Revisiting Customer Satisfaction-Loyalty Link: Exploring the Role of Adjusted Expectations in North Cyprus Restaurants

Valentina Siverukhina

Submitted to the
Institute of Graduate Studies and Research
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Science

in

Tourism Management

Eastern Mediterranean University
September 2019
Gazimağusa, North Cyprus

Approval of the Institute of Graduate Studies and Research

_____
Prof. Dr. Ali Hakan Ulusoy
Acting Director

I certify that this thesis satisfies all the requirements as a thesis for the degree of Master of Science in Tourism Management.

_____
Prof. Dr. Hasan Kılıç
Dean, Faculty of Tourism

We certify that we have read this thesis and that in our opinion it is fully adequate in scope and quality as a thesis for the degree of Master of Science in Tourism Management.

_____   _____
Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ali Öztüren   Prof. Dr. Turgay Avcı
Co-Supervisor   Supervisor

Examining Committee
_____

1. Prof. Dr. Turgay Avcı   _____

2. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mine Haktanır   _____

3. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ali Öztüren   _____

4. Asst. Prof. Dr. M. Güven Ardahan   _____

5. Asst. Prof. Dr. Georgiana Karadas   _____

ABSTRACT

Driving customer satisfaction to customer retention and customer referrals are the interesting topic for managers in recent literature, but there is a gap in explaining the mechanism of this transition with comprehensive models lacking consideration of adequate affecting factors on customer satisfaction-loyalty link. Hence, this study aims to develop a model investigating the role of customer satisfaction along with the respective adjusted expectations of customers on a proper customer loyalty index. Survey research with 308 respondents in North Cyprus has been conducted to draw statistical conclusions regarding the proposed model. The findings of this study suggest that customer satisfaction is a significant predictor of customers' intentions in terms of repurchase and referral intentions and adjusted expectation is a partial mediator in latter relationships. Hence, it is suggested that tracking the levels of satisfaction and adjusted expectations of customers will facilitate predicting of respective positive attitudinal loyalty in the future. The dimensions of attitudinal loyalty including repurchase and WOM referral intentions have been employed as a proper index to measure customer loyalty. To measure the effect of customer satisfaction and adjusted expectation on dimensions of attitudinal loyalty separately, this study has been used the developed constructs extracted from literature to define repurchase and WOM referral intentions as a separate construct in the proposed model. This feature of the proposed model enables future studies to measure to what extent other factors such as perceived switching costs would affect attitudinal loyalty dimensions in an isolated manner.

ÖZ

Müşteri memnuniyetini müşteri tutmaya itmek ve müşteri yönlendirmeleri, son literatürdeki yöneticiler için ilginç bir konudur, ancak bu geçişin mekanizmasını, müşteri memnuniyeti-sadakat bağlantısı üzerindeki yeterli etken faktörleri dikkate almayan kapsamlı modellerle açıklamakta bir boşluk vardır. Bu nedenle, bu çalışma, müşteri memnuniyetinin müşterilerin düzeltilmiş beklentileri ile birlikte uygun bir müşteri sadakat endeksi üzerindeki rolünü araştıran bir model geliştirmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Önerilen model ile ilgili istatistiksel sonuçlar çıkarmak için Kuzey Kıbrıs'ta 308 katılımcıyla anket araştırması yapılmıştır. Bu çalışmanın bulguları, müşteri memnuniyetinin geri alım ve referans niyetleri açısından müşterilerin niyetlerinin önemli bir öngörücüsü olduğunu ve düzeltilmiş beklentinin ikincil ilişkilerde kısmi bir aracı olduğunu göstermektedir. Bu nedenle, müşterilerin memnuniyet düzeylerini ve düzeltilmiş beklentileri takip etmenin gelecekte olumlu tutum sadakatini öngörmeyi kolaylaştıracağı önerilmektedir. Geri alım ve ağızdan ağıza pazarlamaya sevk etme niyetlerini içeren tutumsal sadakat boyutları, müşteri sadakatini ölçmek için uygun bir endeks olarak kullanılmıştır. Müşteri memnuniyetinin ve düzeltilmiş beklentinin tutum sadakatinin boyutları üzerindeki etkisini ayrı ayrı ölçmek için bu çalışma, önerilen modelde geri alım ve ağızdan ağıza pazarlamaya sevk niyetlerini ayrı bir yapı olarak tanımlamak için literatürden çıkarılan gelişmiş yapılar üzerinde kullanılmıştır. Önerilen modelin bu özelliği, gelecekteki çalışmaların algılanan anahtarlama maliyetleri gibi diğer faktörlerin davranışsal sadakat boyutlarını sağlar.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Müşteri Memnuniyeti, Müşteri Sadakati, Düzeltilmiş Beklenti, Ağızdan Ağıza İletişim Tavsiye Niyeti, Geri Alım Niyeti, Restoranlar, Kuzey Kıbrıs

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to extend my special gratitude to my supervisor Prof. Dr. Turgay Avcı and my co-supervisor Assos. Prof. Ali Öztüren for their faith in me, huge support, patience and contribution in completion of this thesis. I could not have imagined having better advisors and mentors for my Dr Study.

I would like to thank the members of my graduate committee, especially for Assos. Prof. Dr. Mine Haktanır and Asst. Prof. Dr. Georgiana Karades for their encouragement, insightful comments, and contribution to this study. Thank you for always being there for me and sharing your knowledge. Special thanks go to Asst. Prof. Dr. M. Güven Ardahan for his crucial contribution to this study.

My sincere thanks to all our Professors of the Tourism Faculty. During 5 years each of them has made an invaluable contribution to my life. I appreciate everyone who works at the faculty for their professionalism, encouragement and motivation to keep going. I wish to extend my special gratitude to Research Assistant Kayode Kolawole Eluwole for support during these years and the time of this thesis.

Last but not least; I want to thank my mother and my family for their support. Thanks to my boyfriend to not let me give up when I was feeling down.

I love you all!

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Increasing the amount of loyal customer is an interesting topic for managers and scholars, as it is believed that they tend to repurchase and recommend others to purchase from the same company (Reichheld and Sasser, 1990). To evaluate their performance regarding customer retention and referral customers, companies use self-reported instruments to measure customers' level of satisfaction along with their attitudinal loyalty including repurchase intention and WOM referral intention. (Morgan & Rego, 2006). It is widely believed that these measures can predict the loyal customers' behavior in the future in terms of their retention, share-of-wallet allocation and referral customers (Keiningham et al., 2007).

This study aims to investigate the role of adjusted expectation as a mediator in a satisfaction-loyalty relationship to explain the mechanism for transformation from satisfaction to loyalty for customers. It is expected that analyzing this framework will bring beneficial business-related implications regarding the influencing factors on customers' loyalty. To properly manage the customer relationship, knowing the influencing factors on consumer behavior is vital. Study of the development of customers' expectations in the post-consumption phase can answer an important question: How satisfied customers become loyal?

Cengiz (2010) proposes that in consumption experience, customers compare their perception of the product's quality with their expectations towards that product. Bagram and Khan (2012) suggest that a performance which is higher than customers' expectations bring satisfaction and failure in doing so will lead to customer dissatisfaction. Hanif et al. (2010) describe a satisfied customer as a customer who has compared the purchased brand with other brands and has perceived that his or her expectations are fulfilled or over-fulfilled. Morgan (2009) explains when customers perceive that they expectations toward a brand has not fulfilled, they tend to switch to other brands and they will spread their bad experience with the purchased brand to a group of people. Hence, customer dissatisfaction is a costly phenomenon for a company, as it is lower the repurchase intention and cause negative word-of-mouth (Keiningham et al., 2007).

Maxham and Netemeyer (2002b) propose that WOM activities are dependent on two factors: one is their fulfillment of expectations towards a brand which stimulates them to engage in conversations and talk positively about that brand and second is a weak performance of a brand which generates the feelings of regret in customer which may lead them to disparage the brand for others.

Customers' expectations are adjusted and updated with each consumption of the brand and influenced by their level of satisfaction with each consumption (Yi and La, 2004; Rufin et al., 2012). Hence, the role of adjusted expectation in customers' decision-making processes is crucial to investigate how consumers tend to behave in the post-consumption phase.

Attitudinal loyalty including repurchase and WOM referral intentions is widely believed to be a good measure for assessing customer loyalty and literature suggest that attitudinal loyalty is a proper customer loyalty index for employing in self-reported instruments to measure loyal customers' intentions and future behaviors (Chi & Qu, 2008). Zeithaml et al. (1996) developed the customer loyalty construct based on attitudinal loyalty including repurchase and WOM referral intentions. Thus, this research has employed attitudinal loyalty as the measure of loyal customers' intentions.

Through scrutinizing most related literature presented earlier, this study has spotted gaps and relevance the study to provide expected contribution, which is comprehensively explained in the next section of this chapter.

1.1 Relevance of the Study

This research and the respective proposed model has focused on the less considered customer's expectation type in literature called adjusted expectation (Yi & La., 2004; Rufin et al., 2012). The adjusted expectation is an expectation created after the consumption and the level of customer satisfaction after each purchase predicts this type of expectation (Yi & La., 2004). Also, the adjusted expectation will stimuli customer's further intentions and behaviors (Rufin et al., 2012). Thus, to explore the role of customers' expectations as the outcome of customer satisfaction in the post-consumption phase, this study has employed adjusted expectation as a variable in the proposed model. Managers and marketers in the food and service industry are after keeping satisfied customers to enjoy the favorable outcomes, which are future repurchases and referral customers. This study explores the mechanism of transition from the satisfaction of the customer to the main customer's loyalty behaviors to

discover pivotal factors to drive customer satisfaction to desired outcomes. This study is believed to be a contribution to managerial and marketing plans regarding customer retention and increasing sales in the food and service industry and more particularly, in North Cyprus.

Recent studies are focused on (electronic word of mouth) eWOM rather than WOM, which has significant differences in nature and should be considered in managerial and marketing plans. This study has focused on WOM, which is based on trust (Berger, 2016) since WOM plays a pivotal role in less populated countries, which people are more connected to each other and positive or negative comments about a product or service can be spread easily as trusted news (Zimmerman & Blythe, 2017).

Most of the literature based on classical theory of disconfirmation, consider expectation as a predictor of customer satisfaction, which has neglected the role of customer expectation in transforming customer satisfaction to loyalty, thus they do not provide appropriate explanation for the transformation process of satisfied customer to a loyal one (Rufin et al., 2012). This study with considering the role of adjusted expectation in satisfaction-attitudinal loyalty association is based on more comprehensive models of latter relationship (Rufin et al., 2012; Yi & La, 2004). This study is believed to contribute as empirical evidence of modern models regarding customer expectations in post-satisfaction phase.

The processes of the research model and hypothesis development were involved with reviewing the most related theories in literature and considering them in mentioned developments. To apply discipline into mentioning the related theories, this study

starts from the most general and universal to more specific theories related to the research model and hypotheses. According to literature, one of the most fundamental theory explaining the reasons underlying loyalty as a social relationship is reciprocation rules of social exchange theory (Solomon, 1992). Hence, this study mentions this theory as the first and most general theory related to the topic and further investigate the alignment of this theory with statistical findings. The adaptive expectation, social cognitive and expectation confirmation are the other theories more specifically explaining the topic that will be explained and related to the research model and hypotheses in the following respective sections.

Based on the presented highlights of the reviewed literature and the specified relevance of the study, section 1.2. suggests the research aims, objectives, and questions of this study. It is expected to find answers for the research questions and detect meaningful relationships among constructs of proposed research model provided in section 1.3. Furthermore, a brief definition of each construct based on reviewed literature has been provided in section 1.4.

1.2 Research Questions, Aims, and Objectives

Restaurant cluster or restaurant quarter is a group of restaurant, which are positioned closely together. The majority of restaurants in North Cyprus are positioned closely together, which have created restaurant clusters or restaurant quarters along with the main cities (Famagusta, Girne, and Lefkosa). Salamis (officially Ismet Inonu Blv) in Famagusta, Dereboyu (officially as Mehmet Akif Avenue) in Lefkosa and Naci Talat Street in Girne are the main districts for aforementioned restaurant clusters. This research aims to answer questions emerged from the detected gap in the literature. This study tries to explain the link between customer satisfaction and favorable

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customer intentions in terms of repurchase and referral through WOM. Further, this study tends to explore the role of customer's expectations affected by their satisfaction with consumption experience in predicting intentions of repurchase and WOM. This study investigates food and service industry in North Cyprus and more specifically, North Cyprus restaurant clusters to find the desired answers. Hence, the developed research questions of this study are as follows:

A) Does customer satisfaction predict customers' attitudinal loyalty in terms of intentions to repurchase and positively refer by WOM?

B) Does adjusted expectation mediate the causal relationship between customer satisfaction and attitudinal loyalty?

1.3 Research Model

Social exchange theory explains that people interact with each other constantly based on cost-benefit analysis to fulfill their needs with exchanging benefits and avoiding costs (Blau, 1964). In other words, in social interactions between people, individuals tend to reciprocate the receiving interaction accordingly and this phenomenon generates relationships among people (Yoon & Lawler, 2005). Thye et al. (2002) introduce personal obligation, appreciation, and trust as the outcomes of beneficial social exchange based on reciprocation rules. Hence, According to this theory, customers with higher levels of satisfaction as a will reciprocate accordingly and positively. Their reciprocation would be their effort to maintain the relationship with the brand for future benefits and appreciate that relationship through WOM.

Adaptive expectation model explains that consumers' expectation at individual level constantly are revised after consumption and even during consumption (Oliver, 1997). This adjusted expectation is found to be influenced by satisfaction with consumption and the predictor of customer's intentions toward a brand and also

adaptive expectation predicts the satisfaction level of the next purchase of that brand (Yi and La. 2004; Rufin et al., 2012).

Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) explains that people tend to obtain a pattern of behavior based on their perceived costs and benefits through social exchanges (Bandura, 1986). Besides, Expectation Confirmation Theory (ECT) explains that people tend to continue an experience if that experience meets or surpasses their prior expectations (Yi and La, 2004). In other words, if individuals perceive that the result of any action will meet their expectations, they will tend to continue that action. Hence, SCT and ECT explain that satisfied customers tend to repurchase according to their emerged pattern of behavior as their expectations are fulfilled.

Attitudinal loyalty includes repurchase and WOM referral intentions and these dimensions have been considered separately in the research model to investigate the effect of customer satisfaction and adjusted expectation on these intentions in a separate manner. Based on the aforementioned theories, the proposed research model is as follows:
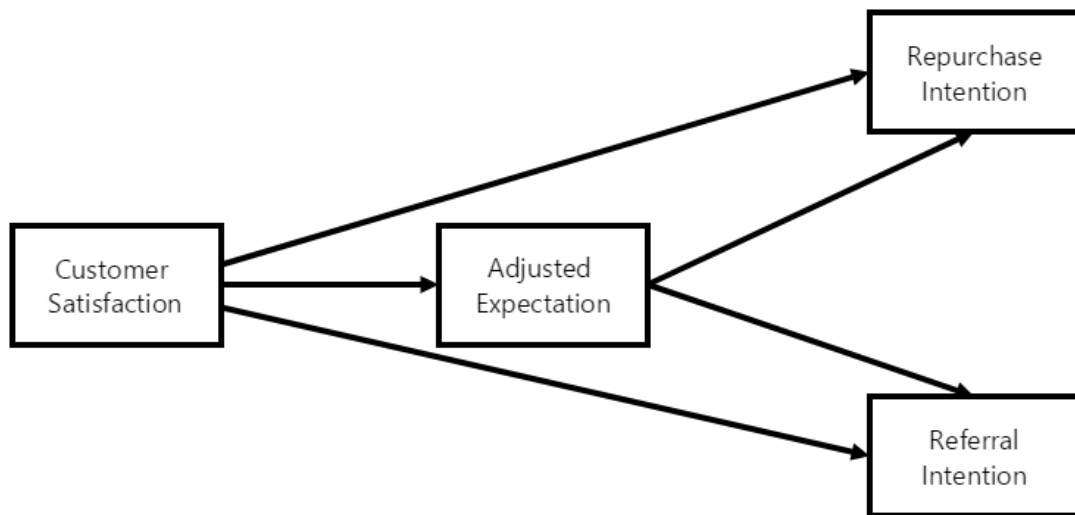
Figure 1. Definitions of Constructs

A) Customer Satisfaction: customer satisfaction is a measure of meeting or surpassing the customers' expectation by providing product or service (Farris et al., 2010). Furthermore, customer satisfaction is widely used to evaluate the performance of the firms (Adolphson et al., 2012)

B) Adjusted Expectation: The adjusted expectation is the customer expectation adjusted by the most recent consumption of a brand which can affect the future customers' intentions and behaviors and it can also have an impact on future satisfaction with consumption of that brand. (Yi and La, 2004; Rufin et al., 2012)

C) Repurchase Intention: Repurchase intention refers to the future intention of a customer to purchase again from the same seller/brand and it is about re-extending the same pattern of purchase by customers (Cronin et al., 2000).

D) WOM Referral intention: WOM refers to the act of transferring the data such as personal experiences or other's stories in the context of interpersonal influence as a social activity (Berger 2016). These interpersonal communications are based on trust, as they don't have direct benefit out of other's purchase for the teller (Murray, 1991).

The employed variable is WOM referral intention, which along with repurchase intention are the two main dimensions of customer loyalty index (Jones & Sasser, 1995). In the reviewed literature, it is found that this variable has been used in developing customer loyalty construct in Zeithaml et al. (1996) study. According to literature, WOM and referral intention has been used interchangeably but refer to the same employed variable (e.g. Curtis, 2009). In this study similar to Curtis (2009), WOM has been used instead of WOM referral intention as a shorter title for the used construct.

Chapter 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Customer Satisfaction

A customer has needs and wants, which can be satisfied through the characteristics of customer satisfaction as a concept (Bagram and Khan, 2012). Expected quality of a service/good is compared with perceived quality after consumption experience occurs (Cengiz, 2010). The concept of customer satisfaction is considered as an abstract, which is different for each individual. Moreover, it is under the influence of several factors such as quality of service, and expectations on an individual level (Cengiz, 2010). As a performance higher than customers' expectations can lead to satisfaction, vice versa is also possible, where a customer is dissatisfied as the performance or quality of the service could not meet the expectations (Bagram and Khan, 2012).

A customer is satisfied when a brand that has been purchased meets or exceeds the expectations of that customer when compared to other brands (Hanif, Hafeez, and Riaz, 2010). Additionally, the degree of satisfaction for customers is a measurement of performance regarding businesses (Adolphson, Eklöf & Parmler, 2012). A company can increase its profitability through increased customer satisfaction, which can be achieved by putting customer satisfaction in company priorities (Cengiz, 2010; Zhang & Pan, 2009). Customers, who do not acquire satisfaction with a particular firm, tend to switch, which can be costly for businesses. In addition, a

customer with low satisfaction or unsatisfied needs can spread the experience to a group of people (from 5 to 15) (Morgan, 2009). This greatly impacts the degree of patronage for that particular brand. It is also noteworthy that some scholars have stated that satisfaction is vital in terms of encouraging repurchase intentions (Tsai and Haung, 2007). This is due to the influential effects that affect the decision-making processes of a customer towards a specific firm or brand (Ndubisi, Malhotra & Chan 2009).

If a service or good meet the expectation level of a customer in terms of performance, satisfaction is achieved for the customer. Additionally, this feeling is achieved when a customer feels pleased regarding his/her expectations being transferred into desirable outcomes of the purchasing experience (Hellier et al., 2003). Customer satisfaction is generally defined with features that are namely, influential on response rate (emotional state as well as cognitive processes); the degree of response intensity, which is due to experience of a certain purchase and its expectation; and response rate can vary based on situational factors and the time of occurrence (Giese & Cote, 2000). It has also been stated on a similar basis that customer satisfaction is in a significant relationship with future intentions regarding a purchase as well as having mediating effects on relational consumers (Garbarino & Johnson, 1999).

Relational quality, core quality, and other service quality elements are intact with customer satisfaction that is perceived through value given to the customer. These are highly influential in the decision-making processes of a customer regarding future purchases or revisit. The aforementioned qualities can drive the satisfaction level of a customer. However, the importance of perceived value exceeds the vitality

of these factors (McDougall & Levesque, 2000). Performance of a product or service is being measured by the customers in terms of instrumental (physical) and expressive (psychological) performance. It is also noteworthy that the outcomes that are considered to be expressive do contribute to satisfaction level but not dissatisfaction. This is while various goods or services can have a different impact on such outcomes regarding either or both expressive and instrumental outcomes (Maddox, 1981).

It has been also stated that satisfaction and its degree is significantly and in a positive manner related to trust (Pavlou, 2003). Other customer attributes can be impacted positively by the degree of satisfaction such as commitment with the service provider (Meyer et al., 2002). Similarly, several scholars have found that satisfaction is significantly and positively linked to intentions regarding repurchase or revisit (Sohaib and Akram, 2016). Consequently, it has been noted that three distinctive reasons can affect the degree to which satisfaction can affect repurchase. These are namely, a) diverse characteristics can lead to variety in terms of repurchase intentions for customers with high satisfaction levels; b) the response rate of customers can be biased based on their reasons; and c) the relationship between satisfaction and intention to repurchase/revisit can be considered as a nonlinear relationship (Mittal and Kamakura, 2001). A company's profit gaining can be increased through loyal customers, which is under the influence of satisfaction level. On an individual level, a customers' decision regarding repurchase can vary based on various degrees of satisfaction (Jin and Su, 2009). Relationship interactions are highly influential regarding satisfaction and repurchase/revisit behaviors of a customer (Sieders, Voss, Grewal and Godfrey, 2005).

Most studies have reported a positive linkage existing between intentions to revisit or repurchase and the degree of satisfaction for the customers (Sohaib and Akram, 2016). As it can be observed, having satisfied or dissatisfied customers can lead to different outcomes regarding intentions to revisit/repurchase (Oliver, 1993). The higher the degree of satisfaction for a customer, the more likely that customer is to exhibit behaviors of loyalty towards repurchasing (Rust and Zahorik, 1993). Moreover, these customers have a higher possibility to maintain their linkage with the brand or company, when compared to those with relatively lower rates of satisfaction or merely dissatisfied customers (Tsai and Huang, 2007).

The feeling that is achieved after an experience concerning its prior expectations is referred to as customer satisfaction (Huarng and Yu, 2019). The degree of loyalty towards the organization can be enhanced through proper management approach, in which customer satisfaction is prioritized (Kandampully and Suhartanto 2003). A customer is more likely to engage in repurchase when their expectations have been met by the experience that has occurred after purchasing as satisfaction increases through this process (Huarng and Yu, 2019). Different aspects have been examined throughout the literature such as price (Abou-Shouk and Khalifa 2017), quality satisfaction (LeBlanc, 1992), and cost performance ratio (Dominici and Guzzo 2010).

A realization of delight regarding consuming a product and its provision is referred to as satisfaction (Zeithaml & Bitner, 2003). The assumption of having received a certain degree of quality regarding a service or product by the customer is perceived as assertiveness that is psychological and leads to satisfaction (Kim, 2012). The customers' anticipation regarding what will be achieved through purchase and its

relationship to their wishes and needs is the degree of satisfaction (Orel and Kara, 2014). The feeling of pleasure needs and wants being met and desirable emotions towards service are the definition of satisfaction provided by the work of Thaichon and Quach (2015). Additionally, attributes of a brand, which can be both tangible and intangible that add to the evaluation of a purchase, which takes place after the service/good is purchased (Krystallis & Chrysochou, 2014).

2.2 Theoretical Background of Satisfaction

Within the literature of marketing as a concept, satisfaction has been a topic of interest for over three decades (Heitmann et al., 2007). This is while a considerable number of studies have been conducted on the context of customer satisfaction (Preis, 2003). As a concept, satisfaction or dissatisfaction are vital and core for marketing research (Patterson, Johnson, & Spreng, 1997). Majority of firms strategize their approaches with having customer satisfaction and its increase into account to maintain or increase their level of competitiveness within the markets they function in (Mittal and Kamakura, 2001; Patterson et al., 1997). Curtis (2009) explains that a significant number of firms and organizations tend to surveil customer satisfaction in an ongoing manner. However, on a national scale, it was initiated by Sweden (The Annual Customer Satisfaction Barometer). This was to address the quality of services and to increase the degree of competitiveness for firms and industries and to further move towards market-orientation approaches (Fornell, 1992). The level of investment from organizations to further increase satisfaction has taken resources and has been major (Durvasula et al., 2004).

Overall healthiness of a firm can be observed through the satisfaction of current and prospective customers. This enables the firm to gain more benefits as the degree of loyalty is added. In turn, costs of marketing can be lowered; the reputation and image

of the firm can be greatly enhanced within the market (Fornell, 1992). If a company can fulfill its claims to its customers, its strategies can then thrive. This will lead to long-term and lasting relationships with customers, which are beneficial for the firm (Carpenter & Fairhurst, 2005). Throughout the literature, the concept of satisfaction and its relationship with organizations level of profit-making has been noted and examined by various authors and scholars (Curtis, 2009). Satisfaction as previously mentioned is a multidimensional concept. It can include various levels of perceptions such as the product itself (e.g. actual performance), the process of sales (interactions during purchase with sales staff), and post-purchase satisfaction (service quality) (Homburg and Gierin, 2001).

It has been mentioned that service quality can lead to higher levels of customer satisfaction. This is while within the context of the service industry, this notion becomes more complicated regarding the quality of constructs and their relationship with the satisfaction level of the customers (Swanson & Davis, 2003). Subjective evaluations regarding a certain product or service will lead to a degree of satisfaction. That is whether that service has met the expectations (Tsai et al., 2006). This can be a positive affection, or general feelings (Olsen, 2007). Additionally, it can be referred to as a total experience about a specific consumption, which yields perception that can be different from what was expected (Suh and Yi, 2006). The satisfaction derived from Bloemer and Kasper's (1995) work can be referred to as manifest satisfaction. It is to be noted that there are cases, in which the customer has not built an expectation towards a service or product. This form of satisfaction is called latent and is derived from implicit assessments. However, based on their study, there is no absolute difference between the two.

In general terms, affective and cognitive components are the classification of satisfaction as previously mentioned and can be found through the literature of the subject (Curtis, 2009). The cognitive form is a multi-step process, where before consumption there are expectations, then the performance of the product is observed, and perceptions are created, thence, the expectations are compared with the performance level of that product. This leads to a judgment regarding the satisfaction level of a customer. This refers to the theory of disconfirmation, which was proposed by Oliver (1993). Fair treatment and favorable or desirable outcomes are among the functions of cognitive satisfaction. Success then is termed as a positive impact from consumption, and vice versa would be a failure. The outcome of emotions can be happiness, disappointment or surprise (Yu and Dean, 2001). In their study, it was mentioned that service quality is thus separated from customer satisfaction through these emotional components. As mentioned earlier, satisfaction is the summary of all experiences regarding purchases and is not to be considered as an individual-transaction-related factor (Olsen, 2007; Yang & Peterson, 2004). This has been the shift from the traditional view on satisfaction, where in recent perspectives is taken into account as a cumulative mean (Olsen, 2002). The transaction-specific traditional view on satisfaction considers this element as an individual experience regarding the latest purchase (Oliver, 1993; Yang & Peterson, 2004).

The notion above is contradictory to the view on satisfaction in a cumulative manner as the customer possesses a general image of all services or products and their performance that has been created over time. This, besides, is related to other features and departments of the firm as well and not merely the purchase itself (Yang and Peterson, 2004). Within the concept of satisfaction as a cumulative façade, there

can be quality, price, name of the product, degree of trust to the marketer or salesperson, knowledge, post-sale services, delivery, orientation, training and also installation, depending on the service (Preis, 2003). While a product may be satisfactory for a customer, other aspects may fall behind regarding satisfying the customer such as price or services provided (Dixon et al., 2005). Economic performance, as well as other behaviors and attitudes, can be better understood and/or determined through the conceptualization of satisfaction as a cumulative façade (Olsen, 2007). This extends to further enhancement of determining the degree of loyalty among customers (Yang and Peterson, 2004).

2.3 Expectation-Confirmation Theory

As it was mentioned earlier in this section, this theory is commonly used among scholars and experts of the field regarding satisfaction (Curtis, 2009). Service marketing, degree of satisfaction and behaviors after purchasing are the topics, in which this theory is used to predict or explain customer behavior (Hsu et al., 2004). This model can be used for both B2B and B2C settings. This theory is a process of expectancy and expectations regarding disconfirmation (Oliver, 1980). Perceived performance, expectations, disconfirmation, and overall customer satisfaction are the main aspect under-emphasis in this model. Anticipations regarding a product and its performance are referred to as expectations (Spreng et al, 1996). The extent of expectations enables the customer to evaluate the performance degree of a certain product or service. Thus, the disconfirmation façade is based on what is perceived from the performance of the product, when compared to what was expected from it (Patterson et al., 1997). If a customer holds high expectations, then it is less likely that a product can satisfy them. This leads to disconfirmation and dissatisfaction.

Contradictory to this notion, if a product provides high performance in the perception of customers, then the expectations of customers will be increased relatively.

It was noted in the work of Oliver (1980) that disconfirmation upon occurrence is the instantaneous factor, which affects the satisfaction of an individual. Through this theory, a customer will have satisfaction after purchasing a good or service, when the perception of performance, as well as expectations, are intact together. The outcome is twofold as a product or service can have positive perceptions due to its efficient performance or negative perception due to failing to meet the prior degree of expectations. The former turns into satisfaction and the latter (negative disconfirmation) leads to dissatisfied customers (Patterson et al., 1997). Customer satisfaction can lead to intentions regarding repurchasing a specific product, which was later included in satisfaction models (Liao et al., 2007). The theory of disconfirmation has been merged with technology acceptance model (TAM), which in turn can reflect the relationship between expectation of a customer and the attributes that lead to satisfaction (Bhattacheriee, 2001). Satisfaction can also be due to the information or the product itself based on its performance level (Spreng et al., 1996).

Within the paradigm of market research, the expectation confirmation theory is the dominant approach. However, it does consist of limitations in terms of comprehensiveness (Spreng et al., 1996). This is mainly due to the lack of comprehensiveness in terms of needs and desires of customers. Thus, the majority of research is conducted upon expectations and not desires that are considered as major motives for satisfaction. Desires, ideals, equity or past experiences have also been proposed in terms of perceived performance and comparisons with predictive

expectations. Additionally, this theory falls behind in terms of social norms and specific characteristics that are individually different. This becomes more vivid in the context of services, where information taken by the consumer is done through a one-time act (Patterson et al., 1997).

2.4 Satisfaction and Loyalty

The linkage between the two variables of satisfaction and loyalty among customers have been extensively reviewed and examined throughout the literature that exists on the subject (Curtis, 2009). However, due to the complex nature of these variables, it further calls for additional research to be conducted to better understand and comprehend various aspects of this phenomenon. In the work of Bloemer and Kasper (1995), it was suggested that most cases do not distinguish repurchase and loyalty factors. This extends to differentials between loyalty and spurious in terms of satisfaction research. Similarly, various types of satisfaction have fallen behind in terms of research as most studies take satisfaction as an independent variable within their analytical methods.

There are two major perspectives regarding the linkage between satisfaction and loyalty of customers. The first group takes satisfaction as a major predictor of loyalty among customers loyalty as an antecedent of satisfaction, where satisfied customers have a tendency towards loyalty behaviors as well as recommendation and WOM (Heitmann et al., 2007). Through satisfaction, future behaviors and decision-making processes are altered. Loyal customers are generally considered to be satisfied with the services and therefore, tend to maintain the relationship with the service provider. The second perspective, in which satisfaction is deemed not as a sole contributor to loyalty, while it is positively related to it. Thus, satisfaction alone is not enough to

create loyalty for a customer (Curtis, 2009). Although, as previously mentioned, loyal customers are generally satisfied, it does not suffice to maintain loyalty. It has been noted by researchers that the extent of loyalty differs among industries (Olsen, 2007). As loyalty forms itself through numerous other factors, satisfaction loses its significance (Olsen, 2007). Situational variables can affect the extent of the loyalty of satisfied customers. This can be mainly related to extent of competitive rivalry in that industry. Attitudes, repurchase, and extent of recommendations can be influenced by satisfaction. However, it does not directly affect the degree of loyalty (Carpenter and Fairhurst, 2005). Price factor plays a major role in a way that a satisfied customer may not repurchase due to high prices regardless of their level of satisfaction (Auh and Johnson, 2005).

It has been noted by Oliver (1999) that satisfaction and loyalty are in nature very close in terms of definition. However, they are relatively different. These two factors can have over-loadings, while satisfaction can be present without the existence of loyalty. According to Oliver (1999), existence and emergence of loyalty are dependent on several factors that can be named, the superiority of a product and its perception, fortitude of individuals, social bonding and synergy. It was also suggested that manifest satisfaction is more thoroughly linked to true loyalty when compared to latent satisfaction (Bloemer and Kasper, 1995). It is also important to note that these concepts are complex by nature and cannot be strictly defined in a single case.

Moreover, the satisfaction of a customer and their extent of loyalty can be significantly altered through demographic variables such as age, gender, income, and other personal characteristics (Homburg & Gierin, 2001). Switching to other brands

is less prone to occur when satisfaction has reached its full potential for a customer (Strauss and Neuhaus, 1997). This is where the notion of satisfaction being a vital determinant of loyalty comes from. It is additionally important to note that when satisfaction increases, it does not imply the same increase in the degree of loyalty for the same individual (Soderlund & Vilgon, 1999). In addition, it was suggested by Rowley and Dawes (2000) that customers, who are more involved with services or products are more likely to form a stronger loyalty towards the firm or product. The efficiency of assets and values given to stakeholders can be enhanced through the existence of loyalty among customers (Reichheld et al., 2000).

2.5 Satisfaction and Repurchase/Repurchase Intentions

During the 1960s, studies have focused on the linkage between satisfaction and intentions to repurchase (Howard and Sheth, 1969). There are a considerable number of scholars, who consider satisfaction as a predictor of intentions to repurchase or revisit (Anderson & Sullivan, 1993; Tsai et al., 2006; Curtis, 2009). In contradiction, some researchers have suggested that the aforementioned link does not exist (Hellier et al., 2003; Hicks et al., 2005). It was suggested through the work of Mittal and Kamakura (2001) that the link between satisfaction and repurchase intentions may vary depending on the following bases: a) individuals possess various characteristics and thus, can have different intentions regarding repurchase; b) response bias that is referred to as a data, which cannot represent the actual images and intentions of customers; and c) the linkage can be nonlinear and therefore, vary from each individual to another.

On a similar context, due to positive relationship that exists between the evaluation of a customer of a purchase after the purchase has taken place and their future

behavior, customer evaluation has taken interest and attention from scholars (e.g. Hicks et al., 2005). Most studies have emphasized on the satisfaction level of customers and/or their complaints regarding repurchase intentions (Peyrot and Van Doren (1994). A complaint occurs when a customer is dissatisfied and thus, the repurchase intention of that customer can relatively decrease. It was also stated that when both service quality, as well as satisfaction, are raised to a certain amount, repurchase intentions are more likely to occur (Taylor and Baker, 1994). Additionally, a satisfied customer is more prone to maintaining their relationship with a particular brand or product, when compared to those who are not satisfied with the provided service (Tsai et al., 2006). This is while scholars have mentioned that the actual repurchase behavior and its linkage with satisfaction have been a difficult matter in terms of empirical evidence (Olsen, 2002; Mittal and Kamakura, 2001). Repurchase intentions are derived from components of an individuals' behavior. This is while satisfaction is whether cognitive or affective. The repurchase is more complex than satisfaction as a sole determinant, as customers may engage in repurchase due to their goals and performance of a specific good rather than their mere satisfaction on that product. Thus, satisfaction cannot be always a predictor for repurchase intentions (Mittal and Kamakura, 2001). This is due to the nonlinearity notion, which was mentioned earlier.

2.6 Adjusted Expectations

As previously mentioned in this chapter, the notion provided by Oliver's work (1980) regarding expectation disconfirmation paradigm is widely known and used throughout the literature. Perception of outcomes of an event and its link to behavioral chances regarding expectations towards that event is the concept of Oliver's work. On a contradictory basis, a model was presented through the work of

Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1988), in which gap-based service quality is redefining expectations and what they are, based on consumers' feelings and their real expectations (Devlin, Gwynne, & Ennew, 2002). These two models have been given terms for being presented as theories regarding the matter, where the former is referred to as predictive, while the latter is termed as desired expectations (Yi, 1990). There is an ongoing argument on whether or not standards provided for expectations are appropriate by nature (Devlin et al., 2002). A "tolerance zone" was proposed in the context of services and employment of adequate and desired services (Zeithaml, Berry, and Parasuraman, 1993). It can be said that for adequate services, they are more intact with predictive expectations, which was explained earlier in this section. Consequently, it can be deduced that desired services agree with desired expectations by nature. A consumer may have several reasons to think that a desired good/service should have a certain level of performance. This can be referred to as the desired service (e.g. price, values, and benefits).

As time passes, expectations, thoughts, and beliefs, which once existed, take new shifts. This is because, within the market, learning is constant and on a fast-pace (Johnson et al., 1995). Through using or consuming a service/good, a customer can learn or have learning experiences (Hoch and Deighton, 1989). Customers gain knowledge and information through these experiences. This, in turn, leads to new beliefs or challenging previous ones. Hence, it can be said that through the accumulation of experiences regarding consumption of a good or a group of services/products, expectations change on a dynamic basis as it is the origin and nexus of change by definition. Following what was noted above in this section, throughout the literature of CS, expectations are generally categorized into two

distinctive groups of prior, and predictive. These are considered to be as a form of standard in terms of consumption and satisfaction relationship evaluation (Yi, 1990, 1993). Cumulative experiences in relation to consumption can significantly influence the dynamics of prior expectations. Additionally, the availability of alternatives and marketing communications can be highly influential (Johnson et al., 1995). This is contradictory to the concept of CS as static (cognitive and/or affective) response. This response is reached through experience or transaction, which is at the moment present and occurring (Oliver, 1997).

In a study conducted by Boulding et al. (1993), it was stated that desired expectations are more likely to be deprived of change when compared to predictive expectations, which can transform or shift with cumulative experiences. Repurchase intentions are among the expectations that are to occur in the future, which can be impacted by transactional or cumulative CS. The adjusted expectations can be referred to both experiences, cumulative and/or current consumption (Yi and La, 2004). For assessing future CS, adjusted expectations can act as a framework regarding purchase-related behaviors. A customer is more likely to have heightened intentions to repurchase when his/her expectations have not only met, but the service/product has exceeded the expectations (Rust and Oliver, 2000). This is can act as an obstacle regarding maintaining the satisfaction level for future purchases. The dynamic basis of expectations is observable through the aforementioned notion. In other words, the satisfaction level at the time of each experience is influential on the expectations regarding the next purchase or visit. When new information is received, adjusted expectations differ from the previous version. Also, adjusted expectations are under

the influence of CS as a wholesome experience regarding the consumption of goods/services.

The change may occur throughout the process of anchoring and adjusting. This is derived from the adaptive expectation theory (Tversky and Kahneman, 1974). Through this theory, individual-level expectations and its changes can be defined on an enhanced basis. This is contradictory to rational expectation theory, in which changes of market-level are emphasized in an aggregate manner (Johnson et al., 1995). It was stated that current information is adapted through individual-level expectations more easily when compared to market-level (Johnson et al., 1995). Additionally, expectations on an individual level are more likely to change, as they can take a new shift during the consumption of a good/service (Oliver, 1997).

It was noted in a study conducted by Oliver (1997, p. 68) that not only expectation differs from need, but it is the element, from which the act of purchase is initiated by the customer. The choice in relation to brand and behavior surrounding it can add to the degree of predictability through cumulative expectations (Kalwani, Yim, Rinne, and Sugita, 1990). This comes more to the light when it comes to service industries (e.g. tourism and hospitality). This is due to the nature of services with their variety in terms of features and characteristics. These can be the degree of tangibility, inseparability, heterogeneity, and disability (Zeithaml et al., 1996). Henceforth, it is necessary that while the need for the brand is present, the marketing team approaches towards customers is to further guide them towards repurchasing the service/product. Thence, customers' expectations are intact with the message that is to be delivered (Zeithaml, Berry, & Parasuraman, 1993).

As previously mentioned, adjusted or adaptive expectations are when the concept is taken into account as post-purchase outcomes. This is referred to in various ways throughout the literature by a considerable number of scholars as 'adaptive expectations', 'post hoc expectations', and 'adjusted expectations', and others. It has been noted through the literature in terms of methodological approaches towards expectations that satisfaction is more significantly related to adjusted expectations when compared to predictive. This is due to the existence of mediation effect, which is possessed by adjusted expectations on the relationship that exists between intention to revisit or repurchase and the satisfaction that is experienced (Yi & La, 2004).

A study suggested that some models are not adequate to be implied in all cases. For instance, it was mentioned through the work of Johnson, Nader, and Fornell (1966) that when the service experience is infrequent and complicated. This is when considering that the customer does not sufficiently recall the experience in terms of its prior expectations (Oliver and Bruke, 1999; Pieters and Zwick, 1993). The beliefs and thoughts of a certain product are under the influence of information that is obtained by the consumer through the usage of the service or product. This process is constant (Yi and La, 2004; Rufin et al., 2012)

The difference between actual consumption and the experience perceived by it, and the expected benefits of the consumption is what has been called as 'a weighted average of expectation', which a person might have (Johnson et al., 1995). This is one of the drivers for change in the expectation spectrum of a customer and needs to be adjusted regarding the information and its context that is provided to the customer and is acquired on a cumulative manner (Winer, 1985). Accordingly, there is a

change occurring in adjusted expectations, in fact, differs from the initial version, when new data is taken, which subsequently are impacted by satisfaction level of the customers (Yi and La, 2004). Therefore, the final acquired perception on the experience regarding pre-purchase expectations is dependent on the situation, where it occurs and thus, the theory to be used is also interdependent on this matter (i.e. assimilation theory, contrast theory, or others). This is also extremely dependent on the time when the information has been acquired (Rufin et al., 2012).

In contradiction to what was mentioned earlier, the mediation effect of expectations regarding customer satisfaction and intention to revisit has had criticism upon it through the literature (Yu'ksel and Yuk'sel, 2001). This is mainly related to the fact that the number of influential factors in terms of expectations that occurs after purchasing a good/service is enormous and theories often tend to limit the number of the mentioned factors. It has been noted that such restrictions can be due to the degree of concern given by the researcher (Rufin et al., 2012). In the light of what was mentioned, the model, which is used to measure the expectations of a customer, must be undertaken before the experience occurs, for it to be considered a proper measurement for predictive (also known as normative) expectations (Johnson et al., 1995). A twofold argument can arise from this notion that is, the models are to be considered as adjusted or adaptive forms of expectations; and whether or not the logic is proper to be applied. Some models have proposed settings, in which adjusted expectations are taken into account as determinants of consumer behavior due to the casualness of the relationship that exists between them and customer satisfaction as well as loyalty (Rufin et al., 2012).

As it was previously mentioned, there have been studies conducted on the linkage that exists between the degree of a customers' satisfaction and their intention to revisit or repurchase (Lin and Lekhawipat, 2014). However, it has been also noted that mere high satisfaction levels cannot lead to higher repurchase or revisit (Pavlou, 2003). Other influential factors, which can be considered to have mediating effects play major roles in the context of repurchase. Regarding post-consumption, adjusted expectations have been used as a means of analysis (Ha et al., 2010). The next period of purchasing a good on online platforms and behaviors surrounding it can be guided through adjusted expectations (Yi and La, 2004). Adjusted expectations are outcomes of consumer satisfaction. Additionally, they act as a determinant in terms of repurchase intentions that may arise in the future regarding customer satisfaction (Ha et al., 2010). Adjusted expectations can increase the level of sensitivity towards a product or service, which is similar to post hoc expectations that occur after consumption (Liao et al., 2010). A customer can be pleased and to some extent surprising if the product exceeds the expectations of the customer in terms of performance. Such customers then can have adjusted expectations increased regarding that customer due to their satisfaction level. This is while in the online sector, this notion still requires further investigation and examinations (Lin and Lekhawipat, 2014).

It was noted in a study conducted by Yi and La (2004) that adjusted expectations can act as a fit and efficient measurement tool regarding behaviors of repurchase. These are under the influence of cognitive judgment. The relationship between customer satisfaction and adjusted expectations in online format regarding repurchase behaviors is the main aspect under discussion. When customers can recall their

satisfaction regarding a product or service from memory, the evaluations are being undertaken instantaneously with repurchase and satisfaction that is expected from the experience (Mattila, 2003). Accordingly, expectations of customers increase as adjusted expectations regarding a repurchase are increasing, which is due to positive emotions towards that experience (Szymanski and Hise, 2000).

2.7 Adjusted expectations as a cognitive process of post-satisfaction

Regardless of the amount of attention paid to the concept of customer expectations in terms of its relationship with satisfaction, it has been noted that there is no singular consensus in defining the terms (Yi, 1990). As previously mentioned in this section, various authors and researchers have defined expectations in different ways (e.g. Oliver, 1980; Parasuraman et al., 1988). This shows that expectations can vary from subjective forms to the objective. However, expectations can also vary from individual to individual. Expectations are generally known to be antecedents of satisfaction degree of a customer from the expectancy disconfirmation theory and that it requires revision and more comprehensive examination (Oliver and Winer, 1987). For predicting and assessing experience obtained by consumption of a good or service, prior expectations and their recognition are vital (Yi, 1993). This is while post-satisfaction judgments and adjusted expectations are considered to be cumulative and regarding current experiences from consumption, which is also referred to as post-purchase satisfaction (Yi and La, 2004). The overall expectations of a customer are adjusted and also adapted in a timely manner (Johnson et a., 1995). As it was noted by the work of Oliver (1997), intentions of the repurchase are highly related to experienced satisfaction and the expectations of satisfaction.

Another concept was proposed by scholars regarding the revision of expectations that are about the experience a customer obtains (Anderson and Salisbury, 2003; Tear, 1993). It has been stated that the judgments of the repurchase are in relation with customer satisfaction when prior satisfaction can be accessed through memory and thus, the customer possesses an expected experience regarding that particular consumption (e.g. Mattila, 2003). Future satisfaction of a customer can be evaluated via adjusted expectations in terms of repurchase intentions and this is in line with cognitive judgment (Yi and La, 2004). In the online context, a customer may revisit a website that is not well-known due to the acquisition of positive emotions towards the experience with that website. Expectations are adjusted on a higher and heightened level when the customer is receiving positive experiences from a certain product, good or service. This agrees with the existing literature as cumulative experiences can adjust the satisfaction level in time as experiences summate (Ganesh et al., 2000). Similarly, some other scholars have stated that by exceeding the level of expectations a customer holds against a service/product, repurchase intentions can be triggered (Szymanski and Henard, 2001).

2.8 Most Common Models of Intention to Adopt

The two major theories in terms of intentions to adopt have been noted to be expectation confirmation theory (ECT) and Social Cognitive Theory (SCT). The SCT has been derived from the literature that exists within the realm of psychology. This theory is addressing the process, in which people obtain a specific pattern in their behavior and maintaining it. Additionally, through this theory intervention methods and approaches are also provided (Bandura, 1986). It has been commonly used within acceptance as well as IT-related studies (Venkatesh et al., 2003). The context of self-efficacy that is derived from SCT addresses self-evaluation. This, in

turn, has an impact on decision-making processes and what it takes to engage in a particular behavior. It can be referred to as a belief in one's capabilities and skills regarding the completion of a task that can result in information sharing and gaining knowledge (Gravill and Compeau, 2008). It was noted through the work of Bandura (1986) that self-efficacy is mainly generated and formed through gaining experience. ECT is commonly used for examining behaviors that are being repeated. This is common within the domain of marketing and market research and the research related to customer behavior and its literature (Oliver, 1993; Pappas et al., 2014).

Continuity and repetition of a certain intention or behavior for a customer are considered to be significantly linked to their level of satisfaction based on ECT. It was mentioned that in an online context, a customer can exhibit loyalty to an online or some extent an offline service, when overall satisfaction level is considerably high (Pappas et al., 2014). A study conducted by Giannakos et al. (2011) suggested that satisfaction can explain the variations of repurchase intentions on a great scale.

2.9 Repurchase Intention

Through Social Exchange Theory (Thibaut and Kelley, 1959) alongside Investment Model of Commitment (Rusbult, 1980) can defined repurchase intentions in accordance to psychology within a social context, which leads to maintaining a relationship with a service provider. This is also referred to as relationship maintenance. As Defensive Marketing strategies and approaches have been noted to be determinants of success for a firm or corporation, the extent of repurchase intention for a customer has been taken as a major element in this context and regarding those strategies (Cronin et al., 2000). There is a growing tendency towards maintaining customers through defensive strategies. This is high since acquiring new

customers is relatively more costly for a firm (Upamannyu et al., 2015). Through defensive marketing, existing customers are encouraged to engage in repurchase or revisit rather than emphasizing on new customers to initiate a purchase (offensive marketing) (Fornell, 1992).

The degree of which a customer tends to stay or maintain a service provider is considered to be the behavioral intention that a customer exhibits regarding repurchase (Jackson, 1985). Surveys can be a good method to analyze the intention of existing customers regarding repurchase of a good or service from the same firm (Cronin et al., 2000; Upamannyu et al., 2015). In terms of definition, customer retention has been used in the same context as repurchase intention, which is referred to as the degree of the tendency of a customer for maintaining a service provider and continue their relationship (Ranaweera and Prabhu, 2003). Several circumstances, as well as the current state of service, are major contributors to the degree of customers' repurchase intention (Hellier et al., 2003). Repurchase behaviors have been linked to satisfaction and/or dissatisfaction levels for customers (Durvasula et al., 2004; Patterson et al., 1997). Competitiveness of a firm or services can greatly increase when value-added and benefits to the customer trigger satisfaction and thus, loyalty (Kaynak, 2003).

Actual repurchase can occur when an existing customer has a positive judgment on self as well as the service/good that is provided (Ha et al., 2010). A future purchase from an existing service provider or supplier is highly dependent on the existing relationship between the firm and the customer, especially in a long term manner (Jones and Taylor, 2007). As it was previously mentioned, studies have found that to obtain a new customer can be significantly more costly for the firm, when compared

to maintaining the existing customers. Thus, repurchase intention of customers become more vital for organizations (Spreng et al., 1995). Satisfaction degree of a customer can significantly impact the relationship that exists between that customer and the service provider, which in turn can lead to higher profits and increased market share (Reichheld and Sasser, 1990; Weun, 1997). Estimation of repurchasing a specific good or product and future transactions regarding that firm can be referred to as repurchase intentions (Hellier et al., 2003).

Perceived value was found to have positive and yet significantly direct linkage with the spread of (WOM) as well as repurchase intention (Cronin et al., 2000). Similarly, a study found a positive outcome regarding repurchases of a customer from an existing service provider (Kuan, Bock, & Vathanophas, 2008). Behavioral intentions of customers were additionally found to have a direct linkage with the degree of service quality (Cronin et al., 2000). This was supported in the study conducted by Ranaweera and Neely (2003). The credibility of retailers was also found to have a significant impact on intention to repurchase/revisit (Chiu et al., 2009). Provision of proper information and its degree of correctness is an important factor regarding customers' repurchase behaviors (Kwek, Lau and Tan, 2010). Customer retention in regards to analysis and/or examination seems to lack demographic variables and their impact as well as personality traits (Upamannyu et al., 2015).

The first stage in the consumer behavior can be said to be the initial encouragement regarding of purchase, and the second stage to be to foster the environment for repurchase to occur (Zhang et al., 2011). A long-lasting relationship with the organization is desired outcome from customer relationship, which is the literal meaning of repurchase intentions (Gounaris, Dimitriadis & Stathakopoulos, 2010;

Morgan, 2009; Hellier et al., 2003). The positive and significant relationship between the customers' intention to repurchase and their level of satisfaction was further supported in several studies (e.g. Yi and La, 2004; Chinomona and Dubihlela, 2014). However, many influential factors play a major role in the reality of situations for a customer to engage in repurchase intentional behaviors (Kaveh, 2011). As the cost for organizations increased regarding attracting new customers, managers, especially in marketing department tend to shift their focus on customer retention and repurchase motives through campaigns and new marketing strategies (Pérez et al., 2007). This extends to analyzing trends and prediction of future or uprising demands. Repurchase intentions, thus, are commonly examined through initial purchase intentions (Chinomona and Dubihlela, 2014).

Marketing in its traditional perspective emphasizes on sole sale of a product with very little consideration regarding customer retention. However, recent approaches tend to consider encouraging customer retention as costs increase in terms of attracting new customers. This is highly related to the extreme rates of competitive rivalry in the present market paradigm (Sohaib and Akram, 2016; Hafeez and Muhammad, 2012; Hallowell, 1996). When a customers' degree of satisfaction increases through a positive relationship with the service provider, that relationship tends to develop towards strengthening and thus, lasting. Satisfactory relationship with the organization yields a higher degree of retention (Eriksson and Vaghult, 2000). It was mentioned in a relatively recent study that commitment as well as satisfaction are major contributors to Repurchase Decision Making as a theory (TRD) (Han and Ryu, 2012; Sohaib and Akram, 2016).

2.10 Theoretical Background of Repurchase/Repurchase Intentions

As mentioned earlier, the concept of intentions to repurchase/revisit and its relationship with various variables have been examined throughout the literature and by many scholars (e.g. see Curtis, 2009). Actual repurchase occurs when a customer transforms their intentions to the action of purchasing the good/service that was previously purchased (Peyrot and Van Doren, 1994). The action of the repurchase is due to an array of situational factors and is not a singular act immune to other variables' impacts (Zineldin, 2006). Relationship marketing pays a great deal of attention to this concept as an influential variable (Fullerton, 2005). This differs from the notion of repurchase intention, as the intention has not yet transformed into the actual purchase (Hume et al., 2007).

Intention to repurchase has been categorized into two main distinctive groups that are namely, intention to repurchase, and intention to spread positive comments (WOM) and/or recommendations regarding that purchase (Zeithaml et al., 1996). However, the topic is yet under debate and discussion among scholars (Dixon et al., 2005; Curtis, 2009).

For maintaining an adequate level of sustainability in terms of gaining competitiveness, customer retention plays a vital role (Dixon et al., 2005). As repurchase occurs, the company gains more profit as due to what was previously mentioned, to maintain customer costs significantly less than attracting a new one (Soderlund and Vilgon, 1999). Customers can switch to alternate products/services due to the extent of competitive rivalry (Peyrot and Van Doren, 1994). For repurchase behaviors as a concept, an array of aspects have been examined such as

WOM, complaints, loyalty, and satisfaction (Hellier et al., 2003; Hicks et al., 2005; Mittal & Kamakura, 2001). The degree of involvement also has been found to play a crucial role particularly, when it comes to information gathering. Prior-experiences, attitude, mood, value, degree of convenience/inconvenience, failure, familiarity level, and quality of service are contributing elements (Hume et al., 2007; Curtis, 2009). A powerful relationship between customers and organization can be formed when the quality of service is high and customers have perceived it. This yields desirable behaviors and attitudes towards the firm, which is profitable for the organization as a subsequent outcome (Zeithaml and Berry, 1996). These behaviors are determinant of a loyal customer or that the customer will not exhibit loyalty or repurchase to its extent. If perceptions are negative towards the firm or the services provided by the firm, then customers are more likely to have a negative intention (Varki and Colgate, 2001).

2.11 Theory of Planned Behavior

Theory of planned behavior (TPB) is one of the main theories used in terms of explaining the actions of customers (Ajzen, 1985, 1991), which is relatively more recent than Theory of Reasoned Action (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975). Marketers undertake such theories to be able to affect the behavioral actions of customers (Bansal and Taylor, 2002). Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) was suggested through the work of Ajzen (1985), in which the previous model of Reasoned Action Theory (TRA) was further developed.

Within the concept of TPB, perceived behavioral control was added into the mix as a variable, which can contribute to a significant level to intentions of an individual. This allows the attempt to analyze and predict future behavior through the means of

intentions (Ajzen, 1991; Bansal & Taylor, 2002; Curtis, 2009). The observed behavior is accepted to be intact with intentions and control behaviors. These components are also termed as actual and perceived, where the actual behavior control is defined as a skillfulness degree of an individual regarding an expected behavior that is given, and perceived control is referred to as proxy of the control that connects perception with the ability to perform a certain behavior. For each individual control factor, the degree of which that factor is being perceived based on its strength can lead to the actual weight of that factor (Ajzen, 1991). Attitudes, behaviors and subjective norms are known to be influential factors. Perception of social pressure for initiating engagement is referred to as social norms. The value given by the performance of a product/service leads to attitudes towards that good, which in turn will lead to behaviors. Satisfaction, as a concept, is derived from intentions and attitudes towards a certain product. This additionally, includes loyalty and its formation as well (Froehle and Roth, 2004). Perceived behavioral control, subjective norms, and attitude towards behavior are known to be the three pillars of a positive relationship with intention. These have been included in means of TPB (Bansal and Taylor, 2002).

Furthermore, TPB can enhance shifting to alternatives or switching to other service providers for the customer (Bansal and Taylor, 2002). When a customer has high perceptions in terms of switching to other brands or services alongside their perceived control, it is highly possible that a customer can initiate switching attitudes or behaviors (Bansal and Taylor, 2002) and vice versa. In a study conducted by Armitage and Conner (2001), it was suggested that TPC can explain the variances for intention as a variable up to a degree of 39% and for behavioral variances up to 27%.

Their study was formed within a quantitative format with 185 studies that were analyzed and measured. This is while subjective norms were found to have a lesser significance in terms of explaining the variance of intention in their study. It is also noteworthy that it was mentioned in their study that the low impact of subjective norms as a factor can be due to improper measurement design and that it further calls for additional examination and analysis to better understand the underlying effects. Due to the high importance of this subject and as it was mentioned earlier, this topic requires further investigation. This importance increases due to the complex nature of the subject matter. Thus, it was deemed appropriate to take the factor of intentions as a major variable in the proposed model of the current paper.

2.12 WOM Concept

The topic of interpersonal communications and its impacts on various aspects have been a topic of interest among scholars from various departments as it has been proven to have a significant linkage with decision-making processes, which includes consumption as well (Katz and Lazarsfeld, 1955). In transferring and delivering information within the context of interpersonal influence, the aforementioned impact has been examined regarding the behavioral actions of consumers through analytical models (Engel et al., 1995). It has been stated that due to experiential nature of a wide range of services and their intangibility, customers and consumers are more likely to put their trust in interpersonal communications (Murray 1991; Zeithaml et al. 1993). These interpersonal communications are also referred to as "word-of-mouth" (WOM). This notion has been defined as a means of communications that are informal and are related to a product or service and its providers. The nature of WOM can be related to the ownership of the goods/products/services, or their usage, or features of it (Westbrook, 1987, p. 261). In another definition, WOM has been

termed as person-to-person verbal interactions between an individual, who is considered noncommercial and an individual, who is considering a specific good, service, or product, or a sales offer (Arndt, 1967, p. 190). It is noteworthy that the previously mentioned notions are intact and in consensus with the findings of more recent studies conducted on the topic of word-of-mouth (WOM) (Dematos and Rossi, 2008).

2.13 Satisfaction as Antecedent of WOM Referral Activity

A theory, which has been commonly used and could be considered as a dominant undertaken theory, is the expectancy disconfirmation theory that helps to measure the degree of customer satisfaction in terms of conceptualization. In other words, a customer assesses and evaluates a certain product or service based on their expectations before their exposure to that good or service, which can be purchased or consumed. Therefore, the performance is graded based on these expectations (Oliver, 1980). In this perspective, the degree of satisfaction is considered as a post-choice judgment based on the selected item or service. This can be understood through 'transaction-specific component' (Oliver, 1981). In a more recent work on this subject conducted by Bolton and Drew (1991), satisfaction is deemed as multiple evaluations that is in relation to a service or good (and its provider) in time as a cumulative structure that is based on all the experiences. This cumulative construction of expectations and comparisons in time, lead to customer attitudes and its functions (Westbrook and Oliver, 1991). This is while other studies have pointed out the fact that customer satisfaction is not merely to be considered as a cognitive mean, but also involving emotional components (e.g. Liljander and Strandvik, 1997). Supportive studies have shown that the state of emotional satisfaction is and can be much more significant for predicting behaviors, which may arise in the future when

compared to the traditional view on satisfaction as a mere cognitive measurement (Martin et al., 2008; Zeelenberg and Pieters, 2004).

It has been mentioned in several studies that customer satisfaction is a significant predictor for two major attributes of behavior that are namely, intention to repurchase, WOM (Bearden and Teel 1983; Maxham and Netemeyer. 2002a, b; Oliver 1980; Ranaweera and Prabhu 2003). Subsequently, the extent of WOM being spread by customers is highly dependent on the following two aspects: A) on what degree the customers' expectations have been met by performance level of the product/service purchased, which encourages them to engage in conversation regarding the service/product and their experience with it (e.g. service recovery and the provision of salience regarding recovery prompts) (Maxham and Netemeyer, 2002b); and B) whether the performance level of product/service was not satisfactory, which leads to experiencing regret in the customer. In this scenario, the customer can engage in WOM due to anxiety, frustration, anger, or other emotions that are considered to be negative towards that product/service. This can be in the context of warning or retaliation (Anderson 1998; Oliver 1997; Richins 1984; Sweeney et al. 2005). As previously mentioned, there are a considerable amount of studies, which have been conducted upon the relationship between satisfaction and WOM (Brown et al. 2005; Heitmann et al. 2007; Mittal et al. 1999; Price and Arnould 1999). However, this does not imply that further investigations are not necessary. As the nature of this topic is complex, it calls for extensive research and further investigations to better understand various aspects of this phenomenon. Therefore, it is deemed appropriate to conduct this research with the factor of WOM included in the presented model.

The importance of WOM has been around for as long as conveying information is considered as it has existed as a mean of communication since the beginning of communing (Dellarocas, 2003). As previously mentioned in this section, there are various definitions of WOM as a concept. Communing marketing information, which is unofficial and is being undertaken among consumers, which in turn leads to forming attitudes towards a specific service or product can be referred to as the spread of WOM (Katz and Lazarsfeld, 1966). Another description of the phenomenon is provided by Litvin et al. (2008), in which they propose that WOM can be referred to as verbal interaction among consumers that are specifically related to a product/service/brand and this interaction is noncommercial and is not influenced by commercial. This form of communication and transference of information moves beyond traditional and formal marketing channels, which influence ones' decision-making processes and is derived from consumer experiences from that product or service (Brown et al., 2007). According to the recent work of Daugherty and Hoffman (2014), WOM is considered to be among the major actors concerning the behavioral outcomes of consumers. The importance grew when the topic expands to products and services, which are harder to be assessed by consumers before purchase or consumption (intangible) (i.e. tourism and hospitality services). It has been noted that WOM has been taken into account as a significantly vital element, which greatly affects the decision-making process of customers regarding purchases and intentions towards purchasing (Litvin et al., 2008). This vitality becomes more vivid when it is due to the tourist section as the satisfaction of tourists is highly important due to the links with intentions, patronage, purchasing, and WOM. It can be deduced that through high levels of satisfaction for

customers, the likelihood of revisit as well as recommendations to others will increase (Sotiriadis and Van Zyl, 2013).

Throughout the literature, it can be seen by evidence that WOM has a more significant effect on people's decision-making when compared to traditional forms of advertising such as television, radio or printed advertisement (Cheung and Thadani, 2012). Thus, the previous notion that WOM is among the most crucial elements regarding information of a product/service is supported (Lee and Youn, 2009). In a study conducted by Nieto et al. (2014) it was highlighted that consumers are more likely to trust other users rather than salesmen/saleswomen. From another perspective, WOM is viewed as a customer-specific marketing channel, from which those individuals delivering information are not related to the origin market. This yields higher credibility levels to be perceived (Lau and Ng, 2001; Brown et al., 2007). Due to this characteristic of the sender of information regarding the product/service, WOM is inevitably merged with higher rates of reliability and credibility as a medium between service/good provider and prospect consumer (Arndt, 1967; Lee and Youn, 2009).

2.14 WOM vs. eWOM

Similar to the sole concept of WOM, EWOM has been considered as a mere electronic format of its traditional predecessor WOM (Filieri and McLeay, 2014). However, as a notion of the current paper, there are differences, which need to be highlighted. Table 1 of this paper presents a general view of these differences.

It can be said that the degree of information sources' credibility is the main difference (Cheung and Thadani, 2012; Hussain et al., 2017). This is highly

influential on decision-making as well as attitudes of the consumers regarding a specific good or service (Veasna et al., 2013). This becomes more vivid in the context of tourism and hospitality products as the degree of risk is considered to be higher when compared to tangible products (Sotiriadis and Van Zyl, 2013). This is while some studies have mentioned the fact that due to anonymity, messages and reviews online can have lesser credibility (Luo et al., 2013). In contradiction, there have been studies, in which eWOM has been noted to be the source of lowering risk regarding decision-making and purchases (Hussain et al., 2017). In the same line, it has been noted that customers with prior experiences tend to use eWOM more in terms of credibility (Sotiriadis and Van Zyl, 2013).

As can be seen, privacy is another matter, which separates WOM and eWOM from one another. WOM can be engaged through in-person communications with controlled privacy and in real-life events and interactions. This is while its successor does not share this feature as online reviews or comments can be seen by unknown people with zero acquaintance levels. Additionally, eWOM is dearth regarding time as it can be referred to again in different periods due to the availability of links (Cheung and Thadani, 2012). Other users, customers, prospects, and even companies can observe and review online comments regardless of the time they have been uploaded. This is contradictory to the traditional WOM as when communication occurs, the messages are no longer available to be reviewed by others. Next in line is the diffusion of messages and its pace, where eWOM tends to be much faster regarding the spread of a review or message when compared to WOM. This is mainly due to the place where the message is being spread, which for eWOM it has a bedrock to be spread on a fast-pace level such as, the internet (Gupta and Harris,

2010). Existence of various sources and platforms online that are available for the spread of eWOM is the main element, which separates it from WOM as its traditional form (Cheung and Thadani, 2012). Social media platforms, websites, blogs, vlogs, and other online platforms can be considered as the abovementioned sources. Accessibility of reviews are increased through these platforms, and due to the written format of these platforms, they are independent of time (Cheung and Thadani, 2012; Sotiriadis and Van Zyl, 2013; Henning-Thaurau et al., 2004).

2.15 Hypothesis Development

According to social exchange theory, satisfied people will have positive feelings that will reciprocate according to those feelings in terms of trust, appreciation and relationship retention (Thye et al., 2002). Hence, In the case of restaurant customers, it can be said that satisfied customers will revisit/repurchase from the same restaurant to maintain the relationship and will say positive things and recommend that restaurant.

According to adaptive expectation theory, the expectations of the customer are constantly becoming updated with every experience of a brand, which predicts the future intentions and behaviors of customers and also predicts the satisfaction with the next purchase of that brand as a priori expectation (Rufin et al., 2012).

SCT explains that people tend to have a pattern for their behavior to fulfill their needs to not decide about everything from scratch and continue the action that they perceive as a beneficial one (Bandura, 1986). To relate this theory to this study, it can be said that customers tend to have a constant pattern of purchase behavior if they perceive it as a set of actions containing advantages.

According to ECT, customers become satisfied with a brand meeting or surpassing their expectations towards the outcome of that brand consumption and this emerged satisfaction leads to their intention to repurchase from that brand (Yi and La, 2004).

Curtis et al. (2011) explain that while many studies on the impact of the level of satisfaction on repurchase intentions have been conducted, there are contrary findings regarding this relationship. Tsai et al. (2006) propose that there is a significant positive relationship among satisfied customers and their repurchase behavior based on collected panel data and further statistical time-series analyses. Hence, the first hypothesis is as follows:

H1: Customer satisfaction has a significant positive effect on repurchase intention.

Fornell and Wernerfelt (1987, 1988) has found that customer satisfaction leads to loyalty in terms of actual repurchase. Moreover, Keiningham al.(1994) and Rust et al. (1995) findings suggest that customer satisfaction with the quality of a product or service will stimulate customers to have referral intention through WOM proxy and they are likely to recommend the product which they are satisfied with. Kim and Lee (2011) explain that satisfied customers with a product say positive things about it and their intention to purchase is highly affected by their satisfaction with their consumption experience. Thus, the third hypothesis is developed:

H2: Customer satisfaction has a significant positive effect on referral intention.

Yi and La (2004) finds that adjusted expectation is a partial mediator in customer satisfaction and repurchase intention relationship. Rufin et al. (2012) findings suggest that adjusted expectation partially mediates the relationship between customer satisfaction and loyalty. The employed measure of the loyalty for Rufin et

al. (2012) consists of repurchase intention and referral intention through word-of-mouth communication. According to Chi et al. (2008), there are many studies drawing conclusions regarding the repurchase intention and referral intention through WOM are the solid dimensions for customer loyalty index. Therefore, the second hypothesis is developed as follows:

H3: Adjusted Expectation partially mediates the relationship mentioned between customer satisfaction and repurchase intention.

Rufin et al. (2012) findings suggest that adjusted expectation partially mediates the relationship between customer satisfaction and loyalty. The employed measure of the loyalty for Rufin et al. (2012) consists of repurchase intention and referral intention through word-of-mouth communication. According to chi et al. (2008), there are many studies drawing conclusions regarding the repurchase intention and referral intention through WOM are the solid dimensions for customer loyalty index.

H4: Adjusted expectation partially mediates the effect of customer satisfaction on referral intention.

2.16 Conceptual Model

Figure 2. Conceptual model

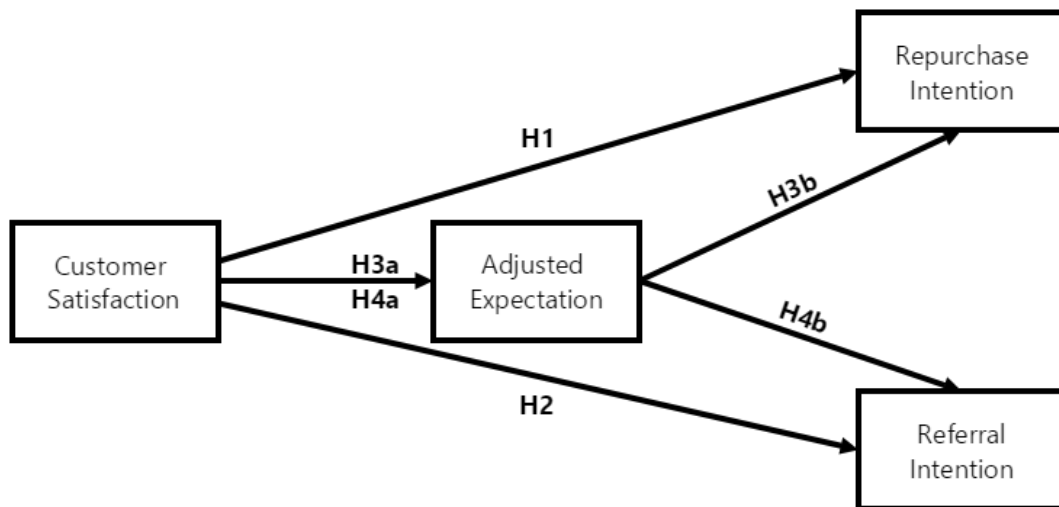H1: Customer satisfaction has a significant positive effect on repurchase intention.

H2: Customer satisfaction has a significant positive effect on referral intention.

H3: Adjusted Expectation partially mediates the relationship mentioned between customer satisfaction and repurchase intention.

H4: Adjusted expectation partially mediates the effect of customer satisfaction on referral intention.

Chapter 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Method

As the nature of this research is Deductive research, which allows the researcher to specify the topic for a generalized statement, the question arises that whether quantitative or qualitative is the proper approach. However, qualitative measures have been undertaken for deductive research, it has been suggested by most scholars (cite) quantitative data is a better approach for deductive research (Hyde, 2000). Although is not a set rule, this research follows the most related literature and choose the quantitative approach. Quantitative approach as the widely employed research method in this field has been chosen because it is more efficient and less time-consuming approach in comparison with gathering data through qualitative. The initial phase of working with collected data through a survey instrument in this study is about providing descriptive statistics on the demographic features of respondents. Then the validity of cases in terms of being free of missing value to have been checked. The next step is evaluating the employability of the measures by EFA and the reliability of constructs through Cronbach's Alpha scores. To investigate the strength and direction of the relationship between the variables in the proposed model, the correlation test (two-tailed Person r) is conducted. Further, linear regression (simple and multiple) has been employed to investigate the hypothesized relationship between the constructs. In order to conduct regression analyses, the PROCESS macro a plugin for SPSS has been used (Hayes, 2017). For Mediation

analyses, the causal steps proposed by Baron and Kenny (1986) was the employed approach to investigate related hypotheses. Hayes (2017) explains how to use PROCESS to test mediation according to the causal steps approach and the further interpretation of findings are based on that. The results of the employed steps of the conducted quantitative approach are presented in Chapter 4 of this study.

3.2 Sample Size Calculation

To calculate the required sample size according to the mentioned statistical tests in the research method section, the priory power analyses with G*power software (Faul et al., 2009) have been conducted. Estimating the total population size of customers for North Cyprus restaurant clusters within the limited time for this research seems a hard task. Hence the method of Faul et al (2009) and their developed software (G*power) have been used. This software can calculate the required sample size for the desired effect size, statistical error, and power (alpha and 1-beta) and does not need population size for this calculation. As it is planned to conduct a two-tailed correlation coefficient test (Pearson r), ANOVA and multiple regression tests for investigating our hypotheses, the required sample size for all these tests have been calculated. The desired alpha has been set to 0.05, beta or desired statistical power is set to 0.95 and the option of medium size effect has been selected. The following tables indicate the input and output of each test.

Table 1. Pearson r Required Sample Size

Input:	Tail(s)	= Two
	Correlation ρ H1	= 0.3
	α err prob	= 0.05
	Power (1-β err prob)	= 0.95
	Correlation ρ H0	= 0
Output:	Lower critical r	= -0.1671877
	Upper critical r	= 0.1671877
	Total sample size	= 138
	Actual power	= 0.9504014

As table 1 shows, the calculated sample size for Pearson r test is **138** while alpha = 005, 1-beta = 0.95 and medium effect size (for Pearson test) = 0.3.

Table 2. ANOVA Required Sample Size

Input:	Effect size f	= 0.25
	α err prob	= 0.05
	Power (1-β err prob)	= 0.95
	Number of groups	= 3
	Noncentrality parameter λ	= 15.7500000
Output:	Critical F	= 3.0320649
	Numerator df	= 2
	Denominator df	= 249
	Total sample size	= 252
	Actual power	= 0.9514888

According to Table 2, the calculated sample size is **252** for ANOVA test while alpha = 0.05, 1-beta = 0.95 and medium effect size (for ANOVA test) = 0.25.

Table 3. Linear Multiple Regression Required Sample Size

Input:	Effect size f²	= 0.15
	α err prob	= 0.05
	Power (1-β err prob)	= 0.95
	Number of predictors	= 2
Output:	Noncentrality parameter λ	= 16.0500000
	Critical F	= 3.0837059
	Numerator df	= 2
	Denominator df	= 104
	Total sample size	= 107
	Actual power	= 0.9518556

Table 3 indicates that the required sample size is **107** for multiple regression test while alpha = 0.05, 1-beta = 0.95 and medium effect size (for multiple regression test) = 0.15.

According to our calculation, having a sample size around 300, which is larger than our calculated sample sizes (138, 252 and 107) would be a good sample size for analyzing our conceptual model. In addition, having a sample size between 200 to 400 is recommended to be a good sample size by the recent literature suggesting rules of thumb for determining sample size (Hair et al., 2013; Bujang et al 2017; VanVoorhis & Morgan, 2007).

3.3 Sampling Procedure

According to the undertaken research method, a self-reported instrument was designed to collect data from customers of these restaurants after their consumption experience to measure desired variables. Convenience sampling is the chosen manner of sample data creation, as the sampling is conducted based on the availability of cases in a limited time. The extent of having access to qualified respondents and their readiness to be a volunteer participant in this study survey was the considered factor for selecting convenience sampling. Respondents were asked to write down the name of the most recent restaurant they visit and think about their consumption experience in their most recent visited restaurant and answer the questions of the survey accordingly. The sampling procedure was conducted according to Yi and La (2004) study on Korean family-restaurants. 314 customers of selected restaurants voluntarily participated in this research and after case processing searching for missing values, 308 of participants were identified as qualified cases to proceed with the study. Qualified respondents for this survey were the customers of restaurants located in clusters who have filled their questionnaires without missing answers. The process of sample collection was conducted during July 2019, as the available respondent were voluntarily supplied with the questionnaire and the approximate time needed to complete the survey was between 8 to 10 minutes. The original questionnaire is in

English, hence to collect data from those Turkish people who are not able to answer the original survey properly, the survey translated to Turkish with the assistance of the first translator; then translated back to English through another translator. Finally, the original survey was compared to the survey translated from Turkish to English to check the ability of the Turkish survey to convey the desired meaning of the original questionnaire. The steps of questionnaire translation were executed according to the proposed steps of Perrewe et al. (2002).

As the *convenience sampling technique* has been conducted for collecting more than 300 respondents being customers of cluster restaurants, the distribution of respondents throughout the city is not proportionally equal. This will arise a concern regarding the non-symmetrical data distribution (Etikan et al., 2016) . Etikan et al (2016) suggest that using the convenience sampling technique with large sample size overcomes the issue of bias in sampling. Convenience sampling enables researchers to collect adequate amount of qualified cases for a study in relatively very easy, inexpensive and feasible way, which rarely has normality issue (Roulin, 2015). However, this study following the conservative side has been conducted the normality test for the data. Further EFA and Chronbach's alpha has been conducted to investigate the probable issue of construct consistency and reliability (Hair et al., 2013). In addition, this study has collected data from restaurants with similar market local structure (restaurant clusters) to overcome the diversity (heterogeneity) in restaurants local properties (e.g. being very far from other restaurants or located in less populated area). These along with MacKenzie & Podsakoff (2012) proposed procedures in research design have been considered in data collection to avoid the bias in this study.

3.4 Survey Design

The measures employed in this study's questionnaire was designed based on developed scales in the literature. Customer satisfaction scale was designed according to Westbrook and Oliver (1991) developed a scale for this construct. Yi and La (2004) have used 4 questions for measuring absolute and 1 question for relative type of adjusted expectation and this study designed this construct based on this paper. The questions measuring repurchase intention was provided based on Abubakar et al. (2017) scale for measuring the same construct. WOM referral intention is based on scale in Curtis (2009), which is developed according to referral intention dimension in Zeithaml et al. (1996). Finally, the last section of the questionnaire was allocated for demographic questions regarding age, gender, and education level. All the survey items besides demographic ones are 5-point Likert scale.

3.5 Survey Ethics

The participated respondents were informed about the confidentiality and anonymity of their responses. The questions of the survey are devoid of any type of personal questions such as questions regarding religion and level of income. These considerations are expected to encourage participants to truly answer the questions and consequently bring unbiased answers for survey questions. All the participants were said about their voluntarily nature of participation and there were no force or obligation for respondents to participate. The design of the survey was in a way to take a short time to answer to respect the time of participants and preventing inconvenience for them.

3.6 Pilot Study

A pilot study is an essential preliminary test for soft researches including latent variables along with self-reported instruments. A pilot study enables a researcher to test the protocols of a research such as data collection techniques, contacting eligible volunteers for the surveys. Researcher through the pilot study will detect the flaws of their planned research process since they can practically investigate their desired study through an actual but brief test. The pilot study can investigate the understandability of the items of the self-reported instrument and the feasibility of research methodology in terms of data collection, data entry through employed software and statistical analyses and outputs. A researcher through the pilot study will achieve the confidence to execute the planned methodology since he or she has detected the flaws and solved them.

Hence, a pilot study for Turkish questionnaire including 24 Turkish respondents have been conducted to test the understandability of the survey along with the process of data entry and statistical analyses in SPSS. As this study adopted the Perrewe et al. (2002) translation procedures for this research, questions were clear for the Turkish respondents. However, a minor rephrasing executed based on the respondents emerged questions and feedback. The resulted data have not been used in the main research analyses/findings and it was only used to test the planned research methodology

Chapter 4

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Descriptive Results

The demographic data of participated respondents are presented in Tables 4 regarding gender, Table 5 considering education level and Table 6 for age.

Table 4. Gender

Valid	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Male	165	53.57	53.57	53.57
Female	143	46.42	46.42	100
Total	308	100.0	100.0	

Table 5. Education

Valid	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Diploma/high school	32	10.39	10.39	10.39
Undergraduate	178	57.79	57.79	68.18
Postgraduate	98	31.82	31.82	100
Total	308	100.0	100.0	

Table 6. Age

Valid	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Under 21	108	35.06	35.06	35.06
22-31	164	53.25	53.25	88.31
32-41	30	9.74	9.74	98.05
Above 41	6	1.95	1.95	100
Total	308	100.0	100.0	

Table 7 reveals the descriptive statistics of participated respondents by cities, while Table 8 reveals the descriptive statistics of reported restaurants by respondents in their surveys. The total valid respondents of the conducted survey is 300 among 24 reported restaurants.

Table 7. Descriptive Statistics of Respondents by Cities

Valid	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Famagusta	143	46.43	46.43	46.43
Girne	109	35.39	35.39	81.82
Lefkosa	56	18.18	18.18	100
Total	308	100.0	100.0	

Table 8. Descriptive Statistics of Restaurants by Cities

Valid	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Famagusta	10	41.67	41.67	41.67
Girne	7	29.16	29.16	70.83
Lefkosa	7	29.16	29.16	100
Total	24	100.0	100.0	

4.2 Case Processing, EFA and Reliability Test

Table 9 reveals the exploration of cases for finding missing data. As it is shown in this Table, 6 cases have been excluded due to having missing data and finally 308 cases have been identified as valid cases to precede the study.

Table 9. Case Processing Summary

Cases	N	%
Valid	308	98.0
Excluded [a]	6	2.0
Total	314	100.0

[a] List-wise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

In order to investigate the reliability of the employed measures. Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) and Cronbach's alpha have been conducted. 16 items of the questionnaire have been the subject of Varimax rotation. The measures of Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (0.92) and Bartlett's test of Sphericity (X^2 = 4321.43, p < 0.001) confirmed the adequacy of collected sample data for proceeding the EFA analysis. The cut-off point for maximum likelihood factor analysis has been set to 0.40 while eigenvalues representing Kaiser's criterion has been set to greater than 1 (see Hair et al., 2013). Table 10 presents the results of EFA and reliability test for each construct. As all the factor loadings exceed 0.5 (Hair et al, 2013) and Cronbach's Alpha scores of constructs exceed 0.7 (Nunnally, 1978), it is concluded that the constructs employed in this study are reliable to measure the proposed model variables.

Table 10. EFA and Reliability Statistics

Factors	Factor loadings	Cronbach's alpha
Factor 1: Customer Satisfaction		0.843
This is one of the best restaurants in Northern Cyprus that I have ever been to	0.86	
I am happy that I have come to eat in this restaurant	0.79	
It was a good idea to select this restaurant to eat out	0.83	
I feel satisfied after eating in this restaurant	0.81	
The food provided by this restaurant is exactly what I want to eat	0.88	
Factor 2: Adjusted Expectation		0.761
After my visit to this restaurant, I expect this restaurant will provide food and service with acceptable quality in future	0.86	
After my visit to this restaurant, I expect this restaurant will provide suitable food and service with reasonable price in future	0.78	
After my visit to this restaurant, I expect this restaurant will fulfill my desired needs in future	0.83	
After your visit to this restaurant, how good is this restaurant in your opinion in general?	0.78	
How are your current expectations in comparison with your prior ones towards the food and service of this restaurant?	0.64	
Factor 3: WOM Referral Intention	0.79	0.713
I would make positive comments about this restaurant	0.72	
I would recommend this place as a good restaurant when people ask me to do so	0.69	
I would encourage my friends and acquaintances to try out	0.71	

this restaurant		
Factor 4: Repurchase Intention		0.795
How often will you intend to come to this restaurant in future?	0.78	
How likely would it be for you to come again to this restaurant in future?	0.75	
I will come to this restaurant soon	0.82	

4.3 Correlation Coefficient Test

Table 11 indicate the correlations among this study constructs. As it can be seen, constructs are significantly correlated for p value less than 0.01 and all the correlations are positive.

Table 11. Correlation

	Customer Satisfaction	Adjusted Expectation	Repurchase Intention	WOM Referral Intention
Customer Satisfaction	1	0.53**	0.69**	0.42**
Adjusted Expectation	0.53**	1	0.34**	0.41**
Repurchase Intention	0.69**	0.34**	1	0.57**
WOM Referral Intention	0.42**	0.41**	0.57**	1
N	308	308	308	308

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

Also, repurchase intention and WOM are positively correlated at 0.01 level, although their relationship are not the aim of investigation in this study.

4.4 Regression Analyses

Figure 3 shows the model for the first hypothesis and Table 12 indicate the linear regression result for the latter model.
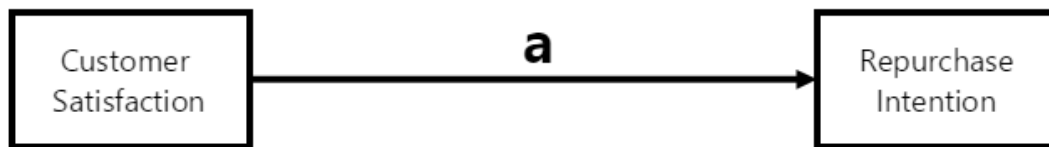
Figure 3. Effect of CS on RI

Table 12. Model 1 - Linear Regression Result for Outcome Variable RI

Model Summary

R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
6954.	4836.	1.2043	6.3245	1.0000	306.0000	0000.

Model	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	6.4832	.2214	7.5291	.0000	5.0322	9.6273
CS	.7432	.1657	3.3218	.0000	.3499	.9134

According to Table 12, there is a statistically significant and positive association between customer satisfaction as the independent variable and repurchase intention as the dependent variable (a = .7432, t(306) = 3.32), since the p value equals to 0.0000 and confidence interval is devoid of zero (0.3499 to 0.9134). Hence, these findings *support the first hypothesis* of this study.

Figure 4 is provided to illustrate the second hypothesis of this study and Table 13 and 14 provide the regression output for the latter illustration.
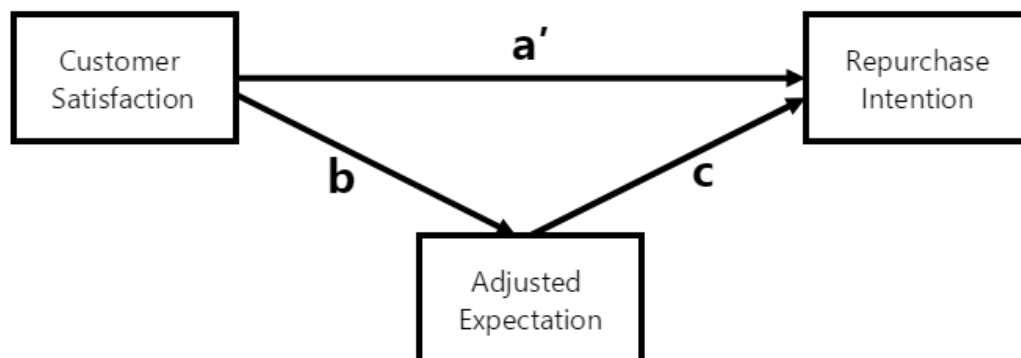

Figure 4. Mediation Role of Adjusted Expectation between CS and RI

Table 13. Model 2 Linear Regression Result (part1) for Outcome Variable AE

Model Summary

R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
.5323	.2833	1.2453	12.0878	1.0000	306.0000	.0323

Model	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	5.3769	.1618	24.2822	.0000	3.0225	6.6953
CS	.6341	.2677	3.0898	.0323	.2299	.8731

Table 14. Model 2 Linear Regression Result (part2) for Outcome Variable RI

Model Summary

R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
.7841	.6148	1.1685	6.4462	2.0000	305.0000	.0028

Model	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	2.0859	.6336	5.1218	.4329	-.7339	5.3844
CS	.4831	.4156	3.5221	.0341	.4127	1.0334
AE	.6251	.1099	4.9318	.0031	.1492	.5651

As, there is a significant relationship between customer satisfaction (independent variable) and repurchase intention (dependent), which mentioned earlier, according to Baron and Kenny (1986) causal steps for mediation, *the first condition of mediation existence is met*. Table 13 shows that there is a statistically significant and positive relationship among customer satisfaction and adjusted expectation (mediator); $b = 0.6341$, $t(306) = 3.09$, $p = 0.0323$. In addition, the 95 percent confidence interval is devoid of zero (0.2299 to 0.8731). Hence, the *second condition of mediation existence is met*. Table 14 shows the result of conducting a multiple regression analysis with customer satisfaction and adjusted expectation predicting repurchase intention. According to the latter output, adjusted expectation has significant and positive relationship with repurchase intention while controlling for customer satisfaction; $c = 0.6251$, $t(305) = 4.93$, $p = 0.0031$. Moreover, the 95 percent confidence interval is devoid of zero (0.1492 to 0.5651). Thus, the *third condition of mediation existence is met*. The final step of the causal step approach is

to investigate the significance of customer satisfaction direct effect on repurchase intention (a′) and compare it with total effect of customer satisfaction on repurchase intention (a). According to Table 14, there is a significant and positive relationship between customer satisfaction and repurchase intention while controlling for adjusted expectation (a′ = 0.4831, t(305) = 3.52, p = 0.0341) and the direct effect of customer satisfaction on repurchase intention is closer to zero in comparison with its total effect on repurchase intention (a′ = 0.4831, a = 0.7432). Hence, according to the final step, the adjusted expectation is a partial mediator of customer satisfaction and repurchase intention relationship and it *supports the third hypothesis of this study*. The predictors of the model proposed in Table 14 has a semi-strong correlation with the repurchase intention (R = 0.7841) while customer satisfaction and adjusted expectation predicts 61 percent of variations in repurchase intention (R-sq = 0.6148).

Figure 5 shows the diagram of third hypothesis and Table 15 provides the output of regression analysis for the illustrated relationship.
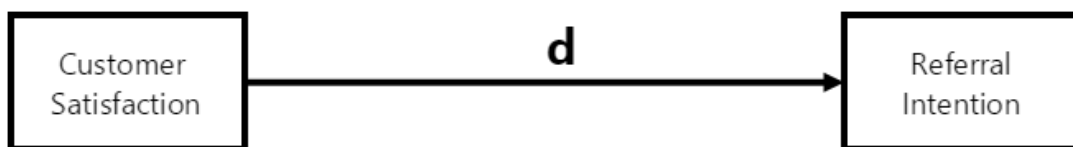
Figure 5. Effect of Customer Satisfaction on WOM Referral Intention

Table 15. Model 3 Linear Regression Result for outcome variable WOM

Model Summary

R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
.4212	.1774	1.3286	12.0878	1.0000	306.0000	.0212

Model	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	4.5376	.1532	21.5464	.0000	7.3241	9.3126
CS	.7024	.0876	6.3832	.0212	.1267	.6542

According to Table 15, there is a statistically significant and positive association between customer satisfaction as the independent variable and WOM referral intention as the dependent variable (d = .7024, t(306) = 6.38), since the p value equals to 0.0212 and confidence interval is devoid of zero (0.1267 to 0.6542). Hence, these findings *support the second hypothesis* of this study.

Figure 6 indicate the model of fourth hypothesis and further table 16 delivers the result of regression analyses for investigating the relationships in latter figure.
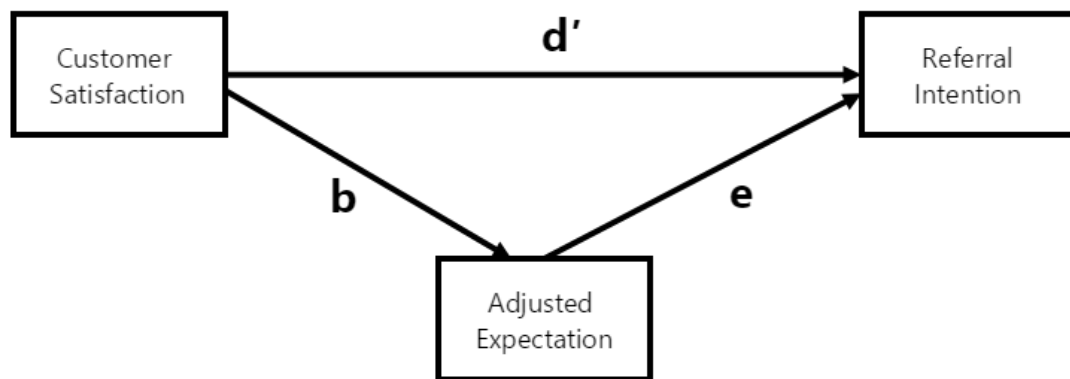

Figure 6. Mediation Role of Adjusted Expectation between CS and WOM

Table 16. Model 4 Linear Regression Result for outcome variable WOM

Model Summary

R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
.6811	.4639	1.4275	8.6319	2.0000	305.0000	.0311

Model	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	4.3176	.7342	18.9314	.0921	-1.2648	3.9541
CS	.5275	.3737	7.2179	.0215	.0876	2.1432
AE	.4638	.5438	8.5281	.0187	.1742	.3459

As, there is a significant relationship between customer satisfaction (independent variable) and WOM referral intention (dependent), which was mentioned earlier, *the first condition of mediation existence is met*. Also, there is a significant association

among customer satisfaction and adjusted expectation, which earlier was presented by regression analysis. Thus, *the second condition of mediation existence is met.* Table 16 shows the result of conducting a multiple regression analysis with customer satisfaction and adjusted expectation predicting WOM referral intention. According to the latter output, adjusted expectation has significant and positive relationship with WOM while controlling for customer satisfaction; $e = 0.4638$, $t(305) = 8.53$, $p = 0.0187$. Moreover, the 95 percent confidence interval is devoid of zero (0.1742 to 0.3459). Thus, the *third condition of mediation existence is met*. The final step of the causal step approach is to investigate the significance of customer satisfaction direct effect on repurchase intention (d′) and compare it with the total effect of customer satisfaction on repurchase intention (d). According to Table 8, there is a significant and positive relationship between customer satisfaction and WOM referral intention while controlling for the adjusted expectation (d′ = 0.5275, $t(305) = 7.22$, $p = 0.0215$) and the direct effect of customer satisfaction on WOM is closer to zero in comparison with its total effect on WOM (d′ = 0.5275, a = 0.7024). Hence, according to the final step, adjusted expectation is a partial mediator of customer satisfaction and WOM referral intention relationship and it *supports the fourth hypothesis of this study*. The predictors of the model proposed in Table 14 has a moderate correlation with the WOM ($R = 0.6811$) while customer satisfaction and adjusted expectation predicts 46 percent of variations in repurchase intention (R-sq = 0.4639).

No significant correlation between demographic variables and other constructs have been found through Pearson r two-tailed test and further, no significant relationship between collected demographic properties of respondents (age, level of education and gender) as predictors of adjusted expectation and attitudinal loyalty have been

found in the proposed model through multiple regression analysis. In addition, no difference in satisfaction level has been found for groups with different age, level of education and gender.

Chapter 5

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusion

Customer satisfaction is a statistically significant predictor of intentions to repurchase and WOM referral and the relationships' nature are positive. These findings are aligned with findings based on social exchange theory (e.g. Yoon and Lawler, 2002) and SCT and ECT theories (e.g. Yi & La, 2004). Moreover, the adjusted expectation has been found as the partial mediator of mentioned relationships. This finding is aligned with literature based on adaptive expectation theory (e.g. Rufin et al., 2012). The findings of this study suggest that adjusted expectation is a partial mediator of both customer satisfaction-repurchase intention relationship as well as customer satisfaction-WOM referral intention. It means that adjusted expectation is one of the reasons explaining how customer satisfaction brings attitudinal loyalty intentions. Thus, it can be concluded that there are other factors affecting the satisfaction-loyalty intentions relationship, which adjusted expectation as the partial mediator does not explain them. Furthermore, these findings support the developed hypotheses of this study are aligned with reviewed literature in the process of hypothesis development.

5.2 Discussion and Business-Related Implications

The theoretical contributions of this study would be developing a model based on works of Yi and La (2004) and Rufin et al (2012) and related fundamental theories mentioned earlier, but with adding an additional perspective to satisfaction-loyalty relationship through adding attitudinal loyalty dimensions (Repurchase intention and WOM referral intention) in the proposed model. To achieve this aim, this study provides empirical evidence supporting the existence of statistically significant relationships between employed constructs of the model from North Cyprus restaurant clusters. Considering the positive WOM intention and repurchase intention as a separate construct but collectively as desired attitudinal customers' intentions that were missed in literature would expand the satisfaction-loyalty models, as it facilitates the investigation of other variable's effect on different dimensions of attitudinal loyalty in a separate manner. For example, variables such as switching barriers would moderate the relationship between satisfactions and repurchase intention as dissatisfied customers may tend to repurchase because of perceived switching barriers, but perceived switching barriers are not likely to stimulate customers to positively talk about a brand. Thus, elaboration of loyalty intentions through separating them with valid constructs based on literature generates a potential for the proposed model to be expanded for future studies. In addition, the statistical findings of this study have validated the model as a fundamental framework for future researches.

The findings of this study suggest that customer satisfaction is a significant predictor of customers' intentions in terms of repurchase and referral intentions and adjusted expectation is a partial mediator in latter relationships. Based on these findings, this

study recommends restaurant managers to consider the role of customers' expectations in the post satisfaction phase regarding customer retention and increasing sales by referral customers. Customer satisfaction adjusts customers' expectations with each purchase and further positively affected expectations will bring repurchase and referral customers for restaurants. Hence, it is suggested that tracking the levels of satisfaction and adjusted expectations of customers will facilitate the predicting of respective positive attitudinal loyalty in the future.

The majority of restaurants in the main cities of North Cyprus are located in a close distance from other restaurants, which makes the effect of switching cost low in terms of required time and effort. For example, long-distance between two supermarkets would lead customers to buy their products from closer supermarket despite the lower quality in provided service. The majority of restaurants having common menu items with competitive prices control the effect of provider heterogeneity, which is one of the main antecedents of switching costs (Burnham et al., 2003).

It is recommended for future studies to collect data about the industry's characteristics to be able to measure their effects on the customer-loyalty link. The aforementioned characteristics of restaurant clusters in North Cyprus may be able to weaken the effect of perceived switching cost. The switching cost has been found as the moderator of satisfaction-attitudinal loyalty relationship (Lee et al., 2001). Therefore, high correlations among this study's construct could be the result of weak perceived switching costs, as dissatisfied customers are able to easily switch to another restaurant, since switching benefits seem greater than switching costs in the eyes of customers (Han et al., 2009). Hence, if the effect of switching barriers as a

moderator of satisfaction-loyalty is weak for an industry or more particular for clusters, In order to make the new customers as loyal customers and keep the already loyal customers, restaurant managers should consider the importance of customer satisfaction and its consequent adjusted expectations after each purchase. It is due to the fact that customers' adjusted expectation is affected by their level of satisfaction for every actual experience and any unpleasant actual experience can affect customers' expectation, which leads to lower attitudinal loyalty. The other practical implication of using restaurant clusters would be that it facilitates collecting data to be devoid of normality and diversity issues due to having similar local properties among reported restaurants. Researchers and managers should consider that issues emerged from collecting data based on availability (Convenience Sampling) can be prevented by collecting data from similar environments to decrease the diversity in environmental factors affecting customer satisfaction-loyalty link.

Adjusted expectations explain that customers' expectations is adjusted and updated with every purchase and they have new levels of expectations to be fulfilled with next purchase of the same brand (Rufin et al., 2012). Hence, managers should plan to constantly surprise their customers through new and innovative ways to keep the customers satisfied to retain them. The latter goal can be obtained with generating sustainable competitive advantage within a firm to have a constant set of advantages for customers fro during their every consumption experience.

5.3 Limitations and Recommendations for Future Studies

Considering the predictors of customer satisfaction such as perceived service quality (Oh, 1999), disconfirmation (Yi and La, 2004) and existing moderators in post satisfaction phase such as perceived switching barriers (Liu et al., 2011) in the model of predicting customer loyalty behaviors could be a proper expansion of the proposed

model. As the more advanced models require more sophisticated statistical methods, it is suggested to employ structural equation modeling as widely recommended advanced method in further studies. PLS-SEM for exploratory research with less empirical evidence in the literature and covariance-based SEM for confirmatory researches with models more supported by evidence in literature.

Employing panel data to capture the required data for satisfaction-loyalty relationship over a period of time and comparing it with actual behavior of customer reflecting in share of wallet and amount of referral customers could validate the relationship between proposed constructs in a long run and it has the potential to produce more solid evidence on the topic of this study. These recommendations were the limitations of this study due to lack of required time and restrained accessibility to required data.

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