

**T.C.**  
**ISTANBUL AYDIN UNIVERSITY**  
**INSTITUTE OF GRADUATE STUDIES**



**THE IMPACT OF RELATIONSHIP MARKETING ON CUSTOMER  
LOYALTY IN CIVIL AVIATION INDUSTRY**

**MASTER'S THESIS**

**RAKAN SALEH AL QHEIWI**

**Department of Business**  
**Business Administration Program**

**February 2020**

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(Y1712.130178)**

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**Thesis Advisor: Assist. Prof. Dr. Farid HUSEYNOV**

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T.C.  
İSTANBUL AYDIN ÜNİVERSİTESİ  
LİSANSÜSTÜ EĞİTİM ENSTİTÜSÜ MÜDÜRLÜĞÜ



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*This thesis is dedicated to:*

*My beloved parents, my brothers, sisters*

*& My dear fiancée.*

## **FOREWORD**

First of all, I would like to express my endless gratitude to Allah for being who I am right now and helping me to find patience, strength within myself to complete this thesis.

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Finally, always be confident that duaa rearranges the scene.

**February 2020**

**Rakan Saleh AlQheiw**

# **THE IMPACT OF RELATIONSHIP MARKETING ON CUSTOMER LOYALTY IN CIVIL AVIATION INDUSTRY**

## **ABSTRACT**

The main purpose of this study is to examine the impact of relationship marketing dimensions on customer loyalty in the civil aviation industry in Turkey. Customer loyalty in the civil aviation industry is one of the major concerns of practitioners because of its significant importance. One way to enhance customer loyalty in civil aviation is to focus on offering excellent services and meeting the diverse needs of the customer. Civil aviation needs to have a good understanding of their customers' behaviours so that appropriate marketing strategies directed towards relationship building and customer retention can be developed. For this reason, in this study emphasis is given to assess the influence of various relationship marketing dimensions on customer loyalty in civil aviation industry. Assessed dimensions were satisfaction, trust, communication, empathy, relational bonds, and commitment. Based on these dimensions, six different hypotheses were formulated as part of the research model. The research method of this study was quantitative; therefore, study data were collected from 279 respondents through online survey. Research model of the study was assessed with the help of confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and structural equation model (SEM) in AMOS. The findings showed that three (satisfaction, communication, and relational bond) out of six dimensions positively and statistically significantly influence customer loyalty in civil aviation industry. This study makes suggestions to practitioners on how to improve their customers' loyalty.

**Keywords:** *Relationship marketing, Customer loyalty, Customer satisfaction, Civil Aviation.*

# SİVİL HAVACILIK ENDÜSTRİSİNDE İLİŞKİ PAZARLAMASININ MÜŞTERİ BAĞLILIĞINA ETKİSİ

## ÖZET

Bu çalışmanın temel amacı, ilişkisel pazarlama boyutlarının Türkiye'deki sivil havacılık endüstrisindeki müşteri sadakati üzerindeki etkisini incelemektir. Sivil havacılık endüstrisindeki müşteri sadakati, büyük oranda önemli olduğundan sektörtekilerin en çok ilgilendiği noktalardan biridir. Sivil havacılıkta müşteri sadakatini artırmanın bir yolu, müşteriye mükemmel hizmetler sunmaya ve müşterinin farklı ihtiyaçlarını karşılamaya odaklanmaktır. Sivil havacılığın, müşterilerinin davranışlarını iyi anlaması, ilişki kurma ve müşteriyi elde tutmaya yönelik uygun pazarlama stratejileri geliştirmesini sağlar. Bu nedenle, bu çalışmada sivil havacılık endüstrisinde çeşitli ilişkisel pazarlama boyutlarının müşteri sadakati üzerindeki etkisi farklı açılardan değerlendirilmiştir. Değerlendirilen boyutlar memnuniyet, güven, iletişim, empati, ilişkisel bağlar ve bağlılıktır. Bu boyutlara dayanarak, araştırma modelinin bir parçası olarak altı farklı hipotez formüle edilmiştir. Bu çalışmanın araştırma yöntemi niceldi; bu nedenle 279 katılımcıdan Likert tipi çevrimiçi anket ile çalışma verileri toplanmıştır. Çalışmanın araştırma modeli AMOS'taki doğrulayıcı faktör analizi (CFA) ve yapısal eşitlik modeli (SEM) yardımıyla değerlendirilmiştir. Bulgular, altı boyuttan üçünün (memnuniyet, iletişim ve ilişkisel bağ) sivil havacılık endüstrisindeki müşteri sadakatini olumlu ve istatistiksel olarak önemli ölçüde etkilediğini göstermiştir. Bu çalışma, uygulayıcılara müşterilerinin sadakatini nasıl olumlu yönde geliştirebilecekleri konusunda önerilerde bulunmaktadır.

*Anahtar Kelimeler:* İlişkisel pazarlama, Müşteri sadakati, Müşteri memnuniyeti, Sivil Havacılık.

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## **ABBREVIATIONS**

<b>RM</b>	: Relationship Marketing
<b>CRM</b>	: Customer relationship management
<b>ICAO</b>	: International Civil Aviation Organization
<b>DGCA</b>	: Directorate General of Civil Aviation
<b>THY</b>	: Türk Hava Yolları
<b>AMOS</b>	: Analysis of a Moment Structures
<b>CFA</b>	: Confirmatory Factor Analysis
<b>SPSS</b>	: Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
<b>SEM</b>	: Structural Equation Modelling
<b>AVE</b>	: Average Variance Extracted
<b>CR</b>	: composite reliability
<b>RMSEA</b>	: root mean square error of approximation
<b>CFI</b>	: Comparative Fit Index

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# **I. INTRODUCTION**

## **A. Statement of the Problem**

Marketing has become more flexible and sophisticated over time, mainly because it deals with human components in a permanent, and continuous manner, which is considered by its ever-increasing need. Marketing has faced many variables and factors which lead to effect the concepts of commercialism. This noted the continual progress in responding to the economic and social transformations in fashionable societies, inside the lightweight of developments and changes happening on planet, the strength of competition and movement towards the knowledge economy at the initiative level, without all of which actual marketing cannot achieve its purposes. The differentiates of current business environment in capturing the market has become extremely difficult. It is not possible to sell a product to the customer so easily; the organization must know the customers well, by dealing with them and identifying the relationship. Hence the modern perception of marketing is to focus more on the customer as the crucial fulcrum for all marketing activities. Institutions may differ in many dimensions or characteristic features, such as mission, goals, strategies. The business philosophies that are being followed to achieve their main goals are factors in common, based on the idea for fulfilment, growth and continuity within the market, their ability to charm to customers and improve their satisfaction by promoting offers. This is often not an associate degree elective matter, or a group of refrains adopted by circumstances, nor its changes within the trendy business atmosphere. However, a compulsory strategy set by the character and characteristics of the shoppers themselves.

In today's business environment success formula is no longer based on product distinction, suitable pricing, or innovative promotion, but primarily on the degree of successful partnership between the foundation and its customers. The two parties are complementary to each other and their ability to provide value to relationship with their commitment by sustaining this relationship and predict the requirements of the shopper, through explaining in detail of the goods and services as desired.

Organizations should thus even strive for dominance by providing more value in their products, make them available at the time and place where they are required by customers, keep customers clearly and continuously notified of products through constant, continuous communication, and addressing any problems before they arise. In sum, adopt a marketing approach to relationships, thus increasing customer fulfilment and enhance customer loyalty.

Nowadays, organizations are beginning to realize that is simpler to sell current consumers and make additional profit from them. The different strategies relating to present consumers and new consumers are elaborated below the philosophy of relationship marketing. Although most successful organizations emphasize customer retention as a routine practice as part of their business philosophy, many production and service institutions do not have any philosophy in this regard. In alternative words, the perception of relationship marketing is not enclosed within these organizations.

There are many factors that increase implementation of perception in relationship marketing, and its foundations by civil aviation segments, which contribute to gaining the loyalty and satisfaction of the traveler. The most prominent of these factors are the commitments of airlines reliability in no delays, while the high prices and increased costs are the most important reasons that may cause a drop in the competitive advantages of civil aviation in different countries (Mazzeo, 2003).

Therefore, the current study is initiated to find out to what degree Relationship Marketing (RM) influences Customer Loyalty Conception in the Turkish civil aviation sector.

## **B. The Purpose Of Study**

The purpose of this study is to explore the influence of dimensions of relationship marketing on customer loyalty in Civil Aviation (Turkish airlines) in Turkey, by clarifying the practices of RM, which is the most significant engine to maintain the market share of this industry or to make a direct impact on customer satisfaction and loyalty.

Overall, the general objectives of the current study are finding the impact of RM dimensions on customer loyalty in civil aviation industry of Turkey, which in this case study, Turkish Airlines provide workable recommendations as required.

**The specific objectives of this study are**

- To define whether Commitment has influence over customer loyalty in civil aviation industry.
- To define whether Trust has influence over customer loyalty in civil aviation industry.
- To define whether Competence has influence over customer loyalty in civil aviation industry.
- To define whether Communication has influence over customer loyalty in civil aviation industry.
- To define whether Empathy has influence over customer loyalty in civil aviation industry.
- To define whether Customer Satisfaction has influence over customer loyalty in civil aviation industry.
- To suggest ways and means to the Civil Aviation Industry to retain and enhance customer loyalty.

**C. Research Questions**

According to the above-mentioned problem, this research tries to answer the following main questions:

Q1. What are the main orientations that influence on customers' loyalty level in civil aviation industry?

Q2. What is the nature of relationship between these factors and customer loyalty and what are their influencing extent?

**D. Justification for the Study**

The desire of most organizations is to keep and rise customer loyalty stems from the fact that cost of obtaining a new buyer is 5 times the cost of retaining an existing



customer (Dowling, 2002). This prompts organizations to build long-term common trust with customers by building a relationship marketing strategy in retaining customers and enhance their loyalty.

The results of some studies have taken into the fact that it does not essentially lead to an investigation of satisfaction with increased loyalty. A study of (Frederick,1993) found that 65%-85 of customers who changed their airline were very satisfied with their services as customers. However, about 30% to 40% of them are dealing with other companies too, which means that despite the satisfaction of customers with the services of the airline, they have no loyalty to these airlines, and this phenomenon was explained as a trap of satisfaction which requires companies' need to assume a RM strategy to keep their customers and increase their loyalty.

#### **E. Thesis Outline:**

This thesis consists of 6 main chapters:

Chapter I, as Introduction part of the study includes the statement of the problem, objective of the research, formulated research questions and justification of the study that discusses the actuality of the topic.

Chapter II, reviews available literature dedicated to background of marketing in general, customer loyalty and civil aviation condition of Turkey. Additionally, literature review has been conducted on background of relationship marketing dimensions and previous studies made on this regard.

Chapter III depicts research model designed for this study and formulated hypotheses based on previous studies.

Chapter IV describes the methodology of the research with research design, sample size, implemented survey tools and techniques subtopics.

Chapter V is dedicated for analysing the data with a help of statistical techniques. This chapter also reveals the outcomes of the research.

Chapter VI include recommendations research and discusses research results. Additionally, it provides limitations of the study that can be used for future researches.

## **II. LITERATURE REVIEW**

Marketing is an important function of all economic institutions, as it represents the means of communication between marketing and its environment. The Foundation can identify and adapt to environment variables and requirements; it enables it by introducing its own activities. Policies and products contribute to refining its image and supporting the justification for its existence, improvising survival and growth in the markets. Refining its function and aspects through optimal methods and techniques enables it to achieve the associated objectives.

One of the most important results of the revolution of marketing and technological thought is known as the “marketing approach to relationships”. The current marketing environment is characterized by its high-intensity and scope for competition. Information enables focusing on the reinforcement of the relationship between the institution and its customers. Further, necessary essential conditions are obtained through the retention of current environmental changes. Relationship marketing has a significant role in strengthening the ability for creativity, by exposure to competition and various risks /challenges in the marketing environment.

### **A. Relationship Marketing**

Relationship Marketing (RM) is a modern concept that emphasizes promotion of market efforts towards current customers. A factor of perception targets customers by winning their loyalty and potential, by raising their interest in the organization through numerous strategies. Loyalty is well-defined in the intensity of competition by improving the image of the institution. Customers who have retained loyalty for a long period are considered elite in every aspect. Many efforts are being made in achieving these given characteristics in the marketing environment, such as developments and changes.

Recognition of rapid changes in the development of customer attitudes, trends, and needs and timely response thereto will empower the efforts of institutions, by

strengthening their relationship with customers. Marketing methods would be taken into consideration for improvising new ways of approach to marketing relations.

Relationship marketing has become one of the most significant elements for establishing relationships between an association and its customers. Long term relationships are often nurtured by empathetic the conception of RM and it is motives in handling customer's satisfaction.

Relationship marketing has transformed dramatically in the last few years. Different relationships with customers and business associates lead companies to a high standard of success (Nguyen N, 2006). According to Christopher (as cited in Ravesteyn, 2005), relationships have moved from consumer goods in the 1950's, business marketing in the 1960's, non-profit marketing and social marketing in less than twenty years. During the 1980's, services marketing and relationship marketing enticed customers through aggressive strategies in dealing with competitors by interchanging brands and reducing customer return. Forming a stable network of distributors, suppliers, and customers is a way of building long-lasting relationships in the market.

The most significant dimensions in RM are communication, trust, empathy, commitment, bond and satisfaction. These factors are crucial in predicting customer loyalty (Ndubisi N, 2007).

Nowadays, customer satisfaction is hard to achieve, not because of bad business, but because of offers from other companies. Other reasons for customers changing loyalty is dissatisfaction in response to false advertisement and inadequate customer service. Good service provided by competitors prompts loyal customers to consider switching to them. A successful business reaches its goals by achieving customer loyalty, more than customer satisfaction. Commitment indicates loyalty which means trust should be shared by the customer and the organization.

Repeat sales and referrals increase business, as well as word of mouth recommendations and advertisement. One of the most significant assets of a firm is its loyal and satisfied customers. Customers who are satisfied would bring new consumers, leading to improvement in sales and profit. "Customers are always right" is one of the most well-known quotes in business history; though not everyone agrees

with it, it is nonetheless true, because customers are what makes the business stay in the industry.

Further, relationship marketing is not always a win-win situation for companies; although it is an asset and adds value, it also not stable since it deals with customers and their loyalty, which are dynamic phenomena. Enhancing the good relationships between customers and organizations is a key to success for both the parties. Switching loyalty from an organization could be frustrating for customers too and some do not like to go through the hassle; however, most others would not mind switching, if a good enough offer is made by a competitor.

### **1. The Concept Of Relationship Marketing**

Based on studies of what customers really want, what they like, prefer and most importantly what they need, organizations should look into new trends and new ways of approaching customers with what they demand. The ability to deliver satisfaction to customers' needs will strengthen the organization by building a system of value. An organization that builds long-term relationships usually emphasizes service, quality, and constant innovation.

An understanding of the concept of RM focuses on inventing promotional strengths towards existing and potential customers. Another concept would be to focus on determined, long-lasting and loyal customers. Another way for an organization builds their loyalty is by focusing on communication skills, leading to careful ways of interactions with customers, by following up after the sale is complete. Information obtained from customers is saved in a file for future reference and attractive offers from the organization shared personally with only frequent and loyal customers.

#### **The concept of RM has 3 complementary aspects:**

**Aspect 1:** addressing the importance of customer retention.

The RM tactic draws attention to the importance of not only customer retention, but also of attracting customers with an emphasis on developing long-standing relationships with existing customers.

To keep customers with a superior service to satisfy their needs and enhance their commitment to the service institution.

**Aspect 2** consists of strengthening internal and external relations.

The idea of RM involves not only the need to foster relations with consumers, but also to develop and strengthen relationships with suppliers, employment offices, the internal audience of the service organization (staff), reference groups, trade union, chambers of commerce and government organizations.

**Aspect 3:** involves reducing the gap between marketing, customer service and quality.

The concept of RM involves the need to bridge the gap between three vital elements: marketing, customer service and quality of service, which constitute the features of the strategy to give a fillip to the activity and achieve the highest levels and degrees of benefit through mutual relations.

Proceeding from the above, there are many opinions and definitions that deal with the concept of relationship marketing, which are elaborated below. Most of them focus on the RM element and development and its importance in the marketing process. Some of these definitions are:

- “Perry” defined relationship marketing as a process of appealing and upholding customers and strengthening relations with them, considering that the idea of attracting new customers as a mediating step in the process of relationship marketing and considering it a social process that works through interactions among numerous parties in the agenda of trade exchanges. Perry was the first to use this concept in 1983. (Lovelock,1983).
- It is defined as a marketing process by establishing sincere relationships with customers through dialogue that strengthens the RM with the customer and affords the customer the feeling that the institution does not want anything from him in return for the service provided to him (Fakhry, 2003).
- In the same context, Kotler defined RM by emphasizing building relationships with all parties involved in the organisation, by “producing, upholding and promoting long-term relationships with customers, processors, distributors and other shareholders” (Kotler, 2007).

Based on the above, it is clear that the idea of RM is a strategically positioned marketing portal, sharing a network of solid relationships built on a firm foundation of trust, commitment and shared values, their needs and their goals.

**Therefore, Relationship marketing focuses on the following elements and points:**

- Attention on and orientation towards the customer, rather than the product.
- Establish permanent relationships with current and potential customers and strive to maintain them.
- Striving to establish continuous cooperation with customers to face the competition.
- It is a mixture of marketing and customer service to manage the continuous and cooperative business relations between the institution and its customers.
- RM contains creating, maintaining and fostering robust relationships with customers and other shareholders that are long-term oriented, with their goal as the release or unlocking of long-term values for customers.

Therefore, relationship marketing focuses on continuous communication with customers and provides them added value, through supporting their needs and problems, running to solve them, offering additional services associated the products and working constantly and tirelessly to meet the expectations of customers, with the understanding that maintaining the relationship with customers is a responsibility common to all employees in the organization (Sivesan, 2012)

Table1 shows the differentiations between relationship marketing and traditional (transaction) marketing:

**Table 1:** Transactional and relationship marketing

<b>Transactional Marketing</b>	<b>Relationship Marketing</b>
Emphasis on single sale	Emphasis on customer retention
Coordination towards product types	Coordination towards customer values
Short time scale	Long time scale
Little importance on customer service	High importance on customer service
Incomplete customer commitment	High customer commitment
Moderate customer contact	High customer contact
Feature as the anxiety of production	Feature as the anxiety of all

Thus, RM efforts on continuous communication with customers and provides added value to them, through understanding their needs and problems, working to solve them, running additional services accompanying the products and working constantly and tirelessly to meet the expectations of customers, with the emphasis that sustaining the relationship with customers is a responsibility common to all staffs of the institution .

## **2. The Importance Of Relationship Marketing:**

Continuous changes in the environment require using appropriate tools to contain threats, exploit opportunities and strength and overcome weaknesses.

RM is one of the most important tackles in this context. The most important benefits accruing to business by adopting relationship marketing are as follows:

- **Importance to the institutions that adopt this concept, specifically:**
  - Long-standing relationships with clients are competitive defensive benefits to the organisation in competitive markets, which help it to beat the challenges of competition to a definite extent and avoid price wars.
  - It helps institutions to acquire what is well-known as a “customer for life” through access to the clients loyal to the institution.
  - Helps achieve stable and consistent profits and returns.

- Instils a notion in the mind of the customer that the institution is located in the position of an expert and is a consultant in the area of specialization.
- Reduces marketing costs, especially in the area of promotion and effort to attract new customers.
- Prompts customer to become one of the marketing networks of the institution engaging in a kind of free advertising for the products, through their word of mouth publicity.
- Increases the amount of purchases and volume of spending by the customer on the products of the institution.
- Helps target the profitable customer in a timely manner and through profitable offers, which increases the effectiveness of the targeting strategy.
- Achieves trust, commitment and exchange of data amid the institution and its customers.
- Creates and builds a two -way communication process through the institution and its customers resulting in feedback that helps to develop future relationships and achieve customer satisfaction (Dyer,1998):
- **Importance for customers:**

Relationship marketing benefits customers in the following ways:

- Comfort and self-assurance in dealing with the entity that customer is used to dealing with.
- Communal relations with the dealer, the service provider or his staffs, which helps the customer to attain special action in most circumstances.
- Reduces the costs (social, physical, or psychological) of switching from one marketer to another, as the relationship amongst the vender and the purchaser is one of the obstacles to the change for the purchaser to switch to another vender or dealer.
- Upon inquiry about a product, appropriate advice would be provided to the customer quickly and properly, specifying the actual services the organisation can perform.
- Provides services or deliver products on time through contacting customers.
- Makes it easier for customers to contact the institution, in addition to facilitating the purchase of the products they want at a reasonable price, with the delivery of complete products on time.



- Enables use of the data provided by the customers correctly and ethically and in ways that serve the customer, making sure that they can be accessed at the period of the customer's contact with the institution.
- Attention to after-sales service and contacting the customer to make sure that the product or service is satisfactory and in line with expectations, and most importantly, providing assistance to the customer quickly and properly, in case customer has a problem (Stone,2002).

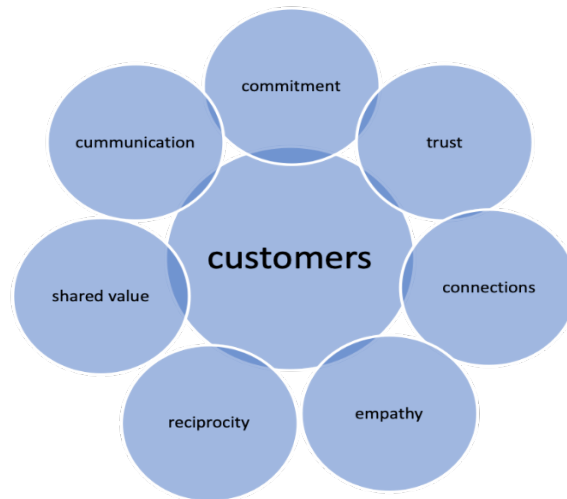
### **3. The Objectives Of RM:**

The primary purpose of RM is to form and develop longstanding relationships through several separate objectives:

- **Maintaining customers:** The core objective of RM is to retain customers, thru improving their relationships with the organisation and always focusing on meeting their needs and desires, rather than constantly looking for new customers.
- **Establishing structural and social bonds** that represent a barrier to exit and make the customer obliged to continue in the relationship; Structural ties arise from an investment by the parties that cannot be compensated at the end of the relationship, it is difficult to terminate the relationship as a result of the complexities and costs of changing the source, or social ties arise as a result of social relations between the parties.
- **Build a loyal customer base:** Here, the foundation focuses on strengthening and enhancing customer loyalty as a basis for strengthening their relationships with them, ensuring their survival and retention and also focusing on their continued satisfaction (Wilson, 2016)

### **4. Elements Of Relationship Marketing:**

Many academics have discussed the elements of RM, each indicating some or all of them. A combined picture is available from the figure below:



**Figure 1:** Elements of relationship marketing

The following is an explanation of each element in the terms of definition and the role plays in the application of the idea of RM:

- **Commitment:** is that the one in all the vital factors for understanding the quality of RM. It is a useful change for estimating the opportunity of the client dedication just as for expecting future buy recurrence (Morgan & Hunt, 1994; Ndubisi & Wah, 2005; Narteh, 2009). Morgan and Hunt (1994) see relationship responsibility as a gathering's conviction that the relationship is so critical as to warrant most undertakings at caring for it. Promise to the association can be helpful to shopper fulfillment in two distinct manners. From one perspective, laborers focused on their organizations convey prime quality support of customers (Boshoff and Tait, 1996). Further, dedicated representatives are content with their work and this sentiment of fulfillment gets communicated to customers (Ulrich et al., 1991). Since the duty is higher among individuals who acknowledge that they get progressively a motivator from the relationship, exceptionally devoted customers are glad to show increasingly huge degrees of responsibility in view of worth, they place on the present relationship got from past useful experience (Anabila et al., 2012). Right now, clients are depended upon to be devoted to the affiliation, realizing a positive relationship between responsibility and client dedication (Mowday, Porter, and Steers, 1982).
- **Trust:** This factor of trade relations is the level that each party feels in trusting on the dependability of the potentials made by the other party in

exchange relationships. Some argue that trust happens when exchanges occur objectively and fairly.

It is a complex term, because it is due to faith and reliance on honesty and efficiency of a reliable person. Trust is a readiness to rely on an exchange partner, whether by the client or marketer and is characterized not only by behaviour, but also by essential characteristics such as inspiration, efficiency, honesty, integrity, credibility, transparency, potentials and a tendency to help. There are those who take into account that social draws subsidise effectually to the creation of trust between the parties, encourages increased cooperation, communication and exchange of information and is the basis for making extended and compact relationships between the client and the dealer, even at the level of the internal staff member (Morgan & Hunt, 1994).

- **Connection “Bonds”**: This element leads to the agreement of the institution and the customer on something specific; The commitment to this variable leads to the development and strengthening of relations with customers and in turn to customers’ satisfaction with the relationship with the institution and enhances loyalty, but the link variable has established only a relatively diffident amount of attention by researchers in the field of marketing in relation to the above- mentioned basic elements (Sin and others, 2009).

The creation of psychological links between the customer and the institution lead to the following advantages (Reynolds and others, 2001):

- The sales staff of the organisation exercises influence over the customer in prompting his purchasing decisions.
- The sales employee finds it easy to deal with the same customer, knowing the desires, needs and style of dealing preferred by the customer, which leads to customer satisfaction with the institution; the employee too enjoys the work and performs better while dealing with a satisfied customer.
- Decrease in marketing costs due to reduced service delivery time for the customer.
- Reduced cost of replacing lost customers with new ones.
- Increases the revenues earned by the institution from each customer.

- **Empathy:** This element is important in trade relations, and it enables all parties to consider the conditions of the other party. It pursues to know the requirements and desires of customers and their difficulties and effort to solve them, provide other services accompanying products and work hard to meet the expectations of customers, emphasising that the maintenance of customer relationship is a shared responsibility of all workers of the organisation. Empathy also means that the facility worker is respectful, polite and offers approachable treatment to customers. This indicates the ability of the institution and its employees to take care of every one of the customers.
- **Reciprocity:** It is the fifth element of relationship marketing and makes each party willing to provide service to the other party, with the trust that the other party would respond positively (Sin and others, 2006). Some studies have shown reciprocation needs to know more about the relational features of the behaviour of the management for the institution and the customer. The correlation phenomenon to study relationship marketing is an interaction between the institution and the customer at two levels : the level of the institution, where commercial and legal contracts are concluded for the purchases and sale of products based on certain conditions or terms , while at the individual level, it involves personal communication, negotiation, bargaining and reciprocation of information between the institution and the customer .

Reciprocation is one of the rudimentary elements of RM, which is based on links between marketing activities.

- **Shared values:** Values are a set of criteria carried by individuals towards the objects, meanings and aspects of different activities that effort to straight their requirements and attitudes to them and identify tolerable and disallowed performance, correct and incorrect and are categorized by qualified constancy. These values do not come from a vacuum and are derived from the environment in the broad sense (Egan, 2001) through religious teaching, socialization, past experience and the group to which the individual belongs. By shared or common values are meant the economic and moral benefits for each seller, such as: gaining the trust and loyalty of customers, achieving more returns and profits in the long-standing, in addition to attaining a moral reputation among all associates of people. The values and welfares that the

purchaser reaps when practicing the concept of relationship marketing is reflected in receiving different action, upkeep and courtesy, the correct value and the exploration for requirements that satisfy his needs. **Communication:** is a proper or familiar exchange of info amongst sellers and buyers. RM emphasises the significance of info conversation in business relationships and the optimistic and unintended effect of this element on the commitment element in business relations. Customer contact is a feature of organizations that accomplish their customers unswervingly through marketing systems and has an important part in the main relationships between customers and suppliers. The rate of communication between the parties designates the strength of the relationship (Narteh,2009).

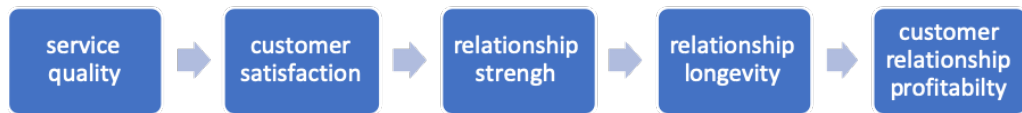
## **5. The Benefits Of Relationship Marketing**

To begin with, it is a fact that obtaining a new client is costlier than retentive one. So, the relationship between these corporations and others incredibly energetic.

RM emphasizes 3 options as a main to higher viability: loyalty, long-standing relationship and customer retention (Jagdish & Parvatiyer, 2000). In line with Bruhn (2003), customer share has the foremost vital part into the firm than market share. An association should be long-run win-win amongst members. In addition, all members should have deferential connections and equivalent accountabilities. Consequently, RM varieties a lot of compensations and predictable.

In the other words, it is an efficient tool for firms to treat issues in industry.

Secondly, RM is fundamental for affiliation quality, worth and administration. The facts demonstrate that if clients are happy with the administrations that associations supply, they will buy and pay more; the relationship will last just as the association will make included benefits (Gronroos,1994). Likewise, RM recommends the key basics to spread social and money related advantages. Thusly, associations need to comprehend the principle variables of the business to help the relationship among their assets, partners and techniques in the long-standing (Jagdish and parvatiyar, 2000). Therefore, holding clients can get more benefits, decline costs or spare expenses of incapable scanning for associations over the long haul. Figure2 shows the connection between the stages in the relationship which will at last outcome in benefit.



**Figure 2:** Stages in the development of relationship profit

Lastly, all parts that are connected to the achievement of a business have an encouragement on relationship management. Every part has upheld itself to be a necessary part of RM in business processes. The connection between the fundamentals that influence RM is shown in figure3



**Figure 3.** The fundamentals impact of RM

In conclusion, RM carries enduring advantages from the views of each the customer and therefore the firm. It's a proven fact that RM confirms the property relationship between the clients and the firm. additionally, relationship marketing is measured as a necessary component within the marketing research method. It's graspable that RM will facilitate the association raise its profitability and competitive advantage through the economic process of world marketplaces. In addition, the relationship also permits suppliers to comprehend customers' demand. Thus, whereas customers have a long-lasting relationship with suppliers, the goods and services might face remittent risk and uncertainty.

## **B. Customer Loyalty**

Customer loyalty is “the marketplace currency of the twenty first century” (Singh & Sirdeshmukh, 2000). Aaker (1992) and Reichheld and Teal (1996) likewise asserted that client reliability could be an imperative hypothetical subject and handy issue for all the marketing staff and instructive scientists. Why do academics treat customer loyalty as money? Why do teachers concentrate in loyalty? The clarifications are clear: because of client loyalty is the most critical issue, which may significantly impact client retention and buyer retention reduces the marketing cost and builds benefits. Different experiential examinations have upheld this perspective (e.g. Jones & Sasser, 1995; Hogan et al., 2003). Oliver (1999) finds that a company’s clients are fulfilled, at the point their pace of repurchase conduct towards an association’s items can be as high as 90%. Reichheld and Sasser (1990) too pronounced that a 5 percent expansion in purchaser retention may bring about a surpassing twenty-five to eighty-five percent increment in benefit.

Therefore, the task of attracting and retaining customers is one of the most significant challenges facing organizations in the face of increasing competition. Most studies have established that institutions that have survived and grown have done so through retaining their customers and their loyalty. Over the last few years, interest in customer retention has increased significantly, with the marketing interest gradually and definitively shifting from independent transactions in the form of trade-offs to frequent purchases based on loyalty and selling opportunities as keys to higher levels of competitiveness and improved purchaser consummation.

Customer loyalty is one of the priorities for the institutions and is a strategic objective. During the preparation of their future strategies, institutions follow a strategic path that allows them to direct all means and efforts towards retaining customers and enhancing their loyalty to the institution and its products.

Customer loyalty is the organization’s gain of customer trust , so that the relationship that governs the exchange between them becomes profitable for both parties, as the customer’s loyalty to the institution does not end once he or she joins the loyalty program or list, but goes beyond that to involve an important aspect that may result in a long-term profitable relationship. It also conveys the positive

sentiments that the customer has towards the working members of the organization and to the products offered by this organization.

## 1.The Concept Of Customer Loyalty

### Definition of customer loyalty:

There are several ideas explained by totally different academics and societies in numerous educational fields and different businesses. (Oliver,1999) outlined customer faithfulness as an extremely- command commitment to repurchase or re-patronize most well-liked product, services, or brands systematically, which might cause repetitive buying within the same brands, despite situational impacts and marketing efforts having the possible to cause changing behavior. Ganesh, Arnold, and Reynolds (2000) clarified loyalty as a mixture of each promise to the relationship and different unconcealed loyalty behaviors. In the table2 below, some other definitions are listed.

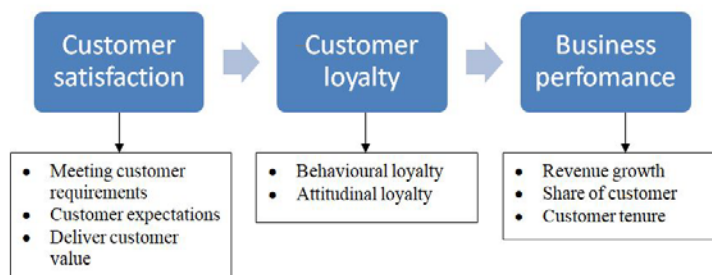
**Table2:** Other Definitions Related to Loyalty

Selnes,1993		Loyalty expresses a supposed behavior associated with product or service, as well as the probability of upcoming acquisitions or renewal of service agreements, or equally, however possible it's that the purchaser shifts to different brand or service supplier.
Pritchard, Havitz and Howard, 1999	and	Loyalty (L) could be a complex mix of brand attitude (A) and behavior(P[B]), with guides that measure the degree to that one favours and buys a brand repeatedly, where $L = P[B]/A$
Kandampully and Suhartanto, 2000	and	A loyal customer is one who repurchases from the constant service supplier when attainable, and who endures to indorse or maintain an optimistic perceptive towards the service supplier.
Khatibi, Abod, Ismail and Thyagarajan, 2002	and	Loyalty denotes to the strength of a customer's intent to get once more product or services from a provider with whom they're satisfied.



## 2. The Importance Of Customer Loyalty

Retaining customers by making them happy and admiring allows the organisation to capture many opportunities, such as reducing the costs of attraction that the organisation normally incurs on potential customers and other opportunities that all combine to bring excellence to the organisation and improve its competitive position, even to the level of achieving leadership in its market. This importance is shown in the following figure:



**Figure4** The importance of customer loyalty

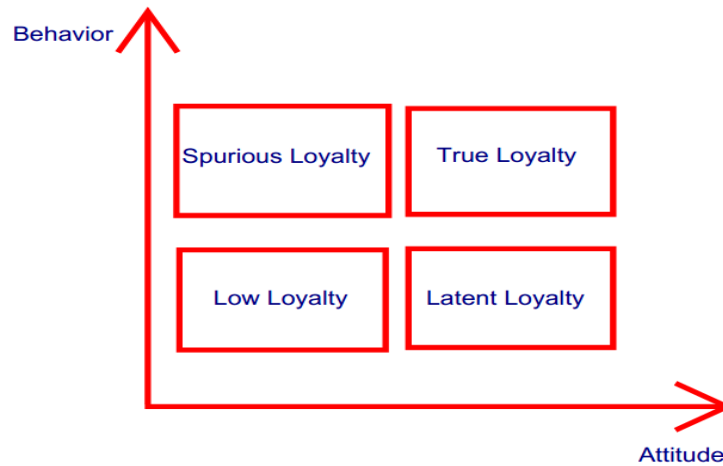
## 3. Measuring Of Customer Loyalty

The Customer Loyalty Scale, which was built by Paraswaman and Berry (2009), is one of the most important metrics, which has been applied in many studies and proved successful and which consists of four dimensions:

- Spoken Word Communication: means recommending the product or organisation to others.
- Purpose of re-dealing means repeated dealing with the institution.
- Price insensitivity: means the willingness of the customer to pay higher prices.
- Behaviour of the complaint: through bearing the consequences of potential issues when dealing with the institution.

## 4. Types Of Loyalty

Dick and Base (1994) mention four forms of loyalty on the idea of the points of behaviour and attitude: spurious loyalty, true loyalty, low loyalty and latent loyalty. The potential relationship is shown below:



**Figure5** Types of Loyalty

**Table3:** Loyalty Forms Summary

Passionate Loyalty	Customers fix the industry with the kind of firm they can “trust to always act in their best interest – without expectation” (Hart & Johnson ,1999)
Polygamy loyalty	Customer who are loyal to more than one brand
Spurious loyalty	Customers stay with a dealer because they notice no additional options or because of low engrossment or little professed delineation. (Zeithaml, Berry & Parasuraman,1996; Dick & Baso, 1994)
Ultimate loyalty	The union of product, social and personal forces with logical, personal and shared strainers that encourage clients to need only one specific brand and be uninfluenced by contestants’ marketing effort. (Oliver, 1999).

**Source:** Elizabeth R. Davis,2006

## 5. The Concept Of Customer’s Satisfaction

As one of the features to check consequences of industry activities, customer’s satisfaction has been cantered and deliberate by teachers and industries for an extended time. As an example, Yi (1990) declared that customer’s satisfaction was

noted in marketing thought and follow as an essential idea as well as a vital objective of each endeavor. Oliver (1980), Churchill and Surprenant (1982) too explicated that shopper's satisfaction is one amongst the necessary results of marketing activities.

Satisfaction means the final output generated by experience and accrued experience, which is reflected in the purchaser's valuation of the level performance of the service provided on the one hand and represents the positive feeling that occurs before, during and after the purchase on the other.

**The concept of satisfaction can be further clarified by the following definitions:**

- Satisfaction is described as: “Customer reaction and evaluation following the purchase of the commodity “. This assessment is what makes the customer intend to return again to buy the commodity and benefit from it in the future (Pritchard M, 1990)

It is also defined as “a measure of the degree of satisfaction of customers when they use the products and services of the institution (Kandampully, 2000)

Therefore, customer's satisfaction is the degree to which the supposed performance of the product conforms to the expectations of the customer. In the other words, we be able to say that satisfaction is a meaning of the variance between performance and expectations and therefore there are three levels that can be achieved (Hill, 2007):

- Performance < Expectation: Customer is dissatisfied.
- Performance = Expectation: Customer is satisfied.
- Performance > Expectation: Customer is very satisfied and happy.

From the angle of service quality, Zeithmal and Berry (1988) and Caruana et al. (2000) found that client satisfaction is a result of evaluation amongst what shopper guess regarding the services offered by provider, and what they really receive. Gerson and Richard (1993) expound that customer's satisfaction could be a shopper's insights, that his or her potentials have been encountered or topped. Customers get one thing, and that they expect it to figure correctly. If it does, clients are going to be satisfied, and if it doesn't, clients are going to be dissatisfied.

**There are many sources from which the customer can build his expectations:**

- Previous experience of the customer in case he repeats the purchase.
- The mental image drawn by the institutions for their customers and aimed at achieving certain goals and focussing on aspects related to the product or institution.
- Frequently asked words, contacts through friends, family and all social channels.
- Promotional efforts made by the institution to obtain customer preferences for the product through the information provided about the product and points of excellence.
- Promotional efforts of competitors.

**6. The Importance Of Customer Satisfaction**

Measuring an organisation's success could be a massive project that contains not solely marketers' views like a profit, scale, market share, etc. however, customer's views like consumers' expectations, customer satisfaction and customer loyalty are very important for organization's success.

All analysts agree that consumer satisfaction is one in terrifically significant components of client dependability. Repeat buy and positive word of mouth by clients are frequently expanded through fulfilment (Reichheld & Sasser, 1990). High fulfilment will incite clients' goal to broaden certainty and demonstrate less motivation to change to choices (Fornell, 1992). In other word, fulfilled purchaser have a ton of motivation to remain and dismiss choices. In a word, consumer loyalty impressively influences every activity, behavioural and attitudinal parts of client loyalty.

Satisfied customers do a ton of business with you and more as often as possible. They additionally allude others to you. However, if clients are not fulfilled, they'll quit working with you. Every one of the things you are doing to accomplish quality and give exceptional assistance, are not essential at all on the off chance that you don't work to fulfil the customer (Garson & Richard, 1993). As it were, the more clients satisfied, the most they will spend. The most they spend, the most benefit you harvest, which is more prominent than your expense of giving flawless assistance.

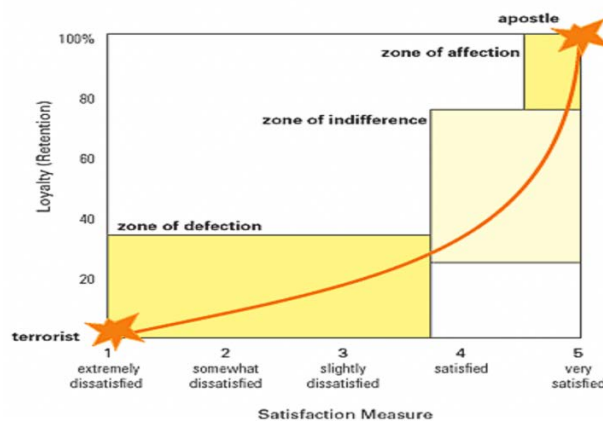
From the analyses above, customer satisfaction can be the connection between service, sales, customer retention, and lastly to profits (Kumar, 2012)

## 7. The Relationship Between Satisfaction And Loyalty

The basis for true loyalty is customer satisfaction. Very satisfied customers turn into loyalty advocates for the institution, where they speak with others in the interest of the institution and its products. Conversely, dissatisfaction leads customers to not return, being a key factor for change.

Studies have shown significant variances in the loyalty of less fulfilled, slightly satisfied and completely satisfied customers, with only something very short of complete satisfaction resulting in dramatic decrease in loyalty (Lovelock, 2009)

In this context we can refer to the model of satisfaction / loyalty presented by F. Reichheld:



**Figure6:** The model of satisfaction / loyalty

Source: <https://hbr.org/2008/07/putting-the-service-profit-chain-to-work>

From the above figure, it can be seen that customers are divided between two extremes:

The first consists of customers who are very dissatisfied or dissatisfied, who are hostile to the institution, and the second of those who are very satisfied and loyal and who become advocates for the institution.

In fact, institutions find in the top part of the pyramid loyal customers, which makes them spend a little effort and time to meet their needs, but at the same time achieve higher returns, which makes it a source of high market value of the

institution, as this section represents the larger market value. When this section shrinks, the lower section of the pyramid expands, therefore consumer satisfaction can be reflected as the last premise in advanced marketing; therefore, the accomplishment of every business organization relies heavily upon recognizing and fulfilling the predominant clients' needs and demands. Customer satisfaction can prompt practices, such as loyalty and positive word of mouth advertising (Abdul-Mauhmin, 2002).

### **C. Civil Aviation Industry**

The developments in the civil aviation segment, representing one of the most remaining technological strides of the twenty first century, have attracted a lot of research attention due to their ensuring the most expeditious and reliable transportation of modern life. In spite of the fact that around a hundred years, have acknowledged since the main engine driven airplane was flown by Wright Brothers in 1903, we have arrived at a point where there are countless air ships, a huge number of air terminals ,airports and aviation business, with billions of travelers being transported, sparing time in a dependable and agreeable way , every year through a huge number of flight.

It can be supposed that these outstanding growths and the stupendous progress have made aviation the preferred mode of transport, setting it poles apart from other alternatives.

In the top of the fast advancements in aviation in the world, Turkey also has arrived at a significant situation in common flying in the universal field, with record-breaking executing in plane rush hour gridlock and number of passengers, model air terminal speculations, improvements in local and worldwide flight, arrangements made for on- flight safety, aviation security etc. It very well may be said that Turkey, which has reciprocal aeronautics concurrences with 168 countries, is one of nations with the most elevated number of flights on the planet. The way that Turkey will attempt an enormous venture, which will make it aeronautics centre around a worldwide, scale will make Turkey one of the most significant transfer centres.

## **1. Historical Timeline of Civil Aviation in Turkey**

- Aviation operation 1<sup>st</sup> began in Turkey in 1912, with 2 hangers at a tiny low airdrome facility.
- The Turkish craft community, supported in 1925, coined the quote that's still used nowadays in Turkey: "Future is in the skies".
- Ten years when changing into a republic, the state had a tiny low fleet of 5 craft known as "Turkish Air Mails" that later became Turkish Airlines. Additionally, supported this year, was the "State Airlines Operation Authority" underneath the Ministry of National Défense. The underlying spending plan of the association headed by one among the essential Turkish pilots, Mr. Fesa Evrensev, was 180,000 Turkish Liras, and thusly, the association utilized an aggregate of twenty-four individuals, included seven pilot, eight mechanics, eight officials and a radio operator.
- In 1944, Turkey was one amongst the fifty-two original signatories to the Chicago Convention.
- Turkey was a member of the ICAO from 1947 to 1950.
- In 1955, the name of the State Airlines Operation Authority was modified to Turkish Airlines.
- The Civil Aviation Section was established in 1954 to shield national interests and modify negotiation with in the quickly developing Civil Aviation Community.
- In 1987, the department was reorganised because the "Directorate General of Civil Aviation".
- The DGCA, that had been the most facility separation of the Agency of Transportation, achieved monetary autonomy on ten November 2005 (Law 5431).

## **2. Turkish Airlines**

Turkish airline (THY) is the banner bearer and national aircraft of Turkey. THY was set up in 1933 and by works a system of booked administrations to one hundred twenty worldwide and thirty-seven residential urban communities (thirty-eight household air terminals) in Europe, Asia, Africa and America.

Turkish airlines directly incorporate a sixty-seven percent domestic market share. Turkish exclusively a significant full-administration transporter in its own right, yet additionally safeguards a strong situation at the minimal effort end of the market, locally through Anadolu jet and its Lufthansa joint venture Sun Express.

THY is one of the quickest developing business carriers in Europe with its 132 craft and is an individual from the biggest global aircraft alliance named "Star Alliance". The enterprise is utilizing Istanbul's Airport as a heart for its international and domestic flights.

#### **D. Previous Studies on RM dimensions**

Hefferman, et al. (2008) planned for investigating the advancement of trust for connections among staff and clients in the financial division and to examine potential connections between budgetary execution of relationship director and their degrees of enthusiastic insight and trust. The investigation utilized an Internet review, where respondents were approached to finish a passionate knowledge test and questions identifying with confiding in conduct. His information was coordinated with money related execution information provided by the bank. Exploratory and corroborative factor examination and connection investigation were utilized to recognize joins. The examination inferred that trust was comprised of three parts: reliability, information, and desires. Additionally, there were huge connections between both trust and passionate insight, when contrasted with the budgetary presentation of a relationship administrator.

Helgesen (2007) study planned for recognizing the most captivating drivers of consumer loyalty. The info source is a market analysis. Things estimating consumer loyalty just as significance and execution (fulfillment) of drivers of consumer loyalty have been remembered for a survey responded by 128 clients from roughly 25 nations. The examination discovered that expenses have not been documented as satisfiers; in any case, as indicated by its emblazoned significance implementation framework, serious costs are significant and can maybe be seen as "cleanliness", focused more on what is significant for client faithfulness.

Ndubisi's (2007) study analyzed the consequence of RM technique on client loyalty. The investigation utilized a poll and circulated it to more than 220 bank clients in Malaysia. Numerous relapse examinations evaluated the effect on client



reliability of four key develops of RM (trust, commitment, empathy, and satisfaction). The investigation reasoned that the four factors have a huge impact and anticipate a decent extent of the difference in customer loyalty. Additionally, they are essentially identified with each other.

**To review related articles within RM scope, the following databases have been used:**

- Web of science
- Science direct
- Scopus
- Springer
- Emerald insight
- Research gate
- Academic journals
- Google scholar

**Following keywords were used while searching for the relevant articles:**

- RM
- CRM
- Relationship marketing dimensions
- Relationship marketing practices
- Relationship marketing elements
- Relationship marketing factors

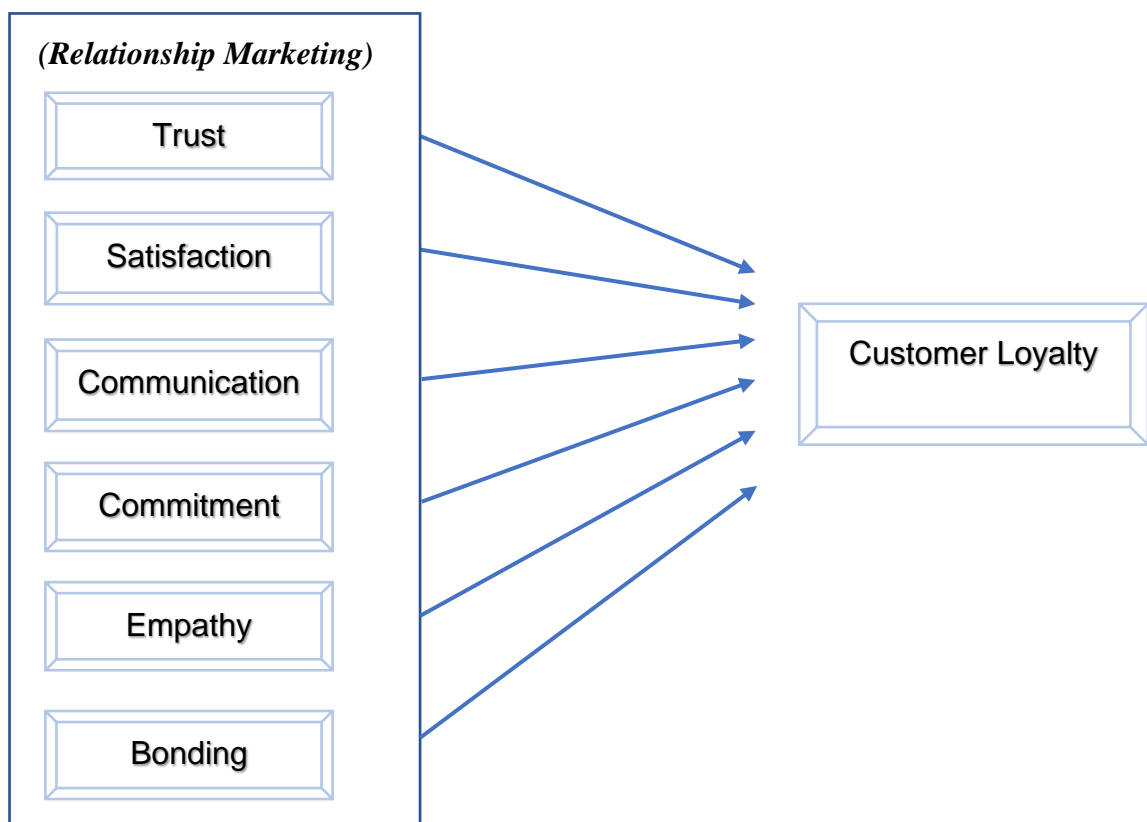
### III. CONCEPTUAL MODEL DEVELOPMENT AND HYPOTHESES FORMULATION

#### A. Conceptual Model

Previous studies clearly showed that different factors have an influence on customer loyalty. Considering this, few models and structures of these elements have been examined. The research model of the study is depicted in Figure 7. The model visually describes the framework of variables to be examined: RM dimensions and customer loyalty. The relationship within the variables will be tested in order to measure to which extent they impact each other. RM features are independent variable, while remaining variable is dependent.

#### INDEPENDENT VARIABLE

#### DEPENDENT VARIABLES



**Figure 7:** The conceptual framework of study

## **1.Trust**

Shaw (1997) characterized trust as the conviction, that those on whom we depend will live up to our desires of them. Various authors propose that the build of trust is a significant component of long-term purchaser -seller relationship in a business domain (Dwyer, Schurr and Oh, 1987). The significance of trust in clarifying client dependability is upheld by creators, for example, Chaudhuri and Holbrook (2001), Sirdeshmukh et al. (2002) and Ball et al. (2004). Adding to this Ganesan (1994) set forward the recommendation that it was trust together with shared reliance on the executing parties that decided long term direction of a relationship. Also, trust is viewed as key to building connections inside the accommodation business. Various specialists have reported the job of trust in dedication (Hikkerova,2011). In those investigations, trust has been demonstrated to be a hard determinant of loyalty.

Hence, in view of the talk over, the accompanying speculation is proposed:

**H<sub>1</sub>:** Trust positively influences customer loyalty in the civil aviation industry.

## **2.Satisfaction**

Customer satisfaction is the most significant thing that is utilized to measure the success of an item or service. satisfaction and evaluation given by the clients can be utilized to discover the degree of customer satisfaction on the products or services. The customer will feel fulfilled when the item they get and feel meet their desire. Bloemer &De Ruyter (1998) characterize satisfaction, as a result, of the abstract assessment process in choosing the other option or surpassing the desire. While Swan and Oliver (1985) depict satisfaction as a direction of post-buy that is full of feeling or subjective concentrating on the assessment of item execution. Consumer satisfaction is decidedly brought about by the products and services offered by the retailer. This propensity has a significant purchase in customer buys later on. (Kim et al.2001) showed that satisfaction was a significant indicator of faithfulness. So, according to the above-mentioned discussion the second hypothesis can be formulated like:

**H<sub>2</sub>:** Satisfaction positively influences customer loyalty in the civil aviation industry.

### **3.Communication**

Communication is another significant part of Relationship Marketing. Communication infers that the capacity of releasing information to the customer, but it has to be timely and trustworthy. In the modern era, a new idea of Communication is two path dialogues among customers and company. It's might be previously or, after or during sell (Anderson and Nanus, 1990, referred to in Ndubisi, 2007). In RM communication alludes to stay in contact with esteemed client, giving timely and precise information about item and service. Communication in RM implies staying in contact with esteemed clients, giving auspicious and reliable data on administration and administration changes, and imparting proactively if a conveyance issue happens. It is the communicator's undertaking in the beginning times to fabricate mindfulness, create shopper inclination (by advancing worth, execution, and different highlights), persuade intrigued purchasers, and urge them to settle on the buy choice. As a result of the above-mentioned discussion, a hypothesis concerning the communication has been formulated:

**H<sub>3</sub>:** Communication positively influences customer loyalty in the civil aviation industry.

### **4.Commitment**

Achrol and Mentzer (1995) characterized commitment as an implicit or explicit promise of social progression between exchange partners. Geyskens, Steenkamp, Scheer and Kumar (1996) and Moorman, Deshpande and Zaltman (1992) portrayed it as a client's long haul direction toward a business relationship that is grounded in both passionate bonds and the client's conviction that staying in the relationship will yield higher net advantages than ending it (Sollner, 1994). Bloemer and Kasper (1995) and Kiesler (1971) characterized commitment as the subjectively anchored, positive connection to behavioral acts, which is restrictive for recognizing true loyalty from fake loyalty. All in all, dedication alludes to a direction that particular aims and practices portray to acknowledge an incentive for the two gatherings over the long haul (Vesel and Zabkar, 2010). Following the above discussion through these theories a hypothesis can be suggested.

**H<sub>4</sub>:** Commitment positively influences customer loyalty in the civil aviation industry.

## **5. Empathy**

Empathy is defined as the capacity to comprehend another person's desires and goals (Yau et al., 2000). Empathy lessens dependence on legitimate administration since trade accomplices who are administered by the rule of compassion will, in general, treat others in the way they might want to be dealt with (Ndubisi, 2004). Empathy is connected at a social level to the capacity of a person to see circumstances from another viewpoint, however not really concurring with such a point of view. One approach to build up a unique relationship is to create empathy. In the previous studies, empathy has been considered as a free factor in clarifying relationship marketing directions (Sin et al, 2002). Therefore, it is judicious here to propose a fifth hypothesis concerning empathy:

**H<sub>5</sub>:** Empathy positively influences customer loyalty in the civil aviation industry.

## **6. Bonding**

Bonding is described as the factor of a business relationship that consequences in two gatherings (the customer and the supplier) acting in a brought together way toward an ideal objective. Berry (1995) recommends that RM can be drilled at three sorts of social bonds – financial, social, and structural. These bonds have been talked about in past examinations; however, the vast majority of them have been created and analyzed uniquely in the physical condition (e.g., Peltier and Westfall, 2000; Williams, Han, and Qualls, 1988). Moderately not many of them talk about these bonds in the virtual condition (e.g., Hsieh, Chiu, and Chiang, 2005). In addition, the intelligence of the Internet gives extraordinary chances to RM to be polished on a coordinated level (Geiger and Martin, 1999). So according to mentioned discussion above, the last hypothesis can be:

**H<sub>6</sub>:** Bonding positively influences customer loyalty in the civil aviation industry.

## **IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **A. Research Design**

The design for this research was descriptive and correlational. The researcher preferred the quantitative research method based on quantified data to achieve objectivity of the research through a well- prepared survey.

A descriptive research design has been used by the academic to provide a data summary, these collected data summaries can be displayed using numbers to express the characteristics of the variables.

The researcher used a correlation design to gauge the relationship strength between variables, it helped in analyzing the impact of relationship marketing on customer loyalty in civil aviation industry.

The data were collected by the answers of the questionnaire that was prepared to include questions that could give the result of achieving the study objective, the questionnaire was distributed digitally to analyze the result through “AMOS” software, and then explained the computed outcomes.

Research stages for this study started with research idea, which further followed by related literature review phase. Based on reviewed literature research questions and hypotheses were formulated.

In order to test research questions and hypotheses, research design phase took a place and proceeded with required data collection. Collected data was measured and analysed by the means of statistical tools. The research has been finalized by interpretation of the outcomes and conclusion.

### **B. Procedures**

The survey participants were required to fill in online survey that consisted of two main parts like: demographics of the respondents and variables related questions. However, before the questionnaire was distributed among participants necessary

approvals were obtained from Istanbul Aydin University ethics committee. The participants were given information about the objectives of the survey in advance along with guidelines.

### **C. Study Sample**

The online questionnaire empowered by Google forms was distributed among Turkish airline customers in turkey. The main purpose of this study is to determine the impact of RM orientation and how it reflects the impact on customer loyalty. Because it is not possible to take all the residents of Turkey into consideration, researcher decided to adopt convenience sampling which is a non-probabilistic sampling method. The purpose behind data collection through a convenience method is that it makes it easier for the researcher to collect data appropriately from the intended respondents. In this study data was collected from target audiences from different regions of Istanbul. In total 279 responses were obtained by study participants.

### **D. Survey Instruments**

As current research concentrates on quantitative research techniques Likert type surveys were chosen for collection of the data. In the first part of the survey, participants were asked specific type of the questions in order to obtain information that will reflect demographics and customer profile.

This included gender, age, education level, occupation, Marital status, Main purpose of travel, airline loyalty program, important factor when choosing an airline online, and travel frequency per year.

The second part of the survey included questions that directed to measure the research variables like: customer satisfaction, trust, empathy, communication, bonding, commitment and customer loyalty.

Likert point 5 scale was used for measurement of research items as follows: 1 (strongly disagree), 2 (disagree), 3 (neutral), 4 (agree), 5 (strongly agree), and 1 (not at all), 2 (to little extent), 3 (to some extent), 4 (to moderate extent), 5 (a large extent). Survey questions were prepared based on antecedent studies that validated research items. The questionnaires were available in English languages. Full version

of the questionnaires and table that depicts the sources of the adapted questions are provided in Appendix A.

### **E. Statistical Techniques**

In this study descriptive statistics (i.e., frequencies, percentages) were used to provide summary information about the study sample. On the other side, Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was used to test the study hypotheses. Structural Equation Modeling is the mixture of factor analysis and multiple regression analysis, and it is used to evaluate the structural relationship between measured variables and latent concepts.



## V. DATA ANALYSIS

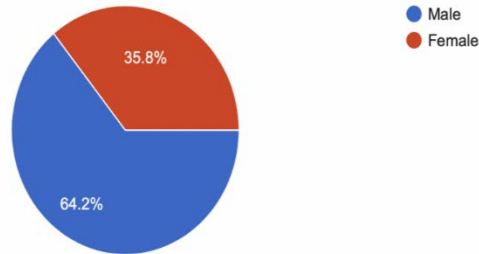
### A. Respondent Profile

The demographic characteristics of the study sample consisted of several basic variables, the aim of which is to collect general info about the respondents (gender, age, marital status, and education level), which are not assumed with the variables. These characteristics can be summarized in the following table:

**Table 4:** Demographic Findings

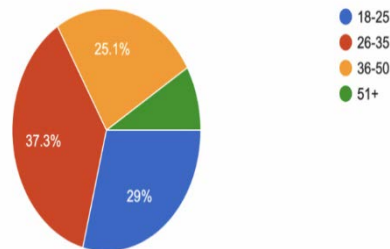
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
<b>Gender</b>				
Male	179	64.2	64.2	100.0
Female	100	35.8	35.8	35.8
<b>Age</b>				
18 – 25	81	29.0	29.0	29.0
26 – 35	104	37.3	37.3	66.3
36 – 50	70	25.1	25.1	91.4
51 or more	24	8.6	8.6	100.0
<b>Marital Status</b>				
Single	100	35.8	35.8	89.6
Married	87	31.2	31.2	53.8
<b>Highest Education Level</b>				
Undergraduate	46	16.5	16.5	100.0
Graduate	123	44.1	44.1	44.1
Master	84	30.1	30.1	74.2
PhD	26	9.3	9.3	83.5
<b>Occupation</b>				
Business partner /owner	37	13.3	13.3	13.3
Director	46	16.5	16.5	29.7
Housewife	20	7.2	7.2	36.9
Officer	47	16.8	16.8	53.8
Other	47	16.8	16.8	70.6
Retired	8	2.9	2.9	73.5
Self-employed	36	12.9	12.9	86.4
Unemployed	38	13.6	13.6	100.0
Total	279	100.0	100.0	

This questionnaire was conducted on 279 respondents, the above table 4 indicates that the gender distribution of respondents was 179 (64.2%) male respondents, which is the highest ratio, and 100 (35.8%) female respondents, the following figure 8 shows the pie charts.



**Figure 8: Gender Chart**

As for age groups, Table 4 indicates that respondents for the group “18 – 25” was 81(29.0%), for the group “26 – 35”, was 104 (37.3%) which is the highest ratio, for the group “36-50” was 70(25.1%), and for the group “51 or more” was 24(8.6%). The following figure 9 shows the pie charts.



**Figure 9: Age Chart**

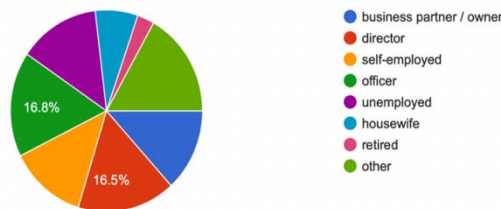
In case of marital status, the above table 4 indicates that the respondents were 100(35.8%) responses for single, which is the highest ratio, 87(31.2%) responses for married, 63(22.6%) responses for divorced, and 29(10.4%) responses for widowed.

In term of education level, the above table 4 indicates that the respondents were 46(16.5%) undergraduate respondents, 123(44.1%) graduated respondents, which is the highest ratio, 84(30.1%) respondents were master, and 26(9.3%) respondents were Ph.D. The following figure 11 shows the pie charts.

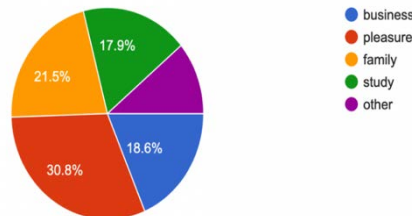


**Figure 10:** Education Qualification Chart

In term of occupation part , the above table 4 indicates that the respondents were 37(13.3%) business partner or owner respondents, 46(16.5%) director respondents, , 20(7.2%) respondents were housewife, 47(16.8%) respondents were officer and other, 8 (2.9%) were retired , 36(12.9%) respondents were self- employed, 38(13.6%) respondents were unemployed .The following figure 12 shows the pie charts.



**Figure11:** Occupation Chart

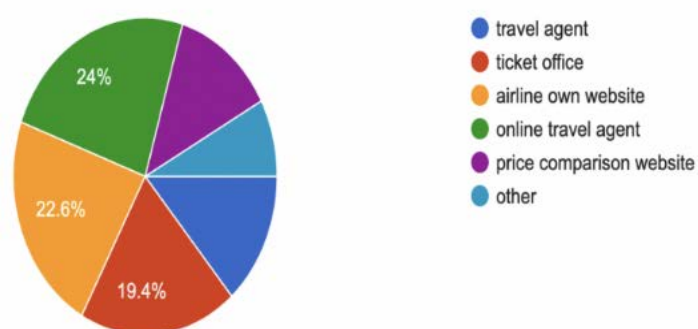


**Figure 12:** Main Purpose Of Travel

The figure above shows answers to the multiple-response question of the type of main purpose of travel by respondents, where pleasure was at the top of the list with 86(30.8%) answers, family 60(21.5%) answers, study 50(17.9%) answers, business52(18.6%) answers, and other 31(11.1%) answers. The table below shows the details.

**Table 5: Main Purpose of Travel**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
business	52	18.6	18.6	18.6
family	60	21.5	21.5	40.1
other	31	11.1	11.1	51.3
pleasure	86	30.8	30.8	82.1
study	50	17.9	17.9	100.0
Total	279	100.0	100.0	



**Figure13: Book Flight**

The figure above shows answers to the multiple-response question of how do you normally book your flights by respondents, where online travel agent was at the top of the list with 67(24.0%) answers, airline own website 63 (22.6%) answers, price comparison website 35 (12.5%) answers, ticket office 54 (19.4%) answers, travel agent 38 (13.6%) answers and other 22 (7.9%) answers. The table below shows the details.

**Table6:** Normally Book Your Flights

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Airline own website	63	22.6	22.6	22.6
online travel agent	67	24.0	24.0	46.6
other	22	7.9	7.9	54.5
price comparison website	35	12.5	12.5	67.0
ticket office	54	19.4	19.4	86.4
travel agent	38	13.6	13.6	100.0
Total	279	100.0	100.0	

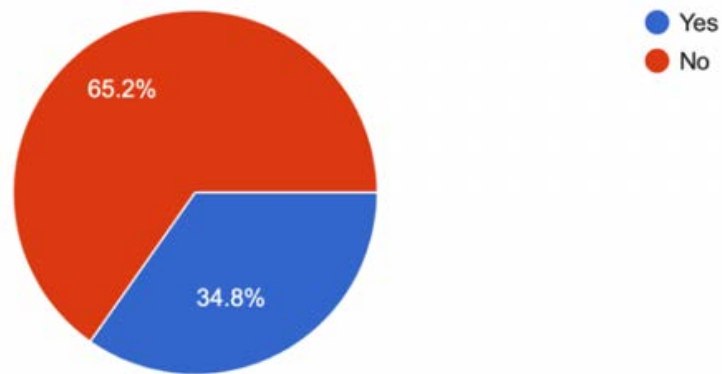
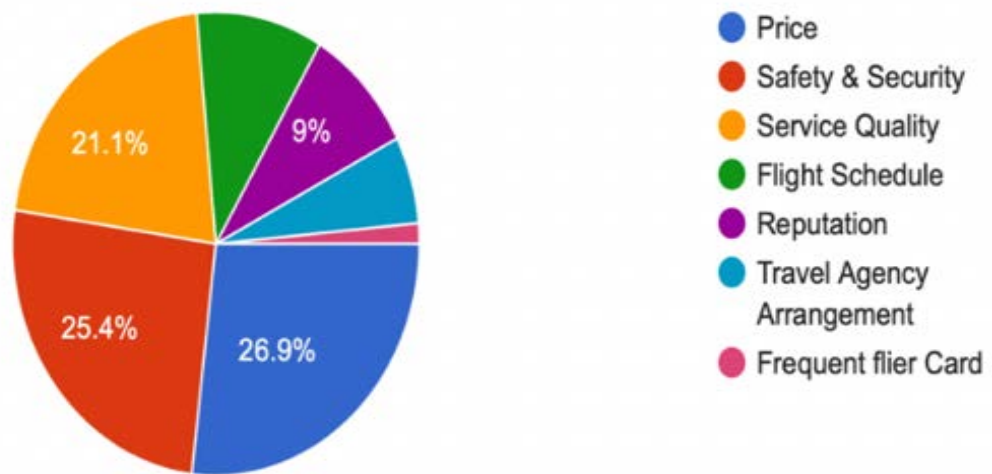


Figure14: Loyalty Program

The figure above shows answers to the multiple-response question of are you part of an airline loyalty program by respondents, where most of the answers were none. The table below shows the details.

**Table7:** Airline Loyalty Program

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
No	182	65.2	65.2	65.2
Yes	97	34.8	34.8	100.0
Total	279	100.0	100.0	

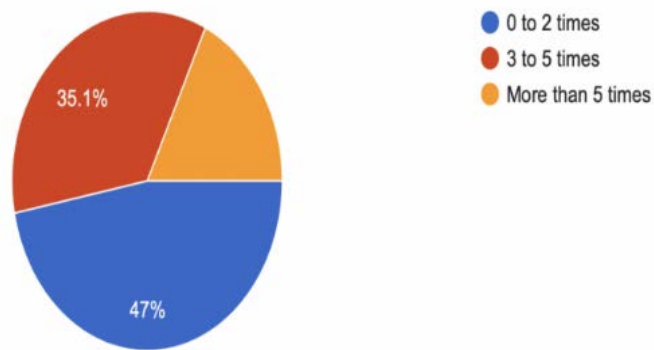


**Figure15:** Most important Factor When Choosing An Airline

The figure above shows answers to the multiple-response question of the most significant factor when deciding an airline by respondents, where price was at the top of the list with 75(26.9%) answers, Flight Schedule 28 (10.0%) answers, Frequent flier Card 4 (1.4%) answers, Reputation 25 (9.0%) answers, Safety & Security 71 (25.4%) answers, Service Quality 59 (21.1%) answers and Travel Agency Arrangement17(6.1%). The table below shows the details.

**Table8: Important Factor When Choosing An Airline**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Flight Schedule	28	10.0	10.0	10.0
Frequent flier Card	4	1.4	1.4	11.5
Price	75	26.9	26.9	38.4
Reputation	25	9.0	9.0	47.3
Safety & Security	71	25.4	25.4	72.8
Service Quality	59	21.1	21.1	93.9
Travel Agency Arrangement	17	6.1	6.1	100.0
Total	279	100.0	100.0	



**Figure 16: Travel Frequency Per Year**

Finally, for travel frequency per year question, the above figure shows the chart of these answer, where the highest was from 0 to 2 times (47%) and the lowest was more than 5 times 50 (17.9%) The table below shows the details.

**Table 9:** Travel Frequency Per Year

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
0 to 2 times	131	47.0	47.0	47.0
3 to 5 times	98	35.1	35.1	82.1
More than 5 times	50	17.9	17.9	100.0
Total	279	100.0	100.0	

### B. Normality Assessment

One of the main assumptions of Structural Equation Modeling is multivariate normality. In order to assess the normality assumption rescaled standardized kurtosis values for each item was examined. These standardized kurtosis values (Table 10) were calculated in AMOS statistical software. Recommended threshold for rescaled kurtosis values is  $\pm 2$ . Table 10 shows that all items have rescaled kurtosis values less than 2. Based on the kurtosis values it can be concluded that study data does not indicate violation of normality.

**Table 10:** Assessment Of Normality

Variable	min	max	skew	c.r.	kurtosis	c.r.
CL9	1.000	5.000	.786	5.358	-.199	-.679
CL8	1.000	5.000	.739	5.042	-.292	-.994
CL7	1.000	5.000	.772	5.265	-.293	-.998
CL2	1.000	5.000	.651	4.442	-.315	-1.074
CL3	1.000	5.000	.729	4.970	-.313	-1.066
CL4	1.000	5.000	.883	6.025	.045	.154
CL5	1.000	5.000	.873	5.952	-.089	-.304
CL6	1.000	5.000	.864	5.895	.010	.033
BOND7	1.000	5.000	.748	5.102	-.166	-.567
BOND1	1.000	5.000	.791	5.395	-.580	-1.977
BOND2	1.000	5.000	.743	5.069	-.059	-.202



**Table 10:** (con)Assessment Of Normality

<b>Variable</b>	<b>min</b>	<b>max</b>	<b>skew</b>	<b>c.r.</b>	<b>kurtosis</b>	<b>c.r.</b>
BOND3	1.000	5.000	.885	6.035	.172	.587
BOND4	1.000	5.000	.731	4.985	-.272	-.928
BOND6	1.000	5.000	.608	4.145	-.719	-2.453
EMP2	1.000	5.000	.707	4.820	-.103	-.351
EMP3	1.000	5.000	.784	5.344	-.032	-.111
EMP4	1.000	5.000	.712	4.852	-.115	-.394
EMP5	1.000	5.000	.717	4.891	-.137	-.467
CMT2	1.000	5.000	.688	4.694	-.065	-.221
CMT3	1.000	5.000	.688	4.693	-.323	-1.101
CMT4	1.000	5.000	.640	4.363	-.513	-1.751
CMT5	1.000	5.000	.658	4.487	-.486	-1.658
CMT6	1.000	5.000	.711	4.850	-.309	-1.053
CMN1	1.000	5.000	.684	4.661	-.628	-2.141
CMN2	1.000	5.000	.873	5.951	.136	.465
CMN4	1.000	5.000	.764	5.211	-.361	-1.230
CMN5	1.000	5.000	.803	5.479	-.159	-.541
CMN6	1.000	5.000	.909	6.201	.200	.681
SAT2	1.000	5.000	.830	5.660	.063	.216
SAT3	1.000	5.000	.833	5.679	.047	.160
SAT4	1.000	5.000	.735	5.014	-.187	-.637
SAT5	1.000	5.000	.882	6.018	-.015	-.052
TRUST1	1.000	5.000	.875	5.964	-.055	-.187
TRUST2	1.000	5.000	.831	5.666	-.035	-.120
TRUST3	1.000	5.000	.924	6.303	.125	.426
TRUST4	1.000	5.000	.907	6.187	-.218	-.742
TRUST5	1.000	5.000	.818	5.578	-.253	-.863
TRUST6	1.000	5.000	.803	5.473	-.104	-.355

### C. Validity and Reliability Assessment

Reliability is a measure of internal consistency in scale items. In this study composite reliability (CR) was used to assess the construct reliability. For reliability to hold for any given factor its CR value and its Cronbach's alpha value is recommended to be greater than 0.70. In this study CR values (Table 11) and Cronbach's alpha values (Table 12) for all factors were above the suggested threshold of 0.70.

Convergent validity which is a subtype of construct validity assesses whether measures that should be related are in reality related. In the assessment of convergent validity Average Variance Extracted (AVE) was utilized. For convergent validity to hold AVE values must be greater than 0.50. In this study AVE values (Table 11) for all factors were found to be greater than 0.50; therefore, it can be concluded that convergent validity assumption holds for each construct.

**Table 11:** Composite Reliability and Validity Assessment

<b>CONSTRUCTS</b>	<b>CR</b>	<b>AVE</b>
Bonding (BOND)	0.906	0.616
TRUST (TRUST)	0.903	0.607
SATISFACTION (SAT)	0.891	0.672
COMMUNICATION (CMN)	0.895	0.631
COMMITMENT (CMT)	0.903	0.652
EMPATHY (EMP)	0.887	0.663
CUSTOMER LOAYLTY (CL)	0.932	0.632

**Table 12:** Reliability assessment (Cronbach's alpha)

Bonding (BOND)	6	0.904
TRUST (TRUST)	6	0.902
SATISFACTION (SAT)	4	0.891
COMMUNICATION (CMN)	5	0.894
COMMITMENT (CMT)	5	0.902
EMPATHY (EMP)	4	0.887
CUSTOMER LOAYLTY (CL)	8	0.934

## D. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) is a statistical method which is utilized to verify the feature structure of a set of experiential variables. CFA enables to test the hypothesis that a relationship between observed variables and their underlying latent constructs exists. In this study Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was conducted in SPSS AMOS software package. The hypothesized CFA model is given in Figure 18. This CFA model was found after several re-specifications and re-estimations based on modification indices generated by AMOS software. As a result of model fitting process five items were removed from the model. These removed items were SAT1, CMN3, CMT1, EMP1, BOND5 and CL1.

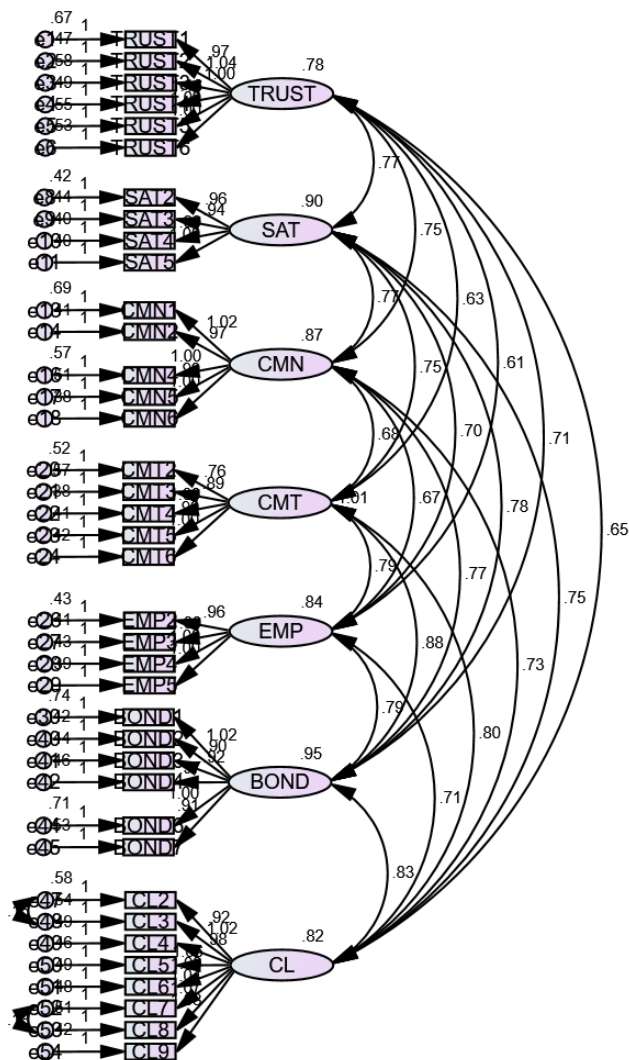


Figure 17: CFA Model

During CFA analysis the strengths of regression paths from latent constructs to their respective observed variables were assessed. These regression paths are given in Table 13. As it can be seen from this table all regression weights are highly significant with  $p < 0.001$ .

**Table 13:** CFA- Unstandardized Regression Weights

			<b>Estimate</b>	<b>S.E.</b>	<b>C.R.</b>	<b>P</b>
TRUST6	<---	TRUST	1.000			
TRUST5	<---	TRUST	1.086	.076	14.208	***
TRUST4	<---	TRUST	1.160	.077	14.996	***
TRUST3	<---	TRUST	1.000	.074	13.453	***
TRUST2	<---	TRUST	1.040	.072	14.417	***
TRUST1	<---	TRUST	.968	.076	12.722	***
SAT5	<---	SAT	1.000			
SAT4	<---	SAT	.993	.059	16.722	***
SAT3	<---	SAT	.939	.059	15.929	***
SAT2	<---	SAT	.957	.059	16.293	***
CMN6	<---	CMN	1.000			
CMN5	<---	CMN	.995	.064	15.649	***
CMN4	<---	CMN	1.000	.066	15.253	***
CMN2	<---	CMN	.966	.059	16.391	***
CMN1	<---	CMN	1.021	.070	14.546	***
CMT6	<---	CMT	1.000			
CMT5	<---	CMT	.993	.057	17.380	***
CMT4	<---	CMT	1.002	.056	17.851	***
CMT3	<---	CMT	.894	.059	15.054	***
CMT2	<---	CMT	.756	.054	13.928	***
EMP5	<---	EMP	1.000			
EMP4	<---	EMP	1.000	.063	15.815	***
EMP3	<---	EMP	1.000	.062	16.037	***
EMP2	<---	EMP	.958	.062	15.504	***
BOND6	<---	BOND	1.000			
BOND4	<---	BOND	.968	.067	14.373	***

**Table 13:** (con)CFA - Unstandardized Regression Weights

			<b>Estimate</b>	<b>S.E.</b>	<b>C.R.</b>	<b>P</b>
BOND3	<---	BOND	.923	.065	14.238	***
BOND2	<---	BOND	.896	.063	14.163	***
BOND1	<---	BOND	1.023	.077	13.242	***
BOND7	<---	BOND	.915	.067	13.597	***
CL6	<---	CL	1.000			
CL5	<---	CL	1.063	.069	15.477	***
CL4	<---	CL	.984	.067	14.705	***
CL3	<---	CL	1.015	.070	14.537	***
CL2	<---	CL	.920	.068	13.528	***
CL7	<---	CL	1.040	.069	15.137	***
CL8	<---	CL	1.067	.071	15.083	***
CL9	<---	CL	1.075	.068	15.853	***

Note: \*\*\* p < 0.001

Standardized form of regression weights is given in Table 14. Standardized regression weights are estimates that have been standardized so that the variances of dependent and independent variables are 1. These standardized coefficients show how many standard deviations a dependent variable will change, per standard deviation increase in the independent variable.

**Table 14:** CFA- Standardized Regression Weights

			<b>Estimate</b>
TRUST6	<---	TRUST	.773
TRUST5	<---	TRUST	.792
TRUST4	<---	TRUST	.827
TRUST3	<---	TRUST	.757
TRUST2	<---	TRUST	.801
TRUST1	<---	TRUST	.722
SAT5	<---	SAT	.831
SAT4	<---	SAT	.829
SAT3	<---	SAT	.803
SAT2	<---	SAT	.815
CMN6	<---	CMN	.835
CMN5	<---	CMN	.791
CMN4	<---	CMN	.777
CMN2	<---	CMN	.815
CMN1	<---	CMN	.752
CMT6	<---	CMT	.840
CMT5	<---	CMT	.841
CMT4	<---	CMT	.855
CMT3	<---	CMT	.766
CMT2	<---	CMT	.726

**Table 14:** (con) CFA - Standardized Regression Weights

		<b>Estimate</b>	
EMP5	<---	EMP	.826
EMP4	<---	EMP	.812
EMP3	<---	EMP	.819
EMP2	<---	EMP	.800
BOND6	<---	BOND	.756
BOND4	<---	BOND	.812
BOND3	<---	BOND	.806
BOND2	<---	BOND	.802
BOND1	<---	BOND	.757
BOND7	<---	BOND	.775
CL6	<---	CL	.790
CL5	<---	CL	.818
CL4	<---	CL	.787
CL3	<---	CL	.781
CL2	<---	CL	.738
CL7	<---	CL	.805
CL8	<---	CL	.803
CL9	<---	CL	.833

Another important estimate namely squared multiple correlations are given in Table 15. The squared multiple correlation is the communality estimate for an indicator variable. The squared multiple correlation measures the percent of variance in a given indicator variable explained by its latent variable. It can also be interpreted as the reliability of the indicator of a given latent variable. That is, the higher this indicator, the more reliable the given indicator is. Indicator with low squared multiple correlation value may be subject to removal from the model. Table 15 shows that squared multiple correlation of all indicators are well above 0.50. For instance, it is estimated that the predictors of CL9 explain 69.3 percent of its variance. In other words, the error variance of CL9 is approximately 30.7 percent of the variance of CL9 itself.

Table 15. CFA- Squared multiple correlation

Indicators	Estimate
CL9	.693
CL8	.645
CL7	.648
CL2	.545
CL3	.609
CL4	.620
CL5	.669
CL6	.625
BOND7	.600
BOND1	.574
BOND2	.644
BOND3	.650
BOND4	.660
BOND6	.571
EMP2	.641
EMP3	.671
EMP4	.659
EMP5	.682
CMT2	.527
CMT3	.587
CMT4	.730
CMT5	.707
CMT6	.706
CMN1	.566
CMN2	.665
CMN4	.604
CMN5	.625
CMN6	.697
SAT2	.664
SAT3	.644
SAT4	.687
SAT5	.690
TRUST1	.522
TRUST2	.642
TRUST3	.573
TRUST4	.684
TRUST5	.627
TRUST6	.597

There are several model fit metrics that can be used to determine goodness-of-fit CFA model. Commonly utilized metrics are CMIN/DF, Comparative Fit Index (CFI) and the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA). Table 16 provides suggested threshold for these metrics (Hu and Bentler, 1999; Hair et al. 2010) as well as goodness-of-fit statistics of the proposed model. By considering the metrics of CMIN/DF, CFI and RMSEA it can be concluded that proposed model is a well-fitting model.

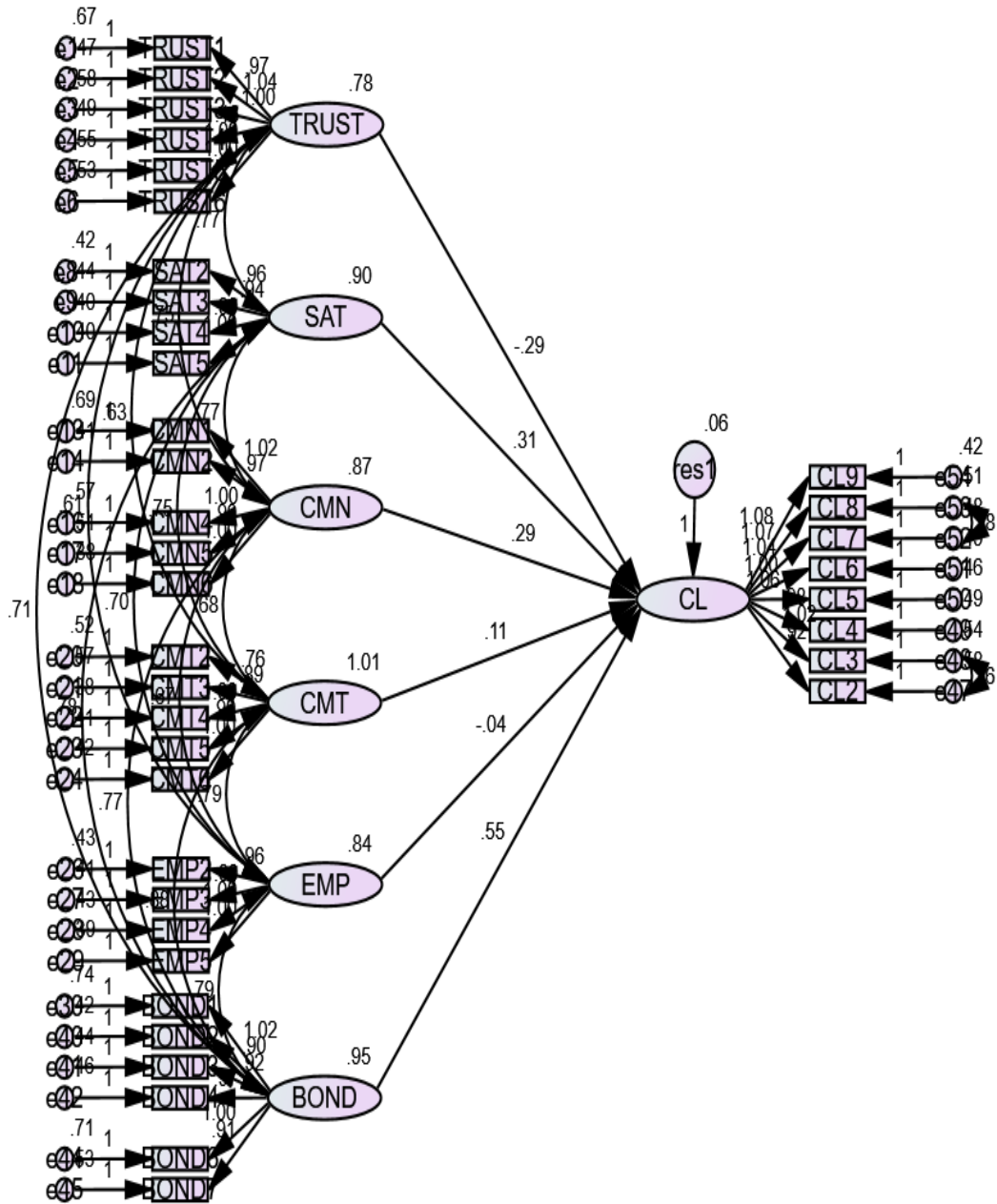
**Table 16.** Model of fit metrics for CFA model

<b>Measure</b>	<b>Threshold</b>	<b>Current Study Model</b>	<b>Remarks</b>
CMIN/DF	<3 good; <5 permissible	1.851	acceptable
CFI	>0.95 great; 0.90 traditional; >.80 permissible	0.938	acceptable
RMSEA	<0.05 good; 0.05-0.10 moderate; >0.10 bad	0.055	acceptable

### **E.Path Analysis**

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) which is also known as measurement model analyzes relationship between latent variables and their associated measures. On the other side, path analysis, also known as structural model, analyzes the relationship between stated latent variables. Figure 19 shows structural model of the study. Metrics on the regression lines between latent constructs are beta coefficients. Beta coefficients which are standardized form of the regression weights were utilized to discuss the results. Standardized coefficients show how many standard deviations a predicted variable will change, per standard deviation increase in the predictor variable.





**Figure18: Structural Model**

Model fit metrics for structural model is provided in Table 17. The values of CMIN/DF, CFI and RMSEA metrics showed that proposed structural model is a well-fitting model.

**Table 17:** Model of fit metrics for Structural model

Measure	Threshold	Proposed Model	Remarks
CMIN/DF	<3 good; <5 permissible	1.851	acceptable
CFI	>0.95 great; 0.90 traditional; >.80 permissible	0.938	acceptable
RMSEA	<0.05 good; 0.05-0.10 moderate; >0.10 bad	0.055	acceptable

Table 18 which is given below shows the regression weights of structural model. Based on this table the following statements summarizes the research findings based.

Trust (TRUST) ( $\beta_{TRUST}=-0.294$ ,  $SE=0.160$ ,  $p=0.066$ ) was not found to have any significant impact on customer loyalty in the civil aviation industry.

Satisfaction (SAT) ( $\beta_{SAT}=0.309$ ,  $SE=0.140$ ,  $p=0.028$ ) was found to have significant positive impact on customer loyalty in the civil aviation industry.

Communication (CMN) ( $\beta_{CMN}=0.289$ ,  $SE=0.109$ ,  $p=0.008$ ) was found to have significant positive impact on customer loyalty in the civil aviation industry.

Commitment (CMT) ( $\beta_{CMT}=0.105$ ,  $SE=0.096$ ,  $p=0.275$ ) was not found to have any significant impact on customer loyalty in the civil aviation industry.

Empathy (EMP) ( $\beta_{EMP}=-0.042$ ,  $SE=0.093$ ,  $p=0.650$ ) was not found to have any significant impact on customer loyalty in the civil aviation industry.

Bonding (BOND) ( $\beta_{BOND}=0.545$ ,  $SE=0.137$ ,  $p<0.001$ ) was found to have significant positive impact on customer loyalty in the civil aviation industry.

**Table 18: Structural Model Regression Weights**

			<b>Estimate</b>	<b>S.E.</b>	<b>C.R.</b>	<b>P</b>
CL	<---	TRUST	-.294	.160	-1.840	.066
CL	<---	SAT	.309	.140	2.200	.028
CL	<---	CMN	.289	.109	2.644	.008
CL	<---	CMT	.105	.096	1.091	.275
CL	<---	EMP	-.042	.093	-.453	.650
CL	<---	BOND	.545	.137	3.972	0.001

The squared multiple correlation value of dependent variable is given in Table 19. Squared multiple correlation shows the part of the variance in the predicted variable which is predictable from the predictor variables. It is assessed that the predictors of Customer Loyalty (CL) explain 92.9 percent of its variance. That is, the error variance of Customer Loyalty (CL) is nearly 7.1 percent of the variance of CL itself.

**Table 19: Squared Multiple Correlation of Dependent Factor**

<b>Dependent Factors</b>	<b>Estimate</b>
Customer Loyalty (CL)	0.929

### **F. Hypotheses Testing:**

The summary of hypotheses analysis is given in Table 20. Data analysis showed that three out of six proposed hypotheses were statistically significantly supported.

**Table 20: Summary Of Hypotheses Testing**

Hypotheses	Description	Remarks
H1	Trust positively influences customer loyalty in the civil aviation industry.	Not Supported
H2	Satisfaction positively influences customer loyalty in the civil aviation industry	Supported
H3	Communication positively influences customer loyalty in the civil aviation industry.	Supported
H4	Commitment positively influences customer loyalty in the civil aviation industry.	Not Supported
H5	Empathy positively influences customer loyalty in the civil aviation industry.	Not Supported
H6	Bonding positively influences customer loyalty in the civil aviation industry.	Supported

## **VI. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION**

### **A. Discussion of finding and conclusion**

This section shows the summary results of the study that includes the hypothetical descriptions and analytical points. Determining the impact RM orientations on customer loyalty civil aviation industry of Turkish airline was the aim of this study.

Perry (1983) accepted, "relationship promoting as a procedure of engaging and maintaining clients and fortifying relations with them, taking into account that pulling in new clients as an intervening advance during the time spent relationship showcasing, and thinking of it as a social procedure that works through associations among various gatherings in the motivation of exchange trades". Along these lines, we infer that relationship showcasing is related to reinforcing relations with clients. The common flight industry of Turkish carrier was picked for agent purposes just and the outcomes don't really sum up to other industries.

The thought behind this examination was to investigate the relationship between six independents factors including trust, satisfaction, bonds, empathy, commitment and communication and one dependent variable named customer loyalty in the common flying industry of Turkish carrier. Besides, reviewing the literature, which was done on a related topic, six hypotheses were proposed dependent on the mentioned variables and related collecting data was done through an online survey.

According to the customers background information of the study, in this study descriptive statistics (i.e., frequencies, percentages) were used to provide summary information about the study sample. On the other side, Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was used to test the study hypotheses. Primary data has been obtained for analysis of research questions and hypotheses testing purposes. In total there were 279 responses participants of the survey. As this study made use of quantitative research techniques, Likert type survey has been implemented. Received responses represent both genders equally (64.2% of males and 35.8% of females). The age of

the respondents varied from 18 to 51 years and (35.8%) of them single. (44.1%) of the respondents graduated. 47 (16.8%) respondents were an officer. Where the main purpose of travel was a pleasure at the top of the list with 86(30.8%) answers, where choose online travel agent was at the top of the list with 67(24.0%) answers. Where have the airline loyalty program by respondents, where most of the answers were none. The most important factor when choosing an airline by respondents, where the price was at the top of the list with 75 (26.9%) answers, where travel frequency per year highest was from 0 to 2 times (47%) and the lowest was more than 5 times 50 (17.9%).

The impacts of RM orientations were analysed through CFA and SEM analysis processed through SPSS AMOS statistical software. Within the scope of CFA standardized regression weights were calculated. It intends to measure the extent to which observed variables represent latent variables. Overall, outcomes represent considerable contribution.

Before the statistical analysis, validity and reliability tests have been applied to this study. These tests are significant for quantitative research that focuses on measurement issues of the factors. Validity analysis helps to check if variables are being measured in an accurate manner. Meanwhile, reliability does check if the results are free of the measurement error. The factors within this research demonstrated adequate validity and reliability.

Another step that should not be omitted in quantitative research is data screening process. This step was vital as it is important to make sure that the obtained data is clean and useable. Two data screening methods have been implemented: normality and multicollinearity assessment. Within the scope of normality assessment skewness and kurtosis of the results have been evaluated and the data met normality criteria. At the same time, it is important to make sure that the variance within independent variable does not represent overlapping. Accordingly, for data to be usable, multicollinearity should not exist. Based on linear regression analysis no multicollinearity issues were found. As a result, collected data was considered usable, valid and reliable for further statistical analysis.

SEM analysis covered hypotheses testing that included both global and local tests. For conducting global tests, model fit and R- squared have been analysed.

Model fit assessment demonstrated good fit and based on R-squared analysis it was concluded overall, predictors explain respective variable relatively well. After global test, local test took a place in term of p-value analysis.

According to the summary of hypotheses testing, three of the proposed hypotheses were statistically and significantly supported and three were unsupported that based on the conceptual model of the study.

Three variables (IV), satisfaction, communication and bonding, had significant positive effect on customer loyalty (DV) and another three variables, trust, commitment and empathy, did not have any significant effect on customer loyalty.

Satisfaction as RM feature demonstrated positive impact ( $p < 0.028$ ) on customer loyalty, on other hand, trust as RM feature did not show any significant impact on customer loyalty ( $p > 0.05$ ). Communication as RM feature showed significantly positive impact on customer loyalty ( $p < 0.008$ ). Bonding feature showed significantly positive impact on customer loyalty ( $p < 0.001$ ). Lastly, empathy didn't show any significant impact on customer loyalty ( $p > 0.05$ ).

Finally, this outcome supports the findings of some previously conducted studies. Clarke (2001) found that customer satisfaction is actually no more than the price of entry to a category. For satisfaction to be actual, it must be able to create faithfulness among customers. McIlroy and Barnett (2000) stated that a suggestive idea to think about when building up a client loyalty program is customer satisfaction. Accordingly, consumer satisfaction isn't an accurate indicator of loyalty. Satisfaction is essential but not an adequate condition of loyalty. In the other words, we can have customer satisfaction without loyalty, but it is too hard or even difficult to have loyalty without satisfaction. In light of the examination, it very well may be inferred that satisfaction is identified with the degree of customer loyalty in the civil aviation industry of Turkish airlines positively.

Furthermore, communication had a positive significant impact on customer loyalty in the civil aviation industry of Turkish airlines. In the other words, communication is viewed as a significant part of effective connections and improves accomplices' capacity to adjust their desires and recognitions. This outcome is in accordance with contemplates by (Rule and Keown, 1998). Hutt et al. (2000) noticed that communication among limit spreading over the workforce delivers a mutual

translation of desires and objectives and a typical understanding of the procedures and duties important to accomplish those objectives. Communication, as conceptualized by Mohr et al. (1996), contains a blend of relationship-building correspondence characteristics. These incorporate correspondence recurrence, bi-directionality, convention, and impact exercises. Therefore, in light of the outcomes over the elevated level of correspondence with clients will expand their degree of unwaveringness in the common flight industry of Turkish aircraft. At long last, in view of the discoveries referenced above, the bond could legitimately influence clients' steadfastness in Turkish airline Company. It implies whenever saw bond by the clients is high, their steadfastness toward the carrier organization will be high.

Some studies support this result, as showed by Wilson (1995), bonding can be set into two categories: social bond and structural bond. Social bond has several measurements containing social collaboration, closeness, relationship and performance satisfaction. The factor of bonding as it applies to relationship marketing comprises of creating and upgrading customer loyalty, which results legitimately in feeling of care, a sense of belongs to the relationship, and by implication one might say of having a place with the organization (Sin et al., 2002), based on the findings of this study, it can be completed that bonds have significant positive influence on loyalty level of customers in civil aviation industry of Turkish airlines.

## **B. Limitations and recommendations for future research**

Primarily, this thesis work tried to depict the effects of RM features on customer loyalty. Even though obtained results seem encouraging as any study it has its limitations. First of all, the data that was used for analysis has been obtained based on accessibility.

Secondly, the survey of this study was based on the self-reported responses.

Thirdly, only six RM features (based on collected literature within study scope) have been analysed in current study. There might other critical RM features that impact customers' loyalty in considerable way.

Taking into consideration the above-mentioned limitations future researchers may conduct new studies with improved models and hypotheses that will let to have



a better understanding of civil aviation. It will be interesting to direct future researches to have mixed outcomes that will include both customer and management perspectives. In this way, we will be able to see the picture as a whole and fill in existing gaps in a more efficient manner.

Despite the fact that structural equation modelling requires a minimum of 200 responses as a sample size, covering large samples will help to represent a bigger portion of the population and generalize outcomes. If the research will be considered at a later point in time, the sampling frame needs to be taken in mind if the aim of the research is to make a general conclusion for the entire population.

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## **APPENDIX**

### **APPENDIX A – Demographic Questions**

## APPENDIX A – Demographic Questions

### Dear Participants,

We are conducting a survey of the Impact Relationship Marketing on Civil Aviation Industry of Turkish Airlines. In the following questionnaire, we would like to know your attitudes and behaviours related to satisfaction and loyalty about the Turkish Airline. This survey is a part of our master thesis, and your kindly help is crucial for our successful completion of this research project. Your responses will be anonymous; data will be combined and analyzed as a whole. Please attempt to answer all the questions and click one appropriate box that best suits your perspective for each statement. Your participation in the study will be greatly appreciated. Thank you very much for your time and assistance.

### \* Required

#### 1-Gender: \*

Male

Female

Other:

#### 2- Your Age: \*

18-25      26-35.      36-50      5   1   +

#### 3 Marital Status \*

Single      married

#### 4- Educational qualification \*

Primary School:

High School:

Undergraduate:

Graduate (Master level):

PhD level:

#### 5-Occupation\*

Business partner / owner:

Self-employed:

Officer:

Worker:

Director:

Unemployed:

Retired  Housewife:  Other (please specify). .....

**6- What is your main purpose of travel? \***

Business Pleasure Family Study Other (please specify)

**7-How do you normally book your flights? \***

Travel agent. Ticket office. Airlines own website. Online travel agent  
Price comparison website. Other (please specify)

**8- Are you part of an airline loyalty program? \***

Yes. No

**9-Most important factor when choosing an airline \***

Price Safety and security Service quality Flight schedule  
Reputation Travel agency arrangement Frequent flier card

**10-Travel frequency per year \***

0 to 2 times 3 to 5 times More than 5 times

This section contains statements that measure the impact of relationship marketing on customer loyalty.

Please indicate your opinion as per the level of disagreement or agreement using 1 to 5 scale guidelines. 1= Strongly Agree 2= Agree, 3= Neutral, 4=Disagree, 5= Strongly Disagree

**1- Trust**

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	<b>STRONGLY AGREE</b>	<b>AGREE</b>	<b>NEUTRAL</b>	<b>DISAGREE</b>	<b>STRONGLY DISAGREE.</b>
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I have confidence in the civil aviation's service of Turkish airline.	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
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The civil aviation of Turkish airline fulfils its obligations to customers.	1	2	3	4	5
Turkish airline is an airline that fulfills my expectations.	1	2	3	4	5
Turkish airline has safe aircraft.	1	2	3	4	5
The civil aviation of Turkish airline's promises are reliable.	1	2	3	4	5
Turkish airline employees are always at my disposal.	1	2	3	4	5

Source: (Mikulic J ,2017)

## 2 - Satisfaction

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEUTRAL	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE.
I'm satisfied with the price's tickets of Turkish airline.	1	2	3	4	5
I feel comfortable dealing with the civil aviation of Turkish airline.	1	2	3	4	5
Turkish airline is keen to achieve customer satisfaction throughout the period of dealing with them	1	2	3	4	5
I'm satisfied with	1	2	3	4	5

Turkish airline offices compared to competitors, thanks to the role of customer relationship management.					
I feel completely satisfied with dealing with this company.	1	2	3	4	5
The method of treating company employees with customers is very satisfactory.	1	2	3	4	5

Sources: (HakJun Song,2019), (Ching-Fu Chen,2019)

### 3-Communication

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEUTRAL	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
Turkish airlines keep me informed about new services and promotions.	1	2	3	4	5
Turkish airline provides timely and trustworthy information.	1	2	3	4	5
Turkish airline allows to communicate with its customers and listen to their	1	2	3	4	5

---

concerns

Turkish airline always uses communication tools such as; social media, telephone and email to inform its customers of its new services and offers.	1	2	3	4	5
Customers can easily send complaints and suggestions by connecting to multiple channel.	1	2	3	4	5
Turkish airline provides accurate information.	1	2	3	4	5

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Source: (Mikulic J,2017)

**4-Commitment:**

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	<b>STRONGLY AGREE</b>	<b>AGREE</b>	<b>NEUTRAL</b>	<b>DISAGREE</b>	<b>STRONGLY DISAGREE.</b>
Turkish airline offers me more benefits than other carriers.	1	2	3	4	5
At other carriers, I would have to pay more.	1	2	3	4	5

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I choose Turkish airline to collect miles and get a reward.	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
I feel emotionally attached to Turkish airline.	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
At Turkish airline, I feel like being part of a family.	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
I have a sense of belonging to Turkish airline.	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>

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Source: (Mikulic J ,2017)

### **5-Empathy:**

	<b>STRONGLY AGREE</b>	<b>AGREE</b>	<b>NEUTRAL</b>	<b>DISAGREE</b>	<b>STRONGLY DISAGREE.</b>
My complaint caused the customer service representative to have feelings of concern for me.	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
This customer service representative really understood my feelings.	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
This customer service representative tried to adopt my perspective.	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
This customer service representative put himself (herself) in my shoes.	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>

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This customer service representative seemed to personally care about me a great deal.	1	2	3	4	5
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Sources:( Françoise Simon,2013)

### 6-Bonding:

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEUTRAL	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE.
Turkish airline sends mail in occasions.	1	2	3	4	5
Turkish airline's employees are perfectly honest and truthful with customers	1	2	3	4	5
The friendliness of the staff makes me feel good	1	2	3	4	5
I am familiar with the employee(s) that perform(s) the service in Turkish airline's offices	1	2	3	4	5
I enjoy visiting Turkish airline's offices	1	2	3	4	5
I have developed a friendship with Turkish airline's employees	1	2	3	4	5
Turkish airline always searches most reasonably priced solution for me.	1	2	3	4	5

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Sources:( Laith Alrubaiee ,2013)

**Customer loyalty:**

	<b>STRONGLY AGREE</b>	<b>AGREE</b>	<b>NEUTRAL</b>	<b>DISAGREE</b>	<b>STRONGLY DISAGREE.</b>
Turkish airline provides me excellent service quality.	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
No airline company offers better service than Turkish airline.	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
Turkish airline offers me better benefits than others airline.	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
I recommended to my friends to deal with Turkish airline for its premium service.	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
I'm proud to deal with this company.	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
Turkish airline is the first airline that I contact when I need to travel.	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
Whenever possible, I choose Turkish airline.	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
Turkish airline is always my first choice for business travel.	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
Turkish airline is the best airline I am currently dealing with.	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>

Sources: (HakJunSong,2019) , (Ching-FuChen,2016)

**APPENDIX B – Ethical Approval Form**

## RESUME



### Rakan Saleh Ismail Alqhaiwi

#### Personal Information:

- Nationality : Jordanian
- Date of Birth : 26 - 11 - 1990
- Place of Birth : Jordan - Amman
- Marital Status : Married

#### Contact Details:

- Mobile : +90 (554)1528982
- Telephone : +962 799 35 74 67
- Address : Jordan - Amman
- Email : [Rakan.qhaiwi90@gmail.com](mailto:Rakan.qhaiwi90@gmail.com)

#### Objective:

- I am self-motivated, ambitious and eager to learn. I am a responsible individual with strong communication skills and work ethics besides being creative, focused and highly determined. I am willing to take responsibility and work independently. At the same time, I can work well in teams.

#### Academic Qualifications:

- [Istanbul Aydin University](#) (Feb. 2020)  
[MBA English](#), degree (3.13)
- [Petra University](#) (2012 – 2016)  
BSc of Business Management, GPA (3.1)

- [The University of Jordan](#) (April. 2017)  
Certified National TOEFL, degree (80)

**Training Courses:**

- [Talal Abu Ghazaleh Organization - Dec.2016](#)  
[Certified](#) PMP “Project Management Professional “

**General Skills:**

- Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, and Power Point)
- Business writing and correspondence
- Excellent time management
- Self-motivated and fast learner
- Willing to work under pressure
- Good public relations and team work appreciation
- Able to work within a group of different nationalities

**Languages:**

- English : Very Good in reading, writing, and understanding.
- Arabic : Mother Tongue.