

Investigating the relationship between customer loyalty and relationship sales in industrial markets (Case Study of Saipa Automobile Company)

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Abstract: Marketing is an organizational function or task and a set of processes for creating, communicating, and delivering value to customers. In the last two decades, we have witnessed a paradigm shift in marketing. So that communication trends now ensure the success of a company. In today's world, buyers face many questions and ifs when making decisions in the purchasing process. The diversity of different goods and products has caused customers to face many choices. On the other hand, companies have realized that the cost of attracting new customers is five times the cost of retaining current customers and losing a customer is not just losing a single sale, but beyond that, losing the entire flow of purchases that the customer could have made throughout his life. Since the early 1980s, many companies have turned to establishing sustainable interactions with their suppliers and other stakeholders, and then in early 1983, the term relationship marketing was first introduced. Relationship marketing has emerged from the reconceptualization of marketing interactions and from transforming the transactional attitude into an attitude based on creating permanent and collaborative relationships with the customer. The dependence between the buyer and the seller and the development of long-term relationships were raised as key features of industrial marketing since 1970. From 1980 to 1990, relationship marketing theories were presented and since 1990 the concept of relationship marketing has been expanded. Therefore, customer retention and establishing long-term relationships with them were considered. Since the provision of services required establishing direct relationships with service recipients, researchers analyzed customer loyalty while establishing sustainable interactions with them. Finally, with the emergence of total quality management issues in 1980, manufacturers sought to reduce the number of suppliers and, as a result, receive the required raw materials with higher quality and lower cost, which required establishing relatively sustainable interactions with suppliers.

Keyword: Customer Loyalty, Relationship Selling, Industrial Markets, Saipa Automobile Company

Introduction

Marketing can be classified into two categories: "transactional marketing" and "relationship marketing". Transactional marketing is defined as a short-term approach that focuses only on current transactions. In transactional marketing, the focus is on sales and product features, and customer service, loyalty and customer

commitment are less important, and quality is only related to production operations. The definition of relationship marketing by the American Marketing Association is: "Relationship marketing is the conscious marketing of developing and managing long-term and reliable relationships with customers, suppliers and distributors, and other factors in the marketing environment. The application of the concept of relationship marketing is increasing. The highly competitive characteristics of today's business environment have led to the creation of stronger company-customer relationships. Relationship marketing is strongly supported by the emerging trends in modern business. Reports show that more and more companies are investing in stronger company-customer relationships to obtain valuable information about how to provide good service to customers. Building customer relationships creates mutually beneficial rewards for both the customer and the company. By establishing customer relationships, an organization can obtain quality sources of marketing information for better marketing strategy planning. It is important to test the real impact of relationship marketing sub-items on customer loyalty through observation and experience. Some departments achieve better customer-company relationships and higher levels of customer loyalty. Iranian companies face fundamental problems in attracting and retaining customers that prevent them from establishing proper relationships with them. Among the problems that Iranian companies face are intense competition between them and not having enough information about customers to prioritize them based on customer information and provide them with the services they need. In fact, the proposed and possible solutions that Iranian companies face include the ability to provide timely and important information about customers, address their complaints, and be flexible in providing appropriate solutions when problems arise, so that customers can use the services of a company continuously and for a long time and maintain their loyalty to that company by meeting their needs. With the help of the results of this study, more practical solutions can be proposed to commercial companies, especially the aforementioned company, in relation to creating customer loyalty.

Relationship Selling

In recent years, research has expanded on identifying factors that are effective in the field of customer loyalty. In most cases, customer loyalty is vital for the success of business organizations because attracting new customers is usually more expensive than retaining existing customers, and in most research conducted by many authors, it has been suggested that loyal customers should be maintained as a competitive asset, and one way to strengthen this is by creating a sincere, appropriate and strong cooperative relationship between sellers and buyers, or in other words, relationship selling. (Crosby & Bryson, 2018)

Iranian organizations are now more in need of strategic change and transformation than ever before. Environmental opportunities and threats have shown their effects on the Iranian economy more than ever before. Organizations are in dire need of changing their internal organizational mechanisms with the needs and demands of customers in the process of gaining a suitable competitive position.

In studying successful strategic plans in the world, the pace of change from product-oriented to customer-oriented can be clearly identified. Today, organizations must embrace the idea of change and respond to it dynamically in order to maintain their competitive power in today's world. In such an environment with intense and increasing competition, attracting new customers and retaining existing customers is a very difficult task. In addition, since the cost of acquiring a new customer is between 5 and 7 times the cost of retaining an existing customer, organizations must implement mechanisms to be able to retain their current customers well. In the meantime, using relationship selling and focusing on it to create an effective connection with customers and influence and influence them can lead to increased customer loyalty and increase the customer's lifetime value for the organization. Today, customers can easily learn about the services and products of another organization with a single click of the mouse, and therefore do not hesitate to choose another organization due to the greater attractiveness of its products and services with its conditions (Dyson, 2017). The main focus of this research is relationship selling, which is focused on achieving customer loyalty. In this section, an attempt has been made to examine the concepts of relationship selling and customer brand loyalty, as well as models that can show the impact of relationship selling on customer loyalty.

Relationship Selling Philosophy

The philosophy of relationship sales can be examined from several perspectives:

Tactical dimension:

Relationships are used as a tool to promote sales. In this regard, we can mention the development of information technology to create various aspects of loyalty. Although the implementation of such projects is costly, it creates a very good opportunity to create loyalty and profitability for the company. (Graham, 2019)

Strategic dimension:

The purpose of relationships is to connect with customers and create loyalty among customers. Today, most senior managers of organizations ask their customers to contact them and share their needs. For example, the head of the North American division of Pepsi-Cola calls and talks with at least four customers daily. (Ebrahimi, 2017)

Philosophical dimension:

From a philosophical perspective, establishing these relationships goes to the heart of the sales concept, which is customer-centricity and is based on their needs and expectations. To better understand the concept of relationship selling compared to what was discussed in traditional sales, consider the following example: Consider a competitive market such as the automobile industry, where manufacturers intend to produce their cars in a traditional manner in terms of design principles, comfort, safety, speed, and power and make them appear different in the eyes of customers. Other manufacturers also intend to make their products appear different by providing after-sales service and providing warranties. However, there are also manufacturers who intend to give advice on various fields, such as how to finance the purchase of a car, maintenance, insurance, replacement, or even sale, based on their knowledge of the customer, his background, and interests, and thereby gain his trust and establish stronger relationships with the customer (Venus & Safaian, 2014). Therefore, in modern sales, services do not only include after-sales services, but also aim for comprehensive services that include 3 stages: before the sale, during the sale, and after the sale. The sum of these services is the basis of marketing and customer retention.

Relationship sales factors

According to Grönroos (1991), the adoption of relationship selling creates many changes in the structure of the company and its interactions. He lists eight relationship selling factors as follows:

1. Sales resources and variables: In relationship selling, the company is not able to predict the set of variable sales factors. Rather, it must use its resources to create appropriate sales, considering the nature of the relationships it has with each customer, in such a way that the result of its actions will lead to customer satisfaction and create value for them. (Abbasi, 2011)

2. Product: In relationship selling, the company should not rely on a prefabricated product, but should develop its resources (such as employees, technology, etc.) and create a system that, through optimal resource management during the growing relationship with customers, provides services that will satisfy the customer.

3. Organizational structure in relationship selling, sales should not be a separate organizational unit, but sales knowledge should be developed throughout the organization. Although sales professionals are required to perform some set of tasks such as consulting senior managers (for decision-making).

4. Outsourcing: The implementation of relationship sales in companies should be outsourced and carried out by part-time sales professionals. In this regard, the company should ensure that these professionals perform sales tasks with a customer-oriented attitude.

5. Sales planning in relationship sales, planning should not be in the form of traditional sales plans, but understanding and understanding customer orientation and building relationships with customers should be present in planning.

6. Paying attention to each customer in relationship sales, sales decisions and activities should not be based on traditional market segmentation techniques, but selecting a customer and providing service to him should be based on a customer database and data mining. (Moradi, 2015)

7. Information sources in relationship sales, the company should obtain its information through face-to-face relationships that sales employees have with customers.

8. Communication attitude: For the successful implementation of relationship sales in the organization, it is necessary to combine the term sales with other titles (such as managing the company's mutual relationships with customers) that apply. It is customer-friendly and should be replaced (Grönroos, 2009).

Elements of Relationship Selling

The goal of relationship selling is to create, maintain, and develop relationships with customers and other stakeholders. In these relationships, a series of norms must be observed. Commitment, trust, and mutual benefit are the main elements of communication. Cooperation, confidence, and two-way relationships are also emphasized. According to Grönroos (1994), sales must move from hanging the customer by the hand to a real connection and sharing information with him. Therefore, compared to traditional sales, the relational, helpful, and fair sales model provides "win-win" results for both marketers and customers. Other researchers have expressed different opinions. Theodore Levitt (1983) stated that sales is not only about completing a transaction, but also about having a good relationship. If we want the relationship to remain successful and the customer to be the center of attention, we must

arouse the customer's heartfelt interest. For this reason, many companies have developed their products and added additional services to them in order to differentiate themselves from their competitors. Additional services are valued by the customer. Also, the improvement and quality of service provided to the customer is an essential element in relationship sales. A set of factors The above-mentioned create an effort that results in "the customer returning to the company."

Morris and others have identified the elements of relationship selling as follows:

- **Commitment:** A sustained willingness to make every effort to maintain the relationship.
- **Trust:** Confidence in the truthfulness and honesty of a transaction partner.
- **Disclosure:** A willingness to share information that is useful to both parties.
- **Relationship value:** Relationships are categorized into different levels, from partners whose relationship is friendly and based on mutual cooperation to those whose relationship is competitive and hostile.

Definition of Loyalty

Loyalty is a situation where a consumer has a high level of attachment to a supplier and a high rate of repurchase over time. Customer loyalty is defined as the customer's relative attitude towards a brand or a store and the repeat purchase. According to Bell and Rhee, customer loyalty is an important indicator of the health of a store. Trying to define loyalty is more difficult than it seems. The main problem is to distinguish whether loyalty is a behavioral variable or an attitudinal variable. The word loyalty brings to mind concepts such as affection or affection, honesty and integrity, or commitment (Bennett, 2004).

Customer loyalty is an important concept that will lead to customer retention, repurchase, and ultimately a long-term relationship. The use of satisfaction as a proxy measure of loyalty has been very common, because it is assumed that satisfaction has a positive effect on purchase intentions. However, research indicates that it is naive to assume that dissatisfied customers are lost and satisfied customers remain loyal. In fact, Reichheld has shown that many customers, regardless of whether they are satisfied or very satisfied, will decline. Again, it has been shown that many customers who appear to be satisfied with a particular brand do not repeat their purchases or have purchased other brands.

Such behavior may be due to variables such as choice, convenience, price, and income. This suggests that attitude-based measures of loyalty (satisfaction) are poor indicators or measures for predicting customer behavior. Furthermore, it casts doubt on the concept of 100% loyalty and instead suggests that a customer may be loyal to two or three brands in each product category.

According to Cartwright, loyal customers are those who are attached to a particular product. Nash states that the sign of customer loyalty is that customers return. Loyalty occurs when customers strongly feel that the organization in question can best meet their needs, so that competing organizations are excluded from the customer's set of considerations (Duffy, 1998). For example, a person may buy fewer cars as they get older and their desire to drive decreases. While these measures provide a more accurate picture of where (on what brand) and how much money a customer spends, researchers say loyalty reflects a commitment to a brand that may not be reflected in measures of repeat behavior. More specifically, behavioral measures have been shown to be ineffective in determining the factors that generate repeat purchases. In other words, behavioral measures are inadequate in explaining why and how brand loyalty is created or modified. The sales research literature examines loyalty as a combination of one-dimensional (general loyalty), two-dimensional (attitudinal and behavioral), and four-dimensional (cognitive, affective, conative, and practical) dimensions. Before 1970, experts focused only on the behavioral dimension, loyalty being seen as a process of repeated purchases.

Types of Loyalty

Loyalty is a continuum from complete to complete indifference. Suppose there are four products A, B, C, D in the market:

Very loyal customers: Customers who buy one product all the time: A, A, A, A, A, this type of loyalty is represented.

Relatively loyal or temporary customers: Consumers who remain loyal to two or three products. A, A, B, B, A, B represents this type of loyalty.

Instable loyalty: Consumers who, after purchasing from one brand several times, purchase another brand continuously. That is, as: A, A, A, B, B, B.

Disloyal: Consumers who are not loyal to a brand and their purchases are as A, B, C, D, E. Dick and Basu believe that it is necessary to focus on attitudes of dependence rather than abstract and absolute attitudes in the discussion of loyalty; because the evaluation of a product or service may depend heavily on absolute perception and

recognition. They developed a model for loyalty in which the two attitudinal and behavioral approaches are somewhat aligned. Therefore, based on this matrix, four loyalty situations are defined;

a) Loyalty

Loyalty is a situation where a consumer has a high dependence on a supplier and his repurchase rate per unit of time is also high.

b) Latent loyalty

A situation where there may be a deep dependence on a brand, but this state is not accompanied by a high rate of purchase or no purchase is made at all.

c) Disloyalty

There is no favorable attitude towards a supplier and the purchase rate is low.

d) False loyalty

In this case, there is no positive attitude towards the supplier, but for various reasons the person is forced to buy that product.

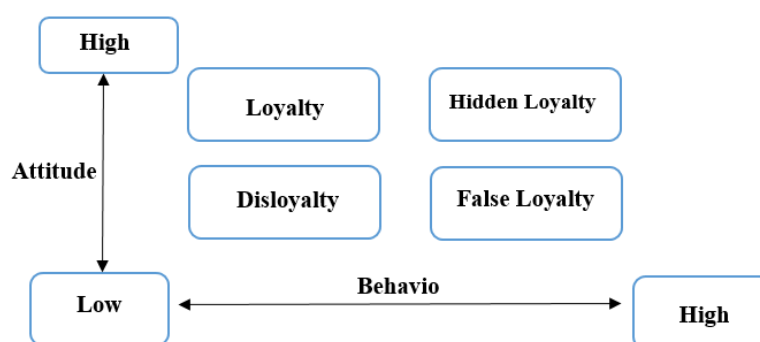


Figure1. States of Loyalty

The fourth approach is a hybrid approach. In this approach, loyalty is measured by customer consumption performance, brand preference, purchase frequency, total purchase amount, and the most recent purchase. Using this method increases the power of correctly predicting customer loyalty (Haghighi, 2010).

Early approaches to customer loyalty focused on repeat purchases or the likelihood of repurchasing a product. However, gradually, criticisms were made by researchers such as Day and others that repeat purchases may be caused by the lack of alternative choices for the customer, and in response to such criticisms, researchers suggested that loyalty be measured through attitudinal dimensions in addition to behavioral dimensions. In commercial service organizations, reasons such as: fewer customers, more continuous use of services by them, the high importance of maintaining and strengthening long-term relationships between the organization and customers, closer and deeper relationships with customers, and customer professionalism have made it very important to pay attention to the factors affecting customer loyalty to these organizations (Alipour, 2010).

Customer loyalty

Loyalty is the extent to which customers want to maintain their relationship with a supplier and usually results from how much customers believe that value occurs when customers fully feel that the organization in question can meet their needs in the best possible way, so that competing organizations are virtually excluded from the customer's set of considerations and purchase exclusively from the organization. (Rezaian, 2007).

It should be noted that a satisfied customer is a good source for company advertising. In other words, experts in sales science have listed many benefits for loyalty, some of the most obvious of which are: reducing the costs of attracting new customers, reducing customer sensitivity to changes and prices, benefits from customer lifetime value, positive performance through increased predictive power, and increasing barriers to entry for new competitors.

Increasing customer loyalty can reduce sales costs and increase customer demand. In addition, loyal customers are more likely to do word-of-mouth advertising, counter strategies, and generate higher profits for the company.

The customer return rate is a vital component in the life cycle value analysis, a tool for providing short-term decision-making, so calculating the profit of each customer is very important for the organization, but considering the philosophy of unlimited activity of the organization, it is better to consider this calculation in a long-term concept. The most important features of successful global companies are accurate knowledge of customers, proper definition of the target market, the ability to encourage employees to improve quality and care for customers.

Producing and providing high-quality services at a reasonable price plays an important role in service industries. In fact, today, customer satisfaction and service quality are considered vital issues in most service industries. Providing high-quality services at a reasonable price at a high level continuously creates a competitive advantage for such organizations, including creating competitive barriers, increasing customer loyalty, producing and providing differentiated services, reducing sales costs, and setting higher prices, etc.

Fullerton considers business customer loyalty to consist of two parts:

A) Behavioral loyalty: The intention of business customers to repurchase services and products from the service provider, and their intention to maintain relationships with the provider.

B) Attitudinal loyalty: The level of psychological dependence and attitudinal defense of the customer towards the service provider. The characteristics of this type of loyalty are: positive word-of-mouth advertising, encouraging others to use that product or service. In a study, the classification provided by Fullerton regarding loyalty has been stated.

He proposes two levels of service loyalty:

Employee loyalty: The customer's relationship with the employees who serve him can be stronger than the relationship of the same customer with the organization. This loyalty is more dynamic and complex than the common models in the field of loyalty and includes important personal and social aspects.

Organizational loyalty: Commitment to the service provider can be an important driver for loyalty to the organization in service industries (Allam, 2003).

Stages of Loyalty

According to some researchers such as Oliver, loyalty should be considered as a process, not an outcome. He identified loyalty in four stages: cognitive, affective, volitional and practical loyalty. The first three are components of the attitudinal approach, and each stage shows a deeper degree of loyalty.

1- Cognitive loyalty: It is based on information about the product that is available to the customer and is a weak form of loyalty.

2- Affective loyalty: It is based on the customer's feelings and commitment to a product. This means that customers have an attachment to the product that is based on more knowledge. Affective loyalty is a function of customers' emotional attitudes towards the product. If customers have a positive attitude towards the product, they will develop affective loyalty. Although cognitive elements have positive effects on affective loyalty, affective loyalty is deeper than cognitive loyalty.

3- Volitional loyalty: It is the customers' behavioral tendency to use a product in the future. This stage of loyalty is driven by repurchase intentions versus activities such as recommending the company to others. Customers who are emotionally loyal to a product may not purchase that product. Reichheld's research results showed that although 80 to 90 percent of customers who are satisfied with their chosen product, only 40 percent repurchase that brand. This indicates that emotional loyalty is not a perfect predictor. Intentional loyalty is a stronger predictor than cognitive and affective loyalty. This explanation suggests that customers may be satisfied with different brands in the same product category and therefore be emotionally loyal to those brands. Although volitional loyalty is a volitional measure of behavioral loyalty, it seems to be a stronger predictor of behavioral loyalty than cognitive and affective loyalty.

4- Action loyalty: The final stage of loyalty in which "action" is the necessary result of the intersection of the previous three stages (Alipour and Shahrastani, 2009).

Benefits of customer loyalty

If an organization can increase customer loyalty to its products and services, it will create many benefits for itself.

These benefits include:

1- Cost savings: Loyal customers are familiar with your business. They know how to do business with you. The way they use your resources is more efficient.

2- Referrals: Customers who are familiar with your brand will introduce it to their friends and acquaintances. Loyal customers will never hesitate to recommend it to their friends and neighbors.

3- Complaining instead of leaving: Loyal customers are like brand shareholders, when they encounter a bad experience with a product or company, they complain and follow up on the issue until they make sure that the

problem they want is resolved. Because they believe in the brand and feel that it is their brand and they want to improve it. Therefore, they will complain instead of abandoning that brand by participating.

This is a very important opportunity in today's business environment where customers are very disloyal.

4- Channel Transfer: Loyal customers usually purchase their products through different channels. One of the most important channels today is the Internet. Today, most companies use Internet sales in addition to traditional sales. Loyal customers who are familiar with a particular brand; usually tend to purchase through different channels, and this leads to increased demand for them and reduced costs for the company.

5- Spontaneous awareness: Loyal customers keep the company name in their minds and strongly remember the brand they are interested in. This in itself leads to increased customer share and retention. It also helps to increase referrals and bring in new customers (friends and acquaintances).

6- Greater awareness of the assets of a brand: Loyal customers tend to be more aware of the collateral benefits (support) of a brand. This awareness of the benefits of support with the same hidden assets of the brand affects customer share and retention. These customers tend to remain loyal to the brand because they feel they are getting more value. Receiving more value is a function of understanding the services offered by communicating with managers and benefiting from those services.

Other researchers have stated the benefits of customer loyalty for the manufacturer as follows:

1- Customers with low price sensitivity

2- Improving the profitability of the organization

3- Reducing marketing costs: Loyal customers reduce marketing costs through word-of-mouth advertising, recommending the company's products and services to others, and because they know the company's products and have awareness, they need less information.

4- Increasing company sales: Loyal company customers are likely to make more purchases than customers who are not loyal (Shahrestani and Alipour, 2009).

Statistical population

In this study, the target population in this study includes all Saipa customers in Tehran. And regardless of any gender, age, or literacy level, a sample should be taken from these people. For this purpose, the number of these customers in the second half of 1402 was considered, and their number was estimated at 26,000 people. According to the standards of the Cochran formula, 384 people were considered as the sample size. The sampling method in this study is simple random.

Instrument specifications

The instrument we used in this thesis is a questionnaire with a five-option Likert scale, the questions of which were extracted from our article, and each has the following number of questions.

Table 1. Research Component Questions

Component Name	Number of Questions
Customer Loyalty	14 Questions
Relationship Selling	12 Questions

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics Gender

Gender Number	Number	Frequency (Percentage)	p-value
Female	224	60.01	P<0/05
Male	160	39.99	
Total	384	100	

Out of the 384 individuals, 160 were women and 224 were men (Table 2). Also, the one-sample chi-square test result showed that there was a significant difference between the ratio of men and women; therefore, the individuals were not gender homogeneous.

Table 3. Marital Status of Individuals

Marital status	Number	Frequency (Percentage)	p-value
Single	282	69.1	P<0/05
Married	102	30.9	
Total	384	100	

Out of the 384 individuals, 282 were single and 102 were married (Table 3) Also, the result of the one-sample chi-square test showed that there is a significant difference between the proportion of single and married people; therefore, people are not homogeneous in terms of gender.

Confirmatory factor analysis of the relationship sales model questionnaire

In this section, we will conduct a confirmatory factor analysis of the extracted factors related to the customer loyalty and relationship sales questionnaire scale among Saipa customers.

Measuring the research model

In this section, we will examine the reliability of the conceptual model constructs using Cronbach's alpha and convergent validity.

The results of this analysis are given in the table 4.

Table 4					
Construct Name	Number of Questions	Symbol	Factor Loading	Cronbach's Alpha	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Trust		A1	0.961	0.946	0.861
		A2	0.918		
		A3	0.906		
		A4	0.925		
		A5	0.964		
Customer Satisfaction		A6	0.949	0.958	0.889
		A7	0.966		
		A8	0.914		
		A9	0.909		
Commitment		A10	0.936	0.941	0.85
		A11	0.867		
		A12	0.973		
		B1	0.959		
		B2	0.872		
Loyalty Customer	12	B3	0.94	0.987	0.852
		B4	0.929		
		B5	0.916		
		B6	0.947		
		B7	0.897		
		B8	0.932		
		B9	0.909		
		B10	0.945		
		B11	0.968		
		B12	0.89		
		B13	0.949		
		B14	0.865		
Relationship Selling	12	A1	0.961	0.983	0.844
		A2	0.918		
		A3	0.906		
		A4	0.925		
		A5	0.964		
		A6	0.949		
		A7	0.966		
		A8	0.914		
		A9	0.909		
		A10	0.936		
		A11	0.867		
		A12	0.973		

According to the values obtained from Cronbach's alpha in the table above, it can be concluded that each of the scale structures of the relationship sales and customer loyalty questionnaire has appropriate internal consistency. Therefore, at this stage, the reliability of this questionnaire and its components is accepted. Also, the convergent validity for all components is higher than 0.7, which indicates an appropriate value. Also, considering the presence of factor loadings with a coefficient higher than 0.4 for all questions in different components, we conclude that the questions have calculated the components correctly to a desirable extent.

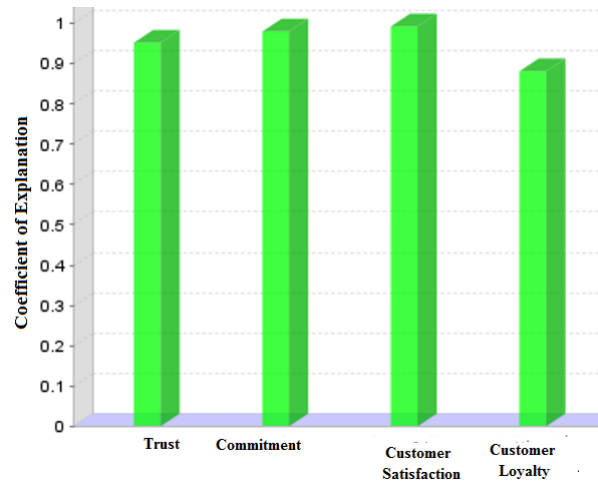


Figure 2. Coefficient of Explanation

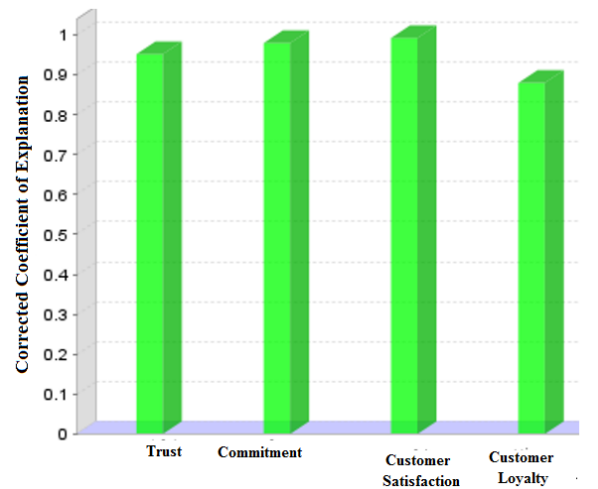


Figure 3. Corrected Coefficient of Explanation

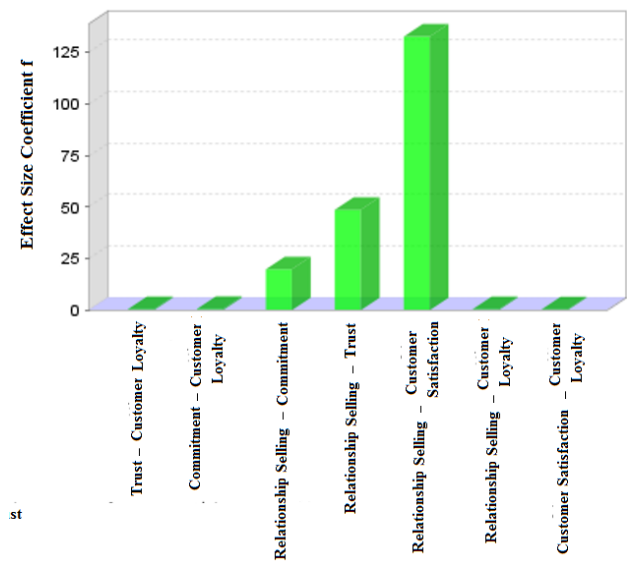


Figure 4. Effect Size Coefficient f

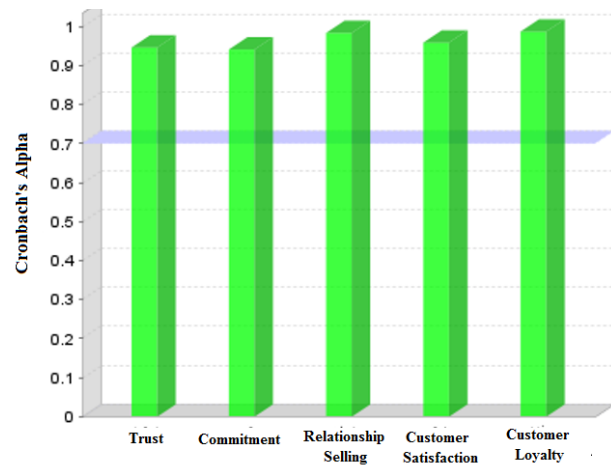


Figure 5. Cronbach's Alpha

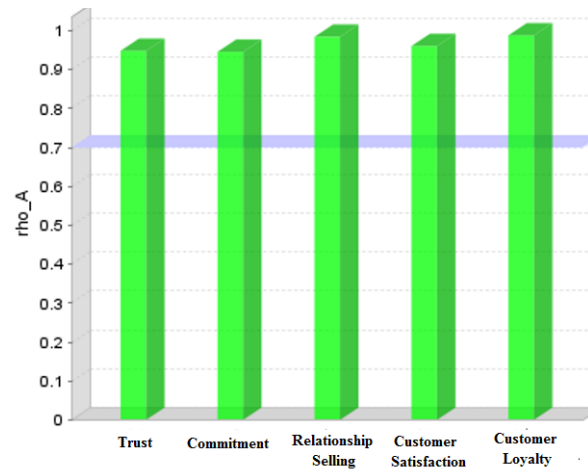


Figure 6. Rho-A

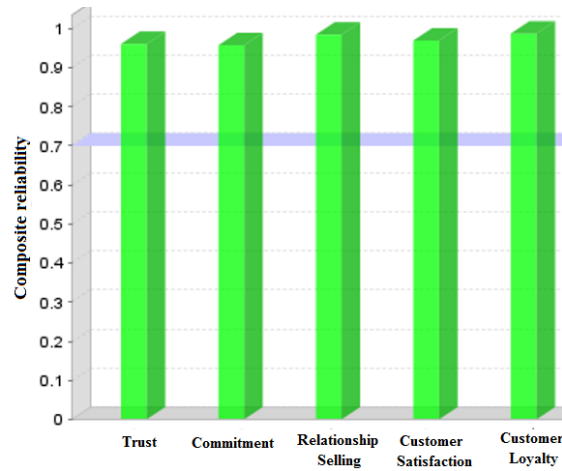


Figure 7. Composite Reliability

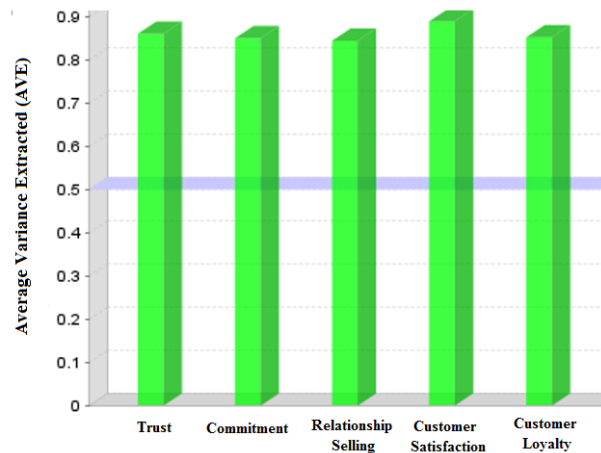


Figure 8. Average Variance Excluded (AVE)

Discussion and Conclusion

Relationship marketing includes all the tools needed to inform customers about different offers and new brand options. It also creates strong customer relationships by receiving referrals from existing customers and does not only include strategies to increase the number of consumers, but also goes beyond these. It includes processes or steps such as customer experience management, customer acquisition process management, targeted information, automation tools for marketing, the relationship between customer relationship management tools, etc. These processes combine to create the desired relationship of strategies and tools. Its impact is not specific to a specific product or service offered by the brand but affects the entire company. And it all depends on the mental image that the brand in question has created and of course the trust that relationship marketing can create or destroy.

Relationship marketing is actually about creating long-term relationships with customers. And this type of marketing serves the changing needs of the customer, satisfies them and makes them happy. Every step that leads to retaining and attracting new customers is considered and these steps should also be aligned with the vision and idea of the company. Customers should feel it as a responsibility but they should also be truly connected to the company and the brand. This method creates a meaningful and long-term approach based on relationship marketing towards customer retention.

There are three main factors for success in relationship marketing. You will find that these factors are internal because relationship marketing is an internal effort on the part of the company to connect with its customers.

1) Market Knowledge

If you do not know the realities of the market, you cannot deliver something according to the expectations of the customer. The needs and wants of the customer can only be understood after a thorough study of the market. Today, many companies offer accessories for mobile phones and laptops. This is because these companies were the first to realize that accessories that come with mobile phones and laptops do not satisfy customers. Instead, the customer is looking for accessories that match his personality. This has led to the boom of the accessories sector with the presence of many people all over the world. So for an organization focused on relationship marketing, market intelligence is the key to success.

2) Training Programs

Relationships are built by people. And people are prone to human error. So how can you ensure that your relationship marketing efforts are going as you wish? You train them through training programs that have been tested and proven to have positive results.

Recently, on an airline flight, some passengers were behaving badly. When the flight attendant was asked what she would do in such a situation, her response was that she was a professional and was trained to handle such situations. The flight attendant went to the group of misbehaving passengers and approached the oldest person in the group and asked them to be polite and courteous because their behavior was disturbing the other passengers. She immediately understood and the group became alert. Therefore, training in how to handle such situations is important in building a long-term relationship.

3) Empowering Employees

The worst case scenario is when a customer is really angry with the company and the employee (who is the face of the brand in front of the customer) is unable to make a decision because he is not in a good position to make such decisions. Delaying the decision-making process will only make the customer angrier and frustrated.

So, even though training is important, success in relationship marketing also depends on empowering your employees so that they are able to make quick decisions and make the customer happy. To emphasize it once again, a single person, even if he is empowered, cannot help the customer. Therefore, for success in relationship marketing, along with empowerment, teamwork is also essential. These three factors are the secret to success in relationship marketing. Implementing a relationship marketing plan is important for an organization, regardless of whether it is small, medium or large scale.

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