

A Review of Literature on Relationship Marketing

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ARTICLE HISTORY

Paper Nomenclature:

Review of Literature (RoL)

Paper Code (DOI): Not Available

Originality Test Ratio: 07%

Submission Online: 10-April-2019

Manuscript Acknowledged: 20-April-2019

Originality Check: 28-April-2019

Peer Reviewers Comment: 18-May-2019

Blind Reviewers Remarks: 27-May-2019

Author Revert: 01-June-2019

Camera-Ready-Copy: 05-June-2019

Editorial Board Citation: 11-June-2019

Published Online First: 15-June-2019

EDITORIAL BOARD EXCERPT Initially at the Time of Submission (ToS) submitted paper had 15% plagiarism and after rectification it was reduced to 07%, which is an accepted percentage for publication. The editorial board is of an observation that paper had a successive close watch by the blind reviewer's which at a later stages had been rectified and amended by authors (Subodh, Jyoti, Madhulika & Shailza) in various phases as and when required to do so. The reviewer's had in a preliminary stages remark with minor revision which at a short span restructured by the authors. The comments related to this manuscript are tremendously noticeable related to the **Relationship Marketing** both subject wise and research wise by the reviewers during evaluation and further at blind review process too. The authors have crafted the paper in structured manner. Investment in relationship marketing is of significance for the improved customer's satisfaction and building long term relations with them. The paper gives a clear perspective on the conceptual foundation about the essence of relationship marketing practices and its application. By and large all the editorial and reviewer's comments had been incorporated in paper and further the manuscript had been earmarked and decided under "**Conceptual Based Study**" category as it highlights and emphasize the literature work in relation to the relationship marketing and its essence..

ABSTRACT The purpose of this paper is to provide academicians and practitioners a review on the essence of relationship marketing practices. This paper reviews an extant literature from the reputed database in the domain of relationship marketing. Out of them a few empirical papers are shortlisted and reviewed and analyzed for the study. The authors find that investment in relationship marketing is significant for the improved customers' satisfaction. That in a way provides competitive edge over others by ensuring long term sustainability of returns. With the changing marketing scenario of the today's' competitive world relationship marketing has been going through various changes. Maintaining relations has been of more significance than ever before. To survive in today's competition firms should invest substantially in building and maintaining long term relationships.

KEYWORDS Relationship Marketing | Relationships | Customer

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<https://doi.org/10.18311/gjeis/2018>

Volume-10 | Issue-3 | July-Sep, 2018 | Online ISSN : 0975-1432 | Print ISSN : 0975-153X

Frequency : Quarterly, Published Since : 2009

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Introduction

In customer-based competitive world of today with increasing customers' expectations, where businesses strive to gain a larger market share through more satisfied customers, Marketing activities has been more important than ever before. Over the last years there has been a shift from considering customers as passive audience to appreciating them as active players. This transportation is an important implication for Relationship Marketing. Making a good relationship is an essential element for every corporate to survive in this competitive era. Now a days organizations moving from transactional marketing to relationship marketing instead of attracting short-term customers try to build relationships with their customers for long-term. Building stronger relationships with customers provides the basis for understanding the evolving requirements of customers and identifying the most appropriate ways of satisfying them better than the other competitors that in a way provides greater opportunities for realizing superior performance. Centre of Relationship Marketing is making most out of the existing customer base for long term profitability and retaining them through developing relationships to maintain an edge in the market. Essence of Relationship Marketing is creation of stronger relationships that enhance performance outcomes including sales growth, market share, profits, return on investment, and in turn customer satisfaction.

Relationship Marketing Definition

The concept of Relationship Marketing came into light two decades earlier and is well-known to the marketers as well as academia. The definition of Relationship Marketing has varied from year to year. The term 'Relationship

Marketing' was popularized by Berry in 1983, he defined it as a process of attracting, maintaining and continuously enhancing relationships with customers in multi-service organizations. Then in 1990, Gronroos defined it as the process of maintaining relationships with not only the prospect customers as well as with other stakeholders and partners at a profit, so that the objectives of the all the parties involved are met. In 1994, Morgan and Hunt defined relationship marketing vital to build and manage successful rapport with various stakeholders. In 2007, Ndubisi defined it as the process to build long term relationships and mutual networks with stakeholders. In 2011, Gilaninia et al, defined it as the process to develop and control a long lasting relationship that is built on trust. In 2015, Hoang Diep To Lan identified that relationship marketing can be seen as one of the most important strategies in the field of marketing as well as one of the most vital sources of enhancing market share and gaining competitive advantage.

Review of Literature:

Review of literature has been done in order to assess the potential and impact of relational marketing efforts. The research papers available on Relationship marketing on B2B and B2C perspective from reputed database such as SAGE, TAYLOR AND FRANCIS, EMERALD, PROQUEST, SPRINGER, ELSEVIER are reviewed and out of which few were shortlisted and finalized for the study. The results of various empirical studies are discussed, categorized and organized in chronological order in the following table.

S. No.	Author	Objective	Research Methodology	Findings
1.	Robert Palmatier, Srinath Gopalakrishna et al, (2006)	To examines the customer specific marginal returns of Relationship Marketing on investment in a business to business context	Primary data was collected from 313 business customers covered by 143 salespeople employed in 34 selling firms. Several variables of relationship marketing were tested through the personal interviews from the sample.	Social relationship marketing expenditure has a direct and significant impact on the profits earned. They are critical and more beneficial to the sustainability of the businesses and pays off handsomely.
2.	Genevieve Catherine Myhal and Jikyeong Kang et al, (2008)	To assess the customers perception on the relationships quality in a business-to-business setting	A quantitative case study approach was used for a subgroup of 55 medium sized customer companies of UK operating from pure service provisions to industrial production. In total 208 items related to the customers' perceptions of relationship quality were identified and then classified & tested into seven dimensions.	Relationship quality is important to the long term maintenance and evaluations of relationships. Maintaining better quality of business relationships with customers offers a competitive edge and like other corporate assets it should also be managed strategically.
3.	Apisit Chattananon and Jirasek Trimetsoontorn, (2009)	To assess the impact of relationship marketing on the business performance of firms	Primary data was collected through mail surveys from a sample of 250 salespeople employed in 30 steel pipe firms for quantitative analysis and in-depthinterviews of 15 sales managers were conducted for qualitative analysis.	Relationship Marketing is perceived as a critical factor for the firms and there exists a significant relationship between the various relationship marketing constructs and firms' performance.
4.	Georgina Whyatt and Ralph Koschek, (2010)	To assess the impact of relationship marketing strategies from the retailers' perspectiveon their profitability.	Primary data was collected through Interviews from 7 senior marketing managers of supermarkets.	Implementation of relationship marketing strategies is considered to be worthier than previously believed. In retailing sector building relations with customers is found to be a key element essential for building trust between both the parties i.e. for retailers as well as for customers.
5.	Le Nguyen Hau and Liem Viet Ngo, (2012)	To assess the impact of Relationship Marketing orientation on the satisfaction of customers	Primary data was collected Responses through online survey of 174 executives in business to business firms	Relationship marketing orientations has a significant impact on the satisfaction of customers. Amongkey components of relationship marketing orientation, bonding, trust, shared value, and reciprocity has positive influence on customers' satisfaction.



6.	Thirunavukkarasu Veinampy and Sivsan Sivanandamoorthy, (2012)	To examine the relationship between customer relationship marketing and the satisfaction of customers	Reponses were collected from primary survey of 130 respondents through closed-ended questionnaires and secondary data were collected through various books, journals and magazines etc. Regression and correlation analysis were done to measure the relationship between the dependent and independent variables.	Functionality of services, service quality and satisfaction of customers are significant elements in relationships building. There exists a positive and a significant relation between relationship marketing and satisfaction of customers.
7.	Michael A. Jones, Kristy E. Reynolds et al, (2015)	To investigate the consumers' overall attitude towards Relationship Marketing	Primary data was collected by survey of 417 consumers living in the southern region of the USA.	Attitudes of consumers play an important role in decision to respond to the companies' Relationship marketing efforts. Consumers' overall attitude is positively associated with consumers' likelihood of developing a relationship with a Company. A large number of respondents (61.2%) choose a company that uses a relationship marketing strategy.
8.	Jonathan Z. Zhang, Georg F. Watson et al, (2016)	To assess the impact of relationship marketing strategy on the performance	Multivariate Hidden Markov model was applied to a six-year longitudinal survey and relationship performance data of 552 B2B relationships maintained by a Fortune 500 selling firm across a broad set of product category	Relationship marketing efforts and strategies positively impact the performance and provide managerial guidance regarding efficient & dynamic resource allocation.
9.	Abdolaziz Abtin and Mostafa Pouramiri, (2016)	To measure the impact of relationship marketing on the customers' loyalty enhancement	Primary data was collected through questionnaire from a sample of 180 customers of insurance services	Relationship marketing strategies can be used by companies to have a competitive advantage to attract new customers and to retain existing ones' through stable and long term and relationships and to get feedback from customers to improve their satisfaction and loyalty.

From the above stated Review of Literature it can be concluded that investment in social relations is beneficial to both the involved parties be it marketers or customers. Social expenditures done on relationship marketing efforts are necessary for the sustainability of business and they have direct impact on the profits earned. They pay-back well and their returns

are much higher than the expenses incurred. In B2B scenario these days implementation of relationship marketing strategies is considered to be worthier than previously believed, done well they can be translated into goodwill. Quality relations are important for the long term sustainability and maintenance and building trust among marketers and sellers and like

other corporate assets they should also be managed strategically. In B2C scenario it helps to get insights of the customers. That helps in improving long term relations which are positively related to the enhanced performances. Customers prefer companies following relationship marketing approach. Various constructs of relationship marketing are positively related to the customers' satisfaction that in turn results in the higher performances of the firms. It also provides managerial guidance regarding efficient & dynamic resource allocation that helps in managing long term relations that in way results in customer retention, loyalty and thus competitive edge over others.

Conclusion

According to Pareto rule, 80% of the profits are created by 20% of consumers (Johnson et al, 2006) and the rest of 20% of the profits are earned by rest of 80% of consumers. Therefore, those 20% of consumers are the company's core consumers, those should be identified and efforts should be made to retain them in order to get edge over competitors. Most of the researchers suggest that acquiring new customers is rather more expensive than keeping them. Customer retention is a powerful tool to achieve business success. The long term success of any firm is contingent upon the building as well as maintaining long lasting relationships with customers. The most important objective of relationship marketing is to keep customers interested and engaged in the firm's services and products through retailers and service providers. These days' customers are branching out significantly to explore the products they desire to purchase. Customers are more informative which helps them taking more rational decisions. Relational approach can be used to treat such customers in a way that makes them feel valued. In the vague of emerging customers' dynamics there is a prerequisite to identify such customers and maintain long term relations with them that will result in the long term benefits for both the firms as well as to them. Relationships itself becomes an important attribute of an offer rather than a byproduct of particular product. Hence maintaining

relations with today's customers is important than any particular transaction. Maintaining good relations with its stakeholders provides companies a competitive edge over others, enhanced customers' satisfaction & loyalty, improved firm's performance and thus higher returns. Therefore investment in relationship marketing is the need of the hour and relationships with various stakeholders should be maintained on ongoing basis.

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The Editorial Board had used the urkund plagiarism [<http://www.orkund.com>] tool to check the originality and further affixed the similarity index which is 7% in this case (See Annexure-I). Thus the reviewers and editors are of view to find it suitable to publish in this Volume-10, Issue-3, July-Sep, 2018

Annexure 1

Urkund Analysis Result

Analysed Document:	A REVIEW OF LITERATURE ON RELATIONSHIP MARKETING.docx (D53872186)
Submitted:	6/15/2019 12:02:00 PM
Submitted By:	skesharwani@ignou.ac.in
Significance:	7 %

Sources included in the report:

IoT 25jan without refferences.pdf (D47224667)
http://hrmars.com/hrmars_papers/The_Impact_of_Customer_Relationship_Marketing_on_Customer_Satisfaction_of_the_Arab_Bank_Services.pdf
<https://scinapse.io/papers/1999114301>

Instances where selected sources appear: 4

Citation

Subodh Kesharwani, Jyoti, Madhulika P. Sarkar and Shailza
 "A Review of Literature on Relationship Marketing"
 Global Journal of Enterprise Information System.
 Volume-10, Issue-3, July-Sep, 2018. (www.gjeis.com)

<https://doi.org/10.18311/gjeis/2018>
 Volume-10, Issue-3, July-Sep, 2018

Online ISSN : 0975-1432, **Print ISSN** : 0975-153X
Frequency : Quarterly, Published Since : 2009

Google Citations: Since 2009
H-Index = 96
i10-Index: 964

Source: <https://scholar.google.co.in/citations?user=S47TtNkAAAAJ&hl=en>

Conflict of Interest: Author of a Paper had no conflict neither financially nor academically.

