

Relationship Marketing Strategies of Some Selected Banks in Kolkata—Introspection

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Abstract

Relationship Marketing Strategy (RMS) which “strives to get the firm close to the customers in order to enable it to accurately and adequately discern and satisfy their needs” is one of the most innovative and dynamic marketing strategy that is being practiced by the banks of modern India in the present business environment marked by intense competition and complexity set in due to the liberalization policies of the successive Governments. The banks which have predominantly promoted the transactional trait of its operation, of late are focusing on the relational aspect of marketing as is evident in the following promotional efforts. The slogans of the banks viz. United Bank of India. The Bank that begins with U, United Commercial Bank-Honours your trust, Allahabad Bank-A tradition of trust, speaks about the effort being put in by the banks to not only attract customers but to retain them. To understand RMS thoroughly a study has been conducted on the cash/credit account holders of three Kolkata based banks viz. United Bank of India, Allahabad Bank and United Commercial Bank. A questionnaire was devised from previous studies and relevant literature was completed by 312 bank customers selected among 5508 customers via convenience sampling. Appropriate statistical tool was used to analyse the responses and study the impact on RMS of two key constructs (reciprocity and empathy). It was found out that the two variables have a significant impact and predict a considerable proportion of the variance in RMS.

Keywords: Relationship Marketing Strategy, reciprocity, empathy, Bank, Statistical Tool.

Introduction

The business environment in India has become more complex and competitive over the last few decades with the introduction of LPG (liberalization, privatization, globalization). And it is this environment that forces different organizations to adopt innovative marketing strategies-the most common being Relationship Marketing Strategy (RMS) which “strives to get the firm close to the customers in order to enable it to accurately and adequately discern and satisfy their needs” (Ndubisi et al, 2005) (www.emeraldinsight.com/0265-2323.htm). A successful ‘firm-customer relationship’ enables the firm to gather exclusive information about the customers’ needs and wants which is useful not only in serving the customers better but it also helps firms to achieve a competitive edge over its peers and rivals.

The environment of the banking business in India has undergone a sea change over the last three decades with the liberalization policies of the successive governments. The complex and competitive environment has resulted in a shift of the customers’ attitude as they have become highly demanding in respect of the banking products and services. And once dissatisfied with the banks, customers are not hesitating to switch their loyalty according to their own sweet will. The high customer turnover today is attributed to the fact that they have wider choice and easy access to multiple options owing largely to the technological revolution. Hence it has become necessary for the banks to devise comprehensive and all-inclusive marketing strategies



from ‘reaching out to retaining’ of customers with a special focus on the latter, which is evident in their various marketing endeavours.

The banks which have predominantly promoted the transactional trait of its operation, of late are focusing on the relational aspect of marketing as is evident in the following promotional efforts.

Name of the Bank	Promotional Campaign
United Bank of India	- The Bank that begins with U
United Commercial Bank	- Honours your trust
Allahabad Bank	- A tradition of trust
Union Bank	- Good people to bank with
State Bank of India	- Banker to every Indian
Bank of India	- Relationship beyond banking
Union bank	- Good people to bank with
Federal bank	- Your perfect banking partner
HDFC bank	- Bank aapki mutthi mein

Further and more importantly the banks of today, be it private or public, inevitably has a personal banking division headed by a Relationship Manager, offers redeemable bonus points for increased usage, provides facility of priority banking, has been opening up touch points (eg. SBI e-corner), are introducing digital application based mobile services (apps like Buddy), all these with a single motive, to establish, maintain and enhance a long-lasting mutually beneficial relational bond, not only to reach out, but also to retain customers. Keeping these in mind an effort has been made to find out the extent to which some selected Kolkata based Indian banks are practicing RMS as a tool to retain customer.

Literature review

The earliest known reference to influence of relationship on marketing could be traced to an educator and economist of business administration **Edmund McGarry’s (1951, 1953)** writings on ‘*Contactual Function*’ of marketing. McGarry was of the view that ‘*contactual*’ information formed the basis of cooperation/collaboration between buyer and seller. He opined that long-term, continuous relationship between buyer and seller help to develop a bond of mutual interest, besides, mutual confidence and respect can bring down the marketing cost by 10-20 percent. He further advocated that long-term cooperation/collaboration between the seller and buyer is a mechanism to increase marketing efficiency from the seller’s point of view.

In 1975 **Richard Bagozzi**, Professor of Behavioral Science in Management, Ross School of Business, University of Michigan, put forward the idea that exchange relationship can fall into three types of exchanges: restricted, generalized and complex. Restricted exchanges are about reciprocal relationships between two parties like customers and company or company representatives, generalized exchanges are about univocal reciprocal relationships between at least three actors like the middleman, the company and its customers, complex exchanges are

mutual relationships between at least three parties and are the closest to the concept of relationship Marketing.

The origins of modern relationship marketing can be traced back to a passage by **B Schneider (1980)** in which he observes: "What is surprising is that researchers and businessmen have concentrated far more on how to attract customers to products and services than on how to retain customers". The initial research was done by **C Gronroos (1982)** at the Swedish School of Economics who introduced what he called "interactive marketing". In 1989 Gronroos wrote, marketing is a mutual exchange and fulfillment of promises and it is through making promises and keeping them that trust develops and out of trust long-term relationships grow.

L Berry (1983) a distinguished professor of marketing at Texas A&M University and a former President of American Marketing Association, coined the term "Relationship Marketing" (RM). Berry emphasized the importance of maintaining and enhancing the relationships with existing customers in addition to creating new customers. He suggested five types of Relationship Marketing Strategies which are core service, relationship customization, service augmentation, relationship pricing and internal marketing.

First generation marketing theorist **Levitt (1983)** at Harvard wanted to broaden the scope of marketing beyond individual transactions. In practice, RM originated in industrial and B-2-B markets where long-term contracts have been quite common for many years.

Academics like **Jackson (1985)** at Harvard re-examined these industrial marketing practices and applied those to marketing proper. Besides above different scholars and academicians have listed and theorized key relationship drivers/constructs/variables like trust (**Moorman et al., 1993; Morgan and Hunt, 1994; Ndubisi, 2004**), Commitment (**Moorman et al., 1993; Morgan and Hunt, 1994; Ndubisi, 2004**), satisfaction (**Sheith et al., 1988**), Conflict Handling (**Dwyer et al., 1987**), empathy (**Ndubisi, 2004**) and many others through various marketing literatures.

The relationship drivers/constructs/variables chosen for the current study are **Reciprocity and Empathy** based on the following facts:

- (i) The mid level bank officials whom the researcher interviewed and who act as a link between the rank & file supplying ground level information to the policy makers stressed on the aforementioned traits.
- (ii) The customers spoken to by the researcher also corroborated the fact that they give importance to the variables chosen by the researcher.

Before deliberating on the issue it is thus pertinent to have some discussion on the independent variables Empathy and Reciprocity.

Empathy is the ability to see a situation from another person's perspective (**Wang, 2007**) or it is the 'capacity to share and understand another's 'state of mind' or emotion. It is defined as seeking to understand somebody else's desires and goals. It involves the ability of individual parties to view the situation from the other party's perspective in a truly cognitive sense (**Chattananon & Trimetsoontorn, 2009**). Empathy should not be equated with sympathy; marketers can be empathetic while still driving a hard bargain with customers (**Murphy et al., 2007**). In the networking literature, empathy has been considered as an independent variable in explaining franchisor–franchisee working relationships (**Sin et al, 2002**). It is often characterized as the ability to 'put oneself into another shoes', or in some way experience the outlook or

emotions of another being within oneself. As mentioned by **Parasuraman et al (1985,1988)** empathy is one of the important elements to measure the service quality in service industries. Thus it is so important to each bank manager to recruit staff with social skills that will assist the development of long standing relationship with the customers.

Empathy not only increases the level of quality of the relationship between customers and the organization, but also empowers the relationship to deliver superior value, which results in customer's repeat purchase, customer retention, and sustained loyalty.

As per the present study empathy towards the customers can be expressed by giving them individual attention, offering them convenient working hours, and providing attention to the needs and interests of the customers.

Reciprocity on the other hand is the dimension of a business relationship that causes either party to provide favours or make allowances for the other in return for similar favours or allowances to be received at a later date (**Callaghan et al, 1995**) which was also of the view of **Chattananon & Trimetsoontorn, 2009**.

It covers the bilateral contingency, interdependence for mutual benefit and equality of exchanged values aspects of social action between two individuals (**Lebra, 1976**) and can be regarded as 'social dualism' and 'mutual legal obligations of repaying' (**Malinowski, 1959**). **Houston et al. (1992)**, reinforced by **Ellis et al. (1993)** and acknowledged by **Smith and Jhonson (1993)** has indicated links of reciprocity and empathy to relationship marketing and exchange. Reciprocity and bonding are linked in that a reciprocal arrangement is indicative of cooperation.

The rule of reciprocity focuses on a recipient's behavior by the social norm expressed as "if you have received a drop of beneficence from other people, you should return to them a fountain of beneficence" (**Wang, 2007**).

The links of reciprocity to relationship marketing have been considered as a basis for the interface between exchange transactions and marketing activities. In fact, relationship marketing is characterized by ".....interactions, reciprocities, and long-term commitments" (**Sin et al, 2002**).

Reciprocity is promoted by the banks in the present study by taking timely action, communicating with customers properly and also by giving personal attention by the bank managers.

Objective of the study

The objective of this study is to investigate the influence of selected independent variables (Reciprocity, Empathy) on the dependent variable (relationship marketing strategy) of the selected banking branches in Kolkata Metropolitan area.

Research Hypotheses:

To give effect to the problem statement a number of null hypotheses have been formulated, stating that no relationship exists, as depicted in the conceptual figure 1. Alternative hypotheses have been formulated stating that relationship exists, as depicted in conceptual diagram.

Specifically the null and alternative hypotheses are:

Ho¹: There is no relationship between perceived Reciprocity and RMS in the selected banking branches in Kolkata Metropolitan area.

Ha¹: There exists a relationship between perceived Reciprocity and RMS in selected banking branches in Kolkata Metropolitan area.

Ho²: There is no relationship between perceived Empathy and RMS in selected banking branches in Kolkata Metropolitan area.

Ha²: There exists a relationship between perceived Empathy and RMS in selected banking branches in Kolkata Metropolitan area.

Hence in the current study the influence of each of the independent variable (empathy and reciprocity) on the dependent variable i.e RMS will be empirically tested. The researcher has further made an attempt to find out the impact of the sub-variables [4 sub-variables of Reciprocity viz Timely Action, Availability of Managers, Communication1 and Communication2, and 4 sub-variables of Empathy viz. Attention, Convenient Working Hours, Needs of Customers and Interest of Customers] of the independent variables (Reciprocity and Empathy) on the sub-variables of dependent variable Relationship Marketing Strategy [5 sub-variables viz. Satisfaction, Relationship Benefits, Cooperation, Bond, Pleasant Experience]. In other words the practicability of the conceptual framework of Figure 1 has been tested.

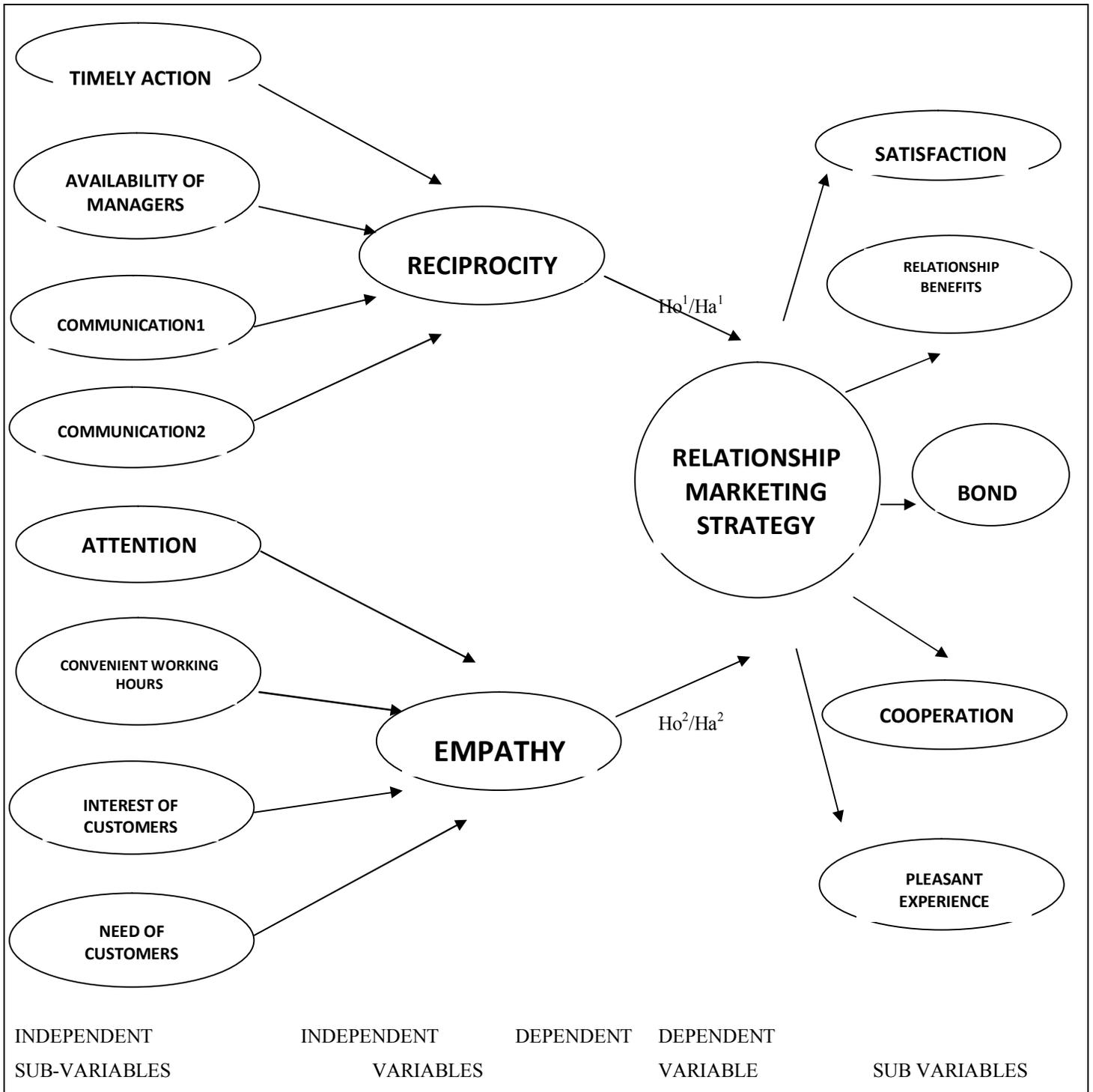


Figure 1 : Conceptual Framework

Research Methodology

A structured questionnaire was developed including some selected items from previous studies. In addition interviews were conducted with officers of the banks selected for the study in order to identify important aspects of Relationship Marketing to assist development of questionnaire items.

The questionnaire has two components- Part A and Part B.

The first part (i.e., Part A) contains five items to gather some relevant biographical information about the respondents viz., gender, age, qualification, annual income, and number of years of association with the bank.

The second part (i.e., part B) contains 13 items to gather the responses (i.e., the perceptions) of respondents on a five point scale (the response alternatives being, strongly disagree/disagree/neither agree nor disagree/agree/strongly agree) with respect to three aspects viz., Reciprocity [4 sub-variables viz Timely Action, Availability of Managers, Communication1 and Communication2], Empathy [4 sub-variables viz. Attention, Convenient Working Hours, Needs of Customers and Interest of Customers] and Relationship Marketing Strategy [5 sub-variables viz. Satisfaction, Relationship Benefits, Cooperation, Bond, Pleasant Experience].

The primary data collected have been intelligently collated, analysed and tabulated using appropriate statistical techniques with the help of a statistical software package, viz., **SPSS (version 20)**.

Data Sources

The researcher has chosen the public sector banks designated as scheduled commercial banks headquartered at Kolkata viz. United Commercial Bank, United Bank of India and Allahabad Bank. The reason being:

- (i) The study is based on banks in Kolkata.
- (ii) It helped the researcher design the questionnaire after talking to the officials who are involved in devising marketing strategies and policies.
- (iii) It is basically a perception study. Hence it was essential to identify the customers interacting frequently with the bank. Speaking with the aforementioned officials helped the researcher to identify such customers.

There are 351 branches of UCO (79), UBI (North + South =118) and Allahabad (154) Bank in Kolkata. 35 branches were chosen (representing 10% of the number of branches) from among the 351 branches in the following manner. The branches were selected based on the premise of Convenience Sampling.

United Commercial Bank	-	8 branches
United Bank of India	-	12 branches
Allahabad Bank	-	15 branches
Total		35 Branches

The customers chosen are those having current accounts enjoying cash/credit accounts/facilities, who utilize the aforementioned accounts for financing their working capital requirement and the accounts are active and transactions are regular in nature.

Information relating to 5508 Cash/Credit account holders was collected. Out of them contact details [telephone numbers (landline and cellular), e-mail i/ds] of 550 (i.e 10% of 5508) account holders could be gathered and contacted to. 384 respondents (i.e 70% of 550) actually responded out of which 312 (57% of 550) completed questionnaires were selected.

Tools for Data Analysis

Crosstabs and Chi-square -The researcher performed the Chi Square test for independence of attributes between two categorical variables which uses cross classification table to examine the nature of relationship between the variables (independent, and dependent).

Factor Analysis-Factor analysis is a statistical tool used to group variables with similar characteristics together. It helps to reduce large number of variables to a smaller number of manageable variables. The reduced number of factors is utilized to explain the observed variance in the large number of variables.

Correlation and Regression-The word “correlation” is used to denote the degree of association between the variables. In the current research the statistical tool has been used to find out the relationship between the individual independent variables (Reciprocity, Empathy) and the dependent variable (Relationship Marketing Strategy)

“Regression” is used to denote estimation or prediction of the average value of one variable for a specified value of other variable.

Pilot Survey:

The researcher conducted a pilot survey to verify the strength of the measuring instrument viz., the questionnaire. A total of 50 participants were chosen for the pilot test and reliability test was performed using Cronbach’s Alpha.

Reliability of a measure is an established tool for testing both consistency and stability. Consistency indicates closeness of the items measuring a concept. Cronbach’s Alpha is a reliability coefficient that indicates how well the items in a set are positively correlated to one another. The coefficient can range between 0 and 1. Closer the value of item to 1 greater is its reliability/consistency. In the present (pilot) study the three Key Constructs Reciprocity (4 items), Empathy (4 items) and Relationship Marketing Strategy (5 items) have coefficient scores of 0.748, 0.741, and 0.748 which indicates that the items within the Key Constructs are closely related, hence are consistent/reliable.

Empirical Survey and its Findings

The researcher then proceeded with the analysis of the data of the main survey. The Reliability test was performed using Cronbach’s Alpha on the responses of the 312 customers. The coefficient scores of 0.724, 0.713 and 0.722 respectively of the independent (Reciprocity and

Empathy) and dependent variable (Relationship Marketing Strategy) shows that the responses are consistent and reliable.

Cross tabulation and Chi Square test

Cross tabulation and Chi Square test were then performed in two stages to find out whether and how the sub variables (referred to earlier) of independent variables (Reciprocity and Empathy) and the sub variables (referred to earlier) of dependent variable (relationship marketing strategy) are related to each other. The null hypothesis being that, there is no statistically significant relationship between the sub variables of independent variables and the sub variables of dependent variable.

In the first instance the low p values ($p < 0.001$) obtained gave the strength to reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis that there is relationship between the sub variables of the independent variable Reciprocity and the sub variables of the dependent variable Relationship Marketing Strategy.

In the second instance the null hypothesis that there is no statistically significant relationship between the sub variables of the independent variable empathy and the sub variables of the dependent variable relationship marketing strategy is also rejected based on the low p values ($p < 0.001$) obtained.

Factor Analysis

Factor Analysis was then performed in three stages to reduce the number of variables into a manageable limit.

The tables showing the results are given below.

Table1: Factor Analysis - Reciprocity

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.744
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	242.654
	Df	6
	p value	<0.001

The value of KMO measure of Sampling Adequacy as shown in the table above for the variable *Reciprocity* is 0.744 which is acceptable hence factor Analysis is appropriate for this data.

The Bartlett's test of Sphericity tests the null hypothesis that original matrix is an identity matrix. The p-value for the variable *Reciprocity* is highly significant ($p < 0.001$) thus the null hypothesis is rejected. In other words there are relationships between the variables.

Table 2: Total variance explained - Reciprocity

Total Variance Explained						
Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	2.198	54.961	54.961	2.198	54.961	54.961
2	.715	17.875	72.836			
3	.615	15.382	88.218			
4	.471	11.782	100.000			

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

The above table shows the eigenvalues associated with each factor which represents the variance explained by that particular linear component. SPSS was used to extract factors having eigenvalues more than 1 which left us with one factor having actual eigenvalue of 2.198. The variance explaining capacity of that particular factor is 54.961 % which is satisfactory.

Table 3: Component Matrix: Reciprocity

Component Matrix ^a	
	Component
	1
RECIPROCITY: TIMELY ACTION:The bank responds to my requests in time	.670
RECIPROCITY:AVAILABILITY OF MANAGERS:The senior managers of the bank are always available for appointment	.819
RECIPROCITY: COMMUNICATION1:The employees of the bank communicate with me whenever I ask for	.735
RECIPROCITY: COMMUNICATION2:The bank always communicates the new and important banking information to me	.734

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

a. 1 components extracted.

The Component matrix above shows factor loadings against component 1 extracted earlier. All the loadings are significant as the values are more than 0.4. The order in which the customers considered the factors to be important is *Availability of Managers*, *Communication1*, *Communication2*, and *Timely Action*.

Table 4: Factor Analysis - Empathy

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.737
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	237.727
	Df	6
	p value	<0.001

The value of KMO measure of Sampling Adequacy as shown in the table above for the variable *Empathy* is 0.737 which is good hence factor Analysis is appropriate for this data.

The Bartlett's test of Sphericity tests the null hypothesis that original matrix is an identity matrix. The p-value for the variable *Empathy* is highly significant ($p < 0.001$) thus the null hypothesis is rejected. In other words there are relationships between the variables.

Table 5: Total Variance Explained - Empathy

Total Variance Explained						
Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	2.165	54.122	54.122	2.165	54.122	54.122
2	.792	19.812	73.934			
3	.564	14.104	88.038			
4	.478	11.962	100.000			

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

The above table shows the eigenvalues associated with each factor which represents the variance explained by that particular linear component. SPSS was used to extract factors having eigenvalues more than 1 which left us with one factor having actual eigenvalue of 2.165. The variance explaining capacity of that particular factor is 54.122 % which is satisfactory.

Table 6: Component matrix - Empathy

Component Matrix ^a	
	Component
	1

EMPATHY : ATTENTION:The bank gives me individual attention	.799
EMPATHY : CONVENIENT WORKING HOURS:The operating hour of the bank is convenient	.788
EMPATHY : INTEREST OF CUSTOMERS:The bank looks after my interest	.576
EMPATHY : NEED OF CUSTOMERS:The bank understands my specific needs	.758

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

a. 1 components extracted.

The Component matrix above shows factor loadings against component 1 extracted earlier. All the loadings are significant as the values are more than 0.4. The order in which the customers considered the factors to be important is *Attention*, *Convenient working hours*, *Need of customers* and *Interest of customers*.

Table 7: Factor Analysis - Relationship Marketing Strategy

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.773
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	283.513
	Df	10
	p value	<0.001

The value of KMO measure of Sampling Adequacy as shown in the table above for the variable *Relationship Marketing Strategy* is 0.773 which is good hence factor Analysis is appropriate for this data.

The Bartlett's test of Sphericity tests the null hypothesis that original matrix is an identity matrix. The p-value for the variable *Relationship Marketing Strategy* is highly significant ($p < 0.001$) thus the null hypothesis is rejected. In other words there are relationships between the variables.

Table 8: Total Variance Explained – Relationship marketing Strategy

Total Variance Explained						
Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	2.393	47.869	47.869	2.393	47.869	47.869
2	.837	16.743	64.612			

3	.697	13.944	78.555			
4	.579	11.583	90.138			
5	.493	9.862	100.000			
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.						

The above table shows the eigenvalues associated with each factor which represents the variance explained by that particular linear component. SPSS was used to extract factors having eigenvalues more than 1 which left us with one factor having actual eigenvalue of 2.393. The variance explaining capacity of that particular factor is 47.869% which is satisfactory.

Table 9: Component Matrix: Relationship marketing strategy

Component Matrix ^a	
	Component
	1
Relationship Marketing Strategy : SATISFACTION:I am satisfied with the overall relationship that I have with my bank	.753
Relationship Marketing Strategy : PLEASANT EXPERIENCE:I have had a pleasant experience of working with my bank	.539
Relationship Marketing Strategy : RELATIONSHIP BENEFITS:I receive benefits due to my relationship with bank	.741
Relationship Marketing Strategy : BOND:I feel that I have a strong bond with my bank	.680
Relationship Marketing Strategy : COOPERATION:I always receive cooperation from the bank due to my relationship with the bank	.723
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.	
a. 1 components extracted.	

The Component matrix above shows factor loadings against component 1 extracted earlier. All the loadings are significant as the values are more than 0.4. The order in which the customers considered the factors to be important is *Satisfaction, Relationship Benefits, Cooperation, Bond and Pleasant Experience*.

Correlation and Regression

The table below represents the result of Correlations between independent variables and dependent variable. The outcome (correlation and p value) reveals that the strength and significance of the relationship between individual Independent Variables (Reciprocity, Empathy) and the Dependent Variable (Relationship Marketing Strategy). In other words the

independent variables have a statistically significant relationship with the dependent variable individually as shown by the sig. value.

TABLE 10: Correlations between Independent and Dependent variables

Correlations		
		Relationship Marketing Strategy
Reciprocity	Pearson Correlation	0.443
	p value	<0.001
Empathy	Pearson Correlation	0.590
	p value	<0.001

Source: worked out by using the SPSS (version 20) based on responses to questionnaire

The researcher motivated by the above findings tried to find out the regression equation between the independent and the dependent variable. The result of the Regression analysis is given below.

Table 11: Regression analysis

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.600 ^a	.360	.356	.726

a. Predictors: (Constant), Reciprocity, Empathy

Source: worked out by using the SPSS (version 20) based on responses to questionnaire

In the first table R^2 , also called the Coefficient of Determination measures the proportion of total variation of the Dependent Variable (RMS) explained by the Independent Variables (Trust, and Commitment). In the current research the Independent Variables explain 35.6% of the total variation of Dependent Variable which can be considered as satisfactory.

Table 12: ANOVA

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	91.777	2	45.888	87.056	<0.001 ^b
	Residual	162.877	309	.527		
	Total	254.654	311			

a. Dependent Variable: Relationship Marketing Strategy

b. Predictors: (Constant), Reciprocity, Empathy

Source: worked out by using the SPSS (version 20) based on responses to questionnaire

In this table the focus is on F-statistic. The tool tests the null hypothesis that none of the Independent Variables (Reciprocity and Empathy) help explain the variation in Dependent Variable (RMS). The p value ($p < 0.001$) indicates that the F-statistic is large enough to reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis that the Independent Variables (Reciprocity and Empathy) help explain the variation in Dependent Variable (RMS).

Table 13

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.195	.168		7.098	.000
	Reciprocity	.142	.057	.140	2.467	>0.001
	Empathy	.476	.054	.506	8.894	<0.001
a. Dependent Variable: Relationship Marketing Strategy						

Source: worked out by using the SPSS (version 20) based on responses to questionnaire

The aforementioned table helps us determine whether the Independent Variables (Reciprocity and Empathy) together have a statistically significant relationship with the Dependent Variable (RMS) and the direction and strength of the relationship.

It is found that the Independent Variables Reciprocity and Empathy are positively correlated with the Dependent Variable Relationship Marketing Strategy. The regression equation is as follows

$$\text{RMS} = 1.195 + 0.142 \text{ Reciprocity} + 0.476 \text{ Empathy}$$

Further the following Hypothesis were tested

Relationship between independent variables and dependent variable (RMS)

Ho¹: There is no relationship between perceived Reciprocity and RMS in the selected banking branches in Kolkata Metropolitan area

Ha¹: There exists a relationship between perceived Reciprocity and RMS in selected banking branches in Kolkata Metropolitan area

In case of the relationship between Reciprocity and Relationship Marketing Strategy the p value ($p > 0.001$) indicates that the Ha¹ is rejected. In other words original Hypothesis Ho¹ that, there exists no relationship between perceived Reciprocity and RMS in selected banking branches in Kolkata Metropolitan area is accepted.

Ho²: There is no relationship between perceived Empathy and RMS in selected banking branches in Kolkata Metropolitan area

Ha²: There exists a relationship between perceived Empathy and RMS in selected banking branches in Kolkata Metropolitan area

In case of the relationship between Commitment and Relationship Marketing Strategy the p value ($p < 0.001$) indicates that the original hypothesis Ho² is rejected. In other words the alternative hypothesis (Ha²) that there is relationship between perceived Empathy and RMS in selected banking branches in Kolkata Metropolitan area is accepted.

Concluding Observations

The analysis of the empirical research carried out on the responses of the customers of selected banking branches of United Commercial Bank, United Bank of India and Allahabad Bank has helped the researcher draw the following conclusions:

- The sub-variables of Reciprocity [Timely Action, Availability of Managers, Communication1 and Communication2] have significant influence on the sub-variables of Relationship Marketing Strategy (i.e Satisfaction, Pleasant Experience, Relationship Benefits, Bond, Co-operation).
- The sub-variables of Empathy [Attention, Convenient Working Hours, Needs of Customers and Interest of Customers] have significant influence on the sub-variables of Relationship Marketing Strategy (i.e Satisfaction, Pleasant Experience, Relationship Benefits, Bond, Co-operation).
- The order of importance of the sub-factors of Reciprocity, as per the customers of the selected banking branches of the Kolkata based banks are Availability of managers, Communication1, Communication2, and Timely Action.
- The order of importance of the sub-factors of Empathy, as per the customers of the selected banking branches of the Kolkata based banks are Attention, Convenient working hours, Need of customers and Interest of customers.
- The order of importance of the sub-factors of Relationship Marketing Strategy ,as per the customers of the selected banking branches of the Kolkata based banks are Satisfaction, Relationship Benefits, Co-operation, Bond, Pleasant experience.
- The independent variables (i.e Reciprocity and Empathy) have strong individual correlation with the dependent variable Relationship Marketing Strategy.
- The independent variables (i.e Reciprocity and Empathy) individually help explain significant amount of variance of dependent variable Relationship Marketing Strategy.

Suggestions

The researcher offers the following suggestions based on the empirical research carried out on the responses of the customers of selected banking branches of United Commercial Bank, United Bank of India and Allahabad Bank:

- Banks may concentrate more on Empathy while designing Relationship Marketing Strategies.
- Banks wishing to retain customers by developing reciprocity may focus on factors like Availability of managers, Communication1, Communication2, and Timely Action.
- Banks wishing to retain customers by developing empathy may focus on factors like, Attention, Convenient working hours, Need of customers and Interest of customers.

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