

Full Length Research Paper

A survey on the relationships between perceived value and customer advocacy behavior

Seyed Alireza Mosavi* and Mahnoosh Ghaedi

Department of Business Administration, Islamic Azad University, Firoozabad Branch, Firoozabad, Iran.

Accepted 8 September, 2011

The main purpose of this paper is to develop a new model to investigate the effects of various dimensions of perceived value (social, emotional and conditional value) on commitment, and explore the effects of commitment on customer advocacy behaviors, including sharing information; marketing research support, word-of-mouth referrals, and increasing repurchase intentions. In this new model, an online survey was used with a sample of 271 students of Shiraz University (IRAN) using NOKIA mobile phone. Over three-quarters of the students (76.2%) were male. The respondents were between the age of 18 and 28 years. The questions used in this study were taken from the relevant literature, contained 37 questions addressing all the variables: social value (4 items), emotional value (5 items), conditional value (1 item), commitment (5 items), information sharing (7 items), marketing research support (5 items), word-of-mouth (7 items) and repurchase intentions(3 items). The data were screened using the SPSS program (Version 11). Finally, descriptive- correlative methodology was used in this study. The research found significant positive relationships between customer perceived value and commitment. The findings suggest that commitment most influenced by social value (40%), emotional value (32%), and conditional value (27%). Beside, the findings illustrate that customers with stronger levels of commitment are indeed more willing to contribute as customer advocates. This study shows that the most impacts of commitment are on word-of-mouth (31%), repurchase intentions (28%), information sharing (21%) and marketing research support (19%).Of course, all of the eight hypotheses were supported. Further research is encouraged on the relative importance of the value dimensions' influence on commitment in global markets and expanded view of customer advocacy. Researchers are also advised to regard this work as a starting-point for expanded hypotheses development of future customer advocacy models. The study considers the potential for how business customers can be further engaged to serve as advocates and thereby help improve the firm's marketing performance. This study implies the major influence of social value and the minor influence of conditional value on commitment and also implies the major impact of commitment on word-of-mouth and the minor influence of commitment on marketing research support.

Key words: Social value, emotional value, conditional value, word-of-mouth, repurchase intentions, information sharing, marketing research support.

INTRODUCTION

From an academic perspective, there is a rich and growing body of research, focusing on buyer-supplier relationships in business markets (Ulaga, 2001). Researchers have provided many insights into the nature

and mechanisms of buyer-supplier relationships (Dwyer et al., 1987; Wilson, 1995). Scholars have also investigated a wide variety of relationship-relevant characteristics (Cannon and Perreault, 1999; Hewett et al., 2002). Across multiple studies, commitment is consistently identified as focal constructs of relationship marketing (Anderson and Weitz, 1992; Doney and Cannon, 1997; Moorman et al., 1993; Morgan and Hunt, 1994).

*Corresponding author. E-mail: ali_Mosavi75@yahoo.com.

Relationship marketing models, however, predominantly focus on the “soft” factors of buyer-seller relationships to the detriment of performance-based measures. For example, Morgan and Hunt (1994) identify commitment as key mediating variable of relationship marketing. In the present research, we suggest that the ambiguities and contradictory results in previous studies may partly be explained by the fact that researchers need to add performance-based constructs to the affective and conative variables in existing relationship marketing models. To close this gap, our research suggests that “relationship value” should be included as a key constituent when modelling business relationships (Anderson, 1995).

Building on the established literature on customer value in the marketing discipline (Anderson and Narus, 2004; Gale, 1994; Woodruff and Gardial, 1996; Zeithaml, 1988), scholars have advanced our understanding of relationship value in recent years – both conceptually and empirically (Eggert and Ulaga, 2002; Hogan, 2001; Mo’ller and To’rro’nen, 2003; Ulaga, 2003; Walter et al., 2003; Wilson and Jantrania, 1995). However, a careful review of the emerging body of research on relationship value reveals that a number of research issues still remain unresolved. In particular, it still is unclear how value interacts with other key variables in the broader nomological network of relationship marketing.

Customer value is a strategic weapon in attracting and retaining customers and has become one of the most significant factors in the success of both manufacturing businesses and service providers (Gale, 1994; Zeithaml, 1988; Zeithaml et al., 1996; Woodruff, 1997; Parasuraman, 1997). Delivering superior customer value has become an ongoing concern in building and sustaining competitive advantage by driving customer relationship management (CRM) performance. As many researchers have suggested, firms should reorient their operations towards the creation and delivery of superior customer value if they are to improve their CRM performance (Jensen, 2001; Day, 1994; Slater, 1997).

However, the growing body of knowledge about customer value is rather fragmented, different points of view are advocated with no widely accepted way of pulling views together and related empirical study is very limited.

Furthermore, relevant studies have not yet yielded any unambiguous interpretations of the key dimensions of customer value (Zeithaml, 1988; Patterson et al., 1997; Woodruff, 1997; McDougall and Levesque, 2000; Lapierre, 2000).

LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIZED MODEL

The influence of perceived value on commitment

Perceived value has gained recent attention as a stable construct to predict buying behavior (Anderson and

Srinivasan, 2003; Chen and Dubinsky, 2003; Cronin et al., 2000; Dodds and Monroe, 1991; Hellier et al., 2003; Parasuraman and Grewal, 2000; Sweeney et al., 1999). Additionally, customers’ value perceptions have been found to increase their willingness to buy and decrease their search intentions for alternatives (De Ruyter and Bloemer, 1999; Grewal et al., 2003; Hellier et al., 2003). Earlier research supports the importance of commitment in relationship marketing and the need to understand the reasons behind the behavior (Dwyer et al., 1987; Gundlach et al., 1995; Morgan and Hunt, 1994; Roos et al., 2005).

Early views on commitment focused solely on repeat purchase behavior, but current definitions of customer commitment include both the attitudinal and behavioral component (Morgan and Hunt, 1994; Oliver, 1999). The attitudinal component consists of affective and continuance commitment; affective commitment is based on liking and identification and continuance commitment on dependence and switching costs (Fullerton, 2003). The relationship marketing perspective emphasizes on the affective commitment to a service provider (Fullerton, 2005).

In service marketing commitment has been found to be the most important driver of customer behavior (Gundlach et al., 1995; Harrison-Walker, 2001; Johnson et al., 2001; Wetzels et al., 1998). Furthermore, committed customers tend to be more tolerant to service failures (Mattila, 2004). The importance in measuring commitment to the service provider lies in estimating if a customer only buys from the same service provider out of habit, convenience or constraints. This type of commitment is seen as a result of lack of consumer choice, lack of effort or purchase based merely on situational cues. Purchase based on habit is referred to as “inertia” by Anderson and Srinivasan (2003) and Gounaris and Stathako poulos (2004), Dick and Basu (1994), and “vulnerable customer segment” by Baldinger and Robinson (1996) and Liljander and Roos (2002).

Roos et al. (2005) have found that committed customers can identify differences between the service offerings of other telecommunications service providers and appreciate the benefits offered by their own service provider, but the uncommitted customers cannot state any differences. In accordance to differences in the level of commitment, it is important to distinguish the difference in value dimensions influence on commitment in order to be able to plan effective marketing strategies MinnaPura (2005).

The direct influence of different value dimensions to commitment has not received much attention yet in the literature, but based on earlier conceptualization of each construct, the relationships between the value constructs, commitment are next hypothesized in detail.

Customer advocates are vital sources for future revenue streams and market intelligence as they offer insight about their needs and provide the opportunity for firms to

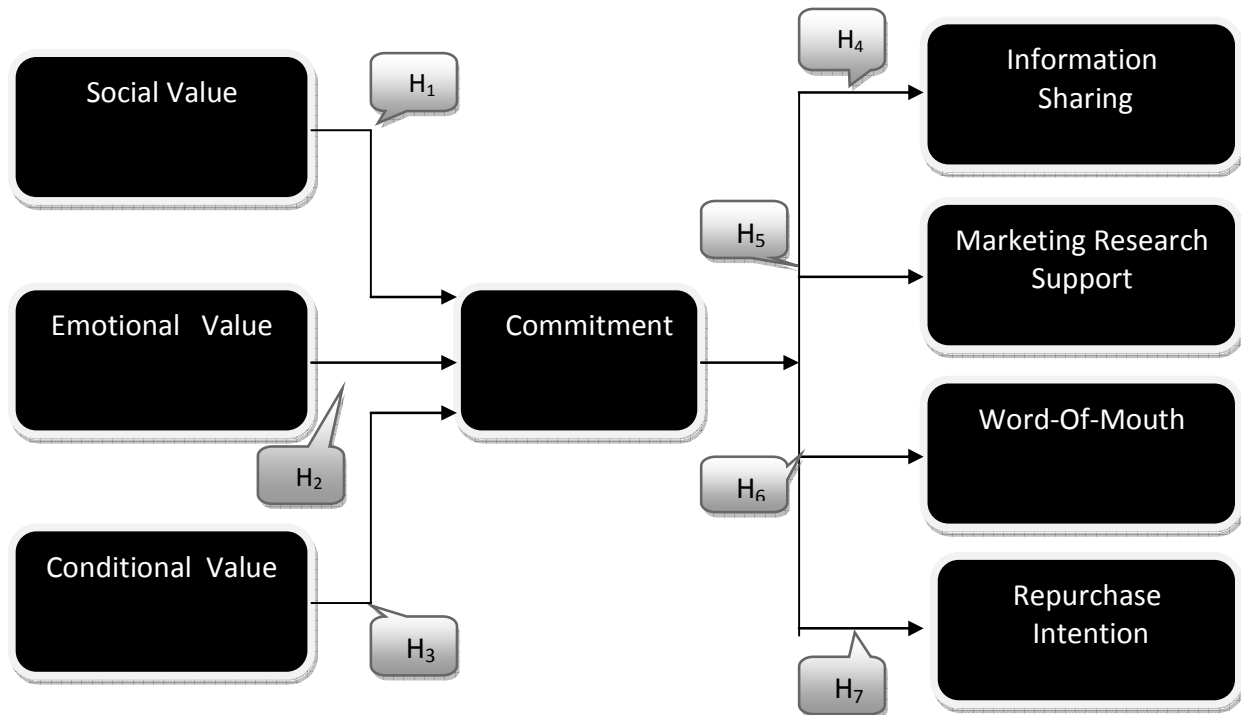


Figure 1. Hypothesized model.

tailor products, pricing, distribution channels, and marketing communications (Zablah et al., 2004). Customer advocacy reflects combinations of marketing resources that contribute to a more efficient and effective marketing enterprise, including voluntarily sharing customer-specific information, engaging in firm-sponsored marketing research activities, word-of-mouth referrals, and increasing levels and proportions of current purchasing activities (Lacey and Morgan, 2007). This briefly discusses the hypothesized relationships between the value constructs, commitment and multi-dimensional nature of customer advocacy. The research model illustrating the hypothesized relationships is shown in Figure 1.

Social value

Social value refers to the social utility derived from the product or service; social value relates to social approval and the enhancement of self-image among other individuals (Bearden and Netemeyer, 1999). Support for the importance of social reputation in the form of esteem can be found in several researchers' work (Bhat et al., 1998; Holbrook, 1994; Sheth et al., 1991; Sweeney and Soutar, 2001). Gratification theories also talk about fashion, status and sociability that relate to similar aspects as social value indicating that use of mobile services may be a way to express personality, status, and image in a public context (Leung and Wei, 2000). Sweeney and

Soutar (2001) define social value as “the utility derived from the product’s ability to enhance social self-concept”. Thus, social value derives mostly from product or service use shared with others (Sheth et al., 1991).

Social value has been suggested to be positively related to commitment to a relationship with the company (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2002; Wang et al., 2004). Further, in the online context, social value is expected to enhance commitment (Hsieh et al., 2005), therefore, a positive relationship is also expected in a mobile context:

H₁: Social value is positively related to customer's commitment.

Emotional value

Emotional value refers to the utility derived from the affective states that a product or service generates. Emotional value is acquired when a product/service arouses feelings or affective states (Sheth et al., 1991; Sweeney and Soutar, 2001). Play or fun gained by using the service for its own sake is related also to emotional value (Holbrook, 1994). Enjoyment and fun seeking have been reported as customers' motives to use services (Leung and Wei, 2000). In addition, use of technology often raises positive feelings, regardless of the service used (Brief and Aldag, 1977).

Previous research has found a direct relationship

between emotions and commitment (Liljander and Strandvik, 1997) and between emotions and attitude towards using self-service technologies (Dabholkar and Bagozzi, 2002). Semeijn et al. (2005) distinguished the importance of emotions in online services. Further, emotional value has been found to be especially important for committed customers, and help build further close emotional links with the wanted customers (Butz and Goodstein, 1996). Consequently, there is a positive relationship between emotional value and commitment:

H₂: Emotional value is positively related to customer's commitment.

Conditional value

Conditional value originally refers to circumstances which impact choice. Such situations may be seasonal, once in a lifetime events or emergency situations (Sheth et al., 1991). Holbrook (1994) postulates that conditional value depends on the context in which the value judgment occurs, and exists only within a specific situation. Previous research in the area by Rescher (1969) defines customer perceived value as the outcome of an evaluation made by a single customer of the object in a certain context based on his/her underlying values. However, the previous conceptualization of conditional or situational use often relate to traditional consumption experiences of goods in certain events, for example, at christmas. Therefore, the concept of conditional value needs to be updated to depict the real situational nature of services on the move, independent of time and place but dependent on the social and emotional context, technology and networks available. Context is based on the time, location and social environment, the equipment available, the technological environment, and user specified criteria, for example, mood, work or free time (Kontti, 2004). Hence, conditional value in this paper is defined as: value existing in a specific context, where information that characterizes a situation related to the interaction between humans, applications, and the surrounding environment results in customized information according to the current location of the customer.

Context is expected to intensify a need to use a certain service in a specific situation and thereby influence the intention to use the service positively. Support for the direct positive effect of the context, that is, conditional value on purchase behavior was found in Ha's (1998) work. Thus, conditional value is expected to influence commitment positively (Pura, 2005):

H₃: Conditional value is positively related to customer's commitment.

Information sharing

Commitment has been defined "as an enduring desire to

maintain a valued relationship" (Moorman et al., 1993). It is based on the belief that a relationship is worth the effort to be maintained. Committed relationship partners are unlikely to switch even if a competing supplier outperforms the incumbent's value offer. Consequently, a high level of commitment helps to stabilise the relationship. Morgan and Hunt (1994) summarize their literature review on the commitment construct as follows: a common theme emerges from the various literatures on relationships: parties identify commitment among exchange partners as key to achieving valuable outcomes for themselves, and they endeavour to develop and maintain this precious attribute in their relationships. Beatty et al. (1988) define consumer commitment as the psychological attachment to a service that develops.

Information sharing refers to the sharing and exchange of essential and exclusive information through interactive activities between manufacturers and their customers (McEvily and Marcus, 2005; Mentzer et al., 2000). The commonly shared information includes market demand, customer preferences, sales promotion, and new product introduction (Mentzer et al., 2000).

Information sharing is conceptualized in this study as the willingness of business customers to voluntarily provide focused organization-specific intelligence that can be used to help build and maintain customer relationships. Migrating from aggregated marketing information systems to focused, individual customer relationships can be used to position the firm toward realizing strategic advantage (Campbell, 2003). As an organizational input, focused customer intelligence can help support the development of customized products and services (Spekman and Carraway, 2006). Customer-specific intelligence also facilitates personalized communications. Customers are predicted to be willing to share organization specific information when they are already committed to the requesting firm. Those customers displaying stronger levels of commitment have greater confidence that the requesting firm will exercise good judgment in how to appropriately store and access the customer's information in support of its business activities (Ryssel et al., 2004; Lacey and Morgan, 2007):

H₄: Customer's commitment is positively related to information sharing.

Marketing research support

Marketing research support is used in the present study as a collective term to describe various firm-requested customer input activities, such as making suggestions for improving products, services and processes, providing feedback about new products, as well as sharing insight about unfulfilled needs. Customers' readiness to share their views of such issues depends on the degree to which a business relationship with the requesting firm already exists (Sheehan and Hoy, 2000). As business

relationships strengthen, they expand beyond repurchase to active marketing support activities (Bailetti and Litva, 1995; Bettencourt, 1997). Since customer input is fundamental to the marketing concept, active customer participation is necessary for collaborative marketing relationships (Cooper, 1998). Customer's commitment programs have been shown to raise the level of voluntary customer feedback via marketing research requests (Lacey et al., 2007):

H₅: Customer's commitment is positively related to marketing research support.

Word-of-mouth referrals

Word-of-mouth (WOM) refers to the informal communication between consumers about the characteristics of a business or a product (Westbrook, 1987). It provides consumers with information about a firm that assist them to decide if they should patronize it (Lundeen et al., 1995; Zeithaml et al., 1993). In a service setting, it is important that if failure occurs, steps must be taken to pacify the dissatisfied customers; if not, it is highly likely that they will either exit or engaged in negative WOM to the detriment of the service provider. The end result would be lost sales and profits.

The goals of a relationship marketing strategy are to get and keep valuable customers. Just to maintain one's block of business, it is necessary to generate new customers because some existing customers will be lost. In services, word-of-mouth (WOM) frequently has a significant impact, both positively and negatively, on the acquisition of new customers. Therefore, as Hennig-Thurau et al. (2002) suggest, WOM is a key service relationship outcome. Considering the importance of WOM in services, most service providers have done little to implement specific strategies to foster WOM (Gremler et al., 2001). Most have assumed that satisfaction with the service alone drives WOM, but research suggests that satisfaction may not be enough to generate positive WOM (Gremler and Brown, 1996; Reynolds and Beatty, 1999). Gremler et al. (2001) suggest, and offer empirical support, that the interpersonal relationship between contact employees and customers can help foster WOM communication.

The recent focus in the literature on relationship marketing highlights potential responses that can emerge from efforts directed at forming relationships with consumers (Sheth and Parvatiyar, 1995; Verhoef et al., 2002). Of all these responses, some scholars and practitioners suggest that WOM may be among the most important (White and Schneider, 2000). The basic idea behind WOM is that information about products, services, stores, companies, and so on can spread from one consumer to another.

In its broadest sense, WOM communication includes any information about a target object (for example,

company, brand) transferred from one individual to another either in person or via some communication medium (Brown et al., 2005). More specifically, Harrison-Walker (2001) defined WOM as "informal, person-to-person communication between a perceived noncommercial communicator and a receiver regarding a brand, a product, an organization or a service".

Reichheld (2006) argues that the ultimate test of strong customer relationships is their willingness to recommend the firm. Word-of-mouth referrals represent the favorable personal recommendations from one individual to other individual regarding a firm and its products and services. Word-of-mouth is well understood as a credible source of communications and plays an instrumental role in new customer acquisitions (Reichheld and Sasser, 1990). Despite its long history in the marketing literature (Day, 1971; Katz and Lazarfeld, 1955), "interest in word-of-mouth communications has been revitalized in marketing practice," being chiefly fueled by the internet's frequently powerful role as a source, and outlet, for electronic word-of-mouth (Gruen et al., 2006). Committed customers promote the supplying firm through word-of-mouth referrals (Groenroos, 2004):

H₆: Customer's commitment is positively related to word-of-mouth referrals.

Increased repurchase intentions

Repurchase intention refers to the individual's judgement about buying again a designated service from the same company, taking into account his or her current situation and likely circumstances. Some studies have concentrated on determining the basic antecedent variables to repurchase intention (Hocutt, 1998; Storbacka et al., 1994; Zahorik and Rust, 1992). Other studies, such as Bitner et al. (1990), Bolton and Drew (1991a, b), Boulding et al. (1993), Grayson and Ambler (1999), Liljander and Strandvik (1995), and Price et al. (1995) have considered the single incident, critical encounters and longitudinal interactions or relationships between these variables.

Still, others have considered the predictive validity of repurchase intention for subsequent repurchase behavior (Bemmaor, 1995; Mittal and Kamakura, 2001; Morwitz et al., 1993). Despite the fact that research in this area largely relies on stochastic and deterministic approaches to customer retention analysis (Ehrenberg, 1988; Howard, 1977; Lilien et al., 1992), few comprehensive, empirically tested, structural models of the customer retention process are evident in marketing literature.

In the marketing literature, there is wide agreement on the crucial role of repurchase as the key behavioral outcome for relationship marketing success (Crosby and Stephens, 1987; Reichheld, 1996). Proportion of purchases devoted to a single entity is well entrenched in the marketing literature as a manifestation of committed customer behavior (Day, 1990). Thus, in assessing

customer advocacy, it is also revealing to consider customer intentions for increasing the level of demand for a firm's products. In the hypothesized model, committed customers are not just expected to maintain the business relationship, but to increase both the level and proportion of their purchasing activities over time (Groenroos, 2004).

H₇: Customer's commitment is positively related to increased repurchase intentions.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Sampling and data collection

To achieve the purposes of the study, data were collected from a structured questionnaire administered to students of Shiraz University (IRAN). The only condition for the inclusion of respondents was that they must have purchased NOKIA mobile phone before.

The survey was posted on the internet as it is a convenient, fast and cost-effective means of eliciting responses from respondents. The survey was posted on a Web site in Shiraz over a month from February to March, 2011. To generate more traffic to the website, subjects were informed of the survey via e-mail. Students from the university database were selected randomly and approached to take part in the survey. A total of 278 responses were collected. Out of these, seven were rejected because of missing data in the questionnaire. Thus, the total usable sample for analysis was 271. Over three-quarters of the respondents (76.2%) were male. 40% of the respondents were 18 years old. 37% were between the age of 19 and 20 years, 15% were 22 years old and 8% were between the ages of 23 and 28 years.

The questionnaire

The first part of the questionnaire requested respondent to provide background information regarding their NOKIA mobile phone purchases. This included the name of the service provider, price plan chosen, and month and year of purchase.

Questions in part 2 measured the three dimensions of value (social, emotional, conditional). The third part of the questionnaire requested respondents to fill up questions regarding their level of commitment. The last section of the survey asked respondents about WOM referrals, information sharing, marketing research support and their intention to repurchase. The questionnaire contained 37 questions addressing all the variables shown in Figure 1

Measurement

The questions used in this study were taken from the relevant literature and the data were screened using the SPSS program (Version 11). A list wise deletion of missing cases was undertaken and outliers were examined to ensure that extreme values did not influence the results. Responses to all items were elicited on a five-point Likert scale ranging from "5= strongly agree" to "1= strongly disagree".

Social value was measured through four items. This study reports coefficient alphas of 0.912. Emotional value was measured through five items. This study reports coefficient alphas of 0.954. Conditional value was measured through one item. This study reports coefficient alphas of 0.937. All items of social, emotional

and conditional value were adapted from Sheth et al. (1991) and Sweeney and Soutar (2001, 2003). Commitment was measured through five items adapted from Fullerton (2003), Garbarino and Johnson (1999) and Zeithaml et al. (1996). This study reports coefficient alphas of 0.946. Information sharing variable was measured using seven items suggested by McEvily and Marcus (2005). This study reports coefficient alphas of 0.943. Marketing research support was measured via seven items adapted from Morgan and Hunt's (1994) cooperate scale. This study reports coefficient alphas of 0.924. Increased repurchase intention was measured via three items adapted from Lacey and Morgan (2007). This study reports coefficient alphas of 0.942. Word-of-mouth was measured via seven items adapted from a measure developed by Gremler and Gwinner (2000). This study reports coefficient alphas of 0.95.

RESULTS

Measurement model evaluation

A two-step modeling approach following Anderson and Gerbing (1988) was used. The measurement model evaluation included exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses in order to purify and test the resulting measures. First, exploratory analysis (maximum likelihood analysis with oblique rotation) was conducted on the items to investigate if the theorized value dimensions could be extracted from the data. The scale was purified by deleting items that did not correlate with other items measuring the same construct. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy was good (0.879) and Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant, indicating that the items were correlated and suitable for factor analysis (Hair et al., 1998). The correlations between the composite variables are shown in the lower triangle in Table 1. All of the correlations were significant, thus, supporting the nomological validity of the constructs. The Fornell and Larcker (1981) test revealed that they do measure separate constructs. Thus, convergent and discriminant validity was assessed by calculating the average variance extracted (AVE) (Appendix). All AVE values were well above 0.50, and therefore, it can be stated that the constructs display a high degree of convergent validity (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). Furthermore, high discriminant validity was also demonstrated by the fact that the square root of AVE of each construct is higher than the correlations between that construct and any other construct in the model. The square roots of AVE for each construct are reported on the diagonal in Table 1. Thus, the constructs are both conceptually and empirically distinct from each other (Fornell and Larcker, 1981).

Next, the quality of the measurement model was assessed on unidimensionality, convergent validity, reliability, and discriminant validity in two steps, first for exogenous and endogenous variables and then for the whole model. The LISREL 8.54 program was used to assess the unidimensionality of the constructs.

Conditional value variables were skewed slightly and,

Table 1. Correlation matrix and square roots of AVE.

Construct	1 (%)	2 (%)	3 (%)	4 (%)	5 (%)	6 (%)	7 (%)	8 (%)
Social value	91							
Emotional value	78	89						
Conditional value	68	76	86					
Commitment	72	83	79	92				
Information sharing	68	73	87	86	85			
Marketing research support	67	66	80	81	77	79		
Word-of-mouth	72	67	76	78	81	79	87	
Repurchase intentions	81	83	79	73	84	86	69	77

Square root of AVE are reported on the diagonal; all correlation are significant at the 0.01 level.

therefore, the asymptotic covariance matrix was used in LISREL, because it provides the Satorra-Bentler χ^2 , which uses a robust maximum likelihood estimation that allows for the use of non-normal data (Holmes-Smith et al., 2005). Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) for all parts of the model provided evidence for unidimensionality, since the items loaded at least 0.5 on appropriate constructs. The factor loadings are presented in the Appendix. Convergent validity for the measurement model including the exogenous variables was supported by a good overall fit: $\chi^2=184.17$, $df =104$, ($p>0.01$). $RMSEA=0.052$, $CFI=0.98$, $GFI=0.91$, $AGFI=0.87$ and $NNFI=0.97$. The fit statistics for the measurement model for each construct were good. The fit statistics, AVE and alpha values are reported in Appendix 1. Both $NNFI$ and CFI exceed the recommended 0.90 threshold levels (Byrne, 1998; Hair et al., 1998) In addition, $RMSEA$ is lower than 0.08 as recommended by Hair et al. (1998). Reliability was estimated by assessing the internal consistency of the scale items using Cronbach's α . The alpha values were all above 0.7 and, therefore, the measures were considered reliable (Nunnally, 1978). The results of the structural model are further presented.

Hypothesized model

Table 2 illustrates the hypothesized relationships and summarizes which hypotheses are supported by the results. All of the seven hypotheses were supported.

Three value dimensions: social, emotional and conditional value had a significant, positive relationship with commitment. According to the covariance paths, social value had the strongest influence on commitment (0.40). Furthermore, emotional value (0.32) and conditional value (0.27) also had an effect on commitment. Commitment also had positive relationship with customer advocacy. According to the covariance paths, commitment had the strongest impact on word-of-mouth referrals (31%), repurchase intentions (28%), information sharing (21%) and finally, marketing research support (19%). The path coefficients of the final model

support all of hypotheses as shown in Figure 2:

- H₁: Social value - Commitment; path coefficient = 0.40, $p < 0.01$;
- H₂: Emotional value - Commitment; path coefficient = 0.32, $p < 0.05$;
- H₃: Functional value - Commitment; path coefficient = 0.27, $p < 0.05$;
- H₄: Commitment - Information sharing; path coefficient = 0.21, $p < 0.01$;
- H₅: Commitment - Marketing research support; path coefficient = 0.19, $P < 0.01$;
- H₆: Commitment - Word-of- mouth referrals; path coefficient = 0.31, $p < 0.01$;
- H₇: Commitment - Increased repurchase intentions; path coefficient = 0.28, $p < 0.01$.

DISCUSSION

Based on the new model described in this study, all dimensions of customer value were found to have a significant effect on commitment. The results of this study indicated that commitment to use NOKIA mobile is strongly influenced by social value. The influences of social value on commitment were statistically significant (Wang et al., 2004). Gratification theories talk about fashion, status and sociability that relate to similar aspects as social value indicating that use of mobile services may be a way to express personality, status, and image in a public context (Leung and Wei, 2000).

Emotional value also had strong influence on commitment. Thus, building commitment with communication that emphasizes the fun, emotional aspects of using a NOKIA mobile in certain situations helps customers to differentiate the service providers and remember how to order the services next time when the need arises (Pura, 2005). Emotional value relates to positive feelings and fun. Emotions can also mean avoiding negative feelings and solving problem situations while on the move. Emotional value is acquired when a product/service arouses feelings or affective states (Sheth et al., 1991;

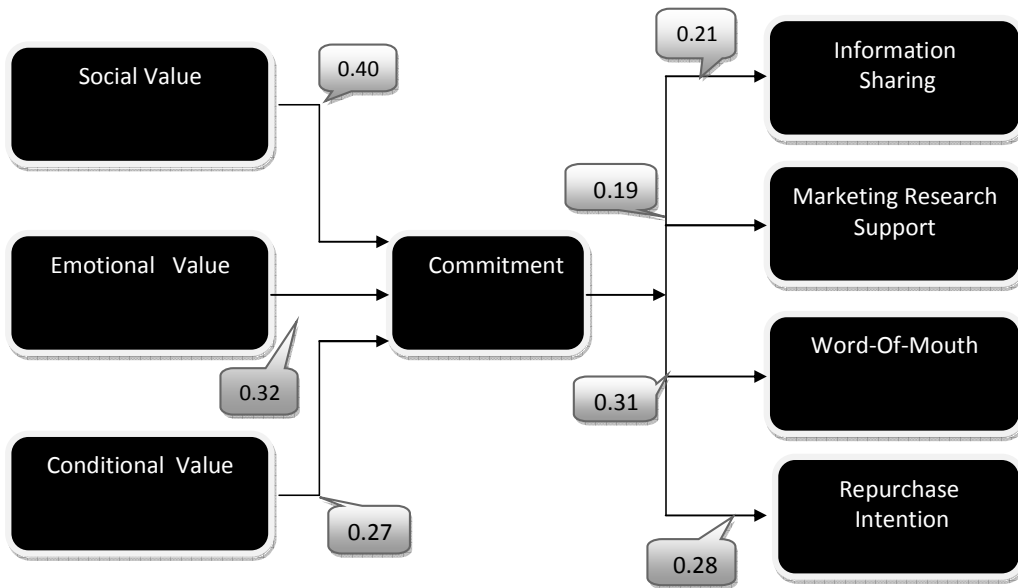


Figure 2. Path coefficient.

Table 2. Supported and not supported hypothesize.

Hypothesized relationship	Result
H ₁ : Social value is positively related to customer's commitment.	Supported
H ₂ : Emotional value is positively related to customer's commitment.	Supported
H ₃ : Conditional value is positively related to customer's commitment.	Supported
H ₄ : Customer's commitment is positively related to information sharing.	Supported
H ₅ : Customer's commitment is positively related to marketing research support	Supported
H ₆ : Customer's commitment is positively related to word-of- mouth referrals.	Supported
H ₇ : Customer's commitment is positively related to increased repurchase intentions	Supported

Sweeney and Soutar, 2001). Play or fun gained by using the service for its own sake is also related to emotional value (Holbrook, 1994; Pura, 2005).

In this study, we also find strong evidence for the linkages between committed customers and their willingness to function as voluntary marketing advocates, thereby accomplishing the research objectives of this study. Roos et al. (2005) have found that committed customers can identify differences between the service offerings of other telecommunications service providers and appreciate the benefits offered by their own service provider.

Much of the previous work on customer advocacy has been based on anecdotal evidence, rather than systematic research. Based on the findings and analyses provided in this study, customer advocacy is a multi-dimensional concept. The importance of commitment as a mediator to various customer advocacy behaviors is further demonstrated by producing higher parsimony fit indices than a rival structural model that identifies commitment as independent antecedents to customer

advocacy behaviors. These results provide additional evidence of the critical mediating role of commitment to relationship marketing theory (Lacey and Morgan, 2007).

Yet, the crux of this study is to shed light into the capability and extent to which firms may engage their customers to perform distinct customer advocacy behaviors, beginning with the empirically support found for the linkage between commitment and discretionary information sharing. Information sharing refers to the sharing and exchange of essential and exclusive information through interactive activities between manufacturers and their customers (Mc Evily and Marcus, 2005; Mentzer et al., 2000). While business customers can be expected to fully cooperate with the selling firm's request for information needed to complete the marketing transaction, they are becoming increasingly concerned with misuse of information when it is used for purposes beyond the marketing exchange itself (Zabin and Brebach, 2004). Moreover, the transformation of customer information systems from basic data depositories into customer-driven marketing information is a basis

for long term competitiveness. It not only involves having the technological infrastructure necessary to store and access data, but also requires that the firm be capable of securing focused customer-specific information (Lacey and Morgan, 2007). While many business marketers are readily able to accumulate knowledge about specific customers without first securing explicit permission from these customers, not only would voluntary cooperation likely improve the quality of the information but it would also help alleviate rising ethical concerns regarding how individualized customer information is secured (Armstrong, 1999; Rich, 2000).

Owing to the importance of both customer retention and new customer attraction to a firm's sustainability, we also assessed the influence of customer commitment on key customer advocacy behaviors that help support new customer attraction, namely marketing research support and word-of-mouth referrals. Customer commitment programs have been shown to raise the level of voluntary customer feedback via marketing research requests (Lacey et al., 2007). We found empirical support for the hypothesized relationship between commitment and marketing research support. Marketing managers have long appreciated the value of customer-focused marketing research support to gain greater understanding of customer needs, expectations, and product performance perceptions. Marketing research support (for example, new product testing, advertising post-testing, and evaluation of service quality) can be utilized to reduce business risks as well as improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the firm's marketing performance (Lacey and Morgan, 2007). The results also demonstrated that committed customers are more likely to engage in positive word-of-mouth referrals.

According to the tested model, committed business customers are not just expected to maintain purchasing activities, but to anticipate increasing both the level and proportion of its purchasing activities over time (Groenroos, 2004). Marketing managers are advised to supplement conventional metrics that calculate a business customer's total purchases and use estimated product category purchases as the dominator to determine share-of-customer, with a second measure of business customer's intentions to increase portion of product category purchases from the selling firm over a defined time period into the future. This expanded view of customer retention measurement would allow managers to take into account not only current share-of-customer at an individual business customer level but projected probability to increase current share levels (Lacey and Morgan, 2007).

Conclusion

Driven by demanding customers, keen competition, and rapid technological change, many firms have sought to deliver superior customer value (Band, 1991; Day, 1994;

Gale, 1994; Naumann, 1995; Butz and Goodstein, 1996; Woodruff, 1997). Delivering superior customer value is now recognized as one of the most important factors for the success of any firm now and in the future because it has a significant impact on the customer commitment. Therefore, the paper contributes to service marketing theories by introducing a multidimensional perceived value model for assessing the direct influence of value on commitment.

By considering more than purchasing activities and word-of-mouth referrals, the tested model provides an expanded view of customers as advocates. The tested model captures potential contributions of customers to share information and participate in marketing research activities, both of which can be instrumental in improving the efficiency and effectiveness of marketing performance. This study clearly does not attempt to encapsulate all potential advocacy behaviors and outcomes of committed customers (Reichheld, 1996; Zeithamlet al., 1996). Thus, another opportunity to enrich the developed model would be to test other types of customer advocacy outcomes.

As anticipated, social value is shown to have a significantly positive effect on commitment and commitment significantly influences information sharing, marketing research support, word-of-mouth referrals, and increased repurchase intentions.

To the extent that a critical mass of business customers are willing to share discretionary information, support marketing research initiatives, promote the enterprise through positive word-of-mouth, and increase current repurchase levels, the firm obviously stands to benefit. Conversely, a firm with less established or relatively weak customer relationships needs to create and build higher levels of commitment before it can anticipate widespread voluntary cooperation of its customers to serve as marketing advocates.

REFERENCES

- Anderson JC, Gerbing DW (1988). "Structural equation modeling in practice: a review and recommended two-step approach", *Psych. Bull.*, 103 (3): 411-23.
- Anderson RE, Srinivasan SS (2003). "E-satisfaction and e-loyalty: a contingency framework", *Psychol. Mark.*, 20 (2): 123-38.
- Bagozzi RP, Gopinath M, Nyer PU (1999). "The role of emotions in marketing". *J. Acad. Mark. Sci.*, 27 (2): 184-206.
- Bailetti AJ, Litva PF (1995). "Integrating customer requirements into product designs". *J. Prod. Innov. Manag.*, 12(3): 3-15.
- Baldinger AL, Rubinson J (1996). "Brand loyalty: the link between attitude and behavior". *J. Advert. Res.*, 36 (6): 22-34.
- Band W (1986). "How to develop customer retention strategies", *Sales Mark. Manage. Can.*, 27(9):30-31
- Bearden W, Netemeyer R (1999). *Handbook of Marketing Scales: Multi-Item Measures for Marketing and Consumer Behavior Research*, 2nd ed., Sage, London.
- Beatty SE, Homer P, Kahle LR (1988). "The involvement-commitment model: theory and implications". *J. Bus. Res.*, 16(2): 149-67.
- Beatty SE, Kahle LR, Homer P (1988). "The Involvement – Commitment Model: Theory and Implication." *J. Bus. Res.*, 16(2): 149–167, March.
- Bemmaor AC (1995). "Predicting behavior from intention-to-buy

- measures: the parametric case". *J. Mark. Res.*, 32(2): 176-91.
- Bettencourt LA (1997). "Customer voluntary performance: customers as partners in service delivery". *J. Retail.*, 73 (3): 383-406.
- Bhat S, Burkhard R, O'Donnell KA, Wardlow DL (1998). "Version 6.0.1, anyone? An investigation of consumer software upgrading behavior". *J. Mark. Theor. Pract.*, 6(2): 87-96.
- Bitner MJ (1995). "Building service relationships: it's all about promises". *J. Acad. Mark. Sci.*, 23 (4): 246-51.
- Bitner MJ, Booms BM, Mohr LA (1994). "Critical service encounters: the employee's view point". *J. Mark.*, 58 (4): 95-106.
- Bitner MJ, Booms BM, Tetreault MS (1990). "The service encounter: diagnosing favorable and unfavorable incidents". *J. Mark.*, 54 (1): 71-84.
- Bloemer JMM, de Ruyter K (1998). "On the relationship between store image, storesatisfaction and store loyalty". *Eur. J. Mark.*, 32(5/6): 499-513.
- Bloemer JMM, Kasper HDP (1995). "The complex relationship between consumer satisfaction and brand loyalty". *J. Econ. Psychol.*, 16: 311-29.
- Bolton R, Kannan P, Bramlett M (2000). "Implications of loyalty program membership and service experiences for customer retention and value". *J. Acad. Mark. Sci.*, 28(1): 95-108.
- Bolton RN (1998). "A dynamic model of the duration of the customer's relationship with a continuous service provider: the role of satisfaction". *Mark. Sci.*, 17(1): 45-65.
- Bolton RN, Drew JH (1991a). "A longitudinal analysis of the impact of service changes on customer attitudes". *J. Mark.*, 55(1): 1-9.
- Bolton RN, Drew JH (1991b). "A multistage model of customers' assessments of service quality and value". *J. Consum. Res.*, 17(4): 375-84.
- Bolton RN, Drew JH (1994). "Linking customer satisfaction to service operations and outcomes", in Rust RT, Oliver RL (Eds), *Service Quality: New Directions in Theory and Practice*, Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks, CA: pp. 173-200.
- Bolton RN, Lemon KN, Verhoef PC (2004). "The theoretical underpinnings of customer asset management: a framework and propositions for future research". *J. Acad. Mark. Sci.*, 9(3): 271-92.
- Boulding W, Kalra A, Staelin R, Zeithaml VA (1993). "A dynamic process model of service quality: from expectations to behavioral intentions". *J. Mark. Res.*, 30 (1): 7-27.
- Brief AP, Aldag RJ (1977). "The intrinsic-extrinsic dichotomy: toward conceptual clarity". *Acad. Manage. Rev.*, 2(3): 496-500.
- Butz H, Goodstein LD (1996). "Measuring customer value: gaining the strategic advantage", *Organizational Dynamics*. 24 (3): 63-77.
- Byrne B (1998). *Structural Equation Modeling with Lisrel Prelis, and Simplis: Basic Concepts, Applications, and Programming*, L. Erlbaum Associates, Mahwah NJ.
- Campbell AJ (2003). "Creating customer knowledge competence: managing customer relationship management programs strategically". *Ind. Mark. Manage.*, 32 (5): 375-83.
- Chen Z, Dubinsky AJ (2003). "A conceptual model of perceived customer value in e-commerce: a preliminary investigation", *Psych. Market.*, 20 (4): 323-47.
- Crosby LA, Stephens N (1987). "Effects of relationship marketing on satisfaction, retention, and prices in the life insurance industry". *J. Mark. Res.*, 24(November): 404-411.
- Dabholkar PA, Bagozzi RP (2002). "An attitudinal model of technology-based self-service: Moderating effects of consumer traits and situational factors". *J. Acad. Mark. Sci.*, 30(3): 184-212.
- Day GS (1971). "Attitude change, media, and word of mouth". *J. Advert. Res.*, 11(6): 31-40.
- Day GS (1990). *Market Driven Strategy*, The Free Press, New York, NY.
- De Ruyter K, Bloemer J (1999). "Customer loyalty in extended service settings". *Int. J. Serv. Ind. Manag.*, 10(3): 320-36.
- Dick AS, Basu K (1994). "Customer loyalty: toward an integrated conceptual framework". *Acad. Mark. Sci. J.*, 22(2): 99-114.
- Dodds WB, Monroe KB (1991). "Effects of price, brand, and store information on buyers". *J. Mark. Res.*, 28(3): 307-20.
- Dwyer RF, Schurr PH, Sejo O (1987). "Developing buyer-seller relationships". *J. Mark.*, 51 (2): 11-27.
- Ehrenberg ASC (1988). *Repeat-Buying: Facts, Theory and Applications*, new ed., Charles Griffen and Company, London
- Fornell C, Larcker DP (1981). "Structural equation models with unobservable variables and measurement error". *J. Mark. Res.*, 18(2): 39-50.
- Fullerton G (2003). "When does commitment lead to loyalty?" *J. Serv. Res.*, 5(4): 333-44.
- Fullerton G (2005). "The service quality-loyalty relationship in retail services: does commitment matter?" *J. Retail. Consum. Serv.*, 12(2): 99-111.
- Gale BT (1994). *Managing Customer Value*, Free Press, New York, NY.
- Gale BT (1997). "Satisfaction is not enough". *Marketing News*, October 27: 18.
- Garbarino E, Johnson M, (1999). "The different roles of satisfaction, trust and commitment in customer relationships". *J. Mark.*, 63(2): 70-87.
- Gardial SF, Clemons DS, Woodruff RB, Schumann DW, Burns MJ (1994). "Comparing consumers' recall of prepurchase and postpurchase product evaluation experiences". *J. Consum. Res.*, 20, March: 548-560.
- Gounaris S, Stathakopoulos V (2004). "Antecedents and consequences of brand loyalty", *Brand Manage.*, 11 (4): 283-306.
- Grayson K, Ambler T (1999). "The dark side of long-term relationships in marketing services". *J. Mark. Res.*, 36 (1): 132-41.
- Gremler DD, Gwinner KP (2000). "Customer-employee rapport in service relationships". *J. Serv. Res.* 3(1): 82-104.
- Grewal D, Iyer GR, Krishnan R, Sharma A (2003). "The internet and the price - value - loyalty chain". *J. Bus. Res.* 56(5): 391-8.
- Grewal D, Iyer GR, Krishnan R, Sharma A (2003). "The internet and the price - value - loyalty chain". *J. Bus. Res.* 56 (5): 391-8.
- Gro'nroos C (2004). "The relationship marketing process: Communication, dialogue, and value". *J. Bus. Ind. Mark.* 19(2): 99-113.
- Gruen TW, Osmonbekov T, Czaplewski AJ (2006). "EWOM: the impact of customer-to-customer online know-how exchange on customer value and loyalty". *J. Bus. Res.* 59 (4): 449-56.
- Gundlach GT, Achrol RS, Mentzer JT (1995). "The structure of commitment in exchange". *J. Mark.*, 59(1): 78-92.
- Gwinner KP, Gremler D, Bitner M (1998). "Relational benefits in services industries: the customer's perspective". *J. Acad. Mark. Sci.* 26(2): 101-14.
- Ha CL (1998). "The theory of reasoned action applied to brand loyalty". *J. Prod. Brand. Manag.* 7 (1): 51-61.
- Hair JF Jr, Anderson, RE, Tatham RL, Black WC (1999). *Analisis multivariante*, 5th ed.
- Harrison-Walker LJ (2001). "The measurement of word-of-mouth communication and an investigation of service quality and customer commitment as potential antecedents". *J. Serv. Res.*, 4 (1): 60-75.
- Hellier PK, Geursen GM, Carr RA, Rickard JA (2003). "Customer repurchase intention, a general structural equation model". *Eur. J. Mark.*, 37 (11/12): 1762-800.
- Hennig-Thurau T, Gwinner KP, Gremler DD (2002). "Understanding relationship marketing outcomes: an integration of relational benefits and relationship quality". *J. Serv. Res.*, 4(3): 230-47.
- Hocutt MA (1998). "Relationship dissolution model: antecedents of relationship commitment and the likelihood of dissolving a relationship". *Int. J. Serv. Ind. Manag.*, 9(2): 189-200.
- Holbrook MB (1994). *The Nature of Customer Value, an Axiology of Services in the Consumption Experience*, Sage, Thousand Oaks, CA.
- Holmes-Smith P, Coote L, Cunningham E (2005). *Structural Equation Modeling: From Fundamentals to Advanced Topics*, Centre for Applied Educational Research, The University of Melbourne, Melbourne.
- Howard JA (1977). *Consumer Behavior: Application of Theory*, McGraw-Hill, New York, NY.
- Johnson MD, Gustafsson A, Andreassen TW (2001). "The evolution and future of national customer satisfaction index models". *J. Econ. Psychol.*, 22(2): 217-45; *J. Mark.*, 58(3): 20-38
- Kontti (2004). "Kontti project description: platform for context sensitive mobile services. (palveluustatillanneherkillembiilpalveluille, kontti)", available at: www.vtt.fi/tte/projects/kontti/description.html (accessed 27 May).
- Lacey R, Sneath JZ (2006). "Customer loyalty programs: are they fair to

- consumers?" *J. Consum. Mark.*, 23 (7): 464-70.
- Lacey R, Suh J, Morgan RM (2007). "Differential effects of preferential treatment levels on relational outcomes". *J. Serv. Res.*, 9(3): 241-256; 24(1) 2009: 3-13.
- Leung L, Wei R (2000). "More than just talk on the move: uses and gratifications of the cellular phone". *J. Mass Commun. Q.*, 77(2): 308-320.
- Lilien GL, Kolter P, Moorthy KS (1992). *Marketing Models*, Prentice-Hall, EnglewoodCliffs, NJ.
- Liljander V, Roos I (2002). "Customer-relationship levels – from spurious to true relationships". *J. Serv. Mark.*, 16 (7): 593-694.
- Liljander V, Strandvik T (1995). "The nature of customer relationships in services", in Swartz, T.A., Brown, D.E. and Brown, S.W. (Eds), *Advances in Services Marketing and Management*. 4, JAI Press, Greenwich, CT: 141-67.
- Liljander V, Strandvik T (1997). "Emotions in service satisfaction". *Int. J. Serv. Ind. Manag.*, 8(2): 148-69.
- Lundeen HK, Harmon LC, McKenna-Harmon KM (1995). "Service recovery in commercial real estate management. *J. Prop. Manag.*, 60(3): 30-32; *Manage. Can.*, 27 (9): 30-2.
- Mattila AS (2004). "The impact of service failures on customer loyalty". *Int. J. Serv. Ind. Manag.*, 15 (2): 134-49.
- McDougall GHG, Levesque T (2000). "Customer satisfaction with services: putting perceived value into the equation". *J. Serv. Mark.*, 14 (4/5): 392-410.
- McEvily B, Marcus A (2005). "Embedded ties and the acquisition of competitive capabilities". *Strateg. Manag. J.*, 26 (11): 1033-55.
- Mentzer JT, Min S, Zacharia ZG (2000). "The nature of inter-firm partnering in supply
- Mittal V, Kamakura WA (2001). "Satisfaction, repurchase intent, and repurchase behavior: Investigating the moderating effect of customer characteristics". *J. Mark. Res.*, 38 (1): 131-42.
- Mittal V, Ross WT, Baldasare PM (1998). "The asymmetric impact of negative and positive attribute-level performance on overall satisfaction and repurchase intentions". *J. Mark.*, 62(1): 33-47.
- Monroe KB (1990). *Pricing, Making Profitable Decisions*, 2nd ed., McGraw-Hill, New York, NY.
- Monroe KB, Chapman JD (1987). "Framing effects on buyers' subjective product evaluations". *Adv. Consum. Res.*, 14 (1): 193-7.
- Moorman C, Deshpande R, Zaltman R (1993). "Factors affecting trust in market research
- Moorman C, Zaltman G, Deshpande R (1992). "Relationships between providers and users of market research: the dynamics of trust within and between organizations". *J. Mark. Res.*, 29(3): 314-328.
- Morgan RM, Hunt SD (1994). "The commitment-trust theory of relationship marketing". *J. Market.*, 58 (3): 20-38.
- Morwitz VG, Johnson E, Schmittlein D (1993). "Does measuring intent change behavior?" *J. Consum. Res.*, 20 (1): 46-61.
- Oliver RL (1999). "Whence consumer loyalty?" *J. Mark.*, 63(4): 33-45.
- Parasuraman A, Colby CL (2001). *Techno-Ready Marketing: How and Why your Customers Adopt Technology*, The Free Press, New York, NY.
- Parasuraman A, Grewal D (2000). "The impact of technology on the quality-value-loyalty chain: A research agenda". *J. Acad. Mark. Sci.*, 28(1): 168-174.
- Perrault WD, Frederick R (1974). "Physical distribution service: a neglected aspect of marketing management", *MSU Business Topics*. 22, Summer: 37-45.
- Price LL, Arnould EJ, Tierney P (1995). "Going to extremes: managing service encounters and assessing provider performance". *J. Mark.*, 59(2): 83-97.
- Reichheld FF (1996). *The Loyalty Effect*, Harvard Business School Press, Boston, MA.
- Reichheld FF (2006). *The Ultimate Question*, Harvard Business School Press, Boston, MA.
- Reichheld FF, Sasser WE Jr. (1990). "Zero defections: quality comes to services", *Harv. Bus. Rev.*, 68(5): 105-11.
- Rescher N (1969). *Introduction to Value Theory*, Prentice-Hall, New York, NY. review", in Swartz TA, Brown DE, Brown SW (Eds), *Advances in Services Relationships*. *J. Mark.*, 57(1): 81-101.
- Roos I, Gustafsson A, Edvardsson B (2005). "The role of customer clubs in recent telecomrelationships". *Int. J. Serv. Ind. Manag.*, *Accept. Publ.*, 16(5).
- Rust RT, Zahorik AJ (1993). "Customer satisfaction, customer retention and marketshare". *J. Retail.*, 69 (2): 193-215.
- Rust RT, Zahorik AJ, Keiningham TL (1995). "Return on quality (ROQ): making servicequality financially accountable". *J. Market.*, 59 (2): 58-70.
- Ryssel R, Ritter T, Gemünden HG (2004). "The impact of information technology deployment on trust, commitment and value creation in business relationships". *J. Bus. Ind. Mark.*, 19 (3): 197-207.
- Semeijn J, van Riel ACR, van Birgelen MJH, Streukens S (2005). "E-services and offline fulfilment: how e-loyalty is created". *Manag. Serv. Qual.*, 15 (2): 182-94.
- Sheehan KB, Hoy MG (2000). "Dimensions of privacy concern among online consumers". *J. Pub. Pol. Mark.*, 19 (1): 62-73.
- Sheth JN, Parvatiyar A (1995). *Relationship Marketing in Consumer Markets: Antecedents and Sheth J, Newman B, Gross B (1991). Consumption Values and Market Choices, Theory and Applications*, South-Western Publishing, Fort Knox, TX.
- Slater SF (1997). "Developing a customer value-based theory of the firm". *J. Acad. Mark. Sci.*, 25: 162-7.
- Soutar GN, Sweeney JC (2003). "Are there cognitive dissonance segments?" *Aust. J. Manag.* 28 (3): 227-49.
- Spekman RE, Carraway R (2006). "Making the transition to collaborative buyer-seller relationships: An emerging framework". *Ind. Mark. Manage.*, 35(1): 10-19.
- Srinivasan M (1996). "New insights into switching behavior". *Mark. Res.*, 8(3).
- Storbacka K, Strandvik T, Gronroos C (1994). "Managing customer relationships for profit: the dynamics of relationship quality". *Int. J. Serv. Ind. Manag.*, 5 (5): 21-38.
- Sweeney JC, Soutar GN (2001). "Consumer perceived value: the development of a multiple item scale". *J. Retail.*, 77 (2): 203-20.
- Sweeney JC, Soutar GN, Johnson LW (1999). "The role of perceived risk in the quality-value relationship: a study in a retail environment". *J. Retail.*, 75(1): 77-105.
- Tamminen S, Oulasvirta A, Toiskallio K, Kankainen A (2004). "Understanding mobile contexts", *Personal and Ubiquitous Computing*. 8: 135-43. and measurement errors". *J. Mark. Res.*, 18(2): 39-50.
- Verhoef PC, Franses PH, Hoekstra J (2002). "The Effect of Relational Constructs on Customer Referrals and Number of Services Purchased: Does Age of the Relationship Matter?" *J. Acad. Mark. Sci.*, 30(3): 202-216.
- Wang Y, Lo HP, Chi R, Yang Y (2004). "An integrated framework for customer valueand customer-relationship-management performance: a customer-based perspective from China". *Manag. Serv. Qual.*, 14(2/3): 169-82.
- Wetzels M, De Ruyter K, Van Birgelen MJH (1998). "Marketing service relationships: the role of commitment". *J. Bus. Ind. Mark.*, 13 (4/5): 406-23.
- White S, Schneide B (2000). "Climbing the Commitment Ladder: The Role of Expectations Disconfirmation on Customers' Behavioral Intentions". *J. Serv. Res.*, 2(3): 240-253.
- Zeithaml V A, Bitner MJ (1996). *Services Marketing*, McGraw-Hill, New York, NY.

APPENDIX

Appendix 1.

Constructs and items	Loading	t-value	SMC	AVE	Alpha
Commitment (five items)				0.79	0.946
1) The brand/service of this firm is one that I am very committed to	0.91	24.8	0.82		
2) The brand/service of this firm is very important to me	0.92	25.64	0.84		
3) The brand/service of this firm is one that I really care about	0.85	20.52	0.72		
4) The brand/service of this firm is worth my effort to maintain	0.93	26.51	0.81		
5) The brand/service of this firm has a great deal of personal meaning for me	0.88	22.49	0.78		
X ² =0.20, df=1, p > 0.1, RMSEA=0.000, CFI=1.00, CFI=1.00, AGFI=1.00					
Information sharing (seven items)				0.79	0.943
1) To fill out a form about your preferences so they can better serve their customers	0.88	20.94	0.77		
2) That in order to provide more personalized marketing information to you, the firm asks your permission to track your purchases	0.93	24.14	0.86		
3) To provide your name and answer some questions about your product preferences, so that your future interactions with this firm can be more personalized	0.88	20.75	0.77		
4) This firm shares market information with customers(promotion information and competitive product information).	0.9	24	0.82		
5) This firm shares product demand information with customers.	0.84	20.67	0.74		
6) This firm shares inventory information with customers	0.85	20.43	0.72		
7) This firm jointly makes production plans with customers.	0.96	24.38	0.85		
X ² =1.26, df=2, p > 0.1, RMSEA=0.000, CFI=1.00, CFI=1.00, AGFI=0.98					
Marketing research support (five items)				0.78	0.924
1) Provide feedback about this firm's new product offerings	0.86	18.79	0.73		
2) Share my feelings about unmet needs	0.87	19.24	0.75		
3) Participate in new product development testing	0.85	18.29	0.71		
4) Provide feedback about this firm's advertising	0.9	19.63	0.8		
5) Discuss my views about this firm's quality of service	0.94	20.17	0.89		
X ² =4.28, df=2, p > 0.1, RMSEA=0.064, CFI=1.00, CFI=0.99, AGFI=0.95					
Word-of-mouth (seven items)				0.78	0.95
1) I am willing to encourage individuals to do business with the brand/service of this firm	0.9	21.79	0.81		
2) I am willing to recommend the brand/service of this firm whenever anyone seeks my advice	0.89	21.08	0.78		
3) When the topic of [product category] comes up in conversation, I am willing to go out of my way to recommend the brand/service of this firm	0.88	20.67	0.77		
4) I am willing to recommend the brand/service of this firm to my peers	0.89	21.34	0.79		
5) I complain to my friends and relatives about the brand/service of this firm	0.9	21.79	0.81		
6) My recommendations about the brand/service of this firm provider would have been positive	0.94	21.84	0.87		
7) I have only good things to say about the brand/service of this firm provide	0.82	20.31	0.63		
X ² =1.51, df=1, p > 0.1, RMSEA=0.046, CFI=1.00, CFI=0.98, AGFI=0.93					
Increased repurchase intentions (three items)				0.6	0.942
1) Make a larger share of your [product category] purchases from this firm rather than from other [product category providers]?	0.92	24.37	0.85		
2) Do business with this firm more often?	0.94	24.79	0.88		
3) would you like to repurchase the offerings and buy more from this firm?	0.81	17.73	0.65		
X ² =1.51, df=1, p > 0.1, RMSEA=0.043, CFI=1.00, CFI=0.99, AGFI=0.97					

Appendix 1. Contd.

Social value (four items)				0.78	0.912
1) The brand/service of this firm would improve the way I am perceived	0.93	24.45	0.84		
2) The brand/service of this firm would help me make a good impression on other people	0.95	24.58	0.89		
3) The brand/service of this firm would give its owners the social approval	0.84	21.73	0.75		
4) The brand/service of this firm help me to feel accepted by others	0.79	20.69	0.62		
X ² =1.51 , df=1 , p > 0.1 , RMSEA=0.043 , CFI=1.00 , CFI=1.00 , AGFI=0.96					
Emotional value(five items)				0.84	0.954
1) The brand/service of this firm is the one that I would enjoy	0.89	24.82	0.86		
2) The brand/service of this firm make me want to purchase and use it	0.92	25.76	0.88		
3) The brand/service of this firm is the one that I would feel relaxed about using it	0.93	25.9	0.83		
4) The brand/service of this firm would make me feel good	0.9	25.35	0.77		
5) The brand/service of this firm would give me pleasure	0.92	25.76	0.88		
X ² =0.03 , df=1 , p > 0.1 , RMSEA=0.000, CFI=1.00 , CFI=1.00 , AGFI=1.00					
Conditional value (one item)				0.87	0.937
1) I value the information the brand/service of this firm offers, with the help of which I get what I need in a certain situation	0.93	24.68	0.87		
X ² =1.36 , df=2 , p > 0.1 , RMSEA=0.000, CFI=1.00 , CFI=1.00 , AGFI=0.98					