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A Study on Customer Relationship Management in B2B at Kitchen Appliance Manufacturing Industry

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ABSTRACT: Customer Relationship Management (CRM) is now an important strategy that helps in building and nurturing long-term relationships in the highly competitive Business to Business (B2B) sector. Within the kitchen appliances industry, companies rely on dealers, distributors, wholesalers, purchase executives, purchase managers, and other business clients in order to grow their business. The present study analyses Customer Relationship Management in the B2B kitchen appliances industry, with particular emphasis on Kitchen Appliance Manufacturing Industry. Important CRM dimensions like customer communication, customer services, after sales services, relationship management, and CRM technology and their effect on customer satisfaction, customer retention, and customer loyalty are discussed in the paper. A descriptive research design is employed for the present study. Primary data have been collected using a structured questionnaire through Google forms from 54 respondents selected through convenience sampling. The questionnaire was designed using a five-point Likert scale for measuring respondents' perceptions regarding CRM practices, customer satisfaction, and customer retention and loyalty. Data has been analyzed using SPSS software for percentage analysis, reliability analysis using Cronbach's Alpha, descriptive analysis, weighted average analysis, and correlation analysis.

KEYWORDS: Customer Relationship Management (CRM), Business-to-Business (B2B), Customer Satisfaction, Customer Retention, Customer Loyalty, After-Sales Service, CRM Technology, Kitchen Appliance Industry.

I. INTRODUCTION

In today's competitive business environment, maintaining strong customer relationships is essential for organizational success. In the B2B sector, it is important to establish and maintain healthy relationships, mutual trust, communication, and efficient service with dealers, distributors, wholesalers, and other business clients. Customer Relationship Management (CRM) offers a strategic way of managing relationships through effective communication, customer service, complaints management, after-sale service, and customer information management. It will not only enhance customer satisfaction but also increase loyalty and customer retention. In the kitchen appliance industry, there is a need to conduct research on B2B CRM since good customer relationships are necessary in order to have business growth. Thus, it will be appropriate to look at CRM within the B2B kitchen appliance industry, especially their relationship with customer satisfaction, customer retention, and customer loyalty, specifically for Kitchen Appliance Manufacturing Industry.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Adrian Payne and Pennie Frow (2005) conducted a study titled "A Strategic Framework for Customer Relationship Management." The study proposed a comprehensive CRM framework that integrates marketing, sales, customer service, and information technology. The authors concluded that CRM is not merely a software application but a strategic approach that helps organizations build long-term customer relationships, improve customer satisfaction, and increase business performance. The framework is widely adopted by B2B manufacturing organizations to strengthen customer relationships and improve operational efficiency.



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Zeynab Soltani and Nima Jafari Navimipour (2016) conducted a systematic review titled "Customer Relationship Management Mechanisms: A Systematic Review of the State-of-the-Art Literature." The study reviewed previous CRM research and identified key components such as electronic CRM (E-CRM), knowledge management, customer data quality, social CRM, and data mining. The authors concluded that organizations adopting these CRM mechanisms achieve higher customer satisfaction, improved customer retention, and better organizational performance.

Hussein A. Al-Homery, Hasbullah Ashari, and Asmala Ahmad (2023) conducted a literature review titled "Customer Relationship Management: A Literature Review Approach." The study examined various definitions, concepts, and applications of CRM across different industries. The authors found that CRM should be considered a customer-centric business strategy rather than only a technological system. Effective CRM implementation helps organizations improve customer loyalty, service quality, and long-term business relationships.

Wai Ting Ngai, Li Xiu, and D.C.K. Chau (2009) conducted a study titled "Application of Data Mining Techniques in Customer Relationship Management: A Literature Review and Classification." The research analyzed how data mining techniques support CRM activities such as customer segmentation, sales forecasting, customer retention, and purchasing behavior analysis. The study concluded that organizations using customer data analytics can make better marketing decisions and strengthen customer relationships, particularly in manufacturing industries.

William Jayachandran, Subhash Sharma, Peter Kaufman, and Pushkala Raman (2005) conducted a study titled "The Role of Relational Information Processes and Technology Use in Customer Relationship Management." The researchers examined the relationship between CRM technology, customer information management, and organizational performance. The findings revealed that effective use of CRM technology and customer information significantly improves customer satisfaction, customer loyalty, and overall business performance in B2B organizations.

Vicente Guerola-Navarro, Hermenegildo Gil-Gomez, Raul Oltra-Badenes, and Javier Sendra-García (2021) conducted a literature review titled "Customer Relationship Management and Its Impact on Innovation: A Literature Review." The study examined the relationship between CRM and innovation across different industries. The authors concluded that effective CRM practices enable organizations to better understand customer needs, improve product development, enhance service quality, and maintain long-term competitive advantage.

Lewlisa Saha, Hrudaya Kumar Tripathy, Soumya Ranjan Nayak, Akash Kumar Bhoi, and Paolo Barsocchi (2021) conducted a systematic review titled "Amalgamation of Customer Relationship Management and Data Analytics in Different Business Sectors." The study explored the integration of CRM with business analytics and artificial intelligence. The findings indicated that organizations using CRM with advanced analytics improve customer satisfaction, operational efficiency, decision-making, and profitability across multiple industries.

Richard Boulding, Richard Staelin, Michael Ehret, and Wesley J. Johnston (2005) conducted a study titled "A Customer Relationship Management Roadmap: What Is Known, Potential Pitfalls, and Where to Go." The researchers discussed the factors influencing successful CRM implementation and identified challenges such as employee resistance, poor organizational planning, and inadequate customer information management. The study concluded that CRM success depends on organizational commitment, customer-focused strategies, and effective use of technology.

Clay M. Voorhees, Nicole M. Boylan, Carlos Bauer, Paul W. Fombelle, and Mason R. Jenkins (2025) conducted a study titled "Conceptualizing Post-Sales Relationship Management in B2B Markets." The research focused on customer relationship management after the completion of sales transactions. The authors concluded that post-sales services, customer success management, proactive communication, and long-term support play a vital role in strengthening B2B customer relationships and improving customer retention.

James S. Ahearne, Michael Hughes, and Wesley J. Schillewaert (2009) conducted a study titled "CRM Systems and Organizational Learning: An Exploration of the Relationship Between CRM Effectiveness and Customer Information Orientation of the Firm in Industrial Markets." The study investigated the role of CRM systems in industrial organizations and found that firms with strong customer information orientation achieve higher CRM effectiveness, improved customer satisfaction, stronger customer relationships, and better business performance.



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III. RESEARCH GAP

The literature that exists for review in the current study is quite informative about Customer Relationship Management, customer satisfaction, CRM technology, data analytics, customer service, and organizational performance. However, the literature review has identified some areas which need further study. First, most of the CRM literature has concentrated on studying CRM in relation to retail, services or general manufacturing, while little work has been done regarding B2B CRM in the kitchen appliances manufacturing. Second, past literature has focused on CRM technology and customer satisfaction. But the role of CRM practices with respect to influencing customer retention, dealers and business relationship has not been studied much in past. Third, empirical literature with regard to CRM practices in Indian kitchen appliance manufacturing companies and its role in business performance has not been examined much. Thus, the current study tries to fill this gap in literature by studying CRM practices in the B2B kitchen appliance industry where customer communication, customer service, after sales service and CRM technology can be identified as some important dimensions of CRM. Customer satisfaction is considered as a mediating variable while customer retention and loyalty are the dependent outcome variables.

HYPOTHESIS

Null Hypothesis (H_0): There is no significant relationship between Customer Relationship Management (CRM) variables and Customer Retention and Loyalty.

Alternative Hypothesis (H_1): There is a significant relationship between Customer Relationship Management (CRM) variables and Customer Retention and Loyalty.

IV. METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study used descriptive research design to describe and analyze the current practices of Customer Relationship Management in the business-to-business sector for kitchen appliances industry. This research design was employed to analyze the nature of the study variables (customer satisfaction and customer retention), beliefs and experiences of the business customers about the current practices of CRM without influencing any study variable.

Descriptive Research Design

A descriptive research design was used in this study to explain and analyze the current customer relationship management (CRM) practices in the B2B kitchen appliances industry. It is worth noting that a descriptive research design was suitable in this research because it helped in explaining the views and feelings of the customers without manipulation of the variables of the study. The study further analyzed the link between CRM practices, customer satisfaction, and customer retention using a questionnaire.

Sampling Methodology

Population: The respondents were the business customers of the company operating in the kitchen appliances sector, and they include the dealers, distributors, wholesalers, purchasing executives, purchasing managers, among others.

Sample Size: 54 respondents

Data Collection

Primary data: Questionnaires were administered to the selected respondents using google forms to gather information pertaining to the research problem under investigation.

Secondary data: Relevant information was gathered from various existing resources including books, journals, research papers, previous works, and other online material. This information provided background details on the topic and was used to complement the results of the primary investigation.

Measurement Scale

A five-point Likert scale was used for the questionnaires. This scale allowed the respondents to indicate their degree of agreement or disagreement with the items included in the questionnaire. The scale ranged from strongly disagree to strongly agree. This helped the researcher to score the responses and report quantitative results.



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Statistical Tools

Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to analyze the data collected. The following statistical tools were used:

1. Percentage analysis
2. Descriptive statistics
3. Reliability analysis
4. Pearson's Correlation analysis
5. Weighted Average Method.

The gathered data from 54 respondents via Google Forms was analyzed using SPSS. The percentage method was used for describing the demographics of respondents while the descriptive statistics method was used for measuring the mean and standard deviation of the study variables. The reliability and validity of the survey were checked using Cronbach's Alpha. The Pearson correlation was used for analysing the association among CRM practices, customer satisfaction, and customer loyalty/retention. The weighted average method was used for rating CRM-related aspects based on the perceptions of respondents.

V. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Demographic Profile

As per the respondent profile, there was almost an equal gender split, with males being at 50.0%, and females at 48.1%. The maximum percentage (66.7%) belonged to respondents who were less than 25 years of age. It is therefore seen that the views collected through this research are more inclined towards the younger generation. In terms of designation, the largest group comprised of Sales Executives and those belonging to the "Other" category, along with managers, dealers, distributors, and retailers.

Descriptive Analysis

From the descriptive statistics, it is clear that customers have a slightly positive view of the CRM activities of the company. The highest means were registered for the performance of the warranty and the service requests as well as the long-term business trust (Mean = 3.81), while customer satisfaction and intention to purchase in future received means of 3.80. In addition, the customers gave positive views regarding the customer service, the relationship management and the customer satisfaction with means between 3.48 and 3.70. On the other hand, it should be noted that the least means (3.19) were registered for the digital communication methods used, which may indicate an area for improvement of the CRM technology.

Reliability Analysis (Cronbach's Alpha)

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	No. of Items
.955	25

From the reliability test results, it was found that Cronbach Alpha is 0.955 with 25 items, which represents excellent reliability. Out of 54 samples, 53 (98.1%) of them are valid, and only one sample was excluded because of missing information. Thus, the questionnaire is very reliable and can be used for further statistical analysis.

Weighted Average Method:

Response	Weight(W)	Frequency (F)	W × F
Strongly Disagree	1	7	7
Disagree	2	0	0
Neutral	3	13	39
Agree	4	24	96
Strongly Agree	5	10	50
Total		54	192



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According to the Weighted Average Analysis, there is a positive perception of the organization's CRM activities by the respondents since most of them rated themselves in "Agree" categories. Communication of products got a rating of 3.56, while warranty and service requests and customer relationship satisfaction both received ratings of 3.78. Purchase intention of customers had a rating of 3.80, which is a very high number. The maximum rating of 3.85 was for customer trust in maintaining a long-term relationship, which is an indication of good customer confidence. The following areas that need improvement are digital communication, product updating, and issue resolution.

Correlation Analysis:

Variable	CC	CS	ASS	RM	CRMT	CSA	CRL
CC	1	.703***	.718***	.633***	.643***	.725***	.519***
CS	.703***	1	.702***	.666***	.679***	.762***	.644***
ASS	.718***	.702***	1	.812***	.782***	.906***	.807***
RM	.633***	.666***	.812***	1	.738***	.768***	.767***
CRMT	.643***	.679***	.782***	.738***	1	.763***	.735***
CSA	.725***	.762***	.906***	.768***	.763***	1	.835***
CRL	.519***	.644***	.807***	.767***	.735***	.835***	1

Customer Communication (CC), Customer Service (CS), After-Sales Service (ASS), Relationship Management (RM), Customer Relationship Management Technology (CRMT), Customer Satisfaction (CSA), and Customer Retention and Loyalty (CRL).

The Pearson's Correlation Analysis demonstrates that all the CRM variables have significant positive correlations with Customer Retention and Loyalty, with all p-values being less than 0.001. Customer Communication has a positive correlation with Customer Satisfaction ($r = 0.703$), After-Sales Service ($r = 0.718$), and Customer Service Availability ($r = 0.725$). Customer Satisfaction is significantly correlated with After-Sales Service ($r = 0.702$), Customer Service Availability ($r = 0.762$), Relationship Marketing ($r = 0.666$), CRM Technology ($r = 0.679$), and Customer Retention and Loyalty ($r = 0.644$). After-Sales Service demonstrates significant relationships with Customer Service Availability ($r = 0.906$), Relationship Marketing ($r = 0.812$), Customer Retention and Loyalty ($r = 0.807$), and CRM Technology ($r = 0.782$). Relationship Marketing has positive correlations with CRM Technology ($r = 0.738$), Customer Service Availability ($r = 0.768$), and Customer Retention and Loyalty ($r = 0.767$). Finally, CRM Technology is significantly related to Customer Service Availability ($r = 0.763$) and Customer Retention and Loyalty ($r = 0.735$). The most significant relationship with Customer Retention and Loyalty belongs to Customer Service Availability ($r = 0.835$). Thus, as $p < 0.001$, H_0 is rejected and H_1 is accepted.

Findings of the study

- The majority of B2B customers hold a positive perception about CRM practices of the company.
- The firm keeps good relations with its dealers, distributors, retailers, and other business customers.
- Effective communication is one of the key elements in fostering strong customer relations.
- Most of the customers are satisfied with the product information provided by the company.
- Customer service and support are perceived positively by the respondents.
- After-sales service and warranty support are among factors that contribute to customers' satisfaction.
- Most of the customers have trust and confidence in the company.
- Many customers are ready to buy products of the company again.
- CRM practices positively affect customers' loyalty and foster business relations.
- Digital communication and product updates should be improved.

Suggestions of the Study

- The company must upgrade its electronic communication tools.
- Information about the products and their update should be provided to B2B clients regularly.
- Complaints from customers must be addressed in an effective manner.



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- Customer service personnel must get training regularly.
- After-sales services and warranty services need to be made strong.
- Regular customer feedback must be taken.
- CRM must be utilized properly for maintaining customer records.
- Personalized communication needs to be offered to the key customers.
- Follow-ups should be done on a regular basis with the dealers and distributors.
- Loyalty programs along with offers can be offered to encourage purchases.
- Service quality of the customers should be improved continually.

VI. CONCLUSION:

Customer Relationship Management in B2B Business in the Appliance Industry indicates that it is extremely important for a company to maintain good customer relations in order to ensure its sustainable development. Good relationships with dealers, distributors, retailers, and other business customers in the highly competitive appliance industry will assist the company in achieving higher levels of satisfaction, trust, loyalty, and repeat business. Effective communication, good customer service, after sales support, warranty services, and effective handling of customer complaints contribute to the creation of strong customer relationships. The majority of customers are satisfied with the company's CRM practices and express their trust and willingness to continue doing business with the company. It should be stated that it is possible to make improvements in the sphere of digital communication, regular updates regarding products, complaint handling, and usage of CRM technologies. It will assist the company in providing better service and handling customer needs more efficiently. In conclusion, it is necessary to emphasize that effective Customer Relationship Management assists the company in understanding B2B customers, increasing their satisfaction, developing stronger customer loyalty and establishing long-lasting business relationships.

VII. FUTURE SCOPE OF THE STUDY

Future scope of this study can be extended by carrying out more researches using more samples and in other regions and in other categories of B2B customers in order to get more comprehensive findings. Other future researches may consider digital CRM systems, customer communication, post-sale service and customer complaint handling. Long-term effect of CRM practice on customer satisfaction, customer retention, customer loyalty and business performance can be studied.

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