

The Effect of Customer Relationship Management on Consumer Behavior: A Case of Retail Industry in Malaysia

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Abstract

Companies will survive by exploiting knowledge resources to maintain customer relationships more efficiently and effectively, as well as enhance their service quality. CRM is one of the successful management and marketing strategies that help companies increase their customer satisfaction, loyalty and retention to build and manage long-term relationships. Hence, the purpose of this research project is to measure the effect of customer relationship management and its effectiveness on consumer behavior. The concerning factors in this project that will influence the behavior of customers are sales, technology, customer services and customer satisfaction. Besides, these factors are the link between CRM and consumer behavior to understand the behavior in the retail industry specifically TESCO Company in Nilai and how they will be influenced by these factors also how it can affect the overall experience for TESCO and its customers. Moreover, when a customer has an enjoyable experience, this service experience will transform into a new service expectation, and so the next experience will be compared to the previous one. Thus, companies should meet the demands and expectations of customers to provide satisfying services and enhance service quality.

Keywords: Customer relationship management, consumer behavior, retail service

1. Introduction

Organizations worldwide in today's industries face challenges with the globalization of the economy and also the growing marketplace. Currently in the retail industry in Malaysia is growing rapidly through the past a few years and many competitors in that field. The retail industry in Malaysia is well developed and positively towards Malaysia's economic growth. The GDP was worth approximately 354.35 billion US dollars in 2018. Services and Manufacturing sectors served as the main contributors to the economy (Trading Economics, 2019).

Retail Group Malaysia (RGM) has increased its 2019 growth forecast for the country's retail sales to RM108.3 billion at 4.9% from 4.5% that was expected for the first quarter and stronger expansion in the second quarter to increase in economic activities in the latter part of the year with an expected sales growth rise to 5.8% for 2019. Previously, the retail sales growth rate was 3.9% in 2018 of RM103.7 billion, compared to the sales in 2017 with 2% at RM99.8 billion (Aisyah, 2019).

The retail sector is grown impressively in the services sectors. There are many local and international retailers such as Tesco, Giant, Jaya Grocer, AEON, IKEA, Mr DIY, 99 Speed Mart, etc. Malaysia retail sector consists of a huge number of small shops that offered a variety of goods and services. (Kaliappan et al., 2009) Retail trades have a significant effect on Malaysian retail since the mid-'90s until now with 50% of the overall retail industry. Most retailers are located in major cities and expanded more to some rural areas.

The concept of customer relationship management (CRM) came up first in the middle of the 1990s in the industry of information technology. The demand of consumers and development of innovation in information processing becomes more important day after day and it increased competitive environment that will contribute and enhance to the development (Graf et al., 2013; Myllylä, 2019) However, after the changes and development of the 21st century it has evolved into the philosophy of management that organizations and firms concentrate their activities around customers and their satisfaction to their product or services (Io et al., 2010; Paul et al., 2014). The term CRM will refer to the technologies, principles and practices that have been used by firms and organizations to analyze and manage their customer interactions with the data throughout the lifecycle of the customers. The main objectives of CRM are to improve business relationships with customers, assisting in customer retention that will lead to increase sales and profit.

CRM has turned out to be one of the exhortations for many organizations. CRM's main role and purpose is to help organizations review productivity on dealings like repeat purchases, dollars spent, and long life (Khodakarami & Chan, 2014). Also, it includes service, quality, or customer satisfaction. A significant factor of service & quality is conveying the product that the customer expects. The flow result of service and quality on approval and fulfillment on customer satisfaction. Service and quality extensively carefully measured to be a key antecedent to winning customer relations (Tseng & Wu, 2014).

1.1 Research Problem

Customer relationship management is important because it is the strongest and the most efficient approach in maintaining and creating relationships with the customers. Customer relationship management is not only pure business but also is the building of strong personal bonding within people. However, in this case, after making intensive research researchers found out there are companies that are unable to use it CRM effectively. Hence, the study concentrated on Tesco Malaysia specifically in Nilai as the survey was conducted from their due to slow and weak CRM also they need to understand how important it is to maintain their customer's loyalty and make them satisfy so that they know what they can achieve through its proper implementation. Besides, managing existing clients and flourishing business strive to get more clients; however, it is still several issues and challenges in reality. Learning about CRM can enhance the circumstance and help in testing better approaches for advertising and business proficiently. Hence in the era of business, every organization should be recommended to have full-fledged knowledge of CRM to cope up with all the business needs and influence consumer behavior. This study is conducted to help those companies reach and accomplish those needs.

Following previous researches and documented problems, this study attempts to fill the gaps by examining the variables identified, sales, technology, customer service and customer satisfaction and their effect on the consumer behavior in the Malaysian retail sector (Tesco Nilai).

2. Literature Review

2.1 Customer Relationship Management (CRM)

The term of customer relationship management means the firm's practices, strategies and technologies that are used to manage its customers (Greenberg, 2010; Raab et al., 2016). CRM is used by all the firms to improve their business by analyzing customers' behaviors towards its products and services which also helps to improve its strategy towards its goal. Organizations can not only gain profit but also retain their customers by building trust in them through well managed CRM (Mohammad et al., 2013). Furthermore, as the business environment is becoming digitally remote, CRM has become even more important due to scarcity in person-to-person contact at the same time companies need to engage to fill the gap between attracting and retaining customers in this complex societal structure (Newman, 2011).

2.2 Customer Relationship Management and Competitive Marketing

The significant focus of CRM has been increased compared to the past where companies can have the ability to understand customers' needs easier by using the new technology and system which provides effective and efficient solutions to understand the behavior of customers. Customer's preferences and needs changed from the past and what they plan to do in the future to meet their objectives and what they have done in the past. The main objective is to develop and improve customer's experience of how they integrate and interact among each other into the company and that will turn and create more satisfaction which yields more loyalty. These acts will yield more sales from product and service and this will increase the market growth and market share of the company. Furthermore, the central database within CRM it is available for all the customers in the company which they can access may type of company products and service and the information of these products and services can be found easily and everybody will be more aware of firm's product and service and which type is more suitable to them that can meet their expectations and needs (Andajani, 2015; Goldsmith, 2010)

2.2.1 Sales

Nowadays, sales support and customer service staff use CRM as their primary function to portray a unified and coordinated point or points of contact to their customers. Furthermore, it is used to segment and target customers as a marketing tool which helps to keep a record of customers' activities as well as helps develop programs for sales and marketing. Different departments such as IT, marketing, and sales have to work closely to maximize the effectiveness of CRM to get optimum profits and benefits (Marshall, 2013). Though in a practical situation this has not been the case, as defined by MO (Modus operandi), CRM plays a big role in knowledge management in an organization by collecting, storing, and utilizing the customers' details and information properly. For sales management, properly managed CRM Application software is a clear window that leads them to high margin profits with greater efficiency in every step such as which sales to be closed, which products are on priorities, which segment of customers to be focused, and how to manage stock (Tauni et al., 2014). In addition to that CRM plays as an indicator to the sales manager's reputation as well as the effectiveness of their strategy which helps to evaluate everyone's performance (Westberg & Pope B, 2014).

Hence, with proper CRM, they will have reports on time and whenever they require: daily, weekly, monthly, and yearly and they can immediately come up with a solution to any problem. They will also have

confidence in their decision as they rely on accurate data. Moreover, they can forecast their sales. It should also be noted that the CRM should have easy-to-use and intuitive reporting options so that a sales manager is not wrapped up in creating time-consuming unnecessary reports for management (Bygstad, 2003).

2.2.2 Technology

Marketing research under CRM tries to attempt finding links to business performance measure relating interaction with CRM implementation as well as IT infrastructure. On the other hand, Rigby & Ledingham, (2004) and, have discussed a more general perspective of CRM. They claimed that the success of CRM depends on stimulate business growth. At the same time, some others have claimed that effectiveness of CRM depends on customer-oriented business strategies (Centre, 2015; Dalla Pozza et al., 2018; Gautam, 2011; Öztaysi et al., 2011). According to Brown & Vessey, (2008), discusses that system implementation plays the major part on the success of CRM because no matter how strong CRM you come up in the theory if you do not implement with proper infrastructure and with right people, the system is going to be collapsed (Hussain et al., 2018; Reinartz et al., 2004). It also depends on the ability of CRM to deliver and support customer' demand in the MO business aspect with the improvement in the economy (Gummesson, 2004; Richard et al., 2007).

The conflicting model of CRM can be explained as the root cause of poor result in implementation. The success measure of CRM and its issues can be due to the inability of factors such as service for customer satisfaction, feedback work to measure dependent variable e.g. Customer satisfaction and correctly quality work. The vast majority of researches have failed to focus on the measure of relationship development with customers, but they have only focused on profitability, performance improvements and customer retention (Ang & Buttle, 2006; Auh et al., 2019; Chang et al., 2010). Some researches such as Bohling et al., (2006) and Soltani & Navimpour, (2016), have focused on the success of project management, quality of data management, the effectiveness of leadership, and the readiness of CRM implementation. Meanwhile, Soltani et al., (2018), argues that customers should be responsible for the improvement of implementing a CRM strategy as they are the direct beneficiaries of the system.

2.2.3 Customer Service

The main concept of CRM is to have the ability to manage customer such a way that is beneficial for the organization not only in a short term but in a sustainable way (Lingavel, 2015; Mithas et al., 2005; Sanad, 2012). Six items are used as a measurement of CRM in the extent to the effectiveness of the system which maintains customer relationships. It is further to measure and maintains customer information from customer contact points, as well as from a single view of the customers and other sources of customer information. CRM recognizes that it is not enough to attract buyers. The CRM goal is to convert buyers into loyalists and enthusiast. Service is the heart of CRM. CRM focus their resources through quality, feedback and service to moving their customers towards satisfaction (Odoom et al., 2017). CRM is not about the revolution of market thought. It is the genuine relation about the marketers how they manage their brands. The facilitators of CRM like past they will make earlier agents in present to look for service and quality for the customer's satisfaction. The accountability for qualities is promotion, intend, procurement, process design, produce, checkup and test, covering and storage freedom and manufactured goods service (Chakravorti, 2009). CRM can be used as a weapon to create comparative advantages against aggressive competitors in the market. It is in increasing trend since the majority of the organizations are utilizing it. Furthermore, many more companies are in their way to implement CRM so that they can decrease weakness and increase managerial efficiency (Bahri-Ammari & Nusair, 2015; Nguyen et al., 2007; Pohludka & Štverková, 2019)

This paper has focused on the strategies to overcome the threads of failure, factors that can be addressed to help business improve their CRM, and making better customer relationship. This paper aims to provide a modest contribution to the topic of CRM while it also explains success factors and main components i.e. people, process, and technology of CRM. The success factors will be identified through a deep review of related journals, researches, proceedings, report and other related articles. There are many academics, researchers and practitioners who have addressed the issues of customer relationship management in the field of marketing and information system. There is increasing attention towards the concept of CRM though it is quite a new concept. As Foss et al., (2008), stated that to identify CRM there is no consensus. As CRM can be different thing depending on the situation, and people; it can be one thing for academics while its different for business organizations hence it is very difficult to come up with the single unified definition of CRM.

2.2.4 Customer Satisfaction

As customer satisfaction has been a widely researched topic, it is defined in many different ways. Since TESCO focuses on a 'people first' strategy for them to achieve customer satisfaction is of the highest order. Cumulative satisfaction or overall contentment over transaction-specific satisfaction has been a major debate in recent times. The nature and measurement of customer satisfaction have been debated, with satisfaction found to be related to and difficult to discriminate from other positive emotions (e.g., happiness, joy, and enjoyment). Some studies have shown a positive relationship between price and customer satisfaction Wantara & Tambrin, (2019), while some other researches show the positive relationship with loyalty and commitment with customer satisfaction Garbarino & Johnson, (1999) and Leninkumar, (2017). Furthermore, El-Adly, (2019) and El-Adly,

(2019), have found that there is a positive relationship between customer satisfaction and price equity; satisfaction, trust and commitment whereas other have found that usage level and satisfaction have positive relationship same with profitability (Anderson et al., 1997).

Most of the time, satisfaction is deemed to be complex, where some outcomes are affected more than others, even though it has been shown that there is a linear relationship between customer satisfaction and performance outcomes – customer satisfaction increases together with improvement in performance (Aktepe et al., 2015; Cristea & Mocuta, 2018; Soltani & Navimipour, 2016). Despite satisfaction not being a “unique, fundamental construct in and of itself” Farris, (2009), holistically, customer satisfaction is a rather significant dependent and independent variable in several studies (Ganesan, 1994; Gul, 2014). CRM has only begun to impact the business world significantly in the last 6 to 10 years although the CRM basis, such as discrete customer groups segmentation, has been revealed since 1956 (Bhat & Darzi, 2018; Nairn, 2002; Zeynali, S., Golkar, 2013).

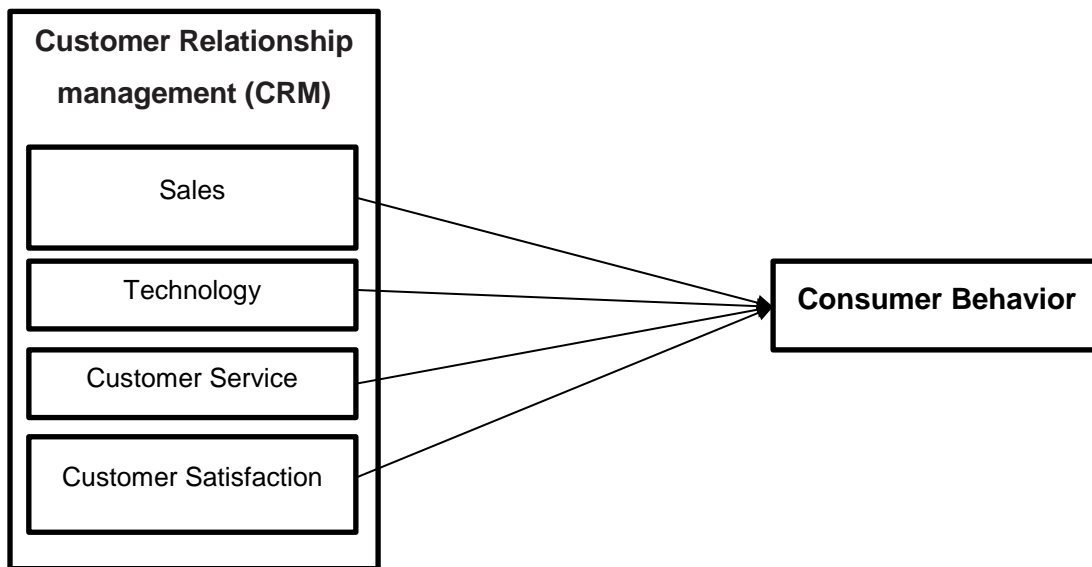
3. Research Methodology

This paper used the causal study and explanatory study that is most useful for the predictive method that gathers information regarding the effect relationship between CRM and consumer behaviors in the retail industry by selecting Tesco Company in Nilai. This research used the quantitative approach to determine the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable within a population (Creswell, 2014).

The method adopted for sampling techniques was non-probability sampling in the form of convenience sampling technique due to the lack of sampling frame and it is the least time consuming and least expensive as in this sampling technique is having a great benefit that has the freedom of sample unit to approach in the population (Doherty, 1994). The research survey was distributed among people through an online survey and among people physically in the area where more people will be gathered and located at Tesco in Nilai.

The data collection used both primary and secondary data to collect information and conduct the research. The primary data referred to the information and data that has been first collected by people and researched on the variable of the interest to meet the purpose of the study as the main objective of this research is to examine and study the link between CRM and consumer behavior that used a questionnaire to collect the primary data (Saunders et al., 2008).

3.1 Research Framework



3.2 Hypothesis

H1: Customer satisfaction and consumer behavior are moderately related to each other.

H2: Sales and consumer behavior are strongly related to each other.

H3: Technology and consumer behavior are moderately related to each other.

H4: Customer service and consumer behavior are moderately related to each other.

4. Results

The results were generated by SPSS software. Consumer behavior dependent variable and independent variables (customer satisfaction, technology, sales and customer service)

Table 1: Model Summary

Model	R		Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	R Square Change	Change Statistics			Sig. F Change
	R	Square				F Change	df1	df2	
1	.529 ^a	.279	.268	.57834	.279	24.033	4	248	.000

This table provides the *R* and *R*² values. The *R* value represents a simple correlation and is 0.529. *R*² value indicates how much of the total variation in the dependent variables explained by the independent variables. In this case, 27.9% can be explained, which is moderately large.

Table 2: ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	32.154	4	8.039	24.033	.000 ^b
	Total	115.105	252			

Anova table indicates that the regression model predicts the dependent variable significantly well. How do we know this? Look at the "Regression" row and go to the "Sig." column. This indicates the statistical significance of the regression model that was run. Here, $p < 0.00007$, which is less than 0.05, and indicates that, overall, the regression model statistically significantly predicts the outcome variable (i.e., it is a good fit for the data).

Table 3: Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		Correlations	
	Std. Error		Beta	t	Sig.	Partial Part
1 (Constant)	.259			5.600	.000	
C.Satisfaction	.057		.220	3.512	.001	.218 .189
Technology	.058		.272	4.366	.000	.267 .235
C.Service	.051		.189	3.051	.003	.190 .164
Sales	.158		.331	2.527	.015	.367 .169

Table 3 shows the direct effect the first process of the mediation test that is to test the hypothesis whether the customer relationship management (CRM) effect on consumer behavior are statistically significant and positively related, to test this hypothesis multiple regression tests was run, the results show the sig is less than 0,05 at 95 of the confidence interval is enough to support the claim that customer relationship management (CRM) has a significant impact on consumer behavior furthermore, we will see the variables and their beta values. The p-values in table 3 show that the independent variables are significantly impacting on the dependent variable at a 5% significance level.

Table 4 Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.934	.936	5

Additionally, the alpha coefficient for the four items is s .934, suggesting that the items have relatively high internal consistency.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

5.1 Discussion

By identifying the needs and wants of customers, the company will be able to provide the needed products and services the customers seek. The company can achieve their objectives and goals by building an effective relationship with their customers and make them loyal to the product and services provided by the company and that will lead the company to have a competitive advantage in the market. The data and information have been collected through many resources primary and secondary research methods. Furthermore, there are various factors

will make an impact on consumer behavior, but in the study, researchers concentrate few variables that will influence consumer behavior such as sales, technology, customer service and customer satisfaction. These factors and variables have a huge impact on consumer behavior that company like Tesco need to focus more on these factors and identify one and each then they can understand and have a better ways make them loyal so that they can improve their strategies. Hence, if the company has made its sales plans more effective compared to its competitor will lead to grab the attention of customers.

At the global business, the movement of technology is increasing day by day and it became more advance comparing to the previous years, firms need to improve their use of technology to understand and study their customer behavior. Other factors will influence human behavior such as attitude, beliefs, social status, specific needs, living standard and others. Different people have different needs and want that the companies need to understand so that they can integrate with the behavior of people and make them satisfy with the product and services. Further, researchers focused more on these four factors namely Sales, technology, customer satisfaction and customer service to sum up CRM and then relate all those independently with consumer behavior.

The data were analyzed by SPSS program that gave a clear picture of all the factors, although with varying the effect that indeed affects consumer behavior in some way, which the regression of analysis value was below 0.05 that is a significant relationship between the dependent and independent variables.

6. Limitations and Direction for Future Research

This paper has covered many important aspects of customer relationship management and its influence on consumers buying behavior. Due to some limitations of the project research, other issues have also aroused and these issues will offer scope for further studies and research to provide valid results and decrease the effect of the limitations. In this case, the research highlighted with the assistance of these examples such as the experiences and the variety of responses that customers gave to create a view about CRM system and the buying behavior of consumers. This will drive and determine how it will shape the buying behavior of consumers most of the time will not associate with CRM. As in this project, the outcome of these several factors will have an impact and contribute to influencing people attention in terms of buying behavior to purchase from the company on their products and services.

Besides, references groups, cultural differences, high waiting time, security features, communication, brand value and perception will influence consumers buying behavior process. This is due to the differences of experiences in customers that will have different characteristics and needs under different circumstances. However, the ability of firm's image in the industry and market to grab the attention of people and resolve the queries of customers to satisfy their needs and meet their expectations by providing high-quality products and services comparing to other competitors in the market. Hence, in the future, other aspects can study and investigate that also need improvement with other factors, so there will be another opportunity to improve this area of CRM and consumer behavior be taking larger sample size and choose different demography than this research to bring about new data to light.

7. Conclusion

This project research has concluded and investigated the outcome of CRM system and its process and how it makes an impact to buying behavior of consumers through main factors such as sales, technology, customer service and customer satisfaction. These factors will influence the perception of customers in the long term and it will lead to an increase in the value of the company to the perception of customers. However, this project aimed to improve the strategies and decision-making process to Tesco Company by focusing in Nilai location so that it can improve their sales and increase the quality of their product so customers will be happy with the product and service provided by Tesco and that will lead to making them loyal. CRM system will allow Tesco to understand the behavior of their customers and know their need and wants as well as social determinants that have an impact to consumer's perception such as attitude, personality, basic needs and demands, willingness, cultural environment and values. One of the main aims of this chapter is to offer a set of logical recommendations to improve and develop the process of CRM system and how the company can adapt to implement and design the system. As discussed earlier, the customer plays a crucial role in the market chain process. To make it clear, satisfied consumer creates the potential for new customers. If existing consumers are satisfied, there are opportunities to recommend new customers. This will increase the number of customers and maintain the relationship with customers. Lastly, all the recommendations provided they are based on some rationale but the limitation of the study is that the research outcomes are not generalized.

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