

Abstract

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A Study on the Implementation of Relationship Marketing Approach in Supply Chain Performance: An analytical Literature Review

Abstract: Purpose: Research has revealed that Relationship Marketing (RM) is one of the major elements playing a crucial role in building a solid network between supply chain members. RM creates successful partnerships & relationship integration throughout the supply chain which, in contrast to firms working individually, have the potential to render efficiencies, overall firm profitability, higher service & overall corporate growth. The purpose of this paper is to review literature related to the integration between Marketing, RM, Supply Chain Management (SCM) & Supply Chain Performance (SCP) measures. Moreover, it aims at contributing to knowledge by identifying certain SCP measures for assessing RM impact on SCP & at developing a conceptual framework proposing that RM influences supply chain performance (SCP), thus contributes in rendering supply chain competitive advantages that can be measured by market & customer oriented SCP measures (referred to as marketing/SCM integration in this study). This study presents (1) the historical stages in the business environment that led to the conceptualisation of RM & SCM, (2) discusses the vitality for integrating RM & SCM, (3) identifies literature gaps related to relational SCP measures & (4) consolidates measures that can assess the impact of RM on supply chain performance (5) develops a conceptual framework for a measured marketing/SCM integration model. Research approach: The research follows a content analysis of published literature in Logistics, supply chain & marketing academic journals between 1995 & 2010 related to the integration of marketing, supply chain & SCP measures & to consolidate relational performance measures. Purposive sampling is used to the relevant articles related to the research concepts. Findings & originality: Although the need for good coordination of inter-organizational cross-functional supply chain relationships was strongly supported in scholarly work, few attempts by scholars have been made to integrate functions between supply chain & marketing & there was no clear identification of specific measures to assess the performance after marketing/SCM integration. Research impact: Reviewing the literature offers a number of benefits to the researcher, most importantly, enabling the researcher to understand why the current practices are executed in the known manner & to examine the reasons for shortage in outcomes through identifying gaps. The objective of this paper is to identify gaps related to the integration of the SCM & the RM concepts & functions. Performance measures that might assess RM impact on SCP will be consolidated & directions for future research will be exploited. Practical impact: Literature search has revealed some evidence suggesting that integrated SCM is not realised in practice. The study points to managers the importance of integrating marketing & supply chain functions & directs them to certain relational measures to justify the suggested positive relationship on the overall performance. Key Words: Marketing, RM, SCM, SCP measures, content analysis.