

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 and relationship integration throughout the supply chain which, in contrast to firms working individually, have the potential to render efficiencies, overall firm profitability, higher service and overall corporate growth. The purpose of this paper is to review literature related to the integration between Marketing, RM, Supply Chain Management (SCM) and Supply Chain Performance (SCP) measures. Moreover, it aims at contributing to knowledge by identifying certain SCP measures for assessing RM impact on SCP and 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 and 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 and SCM, (2) discusses the vitality for integrating RM and SCM, (3) indentifies literature gaps related to relational SCP measures and (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 and marketing academic journals between 1995 and 2010 related to the integration of marketing, supply chain and SCP measures and to consolidate relational performance measures. Purposive sampling is used to the relevant articles related to the research concepts. Findings and 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 and marketing and 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 and 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 and the RM concepts and functions. Performance measures that might assess RM impact on SCP will be consolidated and 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 and supply chain functions and 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.