

Research proposal

To determine the impact of relationship marketing on purchasing behaviour of consumers in the UK: A study on ASOS PLC

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CHAPTER-1

INTRODUCTION

Origin of the study

According to Guerola-Navarro et.al. (2022), the origin of relationship marketing was done in the year 1983 by American marketing scholars Berry and Jackson and they argued that application of relationship marketing is an activity that an organisation obtains, maintain and promotes effectively with its consumers. Further, it was also concluded that the main goal of enterprise marketing is not only to develop new customer base but also focus on maintaining relationship with existing customers.

Background

As per Guerola-Navarro et.al. (2022), relationship marketing is referred to as a concept of customer relationship management and it mainly emphasizes upon achieving customer loyalty and long-term customer engagement rather than short-term goals and objectives. The marketing strategy mainly relies upon increasing interaction between customers and the brand so that an interpersonal connection can be built which in turn contribute towards long-term brand loyalty. The current study is based upon ASOS PLC, a British online fashion retailer founded in the year 2000 in London, UK that sells over 850 brands on its website and also ships products to 196 countries with the help of its fulfilment centers. In addition to that, company has a total of 23 million active consumers globally and is one of the leading fast-fashion brands in the UK (Atul and Mona, 2015). The present research project aims to determine the impact of relationship marketing on purchasing behaviour of consumers and how ASOS company makes use of it adequately to maximize its growth as well as the challenges faced.

Problem Statement

The customer retention and loyalty has become extremely important in this ever-changing business environment. ASOS PLC, is one of the biggest online retailers in the UK and the company is significantly focused on building a relationship with its target customers in order to achieve long-term customer loyalty. However, there are several problems related to it i.e., how does it impact consumers' purchasing behaviour and if it actually increases their loyalty towards the brand or not and finally, the challenges that are faced by company in implementing these strategies.

Aim and objectives.

The aim of the study is to determine the impact of relationship marketing on purchasing behaviour of consumers in the ASOS PLC.

Objectives:

- To understand the impact of relationship marketing on consumer loyalty in e-commerce industry.
- To examine different factors that affect purchase intention of people.
- To determine the role of modern technology in the effective implementation of relationship marketing within E-commerce industry
- To analyse the benefits and challenges of using relationship marketing within UK retail industry.

Research questions.

Q1. What is the impact of relationship marketing on consumer loyalty in E-commerce industry?

Q2. What are the benefits and challenges of using relationship marketing within UK retail industry?

Q3. What is the role of modern technology in the effective implementation of relationship marketing within E-commerce industry?

Scope of study

The main scope of this study involves that the consumers' shopping behaviour is changing constantly hence, it is imperative to understand how much role relationship marketing strategy plays in influencing their purchasing patterns and whether it contributes towards them overspending or not.

Significance

The research study holds significance for not only E-commerce companies but also consumers, government organization and general public as it will help them in understanding the importance of relationship marketing and also make people aware about the strategies used by companies to influence consumers' mindset, win their trust and build an inter-personal relationship.

Rationale

In the current competitive business environment, it has become imperative for every company to establish a strong connection with their consumers in order to achieve long-term loyalty. However, the main rationale involves determining the fact that how relationship marketing influences the purchasing behaviour of consumers and whether it is effective or not (Gilaninia et.al. 2011). Additionally, it will also help investigator in determining the challenges & opportunities relating to relationship marketing, its impact on consumers' psychology, trust level etc.

Structure of Dissertation

Introduction- In the first chapter of dissertation, emphasis is given towards background of the study i.e., a brief context towards the concept of relationship marketing, its application and maintenance. Further, aims & objectives of research study are mentioned to provide a clear idea about the goal of dissertation and how it can be achieved adequately. Finally, rationale explains a set of reasons that describe why the study is important and significance showcases the impact of study on a research field.

Literature Review- The literature review chapter is considered to be as one of the most important chapters in the entire study and basically involves an overview of major writings and other selected topics i.e., journals, articles, government reports, academic database etc.

Research Methodology- The research methodology chapter includes all details relating to the tools & techniques used to formulate the study. It provides details on the data collection procedure used, qualitative or quantitative strategy formulated, sampling procedure and the technique used for data analysis purposes. Finally, it also gives details about the limitations faced during the completion of study and ethical considerations followed.

Data Analysis- The data analysis procedure is a method of collecting raw data and then converting it into useful information to generate research findings. The raw data will be adequately analysed through set of tools to summarise the collected information and answer research questions subsequently.

Conclusion & Recommendations- Finally, the last chapter will summarise the research findings from entire study and generate adequate recommendations accordingly.

Conclusion

The introduction chapter emphasises on the background of research topic i.e., determining the impact of relationship marketing on purchasing behaviour of consumers in the UK, a study on ASOS PLC. Moreover, it also highlights the main aims & objectives that this study sets out of achieve and justifies the importance of selecting this research problem as well as its overall significance to other parties.

CHAPTER-2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theme 1: theoretical framework of relationship marketing

In the opinion of Wongkitrungrueng, Dehouche and Assarut, (2020) relationship marketing is all about the ongoing interaction between the customer and the organization. It is more about traditional marketing that ensures that the company generates a long-term relationship with customers. It can be supported by 4A's framework, in which a company has to accept, afford, access, and be aware of marketing tools before implementing them. Su and et.al., (2020) supported that the framework helps the company create value for customers in order to ascertain their needs and ensure their fulfilment.



Figure 1: 4A model of marketing

(Source: *4A model of marketing*, 2024)

Theme 2: different factors that affect purchase intention of people.

According to Ebrahim (2020) price is the topmost factor that affects the purchase intention of people because, due to the high competition in the market, chances of substitutes are high, or customers prefer those products whose price is relatively low. Whereas quality is another factor that affects the customer's purchase, as people in the upper class prefer high-quality products, even though the product rate is high. Khan and et.al., (2022) argued that customer's trust in brands is another factor where social media provides online communication channels to customers, and if there is a difference identified between offline and online purchasing, then customer loyalty towards a brand has changed. In this sense, the chances of losing customers are considered the

biggest loss for a firm. That is why there is a need to understand the factor and offer products accordingly.

Theme 3: ways through relationship marketing affect purchasing decision of people in UK.

As per the view of Rust (2020) relationship marketing creates a loyal customer base, which helps to encourage repeat purchases, and as a result, customers recommend the same to their family members. This helps to analyse the purchase intention, and implementing relationship marketing helps to increase brand image. On the other side, it was argued by Huirse and Panique (2024) that wrong method of relationship marketing leads to customer mistrust, poor service quality, and dissatisfaction among customers that affect the brand image of a firm in a negative manner. Therefore, it is essential for the business to implement the right type of relationship marketing because it positively influences customer intention.

Theme 4: benefits and challenges of using relationship marketing within UK retail industry.

In accordance with Lee (2024) relationship marketing helps to improve customer experience and reduce marketing spend so that company can generate a better outcome. Along with this, another benefit is to increase customer retention and sales, which contribute positively to business. As a result, the brand value of the company increases in the market. On the other side, de Oliveira Lima and et.al., (2024) claimed that there are no quick results identified within a company when implementing relationship marketing, and as a result, it leads to a higher cost per individual customer that increases the customer's return value. Along with this, it is not easy to manage customer expectations because they keep fluctuating, due to which the business is not able to understand the need. Hence, it can be stated that measuring the success of relationship marketing initiatives has become difficult for businesses.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research philosophy

For the present study, only epistemology research philosophy will be used by the researcher, which helps to determine the theory based upon relationship marketing (Verma, Verma and Abhishek, 2024). Also, through selected philosophy, the knowledge related to the chosen topic can be enhanced and the study can be conducted in a precise manner.

Research paradigm.

Interpretivism paradigm will be chosen by the researcher in order to extract knowledge and evaluate the results on the basis of assumptions made by humans pertaining to relationship marketing and its impact on the purchase intention of UK customers (Dehalwar, 2024).

Research approach.

An inductive approach will be adopted by the scholar, where theories help the scholar fetch correct information and determine the pattern that has been followed for the last many years related to relationship marketing. This helps to draw valid conclusions that help to ascertain the selected topic.

Research methodology.

From both methods, only qualitative research methodology will be used by the investigator, which helps to use the theories and assumptions related to relationship marketing (Denscombe, 2024). This methodology also assists the scholar in examining the pros and cons of relationship marketing so that companies would adopt it to analyse purchase intentions.

Research design.

Only exploratory research design will be used for the present study because it helps to analyse the research problem in depth, and the focus of the selected design is to gain insights about relationship marketing and how the purchase intention has been influenced by it (Nayar and Stanley, 2024).

Sampling

For the present study, a convenient non-probability sampling method will be used, in which 10 random customers of Asos Plc will be selected. These respondents provide their views related to relationship marketing so that their purchase behaviour can be analysed.

Data collection

Primary data collection methods will be used by the researcher, which will help fetch fresh information related to relationship marketing (Kumari and et.al., 2023). Under this, semi-structured interview questions will be designed to help convey the best information and meet the research aim and objectives.

Data analysis

The primary data can be analysed through the thematic data analysis method, where different themes will be designed on the basis of interview questions that help to understand whether the research objectives have been met or not (Zou and Xu, 2023). This helps to present the findings in an effective and presentable manner to assess the changes and conduct the study properly.

Timeframe

Particulars	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7	Day 8	Day 9
Selection of topic								
Developing aim and objectives								
Selecting source								
Conducting LR								
Conducting RM								
Formatting and submission								

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