

Analysis of the Effect of Customer Relationship Marketing Program on Customer Retention with Customer Satisfaction As Mediating Variable in CV Vapor City Semarang

Syed Khuram Shahzad
Soegijapranata Catholic University
lk.rayanshah@gmail.com

Abstract

This study aims to analyze the influence of customer relationship marketing program and customer retention through customer satisfaction in CV Vapor City offering marketing services and retailing. The study addressed all customers of CV Vapor City and took 150 people as the respondents. A questionnaire with close ended questioned forming in 5-poin Liket scale was distributed to the respondents using google form. Using multiple regression analysis, the results conclude that customer relationship marketing programs have positive and significant effect on customer satisfaction and customer satisfaction has positive and significant effect on customer retention. Sobel test proved that customer satisfaction mediates the influence of customer relationship marketing program on customer retention. The model was good and fit. CV Vapor City can thus continue its relationship marketing programs and increase skill and attitude of the employees in serving the customers.

Keywords: customer retention, customer satisfaction, marketing program

INTRODUCTION

Global competition appoints each company to be able to improve the quality of products and services that will benefit customers' satisfaction. Companies that are capable to provide better products and services will be able to gain the market or even dominate the market (Palilati, 2004). In order to maintain consumers, companies must be able to develop customer retention. A strategy that can be applied to maintain consumers is relationship marketing strategy (Pradnya et al, 2016) that is aimed at building good and sustainable relationship with the customers. In essence, the main goal of a company is to create and maintain customers. Ironically, many companies are concerned more with attaining new customers than retaining the existing ones (Widyastuti and Wahyuati, 2014).

Long relationships with customers are very new since a high level of satisfaction does not guarantee customers loyalty. One study found that customers moved from the so called

"satisfied" or "very satisfied" to the previous service provider (Hoffman & Bateson, 1997). The factors that caused them to move from one to another are for a review of looking for other variations, curiosity, the need for changes in overcoming boredom towards a brand, or avoiding saturation of certain attributes (Zulkifli, 2012). Thus, it is wrong to reduce customer defections in order to increase customer retention rates. Increasing relationships with customers is carried out through delivering information in a way that is as needed by each individual (McIlroy & Barnett, 2000).

A company is considered to be able to grow if it has a number of customers that continuesly grows every time. However, a company must think about long-term prospects in building relationships with customers aiming to retain customers and to make customers to keep buying the products offered. Kandampully and Duddy (1999) stated that the success of a company depends on its ability to retain the customers. Customer retention is a strategy to increase the customer value, including reducing the level of customer turnover and increasing customer retention (Kotler & Keller, 2009). Customer retention is more than new customers (Rangkuti, 2000). It is the formation of retaining customers that can occur with a relationship in the company resulting from the use of customer relationship marketing programs and service quality.

There are several ways for a company to attract and retain new customers, which are not only related to the product or service but deeply related to the way it serves the existing customers and the reputation it can create in the market. Retaining customers is considered more economical than acquiring new customers, and customer experience management is the most effective way to drive customer satisfaction, customer retention and customer loyalty. Not only do loyal customers guarantee sales, but also they are more likely to purchase additional, high-margin products and services. Loyal customers are able to reduce costs related

to customer education and marketing, especially when they become promoters of an organization (Rao & Shekhar, 2016).

Hardjati and Amalia (2014) noted that retaining existing customers is easier since companies do not need readjustment. It saves more costs and time if compared to finding new customers in which companies have to build new relationships and new trust and also require a lot of expenses for promotion. Developing good long-term relationships is perceived to have better value and is considered as a more effective method for company's growth. Increasing the level of customer retention will automatically increase the number of customers as well as increase loyalty in the hearts of customers. The higher the customer retention rate, the bigger the positive impacts.

Customer retention is influenced directly by satisfaction on the operation rather than by customer relationship marketing and service quality (Zulkifli, 2012). It is also influenced by the relationship process of customer marketing and the quality of service through customer satisfaction (Novianti, 2012). According to Hadi et al (2011), relationship marketing with good relationship quality contributes to retaining customers. Then, by utilizing information carried out by the system, it improves continuous delivery of product and services. Customer satisfaction will greatly affect customer retention.

Previous research conducted by Ogechukwu et al (2013) stated that the Nigerian manufacturers must establish information system and its relevant facilities and activities such as marketing research to identify customer needs and wants on a continuous basis and facilities for handling customer complaints. All company staff interact with customers and measurement and review mechanism used to ensure the results are in tune with the set objectives and targets which their major aim is the achievement of customer satisfaction in both internal marketing and external marketing.

Marketing mix consistency must not only be an achievable objectives but also be an avoidance any dissonance among marketing elements. As for external marketing, marketers should pay adequate attention to customer needs in designing, pricing, distributing, creating physical evidences, processing and promoting their products, which must be augmented with high quality services. Easy access to the CEO, top management, and workers by customers, high-quality and reliable product delivery systems, good customer relations, and dynamic and high-quality services to customers recommended by the Nigerian manufacturers (to avoid high failure rates between SMEs) must practice the relationship marketing concept's guiding principles to ensure customer satisfaction and a good path to success, as well as for customer loyalty (Ogechukwu et al, 2013).

CV Vapor City Semarang is a company engaged in marketing services and retail. It had been experiencing problems in relationships and satisfaction of the customers. Customers complaints had been improving that is possibly due to the service quality delivered by the employees that doesn't satisfy customers such as slow and unfriendly service. One of the strategies done by CV Vapor City to maintain the customer satisfaction is membership card. It is a subscription card generally issued by retail companies to retain loyalty of the loyal customers. Currently member card is very influential on the marketing of a company, because customers who have a membership card will be more easily recognized by the company regarding to the products or services they have received from the company. They will compare the products or services offered by other companies to those they had been received from the company in which they have the membership. Loyal customers will not turn away even though offers from the competing companies are tempting. Conversely, customers without a membership card will only make purchases if the product is offered in a low price. This research analyzes the effect of customer relationship marketing program on customer retention

and customer satisfaction. It also tried to reveal if customer satisfaction is a mediating variable between relationship marketing program of CV Vapor City Semarang and its customer satisfaction.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Marketing strategy is the logic of marketing where company creates customer value and achieve profitable relationships (Kotler, 2014). Formulation of marketing strategy must be based on a thorough analysis of the influence of the company's external and internal environmental factors. The company's environment changes rapidly, giving rise to various opportunities and threats coming from the main competitors and the ever-changing business climate. The consequences of changes in external factors also resulted in changes in internal factors, such as changes in the strengths and weaknesses of the company. More companies are moving away from managing only products or brand profitability and focus toward customer management (Kotler & Armstrong, 2014). Customer relationship management is becoming important strategy in which company builds and maintains profitable customer relationships by delivering superior customer value and satisfaction.

In creating customer value and building strong customer relationships, company must not only be good at customer relationship management but also at partner relationship management in which company works closely with others inside and outside the company in bringing jointly more value to customers (Kotler & Armstrong, 2014). This underlies marketing strategy development.

Development of marketing strategy has two dimensions: current and future. Current dimension refers to the relationship that already exists between the company and its environment, while future dimension includes relationships that are expected to be established

in the future and the program of action needed to achieve the relationship. Marketing strategies consist of the basic principles underlying management to achieve business and marketing goals in the target market. Marketing is an activity process that is influenced by various social, cultural, political, economic and managerial factors. As a result of the influence of these various factors, each individual and group get the needs and desires of creating, offering, and exchanging products that are valued by commodity value (Rangkuti, 2000).

To be able to create good customer value, company needs to conduct analysis of the internal environment and external environment as the input for formulating marketing strategy. Company needs to consider the main macro environmental strengths such as demography, technology, politics, law and socio-cultural influences on the business. In addition, it is necessary to always monitor the main micro environmental actors comprising competitor customers, distribution channels, suppliers, new entrants and substitute products that will affect the company's ability to earn profits in the target market (Rangkuti, 2000).

Kotler and Armstrong (2014) noted that building customer relationship by creating and delivering superior customer value is the first step in the marketing process. By creating superior customer value, the company creates highly satisfied customers who stay loyal and buy more. In other words, outcomes of creating customer value are customer loyalty and retention.

Customer retention is a process to maintain existing customers by improving good relationships with all parties who buy products from the company. It is done because the company understands that customers are the most valuable asset for its survival. Maintaining and retaining the existing customers will be more effective for minimizing expenses and increasing profits. Customer retention has a very strong influence on profit, higher retention will result in higher profit (Heskett et. al., 1994). Dwyer and Tanner (1999) also found the

same, that is customer retention has a very strong influence on profit. It is especially related to the retention generated from good relationship between the company and the customers and not resulted from customer compulsion due to the absence of alternative products or the magnitude of switching costs. Desai and Mahajan (1998) gave emphasis that customer retention is the key to company success. Therefore, developing and maintaining long-term customer retention is key to the survival and growth of the company.

However, companies cannot assume that customer satisfaction is the only factor that can affect customer retention. Customer satisfaction is a feeling of pleasure or disappointment that appears after comparing between perceptions or impressions of performance (Kotler, 2014). If the performance is below expectation, customer are dissatisfied, if the performance meets expectations, the customer is satisfied, and if the performance exceeds expectation, customers are very satisfied. The satisfaction will certainly be recognized after the customer has consumed the product. In other words, customer satisfaction shows emotional reactions to differences between what customers expect and what they receive (Hansemark & Albinsson, 2004).

Customer satisfaction and customer retention do not always affect each other. This is possible because there are some customers who remain loyal without feeling satisfied because for example there are only few product alternatives. There are also customers who are very satisfied but not loyal because of availability of many other alternative products. Thus, satisfaction is insufficient to create customer loyalty. Moreover, the market situation or structure as well as other influential factors also give influences. If customer satisfaction is achieved, repeat purchase and loyalty arise.

By referring to the above description, the hypotheses indicating the relationship between customer relationship marketing, customer satisfaction, and customer retention are developed as follows:

H1: Customer relationship marketing program influences customer satisfaction.

H2: Customer satisfaction influences customer retention.

H3: Customer satisfaction mediate the influence of customer relationship marketing program on customer retention.



Figure 1. Research Framework

METHODS

Population is a collection of individuals that have quality and characteristics which have been set. The population of this study is all customers of CV Vapor City Semarang. Sample, part of a number of characteristics possessed by this population (Blaxter et al, 2010), was taken for 150 people. They were those who often visited CV Vapor City and have minimum 3 repeat orders.

The data of this research is primary data, which is those are directly available from the original source (Blaxter et al, 2010). The primary data consist of the respondents' response to relationship marketing strategy, customer retention, and customer satisfaction. The respondents' response was gathered using questionnaire with closed ended questions formed

in 5-point Likert scales: 5 (strongly agree), 4 (agree), 3 (neutral), 2 (disagree), 1 (strongly disagree). The questionnaire was be distributed in google form.

Test of validity is to measure how valid a questionnaire is (Ghozali, 2013). It was conducted using validity-supporting evidence type in which the test was based on the respondents' answers. Questionnaire is valid if the questions reveal thing that is measured. Validity of each item using SPSS (Ghozali, 2013) was determined with coefficient of correlation against total score. The item is valid if r value > 0.159 (r critical) and is not valid if r value < 0.159. The test resulted in all items are valid (table 1).

Table 1. The Result of The Validity Test

Item	Code	r	Result
There is folow up from Vapor City after sales service activity	CS1	0.656	Valid
Vapor City gives the member additional benefit such as discount, etc	CS2	0.733	Valid
Employees and staff of Vapor City look good	CS3	0.739	Valid
I will convey the positive things to others I feel while I'm shopping at Vapor City	CR1	0.847	Valid
I will recommend Vapor City to be my choice	CR2	0.822	Valid
I will purchase products at Vapor City	CR3	0.826	Valid
I will be provided different special services for each consumer purchase	CR4	0.802	Valid
I am given lucky draw points for each repeat purchase	CR5	0.769	Valid
Vapor City employees serve friendly and politely	RM1	0.776	Valid
The quality products of Vapor City is precisely as my expectation	RM2	0.762	Valid
Vapor City has the ability to create good relationships with consumers	RM3	0.773	Valid
Vapor City employees handle my complaints quickly	RM4	0.775	Valid

A questionnaire is considered as reliable if the respondents' answers are consistent from time to time (Ghozali, 2013). Cronbach's Alpha was used to test the reliability of the questionnaire. It is reliable if the alpha is greater than 0.6. The results of the reliability test presented in table 2 indicate that the questionanire is reliable.

Table 2. The Results of the Reliability Test

Variable	Alpha Cronbach	Description
Customer Satisfaction	0.843	Reliable
Customer Retention	0.929	Reliable
Relationship Marketing	0.897	Reliable

Descriptive analysis using average was to describe the response of the respondents on relationship marketing strategy, customer satisfaction, and customer satisfaction. Multiple regression analysis was then calculated to determine the influence of relationship marketing strategies (X_1) and customer retention (X_2) on customer satisfaction (Y) with the following statistical equation: $Y = a + b_1X_1 + b_2X_2 + e$

The criteria to accept or reject the hypothesis stating that there is significant influence of relationship marketing strategies (X_1) and customer retention (X_2) on customer satisfaction (Y) is the p-value (sig.) < 0.05 .

The coefficient of determination (R^2) essentially measures how far the model is able to explain variations in the dependent variable. The value of the coefficient of determination is between zero and one.. A value close to one means that the independent variables provide almost all the information needed to predict the variation of the dependent variable. The basic weakness of using the coefficient of determination is the bias towards the number of independent variables included in the research model (Ghozali, 2018).

The F test aims to test whether all independent variables in the regression model simultaneously or jointly affect the dependent variable (Ghozali, 2018). If the significance value of F (sig) < 0.05 , the independent variables jointly affect the dependent variable and vice versa.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Respondents Profile

The majority of respondents were dominated by those who are female with 25 years of age, had an income of 5 – 10 million rupiah and with the latest education being bachelor degree (table 3).

The descriptive statistics indicate that the respondents answered on average a scale of 3 and 4 (table 4). The highest standard deviation value was on the RM4 indicator which stated that Vapor City employees handle my complaints quickly while the lowest standard deviation value was on the CS1 indicator which stated that there was follow-up from Vapor City after sales service activities. While the highest average is 3.7733, an indicator of CR2, which means that the respondents like Vapor City and will recommend it to their relatives. The lowest average is 3.5667, RM1 indicator, which shows that according to the respondents Vapor City has sufficient ability to create good relationships with consumers.

Table 3. Characteristics of The Respondents

	Characteristic	Freq	%
Age	< 20 years	32	21.3
	21- 30 years	62	41.3
	31- 40 years	43	28.7
	> 40 years	13	8.7
Gender	Female	70	46.7
	Male	80	53.3
Income	< 5 milion Rp	52	34.7
	5-10 milion Rp	75	50.0
	> 10 milion Rp	23	15.3
Education	Senior High School	15	10.0
	Associate's degree	48	32.0
	Bachelor degree	69	46.0
	Master degree	18	12.0

Tabel 4. Descriptive Statistics of The Variables

Item	N	Min	Max	Std. Deviation	Mean
There is follow up from Vapor City after sales services activity.	150	1.00	5.00	0.87888	3.7067
Vapor City give the member additional benefit such as discount, etc	150	1.00	5.00	0.91715	3.6667
Employees and staff look good	150	1.00	5.00	0.94476	3.6733
I will convey the positive things to others I feel while I'm shopping at Vapor City	150	1.00	5.00	0.92929	3.7133
I would make recommend Vapor City to be my choice.	150	1.00	5.00	0.88345	3.7733
I will purchase products at Vapor City	150	1.00	5.00	0.93944	3.7000
I will be provided different special services for each consumer purchase	150	1.00	5.00	0.89403	3.7067
I will give lucky draw points for each repeat purchase	150	1.00	5.00	0.95501	3.6933
Vapor City employees serve friendly and politely	150	1.00	5.00	0.91532	3.5667
The products' quality of Vapor City is precisely as my expectation	150	1.00	5.00	0.91101	3.6600
Vapor City has the ability to create good relationships with consumers	150	1.00	5.00	0.94429	3.7400
Vapor City employees handle my complaints quickly	150	1.00	5.00	0.96119	3.6600

The adjusted R square of the model regressing relationship customer marketing program and customer retention on customer satisfaction is 0.822 (table 5), which means that variation of customer satisfaction is influenced by customer marketing program and customer retention as much as 82,2% and the remaining 17,8% is influenced by other variables.

Table 5. The Results of Coefficient of Determination Test

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.908 ^a	.824	.822	1.00974	2.195

a. Predictors: (Constant), Customer_Retention, Relationship_Marketing

b. Dependent Variable: Customer_Satisfaction

Table 6 presenting the results of F test show that the sig. F value of is $0.000 < 0.05$, which indicates the model is fit. This means that the variables of customer relationship marketing program and customer retention together affect customer satisfaction.

Table 6. The Results of F Test

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	702.797	2	351.398	344.655	.000 ^b
	Residual	149.876	147	1.020		
	Total	852.673	149			

a. Dependent Variable: Customer_Satisfaction

b. Predictors: (Constant), Customer_Retention, Relationship_Marketing

From table 7, it is known that the significance value for the regression model is 0.001 for relationship marketing program and 0.000 for customer retention. Since the significant values < 0.05 , this means that the first hypothesis stating that there is an influence of relationship marketing program and customer retention on customer satisfaction is accepted.

To test if customer satisfaction mediates the influence of customer relationship marketing program on customer retention, the Sobel test was conducted. The test resulted in p value of 0.000. (table 8). It means that the third hypothesis y is accepted indicating that customer satisfaction mediates the influence of customer relationship marketing program on customer retention.

Table 7. The Results of t Test

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	.981	.392		2.499	.014
Relationship_Marketing	.204	.062	.279	3.318	.001
Customer_Retention	.381	.049	.647	7.706	.000

Table 8. The Result of Sobel Test

Input:		Test statistic:	Std. Error:	p-value:
a	0.636	Sobel test: 16.18676039	0.06007651	0
b	1.529	Aroian test: 16.17925591	0.06010437	0
s _a	0.030	Goodman test: 16.19427532	0.06004863	0
s _b	0.061	Reset all	Calculate	

Input:		Test statistic:	p-value:
t _a	21.254	Sobel test: 16.24855945	0
t _b	25.206	Aroian test: 16.24109108	0
		Goodman test: 16.25603813	0
		Reset all	Calculate

Relationship between Customer Relationship Marketing Program and Customer Satisfaction

The results indicate significant positive effect of customer relationship on customer satisfaction. This implies that the increases of customer relationship marketing program results in the increase of satisfaction of the customers who buy at CV Vapor City. The result is supported by the respondents' responses to the customer relationship marketing strategy variable with an average value of 3.682 which means that respondents agree with the statements on the relationship marketing strategy variable. This result also supports the results of Firmansyah (2019) which states that marketing strategies affect satisfaction. Marketing strategy is the process of creating and sustaining strategies that match organizational goals, changing marketing capabilities and opportunities. It is the creation of a sound corporate mission, supporting goals, coordinated functional strategy of a healthy business portfolio. Marketing strategists argue that marketing strategy activities are not only aimed at selling goods and services, transferring property rights from producers to consumers, but also integrating efforts to develop strategic plans.

Relationship between Customer Satisfaction and Customer Retention

The result showed that there is positive and significant influence of customer retention on customer satisfaction. The increase in customer retention will increase customer satisfaction of CV Vapor City. This result is supported by the respondents' responses to the customer retention variable which gets an average value of 3.682 meaning that the majority of respondents agree with the statements on the customer retention variable. Retention is a form of loyalty related to loyal behavior as measured by consumer purchases as indicated by the level of consumer purchases of a product. Meanwhile, loyalty itself refers more to a loyal attitude as measured by the components of attitudes, beliefs, feelings, and the desire to make a purchase. Retention rate is how many customers are retained in a given year compared to the customers acquired in the previous year. Customer retention is one marketing method that is often used to improve company performance. By retaining existing customers, costs are certainly saved compared to those for looking for new customers. The concept of customer retention emerged because many companies are interested in existing customers and prioritize finding new customers. Based on the results, it is known that the significance value for customer satisfaction is < 0.05 meaning that there is an influence between customer satisfaction on customer retention. The results of this study support those of Puspita, Abdilah, and Samira (2018) showing that customer satisfaction has a positive and significant effect on customer retention.

Customer Satisfaction as the Mediation of the Influence of Customer Relationship Marketing Program on Customer Retention

The results concluded that the third hypothesis is accepted, which means customer satisfaction mediates the influence of customer relationship marketing program on customer retention. This supports importance of customer retention for a business. The main goal of a

business is to create customer retention for maintaining the relationship between the product or service provider and the customer. It can also be interpreted, customer retention is all forms of activities and activities carried out by the company to maintain good and continuous interactions with customers. Customers will repurchase the product or service depending on their expectations that create satisfaction or dissatisfaction. It can be stated that customer satisfaction generated from the customer relationship marketing programs conducted by the company can result in customer retention.

CONCLUSION

It can be concluded that the results of this study comply with the existing concepts. The study found that customer relationship marketing program has a positive and significant effect on customer satisfaction and customer satisfaction has a positive and significant effect on customer retention. It is also proved that customer satisfaction mediates the influence of customer relationship marketing program on customer retention.

The management CV Vapor City Semarang can thus continue its relationship marketing programs since they can create satisfaction of the customers that results in customer retention. As valued by the customers, CV Vapor City Semarang is considered as having ability in creating good relationship programs. This ability must be accompanied by the ability of the employee and staff in serving the customers. The company must give trainings to leverage the skill and attitude of the employee that was scored the lowest by the respondents.

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