

Relational Marketing and Customer Satisfaction: A Systematic Literature Review

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Abstract

Relationship marketing reflects a business philosophy and strategic orientation that allows companies to focus on satisfying the needs of current customers to retain them rather than acquiring new ones. This investigation analyzes how the relationship between relationship marketing and customer satisfaction is processed. In this sense, a systematic review of the bibliometric literature was carried out based on 61 scientific articles published in the Scopus™ database. The literature review reveals that relationship marketing influences customer satisfaction in several ways. It is concluded that personalizing the service and the product is fundamental in building long-lasting and successful relationships and increasing customer satisfaction. In addition, relationship marketing builds trust and commitment, resulting in higher customer satisfaction and willingness to participate in mutually beneficial relationships. Finally, we classify future research agendas into three broad categories: the impact of emerging technologies on customer satisfaction; the role of personalization and customization in relationship marketing and its impact on customer satisfaction; and the relationship between sustainability, ethical practices, and customer satisfaction.

Keywords: commitment; communication; personalization; trust; VOSviewer.

Marketing relacional y satisfacción del cliente: una revisión sistemática de la literatura

Resumen

El marketing relacional refleja una filosofía empresarial y una orientación estratégica que permite a las empresas centrarse en satisfacer las necesidades de los clientes actuales para retenerlos en lugar de adquirir nuevos. Esta investigación tiene como objetivo analizar cómo se procesa la relación entre el marketing relacional y la satisfacción del cliente. En este sentido, se realizó una revisión sistemática de la literatura bibliométrica a partir de 61 artículos científicos publicados en la base de datos Scopus™. La revisión de la literatura revela que el marketing relacional influye en la satisfacción del cliente de varias maneras. Se concluye que personalizar el servicio y el producto es fundamental para construir relaciones duraderas y exitosas y aumentar la satisfacción del cliente. Además, el marketing relacional genera confianza y compromiso, lo que da como resultado una mayor satisfacción del cliente y la voluntad de participar en relaciones mutuamente beneficiosas. Finalmente, clasificamos las agendas de investigación futuras en tres categorías amplias: el impacto de las tecnologías emergentes en la satisfacción del cliente; el papel de la personalización en el marketing relacional y su impacto en la satisfacción del cliente; y la relación entre sostenibilidad, prácticas éticas y satisfacción del cliente.

Palabras clave: compromiso; comunicación; personalización; confianza; VOSviewer.

Marketing de relacionamento e satisfação do cliente: Uma revisão sistemática da literatura

Resumo

O marketing de relacionamento reflete uma filosofia corporativa e uma orientação estratégica que permite que as empresas se concentrem em satisfazer as necessidades dos clientes existentes para retê-los, em vez de adquirir novos clientes. Esta pesquisa pretende analisar como se processa a relação entre o marketing de relacionamento e a satisfação do cliente. Nesse sentido, foi realizada uma revisão bibliométrica sistemática da literatura, com base em 61 artigos científicos publicados no banco de dados Scopus™. A análise da literatura revela que o marketing de relacionamento influencia a satisfação do cliente de várias maneiras. Conclui-se que a personalização do serviço e do produto é fundamental para criar relacionamentos duradouros e bem-sucedidos e aumentar a satisfação do cliente. Além disso, o marketing de relacionamento gera confiança e comprometimento, resultando em maior satisfação do cliente e disposição para se envolver em relacionamentos mutuamente benéficos. Finalmente, classificamos as futuras agendas de pesquisa em três grandes categorias: o impacto das tecnologias emergentes na satisfação do cliente; o papel da personalização no marketing de relacionamento e seu impacto na satisfação do cliente; e a relação entre sustentabilidade, práticas éticas e satisfação do cliente.

Palavras-chave: comprometimento; comunicação; personalização; confiança; VOSviewer.

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1. Introduction

Companies can no longer survive with a transactional attitude in today's competitive business environment. While transactional marketing focuses on attracting customers, relationship marketing focuses on building and maintaining long-term relationships with customers and other critical stakeholders, including employees, distributors, and suppliers. This aspect is reflected in [Aka et al.'s \(2016, p. 185\)](#) definition of relationship marketing: "creating, maintaining, and enhancing the strong relationship with customers and other stakeholders within and outside one's enterprises." Therefore, it is a philosophy of doing business and a strategic orientation that allows companies to focus on meeting and satisfying the needs of current customers to retain them instead of acquiring new ones. According to [Lo \(2012\)](#), customer retention occurs when companies employ appropriate marketing strategies and relationship management measures. Given the nature of the current competitive business environment, companies acknowledge the role of relationship marketing in building and maintaining long-term relationships with customers as the best way to remain competitive.

Relationship marketing has evolved significantly over the years, driven by technological changes, consumer behavior, and marketing strategies. The evolution of relationship marketing can be summarized in four stages.

- (i) Early relationship marketing (1950s-1980s): This era marked the beginning of relationship marketing, which focused on building long-term customer relationships. Companies started to recognize the importance of repeat business and customer loyalty. Furthermore, the marketing efforts were primarily offline, with businesses using methods like direct mail, telemarketing, and in-person sales to build customer relationships.
- (ii) Database marketing (1980s-1990s): The advent of computers and databases allowed companies to collect and store customer information more effectively. Businesses began to segment their customer bases and tailor marketing messages to specific customer groups. The focus shifted from mass marketing to one-to-one marketing, where companies personalized their interactions with individual customers.
- (iii) Customer relationship management (CRM) (1990s-2000s): CRM systems became popular, enabling companies to manage customer information, track interactions, and automate marketing campaigns. The emphasis was on improving customer service, understanding customer needs, and delivering personalized experiences. Loyalty programs and customer retention strategies gained prominence during this period.
- (iv) Mobile and social media (2010s-present): The proliferation of smartphones and the growth of social media platforms further changed the relationship marketing landscape. Companies now had more channels to connect with customers but faced the

challenge of managing these multiple touchpoints. Real-time engagement, instant feedback, and influencer marketing became essential elements of relationship marketing.

Relationship marketing introduces an aspect of personal interaction in marketing strategies, thus increasing customer engagement in relationship-building activities. [Velnamby and Sivesan \(2012\)](#) found that relationship marketing works when customers are highly involved. For instance, the study notes that when companies provide sufficient information about products and services and consider customer feedback in their development processes, the customers tend to have positive feelings and perceptions of the company and its products and services. Consequently, this approach increases customer satisfaction and relationship strength and builds the organization's competitive position.

In relationship marketing, customers compare products and services' performance to their expectations. Therefore, the company achieves customer satisfaction if the resulting feelings are positive. Moreover, customer satisfaction is usually determined by comparing imaginative functions and expectations. Thus, interacting and connecting with customers under relationship marketing allow marketers to understand customer needs and expectations. These insights are then integrated into marketing communication, products, and services to ensure that what is delivered matches the customers' expectations and imaginations, increasing the probability of building positive customer attitudes and improving satisfaction, thus ultimately enhancing customer satisfaction.

Several studies have evaluated the relationship between relationship marketing and customer satisfaction. However, [Aka et al. \(2016\)](#) note a lack of adequate literature. In addition, [Velnamby and Sivesan \(2012\)](#) stated that although most companies nowadays have deployed customer relationship marketing projects, most face serious implementation challenges. These issues highlight the need for further research providing critical insights connecting relationship marketing and customer satisfaction to bridge the literature gap and provide information to aid the successful implementation of relationship marketing in business strategies.

This investigation analyzes how the relationship between relationship marketing and customer satisfaction is processed. As a result, the researcher conducted a systematic bibliometric literature review (LRSB), limited to the period between January 2012 and May 2022, to collect and synthesize data on relationship marketing and customer satisfaction, thus providing diverse insights from multiple study findings.

2. Methodology

The paper implements a systematic bibliometric literature review (LRSB) methodology to identify potential, relevant studies and synthesize findings.

The method was chosen based on Linnenluecke et al. (2020) description of LRSB as a rigorous method of analyzing and exploring large volumes of data to identify developments, patterns, and critical insights that can be implemented to support further improvements. In addition, the author explains that systematic literature reviews are crucial tools for providing insights and guidance for practitioners and policymakers on best strategies. Based on these arguments, this study aims to provide essential insights connecting relationship marketing and customer satisfaction to improve the marketing practitioners' capacity to develop and implement successful relationship marketing strategies.

The literature search process began with identifying the appropriate database, and for this case, the Scopus database was selected. Then, an initial search was initiated using the keywords "relationship marketing," which resulted in 3,912 documents. The results were narrowed by implementing inclusion criteria. First, the exact keyword "customer satisfaction" was applied, reducing the number of sources to 245. Second, the search was limited to the subject area "BUSI," reducing the document results to 155. Finally, the search was limited to 2012-2022, decreasing the number of documents summarized in the final report to 61, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Screening methodology

Database Scopus	Screening	Publications
Meta-search	Keyword: relationship marketing	3,912
First inclusion criterion	Keyword: relationship marketing Exact keywords: customer satisfaction	245
Second inclusion criterion	Keyword: relationship marketing Exact keywords: customer satisfaction Subject area: business, management and accounting	155
Screening	Keyword: relationship marketing Exact keywords: customer satisfaction Subject area: business, management and accounting Published between 2012 and May 2022	61

Source: Own elaboration.

3. Themes and trends solution

Figure 1 summarizes the published peer-reviewed literature on the study topic for the 2012–2022 period. Interest in the topic peaked in 2015 (11 publications) and since that year, there has been a sharp decrease in the number of publications, with emphasis on the year 2020 in which there was only one publication on the topic.

Table 2 presents the number of documents published by journals and the Scimago Journal & Country Rank (SJR), the best quartile, and the H index by publication. The Journal of Marketing is the most cited publication with 7,461 (SJR), Q1, and H index 253. The source with the most published documents is *Developments in Marketing*

Science Proceedings of The Academy of Marketing Science, with 6 publications.

There is a total of 24 publications in the Q1 quartile (49%), 5 in the Q2 quartile (10%), and 20 without indexing data, representing 41% of publications.

The subject areas covered by the 61 scientific articles were: business, management and accounting (61); economics, econometrics, and finance (10); social sciences (9); computer science (5); decision sciences (5); medicine (3); psychology (3); engineering (2); environmental science (1).

The top 3 most cited articles were: "Creating customer loyalty through service" with 175 citations (published by the European Journal of Marketing); "Acta Non Verba? The Role of Customer Participation and Word of Mouth in the Relationship Between Service Firms' Customer Satisfaction and Sales Performance" with 119 citations (published by the Journal of Service Research); and "Enhancing customer relationships with retail service brands: The role of customer engagement" with 97 citations (published by the Journal of Service Management). The first article aims to develop a model of customer relationship outcomes of service customization and the efficacy of service customization based on relationship marketing and exchange theory. The second article develops and tests a model that predicts that satisfied customers repurchase when they become productive resources through two spontaneous and cooperative customer behaviors: word of mouth and participation. The third article intends to extend the current understanding of customer engagement by examining its role in developing customer-brand relationship quality.

Figure 2 shows the evolution of citations of articles published between ≤2012 and 2022. The number of citations shows positive net growth with an R2 of 94.7% for the period ≤2012– 2022, with 2021 reaching 259 citations. It should be noted that in 2012, there was only one citation and that in the following years, the number of citations grew significantly until 2022.

To better understand the topics enclosed in the documents covered by this research, a bibliometric study was performed to examine the development of scientific information by the main keywords and the social structure of the scientific field under study. The bibliometric analysis was carried out with the scientific software VOSviewer™ (<https://www.vosviewer.com>; van Eck and Waltman, 2010), a software tool specifically designed for constructing and visualizing bibliometric maps, paying special attention to the graphical representation of such maps (van Eck and Waltman, 2010). The VOSviewer™ software can construct the network connections of scientific publications, scientific journals, researchers, research organizations, countries, keywords, or terms based on co-authorship, co-occurrence, citation, bibliographic coupling, or co-citation links (Laengle et al., 2018).

Table 2. Number of documents, Scimago Journal & Country Rank impact factor

Title	N.º of documents	SJR	Best quartile	H index
Developments in Marketing Science Proceedings of The Academy of Marketing Science	6	_*	_*	_*
Global Business Review	2	_*	_*	_*
International Journal of Consumer Studies	2	0.986	Q1	77
Journal of Business and Industrial Marketing	2	0.782	Q1	73
Journal of Service Research	2	4.01	Q1	130
Proceedings of the 28th International Business Information Management Association Conference	2	_*	_*	_*
Vision 2020 Innovation Management Development Sustainability and Competitive Economic Growth				
Service Industries Journal	2	1.796	Q1	70
2015 12th International Conference on Service Systems and Service Management ICSSSM 2015	1	_*	_*	_*
Academy of Accounting and Financial Studies Journal	1	_*	_*	_*
African Journal of Economic and Management Studies	1	_*	_*	_*
Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics	1	0.799	Q1	51
Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research	1	0.888	Q1	44
Business Horizons	1	2.382	Q1	97
Business Theory and Practice	1	_*	_*	_*
Central European Management Journal	1	_*	_*	_*
Construction Management and Economics	1	0.947	Q1	99
Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management	1	1.945	Q1	82
Electronic Markets	1	1.033	Q1	41
European Journal of Economics Finance and Administrative Sciences	1	_*	_*	_*
European Journal of Marketing	1	1.483	Q1	110
Industrial and Commercial Training	1	_*	_*	_*
Industrial Marketing Management	1	2.206	Q1	147
International Journal of Applied Business and Economic Research	1	_*	_*	_*
International Journal of Bank Marketing	1	0.886	Q2	87
International Journal of Business	1	_*	_*	_*
International Journal of Business and Management Science	1	_*	_*	_*
International Journal of Business Innovation and Research	1	_*	_*	_*
International Journal of Logistics Management	1	1.498	Q1	80
International Journal of Market Research	1	0.568	Q2	57
International Journal of Pharmaceutical and Healthcare Marketing	1	_*	_*	_*
International Journal of Quality and Reliability Management	1	0.587	Q2	90
International Journal of Retail and Distribution Management	1	0.964	Q1	87
International Journal of Services Technology and Management	1	_*	_*	_*
Journal of Brand Management	1	0.942	Q1	55
Journal of Global Marketing	1	0.663	Q2	36
Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Insights	1	_*	_*	_*
Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Research	1	1.395	Q1	76
Journal of Marketing	1	7.461	Q1	253
Journal of Organizational and End User Computing	1	1.209	Q1	36
Journal of Relationship Marketing	1	0.591	Q2	26
Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services	1	2.261	Q1	104
Journal of Service Management	1	2.851	Q1	69
Journal of Service Theory and Practice	1	1.08	Q1	90
Journal of Services Marketing	1	1.599	Q1	111
Management Decision	1	1.155	Q1	106
Quality Access to Success	1	_*	_*	_*
Service Business	1	0.883	Q1	36
Services Marketing Quarterly	1	_*	_*	_*
Vision 2020 Sustainable Growth Economic Development and Global Competitiveness Proceedings of the 23rd International Business Information Management Association Conference IBIMA 2014	1	_*	_*	_*

Note: * data not available.

Source: Own elaboration.

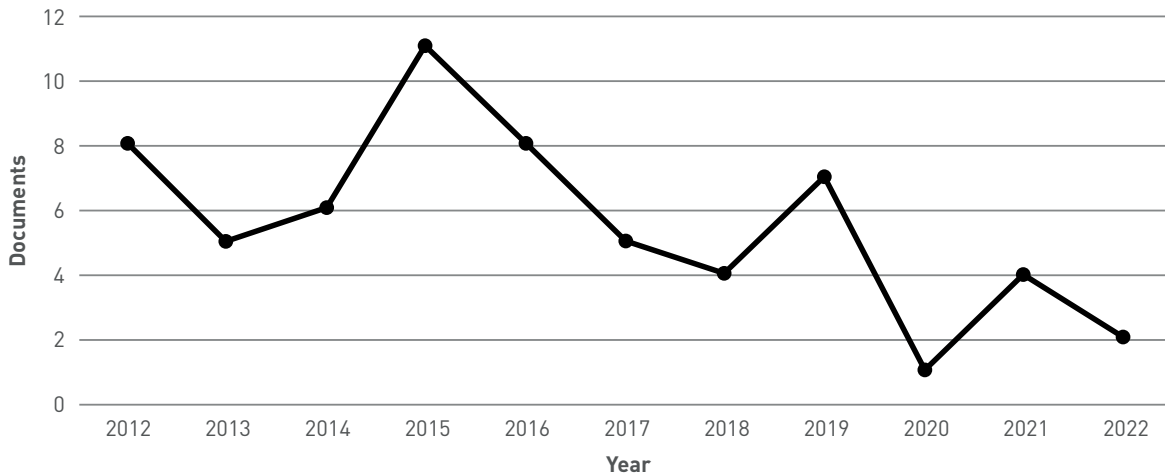


Figure 1. Documents by year.
Source: Own elaboration.

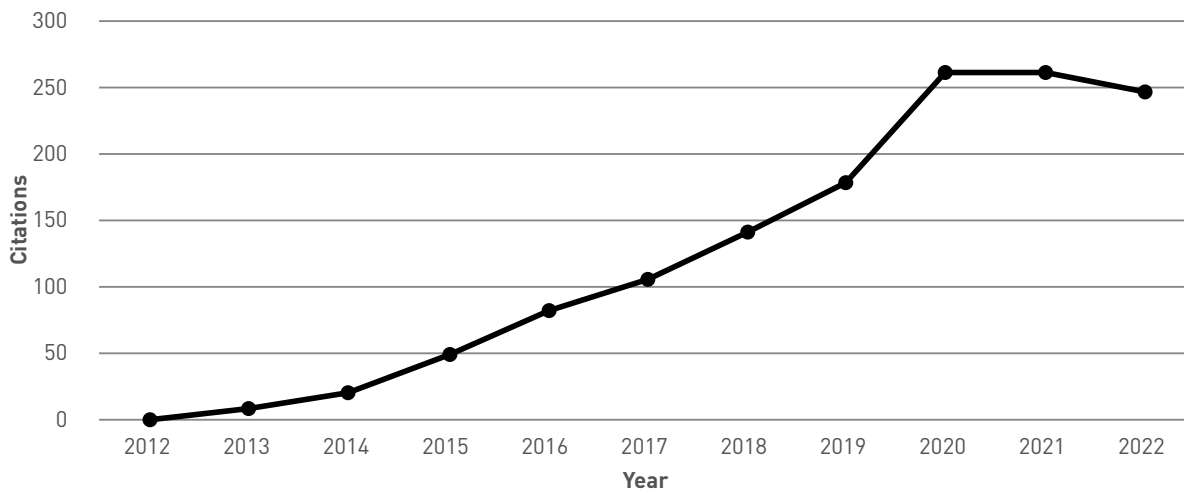


Figure 2. Evolution of citations between 2012 and 2022.
Source: Own elaboration.

Figure 3 presents the network of all keywords. This technique is a well-established and effective approach that can reveal the intellectual structure of a research field to discern research patterns and trends in specific research fields by establishing a subject similarity between two documents (Lee et al., 2018). In this network, the size of the bubble represents the frequency count of the keywords, while the thickness of the line indicates the strength of the co-occurrence of keywords.

The generation of the keywords co-occurrence map was made based on 254 keywords found in the 61 papers from the sample database. The keywords "Relationship marketing" and "Customer satisfaction" were excluded, and the keyword had to appear at least 2 times to be included in the results, resulting in 42 keywords that met the threshold.

The VOSviewer™ software generated seven clusters for the keyword occurrence analysis (cluster red: 11 items; cluster green: 9 items; cluster blue: 8 items; cluster yellow: 4 items; cluster purple: 4 items; cluster navy-blue: 2 items; cluster orange: 2 items). The most co-

occurring keywords in the dataset were customer loyalty (19 occurrences – cluster blue), trust (9 occurrences – cluster blue), marketing (7 occurrences – cluster yellow), and sales (7 occurrences – cluster green).

On the other hand, Figure 4 presents the temporal evolution of the topics covered in the publications under analysis in this investigation. The most preferred keywords in recent years (2018+) are commitment, customer engagement, satisfaction, and hospitality industry.

Figure 5 analyses the social structure of the scientific field under study using a co-authorship analysis. The co-citation analysis groups authors into clusters on a network map based on the similarity of their co-citations (Maier et al., 2020). An author co-citation analysis was performed based on 4,705 authors, of which 88 authors meet the threshold of having a minimum number of 10 citations. The interpretation of the authors' co-citation network is done using the same guidelines listed for the co-occurrence of the keywords network. In the authors' co-citation network, four main clusters were identified. The red cluster is the largest, with 33 authors; Gronroos,

C., with 56 citations, and Palmatier, R.W., with 37 citations, are particularly noteworthy. In the green cluster with 24 authors, Fornell, C., with 68 citations, and Berry, I.I., with 52, stand out. In the blue cluster with 21 authors, Kotler,

P., with 30 citations, and Hair, J.F., with 28 citations, are prominent. In the yellow cluster with 10 authors, Morgan, R.M., with 31 citations, and Mittal, V., with 25 citations, are noteworthy.

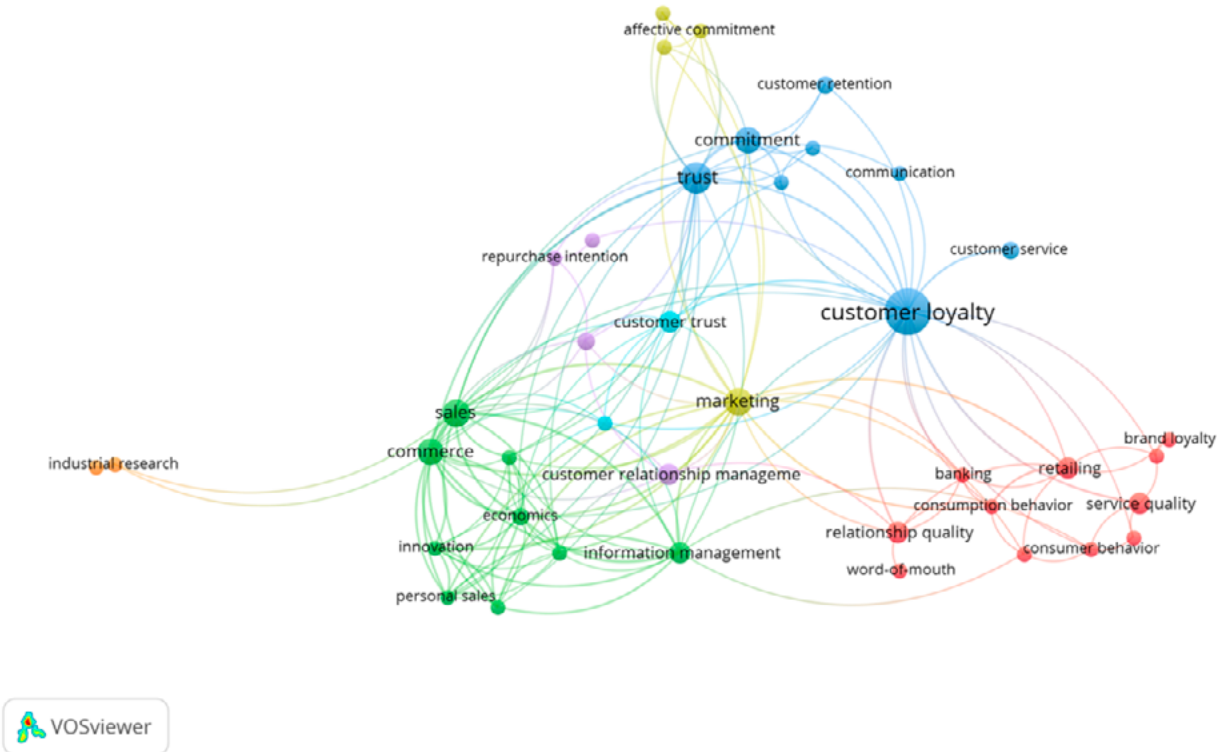


Figure 3. Keyword co-occurrence network.
Source: Own elaboration.

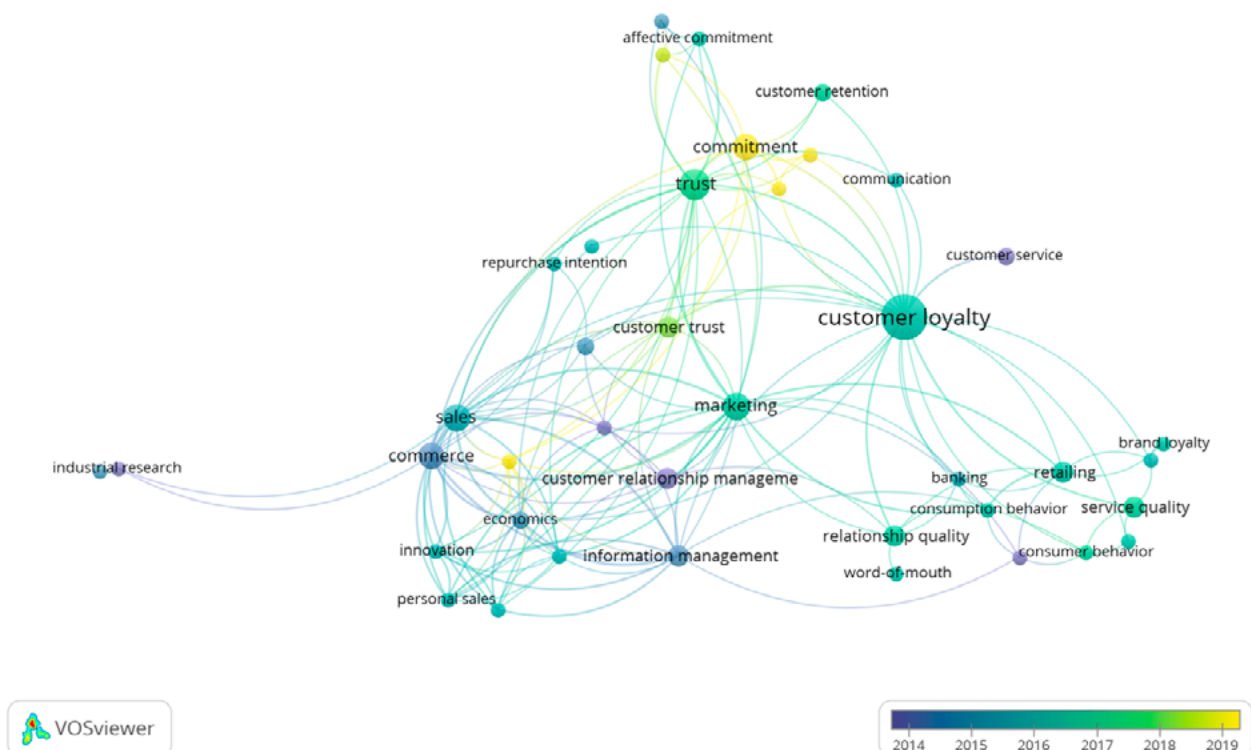


Figure 4. Keyword co-occurrence network.
Source: Own elaboration.

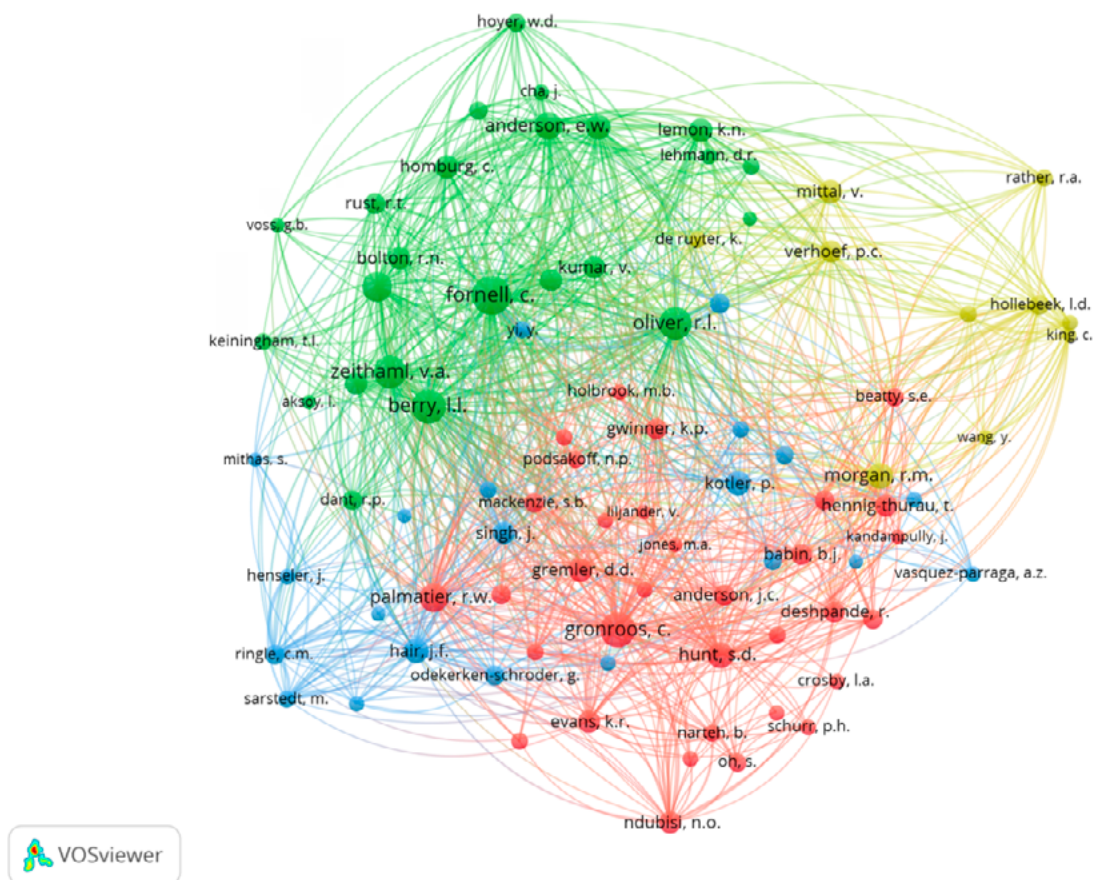


Figure 5. Network of co-citations.
Source: Own elaboration.

4. Theoretical perspectives

Relationship marketing is one of the best modern marketing strategies companies adopt to meet their customers' needs and desires. By building and maintaining long-term, mutually beneficial relationships, these companies increase the customer's perceived value of the engagement and reduce perceived risks, thus enhancing loyalty and customer satisfaction (Amoako et al., 2019).

Given the heightened competition in the global business environment, satisfied customers are currently perceived as significant assets necessary for achieving competitive advantage. Therefore, recent years have seen an increase in research on customer satisfaction and its related aspects as marketers try to understand how they can establish robust customer relationship management strategies (Blut et al., 2016). As a result, this section synthesizes data from multiple studies to empower marketers with critical information revealing the relationship between relationship marketing and customer satisfaction.

4.1 Relationship marketing

Companies operating in private and public sectors in the contemporary business environment acknowledge

the role of the customer as the centerpiece of their organizations. This view is evident in Sayil et al.'s (2018, p. 2) definition of relationship marketing as a "philosophy that puts the customer at the center of all a firm's activities as a way to provide value for both the firm and the customer." As a result, public relations and relationship-oriented marketing have increasingly become popular strategies applied in numerous firms.

According to Cano et al. (2021, p. 428), relationship marketing is "the process of creating, developing and improving relationships with customers and other actors involved in the relationship, known as stakeholders." Building long-lasting, mutually beneficial relationships with customers is critical because of the high competition characterizing most markets today.

Irving and Mathews (2015) indicate that building customer relationships depends on their willingness to participate in the relationship. This notion suggests that building and maintaining customer relationships through relationship marketing improves an organization's competitive advantage since it indicates that these customers want to engage and purchase from the company (Amoako et al., 2019).

Marketers use relationship marketing to create successful exchanges beyond satisfying customer needs to include their active participation in multiple business

processes. Thus, working hand in hand with these clients allows marketers to understand their expectations and create products and services based on these anticipations. This action makes customers feel like they are the companies' protagonists, leading to higher retention and satisfaction.

4.1.1 Components of relationship marketing

Relationship marketing is characterized by a wide range of relationship variables that facilitate the creation of an exchange of value. For example, two-way communication or trust can determine the customers' willingness to participate in a relationship with a company.

Cano et al. (2021) explain that for relationship marketing to be successful, marketers must understand customer demographics and historical data. This knowledge allows them to understand who they are and their purchasing patterns, thus establishing appropriate strategies to relate to them long-term (Asikhia, 2012). Besides, understanding the customers, their needs, perceptions, and expectations allows companies and their marketing teams to embrace customer-centric approaches that build trust, ensure effective communication, and encourage commitment, among other components that affect relationship marketing.

This section discusses these dimensions to understand how they affect relationship marketing and potentially contribute to customer satisfaction.

Trust: Research shows that trust is vital in relationship marketing since relationship building in marketing depends on the client's belief that the company can deliver as promised. For example, if the company promises to provide quality products that meet customer needs, it must ensure that customers know it is reliable. Thus, Nguyen Hau and Viet Ngo (2012) define trust as a customer's willingness to rely on an exchange partner with whom they have confidence. Similarly, Rizan et al. (2014) define it as the belief in the other party's intentions. As a result, the extent they feel they can rely on each other's promises.

Trust reflects a customer's confidence level in a company's integrity and reliability. For relationship marketing to succeed, customers must trust that the company will deliver its obligations and keep its promises (Mahmoud et al., 2018). However, trust is built over time and contributes to creating and reinforcing relationships between trading parties. When customers trust a service provider or a manufacturer, they will continue using the service or product and recommend it to other potential customers (Sharifi & Esfidani, 2014). Therefore, trust is a critical indicator of successful relationship marketing and can help achieve long-term profitability and customer satisfaction.

Competence: Competence refers to the marketers' abilities and expertise as perceived by the customer. Sayil et al. (2018) define it as the essential skills and

knowledge required to deliver a service. Concerning relationship marketing, marketers must prove they understand their products and services. For example, they must understand the physical and technological aspects of the services provided. This knowledge appeals to target customers and can influence their perceptions and willingness to engage in a business relationship (Sliz & Delińska, 2021).

Customers who engage a competent seller receive value in the form of critical product or service details needed to make purchasing decisions. Consequently, the interaction influences their feeling and attitudes towards the brand and its associated products and services, thus encouraging them to invest in building and maintaining the relationships built (Chiu et al., 2015). For instance, if customers know they can ask a specific seller about products or services of interest, the relationship becomes valuable and important. As a result, they will willingly reinforce and maintain the relationship, resulting in successful relationship marketing.

Commitment: Commitment is a critical construct for measuring the strength of a marketing relationship and the likelihood of achieving customer satisfaction. According to Nguyen Hau and Viet Ngo (2012), commitment is an enduring desire to continue a valued relationship. Furthermore, Cano et al. (2021) identify commitment as an "essential ingredient" of long-term success since it compels customers to buy from a particular seller. It indicates the customer's willingness to purchase and actively maintain a relationship with the marketer or the company. However, developing customer commitment is influenced by other components, such as trust and customer satisfaction, since it only arises when clients feel it is essential to maintain the relationship (Chu et al., 2018). Thus, customers must derive a specific value from the engagement with the marketers or the companies to think it is worth maintaining the engagement.

Mahmoud et al. (2018) propose multiple ways that can be used to build customer commitment, including adjusting products or services to meet customer needs. The authors note that customers' perceptions of the efforts made by the seller directly influence their commitment levels. In addition, research shows that commitment leads to relationship marketing outcomes such as loyalty and positive word-of-mouth. Therefore, relationship marketing marketers should prioritize approaches that build customer commitment to achieve the desired results.

Communication: Communication refers to the formal and informal ways of exchanging information between the seller and the customers. In today's business environment, communication is viewed as an interactive dialogue between a business and its clients. It occurs throughout all stages of conducting trade, including pre-selling, selling, consuming, and post-consuming.

Irving and Mathews (2015) identify communication as a critical relationship-building strategy, often used to

align goals, resolve disagreements, and identify value-creation opportunities. In relationship marketing, this component is used to maintain contact with valued customers by offering trustworthy and timely information on products and services, changes or new developments, or resolving complaints (Lau & Ahmad, 2015).

The communicator is responsible for communicating value, product features, and performance to develop consumer preference, build awareness, and convince potential customers to purchase (Cockalo et al., 2012). In addition, appropriate communication is applied to inform dissatisfied customers of the plans to rectify the problems causing their dissatisfaction. In short, communication helps improve relationship quality, which in turn causes higher customer satisfaction.

Conflict handling: Conflict handling refers to the seller's ability to reduce the negative consequences of manifested and potential conflicts. When not handled well, manifest conflicts can create problems that hurt an organization's reputation and severely affect its customer relationship (Mahmoud et al., 2018). Thus, conflict-handling measures and skills are essential in relationship marketing since they help avoid or solve conflicts when they arise.

Sayil et al. (2018) note that an increase in disputes is likely to lower a customer's confidence in the seller's orientation or willingness to invest in building and maintaining relationships. Moreover, Cano et al. (2021) explain that the supplier's outcomes of conflict-handling efforts often depend on the customers' prior satisfaction with the relationship, evaluation of alternative solutions, and the level of investment in the relationship. This argument indicates that customers who are more invested or committed to the relationship or the brand are more likely to accept the conflict resolution tactics employed in case of a problem than those with little or no commitment. This situation shows the interconnection between multiple components of relationship marketing and the need to ensure that all the aspects are considered.

4.2 Customer satisfaction

The concept of customer satisfaction occupies a central position in marketing research and practice. It is perceived as a critical outcome of marketing activities linking processes in purchasing and consumption to post-purchase outcomes such as changes in attitudes, repeat purchases, and brand loyalty. Hannan et al. (2016) define customer satisfaction as the judgment that a product or service or its features offer a pleasurable level of consumption-related fulfillment. Customers develop a feeling or attitude when their needs and expectations are met. Therefore, customer satisfaction is a positive outcome of relationship marketing that provides relatively stable projections of a customer's future intentions and support (Levy, 2015). For instance, a satisfied customer will make a repeat purchase of a product or service and potentially

talk about the brand to potential customers through word of mouth or online reviews and recommendations (Dominici & Palumbo, 2013).

Given the extreme levels of competition in various markets, achieving high levels of customer satisfaction is perceived as an approach to achieving organizational competitiveness because satisfied customers tend to choose the brand over its competitors, reinforcing its status in the market.

4.2.1 Determinants of customer satisfaction

Multiple factors can influence customer satisfaction. For example, some customers derive satisfaction from prior expectations of a store's previous performance. In this case, if a company is known to have quality products, the customer will automatically have high-quality expectations (Schaefers et al., 2015). Thus, if these expectations are unmet, the customer will be disappointed, leading to dissatisfaction. In this regard, Shin and Thai (2015) define satisfaction as a customer's feelings of pleasure or disappointment resulting from a consumption experience based on a comparison of perceived performance and expectations. Therefore, relationship marketing is critical in coordinating a company's business activities and customers' expectations (Dorai & Varshney, 2012).

The engagement involved in relationship marketing can be used as a strategy to gather customer insights, including their needs, experiences, and expectations. These insights can then be integrated into product development processes to ensure that products delivered to target customers address their specific needs to avoid disappointment and ensure satisfaction.

Perceived value: Customer perceived value refers to a customer's perception of a product or service's desirability, especially when compared to other alternatives in the market. It is reflected in the price that customers are willing to pay for the products or services offered (Anabila, 2021).

One major challenge that companies face with perceived value is that it is controlled and measured by the customers. They determine and set the standards and measure a product or service's value based on various factors, including the availability of financial resources, knowledge about the products or services, quality expectations, experiences, and accessibility (Fuentes-Blasco et al., 2017).

Perceived value is often determined based on the customers' perceptions of what they have received regarding quality and satisfaction and what they have given in terms of monetary and non-monetary costs (Sahiti et al., 2020). Therefore, marketers and their respective organizations must ensure that the value of products and services sold to target customers match the prices and other costs incurred. Furthermore, perceived value significantly influences customer satisfaction and

willingness to maintain long-term relationships with companies (Lee, 2016; Hannan et al., 2016). For instance, if the perceived value is high, customers will more likely be satisfied with the products or services provided. Thus, marketing professionals utilizing the relationship marketing approach advertise and price their goods in ways that positively influence the customers' perceived value to enhance satisfaction.

Expectations: Expectations refer to pretrial beliefs about a service or product. The expectations can result from familiarity or prior experience with a brand or novelty. Customer expectations and satisfaction are closely related. For instance, the customer feels less satisfied if delivered products or services do not match their expectations.

In the current digital world, multiple sources of information are used to influence the customers' expectations of a product or service (Saleem et al., 2016). For example, online reviews depicting the product or service as quality or valuable will influence high expectations. Moreover, a company website that offers product details, including features and benefits, can affect expectations (Popp & Woratschek, 2017).

Other information sources before exposure include word of mouth, expert opinions, or company-controlled communication and publicity (Eisingerich et al., 2014). These information sources build an image of the quality of the products or services and the value delivered. Given that customers access these insights before exposure to the service or products, risks of dissatisfaction are high (Elena et al., 2014). For instance, in cases where the delivered products or services fail to meet these expectations, the customer will be dissatisfied and may never purchase products from that company (Malik et al., 2019). This situation reflects the significance of relaying accurate product information throughout the marketing processes to ensure that a customer's purchasing decisions and intentions are based on correct details.

Perceived quality: Perceived quality is an assessment indicating how well the service level matches customers' expectations. Service providers or manufacturers are expected to achieve customer satisfaction by matching expected service with perceived service (Elommal et al., 2019).

Customers will always compare what they feel a company is supposed to offer and what it actually delivers. This comparison determines the perceived quality and influences customer satisfaction. Thanks to advanced technologies and globalization, customers have higher expectations of value and quality (Mattsson & Chadee, 2015). Therefore, relationship marketing facilitates interactive communication to convey these expectations, thus allowing companies to design and develop products and services specifically to meet these needs (Gray & Wert-Gray, 2012).

An organization's customer service can determine a customer's perceived quality of services. For instance,

customer service is critical in maintaining constant communications with customers, transferring essential information, and managing complaints resulting from bad experiences with products, services, or orders (Rostami et al., 2014). In addition, it also helps analyze customer wants and needs and communicate the same to other departments, including product development and marketing (Fazal et al., 2017).

If customer service professionals attend to these duties, they are more likely to influence customers' perceptions of service quality. For example, if a complaint is handled faster and the problem resolved, the customer will most likely associate this instance with high quality. Therefore, influencing customer perceived quality through customer-centric strategies is critical to improving customer satisfaction.

Price fairness: Typically, negative price fairness perceptions trigger negative emotions such as disappointment and anger, leading to adverse behavioral outcomes. For instance, customers experiencing these negative emotions may switch to competitors, seek legal action, or complain to other potential clients, thus spreading negative word of mouth. Therefore, the salesperson must ensure that techniques applied to communicate the price and handle customer reactions influence positive perceptions of fairness (Erwee, 2015). For example, the price offer quoted by the salesperson should be accompanied by an explanation of other aspects, such as delivery charges, financing arrangements, or down payments.

Explaining the terms associated with the price offer is critical to ensure that customers understand all the costs associated with the purchase. Salespersons and their respective companies must consider price differences since they may negatively influence consumers' perception of price fairness (Haumann et al., 2014). Research shows that customers develop perceptions of price unfairness if they discover that the prices are to their disadvantage; for example, if they are paying a higher price than other customers (Söderlund et al., 2014). These issues can result in dissatisfaction, thus negatively affecting the customers' willingness to engage in a long-term, mutually beneficial relationship with the company.

4.3 The effects of relationship marketing on customer satisfaction

Relationship marketing influences customer satisfaction in multiple ways. For instance, building quality interactive relationships can lead to higher customer satisfaction since customers feel valued and that their feedback is appreciated. Sayil et al. (2018) indicated that satisfaction is subjective, affective, and feelings-related factors can be influenced by relationship marketing. For example, communication and trust built through relationship marketing can influence the customers' positive feelings and attitudes toward a product or

service, thus leading to satisfaction (Fam et al., 2021). As a result, research depicts customer satisfaction as a positive outcome of relationship marketing. This section comprehensively analyses the various ways relationship marketing affects customer satisfaction.

4.3.1 Increased satisfaction through service and product customization

Current market trends are becoming more fragmented and heterogeneous, with customers expressing their individual needs. As a result, industries are shifting from mass production to customization (Swartz et al., 2016). Similar changes are happening in marketing practice, with customers demanding customized marketing content, services, and products. Therefore, meeting individual customer needs through quality, individualized services, and products has become a major differentiating factor under relationship marketing used to achieve customer satisfaction.

Customization refers to the degree to which a company's offerings are tailored to meet individual customer needs (Coelho & Henseler, 2012). Unlike conventional techniques that prioritize reaching out to as many customers as possible while satisfying a limited number of needs, customization focuses on meeting as many needs as possible for individual customers. Therefore, it is perceived as a practical solution to the problems associated with increased demand for high-quality products, features, and product variety (Tarasi et al., 2013). Moreover, it is a critical strategy for improving customer experience in successful relationship marketing as it helps gather and analyze essential insights that help differentiate the product and services in ways other than the typical feature-driven messages.

Most companies employ a customization strategy to achieve competitive advantage and company growth. For instance, Coelho and Henseler (2012) explain that customers are willing to pay more for products that cater to their needs, including tastes, styles, and sizes.

Although customization is associated with higher returns, research establishes that customers only pay higher if the perceived product or service's value is high and considered worth the monetary and non-monetary associated costs. Consequently, customers see the value in custom-made products based on their products and services (van der Aa et al., 2015).

Relationship marketing helps build trust and commitment and facilitates two-way communication that ensures an understanding of customer characteristics and value determinants. What one customer defines as valuable may differ from what another customer considers worthwhile. Thus, customization ensures the incorporation of these differences in perspectives throughout product development processes.

4.3.2 Building customer trust and commitment to boost customer satisfaction

Numerous studies have demonstrated the impact of trust and commitment on customer satisfaction concerning relationship marketing. For instance, Sayil et al. (2018) found the effect of relationship marketing on customer satisfaction in the banking sector. According to the study, dimensions of relationship marketing, including trust, commitment, and communication, influence customer loyalty and satisfaction. For customers to conduct business with a company, they must be able to trust it and its products or services (Vieira et al., 2022). Relationship marketing helps in this quest since it aims to establish and maintain long-term, mutually beneficial relationships with clients by fostering greater brand trust and commitment over time.

According to the commitment-trust theory, commitment and trust antecedents must exist for a relationship to succeed (Yen et al., 2015). Therefore, marketers leveraging relationship marketing prioritize bonding with customers to meet their needs and honor their commitments. Instead of chasing short-term benefits, these marketers establish long-lasting bonds that encourage customers to trust the business, leading to mutual loyalty and boosting satisfaction.

Relationships based on trust and commitment are characterized by cooperative behaviors that allow both parties to fulfill their needs. In this regard, companies derive multiple economic advantages from such relationships, including increased profitability, high investment returns, and expanded market share (Walsh & Brylla, 2017). On the other hand, customers get products and services they are paying for. In addition, constant active engagement throughout business practices also makes customers feel valued and increases their sense of attachment to the brand or company (Yulisetiari & Susanto, 2018). For example, when companies listen to their customers' feedback and implement shared opinions through valued relationships, customers are more likely to feel a sense of commitment and trust in the brand, eventually leading to higher satisfaction.

4.3.3 Improved repurchase intentions

Relationship marketing builds trust and prioritizes the delivery of quality services, thus resulting in improved customer satisfaction. Research shows that this satisfaction results in repurchase intentions since customers are assured of receiving quality products and services that meet their specific needs and expectations (Shin et al., 2017).

Repurchase intentions indicate the customer's commitment to a particular product or service, indicating a willingness to participate in a long-term relationship.

It is often achieved by managing relationships with customers. [Lin and Wang \(2015\)](#) explain that marketers aiming to understand their target customer's repurchase intentions should focus beyond using promotional activities to promote repeat buying. Instead, the authors indicate that they should prioritize building relationships with clients that lead to a commitment to buying from the same company despite competitors' activities and incentives ([Menidjel & Bilgihan, 2022](#)). Furthermore, marketers can leverage relationship marketing to enhance repurchase intentions by moderating the effects of perceived risks ([Kaur & Gupta, 2012](#)). Many scholars explain that perceived risks negatively impact repurchase intentions, consequently negatively affecting customer satisfaction. In this case, marketers can regulate the effects of perceived risks by building trust and strengthening relationships with customers to reduce the level of perceived threats.

Other aspects characterizing relationship marketing, such as assurance, responsiveness, reliability, and empathy, influence customer repurchase intentions. For example, repurchase rates increase when products and services exceed customer expectations ([Shin et al., 2017](#)). However, expectations are based on experience, thus making satisfaction a critical determinant of the success of relationship marketing.

[Lin and Wang \(2015\)](#) indicate that high satisfaction as an emotional response from positive experiences with a product or service tends to enhance customer trust, eventually leading to repurchase intentions. Therefore, providing quality products, reducing perceived risks, and building trust encourage customer repurchase decisions and improve satisfaction.

4.3.4 Delivery of quality services

Service quality and customer satisfaction are arguably two of the most critical concepts in marketing theory and practice. Customers always expect the delivery of high-quality services. In today's highly competitive business environment, one of the most critical ways of achieving a sustainable competitive advantage is by delivering high-quality services that satisfy customers ([Hussain et al., 2019](#)).

Customers can respond to services or products favorably or unfavorably depending on their experience, attitudes, and satisfaction with the value delivered. A favorable response is associated with a company's economic goals, including profitability, return on investments, and ability to expand market share. Therefore, marketers understand the significance of ensuring positive customer responses to offers ([Negi & Ketema, 2013](#)).

Relationship marketing helps improve the delivery of services by attracting, maintaining, and enhancing customer relationships. For instance, the relationship allows marketers to assess potential quality gaps by engaging customers to understand their needs and expectations ([Raychaudhuri & Farooqi, 2013](#)). The insights gathered are

incorporated into the planning to ensure that strategies, products, and services sold match the customers' quality expectations, thus improving their satisfaction.

Five service quality dimensions are relevant for customer satisfaction: tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. Tangibility refers to the physical aspects of services, including staff, communication materials, tools and equipment used to deliver services, and physical facilities. For example, physical interactions with customers during relationship marketing can influence their satisfaction with the services provided ([Petzer & van Tonder, 2019](#)). In this regard, salespersons capable of clearly explaining a product or service to customers during these interactions are more likely to arouse positive feelings and attitudes that result in higher satisfaction ([Hussain et al., 2019](#)).

Reliability is the capacity to deliver the promised service precisely and constantly. Thus, relationship marketing is critical in reinforcing the company's reliability by guaranteeing customer service delivery, communicating value, conflict resolutions, and service arrangements. In this case, marketers function as the link between the company and customers to ensure they remain faithful to their obligations, especially the delivery of unwavering quality.

Responsiveness plays a pivotal role in fostering strong customer relationships within the framework of relationship marketing, which is a customer-centric approach prioritizing the timely acknowledgement of customer needs ([Kiseleva et al., 2016a](#)). The swiftness and efficiency with which a company responds to customers not only contribute to customer satisfaction but also serve to strengthen the overall relationship. This inclination to promptly assist and support customers becomes a cornerstone in building enduring and positive connections.

Service assurance refers to policies and processes to ensure customers receive services that meet a pre-defined service quality level for optimal experience ([Raychaudhuri & Farooqi, 2013](#)). Assurance builds customer trust and confidence in the organization's ability to deliver its promises and maintain the desired quality.

Empathy is a dimension used in relationship marketing to build a relatable brand. It allows marketers to create strong, natural, emotional relationships with customers. It is achieved by acknowledging and appealing to the role of emotions in customers' decision making and responding accordingly with appropriate marketing campaigns ([Kiseleva et al., 2016b](#)).

Integrating these five dimensions into a relationship marketing strategy enables marketers to interact with customers in ways that create win-win situations that lead to the delivery of high-quality services and consequently enhance customer satisfaction.

4.3.5 Higher customer engagement

Customer engagement is a crucial success factor in relationship marketing that involves communicating

and interacting with customers and other stakeholders through various communication channels. For example, engagement in marketing campaigns can occur offline through direct interactions with marketers or online using social media and internet-based channels (Kordnaeij et al., 2012). Research shows consistent and effective customer engagement results in higher satisfaction and other positive outcomes, including increased demand for products and services and consumption (van Tonder & Petzer, 2018). In addition, customer engagement influences attitudes, intentions, and behaviors. A good relationship between a company and its customers based on engagement creates loyalty, thus ensuring that customers continue to choose the company over its competitors (Rather, 2019).

Engagement is perceived as a proxy measure of assessing the strength of a company's relationships, as reflected in the extent to which customers have established emotional and rational connections with companies. Highly engaged customers are more likely to be more emotionally connected to a brand, thus leading to higher satisfaction and loyalty (So et al., 2016). In this case, leveraging relationship marketing to increase customer commitment can lead to long-term benefits by strengthening company-customer relationships. Therefore, these arguments indicate that customer satisfaction emerges from increased engagement.

5. Discussion

Customer satisfaction is influenced by various factors varying across industries and individual customers. Companies should strive to understand their target customers and adapt their strategies accordingly to maximize customer satisfaction. Therefore, to ensure high levels of customer satisfaction, businesses should focus on delivering products or services that provide a strong perceived value to their customers (Anabila, 2021). This involves understanding customer needs and preferences, communicating the value proposition effectively, and continuously striving to exceed customer expectations (Fuentes-Blasco et al., 2017).

According to Malik et al. (2019), businesses should strive for clear and transparent communication to manage customer expectations effectively by accurately setting expectations through marketing and customer interactions and consistently delivering on promises. Therefore, continuous efforts to understand customer needs, monitor and manage expectations, and adapt to changing customer preferences are essential for achieving and sustaining high levels of customer satisfaction (Elena et al., 2014; Popp & Woratschek, 2017).

In terms of perceived quality, businesses should focus on delivering products or services that meet or exceed customer expectations, conduct quality control measures, gather customer feedback, and continuously strive for product or service improvement (Elommal et al., 2019; Rostami et al., 2014). Haumann et al. (2014) argue

that to ensure price fairness and customer satisfaction, businesses should consider factors such as market research, competitive analysis, cost structures, and customer expectations when setting prices. Likewise, Söderlund et al. (2014) consider that transparent pricing communication, avoiding hidden fees or unexpected price increases, and providing value in line with the price charged is essential for maintaining price fairness and enhancing customer satisfaction.

Relationship marketing creates a customer-centric approach that fosters trust, commitment, personalization, repurchase intentions, quality services, and engagement. These factors directly contribute to higher levels of customer satisfaction by ensuring that customers feel valued, understood, and supported throughout their relationship with the company.

By offering service and product customization options, businesses can create a more customer-centric approach and provide tailored solutions that meet individual needs and preferences (Swarts et al., 2016). This leads to higher customer satisfaction, which in turn contributes to increased loyalty, positive word-of-mouth, and business success (Tarasi et al., 2013).

Building customer trust and commitment is crucial for boosting customer satisfaction. So, by focusing on building customer trust and commitment, businesses create a solid foundation for customer satisfaction (Sayil et al., 2018; Yulisetiari & Susanto, 2018). According to Vieira et al. (2022), trust and commitment lead to stronger relationships, increased loyalty, positive word-of-mouth, and, ultimately, business growth and success.

Regarding improved repurchase intentions, Menidjel and Bilgihan (2022) state that by providing reliable products or services and building trust and loyalty, businesses can increase customers' repurchase intentions. Likewise, Lin and Wang (2015) argue that improved repurchase intentions signify higher levels of customer satisfaction, which, in turn, contribute to business growth and success. On the other hand, businesses can enhance customer satisfaction levels by focusing on delivering quality services that consistently meet customer expectations (Hussain et al., 2019; Kiseleva et al., 2016).

Delivering quality services plays a vital role in the success and growth of a business. Consequently, investing in service excellence, effective problem resolution, personalized experiences, and continuous improvement build strong customer relationships and loyalty (Petzer & van Tonder, 2019). Finally, businesses can significantly enhance customer satisfaction by fostering customer engagement through personalized experiences, active communication, co-creation, and emotional connection (Rather, 2019; van Tonder & Petzer, 2018).

6. Conclusions

High competition in the current business environment indicates that companies can no longer survive with a transactional attitude that focuses on attracting

customers for short-term benefits. Instead, relationship marketing has been adopted as a practical strategy for building and maintaining long-term, mutually beneficial relationships with customers and other stakeholders, including employees, suppliers, and distributors. This philosophy is based on the understanding that retaining existing customers by meeting their needs is cheaper than acquiring new ones. Thus, relationship marketing is employed to establish a robust and loyal consumer base that increases the company's competitive advantage through guaranteed future sales and loyalty.

The shift from transactional marketing to relationship marketing reflects a broader recognition that sustainable business success often depends on the depth and quality of the relationships a company can build and maintain with its customers. Extensive literature has been published on analyzing and understanding the role of customer satisfaction in loyalty within the context of relationship marketing. The present study shows that the most cited articles are "Creating customer loyalty through service" with 175 citations (Coelho & Henseler, in *European Journal of Marketing*); "Acta Non Verba? The Role of Customer Participation and Word of Mouth in the Relationship Between Service Firms' Customer Satisfaction and Sales Performance" with 119 citations (Eisingerich, Auh, & Merlo, in *Journal of Service Research*); and "Enhancing customer relationships with retail service brands: The role of customer engagement" with 97 citations (So, King, Sparks & Wang, in *Journal of Service Management*).

Relationship marketing comprises five major components: trust, competence, commitment, communication, and conflict handling. Trust is associated with a customer's belief that the company will deliver its promise. Customers who deem a company trustworthy will be willing to engage in long-term relationships. Competence reflects the skills and expertise to provide specific services. For instance, if salespersons understand a product's or service's technological and physical aspects, the customer will consider them reliable and knowledgeable. As a result, they are more likely to have positive attitudes and feelings towards these experts, leading to higher satisfaction. Commitment refers to the desire to maintain a valued relationship, while communication refers to the formal and informal ways of exchanging information. Finally, conflict handling refers to the ability to reduce the negative consequences of manifested and potential issues. These components of relationship marketing directly impact customer satisfaction.

The main objective of this research was to analyze the relationship between relationship marketing and customer satisfaction, and the results suggest that relationship marketing is a strategy that prioritizes the construction of strong and lasting connections with customers, and customer satisfaction is a critical outcome of this approach. By focusing on understanding and satisfying customer needs, building trust and loyalty,

and continually improving the customer experience, relationship marketing plays a significant role in increasing customer satisfaction and, in turn, the success of the business.

The literature review also reveals that relationship marketing influences customer satisfaction in multiple ways. For instance, relationship marketing is concerned with addressing the individual needs of target customers. As a result, service and product customization is considered fundamental in building long-lasting, successful relationships and enhancing customer satisfaction. Furthermore, relationship marketing builds trust and commitment, resulting in higher customer satisfaction and willingness to participate in mutually beneficial relationships.

A delighted customer base is more likely to repurchase products or services from the same company in the future since relationship marketing prioritizes creating relational and emotional bonds with customers, delivering quality, customized services, and promoting consistent customer engagement throughout product development. These activities help create an organization where customers feel valued and appreciated, thus influencing their future purchase decisions. Therefore, while relationship marketing and customer satisfaction are two distinct concepts, they are closely related, with one affecting the other, meaning that customer satisfaction leads to successful relationship marketing and vice versa.

6.1 Contributions to theory and practice

This study suggests some implications for theory as well as for management actions. For theory, this customer satisfaction research provides insights into the factors that drive satisfaction, its influences on customer attitudes and behaviors, and the strategies companies can employ to enhance satisfaction levels. These contributions have deepened our understanding of customer-centricity, marketing strategies, and the dynamics of customer-company relationships.

For management actions, understanding the importance of customer satisfaction in relationship marketing is essential for marketing professionals to develop strategies and initiatives aimed at fostering customer loyalty and increasing customer lifetime value.

Marketing professionals can utilize customer satisfaction data to develop customer-centric marketing strategies, personalize marketing communications, and tailor offerings to meet customer preferences. This customer-centric approach improves customer engagement and satisfaction. Another action to take concerns the competitive advantage in the marketplace provided by customer satisfaction: marketing professionals can leverage customer satisfaction as a key differentiator in their marketing strategies, messaging, and positioning to gain a competitive edge.

6.2 Limitations and future research

The study has some limitations that should be addressed in further research. First, the database of indexed scientific or academic documents used was Scopus, the most important peer review in the scientific and academic world. However, we consider that the study has the limitation of considering only the Scopus decomposition database, excluding other scientific and academic databases. Second, the search was limited to business, management, and accounting from 2012 to 2022. Using various databases simultaneously (Scopus, Web of Science, etc.) and expanding the subject's areas and the period of publication years could provide new insights about this research topic.

Future research on the importance of customer satisfaction in relationship marketing could address the following research questions: (1) What is the impact of emerging technologies on customer satisfaction? To investigate the impact of emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, virtual reality, chatbots, and voice assistants on customer satisfaction; (2) What is the role of customization in relationship marketing and its impact on customer satisfaction? To explore how businesses can effectively tailor their offerings, communications, and experiences to individual customers to maximize satisfaction and strengthen relationships; (3) What is the relationship between sustainability, ethical practices, and customer satisfaction? To explore how the businesses' environmental and social responsibility efforts impact customer satisfaction and relationship building and how the ethical considerations can be integrated into relationship marketing strategies.

By exploring these research areas, scholars can further enhance our understanding of customer satisfaction and its relationship with relationship marketing strategies. This knowledge can help businesses develop more effective and customer-centric marketing approaches, strengthen customer relationships, and drive business success.

Conflict of interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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