

MARKETING PRACTICES OF SMALL MEDIUM ENTERPRISES AND SATISFACTION OF CUSTOMERS IN ABRA, PHILIPPINES

CALIXTO LIBRADO VALERA

Abra State Institute of Sciences and Technology, Bangued Campus, Bangued, Abra, Philippines.

Email: alexvalera88@yahoo.com

DIONISIO ADAME VISCO

Abra State Institute of Sciences and Technology, Bangued Campus, Bangued, Abra, Philippines.

Email: ian_mardion@yahoo.com

Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic significantly impacted customer satisfaction, especially given the economic downturn it caused. A study was conducted to determine customer satisfaction in Abra, Philippines, via micro-business marketing practices to address this issue. A descriptive-correlational research design was used in the study, with 250 micro-enterprise owners in Abra completing a questionnaire on business practices and customer satisfaction. According to the findings, respondents' educational attainment and number of training/seminars attended are significantly related to customer satisfaction. Customers are highly pleased with the appropriateness, timeliness, progress, equity, continuity, and demeanor of products and services. Customer satisfaction is significantly related to respondents' educational level, number of training/seminars attended, and level of marketing practices. The study concludes that entrepreneurs' buying, selling, pricing, promoting, financing, and hedging marketing practices are strongly related to customer satisfaction. Business owners should improve their educational attainment and attend training/seminars to maximize customer satisfaction. Customer satisfaction is significantly related to business success, so it is also critical to maintain effective marketing practices.

Keywords: Customer satisfaction; Micro-businesses; Marketing practices; Educational attainment; Training/seminars

RATIONALE

Businesses are critical to a country's economy (Tyrocity.com, 2020) because they supply goods and services and create jobs. Businesses are far more efficient at completing these tasks than individuals. Businesses provide the majority of the goods and services that we desire and require as consumers.

Successful entrepreneurs (Abby Robinson, 2018) with vision improve the global quality of life by leading with courage—which requires trust and integrity—and empowering others to lead with courage by 'walking the talk.' The business improves the quality of life in two ways. First, it provides high-quality goods and services necessary for people's enjoyment, comfort, and health. Second, a business creates jobs for individuals, earning money and improving their quality of life.

A business enterprise (Denise Dayton, 2019) is a commercial venture or initiative undertaken for profit. Entrepreneurs can structure their businesses in a variety of ways to comply with legal and tax requirements. Profitability is a given regardless of the arrangement. It could be a for-profit enterprise. According to some economists, entrepreneurs are superfluous in perfectly competitive markets where everyone knows

everything and has no risk. Eventually, the world and its needs will become impenetrable. Entrepreneurs can benefit from starting new businesses or repurposing existing ones.

While operating a business (WGU, 2018), an entrepreneur faces dangers. These dangers include 1. Entrepreneur's risk evaluates who the company's founders are, whether they get along, and how they work together; 2. Product risk considers the engineers responsible for developing new products for the firm and attracting additional product engineers; 3. Market risk takes into account the issue being addressed by the solution and the potential reaction of consumers; 4. Competition risk assesses an organization's and company's unique characteristics; and 5. Sales execution risk contributes to determining the most effective method of selling goods to consumers by solving their problems.

Outstanding customer satisfaction is inextricably tied to good client retention. Customer retention drives sales and aids in the sustainability of enterprises. While sales and share prices provide critical information about how well a business is functioning at any point in time customer satisfaction scores are one of the best markers of a business's future performance. Retaining clients' loyalty requires that they are satisfied. This study work is framed in this light.

Customer satisfaction (commonly abbreviated as CSAT) is a metric that indicates how satisfied (or dissatisfied) customers are with a business's products, services, or overall experience. Customer satisfaction is described as a customer's assessment of your company's quality, value, and expectations for the products or services you provide. This data can reveal a great deal about how customers feel.

Understanding CSAT (Indeed Editorial Team, 2021) benefits businesses because:

- 1) CSAT determines which customers are dissatisfied. Recognizing and resolving dissatisfied consumers is critical for any business's success. Negative customer evaluations, as well as word-of-mouth, and cautions to friends and family, can have a detrimental effect on a business's sustainability. By soliciting feedback via surveys and acting on any negative comments by resolving issues and making improvements, you demonstrate that your consumers come first. When you demonstrate your concern for dissatisfied consumers, they are more likely to return.
- 2) CSAT recognizes satisfied customers. Customer success must be a top priority if your business is to grow. To ascertain whether or not customers are satisfied, you must quantify and analyze their satisfaction levels. Your delighted consumers are critical since they will promote referrals and loyalty. You can develop customer advocacy programs for these clients to incentivize them to bring in additional referrals and advertise on your behalf.
- 3) CSAT projections assist with prioritization. Customer analytics assist in prioritizing efforts. Client satisfaction data enables teams to pinpoint areas where the customer base's health could be improved. Customer success teams, sales, production, and marketing all contribute to providing an exceptional customer experience.

- 4) CSAT is the engine that drives internal activities. Client satisfaction analysis suggests a great deal of information about the demographics of those who use a product or service. When properly implemented, these measures can be rather beneficial. Change marketing strategies, sales approaches, and other internal operations based on a deeper understanding of the consumer base.
- 5) CSAT generates fresh leads. Customer reviews are a highly compelling method of attracting new consumers. Customer satisfaction increases as a result of positive reviews. Because people trust their peers, these excellent testimonials attract more potential clients to business than a marketing effort.
- 6) CSAT generates revenue. For sales teams, customer pleasure is a selling point. High customer satisfaction levels are a compelling selling point when pitching to new leads. Additionally, sales teams can evaluate positive customer evaluations to determine which aspects of service or product to highlight as a competitive advantage.
- 7) CSAT serves as a roadmap for product improvements. Negative reviews, on the other hand, might be precious for product development. When an unhappy consumer communicates their concerns about a product or service, it creates an opportunity to resolve an issue that may affect many other customers in the future. Negative reviews are especially critical for firms that regularly update software and require fast problem fixes.

Conceptual Framework

During the course of the investigation, the researchers were directed by the following paradigm:

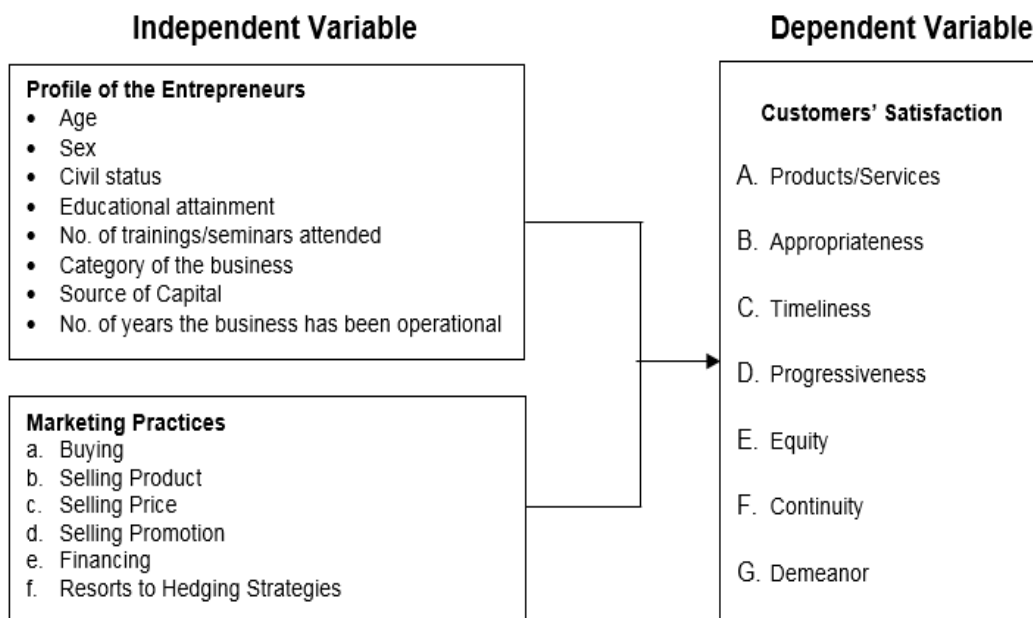


Figure 1: Research Paradigm

The study was centered on the aforementioned paradigm. The independent variable includes the entrepreneurs' profiles and marketing practices, which appear to influence the dependent variable, customer satisfaction.

Hypotheses

In this paper, it is hypothesized that customer satisfaction is significantly related to the profile of the respondents and marketing practices.

Objectives

This study unveiled the relationship between the profile of respondents and marketing practices and customers' satisfaction.

Specifically, it sought answers to:

1. What is the profile of the responders in the following:
 - a. Age,
 - b. Sex,
 - c. Civil status,
 - d. Educational attainment,
 - e. No. of trainings/seminars attended,
 - f. Category of the business,
 - g. Source of Capital, and
 - h. No. of years the business has been operational?
2. What is the level of marketing practices in the following:
 - a. Buying,
 - b. Selling Product,
 - c. Selling Price,
 - d. Selling Promotion,
 - e. Financing, and
 - f. Resorts to Hedging Strategies?
3. What is the level of customer satisfaction in:
 - a. Products/Services,
 - b. Appropriateness,
 - c. Timeliness of the Product/Service,
 - d. Progressiveness,
 - e. Equity,

f. Continuity, and

g. Demeanor?

4. Is there a correlation between respondent profile and level of customers' satisfaction?

5. Is there a correlation between marketing practices and customers' satisfaction?

Significance of the Study

1. The study could pave the way for a better customer experience, retention, loyalty, and a more efficient marketing strategy due to knowing the customer profile.
2. The study confirms that excellent customer service practices keep resellers and customers loyal and keep them coming back.
3. The study discloses customer satisfaction is critical for increasing credibility and popularity, generating sales, and saving money on promotional campaigns.
4. The study could be used as a framework for marketing practices to help sell products or services and are an essential channel for achieving the end goal of increased sales.
5. The study proves that systematic marketing practices achieve the goals and objectives of the business productively and effectively.
6. The study indicates that customer satisfaction is an essential culture that entrepreneurs must consider to increase revenues and ensure the healthy performance of the undertaking.
7. The findings could be used as a basis for understanding the relationship between the level of marketing practices and the level of satisfaction experienced by customers.

METHODOLOGY

This section describes the work's methodology.

Research Method

Descriptive correlational design was applied to determine whether changes in one or more variables significantly affect other variable changes (s). According to V. Sousa, M. Driessnack, and I. A. Costa Mendes (2007), descriptive correlational analyses describe the variables and the correlations between and among them. It is primarily concerned with documenting associations between variables rather than establishing a causal link.

Descriptive research is conducted to provide a glimpse of current events. Correlational research studies correlations between variables to predict future events based on current information. (Stangor & Walinga, 2014).

Population and Locale of the Study

Two hundred sixty-nine micro, small, and medium-sized business proprietors hailing from Abra's 27 municipalities participated in the study. They were selected as respondents because they are sample representations from the MSEs in the province. According to

Tirona's definition (2020), MSEs account for around sixty percent of the workforce in the country.

Data Gathering Instruments

Questionnaires adopted from Valera's (2014) study were used to collect data on business practices and customer satisfaction. It was divided into four sections. Part I focused on the entrepreneurs' profiles. The second part examined the entrepreneurs' business practices, while Part III focused on customer satisfaction.

Data Gathering Procedure

The data collection process began with the respondents receiving a consent letter to participate and alerting them of the study's confidentiality. The researchers established a precise count, including those classified as micro, small, and medium-sized businesses in the province of Abra.

The total number of MSEs was then grouped into clusters representing a population subset. Cluster sampling (Thomas, 2020) divides a population into smaller clusters. They then formed a sample by randomly selecting from these clusters. Cluster sampling is a statistical technique frequently used to analyze large populations, mainly geographically distributed ones. Typically, researchers cluster pre-existing entities such as micro, small, and medium-sized businesses.

The clusters' quality and ability to accurately represent the more significant population determine the validity of the study's findings. When researchers are confident that each cluster is a micro-representation of the wider population, randomly selecting and sampling from the clusters enables them to simulate simple random sampling, ensuring the validity of the results.

The researchers used a sample size calculator to determine the sample size appropriately. The researchers then conducted the study, collecting data from each unit inside the chosen clusters.

After collating the documents utilized in this study, data were tabulated and analyzed using relevant statistical tools.

Statistical Treatment of Data

The following statistical tools were used in the study:

1. Respondents were profiled using frequency and percentages.
2. Mean was employed to characterize company practices and consumer satisfaction.
3. Point-Biserial correlation coefficient examined correlation between profile, business practices, and contentment of the clientele.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This part discusses the data gathered, their analysis, and interpretations, which all contribute answers to the following problems:

Problem 1.

1. What is the profile of the responders in the following?

- a. Age,
- b. Sex,
- c. Civil status,
- d. Educational attainment,
- e. No. of training/seminars attended,
- f. Category of the business,
- g. Source of Capital, and
- h. No. of years the business has been operational?

The table reveals the profiles of the entrepreneur-respondents. The majority of entrepreneurs who answered (122 out of 269 or 47% of those who responded) were between 41 and sixty. Following this is information about the age range of 21-40. (117 out of 269 or 45% of the total). Because people settle down and need to provide for their families throughout these ages, the data may indicate that people must be more serious about finding a source of income.

This leads to the conclusion that people's extended families are also present during these phases of their life. It has added new members to the family, increasing the group's overall size. Filipinos' strong bonds with their families have resulted in them being required to aid their offspring.

As indicated by the frequency of 203 out of 269 entrepreneur respondents, most respondents are female. As a result, female entrepreneurs are frequently in front. Females are thought to be more tolerant due to business demands.

Most respondents are married, as indicated by the frequency of 200 out of 269 or 74%. This could be because marriage entails the burden of parenthood. Married couples must commit more seriously to profit-generating activities to meet the family's demands and expectations.

Most respondents are college undergraduates, as indicated by the frequency of 137 respondents out of 269 or 51%. It may be attributed to the assumption that failure in college compelled them to pursue profitable endeavors, particularly those already married. There is a high demand for earning money due to children's numerous needs and wants.

Table 1: Profile of the Entrepreneur-Respondents

Variables	f	%
Age		
1-20	7	3
21-40	117	45
41-60	122	47
61-80	13	5
81-100	2	1
Total	269	100
Sex		
Male	59	25
Female	203	75
Total	269	100
Civil status		
Single	60	22
Married	200	74
Widow/er	9	3
Total	269	100
Educational attainment		
Elementary	9	3
High School	51	19
College Undergraduate	137	51
BS	48	18
BS with MA/MS	7	3
MA/MS	3	1
MA/MS with PhD/EdD units	10	4
PhD/EdD	4	1
Others (specify)	-	-
Total	269	100
No. of trainings/seminars attended		
Local	246	91
National	18	7
International	5	2
Total	269	100
Category of the business		
Micro	242	90
Small	21	8
Medium	6	2
Total	269	100
Source of Capital		
Savings	72	27
Loan	197	73
Total	269	100
No. of years the business has been operational		
1 – 5	152	57
6 – 10	63	23
11 – 15	24	9
16 – 20	8	3
21 – 25	7	3
26 – 30	4	1
31 – 35	3	1
36 – 40	3	1
41 – 45	3	1
46 – and above	2	1
Total	269	100

In terms of training/seminars attended, the majority (246 out of 269) attended local business training/seminars. Information, skills, and attitudes must be mastered and remastered to compete in today's corporate environment.

Most respondents, 242 out of 269 or 90%, are classified as micro-businesses. The category is determined by the amount of capital invested in the business. The government's acknowledgment of micro businesses as economic drivers have accelerated their growth. That is why the government launched so many microlending agencies. The government recognizes the importance of these small firms.

The entrepreneurs-respondents obtain their business capital through loans, as evidenced by the frequency of 197 out of 269 or 73 percent. This indicates the presence of several lending institutions due to the president's goal of reviving the Philippine economy through micro, small, and medium-sized businesses.

In terms of the years the firm has existed, the data in the table reveals that 152 out of 269 entrepreneurs, or 57 percent, have been in operation for one to five years. This figure is attributed to the president's initiative to make entrepreneurship the primary engine of the Philippine economy. His administration directed lending institutions to assist small enterprises, which employ nearly 60% of the country's workforce.

Lipa et al. (2017) found a correlation between the demographic profile of Office Management students and their academic performance. They looked at the ensuing parameters include: (a) Test Worry; (b) Test Proficiency; (c) Scholarly Proficiency; (d) Chronological Organization; and (e) Learning Patterns. The findings indicated that while most students were competent, they struggled to manage their time effectively for their studies. Additionally, age affected students' time management and study habits. Thus, researchers advocated for increased faculty communication with students, the development of successful teaching methodologies and procedures, the creation of an effective curriculum, and faculty seminars and training to enhance faculty effectiveness. Sustaining academic success was critical for an educational institution to undertake.

Comprehending the social and economic persona of the consumers (WGU, 2018) is essential to the growth and prosperity of your company. You need to be able to comprehend them and decide precisely what your product and service mixes will include. The information presented here will also impact pricing, packaging, promotion, and placement. In order to conduct a thorough assessment of a group, you must find the optimal site for your enterprise. You must first understand your potential customers' demographic profile. Look at the purchasing power of the community you're considering to see if it has a population with the demographic characteristics essential to the success of your business, domiciles, modes of conveyance, demographic cohorts, marital statuses, and recreational pursuits.

Problem 2.

2. What is the level of marketing practices in the following?

- a. Buying,
- b. Selling Product,
- c. Selling Price,
- d. Selling Promotion,
- e. Financing, and
- f. Resorts to Hedging Strategies?

Table 2: Level of Marketing Practices

<i>Marketing Practice</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Descriptive Rating</i>
<i>Buying</i>	4.02	Highly Practiced
<i>Selling Product</i>	4.13	Highly Practiced
<i>Selling Price</i>	3.88	Highly Practiced
<i>Selling Promotion</i>	3.67	Highly Practiced
<i>Financing</i>	3.66	Highly Practiced
<i>Resorts to Hedging Strategies</i>	3.86	Highly Practiced
Total	3.87	Highly Practiced

Legend:

<i>4.21-5.00</i>	<i>Very Highly Practiced</i>	<i>1.81-2.60</i>	<i>Slightly Practiced</i>
<i>3.41-4.20</i>	<i>Highly Practiced</i>	<i>1.00-1.80</i>	<i>Not Practiced</i>
<i>2.61-3.40</i>	<i>Moderately Practiced</i>		

The table summarizes how customers assess the marketing practices of the businesses included in this study. According to the table, marketing practices have a mean of 3.87, described as "highly practiced." This suggests that people in the business engage in extensive purchasing activities, such as purchasing goods/raw materials in large quantities and purchasing goods/raw materials solely from specific vendors. Entrepreneurs are responsible for designing packaging for the convenience of customers, consistently improving the product/service, and creating packaging to fit the customer's budget. When it comes to selling price, entrepreneurs consider the following: they set the market price; they set the price based on the terms of payment; they set the price based on the targeted profit; they offer discounts and design packaging to match the customer's budget. Entrepreneurs advertise their products/services and seek the assistance of go-betweens when it comes to selling promotions. Entrepreneurs maintain available capital to acquire raw materials/goods/supplies, purchase natural materials/goods/supplies on credit, ensure commodities, and use trading methods. Finally, when resorting to hedging, businesses evaluate changing client wants, forecast future demand from the target market, perform market surveys, and solicit feedback from repeat customers.

Parallel to this, Morgan, NA, et al. (2019) studied the six most essential marketing publications from 1999 to 2017 to build a new paradigm of marketing strategy. They highlight fundamental difficulties facing marketing strategy research, such as decreasing

study numbers and scope and decreasing the use of theory and primary research designs. The number and importance of unaddressed marketing strategy questions and the potential to transform practice have never been more significant. They provide a new research agenda for academics to produce new theories, establish clear relevance, and enhance practice.

Regarding product or service timeliness, Vocalcom (2020) stated that it is common knowledge that timely customer service keeps customers satisfied. Entrepreneurs risk jeopardizing their long-term commitment by forcing customers to waste time due to a lack of knowledge or slow customer service. Furthermore, responsiveness can make or break a sale when a customer requires assistance. Here are five reasons why responsive customer service is essential for great omnichannel experiences: 1. Speed is necessary for social customer service; 2. It is vital for maximizing voice; 3. It aids in targeted marketing and sales acceleration; 4. Prompt client feedback is compelling; and 5. Customers expect it.

Problem 3.

3. What is the level of customer satisfaction in:

- a. Products/Services,
- b. Appropriateness,
- c. Timeliness of the Product/Service,
- d. Progressiveness,
- e. Equity,
- f. Continuity, and
- g. Demeanor?

Table 3: Degree of Customer Satisfaction

<i>Customer Satisfaction</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Descriptive Rating</i>
<i>Products/Services</i>	4.23	Very Highly Satisfied
<i>Appropriateness</i>	4.31	Very Highly Satisfied
<i>Timeliness of the Product/Service</i>	3.90	Highly Satisfied
<i>Progressiveness</i>	4.05	Highly Satisfied
<i>Equity</i>	4.19	Highly Satisfied
<i>Continuity</i>	4.06	Highly Satisfied
<i>Demeanor</i>	4.28	Very Highly Satisfied
Total	4.15	Highly Satisfied

Legend:

4.21-5.00	Very Highly Satisfied	1.81-2.60	Slightly Satisfied
3.41-4.20	Highly Satisfied	1.00-1.80	Not Satisfied
2.61-3.40	Moderately Satisfied		

The table shows the degree of customer satisfaction. As evidenced by the mean of 4.15, the overall level of customer satisfaction is described as "highly satisfied." This signifies that a product/service is available when necessary; the products/services shown on the

shelf/service are by the customer's preferences. Regarding appropriateness, customers are tremendously satisfied when the product/quality service matches their desires, the product/uses service meets their wants, and the product/pricing service is within their grasp.

This also indicates that when it comes to product/service timeliness, customers are delighted when the product/service is delivered on time, and delays, errors, and wastages are kept to a minimum. Additionally, it indicates that clients are extremely satisfied with progressiveness when products/services are regularly developed to satisfy changing customer wants and when facilities and amenities are constantly enhanced. In terms of equity, clients are highly delighted with the product/service since it is environmentally friendly; credit is available to deprive and underserved customers. Regarding continuity, clients are highly satisfied when a current stock of goods and services appears to be adequate for a predetermined duration, and no items or services are delayed due to a supply shortage. Finally, clients are highly delighted when personnel have a positive and courteous approach and provide complete customer assistance.

J. Heimonen and M. Kohtamäki (2019) create and evaluate a three-dimensional assessment approach that covers the three elements of a new product and service portfolio (NPSP) advantage: novelty, meaningfulness, and superiority. The results show that these three NPSP attributes – novelty, importance, and superiority – are individual characteristics that lead to NPSP advantage. An essential contribution to the literature on new product development is that the three-dimensional construct containing the three criteria above fits the data better than a unidimensional structure. The current study provides an integrated framework for analyzing the targeted innovation process outcome (NPSP advantage). This report thereby bridges the gap between product and service development research.

Problem 4.

4. Is there a correlation between respondent profile and level of customers' satisfaction?

Table 4: Correlation Showing the Relationship between Customer Satisfaction and Profile

Profile	Customer Satisfaction							
	Product/ Services	Appropriate ness	Timeline of the Product/ Service	Progressive ness	Equity	Continuity	Demeanor	As a Whole
Age	-0.141*	-0.104	-0.113	-0.056	-0.024	-0.085	-0.076	-0.116
Sex	0.027	0.024	0.11	0.017	-0.035	-0.017	-0.017	0.026
Civil Status	0.009	0.007	0.074	0.014	0.024	0.115	0.045	0.042
Educational Attainment	0.131*	0.164**	0.083	0.084	0.057	0.164**	0.037	0.136*
No. of Trainings/Seminars	0.137*	0.017	0.060	0.118*	0.248**	0.033	0.109	0.159**
Category of the Business	0.119	0.024	0.087	0.077	0.042	0.046	0.014	0.086
Source of Capital	0.051	0.081	0.044	0.031	0.044	0.05	0.052	0.040
Years of business -operational	0.415**	0.045	0.010	0.129**	0.009	0.002	0.085	0.470

Legend: * - 0.05 level of significance

** - 0.01 level of significance

The table displays the correlation coefficient between the profile of the respondent and the level of customer satisfaction. Customer satisfaction was significantly correlated with educational attainment, as demonstrated by the estimated r-value of 0.136, which was tested at the 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, business owners must have a high level of education to carry out their responsibilities as owners of their businesses efficiently. As a result, entrepreneurs who have received a high formal education are more likely to display reasonable and adequate moral standards while running their businesses than others. A high level of educational attainment among small business owners is associated with a greater likelihood of providing their customers with services with a high degree of professionalism. After all, customers are looking for business professionals capable of supplying them with the services they deserve. Customers have expressed exceptional satisfaction with the professionalism of the company's employees and how these employees have treated them. Successful entrepreneurs are seen as role models among their peers and coworkers.

The scholarly inquiry conducted by Fida BA, Ahmed U, Al-Balushi Y, and Singh D. (2020) scrutinized the impact of service quality on the patronage and contentment of customers in four distinguished Islamic financial institutions located in the Sultanate of Oman. The researchers employed the SERVQUAL model to carry out their investigation. As per their research, the participants have reported an average level of agreement in five distinct domains, namely tangibles, responsiveness, reliability, assurance, and empathy. The results of the correlation analysis indicate a noteworthy association among facility value, client gratification, and buyer faithfulness. Analogously, the utilization of regression analysis has divulged that the magnitudes of empathy and responsiveness exhibit a noteworthy affirmative impact on the contentment of patrons. Due to the notable correlation observed between the aforementioned variables and the level of contentment experienced by customers, it is advisable for financial institutions to prioritize the cultivation of empathy and responsiveness. Conversely, financial institutions must not disregard the significance of factors such as dependability, guarantee, and physical evidence, as evidenced by the feedback of respondents regarding the offerings of the bank.

Juneja, Richu M., and Mehta, Prachi B. (2018) examined various factors affecting customer satisfaction when making an online purchase, including behavioral and demographic aspects. Their study sought customers' sociodemographic traits and their satisfaction with internet purchasing. The study analyzed primary data. A systematic questionnaire was used to collect data from 180 online clients in Surat City. Cross tabulation and the chi-square test were used to analyze data. The empirical evidence presented in the study suggests that patron qualification substantially correlates through online customer satisfaction, whereas gender, age, occupation, and prior experience with online shopping have no such correlation.

The number of seminars and training sessions that entrepreneurs participate in is also significantly related to customer satisfaction, as demonstrated by the computed r-value of 0.159 at the 0.01 level of significance, which is significant. In this case, entrepreneurial education and training prepare people in business to discover commercial opportunities

and to have the self-confidence, knowledge, and skills necessary to profit from those opportunities. It teaches them how to recognize business possibilities, commercialize a concept, manage resources, and begin a company venture, among other things.

Problem 5.

5. Is there a correlation between marketing practices and customers' satisfaction?

Table 5: Correlation Showing the Relationship between the Current State of Marketing Practices and Customer Satisfaction

Marketing Practices	Customer Satisfaction							
	Product/ Services	Appropriateness	Timeliness of the Product/ Service	Progressiveness	Equity	Continuity	Demeanor	As a Whole
Buying	0.527**	0.498**	0.489**	0.591**	0.240**	0.322**	0.560**	0.591**
Selling Product	0.346**	0.291**	0.264**	0.428**	0.140*	0.193**	0.269**	0.366**
Selling Price	0.491**	0.518**	0.457**	0.635**	0.235**	0.349**	0.494**	0.580**
Selling Promotion	0.493**	0.443**	0.431**	0.540**	0.240**	0.331**	0.413**	0.526**
Financing	0.452**	0.474**	0.499**	0.603**	0.287**	0.335**	0.491**	0.584**
Resorts to Hedging Strategy	0.491**	0.539**	0.488**	0.651**	0.276**	0.364**	0.508**	0.612**
As a Whole	0.573**	0.557**	0.530**	0.704**	0.278**	0.382**	0.549**	0.661**

Legend: * - 0.05 level of significance

** - 0.01 level of significance

Correlation coefficients between marketing practices and customer satisfaction are shown in the table. The computed r of 0.661 at the 0.01 level of significance indicates that consumer satisfaction is significantly correlated with marketing practices. Accordingly, customer satisfaction with indicators such as product/services, appropriateness of the commodity or amenity, coupled with the timely conveyance of said commodity or amenity, the progressiveness of the product/service, equity, continuity, and demeanor is described as highly satisfied with entrepreneurs' marketing approaches, including their buying-selling-and-financing operations, use of hedging strategies, and pricing of their products.

Upon closer inspection, the table reveals that customer happiness is statistically significantly related to marketing strategies on "buying," as evidenced by the calculated correlation coefficient (r), which was found to be 0.591 when tested at the 0.01 level of significance. The implication is that entrepreneurs purchase commodities and raw materials in massive amounts from a specific number of suppliers.

Customers' pleasure was found to be substantially connected with the marketing practice of "selling product," as demonstrated by the computed r of 0.366, which was considered significant when assessed at the 0.01 level of significance. This means that customers are pleased when entrepreneurs with vast experience develop packaging for consumer convenience, continually improve the product/service, and design packaging to fulfill customers' expectations while working within a limited financial budget.

When analyzed at the 0.01 level of significance, it was discovered that customer satisfaction was significantly connected with the marketing tactic of "selling price." A good

association between customer satisfaction and marketing methods was proved by the calculated r of 0.580, demonstrating a positive the correlation that is present among consumer happiness and marketing activities. Clientele happiness is achieved if entrepreneurs establish prices competitively in the market, set prices dependent on payment terms, set prices based on projected profit, offer discounts, and design packaging to meet customers' needs on a tight financial budget.

The table also shows that customer satisfaction was significantly connected with the marketing activity of "selling promotion," as demonstrated by the computed r of 0.526, which was statistically significant at a level of 0.01. By advertising its products or services and enlisting the assistance of intermediaries, a firm is just hinting that its customers are pleased with the results.

The marketing practice of "financing" was also shown to be substantially associated with customer satisfaction when evaluated at the 0.01 level of significance, as demonstrated by the computed r -value, 0.584. Consequently, it is possible that customers are pleased when businesses have cash on hand to purchase raw materials, finished goods, and supplies, acquire raw materials, finished goods, and supplies on credit, ensure commodities, and use hedging strategies to safeguard their profits.

When the relationship was analyzed at the 0.01 level of significance, the marketing practice of "resorting to hedging technique" was substantially associated with customer satisfaction, as demonstrated by an r -value of 0.612 for the activity. This is likely because entrepreneurs pay attention to the changing expectations of their customers, forecast future demand from their target market, undertake market research from their target market, and solicit feedback from their regular customers.

The present discovery bears a resemblance to the study conducted by M. Turco, R. Juevesa, and A. Galigao (2021), wherein they established a statistically significant correlation between commercial methodologies and customer contentment within the motorcycle dealership industry in General Santos City, Philippines, during the year 2021. The methodology employed in the study involved the acquisition of numerical information by means of a descriptive questionnaire and a correlational design. The survey instrument was disseminated to a cohort of eight (8) managers and a sample of forty (40) patrons of designated motorcycle vendors, selected through purposive sampling. The data that were gathered underwent analysis through the utilization of weighted mean and Pearson (r) Correlation. The empirical evidence suggests a direct association between commercial methodologies and clientele contentment. The rejection of the null hypothesis, which posits no correlation between business operations and consumer satisfaction, has been established. Based on the findings of the investigation, it is advisable that extant business protocols be upheld in order to sustain prevailing levels of customer contentment.

Among the evidence-based analysis findings on the relationship between complaint management efficiency and customer happiness and loyalty in Vietnam's e-commerce were Phan, A., Nguyen, H., and Pham, T. (2021). Between November 2018 and March 2019, data obtained from experienced online buyers in Vietnam was evaluated using Structural Equation Modelling (SEM). According to data analysis, customers' pleasure

and loyalty are positively influenced by fairness in the workplace, justice in the marketplace, and equal treatment under the law. In this study, the researchers discovered that customers' capacity to identify and connect with technical help on a website and how a firm handles its customers substantially impact their satisfaction and loyalty. Customers' purchase intentions should be an opportunity for e-retailers in developing economies during the service recovery.

Conversely, erudite individuals have ascertained that the contentment of patrons has a significant impact on multiple facets of a company's fiscal prosperity. An aspect that is crucial to managerial success, yet frequently disregarded, pertains to its influence on a business. This metric reflects the expenses incurred in attempting to persuade customers and provide them with a sense of ease. The study conducted by Lim, L., Tuli, K. R., and Grewal, R. (2020) represents a pioneering effort in examining the effects of customer satisfaction on future COS through both theoretical and practical means. As per the authors' analysis, the correlation between enhanced customer contentment and a decline in forthcoming cost of sales (COS) is contingent upon the strategic approach and contextual milieu of a given enterprise. Upon analyzing data spanning nearly twenty years and encompassing data from 128 distinct firms, the authors have arrived at the conclusion that customer satisfaction exerts a significant and consequential adverse effect on future COS, both statistically and economically. For enterprises with higher levels of capital intensity and financial leverage, the impact of genuine customer contentment on COS is significantly reduced. Notably, its significance is amplified for enterprises that exhibit greater diversification and operate within industries characterized by high growth and labor intensity. The authors have determined that the effects above may demonstrate variability concerning two discrete components of COS, specifically the cost of persuasion and convenience.

FINDINGS, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATION

The study's findings are as follows:

1. The educational attainment profile of respondents and the number of training/seminars are 'highly related' to customer satisfaction.
2. The level of marketing practices in terms of product purchase, product sale, selling price, selling promotion, financing, and hedging strategies is 'highly practiced.'
3. Customers are 'highly satisfied' with products/services, appropriateness, timeliness of the product/service, progressiveness, equity, continuity, and demeanor.
4. Notable link among the responders' educational attainment perspective, the number of training/seminars, and their level of customer satisfaction.
5. The level of marketing practices and customer satisfaction has a significant relationship.

The following are the study's conclusions:

1. Customer satisfaction is significantly related to entrepreneur educational attainment and the number of training/seminars attended by business owners.
2. Customer satisfaction is significantly related to the marketing practices of entrepreneurs in terms of buying, selling a product, selling price, selling promotion, financing, and hedging strategy.
3. Customers play an important role in marketing practices and strategy. Customer satisfaction is significantly related to business success.

It is then suggested that business owners:

1. Improve their educational attainment and attend training/seminars to maximize customer satisfaction.
2. Maintain the level of marketing practices in buying, selling a product, selling price, selling promotion, financing, and hedging strategy to ensure customer satisfaction.

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