Investigating the Attitudinal Outcomes of Relationship Marketing on Customer Loyalty

Amirhossein Golzarizamir

Bachelor of Business Administration, Hamedan Branch, Islamic Azad University, Hamedan, Iran

Article Info
Page Number: 441 - 456
Publication Issue:
Vol 72 No. 2 (2023)

Abstract

Intense competitiveness and complexity of the markets have made it inevitable for businesses to accept a modern attitude about marketing, which is "relationship marketing", and drive them-particularly in industrial markets, to defensive marketing strategies rather than aggressive marketing strategies. This research also aims to investigate the attitudinal outcomes of relationship marketing on customer loyalty to Amavis Industrial Valves company. Thus, based on the attitudinal outcomes of relationship marketing, five assumptions have been developed. The research method is descriptive/correlational and used structural equation modeling techniques to analyze and interpret the research assumptions. Research findings confirm that relationship marketing has a positive and meaningful effect on brand image, brand satisfaction and brand loyalty, and also brand loyalty is influenced by other factors of brand that are prioritized as following: 1) relationship marketing, 2) brand satisfaction, and 3) brand positive image.

Article History:
Article Received: 15 October 2023
Revised: 24 November 2023
Accepted: 18 December 2023

Key words Relationship marketing, brand satisfaction, brand positive image, brand loyalty, structural equation modeling, Amavis Industrial Valves company

1-Introduction

Intense competitiveness and complexity of the markets have made it inevitable for businesses to accept a modern attitude of marketing, i.e. "relationship marketing" and drive them-particularly in industrial markets, to defensive marketing strategies rather than aggressive marketing strategies. In fact, relationship marketing is an art of business in competitive conditions today, because, considering that customers are the main source of profit in companies in the present and the future, competition for access to appropriate customers is so intense and highly sophisticated. Also, considering that there is always this possibility that profitable customers of a company are attracted by other competitors, now, companies should stress maintaining the current customers and building a long-term and profitable relationship. Particularly, this matter is more acute in industrial markets where the number of customers is limited. According to Kotler and Keller (2006), relationship marketing involves building and maintaining a strong relationship with customers and other stakeholders. Gummesson (1999) also commented in this regard that relationships need two parties being in contact with each other. For example, the foundation of marketing relationships rest between the (service) supplier and the customer.

On the other hand, "**brand loyalty**", "**brand satisfaction**", and "**brand image**" are the most important non-financial indicators of corporate performance, particularly in industrial markets (B2B), because, given the specific features of industrial markets- compared to consumer markets- such as fewer buyers, more prominent buyers, derived demand, inelastic demand, more volatile demand, etc, the importance of industrial customers and gaining their satisfaction and loyalty for active businesses will be doubled in such markets. Customer (industrial or consumer) loyalty that the most consequence of which is customer satisfaction, is defined as "maintaining deep commitment to buying or choosing a product or service, constantly in the future, despite situational effects and marketing efforts that could potentially lead to changing the customer behavior " (Oliver, 1999). The above definition points out to two distinctive dimensions of brand loyalty: behavioral and attitudinal (Aker, 1991). Behavioral loyalty or making purchases includes the respective constant purchases of a brand, while attitudinal loyalty covers the inherent commitment to the values unique to a product. Of course, according to Oliver (1997), perceptual loyalty which is concerned with the customer feelings, and ultimately, action loyalty which is concerned with the customer tendency for making purchase in the future (Carolyn, 2002). The customers loyal to a brand become the firm's assets and will be recognized as the major indicator of the brand equity.

In addition to "brand loyalty", there are two important attitudinal elements considered more as requirements of customer loyalty: "brand loyalty", "brand image". Psychologically, Lingenfield defines customer satisfaction as a feeling generated as a result of comparison between the specifications of the received product to customer needs or objectives and public expectations related to the product. Also, according to Kang and James (2004), corporate image concerns with the customer perceptions about the service organization. Perception (image) regarding the corporate brand is a set of beliefs established by people about a product with a particular brand (Kotler & Armstrong, 2004). Therefore, considering the specific position of relationship marketing in the modern literature of marketing, and the increasing attention towards it, examining the impact of this new component on the most important non-financial performance indicators of the company such as satisfaction and loyalty is of a particular importance to the marketing managers and the researchers studying this field, and we will discuss it in this article. The primary question in this research is: Do the attitudinal outcomes of relationship marketing have a meaningful relationship with customer loyalty in Amavis Industrial Valves company?

2. Theoretical principles

For the first time, principles of relationship marketing were raised by Leonard Berry (1983). Christopher, Payne and Ballantyne also have put considerable efforts on developing their domain and field of theoretical foundations whose perspectives contained some points such as stressing the relationship between customers and suppliers that takes building the relationship in to consideration rather than the transaction; according to Payne (1998) quality, serving customers and marketing, though managed distinctively, are close to each other and relationship marketing integrates them. Sin, et al (2005) have defined this concept as a one-dimensional construct comprising 6 core elements as a way of conceptualizing and scaling relationship marketing which is being considered in developing the conceptual model of the present research: trust, as a component of business relationship, determines how each side of the relationship feels to count on the accurateness and truthfulness of the other side word and agreement (Callaghan, et al, 1995). Bonding, also as another component of the business relationship makes it possible for the parties to take action towards a desired goal with uniform and coordination (Callaghan, et al, 1995). Communications as the third component, is defined as the formal and informal exchanges (or apportionment) of meaningful and timely information between the buyer and the seller. The fourth component is the shared value which includes both parties' consensus over what behaviors, goals and policies are important or unimportant, appropriate or inappropriate, right or wrong (Morgan and Hunt, 1994). Empathy, as another component of business relationship enables a party to look into the situations from the perspective of the other party. In fact, empathy is defined as understanding the desires and goals of the other party, and ultimately, reciprocity, as the last component is about compensation of either of the parties for the favor received from the other (Callaghan, et al, 1995). Still, many studies have been conducted around identification and categorizing the dimensions of customer loyalty, the most important of which raised by Brink, et al (2006) as "the effects of strategic and tactical affinity marketing on customer loyalty to the brand" that was applied partly to the model of this research. Among the most important and recent studies conducted in the field of relationship marketing, we can point to the followings:

Jemaa and Tournois (2014) provided the key points of relationship marketing in this study which are indicators of the value-based relationship. In this study, the relationship between *trust, satisfaction, commitment* and direct, indirect marketing are separately investigated. Rizan1, et al (2014) examined the relationship marketing modeling, customer loyalty and satisfaction and trust in a study.

In a research, Sharif Mollah (2014) has investigated the relationship between relationship marketing and customer loyalty.

In an article, Romero, et al (2014), investigated the relationship marketing management and its importance for privatization. They have also modeled the relationship marketing, experience, trust, commitment and loyalty, using structural equation.

In a research, Kiani, et al (2015), investigated the effects of relationship marketing on football sponsors' financial loyalty. In order to do this, the effective factors such as competence, ability to solve customers' problems, the effects of commitment and relationship marketing on the relationship reliability and quality, and eventually customer loyalty were examined.

Thus, considering the significant components and advantages of relationship marketing, many businesses move towards adopting this approach, because the past approaches to the marketing are not efficient and they are less profitable. Now days, most of the markets are sophisticated, and faced with intensive competition and the excess of supply over demand, therefore, it's hard to find new customers, while businesses intensively feel the need for maintaining the current customers. Given this changes, businesses must prepare themselves beforehand and be ready to compete with other competitors. In this respect, building and maintaining long-term relationship with the current customers, the relationship marketing tries to lower costs of attracting new customers, and thereby, increases the corporate profitability. As a result, for Amavis Industrial Valves company, which is not an exception, having a tendency towards relationship marketing and a great attention about its elements can be essential factors in order to maintain and enhance customer loyalty, as well as upgrading its competitiveness, since as Singh et al.(2005) say, relationship marketing orientation as a maker of competitive advantage for businesses, will have a positive effect on financial and non-financial performance of businesses such as customer satisfaction, building a positive image of the company as well as customer loyalty.

3. Materials and methods:

3-1- The research hypotheses :

According to the above explanations, the researcher reasonable and scientific expectation for accountability to the research primary question can be set fourth within the following hypotheses:

- Hypothesis 1: The extent of orientation to relationship marketing has a positive effect on the customer satisfaction of the brand.
- Hypothesis 2: The extent of orientation to relationship marketing has a positive effect on the customer positive perception of the brand.
- Hypothesis 3: The extent of orientation to relationship marketing has a positive effect on the customer loyalty to the brand.
- Hypothesis 4: The extent of the customers' satisfaction of the brand has a positive effect on their loyalty.

Based on the raised hypotheses, we can codify the conceptual model of the research based on the proposed model developed by Singh et al. (2005) to assess the relationship between the research components (Figure 1).

In the conceptual model of this research, relationship marketing component is considered as the independent variable, and the components pertinent to brand satisfaction, brand image and brand loyalty are considered as the dependent variables.

3-2- Data collection

In this research, we used two methods for collecting data, field and library methods. In field method, after investigating different approaches and collecting ideas from professors, questionnaire was recognized as the most appropriate tool. Spatially, the data contained in this research was collected within the real environment. Information resources of this research consist of a combination of primary and secondary sources, so that the distributed questionnaire is considered as the primary sources of information. Some of the secondary information sources used in this research include articles available in reputable publications of marketing and business management obtained from scientific sites on the Internet, as well as scientific journals, indexes, PhD and MA theses and relevant books.

3-3- Population, statistical sample and sample size

The common attribute concerning this research statistical population is being customer to Amavis Industrial Valves company. Generally, we can define the corresponding statistical population in this way: Managers, directors and experts working for Amavis Industrial Valves company's seven contracting parties. Statistical unit is the most fundamental level in any study. A member/unit of statistical population is part of the total population (Sekaran, 2002, 294). In this research, the statistical population consists of all of the respective customers.

The population framework is a list of all of the members of the population that the sample is developed from. The presence of such a list is essential for simple random sampling. It means that in order to determine a sample size (n) from the population size N, we must learn where the members or units are situated in the statistical population to grasp the measure of the said attribute or the desired data from the sampling units. Also, in some of the discussions regarding sampling methods, a set or list of population units including address, phone number and perhaps some other details, is referred to as "**sampling framework**" (Danaie Far, et al, 2004, 391-392). In this research, the statistical population framework which is authentic, reliable and available consists of 385 units and the sampling process is carried out using simple random sampling which is based on the mentioned list.

3-4- Sample size

The number of samples that must be selected from the population is called "**sample size**". But, it doesn't seem reasonable for the sample size to be the same in all of the researches and all of the populations. The size depends on, distribution of the research attribute in the population, level of reliability, maximum error and sampling technique. The research's making generalizations from the sample to the population is not always satisfactory, since, it is impossible to make sure that the sample is the representation of the population in every case, and in fact, they are different in many cases. The issue that the researcher must deal with is the sample size. In the case that the sample size is too large, the resource will be lost. On the other hand, if the sample size is too small, it implies that the accuracy of the results is too low meaning that the results may not be the implication of the facts and realities of the population. But, if the random sample is determined and its size is appropriate, the difference between the sample and the population will decrease. Regarding the type of the research and its goal, varieties of formulas have been set forth by experts of statistics in order to determine an appropriate sample size. The sample size is achieved in terms of the statistical population being finite or infinite (Sekaran, 2002, 323-335). Considering that the statistical population of this research is all of the managers, directors and experts working for Amavis Industrial Valves company's seven contracting parties that its number is limited to 385, therefore, the following formula is used to estimate the sample size (Hoseini, 2003, 14):

$$n = \frac{N(Z_{\frac{\alpha}{2}})^2(P)(1-P)}{\varepsilon^2(N-1)+(Z_{\frac{\alpha}{2}})^2(P)(1-P)}$$

N: the (statistical) population size available

n: the required sample size

Z: the value of the standard variable (its value will be 1.96 in the table for confidence level of 95%)

ε: The extent of error made by the researcher throughout the investigation. In the current research, this extent is 0.05.

P(1-P): Variance is the quality attribute being analyzed, and because it is not certain its maximum value (i.e. 0.5 × 0.5 =0.25) is used. Thus, the required sample size is calculated using the following formula:

$$n = \frac{N(Z_{\frac{\alpha}{2}})^2(P)(1-P)}{\varepsilon^2(N-1)+(Z_{\frac{\alpha}{2}})^2(P)(1-P)} = \frac{385 \times 1/96^2 \times 0/25}{0/05^2(384)+1/96^2 \times 0/25} = 193$$

In order to obtain 193 appropriate and perfect questionnaires, 300 questionnaires were distributed. After collecting the questionnaires, 247 appropriate questionnaires were identified and their respective data was entered into statistical analysis software (SPSS).

4. Data analysis

In fact, in this research, the SPSS and LISREL software will be used for data analysis in descriptive and inferential statistics. In descriptive statistics, the statistical indices such as frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation were used, and in inferential statistics, structural equation modeling was used (including confirmatory factor analysis and path analysis).

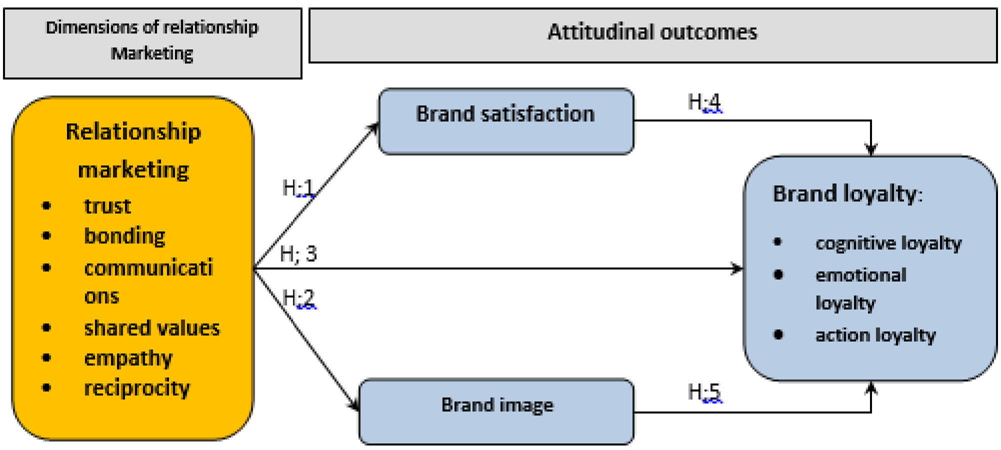

Figure 1: the conceptual model of the research (based on the model developed by Singh et al. (2005)) .

Table 1: Fitness indices for the comprehensive model of the research

fit index	utility criterion	acceptance criterion	the statistics of the research primary model	statistics of the research adjusted model
χ^2 (*Chi Square*)	$0 \le \chi^2 \le 2df$	$\chi^2 \le 3df$	χ^2 = 2627.39 ,*df* =774	**χ^2 = 1878.71 ,*df* =762**
χ^2/df **(ratio of chi square to the degree of freedom)**	$0 \le \chi^2/df \le 2$	$\chi^2/df \le 3$	3.394	**2.465**
RMSEA **(Root Mean Square Error of Approximation)**	$0 \le RMSEA \le 0.05$	$RMSEA \le 0.08$	0.099	**0.077**
SRMR **(Standardized Root Mean Square Residual)**	$0 \le SRMR \le 0.05$	$SRMR \le 0.10$	0.088	**0.078**
NNFI **(Non-Normed Fit Index)**	$0.95 \le NNFI \le 1.00$	$0.90 \le NNFI$	0.94	**0.95**
CFI **(Comparative Fit Index)**	$0.95 \le CFI \le 1.00$	$0.90 \le CFI$	0.94	**0.96**
GFI **(Goodness of Fit Index)**	$0.90 \le GFI \le 1.00$	$0.80 \le GFI$	0.66	**0.73**
AGFI **(Adjusted Goodness**	$0.90 \le AGFI \le 1.00$	Close to *GFI*	0.62	**0.69**

of Fit Index)				
Hoelter's Critical N			***95 ≤ N (of sample)*** ***N=247***	***115 ≤ N (of sample)*** ***N=247***

4-1- Evaluation and validation of the measurement model

In order to evaluate the measurement model, validity and reliability of existing constructs in the model must be examined. Convergent validity exists, when all of the assumed indicators for evaluating a latent variable (construct) have statistically meaningful loadings. Based on the performed adjustments in the previous stage, the remained indicators for evaluation of the existing constructs were meaningful at the error level of 5% which demonstrates the validity of the strong convergence in the measurement model. Also, in order to evaluate the reliability of the indicators, the number of the existing indicators in the adjusted model along with reliability coefficients of each construct is mentioned in table 2.

Table 2: condition of the indicators available in the research model

Responding dimension	**Number of primary indicators**	**Alpha coefficient**	**Number of existing indicators**	**Adjusted questions**	**Alpha coefficient**
Relationship marketing	22	0.934	22	---	0.934
Brand image	4	0.850	4	---	0.850
Brand satisfaction	7	0.825	7	---	0.825
Brand loyalty	8	0.839	8	---	0.839
Total constructs	41	0.955	41	---	0.955

According to the results in table 8-4, all the constructs available in the research model are in a good condition in terms of reliability (internal consistency), it's because the alpha coefficient of all of the constructs are above 0.7 in utility range.

4-2- Hypothesis testing (evaluation and validation of structural models)

After confirming the acceptability of the indicators related to overall fit of the model and also the validity of the measurement model, starts the evaluation of the structural model. Generally, if the t-value is above 1.96 or 2.576, the relationship between the two constructs is statistically meaningful respectively with the error level of 5% and 1%. The results of testing the hypotheses are summarized in table 3.

BImage = 0.61*RelMarke, Errorvar.= 0.63 , R^2 = 0.37

(0.079) (0.12)

7.72 5.25

Bsatisfa = 0.69*RelMarke, Errorvar.= 0.52 , R^2 = 0.48

(0.083) (0.11)

8.28 4.92

BLoyalty =0.19*BImage+0.26*Bsatisfa+0.60*RelMarke,Errorvar.= 0.13,R^2 =0.87

(0.060) (0.073) (0.089) (0.041)

3.18 3.64 6.70 3.29

Table 3: Condition of the relationship between the set fourth constructs in the research model

Hypotheses of the research model	Test values		
	Level of significance	Impact factor	Test result
Relationship marketing→ its attitudinal outcomes			
Hypothesis 1: Null hypothesis (H_0): The extent to which relationship marketing is regarded doesn't have a positive effect on the customer satisfaction of the brand. ($\beta = 0$) Alternative hypothesis (H_1): The extent to which relationship marketing is regarded has a positive effect on the brand satisfaction. ($\beta \neq 0$)	7.72	0.61	Rejecting the null hypothesis (H_0)
Hypothesis 2: Null hypothesis (H_0): The extent to which relationship marketing is regarded doesn't have a	8.28	0.69	Rejecting the null hypothesis

positive effect on the brand image. ($\beta = 0$) Alternative hypothesis (H_1): The extent to which relationship marketing is regarded has a positive effect on the brand image. ($\beta \neq 0$)			(H_0)
Hypothesis 3: Null hypothesis (H_0): The extent to which relationship marketing is regarded doesn't have a positive effect on the brand loyalty. ($\beta = 0$) Alternative hypothesis (H_1): The extent to which relationship marketing is regarded has a positive effect on the brand loyalty. ($\beta \neq 0$)	6.70	0.60	Rejecting the null hypothesis (H_0)
Hypothesis 4: hypothesis (H_0): The extent of brand satisfaction doesn't have a positive effect on the brand loyalty. ($\beta = 0$) Alternative hypothesis (H_1): The extent of brand satisfaction has a positive effect on the brand loyalty. ($\beta \neq 0$)	3.64	0.26	Rejecting the null hypothesis (H_0)
Hypothesis 5: hypothesis (H_0): Establishing a positive image of the brand doesn't have a positive effect on the brand loyalty. ($\beta = 0$) Alternative hypothesis (H_1): Establishing a positive image of the brand has a positive effect on the brand loyalty. ($\beta \neq 0$)	3.18	0.19	Rejecting the null hypothesis (H_0)

In table 3, impact factor indicates the effect of a construct on another construct in the research conceptual model. In fact, impact factor is the indicator of the extent of variable effect on another variable. Level of significance indicates the significance of the effect. As a result, given the developed model, there's no evidence of rejecting any of the proposed hypotheses in the error level of 1%. In general, with regard to the results of testing the hypotheses of the model, we can provide a model as illustrated in figure 2.

In the Below figure, values of R^2 indicate the extent of variance explained in the constructs of the indigenous model of the research.

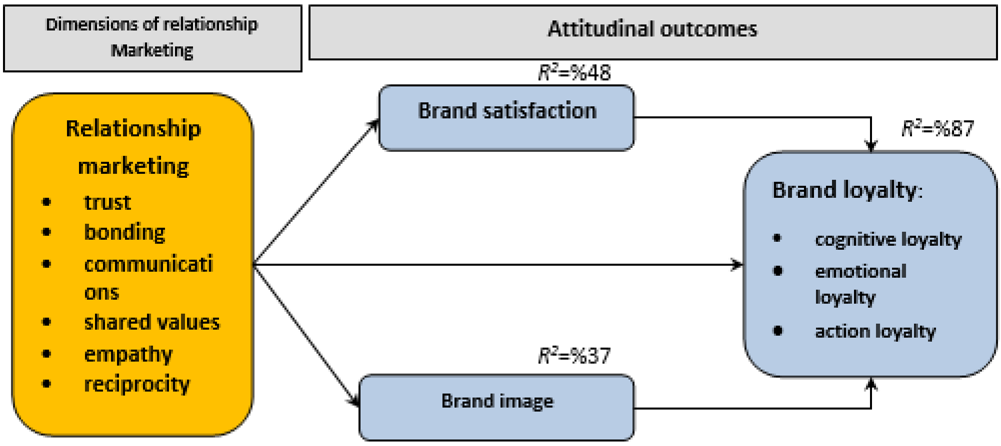

Figure 2: the proposed model of the research

4-3- Assessment and ranking of the research constructs

Considering the results of testing the hypotheses, we can rank the available constructs based on their effectiveness. In table 10-4, the impact measure of each of the constructs available in the research model, on the brand loyalty is specified:

Table 3: ranking of the constructs pertinent to brand loyalty

Effective factors→ Brand loyalty	Ranking of values			
	Direct impact	Indirect impact	Total impact	Priority (driving rank)
Relationship marketing	0.60	0.69+0.19×0.61×0.26	0.895	1
Brand satisfaction	0.26	0.0	0.26	2
Brand positive image	0.19	0	0.19	3

According to the results, in table 3, "relationship marketing" with total effect of 0.895, has the most impact on customer loyalty to the brand in Amavis Industrial Valves company. Also, "brand satisfaction" and "brand image" are respectively the following factors.

5- Interpretations and conclusions of the research hypotheses

New concepts such as relationship marketing compared to transactional marketing, and branding compared to mass production have been the focus of many marketers in the last decade and it is because the strong brand leads to high revenue flows in short and long terms (Akar, 1996; Kapferer, 2004; Keller, 2003). Thus, the brand management strategic goal is to create a brand that remains for decades and can leverage different types of products and markets (Akar, 1996). Creating awareness and brand image was the brand management key purpose for a short time, but now, marketers have come to this conclusion that merely brand recognition and image can't ensure selling a product or service. All the money spent for advertisement only builds a public awareness of the brand and can be effective for the brand image, but advertisement doesn't ensure that customers will buy the product and doesn't make customers loyal to the brand. Thus, the researchers studying brand have analyzed many factors and examined how those factors influence brand dimensions. According to the study conducted by Lin and Lu (2010), relationship marketing, firm brand and putting trust in the customer's intention to buy again have been assessed. Word of mouth advertising is also considered as a moderator variable. Results approve that image has a positive and significant effect on trust, and product's image has the most effect on trust. Also, relationship marketing has a positive effect on trust, and trust factor is a determinant factor of the customer intention to buy a product or service again. Of course, based on the type of common word of mouth advertising, trust effects are adjustable in the market. Moreover, according to a research conducted by Taylor et al (2004), the effects of satisfaction, value, resistance against change, interest, trust and brand equity on the behavioral and attitudinal consequences, after customers' making purchases have been assessed. The results show that all of these factors have significant effects on the behavioral and attitudinal consequences after customers' making purchases. Furthermore, H et al (2006) conducted a research assessing the direct and indirect effects of brand awareness, image brand, brand satisfaction, brand trust and brand interest on the current and future purchases. The results of this research also show that all of the mentioned factors, directly and indirectly have effects on the current and future purchase, except that the direct effects of brand awareness on the brand satisfaction and trust as well as future purchase haven't been approved of, as the effect of brand image on the future purchase. Eventually, another research conducted by Li et al (2008) has investigated the direct and indirect effects of norms, brand awareness, emotional values and perceptual quality on purchase intention. The results show that all of the above factors, except for perceptual quality, have direct and indirect effects on the customers' intention for purchase. As a result, in this research, just like the mentioned researches, factors such as relationship marketing, brand (positive) image and brand satisfaction have considerable effects on customer loyalty to the brand of Amavis Industrial Valves company which will be a reaffirmation of the experimental results and the theoretical expectations of researchers.

This research looks for an answer to a primary question: **Does relationship marketing have an impact on brand satisfaction, brand image and customer loyalty of customers of Amavis Industrial Valves company?** In order to answer this primary question, based on the background of the topic and remarks of experts such as Sin et al (2005) and Brink et al (2006), assumptions were raised according to table 3, and a model was proposed as illustrated in figure 2. We will deal with interpreting the research assumptions later:

5-1- Administrative suggestions

The results of this research provide some important suggestions for senior managers of Amavis Industrial Valves company:

1. In this research, the specific importance and position of the new concepts of marketing such as relationship marketing is emphasized and supported. In fact, with regard to the type of market Amavis Industrial Valves company is facing with, i.e. an industrial market with limited, greater, more concentrated customers who have derived, inelastic, and more volatile demands, and in which purchases are made more peculiar, and influences several factors, maintaining the current customers is of specific importance and position; which is why the relationship marketing can provide favorable applications for the company to enhance the customer satisfaction and loyalty.
2. This research stresses the importance of paying special attention to some of the drivers of brand such as brand positive image, brand satisfaction and brand loyalty; as existence of a strong brand in the industry of industrial valves will create a sustainable competitive advantage for this company and will upgrade the company's competitiveness and competitive position. Reaching to such a position in the market, at the micro level, will involve sustainable profitability for the company, and at the macro level, it will build a positive image from the country of origin (producer). Thus, developing strategies in keeping with improving and maintaining the company’s brand position can yield favorable outcomes.
3. Given the considerable effect of brand positive image and brand satisfaction on customer loyalty, we suggest the senior management to consistently and authoritatively develop adaptable and dynamic strategies within his company product upgrade programs to create a brand well-known to all the subjects of the target market. Of course, a combination of adaptable strategies focused on the end customers and dynamic strategies focused on industrial customers is more effective.
4. Considering the effects of positive image on customer loyalty, we suggest the senior managers to adopt an integrated approach in choosing promotional methods and tools to create a distinctive position in the target market so that the customers won’t establish an agitated perception about the brand of Amavis Industrial Valves. Emerging such agitation about the brand will have a negative impact on brand associations, hence the company’s identity won’t desirably be perceived by the customers.
5. Regarding the effects of the relational drivers of brand on customer loyalty and also the company's marketing capabilities in developing promotional strategies, we suggest the company to move towards taking a superior position in the minds of the target community by maintaining product quality, gaining the potential customers’ satisfaction and trust along with the benefit of their buzz-worthy advertising. With minimum cost and investment, such a leveraged element will involve undeniable results for the company. The results show that a satisfied and loyal customer is more useful than any mass and specific advertising tool, and it is effective in achieving a competitive advantage in the market and improving profitability.

5-2- Recommendations for future studies

The most important recommendation is that, the issues concerned with localization and creating strong national brands must be raised in strategic petroleum industry which is fully professional, bureaucratic, and rigid, with highly sophisticated standards at factory, national, regional and international level in production of high tech and sophisticated components and equipment needed for this industry, particularly that our country is subject to adversaries' attack and plot for possessing this black gold, worsening it by adding the issue of sanctions; and these limitations must be exploited, conceiving them as an opportunity to strengthen domestic manufacturing and localize the technical knowledge, and eventually; worthwhile steps must be taken in keeping with supporting the domestic manufacturers and collaborating with knowledge-based centers.

However, regarding the increasing importance of this subject in domestic and international companies, the following propositions are provided for future studies:

- Providing an effective model in relationship marketing with an emphasize on industrial markets
- Investigating the gap in creating a strong national brand, especially among competitive industries
- Evaluating the effects concerning the drivers of brand in order to transform supporting industries into competitive industries
- Evaluating the effects of creating a national brand on gaining the loyalty of customers of competitive industries
- Developing a local model of brand equity in industrial markets
- Evaluating the effects of drivers of national brands on reduction of foreign exchange outflows from the country
- Determining the best benchmark in order to identify the needed platforms for deploying the relationship marketing
- Investigating the effects of globalization process on the importance of relationship marketing at industrial enterprise level

References

1. Esmaeil Pour, Hassan. (2004), **International Marketing Management**, Negahe Danesh Publications, Tehran, 4th edition
2. Azar Adel (and) MomeniMansour (2005), **Statistics and Its Application in Management 1 and 2**, Samt Publications, Tehran, 8th Edition
3. Baghban, Ali; Mousavi, Syed Abbas (2005) **Value of Brand**, Tadbir monthly magazine, Industrial Management Institute, No. 164
4. Bigdlo, Mahdi. (2002), **Brand Name**, Professional Marketing magazine, No. 16
5. Hosseini, Sayed Yaqub (2003), **nonparametric statistics (Research methodology and statistical software SPSS 10.0)**, Allameh Tabatabai University, Tehran, first edition
6. Sarmad, Zohreh et al. (2002); **Research Methods in Behavioral Science**, Agah Publications, Tehran, 6th edition
7. Shoomakhar, Randall I (and) Lumex, Richard J. (2002), **An Introduction to structural equation modeling using applications Amos, LISREL, EQS**; translated by Waheed Qasemi, Jameshenasan publications, Tehran, first edition

8. Mansour Sadeghi, Karim (2006), **advanced statistical methods (including computer programs)**, Tehran University Press, Tehran, first edition
9. Hooman, Haider Ali (2005), **Structural Equation Modeling using LISREL software**, Samt publications, Tehran, first edition
10. Ajzen, I. and Fishbein, M. (1980), *Understanding Attitudes and Predicting Social Behavior*, Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs, NJ.
11. Alsem, K.J. & Kostelijk, E. (2008) “Identity based marketing: a new balance marketing paradigm”, *European Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 42 No. 9, pp.907 - 914
12. Baldinger, A.L. and Rubinson, J. (1996), “Brand loyalty: the link between attitude and behavior”, *Journal of Advertising Research*, November/December, pp. 22-34.
13. Baldinger, A.L. and Rubinson, J. (1997), “In search of the Holy Grail: a rejoinder”, Journal of Advertising Research, January/February, pp. 18-20.
14. Bass, F. (1974), “The theory of stochastic preference and brand switching”, *Journal of Marketing Research*, Vol. 11, February, pp. 1-20.
15. Bauer, R.A. (1960), *Consumer Behaviour as Risk-taking. Dynamic Marketing for a Changing World*, American Marketing Association, Chicago, IL, pp. 389-98.
16. Bawa, K. and Shoemaker, R.W. (1987), “The effects of an direct mail coupon on brand choice behavior”, *Journal of Marketing Research*, No. 24, November, pp. 370-6.
17. Berry, L.L. (1980), “Services marketing is different”, *Business*, Vol. 30 No. 3, pp. 24-9.
18. Bhimrao M. Ghodeswar, (2008) “Building brand identity in competitive markets: a conceptual model”, *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, Vol. 17 No. 1, pp.4 - 12
19. Blattberg, R.C. and Neslin, S.A. (1989), “Sales promotion: the long and the short of it”, *Marketing Letters*, Vol. 1 No. 1, pp. 81-97.
20. Bonfield, E.H. (1974), “Attitude, social influence, personal norm, and intention interactions as related to brand purchase behavior”, *Journal of Marketing Research*, Vol. 11, November, pp. 379-89.
21. Bucklin, R.E. and Gupta, S. (1992), “Brand choice, purchase incidence and segmentation: an integrated approach”, *Journal of Marketing Research*, No. 29, May, pp. 201-15.
22. Aida Matri Ben Jemaa1 and Nadine Tournois (2014), “Relationship Marketing Key Concepts as Relationship Value Determinant”, Journal of Marketing Research and Case Studies, Vol. 2014(2014), Article ID 201710, 17 pages
23. Mohamad Rizan, Ari Warokka2 and Dewi Listyawati (2014), “Relationship Marketing and Customer Loyalty: Do Customer Satisfaction and Customer Trust Really Serve as Intervening Variables? ”, Journal of Marketing Research and Case Studies, Vol. 2014 (2014), Article ID 724178, 12 pages
24. UK MD ANHAR SHARIF MOLLAH (2014), The Impact of Relationship Marketing On Customer Loyalty At Tesco Plc, European Journal of Business and Management, Vol.6, No.3, 2014

25. Miquel-Romero, Eva María Caplliure-Giner, Consolación Adame-Sánchez (2014), “Relationship marketing management: Its importance in private label extension”, Journal of Business Research 67 (2014) 667–672

26. Fatemeh Kiani and Dr. Amir Ahmad Mozaffari Dr. Lila Sabbaghian Rad (2015), Relationship Marketing Approach Effect on Financial Loyalty of Football Sponsorship Case Study: Iran’s football Professional League , J. Appl. Environ. Biol. Sci., 5(7S)106-111, 2015