THE INFLUENCE OF ORGANIZATION CULTURE ON RELATIONSHIP MARKETING

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DECLARATION

I hereby certify that this independent study paper, which I now submit for assessment as part of the programme of study leading to the award of Doctor of Philosophy in Business Management degree, is entirely my own work and that it has not been taken from the work of others, save and to the extent that such work has been cited and acknowledged within the text of my work.

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SECTION ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

The discipline of marketing has been evolving over the years. Analysis of the definitions of marketing for the period between 1920 and 1989 by Cooke, Rayburn and Abercrombie (1992) established that each definition reflects the prevalent environment at the time when the definitions were made. This suggests that marketing concepts just like definitions need to adjust with time to reflect changes in the environment. Cooke et al. (1992) distills marketing definitions and identify four viewpoints namely: economic utility perspective, consumer perspective, societal perspective and managerial perspective. They note that the economic viewpoint has been prevalent since 1920s. The consumer viewpoint emerged in the 1950s and was prevalent between 1960s and 1970s. It is worth noting that despite documentation of chronological evolution of marketing philosophies in marketing text books which position societal marketing concept as having emerged after the marketing concept, Cooke et al. (1992) report that societal viewpoint made small appearances in the 1930s and gained wider acceptance in the 1970s.

More recently, the American Marketing Society (AMA) released a new definition of marketing which captures a strategic focus. They define marketing as an organizational function and a set of processes for creating, communicating, and delivering value to customer relationships in ways that benefit the organization and its stakeholders (Keefe, 2004). Greenley and Foxall (1998) found that the stakeholder orientation consists of five major dimensions that cut across the use of marketing research, top management values, organization culture and long term sustainability of corporate performance. Marketing has been evolving over time with emphasis currently being placed on building long term relationship with customers. The importance of customer in business performance has therefore, become a major concern for marketing practitioners and scholars.

1.2 Relationship Marketing

Theoretical underpinnings of marketing have been put to focus with relationship marketing being proposed as a modern and future oriented branch of marketing. The discovery and growth of relationship marketing is closely linked to innovations and advancements in computing hardware and software which in turn enables database marketing and reduces the cost of accessing markets. O'Malley and Tynan (2000) observe that 1995 marked a turning point for relationship marketing backed by renewed academic interest and a move to more direct interaction with customers. Proponents of relationship marketing argue that transactional marketing is different from relationship marketing. However, as observed by Cooke, Rayburn and Abercrombie (1992), there are confusions arising from definitions and conceptualization of relationship marketing. Despite existing confusions, arguments for and against relationship marketing, the role played by relationship marketing on improving performance of business organizations especially those dealing with business-to-business marketing remains undisputed (Groonroos, 1997). Relationship marketing has also been viewed as a tactical way of implementing marketing strategy. For many firms, execution of strategy occurs at the interface with the customer.

1.3 Organization Culture

The culture of an organization plays a significant role in adopting and implementing strategy. Tustall (1983) defines culture as a general constellation of beliefs, mores, customs, value systems, behavioral norms and ways of doing business that are unique to each corporation. Hunt and Morgan (1995) warn that the marketing concept should not be considered as strategy. The stakeholder school of marketing thought coined by Jenny, Morgan and Ernest (2012) indicate that culture is a more permanent and intrinsic part of the organization that can be hard to select and more difficult to change. A number of studies have identified different themes of corporate culture. According to O'Reilly, Chatman and Caldwell (1991), organization culture has seven value dimensions. The values include those oriented towards innovation, stability, people, outcomes, details, teams and aggression. Hatch (1993) holds that organization culture consists of components which are linked together by processes. He conceptualizes culture as comprising of artifacts which are connected to assumptions by symbols and manifested through values.

1.4 Organization Culture and Relationship Marketing

Stone and Manson (1997) assert that relationship marketing is characterized by longer term focus and greater emphasis on customers. This indicates that corporate culture influences marketing orientation and adaptation by firms. Marketing concept is an expression of organizational culture, a normative statement that the firm should always put customer's interest first. It is a management philosophy asserting that the existence and legitimacy of the firm depends on satisfying customer needs. Lloyd (1998) conceptualizes market oriented culture as a subculture which dominates over conflicting subcultures. According to Meldrum (1996) cultural features affect the degree of market orientation. Lloyd (1998) contends that a market oriented culture is characterized by low levels of conflict and politics, highly developed information generation, and human resource management systems geared towards the market. In addition, a high level of marketing input into strategic planning and developed response implementation as well as design abilities of an organization depict a market oriented culture.

SECTION TWO: RELATIONSHIP MARKETING

2.1 Introduction

The following section presents a critical review of conceptual and empirical literature. The review covers relationship marketing, draws comparison between relationship and traditional marketing, and discusses theoretical perspectives of relationship marketing.

2.2 Relationship Marketing

The marketing environment is dynamic and creating a competitive edge requires a firm to create and nurture relationships with customers and other major stakeholders. The concept of relationship marketing relates to the culture of an organization that is oriented to delivering superior value to customers. Gummesson (1997) cautions however, that no definition of relationship marketing will ever be precise and all inclusive. A critical review of the history, domain and theoretical perspectives and conceptualization of relationship marketing is provided in the following sections.

2.2.1 History of Relationship Marketing

The exact period when relationship marketing emerged remains unclear since different periods of time are reported in literature. Some strand of literature position the emergence of relationship marketing to 1980s (Berry, 1983). Marketing has changed significantly since it emerged between First and Second World Wars (Morgan and Hunt, 1994; Lindgreen, Palmer and Vanhamme, 2004). As early as 1991, Kotler indicated that there was a paradigm shift from transactional to relational style of marketing. This view received support by later researchers such as Groonroos (1994) and Aijo (1996). In addition, Groonroos (1997) as well as Sheth and Parvatiyar (2002) reckon a paradigm shift in both theory and the practice of marketing as a result of the emergence of relationship marketing. On the contrary, some researchers have questioned the application of the paradigm concept to relational marketing (Millman, 1993; Palmer, 1996; Hunt and Morgan, 1997; Rao and Perry, 2002). The researchers who challenge the marketing paradigm shift posit that this view is controversial

The concept of relationship is well founded in sociology and behavioral sciences disciplines. The traditional view of marketing was based on transaction. Over the years and with changes in the environment such as passage of time, economy, liberalization, customer expectations and information technology; marketing has evolved to a new paradigm based on relationship. Morgan and Hunt (1994) argue that global competition that occurs increasingly between networks of firms have resulted to the paradoxical nature of relationship marketing. Human relations, organization behaviour and group dynamics are some of the theories from which the word relationship was adopted. Payne, Martin, Moira and Helen (1999) trace the roots of the relationship marketing concept to services marketing literature. They however, hint that even though the concept has been extensively documented in services marketing literature, it is argued that it originated from industrial marketing practice.

Lindgreen et al. (2004) note that relationship marketing has emerged in response to changes in the business environment. A more recent study by Murphy, Laczniak and Wood (2007) offer an alternative view and report that relationship marketing emerged between 1950s and 1960s in the work of Copenhagen School in Europe. The divergent views about emergence of the concept suggest that there could be possibilities that relationship marketing was practiced as early as 1950s but, scholars were either slow to conceptualize and document the concept or they failed to appreciate evolutionary nature of the marketing. Gummesson (1997) alludes to this observation by stating that relational marketing is a new term but, an old phenomenon. He claims that relationship marketing has been the core of business since time immemorial.

2.2.2 Relationship Versus Transactional Marketing

Several attempts have been made by scholars to draw distinctions between relationship marketing and the traditional transaction based marketing. However, clear distinctions based on scope, concepts and theories have not emerged and remains an ongoing debate. McKenna (1991) contends that traditional market-driven approaches have relied on tricks, gimmicks, promotions and tinkering and not on an ongoing dialogue between the organization and the customer. This approach is not sustainable and proponents of relationship marketing insist that marketing requires innovative thinking and long term focus. Christopher, Payne and Ballantyne (1993) argue that traditionally marketing has not been concerned with quality nor with customer service. In essence, they argue, marketing, to its detriment, has historically been concerned with the transaction, the getting of customers, and not with the relationship.

Tedlow (1990) and Pine (1993) challenge the conception of relationship marketing as being different from traditional marketing. Borrowing from successful American firms, they argue that relationship is a sub-set of traditional marketing. Pine (1993) elaborates that American firms showed a much greater talent than British firms for successfully coordinating their relationships with other firms upon which they were dependent. This view has been supported by Robicheaux and Coleman (1994) who assert that there is no single definition of relationship marketing. Buttle (1996) argues that although the shift to relationship marketing is widespread, it is occurring more rapidly in some industries than in others. This disparity is facilitated by cultural shifts within organizations, powerful databases and new forms of organizational structure. According to Stone and Mason (1997) relationship marketing is characterized by a longer term focus, greater focus on customer and more emphasis on product benefits and quality than traditional marketing. Unlike traditional marketing which is focused on winning customers with emphasis on the value of an individual sale; relationship marketing emphasizes long term relationships and repeat purchases.

An understanding of how to manage relationship with customers effectively has become an important concern for both marketing managers and scholars. Morgan and Hunt (1994) draw a distinction between traditional marketing and relationship marketing on the basis of duration of contact spent with customers. They argue that traditional marketing is characterized as having distinct beginning, short duration and sharp ending by performance. Wang, Head and Archer (2000) consider relationship marketing as being different from transactional marketing on the basis of focus. They argue that transactional marketing is focused on increasing market share whereas relationship marketing aims at improving customer retention. Stone and Foss (2001) conclude that the central activity in customer relationship management strategy is exploiting customer insight and information to create profitable customer relationships. Findings of this kind have received heavy criticism from Gummesson (1997) who insist that accentuating a single perspective of relationship marketing is being myopic.

The distinction between relationship marketing and transactional marketing has been emphasized by Groonroos (2004) who argues that implementation of the former requires an interaction process and planned communication.

The marketing concept, a key thrust of traditional marketing has several weaknesses. It lacks strategic content and does not guide the firm about how it should compete at the marketplace. Marketing concept ignores basic questions as which needs the firm should focus on, which customers should be given priority and how the firm should match its capabilities with the underserved needs of the marketplace. According to Webster, Malter and Ganesan (2003), marketing advocacy depends on the commitment by the Chief Executive Officer to articulate the importance of customer orientation as the key pillar of corporate culture. On the other hand, relationship marketing as explained by Morgan and Hunt (1994) is portrayed by longer duration with the customer reflecting an ongoing process. Organizations are moving away from product- or brand-centric approach (Werner, Manfred and Wayne, 2004). Some firms blend both transaction and relationship marketing in a complimentary manner. Lindgreen et al. (2004) observe that some firms adopt market segmentation and target some customer groups with relationship marketing while they handle other segments using transactional marketing. They refer to this approach as 'pluralistic'.

2.2.3 Domain of Relationship Marketing

Services and industrial marketing are antecedents to the emergence of relationship marketing. According to Gummesson (1994), relationship marketing draws its definition from services marketing. Embedded within this definition is the enhancement of customer value (Gummesson 1995). In industrial marketing, most companies began to institute key account, national account and global account management processes and programs to consolidate and increase share of each account's business to fewer suppliers resulting in a sole source relationship. It is in the business- to- business arena where the concept of a relationship is most comfortably used by the involved parties (Root, 1994). Attempts have been made to clip the scope of relationship marketing to services and industrial marketing. Several authors posit that relationship marketing fits service oriented firms and business-to-business firms that stand to gain from managing relationships with customers.

O'Malley and Tynan (2000) broaden the scope of relationship marketing to cover consumer markets. They argue that throughout the 1980s, relationship marketing was largely ignored by consumer marketers as its domain was considered to be both conceptually and contextually different. This belief has been overtaken by events due to changing nature of consumer behaviour and increased access to technologies that allow marketers to reach various market segments to the level of customization with speed and at reduced costs. Duncan and Moriarty (1999) note that integrated marketing communication is an important part of relationship marketing strategy. Wang et al. (2000) argue that e-commerce facilitates information access by consumers in retail market segments hence extending the scope of relationship marketing. However, Wang et al. (2000) warn that relationship building is limited by communication and data collection constraints in the conventional retail market.

2.3 Theoretical Perspectives of Relationship Marketing

Divergent views have been expressed on conceptualization of relationship marketing. Sin et al. (2002) visualize relationship marketing orientation as a multi-dimensional construct consisting of six components namely: trust, commitment, communication, shared values, empathy and reciprocity. Hunt and Morgan (1994) identify trust and commitment as the key concepts that together build relationship marketing. A radically different conceptualization was offered by Gummesson (1997) who visualized relationship marketing as comprising of 30 distinct relations which he referred to as the 30R. Conceptualization of relationship marketing is an ongoing debate and no conclusive frameworks have been documented.

Existing literature documents a number of theories that explain relationship marketing. According to Palmer (2007) the development of relationship marketing can be grounded in a number of schools of thought. These are generally taken to be the industrial marketing and purchasing (IMP) group; the Nordic school of services; the Anglo Australian approach; and the American approach (Gummesson et al., 1997). Relationship marketing is explained by different theories each of which emphasizes different constructs. Relationship marketing however, falls short of an integrative general theory and as a result, piecemeal analytical approach is used to aid understanding relationship marketing. The following section discusses theories of relationship marketing.

2.3.1 Neoclassical Microeconomic Theory

Neoclassical microeconomic theory emphasizes profit maximization in competitive markets. The theory contends that exchange parties are price takers and maximizes utility in price equilibrium markets (Kristof and Gaby, 2001). The theory assumes a well-defined and stable preference structure where individuals independently worry about creating value (Sheth and Parvatiyar, 1995a). Transactions are considered to be independent of each other and it is assumed that decisions made by buyers are influenced exclusively by the price of the product being exchanged. This reduces the marketing function to a process of simply finding buyers and manipulating the price. It is assumed that transactions are characterized by absence of a brand name, recognition of the buyer by the seller or buyer loyalty (Webster, 1992). Gronroos (1994) argue that the marketing mix paradigm directly flows from the assumptions of microeconomic theory. The functional view of the marketing mix concept developed from a notion of the marketer blending and manipulating different marketing elements so that a profit function is optimized (Kristof and Gaby, 2001).

The microeconomic framework has been hailed for its relevance in the development of marketing theory. According to Arndt (1983) the marketing mix tradition based upon the microeconomic profit maximization paradigm has made a strong point of distinguishing between the marketing environment and controllable decision variables. The theory has been criticized for being inadequate in the sense that it provides insufficient tools for analyzing exchange structures and processes within and between exchange parties. The theory is therefore, more applicable in low involvement buying situations (Gronroos, 1994).

2.3.2 Transaction Cost Theory

The theory was formulated by Williamson in 1975. At the core of the paradigm are the axioms that certain exchange characteristics give rise to transaction difficulties and that different governance mechanisms vary in their cost minimizing properties (Heide and John, 1990). Williamson (1975) indicated that transactions might become very costly due to human factors such as bounded rationality and opportunism, and environmental factors such as uncertainty and economically concentrated input or output markets. Transaction cost theory departs from the assumptions that individuals are limited in their cognitive capabilities and that they are inclined towards opportunistic and self-interest seeking behavior (Rindfleisch and Heide, 1997). The theory holds that in order to reduce the risks of being exploited in an exchange relationship, exchange partners can build in a safe-guarding mechanism by making substantial transaction specific investments that are uniquely related to the exchange relationship and that cannot be retrieved in case it terminates (Wilson, 1995). According to Anderson and Weitz (1992) if both partners make such investments, they create incentives to maintain or obstacles to leave the relationship. Transaction costs include costs associated with information search, reaching a satisfactory agreement, relationship monitoring, adapting agreements to unanticipated contingencies, and contract enforcement (Ganesan, 1994). The theory suggests that transaction costs are minimized by selecting a relationship governance mode that is optimal given transaction properties such as asset specificity, uncertainty and infrequency that curbs small numbers bargaining and opportunism (Sheth and Sharma, 1997).

The extremes in governance modes are arm's length spot market governance (external governance mechanism) and vertical integration (internal governance mechanism). In arm's length exchange situation, buyers pit sellers against each other in order to achieve lower costs. In vertically integrated exchange situations, buyers and sellers can reduce transaction costs by aligning their objectives and internal systems (Wilson, 1995). Bowen and Jones (1986) stated that as a general rule, an increase in transaction costs is accompanied by a movement from external to internal governance mechanisms. The main contribution of the theory is its economically rooted assumption that a party will tend to build a long term relationship if this relationship helps to reduce transaction costs and that it will rely on market mechanisms for activities that do not involve important transaction costs (Dabholkar, Johnston and Cathey, 1994). The theory has been criticized for focusing on cost efficiency as the only single criterion for shaping transactions.

The transaction cost theory does not take into account interdependencies between the parties in a relationship. It focuses upon one party making decisions to maximize profit as a result of minimizing transaction costs rather than two parties cooperating to maximize the profit flowing from the relationship as well as their individual profits. The theory fails to consider the costs incurred by both parties in the transaction (Bendapudi and Berry, 1997). Transaction cost theory is mainly preoccupied with the conditions that motivate exchange partners to structure relationships in a particular way without specifying the mechanisms that provide the ability to implement desired structures (Heide and John, 1990). There is little empirical evidence of the performance effects of following transaction cost theory's guidelines, making it difficult to assess its true theoretical value and empirical validity (Rindfleisch and Heide, 1977). Morgan and Hunt (1994) report that human behavior in relationships is not as Machiavellian as described by transaction cost theory. Arguments drawn from sociology stress that exchange typically is embedded in social structures in which opportunism is the exception rather than the rule. As a result, transaction cost theory fails to offer predictions about the implications of a deviance from opportunism (Dabholkar, Johnston and Cathey, 1994). Many exchanges are based on gradual development of trust that helps exchange partners to lower transaction costs by safeguarding against opportunism. The implications of the effect of trusting behavior on governance structures are generally ignored in transaction cost theory. According to Kristof and Gaby (2001) transaction cost theory is narrowly focused as it addresses a limited set of control and coordinated actions.

2.3.3 Relational Contracting Theory

Relational contracting theory was proposed by MacNeil in 1980. It explicitly distinguishes intermediate types of exchange between discrete transactions and complete internalization of exchanges (Gundlach and Murphy, 1993). The theory has its roots in classical contract law which relied on legal framework as a mechanism for planning exchanges, negotiating contracts, adjusting existing contract relationship and resolving contractual conflicts (Rylander, Strutton and Pelton, 1997). Relational contracting theory states that purely relying on the law mechanism can be costly in terms of both resources and time. According to Nevin (1995) exchange relationships can be affected by unforeseen circumstances and extra-legal governance methods are needed to govern relationships. Specifically, culture that is shared by a group of decision makers is suggested as complimentary mechanism for relational governance (Dwyer, Schurr and Oh, 1987; Weitz and Jap, 1995). A general property of relational norms is their prescription of behaviours that are aimed at maintaining a relationship and their rejection of behavior that promote individual goal seeking (Heide and John, 1990). Even though relational contracting theory fails to prescribe optimal types of governance to deal with specific characteristics of the exchange, it deals with criticisms directed at transaction cost theory by including social dimension of exchange. In addition, it clarifies that hierarchical relationship governance are not the only governance mechanisms available.

2.3.4 Social Exchange Theory

Social exchange theory explicitly predicts social relationships to be based on each partner's motivational investment and anticipated social gain. The theory stresses that self-interest and relationship outcome evaluation are at the basis of maintaining and exploiting relationships (Smith and Barclay, 1997). Self-interest is at the core of social exchange theory as it assumes that exchange parties intend to derive benefits from their relationships that would not be achievable on their own. These benefits can include non-economic and altruistic rewards derived from increasing their partner's utility (Weitz and Jap, 1995). Bendapudi and Berry (1997) as well as Morgan and Hunt (1994) consider both desires and constraints as relationship determining factors. The theory further assumes that relationship outcome evaluation is at the basis of relationship maintenance and growth. A major contribution of social exchange theory is its explicit recognition of both positive and negative motivations underlying the formation and growth of relationships. On the other hand, Dwyer, Schurr and Oh (1987) criticize social exchange theory for not being able to explain the processes related to relationship dissolution. The theory assumes that parties consciously engage in a process of comparison. However, this assumption cannot hold in real life situations.

2.3.5 Equity Theory

Equity theory also referred to as distributive justice seeks to understand deviations from the norm of distributive justice in dyadic relationships. The theory postulates that parties in exchange relationships compare their ratios of exchange inputs to outcomes (Kristof and Gaby, 2001). The theory is applicable as an explanatory framework to exchange situations in which parties are unequal in size or power. Gruen (1995) argues that perceived inequalities between exchange parties lead to a feeling of under or over-rewarded, anger or resentment, to the extent that it affects behaviours in subsequent periods by encouraging parties involved to change their inputs into the relationships. Equitable outcomes stimulate confidence that parties do not take advantage of each other and that they are concerned about each other's welfare (Ganesan, 1994).

Role expectations play a crucial part in determining the equity level of a potential exchange relationship.

Role stress can affect long term relationships if role expectations are unclear or ambiguous. Role stress also affects relationships in situations where actual behaviours from one party deviate from expectations leading to role conflict. Equity theory prides in its ability to explicitly recognize inherent inequalities between exchange partners. However, the theory fails to take into account whether parties in a relationship are able and motivated to judge their respective input to output ratios.

2.3.6 Political Economy Theory

Political economy theory integrates economic efficiency theories of organizations with behavior power theories in explaining the development of relationships (Stern and Reve, 1980). Pandya and Dholakia (1992) concur to views expressed by Arndt (1983) who suggested that political economy theory was developed to explain collective, organizational and institutional behavior. The unit of analysis under this theory consists of relational exchanges between collective entities. An essential characteristic of the theory is its simultaneous and interdependent analysis of economic and political systems of production and consumption (Pandya and Dholakia, 1992). Economy refers to the economic drivers that underlie optimal governance structures. Polity refers to elements of power, authority, control and conflict, legitimizing, facilitating, monitoring and regulating exchange transactions within and between institutions (Robicheaux and Coleman, 1994).

Political economy theory is concerned with the allocation of economic resources, authority and power (Stern and Reve, 1980). A second distinctive characteristic of the theory is that it examines both the internal structures of a group as well as its external environment. More specifically, it focuses upon external as well as internal determinants of institutional exchange (Robicheaux and Coleman, 1994). It views a social system as consisting of interacting sets of internal or external forces that affect collective behavior and performance. The theory adopts a dyadic approach by integrating both economic and socio-political factors. Further, it insists that economic and socio-political forces should not be analyzed in isolation. As a general integrative theory, it supports theory construction in a wide range of marketing areas. Critics point out that the model is so comprehensive that it has proven difficult to apply empirically (Dabholkar, Johnston and Cathey, 1994). The theory has also been criticized for incompleteness, methodological problems and for being vague.

2.3.7 Resource Dependency Theory

Emerson (1962) described dependence as the extent to which each party's reward or motivation is reliant upon the reward or motivation received by the other party; and the reward or motivation exceeds what would be available outside the relationship. Resources are defined as tangible and intangible entities available to the firm that enhance its capability to serve target markets effectively and efficiently. Resources are categorized as financial, physical, legal, human, organizational, informational and relational. Resource dependence theory examines sources of power and dependence in exchange relationships. The resource-based economic theory of the firm states that a company, seen as a collection of productive resources tries to upgrade these resources as part of an attempt to initiate, develop and terminate relationships (Krapfel, Salmond and Spekman, 1991). The theory assumes that a lack of self-sufficiency with respect to acquiring and developing resources leads to dependence and introduces uncertainty in a party's decision making environment. The dependence of a party is intrinsically tied to the power of the other party as dictated by resources controlled by that party (Wilson, 1995).

As posited by psychological reactance theory, dependent exchange partners may wish to regain control and influence their power balance by acquiring and defending a secure and adequate supply of critical resources or by developing substitute sources which can reduce their dependence. The work of resource dependence theorists suggest that dependencies between exchange partners are a function of multiple factors. Exchange partners become more dependent on each other as outcomes from an exchange become more important; magnitude of trade with one partner increases; the business is concentrated with fewer partners; and it becomes more difficult to locate potential alternative exchange partners. Supporters of resource dependence theory argue that its assumptions reflect characteristics of many real life exchange situations. On the contrary, critics claim that the theory cannot explain why and how exchange relationships are initiated and how exchange outcomes are evaluated by exchange partners (Dabholkar, Johnston and Cathey, 1994). Another weakness of the theory includes difficulties in explaining long-term exchange relationships resulting from behavior based on trust.

2.3.8 Commitment-Trust Theory

Commitment-trust theory draws its premise from the political economy theory. It argues that power wielded by one party in an exchange process can condition the other party to behave in a desired manner. Unlike political economy theory, commitment-trust theory assumes that trust and commitment overrides all contextual issues as well as exchange partner power in determining relationship success. Hunt and Morgan (1994) justify the key role of commitment and trust in explaining relationship marketing by insisting that they encourage marketers to work at preserving relationship investments and influencing them to resist attractive short term alternatives in favor of expected long term benefits. Hunt and Morgan (1994) further argue that commitment and trust must not be mutually exclusive to produce effective, efficient and productive relationship. Commitment to the relationship is defined as an enduring desire to maintain a valued relationship. Berry and Parasuraman (1991) maintain that relationships are built on a foundation of mutual commitment.

Trust is defined as a willingness to rely on an exchange partner in whom one has confidence. Trust therefore, exists when one party has confidence in an exchange partner's reliability and integrity. Hunt and Morgan (1994) posit that trust influences relationship commitment. Commitment-trust theory assumes that exchange relationship has both antecedent and outcome variables and that trust and commitment plays mediating role. According to Hunt and Morgan (1994), antecedent variables include: relationship termination costs, relationship benefits, shared values, communication, and opportunistic behavior. On the other hand, outcome variables are identified as acquiescence, propensity to leave, cooperation, functional conflict and uncertainty.

2.3.9 States and Stages Theories

Rao and Perry (2002) suggest two theories that explain the development of relationship marketing. The stages theory conforms to the development of relationships in an evolutionary, processual manner over time. This theory has been criticized on the basis of its inappropriateness in particular with regard to the sequential and incremental nature of relationship development as it purports (Quinn and Cameron, 1983). The states theory on the other hand proposes that relationship development is highly complex and unpredictable (Palmer, 2007). The theory suggests that relationships can improve or deteriorate over time or remain static but, do not conform to a type of processual model that can be managed from a practitioner's perspective to improve the quality of the relationship. The states theory has a number of weaknesses. The theory assumes that relationships are self-managing episodes and can either deteriorate or improve. If this was indeed true, then the practice of managing relationship would be put to question. The theory therefore, raises more questions than it provides explanations to aid our understanding of relationship marketing.

2.3.10 Summary of Evolution of Relationship Marketing Theories

Period	Theory	Key contribution
1950s and 1960s	Institutional economic, sociology and psychology	Integrated sociological and psychological factors into prevalent institutional economic perspective of rational economic actors
1970s	Exchange theory	Redirected marketing thought by applying exchange theory to explaining why people and organizations engage in exchange relationships; and how exchange is created, resolved or avoided
1970s and 1980s	Power and Dependence Theory	Offered power and dependence as the critical factors in understanding exchange relationship and performance
1980s and 1990s	Relational contracting theory	Integrated relational contracting theory with social exchange theory in a dynamic relationship framework
1990s	Transaction cost economics	Demonstrated that relationship governance can serve many of the same functions as vertical integration by suppressing opportunistic behaviors and reducing transaction costs
1990 to 2000	Commitment-trust theory	Extended relationship marketing beyond customer-seller interactions to offer a well-argued theory of relationship marketing
2000s	Resource-based view (Social exchange and network theories)	Demonstrated that relationship marketing's impact on performance is affected by relational bonds

SECTION THREE: ORGANIZATION CULTURE

3.1 Meaning of Organizational Culture

A critical assessment of literature established that there is no single definition of organization culture. Siehl and Martin (1981) define culture as social or normative glue that holds an organization together. It expresses the values or social ideals and beliefs that organization members share. Conner (1983) defines organization culture as the interrelationship of shared beliefs, behaviour and assumptions that are acquired over time by members of an organization. Tustall (1983) define organization culture as a general constellation of beliefs, mores, customs, value systems, behavioural norms and ways of doing business that are unique to each corporation. Organization culture has also been defined as a coherent system of assumptions and basic values. Kluckhohn (1985) points out that culture manifests itself in shared beliefs and values. This characterization of culture has been summarized by the definition offered by Schein (1993) who state that organization culture is a pattern of shared basic assumptions.

From a marketing management perspective, organization culture is defined as organizational cognition, or a knowledge system that expresses itself in assertions about why things happen the way they do in a particular organization, it helps members understand the organization's functioning and provides norms behaviour of organizational members (Deshpande and Webster, 1989). Even though there is consensus that values is a key element of culture, Hofstede (2001) argues that culture is invisible unless the related values appear in the form of behaviour.

Organization culture has no universal definition because every firm influences how symbolic values are transmitted in their organization. The culture of an organization is reflected by the dominant leadership styles, language and symbols. It is also reflected through organizational procedures and routines as well as unique definition of success in the views of particular organizations. A review of definitions of organization culture shows threads of consistency marked by shared values that are unique to each organization. The definitions of culture illustrate that organization culture exhibit certain characteristics. It must be shared by organizational members and it exists in repeated manner forming predictable patterns of values, assumptions and mindsets.

Organizations have cultural values and important philosophies, policies and practices that both send signals to employees about what behaviour is valued, and create the architecture through which effective behaviour is managed. Perceptions of these values and philosophies are learned over time. Cooper, Cartwright and Earley (2001) posit that people are attracted to specific organizational cultures. They argue that culture acts as a stabilizer of individual behaviour. From a functional perspective, culture is viewed as a means of social control; a means by which behaviour and beliefs are shaped and determined (O'Reilly and Chatman, 1996).

3.2 Organization Culture Typologies

Organizational culture received a lot of research attention in the 1980s based on the argument that organizational performance could be explained by distinctive types of culture, and that strong cultures characterized by clearly expressed and widely practiced values predicted corporate achievement (Peters and Waterman, 1982). In 1989, an empirical study Wong et al. established a clear relationship between organization culture and marketing orientation. During the same period, Deshpande and Webster (1989) argued that despite considerable linkages, there have been few conceptual studies combining organizational culture and marketing. Despite limited number of empirical studies, it has been argued that distinctive organizational cultures (unlike technologies, for example) could represent a source of long-term competitive advantage because they are not quickly or easily replicated by competitors (Kay, 1995).

Deshpande, Farley and Webster (1993) argue that the organizational cognition paradigm for culture study is relatively more developed than other paradigms in terms of conceptual framework, specification of variables and operationalization of measures. Organization cognition focuses on managerial information processing and views organizations as knowledge systems. Deshpande et al. (1993) contend that information processing view of organizational functioning is very useful for understanding culture of organization and their customer orientation. They note that most firms have elements of several types of cultures between product groups even within the same strategic business unit. However, over time, one type of culture emerges as the dominant one.

3.2.1 Market Culture

A market culture also known as compete culture emphasizes competitiveness and goal achievement. Under this culture, transactions are governed by market mechanisms (Ouchi, 1980). The culture is based on the work of Oliver (1975) and Ouchi (1981) that identified transaction costs as the basis of organizational effectiveness. The term market refers to a type of organization that functions as a market itself (Oliver, 1975; Ouchi, 1981). Deshpande et al. (1993) define customer orientation as the set of beliefs that puts customer's interest first, while not excluding those of all other stakeholders such as owners, managers and employees in order to develop a long-term profitable enterprise. Kohli and Jaworski (1990) distinguish three behavioural components of market orientation as being customer orientation, competitor orientation and inter-functional coordination. They argue that on average, all the three components are equally important.

Organizations following this culture are oriented toward the external environment instead of internal affairs (Kohli and Jaworski, 1990). This argument is quite disturbing because from strategic marketing point of view, firms are known to carry out analysis of their internal environment and identify strengths that are used to exploit opportunities in the external environment. Arguing that firms using market culture are externally oriented is inconsistent with the practice of market planning and strategy implementation. The core values that dominate market type organizations are competitiveness and productivity. According to Lloyd (1998) market oriented cultures assumes that the organization is dependent on hostile external environment for existence; and that consumers are choosy and interested in value but, satisfying their needs leads to long-term profitability and organizational survival. It further assumes that the organization is in the business of increasing its competitive position and the major task of management is to drive the organization toward productivity, results and profits. According to Kasper (2002) marketing culture is open, participative, employee oriented, results driven, professional, pragmatic and balanced between a tight and loose control system.

A market culture is a result oriented workplace and success is defined in terms of market share and penetration. Kohli and Jaworski (1990) conceptualize market orientation as the organization culture that most effectively and efficiently instills the necessary behaviours for the creation of superior value for buyers. The adoption and development of market oriented culture has been associated with a host of factors. Messikomer (1987) saw the development of market orientation as contingent on the ability of an organization to overcome its cultural barriers in the form of attitudes. Chaganti and Sambharya (1987) implicitly studied factors which influence the development of market orientation through the analysis of how the characteristics of top managers affect the strategic orientation of the organization. They established that the background, commitment and ability of top managers impacted greatly on the orientation of an organization. The finding is important due to its practical value in the sense that it provides policy direction for holding managers responsible for culture management.

In contrast, Kelly (1992) found that employees at every level were inclined to resist market orientation development. This implies that culture change requires influence of leadership across the entire structure of organization. Ruekert (1992) reports that the extent of market orientation within an organization is inextricably linked to organizational structure, systems and processes created to sustain them. Kasper (2002) identifies market sensing, market relating and strategic thinking as fundamental and operational issues in defining and implementing market orientation. These capabilities are linked to values of organization which reflect the dominant culture. Adoption of market culture can be slowed or hampered altogether by the strength of existing dominant culture, leadership, structure and organizational systems. According to Felton (1959), flawed decision making, inexperience and lack of skills leading to political activity and status seeking behaviour are major obstacles to adoption of market culture. However, adoption of market oriented culture can be enhanced by influencing change in employees' opinions, attitudes, attitudes, beliefs, and shared values (Lloyd, 1996). This demonstrates that leadership plays major role in influencing organizational culture change.

3.2.2 The Collaborative Culture

Collaborative also called clan culture depicts shared values and goals, cohesion, participatory, individuality and a sense of togetherness (Payne et al., 1999). The culture is characterized by teamwork, employee involvement programs and corporate commitment to employees. Basic assumptions in a clan culture are that the environment can best be managed through teamwork and employee development; customers are best thought of as partners; the organization is in the business of developing a humane work environment; and the major task of management is to empower employees and facilitate their participation, commitment and loyalty.

3.2.3 The Adhocracy Culture

Payne et al. (1999) contend that adhocracy culture is based on the assumptions that innovative and pioneering initiatives lead to success; organizations are mainly in the business of developing new products and services and preparing for the future; and the major task of management is to foster entrepreneurship, creativity and activity on the cutting edge. It also assumes that adaptation and innovativeness lead to new resources and profitability and therefore, the firm emphasizes creating a vision for the future organized anarchy and disciplined imagination. The culture is characterized by frequent change of organization structure and employee roles are temporary.

3.2.4 The Control Culture

Control culture also referred to as hierarchy culture is based on classical attributes of bureaucracy proposed by Weber (1947). The culture is nurtured by rules, specialization, meritocracy, hierarchy, separate ownership, impersonality and accountability. The long term concerns of the organizational members are stability, predictability and efficiency (Payne et al., 1999). This kind of culture is less responsive to changes in the environment and organizations exhibiting this culture are not suitable candidates for relationship marketing.

3.3 Theoretical Perspectives of Organization Culture

Organization culture is a new area for marketing research and has not developed a generally agreed theory. According to Demison and Mishra (1995), there is limited consensus regarding a general theory of organizational culture. There is skepticism about whether culture can ever be measured in a way that allows one organization to be compared with another. However, attempts have been made towards development of conceptual frameworks to enable understanding and analysis of organization culture. Schein (1983) argues that culture exists simultaneously on three levels. On the surface are artifacts, underneath artifacts lie values, and at the core are basic assumptions. The analysis by Schein (1983) suggests that culture is a multi-layered construct grounded in shared assumptions as the foundation. Values represent the walls while artifacts signify the roof of culture house. Assumptions represent the taken-for-granted beliefs about reality and human nature. Values are social principles, philosophies, goals and standards considered to have intrinsic worth. Artifacts are the visible, tangible, and audible results of activity grounded in values and assumptions. Schein (1985) claims that a founder's beliefs and values are taught to new members and, if validated by success undergo cognitive transformation into assumptions.

Hatch (1993) offers improved conceptualization of culture which he refers to as 'dynamic'. He further proposes symbols as the fourth element of culture. This demonstrates reformulation of conceptualization of culture offered by Schein (1983). Hatch (1993) describes the relationship between cultural elements as processes. In his submission, he explains that Schein's view focuses on what artifacts and values reveal about basic assumptions. He further clarifies that cultural dynamics does not undermine Schein's interests; it reaches beyond them toward a more complex, process based understanding of organizational culture. Consequently, Hatch (1993) suggests that the four elements of culture are constituted through manifestation, realization, symbolization and interpretation processes.

The cultural dynamic perspective captures both objective and subjective theories of organizational culture. Pfeffer and Salancik (1978) argue that theories of environmental determinacy such as resource dependency theory are evidence of objectivist appreciation of organizational reality, whereas social constructionist theories such as enactment theory (Weick, 1979) evidence subjectivist appreciation. The concepts of values and symbols provide the means by which subjectivist and objectivist orientations can be made to communicate and coexist (Hatch, 1993). Symbols and values invoke objectivist theorizing on one hand because of their relationship to artifacts experienced as external. On the other hand, symbols and values invoke subjective theorizing by referring to basic assumptions that have no direct external referent.

Schein (1985) identifies assumptions as the essence of culture and suggests that assumptions underlie values. He argues that humans infer their assumptions from known values. On the contrary, Hatch (1993) argues that Schein (1985) fails to address the active role of assumptions in constituting and reconstituting culture. He adds that consideration of the manifestation process provides the dynamic viewpoint. Hatch (1993) therefore, explains that manifestation contributes to the constitution of organization culture by translating intangible assumptions into recognizable values. Hatch (1993) argues that what organizational members assume to be true shapes what they value. This shaping occurs through the process of proactive manifestation where assumptions provide expectations that influence perceptions, thoughts and feelings of employees. According to Hatch (1993) multiple assumptions engage in manifestations simultaneously and interactively to reveal values. Schein (1985) argues that assumptions can be altered by the introduction of new values by top managers and the experience of success attributed to those values. Hatch (1993) insists that for this to happen, the new values must be at odds with existing assumptions at the start of the process. Cultural assumptions are experienced as general expectations that provide possible responses that reflect and embody cultural values. The values are constituted by perceptions, cognitions and emotions activated by cultural assumptions.

Gioia (1986) offers a representative list of organizational symbols namely: corporate logo, slogans, stories, actions and non-actions, visual images and metaphors. Eisenberg and Riley (1988) added organization charts, corporate architecture, rites and rituals. Weick (1987) explains that organizational members are symbol manipulators, creating as well as discovering meaning as they explore and produce a socially constructed reality to express their self-images and to contextualize their activity and identity. Symbolization refers to culturally contextualized meaning creation through the prospective use of objects, words and actions. The objects, words and actions are transformed into symbols through communication.

Hofstede (2001) proposed cultural dimensions framework that identifies four cultural values namely: power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism/collectivism, and masculinity. Schumann (2009) tested this framework in explaining customer behaviour and cognitions. He demonstrates that Cultural values affect the level of development of trust, customer's willingness to provide personal information and the effect of word of mouth on customer evaluations of service providers.

SECTION FOUR: ORGANIZATION CULTURE AND RELATIONSHIP MARKETING

4.1 Link between Organization Culture and Relationship Marketing

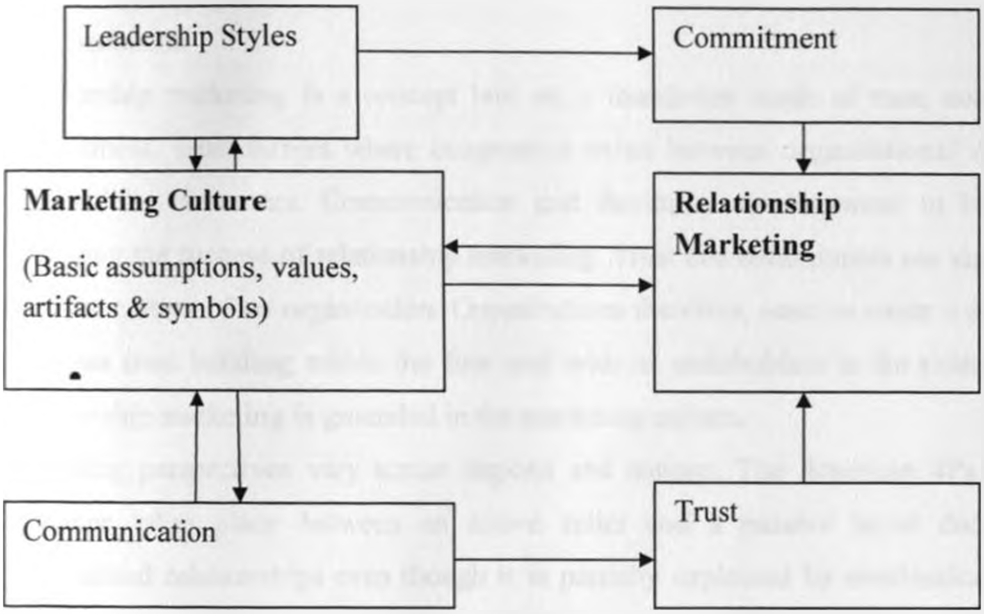
Relationship marketing and corporate culture share related research history. Both concepts received greater research interest from early 1980s. A number of studies in corporate culture tend to investigate its impact on corporate performance. Academic approaches to the study of relationship marketing rooted in cultural dimensions were first developed by Jarret and O'Neill (2002). They identified four organizational cultural dimensions which include broad consultation, communication, innovation and flexibility. The implications of culture on marketing have been studied empirically to the extent of how culture generally manifests itself in society. Schumann (2009) studied the impact of culture on relationship marketing. However, he conceptualized culture as a way of life in society. His study was based on understanding how different cultures in different market segments (nations) influenced relationship marketing by firms. This perspective is important only to the extent of understanding countries where national cultures are advanced and shared.

Schumann's study falls short in explaining an internal organizational environment which can be used to build and protect competitive advantage at the marketplace. It is not sufficient to enable understanding of how organization culture affects marketing orientation of firms. Whether one looks at culture from customer perspective or organizational perspective, Schumann (2009) has demonstrated that cultural values moderate trust building process in relationship management between the firm and its customers. This finding is important not only because it explains that trust is an important construct in relationship marketing but, it also supports the trust-commitment theory of relationship marketing. Rama (2001) explains that culture of an organization represents the prevailing roles, relationships, beliefs, norms, values, attitudes and skills pertaining to work. He further, explains that culture takes time to develop and after having come into being, it acquires an enduring character that is resistant to change.

According to Cameron and Quinn (2011) sustained success of firms depends on company values, personal beliefs of employees and strategic vision. They add that successful organizations have distinctive and readily identifiable organization culture. Herington et al. (2006) observe that firms which espouse and pursue relationship building are often not taken seriously in terms of their claim that their success is as a result of relationship marketing within the firm. Cameron and Quinn (2011) argue that although strategy, market presence and technology are important, highly successful firms have capitalized on the power that resides in developing and managing a unique corporate culture. There is need therefore, to test empirically the argument by highly successful firms that strong relationships developed between the firm and its customers drives business success.

According to Rama (2001), a company moving on to a strong customer orientation needs to decentralize decision making. Oriol, Alfons and Jordi (2011) argue that in order to successfully implement a relationship marketing orientation it is necessary to develop a corporate culture that would be able to support it. Nadler and Tushman (1988) argue that when organization culture is congruent with corporate strategy, the behaviour of organizational members promotes firm's goals, enhancing its effectiveness. Oriol et al. (2011) contend that the transition from traditional marketing orientation to relationship marketing is a long and complex course. They insist that in order to complete the transition successfully and to maintain the innovative spirit of relational firm, it is essential to have employees who are flexible and able to adapt to change.

4.2 Proposed Conceptual Framework



SECTION FIVE: CONCLUSION AND KNOWLEDGE GAPS

5.1 Conclusion

Relationship marketing is a concept laid on a foundation made of trust, communication and commitment. Trust thrives where congruence exists between organizational values and values espoused by customers. Communication and flexibility are important in building trust and enhancing the success of relationship marketing. Trust and commitment are virtues that develop from the culture of an organization. Organizations therefore, need to create a strong culture that promotes trust building within the firm and with its stakeholders in the external environment. Relationship marketing is grounded in the marketing culture.

Marketing perspectives vary across regions and nations. The American 4Ps paradigm where exchange takes place between an active seller and a passive buyer does not allow for personalized relationships even though it is partially explained by neoclassical microeconomic theory. American marketing perspective differs contextually from the European paradigm where customer focus is emphasized. Relationship marketing is more a European perspective of marketing than American. This is evidenced by delayed adoption of the new definition of marketing by (AMA) that captures relationship marketing. Marketing orientation by firms is influenced by cultural values of management that are promoted throughout the organization.

Organization culture is important in influencing marketing orientation of firms. Even though different cultural typologies exist, relationship marketing closely identify with the market culture. A well developed and inclusive market culture helps organizations to implement relationship marketing strategies. Even though some empirical work has been carried out to understand organization culture and relationship marketing, an integrative general theory that explains the relationship between the two concepts remains elusive.

5.2 Knowledge Gaps

Relationship marketing theories exist in isolation of each other despite the fact that some of these theories share implied assumptions. A general integrative theory of relationship marketing has not been formulated to date. Literature is clouded with confusions and contradictions about relationship marketing strategies. There is no consensus about the time when relationship marketing emerged. More importantly, organization culture is at the stage of developing theoretical foundations and there is need for empirical studies to develop theories in this area.

Empirical studies are required to establish emergence and development of relationship marketing in Africa and to understand how African Culture has influenced this process. Even though there is evidence in literature which links leadership to organizational culture, little is known about how leadership styles influence market culture and in turn relationship marketing. There is need for designing empirical studies using mixed methods to establish how and to what extent leadership styles influence market culture and relationship marketing. In addition, studies should be designed to establish how diffusion of technologies in African context moderates the relationship between organization culture and relationship marketing.

5.3 Summary of Key Contributions and Knowledge Gaps

Concept	Authors	Focus of Study	Key contributions	Knowledge gap
Relationship marketing	Emerson (1962)	Relationship marketing theory	Resource dependence theory	Contribution of long term relationship investment and outcome such as trust and commitment
	Williamson (1975)	Theoretical underpinning of relationship marketing	Transaction cost theory	Moderating variables that influence relationship outcome
	MacNeil (1980)	Relationship marketing theory	Relational Contracting Theory	Relationship governance
	Berry (1983)	Service marketing	Relationship marketing history	Relationship marketing theory
	Gummesson (1997; 1994; 1987)	Conceptualization of relationship marketing	Challenges distinctions between relationship marketing from transactional marketing	Origin and development of relationship marketing; integrative theory of relationship marketing
	Morgan and Hunt (1994)	Relationship marketing	Relationship marketing theory	Scope of relationship

				marketing
	Groonroos (1994; 1997)	Shift from transactional to relationship marketing	Explains differences between relationship marketing from transaction marketing	General theory of relationship marketing
	Stone and Manson (1997)	Future of relationship marketing	Nature of relationship marketing and its role in marketing strategy	Theories of relationship marketing
	Lindgreen, Palmer and Vanhamme (2004)	Marketing planning	History of relationship marketing	Theoretical underpinnings of relationship marketing
Organization Culture	Schein (1983)	Organization culture and leadership	Elements of organization culture	Measurement of organization culture
	Deshpande and Webster (1989)	Organization culture and marketing	Link between organization culture and relationship marketing	Culture change
	Kohli and Jaworski (1990)	Marketing culture	Nature of marketing culture	How marketing culture is created?
	Hatch (1993)	Organization culture	• Symbols as additional element of culture • Process of culture	How objective and subjective theorizing can be made to coexist

			formulation	

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