

How to Cite:

Quadree, S. T., & Pahari, S. (2022). Evaluating the role of consumer perceptions in direct selling business in new normal era: A study on Southern Region in Kolkata with special reference to health supplement products. *International Journal of Health Sciences*, 6(S1), 8700–8712.
<https://doi.org/10.53730/ijhs.v6nS1.6961>

Evaluating the role of consumer perceptions in direct selling business in new normal era: A study on Southern Region in Kolkata with special reference to health supplement products

Shams Tabrez Quadree

Research scholar, Brainware University, Kolkata

Dr. Subhajit Pahari

Assistant Professor, Symbiosis Centre for Management Studies, Nagpur, Constituent of Symbiosis International (Deemed University), Pune.

Corresponding author email: pahari.subhajit@gmail.com

Abstract---In the era of the competitive business landscape, every company seeks to be the category-lead but it is not an easy-going task, especially in case of Direct selling business. To be the category lead, a company is required to differentiate its brand over competitors in terms of product value proposition, pricing, customer service, and other constructs that bind the customers who have been loyal to the brand for a long time. Understanding consumers' buying behaviour is a vital task in this regard, failing which any organisation struggle to find their position in the competitive market. Customer satisfaction refers to a person's general attitude toward a service provider or an emotional reaction to a discrepancy between the expected service and the service received to fulfil the desired goals or needs. The first intent of the present investigation is to identify the factors contributing to Customer Satisfaction. The second intent is to evaluate the relationship between Customer Satisfaction and Consumer-Organisation Relationship (COR). The study was carried out by considering the five factors viz. price stability, product quality, reliability, efficiency, and user-friendliness to explore their impact on customer satisfaction. Further, CFA and SEM approaches were used to analyse the data. This study identifies the factors contributing to customer satisfaction and inspects the impact of these factors on customer satisfaction. Among the five constructs, both price stability and product quality have a very high impact on customer satisfaction. The contributions of our study are multifarious. First, we contributed to the literature by developing and testing a new empirical model that

explores determinants of customer satisfaction and their related weightage concerning direct selling business. Second, we explored another dynamic aspect of customer satisfaction by investigating the relationship between customer satisfaction and COR. Third, this investigation has some implications for the managers which are discussed in detail.

Keywords---Direct Selling, Consumer-Organisation Relationship, customer satisfaction, consumers' buying behaviour, Health Supplement Products.

Introduction

According to industry estimates, India's Direct Selling market, which is now ranked 15th internationally, is predicted to increase at a CAGR of roughly 4.8 percent by 2021, reaching Rs 15,930 crore. This demonstrates that the Multilevel marketing organization is thriving and demonstrates its capability with its continuous rate of expansion — up 12.1 percent year over year (Indian Retailer Bureau, 2020). Another noteworthy aspect is that the sector has contributed to provide huge number of jobs to the Indians who have lost their work as a result of the pandemic.

Initiatives such as 'Vocal for Local' and 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat' urged Indians to consider purchasing and selling nationally created products through the Network marketing direction, which requires less effort and yields large profits. It not only boosted local manufacturing, but also gave the emerging entrepreneurs a sense of ownership and commitment to success. The Direct Selling business in India has created additional income prospects for its citizens while also promoting micro-entrepreneurship. There were about 5.7 million direct sellers in fiscal year 2018-19. By 2025, these figures are expected to have risen to 18.1 million. The lady are also entitled in a considerable way, as almost 2.1 million Lady today are associated who are the driving force behind this organization.

The Indian direct selling business, which employs roughly five million individuals, is redefining itself in the wake of the COVID-19 outbreak. To overcome the ongoing crisis, it is attempting to strike a balance between human interactions, which is considered to be the bedrock of direct selling. The foremost goal of this research is to resolve the influence of customer satisfaction on the development of a healthier connection between an organisation and its customers in the context of direct selling business.

The fastest-growing middle class in the world, along with the widespread availability of the internet, has catapulted India's direct selling industry to new heights. It has created a plethora of chances and problems in the process of ushering in a new normal era. For every product or service, understanding consumer perception is one of the most powerful and fundamental marketing aspect. At the end of the day consumer perception matters. It is described as a customer's total appraisal of a product's utility based on their judgements of "what is received and what is given" (zeithaml 1988).

In the competitive business environment, every organisation strives to develop long-term relationship with their consumers to boost sales, increase loyalty, generate resilience to adverse brand details, and lessen price susceptibility. From customers' perspective, positive relationship between customers and organisation reduces switch cost, lessens consideration set and boosts psychic benefits. With this as a setting, companies are seeking into numerous methods for establishing such long-term and beneficial customer relationships. As a result, the current research aims to evaluate the effect of customer satisfaction on the development of healthy business-organisation relationships. Many investigators like Aldas-Manzano et al., (2009); Chen et al., (2012); Dahlstrom et al., (2014) have acknowledged that customer satisfaction turns as an indispensable factor in creating greater relationships but none of the research has been done empirically to measure the intensity of relationship between companies and customers in the context of direct selling business.

Earlier, majority of the studies have mainly been focused on customer satisfaction by identifying factors contributing to it (Altobishi, Erboz, & Podruzsik, 2018; Madavan, & Vethirajan, 2020) and further its influence on Behavioral Purpose to Use (Ayyash, 2017), Loyalty (Raza, Umer, Qureshi, & Dahri, 2020; Haq, & Awan, 2020), Purchase Intention (Khatoon, Zhengliang, & Hussain, 2020) and Positive WOM (Ahmad, & Al-Zu'bi, 2011; Casaló, Flavián, & Guinaliú, 2008). Thus, of this research is to identify elements that influence customer satisfaction in direct selling business. The second objective is to assess how customer satisfaction affects the development of consumer-organization relationships. The third objective is to measure how Consumer-Organization Relationship further facilitates brand loyalty and customer satisfaction.

This study contributes considerably to the literature of direct selling business and is also helpful to academics because it illustrates how specific determinants predict customers' satisfaction, which eventually build up a solid bond between consumers and organisations. In the present study, mainly five components have been undertaken from the extensive literature review namely: Price Stability, Product Quality, Reliability, Efficiency, User-Friendliness. These factors were believed to be impacting customer satisfaction and Customer-Organization Relationship. The present study will assist the direct selling sector in developing innovative marketing strategies, establishing customer relationship that lasts a long time and achieving a aggressive advantage in marketplace. The improved dynamics of direct marketing will scale up their marketing activities by fulfilling the needs of customers and develop sound strategy to strengthen their long-term customer relationships.

Literature Review

Direct Selling

Direct selling is a business approach in which a company sells things through one-on-one interactions. In most cases, an independent seller purchases the goods from the parent company and then sells them to other people (Peterson, Albaum& Ridgway,1989). The terms "direct selling" and "multilevel marketing" are frequently interchanged. During the 1990s, multilevel marketing, a type of direct

selling, saw tremendous international expansion. In direct selling sellers are paid not only for their own sales, but also for the sales of others they recruit. Multilevel marketing is often known as “Network Marketing” since most recruiting is done through personal networking (Muncy 2004). This organization in India, which presently ranks 15th globally, is predicted to increase at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of roughly 4.8 percent to reach INR 15,930 by 2021, according to industry estimates.

Carl Rehnborg founded the first direct selling company Nutrilite in the United States. This company used to be known as California Vitamin corporation, and it sold vitamin supplements. Nutrilite, a vitamin company, has been selling its goods directly to consumers since 1934. From 1941 onwards, Nutrilite began selling its goods directly through the direct selling method. The company was in the business of producing and distributing food supplements, for which it had created a special selling approach. The company’s corporate development has pushed each of its networkers to create their own network, Nutrilite played a significant influence in the evolution of direct selling, according to history. Rich Devos and Jay Van Angel became distributors for Nutrilite in 1950, but in 1959 they founded the Amway, a multi-level marketing company. They bought Nutrilite as a part of Amway in 1972, making them the world’s largest seller of nutritional supplements.

Difference between Legitimate Direct Selling and Illegal Pyramid Scheme:

Because a direct selling company runs its business by enlisting the help of a network of salespeople, the likelihood of such an organization devolving into unethical pyramid scams is fairly significant. The compensation in networkers is entirely dependent on the network structure they create, although a reputable direct selling organization will compensate networkers in the following ways.

- Incentive on products you sell to your retail customers and buy yourself.
- Incentive on products your networkers sell to their own customer.
- Incentive on products they sell to their networkers, and so down the line upto five to seven levels down from you (Dunn 2008).

A legitimate direct selling company should create a pure and perfect business opportunity based on consumers, with a high level of customer satisfaction and product cancellation rights, and the ability for customers to return products for replacement or refund if they are not satisfied, but pyramid schemes do not have such a commercially viable business opportunity.

Typical Direct Selling Claims:

- People who work in direct selling propose that it is the most powerful and intelligent system for bringing products and earning opportunities to their consumers.
- Consumers prefer to acquire things in a simple manner using the direct selling model, and this model can eventually sell any product.
- Maximum direct selling companies claim to provide better prospects for producing huge sums of money than other traditional company models.
- Through a supportive training system, success in direct selling is simple.

Compensation Plan:

Direct selling compensation plans differ, some concept permit enrol to finally “split away” from their sponsor. Sponsors are required to pass one or two enrols upline to their immediate supervisors in some cases.

Indian Direct Selling Association (IDSA):

The IDSA is the apex body of direct selling in India and is affiliated with the world federation direct selling association (WFDSA). According to IDSA estimates, the direct selling industry in India is expected to grow compounded Annual growth rate (CAGR) of about 4.8 percent to reach INR 15,930 by 2021 (Economic times.indiatimes.com).

Consumer Perception:

Customer perception is a phenomenon characterized by heightened awareness for the evaluation of purchase and use experiences and consequently plays an important role in long-term consumer responses. Due to rising rivalry and recent technical developments, the perception in direct selling has also received more attention. In reality, consumer perceptions of price stability and product quality are essential factor in examine consumer buying behaviour and product selection (Jacoby and Olson, 1985). As a result, in order to remain aggressive in a universal situation, businesses should learn to focus on and develop products that will appeal to a wide range of customers.

Dimension of Direct Selling Business and Consumer Perception:

Consumer perception is given top emphasis in business concerns, particularly the direct selling sector, to suit their needs. Consumer perceptions of direct selling and related technology are the primary cause of this variable adoption level (Ab Hamid, 2008). Several studies have attempted to measure consumer perceptions of direct selling, but few have identified the fundamental causes of that impression. In comparison to non-consumers, (Yang and Lester, 2004) found that frequent internet shoppers have good emotions towards direct selling. As a result of the substantial literature review, numerous parameters for measuring consumer perception of direct selling businesses have been found. The factors extracted are price stability, product quality, reliability, efficiency and, user-friendliness. The definitions of these factors are presented in Table 1. Thus, the hypotheses are.

- H1: Price stability has a beneficial impact on consumer satisfaction in direct selling business.
- H2: User-friendliness has a beneficial impact on consumer satisfaction in direct selling business.
- H3: Reliability of direct selling business has a beneficial impact on consumer satisfaction in direct selling business.
- H4: Efficiency has a beneficial impact on consumer satisfaction in direct selling business.

H5: Product quality has a beneficial impact on consumer satisfaction in direct selling business.

Consumer Organization Relationship:

The consumer is the core of any organisation. As a result, establishing an effective relationship with consumers is vital for any business organization (Dovaliene, Masiulyte & Piligrimiene, 2015). In recent years, both business coaches and academicians have placed a strong emphasis on developing and sustaining quality relationships with consumers (Hennig-Thurau, et al., 2010). The term consumer-organization relationship (COR) was coined as a result of substantial consumer-organization research. Long-term collaboration from both actively interested parties is the foundation of a perfect relationship. Further, Relationship development also entails active communication and mutual exchanges between both parties involved (Ferrand and McCarthy,2008). Prior research has shown that the quality of a relationship may be measured in terms of numerous aspects such as mutual legitimacy and reciprocity (Ledingham, & Bruning, 1998). Furthermore, utilizing interpersonal relationship theory. (Hon and Grunig,1999) investigated six relationship metrics that were later accepted globally to qualify relationship quality. These parameters are truth, exchange relationship, commitment, satisfaction, control mutuality and communal relationship. Furthermore, A study by Kumar and Kaushik,2020 has used two unique parameters (two-way communication and emotional exchange) to measure the quality of relationship,both of which have been researched. In current research there two variables have been chosen to estimate the relationship between consumer and organization.

The concept demonstrates a clear link between price stability and product quality, with perceived quality involving customer judgement above the product's level of superiority. Consumer perceptions of pricing stability and product quality are key drivers in analyzing consumer purchasing behavior and product selection in the direct selling business (Jacoby and Olison 1985). A price discount is another common marketing strategy for attracting customers by offering a bonus or incentives that encourage them to buy the marketed products right away (Yin and Huang 2014). Because of marketing research, the price-quality-value model is one of two renowned models in the literature that have been designed to study the relationship between price and purchaser perceptions of the product (Monroe and Krishnan 1985) and the means-end model (zeithaml 1988).

Consumer Perception and Consumer-Organisation Relationship:

Consumer Perceptions are crucial in building long-term relationships between consumers and successful organizations. Consumer perception refers to a person's understanding of his or her view and opinions in relation to preconceived expectations. This refers to the moment when consumers learn that the product's actual performance exceeds their expectations. They begin to experience a sense of belonging to the organization, which leads to the formation of strong emotional bonds. Consumer perceptions, according to the current study, will have a favourable impact on the development of consumer-organisation relationships. As a result, the following theory is proposed:

H6: The consumer satisfaction with direct selling business has a positive influence on consumer-organization relationship.

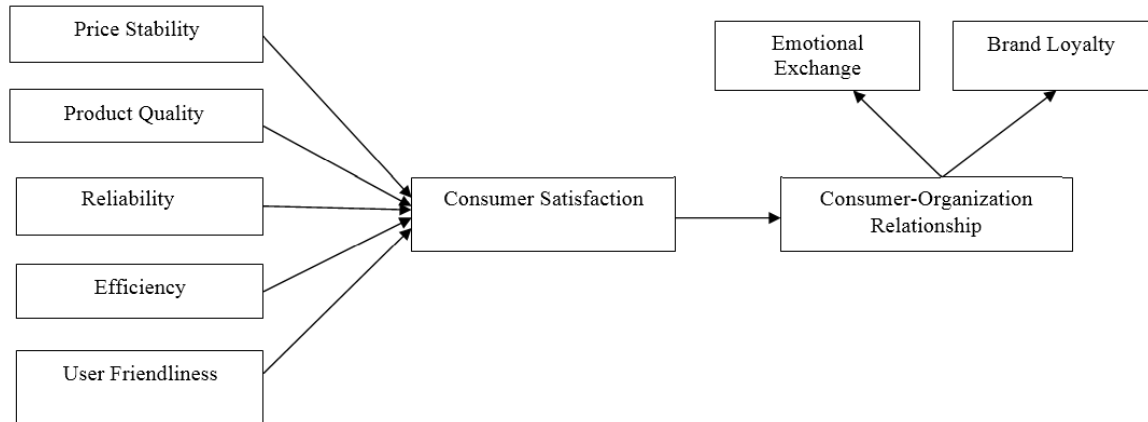


Figure 1: Conceptual framework

Table 1
Definitions of the Components of Direct Selling

Components	Definition
Price Stability	This leads to enhancing the trust of the consumer on a company's product.
Product Quality	The capacity to meet consumer's need and gives satisfaction.
Reliability	The ability to consistently and correctly accomplish an agreed-upon activity.
Efficiency	The ability to maintain consumers faith and ensure consumer fulfillment.
User's Friendliness	An interface designed to make using the service as simple as possible.

Research Methodology

Sample selection and data collection

The present research considered sample targets to the consumers, located in Southern Region in Kolkata. For data collection, a structured questionnaire was prepared by referring to past literature and the items were slightly revise to fit the context of the present research. The questionnaire was further divided into two parts; the first one consisted of all the demographic data and the last one consisted of the questions validating the constructs of customer satisfaction which were designed on the 5-point Likert scale, ranging from "strongly disagree" (1) to "strongly agree" (5). The respondents who purchase and use pest control products regularly were considered eligible respondents in the study. Due to COVID-19 situation, the data was collected through online mode using Google

form. The questionnaire was circulated using various social media platforms like Emails, Facebook, Whatsapp groups, and Linked In. Snowball sampling technique was applied to gather more responses, for which the researchers requested many participants to further share the questionnaire with their friends and groups. The duration for data collection was 3 months (March 2021 and May 2021). After 3 months, the collected data were screened and finally, 560 responses were considered for the present study after removing miscoded and suspicious-looking entries.

Measures

The scales of the construct in this study were all adopted from the past literature. A total of 29 items were taken for measuring the conceptual framework of this study. For details of the scales of the construct, please follow Table 2. To find out the result of the collected data, here, in this study confirmatory factor analysis and structural equation modelling has been done.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA)

CFA has been separated into First Order CFA and Second-Order CFA in this study. The current survey has utilized a measurement model utilizing the 1st Order CFA for the construct validity and construct reliability and for examining the intensity of item indicators incorporated by the researchers. A pooled CFA 1st Order Analysis was used to examine the latent variables. The 2nd level CFA is a quantitative tool for determining that theoretical constructions in a study load into a set of underlying sub-constructs. In the case of the present study, Consumer-Brand Engagement acts as theorized construct or main construct. The sub-constructs of attachment are Two-Way Communication and Emotional Attachment.

CFA first order

The CFA First Order result has showed that the proposed factor structure has a strong measurement model fit (CMIN/DF= 2.054, GFI= 0.908, NFI= 0.937, IFI= 0.968, TLI= 0.964, CFI= 0.966, PCFI= 0.840, RMSEA= 0.045, RMR= 0.037). To assess high correlation among constructs, Stats tools package software was used to perform convergent and discriminant analysis. Tables 1 and 2 reveal that each data set's satisfactory characteristics. The findings match all of the criteria concerning CFA 1st order tests. As needed in this study, the measuring model can go to the following level or exam, such as the CFA 2nd Order.

Table 3
Factor loadings of the constructs (EFA, first-order CFA, second-order CFA)

Second-Order Construct	First Order Construct	Indicator Code	EFA	First Order CFA	Second-Order CFA
	Price Stability	PS1	0.742	0.702	0.702
		PS2	0.823	0.794	0.794
		PS3	0.844	0.817	0.817
		PS4	0.743	0.727	0.728
	Product Quality	PQ1	0.784	0.749	0.747
		PQ2	0.797	0.721	0.721
		PQ3	0.804	0.762	0.764
		PQ4	0.718	0.68	0.680
	Reliability	RLB1	0.823	0.767	0.766
		RLB2	0.808	0.737	0.737
		RLB3	0.819	0.734	0.735
	Efficiency	EFF1	0.835	0.762	0.762
		EFF2	0.949	0.988	0.988
		EFF3	0.94	0.968	0.969
	User's Friendliness	UF1	0.869	0.941	0.941
		UF2	0.885	0.891	0.891
		UF3	0.665	0.626	0.626
	Consumer Satisfaction	CS1	0.825	0.821	0.821
		CS2	0.827	0.795	0.795
		CS3	0.861	0.843	0.843
		CS4	0.862	0.83	0.830
Consumer-Organization Relationship	Brand Loyalty	BL1	0.795	0.791	.823
		BL2	0.798	0.775	
		BL3	0.799	0.785	
		BL4	0.793	0.836	
	Emotional Exchange	EE1	0.866	0.869	.670
		EE2	0.864	0.855	
		EE3	0.856	0.88	
		EE4	0.821	0.806	

Table 4
Construct validity and inter-construct correlations

	CR	AVE	MSV	MaxR(H)	EFF	BL	CS	EE	PS	PA	PQ	RLB
EFF	0.850	0.662	0.222	0.931	0.815							
BL	0.921	0.738	0.315	0.924	0.285	0.861						
CS	0.900	0.687	0.112	0.901	0.158	0.184	0.830					
EE	0.874	0.631	0.315	0.875	0.232	0.562	0.183	0.796				
PS	0.853	0.590	0.222	0.860	0.471	0.158	0.332	0.196	0.769			
PA	0.943	0.843	0.065	0.992	0.157	0.152	0.251	0.154	0.228	0.920		
PQ	0.826	0.541	0.164	0.829	0.285	0.236	0.257	0.404	0.281	0.172	0.737	
RLB	0.798	0.567	0.095	0.799	0.131	0.171	0.305	0.172	0.265	0.221	0.194	0.754

CFA second order

The findings of CFA 2nd Order reveal that the proposed factor structure has a satisfactory model fit, as shown in tables 3 and 4. The results match all of the criteria for the CFA 2nd Order tests. As a result, the current study can move on with additional analysis, such as SEM, as needed.

The CFA Second Order results show that the proposed factor structure has a strong model fit (CMIN/DF= 2.064, GFI= 0.915, NFI= 0.924, IFI= 0.957, TLI= 0.953, CFI= 0.955, PCFI= 0.835, RMSEA= 0.046, RMR= 0.037). As a result, in the pooled CFA 2nd Order, the model fitness was obtained.

Table 5
Construct validity and inter-construct correlations

	CR	AVE	MSV	MaxR(H)	RLB	CS	PS	UF	PQ	EFF	COR
RLB	0.798	0.567	0.095	0.799	0.754						
CS	0.9	0.687	0.112	0.901	0.305	0.83					
PS	0.854	0.59	0.222	0.861	0.265	0.332	0.77				
UF	0.943	0.843	0.065	0.992	0.221	0.251	0.228	0.92			
PQ	0.826	0.541	0.196	0.829	0.194	0.257	0.282	0.172	0.737		
EFF	0.85	0.662	0.222	0.931	0.131	0.158	0.471	0.157	0.285	0.815	
COR	0.727	0.573	0.196	0.754	0.222	0.237	0.234	0.198	0.442	0.326	0.758

Structural model

Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was used to evaluate hypotheses testing. The summary notes were examined first before looking at the test findings for the suggested study model. The model-fit indices for structural models showed that the model fit was relatively excellent. (CMIN/DF= 2.863, GFI= 0.905, NFI= 0.902, IFI= 0.932, TLI= 0.925, CFI= 0.933, PCFI= 0.852, RMSEA= 0.054, RMR= 0.053).

Table 6
Result of SEM model

Hypotheses	Path			Standardized Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
H1	PS	→	CS	0.243	0.069	4.655	***
H2	UF	→	CS	0.164	0.046	3.665	***
H3	RLB	→	CS	0.167	0.067	3.307	***
H4	EFF	→	CS	0.188	0.063	3.587	***
H5	PQ	→	CS	0.215	0.063	4.190	***
H6	CS	→	COR	0.411	0.045	6.241	***
			COR	→	EA	0.761	
			COR	→	BL	0.747	

Table 6 contains a summary of the hypotheses, including standardised, t-value, and statistical significance level. All of the structural routes yielded substantial outcomes.

The SEM results show that Price stability of the product has the highest influence on consumer satisfaction ($\beta = 0.243$), followed by product Quality ($\beta = 0.215$), Efficiency ($\beta = 0.188$), Reliability ($\beta = 0.167$) and User friendliness ($\beta = 0.164$), the last being the factor with the lowest influence on consumer satisfaction.

Next, it was necessary to assess the influence of consumer satisfaction in developing Consumer-Organisation Relationship (COR). The present study predicted this hypothesis having positive and significant relationship between Consumer Satisfaction and COR and this assumption is supported by the SEM result ($\beta = 0.411$). This implies that consumer satisfaction helps in establishing strong and unbreakable bond with concerned companies in terms of two-way communication and brand loyalty.

Discussions and Managerial Implications

Consumer attitudes toward direct selling in Kolkata's Southern region are investigated in this study. Although direct selling looks to be gaining popularity, the sample in this area had a good attitude toward it. As a result, direct selling companies should improve their direct selling components like price stability, product quality, reliability, efficiency, and user- friendliness to focus on the development of the organization. Furthermore, direct selling companies should place higher importance on customer perception because satisfied customers are more interested in receiving information about the company, establish confidence and belief in the direct selling sector, and are more inclined to acquire products in the future.

Conclusions

Due to the latest trend in direct selling products with low switching costs, networkers can quickly transition from a small traditional firm to a reputable direct selling organization. In this regard, there is a growing demand for consumer perception research and direct selling industry to build good and long-lasting relationships with customers. The current study has identified the aspects of direct selling components that have a strong and direct impact on consumer perception to fill this research gap. In addition, the study looked at how consumer perception affects long-term relationships.

The findings of this study revealed that all factors related to direct selling components (price stability, product quality, reliability, efficiency and user friendliness) have a positive and significant influence on consumer perception on direct selling, with product quality being the most important component in affecting consumer perception on direct selling. This means that consumer perception of direct selling is directly dependent on product quality by which consumers can take the decision very easy. Price stability is equally crucial in direct selling as evidenced by the current findings, which reveal that it has a

significant impact on consumers perception. This means that when a consumer buys a product, they always consider the value for money, hence price stability contributes to increased consumer trust in a company's product. Reliability is also a key aspect of direct selling, consumers have faith in it when compared to other factors. That it would meet their needs without them having to go to a concern outlet. Efficiency is one of the most significant aspects of direct selling since it allows businesses to be speedy and cost-effective in their transactions and save money as well as time. Finally, Brand loyalty is an important aspect of direct selling because every consumer expects MLM platforms to have a user-friendly website, easy navigation, and low website freezing times. When customers find a direct selling company to be user-friendly, their perception of the company rises gradually. Brand loyalty and emotional exchange have been used to gauge the strength of a relationship. Consumer's significant interest in hearing from the company about new product launches, company updates, and so on is referred to as two-way communication. The entire faith that the organization would give the consumers efficiently and effectively is referred to as emotional exchange. This is the consumer's faith and belief in the organization's ability to provide all of the services they require. The findings demonstrate that emotional exchange benefits the consumer-organization relationship more than two-way communication.

References

1. Abhamid, NR. (2008). Consumers' behaviour towards Internet technology and Internetmarketing tools. *International Journal of Communications*, 3(2).
2. Bishop, Willard R., Jr. (1984), "Competitive Intelligence," *Progressive Grocer* (March), 19-20.
3. Dovaliene, A., Masiulyte, A., & Piligrimiene, Z. (2015). The relations between customer engagement, perceived value, and satisfaction: the case of mobile applications. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 213, 659-664.
4. Doyle, Mona (1984), "New Ways of Measuring Value," *Progressive Grocer-Value*, Executive Report, 15-19.
5. Dunn, N., 2008. Multi-Level Marketing: The Future or Folly?| *Wise Bread. Wise Bread*. Available at: <http://www.thehindubusinessline.com>
6. Ferrand, A., & McCarthy, S. (2008). *Marketing the sports organisation: Building networks and relationships*. Routledge.
7. Hennig-Thurau, T., Malthouse, E. C., Friege, C., Gensler, S., Lobschat, L., Rangaswamy, A., & Skiera, B. (2010). The impact of new media on customer relationships. *Journal of service research*, 13(3), 311-330
8. Hon, L. C., & Grunig, J. E. (1999). *Guidelines for measuring relationships in public relations*.
9. Jacoby, J. and Jerry C. Olson (1985), *Perceived Quality*. Lexington, MA: Lexington Books.
10. Kumar, V., & Kaushik, A. K. (2020). Building consumer-brand relationships through brand experience and brand identification. *Journal of Strategic Marketing*, 28(1), 39-59.
11. Ledingham, J. A., & Bruning, S. D. (1998). Relationship management in public relations: Dimensions of an organization-public relationship. *Public relations review*, 24(1), 55-65.

12. Monroe, K. B., & Krishnan, R. (1985). The effect of price on subjective product evaluation. In J. Jacoby & J. Olson (Eds.), *The perception of merchandise and store quality* (pp. 209–232). Lexington: Lexington Book.
13. Muncy, J.A., 2004. Ethical issues in multilevel marketing: Is it a legitimate business or just another pyramid scheme. *Marketing Education Review*, 14(3).
14. Peterson, R.A., Albaum, G. and Ridgway, N.M. (1989), "Consumers who buy from direct sales companies", *Journal of Retailing*, Vol. 65 No. 2, pp. 273-86.
15. Sawyer, Alan G. (1975), "Demand Artifacts in Laboratory Experiments in Consumer Research," *Journal of Consumer Research*, 1 (March), 20-30.
16. Schechter, Len (1984), "A Normative Conception of Value," *Progressive Grocer*, Executive Report, 12-14.
17. Yang, B. & Lester, D. (2004) Attitudes toward buying online. *Cyber Psychology & Behavior*, 7, (1): 85-91
18. Yin, X., & Huang, J. (2014). Effects of price discounts and bonus packs on online impulse buying. *Social Behavior & Personality: An International Journal*, 42(8), 1293–1302.
19. Zeithaml, V. A. (1988). Consumer perceptions of price, quality, and value: A means-end model and synthesis of evidence. *Journal of Marketing*, 52, 2–22.