

## *Abstract*

The importance of maintaining long-term buyer-seller relationships for success in today's business is an established fact in marketing theory and practice. A plethora of books, special journal issues, and conference proceedings (both academic and managerial) in recent years exhibit testimony to the continuing interest in relationship marketing paradigm. With the globalization of world economy, cross-cultural marketing research has assumed great importance in the academic and business world. However, there has been limited research on the cross-cultural implications of buyer-seller relationship. Keeping this in view, this study aims at developing and examining a model to compare cross culturally the antecedents of buyer-seller long-term relationships in banking Industry.

In this study, long-term relationship is measured through the degree of commitment of the participant to the relationship. Drawing on organizational buying behavior theory and channel relationship theory, a comprehensive causal model of antecedent constructs of commitment has been developed and examined. One of the important features of this study is to examine the moderating effect of national culture on the nature of buyer-seller relationship. Data were gathered from 126 Canadian corporate customers and 156 Indian corporate customers.

Result of the study revealed that social bonding; trust and perceived Interdependence were important predictors of commitment in both the countries. Mutual Communication exchange and cooperation between buyer and seller were important predictor of trust in both the countries. Although some similarities are evident between both the countries, the findings in this study do not point toward a single, global formula for maintaining long-term buyer seller relationships. Varied degree of importance was placed on different 'success' variables in the buyer-seller relationship. Relationship duration is a predictor of trust in Canada but not in India. Perceived Interdependence between buyer and seller and trust on the seller are given more importance in Canadian business environment than in

India. Similarly, communication exchange and cooperation between buyer and seller were given more importance by Canadian buyers than their Indian counterparts. Social bonding was given more importance by Indian corporate customers than their counterpart Canadian corporate customers. Interdependence asymmetry is positively related to commitment in Canadian business environment whereas the relationship is in negative direction in Indian context. Results of the analyses provided clear evidence that national culture moderated the form of relationship between 'success' variables and outcome variable of buyer-seller relationship.

The present study has contributed to a more comprehensive understanding of the similarities and differences in the relative importance of key 'success' variables contributing to buyer-seller long-term relationships on a global basis. The results of this research have implications for cross-cultural relationship marketing theory, marketing management, and for research methodology.

#### **Key words**

National culture; communication; cooperation; relationship duration; Interdependence; social bonding; structural bonding; satisfaction; trust; commitment.

#### **Layout of the Thesis**

This thesis based on the study is presented in six chapters. Chapter I provides an overview of the relevance of the study on exchange relationships in the commercial banking context. Further, problem focus, objective and scope and expected contributions of the study are also described.

In Chapter II, previous literature concerning the topic of buyer-seller relationship is reviewed. To demonstrate the omnipotent functions of commitment construct, the construct is elaborated in detail. In addition, previous researches related to antecedents of commitment in different contexts of buyer-seller relationships are also discussed.

Based on the theoretical and empirical findings of various researches reviewed in chapter II, a conceptual model of the determinants of commitment is developed in Chapter III. In addition, this chapter includes hypotheses derived from the model.

Chapter IV outlines the research methodology employed in the study. The development of research instrument, the sample and its selection are described in this chapter. The statistical methods used for the analysis and testing of the hypotheses are discussed here.

Chapter V contains the results of the analyses. The reliability and validity assessment of the measures is presented and the tests of the research hypotheses are reported

Chapter VI summarizes the study and its important findings. The theoretical and managerial implications of the findings are appraised. Limitations of the present study and directions for future research are also discussed in the concluding chapter.