
AN ANALYTICAL STUDY OF RELATIONSHIP MARKETING IN MARKET MATURITY

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Within my research, I aimed to develop the customer relationship marketing maturity model and seeking to find better ways to keep good relationship for the existing clients and winning new potential customer. As a means of retaining existing customers and thus winning new customers. My conclusion is on the fact that for an organization to manage and maintain their customer relationship, there need to a plan to make good customer decisions. With this plan, organizations must have the capability of performing and assessing operations. This can be perceived as a way of targeting customers in the environment and thereby establishing a good portfolio and a good relationship with them. Organizations have different preferences when it comes to customers. They perceive them as key customers all because of the high interest in them and their competences they acquire. Due to competences and capabilities possessed by their customers, coordination, relationship and communication can be seen to be effective. I found that loyalty is a concept that is not static but rather dependent on the performance of the company.

KEY WORDS: Relationship; Marketing; Maturity.**INTRODUCTION:**

Relationship Management (RM) has been a hot topic from both business discipline and information technology perspectives. Although RM has received considerable investment in many large enterprises, the need for an integrated approach is not clearly understood by many growing mid-market companies. The concept of Customer Relationship Management has evolved from years of studies on the buyer-seller relationship. Mack, Mayo and Khare defined Strategic RM as the operational component of managing shareholder value in the marketing, sales and service areas of the business. In practice, the right customers are acquired, retained, and nurtured based on an understanding of their needs.

In recent years Marketing has been shown to be lacking when applied to service industries, with Relationship Marketing (RM) in particular coming to the forefront of business and management interaction. Whilst marketing has been identified as appropriate for transactional processes where essentially a firm endeavours to expand its client base with a one shot deal; RM is more concerned with providing additional dimensions, which are a particularly useful for successful exchange relationships where many aspects are intangible. Transactional Marketing has features that focus on a single sale; an orientation toward a focus on short time scales; and limits commitment toward a client. RM has an alternative focus. A RM approach has characteristics and principles that focus in the main upon client retention with an orientation on product or long term benefits.

Relationship marketing is to identify and establish, maintain, and enhance relationships with customers and other stakeholders, at a profit, so that the objectives of all parties involved are met; and this is done by mutual exchange and the fulfillment of promises. Essentially construction focuses on transactional marketing. They apply themselves to discrete projects; process features, short time scales and does little to emphasis client service. Construction operates in an environment of low commitment, limited interaction and contact. The low commitment and interaction produce an outcome that engenders negligible vertical

integration. This is commonly known as traditional procurement. It apparently fails to recognize the benefits that accrue from a RM approach to its business endeavors. Construction's focus on price, a trait that is widely documented as part of traditional procurement, fails to recognize interrelationships between important elements that are presented by RM.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK – RELATIONSHIP MARKETING:

Relationship marketing was first defined as a form of marketing developed from direct response marketing campaigns which emphasizes customer retention and satisfaction, rather than a dominant focus on sales transactions. As a practice, relationship marketing differs from other forms of marketing in that it recognizes the long term value of customer relationships and extends communication beyond intrusive advertising and sales promotional messages. With the growth of the internet and mobile platforms, relationship marketing has continued to evolve and move forward as technology opens more collaborative and social communication channels. This includes tools for managing relationships with a customer that goes beyond simple demographic and customer service data. Relationship marketing extends to include inbound marketing efforts, PR, social media and application development.

DEVELOPMENT OF RELATIONSHIP MARKETING:

Relationship marketing views marketing as an exchange where both buyers and sellers help shape the direction and outcome of the product that will be offered to the market. Instead of treating marketing as merely selling a product to passive potential buyers, relationship marketing argues that you need to encompass many more activities and parties in the marketing process, including consumers. You attempt to build long-term relationships. Marketing doesn't end after the customer purchases the product; rather, you attempt to obtain important feedback from your customers and build a continuous relationship through related products and services. For example, after you sell a customer a car, you try to continue the customer relationship with a customer satisfaction survey for important feedback, customer service departments, maintenance plans and promotions, installment payment plans, and extended warranties. Relationship marketing refers to an arrangement where both the buyer and seller have an interest in providing a more satisfying exchange. This approach tries to disambiguously transcend the simple post purchase-exchange process with a customer to make more truthful and richer contact by providing a more holistic, personalized purchase, and uses the experience to create stronger ties.

SCOPE OF RELATIONSHIP MARKETING:

Relationship marketing has also been strongly influenced by reengineering. According to (process) reengineering theory, organizations should be structured according to complete tasks and processes rather than functions. That is, cross-functional teams should be responsible for a whole process, from beginning to end, rather than having the work go from one functional department to another. Traditional marketing is said to use the functional (or 'silo') department approach.

In contrast, relationship marketing is cross-functional marketing. It is organized around processes that involve all aspects of the organization. In fact, some commentators prefer to call relationship marketing "relationship management" in recognition of the fact that it involves much more than that which is normally included in marketing. Martin Christopher, Adrian Payne, and David Ballantyne at the Cranfield School of Management claim that relationship marketing has the potential to forge a new synthesis between quality management, customer service management, and marketing.

APPROACHES OF RELATIONSHIP MARKETING:

Satisfaction- Relationship marketing relies upon the communication and acquisition of consumer requirements solely from existing customers in a mutually beneficial exchange usually involving permission

for contact by the customer through an "opt-in" system. With particular relevance to customer satisfaction the relative price and quality of goods and services produced or sold through a company alongside customer service generally determine the amount of sales relative to that of competing companies.

Retention- A key principle of relationship marketing is the retention of customers through varying means and practices to ensure repeated trade from preexisting customers by satisfying requirements above those of competing companies through a mutually beneficial relationship. This technique is now used as a means of counterbalancing new customers and opportunities with current and existing customers as a means of maximizing profit and counteracting the "leaky bucket theory of business" in which new customers gained in older direct marketing oriented businesses were at the expense of or coincided with the loss of older customers.

APPLICATIONS OF RELATIONSHIP MARKETING:

Relationship marketing and traditional (or transactional) marketing are not mutually exclusive and there is no need for a conflict between them. A relationship oriented marketer still has choices at the level of practice, according to the situation variables. Most firms blend the two approaches to match their portfolio of products and services. Virtually all products have a service component to them and this service component has been getting larger in recent decades.

Relationship marketing also stresses what it calls internal marketing, or using a marketing orientation within the organization itself. It is claimed that many of the relationship marketing attributes like collaboration, loyalty and trust determine what "internal customers" say and do. According to this theory, every employee, team, or department in the company is simultaneously a supplier and a customer of services and products. It also helps employees understand the significance of their roles and how their roles relate to others'. If implemented well, it can also encourage every employee to see the process in terms of the customer's perception of value added, and the organization's strategic mission. Further it is claimed that an effective internal marketing program is a prerequisite for effective external marketing efforts.

IMPLEMENTING RM TO THE COMPANY:

The following are general guidelines on implementing a RM system.

- ❖ Make a strategic decision on what problems you want your RM system to address, what improvements or changes it should bring in the business processes of the organization.
- ❖ Choose an appropriate project manager. Typically IT will be engaged, however a manager with a customer service/sales and marketing business focus should be involved, as the impact of the project will be mainly on the business side.
- ❖ Ensure executive sponsorship and top management support.
- ❖ Empower team members with the required authority to complete the tasks.
- ❖ Select the correct implementation partner. They must have both vertical and horizontal business knowledge, as well as technical expertise.
- ❖ Define KPI's that will measure the project's success
- ❖ Use a phased approach. Work towards long-term enterprise-scale implementation through a series of smaller, phased implementations
- ❖ Differences between RM for B2B (Business to Business) and B2C (Business to Customers)
- ❖ B2B and B2C marketing operates differently, that is why they cannot use the same software. All the differences are focused on the approach of these two types of businesses: B2B companies have smaller contact databases than B2C ; The amount of sales in B2B is relatively small
- ❖ In B2B there is less figure propositions, but in some cases they cost a lot more than B2C items
- ❖ Relationships in B2B environment are built over a longer time

CORE PRINCIPLES FOR REDEFINING CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIPS:

In this fast-changing environment, insurers need to focus on a new set of core principles to redefine relationships with customers and transform business models. To achieve this new strategic paradigm — and the first step on the journey to customer centricity — insurers need to take the following steps.

Protect business against disintermediation: Insurers unable to understand or deliver against current and future consumer needs and preferences face the prospect of losing the connection with or being pushed further away from the end customer. Insurers need to make sure they retain a strong influence on how customers view their products and services, regardless of overall channel strategy.

Redefine customer relationships: Insurance has traditionally been a product-centric business, focused on developing the best products for a given risk and delivering those in the most cost-effective manner. Now insurers need to better understand the true needs of their customers in order to redefine the products and services they offer and the ways in which they interact and serve them.

Increase productivity to gain a competitive advantage: Historically, productivity improvements were viewed as a response to adverse market conditions. Insurers typically curtail spending in times of shrinking revenue or increasing cost pressures. Those carriers that are able to increase productivity through streamlined business processes and technology improvements will be able to enhance their expense positions and increase the quality of their customer service.

Diversify sources of revenue: Insurance by nature is cyclical. Non-life insurers face hard and soft pricing cycles, while life and pension sales and profit performance are affected by interest rate movements and equity market volatility. Insurers need to diversify to sustain stable top-line growth and earning fluctuations. This also affects customer centricity, as it recognizes that product performance and consumer needs shift with market conditions and life events.

Collaborate with new partners across the value chain: The shift from pushing products to delivering solutions often requires insurers to develop new capabilities or provide products outside the current portfolio. In addition, the adoption of new technologies is opening opportunities to outsource non-strategic functions to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of business functions across the value chain. Successful insurers will be those that develop capabilities to identify and manage strategic business partnerships.

PHASES OF RM MATURITY MODEL:

RM isn't a one-and-done technology project. It's a journey. Here's a RM maturity model that I've developed over many years that may stimulate your planning, aid your customer objectives and help you get the most from your RM software investment.

Maturity Model Level 1: Activity-based RM: Most RM deployments begin by deploying software. Unfortunately, more often than not the technology implementation doesn't support or accompany a RM strategy. In essence, adopters' naïvely believe that the software is a substitute for RM strategy. According to analysts, this mistake alone contributes to the oft quoted statistic that anywhere from 30-50% of all RM deployments fails to achieve their objectives or fail outright. In this RM phase the sales department will finally get their pipeline and forecast reports, marketing can see campaigns and customer service will gain reports showing customer requests and resolutions.

Maturity Model Level 2: Tactical RM: This phase advances RM from a customer data management platform to include the pursuit of tactical objectives. RM adopters recognize that a holistic customer view

can't be achieved within departmental confines and data siloes so sales, marketing and service become more integrated. Customer data, workflow processes and information analysis are designed to cross departmental boundaries and seamlessly share information needed to support and grow customer relationships.

This phase also considers how RM integrates with other business applications in order to support use cases which span front to back office and thereby enhance business process automation, reduce cycle times and enable closed loop reporting.

Maturity Model Level 3: Strategic RM: The phase is most characterized by a cultural shift to advance from a product-centric to a customer-centric company. It requires a change in customer strategy, and most notably a change in perspective. Instead of defining successful customer relationships strictly from an inside-out company perspective, it's now apparent that to grow mutually rewarding customer relationships you're going to need to include some outside-in perspectives and understand how your customers define successful relationships.

Maturity Model Level 4: Business Critical RM: In this phase RM transcends from a mix of effective departmental programs to a central enterprise-wide strategy and RM software becomes the primary technology enabler in the company's quest for customer and revenue growth. RM software provides the data, automation and information to enable customer acquisitions, up-sell and retention programs. When you understand how customer relationships mature, you can proactively respond in a way that caters to customers.

A NEW PARADIGM OF RELATIONSHIP MARKETING:

After the 1980s, relationship marketing emerged as a popular new paradigm in marketing. As a paradigm, relationship marketing is a recent phenomenon. It has been proposed as the "newest" mainstream school of thought in marketing, beyond the twelve commonly accepted schools: commodity, functional, regional, institutional, functionalist, managerial, buyer behavior, activist, macro marketing, organizational dynamics, systems, and social exchange. Pointed out that companies must move from short-term transaction oriented goals to long-term relationship-building goals. Relationship marketing, however, just offers firms the opportunities to archive this goal and to build long term relationships with their stakeholders

WHY RELATIONSHIP MARKETING IS IMPORTANT:

The recent trend seen in the Organizations across the world is that they are faced with changing times and the changing economies and business is forcing them to change themselves too. Organizations today have no option but to change and evolve. The change has to do with every aspect of business and not limited to any one aspect of its business. Those who are not able to see the trends and change themselves are perishing. Technology has been the single most important change agent. Technology has redefined all aspects of business. What we see today is the definitive shift of power from the Organization into the hands of the Customer.

Relationship Management holds the centre stage to designing Marketing as well as communication strategies of the organization. It is essential for every student to understand the dynamics of Relationship Marketing in the present context for this subject will be the key differentiator for the Organizations in the market place.

THE NEW ERA OF RELATIONSHIP MARKETING:

As the marketing industry continues to rapidly evolve, it is important to understand the shift in power from companies to consumers. Today, clients and customers expect companies to adapt according to what their needs are. In order to meet this new demand, companies must engage with their consumers and know what they want through relationship marketing. Relationship marketing is more than just sending out a survey to

receive feedback, but is about truly engaging clients and customers so that they feel a part of something special and a deeper connection to the brand.

Progressive Medical has implemented relationship marketing tactics with their Medical's Claims Professional Advisory Panel. Claims professionals were invited to join a special advisory panel to share their challenges, insights and opinions on Progressive Medical's services. This information was then used by Progressive Medical to enhance services and even change their marketing approach. PMI responded on a one-on-one basis to feedback they received. Their use of relationship marketing is helping to build stronger connections to the company because the claims professional truly cares about the relationship.

RELATIONSHIP MARKETING IN THE 21ST CENTURY:

When retail magnate John Wannamaker spoke these words in the late 19th Century, little did he know that many an advertiser in the 21st could say the exact same thing and not be far off the mark. We get questions all the time about brand advertising and return on investment, as marketing officers around the globe are continually called to task in justifying or accounting for their budgets. We've seen clients actually lose brand equity when they decided not to advertise because of the lack of tangible ROI. But brand advertising is not designed by nature to generate sales—it is a means by which to create awareness, differentiation and consideration.

During the 1990's everyone was obsessed with opening up an online store—e-commerce was it. And suddenly marketers realized something revolutionary. Consumers shopping and buying online were, without even knowing it, telling marketers everything they could ever dream of knowing about them. What they buy. When they buy. How much they buy. Everything! And for once, people realized that this time it was the customer communicating with the advertiser, not the other way around.

Things like this do a lot more than sell products. They say to a person, "Hey, you! You're my customer and I don't just want to sell to you, I want you to be happy. I want you to enjoy what you buy from me! Now tell me what else would make you happy!" Now how much more does that make a brand stand out? And as time and technology continue to hurtle forward at greater and greater speed, new ways to personally touch people are already emerging—podcasts and text messaging are already coming into the mainstream—and will continue to evolve, along with more streamlined, automated means of evaluating a campaign's effectiveness.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE – RM:

Hyung-Su and Young-Gul (2009), RM as a collection of methodologies, processes, software and systems that help institutes and companies in the effective and organized customer relationship management. **Burnett (2001)** customer relationship management creates and maintains personal relationships with profitable customers of the organization through proper use of information and communication technologies. **Wild et al. (2001)** customer relationship management as a process consisted of customer monitoring, management and evaluation of data and ultimately creates a real advantage of extracted information in interacting with them. **Hampej and Pwatman (2002)** customer relationship management is a comprehensive business and marketing strategy which integrates the technology of processes and all business activities and focuses them on customer. **Mishra et al. (2009)** customer relationship management has a continuous process consisting of creating and applying knowledge and market intelligence to create and maintain a basket of customer relationships that have the highest efficiencies. **Zablah et al. (2004)** calculates the organization rate and its degree of maturity to implement RM. **Boulding et al. (2005)** classified the core factors influencing RM performance into three groups of processes, human resources and technology. **Becker et al. (2009)**, customer relationship management is a comprehensive business and marketing strategy which integrates technology of processes and all business activities and focuses them on customer.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

Research enables one to develop theories and principles, on the one hand, and to arrive at generalizations, on the other. Both are aids to problem-solving. Gathering primary data for analytical purposes or using secondary data for first hand investigation is involved in research. It simulates the process of understanding, on the one hand, and deepens the insight, on the other. Obviously, managerial efficiency increases. As research is based on observations and empirical evidences, it improves knowledge and understanding, as well as decision-making skill and ability. Moreover, a systematic research involves various formalities and procedures, and hence the decision-maker gets sufficient time for postponing decisions if he desires to do so in certain circumstances.

The researcher adheres to the view that obviously, managerial research has unlimited scope in a business organization. As research findings influence corporate policy, research has conspicuous role in shaping organizational philosophy, culture and climate. It has already been pointed out that decision-making is considerably influenced by research in the relevant area, while the project objective stands for the role played by research in project identification, feasibility and project implementation. There is a corporate policy for any organization, which is linked with the corporate objectives and organizational philosophy, culture, and climate. Research highlights the risk and uncertainty factors, Decisions-making calls for alternatives courses of action, and in identifying alternative managerial decisions, research plays an important role.

NEED OF THE RESEARCH:

One of the major problems in the full implementation of customer relationship management is that there is no model to guide organizations in implementation and deployment of this strategy. It is important to recognize factors affecting the performance and success of RM in the organization, which is the subject of this research. One of the reasons of the necessity of this research and study RM is that by transition from the traditional economy and intensification of competition in new dimensions, customer has become the linchpin of all organizational activities, in a way that from a competitive perspective, survival of organizations depends on identifying and attracting new customers as well as retaining existing customers. Many successful organizations emphasize that maintaining a stable relationship with customers can guaranty their lead in the competing market. Due to the increasing competition, organizations must be able to have a correct and timely identification of the environment and specially their customers which are the key to survive in organizational life, so by timely understanding of the customer changes and demands and needs it is possible to step toward effective interaction with the environment. Hence many successful organizations in the world have prioritized the attention to the external environment and the precise identification of customers needs through creation of environmental information systems.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM:

The statement of the Problem of present Study is “**A Model of Relationship Marketing in Market Maturity**”.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

1. To apply a mission to create and sustain RM
2. To recognize and relentlessly pursuing new opportunities to serve that RM Maturity Model
3. To engage in a process of continuous innovation, adaptation and learning of RM & Maturity Model
4. To act boldly without being limited by resources currently in hand.
5. To exhibit heightened accountability to the constituencies served and for the outcomes created.

METHODOLOGY ADOPTED:

Based on literature reviews on maturity, readiness and success factors in the proposed area of study, we have listed measures influencing RM maturity. Some of the critical success factors have been extracted from various papers dealing with RM in general and RM success factors, RM readiness and RM maturity, in particular. This research in terms of purpose is an applied research and used exploratory survey for data collection which aimed at obtaining consensus from experts familiar with the subject of the article. This research by designing the research plan tried to collect literature about empowerment of human resources and then by designing the proposed conceptual model, formed a questionnaire for the statistical community. Finally, after distributing and collecting questionnaires and expert opinions and based on analysis of obtained data, conclusions and proposals will be discussed. Major tasks and activities carried out in this article include: determine the statistical population, sampling method, need of research, data analysis, determine validity and reliability. Hence, this study provides a comprehensive view on RM, for firms embarking to this project.

DATA COLLECTION: The task of data collection begins after research problem has been defined and research design/plan chalked out. While deciding about the method of data collection to be used for the study, the researcher should keep in mind two types of data sources viz., Primary and Secondary sources:-

PRIMARY SOURCES: The primary data in our research will be gathered through interviews within selected social enterprises. As Glaser (1992) said that the common way of collecting qualitative data is to the conductive of interviews, it enable one to acquire loads of insightful data in a very short time. It is also possible in this technique to ask follow-up questions if the respondents don't give enough information.

SECONDARY SOURCES: The literature here can be newspapers, books, journals, articles, and so forth. Indeed, literature is used somehow throughout all stages of the research, but when using secondary data as a source in a research it is important to be critical to the data and also to the selection of the data, thus to make sure that the data is reliable

RESEARCH DESIGN: A research design is the arrangement of conditions for collection and analysis of data in a manner that aims to combine relevance to the research purpose with economy in procedure. The present project is a case study of factors instrumental in influencing people to visit a mall. So it is a combination of several types of research designs viz. exploratory, descriptive, experimental, empirical, as well as, library research. The formidable task of defining the research problem is the preparation of the design of the research project, called the "research design". Decisions, regarding what, where, when, how much, by what means, concerning an inquiry or a research study, constitute a research design. In fact, the research design is the conceptual structure within which research is the conducted; it constitutes the blueprint for the collection, measurement and analysis of data.

SAMPLING OF THE STUDY:

There are two basic respondent strategies: sampling and census. However, we decided not to apply any sampling approach or collect data from the whole population, due to required levels of respondent expertise and limited amount of RM experts in India as a developing country.

POPULATION:

The population includes RM experts from academic environment in India as well as those working in software companies and has already participated in several RM projects. The lists were distributed among 117 experts and as such, a total of 86 surveys were completed at the rate of 74%. The average age and experiences of the respondents was 43 years and 4.2 years.

INSTRUMENT AND DATA ANALYSIS:

As mentioned earlier, critical success factors affecting RM maturity were extracted from literature reviews and questionnaire based surveys. The responses about the agreement or disagreement were analyzed using a five-point scale. Further, their reliability or internal consistency was assessed. It was observed that consistency was above 0.9, higher than the 0.7 threshold normally considered as minimum. To validate the measurement of the multi-item constructs, we used exploratory factor analysis, a procedure that allowed us to drop some invalid items from the scale and include valid items to the relevant groups. Three variables were deleted in this approach, while 41 variables including 9 factors remained there.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY:

The finding of the study are-

1. Analysis of the data gathered is also very important in order to determine the characteristics or attributes influencing the customer marketing relationships.
2. The data analysis and understanding of the determinants in customer relationships is the key point towards the efforts in improving services.
3. Appendix 1 shows the findings on the RM maturity of a firm based on responses, which includes RADAR and average scores of each measure and the average scores of the firm in given categories.
4. The evaluations were conducted by managerial staffs and bottom-line staffs in the relevant departments. The same also highlights specific categories that need attention to achieve maturity.
5. All items in the change management are the least matured with the lowest scores compared to the other categories. So, given firm gets level 2 in maturity model and should improve its state in this factor to go beyond.
6. All items in technology and structure are less than the threshold and need urgent attention for improving RM. Although, other factors are less than the threshold and thus called no-mature but some of its items are greater than 70. It leads to the related levels of these items be it pass more easily and quickly.

CONCLUSION AND FUTURE RESEARCHES:

Within my research, I aimed to develop the customer relationship marketing maturity model and seeking to find better ways to keep good relationship for the existing clients and winning new potential customer. As a means of retaining existing customers and thus winning new customers. My conclusion is on the fact that for an organization to manage and maintain their customer relationship, there need to a plan to make good customer decisions. With this plan, organizations must have the capability of performing and assessing operations. This can be perceived as a way of targeting customers in the environment and thereby establishing a good portfolio and a good relationship with them. Organizations have different preferences when it comes to customers. They perceive them as key customers all because of the high interest in them and their competences they acquire. Due to competences and capabilities possessed by their customers, coordination, relationship and communication can be seen to be effective. I found that loyalty is a concept that is not static but rather dependent on the performance of the company. With this, it is measured by the extent to which the company can deliver good services to their customers. However, I could see that company believed that loyalty could be enhanced through a better relationship. This is one of the reasons why they developed different types of programs so to increase customer loyalty. Maintaining customers can be done by having constant superior performance and delivering value to customers while at the same time developing personal relationship. Customer satisfaction, which is the other variable of maintaining customers, is an essential aspect and a central focus of an organization. This is reflected through the fact that company use surveys to check customers' interest in the relationship, goods and services, and their salesperson's performance as mentioned, using this model enables organizations to reduce risks of RM implementation that is highly uncertainty. In this research, a RM implementation maturity model has been presented that has the potential to help companies assess and improve their RM implementation processes.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH:

There are some limitations/constraints to this study, including its focus on one enterprise. In addition, self-selection bias not only limits to conclude the results of the study rather it might lead our choice of industry or firm narrow. Although, the instrument can be applied to IT firms, it must be handle prudently while applying in other industries. As a matter of fact, additional researches must be carried out to validate conclusions and to add to our understanding about RM maturity in other commercial or governmental enterprises. It is believed that the number of RM experts and their responses was small since it is a new and emerging discipline, and not many SMEs have formally implemented it, especially in a developing country like India. Furthermore, we think that there are other influencing factors on maturity that were probably left out, especially environmental ones that was excluded because of difficulty in developing universally applicable questionnaire, suitable to organizations. Finally, assessment instrument applied in the firm was attitude-based that in reality may be biased.

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