



## RESEARCH ARTICLE

### ASSESSMENTS ON DETERMINANTS OF RELATIONSHIP MARKETING: THE CASE OF ETHIO TELECOM, BAHIR DAR BRANCH

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#### ABSTRACT

Businesses are living in a world of stiff competition. To be successful in this competition, considering customer relationship is a requisite, and organizations need to investigate more on the determinants of relationship marketing. The objective of the research is to assess determinants of relationship marketing on overall relationship quality of Ethio telecom. To achieve this objective the researcher employed descriptive statistics. Study population for the study was customers who are living in Bahirdar city and customers who come to Bahirdar during the study period. Questionnaire and interview were used as data collection tools. The result of the study shows that Communication has got highest value on relationship marketing of Ethio telecom followed by trust, commitment. However, only about half of the customers are happy with ET conflict handling. Descriptive results show that ET relationship quality is good where as organizational ability in conflict handling is poor.

## INTRODUCTION

Today, service delivery companies and institutions worldwide compete due to the demands and expectations of the customers induce a factor for the survival of their professional activities. However, only those groups of the institutions will be more successful that correctly recognize, customer is a valuable investment. According to Kindye (2011), improved customer satisfaction will lead to improved customer loyalty, which will eventually improve profit. In order to satisfy our customers, we have to focus on effective customer services to meet their immediate needs. Besides Kotler (2002) stated that, it is no longer enough to satisfy customers unless we must delight them. Hence customer satisfaction is critical to any product or service as it is a strong predictor of customer retention, customer loyalty and product repurchase. Relationship marketing practice is different from transactional marketing practice, transactional exchanges as transactions with a distinct beginning, short duration, and sharp ending by performance, whereas relational exchanges as exchanges with commencement traces to previous agreements, longer duration, and reflecting an ongoing process. Hence in the case of Relationship marketing the solution is the relationship itself but in transactional exchange the solution is the product in the form

of physical goods and service (Ganesan, 1994). He also explained that Relationship marketing is more applicable, especially for service provider organization like Ethio telecom. In the case of service marketing, it is process consumption than outcome consumption. Relationship marketing is designed to develop strong connections with customers by providing them with information directly suited to their needs and interests and by promoting open communication. This approach often results in increased word-of-mouth activity, repeat business and a willingness on the customer's part to provide information to the organization. Naudé and Buttle (2000) made an overview of the major constructs of relationship quality identified in the literature. Based on their constructs relationship quality is a combination of trust, commitment, communication, conflict handling, etc.

However, according to different scholars finding, each determinant's magnitude on the relationship quality of the organizations is different. Different researchers identified different determinants of relationship marketing on their countries context and similarly it may be different in the case of our country's experience. Moreover, as to the studies in Ethiopian set up, the work of Negi (2010) is important to mention. Negi has tried to see the antecedents of relational marketing and customer loyalty in the case of Ethiopian Telecommunications Corporation.

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The works of Negi focus on customer loyalty in Ethiopian mobile telecommunications sector. But the present study covers all activities undertaken by Ethio Telecom with equal emphasis to all determinants. Therefore, the current study assesses the determinants of relationship marketing in Ethio Telecom Bahirdar branch, and fills this gap by providing full information about relationship marketing with its determinants.

### Objective of the Study

The main objective of the study is to assess determinants of relationship marketing on Ethio Telecom Bahir Dar branch. However, there are also additional objectives that should be addressed by this study work. Hence the following are specific objectives of the study:

- To assess the role trust on relationship quality of Ethio telecom
- To know the importance of commitment on relationship quality of Ethio telecom,
- To assess the role of communication on relationship quality of Ethio telecom,
- To assess the importance of conflict handling on relationship quality of Ethio telecom

### Literature review

#### Meaning and Definition of Relationship Marketing

The current conceptualization of relationship marketing migrated from organizational behavior and industrial marketing where interdependence between firms has been the foundation of successful business-to-business alliances. Morgan and Hunt (1994) define relationship marketing as all marketing activities directed towards establishing, developing, and maintaining successful relational exchanges. Relationship Marketing refers to a long-term arrangement where both the buyer and seller have an interest in providing a more satisfying exchange. Mohammad *et al.* (2011) explain that Relationship marketing is not about having a "buddy-buddy" relationship with your customers. Customers do not want that kind of relationship. Relationship Marketing uses the event-driven tactics of customer retention marketing, but treats marketing as a process over time rather than single unconnected events. By molding the marketing message and tactics to the Lifecycle of the customer, the Relationship Marketing approach achieves very high customer satisfaction and is highly profitable.

Designing customer centric strategies and processes to realize lifetime value of customers become a necessity for the organizations shifting their focus from transactional to relational exchange. This resulted in seeing firm-customer relationship from strategic perspective by bringing a shift in customer handling and retention. While, Hoffman and Bateson (2002) define customer retention as focusing a firm's marketing efforts towards the existing customer base. Kotler (2000) emphasizes upon the practice to devote marketing efforts to retain existing customers by the firm rather than attracting new customers, as there exist overwhelming arguments supporting that it is more expensive to win new customers than to keep existing ones (Negi, 2010).

Furthermore, customer replacement costs, like advertising, promotion and sales expenses are high, and it takes time for new customers to become profitable. In this regard Negi further stated that relationship marketing aims to create developer and enhance relationship with carefully targeted customers to maximize customer value and corporate profitability.

### Determinants of Relationship Marketing

The marketing literature has theorized key virtues that underpin relationship marketing, such as trust (Morgan and Hunt, 1994), commitment (Chan and Ndubisi, 2004), conflict handling (Ndubisi and Chan, 2005; Dwyer *et al.*, 1987), communication (Ndubisi and Chan, 2005; Morgan and Hunt, 1994) and satisfaction (Jones and Suh, 2000; Bojeia and Alwie, 2010); relationship quality is a bundle of intangible value that augments products or services and results in an expected interchange between buyers and sellers. Additionally, Johnson (1999) describes relationship quality as the overall depth and climate of a business relationship. According to Negi (2010) 'Trust' and 'commitment' have been reported as the key elements in managing relationship between the customers and the firm. However, maintaining life-long relationships has its roots in mutual exchange, fulfillment of promises, ethical business practices, effective communication and emotional bonding. Furthermore, Gronroos (1990) asserted that the resources of the seller-personnel, technology and systems have to be used in such a manner that the customer's trust in the resources evolved and thus, maintained and strengthened in future course of action by supporting customer loyalty.

### Trust

As competition deepens, products and services become more indistinguishable, and markets become established, it is becoming increasingly tougher for companies to distinguish themselves from other industries. Simply offering customers with technical solutions to problems does not be sufficient anymore to be competitive and obtain and retain market share. Various value-added services, which commence before the actual operation begins, had gone far beyond it, so as to stay competitive and develop customer loyalty. Trust can be defined as "when one party has confidence in an exchange partner's reliability and integrity" (Morgan and Hunt, 1994). Trust is a willingness to rely on an exchange partner in whom one has confidence up on. Both definitions also highlight the importance of strengthening mutual confidence. Johns and Perrott further suggest that, trust leads to relationship commitment, which is what marketers are striving to achieve. Trust is also a key element for relationship success and tends to be related to a number of elements such as competitive advantage and satisfaction. In contrast with a discrete transaction or sale, which has a beginning and end (Dwyer, Shurr and Oh, 1987), relationship marketing is a longer-term relationship where building trust and commitment is seen as important. In order to compete effectively in the marketplace, it is acknowledged that organizations need to be trusted cooperators. In this regard Morgan and Hunt (1994) suggest that Trust is generally important in any relationship because it can be considered as a foundation of any relationship. It is the main component of long-term business as well as personal

relationships, and widely studied in the social exchange and also in marketing literature.

### **Commitment**

Relationship commitment is defined as “an exchange partner believing that an ongoing relationship with another is so important as to warrant maximum efforts at maintaining it” (Morgan and Hunt, 1994). Commitment is seen as central because it not only leads to such important outcomes as decreased turnover, higher motivation, and increased organizational citizenship behaviors, but it also results from such things that can be influenced by the firm as recruiting and training practices, job equity, and organizational support (Chan *et al.*, 2004). Commitment, as one of the important variables to understand the strength of a marketing relationship, implies to a higher level of obligation to make a relationship succeed and mutually satisfying (Morgan and Hunt, 1994). Commitment, therefore, is defined as an enduring desire to maintain a valued relationship between business person and customers. Since relationship quality from the customer’s perspective is achieved through the service provider’s ability to reduce uncertainty, firms that are highly committed to service and relationship maintenance with customers, would be more successful in reducing customer doubts and uncertainties and in turn enhanced customer loyalty (Negi, 2010).

### **Conflict Handling**

Conflict handling, as defined by Dwyer *et al.* (1987), is the supplier’s ability to minimize the negative consequences of manifest and potential conflicts. Therefore, it reflects the supplier’s ability to avoid potential conflicts, solve manifest conflicts before they create problems, and to discuss solutions openly when problems arise. They concluded that the likelihood that an individual will engage in these behaviors depends on the degree of prior satisfaction with the relationship, the magnitude of the person’s investment in the relationship and an evaluation of the alternatives one has. Thus, how conflicts are handled will ensure loyalty, as reported by Ndubisi (2007). Morgan and Hunt (1994) clearly identify on their research about conflict handling as a result effective conflict handling can have a dramatic impact on customer retention rates, redirect the spread of damaging word of mouth, and improve end result performance. Effective resolution of customer problems and relationship marketing are linked closely in terms of their mutual interest in customer satisfaction, trust, and commitment. Challenges in managing quality, combined with the important role played by customers in the service production process and evidence that customer loyalty drives profitability, make conflict handling a critical moment of truth in maintaining and developing these relationships.

### **Communication**

Communication can be defined as “the formal as well as informal sharing of meaningful and timely information between firms” (Anderson and Narus, 1990). Communication in relationship marketing means providing information that is trustworthy, deals with quality and fulfils promises. It is the

marketer’s task to build awareness and customer preference by promoting quality, value, performance and other features, and to encourage interested buyers to make purchase decisions (Ndubisi and Chan 2005). Communication means keeping in touch with valued customers, providing them timely and trustworthy information on service and service changes, and communicating proactively if a delivery problem occurs (Ndubisi and Chan, 2005). It is also about mutual disclosure or sharing of secrets. However, both content and style in communication are important in building quality relationship with customers. Anderson and Narus (1990) argued about the view of communication as an interactive dialogue between the company and its customers that takes place during the pre-selling, selling, consuming and post-consuming stages. Therefore, by assuming that when there is effective communication between an organization and its customers, customers will be better informed on the organization’s initiatives and activities, thus leading to improve customer loyalty through quality firm-customer relationship (Negi, 2010).

### **Summary and Identifying Knowledge Gap**

Gronroos (1994) states the aim of relationship marketing as establishing, maintaining, and enhancing relationships with customers and other partners, at a profit, so that the objectives of the parties involved are met. Additionally, the literature of relationship marketing has identified a need to expand the focus of firm-customer interaction to include relational properties (Ndubisi, 2007; Dwyer *et al.*, 1987), as customers make long-term commitments in order to reduce transaction costs. Therefore, the key objective of relationship marketing is to foster customer loyalty, which Oliver (1999) defined as a deeply held commitment to re-buy or re-patronize a preferred product or service in the future, despite there are situational influences and marketing efforts having the potential to cause switching behavior. The review of the literature reveals the existence of gap, and it shows that relationship marketing is not yet fully discovered issue. Particularly in Ethiopia the concept of relationship marketing is at its infancy level that needs further investigation. Besides, so far to the best of the researcher’s knowledge, there is only one study conducted on this specific area in the context of Ethiopia, particularly in telecom industry. Therefore, the current study will be an eye opener for further studies in the local and regional context.

### **Research Methodology**

This research is a descriptive research that covers the assessment of determinants of relationship marketing. Hence the researcher is intending to use the following methods to collect relevant data and to handle cases related to Ethio Telecom in general and Bahir Dar branch in particular. Both primary and secondary data were used in the study. Primary data was collected through questionnaire, formal and informal interviews with, employees and customers of Ethio Telecom. Secondary data like official documents, annual reports’ journal articles, books and other web related materials were used in the study. The kinds of data used as secondary sources were data related to marketing activities and human resource aspects. The study population was both employees and customers of Ethio

Telecom of Bahir Dar branch which is found at Bahir Dar city. Convenient sampling techniques were used to select customers to fill the questionnaire. The purpose of using questionnaire is to secure data from many people at a time and for its natural characteristics that allow informants express their idea and opinion freely. Judgmental sampling techniques employed to select employees for interview. This is because all employees may not provide genuine information. Moreover, the concept of relationship marketing is known only in certain employees. To determine sample size the scientific method is used. When sample size scientifically determine: purpose of the study, population size, the level of precision (sampling error), the level of confidence interval, and the degree of variability in the attributes being measured should be considered (Miaoulis and Micher, 1976). Confidence level for this study was 95% (CL) and Degree of variability (Proportion) 50%, Maximum tolerable error was 5%.

$$N = \frac{Z^2 \times (p) \times (1 - p)}{E^2}$$

Where: 'Z' is 1.96. Since the value of 'Z' is depend on tolerable error

$$N = \frac{(1.96^2) \times .5 \times .5}{.05^2} = 384$$

Based on the assumption the sample size for infinite population of the study was calculated and found to be 384. But due non response and incomplete filled questionnaire 304 questionnaires were valid for analysis. The internal consistency of the instruments was tested via reliability analysis by different researchers in Ethiopian as well as developed countries starting from 1994 by Morgan and Hunt to date. Since each determinant item has been adopted, the researcher did not go further to take pilot study for checking the internal consistency of the instruments. The data collected from questionnaire were tabulated. Percentiles and averages were calculated and the data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. The collected and analyzed data interpreted in an effort to draw meaning for the research work conducted. Secondary data were used to strength data collected from primary data and descriptive analysis used where findings presented in percentages.

### Data Analysis, Presentation and Discussions

The purpose of this study was to assess determinant of relationship marketing on Ethio telecom Bahirdar branch. Accordingly, this topic presents the data gathered from the field, the analysis of the collected data and findings of the study. The findings of the study were also presented in percentages and frequency distributions.

#### Commitment

As shown in table 1 below the activity of Ethio Telecom on offering customized telecommunication service is fair and above (58%) but about 32% of the respondents rated as poor. With regard to Adjustments of ET to suit individual telecommunication services need nearly 70 % of the respondents value fair and above with 34% good and 10% very

good. Similarly, ET flexibility in providing telecommunication services of various type is good (43%), fair (30%), poor (12%), very good (10%), very poor (5%) respectively. The respondents valued commitment of employees of the organization positively in such a way that more than 40% of the respondents valued commitment of the staff as good and above. However, nearly 30% of the respondents evaluated commitment as poor and very poor. This shows that the commitment of the staff is far from expectation. An informal interview with some employees also has revealed the same result. Therefore, the organization needs to work hard to satisfy the needs of its customers pertaining to commitment of the staff.

#### Conflict Handling

Conflict handling is an important relationship builder. Since it is difficult to achieve perfect service all the time, it is better to have problem solving strategy like reactive and proactive. Table 2 below indicated that majority of the respondents (58%) are not happy with regard to avoiding conflict/complaint. Only one fourth of the respondents are valued good and very good on conflict handling. 28% of the respondents valued ET ability to openly discuss solutions when problem arises followed by 26% poor and 24% good. Ethio Telecom's potential in avoiding conflict/complaint is somewhat poor and many customers utter their unhappiness about this issue. They were thinking conflict handling procedure was lengthy time taking, most of the time the outcome was also in favor of service provider. nearly one fourth of the respondents valued the employees have the habit of discussing with customers when problem arises; are very active to respond for the manifestation of the customer when problems arises; they also provide fast response for the customers, and they are advocating the proactive problem solving methods. On average 20 % of conflict handling is as good and above. However, nearly 40 % of the respondents evaluated it as poor. This shows that the conflict handling of the employees is far from the standard set by the organization. Therefore, ET employees' are highly needed to improve their means and habits of conflict handling. The findings of the descriptive revealed that conflict handling in Ethio Telecom lags behind the expectation of customers. So, the problem seems very much serious and should work more in this area extensively. As pointed out by Negi (2010) Since it is difficult to achieve in total the avoidance of conflicts, it is important that ET put in place effective conflict resolution or problem solving mechanism, as what could drive a customer to become dissatisfied thus separated from behaving loyally, will not be occurrence of a problem by itself, but how the problem was handled. However, the ultimate approach in this regard may be avoiding potential conflicts by blocking the sources of their occurrence, or solving conflicts before they manifest. These efforts if directed properly would bring about better firm-customer relationship that in turn, ensures customer loyalty.

#### Trust

Maintaining and developing trust has a positive contribution to firm customer relation quality.

On average 50% of the respondents valued ET is concerned in providing secured services to customer as good and above.

**Table 1. Employees Commitment**

Questions Forwarded to the respondents	Alternative Responses	Frequency	Percent
ET's endeavor to offer customized telecommunication services in an effort to meet customer needs	Very poor	29	10
	poor	98	32
	fair	71	23
	good	76	25
	Very good	30	10
Adjustments of ET to suit individual needs of telecommunication services	Very poor	55	18
	poor	34	11
	fair	82	27
	good	105	34
ET flexibility in providing telecommunication services of various type	Very good	28	10
	Very poor	16	5
	poor	37	12
	fair	90	30
	good	131	43
	Very good	30	10

**Table 2. Employees' ability in conflict handling**

Questions Forwarded to the respondents	Alternative Responses	Frequency	Percent
4.ET's potential and system of handling/resolving conflicts and that of complaints	Very poor	55	18
	poor	120	40
	fair	73	24
	good	47	15
	Very good	9	3
5. ET's conflict handling in solving problems with customers through open discussions	Very poor	40	13
	poor	80	26
	fair	84	28
	good	72	24
	Very good	28	9

**Table 3. Employees Trust**

Questions Forwarded to the respondents	Alternative Responses	Frequency	Percent
6.ET's concern in providing secured service to customers	Very poor	15	5
	poor	44	14
	fair	96	32
	good	101	33
	Very good	48	16
7. ET's reliability in keeping its promise	Very poor	20	6
	poor	45	15
	fair	95	31
	good	109	36
	Very good	35	12
8. ET employees respect to customers	Very poor	28	9
	poor	60	20
	fair	91	30
	good	91	30
	Very good	34	11
9. ET's concern in fulfilling its obligations and promises with customers	Very poor	13	4
	poor	50	16
	fair	130	42
	good	85	30
	Very good	26	8

**Table 4. Ability of Employees' Communication Skill**

Questions Forwarded to the respondents	Alternative Responses	Frequency	Percent
10. ET ability on provision of timely and trustworthy information	Very poor	9	3
	poor	33	11
	fair	50	18
	good	152	46
	Very good	60	22
11. ET provides quick information when there is a new service	Very poor	35	11
	poor	51	17
	fair	51	17
	good	109	36
	Very good	58	19

However, nearly 14% of the respondents evaluated it as poor and 5% valued as very poor. This result shows that ETs concern in providing secure services to customer of the employees is still needs little improvement. As to ETs reliability in keeping its promise, 33% of the respondents answered well, 32% fair, while the remaining 16% said very well and 14% poor. ETs reliability in keeping its promise most of the respondents (79%) are positive and valued fair and above 21 % (15% poor and 6% very poor) of the respondents claimed that the ETs reliability in keeping its promise is not up to the expectation of customers and the organization standard. customers were asked whether ETs employees with whom they contacted in the past had paid respect to them, most of the customers have got proper respect from Ethio Telecom employees (30% good, 30% fair 11 % very good) and the remaining 29% (20% poor, 9% very poor) customers are not happy with performance of Ethio Telecom employees on the area of customer respect. The responses of majority respondents for the question ETs concern in fulfilling its obligations and promises with customers give an impression that 80% of the respondents valued fair and above (42% fair, 30% good, and 8% very good). The remaining 16% and 4% are evaluating poor and very poor respectively. Interview made with the manager of Bahir Dar branch direct channel Management Division of ET, has revealed that the direct channel division has devised ways to tackle problems with regard to discharging the organization's responsibility. An administrative decision is to be taken on the basis of employee's performance in fulfilling their duty in particular and the organization obligation in general. Trust is an important foundation of relationship marketing is particularly important in building quality relationship as individuals seek predictable and consistent behavior on the part of their partner such that a relatively high degree of certainty is attached to future rewards. Besides, it reduces transaction costs as there is less necessity to establish expensive controlling mechanisms; lower costs in turn increases the probability continuing the relationship in the future and, therefore, increases commitment to the relationship quality because, both parties are relied upon each other (Ganesan, 1994).

The descriptive result of the study shows that about 80% of the study participants evaluated the degree of trustworthiness of employees of the organization as fair and above. However, still there is formidable proportion of customers who were not happy with trustworthiness of employees showing that the Ethio Telecom has to address this gap of employees.

### Communication

To measure the overall role of communication on relationship marketing, two questions were forwarded to respondents as shown in table 4. The first one is ETs ability on provision of timely and trustworthy information and the other one is, whether ET provides quick information when there is a new service or not. For the first one, ETs ability on provision of timely and trustworthy information, the respondents valued 46% good, 22% very good, and 18% fair. However, small proportion of the respondents (11% poor and 3% very poor) responded negatively to this particular variable. For the second one, whether ET provides quick information when there is a

new service or not, 55% of the respondents responded good and above and 17% fair. The remaining respondents responded that 17% poor and 11% very poor. The interview conducted with some managers of the ET of Bahir Dar branch shows that communication skill of employees is increasing after the Ethiopian telecommunication corporation reborn as Ethio Telecom which the management system is under taken by France telecom. They further explained that, after the change of management the communication system between employees and top managers is short and direct. Similarly the customer is free to communicate with front line employees and top level managers as well. Moreover, ET is good at promotion and advertisements of its products and services using different Medias like television, radio, and written Medias including messages sent through Cell Phones. Discount and price reduction is made with holidays and other occasions. Gronroos (1994) pointed out that the outcome of an ongoing communication may offer a feeling of control, security, a sense of trust, minimized purchasing risks and, importantly, reduce cost to the customer. So, devising effective personal communication is a fundamental part of relationship marketing and that dialogue is a key feature that makes each customer feel special and unique. In addition to this, effective communication helps to shape realistic expectations between partners and develops a sense of closeness and ease in the relationship. When there is effective communication between the organization and its customers, customers are better informed about the organization initiatives or plan and activities, uncertainty will reduce and relationship quality will also improve, because the ability of employees to communicate well contributes to good relationship quality of Ethio Telecom with its customers.

### Conclusion

Relationship marketing is an important strategy for every business organizations in general and service organizations in particular since service by its very nature needs the interaction and physical presence. To achieve good relationship quality with the customer the knowledge of determinants of relationship marketing is important. And the most important determinants of relationship marketing are: commitment, trust, conflict handling, and communication. In line with the theoretical contributions of these determinants briefly stated, this study assess determinants of relationship marketing in Ethio Telecom Bahir dar branch by examining the organizations activity with recently developed concepts. From descriptive analysis it is possible to conclude that each relationship determinants are important on relationship marketing of Ethio telecom. Communication has got the highest value of customers which 79% of the customers have positive attitude towards their communication with Ethio Telecom. The next most important variable for relationship marketing is trust, which accounts 78% of customers able to develop trust on ET in general ET employees in particular. The third determinants of relationship marketing is commitment in which 71% of the respondents were committed to continue their relationship, satisfied with Ethio Telecom. The last determinant is Conflict handling; which only about 52% of the customers are happy with ET conflict or complaint handling. Nearly equal number of customers (48%) did not get proper

treatment while they got problem on the service of ET. To sum up, ET has different means of checking whether employees are trusted, committed to their responsibility as well as for their customers by conducting audit, and monitoring each employee's daily activities by the immediate supervisor. In addition to this, ET providing continuous training for these lower performers as well as other employees to make the service more attractive than before.

### Recommendations

Based on the major findings obtained from the study, the researcher provided the following recommendations.

- The study indicated that nearly one third of the employees of Ethio Telecom are not committed to their work. ET is at transition period there by some employees feel insecurity to their job and there is knowledge gap to perform the new working process. Therefore, it is advisable that ET should provide encouragement and training to employees in order to improve their commitment and there by develop good relationship with customers.
- ET's potential in avoiding conflict/complaint is poor. Supporting employees with formal conflict handling training will further enhance their skill in improving the existing moderate relationship between employees of ET and its customers. Therefore, ET needs to identify its weakness and provide the appropriate training. Furthermore, it is better to introduce complete changes in customer complaint handling system and its outcome by giving clear cut instructions to the concerned sections for legitimate evaluation on customer complaints.
- There is some proportion of customers who were not happy with the degree of trustworthiness and communication, lack of awareness about trust, communication and their proper use will have immeasurable importance on relationship marketing. Thus managements of ET should arrange awareness creation program to employees on trust and communication determinants in particular and relationship marketing in general.

### Further Research Directions

This study focused on determinants of relationship marketing on Bahirdar branch. This hence limiting generalization of the results to all Ethio telecom in Ethiopia. Further studies may thus focus on Ethio telecom other branches. Future research can also investigate other determinants of marketing using a broader framework to measure relationship quality.

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