The Effects of Information Technology on Employee User Satisfaction, Customer Satisfaction, Service Quality, and Customer Relationship Performance

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Abstract*: The performance of customer relationships, employee user satisfaction, employee service quality, and customer satisfaction are all examined in relation to information technology in this article. Three research questions regarding the roles of information technology in the context of customer relationship management, the impact of information technology on the user satisfaction and service quality of front-line employees, and the impact of information technology user satisfaction on employee service quality and ultimately customer satisfaction are addressed. Along with finding the answers to the study questions, a mechanism for how information technology influences the two primary actors in the front-line business process—customers and customer service representatives—is also revealed. The study focuses mostly on CRM technology, or customer-related information technology. The importance of relational information processes and technology utilisation in customer relationship performance is studied, and the moderating effects of supply integration and the mediating effect of customer knowledge are discussed. In terms of five levels, the operational CRM technology known as sales force automation (SFA) is also analysed for its impact on customer service. The causes of CRM technology failure include a lack of connectivity between the supply chain and the relationship information processes, as well as organisational and environmental variables. The impact of information technology use on users' satisfaction among employees is discussed using the needs theory and equity theory. Understanding the relationship between user pleasure and employee service quality, which is regulated by employees' embodied service knowledge, using the service profit chain (SPC) hypothesis. Finally, a variety of studies have examined the effect of service quality on customer satisfaction.*

Keywords: CRM, IT, Customer sasfaction, Service quality, performance

I. INTRODUCTION

Organisations are anxiously seeking an efficient IT strategy and apps to capitalise on the information technologies that are revolutionising their customer-side operations. consumer service performance has become crucial for corporate entities' survival and growth due to the rapid speed of innovation, shorter product life cycles, different consumer needs, and increased internationalisation of firms (Setia et al. 2013).

Information technologies have long been incorporated into every area of company, especially at the front end where they are essential for generating income and fostering business expansion. The usage of information systems has attracted a lot of attention from practitioners and persistent curiosity from researchers.

Customers and staff are both important participants in customer-side operations, which are at the forefront of the commercial process. For the front-line of business processes, this paper focuses on customer relationship management and one of its subsets, sales force automation. These aspects are directly related to the market performance and financial performance of organisations and have attracted a lot of attention from researchers and practitioners. It's critical to consider the connections between the four components of information system use, employee system satisfaction, employee service quality, and customer service quality.

The remainder of the paper will be organised as follows. First, the function of customer-related information technologies in customer service (hereafter referred to as CRM) will be examined from a variety of views proposed by various academics, based on a thorough assessment of research literature.

Relational information processing and its interaction with CRM technology, the mediating impact of customer expertise, and the moderating impact of supply chain integration are some of the aspects covered. The exploration also includes operational CRM applications such as sales force automation (SFA). In this paper, it is also investigated why the use of CRM technology might not always deliver the expected customer relationship performance outcome given the strategic imperative nature of effective customer service and the evidence that 40% of customers who experience poor customer service stop doing business with the target company (Dougherty and Murthy 2009; Pavlou and El Sawy 2010).

Understanding the elements that influence information technology user happiness is the second section of the paper's design. The CRM systems are where front-line personnel connect with customers and each other while providing customer care. The direct providers of customer service are front-line employees who use information technologies. Because employees have such direct touch with the clients they serve, it is also empirically significant to know what could influence employees' user satisfaction with information technology.

The investigation of how front-line employees' satisfaction with information technology affects employee service quality and, in turn, customer satisfaction is the third component of the main construct. The first portion of this section will introduce the service profit chain (SPC) idea. The CRM technology will often be implemented in a business context and then rolled out across the full organisation before eventually becoming a part of the business infrastructure in which the front-line employees interact with customers. In other words, the CRM becomes a must for the staff to provide customer support in the majority of situations. The effect of customer happiness with required CRM use on the calibre of employee service is also investigated. There is a brief discussion of the effects of service quality and client satisfaction.

The Impact of Information Technology on the Performance of Customer Relationships

Strategically, most businesses have placed a high priority on customer service. For many business and information technology (IT) executives, it is a primary priority. According to Sweat and Hibbard (1999), a one-point increase in a company's customer satisfaction index equates to an average market value increase of $240 million, or $364 million today. Understanding and meeting customer expectations and enhancing customer service are the top two strategic technology, business, and IT project implementation priorities, according to a poll of 300 IT leaders (Davis 1999).

Businesses are attempting to establish stronger relationships with their clients by converting the client-provider relationship into one of support and service through collaborating and problem-solving. The way a product is displayed, ordered, delivered, packaged, charged, installed, fixed, renewed, and improved are all examples of customer support and service. Considering its role in managing and developing one of the most crucial fundamental business processes is developing strong long-term client connections, customer support, and service (Sawy and Bowles 1997).

Scholars and business executives now generally concur that providing excellent customer service is not only the key to exceeding marketing objectives in terms of customer satisfaction, but also a key indicator of how competitive the customer service process is (Szymanski and Henard 2001; Zeithaml 2000). Information systems' priorities have risen as a result of the increased attention being paid to customer service, suggesting that IT plays a crucial part in assisting the customer service process (Sawy and Bowles 1997).

This paper's focus is on the functions and effects of information systems use in business processes on the client side. The front-line business engagement's information systems are centred on an IT solution for customer relationship management.

Customer relationship management (CRM) technology will be examined in this portion of the paper as an example of an information system used in a front-line business operation. In addition, the function of sales force automation (SFA) technology as a CRM technology for customer service will be examined. SFA technology represents operational CRM applications that assist selling tasks.

The Use of CRM Technology and the Performance of Customer Relationships

As information technology (IT) has developed quickly, businesses now have access to new technology-based solutions, such as CRM systems, to manage customer connections. The CRM process is supported by this technology, which

consists of a collection of IT solutions (Rigby et al. 2002). Such technology is described by Rigby et al. (2002) as a collection of IT solutions created to support the CRM process.

To distinguish between lucrative and unprofitable consumers, personalise services, and keep customers, many businesses have invested in CRM technology (Peppers et al. 1999). By examining its moderating impact on the relationship between relational information processes and customer performance, Jayachandran et al. (2005) distinguish CRM technology use from the relational information processes that support CRM and assess the role of CRM technology use in customer relationship management.

The use of CRM technology makes it possible to integrate and share information, to connect with customers in an effective and efficient manner, to analyse customer data, and to personalise responses. The ability of an organisation to maintain profitable customer relationships should therefore be improved by the use of CRM technology (Day 2003). CRM technology consists of back office applications that help integrate and analyse the data as well as front office apps that support sales, marketing, and customer service as well as data collection and storage (Greenberg 2001). IT serves as a moderator between organisational procedures and customer relationship performance, not as a replacement for those processes. By facilitating efficient implementation, IT raises the processes' marginal value (Hitt and Snir 1999). In order to increase their marginal value, businesses employ IT to support organisational activities (Brynjolfsson and Hitt 2000). CRM technology, according to Reinartz et al. (2004), facilitates CRM activities. CRM technology boosts the marginal value of relational information processes by acting in a complementary manner, enhancing the effectiveness of customer relationships.

CRM tools support the highest levels of product and customer service excellence and increase clients' perceptions of liability. Customer satisfaction results as a result. Supply chain integration in the CRM process as a whole and customer knowledge mediate the impact of CRM on the quality of customer service.

The Function of SFA in the Performance of Customer Relations

The sales territory's dynamism is crucial in the current world, and businesses need a new perspective on the sales function to add value and achieve a competitive edge. As a result, businesses make significant investments in customer relationship management (CRM) software. Sales force automation (SAF), an operational CRM system with a focus on the front end of the process, has been a hot zone for the CRM investment for many organisations (Widmier et al. 2002). Information technology is used in SFA to help the sales function (Boujena et al. 2009). According to some professionals, SFA refers to remote access to a continuously

Salespeople maintain a central database that is updated (Parthasarathy and Sohi 1997). As a result, SFA can be regarded as an operational CRM application since it has the capacity to gather and share market data, support sales operations, and encourage the growth of value-added customer connections (Ahearne et al. 2008).

Both customers and staff gain from SFA. The effectiveness of SFA is reflected in how customers view the advantage (Ahearne et al. 2004). The purpose of SFA is to guarantee sales force productivity, which directly and immediately affects customers. Given the initiative, SFA performance can be determined by how customers perceive the value they receive, as shown by staff traits like productivity, skills, and responsiveness (Othman et al. 2009).

Customers' perceptions of service quality during interactions with salespeople have the biggest impact on total customer satisfaction in industrial settings (Homburg and Rudolf 2001).

A relationship-building process is used by Boujena et al. (2009) to measure the benefits of SFA from the viewpoint of the customers and to assess the role of SFA at the following five levels: salesperson productivity, information processing, communication effectiveness, perceived competence, and customer relationship quality.

Customer Service Productivity

SFA is typically thought to occur when businesses automate their operations or use technology to increase the efficacy and productivity of their sales staff (Boujena et al. 2009). Through improved client recruitment, development, and account profiling, effective SFA implementation can result in increased productivity (Pullig et al. 2002). According to Hill and Swenson (1994), SFA increase an organization's capacity to understand customer wants, provide customised options, make educated decisions, forge lasting customer relationships, and boost the output of front-line staff members. SFA gives salespeople access to

information that, in a timely and organised manner, reflects both the needs of each individual client and the general market dynamic. Finally, it is suggested that IT can improve front-line staff members' productivity and effectiveness (Igbaria and Tan 1997) and make data interpretation and analysis easier (Huber 1990).

SFA expedites access to current information and cuts down on time spent on administrative procedures (Rivers and Dart 1999). By arranging connections in a way that salespeople can utilise to add value for both customers and the organisation, customer contact management technologies can increase salesperson productivity. Finally, SFA can assist front-line staff in responding quicker (Gilbert 2004), which affects how customers perceive the level of customer care. processing information

SFA utilises a centralised CRM database for operation. The database gives salespeople access to a wealth of data about goods, customers, rival goods and prices, client production schedules, market trends, and industry events. Salespeople can better understand client needs and requirements by using SFA to communicate with customers about the features and benefits of the products or services. SFA enables businesses to provide more goods and services that customers will value and to generate more pertinent data through the analysis of customer data (Boujena et al. 2009). Employees who share, take in, and use the pertinent information can transform it into embodied customer knowledge. As a result, salespeople can spend less time navigating through the vast amounts of customer data by employing SFA technology. They can instead concentrate on the information that matters most, use it to better illustrate the benefits to the customer, and complete the sale (Jayachandran et al. 2005).

II. CONCLUSION

In order to manage client interactions and provide customer support, businesses now have access to technological solutions like CRM and SFA thanks to the rapid advancement of information technology. In order to comprehend the relationship between the usage of information systems, customer service, employee user satisfaction, employee service quality, and customer satisfaction, a thorough literature review is undertaken in this paper. Numerous factors, such as relational information processing, CRM technology use, the mediating influence of customer knowledge, and the moderating effect of supply chain integration, are used to illustrate the function of customer relationship management systems. It also examines the function of sales force automation (SFA), a functioning CRM system. Included are a few elements that may help to explain why using CRM technology doesn't always produce the desired results in terms of customer relationship performance. A study with an equitable needs fulfilment model and the three motivational theories explore the relationship between these two variables, but no significant and clearly stated impact of information systems on employees' user satisfaction is discovered. By using the service profit chain (SPC) and examining a setting of required CRM use, the effect of user satisfaction of information systems on employee service quality and later customer satisfaction is also evaluated. Employees' embodied service knowledge is taken into consideration as a moderating element. The consensus that service quality has a major beneficial impact on customer satisfaction has not been identified in any of the literature that was studied, and the evidence for this link is sparse and needs to be clarified through further research.

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