
THE EFFECT OF ROLE CLARITY AND SELF-EFFICACY ON CUSTOMER VALUE CO-CREATION: THE CASE OF FITNESS CENTRES

Abstract ID: EASM-2015-263/R1 - (763)

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Date submitted: 2015-03-23

Date accepted: 2015-04-24

Type: Scientific

Keywords: VALUE CO-CREATION, ROLE CLARITY, SELF-EFFICACY

Category: 5: Marketing in and Through Sport

Synopsis:

This study indicates that role clarity and self-efficacy are facilitators of value co-creation.

Abstract:

AIM OF THE PAPER

This study examines to what extent role clarity and self-efficacy enable customers to co-create mutual value in the context of the sport services sector.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Value co-creation has attracted the attention of academics and practitioners since service-dominant logic was introduced by Vargo & Lusch (2004). The concept refers to “joint activities by parties involved in direct interactions, aiming at contributing to the value that emerges for one or both parties” (Grönroos, 2012, p.1520). In the recent years, customer co-creation is becoming more important because it is concluded that customers’ collaboration is necessary to accomplish value creation. Customer participation results in better service, more customisation and service quality, improved experiences, enhanced psychological value on the customers’ side. On the other side, organisations’ benefits from customer engagement are increased productivity and customer satisfaction, higher revenue and profit, and lower costs and risks. These important benefits for the both parties lead to the importance of exploring influential factors on customer engagement.

Furthermore, a remarkable number of scholars have theoretically discussed the concept of value co-creation. However, the need for identification of antecedents of value co-creation, especially through empirical studies (Grisseemann & Stokburger-Sauer, 2012), is emphasised by scholars (e.g., van Doorn et al., 2010). As a result, this study is intended to contribute to marketing knowledge by empirically exploring the influence of role clarity and self-efficacy on value co-creation dimensions. Verleye, Gemmel, & Rangarajan (2014) mention that customer role readiness is essential to engage in service delivery. It is supposed that role clarity and self-efficacy are facilitators of customer

engagement. Role clarity occurs when a customer is knowledgeable about what must be performed. McKee, Simmers, & Licata (2006) contend that researchers have paid little attention to customer role in services. Moreover, self-efficacy is one's belief regarding his/her ability to execute a specified action (Bandura, 1997). Given that engagement in service delivery processes may result in psychological, financial, social, and physical risks, self-efficacy can have a facilitator role. Studies indicates significant effect of role clarity and self-efficacy on customer participation. However, their effects are not well-documented in the sport marketing literature. Therefore, this study contributes to the literature by investigating the effect of role clarity and self-efficacy on value co-creation dimensions in the fitness centres.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

The present study contributes to marketing knowledge through objectivist ontology, positivist epistemology, quantitative research method, and deductive approach. Items of research questionnaire (30 statements) were adopted from previous studies to assess role clarity and self-efficacy as predictor variables, and compliance, advocacy, and helping other customers as criterion variables. To develop content validity 20 informants including two marketing academics, two fitness centre managers, four fitness centre staff, and 12 PhD students reviewed the questionnaire and gave feedback. This pre-testing stage helped to improve the survey (e.g., amendment of vague words and statements). Then, a pilot-testing was conducted. In this stage, 60 members of fitness centres completed the questionnaire. Factor analysis confirmed dimensionality of the factors. Cronbach's alpha also indicated that the factors were reliable. Lastly, data was collected among 346 members of fitness centres who had at least one month membership at the centres.

RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS

After exploratory factor analysis (Principle Components factor analysis with Promax rotation) by SPSS and confirmatory factor analysis using AMOS to check unidimensionality of constructs, 17 items were retained. Findings indicated that the goodness-of fit indices are satisfactory ($\chi^2(109) = 154.50$, CFI=.98, TLI = .98, IFI = .98, RMSEA = .035). Moreover, it is suggested that first-order constructs of a higher-order factor should have significant correlation. Findings revealed that compliance, advocacy, and helping as dimensions of value co-creation were correlated. In addition, reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity of the constructs were calculated and all confirmed. The results of structural model also revealed that model was fit ($\chi^2(113) = 311.727$, CFI=. 92, TLI = .91, IFI = .93, RMSEA = .07).

As well, findings indicated that role clarity had positive significant effect on compliance ($\beta=.39$, $p<.001$), advocacy ($\beta=.42$, $p<.001$), and helping ($\beta=.25$, $p<.001$). Furthermore, while the effect of self-efficacy on advocacy ($\beta=.16$, $p<.05$), and helping ($\beta=.20$, $p<.01$) was positively significant, its impact on compliance was insignificant ($\beta=.05$, $p>.05$). In sum, this study indicated that role clarity and self-efficacy are facilitators of value co-creation. Comparison of the predictors specified that role clarity has more important effect on customer engagement than self-efficacy. Given the importance of customer engagement in value co-creation, fitness centres' managers can benefit from this type of interaction if they improve consumers' self-efficacy and particularly clarify their customers' role.

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