

FACTORS AFFECTING CUSTOMER SUPPORT SYSTEM FOR SUSTAINABILITY OF MEMBERSHIP IN NUTRIWEALTH MULTI-PURPOSE COOPERATIVE

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to describe the issues that affect the improvement of the customer support system in NutriWealth Multi-Purpose Cooperative in order to sustain the relationship and loyalty of the members. The respondents were composed of 95 members of NMPC located at one of the satellites of the cooperative which is in Tanauan, Batangas. The primary instrument used in gathering data was survey questionnaire administered through Google forms and personal meeting with the respondents. The four-point scale was used to distinguish the level of agreement and disagreement in perception and attitude of the respondents towards the issues affecting the customer database of NMPC. Findings revealed that members were not aware of the existence of the online database of NMPC, but they were satisfied to the overall services given by NMPC.

Keywords: customer support system, relationship marketing, customer loyalty

INTRODUCTION

It has been said that a strong army can conquer a kingdom but the strongest army in the world cannot stop an idea whose time has come. This is the story of NutriWealth Multi-Purpose Cooperative whose time has come as it advances what it aptly termed as the four pillars of success anchored on co-op principles and practices with programs that are responding to the call of the times. NutriWealth is a Multi-Purpose Cooperative that focused on manufacturing products and giving its members access to its savings and investment program. They also provide other valuable services and different projects established and implemented by their members.

According to Mohammadhossein and Zakaria (2012), Customer Relationship Management (CRM) is a strategic technique that brings

people, business, and technology together to grasp the needs of customers to be more satisfied. The fundamental key to each business and company to help them to grow are the customers. Having a CRM application is very significant in a business because it will help managers and companies to increase the level of satisfaction and loyalty of the customers compare before.

Giving prominence to service marketing strategies particularly service quality and in-store supermarkets can increase customer satisfaction and customer loyalty. The usage of research papers, conference articles, online databases, masters or doctoral dissertations and other related published information which are directly connected in service strategy found that it can affect to customer satisfaction and in turn to customer loyalty (Kumaradeepan & Pathmini, 2015).

Nutriwealth (2017) states that 20% of their members are pulling out their investment and membership because of the following reasons: 5% due to badly need of money and 15% due to many issues regarding member accounts and unsatisfactory services.

In the light of the aforementioned statement, this study aimed to determine the factors that affect why customer database is not updated and many members are not updated in the cooperative new activities and programs, and are not highly satisfied in the current support system of the cooperative. The factors that the researcher were looking at were lack of manpower in updating the database or system, the member itself was not really aware of the existence of the online database, and the frontline employees were not interactive enough to the members to get their information and to inform them.

The researchers attempted to identify the reasons for poor quality of online database of NutriWealth Multi-Purpose Cooperative, so that it can lead to a sustainable relationship with the members of the cooperative. The researchers wanted to help the cooperative in accomplishing their objectives in giving quality service to their members through contributing to them some strategies that they may use to improve their customer support system and increase the level of satisfaction of their members through relationship marketing strategy or customer relationship management. Through this strategy, the frontline employees and members or the whole cooperative itself will have a better relationship to each other and they can easily resolve issues and problems regarding their accounts and other significant problems related to them. Through this study, the company can resolve one of

the most important problems in sustaining their members, which is the issue of unprogressive customer support system. If this study succeeds, the goodwill of the NutriWealth Multi-Purpose Cooperative will be enhanced through relationship marketing strategy and the members will become more aware of the cooperative.

METHODOLOGY

The descriptive method of research was used to gather information about the factors affecting the customer support system for the sustainability of the membership in NutriWealth Multi-Purpose Cooperative.

The respondents of this study were composed of the selected members of NutriWealth Multi-Purpose Cooperative. There were 95 respondents from the chosen location which was in Batangas Satellite of NutriWealth Multi-Purpose Cooperative. These respondents were either regular or associate member and also been in NutriWealth for less than a year and more. They were either single, married, widowed or divorced and also either employed or self-employed.

The study was conducted at 506 Brgy. 7 Poblacion, Tanauan City, Batangas. The researchers chose this venue because this is where the Batangas satellite of NutriWealth Multi-Purpose Cooperative is located and they knew that the people here can be resource persons from whom necessary information about the study could be obtained.

A self-made survey questionnaire was used to gather all the information needed for this research. This questionnaire was divided into two (2) parts. The first part was the demographic profile of the respondents which included sex, civil status, social status, number of years in NMPC, monthly income, type of membership and reason in joining the cooperative. The second part of the questionnaire dealt with the respondents' level of satisfaction towards the current database of NutriWealth Multi-Purpose Cooperative, the researchers used the Likert scale in measuring the gathered data in the questionnaire.

After validation of the questionnaire was done, the finalized questionnaire was given to the chosen respondents in two ways: First, through Google Forms and distributed online through the use of Facebook, a social networking site and second, through personal meeting with the respondents in one of the brick and mortar of NutriWealth Multi-Purpose Cooperative, which is in Tanauan, Batangas

Satellite. Data gathered were analysed using frequency, percentage, and weighted mean or weighted average

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 shows the result of why the respondents joined NMPC. Out of 95 respondents, there are 84 individuals who answered the survey in which 88.4% joined because of savings/investment. The least respond with 0% are the profit sharing and low interest in credit.

According to CDA website (2014), NutriWealth Multi-Purpose Cooperative is the first cooperative that focuses on savings not on credit so the people are amazed how NMPC system works toward their savings and investment. Luskin (2017) says in his research “Focus on what you save – Not on what you spend”, people nowadays are very knowledgeable on handling money that’s why many respondents agreed that savings are one of the factors they join this cooperative.

Table 1. Why respondents join NMPC

	Frequency	Percentage
Savings/Investment	84	88.4
Referral of Relatives/Friends	8	8.4
Profit Sharing	0	0
Low interest in credit	0	0
Benefits	2	2.1
Passive Income	1	1.1
TOTAL	95	100

Table 2 shows the result of the perception of the members of NutriWealth Muti-Purpose Cooperative. The statement “I am having problems with my account in NMPC” and “I will recommend NMPC to my friends, family, and colleagues” gained the highest weighted mean with 3.37 with the verbal interpretation of Strongly Agree and the statement “It is easy to access on my account because of online database” obtained the lowest weighted mean with 1.72 with the verbal interpretation of Strongly Disagree and with the composite mean of 2.78 with the verbal interpretation of Agree.

According to Kay and Keller (2014), the recommendation of a customer is what business key to success and it is also important to the

business because the recommendation is one of the reasons why business continues to innovate new things. They also state that most females are swayed by recommendation than men. It is an advantage that the cooperative is being recommended by its members to others because it means that the cooperative's products, systems, and programs have an impact on their members.

Table 2. Perception and attitude of respondents

Indicators	Frequency				WM	Interpretation
	1	2	3	4		
I am aware of the database of NMPC	43	17	22	13	2.05	Disagree
The people in NMPC is friendly and approachable	1	1	33	60	3.60	Strongly Agree
I am always updated by NMPC staff regarding my accounts	4	26	57	8	2.73	Agree
I am updated on the new activities, programs, and systems of NMPC	4	25	28	38	3.05	Agree
I am updated in my earnings with regards to my savings and investments	33	40	19	3	1.92	Disagree
It is easy to access on my account because of online database	50	25	17	3	1.72	Disagree
I'm having problem with my accounts in NMPC	4	7	34	50	3.37	Strongly Agree
I am satisfied with the overall service given by NMPC	3	18	57	17	2.93	Agree
I would still like to be a member/investor of NMPC	1	20	43	31	3.10	Agree
I will recommend NMPC to my friends, family, and colleagues	1	15	27	52	3.37	Strongly Agree
Composite Mean				2.78		Agree

Results on Table 3 show that out of 95 respondents, 51 respondents answered social media with 53.7%. Emails had the least number of respondents which were 12 respondents with 12.6%.

Because of the rising technology in the world today, Facebook is very in demand in terms of its usage and convenience to the people. Most of the respondents chose Facebook as the medium of communication they will use to communicate and help the cooperative in improving its customer database. Di Capua (2012) states that Facebook is a form of communication to other people and you can reach a maximum number of people through Facebook, thus, it is an avenue for NMPC to communicate easily with their members, as well as to those potential customers.

Table 3. Action and recommendation to improve customer database

Indicators	Frequency	Percentage
Social Media (Facebook)	51	53.7
Emails	12	12.6
SMS and Phone Calls	32	33.7
TOTAL	95	100

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the survey, females had the largest contribution in answering the survey as well as the married ones. Most of the members in NutriWealth Multi-Purpose Cooperative fell between 35 to 44 years old. They had been with NMPC for two to three years. In terms of income, members earned Php 50,000 and they were mostly the associate members of the cooperative. Majority of the respondents agreed that they join NutriWealth for the savings and investment programs. Many members were not aware of the existence of the online database of NMPC, but they strongly agreed that the employees of NMPC were approachable and friendly. The members agreed that some of them were always updated by the staff concerning their accounts and that they were still updated on the new activities, programs, and systems of NutriWealth. Most of the respondents or the members disagreed that they were updated on their personal accounts,

especially on their savings and investment which the respondents found alarming. Many of them also agreed that they were facing problems with their account. However, they were satisfied on the average to the overall services given by NMPC. The members agreed that they still wanted to be a member or investor of NMPC and still would recommend it to their friends, colleagues, and family.

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