

RELATIONSHIP HIERARCHIES AND BEHAVIOURAL EFFECTS: UNDERSTANDING KEY RELATIONSHIP VARIABLES IN INTERACTION

Competitive paper submitted to the 26th IMP Conference, Budapest, September 2010

Javier J. O. Silva

Professor of Marketing, IAE Business School, Universidad Austral
Mariano Acosta s/n° y RN n°8, CC 49, (1629) Pilar, Buenos Aires, Argentina
Tel : +54 2322 481080, e-mail: jsilva@iae.edu.ar

Marc Day

Associate Professor of Management, Henley Business School, University of Reading
Tel: +44(0)1491 414559, e-mail: marc.day@henley.reading.ac.uk

Roger Palmer

Professor of Marketing, Henley Business School, Reading University
Greenlands, Henley-on-Thames, Oxfordshire, RG9 3AU, England
Tel: +44 (0)1491 571454, e-mail: roger.palmer@henleymc.ac.uk

Abstract

This paper presents the results of a qualitative exploratory study which demonstrates that a buyer's personal motivation to build a relationship with a supplier is represented as a function of cognitive, affective, and behavioural components. Proposing value as an output based measure of supplier-buyer relationships we present a multi-echelon model which links relationship value and trust from the buyer's perspective, and posits that these two constructs are impacted by a strong cognitive dimension, with buyer satisfaction as an affective dimension, with commitment and loyalty as functions of a behavioural dimension. Preliminary findings suggest that supply managers appear to be aware of the need to balance all key behavioural components efficiently, but there is little evidence to suggest that they have formal measurement systems to track them in order to evaluate relationship performance. It appears that when managers find that one particular relationship variable does not perform well, they can take steps to avoid unbalanced relationships by taking into account changes in other behavioural components through substitution. Implications for concept measurement are discussed, and possible paths for research are suggested in order to generalise the model.

Keywords: Buyer-Seller Relationships, Value, Trust, Commitment, Satisfaction, Loyalty, Hierarchy of Effects.

Introduction

Over the past decade, there has been renewed interest in key business relationships variables – Value, Trust, Commitment, Satisfaction, and Loyalty- (e.g.: Lapierre, 2000; Jap & Ganesan, 2000; Walter et al., 2001, 2003; Eggert & Ulaga, 2002; Sirdeshmukh et al. 2002; Ulaga, 2003; Spiteri & Dion, 2004; Lindgreen & Wynstra, 2005; Liu et al., 2005; Golicic & Mentzer, 2006; Ulaga & Eggert, 2006a; Johnson et al. 2006) among both marketing researchers and practitioners. Yet, the growing body of research has been somewhat contradictory with respect to definitions of these variables, how they perform in buyer-seller relationships and the causal direction between them. Researchers have called for further investigation to broaden the understanding of these key relationship variables in order to reduce the ambiguities surrounding these concepts (e.g.: Spiteri & Dion, 2004; Ulaga & Eggert, 2006b).

On the other hand, marketing and sales managers at business-to-business (B2B) vendors often have to deal with conflicting pressures to show financial results in their annual or quarterly forecasts while investing in efforts to build relationships with a decreasing number of accounts and returns that require longer terms. In addition, these relationships call for different performance measurement systems than transactional relationships. This conflict would be mitigated if supplier managers could work with well-defined key relationship building blocks and were able to evaluate relationships effectiveness through them. Understanding the interactions between value, trust, commitment, satisfaction and loyalty may be instrumental for efficient performance, as they embody the most significant variables in relationship building. Knowledge of the operating hierarchy of these variables in relationship development processes would facilitate that understanding. It would also help to deliver on the promise of more effective marketing efforts based on more accurate predictions of relationship effectiveness, as practitioners would know which variable to focus on at every stage of the process, avoiding unbalanced relationships.

A similar controversy has been historically found in discussions on advertising effectiveness. According to one view, advertising is effective only if it sells during the forecast period. As a result, advertising effectiveness is assessed by looking at the relationship between advertising expenditures and brand sales (e.g., Little, 1979). Another view posits that advertising can satisfy its ultimate demand-driving objective only by establishing a hierarchy of intermediate effects in its audience. Thus, a communication campaign may be evaluated in terms of a hierarchy of effects leading to any particular stage, not necessarily the stage of demand (e.g., Barry, 1987). Proponents of these two approaches rarely agree on a middle ground. A compromise position is, of course, that advertising should be evaluated on its entire hierarchy of effects, including sales effects (Urban & Hauser, 1980). The body of work in the marketing and advertising literature refers to this advertising effectiveness controversy as the “hierarchy of effects”. This notion has been around for more than 100 years and continues to be a major guideline for advertising researchers and practitioners (Barry, 2002), with many of them according it theoretical status (Barry, 1987).

Most consumer decision-making descriptions rely on the notion of separate thinking stages linked together over time. Potential buyers apparently navigate these stages in a specific order as they approach a decision on brand choice. This idea of a sequence is appealing as a result of its promise of more effective marketing efforts based on more accurate predictions of consumer information needs over a product's lifecycle (O'Brien, 1971). As the relationship marketing literature (e.g., Dwyer et al., 1987; Grönroos, 2004; Lindgreen et al., 2005; Eggert & Ulaga, 2002) and common sense would dictate, a basic assumption of buyer-seller relationship processes is that a strong cross-organisational relationship cannot be built immediately. Instead, buyers and sellers go through hierarchies or series of progressive changes in their value perception, trust, commitment, satisfaction, and loyalty before building a relationship.

This paper aims to examine key relationship variables revealing scientific shortcomings from the point of view of a relational hierarchy of effects. This is important for marketing theory and practice because key relationship variable concepts are heavily represented in Relationship Marketing

models. To accomplish this goal, the rest of the paper is structured as follows: first, a literature review on hierarchy of effects and key relationship variables is presented; second, a description of the research methodology used; third, research findings are analysed. Then, conclusions are drawn; and finally, a brief discussion on limitations and future research paths.

The hierarchy of effects

The basic hierarchy of effects model consists of a sequence of mental stages that an individual is supposed to experience during a communication campaign. While refinements and discussions have proven the popularity of this hypothesis, criticism seems to have focused on each individual step in the hierarchy rather than on the hypothesis as a whole.

Literature reviews reveal there is not one but many hierarchy of effects' models (for an overview, see Barry, 1987). Many of these were developed by personal selling researchers and adopted early on by advertising researchers and practitioners, who felt that advertising was a long-term investment, since many advertising effects were long-term in nature.

The first hierarchical framework was introduced by St. Elmo Lewis in 1898 (Strong, 1925). He theorised that sales prospects could only be sold once salespeople got prospects' attention, held their interest, and created their desire. Shortly thereafter, in the 1900s, Lewis added a fourth step, action. Accordingly, this model is commonly known with the acronym AIDA, standing for awareness-interest-desire-action, although the marketing and advertising literature generally attributes the development of AIDA to Strong in 1925 (Barry, 1987).

With the possible exception of the addition of conviction (Strong 1938) and satisfaction (Sheldon, 1911) in various models, the basic AIDA model changed very little (Barry, 1987) until Lavidge and Steiner (1961) suggested a more complete hierarchical approach for advertising, summarizing previous work in this area in a six-stage model consisting of awareness > knowledge > liking > preference > conviction > purchase. Also, they were the first to employ the summary labels of cognition, affect, and conation to represent the advertising response sequence more efficiently.

However, the term "hierarchy of effects" came to be known with Palda (1966), who argued that each step was believed to be a necessary but insufficient condition for its succeeding step. Table I shows later developments on the hierarchy of effects.

Table I
Hierarchy of Effects Models

Author	Cognitive	Affective	Conative
Lewis (1898, 1900); Sandage & Fryburger (1963)	Attract attention	Maintain interest, Create desire	Get action
Sheldon (1911)	Favourable Attention	Interest, Desire Permanent satisfaction (after action)	Action
Eastman (1916), in Strong (1925)	Thinking	Feeling	Acting
West Coast Life Insurance Company (1920), in Strong (1925)	Attracting attention,	Creating desire, Removing inhibitions, Inspiring confidence	Impelling to action
Strong (1938)	Attention	Interest, Desire, Want. Satisfaction (after Purchase)	Conviction, Solution, Purchase
Lavidge & Steiner (1961)	Awareness, Knowledge	Liking (favourable attitude), Preference	Conviction, Purchase
Coley (1961)	Awareness, Comprehension		Conviction, Action
Rogers (1962)	Awareness	Interest, Evaluation	Trial, Adoption
Wolfe, Brown & Thompson (1962)	Awareness	Acceptance, Preference	Intention to buy, provocation of sale
Howard & Sheth (1969)	Attention, Brand comprehension	Attitude,	Intention, Purchase
Klonglan & Coward (1970); Rogers & Schoemaker (1971)	Cognition	Affect	Trial (between cognition and affect) Commitment
Roberston (1971)	Awareness, Comprehension	Attitude, Legitimation	Trial, Adoption.
O'Brien, (1971)	Awareness	Attitude	Intention, Purchase
McGuire (1978)	Attention, Comprehension	Yielding	Retention (of the new attitude), Behavior
Smith & Swinyard (1982).	Beliefs	Affect (evaluations, preference, attitude)	Commitment (purchase intentions, purchase)
Preston & Thorson (1984)	Awareness, Perception	Evaluation, Stimulation	Search, Trial, Adoption
Vakratsas & Ambler (1999)	Cognition	Affect	Experience, Behavior (choice, consumption, habit, loyalty)
Bagozzi, (2000)	Reasons (Beliefs)	Emotions, Desire	Intention (Deciding and intention formation), Goal Behavior (Trying, Bodily movements, Outcomes)

Description of behavioural dimensions or hierarchy stages

In essence, cognition is the mental or rational processing that occurs when people are exposed to information (Hughes & Guerrero, 1971). This grouping of effects refers to the learning effects in hierarchies, the realm of thoughts, the intellectual, mental, or "rational" states (Lavidge & Steiner, 1961), including attention, awareness, knowledge, recognition, perception, comprehension, and belief (see Table I). This group includes all of the effects from other hierarchies that involve gaining an understanding or a learning of a product (or relationship) as well as its particular features and benefits. Because behaviour is vastly complex and researchers need an analysis and understanding of the thought processes -that is, the way that human beings process information, cognition has been a key element of research in social psychology (Zajonc, 1980). However, as cognitive processing is very complex and people's information processing skills differ greatly (Wright, 1973; 1975), there is no unique information processing model, making marketers' work difficult (Hughes & Guerrero, 1971).

The affective grouping of effects refers to the feeling effects in traditional hierarchies. This group combines the effects from other hierarchies that involve how a potential customer feels about a

given product or relationship. This grouping includes liking, acceptance, interest, evaluation, preference, yielding, legitimisation, want, satisfaction, emotion, feeling, attitude, and desire (see Table I). Researchers like Batra (1986) suggest that many scholars and practitioners use the terms affect, feeling, emotion, and attitude interchangeably, in spite of their different meanings. According to the American Psychological Association (APA), emotion is defined as an affective state of consciousness that moves feelings and may lead to excitement or agitation. Feeling is generally neutral (APA) and usually refers to the experiencing of affective and emotional states (WordNet). As for the attitude concept, its importance dates back to the 1920s, when behavioural scientists began the search for factors mediating between stimulus perception and overt behaviour (Smith & Swinyar, 1983). Attitude definitions have varied markedly, but many stress its relationship to overt willingness or behaviour prediction. Attitude differs from affect in that attitude is an evaluative judgment, while affect is a valenced feeling state (Cohen and Areni, 1991). An attitude indicates that people's past experiences predispose them to respond in certain ways on the basis of perceptions, pointing to predispositions (Boyd et al., 1972). Eagly & Chaiken (1993) defined attitude as a psychological tendency that is expressed by evaluating a particular entity with some degree of favour or disfavour. Finally, desire can be defined as the feeling that accompanies an unsatisfied state or an inclination to want things (Visual Thesaurus). Indeed, Perugini & Bagozzi (2004) referred to desire as a state of mind whereby an agent has a personal motivation to perform an action or to achieve a goal. According to Gollwitzer (1990), the outcome of considering one's desires for goal alternatives is the production of a goal intention, with a commitment to achieve a goal as an end. In addition, considerable empirical work supports the hypothesis that desires mediate and transform the effects of reasons and motives for acting, influencing intentions (Bagozzi, 2000).

The conative grouping refers to the action or behavioural effects from the traditional hierarchies. These effects are most generally defined as what a consumer does that can be observed and verified intersubjectively (Bagozzi, 2000). This includes variables associated with action and behaviour, such as conviction, intention, trial, search, purchase, adoption, commitment, and loyalty (see Table I). This group includes any effects from the other hierarchies that involve a customer's actions and intentions regarding an object (e.g.: product) or situation (e.g.: relationship). Normally, conation has been measured as purchase intent (i.e., the likelihood of future purchase) (Barry, 1987).

Hierarchy model types

The literature on the different types of hierarchy models shows there is great consensus regarding the three most important of all. These are the learning hierarchy, the dissonance-attribution hierarchy, and the low-involvement hierarchy,

The Learning hierarchy is perhaps the most intuitive of the three (Floyd, 1999). It was the thinking model that led individuals to think and perceive, then feel or develop attitudes, and, finally, behave. This is the traditional cognition-affect-conation model. According to Lavidge and Steiner (1961), the various steps are not necessarily equidistant. In some instances, the distance from awareness to preference may be very small, while the distance from preference to purchase is extremely large. In other cases, the reverse may be true. Furthermore, a potential purchaser sometimes may move up several steps simultaneously. Aaker & Day (1974) have demonstrated that all individuals do not necessarily proceed through each stage. This hierarchy is often the strongest model for personal selling (Floyd, 1999) and assumes a rationally disposed individual facing a potential decision. The Learning hierarchy is mostly predictive when an individual is highly involved, the differences between alternatives are clear, and the information is readily available.

The dissonance-attribution hierarchy involves the reverse sequence from the Learning hierarchy: conative-affective-cognitive, as based on the theories of dissonance (Festinger, 1957), attribution (Heider, 1958), and self-perception (Bem, 1972). For instance, under uncertain decision-making conditions, individuals usually tend to employ positive attitudes to reduce confusion or internal conflict. The dissonance hierarchy is applied when individuals act first, then develop attitudes towards such behaviour or even assume feelings which reinforce such choice. Thereafter, individuals

learn and tend to selectively seek out information supporting their decision and selectively ignore information that disputes it (Aaronson, 1969; Batra & Vanhonacker, 1986). Later, individuals tend to become more aware of information supporting the choice and subsequent attribution of attitude (Floyd, 1999). In this hierarchy model, consumer involvement remains high, but the differences between alternatives are not clear, and information is generally less available and influential concerning product choices.

Lastly, the low-involvement hierarchy follows a cognitive-conative-affective sequence, as supported by Krugman's (1965) low-involvement theory of learning. Here, consumers become aware of a product before purchasing it. After purchasing and perhaps experiencing the product with use, they develop attitudes as a result of their behaviour and their learning. This process suggests that people do not buy trivial products because they like them, but rather, they like those products because they buy them (Smith and Swinyard, 1978). In this model, consumer involvement is low, and the differences between alternatives are very slight.

Unfortunately, scales of this nature obscure the various functions that purchases might serve - more specifically, key relationship variables, such as commitment and loyalty, or the result of a higher/lower-order affect toward a brand (Smith & Swinyard, 1982).

Key relationship variables

The following literature review intends to reduce the ambiguities surrounding the notion of relationship variables and provide a better understanding of their behavioural dimensions and interrelationships.

Value

Value has always been the fundamental basis for all marketing activities, as market exchanges take place because all parties involved expect to gain value in them (Ulaga, 2003). Sheth and Parvatiyar (1996) argue that the traditional concept of exchange should be abandoned and replaced with the notion of value creation within customer relationships as a core issue in "relationship marketing". In recent years, the term value has become a buzzword in business markets (Anderson et al., 2007). Although, in the last decade, researchers have introduced a relational approach that explores customer value from a more pluralistic relationship perspective (e.g., Silva & Palmer, 2007; Ulaga & Eggert, 2005; Payne & Holt, 2001; Wilson & Jantrania, 1995).

The understanding of value in the relationship and business marketing field can be viewed as influenced by previous work in a number of areas. The most important influence comes from customer value and interpersonal relationship literature. Table II summarises several definitions of value offered by a number of authors. Despite their differences, these definitions share several common elements: trade-offs, benefits, quality, sacrifices, costs or prices, worth, use and judgement, as well as terms such as exchange, co-creation, and comparative.

Table II
Value Definitions and Their Behavioural Dimensions

Author	Value Definition	Cognitive	Affective	Cognitive	Trade-off	Price - Cost	Use	Benefits	Sacrifices	Judgement	Quality	Worth
Miles (1961)	"...the minimum dollars, which must be expended in purchasing or manufacturing a product to create the appropriate use and esteem factors...."	x	x	x	x	1	1	1				
Emerson (1976)	"The value of a unit of some stimulus (x or y) is the magnitude of reinforcement affected by that unit."	x										
Holbrook & Corfinan (1985)	"...an interactive, relativistic preference experience"	x	x	x								
Zeithaml (1988)	"...the customer's overall assessment of the utility of a product based on perceptions of what is received and what is given. Though what is received varies across consumers (i.e. some may want volume, others high quality, still others convenience) and what is given varies (i.e. some are concerned with money spent, others with time and effort expended), value represents a trade-off of the salient give and get components."	x	x			1	1	1			1	1
Bolton & Drew (1991)	"...customer's overall evaluation of what he or she receives compared with what he or she gives up or pays"	x				1						1
Monroe (1991)	"...the ratio of perceived benefits relative to perceived sacrifice"	x				1			1	1		
Anderson et al (1993)	"...the perceived worth in monetary units of the set of economic, technical, service, and social benefits received by a customer firm in exchange for the price paid for a product offering, taking into consideration the available alternative suppliers' offerings and prices."	x				1	1		1			1
Gale (1994)	"...the market-perceived quality adjusted for the relative price of your product."	x				1	1					1
Storbaka et al (1994)	"Service quality compared with perceived sacrifice"	x				1				1		1
Holbrook (1994)	"...refers to a preferential judgment like an interactive, relativistic preference experience...."								1			1
Dolan & Simon (1996)	"...the maximum price the customer will pay."	x			x		1					
Rajendran and Hariharan (1996)	"...a tradeoff between perceived quality and perceived price which may be consumer, product and time specific."	x				1	1					1
Woodruff & Gardial (1996)	"...the customers' perception of what they want to have happen (i.e., the consequences) in a specific kind of use situation, with the help of a product or service offering, in order to accomplish a desired purpose or goal."	x	x	x				1				
Flint et al. (1997)	"...customer's perceived net tradeoff received from all relevant benefits and costs delivered by a product/service/supplier and its use."	x				1	1	1	1			
Patterson & Spreng (1997)	"...cognitive-based construct which captures any benefit-sacrifice discrepancy in much the same way disconfirmation does for variations between expectations and perceived performance"	x				1			1	1		
Woodruff (1997)	"...customer's perceived preference for and evaluation of those product attributes, attribute performances, and consequences arising from use that facilitate (or block) achieving the customer's goals and purposes in use situations."	x	x					1				1
Madhok & Tallman (1998)	"...the net rent earning capacity of an asset or resource, tangible or intangible." And "...the ability of the partners to earn rents over and above what could have been achieved in the absence of the partnership...."	x			x	1						
Andreassen & Lindestad (1998)	"...an aggregated variable reflecting the perception of all quality attributes as a function of price is believed to impact the satisfaction judgment of the transaction."	x	x	x			1					1
Grisaffe & Kumar (1998)	"...an exchange partner's assessment of the net contribution of benefits obtained from the core functions of a product/service compared with the costs involved in the acquisition and use of a product or service"	x				1	1	1	1			1
Bagozzi (1999)	"...judgments or assessments of what a customer perceives he or she has received from a seller in a specific purchase or use situation"	x	x	x				1				1
Doyle (2000)	"...the perceived benefits offered by the company's product, minus the product's price, and minus the other costs of using/owning it."	x				1	1	1	1			
Kotler (2000)	"...the difference between the bundle of benefits customers expect from a given good or service (e.g. good, services, personnel and image value) and the bundle of costs customers expect to incur in evaluating, obtaining, using, and disposing of the good or service (e.g. monetary, time energy, and physic costs)."	x				1	1	1	1			
Hogan (2001)	"...the perceived net worth of the tangible benefits to be derived over the life of the relationship"	x				1				1		1
Uлага & Chacou (2001)	"...the trade-off between the multiple benefits and sacrifices of a supplier's offering, as perceived by key decision makers in the customer's organisation, and taking into consideration the available alternative suppliers' offerings in a specific-use situation."	x				1		1	1	1		
Walter et al. (2001)	"...the perceived trade-off between multiple benefits and sacrifices gained through a customer relationship by key decision makers in the supplier's organisation."	x				1			1	1		
Flint, Woodruff & Gardial (2002)	"...refers to what customers want to have happen when interacting with a supplier and/or using the supplier's product or service"	x	x	x				1				1
Gupta, Lehmann & Stuart (2002)	"...the expected sum of discounted future earnings based on key assumptions concerning retention rate and profit margin. The value of all customers is determined by the acquisition rate and cost of acquiring new customers."	x		x		1						
Smith (2002)	"...the benefits the customer receives relative to the price paid."	x	x	x		1	1		1			
Nagle & Holden (2002)	"...the total savings or satisfaction that the customer receives from the product."	x	x	x		1						
Sirdeshmukh et al. (2002)	"...the consumer's perception of the benefits minus the costs of maintaining an ongoing relationship with a service provider."	x			x	1	1			1		
Anderson & Narus (2004)	"...the worth in monetary terms of the technical, economic, service, and social benefits a customer firm receives in exchange for the price it pays for a market offering."	x				1	1					1
Kumar & Grisaffe (2004)	"...a trade off of benefits and sacrifices, with intrinsic quality typically being the primary benefit, and price typically being the primary sacrifice"	x	x	x		1	1		1	1		1
Johnson, Herrmann, & Huber (2006)	"...a broad construct that encompasses perceptions of quality given price and inputs versus outputs relative to the competition."	x	x	x		1	1					1
Golicic & Mentzer (2006)	"...the perception of benefits received versus costs sacrificed from the relationship. This perceived value is not only a consequence of relationships, but is proposed to be a direct outcome of the type of relationship."	x				1	1			1	1	
Higgins (2006)	"...an experience of strength of motivational force. It is an experience of how intensely one is attracted to or repulsed from something... derives not only from hedonic experience but also from the strength of the motivational force experience of wanting to make something attractive happen or something repulsive not happen."	x	x	x								
Silva, Day & Palmer (in press)	"...an individual judgement of a trade off multidimensional between benefits and sacrifices co-created in a relationship and perceived as relative to alternative relationships."	x	x	x		1				1	1	1
	% on 36 definitions	100%	39%	44%	69%	50%	33%	42%	22%	22%	22%	14%

Most authors agree that customer or buyer¹ value involves trading off sacrifices for benefits, with intrinsic quality typically being a primary benefit, and cost or price typically being a primary sacrifice, although value benefits normally include more than quality and value sacrifices often include more than price (e.g. Brock et al., 2007; Day & Crask, 2000; Holbrook, 1994). Benefits are defined as anything that the buyer considers as a desirable output in a relationship, while sacrifices are anything perceived as undesirable (Blau, 1964). These benefits and sacrifices are defined in terms of buyers' perceptions in the monetary and non-monetary activities of acquisition, consumption and maintenance, as well as supplier-buyer values' alignment or congruence (Silva & Palmer, 2007; Cox et al., 2003; Huber et al., 2001; Doyle, 2000).

It is noteworthy that the primary definition of value describes the value of something as its objective worth, where worth is the quality that renders something desirable or useful (Visual Thesaurus). This type of definition provides a useful, operational definition of "value," but it does not explain what value is. According to marginalist scholars (like Austrian Economist Carl Menger, 1840-1921), value is subjective, as a single product will have a different marginal utility for different buyers or even for the same buyer under different circumstances. Different customer segments perceive the same product as having a different value. In a business context, an organisation's value perception is shaped by the perceptions of several individuals. Moreover, there is substantial evidence that, when a decision-making activity is perceived as justified or proper, people enhance the subjective aspects of value and engage more strongly (e.g., Lerner & Tetlock, 1999; Pennington & Hastie, 1988; Tetlock, 1991; Tversky & Shafir, 1992). This increased engagement strength that comes from using proper means when making a choice could enhance the attractiveness of one's choice, including its perceived monetary value (Higgins, 2006). Also, philosophers refer to the problem of organic value as a result of the observation that the value of a whole does not seem to be the mere sum of the value of its parts (Davis, 1972). Adding more features, even if each seems to be a good one, can undermine the overall value.

Many authors see value as value-in-use, while others view value as value-in-exchange or both conceptualizations at once. For Karl Marx (1818-1883), value-in-exchange was equivalent to price, and value-in-use pointed to the utility of a product. Adam Smith (1723-1790), showing his objective value perspective and using the water/diamond paradox of value (John Law, 1671-1729), argued that the things with the greatest value-in-use often have little or no value-in-exchange, and vice versa. However, although value has been used in marketing literature to refer to "the value of buyers to a firm," buyer value is determined by buyers' perceptions rather than suppliers' assumptions or intentions (e.g., Raval & Grönroos, 1996; Grönroos, 2000). Thus, if the customer is the focal point of marketing and value is always uniquely and phenomenologically determined by the beneficiary, value creation is only possible when a good or service is consumed (Gummesson, 1999). Nicholas Barbon (1640-1698) stated that "the value of all wares arises from their use; things of no use have no value" - as the English saying goes, they are good for nothing (Fogarty, 1996). There is no value until the offering is used; value emerges only after consumption - experience and perception are essential to value determination. Hence, an unsold thing has no value, and a supplier without customers cannot produce anything valuable - value is not only embedded through manufacturing (Vargo & Lusch, 2004; 2007). Value is not what goes into goods or services; it is what customers get out of them. In addition, customers become valuable for the firm only when the firm has something of value to offer to them (Van Weele, 2001). Therefore, companies can only make value propositions. Moreover, value is co-created through the interaction among customers and suppliers or with a number of other

¹ In both practice and literature, many terms and concepts are currently used to describe actors in business purchasing. However, there is no agreement exists about their definitions (Van Weele, 2005). Terms like purchaser and buyer are used interchangeably. Similarly, in marketing literature, customer and buyer are often used with the same meaning. In this paper, a buyer is the functional executive in an organisation that traditionally handles buying or purchasing processes. Typically, a buyer is in charge of at least one of the following sub-processes: determining a need, selecting a supplier, arriving at a proper price, specifying terms and conditions, issuing a contract or order, and following up to ensure proper delivery (Van Weele, 2005).

stakeholders (Vargo & Lusch, 2004; Sirdeshmukh et al., 2002; Gummesson, 1999; Normann & Ramirez, 1993). As Möller (2006: 915) asserts, “value is conceived through the relationship itself.”

Most commonly, buyer value involves a judgment of what a buyer perceives to have received from a supplier in a specific purchase or use situation (Bagozzi, 1999; Woodruff, 1997; Woodruff & Gardial, 1996; Walsh, 1995). A judgment is a subjective evaluation of the rightness or wrongness of something, or of the usefulness of something, based on a personal view (Silva, Day & Palmer, in press). Judgment implies comparison. For instance, a buyer perceives that less value is created with a supplier when that supplier’s performance is less valuable than past performances experienced by the buyer with the same supplier or with other suppliers. Even when there is no comparable market offering, there is always an alternative. Thus, all judgments are relative, and they are expressed as compared to alternative value propositions (Johnson, 1945). Partners weigh value judgments according to past experience, facts, meanings, implications, connotations, and associations, as well as on the basis of source credibility, accuracy, confidence, and access to information (Soll & Larrick, 2009; Budescu et al., 2003; Flint et al., 1997; Sniezek & Buckley, 1995; Birnbaum & Stegner, 1979). The data admitted are organized into a context, and value is judged within this context or benchmark (Tverski & Kahneman, 1991; Johnson, 1945). Partners review the benefits they receive from a relationship and the sacrifices they invest to maintain it, and they will move to another relationship if they think that it will bring them more value. Value in business markets is a comparative concept that is assessed within a context (e.g., Anderson et al., 2007).

To conclude, our analysis of the definitions of this concept show that value is a partner’s judgement of a trade-off between benefits and sacrifices co-created in a relationship and perceived as relative to alternative relationships. It is also a contextual, subjective and organic concept usually defined by buyers’ perception based on the value-in-use notion.

Behavioural dimensions of value

Although researchers do not seem to agree on the definition of other buyer value dimensions, several scholars do concede that there is more than one dimension of value (e.g. Flint et al., 2002; Sheth et al., 1991). For instance, based largely on Ellram & Siferd (1993, 1998), Ulaga (2003), Ulaga & Eggert (2005, 2006a), and Lefaix-Durand (2007), Silva, Day and Palmer (in press) describe two first-order value dimensions, benefits and sacrifices, and eight second-order dimensions, respectively, categorised in four sources of value creation –core offering, sourcing process, customer operations, and congruence. The benefit dimension encompasses product quality, delivery performance, services support, personal interaction, supplier know-how, time-to-market, image, supplier alignment, transparency, and attitude, while the sacrifice dimension includes direct cost, switching cost, core offering risk, acquisition cost, excess value, acceptance, operation cost, benchmarking complexity, and congruence risk. All dimensions have cognitive, affective or conative connotations. Table II shows there is strong consensus about the cognitive dimension of value. The cognitive sources of value correspond to the prevalent philosophical view of value that involves using reason, reflection and comparison processes to create an objective basis to determine what is better or worse (Eggert & Ulaga, 2002; Haidt, 2001; Williams, 1985).

According to Rempel et al. (1985), the relationship is seen as a vehicle for obtaining desired value. This refers to what customers seek when interacting with a supplier and/or using the supplier's product or service (Flint et al., 2002; Woodruff, 1997). Consequently, when partners make decisions in the present that have consequences for their future, they try to anticipate or predict the value of making a particular choice (Higgins, 2006). This may include inferring or imagining the future pleasure or pain drawn from the consequences of a choice made now (Wilson & Gilbert, 2003; Mellers, 2000; Loewenstein & Schkade, 1999). This conceptualization has implications for the nature of emotional experiences and attitudes that involve a judgement process (Sample & Warland, 1973) and refers to an affective value dimension. Also, a judgment may be expressed in action or behaviour (Johnson, 1945). Indeed, Higgins (2006) and Kahneman (2000) argue that value is an experience of

motivational force —experiencing the force of attraction to or repulsion from something or somebody. Experience-based value conceptualisations have a rich history in both psychological and philosophical literature (Higgins, 2006). Barry (2002) defines "experience" simply as a phenomenon that flows back into cognition, affect, and conation. Thus, this aspect of value denotes a conative dimension.

Trust

In business-to-business relationships, where outcomes depend on the behaviour and intent of partners, trust is especially crucial (Johnson & Cullen, 2002). As Berry (1996, p. 42) asserts, "trust is the single most powerful relationship marketing tool available to a company." Trust is instrumental to relationship marketing because it encourages marketers to (1) work at preserving relationship investments by cooperating with exchange partners and resisting attractive short-term alternatives in favour of the expected long-term benefits of existing relationships (Morgan & Hunt, 1994), and (2) facilitate lower transaction costs and allow for greater flexibility to respond to changing market conditions (Gulati, 1995; Dyer, 1997). Many psychologists define trust as a personal trait (Deutch, 1973; Rotter, 1980), while other researchers, especially in social sciences, view it as interpersonal phenomenon (e.g.: Blau, 1964; Lewis & Weigert, 1985), and several scholars have recognized the role and importance of cross-organisational trust in industrial contexts (e.g.: Sako & Helper, 1998; Zaheer et al., 1998; Dyer & Chu, 2003). The main difference between interpersonal and cross-organisational trust is the object of trust (Zaheer et al., 1998). Interpersonally, the object of trust is the member of the partner organization, but, among organisations, the object is the partner organisation itself (Laaksonen et al., 2008). It is suitable to describe trust not as a stable trait but as a quality that is specific to a particular relationship with a particular partner (Hinde, 1979).

To clarify the notion of trust, Table III shows the terms more frequently used to define it: expectancy, belief, reliability, willingness, risk, vulnerability, and confidence, as well as conceptualisations such as benevolence, trustworthiness, competence, dependability, predictability, propensity and honesty.

Table III
Trust Definitions and Their Behavioural Dimensions

Author	Trust Definition														
		Cognitive	Affective	Competitive	Expectancy	Reliability	Willingness	Risk	Vulnerability	Confidence	Belief				
Giffin (1967)	"Reliance upon the characteristics of an object, or the occurrence of an event, or the behaviour of a person in order to achieve a desired but uncertain objective in a risky situation."	x				1	1		1						
Rotter (1967, 1980)	"A generalized expectancy held by an individual or group that the word, promise, or statement of another individual or group can be relied upon."	x					1	1							
Kee and Knox (1970)	"P's certainty or uncertainty about O's trustworthiness"	x					1			1					
Deutsch (1973)	"Confidence that one will find what is desired from another, rather than what is feared."	x	x									1			
Lindskold (1978)	"Objective credibility of an exchange partner, an expectancy that the partner's word or written statement can be relied on."	x				1	1								
Scanzoni (1979)	"Actor's willingness to arrange and repose his or her activities on other because of confidence that other will provide expected gratifications." Trust requires a willingness to place oneself in a position of risk and is not likely to appear early in a relationship because there would be little basis in past experience for its development.	x		x	1				1	1	1				
Cook & Wall (1980)	"The extent to which one is willing to ascribe good intentions to and have confidence in the words and actions of other people."	x			x					1		1			
Johnson-George & Swap (1982)	"Willingness to take risks may be one of the few characteristics common to all trust situations."			x	x					1					
Dore (1983)	"One party's confidence that the other party in the exchange relationship will not exploit its vulnerabilities."	x	x									1	1		
Rempel et al. (1985)	"A generalized expectation related to the subjective probability an individual assigns to the occurrence of some set of future events."	x				1									
Baier (1986)	"An accepted vulnerability to another's possible but not expected ill will (or lack of good will) towards one. It is reliance on the other's competence, and willingness to look after, rather than harm, things one cares about which are entrusted to the other's care."	x		x	1				1					1	
Gambetta (1988)	"A particular level of the subjective probability with which an agent assesses that another agent or group of agents will perform a particular action"	x				1						1			
Anderson & Weitz (1989)	"One party's belief that its needs will be fulfilled in the future by the actions undertaken by the other party." The expectation that an actor can be relied on to fulfill obligations.	x				1	1								1
Anderson & Narus (1990)	"The firm's belief that another company will perform actions that will result in positive outcomes for the firm as well as not take unexpected actions that result in negative outcomes."	x										1			1
Noorderhaven (1992)	"The willingness to engage in a transaction in the absence of adequate safeguards."				x					1					
Ring & Van de Ven (1992)	"Confidence or predictability in one's expectations about another's behavior and another's goodwill."	x				1			1			1			
Sako (1992)	"A state of mind, an expectation held by one trading partner about another, that the other behaves or responds in a predictable and mutually acceptable manner."	x				1									
Moorman et al. (1993)	"A willingness to rely on an exchange partner in whom one has confidence."				x			1	1			1			
Sitkin & Roth (1993)	"A belief, attitude, or expectation concerning the likelihood that the actions or outcomes of another individual, group or organization will be acceptable or will serve the actor's interests."	x		x	1										1
Morgan & Hunt (1994)	"Confidence in an exchange partner's reliability and integrity". Confidence results from the firm belief that the trustworthy party is reliable and has high integrity, which are associated with such qualities as consistent, competent, honest, fair, responsible, helpful, and benevolent	x	x					1				1			1
Bromiley & Cummings (1995)	"The expectation that an actor will act and negotiate fairly when the possibility for opportunism is present."	x				1								1	
Currall & Judge (1995)	"An individual's behavioral reliance on another person under a condition of risk"				x			1			1				
Mayer et al. (1995)	"The willingness of a party to be vulnerable to the actions of another party based on the expectation that the other will perform a particular action important to the trustor, irrespective of the ability to monitor or control that other party". Trust is not taking risk per se, but rather it is a willingness to take risk.	x		x	1				1	1				1	
Mishra (1996)	"One party's willingness to be vulnerable to another party based on the belief that the other party is (a) competent, (b) open, (c) concerned (about their well-being in the relationship), and (d) reliable"	x		x				1	1						1
Blomqvist (1997)	"An actor's expectation of the other party's competence and goodwill."	x				1			1						
Doney & Cannon (1997)	"Perceived credibility and benevolence of a target of trust." A buying firm facing some degree of risk in a purchase situation turns to a supplier or salesperson that the buyer believes is able to perform effectively and reliably (credible) and is interested in the customer's best interests (benevolent).	x						1	1	1					
O'Mally & Tynan (1997)	"An expectation of how another party will behave in a given situation which allows us to increase our vulnerability to that party in order to satisfy our needs"	x				1								1	
Hagen and Choe (1998)	"is the expectation that the promise of another can be relied on and that, in unforeseen circumstances, the other will act in a spirit of cooperation with the trustor"	x				1	1				1				
Zaheer et al. (1998)	"The expectation that an actor: can be relied on to fulfill obligations; will behave in a predictable manner; and will act and negotiate fairly when the possibility for opportunism is present"	x				1	1				1				
Money (2000)	"An individual's expectation that an organisation will keep its explicit and implicit commitments, will communicate openly and honestly and will not coerce or seek to disadvantage the individual."	x				1									
Dyer & Chu (2000, 2003)	One party's confidence that the other party in the exchange relationship will not exploit its vulnerabilities. A construct based on three components: reliability, fairness, and goodwill/benevolence.	x	x					1	1			1	1		
Sirdeshmukh et al. (2002)	"Expectations held by the consumer that the service provider is dependable and can be relied on to deliver on its promises."	x				1	1								
Perrone et al. (2003)	"Supplier's expectation that a purchasing manager can be relied on to fulfill obligations, will behave in a predictable manner, and will act and negotiate fairly when the possibility for opportunism is present"	x				1	1							1	
Walter & Ritter (2003)	"The expectation that the relationship partner is willing and able to act in the best interest of the relationship or the belief in the supplier's honesty, goodwill, and competence"	x				1	1								
Singh et al. (2005)	"An exchange partner's expectation that a firm is dependable and can be relied on to deliver on its promises and is motivated by giving priority to the exchange partners' best interests."	x				1	1								
Laaksonen et al. (2008)	"A belief by one party in a relationship that the other party will not act against his or her interests, where this belief is held without undue doubt or suspicion and in the absence of detailed information about the actions of the other party".	x													1
% on 36 definitions		86%	14%	28%	61%	47%	33%	28%	22%	19%	17%				

The different definitions of trust lead to conclude that this concept involves a psychological state of the trustor or trusting party. It is a generalised expectation related to the subjective probability the parties assign to the occurrence of some set of future events. This expectancy may have its most pronounced effect in risky or uncertain situations. The level of trust evolves as the parties interact and depends more heavily on beliefs about trustees' motivations and intentions, and less on expectation. Trustors also feature propensity and vulnerability. In addition, trust involves latent trustee characteristics such as reliability, benevolence, dependability and honesty. Although these dimensions are likely to be linked to each other, they each contribute separately to influencing trust in a relationship.

Behavioural dimensions of trust

Table III shows researchers realised that the variables used to define trust fit into three groups. One group of variables seems concerned with how relationship actors cognitively make sense of trust (e.g., as an expectation/ belief, a future-oriented construct or as a precursor to starting a relationship). The second group seems concerned with how individuals affectively feel trust (e.g., as a confidence/faith, both an emotional and rational construct). The third group seems to be concerned with the actions and/or intentions of individuals and how these make up trust (e.g., as willingness, a behavioural construct). Furthermore, this table suggests that there is clear consensus (86%) on how organisations and/or individuals' cognitively make sense of trust in the trust literature from different disciplines.

Trust is cognition-based in that "we choose whom we will trust in which respects and under what circumstances, and we base the choice on what we take to be 'good reasons,' constituting evidence of trustworthiness" (Lewis & Wiegert, 1985: 970). Also, Miller & Rempel (2004) have argued that trust represents a cognitive process that should have direct bearing on interpretations for both current and future events. Individuals interact, experience and observe the actions of a relationship partner (e.g., how they have communicated, whether they have kept commitments or been honest etc.) and use these perceptions to develop a view of how that partner will act in the future (e.g., their trust in the supplier) (MacMillan et al., 2005). According to Johnson and Grayson (2005), cognitive trust "arises from an accumulated knowledge that allows one to make predictions, with some level of confidence, regarding the likelihood that a focal partner will live up to his/her obligations" (p. 501). Thus, knowledge is accumulated from observation of partner behaviour within the focal relationship and from reported reputation in other relationships (Johnson & Grayson, 2005). This form of trust is based on rational processes that determine whether the other party in the relationship is reliable and competent, and therefore, can be trusted (e.g.: Rempel et al., 1985; Moorman et al., 1992; McAllister 1995; Doney & Cannon, 1997).

Although cognitive trust is knowledge-driven, the need to trust presumes a state of incomplete knowledge (Johnson & Grayson, 2005). Individuals in an organisational context periodically process information and clues about their counterparts to assess the fragility of trust (McEvily et al., 2003). Thus, in business relationships, there is no total ignorance of relationships, but there is no total knowledge, either. In relationships, the future may be faced with new stresses and forces, which could not have been anticipated and for which no past or present encounters reasonably correspond (Rempel et al., 1985) -for instance, executives may change in one of the companies, or environmental, uncontrollable conditions may change company needs, or a firm may initiate a new relationship. Also, viewing trust as an expectation highlights an inherent uncertainty or risk surrounding a supplier's behaviour (Rempel et al., 1985). Consequently, the amount of knowledge necessary for trust is somewhere between total knowledge and total ignorance (Simmel, 1964). Thus, given that a successful relationship is not a guaranteed proposition, included explicit or/and implicit expectations, sometimes trust requires a "leap of faith" (Rempel et al., 1985; Zaheer et al., 1998; Perrone et al., 2003). As faith involves a stance toward some claim that is not -at least presently- demonstrable by reason (Alston, 1998) and it connotes unquestioning, often emotionally charged belief (The American Heritage, 2009). Thus, as faith features an affective dimension and is a kind of trust (Rempel et al., 1985; Alston, 1998), there is an affective dimension of trust, consisting of the emotional bonds

between individuals and being complementary to its cognitive base (Lewis & Wiegert, 1985). In this way, McAllister (1995) found that the levels of cognition-based trust were higher than levels of affect-based trust and that some level of cognitive trust is necessary for affective trust to develop. Affective-based trust is the confidence one places in a partner on the basis of feelings fuelled by the care and concern demonstrated by a partner demonstrates (e.g.: Johnson-George & Swap, 1982; McAllister, 1995; Rempel et al., 1985). Also, it is characterised by feelings of security, perceived relationship strength, and reputation effects, but affective trust is decidedly more confined to personal experiences with the focal partner than cognitive trust (e.g.: McAllister, 1995; Johnson & Grayson, 2005). It appears to be clear that emotions do influence the perception of trust in relationships. However, according to Schoorman et al. (2007), proponents of the strictly cognitive approach to trust would argue that, while emotions may create a temporary “irrationality” about the data on cognitive-based trust, after a period of time, the perception would return to a rational perspective, as this emotion does dissipate over time after a violation of trust. Although, whether it ever completely dissipates and returns to a non-emotional evaluation does not seem to be clear yet (Schoorman et al., 2007).

Satisfaction

The satisfaction construct has gained an important role in marketing literature (Abdul-Muhmin, 2002; Eggert & Ulaga, 2002; Bennett & Rundle-Tiele, 2004). It is critical for the development of future business exchanges (Cannon & Perreault, 1999) and essential to relationship performance improvements (Lages et al., 2008). For many researchers, customer satisfaction measures indicate future profits (e.g., Hauser et al., 1994) and provide the foundation for a company’s long-term success (e.g., Huber et al., 2007; 2001). However, there is little support for the notion of a process in which people who start off with higher levels of relationship satisfaction develop more relationship-enhancing attributional tendencies over time (Cannon & Perreault, 1999; Miller & Rempel, 2004). Many authors suggest that customer satisfaction is strongly related to customer value (Woodruff, 1997; Spitieri & Dion, 2004), with some ambiguity surrounding both concepts (Parasuraman, 1997), while others believe they are complementary, yet distinct constructs (Woodruff & Gardial, 1996). Eggert & Ulaga (2002) reduced the apparent operational ambiguities besetting the two constructs. Lengthy reviews and empirical applications point to maturing satisfaction research and definition (Fournier & Mick, 1999).

As Table IV shows, fulfilment -disconfirmation-, consequence, experience, expectation, performance, evaluation and state all emerged as central terms in the definition of satisfaction. The first four are underpinned by the confirmation/disconfirmation paradigm (Oliver, 1980) and equity theory (Adams, 1965; Oliver & Swan, 1989), which are the basic principles for satisfaction research (Homburg et al., 2002).

Table IV
Satisfaction Definitions and Their Behavioural Dimensions

Author	Definition	Behavioural Dimensions											
		Cognitive	Affective	Fulfil (Con/Discon)	Expectation	Evaluation	Consequence	Performance	Experience	State			
Olshavsky & Miller (1972)	"...is the consequence of the confirmation or positive disconfirmation of expectations , which means that the perceived performance is equal to or better than the expected outcome."			x		1	1			1	1		
Hunt (1977)	"...is the evaluation rendered that the experience was at least as good as it was supposed to be."	x	x					1	1				1
Westbrook & Newman (1978)	"...the extent to which consumers feel subjectively pleased with their ownership and usage of products."			x									
Oliver (1980)	"...is a function of an initial standard and some perceived discrepancy from the initial reference point. ..." "..."an additive combination of the expectation level and the resulting disconfirmation ."			x		1	1						
Churchill & Surprenant (1982)	"...is an outcome of purchase and use resulting from the buyer's comparison of the rewards and costs of the purchase in relation to the anticipated consequences ."			x		1	1			1			
Woodruff et al. (1983)	"...is an emotional feeling in response to confirmation/disconfirmation ."			x		1							
Anderson and Narus (1984)	"...a positive affective state resulting from the appraisal of all aspects of a firm's working relationship with another firm."			x						1	1		1
Day (1984)	"...is a postchoice evaluative judgment concerning a specific purchase selection."	x	x			1			1				
Tse and Wilton (1988)	"... evaluation of the perceived discrepancy between prior expectations ... and the actual performance of the product"	x	x			1	1	1				1	
Westbrook & Oliver (1991)	"...an emotional state arising from both a cognitive process of comparing customer's expectations with perceptions of service performance and an evaluation of emotions experienced during the consumption experience "			x		1	1			1	1	1	1
Kotler (1991)	"...is a postpurchase evaluation of product quality given prepurchase expectations ."	x	x			1	1	1					
Yi (1991), in Anderson (1994)	"...is generally construed to be a postconsumption evaluation dependent on perceived quality of value, expectations , and confirmation/disconfirmation - the degree (if any) of discrepancy between actual and expected quality."			x		1	1	1					
Fornell (1992)	"...is expressed as a function of prepurchase expectations and postpurchase perceived performance ..."			x		1	1					1	
Oliver (1993)	(Attribute satisfaction) "... is the consumer's subjective satisfaction judgment resulting from observations of attribute performance and can be considered to be the psychological fulfillment response consumers make when assessing performance ."			x		1				1	1		
Ganesan (1994)	"...a positive affective state based on the outcomes obtained from the relationship."			x							1		1
Anderson et al. (1994)	"...is an overall evaluation based on the total purchase and consumption experience with a good or service over time."			x					1				1
Storbacka et al. (1994)	"Customers' cognitive and affective evaluation based on the personal experience across all service episodes within the relationship"	x	x						1				1
Peter & Olson (1996)	"...the degree to which a consumer's prepurchase expectations are fulfilled or surpassed by a product."			x		1	1						
Spreng et al. (1996)	"...a consumer's assessment of the degree to which a product's performance is perceived to have met or exceeded his or her desires (desires congruency) and expectations (expectations congruency)."	x	x					1	1				
Woodruff (1997)	"Overall satisfaction is the customer's feelings in response to evaluations of one or more use experiences with a product."			x									1
Flint et al. (1997)	"...is essentially a response to an evaluation of perceived product or service performance ."			x					1	1	1		
Patterson et al. (1997)	"...when the performance of a product or service meets the expectations of the purchaser."			x		1	1					1	
Oliver (1997)	"...is the consumer's fulfillment response . It is a judgment that a product or service feature, or the product or service, itself, provided (or is providing) a pleasurable level of consumption related fulfillment , including levels of under- or overfulfillment."			x		1					1		
Andreassen & Lindestad (1998)	"...as the accumulated experience of a customer's purchase and consumption experiences ."			x									1
Oliver (1999)	"...is the consumer's sense that consumption provides outcomes against a standard of pleasure versus displeasure." And "...a fairly temporal postusage state for one-time consumption or a repeatedly experienced state for ongoing consumption that reflects how the product or service has fulfilled its purpose."			x		1					1		1
Bolton & Lemon (1999)	"...is a fulfillment response ..."			x		1					1		
Geyskens et al. (1999)	"...is defined most frequently as a positive affective state resulting from the appraisal of all aspects of a firm's working relationship with another firm... Economic satisfaction is defined as a channel member's positive affective response to the economic rewards that flow from the relationship with its partner, such as sales volume and margins. Noneconomic satisfaction is defined as a channel member's positive affective response to the noneconomic, psychosocial aspects of its relationship, in that interactions with the exchange partner are fulfilling , gratifying, and easy."			x		1			1	1			1
Fournier & Mick (1999)	"...a context-dependent process consisting of a multi-modal, multi-modal blend of motivations, cognitions, emotions, and meanings, embedded in sociocultural settings, that transforms during progressive and regressive consumer-product interactions."	x	x										
Huber et al. (2001)	"...the result of a comparative process, in which the desired component serves as a measure for evaluating perceptions of a given relationship between (dis)confirmation and (dis)satisfaction with a particular performance ."			x		1			1	1	1		
Rossumme (2003)	"...the individual psychological judgments of pleasure or comfort surrounding the relationship with the supplier..."			x									
% on 30 definitions		23%	100%	0%	60%	40%	40%	40%	40%	27%	23%	17%	

The above mentioned definitions of satisfaction lead to conclude that this concept seems to be the affective result of a post-decision experience of these theories. It should be noted that, when we delve into the meaning assigned by current literature to that statement, we find that it actually refers to an antecedent of satisfaction.

Behavioural dimensions of satisfaction

Based on the definitions above and Table IV data, satisfaction reflects an affective reaction or response to a current situation and can be contrasted with an objective or "rational" summary assessment of prior experience outcomes, as captured by the concept of outcomes based on comparisons (Ganesan, 1994; Anderson & Narus, 1990). It clearly arises from a cognitive process that compares perceived performance to a specific set of standards. However, satisfaction essentially represents an affective state of mind (Eggert & Ulaga, 2002). Such feeling, by nature, is comparatively transitory and subject to revisions as circumstances change (Miller & Rempel, 2004). Moreover, as an affective reaction to present circumstances, satisfaction does not appear to involve a precise cognitive structure (Miller & Rempel, 2004).

Commitment

Commitment has received a great deal of attention in current literature and scholars have recognized it as an essential ingredient for successful long-term relationships (e.g., Williamson, 1985; Dwyer et al., 1987; Anderson & Weitz, 1992; Morgan & Hunt, 1994; Gundlach et al., 1995). Berry and Parasuraman (1991) state that relationships are built on the foundation of mutual commitment. This construct is central to successful buyer-seller relationships because it enables partners to (1) bring future value, benefits (Hardwick & Ford, 1986) and/or costs reductions (Stanko et al., 2006) to them; (2) increase supplier sales (Mohr & Speckman, 1994) and buyers orders (Gassenheimer et al., 1995); (3) comply with a partner's requests (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990) and engage in consistent activities (Becker, 1960); (4) act as powerful signals of intended relationship quality and influence the development of shared social norms for regulating future exchanges (Gundlach et al 1995); (5) work together to serve buyer needs better, achieve a higher level of performance and view potentially high-risk actions as being prudent because of the belief that their partner will not act opportunistically (Morgan & Hunt, 1994).

Many scholars argue that "reciprocal or joint commitment" inputs can lead to stable long-term relationships, although Stanko et al. (2006) found no link between relationship length and commitment. For instance, Morgan & Hunt (1994) point out that a committed party believes the relationship is worth working on to ensure that it endures indefinitely. However, there is no reciprocal commitment in all relationships, as commitment mismatches may occur naturally (Bacharach & Lawler, 1981). This could decrease cooperation and inhibit long-term success (Anderson & Weitz, 1992), as a more committed partner may become vulnerable to opportunism, whereas a less committed partner may be tempted to exploit advantages, especially under adverse market conditions (Anderson & Weitz, 1992). However, Gundlach et al (1995) found that disproportionate commitment may not always result in opportunistic behaviours.

In multiple disciplines, there are many different and sometimes conflicting definitions of commitment that may exacerbate the overall confusion about its meaning (Kim & Frazier 1997). Some common elements stand out in the definitions shown in Table V, namely desire, intention, act, attitude, willingness, attachment, and believing.

Table V
Commitment Definitions and Their Behavioural Dimensions

Author	Definition													
		Cognitive	Affective	Conative	Desire	Intention	Act	Attitude	Willingness	Attachment	Believing			
Porter et al. (1974)	"... refers to an individual's attachment to, or identification with, an organization and willingness to exert additional effort to maintain organizational goals and values"			x	x							1	1	
Dean & Spanier (1974)	"...an overall evaluation of the individual's attraction to the marriage and dedication to the continuation of the relationship"			x	x				1	1			1	
Sen (1977)	"...a person choosing an act that he believes will yield a lower level of personal welfare to him than an alternative that is also available to him."					x				1				1
Cook & Emerson (1978)	"...an interpersonal attachment leading persons to exchange repeatedly with the same partners" and "...a social- structural phenomenon properly measured as an attribute of total network unit"			x	x									1
Anderson & Narus (1984)	"... act of staying in a relationship"					x				1				
Dwyer, Schurr & Oh (1987)	"...an implicit or explicit pledge of relational continuity between exchange partners" and "...implies a willingness to make short-term sacrifices to realize longer-term benefits"						x						1	
Anderson & Weitz (1992)	"...a desire to develop a stable relationship, a willingness to make short-term sacrifices to maintain the relationship, and a confidence in the stability of the relationship."			x	x	1							1	
Moorman, Zaltman & Deshpande (1992)	"... an enduring desire to maintain a valued relationship"			x	x	1								
Liljander & Strandvik (1993)	"... the parties' intentions to act and their attitude towards interacting with each other."					x			1			1		
Rusbult et al. (1994)	"...represents longterm orientation toward a relationship, including intent to persist and feelings of psychological attachment "			x	x			1						1
Storbaka, Standvik & Gronroos (1994)	"...the parties' intentions to act and their attitude towards interacting with each other"					x			1			1		
Morgan & Hunt (1994)	"...an exchange partner believing that an ongoing relationship with another is so important as to warrant maximum efforts at maintaining it " and "... enduring desire to maintain " corresponds with our view that a committed partner wants the relationship to endure indefinitely and is willing to work at maintaining it"			x	x	1							1	1
Wilson (1995)	"... the desire to continue the relationship and to work to ensure its continuance."			x	x	1								
Gundlach, Achrol, & Mentzer (1995)	"...an affirmative action taken by one party that creates a self-interest stake in the relationship and demonstrates something, more than a mere promise. ... includes an attitudinal component signifying an enduring intention by the parties to develop and maintain a stable long-term relationship. ... means something only over the long term..."			x	x			1	1	1				
Kumar et al. (1995)	"... the desire to continue a relationship because of positive affect toward the partner."			x			1							
Brown et al. (1995)	Instrumental commitment: a channel member accepts influence because he hopes to achieve a favorable reaction from the other firm. Normative commitment: (a) identification : a channel member accepts influence because he wants to maintain a satisfying relationship; (b) internalization: a channel member accepts influence because the content of the induced behavior is intrinsically rewarding.					x						1		1
Mohr et al. (1996)	"... the desire to maintain membership in the dyadic relationship"			x			1							
Geyskens et al. (1996)	"... the intention to continue the relationship."						x		1					
Hinde (1997)	"...an individual identification with an organisation, or believing that he/she needs or ought to stay with an organisation."			x	x								1	1
Kim & Frazier (1997)	Continuance commitment: "...a distributor's desire to continue the relationship with the supplier firm"; Behavioral commitment: "...the extent to which a distributor provides special help to its supplier in times of need"; and Affective commitment: "... the sense of unity binding a distributor to its supplier firm"			x	x	1			1	1				
Meyer & Allen (1997)	"...a psychological state that (a) characterises the employees relationship with the organisation, and (b) has implications for the decision to continue membership of an organisation."			x										1
Money (2000)	"... is related to both an individual's intention to stay in a relationship with an organisation, and a willingness to put in effort to maintain the quality of the relationship with that organization"					x			1				1	
Bagozzi (2000)	"...concerns emotional involvement with and attachment to one's group"			x										1
Jap & Ganesan (2000)	"...the supplier's desire to develop a stable relationship with the retailer, a willingness to make short-term sacrifices to maintain the relationship, and a confidence in the stability of the relationship"			x	x	1							1	
Gilliland & Bello (2002)	"... the intention to stay with a partner due to its affect for and obligation to the partner"					x			1					
Walter & Ritter (2003)	"... the "enduring desire" of a customer to maintain and develop a supplier relationship"			x	x	1								
Golicic & Mentzer (2006)	"... the willingness to exert effort to continue the relationship"						x							1
Han & Sung (2008)	"...an enduring desire to maintain a valued relationship"			x	x	1								
	% on 28 definitions			0%	64%	89%	36%	25%	18%	21%	25%	29%	11%	

Our analysis of the above exposed definitions of the term leads to the conclusion that the essence of commitment in cross-organisational, intra-organisational and interpersonal relationships can be defined as the desire to continue a stable relationship, the intention to stay in that relationship, and a willingness to make short-term sacrifices consistently to maintain the quality of the relationship. This implies a state of being bound and a relational continuity, stability, durability and consistency as often the focus of the desire, intention and willingness. It is clear that relationships cannot endure for long without some commitment on both sides. An intention to stay in a relationship may also be borne

out of coercion. For instance, a buyer may be committed to staying in a relationship because there may be no valuable alternatives to this relationship. This could decrease the state of being bound, inhibiting long-term success, except when the more committed party has an enduring desire to continue the relationship and a willingness to balance commitment differences.

Behavioural dimensions of commitment

Though there are differences in commitment conceptualisations, Table V reveals some measure of consensus around an affective and a conative behavioural dimension of commitment. The affective dimension of commitment has been described in terms of psychological attachment, desire and attitude. Affective commitment refers to the sense of unity binding or emotionally attaching parties, with an enduring positive regard for the other party (Forgas & Dobosz, 1980; Stern, 1986; Kumar et al., 1995; Kim & Frazier, 1997). For instance, highly affective commitment means that the parties feel a strong unity of interests and goals and can work well together (Dwyer et al., 1987; Anderson & Narus, 1990). The attitudinal component of commitment shares common meaning domains with other conative constructs, such as intention, identification, and involvement, as well as loyalty (Gundlach et al., 1995). This dimension is most susceptible to Staw's (1977) criticism that the value of commitment as a separate and distinct construct remains to be demonstrated. Moreover, as noted before (e.g.: Vroom, 1964; Palda, 1966) and according to Gundlach et al (1995), the attitudinal component is not nearly as consistent a predictor of long-term commitment processes. Other commitment conceptualisations with affective dimensions in the literature were normative (e.g.: Brown et al., 1995) and continuance commitment (e.g.: Kim & Frazier, 1997), indicating parties that stay in a relationship because they believe that they ought to and desire to continue the relationship because they need to, respectively.

The conative dimension of commitment refers to actions or investments or resource commitments that demonstrate a party's intention for the future of the relationship (Wetzels et al., 1998; Sollner, 1999). Also, it is defined as the extent to which a party provides special help to its partner in times of need and reflected in the actual behaviour of the parties (Kim & Frazier 1997). With an emphasis on the "willingness to make short-term sacrifices," parties are determined to stay in a relationship, making efforts to maintain its quality (Money, 2000). An enduring level of commitment, as reflected in each party's long-term investment intentions, provides the basis for parties to develop confidence in the stability of their relationship. The absence of such expectations is likely to discourage future-oriented relationship investments (Gundlach et al 1995). Another commitment conceptualisation featuring a conative dimension in the literature was instrumental or calculative commitment (e.g.: Brown et al., 1995; Gundlach et al., 1995; Geyskens et al., 1996; Wetzels et al., 1998; Sollner, 1999; Golicic & Mentzer, 2006), defined as an affirmative action taken by one party that creates a self-interest stake in the relationship and proves something, more than just a promise.

Loyalty

The core of relationship marketing lies in relationships, and the purpose of creating and maintaining customer loyalty is to build mutually profitable and long-term relationships (Ravald & Grönroos, 1996). Customer loyalty has often been considered an important part of managerial marketing (e.g.: Reicheld, 1993). Its frequent presence in non-academic periodicals, where many writers even ask whether it has altogether disappeared, is another demonstration of its importance. Unfortunately, there is no universally accepted definition of loyalty (Jacoby & Chestnut, 1978; Dick & Basu, 1994; Oliver, 1999; Uncles et al. 2003). Table VI shows the concepts most widely used to define it: re-buying, commitment, intention, action to stay, and predisposition, as well as attitudinal preference.

Table VI
Loyalty Definitions and Their Behavioural Dimensions

Author	Loyalty Definition													
		Cognitive	Affective	Conative	Re buying	Attitude-Predisposition-Preference	Action to stay - to remain	Commitment	Intention					
Newman & Werbel (1973)	... who rebought a brand, considered only that brand, and did no brand-related information seeking					x	1	1						
Jacoby & Chestnut (1978)	"...the consumer's predisposition towards a brand as a function of psychological processes. This includes attitudinal preference and commitment towards the brand."					x	x				1	1		
Smith & Swinyard (1982)	"...a statement of clear preference for a particular brand. In this case, purchase appears to be the result of higher order affect developed toward the brand. In other cases, purchase could represent a search or an attempt to gather more information about a product, being the result of a lower order affect toward the brand."					x	x	1			1			
Assael (1987)	"... commitment to a certain brand."							x					1	
Tellis (1988)	...repeat purchasing frequency or relative volume of same-brand purchasing							x	1					
Heskett et al. (1990)	the attitude driving customers to remain with a supplier					x	x			1	1			
Aaker (1991)	...degree of predispositional commitment toward a brand					x	x				1	1		
Liljander & Strandvik (1993)	"...repeat purchase behaviour within a relationship."							x	1					
Storbaka et al (1994)	...observed purchase behaviour.							x	1					
Zeithaml et al. (1996)	"the decision to remain with the company despite dissatisfaction"					x	x			1				
Pritchard & Howard (1997)	"...a composite blend of brand attitude and behavior , with indexes that measure the degree to which one favours and buys a brand repeatedly"					x	x			1	1			
Oliver (1997)	...who "fervently desires to rebuy a product or service and will have no other" and will pursue this quest "against all odds and at all costs."					x	x	1	1					
Söderlund (1998)	"...customer's intention to purchase again from the supplier who has created a certain level of satisfaction..."							x	1					1
Andreassen & Lindestad (1998)	"...expresses an intended behavior related to the service or the company. This includes the likelihood of future renewal of service contracts, how likely it is that the customer changes patronage..."							x	1	1				1
Oliver (1999)	"...a deeply held commitment to rebuy or repatronize a preferred product/service consistently in the future, thereby causing repetitive same-brand or same brand-set purchasing, despite situational influences and marketing efforts having the potential to cause switching behavior."	x	x	x	x	1	1				1			
Chaudhuri & Holbrook (2001)	"...the willingness of the average consumer to repurchase the brand" and "... the level of commitment of the average consumer toward the brand"					x	1					1	1	
Yi & Jeon (2003)	"...as repeated purchases of particular products or services during a certain period of time."					x	1	1						
Sirdeshmukh et al. (2002)	"...the intention to perform a set of behaviors that indicate a motivation to maintain a relationship with a supplier..."							x		1				1
Rosanas & Velilla (2003)	"...is closely related with identification . Identification with a group, society, a company, or a set of objectives..." and "being capable of honoring the trust deposited by the trustor in case there is a motivational conflict."					x					1			
Plank & Newell (2007)	"...the customer perceptions of whether they will continue to use and remain committed to the supplier".							x		1		1		
Han & Sung (2008)	"...the degree to which an industrial buyer has repeatedly purchased a supplier's particular brand during recent years..."							x	1	1				
% on 21 definitions		5%	43%	95%	57%	52%	29%	29%	19%					

Table VI enables to draw an overall definition of the term loyalty, which could be described as a predisposition and action to stay in a relationship for a long period of time. Additionally, according to Rosanas & Velilla (2003), an individual (a buyer) becomes loyal to another individual (a supplier) only through interactions where the buyer perceives the supplier's actions as primarily motivated to create value for the buyer –that is acting on transcendent motives that, in turn, develop trust (Perez Lopez, 1993). Thus, the buyer's loyalty is the result of his/her perception of the supplier's transcendent motives and the buyer's predisposition toward this supplier. Both the buyer's perception and predisposition evolve into action to stay in a relationship with that supplier in order to maintain a set of behaviours, such as repeat purchasing and/or referencing. As such, loyalty may emerge pre consumption in a first-purchase situation and both pre and post consumption in repeat-purchase settings (Bennett & Rundle-Tiele, 2004).

Behavioural dimensions of loyalty

As Table VI shows, there is no consensus on a cognitive dimension of loyalty, while there is some measure of consensus around its affective dimension. Yet, there is significant consensus on a conative dimension of loyalty. Cognitive loyalty surfaces when researchers use re-buying to define loyalty; it is based on routine transactions and characterised by a habitual attachment that is, to a large extent, unemotional and convenience-driven (Oliver, 1999; Gounaris & Stathakopoulos, 2004). It relies solely on performance, based on prior or vicarious knowledge or on recent experience-based information (Oliver, 1999). Often called "phantom loyalty" (Oliver, 1999), "inertia loyalty" (Gounaris & Stathakopoulos, 2004), and "spurious loyalty" (Day, 1969; Dick & Basu, 1994), it is the easiest form of loyalty to break down, and it is thereby subject to failings on the cognitive dimension (Oliver, 1999).

Affective loyalty reflects predisposition and attitudinal preference conceptualisations. Whereas cognition is directly subject to counter argumentation, affect is not as easily dislodged (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001). However, like cognitive loyalty, this form of loyalty remains subject to switching (Oliver, 1999), and, thus, neither one of them achieve true loyalty as independent dimensions. The conative dimension of loyalty comes into play when a motivated intention to stay in a relationship (commitment) is transformed into readiness to act, thereby facilitating repurchase and reference. It involves an additional desire to overcome obstacles that might prevent the act. This is similar to Oliver's (1999) description of "action loyalty" and Gounaris & Stathakopoulos' (2004) "premium loyalty" notion. Conative loyalty is influenced by repeated episodes of positive affect and is characterised by the greatest degree of individual attachment to a relationship (Gounaris & Stathakopoulos, 2004).

Table VII summarize the key relationships variables main concepts.

Table VII
Conceptual Differences among Key Relationship Variables

	Value	Trust	Satisfaction	Commitment	Loyalty
<i>Definition</i>	Judgement	Expectation Belief	Affective state	Intention to stay Willingness	Action to stay
<i>Main dimension</i>	Cognitive	Cognitive	Affective	Conative	Conative
<i>Secondary dimension</i>	Affective Conative	Affective	-	Affective	-
<i>Associated features</i>	Trade-off Organic Co-created In-use	Future-oriented Trustor: Propensity and Vulnerability Trustee: Reliability, Benevolence, Dependability and Honesty	Confirmation/ Disconfirmation	Desire to continue Attachment Continuity Stability Durability Consistency	Predisposition to stay Transcendent motivation Reciprocity and opportunism
<i>First purchasing perspective</i>	Post consumption (value co-created) Pre consumption (value proposal)	Post consumption	Post consumption	Pre consumption	Pre consumption
<i>Repetitive purchasing perspective</i>	Post consumption	Bridge between pre consumption and post consumption	Pre consumption and post consumption	Pre consumption and post consumption	Pre consumption and post consumption
<i>Relative to</i>	Supplier and competitor offering Context	Supplier evolution	Supplier performance Context	Supplier involvement	Supplier motives

As detailed in this section, academic literature has yielded several definitions on key relationship variables based on the behavioural dimensions outlined in hierarchy of effects models. Yet, none of the former research efforts has integrated these notions into a model, which is the goal of this research work.

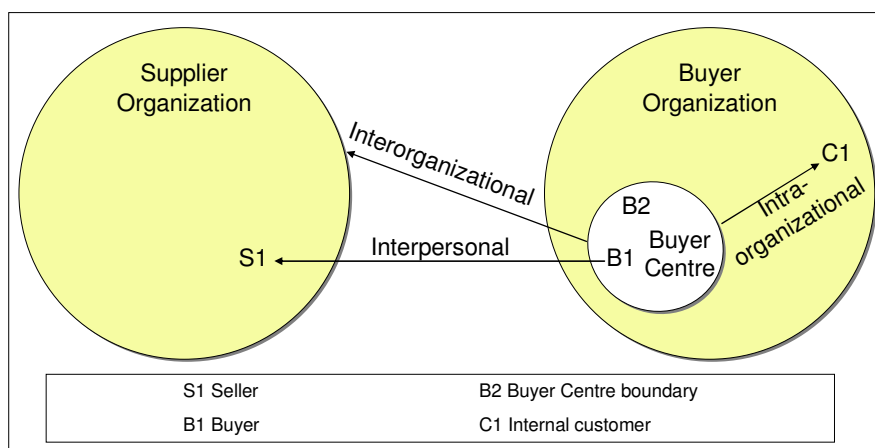
Methodology

As qualitative research methodologies cover an array of interpretative techniques that seek to describe, decode, translate, and come to terms with the meaning of certain more or less naturally occurring phenomena in the social world (Van Maanen, 1979), qualitative data collection methods were undertaken. Eight semi-structured, in-depth interviews were held with key decision-makers at leading companies' purchasing departments. At first, the intention was to find out the meaning of value for them in order to provide the literature with a definition encompassing all of its dimensions. Interviewers started by openly asking respondents what value was for them. Then, they delved into each value dimension mentioned by interviewees, asking for examples of more and less valued suppliers. All professional buyers freely associated their value perception to different kinds of relationships and, therefore, to key relationship drivers -commitment, trust, satisfaction and loyalty.

This initial round of interviews led to another ten interviews to further explore the notions associated with these variables, as well as their interactions and hierarchies. At the same time, an extensive literature review was carried out to take a closer look at academic definitions on key relationship variables, including interactions tested in empirical research works conducted at the interpersonal, inter-organisational and intra-organisational relationship fields, in order to strengthen interview findings. This process eventually and inductively yielded the findings presented in this paper.

Considering the variety of units and levels of analysis to which key relationship variables have been applied, it is necessary to clearly state that this research has taken individual buyers as its unit of analysis. Thus, this study could be structured into three interaction types: "person and person" (interpersonal), "organisation and organisation" (inter-organisational) and "person and organisation" (intra-organisational), as shown in Figure I. This research has focused on inter-organisational interactions, defined here as the extent of value, trust, commitment, satisfaction and loyalty perception placed on the partner organisation (buyer centres) by the members of a focal organisation (supplier). It is usually buyers who decide whether to purchase from a supplier or not. Thus, we have first considered the buyer's point of view in buyer-supplier relationships. In addition, examining the characteristics of cross-organisational relationships, we need to study the individual and organisational levels simultaneously (Rousseau 1985), and, usually, key decision-makers at buyer centres or purchasing departments have better information of both levels.

Figure 1
Inter-organisational, Interpersonal and Intra-organisational Definitions



Sample companies are located in Argentina, ranking among the top one hundred companies with the highest turnover in this country. Managers were contacted by email and invited to participate in the study. Eighteen purchasing managers in a variety of industries (e.g., pharmaceutical, consumer goods, automotive, oil & energy) agreed to join this study, and interviews were scheduled over a period of three months. Table VIII summarises the main characteristics of sample companies.

Table VIII
Study Sample

Participant name*	Years in Industry	Years in buyer dept	Years in firm	Age	Company activity	Company size (headcount)
Abel	12	4	12	39	Oil & gas	1500
Alfred	11	5	8	36	Viticulture	500
Mary	13	11	13	39	Consumer goods	500
Damian	15	10	15	44	Food & drinks	2300
Ernest	16	14	9	38	Oil & gas	50000
Alex	15	4	11	48	Drinks	1000
Gabriel	1,5	11	1,5	32	Cleaning prod.	220
Richard	7	5	7	56	Gas transport	900
William	26	20	20	49	Fast Food	50000
John	18	15	10	44	Pharmaceutics	1000
Kelly	20	7	20	46	Spares automotive	350
Luke	12	9	12	41	Personal care	64000
George	17	15	11	58	Food	3500
Joe	27	9	27	55	Food	2000
Sylvia	30	20	5	60	Gas transport	550
Paul	25	18	8	50	Oil & gas	Over 35000
Robert	24	15	10	52	Oil & gas	40000
Simon	29	20	12	58	Construction	800

*All participants are key decision-makers in the purchasing departments of their firms. Products purchased by all of them: all direct and indirect materials and services. Names are pseudonyms.

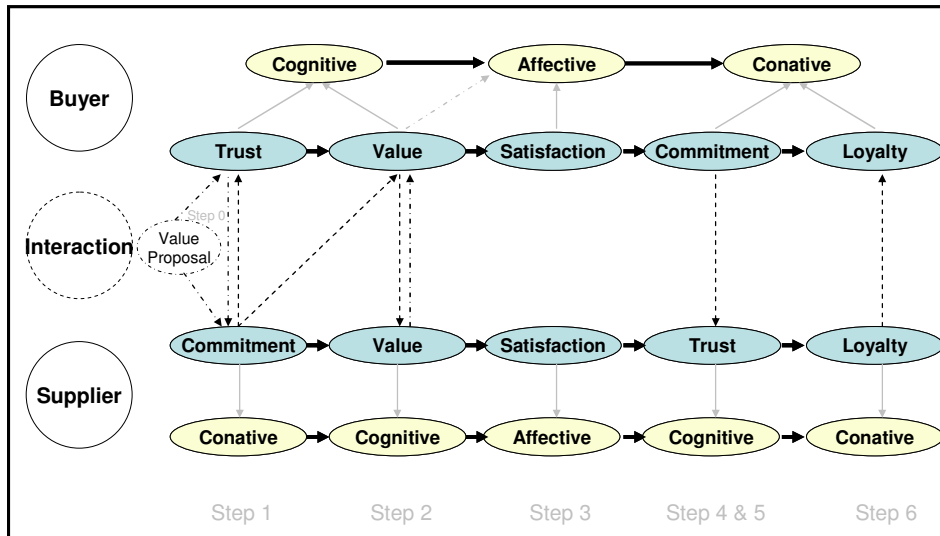
As most spontaneously provided examples referred to relationships with suppliers of strategic products, interviewees were asked to provide other examples involving services or indirect materials—i.e., cleaning and maintenance services, and stationary supplies- in order to obtain a broader conceptualisation of terms and hierarchies. To reinforce this and to ensure the collection of information on different relationship types (Cannon & Perreault, 1999), definitions on Contemporary Marketing Practices (CMP framework: transactions, database, interpersonal, and network) provided by Coviello et al. (1997) were exposed. As a result, examples of diverse transactional, interpersonal and network relationships were obtained. No example of relationships based on database practices surfaced.

Individual interviews lasted around 1.5 hours. They were all taped, transcribed and coded with NVivo Software. Verbatim contents were analysed. As interviews were conducted in Spanish, a back-translation technique of verbatim contents was undertaken (Easterby-Smith et al., 2004) to ensure the correct use of key concepts. The trustworthiness of these research findings was assessed by applying reliability coding techniques (Huberman & Miles, 1994). In fact, verbatim interview contents were also analysed by an additional researcher who had not been present at interviews. Variable concepts and their hierarchies were identified using the same materials and procedures to facilitate further research efforts.

Results

All the notions summarized on Table VII also surfaced during our interviews with purchasing managers. Then, in line with these concepts, this research study uncovered several hierarchies of effects of key buyer-supplier relationship variables from buyers' point of view, as shown in Figure II. This section discusses relationship hierarchies in detail.

Figure II
Relationship hierarchies of effects



Step 0: Buyer-supplier interactions begin with the construction of a value proposal developed by suppliers or co-created with buyers through supplier evaluation processes. With these processes or when value proposals are accepted by buyers, expectations of future value creation begin to develop, while buyer trust starts to grow. Study participants consistently referred to these developments:

Kelly: "... You start building a relationship when approach a supplier, assessing their performance and drawing conclusions on a daily basis. There are a lot of meaningful elements in a quotation besides prices –presentation, completeness... these are all elements that create more trust. And they are subjective..."

Buyer trust has a predominantly cognitive dimension, based on market references or supplier evaluation processes, but it may also include affective components stemming from buyers' "leap of faith" –sometimes necessary as a result of insufficient interaction with and, therefore, knowledge of suppliers:

Mary: "At the beginning, there is hope, and hope is trust. I believe that this supplier will work out. You start by trusting, but, somehow, that trust consolidates over time, with facts. Your trust becomes stronger when... you see how a supplier actually behaves. Trust consolidates day after day, as the relationship evolves... Hope begets trust, building expectations... Suppliers' commitment is also factored in... These drivers build the relationship, which starts from scratch... The relationship stems from that trust. So, relying at first on reputation and hope, I start trusting a supplier, and, in turn, I see the supplier's commitment that, doubtlessly, fuels that trust..."

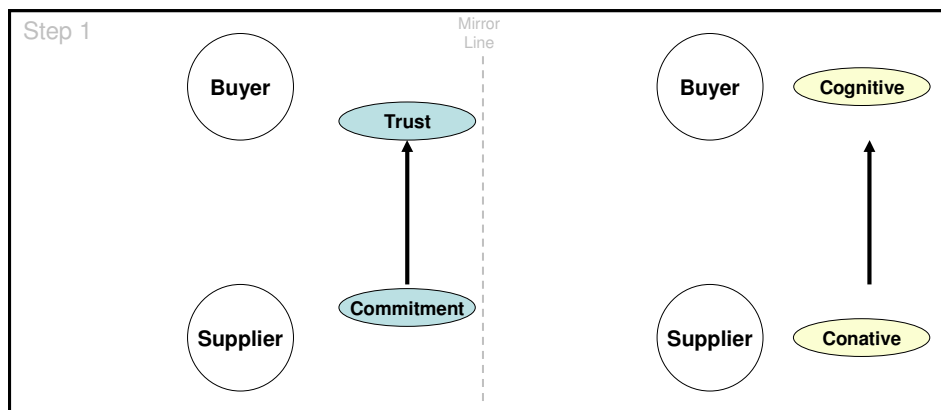
The affective component of buyer trust emerges, consistently, at the beginning of relationships with suppliers characterised as having low economic or strategic impact, or at the onset of transactional relationships. However, this component always comes with a significant cognitive dimension -based on supplier intentions (like commitment) and facts (like value created)- that is later confirmed throughout the relationship, over settings and situations that test the strength of supplier-buyer ties:

Paul: "It is very hard to build trust without commitment... Except at the beginning, when a relationship is only based on references, but I daresay it's almost spiritual... trust is a perception..."

Alex: “I’d say that, if the reference comes from someone who is as demanding as I am, we view it as a fact, but it does not play a part in our assessment; what counts is our evaluation... Trust is earned over the years and with facts, when one partner does not let the other partner down. But it takes time. In my opinion, it takes time, and the only to build trust is to build long-term relationships and to try to maintain them, even in complicated situations...”

Step 1 (shown in Figure III): As buyer-supplier relationships are built on repeated interactions, trust acquires exclusively cognitive dimensions based on perceptions about suppliers’ commitment, which becomes conative. When relationships grow mature, trust cannot consolidate without a perception of suppliers’ actual commitment or behaviour:

Figure III
Step 1: Supplier Commitment

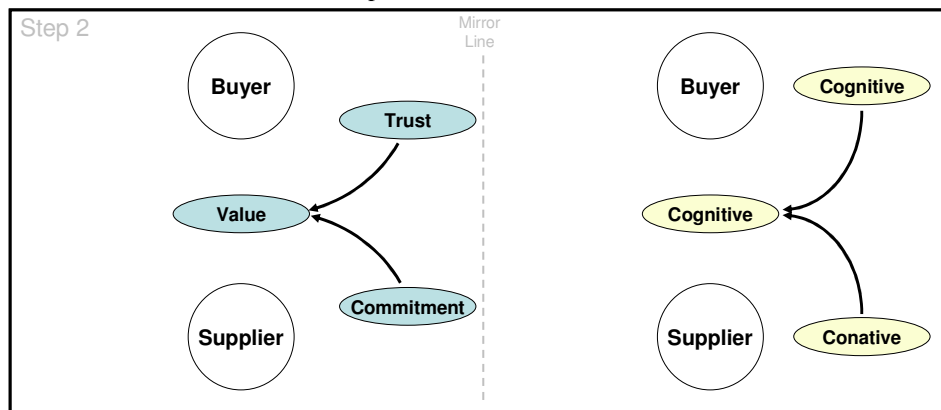


Richard: “... You start assessing that supplier, and your positive or negative assessment starts building your trust... When the process begins, the first job execution starts to consolidate or not the relationship –trust begins to build up or not. If there is a deviation, you watch the supplier’s reaction to that deviation, their concern and commitment to fix it, and it all adds to your trust or not... Trust is very important, but it is earned with facts, agreeing on deliverables in writing and proving, six months later, that deadlines were met. If they are met, there is trust; if deadlines are not met or there are delays, there is no trust. When the client is instrumental to their goals... Suppliers must commit to their clients. If suppliers’ commitments are clear, their execution and timely performance build trust.”

Kelly: “When you look for a new source, it is best to develop it –that is, you’d better not switch from one supplier to another, because you don’t know how the new supplier will behave. So, we start by working on a development that enables us to see how our assumptions work out in reality, how the supplier delivers. If that unfolds satisfactorily, trust starts to build up. In a way, building trust amounts to increasing business volume.”

Step 2 (shown in Figure IV): In the relationship hierarchy of effects, after buyers perceive suppliers’ value proposal and trust starts to grow based on proven supplier commitment, parties begin to perceive co-created value, largely with a cognitive dimension that will fuel buyer trust:

Figure IV
Step2: Value Co-created

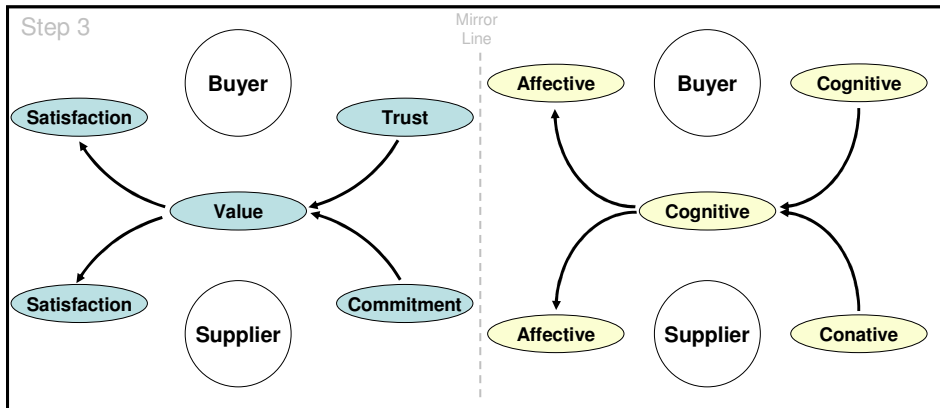


Damian: “If I don’t trust a supplier, it will be very hard to build value. I look at trust, and I determine whether that supplier is adding value or impairing it. I think value is basically the support or trust you feel when you can let go of an issue and you know it’s going to work out just fine... Trust is believing that someone will honour their commitments.”

Alex: “We sit at a table and say, ‘somehow we need to go through this process. Neither you or we are earning what we expect to gain –in some cases, we are even losing- so we need to find a way to get to the other side safe and sound.’ In this setting, we have built significant collaborations. I remember specific products that we launched to reach low-income segments, with costs below product profitability objectives. In those cases, we got together with our suppliers and said, ‘Look, this is only way to get to this segment. What can we do about it?’ And then suppliers would go, ‘Ok, I can sell this product range at this margin, with no margin,’ or ‘I can sell you this product I had discontinued, so that you use it there; I won’t be making a profit, but we can check in six months, to see how we are doing.’ We have worked that way, and we continue to work that way, provided that you set your cards on the table. At that time, we were trying to survive. Now, we can grow, increase our share... To do that, you need trustful relationships. If there is no trust among parties, it is impossible, because one or the other partner is suspicious about what is going on, what the supplier is trying to do, whether a supplier is trying to reel you in in order to do whatever he wants with his prices... And, on the other side, suppliers worry as well, speculating that a buyer wants to make a larger profit or is trying to boost volume to have a supplier captive. Trust is crucial. If trust is lost, it is impossible to do any of this, and you become some sort of administrative department that sends out invitations to bid, secures the lowest price, awards a contract, and is done.”

Step 3 (see Figure V): As value is created and value-creation expectations derived from suppliers’ value proposal promise, satisfaction emerges as an affective reaction restricted to a specific time.

Figure V
Step 3: Mutual Satisfaction

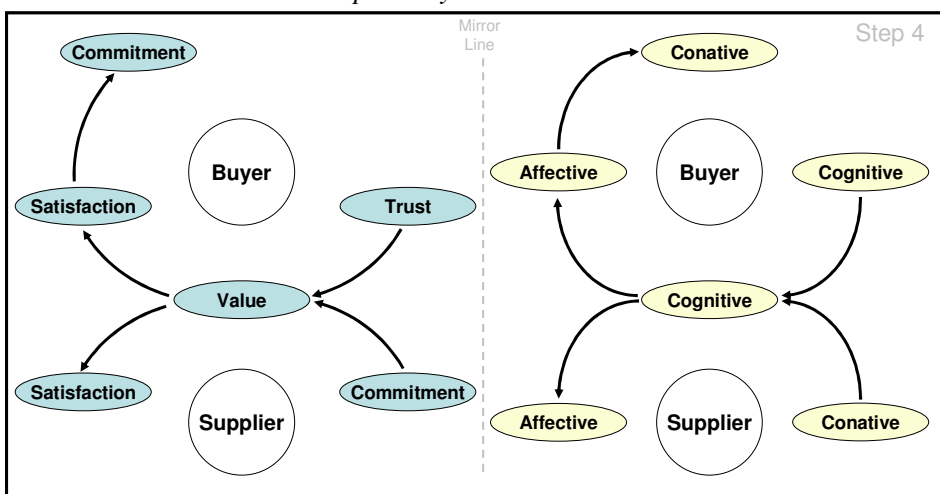


Robert: “When we reached the end of the cycle, we would be able not only to feel satisfaction but to determine, after going through the entire process, what we could improve on in order to add a little more value for the next cycle... Satisfaction would be a consequence of value construction.”

Joe: “...Satisfaction is constantly associated with the way in which a supplier meets your expectations. That is to say, satisfaction is tied to trust, but it is perhaps convenient to establish what trust is... Maybe we could call it “responsiveness” –something that you appreciate and brings satisfaction to you is a supplier’s ability to respond. For instance, if everything has been worked out, and a supplier is ready to deliver, but something comes up – an inconvenience or a need- you want your supplier to be able to respond. That is a very significant value that fuels trust... It is a spiral-like process that grows on its own feedback, starting with... a promise and building on that promise...”

Step 4 (shown in Figure VI): The most valued aspects in value creation, building buyer commitment to maintain a relationship, are associated with value congruence drivers (Silva, Day & Palmer, in press): transparency, communication and honesty. As a result of value perceptions and the satisfaction (or dissatisfaction) derived, buyers commit to (or try to reduce their engagement in) a relationship with their suppliers, and that commitment acquires a conative dimension:

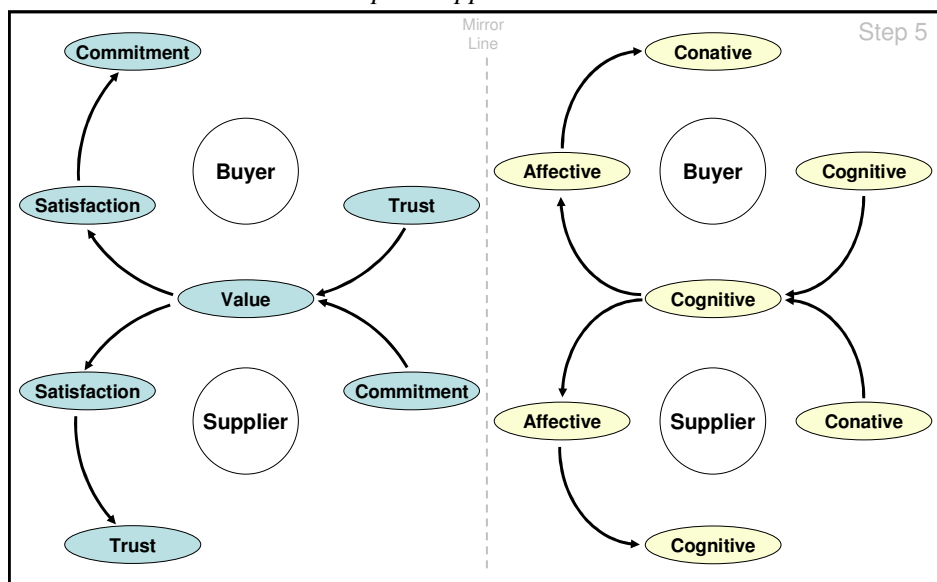
Figure VI
Step 4: Buyer Commitment



William: “Not making a commitment is a commitment in itself. Look, this lasts six months or until someone cheaper comes along. That’s tantamount to not making a commitment, but suppliers know what to expect. As a buyer, you need to be clear on communicating the rules of the game, and, if they change, communicate the changes immediately. In many relationships, suppliers ask for commitment, and, in some situations, there just isn’t any commitment, and you need to make it clear... Let’s assume we want to build a cheese plant in Brazil, and you are going to buy from us, but ‘how much volume will you commit to?’ ‘None; we are going to buy from you, but don’t ask us to commit to a specific volume.’ They don’t get involved in your future success or failure... Value is created when you manage to build the necessary supplier trust, and that’s value for the company as well.”

Step 5 (see Figure VII): Buyer-supplier commitment imbalances award greater power to the least committed partner, who stops being coercive to the extent that this partner contemplates a long-term relationship and shows value congruence by being transparent, satisfying the other, most committed partner. Perceiving buyer commitment, supplier trust grows, acquiring a cognitive dimension:

Figure VII
Step 5: Supplier Trust



William: “Trust grows when you live up to your commitments –or lack of commitments, as well: I do what I say I will do. When that happens, there is trust. How are you going to ask a supplier to do something for you if you haven’t been transparent and honest with your supplier? In a relationship like this one, which requires investments, exports or imports, trust is key... To create value, a buyer needs internal and external credibility, because that enables you to build trust and long-term relationships, optimizing... Sometimes, suppliers find it convenient to do something else, but they won’t do it if they have my commitment that I won’t do something else in the future.”

Step 6 (shown in Figure VIII): When supplier trust is built, supported by buyer commitment, which enables suppliers to gain a deeper understanding of buyer needs, suppliers have the opportunity to provide customized solutions. With this behaviour, suppliers start proving their loyalty to their respective buyers, supporting them and showing greater commitment to maintaining their relationship in the situations they both find themselves in. As a result of buyers’ commitment to their suppliers and suppliers’ behaviour, buyers become more loyal to suppliers, showing greater trust in them. Buyers express their loyalty conatively by retaining suppliers or with repeated purchases, maintaining relationships with specific actions. Some of these actions, such as turnover, imply a sacrifice for

suppliers, who seek to increase short-term benefits or impair short-term value in favour of a greater long-term value. Buyer disloyalty comes as a result of suppliers' lack of commitment and loyalty:

Alfred: "For me, sacrifice –and our company focuses on this with a policy implanted years ago- involves low supplier turnover. Once we get a supplier to understand everything we need, we try to work with that supplier rather than incorporating a new one. If we develop a new supplier, it is because the former supplier does not manage to move forward, and I need to switch... For example, now our suppliers are overwhelmed with work; now they see other business opportunities. They find that they can get greater value... But it is a cycle: next, there will come a time when they are all desperate for work. That's when I prove my loyalty, saying, 'let's continue.' When others see that we continue, they see the opportunity and are able to do more business because they have been working with us. I cannot view this as a scheme in a void."

Robert: "My loyalty to suppliers is all about respecting my agreements to a t –and this is not common at all. My loyalty is also conveyed when I differ, when I say no, when I say this is alright –something also rare, as this is often viewed as part of their duty. I think it is the counterpart of what I expect from their loyalty; it is what I must give in return... For me, a loyal supplier, associate or customer is someone who can tell me no when it needs to be said, who can admit when he or she is wrong, who can discuss things with me."

In general, all interviewees found it hard to talk about their loyalty to suppliers. They do not like to use that term. To define loyalty notions, it was easier for them to discuss instances of disloyalty on both parts, as disloyalty is something that worries them and captures their attention. Supplier loyalty is largely defined as exclusivity or priority in special circumstances, in addition to ongoing adjustment to their changing needs. For example, buyers expect to be prioritised by suppliers when they have a need or they have to overcome hurdles in the relationship. Context provides the ultimate test for loyalty, especially when there is uncertainty, and buyer loyalty vanishes when buyers feel that supplier loyalty fails, when a supplier does not meet their needs:

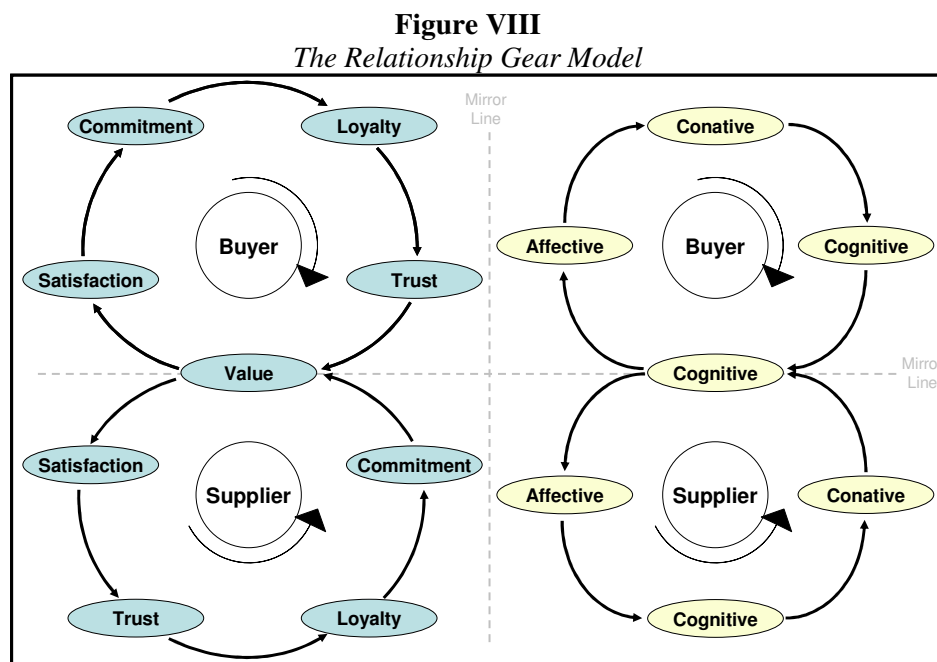
Abel: "It is easy to measure disloyalty, but it is very hard to value loyalty, because it is... that is... What does loyalty mean? If it means that a supplier's deliveries are adequate, that's good; that is what you are assessing. If it means that a supplier sells to you and doesn't selling to your competitors, you will never be able to confirm or measure that, because a supplier's business is to sell as much as they can... I mean, how do you evaluate loyalty? It is very hard for me say, 'Oh, look! That supplier is loyal.' I know that some suppliers support me and respond to my needs, that they strive to deliver on time and, if I have a problem, they are very proactive to find a solution. It is too general a notion. But, sometimes, there is a greater degree of loyalty, when a supplier says, 'In addition, I don't sell to others,' or 'I'm only selling to you,' or when, in a bind, a supplier prioritises your need. I daresay that loyalty is very hard to assess... Instead, if a supplier chooses another customer over you, there is a clear disloyalty right there..."

Alfred: "Right now, I am considering switching suppliers, but I am not done developing the new one –we haven't fine-tuned everything yet. This is the case of a supplier who does a good job, but now I can get more value working in a different way. We have started talking with the new one, and, at first, output volume will be half or less over the first year, depending on how it works out. If something goes wrong, I have to go back. If something does go wrong, I don't know if the other supplier will take me back."

In relationships with a long, shared track record, with the supplier showing loyalty and commitment, a significant affective value dimension unfolds, leading to greater buyer commitment and loyalty:

John: “We know for a fact that we can find cheaper pharmaceutical packagers in other countries, but, at this point, we have decided to maintain local costs, because we have developed our supplier to that end –that is, there is a component that cannot be overlooked. You cannot tell the guy who supported you across your process, who stood by your side at your worst time, when you were wondering whether to close shop or not –it’s very hard to suddenly tell him, ‘ok, you know what? I’m really sorry, but I’m going to start bringing this from abroad because it’s cheaper for me.’ Loyalty –the fact that he was there for you when you needed him and you didn’t have enough money to pay him or to pay him in full- is noticeable; it is worth something. It cannot be quantified; you cannot say, ‘this is worth 10%.’ But it does come into play, and you have to retain that guy. Going back to the topic of economic cycles, perhaps, today, you can tell him, ‘so, I’m going to get a cheaper packaging abroad,’ but what are you going to do when you need to go back to him? When imports are banned and you cannot wire transfer money abroad, like in 2002, and you have to knock at his door once again...”

The Relationship Gear model (see Figure VIII): Then, the hierarchy of effects in buyer decisions to build relationships develops on the basis of a perception of a combination of three hierarchical and interrelated processes: the supplier’s variable hierarchy as perceived by the buyer, the buyer’s variable hierarchy, and the variable hierarchy of their interactions. The latter drives interaction decision cycles resulting from the perception dynamics of each partner’s hierarchies. These cycles or hierarchies grow on feedback, spinning like two gears, with their teeth (key relationship variables reflecting on both supplier and buyer) fitting perfectly, pushing each other, developing a strong relationship in a dynamic fashion. Value co-creation provides contact points or common interests, bolstering supplier commitment and buyer trust driven by the dynamics of the other variable effects:



Ernest: “...As you try to get your suppliers to commit to you, to your project and your future commitments, as well as to their quotations, their compliance builds your trust. A basic tenet lies in having a committed supplier; you need your supplier to be sound and believable, to deliver on time, to follow a schedule, to keep prices stable. I think commitment comes first, as trust grows as a result of experience, joint satisfactory developments. To build trust, you need reciprocity, in the sense that a supplier is not a thing... a supplier is a partner you are working with, and, while you want your costs to be as low as possible, your supplier has to get enough to ensure that the relationship is healthy, not abusive...”

Gabriel: "In the trust building formula, the pressure resurfaces for the supply area to show results, to meet plant needs and to build those relationships. This happens all the time. At times, management is very satisfied, and, at times, management is not that satisfied and asks for cost reductions. Sometimes, cost reductions show that there are lower-cost alternatives in the market, and, then, the pressure is on, once again. You need to make a commitment and to honour it, even if these things start to happen. Of course, when the market shows lower-cost prospects, you have to talk about it, and suppliers will understand, as well. However, keeping this balance also takes commitment, both from the client, who must not exert more pressure than necessary, and suppliers, who cannot stick stubbornly to something that the market is destroying."

In short, buyers, in their relationship-building processes, adopt a Learning Hierarchy or a high-involvement hierarchy. This is a sequence of cognitive-affective-conative effects, with their feedbacks. Buyer hierarchies interact with supplier hierarchies, perceived by buyers as conative-cognitive-affective-cognitive and their feedbacks, whose sequence does not match the most explored sequences in current literature. In most studies, these behavioural components are viewed in buyer-seller relationships as follows: cognitive is the buyer's intellectual, mental, or rational state; the affective component is related to the emotional, feeling or attitudinal state, and, lastly, the conative component refers to the buyer's behavioural, motivational, or striving state. In turn, these components are represented by key relationship variables, with trust viewed as an expectation with cognitive and, exceptionally, affective dimensions. Instead, value refers to a buyer's judgment, with a cognitive dimension and, to a lesser degree, an affective dimension, while co-creation of value is the focus of these relationships. Satisfaction refers to liking or feeling, with a purely affective dimension, while commitment is a partner's intention to maintain a relationship, and loyalty refers to a conviction to remain in that buyer-supplier relationship, both with conative dimensions.

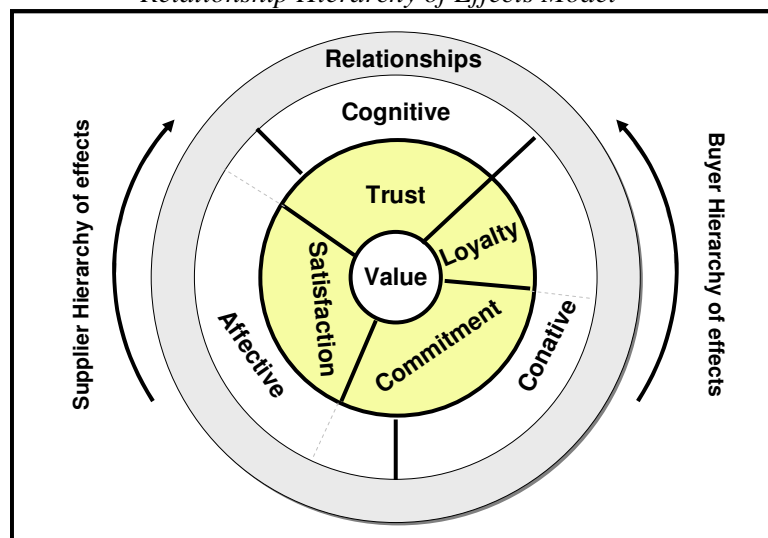
Discussion

The fact that all interviewees found it hard to discuss key relationship variables independently, resorting to one of the others to define each one of them, and that these definitions referred to different kinds of relationships attests to the importance of these variables when it comes to defining relationships, especially to measure their performance or their development by means of the hierarchy of effects of those variables. All interviewees also noted that, in order to explore their relationships with their suppliers, it is necessary to consider that there are several relationship stereotypes, as Cannon and Perreault (1999) have demonstrated, and that each one of them could match behavioural characteristics in the hierarchy of effects. As stated by Lavidge and Steiner (1961) as well as Aaker and Day (1974), the various steps are not necessarily equidistant, or partners may move up simultaneously or may not necessarily proceed through each. For instance, for interviewees and according to Kraljic's (1983) classification, the greater the buyer's psychological and/or economic commitment involved in the purchase of a particular product or service, the longer it takes to move the buyer's gear. On the contrary, the less serious the commitment, the more likely it is that some buyers will turn their gear almost "immediately" to go through the necessary steps to build any kind of relationship. Additionally, evidence shows that there are some relationship types that may award an occasionally different behavioural dimension to certain variables, like trust and value.

In addition to the hierarchies of effects found in this research, other issues must be taken into account. First, most interviewees referred to trust, commitment, satisfaction and loyalty as pillars of the value creation process, and the latter as the core of relationship development. Second, our literature review about value reveals that this variable may take on cognitive, affective and conative dimensions. Third, according to Kreshel (1984), the three levels of the traditional hierarchy model should be viewed as interactional, rather than as three separate response levels aligned in a sequential or causal pattern, which makes the hierarchy model rather simplistic as a planning and decision-making model. Lastly, Doz (1996), Zajac and Olsen (1993), as well as Ring and Van de Ven (1994) argued that relationship processes are not linear but circular in nature, containing feedback loops. A

more realistic model would make the multidimensional value variable the centre of the traditional cognition, affect, conation sequence, changing the levels from sequential to circular. Thus, value could be construed as the linking pin of relationship behaviour, as shown in the Relationship Hierarchy of Effects model presented in Figure IX. This is a more general model, with all the behavioural dimensions that each variable can acquire and with value at the core of relationships. It also depicts the hierarchies detected for buyers and sellers (each one with its respective cycle), possible interactions among variables in a process with relationship-building feedback loops.

Figure IX
Relationship Hierarchy of Effects Model



Implications

This study has a number of implications for managers and researchers alike. From a theoretical point of view, it shows that the hierarchy of effects in a relationship involves three hierarchies: a buyer hierarchy, a supplier hierarchy, and the hierarchy of their interactions. This finding will allow future studies to gain a better understanding of buyer-supplier relationship creation and development processes, as it provides a simpler analysis. In addition, this study clarifies the definitions and behavioural dimensions of key relationship variables, dispelling current confusion.

These findings match those reported by researchers like Moorman et al (1992), who stated that buyers are unlikely to be committed to something they do not value, as well as others (including Anderson and Weitz, 1989; Achrol, 1991; Ghoshal and Bartlett, 1994, Morgan and Hunt, 1994; Ganesan, 1994; Geyskens et al., 1996, and Doney and Cannon, 1997) who posit that trust is a major determinant of commitment for buyers –as trustors- and that, at the beginning of a relationship, interactions involve trust as a leap of faith. However, suppliers do not experience this at the beginning of a relationship. As trustees, suppliers find themselves in a “dependant” position. This dependence promotes supplier commitment, and, in turn, the latter promotes buyer trust, driving the movement of hierarchies. This cycle is consistent with the tested Mutual Cyclical Growth model elaborated by Wieselquist et al. (1999) for interpersonal relationships. Then, as partners develop increased trust in one another, they are likely to become increasingly dependent on one another and feel more vulnerable -that is, they are likely to become increasingly satisfied (e.g., Wilson and Mummalaneni, 1986; Bejou et al., 1998; Ganesan, 1994; Sharma and Patterson, 2000; Jap and Ganesan, 2000; Abdul-Muhmin, 2005) with the relationship and increasingly willing to commit to it (Holmes and Rempel, 1989). This should not undermine the fact that value is created by the experience of supplier commitment (Brickman, 1987; Higgins et al., 2005).

This research also implies that the fact that buyer commitment leads to buyer loyalty indicates that these constructs are related and distinct (Day, 1969; Beatty, Kahle, and Homer 1988; Dick and

Basu, 1994). However, this view is not universally held, as some researchers suggest that the two constructs are either not related (Oliva et al., 1992) or that they are synonymous and represent each other (Assael, 1987). It should be noted, though, that, for buyer loyalty to exist, there must be both supplier loyalty and buyer commitment. Also, these findings support the case made by researchers who argue that the relationship between buyer satisfaction and buyer loyalty is moderated by commitment (e.g., Bloemer & Kasper, 1995) and that satisfaction does not always imply loyalty (e.g., Mittal and Lassar, 1998; Oliver, 1999; Bennett and Rundle-Tiele, 2004). Yet, some authors have found a positive correlation between customer satisfaction and loyalty (Anderson and Sullivan, 1993; Bearden et al., 1980; Bolton and Drew, 1991; Fornell, 1992). Strengthening buyer gear movement, Reichheld and Scheffer (2000, p. 107) point out that "to gain the loyalty of customers, you must first gain their trust." Regarding supplier loyalty, this research study agrees with Berry's (1993) observation, "trust is the basis for loyalty." Finally, several authors have proved that value is a critical mediating variable among key relationship variables (including Gwinner et al., 1998; Sirdeshmukh et al., 2002; Ulaga and Eggert, 2006b).

From a managerial perspective, in addition to their simplicity, intuitiveness and logic, both the relationship gear and the relationship hierarchy-of-effects models (1) help us to predict behaviour, no matter how imperfect those predictions are; (2) provide us with information on where relationship strategies should focus (cognition, affect, conation) based on buyer experiences; (3) account for a good planning, training, and conceptual tool; and (4) allow suppliers to search for improvements on their shortcomings in relationships with buyers or to stress their strengths as compared to other suppliers. Overall, these models can help suppliers to strengthen their relationships with buyers, allocating their resources more efficiently as they know which variable they need to work on at every juncture.

Interviewees largely reported that they used no formal measurement systems for all variables. Buyers usually rely on formal systems to measure a large share of value dimensions and internal customer satisfaction. All other variables are measured informally. Most suppliers tend to measure buyer satisfaction, but they do not usually measure the other dimensions effectively. As noted in this research, satisfaction is an affective and emotional variable that is usually defined at specific times. It is a necessary but not sufficient measure to strengthen relationships with buyers, nor is it a meaningful measurement if isolated. If suppliers are to control their relationships, it is crucial for them to measure all key relationship variables. To do this, several questions have been provided in their specific literature, but Table VII may help to choose the most adequate questions in a focalised and accurate fashion. Also, our research underlines the importance of trust and commitment building activities within a relationship marketing approach. Satisfaction with the supplier will only translate into buyer commitment if the relationship is characterised by supplier commitment and, consequently, buyer trust. Finally, buyer loyalty does not develop if there is no prior perception of supplier loyalty. Buyers need to find loyal suppliers, who support their customers, anticipating their needs and providing solutions as quickly as possible. This maintains and increases co-created value as well as buyer trust and satisfaction, driving buyers' commitment to the relationship, which may be construed as a loyal behaviour. This is more than a semantic issue, because the actions that need to be taken to stimulate loyalty may be quite different from those that produce trust. And these, in turn, may differ from actions designed to produce satisfaction or commitment. Although not all suppliers are invested emotionally in the relationships with their buyers, those who are concerned about their partners' interests and welfare may be more willing to help out their partners in difficult times to ensure the long-term continuance of their relationship.

Limitations

The results of this study cannot be interpreted without taking into account some limitations that have hindered a proper analysis of the relationship hierarchy of effects in any empirical research. First, the sample of purchasing managers selected for this study is not representative of the population of manufacturing companies. Only quantitative approaches using large samples could provide for

generalisations across several industries. Second, this research was based on data drawn from the buyer's point of view, keeping in mind that it is usually the buyer that makes the decision of whether to purchase from a supplier or not (Cannon and Perrault, 1999). The supplier's perspective could be different. Third, this research only relied on single respondents, as organisational buying behaviour ultimately consists of individuals making decisions (Webster and Wind, 1972). Other members of the buying organisation could emphasize different hierarchies. Next, key relationship variables were only studied within the buyer-supplier dyad. These concepts were not addressed within the larger network of relationships. Finally, the sample was based on buyers from large companies in several sectors in one country, with no consideration for segment specificities.

Further research

According to Barry (2002), the validation problem of the hierarchy of effects model lies in the complexities of the measurement process to understand how people process information, shape attitudes and behave as a direct result of the information they processed and the attitudes they developed. The problem further lies in the ability and/or the willingness of researchers to provide better measurement techniques and apply them to different types of buyer-supplier relationships. The relationship hierarchy of effects model is intuitive and rational because it is logical. A logical model seems to be suitable to understand how relationship strategies affect our customers.

Therefore, the present research provides opportunities for further research in understanding the hierarchy of effects in buyer-supplier relationships. First, the relationship hierarchy of effects model should be tested, validated and refined according to an acceptable statistic sample. Empirical research based on a cross-sectional sample of manufacturing industries could prove useful in that regard. Second, findings (both similarities and differences) should be analysed within a single-sector, cross-sector, single-country, and cross-country samples, as well as among large, medium, and small companies. Third, other members of the buying organisation might emphasize different hierarchies of effects in the same relationship. Next, sellers' point of view could be analysed to explore potential gaps between both parties' relationship hierarchy of effect perceptions. Also, the development of managerial tools based on the approach presented in our study would provide managers with a simple, yet effective, tool to plan their strategies and to allocate resources efficiently in manage buyer-supplier relationships.

Finally, several additional research questions may help us deepen our knowledge on relationship hierarchies of effects: To what extent and under what conditions, (1) should buyer trust not prevail over buyer commitment or loyalty in relationships? (2) Should supplier commitment not prevail over supplier trust? (3) Should supplier commitment not prevail over buyer trust? (4) Should buyer trust not prevail over supplier loyalty? (5) Should supplier loyalty not prevail predominate over buyer loyalty? Also, can suppliers control or even influence the hierarchy? Should several attitudes be pursued more?

This paper has offered a greater understanding on key relationship variables and their interconnections, surely contributing to the development and advancement of relationship performance measurements. It has attempted to reduce the ambiguities in the definitions of value, trust, satisfaction, commitment, and loyalty, while defining the Relationships Hierarchy of Effects model. The understanding of how suppliers should plan and allocate resources more efficiently to improve customer relationships is important in many business markets. Yet, few researchers have explored the relationship hierarchies of effects in business-to-business relationships and suggested psychometrically sound measures for behavioural steps. We hope that this study will encourage further empirical research on the relationship hierarchy of effects.

References

- Aaker D. (1991). "Managing Brand Equity: Capitalizing on the Value of a Brand Name". New York: The Free Press.
- Aaker D. A. & Day G.S. (1974), "A Dynamic Model of Relationships Among Advertising, Consumer Awareness, Attitudes, and Behavior". *Journal of Applied Psychology*, Vol. 59, No. 3, pp. 281-286.
- Aaronson, E. (1969). "The Theory of Cognitive Dissonance," in *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*. Ed: L. Berkowitz. New York: Academic Press.
- Abdul-Muhmin A. (2002). "Effects of suppliers' marketing program variables on industrial buyers' relationship satisfaction and commitment". *The Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing*. Vol. 17, N° 7. Santa Barbara. Pp. 637-651.
- Adams, J. S. (1965), "Inequity in Social Exchange," in *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, Vol. 2, ed. Leonard Berkowitz, New York: Academic Press, 267-299.
- Anderson E. & Narus J. (1990), "A Model of Distributor Firm and Manufacturer Firm Working Partnerships". *Journal of Marketing*, N° 54 (January). Pp. 42-58.
- Anderson E. & Weitz B. (1992), "The Use of Pledges to Build and Sustain Commitment in Distribution Channels". *Journal of Marketing Research*, Vol. 29, February. Pp. 18-34.
- Anderson J. C., Kumar N. & Narus J. A. (2007), "Value Merchants: Demonstrating and Documenting Superior Value in Business Markets". Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Alston, W. (1998), "History of Philosophy of Religion." *The Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Vol. 8. Ed. E. Craig. New York: Routledge. Pp. 238-248.
- American Psychological Association (APA): *The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language*, Fourth Edition. Retrieved March 27, 2009, from Dictionary.com website: <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/>
- Bacharach S. B. & Lawler E. J. (1981), "Bargaining: Power, Tactics, and Outcomes." San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Inc.
- Bagozzi R. P. (2000), "The Poverty of Economic Explanations of Consumption and an Action Theory Alternative", *Managerial and Decision Economics*, Vol. 21, No. 3/4, Apr. - Jun., pp. 95-109.
- Barry, T. E. (1987), "The Development of the Hierarchy of Effects: An Historical Perspective", in *Current Issues and Research in Advertising*, vol. 10, Issue 2 J. H. Leigh and C. R. Martin, Jr., eds., University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI, pp. 251-295.
- Barry T. E. (2002), "In Defense of the Hierarchy of Effects: A Rejoinder to Weilbacher". *Journal of Advertising Research*, May-June, pp. 44-47.
- Batra, R. & Vanhonacker, W. R. (1986), "The 'Hierarchy of Advertising Effects': An Aggregate Field Test of Temporal Precedence." New York: Columbia Business School, Avis Rent-a-Car System Working Paper Series in Marketing (March).
- Becker, H. S. (1960), "Notes on the Concept of Commitment," *American Journal of Sociology*, 66, 32-42.
- Bem, D. J. (1972). "Self Perception Theory," in *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*. Ed: L. Berkowitz. Vol. 6, 1-62. New York: Academic Press.
- Bennett R. & Rundle-Thiele S. (2004). "Customer satisfaction should not be the only goal". *The Journal of Services Marketing*. Vol. 18, N° 6/7. Santa Barbara. Pp. 514-523.
- Berry, L. L. (1996), "Retailers with a Future," *Marketing Management*, 5 (Spring), 39-46.
- Blau, P. (1964) "Exchange and Power in Social Life." John New York, NY: Wiley & Sons Inc.
- Boyd H. W. Jr., Ray M. L. & Strong E. C. (1972), "An Attitudinal Framework for Advertising Strategy". *Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 36, April, pp. 27-33
- Brashear T. G., Boles J. S., Bellenger D. N. & Brooks Ch. M. (2003), "An Empirical Test of Trust-Building Processes and Outcomes in Sales Manager-Salesperson Relationships". *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, Vol. 31, No. 2, pp. 189-200.

- Brown, J. K., Lusch, R. F., & Nicholson, C. Y. (1995). "Power and relationship commitment: Their impact on marketing channel performance". *Journal of Retailing*. Vol. 71. Pp. 363-392.
- Cannon, J.P. & Perreault (1999) "Buyer-seller relationships in business markets." *Journal of Marketing Research*, 36, 439-460.
- Chaudhuri, A. & Holbrook, M. (2001). "The chain of effects from brand trust and brand affect to brand performance: The role of brand loyalty". *Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 65, No. 2. Pp. 81-93.
- Cohen, J. B., & Areni, C. S. (1991), "Affect and Consumer Behavior." In *Handbook of Consumer Behavior*, A. Robertson and H. Kassarian, eds., Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs, NJ. 1991, pp. 183-240.
- Coley R. H. (1961), "Defining Advertising Goals for Measured Advertising Results", New York: Association of National Advertisers, 55.
- Day G. (1969). "A Two-Dimensional concept of brand loyalty". *Journal of Advertising Research*. N° 9 (September). Pp. 29-35.
- Deutsch, M. (1973), "The resolution of conflict: Constructive and destructive processes." New Haven, CN: Yale University Press
- Dick A. & Basu K. (1994). "Customer loyalty: toward an integrated conceptual framework". *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*. N° 22 (Spring). Pp. 99-113.
- Doney P. A. & Cannon J. P. (1997), "An examination of the nature of trust in buyer-seller relationships". *Journal of Marketing*; Vol. 61, N° 2, April; pg. 35-51
- Dwyer, F., Schurr, P., & Oh, S. (1987). "Developing buyer-seller relationships". *Journal of Marketing*, N° 51 (April). Pp. 11-27.
- Dyer JH. (1997), "Effective interfirm collaboration: how firms minimize transaction costs and maximize transaction value." *Strategic Management Journal*, 18, 535-556.
- Dyer J. H. & Chu W. (2003), "The Role of Trustworthiness in Reducing Transaction Costs and Improving Performance: Empirical Evidence from the United States, Japan, and Korea". *Organization Science*, Vol. 14, No. 1, January-February, pp. 57-68.
- Eagly, A. H., & Chaiken, S. (1993), "The psychology of attitudes. Fort Worth, TX: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.
- Eggert A. & Ulaga W. (2002). "Customer perceived value: A substitute for satisfaction in business markets?". *The Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing*. Vol. 17, N° 2/3; Santa Barbara. Pp. 107-118.
- Ellram, L.M. & Siferd, S.P. (1993) "Purchasing: The Cornerstone of the Total Cost of Ownership Concept." *Journal of Business Logistics*, 14(1), 163-184.
- Ellram, L.M. & Siferd, S.P. (1998) "Total cost of ownership: a key concept in strategic cost management decisions." *Journal of Business Logistics*, 19(1), 55-84.
- Festinger, L. (1957). "A theory of cognitive dissonance". Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Flint, D., Woodruff, R., & Gardial, S. (2002) "Exploring The Phenomenon of Customers' Desired Value Change in a Business to Business Context." *Journal of Marketing*, 66, 102-117.
- Floyd A. G. (1999), "An examination of the Three-Order hierarchy model", University of Texas – Austin - Department of Advertising - <http://www.ciadvertising.org/studies>
- Forgas, J. P., & Dobsz, B. (1980), "Dimensions of romantic involvement: Toward a taxonomy of heterosexual relationships." *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 43, 290-300.
- Fournier, S. & Mick D. G. (1999), "Rediscovering Satisfaction". *The Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 63, No. 4, Oct., pp. 5-23
- Ganesan S. (1994). "Determinants of long-term orientation in buyer-seller relationships". *Journal of Marketing*. Vol. 58, April. Pp. 1-19.
- Gassenheimer J. B., Calantone R. J. & Scully J. I. (1995), "Supplier involvement and dealer satisfaction: implications for enhancing channel relationships". *Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing*, vol. 10, 2, pgs 7-19

- Geyskens, I., Steenkamp, E., Scheer L. & Kumar, N. (1996). "The effects of trust and interdependence on relationship commitment: a trans-Atlantic study". *International Journal of Research in Marketing*. Vol. 13, N° 4. Pp. 303-317.
- Golicic S. L. & Mentzer J. T. (2006), "An Empirical Examination of Relationship Magnitude". *Journal of Business Logistics*, vol. 27, No. 1, pp. 81-109.
- Gollwitzer, P. M. (1990), "Action phases and mind-sets." In E. T. Higgins, & R. M. Sorrentino (Eds.), *Handbook of motivation and cognition* (Vol. 2, pp. 53–92). New York: Guilford.
- Gounaris S. & Stathakopoulos V. (2004). "Antecedents and consequences of brand loyalty: An empirical study". *Journal of Brand Management*. Vol. 11, N° 4 (April). Pp. 283-306.
- Grönroos, Ch. (2004) "The relationship marketing process: communication, interaction, dialogue, value." *Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing*, 19(2), 99-113.
- Gulati R. (1995), "Does familiarity breed trust? The implications of repeated ties for contractual choice in alliances." *Academy of Management Journal*, 38, 85–112.
- Gundlach G., Achrol R. & Mentzer J. (1995). "The Structure of Commitment in Exchange". *The Journal of Marketing*. Vol. 59, N° 1 (January). Pp. 78-92.
- Haidt, J. (2001). The emotional dog and its rational tail: A social intuitionist approach to moral judgment. *Psychological Review*, 108, 814–834.
- Hardwick B. & Ford D. (1986), "Industrial Buyer Resources and Responsibilities and the Buyer-Seller Relationships." *Industrial Marketing and Purchasing* 1. 3-25.
- Heider, F. (1958). "The Psychology of Interpersonal Relations". New York: John Wiley & Sons.
- Hinde, R. A. (1979), "Towards understanding relationships." London: Academic Press.
- Homburg C., Krohmer H., Cannon J. & Kiedaisch I. (2002). "Customer Satisfaction in Transnational Buyer–Supplier Relationships". *Journal of International Marketing* Vol. 10, No. 4. Pp. 1–29.
- Howard J. & Sheth J. (1969). "The theory of buyer behaviour". New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Huber F., Herrmann A. & Henneberg S. (2007). "Measuring customer value and satisfaction in services transactions, scale development, validation and cross-cultural comparison". *International Journal of Consumer Studies*. Pp 1-12.
- Huber F., Herrmann A. & Wricke M. (2001). "Customer satisfaction as an antecedent of price acceptance: Results of an empirical study". *The Journal of Product and Brand Management*. Vol. 10, N° 3. Santa Barbara. Pp. 160-169.
- Hughes, G. & Guerrero, J. (1971). "Testing Cognitive Models Through Computer-Controlled Experiments." *Journal of Marketing Research*, 8 (Aug.): 291-97.
- Jacoby, J. & Chestnut, R. (1978). "Brand Loyalty: Measurement and Management". John Wiley & Sons, New York.
- Jap S. & Ganesan S. (2000). "Control Mechanisms and the Relationship Life Cycle: Implications for Safeguarding Specific Investments and Developing Commitment". *Journal of Marketing Research*. Vol. 37, N° 2 (May). Pp. 227-245.
- Johnson J. L. & Cullen J. B., (2002), "Trust in cross-cultural relationships." In *The Blackwell Handbook of Cross-Cultural Management*, eds. by Gannon M. J. & Newman K, 17.
- Johnson D. & Grayson K. (2005), "Cognitive and affective trust in service relationships". *Journal of Business Research*, Vol. 58, pgs. 500– 507
- Johnson M., Herrmann A., & Frank Huber (2006). "The Evolution of Loyalty Intentions". *Journal of Marketing*. Vol. 70 (April). Pp. 122–132.
- Johnson-George. C , & Swap, W. (1982), "Measurement of specific interpersonal trust: Construction and validation of a scale to assess trust in a specific other." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*. 43, 1306-1317.
- Kim K. & Frazier G. (1997), "On Distributor Commitment in Industrial Channels of Distribution: A Multicomponent Approach". *Psychology & Marketing*. Vol. 14, N° 8 (December). Pp. 847-877.

- Krugman, H. (1965), "The Impact of Television Advertising: Learning Without Involvement," *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 29, pp. 349-356.
- Kumar, N., Scheer, L. K., Steenkamp, J. E. M. (1995), "The effects of perceived interdependence on dealer attitudes". *Journal of Marketing Research*. Vol. 32. Pp. 348-356.
- Laaksonen T., Pajunen K. & Kulmala H.I. (2008), "Co-evolution of trust and dependence in customer-supplier relationships". *Industrial Marketing Management*, Vol. 37, Iss. 8, pp. 910-920.
- Lages L., Lancastre A., Lages C. (2008), "The B2B-RELPERF scale and scorecard: Bringing relationship marketing theory into business-to-business practice". *Industrial Marketing Management*. Vol. 37. Pp. 686-697.
- Lapierre, J. (2000) "Customer perceived value in industrial contexts." *Journal of Business and Industrial Marketing*, 15(2/3), 122-140.
- Lavidge R. J. & Steiner G. A. (1961), "A Model for Predictive Measurements of Advertising Effectiveness". *Journal of Marketing*, October, Iss. 25, pgs. 59-62.
- Lefaix-Durand, A. (2007) "Extending relationship value: Methodological observations from a case study in the wood products supply chain." *Proceedings on the Relationship Marketing Summit: Time to integrate perspectives Conference*, 2008, Buenos Aires, Argentina.
- Lewis J. D. & Weigert A. (1985), "Trust as a Social Reality". *Social Forces*, Vol. 63, No. 4, Jun., pp. 967-985
- Lindgreen, A. & Wynstra, F. (2005), "Value in business markets: What do we know? Where are we going?" *Industrial Marketing Management*, 34, 732-748.
- Little J. (1979), "Aggregate Advertising Models: the State of the Art". *Operations Research*. 27, July/August, 629-667.
- Liu, A.H., Leach, M.P. & Bernhardt, K.L. (2005) "Examining customer value perceptions of organizational buyers when sourcing from multiple vendors." *Journal of business research*, 58.
- MacMillan K., Money K., Money A. & Downing S. (2005), "Relationship marketing in the not-for-profit sector: an extension and application of the commitment-trust theory". *Journal of Business Research*, 58, pp. 806-818.
- Mathieu, J. E. & Zajac D.M. (1990), "A Review and Meta- analysis of the Antecedents, Correlates, and Consequences of Organizational Commitment," *Psychological Bulletin*, 108, 171-94.
- McAllister D. J. (1995), "Affect- and Cognition-Based Trust as Foundations for Interpersonal Cooperation in Organizations." *The Academy of Management Journal*, Vol. 38, No. 1, Feb., pp. 24-59.
- McEvily B., Perrone V. & Zaheer A. (2003), "Trust as an Organizing Principle." *Organization Science*, Vol. 14, No. 1, January-February, pp. 91-103.
- Miller P.J. E. & Rempel J. K. (2004), "Trust and Partner-Enhancing Attributions in Close Relationships". *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, Vol. 30, No. 6, June, pp. 695-705.
- Mohr, J. and Spekman, R. (1994), "Characteristics of partnership success: partnership attributes, communication behaviour, and conflict resolution techniques". *Strategic Management Journal*, Vol. 15, pp. 135-52.
- Mohr, J. J., Fisher, R. J., & Nevin, J. R. (1996). Collaborative communication in interfirm relationships: Moderating effects of integration and control". *Journal of Marketing*. Vol. 60. Pp. 103-115.
- Moorman C., Zaltman G. & Deshpandé R. (1992). "Relationships between providers and users of market research: the dynamics of trust within and between organisations". *Journal of Research in Marketing*. Vol. 29, August. Pp. 314-328.
- Morgan R. M. & Hunt S. D. (1994), "The Commitment-Trust Theory of Relationship Marketing". *The Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 58, No. 3, Jul., pp. 20-38.
- O'Brien T. (1971), "Stages of Consumer Decision Making", *Journal of Marketing Research*, Vol. 8, No. 3, Aug., pp. 283-289

- Oliver R. L. (1980). "A cognitive model of the antecedents and consequences of satisfaction decisions". *JMR, Journal of Marketing Research* (pre-1986). Vol. 17 (November). Pp. 460-469.
- Oliver R. L. (1999). "Whence Consumer Loyalty?". *Journal of Marketing* Vol. 63 (Special Issue). Pp 33-44.
- Oliver R. L. & Swan J. (1989), "Equity and Disconfirmation Perceptions as Influences on Merchant and Product Satisfaction". *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol. 16 (December). Pp. 372-383.
- Palda K.S., (1966), "The Hypothesis of a Hierarchy of Effects: A Partial Evaluation". *Journal of Marketing Research*, Vol. III, February, pgs. 13-24
- Parasuraman, A. (1997), "Reflections on gaining competitive advantage through customer value", *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, Vol. 25 No. 2, pp. 154-61.
- Perez Lopez, J. A. (1993), "Fundamentos de la Direccion de Empresas". Rialp, Madrid.
- Perugini M. & Bagozzi R. P. (2004) "The distinction between desires and intentions", *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 34, pp. 69-84.
- Perrone V., Zaheer A. & McEvily B. (2003), "Free to Be Trusted? Organizational Constraints on Trust in Boundary Spanners". *Organization Science*, Vol. 14, No. 4, July-August, pp. 422-439.
- Ravald, A. & Grönroos, C. (1996), "The value concept and relationship marketing". *European Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 30 No. 2, pp. 19-30.
- Reichheld, F. F. (1993), "Loyalty-Based Management". *Harvard Business Review*, March-April, pg 64-73.
- Rempel J. K., Holmes J. G., & Zanna M. P. (1985), "Trust in Close Relationships". *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, Vol. 49, No. 1, pgs 95-112
- Rogers, E. (1962). "The Adoption Process," in *Diffusion of Innovations*, Ch. IV, pp. 76-119.
- Rosanas J. M. & Velilla M. (2003), "Loyalty and trust as the ethical bases of organizations". *Journal of Business Ethics*; Apr; 44, 1; pgs 49-59
- Rotter, J. B. (1980), "Interpersonal trust, trustworthiness, and gullibility." *American Psychologist*, 35, 1-7.
- Sako M. & Helper S. (1998), "Determinants of trust in supplier relations: evidence from the automotive industry in Japan and the United States." *Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization*, 34, 387-417.
- Sandage C. H. & Fryburger V (1963), "Advertising Theory and Practice", Homewood, Ill.: Richard D. Irwin, Inc., 6th ed., 240.
- Schoorman F. D., Mayer R. C. & Davis J. H. (2007), "An Integrative Model of Organizational Trust: Past, Present, and Future". *Academy of Management Review*, Vol. 32, No. 2, pp. 344-354.
- Sheldon, A. (1911), "The Art of Selling". Chicago: The Sheldon School.
- Sheth, J., Newman, B. & Gross, B. (1991) "Consumption Values and Market Choices: Theory and Applications." Cincinnati: South-Western Publishing Company.
- Silva J. J. & Palmer R. (2007), "Understanding Contemporary Organisational Buyer Value Perception: Development of a Classification Scheme". *Proceedings on the Relationship Marketing Summit: Time to integrate perspectives Conference, 2008, Buenos Aires, Argentina.*
- Silva J. J., Day M. & Palmer R. (in press), "Defining value from the organisational buyer perspective: An exploratory study of benefits expectations and perceptions".
- Sirdeshmukh D., Singh J. & Sabol B. (2002), "Consumer trust, value, and loyalty in relational exchanges." *Journal of Marketing*, Jan., Vol.66, Iss. 1; pp. 15-23.
- Smith R. E. & Swinyard W. R., (1978), "Involvement and the Hierarchy of Effects: An Integrated Framework," in *A Look Back, A Look Ahead*, G. Hafer, ed., Chicago: American Marketing Association, 86-98.
- Smith R. E. & Swinyard W. R. (1982), "Information Response Models: An Integrated Approach". *The Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 46, No. 1, Winter, pp. 81-93

- Smith R. E. & Swinyar W. R. (1983), "Attitude-Behavior Consistency: The Impact of Product Trial Versus Advertising", *Journal of Marketing Research*, Vol. 20, No. 3, Aug., pp. 257-267
- Sollner, A. (1999), "Asymmetrical Commitment in Business Relationships." *Journal of Business Research*, Vol. 46, No. 4, pp. 219-233.
- Spiteri, J.M. & Dion, P.A. (2004) "Customer value, overall satisfaction, end-user loyalty, and market performance in detail intensive industries." *Industrial Marketing Management*, 33(8), 675-687.
- Stanko M. , Bonner J. & Calantone R. (2006), "Does Emotional Intensity Matter in Inter Firm Relationships?". AMA Summer Marketing Educators' Conference.
- Staw, Barry M. (1977), "Two Sides of Commitment." Academy of Management conference, 1977, Orlando, FL.
- Stem, P. C. (1986), "Toward a social psychology of solidarity." *American Psychologist*, 41, 229-231.
- Strong, E. (1925), "The Psychology of Selling and Advertising". Nueva York: McGraw-Hill
- Strong, E. K. Jr. (1938), "Psychological Aspects of Business". New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 210.
- Uлага, W. (2003), "Capturing value creation in business relationships: A customer perspective." *Industrial Marketing Management*, 32, 677-693.
- Uлага, W. & Eggert, A. (2005), "Relationship Value in Business Markets: The Construct and its Dimensions." *Journal of Business to Business Marketing*, 12(1), p. 73.
- Uлага W. & Eggert A. (2006a), "Value-Based Differentiation in Business Relationships: Gaining and Sustaining Key Supplier Status". *Journal of Marketing*. Vol. 70, January, 119–136
- Uлага W. & Eggert A. (2006b), "Relationship value and relationship quality -Broadening the nomological network of business-to-business relationships". *European Journal of Marketing*. Vol. 40, N° 3/4. Pp. 311-327.
- Uncles M.; Dowling G. & Hammond K. (2003), "Customer loyalty and customer loyalty programs". *The Journal of Consumer Marketing*. Vol. 20, N° 4/5. Pp. 294-316.
- Urban, G. & Hauser, J. (1980), "Design and Marketing of New Products". Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs, NJ.
- Vanden Abeele P. & Butaye I. (1980), "Pretesting the Effectiveness of Industrial Advertising". *Industrial Marketing Management*, 9, 75-83
- Visual Thesaurus. <http://www.visualthesaurus.com>
- Vroom V. A. (1964), "Employee Attitudes", George Fisk, ed.. *The Frontiers of Management Psychology*, New York: Harper & Row. Publishers, 127-43
- Walter, A., Ritter T. & Gemqnden, H. (2001) "Value creation in buyer–seller relationships." *Industrial Marketing Management*, 30(4), 365–377.
- Walter, A. & Ritter T. (2001), "The influence of adaptations, trust, and commitment on value-creating functions of customer relationships". *The Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing*; 18, 4/5; pg. 353
- Wetzels M., de Ruyter k. & van Birgelen M. (1998), "Marketing Service Relationships: The Role of Commitment." *Journal of Business and Industrial Marketing*, Vol. 13, No. 4/5, pp. 406-423.
- Williams, B. (1985). *Ethics and the limits of philosophy*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Wilson, D. (1995), "An Integrated Model of Buyer-Seller Relationships". *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*. Vol. 23, N° 4. Pp. 335-345.
- Wilson, D.T. & Jantrania, S. (1995) "Understanding the value of a relationship." *Asia–Australian Marketing Journal*, 2(1), 55–66.
- Wolfe H. D., Brown J. K. & Thompson G. C. (1962), "Measuring Advertising Results", New York: National Industrial Conference Board, 7.
- Woodruff R. (1997). "Customer value: The next source for competitive advantage". *Academy of Marketing Science Journal*. Vol. 25, N° 2 (Spring). Pp. 139-153.
- Woodruff R. & Gardial S. (1996). "Know your customer: New approaches to customer value and satisfaction". Cambridge. MA: Blackwell.

WordNet® 3.0. Princeton University. 27 Mar. 2009. <Dictionary.com
<http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/feeling>>.

Wright, P. (1973), "The Cognitive Processes Mediating Acceptance of Advertising." *Journal of Marketing Research*, 10 (Feb.): 53-62.

Wright, P. (1975), "Factors Affecting Cognitive Resistance to Advertising." *Journal of Consumer Research*, 2 (June): 1-9.

Zaheer A, McEvily B. & Perrone V. (1998), "Does Trust Matter? Exploring the Effects of Interorganizational and Interpersonal Trust on Performance." *Organization Science*, Vol. 9, No. 2, March-April, pp. 141-159.

Zajonc, R. (1980). "Cognition and Social Cognition: A Historical Perspective." *Four Decades of Social Psychology*, ed. Leon Festinger. Oxford University Press.