



Linnæus University

Sweden

Thesis

Customer Value Creation

Operationalization, evaluation, and challenges to
globalized businesses



Author: Palwasha Javaid
Supervisor: Alina Husung
Examiner: Frederic Bill
University: Linnaeus University
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Linnæus University
Sweden



Abstract

Companies need to attract new customers, retain them, and gain a competitive advantage in this global market era. When companies value customers, it increases company profit, market share, and customer loyalty. The study investigates the operationalization evaluation and challenges the organization faces while creating customer value. The study used a qualitative research design to obtain data researcher interviewed DHL organization members. The study indicated that customer value creation is evaluated through a survey feedback mechanism, feedback call and online tracking system. Some of the issues highlighted in the study are no proper usage of collected data, data not collected from the right customers, missing value data and the high cost of conducting customer value creation procedures. The result indicates that organizations benefit from creating customer value, but some challenges are associated.

Key words

Customer Value Creation, value, digitalization, operationalization and evaluation of value creation and challenges to global businesses.

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1 Introduction

In this chapter, background, problem discussion, research gapw and purpose of the report is presented. Based on the above-mentioned aspects, research questions are then designed for the report. Furthermore, research methodology is presented followed by an introduction to the case company and its strategy.

Companies are giving importance to creating customer value as the competition is increasing, businesses are going global, and businesses are also becoming digitalized (Melović et al., 2020). Organizations that are digitalized can work in any part of the world. Hence, the products and services companies produce need a competitive advantage to meet competitive market demand, as competition is increasing globally. Competition is becoming more challenging daily as new actors enter the market. Companies now engage within an environment that is undergoing substantial and swift changes because of technology advancements and digitization (Lim, Jin & Srari, 2018). Due to the current situation, organizations need help keeping loyal customers and attracting new ones. Organizations to gain competitive advantages are working to provide customer value. Customer value is linked to sales profitability, company loyalty, and market share (Khadka and Maharjan, 2017). When an organization takes the initiative to increase customer value, it increases repurchase intention and adds price premiums (Woodruff, 1997; Puolakoski, 2016).

Studies already indicated that companies that value customers make more profit as loyal customers will always visit them to buy products. The customer who is loyal to the supplier will buy in large volumes and bring in more customer base by bringing new customers such as by referral to friends and family (Khadka and Maharjan, 2017). These demand increases will also affect performance elements; if companies provide customer value and build relationships with customers to create new products and find innovative ways of doing business, it will improve the company's financial performance as digitization is blurring the boundaries of organizations, so they are working closely with their customers. A strong relationship, according to Nadeem et



al., 2019, between an organization and its customers can be built when both parties gain something from it. Thus, customer value creation is becoming a more important concept, whether digitalized or working in a traditional style (Nadeem et al., 2019).

The study investigates the customer value creation process in organizations with global reach which somehow faces challenges in handling customer value creation. In the study, customer valuation is the organization that values the customer rather than the customer providing value to the organization. In this chapter, the author discussed the background of the study, significance, purpose of the study, research problem, research objectives, research gap and organization of the study.

1.1 Background

It is difficult to understand and define the term value as it is subjective. However, it is hard to manage and measure, but in the organization, all activities conducted need to be measured. The situation is complex as organizations need to measure something they need to be specific. However, still, they are looking for ways to create and provide importance to customer value to survive in a competitive market environment. As it has been seen, companies that value customer creation increase company profit. Customer value creation requires comprehensive knowledge and understanding of customer behaviour and requirements (Sheth, 2019). According to diverse conditions like economic instability, product quality, and product availability, consumer behaviour might fluctuate (Raewf, Thabit, & Jasim, 2021). Businesses in the logistics industry often provide the right products to the appropriate consumer while also offering high-quality services. Among other things, sustainability was once seen as a cost to the logistics sector, but today it is seen as a major driver of effectiveness and profitability, leading to a decrease in costs (Bosona, 2020). Acquiring customer value creation is a challenging task, which requires effort and time, while choose the suitable set of customers and the proper evaluation measures to see customer value creation abilities. (Sheth, 2019).



Companies can gain knowledge about their customers through digitalization. By knowing customer views, companies can know what customers need and want. Through this, organizations can increase customer value. The organization requires additional resources to assess and manage customer value generation since it is thought that it is too revolutionary to the business environment. Previously, researchers have focused on creating customer value, but there needs to be more connecting theory with practice. Thus, the study will combine the theory and practice of customer value creation and highlight the challenges that organizations face while tackling the customer value creation process (Smith and Colgate, 2007; González-Mansilla, Berenguer-Contrí and Serra-Cantalops, 2019).

As a member of DPDHL, DHL has recognized the value of sustainable practices in all logistical operations to benefit society and the economy. However, DHL's transport partners must be properly certified to ensure that sustainability criteria have been met. Blockchain technology and innovation via digitization have helped the logistics industry succeed to a great extent (Tan, Wang, Liu, Kang, & Costa, 2020). To achieve operational efficiency, DHL Freight, a case firm, has used digital innovation and sustainable business practices. Businesses now have access to sophisticated control tools with real-time monitoring systems that enable the creation of more precise planning models and proactive managerial decision-making as an outcome of technological advancement and the adoption of digital tools (Sgarbossa, Grosse, Neumann, Battini, & Glock, 2020).

1.2 Problem Discussion

Peng & Li (2011) contend that providing clients with value and ensuring their complete satisfaction are essential for any business to succeed. Whereas globalization has caused major change in several corporate areas, and the logistics sector is no exception. In many sectors, including logistics, operational procedures are the most important drivers of customer service and competitive advantage (Sgarbossa et al., 2020). As previously discussed, customer value is challenging to measure by the organization and requires



specific skills to evaluate customer value creation which could be achieved through technology. Although technology has been seen to be quite challenging for creating customer value creation (Zeithaml et al., 2020), especially in the era of globalization. The customer value creation concept is quite complex, so creating a single process or standard scale is challenging to measure. (Parasuraman, 1997). The change in customer demand, needs, and value of products and services needs to be understood by organizations to give preference to customer demand. The value for the company is essential. No matter what they are selling, they must continuously understand and monitor their values. Companies that do not value their customer value creation suffer in the long run. The customer may stop buying and go to the competitors that surpass them and find an alternative way to create value for the customer (Woodruff, 1997; Puolakoski, 2016).

Companies are going global but faces challenges regards to value customers since they operate in diverse markets with diverse customer base. They use innovative resources and technology to launch their products globally, causing losses to companies instead of gaining profit (Bough et al., 2023). The globalization of many corporate sectors has resulted in tremendous transformation, and the logistics sector is no exception. Logistics is no exception to the rule that operational procedures are the most important drivers of customer service and competitive advantage in many businesses (Sgarbossa et al., 2020). Customer`s needs may differ for each country, so companies need to conduct market analysis by customers. In this way, the company launch products that fit that country's customers preferences, who then will be loyal to the company which value them. Many options, as highlighted by Patel, 2017, are available for the customer nowadays because business globally offers many options for customers online such as with just one click, they can deliver their order to their homes. In this situation, the companies that will value customers will gain a competitive advantage over other companies in the market (Patel, 2017). The study will highlight why measuring customer value creation is essential for companies and what challenges companies face.



Being one of the top logistics businesses in the world while also implementing processes for local markets makes DHL a research topic of great relevance. Despite the benefits of innovation through digitization being highlighted in several studies (Maslari, Nikolii, & Mireti, 2016), there is not a lot of scientific study on the use of digitization in everyday life.

1.3 Research Gap of the Study

Global organizations know that they need to cooperate and evaluate the value creation process to increase profit and become the best organization for all competitors in the market. However, unfortunately, the method to value the customers is missing. Still, the concept of value creation needs to be added for some big companies (Matarazzo et al., 2021). So, the study found that there needs to be a greater understanding of the term, so the study will identify the global business operationalization and the challenges the organization faces while implementing customer value creation and how these challenges can be overcome so the organization can benefit from the process. So, the study fills the gap in the literature by analysing the interview techniques (Karimi and Allameh, 2016).

1.4 Purpose

This report aims to investigate the customer value creation process based on its operationalization and evaluation by organizations and the challenges faced by DHL while tackling customer value creation. The study will also provide some recommendations to tackle issues faced by DHL while creating customer value creation.

1.5 Research Question

RQ1: How can globalized businesses significantly operationalize and evaluate customer value creation?

RQ2: What challenges do organizations face in applying the customer value creation process?



1.6 Significance of the study

It is crucial to understand the concept of customer value creation in global business, its evaluation, and the challenges companies face to tackle it, as customer needs continuously change from time to time. Customers usually choose the product when they think it is good among the competitors. It would help if they saw why a customer chooses the products, whether the price attracts their quality or the attraction and views they take from the customers (Merz, Zarantonello and Grappi, 2018). The study will benefit new organizations by identifying the challenges faced while implementing customer value creation and how they can evaluate it in the company. The study also describes some solutions to resolve these challenges, so the study will be quite beneficial for organizations to prepare for the challenges in advance. They can also use this study by viewing the recommendation of overcoming those challenges. The study will also add value to existing literature and help researchers and field experts learn about customer value creation. The study will be beneficial for future researchers to find other research topics.

1.7 Thesis outline

Chapter 1: This chapter elaborates on the significance, purpose, background, research question, research objective and research gap of the study. The chapter highlighted a need to understand the customer value creation process, and the challenges faced by the organization.

Chapter 2: This chapter includes the previous literature on the topic. A literature review is part of a study to understand theory and practice clearly. The chapter also provides support for the study from existing literature.

Chapter 3: This chapter describes the study methodology to analyse the problem statement and fill the gap in the study.

Chapter 4: the chapter provides the study result and discussion. The study highlights the operationalization of the customer value creation process in the



global market and the challenges organizations face in tackling customer value creation.

Chapter 5 includes the conclusion and valuable recommendations for the organization to tackle customer value creation to overcome the issue, make a profit, and use it as a competitive advantage.



2 Literature Review

The chapter describes the existing theories used in the literature and links it with study results. The chapter includes definition of terms used in the study to know about the concept of customer value creation. The chapter also adds up the value in existing literature related to the topic.

2.1 Customer Value Creation

Customer value is the perception of the customer about what product and service is worth other alternatives. The customer sees that the product they buy benefits the money they pay or in other words, customer value is a benefit–cost (Mahajan, 2020). Customer value, thus, refers to the trade-off between what the customer gains and what they give up buying and use a product (Kauppinen et al., 2009). Customer value cannot be measured in just price, but it also has other factors to consider, such as quality, time, energy, and effort which compels businesses to understand the term customer value, how it changes over time, and how to create customer creation and know their perception and opinion (Mahajan, 2020). Clearly, people buy specific products that seem to value more than other alternatives in the market (Pahwa, 2023). According to Kauppinen et al. (2009), the simplest definition of "customer value" is the proportion of advantages a customer obtains in return for their money during a purchase transaction. Value creation is developing consumer value through business model strategies using organizational resources, relationships, and capital. The three pillars of value creation organization's purpose describe what the organization needs to achieve—a business model of how the business will operate and earn money. Resource and process utilization is the last pillar that tells how business resources can be used in the right way to benefit customers and increase the profitability of businesses (Pahwa, 2023).

Kotler (1972) defined exchange theory as the value of exchange between two parties. Value is not linked with goods and services but refers to resources such as feeling, time, and energy. Thus, companies, before producing goods and services, need to know the preference of people so that they produce goods



and services that are needed for them. In exchange theory, customers always select the product that benefits them most, so companies know that customer prefers these commodity companies can communicate with the customer to know why they prefer the commodity and not purchase the identical product from another company; this help companies to improve. The theory linked with the study result as result indicated that if customer value is taken into consideration, it value company in best possible way. According to the marketing perspective theory, customer value refers to customer perceptions of what they receive and what they sacrifice in return (Zeithaml, 1988).

The competition of corporate groupings, which leads to the development of new business models through creative activities aimed at providing greater value to their consumers, fuels the desire to find novel ways to provide considerable value for customers (Imberová and Kita, 2020). The corporate environment has undergone significant changes because of globalization and advancements in information and industrial technologies (Burgstahler et al. 2007).

2.2 Existing literature on variables

According to Flaxer and Nigam (2004), the business operation describes what the corporation really does to achieve its objectives. A business operation describes the following aspects of the company: how the business conducts its operations, the cost of the procedure, what the company produces or uses, how the company's systems interact, and how the company is impacted by behavioural circumstances (Flaxer and Nigam, 2004). Whereas Measurement and analysis of an organization's performance in relation to defined goals and objectives constitute performance evaluation in management accounting. Organizations may use this technique to assess their strengths and shortcomings and pinpoint opportunities for growth (Qurba, 2023)

Value is generated when businesses place greater emphasis on the process and system, and it results from culture and attitude, which is challenging to alter



(Mahajan, 2020). Organizations need to create value for customers to improve their experience and pleasure, foster a sense of loyalty, and lead to more earnings, efficiency, and market share (Mahajan, 2020; Patel, 2017; Khadka and Maharjan, 2017). Before creating value for customers, they need to understand what customers perceive as value and how these values need to change with time since customers usually buy products that create value for them over time, value could be price or other benefits, such as whether organizations are delivering what is needed by the customer, and whether they deliver more value to the products than the competitors (Mahajan, 2020; Karimi & Allameh, 2016).

Customer orientation is considered a competitive advantage for the organization. When an organization attracts loyal and satisfied customers, the organization's long-term growth will increase (Qurba, 2023; Karimi & Allameh, 2016). As the market is becoming global, organizations are giving more attention to competitive advantage to increase growth. Knowledge management is necessary for an organization and can establish a competitive advantage. Karimi and Allameh (2016) proposed that customer image and perceived value had a significant impact on loyalty and according to the survey, businesses must be aware of the factors that consumers consider while making decisions to effectively manage their knowledge of their customers who are regarded as a company's most valuable resource. Lack of consumer trust, according to Gulledge (2002), impacts the company's brand image.

Wollenick (2012) explored nature and developed a framework to understand the value of co-creation, as many managers in the organization still need to familiarize themselves with the term. Thus, more practical context was needed. The study service sector business to business was selected to fill the gap. The study identified the issues and risk areas of value co-creation during the implementation of value creation and how an organization can manage these challenges. The study found that value co-creation only occurs when all elements of the value-creation process are included: interaction, access, transparency, and involvement. If the companies follow this element, they



build a long-term relationship with the value creator, facilitator, customer, and company.

The exchange of information among citizens has increased because of digitization. Every other day, new actors are coming into the market, so organizations need help attract new customers and keeping their current customers. Companies are looking for effective ways to find customer value as a valuable solution to their problem. Companies can also use digital technologies to create customer value creation. When companies create customer value, customer loyalty increases, and they will find the best way to tackle new customers. Substantial changes to how products and services are given to various customers in various marketplaces as well as the operations of the businesses have been brought about by digitalization, which has had a substantial influence on organizational operations (Saunila et al., 2017).

Puolakoski (2016) conducted a literature review, survey, and semi-structured interviews. The researchers use a mixed-method approach. To get more profound knowledge about the subject. The study found that the top element for customer value creation is the quality of the product or service, corporate identity, service range, innovations, and networks. While measuring these elements, organizations can efficiently deal with their future and present customer. Information sharing is becoming easy because of digital resources, so companies can quickly know the need and desires of customers. If companies follow the above point, they will increase sales profit and efficiency.

Smith and Colgate (2007) suggested that creating value for customers is a difficult task for companies for marketers, especially when they are establishing a new product or service. The study provides specific ways and frameworks to such companies that help them distinguish their business from customers' eyes. The study develops the framework based on the existing framework. The study indicated that effective marketing strategy, enhancing product concepts, and recognizing new product opportunities could



be discussed with customers, helping the companies grow while valuing customers' opinions.

Rautio (2021) provides an understanding of customer values. The study identified the values of customers that relay them in making decisions. When companies know what their customers value most, the organization can focus on the aspect they value. Companies can remove their focus from the aspects not valued by the customer and divert their resources toward the value customers value. The companies should see what type of customer value generates profit and invert their focus on it. The study uses a survey method to measure customer value. To access the maximum number of customers, the questionnaire was distributed online. The primary reason for conducting the study was to see whether the customer values shifted from previously collected data or remained the same. The result indicates that customers have positive opinions about the Hertsi shopping center. On average, customers indicated that customers value the efficacy of shopping on time. The company can use new ideas that the customer also shares while designing new ideas.

Matarazzo et al. (2021) investigate the effect of digitalization on customer value creation. The study was conducted on small and medium firms in the made-in-Italy sectors to understand the mechanisms and dynamic capabilities that foster digitization. The study uses multiple cases and SMEs made in Italy that belong to the fashion, food, and furniture industries. The study found that digitalization improved innovation in business models. It helps create new distribution modes and new ways to value customers. The study found that digital transformation helps in sensing and learning capabilities.

Parasuraman (1997) provides a detailed discussion on woodruff measurement and the meaning of customer value and shows how companies can use customer value information to design strategies that will contribute toward marketing theory and practice. The study adds to the literature on customer value and states that theory on the subject need to be strengthened. The study indicates that companies must adopt customer value learning as a competitive



strategy. The main objective of this study is to investigate woodruff's contribution and further investigate the concept of customer value by discussing and proving a framer for monitoring and evaluating customer value. Considering the offer, some suggestions can raise the question that stimulates rationale for research customer value.

Research on customer value topics has been revived in the past three decades. The study examines different journal publications on customer value. Zeithaml (2020) briefly explains three paradigms: positivist, social constructionist, and interpretive. The positivist paradigm uses a deductive approach and a value customer perspective to express customer value literature. The interpretive paradigm is interested in understanding the nature of the customer value inductive approach. The social constructionist view of customer value emerged from co-creation practices. The study indicates the difference between paradigms in dealing with customer value and proposes that, to forward the concept of customer value, researchers need to complement one another.

González-Mansilla (2019) found that perceived value and brand equity positively correlate with customer satisfaction. Customer prior experience has a moderating effect on relationships, also ready discussed.

Repoviene and Pazeraite (2018) focuses on content marketing strategies that create more value for the customers in the social networks. The study includes theoretical insight into content marketing decisions that create value for the customer in social networking. The study leads to the assumption that content marketing decisions lead to valued customers on social networks. Case analysis was conducted using the organic farm "Ilzenberg Manor." In the study to see which content marketing decisions create more value for the customer in social media, the researcher examined the correlation between customer value and content marketing decision indicators. The data was obtained from the Ilzenberg Manor Facebook page. The study found that all content marketing decision indicators value social network customers.



The markets are continuously and rapidly changing, increasing the competition among businesses. In this situation, corporate marketing decisions can create customer value that leads to competitive advantage and advantage of the loyal customer in the future. Kovanoviene, Romeika and Baumung (2021) examine whether there is a relationship between marketing communication tools and consumer value in the form of customer loyalty. The study used qualitative and quantitative research techniques to test the relationship between variables. The qualitative study explains that marketing communication tools supplement consumer value. The regression analysis performed in the study indicated a strong significant relationship between marketing communication tools and consumer value in the form of consumer loyalty.

Attracting customers is difficult for new businesses and essential for all businesses. Businesses require a lot of time and effort to attract customers, as the needs of the customers frequently change with time. Consumer behaviour is continuously changing in today's world because of global attraction. Consumer role is changing from passive to active, and they are more involved in organizational activities. Customers know the products and services before they purchase the product. This is because companies, while developing products, value customer demand and needs and keep them informed about the product. Customers are well-informed through the everyday use of technologies, and distance barriers have also disappeared (Piercy, 2016). An organization's success properly depends on creating value for customers and communicating ethical value to customers through marketing tools. Nowadays, marketing tools also focus on customer needs. They design strategies that value customers. Consumer value has increased because of competition, expanded markets and well-defined demands (Zhang et al., 2016; Gan & Wang, 2017; Kotler & Keller, 2020).

Woodruff (1997) indicates that customer has become more demanding, global completion increased, and slow industry growth has shifted the organization's perception to look for alternative ways and competitive advantage to retain



customers. The studies indicate that previously the organization looked for improvement in internal factors such as restructuring, quality management, downsizing and re-engineering. However, it has been seen that competitive advantage will come from outside sources, such as customers. Many organizations are competing to deliver value to customers. The paper provides a framework for customer value, customer value learning, and skills for managers to create compelling customer value strategies.

The term value has explained economic change even from the time of Adams. There still needs to be an understanding of term value. Surprisingly, managers and researchers have struggled to manage and measure value, and specific terminology and approaches to value must be needed. Value has been seen as a dual construct. Value to the firm and value to the customer both should be kept balanced. The value of the customer is assessed o competitive alternatives. Keiningham, Aksoy and Cadet (2017) provide a relative metric to link customer spending and assess customer value. This help organization to see how much value customer provides to their offerings and estimate changes in values due to market conditions. Customer value will generate profit for firms, so organizations need to balance between valuing firms and customers.



3 Research Methodology

In this chapter, philosophy of study, population sampling, data collection process has been included.

3.1 Philosophy of the Study

The study describes the operationalization, evaluation and challenges an organization faces in tackling customer value creation. The study uses an interpretive research design. The interpretive research design is used in the study to understand the meaning purpose and intention of people regarding a particular action.

The study used philosophy to learn about the social environment. The study used interview techniques to obtain data from the respondents (Chowdhury, 2014).

3.2 Population and Sampling

This study includes managers of global businesses to know how they operationalize and evaluate customer value creation. The study also asked them about the challenges they faced in their organization while handling customer value creation. The researcher interviewed the respondent on Skype and visited the organization to know their situation. The purposive sampling technique is used in the study to obtain information from the respondents in the organization. The data is collected from 4 high-level and middle-level managers in the organization. Eight respondents were in the study; 5 were men 3 were females. The study selected that managers with knowledge are directly linked to managing the challenges of customer value creation and are willing to share their opinions. The data is collected from DHL. The reason for choosing these organizations was the ease of access to these organizations, as the study has some financial and time constraints.

3.3 Interview Guide

Respondents developed an interview guide to get a brief knowledge about the study. The interview guide section I contain a brief introduction about the



respondent, and section II is a guide that will be helpful while interviewing and helpful while extracting data for the study results.

Interview guide is attached as appendix

3.4 Demographics of the Study Participants

The researcher organized the meeting with the managers in the organization while some managers provided the interview through the Skype call feature. Total five men and three women were part of the study. The employment statuses of 6 respondents were permanent, and two were contractual. The respondent age group varies between 31 to 60 and above. All the respondents have experience of more than six years. The respondents have different education levels. The study maintained the confidentiality of respondents by allocating the code to each respondent.

| <i>Code</i> | Experience | Employment status | Age | Gender | Education level |
|-------------|-------------------|--------------------------|------------|---------------|------------------------|
| <i>P1</i> | 6-10 | Permanent | 31-40 | Male | PHD |
| <i>P2</i> | 11-15 | Permanent | 41-50 | Male | Four years bachelors |
| <i>P3</i> | 6-10 | Permanent | 31-40 | Male | other |
| <i>P4</i> | 16-20 | Permanent | 51-60 | Female | PHD |
| <i>P5</i> | 6-10 | Contract | 41-50 | Female | Master |
| <i>P6</i> | 11-15 | Permanent | 41-50 | Male | PHD |
| <i>P7</i> | 11-15 | Permanent | 41-50 | Male | Master |



| | | | | | |
|-----------|-------|----------|---------------|--------|-------------------------|
| <i>P8</i> | 16-20 | Contract | 61 & above | Female | Four years bachelors |
|-----------|-------|----------|---------------|--------|-------------------------|

Table 1: List of participants.

3.5 Data Collection Procedures

The researcher conducted semi-structured interviews with the study participant. The data was collected from high-level and middle-level managers that have experience of more than six years in the organization, and mostly the selected respondents were permanent employees of the company. Only two were on a contractual basis. The participants were selected to know the challenges DHL faces while tracking customer value creation, operationalizing, and evaluating customer value creation in the company. After face-to-face and Skype call interviews were conducted. The teacher transcribes each respondent's interview. The transcription is later sent back to the respondents to see whether they matched their word of mouth. This step is necessary for qualitative research techniques to check the validity and reliability of the data (Senel & Senel, 2021). The researcher took the consent of the study participant before starting the interview formally.

3.6 Data Analysis Techniques

The study uses an exploratory research method because it is a qualitative study. The exploratory study conducts an in-depth investigation of the subject. The study used an open-ended questionnaire interview guide was prepared to extract data for study analysis. The exploratory study is based on investigating questions used as research design guidelines (Creswell & Poth, 2012). Interpretivism school of thought is used in the study as it links with the exploration and experience of the study respondents. The study to see the operationalized evaluation and challenges faced by organizations to tackle customer value creation used thematic analysis (Richards & Hemphill, 2018.; Miller & Glassner, 1997). In qualitative study, (Kiger & Varpio, 2020).



3.7 Thematic Analysis and Coding

The study to perform qualitative analysis critically reviews the data by performing thematic analysis. The researcher can easily see the cross-reference between the data obtained through thematic analysis. The analysis also tells if there is any validation, procedure, and concept issue. The thematic analysis provides an inductive and deductive research approach, and it is considered an authentic source to get in-depth knowledge about the study subject (Alhojailan & Ibrahim, 2012). Nowell, Norris, White & Moules (2017) identified how much thematic analysis is credible and worth. The study also highlighted how qualitative research had improved the knowledge and criteria on the research topic. The thematic analysis uses a systematic process and a precise and logical research question (Khokhar et al., 2020).

Thematic analysis is feasible for the researcher and eye-catcher for readers to understand and interpret the information quickly. There are complex standards for thematic analysis in qualitative research. The researcher, reader, and editor do not change the standard requirement of thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2021). Certain issues can affect thematic analysis, like the homogeneity factor in the data. (Fugard & Potts, 2015).



4 Thematic analysis and discussion

This chapter elaborates on the result and discussion of the study. The study first transcript all the participant interviews and later create a theme to conclude the study.

4.1 Analysing interview transcript

The study discussed the operationalization, evaluation and challenges an organization faces in tackling customer value creation. The study stated how customer value creation is evaluated and what tools are used to measure it. It also focuses on collecting and using information for customer value creation. It also focuses on challenges faced by organizations during customer value creation. The study highlights customer value creation and is evaluated through a survey feedback mechanism and online tracking system. Some of the issues highlighted in the study are no proper usage of collected data, data not collected from the right customers, missing value data and the high cost of conducting customer value creation procedures. The study used interview techniques to collect data. The result indicates that organizations benefit from creating customer value creation, but some challenges are also associated with it.

| 4.1.1.1 Main theme | 4.1.1.2 Sub-themes | 4.1.1.3 Participant |
|--|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 4.1.1.4 Information collected from customers | 4.1.1.5 Feedback on delivery | 4.1.1.6 6 |
| | 4.1.1.7 Quality of package | 4.1.1.8 5 |
| | 4.1.1.9 Preference of delivery time | 4.1.1.10 4 |



| | | |
|---|--|-------------------|
| | <i>4.1.1.11</i> Customer behaviour | <i>4.1.1.12</i> 5 |
| | <i>4.1.1.13</i> Price | <i>4.1.1.14</i> 7 |
| | <i>4.1.1.15</i> Feedback on customer service | <i>4.1.1.16</i> 6 |
| <i>4.1.1.17</i> Information collected through | <i>4.1.1.18</i> Feedback survey | <i>4.1.1.19</i> 6 |
| | <i>4.1.1.20</i> Feedback call after delivery | <i>4.1.1.21</i> 7 |
| | <i>4.1.1.22</i> online tracking system | <i>4.1.1.23</i> 5 |
| | <i>4.1.1.24</i> Email feedback | <i>4.1.1.25</i> 6 |
| | Customer profile | <i>4.1.1.26</i> 6 |
| | <i>4.1.1.27</i> Customer service attraction while booking for delivery | <i>4.1.1.28</i> 4 |
| | <i>4.1.1.29</i> Public forms and social media platform through polls. | <i>4.1.1.30</i> 6 |
| <i>4.1.1.31</i> Investment | <i>4.1.1.32</i> Customers analytics. | <i>4.1.1.33</i> 5 |



| | | |
|---|--|------------|
| | 4.1.1.34 Customer service marketing | 4.1.1.35 6 |
| | 4.1.1.36 Technology | 4.1.1.37 5 |
| | Research and development | 4.1.1.38 4 |
| | 4.1.1.39 New transportation facilities | 4.1.1.40 4 |
| 4.1.1.41 Benefit of customer value creation | 4.1.1.42 Improve performance | 4.1.1.43 5 |
| | 4.1.1.44 Increase sales, profit | 4.1.1.45 7 |
| | 4.1.1.46 Help organization to improve and know the pitfalls. | 4.1.1.47 4 |
| | 4.1.1.48 Save cost | 4.1.1.49 6 |
| | 4.1.1.50 Increase market share | 4.1.1.51 5 |
| | 4.1.1.52 Customer loyalty | 4.1.1.53 6 |
| | 4.1.1.54 Competitive advantage | 4.1.1.55 7 |
| | 4.1.1.56 Brand reputation | 4.1.1.57 6 |



| | | |
|---------------------------|---|------------|
| 4.1.1.58 Evaluation tools | 4.1.1.59 Surveys | 4.1.1.60 8 |
| | 4.1.1.61 Customer lifetime value | 4.1.1.62 4 |
| | 4.1.1.63 Net promoter score | 4.1.1.64 6 |
| | 4.1.1.65 Social media monitoring | 4.1.1.66 7 |
| | Customer journey mapping | 4.1.1.67 5 |
| 4.1.1.68 Challenges | 4.1.1.69 Lack of adaption | 4.1.1.70 5 |
| | 4.1.1.71 Lack of innovation | 4.1.1.72 6 |
| | 4.1.1.73 Unable to change the working pattern | 4.1.1.74 4 |
| | 4.1.1.75 Evaluated wrong population of study | 4.1.1.76 8 |
| | 4.1.1.77 No alignment after collecting data. | 4.1.1.78 6 |
| | 4.1.1.79 Lack of clarity and focus | 4.1.1.80 5 |



| | | |
|--|---|------------|
| | 4.1.1.81 Lack of proper customer insights | 6 |
| | 4.1.1.82 Hard to understand changing need of customer | 4.1.1.83 5 |
| | 4.1.1.84 Hard to maintain competitive advantage | 4.1.1.85 4 |
| | 4.1.1.86 High cost | 4.1.1.87 6 |

Table 2: Coding

The study indicated that organizations to create customer value take feedback from their customers after the product is delivered. DHL also asks its valuable customer about the packaging quality so that the customer is satisfied with the packaging quality to see whether the package is delivered safely without any damage. There are many package and delivery time options for DHL to deliver the product. Thus, to create customer value creation in the company, they also ask their customer about the preferred delivery time and their preferred location. They ask the suggestions from the customers to know their views about their service. They ask their customers about the pricing, whether they feel it is acceptable, and how they improve their pricing strategy. Customer service is essential to judge whether a company prefers new customers. Customers see whether the representative on the call or the counter is polite and friendly to listen their issues, so the organization asks the customer whether they are satisfied customer representative's treatment and solution to make the customer feel that they are most valued.

We usually take feedback from our customers after the package is delivered. We asked them about the package's quality and whether it was delivered safely



and timely. The customer is usually asked whether the package is delivered on time and if there is any extra price charged to them. (Participant).

Feedback is the best and most powerful tool to give the company and provides the leadership team to choose the right path to grow the company. The organizations to create customer value creation prepare surveys to know the opinion of the customers regarding the services the company provides. The survey is the best tool for an organization to get information from a large population, and these responses are helpful for organizations to develop new features in delivering products and services. They also help to provide better customer support. Customers, when providing their opinion to the organization, feel that their values and opinion matter to the company. The development of a survey is complex, and you can ask many questions. Still, the company chooses short slider surveys that help the company to know the opinion of customers about specific needs and issues. DHL also ask their customer for feedback through a call after the successful to know whether the customer receives on-time delivery with the proper package delivery of items without any damage to the package. The company only takes customer feedback that helps them meet their goals. The company avoids asking too many questions and usually asks thoughtful, open-ended questions. They also track the people visiting their company website, which product is more booked, and which delivery service is used by the customers, so the company later design product and service like that one. The company used email to take the opinion of people. The company provides discount codes to the customers for each interaction they provide to the company as feedback. The company also visits the customer profile to find out their preferences, so they create similar products and services in the future. When a customer creates their profile and signs up for more information the company sends auto-generated emails by asking simple questions about customers' struggles on the website, customer care service or product delivery. The company also conducts usability tests to know whether the customer feels the new product or service is needed. It helps the company to refine its product strategy. When customers



call on the landline and visit the office, the representative asks the customer about their valuable input at that time. The company also conducts different polls on its social media platform to know the opinion and needs of its valuable customers.

We get customer feedback, usually through surveys, by calling them through the email they provided. We also use an online tracking system. If any problem occurs, we immediately inform our customers. The customer profile and social media are also used to take the customer's opinion. (Participant)

The organization also invests a lot in customer value creation because they are an organization's asset. They are the ones that make the organization profitable or a Loss Company. The company invests in customer analytics to know the customer-specific needs and what are the major perks and benefits that make the customer happy and make them happy to purchase your product and services; other competitors in the market, such as the company, do customer analytics for sales conversion digital market tracking the customer on the website and social media platforms. Companies are investing in technology frequently. DHL is spending a lot of their investment in technology because they keep their customers informed about tracking their package. They can easily see online where the package is correct and on what date it will be delivered. The tracking of the parcel was a customer need, and to value customer needs, DHL, through technological advancement, made this possible. The company is investing in customer service marketing, making a marketing strategy that attracts customers to interact with the organization. The company established new transportation facilities for some routes to make the delivery process smooth and timely, so customer needs are met as the product is safe and delivered promptly.

We are investing in customer analytics to know which products and services customers prefer. We are continuously bringing changes in technology to deliver the best services to our customers. A team from DHL continuously



researches and develops services according to customer analytics. We are also investing in new transportation facilities for the fastest delivery. (Participant)

The company evaluates whether they are working well, and according to the needs and desires of customers, they conduct a survey and ask their customers about the services they offer that are best for them. The company used the customer lifetime value tool to know how much value a customer will bring into your company through the average life span of the customer. The organization used new promoter measures to see customer satisfaction, enthusiasm, and loyalty to a company. It is a single survey question where the respondent must rate the company product or service to their family, friends etc. the company has hired a social media management team that continuously evaluate the comment and need of customer through different interaction post on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram etc. the company also use customer journey map to have a visual engagement of the customer with the company product and service. The company learns about customer preferences, perceptions and needs through the map.

The company uses surveys to evaluate customer value creation. A social media team monitors customer needs through specific activities and posts on the company website and social media pages. Customer lifetime value and net promoter scorer are also used by the company (Participant).

The benefits companies get from implementing customer value creation are massive and impact the whole organization's performance. When customers add value to your products and service, and you deliver the best quality of products and service, the price is higher. Not just the price is set higher, in fact, it increases company sales and profit. When customers add value, your products and services differ from your competitors, and people love buying such products. DHL took feedback from its customers to improve its pitfalls, to improve its service and deliver the best to its customers. Companies create a strong relationship between them and their customers. DHL customers purchase their service for the first time because they consider it more valuable



in that price range than other competitors. When satisfied with their services, they always take them from them and recommend their families and friends. It brings free marketing to your company, so valuing customers' needs is of utmost importance. It would help to consider what they want from your product and services that other competitors are not offering them. When a company's profit increases because people purchase your products as you value them, the market share increases during the creation of a product, and profit benefits shareholders. Creating customer value gives a competitive advantage to your organization because your product is preferred by the customers when you take their opinion while creating specific services and products. The company's reputation has improved because of profit, market share, and customer value creation, and they improved their pitfalls.

The company invested in customer value creation, which increased sales profit and led the company toward our competitive advantage. The suggestion of valuable customers helps us to overcome our pitfalls. Our brand reputation has improved, and the customer seems more loyal to us. (Participant)

When the company obtains the survey result and needs to change some working patterns, employees are reluctant to do so, and the company faces many challenges. Companies face resilience, and there needs to be more adoption from company employees to adopt new policies. No doubt, change is good, but people, in the beginning, are reluctant to do it; the company should also support employees because they are assets to the company. Customers may prefer new techniques for value creation, and the company may need more innovation and creativity to bring innovative change to their product and service. Customers like unique and innovative things, so the company needs more innovation to meet customer demand. Sometimes, a survey collected from the right audience provides an inaccurate result, and company resources are wasted, so the company, while selecting customers carefully, sees study population traits that meet your demand. The company sometimes collects the data randomly, which is appropriately aligned and missing values that can mislead to the wrong development of products or services. Companies



sometimes are unable to get proper insight from customers. Clarity and focus are needed for companies to succeed, but sometimes, companies need more clarity and focus, like why they need to value what they will get from it and why they are doing it. Before using measurement tools, the company always sees what it will attain from it. To know customers' opinion is complex and costly as you frequently need to know the customer's need as their need and demand changes with time. Companies achieve competitive advantage by valued customers, and it is hard to maintain a competitive advantage because your competitors keep an eye on you, so you keep using new tactics to maintain a competitive advantage.

Our company's primary challenge is adopting changes recommended by customers. The company needs more innovation to bring change and cannot change already working patterns for many years. When evaluating customer value, sometimes the wrong respondents are selected. After spending a considerable amount to collect data, I found values in the data that needed to be added. It is also hard for us to measure customers' value because they keep changing. Participant

4.2 Discussion

Customer value creation is an essential phenomenon for an organization to remain profitable. The customer who is loyal to the supplier will buy in large volumes and affect the customer's purchasing behaviour by recommending the supplier to friends and family. The study discussed the operationalization, evaluation and challenges an organization faces in tackling customer value creation. The study indicated that organizations to create customer value take feedback from their customers after the product is delivered. DHL also asks its valuable customer about the packaging quality to see whether they are satisfied. Feedback is the best and most powerful tool to give the Company and provides the leadership team to choose the right path to grow the Company. The organizations to create customer value creation prepare surveys to know the opinion of the customers regarding the services the Company



provides. They also give their customer a feedback call and conduct usability test to know whether the customer feels the new product or service is needed, which help the Company to refine its product strategy substantial changes in how products and services are supplied to various customers in various marketplaces as well as the operations of organizations have been brought about by digitalization, which has had a substantial influence on the organization's operations (Saunila et al., 2017) such as in the case of DHL.

The organization also invests a lot in customer value creation because they are an organization's asset. They are the ones that make the organization profitable or a Loss Company. The Company invests in customer analytics and technology. DHL is spending a lot of their investment in technology because they keep their customer informed about tracking their package. They can easily see online where the package is correct and on what estimated date it will be delivered. The benefits companies get from implementing customer value creation are massive and impact the whole organization's performance. The Company's reputation is improved because of profit, market share, customer value creation, and improved pitfalls. The significant challenges companies face after taking customer value creation are businesses face resilience, and there needs to be more adoption from the company employees to adopt new policies. DHL has additional contracts with transportation firms that are required to hold a specific certification (participant) and according to Gullledge (2002), this outsourcing may cause problems with customers' ability to trust DHL, while the outsourced transportation firm working for competitors may present difficulties with goal alignment and cause conflicts between customers' and DHL's preferences. Customers like unique and innovative things, so the Company needs more innovation to meet customer demand. The Company sometimes collects the data randomly, which is appropriately aligned and needs to include values that can mislead to the wrong development of products or services. Companies sometimes need help to get proper insight from customers. To know customers' opinion is complex



and costly as you frequently need to know the customer need as their need and demand changes with time.



5 Conclusion

The report's conclusions are presented in the concluding chapter, along with the work's limits and potential for further study.

Due to the current situation, organizations need to concentrate on loyal customers and attracting new ones. Organizations to gain competitive advantages are working to provide customer value. Regardless of hierarchy, managers must be aware of what they are doing, how they are accomplishing their objectives, and whether their accomplishments are consistent with their strategic objectives. Customer value is linked to sales profitability, company loyalty, and market share. The study analyses the operationalization, evaluation and challenges the organization faces while creating customer value. The study's objective was to evaluate the problems DHL is encountering in creating value for its customers as well as the processes and procedures that enable the company to accomplish its goals. DHL organizes seminars, meetings, and physical activities as one of the primary methods to create value for clients. To develop, improve, compete with rivals, and assess clients, DHL analyses consumer information, preferences, and choices, by evaluating lead time, cost, and location as operations progress.

The study used a qualitative research design to obtain data researcher interviewed DHL organization members. The report's author discovered that DHL, which has a global footprint, operates using a variety of techniques to generate customer value that are quite like the idea. The constant, direct, and prompt communication system that DHL uses to ensures that client centricity is a key road map in their Strategy 2025 to reach the overall goals is the most important component of their ability to generate value for consumers. By putting a strong emphasis on communication, DHL makes sure that both inside and outside of terminal operations are in line with strategy, guaranteeing continuous process improvement. The study indicated that customer value creation is evaluated through a survey feedback mechanism, feedback call and online tracking system. Some of the issues highlighted in the study are no proper usage of collected data, data not collected from the right customers,



missing value data and the high cost of conducting customer value creation procedures.

The result indicates that organizations benefit from creating customer value, but some challenges are associated with it. Regarding obstacles to the operationalization of customer value creation at DHL like any other company with a global presence and ample resources as a member of a large group, DPDHL, may experience problems and implement tactical solutions. DHL's sales division deals daily with issues relating to customers and is currently has digitalization tools that are adequate to meet customer expectations, but the author argue that in order to adapt to the changing business environment and increase communication in the global market, it is necessary to go one step further and have software that allows customers to interact with DHL Freight in real time during every stage of the processing, such as live chats, call now, or scheduling a call back. In summary, DHL is very attentive to all its customers' issues, listens to them, and responds appropriately, pleasing the customers in the process to successfully implement customer value creation process.

5.1 Recommendations

Before creating customer value, the organization must see what customers perceive as value and what is essential for the customers when deciding to buy your product, whether it is quality, price, customer service, or any other element. Later, see whether you can deliver what is essential for the customer. These are important things you need to consider before taking data from the customers because just taking it and not using it wastes your time and resources. Always provide the price to customers that attract them to buy your product rather than another competitive market offer. Make sure if you collect the data, you use it and choose the right audience to collect data. You need to make your products and services convenient for customers. Take customer opinion while launching any new product. In this way, they feel valuable, provide customer loyalty, and recommend your product to family and friends.



Make sure that customer representatives are polite and friendly and that customers can quickly contact you at the time of complaint and issue with the parcel. When customers value something, and you need to change certain things in your working pattern, and change is not acceptable by employees to train your employee about any technology you are launching and provide them an incentive to learn new techniques. In this way, they will learn quickly and benefit your company and its customers.

5.2 Limitations and Future Research Directions

The study is limited to only organization DHL because of time and resource constraints. The future researcher can use other organizations to generalize the study results. There are only a few study respondents. Future researchers can interview more respondents. Future researchers could select specific sectors to know the challenges they face during value creation and the customer value creation evaluation procedure. Future researchers can conduct a study on qualitative to see the customer value creation's effect on an organization's profit, customer loyalty etc.



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Appendix

Your Name (Optional):

| | | | | | |
|------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|-------------|
| Age | 1(21-30) | 2(31-40) | 3(41-50) | 4(51-60) | 5(61-above) |
|------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|-------------|

| | | |
|---------------|----------|------------|
| Gender | Male () | Female () |
|---------------|----------|------------|

| | | | | | | |
|----------------------|--------------------|--------------------|------------|-----------|--------|-----------|
| Qualification | 1(2-year bachelor) | 2(4-year bachelor) | 3(Masters) | 4(M-phil) | 5(PhD) | 6(others) |
|----------------------|--------------------|--------------------|------------|-----------|--------|-----------|

| | | | | | | |
|-------------------|--------|---------|----------|----------|----------|-------------|
| Experience | 1(0-5) | 2(6-10) | 3(11-15) | 4(16-20) | 5(21-25) | 6(26-above) |
|-------------------|--------|---------|----------|----------|----------|-------------|

| | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------|----------------|
| Employment Status | 1 Permanent () | 2 Contract () |
|--------------------------|-----------------|----------------|

Department: _____

Contact detail (Optional):

Table 3: Interview Guide.

| | |
|-----------|---|
| Q1 | What type of information do you collect from the customer? Whether the information you collect is relevant and valuable? |
| Q2 | How do you collect customer data that can be useful for the organization? |
| Q3 | How much do you invest in customer value creation, and in which areas do you invest more in customer value creation? |
| Q4 | How investing in customer value creation is beneficial for your organization? |
| Q5 | What kind of tools and metrics you used to evaluate customer value creation in your organization |



| | |
|-----------|---|
| Q6 | What main reasons restrict your company from investing in customer value creation? |
| Q7 | What challenges your company faces after digitalization in customer value creation? |
| Q8 | What kind of issues does your organization face while interacting with customers? |

Table 4: Interview questions.