



Digital Value Creation by Online Taxi Services Through Relationship Bonding and Relationship Quality

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Abstract

Purpose: This study extends the current understanding of customer engagement by examining the impact of relationship bonding and relationship quality on customer engagement in value creation for online taxis.

Method: A quantitative research design was used to validate the hypotheses proposed in this research. Customer engagement has become an important metric for measuring the quality of relationships between brands and their customers. Despite this, there has been limited research into how relationship bonds affect the effectiveness of building such a relationship in online taxi services. A survey was conducted using the convenience method among 600 users of online transportation services in the city of Urmia, Iran to test the theoretical model. Structural equation modelling in software Amos 23 were used in this study to test the research hypotheses.

Findings: Findings showed that relationship bonding (financial, social, and structural) positively affects the quality of online relationships. Moreover, it was found that the quality of online relationships had a positive impact on all

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How to Cite: Moosakhani, S., Aali, S., Sanoubar, N., Iranzadeh, S. (2024). Digital Value Creation by Online Taxi Services Through Relationship Bonding and Relationship Quality, *International Journal of Digital Content Management (IJDCM)*, 5(8), 79-102. DOI: 10.22054/dcm.2023.73154.1197

four aspects of customer engagement value (lifetime value, influence value, customer knowledge value, and customer referral value).

Conclusion: In order to demonstrate the promotion of customer engagement through relationship bonds and online relationship quality, the study adds new data to the literature on online taxis services. Online taxi services are able to offer open innovation structures to help them increase customer engagement, gather innovative ideas and integrate them into their operations. In this regard, in order to enrich ideas, customers who have successfully come up with new ideas should be rewarded.

Keywords: Digital Value Creation, Online Taxi Services, Relationship Bonding, Relationship Quality.

Introduction

In today's markets characterized by intense competition between companies, the emergence of digital business models, and the ease of customer interaction, companies have devoted their resources to developing a customer base that engages in value creation. As a result, they have been able to achieve a sustainable competitive advantage (Mousakhani et al., 2022). On the other hand, the spread of the Internet and the emergence of social networking services (SNS) (such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Telegram, etc.) and the use of these networks by businesses, and companies has altered the customer-business relationship and encouraged customer engagement (CE) in creating value for businesses (Pansari & Kumar, 2017). Since the development and delivery of value occur immediately in online businesses, customers prefer to connect more intimately with businesses to better suit their needs (Palmatier & Steinhoff, 2019).

According to the dynamic relationship marketing theory, The relationships have a life cycle similar to that of products, and as time passes, the relationship between the business and the customer evolves and reaches a new level (Zhang et al., 2016). Recent study indicates that relationship marketing still has unknown features; in this respect, we may refer to studies on the mutual impacts of trust and commitment on each other (Brown et al., 2019), as well as the mutual effect of work trust and its influence on performance (Mangus et al., 2020). Furthermore, relationship marketing has engaged the interest of academics in a variety of business disciplines, and several studies have been carried out on online marketing (Sota et al., 2020; Soni 2020) and businesses (Chang & Lu, 2019; Tolstoy et al., 2022; Kumar et al., 2019). Researchers have also focused on the significance and role of relationship marketing in domestic markets, as shown by (Aali et al., 2019; Nadaf et al., 2018) studies.

In online businesses, considering that value creation and delivery co-occur, customers tend to interact more closely with companies to fulfil their needs more effectively, so (Hollebeek et al., 2019) propose CE as a customer's motivationally-driven operant (e.g., cognitive, emotional, and behavioural) and operand (e.g., equipment-based) resource investment in their brand interactions. According to the engagement theory, when a company forges an emotional, satisfying, and trusting relationship with customers, the company and the customer are said to be engaged (Pansari & Kumar, 2017). On the other hand, according to the norm of reciprocity theory, it can be posited that

benefits customers gain from a company in the form of relationship bonding will create values and perks through engagement of the company affairs (Khan et al., 2023). Generally, when both parties perceive that their mutual capabilities live up to their expectations, trust will occur (Wang et al, 2023). One driver of relationship effectiveness and success relates to the concept of relationship quality, which refers to the customer's ability to rely and trust the salespersons or firm's integrity owing to consistent and satisfactory previous interactions with them (Alshurideh et al., 2023).

Despite the rapid development of online businesses in Iran, previous studies have not focused on the importance of online relationship quality in predicting customer engagement. Thus, this study represents one of the first efforts to investigate the effect of online relationship quality on customer engagement. This study empirically examines the impact of customer engagement on relationship bonding and online relationship quality within the online transportation sector (online taxi). The goal is to understand the mechanism through which relationship bonding can influence customer engagement from a relationship marketing perspective. Based on the theory of engagement, the model and the theory of relationship marketing are proposed. However, little research has been conducted in this area, and the academic community and businesses require more empirical research to fathom the predictors of customer engagement in online businesses (online taxis). The present study seeks to provide more significant insight into this subject and to answer the following question: "To what extent can digital value be created by online taxi services using link approach and relationship quality?"

Literature Review

Relationship bonding

The importance of relational bonding concept in businesses has been well studied by many researchers. Relationship bonds positively correlate with customer loyalty (Wahyuni et al., 2022).

Financial bonding

Financial bonding, commonly called potential marketing (Aali et al., 2020), stimulates consumer motivation and fosters customer loyalty through pricing incentives (e.g., discounts and higher interest rates) (Sin et al., 2002). Financial bonding operates as the customer stimulus for consumption and a means of cultivating customer loyalty through

financial incentives (Zhang et al., 2016; Maldonado-Chaparro et al., 2021).

Social bonding

The marketing literature on partnerships emphasizes that customers pursue social benefits with employees (Balci et al., 2019). The degree to which customers long to engage in personal relationships with staff is known as social bonding (Yi et al., 2021).

Structural bonding

An important characteristic of structural bonding is the enforcement of norms within the relationship, their management, and institutionalization. By combining these techniques, psychological, legal, and physical bonds can be fostered which can enhance the relationship between the parties (Aali & Bafandeh Zendeh, 2023). Businesses can strengthen their relationships with their customers by utilizing this level of relationship bonding (Rafiq et al., 2012).

Relationship Quality

Relationship quality comes under the umbrella term of relationship marketing (Nadeem et al., 2020). Scholars in industrial marketing literature proposed various configurations for the concept of relationship quality between supplier and customer. This dynamic concept links together several elements such as service quality, customer satisfaction, relationship strength, relationship longevity and relationship profitability (Grandinetti et al., 2020; Itani et al., 2019).

Online trust

Because of the complexity and the broad nature of online trust, it is not surprising that there is no clear shared consensus about its conceptualization (Jadil et al., 2022). There are various definitions of trust in relationship marketing. In order for social media users to interact online, share content, and build social networks, they need to establish minimum levels of trust (Zagidullin et al., 2021).

Satisfaction with online relationship

Online customer satisfaction is a complex equation, the vague aspect of which is the detection of online customers' needs. A buyer's and a seller's orientation are described by (Sanzo et al., 2003) as a factor

determining satisfaction. As a result, this definition should be constructed in a way that takes into account both economic and noneconomic aspects of relationships. First, economic satisfaction is defined by them as a positive emotional response by which a participant seeks to be rewarded.

Online commitment

Customers' commitments are defined as their will to maintain a valued relationship with other parties, including service providers (Jones et al., 2010; Raimondo et al., 2008) define it as a "sustained desire to maintain a valuable relationship." Consumers who make an online commitment represent their psychological attachment to the online service provider and their desire to keep a positive customer-company relationship (Lim et al., 2021).

The formation of a bond between the company and customers is a crucial point in the literature pertaining to relationship marketing theory. An important part of relationship marketing is building links between the company and its customers.

Lin et al. (2003) developed a model for business-to-customer transactions in which financial and structural bonding is positively correlated with trust and commitment. These findings suggest that financial, structural, and social types of bonding have a pivotal role in building trust and commitment. Considering the above, we formulate the following hypotheses:

H1: Financial bonds have a positive impact on the quality of online relationships in taxi services.

H2: Social bonds have a positive impact on the quality of online relationships in taxi services

H3: Structural bonds have a positive impact on the quality of online relationships in taxi services.

Online relationship quality and customer engagement value

A relationship founded upon an emotional, satisfying, committed, and trusting relationship can foster engagement. Customers who engage with an organization are more likely to remain loyal to that organization (Brodie et al., 2011).

Creating and maintaining quality relationships with customers generate positive results including customer engagement and Word of Mouth (WOM) advertising (Palmatier et al., 2006). Research also

shows that relationship quality (trust, satisfaction, and commitment) affects customer loyalty (Shamdasani & Balakrishnan, 2000).

According to Ng et al. (2011), improved quality of relationships also promotes WOM by customers. On the other hand, enhanced customer satisfaction elicits more feedback from customers (Prayag & Ryan, 2012) and increases customer lifetime. The results of this study suggest that improved quality of relationships with consumers can substantially foster customer loyalty and subsequently increase customer value. The quality of online relationships was found to be important in promoting customer engagement in various studies (such as Bowden, 2009). Among different relationship constructs (satisfaction, trust, and commitment), Bowden (2009) argues that each contributes in some way to customer engagement.

In light of the above framework of the customer engagement value, including CLV, CRV, CIV, and CKV, we formulate the following hypotheses:

H4: Quality of the online relationship has a positive effect on CLV in online taxis.

H5: Quality of the online relationship has a positive effect on CIV in online taxis.

H6: Quality of the online relationship has a positive effect on CRV in online taxis.

H7: Quality of the online relationship has a positive effect on CKV in online taxis.

Based on the literature review, the research conceptual model can be outlined as represented by Figure 1.

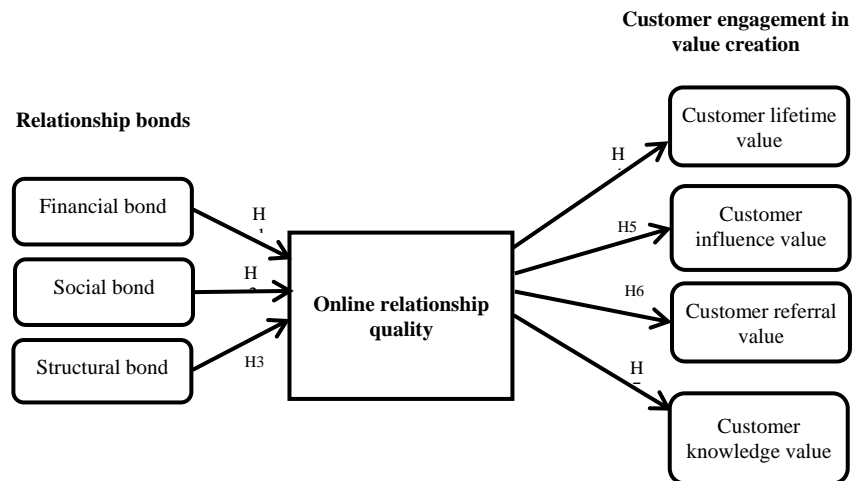


Figure 1. Conceptual model of the research

Method

This research is applied in terms of purpose and draws on a survey-correlation method. Structural equation modelling in software Amos 23 was used in this study to test the research hypotheses. The model was re-run after excluding these items. In terms of factor loadings, model fit indices were valid, and factor loadings exceeded 0.5. Considering that the research community was online taxi customers in Urmia city in Iran, the community was unlimited. Based on Morgan table sampling, 384 people as a sample can be representative of the society. But finally, among the distributed questionnaires, 600 acceptable questionnaires were used for analysis. The adjusted questionnaires were posted online to be completed by online taxi users in Urmia, Iran, of whom 600 filled out the questionnaires. 67.8% of respondents were male, and 30.8% were between 45-54 years of age. Most of the respondents (78.2%) were users of Snap online taxis.

The data collection tool was a questionnaire. A comprehensive review of the literature led to the development of the questionnaire. The research variables were measured using a total of 40 items (Table 1). The relationship bonding with nine items were adopted from Plamatier et al. (2006); online relationship quality with 16 items and satisfaction with relationship were adopted and customer engagement value with 15

items adopted from Kumar & Pansari (2017), were used. The pre-test was conducted based on the views of some marketing professors, and some suggestions were provided for item correction and item compatibility.

Findings

The results of factor loading are listed in Table 1, and the results of fit indices are in Table 2. For the purpose of evaluating the reliability of research variables, three methods of Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability (CR), and average variance explained (AVE) were used. $CR \geq 0.6$, $AVE \geq 0.5$, and Cronbach's alpha ≥ 0.7 are desirable. Hence, as shown in Table 1, CR, AVE, and Cronbach's alpha are all within the accepted level. Therefore, it is safe to assume that research variables are reliable.

Table 1. Items, factor loading, and reliability coefficients of research constructs

Items	Standard factor loading	Cronbach's alpha coefficient	Composite reliability	Mean-Variance explained
Financial bond				
Online taxis save me money.	0.89	0.723	0.745	0.600
Online taxis offer discounts depending on the mileage, frequency of travel, etc.	0.64			
Social bond				
Online taxi drivers are friendly and approachable.	0.71	0.706	0.708	0.548
Online taxis treat me like a valuable and particular customer	0.77			
Structural bond				
I feel comfortable using online taxis	0.76	0.757	0.760	0.515
My personal and specific needs are taken into account in this online taxi	0.65			
Online taxis address my transportation needs efficiently	0.74			
Customer trust				
I am assured of the safety of online taxis as a means of transportation.	0.69	0.869	0.956	0.648

Items	Standard factor loading	Cronbach's alpha coefficient	Composite reliability	Mean-Variance explained			
I can count on the sincerity of this online taxi.	0.83	0.886	0.889	0.671			
The services promised by online taxis match the services offered.	0.73						
Online taxis take into account the interests of customers.	0.90						
Customer commitment							
I often use this online taxi.	0.65						
I feel like I belong to this online taxi.	0.82						
It is difficult for me to stop using these online taxis.	0.78						
If I stop using online taxis, I will probably run into trouble.	0.68						
I feel obliged to stay in touch with this online taxi.	0.82						
Satisfaction with relationship							
As a result of using this online taxi service, I am satisfied with my decision	0.89						
I am content with the transportation services offered by this online taxi.	0.93						
I have a satisfying online taxi experience	0.88						
Customer lifetime value							
I will continue to use online taxis in the near future.	0.87				0.886	0.889	0.671
I am satisfied with online taxis.	0.90						
The value of services provided by this online taxi is worth the money you pay	0.81						
Using an online taxi is delightful for me.	0.68						
Customer referral value							
I promote this online taxi because of its advantages.	0.78	0.859	0.860	0.673			
In addition to the benefits associated with online taxis, the incentives provided by this taxi also persuaded me to	0.84						

Items	Standard factor loading	Cronbach's alpha coefficient	Composite reliability	Mean-Variance explained
recommend it to friends and acquaintances.				
As a user of online taxis, I would like to introduce this taxi to friends and acquaintances because of the incentives offered for referrals.	0.84			
Customer influence value				
I talk about this online taxi everywhere (on media or social networks, etc.).	0.85	0.90	0.905	.0706
I love sharing my experience with this online taxi.	0.89			
I talk to others about the benefits of using an online taxi.	0.80			
I consider myself a part of online taxis, and I bring it up in my conversations.	0.82			
Customer knowledge value				
I give feedback to the company based on my experience of using online taxis.	0.76	0.882	0.888	0.726
I offer suggestions to improve the performance of this online taxi.	0.91			
I offer suggestions and feedback to enhance the services of this internet taxi.	0.88			

Content validity as well as structural validity (convergent validity and divergent validity) were used to determine the validity of the research. The content validity of the questionnaire was evaluated according to the opinions of experts. Similarly, the factor loadings of items associated with each construct were statistically significant ($p < 0.001$), and their values exceeded 0.5, confirming their convergence validity (Table 1). Two methods were used to assess divergent validity: Klein (2005) and Fornell & Larcker (1981). Divergent validity is affirmed when there is a correlation coefficient of not more than 0.85 between factors, as pointed out by Klein. According to Figure 2, divergent validity is confirmed since the correlation between the variables is less than 0.85.

It has been determined by Fornell and Larcker (1981) that divergent validity occurs when the square root value of the AVE for each construct is greater than the variance between that value and the other values in the model. For each construct, Table 3 indicates the correlation coefficients and their square roots as well as the AVE values. As a result, the divergent validity of the model based on Fornell and Larcker criteria is corroborated by the correlations and square root of AVE on the diameter of the table. All constructs have a correlation coefficient that is lower than the square root of AVE, because they have a lower correlation coefficient.

Table 2. Fit indices of measurement models

	χ^2	df	P	GFI	AGFI	TLI	NFI	CFI	RMSEA	χ^2/df
Relationship bonding	24.05	11	0.01	0.99	0.97	0.98	0.98	0.99	0.04	2.10
Relationship quality	101.74	32	0.00	0.97	0.94	0.97	0.97	0.98	0.06	3.18
Engagement value	126.89	71	0.00	0.97	0.96	0.99	0.98	0.99	0.04	1.79

Table 3. Correlation matrix and square of values

Construct	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
(1) Financial bonding	0.774							
(2) Social bonding	0.264	0.740						
(3) Structural bonding	0.243	0.447	0.717					
(4) Relationship quality	0.248	0.405	0.469	0.804				
(5) Customer lifetime value	0.087	0.104	0.144	0.176	0.819			
(6) Customer referral value	0.092	0.111	0.149	0.144	0.242	0.820		
(7) Customer influence value	0.138	0.138	0.187	0.250	0.097	0.223	0.840	
(8) Customer knowledge value	0.174	0.256	0.218	0.347	0.090	0.186	0.363	0.852

Based on maximum likelihood, structural equation modelling was undertaken. Table 4 and Figure 2 present the results of the structural model. As a result of the statistical significance of all research hypotheses at $p < 0.001$, they were all confirmed. A comparison of the fit indices for the research model (Table 5) reveals that all fit indices are within the acceptable range and that a fit exists.

Table 4. Evaluation of hypotheses by estimation of the standardized coefficient

Hypothesis	Assumed Paths	Standardized Coefficients	Critical Ratio	p	Result
H 1	financial bonding =====> online relationship quality	0.47	10.01	0.000	Confirmed
H 2	Social bonding =====> online relationship quality	0.54	12.97	0.000	Confirmed
H 3	Structural bonding =====> online relationship quality	0.50	11.86	0.000	Confirmed
H 4	Quality of online relationship =====> lifetime value	0.55	13.52	0.000	Confirmed
H 5	Quality of the online relationship =====> influence value	0.59	13.05	0.000	Confirmed
H 6	Quality of online relationship =====> referral value	0.40	10.58	0.000	Confirmed
H 7	Quality of online relationship =====> knowledge value	0.49	10.61	0.000	Confirmed

Table 5. Fit indices of the structural research model

	χ^2	df	P	GFI	AGFI	TLI	NFI	CFI	RMSEA	X ² /df
Values	956.39	479	0.00	0.91	0.90	0.95	0.92	0.96	0.04	2

Based on Table 4, assuming 99% CI are applicable, it may be concluded that financial, social, and structural types of bonding have a positive and significant influence on the quality of online relationships. Intriguingly, structural bonding has a greater impact on the quality of online relationships than financial and social bonding. As a result of the research, all four dimensions of customer engagement value appear to be positively impacted by the quality of the online relationship. Based on the impact coefficients of the paths, it is possible to conclude that customer knowledge value (0.49) is highly influenced by the quality of the online relationship.

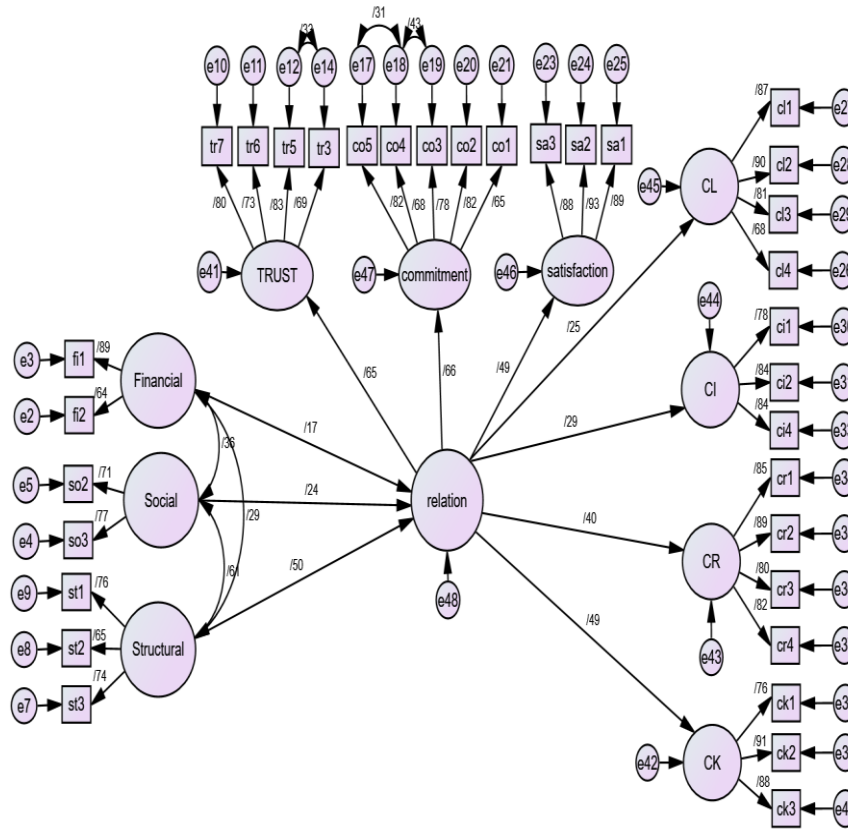


Figure 2. The result of the structural model of the research

Discussion

The purpose of this research was to investigate digital value creation by driving an online taxi with the approach of connection and relationship quality. Previous studies have demonstrated the association between relationship bonding and relationship quality, as well as relationship quality and customer engagement. For example Bowden (2009) has highlighted the role of online relationship quality in promoting customer engagement. However, there is a paucity of research that simultaneously examines the relationship between online relationship quality and customer engagement. The present research was conducted to fill this gap in relationship marketing literature. The results indicate that service managers should devote more efforts to using online

relationship bonding in order to develop online relationship quality and create a high level of customer engagement.

Based on this research, relationship bonding and customer engagement in value creation are associated with the quality of online relationships. This is the first study to display the significant association between the quality of online relationships and customer engagement in creating value in online businesses (online taxis). The results manifest that one of the critical dimensions of the exchange between online businesses (online taxis) and customers is the quality of online relationships, and customers tend to assess the quality of online relationships based on relationship bonding (financial, social, and structural). Relationship bonding is a factor that is shown to affect the quality of online relationships according to the framework proposed in this study. The findings of these studies suggest that the quality of the relationship and its dimensions (financial, social, and structural) are positively related.

Furthermore, the results suggested that for online taxis to increase their customer lifetime value, they need both to account for relationship bonding and to improve the quality of online relationships. It is noteworthy that the findings of this study are in line with those of Shamdasani & Balakrishnan (2000). According to Shamdasani & Balakrishnan (2000) and Palmatier et al. (2006), the quality of a relationship (measured by trust, satisfaction, and commitment) has a direct impact on loyalty.

However, prior to improving the quality of an Internet taxi relationship in an attempt to increase the value, when enhancing relationship bonding with customers, it is important to consider how to encourage them to use the company more frequently. In his study of customer engagement, Bowden (2009) considers the influence of different intermediary relationships (satisfaction, trust, and commitment).

The findings also suggested that when customers are content with the quality of online relationships, customer knowledge is improved, and customers will be more likely to provide feedback to the business, share their experience, make suggestions about new business services, collaborate with online businesses for the development of a new service and to identify customer needs and improvement services by providing relevant information. These findings are consistent with those described by Bowden (2009) proposing a framework for measuring customer

engagement value.

Finally, the results illustrated that if customers are satisfied with the quality of online relationships, the customer referral value is developed, and existing customers will refer new customers to the company. This is in line with the results of Ng et al. (2011). According to Ng et al. (2011), improved quality of relationships increases the likelihood of word-of-mouth advertising by customers.

Conclusion

Considering how online taxi services motivate customers to engage with their brands, we try to make a significant contribution to the marketing literature by examining how customers can act as marketers for these brands. In spite of the importance of customer engagement for a business' success, customer engagement with online taxi services is still a neglected concept. Plus adding to the growing body of research into the drivers of customer engagement and their mediators, this study examines the effects of relationship bonds on customer engagement through online relationships quality. In addition, the mediation role of quality in online relationships within the relationship between bonding of relationships and customer engagement contributes to the development of relationship marketing theory in the literature associated with the online service industry. Moreover, it reinforces the importance of online service providers nurturing customer relationships by more investment in them.

Through this study, we aim to respond to numerous calls from scholars regarding more empirical research that examines customer engagement in the online service industry, specifically online taxi services. Additionally, we think our study provides an answer to Ng et al. (2020)'s call for research into service attributes that contribute to customer engagement. According to our study, customer relationships is a significant service attribute that may increase customer engagement.

Overall, the findings of this study suggest that relationship marketing entails the creation of long-term online relationships, and warrants further analysis. It is because the quality of online relationships serves as the link between the financial bond and customer engagement with online retailers. Once the determinants and consequences of online relationship quality are identified, marketers will seek to develop and retain an online relationship view of this fact.

It is impossible for marketers to establish a long-term relationship with their online customers by simply building trust and commitment. Therefore, in the online industry, in order to build a relationship with online customers, in the long run, marketers should consider the expansion of online relationships and equip themselves with measures that will boost the quality of the relationship. Marketers need to look for other marketing measures, including value creation for online customers compared to their rivals, among other things. This finding poses a challenge to relationship marketing that calls for further research.

It is worth noting that in online taxis, values are created and presented simultaneously, and customers tend to interact more closely with companies to meet their needs better. When customers are assured of the benefits of their investments in effect, they will ascertain the value of online relationships and attempt to invest in their resources as a way of improving the relationship in response to online relationship-building efforts. Accordingly, all value maximization tactics and strategies should be utilized for customer engagement.

This study revealed that relationship bonding through online relationship quality can enhance the value of customer engagement. In this regard, it is suggested that service managers adopt a communication-oriented perspective and base their strategy on relationship marketing, in which customer orientation is a key of success for online sales and building long-term relationships with customers. Online shopping websites also offer a variety of options to support their consumers. For example, websites seek to provide quick feedback to customers by hiring competent staff and following up. Moreover, customers' trust could be gained by offering the possibility of chatting with the internet service provider during the online purchase.

In light of the findings of the study, it can be stated that online taxis need to categorize their customers based on behaviors that are directly related to their level of engagement in creating value and then employ different marketing tools to engage them based on the level of customer engagement and strategies (e.g., segmentation, goal-setting, differentiation, and positioning). In this regard, it is recommended that by investing in strong online relationships with customers and customer engagement (by providing more benefits than costs for customers), companies exploit different strategies to boost customer engagement.

It is suggested that in order to offer value to customers, online taxis

should minimize service costs. For example, they can facilitate the service delivery process and accelerate it. If online taxis fail to provide adequate value to customers, they will obviously lose their competitive advantage.

In light of the research results, which illustrate the significant impact of financial bonding on the quality of online relationships, special attention must be paid to this bonding. In order to create the desired situation, it is vital to highlight strategies and financial bonding. Considering that such bonding is easily imitated, which overshadows its distinction, it is essential to offer financial incentives according to the type of customers and the extent to which they use online services. For this purpose, companies can offer free or discounted services to their regular customers through online customer loyalty programs.

As for social bonds, in addition to price stimuli that advance customer motivation for interaction, emphasis is placed on establishing a friendly relationship with customers based on each customer's specific needs. Such active and intimate relationships with the customer could improve the quality of the online relationship. As a result, creating long-term and close relationships with the customer via proper channels according to the customer's needs would enhance the quality of online communication and the effectiveness of social bonding strategies.

Facilitating two-way bilateral communication through phone calls or even face-to-face communication in cyberspace (WebCam), providing customers with sections on the website offering solutions to service problems, and some of the most effective methods of social bonding constitute oral advertising. Cyber service providers can use this method to cultivate relationships with their customers or to constantly monitor their needs, and to enhance customer satisfaction and loyalty.

Finally, it should be noted that structural bonding is a link that secures the structure, management, and institutionalization of norms in a relationship. By providing this level of relationship-building tactics, companies can consolidate their relationships with customers. Online service providers can also offer knowledge and information needed by online taxis as a way of customizing the product.

If the structural bond is further integrated with the other two types of relationship bonding, the emergence of rivals into a company's existing markets will be crucial. By providing this level of relationship bonding, online service providers can strengthen their relationship with customers, improve productivity and create a sustainable competitive

advantage.

On the other hand, in order to prolong customer lifetime, companies need to focus on taking care of the valuable customer, customer satisfaction, customer loyalty so that the receivers of services would be urged upon to make more frequent and larger purchases.

The customer influence value could be fostered to affect a customer's impact on other customers by convincing and encouraging other customers to share their shopping experience. As far as online taxis are concerned with, we need to develop platforms where customers can help each other to connect and share experiences. Moreover, online taxis can benefit from their customers feedback to determine their merits and demerits as well as to develop innovative solutions for improving customer service. Development of an online platform where customers can meet and exchange ideas regarding topics and trends proposed and directed by online taxi services would be one means to accomplish this goal. Online taxi services are able to offer open innovation structures enabling them to increase customer engagement, gather innovative ideas and integrate them into their operations. On this score, in order to enrich ideas, customers who have successfully come up with new ideas, should be rewarded.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST: The authors declare that they have no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this manuscript.

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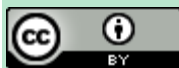
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How to Cite: Moosakhani, S., Aali, S., Sanoubar, N., Iranzadeh, S. (2024). Digital Value Creation by Online Taxi Services Through Relationship Bonding and Relationship Quality, *International Journal of Digital Content Management (IJDCM)*, 5(8), 79-102. DOI: 10.22054/dcm.2023.73154.1197



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