

# RELATIONSHIP MARKETING IN CEMENT INDUSTRY: A REVIEW AND SYNTHESIS OF RECENT RESEARCH

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**Abstract:** Relationship marketing is a new paradigm, which propounds ways to maximize an enterprise's returns in the newly emerging liberalized markets in India. The focus of the study is to explore the concept of relationship marketing (RM) in the context of cement industry. India is home to the world's second largest Cement Industry and accounts for over 8% of the global installed capacity. Cement is one of the core industries which plays a vital role in the growth and expansion of a nation. The Indian cement industry has evolved significantly in the last two decades, going through all the phases of typical cyclical growth process. After a period of over-supply and a phase of massive capacity additions, the industry is currently in a consolidation phase. Relationship marketing is important for building long-term relationships with customers and contributes to organisational profitability. The main objective of the study was to review and analyze key dimensions of RM in the cement industry. The study is based on the secondary data & literature review and desk research on RM in Cement Industry has been carried out. The results reveal that relationship marketing dimensions have significant effect on customer attitude, satisfaction and retention in cement Industry.

**Key Words:** Cement Industry, Consolidation, Long-Term Relationships, Relationship Marketing

**I. Introduction:** All marketing is done with the customer in mind. Marketing can in fact be referred to as an on-going conversation occurring between business and customer. It is therefore necessary for businesses to gain in-depth knowledge of their relative customers so that the best marketing strategies can be employed in order to attract these potential buyers. **Relationship marketing** is a marketing approach that acknowledges the importance of both the buyer and the seller in the marketing process. The core concept is to build long-term relationships with customers.

Relationship marketing views marketing as an exchange where both buyers and sellers help shape the direction and outcome of the product that will be offered to the market. Instead of treating marketing as merely selling a product to passive potential buyers, relationship marketing argues that you need to encompass many more activities and parties in the marketing process, including consumers.

The Cement Industry globally has immense forward and backward linkages with a Nation's economy. For a developing and transitioning economy such as India, the value proposition of the Cement Industry is even greater given the immense infrastructure requirements of a growing and urbanizing country, as well as its contributions by way of direct and indirect employment. Accounting for over 7% of the global installed capacity, the Indian Cement sector is the second largest cement industry in the world, second only to China. It plays a binding and pivotal role in both the infrastructure and socio-economic development of the Country; moreover, the Indian Cement Industry is the fourth-largest revenue contributor to the exchequer and the second-largest revenue contributor to the Indian Railways — it contributes nearly US\$ 7.14 billion (INR

50,000 crore) per annum to Government via taxes and levies, and about US\$ 1.29 billion (INR 9,000 crore) per annum to the Indian Railways by way of freight revenue.

Nowadays, cement production has been increased and cement companies are facing with surplus of supply. This leads to the lack of selling in the sector and intensification of competition among cement plants. Therefore, there is an urgent need for marketing tactics to be taken into consideration in the cement sector India.

Customer is the core point amongst most marketing strategies so relationship marketing is a suitable pattern that should be taken into consideration in this sector in India in dealing with customers.

The main focus of this paper is to understand the key dimensions of RM along with the effects of the different dimensions of relationship marketing in context of cement Industry.

## **II. Conceptual Perspective:**

Today, the companies in addition to the compilation of strategies to attract new customers and close deals with them are going to maintain the current customers and establish a permanent relationship with them. In other words, they have understood that losing a customer is something more than the loss of a sales item but it is a significant loss of the entire purchases that the customer could make during his/her lifetime or the period in which the buyer purchases the company's products. That is, the companies are after capturing the customers' lifetime value. The relationship marketing means all steps taken by the companies for better recognition and providing better services to valuable customers.

Traditional marketing has been about getting customers—relationship marketing is about getting and keeping customers. To do this calls for the coordination of external markets and collaboration within internal (staff) markets to ensure the right marketing mix. The role of relationship marketing in the current business scenario has become significant as maintaining good relationships with various sections of society (SupriyaBiswas). People have always done business with people they know, like, and trust. That's the essence of "relationship marketing." Today, the popularity of online social networking has caused a paradigm shift in relationship marketing.

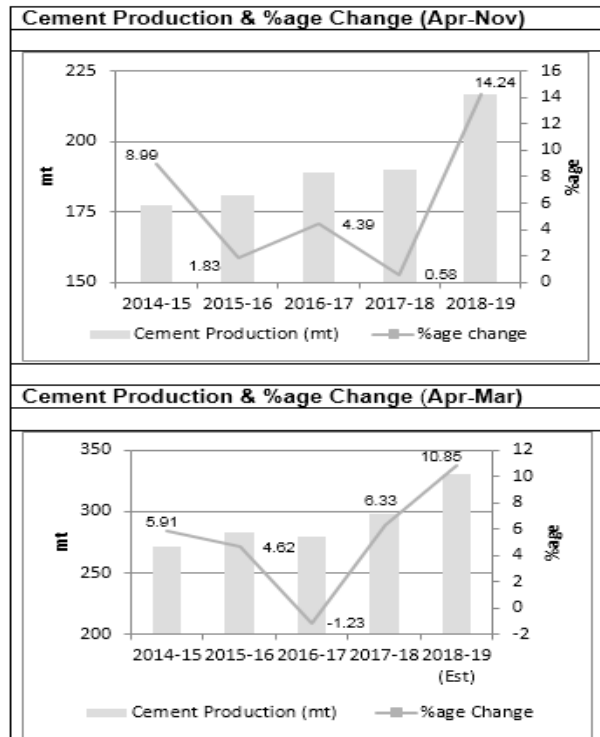
Relationship marketing is the on-going process of identifying and creating new value with individual customers and then sharing the benefits of this over a lifetime of association (SShajahan). Relationship Marketing seeks to align the enterprise with the expectations of certain customers and to deliver the value these customers want, continuously. Exploring relational strategies in marketing continues to acknowledge the role that relationship marketing (RM) plays in modern management and establishes the contexts in which RM is most beneficially exercised (John Egan).

### Cement Production in India:

#### Cement Production and %age growth

Year	Cement Production (mt)	%age Change over previous year	CAGR %
<b>(Apr-Nov)</b>			
2014-15	177.62	8.99	
2015-16	180.88	1.83	
2016-17	188.82	4.39	
2017-18	189.91	0.58	
2018-19	216.95	14.24	5.13
<b>(Apr-Mar)</b>			
2014-15	270.94	5.91	
2015-16	283.46	4.62	
2016-17	279.98	-1.23	
2017-18	297.71	6.33	
2018-19 (Est)	330.00	10.85	5.05

Source: DIPP (www.eaindustry.nic.in)



Cement industry has shown a CAGR of over 5% in the year 2018-19 from 2014-15 (Apr-Nov). During the year 2018-19 (Apr-Nov), industry has shown a double digit growth of over 14% as compared to a marginal growth of around 1% in the year 2017-18 (Apr-Nov). There has been recorded positive growth in 2014-15 (5.91%), 2015-16 (4.62%) barring negative growth in the year 2016-17 (-1.23%). During the period 2018-19 (Apr-Mar), the CAGR was around over 5% from 2014-15 (Apr-Mar). If we see the growth in last two quarter of the year 2018-19, there has been a double digit growth, which can be seen in the current quarter also.

Month wise/Quarter wise data is given in the table as follows:

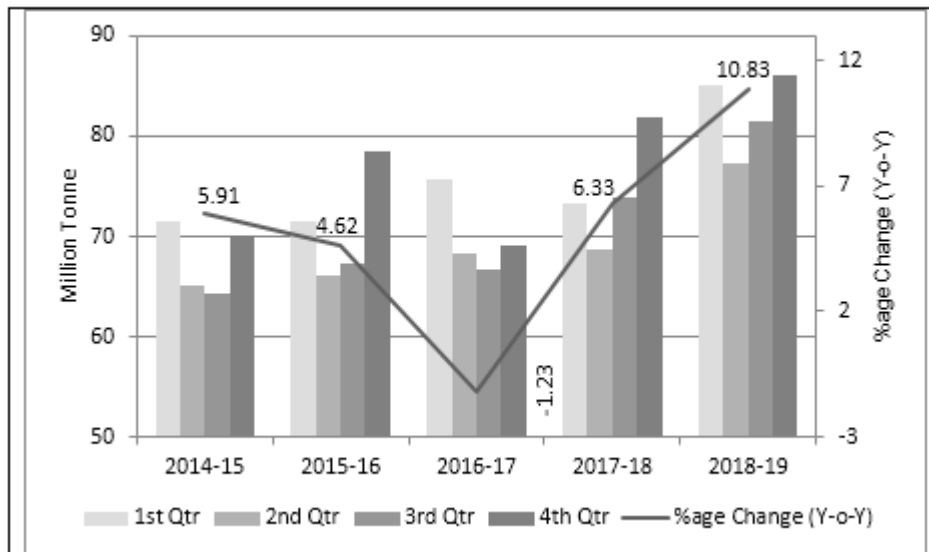
Quarter-wise Cement Production										
(Million Tonnes)										
Quarter	2018-2019		2017-2018		2016-2017		2015-2016		2014-2015	
	For Qtr	% age Change	For Qtr	% age Change	For Qtr	% age Change	For Qtr	% age Change	For Qtr	% age Change
Apr-Jun	85.12	16.25	73.22	-3.30	75.72	5.79	71.57	0.10	71.50	11.01
Jul-Sep	77.36	12.52	68.75	0.62	68.33	3.42	66.07	1.63	65.01	9.87
Oct-Dec (*)	81.47	10.35	73.83	10.55	66.78	-0.85	67.35	4.61	64.26	4.15
Jan-Mar (*)	86.00	4.99	81.91	16.45	69.15	-11.88	78.47	11.63	70.17	-0.54
<b>Apr-Mar</b>	<b>329.95</b>	<b>10.63</b>	<b>297.71</b>	<b>6.33</b>	<b>279.98</b>	<b>-1.23</b>	<b>283.46</b>	<b>4.62</b>	<b>270.94</b>	<b>5.91</b>

Monthwise Cement Production										
(Million Tonnes)										
MONTH	2018-2019		2017-2018		2016-2017		2015-2016		2014-2015	
	FOR MONTH	CUM	FOR MONTH	CUM	FOR MONTH	CUM	FOR MONTH	CUM	FOR MONTH	CUM
Apr	28.51	28.51	23.38	23.38	24.68	24.68	23.66	23.66	24.28	24.28
May	27.79	56.29	24.60	47.98	24.94	49.62	24.29	47.95	23.95	48.24
Jun	28.83	85.12	25.24	73.22	26.10	75.72	23.62	71.57	23.26	71.50
Jul	26.02	111.14	23.40	96.62	23.16	98.88	23.01	94.58	22.70	94.20
Aug	25.73	136.86	22.44	119.06	22.28	121.16	21.62	116.20	20.51	114.71
Sep	25.62	162.48	22.91	141.97	22.88	144.05	21.44	137.64	21.80	136.51
Oct	28.37	190.85	23.95	165.93	24.26	168.31	22.84	160.47	20.36	156.87
Nov	26.10	216.95	23.99	189.91	20.52	188.82	20.41	180.88	20.76	177.62
Dec(*)	27.00	243.95	25.89	215.80	22.00	210.82	24.11	204.99	23.15	200.77
Jan (*)	28.00	271.95	26.90	242.69	22.49	233.31	25.93	230.91	23.74	224.51
Feb (*)	27.00	298.95	26.40	269.09	21.45	254.77	25.49	256.41	22.46	246.97
Mar (*)	31.00	329.95	28.62	297.71	25.21	279.98	27.05	283.46	23.97	270.94

(\*) – Production data is estimated for the months December 2018 to March 2019  
 Source: DIPP ([www.eaindustry.nic.in](http://www.eaindustry.nic.in))

**Yearwise/Quarterwise Cement Production and %age Changes (Y-o-Y)**



High growth in cement industry during 2018-19 can be attributed to a bouquet of factors, largely related to demand. The growth has been led by:

- Higher government spending on infrastructure, Ports, Railway Corridors, Smart Cities, affordable housing, irrigation sector, etc
- Revival of the Kerala markets after the devastating floods
- Faster execution of the projects particularly due to election year
- Various incentives (tax benefits, low interest rates, etc) for affordable housing by the Government
- Income boost for rural people accorded by the Government picked-up rural cement demand

- Lowered cement prices

III. **Methodology** The present study used a systematic review to clarify Relationship Marketing concept. This study initiates the research process with an analysis of literature. Its purpose was to capture the overall essence of the concept in the context of Cement Industry. Researcher has used various journals, research articles, newspapers, internet, books, e-books, etc. for this study.

#### IV. Literature Review:

Relationship Marketing is an emerging topic and various facets of Relationship Marketing experienced by Business-to –Business sector employees have received research attention. The studies on RM in Cement Industry in India are limited.

#### A Synthesis Matrix Organized by Key Studies of Relationship Marketing in Cement Industry

Sr. No.	Author & Year of the Study with Title	Purpose	Method	Sample	Inferences
1	Dwyer, F.R, Schurr, P.H. & Oh, S. (1987). “Developing buyer-seller relationships”	To develop a framework for developing buyer-seller relationships	Various literature has reviewed	Secondary data	The authors describe a framework for developing buyer-seller relationships that affords a vantage point for formulating marketing strategy and for stimulating new research directions
2.	Anderson, J.C. & Narus, J.A. (1990). “A model of distributor firm and manufacturer firm working partnerships.”	To understand the distributor firm and manufacturer firm working partnerships.	A multiple-informant research method is employed.	Primary data of 504 wholesaler-distributor firms.	The working relationships with manufacturer firms that supplied the first- or second-highest-selling product lines tended to be uniformly positive, whereas relationships with the fourth manufacturer firms were more variable.
3	Gounaris, S.P. (2005). “Trust and commitment influences on customer retention: insights from business-to-business services.”	To investigate two specific antecedents of trust of commitment to study the relationship between: the customer supplier.	Factor analysis and structural modeling	280 companies from different industries were identified by approaching consulting companies offering middle and senior management	Trust and commitment are indeed two important notions which cause corporate clients to uphold a relationship with their provider. Furthermore, trust precedes the development of commitment.

				training as well as recruitment services in Athens, Greece.	
4.	Goffin, K., Lemke, F. & Szwejczewski, M. (2006). "An exploratory study of 'Close' supplier-manufacturer relationships."	To identify the specific attributes to establish Close' supplier-manufacturer relationships	Interview method	39 managers responsible for purchasing were interviewed using a technique from psychology, which is particularly effective at uncovering the characteristics of relationships	Overall, the study has established the viability of a new approach for understanding the complex topic of manufacturer-supplier partnerships.
5	Hunt, S.D. & Morgan, R.M. (2006). "The explanatory foundations of relationship marketing theory."	to the development of the explanatory foundations of relationship marketing theory	Desk Research	Secondary data	Although relationship marketing is a relatively young field of inquiry, relationship marketing theory is an extremely rich area of research. Relationship marketing can take many forms and, as a result, relationship marketing theory has the potential to increase one's understanding of many aspects of business strategy. Relationship marketing can take many forms and, as a result, relationship marketing theory has the potential to increase one's understanding of many aspects of business strategy.
6	KanagalNagasimhaBalakrishna (2009), Role Of Relationship	To understand	Conceptualized the role	Primary data and	RM outputs can be usefully used, as inputs



	Marketing In Competitive Marketing Strategy	the role of RM in Competitive Marketing Strategy	of relationship marketing to competitive marketing strategy and empirically tested the role of relationship marketing.	Secondary data	in product design and development, want identification, improving selling systems, pricing strategies. It is one of the supports to systematic action setting in competitive marketing strategy
7.	Athanasopoulou, P. (2009). "Relationship quality: A critical literature review and research agenda."	To critically review the literature on relationship quality (RQ) and to suggest avenues for further research.	Various literature has reviewed	Secondary data	A comprehensive review of the RQ literature that has not been done before and develops a general framework that can be applied in all contexts and will guide future studies in the area.
8.	Phineas Mbango(2010), Business-to-business Framework of Relationship Marketing in the South African Cement Manufacturing Industry	To study relationship marketing (RM) in the context of business-to-business in the cement manufacturing industry in South Africa.	Survey method	Data were collected from 362 major cement customers throughout South Africa's nine provinces using the face-to-face interview technique with self-administered questionnaires.	The empirical results of this study suggested that in order to maintain customer satisfaction, a cement supplier has to invest in ways of enhancing customer trust and communication. One contribution of this study is its examination of the sequential logic of RM constructs in business-to-business in the cement industry.
9.	Qureshi Muhammad Imran, Khalid Zaman and Dr. Iqtidar Ali Shah(2010) Relationship between Rewards and Employee's Performance in the Cement Industry in Pakistan	To understand relationship between rewards and employee's performance in cement industry in the Khyber Pakhtoonkha	Survey method, rank correlation coefficient and multiple regression analysis	Primary data collected from one hundred and forty employees of various cement industry in Pakistan.	There is a direct relationship between extrinsic rewards, intrinsic rewards and the employees' performance.

		wa Province (KPK) of Pakistan.			
10	Svensson, G., Mysen, T. & Payan J. (2010). "Balancing the sequential logic of quality constructs in manufacturing-supplier relationships-cause and outcome."	To explore the quality constructs in manufacturing-supplier relationships	Desk research and content analysis	Primary data and Secondary data	Win-win working relationships between buyers and suppliers in business markets are becoming more and more vital to achieving business success.
11	Aali, Mohammad Bagher (2012), Relationship Marketing and Customer Loyalty, Case Study: Hormozghan Cement Company, Bandar Khamir, Iran, Caspian	To evaluate the impact of relationship marketing's underpinnings on relationship quality (customers' trust and satisfaction) and then determine the impact on customers' loyalty in Hormozghan Cement Company.	Correlation analysis, Multiple Regression analysis and Path analysis assessed the impact on customer loyalty of four key constructs of relationship marketing (product quality, product price, brand image, value offers) and mediators.	246 Company's customers in Iran.	customer loyalty can be created, reinforced and retained by marketing plans aimed at building satisfaction, demonstrating product quality to customers and getting in touch with them in a timely manner.
12	Sunil Kumar, Dr. N.C. Bansal (2013), "Marketing Mix Strategies and Indian Cement Sector"	To overview of Indian cement industry and its marketing strategies.	Various review is undertaken	Secondary Data	Considering the growing demand for cement in India and higher capacity utilization over the years, many key players already begun to revisit their business strategies and some strategic changes will be the sustainable approach for future
13	Peterson Nduati (2014), "The effect of competition on strategic orientation of cement manufacturing firms in Kenya"	To examine the effect of competition on strategic orientation of cement	content analysis	Desk review and interviews with managers of firms in the	The results show that competition in the industry has led to firms seeking three strategic orientations – customer, competitor, and



		manufacturing firms in Kenya.		industry.	technology orientations.
14	Kaut H, KaurH(2015), Satisfaction, trust and loyalty: investigating the mediating effects of commitment, switching costs and corporate image.	to develop an understanding of the factors influencing Indian consumers' loyalty toward mobile phone service providers by exploring the mediating roles of commitment, corporate image and switching costs on causal relationships between customer satisfaction, trust and loyalty.	Survey Method	A survey of 855 Indian mobile phone users was carried out to test the hypothesized relationships using structural equation modeling. The results support most of the proposed hypotheses.	The results have implications for retaining customers in highly competitive and maturing Indian mobile telecommunications. The research provides some initial insights into corporate brand building as an important area for mobile phone companies.
15	Dr. PurnaPrabhakarNandamuri Dr. Mukesh Kumar Mishra(2017), Cement Industry (B): The demand - supply dynamics	to highlight the understanding of the basic concepts of demand and supply in the Indian Cement Industry	Case Study Approach	Secondary data	The case highlights the demand – supply mismatch and the ability of the businesses to strategically combat with the competition and turn profitable.

## V. Findings:

RM is primarily concerned with retaining, attracting and maintaining customers in order to meet the mutual objectives of parties involved, by creating value for the customer and treating the customer as a co-producer. According to Svensson, win-win working relationships between buyers and suppliers in business markets are

becoming more and more vital to achieving business success. The strong relationships in business-to-business markets ensure stability to both suppliers and buyers. According to the literature, the three most studied dimensions of relationship marketing (RM) are trust, commitment and satisfaction. The challenge is to find commonality of dimensions for a specific industry/sector. In the cement industry, supplier competency is considered crucial to strengthen the relationship between supplier and buyer. Hunt and Morgan argue that competencies are essential in enabling firms to use resources efficiently and/or effectively and as a result, competencies are sources of competitive advantage. This is possible since competency is tacit, complex and organisation-specific, rendering it difficult to imitate.

As the cement industry and its products are of a technical nature, providing such services distinguishes an organisation from competitors and is assured to enhance the relationship between supplier and buyer.

- VI. **Conclusion:** RM has become relevant to the cement industry, particularly subsequent to restructuring of the cartel system in 1994, which presented challenges for competitors entering the market, globalization, changes in legislation and the need for long-term profitability. The literature reveals that while the approach to RM is of mutual benefit, it may not always be appropriate to pursue an entire problem-solving approach, as vulnerabilities and challenges may occur, which are associated with rigidly applying RM as a 'straight jacket'. Therefore, when implementing relationship strategies, each case must be assessed on its merit by conducting a cost-benefit analysis.

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