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# THE ROLE OF HOLISTIC MARKETING IN GAINING CUSTOMER LOYALTY IN TOURISM COMPANIES-AN ANALYTICAL STUDY OF THE OPINIONS OF A SAMPLE OF CUSTOMERS OF TOURISM COMPANIES IN THE HOLY CITY OF KARBALA

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# Abstract:

The current research was concerned with studying the nature of the relationship and the influence between two variables represented by (holistic marketing and the customer loyalty ) of a sample of customers of tourism companies in the holy city of Karbala and the nature of the answers was analyzed statistically through the spss statistical program to get to the fact of accepting or rejecting the two hypotheses of the research, which are the hypotheses of correlation and effect relationships, and through the statistical results, the two hypothesis was accepted based on the level Statistical significance. The research reached a set of recommendations that support the application of the concept of holistic marketing in the tourism company enhancing the customer loyalty by Adopting loyalty strategies and programs, which contribute to achieving the level of loyalty of current customers, the necessity of achieving integration in applying the dimensions of holistic marketing and giving importance to each of its dimensions in tourism institutions, and the necessity of adopting customers' demands, needs and desires from those involved the nature of the quality of tourism services goes beyond companies.

Keywords: Holistic Marketing, Customer Loyalty, Tourism Company, Service Quality, Employee Training

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The world today lives under the challenges of the twenty-first century, represented by the same markets and technological developments the continuous growth and development of products, the intensity of competition, and the speed and development of means of communication, as you can see in global markets in general. in Iraq in particular, there have been changes in various fields and the influx of many different products and services into the markets advanced and new ideas in the field of marketing and the use of advanced technology, all of which led to providing services and ideas to markets were not what the customer expected, seeking to meet his different needs and take his opinions regarding his requirements(1). Developing a strong marketing strategy is vital to the success of any business. Service firms can face challenges in their marketing strategies as they often don't offer physical products that can be demonstrated for customers. These companies therefore depend on delivering high levels of professionalism and efficiency. A comprehensive marketing strategy can help service providers highlight capabilities and attract clients. Holistic Marketing concept is probably the newest strategy to marketing and the latest business concept. The concept of holistic marketing is Developing a strong marketing strategy is vital to the success of any business. Service firms can face challenges in their marketing strategies as they often don't offer physical products that can be demonstrated for customers. These companies therefore depend on delivering high levels of professionalism and efficiency. A comprehensive marketing strategy can help service providers highlight capabilities and attract clients. Holistic Marketing concept is probably the newest strategy to marketing and the latest business concept. The concept of holistic marketing is based on the development, design and implementation of marketing programs, processes and activities that recognize their breath and interdependencies. It recognizes that 'everything matters' with marketing and that a broad, integrated

perspective is necessary to attain the best solution. Successful holistic marketing implementation involves four major marketing activities namely internal marketing, integrated marketing, relationship marketing and performance marketing<sup>(2)</sup>. The concept of holistic marketing emerged at the beginning of the third millennium, and it was a new challenge in the field of theory and marketing work, while holistic marketing was viewed as an important work and achievement for achieving integration with regard to both balanced performance and quality management can be achieved through four elements as a tool that include (integrated marketing, relationship marketing, and marketing Socially responsible, and performance marketing), and it helps to implement this tool to develop performance general organizational<sup>(3)</sup>.

### 2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

### 2.1. Holistic Marketing

<sup>(4)</sup> Holistic marketing is a participatory approach and goal achieving integration between the supply chain group and the functional areas of information acquisition necessary to improve the current offered products for the purpose of their success with customer requirements without any there are significant problems in product design, and comprehensive marketing directs consumers towards use the best marketing operations to achieve strategic and organizational stability, and the best infrastructure paying attention to information related to customer requirements and making the best use of it marketing resources and knowledge in order to maintain competition and offer products that meet customer expectations, and it has holistic marketing is involved in building a value proposition for the customer by asking marketers to improve relationships and building direct interaction between employees, organizational managers, stakeholders, and customers externals<sup>(5)</sup>. Holistic marketing directs marketers towards using optimize marketing operations, to achieve strategic and organizational stability and improve the structure infrastructure and attention to information related to customer preferences and achieving the maximum benefit from resources and marketing knowledge, in order to maintain competition and provide products that meet customer expectations<sup>(6)</sup>.

The importance and objectives of holistic marketing appeared in the academic articles that called for

the need to embrace and implement comprehensive change, and provide business requirements to achieve marketing success deal smoothly with external environment variables, and ensure the completion of the necessary transformations to create solutions to external threats and rapid response to changing customer needs, and taking this into account eliminating all issues related to shopping operations and improving the organization's ability to quickly adapt to the environment business, diagnosing opportunities to improve marketing activity. The importance of holistic marketing and its goals emerged from the importance of academic articles that called for the necessity of adopting and creating comprehensive change, and providing business requirements to achieve marketing success, Dealing smoothly with the variables of the external environment, ensuring this and completing the necessary transformations to find solutions to external threats, respond quickly to the changing needs of the customer, and take into account all marketing related processes, improving the organization's ability to quickly adapt to the environment business, and diagnose opportunities to improve marketing activity<sup>(7)(8)(9)</sup>. The importance of comprehensive marketing leads to achieving the following:

- 1. Sticking to employees, especially those with capabilities and skills in the organization with potential addressing any decline in the marketing strategic directions of the organization's management and providing adaptations sustainable.
- 2. Encouraging senior management to build strong and solid relationships with specialized teams that share with them the formulation objectives to gain the skills and experience needed to build and release useful and unusual ideas motivations of employees to achieve recovery from the strategic, organizational and marketing aspects.
- 3. Deepening the correct understanding of customer requirements in order to provide the best quality of products and construction strong interactive and social relationships and improving the technology used in production to achieve sustainability  $marketing^{(10)}$ .
- 4. It is the link between the community and business organization in which it lives and the markets it serves.
- 5. Retaining employees, especially those with good skills in the organization with the possibility of addressing any a review of strategic marketing trends for managing organizations and presenting modern trends.
- 6. Establishing good marketing relationships through the organization's network of internal and external relationships, and use it directly to achieve a sustainable balance between the organization's vision and changing needs for the customer.
- 7. The belief that the impact factor of the whole will be greater than the sum of the parts, and this is the basic element of holistic marketing, which requires supporting and providing everything to the organization's managers<sup>(8)</sup>.

## 2.2. Customer Loyalty

Loyalty has many definitions, including researchers, management scholars, and economists. Although these definitions differ in terms of linguistic wording, through research into all of these definitions, we found that they all agree in terms of content, as some define it as holding on to the customer or the customer and the constant renewal of his desire to buy a specific product and keep or be careful to order it over other similar or alternative products competition for these products<sup>(11)</sup>. Others defined loyalty as a measure of the degree of repurchase by the customer, as it is a measure of the customer and his desire to participate reciprocally in the organization's activities. such a customer has a strong commitment in light of his previous experience in dealing with the organization and preferring its products, services, and brand. It creates an advantage for the organization over its competitors<sup>(12)</sup>. There are those who define it as the relatively exclusive attachment to a brand or group of brands during continuous purchasing operations. It is the result

of a psychological path that leads to a meaningful choice. Loyalty differs from stagnation, which is known as simple, repeated purchases, or fake loyalty, which is represented by sticking to the organization by repurchasing the same brand or continuing to request the same services without a positive attitude<sup>(13)</sup>. The word loyalty has a positive connotation that institutions of economic business and services seek to obtain, and loyalty can be viewed as a behavior through repeated dealings without choosing any other alternatives, or viewing loyalty as a direction, the individual has formed his emotions and feelings.

towards the service, in this case the matter has gone beyond the mere process of repeating the transaction to the stage of urging and encouraging others to dealing with this institution or using certain services<sup>(14)</sup>.

The efforts of institutions to try to gain customer loyalty are due to the benefits resulting from it and its direct impact on the profitability of institutions, as it has been proven many studies have shown the great importance of customer loyalty, including:

- 1.The costs of retaining loyal customers are lower when compared with the costs of attracting new customers, as it has been proven studies show that the cost of attracting new customers is many times the cost of retaining existing customers and gaining their loyalty<sup>(15)</sup>.
- 2-A customer who is loyal to the organization is considered one of the sources that can be referred to when undertaking new activities, as well as recommendations these customers often attract new customers without the organization bearing any additional marketing costs<sup>(16)</sup>.
- 3 Limiting the provision of promotional prices, especially since a loyal customer is willing to pay a higher price to get the value. desirable, and the new customer needs several years to buy at the same rate as the old customer who left the organization.
- 4 The employee of the organization or service provider takes only 50% of the time spent presenting the sale to the average individual, meaning that he consumes half the time that can be spent on a new customer when presenting sales offers to a loyal customer. Customer loyalty means the presence of strong reference groups for institutions and their services, as these customers talk to their friends and relatives about the organization's services and benefits, which makes them marketers of the organization's services and products without costing the organization any costs for marketing and advertising<sup>(14)</sup>.
- 5 Customer loyalty is more important in the service sector compared to the commodity sector. This is due to customers' awareness that the increase in the costs of transformation in the services sector are higher compared to the costs of transformation in goods, in addition to the fact that the process of providing services constitutes opportunities more for communication and personal interaction between the customer and the institution or service provider.
- 6 Finally, loyalty has become one of the most important marketing terms in circulation because it is one of the most important keys to the success of marketing programs. If the customer is it is the center of the marketing process. Customer loyalty is one of the organization's priorities, and the highest ambition it wants in the customer is this increased interest in loyalty due to competition, whether at the local or global level, the latter has become more fierce, which makes obtaining clients new more difficult therefore, loyalty today constitutes the golden basis for measuring the quality of a relationship, as true loyalty lasts longer and is evidence on customer satisfaction with the organization's products, achieving loyalty means that the organization has achieved the interests of customers, which increases the strength of the relationship<sup>(17)</sup>.

### 3. THE IMPORTANCE OF THE RESEARCH

The increasing pace of competition forces organizations to adopt methods to ensure their survival in the market, and these methods include practicing the dimensions of holistic marketing, from here the importance of research emerges through the lack of interest of Iraqi organizations, including tourism organizations, in holistic marketing methods and its role in enhancing customer loyalty. The importance of research lies in the following:

- A Knowing the theoretical concepts of holistic marketing and focusing on its dimensions.
- B Linking holistic marketing and the dimensions of customer loyalty.
- C Knowing the extent of application of holistic marketing concepts and its activities in tourism companies from the point of view of the customers of these companies.

### **4 - MATERIALS AND METHODS**

Figure (1) below shows the hypothesis diagram of the research, which refers to the total of the two hypotheses that explain the relationship and effect between the research variables.

Figure (1) Hypothesis Diagram of the Research

Holistic customer loyalty

age



Source(18, 19): Tushi (2014), Hassouni, and Abdullah (2020)

**H1**—There is statistically significant correlation at  $\alpha = 0.05$  between holistic marketing and customer loyalty in the company .

**H2-**There is statistically significant effect at  $\alpha = 0.05$  to holistic marketing in customer loyalty in the company.

### 5- RESULTS

### A – Study Population and Sample

The research tried by studying the nature of the relationships between the variables to identify the extent of the correlation and effect between the research variables, and the research targeted a sample consisting of (47) customers of tourism companies in the holy city of Karbala, as the questionnaire was distributed to the sample members in order to know the level of their opinions and ideas about the variables the research, and the answers were collected from the sample and analyzed statistically through the statistical program SPSS. Table (1) below shows the characteristics of the sample .

# **B- Reliability and Validity of the Survey Instrument**

The research tool includes (31 items) that depends on two variables, which are holistic marketing as an independent variable and includes four dimensions which are (Internal marketing, Integrated marketing, Relationships marketing, and Performance marketing) and customer loyalty is a dependent variable and includes three dimensions, which are (Behavioral loyalty, Situational loyalty, and Compound loyalty).

Table (1) Descriptive statistics and Reliability for Holistic Marketing's dimensions

	Internal marketing	Integrated	Relationships marketing	Performance marketing
		marketing		
Mean	3.08	2.90	2.79	3.01
Std. Deviation	1.205	.842	.999	1.063
Reliability: .7	'37			

The values in Table (1) above indicate that Internal marketing obtained the highest mean value of (3.08) and Std. Deviation with a value of (1.205), which indicates the importance of this dimension and its high value among respondents in the institution. Followed by the dimension Performance marketing with value mean and std. Deviation was equal to (3.01) and (1.063), respectively. Then came Integrated marketing and Relationships marketing after that according to mean value. As for measuring the extent of realism and credibility of the dimensions of holistic marketing

, the Alpha Cronbach index was used, which came with a value of (.737), which is an acceptable percentage as an indicator of the credibility of the questionnaire.

Table (2) Exploratory Factor Analysis for Holistic Marketing's dimensions

Total Variance Explained									
		Initial Eigenval	ues	Extractio	n Sums of Squar	ed Loadings			
Component	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %			
1	2.337	58.413	58.413	2.337	58.413	58.413			
2	.846	21.146	79.559						
3	.529	13.228	92.786						
4	.289	7.214	100.000						
Extraction Me	Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.								

The results contained in Table (2) refer to the exploratory factor analysis of the holistic marketing's dimensions, which aims to explain the amount of variance and reduce the dimensions to a specific value, as the four dimensions of the holistic Marketing were reduced to a single component with a value of (58.413), which explains the variance in the variable. We also note from the above table that the first component has obtained the highest percentage of (2.337) and a variance value of (58.413), then the second, third and fourth component comes with a value of less than one, which means that they cannot be considered as strong components in terms of influence.

Table (3) Component Matrix for Holistic Marketing's dimensions

Dimensions	Component 1
Internal marketing	.730
Integrated marketing	.890
Relationships marketing	.765
Performance marketing	.652

Table (3) shows the percentage of the contributions of each of the three dimensions to the formation of the holistic marketing variable , as Integrated marketing got the highest value of the variable formation with a value of (.890 ) , while came Relationships marketing in second level with value ( .765 ) , then came Internal marketing and Performance marketing in third and fourth levels with values ( .730 ) , ( .652 ) respectively .

Table (4) Descriptive statistics and Reliability of customer loyalty's dimensions

	Behavioral loyalty	Situational loyalty	Compound loyalty
Mean	3.39	1.99	2.18
Std. Deviation	1.224	.851	.831
Reliability: .843			

The values in Table (4) above indicate that Behavioral loyalty obtained the highest mean value of (3.39) and Std. Deviation with a value of (1.224), which indicates the importance of this dimension and its high value among respondents in the institution . Followed by the dimension Compound loyalty with a value as mean and std. Deviation was equal to (2.18) and (.831), respectively. Situational loyalty dimension came in third place in terms of importance to the respondents, it obtained a mean of (1.99) and std. Deviation was equal to (.851) . As for measuring the extent of realism and credibility of the dimensions of customer loyalty , the Alpha Cronbach index was used, which came with a value of (.843), which is an acceptable percentage as an indicator of the credibility of the guestionnaire.

**Table (5) Exploratory Factor Analysis of customer loyalty's dimensions** 

Total Variance Explained									
		Initial Eigenval	ues	Extractio	Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings				
Component	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %			
1	2.290	76.342	76.342	2.290	76.342	76.342			
2	.478	15.943	92.285						
3 .231 7.715 100.000									
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.									

The results contained in Table (5) refer to the exploratory factor analysis of the Customer loyalty's dimensions, which aims to explain the amount of variance and reduce the dimensions to a specific value, as the three dimensions of the Customer loyalty's variable were reduced to a single component with a value of (76.342), which explains the variance in the variable. We also note from the above table that the first component has obtained the highest percentage of

(2.290) and a variance value of (76.342), also the rest of the components, they had values of less than one, which means that they cannot be considered as strong components in terms of influence.

**Table (6) Component Matrix of customer loyalty's dimensions** 

Dimensions	Component 1
Behavioral loyalty	.912
Situational loyalty	.892
Compound loyalty	.814

Table (6) shows the percentage of the contributions of each of the three dimensions to the formation of the Customer loyalty variable, as Behavioral loyalty got the highest value of the variable formation with a value of (.912), then the Situational loyalty dimension with a value of (.892), and finally Compound loyalty with a value of (.814).

### **C- Hypothesis testing**

**H1**—There is statistically significant correlation at  $\alpha = 0.05$  between holistic marketing and Customer loyalty in the company .

Table (7) corellation between holistic marketing and Customer loyalty							
		Holistic Marketing	Customer loyalty				
Holistic Marketing	Pearson Correlation	1	.730				
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000				
	N	47	47				
Customer loyalty	Pearson Correlation	.730	1				
Sig. (2-tailed)		.000					
	N	47	47				

It is evident from the results in Table (7) above that there is a positive significant correlation between Holistic Marketing and Customer loyalty, which was valued at (.730), in addition to that was the value of the sig. (.000) less than 0.05, which means the relationship between the two variables Holistic Marketing and Customer loyalty is statistically significant at a = 0.05, and therefore the first hypothesis is accepted.

**H2-**There is statistically significant effect at  $\alpha = 0.05$  to holistic marketing in Customer loyalty in the company .

Table (8) ANOVA									
Model		Sum of	df	Mean	F	Sig.			
		Squares		Square					
1	Regression	123.443	1	123.443	182.168	.000b			
Residual		108.421	160	.678					
	Total	231.863	161						

a. Dependent Variable: customer\_loyalty

b. Predictors: (Constant), Holistic\_marketing

It is clear from the results presented in Table (8) that there is a statistically significant impact of holistic marketing in customer loyalty , as the value of sig. was (.000 ) which less than (0.05) and this indicates the accept of the second hypothesis, which refers to there is statistically significant effect at  $\alpha=0.05$  to holistic marketing in Customer loyalty in the company .

Table (9) Model Summary									
Model	R	R	Adjusted	Std.	Change Statistics				
		Square	R Square	Error of the Estimate	R Square Chang e	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.730a	.532	.529	.823	.532	182.168	1	160	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), Holistic marketing

Finally, the results presented in Table (9) indicate the total correlation value of the model by considering that holistic marketing as independent variables have a correlation with the dependent variable customer loyalty, as the correlation

value was positive by (.730) and at a significant level of (.000)) Which is less than (0.05), which supports the correlation between the research variables, in addition, the value of R. Square indicates the amount of variance that occurs in the value of the independent variables will affect the interpretation of the variance in the dependent variable with a value of (.532).

### 6. DISCUSSION

It is clear from the results contained in the statistical analysis that there is an acceptance of the two hypotheses of the research . The two hypotheses were designed in order to identify the nature of the correlation and effect relationships between the two research variables. The first hypothesis indicated that there is a correlation between holistic marketing and customer loyalty . With a score of (.730), while the level of significance was (.000), which is less than (0.05), so the first hypothesis was accepted .

While the second hypothesis explained the extent of the effect of holistic marketing in achieving customer loyalty, the second hypothesis was accepted because the level of significance (.000) is less than (0.05). The values in Table (1) above indicate that Internal marketing obtained the highest mean value of (3.08) and Std. Deviation with a value of (1.205), which indicates the importance of this dimension and its high value among respondents in the institution.

Then , The values in Table (4) above indicate that Behavioral loyalty obtained the highest mean value of (3.39) and Std. Deviation with a value of (1.224), which indicates the importance of this dimension and its high value among respondents in the institution

### 7. RECOMMENDATIONS

In this part, the researcher seeks to present a set of recommendations that can be of interest to the tourism institutions administration, the research sample in order to achieve the best results in terms of improving performance and achieving positive relations in the field of work:

- 1- The necessity of achieving integration in applying the dimensions of holistic marketing and giving importance to each of its dimensions in tourism institutions.
- 2 The management of the tourism company should not be limited to only official channels for disseminating information among employees, but rather achieve a kind of balance between using official and informal channels within the framework of organizational flexibility in a way that supports the level of performance.
- 3 The organization must strengthen customer relationship management programs and provide the necessary mechanisms for their implementation because of its important role influencing customer loyalty.
- 4 It is necessary for the researched companies to pay attention to the study variables and their dimensions so that they are available and in proportion good, especially by establishing and consolidating relationships for the purpose of retaining customers from those companies, providing offers and facilities to their customers, and creating a distinct mental image of the services provided at the lowest possible costs, and in a way that reflects positively in achieving customer loyalty.
- 5 The study recommends the necessity of adopting customers' demands, needs and desires from those involved the nature of the quality of tourism services goes beyond companies, through reliance on results Marketing research to diagnose these emerging needs of relevant parties, in a way that supports attracting and retaining customers.
- 6 The necessity of building a culture and philosophy of holistic marketing in the company, so that individuals believe in it realistically and embody it in their behavior and work in the company.
- 7 The need for corporate management to pay attention to the dimensions of holistic marketing, as this concept has a major role in its survival and continuity the organization's growth in the market and achieving competitive advantages.
- 8 The necessity of providing a training program within the surveyed companies that explains the importance and extent of holistic marketing its contribution to enhancing excellence and superiority in companies and its positive impact on achieving customer loyalty towards companies and their services.
- 9 Adopting loyalty strategies and programs, which contribute to achieving the level of loyalty of current customers, as well as attracting and attracting customers, and thus achieving continuous growth for companies.
- 10 Upgrading human resources by seeking the help of experienced people and constantly striving to train workers on its use the latest administrative systems, as well as increasing the efficiency of employees by giving priority in hiring university graduates and employers specializations in tourism work, which contribute to providing high-quality services and gaining customer loyalty.

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