

Key determinants of relationship value gap: a conceptual framework

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Abstract

There exists a tension between buyer and seller firms on the difference between what they give and receive from their relationship. Drawing on transaction cost and social exchange theories, this study argues that relationship marketing programs have different impacts on opportunism and reciprocity by both parties, which in turn are key drivers of relationship value gap. Our conceptual framework underscores opportunism and reciprocity as two competing mechanisms linking relationship marketing programs and relationship value gap. Furthermore, the effects of relationship marketing programs (financial, social, and structural) on opportunism and reciprocity may depend on the relationship lifecycle stage.