



A Study on Customers' Approaching by Shipping Companies in line with Relationship Management

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Abstract

Purpose: Service industry is booming very fast and shipping services is one of those industry which is contributing significant amount in Indian economy. Foreign trade contributes 43% to the Indian GDP. Exports contributes around 20% of total GDP and Import contributes around 23% of total GDP. Shipping companies play a significant role in foreign trade. Current research work is been conducted to know the various practices used by shipping companies to approach customers and its effect on relationship with customers. While approaching the customers, shipping companies communicate with customers on many aspects, like Companies representative behaviour and knowledge, ocean freight, discounts and payment terms and others. Here researchers tried to check, communication as tool to have good relationship with customers.

Design/Methodology/Approach: This research work is a descriptive in nature. To conduct this research work, a structure questionnaire was designed with the help of industrial experts and sent to service takers (exporters) to get the responses. Researchers collected data to know the customers' approaching practices done by shipping companies and effect on relationship management. These approaches include communication related with freight, discount, payment term and other services. Data was also collected about the representative behaviour with the existing and potential clients, to know the effectiveness of relationship with customers.

Findings: Findings of current research work deals with the approaching practices as an important tool to have good relationship with customers. These approaches focus on Communication with respect to freight, discount, payment term and other ancillary services. Researchers has examined behaviour of executive with

present and prospective clients for shipping companies and its impact on customer relationship. These findings indicates the potential area where shipping companied need to work more to have better customers' acquisition.

Practical implication: Current research will be helpful to the shipping companies to know the relationship level with their customers. This will also help to improve their relationship with customers and approaching practices.

Originality/Value: This research work contributes to the existing filed of shipping and its self a kind of new research in this field, as customers' approaching practices in other industries has been checked by various research, but current research work deals with approaching practices and relationship in B2B sector.

Key words: *Shipping Industry, Approaching, Customer Relationship Management, Communication, Liner Shipping.*

1. **Introduction:**

India has always been hub for international trade activities since old time. During old time, traders from across the world always look forward to have business dealing with Indian producers of spices and other agricultural commodities. Kingdom's ships were being used to transport material from one state to another country, but as time changes, mode of transportation also changes. With the globalization, many private companies enter in the business of shipping. Globalization also help these companies to operate across the globe. As India is one of the most fasted developing economy, shipping companies also started their operation in India. Some local companies are also engaged in shipping business which makes perfect market for competition. Perfect competition markets force companies to provide better services and maintain good relationship with their customers for longer time period. Every company want to connect or maintain good and long term business relationship with customers and for this companies are trying very hard and adopting relationship marketing approach. Every shipping companies claim that they are providing better services and maintaining relationship with customers.

Organisation must focus on the relationship with their key public and communicate involvement of those activities/programme that build the organization public relationship to member of their key public (**Ledingham, J. A., & Bruning, S. D. (1998)**). Approaching a customers is an integral part of CRM practices, which fall under the relationship marketing, used by shipping companies to maintain good and long term business relationship with their customer. As mentioned by **Shang K.C. and Lu C.S. (2012)** that use of phone calls email for communication, and respond to customers are among the top attributes of CRM to develop the good relationship with service taker. **Jin-Long Lu (2013)** also mentioned that communication is one of the major factors which affect the shipper decision to select shipping company. So current research work is an attempt to know about the various aspects of approaching by shipping companies like, representative behaviour and knowledge, ocean freight, discounts and payment terms and others. Later, researchers tried to check, communication as tool to have good relationship with customers.

Under this research work, research has gone through the various literature review about the approaching models, and how approaching helps companies to make good relationship with customers. Coming part of this research work deals with research methodology followed by the theoretical background as literature review about the CRM. Post this, research paper contain data analysis and on the basis of findings of data analysis, researchers make conclusion and suggestions for the industry.

2. Theoretical background (Literature Review)

Here researchers have reviewed past research work on CRM, Approaching, and CRM in Shipping Industry.

- Customer Relationship Management

Customer relationship management became an integral part of business strategy, almost every organization want to have good and long term business relationship with their customer. Consequently, many businesses from different sectors such as manufacturing, Shipping, and retail industry realized the importance of CRM in acquiring and keeping new customers and retaining the existing ones in the development of their businesses.

Times ago companies were forcing or instructing their employees to sell maximum amount or numbers of products without knowing the customer demand or wish, but now a days companies are using reverse approach of it, first they understand the demand and wish of customer them instruct their employee accordingly. This was the starting of the relationship marketing concept from transactional concept. Since then many definitions have been given by different writers and authors.

Berry (1983) define relationship marketing *“as attracting, maintaining, and enhancing the customer relationship in multi service organization”* Where author define relationship marketing as bunch of activities which need to be practice by organizations to maintain relationship with customers. In 1992, **Kotler (1992)** mentioned relationship marketing for the first time only as a part of personal selling by stating that *“the seller, who knows how to build strong relationship with customers, will achieve many successful businesses in the future. Relationship management is a key skill that marketing professionals need.”* In line with the same, **Glazer (1997)** said that *“CRM attempts to provide a strategic bridge between information technology and marketing strategies aimed at building long-term relationships and profitability. This requires “information-intensive strategies”*. Here CRM is being treated as strategy which correlate IT and Marketing aim. Whereas **Hobby (1999)** define *“CRM as a management approach that enables organizations to identify, attract, and retain profitable customers by managing relationships with them”*. Here CRM is being defined as Management Approach. Communication is an integral part of management strategy, in line with this statement, **Swift (2000)** defined CRM *“as a method of understanding the customer behavior through intense communication with him/her to improve the performance which is represented in attracting the customer, keeping him/her and increasing his/her loyalty and profitability”*. While **Buttle (2001)**, mentioned that *“CRM is about the development and maintenance of long term, mutually beneficial relationships with strategically significant customers”*. Whereas **Parvatiyir and Sheth (2001)** defined CRM as *“a comprehensive strategy and process of acquiring, Retaining and partnering with selective customers to create superior value for the company and the customer.”* Here again CRM is been defined as management strategy and approach (**Wilson H., Daniel E. & McDonald M. 2002**), to attract and increase retention of profitable customers by managing

relationships with them. In the same context **Hirji K. (2002)** says “*CRM is about optimizing existing customer relationships, creating mutually beneficial interactions that attract new customers and increasing customer value at every opportunity*”.

Along with the time, practices of relationship marketing also changes, and technology get involved in the management strategies, so as relationship marketing also became technology based. In 2000, **Starky, Woodcock (2000)**, defined “*Customer Relationship Management (CRM) is an IT-enhanced value process, which identifies, matures, combines and focuses the various capabilities of the organization to the customers’ opinion in order to deliver long term exceptional customer value, at a profit, to well-known existing and future customer segments.*” Here author emphasis on the usage of technology specially information technology, and highlighted the utility of IT in CRM. Study conducted by **Viljoen M, Bennett Ja, Berndt Ad & Van Zyl Cr (2005)** conclude that “*more incorporation of technology in CRM strategies leads to have more satisfied customers.*” **I. Mahdavi, N. Cho, B. Shirazi, N. Sahebjam (2008)**, state that *E-CRM helps companies improve the effectiveness of their interaction with customers while at the same time making the interaction intimate through individualization.* A proper implication of IT and CRM can help in *Collecting and analysing data about customer patterns, behaviour interpretation, and delivery of products/services to special customers.* (**Bahrami, M., Ghorbani, M., & Arabzad, S. M. 2012**)., Another research by **Ponduri S.B. & Bala E.S. (2014)** on IT based CRM describing that *e-CRM Improve identification of profitable customers; Make segmentation easy and better; Increase the loyalty of customers; minimising the risk.*

From the above work in relationship management, it can be concluded that CRM is an integral part of management strategies, and to have good and long term relationship, companies need to keep doing relationship marketing practices. Also CRM implementation can be viewed as the integral part of strategy making and with the help of proper use of IT, it can help to identify the customers by better knowledge and initiating stronger relationship. Therefore, CRM requires sophisticated IT support.

- **Customer Approaching**

Effectively communication with customers (**Jain R, Bagdare S.2011**) is an integral part of customer oriented approach. In today’s competitive world approaching customers requires using a wide range of online media, social networks and mobile applications that work in a relationship involving all touch-points (**Pisarova, A. 2012**), co-creating products as well as many –to- many dialogue and cooperation **Tarabasz, A. (2013)**. According to **Yuen, K.F. and Thai, V.V. (2015)** reliability, speed, responsiveness and value are among the attributes to get customer satisfaction, and communication is the life blood of organization (**Kelvin-Iloafu, L. E. 2016**), **Radovic Markovic, M., & Salamzadeh, A. (2018)** mentioned that success of any business lies in the effective communication, and while communicating with customers, quality of customer service representative play major role to have satisfied customers (**Hirata, E. 2019**). Personal selling is one of the most effective method to customers (**Qian, C et al 2019**). When it’s come to using the tool for communication, digital marketing tools are most effective to enhance customer relationship (**Karjaluo, H. et al 2015**).

Above statement made by various research explain the communication and approaching is key element to have good and effective CRM. As marketing communication mediate the relationship (**Hänninen, N. and Karjaluoto, H. 2017**) between organization and customers.

- **CRM in Shipping Industry**

Customer orientation must be core focus of the shipping companies and companies must keep customer close while making marketing plan (**Jirsak P., Kolar P. 2012**). Shipping companies need to build strong relationship with clients and for this, service provider company's managers/executives should visit and meet to clients (**Bamrara A, Jamba L & Rathore A 2014**). The major CRM indicators are Customer interaction, Value addition, and Customer profiling (**DING J F 2012**). Communication play important role to maintain CRM in shipping Industry. Various communication factors are *Interaction with customers; Willingness to negotiate services to Satisfy needs; Responses and communication; Regard to shipping business; Familiar with local regulations and systems* (**Lu J.L. 2013**). Also explained by **Shang K.C. and Lu C.S. (2012)** that use of phone calls, email for communication; *respond to customers on problem and complain, respond on enquiry; transportation and related information; and, understanding of customer requirement* are some of the top attributes of CRM in shipping Industry. Call Management System, sales presentation, and Help desk are among the top CRM attributes in shipping industry which help to have satisfied customers (**Yang and Nguyen 2011**). Whereas Customer relationship in shipping industry includes *frequency of visit and call; Good relationship with shipper and liner; consultancy provided by liner to shipper; and accessibility of liner employee when required* (**Balci G, Cetin I.B, and Tanyeri M.2018**).

From the above research paper explanation, research would like to mention that CRM is very crucial in Shipping industry, as it's allow shipping companies to know customer in a better way. Many researchers mention that through the CRM shipping companies can improve performance which include profit maximization and customer satisfaction.

3. Research Methodology:

Current research design is descriptive in nature and is being conducted in Gujarat state of India. Researchers collected data through structure questionnaire from the exporters of various commodities. Data analysis is been done with the help of statistical tools like chi-square test and mean analysis.

From the literature review, researchers identified that, while approaching the customers, shipping companies communicate with customers on many aspects, like Companies representative behaviour and knowledge, ocean freight, discounts and payment terms and others. Here researchers tried to check, **Approaching & Communication, as tool to have good relationship with customers**. Also customer satisfaction is been checked toward the various CRM practices, so effect on relationship can be analysed.

Objective of research:

- To know the various practices used by shipping companies to approach customers and its effect on relationship with customers.

Scope of Research: This research work is covering shipping industry and export-import industry. As shipping industry is not alone, it's also include freight forwarders, NVOCC, Container industry, and Port industry. These all industry are directly affecting the performance of Shipping Industry.

Research Gap: Many researchers has conducted research on Customer relationship Management in various industries with different aspects. However researchers found that Indian shipping industry remain less touched with research on CRM, so researchers decide to make an attempt by conducting this research work.

Limitation Of research: Current research work is been done from the customers point of view, and only covering shipper of selected commodities/products.

4. **Data Analysis:**

Under this chapter, researcher has analyses data collected through structured questionnaire. Researchers collected data through structured questionnaire and received 150 responses. *First*, data is represented of general purpose to know demographic informations of respondents and other informations. *Secondly*, data is been represented to know the over view of communication and approaching practices, and to know the satisfaction of customers towards these practices done by shipping service providers. Satisfaction is being check to know the influence of communication and approaching on relationship. Under this analysis researcher also analysis hypothesis.

Table 1.1. Demographic Data

Nature of Business	Percentage (%)
Only Exporters	69
Only Importer	13
Exporter & Importer Both	18
Business Time	Percentage (%)
No information provided	24
More than 20 yrs	20
15-20 yrs	29
10-15 Yrs	20
< 5 Yrs	8
Export/Importers	Percentage (%)
Agriculture	16
Pharma	31
Ceramic	24
Textile	19
Chemical	12
Type of Service providers	Percentage (%)
Shipping Comp	30
Freight Forwarder	21
Both	49

Here it can be seen that 69% of respondents are into only exports while 13% are into imports. Only 18% respondents are doing both. 28% respondents are in to their business since more than 15 years, while 20% respondents are in to their business line since more than 20 years. 20% are in to business since 10 years. Only 8% respondents are less than 5 years. But about ¼ of respondents did not provide data related with their timeline in to business. Around 1/3 of respondents are from Pharma industry and ¼ are from Ceramic Industry. While 19% are from textile and 16% are from Agriculture background. Only 12% respondents are from chemical industry. It can be seen that almost ½ of the respondents are using all type of service providers. Around 1/3 of respondents are using shipping companies and around ¼ of respondents are using freight forwarders.

Table: 1.2. Change in Service providers and Reasons

Change Service Providers	Percentage (%)	
Yes	87	
No	13	
Reason to Change Service Providers	Yes Percentage (%)	No Percentage (%)
Price	61	39
Poor Relationship	79	21
Any Dispute	49	51
Odd route	16	84
Non Delivery on Time	23	77
Any other reason	5	95

Above data is showing that almost 90% of respondents has changed their shipping service providers due to various reasons. **Poor relationship** is major reason behind the change of service providers. Around ¾ of respondents change their service provider due to poor service quality. Second come Prices, due to which more than 50% of respondents change their service providers. And around 50% change their service provider due to any dispute. About ¼ of service taker change their service provider due to non-delivery on time.

Table: 1.3. Mode of Communication & Frequency of Communication, and Content of Communication

Mode of Communication & Frequency of Communication (%)	Mail	Phone	Personal Meeting (Appointment)	Random Visit
Daily	8	1	0	1
Weekly	56	14	4	2
15 Days	25	64	10	9
Monthly	10	21	71	21
On Call	3	2	17	68
Mode of Communication & Content of Communication (%)				
Price	85	30	23	18

New Services	15	69	72	71
Introduction to New Service	1	2	6	11

Above table reflect the frequency and mode of communication being used by service providers' to contact with their clients. It can be analysed that daily communication is not being done by service providers. And if it is been done, then only through mail. On weekly basis also it is only through mail. More than 50% of respondents reply that they are being contact weekly through mail. Around 15% replied that they are being communicated or approached by phone. But when it comes to 15days interval, it can be seen that Phone is the best mode to communicate with clients. 64% reply that they are being communicated by service provider by phone. Only ¼ of respondents reply that they are being communicated by Mail. On monthly basis, Personal meeting is being preferred by the service providers of 70% respondents. And ¼ respondents reply that they are being communicated by mail or random visit. 70% random visits are being done on call. Or by the new service provider. By mail, it can be seen that more than ¾ respondents receive price information. While around 70% of respondents get information about the new service offered by service provider through phone, personal meeting and random visit.

Table: 1.4. Satisfaction of Respondents' on Various CRM aspects of Communication

CRM ASPECT OF REPRESENTATIVE	Highly Satisfied	Satisfied	Average	Dissatisfied	Highly Dissatisfied
Way of Communication	5	62	28	5	2
Politeness	5	51	40	4	1
Knowledge of market	4	70	21	4	2
knowledge of competitor	1	31	64	5	0
knowledge of product	1	38	58	3	0
Follow up	4	55	37	4	1
Promptness	8	56	30	6	1
CRM ASPECT ABOUT APPROACHING					
Way of Approach	3	75	19	3	2
Purpose of communication	3	55	42	1	2
Content of communication	8	53	32	5	3
Frequency of communication	2	62	31	5	1
Promptness	8	53	34	5	2
Behaviour of Representative	3	81	15	1	2
Technical Aspect	0	79	21	1	0

Table 1.4 is about the Satisfaction of Respondents' on Various CRM aspects of Communication. On the *CRM aspects of representative*, 60% respondents are satisfied with the way of communication while around 1/3 of respondents are indicating average rating for the same. 50% are satisfied with the politeness of representative, while almost same amount of respondents expecting more politeness from representative by putting them on the scale of average. Almost ¾ of respondents are satisfied with the knowledge of market, but around ¼ of respondents are giving it average scale. And around 65% of respondents are not satisfied with the knowledge of respondents when it come to know the competitor. Only 1/3 are satisfied with this knowledge. Around 60%

of respondents are also not satisfied with the knowledge of products, only 40% are satisfied with the knowledge of representative related with products. More than ½ of the respondents are satisfied with the follow-up, while 37% are expecting something more from representative. When it comes to promptness of representative, around 57% are satisfied with this and only 30% are giving scale of average.

On *CRM aspects about overall approaching*, Almost ¾ clients are satisfied with way of approach, while around 50% are satisfied with purpose of communication and 42% are scaling it on average. Regarding content of communication more than 50% of clients are satisfied while around 1/3 of respondents are scaling it on average. 62% are satisfied with frequency of communication, but around 1/3 are expecting that they should be communicated more frequently. More than 50% respondent are satisfied with the promptness of service provider, but 1/3 of respondents are scaling it on average. Around 80% are satisfied with behaviour of representative and technical aspect, while 20% are expecting some improvement on these aspects.

Table: 1.5. Mean and Standard Deviation Value of CRM practices

Sequence of Approaching & Communication Practices based on Mean	Approaching & Communication Practices	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	Behaviour of representative	150	2.19	0.559
2	Technical Aspects	150	2.22	0.424
3	Way of Approach	150	2.25	0.624
4	Knowledge of Market	150	2.29	0.668
5	Promptness	150	2.36	0.75
6	Way of Communication	150	2.37	0.71
7	Contents of Communication	150	2.41	0.809
8	Promptness	150	2.41	0.764
9	Frequency of Communication	150	2.43	0.661
10	Politeness	150	2.44	0.677
11	Follow Up	150	2.44	0.669
12	Purpose of Communication	150	2.45	0.648
13	Knowledge of Products	150	2.63	0.561
14	Knowledge of Competitors	150	2.72	0.562

Above table explain about the mean value and Std. Deviation of various practices related with approaching & Communication. Here it can be observed that Behaviour of representative is most desired aspect of approaching & Communication, followed by technical aspect of approaching & communication. Other desired aspect are way of approach, knowledge of market, and promptness. Whereas lest desired approaching & communication aspects are knowledge of competitors, knowledge of product, purpose of communication, follow up and politeness.

Hypothesis Test to know the influence of demographic variables and effect of CRM practices

1. Hypothesis to know influence of Age of Business on Approaching & Communication

H₀: There is no influence of Age of Business on CRM practices regarding Approaching & Communication.

H₁: There is influence of Age of Business on CRM practices regarding Approaching & Communication.

Variable of Approaching & Communication	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	< / >	Significant value
Way of Approaching	0.45	>	0.05
Purpose of Communication	0.75	>	0.05
Content of Communication	0.27	>	0.05
Frequency of Communication	0.06	>	0.05
Promptness	0.37	>	0.05
Behaviour of representative	0.18	>	0.05
Technical Aspect	0.13	>	0.05

Conclusion: As Chi-Square value of all variables of Approaching & Communication is higher than 0.05, hence H₀ is accepted. Which indicate that age of business do not affect the CRM practices of shipping service providers related with Approaching & Communication. Shipping service providers keep doing same kind of CRM practices despite of Age of Business of Customers. Hence it can be concluded that there is no influence of age of business on relationship.

2. Hypothesis to know influence of products traded on Approaching & Communication practices

H₀: There is no influence of Product Traded on CRM practices regarding Approaching & Communication

H₁: There is influence of Product Traded on CRM practices regarding Approaching & Communication

Variable of Approaching & Communication	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	< / >	Significant value
Way of Approaching	0.66	>	0.05
Purpose of Communication	0.39	>	0.05
content of Communication	0.26	>	0.05
Frequency of Communication	0.72	>	0.05
Promptness	0.90	>	0.05
Behaviour of representative	0.89	>	0.05
Technical Aspect	0.66	>	0.05

Conclusion: As Chi-Square value of all variables of Approaching & Communication is higher than 0.05, hence H₀ is accepted. Which indicate that product traded does not affect the practices of shipping service

providers related with Approaching & Communication. Shipping service providers keep doing same kind of practices despite of difference in product traded by Customers. It can be concluded that product traded does not have any influence on Approaching & Communication

5. Findings

This part of research deals with the key findings and identification from data analysed. Researcher write down findings in connection with research objectives to mention that objective of research are getting fulfilled through findings.

Findings related with Demographic Variables

- Researchers found that from all respondents 69% are only exporters, 13% are only importers, and 18% are engaged in both activities. From all the respondents 29% are in to the business since 15-20 years, 20% since more than 20 years, and same number of respondents are in business since 10-15 years. While only 8% of respondents are in business since less than 5 years.
- About the sectors of respondents, researcher found that, 31% respondents belong to Pharmaceutical sector, 24% to Ceramic sector, and 19% to Textile sector, 16% are from Agribusiness, and rest 12% are from Chemical sector.
- About the services taken from different types of shipping companies, researcher found that around ½ of respondents take services from all type of shipping companies which includes Freight Forwarder, and Direct Shipping Line. While ¼ take services from Freight forwarders, and remaining around 1/3 of customers take services from shipping companies.
- Regarding the change in service providers, researcher found that, 87% of respondents have changed their shipping services providing companies, while only 14% did not change their service providers.
- About the reason to change service provider, researchers found that poor relationship is major reason followed by price. Non settlement of dispute is also one of the reason to change service provider. Other reason is Non delivery of material on time.

Findings about the Approaching practices and its effect in relationship

- Research found that service provider use E-mail more frequently than personal meetings, phone and random visit to approach service takers. E-mail is being used at the interval of a week, making a call to customers is being used at the interval of 15 days, whereas personal visit is being done monthly.
- Researcher identify that *price* is main content to discuss through e-mail, whereas new services are being communicated through personal meetings or visits.
- Finding show about the satisfaction toward company representative that, 62% respondents are satisfied with *way of communication*, On *politeness* ½ of the respondents are satisfied while around same amount of respondents rank it in average category.
- About *knowledge of market*, 70% of respondents are satisfied with this quality. On other hand side *knowledge about competitors*, 64% of respondents' rate average to sales representative and only around 1/3 of respondents are satisfied. Respondents are also not satisfied with the *product knowledge*

of representative as more than ½ respondents put average ranking on this aspect. On follow up more than ½ of the respondents are satisfied and 37% are expecting better services. Whereas on *promptness* 56% are satisfied and 30% are looking for better response from shipping company representative.

Shipping company representative carry an identity of company on shoulders. Representative create first impression about the company. From the above finding, research mention that shipping companies need to train their representative in better way.

Now, let's have look on Satisfaction towards CRM practices related with Approaching & Communication

Satisfaction of customers towards the CRM practices was recorded through the factors like: *Way of Approach, Purpose of Communication, Contents of Communication, Frequency of Communication, Promptness, Behaviour of representative, and Technical Aspects*

- Findings reveal that, ¾ of respondents are satisfied with *way of approaching*, which indicate that shipping companies are adopting good CRM practices to approach customers. Researcher also found that more 53% of the respondents are satisfied with *purpose of communication, Content of communication, and Promptness*.
- Findings also reveal that shipping companies are good in doing communication. As 62% of respondents are satisfied with *frequency of communication*. Technology also play an important role to make customer satisfy by assisting different department. On *technical aspect*, researcher found that customer are satisfied with shipping company.
- *Behaviour of representative* is also important factor to have satisfied customers. Here, researcher found that 81% of customers are satisfied with behaviour of representative.

Findings from Hypothesis test

- There is no influence of Age of business on Communication & Approaching practices. Which indicate that whether it is new customer or old customer, shipping services provide communicate and approach in same way.
- Researcher found that, there is no influence of Product traded by customers on CRM practices related with Communication & Approaching. Which indicate that despite of product's nature, shipping services providers' communicate and approach in same way.

6. Conclusion

Researchers start this work to various practices used by shipping companies to approach customers and its effect on relationship with customers. For this purpose researcher studied about the industry and has gone through various research paper to understand that concept and important of CRM and approaching, and found that approaching the customers is very crucial to have satisfied customer as satisfied customer turn in to loyal customers. In this way, CRM aspects of communication and approaching play important role to build better relationship with customers. From data analysis, researcher also come to know that shipping companies are communication and approaching, but there are still chances to improve it. Chi-Square test findings reveals that there is no influence of Age and Product traded on communication and approaching. This indicate that there are some standard practices which are been adopted by services

providers. Due to lack of good relationship, customers easily switch to another service providers. Researcher suggested to the shipping service providers to take care of customers need and demand through having proper communication.

Export & Import industry of India is going to increase and several new player will be in market, in such tough competition situation it became important to shipping service providers to retain the customer for longer time period. And as per the nature, communication and Approaching, will allow shipping companies to maintain good relationship with customers.

7. **Suggestions:**

Suggestion to such a large industry is not easy task, but researcher make an attempt to do so. *Researcher's suggestions are based on the findings from data and personal observation about the shipping industry and applicable to the different type of service providers.*

- Shipping service providers need to come up with customer retention strategies, as most of the respondents change service providers due to poor relationship. Service provider need remain keep in touch with customer, for this purpose shipping service provider can take permission from customers to send mail or information on daily or weekly basis. It will help customers to get update as well as to shipping service providers to come across any requirement of customers. Apart from this, service provider can make a matrix or schedule to use different communication tools to approach and communicate with customers.
- Researcher suggest to the shipping service providers, that they need provide formal training to employees. Training can be provided on communication skill, soft skill development and giving prompt reply to customers. Also shipping service providing companies give some information to sales person about the market and clients. These information can be used at the time of negotiation or discussion with different clients.

8. **Future Scope of Study**

This research is covering respondents only from selected industries, other researchers can cover more industries. This research is considering responses of customers (Service taker), further research can be done by considering responses of service providers as well. In the extension of this research, more research can be done by considering the other practices done by shipping service providers and its impact on relationship and loyalty. At this point researchers shutdown his computer.

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