

## **Relationship Factors Affecting Loyalty: A Study on Agents Loyalty towards Hotels in Maldives**

Zubair Hassan<sup>1</sup>, Abdulla Shujau<sup>2</sup>, Abdul Basit<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>(PhD Student, Faculty of Economics and Management Sciences, International Islamic University,, Malaysia)

<sup>2and 3</sup> (Research Assistant, School of Accounting and Business Management, FTMS College Malaysia)

---

**Abstract:** *The purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship related factors the effect loyalty between hotels and its agents in the tourism Industry of Maldives. A combination of causal and descriptive research designs was used. The research is carried on 199 research respondents in the Maldivian tourism Industry. The independent variables are Trust, Reliability, Commitment and Communication and dependent variable is Loyalty. The research employed descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation coefficient and multiple linear regressions and the findings shows Reliability, Commitments and Communication have a significant impact on Loyalty. While Trust is the only factor that founds an insignificant impact on loyalty. Furthermore, it is recommended that other specific factors can also be used with wider respondents to gauge the effect of relationship factors on loyalty. This Study will eventually benefit the marketing managers to define an efficient marketing Strategy and also the research community by providing new knowledge regarding the relationship factors effecting loyalty. Though, other major economies can also be examined with different other industries to check the deviation of effecting relationship factor on Loyalty*

**Keywords:** *Trust, reliability, commitment, communication, loyalty, relationship, Maldives*

---

### **I. Introduction**

The tourism sector is one of those sectors that have flourished in the last epoch to a massive extent. Several nations have gigantic business opportunity within the tourism sector and have proved the worth of investing within the tourism industry (Tinsley 2012). Maldives is one of those places where the tourism sector has grown rapidly since its inception in the early 1970's. The tourism has transformed the fiscal structure of the nation from a primarily finishing community to a world- class service industry within a small span of time (Pimpa, 2008).

Though majority of the times, China have outperformed Maldives regarding the revenue generation from the tourism industry, but still various surveys states the fact that the count of tourism visiting Maldives have increased massively over the last few years. Meanwhile, another massive fact have also been extracted by various researches, which states that the average stay of tourists in Maldives have decrease gigantically over the last few years, which have affected the business of the tourism sector to quiet some extent (Jackson 2009). Though a portion of losses that have aroused from less staying of tourist have been recovered from the fact that there has been a huge increase in the number of tourists visiting Maldives. Hence, the fact can be highlighted that the tourism sector of Maldives and its stakeholders have not been able to swallow the pie of profit that have aroused from the increased number of tourists visiting Maldives rather that has been balanced with the cut down in the staying days of tourists (Love, Staton and Rotman 2015).

Relationship between the Hotels and agents of Maldives have flourished to a certain higher standard in the last few years, which have increased customer satisfaction and at same time have achieved customer loyalty as well. With a strong bonding of the two, the tourism sector has been exploited even more by the marketers, which have amplified the revenue generation of the entire industry as well. A survey in the year of 2012 showed that 61.79 % of tourists in Maldives have revisited the place within a small span of time and there was an increase of around 17.22 % of tourists each year, which highlights the fact that business opportunities within the tourism sector of Maldives will amplify itself to an even higher standard within the next 5 years (Ministry of Tourism 2016). Therefore, it can be commented that in order to maintain the relationship both the parties have to deal with and maintain some basic elements such as trust, loyalty, commitment and reliability factors.

The year of 1999 brought in a huge boom for the tourism industry as the Maldives Tourism Act of 1999 has some amendments within its regulations and have started supporting the lease of land or islands for hotels and resorts (Mathias 2013). Apart from these the Act also supported various elements like how lease agreements should be drawn up between the concerned parties, terms and conditions of the lease of islands, the transfer and sales rights to third parties, taxation from tourists and tourists establishments (Mc Cormack 2011). Apart from an overall advantage for the sector, the implementation of these elements enhanced the relationships among the Hotels and Agents operating in the tourism industry of Maldives.

Tourism sector is a certain division that have attracted the attention of various researchers in the past, which have also led them to conduct various researchers within this industry. The tourism sector of Maldives generates the majority of the revenues among all other sectors operating within the nation. Several researches have state the fact that the upcoming year of 2017 and 2018 will witness a massive growth of even more business opportunities within every tourism sector of all nations around the globe (Ministry of Tourism 2016).

The main stakeholders of the tourism industry are the Hotels, resorts, tourists, agents etc, which states the fact that a certain sort of collaboration, understanding and loyalty within the stakeholders will flourish the business operations to an even higher success level. The time span of 2001 to 2004 has experienced various issues within the agents and hotels which had affected the business operations of the industry as whole (Ministry of Tourism 2016). The sector which usually generates the highest revenue within the nation was unable to generate even standard revenues in the year of 2009 and 2010 despite of having massive business opportunities (Ministry of Tourism 2016). Therefore the following research objectives are formulated

- ✓ To examine the impact trust and reliability on loyalty
- ✓ To examine the impact of commitment on loyalty
- ✓ To examine the impact of communication on loyalty
- ✓ To examine the impact of resource commitments loyalty

## **II. Literature Review**

### **2.1. Definitions of B2B relationship**

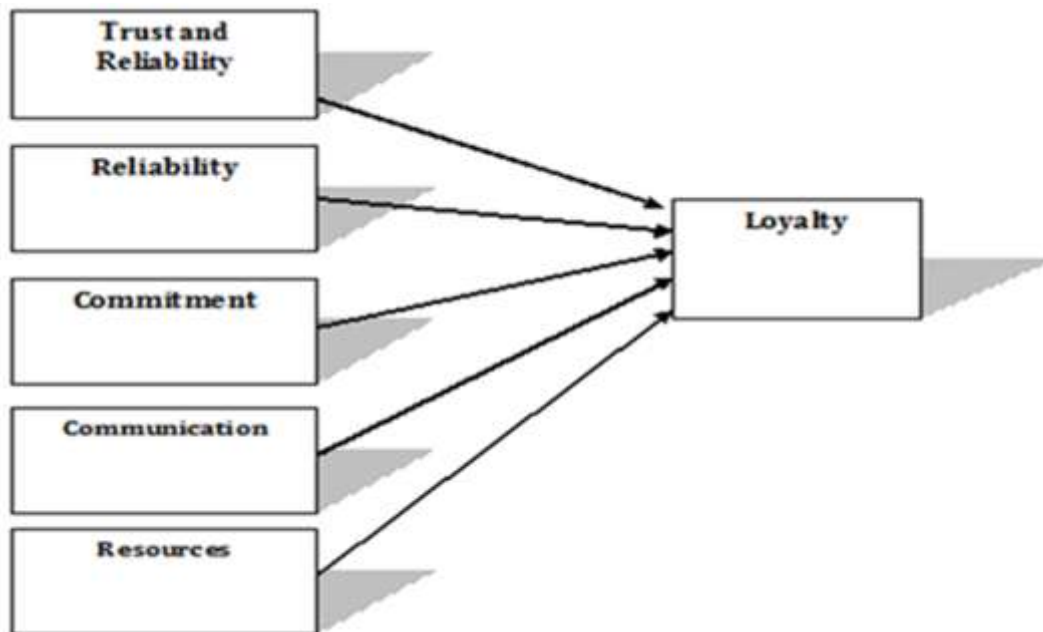
Martin and Clay comb states B2B relationship is the acronym stands for Business-to Business relationship that ensure creating as well as sustaining the long-term relationship status that delivers the key target for establishing the business activities successfully. Be it any company, it often pays more attention to the successful relationships among the business partners for generating mutual benefit (Claycomb and Martin, 2002). Garbarino and Johnson (1999), mentioned Business-to-Business relationship also illustrated that organizational relationship management between business partners and its high position in the business network have significant role in giving solution to the critical tasks available on which the survival of any business stands and/or falls (Garbarino and Johnson, 1999). Anderson, Narus and Wouters (2014) stated that B2B relationship can offer a stand-out performance to the business by relying on their relationships with customers, suppliers, partners, shareholders, trade associations and so on. Many businesses nowadays relocate their emphasis from discrete transactions to shape long-term and mutually profitable business exchange relationships (Anderson, Narus and Wouters, 2014). Bagdoniene and Zilione points out Business-to-Business or B2B relationship as the process in which one business makes the commercial transactions with another business. The process generally happens when a business is outsourcing its products and services for their successful production process (Bagdoniene and Zilione, 2009). It also emerges when one business demands the services of another on behalf of operational reasons and the business when opt for reselling its services and goods manufactured by others

### **2.2. Past Empirical studies**

Many literatures have their varied verdicts towards B2B relationship among which some are discussed in here. However, how the B2B relationship occurs, how hotels and agents are getting benefitted through this relationship, what will be the advantage of B2B relationship, use of internet sites in B2B relationship, hotel-agent relationship measurement and management are summarized hereafter. Therefore, this critical review will further give recommendation to the business activities. In the hotel business, agents are acting as an integral part committing to deliver the comfortable, memorable, convenient and economical journey to the customers. In fact, we can say that the agents are the bunch of un-coordinated people who lend a helping hand to accomplish

the coordinate results. In the hospitality industry, agents are offering a virtual link to the customers through which they can fulfil their desire to serve the clients in a convenient way. Buhalis says that a good agent can act like a personal counsellor who has ample knowledge regarding the journey and the demands of the intending customers. Reciprocal success established in B2B selling frequently hang on to start and maintain a sound relationship to measure the benefits and costs (Buhalis, 2000). It facilitates business partners to create more value and to do more while focusing on the core competencies of the business and letting others to do the things that they can do better. As a complex phenomenon, business-to-business relationships have multi-dimensional characteristics such as value, functions, time structure, substance and process. Even though the advent of internet sites allows customers to book a hotel directly for their staying purpose, agents' remains as a significant part of most hotels' marketing mix (Johansson, Nilsson and Thulin, 2005). The business-to-business relationships are not only a complex phenomenon but also are multidimensional. The business endeavours are depending upon their B2B relationships with suppliers, partners, customers and employees. Success story of B2B relationship will assist the business as well as agents to create mutual benefit and/or could help them in creating greater profitability and increasing value as well. The key role in creating and maintaining the business-to-business relationships are supremely carried out by several relationship variables those are outlined above (Claycomb and Martin, 2002).

### 2.3. Conceptual Framework



**Figure 1:** Conceptual framework- Relationship related factor affecting loyalty

Trust is the crucial factor that is described by many models highlighting the relationship marketing in a B2B relationship. There are lots of varied definitions about trust but most of them would agree that trust is the confidence level present in between parties defining that other party is trustworthy. By examining the earlier literatures, it can be concluded that trust can be fabricate in three ways remarkably. It was reported that trust can be build with the help of three key elements, which are honour, dependable and reliable that the business should demonstrate (Räikkönen, 2014). Reliability: Claycomb and Martin (2002) defines reliability as the key to have a taste of successful business environment. In hotel business, hotel owners should have to be reliable on their agents and vice versa for creating and maintaining a long-lasting B2B business environment. Without having reliability upon each other, a business will only see the down fall (Claycomb and Martin, 2002).

Communication-Räikkönen states that the communication channel would have greater influence in creating and maintaining the business-to-business relationship. It is because of the fact that if the communication fails to explain what your business can offer or what it is doing in the marketplace, then it will lessen the visibility of your business (Räikkönen, 2014). Therefore, it is a key aspect that businesses should

adapt precisely. In hotel business, the agents do the work to maintain the communication channel clear on behalf of business so that more and more customers will get familiar with the products and services. (Johansson et al, 2005).

Commitment-The desirable outcome that is available in the relationship marketing is the commitment. The commitment in business relationship marketing is acting just as the commitment exists in the marriage ceremony. Commitment in business-to-business relationship is defined as an incomplete relationship that works between two or more parties which is important to permit maximum efforts in maintaining B2B relationship (Peterkin, 2014).

Resources: No doubt that the resources have also an essential role to play in B2B relationship. According to Bagdoniene and Zilione (2009), the primary objective of the business marketing is to be a trusted resource that the customers' always carved for during their research. It will also give agents or customers an ample set of information based on their areas of interest (Bagdoniene and Zilione, 2009).

Loyalty is granted as the degree to which potential customers will exhibit the repeated behavior for purchasing products and services from organisation. Regardless, it will help them to possess an optimistic attitudinal character towards the service provider and assist them to think about the service provider when a need of the product and service comes up. Loyal customers will help the business to generate a steady stream of revenue by keeping up to venture the journey with the brand or supplier. It defines that the business-to-business customer loyalty is coming attached with the organizational change, trust, satisfaction, relationship quality, switching costs and purchase development (Gurcaylilar, Yenidogan and Windspergerc, 2011)..

Therefore the following hypotheses are generated to test in this study

H1: Trust has a positive significant impact on loyalty.

H2: Reliability has a positive significant impact on loyalty.

H3: Commitment has a positive significant impact on loyalty

H4: Communication has a positive significant impact on loyalty

H5: Resources have a positive significant impact on loyalty

### **III. Research Design And Methodology**

Explanatory research looks the context of the reason for the nature of relationships. This research provides hypothesis testing in answering the specific research questions in the study. For this research explanatory research adopted.

#### **3.1. Research Methods**

A quantitative data collection method was used because this method permits the testing of hypothesis with a large sample, which is more appropriate for answering the research questions. However, the quantitative data is connected closely with the final part of the definition that is based on mathematically based methods (Muijs 2010). However, quantitative methods attempt to maximize reliability and objectivity. The integrity of this approach is more than qualitative research because the researcher will set aside his experiences, biases and perceptions in carrying out the study. The deductive nature of quantitative data is characterized by assuming that there is the single truth that exists which is independent of human perception and insights (Harwell, 2011).

#### **3.2. Data Collection Methods**

This research used primary data method for data collection because the researcher has the opinion to do a direct and indirect study about quality of the investigation. The primary data is useful and perspective as it examines the sample of the population over time and receives the exposure of experience outcomes. The primary data internal validity is experimental, controlled, managed within the study and consistent with pre-specified research practice to study the causal relationship between the variables. However, primary data collection method is valid externally because it is flexible with the criteria, systematic, constitutes a large group of observations and can apply to the other circumstances even though the results of the study can be limited (.nih.gov, 2016).

### 3.3. Target Population

The target population is the total number of participants from a population that will represent the research study. However, the target population needs to be well defined and easy to classify according to the demographic features of the participants. However, in this research our target population is 600, and out of this only 200 agents were selected. It is distinguished based on the field of work and type of hotel. The records are collected from agents, resorts, guest houses, and hotels and are assessed on each participant from these areas as mentioned above.

### 3.4. Sampling Size and Sampling Technique

The sample size is the actual cases that are considered, and no participant was unrepresentative of the population (Wilson 2014). Hence 200 questionnaires were distributed to the prospective participants. The sampling technique chosen was random probability sampling in which every participant has the equal probability of getting selected in the sample. This sampling had the validity of the results (Fowler 2013). The researcher applied random sampling in choosing the database of Tourism in Maldives and obtained the permission from the authority for the same. The questionnaires were distributed to the sample and were collected after a week while reminding the participants of the deadline for the compilation of completed questionnaire.

### 3.5. Ethics Issues and Management

Many ethical issues need to consider while writing a research from the identification of research problem to the problem generated due to results and findings. The research involves maximum moral issue when valuing the protection of the research participants. However, the purpose of the research should be clearly stated so that it does not constitute any component of deception (Jones, 2015). In this proposed research, the questionnaire was given to the participants who were willing to fill the questionnaire. Consent was signed by each voluntary participant who filled the questionnaire to protect privacy

### 3.6. Data Analysis Plan

Among the various software's, the SPSS.23 were selected and which is most suitable to analysis the quantitative data and easily converted to tables or graphs. Relationship with all the dependent variables and independent variable examining the strength and impact of independent variable, regression analysis has been used to measure it. In this research, the data was calculated using the questionnaire. The descriptive statistics was run on the data based on mean, kurtosis, and skewness. The researcher then runs the reliability and validity test followed by correlation and regression. After interpreting the findings, the results will be compared with the hypothesis for 6 independent variables and the dependent variable to conclude the study.

## IV. Finding And Analysis

### 4.1. Descriptive Statistical Analysis

Descriptive statistics sketch either the relationship among variables in a sample or the characteristics of a sample. Descriptive statistics simply summarize a set of sample observations, whereas inferential statistics move beyond the description of specific observations to make inferences about the larger population from which the sample observations were drawn. It is the discipline of quantitatively describing the main features of a collection of data. In this study, the reason of using descriptive statistics would be for describing the characteristics of variables selected.

**Table 1:** Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean		Std. Deviation
	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic
<b>Resources</b>	199	4.5678	.02973	.41944
<b>Reliability</b>	199	4.6972	.02171	.30626
<b>Commitment</b>	199	4.7098	.02650	.37388
<b>Trust</b>	199	4.7312	.01825	.25738
<b>Loyalty</b>	199	4.7772	.02860	.40349
<b>Communications</b>	199	4.7839	.02757	.38898
Valid N (listwise)	199			

According to the Descriptive Statistics Table 1, the least influential factor is Resources with a mean value of 4.56 and the standard deviation is 0.41 which is found to be a contributor to the loyalty in building relationship within the Maldivian Tourism Industry. Furthermore, the second least influential attributes of agent and hotel relationship is reliability with a mean value of 4.69 and the Standard Deviation is 0.306 which indicates that the handsome amount of respondents' value reliability as an attribute in agents for the Tourism Industry of Maldives. Loyalty is the second most influential factor in Hotel agents with a mean value of 4.77 and the standard deviation 0.40 which reflects that respondents finds loyalty to be a mainstream player in agents building relationship with tourism industry. Trust is another crucial trait with a mean value of 4.73 and the standard deviation is 0.25 amongst the agents in the concern industry. Commitment is another player which is found to be influential in the target research respondents with a mean value of 4.70 and the standard deviation is 0.37. Lastly, communication is the most vibrant factor found in hoteling agents to impact the loyalty in building relationships with a mean value of 4.78 and the standard deviation is 0.38.

**4.2. Correlation**

The reason of conducting the Pearson correlation Coefficient analysis is to determine between the direction and the degree of the relationship constructed, in addition, is to find out the relationship between two variables or more. The range of correlation coefficient is between +1 to -1 which respectively representing the positive and the negative correlation.

**Table 2: Correlations**

		Trust	Reliability	Commitment	Communications	Loyalty	Resources
<b>Trust</b>	Pearson Correlation	1					
	Sig. (2-tailed)						
<b>Reliability</b>	Pearson Correlation	.071	1				
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.316					
<b>Commitment</b>	Pearson Correlation	.195**	.180*	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.006	.011				
<b>Communications</b>	Pearson Correlation	.170*	.097	.739**	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.016	.172	.000			
<b>Loyalty</b>	Pearson Correlation	.182**	.037	.735**	.909**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.010	.602	.000	.000		
<b>Resources</b>	Pearson Correlation	.319**	.035	.623**	.642**	.724**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.620	.000	.000	.000	
** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).							
* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).							

The Trust found to be positively correlated with Loyalty and the relationship amongst the two variables is weak with the value of 0.182 and the relationship is significant with the value of 0.010 which is equal than 0.01 (2-Tailed). Though the result shows that hotel agents with more trust can be loyal in maintaining good relationships with hotels in the tourism industry of Maldives. Similar results were been concluded in the studies of Williams and Alshibly (2005) regarding the relation between trust and loyalty.

The reliability is positively correlated with loyalty and the relationship amongst the two variables is 0.037 which is a weak relationship and the relationship is insignificant with the value of 0.602 which is higher than 0.01 (2-Tailed). Therefore, the result indicates that reliability is not a good player in relation with loyalty when it comes for building relationships amongst agents and hotels in the Maldivian Tourism Industry. As per was found in the studies of Williams (2005)

The commitment is positively correlated with Loyalty and the relationship amongst the two variables is 0.735 which shows that there is positive good relationship and the relationship is significant with the significance value of 0.00 which is lower than 0.01 (2-Tailed). Hence, the result portrays that commitment owns a vibrant relationship with loyalty when it comes for building relations between agents and Hotels in the concern tourism industry.

The communication is positively correlated with Loyalty and the relationship amongst the two variables is 0.909 which shows that there is positive significant relationship with value of 0.00 which the significance value of 0.00 which is lower than 0.01. Henceforth, the correlation statistics concludes communication to be an active factor in terms of relation with Loyalty in building relations between agents and Hotels.

The Resources is positively correlated with Loyalty and the relationship amongst the two variables is 0.724 which shows that there is a positive significant relationship between with the significant value of 0.00 which is lower than 0.01. Conversely, the result indicates resources to be a crucial factor to create loyalty between Agents and Hotels in the Maldivian Tourism Industry. As been evident by Williams (2005) who concluded their studies with the similar findings.

**4.3. Regression**

For this study, regression was performed to predict the impact of Trust, Commitment, Communication, reliability and resources on Loyalty in terms of Building relationships in Tourism industry of Maldives based on five independent factors. The dependent variable is Loyalty.

**Table 3: Model Summary**

Model	R	R <sup>2</sup>	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics					Durbin-Watson
					R <sup>2</sup> Change	F Change	df 1	df2	Sig. F Change	
1	.93 <sup>a</sup>	.87	.86	.15	.87	248.26	5	193	.000	2.08
<i>a. Predictors: (Constant), Resources, Reliability, Trust, Commitment, Communications</i>										
<i>b. Dependent Variable: Loyalty</i>										

The Table 3 shows the model fitness. According to the most of the research the standard adjusted R-square should be equal or more than 60% (Zygmunt and Smith, 2014). Therefore this model is a good fit since the adjusted R-square is 0.862 (86.2%). This means the Relationship effecting factors such as Trust, Commitment, Communications, Reliability and Resources represents 86.2% variance in building relationships. While looking into Durbin Watson, the acceptable range is 1.5 to 2.5. So the model shows that Durbin Watson is 2.077 indicating there is no auto correlation which means there is no multi Co-linearity among the variables.

**Table 4: Beta Coefficients**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	.33	.26		1.27	.21		
	Trust	-.04	.04	-.02	-.82	.41	.89	1.12
	Reliability	-.07	.04	-.05	-1.98	.05	.95	1.05
	Commitment	.09	.05	.08	2.00	.05	.40	2.48
	Communications	.74	.04	.71	17.07	.00	.40	2.50
	Resources	.21	.04	.22	5.97	.00	.500	2.01
<i>a. Dependent Variable: Loyalty</i>								

**Trust and Loyalty**

According to the Table 4., there is a negative and not significant Impact of Trust on Loyalty with the Beta value of -0.23 and the p-value is 0.412 which is higher than 0.01. The statistics portray that Trust is not been regarded as a vibrant factors when it comes for building relationships within agents and hotels in Maldivian Tourism Industry. Though the result criticizes the concept of Metcalf’s “relationship commitment” which states Trust to be vibrant factor in building relationships. Hence, Williams and Alshibly (2005) has concluded their studies with similar findings to our findings. H1: Rejected.

**Reliability and Loyalty**

Looking into Table 4, a negative insignificant impact can be seen of Reliability on Loyalty and with the Beta value of -0.53 and the p-value is 0.05 which is higher than the selected scale 0.01. The figures mirror that reliability is also not a good factor in building relationships within agents and hotels in Maldivian Tourism Industry. Therefore, the derived characteristics contradict the concept of Metcalf’s “relationship commitment” which states reliability to be vibrant factor in the construction of relationships. H2: Rejected

### **Communication and Loyalty**

In Accordance to the Table 4, there is a positive and significant Impact of Communication on Loyalty was found with the Beta value of 0.71 and the p-value is 0.00 which is lower than 0.01. The figures can be interpreted that Communication in Agents can be a crucial factor in building relationships within agents and hotels in Maldivian Tourism Industry. Furthermore, the result is also supported by the concept of Metcalf's "Quality Communication Channel" which states Communication to be significantly influential in building relationships. H3 Accepted

### **Commitment and Loyalty**

Seeing to the Table 4, there is a positive and not significant Impact of Commitment on Loyalty with the Beta value of 0.83 and the p-value is 0.47 which is higher than 0.01. The numbers show that Commitment is not a crucial element in tying relations amongst the hoteling agents and hotels in Maldivian Tourism Industry. However, the outcome opposes the concept of Metcalf's "relationship commitment" which considers commitment to be influential factor in building relationships. H4: Rejected.

### **Resources and Loyalty**

In Accordance to the Table 4 there is a positive and significant Impact of Resources on Loyalty was found with the Beta value of 0.22 and the p-value is 0.00 which is lower than 0.01. The figures can be interpreted that Resources is a significant element in building relationships within agents and hotels in Maldivian Tourism Industry. Furthermore, the result is also backed by the approach of Metcalf's "relationship commitment" which states Resources to be significantly influential in building relationships. H5: Accepted

## **V. Conclusion And Recommendation**

Trust is considered as one of the important factors that affects relations between agents and hotels. Also there is positive and significant relationship between trust and loyalty indicating there is a trust is a key variable in building relations and loyalty. However it was found that there is no significant influence of trust on relationship between hotels and agents. This means there is no significant influence of trust on loyalty. This means trust is not a key relationship variable to build trust in this case. Reliability is one of the key components perceived by respondents as an important factor that influence agent relationship with hotels. Also there is a significant and positive relationship between loyalty and reliability suggesting reliability is a key factor that builds relationship with B2B. Also it was found that reliability has a significant negative impact on loyalty. This means overall reliability is a good predictor of relationship. Commitment is also perceived by respondents as very important factor that builds relationship between businesses to business. Also it has a positive and significant relationship between loyalty and commitment; the agents are more committed to the relationship the loyalty will increase. This mean commitment is a good predictor of relations of B2B through loyalty. Communication is one of the important variables in building relationship. Also it has a positive relationship with loyalty. Similarly communication has positive and significant influence on loyalty suggesting that communication is key variable in building relationship in case of B2B, especially between agents and hotels. Therefore effective communication should be emphasis in creating and sustaining relationship. Resource commitment is one of the key variables that has a significant role in building relationship. Also it is positively associated with loyalty and other relationship variables. It also has a positive and significant influence on loyalty, this suggests again, resource commitment from both agents and hotels should not be compromised if they wish to build sustain positive relationship.

### **Implication to Manager**

Managers should emphasis on most of the relationship variable except trust. All over relationship variables found to have a positive impact on loyalty and relationship. Therefore, managers should focus on communication, reliability, resource commitment and loyalty. That should ensure all the agents and hotel employees' focus on these variables while they work with agents and hotels.

### **Future research Direction**



The sample size should be increased. The variable of trust should be changed and tested. Therefore, we need to increase the sample size to generalize the finding, also the instruments can be tested on other setting.

### References

- [1]. Anderson, J. C., Narus, J. A., and Wouters, M. 2014. Tiebreaker selling: how nonstrategic suppliers can help customers solve important problems. *Harvard Business Review*, 92(3).
- [2]. Bagdoniene, L., and Zilione, R. 2009. Business to business relationships: the variables in the context of success. *Social Sciences*, 4(66), 16-25.
- [3]. Buhalis, D. 2000. Relationships in the distribution channel of tourism: Conflicts between hoteliers and tour operators in the Mediterranean region. *International Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Administration*, 1(1), 113-139.
- [4]. Claycomb, C., and Martin, C. L. 2002. Building customer relationships: an inventory of service providers' objectives and practices. *Journal of Services Marketing*, 16(7), 615-635.
- [5]. Fowler Jr, F.J., 2013. *Survey research methods*. Sage publications.
- [6]. Garbarino, E., and Johnson, M. S. 1999. The different roles of satisfaction, trust, and commitment in customer relationships. *the Journal of Marketing*, 70-87.
- [7]. Gurcaylilar-Yenidogan, T., Yenidogan, A., and Windspergerc, J. 2011. Antecedents of contractual completeness: the case of tour operator-hotel allotment contracts. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 24, 1036-1048.
- [8]. Harwell, M.R., 2011. *Research design in qualitative/quantitative/mixed methods*. The Sage handbook for research in education. 2nd ed. Los Angeles, CA: Sage, p.147.
- [9]. Jackson, J. 2009. Berkeley loyalty oath tested politics, fear not loyalty. *Phys. Today*, 62(6), pp.8-10
- [10]. Johansson, M., Nilsson, M., and Thulin, C. D. 2005. Factors Influencing Customer-relations in B2B-A Survey of Medical Rubber's Customers.
- [11]. Jones, R. 2015. *Dissertation Writing: The Importance of Maintaining Ethical Standards | The Refractive Thinker*. [online] Refractivethinker.com. Available at: <http://refractivethinker.com/articles/dissertation-writing-the-importance-of-maintaining-ethical-standards/> [Accessed 28 Jan. 2016].
- [12]. Love, E., Staton, M. and Rotman, J. 2015. Loyalty as a matter of principle: the influence of standards of judgment on customer loyalty. *Marketing Letters*
- [13]. Mathias, P. 2013. Business history and accounting history: a neighbourly relationship. *Accounting, Business & Financial History*, 3(3), pp.253-273
- [14]. Mc Cormack, M. 2011. Rethinking Loyalty in Eighteenth-Century Britain. *Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 35(3), pp.407-421
- [15]. Ministry of Tourism, 2016. Guest House - Ministry of Tourism. [online] Available at: <http://www.tourism.gov.mv/facilities/guest-house/> [Accessed 30 Jan. 2016]
- [16]. Muijs, D., 2010. *Doing quantitative research in education with SPSS*. Sage.
- [17]. Nlm.nih.gov, 2016. HTA 101: III. PRIMARY DATA METHODS. [online] Available at: <https://www.nlm.nih.gov/nichsr/hta101/ta10105.html> [Accessed 28 Jan. 2016].
- [18]. Peterkin, K. Y. 2014. Online travel agencies as a source of hotel information: A content analysis.
- [19]. Pimpa, N. 2008. Relationship Value in Thai Business-to-Business Marketing. *Journal of Asia-Pacific Business*, 9(3), pp.235-247
- [20]. Rääkkönen, J. 2014. Enabling experiences-The role of tour operators and tour leaders in creating and managing package tourism experiences.
- [21]. Tinsley, D. 2012. Relationship marketing's strategic array. *Business Horizons*, 45(1), pp.70-76
- [22]. Trust and loyalty 2005. B2B Relationship factors [online] Available at: <http://www.b2b.biz/reports/hospitality/> [Accessed 30 Jan. 2016]
- [23]. Williams (2005) and alshibly (2005) regarding the relation between Trust and Loyalty.
- [24]. Wilson, J., 2014. *Essentials of business research: A guide to doing your research project*. Sage.
- [25]. Zygmunt, C. and Smith, M. R., 2014. Robust factor analysis in the presence of normality violations, missing data, and outliers: Empirical questions and possible solutions. *The Quantitative Methods for Psychology*, [online] 10(1). Available at: <http://www.tqmp.org/RegularArticles/vol10-1/p040/p040.pdf> [Accessed 2 Dec. 2015].