

Determinants of Key Account Management Performance in Business-to-Business Relationship: The Garments Industry in Bangladesh

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Abstract

Purpose – This study traces the determinants of key account management performance in the garments industry in Bangladesh. The key account management approach involves significant challenges for marketers to manage their strategically important customers and use this approach as a strategic weapon in their selling efforts. This study examines three categories of determinants of key account management performance including operational variables, organizational variables, and relational variables by exploring data from 100% export oriented ready-made garments companies in Bangladesh.

Research design, data, and methodology – Data were collected from 30 readymade garments manufacturers, considering a company as a unit of analysis. Using the data, instrument validity and reliability and, subsequently, data normality were examined using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software to isolate the important determinants of key account management performance.

Results – The instruments are reliable and the data are reasonably normal.

Conclusion – The study explored and validated the adapted instruments of various operational, organizational, and relational antecedent factors of key account management performance, most of which were thus far ignored.

Keywords: Key Account Management Performance, Business-to-Business Relationship, Readymade Garments Industry, Bangladesh.

JEL Classifications: M31, M39, M10.

1. Introduction

In the field of relationship marketing, both buyer and seller maintain an environment of perennial interaction between them for mutual interest. This interaction is more vital and intensive when these customers have their strategic importance and these customers are called key customers. Key accounts are company's most important customers from whom company earns more and enjoy other strategic benefits. This strategic importance relates to sales turnover, profitability, centralized purchasing systems, requirements of special treatment and so on (Barrett, 1986; Colletti & Tubridy, 1987; Cooper & Gardner, 1993; Platzer, 1984; Shapiro & Posner, 2006). As these customers have specialty, thus managing them properly is essential for the supplying company. To meet their diversified and complex need an integrated manner and special arrangement of needed resources on the part of supplier are necessary. Thus key account management can be defined as the supplier company initiated approach targeted at the most important customers to solve their complex requirements with special treatment that eventually ensures both parties' financial and nonfinancial objectives (Ahmmed & Noor, 2012).

A pilot test is conducted to decide on the actual instrument to utilize in a particular study. Gay, Mills and Airasian, (2006) mention that a pilot test can be considered as a 'dress rehearsal' in which a small number of responses are evaluated prior to the full-scale study with some objectives. Similarly, Thabane et al. (2010) explain that pilot test is the best way to assess feasibility of a large, expensive full-scale study, and in fact is an almost essential pre-requisite. Additionally, conducting a pilot prior to the main study can enhance the likelihood of success of the main study and potentially help to avoid doomed main studies they added.

Through this pilot study, researchers were intended to achieve some objectives. Firstly, the measurement instruments' validity and reliability were tested. Secondly, it aimed at identifying any mistakes and ambiguity in questions so that survey questionnaire is more clear and understandable for the respondents. Thirdly, the mini study was done to judge the pattern of responses in order to get an insight into the real conditions of the actual study. In the measurement of validity, the

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instrument's ability to measure what it is suppose to measure is tested. Whereas reliability indicates the measurement is error free and thus, consistent and stable across time and also across the various items in the scale (Sekaran & Bougie, 2010). To this end, the study presents the result of pilot test with regard to the influence of operational, organizational and relational factors on key account management performance in the context of readymade garments industry of Bangladesh.

Within a very limited time garments industry has become a major player in the economy of Bangladesh and now second behind only China among the world's largest exporters of apparel, with a \$20 billion-a-year garment industry (Breed, 2012) and solely represented 78.60 percent of the country's export earnings in the fiscal year of 2011-2012 (BGMEA, 2013). At present this industry is availing about thirty categories of apparels for Wal-Mart, Levi Strauss, Zara, Tesco, Gap, Carrefour, Metro, Marks and Spencer, Kohl's, JC Penney, H & M, Tommy Hilfiger and other key accounts (Rahman, 2010). Their purchase volume, specific requirements, reference power and other superiority like research and development capability in fashion and design, capability to enter into untapped new market giving them asymmetrical edge in the buyer-seller relationship in the Bangladesh garments sector (Huq, 2006). Although low labor cost along with efficient producers and good needlework has made Bangladesh an attractive destination for major buyers of apparel (Murshid, Zohir, Ahmed, Zabid & Mehdi, 2009), the challenges facing this sector are formidable (Rahman, 2010). Rahman and Mirdha (2009) mention that the garment industry is the backbone of Bangladesh's fledgling economy and any shocks to its system could prove fatal for the growth of the nation and resulting economy of Bangladesh will be three times poorer (Haque, 2010). Therefore, it becomes critical for garments owners to understand various drivers or determinants that affect key account management performance in the business-to-business context.

The remaining parts of the article are organized as follows. Next section provides us a sketch on key account management performance from the extant literatures. Discusses then turned to elaborate the research methodology with measurements of variables. Results of measurement validity and reliability are discussed then. In addition data distribution results are also placed. We organize our paper with these topics before ending the article with conclusion.

2. Key Account Management Performance: Sketch from the Literature

Efficient customer management with endless efforts makes the marketer's position enduring in the marketplace, creates its position impregnable and ensures the sustained competitive advantage. Performance relates to the assurance of efficiency and effectiveness in the completion of a particular task which results in expected level of outcomes. In the field of marketing, usually sales volume, profit margin and return on investment

made by marketer determine performance (Ofek & Sarvary, 2003). In addition, choice among brands by the customers (Meyvis & Janiszewski, 2004), attitude towards brand and repeat sales and in case of nonprofit marketing, donations and promotions in non-profits are also used to measure the performance. Sherman, Sperry, Reese and Reese (2003) mention that key account management performance is the undertaking of firm-wide initiative by which firms systematically and proactively deliver strategic solutions to multiple contacts at targeted accounts with a purpose of capturing a dominant share over time.

At the organizational level, effective key account management generates various outcomes for the supplier as well as for customers. From key account management performance buyer's requirements were dealt in a concerted manner and filled with customized way. On the other hand, supplier realizes a bunch of benefits from key account management performance like customer loyalty in the form of repeated business, positive reference, cooperation, joint value creation and so on. Smith (2009) mentions that key accounts are key to both partners and their management is different from traditional customer management because key accounts create more than financial value.

A thorough review of researches in the field of key account management approach indicates that a substantial number of determinants are examined by researcher to explore their impact on key account management performance (Al-Husan & Brennan, 2009; Abratt & Kelly, 2002; Birkinshaw, Toulon & Arnold, 2001; Montgomery, Yip & Villalonga, 1998; Sharma, 2006; Workman, Homburg & Jensen, 2003). However, because of their inconclusive results, newness in the field, and differing nature across different marketing environment in terms of their impact on key account management performance (Al-Husan & Brennan, 2009; Kempeners & Hart, 1999; Pardo, 1999; Tsai & Chen, 2008; Wengler, Ehret & Saab, 2006) further validation is required. The studies of Sharma (2006) and Zupancic (2008) explore that what factors lead to successful or unsuccessful key account management and what are the impact of successful key account management strategy is still lacking. Similarly, Millman (1996) explores that in the academic field the area of key account management is under researched and its efficacy is only partially understood.

Following table 1 shows the literatures on key account management performance which are done in different contexts. Various areas of interests in key account management performance are evaluated in these studies. Major areas covered include drivers and outcomes of KAM, interorganizational determinants of KAM, efficiency and sales growth, team selling situations.

<Table 1> Literatures on key account management performance

Sl. No.	Particulars
1	Authors: Birkinshaw, Toulan & Arnold (2001) Key Account Management Success Measure: Two multi-item measures labeled: (a) efficiency and sales growth, (b) partnership with customer Sample and methods: 106 survey responses from 16 multinational firms using GAM. Ordinary least square regression were used. Statistically significant findings: 6 different models presented, in general, strongest effects from customer dependence, communication and scope of account.
2	Authors: Abratt & Kelly (2002) Key Account Management Success Measure: Six fundamental success factors suitability of the key account manager, knowledge and understanding of the key account customer's business, commitment to the partnership, delivering value, importance of trust and the proper implementation and understanding of the KAM concept. Sample and methods: 92 suppliers and 98 customers, representing 100 responses relating to suppliers and 98% of customers. Descriptive statistics were used, Chronbach's α was used to assess the reliability of the instrument. Statistically significant findings: All the factors are found significant that could assist management in creation of enhanced and sustainable relationships.
3	Authors: Workman, Homburg & Jensen (2003) Key Account Management Success Measure: Intraorganizational determinants of key account management success Sample and methods: 265 German firms and 121 USA firms. Structural equation modeling was used by means of LISREL VIII Statistically significant findings: KAM team esprit de corps, access to marketing and sales resources, activity intensity, activity proactiveness and top management involvement in KAM affect positively on KAM program success.
4	Authors: Wilson & Weilbaker (2004) Key Account Management Measure: Global Account Management: A Literature Based Conceptual Model Sample and methods: Conceptual paper. In-depth literature review was done. Statistically significant findings: Several propositions are given in an attempt to stimulate further research in the area.
5	Authors: Sharma (2006) Key Account Management Success Measure: Success factors in key accounts Sample and methods: Within-firm and single-industry focus. Correlation and regression analysis were done. Statistically significant findings: Marketers' relational assets, personal/social bonds, dissatisfaction, and change in environment are the primary drivers of key account success.
6	Authors: Al-Husan & Brennan (2009) Key Account Management Success Measure: Strategic account management in an emerging economy Sample and methods: Single-company. In-depth case study was performed. Statistically significant findings: Quick access to top management and authority to communicate with any level in the organization; authority to make decisions; teamwork; and training.
7	Authors: Brehmer and Rehme (2009) Key Account Management Measure: Proactive and reactive: drivers for key account management programmes Sample: 50 individuals including corporate managers, key account managers and sales personnel/project Managers were interviewed. In-depth interviews were taken to isolate the inner views on proactiveness and reactivity in key account management practice. Statistically significant findings: The study answers the question of what are the reasons of establishing several KAM programs in the same corporation.
8	Authors: Shi et al. (2010) Key Account Management Success Measure: Global account Management strategies: drivers and outcomes Sample and methods: Cross-industry online survey with member companies of the Strategic Account Management Association (SAMA), data collected from 203 global company managers. Descriptive statistics, non-parametric tests, PLS-based confirmatory factor analysis, correlations and structural equation modeling were used. Statistically significant findings: Global strategic priority and globalization are significant drivers of four GAM strategies –inter-country coordination, interorganizational coordination, marketing activities standardization, and global integration; (2) inter-country and inter-organizational coordination have significant main effects on GAM performance, while global customer demand positively moderates the effects of marketing activities standardization and global integration on GAM performance; and (3) GAM performance significantly influences relationship continuity.
9	Authors: Salojaarvi & Saarenketo (2013) Key Account Management Measure: The effect of teams on customer knowledge processing, esprit de corps and account performance in international key account management. Sample and methods: 158 firms. t-test and hypotheses test were used. Statistically significant findings: Customer-knowledge acquisition, dissemination and utilization are higher in team-selling situation rather than non-team group.

Source: Ahmed & Noor (2014).

The present study reveals the area of operational, organizational and relational variables which impact on key account management performance and its resulting impact on repeat order. Therefore, it is vital for the supplier company to ensure key account management performance through availing necessary arrangements, resources and paying attention on most important determinants of key account management performance. Because, focusing on the impact of such variables on key account management performance may help management improve the performance of their key account relationship and that eventually will serve both parties financial and nonfinancial objectives.

3. Methodology

As part of an ongoing research project, this pilot study was done with 30 sample readymade garments manufacturers of Bangladesh. Malhotra (2008) mentions that for a pre-test normally a small sample size ranging from 15-30 seems to be enough. Following a convenience sampling technique companies were selected and a self-administered questionnaire was surveyed to collect data from garments companies of Bangladesh. These companies are 100 percent export oriented in nature and sell their apparels directly to key buyers. Additionally, company's different size, year of experience and key account serving capability were also considered. Data were collected once with a consideration of companies as unit of analysis. Responses were collected from the merchandising managers or merchandisers of merchandising department who represented the respective garments company. These personnel are perceived most knowledgeable as merchandising department in Garments Company is responsible to deal with international buyers.

To maintain the parsimony of responses and assess their suitability, interested companies in this survey were finally selected and interviewed with the following criterions.

- Consideration of a company's most familiar key account customer for profits or importance;
- Companies having a single point of contact, a team, or a special department like merchandising department in place to serve this key account customer;
- Company should sell garments products directly to buyers or through its own buying house, and
- Representative person of the responding company must be a practitioner involved with key account management practices.

As questionnaires were administered personally that generally elicit a substantially complete response (Hansen & Hurwitz, 1946), errors were not evident enough to reject any questionnaire. To ensure for face and content validity, the draft copy of questionnaire was initially checked by expert before the distribution of the questionnaires. The data was analyzed using SPSS software version 15 for windows. To test the internal consistency of the instruments, the most popular test of Cronbach's alpha coefficient was done (Sekaran & Bougie, 2010).

3.1. Instrumentation and measurement of variables

For this pilot study a structured questionnaire was used that consist of closed-ended multiple-choice questions. Most of the items in the questionnaire are targeted at measuring the subjective perception of respondents' key account management performance at their organizations. Hence, in the subjective measurement situation Likert-type scale is considered more appropriate and reliable (Alreck & Settle, 1995; Miller, 1991). Ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree, the instrument is meant to measure the key variables of the research using a 5-point Likert-type rating scale. Krosnick and Fabrigar (1997) explain that the range of scale between 5 and 7 is established to be more reliable than otherwise. This is because respondents are getting more options to choose from to put their judgment on a particular issue. On the other hand it provides researcher an effective scope to isolate subtle distinction in the responses.

When midpoint is available in the scale, respondents are felt comfortable to choose the direction of supporting or discarding an issue based on their experience and perception. In mentioning the importance of having midpoint in a scale Schuman and Presser (1981) assert that associations among attitudes are strengthened when middle options are included into a scale. Similarly, the effects of interviewer bias tend to decrease and data quality tends to increase when a midpoint is included in a scale (Krosnick & Fabrigar, 1997).

3.2. Operationalization of the model constructs and measures

The present study consists of nine variables which are categorized as follows:

Consequence variable: Repeat Order;

Dependent variable: Key Account Management Performance;

Antecedent variables:

Operational variables: Internal Alignment and Perceived Risks;

Organizational variables: Top Management Emphasis and Team Effort;

Relational variables: Supplier Relational Investment, Perceived Buyer Relational Investment and Relational Intimacy.

To measure these variables items were borrowed from the existing studies with which a questionnaire was constructed. Within the questionnaire mainly two parts were available including multiple choice items to measure the constructs and demographic information part. For the multiple choice questions each item was scored on a 5 point Likert scale with anchors "1 = strongly disagree" to "5 = strongly agree". Following sections provide the operationalization of the constructs with their dimensions and the source of items.

3.2.1. Repeat order was operationalized by using one dimension. It refers to the key account customer's continuation of purchasing goods and services from an organization (Molinari, Abratt & Dion, 2008). This dimension was measured using a modification of an existing scale taken from the study of Molinari et al. (2008) that consists of four items with internal re-

liability of 0.91.

3.2.2. Key account management performance was operationalized by two dimension namely relational and financial outcomes. It is the degree to which an organization achieves better relational and financial outcomes for key accounts in comparison with average account. This dimension consists of twelve items from where seven items for relational outcomes taken from the study of Workman et al. (2003) and remaining five items from Shi, White, Zou & Cavusgil (2010). The internal reliability reported by Workman et al. (2003) and Shi et al. (2010) were 0.85 and 0.92 respectively.

3.2.3. Internal alignment was operationalized as the inter-departmental connectedness that mentions the degree of formal and informal direct contact among employees across departments that consists of six items (Jaworski & Kohli, 1993). The internal reliability of the scale reported by Jaworski and Kohli (1993) is 0.80.

3.2.4. Perceived risk was operationalized by using two dimensions namely partner opportunism and uncertainty avoidance. Partner opportunism is the extent to which the partner pursues its self-interest with guile (Wuyts & Geyskens, 2005). On the other hand uncertainty avoidance dimension describes the extent to which firm feels threatened by and tries to avoid uncertain, ambiguous or undefined situations in the supply chain (Hofstede, 2001). Partner opportunism dimension was measured using an existing scale developed by Wuyts and Geyskens, (2005) with some modification in wording that consists of four items. Uncertainty avoidance dimension was measured using a modification of an existing scale that consists of three items taken from the study of Wuyts and Geyskens (2005). The internal reliability reported by Wuyts and Geyskens (2005) for these dimensions are 0.81 and 0.87 respectively.

3.2.5. Top management emphasis was operationalized by using two dimensions namely top management involvement and top management support for KAM performance. Top management involvement dimension was measured using an existing scale adapted from Salojärvi, Sainio & Tarkiainen (2010) that consists of four items. On the other hand, top management support dimension was measured using Atanasova and Senn's (2011) scale with some modification on wording with three items. The internal reliability reported by Salojärvi et al. (2010) and Atanasova and Senn (2011) for senior management involvement and senior management support dimensions are 0.74 and 0.811 respectively.

3.2.6. Team effort was operationalized by using one dimension. Team effort is measured using an existing scale adopted from the study of Workman et al. (2003) that consists of three items. Internal reliability reported by Workman et al. (2003) is 0.82.

3.2.7. Supplier relational investment was operationalized by using one dimension namely idiosyncratic investments from the study of Ganesan (1994). Here total number of items is four and internal reliability reported by Ganesan (1994) is 0.76.

The following table 2 on the next page summarizes the variables, dimensions and total number of items used to measure the variables of the present study.

<Table 2> Summary of variables, dimensions and total number of items

Variables	Dimensions	Total Items
Repeat order (Molinari, Abratt & Dion, 2008)	Repurchase	4
Key account management performance (Workman et al., 2003; Shi et al., 2010)	Relational outcomes Financial outcomes	7 5
Internal alignment (Jaworski & Kohli, 1993)	Interdepartmental connectedness	6
Perceived risks (Wuyts & Geyskens, 2005)	Partner opportunism Uncertainty avoidance	4 3
Top management emphasis (Salojärvi et al., 2010; Atanasova & Senn, 2011)	Top management involvement Top management support	4 3
Team effort (Workman et al., 2003)	Team usage	3
Supplier relational investment (Ganesan, 1994)	Idiosyncratic investments	4
Perceived buyer relational investment (Ganesan, 1994)	Idiosyncratic investments	4
Relational intimacy (Sin et al., 2002)	Mutual cooperation and action	4

Source: Self generated table. Authors after each variable indicate the sources of such variables with their dimensions and number of items used for data collection.

3.2.8. Perceived buyer relational investment was operationalized by using one dimension namely idiosyncratic investments. It is the perceived magnitude of the investment by buyer in relationship assets that would be lost or no longer useful if it terminates the relationship (Rusbult, 1980) with supplier. For measuring this variable, four items were adapted from the study Ganesan's (1994) with the internal reliability of 0.76.

3.2.9. Relational intimacy was operationalized by using one dimension. It is the two parties' action in a unified manner towards a desired goal (Callaghan, Mcphail & Yau, 1995). The instrument consists of four items taken from the study of Sin, Tse, Yau, Lee and Chow (2002) with internal reliability of 0.8029. With the second section of the questionnaire, demographic information was solicited. In putting the question relating to demography, sensitive questionnaire are not included in order to elicit high response rate (Sekaran & Bougie, 2010). This part includes company's year of establishment to assess its experience, number of key customer handled per year to assess its capacity and number of employees to appraise the size of the company.

4. Results of Validity and Reliability Tests

4.1. Content and face validity

Validity of a construct implies that it represents accurately

those features of the phenomena, that it is intended to describe, explain or theorize (Hammersley, 1987). That means through content and face validity scale's ability to measure what it intend to measure is assess in systematic manner. In ensuring content validity, consulting with a small of typical respondents and /or experts' judgments is required so that suitability of the items can be assessed (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2010 Sekaran & Bougie, 2010). A draft of the instruments in questionnaire form was judged by three university professor in marketing relating to clarity, suitability and adequacy of items to measure the variables. After taking into consideration of their opinions, researcher came up with improved version of the questionnaire to use to conduct the study.

4.2. Reliability test

In the social science researches the most common method used by researchers is the internal consistency reliability test (Litwin, 1995). The study used past instruments from related

and unrelated fields and one of the criteria for selection of past instruments was internal consistency of the scales. According to Sekaran and Bougie (2010) the most popular test of inter-item consistency reliability is Cronbach's alpha coefficient and through this how well the items in a set are positively correlated to one another can be assessed. It is the extent to which items hang together and able to represent a variable independently. The following table 3 shows the results of pilot study on reliability coefficient. In general, a closer reliability coefficient to 1.0 provides the better result. Sekaran and Bougie (2010) notes that reliability less than .60 is considered to be poor, those in the .70 range are acceptable and those over .80 are good. The result shows that reliability estimates ranged from .59 to .87 are considered sufficient for research purposes (Nunally, 1978), thus explaining relatively reliable.

Three categories of demographic information namely companies' experience in the garments manufacturing industry, year-wise key customer serving capacity and their size in terms of number of employees are given in the following table 4.

<Table 3> Reliability Coefficient for Multiple Items in Pilot Study (n=30)

Variables	Dimensions	Number of items	Alpha coefficient (α)
Repeat order	One	Four	.748
Key account management performance	Two – Relational Performance – Financial Performance	Twelve (total) Seven Five	.741 .579
Internal alignment	One	Six	.723
Perceived risks	Two – Partner Opportunism – Uncertainty Avoidance	Seven (total) Four Three	.706 .847
Top management emphasis	Two – Top management involvement – Top management support	Seven (total) Four Three	.688 .652
Team effort	One	Three	.650
Supplier relational investment	One	Four	.597
Perceived buyer relational investment	One	Four	.814
Relational intimacy	One	Four	.878

Source: Self generated table.

<Table 4> Companies' demographic information details

Items	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Company Establishment Year (Experience)		
1= 1-12 years (low)	8	26.7
2= 13-24 (medium)	11	36.7
3= 25 years and above (high)	11	36.7
Serving Customer Per Year (Capacity)		
1= 1-4 key customers (low)	14	46.7
2= 5-8 key customers (medium)	7	23.3
3= 9 key customers and above (high)	9	30.0
Number of Employees (Size)		
1= 1-1800 employees (small)	19	63.3
2= 1801-2600 employees (medium)	2	6.7
3= 3601 employees and above (large)	9	30.0

Sources: Self generated table. Categorizations of companies' demographic information have been done with the expert opinion having expertise on this field.

The frequencies for experience indicate that majority companies are with medium and high experience which constitutes 73.4% from total. This indicates that companies are well equipped in terms of their experience to serve key account customers. In case of capacity, companies deal with limited number of key customers. This finding is parallel with the nature of key customers. This is because key customers demand more with their individual specification and to fulfill these complex requirements companies have to deploy customized resources suitable for the individual key account. On the other hand, regarding the size of the companies, maximum (90.3%) represent small and large size. These results match with the previous category of companies' key account serving capacity. In other words, large size represent more serving capacity compared to small size that represent low capacity to serve key customers. Overall, results indicate a higher degree of key account management performance by the readymade garments manufacturers of Bangladesh.

4.3. Data distribution

In addition of dealing with the reliability of the constructs and demographic information of the responding garments manufacturer, this pilot study also dealt with data normality assumption. In mentioning the importance of normality, Tabacknick and Fidell (2007) explain that inferential statistical techniques should fulfill the requirements of normality assumption. Pallant (2007) explains that normal is used to describe a bell-shaped curve, which has the maximum frequency of scores in the middle, with smaller frequencies towards the extremes. Through examining the skewness and kurtosis value we can assess the data normality. For the present pilot test, it is evident that data are reasonably normal. Regarding the skewness aspect all the items ranges from 0.356 to 0.863 which are within the range of ± 2.0 . On the other hand, kurtosis values represent that all the variables are within the range of 0.821 to -1.456 which are well below the threshold of ± 10 .

5. Conclusion and Implications

In compliance with the objective of the present pilot study, researcher endeavored to test the construct validity and reliability. With the examination of 30 sample data, test results indicated that instruments are reliable to go for further investigation of the phenomenon in large scale. From the preliminary results, it is indicative that instruments are able to measure what they are supposed to measure. Both content and face validity of the instruments are also assessed and some amendments on wording are made based on expert opinions. In addition, we tested the normality assumption through evaluating the values of skewness and kurtosis. Findings shown that, data are reasonably normally distributed and thus does not violating the normality assumption. It is expected that several implications can be drawn from this study. First and foremost is the validation of the measurements

for three categories of determinants of key account management performance in the context of different cultural settings. Because previous researches on key account management performance were done in the western developed culture like North American perspective (Boles, Johnston & Gardner, 1999); from European context (Homburg, Giering & Menon, 2003; Kempeners & Hart, 1999; Millman & Wilson, 1999; Ojasalo, 2001; Pardo, 1999) from Australian context (Spencer, 1999); and from South Africa perspective (Abratt & Kelly, 2002). This research is unique in assembling the three categories of determinants of key account management performance. Thirdly, the theoretical model created a platform for future empirical study.

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