

**MANUFACTURER–DISTRIBUTOR RELATIONS
AS BASIC ELEMENTS OF A COMPETITIVE
MODEL. EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS OF MODERATING
FACTORS IN THE SPANISH CERAMIC CLUSTER**

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1. OBJECTIVES

To analyse the existing connections between the level of relations between ceramic manufacturers / distributors and 3 factors:

- Distributor market orientation
- Exchange of strategic information with manufacturers, and
- Additional services offered to the customer.

2. THE IMPORTANCE OF RESEARCH

- The relevance of the distribution function in a mature industry;
- It's application to the entire traditional industry, which is currently in crisis.

3. LITERARY CONTRIBUTION

- The *Relationalism* school, adding value through networking;
- The role of distribution channels in contributing value:

Market orientation

The role of service provision

Exchange of strategic information

4. FIELDWORK

- 125 questionnaires AMONG various different types of shops.

5. RESULTS

- Independent variable: Level of relations between manufacturer and distributors according to the Gonzalez scale (2001)
- Three groups:

1st, high value on relations with manufacturers (20),

2nd, medium value (64) and

3rd superficial value (41)

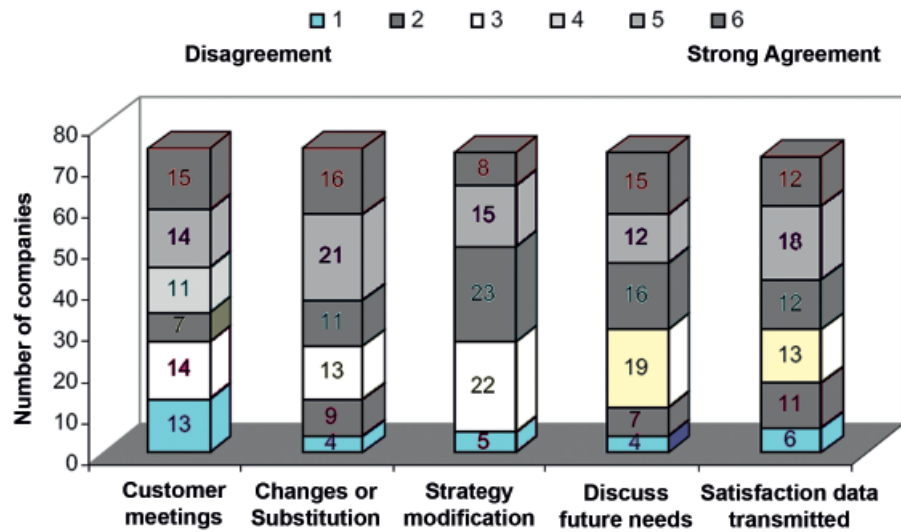


Figure 1.

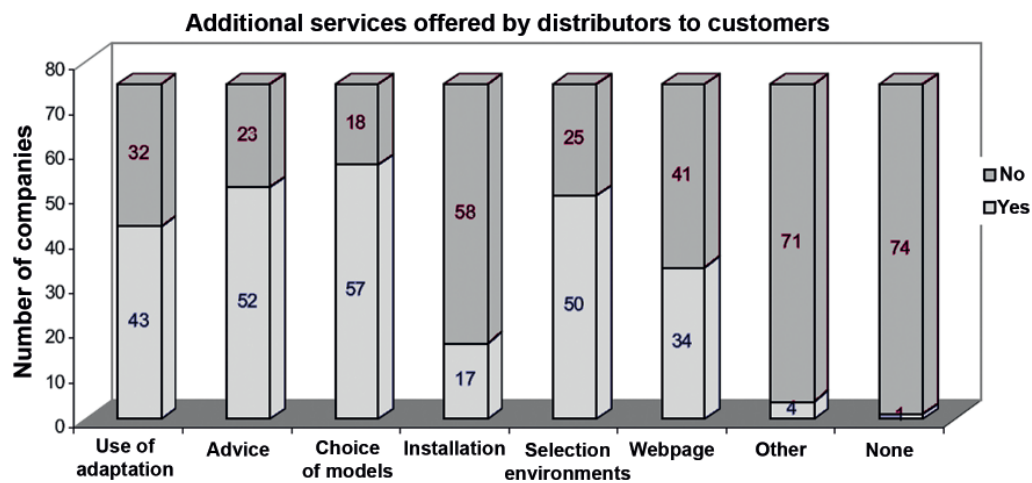


Figure 2.

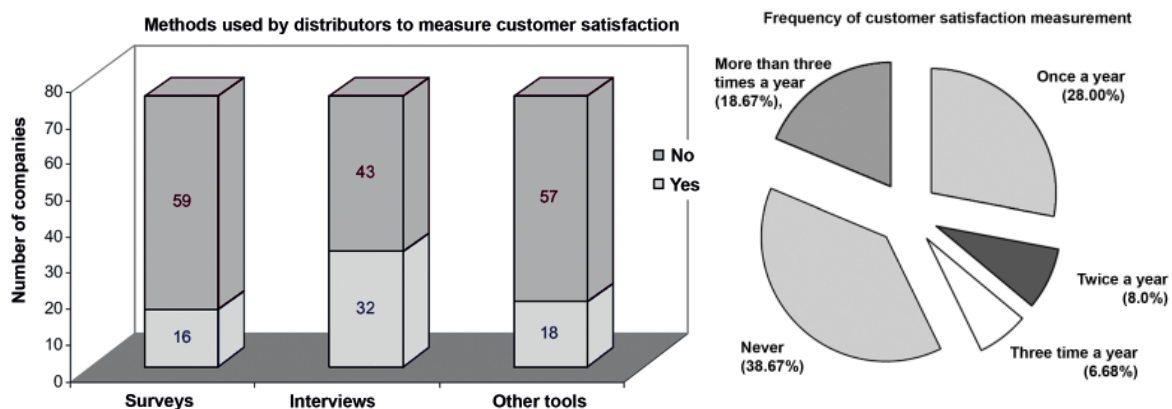


Figure 3.

Figure 4.

6. CONCLUSIONS

There is a correlation between the intensity of manufacturer–distributor relations and market orientation, the contribution of added value and value performance.

- There is an evolutionary dynamic in distribution that contributes greater value to distribution.
- Leading distributors have a higher economic performance.
- Leading manufacturers are developing their own distribution network
- An example for the future: the British market.

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