Client commitment relations towards financial entities

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Keywords

Banks, Customer loyalty, Customer behaviour, Spain

Abstract

Given the situation that the banking sector currently faces, this paper will focus on the importance of the presence of client commitment to retailers in general and, more specifically, to financial institutions. So, comments will be made concerning the evolution and current situation of the banking services sector in Spain. In addition, the concept of relational commitment as well as the influence that its development has on the presence of bank client loyalty will be specified. Lastly, an empirical study is developed. The results show differences in the commitment level that individuals project based on links to distinct types of financial entities.

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International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management
Volume 31 · Number 4 · 2003 · pp. 203-213
 · ISSN 0959-0552
DOI 10.1108/09590550310469194

1. Introduction

The financial services sector has undergone different changes during the last years as a consequence of the intense competition, little growth in primary demand and the gradual process of deregulation (Bloemer *et al.*, 1998), together with the introduction of new distribution channels (Beckett *et al.*, 2000). New information technologies are influencing the design of the strategies of retail banking all over the world, though the speed of implementation is different from one country to another.

Focusing on the Spanish banking industry, it has been traditionally characterized by being a "product-oriented bank" (García *et al.*, 1999) that developed undifferentiated strategies geared towards a target client. But in the last years, a new course is detected in the marketing strategy of the Spanish retail banking. It has been reshaping its activity in the market as a result of the liberalization of the sector, higher level of activity and changes in bank client behaviour, adopting a position geared more towards the market (i.e. market-oriented) (García *et al.*, 1999; Gardener and Molyneux, 1995) in which competition requires the development of long-term strategies that imply the foundation of strong and stable relationships (Santesmases, 1994), and the adaptation to the market needs.

Regarding the adaptation to the market needs, in the Spanish retail banking industry, private banks are progressively diminishing the number of branches and introducing new information technologies (on-line banking), even though the evolution of on-line banking is slower than in other European countries. Meanwhile, savings banks and land banks are increasing the number of outlets, backed in the reduction of the operative costs, and trying to be close to the client (Casilda *et al.*, 1997). In both cases, a relational marketing strategy underlies.

Concerning the development of relational marketing strategies, Spanish retail banking is worried about offering quality service, getting satisfied clients and attaining their loyalty, going far beyond the traditional strategies pointed at temporarily gaining assets and liabilities (Aragón and Llorens, 1999; Penelas, 1996). In this respect, commitment has been recognized as an essential ingredient for successful long-term relationships (Garbarino and Johnson, 1999; Grönroos,

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1996; Morgan and Hunt, 1994). The presence of commitment, together with confidence, promotes efficiency, productivity and effectiveness of the organization (Morgan and Hunt, 1994). However, if commitment is lacking, the relationship will soon come to an end (Wetzels *et al.*, 1998). Therefore, companies should be interested in knowing their customers' commitment level, as well as the aspects that characterize committed and non-committed clients, in order to manage a suitable strategy to each case. Moreover, bank commitment seems to be a necessary condition for bank loyalty to occur (Bloemer *et al.*, 1998; Bloemer and de Ruyter, 1998). If loyalty were not based on commitment, it would be merely spurious loyalty (Dick and Basu, 1994; Martin and Goodell, 1991). "Consumers whose patronage is not based on bank loyalty may exhibit an attachment to bank attributes and can easily be lured away by competitors through, for instance, pricing strategies" (Bloemer *et al.*, 1998, p. 277). Therefore, the development of commitment in consumers is necessary to maintain a true loyalty along time (Zins, 2001; Richards, 1998). And given the limitation of loyalty derived from on-line banking, the reinforcement of relational strategy to overcome this situation encourages research of commitment in services banking.

Considering all that exposed, this study deals with establishing if different levels of client commitment can be associated with different types of banks (private banks, savings banks and land banks). The profile of individuals with different levels of commitment will be also provided. In the same way, we will try to determine if, in the Spanish banking industry, the relationship observed between commitment and loyalty can be recognized. In doing so, this study will begin by describing the banking system in Spain. Later, client relational commitment to banks will be described and discriminated from other forms of bank client commitment. Finally, an empirical study will be developed in order to achieve the objectives previously proposed.

2. The banking industry in Spain

The banking industry in Spain is characterized by the dominant position of banks and saving banks, and a marginal position of agribusiness cooperative banks (Table I).

Worrying about achieving new clients and maintaining the current ones that have generated the intense competition and changes in the financial sector, have caused Spanish banks to abandon their passive attitude towards the market and adopt a distinct one. In the past, clients would go to the financial entity in order to obtain or place funds in it. Now, banks adopt a much more market-oriented attitude, being aware that it is not only important to attract new clients, but to also carry out continuous activities with them that attain their loyalty (Teruel, 1995).

The strategy of closeness to the customer has been very useful in implementing a relational strategy. This strategy has been traditionally developed by the Spanish banking industry and was based on the control of territories or geographical areas (Maroto, 1994), having now been translated into the presence of a wide range of branches, the highest in Europe. Table II clearly shows the evolution of the banking branches and savings banks in Spain as well as the number of inhabitants per branch during the last nine years. On the one hand, a reduction in the number of inhabitants per branch and a continual increase in the number of branches for the savings banks (35 per cent over nine years) is observed. This is a signal of the proximity policy that they hold, and it is due to a higher competence and a deep reduction of the operative costs of branches. This high number of branches is a very important entry barrier.

On the other hand, the bank branches were practically stable until 1998. Since then, there has been a reduction, together with an increase of the number of inhabitants per branch. This situation can be attributed to banking concentration that has taken place since the end of the 1980s (Maroto, 1994). In

Table I Investment of customers in the banking industry in Spain (millions of Euros)

	Balance (31 December 2001)	Share (%)
Banks	389,315	50.16
Savings banks	349,334	45.00
Agribusiness cooperative bank (land bank)	37,573	4.84
Total	776,222	100

Source: La Caixa (2002)

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Table II Evolution of the number of branches and branches per inhabitant in Spain from 1993 to 2001

	Number of branches			Number of inhabitants/branch		
	Banks	Savings banks	Total	Banks	Saving banks	Total
1993	17,636	14,485	32,121	2,219	2,700	1,217
1994	17,557	14,880	32,437	2,229	2,634	1,208
1995	17,842	15,214	33,056	2,193	2,577	1,186
1996	17,674	16,094	33,768	2,214	2,465	1,175
1997	17,530	16,636	34,166	2,232	2,395	1,166
1998	17,450	17,582	35,032	2,243	2,287	1,148
1999	16,905	18,337	35,242	2,315	2,209	1,149
2000	15,811	19,268	35,079	2,475	2,131	1,171
2001	15,182	19,611	34,793	2,578	2,097	1,182

Source: Adapted from Bank of Spain (2002)

order to reduce the excess capacity of the banks and trying to attain a more efficient and rational banking system, the high value of proximity assigned to branches, with respect to the client, could cease. The new channels of distribution and on-line (Internet) banking will make it possible for the goal of "the branch that goes to the client and not the opposite to be achieved" (Casilda *et al.*, 1997, p. 379). This circumstance would bring a gradual reduction in the number of branches of banks and savings banks in the future.

In Spain, the evolution of on-line banking is slower than in other European countries. Of Spanish bank customers 3 per cent use the Internet as their main channel; meanwhile, in Europe the figure is higher (4 per cent). Evidence also shows that on-line distribution models do not fully succeed: 60 per cent of the total sales will continue coming from branches in 2004. Nowadays, 80 per cent of new accounts are opened in physical branches (Ernst & Young, 2002). The Spanish financial entities have found some problems increasing the penetration rate of the Internet: safety issues, adoption by consumers slower than expected, and some important mistakes from the banks (insufficient customized service, confusing Webs, etc.) (Badía, 2002).

The importance of establishing a long-term relationship with clients and satisfying all their financial service needs, thus minimizing their wish to distribute their financial matters among various banks, has led the Spanish banking system to discriminate among homogeneous client segments (Urcola, 1994). This means that instead of developing undifferentiated strategies that distinguish one type of client for all activities, different strategies based on each client group are developed. The new electronic distribution channels can help the development of micromarketing strategies based on the technologic capacity of each group of clients, providing them with adapted information that satisfies their specific needs (Nash, 1995).

On one hand, the numerous messages sent by the different banks in order to attract clients by offering them more favourable conditions than others, have resulted in the fact that the price is not the only differentiating factor. On the other hand, the higher educational or cultural standard of the clients of financial services and the increase in time dedicated to leisure activities, along with the resulting increase in the demand of services, has caused these entities to face more informed and demanding clients that look for quality more than quantity in their consumption choices. These clients also possess a more critical attitude with regards to the financial entity in which they would like to have a continuous relationship (Casilda *et al.*, 1997). Under these circumstances, banks need to develop relationship management systems and skills to avoid customer exit (Stewart, 1998). The relationship capacity of the financial entity must be considered one of the resources of the banking management quality (Mehra, 1996). The competitive advantage of the banks is found in not only obtaining a close relationship maintained in time, but also enhancing clients' trust and commitment by offering a personalized and guaranteed quality service (Johnston, 1997; Yavas *et al.*, 1997).

3. Bank client relational commitment

As we have mentioned before, literature distinguishes between true bank loyalty and spurious bank loyalty. Under true bank

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loyalty a maximum amount of commitment is found, and under spurious bank loyalty no commitment is found (Bloemer *et al.*, 1998). Really, a continuum of loyalty can be assumed moving from one form of loyalty to another (Bloemer and de Ruyter, 1998). Taking this reasoning into consideration, we are analysing two different forms of commitment: bank client transactional and relational commitment.

In commercial dynamics, fundamentally in transactions between individuals and organizations, "commitments" caused by marketing stimuli are usual. For example, various kinds of promotions or advertising are directed to persuade the individuals to buy, to finish off the transaction, but not to build a relationship. Thus, people could buy a particular thing because they feel certain obligation or commitment to do it. Following Bloemer and de Ruyter (1998) this commitment, which would underlie next to spurious loyalty, could be named transactional commitment, or spurious commitment. In this way, a database-marketing action developed through i.e. direct marketing, can obtain a commitment of an individual of going to a banking branch to learn about or buy a certain service (i.e. information about an insurance, or a fixed-term deposit). It deals with an isolated action whose end result could be in the mere action of physical moving or that of the transaction.

If the result of the marketing actions leads to the establishment of a continued relationship on the part of the client, the commitment generated could be named relational commitment. This one does not end with the transaction, but it continues with the relationship; it is a commitment that implies the willingness or intention to continue carrying out other transactions with the same bank for an unlimited period of time because of a desire or a need to do it. The use of certain promotional practices could, therefore, generate a relational commitment (i.e. a client can be initially attracted to a bank by a promotion, but could maintain or increase the links with the bank for a long period of time).

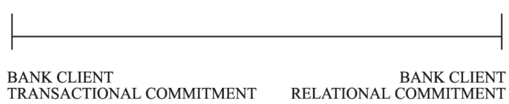
Relational commitment has been analysed from various fields like social psychology (Dutta and Ghose, 1997; Brierley, 1996), economics (Williamson, 1983), organization (Folta, 1998; Allen and Meyer, 1990), and marketing (Pritchard *et al.*, 1999; Kim and Frazier, 1997; Anderson and Weitz, 1992). This circumstance has given rise to various definitions regarding this concept. Thus, Dwyer *et al.* (1987, p. 19) define it as "an implicit or explicit pledge of relational continuity between exchange partners", while Anderson and Weitz (1992, p. 19) define it as "a desire to develop a stable relationship, a willingness to make short-term sacrifices to maintain the relationship, and a confidence in the stability of the relationship". Morgan and Hunt (1994, p. 23) believe that commitment is an "an exchange partner believing that an ongoing relationship with another is so important to warrant maximum efforts at maintaining it".

After reviewing the relevant literature of commitment (Iniesta, 2000), and focusing attention on bank client relational commitment, a definition that comprises the different perspectives is proposed. "Bank client commitment is a psychological state generated by an individual's perceptions, beliefs and emotions which provoke the willingness or intention of developing and maintaining a stable and durable relationship with a bank, because the individual wants it or feels that he/she should make it, and which manifests itself in a behaviour which bears certain obligation" (Iniesta, 2000).

Given that the level of bank commitment enables to define a degree of bank loyalty (Bloemer *et al.*, 1998) being a continuum between spurious bank loyalty and true bank loyalty, and just like Grönroos (1995, 1994) established for transactional and relational marketing, the two forms of bank client commitment mentioned could also be placed on the extremes of a continuum (Figure 1).

As we have mentioned before, the Spanish banking system constitutes a good example of a relational business, having passed from developing transactional marketing strategies to design others related more to relational marketing. In fact, on a business level, the relational banking system is preferred (Gómez, 2000). Transactional banking can help potential clients become actual customers, but not to achieve their retention and loyalty.

Figure 1 Bank client commitment continuum



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Relational strategies could be considered as an augmentation of the conventional categories of banking services (Binks *et al.*, 1989). Starting from the papers of Holland (1992) and Thunman (1992), we can summarize the following dimensions of the bankclient relationship in relational banking:

- technical aspects (i.e. Internet);
- organizational aspects (i.e. long-term contracts);
- informational aspects (i.e. new products);
- social aspects (i.e. trust, empathy, ...);
- economic aspects (i.e. price).

It is important to emphasize that, as a social aspect, bank commitment to customers, usually materialized in bank employees' commitment (Durkin and Bennett, 1999), is perceived as an important factor for gaining customer commitment to the financial entity. Anderson and Weitz (1992) built a mutual commitment model in which each channel member's commitment to the relationship is based on its perception of the other party's commitment. Both parties generate a positive reinforcement that increases the level of commitment over time. Moreover, mutual commitment promotes the creation of value (Holm *et al.*, 1999). Then, commitments by both parties constitute a powerful signal of the quality of the banking relationship, and "disproportionate commitments can result in conflict, dissatisfaction, and opportunistic tendencies [...] leading to the eventual decline of an exchange relationship" (Gundlach *et al.*, 1995, p. 80).

4. Methodology and descriptive analysis

The objectives settled in this study consist in determining, on the one part, if the presence of a higher client commitment can be translated into a higher loyalty. On the other part, this study aims to tackle if some association between the level of commitment and the size and type of the main financial entity of the client can be established. In the case of proving such a relationship, profiles of the clients of each group will be described by their socio-demographical characteristics.

To carry out the analysis, 400 clients of financial entities were interviewed. These banks, savings banks and land banks were located in four distinct Spanish cities based on category, class and size (Madrid, Barcelona, Valencia and Almería). Quotas of sex and age were fixed according to data provided by the National Statistic Bureau based on the last population census, carried out in 1996 (Table III). The scale of commitment used was composed of 21 items (seven-point Likert scale) and was validated in a previous study (Iniesta, 2000).

The survey was performed through personal interviews on the street, searching for the direct contact with the clients to explain clearly all the items. This method avoids biases of surveys performed within the establishments, lack of sincerity and environmental pressures. Anyway, some limitations are derived from interviews on the street such as the timing limitation.

The interviewees were asked to select the bank with which they had the main relationship and to make sure that they used that answer throughout the questionnaire. Besides the name of the bank and items to measure commitment, another series of socio-demographical data questions were asked.

To validate the commitment construct and confirm its supposed relationship with loyalty, an analysis based on correlations between the two variables was performed. For operationalization purposes, an index of commitment was built comprising all items. The results show a significant and positive relation between the two factors (0.617; $p < 0.001$). A regression analysis between

Table III Population quotas by age, gender and city ($n = 400$)

	%
Age	
Between 20 and 29	23.5
Between 30 and 39	20.75
Between 40 and 49	17.25
Between 50 and 64	24.25
More than 64	14.25
Total	100
Gender	
Man	47.25
Woman	52.75
Total	100
City	
Madrid	41
Barcelona	27
Valencia	20
Almeria	12
Total	100

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both variables tests the proposed relationship (β =0.617, p < 0.001; R^2 = 0.38). These results correspond and fit accordingly to those obtained in previous studies (Pritchard *et al.*, 1999; Bettencourt, 1997).

In the second stated objective, a correspondence analysis was performed to find out if there existed some relationship between the level of commitment (high, medium, low)[1] and the type of entity with whom the clients deal (large banks, small and medium sized banks, large savings banks, small savings bank and agribusiness cooperative or land banks). The sizes of these entities are based on turnover. With this analysis the most notable level of commitment for each type of bank is emphasized from the association frequencies between the categories containing the two variables included in this analysis.

In Table IV, eigenvalues and the proportion of partial and cumulative inertia are shown in the two resulting factors. These factors explain all the information. The first one contributes to explain practically all the information. Table V shows the relative and absolute contributions of the distinct categories of the two variables analysed.

It can be observed that low and medium commitment levels contribute the most to the formation of the first factor. Analysing the relative contribution, the three levels of commitment are well represented in this dimension. The analysis from the second factor shows that it is the high commitment that contributes most to its formation and that which is best represented in it.

Analysing the bank types, it can be concluded that the large savings banks and the small and medium sized banks are the ones that contribute most to forming the first factor. However, all the dimensions of this variable are well represented in the factor. Regarding the second factor, the large banks, the small and medium sized banks and the land banks contribute especially to its formation, although the small savings banks are the best represented.

Table IV Singular values and proportion explained of inertia for each factor

Factor	Singular Value	Proportion explained of inertia	Cumulative proportion
1	0.213	0.973	0.973
2	0.034	0.027	1.000
	1.000	1.000	1.000

The graphical analysis of the results (Figure 2) emphasizes, on the one hand, the link between the high level of commitment and the clients associated with large banks and, on the other hand, a certain relationship that exists between medium commitment and clients with agribusiness cooperative banks, and small and medium sized banks. Finally, the link between low levels of commitment and clients of large savings banks can also be observed. It is important to note that clients of small savings banks do not present a priori links with any level of commitment.

An analysis of the socio-demographical characteristics of the clients of the distinct types of banks associated with each level of commitment can be observed. In Table VI, gender and education level variables do not show significant differences on the type of entity that the individual uses and, thus, they will not be considered in characterizing the clientele. Job, marital status and age are the key personal criteria to explain different perception of commitment. The percentage analysis shows that the majority of the individuals deal principally with large savings banks (43 per cent) followed by large banks (27 per cent).

Large bank customers, appearing in the correspondence analysis associated with high levels of commitment, are mainly married people. However, there are also a considerable proportion of widowers and divorced clients. With regard to age, all levels can be found in a very similar proportion. However, this group accounts for the higher percentage of individuals older than 64 (44 per cent). Lastly, the majority of their clients are civil servants, occupy intermediate positions in the company or are retired people. In fact, this group accounts for more than 40 per cent of the retired individuals.

Analysing now the clients of small and medium sized banks, which show a medium level of commitment, the age group that varies between 30-39 is the most numerous. However, individuals between 50-64 are also well represented. Almost 60 per cent are married, followed by single people that make up about 30 per cent of the customers. Workers that have an intermediate position in the company are the most represented in terms of main activity although superior controls are principally related with this type of bank.

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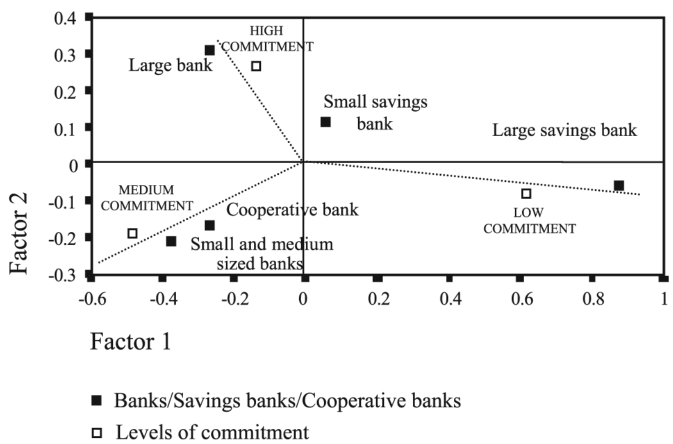
Table V Coordinate system, absolute contribution and relative contribution of the commitment levels and entity type

	Coordinate system		Absolute contribution		Relative contribution	
	1	2	1	2	1	2
Commitment						
Low commitment	0.623	–0.079	0.607	0.060	0.997	0.003
Medium commitment	–0.481	–0.180	0.361	0.305	0.977	0.023
High commitment	–0.142	0.259	0.032	0.635	0.647	0.353
Entity type						
Large bank	–0.276	0.301	0.072	0.514	0.836	0.164
Small and medium bank	–0.381	–0.209	0.136	0.249	0.952	0.048
Large savings bank	0.877	–0.052	0.721	0.015	0.999	0.001
Small savings bank	0.051	0.119	0.002	0.080	0.528	0.472
Agribusiness cooperative bank (land bank)	–0.271	–0.158	0.069	0.142	0.947	0.053

Figure 2 Row and column points



Land banks have most of their clients in the medium commitment range. Most of them are women between the ages of 20-39, married; next come singles. Their jobs are varied although the most frequent one is the civil servant and the less frequent are superior controls and intermediate positions in the company.

Finally, the clients of large savings banks, that show low levels of commitment, are composed of more than 30 per cent young individuals but, given the fact that they form the most numerous group, they also have the highest proportion of individuals between 30-64. Most clients are single, followed by married individuals. However, it is important to highlight that 50 per cent of divorced people are found in this group. With respect to main activity, the least present are directive control jobs and unemployed individuals, although more than 50 per cent of unemployed individuals are found in this group of large savings banks. The same happens with students and self-employed workers.

5. Conclusion

The results obtained in the study are helpful to understand commitment behaviour in financial services. First of all, in the descriptive analysis, clients of each entity type are linked with a determined level of commitment and show differences in the socio-demographical variables analysed. Definitely, job, marital status and age are the key personal criteria to explain different perceptions of commitment. Then, as commitment manifests with different intensity for several individual key variables, it could be considered an interesting non-observed and specific segmentation criterion. As a segmentation variable, commitment links the internal dimension of consumers to their consumer behaviour in a greater degree than other variables do it. So, it can be used to design consumption patterns of actual and potential bank clients.

Second, clients of large banks generally present high levels of commitment and clients of small and medium sized banks and agribusiness cooperative banks show medium levels of commitment. Large savings banks generally have low committed clients. It appears that the strategies used to obtain loyalty in the clients are especially productive in the case of large banks. The antithesis occurs in large savings banks where policies developed do not provide the expected outcomes. Then, evidence seems to shows that large entities have more

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Table VI Column and row frequencies of socio-demographic variables of the clients for each entity type, and χ^2-statistic of significance

Variables		Large bank (%)	Small and medium sized bank (%)	Agribusiness cooperative bank (land bank) (%)	Large savings bank (%)	Small savings bank (%)	Total row	χ^2 (df)
Gender								
Man	% column	49.09	52.08	39.39	47.95	42.11		
	% row	28.42	13.16	6.84	43.16	8.42	100	1.84 (4)
Woman	% column	50.91	47.92	60.61	52.05	57.89		$p = 0.765$
	% row	26.67	10.95	9.52	42.38	10.48	100	
Total column		100	100	100	100	100		
Age level								
20-29 years old	% column	20.00	14.58	27.27	30.41	21.05		
	% row	22.45	7.14	9.18	53.06	8.16	100	
30-39 years old	% column	16.36	33.33	30.30	18.71	23.68		
	% row	21.18	18.82	11.76	37.65	10.59	100	25.4 (16)
40-49 years old	% column	20.00	18.75	12.12	15.20	18.42		$p = 0.063$
	% row	32.35	13.24	5.88	38.24	10.29	100	
50-64 years old	% column	21.82	27.08	15.15	23.39	31.58		
	% row	25.53	13.83	5.32	42.55	12.77	100	
65-74 years old	% column	21.82	6.25	15.15	12.28	5.26		
	% row	43.64	5.45	9.09	38.18	3.64	100	
Total		100	100	100	100	100		
Marital status								
Single	% column	26.36	29.17	36.36	47.95	36.84		
	% row	19.21	9.27	7.95	54.30	9.27	100	
Married	% column	60.91	58.33	42.42	39.18	60.53		26.73 (12)
	% row	33.67	14.07	7.04	33.67	11.56	100	$p = 0.008$
Widower	% column	7.27	4.17	12.12	4.09	2.63		
	% row	36.36	9.09	18.18	31.82	4.55	100	
Divorced	% column	5.45	8.33	9.09	8.77			
	% row	21.43	14.29	10.71	53.57		100	
Total		100	100	100	100	100		
Education level		0.382						
University studies	% column	37.27	60.42	45.45	42.69	47.37		
	% row	23.30	16.48	8.52	41.48	10.23	100	
Secondary studies	% column	31.82	27.08	21.21	33.33	28.95		12.82 (12)
	% row	28.46	10.57	5.69	46.34	8.94	100	$p = 0.382$
Primary studies	% column	26.36	12.50	27.27	21.64	21.05		
	% row	32.58	6.74	10.11	41.57	8.99	100	
Without studies	% column	4.55		6.06	2.34	2.63		
	% row	41.67		16.67	33.33	8.33	100	
Total		100	100	100	100	100		
Main activity		0.001						
Student	% column	4.55	4.17	9.09	12.28	2.63		
	% row	15.63	6.25	9.38	65.63	3.13	100	
Housewife	% column	8.18	4.17	9.09	8.19	18.42		
	% row	25.71	5.71	8.57	40.00	20.00	100	
Unemployed	% column	1.82		6.06	2.92			
	% row	22.22		22.22	55.56		100	
Retired	% column	20.00	4.17	15.15	13.45			
	% row	42.31	3.85	9.62	44.23		100	61.24 (32)
Self-employed worker	% column	10.91	14.58	15.15	15.20	15.79		$p = 0.001$

(continued)

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Table VI

Variables		Large bank (%)	Small and medium sized bank (%)	Agribusiness cooperative bank (land bank) (%)	Large savings bank (%)	Small savings bank (%)	Total row	χ^2 (df)
	% row	21.43	12.50	8.93	46.43	10.71	100	
Directive and	% column	3.64	10.42	3.03	1.17			
superior controls	% row	33.33	41.67	8.33	16.67		100	
Intermediate position	% column	20.00	35.42	3.03	14.62	18.42		
in the company	% row	30.56	23.61	1.39	34.72	9.72	100	
Civil servant	% column	22.73	22.92	24.24	22.22	28.95		
	% row	26.88	11.83	8.60	40.86	11.83	100	
Other works	% column	8.18	4.17	15.15	9.94	15.79		
	% row	23.08	5.13	12.82	43.59	15.38	100	
Total		100	100	100	100	100		
No. individuals		110	48	33	171	38		

capacity to get commitment of customers than those ones of smaller size. This could be because of the level of knowledge, strategic planning and resources. This also suggests that the greater the size, the higher the credibility, the image and the trust on the part of customers. So, it seems that the size of the organization is positively related to its relationship capacity. In this sense, future empirical work is needed to give support to this result.

Third, we have gone deeper into the profiles of committed and non-committed consumers. This could be valued information for managers, because marketing strategies and tactics can be supported in those profiles. Concerning the resources allocation, this information allows the firm to better discriminate among those clients more predisposed to maintain a stable relationship with the firm, and those ones with a reduced predisposition to commit themselves.

Finally, this work constitutes another empirical contribution for the assessment of the relationship between commitment and loyalty. The results obtained confirm the relationship theoretically planted and empirically demonstrated in other settings between commitment and loyalty. This fact shows that commitment is a valuable asset for the Spanish banking system. The scene of intense competition in which it is found gives loyalty a special importance. This is because facing the loss of a client, an entity can spend a lot of resources in order to winback the client or find another individual that takes the place of him/her.

Note

1 Correspondence analysis deals only with categorical data. For this reason, the index of commitment is transformed from metric to categorical in three levels: low, medium and high commitment. First, its standing was determined [n, 7n] where n is the number of variables that compose the dimension and 7n is the maximum value that it can reach given that a seven-point scale has been used. To determine the marks that correspond to each level of commitment, subtract the value n from 7n and divide by 3. Low commitment levels are the values [n, (n+(7n-n)/3)]; medium levels of commitment are [1+n+(7n-n)/3), (n+2(7n-n)/3)]; and finally high levels of commitment are found in the values indicated within the interval [1+n+2(7n-n)/3), 7n].

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