






“The effect of customer relationship management on customer satisfaction performance in the hotel industry in Jordan”

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THE EFFECT OF CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT ON CUSTOMER SATISFACTION PERFORMANCE IN THE HOTEL INDUSTRY IN JORDAN

Abstract

Despite extensive research and practice in the topic of customer relationship management (CRM), the hotel industry still lacks clarity on the effect of CRM on customer satisfaction performance. Thus, the study aims to investigate the effect of CRM through different dimensions (key customer focus, CRM organization, knowledge management, and CRM-based technology) on customer satisfaction performance in Jordanian hotels. A quantitative research approach through questionnaire adopted from relevant literature was used for data collection. The study participants were managers of Jordanian different star hotels. A total of 101 managers were involved in this study, and different key statistical analyses were applied to achieve its purpose using SPSS, regression and correlation analysis after validating the study measures and scale. The results showed that all dimensions of CRM have a positive and significant effect on Jordanian hotels' customer performance and key customer focus has the greatest effect on customer satisfaction out of four CRM dimensions that were examined, followed by CRM organization and knowledge management. Although the technology of CRM considerably impacts customer satisfaction, this impact is very slight. Therefore, the results suggested that the hotel managers should pay attention to their internal resources such as top management support and employee involvement and assess the impact of CRM implementation of customer-orientation culture to improve their performance and consequently establish a competitive advantage.

Keywords

customer relationship, knowledge management, customer satisfaction, hospitality, Jordan, regression, correlation, quantitative

JEL Classification

M30, J28, L83

INTRODUCTION

In the hotel industry, each customer's relationship is important to the hotel and it is recently treated carefully (Hussein et al., 2023). Becker et al. (2009) indicated the CRM as a system can help manage information about past customers and integrate it with front-line customer service software. Moreover, several obstacles have hindered the adoption of CRM in the hotel business, including the industry's ongoing fragmentation, the varied, proprietary, and still-developing nature of information technology systems (Albhirat et al., 2024; Sigala, 2005, 2020). Due to increasing of the importance of developing services for hotels, many hotels have tended to provide new services or develop their current services to achieve their goals, and to apply appropriate marketing strategies, including CRM strategy. However, the problem lies in the lack of clarity about the results of hotels' adoption of CRM and the extent of its impact on their performance within the study environment (Mohammad et al., 2022). Hotels are currently facing an increased awareness of guests of issues related to the field of services,



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in addition to the exposure of the hotels services to great pressures as a result of customers' attitudinal changes, and this in turn led to a weakness in the services provided (Harahsheh et al., 2021; Sanasam et al., 2022). The level of quality of the service provided of hotels and its improvement, which resulted in an increase in burdens and obligations in order to improve the quality of its service. All of these factors contributed to introducing what is new to raise the level of its performance, and among these strategies is CRM (Menhat et al., 2022; Sinisalo et al., 2007).

CRM challenges for hospitality is not a one-size-fits-all solution for hospitality. It requires a clear vision, a customer-centric culture, strong commitment, and significant investment of time, money and resources (Awasthi et al., 2014). CRM also involves dealing with complex and dynamic customer data, which can pose technical, ethical and legal issues. The hotels also have difficulties in integrating and managing the data from different sources, such as online reservations, social media, and loyalty programs (Adam et al., 2010; Njiru et al., 2022). Such a lack of recognized associated aspects might explain why hotel managers have developed incorrect strategies of CRM. Ignorance and oversight of critical aspects will almost certainly continue to stymie organizations' efforts to reap the full benefits of CRM (Alsabi et al., 2023; Mohammad et al., 2024). Previous studies have focused on the impact of CRM dimensions on financial and non-financial performance (Jayachandran et al., 2005). However, there has been limited research on the relationship between CRM dimensions and customer retention, loyalty, and satisfaction (Alhawamdeh et al., 2024; Kim, 2010). This gap in the literature highlights the need to investigate the impact of CRM dimensions on customer performance, especially in developing countries like Jordan (Hussein et al., 2024; Mohammad et al., 2023; Sigala, 2005). Therefore, it is essential to examine the relationship between CRM dimensions and customer performance in order to enhance customer satisfaction, loyalty, and retention.

1. LITERATURE REVIEW

Undoubtedly, CRM systems play a critical role in growing and maintaining customer relationships throughout the entire customer lifecycle. There are some key points that underscore the importance of CRM in this journey like effective lead management. This system allows all organizations to capture, monitor and manage potential customers effectively (Afaq et al., 2023). Also it can ensure that no potential opportunity is overlooked by centralizing lead data and automating lead management processes. This allows businesses to efficiently respond to inquiries, qualify leads, and allocate resources. In the hospitality sector, CRM can enhance visitor experiences and loyalty by implementing such these systems. It makes it easy to capture customer preferences, manage reservations, and provide personalized services and facilitate targeted marketing campaigns, management of loyalty programs, and effective management of customer feedback by analyzing guest data, leading to increased guest satisfaction (Thai et al., 2024).

CRM is characterized as a people-process-technology approach that empowers a company to un-

derstand and keep its customers to generate long-term profits (Eid et al., 2007; Ozgener & Iraz, 2006). Adam et al. (2010) describe CRM as an enterprise strategy that aims to increase customer acquisition, retention, loyalty, and profitability through effective interactions that comprehend and influence customer behavior. Njiru et al. (2022), in another way, define CRM as "the process of storing and analyzing huge volumes of data derived from sales calls, customer-service centers, and real transactions to obtain insight into consumer behavior (Hayley, 2016). CRM also allows businesses to treat various sorts of consumers differently. For example, firms might reply more gradually to those who spend less and charge more to those who demand more services. Furthermore, according to Lawson-Body et al. (2003), CRM enables businesses to gather and obtain knowledge about consumers' purchasing history, favorites, complaints, and other pertinent information to forecast future client demands more accurately, the primary purpose is to increase consumer loyalty (Alshourah, 2015; Jaboob et al., 2024).

Several studies have identified four key indicators for investigating CRM (Reinartz et al., 2004;

Mohammed et al., 2013; Sin et al., 2005; Yim et al., 2005). They indicate some indicators that include “organizing around CRM, adopting CRM technology, focusing on key customers, and knowledge management”. Sin et al. (2005) proposed a multi-dimensional component consisting of four major behavioral constructs: “key customer focus, CRM organization, knowledge management, and technology-based CRM”. Similarly, successful CRM is anticipated by researching the four key areas of “technology, strategy, people, and procedures”. Sin et al. (2005) developed a CRM measure based on previous studies. So that, the present study aims to examine the effect of CRM through different dimensions called (key customer focus, CRM organization, knowledge management, and CRM-based technology) on customer satisfaction performance in Jordanian hotels. The following section discusses the current study’s comments on the CRM indicators.

The primary consumer is given significant attention in the first dimension. Any business intending to successfully deploy CRM needs to have a policy, reward system, customer-focused structure, and culture (Reimann et al., 2010). “Lifetime value computations” are often used to determine key customers. The connections with these customers should accurately reproduce the company’s overarching CRM approach. The goal is to establish enduring relationships with customers. Thus, the seller company becomes necessary to its maximum profitable clients by succeeding this level of intimacy (Wang et al., 2009). The doorway to effective CRM is an overwhelming customer-centric emphasis and continual supply of superior products/services and the accumulation of value to these selected key consumers carried out via customized/personalized offers (Alshourah et al., 2018). According to Sin et al. (2005), this dimension has four main components: interactive co-creation marketing, critical customer lifetime value identification, personalization, and customer-centric marketing.

CRM organization is the second indicator of CRM. The corporation’s CRM system needs to be thoroughly deep-seated with a strong emphasis on its most vital clients. The development of these important connections should be integrated into the structure of the entire business (Yim et al., 2005).

The effective organization of the entire company around CRM depends on a few important factors, according to Sin et al. (2005). These factors include human resources management, organization-wide resource commitment, and organizational structure.

Individual workers are the foundation of customer relationships in CRM, although strategy, people, technology, and procedures are also significant factors (Jayachandran et al., 2005). Alshourah et al. (2018) think that people – rather than technology – are the most challenging component of adopting a CRM orientation. They add that internal marketing, a business function that integrates marketing and human resources, could help achieve this. Furthermore, it oversees fostering in employees a sense of client-centeredness and service. Internal marketing is made up of four major processes: education, market training, reward schemes, staff participation, and internal communication (Soltani et al., 2018; Ko et al., 2008).

Three dimensions are knowledge-based CRM. Effective transition of customer information to customer knowledge, like knowledge management, might lead to success of CRM (Alshourah, 2015). Knowledge in CRM can be defined as “knowledge obtained through experience or empirical study of customer information”. According to Njiru et al. (2022), fundamental parts of knowledge management are “knowledge responsiveness and generation, knowledge dissemination and sharing, and knowledge learning”.

The fourth dimension of CRM is technology-based CRM which is one of the CRM-related tasks that cannot be effectively completed without leveraging the most recent technological advancement. Undoubtedly, technology offers several benefits that can be utilized by the majority of CRM systems (Umrani et al., 2023). Innovative technology can greatly benefit activities of CRM like gathering and creating prediction models, investigating data on customer patterns, responding quickly and effectively with communications of customized, and effectively providing personalized value offerings to customers of individual (Mekhum & Rajabhat, 2020). Unprecedented improvements in IT enable the realization of activities like one-to-one connections, customer-value analysis,

and needs customization (Kim, 2010; Njiru et al., 2022). The use of current IT aided businesses in altering the old CRM methodology. For these CRM tasks, these businesses may now adopt an integrated, web-enabled strategy. Automation of customer procedures, customer information systems, and call centers are among the tools used in the new IT-based strategy (Sin et al., 2005).

From the perspective of the customer, it is understood what is needed to examine how CRM success affects customer performance, including loyalty, retention, and satisfaction. However, this search will focus on how using “CRM as a business strategy” impacts CRM success and customer performance. Customer satisfaction is determined by “evaluating and contrasting the customer’s pre-purchase expectations about the product or service with their post-purchase experiences with the same good or service” (Yim et al., 2005; Sin et al., 2005). Thus, the degree of customer satisfaction will increase with the equivalency between consumer expectations and post-purchase consumption. Satisfied customers act as “the promoters and brand ambassadors of the organization as they spread positive word of mouth more often” (Yim et al., 2005). Thus, for an organization to succeed, it must implement a program to measure customer performance.

Several studies have found that CRM has a positive impact on customer performance (Berraies et al., 2019; Valmohammadi, 2017). For example, in a survey of the largest 1,000 Greek firms, Constantinos et al. (2005) discovered that managers had positive attitudes toward CRM and valued customer satisfaction research. Attharangsun and Ussahawanitchakit (2009) surveyed 524 managers from various Thai businesses and found that CRM effectiveness significantly improved customer performance in American businesses. Mithas et al. (2005) found a positive correlation between the implementation of CRM and increased customer satisfaction in their cross-sectional research of US businesses. Yim et al. (2005) discovered that four CRM aspects significantly impacted customer satisfaction and emphasized the importance of these dimensions being related to one another and functioning harmoniously. Finally, according to Mack et al. (2005), the success of CRM depends on customer performance. These empirical results support the research hypotheses that will be tested.

Based on the preceding, the purpose of the present study is to investigate the effect of CRM through different dimensions (key customer focus, CRM organization, knowledge management, and CRM-based technology) on customer satisfaction performance in Jordanian hotels.

The study hypotheses are as follows:

- H1: Key customer focus positively influences the customer satisfaction performance.*
- H2: A well-organized CRM positively influences the customer satisfaction performance.*
- H3: Knowledge management positively influences the customer satisfaction performance.*
- H4: CRM-based technology positively influences the customer satisfaction performance.*

2. METHODOLOGY

The study selected a quantitative research approach using a research instrument of survey questionnaire that was edited and modified based on relevant literature such as Akroush et al. (2011), Rîpa and Nicolescu (2023), Sin et al. (2005). The measuring indicators include 23 items that covering five constructs which is designed to gauge consumers’ perceptions of CRM characteristics and satisfaction. Each of these assessment items was measured using a five-point Likert scale, with anchors ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). Besides, a separate piece of the questionnaire was designed to obtain the demographic details of the participants.

The data were gathered using a single cross-sectional survey approach. Managers residing in Amman, Jordan’s one- to five-star hotels provided the information (Jordanian Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, 2023). Additionally, the decision is a result of these hotels’ operational implementation of CRM strategy. Using systematic random sampling, 160 questionnaires were sent to hotel managers in Amman. Of those, 101 valid replies were collected, indicating a 63.4% response rate. The underlying hypotheses are tested using multiple regression analysis.

Table 1. Demographic profile

Measure	Value	Frequency	(%)
Gender	Male	80	79
	Female	21	21
Operating age	1-10	26	21
	11-20	34	34
	21-30	20	20
	31-40	15	15
	40 and older	6	5
Hotels categories	One star	15	15
	Two stars	21	21
	Three stars	35	35
	Four stars	21	21
	Five stars	13	12

The profile details of the answering hotels are displayed in Table 1. The bulk of the participating hotels (79%), according to their sex, are male, while 21% are female. From the perspective of operating years of the hotels, it was originated that most of the participating hotels are operating for 11-20 years, comprising 34% of the total. This is followed by hotels operating for 1-10 years, comprising 21% of the total. Those operating for above 40 years occupy the least proportion of .05% only. Among the sample data regarding hotels categories, 15% are one-star hotels, 21% are two-star hotels, 35% belong to the three-star category, 21% belong to four-star category, while 12% belong to the five-star category.

The survey was initially developed in English and then translated into Arabic, and then, by a qualified translation, independently returned to English to guarantee content authenticity. To make sure the questionnaire was clear and readable, it was also shown to four impartial marketing specialists. However, the four experts' input was taken into consideration when making a few modifications to the questionnaire. Pilot research was used in the next phase to pre-test the questionnaire. The scale was further refined as a consequence of the pilot study, and it was then given by hand in the study's primary survey (Alshourah, 2021).

Table 2 displays the primary survey's validity and reliability metrics. Since the Cronbach's alpha test is the most popular and advised approach, the study employed it to assess reliability (Hair et al., 2010). According to Nunnally's (1978) recommendation, the alpha coefficients for each dimension in Table 1 were more than the threshold value of 0.7.

The study utilized "exploratory factor analysis" using main component analysis and varimax rotation to establish the accuracy of the results, the consistency of the findings, and the normal distribution of the data. The results of the exploratory factor analysis indicate that the dataset has normal distribution based on the Bartlett test of sphericity ($\chi^2 = 478.85$, $df = 171$, $p < 0.01$) and the "Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure" ($KMO = 0.858$). Therefore, the data are adequate and appropriate for factor analysis. The "rotated component matrix" was used to examine the factor loading of the measurement items, as shown in Table 2. The results indicate that each measurement item was strongly loaded to its own factor, with factor loading values ranging from 0.564 to 0.846. This suggests that the study has sufficient convergent validity.

Table 2. Reliability analysis of the constructs

Constructs	Component	Cronbach's alpha
Key customer focus	.82	.88
	.81	
	.69	
	.67	
CRM organization	.89	.77
	.86	
	.75	
Knowledge management	.85	.85
	.79	
	.69	
CRM-based technology	.65	.78
	.90	
	.88	
	.76	
	.75	
Customer satisfaction performance	.70	.81
	.82	
	.77	

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results align with theoretical predictions as the correlations between factors do not exceed the 0.70 threshold limit. Additionally, each factor's correlations were statistically significant with $p < 0.01$ (two-tailed). The analysis highlights that every factor has its own unique characteristics and shows a stronger relationship with itself compared to the other factors. Overall, this illustrates how the variables are positively correlated while still

Table 3. Correlations between variables

	KC	CRMO	KM	CRMT	CS
KC	1.0				
CRMO	.36 (**)	1.0			
KM	.43 (**)	.63 (**)	1.0		
CRMT	.50 (**)	.48 (**)	.52 (**)	1.0	
CS	.47 (**)	.33 (**)	.46 (**)	.51 (**)	1.0

maintaining their distinct identities. Table 3 displays the estimated Pearson bivariate correlations between variables.

The study used multiple regression analysis to test hypotheses with the help of SPSS (version 24.0). In this analysis, customer performance was considered the dependent variable, while the CRM dimensions – key customer focus, knowledge management, CRM organization, and CRM-based technology – were the independent variables. The model's modified R-square value of 0.41 indicates a good fit between the data and the theory. To evaluate the relationships between the dependent and independent variables, the degree of significance (p-value) and the standardized regression coefficient (β -value) were used. The outcomes of testing hypotheses are presented in Table 4, which supports all four hypotheses empirically through the standardized regression weight and significance level. These results confirmed a positive association between CRM dimensions and customer performance.

Beta values from Table 4 were analyzed to identify which Customer Relationship Management (CRM) dimensions, namely key customer focus, knowledge management, CRM organization, and CRM-based technology, have the most significant impact on customer performance. The analysis revealed that key customer focus ($\beta = .434$), CRM organization ($\beta = .392$), knowledge management ($\beta = .243$), and CRM-based technology ($\beta = .211$) are the predictor variables that have the greatest im-

act on customer performance, based on the beta values of the four major variables.

Finding out how the four CRM dimensions affect customer performance in the hotel industry is the main goal of this study. According to the multiple regression analysis, these four CRM factors account for 43% of the variance in customer performance, or an adjusted R-square of 0.43. All four CRM dimensions significantly improve customer satisfaction, according to the results of the hypothesis testing. Key customer focus has the greatest effect on customer satisfaction out of four CRM dimensions that were examined, followed by CRM organization, knowledge management. Although technology of CRM considerably impacts customer satisfaction, this impact is very slight. These findings are consistent with approximately of the well-recognized research studies that show CRM adoption results in enduring client relationships, which in turn contributes to the achievement of customer satisfaction (Roh et al., 2005; Constantinou et al., 2005; Attharangsun & Ussahawanitchakit, 2009; Mithas et al., 2005; Yim et al., 2005; Mack et al., 2005).

The outcomes demonstrated that a key customer focus significantly improves customer performance. The consequences published by Yim et al. (2005) and Mohammed et al. (2013) are consistent with the substantial correlation between key customer focus and customer satisfaction that has been seen. Furthermore, Mack (2005) discovered that one of the main factors influencing customer

Table 4. Multiple regression statistics coefficients

Model	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	t	Sig	Result
	β	Std. error	Beta			
1 (constant)	275	304		905	.368	
KC \rightarrow CS (H1)	.160	.060	.434	2.682	.000	Accepted
CRMO \rightarrow CS (H2)	.396	.094	.392	4.234	.000	Accepted
KM \rightarrow CS (H3)	.047	.098	.243	.481	.000	Accepted
CRMT \rightarrow CS (H4)	.159	.092	.211	1.717	.000	Accepted

Table 5. Hypotheses testing results

Hypothesis	Conclusion
H1: Key customer focus positively influences the customer satisfaction performance	Supported
H2: A well-organized CRM positively influences the customer satisfaction performance	Supported
H3: Knowledge management positively influences the customer satisfaction performance	Supported
H4: CRM-based technology positively influences the customer satisfaction performance	Supported

happiness is having good customer interactions. Thus, it illustrates that achieving customer satisfaction – one of the primary indicators of organizational performance – requires that the company identify, comprehend, and exceed the expectations of a wide range of (possible) customers.

The findings suggest that customer performance is significantly impacted by knowledge. This result is proportionate with the result of Kim et al. (2008) who proposed that to enable efficient service delivery, firms should integrate and make use of all pertinent data about the client. In a similar vein, Mohammed et al. (2013) discovered a favorable correlation between knowledge management and customer service effectiveness. Furthermore, a large body of research has offered actual evidence in favor of the confident correlation between knowledge and customer performance. Therefore, it illustrates how improved customer relations allow businesses to quickly gather pertinent data to meet each individual customer's needs.

The study indicates that while technology-based customer relationship management (CRM) enhances customer performance, the correlation between the two is not particularly strong. Therefore, only limited evidence supports the proposed hypothesis. This finding contradicts the results of a previous study by Sin et al. (2005), which demon-

strated that technology-based CRM had a significant positive impact on customer performance. However, the fact that hotels in Amman view CRM technology as a mere customer data storage tool could explain this discrepancy. This viewpoint is further supported by Constantinos (2005) who suggests that technology is often regarded only as a means of storing data and not as a system for processing consumer information.

The findings demonstrate that customer performance is significantly improved by CRM organizations. This outcome is consistent with research presented by Rahimi and Gunlu (2016), Rahimi and Kozak (2017), and Conze et al. (2010). Besides, the studies conducted by Akroush et al. (2011) and Sin et al. (2005) has provided empirical support for the idea that customer satisfaction (or performance) is influenced by CRM organization. It follows that the success of the organization's CRM initiative depends on having a commitment from the entire organization. Additionally, according to Akroush et al. (2011), CRM organization involves correctly assigning the necessary resources and aligning the critical competencies required to change customers. Thus, without an organizational-wide promise to the CRM strategy, a customer-oriented focus alone cannot ensure tangible financial outcomes. Table 5 summarizes the results of this study.

CONCLUSION

The study aims to investigate the effect of CRM through different dimensions (key customer focus, CRM organization, knowledge management, and CRM-based technology) on customer satisfaction performance in Jordanian hotels. The findings confirmed the hypothesized statements that showed positive effect of CRM dimensions on customer satisfaction based on hotels managers' perceptions, which indicates the importance of CRM in creating and sustaining higher level of satisfaction among hotels customers. Accordingly, the findings support the growing concern of hotels management to focus on their customers and establish positive CRM to reach out desirable outcomes. Therefore, the factors of CRM and relationship with customer satisfaction performance underpin the influence of CRM over different critical factors related to organizational performance and outcomes.

The study's findings provide practitioners important new perspectives on the importance of successfully putting a CRM strategy into practice. Furthermore, as Amman is a well-known travel destination worldwide, knowing the traits and preferences of hotel guests, as well as gathering other vital data would be helpful in creating marketing plans that will effectively draw visitors to Amman's main tourist attractions. Additionally, keeping a long-term relationship with customers and improving customer performance through effective CRM framework management would encourage visitors to return to the area. Thus, the main goal for all hotel managers ought to be developing a CRM strategy. Based on the study's findings, it is evident that customer knowledge is a vital component of CRM strategies that significantly affects customer performance. Hotels that can effectively implement such strategies and manage customer knowledge will enjoy the benefits of customer loyalty and boost their long-term profitability.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Conceptualization: Abdulrahman Al-Kharabsheh.
 Data curation: Abdulrahman Al-Kharabsheh.
 Formal analysis: Abdulrahman Al-Kharabsheh.
 Investigation: Abdulrahman Al-Kharabsheh.
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 Project administration: Abdulrahman Al-Kharabsheh.
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 Validation: Abdulrahman Al-Kharabsheh.
 Writing – original draft: Abdulrahman Al-Kharabsheh.
 Writing – review & editing: Abdulrahman Al-Kharabsheh.

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APPENDIX A

Table A1. Measurements items used in this study

Item	Statement
Key customer focus	
KC1	Customized offerings via ongoing dialogue with key customers
KC2	Customized services and products to key customers
KC3	Effort to find out what key customers need
KC4	Product/service modified according to customer needs
CRM organization	
CRMO1	Sales and marketing expertise and resources to succeed in CRM
CRMO2	Trainings to develop the skills for acquiring and deepening customer relationships
CRMO3	Clear business goals related to customer acquisition, development, retention, and reactivation
Knowledge management	
KM1	Employees are willing to help customers in a responsive manner
KM2	Understanding the needs of key customers' knowledge learning
KM3	Channels to enable ongoing, two-way communication with key
KM4	Customers can expect prompt service from employees
Technology-based CRM	
CRMT1	The right technical personnel support in utilization of computer technology in CRM
CRMT2	The right software to serve customers
CRMT3	The right hardware to serve customers
CRMT4	Individual customer information is available at every point of contact
CRMT5	Maintenance of a comprehensive database of customers
Customer satisfaction performance	
CS1	I am very satisfied with my stay at the hotel
CS2	I am delighted with the services that the hotel offers