

Customer Relationship Management (CRM) Dimensions on Hotel Customer Satisfaction

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Abstract

This study examines the impact of Customer Relationship Management (CRM) on customer satisfaction in the hotel industry in Johor Bharu, Malaysia. It examines CRM dimensions such as Customer Orientation, CRM Organisation, CRM-based Technology, and Knowledge Management. The research uses a correlational quantitative cross-sectional survey approach and a sample size of 200 customers. The findings provide insights for marketing, hotel management, and consumer relationship studies, enabling informed decisions on resource allocation, training programs, and technology investments.

1. Introduction

Customer relationship management (CRM) is an organization movement focused on creating and holding customers through expanded fulfilment and satisfaction. It is being integrated into various industry sectors, with research on improving CRM frameworks. One way to address future CRM framework improvement is to connect CRM with the hotel industry, focusing on customer satisfaction and efficiency. Understanding the collaboration and interface between CRM and Knowledge Management (KM) is crucial, as CRM involves communication, building a loyal customer base, and improving service quality. Service quality allows hotel firms to address customer concerns and improve their competitiveness. To enhance CRM in the hotel industry, companies should improve their customer information handling, ensuring they provide services that meet customer needs and loyalty. This study aims to examine how understanding customer knowledge, loyalty, and service quality can lead to the enhancement of CRM systems.

1.1 Problem Statement

Customer satisfaction is crucial in the hotel industry, especially in regions like Johor Bharu, Malaysia. Rapid technological advancements, changing consumer preferences, and the need for personalization are posing challenges. To foster a stronger bond with customers, hotels should incorporate effective Customer Relationship Management (CRM) practices. CRM dimensions include Customer Orientation, CRM Organization, CRM-based Technology, and Managing Knowledge. Effective CRM organizations can improve service quality and customer satisfaction. CRM-based Technology allows organizations to gather, analyze, and deploy customer data for better relationship management. Managing Knowledge involves collecting, analyzing, and using customer information to personalize the experience. Understanding the impacts of these dimensions on client satisfaction within Johor Bharu's unique socio-economic and cultural landscape is essential for hotels to harness CRM potential and ensure sustained growth and success.

1.2 Research Question

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1. How does Customer Orientation impact customer satisfaction in Johor Bharu hotels?
2. In what manner does CRM Organization influence customer satisfaction in this region?
3. What role does CRM-based Technology play in determining hotel customer satisfaction in Johor Bharu?
4. How does Managing Knowledge impact customer satisfaction in Johor Bharu hotels?

1.3 Research Objective

1. To assess the impact of Customer Orientation on customer satisfaction.
2. To analyze the influence of CRM Organization on client satisfaction.
3. To understand the significance of CRM-based Technology in determining customer satisfaction.
4. To investigate the influence of Managing Knowledge on customer satisfaction in the hotel industry of Johor Bharu, Malaysia.

1.4 Scope of study

The study focuses on hotels in Johor Bharu, Malaysia, exploring the impact of Customer Relationship Management (CRM) dimensions on customer satisfaction. Johor Bharu's vibrant tourism sector and unique cultural, economic, and market characteristics make it an ideal setting. The research emphasizes the importance of considering local contexts in CRM studies, as cultural and regional factors significantly influence customer expectations and responses to CRM practices. By concentrating on Johor Bharu, the study aims to provide nuanced insights into how these factors shape the effectiveness of CRM strategies in the local hospitality sector, contributing to a more comprehensive understanding of the relationship between CRM dimensions and customer satisfaction in this specific geographical context.

1.5 Significance of study

This study enhances understanding of Customer Relationship Management (CRM) in the hotel industry, specifically in Johor Bharu, Malaysia. It expands knowledge of CRM practices and their application in a specific regional setting, benefiting scholars in marketing, hospitality management, and customer relationship studies. The findings provide nuanced insights specific to the Johor Bharu hospitality market, enabling hotel managers to make informed decisions about resource allocation, training programs, and technology investments. The study aligns with Peppers and Rogers' Relationship Marketing framework, promoting long-term success by enhancing customer relationships.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Customer Satisfaction

Malaysia's hotel industry is facing intense competition from other establishments offering similar hospitality services. Johor, a state with a proliferation of new developments, such as service flats and condos, is attracting tourists and families. Airbnb is a significant rival, and the number of hotels in Malaysia has also been steadily expanding. Johor Bharu Hotels, which are heavily integrated with a theme park and water park, are no exception. Customer relationship management (CRM) deployment is positively correlated with customer satisfaction, with aspects such as customer orientation, CRM organization, knowledge management, and technology-based CRM significantly impacting hotel performance.

Customer satisfaction is directly proportional to service quality, service features, and accessibility, and it determines whether a customer will return to a hotel or recommend it to others. Hotels should consider CRM dimensions such as customer orientation, CRM organization, CRM-based technology, and managing knowledge service quality to gauge customer satisfaction.

Customer satisfaction is a significant issue for service industries, especially those in the service industry. Alhkami & Alarussi (2016) argue that customer satisfaction is tied to a specific experience, which is influenced by the quality of service. Wang'ombe and Ngige (2016) and Eshetie *et al.* (2016) suggest that hotels can gauge customer satisfaction by measuring satisfaction with specific aspects of service.

2.2 Customer Relationship Management Dimensions

The four primary behavioural components that make up customer relationship management (CRM) are seen as multi-dimensional constructs. Among these parts are CRM based on technology, knowledge management, and a primary emphasis on customers. Michael (2018) asserts that CRM relies on four pillars: people, technology, strategy, and procedures. The beneficial effect of CRM aspects on organisational effectiveness has been shown by several research. Sofi (2020) performed research in the hotel business that sheds more light on the favourable correlation between four CRM dimensions—customer orientation, CRM organisation, knowledge management, and technology-based CRM—and organisational effectiveness. One of the most important aspects of customer

relationship management (CRM) in the hospitality industry for improving guest-organization relationships is customer orientation. In addition, financial, customer, internal, learning, and growth success are all strongly correlated with customer orientation. The success of marketing efforts, customer satisfaction, and good organisational performance may be achieved by a more customer-centric approach, say Elmubasher & Hamid (2020). According to the literature, customer orientation, CRM organisation, CRM-based technology, managing knowledge, and CRM all contribute to customer happiness. The core elements of customer relationship management (CRM), which include people, technology, strategy, and procedures, are closely related to these aspects.

2.2.1 Customer Orientation

Customer orientation comprises of identifying customer needs, engaging with customers, addressing customer problems, and providing avenues for resolution, this leads to customer satisfaction. An organization's customer orientation may be described as its inclination to meet the needs of its customers. When hotel employees proactively look out for their requirements, visitors are more likely to have a pleasant stay. One of the most important aspects of customer orientation, according to Sofi *et al.* (2020), is fostering strong connections between hotel visitors and service providers. In order to successfully implement CRM, which aims to guarantee incremental organisational performances, customer orientation is crucial. Only when a company outperforms its rivals in identifying, comprehending, and meeting the diverse demands of its (possible) consumers will its performance improve. This may be accomplished by consistently engaging with consumers, which allows the organisation to create a problem-solving process that is focused on their needs. According to Elmubasher & Hamid (2020), firms with a customer-centric culture tend to have more productive operations since their staff are more invested in satisfying customers. A hospitality (hotel) organization's performance and competitive advantage may be significantly enhanced when staff adopt a customer-centric approach. This, in turn, boosts the organization's service image. So, customer orientation helps businesses stay in touch with consumers all the time, which increases customer happiness.

2.2.2 CRM Organization

Businesses in all kinds of industries, according to earlier work by Elmubasher & Hamid (2020), should prioritise their customers and use customer relationship management (CRM) systems. Businesses must have up-to-date machinery, a compliant tracking system, and a safe working environment in order to operate legally. Companies without a culture that values long-term connections with customers typically find that CRM doesn't work. In addition, anytime these companies' personnel come into contact with consumers, they must maintain friendly ties with them. The CRM framework in hospitality organisations is said by Al-Gasawneh *et al.* (2022) to be dependent on the attitude, commitment, and performance of the personnel. Employees play an increasingly important role in CRM organisations and are crucial to CRM's effective adoption.

2.2.3 Knowledge Management

Improved customer interactions obligate commercial entities to collect data from consumers on their service habits, buying history, attitudes, perceptions, and intentions (Elmubasher & Hamid 2019). In this way, they can get the word out to the right service points where it may help them better serve their consumers and stay competitive. Businesses in the hotel industry may get an edge in the market, according to Sofi *et al.* (2020), if they utilise advanced IT-enabled technologies to learn more about their customers and share that information with their staff. Organisational performance has been favourably impacted by customer knowledge and information, which has helped to build mutual partnerships (Sofi *et al.*, 2020). On top of that, businesses are able to enhance their interactions with customers by tailoring their services to their specific needs.

2.2.4 Technology Based CRM

Software based on technology is used by most organisations to facilitate customer interactions and data collection (Elmubasher & Hamid, 2020). Nevertheless, how well and efficiently these technological resources are used will dictate their level of success. The data collected by these instruments is also used for decision-making and business intelligence, ensuring precise service delivery. Not only can these information tools based on technology reduce internal expenses, but they also increase earnings. Hotels often use technology-based techniques to appeal to clients due to changing customer preferences and tough competition. Thus, it is thought that a customer-centric approach, supported by service tools based on technology, may lead to greater customer satisfaction and larger profit margins (Pozza *et al.*, 2018).

2.3 Hypothesis Development

2.3.1 Customer Orientation

According to Sofi *et al.* (2020), building lasting connections with consumers and going above and beyond to meet their needs is the goal of customer orientation, which in turn increases the level of customer satisfaction. Sofi *et al.* (2020) also pointed out that among the fundamental concepts of market orientation is a focus on the customer. Both the company and its consumers benefit from increased value creation when businesses have a keen eye for and knowledge of consumer preferences and requirements. A further aspect of customer orientation is the tendency for employees to establish personal relationships with consumers. Behavioural and cultural traits make up customer orientation. In contrast to the cultural viewpoint, which is linked to the core qualities of the business, the behavioral viewpoint identifies customer orientation in relation to the creation, dissemination, and response of market data (Dhingra *et al.*, 2020). Jiang *et al.* (2019) add credence to this idea by arguing that consumer participation is all about sharing information, being accountable, and keeping in touch on a personal level. Customer orientation, according to Anabila *et al.* (2020), is a strategic choice that means directing all of a company's efforts toward helping and satisfying consumers who make money. Customer orientation and customer satisfaction are positively and significantly related, according to the findings above. The following hypothesis has been proposed based on the literature that has been examined: H1. Customer orientation has positive effect on customer satisfaction.

2.3.2 CRM Organization

A previous study by Elmubasher & Hamid, (2020) revealed that there is a positive and statistically significant relationship between CRM organisation and the following CRM dimensions: customer satisfaction, retention, and marketing, brand distinctiveness, pricing, and financial capacity of the organisation. Therefore, consumer data is essential for precise preference determination, which in turn allows hospitality businesses to tailor pricing and services to meet the unique requirements of each client. Therefore, it is postulated that: A CRM organisation boosts customer satisfaction.

2.3.3 Knowledge Management

According to Al-Gasawneh *et al.* (2022) boosting customer satisfaction is a two-way street that begins with better understanding your customers via CRM implementation. Knowledge management allows businesses to strengthen relationships with their most valued consumers, which in turn generates customer loyalty and gives them a leg up in the market. Therefore, following from the results of the existing literature: H3. Managing knowledge has a positive effect on customer satisfaction.

2.3.4 Technology-Based CRM

Michael. (2018) pointed out that hotels moving away from transactional to relationship-oriented business strategies and aiming for mutually beneficial interactions with customers prioritize customer relationship management technology as a business strategy. As a result of fierce competition and shifting consumer tastes, hotels often use tech-based strategies to win over guests and enhance customer satisfaction, (Pozza *et al.*, 2018). Using customer relationship management (CRM) software, businesses can have two-way conversations with their clientele, which helps with building rapport, finding new clients, keeping the ones they already have, satisfying their wants, and retaining the ones they have. Hence, it is hypothesized that: H4. CRM-based technology has a positive effect on customer satisfaction.

2.4 Research conceptual framework

Adapted from the previous study of (Maraj *et al.*, 2019), the research framework for this study is shown as in Figure 1.

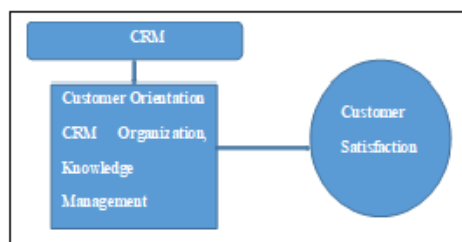


Fig. 1 Conceptual Framework

2.5 Research Gaps

One of the key areas of research in Johor Bharu's hotel industry remains the impact of Customer Relationship Management (CRM) dimensions on buyer satisfaction (Smit, 2023). Whereas CRM has shown significant correlations with customer satisfaction in various studies there is no specific study that has been conducted focusing on Johor Bharu's hotel industry. It is therefore essential to explore its effectiveness in this particular region. There is lack of comprehensive data as well as understanding of the effectiveness of CRM practices within the region (Sanasam *et al.*, 2022). The current study seeks to fill this gaps by establishing the effects of customer relationship management (CRM) dimensions in terms of customer orientation, CRM organisation, CRM based technology and managing knowledge on customer satisfaction in hotels in Johor Bahru.

3. Methodology

This section of the study will focus on the research technique that will be used to ascertain the impact of CRM dimensions on the satisfaction of hotel customers in Johor Bharu. It will also examine and provide justification for this approach. This chapter details the study's methodology, including its research design, instruments and measurements, population, sample size, sampling processes, data collecting methods, and data processing methodologies.

3.1 Research Design

This study uses a correlational quantitative cross-sectional survey methodology to investigate the impact of different CRM elements on hotel guests' happiness in Johor Bharu. The methodology is based on quantitative research approaches, which use structured numerical data and statistical analysis. Descriptive and correlational designs are used to test hypotheses and provide a comprehensive definition of relevant variables. The study aims to examine the direction and magnitude of correlations between variables and explore potential new avenues of study. The correlational design is ideal for research focusing on associations between variables rather than causality.

3.2 Population and Sampling

The study focuses on Hotel Customer Satisfaction in Johor Bharu, specifically at Sentral hotel. Researchers will recruit customers who visited the hotel in the last three months, using social media permission and data from the hotels. A sample size of 200 will be used to generalize findings, based on the total number of customers who visited the hotel in the last three months.

3.3 Research Instruments

The study uses a self-administered structured questionnaire for the survey phase, collecting quantitative data on customer satisfaction, customer orientation, CRM organization, CRM based technology, and managing knowledge. The questionnaire is seven-part, with sub-sections for ordinal and nominal levels. Pilot research with 20 participants is planned, and questionnaire questions were derived from previous studies for high validity and reliability.

3.4 Method of Data Collection

The university's ethical permission will be obtained prior to the commencement of data collecting. Prior to the collection of research data, participants were also recruited. The management of the Sentral hotel in Johor Bharu received an introduction letter and a request for authorization from the researcher to conduct the survey among their patrons. In order for the researcher to interact with their consumers on social media, permission from the management is also required. Since the majority of the clients are often either internal or foreign visitors, conducting the research would be done remotely since it would incur additional costs to meet their physical needs. To help with the data gathering for the research, a human resource management employee known as a gatekeeper will be hired. By posting requests for participants on message boards and social media groups, the gatekeeper will assist in the study's participant recruitment. The initial 25 applicants will participate in the pilot phase of the two studies, and the recruiting process will continue until 250 people are found. With the assistance of the gatekeeper, who will return the participants' answers to the researcher, the questionnaire will then be sent to the participants via social media platforms. Customers will be informed by the researcher that participation in the whole procedure is entirely optional. The research will only include those who are willing to participate.

3.5 Statistical Analysis

The information that will be collected during the survey phase of the research project will be subjected to statistical analysis. For the purpose of conducting the statistical analysis, the 29.0 version of the Statistical Product and Services Solutions (SPSS) program will be used. The quantitative data will be summarized using descriptive statistics methods such as means and frequencies. To test the alternative hypothesis, however, we will use

inferential statistics methods such as linear regression and Pearson's correlation coefficient surveys. Further details are given in the sections that follow.

3.5.1 Descriptive Statistics Analysis

The statistical procedures used to list the properties of a dataset are the primary subject of descriptive statistics evaluations (Knife & Forstmeier, 2021). This quantitative research method aids researchers in conducting thorough analyses, which in turn helps them to draw relevant conclusions and make educated decisions. It lays forth the facts in a way that anybody can understand. In order to properly identify and categorize data, descriptive statistics often use pattern, variation, and distribution measures. Range, deviation from the mean, and variance are variability measures that reveal the overall pattern in the data, whereas the mean, median, and mode provide the typical value of a dataset (De Smith, 2018). It is possible to identify the kind of data using distributional metrics like frequency distribution, box plots, and histograms. Descriptive statistics were derived from the calculations of frequencies, distributions, standard deviations, and means for this investigation.

3.5.2 Normality Analysis

Normality analysis refers to a toll in statistics that is used to determine whether a collected dataset in a study follows the bell curve distribution, this is based on a study conducted by (Knife & Forstmeier, 2021). In any research work, the regression analysis, analysis of variance (ANOVA), and all the particular t-tests conducted depend on the data being normally distributed. This means that it's very essential to conduct a normality study to since it assists the researcher to determine whether the data is normally distributed. These ensures that there is no biasness in the results obtained during the study. The Shapiro-Wilk, Anderson-Darling, and Kolmogorov-Smirnov tests are the most often used to determine normality (De Smith, 2018). The current study will used the Shapiro-Wilk test for normalcy investigation.

3.5.3 Multiple Regression Analysis

The relationship between the dependent and independent variables in the current study will be conducted by use of the multiple regression analysis, as stated by Mohajan *et al.* (2020). The multiple regression analysis is verified statistical approach which gives researchers a chance to determine the correlations between the independent and dependent variables in research. In this case the researcher will establish the relationship between Customer Satisfaction and Customer Orientation, CRM Organization, CRM based Technology and Managing Knowledge. The dependent variable in a multivariate regression analysis is called the criterion variable or the outcome, while the independent variables are called the predictors or explanatory factors. As stated by De Smith (2018), the goal of this research is to develop a model that can reliably predict the dependent component's outcomes by considering the independent elements. This research will make use of the multiple regression analysis since there is a single dependent component and several independent factors. The analysis will be predicated on the assumption that a significance threshold of $p = +/- 0.05$ is suitable.

3.5.4 Pearson's Correlation

According to Baak *et al.*, (2020), Pearson's correlation coefficient evaluation can be to ascertain the direction and magnitude of the linear connection between two continuous variables. The researchers understand the degree of correlation between two variables with the assistance of this statistical approach that is extensively employed. The range of values for Pearson's correlation coefficient, sometimes known as "r," is "-1" to "+1." A complete positive correlation is shown by a score of +1, as stated by De Smith (2018). In the event that the score is zero, it signifies that there is no linear link between the two components. Considering that it would be useful in putting theories to the test, the research on Pearson's correlation coefficient was suitable for this study. A significance level of $r = +/-0.1$ will be determined to be appropriate for the study. The results obtained from the collected data will be used to draw the final conclusions for this study.

4. Conclusion

The chapter has presented the methodology that will be used by the researcher during data collection and data analysis. An overview of the method analysis process is given in this chapter, which includes research calculations, measurements, sampling, operational description, and study hypotheses. It follows the development of the analysis from the beginning via the techniques used to analyze the data. The methodology used by the researcher in this study has been explained in the present chapter. The examination of the findings produced from the data collected in the previous chapter will then be further upon in the next chapter.

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Conflict of Interest

Authors declare that there is no conflict of interests regarding the publication of the paper.

Author Contribution

The authors confirm contribution to the paper as follows: **study conception and design:** Nurul Hafizah Mohd Fauzi, Siti Aisyah Mustafa; **data collection:** Nurul Hafizah Mohd Fauzi; **analysis and interpretation of results:** Nurul Hafizah Mohd Fauzi; **draft manuscript preparation:** Nurul Hafizah Mohd Fauzi. All authors reviewed the results and approved the final version of the manuscript.

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