

The Impact of Customer Relationship Management on Hotels Performance in Jordan¹

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Abstract

Customer relationship management (CRM) has currently become one of the hottest issues and a focal-center in the business field. In fact, due to the competitive environments among hotels sector, it is essential that hotels should adopt new strategy such as CRM technology to help hotel managers, service customers and to improve organizations performance. Though previous research showed that the relationship between CRM technology and hotel performance is ambiguous, these inconsistent findings may be lack understanding of the instrument that connect CRM technology and hotel performance. Moreover, studies that evaluate the relationships between CRM dimensions (customer orientation, CRM organization, knowledge management, technology-based CRM) and hotel performance are still inadequate. This research evaluates the relationship between CRM dimensions and hotel performance in Jordan. The research surveys a sample of 50 hotels in Jordan and uses correlation and regression for analyses and testing. Based on these findings, this study demonstrates a significant relationship between CRM dimensions and hotel performance.

Keywords: customer orientation, CRM organization, knowledge management, technology-based CRM, hotel sector in Jordan.

1. Introduction

Customer relationship management (CRM) is one of the major sources of competitive advantage in hotels sector. Furthermore, customer relationship management (CRM) is an extensively accepted instrument that supports customer-oriented organizations decisions (Mohammed et al., 2014). More specifically, CRM is regarded to be among the best strategies and practices for hotels in order to develop their performance and thus to make sure that their long-term business is survival (Kasim & Minai, 2009; Sigala, 2005; Wu & Lu, 2012). In Jordan, the hotels sector operates in a business environment that is illustrated by strong competition, making it vulnerable to international competition (Rababah, 2012; Al-Momani, & Noor, 2009). Besides, the occupancy rates of hotels in Jordan have varied between 2010 and 2016 (MOTA, 2016).

This also reveals that hotel performance in Jordan needs development. In other words, hotel managers need to use an appropriate strategy and practice to develop their performance (Alshourah, 2012). Consequently, to develop both customer satisfaction and to improve profitability, hotels must nowadays emphasize on implementing a CRM strategy that aims to look for, collect and store the right data, share it through the whole hotel and then use it all in organizational levels to improve a personalized; and unique customer experience (Abdullateef, 2011; Ammari, 2014; Mohammed et al., 2014). However, in spite of the wide use of CRM in the organizations, there have been only limited studies and publications within the hotels sector (Ammari, & Nusair, 2015). At the same time, the effect of CRM implementation on organization performance has not received adequate attention from academics and there are still a few of empirical researches in this field (Krasnikov et al., 2009; Kumar, 2008; Piskar & Faganel, 2009). In addition to justification for this study regarding to CRM technology and hotels performance, previous research have demonstrated inconsistent findings concerning their relationship.

¹ "" This research is funded by Deanship scientific research and Graduate studies Zarga University, Jordan. ""

In particular, some of the previous research showed a significant and positive impact CRM technology on hotels performance (Akroush *et al.*, 2011; Kasim & Minai, 2009), while others have indicated non-significant between CRM technology and hotels performance (Ernst, Hoyer, Krafft, & Krieger, 2011; Jayachandran *et al.*, 2005; Reigby *et al.*, 2004). Consequently, there is a need for more studies to be performed within the hotel industry in Jordan countries (Alshourah, 2012). In this respect, Jordan has been recording a steady growth in the hotels industry.

2. Problem Statement

These days the hotel sector is experiencing a rise in globalization, competition, and higher level of customer turnover. Furthermore, increasing customer acquisition costs and growing customer expectations are making the hotels performance and competitiveness depend considerably on their ability to satisfy customers efficiently and effectively (Adam *et al.*, 2010). On the other hand, there are lacks of transparency, quality, and analysis of these data in this sector (Adam *et al.*, 2010). Scholars (e.g., Kasim & Minai, 2009; Mohmmmed, & Rashed, 2012; Ammari, & Nusair, 2014) also explored CRM to be the best business strategy for hotel companies to differentiate themselves from their competitors. Therefore, Jordanian hotels must also focus on CRM strategies for durable, dichotomous and profitable relationships with guests. Finally, the problem which this study seeks to address is the relationship between CRM performances an organizational performance in hotel sector.

3. Literature Review

CRM is often described as a strategy or a set of activities a firm employs to increase a competitive advantage. Antonio confirms that, “the essence of strategy is in activities - selecting to perform activities differently or to perform different activities than rivals” (Antonio, 2004). Therefore, if one agrees with the premise that CRM is a strategy, one can reasonably deduce that CRM must consist of a series of activities that provide the company the chance to get or maintain a competitive advantage over their competitors. Therefore, CRM that presents a competitive advantage to a firm has not been fully explored in the CRM literature. Consequently, it is necessary to spend some time to develop the link between CRM and competitive advantage.

3.1 Customer orientation

Customer orientation indicates to the employee’s inclination to meet the customers’ needs. It has a positive effect on employees’ customer satisfaction and their overall performance. Furthermore, to improve an organizations performance, it is important to have customer-oriented behaviors that aid in maintaining a good relationship with all customers (Brown *et al.*, 2002). However, there are many purposes of customer-oriented behaviors, but perhaps the most important is to increase and improve long-term satisfaction, which will in return create customer loyalty. Studies have shown that stronger customer-oriented behaviors in organizations have a positive effect on the organizations’ overall performance (Kim, 2008; Yilmaz *et al.*, 2005). This finding suggests that managers need to add a customer-centered strategy that modifies and adjusts their cultural norms, employee performance rewards, and organizational structures (Minghetti, 2003).

When employees of customer-oriented hotels, for example, provide wonderful service, the overall image of the hotel will improve and the likelihood of the system to continue is high (Fan & Ku, 2010). Because of the growing market environment and pressure in the hotel industry, hotel managers need to maximize efforts in order to see results, growth, and an increase in profits. Thus, a more customer-oriented approach may be the best possible option for them to improve their performance (Tajeddini, 2010). Therefore, the literature claiming the marketing concept has assumed that the implementation of the customer orientation would lead to the greatest organizational performance (Kennedy *et al.*, 2002; Piercy, 2002). And many studies have reported a positive relationship between the customer-orientation strategy and organization’s performance (Asikhia, 2010; Dowling, 1993; Liu *et al.*, 2003; Sin *et al.*, 2005; Tajeddini, 2010; Zhou *et al.*, 2009). In conclusion, the customer-orientation strategy is one of an organization’s resources to improve customer satisfaction and business profit and is also a very important dimension of CRM. Therefore, organizations must have a customer-centric culture to implement CRM successfully and consequently develop a competitive advantage.

3.2 Knowledge management

Customer knowledge has been considered as a critical organizational resource, this resource allows a company to strengthen its link with the customers, and achieve sustainable competitive advantage (Croteau & Li, 2003; Shi & Yip, 2007).

Consequently, customers' knowledge plays a crucial role in CRM. Organizations can use it to construct and improve their relationship with customers (Zahay & Griffin, 2004), and it enables organizations to achieve a competitive advantage in the market (Sin et al., 2005). Moreover, successful CRM is based on effectively transforming customer information into customer knowledge (Plessis & Boon, 2004; String fellow et al., 2004). Created customer knowledge needs to be public and shared throughout the organization (Ryals & Knox, 2001), because the potential of knowledge happens when it is shared within diverse functions of the organization in order to meet present customers and their predictable needs. Knowledge management helps an organization to succeed by building better customer relationships and it has a positive effect on an organization's performance (Akroush et al., 2011; Sin et al., 2005; Yim et al., 2005). Thus, in order for organizations to stay competitive, they need to obtain new information about their customers, discover and make use of their existing knowledge, and share this knowledge within the organization. Furthermore, many studies have explored that there is a positive relationship among knowledge management and market effectiveness and financial performance (Sin et al., 2005), customer retention (Yim et al., 2005), and customer satisfaction (Abdullateef, 2011). In spite of these benefits there are few studies that illuminate the role of knowledge management in the hotels performance (Hallin & Marnburg, 2008; Lo et al., 2010; Shaw & Williams, 2009).

3.3 CRM organization

First and foremost, to build customer-oriented behaviors, organizations have to develop an appropriate working environment for service in work. For example, providing staff with the modern tools, and technology, customer-satisfaction tracking and complaints management systems, inspirational leadership, and appropriate rewards systems can all create these behaviors (Mechinda & Patterson, 2011). Researchers argue that CRM cannot be successful even if the organizations enjoy the most advanced technology and adapt a customer - oriented method, unless the project is completely integrated by them (Sin et al., 2005; Yim et al., 2005). Further, as a confirmation for this point Ku (2010) stresses that CRM success requires effective service and suitable operation procedures, rather than only technological systems. Therefore, the achievement of CRM completion depends on the active involvement of the employees in the organization itself (Boulding, Staelin, Ehret, & Johnston, 2005; Payne, 2006; Tamilarasan, 2011).

Therefore, we can say that CRM organization has to be an essential means in the way they organize their actual business processes for employees and customers (Sin et al 2005; Yim et al., 2005). In the end, all of organizations resources (such as marketing capabilities, policies, culture, and organization structure) have to be integrated in order to implement CRM successfully and, in turn, develop organizations performance. Most prior research also affirm the positive effect of CRM organization on customer retention (Yim et al., 2005), financial and marketing performance (Akroush et al., 2011; Sin et al., 2005). Furthermore, Richards and Jones (2008) notice that CRM organization may even impact marketing decisions such as brand differentiation, price, communication, and distribution. For example, it has also been reported that several hotel chains cleverly quote their room prices according to the customer data that were collected previously (Nunes & Dréze, 2006). The main purpose behind collecting data about customers is to get a clear image about them from different perspectives (Sin et al., 2005). Therefore, organizations can validate such data to be able to institute and develop beneficial relationships with their customers (Zahay and Griffin, 2004).

3.4 Technology-based CRM

Due to advances in information communication technology (ICT), a modern system has come about to reduce internal costs and better interact with the environment also to increase economic profit in the long term. Different hotels and businesses now implement different CRM systems (Moriarty et al., 2008). Because of this, Dutu and Halmajan (2011) stated that unless CRM strategy is used with information technology, it will fail. Furthermore, the strategic applied of technology in marketing is one of the most important chances in the hotel sector since it is essential to obtain the right information from the right people at the right time, so that the right decisions can be made and/or services delivered (Mohammad, et at., 2013). Also, the applied of CRM technology is predictable to improve the firms capability to maintain beneficial customer relationships by enabling information integration and sharing that influences smooth and efficient firm-customer interactions, suitable analysis of customer data and customization of response (Mukerjee & Singh, 2009). Furthermore, Sirirak et al. (2011) found that hotels have adopted ICT as a tool because of increasing competition and customer expectations.

Additionally, numerous studies report that CRM technology has a significant positive impact on their organization's performance (Abdullateef, 2011; Akroush et al., 2011; Sin et al., 2005). Similarly, Kasim and Minai (2009) have found that the technology coupled with CRM has a positive impact on hotel performance.

3.5 Measuring Hotel Performance

Performance is a multi-dimensional construct that cannot be adequately reflected in a single performance item (Mohammed et al., 2013). Studies on firms' performance have adopted various approaches to conceptualize and measure performance. This argument suggests that a compound measure of performance would reflect more exactly a firm's development, as opposed to a single qualitative or accounting-related performance measure. This study used the balance scorecard (BSC) approach to measure hotel performance through three categories: customers (measures are concerned with what really matters to the customers); internal process (measures related to the critical internal processes in which the organization must excel to implement strategy); and learning and growth perspectives: (measures focused on building continuous improvement in relation to products and processes, and to also create long-term growth) (Mohammed et al., 2013). The BSC approach has been used extensively in manufacturing industries and non-profit organizations (Kaplan and Norton, 2001). The model has also been widely embraced by business writers as a leap forward in performance measurement and reporting (Goulian & Mersereau, 2000). Furthermore, it translates mission and strategy into objectives and measurable terms that is viewed from the financial and internal business process perspectives (Chang & Ku, 2009).

In line with this argument, Wu and Hung (2007) found that financial figures alone cannot provide a full understanding of CRM's effect and findings; so, the total performance perspective should be employed in the assessment of CRM findings. Therefore, it is critical using BSC to evaluate the impact of CRM on organizational performance (Wu and Hung, 2007). To sum up, to assess business performance, the BSC approach uses both financial and non-financial indicators (Kaplan & Norton, 2004; Wu & Hung, 2007; Wu & Lu, 2012). Thus, the application of BSC to measure hotel performance has been used here, since hotels consist of several dissimilar activities such as food (restaurant), housekeeping, point-of-sale (front office), and receiver (storeroom) activities (Paraskevas, 2001), which have different charge structures. The diversity of the activities makes the use of financial measures alone insufficient. Through CRM, organizations improve customer relationships. Thus, any measure of results must comprise the idea of the customers (Chang et al., 2005). As a result, this study uses the BSC concept as a framework for hotel performance evaluation in order to better understand the impact of CRM dimensions. Using the four BSC perspectives to evaluate hotel performance along with arguments about the impact of CRM dimensions, coupled with the RBV theory) theory that advocates that all of resources (i.e. customer-orientation strategy, CRM organization, knowledge management, and technology-based CRM) leading to competitive advantage, this study proposes the following hypotheses:

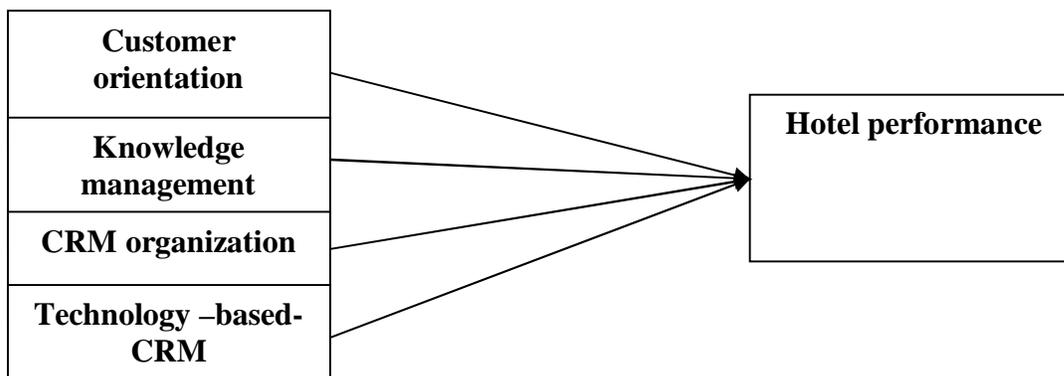
- H1. Customer orientation has an influence on the hotels performance.
- H2. Knowledge management has an influence on the hotels performance.
- H3. CRM organization has an influence on the hotels performance.
- H4. Technology based CRM have an influence on the hotels performance.

4. Methodology

The objective of this study is to identify the Customer Relationship Management and its impact on hotels performance in Jordan. The method will be discussed in this study in the following order: research Design, population and sample, data collection method, data analysis, result and implication.

4.1 Research Framework:

The proposed model of this research is based on the resource based view theory. It indicates that the hotels have the resources and capabilities can effectively perform valuable business strategy for achieving a competitive advantage to the hotels successfully. This proposed contains four dimensions of CRM which comprise customer orientation, CRM organization, knowledge management, and technology based CRM. This propose is constructing on prior researches (Abdullateef et al., 2010; Chang et al., 2010; Wu & Lu, 2012). Furthermore, Figure (1) demonstrates the model of this research. The research investigates the relationship between customer relationship management dimensions and hotels performance.

Figure1 Theoretical Framework**Independent variables****Dependent variable****4.2 Measurement of variables**

Based on previous literature, regarded customer relationship management was operationalized utilizing the measuring of our factors in the previous research. The scales of customer orientation, knowledge management, CRM organization, and Technology-based CRM adopted from the study by (Ammari, & Nusair, 2015; Mohammed, & Rashid, 2012), and Hotels performs were operationalized using the measurement developed by items from (Basri et al., 2014). Hence, the current study employed the instrument that used by (30 items). All items were rated on a five point Likert scales (1=strongly disagree, and, 5= strongly agree).

4.3 Sample and data collection

To investigate hypotheses for this research, we applied standardized questionnaire as the major tool of data collection. Leedy and Ormrod (2005) noticed that the best method to learn about the relationship between measurable factors with the intention of explaining, predicting and managing phenomena is the quantitative research technique. Moreover, the quantitative method is very useful to analyze and prove theories, explored significant factors for future research and relate factors posed by questions or hypothesis, using standards of validity and reliability and statistical procedures (Creswell, 2009). The sample for this study include of general managers and senior managers chosen from 3-5 star hotels operating in the Jordanian hotel sector. Particularly, the population of the study is drawn from the CRM managers in Jordanian Hotels. The choice of this class of hotels is because customers look for an offer and a dissimilar service compared with other less-starred hotels. Additionally, these customers pay further to obtain a high-quality service, especially a service that is customized according to their needs and wants. To react to their expectations and to maintain their loyal customers, hotels should be used in technology and in CRM in particular to give the best service. However, Convenience sampling was applied in this study. Furthermore, the number of questionnaires administered (direct face to face) was about 200. A total of 170 complete and usable questionnaires are retained for data analysis, with a response rate of 85.5 per cent. Finally, in this study, sample size is sufficient as the total number of factors is 25 and the sample data is 170 respondents', which represent the desired ratio (Hair et al., 2006).

4.4 Research Design

The survey research design is applied for this study. Hair et al (2010) found that “a survey is a way of collecting relatively information in-depth which talks about respondent attitudes and beliefs. Primary data will be gathered for the present research. The gathering of primary data will be achieved through using a personal survey approach. This research is cross-sectional in nature where data is gathered once to answer the study’s research questions. Data is gathered through personal survey using questionnaire to get a good grasp of the CRM dimensions among the mangers in the hotel sector and its impact on the performance of Jordanian hotels. For this research, Likert scale was employed to measure responses since this scale is widely used in market research and has been widely evaluated in both marketing and social science (Garland, 1991). Though, researchers confirmed that a five-point scale is just as good as any other (Sekaran, 2010) that could reduce confusion to the respondents. To ensure consistency among factors and to avoid confusion among respondents, all items will be measured using one to five point Likert scale (Ackfeldt & Coole, 2003).

4.5 Data Analysis

Before the main analysis, numerous statistical tools and techniques were used with the help of SPSS software, version 18. These contain validity and reliability analyses in order to evaluate the goodness of measures and descriptive statistics, to describe the characteristic of respondents and test of differences, to test non-response bias, to compare the customer relationship management performance by the respondents with different demographic profiles and correlation analysis, to describe the relationship between factors and regression analysis and to test the influence of customer relationship management dimensions on hotels performance.

5. Results and Implications

5.1 Descriptive statistics

Table 2 (as demonstrated below) provides the descriptive statistics of the four main variables built in this study model. Detailed descriptive statistics of each variable can be found in Table 2 that contain means and standard deviations as below. Finally, the aim of descriptive analysis was to current raw data into a transformed form that will make easy to read and understand.

Table: 2 Descriptive Statistics of Main Variables (n = 200)

Variables	Min	Max	M	SD
Hotels performance	1.00	5.00	3.8298	.49278
Customer orientation	1.00	5.00	3.7222	.487883
Knowledge management	1.00	5.00	3.8306	.48994
CRM organization	1.00	5.00	3.6162	.60900
Technology based CRM	1.00	5.00	3.7522	.54229

From Table (2), the mean values for Hotels performance, Customer orientation, Knowledge management, Knowledge management, CRM organization, Technology based CRM fall in the range of 3.6162 and 3.8306. Clearly, this indicates that respondents perceive a moderate level of customer relationship management dimensions offered and they perceive a high level in their hotels performance. However, in terms of CRM organization measure, the mean scores are at the moderate level.

5.2 Scale Reliabilities

One of the major issues in studies is the scale's internal consistency (Pallant, 2001). The basis for internal consistency evaluate is that all individual items of a scale should all be measuring the same construct and thus be highly correlated (Hair et al., 2006). The commonly indicator used to gauge internal consistency of a scale is the Cronbach's coefficient alpha. Several scholars such as (Hair *et al.*, 2006; Nunnally, 1978; Pallant, 2007) indicate that studies Cronbach's alpha coefficients above .70 of a scale. Sekaran (2000) also suggests that a Cronbach's alpha slightly lower than .60 is considered to be poor and those in the .70 are acceptable and those over .80 are good. In this study, the recommendations suggested by the scholars are applied.

Table 3: Reliability Analysis

Factors	Number of items	Cronbach's Alpha
Hotels performance	5	.839
Customer orientation	5	.881
Knowledge management	5	.860
CRM organization	5	.853
Technology based CRM	5	.879

5.3 Multiple Regressions

In order to answer the research question that addresses the relationship between CRM dimension and hotels performance, regression analysis was conducted to test the hypothesis. In this analysis, CRM dimension is treated as the independent variables, whereas hotels performance as the dependent variables. However, before conducting the analysis, the data were first examined to detect whether there are any violations of the basic assumptions underlying the regression analysis, namely linearity, normality and homoscedasticity (Hair et al., 2010). Furthermore, multiple regressions are used to explain the relationship between a single dependent (criterion) variable and several independent (predictor) variables.

There are a few approaches that are used for multiple regression analysis such as standard regression, hierarchical or sequential, and stepwise regression (Palant, 2007). Table 4 demonstrates the relationship between CRM, and hotels performance.

Table: 6 Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis for Customer Relationship Management Performance

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (constant)	.414-	.091		45.47	.000
Customer orientation	.589	.111	.597	5.312	.000
Knowledge management	.114	.069	.107	6.645	.010
CRM organization	.624	.037	.625	16.660	.000
Technology based CRM	.321	.042	.336	7.575	.000

a. In dependent Variable: mean_ CRM performance

b. DV = Hotel performance R= .474 (a) R Square= .222 F= 80.098, Sig=.000. Note: Significant levels: ***p<.00; **p<.01; *p<.05

5.4 Correlation of Analysis

Pearson correlation coefficients was performed to test and reveal the inter-correlation among the factors, Customer orientation, Knowledge management, CRM organization, Technology based CRM, and Hotels performance. To obtain this, the bivariate association that was conducted computes Pearson's correlation coefficient with significance levels. Furthermore, Pearson's correlation coefficient correlation coefficient has value from -1 to +1. If the correlation is 0, it points that there is no liner relationship among the two factors. However, the closer the correlation is to either +1 or -1, the stronger relationship among the two factors. On the other hand, the closer the correlation is to 0, the weaker the correlation (Hair et al.,2010). Cohen (1988) and Pallant (2007) recommend a guideline to interpret the strength of the relationship between two variables (r) as shown in Table 3.

Table: 3 Pearson Correlations of Study Variables

	HP	CO	KM	CRMO	TB CRM
HP	1.0				
CO	.38(**)	1.0			
KM	.36(**)	.64(**)	1.0		
CRM O	.35(**)	.56(**)	.66(**)	1.0	1.0
TB	.46(**)	.67(**)	.68(**)	.59(**)	.55(**)

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Note. HP=Hotels Performance, CO= Customer orientation, KM= Knowledge management, CRM O= CRM Organization, TB CRM= Technology based CRM.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

The aims of the present study are to investigate the success of customer relationship management dimension and its impact on hotels performance in Jordan. From the findings demonstrated in prior sections, the current study indicated that CRM technology has a significant and positive relationship with the hotels performance. The result is consistent with that reported by previous study of Mohammed and Rashid (2012), who found a significant and positive relationship between CRM and hotels performance. They found CRM plays an important role in attracting customer to hotels. The findings were also revealing by Lo et al. (2010), who explored the effect of CRM on hotels performance. Additionally the results supported the argument made by Ammari and Nusair (2014) who stated that successful implementation of CRM technology can play a key role in developing marketing capabilities, which lead to better organizational performance. In conclusion, this study has provided a theoretical model to illustrate the firm relationship among customer relationship management dimensions, and hotel performance. It contributes widely to the body of knowledge, as it provides an inclusive framework that is applied for explanation the effect of the CRM four dimensions on hotel performance.

Furthermore, it is an accepted actuality that the concept of customer relationship management neither has been completely verified, nor empirically evaluated to determine the strength of the relationship among dimensions of customer-relationship management and hotel performance. Thus, this study will also increase awareness among hotel managers to pay more attention to CRM dimensions, and to assist them in developing hotel performance and competitiveness. Furthermore, CRM technology can be used as an operational instrument for business internal quality control because it can transmit significant customers' data to where they are needed.

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