

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF RESEARCH IN COMMERCE & MANAGEMENT

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ANTECEDENTS AND CONSEQUENCES OF CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT IN HOTEL INDUSTRY**V. KRISHNAMOORTHY****ASST. PROFESSOR****DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT STUDIES****KONGU ENGINEERING COLLEGE****PERUNDURAI****DR. R. SRINIVASAN****ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR****PG & RESEARCH DEPARTMENT OF CORPORATE SECRETARY SHIP****BHARATHIDASAN GOVERNMENT COLLEGE FOR WOMEN****PONDICHERRY****ABSTRACT**

The aim of the study is to identify the antecedents of Customer Relationship Management (CRM) in Hotel and also to examine Linkage between the antecedents of CRM and Guest Satisfaction and Guest Loyalty. This study was conducted in five major cities in TamilNadu. The researcher used questionnaire method for collecting data from guests and purposive sampling method has been adopted by the researcher. This study was undertaken during the period of October 2013 to March 2014. This study identified six important antecedents of CRM, namely Convenience, Responsiveness, Reliability, Commitment, Empathy and Trust. This study shows that there is a relationship between Responsiveness, Commitment, empathy dimensions of CRM and Guest satisfaction, Furthermore, this study also reveals that there is a significant relationship between Responsiveness, Commitment, and Empathy with Guest Loyalty. This study would help the policy makers to monitor and improve the CRM practices at Hotel Industry in the world class standard.

KEYWORDS

Convenience, Empathy, Reliability, Responsiveness & Trust.

INTRODUCTION

The high level of competition has been one of the difficult challenges in the Hotel Industry. It is reflected in increasingly narrow margins and growing pressure to provide more and better service, which has led to increasing costs, reduced Customer Loyalty and Subsequently a decrease in occupancy rate (Sigala, 2005; Verdugo et al., 2009; Wang and Wang, 2009; Yi – Wen and Edward, 2010). New forms of competition and structural modifications of exchange process have led to the emergence of a relationship paradigm for creating long – term relationships among customers and suppliers. This is partly on account of the globalization of business, Internationalisation, deregulation, information technology advances, shorter product life cycle, (Morgan and Hunt, 1994; Zineldin and Jonsson, 2000; Chandra and Kumar, 2000; Sahay, 2003). Guests are at the forefront of operations within the Hotel Industry (Zineldin, 1999). CRM is essential to the Hotel Industry, in particular to chains of hotels operating either nationally, worldwide or through International partnerships (Diana Luck, Geoff Lancaster, (2013). Relationship marketing stresses the development and maintenance of long – lasting relationships between the firm and its customers (Sheth and Parvatiyar, 1995). Long – term customer relationships are considered to be one of the most important business assets for business organizations (Collier and Bienstock, 2006). Several studies revealed the positive impact of relationship marketing, in seller performance as the increase of selling market share and profit (Crosby et al., 1990; Morgan and Hunt, 1994; De Wulf et al., 2001). Although the clients may be affected by their relationships with the firm, they are even more affected by their interpersonal relationship (Palmatier et al., 2007). Relationship quality is considered as an overall assessment of the strength of a relationship (Garbarino and Johnson, 1999), and captures the essence of relationship marketing (Jap et al., 1999, Ural, 2007). A strong relationship is an intangible asset, which cannot be easily duplicated by competitors (Wong et al., 2007). Several studies have been conducted with regard to the positive benefits of relationship marketing. Research conducted by Athanassopoulou, (2006) concluded that it is five times more expensive to acquire new customers than to keep existing ones. The development of a strong customer relationship can improve customer Loyalty, which in turn leads to increased profits for the firm (Reichheld, 1993, Athanassopoulou, 2006). Hotel – companies have increasingly attempted to strategically differentiate themselves through the development of relationship with the guests. (Diana Luck and Geoff Lancaster, 2013), Customer retention is economically more advantageous than constantly seeking new customers (Verhoef, 2003, Reichheld and Sasser, 1990). Therefore, to improve both customer satisfaction and enhance profitability, hotels must focus on implementing a CRM strategy that aims to seek, gather and store the right information, share it through the entire organization and then use it all organizational levels to create a personalized and unique customer experience (Olsen and Connolly, 2004, Wu and Li, 2011). CRM is considered as the best strategies and practices for hotel to improve their performance and ultimately to ensure their long term business survival. (Kasim and Minai, 2009; Sigala, 2005; Wu and Li, 2011). With this background the researcher intends to study the antecedents and consequences of CRM in Hotel Industry.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Several studies have been revealed that only limited research and publications within the Hospitality industry (Hermans et al., 2009; Vogt, 2011, Wu and Lu 2012). Line and Runyan (2012) reviewed hospitality marketing research published from 2008 to 2010 in Top Hospitality Journals to identify the trends and gaps in the literature. The study found that CRM is one of the most popular topics in hospitality marketing research and therefore there is an opportunity for hospitality researchers to contribute to the development of theory in the field. Abdul alem Mohammad et al., (2013), identified the customer orientation, CRM organization, knowledge management, and technology based CRM have a positive and significant impact on different perspectives on hotel performance. A study conducted by Diana Luck and Geoff Lancaster (2013) concluded that success of CRM strategy in Hotel Companies not only on the ability of a company to identify and understand what the target customers need and want, but also on the company's ability to deliver enhanced value in terms of their specific needs and wants. CRM – related research on the hotels has looked at various specific practices in isolation. They include loyalty programs, brand loyalty, customer satisfaction, knowledge management, information and communication technologies and internal and external marketing (Bouncken, 2002; Choi and Chu, 2001; Engstrom et al., 2003; Kandampully and Suhartanto, 2000; Lee et al., 2005; Minghetti, 2003; Palmer et al., 2000; Piccoli et al., 2003, Sigala, 2005; Sigala et al., 2001; Tepeci, 1999). Wu and Lu (2012) suggested that hotels are part of the service industry and therefore marketers in hotel industry setup CRM systems to find and retain their customers and develop long – term relationships with loyal customers in order to enhance greater profits. CRM enables a company to optimize revenue and increase customer value through understanding and satisfying the individual customer needs (Liu and Yang, 2009; Kaufmann et al., 2012). CRM is very important for the hotel industry. Hotels need to have a deep knowledge of their customer's needs, Behavior and preferences to be aware of the ways in which their hospitality services will be delivered (Papaioannou et al., 2011). CRM strategy is putting more emphasis on involving and engaging customers in the long – term relationships, so that the firm can learn about customers' individual needs (Payne et al., 2009; Peppers and Rogers, 2010). Gilbert et al., (1999) suggested that relationship marketing is highly suitable for the hotel industry. CRM has its philosophical basis in relationship marketing (Chen and Popovich,

2003). Piccoli et al., (2003) argued that the hotel sector has the greatest potential of all industries with regard to the CRM application. A study conducted by Kim et al., (2006), revealed that the hotels require a better understanding of customer orientation, which is of a great importance for their performance. Several studies have been conducted with regard to CRM dimensions in the hotel sector. (Sin et al., 2005; Akroush et al., 2011; Sadek et al., 2011). Loyalty, Purchase intention and word of mouth are the important consequences of relationship marketing. (LovaRajaobelina and Jasmin Bergeron, 2009). Huntely (2006) identified that when the quality of relationship is high, customers are more willing to recommend the seller's offering to colleagues and they purchase more from the seller. Customer loyalty has been considered as an important source for long term business success (Rust and Zahorik, 1993) and building relationship with a customer is a good way to retain loyal customers in the long term (Sheaves and Barnes, 1996). Loyal customers are less likely to switch to a competitor on account of price inducement and these customers make more purchases compared to less loyal customers (Baldinger and Rubinson, 1996). Even though numerous studies have been conducted with regard to the Hotel Industry, only few studies have been conducted in the Indian perspective. Therefore the researchers intend to study the antecedents of CRM and consequences of CRM.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The following are the objectives of the study:

1. To identify the important antecedents of Customer Relationship Management in Hotel.
2. To examine the impact of perception on the antecedents of CRM on the Guest Satisfaction and Guest Loyalty in Hotel Industry.
3. To reveal the Guest's perception on various antecedents of CRM in Hotel.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The scope of the study is confined only to the Erode, Coimbatore, Salem, Karur, Namakkal, and Cities of Tamil Nadu. From each identified cities five hotels with restaurants were selected randomly. From each identified hotels, 6 guests were identified with the help of Hotel Managers. Therefore the total sample size came to 300 guests. Even though the researcher made several efforts to collect data from the respondents, Only 127 questionnaires have been collected from the respondents. Therefore the response rate of the study was 42.33 percent. This study was conducted during the period of October 2013 to March 2014. The researcher collected data from the respondents adopting the questionnaire method. The questionnaire consists of four parts. The first part of the questionnaire consists of the demographic profile of the guests the second part of the questionnaire consists of various antecedents of customer relationship variables related to Hotel. The third and fourth part of the questionnaire covers the guest satisfaction and guest loyalty. The guest has been asked to rate the variables at five point scale.

The researcher adopted purposive sampling method for collecting data. Before collecting the data, pre-test was conducted. Furthermore, content validity of the questionnaire was verified by constituting a panel which consists of one hotel managers, two senior professors who have handling service marketing subject more than two decades. Based on the feedback received from experts and pilot studies, suitable modification has been made in the existing questionnaire to suit the requirements of the present study.

QUESTIONNAIRE DEVELOPMENT

The variables relating to this study was drawn from the previous work of Brotherton (2004). Suitable modification has been made in the existing questionnaire to suit the requirement of the study.

DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

With regard to gender of the respondents, 66 percent of the respondents are male category; about 32.1 percent of the guests were 35 to 45 years old. In terms of educational qualification, 20 percent of the guests have a post graduate qualification. With regard to the monthly income of the guests, 24.4 percent of the respondents have earned more than Rs. 50,000/- as monthly income, 72 percent of the respondents are hailing from the nuclear family system, 42 percent of the respondent's occupation is business, 38 percent of the guests are staying in the Hotel on account of Business purpose.

INSTRUMENT VALIDITY

To ascertain the reliability of the antecedents of CRM in Hotel, the Cronbach Alpha Value was computed. According to Nunnally (1978), reliability co-efficient of 0.70 or more are considered important criterion for internally consistent construct. The results of the Cronbach Alpha as shown in Table No: 1 reveals that six dimensions of the antecedents of CRM in Hotel strongly meet the acceptable level of 0.70 (or) higher.

TABLE NO. 1: INSTRUMENT VALIDITY OF VARIOUS ANTECEDENTS OF CRM

S.No	Antecedents of CRM in Hotels	No. of Original Statement	No. Of Statement Retained	Cronbach's Alpha
1	Convenience	5	5	0.821
2	Responsiveness	4	4	0.798
3	Reliability	5	5	0.701
4	Commitment	3	3	0.738
5	Empathy	3	3	0.732
6	Trust	3	3	0.714

RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

To explain the relationship among the six antecedents of the CRM with Guest Satisfaction and six antecedents of CRM with Guest Loyalty, the following hypotheses are formulated.

1. Convenience dimensions directly impact the Guest Satisfaction.
2. Responsiveness dimensions directly impact the Guest Satisfaction.
3. Reliability dimensions directly impact the Guest Satisfaction.
4. Commitment dimensions directly impact the Guest Satisfaction.
5. Empathy dimensions directly impact the Guest Satisfaction.
6. Trust dimensions directly impact the Guest Satisfaction.
7. Convenience dimensions directly impact the Guest Loyalty.
8. Responsiveness dimensions directly impact the Guest Loyalty.
9. Reliability dimensions directly impact the Guest Loyalty.
10. Commitment dimensions directly impact the Guest Loyalty.
11. Empathy dimensions directly impact the Guest Loyalty.
12. Trust dimensions directly impact the Guest Loyalty.

ANTECEDENTS OF CRM IN HOTEL INDUSTRY

The guests are asked to rate the various antecedents of CRM related variables at five point scale accordingly to their perception, namely Highly Satisfied, Satisfied, Moderate, Dissatisfied and Highly Dissatisfied. The assigned marks on these scales are 5, 4, 3, 2, and 1 respectively. The marks of the various factors of CRM in Hotel have been included to find out the antecedents of CRM with the help of factor analysis. Before administering factor analysis, the test of validity of data for factor analysis has been examined with the help of Kaiser – Meyer – Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity. The minimum acceptable level of KMO measure and level of significance of Chi-square Value are 0.5 and 5 percent level. (Rao and Saikia, 2006). These two tests

satisfy the validity of data for factor analysis. The factor analysis results in six important factors, namely Convenience, Responsiveness, Reliability, Commitment, Empathy and Trust. The Antecedents of CRM Hotel Dimensions, Number of variables included, Eigen Value, and Percentage of Variation explained by the factors are shown in Table No: 2.

TABLE NO. 2: ANTECEDENTS OF CRM IN HOTEL

S.No	Antecedents of CRM in Hotel Dimensions (ACHD)	No. of Variables included	Eigen Value	Percentage of Variance Explained	Cumulative Percentage of Variance Explained
1	Convenience	5	10.368	17.661	17.661
2	Responsiveness	4	2.972	17.224	34.885
3	Reliability	5	1.470	10.584	45.469
4	Commitment	3	1.161	9.627	55.096
5	Empathy	3	1.078	6.903	62.000
6	Trust	3	1.004	4.863	66.862
KMO measures of sampling Adequacy 0.877			Bartlett's Test Sphericity Chi-square Value 2048.711		

The most important antecedents of CRM in Hotel are 'Convenience' since its Eigen value and the percent of variation explained by this factor are 10.368 and 17.661 percent respectively. The second and third antecedents of CRM factor Identified by the factor analysis are 'Responsiveness' and 'Reliability' since their respective Eigen values are 2.972 and 1.470. These two factors consists of four and five factors respectively. The percent of variation explained by these two factors are 17.224 and 10.584 percent respectively. The fourth antecedents of CRM are 'Commitment' since their Eigen values are 1.161 percent respectively, and this factor consists of three variables. The last two factors identified by the factor analysis are Empathy and Trust since their Eigen values are 1.078 and 1.004 respectively. The percent of variation explained by these two factors are 6.903 and 4.863 percent respectively. The narrated six antecedents of CRM factors explain the antecedents of CRM to the extent of 66.862 percent.

GUESTS' PERCEPTION ON ANTECEDENTS OF CRM

The perception on the antecedents of CRM is derived from the mean score of the antecedents of CRM variables in each antecedents of CRM dimension. The mean score of the perception on various antecedents of CRM have been computed to exhibit the Guests' perception on various antecedents of CRM in Hotel. The results are shown in Table 3.

TABLE NO. 3: PERCEPTION ON ANTECEDENTS OF CRM

S.No	Factors	Mean Score	Standard Deviation	Co - efficient of Variation(in percent)
1	Convenience	2.4157	0.68155	27.74
2	Responsiveness	2.3591	0.71151	30.16
3	Reliability	2.2882	0.60979	26.55
4	Commitment	2.2966	0.64683	28.16
5	Empathy	2.4665	0.75090	30.69
6	Trust	2.3504	0.76135	32.39

The highly perceived antecedents of CRM among the Guest are 'Empathy' since its respective mean score is 2.4665.It is followed by 'Convenience' and 'Responsiveness' with the mean score of 2.4157 and 2.3591 respectively. The higher fluctuations are seen in the perception of trust on the antecedents of CRM since their respective co – efficient of variation is 32.39 percent. The lesser fluctuation is seen in the perception of 'Reliability' since its relative, co – efficient of variation is 26.55.Reliability scored the lowest mean score of 2.2882.

INTER CORRELATION BETWEEN ANTECEDENTS OF CRM

The Interrelationship between the perceptions on the antecedents of CRM in Hotel is examined with the help of Karl Pearson Correlation co – efficient. The estimated correlation co – efficient and its respective significance are shown in Table No: 4.

TABLE NO. 4: INTER CORRELATION BETWEEN THE PERCEPTIONS OF CRM FACTORS

S.No	Factors					
	Convenience	Responsiveness	Reliability	Commitment	Empathy	Trust
1.	Convenience	0.656**	0.593**	0.712**	0.649**	0.645**
2.	Responsiveness		0.572**	0.651**	0.635**	0.648**
3.	Reliability			0.687**	0.619**	0.563**
4.	Commitment				0.693**	0.713**
5.	Empathy					0.127**
6.	Trust					

** - significant at 1 percent level

All Inter correlation co – efficient are positive. The significant positive correlation co – efficient is identified with convenience to Responsiveness, Reliability, Commitment, Empathy and Trust at one percentsignificant level. Regarding the Responsiveness the significant positive correlation co – efficient is identified with Reliability, Commitment, Empathy and Trust at one percent significant level. Regarding the Reliability, the significant relationship is identified with Commitment, Empathy and Trust since their respective correlation co – efficient are significant at the five percent level. Regarding the Commitment, the significant relationship is identified with Empathy and Trust since their respective correlation co – efficient are significant at theone percent level. The significant positive correlation is noticed between Empathy and Trust.

IMPACT OF PERCEPTION ON ANTECEDENTS OF CRM AND GUEST SATISFACTION

The antecedents of CRM are one of the important factors leading to Guest Satisfaction. The present study has made an attempt to examine the impact of perception on the antecedents of CRM and the Guest Satisfaction with the help of multiple regression. The score on the Guest Satisfaction is considered as dependent variable, whereas the score on the perception on the antecedents of CRM factors is treated as independent variables. The fitted regression model is

$$Y = a + b_1X_1 + b_2X_2 + b_3X_3 + b_4X_4 + b_5X_5 + b_6X_6$$

Y = Score on Guest Satisfaction.

X₁ = Score on Perception on Convenience.

X₂ = Score on Perception on Responsiveness.

X₃ = Score on Perception on Reliability.

X₄ = Score on Perception on Commitment.

X₅ = Score on Perception on Empathy.

X₆ = Score on Perception on Trust.

b₁..... b₆ = Regression, Co – efficient of Independent Variables.

a = Intercept and

e = Error term.

The Impact of perception on the antecedents of CRM on Guest Satisfaction is illustrated in Table No. 5

TABLE NO. 5: REGRESSION CO – EFFICIENT ON ANTECEDENTS OF CRM WITH GUEST SATISFACTION

S.No	Independent variables	Un Standardized Co - efficient	Standard Error	Standardized Co - efficient Beta	t - value	Significance
	Constant	0.168	0.101	--	1.655	.099
1	Convenience (x ₁)	0.142	0.054	0.150	2.615	.010
2	Responsiveness (x ₂)	0.234	0.049	0.258	4.736	.000**
3	Reliability (x ₃)	0.046	0.056	0.044	0.828	.409
4	Commitment (x ₄)	0.33	0.065	0.330	5.069	.000**
5	Empathy (x ₅)	0.142	0.050	0.165	2.860	.005*
6	Trust (x ₆)	0.113	0.052	0.125	2.161	.033
	R ²	0.843				
	Adjusted R ²	0.835				
	F Statistics	107.273				0.000

** 1 percent significant level

* 5 percent significant level

The result revealed that there is a strong and significant relationship between the antecedents of CRM with Guest Satisfaction. (F = 107.273, Probability F Statistics < 0.00). The significant F Statistics reveal the viability of the fitted regression model. The R² value of 0.843 revealed that independent variables explained 84.3 percent of the variance in antecedents of CRM with an adjusted R² of 0.835 percent. On the individual determinants 'Commitment' dimensions was found to be most important dimensions of CRM (β = 0.330, t = 5.069, p = 0.000 < 0.01). This was followed by Responsiveness dimensions of CRM (β = 0.258, t = 4.736, p = 0.000 < 0.01). The third predictor was 'Empathy' (β = 0.165, t = 2.860, p = 0.000 < 0.05). Therefore, it is concluded that Commitment, Responsiveness, Empathy dimensions directly impact the Guest's Loyalty. Therefore H₁ is accepted on these dimensions. The study revealed there is no significant impact on Convenience, Reliability, Trust dimensions of CRM with Guest's Satisfaction.

IMPACT OF ANTECEDENTS OF CRM ON GUEST LOYALTY

The impact of the antecedents of CRM and Guest Loyalty is examined with the help of multiple regression analysis. The included independent variable is the score of the perception on the antecedents of CRM whereas the dependent variable is the score of a Guest Loyalty. The resulted regression co – efficient are presented in Table No: 6

TABLE NO. 6: REGRESSION CO – EFFICIENT OF ANTECEDENTS OF CRM WITH GUEST LOYALTY

Independent variables	Un Standardized Co - efficient	Standard Error	Standardized Co - efficient	t - value	Significance
Constant	.161	.100	--	1.606	.111
Convenience (x ₁)	.146	.054	.154	2.699	.008
Responsiveness (x ₂)	.230	.049	.254	4.68	.000**
Reliability (x ₃)	.046	.055	.044	0.836	.405
Commitment (x ₄)	.327	.065	.327	5.052	.000**
Empathy (x ₅)	.141	.049	.164	2.862	.005*
Trust (x ₆)	.115	.052	.127	2.203	.029
R ²	.842				
Adjusted R ²	.834				
F Statistics	108.063				0.000

0.161 + 146X₁ + 0.230 X₂ + 0.046 X₃ + 0.327 X₄ + 0.141 X₅ + 115 X₆

** 1 percent significant level

* 5 percent significant level

The result shows that there is a strong and significant relationship between the antecedents of CRM and Guest Loyalty (108.063), Probability, F Statistics < 0.00. The significant F Statistics show the viability of the fitted regression model. The R² value of 0.842 revealed that independent variables explained 84.2 percent of variance in antecedents of CRM with an adjusted R² of 0.835 percent. On the individual dimensions, commitment was found to be most important dimensions of CRM (β = 0.327, t = 5.052, p = 0.000 < 0.01). This was followed by Responsiveness dimensions of CRM (β = 0.254, t = 4.680, p = 0.000, 0.01). The third predictor was 'Empathy' (β = 0.164, t = 2.862, p = 0.000 < 0.05). Except the factors Convenience, Reliability, and Trust the remaining three dimensions showed significant impact with the independent variable. The study also proved that Responsiveness, Commitment, Empathy, Dimensions have a significant impact on Guest Loyalty.

CONCLUSION

In the study, six dimensions of various antecedents of CRM in Hotel Industry emerged. These are Convenience, Responsiveness, Reliability, Commitment, Empathy and Trust. Among the dimensions, Empathy has been highly viewed variable among the Guest. The study reveals that there is significant impact on Responsiveness, Commitment, Empathy dimensions of the antecedents of CRM and Guest Satisfaction. Among the six antecedents of CRM Responsiveness, dimensions have the greatest impact on Guest Loyalty. The study shows that there is no significant impact on Convenience, Reliability and Trust dimensions with Guest Satisfaction. Furthermore, the study also noticed that there is no significant impact on Convenience, Reliability and Trust dimensions of CRM with Guest Loyalty.

LIMITATION AND SCOPE OF FUTURE RESEARCH

Even though the study has achieved its objectives, certain limitation was found. This study has been conducted in Erode, Coimbatore, Salem, Karur, Namakkal cities of Tamil Nadu. Therefore the findings of this study cannot be generalized to other industries. This study considers only the Hotel with restaurant. In future similar study can be conducted in Luxury Hotels antecedents of CRM. This study considers only the twenty three variables for the study; In future more number of variables can be included. Furthermore, comparative study can also be conducted with regard to Government owned Hotels and private Hotels antecedents of CRM. In addition to this foreign tourist opinion on CRM implementation can also be studied. In addition, to this, comparative study can also be conducted regarding the perception of business customers and household customer perception on implementation of customer relationship management in the Hotel Industry.

MANAGERIAL IMPLICATION OF THE STUDY

The identified dimensions may help the tourism department, in particular, policy makers in general regarding the implementation of CRM in Hotel Industry. It is well known that the cost of retaining a customer is much less than the cost of acquiring customers. Therefore, these findings may help the Hotel Industry to ascertain the priorities of the Guests. Furthermore, Hotel Administration can design the suitable strategy regarding the customer retention. To achieve Loyalty

and Guest Satisfaction, Hotel ought to satisfy its Guest, which can be implemented through proper a feedback system, on a continuous basis. Therefore, every Hotel should establish a research and development department to conduct market survey regarding CRM. In addition to this Hotel management should ensure the proper functioning of Research and Development Department.

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