Examining The Awareness Level Of Customers Towards CRM Initiatives Taken By Hotels In Delhi NCR (India)

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
	This study investigates the awareness level of customers regarding Customer Relationship Management (CRM) initiatives implemented by hotels in Delhi NCR. As the hospitality sector becomes increasingly competitive, understanding customers' perceptions of CRM practices is vital for enhancing service quality and customer loyalty. The research employs a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews to assess customer awareness and engagement with various CRM initiatives, such as loyalty programs and personalized marketing strategies. Preliminary findings suggest that while many customers recognize some CRM initiatives, a significant gap exists in their overall awareness and understanding of these programs. The study highlights the implications of these findings for hotel management, suggesting that effective communication and education about CRM initiatives can significantly enhance customer satisfaction and loyalty. This research contributes to the growing body of literature on CRM in hospitality by offering insights into customer perceptions and providing actionable recommendations for improving CRM strategies in a diverse and dynamic market. **Keywords:** Customer Relationship Management, CRM initiatives, hotel industry, customer awareness.

1. INTRODUCTION

Customer Relationship Management (CRM) has emerged as a vital strategic approach in the hospitality industry, particularly in densely populated and competitive regions like Delhi NCR. In this urban environment, hotels are challenged to distinguish themselves amidst a plethora of options available to consumers. As the hospitality sector evolves, the adoption of CRM initiatives has become a cornerstone for improving customer satisfaction and building long-term loyalty. By leveraging customer data, hotels can provide personalized services, enhance engagement, and ultimately drive revenue growth (Maharani & Lestari, 2020).
CRM systems enable hotels to gather and analyze customer information from various touchpoints, including booking behavior, feedback, and preferences. This wealth of data allows hotels to tailor their marketing efforts and service offerings to meet the specific needs of their guests (Wang et al., 2020). However, the successful implementation of CRM strategies hinges on customers' awareness of these initiatives. When customers recognize and understand the benefits of CRM programs—such as personalized offers and loyalty rewards—they are more likely to engage with the brand, which can lead to increased satisfaction and repeat business (Kumar & Reinartz, 2016).
The hospitality industry in Delhi NCR is characterized by its diverse demographic, ranging from business travelers to tourists and local customers seeking staycations. This diversity adds complexity to CRM efforts, as hotels must navigate varying expectations and preferences. Recent studies indicate that customer awareness of CRM initiatives significantly impacts their engagement levels and satisfaction (Gummesson, 2002). Despite the growing importance of CRM in enhancing customer experiences, research focused specifically on customer awareness of CRM initiatives in hotels remains limited.
This study aims to investigate the awareness level of customers regarding CRM initiatives taken by hotels in Delhi NCR. By identifying gaps in customer knowledge, this research will provide actionable insights for hotel management. Understanding customer perceptions of CRM can help hotels refine their communication

strategies, ensuring that the benefits of their CRM initiatives are effectively conveyed. This, in turn, can foster deeper customer relationships, leading to enhanced loyalty and profitability.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Understanding Customer Relationship Management

CRM encompasses a variety of strategies, practices, and technologies designed to manage interactions with customers and potential customers. The primary goal of CRM is to improve business relationships and enhance customer satisfaction (Payne & Frow, 2005). In the context of the hospitality industry, CRM allows hotels to collect valuable data on their guests, facilitating the customization of services and marketing efforts. By utilizing CRM systems, hotels can track customer interactions, preferences, and feedback, enabling them to provide personalized experiences (Moutinho & Tar, 2016).

The importance of CRM in hospitality cannot be overstated. Studies show that effective CRM practices can lead to higher customer retention rates and increased profitability (Bharwani & Jauhari, 2013). In a highly competitive market like Delhi NCR, where consumer choices are abundant, the ability to create memorable experiences through personalized service is a significant differentiator for hotels.

2.2 The Role of Customer Awareness

Customer awareness is a critical factor in the success of CRM initiatives. Awareness influences customer perceptions and behaviors, directly impacting their willingness to engage with the hotel brand (Kumar & Reinartz, 2016). When customers are informed about the CRM initiatives a hotel offers, they are more likely to perceive the brand positively and engage with its services. For instance, a study by Ranjan and Read (2016) found that customers who were aware of loyalty programs were more likely to participate, enhancing their overall satisfaction and likelihood of repeat visits.

Moreover, awareness facilitates the formation of trust between customers and hotels. According to Gummesson (2002), a transparent approach to CRM initiatives fosters a sense of value among customers, leading to deeper emotional connections with the brand. This emotional connection is essential in the hospitality sector, where customers seek not only services but also experiences that resonate with their personal preferences and values.

2.3 CRM Initiatives in the Hospitality Sector

In recent years, hotels in Delhi NCR have increasingly embraced a range of CRM initiatives to enhance customer relationships. Common initiatives include loyalty programs, personalized marketing, customer feedback systems, and targeted promotional campaigns (Maharani & Lestari, 2020). Loyalty programs, for instance, incentivize repeat business by offering rewards based on customer spending and engagement. These programs often utilize tiered structures, where customers can unlock greater benefits as they progress, thus encouraging ongoing loyalty (Chechi, 2020).

Personalized marketing, another critical CRM initiative, involves tailoring communications and promotions to individual customer preferences. Research by Wang et al. (2020) indicates that personalized marketing efforts can significantly increase customer engagement and conversion rates. By understanding customer behavior and preferences, hotels can create targeted marketing campaigns that resonate with their audience, thereby enhancing the likelihood of bookings.

Customer feedback systems also play a vital role in CRM strategies. By soliciting feedback through surveys and reviews, hotels can gain valuable insights into customer experiences and areas for improvement (Ivanov & Zhechev, 2012). This feedback loop not only helps hotels enhance their service offerings but also demonstrates to customers that their opinions are valued, further fostering loyalty.

2.4 Challenges in CRM Implementation

Despite the clear advantages of CRM, many hotels face significant challenges in implementing these strategies effectively. Research by Homburg et al. (2011) highlights several barriers, including inadequate staff training, poor integration of technology, and a lack of customer-centric culture. Without proper training, hotel staff may not fully understand the CRM tools at their disposal or how to effectively engage with customers based on the data collected.

Furthermore, the integration of CRM technology can be complex. Many hotels struggle to unify data from various sources, leading to incomplete customer profiles and ineffective marketing efforts (Buttle, 2009). A disjointed approach can result in inconsistent customer experiences, undermining the very purpose of CRM.

Cultural factors also play a crucial role in CRM success. Research indicates that hotels must cultivate a customer-centric culture to fully leverage CRM initiatives (Homburg et al., 2011). This involves aligning all departments—front desk, marketing, and management—toward a shared goal of enhancing customer relationships. When staff across all levels understand the importance of CRM and are empowered to act on customer insights, hotels can achieve more cohesive and effective CRM strategies.

2.5 The Impact of Technology on CRM

The rise of digital technology has significantly transformed CRM practices in the hospitality industry. With the advent of big data analytics, hotels can process vast amounts of customer information, allowing for more precise targeting and personalization (Wang et al., 2020). Additionally, advancements in customer engagement platforms enable hotels to communicate with customers across multiple channels, enhancing the overall customer experience.

Social media has also emerged as a crucial platform for CRM. Hotels can engage with customers in real-time, addressing concerns and gathering feedback instantly. Research shows that active engagement on social media can enhance brand loyalty and customer satisfaction (Duncan & Moriarty, 1998). However, to harness the power of social media effectively, hotels must ensure that customers are aware of their presence and the benefits they offer through these channels.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The Research method used to carry out a research plan is another name for a research technique. Study design addresses a conceptual issue rather than a practical one. The three main kinds of research designs that are used are experimentation, descriptive research, and causal research. A descriptive and causal research design is used in the context of this specific investigation. The study plan, according to Bell and Bryman (2007), is a technique used to methodically examine the hypothesized correlations between variables via the use of scientific procedures and numerical analysis. Furthermore, this approach clarifies how the goals and objectives of the research are achieved.

This study uses a **descriptive and causal research technique** to examine the present status of CRM activities and their influence on customer satisfaction and loyalty within the setting of five-star hotels in Delhi. To achieve a 95% confidence level and a 5% margin of error, this research required a sample size of 385 respondents.

3.1 Objective of the study
To examine the awareness level of customers about CRM initiatives taken by hotels.

3.2. Data Collection Method
Research on Customer Relationship Management (CRM) and its impact on customer satisfaction and loyalty at five-star hotels in Delhi utilized a variety of techniques and methodologies to gather primary and secondary data. Every technique was selected to guarantee a thorough and precise comprehension of the elements impacting consumer experiences.

3.2.1. Primary Data Collection
Primary data refers to original information that has been collected directly from sources to achieve the specific purpose of the study. Structured questionnaires intended to elicit comprehensive insights from hotel patrons were used to collect primary data for this research.

Structured Questionnaires: To collect quantitative data from guests at five-star hotels, a standardized questionnaire was developed. This tool was painstakingly designed to handle several CRM activities and how they affect customer loyalty and happiness.

4. HYPOTHESIS TESTING

H1: There is a significant difference between gender of customer and awareness level of CRM initiatives taken by hotels.

A thorough cross-tabulation of responses regarding CRM initiatives by gender is shown in Table 4.57. The table displays the distribution of viewpoints regarding awareness, communication, preferences, feedback evaluation, and other CRM dimensions.

Table 4.1: Cross tabulation data between Gender and awareness level of CRM initiatives taken by hotels

Variables	Likert scale	Gender	
		Male	Female
Awareness of Gender CRM	Strongly Disagree	24	32
	Disagree	31	42
	Neutral	63	49
	Agree	60	49
	Strongly Agree	20	15
CRM Communication by Gender	Strongly Disagree	20	24
	Disagree	33	43
	Neutral	86	71
	Agree	48	39
	Strongly Agree	11	10

CRM Preferences by Gender	Strongly Disagree	19	21
	Disagree	35	33
	Neutral	76	68
	Agree	41	42
	Strongly Agree	27	23
Evaluation of Gender Feedback	Strongly Disagree	20	17
	Disagree	33	40
	Neutral	62	60
	Agree	56	42
	Strongly Agree	23	27
Experience Tailored to Gender	Strongly Disagree	22	20
	Disagree	43	34
	Neutral	78	69
	Agree	41	49
	Strongly Agree	14	15
Efficiency of Gender CRM	Strongly Disagree	24	21
	Disagree	35	30
	Neutral	63	58
	Agree	50	47
	Strongly Agree	22	30
Gender Constant Communication	Strongly Disagree	19	22
	Disagree	31	33
	Neutral	89	64
	Agree	45	55
	Strongly Agree	14	13
Gender-specific New Offers Consciousness	Strongly Disagree	18	18
	Disagree	30	34
	Neutral	82	72
	Agree	45	39
	Strongly Agree	23	24
Booking by Gender Is Simple	Strongly Disagree	19	18
	Disagree	39	42
	Neutral	68	60
	Agree	51	52
	Strongly Agree	21	15
Gender-specific Community Values	Strongly Disagree	29	23
	Disagree	24	21
	Neutral	73	64
	Agree	55	52
	Strongly Agree	17	27

T-Test With Gender

Group statistics and the findings of a t-test comparing male and female perspectives on CRM initiatives are shown in Table 4.58.

Table 4.2: T-Test with Gender

Group Statistics					
	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Awareness of CRM	Male	198	3.1061	1.15932	.08239
	Female	187	2.8556	1.21616	.08893
CRM Communication	Male	198	2.9848	1.01999	.07249
	Female	187	2.8289	1.06893	.07817
CRM Preferences	Male	198	3.1111	1.14341	.08126
	Female	187	3.0695	1.15957	.08480
Evaluation of Feedback	Male	198	4.1768	7.26259	.51613
	Female	187	3.3904	3.90099	.28527
Experience Tailored	Male	198	2.9091	1.07194	.07618
	Female	187	3.0267	1.09463	.08005
Efficiency of CRM	Male	198	4.0859	7.27960	.51734
	Female	187	3.4599	3.90922	.28587
Constant Communication	Male	198	3.0202	1.02734	.07301
	Female	187	3.0214	1.10695	.08095
New Offers Consciousness	Male	198	3.1263	1.09415	.07776
	Female	187	3.0909	1.13463	.08297
Simple booking	Male	198	3.0808	1.12360	.07985
	Female	187	3.0214	1.10209	.08059
Community Values	Male	198	3.0354	1.15489	.08207

| Female | 187 | 3.2086 | 1.19332 | .08726 |

For every CRM dimension, the table displays the mean scores, standard deviations, and standard errors. The mean score for "Awareness of Gender CRM" is higher among men (3.1061) than among women (2.8556), suggesting that men view CRM programs as having a greater influence on boosting awareness. In contrast, women report mean ratings for "Experience Tailored to Gender" (3.0267) that are higher than those of men (2.9091), indicating that they believe their needs are better met by CRM experiences.

Table 4.3: Independent Samples Test

Independent Samples Test		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means				
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
Awareness of CRM	Equal variances assumed	1.886	0.170	2.069	383	0.039	0.25045	0.12107
	Equal variances not assumed			2.066	378.819	0.040	0.25045	0.12123
CRM Communication	Equal variances assumed	3.068	0.081	1.465	383	0.144	0.15597	0.10646
	Equal variances not assumed			1.463	378.897	0.144	0.15597	0.10660
CRM Preferences	Equal variances assumed	0.017	0.898	0.354	383	0.723	0.04159	0.11740
	Equal variances not assumed			0.354	381.061	0.723	0.04159	0.11745
Evaluation of Feedback	Equal variances assumed	2.633	0.105	1.313	383	0.190	0.78639	0.59912
	Equal variances not assumed			1.334	305.545	0.183	0.78639	0.58972
Experience Tailored	Equal variances assumed	0.011	0.916	-1.065	383	0.287	-0.11765	0.11044
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.065	380.670	0.288	-0.11765	0.11050
Efficiency of CRM	Equal variances assumed	2.565	0.110	1.042	383	0.298	0.62597	0.60049
	Equal variances not assumed			1.059	305.504	0.290	0.62597	0.59107
Constant Communication	Equal variances assumed	2.951	0.087	-0.011	383	0.991	-0.00119	0.10878
	Equal variances not assumed			-0.011	376.477	0.991	-0.00119	0.10901
New Offers Consciousness	Equal variances assumed	0.253	0.615	0.311	383	0.756	0.03535	0.11360
	Equal variances not assumed			0.311	379.676	0.756	0.03535	0.11371
Simple booking	Equal variances assumed	0.073	0.788	0.523	383	0.601	0.05942	0.11351
	Equal variances not assumed			0.524	382.448	0.601	0.05942	0.11345
Community Values	Equal variances assumed	1.273	0.260	-1.447	383	0.149	-0.17320	0.11968
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.446	379.923	0.149	-0.17320	0.11980

The findings of the independent samples t-test, which was used to assess if gender differences in perceptions of CRM initiatives are statistically significant, are presented in Table 4.59. The findings of the t-test demonstrate that different CRM dimensions have differing degrees of significance. Gender has a considerable effect on awareness levels, as evidenced by the significant difference in "Awareness of Gender CRM" (p-value = 0.039). However, non-significant p-values (0.144 and 0.723, respectively) are found for dimensions like "CRM Communication by Gender" and "CRM Preferences by Gender," indicating that there are no appreciable gender differences in these domains. The significance levels show that while certain components of CRM projects are seen differently by various genders, other aspects are not. This emphasizes the need for gender-specific CRM strategies to address perceptions and needs.

5. RESULT

The result from the t-test show that there is a substantial difference in how people view CRM initiatives depending on gender, especially when it comes to "Awareness of Gender CRM" (p = 0.039). Nevertheless, no noteworthy distinctions were discovered in other aspects, such "CRM Communication" and "CRM Preferences."

6. CONCLUSION AND FINDINGS

The t-test results show that male and female guests at five-star hotels in Delhi have significantly different views on CRM activities, especially when it comes to awareness levels. In particular, the statistically significant p-value of 0.039 indicates that male consumers are more aware of gender-specific CRM programs than female customers. This implies that campaigns by CRM companies to increase awareness might have a greater impact on male clients. With p-values of 0.144 and 0.723, respectively, the research did discover that gender differences are not statistically significant in other aspects of CRM, such as communication and preferences. This suggests that regardless of gender, male and female clients see certain CRM features in a same way. These results imply that although gender-specific approaches are necessary to raise CRM awareness across various consumer segments, there may not be as much difference needed for other CRM characteristics. Thus, although emphasizing areas where gender disparities are not as prominent, the findings also support the

alternative hypothesis (H1), which suggests that there is a considerable variation in awareness levels of CRM programs depending on gender.

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