

Bibliometric Analysis of CRM Practices and Their Descendants: Impact on Business Outcomes and Strategic Development

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Abstract

The current research performs a bibliometric analysis of Customer Relationship Management (CRM) practices and their offspring, looking at their contributions to business performance and strategic formation. Based on data obtained from the Scopus database, it provides an extensive view of the scholarly environment, identifying primary trends, popular studies, and upcoming themes in CRM. The analysis employs biblioshiny and VOSviewer, two advanced tools for data visualization and citation network analysis, to map the structure of CRM research and trace its evolution across different dimensions. The paper explores how CRM practices have influenced organizational performance, customer satisfaction, and strategic growth over time, while also identifying the "descendants" of CRM, such as newer methodologies and technologies that have evolved from traditional CRM approaches. Key findings reveal significant clusters of research on CRM's impact on customer loyalty, digital transformation, and data-driven marketing strategies. The study also highlights gaps in the literature, offering future research directions for scholars and practitioners seeking to explore the next frontier in CRM practices. By combining bibliometric techniques with visualization tools, this paper contributes to a comprehensive understanding of CRM's role in shaping business outcomes and strategic decision-making in a rapidly changing business environment.

Keywords: CRM Practices, Customer Loyalty, customer satisfaction, Business Outcomes.

INTRODUCTION

CRM is now a critical business strategy for organizations that aim to create customer satisfaction, loyalty, and business performance. CRM best practices are concerned with the management of customer data to ensure customized services and satisfaction (1). The effectiveness of CRM programs is, in turn, closely related to organizational commitment and knowledge management, which lead to customer loyalty and profitability (2). Moreover, the level of CRM systems also has a significant influence on customer satisfaction, with information, system, and service quality being the most influential factors (3). Having a high CRM orientation has also been found to enhance market effectiveness and profitability, highlighting its strategic value in business performance (4). As the era of digital transformation picked pace, CRM also went beyond its conventional means through the use of sophisticated technologies like artificial intelligence (AI), big data analytics, and cloud computing (5,6). Through these, data is captured and

analyzed in real-time, hence enabling businesses to provide tailored experiences and customer interaction (5). Big data analytics, especially, facilitates CRM by allowing marketing campaigns to be targeted, customer service to be optimized, and loyalty programs to be tailored (7). Additionally, it assists firms in being able to predict customers' needs, minimize churn, and react quickly to changes in consumer behavior (8). The combination of multiple data sources, such as transactional data and social media, enables organizations to get a complete picture of the customer journey (7).

The application of AI in CRM software has also further transformed customer interaction by creating tailored interactions and enhancing operations (9). AI-based CRM applications have proven to improve B2B relationship satisfaction, consequently leading to enhanced firm performance (10). In the auto industry, businesses utilizing CRM and big data analytics have effectively adopted best practices that enhance total quality management (TQM) and improve business performance (11). In addition, the implementation of ICT-enabled CRM systems enables organizations to effectively handle customer data, converting insights into strategies for growth (12). From businesses like banking, hospitality, e-commerce, to logistics, CRM implementation has greatly enhanced business competitiveness and efficiency. AI technologies have been at the forefront of this revolution, facilitating data-driven decision-making that optimizes customer engagement and business success (9). Organizations that combine AI with CRM solutions are able to process customer data more effectively, resulting in personalized experiences and increased customer satisfaction. For example, in the financial services industry, studies emphasize that a well-designed CRM strategy, underpinned by strong information systems and empowered staff, improves an organization's readiness to respond to changing markets (13). Flexibility to sustain competitive advantage in rapidly changing industries is critical. Adoption of CRM technology is also found to have a positive impact on an organization's customization, thus enhancing CRM effectiveness (14). Aligning organizational objectives with CRM initiatives is key to achieving maximum impact. E-CRM in the banking sector has been found to increase customer satisfaction through overall customer experience (15). The mediating effect of customer experience in the relationship underscores the need for E-CRM integration.

Although there has been enough of bibliometric research on CRM, there are some gaps in current research. Current research like that by Perez-Vega et al. (16, 17) Del Vecchio et al. (2022) concentrates on Social CRM and Big Data but misses the overall effect of such emerging technologies as blockchain and IoT. There are still geographical imbalances in CRM literature, with research like that by (18) spanning prominent geographies while excluding developing markets. Industry-specific CRM implementation is not well-researched, with only meagre attention outside higher education (19) and the retail sector (20). Moreover, research like that by (21) and (22) does not perform a thorough investigation of CRM's financial and competitive effect. Although (23) studied the contribution of social media to Supply Chain 4.0, integrating it with CRM for predictive analysis has limited research. In addition, sustainability of CRM strategies, as emphasized by (24), needs additional bibliometric analysis of CRM practices and its descendants impacting business outcomes. Bridging these knowledge gaps will contribute to greater comprehension of CRM's changing function in business strategy and technological innovation.

This study investigates dominant trends, impactful contributions, and the development of CRM practices, with a focus on new methodologies and their influence on business outcomes. It also discusses the most highly cited articles, top authors, journals, and institutions that contribute to CRM studies along with analysing citation patterns, bibliographic coupling and co-occurrence of keyword networks. This study applies a bibliometric analysis to the CRM practices and its offspring. The advanced visualization tools,

such as Biblioshiny and VOSviewer, have nowadays become indispensable to carry out bibliometric analyses for scientific research. These tools provide strong capabilities for data visualization, text mining, and scientific mapping (25) that are used in the study to identify influential authors, journals, and articles as well as discover thematic clusters and citation networks for the years 2014 to 2025. This paper integrates bibliometric techniques with advanced visualization tools to enhance the understanding of CRM's role in driving organizational success in an evolving business landscape. The findings are expected to be of value to researchers, practitioners, and policymakers alike, as they point out the transformative potential of CRM and its impact on strategic decision-making.

Table 1: Literature Review in Tabular Form

S. No.	Reference	Citations	Main Findings	Future Research Scope
1	(26)	301	The study shows that social CRM capabilities enhance business performance through the improvement of customer engagement, with social media usage amplifying this effect. However, the focus on a single platform (Facebook) highlights the need for further research across diverse platforms.	Future research should explore diverse social media platforms to broaden insights into social CRM's effectiveness and impact on firm performance. Studies should examine the interaction of social media technologies with CRM systems, their combined effect on firm value, and the long-term impacts on customer management and business outcomes.
2	(27)	245	CRM quality mediates the link between service evaluation variables and customer loyalty, with its impact heightened by a strong brand image. High service quality alone is insufficient; CRM quality is essential for fostering loyalty.	A future study will expand the conceptual model to B2B. The analysis of moderating variables such as demographics, tenure, and competitive intensity would identify conditions under which the quality-loyalty nexus becomes stronger or weaker. Future studies should move deeper to explore relationships between service evaluation variables, CRM quality, brand image, and customer loyalty.
3	(28)	159	The study reveals that innovativeness drives customer value co-creation, where customer engagement mediates this link. Innovativeness boosts customer engagement and participation, enhances perceived benefits, and fosters citizenship behaviors	Future research should utilize longitudinal designs to determine causality and examine other industries such as hotels and airlines to generalize the findings. The authors recommend controlling for confounding variables and exploring the

			especially in the coffee shop context.	moderating factors that affect innovativeness, customer engagement, and value co-creation.
4	(29)	144	Value congruity is an important factor in motivating customer-brand identification (CBI), affective commitment, and customer-brand engagement (CBE) in the hospitality industry. CBI is an important determinant of affective brand commitment and customer-brand engagement.	Explore alternative frameworks, such as social exchange, social resource, and social practice theories, could be in respect to customer-brand identification and engagement within hospitality and retail brands. Also include relational constructs like co-creation, brand equity, and customer experience, along with longitudinal designs and diverse methodologies.
5	(30)	137	The cross-sectional study design does not allow for gaining causal insights regarding customer engagement and customer-brand relationships. Future research should validate CE's impact on brand relationships and explore its financial benefits for retail. Qualitative methods can uncover brand traits fostering CE.	Future studies should analyze how customer engagement (CE) drives financial performance, determine the conditions that promote CE, study what triggers disengagement, and compare CE behaviors between existing and potential customers with a focus on content that elicits participation.
6	(31)	129	CRM and company reputation have positive influences on customer loyalty, with customer satisfaction mediating these relationships. Building trust among staff and leveraging advertising, PR, and marketing are crucial for enhancing reputation and shaping customer behavior.	Further studies should expand into cities beyond Islamabad and Rawalpindi to cover other diverse sectors and countries for the better generalizability of findings. Moderators like literacy rates should be included and studied about their effect on decision-making, loyalty, and satisfaction across different industries.
7	(32)	111	The research found seventeen essential mobile banking service quality dimensions, grouped into application quality and customer service quality. Eight dimensions fall under application quality, including content, accuracy, ease of	Future studies need to confirm the seventeen dimensions of m-banking service quality identified by gathering primary data from m-banking customers via surveys and interviews. A longitudinal study may be undertaken to analyze how

			use, etc. Five factors of key importance, namely mobile convenience, accuracy, etc improvement, had an impact on customer satisfaction and dissatisfaction. The research emphasizes the need to bring mobile banking service quality in line with customer wishes.	customer beliefs about m-banking service quality change over time. Analyzing the impact of new mobile technologies on customer satisfaction and service quality would also be informative. Research on the connection between customer preferences and the efficiency of m-banking service delivery is also advisable.
8	(33)	110	The study reveals social media CRM improves business performance for Thai microenterprises; however, entrepreneurs' social competency and social media sales intensity moderate benefits. Low-competency entrepreneurs benefit more with intensive use of social media; therefore, a digital adaptation can be a factor in maintaining competitive advantage.	Future research should broaden sample coverage, explore firm and entrepreneur characteristics that influence social media benefits, study its role in marketing globally, and assess entrepreneurs' product presentation skills as a moderating factor.
9	(34)	105	This study drew on 10,895 tweets to find more positive than negative customer sentiments toward Malaysia's LCC. Key discussions covered customer service, promotional offers related to ticket sale, cancellation of flights, and the organization of bookings after purchase. Both K-Means and spherical K-Means provided the same results to substantiate the effectiveness of their use in opinion analysis. This study emphasizes that clear assessment of consumer sentiment will help service quality improve and attract more customers toward making greater profits for LCCs.	Future studies should focus on the difficulties of morphological affix removal from Malay words and consider Malaysia Airlines (MAS) for comparative studies with low-cost carriers (LCCs). Exploring specific hashtags and incorporating advanced sentiment analysis techniques may further help in understanding customer feedback in the airline industry.
10	(35)	81	Customer satisfaction with an app is influenced by its positive attitude, ease of use, and compatibility,	Future research should incorporate data from other fields like banking and securities to predict customer

			which all contribute to a better service orientation among users.	satisfaction, explore long-term customer behaviour changes, and use SEM to add additional factors.
11	(36)	70	The research indicates that service failure lowers customer satisfaction with the handling of complaints, and effective complaint resolution increases both satisfaction and brand credibility. Banks should, therefore, implement customer relationship management systems to improve complaint handling, thereby strengthening brand credibility.	The future could be conducted to validate the results of this study by using a longitudinal design with different cultures, countries, and sectors. Examining the service failures from both employees and executives, and understanding how service recovery strategies impact customer loyalty and brand credibility, will give more insightful outcomes.
12	(37)	69	The 14-item scale measures CRM practices and customer satisfaction, with customer care and communication playing crucial roles. The relationship between CRM practices and customer satisfaction is mediated by relationship quality	Expanding the model beyond Greece requires confirmation and can add customer loyalty, personality traits, relationship quality, and commitment dimensions. Validating scales on CRM practices beyond hospitality and mobile telephony is crucial.
13	(38)	66	The study suggests that increasing consumer satisfaction is a challenging task but trust significantly impacts it. The combination of service quality, trust, and privacy, which can ensure E-CRM success, significantly influences customer satisfaction.	Increase data collection and validation from Iran sites, introduce additional variables affecting customer satisfaction and E-CRM effectiveness, analyse cultural factors, and expand the existing model to include more variables and locations.
14	(39)	66	The connect between Big Data Analytics and CRM capability is strengthened, with leadership support moderately influencing this relationship.	Future research should focus on long-term analysis of user behaviour changes, analysing BDA's benefits, considering privacy, analysis environment, and cross-cultural biases, and adding dynamic process and marketing abilities to strengthen the research model.
15	(40)	66	The research indicates that customer knowledge positively influences service quality, and CRM acts as a partial mediator. Valuable customer	Upcoming research will involve company personnel, existing customers, and potential customers to enhance the data triangulation

			knowledge acquisition is essential for improving customer relationships and service quality, which is a source of competitive advantage. The assessment showed a strong interrelation of customer knowledge with service quality.	and explore how enterprises can transform the knowledge of customers into better relationships as well as service quality. Investigating the integration of customer knowledge through business processes as well as determining the influence of various acquisition methods on service quality will be informative.
16	(41)	60	The paper indicates a positive interrelation of IT investments with customer satisfaction, with a stronger connection between 1994-1996 and 1999-2006. IT investments positively influenced profits during 1999-2006, but negatively during 1994-1996. Few studies focus on firm-level IT investments impact.	Upcoming research are required to know the impact of IT investments on perceived quality and value, besides the influence of IT on customer satisfaction, a key indicator of company performance. Further studies should also explore the unique effects of IT on consumer surplus and satisfaction.
17	(42)	39	The study found that how the relationship between E-CRM and customer satisfaction is influenced by customer experience, with positive experiences fostering long-term bank relationships. The S-O-R model supports this, indicating that E-CRM acts as a stimulus influencing both customer experience and satisfaction.	The model should be expanded to include bank employees' perspectives, with a larger sample size and regional participants. Comparative analyses between public and private banks should be conducted. Variables should be incorporated to assess E-CRM's impact on customer satisfaction.
18	(43)	38	This research explores the relationship between customer trust, loyalty, and knowledge and satisfaction, highlighting the positive impact of CKM and satisfaction on customer trust.	Future research should explore factors enhancing customer satisfaction and trust, replicate across different nationalities, regions, and sectors, and assess the applicability to different banks and cultures, while also examining the weak link between customer satisfaction and trust.
19	(44)	33	Customer satisfaction is positively correlated with food quality, pricing, and service excellence, and loyalty, but there's an inverse relationship	Future research should explore restaurant types, demographic factors, price awareness, customer satisfaction, loyalty, brand value,

			between restaurant location and atmosphere.	and image, using a longitudinal method and incorporating variables like brand value and image to better understand the connections between these constructs.
20	(45).	33	Technology critical success factors (CSFs) positively impact customer satisfaction, with trust acting as a mediator, with a significant positive effect on both CSFs and trust's impact on customer satisfaction.	Upcoming research is required to explore how the interrelation of technology critical success factors and customer satisfaction is influenced by other mediating factors beyond trust and assess its applicability in other service sectors, and evaluate their lasting effects.

METHODOLOGY

This study is based on collection of information obtained from past research on the trend of research in customer relationship management between 2014-2025 obtained from Scopus database that will be put as input to conduct bibliometric research. Bibliometric research is a type of quantitative approach that uses statistical analysis of published literature to describe trends, performance, and relationship in academic writings (30, 46) (31, 47). It employs a range of indicators to capture productivity, quality, and connections among publications, authors, and research areas (30,46). It is a very potent tool for research landscape mapping as well as grasping conceptual, intellectual, and social structures of the scientific field. These analyses commonly employ quantitative methods such as network analysis and thematic clustering for the identification of key themes, trends, and influential works (32,48) (33,49). For an effective search strategy to retrieve relevant Scopus-indexed articles, the title, abstract and key words will involve this search query, TITLE-ABS-KEY ("Customer Relationship Management") AND TITLE-ABS-KEY ("customer satisfaction") OR TITLE-ABS-KEY ("brand loyalty") OR TITLE-ABS-KEY ("sales performance") with regard to publications for the period of 2014 to 2025. In this case, a focus on relevant and current time for the analysis from the past ten years was established by filtering off irrelevant and obsoleted content with the use of the latter condition. The years before 2014 have been excluded within the scope. To avoid duplication and error, it was limited to its source in peer-reviewed journal articles in their final form. Only English language was used. The wide search string is as shown in Table 2. Data extraction was conducted on January 14 2025, yielding an initial corpus of 179 documents after applying the specified filters as mentioned in figure-1. Following a thorough review, two duplicate records were identified and excluded, resulting in a final dataset of 196 unique documents. The dataset was exported in CSV format for further analysis. Various analytical tools were applied to analyze descriptive data and create visualizations. For descriptive statistical analysis, Microsoft Excel was the employed tool, while advanced analyses like co-keyword and co-citation analysis, and bibliographic coupling were done through VOSviewer (34, 50) (35,51). Also applied was the web-based Biblioshiny application that is part of RStudio for applying Bradford's Law, producing three-field plots, identifying the globally most-cited articles, and more. It therefore covered all the methodologies comprehensively.

Figure 1: Selection Criteria for Publications Utilized in This Research

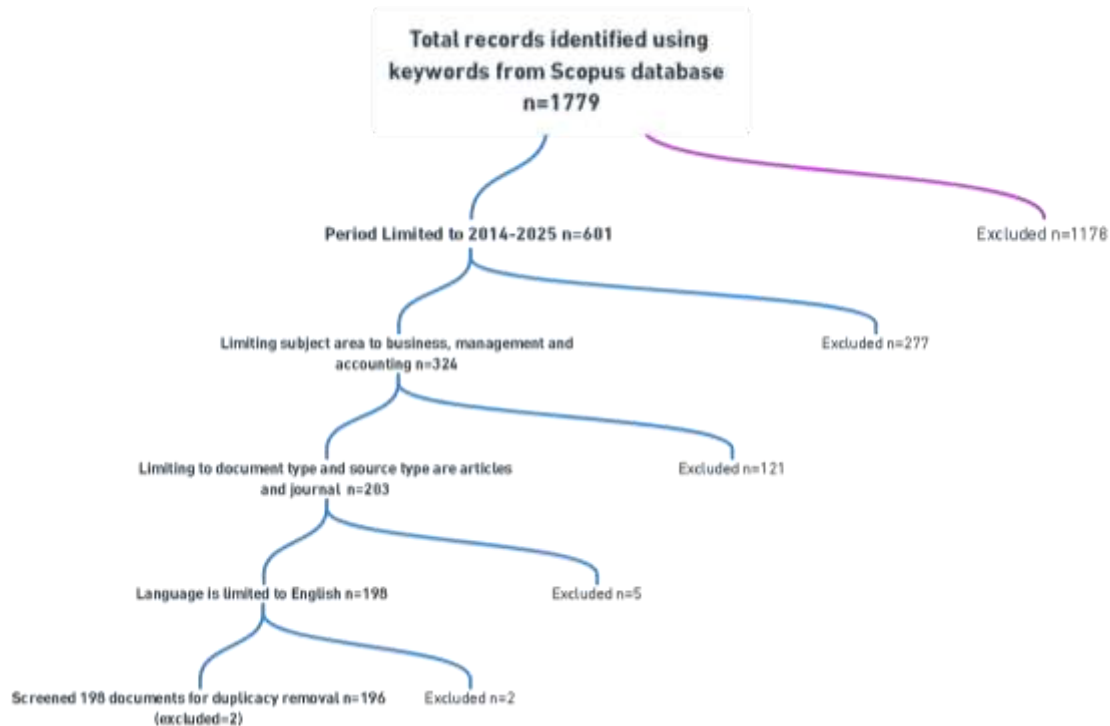


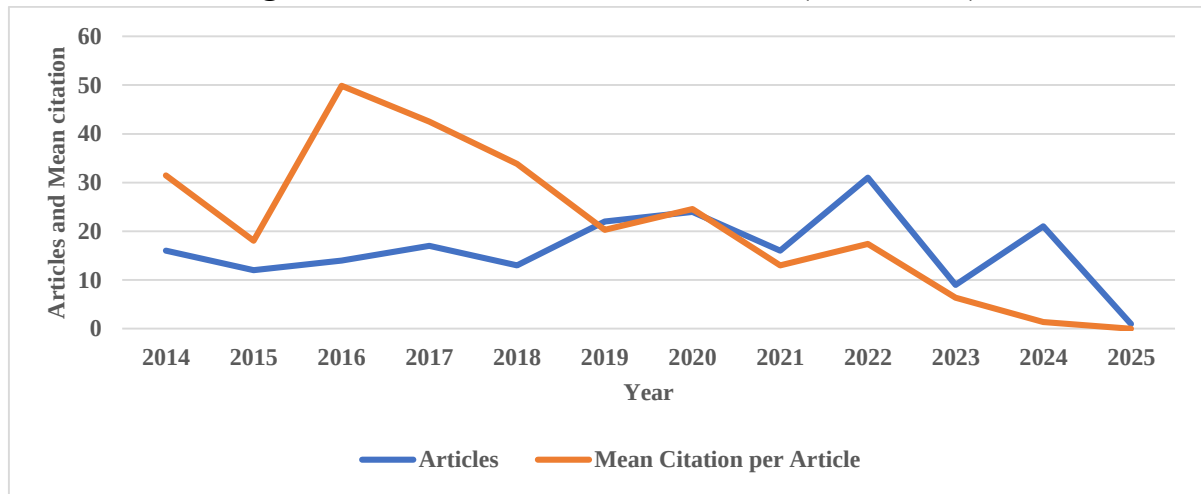
Table 2: The Strings of Search

Search String
(TITLE-ABS-KEY ("Customer Relationship Management") AND TITLE-ABS-KEY ("customer satisfaction") OR TITLE-ABS-KEY ("brand loyalty") OR TITLE-ABS KEY ("sales performance")) AND PUBYEAR > AND PUBYEAR

Bibliometric Analysis

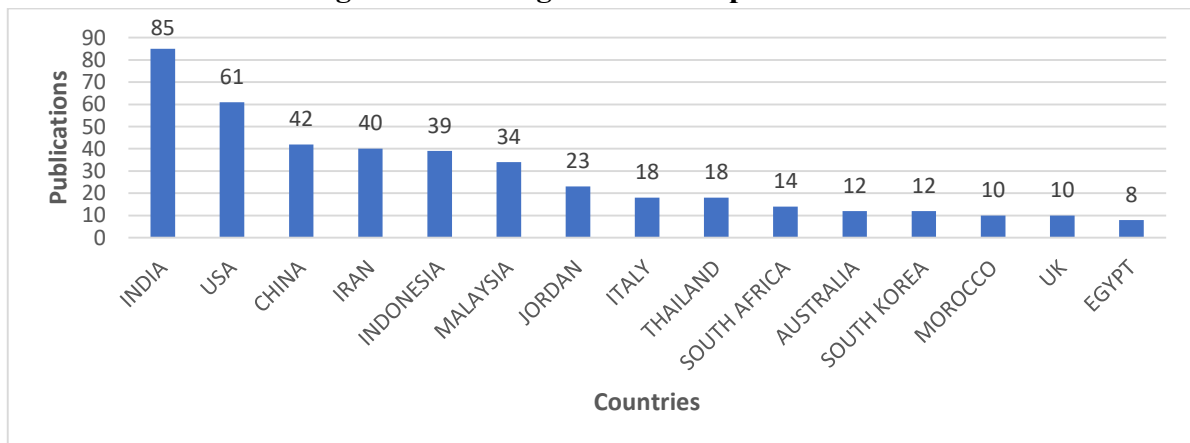
Annual Scientific Production: Annual scientific publication of research articles plays a crucial role in advancing knowledge and enhancing research quality. It allows researchers to communicate their findings, contribute to the global knowledge base, and learn about previous work in their field (36 52,37,53). The annual scientific publication of research articles on CRM practices provides a thorough analysis of the evolution, The information indicates fluctuations in the average citations and number of published articles between 2014 and 2025. The highest publication year was in 2022 at 31 articles, followed by a steep decrease to nine publications in 2023 and in 2024 the number of articles published were 21. In terms of mean citations per article, these were notably highest in 2016 at an average of 49.86 but have consistently decreased since then, hitting a low point of 1.38 in 2024 and falling to zero by 2025. The earlier years between 2014 and 2017 demonstrated greater impact on research influence while recent years reflect diminished relevance—a phenomenon that is further evidenced by sporadic increases in the volume of articles published over time. This trend suggests potential shifts regarding the significance or impact of research topics being addressed today.

Figure 2: Trends in Scientific Production (20014–2025)



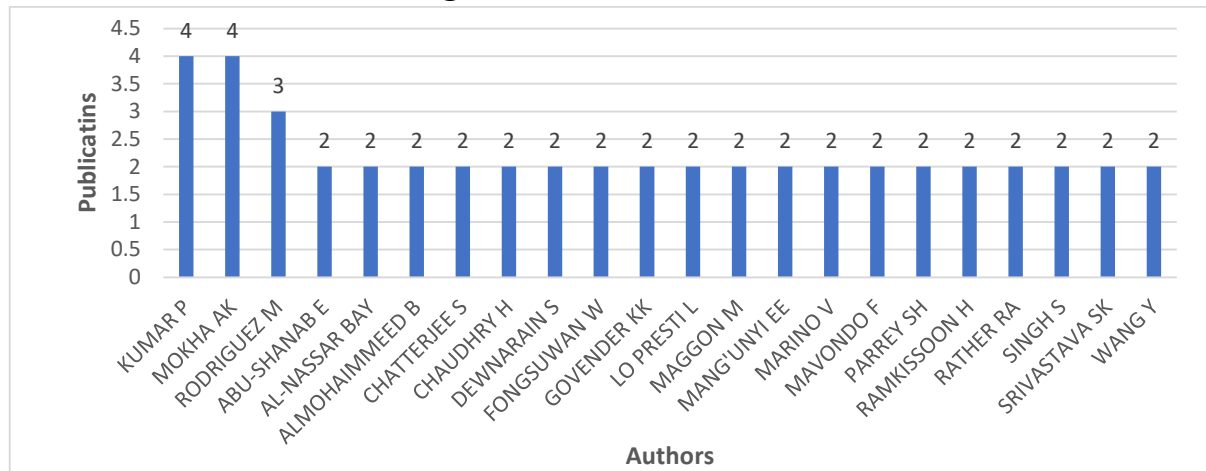
Leading Countries with Total Publications: The data from Figure-3 show the number of publications by each country out of a total of 196, with 85 (43.4%) of these publications stemming from India, 61 (31%) from the United States, and 42 (21.4%) from China. Significant contributions came from Iran (40) and Indonesia (39); Malaysia published 34 and Jordan contributed 23. Italy and Thailand produced 18 totals, whereas activity is moderate for South Africa (14), Australia (12), and South Korea (12). A comparatively small number of publications were produced by Morocco, the United Kingdom (jointly) and Egypt. The distribution makes clear India's dominant role in research output, with important contributions from other countries in Asia and beyond.

Figure 3: Leading countries in publications



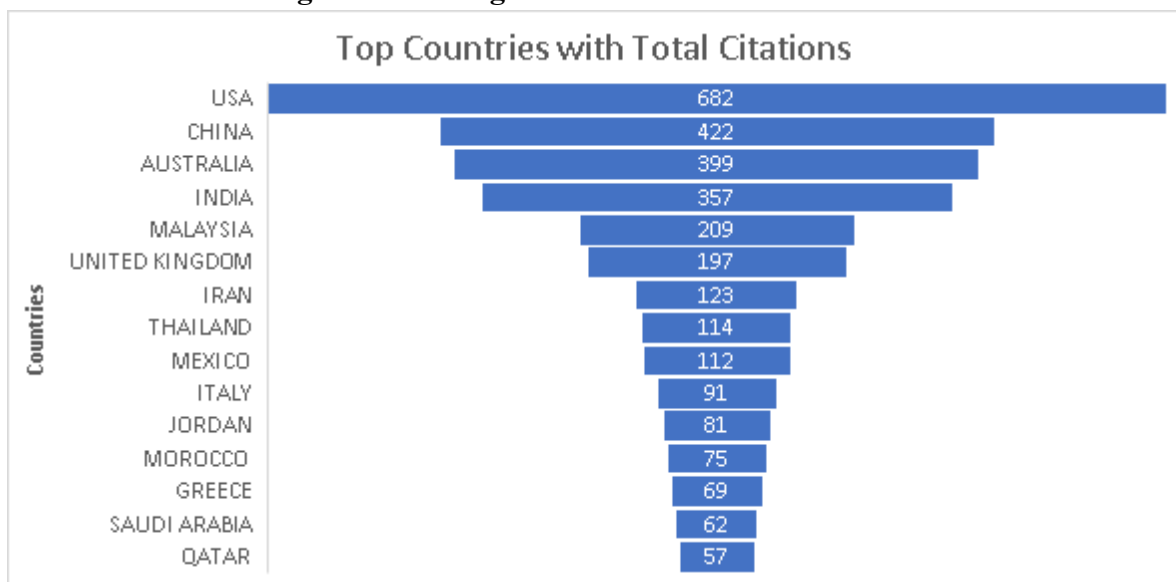
Influential Authors – Top Authors: The figure-4 indicated an influence by authors in research related to CRM practices, customer satisfaction, loyalty, and sales outcomes. Kumar P and Mokha A.K paired together provided four articles each for this investigation, while Rodriguez M was worthy of mention as he provided three articles. Others include Abu-Shanab E, Al-Nassar Bay, Almohaimmeed B, and Chatterjee S, who provided two articles each. The distribution indicates the existence of an extensive range of contributors, with a few being very active, implying a collaborative and diversified nature of research in this field.

Figure 4: Influential Authors



Leading Countries with Article Citation: This figure-5 reveals the 15 leading countries concluding article citation to date, concerning CRM practices, customer satisfaction, loyalty, and sales outcomes. The USA has secured its spot as the most productive country with 682 citations. China ranked second with 422 citations, while Australia secured third place with 399 citations-the two demonstrate some research influence. India, Malaysia, and the UK, with 357, 209, and 197 citations, respectively, can also be considered decisive contributors. Countries with moderate influence over the remaining are Iran (123), Thailand (114), and Mexico (112), while Italy (91), Jordan (81), and Morocco (75) made lesser but still meaningful contributions. Greece, Saudi Arabia, and Qatar closed the ranks and present overall participation in the development of above fields.

Figure:5 Leading Countries with Total Citations



Leading Journals: The data from Table-3 show the major journals contributing to CRM practices research in the order of their influence. The International Journal of Electronic Customer Relationship Management leads with the highest h-index (6), g-index (10), and total citations (108) from 13 publications since 2014. The Journal of Business and Industrial Marketing and International Journal of Bank Marketing

respectively have h-indices of 5 and 4 and show great influence despite a smaller number of publications. Other journals such as Quality - Access to Success and Uncertain Supply Chain Management with emerging contributions should be noted, having generally consistent indices, albeit lower. In total, these journals comprise broad differences in the level of influence and focus emerging in CRM research, giving a well-blended taste of input from both established and new contributors.

Table 3: Leading Journals with the Source Impact

Journals	h_ind ex	g_ind ex	m_ind ex	T C	N P	PY_st art
International Journal of Electronic Customer Relationship Management	6	10	0.5	10 8	13	2014
Journal Of Business and Industrial Marketing	5	5	0.455	19 1	5	2015
International Journal of Bank Marketing	4	4	0.333	22 4	4	2014
Quality - Access to Success	3	3	0.273	9	4	2015
Uncertain Supply Chain Management	3	4	0.6	16	4	2021
Cogent Business and Management	2	4	0.25	45	4	2018
Fiib Business Review	2	2	0.25	26	2	2018
Industrial Management and Data Systems	2	2	0.167	12 2	2	2014
Information And Management	2	2	0.286	67	2	2019
International Journal of Business Information Systems	2	3	0.182	32	3	2015

Bradford Law: Bradford's Law of Scattering is a bibliometric law that describes the pattern of articles between journals in a given subject area (38,54). It postulates that few core journals contain most articles, with numerous other journals contributing fewer (39,55). As stated by law, the number of journals in the second and third zones is n and n^2 more than that of the first zone, respectively (38,54). Journals are divided into three zones: core journals (zone 1), less relevant journals (zone 2), and even less relevant journals (zone 3) as seen in this study. In this research, zone 1 has eighteen journals, zone 2 has fifty journals, and zone 3 has sixty-four journals, showcasing the most powerful sources. This classification is beneficial for researchers as it aids in the determination of highly influential journals while presenting a general picture of the publishing world and its sources.

Table 4: Bradford Law

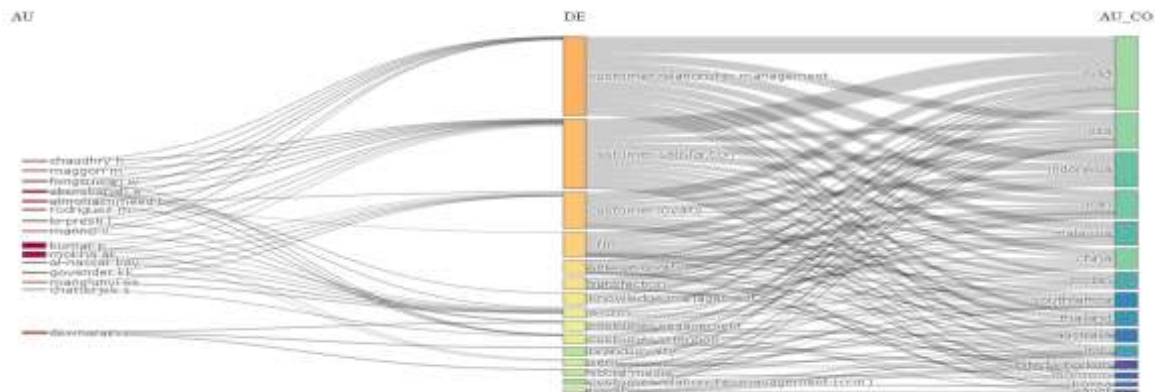
Column1	Rank	Freq	cumFreq	Zone
International Journal of Electronic Customer Relationship Management	1	13	13	1
Journal Of Business and Industrial Marketing	2	5	18	1
Cogent Business and Management	3	4	22	1
Emerald Emerging Markets Case Studies	4	4	26	1
International Journal of Bank Marketing	5	4	30	1

Quality - Access to Success	6	4	34	1
Uncertain Supply Chain Management	7	4	38	1
International Journal of Applied Business and Economic Research	8	3	41	1
International Journal of Business Information Systems	9	3	44	1
Journal Of Financial Services Marketing	10	3	47	1
Journal Of Global Scholars of Marketing Science: Bridging Asia and The World	11	3	50	1
Polish Journal of Management Studies	12	3	53	1
Fiib Business Review	13	2	55	1
Ibima Business Review	14	2	57	1
Industrial Management and Data Systems	15	2	59	1
Information And Management	16	2	61	1
Innovative Marketing	17	2	63	1
International Journal of Customer Relationship Marketing and Management	18	2	65	1
International Journal of Economics and Business Research	19	2	67	2
International Journal of Enterprise Information Systems	20	2	69	2
International Journal of Hospitality Management	21	2	71	2
International Journal of Supply Chain Management	22	2	73	2
Journal Of Business-To-Business Marketing	23	2	75	2
Journal Of Business Research	24	2	77	2
Journal Of Decision Systems	25	2	79	2
Journal Of Hospitality Marketing and Management	26	2	81	2
Journal Of Relationship Marketing	27	2	83	2
Journal Of Retailing and Consumer Services	28	2	85	2
Journal Of Travel and Tourism Marketing	29	2	87	2
Management And Marketing	30	2	89	2
Marketing Intelligence and Planning	31	2	91	2
Research Journal of Business Management	32	2	93	2
Spanish Journal of Marketing - Esic	33	2	95	2
Total Quality Management and Business Excellence	34	2	97	2
Tqm Journal	35	2	99	2
Abac Journal	36	1	100	2
Academy Of Strategic Management Journal	37	1	101	2
Acta Commercii	38	1	102	2
Advances In Hospitality and Leisure	39	1	103	2
African Journal of Economic and Management Studies	40	1	104	2
African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure	41	1	105	2
Annals Of Applied Sport Science	42	1	106	2
Applied Marketing Analytics	43	1	107	2
Asia Marketing Journal	44	1	108	2

Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics	45	1	109	2
Asia Pacific Management Review	46	1	110	2
Banks And Bank Systems	47	1	111	2
Benchmarking	48	1	112	2
British Food Journal	49	1	113	2
Business: Theory And Practice	50	1	114	2
Construction Management and Economics	51	1	115	2
Corporate Ownership and Control	52	1	116	2
Decision Support Systems	53	1	117	2
Electronic Commerce Research and Applications	54	1	118	2
Euromed Journal of Business	55	1	119	2
Foundations Of Management	56	1	120	2
Industrial And Commercial Training	57	1	121	2
Industrial Marketing Management	58	1	122	2
Information Resources Management Journal	59	1	123	2
Information Systems Research	60	1	124	2
International Journal of Applied Management Science	61	1	125	2
International Journal of Business Excellence	62	1	126	2
International Journal of Business Innovation and Research	63	1	127	2
International Journal of Computer Information Systems and Industrial Management Applications	64	1	128	2
International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management	65	1	129	2
International Journal of E-Business Research	66	1	130	2
International Journal of Electronic Business	67	1	131	2
International Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Systems	68	1	132	2
International Journal of Information Science and Management	69	1	133	3

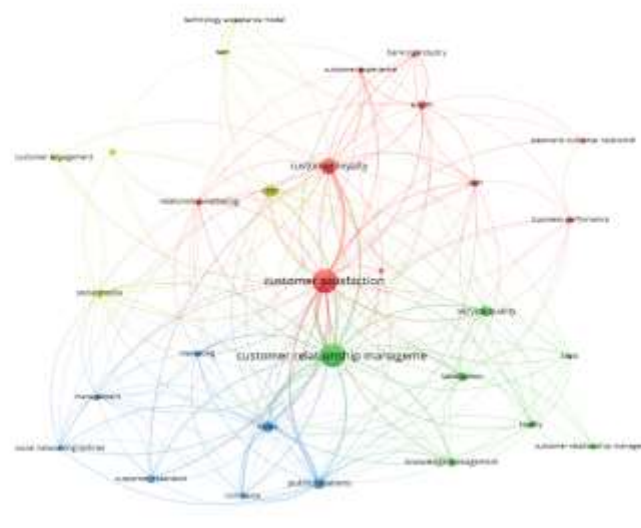
Three Field Plots: To enhance the analysis, core research areas with countries contributing to it and leading authors are singled out for detail. Three-field map built from a Sankey diagram lay out the relationships among countries, keywords, and authors (see figure 6). The area of the rectangle nodes is directly proportional to their frequency of occurrence. The triple layers that the Figure 6 presents include the CRM practices: countries on the right, author names on the left, and keywords toward the center. The highlights are that customer satisfaction, customer loyalty, CRM, and service quality are the major research areas. India, USA, Indonesia, Iran, Malaysia, and China are among the nations that have contributed to research in the field. A number of authors from various countries are contributing to overlapping themes, thus highlighting the global nature of customer relationship management research and its importance in a number of regions.

Figure 6: Three Field Plots (SO-Authors, DE-Keywords, AU_OC Author Country)



Co-Occurrence of Keyword Network: Keyword co-occurrence analysis is a powerful method for identifying major themes, research directions, and emerging trends within specific domains. This approach involves treating keywords as nodes in a network, with co-occurrences as links between them (40, 56, 41, 57). By analyzing these networks, researchers can uncover the knowledge structure and evolution of a field over time (42,58). The method has been applied to various fields, including social research methods, pain research, and operational research (42,58, ,41,57,40,56). This analysis can reveal emerging topics, declining trends, and synergies between different research areas. The results confirmed four keyword clusters generally linked with CRM and customer-centric strategies see figure:7. The first cluster stressed customer satisfaction and loyalty together with customer experience and e-CRM. The second cluster accentuated CRM practices, trust, service quality, and satisfaction all of which are crucial for improving the business performance. The third cluster deals with the strategic aspects of sales, public relations, and online social networking sufficient ditto high-light the integration of CRM into the wider scope of business functions. The fourth cluster threw up new themes such as customer engagement, social media, and brand loyalty-a move towards digitization and innovation. Customer satisfaction and loyalty remain a common priority area of effort, with a growing desire to explore digital strategies and integrate them within CRM practice.

Figure 7: Co-occurrence of keywords

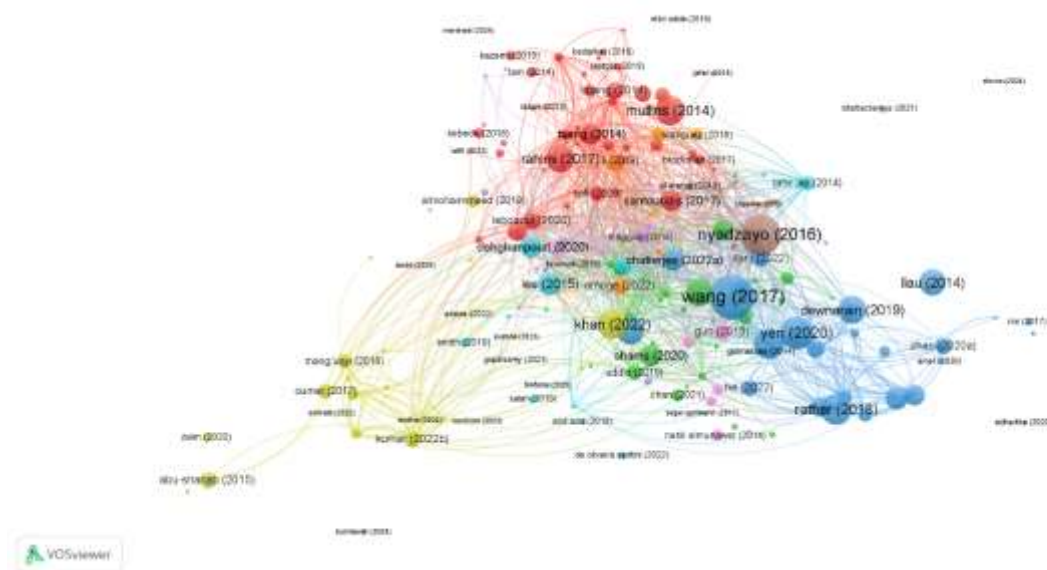


Bibliographic Coupling: Bibliographic coupling, a method for analyzing relationships between documents based on shared references, has gained renewed interest in recent years (43,59). While it is often assumed that bibliographically coupled papers are conceptually similar, recent research challenges this notion (44, 60). Bibliographic coupling can be applied at various levels, including author-level analysis, to reveal intellectual structures and research trends (45, 61). It complements other citation-based methods like co-citation analysis, providing a more comprehensive view of a field's intellectual landscape (46, 62).

In this network, nodes (circles) represent individual documents, whereas connections between nodes (if two nodes are connected by an edge, the thickness of the edge represents the degree of bibliometric coupling, where thicker edges represent stronger connections). The nodes are clustered together, with each one identified by a different color, indicating sets of documents that share common references within particular research themes or subfields. Larger nodes correspond to documents found to be more relevant and also have a higher degree of shared citations; proximity indicates relative strength of the bibliographic relationship. In figure-8 the red cluster includes major nodes like Mullins (2015) and Rahimi (2017) and shows this cluster reflects the dominant area of research. The blue cluster includes documents like Rather (2018) and Liau (2014) representing the influence of another major subfield. The green cluster has documents such as Khan (2022) and Kumar (2022). Therefore, this would reflect recent literature. Peripheral nodes, such as Abu-Shabab (2015), have fewer connecting nodes hence potentially represent a niche or isolated area of study.

This visualization gives one a perspective of the intellectual bridge between clusters, how interrelated subfields are related or facilitate interdisciplinarity. The timeline between 2014 and 2025 gives a perspective on how the trends of research have been developed over time, with felt clustering around specific documents representing an active and influential area of research.

Figure 8: Bibliometric coupling

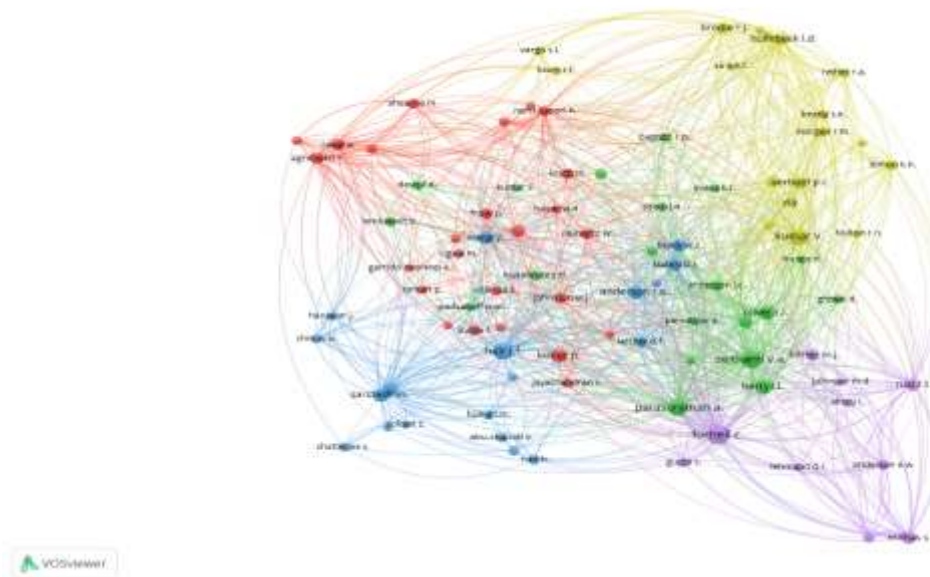


Co-citation Analysis

Co-citation analysis, facilitated by tools such as VOSviewer, has become an effective method for visualizing research trends and understanding disciplinary structures. These tools allow researchers to

group publications based on citation relationships and analyze the resulting networks (47, 63). VOSviewer, specifically, has been widely employed to uncover research trends in various fields, such as information retrieval, highlighting interdisciplinary links and identifying key contributors (48,64, 49, 65). In this study, we applied author co-citation analysis, which offers notable perspectives into the development of a discipline over time. For example, a study in information science demonstrated how author influence and specialty structures evolve across different periods. Co-citation analysis in figure:9 uncovers the intellectual framework of a field by identifying clusters of authors frequently cited together. Among the analyzed authors, Fornell C. has the highest citation count (3729), indicating significant influence within the research community. Authors such as Berry L.L., Parasuraman A., and Rust R.T. exhibit strong total link strengths, reflecting the high interconnectedness of their work with other influential studies. Similarly, Hair J.F., Sarstedt M., and Kumar V. are distinguished by their notable citation counts and link strengths, demonstrating their major contributions to the field. Collectively, these authors represent foundational figures in research, particularly in the areas of CRM and consumer behavior.

Figure: 9 Co-Citation Analysis:

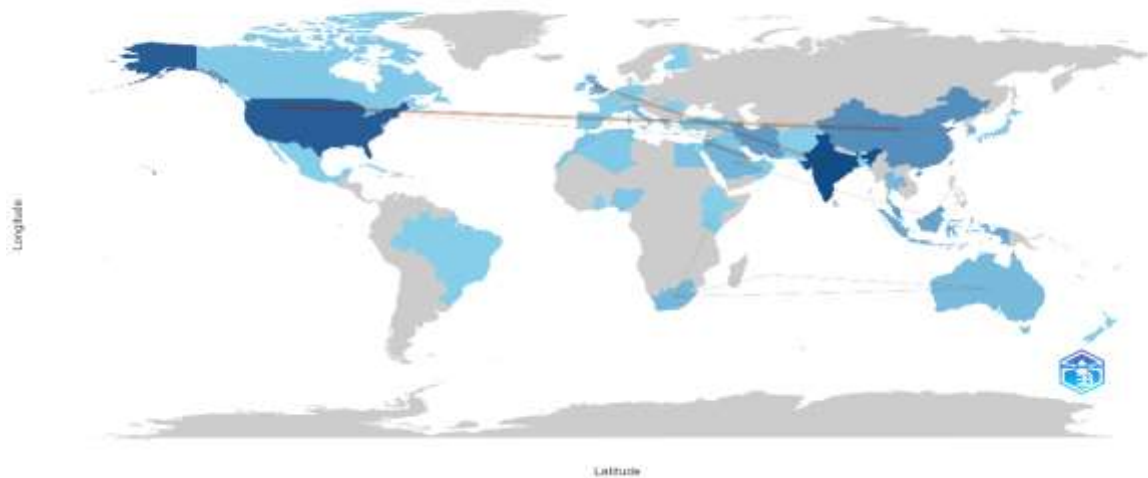


World Collaboration structure

The country collaboration map draws importance to most research collaborations on CRM, brand loyalty, customer satisfaction, and sales output, in which United States and India appear as central hubs see figure-10. Strong links with European nations, such as the UK and Germany, and Asian countries like China, Japan, and South Korea, emphasize a global and interdisciplinary focus of customer-centric strategies. It will, therefore be more apt to draw on international alliances that can advance CRM effectiveness as well as optimize sales performance through higher customer satisfaction. Darker areas, like the U.S. and India, represent that it is major in research initiatives. However, it indicates shared methodologies and insights geared towards solving worldwide market challenges from these connections.

Figure 10: World collaboration structure

Country Collaboration Map

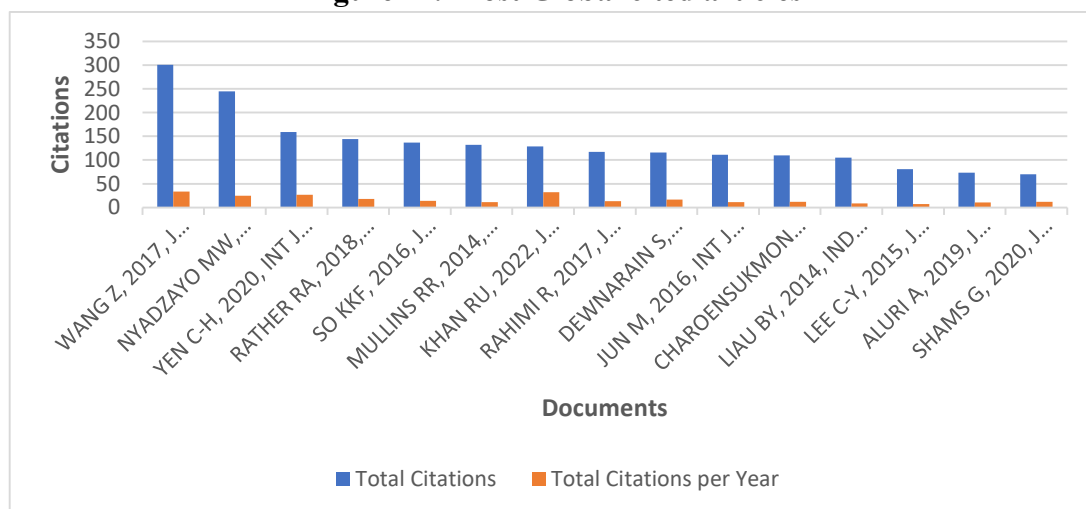


The Most Global Cited Articles

The bar graphfigure-11 shows the most cited articles worldwide in terms of total citations and yearly citations. Wang Z (2017) is one of the most referenced documents globally with a large number of total citations, a sign that the research has major implications and served an inherent role in the domain. Nyadzayo MW (2020) and Yen CH (2020) are also highly cited and bear significant influence and relevance to academic accreditation.

A pairwise comparison of total citations and citations per yearly publication indicates that although older articles like So KKF (2016) and Khan RU (2014) score quite well overall, more recent articles such as Rahimi R (2022) and Nyadzayo MW (2020) have much higher yearly citation rates, in this case reflecting an increased contemporary relevance of these works.

Figure 11: Most Global cited articles



DISCUSSION

The annual scientific production analysis depicts fluctuating trends in the years for research on CRM practices, which are seen to have significant peaks and declines in the publication and citation metrics.

Data from the previous year indicate that 2022 was a significant peak in publication activity with 31 articles. However, in the subsequent year, there was a steep drop, and there was a rebound in 2024 with 21 publications, indicating research activity or interest in this area is patchy. The citation metrics trend is similar. The highest average citations per article were recorded in 2016 (49.86), followed by a steady decline from 2017 to 2024. Such a pattern could indicate a decline in the impact of CRM-related research over the last few years, perhaps due to shifts in research interests or saturation within specific subfields of CRM.

Geographical analysis lays bare the strength where India is a forerunner, generating 43.4 percent of all publications, followed by significant contributions from the U.S. and China. This illustrates the global reality of CRM research, with nations on both sides of the Pacific Ocean, besides Asia and North America, playing critically important roles. It focuses on leading authors and journals providing insight into key contributors as well as platforms shaping the field. Two significant journals from that list that feature influential CRM scholarship are International Journal of Electronic Customer Relationship Management and Journal of Business and Industrial Marketing. Keyword co-occurrence and bibliometric coupling analyses enrich the understanding of themes. Themes like customer satisfaction, loyalty, and e-CRM are still central, but emerging topics such as digital strategy, social media, and brand loyalty account for the ongoing evolution of CRM practices towards digitization and innovation. Co-citation analysis also reveals founders of ideas who, even years later, significantly influence the thinking of authors around the field, again underlining the interdisciplinary nature of CRM research.

CONCLUSION

This research makes an exhaustive presentation of trends, contributions, and thematic developments within CRM practices in the period of 2014-2025 that reveal important trends and avenues to be further examined. The high research period came in 2022, publishing 31 publications, but witnessed a sharp drop in 2023 and, thereafter, did decently next year with a publication of 21 articles. These volatile trends combined with declining citation averages may suggest a stagnation either in the conventional CRM themes or lack of innovation around emerging issues. India takes the lead in terms of contributions to CRM research, accounting for 43.4% of the publications, followed by the U.S. and China, with the U.S. producing the most impactful work, evidenced by 682 citations.

Key contributors such as Kumar P, Mokha AK, and Rodriguez M, as well as the journal itself, International Journal of Electronic Customer Relationship Management, have contributed much to the development of the field. Thematic clusters reveal a focus on core CRM elements such as customer satisfaction, loyalty, and trust, while emerging themes focus on digitization and innovation, reflecting broader business and technology trends. Foundational authors include Fornell C. and Parasuraman A continue to influence research directions, bridging traditional CRM practices with interdisciplinary approaches. Although the contributions are remarkable, the decline in publication and citation trends points to challenges such as adapting to artificial intelligence, big data, and sustainability. There are also regional disparities in contributions that point to gaps in global collaboration and knowledge sharing. For relevance, CRM research must embrace innovation, address shifts in consumer behavior, and explore new methodologies to keep impacting business practices. Future areas of research for CRM would be in their adoption and integration with the newer digital trends, such as social media, AI, and blockchain, in improving customer engagement and brand loyalty. Cross-cultural studies can help to understand how flexible and effective CRM practices are in diverse cultural and geographical contexts. Sector-specific research may focus on

the applications of CRM in the healthcare, education, and e-commerce sectors. This may be utilized for specific strategy building of customer retention and improvement of satisfaction. This could be yet another possible contribution from an understanding of the role that CRM can play in pursuing sustainability, along with the implications it bears for long-term relationships. The declining output and citation impact needs to be dealt with finally. The future research should therefore focus on the reasons for this decline and come up with strategies to renovate the attention of research in CRM, especially focusing on its importance in an increasingly fast-changing business environment.

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