

# DETERMINANTS OF CRM STRATEGY SUCCESS IN THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT AUTHORITIES IN ZIMBABWE

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## ABSTRACT

*The study used the regression analysis to assess the critical factors in customer relationship management strategy success in the local government authorities in Zimbabwe. Explanatory research design was used and data was collected from 197 participants using a questionnaire. The regression analysis of the study confirmed that all of the ten critical success factors are significant and positively connected to CRM Strategy success at various degrees. The study developed a new CRM framework of implementing CRM strategy in the local government authorities. The study recommended that all the ten CSF's must be thoroughly considered before the CRM implementation to guarantee success of CRM in the local government authorities.*

**Key Words:** Customer Relationship Management, Critical Success Factors, Local Government Authorities

## INTRODUCTION

Customer Relationship Management (CRM) is the new concept of marketing that is now embraced in state owned enterprises. Of late, it used to be visible in the private sector. Most government institutions are believing that business presence is vital compared to customers. Many government departments do not value the needs and wants of its citizens. The local authorities in Zimbabwe are more focused on product availability and access without considering long term relationship with the customers. This seems to be caused by lack of competition, over reliance on government grants and support. The researchers have observed that the Zimbabwean government support to the local authorities and councils, in the form of grants and resources, is decreasing and diminishing. This growing trend clearly shows the need of CRM in local government authorities. Vel & Sohail (2012) argued that the key objective of customer relationship marketing is to develop and keep existing clients, decrease marketing budget and promote strong relationships with customers. Competition is increasing and affecting all business ventures. CRM is one of the strategies needed to be embraced by local authorities in order to gain a competitive advantage. CRM seeks to build and cement long term client relationship that centers on the life-time value of customers. The researchers have observed that many local authorities in Zimbabwe are failing to provide sufficient quality services to the citizens due to shortage of resources, corruption and political instabilities and power conflicts among political parties governing the local government authorities. Customers are resorting to other alternatives at the expense of local authorities' services. For example, many citizens are now putting solar systems, erecting their own water boreholes as strategies to access services which many local authorities are failing to provide. Customer priorities and needs are not considered or implemented by many local authorities. Many local authorities seem to be clueless on what exactly is needed to retain and build trust with the customers. Thus, the critical question in this research is: What are the key critical success factors for executing the CRM Strategy among the local government authorities?

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Customer Relationship Management

Customer Relationship Management (CRM) has got different definitions, however, the overall focus of CRM is simply to acquire, nurture and retain loyal customers to the business. This marketing philosophy is lacking in practice in many local government authorities in Zimbabwe. Customer requirements are not prioritized, as most local authorities are focusing on personal interest and politics at the expense of the rate payers and citizens. This is worsened by the fact that many local authorities in Zimbabwe does not have CRM officers to acquire, develop and retain customers. Many local authorities in Zimbabwe and Africa in general are production oriented. They believed in mass production and distribution of products without considering customer requirements. They are not customer centric but the focus seems to be centred of personal enrichment and politics without considering customer requirements. Customer voice is not considered. This seems to be caused by lack of knowledge on how to implement CRM Strategy.

The purpose of customer relationship management is to form long lasting profitable relationships with clients (Chiguvi, 2018). To accomplish this objective two-way communication is needed with the citizens. Effective communication with citizens helps to build and maintain good mutual relationship with customers (Chiguvi, 2017; Baran et al., 2008). It is vital to note that CRM is not only about bring clients to the organization, but it is also about nurturing and retaining clients. This seems to be lacking in most local authorities in Zimbabwe. Most local authorities have clients but they do not how to manage and retain the clients. Good management of customers enables businesses to develop profitable relationship and to gain competitive advantage. Most CRM scholars have argued that, if customers are managed effectually, they grow and stay longer in the organization (Chiguvi, 2018). Clients feel happy if the organizations show love to them. This infers that local government authorities in Zimbabwe should show love to their clients if they are to achieve CRM strategy success. Careful planning is necessary before the CRM Strategy implementation. Many local authorities do not follow due diligence before customer relationship management implementation. Lack of harmony among all stakeholders is another hinderance factor which limit CRM Strategy success in many local government authorities. Disunity among the facets of the enterprise will destroy long lasting relationships with clients (Chiguvi, 2018). This means that local government authorities in Zimbabwe should view the CRM as a system to ensure the success of CRM Strategy.

Keramati, et al., (2011); Varajão, et al., (2013) posited that parastatals need to be citizen centric and adopt responsive leadership. This infers that, the implementations of the CRM Strategy in local authorities need to be customer oriented. Varajão (2013) affirmed that local authorities must meet customers' expectations at the right time. To accomplish this, latest technology must be employed to ensure timeous instant communication. Finnegan and Currie (2010) also indicates that there is proof that many organizations find it difficult to operationalize the CRM Strategy. Many researchers have attempted to identify elements and Critical Success Factors (CSFs) of a CRM but there are few studies in the area of the CRM in the local government authorities. Moreover, there are variations in the results that have been obtained in previous studies. Therefore, this study aims to pursue and identify critical success factors appropriate for the local authorities in Zimbabwe.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Causal quantitative research design and approach were used in the study. A structured questionnaire was used to collect data from 210 respondents. Various test was done before the formulation of the CRM Strategy model for local authorities in Zimbabwe. Regression and Pearson

correlation study were employed to identify critical success factors for CRM Strategy success of the study. The results have been quantitatively presented in the form of graphs, and tables.

## DATA RESULTS

In this study, the researchers were testing the relationship between critical success factors and the success of the CRM Strategy as displayed in Table 1. The overall results in the regression model summary indicate that there is a relationship between critical success factors and CRM Strategy in the local government authorities in Zimbabwe. Detailed analysis of each predictor and its relationship on the success of the CRM Strategy is shown in Table 4.0 and interpreted accordingly.

**Table 1**  
**REGRESSION COEFFICIENTS OF CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS IN CRM STRATEGY SUCCESS**

Model		Unstandardized		Standardized	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B		Durbin-Watson	Collinearity statistics	
		Coefficients		Coefficients			Lower Bound	Upper Bound		Tolerance	V IF
		B	Std. Error	Beta							
1	(Constant)	32.007	10.489		3.052	0.003	11.223	52.792			
	DDT	13.422	0.841	0.834	15.953	0	11.755	15.09	1.791	1	1
2	(Constant)	61.793	6.525		9.47	0	48.863	74.723			
	SFAT	6.508	0.308	0.895	21.164	0	5.899	7.118	2.675	1	1
3	(Constant)	70.463	4.486		3.052	0	61.575	79.352			
	CFT	7.586	0.262	0.94	28.929	0	7.066	8.106	3.025	1	1
4	(Constant)	109.252	2.023		54.016	0	105.24 4	113.26			
	CHMT	4.67	0.102	0.974	45.576	0	4.467	4.873	2.827	1	1
5	(Constant)	96.401	4.904		19.656	0	86.683	106.12			
	IMPAT	7.226	0.34	0.896	21.233	0	6.551	7.9	2.224	1	1
6	(Constant)	85.505	4.409		19.392	0	76.768	94.243			
	MET	7.926	0.304	0.927	26.071	0	7.324	8.529	1.241	1	1
7	(Constant)	58.287	5.877		9.918	0	46.642	69.932			
	IMPS	9.995	0.415	0.916	24.102	0	9.173	10.816	2.334	1	1
8	(Constant)	146.674	18.259		8.033	0	110.49 3	182.85 5			
	BIADT	3.753	1.325	0.26	2.832	0.005	1.127	6.378	3.156	1	1
9	(Constant)	116.042	3.604		32.2	0	108.90 1	123.18 3			
	PMT	7.797	0.33	0.913	23.648	0	7.144	8.451	2.608	1	1
10	(Constant)	93.773	14.902		6.293	0	64.245	123.30 2			
	PDT	6.669	0.945	0.557	7.057	0	4.797	8.542	3.164	1	1

Dependent Variable: CRMSS Total \* Significant Differences P<0.05

### Due Diligence

Due diligence (DDT) is significantly and positively related to the success of the CRM Strategy (CRMSS). Table 4.0 shows that  $\beta=0.834$ ;  $t=15.953$ ;  $p<0.05$ . This result demonstrates that the local government authorities that highly consider due diligence as a factor critical for the

achievement of the CRM Strategy are likely to be successful in their operations. It infers that due diligence is significant and should be considered seriously, as it accounts for 83, 4% variation in CRM Strategy success. Durbin-Waston value of 1.791 also corroborates the assertion espoused above. Tolerance level and Variance Inflation Factor level of 1.000 also demonstrate lack of fulfillment of the Multi collinearity assumptions in this empirical study in Zimbabwe. Therefore, hypothesis one (H1) is supported in this study.

*H1: Due diligence (DDT) is positively linked to customer relationship management Strategy success in the local government authorities in Zimbabwe.*

## **Strategy Focus and Alignment**

Strategy Focus and Alignment is significantly and positively related to the success of the CRM Strategy ( $\beta=0.895$ ,  $t=21.164$ ,  $p<0.05$ ). This demonstrates that council strategies need to be aligned in the CRM Strategy of the local government authorities in Zimbabwe. Failure to do this will result in CRM Strategy failure in the local government authorities in Zimbabwe. Tolerance level and Variance Inflation Factor level of 1.000 also demonstrate lack of the fulfillment of Multi collinearity assumptions in this empirical study in Zimbabwe. Durbin-Waston value of 2.675 also validates the assertion espoused above. Therefore, hypothesis two (H2) is supported in this study.

*H2: Strategy Focus and Alignment (SFAT) is positively linked to customer relationship management Strategy success in the local government authorities in Zimbabwe*

## **Customer Focus**

Customer Focus is significant and positively linked to the success of the CRM Strategy ( $\beta=.940$ ,  $t=28.929$ ,  $p<0.05$ ). This reveals that customer centricism is vital in the success of the CRM Strategy. The local government authorities must understand customers' requirements and incorporate their voice in the CRM Strategy. This implies that without clear customer focus CRM Strategy will fail in the local government authorities in Zimbabwe. The researcher has observed that the local government authorities in Zimbabwe are not customer centric due to poor customer service delivery. Tolerance level and Variance Inflation Factor level of 1.000 also demonstrates lack of the fulfillment of Multi collinearity assumptions in this empirical study in Zimbabwe. Durbin-Waston value of 3.025 also authenticates the assertion espoused above. Therefore, hypothesis three (H3) is supported in this study.

*H3: Customer Focus (CFT) is positively linked to customer relationship management Strategy success in the local government authorities in Zimbabwe*

## **Change Management**

Change management is significantly and positively linked to the success of the CRM Strategy ( $\beta=0.974$ ,  $t=45.576$ ,  $p<0.05$ ). The study findings revealed that change management is one of the major factors of CRM Strategy in the local government authorities, as it accounts for 97, 4% variation in the success of the CRM Strategy in Zimbabwe. Tolerance level and Variance Inflation Factor level of 1.000 also establish lack of the fulfillment of the Multicollinearity assumptions in this empirical study in Zimbabwe. Durbin-Waston value of 2.827 similarly validates the assertion espoused above. Therefore, hypothesis four (H4) is supported in this study.

*H4: Change Management (CHMT) is positively linked to customer relationship management Strategy success in the local government authorities in Zimbabwe*

### **Implementation Approach**

Implementation Approach is significantly and positively linked to the success of the CRM Strategy ( $\beta=0.896$ ,  $t=21.233$ ,  $p<0.05$ ). This study found out that without a clear implementation approach, the CRM Strategy will not be successful in the local government authorities in Zimbabwe. The Tolerance level and Variance Inflation Factor level of 1.000 also demonstrate lack of fulfillment of the Multi collinearity assumptions in this empirical study in Zimbabwe. Durbin-Waston value of 2.224 also validates the assertion espoused above. Therefore, hypothesis five (H5) is supported in this study.

*H5: Implementation Approach (IMPAT) is positively linked to customer relationship management Strategy success in the local government authorities in Zimbabwe*

### **Metrics**

Metrics is significantly and positively concomitant to the success of the CRM Strategy ( $\beta=0.927$ ,  $t=26.071$ ,  $p<0.05$ ). The result demonstrates that good metrics improve the success of the CRM Strategy and also Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) must be in place to measure CRM success. Tolerance level and Variance Inflation Factor level of 1.000 also demonstrate lack of fulfillment of the Multi collinearity assumptions in this empirical study in Zimbabwe. Durbin-Waston value of 1.241 also corroborates the assertion espoused above. Therefore, hypothesis six (H6) is supported in this study.

*H6: Metrics (MET) is positively linked to customer relationship management Strategy success in the local government authorities in Zimbabwe.*

### **Implementation Strategy**

Implementation Strategy is significantly and positively related to the success of the CRM Strategy ( $\beta=0.916$ ,  $t=24.102$ ,  $p<0.05$ ). The result surmises that the right implementation approach will increase the success of the CRM Strategy in the local the government authorities. The researchers have observed that many key stakeholders are not attending council meetings due to lack of faith and confidence in the local government authorities in Zimbabwe. This challenge also led to the failure to implement the CRM Strategy. The Tolerance level and Variance Inflation Factor level of 1.000 also demonstrates lack of fulfillment of the Multi collinearity assumptions in this empirical study in Zimbabwe. Durbin-Waston value of 2.334 also corroborates the assertion espoused above. Therefore, hypothesis seven (H7) is supported in this study.

*H7: Implementation Strategy (IMPS) is positively linked to customer relationship management Strategy success in the local government authorities in Zimbabwe*

### **Buy-in and Adoption**

Buy-in and Adoption is less significantly and positively linked to the success of the CRM Strategy but that was not as strong as other factors of that influenced the success of the CRM Strategy ( $\beta=0.260$ ,  $t=2.832$ ,  $p<0.05$ ). The contribution of this critical success factor is below average although it is positively linked to the success of the CRM Strategy. This infers that the

council employees are lowly motivated to participate actively in the success of the CRM Strategy in Zimbabwe. The Tolerance level and Variance Inflation Factor level of 1.000 also demonstrates lack of the fulfillment of the Multi collinearity assumptions in this empirical study in Zimbabwe. Durbin-Waston value of 3.156 further corroborates the assertion espoused above. Therefore, hypothesis eight (H8) is supported in this study.

*H8: Buy-in and Adoption (BIADT) is less positively linked to customer relationship management Strategy success in the local government authorities in Zimbabwe*

## Project Management

Project Management is significantly and positively related to the success of the CRM Strategy ( $\beta=0.913$ ,  $t=23.648$ ,  $p<0.05$ ). This means that the local government authorities in Zimbabwe would appreciate the efficacy of the project management orientation and enjoy the success of the CRM Strategy. The Tolerance level and Variance Inflation Factor level of 1.000 also demonstrates lack of fulfillment of the Multi collinearity assumptions in this empirical study in Zimbabwe. Durbin-Waston value of 2.608 also confirms the assertion espoused above. Therefore, hypothesis nine (H9) is supported in this study.

*H9: Project Management (PMT) is positively linked to customer relationship management Strategy success in the local government authorities in Zimbabwe.*

## Process Design

On average, Process Design is significantly and positively connected to the success of the success of the CRM Strategy ( $\beta=0.557$ ,  $t=7.057$ ,  $p<0.05$ ). This means that for the CRM Strategy to be successful; the CRM processes must be customer centric and user friendly. The Tolerance level and Variance Inflation Factor level of 1.000 also demonstrates lack of fulfillment of the Multi collinearity assumptions as found in this empirical study about Zimbabwe. Durbin-Waston value of 3.164 also corroborates the assertion espoused above. Therefore, the hypothesis ten (H10) is supported in this study.

*H10: Process Design (PDT) is averagely positively linked to customer relationship management Strategy success in the local government authorities in Zimbabwe*

In a nutshell, the researchers confirm that all the ten CSFs are significant and positively linked to the success of the CRM Strategy in local authorities as depicted in table 2.

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B		Durbin-Watson	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound		Tolerance	VIF
11	(Constant)	-1.034	0.337		-0.067	0.002	-1.699	-0.369			
	CRM45	0.317	0.020	0.756	16.130	0.000	0.278	0.356	2.372	1.000	1.000
12	(Constant)	3.892	0.611		6.374	0.000	2.688	5.096			
	CRM46	-0.018	0.036	-0.037	-0.514	0.608	-0.088	0.052	2.481	1.000	1.000
13	(Constant)	-1.083	0.318		-0.402	0.001	-1.710	-0.455			
	CRM47	0.332	0.019	0.788	17.893	0.000	0.295	0.368	2.112	1.000	1.000

14	(Constant)	-1.776	0.263		-0.760	0.000	-2.294	-1.258			
	CRM48	0.370	0.015	0.866	24.151	0.000	0.339	0.400	2.537	1.000	1.000
Dependent Variable: Service Quality (CRM45); Cost (CRM46); Customer Satisfaction (CRM47); and Customer Loyalty & Trust (CRM48): * Significant Differences P<0.05											

## Service Quality

The success of the CRM Strategy is significantly and positively linked to improved service quality in the local government authorities in Zimbabwe ( $\beta=0.756$ ,  $t=16.130$ ,  $p<0.05$ ) and the significance level is 0.000. This undoubtedly reveals that the local government authorities that engage in the effective success of the CRM Strategy must recognize the value of service quality in their operational and strategic performance. Therefore, hypothesis eleven (H11) is supported in this study.

*H11: The success of the CRM Strategy increases service quality in the local government authorities in Zimbabwe*

## Costs

The success of the CRM Strategy is negatively linked to reduction of cost in the local government authorities in Zimbabwe ( $\beta=-0.037$ ,  $t=-514$ ,  $p<0.02$ ) and the level of significance test is 0.608. The result reveals that there is no substantial association between the success of the CRM Strategy and cost as evidenced by ( $\beta=-0.037$ ,  $t=-0.514$ ). This might have contributed to poor cost control measures in the local government authorities in Zimbabwe. Therefore, hypothesis twelve (H12) is not buttressed in this study.

*H12: The success of the CRM Strategy reduces costs in the local government authorities in Zimbabwe*

## Customer Satisfaction

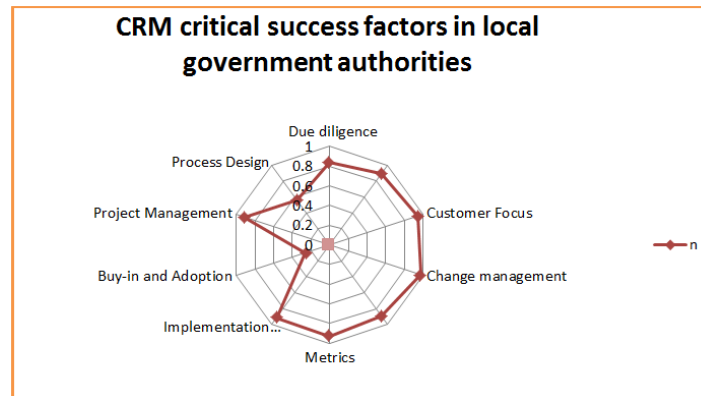
The success of the CRM Strategy is significantly and positively related to customer satisfaction in the local government authorities in Zimbabwe ( $\beta=0.788$ ,  $t=17.893$ ,  $p<0.05$ ) and the significance level is 0.000. This implies that the local government authorities that engage in the success of the CRM Strategy will enjoy increased customer satisfaction in their customer value-driven chain system. Therefore, hypothesis thirteen (H13) is supported in this study.

*H13: The success of the CRM Strategy increases customer satisfaction in the local government authorities in Zimbabwe*

## Customer Loyalty and Trust

The success of the CRM Strategy is significantly and positively linked to customer loyalty and trust in the local government authorities in Zimbabwe ( $\beta=0.866$ ,  $t=24.151$ ,  $p<0.05$ ) at the 0.000 significance level. The result demonstrates that the local government authorities will enjoy greater customer loyalty and trust has high chance of contributing success of the CRM Strategy in their operational and strategic performance. Therefore, hypothesis fourteen (H14) is supported in this study.

*H14: The success of the CRM Strategy increases customer loyalty and trust in the local government authorities in Zimbabwe.*



**FIGURE 1**  
**CRM CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT AUTHORITIES**

### Contribution of the Study to New Knowledge

The study has contributed to CRM literature especially in the local government authorities. The study provides critical success factors needed for CRM Strategy success in the local government authorities. The study further indicated that a successful CRM Strategy contributes to increased customer loyalty and trust, client gratification and promotes excellent service delivery. The study will help and guide local council management to develop appropriate CRM strategies will help to acquire, develop and retain clients.

### CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study results revealed that CRM Strategy victory is decided by how it is implemented by the local government authorities. This study found that by providing a service that appeals to the Council's customers, relationship traits such as loyalty and trust, customer satisfaction and service quality are supported. Good mutual relationship enables the stakeholders to view the local government authorities as customer centric institutions. Metrics is a vital factor towards the triumph of the CRM Strategy. This study found that the local government authorities should have a good metrics in place in order to have got high chance of success in their CRM strategies. The researcher discovered that many the local government authorities in Zimbabwe are keeping large data but they do not have good performance audits techniques to measure the attainment of the CRM Strategy. The research study also found that the local government authorities in Zimbabwe are operating with limited resources and consequently they are often under great pressures that sometimes befuddle them from giving care to their relationships with strategic stakeholders. To survive and gain competitive advantage the local government authorities need to develop right strategies and maintain long lasting relationships with stakeholders.

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