

## Examining Customer Relationship Management Practices and Its Effect on Company Performance in Business-to-Business (B2B) Markets

Ismail Şahin<sup>1</sup> and Pelin Özgen<sup>2</sup>

### Abstract:

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The aim of this study is to reveal the effects of customer relationship management practices on business performance in business-to-business (B2B) markets. Survey data came from 134 people working in the purchasing unit of companies engaged in B2B activities. The results of the statistical analysis show that the corporate performance of the enterprises whose customer relationship management applications score increases by one unit will increase by 0.622 units. It is seen that the performances of companies whose customer relationship management applications are more frequently applied are also positively affected. In addition, it has been determined that customer relationship management practices and their dimensions, customer focus, customer relationship management organization, information management and technology-based customer relationship management, have statistically significant and positive effects on company performance.

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**Key words:** B2B markets, Customer relationship management, organizational performance

**Jel Codes:** M310 (Marketing)

### 1. Introduction

The literature on marketing relies mostly on consumer markets and for some people it is wrongly believed that marketing in business markets is the same with marketing in consumer markets. However, it is known that the volume of the sales which is driven by companies that purchase any product or service and use it for commercial purposes is much larger than the consumer market (Kotler & Armstrong, 2010, p. 192). Moreover, many researchers and practitioners agree that marketing in business-to-business settings have higher stakes, involves higher technical knowledge and requires more patience and higher personal skills than in consumer markets. All the afore mentioned facts are more than enough to pay more attention to marketing in business markets. For companies to capture value from their customers though the value chain perspective, it is important that they understand and satisfy their needs, requirements, and limits. For this purpose, a system which utilizes customer information to analyze and predict their purchases is applied. This system is referred to as "customer relationship management" CRM and is one of the most important concepts in today's conflicting marketplace.

To analyze the use of CRM practices in a B2B context, this paper is organized as follows: first a compact literature analysis is provided, then methodology including data collection and analysis is presented, which is followed by discussion of the results of the analysis.

### 2. Literature Review

In the studies conducted in the early 1970s the concept of business marketing was generally defined only in the scope of "industrial marketing" (Dodge, 1970). However, with the book written by Morris (1992), the concept of

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<sup>1</sup> Atılım University, Turkey (ism\_shn@hotmail.com)

<sup>2</sup> (Corresponding author): University of Malta, Malta & Atılım University, Turkey (psurucu@gmail.com)

"organizational marketing" emerged in addition to industrial marketing. Today, with the increased awareness to the importance of marketing in business, the concept is referred to as "B2B" (business-to-business) marketing. All businesses that produce consumer goods primarily sell their products to other businesses such as retailers or wholesalers. Every company encounters B2B markets in some way to continue their operations (Hinterhuber, Snelgrove, & Stensson, 2021) and because of this derived demand, B2B sales volume is far beyond B2C sales volume. In this context, the B2B market is accepted to consist of all organizations that purchase goods and services to use in their activities, to resell to others or to use as materials and raw materials in their own production process (Felea & Albastroiu, 2013).

B2B marketing is concerned with properly fulfilling the stages that a large number of intermediate businesses must complete to turn the end consumer demand into the final product in order to meet the demands of the end consumer (Hauge, Hauge, & Harrison, 2000). On the other hand, Haas (1976) defined B2B marketing as identifying the expectations, wishes and needs of industrial customers, transforming them into products and services, and then with effective promotion, distribution, pricing and after-sales service this product or service in the market. It is the process of getting more customers to use it. B2B markets are like the "behind the scenes" activities for consumers. Each of the products purchased by consumers go through many B2B processes (as well as the transformational processes) before they appear in the marketplace (Kotler & Armstrong, 2010). All the processes in question can be carried out either in a single organization or different processes can be completed in different organizations. In both these cases, the product in question becomes the subject of B2B marketing until it reaches the final consumer (Bingham, Gomes, & Knowles, 2005).

Similarly, as the world becomes a huge open marketplace, the dynamics of businesses because of developing fast technology, and the fact that customers control the businesses by means of their purchases have led to the need for businesses to demonstrate effective performance (Dwivedi, et. al., 2021, Purtaş, 2018). Businesses need effective performance measurement systems to be successful in today's tough competitive conditions (Yılmaz, 2014). Businesses can understand benchmark their current performance by comparing the industry average and with their past performance (Fourberg, et.al., 2021). However, they should set performance targets for the whole business to be able perform better in the future (Koçyigit, 2010). Also, it is important that the transparent and measurable evaluation of the contributions of the employees to the business goals should be included in the corporate performance measurements. This should be ensured with motivating work environment to support personal development (Oltulu, 2014, Ballı, 2015) since the ultimate success of businesses rely on the performance and motivation of the personnel.

Similarly, bringing new customers to the business and increasing customer loyalty depend on the production of products which satisfies the needs and specific requirements of the customers. Moreover, it should be assured that the products delivered on time, especially for business users. Therefore, strategies to keep good relations should be used by business marketers to successfully satisfy customers (Yavuz & Leloğlu, 2011) especially in today's more than ever competitive environment. Hence, considering that customer-oriented practices are of great importance, customer relationship management, which is characterized as a managerial approach, aids for delighting customers as well as increase efficiency for customer retention activities.

The major role of Customer Relationship Management (CRM) is to collect the most detailed information about consumers and to offer products and services that meet their needs and requirements based on this information. Despite the term gained popularity in the last decade, the beginnings of CRM was started in the 1980s by The Kestnbaums. They were pioneers of database marketing, which is a form of direct marketing analyzing the customer database to identify the propensity to purchase for each customer. Customer relationship management consists of customer, relationship and management elements. On the basis of customer relationship management, there is a structure that creates satisfaction by adding value to the customer and realizes customer loyalty, which will ensure that the customer's lifetime value is maximized. In addition to these, it is seen that human resources and technical tools are used effectively in customer relations management. As a result of such use, the idea that customers are extremely "special" is reflected in order to enable them to prefer a single business (Şenlik, Güçlü, & Özdemir, 2016). CRM has developed as an alternative to traditional marketing strategies in recent years and has revolutionized the marketing world.

In the light of the above review of the literature, it is clear that application of CRM techniques and customer database are indispensable managerial tools to create sustainable long-lasting and profitable B2B relationships. In the following sections, the relation between CRM applications and company performance will be studied.

### 3. Data and Methods

#### 3.1. Purpose of the Study

Based on the above discussions in the literature, the aim of this study is to determine the effects of customer relationship management practices on company performance in business-to-business (B2B) markets.

For this purpose, first the concept of company performance and business-to-business (B2B) marketing are discussed, followed by the conceptual framework of CRM. In the empirical part, the effects of customer relationship management practices on company performance in business-to-business environments is analyzed with data coming from a survey with 134 people working in companies operating in B2B.

#### 3.2. Data Collection

Judgmental sampling technique, which is one of the non-random sampling methods, was used in the research and the data were obtained by online survey method between September- November 2020. The universe of the research consists of 9,627 personnel working in the purchasing unit of 1469 companies which are licensed in B2B operations in Ankara Chamber of Commerce. Due to time and pandemic constraints, 547 personnel were reached, however upon follow-up calls 134 questionnaire forms were returned and were evaluated. The questionnaire used consists of three parts. In the first section, there is information about the demographic characteristics and business characteristics of the participants, in the second section, the customer relationship management (CRM) scale and in the third section consists of the business performance scale.

*Socio-Demographic Form* is the form aiming to measure the socio-demographic characteristics of the participants and the characteristics of the embroidery they studied was developed by the researcher. The questionnaire there are 7 questions to ask about gender, age, position, type of business, time worked in the business, operating time of the business and the number of employees of the business.

*Customer Relationship Management (CRM) Scale:* In order to measure the customer relationship management (CRM) variable, it is stated that a scale developed by Leo et al. (2005), which includes 22 statements in total, whose validity and reliability has been previously tested, is used. It is stated that the said scale was prepared using a 5-point Likert scale (1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Undecided, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly Agree).

*Business Performance Scale:* The scale developed by Zehir and Özşahin (2008) was used to measure business performance. The scale was prepared in a 5-point Likert type where 1 indicates that the company's performance is low; and 5 indicates a high company performance.

#### 3.3. Analysis of Data

In the analysis, the demographic characteristics of the participants and the characteristics of the companies they work with are shown by frequency analysis method. The analysis aimed to the test the reliability and validity of the data collected with the help of customer relationship management (CRM) and company performance scales. Variables related to customer relationship management (CRM) and company performance were analyzed with descriptive analysis method.

Whether customer relationship management has a significant effect on company performance was tested using regression analysis. The results of the normality test for the data collected with the help of customer relationship management and company performance scales are given in Table 1.

**Table 1. Normality Test Results**

	N	Average	Standard deviation	Kurtosis	Skewness
Customer relations management	134	3.3457	,91456	-.259	-,956
Company Performance	134	3.2425	,76201	-,002	-1,121

Skewness and Kurtosis values were examined in order to determine whether the data had a normal distribution. According to Tabachnick and Fidell (2013) a value in the range of  $+1.5 - 1.5$  is sufficient for normality. Again, according to George and Mallery (2010), if this value is in the range of  $+2.0 - 2.0$ , it can be said that the data are normally distributed. As seen in Table 1, the kurtosis values of the research variables are  $-.259$  and  $-.002$ ; skewness values are  $-.956$  and  $-1.121$ . When the results were examined, it was seen that the data showed a normal distribution at the 5% significance level. Thus, it was deemed appropriate to perform parametric tests.

Since the data obtained from the research show a normal distribution, the differences in customer relationship management practices and company performance according to characteristics such as the type of businesses, operating time and number of employees have been extensively examined using one-way analysis of variance, since there are variables with three or more categories. In the analyzes made, it was determined that the level of significance was  $.05$ .

As seen in Table 2, the reliability of the scale consisting of 22 expressions and 4 dimensions was tested and the Cronbach Alpha value was found to be  $0.973$ . The Cronbach Alpha value of the customer focus dimension was  $0.854$ , the Cronbach Alpha value of the CRM organization dimension was  $0.886$ , the Cronbach Alpha value of the Knowledge management dimension was  $0.911$ , and the Cronbach Alpha value of the technology-based CRM dimension was  $0.951$ . Since there was no strong jump in the case of removing the variables within the stated dimensions, it was not necessary to remove any variables. According to the findings obtained as a result of the reliability analysis, it was determined that the scale was highly reliable;  $0.80 \leq \alpha < 1.00$ .

**Table 2. Reliability Analysis Results for the Customer Relationship Management Scale**

	Cronbach's Alpha Value	Number of Items
Customer Focus	,854	5
CRM Organization	,886	6
Information Management	,911	5
Technology-Based CRM	,951	6
Total CRM	,973	22

It is stated that Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) sample adequacy and Bartlett sphericity test were applied in determining the suitability of the data set for factor analysis. In this context, the Kaiser-Meyer Olkin (KMO) value was found to be  $0.886$ , interpreted as the sample size is sufficient. In addition, according to the result of the sphericity test, the significance level value was determined as  $.000$ . As a result, Bartlett Sphericity test was found to be significant, showing that the data collected for the scale were meaningful and suitable for analysis.

**Table 3. Validity Analysis Results for the Customer Relationship Management Scale**

Measuring Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Sampling Adequacy.		,886
	Approximate Chi-Square	4021,320
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Df	231
	Significance	,000

As seen in Table 4, the reliability of the scale consisting of twelve statements was tested. As a result, the Cronbach Alpha value was found to be  $0.873$ . According to the aforementioned finding, the scale was found to be highly reliable;  $0.80 \leq \alpha < 1.00$ .

**Table 4. Reliability Analysis Results Regarding the Company Performance Scale**

Cronbach's Alpha Value	Number of Items
,873	12

The Kaiser-Meyer Olkin (KMO) value was found to be 0.776. Since this value was greater than 0.5, it was concluded that the sample size was sufficient. “According to the results of the sphericity test, the significance level value was found to be .000. The Bartlett Sphericity test was found to be significant since the said value was less than 5% margin of error; Chi-Square Value =1011,934,  $p=.000<.05$ . According to the results obtained, it was determined that the data related to the scale were meaningful and suitable for analysis.

**Table 5. Validity Analysis Results Regarding the Company Performance Scale**

Measuring Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Sampling Adequacy.		,776
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approximate Chi-Square	1011,934
	Df	66
	Significance	,000

All the statistical analysis were conducted by IBM SPSS 23 software program.

**4. Results and Discussion**

**4.1. Findings on Demographic Characteristics**

Results show that 58.2% of the research participants were female and 41.8% were male. 17.2% of the participants are between the ages of 18-29, 32.8% are between the ages of 30-39, 15.7% are between the ages of 40-49, 13.4% are between the ages of 50-59 It is observed that 20.9% of them are in the age range of 60 and over. From the results of the analysis, it is observed that 13.4% of the participants work in a sole proprietorship, 14.2% in a common company, 31.3% in a limited company and 41% in a joint stock company. 28.4% of the participants have a duration of less than 1 year, 20.1% have 1-3 years, 27.6% have 3-5 years, 11.9% have 5-8 years and 11.9% have on the other hand, it is seen that they have been working in the enterprise for 8 years or more.

According to the results of the analysis, 17.9% of the participants have 1-9 employees, 14.9% have 10-24 employees, 19.4% have 25-49 employees, 19.4% have 50-99% employees and It is seen that 28.4 of them have 100 or more employees. 22.4% of the companies participating in the research work for less than 1 year, 17.9% for 1-3 years, 11.9% for 3-5 years, 17.9% for 5-10 years and It is seen that 29.9 of them have been operating for 10 years or more.

**4.2. Findings Regarding the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) Scale**

According to the average values in the Likert Scale questions of CRM scale, it is observed that items number 14, 15, 1, 2, 10 and 20 received very high scores (3.90, 3.83, 3.69 and 3.66 over 5 respectively). Accordingly, it can be said that customer relationship management practices are generally perceived to be good. The results are shown in Table 6.

**Table 6. Analysis Results Regarding the Customer Relationship Management Scale**

Item		Av.	St.Dev.
1	“We work in continuous dialogue with our key customers individually to tailor the products and services we offer to our customers.”	3.69	1,190
2	“My firm offers special services and products to its important customers.”	3.66	,941
3	“My firm strives to learn about the needs of its key customers.”	3.41	,911
4	“When my company's customers want a change on a product / service, the relevant departments try to coordinate to realize this request.”	3.28	1,106
5	“My firm has clear goals and strategies for key clients.”	3.07	1,264

	6	“My firm has the sales, marketing expertise and related resources necessary to be successful in customer relationship management.”	3.37	1,155
	7	“Our employee training programs are designed to build new relationships with customers and develop skills to strengthen existing relationships with them.”	3.46	1,187
	8	“My firm has established clear business objectives of customer acquisition, development, retention and re-engineering.”	3.48	1,038
	9	“Employee performance is measured and rewarded based on meeting customer needs and successfully serving the customer.”	2.54	,955
	10	“Our organizational structure has been meticulously designed with the customer centered.”	3.62	1,225
	11	“My firm has the technical expertise and relevant resources necessary to be successful in customer relationship management.”	3.08	1,104
	12	“The employees of my company show sensitivity to help customers in every way possible.”	2.96	1,397
	13	“My firm fully understands the needs of our important customers through learning / learning.”	3,55	1,161
	14	“My firm creates communication channels to enable ongoing mutual communication between us and our important customers.”	3.90	,965
	15	“Customers can expect fast and efficient service from my company's employees.”	3.83	,954
	16	“My firm regularly monitors and protects its customer information.”	3.31	1,294
Technology-Based CRM	17	“My company has the appropriate technical personnel to provide technical support to its customers in developing customer relations using computer technology.”	2.97	1,315
	18	“My firm has the appropriate software to serve its customers.”	3.10	1,258
	19	“My firm has the appropriate equipment to serve its customers.”	2.99	1,248
	20	“Individual customer information is available at every contact point with the customer.”	3.63	1,074
	21	“My firm has a comprehensive database of our customers' information.”	3,58	1,139
	22	“The computer infrastructure we use allows us to create special offers for our customers.”	3.11	1,161

#### 4.3. Findings Regarding the Company Performance Scale

According to the descriptive analysis results, as shown in Table 7, the average points are quite high. For example, statements such as, "Increase in market share compared to your leading competitors", "Annual average increase in our sales" and "Your general level of success in financial terms" scored 3.88, 3.79 and 3.40, respectively, indicating that corporate performances are perceived to be high by participants.

**Table 7. Analysis Results Regarding Company Performance Scale**

	Average	Std. dev.
“Your average net profit relative to your equity”	2.69	1,405
“Your average net profit before tax relative to all available resources”	3.37	1,324
“Net income from your core activities”	3.22	1,224
“The financial success of the new products we introduce to the market”	3.01	1,262
“Your overall level of financial success”	3.40	1,430
“Average annual increase in our sales”	3.79	1,048
“Increase in sales of new products you offer to the market”	3.61	,973
“Increase in market share compared to your leading competitors”	3.88	,974
“Increase in the number of employees”	3.06	1,088
“Increase in the number of new customers”	3.31	1,044
“Your position in the competitive environment in the market in general”	2.96	1,169
“Your level of profitability in general”	2.60	1,090

**4.4. Regression Analysis Findings**

Regression analysis was conducted to examine whether the customer focus dimension of customer relationship management practices has a significant effect on company performance. In the regression analysis, the effect of each dimension of customer relationship management practices and total customer relationship management on company performance was examined, in other words, the company performance is the dependent variable and the dimensions in the CRM practices are the independent variables.

**Table 8. Result of Regression Analysis on the Effect of Customer Focus on Company Performance**

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			F	R <sup>2</sup>
	B	Std. error	$\beta$	T	P		
Constant	1,179	,197		5,996	,000	117,233	,470
Customer Focus	,603	,056	,686	10,827	,000		

Dependent Variable: Company Performance

As a result of the analysis, when the effect of customer focus dimension of customer relationship management practices on company performance is examined; It has been concluded that customer focus has a statistically significant and positive effect on company performance. Customer focus explains 47% of company performance variance. According to the results of the analysis, it has been determined that the company performance

of the companies whose customer focus score increases by one unit will increase by 0.603 units. It is seen that the performances of companies with increased customer focus are also positively affected.

**Table 9. Result of Regression Analysis on the Impact of CRM on Company Performance**

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			F	R <sup>2</sup>
	B	Std. error	$\beta$	T	P		
Constant	1,405	,190		7,409	,000	100,905	,433
CRM Organization	,564	,056	,658	10,045	,000		

Dependent Variable: Company Performance

According to the results of the regression analysis, when the effect of customer relationship management practices on the company performance of the CRM organization dimension; It has been seen that the organization has a statistically significant and positive effect on company performance. CRM organization explains 43.3% of company performance variance. As a result of the analysis, it has been determined that the company performance of the enterprises whose CRM organization score increases by one unit will increase by 0.564 units. It is seen that the performances of companies with increased CRM organization are also positively affected.

**Table 10. Result of Regression Analysis on the Effect of Information Management on Company Performance**

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			F	R <sup>2</sup>
	B	Std. error	$\beta$	T	P		
Constant	1,346	,170		7,933	,000	134,954	,506
Information Management	,540	,046	,711	11,617	,000		

Dependent Variable: Company Performance

According to the regression analysis findings, it was concluded that customer relationship management practices and knowledge management had a statistically significant and positive effect on company performance. Knowledge management explains 50.6% of company performance variance. According to the results of the analysis, it has been determined that the company performance of the enterprises whose knowledge management score increases by one unit will increase by 0.540 units. It is seen that the performances of companies with increased knowledge management are also positively affected.

**Table 11. Result of Regression Analysis on the Effect of Technology-Based Customer Relationship Management on Company Performance**

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			F	R <sup>2</sup>
	B	Std. error	$\beta$	T	P		
Constant	1,480	,134		11,072	,000	192,779	,594
Technology-Based CRM	,545	,039	,770	13,885	,000		

Dependent Variable: Company Performance



According to the results of the regression analysis, when the effect of the technology-based CRM dimension of customer relationship management practices on company performance is examined; It has been seen that technology-based customer relationship management has a statistically significant and positive effect on company performance. Technology-based CRM explains 59.4% of company performance variance. As a result of the analysis, it has been determined that the company performances of the enterprises whose technology-based CRM score increases by one unit will increase by 0.545 units. It is seen that the performances of companies with increased technology-based customer relationship management are also positively affected.

**Table 12. Result of Regression Analysis on the Effect of Customer Relationship Management Practices on Company Performance**

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			F	R <sup>2</sup>
	B	Std.error	β	T	p		
Constant	1,161	,167		6,940	,000	166,495	,558
Customer Relationship Management Applications	,622	,048	,747	12,903	,000		

Dependent Variable: Company Performance

According to the regression analysis findings, it has been determined that customer relationship management practices have a statistically significant and positive effect on company performance. The independent variable was defined by taking the average of each expression in the scale of customer relationship management practices. Customer relationship management practices explain 55.8% of company performance variance. According to the results of the analysis, it has been determined that the company performance of the enterprises whose customer relationship management applications score increases by one unit will increase by 0.622 units. It is seen that the performances of companies whose customer relationship management applications are increasing are also positively affected.

**Table 13. One-Way Analysis of Variance Results for the Difference Between Research Variables and Business Type**

	Business Type	N		SS	F	p
Customer Relationship Management Applications	Sole Proprietorship	18	2.1515	,15669	144,438	,000
	Ordinary Company	19	2.6364	,18370		
	Limited company	42	2,9924	,68598		
	Incorporated company	55	4,2512	,31490		
Company Performance	Sole Proprietorship	18	2.3194	,30283	129,132	,000
	Ordinary Company	19	2.3465	,29300		
	Limited company	42	3,1310	,33694		
	Incorporated company	55	3.9394	,46438		

According to the results of one-way analysis of variance, it has been determined that there is a statistically significant difference between customer relationship management practices and company performances according to the types of businesses;  $p < .05$ . Tamhane's T2 Post-hoc test was applied because the variances were not homogeneous in order to determine between which groups the differences detected in this framework were. According to the data obtained as a result of this test, it is observed that the customer relationship management practices and company performances of companies operating as joint stock companies are much higher.

**Table 14. One-Way Analysis of Variance Results for the Difference Between Research Variables and Operating Period of the Enterprise**

	Activity Duration	N		SS	F	p
Customer Relationship Management Applications	less than 1 year	30	2,5000	,32756	27,051	,000
	1-3 years	24	2.9318	,50598		
	3-5 years	16	3.2102	,58255		
	5-10 years	24	4.2083	,40852		
	10 years and above	40	3.7648	1,04476		
Company Performance	less than 1 year	30	2,3250	,32925	79,173	,000
	1-3 years	24	2.8854	,32397		
	3-5 years	16	2.9792	,27806		
	5-10 years	24	3.8333	,29283		
	10 years and above	40	3.8958	,59189		

According to the results of the one-way analysis of variance, it has been observed that there is a statistically significant difference between the customer relationship management practices and company performances according to the operating period of the enterprises;  $p < .05$ . Since the variances were not homogeneous, Tamhane's T2 Post-hoc test was used to determine between which groups the differences were. According to the findings, the customer relationship management practices of companies that have been operating for 10 years or more have higher company performances.

**Table 15. One-Way Analysis of Variance Results for the Difference Between Research Variables and Number of Employees**

	Number of Employees	N		SS	F	p
Customer Relationship Management Applications	1-9	24	2,5000	,31748	28,290	,000
	10-24	20	2,6500	,40363		
	25-49	26	3.1678	,50054		
	50-99	26	4.0839	,36853		
	100 and above	38	3.8624	1,09283		
Company Performance	1-9	24	2.2813	,34562	71,327	,000
	10-24	20	2,7250	,31309		
	25-49	26	3,0160	,30643		
	50-99	26	3.7949	,37950		
	100 and above	38	3.8991	,60378		

According to the results of the one-way analysis of variance, it has been determined that there is a statistically significant difference between the customer relationship management practices and company performances according to the number of employees;  $p < .05$ . In this context, Tamhane's T2 Post-hoc test was applied because the variances were not homogeneous to determine between which groups the differences detected were. According to the findings obtained as a result of the test in question, the customer relationship management practices of companies with 50-99 employees; the employees have higher perceptions of the business performance of the participants.

## 5. Conclusion, Discussion and Recommendations

This research as in all research contains some limitations. The data collection process was deeply harmed due to the pandemic, the time, and the difficulty of reaching the respondents due to the online data collection phase. Moreover, data collection tools and sampling procedures constitute more limitations. For further studies in this direction, it is recommended that it be done on different sectors and different cities, with a larger sample, and to be strengthened by conducting in-depth interviews in addition to the survey application.

As a result of the analysis carried out in this research, it has been seen that the customer relationship management practices and company performances of the enterprises are at a good level. It has been observed that customer relationship management practices and their dimensions, customer focus, customer relationship management organization, information management and technology-based customer relationship management, have statistically significant and positive effects on company performance. These findings coincide with the results of Yıldız (2010)'s study on an automotive company. Similarly, in the research conducted by Hatip (2019), it was determined that the understanding of customer relationship management has positive effects on business performance. It is extremely important for businesses to be able to create a new service or product that suits their customers' needs for businesses to survive and achieve their goals in a market where competition is fiercer than ever. Therefore, businesses need to show the utmost importance in their customer relationship management practices.

To summarize; customer relationship management contributes greatly to customers and business performance. For this reason, customer relationship management has become a popular management philosophy in recent years. The power and importance of the customer has been understood by the businesses and this asset has been valued like business assets. In addition to these, it is seen that customer relationship management finds an application area in the sector that requires one-to-one communication and relationship with customers.

Based on the company where the research was conducted, the following suggestions are offered for business managers who want to gain competitive advantage. In today's businesses, it is seen that customer satisfaction has ceased to be a distinctive feature and has become one of the indispensables of businesses. Therefore, it is necessary to make the one-to-one relationship with the customers permanent and to gain a satisfactory quality.

The most important element for businesses is the customer information they have obtained. It is necessary for businesses to carry out systematic studies to collect, store and use information about the customers with which they have a relationship. Even the smallest details should be taken into account during the information gathering process of businesses and this information should be updated regularly. In addition to these, it is also important to analyze the collected information and to interpret the analysis results well. Thanks to these applications, detailed customer data is obtained. Thus, it is possible to predict what kind of behavior the customers will exhibit in the future and to establish close and permanent relations with the customers. As a result of the correct analysis and interpretations, the business will be able to achieve the desired results. The prerequisite for the success of customer relationship management is to target an effective process management in the implementation process. From the point of view of the enterprise, it is necessary to determine the basic dynamics of the process in question, and to set clear and realistic goals with time and resource planning. It is extremely important that the top management of the enterprise and other people wholeheartedly believe and support the customer management project. Existing customers should not be seen as customers that are won and will never be lost by businesses. For businesses, attracting new customers to the business is more costly than retaining existing customers. For this reason, it is necessary to establish high-importance relations, although low-cost, with greeting cards, SMS or e-mail sent by businesses to existing customers on special occasions. This will ensure that customers see that they are always remembered and cared for by the business. At the same time, it will play an important role in increasing customer loyalty. Businesses should be aware of the importance of customer feedback after service delivery. It is extremely important that customers' requests and complaints are considered. Thanks to these criticisms, businesses can see their faults and deficiencies and gain the opportunity to increase their service quality.

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#### **Author Declaration**

The authors formally declare that the content of this paper is the original work of themselves. It has not been published previously in any media including journals, conferences, or websites. It is not being reviewed by any editorial office of publishers. All cited materials have been properly credited with citations in the contexts and the References section. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

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