

A Study on Perception of Passengers on Quality of Services offered by selected Airline Operators at Tiruchirappalli Airport, Tamilnadu

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ABSTRACT

The Airlines industry fastest growing sectors India. In 2001, the only public airlines in India has enjoyed monopoly in its operations and business and therefore could dictate its own terms to the passengers' who had no other choice but to accept whatever had been available respective of quality of services, pricing, satisfaction and comfort. The current scenario changed following globalization and air space is subject to competitions. Subsequent events moved very fast as more and more new players entered with lot of advantages of being new operators as compared to the airlines which had been in operations since independence and therefore accumulated lot of fat which needed to be immediately dispensed with two faced the emergent competition that forced as threats to its existence and substance. In the other hand some of the private players are very much concern about the passengers' as a result they are implementing low price strategy to attract the passengers. The survey captured the perceptions of passengers who are now travelling in this rapidly changing environment of free and more competitive markets. India's first low cost carrier, Air India has changed the competitive landscape within India. The survey results confirm the hypothesis that there exists two distinct markets, one comprising those passengers who choose a full service airlines and the other that the select a lowest cost carrier.

1. Introduction

The aviation industry in India has emerged as one of the fastest growth industry in the country in last three years. India aims to become the third large aviation market by 2020 and the largest by 2030. The aviation industry has a new era of expansion, driven by factors such as low-cost fare, modern airports. Over the five years, domestic and international passenger traffic is expected to increase at an annual average rate 12% and 8% respectively. India aviation industry is largely untapped with huge growth opportunity considering that air transport is still expensive for major population, of which nearly 40% the upwardly mobile middle class. It is the right time that the private airline operators functioning in India realizing the opportunities available to them have to enhance their service quality and try to reduce the prevailing gap between air passengers' expectation and final level of satisfaction.

Indian aviation industry has been one of the high growths in the world with private airline operators according for more than 75% of the sector of the domestic aviation market. The compound annual growth of 18% and 454 airports and airstrips in place in the country, of which 16 is designed as international airports, it has been stated that the aviation industry will witness revival by 2011.

Statement of problem

An air passenger experience different thing during their journey, which a consumer, takes along a series of encounters: they become aware of a brand, consider what on offer, make enquires, make a purchase and use the service. Customers may choose to stay with the current service provider or may even choose to opt for a different set of services. Passengers

this decision is purely influenced by their level of satisfaction derived by them during a travel and while availing a particular private air carrier services. A high quality service is the corner stone of any successful services industry which is why marketing strategies implemented by airlines to expand internationally must take into account the different expectations and perceptions of passengers. This study aimed to analyse the air passengers' level of service and expectation towards airlines services with references to Tiruchirappalli city.

Objectives of the study

The following are the primary objectives

- To analyse the profile of the respondents of airline passengers.
- To find the airline passengers relationship between ticket purchasing and cancellations dimensions.
- To examine the passengers attitude towards post arrival services of airline passengers.

2. Review of literature

Bonill and Bonilla (2008) investigated whether the state-owned airlines exhibited services quality levels than privately owned airline operators by examining few things namely, check-in, information services, courtesy, seat space, comfort, food services, entertainment services, post arrivals, delays, word of mouth communication and overall satisfaction. The results of the research study showed that state owned airlines offered low satisfaction levels than private airlines and mixed ownership carriers.

Hence, the findings of the study implied that there is an impact of economic liberalization on airlines industry in India.

Chirawan Somwang (2008) the determinants of service quality that affected the world competitiveness of the aviation industry. This research study was conducted in the Thai low cost airline industry. Service quality was evaluated through airline operators' experiences and expectations based on the SERVQUAL instrument by using number of attributes in service quality. The study found that the expectations of Thai low cost carriers' passengers on service quality were higher than their perceptions. Therefore, it is essential to take SERVQUAL instrument for future research.

Archan. A.R. and Subha M.v (2012) the researcher to study find revealed that these three dimensions are positively to service quality in international air travel and of these dimensions, Cuisines provided, seat comfort safety are the most important dimensions in-flight services quality. Personal entertainment is one of the most important dimension as perceived by airlines passengers' in In-flight digital services quality. Online ticket booking or cancelling is another dimension in back-office airline operations. In addition, the findings indicated that passengers' satisfaction on different airlines on basis of the services delivered.

Satyanarayana Chary (2012) proposed a conceptual model to measure the patient perceived service quality in healthcare. The proposed model contains 10 dimensions and is based on existing literature in healthcare service quality and helps to improving knowledge of identify the components that are important and can influence services quality. The researcher study will improve understanding service quality and assist practitioners that they meet in their daily operations.

Agarwal and Dey (2010) the researcher study of customer satisfaction based on service quality as perceived by air travelers on six domestic airlines by using different variables such as ease of bookings through the website call center, efficient ticketing staff, regular announcements during flight delays at airport, on time performance of flights, in flight experience, baggage handling and value for currency. Around 130 questionnaires were collected by using convenient sampling method. The Perceptions air travelers were captured who had actually undergone the experience of travelling by a various airline operators. The result of the study showed that weather air travelers perceive any significant difference between six airlines operator for each of the above six identified variables. The researcher study concluded that will

help marketers of domestic airlines and designers of flight service offering to enhance the satisfaction level of air travelers. The above discussed reviews motivate the author to analyse the air travelers' level of expectation and satisfaction towards airlines service quality. This study is primary confined to Tiruchirappalli city.

3. Research Methodology

The study has applied both qualitative and quantitative data analysis techniques. The research study is restricted to Tiruchirappalli Airport. As per the information provided by the Tiruchirappalli Airport authorities at present eight private and one public owned airline services are offered at this airport. Five Airlines were choosing as the sample. A sample of 180 respondents was chosen from each Airline. Five special areas of parasuraman model five dimensions SERQUAL namely Tangibility, Reliability, Responsibility, Assurance and Empathy have been focused.

4. Data Collection

This study is based on the primary data secondary data. They have been collected through administration interview schedule from the passengers' and personal observation and discussion with the passengers who make regular visits and conversation with airline officials. Secondary data been collected from the book, journals, newspaper, articles and websites mainly from the airlines industry.

5. Sampling Design

Selection of sample passengers

The sample size determine in 180 respondents and they have been selected at random on convenience (non-probability) basis from airline passengers' at Tiruchirappalli Airport.

6. Analysis of Data

Collected data were analysed using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS.20). The opinion elicited from the sample respondents are tabulated and analyzed using percentage analysis, Correlation, Multiple Regression and ANOVA. The impact of services quality on the choice of airlines had been highlighted in this research study.

7. Analysis and Interpretation of Data

TABLE I
Respondents Personal Demographic Information

| PARTICULARS | | NO. OF RESPONDENTS | PERCENTAGE |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|------------|
| Gender of the Respondents | Male | 114 | 63.3 |
| | Female | 65 | 36.1 |
| | Transgender | 1 | .6 |
| Age of the Respondents | Below 20 Yrs | 42 | 23.3 |
| | 21 – 30 Yrs | 82 | 45.6 |
| | 31 – 40 Yrs | 40 | 22.2 |
| | 41 – 50 Yrs | 16 | 8.9 |
| Reason for Journey | Business / Official Visit | 29 | 16.1 |
| | Employment | 39 | 21.7 |
| | Leisure / Tour | 47 | 26.1 |

| | | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|----|------|
| | Personal Reasons | 34 | 18.9 |
| | Pilgrims | 17 | 9.4 |
| | Others | 14 | 7.8 |
| Booking Flight Tickets | Carrier's Own website | 8 | 4.4 |
| | Online | 71 | 39.4 |
| | Paytm | 16 | 8.9 |
| | Travel Agencies | 71 | 39.4 |
| | Airline office | 10 | 5.6 |
| | At Airport | 4 | 2.2 |

The above table reveals that from 180 sample respondent. Among the sample data, 114% respondents are male and 65% respondents are female; 23.3% belongs to below 20 years of age group, 45.6 % are 21- 30 years of age group, 22.2 % are

31- 40 years of age group, 8.9 % are 41 – 50 years of the age group. Majority of 26.1% respondents were travel for Leisure / Tour purpose and 39.4% were booking flight ticket from travel agency.

TABLE II
Correlations Analysis

| | | Information offered | Reservation ticketing | Cancellation of Ticket | Postpone of Travel |
|------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|--------------------|
| Information offered | Pearson Correlation | 1 | | | |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | | | |
| | N | 180 | | | |
| Reservation of ticket | Pearson Correlation | .078 | 1 | | |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .300 | | | |
| | N | 180 | 180 | | |
| Cancellation of Ticket | Pearson Correlation | .043 | .135 | 1 | |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .562 | .072 | | |
| | N | 180 | 180 | 180 | |
| Postpone of Travel | Pearson Correlation | .097 | .275** | .114 | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .194 | .000 | .127 | |
| | N | 180 | 180 | 180 | 180 |

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Above correlations table shows that the relationship between various service Quality dimensions. Here the value of correlations (r) were reservation of ticket is 0.78, cancellation

of ticket is .043, postpone of travel is .097. All the factors have positive relationship between information offered.

TABLE III
Multiple Regression analysis

| | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|--------|------|
| | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| (Constant) | 1.424 | .156 | | 9.099 | .000 |
| Delivery of Bag | -.011 | .036 | -.024 | -.307 | .759 |
| Missed Luggage's | .015 | .035 | .034 | .421 | .674 |
| Travel Related Partners | .045 | .043 | .086 | 1.048 | .296 |
| Money Exchange | -.085 | .039 | -.168 | -2.190 | .030 |
| Luggage Handling | .015 | .034 | .035 | .455 | .650 |
| a. Dependent Variable: Gender | | | | | |

Multiple regressions were used to analyse the relationship between gender and various dimensions of service Quality. Dependent variable is Gender and Independent variables are Delivery of Bag, Missed Luggage's, Travel Related Partners,

Money Exchange, Luggage Handling. The Regression equation is Gender (Constant) 1.424 = -0.11* Delivery of Bag + 0.15* Missed Luggage's + 0.45* Travel Related Partners - 0.085* Money Exchange – 0.15* Luggage Handling. Here

except Money exchange all the significant values are higher the 5%, therefore only money exchange have association between Gender regard to post Arrival services provided by the Airport.

8. Conclusion

A transport sector plays an integral role in the growth development an Indian economy. According to the Indian Aerospace industry report, in term of passengers' traffic, India is currently the ninth largest aviation market in the world. India has 132 airports it includes 24 international Airports, 7 Customs Airports, 78 Domestic Airports and 26 civil enclaves at Military Airfields. India has civil aviation sector has evolved over time. India is dynamic aviation market is being refines by

changing regulation policies, increased privatization of airports and growth infrastructure developments. Tiruchirappalli International Airports serves Tiruchirappalli in the state of Tamil Nadu. It is located on the Tiruchirappalli to Pudukkottai Highway, which is about 4 Km south of the main city. It has changed the definition of airlines that air travel is a luxury and it is only for the upper segment of the population.

9. Scope for further study

The study was carried out only in Tiruchirappalli airport, there is a scope for further research in these areas like to study the individual airlines or by comparing to or more airlines operators offered the same services or by comparing any airports in TamilNadu.

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