A Research on Passengers' Satisfaction in Airways – In Coimbatore City

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Abstract: *Air Transport is the most recent mode of transport. It is the gift of the twentieth century to the world. The two world wars gave a great impetus to the development of air transport in almost all the countries of the world. Aviation creates large number of jobs, every million passenger transported create thousand jobs directly at the airports and a further development in the national economy. However the outrageous rates have made it the mode of travel of the rich or of the business community for whom time is more affluent than air travel. The success of an any airways fully depends on quality of service delivery and customer satisfaction. The main objective of the present study is to find out the customer satisfaction in airways in various objects like, quality, service, fare etc.*

Keywords: Airline, Booking, Service, Quality, Passengers Satisfaction

1. Introduction

The Aviation industry can be defined as those activities that are directly related to the transporting of people and goods by air from one place to another, this industry plays a major role in every countries economic activity and it aids in opening up of the countries market to both domestic and foreign investor. The two branches of the commercial air transport industry, passenger and freight had contrasting fortunes in 2015. Industry-wide revenue passenger kilometers (RPK) grew 7.4%, this was the greatest increase since the rebound from the depth of the global financial crisis in 2010 and well above the long-run average of 5.5%. Altogether, more than 3.5 billion passenger segments were flown in 2015, an increase of 240 million compared with 2014 (IATA -2016).

Indian air transport is one of the fastest developing aviation sector of the world. In recent years Indian air transport has witnessed a boom which has given rise to the need for improving Indian air transport infrastructure like never before. The reason for that is an upsurge in demand for air travel, much of which owes to the opening of a host of low-cost airlines by the both private and public sector.

Services marketing is a sub-field of marketing, which can be split into the two main areas of goods marketing (which includes the marketing of fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) and durables) and services marketing. Services marketing typically refers to both business to consumer (B2C) and business to business (B2B) services, and includes marketing of services such as telecommunications services, financial services, all types of hospitality services, car rental services, air travel, health care services and professional services. The airline organization is one among the above said service establishments, and this paper aims at ascertaining what constitute the customer service variable, how satisfied are the passengers with the services of the Air India and how managers of this service organization improve and promote satisfaction level among passenger who travelled through the said city airport.

Airlines in India

Indigo, Jet Airways, Air India, Spice Jet and GoAir are most popular brand in domestic air travel in order of their market share. These airline connects more than 90 cities across India also operates international routes after the liberalization of Indian Aviation. India's vast unutilized air transport network has attracted several investments in the India air industry in the past few years. More than half dozen low cost carrier entered in the Indian market in mid of 2000. Because of the competition in the industry the public sector also upgraded their operations and has invested more for purchase of new aircrafts. Air India is mulling expanding its Boeing wide-body air crafts feet to implement its plans of adding a host of new destinations in its local and overseas network in a couple of years. The airline is expected to draw up a firm plan in this regard early nest fiscal. As of now, the government-owned carrier has 40 wide-body or twin-aisle plane in its fleet-15 Boeing 777s, 21 B-787(Dreamliner) and Jumbo B 747, as against 68 Airbus single-aisle A – 320 family aircraft.

2. Review of Literature

According to the industry analysis, the competition of airline service sectors is strict. Hence, in order for company to stay competitive in the industry, it is advisable for company to know certain strategies. In this literature review, it provides three different strategies which are essential to stay competitive.

Customer Satisfaction
It has been stated in the work of Timm (2011), that a basic sense of caring, concern and competence plays an important role in building customer satisfaction. Customer that are satisfied with a service tend to be loyal and involved with repeat purchases that lead to mouth-to-mouth promotion which will increase the company profitability (Hill et al, 2007). Next, according to Timm (2011), customer satisfaction occurred whenever the customers feel that the price that they pay for certain service is beneficial or worthy. One of the best ways for company to provide satisfaction for

customers is by working closely with the customers to ensure the service meet their needs and wants (Lovelock, et al., 2005). This is necessary in order to ensure the service to stay relevant and needed by the target customers and not result in defect customers. For example, tiger airway which is a budget airline stays closely with their target market which is the price conscious customers by keep offering value-for-money airline service. Next, different customers perceived value from a service subjectively. Therefore, it is essential for company to identify and assess the value perception of key people that are involved in purchasing process (Hollensen, 2003). For example, by using a multiple-person approach which often provide more reliable results rather than single-person studies.

Customer Relationship

A remarkable technique that involves creating relationship that gives win-win situation for both customers and company can be defined as Customer Relationship Management (Baran, Galka and Strunk, 2008). Customer relationship management involves compiling and analyzing the vast amounts of data of customers which will provide greater insight of the customers' behavior. This will allow a company to treat different customers with different actions accordingly which allow the company to act more efficiently and effectively while retaining their customers. This technique is crucial in retaining customers, as without the existence of knowledge in regards of customers, it is difficult to understand, anticipate and adapt with the customer needs and wants.

Customer Acquisition

According to Kotler and Armstrong (2009), finding the right customers that provides a profitable return can be defined as customer acquisition. Customer acquisition is necessary for every companies that start creating a business, expanding their business, products and services, and it is effective in situation where the switching cost is relatively low and repeat purchases are rare .In acquiring customers it is essential for organization to choose the right customers to serve before decide how they can best acquire them. This is particularly important as it is a fact that organization will not be able to serve all customers in every way. Hence, organizations nowadays decide to segment their customers and focus more on customers that they can acquire, satisfy best and bring profitability (Jobber, 2010).After deciding which segment of customers to target, it is necessary for organization to understand the consumers first. There are three concepts that need to be recognized. Firstly, needs which refer to basic human requirements, in airline case; this can be in a form of necessity to go overseas by airline service. While, wants are the alternative form of needs that are molded by culture and individuality, again in airline case, this would be the desire to have convenience, comfortable and prestigious airline service. Thirdly, wants that are supported by ability to pay is often called demand. It is critical to understand these three concepts which can be seen in the work of Burton, Kotler and Keller (2009) because it is difficult to provide service with better value that lead to successful customer acquisition, if the organization itself does not know what are the customers' needs and wants which will not create strong demand.

Next, Market offerings can be defined as the combination of product, service, experience and information that meet the needs or wants of customers (Lovelock, Patterson and Walker, 2007). Organization need to be careful in creating market offering as by creating an offering, customers tend to create a form of expectations in regards to value and satisfaction based on market offering (Kotler, 2000). For example, SIA offer a great experience and excellent quality level of airline service, customers that hear SIA market offering tend expect high level of airline service. Hence, if the market offering of SIA does not meet the expectations, customers tend to be dissatisfied and switch to competitors. However, in SIA scenario, SIA is able to deliver their service at the promised level which leads to the creation of loyal customers who will share their experience and recommend the service to others. Next, it is also essential to keep in mind that quality of the service is not the only decisive factor. This is true as every customer has their own budget (i.e. for those who want value-for-money service can go for budget airline while those who prefer luxury and prestige will choose SIA). Last but not least, there has been an observation in the work of (Sellers, 1989; Hanan, 2003) that more than 25% of airline customers are changing airlines annually which indicates that knowing how to acquire customers are extremely essential, particularly due to arrival of budget airlines and the development of technology (internet).

3. Research Methodology

The population of the study in question comprised of all travelling passenger using the Airline service and a total of one hundred respondents' opinion was sampled in order to avoid the cumbersome nature of trying to gather information from the entire population. In the selection of the sample, a simple random sampling technique was used, the questionnaires were administrated to the customers travel in air service under study.

Objectives of the Study

- To Study about the passengers opinion on quality of service and price
- To Study the level of satisfaction of various factors of airline service
- To Study the effectiveness of quality and service of the airline service
- To Study the passenger satisfaction level in boarding competence, baggage distribution timings.
- To Study Passengers satisfaction in overall chivalrous and kindness.

Limitations of the Study

The present study covers only the customer who travel in the air, sample of 200 was selected. Questionnaire methods was used and the analysis was made out based on the information provided by the respondents.

Tools used

The under mentioned tools are used to analyze the data obtained from the respondents:

- Percentage Analysis
- Chi-Squire Test.

Percentage Analysis
Under this methods, different table drawn for the data which are obtained from samples. Interpretation also given for the data recorded in the table. This analysis helps a common people to understand, what amount of respondents belong to each category.

Chi-Squire Test
This test is to finding out whether any one factor has association with other. The test were carried out at five percent significance level. Under the hypothesis of independent of attributes the expected frequencies for any of the frequencies can be obtained on modifying in the dividing the product by the total frequency N.
Formulae which is used in this tool is:

$$\chi_c^2 = \sum \frac{(O_i - E_i)^2}{E_i}$$

If calculated P value is less than α value, the null hypothesis may be rejected.

Outcome of the Study
The data obtained from the questionnaire were analyzed by descriptive statistical tools like percentages, Chart, frequency, statistical tool like Chi-Squire and Microsoft Excel Worksheet also used. A total of 200 questionnaires were distributed to respondents all these questionnaires was received form the respondents, its response rate is 100%.

Table 1: Gender Details

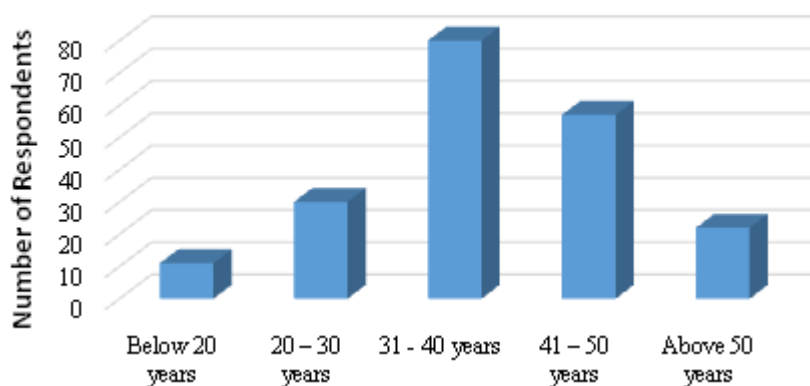| Particulars	No. of Respondents	Percent
Male	112	56.00
Female	88	44.00
Total	**200**	**100.00**

The above table shows that 56 percent of the respondents are male, and remaining 44 percent of the respondents are female. Majority of the respondents are male.

Table 2: Age of the Respondents

Particulars	No. of Respondents	Percent
Below 20 years	11	05.50
20 – 30 years	30	15.00
31 - 40 years	80	40.00
41 – 50 years	57	28.50
Above 50 years	22	11.00
Total	**200**	**100.00**

The above table shows that, out of 200 respondents 80 respondents are 31- 40 years, 57 respondents are in the age group of 41-50 years, 30 respondents are in the age group of 20 – 30 years, 22 respondents are above 50 years and balance 11 are coming under the age group of below 20 years. Majority of the respondents are in the age group of 31 – 40 years.


Chart No. 1 Age of the Respondents

Table 3: Marital Status of the Respondents

Particulars	No. of Respondents	Percent
Married	147	73.50
Unmarried	53	26.50
Total	200	100.00

It is interpreted that, out of 200 respondents 73.50 percent of the respondents are married and balance 26.50 percent of the respondents are unmarried. Majority of the respondents are married.

Chart No. 2 Marital Status of the Respondents

Chart No. 3 Educational Qualification of the Respondents
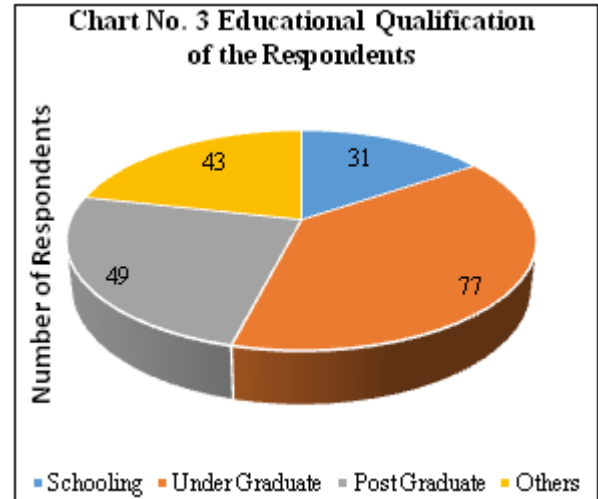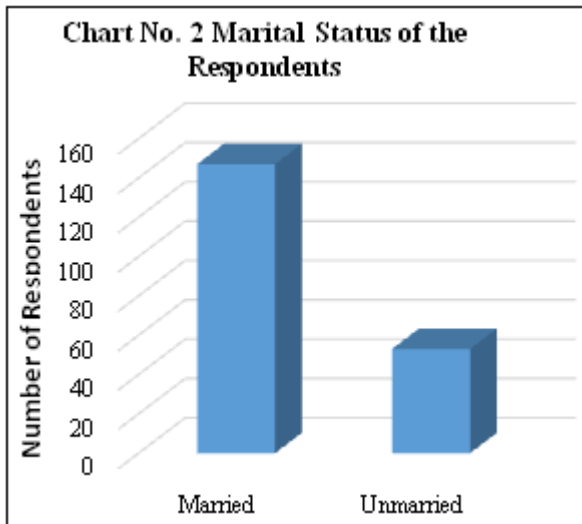
Table 4: Educational Qualification of the Respondents

Particulars	No. of Respondents	Percent
Schooling	31	15.50
Under Graduate	77	38.50
Post Graduate	49	24.50
Others	43	21.50
Total	**200**	**100.00**

It is depicted that table No. 4 out of 200 respondents, 38.50 percent of the respondents are belongs to Under Graduates, 24.50 percent of the respondents are belongs to Post Graduates, 21.50 percent of the respondents are comes under other category of education and balance 15.50 percent of the respondents educational qualifications are at school level. Majority of the respondents are under graduates.

Table 5: Occupation of the Respondents

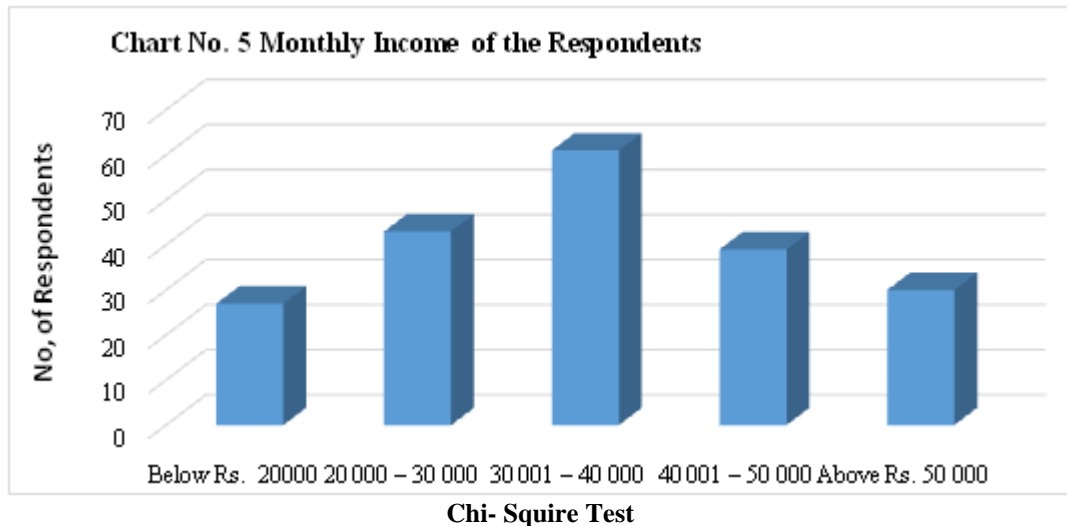| Particulars	No. of Respondents	Percent
Students	09	04.50
Private Employee	56	28.00
Govt. Employee	42	21.00
Business	73	36.50
Others	20	10.00
Total	200	100.00

It is perceived that 36.50 percent of the respondents are doing business, 28 percent of the respondents are private organization employees, 21 percent of the respondents are working in government sector, 10 percent of the respondents are doing other type of job and balance of 4.50 percent of respondents are students. Majority of the respondents are business individuals.

Chart No.4 Occupation of the Respondents
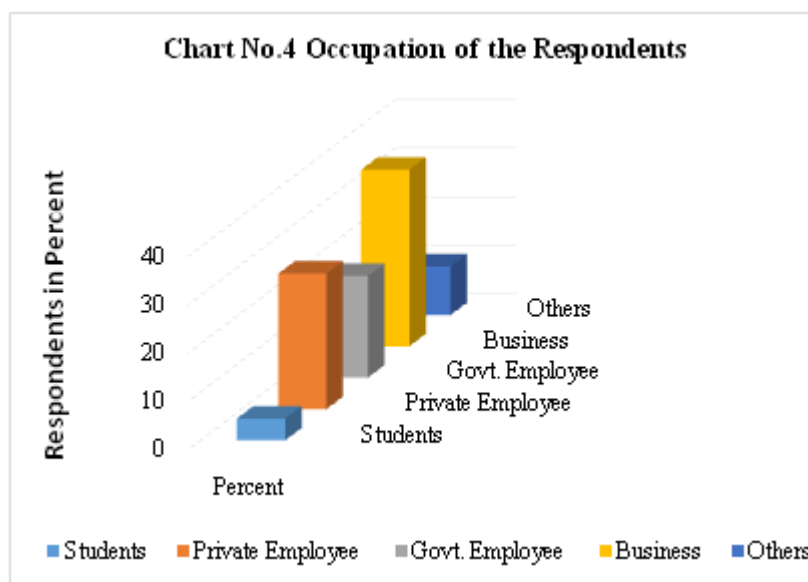
Table 6: Monthly Income of the Respondents

Particulars	No of Respondents	Percent
Below Rs. 20000	27	13.50
20 000 – 30 000	43	21.50
30 001 – 40 000	61	30.50
40 001 – 50 000	39	19.50
Above Rs. 50 000	30	15.00
Total	200	100.00

The above table displays that 30.50 percent of the respondents belong to the monthly income Rs. 30 001 – 40 000, 21.50 percent of the respondents belong to the monthly income Rs. 20 000 – 30 000, 19. 50 percent of the respondents earns monthly income between Rs. 40 001 – 50000, 15 percent of the respondents are earns more than Rs. 50 000 and balance 13.50 percent of the respondents earns below Rs. 20 000. Majority of the respondents belonging monthly income Rs.30 001 – 40 000.

Chart No. 5 Monthly Income of the Respondents

Chi- Squire Test

Table 7: Chi-Squire Test for Area of residence and Ticket Booking Source

Particulars	Source of Ticket Booking				Total no. of Respondents
	Travel agent	Internet	Airline office	Others	
Rural	15	23	7	0	45
Urban	36	69	40	10	155
Total	51	92	47	10	200

Null Hypothesis
Ho: There is no association between the area of residence and the ticket booking source
Alternative Hypothesis
H1:There is association between the area of residence and ticket booking source
Inference:
Degree of freedom: 6
X^2 value 6.19
Table value at five percent level 7.815
At one percent level 11.345

The calculated Chi-squire value is slighter than the table value at five percent level; there does not exist significant association between area of residence and ticket booking source. Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted.

Table 8: Chi-Squire Test for Respondents Occupation and Purpose of Travelling

Particulars	Purpose of Travelling				Total no. of Respondents
	Business	Holidays	Education	Others	
Student	0	6	3	0	09
Private Employee	10	22	0	24	56
Govt. Employee	9	24	0	9	42
Business	34	19	9	11	73
Others	5	11	0	4	20
Total	58	82	12	48	200

Null Hypothesis
Ho: There is no association between Occupation of the Respondents and Purpose of Travelling
Alternative Hypothesis
H1: There is association between Occupation of the Respondent and Purpose of Travelling

Inference:
Degree of freedom: 12

X^2 value 59.119
Table value at five percent level 21.026
At one percent level 26.217
The calculated Chi-squire value is greater than the table value at five percent level; there is an association between the Respondents Occupation and Purpose of travelling. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Table 9: Chi-Squire Test for Respondents Marital Status and Purpose of Travelling

Particulars	Purpose of Travelling				Total no. of Respondents
	Business	Holidays	Education	Others	
Student	48	53	3	44	147
Private Employee	10	30	9	04	53
Total	58	82	12	48	200

Null Hypothesis
Ho: There is no association between Marital Status of the Respondents and Purpose of Travelling
Alternative Hypothesis
H1: There is association between Marital of the Respondent and Purpose of Travelling

Inference:
Degree of freedom: 3
X^2 value 29.46
Table value at five percent level 7.815
At one percent level 11.345
The calculated Chi-squire value is greater than the table value at five percent level; there is an association between the MaritalStatus and Purpose of travelling. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Table 10: Chi-Squire Test for Monthly Income and the Class in which they Travel

Particulars	Class in which they Travel		Total No. of Respondents
	Economy Class	Business Class	
Below Rs. 20000	27	0	27
20 000 – 30 000	36	07	43
30 001 – 40 000	49	12	61
40 001 – 50 000	28	11	39
Above Rs. 50 000	08	22	30
Total	148	52	200

Null Hypothesis

Ho: There is no association between Monthly Income ofthe Respondents and Class of Travel

Alternative Hypothesis

H1: There is association between Monthly of the Respondent and Class of Travel

Inference:

Degree of freedom: 4

X² value 47.901

Table value at five percent level   9.488

At one percent level 13.277

The calculated Chi-squire value is inordinate than the table value at five percent level; there is an association between monthly income of the respondent and class of Travel. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Table 9: Chi-Squire Test for Respondents Class of Travel and Opinion on Service Quality

Particulars	Rating of Quality of Service					Total no. of Respondents
	Highly Satisfied	Satisfied	Moderate	Dissatisfied	Highly Dissatisfied	
Economy Class	29	84	30	3	2	**148**
Business Class	9	32	6	4	1	**52**
Total	**38**	**116**	**36**	**7**	**3**	**200**

Null Hypothesis

Ho: There is no association between Class of Travel and Service Quality of Airlines

Alternative Hypothesis

H1: There is association between Class of Travel and Service Quality of Airlines

Inference:

Degree of freedom: 4

X² value 5.5

Table value at five percent level   9.488

At one percent level 13.277

The calculated Chi-squire value is slighter than the table value at five percent level; there does not exist significant association between the class of travel and service quality of airline.   Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted.

4. Findings of the Study

The research is alarmed with the air travel customers satisfaction in Coimbatore city. Based on the study the following findings and conclusions were made after analyzing the collected data prudently**.**

- Majority of the respondents are Male
- Majority of the respondents are in the age group of 31-40 years of age.
- Majority of the respondents are Married
- Majority of the respondents' are under graduates
- Majority of the respondents are doing business as their profession
- Majority of the respondents earns monthly income of Rs. 30001- 40000
- Majority of the respondents are living in urban area
- Majority of the respondents are purchasing air ticket through Internet and travels for the purpose of spending their holidays.
- Majority of the respondents are travelling in economy class
- Majority of the respondents are satisfied airline service quality and safety provided.
- Majority of the respondents are travelled 2 – 6 time by air during last year.
- Majority of the respondents are hang on in the queue during baggage check-in counter and aircraft boarding counter for 10-20 minutes respectively.

- Majority of the respondents are delayed in the queue of the security check counter 5 -10 minutes.
- Majority of the respondents are opined that the departure and arrival time is very important while making a decision to choose the airline service.
- Majority of the respondents are opined that air fare, seat availability and seat comfort is very important while making a decision to choose the airline.

5. Conclusion

Based on the study, it is concluded that customers are satisfied with quality of service, safety measure provided by airline. Passengers also fulfilled in-flight amenities, cabin spotlessness and seat luxury. Airlines should focus passengers waiting time of boarding, baggage check-in counters and also pay attention on aircraft arrival and departure timings. Finally customer are opined that they are receiving great value for their money and satisfied with the overall chivalrous and kindness.

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