A Study On Service Quality Dimensions Of Domestic Airline Industry In India

Dr K K Ramachandran

Professor / Director, GRD Institute of Management, Dr G R Damodaran College of Science, Coimbatore, India – 641 014.

E-Mail: dr.k.k.ramachandran@gmail.com

Abstract: Air transportation acts as a catalyst for economic development and trade by facilitating goods and passenger movement domestically and around the world. The robust growth in Indian Airline Industry has redefined the way people travel in India. In the recent past, the cost of air transportation has fallen and this has encouraged many middle income travelers to travel by air. Open sky policy is being followed in the airline industry and growing stiff competition has changed the rules of the game. The pressure to provide better customer services has never been greater. Yet the challenge to reduce operating costs is equally strong. Automation of services is playing a key role in attaining these goals and many innovative solutions are being deployed. Plethora of software solutions are designed and implemented to improve the passenger's journey, streamline and integrate airline and airport operations, such as internet-based reservation systems, electronic ticketing, automated check-in, baggage handling, meals, enterprise-wide customer relationship solutions and frequent flyer programmes. The objective of all such solutions is to deliver the highest quality of customized services to the passengers at affordable costs. In the airline business, service quality indicates that, all passengers are entitled to receive any or all relevant information about their trip, such as any changes in scheduled flight timings or route diversions, giving fare information, including extras such as departure taxes, reserve seat charges and ad-hoc surcharges. Airlines should be committed to providing quality onboard services to passengers. Focusing on service quality is the need of the hour if the airline company aspires to improve market share and to enhance its financial performance. This paper identifies different service quality dimensions and assesses its relevance with reference to passenger's satisfaction. It also measures the gap between expectations and perceptions of the passengers so that strategies can be implemented to improve the quality of service and increase airlines profitability and market share.

Keywords: Airline transport, Customer satisfaction, Service Quality dimensions, Sustainability

.

1. INTRODUCTION:

Customers buy goods and services to meet specific needs. Needs are often deeply rooted in people's unconscious mind and may concern long-term existence and identity issues. When people feel need, they are motivated to take action to fulfill it. In many instances, purchase of a good or service is seen as offering the best solution to meet a particular need. Subsequently, consumers will compare what they received against what they expected, especially if it cost them money, time, effort that could have been devoted to obtaining an alternative solution. Customer expectations embrace several elements, including desired service, adequate service, predicted service and a zone of tolerance that falls between the desired and adequate service levels. The type of service customers hope to receive is termed as desired service. It is a wished-for level: a combination of what customers believe can and should be delivered in the context of their personal needs. However, most customers are realistic and understand that companies can't always deliver the desired level of service; which is defined as the minimum level of service customers will accept without being dissatisfied. The level of service that customers anticipate receiving is known as predicted service, which directly affects how they define "adequate service" on that occasion. If good service is predicted the adequate level will be higher than if poorer service is predicted. Customer predictions of service may be situation specific. A performance that falls below the adequate service level will cause frustration and dissatisfaction, where as one that exceeds the desired service level will both please and surprise customers. The extent to which customers are willing to accept this variation is called the zone of tolerance. When service falls outside the range, customers will react either positively or negatively. The zone of tolerance can increase or decrease for individual customers depending on such factors as competition, price or importance of specific service attributes. These factors most often affect adequate service levels which may move up or down in response to situational factors where as desired service levels tend to move up very slowly in response to accumulated customer experiences. It is known that expectations are not stable in the sense that they may change over time due to changes in aspiration levels or need at a particular moment in time.

According to Evans and Dean (2003), the customer is the judge of quality. Understanding customer needs, both current and future and keeping pace with changing market require effective strategies for listening to and learning from customers, measuring their satisfaction relative to competitors and building relationships. Satisfaction and dissatisfaction information are important because understanding them leads to the right improvements that can create satisfied customers who reward the company with loyalty. Customer satisfaction leads to repeat purchases and repeat purchases lead to loyal customers. In turn, customer's loyalty leads to enhanced brand equity and higher profits. On the other hand the only measure of acceptable quality is customers satisfaction, which takes into account both objective and subjective interpretations of the needs and expectations of customers. If the customers are satisfied with the products and services offered, the organization has not only correctly interpreted customer needs and expectations but it is also providing products and services of acceptable quality.

Service Quality Dimensions: Gronroos (1984b) identified two service quality dimensions the technical aspect that is 'what' service is provided and functional aspect and 'how' the service is provided. The customers perceive what he/she receives as the outcome of the process in which the resources are used that is the technical quality.

The SERVQUAL Instrument

The SERVQUAL instrument developed by Parasuraman et al (1991) has proved popular, being used in many studies of service quality. This is because it has a generic application and is a practical approach to any area. A number of researchers have applied the SERVQUAL model to measure service quality to identify and measure the gaps between customers' expectations and perceptions of the service received. Service quality from the consumer's perspective depends on the direction and degree of difference between the expected service and the perceived service. Thus by comparing customer's expected service with customer's perceived service can determine whether its service standard is appropriate. The gap between expectations and perceptions of performance determines the level of service quality from a customer's perspective.

The SERQUAL instrument consists of 22 statements for assessing consumer perceptions and expectations regarding the quality of a service. Respondents are asked to rate their level of agreement or disagreement with the given statements. Consumer's perceptions are based on the actual service, they receive while consumer's expectations are based on past experiences and information received. The statements represent the determinants or dimensions of service quality.

The five dimensions of service quality measured by the SERVQUAL Instrument. These five dimensions are:

1. Tangibility
2. Reliability
3. Responsiveness
4. Assurance and
5. Empathy.

The five popular dimensions of service quality viz., Reliability, Responsiveness, Assurance, Empathy and Tangibles are considered to be the drivers of service quality. These dimensions represent how consumers organize information about service quality in their minds. This section is an attempt to analyze how domestic air passengers give order of preference among the five dimensions of service quality in airline service. The data collected is through likert scale on five point, where 1 indicates strongly agree, 2 indicates agree, 3 indicates neither agree nor disagree, 4 indicates disagree and 5 indicates strongly disagree. Further, the analysis of data through hypothesis testing is done using two-way ANOVA as the scale used is interval scale.

Reliability is the prime factor determining service quality. Offering the service timely is the most crucial factor. In these fast-changing times, punctuality is not just a virtue but a specialized skill that every focused executive is supposed to possess. Similarly, the air travelers venerate the air carriers who value passengers' time by taking them to their destined places by the scheduled time, thereby honoring their commitments and engagement in life. Careful personal attention to pre-flight procedures is the mark of an airline which will be repaid not only in safety, but in lower airplane maintenance costs. In this regard, the approach should be the external visual inspection starting with looking for hazardous obstructions in the parking area, and for dripping oil and fuel leaks under the airplane. Maintaining error free records is also important as it adds value to the reliability factor.

Responsiveness service quality has three aspects each with four/five sub-aspects such as: (a) Handling of delayed flights, which includes announcing delay, giving delay information to the passengers through message or phone call, arranging accommodation or refreshments, providing transportation facilities etc., (b) Check in or Baggage handling services, which includes waiting time for baggage, accuracy and promptness in baggage delivery, policies towards over weight baggage, dealing with missing baggage, compensating the baggage loss etc., (c) Handling Passengers, which includes willingness to help, complaint resolving speed and accuracy, quality of reservation services etc.,

The next attribute is of service quality if Assurance, which includes: Back office operations like online seat booking, customer care availability round the clock, updating of airline website, cancellation methods. The crew friendliness, language or vernacular used for communication, knowledge level of the staff to deal with passenger queries is important attributes of service quality.

Empathy, deals with the compassionate attribute of service quality. Apart from meeting the routinely predictable needs of the children, women, and the physically challenged, the airlines should put into effect enough judgment to see to it that the complex medical, geriatric, and psychosocial requirements of special category of customers are met with professional elegance. For the family on the wings, aside from providing discount to infants (less than two years of age), airlines should provide facilities for the young ones such as bassinets on board, Child safety seats, strollers and buggies etc., Conventionally considered vulnerable by the society, the requirements of the children, the women, and the differently-abled need to be attended to carefully for they represent a different lot. Children's comfort while in air need to the utmost priority for their parents/guardians rest not till their (i.e. children's) wellbeing is assured. Women, specifically with children have an altogether varied needs compared with the general travelling public. Finally, the constraints of the physically challenged make them stand out from as basic a necessity a seating. Although the governments across the globe have come across with various mandatory rules with regard to the safety, security, and welfare of such people, the airline companies can go overboard and do their best to meet these requirements.

Tangibility deals with visible attributes of service quality. It includes, availability of news paper, magazines, TV screen, radio facility, video games, food and beverages provided to the passengers etc., visible aesthetic aspects of the physical nature which have everything to do with enhancing the beauty and magnificence, thereby contributing to the exquisiteness of the airline service provider. It is not just the service of flying from point A to point B that counts, but the very statement of the flying experience through ostentatious looks and a feeling of grandiose leaves the loyal customers as well as the prospective passengers with an admiration that needs to be encased appropriately by the service provider. Therefore, features like leg room space or seat comfort goes a long way in enhancing customer's satisfaction.

Measuring Scales:

Multiple-item scales are deemed appropriate to measure consumer perceptions towards the airline service quality, as it is frequently used in marketing research to measure attitudes. The use of a multi-item scale would ensure that the overall score, which is a composite of several observed scores, is a reliable reflection of the underlying true scores. Three types of measurement scales are used in this research: nominal, ordinal and interval. Nominal scales are used for identification purposes because they have no numeric value. On the other hand, ordinal scales are used to rank and interval scales are used to measure the subjective characteristics of respondents, about their expectations and perceptions in relation to service quality in airlines. This scale is used due to its strength in arranging the objects in a specified order as well as being able to measure the distance between the differences in response ratings.

Prior to carrying out further analysis, the multi-item scales developed for the study has been evaluated for their reliability, uni-dimensionality and validity.

2.   REVIEW OF LITERATURE

ShoaibFarooq, Muhammad & Salam, Maimoona& Alain, Fayolle&Jaafar, Norizan&Ayupp, Kartinah. (2018): Findings show that airlines should concentrate on all dimensions of service quality, with a special emphasis on staff services and image to enhance customer satisfaction, and studies found that all five dimensions of the AIRQUAL scale, i.e. airline tangibles; terminal tangibles; staff services; empathy and image, have a positive, direct and meaningful effect on customer satisfaction.

SteliosTsafarakis, TheodosiosKokotas, Angelos Pantouvakis (2017): In this research paper, the author indicated that measuring customer satisfaction is a crucial element for modern companies as it can contribute significantly to an ongoing effort to enhance service quality and show how MUSA, a multi-criteria satisfaction measurement tool, can be used to assess passenger satisfaction from a wide range of service dimensions and to indicate those dimensions.

S. Suresh, T. G. Balachandra and S. Sendilvelan (2016): The main objective of this study is to examine the relationship between the class of service of air passengers and their perception of the quality of service and also the intent of the trip and satisfaction, and found that most respondents perceived responsiveness, followed by tangibility, empathy, assurance and reliability, to be the most relevant. Conversely, the degree of customer satisfaction is more observable, accompanied by reactivity, efficiency, empathy and assurance.

Etemad-Sajadi, Reza & Way, Sean &Bohrer, Laura (2016): In the current research, the author focuses on demonstrating the uniqueness of two dimensions of the quality of airline service and showing their separate (distinct) impact on airline passenger satisfaction and loyalty & the study presents empirical evidence supporting the reliability, convergent validity, discriminate validity and criterion-related validity of our airline passenger measurements per study.

Jiang, Hongwei& Zhang, Yahua, (2016): Through this research review, the author pointed out that when researching the determinants of customer satisfaction and customer loyalty, it is important to draw distinctions between leisure and business travelers and found that ticket pricing had a positive and significant effect on the overall satisfaction of passengers and in turn increased customer loyalty among leisure travelers, but had no impact on the satisfaction and loyalty of business passengers.

Faizan Ali, BiditLalDey, RaffaeleFilieri, (2015): The results of the study reveals that In-flight service by in-flight attendants is the most direct airline service to customers, since travelers prefer to judge airlines based on their degree of satisfaction with the in-flight service and one of the most important success factors for airline companies is enhancing the quality of in-flight service.

Za'faran Hassan & K.K Ramachandran (2013): "Managing Market Competitive Strategy Successfully: An Empirical Testing of Successful Generic Strategy Implementation Leading to Product Quality and Customer Satisfaction", this study represents a small section of a larger research sponsored by National University of Malaysia (UKM). The sampling frame of this study constitutes public listed manufacturing companies in Malaysia. The respondent companies were chosen based on a stratified random sampling. Using well-stratified process, the element of diversities that may exist among industries would be captured. The sample size represents about 25% of the total sampling frame from 51 consumer product companies and 76 industrial product companies.

Archana & Dr. M V Sudha (2012): The results of the study show that these three dimensions are positively linked to perceive service quality in international air travel and of these dimensions, Cuisines offered, seat comfort protection are the most significant dimension in in-flight service quality. In flight digital service quality and online ticket booking in back-office operations, personal entertainment is the predictor of passenger satisfaction with various airline companies based on the services offered.

Tiernan, S., Rhoades, D.L., and Waguespack Jr, B. (2008): From this analysis, the author of the study found that the level of satisfaction with the overall quality of airlines and selected attributes decreases as more passengers travel and the level of value attributed to airline facilities increases with flight frequency. It was also stated that airline quality perceptions could vary between different nationalities and different socio-economic classes, and there could also be variations between short- and long-haul flights, as well as domestic and international services.

Cronin, J.J., and Taylor, S.A. (1994): The author of this research paper indicated that a useful starting point would be to limit the domain of service quality to long-term attitudes and that of customer satisfaction to transaction-specific decisions, consistent with what is currently understood, and to suggest that such a restriction could enhance our understanding of the realms of service quality and consumer satisfaction.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY
3.1 Objectives of the study
1. To study the customer satisfaction of airline Industry
2. To study the service quality dimensions of Indian domestic airline industry
3. To suggest strategies to improve service quality in airline industry

3.2 Research design
Descriptive research design is selected for the study and the primary data was collected by using convenience sampling method. 600 questionnaires were distributed to the Indian domestic airline passengers and received 578 filled questionnaires. Secondary data collected from research article, international and national journals, white papers, news paper articles and internet sources. The collected data was analyzed using ANOVA-1 "f" test and the outcome of the results were discussed the data analysis chapter.

4. DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS
All five factors constitute the service quality dimensions. Out of this, a hypothesis has been framed to test the tangibility factor and its role on passenger perception. The framed hypothesis is as follows:

> **Null Hypothesis (H_0):** There exists no significant difference in passengers' perception of tangibles of different domestic airline companies in India.
> **Alternative Hypothesis (H_1):** There exists a significant difference in passengers' perception of tangibles of different domestic airline companies in India.

The estimated Marginal Means of Domestic Airlines

Flights	Mean	Std. Error	95% confidence Interval	
			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Indigo	46.260	0.379	44.609	45.691
Spice Jet	44.085	0.378	42.234	43.276
Jet Airways	39.264	0.378	38.526	41.003
Air India	32.638	0.378	31.842	33.372
Go Air	41.351	0.378	42.325	43.965

Source: Primary Data

Tests of Between- Subjects Effects

Source	Type 1 Sum of Square	Degree of freedom	Mean Square	F Value	Sig
A. P	1314.594	4	328.6485	10.534	0.00
N.F	17835.364	4	4458.841	216.362	0.00
A.P * N.F	1108.581	16	69.286	3.0458	0.00
Errors	12602.488	554	22.748		
Total	32861.027	578			

R squared = 0.501, adjusted R squared = 0.489

Inference: Based on the highest Mean Score (46.260), it is found that IndiGo flights are ahead of other flight service providers in terms of service quality attribute of tangibles. This Mean Score variation is statistically significant in the two-way ANOVA interaction model where the F value is found significant at 5% level of significance (F values 216.362 and 10.534 with P=0.000 < 0.05).The computed F statistic equals 216.362 and the table value of F with 4 degrees of freedom in the numerator and 578 degrees of freedom in the denominator is given by 2.381. [$F(4, 578) = 216.362$ (2.381), $p < 0.05$] As the computed F statistic is greater than the table F value, the null hypothesis is rejected with the conclusion that there is a statistically significant difference (p value 0.000 is less than $\alpha = 0.05$) in the perception of passengers towards the tangibles of different airline companies in India. Therefore, H_0 is rejected and H_1 is accepted.

5. CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

5.1 Conclusion

Overall, a number of studies have been carried out to research the dimension of service quality and its effect on customer satisfaction, especially in the service sector, including in the airline industry, and it is proof that the airline industry has recognized that the quality of service is critical in order to achieve a real and sustainable competitive advantage. Tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy (Parasuraman et al- 1991) are the five dimensions of service quality measured by the SERVQUAL Instrument discussed in this research paper and found that Based on the highest Mean Score (46.260), it is found that Indigo flights are ahead of other flight service providers in terms of service quality attribute of tangibles and the items chosen from these dimensions match well together and can be used to calculate airline passengers' impressions of service quality. Regarding its effect on satisfaction, for airline passengers, the impact of quality of services can be measured by the successful customer service relationship in many of the service levels Measurements or goods. In particular, human resources or workers are an integral source of satisfaction because they are responsible for the performance of the most significant dimension of empathy and responsiveness in service quality and because they are the main point of contact that the passenger has with the organisation and are an important part of service creation and delivery. Finally, five dimensions that were partly agreed and used as customer satisfaction variables and service characteristics around the world, depending on different social, economic and cultural factors, were discussed above.

5.2 Suggestion

The airlines have increased their revenues in recent years though they have struggled to transfer any of those profits and associated savings on to the customer. Passengers in first and business class are pampered while those in the back of the plane get stiff, paying more and more fees for a mediocre, if not, poor travel experience. All clients across the board, where they feel respected and relevant, are still searching for that smooth and easy travel experience.

- High quality aircraft interior items in airplanes can really take airline to the next level. Customers like high-tech technology and advanced aircraft display systems would allow them to use their technical devices and enjoy all the quality visuals associated with interior aircraft products and systems for flight entertainment.
- Behavioral service matters a lot in the airline industry, staffing friendly professionals who appreciate the value of high quality customer service maintain high quality service.
- Tracking passengers who recently flew on the airline is an excellent way to enhance service efficiency. To strengthen it, gather feedback on their experience & what they disliked about the flight or what they feel can be done.
- Airlines may have surveys on the websites they use for bookings, get the seats they want, fly for personal or business purposes, choose a business or economic class, etc. and get their input on booking experience. This will give airlines an insight into their customers' travel habits, whether they prefer discount sites or use the company's booking website, and during their waiting period, customers are more likely to take surveys than after the flight.
- The secret to success in the airline industry is to provide more flight schedules, conduct a market feasibility study on the provision of the low-cost airline, provide more protection and comfortable systems/facilities and provide self-check-in or online check-in services
- Stakeholders should behave and function as one in aviation and should be mindful of the different stakeholders involved in coordinating the travel experience of a passenger, such as airlines, airports, handlers, caterers, police, customs, immigration, retailers, etc.
- In the aviation sector, metrics around safety and operational excellence have a heavy weight (as they should). Aviation companies must not restrict themselves to logistics or engineering companies, but turn the provision of services as hospitality by concentrating on welcoming, entertaining and assisting passengers. You are a supplier of experience, not merely a mode of transport.
- Create experiences that take individual customer needs into account and work with your partners to execute them effectively, so that you can be competitive and reap your customers' lifetime value.
- Create experiences that take individual customer needs into account and work with your partners to execute them effectively, so that you can be competitive and reap your customers' lifetime value.

REFERENCE:
1. Chetanya Singh (2019): Factors Affecting the Sales of Airlines in India with Special Reference to Air India International Journal of Engineering and Advanced Technology (IJEAT) ISSN: 2249 – 8958, Volume-9 Issue-2, December, 2019
2. ShoaibFarooq, Muhammad & Salam, Maimoona& Alain, Fayolle&Jaafar, Norizan&Ayupp, Kartinah. (2018): Impact of Service Quality on Customer Satisfaction in Malaysia Airlines: A PLS-SEM Approach, Journal of Air Transport Management. 67. 169-180.
3. Anuradha Yadav (2017): Emerging Scenario of Indian Aviation Sector Facing Issues and Challenges in Economy, International Journal Recent Scientific Research. 8(6), pp. 17527-17531. DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.24327/ijrsr.2017.0806.0372
4. SteliosTsafarakis, TheodosiosKokotas, Angelos Pantouvakis (2017): A multiple criteria approach for airline passenger satisfaction measurement and service quality improvement", Journal of Air Transport Management, Volume 68, 2018, Pages 61-75.
5. Dr. A Kumudha and Dr. Amalendu Bhuni (2016): Customer relationship management and marketing practices in airlines industry- An empirical study, International Journal of Applied Research 2016; 2(11): 39-43
6. S. Suresh, T. G. Balachandra and S. Sendilvelan (2016): Empirical Investigation of Airline Service Quality and Passenger Satisfaction in India, International Journal of Performability Engineering Vol. 13, No. 2, March 2017, pp. 109-118
7. Alok Kumar Singh (2016): Competitive service quality benchmarking in airline industry using AHP, Bench marking: An International Journal, Vol. 23
8. Etemad-Sajadi, Reza & Way, Sean &Bohrer, Laura (2016): Airline passenger loyalty: The distinct effects of airline passenger perceived pre-flight and in-flight service quality, Cornell Hospitality Quarterly. 57. 219-225.
9. Jiang, Hongwei& Zhang, Yahua, (2016): An investigation of service quality, customer satisfaction and loyalty in China's airline market. Journal of Air Transport Management, Elsevier, vol. 57(C), pages 80-88.

10. Mohamed, M. S., Rani, A. (2016): Modeling Customer Satisfaction Using Structural Equation Modeling Based On Service Quality Measurement In Airline Industry. International Journal Of Management (IJM) Volume 7, Issue 6, September–October 2016, Pp.06–14

11. Faizan Ali, BiditLalDey, RaffaeleFilieri, (2015): An assessment of service quality and resulting customer satisfaction in Pakistan International Airlines: Findings from foreigners and overseas Pakistani customers. International Journal of Quality & Reliability Management, Vol. 32 Issue: 5, pp.486-50

12. Atul Arun Pathak, (2015): Survival lessons from a dying Kingfisher: What not to do in the airlines industry in India. Strategic Direction, Vol. 31 Issue: 8, pp.13-16.

13. Paparoidamis, Nicholas &Cáceres, Ruben & Ford, John (2015): Service Quality, Customer Satisfaction, Value and Loyalty An Empirical Investigation In A Service Failure Context.

14. Hussain, Rahim & Al-Nasser, Amjad& K. Hussain, Yomna (2014): Service quality and customer satisfaction of a UAE-based airline: An empirical investigation, Journal of Air Transport Management.

15. Suki, N.M. (2014): Passenger satisfaction with airline service quality in Malaysia: A structural equation modeling approach. Research in Transportation Business & Management, 10(4), 26-32.

16. Akhil Mohan Pillai (2014): A secondary research study on Indian Airline Industry 2013-14, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/263651757

17. Adil, M. (2013): Efficacy of SERVPERF in measuring perceived service quality at rural retail banks: Empirical evidences from India, International Journal of Business Insights and Transformation, Vol. 6, No. 1, pp. 52-63

18. Khan, M. N., & Adil, M. (2013): Data analysis techniques in service quality literature: Essentials and advances, Serbian Journal of Management.

19. HM Yayla-Kullu, P Tansitpong (2013): A Critical Evaluation of US Airlines' Service Quality Performance: Lower Costs vs. Satisfied Customers. Journal of Management and Strategy

20. Arjun& Deshpande, Aashish&Srivastava, Namita.(2013): Service Quality, Customer (Patient) Satisfaction and Behavioural Intention in Health Care Services: Exploring the Indian Perspective.Journal of Health Management. 15. 29-44.

21. Curry, Neil &Gao, Yuhui. (2012): Low-Cost Airlines — A New Customer Relationship? An Analysis of Service Quality, Service Satisfaction, and Customer Loyalty in a Low-Cost Setting, Services Marketing Quarterly. 33. 104-118

22. Archana & Dr. M V Sudha (2012): A study on service quality and passenger satisfaction on Indian airlines, Research gate publications

23. K. K. Ramachandran., D. Padmanaban., K. K. Karthick (2012): A Study on the Customer Perception, Preference and Satisfaction towards Online Traveling, European Journal of Social Science, Vol 33, No.1, PP. 163-183.

24. Teresa Shuk-Ching Poon and Peter Waring (Feb 2010): The lowest of low carriers: The case of Air Asia. The International Journal of Human Resource Management-Vol. 21, No. 2 Pages 197–213

25. Vinh Sum Chau Yu-Ying Kao, (2009): Bridge over troubled water or long and winding road?". Managing Service Quality: An International Journal, Vol. 19, pp. 106 - 134

26. Tiernan, S., Rhoades, D.L., and Waguespack Jr, B. (2008): Airline Service Quality: Exploratory analysis of consumer perceptions and operational performance in the USA and EU, Managing Service Quality, 18 (3),212-224

27. Zeithaml, V.A., Bitner, M.J., Gremler, D.D. and Pandit, A. (2008): Service Marketing: Integrating Customer Focus across the Firm, 4th Edition. New Delhi: Tata McGrow-Hill.

28. Festus Olorunniwo, Maxwell K. Hsu, Godwin J. Udo, (2006): Service quality, customer satisfaction, and behavioral intentions in the service factory. Journal of Services Marketing, Vol. 20 Issue: 1, pp.59-72

29. Gursoy, D., Chen, M. and Kim, H.J. (2005): The US airlines relative positioning based on attributes of service quality, Tourism Management. 26, 1, pp.57-67

30. Rajat K. Baisya, R. Sarkar, (2004): Customer satisfaction in the service sector: a case study of the airline industry. Journal of Advances in Management Research, Vol. 1 Issue: 2, pp.73-79

31. Park, J.W., Robertson, R., Wu, C.L., (2004): The effect of airline service quality on passengers' behavioural intentions: a Korean case study. Journal of Air Transport Management 10, 435–439

32. Jain, S.K. and Gupta, G. (2004): Measuring Service Quality: SERVQUAL vs. SERVPERF Scales, VIKALPA, Volume 29, No 2, April - June 2004, pp 25-37

33. Fareena Sultan, Merlin C. Simpson, Jr, (2000): International service variants: airline passenger expectations and perceptions of service quality. Journal of Services Marketing, Vol. 14 Issue: 3, pp.188-216.

34. Zeithaml, V., Berry, L., &Parasuraman, A. (1996): The Behavioral Consequences of Service Quality. Journal of Marketing, 60(2), 31-46.

35. Cronin, J.J., and Taylor, S.A. (1994): SERVPERF versus SERVQUAL: Reconciling performance-based and perceptions-minus-expectations measurement of service quality. Journal of Marketing, 58(1), 125 - 131.

36. Rust, Zahorik&Keiningham, (1993): Customer Satisfaction, Customer Retention and Market Share. Journal of Retailing, 69 (Summer), 193–215.

37. Anderson, Eugene W., and Mary W. Sullivan (1993): The Antecedents and Consequences of Customer Satisfaction for Firms, Marketing Science, vol. 12, no. 2, 1993, pp. 125–143.

38. Bowen, B. D., Headley, D. E. &Luedtke, J. R. (1992): A Quantitative Methodology for Measuring Airline Quality, Journal of Aviation/Aerospace Education & Research, 2(2).

39. Parasuraman, A., Zeithaml, V.A., and Berry, L.L. (1988): SERVQUAL: A multiple-item scale for measuring customer perceptions of service quality. Journal of Retailing, 64 (1), 12 – 40

40. Nagasimha Kanagal: Role of Relationship Marketing in Competitive Marketing Strategy, Journal of Management and Marketing Research, Indian Institute of Management, Bangalore.