



# AN ANALYTICAL STUDY ON CUSTOMER PREFERENCE ON CHOOSING AIRLINES THROUGH BRAND INFLUENCE AND RESONANCE AT CHENNAI AIRPORT

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**Abstract:** The airline industry is one of the most revenue generated and fast-growing industry in the world. The quality of service plays a major role in the industry to remain for long run by attracting the passenger satisfaction. Many researchers are investigating the service quality of airliners in the world or a particular country and brought their views on the basis of service quality in the airliners. In this project, the detailed analytical study carried out on the basis of Brand influence and resonance of airliners in Chennai Airport. In Chennai Airport, for the services rendered the Airliners are either increased or decreased. The data collecting from the passengers are analyzed by analytical method and found the reason for not increasing the services by the airliners and effectiveness of passenger satisfaction involved in this.

**KEY WORDS:** Airline Industry, Analytical Method, Brand Influence, Brand Resonance, Chennai Airport, Passenger Satisfaction, Quality of Service, Services of Airliners.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Airline industry is the most reliable industry for growth and development. The connections made between the places have made more-comfortable and easy for the people to access in a shorter period of time. The passengers who are travelling for business purposes prefer this because they can save more time in travelling. The new Start-up of airlines made easier for the airlines to choose and travel. The airlines provide different classes of services so passengers can choose their class and according to their budget, purpose of travel, duration of travel, etc., *Thomas Bamert et. al., (2005)*, stated that costumer service is equally important in consumer industry and service industry. The passengers who are spending their money for business class seats expects a more royal service to be given. The airlines also focus on this, to compete their business and generate the revenue. But the promise rendered by the service provider to the passengers should be honest and fulfilment of passenger's expectation will give the negative effect in-case failed to provide such services. The customer feedback is important for the growth of the airline. For an airline every customer is important.

In aviation industry customer is not depended on airlines, the airlines are depended on Customers for they development and growth. The airlines shouldn't lose any of its customers they should always hold their customers with them. Today Indian aviation is dominated by Indigo airlines and it has 8 more competitors in the market. The airlines should vary from others and stand unique in some way to gain customers, to retain customers and to sustain in the market. *Nuriye Güreş, et. Al., (2011)*, they stated that "assurance" is the most important part of service quality for airlines operating in domestic sector. The airlines had to fulfil it 1<sup>st</sup> now-a-days to sustain.

In the early days there was only two airlines operating Air India and Indian airlines. after the deregulation new airlines like Jet Airways, Air Sahara, Indus, Kingfisher, deccan and indigo came. Most of the airlines didn't sustain due to many reasons. But the deregulation and new airlines have took the Indian aviation market to next level. The customers have now choice in choosing the airline. The fares are also different and service provided also differs.

The airline industry had a huge growth after the liberalization. This may help the industry to grow but there are few problems were continual causing trouble. Then, there were few queries about the flow of aviation growth in India. They needed to be addressed because there may be a lag in the growth. *Preethi Chamikutt et.al. (2011)* has told that brand experience review spreads widely and faster through web. The airline has to focus on their services, each and every mistake of the airline is noted. The problems of the airlines remain unknown.

Indian aviation industry has witnessed the transformation of aviation industry when the private players came into action. The full-service airline and low-cost carrier has significantly increased the passenger traffic in both domestic and international sector. The intensions of buying the air ticket of people may differ but one main reason was the low fares which was offered by the low-cost carriers.

The middle-class people had a chance of buying and travelling through air. The other important reason was growth in tourism, the inbound and outbound growth was increasing continuously the airlines were more benefited as travellers preferred air transport.

According to DGCA report as of 2019, the private players dominate the market by 87.6% and the remaining percentage is the share market of the Government owned airlines, i.e. Air India and Air India Express. Though the govt has less hand in the market it plays a major role in regulating the Indian aviation by providing new guide lines, standard operating procedures and in development.

The low-cost carriers have given a new shape to Indian aviation market. The transportation sector is very important for any industry. The airlines like Indigo and Spice Jet are the notable one's for LCC's in India. Now in India the LCC carrier Indigo is the market Leader. This study is to identify at what bases the customers prefer the airlines and to identify which is the most preferred airline in Chennai. The study also covers about some airlines which are operating in Chennai have no improvement in their Services. They have been continuing the same pattern of Services for the last few years. To understand to reason behind this and to correlate this, happened because of Chennai people preference or not.

## II. Review of Literature

Peter L. Ostrowski, et. al, (1993), study is about Customer loyalty and service quality in two commercial carriers. The research found that there is some relation between service quality and customer loyalty. This customer loyalty is about the retained customers. The results found that the service quality which was perceived was below potential level, the customer loyalty in airlines was also the same. David Gilbert, et. al, (2002) investigated that the service dimensions on airline passengers in Hong Kong. The authors compared the differences in passenger's expectations in terms of assurance, reliability, employees, facilities, flight patterns, and responsiveness'. The Data's were collected from passengers flying out from Hong Kong. This study clearly stated that the assurance is more important service dimension and they also given equal importance for safety. This study was conducted just prior to the biggest accident in aviation industry i.e. 9/11. This also states that Safety and Security is also a important dimension to be considered.

Bhagyalakshmi Venkatesh, et. al, (2006), explained about the service quality provided by the major carriers in India. The service and pricing are the most important variables which decide the brand equity in airline. There are three parts of flights, pre-flight, in-flight, and post-flight. The experience in these three parts are different. This survey was conducted to find perceived quality of frequent fliers in these four airlines. These brands were positioned in perceptual space, and the airlines emerged clear differences, the result says that two airlines service are similar and other two varies in different aspects and hence the service provided is worth.

Silke J. Forbes (2008), studied that the customer has played a very important role and the author has measured the service quality through this. He found that negative feedback or customer complaints helps to identify that the service quality has fulfilled the expectation of the customer or not. It also guides to identify and improve the satisfaction level. These Data was collected from Department of Transportation in airline industry. Some of the important or major complaints registered is due to flight delays, baggage lost, flight cancellations. Therefore, it is indispensable to study all the negative aspects of customer complaints in airline industry while measuring service quality.

Shobhit Agarwal et. al, (2010), compared in their study that the customer satisfaction on service quality as perceived by passengers on 6 domestic airlines they are Indigo, Air India, Jet Airways, Kingfisher, Go Air and Spicejet. These data were collected through different variables such as website/call-centre, in-flight experience, hassle free check-in, baggage handling, regular announcements during flight delay and value for money. The travellers who had undergone the experience of travelling the data is collected from them. 150 Questionnaire were collected and the author has used convenient sampling method. The result showed that there are six significant difference among these 6 variables. This study stated that this will help the marketers' and airlines to enhance the service quality and customer satisfaction. Therefore, it is indispensable to take the variables to measure the satisfaction level of customers in domestic market of Tamil Nadu in future.

R. Archana et. al, (2012), has examined the factors which influenced the service quality on passengers' satisfaction in airline industry. This also examined the positive influence in service quality and to identify the least and most important factors or impact in service quality. The data were based on 270 respondents. This study has analysed all four classes of travel, they are: economy, premium economy, business and first-class. According to the study there were different types of service provided in all four classes. These dimensions have included in-flight service, back-office operations and in-flight digital. Personal entertainment had played an important dimension in in-flight service. in-back office operations had one main role it is the online ticket booking. In the result, the author has delivered that the passenger satisfaction is based on service delivered to them. In future, it is to be focused on influencing factors that affect service quality in domestic sector.

K. Krishnakumar and Baby, et. al, (2012), The author has studied the customer preference in domestic airlines. This also depends on the purchase decision. In this research, it was identified that there are 8 factors which influenced the preference and purchase decision. The data was collected in a questionnaire type and they use convenient sampling to analyse. The most influencing factor that had a major role is departure and arrival, the ticketing facilities also gave its part in influencing. In result, the author has suggested the airlines to use these factors to retain its customers.

N. Nirmla Devi, et. al, (2012), This study is to focuses to explore the Insights and perception of customers towards airline industry and to find out which airline hold more passengers through brand resonance in India. Data's was collected from passengers who were waiting for their flight and a questionnaire was circulated. In the result Jet Airways was in the 1<sup>st</sup> place with more passengers. Constant look in market, marketing and communicating brand name to customers help to create positive value towards it and it is the minds of peoples.

P. Baby, et. al, (2012), In this study the author says that satisfaction is the ultimate level which shows the quality of services. As this study is about the airlines the author has added 3 main factors to the existing fundamental aspect of service quality. The Data's were collected from 520 respondents' in that 120 was rejected remaining 400 were taken into consideration an got the result has there are more elements judged by the passenger to choose an airline. Those elements are Pre-flight, In-flight & Post-flight services, crew service, comfort, cleanliness. The existence of passengers denotes the service quality of airline.

G. Rajesh, et. al, (2017), focus on two independent variables and two dependent variables which was required to sustain in the market. This research is about the 9 airlines operating in Chennai. The Data's were collected from 1060 passengers flying in and out Chennai. The Data's were subjected to statistical tools and got significant results. The research says that if airline industry focus on Airline service marketing mix (ASMM) Place and Airline Service Quality (ASQ) Assurance it will help the airlines to survive in Chennai.

### III. Objectives of the study

- To study on consumer preference on choosing airlines through brand influence and resonance with respective loss overcoming increased operations at Chennai airport.
- To provide suggestions to improve the intension of customers choosing airlines based on their preference.
- To Study the factors involving Brand resonance towards customers.
- To identify the most preferred airline among customers with respective LCC or FSA in Chennai Airport
- To establish a relationship between service quality of airlines and customer demographic factors.

### IV. Hypothesis of the Study

#### Brand Influence

**H<sub>0</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between customer preference on airlines and brand influence

**H<sub>1</sub>:** There is significant relationship between customer preference on airlines and brand influence

#### Brand Resonance

**H<sub>0</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between customer preference on airlines and brand resonance

**H<sub>1</sub>:** There is significant relationship between customer preference on airlines and brand resonance

#### Service Quality

**H<sub>0</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between customer preference on airlines and brand Service Quality

**H<sub>1</sub>:** There is significant relationship between customer preference on airlines and brand Service Quality

### V. Research Methodology

In this study we have used Google forms to collect answers from the passengers through online and a total of 110 sample data's have been collected.

### VI. Analysis and Interpretation

#### 6.1 Correlation: Customer Preference vs Brand Influence

##### 6.1.1 Null Hypothesis

**H<sub>0</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between customer preference and brand influence.

##### 6.1.2 Alternate Hypothesis

**H<sub>1</sub>:** There is significant relationship between customer preference and brand influence.

**Table:1. Source Data Collected from the Respondents**

<b>Customer Preference (x)</b>	13	22	10	32	33
<b>Brand Influence (y)</b>	4	2	13	42	49

Table:2. Correlation: Customer Preference vs Brand Influence

X	y	X	Y	XY	X <sup>2</sup>	Y <sup>2</sup>
13	4	9	-18	-54	81	324
22	2	0	-20	0	0	400
10	13	-12	-9	108	144	81
32	42	10	20	200	100	400
33	49	11	27	297	121	729
<b>Total</b>				<b>551</b>	<b>446</b>	<b>1934</b>

$$r = \frac{\Sigma XY}{\sqrt{x^2+y^2}} = 0.593$$

The value lies between -1 to 1 so the null hypothesis is rejected and it is clear that there is significant correlation between customer preference and brand influence.

## 6.2 Correlation: Customer Preference vs Service Quality

### 6.2.1 Null Hypothesis

**H<sub>0</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between customer preference and service quality.

### 6.2.2 Alternate Hypothesis

**H<sub>1</sub>:** There is significant relationship between customer preference and service quality.

Table:3. Source Data Collected from the Respondents Regarding Service Quality

Customer Preference (x)	11	9	17	35	38
Service Quality (y)	2	6	32	25	45

Table:4. Correlation: Customer Preference vs Service Quality

X	Y	X	Y	XY	X <sup>2</sup>	Y <sup>2</sup>
11	2	-11	-20	220	121	400
9	6	-13	-16	208	169	256
17	32	-5	10	-50	25	100
35	25	13	3	39	169	9
38	45	16	23	368	256	529
<b>Total</b>				<b>785</b>	<b>740</b>	<b>1294</b>

$$r = \frac{\Sigma XY}{\sqrt{x^2+y^2}} = 0.802$$



The value lies between -1 to 1 so the null hypothesis is rejected and it is clear that there is significant correlation between customer preference and service quality.

### 6.3 Chi – Square: Customer Preference vs Brand Resonance

#### 6.3.1 Null Hypothesis

**H<sub>0</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between customer preference and brand resonance.

#### 6.3.2 Alternate Hypothesis

**H<sub>1</sub>:** There is significant relationship between customer preference and brand resonance.

**Table: 5 Source Data Collected from the Respondents Regarding Service Quality**

<b>Customer Preference (x)</b>	25	21	222	31	11	<b>110</b>
<b>Brand Resonance (y)</b>	6	4	34	38	28	<b>110</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>220</b>

**Table:6. Chi – Square: Customer Preference vs Brand Resonance**

<b>O</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>o-e</b>	<b>(o-e)<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>(o-e)<sup>2</sup>/e</b>
25	15.5	9.5	90.25	5.83
21	12.5	8.5	72.25	5.78
22	28	-6	36	1.29
31	34.5	-3.5	12.25	0.36
11	19.5	-8.5	72.25	3.71
6	15.5	-9.5	90.25	5.83
4	12.5	-8.5	72.25	5.78
34	28	6	36	1.29
38	34.5	3.5	12.25	0.36
28	19.5	8.5	72.25	3.71
<b>Total</b>				<b>33.94</b>

**Table 7. Statistical Data's of Chi – Square**

<b>Statistics</b>	<b>Dof</b>	<b>Significance level</b>	<b>Tabulated Value</b>	<b>Calculated Value</b>
	<b>4</b>	<b>.05%</b>	<b>9.49</b>	<b>33.94</b>

The value is 9.49 and the tabulated value at the .05% significance level is 33.94. The calculated value is less than the calculated value so the null hypothesis is rejected. There is perfect relationship between brand resonance and customer preference. Brand resonance plays an important role in choosing the airlines.

## 6.4 ANOVA: Age vs Overall experience with the airline satisfaction

### 6.4.1 Null Hypothesis

**H<sub>0</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between age and overall experience with airline satisfaction.

### 6.4.2 Alternate Hypothesis

**H<sub>1</sub>:** There is significant relationship between age and overall experience with airline satisfaction..

**Table 8. ANOVA: Age vs Overall experience with the airline satisfaction**

	1	2	3	4	5
20 – 25	0	2	11	20	21
26 – 35	0	2	2	19	24
36 – 45	0	0	1	4	1
46 – 55	0	0	0	1	2
56 – 65	0	0	0	0	0
Above 66	0	0	0	0	0

**Table 9. Statistical Data's for ANOVA**

Sources of variation	Sum of Squares	Dof	Mean Sum of Squares	Variance ratio
Between columns	338.7	4	84.675	3.317
Between rows	630.6	5	126.06	4.939
Reciprocal error	561.3	22	25.52	-

Tabulated value at .05% significance level

$$\text{Dof (4)} = 2.87$$

$$\text{Dof (5)} = 2.71$$

From the above table it is clear that the calculated value is greater than the tabulated value so the null hypothesis is rejected. Hence there is significant relationship between age and overall experience with airline satisfaction.

### 6.5 Weighted Average: Factors affecting service quality

Table 10. Weighted Average: Factors affecting service quality

Service Quality	1	2	3	4	5
Offers high service quality (Y1)	2	7	17	39	45
Services are offering competitive ticket fare (Y2)	4	4	21	45	36
Fast check-in for passengers (Y3)	0	4	27	33	46
The airline has all new airplanes & up-to date technology (Y4)	1	2	33	35	39
I receive promote attention from the staff members (Y5)	4	8	32	29	37

$$\text{Weighted Average} = \frac{W_1X_1 + W_2X_2 + W_3X_3 + W_4X_4 + \dots + W_nX_n}{W_1 + W_2 + W_3 + \dots + W_n}$$

$$\text{Weighted Average value } Y_1 = 14.13$$

$$\text{Weighted Average value } Y_2 = 15$$

$$\text{Weighted Average value } Y_3 = 13.9$$

$$\text{Weighted Average value } Y_4 = 14.73$$

$$\text{Weighted Average value } Y_5 = 16.3$$

From this analysis we can see that attention from the staff members ranked 1<sup>st</sup>, services are offering competitive ticket fare ranked 2<sup>nd</sup>, the airline has all new airplanes & up-to date technology ranked 3<sup>rd</sup>, offers high service quality ranked 4<sup>th</sup> and fast check-in for passengers ranked 5<sup>th</sup>. It is clear that customer service is more important to retain a customer.

## VII. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

From the analysis and interpretation, it is found that various factors affecting the preference of airlines. In this researcher has attempted to study the perceptions of service quality in all the 9 domestic airlines operating in Chennai. This research also tried to relate the demographic factors and service quality. The airlines has to maintain the level of services in all the parts, because there are many procedures and steps involved like ticket reservation, check-in process, lounge, personal assistances, on-board services, special service requirements, baggage claiming, check out process etc... the airline has to maintain a good relationship with the passengers by giving a good experience while travelling with them. The expectations of passengers may vary but the airline has to consider all the perspectives and provide the service. in this study it is identified that cabin-crew assistance, booking convince and check-in issues are the major drawbacks, the airline has to resolve it. In India there are 6 LCC and 2 FSA carriers, and in Chennai LCC carriers plays a major role because they provide more operations to destinations and frequencies are also high. IndiGo alone operates more than 120 scheduled operations in Chennai.

The other airlines have less operations and few operate to 1 or 2 destinations. The brand resonance of airlines among people is moderately high in few airlines. i.e. SpiceJet, Air India and IndiGo. The SpiceJet holds maximum people because of these categories - offers high quality service on-board, the performance of scheduled flight shows on time, the airline provides their service at the time they promise, convenient vehicle available for passenger to drop and pick-up from aircraft. In these factors SpiceJet tops in the minds of people and there are few factors where SpiceJet lacks and IndiGo tops, they are offers more scheduled operations and provide on-time flight services, services are offering competitive ticket fare, provides a good service for the fare charged, fast check-in for passengers and online booking easiness and promotions of this airline are always attractive. There is also one factor where Air India tops and these two airlines lacks they are the airline has all new airplane and up-to date technology. These three airlines are more popular among the customers and people prefer and suggest others to travel. The remaining airlines can also improve and attract the passengers by giving concessional air fare, timings, special assistance, arriving of flights on-time and better inflight services. These factors are obtained from this study, people tend to change the airline due to these factors. And also the satisfaction level of passengers for the airlines are moderately satisfied.

The airlines have to focus on the overall services provided by them and improve their satisfaction level. Some airlines have only few aircrafts in their fleet so the chances of operating more number of flights to more destinations is impossible. In this study it is also found that brand influence, resonance plays an important role in choosing the airline. It shows that all the people requests high level of

services, making a customer and make them loyal passengers with these marketing strategies will help to sustain the brand in the market.

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