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The impact of service quality on the consumer satisfaction and loyalty: A case study of Air Asia Airline Cambodia

Tech You Ear^{1*}, Suwat Vongsinsirikul², Sasithorn Suwandee² and Pavadee Surakomol²

¹ Master of Business Administration, Kasem Bundit University, Thailand

² Graduate School, Kasem Bundit University, Thailand

*Corresponding author, e-mail: eartechyou@qq.com

Abstract

This paper aims to investigate the impact quality service of Air Asia Airline Company in Cambodia. This study employs primary data through conducting survey with 110 passengers and customers, who experienced in taking Air Asia Airline. The service quality is broken down into 6 categories namely, online services, servicing by flight attendants, food services, ground staff services, tangible feature and schedule of flight. By using regression analysis, the result reveals that only food services and servicing by flight attendants positively impact on consumer satisfaction. Tangible feature, servicing by flight attendants, online services and food services are statistically significant with customer loyalty. Last but not least, customer satisfaction reveals to have positive relationship with customer loyalty. This finding is an essential policy implication for Air Asia Company to consider and reaffirm the impacted variables in order to serve their customer satisfaction and make more profit by attracting more customers.

Keyword: Impact Service Quality, Consumer Satisfaction, Consumer Loyalty, Cambodia

INTRODUCTION

Air Asia Airline is one of the largest Airlines in Cambodia. A lot of passengers access their travelling as well as business trip through this company. Precisely, the number of passengers carried in 2016 reached to 56,594,451 people as an increased by 12% from 2015 as 50,682,359 people. Through this increasing, it realistically illustrates the great achievement of Air Asia Company in increasing the passengers and gaining more profit at the end. With this great achievement Air Asia Company explore the significant service factor which could impact on the consumer satisfaction in order to ensure the sustainable profit by maintaining and increasing the customers.

It has been increasing on the research into airline service quality since its relationship with passenger satisfaction and profitability has been established (Shanka, 2012). Much of the literature suggests that airline passengers perceive service quality as multi-dimensional construct, which is in accordance with the conception of service quality proposed by Parasuaman et al., (1988) in their well-known service quality measuring instrument called service quality (Saha and Theingi, 2009).

In the recent study on service quality, the customers are the ones who judge the quality of service and assess service quality by comparing what they are expected with what they perceive to receive. Instead of money, the customers rely on what they have spent to judge the quality of service process delivered by the firm (Yunus, et al, 2013). Some studies claimed that it is commonly agreed that service quality is the outcome of evaluations made by the customers (Zeithaml et al., 1990).

In this study, we will focus on the impact of service quality on consumer satisfaction and consumer loyalty. Hence, we will generate three linear regressions, namely the impact of consumer satisfaction, consumer loyalty, and the impact of consumer satisfaction on consumer loyalty. In this



study we classify the service quality into 6 different categories, namely tangible figure, flight schedule, ground staff service, in-flight food service, online service and flight attendant service³.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Literature Review

Tangible Feature

Tangible can be referred to as the appearance of physical facilities, equipment, personnel and communication materials in the service process, such as cleanliness, appearance of staff and appropriate technical equipment for support and entrainment (Yunus, et al. 2013). Comfort is one of tangible feature, where GAP analysis found it as one of an importance factors (Lindstrom, 2009).

Flight Schedule

According to Parasuraman et al., (1985) defined reliability involves consistency of performance and dependability which it also means specifically to performing the service at the designated time. According to Lindstorm (2009) in the in-flight passenger perspective, dimension of reliability refers to on-time departure, consistent service delivery, doing things right the first time and consistent inspections and cabin announcement. Similarly, with regards to Chen and Chang (2005) study, on-time departure and the lucidness and punctuality in inspections and announcements have been considered important as compared to other dimensions (Yunus, et al., 2013).

Ground Staff Service

Based on Sun and Chiou (2011), the job scope of airlines ground staff (GS) can be divided into check-in, ticket information counters, flight control center, lost and found, customs immigration-quarantine, boarding gate, transit, weight balance and load control in the main working space of the GS in airports.

Food Service

Yunus et al., (2013) referred to Lovelock and Wirtz (2003) framework, food is the core attribute to determine quality. Again, Susskind and Chan (2000) claimed that food, physical environment and service are significant determinants that can boost the guest check averages apart from competitors in the consumer's estimation. The study by Jonh and Pine (2002) followed the the applicability of SERVQUAL in the food service has been demonstrated by Bojanic and Rosen (1994) and Lee and Hing (1995), while Stevens et al. (1995) have developed a slightly modified instrument that they call DINESERVE.

Online Service

Online services (OS) can be defined as services that are “delivered” over the internet. Important data and information may be accessed through online services. Even the Internet itself is considered by some to be an online service (Pietroluongo, 2012 cited in Yunus, 2013). While the importance of brand loyalty has been recognized in the marketing literature for at least three

³ See the measurement of each variable in appendix



decades (Howard and Sheth, 1969 cited in Luan and Lin, 2003), the conceptualization and empirical validation of a loyalty model for e-service context has not been addressed (Luan and Lin, 2003). With the rapid growth and proliferation of e-service, it seems, therefore, imperative to know what factors influence customer attitudinal commitment and repeat purchase behaviors towards e-service (Luan and Lin, 2003). Another finding on online shopping suggested that stated avoiding the crowd is the main reason online consumers prefer to shop on the web. The other reasons are lower prices, ease of comparing products and prices, travel inconvenience and wider selection of products (Zialani, et al., 2008).

Flight Attendant Service

According to (Wang, 2011), echoed that the appearance of the flight attendant easily influenced on the consumer satisfaction. Moreover, (Saha, 2009) also confirmed that consumer express their satisfaction on the flight attendants.

Data Collection

Primary data is the data that has been collected from first hand-experience. Hence, it is more reliable, authentic and objective in data collection (Gulnazahmad, 2011). In this study, the primary data will be collected through administering questionnaires from selected passengers or customers who recently experiencing in taking Air-Asia flight. 110 passengers and/or customers will be selected for self-administered questionnaire as these protocols are likely more convenient and time allowing. The format of questions will be asking by using 5-points Likert scale (5 = Highly satisfied, 4= Satisfied, 3=Somewhat Satisfied, 2 =Dissatisfied, and 1 =Highly Dissatisfied). The open questions will use to explore the view of customers' opinion, viewpoints and suggestions for improving the services etc. The dichotomous questions will also apply for deeply understanding the level of satisfaction, decisions and confirmation to the previous answers of the sequence.

The survey instruments will be designed in Khmer language. Questionnaire will focus on five sections: a). General information; b). demographic and socio-economics conditions; c). perceptions regarding service quality (as independents variables) and the measuring SQ indications will be included in questionnaire, d) factors affecting the determination on service quality, costumers' satisfaction and loyalty; e) improved management measures and suggestions.

Sampling design is ultimate for researchers to collect accurate information from the right people, right time and right location for research questions. The sampling frame is purposively determined as the passengers or customers will be selected and interview at Airport or workplace. The passenger experienced in purchasing Air Asian flight will be selected.

Sampling process comprises of four steps that define target passengers, determine sampling location and air Asia flight, determine sampling size and execute sampling process.

The Phnom Penh International Airport will be selected as the site for conducting interview and observation. The study will select 110 sample sizes at Phnom Penh International Airport (PPIA) from those Air Asia airline travelers when they are landing and departing at this airport. Only Cambodian nationality will be chosen for interview due to the framing of respondents and the scope of the study.

For this study, the research will apply non-probability sampling technique for selecting the sampling respondent. Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill (2009) urged that it is impossible for researchers to collect data from all travelers, thus non-probability technique is chosen in which the



respondents are selected from the population in some non-random manners. There are two stage sampling procedures to identify the respondents. Purposive sampling method is chosen whereby researcher has selected the respondents who are relevant and compatible to the purpose of study. The purpose of the study is targeting those passengers have taken/taking-up Air Asia flight from/to Cambodia.

Methodology

Inferential analysis is a group of statistical techniques and procedures used in confirmatory data to draw conclusions about a population from quantitative data collected from a sample (Collis & Hussey, 2003). SPSS version 17 was employed to conduct the following types of inferential analysis: 1. checking the multicollinearity problems among variables and 2. Multivariate Analysis and the multiple regression analysis will be used to analysis the relationship between service quality and level of customers' satisfaction and the association with customer loyalty and the regression between customer satisfaction and customer loyalty.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Before reaching the regression analysis, we access the multicollinearity check in order to check the correlation among independent variables.

Table 1. Multicollinearity check on customer satisfaction

Model	Coefficients	
	Collinearity Statistics	
	Tolerance	VIF
Tangible feature	.482	2.076
Food service	.383	2.608
Online service	.336	2.977
Schedule	.287	3.483
Ground staff services	.139	7.197
Servicing by Flight attendants	.166	6.039

Note: Dependent Variable: Customer satisfaction

From the multicollinearity check, it can be seen clearly that there is no multicollinearity since all variables display the variance inflation factors less than 10^4 .

⁴ Richard Williams, University of Norte Dame, VIF exceed the rule of thumb of 10 consider to have multicollinearity problem.

**Table 2.** Regression on customer satisfaction

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t-statistic	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	-.062	.234		-.266	.790
Tangible feature	.019	.087	.016	.222	.825
Schedule	.142	.101	.135	1.403	.164
Ground Staff Service	.211	.152	.191	1.386	.169
Service by flight attendant	.310	.131	.300	2.375	.019
Online service	.138	.096	.127	1.435	.154
Food service	.185	.085	.181	2.183	.031
Model Summary	R ² = 0.728		Adj R ² = 0.712	F test = 45.977***	

Note: Dependent Variable: Customer satisfaction

*** significant at 1%.

the stepwise linear regression, the results are shown in table 1:

F=45.977, $p < 0.01$, explain model of goodness of fit is good the results to be trusted. Servicing by Flight attendants and Food service reached the significant level ($p < 0.05$), Tangible feature, Schedule and Ground staff services and online service have not reached significant level ($p > 0.05$). In other words, these 4 variables have no impact on the consumer satisfaction. $adjR^2 = 0.712$, indicating that Servicing by Flight attendants and Food service can explain customer satisfaction 70.5% of variance. Among them, Servicing by Flight attendants and Food service to the customer satisfaction has a positive effect, among Servicing by Flight attendants is more prominent on customer satisfaction ($\beta = 0.300$) and Food service regresses on the consumer satisfaction with coefficient ($\beta = 0.181$).

Table 3. Multicollinearity check on customer loyalty

Model	Collinearity Statistics	
	Tolerance	VIF
Tangible feature	.482	2.076
Online service	.336	2.977
Food service	.383	2.608
Servicing by Flight attendants	.166	6.039
Ground staff services	.139	7.197
Schedule	.287	3.483

Note: Dependent Variable: Customer loyalty

From the multicollinearity check, it can be seen clearly that there is no multicollinearity since all variables display the variance inflation factors less than 10

**Table 4.** Regression on customer loyalty

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t-statistic	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	-.271	.249		-1.086	.280
Tangible feature	.242	.093	.202	2.612	.010
Schedule	-.049	.107	-.046	-.456	.649
Ground Staff Service	-.020	.162	-.018	-.124	.901
Service by flight attendant	.275	.139	.261	1.981	.050
Online service	.276	.102	.251	2.712	.008
Food service	.322	.090	.310	3.570	.001
Model Summary	R ² = 0.703 Adj R ² = 0.686 F Test = 40.600***				

Note: Dependent Variable: Customer loyalty

***, significant at 1%

From table 4, $F=40.600$, $p<0.01$, explain model of goodness of fit is good, the results to be trusted. Servicing by Flight attendants Tangible feature, Online service and Food service and into the equation, reached the significant level ($p<0.05$) and ($p<0.01$). Schedule and Ground staff services have not reached significant level ($p>0.05$). $adjR^2=0.686$, indicating that Servicing by Flight attendants, Tangible feature, Online service and Food service can explain Customer Loyalty 69.1% of variance. Above four variables to the Customer Loyalty has a positive effect, among Food service has a more prominent impact on Customer Loyalty ($\beta=0.310$).

Last but not least, we estimate the relationship between customer loyalty and customer satisfaction by analyzing the regression.

Table 5. Regression between consumer satisfaction and loyalty

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t-statistic	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	.496	.211		2.354	.020
Customer satisfaction	.813	.059	.799	13.813	.000
Model Summary	R ² = 0.639, Adj R ² = 0.635, F Test = 190.806				

Note: Dependent Variable: Customer loyalty

From the above table, it is clearly seen that consumer satisfaction confirms positive correlation with consumer loyalty with the coefficient 0.799 and significant at 1%. It means that one unit increase in consumer satisfaction could induce 0.799 units increase in consumer loyalty. From



this point of view, once company could serve the consumer satisfaction; company could attract more customers in purchasing and using its product and services.

CONCLUSION AND POLICY IMPLICATION

As the main finding from the previous section, we could be able to make a conclusion in terms of both the major impact on the consumer satisfaction and consumer loyalty.

There are two essential factors that influence the consumer satisfaction. First, food service is found to be positively impact on the consumer satisfaction with the coefficient (0.031). It simply means that one unit increase (decrease) in food service causes increase (decrease) the consumer satisfaction with 0.031 units. Second, servicing by flight attendants is also found to be positive and significant with consumer satisfaction with the coefficient (0.300) which means that one unit increase (decrease) in servicing flight attendants causes increase (decrease) in consumer satisfaction with 0.300 units.

There are four explanatory variables that statistically influences on the consumer loyalty. Food service is also found to be positive impact on the consumer loyalty with coefficient (0.310). One unit increase (decrease) in food service causes increase (decrease) with 0.310 units of consumer loyalty. Servicing by flight attendants also explains the consumer loyalty with the coefficient (0.261). One unit increase (decrease) in servicing flight attendants causes 0.261 units increase (decrease) in consumer loyalty. Online service shows it important in determining the consumer loyalty with coefficient (0.251). One unit increase (decrease) in online service causes 0.251 increases (decrease) in consumer loyalty. Last but not least tangible feature is also confirmed its role in determining the consumer loyalty as well. it is found with the coefficient (0.202). One unit increase (decrease) in tangible feature causes 0.202 units increase (decrease) in consumer loyalty.

Customer satisfaction is statistically significant with customer loyalty; it means that once consumers increase their utility through provided good services, they will keep using Air Asia Company.

After confirming the influence of selected factor on both consumer satisfaction and consumer loyalty there is some suggestion to be discussed:

1. The company should pay attention on food services by making more attractive of food menu, enhancing the quality of food specifically.
2. The company, moreover, also focus on the online services by making the information on online including all information about the flight and other emergency information.
3. Tangible feature is also one of the factors that should be enhanced and improved. Company must ensure the environment and condition of the plane and other stuffs namely air conditioners and seats to be comfortable for customers.
4. Flight attendant should be friendly and helpful for any concerns from customers. Moreover, flight attendant should be well-prepared and willing to serve the customers.

As long as all of these three services are enhance and improved, Air Asia Company could effectively serve the customer satisfaction. Once it could serve the customer satisfaction, company will be able to attract more customers in purchasing and using their airline. The company could ensure their sustainable profit at the end.



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APPENDEX

Appendix1: Variables measurement

1. Tangible Feature

For our primary survey, tangible feature includes:

- V1: The airline has new planes
- V2: The air conditioners in the planes were comfortable
- V3: The seats in the planes were comfortable

2. Schedules

- V4: The airline has convenient flight schedule
- V5: The airplane departed from airport at schedule time
- V6: The airplane arrived at the destination at schedule time
- V7: The airline did not cancel the flight

3. Servicing by ground staff

- V8: Well dressed and neat appearance
- V9: Easy to contact
- V10: Had sincere interest in fulfilling my needs
- V11: Willing to help passengers
- V12: Never too busy to respond to my request
- V13: Friendly to passengers
- V14: Had knowledge to answer my question

4. Servicing by flight attendants

- V15: Well dressed and neat appearance
- V16: Easy to contact
- V17: Had sincere interest in fulfilling my needs
- V18: Willing to help passengers
- V19: Never too busy to respond my request
- V20: Friendly to passengers
- V21: Had knowledge to answer my question

5. Online Service

- V22: It is flexible and easy to choose airport
- V23: It is flexible and easy to select date and time
- V24: It is very fast to the result page
- V25: The information is clearly present on the result page
- V26: The flights information is accurate and update in time

6. Food Service

- V27: Attractiveness of the food menu
- V28: Quality of food is good
- V29: The foods served look appealing



V30: The printed menu is same as the actual foods served at meals

V31: I like the taste of most of the foods served at meals.

These selected services are expected to be the major impact on the consumer satisfaction and loyalty. However, the consumer satisfaction could be measured by:

S1: The price of this airline was reasonable

S2: I was satisfied with how the airline had taken care of me

S3: I was satisfied with this Air Asia airline compared to other low cost

S4: I would like to provide feedback and complaints for improve the services

S5: Air Asia airline service has met my expectation

While the consumer loyalty can be measured by:

L1: I will buy this brand the next time I buy [product name]

L2: I intend to keep purchasing this brand

And, attitudinal loyalty was measured by two statements as follows:

L3: I am committed to this brand

L4: I would be willing to pay a higher price for this brand over other brands

In other word, the consumer satisfaction refers to the utility of consumers towards the Air Asia Company while the consumer loyalty refers to the repurchase and pursue in using the Air Asia Company. Therefore, this study will illustrate the selected services variables that strongly impact on both the consumer satisfaction and loyalty.

Appendix 2 Socio-economic information from respondents of the survey

Variables	Mean
Number of respondents	
Female respondents (%)	45%
Range of age of respondents (18-26 years old)	82%
Levels of education (Bachelor degree)	81%
Range of monthly incomes (%) – 250 USD and lower	55.5%
Range of monthly incomes (%) – 251 to 500 USD	29%
Range of monthly incomes (%) – 501- 750USD	4%
Range of monthly incomes (%) – 751-1000 USD	6.5%
Range of monthly incomes (%) – 1001 USD and over	6.5%

Number of correspondent is 110.