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SERVICE QUALITY CONTROL IN SAUDI ARABIAN AIRLINES

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ABSTRACT

The study aimed to reflect the significance of service quality control management in the special reference of Saudi Arabian Airlines. The primary information is collected with the help of survey through questionnaire method. Survey through questionnaire method has been used for the purpose of revealing primary data related to the study context. Second method of data collection used was literature review method. A total of 100 questionnaires were distributed among the passenger, out of which 78 were returned. Rest 15 questionnaire were rejected as not filled properly. In the study, the survey is done with 63 passengers who have recently travelled with Saudi Arabian Airlines. These passengers travelled with Saudi airlines can provide some crucial information with the positive and negative aspects of the service quality of the Saudi Arabia. In addition, this study was used graphical representation. The result indicated the significance of establishing an effective service quality control framework for Saudi Arabian Airlines.

INTRODUCTION

In existing scenario, norms and practices undertaken by business organizations have been changed. The global airline industry is responsible for effectively providing transportation to passengers, cargo and postal services worldwide [1]. Airline is critical part of country economy which providing for people movement and goods throughout the world that enabling economic growth [2]. Airlines has facing challenges with respect to satisfying the customer satisfaction and fidelity [3]. The customer perceptions and service quality are impacted the positioning of the airlines [4]. Flight service quality has sub-construct such as inflight, reliability, reservation, availability, airport and employees regarded as perceived quality in the airline service quality [5]. Different issues such as stiff competition prevailing in the marketplace and

dynamic conditions of the global economy have become quite integral to the business organizations. In such conditions, it becomes quite essential for the organization to maintain some long-term relationship with its customers. In this context offering of the high-quality products and service is one of the most crucial and frequently used measures adopted by business organizations in order to make the customers brand loyal.

A satisfied and loyal customer is the basis for quality development. In the context of business organizations such as airlines, which operates in the core service sector, the role of quality control enhances in the most effective manner. For a business organization it is quite crucial to enhance the level of quality of the product and services delivered by the business organization to its customers so that it can be able to make its distinguished image in the eyes of its customers.

Service quality is defined as the gap between customers' expectations on the service that perceived and actually received which SERVQUAL widely use as measurement [6]. The service quality can be measured by employees, tangibles, responsiveness, reliability and assurance, image and empathy [7]. The word-of-mouth communication has increased the customer sources and improve internal operating achievements which strengthening their competitive advantage in the markets [8]. Airline companies present various flight programs to increase the customer trust and reduce their desires for competitor companies [9].

Jahmani (2017) had determined the effect of Royal Jordanian service quality on passengers' satisfaction with service quality dimensions. The service quality dimension included reliability, responsiveness, empathy, assurance and tangibles. There were 475 respondents selected in this study and questionnaire were distributed randomly to passengers who using Royal Jordanian airline during September 2016 until December 2016. The findings showed service quality is important factor impacted passengers' satisfaction [10].

Meanwhile, Akpoyomare et al. (2016) had determined the relationship between airline service quality dimensions and customer loyalty among air passengers in Lagos state. There were 600 air travellers selected using convenience sampling technique. The result showed service quality and its dimension were positive and significantly correlated with each other. Besides, the findings also indicated no significant difference between customers' travelling for different motives in their service quality perception [11].

Chen et al. (2017) explored key factors to influence customers to choose an airline. There were 560 questionnaires surveyed in the airport. In this study, the satisfaction degree of service quality, perceived value, brand image and customer loyalty were measured for China Airlines, EVA Air and TransAsia customers. The findings showed perceived value had positive influence on brand image. Furthermore, the brand image helps in the relationship between service quality and loyalty and perceived value strengthens the relationship [12].

In this way, different literatures have suggested different important and effective aspects service quality management in the special reference of the

airline industry. The section has also revealed the concerns and practices undertaken by Saudi Arabian Airlines towards the service quality control management framework. The section articulates that quality management is one of the most essential aspects of management functions undertaken by the business organization operating in the airlines industry as quality service delivered to the passenger is the scale of long term variability and sustainability of the organization in the highly competitive airline industry. The study aimed to reflect the significance of service quality control management in the special reference of Saudi Arabian Airlines.

METHODOLOGY

There was a need of both conceptual and practical information so that the accomplishment of all the study objectives can be accomplished in the most effective manner. From the perspective of this study, mixed approach was selected as the most suitable and effective research approach due to the reason that this research approach helps the researcher to analyse the study problem from various points of view so that a comprehensive and applicable solution of the research problem can be revealed.

Survey through questionnaire method has been used for the purpose of revealing primary data related to the study context. In this method, a field survey is conducted with passengers at airport. For the survey purpose, passengers who have recently travelled with Saudi Airlines, have been selected on the basis of random sampling. The respondents were selected randomly so that biasness in the response could be eliminated and research credibility and validity. This passenger travelled with Saudi airlines can provide some crucial information with the positive and negative aspects of the service quality of the Saudi Arabia. The total sample size selected for this research work is 100.

The rationale behind selection of survey through quantitative method for collecting primary information was that this method quite helpful in retrieving the quantitative data associated with the research context. The survey through questionnaire method also help to collect effective primary information and data from large population.

Second method of data collection used was literature review method. In this method, an intensive review of different related literatures such as books, journal article and research work have been considered for the purpose of enhancing overall conceptual knowledge and understanding related to the study context can be enhanced. In this method, different literatures related to the concept of service quality management have been used for the purpose of preparing a conceptual framework for this research work.

A total of 100 questionnaires were distributed among the passenger, out of which 78 were returned. Out of these 78 questionnaires, only 63 questionnaires were complete in all respects and were included for the analysis. Rest 15 questionnaire were rejected as not filled properly. For the purpose of analysing the data, graphical representation method is used. In this method, with the help of the responses of the respondents collected in the

survey, graphs are prepared. These graphs show a specific trends and common perspective about the service quality management related competencies of Saudi Arabian Airlines.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Figure 1 shows that 79.37% of the respondents were male and 20.83% of the respondents were female.

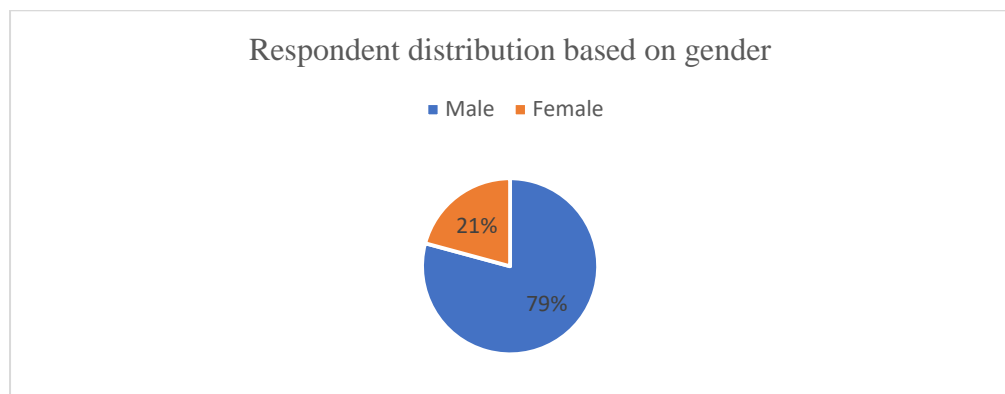


Figure 1. Respondent Distribution Based On Gender

Figure 2 shows that 5% of the respondents aged between 18 years and 30 years old and 32% of the respondents were aged between 31 years and 40 years old. Meanwhile, 28% of the respondents aged between 41 years and 50 years old and 35% of the respondents aged more than 51 years old.

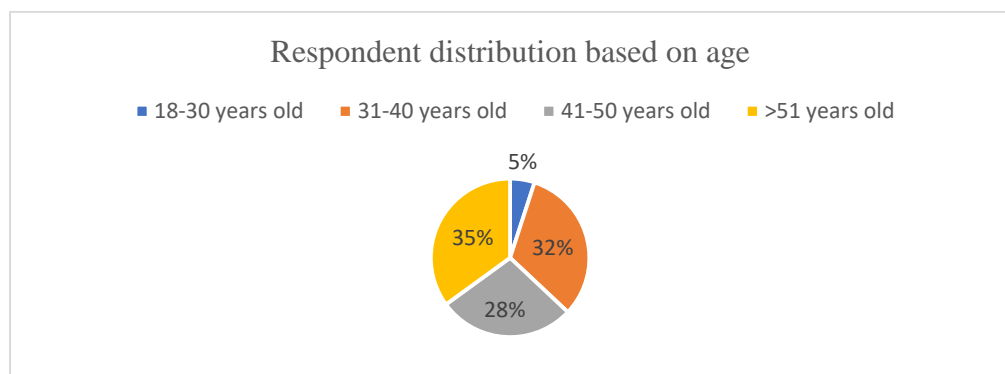


Figure 2. Respondent Distribution Based On Age

Figure 3 shows that 22% of the respondents were travelled by air once in a month and 57% of the respondents were travelled by air twice in a month. There were 16% of the respondents had travelled once in three months and 5% of the respondents were rarely travelled by air.

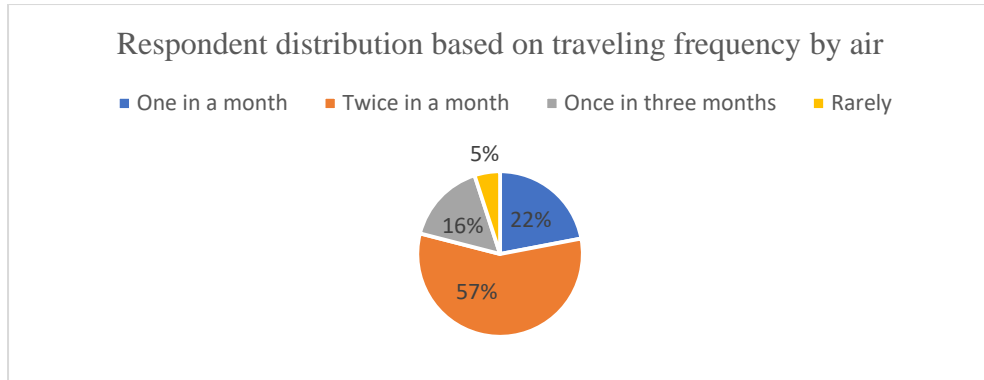


Figure 3. Respondent Distribution Based On Traveling Frequency By Air

Figure 4 shows 19% of the respondents considered flight availability in selecting airline company for traveling and 18% of the respondents considered service quality in selecting airline company. Furthermore, 60% of the respondents considered cost in selecting airline company and 3% of the respondents considered other reason in selecting airline company. Airfare is the most crucial reason behind their selection. Remaining two respondents have provided different reasons such as word of mouth publicity and unavailability of other options behind the selection of the airline company. These results were reflecting that quality of services is one of the most crucial factors that lead the passengers to take decisions related to selection of airline company.

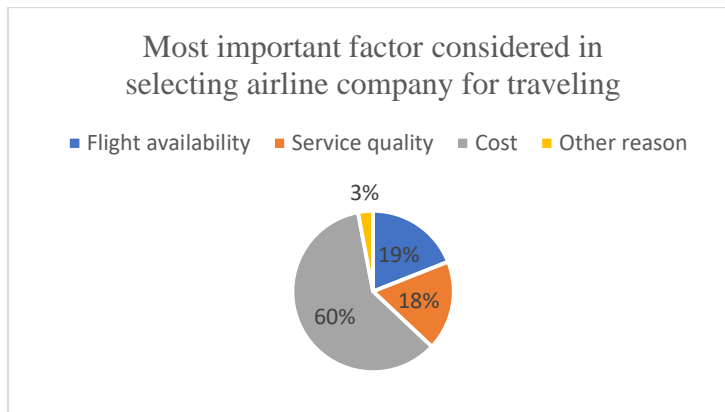


Figure 4. Most Important Factor Considered In Selecting Airline Company

Figure 5 shows that 24% of the respondents were satisfied with the service and 13% of the respondents did not satisfied with the service provided by the airline company. In addition, 63% of the respondents were satisfied with service quality but only to a specific extent. These findings sowed there are some important areas of service quality on which the company requires to work quite intensively in order to make passengers satisfy quite adequately.

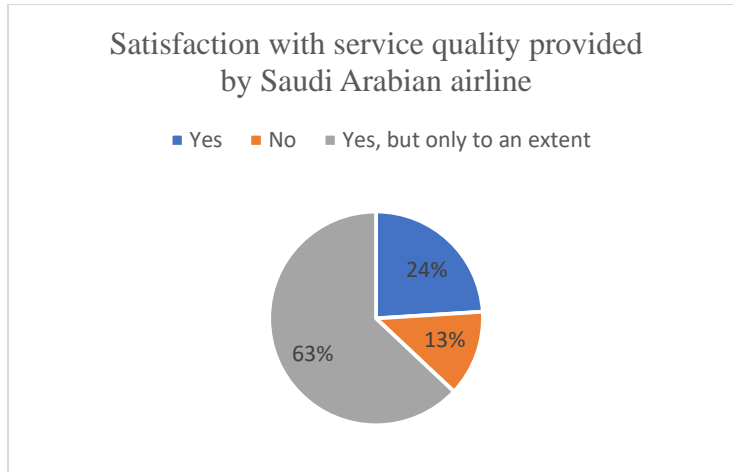


Figure 5. Satisfaction with service quality provided by Saudi Arabian airline

Figure 6 shows 6% of the respondents have given their extreme positive views regarding the customer feedback system of the organization and 59% of the respondents felt the existing feedback system followed by the company is an average system which not add value in the operations and quality of services. In addition, 19% of the respondents has rated the company’s customer feedback system as a satisfactory system only and said that there is a need of a lot of improvement in the system. There were 16% of the respondents have reflected an extreme negative perception regarding quality and efficiency of company’s customer feedback system. The question has reflected that for the company improvement in its existing customer feedback system is one of the most crucial requirements in existing period of time.

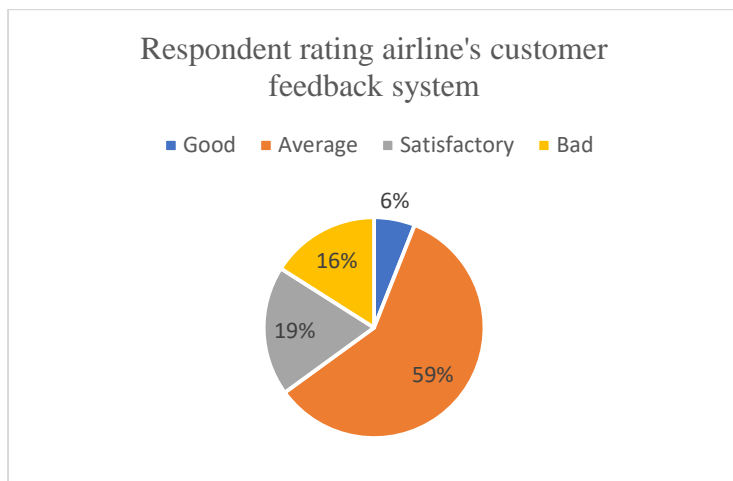


Figure 6. Respondent Rating Airline’s Customer Feedback System

Figure 7 shows that 78% of the respondents have faced problems due to ineffective in-flight and ground services offered by Saudi Arabian Airlines to its passengers. This high percentage of positive response of this question is a major concern for the company as it can hit the image of company in the competitive market place in an adverse manner.

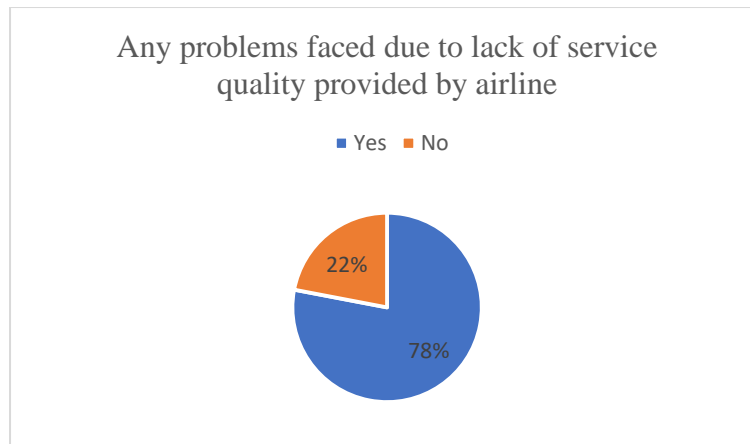


Figure 7. Any Problems Faced Due to Lack of Service Quality Provided by The Airline

Figure 8 shows that 51% of the respondents rate the behaviour of ground staff of Saudi Arabian Airlines as good and 33% of the respondent's rate this as average. Meanwhile, 13% of the respondents stated behaviour of ground staff of the organization can only be considered as satisfactory and 3% of the respondents have stated the behaviour of the ground staff of the organization as bad. The findings of this question reflect that the quality ground staff of the organization is pretty good.

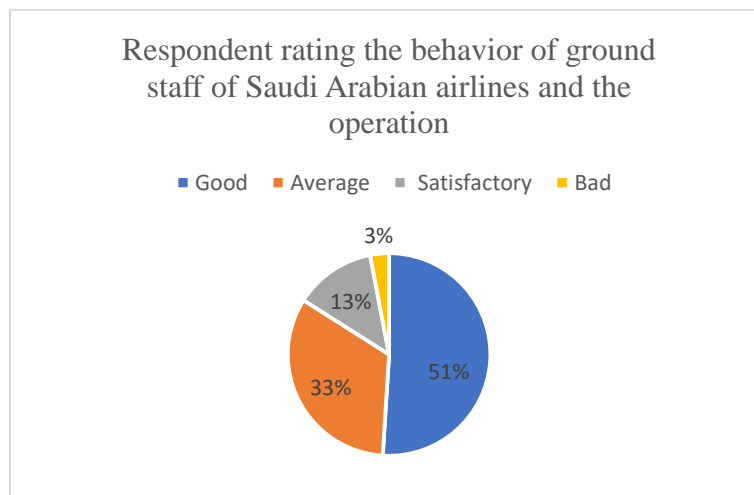


Figure 8. Respondent Rating The Behaviour Of Ground Staff Of Saudi Arabian Airlines And The Operation

Figure 9 shows that 32% of the respondents have shown their strong agreement on the aspect that quality plays the most crucial rule in their purchasing decision and 47% of the respondents stated that are agreed with this. Furthermore, 18% of the respondents have shown their negative views on this point. there are some other factors like airfare and availability that drives the passenger to make their purchasing decisions regarding availing service from the airline.

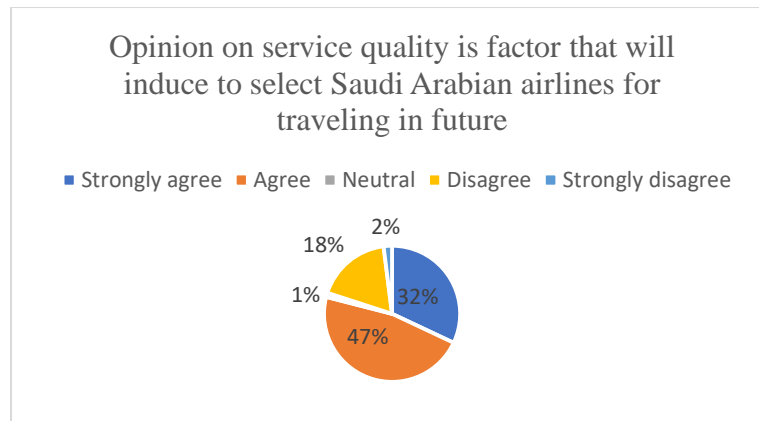


Figure 9. Opinion on Service Quality Is Factor That Will Induce to Select Saudi Arabian Airlines for Traveling in Future

Figure 10 shows that 89% of the respondents stated that intensive IT services offered by the organization are quite helpful for the organization to develop the quality of the services delivered to the customers. Furthermore, 8% of the respondents were not agreed with the positive relationship between enhancements in IT competencies and enhancement service delivery to passengers. There were 3% of the respondents were unsure on this perspective. The findings of this question is reflecting that it is quite crucial for a business organization to put some intensive attention over developing its overall IT competencies so that the organization can be able to deliver high quality services to the customers.

One open ended question was also included in the questionnaire, which was directed to invite some crucial suggestions for the company to enhance their quality control framework. there are three prime recommendations have revealed on the basis of review of the entire responses from the questionnaire. These recommendations such as the company should make its customers feedback system effective and easy, conduct quality audit and inspection the frequent basis and requires upgrading its information system which would be helpful to deliver effective and high service quality to its customers.

In this way, on the basis of analysing the entire data, it can be considered that existing disposition of Saudi Arabian Airlines is quite satisfactory. However, for the purpose of addressing tough competition prevailing within the Airline industry, it is quite crucial for the organization raise the standards of the service quality. In this context, the service quality control management of the organization is required to make quite effective and strong.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the service quality control can be understood as one of the most crucial and effective aspects of management related functions undertaken by the management of an organization. The findings concluded that from the perspective of long-term sustainability and success of the organization, service quality control can play a vital role. Saudi Arabian Airlines which national flag Airlines of Saudi Arabia has undertaken a number of different crucial steps for the purpose of enhancing the level of quality in the services delivered

to the customers. Different initiatives such as organizing of total quality management conference in the year 2004 and starting of online helpline services, undertaken by the company are directed to make the positive direction of the company towards effective service control management system

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