

Influence of Airline Service Marketing Mix with Airline Passenger Satisfaction and Loyalty

G. Rajesh, K. Sakthidasan Sankaran

Abstract: *The study analyzed the influence of airline service marketing mix on the airline passengers' satisfaction and loyalty by conducting a survey among domestic airline passengers in Chennai, India. The role of the airline service marketing mix strategies which had both most and the least influence on the domestic air travel, as perceived by airline passengers was examined using the 7Ps of airline service marketing mix elements as drivers of domestic airline passengers' satisfaction. The result highlighted that the punctuality, promotion, people, process and physical evidence factors had an extremely significant positive relationship with the airline passenger satisfaction and loyalty, whilst Price factor revealed a negatively significant relationship with airline passenger satisfaction and loyalty. Thus the study recommends that a management should improve the service marketing mix elements by applying the right mix to attract and retain customers to establish their service to survive and sustain in the current competitive scenario.*

Index Terms: *Airline service marketing mix, Airline passengers' satisfaction, Airline passenger's loyalty, Domestic airlines..*

I. INTRODUCTION

The world has transformed into a worldwide town, it has turned out to be less demanding for individuals, living in outrageous corners of the world, to associate to their friends and family just as increment their business network, without quite a bit of a problem [1] Wish to acknowledge the blasting common avionics industry-it has helped individuals travel to the niche and corners of the world, inside only couple of hours. As a piece of this worldwide town, India is likewise seeing a lofty increment in the quantity of carrier travelers, making a trip to and from the nation, through air [2]. In the current competitive conditions, airline passengers have become very important to the survival of the airline companies. Airline passenger satisfaction is considered as a solid foundation to success of airline companies in general as well as airline in domestic air transport [3]. In addition, when passengers are satisfied with punctuality of the products or services, they will be loyal to the airline companies and repeat their behavior of buying [4]. There are many factors which affecting airlines passenger satisfaction and the airline service marketing mix is one among them. This study examines the

effect of airline service marketing mix (7p's) on passenger satisfaction and loyalty to airline in domestic air transportation in Chennai, India [5]. To assess the effect mentioned above, this study will system theoretical basis airline service marketing mix, airline passengers' satisfaction and loyalty; review studies related to the research problem; establish research models and theories; survey, collect and analyze data. The results of this data analysis will be the basis for policy suggestions for the airline to enhance airline passengers' satisfaction and loyalty for sustainable development in the current market trend [6-8].

II. RELATED WORKS

Marketing mix was an attempt made by the airline industries to correlate numerous factors, such as high grade services, cost, communication and promotion (Hartono, 2010) [9]. The marketing mix analysis included almost all strategic marketing tools and could thus be considered as a base for analyzing any product (Kotler et al., 2008) [10]. For a passenger, loyalty was a positive outlook and behavior related to the level of re-purchasing obligation to a product in future (Chu and Kuo-Ming, 2009) [11]. Item was the mix of merchandise and ventures that offered by the firm to the objective market (Kotler and Armstrong, 2010) [12]. As per Ahmed and Rahman (2015) [13], it was avowed that item was the center variable that the organization could offer to the administration advertise, in this manner, the item itself ought to be not standard and ready to offer answer for the market needs. In the present study, Product has been replaced by Punctuality as the reliability and consistency with respect to prompt and punctual departure and arrival was more meaningful in an airline firm. It was the first attempt to study about the Punctuality aspect of the seven marketing mix dimensions. (Friesner, 2014) [14]. Price was the most elastic component of the marketing mix and also the most challenging one (Kotler et al., 2008). Reader (2011) [15] strengthened the reliance of mediators on airlines and also highlighted benefits which resulted from coordinating mediators in the distribution chain, since the mediators made the process much easier for the consumers. Pride and Ferrell (2011) [16] suggested that advertising and promoting the products through the mediators was more competent and successful. Shaw (2011) [17] stated that social media should be communicated as interactive relationships and the marketing opportunities that could be developed through them.

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There was a strong interdependence between the process and the dimensions of personnel/people and promotion, particularly in one to one service settings, regular steps might never be executed in the same way which amongst other factors was due to different staff members (Lovelock et al., 2008) [18]. A complete comprehension of advertising blend components by service providers would have an effect on potential and current clients, convert them to steadfast clients, and help them proceed with their business life (Wahab et al., 2016) [19]. Traveler fulfillment depended on travelers' appraisal and their involvement with an item bought or an administration offered (Chen et al., 2011 and Malyadriet al., 2014) [20]. Arokiasamy (2014) [21] contended that if a very much structured administration recuperation was offered to a traveler, it could change over a disappointed traveler into a fulfilled and even steadfast traveler, along these lines dispensing with the negative effect of administration disappointment. Appropriately, specialist co-ops who could change over an administration disappointment into a fruitful recuperation would prevail with regards to saving a lot of travelers and therefore their piece of the overall industry (Eisingerich et al., 2014) [22]. As indicated by Bataineh et al. (2015) [23], devotion and satisfaction strongly affected traveler maintenance. A striking administration experience would upgrade customer satisfaction; fabricate positive feelings and client dependability towards the specialist co-op (Nadiri et al., 2008 and Rahim, 2016a) [24]. Fulfillment is broadly recognized as an indicator of client unwaveringness by various experimental investigations (Cheng and Rashid, 2013; Gures et al., 2014) [25]. A Taiwanese ponder built up an incorporated model to investigate the impacts of six advertising blend parts on purchaser faithfulness through shopper esteem in social business (Ya Ling Wu et al., 2018) [26]. As indicated by Rahim et al., 2016a, visit air voyagers showed more devotion propensity towards aircraft transporters contrasted with non-visit air travelers. The survey of past writing has distinguished two primary qualities of client dependability, to be specific, the conduct and the attitudinal measurements and traveler devotion was the main consideration which affected upper hand in the seriously difficult aircraft commercial center (Cooil et al., 2007; Wirtz et al., 2007) [27]. Carriers' sustainable market offer may to a great extent rely upon traveler reliability (Chang and Hung, 2013) [28].

III. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

- To study the impact of airline service marketing mix dimensions on airline passenger satisfaction.
- To study the impact of airline service marketing mix dimensions on airline passenger loyalty.
- To enrich airline service marketing mix that increases passenger loyalty for the airline operators to survive in the current scenario.

IV. METHODOLOGY AND TOOLS

The timetable planned with a lot of administration showcasing blend factors, the reactions of 1060 travelers' traversing nine local aircrafts was gathered and factor investigation, chi-square examination and Cronbach's alpha

test for consistency among factors were connected for breaking down the information. The investigation actualizes a blend of graphic and overview inquire about plan. Survey was created and appropriated to haphazardly chosen travelers from Chennai residential air terminal in India. The principal segment of the questionnaire portrayed the respondents, while the second segment of the poll managed administration advertising blend (with promptness, value, place, and advancement, individuals, process and physical proof). The last segment of the poll contained things on travelers' satisfaction & Passengers' Loyalty. Seven point Likert scale was utilized and the respondents were asked for to react dependent on their level of consent to the issue being talked about. Information examination was executed at 95% certainty level or better with the guide of SPSS 24. The insights, estimation scale, information examination, unwavering quality and legitimacy tests utilized in this exploration pursued the examination recommendations in surviving writing. Distinct investigation and auxiliary condition models were among the statistical stools utilized to find out the nature of research instrument and the example of relationship among the factors.

V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study examined the airline passengers' satisfaction and loyalty using 7Ps of airline service marketing mix elements on the domestic airlines passengers in Chennai, India. The results highlighted that the punctuality, promotion, people, process and physical evidence factors had an extremely significant positive relationship with the airline passenger satisfaction and Loyalty, whilst Price factor revealed a negatively significant relationship with airline passenger satisfaction and Loyalty.

A. Major demographic characteristics of the study respondents:

The gender analysis of the study passengers' showed that out of the 1060 respondents, 703 were male respondents and the remaining 357 respondents were females, thus showing the predominance of the male passengers in the study group. The age of the respondents was categorized into six groups consisting of ages between 16-25, 26-35, 36-45, 46-55, 56-65 and greater than 66. Majority of the air passengers in the present study were under the age group of 26-35 years. There were different kinds of occupations, such as education, corporate executive, government official, business man, students, homemaker and others under the profession head of the demographic profile. Of the 1060 respondents, 452 (42.6%) were among the education sector, 246 (23.2%) respondents were corporate executives, 224 (21.1%) were under the category of business men, 58 (5.5%) respondents were students, 41 (3.9%) were government officials, 26 (2.5%) were housewife/homemakers and the remaining 13 (1.2%) respondents were from the other occupations.

B. Analysis of airline service marketing mix factors using KMO and Bartlett's test:

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test was a proportion of suitability of the examination information for factor investigation. Kaiser (1974) suggested that qualities >0.5

were acknowledged, values between 0.5 to 0.7 were average, values between 0.7 to 0.8 were great, between 0.8 to 0.9 were extraordinary and values above 0.9 were brilliant (Hutcheson and Sofroniou, 1999). Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure Sampling Adequacy for Airline administration promoting blend variable on this model was 0.8, which showed that qualities were in the great range and that the testing was satisfactory. Bartlett's test was another sign of the quality of the relationship among the factors. In this examination, Bartlett's test was exceptionally noteworthy ($p < 0.001$), and in this way the factor investigation done was proper

C. Communalities of Airline Service Marketing Mix

The communalities of the factor analysis of Airline service marketing mix revealed the magnitude of the extraction values which were used to ascertain which variables were retained as items of the marketing communication construct. Generally, a variable must have an extraction value of at least 0.50 to be retained. In this respect, it was obvious that all the variables were retained. Thus punctuality, price, place, promotion, people, physical evidence and process were significant items of the marketing communication construct

D. Total variance explained out of the 21 items of airline service marketing mix

The Eigen esteems were related with each straight part before extraction, after extraction and after revolution. Before extraction 21 straight segments were recognized inside the informational index. The eigenvalues related with each factor spoke to the difference clarified by that specific straight segment and SPSS likewise showed the eigenvalue as far as the level of fluctuation. The initial couple of components clarified moderately a lot of change though ensuing elements clarified just little measures of the difference. SPSS then extricated all elements with eigenvalues with seven components. The Eigenvalue table has been divided into three sub-sections, Initial Eigen Values, Extracted Sums of Squared Loadings and Rotation of Sums of Squared Loadings. The Extracted Sums of Squared Loadings are considered generally. The first factor accounted for 18.53% of the variance, whereas the second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh were 14.29%, 12.65%, 11.36%, 10.41%, 9.44% and 4.03% respectively (Table 1). All the remaining factors were not significant. Only the first seven had the eigenvalue around 1.00, and together these explained over 80% of the total variability in the data. Thus the seven factor solution would probably be adequate

E. Model summary and ANOVA for ASMM factors with Airline Passenger Satisfaction

The model summary for airline service marketing mix factors with airline passenger satisfaction was studied. The model summary includes multiple correlation coefficients R and R-Square and also the adjusted version of this coefficient

as summary measures of the model fit. A Linear Regression Coefficient $R=0.34$, $R \text{ square} = 0.12$ was observed, indicating that 12% of the variation in the APS was explained by the seven dependent variables namely physical evidence, price, place, punctuality, people, process and promotion. The other 88% of the variation remain unexplained. Setting the confidence interval at 95%, the results of ANOVA test provided an F-test value for the null hypothesis; none of the independent variables of ASMM were related to APS. However based on the analysis, the null hypothesis could be rejected, where $F=19.89$ and $P < 0.001$ with a confidence interval set at 95% and thus ASMM reflected significant relation with APS. It also meant that the prediction of airline passenger satisfaction by the airline service marketing mix factors was a linear function.

F. T-test for ASMM factors with APS

The significant positive values of Punctuality, Promotion, People, Physical Evidence and Process were <0.001 , 0.001 , <0.001 , <0.001 and <0.001 respectively, which was below the p-value of 0.05. Price value was negatively significant with a $p < 0.001$. Thus there was a positive relationship between ASMM five P's as mentioned and negative relationship of Price to APS (Table 2). It meant that the airline service marketing mix factors predicts airline passenger satisfaction. In practice therefore, airline operators would need to improve their practice of each aspect of the airline service marketing mix factors to maximize airline passenger satisfaction and possibly financial growth.

G. Model Summary and ANOVA for ASMM factors with APL

The model summary for airline service marketing mix factors with airline passenger loyalty was studied. The model summary includes multiple correlation coefficients R and R-Square and also the adjusted version of this coefficient as summary measures of the model fit. The Linear Regression Coefficient $R=0.44$, $R \text{ square} = 0.19$ was observed, indicating that 19% of the variation in the APL was explained by the seven dependent variables namely physical evidence, price, place, punctuality, people, process, promotion. The other 81% of the variation remain unexplained. Setting the confidence interval at 95%, the results of ANOVA test provided an F-test value for the null hypothesis; none of the independent variables of ASMM were related to APL. However based on the analysis, the null hypothesis could be rejected, where $F=35.13$ and $P < 0.001$ with a confidence interval set at 95% and thus ASMM reflected significant relation with APL.

It also meant that the prediction of APL by the airline service marketing mix factors was a linear function.

TABLE I - Total Variance Explained out of the 21 items of Airline Service Marketing Mix

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	3.81	18.13	18.13	3.81	18.13	18.13	2.86	13.62	13.62
2	3.00	14.29	32.42	3.00	14.29	32.42	2.55	12.14	25.76
3	2.66	12.65	45.08	2.66	12.65	45.08	2.55	12.13	37.89
4	2.39	11.36	56.43	2.39	11.36	56.43	2.47	11.76	49.64
5	2.19	10.41	66.84	2.19	10.41	66.84	2.43	11.58	61.23
6	1.98	9.44	76.28	1.98	9.44	76.28	2.32	11.05	72.28
7	0.85	4.03	80.31	0.85	4.03	80.31	1.69	8.03	80.31
8	0.59	2.81	83.12	-	-	-	-	-	-
9	0.41	1.96	85.08	-	-	-	-	-	-
10	0.38	1.82	86.90	-	-	-	-	-	-
11	0.36	1.71	88.60	-	-	-	-	-	-
12	0.35	1.65	90.26	-	-	-	-	-	-
13	0.32	1.51	91.76	-	-	-	-	-	-
14	0.29	1.38	93.14	-	-	-	-	-	-
15	0.29	1.36	94.50	-	-	-	-	-	-
16	0.27	1.28	95.78	-	-	-	-	-	-
17	0.24	1.14	96.92	-	-	-	-	-	-
18	0.21	1.00	97.92	-	-	-	-	-	-
19	0.19	0.91	98.83	-	-	-	-	-	-
20	0.17	0.81	99.64	-	-	-	-	-	-
21	0.08	0.36	100.0	-	-	-	-	-	-

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

A. T-test for ASMM factors with APL

The significant positive values of Punctuality, Promotion, People, Physical Evidence and Process were all <0.001, which was below the p-value of 0.05. Price value was negatively significant with a p<0.001 (Table 3). Thus there was a positive relationship between ASMM 5P's as mentioned and negative relationship of Price to APL. It was meant that the airline service marketing mix factors predicts APL. In practice therefore, airline operators would need to improve their practice of each aspect of the airline service marketing mix factors to maximize APL and possibly financial growth.

B. Relationship between ASMM and APL when mediated by APS:

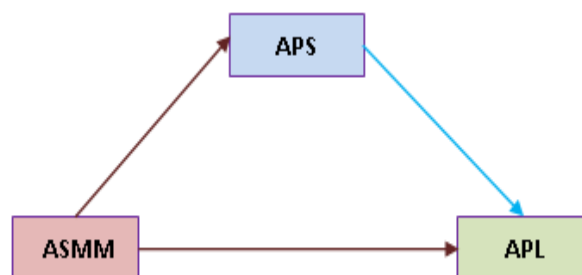


Fig. 1. Direct / Indirect effect of APS on ASMM and APL

C. Model Summary and ANOVA for ASMM factors and APL when mediated by APS

The model summary for ASMM factors and APL when mediated by APS was evaluated.

The model summary includes multiple correlation coefficients R and R-Square and also the adjusted version of this coefficient as summary measures of the model fit. The Linear Regression Coefficient R=0.44, R square = 0.19, indicated that 19% of the variation in the APL was explained by the seven dependent variables namely physical evidence, price, place, punctuality, people, process, promotion. The other 81% of the variation remain unexplained. However when mediated by APS, the Linear Regression Coefficient R=0.65, R square = 0.43, indicated that 43% of the variation in the APL was explained by the seven dependent variables of ASMM. Thus to conclude, when mediated by APS, the variability had been increased by 24% which clearly indicated that APS strongly influenced APL.

Setting the confidence interval at 95%, the results of

ANOVA test provided an F-test value for the null hypothesis; none of the independent variables of ASMM were related to APS. However, based on the analysis, the null hypothesis could be rejected, where F=35.13 and P <0.001 with a confidence interval set at 95% and thus ASMM reflected significant relation with APL. It also meant that the prediction of APL by the airline service marketing mix factors was a linear function. When mediated by APS, ASMM showed a drastically high significance with APL with F=97.31 and P <0.001, thus showing 62% difference in the F value when compared with the same without APS mediation. Thus to conclude, ASMM had a stronger impact on the APL when mediated by APS.

TABLE II: T-test for ASMM factors with APS

Coefficients						
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
(Constant)	3.75	0.26		14.5	<0.001	
Punctuality	0.12	0.03	0.18	4.42	<0.001	
Price	-0.06	0.03	-0.10	-2.40	0.016	
Place	0.01	0.02	0.17	0.59	0.549	
Promotion	0.06	0.02	0.09	3.31	0.001	
People	0.08	0.02	0.12	4.26	<0.001	
Physical Evidence	0.10	0.02	0.15	5.29	<0.001	
Process	0.09	0.02	0.15	5.10	<0.001	

a. Dependent Variable: APS

TABLE III: T-test for ASMM factors with APL

Coefficients ^a						
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
(Constant)	3.423	0.222		15.384	<0.001	
Punctuality	0.229	0.024	0.385	9.655	<0.001	
Price	-0.128	0.022	-0.234	-5.862	<0.001	
Place	0.031	0.017	0.051	1.833	0.067	
Promotion	0.082	0.016	0.143	5.101	<0.001	
People	0.077	0.017	0.128	4.586	<0.001	
Physical Evidence	0.084	0.017	0.145	5.065	<0.001	
Process	0.074	0.015	0.137	4.832	<0.001	

a. Dependent Variable: APL

A. T-test for ASMM factors and APL when mediated by APS

The significant positive values of Punctuality, Promotion, People, Physical Evidence and Process were all <0.001, which was below the p-value of 0.05. Price value was negatively significant with a p<0.001 (Table 4).

Thus there was a positive relationship between ASMM 5P's as mentioned and negative relationship of Price to APL. This means that the airline service marketing mix factors predicts airline passenger loyalty - attitudinal loyalty. In practice therefore, airline operators would need to improve their practice of each aspect of the airline service marketing mix

factors to maximize airline passenger satisfaction and possibly passenger loyalty and thus financial growth.

The partial mediation of APS between ASMM and APL was evaluated (Table 4).

VI. CONCLUSION

Survivability and sustainability are considered to be the two most important criteria for the airline companies to attain success.



Influence of Airline Service Marketing Mix with Airline Passenger Satisfaction and Loyalty

Domestic airline operators should establish the strategies which are apt for the firm's infrastructure and precisely fulfilling the expectations of the air travelers. On par with the similarities in service delivery, air routes, costs and capacities among the domestic airline operators The present study attempted to find out the airline service quality and airline service marketing mix dimensions which influence the passengers' degree of in-flight satisfaction and strategies used for sustainable airlines-passengers relationship. The focal point of this research is "How to improve the revenue or reduce the loss of the airline companies to survive and sustain in the current competitive scenario?" current study focused only on the impact of one of the independent variable of Airline Service Marketing Mix which were required for the survival and two major dependent variables of Airline Passenger Satisfaction and Airline Passenger Loyalty, which were required for the sustenance of the airline companies to achieve success. The research design involved a survey questionnaire tool to investigate the key variables of airline passenger satisfaction and loyalty for the nine major domestic airlines in Chennai. The data collected from 1060 respondents was subjected to statistics tools and significant results were brought out.

OUTCOME OF THE STUDY:

- 1) The five dimensions of Airline service marketing mix namely, punctuality, promotion, people, process, and physical evidence factors had an extremely significant positive relationship with the airline passenger satisfaction and Loyalty.
- 2) Place factor was not significant with the airline passenger satisfaction and Loyalty.
- 3) Price factor revealed a negatively significant relationship with airline passenger satisfaction and Loyalty.
- 4) All the 6P's including the Place factor revealed an extremely significant positive relationship with Airline passenger loyalty.
- 5) The five P's namely Punctuality, Promotion, People, Physical evidence and Process showed a significant positive correlation with Airline passenger loyalty when partially mediated by Airline passenger satisfaction and the relationship between Airline service marketing mix and Airline passenger loyalty was increased by as much as 24%, when mediated by Airline passenger satisfaction.
- 6) The Price factor of Airline service marketing mix revealed significant but negative correlation with Airline passenger loyalty.

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