

T.C.
ISTANBUL AYDIN UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES



**SERVICE QUALITY AND CUSTOMER SATISFACTION IN AIRLINE
INDUSTRY: A COMPARISON BETWEEN TURKISH FOUNDED
AIRLINES**

MBA THESIS

Vanini Claude MEGNE TCHOUBE

Department of Business

Business Administration Program

Thesis Advisor: Assist. Prof. Dr. Uğur ŞENER

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İSTANBUL AYDIN ÜNİVERSİTESİ
SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ MÜDÜRLÜĞÜ



YÜKSEK LİSANS TEZ ONAY FORMU

Enstitümüz İşletme İngilizce Anabilim Dalı, İşletme Yönetimi İngilizce Tezli Yüksek Lisans Programı Y1512.130104 numaralı öğrencisi **VANINI CLAUDE MEGNE TCHOUBE**'nin "SERVICE QUALITY AND CUSTOMER SATISFACTION: A COMPARATIVE STUDY IN TURKISH AIRLINE INDUSTRY" adlı tez çalışması Enstitümüz Yönetim Kurulunun 13.06.2019 tarih ve 2019/13 sayılı kararıyla oluşturulan jüri tarafından oybirliği/oyçokluğu ile Tezli Yüksek Lisans tezi 28.06.2019 tarihinde kabul edilmiştir.

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that all information in this thesis document has been obtained and presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that, as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced all material and results, which are not original of this thesis. (23/07/2019)

Vanini Claude MEGNE TCHOUPE

DEDICATION

I dedicate this project to the following;

- My beloved Parents
- To my siblings
- Unforgettable Mentors;
- Wonderful Supervisor;
- **Prof. Dr. Uğur ŞENER**

I equally wish to extern my gratitude to all those who directly or indirectly contributed to the completion of this thesis.

I wish that this thesis will be useful for researchers in further study on fields related to this topic.

FOREWORD

This thesis is written in completion of Master's Program in Business Management at Istanbul Aydin University. The research is focused on "Service Quality and Customer Satisfaction in Airline Industry: A Comparison between Turkish Founded Airlines". The scope of application is based on local air service suppliers in the country operating regionally thus service millions of inhabitants in the landscape. The highly competitive marketplace that describe the Turkish airline industry is catching attention as it considerably impacts on the economy. It is usually seen that perceived service performance fuels the satisfaction on a customer's perspective therefore their loyalty towards a particular brand. This study aims at comparing few domestic airlines given their perceive performance using dimensions of the SERVQUAL method in order to determine the one with more customer's retention.

If I went through storms and hardship several times without falling, it is because I took support of individuals and groups to whom I am deeply indebted. My profound appreciation goes to my supervisor **Assist. Prof. Dr. Uğur ŞENER** whose ideas, criticisms, guidance, encouragement and devotion spurred me, and gave the shape and form of this study. Despite his very charged commitments, he created appropriate time to guide me, read carefully through my manuscript, made necessary corrections and observations, making sure I was on the right tract. I will rather say he was more of a father and care taker than just a supervisor.

My sincere gratitude and appreciation goes to my beloved parents, friends, my siblings and wonderful friends like; Manuela Phalone Tchoupe, Therence Atabong, Paul Jonathan Yimga etc. for their relentless encouragement, moral and financial assistance for this exercise.

Above all, I am grateful to the most high for giving me the strength and guidance throughout the entire course, and his wonderful deeds upon my life.

I wish that this thesis will be useful for researchers in further study on fields related to this topic.

June, 2019

Vanini Claude MEGNE TCHOUBE

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ABBREVIATIONS

ASCI : American Standard Code for Information

EU : European Union

FDI : Foreign Direct Investment

GDP : Gross Domestic Product

IATA : International Air Transport Association

NPS : Net Promoter Score

THY : Türk Hava Yolları

TQM : Total Quality Management

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**SERVICE QUALITY AND CUSTOMER SATISFACTION IN AIRLINE
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ABSTRACT

The way of conducting business activities has considerably changed over the past few years. Both manufacturing and service sector have implemented new approaches in meeting organizational goals therefore performance. Service quality and customer satisfaction are two terms often used in marketing to assess how well customers' expectations are met. Turkish airline industry has witnessed series of changes since the deregulation law was enacted whereas globally or domestically (Tamer Çetin, 2016). Therefore, with the highly competitive market place that entails that of the country' domestic sector, companies are always striving to find adequate strategies to attract and retain the highest number of customers. Four airline companies namely: Atlas Global, Onurair, Pegasus and Turkish Airlines were selected to efficiently evaluate this critical issue. In line with that, the dimensions of SERVQUAL method were chosen to highlight the satisfaction factor on a passenger's point of view; in other words, perceived performance. The aim of this research paper is to identify through comparison the company that best and accurately implement service quality dimensions to reach the most suitable satisfaction factor which highly impact on the outcome and business growth.

Reasons being of this purpose is to draw a correlation between all dimensions of quality and others like demographic. A survey was therefore conducted on potential passengers of the above mentioned airline companies living in Istanbul; questionnaires were distributed among respondents and evaluated using a quantitative approach. Results of the analysis were used to make conclusions and draw inferential questions.

Keywords: *Service quality, Customer Satisfaction, Customer loyalty*

HAVACILIK ENDÜSTRİSİNDE HİZMET KALİTESİ VE MÜŞTERİ MEMNUNİYETİ: TÜRK HAVA SEKTÖRÜNDE KARŞILAŞTIRMALI BİR ÇALIŞMA

ÖZET

İş faaliyetleri yürütme yolu son birkaç yılda önemli ölçüde değişmiştir. Hem imalat hem de hizmet sektörü, organizasyonel hedeflere ulaşmada yeni yaklaşımlar benimsemiş, bu nedenle performans göstermişlerdir. Hizmet kalitesi ve müşteri memnuniyeti, müşterilerin beklentilerinin ne kadar iyi karşılandığını değerlendirmek için pazarlamada sıklıkla kullanılan iki terimdir. Türk havayolu endüstrisi, serbestleşme yasasının yürürlüğe girmesinden bu yana küresel ve yurtdışında yürürlüğe girdiğinden bu yana bir dizi değişime şahit olmuştur (Tamer Çetin, 2016). Bu nedenle, ülkenin iç sektörünün sektörünü gerektiren oldukça rekabetçi bir pazar yeri ile şirketler her zaman en fazla müşteriyi çekmek ve elde tutmak için yeterli stratejiler bulmaya çalışıyorlar. Dört havayolu şirketi: AtlasGlobal, Onurair, Pegasus ve THY bu kritik konuyu etkin bir şekilde değerlendirmek üzere seçildi. Bu doğrultuda, SERVQUAL yönteminin boyutları bir yolcu bakış açısında memnuniyet faktörünü vurgulamak için seçilmiştir; Başka bir deyişle, algılanan performans. Bu araştırmanın amacı, sonuç ve iş büyümesini çok etkileyen en uygun memnuniyet faktörüne ulaşmak için hizmet kalitesi boyutlarını en iyi ve doğru şekilde uygulayan şirketin karşılaştırılmasıdır.

Bu amacın olmasının sebepleri kalitenin tüm boyutları ile demografik gibi diğer unsurlar arasında bir korelasyon oluşturmaktır. Bu nedenle, İstanbul'da yaşayan yukarıda belirtilen havayolu şirketlerinin potansiyel yolcuları hakkında bir anket yapıldı; ankete katılanlar arasında dağıtılmış ve nicel bir yaklaşımla değerlendirilmiştir. Analiz sonuçları, sonuç çıkarmak ve çıkarımsal sorular çekmek için kullanılmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Hizmet kalitesi, Müşteri Memnuniyeti, Müşteri sadakati*

1. INTRODUCTION

The service sector type of business has proven to be ambiguous as its assessment not only depends on a sole factor but rather the completion of many. Satisfying the needs and expectations of customers therefore relies on the execution of strategic tasks in respect to the type of industry in which they are operating. In line to this, other factors appear to strongly impact on firm's revenue given the type of order purchase, products utility, feedback as well as cost (Gour C. Saha, Theingi, 2009). Some findings have proven that providing the maximum of service quality to the market demand leverage the competitive advantage towards others in business. As the airline industry, has grown rapidly over the years, leading to launching of private's companies operating as charter carriers, we observe as a result innovation which in return prompt executives for continuous improvement of products and services offered to customers. Nevertheless, this observation does not disclaim the fact that cost is as well playing a vital role as punctuality and scheduling but rather occupies a secondary position in customer's purchase behavior (D. Gilbert, Robin K.C Wong 2003). Turkey a country of a population of more than seventy-nine million inhabitants with various city has deployed innovative measures in its transportation most especially in air transport after the year 1980s. We observe a considerable increment in passengers' shift towards airline services rather than other as deregulation laws have laid the ground for low-cost carriers into the business. Travelling by air is no longer considered as a luxurious or exotic thing (Özge, P., 2010). According to the Oxford Economics index, aviation was said to account for 1.1% of the national GDP in 2010 with a forecast of an increment in the upcoming years. Huge investments have been made so far by governments of various nations around the world in the aviation sector that fostered a deregulation in the industry leading to privatization of many brand names nowadays and access to flexible fare, low tariff-taxes, differentiation in services just name a few (Tamer Çetin, 2016). Differentiation, in most cases help in marketing strategies to promote the product or service relatively the brand in order to surpass competition and delivering more valuable services. Quality of service rendered to customers is currently rated as the one of the most important attributes in the continuity or

sustainability of any business. It is defined as the total coefficient of evaluation of excellence in performance (Parasuraman et al, 1985). This concept has long been contemplated by researchers in various business field and associated to the satisfaction of end users towards a service or placement of an order. The two variables service quality and customer satisfaction therefore seem dependent of each other as they serve as driving tools in customer's purchase attitude (Y.S. Fen, K. M. Lian;2007). While others view service quality as an important factor in company's growth, others like Olivier (1999) simultaneously identify customer satisfaction as the strongest component in maintaining customers and gaining their trust. Many research papers have explored either of the above-mentioned concepts as an attempt to unravel the cornerstone of some businesses competitive advantage against others. The Principle of Operations Management 7edition in the case of Arnold Palmer hospital identifies a focus on quality management as a vital tool used by managers to beat competition in the market. This in another word implies all. Some important figures whose work have been directed on the TQM with W. Edwards Deming as an example, attach a high esteem on continuous improvement of quality of products and service to meet up with demand expectations thus, customer's retention. Many scientific works on quality improvement have been centered on products rather than service industry making it slightly difficult for researchers to gathered up-to-date data from empirical studies. Moreover, factors that require more than just scientific concern make the study on such domain unlikely proficient as they have no human control over. We note as some few examples: human error or mistakes, weather sudden changes and every other default occurring in the performance of a task which could not be predictable with full assurance. Therefore, in industries like the airline where most of this above mentioned factors do occur at times, it will be delusionary to assess or rate companies based on the management of those but rather attribute a ratio number in respect of the focus behind other drivers of satisfaction of needs. Airline market is regarded as a very critical industry; its growth often relies on relative environmental, social and economic factors which require carefully planned strategic tools to achieve sustainability. After the year 2003, Turkey followed the deregulation train with launching of new airline companies. In addition to that, innovations made in this sector have considerably elevated the number of customers nationally and also around the world. How do traditional airline carriers deploy their fleet in order to surpass the services of competitors in the face of consumers has drawn considerable attention on both

academic and business point of view. Innovations in airline services around the world have constantly been observed over the years with a predominant shift into the economy. The aim of this study is to determine among some of the existing domestic airlines service providers in Turkey the one satisfying the larger number of consumers regardless of their profile as regular, frequent and constant type of consumers in domestic flight as well as the drivers attached to their purchase behavior using a comparative analysis based on chosen dimensions of quality and satisfaction they get in an in-flight process.

1.1 Background of the Study

Turkish business market has witnessed tremendous changes over the years both economically and socially since its ascension on the list of those countries subjected to join EU union. Many industries have experienced spectacular growth most especially that of tourism and transport. The airline industry on the other hand has had the country's image at a higher level due to his geographical advantage and also the technological and strategic investments made to widen their horizon. The country's airline industry has first been uttered in the 90s after the formal sole airline company was launched under a private status. It had been the only air service provider in the whole country for more than twenty years giving no room for any competition. After the deregulation acts in this industry by the US in the 70s, many countries around the world have implemented such regulations which also resulted in lower fares, increment in flights routes and passengers traffic to name a few (Borenstein, 1992; Joskow, 2005; Goetz and Vowles, 2009; Gudmundsson and Kranenburg, 2002). Such acts have in a way contributed to the success observed nowadays as the first airline carrier in the country THY is known worldwide and still projects to widen the image globally. Old records have shown an increment on the customer's expenditures in term of air transportation fare and tax (approximately TL 38) in the recent years also proven to be increasing nowadays. Not only did the deregulation act that led to the privatization of airline industry spurred the focus on marketing strategies implemented in the business, but also the need to fulfill customers' expectations. As we observe in this modern days, the strive to win and sustain the greatest number of customers constantly have managers launching new programs and strategies to fit into the market place while sustaining a competitive advantage. A greater understanding of factors directly

or indirectly affecting revenues fuels the implementation of business decisions that surface. In the airline industry, in particular such philosophy is explained by the shift from marketing strategies to customer focus instead since he is considered as the most important asset here; therefore, a focus on satisfaction (Zeithaml, Bitner, 2000). Customers play a vital role in determining the future of a business given their feedbacks on prior experiences. To the little of our knowledge, they stand as the judges of expectations of services rendered to them; in other words of service quality. However, previous literatures have analyzed the important combination of both service quality and satisfaction which greatly reflects in performance figures. One is in conjunction of the other as some researchers have brought to light the connection between the two terms. Unlike production sector, service industry; airline precisely is very critical to assess perhaps due to the difficult task given to managers to effectively comprehend and satisfy the demand in a highly competitive market regardless of their gender, class or any other determinant of their profile. Turkey's transportation system has witnessed tremendous changes over the years in many aspects one could think of; from road, rail, to air carriage. The country's development has also affected the choice of this means of transportation consumers use nowadays to move from one place to the other for business or any other related purpose. With a considerable number of passengers wishing to enjoy the service offered to them by the private companies available locally, concerns have been drawn by researchers and service providers to find best approaches to effectively understand end users' needs. It is vital and more costly to gain and sustain new customer (Woodruff, 1997); therefore service providers constantly invest into quality dimensions to achieve satisfaction. Flights depart on daily basis in the land of Turkey both to regional or international locations. Few literatures have contemplated problems in Turkish aviation sector and even the ideology of companies' ranking in respect to price, safety and other strategic responses to competition and proposed theoretical approaches to problem arising. However, how quality and customer satisfaction to the benefit of operating airline companies and alliances in the domestic market is yet to be uncovered through scientific works and observations in order to obtain clearer and practical approaches to related issues.

1.2 Overview of Turkish Airline Industry

The twenty first century has since its new entry encountered series of technical, scientific, environmental and many other innovations which have so far completed or rather improved the lives of those sharing our planet. Some of these greatest achievements were made in transport system. Although the country enjoys the other means of transport available to them to name water, road, rail etc. the focus on the airline sector is of importance as of the tremendous impact on the country's economic and social conduit.

After the freelance of privatization was implemented in Turkey, the country today accounts of eleven different air service suppliers that operate domestically on scheduled/ non-scheduled flights of which only few are publicly known both to nationals and foreigners; Turkish Airlines, Onur air, Pegassus, AtlasGlobal, Borajet, Anadolujet, Sun express, besides those, there is mention of additional ones such as: IZair, Corendon Airlines, Tailwing Airlines and Freebird Airlines. Despite the existence of other substitutes and alliances the market comprises of, some are not effectively regarded as actual threat to other competitors. Online websites such as Skyscanner.com as an example often display results of a search for ticket with only the commonly known carriers which subsequently impact on their image to be more accessible. THY the oldest air carrier in the country was founded in the year 1933 prior to the second world war era while Pegasus Airlines came in sixty-seven years later in 1990. OnurAir on the other hand was launched in 1992 and nine years post to that, we witnessed the introduction of AtlasGlobal into Turkish airline domestic market. Over the years, reports have showcased evolution in the industry especially expressed by the number of passengers yearly with the growth' percentage.

2012-2016 PASSENGER TRAFFIC IN TURKEY

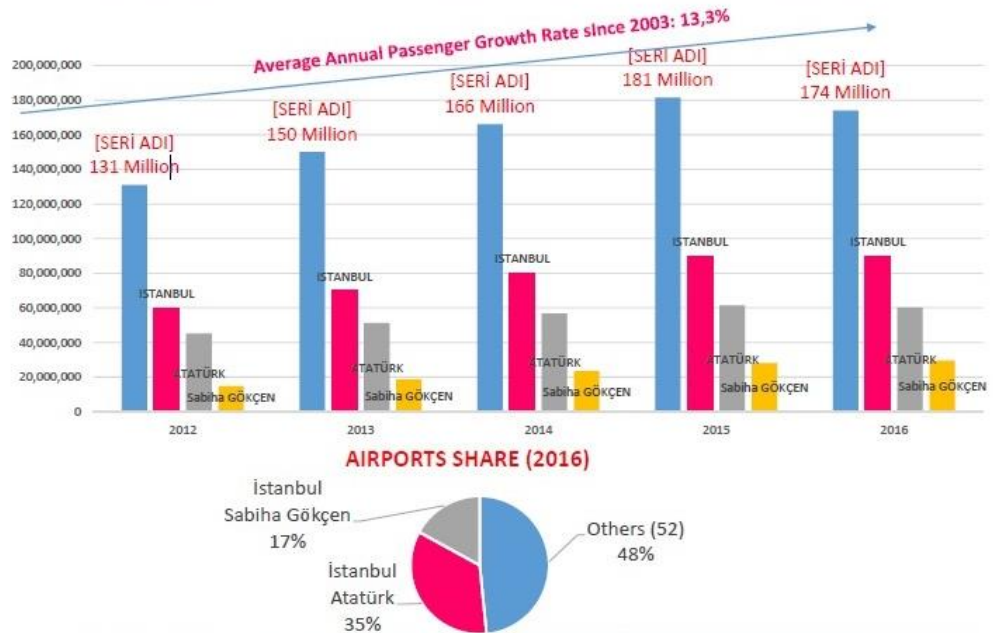


Figure 1.1: Air Passenger's traffic in Turkey 2012-2016

The above figure illustrates the increase in the number of passengers registered for intended flights at two of the airports in Istanbul over a period of four years. The equation in this case is to be solve using independent and dependent variables; in other words, the success of one is been driven by the performance of the other.

As of recent, liberalization as a result of the global deregulation in aviation sector, has sparkeded the intense competition observed nowadays between carriers. We move from only one player domestically to more than five up to date serving a rapidly growing number of customers in all available routes within the Turkish air traffic. The table below gives more in-sights in the changes observed over a period of ten years as from 1995 both domestically and international.

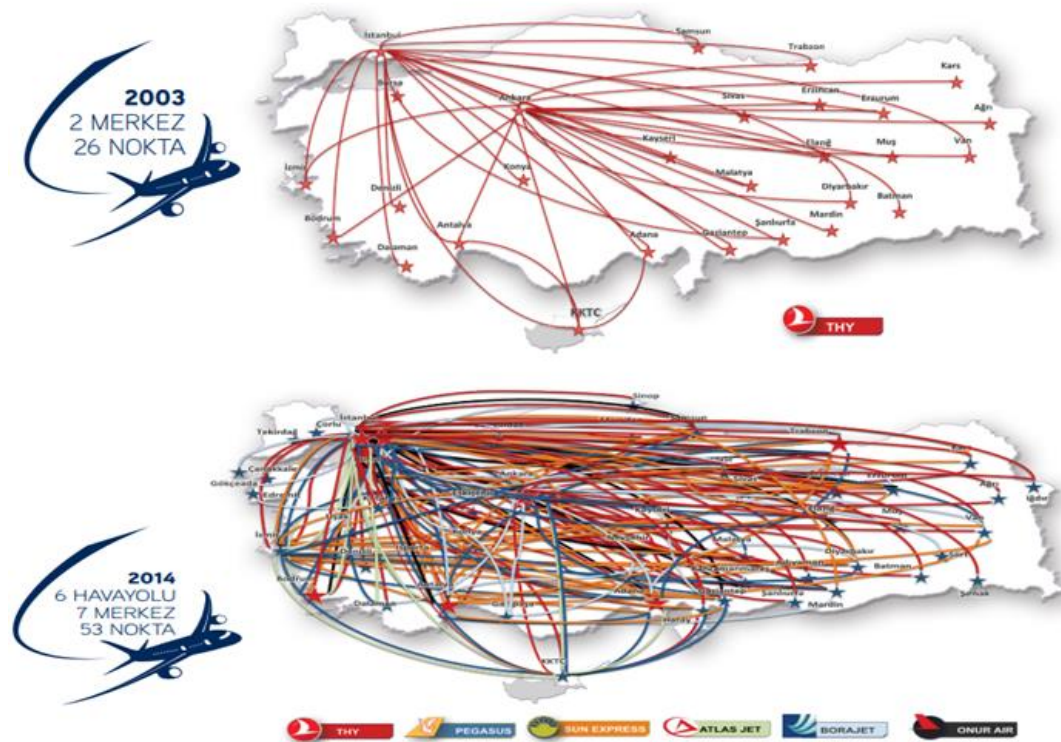
Table 1.1: Annual number of passengers from 1995-2005

Year	The number of passengers		
	Domestic	International	Total
1995	10.347.528	17.419.851	27.767.379
1996	10.862.539	19.918.123	30.780.662
1997	12.413.720	21.982.614	34.396.334
1998	13.238.832	20.960.847	34.199.679
1999	12.931.771	17.079.887	30.011.658
2000	13.339.039	21.633.495	34.972.534
2001	10.057.808	23.562.640	33.620.448
2002	8.697.864	24.927.311	33.625.175
2003	9.125.298	25.141.870	34.267.168
2004	14.427.969	30.361.101	44.789.070
2005	19.942.692	34.582.322	54.537.240

Source: SAA Statics Yearbook, 2005.

The above figures displayed in this table been recorded and approved, they showcase with exactitude the entry into the market of new policies, strategies and probably other service providers attracting more consumers creating an intense competition thus the number of domestic and international passengers. However, the concern

Turkish Domestic Aviation 2003 vs 2014: Connections & Airlines



Source: Directorate General Civil Aviation (DGCA, 2014 Activity Report)

Figure 1.2: Turkish Domestic Aviation 2003 vs 2014

The above figures clearly illustrate a high volume in registered domestic flights in Turkish cities using different carriers in respective of preferences and every other influencing factors. Consequently, to this increment in the number of local destinations, is also the growth in air service providers resulting in a highly competitive market place and a wider range of options for customers.

1.2.1 Benefits of air services in Turkey

Developments recorded in aviation sector on the land have tremendously impacted on the social and economic life of its inhabitants. As the demand curve for airline services is constantly shifting upward, we also observe increment in the creation and implementation of new jobs openings to support related activities. The Oxford Economics report of December (2016) supported by the IATA reveals an added value on the GDP which amount of 6 percent of the annual value in the year 2014; this subsequently of airline operations. Sector as that of tourism and air transport witnessed constructive changes as they attract a higher number of customers, therefore improving revenues. Not only are the benefits of air transportation in Turkey an expansion of tourism and catering services but also reinforcement of FDI and new form of businesses.

1.2.2 Onur Air

Onur airlines, is one among all private airline companies operating in Turkey. It was founded in 1992 but only began domestic flights in the year 2003. The airline services more than 10 airports locally with a high rate at Atatürk International Airport in Istanbul. Operating with a 23 fleet passengers types of aircraft, it also services numerous destinations around the world and is currently recognized as the largest private airline in the country; servicing the highest number of domestic flights with competitive fares. Most flights operated by the company departs from the largest airport in the nation namely Atatürk Airport.

1.2.3 Atlas Global

It is a low-cost private carrier among airlines in Turkey. First established in 2001, it only commenced providing services for commercial purposes in 2004. Operating with eighteen fleet type of aircraft, unlike Onur Airlines, comprises of fewer international destinations.

1.2.4 THY

Commonly known as the flag carrier of Turkey, is the first ever launched airline company in the country. Formally state owned company, the airline was founded in 1933 by the Ministry of defense with a very low budget of TRY 180,000 according to the investors relations (2013) to serve different purposes. It comprises of one subsidiary or tradeoff such as Anadolujet which has a wider range of affordable offers and mostly operate on shorter routes.

1.2.5 Pegasus

Founded as joint venture in 1990 by Aer Lingus Group, Silkar Yatırım ve Insaat Organizasyonu A.S. and Net Holding A.S., Pegasus main site' Sabiha Gokcen airport where most schedule flight depart from is also known as Turkey' lowest airline cost wise. According to Pegasus online network, it comprises of 83 aircrafts which 75 belongs to Pegasus, 6 to Izair and 2 to Air Manas. The company only started operating domestically in the year 2005 after being handed over to the management of Esas Holding A.S and has then developed considerably and also extending his fleet. One of the recent updates is recorded to be that of cabin simulator used on board should in case of emergency.

1.3 Problem Statement

According to the increase number of passengers and entry into the market of other airline companies rather than the previously state owned brand, Turkish airline industry has reached a more intensive stage of its life cycle as it has become more saturated and highly competitive. People are using more and more air services for their different travel purposes and other businesses. Introduction of new type of carriers such as Boeing, charter type being larger and easily accessible respectively has made the management a more complex task one could efficiently handle. The continuity of their purchase order is constantly being powered by predominant factors that in return will increase the competitive advantage of suppliers. However, in a quite dense competition as that of this great country in the air industry, the use of different types of strategies to gain greater shares is prevalent. Organizations do compete with one another yet do not especially rely on the same type of competitive methods used. Despite the pointing fact of which they are regarded as being complementary to each

of them (Potter, 1980), it requires different settings, techniques and resources to implement such strategies into the portfolio. Nevertheless, the main purpose of all being to gain and sustain more customers, it is necessary to address the issue in a flexible way as to direct the process of evaluation in a customer-oriented point of view to have more insights on the problem. Three different travel processes have been identified as to be: the pre-consumption, consumption and post-consumption (Kasper et al, 2006). Such basis has been the point of focus coupled to the type of competitive strategy players used to satisfy their consumers over the year but then studies to help airline carriers in Turkey market grow have demonstrated their focus on other perspectives such as price-focus, differentiation just name a few. After collecting information from handful of passengers and having faced real life cases during travel experience, I discovered that the most critical aspect influencing consumer's choice of their favorite airline company was deemed to be the main flight process. Thus, in this stage, passengers get to spend length of time accordingly the distance of their journey but also are directly exposed to the various quality attributes available. In other words, the better the result of the exposure, the greater the customer's satisfaction.

1.4 Research Aims and Objectives

In depth with the questionnaires administered to respondents and interviews with few flight attendants from local airline brands, I therefore articulate the desire to add findings to this research paper. It is hereby aimed at identifying among domestic Turkish airline carriers, the one satisfying the greatest number of passengers in terms of in-flight services and various aspects attached to this critical process. As indicated above, the key elements intended at underpinning our aim would therefore be:

To explore the geographical changes in airline industry and the joint effects on Turkey

To analyze the usefulness of customer-oriented quality dimensions during the most critical stage of the travel

To explore the appraisal criteria of customer satisfaction in an on-going process

To identify how managers strategically respond and fulfill the most expected value of passengers in-flight.

1.5 Limitation of the Study

It is considerably appealing to the public nowadays that Turkey has so far considerably gained a profitable and competitive advantage in many businesses and industries due to its geographical position. Aviation sector has also developed innovative ways to increase their market share and profitability; thus enlarging the industry. The country is globally known for its culture, population, its sophisticated airline industry and other related features. Due to time constraints and quantity of data to be collected and analyzed for this research paper, placing the focus on only domestic flights within the land of Turkey stands as the best option to truly examine factors behind customer's satisfaction in some of the operating carriers. Furthermore, an explicit analysis of literature and case study on in-flight process will be used as reference to light up the dissertation. The current paper will also narrow down the research as to concentrate on four domestic airlines in Turkey to name AtlasGobal, Onurair, Pegasus and Turkish Airlines for more accurate data. Hence the choice of questionnaires as a data collection technique is deemed appropriated as the respondents (passengers) are the most concerned in this case.

1.6 Research Questions

The following research questions will help us shape our way into the overall purpose of this paper as we literally attempt to comprehend how the proposed objectives are being incorporated.

- What are the drivers of passenger's choice of an airline domestic service carrier?
- What type of competitive marketing strategy is commonly used in Turkey's aviation market?
- How does managers' choice of a competitive strategy affect the local market?
- What are the dimensions of service quality highly in use in Turkish market in a customer aspect?
- How do SERVQUAL dimensions of quality affect passenger's satisfaction of regional air carriers?

1.7 Importance of the Study

To Academicians: findings retrieved from this research paper will be beneficial to scholars in the sense that it will propose a new literature to the previously existing ones conducted in this area using Turkey as a sample within the population considered to be all international destinations around the globe. The comparison between the chosen companies will help shape the way towards a more accurate cluster in defining standard metrics in assessing quality among airline services providers in Turkey regardless of customer' profile.

To managers: results of the analysis conducted in light to this topic is intended at supporting and consolidating formal strategies used by players in the industry to develop a strong competitive advantage in the market and sustain the higher level of customers. The review of respondent's answer to the proposed survey would be likely to understand and cover lapses in processes.

2. LITERATURE SURVEY

Some critics within the scope of business have argued that service quality and customer satisfaction have a great impact on organization performance while others attributed its rating to other factors.

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews the relevant series of literature that will contribute to the advancement of our study that comprises of different sections presented below.

The performance of a business is sometimes measured in terms of the quality of products or to understand the particularity, kind of utility derived from a placement of order or rather a task enabling consumers to rate it accordingly their satisfaction towards it.

Assessing the effectiveness of services offered is a difficult task to perform as there are considerable factors involved. (Parasuraman et al 1985), identified a connection between perception and expectations derived from customer's pool as they focus on comparing goods and services they get accordingly their own prerequired standards. This evaluation of the quality problem has prompted him to develop and apply to real-life business issues a scheme well-known as the SERVQUAL model. Parasuraman's work here attributed a grading system to the quality problem based on five dimensions such as: tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy. Along with other researchers who embraced the study model, it has enabled them to place a label as of excellent or rather bad if any of the two independent variables is greater than the other (Vazquez et al, 2001). His study has considerably contributed to the previously exiting literature; as theories are drawn and applied to various business case studies.

The above proposed model has recognized tangibility as one of the features used in qualifying businesses; thus, some types are said to be solely intangible. This particularity is known as that of service industry. As an example, to this type, we have the airline market which; over the years has become very critical to comprehend as customers' switch or preferences to competitors' services may vary accordingly their

criteria and uniqueness as (Clemes, Mollenkopf and Burn, 2000). Expectations are then difficult to apprehend as behavioral attitude of one is linked to different attributes which in return play a dominant role in the return customer 'purchase attitude.

In the recent years, researchers' focus has been placed on analyzing and determining the most accurate and satisfying level of perceived value received as form of services rendered. This concern lead to the evaluation of contents of service quality as for instance from authors like (Ye et al, 2014), who attached price, service received and expectations as some of the core determinants of service quality definition from customer point of view. Price is given primordial attention for it is more feasible for all service providers with no pre-existing knowledge on the drivers of their consumers' purchase behavior to gather relevant information related with customers' database (McConnell 1968, Olander 1970 and Zeithaml 1981). Along with this philosophy of which quality evaluation does not just rely on the attribute of one but rather diverse concepts fitting in its core assessment, other scientific work have also attached importance to customer' perceptions by attempting to examine the link between variables to understand the driven aspects which could eventually satisfy the end user' needs and expectations. Despite the numerous studies directed in this sector, considerable amount of information has still not been totally revealed to actors of the research to unable them close all gaps of low-quality services in various disciplines. This accounts for both direct and indirect variables that shape the way to the maximum service quality in the mind of purchasers. Different approaches are being used to return the offer to the other party which might not necessarily be the same in all organizations in respect to their area of specialization. However, it first requires one an accurate and clear understanding of the quality concept prior to its analysis to be able to prompt strategic thinking in quality management.

The reason behind every placement of order is usually considered to be satisfaction from the offer. Individuals often expect a return of value for what they have spent; thus, considered here as utility or quality as commonly used term. However, that might not essentially appear or be perceived the same as in retails, or any other type of industry (Finn, 2004). Some authors like Solomon (2009) identify service as one of the features consumers do seek for in their quest for quality; therefore, a combination of the two concepts is likely to consolidate the definition of one of our research terms said here to service quality. There is no general rule as to unfold the accurate meaning

of the above concept but rather an attempt from empirical review of literatures. Service quality is thus defined as consumer' feedback on the overall performance of an action or offer in exchange of money and or other related features (Zeithaml, 1987). This description could either be denoted as in term of satisfaction or the contrary relatively to the level of needs and expectations which are been met. Thus with little of our knowledge, it is relative to say that service quality might closely be associated with customer satisfaction. Hence, criticism by other researchers as its validity has not been fully accepted unless measurement techniques contribute to managers' work of improving lapses of satisfaction in quality (Parasuraman, 1990).

Several reviews of literature have risen emphasis on the importance of fulfilling customer's need to maintain a constant revenue with hope for greater ones. Further, it has become imperial for industries to invest both strategically and operationally into the scope of their performance to compete in the market place.

2.2 Service Quality

The main purpose of this paper is to identify the critical aspects of quality in airline industry which help to enhance performance derived from any establishment into the industry. In relation to the previously stated objectives and aim to undergo this study, focus on service quality topic is vital for our intended findings. Several authors and scholars have over the years undertaken the argumentations on the service quality thoughts and dimensions of this discipline in order to eradicate negative peers. It has partially been explored this explained with the fact that not only is its definition difficult to apprehend but also does it express confusion for researchers to find relevant evaluation techniques and methods with accurate results (Monroe and Krishnan, 1983). Grönroos (1984) has highlighted throughout his work two dominant features of service quality such as the technical and the functional aspects which respectively question the "what" and "how" of the service delivered into the market (Brady and Cronin, 2001). These two interrogatives here are eventually in conjuncture with the type of service rendered and the different processes involved in performing and delivering it to customers. In accordance with this research, additional extend on the topic has disclaimed the existence of a multitude of attributes numbered over 90 (Parasuraman, 1988) all narrowed down to ten dimensions used in quality assessment listed below as follow:

- Tangibility
- Reliability
- Responsiveness
- Competence
- Courtesy
- Credibility
- Security
- Access
- Communication
- Understanding the customer

Despite the previous existing studies on quality from other academicians, only few have focus on the service industry. Early literature that questioned the effectiveness of performance were first conducted in the manufacturing sector leaving researchers puzzled about its assessment for those targeted as intangible overall outcomes of a process. Some authors as Carman (1990), criticized this approach proposed by his formal as the SERVQUAL model do not provide effective and accurate data for service type of industry till being commonly approved. Garvin (1983), introduced a different method for assessing quality of products aiming at comparing both the internal and external disconformities observed in a product. His method has long served in operations management as to denote and improve the quality of goods thus sustaining customers with less defaults on products. The same philosophy is used in the TQM (Total Quality Management); a very popular method introduced by the Japanese automobile manufacturer that was set as a standard for quality assessment in various industries up to date. However, given the type of goods, the so-called method would unlikely be replicated in all industries because of the intangibility of some. However, has known a huge success in the quality control process of products through the Kaizen method which lead to the Toyota brand, one of the best ever made type of vehicles with variety of choices in products not only because of the affordability of purchase cost but rather with higher level of satisfaction customer's wise; acquired as a result of well-established and effective decisions making process involving managers of all levels of the pyramid.

Although the few historical studies conducted in service sector attempted to propose a more realistic model to service quality, many authors are yet to identify the constants

that rely on the existing concepts and all related attributes that foster its completion. It has also been proven that some consumers' choice of a particular product or service not only is driven by the features of the offer but also other attributes that best suit his personality and lifestyles in order to discriminate him from others (Leon G. Schiffman and L.L Kanuk 2000). This is often observed nowadays in one of the most innovative industries: technology. We observe here a battle of recognition between Samsung and iPhone users hence considered to be more sophisticated and wealthier than those of his competitor. One will spend more than the average price of that of the competitor's for the same model and functions that offer the phone being purchased in order to get the non-monetary benefits set by the society such as prestige and sense of superiority in this case. Further, with the little of our knowledge, we are able to draw as conclusion regarding the above mentioned real life situation that service quality is strongly qualified as the amount of satisfaction one gets from goods or service formally purchased. However, differentiates in variables and factors given the consumer's profile and expectations.

Growing into a new century where innovations often occur in different sectors, quality is as well facing slight changes in perception in the mindset of customers therefore needs constant refinements. Having the best quality do no longer require the most expensive investment towards realization of tasks but rather conformity; in other words, how well improvements could satisfy and go beyond needs. In airline industry, perhaps, we observe great improvements which also fuel challenges in the market for actors to respond through more competitive strategies in every stage of the intended travel process. Its assessment extend to a wider construct of the entire process of provision (G. Nicolini; S. Salini 2006). The heterogeneous characteristic of quality as identified by Parasuraman et al in his work proves the difficulty in measuring this concept in business for as services are unlikely uniform as products; hence process non-identical from each and every individual's experience and behavior.

2.2.1 Service quality dimensions

Early researches on quality effectiveness in marketing were developed on the basis of multiple item-instruments such as the SERVQUAL, RATER to name a few. Thus, for academic purpose, it was deemed necessary to assess quality of service as it incorporates both the disconfirmation and other service variables directly impacting

on managerial issues. Therefore, the five dimensions used by Parasuraman et al., (1988b) to find the gap between performance and service expectations are namely: responsiveness, tangibility, empathy, reliability and assurance.

2.2.2 Customer satisfaction

The secondary objective of this paper is to identify the factors or dimensions of quality in airline services retrieved in Turkish domestic flights passengers are the most satisfied with. Traditionally, it is always important to have a happy customer than one with consistent complains for it will impact on the business at a measurable scale. But having to satisfy them through the services provided may sound even lot better as it serves as a vital strategy to create and maintain trust, loyalty and profits gain.

Customers satisfaction is a business term commonly used as a measurement tool of products and services' effectiveness in meeting market expectations. In other words, it serves as a key performance indicator. Both tangible and intangible products' future seem to rely on this very critical concept. Debates concerning customer satisfaction have widely been on the scene over the years as the future of companies highly depends on its effective assessment. The use of various methods and approaches to this task have been developed by various actors to differentiate and outperform their competitors in the market place. However, the satisfaction process being influenced by other factors namely individual expectations, direct contact to name a few; combining such characteristics to its definition not only explicit the understanding but also open room for debate on the question at a standard point of focus.

It is very obvious today to forecast the intended future sales of a company in respective of the formal production and defaults encountered in the product to be delivered to the public whilst the latter, the service type is classified as unstandardized due to individuals. According to (Kotler et al (2002), building a solid, positive and trustworthy relationship with customers benefits an upper advantage of one over his competitors. Thus, such relationship could extend to loyalty towards the brand. Measuring customer satisfaction in airline industry could be subjective to peculiar aspects other than the commonly known in this sector for as airline companies often do have similar features namely the seats, fleets at which they operate, same transit zones and or manner of approach towards customers. However, in the case of analyzing differentiated variables accordingly the "Expectancy-Disconfirmation"

paradigm introduced by Gale (1994), results of each steps in the process seem to strongly depend on the former variable in the cycle; that of quality.

2.2.3 Theoretical framework on customer satisfaction

The interest on leveraging the overall performance and surviving competition in business have led to researchers and practitioners engaging in developing more strategic and feasible techniques in some of the most essentials functions of the organizational chart as that of the marketing mix. Opinions and techniques being drawn as a mean to efficiently evaluate the construct in order to draw the cluster of similarities in assessing the level of satisfaction in the mind of consumers. Nowadays, a more insightful mean for companies to evaluate the customer service index is deemed to be the NPS method. NPS which stand for Net Promoter Score has greatly contributed to diminishing the task in satisfaction assessment providing more accurate results which in return are used as point of focus to solving customers related issues. It was first introduced in business by his author, Reichheld (2003) as a barometer to customer to purchase habits and company's future growth. David VanAmburg, director of ACSI qualified the aviation sector; airline to be precised as a very sensible and critical one as it faces various problems on the daily basis. From flight delay and luggages lost to poor direct contact on in-flight service, all commercial airline companies do have to struggle to maintain the satisfaction level as high as possible to avoid dissatisfied customers being detractors of the business. This new strategy implemented in marketing operations helps in strategizing the future; therefore on the long-run. The above index is obtained by subtracting the number of promoters from that of the detractors you have in the business and expressed as a percentage. The higher the value, the better the customer satisfaction. Using a scale that ranges from 0-10 accordingly the category of the respondents, It is commonly used in business as a metric for brand loyalty also expressed here as the satisfaction level the consumers get from using a random brand and the likelihood for purchase behavior.

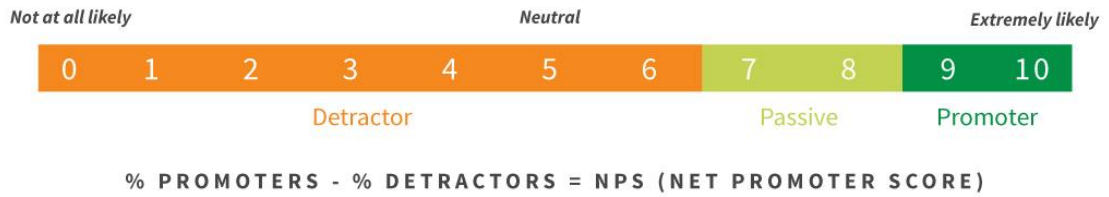


Figure 2.1: Net Promoter Score

Source: <https://www.netpromoter.com/know/>

Other theories have been developed, proposed and utilized in business to measure the conformity of service performance. Some example of these philosophies are the expectancy disconfirmation, assimilation, contrast and assimilation theories all aimed at perceiving and fill the gaps of expectations on a customer’ based approach.

2.2.3.1 Expectancy/Disconfirmation Theory (EDT)

The initial purpose for producing and delivering goods and services to customers is to satisfy all expectations associated. Having a satisfy consumers always entails good performance from the producers. The EDT is derived from the Cognitive Dissonance Theory (CDT) first presented in 1957 by the researcher Leon Festinger. The latter is assessed as the dissonance one gets from conflicts in behaviors and consistency. In his work, the author attributed a more neutral term to the formal “Cognitive Dissonance” stated as “Consonance”. The dissonance factor usually escalates in respect to how high or low the cognitions towards a particular concept are. In other words, the strive to maintain the factor at a well befitting range highly depends on the variables driving it and outcomes. Previous studies have addressed the dissonance traits and argued on the diminution approaches to maintain its consistency such as: decreasing empirical cognitions, entirely changing the formal thoughts and adding an intermediate factor with a stronger value than the already existing two conflicting terms.

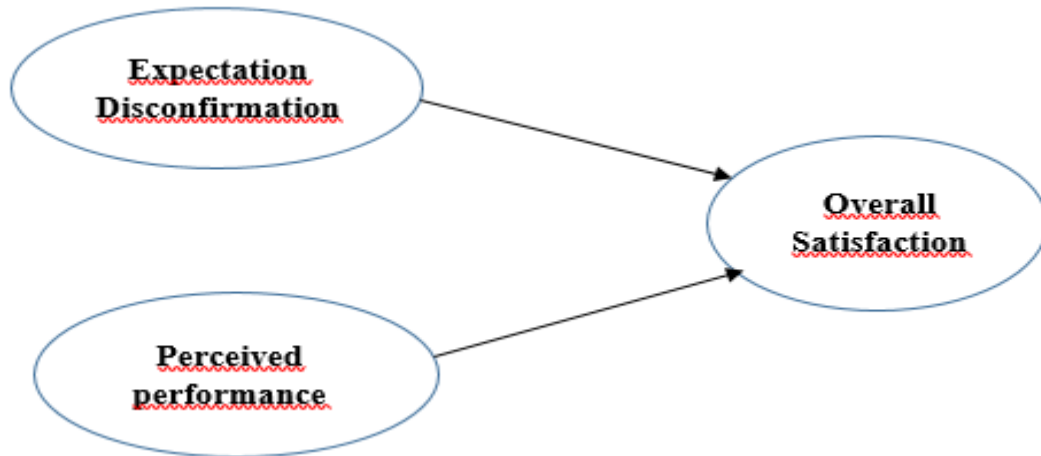


Figure 2.2: Expectation Disconfirmation Paradigm

Source: Saltari, S. (2007) “Application of Disconfirmation Theory on Customer Satisfaction Determination Model in Mobile Telecommunication: Case of prepaid mobiles in Iran, p.31.

In accordance with the CDT, a traditional definition of the disconfirmation theory would be based on the three different points as follow:

- If prior beliefs of a product or service meet expectations, therefore we reach the satisfaction level
- If performance fail to meet with customers’ expectations, therefore the dissatisfaction would be of used; and
- If expectations are at a lower level than that of the performance, therefore it is a positive disconfirmation.

Tse and Wilson (1988) ‘work presented perceived performance as a vital tool used to assess the overall satisfaction of customers in regards to their antecedents’ work on service performance and satisfaction. In the case of Airline industry whereby passengers’ positive disconfirmation is generally considered by the high number of passengers in respect to affordable offers provided, the contrast is more appealing as satisfaction does not only accounts for one factor but rather a sum a cumulative determinant such as those of the SERVQUAL analysis.

2.2.3.2 Assimilation theory

Retrieved from the Dissonance theory of Festinger's (1957), it highlights the comparison customers make between the actual service and their expectations prior to the purchase. This technique could be deemed flexible as service consumers here can decide to moderate or change the value they attached to services by either leveraging or minimizing the standards.

The method has been subjected to criticism as some authors (Payton et al 2003) argued the accuracy of fact such as the positive relation between customer's expectation and either satisfaction or disconformity. Thus as we move deeper into reviewing other literature, some academic works are parallel to the idea of a negative performance been recorded as a result of higher customers' expectations unless initially vowed as such.

2.2.3.3 Contrast theory

The theory was first introduced in 1987 by the authors Hovland, Harvey and Sherif as to coneract the assimilation theory. Attempts to posit the meaning of this theology has permitted review of previous work to unveil the discrepancy attribute of this concept. Consumers' evaluation are deducted from post usage and often exaggerated therefore its definition: a way of amplifying the differences in opinions from the stated ones resulting in a discrepancy (Dawes, singer and Lemons1972). According to facts, the tendency of any sudden action to occur on an on-going evaluation process is at its highest pitch which consequently results in maximizing the discrepancy factor unlike in assimilation theory. Further studies as that of the author Anderson have been developed accordingly in other to emphasize on the relation between the two theories, their similarities and contrast.

Of a recent, a new model had been developed on a basis of questioning and speculations on factors highly contributing to satisfaction and loyalty of customers towards a brand regardless of the type of business. His study was aimed not only at determining the most important factors which improve the quality of services but rather the way to effectively attain and sustain satisfied and loyal customers. Not only investing in providing products or services with the greatest quality features always positively affect the business but also understanding the important roles each play is wiser. Thus, a different evaluation approach the "Kano Model" has been developed by the Japanese author Prof Nariaki Kano in the early 80s and still responds today as a

vital tool for firms in the strive for customers satisfaction key elements. The model was created on a basis of five different variables; all playing important role into the overall mission goal. The Kano model through its framework shows that investments on a product or service of the same kind could have different effects on the customers; Not only high investments are deemed to high degree of satisfaction. Sometimes just as small as little is needed to convey buyers and satisfy their need. The idea behind is to reach the utility factor rather than the “Ceteris Paribus”. Unlike the law of demand and supply states in economy that the demand of a product is being affected by the quality and price features, Dr Kano’s work

proves otherwise with the conceptual approach embodied in his theory. Generally, three different attributes are used to categorize and rate the satisfaction index in business. They are listed as follow:

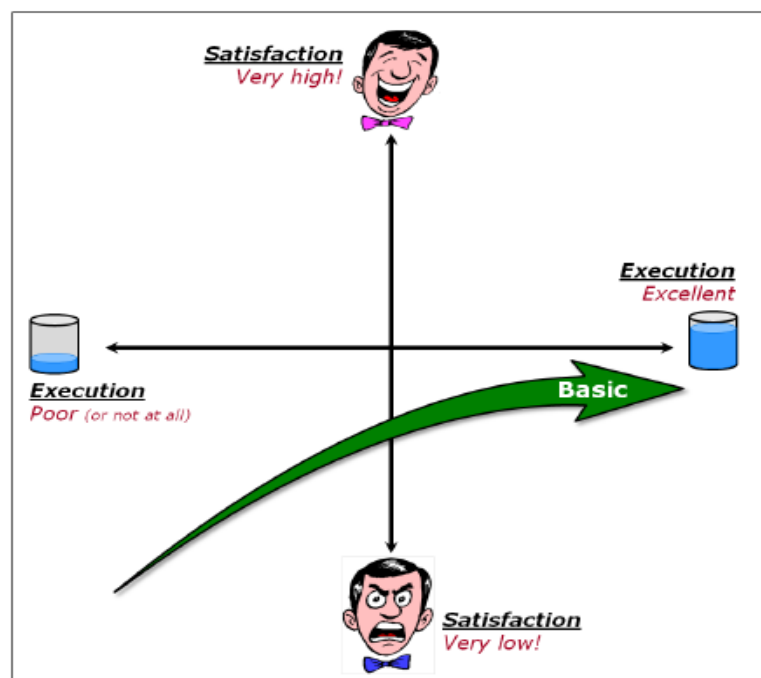


Figure 2.3: Kano Model

Source: <https://www.kanomodel.com2014>

*Performance: as per function or process, is related with the act of completing an action to be delivered in the form of service or products. It is easily noticeable therefore directly giving room for judgments and other feedbacks accordingly the nature of the task done. The results could either be satisfactory or dissatisfactory. An example of such essentials features of the customers is the waiting time between the placement of

a food order and the delivery. The faster the food is delivered, the happier the customer. The author, Dr Kano primarily quoted the requirements performance as being “One-Dimensional” due to the correlation between variables.

*Basic: here are included all features that ought to be as part of the service of products. Already presumed as present, these factors are often attached first evaluation. However, when omitted, they have a considerable impact on sales and profits. It is the case of a small milk pack to be consumed mainly by kids being sold without a straw being attached to the pack. It does not really matter whether or not each pack has two straws instead of one but; thus, it only adds little but less to the value rather than when absent.

*Excitement: understanding customers’ needs for satisfaction sometimes requires going beyond just the strategic processes of a successful marketing but rather understanding the subconscious. The aim here is to attain delightful elements which could be expressed by amazement on customer’s side and touch the emotional aspect of each. Despite their accountability when present in products or service as value added, they do not controversially affect the business if not present. A surplus value term has more meaning in such situations as added features will not only differentiate the customers and organization, but also attract more customers

2.2.4 Service quality and satisfaction

Both concepts “service quality” and “customer’s satisfaction” are often used in conjunction in scientific works to fill gaps in company’s overall performance and also test the accuracy of empirically proposed theories on the question of satisfy buyers and consumers. However, it is essentials too for researchers to have more insightful thoughts on drivers that motivate consumers purchase attitude towards a brand despite the competition. Therefore, the use of a different approach such as the quantitative technique although argued among practitioners of the marketing discipline, is likely to provide concrete data as the feasibility and application are more accurate.

In the contemporary era of nowadays, various definitions of the above terms from empirical studies have shaped a more constructive and feasible meaning of the two concepts. However, to date no any standard definition has been made unanimous to all as a result of differential factors and type of industry we do have. Some industries as the service type; precisely airline business abounds of numerous a vital characteristic

that make its uniqueness (Kilic and Eleren 2009). Usually, both concepts are being intertwined due to their conjunctive description and relationship within businesses. To some extent, satisfaction finds its truthful meaning in the perceived-quality one gets from a service performance offered; therefore, assess the satisfaction depending on it (Giovanna and Silvia, 2006). Some as Carman (1990) will go in the same perspective as to agree with this philosophy by considering satisfaction also as the contrast existing between expectancy.

However, in an environment of constant changes as it is in the airline market, sustaining that perceived quality therefore demand more than investing in quality but rather combining both strategic efforts and technology resulting in loyalty in most case. For every staff member involved in the delivering process of service, he/she is accountable to intermediate towards customers' expected value. In as much as there is a direct contact between staff member and customers, all physically features here are as well regarded as critical inputs to the credibility of the expected service to be rendered. An easier way of determining a brand loyalty stands to be that of the words of mouth to mouth technique whereas the quickest response in the choice of a particular service provider is being given. Several methods are used in the evaluation on satisfaction in airline services as examples of the MUSA model used in Greece (Athens in 2001) in domestic flight, the perceived service quality model proposed by Gronroos composing of dimensions; used as a customer 'satisfaction barometer in British Airways (UK) to name a few. To path out all competitors in business, all important characteristics of a satisfactory quality are to be embedded into the model (Giovanna and Silvia, 2006).

2.2.5 Service quality dimensions

Up to date, there has not been any quantitative technique in measuring the quality in service industry; reason being of the particularity of service focus type of businesses which often distinguish by their intangible, heterogeneous and inseparability features as mentioned the authors Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry (1985). The most commonly used metric in marketing in the evaluation of service performance, the SERVQUAL method constitutes of various constructs narrowed down under five different dimensions of quality applicable to all indicators of the template. They are namely,

Tangibility: Unlike in goods quality where every indicator is being detected, other features such as the cleanliness of the aircraft, number and state of passengers' seats to name a few.

Reliability: is expressed by the ability the firm has to perform and fulfill promises upon expectations.

Assurance: is regarded as the capacity employees have to retain customer's trust and gain their credibility.

Empathy: as the word itself indicates, it is referred to as the special manner used on each and every customer to approach existing matters. In this case, no standard technique is used as it depends on profile, mood, gender to name a few.

Responsiveness: has its meaning in the customers' complaints management. Not only do business must handle issues arising but also should they apply responsibility and role taking to understand the consumer better.

However, when evaluating results from surveys and other type of data collection methods applied on respondents, a difference in the percentage number surface as to prove that all dimensions of service quality do not all have the same value on a user based approach. Therefore every marketing investment made in this prospective ought to be balanced to reach the maximum satisfaction level. A study by Chris Arlen (2008) graphically illustrate the different dimensions of service quality customers really focus on in an ascendant order. The below figure showcase the fact.

Service quality dimensions; customer's value approach.

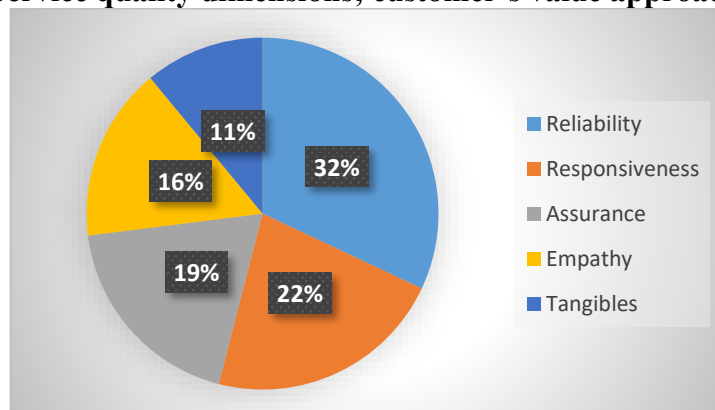


Figure 2.4: Service Quality dimensions on Customer's Approach

Source: Service Performance Inc. (2015)

2.2.6 Service quality concepts

Service quality literature index still showcase a minimum value perhaps of the small number of researches in this area as it

Models of service quality are aimed at improving the quality. The service type of business or enterprises entails a larger or rather deeper definition of its etymology. It is characterized as a varied one as it ranges from governments (Health, military, education to name a few) to NGO and/or private (insurance, tourism, some airline companies, churches etc.). Many firms nowadays whether manufacturing or service type often evaluate their performance based on the quality index in a customer's perception. In other words, as one greatly reflects on others, customers' perceived value or appraisal on services rendered is of great importance for every organizations' growth.

2.2.7 Customer loyalty

Customer loyalty term is usually uttered for a brand as a result of the tight relationship between both parties. Traditionally, it occurs after strong bonds have been built and continuously maintained for the benefit of the company's growth. As empirically focused on, contrast in detecting the exact meaning is yet to be puzzled out. Following the work of other authors, (Kim & Yoon, 2004), customer loyalty is defined as the tendency and free will buyers have towards a firm/business expressed by the frequent purchase of goods and services of the same provider. Customer expects responsiveness whenever he comes to get a product, good or service from the producer. In other words they expect suppliers to respond to his needs as fast as possible. Building loyalty in the mind of customers' accounts of more than just offering coupon bonds or any other discount package which everyone is entitled to but rather investing in more strategic marketing technique to attend the goal.

Previous researches in marketing oriented area have proven that the cost of gaining new customers is literally higher than that of sustaining the current ones. New buyers are often targeted as competitor's assets as they converted from the formal supplier's database to that of a new one (Kotler and Keller 1997). The satisfaction factor in this case plays a vital role as identified in Crosby et al (1990) work. Thus, various literatures determined other related factors of customer's loyalty combined with the former as: Trust, commitment and service quality. A paradigm has been developed as

a model in business (Rauyruen and Miller, 2007) to highlight the correlation existing between loyalty and dependent variables.

Customers loyalty is a very huge term that could impact either negatively or positively on the sales numbers if ultimately escalated. However, such assertion is not to be generalized in every part of the world for some findings (Maxwell and Bright, 2016) have demonstrated the inability to equally evaluate the level of loyalty in airline industry. Various factors such as the level of income, social and cultural behaviors, type of market, geographical location of the country to name a few lead to different results in profitability. For example, in more developed countries, passengers are most likely going to have a different perception of what it is to be on business class, having discount packages etc. than those in tiers countries.

Other academic publications have raised and theoretically demonstrated the hypothesis of customer's satisfaction and retention highly impacting on loyalty factor (Inamullah, 2012). It is always important for newly and or already existing businesses not to interpose marketing program from loyalty program for they serve different purposes. One focuses on the strength and weaknesses while the other is concerned with creating more value to brand loyalty and equity. A study by Wasib, Aminimal and Idriss (2014); highlight the relationship between variables namely brand equity, loyalty with outcomes (behavior and habit) being intertwined. Many established firms are suffering from customer churn expressed by a defection rate which in return impact on the business. However, some marketers (Jill, Murray and Neil; 1995) have proposed a set of conduct to adopt and follow in a quest for customer churn diminishment namely:

- The measurement and defining the rate of retention,
- Identifying the problem which in this case is regarded as the reason in customers' shift and,
- Comparison between cost: basically, measuring both the cost of losing and retaining potential buyers.

The use of the Relationship quality (RQ) method has widely been spread around the world over the years thus commonly used nowadays to test hypothesis in business activities. A research carried in Malaysia (Chong, Low, Tai, Tan.L and Tan. S 2015) to undercover factors influencing the loyalty of customers in the country's airline industry identify the model as a standard technique used in both manufacturing and

service industry by many authors to draw the correlation between variables. However, given the type of industry, the focus or rather the dimensions proposed in the model development slightly differ from each other.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This section of the study entails an argumentation through the use of different assessment techniques and approaches in order to compare the customer's satisfaction level within some Turkish domestic airline companies.

3.1 Aim/Purpose

The aim of this chapter is first and foremost to develop a design and research approach to be used in exploring and identifying different strategies and methods applied in some Turkish domestic airline companies in order to distinct their service while responding to customers' expectations. Thus, the approach destined for this paper will help justifying the reasons of the methods in accordance with the stated objectives. The choice of method used is hereby elaborated as the link between aim of the paper and the research questions are met. The section addresses the various hypothesis raised in the course of the research which in return are scientifically tested using a distinct methodology' description and model describing the different factors having effects on the comparative advantage of some domestic airline companies in Turkey. Hence limitations as well as ethics are hereby mentioned in this section. Past studies, as well as some customer's feedbacks on some airline services received on previous experiences have enabled the drafting of a paradigm including considerable aspects of customer's satisfaction level in the industry which could serve as standard requirements for service providers if consistent enough.

3.2 Research Approach

The study consists of passengers using domestic air carriers in Turkey; most especially with focus on two competitors namely OnurAir, Pegasus, THY and Atlas Global. A positivism philosophy is hereby adopted to mirror out the evidences of previous studies and propose related hypothesis to test different claims. The population parameter being potential customers, a questionnaire will be used and administered to respondents as a data collection technique. The choice of the above method is justified

by the large number of possible outcomes one might get, therefore the sampling for more illustrated and accurate results. Thus as similar empirical researches proposed and recommended possible solutions consequently of their findings, using a positivism philosophy to relate with scientific method as that of the survey conducted here is to foster objective outcomes. Questionnaires which will be filled out individually by the correspondents; will provide more insights of their perceptions on every quality aspect and satisfaction they got during their journey onboard. Reversely, how do the direct contact and type of service provided within the scope of their travelling period affects their satisfaction level and purchase attitude towards competitors. In order to proceed with our study, the popular SERVQUAL method developed by the Marketing figure Parasuraman (1985) is used to evaluate the accuracy of the five dimensions elaborated in his method. The frequency of flights, number of regular customers registered for leisure or business purposes within Turkey, the advocacy of airline fares and purchase habits, income level and gender will independently map the way to establishing a relationship between factors impacting on service assessment therefore choice of an airline company rather than that of its competitors

3.3 Research Design

This section of our research is attributed to the motivation towards the chosen method of investigation and data collection used here to test the different claims.

The population is to be sampled and directed to certain age group [18-45] regardless of their genders; the location, regionally defined as Istanbul where the airport with the higher quota of flights is recorded; this in order to throw more light to our previously stated aims and objectives in the above chapters. A quantitative method therefore stands as the best option to scientifically broadcast lapses in strategic decisions making process which deductively surface with customers' choice of some airline carriers rather than the existing ones. According to Malhotra (2008) works in determining the three different design approaches namely: exploratory, casual and descriptive techniques, it has been deemed best to follow the formal as it provides more insights on the nature of variables used to map out clearly defined process to any research. Exploratory design method will therefore contribute to generating prerequisite and primary data characterized as qualitative, thus consolidated with a quantitative approach of data collection as that of the questionnaires which would be destined to

analysis through computerized method (SPSS) to generate quantified figures to customer's satisfaction in domestic flights on the landscape.

3.4 Research Design and Justifications

A model to exemplify the connection between variables affecting the choice of a companies is provided in the above section of this paper.

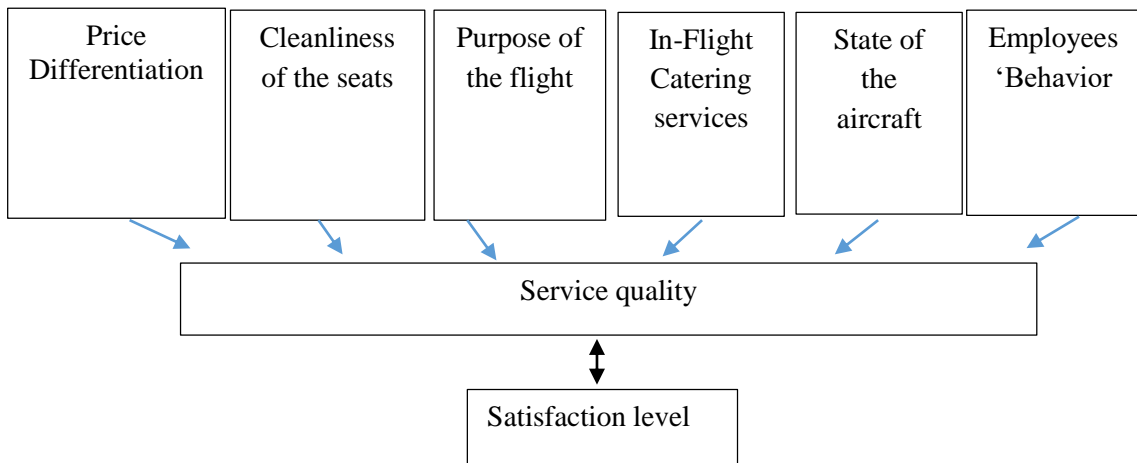


Figure 3.1: Research Design Model

The above figure broadly highlights the important determinants of airline preference rather than others available in the Turkish domestic market.

Customers' feedbacks such as online platforms, simple interviews, word of mouth to name a few have proven that price plays a vital role in a choice of a good or service. However, the quality is sometimes at stake when identical offers are in the market place with competitors striving to win loyalty and trust.

Cleanliness of the seats here is hereby expressed by the physical appearance; the comfortability one gets when seated as he/she embarks to a stated destination. All relevant and expected features shall fit requirements of the ASCI conventions.

Travelling from one location to the other often does not have the same purpose for all passengers. Therefore, expectations for a business could not be replaced as that of leisure or the type of class each service purchaser falls into.

In-Flight catering services are sometimes viewed as the root of any decision making towards any purchase order or reservation in a customer's perspective. A personal

experience has enabled the development of a self-metric rating services accordingly the type of facilities available such as: entertainment, handouts, books and or newspapers, menu to name a few.

Employees' behavior has long been the focus of many numerous researchers in the quests of companies' success when involving both direct and indirect contact with customers. Park et. al (2004) and Zeithaml (1988) have demonstrated in their studies how important is the labor as it can affect the business positively or negatively in respect to customers' perceptions. Thus, the empathy dimension of service quality in airline industry should be given more attention.

The high concentration of Low Cost Carriers in Turkey has enabled the private sector to deploy its feet in other to beat the existing competition. Moreover, we observe a higher number of Airbus, Cargo and Charter carriers. Nevertheless, the choice of an airline despite the destination of the flight is also usually found reason in the type and age of the aircrafts to be used.

3.5 Hypotheses

The following hypothesis will be raised in the course of the research and their validity will be tested using a multiple linear regression model followed by a statistical analysis of data to arrive our findings. They are listed below as follow:

- Ho₁: If tangibility increases then customer satisfaction will increase.
- Ho₂: If empathy increases then customer satisfaction will increase (Employees' behavior towards customers on an In-Flight process motivate customers to generate future purchase).
- Ho₃: If differentiation strategy (price, added advantages) and focus strategy in Turkish airline industry increase then will customer satisfaction
- Ho₄: If words of mouth to mouth positively increase then the repurchase attitude of passengers will also increase.
- Ho₅: If airline service quality offered by direct contact increase then the choice of a particular service provider will shift positively.
- Ho₆: If purpose of a travel is well-defined then the choice of an airline will be made easier.

3.6 Sampling Techniques

The desire to provide unbiased representative of the population will hereby serve as a leading tool in determining the sampling method to be used in respect to the type of resources available to researchers, time, cost to name a few. A convenience sampling will be adopted for this research paper and questionnaires distributed using both social media and on-site location to respondents within a one-month duration. Thus, the likelihood of interest on the topic is more appealing as we observe an increment or rather preference in the use of air transportation type on the land to move around city as it is more convenient and faster; however more expensive during high seasons.

The questionnaire is divided into two sections and comprises of 25 questions which are the result of cumulated review of literature and primary source type of data such as interviews and or surveys.

The first section addresses the general information on the respondent namely their age, gender status, which of the four airlines companies (OnurAir and AtlasGlobal, Pegasus and THY) he/she prefers, how often in a year they use their services, the purpose of the flight for domestic routes and lastly the reason that fosters the ticket purchase decision.

The second part of the questionnaire on the other hand is related to respondents' knowledge of the airline they use for different flight purpose. The two competitors are being evaluated on the basis of the commonly known SERVQUAL dimensions such as: assurance, empathy, tangibility, responsiveness and reliability. The method was developed by the formal and popular Parasuraman et.al, Zeithalm and Berry (1985) and widely used nowadays in Marketing to improve service performance and generate a higher competitive advantage or customer loyalty.

A five point Likert-scale is therefore used for our survey to enable respondents effectively rate each of the above listed air companies and provide a representative of the population. Options are hence respectively ranging from 1 to 5 with the following statements: "strongly disagree", "disagree", "neutral", "agree" "and strongly agree". Given any of the five dimensions of service quality; responsiveness for instance, the question on whether passengers' request is given prompt attention will be given a scale 5 if the customer is totally please with the way he/she is been attended to; this being the best possible option and 1 if the contrary occurs.

3.7 Research Strategy

The mixture of both qualitative and quantitative method for the current paper is deemed on the necessity for accurate findings which will be added to already existing literature of similar problems in the airline industry in Turkey. Based on the nature of the research design adopted here, the choice of a survey coupled with open ended questions on focus group is hereby the most suitable option to further the study and arrive at concrete facts. Results from the survey which are very often quantifiable, will be used for inferential statistics thus appealing to managerial issues therefore company's future.

3.8 Data Collection Method

In research, practitioners often aim for one of the two methods namely primary and secondary data collection to gather necessary information to further the study. This current paper is entitled to a primary data gathering approach as all figures are drawn from respondents' feedback retrieved from conducted survey administered on them. In order to establish the correlation between the satisfaction index of customers from the selected airline companies in this study; therefore, the purchase order and the quality of service offered, and increase the credibility of findings, a clear definition of variables is deemed important to further the research. The respondent variable Y, would therefore be identified as the choice of the airline while; other determinants such as price differentiation, employees' behavior, catering services, cleanliness of the seats, state of the aircraft and purpose of the flights would account for all the independent variables. All data are hereby qualified as primary for they are gathered through appropriate methods in this case. The questionnaire comprises of questions which a measuring up to a period of 5years; reasons being because the interest in air transportation has gradually started growing after the spread of new laws in the industry most especially in Turkey where the economy, social and cultural lifestyle is merging into new horizons.

3.9 Data Analysis

This section of the research elaborates all techniques and methods used to analyze results of the proposed means of data collection utilized for the current paper. Validity of the proposed model, hypothesis, service quality factors and other variables are

analyzed through the use of a multiple regression analysis model and presented after evaluation of the model through a p-value test to test the significance of our proposed hypothesis, Normality test for the difference between population or sample means correlation analysis as well as the SPSS package etc. Moreover, the multiple regression's equation of our analysis will be based on the five dimensions of the popular SERVQUAL method (Parasuraman et, al 1985) namely tangibles, responsiveness, assurance, empathy and reliability as mentioned in the above sections. Therefore, all independent variables with their related coefficients would be statistically measured using a significance level test followed with a p-value assessment to test each of the variables significance in predicting the respondent variable Y represented here as the level of satisfaction. The analysis of each will ascertain the various hypothesis or claims regarding the research. To mathematically translated the assumptions, the following equation is represented as:

$$Y = b_0 + b_1X_1 + b_2X_2 + b_3X_3 + b_4X_4 + b_5X_5 + \varepsilon$$

Where,

b_0 : value of Y when all independent variables are equal to zero

Y: customer satisfaction

X: service quality attributes (independent variables)

ε : the Random error

3.10 Limitations of the Research

The current research paper is restricted to a narrower pool of data which includes respondents for a survey conducted within the above period of time and location stated prior. Each of the sample or population parameter is described as a mature, intellect, student or working individuals fitting to the chosen age range for the study.

However, the results of our data analysis should not be generalized to the whole population; thus, all domestic airline customers in Turkey for the accuracy will be questioned. Therefore, we will only limit the study to chosen sample; in another words, passengers of the above four companies namely Onur Air, Turkish Airlines, Pegasus and Atlas Global. Hence, the choice of the data collection method is allegedly affecting the effectiveness of results as questions which could evolve a limitation of

respondents' point of view, reluctance from participation or rather create a bias type of data.

4. DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

This present section of the study entails an observation and interpretation of results depicted from the designed questionnaires. To measure the correlation and closeness between variables, quantitative methods such as reliability test, correlation and exploratory factor analysis are hereby used as means for assessment.

4.1 Descriptive Statistics

The descriptive analysis hereby entails frequencies of some of the demographic questions administered during the survey to different respondents all fitting the chosen range for the sample of the study. Details of percentiles, frequencies to name a few are shown in the below tables as follow:

Table 4.1: Frequency table for gender

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Female	157	51.6	51.6
	Male	147	48.4	100.0
	Total	304	100.0	

The above table for gender's frequency showcases a total number of 304 respondents among which 157 were female and 147 males. With a higher frequency than that of the males, it is wise to affirm that there were more females surveyed than the opposite sex.

Table 4.2: Frequency table for age

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	20 below	19	6.3	6.3
	21-29	161	53.0	59.2
	30-39	87	28.6	87.8
	40-49	23	7.6	95.4
	50 above	14	4.6	100.0
	Total	304	100.0	

Table 4.2 here of frequency for age presents the age range chosen for the sample data. It is shown that from a total of 304 individuals, the highest frequency of passengers belongs to those between the age of 21-29; followed by that of 30-39, 40-49, below 20 and 50 and above in a descendant order. The greatest valid percent attributed to the second age group (20-29) enables us to testify that there are more young individuals using air transportation services in Turkey most especially Istanbul than older one. This could be attributed to the fact that as they grow older they tend to travel less or rather use other means of transport.

Table 4.3: Frequency table for origin

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	African	83	27.3	27.3
	American	48	15.8	43.1
	Asian	87	28.6	71.7
	European	86	28.3	100.0
	Total	304	100.0	

The cosmopolitan city of Istanbul does accommodate both local citizens and foreigners from all over the world who for various reasons travel across and outside the country on different

basis to satisfy their needs and wants. The results shown above present the Asian as the origin with the highest frequency (87) and a percentage (28.6%) followed by the European with a frequency of 86, next the African with a frequency of 83 and lastly the American with a frequency of 48. Therefore, it could be confidently affirmed based on the results from table 4.3 that those of Asian origin travel more on regional air routes in Turkey than others.

Table 4.4: Frequency table for citizenship

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No	207	68.1	68.1
	Yes	97	31.9	100.0
	Total	304	100.0	

The above table represents the total number of surveyed passengers in terms of citizenship. Two options are chosen for the questionnaire which are respectively “no” for individuals not holding any Turkish citizenship and “yes” for the reverse case. Results here show from a total number of 304 a higher frequency (207) and percent (68.1) for passengers without a Turkish nationality and a lower one (97) and (31.9%) for nationals. These could be interpreted as foreigners in Istanbul use more air transportation services rather than local citizen.

Table 4.5: Frequency table for status

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Civil worker	104	34.2	34.2
Retired	7	2.3	36.5
Self-Employed	50	16.4	53.0
Student	122	40.1	93.1
Unable to work	11	3.6	96.7
Unemployed	10	3.3	100.0
Total	304	100.0	

Six categories have been chosen to group passengers according to their status namely civil worker, retired, self-employed, student, unemployed and unable to work. Thus, outcomes of the proposed questions indicate that students have the highest travel

frequency (122) and percent (40.1) compare to other groups. The lowest frequency among all categories is shown to be that of the retired. Therefore, it will be wise to affirm given the above results that people that travel regionally the most in Istanbul are considered to be students; followed by civil-workers, self-employed, unable to work, unemployed and lastly retired.

Table 4.6: Frequency table for regularity in using airline services

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1-5	141	46.4	46.4
	6-10	103	33.9	80.3
	11-15	34	11.2	91.4
	16-20	11	3.6	95.1
	20 above	14	4.6	99.7
	16.00	1	.3	100.0
	Total	304	100.0	

Table 4.6 above reflects results on the question of how often do individuals travel on domestic air routes from Istanbul to other cities in the land of Turkey within a year. We depict a higher frequency in the range 1-5 times of 141 and a percent of 46.4 followed by the range 6-10times a year with a frequency of 103 with 33.9 as percent; all total surveyed recorded as to be 304 in number. The lowest category which is assigned to that of 16times a year on the other hand only accounts for 1 in frequency with a percent of .3.

Table 4.7: Frequency table for reason for travelling

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Business	57	18.8	18.8
	Business and leisure	3	1.0	19.7
	Educational	56	18.4	38.2
	Education leisure	2	.7	38.8
	Leisure	186	61.2	100.0
	Total	304	100.0	

Table 4.7 of frequencies and percent represent that of the reason that foster every travel decision passengers make before embarquing on the journey. A total of 304 answers were collected on the question. The highest frequency is registered as that of leisure

(186) with a percent of 61.2 which accounts for more than two times that of educational (18.4) and business (18.8). It clearly indicates that the first motive in travelling around the country for both locals and foreigners is said to be leisure (tourism, honeymoon, holidays etc.)

Charts

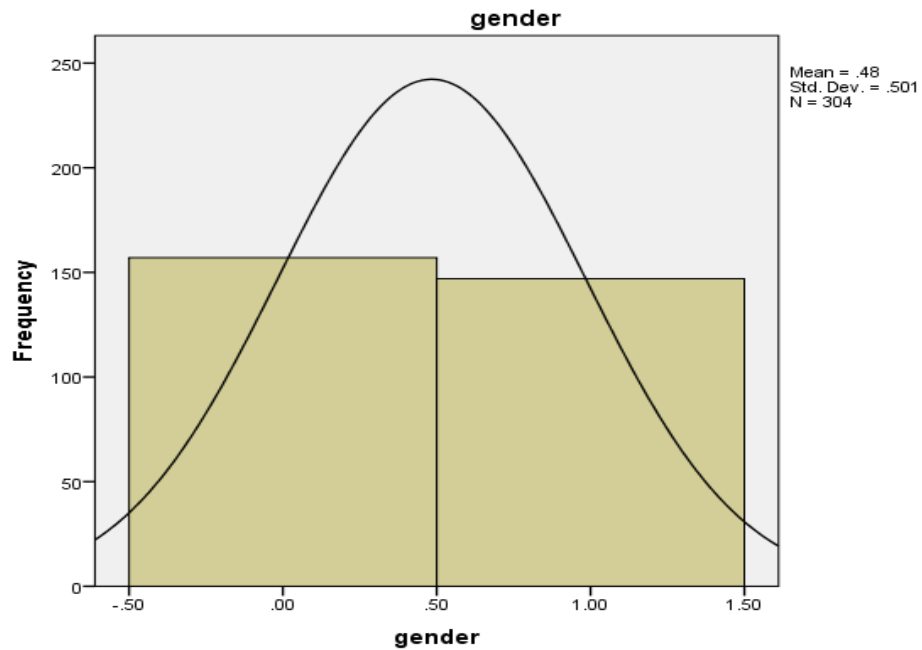


Figure 4.1: Histogram for gender

The above figure presents a graphical illustration of the gender frequency surveyed.

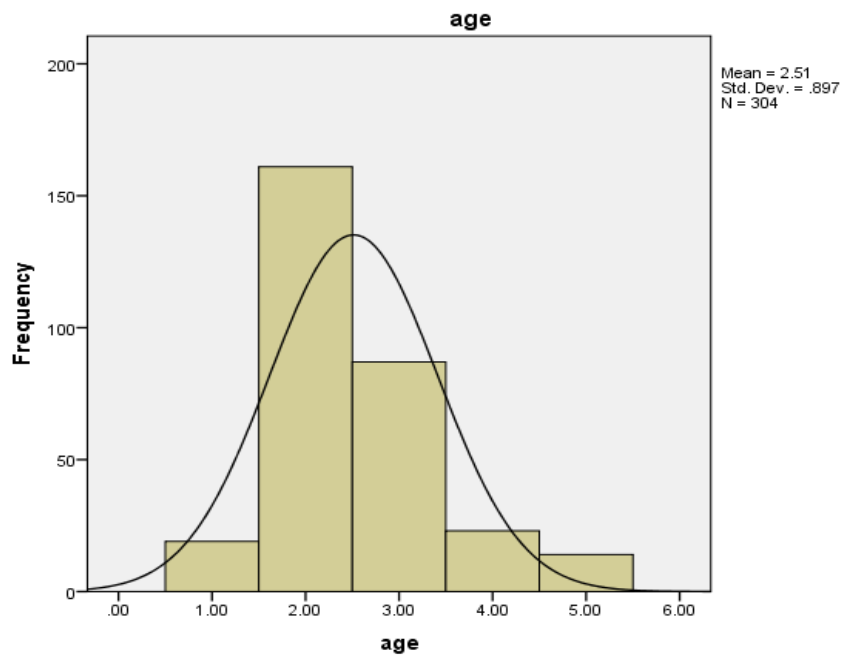


Figure 4.2: Histogram for age

The above figure shows five different age groups all with a frequency accordingly the distribution. The graph on the other hand presents the characteristics of a kurtotic curve which implies a normal distribution of the age range. A pitch is observed on the second age group which later drops in the form of plot considered as center of the distribution. Therefore, given the results on the graph, it is wise to say that the age variable is approximately normally distributed.

4.2 Normality Test

One of the most crucial steps in screening data scientifically is deemed to be that of the normality assessment. It is vital in analyzing or rather determining the skewness of any distribution. Thus the constant use of the above method to accurately describe or give an approximate of the distribution's type related with adequate variables has led to the standardization of the method in scientific and academic researches. It has been argued and proven by statistic practitioners such as Hair et al (2010) that not only does the normality test apply to univariate data sets but also to multivariate models thus multivariate analysis. It is therefore essential to synthesize different aspects of the current set to identify a particular distribution.

The below table in appendix 2 displays all variables utilized for this analysis as well as the sample size. All variables are hereby represented as the five dimensions of the SERVQUAL method commonly used in Marketing to evaluate performances.

The Skewness and Kurtosis factors for each of the five dimensions of service quality will be evaluated given the below values to test the normality of distribution. Data are approximately or perfectly normally distributed if the statistic Kurtosis value falls between $z \pm 3$ and Skewness of ± 1.96 . However, greater number of studies on the Kurtosis which in return question the test's reliability has been recorded as it is very critical in determining the shape of the distribution (Balanda and MacGillivray, 1988).

Skewness and Kurtosis test ($z \pm 1.96$), coupled with graphical analysis of the dimension's histograms, box plots as well as the normal Q-Q plots reveal the approximate of a normal distribution of items. Thus a skewness of -0.371 (SE= 0.140) and a kurtosis of 0.174 (SE= 0.279) which z value that falls or rather closer to the threshold.

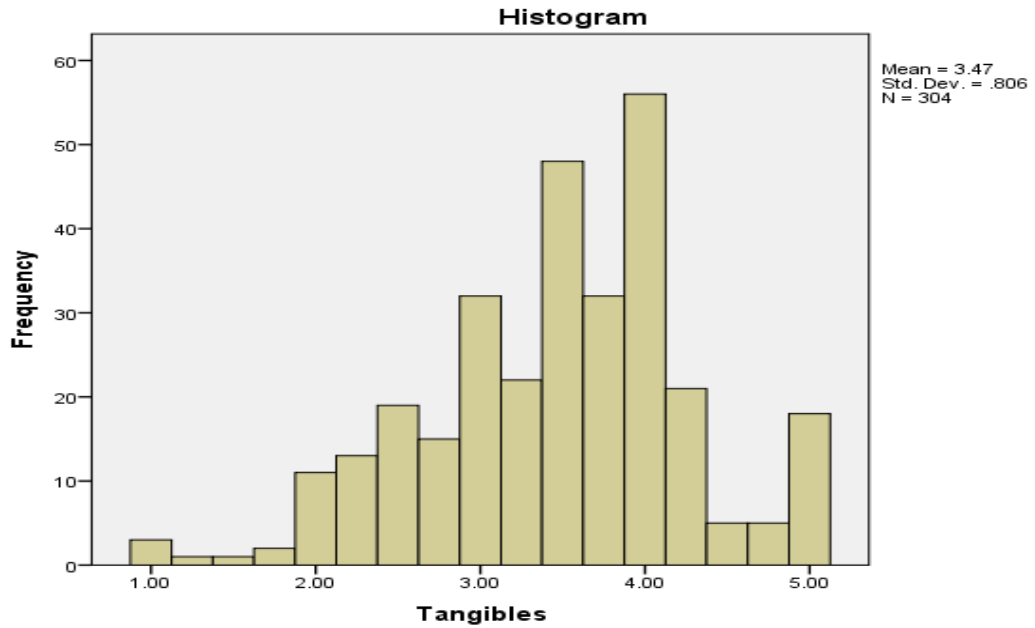


Figure 4.3: Histogram for Tangibles

Here above is an illustration of results of the normality test in term of tangibles. A statistical analysis conducted on data is hereby expressed as histogram to determine the nature of the distribution.

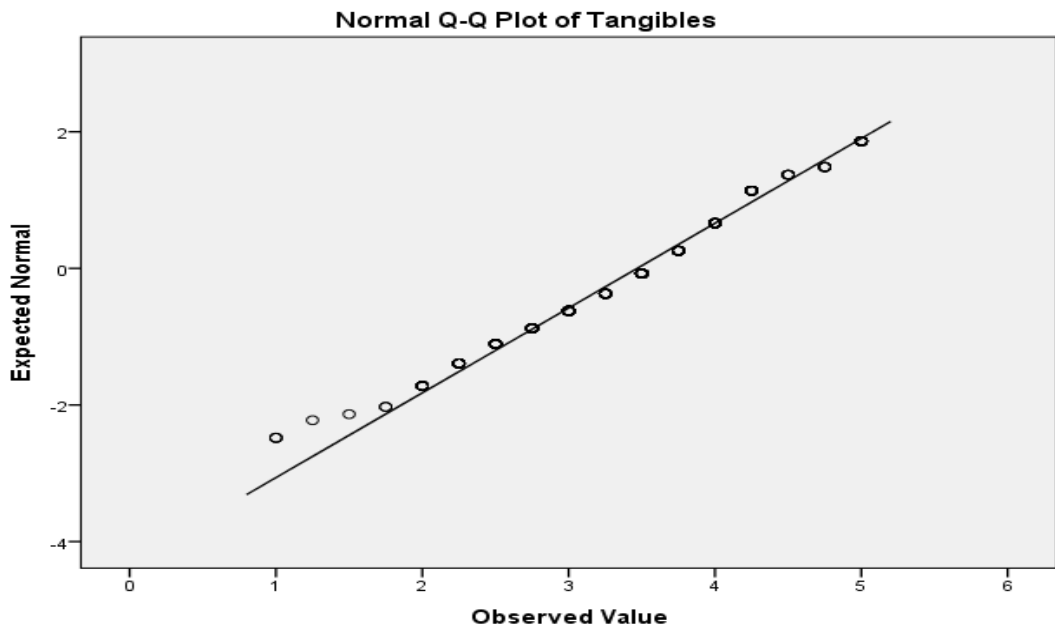


Figure 4.4: Tangibles Plots

Another tool used in exploring the symmetry of the distribution is no other than the box plot inspection's. Although no numeric data is displayed, box plots are also

considered as vital as they enable a quicker evaluation of the skewness (Doane & Seward, 2011:4); therefore, an overview of the results and type of shapes.

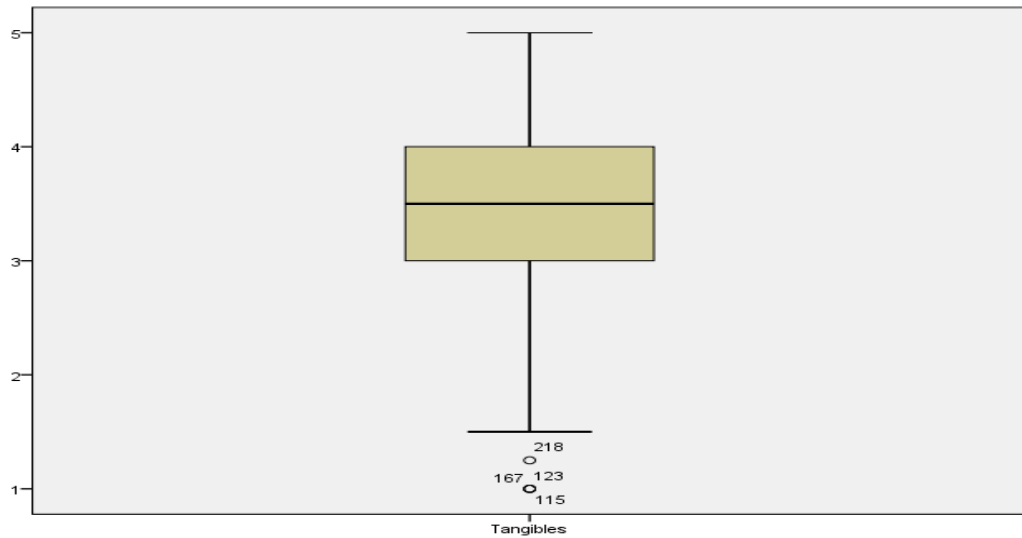


Figure 4.5: Tangibles Box Plot

The explanations derived from the above graphs therefore enable us to conclude that data for the tangible variables are approximately normally distributed.

4.2.1 Assurance

A skewness and Kurtosis test ($z \pm 1.96$), coupled with graphical analysis of the dimension's histograms, box plots as well as the normal Q-Q plots reveal the approximate of a normal distribution of items. Thus a skewness of -0.395 (SE= 0.140) and a kurtosis of 0.112 (SE= 0.140) with z value that falls or rather closer to the threshold.

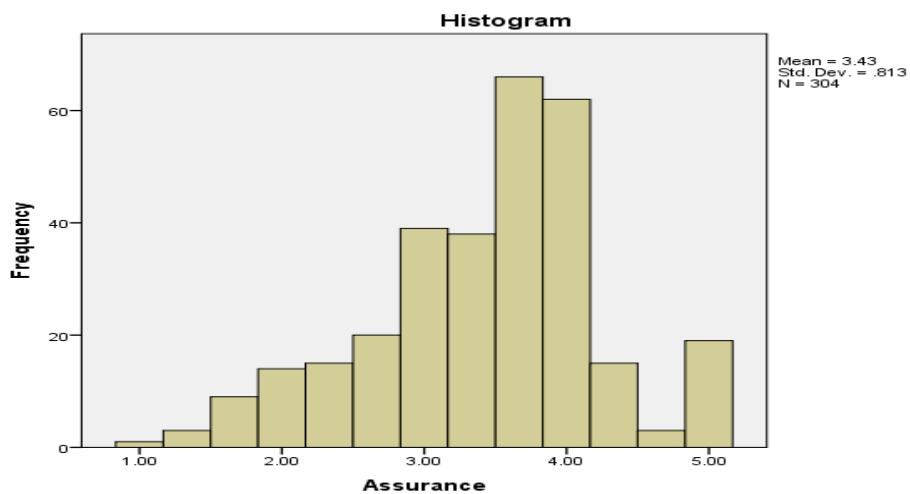


Figure 4.6: Histogram for Assurance

The above figure is an illustration of results of the normality test in term of assurance. A statistical analysis conducted on data is hereby expressed as histogram to determine the nature of the distribution.

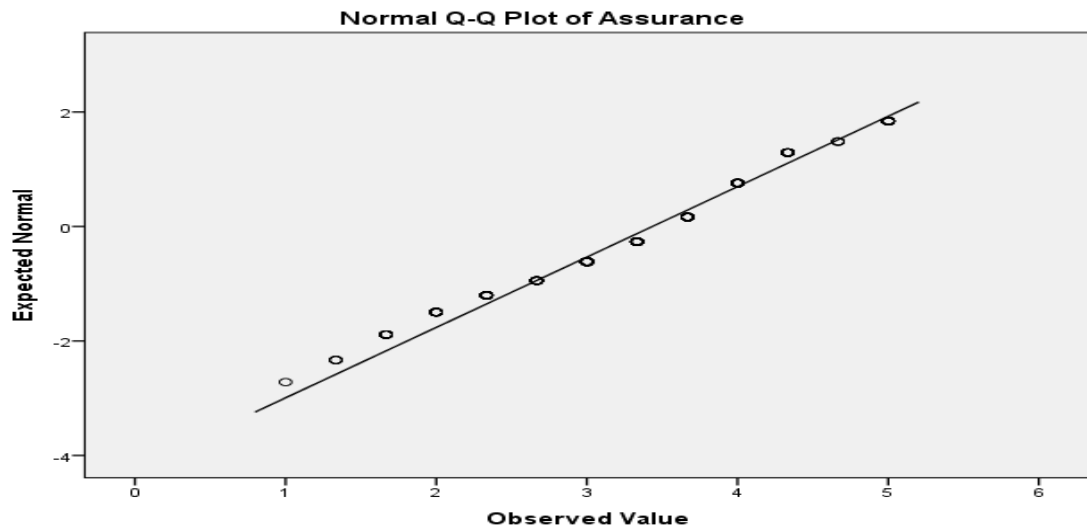


Figure 4.7: Assurance plot

The above graph represents the the normal Q-Q plot for assurance indicating a symmetric distribution illustrated with all dots roughly falling on the same line. Therefore, it could be affirmed that data for the assurance are approximately normally distributed.

4.2.2 Reliability

Skewness and Kurtosis test ($z \pm 1.96$), coupled with graphical analysis of the dimension's histograms, box plots as well as the normal Q-Q plots reveal the approximate of a normal distribution of items. Thus a skewness of -0.261 ($SE= 0.140$) and a kurtosis of -0.060 ($SE=0.279$) which z value that falls or rather closer to the threshold.

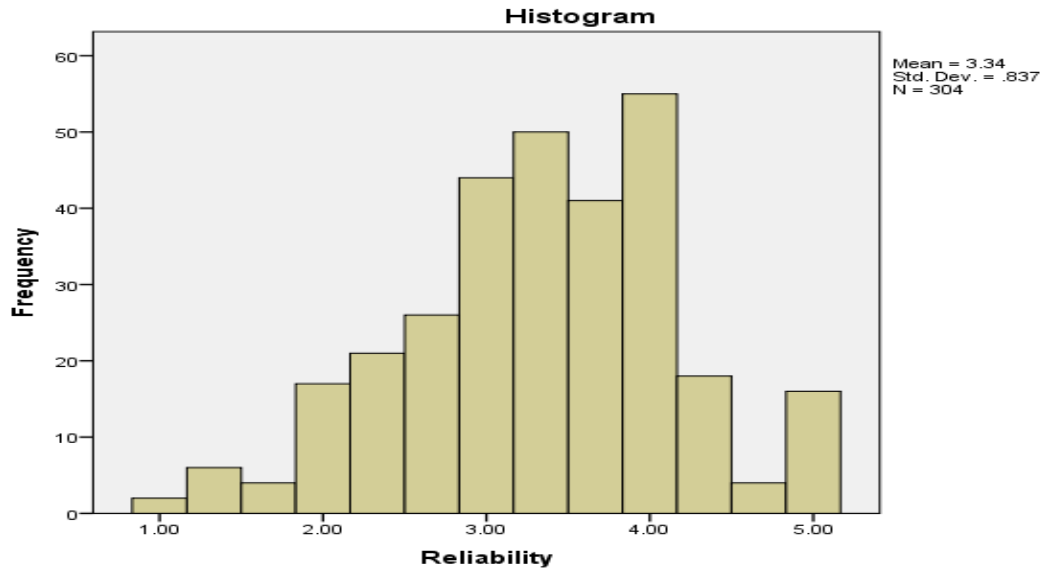


Figure 4.8: Histogram for Reliability

Here are above results of the normality test for reliability; graphically represented as histograms.

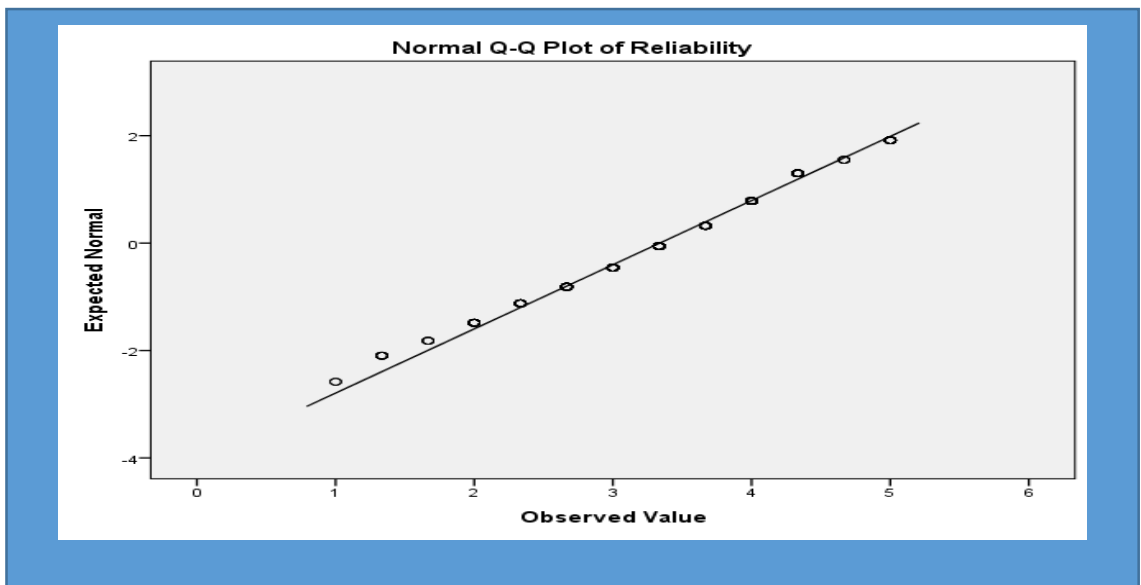


Figure 4.9: Reliability Plot

The above figure 4.8 which represents that of the normal Q-Q plot for reliability indicates a symmetric distribution illustrated with all the dots falling on the same line.

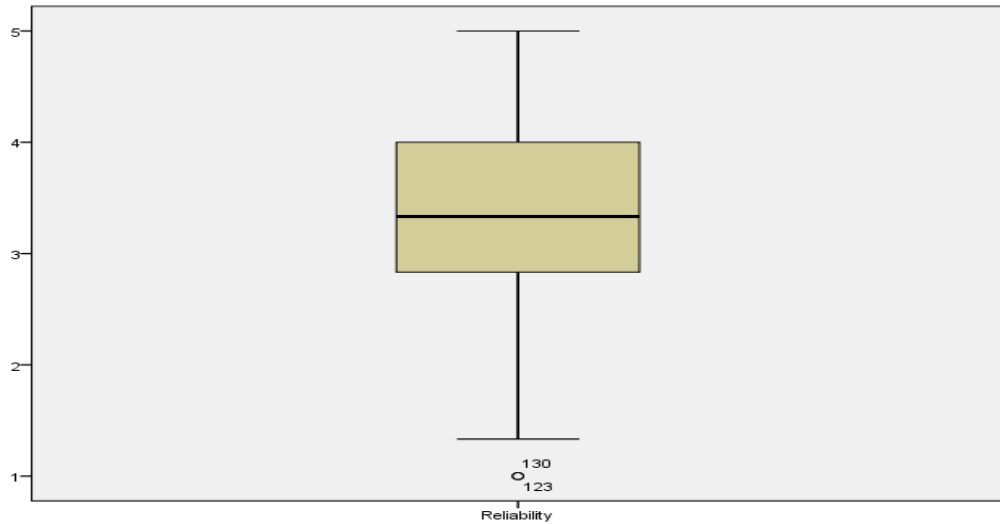


Figure 4.10: Reliability Box Plot

Illustrated here above is the box plot for the reliability factor. It enables an evaluation of the skewness of data through graphic observations. Thus, an analysis of the shape of the above plot reveals a proximity in the symmetry; therefore, it can be concluded that data for the reliability dimension are approximately distributed.

4.2.3 Empathy

Skewness and Kurtosis test ($z \pm 1.96$), coupled with graphical analysis of the dimension's histograms, box plots as well as the normal Q-Q plots reveal the approximate of a normal distribution of items. Thus a skewness of -0.447 ($SE = 0.140$) and a kurtosis of 0.235 ($SE = 0.279$) which z value that falls or rather closer to the threshold.

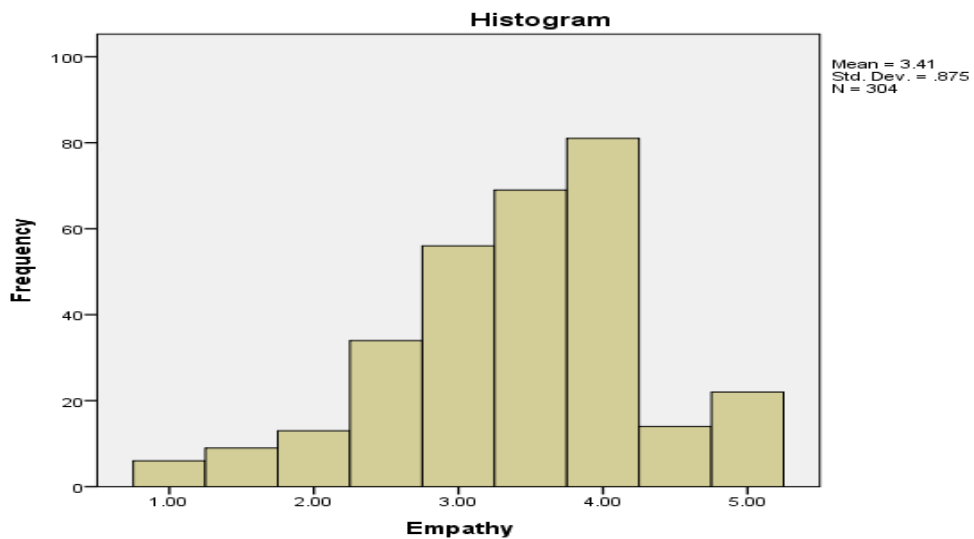


Figure 4.11: Histogram for Empathy

The above figure 4.9 illustrates a graphical interpretation of the normality test for Empathy, hereby expressed as histogram.

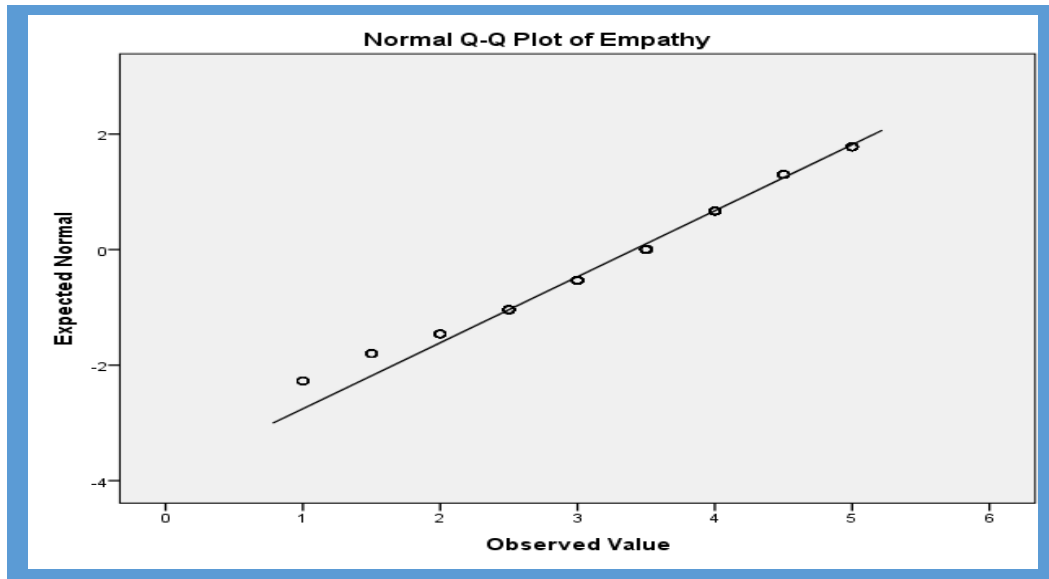


Figure 4.12: Empathy Plot

The above figure which represents that of the normal Q-Q plot for rempathy indicates a normal distribution illustrated with all the dots roughly falling on the line.

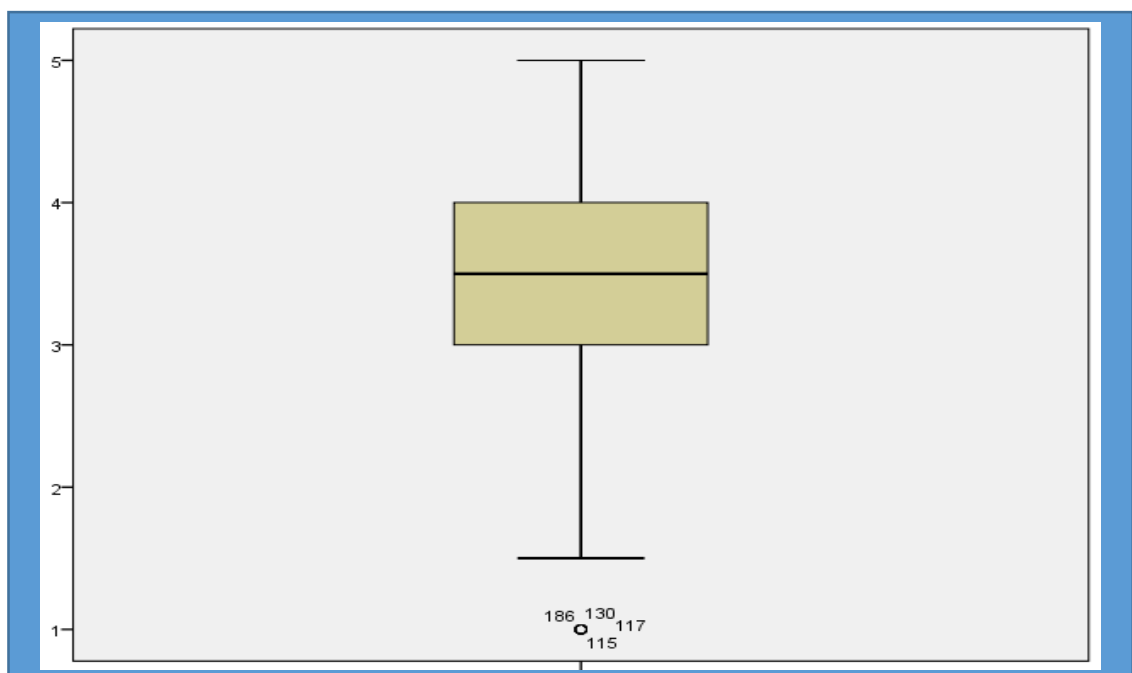


Figure 4.13: Empathy plots

Figure 4.10 here which displays the box plot for the empathy dimension of service quality. An observation of its shape reveals a symmetry of the distribution. Therefore,

regarding the graphical analysis above, it could be concluded that data are approximately normally distributed for the empathy factor.

4.2.4 Responsiveness

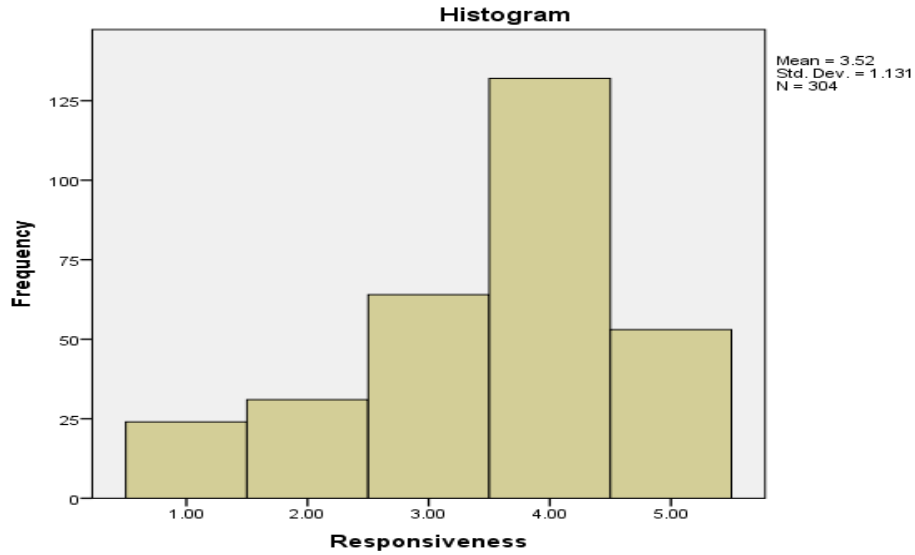


Figure 4.14: Histogram for Responsiveness

The above figure indicates a graphic interpretation of the normality test for the responsiveness dimension.

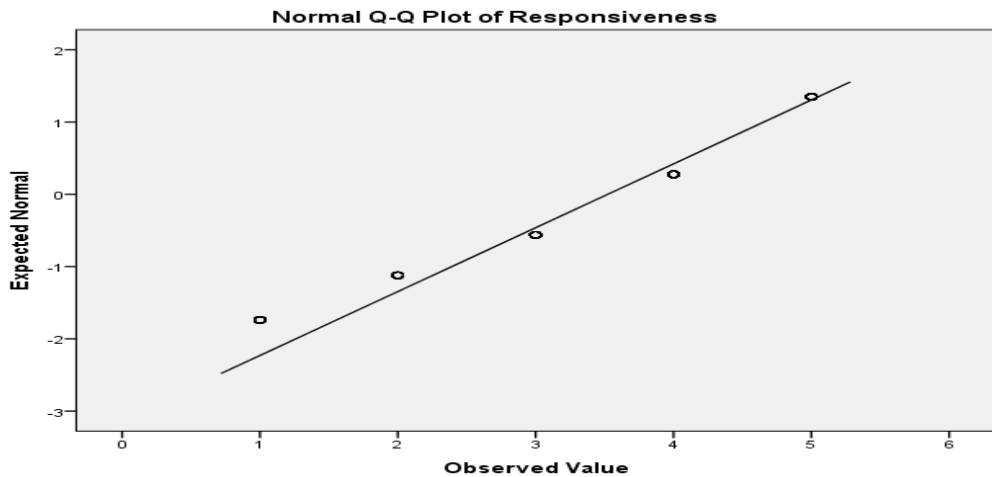


Figure 4.15: Empathy Box Plot

The above figure represents the normal Q-Q plot for responsiveness which shows all the dots falling very closely to the line. Therefore, could also be interpreted as that of a symmetric distribution. It is also quite convincing that there is an approximate normal

distribution of data. However, the histogram does present the features of a left-tailed distribution in this case.

4.2.5 Standard deviations

The below table displays each dimension's standard deviation after computerized values selected for the normality test.

Table 4.8: Standard deviations

SD	Tangibles	Assurance	Empathy	Responsiveness	Reliability
Values	0.80556	0.81338	0.87522	1.13137	0.83689

The above table after comparison, reveals a closeness between the four dimensions 'standard deviations respectively tangibles, assurance, empathy and reliability which values are approximately equal at one decimal. However, the responsiveness factor on the other hand displays the highest S.D value; summarized as respondents all thinking different.

4.2.6 Correlations

The correlation analysis is a statistical method used in assessing the relationship between variables which happened to be continuous. It will therefore be applied here to determine the strength of affinity between five dimensions of the SERVQUAL.

Table 4.9: Correlations

		Tangible	Assurance	Reliability	Empathy
Tangible	Pearson	1	.778**	.763**	.729**
	Correlation				
Assurance	Pearson	.778**	1	.725**	.627**
	Correlation				
Reliability	Pearson	.763**	.725**	1	.670**
	Correlation				
Empathy	Pearson	.729**	.627**	.670**	1
	Correlation				
Responsiveness	Pearson	.592**	.629**	.582**	.575**
	Correlation				

A sample size of 304 passengers of some of the commonly domestic known airlines in Turkey most especially in Istanbul area were surveyed about some reasons in the choice of a company when flying domestically. The Pearson's correlation analysis therefore reveals a strong correlation

$r = .778$ between Tangible and Assurance

$r = .763$ between Tangible and Reliability

$r = .729$ between Tangible and Empathy

$r = .592$ between tangible and Responsiveness.

The results displayed on the above table depict a moderate positive correlation between the former four dimensions namely tangible, assurance, reliability and empathy and responsiveness.

The responsiveness factor on the other hand indicates a weaker correlation with other four dimensions. Therefore, it is wise to conclude that there are more important of specific indicators in a customer's response to loyalty.

Table 4.9 of Items correlations in appendix 2 illustrates all items used in assessing the five dimensions of the SERVQUAL. The results displayed in the table simply represent the relation between all questions administered in the survey as how correlated they are to each other. For example, S1 is correlated to S2 at 44%, S1 42% to S9 and so forth.

4.3 Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)

The EFA is a technique used in statistics to unravel the structure of a particular data. It is often used for a large set of data in social science and help practitioners attain conclusions on their description.

4.3.1 KMO and Bartlett's test

In order to determine whether or not data is suitable for a factor analysis to be conducted, the KMO and Bartlett's test is used. It is therefore aimed at measuring the share of variance between variables explained by other factors.

Table 4.10: KMO and Bartlett's test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.875
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	1008.324
	Df	10
	Sig.	.000

The above table which represents the output of the KMO and Bartlett's test displays a sampling adequacy value of $.875 \geq .5$; therefore, suitable for the analysis.

Bartlett's test of Sphericity on the other hand indicates a P value less than that of the statistically approved one. $P (.000) \leq P (.001)$. Thus, it is wise to agree on the Chi-squared normality of the distribution.

4.3.2 Communalities

In social science, item communalities are often considered to be low or moderate which entails an extraction factor of ranging from .40 to .70 for realistic data (Anna and Jason 2005). However, a low record of extraction might as well refer to an extra item or rather a non-correlation between factors.

Table 4.11: Communalities

	Initial	Extraction
Tangibles	1.000	.822
Assurance	1.000	.775
Reliability	1.000	.768
Empathy	1.000	.705
Responsiveness	1.000	.606

Extraction method: Principal Component Analysis

The above communalities table mathematically demonstrated how much of a variance' proportion of each variable could be explained by the factors. They are namely: tangibles, assurance, reliability, empathy and responsiveness. The initial values 1,

simply determine the proportion one could explain a variable by itself whereas the extraction entails the proportion of variance.

Table 4.12: Total variance explained

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	3.676	73.517	73.517	3.676	73.517	73.517
2	.480	9.610	83.126			
3	.383	7.650	90.777			
4	.270	5.392	96.169			
5	.192	3.831	100.000			

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis

Recorded are above both the initial Eigenvalues and extractions sums of squared loadings. However, only the total Eigenvalues of each component will graphically be plotted left to right on the above figure to determine which to retain.

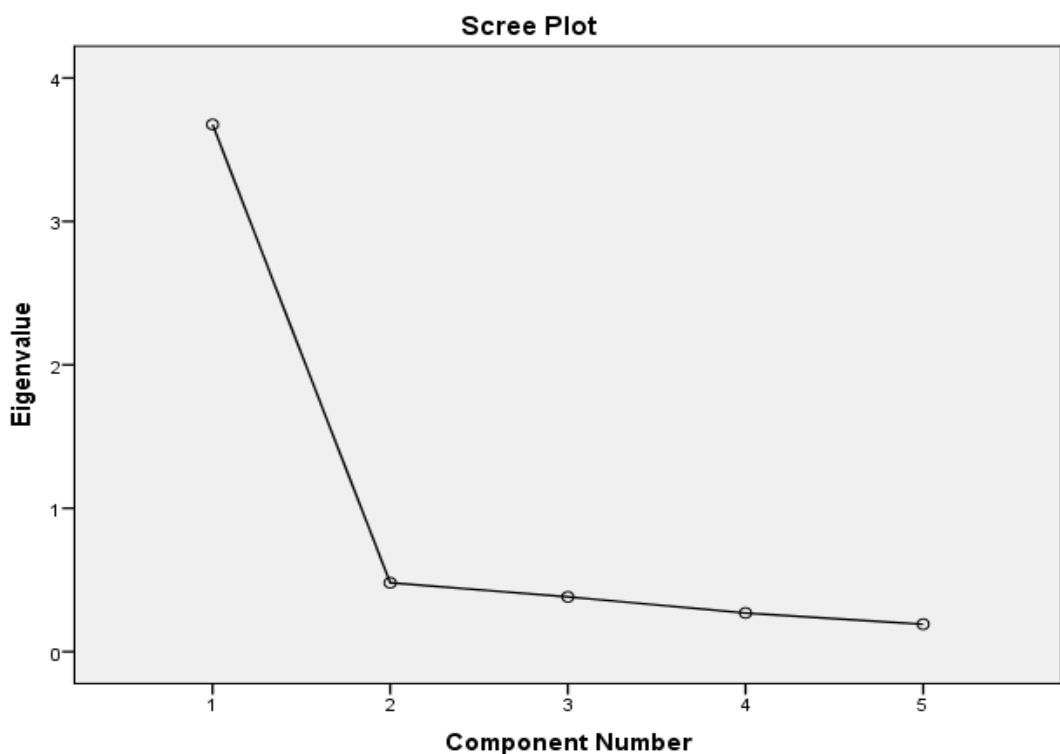


Figure 4.16: SERVQUAL Dimensions' scree plot

A graphic observation and interpretation of the scree plot enables us to determine where exactly the scree does occur thus, the variable(s) to retain. The draft from component 1 to 2 tends to be way higher than the rest of the flat line. Therefore, as the result of the extraction rule, only the variable tangibles represented as component 1 will be retained while failure to retain the others occurs with Eigenvalues less than one. On the other hand, more than 73% of component 1 accounts of the total variance.

4.4 Independent T-Test Statistics

This section here entails an analysis of some demographic variables with the dimensions of the SERVQUAL in order to determine the relation between each. An independent t-test statistic will therefore be used to reach conclusions.

4.4.1 Descriptive statistics for tangibility and gender

The below tables are aimed at providing a brief summary about the sample and measures of the data for tangibility and gender factor and the features attached.

Table 4.13: Group Statistics

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Tangibles	Female	157	3.3822	.83760	.06685
	Male	147	3.5595	.76208	.06286

Above here is the descriptive statistics' table for the two groups namely female and male. It entails the differences both genders express towards the tangible dimension of the SERVQUAL used in assessing the customers 'satisfaction level in service industry. It also shows that of a total of 304 respondents, 157 were female while the remaining 147 were male. However, the highest mean $\mu = 3.5595$ is attributed to the male group while only $\mu = 3.3822$ is that of the female group. The greatest Std. Deviation ($\sigma = .83760$) and Std. Error Mean ($\epsilon = .06685$)

4.4.2 T-test for tangibility and gender

In order to determine the nature of the data used in the sample, a t-test is therefore conducted and results presented below.

Table 4.14: T-test for tangibility and gender

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means	
		F	Sig.	T	df
Tangibles	Equal variances assumed	1.536	.216	-1.927	302
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.933	301.757

The above table indicates results of the Levene's test of equality for variance as well as the equality t-test for means between the tangibility dimension of the SERVQUAL method and the gender factor.

Table 4.15: Independent Sample t-test for tangibles and gender

		t-test for Equality of Means			
		Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference Lower
Tangibles	Equal variances assumed	.055	-.17736	.09204	-.35848
	Equal variances not assumed	.054	-.17736	.09176	-.35792
		t-test for Equality of Means			
		95% Confidence Interval of the Difference			
		Upper			
Tangibles	Equal variances assumed			.00377	
	Equal variances not assumed			.00321	

T-test Statistics results

If $p < .05$, then reject the null hypothesis H_0 and accept H_1 : There is a difference between gender and tangibles

If $p > .05$, then accept H_0 : Males and females have same perception of customer satisfaction in terms of tangibles.

Table 4.15 indicates the independent sample t-test for tangibles and gender. In order to find accurate results to test our hypothesis, the significance value, equal variances assumed and not assumed for both male and females will be evaluated to check the similarities in the shape of the distribution.

According to the results from the table, the significance 2-tailed P value ($.055 > P$ ($.050$), therefore it will be wise to accept the null hypothesis H_0 : Males and females are slightly different from each other; they don't vary much in terms of mean and or variances.

4.4.3 T-test for tangibility and citizenship

The below tables are aimed at providing a brief summary about the sample and measures of the data for tangibility and citizenship factor and all related features. The t-test is therefore deemed necessary in understanding the nature of the distribution.

Table 4.16: Group Statistics

	Citizenship	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Tangibles	No	207	3.5157	.78714	.05471
	Yes	97	3.3660	.83857	.08514

The above mentioned table displays results of the t-test analysis for the tangibility and citizenship variables. A total number of 304 individuals were surveyed both foreigners and Turkish. It indicates that between both groups, the highest standard error for mean depicted is that of the citizen of the country. Therefore, given the results, $N=207$ with the smallest record of $\epsilon=.05471$, it could be assumed that sample mean is closer to that of the population.

Table 4.17: Independent sample t-test for tangibles and citizenship

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means	
		F	Sig.	t	df
Tangibles	Equal variances assumed	.026	.872	1.514	302
	Equal variances not assumed			1.479	177.535
Independent Samples Test					
t-test for Equality of Means					
		Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference Lower
Tangibles	Equal variances assumed	.131	.14972	.09891	-.04492
	Equal variances not assumed	.141	.14972	.10121	-.05000
Independent Samples Test					
t-test for Equality of Means					
95% Confidence Interval of the Difference					
				Upper	
Tangibles	Equal variances assumed			.34436	
	Equal variances not assumed			.34944	

T-test Statistics results

If $p < .05$, then reject the null hypothesis H_0 and accept H_1 : There is a significant difference between citizenship and tangibles

If $p > .05$, then accept H_0 : Both Turkish and foreigners have the same perception of customer satisfaction in terms of tangibles.

Table 4.17 here above provides us with the independent sample t-test results of tangibles and citizenship. The group statistics indicates a higher number of respondents with no Turkish nationality (N=207) while the opposite case accounts for only (N=97). The sample means however, seen not to significantly differ from each other $\mu=3.5157$

$\geq \mu=3.3660$. An in-depth analysis of the table indicates a significance 2-tailed P value (.131) > P (.050).

Therefore, there is enough evidence to support the claim H_0 stating “: Both Turkish and foreigners have the same perception of customer satisfaction in terms of tangibles”

4.5 Independent T-Test Cut Point

The analysis of multiple demographic variables with the dimensions of the SERVQUAL is hereby addressed in this section and results of the t-test cut point are presented in the following tables as follow:

Table 4.18: Group Statistics for tangibles and age group

		Group Statistics			
Age	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	
Tangibles	>= 5.00	14	3.2500	.80264	.21451
	< 5.00	290	3.4784	.80559	.04731

The above table give an illustration of the two groups into which respondents have been divided: N= 14 which correspond to all adult passengers above 50years old meanwhile N= 290 below that age. It could be interpreted as follow: customers below 50 years of age purchase more airline tickets than those older.

Table 4.19: Independent sample t-test cut point for tangibles and age group

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Tangibles	Equal variances assumed	.009	.924	-	302	.301	-.22845	.22040	-	.20527
	Equal variances not assumed			1.037					.66217	
				-	14.294	.316	-.22845	.21967	-	.24179
				1.040					.69868	

Table 4.19. here shows a statistic cut point analysis of variables namely tangibles and age group. With a total number of 304 respondents, there are two categories represented here such:

- Group1: all individuals between 18 and 50 years old
- Groups 2: all individuals aged 50 years and above.

T-test Statistics results

If $p < .05$, then reject the null hypothesis H_0 and accept H_1 : There is a significant difference between age groups and tangibles

If $p > .05$, then accept H_0 : Both respondents below 50years and 50years and above have the same perception of customer satisfaction in terms of tangibles.

The highest total number recorded is that of the first group (N=290) against 14 of the second group. Their mean and standard deviation slightly differ whereas a considerable difference exists in their standard errors. The significant 2-tailed P value (.0381) > (.050) could therefore be account for enough reason to reject the null hypothesis.

Table 4.20: Group statistics for assurance and status

Status	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Assurance ≥ 6.00	10	3.5333	.77300	.24444
< 6.00	294	3.4308	.81576	.04758

The above table presents results of the t-test for assurance and status in terms of mean. It is seen from the statistics that N=294 which correspond to individuals either working or having their own business could be associated to the population mean for the standard error $\epsilon = .04758$ is closer to %50.

Table 4.21: Independent sample t-test cut point for assurance and status

		Independent Samples Test								
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Assurance	Equal variances assumed	.265	.607	.391	302	.696	.10249	.26192	-	.61791
	Equal variances not assumed			.412	9.694	.690	.10249	.24903	-	.65975

T-test Statistics results

If $p < .05$, then reject the null hypothesis H_0 and accept H_1 : There is a significant difference between status and assurance

If $p > .05$, then accept H_0 : Both employed and unemployed passengers have the same perception of customer satisfaction in terms of assurance.

Table 4.21 here above presents results from the T-test analysis between assurance and status. Six categories were recorded for the sample. The total number $N=10$, accounts for that of unemployed individuals whereas the remaining $N=294$ entails other respondents having a different status other than the previous category. With sample means only different at one decimal, the group statistics table also provides other information such as standard deviations (a greater one for those that are employed) and errors. Given the results displayed on the second table, most especially the significance 2-tailed value $P (.696) > P (.050)$ at 95% level of confidence, It could therefore be wise to support the claim with all tangible facts included on the table; thus accept the null hypothesis: Both employed and unemployed passengers have the same perception of customer satisfaction in terms of assurance.

Table 4.22: Group statistics for assurance and age group

Group Statistics					
	age	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Assurance	>= 5.00	14	3.2381	.61919	.16549
	< 5.00	290	3.4437	.82124	.04823

The above table represents that of the t-test between assurance and age group in terms of mean and standard deviation. In respect to statistics presented, it could be affirmed that passengers aged 50 and below think the same when considering assurance in an in-flight process.

Table 4.23: Independent sample t-test cut point for assurance and age group

		Independent Samples Test								
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances			t-test for Equality of Means					
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Assurance	Equal variances assumed	1.518	.219	-.923	302	.357	-.20558	.22263	-.64368	.23251
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.193	15.297	.251	-.57236	.16119		

T-test Statistics results

If $p < .05$, then reject the null hypothesis H_0 and accept H_1 : There is a significant difference between age group and assurance

If $p > .05$, then accept H_0 : Young and Old passengers have the same perception of customer satisfaction in terms of assurance.

Table 4.23 here represents results of the statistical analysis; independent t-test between assurance and the age group. The latter has been distributed into two different groups precisely individuals below 50 and 50 years and above. According to the table, a total number of 290 individuals who participated in the survey are below fifty years of age while the remaining 14 is equal or more than fifty years old. The means ($\mu=3.4437 >$

$\mu=3.4437$) and standard deviations ($\sigma=.82124 > \sigma=.61919$) on the other hand present some differences at one or two decimals. As the interpretation is furthered to the 2-tailed significance value interpretation, both value $P=.357$ and $P=.251 > P=.050$; however, are not considered as equivalent to each other or rather similar. Despite the difference observed in the means, standard deviations and significance P values, there is not enough evidence to claim the null hypothesis; therefore, the null will be accepted; in other words, both old and young customers do have the same perception of assurance for airline companies.

Table 4.24: Group Statistics for assurance and travelling frequency

Group Statistics					
	howoften	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Assurance	≥ 5.00	15	3.1556	.86251	.22270
	< 5.00	289	3.4487	.80971	.04763

Table 4.25: Independent T-test cut point for assurance and travelling frequency

		Independent Samples Test								
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Assurance	Equal variances assumed	.457	.500	-1.363	302	.174	-.29312	.21509	-.71639	.13015
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.287	15.309	.217	-.29312	.22773	-.77767	.19144

The independent sample T-test of assurance and frequency of travel's results are represented here above in table 4.25. Two categories have been chosen for the test which entails the first group as that of those who travel less or up to twenty times per year while the other constitutes of a travelling of a minimum of twenty times yearly. It was therefore recorded as a total of 289 surveyed who travel at least once or twenty times a year at a maximum with a mean ($\mu = 3.4487$) and the standard deviation ($\sigma =$

.80971) against 15 for the other category with a mean of ($\mu= 3.1556$) and a standard deviation ($\sigma= .86251$). It is then obvious that many people travel regionally in Turkey however less than twenty times a year on an average.

T-test Statistics results

If $p < .05$, then reject the null hypothesis H_0 and accept H_1 : There is a significant difference between frequency of travel and assurance

If $p > .05$, then accept H_0 : Both regular and frequent passengers have the same perception of customer satisfaction in terms of assurance.

The independent sample test table above also indicate a significant P value greater than the P statistic initial value (.050) for both equal variances assumed and not assumed respectively ($P = .174$) and ($P = .217$). This stands as evidence to reject the alternative claim. Therefore, support the null hypothesis which entails that both regular and frequent airline customers have the same perception of assurance.

Table 4.26: Group Statistics for reliability and age group

		Group Statistics			
	Age	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Reliability	≥ 5.00	14	3.1667	.73671	.19689
	< 5.00	290	3.3460	.84167	.04942

The results of the table above could be interpreted as follow: individuals aged 50 and below rely more on airlines rather than those aged 50 and above.

Table 4.27: Independent sample t-test cut point statistics for reliability and age group

		Independent Samples Test									
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means							
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
										Lower	Upper
Reliability	Equal variances assumed	.011	.916	-.783	302	.435	-.17931	.22915	-.63024	.27162	
	Equal variances not assumed			-.883	14.687	.391	-.17931	.20300	-.61280	.25418	

T-test Statistics results

If $p < .05$, then reject the null hypothesis H_0 and accept H_1 : The reliability factor is significantly different for young and old passengers.

If $p > .05$, then accept H_0 : Both age groups of passengers have the same perception of reliability.

Table 4.27 here above indicates results of the t-test analysis including reliability and age group factors. The total number $N = 14$ represents that of individuals age 50 and above while the remaining $N = 290$ for passengers below that age range. Thus the significance 2-tailed value for both equal variances assumed and not assumed is greater than the initial .050 ($P = .435$ and $P = .391$) which entails; there are no enough evidences to reject the H_0 . It can therefore be affirmed that the reliability factor is the same for both young and old passengers.

Table 4.28: Group Statistics for reliability and status

Group Statistics					
Status	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	Mean
Reliability ≥ 6.00	10	3.3000	1.11610		.35294
< 6.00	294	3.3390	.82824		.04830

The above table demonstrates that with N=294 which correspond to individuals either working or having their own business, their perception of reliability could be associated to that of the population for the standard error $\epsilon=.04830$ is less than %50.

Table 4.29: Independent sample t-test cut point for reliability and status

		Independent Samples Test								
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Reliability	Equal variances assumed	1.300	.255	-.145	302	.885	-.03900	.26955	-.56943	.49143
	Equal variances not assumed			-.109	9.340	.915	-.03900	.35623	-.84040	.76240

Table 4.29 here above shows results of the T-test analysis between status and the reliability factor of service quality. A total number of 304 respondents are recorded whereby N= 10 corresponds to the unemployed ones and N = 294 were employed or working on their own account. Both mean for the two groups are approximately equal to each; however, the greatest standard deviation is that of unemployed respondents ($\sigma = 1.11610$).

T-test Statistics results

If $p < .05$, then reject the null hypothesis H_0 and accept H_1 : The reliability factor is significantly different for employed and unemployed passengers.

If $p > .05$, then accept H_0 : Both employed and unemployed passengers have the same perception of reliability.

The 2-tailed significant value for both equal variances assumed and not assumed is higher than the standard value ($P = .050 < .885$; $.050 < .915$). Therefore, it will be wise to say with enough evidence to support the claim “both employed and unemployed passengers assess reliability the same way”. In other words, the choice of a domestic airline is made not based on the status when considering reliability but rather other variables to be mentioned in further studies.

Table 4.30: Group Statistics for reliability and travelling frequency

Group Statistics				
How often	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Reliability >= 5.00	15	2.9556	.71121	.18363
< 5.00	289	3.3576	.83921	.04937

The above table which indicates results of the t-test between travelling frequency and the reliability dimension in terms of mean indicates that passengers using domestic routes in Istanbul travel less than 16 times in a year given the total mean for each group.

Table 4.31: Independent sample t-test cut point for reliability and travelling frequency

Independent Samples Test										
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Reliability	Equal variances assumed	.066	.798	-1.821	302	.070	-.40200	.22078	-.83646	.03246
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.114	16.092	.050	-.40200	.19015	-.80492	.00092

Table 4.30 here above show results of the statistical analysis between the reliability factor and the frequency at which passengers travel per year in the land of Turkey considering only regional routes. It indicates that from a total of 304 respondents, 289 travel at a frequency of less or 20 times yearly with a mean of $\mu=3576$ while the remaining 15 travel for more with a mean of $\mu=2.9556$.

T-test Statistics results

If $p < .05$, then reject the null hypothesis H_0 and accept H_1 : There is a significant difference between frequency of travel and reliability

If $p > .05$, then accept H_0 : Both regular and frequent passengers have the same perception of customer satisfaction in terms of reliability.

The second part of the table 4.31 on the other hand displays results for Levene's test for equal variance and t-test for equal means. To test the claim, attention is to be directed to the 2-tailed p-value for variances. P-value hereby for variances assumed $(.070) > (.050)$ the statistic value. Given the numbers indicates above, it therefore wise to support the null hypothesis: both regular and frequent passengers have the same perception of reliability. In other words, reliability of an airline depends on other factors rather than how frequent people fly.

4.5.1 Open-ended questions

Four Turkish founded companies were chosen in the cause of this research to investigate on a sample for the reasons behind the choice of a particular airline service provider for domestic flights. They were namely: AtlasGlobal, Onurair, Pegasus and THY. On the questions of:

- What are the reasons behind your choice? and,
- What features should be incorporated during every flight to entice more customers?

The 304 respondents have similar to entirely different contributions to bring regarding their choices. These all have been summarized and narrowed down as follow,

- AtlasGlobal

A total number of N= 55 was recorded from the initial sample as that of customers who often use the brand as per every domestic flight.

Reasons for choosing the airline were: cheap or very affordable offers, reliable, free food and soft drinks, good luggage handling, smoothest landing ever, wider seats and toilets and Miles and Smiles.

Suggestions on the other hand to entice more customers were listed as: entertainment, on-air wifi, free alcohol, variety on the food menu, separate sections for toddlers and their moms and also African food menu.

- Onurair

The airline company in the course of our research was recorded with a total number of N= 29 choices of loyal customers.

Reasons for choosing the airline were: cheaper or low prices, nice looking and spacious aircrafts, more convenient and clean toilets.

Suggestions: less delay, free food, improved comfortability and customers' approach most especially during the flight journey.

- Pegasus

The company was recorded with a total number of N= 97 respondents who confirmed often or always using its services for any intended regional flight.

Reasons for choosing the airline were: very cheap and low cost, affordable offers, best flight promotions, comfortable, good looking personnel and trust worthy.

Suggestions to entice more customers: Free in-flight catering services (food and drinks), less delay, larger or rather more comfortable seats and also to allow late check-in.

- THY

Commonly known as the flight carrier of Turkey, a total number N= 112 which entails most individuals directed their choice towards Turkish Airlines' services.

Reasons for choosing the airline were: better services, high quality, best in the land of Turkey, comfortable seats, delicious meals, fancy and luxurious, the oldest therefore trustworthy.

Features to be implemented to entice more customers: on-board Wi-Fi, cheaper fares, more promotions, balanced diet menus, student packages, massage seats rather than just the regular ones, lower extra luggage cost, entertainment or toys for crying babies, nurses on board, private section for toddlers and moms and lastly, a multicultural working staff.

Despite the considerable number of respondents who took part in the survey, giving a brief explanation of their reasons for choosing an airline rather than the competitors, a total number of N= 5 had been recorded referring to the void choice of some individuals. In other words, none among the four choices presented was reflecting theirs; whereas

- N=1: only one customer uses all 4 airline services without any distinction
- N=1: preferred both AtlasGlobal and THY

- N=1: only one out of the subtotal number of respondents uses both OnurAir and Pegasus airlines interchangeably
- N=1: one individual directed his choice on both Pegasus and THY and,
- N=2: two passengers chose AtlasGlobal, Pegasus and THY as the airline companies they most likely use depending on factors available and personal responsibilities at the time of the travel.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The concepts of service quality and customer satisfaction are two terms often used internationally in business to emphasize on reasons behind success of some companies over their competitors. However, some studies attribute customer's purchase behavior not only to standards of evaluation but also prerequisites perceptions of the product or service to be rendered. Up to date in marketing and every other business field, there are still investigations on the question of arriving at a standard of comparison of customer satisfaction.

5.1 Conclusion

This section of the study is aimed at presenting some findings based on results of analysis in the prior chapters as well as proposing practical ideas for future research and reference. The above sections of the current paper illustrated and investigated the interrelations between the five dimensions of the SERVQUAL analysis and customer satisfaction in some domestic airlines in Turkey.

Results presented here above entails that among the chosen parameters which included four of the domestic airline companies operating in Turkey, the most preferred or one is THY. The ranking therefore continues with Pegasus, Atlasglobal and Onurair in a descending order. THY being the first ever launched airline company in the country, this serves as an added advantage over other brands. Thus, with the launching of Anadolujet, its subsidiary, a greater number of affordable offers are now available, therefore increasing the brand awareness over the country.

Pegasus airlines, a low cost carrier company has shown through results to be highly competitive nowadays in the market place despite the different strategy used. Founded many years post that of THY, the airline company is beating records competing with the country's flag carrier. Perhaps a more strategical approach to overcome lapses will set the brand at a higher rank. Passengers choosing to fly with Pegasus tends to be more price sensitive, and concerned with the tangible aspects.

A bias concept was found in customers' perception of airline companies in Turkish domestic market place. All low cost carriers are often expected to provide a narrower range of services compare to that of competitors such as: low fares, less comfort, little to no catering services during the flight, more delays to name a few. Atlasglobal on the contrary, does provide more affordable price tickets one of the most important factors to consider for low cost carriers however, registered and operates as a full time carrier. The ambiguity there lies in the similarities with other low cost competitors in the marketplace. Perhaps a more customized or rebranding of services offered will be essential for brand awareness.

Onurair was attributed the lowest score given results of analysis placing the brand in the last position in the ranking of the four mentioned airline service providers. Despite the supposed constant low fares and appealing aircrafts, customers do consider many other factors when evaluating the airline. In other words, price factor alone doesn't seem to be convincing enough to customers rather other important criteria such as on-time delivery of service, empathy should be given more attention. Most passengers disregarded the company's customers approach and service performance.

5.2 Recommendations

Price differentiation, state of an aircraft as well as in-flight services play crucial role in attracting customers in airline business. However, there are other minor factors often omitted which could greatly impact on the future performance of organizations. Technology has greatly improved in the current millennium and as a results, individuals expect to always have the best of all. Features such as on-air wifi are mostly required as an added value by passengers perhaps costly but competitive for his actors. Brand image as well is likely to clearly state the missions in the sense that it could create a certain definition in the mind of customers. Diversity is said to bring people closer; hence diversity of staff is also likely to develop a sense of belonging customers wise that not only is the company concerned about leveraging profits but also making its customers safe and comfortable.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Questionnaire

Appendix 2: Items correlations

Appendix 3: Descriptive statistics

Appendix 1: Questionnaire

Questionnaire.

The below questions here are aimed at examining the Service Quality and Customer Satisfaction in Airline Industry: The case of Turkish Domestic Companies. Proposed by Vanini Claude a Master degree student at Istanbul Aydin University as a part of her academic work in underpinning the driven factors behind the choice a domestic airline company in Turkey when flying regionally. The competitors are hereby listed as two above the numerous domestic air carriers within the country; namely OnurAir and AtlasGlobal. Passengers from both companies have been selected as the best reliable information source to further this research. Therefore, your contribution as one potential passenger into the success of this survey will be highly appreciated.

This survey is under the supervision of Prof. Uğur Şener, a dedicated and inspiring scholar at Istanbul Aydin University.

***Confidentiality:** To ensure that your credentials or any other personal information are kept private throughout the whole process, neither your identity nor your name would be mentioned for your confidentiality is our concern.*

Demographic questions

Answer all questions below by either checking in the box between the available options stated.

What is your origin? Check grammar

- American
- European
- African
- Asian

Do you hold a Turkish citizenship? Answers must be mutually exclusive

- Yes
- No

What is your gender?

- Male
- Female

How old are you?

- 20- - below
- 21 - 29
- 30 - 39
- 40 - 49
- 50 and above.

What is your occupation?

- Student
- Civil Worker
- Self-employed
- Homemaker
- Retired
- Unable to work

Which city do you come from in Turkey?

Frequency of travel per year within Turkey?

- 1 to 5 times
- 6 to 10 times
- 11 to 15 times
- 16 to 20 times
- 20 times and above

Purpose of the flight

- Business trip
- Leisure
- Educational/ Research

Which above the following do you often use when traveling domestically?

- OnurAir
- AtlasGlobal
- Pegasus
- THY
- None of the above

In one sentence, give the reason for your choice below.

Given your personal experience, what other features should be incorporated during every flight process to entice more passengers in order to gain their loyalty?

Part two: The below table aims at investigating and assessing the dimensions of service quality in any of the above listed airline companies in respect to personal experience.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly disagree
The availability of low-price ticket is constant.	Check sentence				
The seats on the aircraft are very comfortable.					
The seats are up to expectation in terms of cleanliness and industrial features (eg:width)					
The choice of the airline is influence by the purpose of the trip.					
Schedule flights are always on time.					
All information provided for a flight are accurate.					
Flight-Attendants are very courteous to passengers.					
Flight-Attendants effectively respond to customers' needs and always willing to help					
The aircraft is equipped with modern facilities to advertise customers during their journey.					

The quality of food served is varied and of high quality.					
There are no free catering services due to the constant low-cost fare.					
Toilets in the aircraft are always clean and easy to use.					
The airline focuses more on quality rather than leveraging profits.					
Employees are very much aware of their duties.					
The airline company has a very strong image therefore high service quality standards					
Luggages are handled with care and attention.					
The airline is commonly known as being empathic and have customers' interest at heart.					
The number of flights attendants is fairly distributed to answer all needs.					

Appendix 2: Items correlations

		s1	s2	s3	s4	s5	s6	s7	s8
s1	Pearson Correlation	1	.441**	.403**	.486**	.439**	.391**	.369**	.461**
s2	Pearson Correlation	.441**	1	.480**	.470**	.530**	.489**	.516**	.521**
s3	Pearson Correlation	.403**	.480**	1	.544**	.504**	.471**	.427**	.513**
s4	Pearson Correlation	.486**	.470**	.544**	1	.475**	.552**	.544**	.507**
s5	Pearson Correlation	.439**	.530**	.504**	.475**	1	.558**	.452**	.462**
s6	Pearson Correlation	.391**	.489**	.471**	.552**	.558**	1	.536**	.527**
s7	Pearson Correlation	.369**	.516**	.427**	.544**	.452**	.536**	1	.622**
s8	Pearson Correlation	.461**	.521**	.513**	.507**	.462**	.527**	.622**	1
s9	Pearson Correlation	.422**	.470**	.442**	.499**	.382**	.430**	.600**	.626**
s10	Pearson Correlation	.394**	.511**	.365**	.370**	.541**	.551**	.545**	.568**
s11	Pearson Correlation	.363**	.485**	.439**	.465**	.455**	.560**	.550**	.542**
s12	Pearson Correlation	.343**	.471**	.376**	.444**	.445**	.485**	.538**	.507**
s13	Pearson Correlation	.398**	.393**	.431**	.482**	.550**	.520**	.418**	.582**

Correlations						
		s9	s10	s11	s12	s13
s1	Pearson Correlation	.422**	.394**	.363**	.343**	.398**
s2	Pearson Correlation	.470**	.511**	.485**	.471**	.393**
s3	Pearson Correlation	.442**	.365**	.439**	.376**	.431**
s4	Pearson Correlation	.499**	.370**	.465**	.444**	.482**
s5	Pearson Correlation	.382**	.541**	.455**	.445**	.550**
s6	Pearson Correlation	.430**	.551**	.560**	.485**	.520**
s7	Pearson Correlation	.600**	.545**	.550**	.538**	.418**
s8	Pearson Correlation	.626**	.568**	.542**	.507**	.582**
s9	Pearson Correlation	1	.511**	.515**	.548**	.491**
s10	Pearson Correlation	.511**	1	.654**	.510**	.534**
s11	Pearson Correlation	.515**	.654**	1	.591**	.507**
s12	Pearson Correlation	.548**	.510**	.591**	1	.523**
s13	Pearson Correlation	.491**	.534**	.507**	.523**	1

Appendix 3: Descriptive statistics

		Statistic	Std. Error	
Tangibles	Mean	3.4679	.04620	
	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	3.3770	
		Upper Bound	3.5588	
	5% Trimmed Mean	3.4817		
	Median	3.5000		
	Variance	.649		
	Std. Deviation	.80556		
	Minimum	1.00		
	Maximum	5.00		
	Range	4.00		
	Interquartile Range	1.00		
	Skewness	-.371	.140	
	Kurtosis	.174	.279	
Assurance	Mean	3.4342	.04665	
	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	3.3424	
		Upper Bound	3.5260	
	5% Trimmed Mean	3.4488		
	Median	3.6667		
	Variance	.662		
	Std. Deviation	.81338		
	Minimum	1.00		
	Maximum	5.00		
	Range	4.00		

	Interquartile Range		1.00	
	Skewness		-.395	.140
	Kurtosis		.112	.279
Reliability	Mean		3.3377	.04800
	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	3.2433	
		Upper Bound	3.4322	
	5% Trimmed Mean		3.3465	
	Median		3.3333	
	Variance		.700	
	Std. Deviation		.83689	
	Minimum		1.00	
	Maximum		5.00	
	Range		4.00	
	Interquartile Range		1.25	
	Skewness		-.261	.140
	Kurtosis		-.060	.279
Empathy	Mean		3.4112	.05020
	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	3.3124	
		Upper Bound	3.5100	
	5% Trimmed Mean		3.4397	
	Median		3.5000	
	Variance		.766	
	Std. Deviation		.87522	
	Minimum		1.00	
	Maximum		5.00	

	Range		4.00	
	Interquartile Range		1.00	
	Skewness		-.447	.140
	Kurtosis		.235	.279
Responsiveness	Mean		3.5230	.06489
	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	3.3953	
		Upper Bound	3.6507	
	5% Trimmed Mean		3.5811	
	Median		4.0000	
	Variance		1.280	
	Std. Deviation		1.13137	
	Minimum		1.00	
	Maximum		5.00	
	Range		4.00	
	Interquartile Range		1.00	
	Skewness		-.732	.140
	Kurtosis		-.147	.279

RESUME

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