

# THE IMPACT OF TRUST AND CABIN CREW PERFORMANCE ON CUSTOMERS' SATISFACTION

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**Abstract:** In this research, the case of AIRBLUE has been taken to examine what people think about its performance, whether they trust this airline or not, and are they satisfied or not? Further, this study measures the impact of cabin crew performance and trust on customer satisfaction. The data was collected by distributing questionnaires to the domestic travelers of AIRBLUE. The sample size of the research was of 180 people. The result shows that majority of people are satisfied with the performance of AIRBLUE and they trust on its service, but at the same time they have positive expectation that AIRBLUE would improve its services. The results of this further explain there is positive correlation among the satisfaction, trust and cabin crew performance.

**Keywords:** Customer satisfaction, Positive correlation, AIRBLUE, Performance, Trust

## INTRODUCTION

Variability is the main function of the services are inherently variable: which means that a service provider cannot be consistent in his performance all the time: it can be good at one time and bad at the other. This inconsistency put a negative impact on the performance of service provider, and leaves customer dissatisfied by damaging their trust. Service performance is strongly affected by trust and satisfaction. Trust act as a bridge between the effects of service performance on satisfaction. If customers have a strong trust on the service, it will somehow reduce the negative impact of variability. The increasing demand of traveling by aeroplane has led many airlines firms to come into the market, which resulted into the increased numbers

of airlines during last two decades. The services of airlines also have an element of variability in its customers who don't get the same performance every time by the service provider, and sometimes they find the services below their expectation, which force them to switch the airline services with another one. As competition in the airline industry has become very intense, firms are giving more and more importance to customer relation management, as they are the key element toward their success. Now a days airline companies like other organizations are focusing on customer retention and there repeat purchases, for this building customer trust in the services is a major task for them.

Airblue is based in Karachi, Pakistan, It is privately owned organization. It represents the second largest airline in the country has market share over 30%. It has, spread its operations to domestic and international destinations. There are 30 scheduled flights daily. It links four domestic locations and several international destinations like Manchester, Muscat, Sharjah, Abu Dhabi and Dubai. Airblue has its establishment history during back in 2003. It commenced its operations in the mid 2004. It was having three Airbus A320-200 aircrafts at that time

The internal and external problems affect the performance of the Airblue which ultimately impact the profitability. Due to these problems standard of the company services are declining. Sometimes the company offers good services but at the same time the crewmembers fails to give attention to their customers. If crewmember attitude is good with their customers the quality of food becomes poor. This service variability affects the customer trust and e satisfaction.

This research aims to investigate customer satisfaction, trust by Airblue Airline and to determine the correlation among customer satisfaction, performance and trust. To identify and recommend the ways in which the problem can be minimized.

#### LITERATURE REVIEW

When the service provider is the same and the preference varies from one counter to other and the service is not consistent, it is regarded as performance variability[1]. Alteration in performance can be caused by several factors [2], However, the prime reason is the human factor, It causes the variation in service as it is not possible for humans to deliver same service every time like machines [3]. So, the services that do not measure up to the expectations of customers affect their mind more badly than that of a positive effect of the service having utility exceeding the expectations, So, once the customer develops the mind about the service variation, it may affect the profitability and sales of company adversely [4].

service attributes of organization are the key for making the mind of customers about the service and its value. Here, the employees need to work hard. They can play a pivotal role in diverting the mind of customers and can retain them. Further it increase the customer satisfaction and loyalty[5]. Studies on customer psychology highlight the interesting fact that customers tend to find some loop holes in the service to blame the organizations. This process impacts the customer satisfaction level [6,7,8]. Social psychology highlights that trust is an important attribute when considering the personal relationship [9]. However, when talking about the service providers, the role of trust seems conflicting in the view of researchers [10, 11].

When talking about companies, trust is referred as the sense of safety or faith in the service provider that customer can rely on . It is based on the belief that the service provider would not take advantage of consumer, break any promise or tell a lie[12]. Here, trust is referred to a state of mind where person have some view of specific target. Literature is full of investigating the trust on various stimuli like exchange partners, other individuals and institutions. The present study focuses on one service provider merely. The intention to embrace the weaknesses of the service provider based on the positive anticipations [13], and further, the degree to which the positive feeling of individual exist regarding the

risk taking behavior of service provider [14]. Hence, trust can be regarded as an evaluation method of service provider, However, it is in contrast to commitment and satisfaction related with service and experience [15]. Here, it is important to note the Two specific sides of trust. Firstly, the service provider must expect to be operational and establish the trust[16]

Literature indicates a well established fact that perception regarding performance of service by service provider affect the satisfaction of the customer [17]. Once the service is delivered it becomes the source to explain the performance of service. It impact greatly on customer satisfaction than that of the perceived and expected service gap[18]. So, it is evident from the discussion that customer satisfaction is directly influenced by the service provider's performance. As mentioned earlier, trust is an important factor in service performance therefore it is obvious that customer satisfaction and trust has positive relationship[15] , The relationship of performance and trust is quite similar to the confirmation/disconfirmation theory- a traditional view [7]. As the several definitions of trust incorporate expectations so it is regarded as a future related attribute. The gap between the expectations before and after the service provision confuses the mind of customer [19]. Similarly, to this exceeding expectations of service of post-encounter is likely to leave customer confused. The greater gap between performance and trust points out that either customer has misjudged the trust-performance relationship or has been deceived utterly- a negative case of disconfirmation. It certainly, impacts the satisfaction level of customer. On the other hand if the gap is narrower then impact would be modest. It the satisfaction and trust are related positively the correlation of consistency [20] help this gap to be minor and let the pre and post encounter expectations in line

The perception of the satisfaction has a direct effect on performance of the supplier. Moreover, trust is an important variable in service encounters, and it has been shown that trust and performance are positively related. The following hypotheses statements have been developed:

- (a) H1: Satisfaction and cabin crew performance are positively correlated to each other
- (b) H2: Trust and customer satisfaction are positively correlated to each other.

**Table 1:** Frequency Distribution W R T Variables (N=180)

<b>Customer Satisfaction (Items)</b>	<i>Dissatisfied</i>	<i>Neutral</i>	<i>Satisfied</i>
To what extent does AIRBLUE meet your expectations?	37	21	122
Imagine an airline that is perfect in every respect. How near or how far from this ideal do you find AIRBLUE	49	35	96
<b>Trust (Items)</b>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Neutral</i>	<i>Agree</i>
AIRBLUE keeps its promises to me.	38	51	91
AIRBLUE does really care for me.	41	37	102
AIRBLUE is concerned about my well-being.	39	31	110
I feel confidence with regards to AIRBLUE.	55	33	92
<b>Cabin crew performance (Items)</b>	<i>Poor</i>	<i>Neutral</i>	<i>Good</i>
Availability	25	21	134
Helpfulness	51	32	97
Personal attention	44	23	113
Personal approach	37	43	100

**Table 2:** Correlation Matrix of Networking, Competence, Opportunity and Participation

		Satisfaction	performance	Trust
Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)			
	N	180		
Performance	Pearson Correlation	.198(**)	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		
	N	180	180	
Trust	Pearson Correlation	.181(**)	.450(**)	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	
	N	180	180	180

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

## METHOD

The sample size taken for this research was of 180 people who have traveled with AIRBLUE. The questionnaire was distributed among those consumers who use services of AIRBLUE for travelling within Pakistan. Data was collected from primary source. Questionnaire was used as an instrument for collecting primary data. The scale was adopted from a research paper [21] which helped in getting feedback from consumers regarding problem area. The data was collected through random sampling. The questionnaire consisted of different questions and was arranged in sequence. The types of questions being asked in the questionnaires were focused on the three variables of the research i.e. Performance, Trust, and Satisfaction. Internet articles and journals were also used for collecting literature. Information regarding selected company and other relevant information was taken from the Internet. The reliability of scale used for the research was 0.623, which shows it was a reliable scale for the research. All variables were measure by using a 5-point likert scale and SPSS was used to analyze the data. Correlation test was applied to test the relationship between dependent and independent variables.

The results of above table give the information of respondents' response about each statement of each variable. The responses about the first statement of more than two third respondents are satisfied and out of 180 customers 96 are also satisfied that airline that is perfect in every respect. The results of second variable trust almost two third of the subjects have the trust on AIRBLUE services as well as airline. The response regarding the cabin crew performance (availability, personal attention, and personal approach) response is in good side and out of total 180, only 97 passengers replied that they are helpfulness and 32 are neutral and 51 consider the poor in this regard.

The correlation depicts that the significant relationship among dependent and independent variables. It is proved from the analysis that considering the 5% confidence level of significant the customers are satisfied with the performance /service of the company and the correlation coefficient is 0.198. There is positive correlation among customer satisfaction and trust of customer regarding to services of the company and correlation coefficient is 0.18. Finally, we can say that customer satisfaction is positively and significantly correlated with both the variables. So, the results of this study validate the both hypotheses that there is a positive correlation between customer satisfaction, trust on company services and performance of the staff.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The survey has shown that consumers find it worthy to use services of AIRBLUE with some of the attributes like keeping the promise, concerned about well being, availability of the crew members, and their care for the travelers. Evaluating and sifting through all the survey results indicates one big thing, and that is AIRBLUE consumers are satisfied towards using their services. Majority of the respondents have shown satisfaction. Also majority of the respondents are satisfied regarded it as either far away or very far away from an ideal airline. Regarding crew members, there are consumers who have shown satisfaction in terms of their availability, and their care, in terms of personal approach and personal attention, little amount of consumers has shown a negative response with helpfulness. Therefore, this is an area to be considered that leads to the dissatisfaction for the AIRBLUE services. However, their expectations are still out there as the survey results show that they have still the positive expectations regarding the personal approach and personal attention served by the AIRBLUE crew members. Further, the results of this study validate the both hypotheses that there is a positive correlation between customer satisfaction, trust on company services and performance of the staff.

Following steps should be taken to increase the performance of AIRBLUE services and also to increase the trust and satisfaction level of the consumers; AIRBLUE needs to come up with the good publicity in terms of their approach. Therefore, by good publicity along with their genuine services they can boost the trust and satisfaction level of the consumers. AIRBLUE operates its flights in fewer cities as compared to PIA which is a disadvantage to AIRBLUE. PIA has another advantage over AIRBLUE that they have more number of planes than AIRBLUE. The crew members should be trained professionally in terms of personal helpfulness for the consumers of the AIRBLUE. The consumers still have positive expectations in this regard. Therefore with such efforts like professional training, the satisfaction of the consumers should be boost. AIRBLUE should also purchase new luxury class airplanes. This will make their services more near towards an ideal class airline. Since their customers still have positive expectations, therefore, by just having this procurement of new airplanes they can boost the satisfaction levels of their customers.

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