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ST. MARY'S UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF POST GRAGUATE STUDIES
MEASURING CUSTOMER SATISFACTION
LEVEL ON ETHIOPIAN AIRLINES SERVICE:
THE CASE OF SOUTHERN ETHIOPIA HISTORIC
ROUTE FLIGHTS

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MA Program

MEASURING CUSTOMER SATISFACTION LEVEL ON
ETHIOPIAN AIRLINES SERVICE: THE CASE OF SOUTHERN
ETHIOPIA HISTORIC ROUTE FLIGHTS

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A thesis submitted to the school of graduate studies of st.mary's university in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the master's degree of marketing management

ST. MARY'S UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES FACULTY OF BUSINESS

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Declaration

I, the undersigned graduate student, hereby declare that this thesis is my original work, and that all sources of the materials used for this thesis have been duly acknowledged. This research study is being submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement for Master of Arts Degree in Marketing Management.

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ENDORSEMENT

This is to certify that ADDISU BABU carried out his thesis on “MEASURING CUSTOMER SATISFACTION LEVEL ON ETHIOPIAN AIRLINES SERVICE: THE CASE OF SOUTHERN ETHIOPIA HISTORIC ROUTE FLIGHTS IN THE CASE OF SOUTHERN ETHIOPIA HISTORIC ROUTE FLIGHTS”. And a thesis submitted in partial Fulfillment at st. Marry University with my Approval as University Advisor.

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“Delight yourself in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart.”

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List of abbreviations

CEO- Chief Executive Officer

Cust - Svcs- Customer services

ET-Ethiopian Airlines

ETB - Ethiopian Birr

MRO- Maintenance and Overhaul department

OTP- on-time performance

Pax –Passenger

Q-400 – Aircraft Type

SPSS –Statistical Package for Social Sciences TWA – Trans World Airlines

ABSTRACT

This study explored the level of customer satisfaction on the air transport service provided by Ethiopian airlines. The study used a descriptive survey design to obtain information on the level of perceived service quality from passengers of Ethiopian airlines in the historic routes. This historic route composed of flight from Addis Ababa to Hawassa, Jimma and ArbaMinch. The study mainly adopted a case study approach and the respondents constituted Passengers who had used Ethiopian airlines to fly to the southern historic destinations of Ethiopia. The research was conducted on a cross sectional bases and lasts for three weeks on May 01- 21, 2020. The sample of this study consisted of Three hundred (300) passengers. Primary data source and Secondary data source was used to answer the research questions. This data was mainly obtained through administering of questionnaires. This questionnaire had four basic sections grouped under airport services, onboard products, In-flight services and Airline Website. The data collected was analyzed by use of the frequency, percentage and cross tabulation (mean, standard deviation). The study findings indicate that among the dimensions tested under check-in staff attitude, check-in service efficiency and Aircraft seat comfort created dissatisfaction on passengers. On the other hand, a significant satisfaction response was found from passengers on almost all variables under Airport service, onboard products, and Cabin staff services namely on punctuality, flight cancelation, onboard catering and in-flight staffs' hospitability. This study contributes to existing theories of service quality and level of customer satisfaction by confirming or adding value to the relationships that are involved in customer satisfaction and service quality at Ethiopian airlines. It provides results that are useful to Ethiopian airlines to consider both ways of increasing customer satisfaction through acquiring of new aircrafts and proper management of operational as well as back office employees.

Key words: Airport services, onboard products, in-flight service, historic route, customer satisfaction and Ethiopian Airlines.

CHAPTER ONE

1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter presented an overview of the entire study. It includes the background of the study, statement of the problem, research question and research objectives, significance of the study, scope of the study, limitation of the study, organization of the paper and definition of terms.

1.1 Background of the Study

“Ethiopian is, first and for most, a customer focused and market driven airline. In a context of hyper competitive global airline industry, the only way for Ethiopian to sustain its success is through its differentiated service delivery and by meeting its customer’s expectations...”

Tewelde GebreMariam CEO of Ethiopian Airlines, 2013

In today’s competitive environment delivering high quality service is the key for a sustainable competitive advantage. Customer satisfaction does have a positive effect on organizations profitability. Satisfied customers form the foundation of any successful business because customer satisfaction leads to repeat purchases, brand loyalty, and positive word of mouth. Customer satisfaction is the outcome felt by those that have experienced a company’s performance that have fulfilled their expectations. The Airline industry is one of the service industries that the wishes of the airlines owners, CEO’s and executive managers are to satisfy, go beyond and delight their customers’ expectation. But the reality for the reason described by Tolpa [2012] as airline industry has always been famous for its continuous struggle, cutting costs, increasing oil price, managing fluctuating demand, keeping up with tight quality requirements while trying to maintain superior services and satisfy needs of various customer groups. For these reason and other unforeseen circumstances Airlines fail to meet their customers need, the Economist [2013] described this reality with “ Americans dislike their airline” and this fact is supported by the countries customer satisfaction index in 2013, the countries airline industry received, as a whole, a score of 69 on a 100-point scale. That’s lower than energy utilities [77], hospitals [78], banks [77] and the soft drinks industry [84].

Ethiopian airlines, formerly Ethiopian Air Lines[EAL] and often referred to as Ethiopian, is Ethiopian flag carrier and is wholly owned by the countries government EAL was founded on 21DEC1945 and commenced operations on 8apr1946, expanding to international flights in 1951. The firm became a share company in 1965 and changed its name from Ethiopian Air Lines to ETHIOPIAN AIRLINES.

The airline has been a member of the international Air Transport Association since 1959 and of the African Airlines Association [EFRAA] since 1968. Ethiopian is a star alliance member, having joined in December 2011.

The first Ethiopian Airlines scheduled flight took place to Cairo via Asmara in Douglas C-47 sky train. The national airline had been set up a few months earlier as Ethiopian Airlines INC, a joint venture with American Airline, TWA [Trans World Airlines].

Following the successful inaugural flight to Cairo, a regular weekly service was established. Weekly services to Djibouti followed, as well as a domestic service to Jimma. Demands for additional services were so great that towards the end of 1946[Ethiopian Airlines, 1988].

Ethiopian is the fastest growing airline in Africa. In its operations in the past close to seven decades, the company has become one of the continents leading carriers, unrivalled in efficiency and operational success [Ethiopian, 2012].

Ethiopian is currently now implementing a 15-year strategic plan called “vision 2025” that will see it become the leading aviation group in Africa with around seven business centers: Ethiopian Domestic and regional Airline: Ethiopian cargo: Ethiopian international passenger airline: Ethiopian Aviation Academy: Ethiopian MRO: Ethiopian in-flight catering services and Ethiopian Ground Service.

By doing so the company has received a lot of awards from different organization for its services quality, some of them are customer service awards such as; Ethiopian airlines SKYTRAX star rating, 2018 award winner which gives the airline a 4-star airline rating of product and service quality. The SKYTRAX rate Ethiopian by Best airline in Africa, Best business class service in Africa and Best economy class service in Africa.

Ethiopian designed a domestic route which connects the tourist attracting sites that are found to the southern part of the country and name it historic routes. This historic route connects Addis Ababa with Jimma, Hawassa and Arbaminch.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Nowadays all companies are realizing the significance of delivering and managing service quality, which leads to customer satisfaction. Service quality that is delivered can meet or exceed customers' expectations that are mainly influenced by customers' prior expectations.

In this struggling environment, airlines are forced to shift their focus towards customer oriented service quality (Chang & Yeh, 2002). It is extremely important for carriers not only to understand the perception of passengers of their service offerings, but as well find out what customers expect from the services (Chen & Chang, 2005) and what kind of services customers consider the most important.

In the airline industry, services are composed of very complex mix of intangibles as the airlines sell not physical objects but performances and experiences (Gursoy et al., 2005). Thus service quality is a key to attract and keep loyal customers and helps to measure the customer satisfaction (Liou & Tzang, 2007; Chang & Yeh, 2002).

Ethiopian Airlines is exposed to a heavy competition against giant alliance in the international scene, regional alliance in Africa and the Middle East, and strong individual airlines from Europe, Middle East and Africa. Unless the Airline prepare And develops strategy to counter the upcoming competitive pressure, the consequences could be unmerciful.

According to Ecaterina T. (2012), the customers care more about very basic aspects of air transportation: provide good information for decision making, be on time and communicate promptly in case a flight is delayed or cancelled. The airlines may consider such results as an incentive to deliver key services on consistently high level and carefully reconsider the value of ancillary services.

Ethiopian airlines change its domestic fleets from Fokker 50 aircrafts with maximum carrying capacity of 50 passengers to the state of the art Q-400 next generation aircraft that has 78 seats capacity since December 31, 2010 with the aim of improving customer service [Ethiopian, 2010]. By doing the above Ethiopian claimed it improved its customer service, did the same perceived by passengers of this historic route?

Even if the company gives services like Airport services, On-board product services, cabin staff services and Airport Website services to the customers, Ethiopian is accused for poor customer service. The customers mostly complain in different mass Medias for sub-standardized service of the airline/ treatments they experienced with domestic service given by the airline in general and the historic route in particular [the Reporter,2013]. It was observed that those services provided by the airline are not well organized, the service providers lack communications among departments if the flights being delayed or cancelled, the Airlines lack giving frequent trainings for the employees. It was also observed that due to the above problems the airline lacks to meet customers' expectations on the southern historic route flights.

1.3 Research Questions

This study answered the following general research questions and specific research questions in relation to southern historic route service quality of Ethiopian Airlines.

1.3.1 General Research Question

How the customer satisfaction measurement levels on the southern historic route flights focused on the services provided by Ethiopian Airlines based on Aircraft Quality, Schedule Convenience and Reliability, Check-in service, In-flight entertainment and meal services provided by the ground and cabin crews and baggage service.

1.3.2 Specific Research Questions

1. What are the determinant levels of customer satisfaction over Airport based services of Ethiopian Airlines like Baggage service, check-in service, boarding efficiency and staff efficiency on the services?
2. How passengers of Ethiopian Airlines satisfied with the on-board products like Aircraft seats, Cabin cleanliness and other cabin services?

3. How the passengers of Ethiopian Airlines satisfied with the services given by the Front line (Check-in counter) and in-flight staffs?
4. How the service quality change made by Ethiopian Airlines to meet customers' expectations on the southern historic route flights perceived by passengers?

1.4 Objectives of the Study

1.4.1 General Objective

The general objective of this research was to measure the southern historic route flight service quality of Ethiopian airlines from the customers' point of view to identify the service types which did not meet customers' expectations and finally to draw possible recommendations to improve the service quality.

1.4.2 Specific Objective

For customer service providing enterprises like Ethiopian Airlines customer satisfaction measurement is a basic improvement mechanism. Accordingly, this study assessed the level of customer satisfaction the following key service areas of the airline.

- To measure the level of customer satisfaction over the service provided by cabin staffs of the airline.
- To determine the level of customer satisfaction over airport based services of Ethiopian airlines like baggage service, check in service, boarding efficiency and staff efficiency on the services.
- To rate level of customer satisfaction over onboard products of the airline like aircraft seat, cabin cleanliness and other cabin services.
- To measure the perception of passengers on overall service quality provided by Ethiopian.

1.5 Significance of the Study

The results of this research could help to show the gap between the southern historic route service quality that is proved by Ethiopian Airlines and the level of satisfaction perceived by the customers.

Accordingly, the airline uses the gaps that were identified as an input for its customer service improvement strategy and a baseline to other researchers to further identify other gaps from the airline perspective. Therefore, improvement of gaps identified could help the airline to attain its vision and mission since one of the airlines mission and vision is to become a customer centered and airline of choice to its customers by 2025 (Ethiopian Airlines, 2010).

As World Bank (2012) describes, these days' Ethiopian road transport service is improved significantly so that customers may shift to use road transportation service than the air transport. Therefore, this research will help the airline to improve its customer service and become a choice of transport means to its customers in the competitive market.

As it was depicted by the Central Statistical Agency of Ethiopia: The Ethiopian economy was growing fast; on average by 11.4% for five years (CSA, 2013). Shutkina (2009), states that economic growth has a direct relationship with preference of transportation means. Therefore, this study will help the airline to improve its customer service and tap this market potential properly.

1.6 Scope of the Study

This study would try to show the measurement of customer satisfaction levels on Ethiopian Airlines services. To achieve this aim, the scope of the study is to identify and determine services provided by Ethiopian Airlines i.e. Airport services, On-board products, Cabin staff services and Airport website services that measures the customer satisfaction levels on the southern historic route flights.

The scope of the study limited to Addis Ababa, the capital city of Ethiopia and Hawassa focusing on the frequent passengers of southern historic route flights. The geographical limitation is not only chosen because of time, access and cost restrictions, but also it is believed that a considerable number of frequent travelers that mostly uses the southern historic route flights are available and most of the frequent travelers from foreign countries are available in Addis Ababa and Hawassa.

1.7 Limitation of the Study

A major problems or limitations faced during the research period were:

1. Lack of voluntariness from the passenger's side to fill the questionnaires at Addis Ababa Bole International airport site.
2. Lack of getting time to get the passengers to fill the questionnaires at the departure hall basically at the Hawassa and Jimma flights.
3. Due to the Pandemic Covid-19 or Corona Virus there was a problem of making contact with the respondents. It makes the respondents not to fill the questionnaires.

1.8 Organization of the Study

This study is organized into five main chapters. The first chapter dealt with introductory issues of the study which will be classified into introduction, background of the study, statement of the problem, objective, and significance of the study.

The second chapter was composed of literature reviews organized in two major groups. First conceptual literatures will be collected and organized on ideas, theories and concepts from books, journals and other electronic sources. Second empirical literatures will be organized from papers released empirical evidences done on similar fields and business categories.

The third chapter focused on research methods and design on how the data sources will be determined, selected, analyzed and presented using different techniques.

The Chapter four is dealing with analysis of data collection using descriptive statistical techniques and other statistical methods.

The fifth chapter composed of three major parts namely summaries of findings, conclusion and recommendations drawn from the study.

CHAPTER TWO

Review of Related Literature

2.1 Introduction

This chapter is a comprehensive presentation of the relevant literature that was reviewed. It touches on the theoretical Framework i.e. Theories of customer satisfaction such as customer satisfaction theory, Assimilation theory, Contrast theory and Assimilation and Contrast theory, service Quality, the importance of service quality in the airline industry. On the Empirical Literature the researcher focused on empirical results obtained from similar research works conducted at different times in a different place and organization. Finally the researcher tried to show the conceptual framework of the study and presented at the end of this chapter.

2.2 Theoretical Literature

A number of theoretical approaches have been utilized to explain the relationship between disconfirmation and satisfaction. Many theories have been used to understand the process through which customers form satisfaction judgments.

2.2.1 Customer satisfaction theory

Satisfaction is an overall psychological state that reflects the evaluation of a relationship between the customer and a company- environment- product- service. It involves one of the following three psychological elements; cognitive (thinking/evaluation), affective (emotional/feeling) and behavioral. Satisfaction can be determined by subjective (e.g. Customer needs, emotions) and objective factors (e.g. Product and service features).

Expectations and customer satisfaction

Expectations are beliefs (likelihood or probability) that a product or service (containing certain attributes, features or characteristics) will produce certain anticipated levels of performance based on previous affective, cognitive and behavioral.

Customer satisfaction is the outcome felt by those that have experienced a company's performance that have fulfilled their expectations. According to Hansemark and Albinson (2004) " Satisfaction is an overall customer attitude towards a service provider, or an emotional

reaction to the difference between what customers anticipate and what they receive, regarding the fulfillment of some needs, goals or desire...”

2.2.2 Assimilation Theory

Assimilation theory is based on Festinger’s (1962) dissonance theory. Dissonance theory posits that consumers make some kind of cognitive comparison between expectations about the product and the perceived product performance. This view of the consumer post usage evaluation was introduced into the satisfaction literature in the form of assimilation theory.

According to Anderson (1973), consumers seek to avoid dissonance by adjusting perceptions about a given product to bring it more in line with expectations. Consumers can also reduce the tension resulting from a discrepancy between expectations and product performance either by distorting expectations so that they coincide with perceived product performance or by raising the level of satisfaction by minimizing the relative importance of the disconfirmation experienced.

2.2.3 Assimilation-Contrast Theory

Assimilation-contrast theory suggests that if performance is within a customer’s latitude (range) of acceptance, even though it may fall short of expectation, the discrepancy will be disregarded – assimilation will operate and the performance will be deemed as acceptable. If performance falls within the latitude of rejection, contrast will prevail and the difference will be exaggerated, the produce/service deemed unacceptable.

2.2.4 Contrast theory

This theory was first introduced by Hovland, Harvey and Sherif (1987). Contrast theory is defined as a tendency to magnify the discrepancy between one’s own attitudes and the attitudes represented by opinion statements. (Dawes et al, 1972). This theory presents an alternative view of the consumer post-usage evaluation process that leads to results in opposite predictions for the effects of expectations on satisfaction.

According to the contrast theory, any discrepancy of experience from expectations will be exaggerated in the direction of discrepancy. If companies raise expectations in their advertising and then a customer’s experience is only slightly less than that promised, the product/service would be rejected as totally unsatisfactory.

The above theories of customer satisfaction stressed that it's the responsibility of the service giver to seek the needs and wants of its customers and meet their expectations. Therefore, a service provider and delivery enterprises like Ethiopian Airlines should constantly conduct periodic customer satisfaction measurements to identify the gaps between the service provided and how well the service level delivered matches customer expectation.

2.3 Service quality

As it mentioned by Archana et al,(2012) ideas of (ostrowaki et al, 1993), Buttler and Keller, (1992), maintaining sustainability of quality service in a business are the main concern of business today providing quality is not a concern of manufacturing companies alone.

The delivery of high quality service becomes a marketing requirement among air carriers as a result of competitive pressure. Chang and Keller, (2002) also argue from the challenges point of view to satisfy and maintain customers' expectation in the airline business and described that quality in airline service is difficult to describe and measure due to its intangibility, inseparability and heterogeneity.

Lewis and Booms (1993) define service quality as a measure of how well the service delivered match customer expectation. Providing service quality means confirming to customer expectation on consistent basis. It has also defined as the difference between customer expectation and service delivered.

Service quality has been given increased attention in recent years, due to its specific contribution to business competitiveness. Service quality is considered as a critical dimension of competitiveness (Lewis, 1989). Excelling in service quality and opting for high customer satisfaction is the vital issue and challenge facing the contemporary service industry.

Service quality is an important subject in both the public and private sectors, in business and service industries (Zahari et al, 2008).

Most service giving companies strive to meet their customers' expectation even they need to exceed this level and tried to delight their customers. So concerned companies need to conduct periodical survey to check the level of their customer satisfaction on the service they provided and what customers currently expects from the organization.

2.3.1 Service quality in the airline industry

Flight safety, good appearance of flight crew and offering highest possible quality services to customers a day are the most important airline service quality factors in the eyes of customers. (Gaddene et al., 2009). In a highly competitive environment, where all airlines have comparable fares and matching frequent flyer programs, airline's competitive advantages lie in the service quality perceived by customers (Chan and Yeh, 2002).

1. Frequency and timings

In short-haul markets, frequency and timings are all important for the business traveler. Because this is so, on almost all routes there will be a very long correlation between the share of the frequency that an airline holds, and the share of the market it will obtain. Alongside the question of flight frequency, the timing of flights will also be a vital consideration. A high frequency of flights will be of no value if all the flights are concentrated at the weekend or during middle-of-the-day periods (shwan, 2007).

2. Punctuality of flights

Shwan (2007) explained punctuality of flights is of obvious, crucial to the business traveler, with flight delays meaning inconvenience, missed appointments and, perhaps, the loss of customers.

3. Airport location and access

In short haul routes, Passengers will prefer service from a local, easily accessible airport, rather than from a more distant hub. (shwan, 2007).

4. Seat accessibility/ Ticket flexibility

“seat accessibility” is one of an aviation jargon which means the probability of a passenger being able to book a seat on a flight shortly before the flight departs.

It is an important product need for the business traveler. Some business travel is undertaken in response to a sudden crisis, which requires someone to travel on a “next flight out” basis. Also, an airline can be giving a very high frequency on a route, but this frequency will be of no value to the business traveler if all the flights are fully booked days or weeks in advance.

A further aspect of ticket flexibility is that many business travelers expect the right to no-show for the flight, and then to be re-booked on a later one, without any penalty being charged (shwan, 2007).

5. Frequent flyer benefits

shwan (2007) said that, almost all airlines operate their own frequent flyer program, are partners in another carrier's program. The evidence is that on short-haul routes flights are chosen on the basis of appropriate departure timing and the availability of a seat. If this is the case, then the offer of frequent flyer miles simply acts as a welcome bonus.

6. In-flight service

on short-haul routes, the fact that flight times are short means that in-flight service often assumes a lower priority than frequency and punctuality in choice of airline decisions.

Even on routes where flight times are only three-quarters-of-an-hour or so. In terms of the factors this will be taken into account in evaluating the in-flight experience, seating comfort in terms of seat pitch and seat width will be significant. A final requirement in terms of in-flight service will be meals and drinks appropriate to the time of day (shwan, 2007).

7. Airport service

The other point raised by Shwan (2007) is on a short flight, time spent at the airports at each end of the route may exceed the flight time. An online check-in facility may be even better.

Today, they will expect expedited security and passport checks, and that a lounge should be available in which they can relax prior to a flight and make any last-minute phone calls or send emails.

Quality has become a significant concern for those in the service industry, specifically the airline industry.

Although people primarily use airplanes to satisfy their need to go from one place to another, procedures from ticketing, checking, boarding and traveling to baggage handling, etc... can also deeply influence travelers' attitudes to the services provided by airlines and their satisfaction with those services. Hence, airline passengers can experience many service encounters with

front-line employees as well as in-flight attendants, this is called ‘moment of truth’. Passengers may judge or evaluate airline service quality through a comparison between their experiences and expectations, over a number of quality attributes (Gronroos, 2000).

So far, many academic researchers have devoted themselves into studying the quality of airline service by following the simple logic of comparing expectations/experiences or gap analysis. In the research of Gourdin and Kloppenborg (1991), for example, indicated that identification of service gaps is the first step toward quality improvements. Their findings showed that the gap between passenger expectation, and management perceptions of passenger expectations, was the most crucial failure point. That is, a critical issue for airline managers is being aware of passenger expectations and meeting those expectations. Ostrowski, et al. (1993) also pointed out that superior service quality could lead passengers to a significantly higher propensity of retained preference. Some similar points also can be seen in the research of Lee and Cunningham (1996). Thus, the service quality of airlines is an important issue, not only for airline managers; it is also a key factor in building long-term brand recognition.

Whether for business purposes, official duties or for holidays, passengers traveling on airlines expect certain levels of service quality, and this applies to specifically Ethiopian Airlines travelers as well.

Consumers’ overall impressions of service quality are linked to how efficiently an organization renders its services, and it is this impression that determines customers’ behavioral intentions to continuously patronize the airline or not. Good service quality helps organizations increase profits (Buzzell and Gale, 1987) and maintains their competitive advantage within their specific industry (Park, Robertson, and Wu, 2004). Airlines also need to be aware of differences in service expectations among airline passengers (Sultan and Simpson, 2000; Cunningham, Young and Lee, 2002). Since service quality and delivery are tangible, customers can make comparison between good and poor service providers. Thus, it is important for airlines to develop passenger-focused services by making an effort to understand passengers’ expectations (Park, Robertson, and Wu, 2000).

Some research has shown that, besides having to change planes, flight scheduling, ticket prices, in-flight services, facilities and ticketing procedures are also key factors in determining how

airline service quality is evaluated and can influence a travelers' choice of airline (Cunningham, et al. 2002; Sultan and Simpson, 2000).

2.3.2 Airline service Quality

First, we perceive air transport as service retailer. Although airlines offer varying degree of tangibility, airlines predominantly provide sales service. The demand for an airline seat is a derived demand based on the customers' desire to be in a different location at a certain time. One airline seat is really not much different from another.

It is the quality of service given to the customers that will differentiate the competitors, determine market share and ultimately profitability (Ayling 1991, Ott 1993).

Second, the expectation from a customer from an airline is mainly service related. Airlines must surpass a passengers' expectation of time lines, convenience and comfort (Ott, 1993). Third, it was revealed in an earlier study that convenient schedules is the most important service indicator for frequent (more than 10 trips a year) and moderate fliers (3-9 trips a year) whilst light fliers (1-2 trips a year) ranked destinations at their main preference (Ott, 1993). This justifies that through the objective of flying from one place to another is for transportation purposes, the importance in ranking by airline passengers is mainly service related.

Most of the literature suggests that airline passengers look at service quality as a multi-dimensional variable, which is consistent with the Parasuraman's et al. (1998) conception of service quality popularly known as SERVQUAL. SERVQUAL measures service quality based on five dimensions namely reliability, assurance, tangibles, empathy, and responsiveness. The instrument is based on the premise that customers' assessments of overall service quality are determined by the 'gap' between their level of expectations and their perceptions of actual performance.

The instrument has been used by researchers to measure airline service quality such as Sultan and Simpson (2000). In general, service quality literature recognizes expectations as an instrumental influence in customer evaluations of service quality (Parasuraman et al., 1985 as cited in Sultan and Simpson, 2000).

According to Atilgan et al. (2008), in most of the service settings customers may not received the level of service they expected before the actual service experience. The performance of the service falls either under customers' expectations or above expectation. When expectations are exceeded, service is perceived to be of high quality and also to be a surprise. When expectations are not met, service quality is deemed unacceptable.

When expectations are confirmed by perceived service, quality is satisfactory. However, quality, which falls short of expectations, has a greater effect on customer satisfaction than quality which exceeds satisfaction (Zeithal and Bitner, 2000). The notion that service quality and customer satisfaction are distinctive variables has achieved some degree of consensus among researchers (Saha and Theingi, 2009).

The construct of service quality is evaluated by the actual service performance in terms of particular service attributes in the specific context; whereas satisfaction is measured by the customers' overall service experiences. Customer satisfaction depends on a variety of factors, including perceived service quality, customers' mood, emotions, social interactions, and other experience-specific subjective factors (Rust and Oliver, 1994). According to Crompton and Love (1995), the two constructs are likely to be positively correlated, but unlikely to be linear.

Although researchers have generally agreed on the consumptions and distinctiveness of service quality and satisfaction, their causal relationship is yet to be resolved including in the airline service consumption.

Yi (1990) defined customer satisfaction as "... an emotional response to the experiences provided by, associated with particular products and services purchased, retail outlets, or even molar patterns of behaviors such as shopping and buying behavior, as well as overall market place" (Yi, 1990, P.69). Although, there are a number of customer satisfaction theories in the literature such as contrast theory, dissonance and equity theory, research shows that expectation-disconfirmation paradigm has received much empirical attention (Parasurman et al., 1988). However, other empirical findings demonstrate that customer satisfaction can also be measured through product or service performance (Anderson and Sullivan, 1993; Churchill and Surprenant, 1982) or an outcome of service quality (Anderson et al., 1994).

Investigating all these theories and providing an extensive review of the customer satisfaction is well beyond the scope of this study.

Customer satisfaction has become a key intermediary objective in service operations due to the benefits it brings to the organizations (Saha and Theingi, 2009). The importance of customer satisfaction is derived from the generally accepted philosophy that for a business to be successful and profitable, it must satisfy customers (Binter and Hubert, 1994). Previous research has demonstrated that satisfaction is strongly associated with re-purchase intentions (Cronin and Taylor, 1992; Fornell, 1992). Customer satisfaction also serves as an exit barrier, helping a firm to retain its customers (Fornell, 1992; Halstead and Page, 1992). Several studies have concluded that it costs more to gain a new customer than it does to retain an existing one. In addition, customer satisfaction also leads to favorable word-of-mouth publicity that provides valuable indirect advertising for an organization (Halstead and Page, 1992; Fornell, 1992).

In many industries, having satisfied customers also means that organizations received fewer complaints (Fornell, 1992), hence reducing costs and handling failures. Researchers also maintain that satisfied customers are willing to pay more for the benefits they receive and are more likely to be tolerant of an increase in price (Fornell, 1992). Bitner and Hubert (1994) conclude that, through satisfying customers, organizations could improve profitability by expanding their business and gaining a higher market share as well as repeat and referral business.

2.3.3 Measurement of customer satisfaction

Gilmore and Litu (2003) described measurement of a customer satisfaction by assuming service provision as a process and in order to measure a service given by an organization it needs to identify the different stages of the process in a given service type. As to them the parts or the stages of experiences of the customer in the process in which the customer will pass and experience are the pre-during and post-service experience.

Litu (2003) also saw measurement of customer satisfaction from the advantage it will give to the measuring organization by saying customer satisfaction measurement serves two roles, providing information and enabling communication with customers.

With this one is to collect information either regarding what customers say that needs to be done differently or to assess how well an organization is currently meeting its customers need and want.

2.3.4 Customer Loyalty

Since airline companies are very concerned about customer loyalty, they need to review and re-examine their strategies not only to sustain customer loyalty but also to remain competitive. Natalisa and Subroto (2003) suggested that domestic airline operators need to honor promises made in their promotional and external communication materials. Continuous training activities should also provide to frontline operators, in addition to developing various kinds of loyalty programs to insure continued customer loyalty. Chin (2002) stated that an attractive frequent flier program could actually contribute to increased loyalty from the repeat business of an increased number of customers. In addition, Dick and Basu (1994) suggested that reliability and confidence might encourage loyalty to the service provider.

Even though customer loyalty is very important to the survival of service companies, Selnes, (1993) contend that this is an area that needs to be researched further. The result of customer loyalty can be depicted in customer behaviors such as repurchase intentions and purchasing sequence (Day, 1969) and attitudinal outcomes, such as recommending the service to others (Cronin and Taylor, 1992; Zeithaml, Parasurman, and Berry, 1990; Selnes, 1993).

2.3.5 The Relationship between Satisfaction and Service Quality

To achieve a high level of customer satisfaction, most researchers suggest that a high level of service quality should be delivered by the service provider as service quality is normally considered an antecedent of customer satisfaction (Cronin, Brady and Hult, 2000; Anderson et al., 1994; Cronin and Taylor, 1992).

However, the exact relationship between satisfaction and service quality has been described as a complex issue, characterized by debate regarding the distinction between the two constructs and the casual direction of their relationship (Brady, Cronin and Brand, 2002).

Parasurman, Zeithaml, Berry (1994) concluded that the confusion surrounding the distinction between the two constructs was partly attributed to practitioners and the popular presses using the terms interchangeable, which make theoretical distinctions difficult, interpretations of the role of service quality and satisfaction have varied considerably (Brady et al., 2002; Cronin and Taylor, 1992; Parasurman, Zeithaml and Berry, 1998). Parasurman et al. confined satisfaction to relate to a specific transaction as service quality was defined as an attitude. This meant that perceived service quality was a global judgment, or attitude, relating to the superiority of the service. Cronin and Taylor (1992) argued against Parasurman et al.'s categorizations.

Cronin and Taylor (1992) found empirical support for the idea that perceived service quality lead to satisfaction and argued that service quality was actually an antecedent of customer satisfaction. Cronin and Taylor (1992) asserted that consumer satisfaction appeared to exert a stronger influence on purchase intention than service quality, and concluded that the strategic emphasize of service organizations should focus on total customer satisfaction programs.

2.3.6 Relationship between service Quality and Customer Loyalty

In various studies the relationship between service quality and customer preference loyalty had been examined (Boulding, Kalra, Staelin, & Zeithaml, 1993; Cronin & Taylor, 1992). In their study Cronin and Taylor (1992) focused solely on repurchase intentions, whereas Boulding et al (1993) focused on the elements of repurchasing as well as the willingness to recommend.

In the study by Cronin and Taylor service quality did not appear to have significant (positive) effect on repurchase intentions (in contrast to the significant positive impact of satisfaction on repurchase intention), whereas Boulding et al (1993) found positive relationships between service quality and repurchase intentions and willingness to recommend.

Unlike material products or pure service it is very difficult to identify the point of satisfaction and dissatisfaction caused by an organization on its customers by the service provided. Meaning satisfaction or dissatisfaction is the sum total of the individual elements or attributes of all the products and services that makes up the experience [Bozorgi, 2006], Davis and Stone [1985] and Lewis [1987] classified the service into two main groups which are direct and indirect based on the assumption of core and supportive business.

Airline industry service is a good example to clearly show these two parts as Bozorgi [2006] described it customers first making inquiries and reservations and then checking in their baggage, getting seat assignments, being checked at the gate, receiving on board services, in-flight and retrieving their baggage at the destination airport.

2.4 Empirical Literature

This part of the literature review focused on empirical results obtained from similar research works conducted at different times in a different place and organization.

Customers are increasingly becoming aware of alternative offerings in the market, and are more demanding in terms of their expectations related to service delivery. Most of the time Airlines in particular are affected to competitors' offerings. So they should offer passengers high levels of service and ensure that passengers are satisfied with their service offering in an effort to build long-term and positive relationship.

Main findings from south Africa domestic Airline service indicates that the majority of dissatisfied respondents have not formed a long-term relationship with the domestic Airline, while satisfied respondents are more inclined to form a long-term relationship (meyer, 2010). So, if customers are dissatisfied with the service they received from an airline they will shift to other service providers. It means service quality and customer loyalty are positively correlated. This means service quality has positive correlation with customer loyalty.

Archana and Subha (2012) conducted a research study on service quality and passenger satisfaction on Indian Airlines. The findings of this study were based on the analysis of a sample of 270 respondents and the survey was conducted at the Chennai international terminal of Tamil Nadu. The study analyzed the data from passengers of three classes. The sampling was done by interviewing randomly selected passengers. For measuring airline service quality, Exploratory Factor Analysis was issued to determine the dimension of airline service quality on three variables;-passenger satisfaction and service quality on in-flight services, passenger satisfaction and service quality on in-flight digital services and passenger satisfaction and service quality on Airline back office operations.

The findings of the factor analysis showed that the overall cumulative percentage of variance was 53.686 to in-flight service, 62.239 to in-flight digital service and 72.793 to back-office

operations. In this study, passengers were satisfied to the service provided and overall facilities delivered by the airline companies.

From the research Archana and Subha concluded failure to provide quality services to passengers may damage the formation of airline image and cause a negative impact on passenger's behavioral intentions.

Timba et al (2013), "the service quality and customer satisfaction at Kenyan airways". The study mainly adopted a case study approach and the respondents constituted passengers who had used Kenya Airways for a period of six months between January to June 2012. The sample of this study consisted of 100 passengers.

The findings indicate that among the key determinants of customer satisfaction with passengers were baggage security and safety, proper communication with customers to update them on status of their flights, provision of food variety and ability of the airline to communicate to passengers about the weather on arrival destinations. Weather conditions prevailing at the destination, compassion by airline crew toward any disabled persons on board were particularly noted to increase significantly the level of customer satisfaction.

Findings in Precision Air showed that out of the five independent variables taken only one variable is negatively related with satisfaction of airline passengers. In contrast, on time performance (OTP) was satisfactory variable by most of passengers compared to the rest of explanatory variables. Schedule integrity, airline safety and on-board services are positively related with passenger's satisfaction. Relationship between customer services and satisfaction are negatively related which implies that, there is a need of finding strategies to improve customer services to customers. The paper recommended that the airline should maintain and improve on time performance as this is crucial variable for passenger's satisfaction but other variables need more improvement (Josephat, 2012).

Another study by Ekiz and Hussain (2006) "perception of service quality in North Cyprus airline industry; a path analysis application" also adopted the AIRQUAL model to overcome the psychometrical application problem of existing quality scale. Out of the 610 questionnaires distributed; 583 questionnaires were found to be useful and used in the analysis and conclusion. The sampling that was used in the study is non-probability judgmental techniques. The study

used path analysis to test the hypothesis and findings showed that airline tangibles have a significant positive effect on both customer satisfaction and repurchase intentions and the same is true for the four dimensions namely; Image, Empathy, Personnel and Terminal Tangibles. The study depicts that service quality dimensions jointly explain 68% of the variance in customer satisfaction.

According to the results of the study Ekiz and Hussain (2006) recommended that National Airline should give importance to physical equipments such as aircrafts exterior and interior appearance, efficient cargo handling procedures, technical maintenance of aircraft at regular intervals to better satisfy their customers or passengers, personnel should be trained and highly qualified in order to understand and serve the customers. Moreover, they should update their catering service facilities. Especially in the field of marketing the company should recruit qualified personnel.

Another study was by Gashaw (2011) on the Assessment of service quality and customer satisfaction on Ethiopian Airlines using SERVIQUAL model. The total sample of 150 passenger's selected using convenience sampling for passengers that had traveled using Ethiopian airlines was taken as a respondent out of which 144 passengers returned a filled questionnaire therefore analysis and conclusion was done using the 144 responses. The study found that tangible [1.592] has the highest mean difference which placed it in the first position in Ethiopian Airlines performance from the passengers' point of view, followed by Reliability [0.043] then Empathy (-0.158) which shows that performance was below the expectation of the customer, Assurance (-1.612) has the group mean difference showing negative. It implies that passengers perceive less than what the passengers expecting in assurance items. The last item is Responsiveness where findings show that Ethiopian Airlines has not tried hard to improve its Responsiveness as group mean is negative (-2.699)

2.5 Conceptual Framework

This research conducted a customer satisfaction measure on the historic routes of Ethiopian Airlines which was focused on the flight that connects the historic tourist attractions in the southern parts of Ethiopia. These are historic flights which incorporate a flight from Addis Ababa, Hawassa, Jimma and Arba Minch. (Ethiopian Airlines, 2013).

Therefore, the customer satisfaction measurement was focused on the services provided by the airline in these destinations (dimensions) based on Aircraft Quality, Schedule convenience and Reliability, check in service, In-flight entertainment and meal services provided by the ground and cabin crews and baggage service.

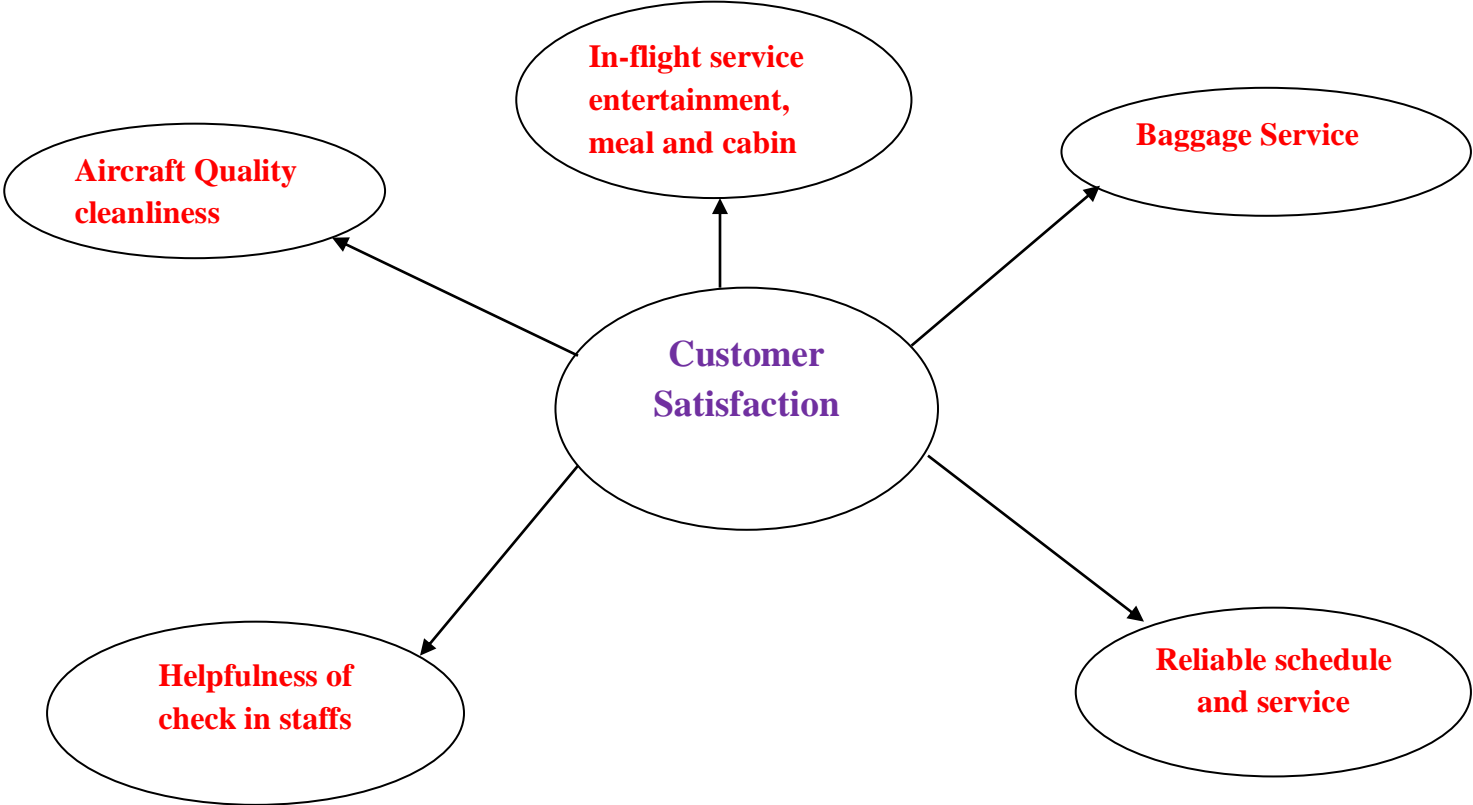


FIGURE2. 1 conceptual framework to show customer satisfaction on the service provided by Ethiopian Airlines on the southern historic route flights (Source; Ethiopian Airlines, 2013 and Modified by the Researcher)

CHAPTER THREE

Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter was paid attention to the methodology used for this study by providing the conceptual framework based on literature review. This chapter gave details on population, sample and sampling procedure and the instruments used in collecting data for the study. Data collection procedure and analysis are also being discussed. Towards the end of the chapter issues on Validity and Reliability are discussed.

3.2 Research Approach

Research Approaches are plans and the procedures for research that span the steps from the broad assumptions to detailed methods of data collection, Analysis and interpretation [Creswell,2014].The plan involves several decisions of what should be used to study a topic.

As Denzin and Lincoln [2011] explained there are three types of research approaches which are Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed. Qualitative Research emphasizes the process of discovering how the social meaning is constructed and stresses research using qualitative research referred to the meanings, concepts, definitions, characteristics, symbols and descriptions of things. While the Quantitative Research, is based on the measurement and the analysis of casual relationships between variables. Quantitative Research referred to the measures and counts of things.

Mixed Research has an approach to enquiry that combines or associates both qualitative and quantitative approaches. It involves philosophical assumption the use of qualitative and quantitative approach and the mixing of both studies. Thus it is more than simply collecting and analyzing both kinds of data. It also involves the use of both approaches in tandem so that the overall strength of the study is greater than qualitative and quantitative research [creswell and Plano clark, 2007]. Based on the suitability to answer the research question, both qualitative and quantitative research approaches [mixed research approach] are used.

3.3 Research Design

As Creswell, 1994 mentioned Research design is the overall plan for connecting the conceptual research problems to the pertinent empirical research. It also reflects the purpose of the inquiry, which can be classified as Exploration, Explanation, Prediction, Evaluation and History. Let's see them one by one.

Descriptive Research is aimed simply at describing phenomena and is not particularly concerned with understanding why behavior is the way it is regarding the average number of a group. [Creswell and Plano Clark, 2007].

Exploratory Research is often the starting point of a research project into phenomena [known as an exploratory study] of which we know very little (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2007). Explanatory Research is deeper in the sense that it describes phenomena and attempts to explain why behavior is the way it is [Creswell and Plano Clark, 2007].

Thus this study is basically followed descriptive Research method to determine the level of customer satisfaction on the service provided by Ethiopian Airlines on the southern historic route. This design was selected mainly due to the nature of the data collection technique that was used in the research process which would be asking opinion of peoples in the qualitative part and standardized responses in the quantitative side.

3.4 Data Type and sources

The source of data for this study was passengers of Ethiopian Airlines who had the experience of travelling to the southern historic routes. Meaning passengers who flew with Ethiopian Airlines to Jimma, Hawassa and Arbaminch for tourism and other purposes since 2010 where the airline changes its fleets from Foker 50 to Q-400 [Ethiopian Airlines, 2010].

Appropriate structured questionnaire was prepared and used to collect primary data from the passengers' who had an experience of flying with Ethiopian Airlines In the southern historic route flights. Detailed information on the passenger's demographic characteristics, about using the airport services, onboard products, cabin staff services.

In order to support the questionnaire, secondary data was collected from empirical evidences to supplement the findings of primary data.

3.5 Target Population

The target population of this study is infinite in number and are individual passengers' who had an experience of using the southern historic flights by Ethiopian Airlines and uses the service frequently.

3.6 Sampling Technique and Sample Size

3.6.1 Sampling Technique

In this study the Sampling technique is non-probability sampling method of convenient sampling technique. It is used to select the existing respondent and who are easily accessible.

3.6.2 Sample Size

In this study the Hawassa, Jimma and Arbaminch flights are included. In the southern regions of Ethiopian flights, the three flights are selected purposively based on the total Number of active frequent travelers from each station the proportionate no of subjects was selected. In this study the respondents to take the samples and to collect the data are Infinite.

The researcher used the Sample size that the population is infinite and was determined using a single population proportion formula under varying assumptions as follows;

$$n = \frac{Z^2 P[1-P]}{e^2}$$

Where n= sample size

Z= standard normal deviation set at 1.96 [for 95% confidence level]

e = the desired degree of accuracy [taken as 0.05]

P= the estimate of the proportion of our target population satisfied with the Ethiopian Airlines service [50% is taken which is 0.5]

$$n = [1.96]^2[0.5][1-0.5]/0.05^2 = \underline{384}$$

3.7 Validity and Reliability

3.7.1 Validity

As Creswell [2014] explained validity is the extent to which research results can be correctly interpreted and generalized to other populations. Validity represents how well a variable measure what it is supposed to measure [Hopkins, 2001]. Each Attribute was derived from relevant literature to ensure the validity of the questionnaire. The questionnaire was derived from the adapted model and checked with previous related studies. In addition, the questionnaires were also seen by management members of Ethiopian Airlines.

3.7.2 Reliability

Cronbach's Alpha is used in this study to assess the internal consistency of the research instrument, which is the developed questionnaire.

Cronbach's Alpha is a coefficient of reliability used to measure the internal consistency of a test or a scale; it resulted as a number between 0 and 1. As the result approaches to 1 the more is the internal consistency of the items, which means all the items measure the same variable.

Cronbach (1951) describes that sometimes measurements with low reliability result might still influence the scale measure and the overall reliability test results indicate excellent internal consistency.

TABLE3. 1 Chronbach alpha; for Customer satisfaction Dimensions

Dimensions	Chronbach's Alpha	N of items
Airport Service	0.954	8
Onboard Product	0.945	6
Cabin Staff Service	0.961	6
Airline Website	0.951	5
Overall Reliability	0.979	25

Source: own survey, 2020

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.979	.979	25

Source: own survey, 2020

Therefore, the reliability of 25 items that is critical to measure the customer satisfaction level on Ethiopian Airlines services in the case of southern historic route flights has been tested using Cronbach's alpha.

According to Hair et al. [2006] the reliability coefficient which is more than or equal to 70% [A>0.7] is acceptable. So, reliability of the question was evaluated and the result [Cronbach's Alpha] was used to test the reliability of the material in this research.

Thus, the reliability coefficient of the above items is greater than 70% and the overall reliability test for the 25 items is 97.9%. This implies that the items are reliable and understandable to the respondents.

3.8 Method of Data Analysis

In this study Primary data and secondary data was collected. To conduct the analysis exhaustively, data was analyzed with the combination of descriptive statistics like mean, frequency, standard deviations and cross tabulation of the variables and considered under this study. The data was then presented using frequency distribution tables to systematically arrange data values with a count of how many times each value occurred in the data set. Then, the data was analyzed using descriptive statistics where summarizing of the data was done through measures of central tendencies [mean, mode and median], measures of dispersion [variance and standard deviation and distribution]. The result of this analysis was presented by tables. As a result, SPSS-20 and Microsoft Excel was applied to analyze the collected mass of data.

3.9 Ethical consideration

Ethics in business research refers to the set of behavioral principles a norms beginning with the research from the first phase of the study [sekaran, 2003]. The Ethical code of conduct should reflect the behavior of everyone participating in the in the research project, researcher, participants or moderator [sekaran, 2003].

In relation to the research work Ethiopian Airlines was asked its consent with a supporting letter issued by st mary University College, and the airlines becomes volunteer for the research work. The respondents were informed about the purpose of the study and then be asked to give their opinion voluntarily with a privilege not to write their name. The gathered information from respondents been kept confidentially.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

In this chapter of this research the collected data from the respondents were organized, analyzed and interpreted using different statistical analytical methods and data presentation techniques. Respondents in this research were passengers of Ethiopian Airlines who had the experience of flying to southern historic routes namely Hawassa, Jimma and Arba Minch. The analysis is made based on the data collected through questionnaires [primary data] and interviews. Accordingly, the number of questionnaires distributed and the response rate looks like the following.

Questionnaire types	Questionnaires distributed	Questionnaires Returned	Questionnaires Return Rate [%]
Customer questionnaire	384	300	78.125

TABLE4. 1Number of questionnaires distributed from passengers [source: Survey Data, 2020]

The study analyzed that 300 questionnaire papers were returned out of the total 384 distributed to respondents. In general, there was 78.125% response rate.

4.1 Socio- demographic characteristics of respondents

This session briefly shows how respondents of the research are composed. The variables that measure respondents' composition are Gender, Age, Educational background and Income level. So this analysis is done to show some demographic characteristics of respondents who were participated in the research.

Demographic variables	Measurements	Frequency	Valid percentage
GENDER	Male	168	56
	Female	132	44
TOTAL		300	100
AGE	0-18	3	1.00
	18-25	79	26.3
	26-35	72	24
	36-50	104	34.7
	50 and Above	42	14.0
TOTAL		300	100
EDUCATIONAL LEVEL	Primary Education	20	6.7

	Secondary Education	36	12.0
	Diploma	37	12.3
	First Degree	117	39.0
	Second Degree	90	30.0
TOTAL		300	100
INCOME LEVEL	0-200	27	9.0
	200-400	127	42.3
	400-500	45	15.0
	500 and Above	101	33.7
TOTAL		300	100
OVERALL EXPECTATION	Yes	242	80.7
	No	58	19.3
TOTAL		300	100

TABLE4. 2Demographic distribution of respondents [source: Survey Data, 2020]

As we can see from the above table, from all the respondents Gender Group, the highest numbers of respondents are 168 [56%] Male and also 132[44%] Females. This implies that more Male passengers are frequently travels to the southern historic routes and uses the services of Ethiopian Airlines.

As can be seen from the above table, the highest percentage of respondents that account for 104 [34.7%] constitute passengers of 36-50 years of age and also respondents who are aged below 18[1%] which is the lowest from the total of number of respondents. The second lowest is the respondents who are aged above 50[14%.The remaining age groups' have the share of response as indicated in the above Table 4.2.

Looking at the Educational level or background of the respondents, out of the total number of respondents 117[39%] have First Degree, the next highest are those that have Second Degree and above are 90[30%], Diploma level of Education is 37[12.3%], those that are on a secondary Education are 36[12%]. Among the entire, lowest one is respondents who are on or passed a primary Education is 20[6.7%]. This implies that most of the passengers of Ethiopian Airlines that used the southern historic route flights have Bachelor Degrees and most of them knows how to use the services of Ethiopian Airlines most often.

The next respondent information is about the income level. Out of the total number of respondents 127[42.3%] are on 200-400 USD and have the highest income per month. The lowest income level among the rest is 27[9%]. This implies that the passengers who had an

experience of traveling to the southern historic routes can afford the tickets and the services of Ethiopian Airlines.

4.2 Passengers’ Satisfaction over the services provided by Ethiopian Airlines in the Southern Historic Routes

4.2.1 Airport Services

In this perspective eight basic Airport Services were tested and the following data were collected and analyzed accordingly.

4.2.1.1 Punctuality of Departure and Arrival

This punctuality of flight times is a result of different computing factors as stated by Shaw. These are Airport congestion, aircraft status, flight planning and so on [Shaw, 2007]. This study took all the above mentioned factors results as one and tested it as punctuality of the Ethiopian Airlines. The respondents’ perception was encouraging as it is shown in the table below. The result was 52% Satisfied, 16.3% strongly satisfied, 16.7% are dissatisfied and 9.7% are Neutral among the respondents. This implies that most of the passengers or respondents agreed on the punctuality of the airline to its scheduled flight. The Mean score and Standard Deviation are [Mean=3.5733 and Standard deviation= 1.10848]. This can be due to the changing of Fokker 50’s by the new Aircrafts Q-400. Because the Q-400 is new and have low ground time due to maintenance problem as per annual report of Ethiopian CEO [Ethiopian, 2013]

TABLE4. 3Punctuality of Departure and Arrival

Responses	Frequency	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage	Mean	Standard Deviation
Strongly dissatisfied	16	5.3	5.3	3.5733	1.10848
Dissatisfied	50	16.7	22.0		
Neutral	29	9.7	31.7		
Satisfied	156	52.0	83.7		
Strongly Satisfied	49	16.3	100		
TOTAL	300	100			

Source: Survey Data, 2020

4.2.1.2 Check in Waiting Time

Most of the passengers do not want to spend much time on check in counters. This attitude of passengers described by Shaw, on a short flight, time spent at the airports at each end of the route may exceed the flight time. It is therefore not surprising that airport service should be a significant factor in choice-of-airline decisions.

Business travelers will demand the opportunity to check in very late for a flight, by using a separate check-in desk to guard against the possibility of being delayed by a long line of less time-sensitive travelers. An online check-in facility may be even better [Shaw, 2007].

Even they prefer to check in online without coming to the check-in counter and even when they come at the airport they can use Kiosk check-in by themselves. Form the results of the study on the respondents' perception of Ethiopian check-in time was extended as shown in the below table.

TABLE4. 4check-in waiting time

Responses	Frequency	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage	Mean	Standard Deviation
Strongly dissatisfied	16	5.3	5.3	3.5467	1.09169
Dissatisfied	43	14.3	19.7		
Neutral	52	17.3	37.0		
Satisfied	139	46.3	83.3		
Strongly Satisfied	50	16.7	100		
TOTAL	300	100			

Source: Survey Data, 2020

Due to the fact that there were 46.3% of the respondents are satisfied with the check-in time spent at the check-in counter. The rest 14.3% are dissatisfied, 17.3% of the respondents are Neutral and only 5.3% of the respondents are strongly dissatisfied. The Mean is 3.5467 and the standard deviation is 1.09169.

4.2.1.3 Check-in Service Efficiency

This check-in efficiency can be a result of multiple factors like staff inefficiency, system inefficiency, lack of supervision and lack of infrastructure. Even though this study did not identified the exact cause of inefficiency because it is not in its scope, but service perceived by

the passengers was satisfying. This was supported by the response of respondents and the satisfaction accounts nearly 80%. Therefore, the response indicates that Ethiopian Airlines identified the root cause for the inefficiencies' that were stated above and took appropriate action. Among the respondents 49.3% are satisfied. The rest 20.3% are strongly satisfied, 17.3% are dissatisfied and only 3.3% are strongly dissatisfied. The Mean is 3.6933 and the Standard Deviation is 1.05022

TABLE4. 5Check-in service efficiency

Responses	Frequency	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage	Mean	Standard Deviation
Strongly dissatisfied	10	3.3	3.3	3.6933	1.05022
Dissatisfied	42	14.0	17.3		
Neutral	39	13.0	30.3		
Satisfied	148	49.3	79.7		
Strongly Satisfied	61	20.3	100		
TOTAL	300	100			

Source: Survey Data, 2020

4.2.1.4 Boarding Efficiency

This is the process where the passengers' check-in and pass the time for embarking the aircraft. In this regard the airline position per the response of the passengers was encouraging as it is seen in the table below which accounts a huge agree and satisfied responses.42.7% of the respondents are satisfied and 27% of the respondents are strongly satisfied. Only 1.7% of the respondents are strongly dissatisfied about the service given at the Gate in the southern historic route flights of Ethiopian Airlines. This can be due to the fact that boarding procedure convinces passengers to be segregated to each gate for their immediate flight. The Mean is 3.8067 and the Standard Deviation is 1.02606.

TABLE4. 6Boarding Efficiency

Responses	Frequency	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage	Mean	Standard Deviation
Strongly dissatisfied	5	1.7	1.7	3.8067	1.02606
Dissatisfied	38	12.7	14.3		
Neutral	48	16.0	30.3		
Satisfied	128	42.7	73.0		
Strongly Satisfied	81	27.0	100		
TOTAL	300	100			

Source: Survey data: 2020

4.2.1.5 Check-in Staff Attitude

This process is where the passenger came in contact with the assigned check-in staff in a dedicated check-in counter for the first time in a one communication. This is also where the passenger travel documents and eligibility to fly will be tested.

Accordingly, the conduct of these front line staffs at this point has significant impact over passengers' preference of the Airline. Therefore, respondents of this research to the attitude of check in staffs were as follow.

TABLE4. 7 check-in staff attitude

Responses	Frequency	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage	Mean	Standard Deviation
Strongly dissatisfied	10	3.3	3.3	3.7600	1.05805
Dissatisfied	38	12.7	16.0		
Neutral	38	12.7	28.7		
Satisfied	142	47.3	76.0		
Strongly Satisfied	72	24.0	100		
TOTAL	300	100			

Source: Survey Data: 2020

As it is shown in the table above 47.3% of the respondents was in the satisfied position, 24% of the respondents were strongly satisfied, 12.7% of the respondents are dissatisfied and the rest 3.3% of the respondents are strongly dissatisfied. This implies that the staffs the knowledge in giving the customer service and as we can see it from the results either the staffs are enthusiastic to give the service well or there is no lack of proper supervision in giving the service of the

southern historic route flights of Ethiopian Airlines. The Mean is 3.7600 and the standard deviation is 1.05805.

4.2.1.6 Arrivals Staff Assistance

Arrival staff assistance is a major service at the airport which includes information delivery about missed luggage/ baggage, time of next flight or any hotel accommodation. Therefore, in this research this service of the airline was tested and the following result was revealed. Passengers rated this service starting from Neutral with 13.7% and 46% satisfied. This showed that the service in this regard is well improved of giving much information about the service that's being given at the arrivals staff assistance. In here the Mean is 3.7033 and the standard deviation is 1.11030.

TABLE4. 8Arrivals staff Assistance

Responses	Frequency	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage	Mean	Standard Deviation
Strongly dissatisfied	16	5.3	5.3	3.7033	1.11030
Dissatisfied	35	11.7	17.0		
Neutral	41	13.7	30.7		
Satisfied	138	46.0	76.7		
Strongly Satisfied	70	23.3	100		
TOTAL	300	100			

Source: Field Survey: 2020

4.2.1.7 Flight Cancellation

Even though it is costly to cancel a scheduled flight to the Airlines, they will be forced to incur this cost for unforeseen circumstances [Shaw, 2007]. In this research passengers were asked for their experience of facing any flight cancellation and they responded that majority which is 43.7% satisfied with the reliability of the airline to scheduled flights as per the bellow table while flying Ethiopian to the southern historic route. The Mean is 3.5267 and Standard deviation is 1.09237.

TABLE4. 9flight cancellation

Responses	Frequency	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage	Mean	Standard Deviation
Strongly dissatisfied	15	5.0	5.0	3.5267	1.09237
Dissatisfied	45	15	20		
Neutral	58	19.3	39.3		
Satisfied	131	43.7	83.0		
Strongly Satisfied	51	17	100		
TOTAL	300	100			

Source: Field Data: 2020

4.2.2 Onboard Product

This part of the airline service starts after the passengers' embarked in the Aircraft. In this part of the research a total of Four variables were taken and tested to assess the perception of respondents. The results of the analysis presented as follows.

4.2.2.1 Seating Comfort

All aircrafts have their own type of seat types and seat configurations. The following parameter was designed to test passengers' response over the comfort of seats on aircraft of Ethiopian in the southern historic routes.

TABLE4. 10 Aircraft seat comfort

Responses	Frequency	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage	Mean	Standard Deviation
Strongly dissatisfied	18	6.0	6.0	3.6767	1.06579
Dissatisfied	29	9.7	15.7		
Neutral	39	13.0	28.7		
Satisfied	160	53.3	82.0		
Strongly Satisfied	54	18.0	100		
TOTAL	300	100			

Source: Field Survey: 2020

From the above table passengers were comfortable with the aircraft seats. Ethiopian Airlines claimed that it has brought in brand new aircrafts of Q-400 type [Ethiopian, 2010] which have been dedicated to domestic flights. With similar response passengers expressed 13% Neutral,

53.3% satisfied and 18% strongly satisfied rates. The Mean is 3.6767 and Standard deviation is 1.06579 respectively.

4.2.2.2 Cleanliness of cabin

The aircraft over all cleanliness was taken as an indicator to customer service quality and it was tested and analyzed as follows.

TABLE4. 11cleanliness of cabin

Responses	Frequency	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage	Mean	Standard Deviation
Strongly dissatisfied	15	5.0	5.0	3.7500	1.02844
Dissatisfied	25	8.3	13.3		
Neutral	40	13.3	26.7		
Satisfied	160	53.3	80.0		
Strongly Satisfied	60	20.0	100		
TOTAL	300	100			

Source: Field Survey: 2020

As it is shown in the above table the aircraft cabin cleanliness was rated as Neutral, satisfied and strongly satisfied with 13.3%, 53.3% and 20% respectively. Ethiopian Airlines have a dedicated department for aircraft cleaning by the name “Appearance control” [Ethiopian, 2013]. That is why the aircrafts appeared clean under the responses’.

4.2.2.3 Cabin toilet cleanliness

The same also holds for the cabin toilet system and it was found that it was functional and appealing to use. This was depicted over the response of passengers on the following table with high satisfaction rate. Since the flight was a short time flights. The chance of using toilets is very minimal and the aircraft toilet can stay for longer period without servicing and people prefer not to use aircraft toilets unless it’s critical. The same was reflected by the respondents they found out the aircraft was clean and appealing to use by 100% of satisfaction as shown in the bellow table.

TABLE4. 12cabin toilet cleanliness

Responses	Frequency	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage	Mean	Standard Deviation
Strongly dissatisfied	16	5.3	5.3	3.7200	1.04494
Dissatisfied	25	8.3	13.7		
Neutral	46	15.3	29.0		
Satisfied	153	51.0	80.0		
Strongly Satisfied	60	20.0	100		
TOTAL	300	100			

Source: Field Survey, 2020

As it is shown from the above table, 51% of the passengers was satisfied about the cabin toilet cleanliness in the Aircrafts of Ethiopian Airlines those are Q-400 Aircrafts. In these only 8% of the passengers were dissatisfied and almost 15% of the passengers are Neutral. The Mean is 3.7200 and the Standard Deviation is 1.04494.

4.2.2.4 On Board Catering

The flight time from Addis Ababa the base station of Ethiopian Airlines to the tourist destinations took maximum of 1 hour. Within this short period of time the airline provides snacks, juice, coffee, tea and soft drinks [Ethiopian, 2013] based on passengers' preference. This service was appreciated by respondents to the level that 78.7% satisfaction with the meals as shown below.

TABLE4. 13onboard catering

Responses	Frequency	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage	Mean	Standard Deviation
Strongly dissatisfied	15	5.0	5.0	3.7200	1.05767
Dissatisfied	28	9.3	14.3		
Neutral	47	15.7	30.0		
Satisfied	145	48.7	78.7		
Strongly Satisfied	64	21.3	100		
TOTAL	300	100			

Source: Field Survey: 2020

4.2.3 Cabin staff services

This part of the research focused on the human variables of the service inside the aircraft while onboard to the southern historic route flights. Basically this communication is taking place between cabin crew members and passengers. In this part a total of Five variables were taken as indicators of the level of service quality provided by the cabin crews to passengers. The five variables were consolidated in one table and presented as follows.

TABLE4. 14 cabin staff service

LANGUAGE SKILLS					
Responses	Frequency	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage	Mean	Standard Deviation
Strongly dissatisfied	13	4.3	4.3	3.6833	1.00985
Dissatisfied	28	9.3	13.7		
Neutral	53	17.7	31.3		
Satisfied	153	51.0	82.3		
Strongly Satisfied	53	17.7	100		
TOTAL	300	100			
GROOMING AND APPEARANCE					
Responses	Frequency	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage	Mean	Standard Deviation
Strongly Dissatisfied	12	4.0	4.0	3.8300	0.98540
Dissatisfied	22	7.3	11.3		
Neutral	37	12.3	23.7		
Satisfied	163	54.3	78.0		
Strongly Satisfied	66	22.0	100		
Total	300	100			
SERVICE EFFICIENCY					
Responses	Frequency	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage	Mean	Standard Deviation
Strongly Dissatisfied	8	2.7	2.7	3.7567	1.00373
Dissatisfied	39	13.0	15.7		
Neutral	31	10.3	26.0		
Satisfied	162	54.0	80.0		
Strongly Satisfied	60	20.0	100		

Total	300	100			
FRIENDLINESS OF STAFF					
Responses	Frequency	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage	Mean	Standard Deviation
Strongly dissatisfied	8	2.7	2.7	3.8200	1.01869
Dissatisfied	34	11.3	14.0		
Neutral	37	12.3	26.3		
Satisfied	146	48.7	75.0		
Strongly Satisfied	75	25	100		
Total	300	100			
STAFF INTERACTION WITH PASSENGERS					
Responses	Frequency	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage	Mean	Standard Deviation
Strongly Dissatisfied	16	5.3	5.3	3.7633	1.06667
Dissatisfied	27	9.0	14.3		
Neutral	37	12.3	26.7		
Satisfied	152	50.7	77.3		
Strongly Satisfied	68	22.7	100		
Total	300	100			

Source: Field Survey, 2020

As it is shown from the above table, 51% of the passengers were satisfied about the language skills of the cabin staffs in the southern historic route flights of Ethiopian Airlines. About 9.3% of the passengers were dissatisfied about the language skills of the cabin staffs. The Mean and Standard Deviation under the Language skills are 3.6833 and 1.00985.

When we see the Grooming and Appearance 54.3% were satisfied, 12.3% were Neutral and 7.3% were Dissatisfied. The mean is 3.8300 and the Standard Deviation is 0.98540. When we see the service efficiency of the southern historic routes given by Ethiopian Airlines 54% of the respondents were satisfied, 10.3% of the respondents were Neutral and 13% of the respondents were dissatisfied. The Mean is 3.7567 and Standard Deviation is 1.00373.

The Friendliness of staffs on the southern historic route flights about 48.7% of the passengers were satisfied and 11.3% of the passengers were dissatisfied. In here the Mean is 3.8200 and Standard Deviation is 1.01869. The staff interaction with passengers also included.

In here 50.7% of the respondents were Satisfied, 12.3% of the respondents were Neutral and 9% were dissatisfied. The Mean 3.7633 and Standard Deviation is 1.06667.

In general, the cabin staff services of the southern historic route flights given by Ethiopian Airlines satisfied the Passengers by the staff's language skills, Grooming and Appearance, by the service efficiency, friendliness of staffs and being interact with the passengers.

4.2.4 Airline Website services

In this perspective five basic Airline Website Services were tested and the following data were collected and analyzed accordingly. The five variables were consolidated in one table and presented as follows.

TABLE4. 15Airline Website Service

Ease of website navigation					
Responses	Frequency	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage	Mean	Standard Deviation
Strongly dissatisfied	11	3.7	3.7	3.5233	0.94469
Dissatisfied	26	8.7	12.3		
Neutral	95	31.7	44.0		
Satisfied	131	43.7	87.7		
Strongly Satisfied	37	12.3	100		
TOTAL	300	100			
Ease of navigating Schedules fares booking					
Responses	Frequency	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage	Mean	Standard Deviation
Strongly dissatisfied	9	3.0	3.0	3.5167	0.95539
Dissatisfied	34	11.3	14.3		
Neutral	88	29.3	43.7		
Satisfied	131	43.7	87.3		
Strongly satisfied	38	12.7	100		
Total	300	100			
Ease of finding information about Products and services given by the Airline					
Responses	Frequency	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage	Mean	Standard Deviation
Strongly dissatisfied	12	4.0	4.0		
Dissatisfied	26	8.7	12.7		

Neutral	82	27.3	40.0	3.5800	0.97644
Satisfied	136	45.3	85.3		
Strongly satisfied	44	14.7	100		
Total	300	100			
Availability of Language options					
Responses	Frequency	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage	Mean	Standard Deviation
Strongly dissatisfied	1.3	4.3	4.3	3.5733	0.98719
Dissatisfied	25	8.3	12.7		
Neutral	84	28.0	40.7		
Satisfied	133	44.3	85.0		
Strongly satisfied	45	15.0	100		
Total	300	100			
Availability of making Seat reservation					
Responses	Frequency	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage	Mean	Standard Deviation
Strongly Dissatisfied	13	4.3	4.3	3.6000	0.99160
Dissatisfied	25	8.3	12.7		
Neutral	78	26.0	38.7		
Satisfied	137	45.7	84.3		
Strongly Satisfied	47	15.7	100		
Total	300	100			

Source: Own Survey, 2020

As it is shown from the above table, about 44% of the respondents were satisfied about the easiness of navigating the Ethiopian Airlines Website services. In here about 32% of the respondents were neutral. This indicates that the Airline Should Work on promoting the Navigating the website and making the service easier for the passengers. The mean is 3.5233 and the Standard Deviation is almost 0.945.

When we come to the second one, almost about 44% of the respondents were satisfied about the easiness of navigating schedule fares booking. About 29% of the respondents were neutral about the navigating schedule fares booking website service of Ethiopian Airlines for the southern historic route flights. In here the Mean is 3.5167 and the Standard Deviation is 0.9554.

When we come to the Easiness of finding information about Products and services given by the Airline, about 45% of the respondents were satisfied, 27% of the respondents were neutral and about 15% of the respondents were strongly dissatisfied. This indicates that it's not enough for the passengers of the Southern historic route flights of Ethiopian Airlines and the Airline must still work on making the website service of finding information about Products and services given by the Airline to be easier for the frequent passengers of the southern historic route flights.

4.2.5 Overall Satisfaction with the whole Airport Service

Satisfaction is a psychological construct that form the basis upon which evaluation of the quality of a product or service is done. Today, customer focus and satisfaction is a driving force for many companies and organizations. Measuring customer satisfaction provides an indication on how an organization is performing or providing products or services.

Customer satisfaction is generally understood as the satisfaction that a customer feels when comparing his/her preliminary expectations with the actual quality of the service or product acquired [Manani et. al, 2013].

Accordingly, the overall satisfaction rate of customers was tested and the following result observed.

TABLE4. 16Overall service satisfaction

Responses	Frequency	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage	Mean	Standard Deviation
Strongly dissatisfied	29	9.7	9.7	3.6100	1.14992
Dissatisfied	30	10.0	19.7		
Neutral	15	5.0	24.7		
Satisfied	181	60.3	85.0		
Strongly Satisfied	45	15	100		
TOTAL	300	100			

Source: Field Survey: 2020

The above table depicted that the satisfaction rate is very encouraging which is 60% are satisfied and 13% of the respondents were strongly satisfied responses. But there was also 5% are Neutral among the respondents. This shows that the airline has a lot of works to change this average

response to make their passengers to be more satisfied ones about the southern historic route flights.

4.2.6 Comparison on Percentage Results of other research finding with the present work

TABLE4. 17 Comparison on Mean Score

Customer Satisfaction Dimensions	Results (Yonas Mamo, 2014) in %	Results (Own Survey) in %
Airport Services	74%	79.34%
Onboard Product	72%	80.2%
Cabin Staff Services	54.32%	78.52%
Airline Website Services	65%	85.92%

Source: own survey, 2020

From table 4.17 it is clear that there are differences in the results of Yonas Mamo, 2014 research on the services; Airport services (Punctuality of Departure and Arrival, check-in waiting time, check-in service Efficiency, Boarding Efficiency, Check-in staff attitude, Arrivals staff assistance, Flight Cancellation), On board Product (seating comfort, cleanliness of cabin, cabin toilet cleanliness, onboard catering), cabinstaff services (Language skills, Grooming and Appearance, Service efficiency, Friendliness of Staff) and Airline Website services (Ease of navigating schedules fares booking, Ease of finding information about products and services given by the Airline) provided by the Ethiopian Airlines for the Passengers such as the respondents were satisfied by 74%, 72%, 54.32% and 65%. But when we see the Researcher’s results; the Airline increases the satisfaction level on those dimensions.

From the results shown above, the Airline gives best services mainly on the onboard products and makes its passengers satisfied by 80.2% such as seat comfort and onboard catering. The next is the cabin staff services like Friendliness of staffs, Grooming and Appearance makes its passengers satisfied by 78.52%. Ethiopian Airlines makes its frequent travelers be satisfied by 85.92% on the Airline Website Services.

In general, Ethiopian Airlines works more on the southern historic route flights and makes its frequent Travelers to be more satisfied from the point of check-in up to the post departure services(on board services, cabin staff services).

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary of Findings

The study was intended to measure customer satisfaction level on Ethiopian Airlines Service the case of Southern Ethiopia historic route flights based on the questionnaire consisting of 300 randomly selected passengers by using convenient selection i.e. conveniently distribute the questionnaires at the airport i.e. where the flights to Hawassa , Jimma and Arbaminch flights been operated. The study examined passenger's satisfaction based on basic services provided by the airline. Those dimensions were taken in to account and a five level Likert's scale response rate designed. Based on the findings and analysis of the research work the following summaries of findings were drawn and recommendations were forwarded. First let's summarize the demographic data results.

The results of the background information of respondents indicated that majority of the total respondents [56%] are Male, majority of the respondents aged in the range of 36-50 years which is [34.7%], [39%] of the respondents got first degree and [33.7] of the respondents' monthly salary is 500 and Above.

When we come up to the main services that the Ethiopian Airlines provides to its frequent passengers such as the Airport Service, the Onboard Products, Cabin Staff Services and Airline Website that the overall performance was found out very encouraging beside some hiccups over services that needs attention based on passengers' perception were seen. There were two services which were provided by the Airline and created dissatisfaction over the passengers identified by the study is presented here.

1. Check-in staff attitude- As it was seen on the analysis the attitudes of check-in staffs found unsatisfactory with 14% and almost 30% were on Neutral response, even though passengers were Neutral this clearly indicated that the staff in the front desk were not to the level clearly satisfy and give the necessary support to passengers who came to check in. this needs further study why this people typically demonstrate such attitude that dissatisfied passengers.

2. Check in service efficiency- This problem accounted for inefficiency of staffs or system in use. The dissatisfaction rate is almost 17% and 30 % Neutral response by passengers. This point has sort of relation with the above finding.

These can be associated with the trend of the airline that domestic stations job openings were filled with new marketing school graduates and senior staffs are transferred to the capital or assigned to international outstations. This can lead to inefficiency due to lack of experience on the systems and procedures.

3. Aircraft seat comfort- in here about 16% of the frequent passengers was dissatisfied about the comfort of the Aircraft seats and about 29% were Neutral. This indicates that most of the Aircrafts Were Q-400 type of aircrafts and holds 60-78 seats. Due to the smallness of the Aircraft it is a bit difficult for the passengers when they need an extra leg space.

When we generalize the overall service satisfaction, about 20% of the frequent passengers of the southern historic route flights of Ethiopian Airlines were dissatisfied due to reasons such as the check-in staff attitudes, inefficiency of boarding and lack of friendliness of staffs. This indicates that even if the Passengers were satisfied about the services provided by the airline, but still the Airline needs more work on making the frequent passengers of Southern historic route more satisfied.

5.2 Conclusion

Customer satisfaction survey like this is a life and soul for customer service providers to show the gap and causes of customer dissatisfaction. As described it is very costly to bring new customers than retaining existing customers (Miskeen, 2013). Ethiopian airline is a transport service provider with a mission and vision of providing quality air transport service to its esteemed passengers. In addition, it is working to be a world class airline and choice of airline to its customers by providing quality service (Ethiopian, 2010).

In conclusion knowing how customers perceive service quality provided by Ethiopian airlines is a base for its profitability and competitiveness. Measuring service quality can help management provide reliable data that can be used to monitor and maintain improved service quality. Therefore, improving aircraft quality and other infrastructures only will not be a solution to bring and sustain customer satisfaction. From this research we can conclude that among the whole the check-in staff attitude, check-in service efficiency and interaction of staffs were found less satisfactory to respondents. So those services need to be improved by the airline to meet its customer's expectation in one hand and to continue as a profitable airline. We can also conclude that Airport Services in General, Onboard Products in general, the cabin staff services make the frequent passengers to be satisfied. As it is stated earlier this will help to be more profitable for the Airline and to be competitive. The comparison results showed that Airport services, onboard products, cabin staff services and Airline Website services makes the passengers to be satisfied by 79.34%, 80.2%, 78.52% and 85.92%. When we see the overall satisfaction, about 20% of its frequent travelers of the southern historic route flights were dissatisfied due to reasons such as the check-in staff attitudes, inefficiency of boarding and lack of friendliness of staffs. Even if the Airline Makes its passengers be satisfied, it must work on bringing better communication processes, giving better services for its passengers, increasing the complaint handling system and for the Airline it's better to connect the services that were provided to its frequent passengers.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the study findings the following recommendations are forwarded to improve the service quality of Ethiopian airlines in its southern historic route flights.

- Both findings from the check in staff attitude and the friendliness of staffs indicated that there is still a question over the behavior of frontline service provider staffs. This non cooperativeness or bad manner can be resulted from lack of motivation on their work or poor human capital management of the airline. On the other hand this may be originated due to lack of having proper infrastructure or trained airline staffs. Therefore, much work needs to be done on human capital of the airline to motivation, engage or train frontline staffs.
- In addition to training, motivating frontline staffs the airline should upgrade more its technology inputs or provide the necessary infrastructure to help its employees meet customers' expectations i.e. by making paperless environment.
- The other finding was lack of getting necessary information by passengers from airport staffs of the airline, to address this problem the airline needs to avail information desk at domestic terminal with a dedicated staff who can respond to any requests of passengers at airports same as it deed at international terminal.
- The airline should avail more Self check in Kiosks or online check in facilities to reduce extended check in time and unnecessary queue.
- The other finding was extended Check in time; this problem can be caused by different factors. To improve the current situation, the airline should assign the necessary number of staffs with sufficient knowledge of the system or increase number of check-in desks during pick hours of check in.
- The airline should assign big aircrafts at the peak seasons to meet the passengers' expectation.
- I finally recommend further studies should be conducted to identify the cause for frontline staff inefficiency, disengagement or lack of motivation towards delivering quality customer services and lack of communication on the southern historic route of Ethiopian airlines.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX-ONE

Questionnaire to be filled by passengers of Ethiopian Airlines

Dear Respondent

The purpose of this questionnaire is to collect primary data for conducting a study on the topic of ‘Measuring Customer Satisfaction level on Ethiopian Airlines Service: the case of All route Flights’ for the partial fulfillment of the Masters of Marketing Management [MMA] program at St.Mary University. I kindly request you to provide reliable information. Your responses will be kept confidential.

Thank you in Advance for your cooperation

N.B- no need to write your name

-put [√] inside the box or table for an Alternative you think is right

Part 1 - Demographic Data

1. Gender- Male Female
2. Age- Below 18 26-35
18-25 36-50 50 and Above
3. Highest Educational level obtained
Primary Education secondary Education Diploma
First Degree second Degree and Above
4. What is your income per month? Less than 200USD 400-500USD
200-400USD 500 and Above
5. Does the general service you received from Ethiopian Airlines meet your expectation?
a. YES b.NO {if your answer is No how?}.....
.....
.....

Part 2

N.B- for the following questions please put “√” tick mark on the space provided

- The rating that you have to follow is; 1. Strongly Dissatisfied 2. Dissatisfied
3. Neutral 4. Satisfied
5. Strongly Satisfied

NO	Statements	Strongly Dissatisfied[1]	Dissatisfied[2]	Neutral[3]	Satisfied[4]	Strongly satisfied[5]
AIRPORT SERVICE						
1	Punctuality in flight time					
2	Level of satisfaction with Flight cancellation services					
3	waiting time at the check-in queue/line					
4	Check-in service efficiency					
5	Attitudes of Check-in staffs					
6	Boarding Efficiency					
7	Staff Helpfulness and Assistance at the Arrivals					
8	Delivery time of the Baggage's at the Arrival					
ON BOARD PRODUCT						
9	Comfort and Quality of Aircraft Seats					
10	Cleanliness and quality of cabin					
11	Cleanliness and quality of toilets					
12	Availability of Airline magazine, Newspaper service					
13	Availability of Pillow, Blankets					
14	Availability of On board Catering					
CABIN STAFF SERVICE						
15	Language skills of cabin staffs					
16	Grooming and Appearance of cabin staffs					
17	Service efficiency of cabin staffs					
18	Courtesy, professionalism and helpfulness of cabin staffs					
19	Cabin Staff interaction with passengers					
20	Total service consistency					

AIRLINE WEBSITE						
21	Ease of website navigation					
22	Ease of navigating Schedules fares booking					
23	Ease of finding information about Products and services given by the Airline					
24	Availability of Language options					
25	Availability of making Seat reservation					
OVERALL SATISFACTION WITH THE WHOLE AIRPORT SERVICE						

APPENDIX-TWO

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.979	.979	25

Scale Statistics

Mean	Variance	Std. Deviation	N of Items
91.8700	440.073	20.97793	25

Descriptive Statistics(AS)

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Punctuality in flight time	300	1.00	5.00	3.5733	1.10848
Level of satisfaction with Flight cancellation services	300	1.00	5.00	3.5267	1.09237
waiting time at the check-in queue/line	300	1.00	5.00	3.5467	1.09169
Check-in service efficiency	300	1.00	5.00	3.6933	1.05022
Attitudes of Check-in staffs	300	1.00	5.00	3.7600	1.05805
Boarding Efficiency	300	1.00	5.00	3.8067	1.02606
Staff Helpfulness and Assistance at the Arrivals	300	1.00	5.00	3.7033	1.11030
Delivery time of the Baggage's at the Arrival	300	1.00	5.00	3.6800	1.07149
Valid N (listwise)	300				

Descriptive Statistics(OBP)

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Comfort and Quality of Aircraft Seats	300	1.00	5.00	3.6767	1.06579
Cleanliness and quality of cabin	300	1.00	5.00	3.7500	1.02844
Cleanliness and quality of toilets	300	1.00	5.00	3.7200	1.04494
Availability of Airline magazine, Newspaper service	300	1.00	5.00	3.6033	.98109
Availability of Pillow, Blankets	300	1.00	5.00	3.6767	1.00440
Availability of On board Catering	300	1.00	5.00	3.7200	1.05767
Valid N (listwise)	300				

Descriptive Statistics(CSS)

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Language skills of cabin staffs	300	1.00	5.00	3.6833	1.00985
Grooming and Appearance of cabin staffs	300	1.00	5.00	3.8300	.98540
Service efficiency of cabin staffs	300	1.00	5.00	3.7567	1.00373
Courtesy, professionalism and helpfulness of cabin staffs	300	1.00	5.00	3.8200	1.01869
Cabin Staff interaction with passengers	300	1.00	5.00	3.7633	1.06667
Total service consistency	300	1.00	5.00	3.7867	1.03508
Valid N (listwise)	300				

Descriptive Statistics(AW)

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Ease of website navigation	300	1.00	5.00	3.5233	.94469
Ease of navigating Schedules fares booking	300	1.00	5.00	3.5167	.95539
Ease of finding information about Products and services given by the Airline	300	1.00	5.00	3.5800	.97644
Availability of Language options	300	1.00	5.00	3.5733	.98719
Availability of making Seat reservation	300	1.00	5.00	3.6000	.99160
Valid N (listwise)	300				