TRAVELERS' SATISFACTION WITH SERVICE QUALITY OF TRIBHUVAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, KATHMANDU

Ram Kumar Phuyal[1] and Narayani Joshi[2]

[1] *Dr. Phuyal is an Associate Professor at Centre for Economic Development and Administration (CEDA),Tribhuvan University, Kirtipur, Kathmandu Corresponding Email: phuyal_ram5@yahoo.com*

[2] *Ms Joshi is an MBA graduate of Ace College of Management, Affiliated to Pokhara University, Pokhara*

Abstract: This paper aims to address the importance of service quality of airport on the satisfaction of travelers visiting Nepal for different purpose. This study was conducted to minimize the gap between service provider (airport) and service receiver (travelers) by providing clear picture of travelers' expectations and their satisfaction levels considering five major airport factors (i.e. airport access, airport service and facilities, airport restaurants/dining, airport environment) as determining variables. Based on convenient sampling techniques, one hundred and fifty tourist respondents were surveyed, at different tourist locations throughout the Kathmandu valley. Both, descriptive and inferential statistics was used to analyses the collected data. The entire findings of the study (both qualitative and quantitative analysis) indicate that, there is significant relationship between major airport factors and travelers overall satisfaction. Safety of luggage, less waiting time within airport, hospitality from the airport staff, timely response of luggage misplacement and clear visa information were the top basic facilities travelers expect from airport. Most of the travelers were not satisfied with the airport's current service quality. It indicates policy makers, airlines and airport management need to take workable measure to improve upon airport service quality – that is importance for air customers' satisfaction. Therefore, study suggest for improving some sectors such as; 'immigration', 'security' and 'visa processing'.

Keywords: Travelers' satisfaction; airport service quality; Tribhuvan International Airport; descriptive statistics.

1. INTRODUCTION

Customer satisfaction has been a subject of great interest to organizations (Gnoufougou *et al.,* 2014) including Airlines and alike. Airline industry has been trying to maintain superior services and satisfy needs of various customer groups by many means like cutting costs, managing fluctuating demand, keeping up with tight quality requirements but, still, airlines customer satisfaction has been on very low levels for decades (Baker, 2014).Nevertheless, service quality in airline industry is widely discussed and bad performance is often criticized publicly (Chen & Chang, 2005). As, high level of service quality is vital to acquire and retain loyal customers (Liou & Tzang, 2007; Chang & Yeh, 2002); delivering superior service quality by understanding customer expectations is a key for success and survival in very hectic and competitive environment of airline industry (Munusamy *et al.,* 2011).

Seyanont (2011) identified significant difference in airport service quality attributes among foreign passengers. Cleanliness, security, flight information and ground transport were the most concerned factors whereas art display and children play area were the least concerned factors regarding airport service quality (Ching, 2014). Frederickson & LaPorte (2002) rightly remarked that for commercial air travel (both either public or private, to be highly secure) there must be very high levels of technical competence and sustained performance; regular training; structure redundancy; collegial, decentralized authority patterns; processes that reward error discovery and correction; adequate and reliable funding; high mission valence; reliable and timely

information and protection from external interference in operations.

Many other studies also revealed similar view, Suzuki (2004) in his study mentioned airline attributes such as frequent flyer program, Airfare, Service frequency, Flight miles and Direct flight were major factors responsible to determine the expectation of travelers' and their airport choice. In this respect, airlines need to develop passengers-focused services that require a detailed understanding of passenger's expectations. Meeting these expectations would raise the level of passenger's satisfaction and value perception and presumably commercial viability (Park, Robertson & Wu, 2004).

Prayag (2007) mentioned that service quality performance in the airport industry can be improved through service differentiation and air positioning like service personalization, quality meals, and greater variety of in-flight entertainment, modern aircraft and frequent flyer programmer. Further, Widarsyah (2013) identified seven airport service dimensions (access, services and facilities, dining, shopping, service personnel and security, environment, and immigration and customs) to examine its relationship with the overall passenger perceptions of service quality and the result showed that there is significant relationship between airport service dimension and overall passengers perceptions of service quality.

Likewise Boetsch, Bieger&Wittmer, (2015) identified that characteristics of tourists are also important factors to analyze tourists' satisfaction with the service Quality of the airport. Variables such as car parking, check-in service, departure time, shopping facilities, transfer service from airport to airplane, baggage service, arrival service and staff efficiency were used for measuring the satisfaction of the travelers (Ansari & Agarwal,2015). In many countries, airports are one of the busiest parts of tourism business but in Nepal it is the only transportation means of foreign tourist (Jones, 2013; NTB, 2017).

TIA is only a single choice of entry point for foreign travelers to Nepal. It is one of the first impressions an international traveler will have and last impressions they will have when they are leaving. Even though Tribhuvan International Airport (TIA) is an international airport but still it is difficult for them to compete with the other airport within the same categories such as Incheon and New Delhi airport. International airports of different countries symbolize and reflect the country's traditions and aesthetic inclinations, but TIA fails to even reflect Nepal's cultural heritage and history (Rai, 2016). TIA operates in chaos with overcrowding, regular delays, mismanaged facilities and inadequate infrastructure (Rai, 2016). Lack of prompt service, delay in luggage collection, long queues at the immigration counters, filthy toilets and congested seating in waiting areas are some of the major problems faced by flyers every day at TIA (Rai, 2016).

Research in airport service has suffered from a lack of systematic understanding of travelers' perceptions and expectations (Widarsyah, 2013). Some basic questions arise from travellers mind are; what are the basic facilities travelers' expect from the international airport? How the major areas with in airport could be improved? Therefore, the present study aims to get acquainted with the relationship between the service quality of TIA and the satisfaction of travelers, and to familiarize with the current status of Tribhuvan International Airport, its development progress, security and safety situation. This study aware the airline industries about customers preferences that helps such industries to renew their service quality policies and providing good quality services to the travelers.

In a country like Nepal, a proper timely research on these sectors is significantly lacking except those by some international agencies or few responsible institutions interested in the field. Numerous studies have been carried out to measure the degree of tourist satisfaction however; research in airport service has suffered from a lack of systematic understanding of airport travelers' perceptions and expectations. One of the latest papers by Poudel and Phuyal (2016) made an attempt to perform a complete picture of the variables and examined the causes of travelers' overall satisfaction in TIA through an integrated tourist behavior model. They claim that socioeconomic, demographic and behavioral indicators are commonly used in tourism research to profile tourists by age, gender, income, marital status, occupations, education or ethnic background. The study depicts that airline passengers' satisfaction is a key performance indicator for the performance of an international airport.

Thus, to address such issues and build a supportive base for the future aviation marketing strategies of Nepal and to rebrand international airport of Nepal globally this study attempts to investigate the international tourists' behavior response towards airport services and facilities. Attention is given to address travelers' basic expectation and areas to improve where travelers were mostly dissatisfied. Additionally, to measure overall travelers' satisfaction five major airport factors has been identified.

The outcomes examined in this research will primarily benefit the different stakeholders including the civil aviation authority, the tourism promotional agencies, investors and the policy makers. Civil aviation sector like civil aviation authority of Nepal can benefit from this information. They can get idea of travelers' expectation, areas where travelers' were facing problems and their satisfaction level from airport which will help them in preparing our country' brand building by enhancing service quality of country's solo international airport. Also it is believed to help the students pursuing the education in field related to aviation sectors and the

future researchers for conducting their study on some related areas.

The paper is organized as follows; the second section deals the methodology, the third section consists with result and discussion of the findings and the fourth section makes the concluding remarks.

2. THE METHODOLOGY

2.1. Conceptual Model

The conceptual framework, depicted in table 1, shows the Service Quality attributes of Travelers' Satisfaction in TIA based on Poudel and Phuyal (2015). The paper highlights the Importance of SERVQUAL model. In SERVQUAL conceptual model, service quality is defined as the difference between passengers' expected and perceived quality of services, or simply the gap between "customer perceptions of what happened during the service Transaction and his/her expectations of how the service transaction should have been performed. The framework below shows proposed framework to serve as foundation of this study.
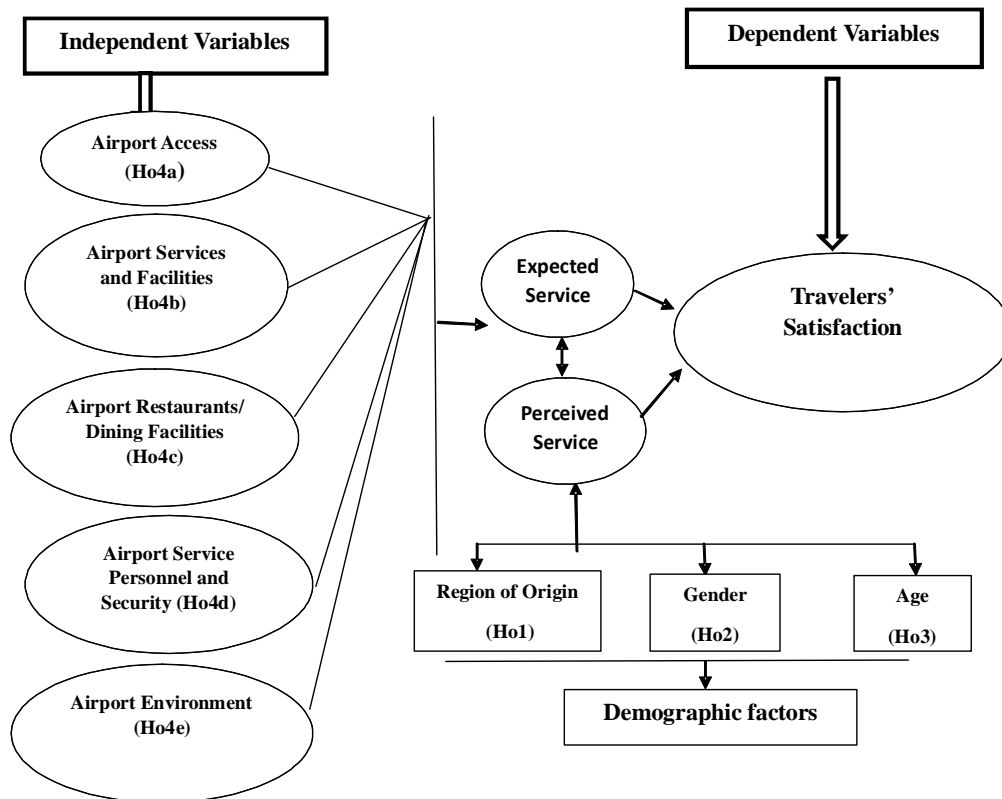

Figure 1: Conceptual framework of the study

In the above conceptual framework, the five major airport factors are linked with the five SERVQUAL dimension to identify the gap between expected service and perceived service and measure travelers' overall satisfaction. They are Tangibles, Reliability, Assurance, Responsiveness and Empathy.

Tangible: It is about the physical evidence of the service that explores the physical facilities of the service provider, the appearance of personnel, the tools and equipment used to provide the services. In this study following variables were taken as tangible factors - Ground transportation access to and from the airport; Walking distance to the gates; Clarity of airport terminal signs and symbols; Availability of bank Counters; Availability of trolley and taxes; Variety of local restaurants; Coffee shop; Availability of nationally recognized foreign restaurants chain; Overall interior settings and layout of the airport; and Accommodation.

Reliability: Reliability is the ability to perform the promised service dependably and accurately or delivering on its promises. The service dimension of reliability measures the consistency of performance and the dependability of the service. In this study, following variables are used as reliability factors - Cleanliness of the restaurant outlet; Overall cleanliness of the airport; Overall ambiance of the airport; and Quality of the food.

Assurance: Assurance entails the knowledge and courtesy of employees and their ability to convey trust and confidence. It also includes competence, courtesy, credibility and security. In this study assurance were measured by Safety of luggage.

Responsiveness: Responsiveness concerns the willingness or readiness of employees to provide service. This dimension is concerned with dealing with the customer's requests, questions and complaints promptly and attentively. Employees at an airport should never be too busy to respond to my requests promptly. An airport is known to be responsive when it communicates to its customers how long it would take to get answer or have their problems dealt with. For responsiveness following variables were used - Processing time at check-in; and Waiting/Processing time at security checkpoint.

Empathy: Empathy entails caring and provision of individualized attention to customers by personnel of an airport. In this respect, the customer feels unique and special. In an attempt to develop empathy, personnel of the firm should endeavor to know the customers preferences and needs and take necessary steps to satisfy them. For Empathy following variables were used – Hospitality and Courtesy/Helpfulness of airport staffs.

Here the basic facilitates travelers' expect from airport were safety of luggage, less waiting time, hospitality from airport staff, timely response of luggage misplacement, clear ambiance and clear visa information and the actual perceived service were long queue in visa processing and immigration area, no scanner for security check-in, mishandled luggage, no availability of trolley and taxes and no compensation in case of luggage mishandled. There is positive relationship between airport service quality and travellers satisfaction, higher the better service quality, higher the travellers satisfaction and vice versa.

2.2. The Data

An extensive exploratory research was conducted that used a mixed-method design of qualitative and quantitative approaches with a triangulation of data collection (interviews, content analysis and survey). Data were collected using both the primary and secondary sources. To make the information and data collected more accurate, the sources have been initially ensured for their reliability and authenticity. Initially, the analysis was done by referring to existing theories, concepts, data, articles and research works about related international case studies dealing on the impact of airport service quality dimension on overall airport experience. Further, various national sources like published data from Government of Nepal, Civil Aviation Authority of Nepal, National Planning Commission, Tourism Board, World Travel and Tourism Council etc. were also referred. Also semi-structured interview with various experts and professionals on the related field was taken to have the basic idea for structuring the research work.

A formally structured questionnaire divided into explanatory, classification and target/objective part was then used to collect the primary data from the international tourists visiting Nepal by encountering them

at different tourist locations throughout the valley. Also online medium, social media and some travel and tours operator's website were used to gather some of the responses. A sample size of 150 respondents was used and responses were collected through a self-administered questionnaire. They were chosen using a non- probability convenience sampling method. Significant efforts were made to ensure that the study is reliable and the outcome derived is valid for this reliability test has been done and pilot study has been also conducted with 5 respondents.

Various statistical tools and methods have been applied for the verification and interpretation of the data accumulated from the primary source. Total responses collected from the respondent is coded and tabulated into SPSS worksheet and Microsoft Excel has been used for further analysis. For the analysis, both descriptive (percentage, central tendency and dispersion, cross tabulation, tables, graphs, charts etc), and inferential analysis (chi-square test, independent sample-test, f-test, one way ANOVA, etc.)have been done.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The descriptive analysis depicts the distribution of the respondents according to their various demographic factors, primary purpose of visit, basic facilities travelers expect from airport along with their overall satisfaction from the airport.

3.1. General Profile of the Travelers and their Behaviors

Out of the 150 participants in the survey, 20 were Indian, 20 were from China, 34 were from America, 32 were from Japan, 14 were from Sri- Lanka and 30 were from other countries i.e. from U.K, Australia, Korea, Germany and Netherland. The data from the interviews of the travelers' revels that the maximum numbers of travelers to Nepal are from America and Japan and low are from Sri-Lanka.

For majority (52.70%) of the tourists surveyed, they travelled to the country for Vacation/Pleasure/ Recreation. Moreover, the travelers who were travelling for business/ research/conference were also plenty i.e. 24% followed by the travelers who visited the country for Visiting friends and relatives (7.3%) and for religious

purpose were 12% out of which maximum were Indian who travel to Nepal for religious purpose. 3.3% of travelers visit Nepal for social service while 0.7% of them were travelling for other purpose such as trekking and Mountaineering.

For majority of the travelers (43.3%) has used Tribhuvan International Airport for the first time, 31.3% has used airport for 2 times, 13.3% for 3 times, 5.3% for 4 times and 6.7% for more than 4 times. The analysis shows that travelers who used airport for the first time are more dissatisfied than those who has used it for multiple times because of the pre- expectations by the travelers from the airport. Furthermore, travelers visiting Nepal via TIA using Economic class were high (63.30%)class among which most of the travelers were students and self- employed. 20% of the travelers visit Nepal in Business class who visited Nepal for business purpose whereas 16.7% used first class who are mostly business person and self-employed.

Among the different facilities travelers expect from airport, the respondents surveyed depicts that travelers expect safety of luggage from airport (80%), followed by less waiting time within airport (74.7%), hospitability from the airport staff (64.7%), timely response of your luggage (59.7%), Availability of ATM inside airport (42.7%) whereas 42.7% expects other facilities such as deposit of luggage for few hours, good food and drink, neat and clean toilet and clear visa information from airport. Since travelers were not satisfied with the airport service quality the major areas travelers would like to improve within airport were immigration followed by other areas such as waiting areas, Restrooms, Security, check-in counter, arrivals, information booth, ticketing booth and others such as luggage belt, Visa kiosk and Visa processing.

Among the five major airport factors mentioned above, the results of the total 150 respondents surveyed depicts that travelers 'experience with ground transportation access to and from the airport were satisfactory with the highest mean of 3.12.However, travelers has neutral feeling with the clarity of airport terminal signs and symbols and walking distance to the gates with average mean which shows they are neither satisfied nor dis satisfied with airport terminal sings and symbols and walking distance from airport to the gates.

The second factors, airport service and facilities that travelers had experienced while using TIA, depicts that travelers were not satisfied with the processing time at check in and accommodation. However travelers were somehow satisfied with the availability of bank counters. The study also shows that travelers have neutral feelings regarding hospitality and availability of trolley and taxes.

Similarly, service such as the airport Restaurant/ Dining facilities, the third factor, shows that traveler's satisfaction from airport restaurants/dinning range from 2.3 to 2.9. It indicates traveler's were not much satisfied with airport restaurants/dining facilities. Among other factors, travelers were satisfied with the availability of coffee shop followed by cleanliness of the restaurant outlet, quality of the food, variety of local restaurants and availability of nationally recognized foreign restaurant chain.

On airport service personnel and security the survey, the forth factor,shows that traveler's satisfaction from airport service personnel and security shows that travelers were not satisfied with airport service personnel and security. Among other factors, travelers' were somehow

satisfied with Courtesy/Helpfulness of airport staffs. However travelers' satisfaction from safety of luggage and Waiting/Processing time at security checkpoint is very low.Similarly, travellers had neutral feelings regarding satisfaction with airport environment, the fifth factor, as the mean of traveler's response were 2.5.

The overall response of the travelers regarding major airport factors showed that mean score were below 3 which depicts travelers were not satisfied with any of the airport factors.

3.2. Inferential Analysis

It includes variables such as primary purpose of visit, overall satisfaction from airport and demographics such as age gender and ROO. More specifically the study has used general linear model including one way ANOVA and independent sample t-test along with the correlation analysis in order to analyze the hypothesis and serve the prime purpose of the research.

Ho1:There is no relationship between region of origin of travelers visiting Nepal, and their overall satisfaction with airport.

Table 2
ANOVA analysis between region of origin and overall satisfaction from airport

		N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min.	Max.	F	Sig.
Overall Satisfaction from TIA	India	20	2.6500	.74516	2.00	4.00		0.292
	China	20	2.6000	.75394	2.00	4.00	1.248	
	Japan	32	2.8125	.93109	2.00	4.00		
	Sri-Lanka	14	2.6429	.63332	2.00	4.00		
	Others	30	2.3667	.76489	1.00	4.00		
	Total	150	2.5800	.77086	1.00	4.00		

The analysis between region of origin and the overall satisfaction with the airport experience reveals that all the travelers visiting from different regions had neutral feeling regarding overall satisfaction from their airport experience i.e. they were neither satisfied nor dis-satisfied with the overall service quality of TIA. Moreover, the p-value is 0.292 which is greater than the significance level of 0.05, the result of the data also shows that there is no significance association between the demographics (Region of Origin) of a travelers visiting Nepal, and his/

her overall satisfaction with the service quality of TIA. It shows that region of origin were not an indicator for measuring satisfaction level of travelers with airport and Region of origin doesn't matter for satisfaction with airport.

Ho2: There is no relationship between gender of travelers visiting Nepal, and their overall satisfaction with airport experience.

Table 3
Independent sample T-test between Gender and Overall satisfaction from airport

	Gender of Respondent	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	t	sig.
Overall Satisfaction from TIA	Male	81	2.5926	0.80277	0.216	0.829
	Fe-male	**69**	**2.5652**	**0.73721**		

As depicted by table 3, the analysis between gender and the overall satisfaction from airport reveals that the satisfaction from both gender were almost similar with very less difference in Mean value. Moreover as the p-value is greater than 0.05, it further supports that there is no significant difference in opinion regarding the satisfaction from airport between different genders.

Ho3: Relationship between age of travelers visiting Nepal, and their overall satisfaction with airport experience.

Table 4
ANOVA analysis between Age and overall satisfaction from airport

		N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min.	Max.	F	Sig
Overall Satisfaction from TIA	15-24	14	2.5	0.75955	2	4	2.809	0.028
	25-34	55	3.202	0.84885	2	4		
	35-44	40	2.725	0.78406	2	4		
	45-54	20	2.35	0.58714	2	4		
	55 & above	21	1.1905	0.51177	1	3		
	Total	150	2.58	0.77086	1	4		

As depicted by table 4, the analysis between age group and the overall satisfaction from airport reveals that the satisfaction from airport is most dominant among the travelers of the age group 25-34 with the highest mean rating score of 3.202 followed by the age groups of 35-44, 15-24 and 45-54. However satisfaction was non-dominant in the age group of 55 and above. Since, the p-value is 0.028 which is less than the significance level of 0.05, the results of the data also shows that there is a significance association between the demographics (age) of a traveler visiting Nepal, and his/her satisfaction with the overall service quality of TIA. It shows that age of the traveler matters in case of measuring satisfaction level of travelers.

Ho4: There is no relationship between five major Airport factors and travelers' overall satisfaction from airport.

The correlation between "Overall satisfaction from airport" and "Airport factors" is less than 0.005 which depicts that there is a significant positive association between the two statements. Therefore, the result of the data shows that five airport factors do affect the travelers' overall satisfaction, and there is significant positive association between these factors.

Table 5
Correlation among major airport factors and travelers' satisfaction from airport

Overall satisfaction	Airport Factors	Sig.	Remark
	Airport access	0.000 (at 0.01 level)	Significant
	Airport service & facilities	0.000 (at 0.01 level)	Significant
	Airport restaurants & dining	0.048 (at 0.05 level)	Significant
	Airport service personnel & security	0.000 (at 0.01 level)	Significant
	Airport environment	**0.000 (at 0.01 level)**	**Significant**

In addition ANOVA analyze has been done to identify the relationship between different travelers' factors such as travelers' airport rating, travelers' frequency of using TIA and airline class used by travelers while visiting Nepal with their overall satisfaction with airport.

Table 6
ANOVA Analysis between travelers' airport rating and their satisfaction

		N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min.	Max.	F	Sig.
	Much worse than expected	28	2.3158	0.319	4	4	39.764	0.000
Overall Satisfaction from TIA	Worse than expected	47	3.4211	0.72154	2	4		
	Same as expected	54	4.06	0.55088	1	4		
	Better than expected	16	2.0625	0.25	2	3		
	Total	**150**	**2.58**	**0.77086**	**1**	**4**		

The analysis between travelers' airport rating and their overall satisfaction from airport reveals that the most of the travelers rate TIA as "same as expected" it shows that service quality of TIA doesn't exceed travelers' expectations. Since the p-value is 0.000 which is less than the significance level of 0.05, the result of the data also shows that there is a significance association between the travelers' airport rating, and his/her overall satisfaction from airport. It shows that airport rating is one of the important indicators for measuring the satisfaction level of travelers.

Table 7
ANOVA analysis between traveler's frequency of using TIA and satisfaction

		N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min.	Max.	F	Sig
	1 time		2.4	0.5164	1	4	0.943	0.441
	2 times	47	2.56	0.68754	2	4		
Overall Satisfaction from TIA	3 times	20	2.85	0.9333	2	4		
	4 times	8	3.52	0.53452	2	3		
	more than 4 times	10	3.02.4	0.5164	2	3		
	Total	**150**	**2.58**	**0.77086**	**1**	**4**		

The analysis between the times travelers have used TIA to travel in the last 12 months, and his/her overall satisfaction from airport reveals that the travelers who had used TIA for 4 times were more satisfied from TIA with highest mean score (i.e. 3.52) followed by more than 4 times, 3 times, 2 times and 1st time. The analysis shows that the more they used airport, more they were satisfied. Moreover as the p-value is greater than 0.05, it further supports that there is no significant association and frequency of travel by the traveler doesn't matters in case of measuring satisfaction level of travelers.

Table 8
**ANOVA analysis between the airline class used by travelers, and satisfaction**

		N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min.	Max.	F	Sig
Overall Satisfaction from TIA	First class	18	2.556	0.70479	2	4	7.437	0.000
	Business class	25	2.834	0.7	2	4		
	Economic class	107	3.120	0.79376	1	4		
	Total	**150**	**2.58**	**0.77086**	**1**	**4**		

As depicted by table 8, the analysis between the airline class used while travelling via TIA, and his or her overall satisfaction with airport experience reveals that travelers who traveled in economic class were more satisfied from the service quality of TIA followed by business class and first class. moreover, the p-value is 0.000 which is less than the significance level of 0.05, the results of the data also shows that there is a significance association between the airline class used while travelling via TIA, and his/her satisfaction with the overall service quality of TIA. It shows that airline class does matters in case of measuring satisfaction level of travelers.

3.3. Economic Analysis

The demand from the travelers' side and supply from airport help us to analyze and make an economic interpretation regarding the satisfaction of tourists in the country. This will give us better understanding of the implication of these factors in overall economic in short term and long term.
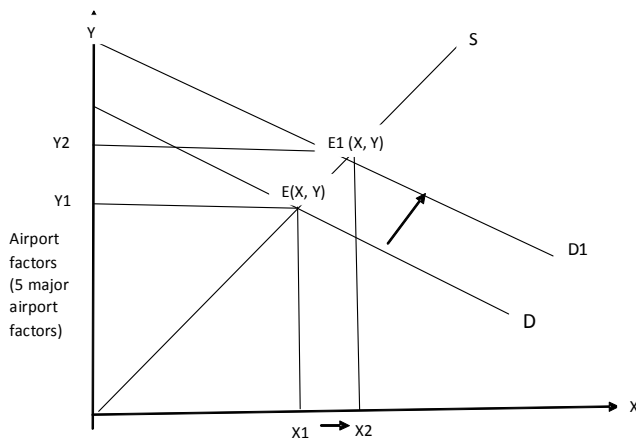
Facilities: safety of luggage, less waiting time within airport, hospitality from the airport staff, timely response of luggage misplacement and clear visa information

In the above figure we can see X- axis (horizontal) represents basic facilities travelers expect from airport and Y-axis (vertical) represents the airport factors which are categorized into 5 major factors. Upward shopping line indicates the supply of airport facilities from TIA.

In general, customer compares the perceived service with the price they pay for and measure their satisfaction level.

I.   If the quality of service is equal to the price paid, then they would remain indifferent (neutral).

II. If the quality of service is higher than price paid, then they would be delighted.

III. If the quality of service is lower than price paid, then they would be dis-satisfied.

In Economic Term

i. $Q = P.S. - P_i = 0$, Indifferent (Neutral)

ii. $Q = P.S. - P_i > 0$, Delighted

iii. $Q = P.S. - P_i < 0$, Dis-satisfied

Where,

Q   = Quality of service

P.S. = Perceived Service

P_i = Price paid

From the figure, initial equilibrium point is E(X, Y) where demand for the facility is equal to the supply. It is the point where customers are satisfied from the airport services and facilities. The demand for facility increases gradually which causes shift in demand curve from D to D1 keeping the supply curve constant because of inadequate management, Infrastructure and physical resources inside TIA. Increasing demand (from X1 to X2) and constant supply results in travelers' dis-satisfaction towards airport services and facilities which causes high switching rate. It shows the insufficiency of TIA to meet rising demand. Therefore, to keep the balance between demand and supply airport need to expand its prevailing services and address the rising demand.

4. CONCLUDING REMARKS

The study has introduced a five major airport factor a complete model which can be used as a basis for further investigation. The model can be used as for designing service quality surveys in the airline industry or for designing completely new business models. The airport model tried to cover all the possible factors travelers expect from any international airport.

This paper provides three most important findings. First, the results of the survey showed that the quality of

service offered at airport does have impact on travelers overall satisfaction from visiting Nepal. Good service at the airport results in higher travelers' satisfaction and vice-versa. This indicate that airports' services and facilities should not be neglected while measuring tourist satisfaction and these issues should be addressed properly to ensure higher tourist satisfaction from Nepal. Second the empirical results pointed out the importance of high expectations on such service quality aspects as safety of luggage, less waiting time within airport, hospitality, timely response of luggage misplacement and availability of ATM. These features represent a basic set of services that have to be delivered by an airline. Customer satisfaction will not be complete if these services are not executed well enough. Third, major areas where travelers faced problem and would like to improve was identified such as immigration, waiting areas, Restrooms, Security, check-in counter, arrivals, information booth, ticketing booth and others such as luggage belt, Visa kiosk and Visa processing. The finding helps the concerned authority to priorities on major areas to improve them simultaneously in order to enhance airport service quality.

Service quality in the airline industry has been a subject for many discussions as well, as it is a key driver for profitability and customer loyalty. Airlines have been striving to balance cost cuts and service improvements for a while, and the understanding of customer expectations and customer segmentation has become paramount.

It has been found in this study that generally travelers' satisfaction with air service quality is poor or below the satisfaction level in TIA. This implies that policy makers or aviation authority need to be alerted to these empirical facts and take pragmatic steps to ensure that international airport improves their effectiveness and efficiency in the provision of air services that meet and exceed customer needs, desire and expectations. Among five major airport factors travelers were somehow satisfied with clarity of airport terminal sign and symbol whereas they show strong dis-satisfaction with the factors such as processing time, Hospitality, airport restaurants and dining, safety of luggage and visa information.

Furthermore, there exist positive correlation between the airport access, airport services and facilities, airport restaurants/dining facilities, airport service personnel and security and airport environment factors and overall satisfaction from service quality of TIA. These findings depict that international tourist are not satisfied with their airport experiences. Moreover there were significant differences in the overall satisfaction based on the demographics as region of origin. However age and gender did not have any significant impact.

The perquisite factors that the travelers seeks while travelling to Nepal were Safety, hospitality and less processing time. This suggests a point of concern where all the aviation staffs must focus in the present scenario. Also it seems more appropriate to re-design service quality by adding more machines for visa processing, training staffs to responds to travelers properly, adding more CCTV cameras and security guards to meet security issues, provide immediate compensation in case of luggage misplacement of lost and accommodation options such as lodges/ guest houses, budget hotels and local cuisines

Based on this research, it is recommended that management in airline industry is to have an understanding of who their customers are and what they expect from the airline services. On the one hand, such knowledge would lay a good ground for further internal research on customer expectations and satisfaction and help an airline firstly to target exactly the customers that are profitable and loyal and second to find out what service components the customers value. On the other hand, service expectations research would help to point out the areas of improvement and probably figure out the services that are not so important to the customers. Further all possible needs to be done to ensure that the travelers are satisfied with their airport experience and carry good memory while leaving country.

REFERENCES

Boetsch, T., Bieger, T., & Wittmer, A. (2011). A customer-value framework for analyzing airline services. *Transportation Journal*, Vol. 50, No. 3, pp. 251-270.

Ching, M.K. (2014). *Passengers' Perception on Airport Service and Quality Satisfaction*. 10th International Academic Conference, Vienna, on 03 June 2014.

Frederickson, H. G., & La Porte, T.R. (2002). The study on airport security, high reliability, and the problem of

rationality. *Public Administration Review*, Vol. 62, Special Issue: Democratic Governance in the Aftermath of September 11, 2001 (Sep., 2002), pp. 33-43.

Park, J. W., Robertson, R., & Wu, C.L. (2004). The effect of airline service quality on passengers' behavioral intentions. *Journal of Air Transport Management*, 10, pp. 435–439.

Poudel, A. & Phuyal, R. K. (2016). An analysis of foreign tourists' behavior and their satisfaction in Nepal. *International Journal of Applied Business and Economic Research,* 14(3): pp. 1955-1974.

Prayag, G. (2007). Assessing international tourists' perceptions of service quality at Air Mauritius. *International Journal of Quality & Reliability Management*, 24(5), pp. 492 – 514.

Seyanont, A. (2011). *Passengers' perspective toward airport service quality at Suvarnabhumi international airport*. A report submitted to the University of the Thai Chanber of commerce.

Suzuki, Y. (2004). The impact of airline service failures on travelers' carrier choice: A case study of central Iowa. *Transportation Journal*, Vol. 43, No. 2 (SPRING 2004), pp. 26-36.

Widarsyah, R. (2013). *The Impact of Airport Service Quality Dimension on Overall Airport Experience and Impression.* A report submitted to William F. Harrah College of Hotel Administration, University of Nevada Las Vegas.

Liou J. J. H. & Tzeng, G. H. (2007). A non-additive model for evaluating airline service quality, Journal of Air Transport, vol. 13, pp. 131-138.