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Customer Satisfaction, the Need of the Hour for Low Cost Airlines in India

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Abstract: The research paper investigates the satisfaction of the customer of low cost carriers in India. The investigation adopts an approach of primary data analysis. The sample of the data is collected from 1200 customers in T3 terminal at the Delhi airport. The Low cost carriers in India are selected looking into the history of their evolution and global expansion. In all the chances of growth is high for low cost carriers in India. The present competition in the market highlights the need for customer satisfaction which would help in turn help them to retain their customers. Chi-square test is used to analyze the association between socio economic background of customers and the level of satisfaction about low cost carriers.

Keywords: Low cost Carriers, Consumer Satisfaction, India, Chi-square test.

INTRODUCTION

The low cost carrier segment is facing challenges of increasing competition, rising fuel prices and inadequate infrastructure. So to cope with this competitive challenge, customer satisfaction has become the primary goal of low cost carrier to survive in this competitive market. Competitors that are prospering in the new global economy recognize that measuring customer satisfaction and understanding the needs and satisfaction of the potential customers is the key factor in order to retain the customers.

The competitors who will be successfully able to recognize that customer satisfaction is a critical and strategic weapon that can bring increased market share and increased profits by way of utilizing the available resources by keeping in view the perception and expectations of the customers. The low cost carrier recognizes that customer satisfaction is the main thing that should be achieved by the company to gain the

loyalty of its customers. Satisfaction is a mediating variable between service quality and customer loyalty, so many satisfied customers that will provide a high loyalty to the company.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Ostrowski *et al.* (1993) concluded that the highly competitive market conditions in the airline industry pressurized airlines to deliver high-quality services. Hence, understanding the nature and determinants of customer expectations was essential to ensure that service performance met or exceeded expectations. To provide this, airline firms must first understand customers' needs and expectations. Next, they should focus on how to deliver the most convenient service to meet customers' needs. The delivery of high-quality service became a marketing requirement among air carriers as a result of competitive pressure.

Oliver (1993) noted the construct of service quality was evaluated by the actual service performance in terms of particular service attributes in the specific context, whereas satisfaction was measured by the customers' overall service experiences.

Rust and Oliver (1994) found that customer satisfaction depended on a variety of factors, including perceived service quality, customers' mood, emotions, social interactions, and other experience-specific subjective factors.

Dube and Maute (1996) concluded that when consumers were not satisfied with service due to the low quality or other factors, consumers were likely to change their behaviour towards that brand. Customers had the right to file a complaint after receiving poor service from an airline with the department of transportation. However, switching to another brand could result from negative word-of-mouth.

Glab (1997) identified ten factors that drove overall airline satisfaction: on-time performance, airport check-in, schedule/flight accommodations, seating comfort, gate location, aircraft interior, flight attendants, post-flight services, food service, and frequent flyer programmes.

Lovelock (2001) concluded that customer satisfaction during service encounter varied as one customer might focus on the responsiveness of the service personnel (either ground or cabin crew), while another customer might focus on the tangible element such as cleanliness of washroom in the cabin. This research explored customer satisfaction from the perspective of customer's total consumption of service experience of low cost airlines including (a) their service encounters with service personnel, (b) their participation in the service delivery process, (c) tangible and physical environment in their service encounters and (d) the behaviour of other customers. This research also took into consideration the timing of the response as customers might be satisfied immediately upon purchase of air ticket. Customers might be delighted either due to the fact that they were able to make ticket reservation with minimum price and effort or after the consumption of a flight experience and its effect on repeat purchase.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To analyze the demographic background of the customers
- To evaluate the satisfaction of the customers in low cost carriers
- To analyze the association between the demographic background of customers and the level of satisfaction about low cost carriers.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

This section analyzes the results arrived through the data. The socio economic profile of the customers are seen in Table 1.

Table 1
Socio-economic profile of customers of low cost carriers

| <i>Profile</i> | <i>Number of Customers</i> | <i>Percentage</i> |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------|
| Gender | | |
| Male | 698 | 58.17 |
| Female | 502 | 41.83 |
| Age | | |
| below 20 years | 56 | 4.67 |
| between 21 – 30 years | 279 | 23.25 |
| between 31 – 40 years | 362 | 30.17 |
| between 41 – 50 years | 311 | 25.92 |
| between 51 – 60 years | 118 | 9.83 |
| above 60 years | 74 | 6.16 |
| Educational Qualification | | |
| Illiterate | 81 | 6.75 |
| Secondary | 117 | 9.75 |
| Higher Secondary | 113 | 9.42 |
| Diploma | 151 | 12.58 |
| Graduation | 416 | 34.67 |
| Post-Graduation | 322 | 26.83 |
| Occupation | | |
| Business | 226 | 18.83 |
| Government Sector | 189 | 15.75 |
| Private Sector | 363 | 30.25 |
| Industrialist | 184 | 15.33 |
| Agriculture | 59 | 4.92 |
| Retired | 61 | 5.08 |
| Housewife | 72 | 6 |
| Student | 46 | 3.84 |
| Annual Income | | |
| below Rs.1,50,000 | 164 | 13.67 |
| between Rs.1,50,001 – Rs.3,00,000 | 298 | 24.83 |
| between Rs.3,00,001– Rs.4,50,000 | 346 | 28.83 |
| between Rs.4,50,001– Rs.6,00,000 | 213 | 17.75 |
| above Rs.6,00,000 | 179 | 14.92 |

Source: Primary Data

The table 1 shows the presence of male in majority. The respondents were more under the age group of 31 to 40 years. The highest level of educational qualification was witnessed among 26.83 percent. The occupation category had a major share for the private sector. The customers annual income ranged between Rs. 3, 00,001– Rs.4, 50,000 for a majority of customers namely 28.83 percent.

CUSTOMER'S SATISFACTION ABOUT LOW COST CARRIERS

The customer's satisfaction about low cost carriers was analyzed and the results are presented in Table 2.

Table 2
Customer's satisfaction about low cost carriers

| <i>Sl. No.</i> | <i>Customer's Satisfaction</i> | <i>Mean</i> | <i>Standard Deviation</i> |
|----------------|--|-------------|---------------------------|
| 1. | Price of air ticket | 4.04 | 0.69 |
| 2. | Reservation process | 3.82 | 0.59 |
| 3. | Information access | 3.97 | 0.73 |
| 4. | Promotional offers | 3.39 | 0.59 |
| 5. | Wait time for check-in | 3.21 | 1.20 |
| 6. | Ease of baggage check-in | 3.27 | 1.18 |
| 7. | Friendliness of employees | 4.16 | 0.43 |
| 8. | Courtesy of flight crew | 3.95 | 0.53 |
| 9. | Quality and quantity of food served on board | 4.20 | 0.32 |
| 10. | Safety standards and security arrangements | 3.88 | 0.94 |

Source: Primary Data

The results indicate that the customers of low cost carriers satisfied with price of air ticket, reservation process, information access, friendliness of employees, courtesy of flight crew, quality and quantity of food served on board and safety standards and security arrangements, while, they are neutral with promotional offers, wait time for check-in and ease of baggage check-in.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS OF CUSTOMERS AND THEIR SATISFACTION ABOUT LOW COST CARRIERS

The customer's satisfaction about low cost carriers is differing with their socio-economic characteristics. The association between socio-economic characteristics of customers and their satisfaction about low cost carriers was analyzed and the results are hereunder presented. The distribution of customers on the basis of their satisfaction about low cost carriers was analyzed and the results are presented in Table 3. The responses of customers about their satisfaction towards low cost carriers has been classified into low level, medium level and high level based on "Mean ± Standard Deviation (SD)" criterion. The mean score is 37.89 and the SD is 3.84.

Table 3
Distribution of customers on the basis of their satisfaction about low cost carriers

| <i>Sl. No.</i> | <i>Level of Satisfaction about Low Cost Carriers</i> | <i>Number of Customers</i> | <i>Percentage</i> |
|----------------|--|----------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. | Low | 214 | 17.83 |
| 2. | Medium | 795 | 66.25 |
| 3. | High | 191 | 15.92 |
| | Total | 1200 | 100.00 |

Source: Primary Data

The results show that about 66.25 per cent of customer's satisfaction about low cost carriers is at medium level followed by low level (17.83 per cent) and high level (15.92 per cent).

GENDER AND SATISFACTION ABOUT LOW COST CARRIERS

The relationship between gender of customers and the level of satisfaction about low cost carriers was analyzed and the results are presented in Table 4.

Table 4
Gender and satisfaction about low cost carriers

| <i>Sl. No.</i> | <i>Gender</i> | <i>Level of Satisfaction about Low Cost Carriers</i> | | | <i>Total</i> |
|----------------|---------------|--|---------------|-------------|--------------|
| | | <i>Low</i> | <i>Medium</i> | <i>High</i> | |
| 1. | Male | 95(13.61) | 502(71.92) | 101(14.47) | 698(58.17) |
| 2. | Female | 119(23.70) | 293(58.37) | 90(17.93) | 502(41.83) |
| | Total | 214(17.83) | 795(66.25) | 191(15.92) | 1200(100.00) |

Source: Primary Data (The figures in the parentheses are per cent to total)

The results show that out of 698 male customers, about 71.92 per cent of customer's satisfaction about low cost carriers is at medium level followed by high level (14.47 per cent) and low level (13.61 per cent).

The results indicate that out of 502 female customers, about 58.37 per cent of customer's satisfaction about low cost carriers is at medium level followed by low level (23.70 per cent) and high level (17.93 per cent).

In order to examine the association between gender of customers and the level of satisfaction about low cost carriers, the Chi-square test has been applied and the results are presented in Table 5.

Table 5
Association between gender and satisfaction about low cost carriers

| | <i>Value</i> | <i>Degrees of Freedom</i> | <i>Sig.</i> |
|--------------------|--------------|---------------------------|-------------|
| Pearson Chi-square | 26.976 | 2 | .000 |

Source: Primary Data

The Chi-Square value of 26.976 is significant at one per cent level indicating that there is a significant association between gender of customers and the level of satisfaction about low cost carriers. Hence, the null hypothesis of there is no significant association between gender of customers and the level of satisfaction about low cost carriers is rejected.

AGE GROUP AND SATISFACTION ABOUT LOW COST CARRIERS

The relationship between age group of customers and the level of satisfaction about low cost carriers was analyzed and the results are presented in Table 6.

Table 6
Age group and satisfaction about low cost carriers

| Sl. No. | Age Group | Level of Satisfaction about Low Cost Carriers | | | Total |
|---------|--------------------|---|------------|------------|--------------|
| | | Low | Medium | High | |
| 1. | Less than 20 years | 3(5.36) | 46(82.14) | 7(12.50) | 56(4.67) |
| 2. | 21 – 30 years | 74(26.52) | 148(53.05) | 57(20.43) | 279(23.25) |
| 3. | 31 – 40 years | 48(13.26) | 245(67.68) | 69(19.06) | 362(30.17) |
| 4. | 41 – 50 years | 65(20.90) | 207(66.56) | 39(12.54) | 311(25.92) |
| 5. | 51 – 60 years | 15(12.71) | 96(81.36) | 7(5.93) | 118(9.83) |
| 6. | More than 60 years | 9(12.16) | 53(71.62) | 12(16.22) | 74(6.16) |
| | Total | 214(17.83) | 795(66.25) | 191(15.92) | 1200(100.00) |

Source: Primary Data (The figures in the parentheses are per cent to total)

The results show that out of 56 customers who belong to the age group of less than 20 years, about 82.14 per cent of customer's satisfaction about low cost carriers is at medium level followed by high level (12.50 per cent) and low level (5.36 per cent).

The results indicate that out of 279 customers who belong to the age group of 21 – 30 years, about 53.05 per cent of customer's satisfaction about low cost carriers is at medium level followed by low level (26.52 per cent) and high level (20.43 per cent).

It is observed that out of 362 customers who belong to the age group of 31 – 40 years, about 67.68 per cent of customer's satisfaction about low cost carriers is at medium level followed by high level (19.06 per cent) and low level (13.26 per cent).

It is clear that out of 311 customers who belong to the age group of 41 – 50 years, about 66.56 per cent of customer's satisfaction about low cost carriers is at medium level followed by low level (20.90 per cent) and high level (12.54 per cent).

It is apparent that out of 118 customers who belong to the age group of 51 – 60 years, about 81.36 per cent of customer's satisfaction about low cost carriers is at medium level followed by low level (12.71 per cent) and high level (5.93 per cent).

The results reveal that out of 74 customers who belong to the age group of more than 60 years, about 71.62 per cent of customer's satisfaction about low cost carriers is at medium level followed by high level (16.22 per cent) and low level (12.16 per cent).

In order to examine the association between age group of customers and the level of satisfaction about low cost carriers, the Chi-square test has been applied and the results are presented in Table 7.

Table 7
Association between age group and satisfaction about low cost carriers

| | <i>Value</i> | <i>Degrees of Freedom</i> | <i>Sig.</i> |
|--------------------|--------------|---------------------------|-------------|
| Pearson Chi-square | 55.491 | 10 | .000 |

Source: Primary Data

The Chi-square value of 55.491 is significant at one per cent level indicating that there is a significant association between age group of customers and the level of satisfaction about low cost carriers. Hence, the null hypothesis of there is no significant association between age group of customers and the level of satisfaction about low cost carriers is rejected.

EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION AND SATISFACTION ABOUT LOW COST CARRIERS

The relationship between educational qualification of customers and the level of satisfaction about low cost carriers was analyzed and the results are presented in Table 8.

Table 8
Educational qualification and satisfaction about low cost carriers

| <i>Sl. No.</i> | <i>Educational Qualification</i> | <i>Level of Satisfaction about Low Cost Carriers</i> | | | <i>Total</i> |
|----------------|----------------------------------|--|---------------|-------------|--------------|
| | | <i>Low</i> | <i>Medium</i> | <i>High</i> | |
| 1. | Illiterate | 11(13.58) | 56(69.14) | 14(17.28) | 81(6.75) |
| 2. | Secondary | 40(34.19) | 68(58.12) | 9(7.69) | 117(9.75) |
| 3. | Higher Secondary | 7(6.19) | 78(69.03) | 28(24.78) | 113(9.42) |
| 4. | Diploma | 47(31.13) | 82(54.30) | 22(14.57) | 151(12.58) |
| 5. | Graduation | 48(11.54) | 284(68.27) | 84(20.19) | 416(34.67) |
| 6. | Post Graduation | 61(18.94) | 227(70.50) | 34(10.56) | 322(26.83) |
| | Total | 214(17.83) | 795(66.25) | 191(15.92) | 1200(100.00) |

Source: Primary Data (The figures in the parentheses are per cent to total)

The results show that out of 81 customers who are illiterates, about 69.14 per cent of customer's satisfaction about low cost carriers is at medium level followed by high level (17.28 per cent) and low level (13.58 per cent).

The results indicate that out of 117 customers who have the educational qualification of secondary education, about 58.12 per cent of customer's satisfaction about low cost carriers is at medium level followed by low level (34.19 per cent) and high level (7.69 per cent).

It is observed that out of 113 customers who have the educational qualification of higher secondary education, about 69.03 per cent of customer's satisfaction about low cost carriers is at medium level followed by high level (24.78 per cent) and low level (6.19 per cent).

It is clear that out of 151 customers who have the educational qualification of diploma, about 54.30 per cent of customer's satisfaction about low cost carriers is at medium level followed by low level (31.13 per cent) and high level (14.57 per cent).

It is apparent that out of 416 customers who have the educational qualification of graduation, about 68.27 per cent of customer's satisfaction about low cost carriers is at medium level followed by high level (20.19 per cent) and low level (11.54 per cent).

The results reveal that out of 322 customers who have the educational qualification of post graduation, about 70.50 per cent of customer's satisfaction about low cost carriers is at medium level followed by low level (18.94 per cent) and high level (10.56 per cent).

In order to examine the association between educational qualification of customers and the level of satisfaction about low cost carriers, the Chi-square test has been applied and the results are presented Table 9.

Table 9
Association between educational qualification and satisfaction about low cost carriers

| | <i>Value</i> | <i>Degrees of Freedom</i> | <i>Sig.</i> |
|--------------------|--------------|---------------------------|-------------|
| Pearson Chi-square | 78.566 | 10 | .000 |

Source: Primary Data

The Chi-square value of 78.566 is significant at one per cent level indicating that there is a significant association between educational qualification of customers and the level of satisfaction about low cost carriers. Hence, the null hypothesis of there is no significant association between educational qualification of customers and the level of satisfaction about low cost carriers is rejected.

OCCUPATION AND SATISFACTION ABOUT LOW COST CARRIERS

The relationship between occupation of customers and the level of satisfaction about low cost carriers was analyzed and the results are presented in Table 10.

Table 10
Occupation and satisfaction about low cost carriers

| <i>Sl. No.</i> | <i>Occupation</i> | <i>Level of Satisfaction about Low Cost Carriers</i> | | | <i>Total</i> |
|----------------|-------------------|--|---------------|-------------|--------------|
| | | <i>Low</i> | <i>Medium</i> | <i>High</i> | |
| 1. | Business | 98(43.36) | 113(50.00) | 15(6.64) | 226(18.83) |
| 2. | Government Sector | 36(19.05) | 130(68.78) | 23(12.17) | 189(15.75) |
| 3. | Private Sector | 32(8.82) | 259(71.35) | 72(19.83) | 363(30.25) |
| 4. | Industrialist | 34(18.48) | 113(61.41) | 37(20.11) | 184(15.33) |
| 5. | Agriculture | 3(5.09) | 43(72.88) | 13(22.03) | 59(4.92) |
| 6. | Retired | 2(3.28) | 50(81.97) | 9(14.75) | 61(5.08) |
| 7. | Housewife | 8(11.11) | 57(79.17) | 7(9.72) | 72(6.00) |
| 8. | Student | 1(2.17) | 30(65.22) | 15(32.61) | 46(3.84) |
| | Total | 214(17.83) | 795(66.25) | 191(15.92) | 1200(100.00) |

Source: Primary Data (The figures in the parentheses are per cent to total)

The results show that out of 226 customers who are businessmen, about 50.00 per cent of customer's satisfaction about low cost carriers is at medium level followed by low level (43.36 per cent) and high level (6.64 per cent).

The results indicate that out of 189 customers who are working in Government sector, about 68.78 per cent of customer's satisfaction about low cost carriers is at medium level followed by low level (19.05 per cent) and high level (12.17 per cent).

It is observed that out of 363 customers who are working in private sector, about 71.35 per cent of customer's satisfaction about low cost carriers is at medium level followed by high level (19.83 per cent) and low level (8.82 per cent).

It is clear that out of 184 customers who industrialists, about 61.41 per cent of customer's satisfaction about low cost carriers is at medium level followed by high level (20.11 per cent) and low level (18.48 per cent).

It is apparent that out of 59 customers who agriculturists, about 72.88 per cent of customer's satisfaction about low cost carriers is at medium level followed by high level (22.03 per cent) and low level (5.09 per cent).

The results reveal that out of 61 customers who are retired, about 81.97 per cent of customer's satisfaction about low cost carriers is at medium level followed by high level (14.75 per cent) and low level (3.28 per cent).

The results show that out of 72 customers who are housewives, about 79.17 per cent of customer's satisfaction about low cost carriers is at medium level followed by low level (11.11 per cent) and high level (9.72 per cent).

The results indicate that out of 46 customers who are students, about 65.22 per cent of customer's satisfaction about low cost carriers is at medium level followed by high level (32.61 per cent) and low level (2.17 per cent).

In order to examine the association between occupation of customers and the level of satisfaction about low cost carriers, the Chi-square test has been applied and the results are presented in Table 11.

Table 11
Association between occupation and satisfaction about low cost carriers

| | <i>Value</i> | <i>Degrees of Freedom</i> | <i>Sig.</i> |
|--------------------|--------------|---------------------------|-------------|
| Pearson Chi-square | 0.017 | 14 | .000 |

Source: Primary Data

The Chi-square value of 0.017 is significant at one per cent level indicating that there is a significant association between occupation of customers and the level of satisfaction about low cost carriers. Hence, the null hypothesis of there is no significant association between occupation of customers and the level of satisfaction about low cost carriers is rejected.

ANNUAL INCOME AND SATISFACTION ABOUT LOW COST CARRIERS

The relationship between annual income of customers and the level of satisfaction about low cost carriers was analyzed and the results are presented in Table 12.

Table 12
Annual income and satisfaction about low cost carriers

| Sl. No. | Annual Income | Level of Satisfaction about Low Cost Carriers | | | Total |
|---------|---------------------------|---|------------|------------|--------------|
| | | Low | Medium | High | |
| 1. | Less than Rs.1,50,000 | 32(19.51) | 112(68.29) | 20(12.20) | 164(13.67) |
| 2. | Rs.1,50,001 – Rs.3,00,000 | 47(15.77) | 207(69.46) | 44(14.77) | 298(24.83) |
| 3. | Rs.3,00,001– Rs.4,50,000 | 53(15.32) | 238(68.79) | 55(15.89) | 346(28.83) |
| 4. | Rs.4,50,001–Rs.6,00,000 | 46(21.60) | 127(59.62) | 40(18.78) | 213(17.75) |
| 5. | More than Rs.6,00,000 | 36(20.11) | 111(62.01) | 32(17.88) | 179(14.92) |
| | Total | 214(17.83) | 795(66.25) | 191(15.92) | 1200(100.00) |

Source: Primary Data (The figures in the parentheses are per cent to total)

The results show that out of 164 customers who belong to the annual income group of less than Rs. 1,50,000, about 68.29 per cent of customer’s satisfaction about low cost carriers is at medium level followed by low level (19.51 per cent) and high level (12.20 per cent).

The results show that out of 298 customers who belong to the annual income group of Rs.1,50,001 – Rs. 3,00,000, about 69.46 per cent of customer’s satisfaction about low cost carriers is at medium level followed by low level (15.77 per cent) and high level (14.77 per cent).

It is observed that out of 346 customers who belong to the annual income group of Rs.3,00,001– Rs. 4,50,000, about 68.79 per cent of customer’s satisfaction about low cost carriers is at medium level followed by high level (15.89 per cent) and low level (15.32 per cent).

It is clear that out of 213 customers who belong to the annual income group of Rs.4,50,001– Rs. 6,00,000, about 59.62 per cent of customer’s satisfaction about low cost carriers is at medium level followed by low level (21.60 per cent) and high level (18.78 per cent).

It is apparent that out of 179 customers who belong to the annual income group of more than Rs. 6,00,000, about 62.01 per cent of customer’s satisfaction about low cost carriers is at medium level followed by low level (20.11 per cent) and high level (17.88 per cent).

In order to examine the association between annual income of customers and the level of satisfaction about low cost carriers, the Chi-square test has been applied and the results are presented in Table 13.

Table 13
Association between annual income and satisfaction about low cost carriers

| | Value | Degrees of Freedom | Sig. |
|--------------------|--------|--------------------|------|
| Pearson Chi-square | 27.914 | 8 | .000 |

Source: Primary Data

The Chi-square value of 27.914 is significant at one per cent level indicating that there is a significant association between annual income of customers and the level of satisfaction about low cost carriers. Hence, the null hypothesis of there is no significant association between annual income of customers and the level of satisfaction about low cost carriers is rejected.

LOW COST CARRIERS (AIRLINE WISE) OF INDIA AND ITS SATISFACTION LEVEL

The relationship between low cost carrier and the level of satisfaction about low cost carriers was analyzed and the results are presented in Table 14.

Table 14
Low cost carriers of india and its satisfaction level

| Sl. No. | Low Cost Carrier | Level of Satisfaction about Low Cost Carriers | | | Total |
|---------|-------------------|---|------------|------------|--------------|
| | | Low | Medium | High | |
| 1. | Air Asia India | 60(35.30) | 94(55.29) | 16(9.41) | 170(14.17) |
| 2. | GoAir | 48(18.46) | 176(67.69) | 36(13.85) | 260(21.67) |
| 3. | Indigo | 34(10.46) | 240(73.85) | 51(15.69) | 325(27.08) |
| 4. | Spice Jet | 36(14.12) | 153(60.00) | 66(25.88) | 255(21.25) |
| 5. | Air India Express | 36(18.95) | 132(69.47) | 22(11.58) | 190(15.83) |
| | Total | 214(17.83) | 795(66.25) | 191(15.92) | 1200(100.00) |

Source: Primary Data (The figures in the parentheses are per cent to total)

The results show that out of 170 customers who prefer Air Asia India, about 55.29 per cent of customer's satisfaction about low cost carriers is at medium level followed by low level (35.30 per cent) and high level (9.41 per cent).

The results indicate that out of 260 customers who prefer GoAir, about 67.69 per cent of customer's satisfaction about low cost carriers is at medium level followed by low level (18.46 per cent) and high level (13.85 per cent).

It is observed that out of 325 customers who prefer Indigo, about 73.85 per cent of customer's satisfaction about low cost carriers is at medium level followed by high level (15.69 per cent) and low level (10.46 per cent).

It is clear that out of 255 customers who prefer Spice Jet, about 60.00 per cent of customer's satisfaction about low cost carriers is at medium level followed by high level (25.88 per cent) and low level (14.12 per cent).

It is apparent that out of 190 customers who prefer Air India Express, about 69.47 per cent of customer's satisfaction about low cost carriers is at medium level followed by low level (18.95 per cent) and high level (11.58 per cent).

In order to examine the association between low cost carrier and the level of satisfaction about low cost carriers, the Chi-square test has been applied and the results are presented in Table 15.

Table 15
Association between low cost carrier and satisfaction about low cost carriers

| | <i>Value</i> | <i>Degrees of Freedom</i> | <i>Sig.</i> |
|--------------------|--------------|---------------------------|-------------|
| Pearson Chi-square | 72.312 | 8 | .000 |

Source: Primary Data

The Chi-square value of 72.312 is significant at one per cent level indicating that there is a significant association between low cost carrier and the level of satisfaction about low cost carriers. Hence, the null hypothesis of there is no significant association between low cost carrier and the level of satisfaction about low cost carriers is rejected.

CONCLUSION

There has been a tremendous change in the airline industry since 1990s by the introduction of low cost carriers in India which slowly picked up pace in the industry. The low-cost carriers seem to be promising for the air travellers with special attention to short hauls. It is important to conclude that certain critical areas like providing promotional offers, wait time for check-in and ease of baggage check-in has to be taken utmost care to satisfy the customer. However promising be the future if failed to address the issues of the customer would result in the downfall of the airlines.

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