



PASSENGERS' PERCEPTION OF QUALITY OF  
EMIRATES AIRLINE

By

Miss. Wissara Kuntonthong

A Survey Research Report for  
MS 7000 Research/IS project

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of  
Master of Science in Management

November 2008



**Assumption University**  
**COLLEGE OF INTERNET DISTANCE EDUCATION**  
**School of Business Administration**

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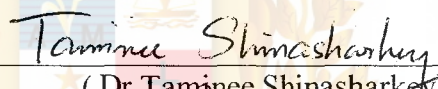
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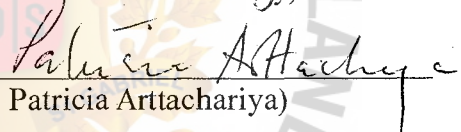
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# **PASSENGERS' PERCEPTION OF QUALITY OF EMIRATES AIRLINE**

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**Degree:** Master of Science in Management **School:** College of Internet Distance  
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## **ABSTRACT**

The objectives of the study were to examine the relationship between six flight attributes which are Airport Service, Air Ticket, Flight Schedule, Cabin Staff, On-board Products, Frequent Flyer Program and Passenger's perception of quality of Emirates Airline. The study also examined the differences in Demographic characteristics and Passengers' perception of quality of Emirates Airline.

The population for the study was 3.5 million people who were passengers as well as members of Emirates frequent flyer program Skywards. The sample size was 384 selected using convenience sampling method and self-administered questionnaires were used as the data collection instrument. The data were analyzed by SPSS program.

The study found that all flight attributes (airport service, air ticket, flight schedule, cabin staff service, on-board products and frequent flyer program) were related to passenger's perception of quality of Emirates Airline, moreover, respondents with different demographic profiles do have different perception of quality of Emirates Airline. The top three attributes that passengers weigh highest in their perception of quality of Emirates Airline, were "on-board products", "flight schedule" and "cabin staff". The study concluded by offering recommendations and suggestions for future research.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The researcher wishes to take this opportunity to thank the important people in helping her to successfully complete this research project. This research could not have been successfully completed without her special people.

First of all, the researcher would like to express her special thanks to her advisor, Dr.Patricia Arttachariya for her constructive guidance, information, and advices for this research. Dr.Patricia had helped her in providing the fruitful advices and also the suggestion in order to ensure the highest quality of the research project.

In addition, the researcher would like to pass the appreciation to the committee member, Dr.Piyathida Praditbatuga, Dr.Thanawan Phongsatha and Dr.Taminee Shinasharkey for the constructive feedback for further improvement.

Also, the researcher would like to pass her thanks to Acharn Frank James Jones, in helping her to edit and beautifully revise the research.

Without them, the researcher would not be able to complete this research study, the valued respondents. Thank you all for the precious time and valuable feedback on the questions asked.

The researcher would like to also express the special thanks to her fiancé, Akharaphon Sermlekhawilat for the giving her the inspiration and the support. With these things from him, they helped her in successfully achieving this degree in the expected timeframe.

Most importantly, all of her greatest gratitude goes to her parents, Mr.Surachai Kuntonthong and Mrs. Chantanaporn Kuntonthong for the love and support as always.

Wissara Kuntonthong

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## CHAPTER 1

### Introduction

#### 1.1 Background of Study

In the service industry, keeping customers happy is just one of the most common things that service providers have always tried to do. Obviously, there are so many different factors that keep the customer satisfied or unsatisfied depending on the type of services.

The Airline Industry, another service industry, has been getting more and more competitive everyday. With all the innovations in aircraft manufacturing and advanced passenger services, these have made the airline industry becoming more interesting and, as a result, the benefits go directly to the customers. Many different types of strategies have been implemented by airline companies, some of them focus on In-flight Services while some focus on Cabin Comfort. However, there have been many researches and studies proving that it requires myriad factors before passengers perceive what can be termed as “Quality”.

Crucially, the airline industry is just like any other industry, whereby the cost of retention of the existing customers is much cheaper than acquiring new ones; consequently, companies are putting more emphasis on their loyalty programs. By accomplishing this, the passengers must be able to feel that the companies have done something beneficial for them.



Air transport is in the throes of a highly dynamic period. Challenges include a slowing world economy, high oil prices, and in some markets, slowing traffic growth. These are some indicators on how air transport will be transformed over the next 20 years.

According to Boeing, over the past 20 years, air travel grew by an average of 4.8 percent each year. This was despite two major world recessions, terrorist acts, the Asian financial crisis of 1997, the severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) outbreak in 2003 and two Gulf wars. During the past four decades, researchers have learned that the resilience of air transport growth comes from its intrinsic importance to the livelihood of people around the world (<http://www.boeing.com/commercial/cmo/>).

On average, over the next 20 years, passenger travel will grow at 5.0 percent and cargo at 5.8 percent. The fastest growing economies will lead the transformation into a more geographically balanced market. More productive new airplanes will play a greater role, and there will be relentless pursuit of further environmental progress.

According to Boeing (Current Market Outlook, 2008-2027) "The average growth in airline passenger numbers will be around 4.0 percent each year. More people will be traveling by air as economies grow. Markets will open up through reduced regulation and increased competition. As markets expand, new travel opportunities will mostly be on longer distance flights." This can imply that, in the near future, passengers will spend more time on the flight. Of course, quality will be perceived differently among various choices of airlines depending on which factors are associated with consumers' perception of quality.

## **Emirates Airline**

Emirates was launched on October 25, 1985, by the government of Dubai. It is the official airline of the United Arab Emirates. Firstly, one Boeing 737-200 and an Airbus A300, both leased from Pakistan International Airlines (PIA), flew to Bombay, Delhi and Karachi. Soon after that, two Boeing 727-200 were added, before Emirates took delivery of several newly built Airbus A310-300s and A300-600Rs. Supported by these new aircraft, Emirates began to expand their route network. London-Gatwick was added in 1987 as the first European destination, Singapore followed in June 1990.

In April 1998, Emirates purchased Air Lanka, which later changed its name to Sri Lankan Airlines. The total net profit for 2005 was 762 million US dollars, which is an increase of 27% compared to the previous year. This was managed, although 2005 was a hard year for airlines due to high fuel prices and natural disasters in South East Asia.

As a consequence of this economical success, Emirates owns a fleet of 92 aircraft with another 123 planes on order, among them 45 Airbus A380-800s. Emirates will be the third airline to receive the big Airbus after Singapore Airlines and Qantas. The Emirates' route network is expanded to Europe, Asia, Africa, Oceania and North America.

In the financial year 2005/2006, Emirates flew 14.5 million passengers and one million tons of cargo with their fleet of aircraft with an average age of 61 months. In November 2006, the airline has signed a deal with AeroMobile, allowing Emirates passengers to use their personal mobile phones onboard selected Boeing 777.

Emirates Airline is currently considered as one of the world's fastest growing airlines (<http://www.ekgroup.com/> annual report 2007). More interestingly, it has received more than 300 international awards for excellence since its launch in 1985. Currently, Emirates now takes passengers to over 90 destinations in Europe, the Middle East, the Far East, Africa, Asia, Australasia and North America.

Additionally, with constant innovation and distinctiveness offered to its passengers, Emirates Airline has been doing very well. For example, Emirates Airline has announced plans to showcase the new, double-decker Airbus A380 during exclusive familiarization flights in San Francisco and Los Angeles. The familiarization flights will immediately follow the inaugural flight of the aircraft from Dubai to New York JFK on August 1st, 2008.

(<http://www.htrends.com/modules.php?op=modload&name=trends&file=detail&sid=334>  
27)

## 1.2 Statement of the Problem

Many paradigm changes have occurred over the past two decades, ranging from innovation in aircraft manufacturing to new technology in reservation systems. These help deter competition and create distinctiveness among the airlines. All of these factors have had effects on passenger perception of quality towards each and every airline. This study will examine Passengers' Perception of Quality of Emirates Airline based on the following variables:

- Airport Service
- Air Ticket

- Flight Schedule
- Cabin Staff Service
- On-board Product
- Frequent Flyer Program

### **1.3. Objectives of the Study**

1. To examine the relationship between Airport Service and passenger's perception of quality of Emirates Airline.
2. To examine the relationship between Air Ticket and passenger's perception of quality of Emirates Airline.
3. To examine the relationship between Flight Schedule and passenger's perception of quality of Emirates Airline.
4. To examine the relationship between Cabin Staff Service and passenger's perception of quality of Emirates Airline.
5. To examine the relationship between On-board Product and passenger's perception of quality of Emirates Airline.
6. To examine the relationship between Frequent Flyer Program and passenger's perception of quality of Emirates Airline.
7. To examine the differences in Demographic Characteristics and passengers' perception of quality of Emirates Airline.
8. To make recommendations for Emirates Airline to improve the quality based on the research findings of this study.



#### 1.4 Research Questions

According to the objectives of the research study, the research questions have been posited and are shown below:-

1. How are flight attributes (Airport Service, Air Ticket, Flight Schedule, Cabin Staff Service, On-board Product and Frequent Flyer Program) related to passenger's perception of quality of Emirates Airline?
2. Do passengers with different demographic profiles (age, gender, occupation, income, and nationality) have different perception of quality of Emirates Airline?
3. Which top three attributes do passengers weigh highest in their perception of quality of Emirates Airline?

#### 1.5 Significance of the Study

The results of this research would be beneficial not only for Emirates in providing insights from passengers in order to further improve the quality of their services. Other Asian and International airlines can use the findings to boost their strengths and opportunities by serving their customers better. Marketers in the airline industry can also use the findings to set their strategy regarding passenger service. After all, the benefits go directly to the passengers as well as obtain a positive reputation and word of mouth for the airline in the industry.

## 1.6 Limitations of the Study

To complete the research, there are some limitations designated as follows:-

1. The research focused only on passengers who have traveled with Emirates Airline at least once. Hence, the findings cannot be generalized to passengers traveling on other airlines.
2. The research questionnaire (convenient sampling) was commenced after passengers have disembarked from the aircraft or while traveling on-board the aircraft. Hence, the data received might not be accurate due to the time constraints and respondents' inconvenience.
3. The research focused on six different factors defined by researcher which are Airport Service, Ticket Air Fare, Flight Schedule, Cabin Staff Service, On-board Product and Frequent Flyer Program. There might be other factors that are related to perception of quality but they are not enumerated in this research.
4. The data was collected randomly at one point in time (October 2008), hence the results might not be generalized for other points in time.

## **1.7 Definition of Terms**

### **Air Ticket**

Human readable combined air-travel ticket and airplane boarding pass (<http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/air-ticket-boarding-ATB-card.html>).

### **Cabin Staff Service**

The service received from the cabin staffs (cabin crews/flight attendants).

### **Cabin Crew**

Passenger aircraft staff: the staff on a passenger aircraft whose job is to attend to passengers ([http://uk.encarta.msn.com/dictionary\\_1861786672/cabin\\_crew.html](http://uk.encarta.msn.com/dictionary_1861786672/cabin_crew.html))

### **Demographic Factors**

The characteristics of human populations and population segments, especially when used to identify consumer markets (population or consumer statistics regarding socioeconomic factors such as age, income, sex, occupation, education, family size, and the like) (<http://www.answers.com/topic/demographics>)

### **Personal Characteristics**

Consist of age, gender, income, occupation and nationality variables. Demographic or personal characteristic are most often used as the basis for market segmentation, and also affect the extent to which a person uses products in a specific product category (Pride and Ferrel, 1997)

### **Flight**

A journey by aircraft (<http://www.thefreedictionary.com/flight>)

### **Frequent Flyer Program**

The programs that allow passengers to earn points or “air miles” each time they fly. Such points can later be redeemed in exchange for free flights or other benefits. These benefits are accrued in direct proportion to the amount spent, and as such are equivalent to a percentage price reduction. (<http://www.iclployalty.com/?q=frequent-flyer-programmes>)

### **Quality**

The condition of being as distinguished from others; nature or character relatively considered, as of goods; character; sort; rank. (<http://ardictionary.com/Quality/247>) (Retrieved on 08 SEP 2008)



## **Perception of Quality**

Passengers' perception of the totality of features and characteristics of a product or service that bears its ability to satisfy stated or implied needs.(ISO 8402-1986)

## **Tangibles**

Appearance of physical facilities, equipment, personnel, and communication materials (Parasuraman et al,1990).

## **1.8 Organization of the remaining chapters**

This research consists of five chapters as follows:-

### **Chapter 1: Introduction**

The first chapter is the introductory stage of this research. It covers the background of study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions and or hypotheses, significance of the study, definition of terms, conceptual framework, and the organization of the remaining chapters.

### **Chapter 2: Review of Literature**

This chapter provides the understanding and definitions about keywords used in the research which includes the overview of the study, flight attributes and demographic factors. It also offers an extensive review of the previous studies indirectly and indirectly relevant to this research topic. Mainly, it is focused on the airline industry and passengers' perception factors.

**Chapter 3: Research Methodology**

This chapter includes a detailed presentation of the methods and procedures used in the study. The chapter contains all the actual steps to be followed in conducting the research, such as, the general procedures, design of the study, the instrument used, collection of the data, treatment of the data, and the summary.

**Chapter 4: Data Analysis and Results**

This chapter displays the findings of the information gathered from the questionnaires given. The research was gathered by conducting the survey of 384 respondents as sample group. All the selected respondents were screened. They were Emirates Airline passengers who were also Skywards members (Emirates' Frequent Flyer passengers).

**Chapter 5: Conclusions and Recommendations**

The last chapter summarizes the results of the data analysis from the previous chapter. The researcher has divided them into four parts which are summary of the research, discussion of the research findings received, the recommendations on applications of research findings and the suggestions for future research

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **Review of Literature**

In this section, the researcher reviews some of the concepts and theories related to the study. The literature review has been developed to describe the different theories and models leading to a conceptual framework upon which the study is being conducted. In the first section, the researcher describes the independent variables such as Airport Service, Air Ticket, Flight Schedule, Cabin Staff Service, On-board Product and Frequent Flyer Program. In the second section, the researcher presents the theories and concepts related to the dependent variable, Passengers' Perception of Quality. In the last section the researcher reviews previous empirical studies.

#### **2.1 Nature and Classification of Services**

Kotler (2000) stated that a service is any act or performance that one party can offer to another. Its production may or may not be tied to a physical product. A company's offer to the marketplace usually includes some service. The service component can be a minor or a major part of the total offer. Five categories of offers can be distinguished:

1. Pure tangible goods: The offer consists primarily of a tangible good such as soap, toothpaste, or salt. No services accompany the product.

2. Tangible goods with accompany services to enhance its consumer appeal. For example, an automobile manufacturer must sell more than an automobile. The more technologically sophisticated the generic product (e.g., cars and computers), the more dependent are its sales on the quality and availability of its accompanying customer services (e.g., display rooms, delivery, repairs and maintenance, application aids, operator training, installation advice, warranty fulfillment). In fact, many manufactures are now discovering opportunities to sell their services as a separate profit center.

3. Hybrid: The offer consists of equal parts of goods and services. For example, restaurants patronize both their food and their service.

4. Major Service with accompanying minor goods and services: The offer consists of a major service along with additional services or supporting goods. For example, airline passengers buy transportation service. Their experience of a trip includes some tangible, such as food and drinks, a ticket stub, and an airline magazine. The service requires a capital-intensive good-an airplane-for its realization, but the primary item is a service.

5. Pure service: The offering consists primarily of a service. Examples include babysitting, hairdressing, and massage.



## Characteristics of Services

Schiffman and Kanuk (2004) stated that activities such as renting a hotel room, depositing money in a bank, traveling on a sky train, getting a haircut, having a car repaired, watching a professional sport, seeing a movie, and getting advice from a lawyer all involve buying a service. A company must consider four special service characteristics when designing marketing programs: intangibility, inseparability, variability, and perishability:

1. Service intangibility means that services cannot be seen, tasted, felt, heard, or smelled before they are bought. For example, people under going cosmetic surgery cannot see the result before the purchase, and airline passengers have nothing but a ticket and the promise of safe delivery to their destinations.

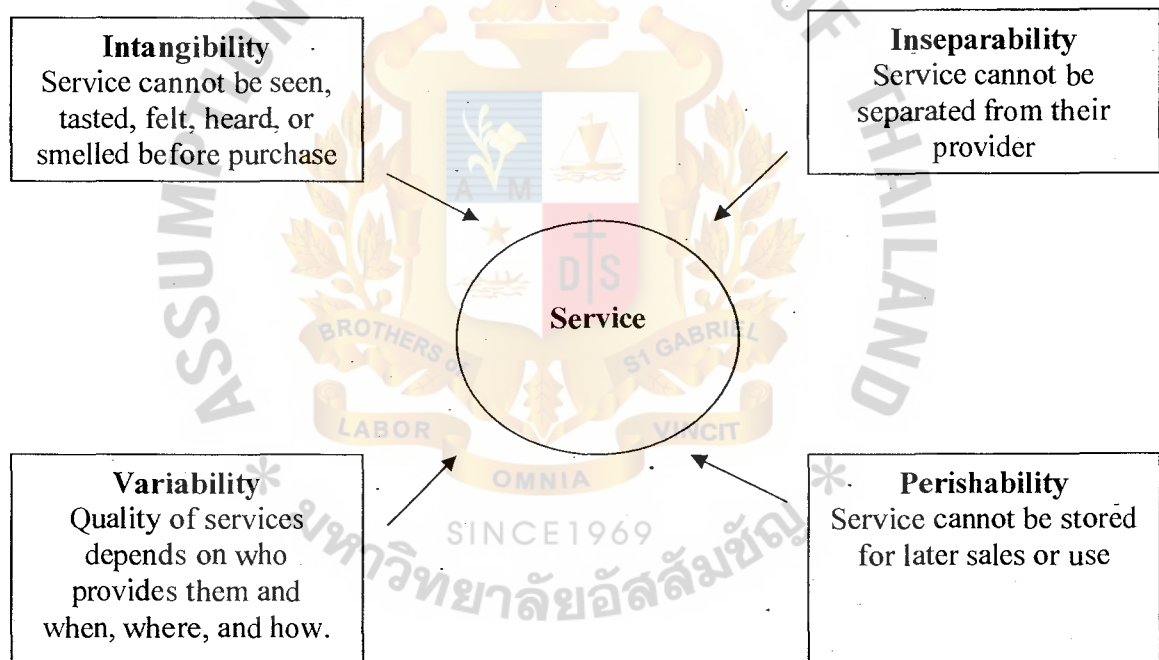
2. Service inseparability means that services cannot be separated from their providers, whether the providers are people or machines. If a service employee provides the service, then the employee is a part of the service. Because the customer is also present as the service is produced, provider-customer interaction is a special feature of service marketing. Both the provider and the customer affect the service outcome.

3. Service variability means that the quality of service depends on who provides them as well as when, where, and how they are provided. A heart transplant performed by a top surgeon will be of higher quality than one performed by a less experienced surgeon. And the top surgeon's skills vary with her energy and mental set at the time of each

operation. Service buyers are aware of this high variability and frequently talk to others before selecting a service provider.

4. Service perishability means that services cannot be stored for later sale or use.

Some doctor charge patients for missed appointments because the service value perishability of services is not a problem when demand is steady. However, when demand fluctuates, service firms often have problems.



**Figure 2.1:** Four Service Characteristics

**Source:** Kotler: Marketing Management, Prentice Hall (2000), p.438.

## **Transportation as Services**

Ortuzar and Willumsen (1990) suggested that the first distinctive characteristic of transport supply is that it is a service and not a good. Therefore, it is not possible to stock it, for example, to use it in times of higher demand. A transport service must be consumed when and where it is produced, otherwise its benefit is lost. For this reason it is very important to estimate demand with as much accuracy as possible in order to save resources by tailoring the supply of transport services to it.

## **The Concept of Service Quality**

Service quality doesn't have a tangible clue which can be measured, and is intangible in comparison with quality of goods. For the most part, a tangible clue of service quality is restricted within physical ability or a human resource of the service provider. Therefore, Gronroos (1994) defined service quality as "perceived service quality" by a consumer with subjective criterion rather than objective criterion, and distinguished service quality from objective quality.

Parasuman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1985) presented several interesting themes for service quality related to expectation and performance. "1) Service quality is more difficult for the consumer to evaluate than goods' quality. 2) Service quality perceptions result from a comparison of consumer expectation with actual service performance. 3) Quality evaluations are not made solely on the outcome of a service; they also involve evaluations of the process of service delivery".

Many researchers (Hollbrook and Corfman, 1985; Milne and McDonald, 1999; Olshavsky, 1985) understood quality as a form similar to attitude, which is the overall evaluation of manufactured goods. They also revealed that quality acts as a comprehensive or global value when measuring consumer satisfaction. In addition, there was a study (Parasuraman et al., 1985) supporting the above, which carried out focus-group interviews with four different service areas.

Leading researchers in service quality marketing attempted to understand the characteristics of services and what providers should possess in order to project a high quality service articulated by their customers. They came to a conclusion that customers' perceived service quality is a different concept from their satisfaction level, and service quality can be known by measuring the gaps between customers' expectations and their performance (Zeithaml and Bitner, 1996). There have been a larger number of researchers interested in developing service quality, which agreed with the idea that service quality significantly differs from objective quality. They believe that is a form of attitude, connected but not equivalent to the level of customer satisfaction (Bolton and Drew, 1991; Cronin and Taylor, 1992; Oliver, 1993).

Service quality is an exclusive and abstract concept that is difficult to define and measure because of intangibility (Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry, 1991). Additionally, finding the important relationship among service quality, customer satisfaction, and purchasing behavior remains largely uncharted.

## **Airline Marketing**

The airline industry is a unique and fascinating industry that has captured the interest of a wide audience because of its glamour, reach and impact on the large and growing number of travelers worldwide (Chan, 2000, p. 489).

Marketing is the management process responsible for identifying, anticipating and satisfying customers' requirements profitably. Running a successful airline requires numerous skills to be developed, and many carriers have an important revenue source from selling these skills to others who need them.

### **CRM in Airline Industry**

CRM stands for "Customer Relation Management". In the Airline Industry, CRM is also very significant in many ways. Greenberg (2002) has defined CRM as "A disciplined business strategy to create and sustain long-term, profitable customer relationship".

In addition, many airlines have started to see the significance of CRM and have implemented unique executions for their passengers. Boland, Morrison and O'Neil (2002) have discussed CRM, particularly for the airline industry.



## 2.2 Flight Attributes (Independent Variables)

According to IATA (IATA 2002), the air passengers usually go through the certain points of process as follows:-

1. Booking
2. Getting to the airport
3. Checking In
4. Getting on-board
5. Flying to the destination
6. Baggage Delivery
7. Arriving Final Destination
8. Unpacking and setting

For airlines, the most two important phrases are “checking-in” and “flying to the destinations experience”, as the passengers get to have the close contact with the airline for a certain period of time. A more detailed discussion of the variables used in this study is shown in the following sections.

### Airport Service

Airport Service can also be understood as “Passenger Service” ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aircraft\\_ground\\_handling](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aircraft_ground_handling)). This includes services inside the airport terminal such as, providing check-in counter services for the passengers departing on the customer airlines, providing gate arrival and departure services. The agents are required to meet a flight on arrival as well as provide departure services

including boarding passengers, closing the flight, and staffing the Transfer Counters, Customer Service Counters and Airline Lounges.

### **Air Ticket**

Air Ticket means human readable combined air-travel ticket and airplane boarding pass (<http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/air-ticket-boarding-ATB-card.html>) (Retrieved: 08 Sep 2008). In the old days, passengers used to be familiar with the paper tickets. Now, they are being replaced by the electronic ticket as the paper ticket does have some disadvantages. Using the Electronic ticket is easier. Many airlines have stopped issuing paper tickets and have implemented the new type of the ticket which is "Electronic ticket" or so called "E-ticket."

Ticket-less travel means that a ticket is never lost or stolen (Fleming, 2008). If you lose the documents that the airline sent you, they can produce another copy at the airport. For many people, the fact that they cannot lose the ticket is the saving grace of an electronic ticket. It is really quite remarkable when you realize that there are a lot of people who have accidentally left their paper ticket at home, or the office. Unlike electronic tickets, if you leave your paper ticket at home, you will either have to pay a fee to have the ticket replaced (if it is a discounted ticket), buy an entirely new ticket (as is often the case with full fare tickets), or not be able to travel at all. Electronic tickets eliminate this possible stress, and for many travelers, particularly frequent travelers, not having to worry about a forgotten ticket is a big selling point.

In 2004 (Aviation Business Magazine, July 2008), the International Air Transport Association (IATA) called for airlines to become 100% e-ticketed by replacing all paper

tickets. Finally, in May 2008, travel agents stopped distributing paper tickets, marking the end of four year e-ticket project. Apparently, after have been using the paper ticket in the aviation industry for decades, it could be simply proved that using the E-ticket is better.

Moreover, according to Keith Longstaff, Emirates' Divisional Senior Vice President of commercial operations worldwide (Aviation Business Magazine, July 2008), "customer response has been positive. E-Ticketing benefits both the customer and the airline by providing greater convenience, reduced processing time, simplified operations and faster check-in. It's also greener and cheaper."

Furthermore, when it comes to the "Air Ticket", passengers are concerned about the price. Kotler (1994) suggests that value to the customer is a function of all product-related benefits discounted by all product-related costs. They include:-

- (1) Benefits accruing from a tangible product
- (2) Service-related benefits
- (3) Benefits accruing from personnel interactions
- (4) Benefits due to the image of a product.

Product-related costs have typically focused on the monetary price of the product. Kotler (1994) augments monetary price with the explicit addition of time, energy and psychic costs. The total cost from a value-based perspective would include both the monetary price of the product and non-monetary costs such as time, energy and opportunity costs.

## **Flight Schedule**

According to the U.S. Department of Transportation (2001), one of every four flights is delayed, cancelled or diverted with impact on 163 million passengers. In a recent poll, 57% of travelers said they think the experience of flying has gotten worse over the past five years (Bryant, 2001). Also, referring to a study on international air travel by the US Department of Commerce (2005), passengers weigh the convenience of the Flight Schedule as the 2<sup>nd</sup> most important factor in choosing an airline.

Clearly, when passengers are traveling, they do not want to confront any delays or flight cancellation. Therefore, the airlines which manage to maintain the reputation by on-time departure and arrivals are those that most passengers look for.

## **Cabin Staff Service**

The Cabin Staff is a person who assists passengers in an aircraft (<http://www.answers.com/topic/flight-attendant>). They are also widely known as cabin crew, steward, cabin staff or cabin attendant depending on the airline. The primary and overriding responsibility of Cabin Staff Services is passenger safety. They are often tasked with the secondary function of seeing to the care and comfort of the passengers, insofar as this does not interfere with their safety responsibilities. They are often perceived by the flying public as waitresses or servants because only this latter function is normally seen outside the extremely rare event of in-flight emergency; and historically this perception has been portrayed by airlines in ads and commercials.

Generally, during the flight, the passengers tangibly receive the service from Cabin Staff Services. This can also be widely understood as "In-flight service". In-flight service (<http://www.htrends.com/trends-detail-sid-33125.html>), is more likely to involve people. People factor is very important, the study finds that satisfaction with "people" factors -- including knowledge, courtesy and helpfulness of reservation and gate agents, check-in staff and flight crew -- has declined dramatically since 2007, and is the leading contributing factor to the overall decline in customer satisfaction with airlines in 2008. The decrease in satisfaction with people factors is more than twice as large as the decline in satisfaction with price factors.

"Across the airline experience, from check-in, to the flight, to deplaning, passengers are being affected by the ramifications of carriers making staff cutbacks and have expressed that performance and attitudes of airline staff are suffering," said Sam Thanawalla, director of the global hospitality and travel practice at J.D. Power and Associates. "In this unstable industry environment, it is critical that airlines invest in their employees as a means to enhance the customer experience, as there is a strong connection between employee satisfaction and customer satisfaction. Those airlines that focus on keeping their employees informed and motivated will be better able to change negative consumer sentiment and truly differentiate themselves."

### **On-board Product**

Referring to Skytrax, leading research advisors to the world's airlines and air transport industry, when they focus on the on-board product in their research, they

include: seat comfort, comfort of blankets/pillows, in-flight entertainment, washroom cleanliness, cabin cleanliness, quality of meals served, and newspaper and magazines. (<http://www.airlinequality.com/Airlines/EK.htm>).

### **Frequent Flyer Program**

Frequent Flyer Programs first appeared at the end of 1970s as a marketing strategy in response to deregulation. They originated in the United States, not appearing in Europe until about 15 years later. The key target of most European programs is business travelers. Frequent Flyer Programs allow passengers to earn points or "air miles" each time they fly. Such points can later be redeemed in exchange for free flights or other benefits. These benefits are accrued in direct proportion to the amount spent, and as such are equivalent to a percentage price reduction (<http://www.iclployalty.com/?q=frequent-flyer-programmes>).

Most Frequent Flyer Programs also incorporate strategic non-linear elements, mainly through the concept of introducing an "Elite" status level whereby additional benefits can be earned after the passenger reaches certain thresholds. This has the potential for the airline running the scheme to generate switching costs, because the passenger in the program, if taking an alternative air service, would lose not just the air miles naturally accrued, but any additional bonus points or air miles that go with being an elite—for example a "gold" or "platinum" card-holder.

Skywards is the Frequent Flyer Program launched by Emirates. Established in May 2000, it has created quite an impact with its unique and innovative approach and has



already picked up a number of prestigious awards, including Middle East's Best Frequent Flyer Program in Business Traveler Magazine (Skywards Reference Guide, 2008).

### **2.3 Demographic Factors**

Solomon (2007) stated the marketers are interested in studying the changes and trends revealed in demographics, because the data can be used to locate and predict the size of markets for many products. Bagozzi (1998) also stated that demographics are popular as a segmentation tool because these data are standardized and readily available and that consumer preferences and behaviors are highly correlated with the demographic variables. Demographic variables such as age, stage in the family life cycle, gender, income, occupation, education, religion, nationality and race, correlates with consumer preference, needs and usage rates (Hanna and Wozniak, 2001). Numerous studies have been conducted to address the parallel between demographics and media viewing behaviors, however research results are still inconclusive (Jack, 1999). Moreover, it is well known that consumers' perspective and perception are both influenced by the situation, which, in turn, is largely influenced by their demographic profile. Therefore, in this study, five demographic variables are examined: age, gender, income, occupation, and nationality.

## **Age**

Product needs often vary with consumer age. Many marketers have carved themselves a niche in the marketplace by concentrating on a specific age segment (Schiffman and Kanuk, 1994). Parrama (1995) also explained that age influences buying decision since age is one factor influencing consumer behavior and thinking. In addition, according to R. Näsänen, H. Ojanpää, J. Päällysaho, E. Poutiainen, M. Sainio (2004), they found that the perception became different with age factor.

## **Gender**

Marketers notice an opportunity for gender segmentation. Gender influences consumer's thinking, values, attitude, behavior, wants and buying decision (Kotler, 1997). It means that males and females have different thinking, values, attitudes, behavior, wants in their purchase decisions. Women place more importance on personal gratification exemplified by such things as a comfortable life, pleasure, and happiness, which in turn is conducive to an increase in their higher demand for experiential and hedonic products. According to Aschbacher (2003), her survey data suggests that there is a little difference in perception of different gender in the study.

## **Income**

Income is a factor related to buying behavior. Consumers having different income can cause different buying behavior. The major problem with segmenting the market on the basis of income alone is that income simply indicates the ability (or inability) to pay for a product (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2007). Kotler (1997) stated that the customer forms

a purchase intention based on such factors as expected family income, price and expected benefits from the products and services.

### **Occupation**

Occupation or can be called as “Career”, it is a term defined by the Oxford English Dictionary as an individual's "course or progress through life (or a distinct portion of life)". It usually is considered to pertain to remunerative work.

### **Nationality**

Many prior studies in international business have examined differences in consumer behavior in traditional shopping environments on the basis of cultural differences. Like psychological studies, studies in marketing mainly compare consumer behaviors in eastern countries to those in western countries. Research has examined various reasons for the differences in consumer behavior across cultures/countries. One of the primary reasons identified for such differences in comparative studies is based on the belief that western countries generally have individualism and a low context culture whereas eastern countries generally have collectivism and a high context culture, and that this difference would influence consumer behavior (Wang, 1999). Furthermore, according to Arletti (2007), it was stated that groups of respondent with different nationalities do have different perception of service quality.

## 2.4 Dependent Variable

### Determinants of Perceptions of Quality

Before buying or using a product, consumers have an idea about the product characteristics and the extent to which it will satisfy their needs and wants. Depending on the amount of information they received regarding the product and their experience, the certainty with which they can predict the product's properties will vary. Consumers base product choice decisions largely on these expectations (Kotler et al., 1999).

Gronroos (1990) elaborated "The Seven Criteria of Good Perception of Quality" as follows:

1. Professionalism and Skills: The customers realize that the service provider, its employees, operational systems, and physical resources, have the knowledge and skills required to solve their problems in a professional way (outcome-related criteria).
2. Attitudes and Behavior: The customers feel that service employees (contract persons) are concerned about them and are interested in solving their problems in a friendly and spontaneous way (process-related criteria).
3. Accessibility and Flexibility: The customer feel that the service provider, its location, operating hours, employees, and operational systems, are designed and operated so that it is easy to get access to the service and so that they are prepared to adjust to the demands and wishes of the customer in a flexible way (process-related criteria).

4. Reliability and Trustworthiness: The customers know that whatever takes place or has been agreed upon, they can rely on the service provider, its employees and systems, to keep promises and perform with the best interest of the customers at heart (process-related criteria).

5. Recovery: The customers realize that whenever something goes wrong or something predictable unexpectedly happens, the service provide will immediately and actively take actions to keep them in control of the situation and find a new, acceptable solution (process-related criteria).

6. Reputation and Credibility: The customer believe that the operations of the service provider can be trusted and give adequate value for money and that it stands for good performance and values, which can be shared by customers and the service provider (image-related criteria).

7. Serviscape: Customers feel that physical surrounding and other aspects of environment of the service encounter support a positive experience of the service process (process-related criteria).

One of the seven professionalisms and skills is outcome-related and thus a technical quality dimension. The criteria, reputation and credibility are image related thus fulfilling a filter function. However, the other five criteria, attitudes and behavior,

accessibility and flexibility, reliability and trustworthiness, servscape, and recovery, are clearly process related and thus present the function quality dimension.

## 2.5 Previous Empirical Studies

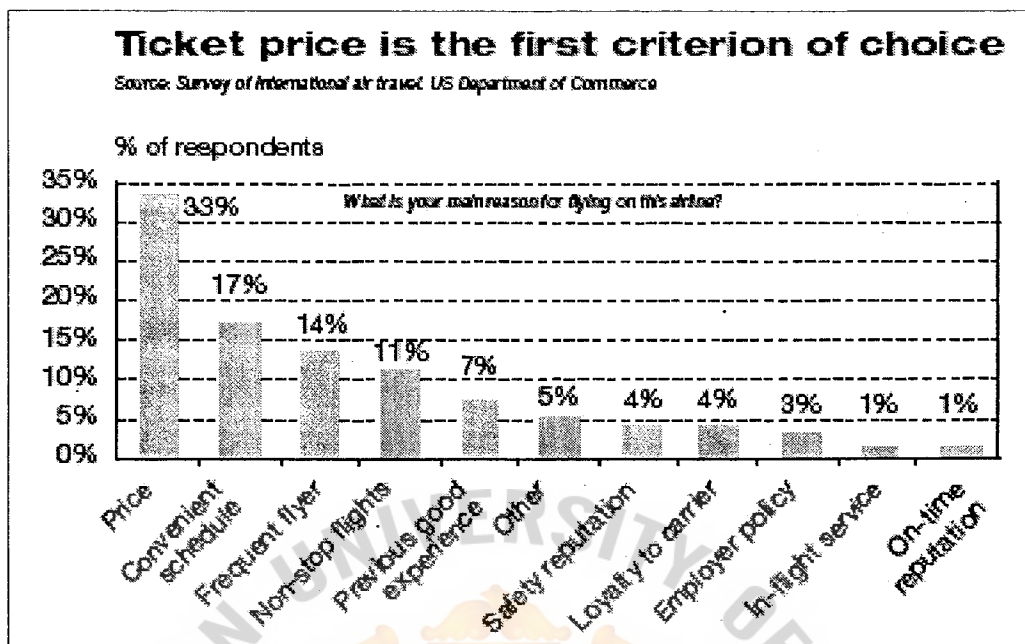
### (1) A Study of International Air Travel, US Department of Commerce (2005)

The findings from the study on International Air Travel by the US Department of Commerce discovered that the most important factors among air travelers when choosing an airline are as follows:-

1. Price 33%
2. Convenient schedule 17%
3. Frequent flyer 14%
4. Non-stop flights 11%
5. Previous good experience 7%,

Nevertheless, the other factors are considered as minor factor which are not really significant to perception of quality when choosing the Airline i.e. safety reputation, loyalty to carrier, employer policy, in-flight service and on-time reputation.





*Figure 2.2: Ticket Price is the First Criteria of the Choice*

*Source: Survey of International Air Travel US Department of Commerce (2005)*

## (2) Expectations and Perceptions of international passengers of Vietnam Airlines

Do Thi Tuyet Trang (2002) studied expectations and perceptions of international passengers of Vietnam Airlines in terms of its service quality. The 384 respondents of this research were international passengers, who had taken flights with Vietnam Airlines on international routes. This research used close-ended questionnaires as a research instrument, and focused on the influence of demographic factors such as age, gender, occupation nationally, and income on the customers' perception of service quality. The SERVQUAL model instrument was applied in this research. The results of this study showed that there was a significant difference between customers' expectation and perception of international passengers of Vietnam Airlines in terms of its service quality

which were segmented by five service quality dimensions: tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy.

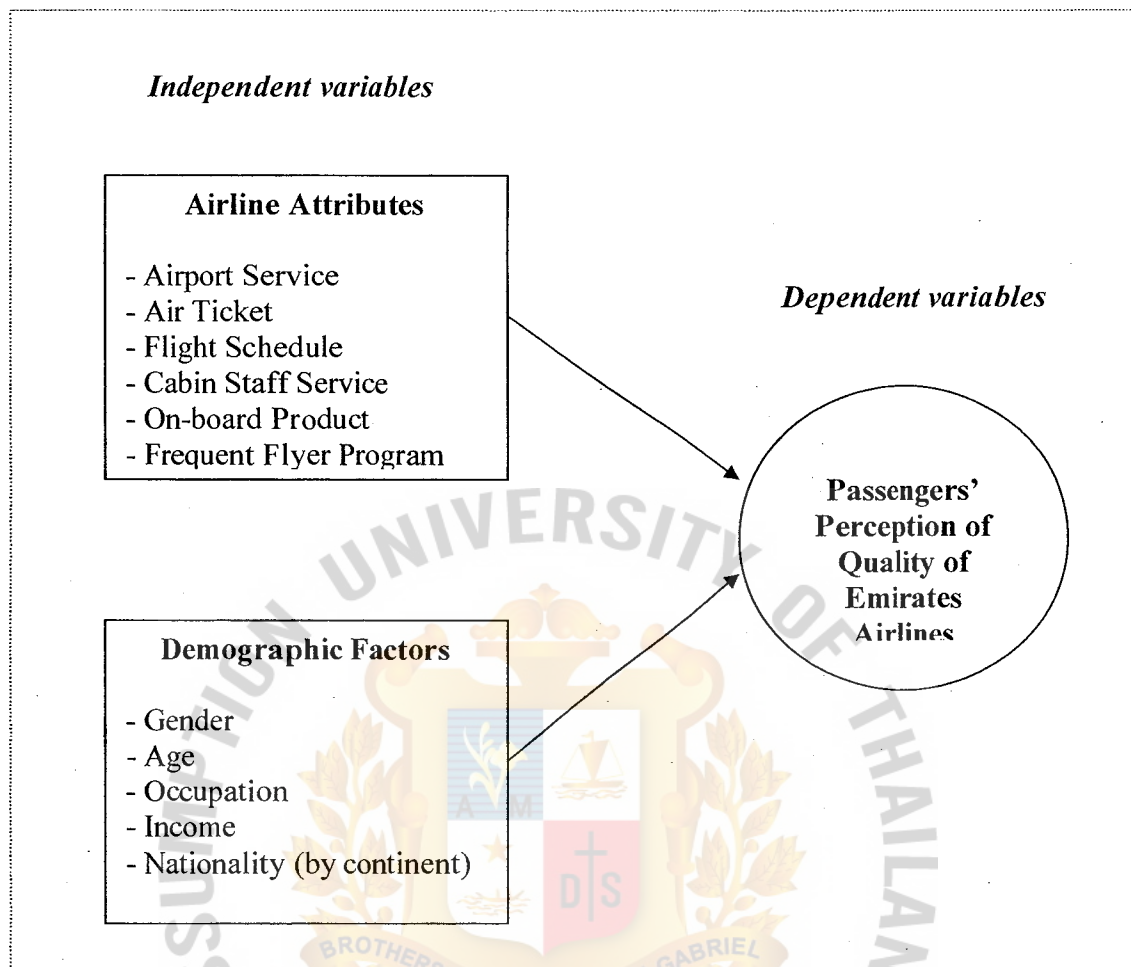
### **(3) Price and Schedule Most Important Factors for Airline Travelers, ICLP**

#### **Report (2007)**

Price and schedule were the key factors when choosing a carrier, according to research from global loyalty marketing specialists ICLP (2007). The recent research had found that the two most important factors amongst air travelers when choosing an airline were Price 62%, and Schedule at 54%, rather than the Frequent Flyer Program at 21% and Brand Loyalty at only 13%. Obviously, getting to a specific destination at a given time was a fundamental part of the airline's hard product. Price always a determining factor in the majority of purchase decisions. Next was seat comfort 27%, while 22% of the sample said the choice was determined by company policy. Surprisingly, membership of a Frequent Flyer Program was important for only one in five respondents, and a mere 13% were influenced by brand loyalty.

## 2.6 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework is the researcher's own model that explains the relationship between independent and dependent variables. The independent variable is one that influences the dependent variable in either a positive or negative way and dependent variable is the variable of primary interest to the researcher (Sekaran, 1992). The researcher developed the conceptual framework to examine whether the six airline attributes are related to Passengers' Perception of Quality of Emirates Airline. In this research, Airport Service, Air Ticket, Flight Schedule, Cabin Staff Service, On-board Product, Frequent Flyer Program, as well as demographic variables (gender, age, income, occupation and nationality) have been chosen as independent variables. The Passengers' Perception of Quality of Emirates Airline has been chosen as the dependent variables. Figure 2.3 shows the conceptual framework of this study.



**Figure 2.3:** Conceptual Framework of the Study

## 2.7 Research Hypotheses

The study's hypotheses are shown below:

- H<sub>0</sub>1:** There is no relationship between Airport Service and Passengers' Perception of Quality of Emirates Airline.
- H<sub>a</sub>1:** There is a relationship between Airport Service and Passengers' Perception of Quality of Emirates Airline.
- H<sub>0</sub>2:** There is no relationship between Air Ticket and Passengers' Perception of Quality of Emirates Airline.
- H<sub>a</sub>2:** There is a relationship between Air Ticket and Passengers' Perception of Quality of Emirates Airline.
- H<sub>0</sub>3:** There is no relationship between Flight Schedule and Passengers' Perception of Quality of Emirates Airline.
- H<sub>a</sub>3:** There is a relationship between Flight Schedule and Passengers' Perception of Quality of Emirates Airline.
- H<sub>0</sub>4:** There is no relationship between Cabin Staff Service and Passengers' Perception of Quality of Emirates Airline.
- H<sub>a</sub>4:** There is a relationship between Cabin Staff Service and Passengers' Perception of Quality of Emirates Airline.

**H<sub>0</sub>5:** There is no relationship between On-board Product and Passengers' Perception of Quality of Emirates Airline.

**H<sub>a</sub>5:** There is a relationship between On-board Product and Passengers' Perception of Quality of Emirates Airline.

**H<sub>0</sub>6:** There is no relationship between Frequent Flyer Program and Passengers' Perception of Quality of Emirates Airline.

**H<sub>a</sub>6:** There is a relationship between Frequent Flyer Program and Passengers' Perception of Quality of Emirates Airline.

**H<sub>0</sub>7:** There is no difference between demographic factors (age, gender, occupation, income and nationality) and Passengers' Perception of Quality of Emirates Airline.

**H<sub>a</sub>7:** There are differences between demographic factors (age, gender, occupation, income and nationality) and Passengers' Perception of Quality of Emirates Airline.

Based on the above hypotheses, the research was conducted on Emirates Airline passengers who were also Skywards members and the questionnaires were in English language.



## CHAPTER 3

### Research Methodology

This chapter, Research Methodology, provides a detailed presentation of the method or procedures used in the study. This chapter contains all the actual steps that are followed in conducting the research, such as, the general procedures, design of the study, the instrument used, collection of the data, treatment of the data, and the statistical procedures used.

#### 3.1 Research Method

Descriptive research is used in this research, which is designed to describe the characteristics of a population. Descriptive research seeks to determine the answer to who, what, when, where, and how questions (Zikmund, 2003). Therefore, descriptive research is used when the objective is to provide a systematic description that is as factual and accurate as possible. It provides the number of times something occurs or frequency, and lends itself to statistical calculations such as determining the average number of occurrences or central tendencies. The research technique used in this study is the survey method. The survey will be conducted by using self-administered questionnaires to collect the data. This technique provides quick, inexpensive, efficient and accurate means of assessing information about a population (Zikmund, 2003).

### **3.2 Research Design**

Research Design provides the basic factors that hold the research study together. A design is used to structure the research, to show how all of the major parts of the research project -- the samples or groups, measures, treatments or programs, and methods of assignment -- work together to try to address the central research questions.

### **3.3 Population and Sampling**

#### **Sampling Unit**

The sampling units are set to be Emirates Airline passengers who are also member of Skywards Frequent Flyer Program. The research operation was randomly conducted at the different times of the day, on the selected target sampling.

#### **Sampling Method**

The Nonprobability - Convenience Sampling Technique was used. The sampling procedure was conducted in the selected locations that optimized the possibility of finding the research targets, such as arrival and departure halls at Dubai airport. The researcher verbally asked the screening questions in order to eliminate the non users and also to obtain the information accurately from the right target sample.

## Sample Size

The researcher determined the sample size of this study based on Anderson's (1996) sampling method. It indicates that if the population is about 1,000,000, at 95% level of certainty then the sample size is at 384 (as per table shown below):

**Table 3.1:** Theoretical Sample Size for Different Size of Population

Population	Required Sample for Tolerable Error			
	5%	4%	3%	2%
100	79	85	91	96
500	217	272	340	413
1,000	277	375	516	705
5,000	356	535	897	1,622
50,000	381	593	1,044	2,290
100,000	382	596	1,065	2,344
1,000,000	384	596	1,065	2,344
25,000,000	384	599	1,067	2,400

**Source:** Anderson, G. (1996). Fundamentals of Educational Research

Anderson's (1996) method was used for calculating the right number of representatives for this research study. From the total population of current Skywards members estimated at about 3.5 million passengers (Brian LaBelle, Senior Vice President, Skywards Emirates Airline, 2008), the target sampling was then set at 384 respondents in order to effectively represent the whole market. The samples of 384 respondents are subject to a maximum sampling error of the 95 percent of the level of certainty.

### 3.4 Research Instrument

The mode of data collection in this study was a self-administered questionnaire. Self-administered questionnaire is a survey delivered to the respondent via personal (intercept) means that is completed by the respondent without intervention from the interviewer (Cooper and Schindler, 2001).

In this research, the questionnaire is divided into three parts:-

#### Part I: Introduction and Screening Questions

In this study, as the samples were Emirates Airline passengers who are also Skywards members. Because the operation is not conducted on-board the aircraft, the screening questions are required. They were asked verbally by the researcher. Doing so, ensured that the researcher targeted the right samples and also saved time. The screening questions are shown below:

**Table 3.2:** Screening Questions (to be verbally asked by the researcher)

<i>Screening Questions</i>	<i>Passenger's Status</i>
1. Have you flown with Emirates Airline before?	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No
2. Are you a Skywards member	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No

When the respondents answered “yes” for both screening questions, the researcher moved on to the next step by distributing the next part of the questionnaire.

#### Part II: Passenger's Perception of Quality of Emirates Airline

The questionnaire asked about the previous/existing passengers' purchasing behavior in traveling with the Emirates Airline. This is the most important part of the questionnaire, it is used the "Interval scale" measurement. The independent variables were broken down into sub-questions to ask the respondents to rate the points of each factor according to passengers' personal opinion.

This part is aimed to be able to evaluate Passengers' Perception of Quality towards the Emirates Airline with the appropriate questions designed as follows:-

**Table 3.3:** Questions Corresponding to the Perception of Quality

<b>Perception of Quality Factor</b>	<b>Questions belong to the factors.</b>	<b>Level of perception</b>
Airport Service	Questions 1.1-1.10	Strongly Agree---- Strongly disagree
Air Ticket	Questions 2.1-2.10	Strongly Agree---- Strongly disagree
Flight Schedule	Questions 3.1-3.10	Strongly Agree---- Strongly disagree
Cabin Staff Service	Questions 4.1-4.10	Strongly Agree---- Strongly disagree
On-board Product	Questions 5.1-5.10	Strongly Agree---- Strongly disagree
Frequent Flyer Program	Questions 6.1-6.10	Strongly Agree---- Strongly disagree
Perception of Quality	Questions 7.1-7.6	Strongly Agree----Strongly disagree

### Part III: Personal Information

The third part of the questionnaire consisted of demographic factors of the respondents. The variables consisted of:

- Age
- Gender
- Education
- Monthly Income
- Nationality

**Table 3.4:** Personal Information

Demographic Factors	Groups
1. Age	1. 20-30 2. 31-40 3. 41-50 4. 51-above
2. Gender	1. Male 2. Female
3. Monthly income in US Dollars (after tax)	1. Under \$ 5,000 2. 5,001-10,000 3. 10,001-15,000 4. 15,001-20,000 5. More than \$ 20,001
4. Occupation	1. Student 2. Self-employed 3. Governmental sector employee 4. Private sector employee 5. Retiree
5. Nationality (by continent)	1. African 2. Asian 3. Australian



	4. European
	5. North American
	6. South American

### 3.5 Pre-Testing of Questionnaire

According to Malhotra (1999), pretest or pilot study which is to be done prior to the actual study is essential. The pre-testing is the test of the questionnaire's reliability and validity on the certain amount of potential respondents.

Therefore, the pilot study was conducted with 30 Emirates Airline passengers. The questionnaires were distributed at the Arrival Hall of Dubai International Airport. The Alpha scores are shown in the table below:-

**Table 3.5:** Summary of the Reliability of Variables measured by using Cronbach's Alpha

Factors	Number of items	Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha
Airport Services	10	.634
Air Ticket	10	.854
Flight Schedule	10	.704
Cabin Staff Service	10	.605
On-board Product	10	.657
Frequent Flyer Program	10	.753
Passengers' Perception of Quality	6	.794

The results shown in the table was analyzed by using the Cronbach's alpha reliability test. The process of this output was computed by combining all of the sub-questions under each variable in order to find the mean. The Cronbach alpha showed that all categories were in the similar level which is above 0.6. Therefore, it could be

summarized that it's suitable to use all variables in this research according to Sekaran (1992).

### **3.6 Collection of the Data**

The researcher distributed the questionnaires to the Emirates passengers who were also Skywards members. As previously mentioned, the screening questions were asked in order to eliminate the unwanted sampling. Because Emirates is an airline which is owned by the United Arab Emirates, its main airport is the Dubai International Airport. The researcher distributed questionnaires in both departure and arrival halls of the Dubai International Airport. Once the right sample was located, the researcher requested him/her to take time completing the questionnaire. The time used for the questionnaire completion was around 10 minutes.

### **3.7 Statistical Treatment of Data**

The researcher will use the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) program in calculating data from the questionnaire. Pearson correlation coefficient was used to measure the relationship between flight attributes and passenger's perception of quality of Emirates airline.

The statistical treatments used in this research were as follows:

#### ***Descriptive Statistics***

Descriptive statistics help to summarize the characteristics of large sets of data using only a few numbers (Wilson, 2003). Descriptive statistics involve transformation of raw data into a form that provides information to describe a set of factors in a situation

(Sekaran, 2003). Normally the descriptive statistics measures the central tendency (mean, mode and median) and measures of variability (range, inter-quartile range and standard deviation).

The objective of the descriptive statistics is to develop sufficient knowledge to describe a body of data by showing the level for the measurements that the researcher wants to study. Descriptive statistics, frequency tables, and average mean will be used for analyzing the demographic profile of the respondents in terms of age, gender, and income as well as respondents' purchase intention for life insurance products. The Arbitrary Range given below and Descriptive Rating was used for grouping responses into levels:

**Table 3.6:** The Arbitrary Level

<b>The Arbitrary Level</b>	
<b>Level</b>	<b>Range</b>
Most important	4.20-5.00
Important	3.40-4.19
Average	2.60-3.39
Least important	1.80 –2.59
Not important	0.00-1.79

### ***Inferential Statistics***

The primary purpose of inferential statistics is to make judgments about the population or the collection of all elements about which one seeks information (Zikmund, 2000). The sample is the subset or relatively small fraction of the total number of

elements in the population. It is useful to distinguish between the data computed in the sample and the data or variables in the population. The term sample statistics designates variables in the sample or measures computed from the sample data and sample statistics are used to make inferences about population parameters; the variables or measured characteristics of the population. Thus, this type of statistics is used to make judgment or inference about the population on the basis of a sample or a small group drawn from the large group.

#### **Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient**

Pearson Correlation Coefficient was used to find the relationships between airline attributes and Passengers' Perception of Quality of Emirates Airline. Malhotra (2004) claimed that the product moment correlation,  $r$ , is the most widely used statistic, summarizing the strength of association between two metric (interval or ratio scaled) variables, say  $X$  and  $Y$ . It is an index used to determine whether a linear, or straight line, relationship exists between  $X$  and  $Y$ . It indicates the degree to which the variation in one variable,  $X$ , is related to the variation in another variable,  $Y$ .

Because it was originally proposed by Karl Pearson, it is also known as Pearson correlation coefficient. It is also referred to as simple correlation, bivariate correlation, or merely the correlation coefficient. From a sample of  $n$  observations,  $X$  and  $Y$ , the product moment correlation,  $r$ , can be calculated using the following formula:

$$r = \frac{\sum (X - \bar{X})(Y - \bar{Y})}{\sqrt{\sum (X - \bar{X})^2 \sum (Y - \bar{Y})^2}}$$

The hypothesis to test Pearson correlation coefficient is as follows:

$$H_0: \rho = 0$$

$$H_a: \rho \neq 0$$

The null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) will be rejected when the P-value (significance of correlation) is less than the value of  $\alpha$ , then ( $H_a$ ) will be accepted.

To measure the level of correlation of each variable, a range of confidence level was set at 95 percent, and the interpretation of the correlation results will be as the Table 3.7 below.

**Table 3.7:** The Pearson Correlation Range Scale

<b>The Pearson Correlation Range Scale</b>	
<b>Range</b>	<b>Pearson Correlation number</b>
Strong relationship	More than 0.7
Moderate relationship	Between 0.3 to 0.7
Weak relationship	Less than 0.3

**Source:** Sekaran, U., (2000), *Research Methods for Business:*

*A Skill-Buildings Approach* 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, Chichester: John Wiley & Son, Inc.

## Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

Cooper and Schindler (2003) identified that Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) is the statistical method for testing the null hypothesis that the means of several populations are equal. One-way analysis of variance was adopted in this study. It uses a single factor, fixed-effects model to compare the effects of one factor on a continuous dependent variable. ANOVA uses squared deviations of the variance so computation of distances of the individual data points from their own mean or from the grand means can be summed. The total deviation of any particular data point may be partitioned in to between groups' variance and within-groups variance. The test statistic for ANOVA is the F ratio. It compares the variance from the last two sources:

$$SS_T = \sum x^2 - \frac{(\sum x_T)^2}{N}$$

$$SS_b = \sum \frac{(\sum x_i)^2}{n} - \frac{(\sum x_T)^2}{N}$$

$$SS_w = SS_T - SS_b$$

$$df_b = (\text{number of groups} - 1)$$

$$df_T = (\text{number of subjects} - 1)$$

$$df_w = df_T - df_b$$

$$MS_b = \frac{SS_b}{df_b}$$

$$MS_w = \frac{SS_w}{df_w}$$

$$F = \frac{MS_b}{MS_w}$$

where:  $MS_b$  = Mean square between group

$SS_b$  = Sum of squares between group

$df_b$  = Degrees of freedom between group

$MS_w$  = Mean square within group



$SS_w$  = Sum of squares within group

$df_a$  = Degrees of freedom two group

If the null hypothesis is true, there should be no difference between the populations and the ratio should be close to 1. If the population means are not equal, the numerator should manifest this difference, and the F ratio should be greater than 1. The F distribution determines the size of ration necessary to reject the null hypothesis for a particular sample size and level of significance.

**Table 3.8:** Statistical Treatments

No.	Null Hypothesis	Statistics used
<i>Ha1:</i>	There is a relationship between Airport Service and Passengers' Perception of Quality of Emirates Airline.	Pearson Correlation Coefficient
<i>Ha2:</i>	There is a relationship between Air Ticket and Passengers' Perception of Quality of Emirates Airline.	Pearson Correlation Coefficient
<i>Ha3:</i>	There is a relationship between Flight Schedule and Passengers' Perception of Quality of Emirates Airline.	Pearson Correlation Coefficient
<i>Ha4:</i>	There is a relationship between Cabin Staff Service and Passengers' Perception of Quality of Emirates Airline.	Pearson Correlation Coefficient
<i>Ha5:</i>	There is a relationship between On-board Product and Passengers' Perception of Quality of Emirates Airline.	Pearson Correlation Coefficient

<i>Ha6:</i>	There is a relationship between Frequent Flyer Program and Passengers' Perception of Quality of Emirates Airline.	Pearson Correlation Coefficient
<i>Ha7</i>	There is difference between demographic factors (age, gender, occupation, income and nationality) and Passengers' Perception of Quality of Emirates Airline.	ANOVA.



## CHAPTER 4

### Data Analysis and Results

This chapter displays the findings of the information gathered from the questionnaires given. The researcher surveyed 384 respondents as the sample group. All the selected respondents were screened. They were Emirates Airline passengers who were also Skywards members (Emirates' Frequent Flyer passengers). The research operation was randomly conducted at different times of the day in Dubai International Airport (both departure and arrival terminals).

The data analysis is divided into two sections. The first section consists of descriptive statistics which were used to study the demographic characteristics and the mean and standard deviation of each variable. The second section consists of hypotheses testing.

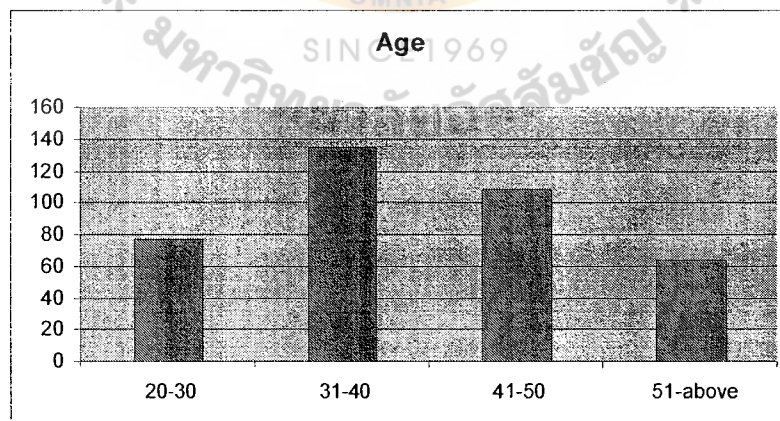
#### 4.1 Demographic Profiles of the Respondents

This analysis requires interpreting the raw data into form of matrix or table which helps readers to understand easily. Describing responses or observation is the first form of analysis. The analysis is done by calculating averages, frequency distributions, and percentage distribution.

Descriptive statistics were used in the second part of data analysis and presented in the form of frequency charts to describe the personal information of the respondents.

##### Age

The result shows that the majority of respondents was in the age ranging between 31-40 years old with 134 respondents or 35%, followed by 41-50 years old with 109 respondents or 28.30%. The least number was the bottom two ranges of 20-30 years old with 77 respondents or 20%; and 51 or above years old with 64 respondents or 16.7, as shown in Figure 4.1 below.



*Figure 4.1: Age*

## Gender

The majority of respondents were female with 204 respondents or 53%. On the other hand, male respondents were 180 or 47% as shown in Figure 4.2.

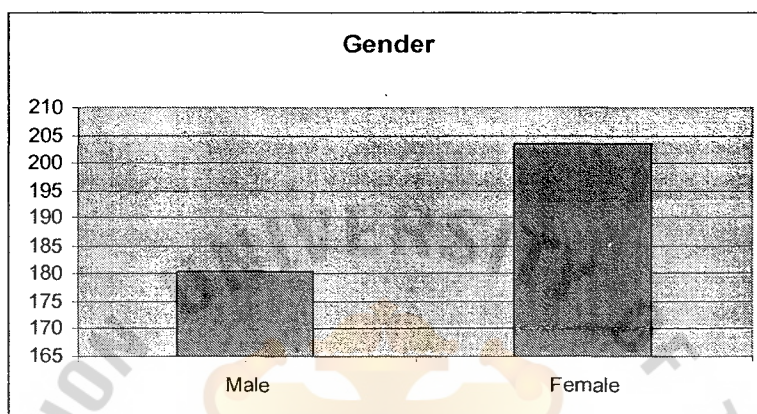
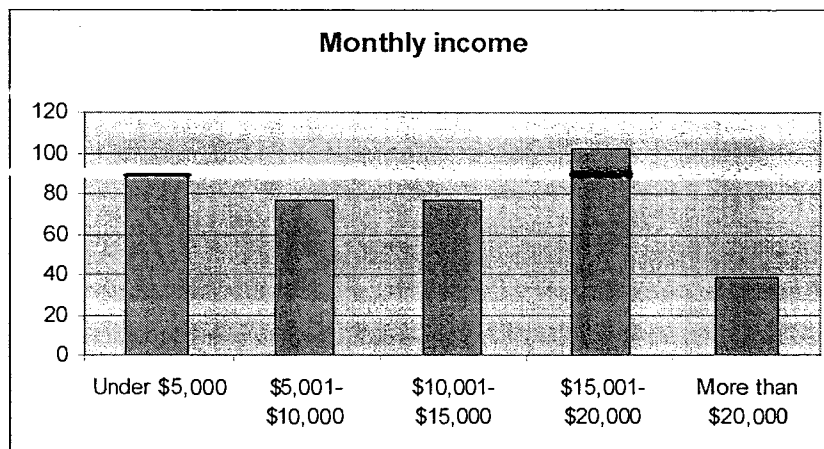


Figure 4.2: Gender

## Monthly Income

Most of the respondents earned an income per month of \$15,001- \$20,000; the numbers of these respondents were 103 respondents or 26.7%. The other groups of respondents were those who have the average income per month of under \$5,000 or 89 respondents or 23.3%, next two ranges have an equal number of respondents which were those who earned an average income per month of \$5,001-\$10,000 and \$10,000-\$15,000 with 77 respondents or 20%. The lowest number of respondents earned income per month of more than \$20,000 with 38 or 10% of respondents as shown in Figure 4.3 below.

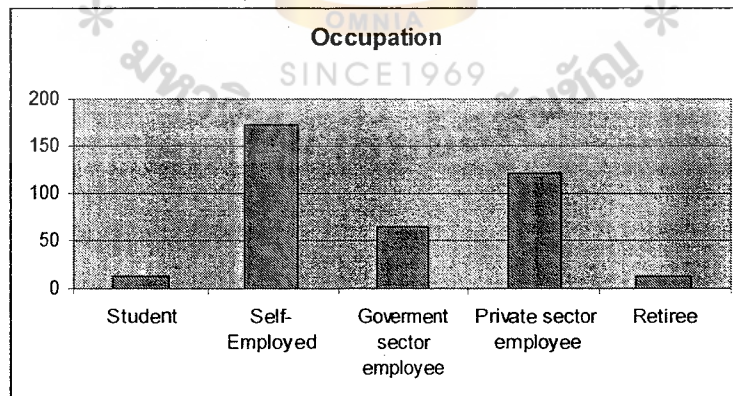




*Figure 4.3: Monthly Income*

### Occupation

When classified by occupation, the majority of respondents were self-employed with 173 respondents or 45%. Next group was private sector-employees with 122 respondents or 31.7%. The last group was made up of those who were government sector employees with 64 or 16.7% as shown in Figure 4.4.



*Figure 4.4: Occupation*



## Nationality

The numbers of respondents was classified by 5 different nationalities; the 3 largest groups were Asians with 141 respondents or 36.67%. The second one was Europeans with 105 respondents or 27.3%. The last one was North Americans with 90 respondents or 23.3% as shown in Figure 4.5. Africans and those from South America, made up the smallest groups in this study.

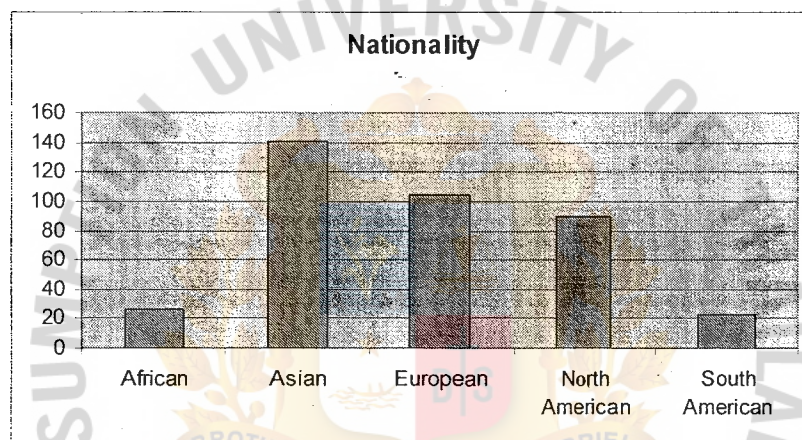


Figure 4.5: Nationality

## 4.2 Mean Evaluation of the Variables

The arbitrary level was explained by Yamane (1993) which shows the level of importance or respondents' agreement with the statements in the questionnaire. This range is shown below:

**Table 4.1:** The Arbitrary Level

The Arbitrary Level	
Level	Range
Most important	4.20-5.00
Important	3.40-4.19
Average	2.60-3.39
Least important	1.80 –2.59
Not important	0.00-1.79

**Source:** Yamane, Taro. 1993. Statistics, an Introduction Analysis. 3rd ed.,  
New York: Harper & Row

The scale used is a 5-point scale which implies that a mean between “4.20-5.00” represents most important level, “3.40-4.19” represents important level, “2.60-3.39” represent average level, “1.80-2.59” represents least important level and “0.00-1.79” represents the unimportant level.

**Table 4.2:** Descriptive Statistic of Airport Service

	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>
Booking and reservation system are convenient	384	4.81	.468
Check-in process is convenient	384	4.78	.418
There is an "On-line check in system"	384	4.18	.438
The on-line check in system is easy to use	384	4.20	.483
The self-check in system at airport is easy to use	384	4.12	.302
Emirates ground staffs are helpful and knowledgeable	384	3.93	.530
Emirates takes care of special category passengers (Handicap and elderly)	384	4.21	.697
Emirates lounges offer good products and services	384	4.67	.615
Emirates offer efficient baggage service	384	3.67	.446
Emirates is responsible for lost luggage	384	2.35	.493

Under descriptive statistics of the mean value of Airport Service, the mean value of the item of Check-in process is convenient with mean of 4.78 and standard deviation of .418 indicated the most important. It is followed by Emirates lounges offer good products and services with 4.67 and standard deviation of .615 which also was rated in the most important level. The lowest mean value was 2.35 under the item Emirates is responsible for lost luggage with the standard deviation of .493 which indicated the least important level

**Table 4.3:** Descriptive Statistic of Air Ticket

Descriptive Statistics of Air ticket			
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Tickets are sold at the reasonable price	384	3.76	.520
Tickets are easy to purchase	384	4.73	.592
Ticket refund process is easy	384	3.73	.498
Emirate always offer satisfied promotional campaign on air ticket fares	384	3.85	.626
You trust in E-ticketing system	384	4.89	.781
You are aware that Emirates offers Electronic tickets	384	3.93	.479
You are worry-free by having an E-ticket	384	3.91	.666
You are satisfied with the many ticket forms offered (Paper-based and Electronic tickets)	384	4.23	.528
It is worth the money spent on Emirates tickets	384	4.27	.417
You chose Emirates because of the ticket price	384	3.53	.487

Under descriptive statistics of the mean value of Air Ticket, the mean value of the item of trust in E-ticketing system with mean of 4.89 and standard deviation of .781 indicated the most important level. It is followed by tickets are easy to purchase with 4.73 and standard deviation of .592 which also falls in the most important level. The lowest mean value was 3.53 under the item of you choose Emirates because of the ticket price with the standard deviation of .487 which falls in the important level.

**Table 4.4:** Descriptive Statistic of Flight Schedule

Descriptive Statistics of Flight Schedule			
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Emirates flies to many destination worldwide	384	4.68	.801
Emirates flies to the destinations that fits with your needs	384	4.81	.521
Emirates offers a number of flights within a day	384	4.31	.695
Emirates offers the complimentary facilities for transit passengers (waiting area, food/drink voucher)	384	4.22	.533
Emirates is punctual in the scheduled departure and arrival time	384	4.13	.768
Emirates offer convenient flight schedules	384	4.18	.511
Emirates bears responsibility for delay/flight cancellations	384	4.23	.583
Information was given in case of the delays/cancellations	384	4.16	.535
Emirates have connections with many airlines' network (code shared flights)	384	4.43	.613
It's easy to look for Emirates' flight schedules	384	4.34	.778

Under descriptive statistics of the mean value of Flight Schedule, the mean value of the item of Emirates flies to the destinations that fits with your needs with mean of 4.81 and standard deviation of .521 indicates the most important level. It is followed by Emirates flies to many destinations worldwide with 4.68 and standard deviation of .801 which also falls in the most important level. The lowest mean value was 4.13 under the item of Emirates is punctual in the scheduled departure and arrival time.

**Table 4.5:** Descriptive Statistic of Cabin Staff Service

Descriptive Statistics of Cabin Staff service			
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Cabin staffs have a good appearance	384	4.12	.521
Cabin staffs are helpful	384	3.93	.638
Cabin staffs are knowledgeable when they asked	384	4.40	.679
Cabin staffs are polite and friendly	384	4.35	.479
Cabin staffs speak many languages	384	4.57	.498
Cabin staffs regularly commence cabin presence	384	4.25	.622
Cabin staffs are prompt to your request	384	4.13	.737
Cabin staffs conduct service in elegant manner	384	4.62	.730
Cabin staffs confidently conduct safety/security procedures	384	4.33	.776
Cabin staffs add personal touch to the customers	384	3.86	.728

Under descriptive statistics of the mean value of Cabin Staff Service, the mean value of the item of Cabin staffs conduct service in elegant manner with mean of 4.62 and standard deviation of .730 indicates the most important level. It is followed by Cabin staffs speak many languages with 4.57 and standard deviation of .498 which also falls in the most important level. The lowest mean value was 3.86 under the item of Cabin staffs add personal touch to the customers with the standard deviation of .728 fell in the important level.



**Table 4.6:** Descriptive Statistics of On-board Product

Descriptive Statistics on-board product			
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Seats are comfortable	384	3.93	.640
Seats offer the good facilities (personal light, adjustable seats, footrest, personal air vents)	384	3.97	.615
The leg room is big enough	384	4.44	.446
Overall cabin atmosphere is comfortable	384	4.79	.498
The reading materials selection are good (magazines, newspapers in-flight magazine)	384	4.87	.629
You find the toilets are clean and tidy	384	4.79	.737
You are satisfied with the entertainment system	384	4.98	.774
You are satisfied with variety of duty free products	384	4.17	.792
You like the food and drinks served on-board	384	4.74	.728
Emirates always offer the new products	384	4.60	.809

Under descriptive statistics of the mean value of on-board product, the mean value of the item of satisfaction with the entertainment system with mean of 4.98 and standard deviation of .774 indicates the most important level. It is followed by reading material selection are good with 4.87 and standard deviation of .629 also falls in the most important level. The lowest mean value was 3.93 under the item of seats are comfortable with the standard deviation of .930, falls in the important level.

Perception of Quality of Emirates Airline with 95% confidence level at significant value of less than 0.05.

**Table 4.9:** The Pearson Correlation Range Scale

The Pearson Correlation Range Scale	
Range	Pearson Correlation number
Strong relationship	More than 0.7
Moderate relationship	Between 0.3 to 0.7
Weak relationship	Less than 0.3

**Source:** Sekaran, U., (2000), *Research Methods for Business:*

*A Skill-Buildings Approach* 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, Chichester: John Wiley & Son, Inc.

The Pearson Correlation range scale categorizes the range into three levels which represents a strong relationship, a moderate relationship, and a weak relationship. Firstly, the strong relationship had the correlation value of more than 0.70. Secondly, the moderate correlation is in the range between 0.30 and 0.70. Thirdly, the weak relationship has the correlation value of less than 0.30. The researcher used the Pearson Correlation Range Scale based on Sekaran (2000) to categorize the relationship between Airline Attributes variable and Passengers' Perception of Quality of Emirates Airline.

**H<sub>0</sub>1:** There is no relationship between Airport Service and Passengers' Perception of Quality of Emirates Airline.

**H<sub>a</sub>1:** There is a relationship between Airport Service and Passengers' Perception of Quality of Emirates Airline.

**Table 4.10:** Pearson Correlation Analysis for relationship between Airport Service and Passengers' Perception of Quality of Emirates Airline

Correlations		Airport_ service	Perception_ quality
Airport_service	Pearson Correlation	1	.645
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	384	384
Perception_quality	Pearson Correlation	.645	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	384	384

The correlation analysis between Airport Service and Perception of quality of Emirates Airline shows a significant level at 0.000. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. There is a positive relationship between Airport Service and Passengers' Perception of Quality of Emirates Airline. The correlation coefficient was 0.645, which means there is a moderate positive correlation between Airport Service and Passengers' Perception of Quality of Emirates Airline.

**H<sub>0</sub>2:** There is no relationship between Air Ticket and Passengers' Perception of Quality of Emirates Airline.

**H<sub>a</sub>2:** There is a relationship between Air Ticket and Passengers' Perception of Quality of Emirates Airline.

**Table 4.11:** Pearson Correlation Analysis for relationship between Air Ticket and Passengers' Perception of Quality of Emirates Airline .

Correlations			
		Air_Ticket	Perception_quality
Air_Ticket	Pearson Correlation	1	.706
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.001
	N	384	384
Perception_quality	Pearson Correlation	.706	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	
	N	384	384

The correlation analysis between Air Ticket and Passengers' Perception of Quality of Emirates Airline shows the significant level at 0.001. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. There is a positive relationship between Air Ticket and Passengers' Perception Quality of Emirates Airline. The correlation coefficient is 0.706, which means there is a strong positive correlation between Air Ticket and Passengers' Perception of Quality of Emirates Airline.

**H<sub>0</sub>3:** There is no relationship between Flight Schedule and Passengers' Perception of Quality of Emirates Airline.

**H<sub>a</sub>3:** There is a relationship between Flight Schedule and Passengers' Perception of Quality of Emirates Airline.

**Table 4.12:** Pearson Correlation Analysis for relationship between Flight Schedule and Passengers' Perception of Quality of Emirates Airline

Correlations			
		Flight_Schedule	Perception_quality
Flight_Schedule	Pearson Correlation	1	.731
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.001
	N	384	384
Perception_quality	Pearson Correlation	.731	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	
	N	384	384

The correlation analysis between Flight Schedule and Passengers' Perception of Quality of Emirates Airline shows a significant level at 0.001. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. There is a positive relationship between Flight Schedule and Passengers' Perception of Quality of Emirates Airline. The correlation coefficient is 0.731, which means there is a strong positive correlation between Flight Schedule and Passengers' Perception of Quality of Emirates Airline.

**H<sub>0</sub>4:** There is no relationship between Cabin Staff Service and Passengers' Perception of Quality of Emirates Airline.

**H<sub>a</sub>4:** There is a relationship between Cabin Staff Service and Passengers' Perception of Quality of Emirates Airline.

**Table 4.13:** Pearson Correlation Analysis for relationship between Cabin Staff Service and Passengers' Perception of Quality of Emirates Airline

Correlations		Cabin_Flight_ Service	Perception_ quality
Cabin_Flight_ Service	Pearson Correlation	1	.723
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.001
	N	384	384
Perception_quality	Pearson Correlation	.723	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	
	N	384	384

The correlation analysis between Cabin Staff Service and Passengers' Perception of Quality of Emirates Airline shows a significant level at 0.001. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. There is a positive relationship between Cabin Staff Service and Passengers' Perception of Quality of Emirates Airline. The correlation coefficient is 0.723, which means there is a strong positive correlation between Cabin Staff Service and Passengers' Perception of Quality of Emirates Airline.



**H<sub>0</sub>5:** There is no relationship between On-board Product and Passengers' Perception of Quality of Emirates Airline.

**H<sub>a</sub>5:** There is a relationship between On-board Product and Passengers' Perception of Quality of Emirates Airline.

**Table 4.14:** Pearson Correlation Analysis for relationship between On-board Product and Passengers' Perception of Quality of Emirates Airline

Correlations		Onboard_ Product	Perception_ quality
Onboard_Product	Pearson Correlation	1	.873
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	384	384
Perception_quality	Pearson Correlation	.873	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	384	384

The correlation analysis between On-board product and Passengers' Perception of Quality of Emirates Airline shows a significant level at 0.000. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. There is a positive relationship between On-board Product and Passengers' Perception of Quality of Emirates Airline. The correlation coefficient is 0.873, which means there is a strong positive correlation between On-board Product and Passengers' Perception of Quality of Emirates Airline.

**H<sub>0</sub>6:** There is no relationship between Frequent Flyer Program and Passengers' Perception of Quality of Emirates Airline.

**H<sub>a</sub>6:** There is a relationship between Frequent Flyer Program and Passengers' Perception of Quality of Emirates Airline.

**Table 4.15:** Pearson Correlation Analysis for relationship between Frequent Flyer Program and Passengers' Perception of Quality of Emirates Airline

Correlations		Frequent_Flyer_Program	Perception_quality
Frequent_Flyer_Program	Pearson Correlation	1	.633
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.002
	N	384	384
Perception_quality	Pearson Correlation	.633	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.002	
	N	384	384

The correlation analysis between Frequent Flyer Program and Passengers' Perception of Quality of Emirates Airline shows a significant level at 0.002. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. There is a positive relationship between Frequent Flyer Program and Passengers' Perception of Quality of Emirates Airline. The correlation coefficient is 0.633, which means there is a moderate positive correlation between Frequent Flyer Program and Passengers' Perception of Quality of Emirates Airline.

**Table 4.16:** Summary of Correlation Analysis

Correlation Analysis for Relationship between Airline Attributes and Passengers' Perception of Quality of Emirates Airline (N=384)			
	Airline Attributes	Sig.	Pearson Correlation
Passengers' Perception of Quality of Emirates Airline	Airport Services	0.000	0.645
	Air Ticket	0.001	0.706
	Flight Schedule	0.001	0.731
	Cabin Staff Service	0.001	0.723
	On-board Product	0.000	0.873
	Frequent Flyer Program	0.002	0.633

In conclusion, based on the Pearson Correlation Analysis, all of the Airline Attributes variables (Airport Service, Air Ticket, Flight Schedule, Cabin Staff Service, On-board Product, and Frequent Flyer Program) have positive relationships with Passengers' Perception of Quality of Emirates Airline because the significant values of all airline attributes variables are less than 0.05.

These positive relationships imply that if the respondents have a positive perception of each airline attribute variable, they will also have a positive perception of the quality of Emirates Airline.

#### 4.4 One-Way ANOVA Test

ANOVA was applied in order to analyze the differences between age, gender, occupation, income and nationality and Passengers' Perception of Quality of Emirates Airline.

**H<sub>0</sub>7:** There is no difference between demographic factors (age, gender, occupation, income and nationality) and Passengers' Perception of Quality of Emirates Airline.

**H<sub>a</sub>7:** There are differences between demographic factors (age, gender, occupation, income and nationality) and Passengers' Perception of Quality of Emirates Airline.

**Table 4.17:** One-Way ANOVA test between Age and Passengers' Perception of Quality of Emirates Airline

ANOVA					
Perception quality	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	.637	3	.212	1.283	.301
Within Groups	4.304	380	.166		
Total	4.941	383			

The Analysis of Variance table indicates that the significance is .0.301 which is above 0.05 which means that null hypothesis failed to reject in terms of age. Hence, there is no difference in age and Passengers' Perception of Quality of Emirates Airline.

**Table 4.18:** One-Way ANOVA test between Gender and Passengers' Perception of Quality of Emirates Airline

ANOVA					
Perception_quality					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	2.133	1	2.133	21.277	.000
Within Groups	2.807	382	.100		
Total	4.941	383			

The Analysis of Variance table indicates that the significance is .000 which is less than .05 which means that null hypothesis is rejected. Hence, there is difference between male and female in terms of perception of the quality of Emirates Airline

**Table 4.19:** One-Way ANOVA test between Income and Passengers' Perception of Quality of Emirates Airline

Test of Homogeneity of Variances				
Perception_quality				
Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.	
.612	4	25	.658	

ANOVA					
Perception_quality					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	2.944	4	.736	9.212	.000
Within Groups	1.997	379	.080		
Total	4.941	383			

The Analysis of Variance table indicated that the significance is .000 is less than .05 which means that the null hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, there is a difference in Passengers' Perception of Quality when determined by income levels at the .05 significance level.

**Table 4.20:** Multiple Comparison of the Monthly Income

Multiple Comparisons			
Dependent Variable: Perception_quality			
Tukey HSD			
(I) Monthly income	(J) Monthly income	Std. Error	Sig.
Under \$5,000	\$5,001-\$10,000	.157	.947
	\$10,001-\$15,000	.157	.980
	\$15,001-\$20,000	.146	.001
	More than \$20,000	.195	.003
\$5,001-\$10,000	Under \$5,000	.157	.947
	\$10,001-\$15,000	.163	1.000
	\$15,001-\$20,000	.153	.011
	More than \$20,000	.200	.015
\$10,001-\$15,000	Under \$5,000	.157	.980
	\$5,001-\$10,000	.163	1.000
	\$15,001-\$20,000	.153	.007
	More than \$20,000	.200	.011
\$15,001-\$20,000	Under \$5,000	.146	.001
	\$5,001-\$10,000	.153	.011
	\$10,001-\$15,000	.153	.007
	More than \$20,000	.191	.939
More than \$20,000	Under \$5,000	.195	.003
	\$5,001-\$10,000	.200	.015
	\$10,001-\$15,000	.200	.011
	\$15,001-\$20,000	.191	.939

The Levene's test shows the significance at 0.658. This significance means this test is able to use Tukey since equal variance is assumed. The Tukey results show the range of income that is different from other groups and the difference in each pair of mean.



The income under \$5,000 was different from income range between \$15,001- \$20,000, income range more than \$20,000.

The income range between \$5,001- \$10,000 was different from income range between \$15,001- \$20,000, income range more than \$20,000.

The income range between \$10,001- \$15,000 was different from income range between \$15,001- \$20,000, income range more than \$20,000.

The income range between \$15,001- \$20,000 was different from income under \$5,000, income range between \$5,001- \$10,000 and income range \$10,001- \$15,000.

The income range more than \$20,000 was different from income under \$5,000, income range between \$5,001- \$10,000 and income range \$10,001- \$15,000.

**Table 4.21:** One-Way ANOVA test between occupation and Passengers' Perception of Quality of Emirates Airline

**ANOVA**

Perception_quality					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1.229	4	.307	2.070	.115
Within Groups	3.711	379	.148		
Total	4.941	383			

The Analysis of Variance table indicates that the significance is 0.115 which is above 0.05, it means that null hypothesis failed to reject in terms of the occupation. Hence, there is no difference between occupation types and Passengers' Perception of Quality of Emirates Airline.

**Table 4.22:** One-Way ANOVA test between nationality and Passengers' Perception of Quality of Emirates Airline

**ANOVA**

Perception_quality					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1.647	4	.412	3.126	.032
Within Groups	3.293	379	.132		
Total	4.941	383			

The Analysis of Variance table indicates that the significance is .032 which is less than 0.05, this means null hypothesis is rejected. Hence, there is difference in terms of nationality and passengers' perception of the quality of Emirates Airline.

## CHAPTER 5

### Conclusions and Recommendations

This chapter summarizes the results of the data analysis from the previous chapter. The researcher has divided them into four parts. The first part shows the summary of the research. The second part discusses the research results. The third part explains the recommendations on applications of research findings. The last part offers suggestions for future research.

#### 5.1 Summary of the Research

The researcher has interpreted the results from the research data gathered, which includes the summary of respondents' demographic characteristic profile and the summary of hypotheses testing.

##### *Summary of Respondents' Demographic Characteristic Profile*

The total of 400 questionnaires was distributed in order to reach the required numbers of the representative of the sample size of 384. The research operation was conducted during late October to early November 2008. As the screening questions were asked to obtain the right target sample, the researcher then successfully received the information from Emirates Airline passengers who were also Skywards members. As planned, the data collection was conducted in the Dubai International Airport's Arrival

and Departure Halls. The questionnaires were tabulated and formulated by SPSS program.

Based on the data of 384 respondents which had been collected from the survey research, there were 53% of Female and 47% Male respondents. The majorities of respondents were at the age range between 31-40 years (35%) and followed by 41-50 years old (28.30%) respectively. For the monthly income earned, most of the respondents earn about \$15,001- \$20,000 per month (26.7%) and under \$5,000 (23.3%) respectively. With regards the occupation, the majority of them were self-employed (45%) and next group was private sector- employees (31.7%). Lastly, when being classified by the nationality, most of the respondents were Asians (36.67%) followed by Europeans (27.3%).

**Table 5.1:** Summary of the Results of Respondents' Demographic Characteristic Profile

Demographic Factors	Major Respondents	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Age	31-40	134	35%
Gender	Female	204	53%
Monthly income	\$15,001- \$20,000	103	26.7%
Occupation	self-employed	173	45%
Nationality	Asians	141	36.67%

### *Summary of Hypotheses Results*

According to the Correlation Analysis, it shows that *ALL the Ho were rejected* as the significance levels are below 0.05. For a summary of each hypothesis, please see Table 5.2 below:

**Table 5.2:** Summary of Pearson Correlation Analysis

Hypothesis	Correlation Coefficient	Level of Significance	Result
H <sub>01</sub> : There is no relationship between Airport Service and Passengers' Perception of Quality of Emirates Airline.	0.645	0.000	Reject Ho
H <sub>02</sub> : There is no relationship between Air Ticket and Passengers' Perception of Quality of Emirates Airline.	0.706	0.001	Reject Ho
H <sub>03</sub> : There is no relationship between Flight Schedule and Passengers' Perception of Quality of Emirates Airline.	0.731	0.001	Reject Ho
H <sub>04</sub> : There is no relationship between Cabin Staff Service and Passengers' Perception of Quality of Emirates Airline.	0.723	0.001	Reject Ho
H <sub>05</sub> : There is no relationship	0.873	0.000	Reject Ho

between On-board Product and Passengers' Perception of Quality of Emirates Airline.			
<b>H<sub>0</sub>6:</b> There is no relationship between Frequent Flyer Program and Passengers' Perception of Quality of Emirates Airline.	0.633	0.002	Reject Ho

In order to examine the differences in the demographic profile and Passengers' Perception of Quality of Emirates Airline, the ANOVA test was employed. According to the ANOVA analysis on the five different demographic factors, all the significance level of each factor are above 0.05 which means that the Ho failed to reject and there are differences between four of the demographic variables and the independent variable.

**Table 5.3:** Summary of ANOVA Analysis

Hypothesis	Level of Significance	Results
<b>H<sub>0</sub>7:</b> There is no difference between demographic factors and Passengers' Perception of Quality of Emirates Airline:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Age</li> <li>- Gender</li> <li>- Occupation</li> <li>- Income</li> <li>- Nationality</li> </ul>	0.301 0.000 0.115 0.000 0.032	Fail to Reject Ho Reject Ho Fail to Reject Ho Reject Ho Reject Ho



In order to clarify the results obtained, the researcher then summarized the meaning of each result accordingly. The Correlation is significant when the number is at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Therefore, “Reject  $H_0$ ” means the significance level is less than 0.05, so null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is accepted, which means that there is relationship between independent variable and dependent variable in each hypothesis.

On the other hand, “Fail to reject  $H_0$ ” means the significance level is more than 0.05, so null hypothesis is fail to reject and the alternative hypothesis is rejected, which means that there is no relationship between independent variable and dependent variable in each hypothesis. The further discussion regarding the result obtained will be discussed in detail in the later stage of this chapter.

## 5.2 Discussion of Major Research Findings

As per the research objectives set and displayed in Chapter 1 of this study, the seven objectives influenced the three main research questions of the study. The research findings answer the questions as follows:-

### Research Question 1:

How are flight attributes (Airport Service, Air Ticket, Flight Schedule, Cabin Staff Service, On-board Product and Frequent Flyer Program) related to passenger's perception of quality of Emirates Airline?

According to the research findings shown in the summary tables 5.2 , the researcher concludes that all the flights attributes (Airport Service, Air Ticket, Flight Schedule, Cabin Staff Service, On-board Product and Frequent Flyer Program) have positive relationships with the Passengers' Perception of Quality of Emirates Airline.

### Research Question 2:

Do passengers with different demographic profiles (Age, Gender, Occupation, Income, and Nationality) have different perception of quality of Emirates Airline?

According to table 5.3, the hypothesis was evaluated by using Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) in order to test the differences in the demographic profiles and the

perception of Quality. Consequently, the differences between demographic factors and Passengers' Perception of Quality of Emirates Airline do exist.

There are evidences for the researcher to say that Emirates passengers who are also Skywards members with different demographic factors of gender, income level and nationality do have differences in their perception of the quality of Emirates Airline. On the other hand, those with different age and occupation do not have difference in perception of quality of Emirates Airline.

### **Research Questions 3:**

Which top three attributes do passengers weigh highest in their perception of quality of Emirates Airline?

Three attributes were highest in Emirates Passengers' Perception of Quality. Significantly, On-board Product shows the highest correlation value comparing to the other airline attributes, therefore, it can be concluded that the Emirates' On-board product has the most significant relationship with Passenger's Perception of Quality. Apparently, with constant product development and innovation, Emirates is widely known as the passenger airline that offers good On-board Product for years. It has always been the market leader in offering the continuous product development for passengers' benefits.

The second in rank when compared with the correlation value is "Flight Schedule". The majority of the Emirates passengers who are also Skywards members perceive that Flight Schedule is the second important attribute. With its fortune in the

location of the airline hub itself (Dubai), Emirates has been continuously expanding its destinations and network worldwide serving the needs of passengers from every continent. One of the reasons behind this is its location. Its hub is located in the middle of the world which means Emirates can offer the air transport to the passengers from one side of the world to the other. Moreover, Emirates has been constantly trying to work on expanding its network to the world's major cities and interesting destinations. Recently, Emirates has officially announced its new destinations to the entertainment capital of the world, Los Angeles (October 2008). Moreover, Emirates is now going to fly to London Heathrow, one of the world's biggest and busiest airports with the new A380 starting from the 1<sup>st</sup> of December 2008. Also, Emirates also offer its passengers diverse culture of a cosmopolitan city like San Francisco starting from 15<sup>th</sup> of December 2008. Emirates, continuously brings more destinations and the convenience in Flight Schedule to its passengers.

([http://Emirates.com/ae/english/destinations\\_offers/new\\_routes/san\\_francisco/san\\_francisco.aspx](http://Emirates.com/ae/english/destinations_offers/new_routes/san_francisco/san_francisco.aspx)).

The last one on the top-three ranked airline attributes rated by the respondents is "Cabin Staff". It can be summarized that apart from the top two attributes ("On-board Product" and "Flight Schedule"), the "Cabin Staff" attribute was perceived as another important quality of the airline. Emirates proudly claims that its multi-national cabin crews speak more than 100 languages. Moreover, Emirates has been awarded by many international organization and publicities in having the excellence service from Cabin Staff for example, recently in 2007, it has been recognized by Aviation Business Awards

for the “In-flight Services of the Year”.

(<http://Emirates.com/ae/english/about/awards/awards.aspx>).

Moreover, owing to its great success during the past two decades, Emirates has been paying special attention to selecting “people” who can work well. It can be also seen from H.H. Sheikh Ahmed Bin Saeed Al-Maktoum, Chairman of the Emirates Group’s welcome message to the new joiners, *“I look forward to you joining our team and being part of our future success, as we grow and expand our business globally.”*

### **5.3 Recommendations on Applications of the Research Findings**

The research findings can help Emirates to understand more about the passenger’s perception of quality of the airline and also leads to ensure a more positive passenger’s perception towards the airline in the future. In any market, to understand customers, is one of the most important tasks for the products and service providers. Therefore, in order to successfully commence or improve its future tactics or strategy with its passengers, Emirates should take these three airline attributes into consideration as they were ranked as the top three important ones in terms of perception of quality; On-board Product, Flight Schedule and Cabin Staff.

#### **On-board Product**

The questionnaire asked respondents to give their opinions on the On-board Product which include seat facilities offered (personal light, adjustable seats, footrest, and personal air vents), enough leg room, quality of food and beverages, toilet appearance, entertainment system, reading materials, duty free products, overall cabin atmosphere and

its constant innovative products offered. Therefore, as the existing passengers perceived this attribute as the most important one in airline quality, Emirates then should focus on this factor. Being perceived as the airline with good on-board product means that Emirates requires ongoing Research and Product development (R&D) for continuous improvements in products for its valued passengers. Nevertheless, the products once launched into the market can always be easily copied or imitated by the competitors, saying this means Emirates cannot just keep offering the “good” products but it can never stop in developing new ideas. Also, another important thing for being able to offer the quality On-board Product is to listen to the existing customers. Taking in feedback including the positive and negative ones is always beneficial but Emirates has to ensure that it takes them constructively; it cannot ask for customer comments without taking them into consideration.

#### **Flight Schedule**

In this study, Flight Schedule includes the variety of destinations offered, the number of flights within certain time, complimentary facilities for transit passengers, punctuality in departure and arrival, convenient Flight Schedule, responsibility in flight cancellations and easy-to-find the Emirates schedule. This attribute also has significant level of importance; it was rated as the second one. So, Emirates should keep on expanding its wings toward new and interesting destinations worldwide. In so doing, it will surely serve the passengers’ needs and also automatically gain more and more passengers in new markets.



Also, with regard to some other details about the Flight Schedule, Emirates should also be concerned about reliability in terms of the flight's departure and arrival time as well as be able to find the right solution for inevitable problems such as delays, cancellations and emergencies.

Moreover, the airline cannot be only concerned about opening up new routes, Emirates has to also ensure the quality of the existing destinations and continuously develop them in order to create the passenger's greater perception of quality (among both users and non users).

#### **Cabin Staff Service**

There are many components in improving in-flight services from consumers' point of view. Each and every component can reflect the in-flight service quality and create ultimate overall in-flight service image. In order to make an improvement, airline operators should concentrate on both tangible (aircraft decoration and arrangement) and intangible components (human staffs and services).

There is a strong emphasis on "intangible" attributes when it comes to "Cabin Staff Service" therefore Emirates needs to ensure the well-trained cabin staffs in order to deliver the ultimate safety, security, first aid and service to its passengers. In order to improve and have well-trained cabin staff, Emirates should start from the core of the training system. It should form a group of trainers who are able to transform the contents of the on-board service manual to an easy-to-understand/practical training program for its crew. Also, it's important to have crew members with good attitude, especially for the service industry like airline industry because they are the ones who have a close contact

and spend longer time with passengers compared with staff from other departments. Also, they must be knowledgeable and capable in carrying out the safety and security procedures as when it comes to the unlikely emergency situations. the passengers will be relying on them. That is why the recurrent training of the emergency procedures must be strictly implemented.

Also, Emirates should also add the language spoken and name tag for every crew: Passengers would see from the badges on cabin crews' uniforms and be able to know which language the crew member speaks. It creates the approachable look for passengers who come from different places and speak different languages. For example, Cabin Crew Max speaks English, Thai, and French; so there should be name badge telling his name and the language spoken by him.

#### **5.4 Suggestion for Further Research**

The research findings received from this study can also be used as the benchmark or serve as guidelines for the service standard development for any passenger airlines if they would like to examine the relationship of the certain airline attributes and Passengers' Perception of Quality of Emirates Airline. In this research study, the researcher only examined the relationship of six attributes which includes:-

- Airport Service
- Air Ticket
- Flight Schedule
- Cabin Staff Service
- On-board Product
- Frequent Flyer Program

In order to understand the passengers better, which also means bringing in better business, future researchers can conduct research using additional factors with other airlines.

Future research can also focus on how passengers from different countries perceive airline attributes. This can help airline companies to better target customers by regional segments.

Finally, more in-depth, qualitative research can be used to research the motivations of passengers for choosing a certain airline as well as their expectations of service quality.



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## Questionnaire

Dear Passengers,

Please complete this questionnaire about "Passengers' Perception of Quality of Emirates Airline" which can be simply completed in a few moments. This research is a part of a project for the Master of Science in Management, Assumption University (Thailand). Also, you can be certain that the information given will be kept confidential and used for the purpose of the study only. Thank you for your precious time and cooperation.

### Part I: Screening Questions

Have you ever flown on Emirates Airline before?

☐ Yes (if yes, please proceed to next questions) ☐ No

Are you a skywards member (Emirates Frequent Flyer program)?

☐ Yes (if yes, please proceed to next questions) ☐ No

### Part II: Perception of quality of Emirates Airline

Please kindly specify your opinion about Emirates Airline by circling the number which closet to your opinion.

	Strongly disagree		<-->		Strongly agree
<b>1. Airport Service</b>					
1.1 Booking and reservation system are convenient.	1	2	3	4	5
1.2 Check-in process is convenient.	1	2	3	4	5
1.3 There is an "On-line check in system".	1	2	3	4	5
1.4 The on-line check in system is easy to use.	1	2	3	4	5
1.5 The self-check in system at airport is easy to use.	1	2	3	4	5
1.6 Emirates ground staffs are helpful and knowledgeable.	1	2	3	4	5
1.7 Emirates takes care of special category passengers (Handicaps and elderly).	1	2	3	4	5
1.8 Emirates lounges offer good products and services.	1	2	3	4	5
1.9 Emirates offer efficient baggage service.	1	2	3	4	5
1.10 Emirates is responsible for lost luggage.	1	2	3	4	5
<b>2. Air Ticket</b>					
2.1 Tickets are sold at the reasonable price.	1	2	3	4	5
2.2 Tickets are easy to purchase.	1	2	3	4	5
2.3 Ticket refund process is easy.	1	2	3	4	5
2.4 Emirate always offer good promotional campaign on air ticket fares.	1	2	3	4	5
2.5 You are aware that Emirates offers Electronic tickets	1	2	3	4	5
2.6 You trust in E-ticketing system.	1	2	3	4	5
2.7 You are worry-free by having an E-ticket.	1	2	3	4	5
2.8 Variety of ticket forms offered is convenient	1	2	3	4	5

(Paper-based and Electronic tickets).					
2.9 It is worth the money spent on Emirates tickets.	1	2	3	4	5
2.10 You chose Emirates because of the ticket price.	1	2	3	4	5
<b>3. Flight Schedule</b>					
3.1 Emirates flies to many destinations worldwide.	1	2	3	4	5
3.2 Emirates flies to the destinations that fits with your needs.	1	2	3	4	5
3.3 Emirates offers a number of flights within a day.	1	2	3	4	5
3.4 Emirates offers the complimentary facilities for transit passengers (waiting area, food/drink voucher)	1	2	3	4	5
3.5 Emirates is punctual in the scheduled departure and arrival time.	1	2	3	4	5
3.6 Emirates offers convenient flight schedules.	1	2	3	4	5
3.7 Emirates bears responsibility for delays/flight cancellations.	1	2	3	4	5
3.8 Information was given in case of the delays/cancellations.	1	2	3	4	5
3.9 Emirates have connections with many airlines' network (code shared flights).	1	2	3	4	5
3.10 It's easy to look for Emirates' flight schedules.	1	2	3	4	5
<b>4. Cabin Staff Service</b>					
4.1 Cabin staffs have a good appearance.	1	2	3	4	5
4.2 Cabin staffs are helpful	1	2	3	4	5
4.3 Cabin staffs are knowledgeable when they are asked.	1	2	3	4	5
4.4 Cabin staffs are polite and friendly.	1	2	3	4	5
4.5 Cabin staffs speak many languages.	1	2	3	4	5
4.6 Cabin staffs regularly commence cabin presence.	1	2	3	4	5
4.7 Cabin staffs are prompt to your request.	1	2	3	4	5
4.8 Cabin staffs conduct service in elegant manner.	1	2	3	4	5
4.9 Cabin Staffs confidently conduct safety/security procedures.	1	2	3	4	5
4.10 Cabin staffs add personal touch to the customers.	1	2	3	4	5
<b>5. On-board Products</b>					
5.1 Seats are comfortable.	1	2	3	4	5
5.2 Seats offer the good facilities (personal light, adjustable seats, footrest, personal air vents)	1	2	3	4	5
5.3 The leg room is big enough.	1	2	3	4	5
5.4 Food and drinks served on-board are good.	1	2	3	4	5
5.5 You find the toilets are clean and tidy.	1	2	3	4	5
5.6 The reading materials selections are good (Magazines, Newspapers and In-flight magazine).	1	2	3	4	5
5.7 The entertainment system is good.	1	2	3	4	5
5.8 The selections of duty free products are good.	1	2	3	4	5
5.9 Overall cabin atmosphere is comfortable.	1	2	3	4	5
5.10 Emirates always offer the new products.	1	2	3	4	5
<b>6. Frequent Flyer Program (Skywards/Sky surfers)</b>					
6.1 Skywards is easy to apply.	1	2	3	4	5

6.2 Skywards always communicate with you.	1	2	3	4	5
6.3 Being a skywards member makes you feel privileged.	1	2	3	4	5
6.4 Skywards offers good benefits.	1	2	3	4	5
6.5 Skywards offers good quality alliances.	1	2	3	4	5
6.6 It's easy to contact Skywards.	1	2	3	4	5
6.7 It's easy to redeem the mileage.	1	2	3	4	5
6.8 Skysurfers program is the good program for young frequent flyers.	1	2	3	4	5
6.9 Skywards is better than other frequent flyer programs.	1	2	3	4	5
6.10 Skywards/Skysurfers is good frequent flyer program	1	2	3	4	5
<b>7. Passengers' Perception of Quality</b>					
7.1 Emirates airport service is good	1	2	3	4	5
7.2 Emirates air ticket is good	1	2	3	4	5
7.3 Emirates flight schedule service is good	1	2	3	4	5
7.4 Emirates cabin staff is good	1	2	3	4	5
7.5 Emirates on-board product is good	1	2	3	4	5
7.6 Emirates Skywards program is good	1	2	3	4	5

### Part III: Personal Data

#### 1. Age

☐ 20-30  
☐ 41-50

☐ 31-40  
☐ 51-above

#### 2. Gender

☐ Male

☐ Female

#### 3. Monthly income in US dollars (after tax)

☐ Under \$ 5,000  
☐ 10,001-15,000  
☐ More than \$ 20,001

☐ 5,001-10,000  
☐ 15,001-20,000

#### 4. Occupations

☐ Student  
☐ Governmental sector employee  
☐ Retiree

☐ Self-employed  
☐ Private sector employee

#### 5 Nationality (by the continents)

☐ African  
☐ Australian  
☐ North American

☐ Asian  
☐ European  
☐ South American



