

Factors Influencing Omani Traveller's Preference While Choosing Low-Cost Airlines and Full-Service Airlines

Naila Al Raisi¹, Yugesh Krishnan²

¹Student, Oman Tourism College, Muscat, Sultanate of Oman

² Oman Tourism College, Muscat, Sultanate of Oman

Email: ¹naila.nails.it@gmail.com, ²Yugesh.krishnan@otc.edu.om

Citation: Al Raisi, N. & Krishnan, Y. (2023). Factors Influencing Omani Traveler's Preference While Choosing Low-Cost Airlines and Full-Service Airlines. *International Journal of Research in Entrepreneurship & Business Studies*, 4(3), 1- 18. <https://doi.org/10.47259/ijrebs.431>

Received on 15th Apr. 2023

Revised on 8th Jun. 2023

Published on 11th Jul. 2023

Copyright: © 2023 by the authors.
License: Global Scientific Publications, Oman.

Publishers Note:

This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/). This is an open-access journal and the articles published in this journal are distributed under the terms of CC-BY-SA.



Abstract

Purpose: The objective of this research was to determine the factors that influence Omani travellers in making airline selection decisions as well as to examine their perception and the level of satisfaction with the quality of services provided by Oman Air and Salam Air.

Design/methodology/approach: A mixed methods research approach was employed in this study to gather primary data through a survey questionnaire and analyse it accordingly. A simple Random sampling method was used with a sample size of 80, 40 from Oman Air and 40 from Salam Air. Inferential Statistics and descriptive statistics have been attained using the collected data from the questionnaire which provided closed-ended questions including rankings using a 5-point Likert Scale.

Findings: The findings of the study revealed that Omani traveller's selecting Oman Air as a preferred airline is influenced by airline image, customer service, and safety factors while Omani traveller's selecting Salam Air as their preferred airline is most influenced by factors including price, baggage handling, and booking options. Travelers' perception of the service quality indicated that airline staff responsiveness scored the highest while satisfaction was declared for the different service experiences for both airlines.

Research limitations/implications: This research was limited to Omani traveller's preference for selecting Oman Air and/or Salam Air as both are local airlines which is convenient for the researcher's access. The most challenging obstacle faced when conducting this research was the pandemic, Covid-19.

Social Implications: The study addresses a critical gap in the existing literature by focusing on Omani traveller's and their decision-making processes, contributing to the knowledge base and aiding airlines in tailoring their services to meet Omani travellers' expectations.

Originality / Value: This research examines unique factors such as airline image, price, service quality, and safety the research provides fresh insights into this specific market, considering Oman's distinctive cultural and economic context.

Keywords: Omani Travelers, Low-cost Airlines, Full-Service Airlines, Airline Preferences, Airline Prices, Service Quality of Airlines in Oman, Airline Safety.

Introduction

The airline industry played and continues to play a great role in the development of the tourism industry around the world. It has been growing rapidly in the past 30 years due to its position in developing tourism and world commerce. The growth of the airline industry provides opportunities and challenges that other industries face as well as the airline industry, particularly the industries that are connected to the airline industry. The opportunities are presented in the form of increased demand for the airline service while the challenges are presented in the form of economic instability, increased competition between the airlines as well as the emergence of a new airline type, low-cost airlines. Since the emergence of low-cost airlines, the airline sector has been in constant competition internally aside from the opportunities and threats they are collectively faced with.



The United Nations World Tourism Organization ([UNWTO](#), 2011) predicted in a press release that international tourist arrivals are to touch 1.8 billion by 2030. This estimation suggests that air transport will be even more important, and the airline industry needs to understand those factors that influence the traveller's preference while choosing an airline type; Low-Cost Airlines (LCAs) and Full-Service Airlines (FSAs). The clear boundaries that were set between the FSAs and the LCAs are distorted due to the constant development of each airline in terms of product quality, connectivity, and customer retention through loyalty programs.

Determining the traveller's preferences in the airline industry which is filled with challenges and competition among airline companies with the development of technology is an integral part of attracting travellers. This study is conducted to determine the factors that influence the Omani traveller's preference when choosing an airline, particularly between the LCAs and FSAs, Salam Air, and Oman Air. This study will also examine the perceptions of travellers on the service quality provided by each airline in Oman and analyse the level of satisfaction with the quality of services offered by Oman Air and Salam Air.

Rationale of the study

This study determines the factors that influence Omani travellers' airline preference for local LCA and FSA. While previous studies focus on LCAs and FSAs in various parts of the world, none were made on local Omani airlines, Oman Air and Salam Air. This research examined the Omani traveller's perception of the service quality provided by the mentioned airlines to determine those factors that influence the Omani traveller's airline selection. It will also attempt to analyse the level of satisfaction of the Omani traveller with the service quality provided by the specified airlines.

Research Questions

- What factors influence travellers' airline selection in Oman?
- How do these factors relate to their perceptions of services offered by Full-Service and Low-Cost Airlines and
- What is the overall satisfaction with the quality of their services?

Research Objectives

- To determine the factors that influence a traveller's airline selection.
- To examine travellers' perception of services provided by Full-Service Airlines and Low-Cost Airlines in Oman.
- To analyse the traveller's satisfaction with the quality of services offered by the selected Full-Service and Low-Cost Airlines.

Significance of the study

The significance of this study lies in its academic and business contribution by providing information and knowledge on Omani travellers' perceptions and levels of satisfaction. It will assist many organizations both private and government-owned in terms of identifying areas for improvement or utilizing the findings as a guide for future investments.

Existing Local Airlines: This study can be referred to by the existing local airlines to understand the latest trends in Omani customers' preferences. It will also provide further assistance in considering the findings and recommendations of this study when improving or developing new products or services by assessing traveller's satisfaction with the quality of service provided by the airlines.

Public Authority for Civil Aviation: Understanding the Omani passenger's preferences will enable the Public Authority for Civil Aviation to modify and create new guidelines in terms of airline operations, services offered, and recurring inspections.

Muscat International Airport: Considering the results of the study conducted, Muscat International Airport will be able to utilize the findings of the study to increase the foot flow of Omanis by providing customized products or services for Omani travellers.

Travel Agencies and Tour Operators: This study will provide significance for travel agencies and tour operators in terms of customizing packages to suit Omanis traveling individually or in groups. It will also assist them when considering alliances and affiliations with airlines.

Future Emerging Airlines: This study is considered a suitable reference for a new local startup airline business. It will assist them when deciding on destinations, services, and pricing as well.

Academics: This research will pave the ground for further research to be carried out on the Omani traveller and quite possibly on Middle Eastern travel as the literature currently lacks such knowledge.

Literature Review

Airlines, Travel, and Growth of the Airline Industry

The airline industry has played an integral role in shaping the global economy as it is currently connecting the entire world by operating in almost every nation in the world. It all started with the first successful motor-propelled and pilot-controlled flight by Orville and Wilbur Wright in 1903 ([National Aeronautics Space Administration](#), 2003) which marked history. Followed by the first commercial airline flight which took place in 1914 from St. Petersburg, Florida to Tampa, Florida. In 1927, Charles Lindbergh successfully flew across the Atlantic Ocean sparking the general public's interest in the aviation world and encouraging two women pilots to travel across the Atlantic; Amelia Earhart flew from America to Ireland in 1932, and Beryl Markham from England to America in 1936. Air transportation companies formed shortly after including Aviation Corporation with American Airways being the air transport division that later became American Airlines. United Aircraft and Transportation Corporation was created in 1928 by Boeing, a leading aircraft manufacturer. One of the major factors that assisted in the growth of the airline industry was the development of the mail transport system by the US which led private airlines to extend their operations starting with mail, then other cargo including passengers. This has opened the possibilities for airlines to constantly grow and innovate. The airline and the travel industry has since then become a huge economic power on its own as well as on the industries surrounding it such as tourism, aircraft manufacturing, and technological advancement. The world's globalization has enabled the airline industry to grow as transporting freight and passengers is a vital part of the global economy. The International Air Transport Association ([IATA](#), 2018) announced an unprecedented air passenger number of over 4 billion for the year 2017. In the same year, an almost 10% growth in air freight was recorded as well.

The airline growth was facilitated by technological innovations and the development of aircraft jet engines such as jumbo jets as well as the liberalization or deregulation of airlines starting with the United States of America in 1978 and expanding to the rest of the world ([Belobaba & Odoni](#), 2009). The airline industry is growing at approximately 5% annually over the last 34 years with different variations due to the fluctuating economic situation. Since the deregulation, a new airline type emerged, Low-Cost Airlines.

Full-Service Airlines and Low-Cost Airlines

It is essential to understand the definition of a Full-Service Airline (FSA) and a Low-Cost Airline (LCA) and its framework. Not only to be able to distinguish the major differences, business models, and characteristics of each of them but also to understand those factors that influence the traveller to select one airline over another. According to the World Air Transport Statistics by [IATA \(2019\)](#), the total number of passengers carried on board air transport (FSA, LCA, and Leisure Carriers) reached 4.37 billion passengers in 2018.

Full-Service Airlines (FSAs)

According to [Cento \(2009\)](#), an FSA can be defined as 'an airline company developed from the former state-owned flag carrier, through the market deregulation process, into an airline company'. A Full-Service Airline is a large-scope airline that offers a complete included service like an allocated seat, baggage allowance, and in-flight meals ([Fedosova](#), 2016). In contrast to Low-Cost Airlines, Full-Service airlines have a complicated fare structure, use multiple class service types namely economy, business, and first-class, affiliations, and partnerships with other airlines as well and use different aircraft types (Civil Aviation Authority, 2006 as cited in [Buaphiban](#), 2015). Full-Service Airline operates on a hub-and-spoke route system indicates that all travellers (not including those travellers whose destination or origin flight is the hub) will be transferring at the hub to embark on a 2nd flight to the scheduled destination ([Cook & Goodwin](#), 2008). There are many differentiations between the business' vision, mission, and strategies for the FSAs, but there are a few key points that they all have in common. These points include attempting to offer their passengers wider connectivity to the global airline system, and the costs of providing a higher service level, to name but a few ([InterVISTAS](#), 2013).

Several elements that describe the different characteristics and business models of an FSA include the passengers and cargo as a part of the core business of an FSA. It also includes the availability of a wide variety of destinations with a wide-ranging network of services due to the hub-and-spoke network system.

The same system allows an FSA to have complete coverage of many demand group types possible through the full optimization of hub connectivity as mentioned by [Gillen and Morrison](#) (2003) and [Cento](#) (2009). FSAs are considered a strong global player due to their ability to connect short-, medium-, and long-haul flights domestically, internationally, and globally. However, [Cento](#) (2009) argues that it is only possible through the development of alliances via the enlargement of the network to become a part of multiple hub-and-spoke systems.

The author further explains the FSA business model to include customer relationship management also known as CRM which involves loyalty and frequent flyer programs to retain as frequent flyers as possible. CRM is a strategy that is set and decided by a company that assists them in interacting with their customers. [Shaw](#) (2007) adds that CRM provides support to the customer's buying process and helps to strengthen the relationship between them. Another purpose of CRM is to enrich the passenger's purchasing and travel experience to be able to enhance the products offered and personalize the services to suit the passengers. As a result, [Kotler and Armstrong](#) (2018) further explained that CRM not only manages the purchasing process but also manages those 'touchpoints' that assist in maximizing customer loyalty. FSAs use multiple channel sales and global distribution systems (GDS like Galileo, Amadeus, Sabre, and WorldSpan) if booked through travel agencies. However, FSA's strategy is directed at increasing traffic online through their websites and direct sales to eliminate commissions paid to third parties like travel agents ([Rouby](#), 2018). Some other characteristics of a FSA include an advanced quality of service in terms of improved and accurate flight schedules, luggage tracking systems, and increased capacity and the offered loyalty and frequent flyer programs are valuable due to the range and frequency of services provided and availability of a wide range of destinations according to [Gillen and Morrison](#) (2003). It is worth noting that out of 4.37 billion passengers who flew in 2018, around 2.9 billion passengers were carried on traditional FSAs showing a 5% increase in the number from the previous year ([IATA, 2019](#)).

Low-Cost Airlines (LCAs)

There are several definitions of low-cost carriers (LCAs) in various literature. It can be defined as an airline company that emerged with a design to have a driven competitive advantage over FSA. It is also defined as '*an airline that differentiates itself in the market through reduced ticket prices*' (Civil Aviation Authority, 2006 as cited in [Buaphiban](#), 2015). A similar definition by [Cento](#) (2009) is '*an airline company designed to have a competitive advantage in terms of cost over an FSC*'. As the name indicates, a Low-Cost Airline is an airline that charges fewer travel fares, offers few basic comforts for its travellers and the price of tickets is fixed and non-refundable ([Fedosova](#), 2016). The author further indicated that a Low-Cost Airline operating on short and medium-haul flights known as a point-to-point route system focuses on cost or price leadership rather than focusing on the experience gained from service quality. A point-to-point system indicates that travellers embark at the flight's origin and disembark at the destination ([Cook & Goodwin](#), 2008). Furthermore, Low-Cost Airlines use a straightforward fare structure, offer one-class service, no affiliations, or partnerships with other airlines, and operate a single aircraft type (Sabre, 2010 as cited in [Buaphiban](#), 2015).

The concept of LCAs first started by Southwest Airlines in the early 1970s in the United States of America and Europe, the Southwest model was adopted in 1991 by an Irish company which was previously a FSA, Ryanair. There are several key characteristics and simplified business model of LCAs that states that an LCA is mainly a passenger's air service with a focus on cost structuring and reduction. However, as far as revenue, ancillary offerings are slowly becoming part of the fundamental business of the airline ([Cento](#), 2009; [Wit & Zuidberg](#), 2012). The author further explained that LCAs working on a point-to-point system using secondary airports aid the airlines in terms of reduced taxes and reduced airport charges as well as generally using a single aircraft type such as Boeing 737 with full aircraft utilization in terms of flying hours. It is also worth stating that LCA products are undifferentiated because they do not offer lounge services, seating choices, flight meals, or luggage inclusion as well as the unavailability of a frequent flyer program ([Cento](#), 2009; [Akpur & Zengin](#), 2019). Although LCA's business model explains that LCAs do not rely on distribution channels and sell directly to customers through Internet or telephone sales, however, some LCAs such as Salam Air and Fly Dubai use different distribution channels too. The sales of the tickets are not the only source of income for LCA, as their increasing revenues include collecting commission from hotels and car rental companies, fees from excess baggage, in-flight food and beverage purchases as well as advertising space they are offering ([Schlumberger & Weisskopf](#), 2014; [Cento](#), 2009). It is worth noting that approximately 1.3 billion were carried out in 2018 onboard LCAs out of the 4.37 billion passengers showing an increase of 11.4% from the previous year according to ([IATA, 2019](#)).

Factors Influencing the Airline Preference

Since the emergence of LCAs, many types of research have been conducted on both FSAs and LCAs over the past decade to identify the most important factors for choosing a specific airline. Identifying those factors will assist each airline type in understanding their point of strength as well as exploring opportunities for improvement in the future to gain new customers and retain the current ones. Several factors might have influenced travellers' decision to select a specific airline, including the cost of traveling, availability of flights during a specific time, comfort, etc. (Ali, 2007). A collection of other studies has also identified some of those factors including but not limited to price, safety, and customer loyalty.

Several factors might be direct or indirect, personal, political, or even psychological factors. These factors can be adopted from previous studies that were conducted on both FSAs and LCAs comparing the purpose of travel as well as the factors influencing the passenger. While not all the factors discussed to date are included in this research, however, a few are identified for the sake of providing more in-depth information and understanding the Omani passengers' choices. These factors are price, service quality, airline image, and safety.

Price

The most obvious factor is price considering the difference between the ticket price of an FSA and an LCA. Price as a main factor for airline selection is supported by previous studies as several studies confirm that price is the most influential factor. A study on New Zealand's passengers' perspective indicated that the local community was more concerned about price (Ali, 2007) as well and a study directed by O'Connell and Williams (2005) suggested that the main purpose for choosing LCA was the reduced price compared to FSAs. An additional study confirming that price is the only drive or motive for choosing an LCA rather than an FSA was conducted in South Africa by Diggins (2010). While another study of the Irish and Malaysian FSA and LCA unravelled that price was the most important for those selecting Irish Airlines however it was not the case for the travellers selecting Malaysian Airlines (O'Connell & Williams, 2005). It can be understood from the previous studies that although price is a main factor influencing the traveller's airline selection, it is not always the case as the Malaysian Airlines traveller's selection was influenced by service quality. A contradicting study of South African passengers resulted in the price ranking on the same level of importance for both FSA and LCA (Fourie and Lubbe, 2006 as cited in Buaphiban, 2015).

Service Quality

The Service quality includes several factors such as baggage handling, food, and beverage as well as entertainment. Moreover, it also includes the environment, customer service, and convenient scheduling. Several studies show either one or a combination of service quality factors as factors for airline selection. A study of Pegasus Air indicated that on-time service ranked 2nd in terms of importance confirmed with a study conducted on Chinese passengers to reveal that while on-time service is the most important, baggage handling is deemed second most important (Atalik & Ozel, 2007; Zhang, 2011 cited in Buaphiban, 2015). Another study conducted by Chen and Wu (2009) indicated that travellers' willingness to pay additional amounts for in-flight meal service followed by easiness of booking and the ability to change their tickets.

Another study conducted in China showed that the perceived service level in FSAs influenced the choice for FSAs and had less influence on LCA (Chiou and Chen, 2010). This research might support one of these studies or contradict others taking into consideration the aspects that differentiate the Omani traveller from others in terms of upbringing, social status, etc.

Airline Image

Airline reputation as a third factor is interesting to consider in this study since the LCA, Salam Air was only founded in 2016. Oman Air has had its fair share of building a reputation for the years since it was founded back in 1993. It is perceived that national carriers have a better overall reputation than regional and local airlines. There are several factors included in the airline's image such as the overall operations, financial performance, and fleet size. A study conducted by Atalik and Ozel (2007) as cited in Buaphiban (2015) perceived the airline image as somewhat important and another study perceived it as a major influence on repeated purchases/choices. However, another study conducted on Chinese travellers disclosed that they are more influenced by the on-time service rather than the image (Zhang, 2011 as cited in Buaphiban, 2015).

Airline Safety and Security Systems

A study done on the Nigerian perspective indicated that safety was most important (Ukpere et al., 2012). The last factor is considered is airline safety since it's an essential component of any airline's reputation

(Graham and Bansal, 2007 as cited in [Buaphiban](#), 2015). Few studies resulted in safety being a major influencer for passenger preference. A study conducted on Pegasus, a Turkish airline found that safety is the most significant factor for selecting an airline (Atalik and Ozel, 2007 as cited by [Buaphiban](#), 2015). However, it is interesting to note that safety was far more critical to LCA passengers than on-time service while FSA passengers preferred the on-time service over safety ([Mikulic & Prebezac](#), 2011).

Full-Service Airlines and Low-Cost Airlines – Traveler’s Perception

To be able to determine the factors that influence the traveller’s airline choice, it is imperative to understand how travellers perceive FSAs and LCAs. By doing so, this study will be able to reveal if the perceptions of travellers are met with satisfaction or dissatisfaction. The perception a traveller has involves many dimensions and understanding what is meant by perception; ‘the process of selecting, organizing, and interpreting sensations into a meaningful whole’ ([Hanna & Wozniak](#), 2013). It is interesting to note that the concept of the perception of service is related to the customer’s perception of the quality of service and the latter reflects on the satisfaction of the customer (Sureshchanda, et al., 2002 as cited in [Palnychenko](#), 2017).

In a study conducted to identify the passengers’ perceptions of LCA and FSA involving Ryanair, Air Asia, Malaysia Airlines as well and Aer Lingus, it was clear that passengers perceive the LCAs as a low fare carriers and FSA as an airline that provides additional services ([O’Connell & Williams](#), 2005). It is not sufficient to consider the perception of passengers in terms of price alone as it is evident that price is the main distinction between both airline types. However, perceiving both airline types in terms of quality of service might have surprising results. [Palnychenko](#) (2017) conducted a study on the perception of service in LCA and FSA; the study mentioned five universal determinants that have a direct influence on passengers’ perception of the quality of service of each airline type. The elements include empathy, responsiveness, tangibles, assurance, and reliability (RATER).

Full-Service Airlines and Low-Cost Airlines – Traveler’s Satisfaction

In literature, there has been a lot of confusion and discussions on the connection between quality of service and satisfaction in terms of their concepts and how are they similar or different from one another ([Jensen](#), 2009). To put it simply, quality is referred to the attributes of what has been offered while satisfaction or dissatisfaction is referred to the emotional reaction to what has been offered (Kasper et al., 2006 cited in [Jensen](#), 2009). The previous explanation shows that there is no connection between them; the quality of the offered product or service is the responsibility of the organization while satisfaction is based on the experience of the customer. However, when using the customer’s decision whether the customer is satisfied or dissatisfied to measure the level of quality offered it is an indication of how the two concepts are related. The concept of satisfaction is further dissected and narrowed to satisfaction related to a specific transaction and satisfaction that is cumulative ([Jensen](#), 2009). This is why this study used specific transactions to acquire the true level of satisfaction from the passengers. The first indicates that the evaluation of the customer was based on a specific transaction or incident that made the customer consider that evaluation as an overall evaluation of the entire experience the customer had. In this regard, Parasuraman et al. (1994, as cited in [Jensen](#), 2009) argue that quality of service and satisfaction can be looked at from both dimensions.

RATER

RATER, the five dimensions of service quality as mentioned earlier namely, tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy were considered in this research to analyse the customers’ perception and satisfaction with the quality of service provided by FSAs and LCAs.

Tangibles refer to the physical elements such as the appeal of the physical facilities, staff presentation, and modern equipment as well as the service process on the flight such as comfortable seating, sanitation of the interior of the aircraft, and the appearance of the crew. It also refers to the availability of materials associated with the services provided such as pamphlets, on-board entertainment, etc. A study conducted on Thai passengers indicated that tangible perception and satisfaction resulted in it being a factor for airline choice. Another study revealed that tangibles were a significant influencer on the perception of the service quality provided by the airline ([Ahn & Lee](#), 2011).

Reliability refers to how reliable or consistent the departure timing and the provision of the service as in the same service delivery. In the same study conducted by [Ahn and Lee](#) (2011), it was discovered that reliability had a high score for timely departure and arrival but scored low for the consistent service

provided. However, it had a positive influence on the perception of the quality of service provided. The responsiveness element includes those factors of how efficient in guiding the passengers in terms of ease of seating, safety instructions and how willing is the crew to assist with requests, complaints, and inquiries as well. It is characterized as the staff's readiness to assist passengers and provide them with a brief service such as notifying the passengers of any delay along with delay justifications. Assurances refer to the knowledge and competence of the employees to address any queries and answer questions as well as how courteous the crew are among each other. Empathy can be associated with personal attention to the passenger, having the passenger's best interest heard, and understanding passenger needs.

Full-Service Airlines and Low-Cost Airlines in Oman

Oman Air is the leading carrier for the Sultanate of Oman and was founded in 1993 which indicates its reputation and market share in Oman as a monopoly since no other native airline was introduced until 2016; when Salam Air emerged. Oman Air was officially classified as a 4-Star Airline by [Skytrax Research of London](#) (2011) and has been the shaper of the airline industry in Oman flying to over 55 destinations across the world and carrying around 9.7 million passengers in 2019. As part of the FSA business model, Oman Air had codeshare agreements and alliances with other airlines such as Lufthansa, Etihad, Royal Jordanian, Qatar Airways, etc. to offer its passengers better connectivity and a wider hub-and-spoke network system. Since its operation in 1993, Oman Air has been awarded several times including 4 World Travel Awards in 2019 including World's Leading Airline to the Middle East, World's Leading Airline –First Class and Business Class Lounge as well as World's Leading Airline –Rewards Program ([The Walshe Group](#), 2019). It is interesting to note a few milestones in Oman Air's journey in 2019 including extending its partnership to serve as the official airline carrier to the Sultanate of Oman's National Football Team ([Zawya](#), 2019) as well as crowned the nation's most trusted FSA brand in 2019 ([Global Travel Media](#), 2019). Salam Air was established in 2016 with a vision to allow more people access to travel. Salam Air offers flights to 27 domestic, regional, and international destinations and managed to cross the 1.6 million passenger milestone by 2019. Although the LCA business model does not entertain a loyalty or a frequent flyer program, Salam Air has created its version of the loyalty program called, More On Air which is created to allow the passengers the airline's frequent flyers to enjoy additional benefits and more convenience once planning a trip ([Salam Air](#), 2023).

Research Methodology

A mixed Methods research approach has been employed in this study for two reasons. Firstly, the study has got questions and objectives to test various scopes of service quality perception in the minds of customers of Salam Air and Oman Air to justify the selection of the airline; an area that falls under the quantitative approach. Secondly, in getting insights on people's perception and satisfaction level over the service quality provided by the previously mentioned airlines and comparing them to past studies for conducting a comparative analysis; an area that falls under the qualitative approach method of this research. Hence, this study had implemented the Mixed Method approach. The rationale behind utilizing such a research design was to analyse the satisfaction levels of Salam Air and Oman Air. Further, the objectives related to the cause-effect relationship between the five different dimensions of service quality perception and corresponding customer selection of the airline were also tested via causal non-experimental design.

The target population is Omanis who have flown onboard Oman Air or Salam Air. The sample size was 80 respondents with 40 respondents from each airline. Simple Random Sampling was used in the selection of the samples. Both Primary and secondary data have been used in this research; the primary data was collected via questionnaires while secondary data was collected through published journal articles, books, websites, previously published studies, etc.

The collected data was analysed using IBM SPSS and the statistical techniques of Inferential Statistics, Regression analysis, Kendall's Coefficient of Concordance, and correlation. Moreover, data was subjected to descriptive statistics too; cross-tabulations, and frequency analysis. These tests were necessary as the impact of five dimensions of service attributes on the customer selection of an airline can be determined via Regression analysis; the nature of the association of RATER with Customer Selection and among themselves using the Correlation analysis; determining the level of agreement with regards to the Airline Choice factors using Kendall's Coefficient of Concordance; Customer Satisfaction and Airline Choice factors using Descriptive Statistical Analysis.

Findings and Analysis
Demographics

Table 1 Demographic Variables

		Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	50	62.5%
	Female	30	37.5%
Age	20 - 29	20	25.0%
	30 - 39	37	46.3%
	40 - 49	12	15.0%
	50 & above	11	13.8%
Marital Status	Single	22	27.5%
	Married	58	72.5%
Number of members in the family	0 to 5	19	23.8%
	6 to 8	47	58.8%
	9 & above	14	17.5%
Income	Below 500	25	31.3%
	501 to 1,500	13	16.3%
	1,501 to 2,500	22	27.5%
	More than 2,500	7	8.8%
Profession	Employed government/private sector	35	43.8%
	Own business	29	36.3%
	Retired	4	5.0%
	Others	12	15.0%

Table 2 Travel Habits

		Frequency	Percent
Frequency of Air Travel	More than 4 times a year	20	25.0
	2 to 3 times a year	40	50.0
	Once in a year	12	15.0
	Once in 2 years	3	3.8
	First time to travel	5	6.3
Purpose of traveling	Friends and Family	11	13.8
	Leisure	37	46.3
	Business	22	27.5
	Others	10	12.5
How do you usually travel?	Alone	26	32.5
	With family	22	27.5
	Friends	30	37.5
	Others	2	2.5

The frequency of travel questions resulted in 50% of the respondents traveling 2 to 3 times in a year, the main purpose for traveling is leisure (46.3%) and 37.5% travel with friends followed by 32.5% travel alone.

Descriptive Statistical Analysis

Table 3 Airline Preference and Demographics Cross Tabulation

		Oman Air	Salam Air	Total
Gender	Male	23	27	50
	Female	17	13	30
Age	20 - 29	8	12	20
	30 - 39	18	19	37
	40 - 49	7	5	12
	50 & above	7	4	11
Marital Status	Single	6	16	22
	Married	34	24	58
Number of members in the family	0 to 5	5	14	19
	6 to 8	26	21	47
	9 & above	9	5	14
Income	Below 500	5	20	25
	501 to 1,500	1	12	13
	1,501 to 2,500	14	8	22
	More than 2,500	7	0	7
Profession	Employed in Govt./ Pvt. sector	15	20	35
	Own business	25	4	29
	Retired	0	4	4
	Others	0	12	12

In Table 3, major takeaways can be noted such as male respondents prefer Salam Air while female respondents prefer Oman Air. Another takeaway is respondents aged 30-39 equally select both airlines with only 1 respondent more in favor of Salam Air. Furthermore, married respondents favor Oman Air while single respondents favor Salam Air. It can be observed that the more members in the family, Oman Air becomes the chosen airline.

Table 4 Airline Preference and Travel Habits Cross Tabulation

		Oman Air	Salam Air	Total
Frequency of Air Travel	More than 4 times a year	14	6	20
	2 to 3 times a year	26	14	40
	Once in a year	0	12	12
	Once in 2 years	0	3	3
	First time to travel	0	5	5
Purpose of traveling	Friends and Family	5	6	11
	Leisure	12	25	37
	Business	22	0	22
	Others	1	9	10
How do you usually travel?	Alone	22	4	26
	With family	7	15	22
	Friends	11	19	30
	Others	0	2	2

Table 4 showcases travel habits with airline preferences. It is noted that respondents traveling 2 to 3 times and more than 4 times a year select Oman Air. Furthermore, the majority of leisure travelers select Salam



Air while business travelers prefer Oman Air. Travelers traveling with friends prefer Salam Air while those traveling alone prefer Oman Air.

Kendall's coefficient of concordance value is used as a measurement of agreement among rated items and used in this research to indicate the level of agreement among respondents. Ranging from 0 to show no agreement to 1 which indicates absolute agreement. Table 5 shows that Kendall's W has a positive value of 0.963 which is greater than 0 indicating the level of agreement on ranking selected.

Table 5 Statistical Inference: Kendall's W Test for Oman Air

N	40
Kendall's W ^a	0.963
Chi-Square	346.653
df	9
Asymp. Sig.	0
a. Kendall's Coefficient of Concordance	

Table 6 Airline Choice Factors - Oman Air

Airline Choice Factors - Oman Air		
	Mean Score	Rank
Airline Image	1.1	1
High standards of customer service and appearance of staff	1.9	2
Airline safety and security systems	3	3
Easy booking, cancellation, and re-booking Options	4	4
Punctuality/ on-time performance	5.5	5
Convenient Flights Scheduling	5.5	5
Food, beverage, and entertainment services	7.23	6
Airfares/Price	8.65	7
A friendly environment in the aircraft for children, families, and the elderly	8.65	7
Baggage service and claims	9.48	8

The conducted test results shown in Table 5 identified the respondents' airline choice factor for Oman Air which is shown in Table 6. The top three factors influencing Omani travelers to select Oman Air are Airline Image, Customer Service, and Airline safety and security system. The least preferred factor is baggage service and claims as the 8th factor. Other factors are ranging between 4th to 7th factor.

Table 7 Kendall's W Test for Salam Air

Test Statistics	
N	40
Kendall's W ^a	0.983
Chi-Square	354.044
df	9
Asymp. Sig.	0
a. Kendall's Coefficient of Concordance	

This table shows that Kendall's W has a positive value of 0.983 which is greater than 0 indicating the respondents' level of agreement on factors ranked for Salam Air shown in Table 8.

Table 8 Airline Choice Factors for Salam Air

Airline Choice Factors for Salam Air		
	Mean Score	Rank
Airfares/Price	1.35	1
Baggage service and claims	1.65	2
Easy booking, cancellation, and re-booking Options	3	3
Convenient Flights Scheduling	4.35	4
Punctuality/ on-time performance	4.65	5
Food, beverage, and entertainment services	6	6
A friendly environment in the aircraft for children, families, and the elderly	7	7
Airline safety and security systems	8.00	8
Airline Image	9.35	9
High standards of customer service and appearance of staff	9.65	10

The conducted test shown in Table 7 identified the respondents' airline choice factor for Salam Air which is shown in Table 8. It is worth noting that the top 3 preferred factors for choosing Salam Air respondents are Airfare/price ranked 1st, baggage service and claims as 2nd, and easy booking options as 3rd factor. The least preferred factors included Airline Image ranked 9th and Customer Service ranked last. Other factors range from 4th to 8th with no two factors sharing a single ranking.

Correlation Analysis

The correlation analysis defines the relationship between the dependent and independent variables which rationalizes that by increasing one variable, another variable increases. It is utilized to evaluate the strength and direction between two quantitative variables. The higher the correlation, the stronger the relationship between the two variables and vice versa.

The Pearson correlation is used to reveal the significance of the dependent and independent variables which are detected through three different categories; at 0 value, no relationship is detected whereas between 0 to either -1 or 0 to +1 indicates that increasing one variable, the other is affected either positively through a matching increase or negatively through an opposite decrease. The value of the Pearson correlation is interpreted in the below description:

- Values ranging between ± 0.9 to ± 1 indicate a very high correlation.
- Values ranging between ± 0.7 to ± 0.9 indicate high correlation.
- Values ranging between ± 0.5 to ± 0.7 indicate moderate correlation.
- Values ranging between ± 0.3 to ± 0.5 indicate weak correlation.
- Values below ± 0.3 indicate negligible correlation

Table 9 Correlation: Tangibles and Customer Selection

		Tangibles	Customer Selection
Tangibles	Pearson Correlation	1	.592**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0
	N	80	80
Customer Selection	Pearson Correlation	.592**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0	
	N	80	80
** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			



Table 10 Correlation: Reliability and Customer Selection

		Reliability	Customer Selection
Reliability	Pearson Correlation	1	.557**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0
	N	80	80
Customer Selection	Pearson Correlation	.557**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0	
	N	80	80

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 11 Correlation: Empathy and Customer Selection

		Empathy	Customer Selection
Empathy	Pearson Correlation	1	.631**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0
	N	80	80
Customer Selection	Pearson Correlation	.631**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0	
	N	80	80

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 12 Correlation: Assurance and Customer Selection

		Assurance	Customer Selection
Assurance	Pearson Correlation	1	0.643
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.05
	N	80	80
Customer Selection	Pearson Correlation	0.643	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.05	
	N	80	80

Tables 9, 10, 11, and 12 show the customer airline selection and traveler's perception of Tangibles in Table 9, Reliability in Table 10, Empathy in Table 11, and Assurance in Table 12. Each of the above-mentioned tables shows a moderate positive relation between the variable compared to the traveler's selected airline as the significance level for each is below 0.05. Although the Pearson Correlation between the two variables ranges between 0.557 and 0.643, all have a positive moderate relation indicating the traveler's airline selection increases when the other variable increases too.

Table 13 Correlation: Responsiveness and Customer Selection

		Responsiveness	Customer Selection
Responsiveness	Pearson Correlation	1	.889**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0
	N	80	80
Customer Selection	Pearson Correlation	.889**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0	
	N	80	80

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 13 shows that the traveler's perception of responsiveness in their selected airline has a level of significance below 0.05 and the Pearson correlation between the two variables is 0.889 showing a high positive correlation which indicates that if the responsiveness increases, the customer selection of the airline will increase.

Regression Analysis

Regression analysis is the method used to identify and determine the variable's impact on the researched topic. This analysis determines the importance level of the factors identified in the research from most important to least important and the degree to which each factor influences one another. This method would help in describing the relationship and degree of influence between the dependent and independent variables.

Table 14 Fitness of the model

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. error of the Estimate
1	.921 ^a	0.848	0.838	0.24494

^a Predictors: (Constant), Empathy, Assurance, Responsiveness, Tangibles, Reliability

The first table of regression analysis shows the model summary which explains the overall fitness of the model. The model summary states the overall multiple models into one specific regression line. The adjusted R square of the table is 0.838 with an R square value of 0.848 which shows the model explains 84.8% of the data. If the value of R square is above 50 percent then it explains the usefulness of the model.

Table 15 ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	24.837	5	4.967	82.794	.000 ^b
	Residual	4.44	74	0.06		
	Total	29.276	79			

^a Dependent Variable: Customer Selection
^b Predictors: (Constant), Empathy, Assurance, Responsiveness, Tangibles, Reliability

The second table of the regression analysis talks about the ANOVA which defines the variance analysis that showcases the level of variability in the model. In the table, multiple models are specified in the single line

of regression. The value of the regression explains the total variance clarified by the independent variable of the model whereas the residual value shows the variance that is not clarified by the independent variable, and it's also called errors. The table shows that the total value of variance explained is 24.837 and 4.440 is non non-explained variance. The significance level of the model is 0.00 which shows significance as its less than 0.01 and 0.05 level of significance. The table indicates a significant relationship between the independent and dependent variables.

Table 16 Impact of independent variables over the dependent variable

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
(Constant)	0.961	0.394		2.439	0.017	0.176	1.746
1 Tangibles	0.007	0.11	0.007	-0.066	0.948	-0.227	0.212
Reliability	0.13	0.137	0.112	0.953	0.344	-0.142	0.403
Responsiveness	0.701	0.074	0.715	9.494	0	0.554	0.848
Assurance	0.292	0.114	0.184	-2.568	0.012	-0.518	-0.065
Empathy	0.237	0.049	0.26	4.792	0	0.138	0.335

a Dependent Variable: Customer Selection

Table 16 shows the impact of the independent variables of RATER on the dependent variable of customer airline selection. The unstandardized beta in the regression equation predicts the independent variable and dependent variable. The coefficient value cannot be compared with each other to determine the impact that which variable has the most as both the variables get calculated on different scales. The predictive line of this study is defined below:

$$\text{Customer selection} = 0.961 + 0.007 * (\text{Tangibles}) + 0.130 * (\text{Reliability}) + 0.701 * (\text{responsiveness}) + 0.292 * (\text{assurance}) + 0.237 * (\text{Empathy}) + \text{error}$$

The predictive line explains the relationship of independent and dependent variables which shows that an increase in customer selection is predicted by increasing the 1 unit in the independent variables. The table shows that responsiveness has the most impact on customer selection which is 70.1 percent and other variables have comparatively less impact on customer selection. Whereas Assurance has 29.2%, empathy has 23.7%, reliability has 13% and tangibles have a 7% impact on customer selection. The table shows that three variables have a significant value less than 0.05 which are responsiveness, empathy, and assurance so it shows a significant relationship between these variables with the customer selection.

Discussion

This chapter is based on the thorough discussion of findings as exposed by the questionnaire conducted with Omani travelers. The research centered around determining the factors that influence the Omani traveler when selecting an airline. This part presents the revealed outcomes in comparison to the available literature considering that no previous studies were available on what influences the Omani travelers' airline choice.

Factors Influencing Omani Traveler's Airline Selection

The results have identified that all the factors listed in this research as determinants for airline selection from previous studies including; Price, baggage service and claims, booking options, etc. influence the Omani traveler's airline selection. However, when Omani travelers who selected Oman Air or Salam Air were requested to rank the most determinant factors, the results showed a great difference between the Omani traveler selecting Oman Air and their preferred airline and the Omani traveler selecting Salam Air. Those selecting Oman Air ranked the airline image as the most influential choice while respondents selecting Salam Air selected Airfare/price as the most influential factor. This highlights the main difference in the business models for both airlines whereas one relies on providing full service and building brand image, the other relies on lowering airfare to be easily accessed and available to everyone. When compared to previous literature, the Omani Travelers' Price selection as the most influential factor for choosing LCA matched several studies conducted in New Zealand by [Ali](#) (2007), South Africa by [Diggins](#) (2010), and on the Irish

Airlines by [O'Connell and Williams](#), (2005). Another study conducted by Atalik and Ozel (2007 cited in [Buaphiban](#), 2015) justified Airline image selection as a major factor for repeated airline selection.

The second most influential factor chosen by Oman Air respondents was identified as high standards of customer service while the second most influential factor chosen by Salam Air respondents was identified as the baggage handling and claims which was interesting to note. Comparing both selections with results from previous studies, similarities can be drawn from two studies conducted on Chinese passengers by Atalik and Ozel (2007) cited in [Buaphiban](#) (2015) revealing that baggage handling and services were ranked second much like SalamAir respondents. The second study done by [Chiou and Chen](#) (2010) revealed that the service levels perceived influenced choosing an FSA.

The 3rd and 4th influential factors for choosing Oman Air respondents were airline safety and booking options while Salam Air respondents ranked booking options as 3rd and convenient scheduling as 4th. A study conducted on the Turkish airline, Pegasus revealed safety as the most important factor for selecting the airline while it might not be the most influential, safety made its way to the 3rd topmost influential factor as per Omanis selecting Oman Air. [Chen and Wu](#) (2009) revealed that the second most important factor in the study was the easiness of booking and ticket changing options which has been ranked 3rd by Omani respondents' selecting Salam Air as their preferred airline.

Traveler's Perception of Services Provided by FSA and LCA in Oman.

This research examines the Omani traveller's perception of the services provided using the RATER model; Reliability, Empathy, Responsiveness, Assurance, and Tangibles. From using the correlation analysis and the regression analysis, it was found that most respondents make their selection due to the perceived responsiveness which was indicative through the correlation analysis in which there was a high positive relation between responsiveness and travellers' airline selection. It was found through the regression analysis that 70% of responsiveness has the most impact on the travellers' airline selection indicating the staff's readiness to assist passengers and provide them with a brief service. Although assurance, empathy, reliability, and tangibles have a moderate positive relationship with the selected airline, it is also imperative to note the strength of their relationship with the travellers' airline selection which their regression analysis indicated 29.2%, 23.7%, 13% and 7% respectively revealing a positive moderate relationship with the traveller's airline selection. The strength of the relationship with the perceived service of the traveller's selected airline translates to any increase in the perception of the services indicating a positive increase in airline selection. The degree the extent of the increase are only matched with the strength of the relationship; moderate or high.

Traveler's Satisfaction with Service Quality Provided by the Selected FSA and LCA

This study is conducted to find out the Omani traveller's satisfaction level with the quality of service provided by their preferred airline. The services listed were the check-in process, boarding procedure, cabin staff performance, and on-board services. Each of the services listed had at least 4 different elements to seek the most accurate results on the traveller's satisfaction level for their selected airline.

It was evident that the level of satisfaction with the services provided by Oman Air was ranging between total satisfaction and satisfaction. The dissatisfaction level on the same services was insignificant in comparison to the remaining responses of total satisfaction as only below 6 respondents declared various levels of dissatisfaction. For the check-in process, it was found that Oman Air travellers are mostly satisfied with the waiting time, the efficiency of the check-in, and the staff appearance and grooming. For boarding procedures, Omani travellers are mostly satisfied with the boarding priority and the assistance during boarding. Most travellers were totally satisfied with the services provided by the cabin's staff and the services offered onboard such as food and beverage services to the general cleanliness of the facilities.

Salam Air travellers have expressed total satisfaction with staff grooming as part of the check-in process while they are somewhat satisfied with the remaining services provided. It can be argued that an LCA such as Salam Air is not highlighting the services they are providing in terms of interactions with customers as their most important differentiation is their price. Although Omani travellers on board Salam Air have expressed total satisfaction over the assistance during boarding and smoothness of boarding, they are almost matching the number of somewhat satisfied travellers over the same services. However, it is also worth noting that the number of neutral responses is high for Salam Air as opposed to Oman Air. This can be indicative that the respondents are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with the services provided.

Conclusion

It has been found through the study that most of the respondents choose Oman Air due to the image of the airline, high standards of customer service, and the appearance of staff, and also due to the safety and security



measures provided by them. The respondents chose Salam Air mainly due to their lower airfare/ prices, baggage services, and claims as well as the easiness of booking and cancelation. Although the latter are not the only reasons influencing travellers to choose Salam Air, they are the top-ranked. The study found that the factors that have the most impact on customer selection are responsiveness followed by assurance and empathy as they have a significant relationship with customer selection. However, tangible and reliability also have a moderate relationship and impact on customer's airline selection. It has been concluded through this research that the customer's satisfaction level with the services provided by Oman Air ranges from total satisfaction to somewhat satisfactory. However, this indicates an overall satisfaction level for the provided services. Although the satisfaction level for the services provided by Salam Air is not as indicative and elaborate as Oman Air, there's a certain level of satisfaction that is combined with neutral responses that indicate a general sense of satisfaction over the services provided by the airline.

Recommendations

Following are the recommendations for future studies to be carried out by professionals in the industry and academics alike:

For Oman Air

1. It is suggested that Oman Air emphasizes its points of strength including its brand imaging, customer service, and the airline's safety and security measures in terms of advertising to gain more customers. It is also important to improve those areas that were unsatisfactory to the Omani travellers.
2. It is recommended that Oman Air enhances their tangibles, reliability, empathy, and assurance levels as the level of satisfaction for each range between 7% to 29% as this will enable them to make the traveller's experience more positive. It is also recommended that the other elements from RATER are considered when making further enhancements which in turn will strengthen the Omani traveller's airline selection.

For Salam Air

3. It is suggested that Salam Air enhances their inboard and boarding experience and services provided on board through providing more training to the staff which in turn will flip the level of satisfaction to the airline's advantage. Considering the nature of Salam Air as a LCA, it is understood that the onboard services are associated with additional payments to be made. However, promotions and upgrades can be granted as a marketing scheme to attract more customers to fly on board Salam Air as well as introduce them to the different onboard services the airline is capable of providing.
4. It is recommended that Salam Air enhances its customer service and responsiveness level in terms of staff training and empowerment to take immediate action and decisions to make the traveller's experience more positive. It is also recommended that the other elements from RATER are considered when making further enhancements which in turn will strengthen the Omani traveller's airline selection.
5. It is suggested that further studies are conducted to close any gaps that might be identified in this study at a later stage due to continuously changing trends in the industry as well as due to the aftermath of COVID-19 which has resulted in restrictions on travel during the pandemic and the second half of this research.

References

1. Acharya, A.S., Prakash, A., Saxena, P. and Nigam, A., (2013) Sampling: Why and how of it, *Indian Journal of Medical Specialties*, 4(2), 330-333. https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Anita_Acharya/publication/256446902_Sampling_Why_and_How_of_it_Anita_S_Acharya_Anupam_Prakash_Pikee_Saxena_Aruna_Nigam/links/0c960527c82d449788000000.pdf
2. Ahn, T. & Lee, T. (2011) Service Quality in the Airline Industry: Comparison Between Traditional and Low-Cost Airlines, *Tourism Analysis*, 16, 1-8. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/272272149_Service_Quality_in_the_Airline_Industry_Comparison_Between_Traditional_and_Low-Cost_Airlines
3. Akpur, A. & Zengin, B. (2019). The Concept of Low-Cost Airline Transportation: Definition and Meaning, *Journal of Tourismology*, 5(1), 73-91. <https://doi.org/10.26650/jot.2019.5.1.0014>
4. Ali, E. (2007). Determinants of Choosing an Airline by a Traveller – An Analysis from New Zealand Perspective, *ESS Working Papers*, 1-15. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/23777629_Determinants_of_Choosing_an_Airline_by_a_Traveller_-_An_Analysis_from_New_Zealand_Perspective
5. Ang, S.H. (2014). *Research Design for Business & Management*. Sage Publications Ltd.



- http://www.sjm06.com/SJM%20ISSN1452-4864/7_2_2012_171_325/7_2_219_230.pdf
6. Buaphiban, T. (2015). Determination of factors that influence passengers' airline selection: a study of low-cost carriers in Thailand. Doctor of Philosophy in Aviation Thesis submitted to Embry-Riddle University. <http://commons.erau.edu/edt/157>
 7. Belobaba, P., & Odoni, A. (2009). Introduction and Overview. In R. Doganis (Ed.), *The Airline Business* (pp. 1-16). London and New York: Routledge.
 8. Cento, A. (2009). *The Airline Industry: Challenges in the 21st Century*, Heidelberg: Springer. Available at <https://docplayer.net/2548236-Characteristics-of-the-airline-industry.html>
 9. Chatterjee, S. and Hadi, A.S. (2015) *Regression Analysis by Example*, 5th Edition, New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons. <http://3.droppdf.com/files/pjxkl/regression-analysis-by-example-5th-edition.pdf>
 10. Chen, C., & Wu, T. (2009). Exploring passenger preferences in airline service attributes: A note. *Journal of Air Transport Management*, 15, 52-53. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jairtraman.2008.07.005>
 11. Chiou, Y. & Chen, Y. (2010). Factors influencing the intentions of passengers regarding full service and low-cost carriers: A note, *Journal of Air Transport Management*, 16(4), 226-228. <https://ir.nctu.edu.tw/bitstream/11536/14097/1/000276958700011.pdf>
 12. Cook, G. & Goodwin, J. (2008). Airline Networks: A Comparison of Hub-and-Spoke and Point-to-Point Systems, *Journal of Aviation/Aerospace Education and Research*, 17(2), 5160. <https://doi.org/10.15394/jaaer.2008.1443>
 13. Diggines, C. (2010). Passenger Perceptions and Understanding of the Low-Cost and Full-Service Airline Models in South Africa and the Implications for Service Strategy. *International Research Symposium in Service Management*, 2(2), 24-27. <https://www.scribd.com/document/220777984/Diggines-12#>
 14. Doganis, R. (2006) *The Airline Business*, London and New York: Routledge, available file://E:/Dissertation/Airline%20Choice/Sources/the-airline-business-2006.pdf
 15. Fedosova, A. (2016). *Comparison between Low-cost and Traditional Airlines. Case study: EasyJet and British Airways*, B.Sc., Arcade University of Applied Sciences. <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/83fd/28ecb0ee555be43bde1471294a311aaa1add.pdf>
 16. Gillen, D. & Morrison, W. (2003). Bundling, integration and the delivered price of air travel: Are low-cost carriers full-service competitors? *Journal of Air Transport Management*, 9(1) 15-23. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0969-6997\(02\)00071-6](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0969-6997(02)00071-6)
 17. Global Travel Media (2019, 24 Dec. 2019). *Oman Air: the nation's 2019 Most Trusted Full-Service Airline Brand*, Press Release, Global Travel Media. <https://eglobaltravelmedia.com.au/2019/12/24/oman-air-the-nations-2019-most-trusted-full-service-airline-brand/>
 18. Hanna, N. & Wozniak, R. (2013). *Consumer Behavior: An Applied Approach*, United States: Kendall Hunt Publishing Company.
 19. IATA (2018). *IATA World Air Transport Statistics Released* [Press release No.51] <https://www.iata.org/en/pressroom/pr/2018-09-06-01/>
 20. IATA (2019). *WATS, World Air Transport Statistics 2019*, IATA. <https://www.iata.org/contentassets/a686ff624550453e8bf0c9b3f7f0ab26/wats-2019-mediakit.pdf>
 21. InterVISTAS (2013). Full-Service Airlines versus Low-Cost Carriers, prepared by InterVISTAS for the Istanbul Technical University. <http://aviation.itu.edu.tr/%5Cimg/%5CAviation%5Cdatafiles/Lecture%20Notes/Aviation%20Economic%20and%20Financial%20Analysis%2020152016/Readings/Module%2007/Airline%20Business%20Models.pdf>
 22. Jensen, R. (2009). *Delivering Excellent Service Quality in Low-Cost Aviation, A Process Perspective on the Passenger Market in Copenhagen Airport*, Master degree Thesis submitted to Copenhagen Business School. https://studenttheses.cbs.dk/bitstream/handle/10417/1848/rasmus_lindstroem_jensen.pdf
 23. Kothari, C.R. (2004) *Research methodology: Methods and techniques*, (2nd ed), New Delhi: New Age International. <http://www.modares.ac.ir/uploads/Agr.Oth.Lib.17.pdf>
 24. Kotler, P. & Armstrong, G. (2018). *Principles of Marketing*, Harlow: Pearson.
 25. Meng, X (2013) Scalable simple random sampling and stratified sampling, *30th International Conference on Machine Learning*, held 17-19 June at Atlanta, Georgia: (pp.531-539) <http://proceedings.mlr.press/v28/meng13a.pdf>
 26. Messner, W. (2016) Cross-cultural measurement of transaction-specific customer satisfaction in the services industry. *Journal of Customer Behaviour*, Vol.15 (4), 369-393. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/312349644_Cross-cultural_measurement_of_transaction-specific_customer_satisfaction_in_the_services_industry
 27. Mikulic, J. & Prebezac, D. (2011). What drives passenger loyalty to traditional and low-cost airlines? A formative partial least square approach. *Journal of Air Transport Management*, 17, 237-240. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jairtraman.2010.09.005>



28. Milne, J. (2007) Questionnaires: Some advantages and disadvantages. http://www.icbl.hw.ac.uk/ltidi/cookbook/info_questionnaires/printable.pdf
29. National Aeronautics and Space Administration (2003). *Learning to Fly: The Wright Brothers' Adventure*, NASA. Available https://www.nasa.gov/pdf/58225main_Wright.Brothers_508.pdf
30. O'Connell, J.F., & Williams, G. (2005). Passengers' perceptions of low-cost airlines and Full-Service Airlines: A case study involving Ryanair, Aer Lingus, and Malaysia Airlines. *Journal of Air Transport Management*, 11(5), 259-272.
31. Palnychenko, D. (2017). *Perception of Service in Airlines: A Comparison of Generation X and Generation Y*, Thesis submitted to Modul Vienna University for the award of B.Sc. Degree. https://www.modul.ac.at/uploads/files/Theses/Bachelor/undergrad_2017/Thesis_1321010_PALNYCH_ENKO_Diana.pdf
32. Rouby, I. (2018). A New Business Model: Low-Cost Carriers (The Case of EasyJet), *Global Review of Research in Tourism, Hospitality and Leisure Management*, 4(1), 608-631.
33. Salam Air (2023). *More On Air*, Salam Air, <https://www.salamair.com/en/book/more-on-air>
34. Schlumberger, C. E. & Weisskopf, N. (2014). *Ready for Takeoff? The Potential for Low-Cost Carriers in Developing Countries*, World Bank Group, <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/420911468331785786/pdf/Ready-for-takeoff-potential-for-low-cost-carriers-in-developing-countries.pdf>
35. Shaw, S. (2007). *Airline Marketing and Management*, England: Ashgate. <https://www.pdfdrive.com/airline-marketing-and-management-e33450563.html>
36. Skytrax Research of London (2003). Airline Quality. <https://www.airlinequality.com/review-pages/latest-airline-reviews/>
37. The Walshe Group (2019, Dec. 2019). *Oman Air Wins Four Prestigious Awards*, Media Releases, The Walshe Group. <https://walshegroup.com/news/oman-air-wins-four-prestigious-awards>
38. Ukpere, W. I., Stephens, M. S., Ikeogu, C. C., Ibe, C. C., & Akpan, E. O. P. (2012). Determinants of airline choice-making: The Nigerian perspective, *African Journal of Business Management*, 6, 5442-5455. <http://www.academicjournals.org/AJBM>
39. UNWTO (2011). *International tourists to hit 1.8 billion by 2030*. World Tourism Organization Press Release No. PR11079, <http://media.unwto.org/en/press-release>.
40. Wit, J. & Zuidberg, J. (2012). The Growth Limits of the Low-Cost Carrier Model, *Journal of Air Transport Management*, 21, 17-23. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jairtraman.2011.12.013>
41. Zawya (2019, 13 Nov. 2019). *Oman Air Extends Partnership to Serve as the Official Carrier of the Sultanate's National Football Team*, Zawya Press Release. <https://www.zawya.com/en/press-release/oman-air-extends-partnership-to-serve-as-the-official-carrier-of-the-sultanates-national-football-team-u562icjy>