

Staff Responsiveness and Communication on Passenger Satisfaction: Bases for Passenger Service Satisfaction Framework

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Date received: May 15, 2024
Date revised: June 12, 2024
Date accepted: June 17, 2024

Originality: 90%
Grammarly Score: 99%
Similarity: 10%

Recommended citation:

Sorso, H., Tandog, N. (2024). Staff responsiveness and communication on passenger satisfaction: bases for passenger service satisfaction framework. *Journal of Interdisciplinary Perspectives*, 2(7), 792-803.
<https://doi.org/10.69569/jip.2024.0211>

Abstract. This study aimed to assess the impact of staff responsiveness and communication on passenger satisfaction, contributing to the development of a passenger service satisfaction framework for Godofredo P. Ramos Airport (Caticlan Airport) in Caticlan, Malay, Aklan. The study employed a descriptive-correlational approach with four hundred fifty (450) passengers as respondents chosen through random sampling. Data were gathered using a researcher-constructed questionnaire. Statistical tools included frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation, and Spearman's rho correlation. Results revealed that most respondents were single, aged between 28-37, local, traveling 2-3 times annually, employed in private sectors, or as entrepreneurs with monthly incomes ranging from Php10,001 to Php50,000. Ground handlers or airline representatives were rated as "Moderately Responsive" but demonstrated "excellent" communication. Passenger satisfaction was found to be "very satisfied," with significant correlations between staff responsiveness/communication and satisfaction levels. These results imply that there is a need for the airline industry and airport management to consider staff responsiveness and communication as key factors in improving passenger satisfaction and to use this insight strategically for service enhancement, staff training, and policy development. The study suggests a framework for enhancing passenger service satisfaction that could be utilized by the airline industry and airport management.

Keywords: Passenger satisfaction; Staff responsiveness; Airport service; Caticlan airport.

1.0 Introduction

In today's fast-paced and competitive transportation market, offering a great client experience has become a major concern for service providers. The degree to which customers perceive the quality of the services they receive is greatly influenced by the responsiveness and communication skills of the staff. Travelers frequently view the effectiveness and clarity of communication channels, along with the efficiency and attentiveness of staff interactions, as critical components of their overall experience.

According to CAAP, 2022, Godofredo P. Ramos Airport, also known as Caticlan Airport, recently known as Boracay Airport by its developer Transaire, is an airport servicing the general region of the town of Malay in the Philippines' Aklan province. The airport is the seventh busiest in the Philippines and the third busiest in Western Visayas, with 761,961 passengers in 2008. The airport had 599,956 passenger movements in 2021 and 2,308,195 in 2022, representing a change of 284.73%. There were 5,956 aircraft movements in 2021, compared to 18,500 in 2022, representing a 210.61% increase. Staff, ground handlers, and airline officials all play important roles in airport operations, helping to ensure that air travel runs smoothly and efficiently. Ground handlers and airline agents are frequently the first points of contact for passengers. They help with a variety of activities, including check-in,

baggage management, and delivering important flight information. In the event of a flight disruption, they assist passengers with rebooking and resolve problems to provide a pleasant customer experience. Ground handlers and airports ensure safety, security, and operational efficiency, resulting in a great overall travel experience.

According to Zámková et al. (2022) found that the company's overall share of delayed flights did not increase over the designated time range. However, it was discovered that bigger aircraft tended to endure lengthier delays. While charter flight delays have decreased slightly, they are increasing owing to a variety of operational reasons such as airline operations, aircraft maintenance, and crew standards. In addition, Zámková and Prokop (2016) discovered that technical and maintenance-related delays are the most common in Prague, as are delays induced by high airspace concentration, operational management, and crew duty requirements.

Based on the reviews posted on various websites such as TripAdvisor, Skaytrax, etc., as well as on the observations, some passengers complaining about the delays in some flights of service airline companies due to various issues such as traffic congestions from NAIA, and the airport is too small to cater the large tourist's arrivals. Staff responsiveness and communication are very critical to ensure customer satisfaction. When the staff is attentive, helpful, and communicative effectively with the customer or passenger it can lead to positive feedback and a high level of satisfaction. Providing regular training for staff in effective communication and encouraging customer centers can improve this aspect of service in the travel industry and or other related businesses. This study investigated the staff communication and responsiveness on passengers' contentment. The findings can provide valuable insights for businesses to optimize their customer service practices, particularly in terms of staff responsiveness and communication, with the ultimate goal of enhancing passenger satisfaction and, consequently, overall business success.

2.0 Methodology

2.1 Research Design

The descriptive-correlational design of research was utilized in this study. A descriptive correlational design seeks the link between variables without attempting to manipulate any of them (Copeland, 2022). In the context of this study, a descriptive-correlational design would entail monitoring and documenting the level of staff responsiveness and communication in a transportation setting, as well as investigating how these factors connect to passenger satisfaction. Similarly, it would provide useful insights into the elements impacting passenger happiness in transportation settings, as well as influence attempts to improve passenger service quality.

2.2 Research Participants

The respondents of the study were 450 passengers equally distributed among the three (3) airlines (Cebu Pacific Air, Philippine Airlines, and Philippines AirAsia) in Godofredo P. Ramos Airport, Caticlan, Malay. The sample group was chosen based on the following criteria: (a) either male or female, LGBTQIA+ (b) eighteen years old and above, and (c) traveled three times or more. In addition, the respondents were chosen through a stratified random sampling method.

2.3 Research Instrument

The data needed in this study were gathered through the use of a researcher-constructed questionnaire as well as an adapted questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of four parts. Part I dealt with determining the socio-demographic profile of respondents. Part II measures the level of responsiveness. Part III measures the level of communication. Part IV of the questionnaire measures passenger satisfaction. Part IV of the questionnaire is adapted from Lamputi's (2015) study "Level of Passenger Satisfaction on the Services of Cebu Pacific Air". The questionnaire was validated, pilot-tested, and tested its reliability. Based on the reliability test variable (Staff Responsiveness) generated Cronbach's Alpha of .877 and was interpreted as "Good". More so, the variable (Staff Communication) and variable (Passenger Satisfaction) generated Cronbach's Alpha of .907 and .898 which were interpreted as "Excellent and Good", respectively.

2.4 Data Gathering Procedures

The researcher individually handed out survey questions to each passenger. This was accomplished by physically going to the terminal where the passengers were waiting for their flights and distributing questionnaires at the

terminal or pre-departure area. During the administration of the study instrument, respondents were instructed on what to do. The researcher also retrieved the surveys.

2.5 Data Analysis

In the analysis of data, statistical tools such as descriptive (mean, standard deviation, and percentages) and inferential (Spearman's rho correlation) were used.

2.6 Ethical Considerations

The researcher considered ethical considerations when carrying out the study. These are required to protect the respondents' privacy, as well as to get consent. Consent and secrecy were among the key concerns considered since they involve sensitive issues such as the level of knowledge regarding airline operations, the level of awareness surrounding airline operations, and customer satisfaction with the airlines. The respondents' confidentiality was maintained by not disclosing their names or personal information in the study; only relevant details about them were provided.

3.0 Results and Discussion

3.1 Socio-demographic Profile of the Respondents

Table 1 presents the socio-demographic profile of the respondents.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics of the socio-demographic profile of the respondent

CATEGORY	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Age		
18-27	126	28.00
28-37	194	43.10
38-47	81	18.00
48-57	28	6.20
58-67	21	4.70
Gender		
Male	220	48.90
Female	203	45.10
LGBTQIA+	20	4.40
I prefer not to say	7	1.60
Civil Status		
Single	297	66.00
Married	137	30.40
Widow	16	3.60
Average Monthly Income		
10,000 and below	75	16.70
10,001- 30,000	168	37.30
30,001- 50,000	154	34.20
50,001 and above	53	11.80
Occupation		
Government Employee		
Private Employee/	149	33.10
Entrepreneur	301	66.90
Type of Passenger		
Local	372	82.70
Foreign	78	17.30
Frequency of Travel in Aklan		
Once a year	92	20.40
2-3 times a year	214	47.60
4-5 times a year	88	19.60
More than 5 times a year	56	12.40

3.2 Responsiveness of Staff

The study presented in Table 2 examines the level of responsiveness of ground handlers or airline representatives at Godofredo P. Ramos Airport. The results revealed that the ground handlers or airline representatives were rated "completely responsive" in demonstrating commitments to serve passengers, accountability, willingness to help and guide passengers, proactivity in identifying and addressing potential issues, and their ability to understand and cater to passengers with unique requirements. Additionally, the ground handlers were

"completely responsive" in quickly responding to passenger requests and inquiries. However, they were only rated as "moderately responsive" in quickly resolving passenger problems and grievances.

Table 2. Descriptive statistics of the level of responsiveness of the ground handler or airline representative

INDICATORS	MEAN	SD	DESCRIPTION
1. Quickly respond to requests or inquiries of passengers.	4.21	0.61	Completely Responsive
2. Exhibits willingness to help and guide.	4.28	0.61	Completely Responsive
3. Treats public situations with care and seriousness.	4.16	0.62	Moderately Responsive
4. Provides proper services promptly.	4.13	0.61	Moderately Responsive
5. Is flexible enough to accommodate traveler's specific requests.	4.15	0.76	Moderately Responsive
6. Is proactive in identifying and addressing potential issues before escalating them to the higher authority.	4.22	0.60	Completely Responsive
7. Takes time to understand and cater to passengers with unique requirements.	4.21	0.70	Completely Responsive
8. Quickly resolves problems and grievances of passengers.	4.08	0.69	Moderately Responsive
9. Engages with feedback and makes necessary improvements.	4.16	0.74	Moderately Responsive
10. Demonstrates commitment to serving passengers and Accountability.	4.40	0.65	Completely Responsive
Composite Mean	4.20	0.45	Moderately Responsive

Legend: 1.00-1.80 - Not Responsive at all; 1.81-2.60 - Slightly Responsive; 2.61-3.40 - Neutral;
3.41 - 4.20 - Moderately Responsive; 4.21-5.00 - Completely Responsive

Overall, the level of responsiveness of the ground handlers or airline representatives was assessed as "Moderately Responsive". The standard deviation indicates that the assessments of the respondents were closely aligned.

These findings suggest that the ground handlers or airline representatives have a baseline level of responsiveness, but may not consistently meet all expectations in terms of speed and thoroughness of their responses. This could lead to a mix of positive and negative experiences for customers, with some feeling adequately assisted while others may feel their needs were not fully met or addressed promptly (Nadimi et al., 2023). Improving the responsiveness of ground handlers or airline representatives can enhance customer satisfaction, operational efficiency, and competitive advantage in the airline industry

The result implies that ground handlers or airline representatives are somewhat responsive but may not consistently meet all expectations in terms of speed or thoroughness in their responses. Also, being moderately responsive may lead to mixed experiences for customers, with some feeling adequately assisted while others may feel their needs were not fully met or addressed promptly. Further, being moderately responsive indicates a baseline level of effectiveness highlighting areas for improvement that can lead to enhanced customer satisfaction, operational efficiency, and competitive advantage in the airline industry.

These results highlight the importance of the responsiveness of ground handlers or airline representatives. According to Shakeerah et al., (2020), responsiveness is the ability of customers to respond to customer needs when they need service. This means that employees can efficiently execute work content, and it also represents their ability to plan when responding to customer needs according to the needs of the staff. Similar result to the study of Shakeerah et al. (2020), responsiveness is the ability of customers to respond to customer needs when they need service. This means that employees can efficiently execute work content, and it also represents their ability to plan when responding to customer needs according to the needs of the staff. Further, the advantage of responsiveness can compete in many of the same industries. It can enhance the company's competitiveness while also achieving better performance, which is critical to the company's healthy growth (Schonberger & Brown, 2017).

The study's findings align with prior research on airport service quality and passenger satisfaction.(Nadimi et al., 2023). For instance, a study on service quality improvement of ground staff at Don Mueang International Airport found that passengers' perceptions of ground staff service quality varied by gender and age group (Sricharoenpramong, 2018). Another study exploring the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on passenger satisfaction revealed positive sentiment towards airport staff and the environment, with significant associations between ratings and the check-in process, the environment, and personnel.

3.3 Level of Communication of Staff

Table 3. Descriptive statistics of the level of communication of the ground handler or airline representative

INDICATORS	MEAN	SD	DESCRIPTION
1. Provides comprehensive public announcements related to flight information, gate changes, and other essential details.	4.18	0.62	Above Average
2. Ensures Clarity in delivering public announcements.	4.32	0.62	Excellent
3. Provide timely and accurate information in response to passengers' inquiries and concerns.	4.16	0.70	Above Average
4. Assists passengers in multiple languages to cater to a diverse range of travelers.	4.32	0.69	Excellent
5. Provides accessibility to information desk or help centers to assist passengers.	4.19	0.73	Above Average
6. Utilizes digital channels such as mobile apps, social media, and websites to provide real-time updates and information.	4.06	0.75	Above Average
7. Exhibits consistency in communication across various channels.	4.13	0.80	Above Average
8. Demonstrates communication and coordination among airport personnel during disruptions, such as flight delays or cancellations.	4.24	0.69	Excellent
9. Communicate and assist passengers with special needs, ensuring a comfortable and inclusive experience.	4.36	0.63	Excellent
10. Provides feedback mechanism for passengers to share their opinion on the quality of communication and assistance received.	4.21	0.66	Excellent
Composite Mean	4.22	0.48	Excellent

The results presented in Table 3 highlight the exemplary level of communication demonstrated by the ground handlers or airline representatives at Godofredo P. Ramos Airport. The ground handlers or airline representatives were rated "excellent" in various aspects of communication, reflecting their professionalism and dedication to ensuring a positive experience for passengers.

One of the key strengths observed was the ground handlers' or airline representatives' ability to communicate effectively with passengers, particularly those with special needs. The study found that they were highly skilled in assisting these passengers and ensuring their comfort and inclusion during the travel experience. Similarly, the ground handlers or airline representatives exhibited excellent communication in delivering clear and understandable public announcements, catering to a diverse range of travelers by providing assistance in multiple languages, and demonstrating effective coordination and communication among airport personnel during disruptions such as flight delays or cancellations.

Furthermore, the ground handlers or airline representatives were praised for their provision of feedback mechanisms, allowing passengers to share their opinions on the quality of communication and assistance received. This reflects a commitment to continuous improvement and a customer-centric approach. Interestingly, the ground handlers or airline representatives were also found to utilize digital channels and websites to provide real-time updates and information, though this was rated as "above average" rather than "excellent." This suggests that there may be room for improvement in fully leveraging digital communication channels to enhance the passenger experience.

Overall, the study findings indicate that the ground handlers or airline representatives at Godofredo P. Ramos Airport have a strong grasp of effective communication, which is a critical aspect of airline operations and customer service interactions. This aligns with previous research highlighting the importance of communication skills for aviation management trainees and ground staff (Kaur et al., 2021; Sricharoenpramong, 2018). The high level of communication proficiency displayed by the ground handlers or airline representatives likely contributes to the positive outcomes and passenger satisfaction observed at the airport.

Further, the study's findings underscore the need for continuous investment in communication training and development for airport personnel to maintain and enhance the level of service quality and passenger experience. It is evident from the study that the ground handlers and airline representatives at Godofredo P. Ramos Airport have consistently demonstrated exceptional communication skills, significantly contributing to the overall positive passenger experience. Their ability to effectively communicate with passengers, particularly those with special needs, showcase their commitment to inclusivity and passenger welfare. Moreover, the provision of multilingual assistance and clear public announcements reflects their dedication to catering to a diverse range of travelers.

Thus, the result implies the importance and positive outcomes of effective communication in the context of airline operations or customer service interactions. Also, the ground handler or airline representative was proficient in conveying clear and effective communication and often reflects professionalism in handling tasks and interactions with passengers. Further, excellent communication was not just adequate but also understanding. This indicates that the ground handler or airline representative likely went above and beyond in addressing and answering the concerns and questions of the passengers as well as by assisting customers in the airport.

The results of the study aligns with the findings of (Kaur et al., 2021; Iwara et al., 2020; Tianyue, 2022; and Türeli et al., 2019), which emphasize the significance of effective communication skills in the aviation industry and the positive impact it can have on customer satisfaction and organizational performance.

These results highlight the importance of communication between ground handlers and airline representatives. In fact, according to the study by Lee (2017) the symbols of messages used in the communication process to convey thoughts and feelings to others verbally and non-verbal, and said that language, a socially established symbol system, is the most basic means of communication. The passengers will communicate throughout the voyage. They will begin by welcoming passengers on board and communicating with them in a language, such as clarifying safety and services or sympathizing with their position. Furthermore, a study by Leigh and Summers (2022) found that non-verbal factors were more influential than linguistic factors. Among nonverbal characteristics, spatial language and comparable language were found to have a significant impact on service quality, followed by physical appearance, verbal communication, and body language, all of which confirm the current study's conclusions.

3.4 Level of Passenger Satisfaction

Table 4. Descriptive statistics of the level of passenger satisfaction to the ground handler or airline representative

INDICATORS	MEAN	SD	DESCRIPTION
1. Sincerity and patience of staff in resolving passengers' problems.	4.62	0.64	Very Satisfied
2. Knowledge and skills of staff in terms of provision of services.	4.46	0.67	Very Satisfied
3. Instillation of safety and confidence to passengers.	4.31	0.71	Very Satisfied
4. Convenience of flight schedules and easy ticketing channels.	4.13	0.69	Satisfied
5. Pleasant demeanor of staff in providing individual attention.	4.08	0.74	Satisfied
6. Availability of other travel-related partners such as car rentals, hotel accommodations, and travel insurance.	4.18	0.79	Satisfied
7. Promptness of staff in responding to passengers' requests or complaints.	4.41	0.73	Very Satisfied
8. Willingness of staff to help.	4.52	0.62	Very Satisfied
9. Dissemination of information about some changes and services to be performed.	4.16	0.83	Satisfied
10. Accuracy of services being performed.	4.38	0.67	Very Satisfied
11. On-time flight performance.	4.12	0.88	Satisfied
12. Remedial procedures for delayed or missing baggage.	3.79	1.13	Satisfied
13. Neat and properly dressed staff.	4.78	0.43	Very Satisfied
14. Visually attractive, modern, and clean physical on-board facilities.	4.60	0.59	Very Satisfied
15. A variety of up-to-date videos/ magazines/ newspapers on board.	3.68	1.11	Satisfied
Composite Mean	4.28	0.44	Very Satisfied

The data in Table 4 presents the results of a passenger satisfaction survey conducted at Godofredo P. Ramos Airport. The results revealed that passengers were "very satisfied" with various aspects of the airport's services and facilities, including the neatness and proper attire of staff, the visual appeal and cleanliness of the physical facilities, and the staff's sincerity, patience, and knowledge in resolving passengers' problems.

Specifically, the survey found that passengers were very satisfied with the neatness and proper attire of staff ($M=4.78$, $SD=0.43$), the visual appeal, modernity, and cleanliness of the physical facilities ($M=4.60$, $SD=0.59$), the sincerity and patience of staff in resolving passengers' problems ($M=4.62$, $SD=0.64$), the staff's willingness to help ($M=4.52$, $SD=0.62$) and the staff's knowledge and skills in providing services and performing accurate services ($M=4.46$; $SD=.67$). Additionally, passengers were very satisfied with the promptness of staff in responding to requests and complaints, as well as the staff's ability to instill a sense of safety and confidence ($M=4.41$, $SD=0.73$) as well as safety and confidence to passengers ($M=4.31$; $SD=.71$).

However, the survey also found that passengers were only "satisfied" with the pleasant demeanor of staff in providing individual attention ($M=4.08$, $SD=0.74$), the remedial procedures for delayed or missing baggage ($M=3.79$, $SD=1.13$). Further, a variety of up-to-date videos/magazines/newspapers on board ($M=3.68$; $SD=1.11$) displayed a "satisfied" result. Generally, the level of passenger satisfaction at Godofredo P. Ramos Airport was found to be "very satisfied" ($M=4.28$; $SD=.44$). Likewise, the standard deviation provides that the assessments of respondents on the level of passenger satisfaction at Godofredo P. Ramos Airport are closed to each other. These findings suggest that the airport is performing well in terms of passenger satisfaction, but there may be opportunities for improvement in certain areas, such as staff interaction and in-flight entertainment.

The results imply that majority of the passengers share a similarly high level of satisfaction which indicates a strong overall satisfaction level among passengers at Godofredo P. Ramos Airport, which is beneficial for the airport's reputation, competitiveness, and stakeholder relationships. Ongoing efforts to maintain and improve this satisfaction level are essential for long-term success and positive passenger experiences. These results highlight the significance of passenger's satisfaction with ground handlers or airline representatives. Surveys such as those conducted by Shakeerah Mohd Shukri, Mohd Shukri Ab Yazid, and Jacqueline Tham (2020) have shown that most respondents agreed that specific characteristics are vital to service provider-consumer interaction.

The results of this study are consistent with previous research on passenger satisfaction at airports (Bakır et al., 2022). The development of a new customer service model has helped airports in the United Arab Emirates better understand passenger perceptions and identify areas for improvement (Wahab et al., 2015; Bakır et al., 2022; Nadimi et al., 2023; Bakır et al., 2022). Similarly, a study on airport service quality in India found that airport facilities and services play a significant role in overall passenger satisfaction (Pappachan, 2020). These findings highlight the importance of continuously monitoring and improving the passenger experience at airports to remain competitive in the industry.

In addition, the results of the study support the findings of Lamputi (2015), who found that passenger satisfaction depends upon the various factors of the services provided or products delivered. The service given can be tangible or intangible; if it does not match the passenger's criteria, it is rejected. Thus, passenger happiness may be viewed as both a baseline standard of performance and a potential criterion of excellence for any corporate organization. As a result of these experiences, poor levels of satisfaction reduce customer loyalty to the airline. When a consumer's contentment improves, so does his loyalty. As a result, users' contentment with an airline is directly influenced by their overall pleasure. On the other hand, (Xu et al., 2018), underscored that service failure may therefore have a major influence on satisfaction and have negative consequences for customer loyalty, especially given that satisfaction has been recognized as a critical antecedent of recommendation likelihood (Serić & Pranićević, 2018).

3.5 Relationship Between Responsiveness and Passenger Satisfaction

Data in Table 5 presents the relationship between the level of responsiveness of the ground handler or airline representative and the level of passenger satisfaction at Godofredo P. Ramos Airport. The study reveals a significant relationship between the level of responsiveness of ground handlers or airline representatives and the level of passenger satisfaction at Godofredo P. Ramos Airport. The results showed a computed p-value of .000, which is less than the level of significance alpha of .05 leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis. Additionally, the positive correlation found between responsiveness and passenger satisfaction suggests that responsiveness plays a crucial role in shaping passenger satisfaction levels.

Table 5. Correlation analysis for the relationship between the level of responsiveness and level of passenger satisfaction

VARIABLE	SPEARMAN RANK CORRELATION COEFFICIENT	DEGREE OF RELATIONSHIP	P- VALUE	DECISION
Level of Responsiveness of the Ground Handler or Airline Representative Level of Passenger Satisfaction	0.571	Moderately Positive Correlation	0.000*	Reject Null Hypothesis

*Highly significant at .01 level of significance

**Significant at .05 level of significance

***Not Significant at .05 level of significance

When ground handlers or airline representatives are more responsive to passenger needs, inquiries, or complaints, passengers are likely to have a better overall experience, resulting in higher satisfaction levels. This is consistent with previous research that has found a positive effect of passenger earliness of arrival on overall satisfaction, as earlier arrival allows passengers to be more relaxed and less stressed during the airport process (Bezerra & Gomes, 2015). Furthermore, the moderately positive correlation highlights the significance of excellent customer service practices in the aviation industry and emphasizes the potential benefits of prioritizing and enhancing responsiveness to meet passenger expectations effectively.

For instance, a study on service quality and passenger satisfaction in the Nigerian aviation industry found that empathy and care shown by airlines can increase passengers' approval rating of their services, and that responsiveness has a significant influence on passenger satisfaction, with a 40.9% increase in satisfaction for every unit increase in responsiveness (Wojuade & Onatade, 2020). Similarly, research on the impact of a global pandemic on passenger satisfaction at airports revealed that despite the ongoing challenges, there was an overall positive sentiment towards staff and the airport environment, highlighting the importance of qualified personnel in shaping passenger experiences.

The findings of this study underscore the critical role of responsiveness in driving passenger satisfaction at Godofredo P. Ramos Airport. To enhance the overall passenger experience, airport operators and airlines should prioritize improving the responsiveness of ground handlers and airline representatives through training, empowerment, and continuous feedback mechanisms. These results underscore the significance of the relationship between the responsiveness of ground handlers or airline representatives and the level of passenger satisfaction that supports the findings of Türelia et al (2019) stated the importance of customer satisfaction is increasing in the aviation industry in other sectors with the developing economy and changing technology. Employees who provide ground handling services at airports also play an essential role in client satisfaction. Employees in ground handling services can acquire value by fulfilling the changing demands and needs of airport terminal services, where innovative technology is at the forefront. It has been determined that organizational factors, ground handling job factors (including team characteristics and relationships), and individual factors can increase the impact of idea generation, idea promotion, and idea realization, all of which have a positive effect on empowerment, value co-creation, customization, and perceived quality, resulting in passenger satisfaction.

3.6 Relationship Between Communication and Passenger Satisfaction

Table 6. Correlation analysis for the relationship between communication and passenger satisfaction

VARIABLE	SPEARMAN RANK CORRELATION COEFFICIENT	DEGREE OF RELATIONSHIP	P- VALUE	DECISION
Level of Communication of the Ground Handler or Airline Representative Level of Passenger Satisfaction	0.638	Moderately Positive Correlation	0.000*	Reject Null Hypothesis

Data in Table 6 presents the results on the relationship between the level of communication of the ground handler or airline representative and the level of passenger satisfaction at Godofredo P. Ramos Airport. The study's findings reveal a significant relationship between the level of communication of the ground handler or airline representative and the level of passenger satisfaction at Godofredo P. Ramos Airport. The computed p-value of .000, which is less than the alpha level of significance at .05 indicates that the null hypothesis can be rejected (Nadimi et al., 2023). Furthermore, the correlation coefficient of .638 suggests a moderately positive relationship between the two variables, meaning that as the level of communication improves, there is a tendency for passenger satisfaction levels to also increase, and vice versa. This highlights the critical role of clear and effective communication in shaping positive passenger experiences and overall satisfaction levels in the aviation industry (O et al., 2020).

The importance of communication in enhancing passenger satisfaction is supported by existing literature. For instance, a study on passenger satisfaction at Murtala Muhammed Airport (MMA2) found that the sample size of respondents was adequate for factor analysis, emphasizing the significance of effective communication in delivering satisfactory airport services (O et al., 2020; Wojuade & Onatade, 2020). Similarly, research on factors affecting travel satisfaction of airport parent-child groups found that communication management is a key

determinant of customer satisfaction. Moreover, a study on communication management strategies for measuring hotel performance in Port Harcourt, Nigeria, revealed that of respondents were very satisfied with the communication strategy used by hotel proprietors, underscoring the crucial role of communication in shaping customer satisfaction in the hospitality industry.

The findings of this study underscore the need for airport operators and airline representatives to prioritize effective communication as a means of enhancing passenger satisfaction. By fostering clear, empathetic, and responsive communication, airports and airlines can cultivate a positive customer experience, which can lead to increased passenger satisfaction and loyalty. Furthermore, the study emphasizes the importance of training and development programs for airport and airline personnel to enhance their communication skills and customer service abilities. In conclusion, the study's findings highlight the significant relationship between the level of communication and passenger satisfaction at Godofredo P. Ramos Airport, underscoring the critical role of effective communication in driving positive passenger experiences in the aviation industry.

Further, the current study's findings support the conclusions of Yu-Lim SUNG and Hye-Yoon PARK's (2021) study, which examined the relationship between international airlines' communication competence, customer happiness, and reuse intention. An empirical investigation of the relationship between airline service quality, customer happiness, and desire to re-use can propose the following findings based on the language and nonverbal communication abilities of Korean staff working for international airlines. Communication between Korean personnel working for international airlines has an impact on airline service quality, customer happiness, and reuse intention. In addition, Prentice and Kadan (2019) find a significant positive relationship between service quality and passenger intentions to reuse airports.

3.7 Passenger Service Satisfaction Framework

Ground handlers or airline representatives play a crucial role in ensuring the smooth functioning of airlines. To ensure that flights operate smoothly, safely, and with exceptional customer service, a significant amount of work is done behind the scenes. Consequently, passengers receive outstanding treatment, and the airline's interests are well-represented throughout the aviation industry. To ensure passenger satisfaction, ground handlers or airline staff must react quickly and interact with other passengers in a friendly manner.

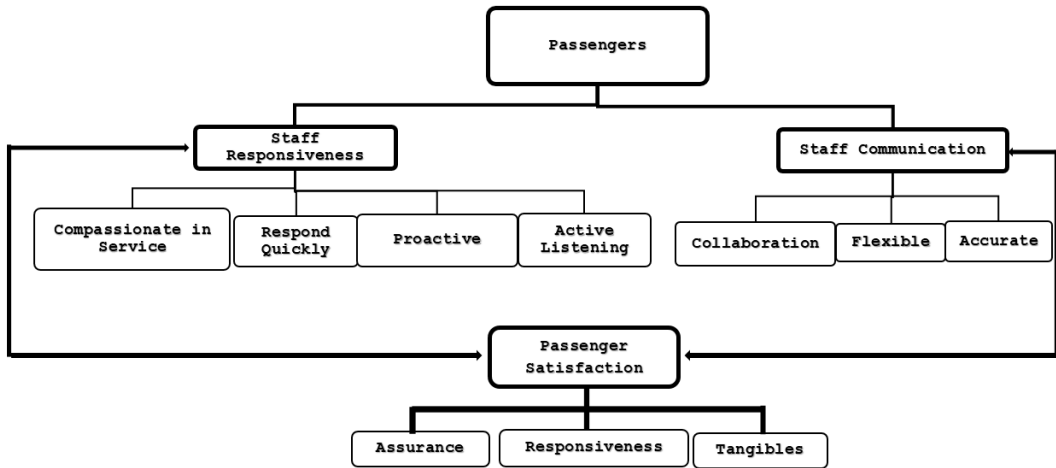


Figure 1. Passenger Service Satisfaction Framework

Regarding staff responsiveness, the discussion underscores its importance in passenger satisfaction within the aviation industry. It specifies that staff must be compassionate, quick to respond, proactive, and attentive listeners. Compassionate staff members or airline representatives should be willing to assist and guide passengers, demonstrating accountability and dedication to helping them. Responsive staff must swiftly respond to passenger requests or questions, adapt to fulfill travelers' unique needs, and promptly address passenger problems and concerns.

Being proactive entails identifying and addressing potential issues before they escalate. Active listening involves interacting with criticism, making necessary adjustments, and taking the time to understand and respond to passengers' specific needs. Passengers are more likely to be satisfied when ground handlers or airline staff exhibit compassionate service, promptly address customers' needs, and take initiative in their interactions, which are key indicators for enhancing responsiveness and contributing to a positive passenger experience.

Effective communication by airline representatives is essential for ensuring customer satisfaction, managing crises, building trust and loyalty, optimizing operations, enhancing safety and security, maintaining a positive brand reputation, and meeting legal requirements. The discussion highlights the importance of staff communication in passenger satisfaction within the aviation industry, emphasizing that staff must be collaborative, flexible, and accurate.

Collaborative airport personnel must communicate and cooperate during interruptions like flight delays or cancellations, providing a feedback system for passengers to share their thoughts on communication quality and support received. Flexible airline representatives should enable clients to provide feedback on the quality of assistance and outreach they experienced, assisting passengers in multiple languages to serve a diverse range of travelers. Accurate personnel or airline representatives must present public announcements clearly.

Prioritizing collaborative, flexible, and accurate communication among ground handlers or airline representatives ensures a more seamless and positive experience for passengers, ultimately enhancing their satisfaction and loyalty to the service. Emphasizing active listening, empathy, and responsiveness fosters stronger relationships and enhances overall customer satisfaction, leading to increased loyalty, positive word-of-mouth referrals, and sustained success in the competitive aviation industry.

Passenger satisfaction is crucial for airlines as it drives customer loyalty, generates positive word-of-mouth recommendations, provides a competitive advantage, increases revenue, enhances brand reputation, improves customer retention, boosts operational efficiency, and ensures regulatory compliance. Airlines must prioritize passenger satisfaction by delivering exceptional passenger experiences at every touchpoint throughout the travel journey.

Passengers are more likely to feel assured when they perceive sincerity and patience from staff in resolving their problems, along with staff demonstrating knowledge and skills in providing services and instilling safety and confidence. In terms of responsiveness, ground handlers or airline representatives make passengers feel appreciated and supported throughout their travel, resulting in higher levels of satisfaction when staff are ready to assist promptly, attend to passengers' requests or grievances, and communicate changes and services effectively.

Finally, when passengers believe the tangibles of the service are of good quality, they are more likely to enjoy their trip and have a positive image of the transportation provider. Ensuring staff or airline representatives are neatly clothed and physically appealing, with modern and clean onboard facilities, along with a selection of current periodicals, newspapers, and videos, contributes to passenger satisfaction.

Prioritizing passenger satisfaction is paramount for airlines as it not only drives business success but also enhances customer relations, brand reputation, and operational effectiveness. By consistently delivering exceptional experiences and addressing key drivers of satisfaction, airlines can cultivate loyal customers and thrive in a competitive industry landscape. Concentrating on these factors allows ground handlers or airline staff to provide passengers with a more gratifying and delightful experience, potentially resulting in increased customer loyalty, favorable word-of-mouth referrals, and commercial success.

4.0 Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were drawn:

- a) The surveyed travelers, mostly young adults, take 2-3 trips yearly, balancing travel desires with time and budget constraints, favoring domestic or regional exploration. Financial stability allows for multiple trips,

indicating a middle-income group with disposable income. Yet, prudent budgeting and planning remain essential.

- b) Although there were instances of responsiveness, it was not consistently up to par. Ground handling and airline staff at the airport require improvement in responsiveness. Implementing strategies like improving communication, training employees, and streamlining processes can better meet passenger needs. Responsive service enhances the overall customer experience, promoting loyalty and positive feedback, which benefits both the airport and the airlines. These enhancements significantly contribute to the long-term success and reputation of the airport.
- c) Survey participants placed great importance on exceptional communication abilities, highlighting the significance of clarity, efficacy, and responsiveness. Effective communication aids in comprehension, prompt resolution of issues, and provision of essential details, resulting in heightened satisfaction and loyalty. Demonstrating professionalism and efficiency in communication underscores the proficiency of ground handlers or airline representatives, positively impacting the overall customer experience and fostering trust among passengers.
- d) Passengers at Godofredo P. Ramos Airport express high satisfaction, indicating the airport exceeds expectations in navigation, cleanliness, service, staff friendliness, and overall atmosphere. This positive reputation reflects the airport's commitment to fulfilling passenger needs, fostering sustained success.
- e) The significant correlation between ground handlers' promptness and passenger contentment underscores the essential role of customer service in shaping the airport journey. Enhancing responsiveness and service benchmarks can cultivate a favorable atmosphere, guaranteeing sustained success and competitiveness within the aviation sector.
- f) The robust connection between ground handlers' communication and passenger contentment emphasizes the critical significance of effective communication in shaping enjoyable airport experiences. Giving priority to efficient communication methods can establish a gratifying atmosphere, securing enduring success and competitiveness in the aviation sector.
- g) The results offer an advancement of the field not only descriptive insights but also prescriptive advice on enhancing airport service. By revealing the importance of staff responsiveness and communication, the study informs practices that could potentially lead to increased passenger satisfaction.
- h) Further, the study has advanced understanding of young adult travel habits, emphasizing the impact of economic stability and planning on travel decisions. It underscores the critical role of responsive customer service and clear communication from airline staff in increasing satisfaction and fostering loyalty. By setting a standard for satisfying airport experiences, the research offers practical guidance for the travel industry to improve service quality and enhance the overall passenger experience.
- i) Finally, further investigations into passenger satisfaction across transportation centers can inform industry benchmarks and reveal service quality's influence on traveler loyalty. Studies focusing on cultural differences, digital technology integration, and staff training effectiveness could provide valuable strategies for personalizing and improving passenger experiences.

5.0 Contributions of Authors

The sole author initiated and completed this study.

6.0 Funding

This work was funded by the author.

7.0 Conflict of Interests

The author declares no conflict of interest.

8.0 Acknowledgment

The author extends his appreciation to everyone who played a role directly or indirectly in aiding him to complete this study and providing motivation during the months it took to piece together.

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