

Determinants of Total Service Quality and the dual mediation of Ticket prices and Customers Satisfaction in the Airline Industry of Pakistan

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Declaration

I, Muhammad Moeen Yaqoob declare that this Masters degree's thesis entitled as "Determinants of Total Service Quality and the moderating role of Ticket prices in the Airline Industry of Pakistan" submitted to NBS for the degree of MS L& SCM is the result of my own work. Acknowledgements are also provided wherever any material is utilized.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

PFS	Pre-Flight Services
IFS	In-flight services
PTFS	Post-flight services
PIA	Pakistan International Airline
IATA	International Air Transport Association
CS	Customer Satisfaction
TSQ	Total Service Quality
FFP	Frequent Flyer Program
WOM	Word of Mouth

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CHAPTER1: INTRODUCTION

1.1. Introduction

It is important to have well maintained customer service since the loyal customers are the foundation of revenue generation, specifically for the airlines in order to compete and remain profitable. Since the Pakistan has nearly above 200 million population, increasing at the rate of almost 1.41% annually (CIA, 2018). With this size of the population; airline sector of Pakistan is among the fastest growing industries. According a study of World Bank, approximately 2.8billion people in 2012 used airplanes to travel. The airline industry is mushrooming and it is expected to touch at \$832 billion till the year 2020 (IATA, 2018). On the other hand, the situation of the airline industry in Pakistan is even more encouraging as a result of a rising population, and greater than before travelling desires of the middle class. On the word of the Airbus Global Market Forecast air traffic in Pakistan's skies is mounting and is anticipated to approximately twice over the following twenty years with a growth percentage of around 4.9% each year (Hanif, 2018). These figures indicate that Pakistan's airline industry is developing as rapidly as the international air industry. With increasing progress in the industry, competition is growing as well. Domestic airlines of Pakistan and international airlines are contending and trying to gain a competitive edge on each other regarding in-flight facilities and providing competitive tickets to large economy-class travelers (Saleem, Zahra, & Yaseen, 2017). In recent times, a series of crunches have caused several difficulties for the established airlines such as Air Blue, Shaheen Air and Pakistan International Airlines (PIA), regardless of their exceptional growth. The difficulties comprise of administration failures, union strikes and high operational costs making the Pakistan's airline industry uncertain between growing income and sustaining a customer's base to survive.

One approach to improve the competitive place of airline is to maintain customers as loyal clients are comparatively not as much price sensitive and can be well connected with the lower budget means (García Gómez, Arranz, & Cillán, 2006). Retaining the customers, though, is a complex task, including many market and culture related factors. Thus, it is important to discover the significance of research in customers repurchase intents in the settings of airline industry of Pakistan. The assertion that for flourishing and surviving in the competitive market

situation especially in services industry; repurchase intention is among the highly significant, if not the utmost important factor (Gustafsson, Johnson, & Roos, 2005). Studying in this perspective, several researchers did focused examining on finding out the determinants of retention or repeated sales (Lin & Lu, 2010; Zeithaml et al., 1996) whereas others study connections with consumers, and client's experience related to the development of repurchase intent (Hansemark & Albinsson, 2004; Martín et al., 2011).

Yet, present research is mostly restricted to the perspective of developed countries instead of developing nations (Hellier, Geursen, Carr, & Rickard, 2003). For that reason, in this research we will attempt to investigate that how to improve the criteria for determining the customer service rather than just focusing on some generic basic parameters in an airline sector. The primary objective of this research is to identify the determinants of total service quality that significantly improves the customer service of the Pakistani airlines, using an approach that will measure the performance in multidimensional perspective. This research studies the phenomenon by addressing why airlines should not entirely focus on traditional indicators and to better understand and further explore the ways to improve their service level measurement criteria. This study will offer a substantial contribution to present literature through assisting to resolve the major concerns associated to service quality in the Pakistan's airline industry with the suggested methodology.

1.2. Problem Statement

Air Travelling includes numerous service providers including from the time of booking, flight travel and till the after travel baggage distribution system. Customers will evaluate every service from different viewpoints. Previous studies made substantial contributions in this regard, however in these studies; customer service was not measured in multidimensional perspective as a Total Service Quality aspect, that will evaluate each key elements in multidirectional perspective that are impacting directly to end-to-end passenger's travel experience. As due to very limited existing research on an end-to-end link of services which leads to customer satisfaction and develops the repurchase intention specially in airline industry and more specifically in scenario of Pakistan's domestic industry. In view of that, in this study we will attempt to examine that what are the prime factors which will determine the customer service

quality that leads to repurchase intentions. Thus in the light of above discussions our problem statement is “*Determining the appropriate total service quality determinants in airline industry of Pakistan: How do passengers perceive service quality of different providers in an end-to-end travel scenario in connection with repurchase intention?*”

1.3. Research Objectives and Questions

Primarily this study aims to identify the service quality determinants of all three stages that are linked with the customer repurchase intentions and to observe the dual mediation effect of ticket prices and customer satisfaction also suggesting a policy guideline for airlines to enhance their repurchases. To achieve this, following research objectives are proposed as:

- To identify factors affecting total service quality in the airline industry.
- To evaluate the impact of various components of total service quality in airline industry on repurchase intention.
- To determine the mediating role of ticket price and customer satisfaction between total service quality and repurchase intentions of airline passengers.
- To suggest policy for improving the focus on key areas of service quality.

In order to examine the key determinants of entire chain of services in airline industry of Pakistan, this research aims to identify the service quality determinants that are linked with the customer satisfaction and develops a repurchase intention; research questions that are currently under consideration for this research includes:

- What are the key determinants of pre-flight, in-flight and post-flight service quality that leads towards customer satisfaction and resultantly the repurchase intention?
- Do customer satisfaction and ticket price mediate the relationship between total service qualities and repurchase intention in airline industry?

1.4. Structure of Research

Chapter one discusses the research topic and highlights the relevance of the study aimed at identifying the determinants of each service delivery stages that helps to achieve a total service quality that ultimately leads towards improved repurchase intentions or repeated sales. Later the chapter one closes on discussing the research problem and developing research questions and objectives.

Chapter two is focused on discussing contributions earlier studies and potential gaps in their frameworks. This chapter is mainly comprised of literature review on service quality in relation with the repurchase intentions in airline industry. This chapter is organized into six main sections including first discussing the repurchase intentions, total service quality which is further separated into three parts as pre-flight, in-flight and the post-flight related services, then Customer satisfaction and lastly the Ticket prices. Later it discusses the identified research gaps.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

With the growth of the globalization, the domestic and international airline sector has turn out to be vital for global trade. Certainly, as international trade increased the airline sector's demand has also increased (Dincer, Hacıoğlu, & Yuksel, 2017). In the same way, the tourism industry has been equally affected on an international scale, causing in tourism increasing throughout the world and similarly more rivalry and choices inside the airline transport industry (Debbage, 1994). Due to the significant influence of airline industry on the economy, determining performance of the airline industry is very important for keeping the competitive advantage. Because of this, analysis on financial indicators must be done so as to understand whether these airlines are effective or not (Perera, Harrison, & Poole, 1997). But, the figures obtained from financial reports will provide only partial data regarding the organizations and non-financial indicators that may significantly impact the overall performance should also be considered while evaluating the performance of an airline.

Measuring the service level is a practice which evaluates the outputs of the organization and the efficiency of the resources obtained by that organization (Dincer, Hacıoğlu, & Yuksel, 2017). Earlier studies made significant contributions to this matter and in recent times there have been some researches on airline sector. According to Christian et al. (2011) safety of the passengers had a considerably larger influence on the overall customer service, specifically for the individuals who travel for pleasure rather than those who travels for business; thus this means that the authors suggests that airlines must more intensely emphasize on the safety measures in promotion aimed at leisure tourists. Moreover, there are some studies that attempt to classify the determining factor of service levels in the airline sector. Degirmenci et al. (2012) has established a connection among quality of customer service and passenger's satisfaction in the commercial airline sector. Likewise, Nikookar et al. (2015) studied the Iran's airline industry and find out that quality of service provided to passengers and loyalty have a substantial influence on the overall performance of a commercial airline. Similar to this study, (Zhang, Yang, Wang, & Zhang, 2014) concluded that earnings, seasonality, size of the population and the total number of airlines contending in a market are the major determining factor of the performance in the airline industry of China. Furthermore, Moon et al. (2015) advocated that the size of the firm impacts the overall service performance of an airline. However, in these above mentioned studies,

customer service was not measured in multidimensional perspective as service quality aspects, passenger's safety, organizational learning and growth, financial indicators, internal operational process excellence organized in a single model to observe pre purchase, purchase and post purchase service quality determinants and their consequences on the airline overall service quality levels. In contrast to that, research in the airline total service quality issue that incorporates an end to end travel scenario particularly in the context of Pakistan remains limited.

2.1. SERVQUAL model, Relationship marketing theory and Repurchase Intentions

Empirical researches on the demand patterns of airlines have shown that the quality of service is proven to be the central factor for the choice. As due to heterogeneity nature of the services; they are difficult to differentiate. In this regard, SERVQUAL model proposed by (Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry 1988) has been widely used, to determine the service quality in a multidimensional perspective. It is basically a model to measure the level of service quality that is splits overall services into five different areas. This model was originally developed for determining the quality for the services organizations. In the context of airline industry, majority of previous studies (Pakdil and Aydin 2007); (An and Noh 2009) based on SERVQUAL model were carried out on its five originally proposed dimensions. This study is different from previous ones, as we attempt to determine the factors of each phase of service delivery (Pre-, in and post-flight) separately and then try to identify them in accordance to the SERVQUAL model's dimensions and linking them with the relationship marketing theory and customer repurchase intention model.

The fundamental principles of relationship marketing is that higher customer's satisfaction level with the relationship providers- not primarily with a service or a product, the higher will be the chances of customer's retention with the company (Christopher, Payne and Ballantyne 2002).

The main aim of relationship marketing is to maintain the higher level of customer's satisfaction via collaborative communication of the stakeholders involved. Relationship marketing focuses on developing a sustainable relationship through delivering the distinctive quality that will in turn help organizations to retain their customers. The model of customer repurchases intention suggested by (Hellier, et al. 2003) that was later adopted by several researcher; proposes that preception of the customers regarding the value offered by a product or a service will influence their choices regarding the repurchase. In current business environment, retaining the customers

is considered as a necessary objective to sustain its competitive position (Oliver 1997). From the viewpoint of services, customers' perception about the overall quality has been determined as a factor of enhancing purchases intention (Park 2007). But, the study included the overall service performance as a one factor to determine the customer's repurchases intentions. There are many sub component of overall service performance that may do not have significant impact on repurchase intention while many sub elements may have direct significant influence on repurchase intentions. For instance, (Pakdil and Aydın 2007) advocates that the responsiveness is the utmost prominent factor that is contributing towards the choice of an airline while (Gilbert and Wong 2003) presented that the assurance, comprising of safety precautions, to be the primarily significant source of creating loyalty among passengers with an airline. Therefore, to in order to increase the repurchase intentions, role of pre-purchase services plays a vital role. Although these studies have studied the impact of pre-purchase services on purchase intention but specifically in the airline industry there are many pre-flight services that needed to be studied in relation with the purchase intention including ease of product search, behavior of booking staff, information availability and discount etc. Likewise, (Namukasa 2013) examined the consequences of pre-, in-, and post-flight service quality and passengers satisfaction on loyalty in the perspective of airline sector of the Uganda. But in the above mentioned studies there is a significant gap of studying the impact of specific services in all three phases of purchase process on the repurchase intentions and customer satisfaction while not taking Ticket price into account as a pre-purchase factor, but to study its mediation effect combine with earlier one in relation with the service attributes that enhances the total service quality.

2.2. Repurchase Intention

The terminology of purchase intention signifies what we consider before we will purchase a product or a service Blackwell et al. (2001). Because of the reason that the services are oftenly insubstantial or intangible, there are chances that a higher level of ambiguity surrounds them, and therefore customers can't easily assess quality of services prior to purchase (Berry, 2000); signifying the important part of brand's image and trustworthiness plays in service industry. This matter is principally more appropriate for airline industry due to the greater level of customer ambiguity and insecurity involved in airline's purchase decision. Customers of an airline

typically faces uncertainty regarding the safety standards and dependability on the airline company, on time flights, the trustworthiness and security of baggage management, or the rapidity of baggage transportation. One more element that was recognized to intensify customer's buying intention is brand image (Chen & Chang, 2008), which is described as a value addition to a product or a service built through an effective marketing strategy. Moreover, a "brand equity", that is termed as the increased value or value addition to a service or a product due to its trademark is expected to improve the customers' buying intentions. A strong brand image helps to reduce the customer's uncertainty about the airline as well as improves their trustworthiness. According to a study conducted by Jeng (2016), credibility of the company or a brand has a strong influence on the purchase intentions and customers' decision when there is an uncertainty regarding the choice, and the brand's image and trustworthiness can offer important benefits to airlines as well as passengers.

According to Denner et al. (2000), booking of desired seats in advance can be viewed as a differentiating factor that tends to add value in the customer pre-purchase experience. In this study although the results have shown that there are positive effects of pre-bookable services on the overall customer satisfaction level as it is primarily a source of differentiation, nevertheless the results are based on the charter airline services and the scope is very limited as the study is case-study. However, one thing that is of significant consideration is that the differentiation advantages of such pre-bookable services are of limited time, as the profit potential of such services are evident competitors are very likely to also offer such services. With regard to airline business, equally transactions related and overall satisfaction is significant because of passengers' opinion and valuations. For instance, Pakdil and Aydın (2007) advocates that the responsiveness is the utmost prominent factor that is contributing towards the choice of an airline while Gilbert and Wong (2003) presented that the assurance, comprising of safety precautions, to be the primarily significant source of creating loyalty among passengers with an airline. Therefore, in order to increase the purchase intentions, role of pre-purchase services plays a vital role. Although these studies have studied the impact of pre-purchase services on purchase intention but specifically in the airline industry there are many pre-flight services that needed to be studied in relation with the purchase intention including ease of product search, behavior of booking staff, information availability and discount etc.

In current business environment, retaining the customers is considered as a necessary objective to sustain its competitive position (Oliver, 1997). As due to increase in globalization, the nature of the products and services as well as competition among firms becomes much more complicated. Companies started to spend tons of money to retain their existing customers therefore, the nature of competition changed from gaining new customers to retaining the present customers.

From the viewpoint of services, customers' perception about the overall quality has been determined as a factor of enhancing repurchases intention (Park, 2007). But, the study included the overall service performance as a one factor to determine the customer's repurchases intentions. There are many sub component of overall service performance that may do not have significant impact on repurchase intention while many sub elements may have direct significant influence on repurchase intentions.

There are several researches that have examined the impact of quality of the services on repurchase intentions in the different contexts. Anderson (1998), in his study revealed that as due to the nature of services, they are delivered instantly as they are required or needed from the customers and once appropriate services are delivered as expected its will tend to enhance the customer's experience creating a positive word-of-mouth. But in my opinion there are several other factors that are to be considered regardless of the customer expectations. As delivering the expected services might not result in enhanced experience that turns into the repurchase intentions but delivering the services that exceeds the customers' expectation will tend to have more influence on customers' repurchase intentions and encouraging word-of-mouth. This argument is also supported by many researches such as Saleem et al. (2017) identified that when customers' experiences high level of pleasure the repurchase intentions arises and expected to be developed with the airline company. Similarly, Zeithaml et al. (1996) studied the link among service quality and repurchase intention and infer that there is a considerably positive and substantial link exists between the two. According to their results of the study the satisfied clients are much more expected to come back for repurchasing the services. As a result, satisfaction has turn out to be an important concern in services industries to develop sustainable competitive advantage and repeated purchase intentions among the customers (Pakdil & Aydın, 2007). The quality of services being provided and relationship with the providers has been seems to have

direct relation with the various significant activates related to consumers' loyalty, such as repurchases Fornell et al. (1996), willingness to pay more and the positive word of mouth (WOM) (Hennig-Thurau & Klee, 1997). Likewise, Namukasa (2013) examined the consequences of pre-, in-, and post-flight service quality and passengers' satisfaction on loyalty in the perspective of airline sector of the Uganda. While Storbacka et al. (1994) studied the impact of quality and consumer satisfactions on anticipated repurchase intention in different situations. The results of all these researches resembled to each other; that is, they constantly revealed a positive direct substantial relationship. But in the above mentioned studies there is a significant gap of studying the impact of specific services in all three phases of purchase process on the repurchase intentions and customer satisfaction while not taking Ticket price into account as a pre-purchase factor, but to study its mediating role in relation with the service attributes that enhances the total service quality.

2.3. Total Service Quality

The quality of the services provided is considered as an essential factor for the success of a company. Total service quality is among the major elements that affect a customer's buying choices (Anderson & Zeithaml, 1984). The TSQ directly related with the consumer's satisfaction and purchase behavior that consequently impacts the overall organization's profits. In the view of Supply chain, the total quality offers a more detailed idea of what exactly customer wants, and even more emphasis ensuring the efficiency, waste reduction and improving reliability (Peters, 1999). Air travel involves various providers from booking, terminal, flight and arrival services to ground transportation. The quality especially in the services industry is a multi-dimensional aspect as different people has different meanings for it. Because of the inseparability and heterogeneity of the services, in the airline industry it is very challenging to measure objectively. The quality of the services can only be determined by the passengers (Chen & Chang., 2005). Passengers will value each service from different perspectives; the individual perception of each service element can affect the total trip experience in both ways. TSQ incorporates ensuring the service level throughout three segments of purchase process including; pre-purchase, actual purchase and post-purchase stage. Several studies have revealed that the ensuring service quality of pre-flight, inflight, and post-flight stages had a substantial influence on overall customer satisfaction level (Namukasa, 2013; Calisir, Basak, & Calisir, 2016).

2.3.1. Pre-flight Services

Information search and pre-purchase processes are the first stage in the customer's purchasing process. Customer gathers and assesses information through advertising, word-of-mouth, brand name and organization's provided information channels. Services are usually intangible and sold without any warranties, consequently, service customers are less dependent upon brand or a product loyalty (Mitra, Reiss, & Capella, 1999) and more greatly on information availability, customized services in the course of the pre-purchase stage. Thus the information availability and pre-purchase customized services tailored accordingly to the customers are likely to be the more impactful. The idea of advance bookable services might be related to the notion of 'home shopping' (Herbig & Ralph, 1992). In my opinion based on the existing literature, the pre-purchase services like pre-booked or advance booking of meals and desired seats are significantly proved as a source of distinguishing the service in addition to providing value addition to the entire package so as to develop a competitive advantage for an organization. Such type of pre-flight services can be advantageous for the customer; as they were distinctive and can be lucrative for the airlines as well. Therefore, pre-flight services can provide a significant source of differentiating the services and improving the customers' satisfaction level. This argument is also supported by the several studies. For instance, the outcomes of study carried by Dennet't et al. (2000) propose that passengers of an airline values the pre-bookable services provided that can potentially improve check-in processes' performance level. So as to improve customer satisfaction levels, companies must be capable to offer and sustain long-term relations with consumers by fulfilling several needs and demands of consumers which in return encourages them to carry on business with the company on a continuing basis.

Although the impact of pre-purchasing services on the customer purchasing process is not much studied for services sector than for production, but the consequences of pre-purchase services is supposed to have a more effect on the customer for services (Murray, 1991). Thus, pre-purchase services including search support of the product, web appearance and pre-booking services as well as transactional services including online payment features are expected to impact positively on the convenience and development of purchase intentions. Several authors' studies have shown their result in supporting the argument. For instance, Küster et al. (2016) indicated that support services related to product search, appearance and interface of the website and pricing are the

pre-transactional services that significantly impact the purchase intentions of the customers in an online purchase. Similarly, Otim and Grover (2006), also studied the pre-purchase services that supports the facilitation in purchase process in the context of e-commerce based purchases. Their results of the study point out that the one of the most significant pre-purchase factor in the online shopping is the product search support and facilitation through the web-based interface. Thus, in this regard, companies try to make websites where online surfers can discover e-services; actually overall customer's satisfaction is subjective to their satisfaction with quality of core services and complementary pre-purchase services. (Visinescu, Sidorova, Jones, & Prybutok, 2015). Therefore, it is supposed that the quality of pre-flight services had a major influence on passengers' satisfaction

2.3.2. In-Flight Services

The second and most crucial phase of a purchase process is Transactional stage or purchase stage. It is essential to recognize what customers actually want in determining and providing high-quality service. The success of any organization's service quality relies on the mix and quality of services that are actually being offered (Gupta, 2017). In the same study he attempts to make an Assessment of several rating approaches used in commercial airline sector, the results of the study shown that tangibility; that is linked with the in-flight services or actual purchase phase has the highest impact rating on the customers' experience regarding the product or service. The results of the above study are very much relevant but if we try to look transactional related services and their impact on overall customer satisfaction level, then we also have to analyze the context in which these services are being provided, timing of service delivery, types of customers or purpose of passengers' travelling and the attitude and behavior of the service provider. Moreover, there are other several sub elements of transaction related services or actual purchase phase that can significantly determine the customer satisfaction level as well as determination of overall service quality. Due to the reason that services are consumed instantly as they delivered so there are numerous aspects of purchase phase services that needed to consider including the appearance, safety standards comfortability and entertainment provided. My opinion can be supported by several studies as different authors indicate that the idea of transactional service quality is reliant on the context and its dimensions should mirror the operational settings.

According to Christian et al. (2011) safety of the passengers had a considerably larger influence on the overall customer service, specifically for the individuals who travel for pleasure rather than those who travels for business, which suggests that airlines must more intensely emphasize on the safety measures in promotion aimed at leisure tourists. According to (Chen & Chang, 2005), service of an airline is a series of services in which the whole delivery of service can be separated into two phases: ground related services and in-flight related services. Küster et al. (2016) indicated that billing procedure and safety standards are the transactional services that found to be directly impacting the customer's purchase intentions. Ostrowski et al. (1993) measured both in-flight service and ground related services as well as airline image. Few studies examined transactional or actual service delivery dimensions that signified most to customers includes On-time flight (Chen & Chang, 2005), discounts for frequent flyers (Gilbert & Wong, 2003), cabin crew related services (Liou et al., 2011), safety standards (Mason, 2003) and in-flight seat comfort (Martín, Román, & Espino, 2011). According to study carried by Ng et al. (2011), services that are related with the in-flight operations provided by cabin crew significantly affects the overall customer satisfaction. The passengers may encounter several services within the flight; this is known as "moment of truth" (Namukasa, 2013). Customers may review the quality of services provided by the airline by comparing their expectations and what they actually experience, with regard to different attributes of quality (Grönroos, 2009). Thus so as to offer a worthy service quality to passengers, the cabin crew should put importance on creating a solid organizational appearance. Therefore it is advocated that in-flight services for example (safety measure, comfortability of seat, flight meal quality, courteousness of cabin crew and in-flight entertainment facilities) substantially impacts the customer satisfaction (Namukasa, 2013). Hence it is supposed that during flight services has a noteworthy influence on overall customer satisfaction.

2.3.3. Post-Flight Services

A post sales service establishes a mean to discover additional customer needs and a tactical factor for retaining the customers (Namukasa, 2013). So as to persist and nurture, airlines irrespective of their place of operations, should be competitive and essentially constantly advance and progress in all aspects. If we analyze the results of the study conducted by Namukasa, we can infer that the several elements of post-flight or post-purchase services

significantly impact the customers' level of satisfaction. Moreover, if better quality of such services is provided than the competitors and against the customer's expectations; it will help to retain the customers while developing the trust and loyalty among them that ultimately directly impacts the repurchase intentions. The elements of services that are related with the fulfillment of customer needs are the most prominent factors that determine the organizational long term profit potentials. Thus we can say that the post-purchase services are the value addition services that are offered to customers in order to develop the loyalty and repurchase intentions among them. In support of earlier analysis few studies are considered from literature. Such as, conferring to Khim et al. (2010), the performance measures about customer service fulfillment in airline industry are prominent indicators of the prospect performance of the organization. The findings of the same research point out that the determination of airlines to correct their mistakes (for instance, decreasing the number of damaged luggage items) positively impacts equally long-term and along with short-term financial performance. Number of complaints serves as a significant aspect of customer service quality (Davidow, 2003). Post-flight facilities like providing frequent flyer program (FFP), handling and swiftness of baggage delivery systems are considered as significant aspects that have an influence on instituting worthy relationships with passengers that ultimately effect customer satisfaction (Namukasa, 2013) and improve repurchase behavior (Su, Swanson, & Chen, 2016). A post-purchase service establishes a source to discover additional customer desires and a strategic tool for improving repurchase intentions (Namukasa, 2013). Further, it is noted that exceptionally satisfied consumers are much expected to repurchase the same product or service than those who are not much satisfied (Oliver, 1997). Therefore, it is assumed that after flight or post-flight services quality has a major impact on passengers' satisfaction.

2.4. Customer Satisfaction

The quality of services offered tends to enhance the customer's experience which in turn stimulate the loyalty and satisfaction (Szwarc, 2005) that ultimately leads to better profits. Satisfaction can be expressed as a customer's feeling of pleasure from the services or product offered in contrast to disappointment that results from matching perceived expectations (Oliver, 1997). Similarly, CS has been defined as a general buyer's attitude towards a product or a service supplier, or an emotional response to the difference among what consumers expect and what they

get about the fulfillment of needs or desires (Hansemark & Albinsson, 2004). Likewise, customer satisfaction in the commercial airline sector has also been studied extensively as the concept of service quality in flight operations. Although there is significant amount of existing literature present focused on examining the connection among the quality of services and customers' satisfaction in the context of airline industry mainly includes Namukasa (2013), Ostrowski, O'Brien, & Gordon (1993) and Jiang & Zhang (2016). But, examining the total service quality determinants in relation with customer's satisfaction, repurchase intentions and price role as a second mediator factor lacks in the existing literature specifically in the perspective of Pakistan's airline industry.

Evaluation by customers of services being provided has a substantial role in the establishment of customer's satisfaction level. Richard and Allaway (1993), advocated that a customer evaluates a service on the basis of technical aspect and functional aspect. Technical aspect is about what services are provided and the functional aspect deals with the why, how, when and where the services are provided. For instance, a traveler is provided a seat is a technical aspect while his/her interaction with the cabin crew and in-flight services will be a functional aspect. However, there are other several aspects in the airlines herself that were not specifically considered in the study where ineffective practices are causing customers' dissatisfaction and complaints; which in response makes a damaging and bad WOM. Hence it is very essential to fulfill customer's satisfaction or meet their expectations because these days most of the customers have accessibility to numerous sources of information, they are much aware with the existing fashions and are more demanding about the requirements in the products and services comparative to competitors.

Besides improving service quality and flight safety, numerous studies point out that triumph in non-financial factors influences the overall financial performance in an airline company such as (Davidow, 2003) indicated that number of complaints serves as a significant aspect in determining the customer service quality; as the greater number of complaints indicates that the organization is not able to keep up their performance with the expectations. But there are many other aspects that are needed to be considered while determining the service quality; as it might possible that customers did not complain and switches to other service provider. Thus in order to retain existing customer campiness offer different loyalty programs as a part of their services.

Seelhorst and Liu (2015) studied the impact and benefits of frequent flyer program (FFP) for retaining the customers. In their study it was revealed that there is a solid positive role of FFP program in the choice of airline, particularly among business class travelers. FFP is a loyalty scheme package that is aimed at sustaining the loyalty among the passengers that travels frequently by providing them supplementary baggage allowances, discounted tickets, free upgrades but nowadays airlines extended FFP offers by including other services including bank discounts, discounted hotels rates etc. However, besides providing the additional services like FFP the better overall customer service than the competitors is the most important objectives for the airlines.

Undoubtedly customer's satisfaction is a post-transaction or purchase experience (Jiang & Zhang, 2016); the quality of service being provided and customer satisfaction are significantly related to each other, though both notions include a comparison of anticipations and what actually service provided. Referring to Khim et al. (2010), measures about customers' service satisfaction in commercial airline industry are prominent indicators of the prospect performance of the business. The findings of the same study point out that the determination of airlines to correct their mistakes (for instance, decreasing the numbers of impaired luggage items) positively impacts equally long-term and in addition to short-term financial performance.

2.5. Ticket Prices

One of the most essential features of a consumer's purchase activities is the fee that they have to pay for the product or a service (Ryu & Han, 2010). The pricing of product or a service is considered as one of the most substantial element in the customer switching behavior. If provided the same or nearly similar services but at the comparative lower prices; customer is then more likely to switch to that offer. That stance is also advocated by few studies; such as a study by Mägi (2003), indicated that customers continuously search for the better offer that has relatively low prices according to the services offered. Thus, the price can significantly affect the relationship between purchase decision and after purchase customer satisfaction; especially when service quality is compared in accordance to the quality of services being provided (Jiang & Zhang, 2016). Even though several authors have recognized that price is a significant element of customers' purchase decision, but a very limited empirical research has determined its impact on

post-purchase behaviors in the airline industry. In my assessment it is not necessary that only the price can determine the purchase decision. Several studies revealed the loyalty and customers' satisfaction could play a primary role in lowering the impact of price on purchase and repurchase decisions. As for airline industry ticket fares are not constant for every passenger, different prices are offered to different segments of customers. Yet it's obvious that price plays a significant part in evaluation of overall service quality as customer is likely to assess the services provided by comparing with the price he has paid for. However, quality of the services similarly impacts customer's purchase decisions in various subjective ways, such as customer's overall evaluation of quality and services provided in relative to price charged. Therefore, we can observe the mediating role of the prices instead of including them in purchase services as it was used before in different studies in airline industry; due to the significant role pre-flight, in-flight and post-flight service quality in determining the customer's choice. This is validated by numerous studies conducted under different contexts as well as in airline industry too. For instance (Morash & Ozment, 1994), in their study concluded that overall quality of the service can significantly prove to be a basis of competitive edge for an airline and influence the passengers' choices. Similarly, Ostrowski et al. (1993) described the service quality as a prime influencing aspect on developing customer's loyalty, satisfaction levels and purchase decision. Thus, keeping price aside, customer's experience and satisfaction is highly dependent on quality services of different airlines including the behavior of cabin crew, on-flight entertainment, individual consideration provided, facilitation in purchase process and post purchase services can directly or indirectly impact the purchasing behaviors.

Grounded on the above discussions, we can study the mediating role of ticket fares in relation with the impact of different elements of total service quality on the customer's satisfaction, purchase intentions and repurchase intention.

2.6. Research Gap

The first research gap concerns with the limited study regarding the interrelationships between the pre-flight, in-flight and post-flight related services quality determinants with the inclusion of customer's satisfaction and repurchase intention (Rajaguru, 2016). Although a study by (Namukasa, 2013) focused on determining the pre-flight, in-flight and post-flight related service

quality determinants in relation with customer satisfaction, however only three service determinants for each stage were used during the study as well as limited to the context of Uganda airline industry and specific to international airlines (Jiang & Zhang , 2016). In these above mentioned studies, customer service was not measured in multidimensional perspective as service quality aspects, passenger's safety, organizational learning and growth, financial indicators, internal operational process excellence to observe the three stages of service quality and their influence on the airline sector. Thus propose a significant research gap by inclusion of a balance scorecard approach to determine more service quality determinants and application in the domestic airlines settings. .

The second research gap is related with the empirical research and application of ticket Prices in re-purchase decisions and purchase decision (Saleem et al., 2017) in the perspective of Pakistan's airline sector (Karjaluo, Munnukka, & Kiuru, 2016). Although ticket price is being used as Pre-purchase service determinant (Küster et al., 2016) but there is a major gap present in relation with the use of price as a mediator between repurchase intention and customer's satisfaction in commercial airline industry. And lastly the limited existing research on pre-flight services in connection with the purchase and repurchase intentions. In the study carried by Küster et al. (2016) the effects of pre-transactional service dterminants are studied on the purchase intentions in the textile industry however a significant gap is present in context of using pre-transactional service quality determinants in relationship with purchase and repurchase intention in airline industry (Saleem et al., 2017).

2.7. Conceptual Framework

Based on the research gaps identified in earlier studies and in the light of its relevance to the airline industry we have proposed the conceptual framework for this research as shown in the figure 1 below. Ticket prices and customer satisfaction both plays a dual mediation role in this study in relation with the separately effects of all three phases of quality service delivery and the repurchase intention

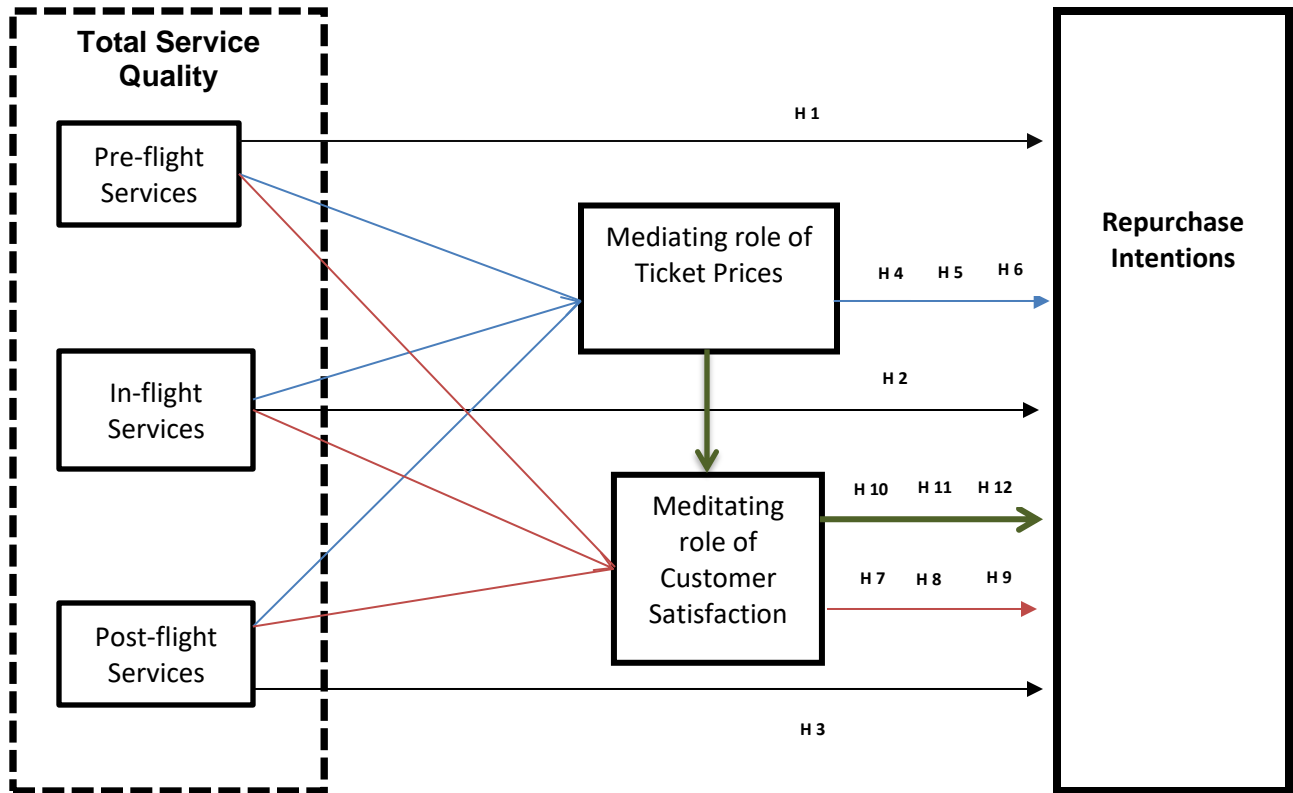


Fig.1 Conceptual Framework

On the basis of above literature, research gaps and framework, therefore, we proposed our hypotheses as:

H1: Preflight related services directly positively affect the repurchase intentions.

H2: In-flight related services positively affect the repurchase intentions.

H3: Post-flight related service positively affects the repurchase intentions

H4: Ticket price plays a mediating role in the relationship between Pre-flight related services and repurchase intentions

H5: Ticket price plays a mediating role in the relationship between In-flight related services and repurchase intentions

H6: Ticket price plays a mediating role in the relationship between Post-flight related services and repurchase intentions

H7: Pre-flight related services positively linked to the repurchase intentions through passenger satisfaction

H8: In-flight related services positively linked to the repurchase intentions through passenger satisfaction

H9: Post-flight related services positively linked to the repurchase intentions through passenger satisfaction

H10: Ticket prices mediate the relationship through customer satisfaction between Pre-flight related services and repurchase intentions

H11: Ticket prices mediate the relationship through customer satisfaction between In-flight related services and repurchase intentions

H 12: Ticket prices mediate the mediating relationship through customer satisfaction between Post-flight related services and repurchase intentions

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

This chapter provides the material relating to the research methodology used in this study. The major headings of this section comprise of research philosophy and approaches, design of research, sampling technique, and data collection methods. The population size together with sample size and sampling technique employed in this study are also discussed. The statistical techniques and tests have also been talk about in this chapter which will be then utilized for testing of the proposed hypothesis. The ethical concerns related to conducting a research are also being kept in mind throughout the research process to ensure the unbiased opinion of the researcher. In other words, this chapter highlights the research methodology including approach, philosophy and techniques employed to collect the data and to analyze it. It also explains that from where the data have been collected, how it was collected and when it was collected and also that how it will be going to be tested.

3.2. Research Philosophy

Research method or approach can be considered as the procedures and processes which involve a series of stages form ambiguous assumptions to the comprehensive approaches for collecting of data, data analysis, and its explanation (Saunders, Thornhill, & Lewis, 2009). It is essential for a researcher to select a research philosophy for a research study which fits best for his research process (Hair et al., 2010). Usually, there are two main research methodologies i.e. deductive approach and inductive approach that are normally employed in every study. For choosing a suitable methodology for the study, researcher should have a rich understanding of both methods. These two methodologies are very dissimilar from each other as deductive approach use the positivist paradigm and in compare, inductive approach uses interpretivist paradigm (Saunders, Thornhill, & Lewis, 2009).

3.2.1. Positivist Paradigm

According to Carson et al. (2001) research conducted according to a positivist paradigm might depend on offering operational definitions, forming hypothesis, testing of hypotheses, and the analysis conducted with the use of the statistical calculations so as to interpret assumptions. The positivist paradigm is dependent upon the data rather than interpretation through personal

opinions and beliefs of the researcher. The positivist paradigm uses quantitative research methods and utilizes the following methodologies:

- Experimental methodology
- Correlational methodology
- Quasi-experimental methodology
- Survey research methodology
- Causal comparative methodology

This study design is used because it facilitates in studying the interrelationships between different variable and checking the significance (Hopkins, 2008). This study will incorporate a quantitative data collection technique, specifically by using a survey questionnaire. Quantitative data technique is appropriate while investigating interrelationships between different variables (Davis & Garcés, 2009).

3.2.2. Interpretivist Paradigm

The purpose of the interpretivist paradigm is to have the understanding of viewpoint of the subject. This paradigm tries to *'understand the subjective world of human experiences'* rather than relying on objective data and testing the hypothesis. Interpretivist is opposite to positivist as it focuses on using the personal opinions and understandings in finding out the reality (Carson, Gilmore, Perry, & Gronhaug, 2001) This paradigm has a qualitative nature of research methods and the methodologies conducted for this research are as follows:

- Naturalist methodology
- Case study methodology
- Narrative inquiry methodology
- Phenomenology methodology
- Grounded theory methodology
- Hermeneutics methodology
- Ethnography methodology
- Action research methodology

3.3. Research approaches

There are three major approaches with regard to the research and the nature of the data; deductive, inductive and abductive approaches. The deductive approach supports the positivist paradigm and focuses on hypothesis testing based on theories, while inductive approach supports the interpretivist paradigm that focuses on grounded theory and subjective analysis.

Deductive approach for research based on hypothesis development grounded on some existing theory and an extensive data also the data is gathered for the purpose of accepting or rejecting the proposed hypotheses by the researcher (Gill & Johnson, 2002). There are several steps which are employed while conducting a deductive approach research including theory basis, hypothesis development, data collection and the data analysis.

On the other hand, an inductive approach is employed while researcher aims at developing a new theory and opting for subjective data analysis approach. It also entails a series of steps including observations, pattern formation, tentative assumptions and theory. Inductive approach doesn't need any pre-existing theory for the collection of the data.

Abductive approach is the third approach and an alternative to earlier two, in order to overcome their flaws. In this approach, known facts evidences are employed to develop some testable assumptions. It is the combination of both inductive and deductive develop new or modify current theory.

Because of the positivist nature of this research, deductive approach was employed to develop some testable assumptions. As this approach utilize quantitative techniques to analyzes the proposed hypotheses (Saunders, Thornhill, & Lewis, 2009). Summarizing the above discussion, the main differences among the approaches is of theory development and hypothesis. In the view of phenomena of the theory and hypothesis that is to be empirically tested by the current study utilizes a deductive approach that based on the forming hypotheses which is based on some theory so as to propose a particular conclusion.

Table 1: Summarizing the Differences among Qualitative and Quantitative Methods

	Qualitative	Quantitative
Types of Questions	Probing	No probing
Research Strategy	Open ended questions	Closed ended questions
Sample Size	Small	Large
Relationship between Researcher and subject	close	Distant
Research Approaches	Inductive	Deductive
Source of Data Collection	Interviews/ Observations	Surveys
Type of Analysis	Subjective, Interpretive	Statistical, Positivistic
Type of research	Exploratory	Descriptive or Causal

Source: Hair et al. (2015); McDaniel and Roger (2002); Bryman and Bugress (1999)

3.4. Time Horizon

There are two research times horizons i.e. “*cross sectional and longitudinal*” (Sekaran, 2003). In a study in which data is gathered just the once, even though it can be collected over a time span of weeks or months to get a sufficient response to research questions is known as a single-shot or cross-sectional studies (Sekaran, 2003). Survey questionnaires are the most commonly tool utilized in the category of cross sectional studies (Flynn et al., 1990). In contrast, longitudinal studies related to a collection of data over a multiple time periods and to whenever the researcher desires to study people or phenomena and wants to responds the research question at more than one point of time (Sekaran, 2003). Longitudinal studies are more flexible and it helps the researcher to understand the behavioral changes among the subjects.

This research involves cross-sectional descriptive study of total service quality determinants in the airline industry of Pakistan. This study design is used because it facilitates in studying the interrelationships between different variable and checking the significance (Hopkins, 2008).

3.5. Sources of Data Collection

This study will incorporate a quantitative data collection technique, specifically by using a survey questionnaire. Quantitative data technique is appropriate while investigating interrelationships between different variables (Davis & Garcés, 2009) and usually in organizational research where the cause and effect relationship is the matter of concern a questionnaire method is used (Bam, 1992) as primarily it is dependent on quantitative and statistical estimations to conclude the results (Namukasa, 2013). Questionnaires are utilized in this research to gather the data for two basic reasons. First, questionnaire is usually used for survey study (Flynn et al., 1990) and the determinants of customer service have been well-developed for the questionnaire technique. This was applied by gathering data from passengers that has travelled before or travelled currently through the four (one former) main airlines that were operative in Pakistan. The travelers surveyed were has a previous air travelling experience through any of the domestic airlines as well as freshly flyers were also being approached in waiting lounges and departure lounges of New Islamabad Airport, Jinnah international airport of Karachi and Allama Iqbal airport of Lahore. To decrease the rejections to take part or to answer specific questions, the researcher communicated with the travelers courteously by clarifying the purpose and impact of the study to them before handing over the questionnaire forms.

3.6. Unit of Analysis and Sampling

Sampling is the process of choosing individuals for a study in such way that the individuals represent the population from which they are drawn (Sekaran, 2003). The sampling methods can be categorized into two different methods i.e. “probability sampling and non-probability sampling” (Saunders, Thornhill, & Lewis, 2009). Probability Sampling can be described as the equal and known probability of all the elements or individuals in a population to be nominated as the sample (Sekaran, 2003). There are the different types of probability sampling including Simple random sample, stratified random sample and the systematic sample. On the other hand, Non-Probability or Judgmental Sampling is the type of sampling, in which the chances of elements to be selected in a sample drawn from population is unidentified and an effort is made for the creating a statistically representative sample. In other words, elements of the population comprise of no probabilities so as to be chosen in the sample of non-probability sampling (Sekaran, 2003).

The unit of analysis employed in this research is the individual specifically customers of all current domestic airlines including Pakistan based airlines Serene Air, PIA, Shaheen Air and Air blue. Questionnaire survey is also being taken from three companies' (except Shaheen Air) employees of different levels, ranging from top to lower level employees working in the airline. As this study sought to investigate how customers perceive different quality determinants, and the population of the study requires to selecting people that has previously or currently travelled through any domestic airline. Therefore, a purposive sampling approach is used rather than choosing people randomly (Lavrakas, 2008).

The questionnaire forms were disseminated through online aviation groups on social Media, as well as with friends and family circle also the requests were made face-to-face for participation in the research to different passengers waiting in the airport lounges. A total of 205 questionnaire forms were distributed physically to different passengers in domestic waiting lounge of airport, out of which 152 were given back. Among those 152 returned questionnaires 10 of the questionnaires were rejected and not used due to missing response rate in the questionnaire is above 25% (Cavana, Delahaye, & Sekaran, 2001).

Table 2: Summary of data collection sources

	Physically distributed questionnaire	Online questionnaire
Total Obtained	205	171
Received responses	152	151
Rejected\	10	12
Included in study	142	139
Total Sample		376

It was presumed that those respondents were unwilling or were not able fully cooperate. And among 171 questionnaires distributed online, 140 of them were completed and 12 rejected to participate in the study and 20 did not completed the questionnaire, resulting in 81.87% online response rate and 69.3% response rate from paper-based questionnaire. Thus an overall response rate of 74.73 % is received which is satisfactory (Nulty, 2008).

3.7. Measures

The scales that are incorporated for the purpose of measurement in this study were adopted from previous studies. Likert scale including five points starting with 1 as “very poor” to 5 as “Excellent” was used for collecting responses and data about the all three phases of total service quality. For the collection of responses regarding the dual mediators of overall satisfaction, and ticket price and repurchase intention was measured on five point Likert scale with response ranges from 1 as “very low” to “very high”. The reason behind using these scales is because of their validity and reliability has been established in earlier studies. Regardless of the fact that national language of Pakistan is Urdu, but in most of the target population is belongs from literate class; thus questionnaire will not be translated in Urdu. The questionnaire is drawn on multiple studies conducted in airline industry as well as in other industries like e-commerce, online advertisement etc. Table for the constructs and their factor loadings has been attached below in the appendix A. The quality of pre-flight service was measured using 8-items from different studies, in-flight services measured with 11-items and post-flight services measured using 4-items. While the single-item is used for price, customer satisfaction and repurchase intentions.

To see whether the usual ways of thinking that single-item are inadequate and deficient to measure the construct, I explored the previous researches and literature on single-item versus multi scales. There are a ton of papers favoring for multi-items scales (particularly to evaluated complex concepts or constructs), yet a significant number indicated times when single items measures are adequate. In a study conducted by Ittner and Larcker (1998), it was found that a single-item of 10-points measuring overall level of satisfaction from a company’s administration and services performed similarly just as a multi-scale of measuring financial performance. Similarly, the outcomes of a study by Van Doorn, et al. (2010) shows that the single-item with 5-points measure for customer satisfaction was a sufficient instrument for estimating the prospective business performance. Because of there are few constructs that are being measured with single item however there are cases where the use of single item presents a true value for concrete constructs. For instance, repurchase intentions (Arnold & Reynolds, 2009; Tsiros & Mittal, 2000) customer satisfaction in channel marketing (Ping Jr, 2003; Oh, 1999) and similarly, the moderating role of price (Ryu & Han, 2010). Pre-flight service(PFS) was measured on five-point Likert scale that is ranging from “1” (Very poor) to “5” (Excellent) with total eight items

adopted from multiple studies as mentioned in the table II, sample items are “Easiness to find information on airline’s website”, “Convenience in reserving the desired seats” and “Fast and accurate reservation system”. Cronbach’s α ($\alpha=0.87$), thus indicating that the items used measure were reliable as the value of alpha greater than 0.70 indicates the good reliability of the items. In-flight services (IFS) were measured with total eleven items from different studies. The sample questions are: “Welcoming crew upon arrival at plane”, “Special facilities for disabled passengers and children” and “Courtesy and individual attention given by Cabin crew / Flight attendants”. Cronbach’s α ($\alpha=0.905$).

Post-flight services (PTFS) were measured with four items and the sample question is: “Support facilities for lost or delayed baggage”. Cronbach’s α ($\alpha=0.783$). Hence items used to measure all three of our constructs were significantly reliable. In this study, Ticket Price, Customer’s satisfaction and the repurchase intentions were measured with single-items on a five point Likert scale that ranges from “1” (Very low) to “5” (Very high). Ticket price was measured by using single-item taken on the basis of the study from Ryu and Han, (2010) i.e. “Satisfaction with the Price charged against the quality of services offered”. Customer satisfaction was measured using single statement to determine the overall satisfaction with regard to services offered adopted on the basis of the study by Oh (1999), i.e. “Satisfaction with the overall quality of the pre, In and Post-flight services”. Repurchase intention was also measured on a single-item adopted from the study of Arnold and Reynolds (2009), i.e. “Likely to purchase or travel again with the same Airline”.

3.8. Analytical Procedures

After excluding the responses that have missing values of more than 25% (Cavana, Delahaye, & Sekaran, 2001), we run the missing value test of series mean in SPSS in order to make data useable for the further tests. As several test in SPSS as well as in AMOS including CFA requires no missing values in the data set. Hence we have utilized the most advocated and recommended technique (Hinton, McMurray, & Brownlow, 2014) in this regard to fill out those missing values in the data set. Then the data is checked that either missing value analysis is appropriate or not. For this purpose we have observed the values of Mean, SD and Standard error of mean of both data set before missing value analysis and after; the results shown exactly same figures indicating that the data represent actual original data.

The descriptive statistics were utilized to give an overall summary and outline of the respondent's profiles studied in this research. Data gathered is analyzed using SPSS the regression analysis, correlation analysis and frequency analysis is used so as to test and conduct the analysis on the data. Using dual mediation analysis the hypotheses of the research is concurrently tested, that allows the whole model to be tested for every proposed outcome. Cronbach will be used to examine the internal consistency for every element under aspects including pre-flight related services, during flight and post-flight related services quality. It is recommended that Cronbach's α coefficient should be over 0.6 in order to validate the research (Hair et al., 2010). Furthermore, to find the distinctive validity of the variables in the study, we have used confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), by using AMOS v.21. Later, to test our proposed hypothesis, dual mediation analyses were conducted by using PROCESS macro in the statistical software SPSS V.21. This is done by keeping in view previous studies (Preacher et al., 2007; Hayes et al., 2012). Hypotheses under consideration could be

Propositions under this research could be tested all together by using SPSS with linear regression analysis, permitting the whole model to be verified for every proposed outcome, which includes the main direct effects of Pre-flight, In and Post-flight services on the repurchase intentions (H1 to H3). Secondly, the mediating role of customers' satisfaction on the Pre, In and Post-flight services on the repurchase intentions (H4-H6) could be tested using SPSS PROCESS macro V3.3 Model 4. Thirdly, the mediation effects of Ticket prices in the relationship between all three independent variables including Pre, In, Post-flight and the repurchase intention were assessed (H7-H9). In the fourth stage, we tested our proposed dual mediation model (H10-H12) with Ticket prices as a mediating variable between Pre-flight services, In-flight related services and Post-flight related services in relation to customer's satisfaction as mediator and the repurchase intentions as a dependent variable. For this purpose, we have used SPSS PROCESS macro V3.3 Model 6. Additionally, we have also verified the indirect effects of ticket prices on repurchase intentions the outcome variable via customer satisfaction were studied with the recommended bias-corrected.

CHAPTER 4: RESULT ANALYSES

4.1. Sample Characteristics

The age of final sample of the participants included in this study ranges from below 21 to above 60. The used measurement for the age is: (1= Below 21, 2= 21-30, 3= 31-40, 4= 41-50, 5= 51-60 and 6= Above 60). The demographic analyses shown that the most of the respondents are young customers (53.4% aged 21-30) and (20.6% aged 31-40), the remaining 11.7% belongs below 21age, 8.5% belongs to age bracket of 41-50, 5% from 51-60 and lastly 0.7% belongs to age bracket of above 60. While for the gender we used measurement as (1= Male, 2= Female, 3= other, 4= Prefer not to say). The reason behind using the versatile gender questions is because such questions is very sensitive and could be very difficult to ask as few people might get offended when you asks about their gender and also to keep the biasness towards people that don't wanted to disclose their sex; it's better to include these options. The Analysis has demonstrated that the 56.2% of the respondents are belongs to Male gender while 42.3% were females and 0.7% of the respondents answered the "Other" as well as 0.7% (2) respondents doesn't prefer to disclose their gender. To determine the education levels of sample we have used measurement as: (1= Less than intermediate, 2= Intermediate or equivalent, 3= Bachelor's 4= Master's, 5= Doctorate). Analysis further underlined that the majority of the sample were well educated as the 38.8% of them have done Bachelor's degree while 37.4% of the respondents have done Master's degree, 13.5% were Intermediate or equivalent, 5.7% of respondents were have education less than intermediate and the remaining 4.6% of them did Doctorate. Lastly, to determine the domestic airline in which respondents travelled and to fill the questionnaire in accordance to their experience with that airline we have listed four Airlines that were being operational in last 15 years as (1= Air blue, 2= PIA, 3= Serene Air, 4= Shaheen Air). The summary of the results of the respondent's profile is reported in the table 3.

Table 3: Demographic Characteristics

Measure	Data	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Gender	Male	158	56.2	56.2
	Female	119	42.3	98.6
	Other	2	0.7	99.3
	Prefer not to say	2	0.7	100
	Total	281	100	
Age	Below 21	33	11.7	11.7
	21-30	150	53.4	65.1
	31-40	58	20.6	85.8
	41-50	24	8.5	94.3
	51-60	14	5	99.3
	Above 60	2	0.7	100
	Total	281	100	
Education	Less than Intermediate	16	5.7	5.7
	Intermediate or equivalent	38	13.5	19.2
	Bachelors	109	38.8	58
	Masters	105	37.4	95.4
	Doctorate	13	4.6	100
	Total	281	100	
Frequently Traveled Airline	Air blue	67	23.8	23.8
	PIA	150	53.4	77.2
	Serene Air	48	17.1	94.3
	Shaheen Air	16	5.7	100
	Total	281	100	

Among the respondents there were total 67 (23.8%) selected the Air Blue, while majority of them frequently travelled through PIA and fill accordance to their experience 150 (53.4%), moreover 48 (17.1%) have selected Serene Air and lastly 16 (5.7%) have choose Shaheen Air; this is low might due to the fact that this airline is not anymore operational from almost last two years

4.2. Confirmatory Factor Analyses (CFA)

Along with the reliability analysis, “confirmatory factor analyses” (CFA) was performed by using software AMOS 21.0. The outcomes of Model fitness indices are satisfactory and meets the acceptance criteria ($\chi^2 / df = 2.089$, NFI = 0.875, CFI = 0.930, IFI = 0.931, RMSEA = 0.062, TLI = 0.917). Measurements of the model fit indices are reported in Table 4. The basic assumptions of CFA test includes the data should have the multivariate normality. This assumption was first satisfied by testing the data normality with the use of histogram. Normality analysis has shown that the all data is normally distributed. Secondly, CFA assumes that the size of the sample studied should be larger than 200 i.e. ($n > 200$). This assumption is also satisfied as our sample size was 376 and selected final sample was 281. And thirdly, the linearity should be present among the data which was also satisfied before the CFA test is conducted. The CFA shows a satisfactory overall results as they should be range between 0 to 1; while the value should be as close as to 1 will point out a good model fitness. Although there are multiple authors that uses the cutoff for a good model fit for CFI, NFI and IFI to be 0.90. However results those are as low as 0.80 are to be considered as acceptable for model fitness (Hu & Bentler, 1999). Furthermore, the value of RMSEA in analysis is 0.083 indicating model fitness as according to the study of MacCallum et al. (1996); RMSEA value ranging between 0.050 to 0.10 reflected a fair fitness of the model however any value that is above 0.10 is to be regarded as poor fit. Basically the purpose of RMSEA is to tell us that how good is the model, with unidentified but optimally selected factor estimates would suitable with the population’s covariance matrix. The diagram of the model fitness also attached in appendices B. Altogether the results demonstrate the distinctive validity of standardized factors loading and was substantially significant.

Table 4: Measurement Model Fit Indices

Overall fit of the Model	
Chi-square/degree of freedom (χ^2/df)	2.089
Normed Fit Index (NFI)	0.875
Comparative fit index (CFI)	0.930
Incremental Fit Index (IFI)	0.931
Root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA)	0.062
Tucker Lewis index (TLI)	0.917

4.3. Correlation coefficients and Reliability test

Table 5 comprises the summary of the results of the tests including mean, standard deviations, and correlations of every variable included in this research. Cronbach's alpha scores of the variables including PFS, IFS and PTFS were satisfactory, ranging between 0.783 and 0.905. The results have been reported in table 5. The mean and SD of all three independent variables were very close to each other as the score of the mean were ranging from 3.0762 to 3.1652, while the scores of standard deviation ranges from 0.7587 to 0.8202.

Table 5: Standard deviations, Means, correlations among variables and the Cronbach's alpha

		SD	Mean	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	PFS	0.7587	3.0762	(0.87)					
2	IFS	0.8202	3.1652	.729**	(0.905)				
3	PTFS	0.8053	3.1311	.624**	.775**	(0.783)			
4	RPI	1.238	3.06	.574**	.664**	.571**	-		
5	CS	0.937	3.09	.680**	.719**	.636**	.633**	-	
6	TP	1.187	2.96	.550**	.602**	.552**	.617**	.603**	-

Note: n=281, p <.05; **p <.01; PFS= Pre-flight services; IFS= In-flight services; PTFS= Post-flight services; RPI= Repurchase Intentions; CS= Customer Satisfaction, TP= Ticket Prices; Elements in brackets and bold, are the values of Cronbach's alpha.

The results of correlation have also been reported in the same table. All results of correlations were significant. Pre-flight related services are positively correlated with the In-flight ($r=0.729$, $p<0.01$) and post-flight related services ($r=0.624$, $p<0.01$) as well as with Repurchase intentions ($r=0.574$, $p<0.01$), Customer satisfaction ($r=0.680$, $p<0.01$) and Ticket prices ($r=0.550$, $p<0.01$). The analysis of correlations coefficients shows that the In-flight related services were positively correlated with post-flight related services ($r=0.775$, $p<0.01$), Repurchase intentions ($r=0.664$, $p<0.01$), Customer satisfaction ($r=0.719$, $p<0.01$) and as well as with Ticket prices ($r=0.602$, $p<0.01$). The Post-flight related services were also positively correlated with the repurchase intentions ($r=0.571$, $p<0.01$), Customer satisfaction ($r=0.636$, $p<0.01$) and also with the ticket prices ($r=0.552$, $p<0.01$). Thus, all the results of correlations were consistent as they were expected to be.

4.4. Hypothesis Testing

With the purpose of testing the hypotheses, by using 5000 bootstraps and a bias-corrected 95% of the confidence level at every single level of the mediator were utilized for conducting the dual mediation analyses. We have used the PROCESS macro V 3.3 Model 6 for testing the conditional indirect effects and dual mediation index. Similarly, with the purpose of testing the direct impact of mediator on relationship among the independent constructs of service quality and dependent variable we have utilized the PROCESS macro Model 4. To see the direct effects of independent constructs on the dependent we have used the multiple linear regression to determine either they are significantly related or not. The outcomes of the tests were presented in the following three sections: “Multiple Regression Analysis”, “Mediation Analysis” and “Dual Mediation Analysis” correspondingly.

4.4.1. Multiple Regression Analysis

The tests for direct effects were conducted after running the model fitness test and getting the satisfactory results as discussed earlier. The results of direct effects between independent service quality constructs and dependent variable were reported in Table VI. Hypothesis 1-3 states the direct link between the three independent constructs of Total service quality with the repurchase intentions. H1 states that the “Preflight related services directly positively affect the repurchase intentions”. As it is apparent from the Table VI that the hypothesis H1 is statistically significant and establishes a direct relation with repurchase intentions ($\beta = 0.936$, $p < 0.01$). Therefore, H1 is statistically reinforced by the results. Meanwhile, H2 states that the “In-flight related services directly positively affect the repurchase intentions”. The results also statistically supported the Hypothesis H2 as evident from the Table VI ($\beta = 1.002$, $p < 0.01$). Hence, the results of H2 indicates that the 1 unit of change in the independent variable will induce more than 1 unit change in the dependent variable which indicates the importance of the pre-flight related service’s impact on the repurchase intentions.

Similarly, H3 states that the “Post-flight related services directly positively affect the repurchase intentions”. By looking at the results of Table 6, the significance is statistically apparent as ($\beta = 0.878$, $p < 0.01$).

Table 6: Model Coefficients for direct relations of IVs and DV

Predictor (X)	Outcome (Y)	Estimate	SE	t	p
PFS	RPI	0.936	0.08	11.697	0.000
IFS	RPI	1.002	0.068	14.844	0.000
PTFS	RPI	0.878	0.076	11.625	0.000

Thus our all three hypotheses related to direct interactions between the independent service qualities construct and dependent variable was statistically significant. More specifically among three independent constructs; In-flight services were seems to have more direct impact on the repurchase intentions while followed by Pre-flight and Post-flight services respectively.

4.4.2. Mediation Analysis

Hypotheses 4-6 were expressing the mediating role of ticket prices between the independent and dependent variables. The mediation role here is played by Ticket price (TP) plays between the all three constructs of the total service quality in relation with the repurchase intentions. Hypothesis H4 proposed that “Ticket prices mediates the relationship between Pre-flight related services and repurchase intentions”. The results in Table 7 show that the H4 does gain the statistical support ($\beta = 0.3873$, LLCI: 0.2736, ULCI: 0.5229). Hence we have found a significant indirect effect of ticket prices on repurchase intentions and pre-flight related services. In the same way, H5 states that “Ticket prices mediates the relation between In-flight related services and repurchase intentions”. As the results reported in Table 7 suggests that the mediating role of the ticket price was statistically significant on the relationship between In-flight services and the repurchase intentions ($\beta = 0.3089$, LLCI: 0.2058, ULCI: 0.4170). Therefore our H5 is also accepted because of zero value didn’t lies between the lower limit and the upper limit. Likewise, we have proposed the hypothesis H6 to see the mediating role between the post-flight services quality and the repurchase intentions. The hypothesis H6 stating that the “Ticket prices mediates the relationship between Post-flight related services and repurchase intentions” also did gains statistical support as results shows a significant effect of ticket prices on the proposed relationship between independent and depend variable ($\beta = 0.3678$, LLCI: 0.2590, ULCI: 0.4823). Therefore, our all three proposed mediated hypotheses H4, H5, H6 related to ticket prices were supported as ticket prices has a significant mediating role between the constructs of the total service quality and the repurchase intentions.

Table 7: Model Coefficients for indirect mediated relations

Predictor (X)	Mediator	Outcome (Y)	Effect	Boot SE	LLCI	ULCI
PFS	TP	RPI	0.3873	0.0641	0.2736	0.5229
IFS	TP	RPI	0.3089	0.038	0.2058	0.4170
PTFS	TP	RPI	0.3678	0.0577	0.2590	0.4823

Note: LLCI= Lower limit confidence interval, ULCI= Upper limit confidence interval, SE= Standard Error

Hypotheses 7-9 states the indirect relationship among Independent and dependent variables in relation with the mediation role of customer satisfaction. The mediation role is played by the customer satisfaction between the Pre, In, post flight services and repurchase intentions. The mediation analysis is done using Model 4 in PROCESS macro. The results for mediation analyses were reported in Table 8. Hypothesis H7 predicted that the “Pre-flight related services positively linked to the repurchase intentions through passenger satisfaction”. It is evident from the Table 8 that the customers’ satisfaction has a substantial mediation effect on relationship between Pre-flight related services and repurchases intentions ($\beta = 0.5002$, LLCI: 0.3313, ULCI: 0.6610). Similar to the results of H7, the hypothesis H8 states that “In-flight related services positively linked to the repurchase intentions through passenger satisfaction”. The results were also supported statistically as the bootstrapped intervals don’t contain the zero in between ($\beta = 0.3481$, LLCI: 0.1924, ULCI: 0.5054).

Table 7: Model Coefficients for indirect mediated relations

Predictor (X)	Mediator	Outcome (Y)	Effect	Boot SE	LLCI	ULCI
PFS	CS	RPI	0.5002	0.0848	0.3313	0.661
IFS	CS	RPI	0.3481	0.0792	0.1924	0.5054
PTFS	CS	RPI	0.4423	0.074	0.3	0.588

Note: LLCI= Lower limit confidence interval, ULCI= Upper limit confidence interval, SE= Standard Error

Furthermore, Hypothesis H9 predicts that “Post-flight related services positively linked to the repurchase intentions through passenger satisfaction”. The results in Table 8 indicate that the customer satisfaction is significantly mediating the relationship between Pre-flight related

services and repurchases intentions ($\beta = 0.4423$, LLCI: 0.3000, ULCI: 0.5880). Hence our all three proposed mediated hypothesis were accepted.

4.4.3. Dual mediation analysis

To determine the conditional indirect effects of dual mediation relationship we run the Model 6 developed by Hayes V3.3 in SPSS. Hypotheses 10-12 predicted that ticket prices ticket prices plays a conditional mediating role between the independent constructs of total service quality and the repurchase intention via customer satisfaction. Hypothesis H10 states that “Ticket prices mediates the mediating relationship through customer satisfaction between Pre-flight related services and repurchase intentions”. As earlier the results of mediation relationship between the pre-flight services and repurchase intentions; the conditional indirect double mediation analysis also has shown that there is a significant dual mediating relationship exists between the pre-flight services and repurchase intentions via customer satisfaction as reported in Table 9.

The results of Table 9 shows the output of dual mediation model where overall effect is distributed into three separate parts as total effect, direct and indirect effects. The total effect represents the overall details of behavior related to repurchase intentions through the quality of pre-flight services. Pre-flight services were positively and significantly related via ticket prices and customer satisfaction to repurchase intentions. The total indirect effect via mediators was established as to be significant through the effect size of about 64 percent. Among which, almost 25 percent was indirect effect related with customer satisfaction as a sole mediator and about 30 percent mediated relation was because of ticket prices. However by looking to the index of double mediation analysis we have observed a significant and positive relation between the pre-flight services and repurchase intention via customer satisfaction in relation to mediating role of ticket prices ($\beta= 0.0916$, LLCI: 0.0431, ULCI: 0.1561). In sum, this mainly in support with our hypothesis H10 assumption as Ticket prices seem to have a significant mediating role in this relation.

Table 9: Total, Direct and Mediated Effect of PFS on RPI

Effect type	Effect	Boot SE	LLCI	ULCI
Total mediated effect	0.6397	0.0864	0.4756	0.8169
Mediated through TP	0.2957	0.0603	0.1883	0.4251
Mediated through CS	0.2524	0.0644	0.1322	0.3837
Double mediation through TP and CS	0.0916	0.0286	0.0431	0.1561

Moreover, our proposed hypothesis H11 states that “Ticket prices mediates the mediating relationship through customer satisfaction between In-flight related services and repurchase intentions”. As before the results of indirect mediation analysis between In-flight services and repurchase intentions were significant, similar to that the conditional dual mediation analysis’s results also shown that there is significant yet a positive relation exists between the pre-flight services construct and the repurchase intentions via customer satisfaction ($\beta= 0.0538$, LLCI: -0.0165, ULCI: 0.0999). As the results in Table 10 suggests the in-flight services were positively and significantly related via customer satisfaction to repurchase intention ($\beta= 0.1865$). Whereas similar to that there is positive and significant relation exists between in-flight services and repurchase intentions via mediation of ticket prices ($\beta= 0.2550$). So what does it suggests that, although there is a significant dual mediation exists, but yet a mediation effect of ticket prices is still more impactful. Thus we accept the Hypothesis H11 as there is a significant dual mediation occurs in relationship between independent and dependent variable.

Table 10: Total, Direct and Mediated Effect of IFS on RPI

Effect type	Effect	Boot SE	LLCI	ULCI
Total mediated effect	0.4954	0.0792	0.3434	0.6552
Mediated through TP	0.2550	0.0553	0.1508	0.3681
Mediated through CS	0.1865	0.0637	0.0637	0.3132
Double mediation through TP and CS	0.0538	0.0215	0.0165	0.0999

And finally, our last proposed hypothesis H12 predicts that “Ticket prices mediates the mediating relationship through customer satisfaction between Post-flight related services and repurchase intentions”. As previously we have discussed the results of unconditional indirect mediated analysis between In-flight services and repurchase intentions were significant, parallel

to that the conditional dual mediation analysis as shown in the Table 11, that there is a significant as well as a positive relation exists among the post-flight services construct and the repurchase intentions via customer satisfaction and ticket prices as dual mediation ($\beta= 0.0976$, LLCI: 0.0496, ULCI: 0.1561).

Table 11: Total, Direct and Mediated Effect of PTFS on RPI

Effect type	Effect	Boot SE	LLCI	ULCI
Total mediated effect	0.5806	0.0778	0.4314	0.7379
Mediated through TP	0.2702	0.0545	0.1674	0.3818
Mediated through CS	0.2128	0.0556	0.1139	0.3299
Double mediation through TP and CS	0.0976	0.0270	0.0496	0.1561

Additionally, the results in Table 11 shows the post-flight services were positively and significantly related via customer satisfaction to repurchase intention, indicating the presence of mediation effect as it was earlier proved to be. The overall mediation effect is around 58 percent out of which 21 percent was contributed due to mediation effect of customers' satisfaction while 27 percent is contributed through ticket prices a single mediator. Consequently, we infer that the Hypothesis H12 is accepted as there is significant dual mediation relationship between independent and dependent variable.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

This research was intended to determine the factors that play an important role to achieve the total service quality leading to customer's satisfaction and ultimately to the repurchase intentions. Generally previous studies on airline industry focusing on the service quality undermine the end to end chain of the services while focusing on the main apparent services mostly in-flight. Thus, possibly neglects the services that might have significant role in determining the repurchase intentions. More specifically, we have focused separately on the end to end chain of the services including the pre-purchase services as well as post-purchase services; that how these independently effects the repurchase intentions, while also observing the mediating role of ticket prices on these relations. Our results are supported by several previous studies such as, Zeithaml et al. (1996) studied the relationship between service qualities and repurchase intention and conclude that there is a considerably positive and substantial link exists between the two. According to their findings of the study the satisfied clients are much more expected to come back for repurchasing the services. While earlier studies has included ticket prices as the part of pre-purchase of pre-flight services; hence not allowing to predict the actual picture of service quality as customer might rate an underperforming service good if the prices were comparably very cheap. So in order to determine the actual effects of the service quality of each three purchase phases independently on repurchase intentions we have taken the price as a mediator so it doesn't influence the actual service quality determinants but it influences the relationships with repurchase intentions and satisfaction level. We have proposed a number of hypotheses to determine the relationships of Pre, in and post-flight services with repurchase intentions directly along with through the mediating role of customer's satisfaction. The results has shown that is a positive and significant relationship occurs between the all three constructs of the service quality and the repurchase intentions, but In-flight services seems to have more direct and significant impact on the repurchase intention as compare to other two. That is basically due to fact that the most of the services included in the In-flight phase are the services that actually customer experiences directly. Nevertheless it doesn't mean that ignoring the other two phases will be justified as it might possible that ignoring the any one of them will significantly impacts the performance of the In-flight services. The results regarding the importance of pre-flight services were also previously recognized as according to Denner't et al. (2000), booking of

desired seats in advance can be viewed as a differentiating factor that tends to add value in the customer pre-purchase experience. Similarly, Otim and Grover (2006), also considered the pre-purchase services that assists in purchase process in the context of e-commerce industry. Their findings point out that the one of the most significant pre-purchase factor in the online shopping is the product search support and facilitation through the web-based interface. Thus, in this regard, companies try to make websites where online surfers can discover e-services; actually overall customer's satisfaction is subjective to their satisfaction with quality of core services and complementary pre-purchase services. (Visinescu, Sidorova, Jones, & Prybutok, 2015). Therefore it is supposed that the quality of pre-flight services had a major influence on passengers' satisfaction. We have used customer satisfaction to determine the mediating effect after confirming the direct relationship between the independent constructs and dependent variable. The results of mediation analysis have shown a strong positive and significant influence of customer's satisfaction with the all of three service quality constructs and the repurchase intentions. Thus, we expected that the better performance in every phase of service including pre-phase and post-phase will tend to increase the customer satisfaction while leading towards repurchase intentions or repeated sales.

One of the most crucial elements of a customer's purchase behavior is undoubtedly the price that they have to pay for the product or a service (Ryu & Han, 2010). But If provided the same or nearly similar services but at the comparative lesser rates; customer is then more expected to switch to that offer. Consequently, the price can considerably affect the relationship between purchase decision and customers' satisfaction; specifically when service quality is compared in accordance to the quality of services being expected to be (Jiang & Zhang, 2016). Despite the fact that the numerous authors have recognized that price is an important element of customers' repurchase decision, but its impact on the repurchase intention in the airline industry is very limited. As for the airline sector ticket prices are not constant for every passenger, different prices are offered to different segments of customers. Yet it's apparent that price play a substantial part in evaluation of the overall service quality as passengers are likely to evaluate the services offered by comparing with the price they have paid for. In this regard later, we utilized the Ticket prices as a mediator to determine the effect on the mediating relationship of customer's satisfaction with the all three constructs of service quality with the repurchase intentions. The results indicates that the Ticket prices does seems to have some significant

influence on the mediating relationship between the all three phases of service quality including Pre, In-flight and Post flight with the repurchase intentions via customer satisfaction. Moreover the Ticket prices have positive and significant effect on all three stages of services in relation with the repurchase intention. This signifies that the airlines should have focus on improving their service quality instead of solely trying to compete on the base of competitive prices while ignoring their service quality, yet also the results suggests that service quality is linked with the repurchase intentions while there are other factors too that can affect the repurchase intentions including customer satisfaction and ticket prices. If an airline provides similar mix of services at comparative higher prices; this ultimately hits their customer's satisfaction level and as well as repurchase intentions or repeated sales. Because how passengers see a certain ticket price, in which the high or low cost of a service can be a substantial influence on customer's intention to buy the service. Passengers will give a consideration to the ticket fares paid by other travelers, as no one is pleased to pay more money as compared to other passengers. The fairness of the ticket fares will affect the opinion of the passengers and it will eventually impact their readiness to repurchase intentions or becoming a customer. Nevertheless, the quality of the services similarly impacts customers' repurchase decisions in various subjective ways, this study provides an important insight for both academia and airline professionals. As the results suggest that the comparative prices may be much significantly improves the satisfaction levels and the repurchase intentions when you have superior service quality.

CHAPTER 6: CONTRIBUTION AND MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1. Contribution to the body of knowledge

This study has highlighted several key areas that will be very helpful for the decision makers, managers and professional working in the airline as well as contributes to the existing body of literature. First of all, this research is contributing to the present literature on the airline industry; as due to limited research available in the airline industry specifically related to the end to end travel scenario that aimed at improving service quality. As air travel comprises numerous service providers together with from the time of booking, in-flight travelling and till the post-travel baggage distribution system. Passengers will assess every service from different viewpoints. It is important to have well maintained customer service since customers are the fundamental source of income generation, specifically for the airlines in order to compete and remain profitable. Earlier researches focusing on service quality in airline industry have been studying the services as a whole, by not specifically focusing on phases of services being offered separately and looking their impact on the repurchase intentions and customer satisfaction. We have contributed to the literature in this regard as by separately studying the direct relationships among the phases of services included in an end to end chain with the repurchase intentions.

Moreover we have focused separately on every phase of flight services and included the factors more extensively in order to gain better insights. Even though a study by (Namukasa, 2013) concentrated on determining the pre-flight, in-flight and post-flight related service quality determinants in relation with customer satisfaction, however only three service determinants for each phase of total service quality were used during the study in addition to limited to the context of international airlines (Jiang & Zhang , 2016). In the above mentioned study customer service was not measured in multidimensional perspective as service quality aspects, passenger's safety, organizational learning and growth, internal operational process excellence to observe the three stages of service quality and their consequences on the airline sector. Thus this study attempts to address these gaps by extensively including factors for every stage of service chain and linking them to repurchase intentions.

Thirdly, this study adds its significance in the literature in such a way that earlier studies have been using Ticket price as a part of service, generally included in pre-flight services; this will hinder the actual picture of service quality. As if any customer is getting not up to the standard services but at very cheaper rates he/ she might rate the airline better. That will not actually depict the real situation of the service quality. Thus with the intention of gaining more in-depth understanding of the services that will increase the repurchase intentions and customer satisfaction; Ticket price has been studied as a mediator in order to see that if we take out the price factor from pre-flight services and then try to investigate that how will customers rate the service quality and then studied its mediating effects on customer satisfaction and repurchase intentions.

And lastly, the limited present research on pre-flight services in connection with the repurchase intentions. In the study conducted by Küster et al. (2016) the effects of pre-transactional service determinants are studied on the purchase intentions in the textile industry however a significant gap was present in context of using pre-transactional service quality determinants in relationship with repurchase intention while having a mediation effect of customer satisfaction and ticket prices in airline industry Saleem et al. (2017).

6.2. Managerial Insights for Airline Industry

This study also highlighted some key issues that airline's management should have considered. As due to current revenue model in Pakistan prevalent in the airline industry; airlines are primarily focusing and competing on two criteria. First is the competitive price by continuously looking for the other airline's fare rates and adjusting their rates in accordance to them and trying to offer similar or lower rates to attract the customers. Secondly, based on the demand and supply airlines are offering changing fares i.e. adjusting their fare accordingly to available seats. Hence, their currently primary focus is on competitive fares instead of providing superior and distinctive services. As the results of our study also suggest that the total service quality has a positive and significant relationship with the repurchase intention via customer satisfaction yet mediating role of the ticket prices was also significant. This indicates that if you provide superior services and on-time flight it will increase your repurchases but; a competitive ticket fare is also a factor to be considered in order to increase satisfaction and repurchase intentions.

Moreover, it is evident from this study regarding service quality determinants and repurchase, the results emphasize that there should be a continuous focus on improving services quality in all three phases not just in-flight services in order to build trust and increase customer satisfaction and repurchase intentions. There are very less costly additional services that can be offered by keeping your prices at competitive so that it will add and improve satisfaction levels. Pre-flight services experience can be enhanced by providing an online check-in system which let the travelers to use e-boarding passes that will be saved or downloaded on their cell phones so it saves their time to stand and wait in long queues. It's a very small effort, yet it can create a big difference as the growing awareness of mobile devices in general public; this can be easily and effectively utilized by majority of travelers.

Furthermore, this research also indicates a policy guideline and recommendation for the airlines to introduce their premium services so that they can capitalize upon that chunk of the market that is willing to pay higher for the premium services instead of getting poor services at cheaper prices. Although airlines do have classifications of economy and business classes but still they are not able to differentiate them at pre-flight and post-flight stages; as they are doing it in just in-flight services. Airlines can offer a free pickup and drop facility to business travelers by contracting with very cheap yet effective newly emerged service providers like Uber and Careem.

Additionally, to improve post-flight service quality, airlines must emphasize in taking corrective measures in the situation of a service disasters that causes losing customers. For instance measures regarding providing assistance to passengers with recoveries requests in the incident of baggage lost, refunding the cancelled flights, and in the case of missed flight providing support in finding an alternative flight.

Other post-flight services can be as in case of delay baggage, airlines should provide a refund of baggage fee, although currently airlines do provide a refund in the vent of lost baggage but if your baggage is delayed like for a day or two, your whole trip will be disturbed, providing fee refund and some additional amount could create a positive image towards the airline. In addition to that post-flight services can be offered to business travelers as creating a separate baggage claim counter for them.

In relation to above, the customer satisfaction has played a significant mediation that impacts the quality of services and repurchases intentions. Even though at present there is an improved importance is given to customer's satisfaction, policies are required to recognize passengers' primary needs, in order to develop better mix of services. This might involve following-up with passengers after every phase of service encounter with the purpose of addressing their complaints, if any.

Lastly, the results of the study also have significant implications for the practitioners dealing the services quality and quality control. As we have also provided a separate table for the individual services that has more significant impact on the repurchase intentions in appendices C. Hence developing a framework for them to prioritize their focus on services but this again doesn't mean losing focus and neglecting other services that has low impact. Because it might be possible that if those services were neglected or highly underperformed the reaction could be much worse. Table XII reports the direct impact of individual services on repurchase intention suggesting the prioritizing focus and keeping more frequent checks on highly significant services. Such as the most significant and impactful services were clean and comfortable seats of the plane followed by On-time flight and Fast and accurate reservation system. Thus airline professional can prioritize their focus in accordance with the proposed results of this study.

6.3. Limitations of the study

Irrespective of the unique finding of this research, there are quite a few limitations of this study too which can be helpful for the future studies on this area. Firstly, this study incorporates data that was cross-sectional, we don't incorporated a longitudinal study; as a result, we cannot certainly infer that how will the experience and opinion of the passengers might change with the passage of time or after a month of travelling experience, as most of the participants were freshly travelled passengers waiting in the arrival lounges or waiting for someone to pick them. Secondly, this study is restricted to the context of domestic airlines only and passengers that do travelled domestically. Therefore, international passengers' experiences on the effect airline's services quality on the repurchase intentions and satisfaction might not be the same as of

domestic travelers. Therefore, an empirical analysis is required that incorporates the opinions and experiences of both domestic and international passengers.

Third, we have measured the customer satisfaction, ticket prices and repurchase intentions using single items. Although, our choice was based on previous studies and the fact that the all other services were very much related with customer satisfaction so we consider it appropriate to use simple one item to see their overall satisfaction level. Therefore, it is not possible to check the reliability of those variables which we consider it our limitation for this study. Measuring them by using more items could provide more insights about this specific area of study. And lastly, this study only utilizes Ticket prices and customer satisfaction as mediators in relation among constructs of total service quality and repurchases intentions; nevertheless, there might be other external variable that can be utilized as a moderator including government regulations, brand image and availability of alternatives. Moreover, instead of looking the dual mediation effect of ticket prices with the constructs of service quality and repurchase intentions via customers' satisfaction, a moderated mediation effect might also provide some different insights in this regard.

6.4. Future research

Despite the novelty of this study, this study also does have some limitations upon which we like to highlight some areas and directions for future researches. A recommendation for future studies is to include the international passengers as well with the domestic travelers in order to gain more deep understanding of this area of research. Moreover, this study only focuses on the domestic airlines operating in Pakistan; future studies should also include the international airlines as well such as Emirates, Etihad etc. and can make a comparative analysis of quality of the services. In addition to that, future researchers could also differentiate the quality of service between private and public airlines. As in our case a large portion of the respondents belongs to PIA (a public airline) that unfortunately has not that good service levels. Hence it offers an opportunity for future studies to investigate and do a comparative analysis of the service quality determinants separately in private and public airlines do gain better insights of the topic. Moreover, as this study is based on the cross-sectional data; in future a longitudinal data could be

incorporated in the study; to ascertain the changing opinions of the travelers as our data has largely includes passengers' opinion that has freshly travelled hence it might be possible that their opinion could differ after sometime. Thus, we recommend future studies to observe the opinion of the passengers in different interval of times to determine the difference of opinion after sometime of post- travelling experiences. Another suggestion for future researchers in this particular area; is to measure the ticket prices, customer satisfaction (instead of looking overall satisfaction) and repurchase intention with more items. As we have used single-items to measure these variables; future studies could use different items to gain better and much clearer view of the mentioned variables. In sum, future research should comprise more predictors to uncover more deeply understanding of the service quality determinants on repurchase behaviors. Furthermore, as this research used ticket prices and satisfaction as the only possible mediators with no moderators between the proposed relationships of service quality determinants and repurchase intentions; studies in future on this topic could incorporate some other factors as well to see the moderating effects. As in Pakistan; airline industry is highly regulated by the Government, thus future studies could also see the moderating role of government policies and regulations as well as other external factors too like availability of alternative channels, brand image, market reputation, perception and word-of-mouth. And lastly we recommend future studies to see a possible moderated mediation effect of regulations; word of mouth or ticket prices in relationship between the total service quality determinants with repurchase intention via mediation effects of customer satisfaction.

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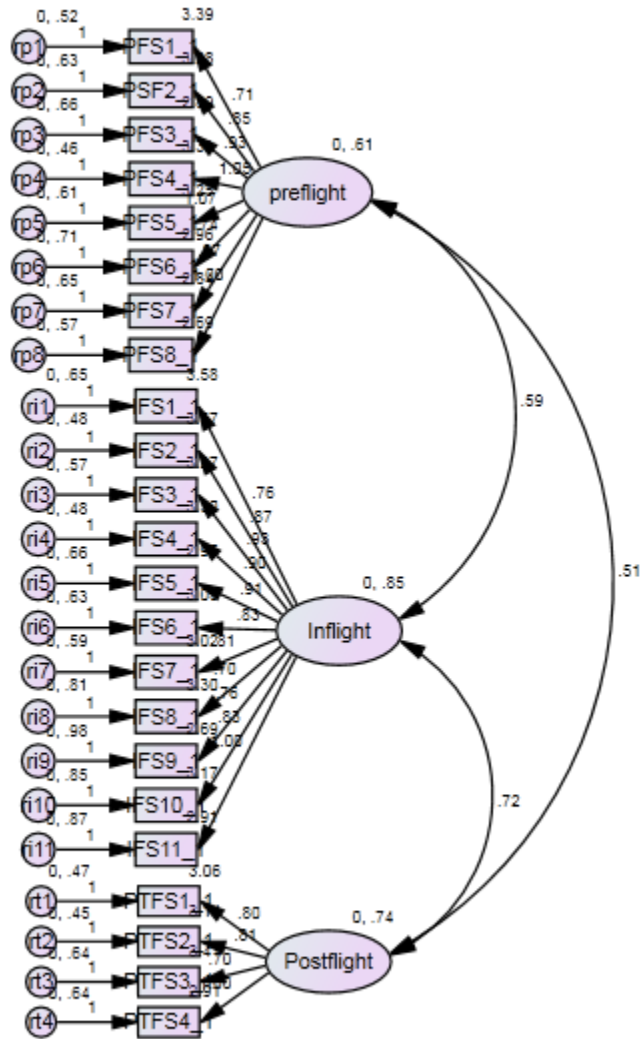
APPENDICES

Appendix A: Factor loadings and constructs

Construct	Construct dimensions	Item codes	Item descriptions	Source
Pre-flight services	Product search & support (Responsiveness)	PFS1	It is easier to find information on website	Otim and Grover (2006)
		PFS2	Convenience for reserving desired seat	Adopted from Denne't, Ineson and Colgate, (2000)
		PFS3	Advertising of the airline company	Pakdil and Aydın (2007)
	Facilitation in purchase (Responsiveness)	PFS4	The website and reservation system is fast	Adapted from Rodgers et al. (2005)
		PFS5	Employees Prompt response to customer requests	Adopted from Su et al. (2016)
	Value added services (Tangibles)	PFS6	Additional Baggage allowance	Adopted from (Namukasa, 2013).
		PFS7	Frequent Flyer Program	Adopted from Seelhorst and Liu (2015)
	Safety (Assurance)	PFS8	Insurance for individual passenger	(Shepherd, Macpherson, & Edwards, 2006)
In-Flight Services		IFS7	Availability of inflight medical assistance	(Shepherd, Macpherson, & Edwards, 2006)
		IFS10	Baggage Security	(Elliott & Roach, 1993)
	Reliability of operations (Reliability)	IFS11	On-time flights	Ostrowski et al. (1993)
		IFS12	Performing the services right at the first time	Pakdil and Aydın (2007)
	Comfort and personal considerations	IFS3	Clean and comfortable interior/seat	Pakdil and Aydın (2007)

	(Tangibles)	IFS6	Food Quality	Ostrowski et al. (1993)
		IFS5	Better and more Leg space available	Adopted from SereneAir survey
	(Empathy)	IFS1	Welcome receive upon arrival	Adopted from SereneAir survey
		IFS4	Courtesy of cabin crew	Park (2007)
		IFS2	Neat appearance of Flight attendants	Park (2007)
		IFS8	Special facilities for children/ disabled travellers	Jiang and Zhang, (2016)
	(Tangibles)	IFS9	In-flight entertainment	Jiang and Zhang, (2016)
Post-flight Services	Baggage claim Facilities (Reliability)	PTFS1	Rapid Baggage Transportation	Adopted from Wu and Cheng, (2013)
		PTFS2	conveyors are Operational	(Post Flight Services Checklist, 2017)
		PTFS3	Availability of Baggage trolleys	(Post Flight Services Checklist, 2017)
		PTFS4	Support facilities for lost or delay baggage	Pakdil and Aydın (2007)
Customer Satisfaction		CS	Satisfaction with the services	Adopted from (Namukasa, 2013)
Ticket Prices		TP	Price charged against quality of services	(Ryu & Han, 2010).
Repurchase Intentions		RPI	Likely to repurchase the same services	(Tsiros & Mittal, 2000)

Appendix B: CFA diagram



Appendix C: Model Coefficients for direct relations of IVs and DV

Predictor (X)		Outcome (Y)	Estimate	SE	t	p
IFS	Clean and comfortable seats	RPI	0.370	0.074	5.038	0.000
IFS	On-time flights	RPI	0.213	0.058	3.665	0.000
PFS	Fast and accurate reservation system	RPI	0.205	0.078	2.639	0.009
IFS	Welcoming crew upon arrival	RPI	0.164	0.074	2.206	0.028
IFS	Special facilities for disabled passengers and children	RPI	0.160	0.062	2.595	0.010
PFS	Effective advertisements	RPI	0.108	0.065	1.676	0.095
IFS	Quality of Food	RPI	0.076	0.069	1.099	0.273
PTFS	Rapid post-flight baggage transportation	RPI	0.057	0.076	0.747	0.455
PFS	Provision of Additional Baggage	RPI	0.054	0.064	0.850	0.396
PTFS	Support facilities for lost or delayed baggage	RPI	0.053	0.067	0.795	0.427
PTFS	Availability of baggage carrying trolleys near conveyors	RPI	0.048	0.067	0.722	0.471
IFS	In-flight entertainment	RPI	0.033	0.056	0.593	0.554
PFS	Additional benefits for frequent flying	RPI	0.030	0.069	0.434	0.665
PFS	Employee's prompt responses	RPI	0.025	0.069	0.368	0.713
PTFS	Clean and operational baggage conveyors	RPI	0.012	0.078	0.153	0.878
IFS	Baggage Security	RPI	-0.021	0.061	-0.342	0.733
PFS	Easiness to find information	RPI	-0.036	0.077	-0.469	0.639
IFS	Neat appearance of flight attendants	RPI	-0.039	0.086	-0.455	0.649
PFS	Individual passenger insurance	RPI	-0.047	0.073	-0.640	0.523
IFS	Courtesy and individual attention	RPI	-0.047	0.077	-0.613	0.540
IFS	Availability of in-flight medical assistance	RPI	-0.094	0.073	-1.287	0.199
PFS	Convenience in reserving the desired seats	RPI	-0.121	0.070	-1.741	0.083
IFS	Better seat space and legroom	RPI	-0.139	0.067	-2.069	0.040

Dear Sir/Madam,

You are invited to participate in this research which is a part of master's degree thesis. The purpose of this research is to recognize about service quality determinants that leads towards the customer satisfaction and enforces the repurchase behaviors specifically in an Airline industry. Your contribution will be greatly appreciated. Privacy and anonymity will be made sure. The data gathered will only be used for academic purpose. If you have some query in your mind concerning anything in this questionnaire or this research please feel free to contact on moeen.yaqoob@yahoo.com

Thank you,
Muhammad Moeen Yaqoob
NUST Business School
MS Logistics & Supply chain Management

Instructions regarding filling questionnaire:

- i. Please fill all the questions and do not leave anything blank.
- ii. Please tick mark only one option against each question.

Gender: Male Female Other Prefer not to say

Age (years): Below 21 21-30 31-40 41-50 51-60 above 60

Education: Less than Intermediate Intermediate or equivalent Bachelor's (BA/BS Master' Doctorat

Frequently travelled in Airline: Air Blue PIA Serene Air

Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with each of these statements by Placing a " ✓ " mark in the box of your answer.

Rate each statement about the airline's Pre-flight services, describing your experience on the following scale of 1 to 5:

1= Very Poor, 2= Poor, 3= Average, 4=Good, 5= Excellent

	1	2	3	4	5
1. Easiness to find information on airline's website					
2. Convenience in reserving the desired seats					
3. Effective advertisements of the airline.					
4. Fast and accurate reservation system					
5. Employee's prompt responses to customer requests.					
6. Provision of Additional Baggage allowance					
7. Additional benefits for frequent flying or loyalty program benefits					
8. Individual passenger insurance coverage					

Rate each statement about the airline's In-flight services, describing your experience on the following scale of 1 to 5:

1= Very Poor, 2= Poor, 3= Average, 4=Good, 5= Excellent

	1	2	3	4	5
1. Welcoming crew upon arrival at plane					
2. Neat appearance of Cabin crew/ flight attendants.					
3. Clean and comfortable seats and plane interior.					
4. Courtesy and individual attention given by Cabin crew / Flight attendants					
5. Better seat space and legroom					
6. Quality of Food					
7. Availability of in-flight medical assistance					
8. Special facilities for disabled passengers and children					
9. In-flight entertainment					
10. Baggage Security					
11. On-time flights					

Rate each statement about the airline's Post-flight services, describing your experience on the following scale of 1 to 5:

1= Very Poor, 2= Poor, 3= Average, 4=Good, 5= Excellent

	1	2	3	4	5
1. Rapid post-flight baggage transportation					
2. Baggage conveyors are clean and operational					
3. Availability of baggage carrying trolleys near conveyors					
4. Support facilities for lost or delayed baggage					

Please think about your overall experience and show your satisfaction or dissatisfaction accordingly on the following scale:

1= Very Low, 2= Low, 3= Moderate, 4=High, 5= Very High

	1	2	3	4	5
1. Satisfaction with the overall quality of the pre-flight, In-flight and Post-flight services					
2. Satisfaction with the Price charged against the quality of services offered					
3. Likely to purchase or travel again with the same Airline					

Thank you very much for participating in this study