

**IBN HALDUN UNIVERSITY  
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES  
DEPARTMENT OF AIR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT**

**MASTER THESIS**

**LINKING PERCEIVED AIRLINE SERVICE QUALITY  
WITH PASSENGER LOYALTY, REPURCHASE  
INTENTION, AND WORD OF MOUTH  
CASE STUDY OF TURKISH AIRLINES**

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**THESIS SUPERVISOR: PROF. EKREM TATOĞLU**

**ISTANBUL, 2021**

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by

**DINA ALGHZAWI**

**A thesis submitted to the School of Graduate Studies in partial  
fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science in  
Air Transport Management**

**THESIS SUPERVISOR: PROF. EKREM TATOĞLU**

**ISTANBUL, 2021**

## APPROVAL PAGE

This is to certify that we have read this thesis and that in our opinion it is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Science in Air Transportation Management.

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## ACADEMIC HONESTY ATTESTATION

I hereby declare that all information in this document has been obtained and presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that, as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced all material and results that are not original to this work.

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Signature:



## ÖZ

### TÜRK HAVA YOLLARI ÖRNEK OLAY İNCELEMESİ: HAVAYOLU SERVİS KALİTESİNİN; MÜŞTERİ SADAKATI, MÜŞTERİNİN AYNI HİZMETİ TEKRAR SATIN ALMA DAVRANIŞI VE SÖZLÜ TAVSİYE İLE İLİŞKİSİ

Yazar: Alghzawi, Dina

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Bu çalışma, havayolu hizmet kalitesinin müşteri davranışına etkisini (hizmeti yeniden satın alma isteği ve sözlü tavsiye) müşteri sadakati üzerinden incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Kantitatif yaklaşımın kullanılması için yapılan anket aracılığı ile; 222 kişi - yolcu - Google formları kullanılarak yüklenen çevrimiçi anketi yanıtladı. Toplanan veriler, AMOS kullanılarak yapısal eşitlik modellemesine dayalı olarak tarandı ve analiz edildi. Sonuçlar, havayolu hizmet kalitesinin, müşteri sadakatine atfedilen müşteri davranışı (yeniden satın alma niyeti ve sözlü tavsiye) üzerinde olumlu bir etkisi olduğunu, yani müşteri sadakatinin, havayolu hizmet kalitesi ile (hizmeti yeniden satın alma durumu ve sözlü tavsiye) değişkenleri arasındaki ilişkiye aracılık ettiği anlamına geldiğini gösterdi. Buna ek olarak, havayolu hizmet kalitesi elementlerinin müşteri üzerinde en etkili olanlarının (imaj ve personel) olduğu görülmüştür. Çalışma, gelişmeler ve artan müşteri bilinci ile müşteri davranışının zaman içinde değişmeyecek sabit bir özellik olmadığı gerçeğini içeren çıkarımları sunmuş; gerekli gelişme ve farkındalık ile, kuruluşların müşteri davranışına ilişkin farkındalıklarını yeni bir inceleme ve takdir düzeyine dönüştürmeleri için bir araç olabileceğini göstermektedir. Bu çalışmadaki araştırmacı, 'Airqual' değişkenlerinin havayolu kuruluşlarının pazarlama yaklaşımları üzerindeki etkisinin incelenmesini önermektedir; ayrıca, kuruluşun iyi yapılandırılmış bir havayolu kaliteli hizmetini takip etmesi halinde pazarlama stratejilerinin ve kampanyalarının nasıl etkilenebileceğinin incelenmesi tavsiye etmektedir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Havayolu Hizmet Kalitesi (AirQual), Müşteri Sadakati, Geri Satın Alma Niyeti, Kulaktan Kulağa İletişim.

## ABSTRACT

### LINKING PERCEIVED AIRLINE SERVICE QUALITY WITH PASSENGER LOYALTY, REPURCHASE INTENTION, AND WORD OF MOUTH CASE STUDY OF TURKISH AIRLINES

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The current study aimed at examining the influence of Airline service quality on customer behaviour (repurchase intention and word of mouth) through the mediating effect of customer loyalty.

Employing the quantitative approach, and depending on questionnaire; 222 individuals – passengers – responded to the online questionnaire which was uploaded using Google forms. Gathered data was screened and analysed based on structural equation modelling using AMOS.

Results indicated that there is a positive influence of airline service quality on customer behaviour (repurchase intention and WoM) that is attributed to customer loyalty, meaning that customer loyalty mediates the relationship between airline service quality and both variables of repurchase intention and WoM. In addition to that, it was found out that airline service quality dimensions are influential on dependent variables. 'Image' and 'Personnel' are the most influential dimensions of all.

Study presented implications including the fact that customer behaviour isn't a fixed trait that won't change over time. On the contrary, it develops with increased awareness from customers; their behaviour is expected to change over time. The current study may present a tool for organizations to develop their awareness regarding customer behaviour into a new level of examination and appreciation. Researcher of this study recommends examining the influence of 'Airqual' variables on marketing approaches of airline organizations. It is also recommended to examine

how marketing strategies and campaigns might be influenced if the organization followed a well-built airline quality service.

**Keywords:** Airline Service Quality (AirQual), Customer Loyalty, Repurchases Intention, Word-of-Mouth.



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Dina Alghzawi

2021

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## LIST OF SYMBOLS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AirQual	Airline Service Quality
FFP	Frequent Flyer Program
HSQM	Hierarchical Service Quality Model
RI	Repurchase Intention
ServPerf	Service Performance Model
ServQual	Service Quality Model
TK	Turkish Airlines
WoM	Word of Mouth



# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Introduction to the Problem

Aviation companies are considered to be important service providers. They play a significant role in economic development and support tourism within the countries. Over the course of time, aviation organizations became more aware of how important satisfying a client can be.

Their focus began to lean towards customer care, customer satisfaction and customer loyalty in order to transform the 'customer' from an end user to a promoter and a marketer, based on recommending the organization to others and setting their preferences on a certain organization (Waits, 2000). According to Vazquez et al. (2011), this awareness among organizations led them to take extraordinary measures in order to guarantee full satisfaction from their customers, aligned with loyalty, for as long as they can.

### 1.2. Background of the Study

Service organizations are currently focusing on expanding their market share and increasing their sales percentage by maintaining existing customers and trying to win new 'potential' customers, based on the idea of improving the level and quality of services provided to them. Service sector organizations seek to achieve long-term success by providing various services that are able to satisfy the customer and secure a place in their mind for future need.

According to Gong and Yi (2018), in order to properly perform the services provided and affect individuals in a way that leads to customer satisfaction and loyalty, they have to arm their infrastructure with high quality services, which are able to attain global standards. Trying to achieve such goals, these organizations realized that

'customer loyalty' is one of the most important factors that contribute to raising the level of services provided by them.

Customer loyalty leads customers to re-engage with the organization and thus increases the possibility of them becoming permanent clients. In addition to that, through adopting such a path, the organisation – as mentioned before – will reach a state where their clients become their marketers. That is achieved through spreading the word and recommending certain services to friends and family, which at the end will lead to a better client base.

Based on what was mentioned before, Researcher tried to formulate a case for study, through focusing on the following set of questions:

What is the influence of airline service quality on customers' behaviour in terms of 'repurchase intention' and 'word of mouth'?

What is the role of 'customer loyalty' in creating a suitable environment for customers to repurchase again and spread a good word about the organization?

Formulating the above questions into a main aim, Researcher was seeking to realize the following:

Examine the influence of Airline service quality (AirQual) on customers' 'repurchase intention' and 'word of mouth' through the mediating effect of customer loyalty.

### **1.3. Purpose of the Research**

It is widely known that customers consider making a purchase from the same place again so long as they are getting the service level that they seek. Many studies have shown that many customers prefer to stick to the source of service that they found suitable, or the source that feeds their satisfaction the most. From that point, it can be said that customers would – for sure - stick to the same organization they deal with as long as they are receiving more than the value they invest in it.

The purpose of the current study is to shed light on the concept of airline service quality and how it can have a significant level on customers' loyalty at one level. On another level, it will focus on the role of increased customer loyalty and how that helps in increasing repurchase intention and word of mouth among customers.

#### **1.4. Rationale**

Recent decades have witnessed significant development in service sectors especially with the growing awareness of customers regarding satisfaction, loyalty, and stemming from the fact that customers now know that 'they are always right'. This awareness increased with the development of the internet and the wide-spread use of social media, which helped in connecting people together. Now customers can meet on a platform and exchange experiences, happiness and frustrations in a service that they get from an organization or a product that they ordered online,

Service organizations are aware of this dilemma, including the fact that individuals these days are willing to spend more of their income on services at the expense of other physical goods – 'increased spending margins'. So, service organizations are shifting their purpose towards winning the customer rather than winning the market share, knowing for a fact that winning the first will help in winning the latter.

Proceeding from this notion, the rationale for the current study stems from the idea that there is a set of attempts aimed to define the dimensions by which clients can be measured. Thus each of (Zeithmail, Berry and Parasuraman, 1996) has reached four dimensions that measure customer loyalty towards an organization or a specific brand:

- Word-of-Mouth, where the customer recommends the service to others.
- The intention to re-purchase and deal with the organization again.
- Lack of price sensitivity because of the ability of the customer to pay higher prices for services that he likes.
- And finally, the behaviour adopted by the client in bearing the consequences resulting from a problem they face with the organization.

In the present study, 'word-of-mouth' and 'repurchase intention' variables are adopted as two variables of consumer behaviour and 'customer loyalty' to the organization.

### **1.5. Significance of the Study**

The importance of the study comes from the fact that the quality of service and its delivery to the customer, in the best ways and methods, is an important basis that plays a major role in the success of the airline business. The field of competition, in the services provided, depends on reaching the stage of customer happiness and exceeding its expectations.

What increases the importance of the current study is that it is applied to Turkish Airlines, bearing in mind that Turkey has now become one of the most important tourist destinations in the world. The Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism announced that the country hosted 51.7 million visitors during the year 2019, a new record.

In addition to that, it is worth mentioning here that the percentage of tourists coming to Turkey through Turkish Airlines increased by 14.11% in the year 2019 compared to 2018 and achieving revenue of 34.5 billion dollars. The current study is considered important as it has dealt with one of the most important Turkish working organizations that have an important role in providing a good impression and a positive image of the country abroad, in addition to its economic importance (aljazeera.net, 2020).

Turkish Airlines is the main national airline of Turkey, and its headquarters is located in Istanbul, one of the largest cities in Turkey. Istanbul International Airport is the centre of the company's operations, and the company provides services to more than 315 destinations including Europe, Asia, Africa and North America; it is also a member of the Star Global Alliance. Turkish Airlines owns a number of European airlines including AnadolJet, Northern Cyprus Airlines, Sun Express, and there are currently talks with the Polish company LOT to purchase Polish airlines.

The importance of the current study also stems from the fact that it provides the required information to develop customer services by improving the quality provided. It will thus be reaching a high level of customer satisfaction, coupled with

customer loyalty to the organization with the probability of dealing with the organization's services again.

### **1.6. Organization of the Study**

This dissertation comprises five chapters. Chapter 1 introduces the case and highlights the problem statement and rationale. Chapter 2 reviews the pertinent literature, explores the theoretical framework and presents the proposed research model. Chapter 3 explains the data collection and the research methodologies applied. Chapter 4 consists of statistical results of analysis, gathered data of study, as well as discussion of the findings. Finally, Chapter 5 presents the conclusion and recommendations.



## **CHAPTER II**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1. Introduction**

It is not possible to talk about renaissance and development without directly or indirectly addressing quality, whether in its concepts, culture, methods, techniques or administrative and technical tools (Gorla et al., 2010). Although the Services sector has a different nature and characteristics than the Products sector, it is characterized by complexity and is of significant importance in the global and local economies (Rudenko et al., 2015).

Popli and Rizvi (2015) stated that with the intensification of competition in this sector, the design of successful services includes engineering a set of operations, resources and outputs that lead to responding to customer expectations. This is considered one of the challenges that an organization may face in order to achieve the quality that suits consumers satisfaction, like improving profitability and enhancing prestige (Rust and Huang, 2014).

#### **2.2. Service Quality**

Ali and Raza (2017) stated that the concept of quality isn't something that is related to the end service/product. On the contrary, it is a concept that is involved at all levels of the organization, including its management, services/products, internal processes, external environment, quality assurance, supply chain and after-supply services.

Launching from the fact that quality refers to 'fulfilling the expectations and requirements of an individual for a service or product provided by a certain organization' (Bansal and Taylor, 2015), there is a need to define the meaning of 'service quality' among service providers. According to Varela (2016); Kushwah and Bhargav (2014), service quality is defined as a comparison between what customers want and expect, and their awareness of actual performance compared to these

expectations; in other words, the awareness of the gap between what is expected and what is received. Orel and Kara (2014) defined service quality as 'judgment or opinion on the extent of service excellence from the customers' point of view', and Shin et al. (2015) defined it as a 'measure of how consistently the level of service provided corresponds to the aspirations of the customer'.

Yarimoglu (2014) defined service quality as the degree of distinction required and the ability to control different variables to achieve that distinction, and achieve customer requirements. Chui et al. (2016) saw that service quality is a set of characteristics of a service that has the ability to satisfy the needs as well as the desires of customers reaching their satisfaction.

Chase and Apte (2007), Mosadeghrad (2014) and Z ur Rehman et al. (2014) state that the concept of quality of service reflects the customer's evaluation of how excellent a certain service reached in an organization is. For Thorson et al. (2014) and Collier and Bienstock (2015), the concept of expectations points to the aspirations or desires of clients, formed in light of previous experience with service organizations or through their exposure to any form of marketing communications and promotion of business organizations in general.

### **2.2.1. Dimensions of Service Quality**

It has been scientifically proven that there is a direct relationship between increased attention to quality of service, customer satisfaction and loyalty. This means that the greater the interest in developing the quality of service, the more it influences customer satisfaction and loyalty (Gustafson and Breed, 2019; Babakus and Inhofe, 2015).

In a famous study by Lovelock (1983), one of the leading scientists in service and marketing business at the University of Michigan, USA, it was found that on average, every 1% paid to investment in increasing customer satisfaction returns to the company by 2.37% as an (ROI). Therefore, when talking about developing quality of service, it is important to refer to the so-called five-gap model, which is

one of the most used models in the world by companies that are concerned with developing and providing quality of service (Abdel Rady, 2018).

The five-gap model simply classifies the aspects which, throughout an organization, highlight how service quality is seen. Finding any kind of defect in those aspects means that there is a gap in the quality of the service. From this, the role of the organisation formulates the need to bridge this gap and work towards improving it with the best strategies possible (Brochado et al., 2019).

As a goal to measure the quality of service in organizations, Parasuraman et al. (1985) designed a proposed model in order to achieve this goal. The proposed model consisted of 10 dimensions to measure the quality of service, namely (1) Tangibles, (2) Reliability, (3) Responsiveness, (4) Understanding the customers, (5) Access, (6) Communication, (7) Credibility, (8) Security, (9) Competence and (10) Courtesy.

A few years later, Parasurman et al. (1988) simplified the model proposed by them in 1985 and presented what we know today as the 'ServeQual'. It consists of five major dimensions including: (1) Tangibles (2) Reliability (3) Responsiveness (4) Assurance and (5) Empathy.

After extensive application, examinations and studying, the model was recognized by many researchers, academics and scholars in the field in various countries: the 'ServQual' provided a comprehensive scale to measure the level of service quality, in order to maintain and develop the level of service quality envisioned by customers. However, although there was great acceptance and recognition of the model at the level of academics and scholars, the Parasurman et al. (1988) model faced a lot of criticism, including the fact that the model only covers the comparison between perceived quality of service and the expected quality of customers.

### **2.3. Service Quality Model with Airline Industry**

#### **2.3.1. Service Quality Model (ServQual)**

Studies by (Parasuraman et al., 1985-1994) are considered the primary references that began to measure quality of service. These studies provided a suggested model

to measure the quality of a perceived service from the customer's point of view by relying on measuring the difference between the expected performance and the received performance of the service as per the customer's perception.

The measuring tool (according to the latest development conducted by the study team) is represented by five main factors (tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy) through 22 sub-phrases, and it is called SERVQUAL. This is an abbreviation of Service Quality – as explained earlier. The scale can be expressed by the formula: Service Quality = Expected service – Perceived service.

The SERVQUAL model of measurement is very important, according to Auckland (1995). He argued that "what cannot be measured cannot be developed". One of the methods used to measure customer satisfaction with the service provided is the "ServQual" survey (Butt and de Run, 2010). Parasuraman et al. (1991) defined ServQual as a questionnaire designed by Zeithaml in 1985 to measure the difference between customer expectations for actual service and the service provided to them. The idea behind ServQual's is to define the gap between the service that customers expect and the service that is actually provided. It is characterized by its ease and comprehensiveness, and the ability to gather real information, identify the problem, and determine the current conditions of service (Parasuraman et al., 1988).

### **2.3.2. Service Performance Model (ServPerf)**

According to Tan and Fitzgerald (2014), the concept of satisfaction in marketing is seen as the correlation between the perceived performance of a good/service and the expectations of buyers. Satisfaction can also be defined as the function of the level of expectation and perceptions of what is uncertain, and that perceived quality of service is a major reason for achieving satisfaction.

Nisar and Prabhakar (2017) argued that satisfaction in general refers to the positive post-consumption evaluation, which is attributed to consumers' feeling of pleasure connected with fulfilment and an anti-dissatisfaction pattern. Those feelings of fulfilment, satisfaction and positivity in a customer might be transformed into feelings of loyalty, meaning that the customer would happily go through the experience again and deal with the same source – organization – in order to get the

same feelings or attitude from the deal once again. This is the so-called customer loyalty (Prakoso et al., 2017).

Ingaldi (2016) stated that situational and behavioural loyalty has an impact on product and brand satisfaction within different cultural environments, and the perceived quality of services is one of the main reasons for customer satisfaction. There have been many scientific attempts to measure the perceived quality of the service. One was the previously proposed SERVQUAL model, which was subject to some modifications, proposed knowingly in the form of SERVPERF model, in addition to (HSQM) Hierarchical Service Quality Model suggested by (Brady & Cronin, 2001), along with many other models and applications.

Through extensive studies and examinations, the authors concluded that the best measure of quality of service is "SERVPERF". This is a developed model for SERVQUAL to treat its problems and reach a less complex and more effective model. It is the measure of quality of service in perceived quality by the customer without the need to measure the expected performance and the difference between them. The SERVPERF form is an abbreviation of Perceived Service, and the scale can be expressed by the formula: Service Quality = Perceived service.

### **2.3.3. Air Quality Model (AirQual)**

According to Abdel Rady (2018), discussion on building and measuring quality of service is still inconclusive within the previous literature related to measuring quality of service, which tried to focus on four services (traditional service, multi-level hierarchical model, services that support technology, serious accident techniques).

Both Alotaibi (2015) and Liu and Li (2014) indicated that there is an urgent need to develop a model based on examining and measuring the level of service quality for airlines. This is due to the widespread criticism faced by SERVQUAL, when it was used to evaluate the services of air transport and navigation companies. In order to be able to examine, measure and evaluate service quality of aviation organizations and the quality of service in this type of service, Bari et al. (2001) presented what is

known today as "AIRQUAL" – Airline Service Quality - indicating that it is a standard model used to measure the quality of airline service.

Alotaibi (2015) indicated that the main reason behind the development of AIRQUAL is that the existing standards and in particular 'SERVQUAL' did not succeed in covering all aspects of aviation and air services. They were also not eligible for service quality measurements in general within the aviation industry. Among the criticisms that were made over the use of 'SERVQUAL' to measure the quality of airline services, is that the idea and dimensions of 'SERVQUAL' are closer to evaluating industrial services rather than air services.

He et al. (2015) and Bari et al. (2001) stated that, within the attempts to measure the quality of aviation services, the researchers were quite aware of the development of quality dimensions in general, even though researchers hadn't reached fixed dimensions related to measuring the quality of services within air airlines. In light of the information available on the preferences of air travellers, research tools for the quality of service standards for the aviation industry were considered essential.

For this, Bari et al. (2001) developed a tool to measure the quality of service in the aviation industry, called AIRQUAL. The AIRQUAL standard developed by Bari et al. (2001) is based on five main dimensions (airline tangible, terminal tangible, empathy, airline personnel and image). Their study was conducted in Northern Cyprus, and they investigated whether AIRQUAL could successfully measure the quality of airline customer perceptions. The AIRQUAL model addresses the five dimensions in view of many aspects of airline services as below:

### ***Airline Tangible***

This refers to facilities and equipment inside the aircraft, such as aircraft interior designs used by airlines, cleanliness of the plane toilets, cleanliness of the aircraft seats, comfort of the plane seats, and the quality of air conditioning in the aircraft. Airline tangible can be considered as one of the most significant and important dimensions of service quality in the aviation industry which directly determines the service quality of an airline.

### ***Terminal Tangible***

Terminal tangible, which is a determining factor that complements the quality of services supplied by the airlines, covers multiple areas more related to airports. Respondents are asked about the cleanliness of airport toilets, the availability of stores in the airport, the availability of parking spaces at the airport, the size of the airport, level of its organization, air conditioning, and the designated areas for smokers. In addition to that, terminal tangibles include the availability of luggage trolleys, carts and passenger buggies at the airport, the efficiency of the security control system, not to mention the uniform of employees, and the convenience of waiting areas.

### ***Personnel Services***

The third dimension of AIRQUAL in relation to employees, it is designed to evaluate employees working in airlines. In this dimension, airline staff behavior, their communication skills and experience can determine the quality of services delivered by the airline. This includes the way employees communicate with passengers, their approach, and their experience in responding to passengers' requests, their level of education, employee dedication, airline bookings and error-free ticket transactions.

### ***Empathy***

The idea of empathy revolves around the feeling that clients get in terms of priority and importance. Empathy also refers to the status in which the organization provides the needed attention and care to customers; to convey a unique feeling to them that they are special. Pakurár et al. (2019) indicated that most of the quantitative studies that preceded 2017 used the empathy dimension to measure the quality of service by combining it with assurance and credibility.

It is the fourth dimension of AIRQUAL. It focuses on specific parameters such as the accuracy of departure and arrival times, transport between the city and the airport, compensation in the event of loss or danger, care of passengers' luggage, airline office locations, and the number of flights undertaken by the company (Kahn, 2011).

## ***Image***

Barnyard (1921) had long said his famous phrase "One picture is better than a thousand words" in one of the periodicals specialized in advertising, in order to promote image ads. Talking about image also includes other dimensions such as product, brand, distribution outlets and everything that constitutes perceptive experiences by the target audience, and then influencing their behaviors towards the organization in terms of attitudes, and behavior (Wu et al., 2011).

Image was defined by Jeeradist et al. (2016) as the mental representation of a specific person or thing in the minds of individuals, while Cham et al. (2014) defined image as the totality of mental as well as emotional perceptions in the form of added value to the brand.

Huang et al. (2014) confirmed that image serves as a seal that distinguishes the product from competitors and protects it from imitation. It also represents a contract between the product and the customer that includes both perceived quality and value.

Image within the aviation industry doesn't only refer to the emotions and attitudes of customers towards the brand. It also refers to how available tickets are and how the prices of tickets match the end service that a customer gets. In addition to that, image may refer to the set of promotional campaigns that an organization runs in order to attract more customers in the form of discounts, additional services, bargains and loyalty programs.

## **2.4. Customer Loyalty**

Psychologists recently launched studies in which they support the relationship that arises between the customer and the brand. They found, through their psychological studies, that even very small details the consumer may not pay attention to, create a positive mutual feeling between the brand and the customer and make each of them more loyal towards the other (Gao et al., 2015). Kim et al. (2015) added that Amazon is one of the prominent examples of organizations that uses the strategy of retaining customers by gaining their loyalty to the brand through annual subscription to their "Prime Membership Program". Members, throughout the year, enjoy exclusive

features and benefits of this membership with every purchase, such as free shipping and special offers not available to Amazon users with regular membership. Researcher added that Amazon confirmed an average amount of Prime membership spent on their purchases from the famous store annually is about \$ 1500, compared to only \$ 650 spent by regular members.

According to Santouridis and Trivellas (2010), customer loyalty is the likelihood of customers continuing to deal with a specific brand, or the extent to which the customers are likely to repeat the process of dealing or buying from a particular brand over others and preferring it, regardless of the offers made by competing brands. Homburg et al. (2011) agreed with the previous definition, arguing that customer loyalty is the (repetitive behaviour of a customer to purchase or deal with a certain brand). This behaviour stems from a positive experience that customers have been through in terms of being provided with a satisfactory, valuable and beneficial service.

It was argued by Pérez and Del Bosque (2015) that the concept of customer loyalty helps to create true-blue customers who are willing to buy from the brand frequently every time they make a purchase decision, as a result of the privileges that they receive at each purchase that makes them return to the same entity every time.

### ***Loyalty Programs***

Customer loyalty doesn't come only from giving customers beneficial service, pampering them, giving them attention and caring for their needs. Customer loyalty isn't a day care or a kindergarten. It is a business strategy that aims at retaining current customers and attracting potential ones with a series of actions, plans, strategies, approaches and campaigns. These actions are designed to uncover the true value of a certain brand's level of service and employing this service to create more loyalty from customers.

With this purpose in mind, organizations began to employ various plans in order to increase the loyalty of their customers. This appeared in the form of different activities that an organization carries out in order to guarantee more loyalty from a

customer, like loyalty cards, loyalty programs, points, VIP deals, and other plans. The details differ from one organization to another but they have the same aim.

An organization sets up simple or complex loyalty programs that are applied in any business channel and are among the most important programs that have been created to maintain customer loyalty to the brand. It is one of the best programs that cares about customer service and about reaching their satisfaction with the service provided (Evanschitzky et al., 2012). Amazon - as was mentioned earlier - is one of the brands that have used loyalty programs for this purpose. Amazon uses loyalty programs in order to maintain existing customers and attract more potential customers by creating loyalty towards their brand.

Another example of customer loyalty programs is what Starbucks does. When a customer orders coffee through the application, they get points for every \$1 spent, which allows them to gain rewards for the points they collect, every time they make a purchase from Starbucks (Nunes and Drèze, 2006).

From the perspective of Yi and Jeon (2003) and Kang et al. (2015), loyalty programs are a strategy designed and adopted in order to reward customers for their repetitive purchases from the brand or any activity that resembles a relationship with the brand. It is an approach that rewards permanent customers for their on-going dealing with the brand.

Magatef and Tomalieh (2015) saw that loyalty programs are a very beneficial approach that helps to gain the trust of customers and creates a strong relationship with them. It also plays a role in encouraging customers to spread the word among their friends and family members, which is considered – as according to any business – a form of free marketing.

Loyalty programs from the perspective of Evanschitzky et al. (2012); Bridson et al. (2008) and Vesel and Zabkar (2009) were seen as a form of promotional and marketing practices that an organization embraces. They encourage customers to 'stay' and repeat their purchases through offering them rewards, gifts and benefits from their stay with the brand. Authors added that such a move would help in

achieving the aim of strengthening the relationship with customers and ensure that the brand is profitable for the services it provides.

For Kim et al. (2013), a customer is seen as the most important asset of any brand. Maintaining a good relationship with them is the best evidence that the business is successful and isn't going only after making profit. On the contrary, loyalty programs give an indication that a certain business cares more about its customer than its profit. Daryanto et al. (2013) seemed to agree with what came along with Kim et al. (2013), arguing that a loyalty program guarantees repetitive purchases by customers as a sign of trust, confidence and satisfaction that they get from the brand. On the same track, Zakaria et al. (2014) stated that through loyalty programs, customer loyalty can be achieved in (marketing through customer approach). This basically refers to the state where an actual customer spreads a positive word about the brand – word of mouth – among their friends and family members, which opens the gate for more potential customers to join the program and develop loyalty to the brand.

### ***Customer Satisfaction***

One may mix between the concepts of customer loyalty and customer satisfaction, but there is a big difference between them. Revealing this difference highlights the fact that customer satisfaction is mainly a measurement of customers' attitudes, point of view, and frame of mind towards a certain service or product or even a brand. On the other hand, customer loyalty is a set of different behaviours that a customer embraces as a sign of their loyalty to a certain brand, product or service. It can appear in different practices from customers including a repetitive purchase, recommendations, and choosing a certain brand over more attractive offers from a competitor. Based on that, it can be said that every loyal customer is a satisfied customer, but not every satisfied customer is a loyal customer (Basari and Shamsudin, 2020).

Brashear-Alejandro et al. (2016) argued that customer satisfaction is a comprehensive and long-term evaluation process – usually numerical and based on a scale - that includes evaluation of both the purchase and the consumption of a product or service. Customer satisfaction is a fundamental driver of customer

behaviour, and both customer satisfaction and loyalty influence managerial decisions, as loyalty also enhances the organization's actual value and cost-effectiveness.

Nadiri et al. (2008) pointed out that not every satisfied customer is a loyal customer. However, having satisfied customers can ease the process of developing loyalty in them. They exhibit the base of loyalty after being satisfied with a product/service, then the post-purchase services and as a result, the brand as a whole. From that point, it can be said that a satisfied customer isn't a loyal customer but it reveals a shortcut for a smart organization to employ this satisfaction and turn it into loyalty.

## **2.5. Repurchase Intention**

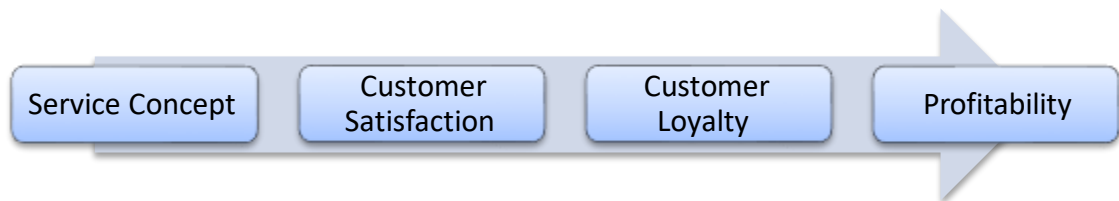
Bose and Rao (2011) argued that customer loyalty and repurchase intention are connected, based on the fact that the repurchase intention is a behavioural response to loyalty. This means that when a customer is loyal to a certain source of services/product, they tend to repeat the purchase experience because of their loyalty to the organization, which in turn influences their decision-making process. Singh and Khan (2012) highlighted the idea more when they stated that customer loyalty is a strong relationship between the individual's relative position and repurchase, leading to the likelihood of a repurchase sequence from the supplier.

For McCall and McMahon (2016), loyalty among customers is the commitment to repeatedly repurchase a particular product in the future from the same brand, despite offers or promotional campaigns from competitors, aimed to change consumer behaviour towards them. According to Ahn and Back (2018), customer loyalty is built through the gathering of A) cognitive evaluation of a brand or store as opposed to other alternative brands or stores, B) influence, emotions or what can be described as complacency, C) intention to continue, and D) actual commitment.

That is why Stathopoulou and Balabanis (2016) stated that customer loyalty is built on two components, 'Attitudinal Loyalty' and 'Behavioural Loyalty'; the actual repetition of buying and emotional position. Loyalty includes the 'kind word' and the intention to continue buying. Loyalty may be sentimental, behavioural or incidental

to unintended or deliberate reasons, in an emergency or in a temporary manner. The author noted that the stages of loyalty go through buying, dealings, encouraging others as well as prompting them to be loyal to a certain brand.

Pakurár et al. (2019) drew a very clear connection between service quality and customer loyalty in the following figure:



**Figure 2.1. Service Leading to Loyalty**

**Source: Pakurár et al. (2019, p.3)**

Among the factors that may play a role in building customer loyalty, is what Mimouni-Chaabane and Volle (2010) referred to as "reputation". The authors argued that product/service reputation in commercial and social media is one of the elements that influence customer loyalty and long-term relationships which can be developed with them. From another perspective, McCall and Voorhees (2010) stated that not only does reputation appear as an influencer on customer loyalty, but also, "expectations" are important. The authors saw that customer expectations indicate what the customer aspires to obtain from the product or service. It also refers to the customer's attitude, beliefs and predictions before the purchase process, based on the opinions of others about what the organization has to offer. Going through expectations in customer loyalty and its relation to repurchase intention, Narangajavana et al. (2017) stated that expectations in general are built on many factors. These include customers' previous experience with similar companies. They also include customers' attitudes towards promotional campaigns launched by the organization, like advertisements and pictures of the product, in addition to the psychological state of the customer at the time of receiving the service.

Thus, reputation and the expectations of customers are related to their repurchase intention, which is connected one way or another to their level of loyalty. Organizations that understand this formula, work towards developing and improving the level of quality in their service/product, to gain more satisfied customers.

Satisfied customers tend to become loyal as long as the service/product satisfies them.

## **2.6. Word-of-Mouth**

The increased use of the Internet by a wide category of consumers has led researchers and marketers alike to pay attention to the new marketing opportunities offered by this medium. It also called for directing more efforts in discussing how to exploit them in the communication process that includes all the activities carried out by the organization via the Internet. This medium can easily promote products and create an appropriate and encouraging environment for purchase. Hence, a concept emerged, that proved its efficiency as one of the popular approaches; to read how satisfied customers were with a brand, and to what extent they were willing to recommend it to their friends and families. This concept was word-of-mouth (WoM). WoM is considered one of the oldest ways of exchanging information and people relied on it through the ages. It attracted the attention of marketers towards the end of 50s of last century, as many researchers tried to define and distinguish it from other marketing communications practices. Sweeney et al. (2008) stated that WoM is the activity of a customer creating and/or distributing marketing-related information to another consumer regarding a certain product/service. This information may be positive or negative; it may be about the product and its characteristics, or its promotion and the extent of its effectiveness. It may also be about its price and suitability, as it may relate to distribution and points of sale. Goyette et al. (2010) defined WoM as a communication process between a customer with information and another customer. It mainly aims at transferring information and exchanging it between consumers.

Another definition was presented by Ng et al. (2011) who stated that WoM is an informal form of advice that customers pass between them about a brand, product or service. It is usually fast and interactive, and has no commercial motivation. As for Sotiriadis and Van Zyl (2013), WoM is defined as an interactive, personal and informal verbal communication between customers that is unpaid. Usually the customer shares such information based on their feelings or attitudes towards the

brand or the organization, and there usually isn't a relationship between the organization and the customer.

WoM is a marketing communication tool that appears either in verbal or in non-verbal form. Therefore, organizations understand the importance of the WoM as an important part of their marketing strategies. It is why they tend to lean towards building good relationships with customers in order to gain their loyalty, which leads customers to spread a good word about the organization (Kitapci et al., 2014). Casidy (2014) argued that WoM is the result of the overwhelming development and evolution that has taken place in the field of information and communication technologies (ICT). Liu and Lee (2010) agreed with that idea stating that this new medium of communication has opened the doors to new and more influencing behaviour of customers through the unique use of the Internet.

WoM is built on the basis of personal communication between clients like verbal communication from person to person or between a sender and a recipient regarding a specific brand (a good or service). It is known to be fast and wide in its spread. Although the positive or negative spoken word has an influential force in the consumer buying and decision-making process, the negative spoken word has a stronger effect than the positive WoM (Choudhury, 2014). This is what Ifie et al. (2018) spoke about when they argued that WoM has a strong influence on purchase decision-making processes among customers. Many customers rely on what they hear from others and based on that, they make their decision whether to buy or not.

As for Suki (2014), they noted that WoM is one of the most important factors affecting the evaluation and selection of a particular brand and not others. It is the most reliable personal communication tool, as it is extremely important in making various purchasing decisions. According to Casaló et al. (2008) Andreassen and Streukens (2009), Kitapci et al. (2014), WoM has many characteristics, among them:

***Preference:*** it comes as either positive or negative, meaning that it appears either for the benefit of the organization or against it.

**Focus:** depending on the six-market model for relationship marketing (customer market, employee market, new members market, supplier market, alliances market, referral market), it was concluded that WoM can work in all six markets. For example, WoM can affect investment decisions (alliance markets), and it can also be an important source of information in the new member market. In addition to being the primary form of behaviour in which organizational culture is presented and built, it has a significant impact on employee behaviour.

**Timing:** WoM can be present either before or after purchase. It can act as an important source of information before buying, on which customers depend in order to make the purchase, or afterwards, when customers spread the word after the consumption, regarding their attitude towards what they got.

**Incitement or induction:** not all WoM from customers are shared in a way that the institution can stimulate positive talk about it. In addition, WoM can be provided either with or without incitement.

**Interference or objection:** Although WoM can be automatically generalized (spontaneously), an increasing number of companies are actively intervening to stimulate and manage the activity of the organized spoken word. WoM that is managed can operate effectively both at the individual and at the organizational level

In a study by Fan et al. (2013), the authors aimed to know the importance of the credibility of the WoM in influencing consumer adoption of a certain brand from a particular organization. In order to reach this goal, they developed a questionnaire consisting of six axes stemming from dimensions of WoM. Results of the Fan et al. (2013) study indicated that WoM is a very critical factor in effecting customers' behaviour towards adopting certain products/ services. This influence increased in risk if WoM took place online – through platforms on the internet – as it increases the chances of it being seen by more people.

Another study by East et al. (2008) aimed at measuring the effect of WoM (positive, negative) on the possibilities of making a purchase. Results of the study indicated that finding information regarding a service/product increases the possibilities of others making a decision to buy it. If positive, WoM helps in developing an intention

within the subconscious of a customer, and increasing the possibility of getting this service/product based on what others say about it. If negative, then the possibility decreases and this negative WoM might be spread to a wider audience, compared to the positive one. This means that negative WoM is more influential compared to the positive WoM and more dangerous, due to its rapid distribution. On the same track, Jalilvand et al. (2012) tried to examine the role of WoM in evaluating the service. Results came in, showing that WoM spreads extensively and widely among customers as it affects them, their attitudes and even their awareness of the value of the service.

According to Choi et al. (2015), customers are exposed to strong influences around the clock. These later constitute how to build their behaviour and purchasing decisions, especially after technological developments and the openness of individuals to different stimulators through online mediums. Choi et al. (2015) saw that many customers rely on WoM for recommendations or placement of a brand or for building loyalty towards a product or service issued by an organization. In spite of the severe impact of the WoM, it is one of the most neglected tools by organizations.

Saleem (2017) stated that there is a vivid correlation between WoM and customer loyalty. This thread comes from the fact that WoM may push a customer to obtain a product/service from a certain organization. As a first step towards creating a loyal customer, the organization has to do its best to preserve this customer and not lose them. Blut (2015) also agreed with this idea, arguing that customers' loyalty is built through what customers hear about the organization they want to deal with. If what they hear appears to be satisfactory to them, they most probably would take the decision to purchase from this organization; the continuous spread of positive words may encourage the customer to engage in another purchase activity from the same brand.

This is how WoM helps in building customer loyalty. Saleem (2017) and Blut (2015) agreed on the idea that WoM has the power to influence consumer behaviour, and this effect varies with awareness, perception, attitudes and attention. Organizations

must pay great attention to the idea of WoM and use it in the interest of the organization because it relates others' experiences with products.

Nikookar et al. (2015) indicated that WoM is an integral part of the marketing communication strategy because of its importance, whether through reference groups, or through websites. Usually, customers tend to rely on sources of personal information to make the decision to purchase. This has led to a WoM effect on the purchasing decision of the consumer through organizations' reliance on viral marketing. Thus they carry out many interactive activities to encourage people to voluntarily transmit the messages of these organizations to others in conversations, with the aim of persuading those others to buy a product or service. The spread of the Internet, visiting the websites of organizations, and communicating through social media increases the importance of WoM and its role in influencing consumer behavior (Hussain et al., 2015).

## **2.7. Hypotheses Development**

In the current study, Researcher aimed at examining the *influence of Airline service quality (AirQual) on customers repurchase intention and word of mouth through the mediating effect of customer loyalty*. From this aim, the following hypotheses were developed and, realizing such hypotheses, aided the researcher to realize the main aim of the study:

### **2.7.1. Airlines Service Quality and Customer Loyalty**

Sandada and Matibiri (2016) aimed to identify the elements that help in creating a loyal customer to airline organizations especially in South Africa. Authors studied the impact of quality of service and awareness of safety on customer satisfaction and on their loyalty. The study adopted variables by changing the quality of service with its dimensions, awareness of safety, brand loyalty programs, customer satisfaction and customer loyalty to the brand. The study reached a conclusion that the quality of service positively affected customer satisfaction. Satisfaction was one of the most important instances of customer loyalty, as customer satisfaction with the service was associated with a high level of loyalty to the airline brand.

The study also indicated that safety awareness and FFP positively affect customer loyalty, while their relationship to contentment was not important. The results of the study confirmed that the quality of service positively affects customer satisfaction and the impact of customer satisfaction on their loyalty was later transmitted to the South African aviation industry. Studying quality of service in all its dimensions has a significant positive impact on satisfaction and thus enhances customer loyalty later. This means that satisfied customers are more loyal and willing to continue flying with the same airline in the future and less inclined to seek the services of another company.

On the same track, Al-Mtairi (2010) aimed to reveal the impact of quality of service (tangibility, reliability, response, assurance, empathy) in addition to relationship marketing on customer loyalty in Jazeera Airways in the State of Kuwait. The study revealed that quality of service in all its dimensions has a clear impact on customer loyalty as well as on relationship marketing. The study also indicated a low degree of loyalty among Jazeera Airways customers in the State of Kuwait. It recommended the strong need to focus on solving the problems of service recipients by studying their current and future needs and working towards achieving them.

Al-Khafagi (2012) appeared to argue that there is an intermediate impact of consumer satisfaction in developing the relationship between service quality and consumer loyalty. It aimed to demonstrate the effect of consumer satisfaction on service quality and its role in enhancing its loyalty to the brand. Results showed a significant relationship between service quality and customer loyalty, and the results of the study indicated an impact of the dimensions of customer satisfaction affecting the relationship between service quality and customer loyalty. Therefore, the study proved that the high level of customer satisfaction resulting from the quality of service has an effective impact in developing the level of loyalty to the brand.

Jiang and Zhang (2016) gathered information on the variables of (service quality, customer satisfaction and loyalty) through their study, which examined the issue of service quality within four major airlines in the domestic market of China, in order to explore the link between service quality and customer satisfaction. Results of the study indicated that the dimensions of the quality of service within the airline companies under consideration, have an effective impact on the customer's

satisfaction and therefore their sense of loyalty to the company they are dealing with. Authors also reached results indicating that service quality standards in the companies under study were low, which led customers to search for alternative companies, indicating lower levels of brand loyalty. Additionally, frequent flight programs (FFPs) have largely failed to increase customer loyalty as demonstrated in this study. This confirmed that customer loyalty is a source of competitive advantage and an intangible asset that is important to any organization. However, empirical evidence from the Chinese aviation market regarding passenger satisfaction and loyalty determinants is not available. The study recommended that the companies researched use different marketing strategies to target different market sectors, in order to improve customer loyalty. This leads to the following hypothesis:

**H1:** *Airlines service quality has a positive influence on customer loyalty.*

### **2.7.2. Linking Customer Loyalty with Repurchase Intention, and WoM**

Yi and La (2004) found that there is a strong relationship that links loyalty and repurchase intention. This relationship stems from the fact that loyal customers are those who are willing to repeat the purchase process from the same brand. Researchers proved that when a customer is loyal to a certain brand, they are most likely to purchase from the same brand again. This loyalty doesn't come from a void, it appears after a long process of elements and factors that help to enhance and develop customer satisfaction towards the brand they are dealing with. Through continuous satisfaction, they are able to build feelings of loyalty as they become satisfied with the service/product that they get. In the course of time, their intentions to re-experience the purchase process increases.

On the same track, Curtis (2009) also used the variables of customer satisfaction, customer loyalty and repurchase intention to refer to the nature of the relationship that builds between the three of them. Researcher was able to prove that when all factors to satisfy customers are present, the possibility of increased loyalty rises to the surface. This helps in increasing the chances to repurchase the same product/service once again by customers, as their feelings become more attached to the fact that this certain brand managed to gain their satisfaction and thus deserves

their loyalty. This can easily lead to a repurchase intention as a change in their behaviour towards the brand.

Curtis et al. (2011) argued that the presence of customer satisfaction can help in building a strong relationship between customer loyalty and repurchase intention where loyalty supports customers repurchase intentions and WoM. Authors argued that customer satisfaction can help in creating many reasons for customers to be loyal to the brand/product or service. This can come through multiple occasions of satisfactory incidents which shapes the overall experience of the customers. From that point, loyalty is created, which in turn can change customers' attitude and behaviour towards the brand. This behaviour is normally attributed to the existence of reasons and motivators that changes the image of the brand before them. This means that customer loyalty plays a role in forming the attitude of customers in terms of WoM and repurchase intentions.

Vlachos and Lin (2014) aimed in their study to identify the main factors that affect and enhance customer loyalty to a specific airline and not to others, especially in the field of air transport services for businessmen in China. By adopting the quantitative approach based on the questionnaire, among 10 airlines in China for domestic flights, 462 passengers responded to the questionnaire.

Through analysis, the study reached a result that stated the existence of three specifications in the airlines that affect the degree of customer loyalty to a certain air transport brand. This included competitive factors such as frequent trips, adherence to flight schedules, loyalty programs and ticket prices, in addition to the airline's reputation. Also included were operational factors such as public safety standards, punctuality, and availability of comfort features in airplanes; and finally, attractive factors such as food and drink services, cleanliness, staff behaviour and passenger concern. In addition, hierarchical regression analysis demonstrated that reputation, services within the plane, and the frequent flyer program (loyalty programs) have the greatest impact on increasing passenger loyalty to airlines, especially from business class passengers. This leads to the following hypotheses:

**H2:** *Customer loyalty has a positive influence on Repurchase Intention.*

**H3:** *Customer loyalty quality has a positive influence on Word of Mouth.*

Huang (2010) aimed to employ a conceptual model that determines the relationship between decision-making processes of travellers and the quality of service provided to them within the chosen airlines; also, the relationship of the quality of those services to the extent of customer satisfaction, in addition to its behavioural intentions in loyalty and repurchase. Through the adoption of a mixed approach between quantitative and qualitative, a ServQual questionnaire was distributed and interviews were conducted.

Results of the study indicated that the value of the service is one of the most important elements for determining the behavioural intention of the traveller and that would affect the degree of the traveller's conviction regarding the value of the air services provided by the company. Compared to the rest of the dimensions of quality of service, service tangibility was the most influencing on consumer behaviour and the intention to repurchase the service. The study also demonstrated that the value of service not only has a direct impact on behavioural intentions, but also has an indirect effect on behavioural intentions of satisfaction and loyalty.

Another study by Koklic et al. (2017) aimed to identify the axes of customer satisfaction towards airlines by employing variables (airline tangibles, quality of personnel, satisfaction with the airline, the intention to repurchase and intention to recommend the airline). The study reached a conclusion that the tangibility of airline services and the nature of employee treatment are important factors in achieving consumer satisfaction, the matter that guarantees a state of change in behavioural intentions and specifically the repurchase process. This means that the traveller is more inclined towards re-dealing with a specific airline in the event that he has a high level of satisfaction in dealing with it the first time. In second place, the study found that employees have an impact on the level of customer satisfaction in companies with full services more strongly than those at low costs.

Both repurchase intention and WoM appeared to be influenced – as variables of customer behaviour – by airline service quality. In that sense, Şimşek and Demirbağ (2017) aimed to identify the determinants of the quality of airline services that customers expect, their impact on perceived service and customer satisfaction, and how the impact on customer satisfaction can lead to a positive change in customers'

attitude, attributed to (repurchase and WoM). In order to collect data, (ServPerf) and (ServQual) questionnaires were used, where variables represented 'tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy'.

The study reached a general conclusion which confirms that the quality of service has a major impact on customer satisfaction and the impact extends - through satisfaction - to the stage of changing behavioural intentions towards (repurchasing and WoM). As for the changes in the quality of service, it was indicated that there was an effect of the company's image on customer satisfaction and behaviour, and this matter was contingent on the tangibility in the services. The study recommended that companies should be able to identify their weaknesses and focus on matters where there is a shortage in terms of tangible service. They also need to focus on the concept of image as being one of the most powerful variables affecting customer satisfaction and loyalty.

### **2.7.3. The Mediating Effect of Customer Loyalty**

According to Kharim (2013), there is an influence of service quality on the behaviour of customers by focusing on their intentions in dealing again with a specific airline and not others, and recommending dealing with a specific airline and not others, for other individuals (repurchase intention and WoM). The study concluded that there is a significant impact of the airline's image with regard to customer behavioural intentions at the level of ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ). That is the quality of service that contributes to changing customer behaviour towards more loyalty associated with the intention of dealing with this company again, in addition to the possibility that the customer recommends this company to a friend or family members. This led to a significant impact on the quality of service in relation to the behavioural intentions of customers at the level ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ). The study recommended the necessity of obligating airlines to maintain a good image in order to preserve their existing customers and increase their ability to attract new customers.

From another perspective, Chen and Liu (2017) focused on the factors that affect the customers' choice of airlines through adopting variables that included (quality of service, brand image, perceived value, and customer loyalty) within Taiwan Airlines.

The study reached a conclusion that the airline's image enhances the relationship between service quality and customer loyalty, meaning that the image enjoyed by the airline would increase the degree of passenger loyalty if the quality of the service was focused on. The study also pointed out that the perceived value of airline services enhances the image of the airline brand through the mutual relationship where (the perceived value and the airline brand image affect each other). On the other hand, the study found that the effect of quality of service has an impact on customer behaviour by enhancing the intention to repurchase, thus increasing customer loyalty.

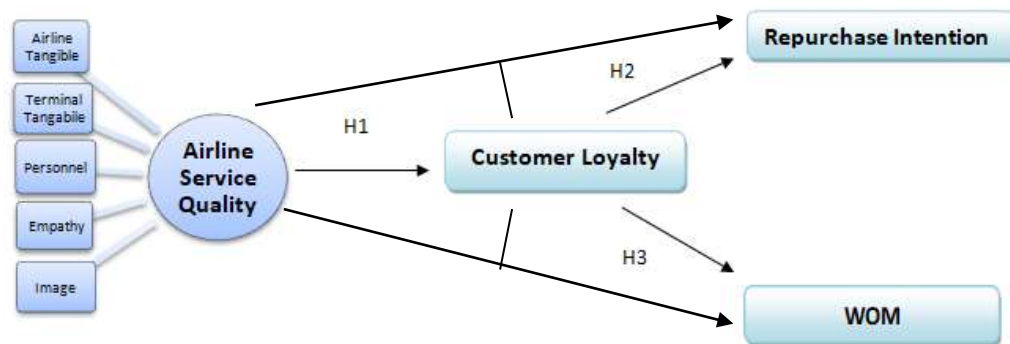
On understanding the nature of relationship between customer loyalty and the two variables of repurchase intention and WoM, Yunus et al. (2013) aimed to understand the principle of the relationship between quality of service and customer loyalty within the air transport services sector in Malaysia, in particular low-cost air transport services. In this regard, the study adopted the variables of service quality in all its dimensions (tangibility, reliability, empathy, assurance, responsiveness) in addition to the variables of customer loyalty and customer satisfaction.

Study reached a conclusion that providing high-quality service to passengers is imperative so that airlines can stay relevant and enhance their competitiveness. The study also stated that (reliability, tangibility, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy) are critical dimensions of service quality that may provide empirical evidence regarding customer loyalty. Consequently, the study indicated that the quality of service influences the level of customer satisfaction in a positive way and this impact is transferred to their loyalty. Therefore, customer satisfaction is the mediator of the relationship between quality of service and customer loyalty. The study also confirmed that the dimensions of service quality affect both satisfaction and loyalty, and the impact was measured (reliability, tangibles, responsiveness, assurance and empathy) from the highest to the lowest. Reliability appeared as the most effective dimension of the impact on customers' satisfaction, loyalty and empathy the least. The study recommended the need to focus on quality service in order to increase customer loyalty in the long term; this in turn leads to cost savings, improved profitability and market share. Hence the following two hypotheses:

**H4:** Customer loyalty mediates the relationship between airlines service quality and repurchase intention.

**H5:** Customer loyalty mediates the relationship between airline service quality and word-of-mouth.

The following figure highlights the relationship that was gathered from study constructs according to the main aim of the study and in harmony with the intended hypotheses which were realized later in the analysis:



Mediation hypotheses

H4: Airline service quality → Customer Loyalty → Repurchase Intention

H5: Airline service quality → Customer Loyalty → WOM

**Figure 2.2. Conceptual Framework**

Table 1 provides a summary of selected studies that investigates the influence of Airline service quality (AirQual) on customers' "repurchase intention" and "word-of-mouth" through the mediating effect of customer loyalty.

**Table 2.1 Summary of Pprevious Studies**

<b>Author</b>	<b>Methodology</b>	<b>Independent variable</b>	<b>Mediator</b>	<b>Dependent variable</b>	<b>Results</b>
Chen and Liu (2017)	Quantitative methodology	Airlines Service Quality (brand image, perceived value)		Customer loyalty	Airline's image enhances the relationship between service quality and customer loyalty, meaning that the image enjoyed by the airline would increase the degree of loyalty
Koklic et al. (2017)	Quantitative methodology/ AirQual questionnaire	Customer satisfaction		Airline Industry (airline tangibles, quality of personnel, satisfaction with the airline, the intention to repurchase and intention to recommend the airline)	Tangibility and personnel are important factors in achieving consumer satisfaction.
Şimşek and Demirbağ (2017)	Quantitative methodology	Airline Service Quality		Customer satisfaction and Behavioural Intentions (repurchase and WoM)	Tangibles and personnel quality positively affect satisfaction, and satisfaction positively influences intentions to both repurchase and WoM.
Jiang and Zhang (2016)	Quantitative methodology	Service quality in airlines		Customer satisfaction and customer loyalty	Dimensions of service quality within airline companies have an effective impact on the customers' loyalty.

**Table 2.1. (continued)**

<b>Author</b>	<b>Methodology</b>	<b>Independent variable</b>	<b>Mediator</b>	<b>Dependent variable</b>	<b>Results</b>
Sandada and Matibiri (2016)	Empirical study/quantitative	Service quality, Frequent Flier Programs and Safety perception		Satisfaction and Customer loyalty	Service quality positively influenced customer satisfaction, and satisfaction was an important antecedent of customer loyalty. Safety perception and FFP positively influence customer loyalty, while their relationship with satisfaction was not significant.
Vlachos and Lin (2014)	Quantitative methodology	Airline Service Quality (safety, punctuality, and aircraft; competitive factors: frequency of flights, schedule, frequent flyer program, ticket price, reputation; and attractive factors: in-flight food & drinks and in-flight staff service.		Traveller loyalty	Reputation, in-flight service, frequent flyer program, and aircraft have the greatest influence in driving airline loyalty.

**Table 2.1. (continued)**

<b>Author</b>	<b>Methodology</b>	<b>Independent variable</b>	<b>Mediator</b>	<b>Dependent variable</b>	<b>Results</b>
Kharim (2013)	Quantitative methodology	Service quality	Customer loyalty	Repurchase Intention and WoM	There is a significant impact of the airline's image with regard to customer behavioural intentions. Quality of service contributed to Changing customer behaviour towards more loyalty associated with the intention of dealing with this company again. This, in addition to the possibility that customer recommends this company to one of their friends or family members, leading to a significant impact on the quality of service in relation to the behavioural intentions of customers.
Yunus et al. (2013)	Quantitative methodology	Airline Service Quality (Reliability, tangibles, responsiveness, assurance and empathy)	Customer satisfaction	Customer loyalty	Service quality has also influenced customer's loyalty towards low- cost airline providers. Quality of service influences positively the level of customer satisfaction and the impact is transferred to their loyalty.

**Table 2.1. (continued)**

<b>Author</b>	<b>Methodology</b>	<b>Independent variable</b>	<b>Mediator</b>	<b>Dependent variable</b>	<b>Results</b>
Al-Khafagi (2012)	Quantitative methodology	Service quality	Customer satisfaction	Customer loyalty	There is a significant relationship between service quality and customer loyalty; customer satisfaction affecting the relationship between service quality and customer loyalty.
Curtis et al. (2011)	Quantitative review	Customer loyalty		Repurchase intention and customer satisfaction	Loyalty and satisfaction indicate strong positive relationships. Repurchase intention and satisfaction have a complicated relationship as satisfaction does not explain repurchase behaviour.
Al-Mtairi (2010)	Quantitative approach	Service quality and Relationship marketing		Customer loyalty	Quality of service in all its dimensions has a clear impact on customer loyalty as well as on relationship marketing.

**Table 2.1. (continued)**

<b>Author</b>	<b>Methodology</b>	<b>Independent variable</b>	<b>Mediator</b>	<b>Dependent variable</b>	<b>Results</b>
Huang (2010)	Quantitative methodology/ ServQual	Airline service quality		Passengers' behavioural intentions	Value of the service influences behavioural intention of the traveller in addition to service. Tangibility increases the positivity of customers' behavioural intentions
Yi and La (2004)	Quantitative methodology	Customer satisfaction	Expectation	Repurchase Intention	Adjusted expectations mediate the effect of CS on RPI. Results also indicate that processes underlying the CS–RPI link are different between low-loyalty and high-loyalty customers.

## **2.8. Conclusion**

Previous studies demonstrated in general that service quality influences different aspects of customer behaviour. This includes their satisfaction, loyalty, RPI and WoM. Going deeper into studies, all results supported current study's allegations arguing that there is an undeniable influence of "Airquality" aspects on customers' loyalty as a mediator, which mainly leads to better customer behaviour in terms of (RPI and WoM). Also, it was revealed that air transport is a multi-billion-dollar industry, and there are several organizations around the world that present air services in many forms and sizes, and for different ends and purposes. Air transport has become a part of people's lives that they cannot do without, whatever happens.

In general, previous studies have come to the conclusion that the organization's interest in providing good service, that meets the aspirations of customers and achieves their satisfaction, will ensure that this satisfaction is reflected by the level of their loyalty. The relationship between service quality and customer loyalty is weak in itself and it is the customer satisfaction variable that contributes to strengthening this relationship through positive dealings with clients, solving their problems and facilitating the procedures required from them.



## **CHAPTER III**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1. Introduction**

Research methodology is one of aspects that determine the quality of carried out research, the accuracy of its results and the nature of its information (McNabb, 2015). Brannen (2017) stated that researchers usually follow a very precise approach in developing their research due to its sensitivity, as it spreads scientific information that has to be built on solid bases. Hammersley (2017) and (Landrum and Garza, 2015) argued that researchers should follow methodological approaches that fit the main aim they want to realize. The chosen methodology should be tailored to the nature of literature selected, hypotheses developed and participants involved.

#### **3.2. Methodological Approach**

According to Almalki (2016), methodology is a set of organized steps through which a specific topic is studied, reaching results of value that contribute to solving a problem. Bryman (2017) defined research methodology as methods, procedures and tools that are put in place in order to implement the scientific mission. Scientific research in general should be carried out according to a specific framework of procedures, in order to reach the research results that the researcher hopes to achieve by the end of the research.

#### **3.3. Philosophy of Research**

The philosophy of research is a collection of beliefs and values on how to collect, analyze, and use scientific research data. These beliefs and values, in turn, affect the conduct of the entire research process.

### **3.4. Data Sources**

The collection of data and information is one of the biggest tasks that the scientific researcher must accomplish. There is no alternative to that, as any scientific research requires a lot of data and information to explain the problem or the topic of scientific research. Of the most important sources from which the scientific researcher can obtain data, are previous studies (secondary data) as well as well-formulated questionnaires (primary data).

#### **3.4.1 Secondary Data**

Previous studies refer to all that has been written and recorded on the subject of scientific research in past periods. This is one of the most important sources from which the researcher obtains information and data included in the methodology of scientific research about the subject being researched, Such data is usually obtained from journals, books, bulletins and other electronic resources in the form of published papers or theses. Secondary data of this current research was selected in a way that presents the topic with a clear approach and that is recent enough to offer up-to-date information.

#### **3.4.2. Primary Data**

This type of data includes all data gathered from respondents of the study, collected through a questionnaire. Questionnaire description appears in the 'tool of study' section.

### **3.5. Survey Instrument**

Scientific research tools are important mechanisms used by the scientific researcher to collect information and data from study samples, or what are called (respondents). Among these tools are (questionnaire, tests, observations, and interviews). The quality of the tool used varies, based on the nature of the scientific research itself.

More than one tool may be used when preparing the methodology for scientific research, as per the researcher's need (Fugard and Potts, 2015).

The current thesis adopted the questionnaire method commonly used in the field of social sciences. It is made up of a set of inquiries, presented as a form, and answered by a group of individuals who represent the research sample chosen by the researcher. There are various classifications of questionnaires, mainly closed and open ones, and the researcher chooses the most appropriate one to fit the nature of the subject of a thesis.

In the current study, the questionnaire consisted of two main sections. The first took into consideration questions related to demographic variables of respondents including (age, gender, education, occupation, marital status, income, country of residence, frequency of flying with Turkish Airlines and membership with Turkish Airlines). As for the second section, it contained statements related to variables of study (independent and depend variables and sub-variables).

### **3.6. Sample and Data Collection**

According to Brannen (2017), there are many reasons that may prevent researchers from conducting a study on an entire population. The reasons can be geographical or managerial, in which case they're obliged to conduct the study on a section of the community that is chosen in a specific way. The accurate and appropriate selection of the sample gives results that are largely similar to the results obtained when studying the entire study population. In general, the larger the size of the sample, the more it represents the characteristics of the community under study, therefore the results that are reached through studying the sample can be generalized (Bernard, 2017).

According to Hudson and Ishizu (2016), a study sample represents the indigenous community, fulfills the research objectives, and highlights the challenges of studying the indigenous community. Based on that, a sample is defined as representative of the original research community. However, the goal of selecting the sample is to obtain information about the original community for research, and it is necessary that

the sample is of sufficient size to be representative of the original population and that the researcher avoids possible sources of error in choosing it.

In the current study, the sample consisted of 255 individuals who were once or more than one time customers of Turkish Airlines services (booking or traveling). Specific questions regarding the how, who, what, why and when are facilitated with data standardization when collating data from a survey. Although there are several guiding rules of thumb regarding sample sizes, there is a lack of agreement about them. Where some scholars are content with considering a size of around 100 people, other scholars recommend a sample size of at least 300 individuals.

Considering all the aforementioned suggestions and recommendations, a sample size of 222 was finally selected. This was found to be convenient in size. After the application process, Researcher was able to retrieve 222 properly filled and completed questionnaires which indicated a ratio of (87%) and was statistically acceptable (Alotaibi 2015).

The process of application was based on gathering data from passengers who are frequent travellers of Turkish Airlines, or those who have used the services of the organization at least once. The questionnaire prepared for the study, was arbitrated by the supervisor in order to finalize the questions, and ensure the degree of its suitability with the main aim of the study. After accepting the questionnaire in its final form (9 questions on Demographics, 27 statements about AirQual as independent variables, 5 statement about Customer Loyalty, 4 statements on Repurchase Intention and 4 statements about Word-of-Mouth, Researcher uploaded the questionnaire using Google forms. The link was distributed to potential passengers within Turkish Airlines over a period of 5 weeks. After gathering the data, 255 questionnaires were retrieved and researcher was able to depend on 222 of those, which were properly filled.

### **3.7. Data Analysis**

The following information was retrieved from analyzing the data of study, using the AMOS software to actualize the hypotheses of the study, and to develop and answer

the questions. AMOS "*Analysis of Moment of Structures*" is software through which statistical data can be analyzed, which is subjected to SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences). AMOS is an important software and technology in the world of statistical analysis of data. It plays an important and prominent role in reaching the desired content in a way that helps the researcher develop sufficient knowledge to be able to answer the questions related to the study. Gathered data was collected from Google forms as it appears in appendix (1). After refining the data and reframing it in a way that was suitable to SPSS/AMOS, Researcher entered all data on SPSS/AMOS software ed. 21<sup>st</sup> for analysis purposes.

### **3.8. Ethics of Research**

According to Bera and Paul (2015), research ethics are defined as the ethics of planning, implementing and writing research. Qamar (2018) noted that scientific research is not only a systematic process that leads to gaining more knowledge about the various phenomena and solving the problems faced in the fields of many different academic fields. It is an ethical process that helps the researcher to fulfill a higher state of excellence in his/her field.

In the current research, Researcher chose to adopt BERA et. hical guideline (2011) which consists of following standards:

- Protection of human and animal resources.
- Collecting, using and interpreting research data in a legal and socially acceptable way.
- Writing reports and reviewing research plans or results in an academic manner free from errors and language problems.
- The relationships of researchers with other persons in the department, affected by the research are based on respect, understanding and appreciation.
- Means of responding to misunderstandings, disputes, or misbehavior are ethical, healthy, and respectful.

In the current research, Researcher chose to adopt BERA ethical guideline (2011) which consists of following standards:

- Responsibility towards society of academic research was achieved by following academic standards in building the research. All information in the text of research was academically referenced and there was no plagiarism involved.
- Responsibility towards sponsors of the research was achieved by focusing on organizations' names used in the research, in terms of not harming their reputation or interfering in the internal operations of these organizations.
- Responsibility towards participants of the research: Researcher made sure that all participants of the research fully understood their role in the research. They had the option to withdraw from participating, and they were informed that their information would not be shared with other parties and would be used only for academic purposes.

## CHAPTER IV

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### 4.1. Introduction

Current study collected data depending on quantitative approach through utilizing a questionnaire. The questionnaire was distributed online to a total of 222 passengers who were aware of Turkish Airlines and its services. AMOS through SPSS was used to tackle the gathered data in terms of screening and analyzing. Results of analysis are presented in the following chapter in sections including: (demographic results of respondents, analysis of questionnaire statements according to variables of study, and testing the hypotheses depending on structural equation modeling (SEM)).

#### 4.2. Results Obtained From Quantitative Analysis

Data was collected from passengers regardless of their backgrounds or place of residences. Due to COVID-19 precautions and health protocols, the questionnaire was uploaded on Google forms. The link was distributed to random passengers through social media depending on the social media pages of Turkish airlines, as well as other pages related to travel services and airline organizations. Final respondents of questionnaire, after uploading the tool online for 6 weeks, reached 222 respondents which was an acceptable number to run statistical analysis and reach results.

#### 4.3. Demographics

Frequency and mean were used in order to screen and analyze sample responses to questionnaire statements. As shown in Table 2 below, the majority of sample respondents to the questionnaire and who travel with TK, were within the age range of 35-49 years old forming (42.8%) of the sample. The youngest were individuals less than 25 years old forming 10.4% of total sample.

**Table 4.1. Summary of the Characteristics of the Respondents**

<b>Characteristics</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Gender</b>	Male	43.7
	<b>Female</b>	<b>56.3</b>
<b>Age (Years)</b>	Less than 25	10.4
	25 - 34	36.0
	<b>35-49</b>	<b>42.8</b>
	over 50	10.8
<b>Education</b>	High school	13.5
	<b>Bachelor's</b>	<b>55.4</b>
	Postgraduate (Masters/Ph.D.)	31.1
<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Full-time</b>	<b>66.7</b>
	Part-time	7.7
	Self-employed	14.0
	Unemployed	11.7
<b>Marital Status</b>	Single	41.0
	<b>Married, Divorced, Widowed</b>	<b>59.0</b>
<b>Monthly Income (USD)</b>	<b>Less than 1000</b>	<b>47.7</b>
	2,000-3000	30.2
	4,000 +	22.1
<b>Broad geographic breakdown - Passenger's place of residence</b>	<b>Asia</b>	<b>67</b>
	Africa	2.9
	South Africa	0.9
	Europe	25.9
	Australia	0.5
	North America	2.8
<b>Frequency of Using TK</b>	Only once	25.7
	<b>2 – 5 Times</b>	<b>36.0</b>
	6- 9 Times	9.9
	10 or More	28.4
<b>FFP/ Miles and Smiles</b>	Yes	31.5
	<b>No</b>	<b>68.5</b>

As for the variable of gender, it appeared from analysis that the majority of sample was female, forming 56.3% of total sample with a frequency of 125 individuals. Males made up 43.7% of the sample, or 97 individuals. The majority of the individuals who responded to the questionnaire according to education, held a BA degree, forming 55.4% of the sample compared to high school graduates who formed the least of the sample at 13.5%.

Demographic analysis showed that 66.7% of total sample were full-time employees with a frequency of 148 individuals compared to the 11.7% of the sample who were unemployed. Also, 59.0% of sample were married, divorced or widowed compared to 41% who travelled with TK as single people. Results also indicated that the majority of respondents who travelled with TK had an income of less than \$1000 forming 47.7% of the sample with frequency of 105 individuals. In 2nd rank, came those who had an income of \$2000-\$3000 and who made up 30.2% of the total sample, or 67 individuals.

In analyzing the countries of respondents, and as shown in Table 2, respondents were categorized according to continents. Results indicated that the majority of respondents who took part in the questionnaire were from Asia, forming 67% of the total sample followed by those who were from Europe, forming 25.9% of the total sample.

In analyzing the frequency of using Turkish Airlines for travel among respondents, it appeared that the majority of the sample used Turkish Airlines 2-5 times throughout their lives. They were 80 individuals, forming 36% of the sample. Those who used Turkish Airlines for travel more than 10 times in their lives, were 63 individuals who made up 28.4% of the total sample. Finally, respondents who used the Frequent Flyer Program/ Miles and Smiles program of Turkish Airlines, formed 32% of the total sample, or 71 individuals, compared to those who haven't used FFP/Miles and Smiles program of Turkish Airlines, making up 68% of the total sample with a frequency of 151 individuals.

#### 4.4. Data Analysis

##### 4.4.1. Analysis of Questionnaire Statements

In this section, results of analyzing responses to questionnaire statements were calculated through highlighting mean and standard deviation. The table below shows each and every variable individually, according to responses. All items used were taken from well-established studies. Variables were measured using the five-point Likert scales (1= ‘strongly disagree’ to 5= ‘strongly agree’). The measurement of the study constructs, along with the exact wording of the questions, and their sources are reproduced in the Appendix.

**Table 4.2 Airline Service Quality (AirQual)**

<b>Air Tangibles</b>		
	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>
All aircrafts within Turkish airlines are well-maintained, new, and modern.	3.79	.899
Food and drinks in the flight are of high quality and sufficiently varied.	3.96	.929
In-flight toilets are clean and easy to use.	3.91	.770
In-flight seats are comfortable.	3.74	.819
In-flight entertainment is sufficiently varied to meet any taste.	3.69	.936
<b>Airline Tangible</b>	<b>3.82</b>	<b>.673</b>
<b>Terminal Tangible</b>		
	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>
Waiting halls, toilets, and facilities in the terminal are clean and easy to use.	3.85	.929
Luggage is all handled with the greatest care and attention.	3.59	.941
Signs and guidance are available in the terminal with multi-languages and easy to understand.	3.86	.884
Adequate numbers of trolleys are available at the airport.	3.76	.918
Parking spaces are always available either self-parking or through valet.	3.67	.776
The airport offers friendly security and reliable control system.	3.73	.923
<b>Terminal Tangible</b>	<b>3.74</b>	<b>.656</b>

**Table 4.2. (Continued)**

<b>Turkish Airline Personnel</b>		
	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>
Turkish airlines staff's behavior instills trust in customers.	3.93	.869
Turkish airlines staff consistently are courteous with you.	3.84	.881
Turkish airlines staff are experienced and well-trained to answer your questions.	3.97	.889
Turkish airlines staff are able to communicate in different international languages.	3.69	.991
<b>Turkish Airline Personnel</b>		
	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>
Turkish airlines staff are neatly dressed.	4.14	.714
Turkish airlines staff do error-free reservations and ticketing transactions.	3.59	.912
<b>Turkish Airline Personnel</b>	<b>3.86</b>	<b>.709</b>
<b>Empathy</b>		
	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>
Turkish Airlines compensate for any damages arising from service disruption (e.g., damage luggage, lost luggage, lost connection, canceled flights) in the shortest time possible.	3.49	.901
The locations of Turkish Airlines offices are easy to find.	3.78	.855
Turkish Airlines flight schedules are convenient and satisfy my demands.	3.76	.873
When you have a problem, Turkish airlines show a sincere interest in solving it.	3.57	.966
Turkish airlines have operating hours convenient to all its customers.	3.67	.793
<b>Empathy</b>	<b>3.65</b>	<b>.673</b>
<b>Image</b>		
	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>
Turkish airlines provide services at the promised time.	3.75	.906
Turkish Airlines offer a high level of the secured online transaction.	3.88	.818
When thinking of flying comfortably, Turkish airlines always come to my mind.	3.92	.933
Turkish Airlines is a reputable airline company and globally noted.	4.04	.806
Turkish Airlines ticket prices are consistent with its services.	3.64	.849
<b>Image</b>	<b>3.81</b>	<b>.661</b>

As it appears in Table 3, service quality within Turkish Airlines was calculated through analyzing responses to statements presented regarding its variables (Air Tangibles, Terminal Tangibles, Turkish Airline Personnel, Empathy, and Image). Results of analysis indicated a positive attitude from respondents regarding the presented statements, given that all the statements scored a mean higher than the mean of scale (3.00). This was seen as a positive indicator regarding the service quality of TK according to the respondents. The most positively answered statements were *"Turkish Airlines is a reputable airline company and globally noted"* scoring a mean of **4.04/5.00** and indicating a positive attitude from respondents towards the presented statements.

**Table 4.3. Customer Loyalty, Repurchase Intention and Word-of-Mouth**

<b>Customer Loyalty</b>		
	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>
I generally find the quality of services provided by Turkish Airlines excellent.	3.86	.813
I am very much satisfied with the services provided by Turkish Airlines.	3.87	.870
Even in the presence of an alternative airline, I always tend to use Turkish Airlines.	3.59	1.019
I generally have a good impression of Turkish Airlines.	4.00	.840
My previous experience with Turkish Airlines motivates me to choose it for my future flights.	3.93	.887
<b>Customer Loyalty</b>	<b>3.85</b>	<b>.781</b>
<b>Repurchase Intention</b>		
I believe using the services of Turkish Airlines is a proper decision.	3.89	.828
The price I pay for the ticket is worth the services I get from Turkish Airlines.	3.71	.921
I would always consider Turkish Airlines my first choice regardless of the ticket prices.	3.29	1.104
I would continue to use the frequent flyer program of Turkish Airlines for my future flights.	3.61	.895
<b>Repurchase Intention</b>	<b>3.61</b>	<b>.745</b>
<b>Word-of-Mouth</b>		
I would recommend Turkish Airlines to someone who seeks my recommendation.	4.14	1.098
I encourage my friends and relatives to fly with Turkish Airlines.	3.85	.939
I always tend to talk positively about Turkish Airlines on social media platforms.	4.13	.925
I regularly follow Turkish Airlines' social media accounts and share them with others.	3.54	1.213
<b>Word-of-Mouth</b>	<b>3.91</b>	<b>.835</b>

In Table 4, statements regarding dependent variables were calculated, including variables of (customer loyalty - as a mediator - , repurchase intention and word-of-mouth). Results of the study indicated the presence of a positive attitude from respondents regarding their loyalty to TK, their willingness to repurchase TK services again and their ability to spread positive words about TK services to their friends and family. This result was reached, given that all statements – as appearing in the Table 3 – scored higher than the mean of scale (3.00) and indicating the positive attitude of respondents towards the ideas presented in the statements.

Going through the table, it can be seen that the most positively answered statement was *"I would recommend Turkish Airlines to someone who seeks my recommendation"*, scoring a mean of (4.14/5.00). This indicates that individuals held a positive attitude towards spreading positive words about Turkish Airlines, based on their service quality.

The current study employed SEM depending on AMOS in order to test the relationship that gathered variables of study including (AirQual, CL, RI, and WoM). SEM is the means to test the mediating relationship prevailed upon by customer loyalty and mediates the relationship between AirQual, RI and WoM. The use of SEM is based on utilizing a two-step approach that involves a scale validation of the model, in addition to the structural path analysis. Through the assessment of scale validity, there appeared the statistics of Goodness-of-Fit (GFI), convergent validity and discriminant validity which helped to realize the psychometric properties of the study constructs.

**Table 4.4. Convergent Validity**

Construct	C.R	AVE
Customer Loyalty	0.946	0.779
Word of mouth	0.878	0.645
Repurchase Intention	0.872	0.629
Image	0.878	0.594
Terminal Tangible	0.871	0.532
Airline Tangible	0.880	0.595
Turkish Airline Personnel	0.921	0.662
Empathy	0.867	0.566

\*AVE= average variance extracted; CR= composite reliability

**Table 4.5. Discriminant Validity**

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Customer Loyalty	<b>0.88</b>							
Word of mouth	0.50\	<b>0.80\</b>						
Repurchase Intention	0.45	0.47	<b>0.79</b>					
Image	0.42	0.38	0.37	<b>0.77</b>				
Terminal Tangible	0.33	0.31	0.30	0.29	<b>0.73</b>			
Airline Tangible	0.32	0.30	0.29	0.30	0.30	<b>0.77</b>		
Turkish Airline Personnel	0.41	0.35	0.34	0.31	0.31	0.28	<b>0.81</b>	
Empathy	0.37	0.37	0.35	0.35	0.352	0.273	0.356	<b>0.752</b>

\*Bolded values are the square root of AVE, off-diagonals are correlations.

Confirmatory factor analysis was carried out on all study constructs through the scale validation period. CFA was used to test the data fitness to test unidimensionality, reliability, and validity of the measurement model, and it must be calculated to meet the specified requirement before perform modeling to the structural model. Results indicated that the model was of good fit to the data, scoring a value of (*ChiSq/ df* = 2.870, *GFI* = .925, *CFI* = .90, *RMR* = .029, *TLI* = .478, and *RMSEA* = .072).

In Table 5, results showed the convergent validity of all study constructs through presenting composite reliability (CR) and the average variance extract (AVE), which plays a role in measuring the convergent validity of constructs. Throughout the table, it can be seen that all results were satisfactory as it scored within the margins of 0.70 and 0.50 for CR and AVE respectively, according to Su et al. (2017). In Table 6, the discriminant validity shows results which indicate that all values were the square roots of constructs' AVE in Table 5 and all scored higher than the correlation, confirming that the constructs were valid and accepted.

#### 4.5. Results

Table 7 shows descriptive statistics and correlations; mean, standard deviation and correlations for all variables were calculated. It appears that there is a positive relationship between the variables as their means scored higher than the mean of scale 3.00 and indicating that each of the variables has a positive influence on the others. From the analysis above, it can be seen that among variables of airline service quality, both *image* and personnel *appear* to be the most influential on customer loyalty, scoring a mean of (3.84 and 3.86/5.00) respectively. This refers to the positive influence of image and personnel on customer loyalty, which in turn, may help in increasing the chances of repurchase intention and word of mouth.

**Table 4.6. Descriptive Statistics and Correlations**

Construct	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Customer Loyalty	3.85	.78	1.00							
2. Word of mouth	3.91	.84	.78	1.00						
3. Repurchase Intention	3.63	.75	.77	.766	1.00					
4. Image	<b>3.85</b>	.66	.81	.69	.75	1.00				
5. Terminal Tangible	3.74	.66	.65	.57	.63	.68	1.00			
6. Airline Tangible	3.82	.67	.61	.54	.59	.67	.65	1.00		
7. Turkish Airline Personnel	<b>3.86</b>	.71	.74	.59	.64	.67	.73	.59	1.00	
8. Empathy	3.66	.67	.71	.65	.70	.79	.74	.61	.75	1.00

**Note:** Correlation coefficients are all significant at  $p < 0.001$ .

Study hypotheses were tested depending on structural path analysis through AMOS. There appeared results of a model that is satisfactory in its fit as according to given data ( $ChiSq/ df = 2.870$ ,  $GFI = .925$ ,  $CFI = .90$ ,  $RMR = .029$ ,  $TLI = .478$ , and  $RMSEA = .072$ ). Table 8 shows the results of the study's direct relationships, and it appeared that Airline service quality was significant and had a positive impact on customer loyalty scoring a ( $\beta = 1.138$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). This value indicates that when Airline service quality goes up by one standard deviation, customer loyalty increases by 1.138 standard deviations. Accepting that hypothesis H1 as valid. Also, it appears that there is a positive relationship between customer loyalty and repurchase intention scoring ( $\beta = .295$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), this value indicates that when Customer loyalty goes up by one standard deviation, RI increases by 0.295 standard deviations, which also supported H2 hypothesis that indicated Customer loyalty has a positive influence on repurchase intention. The same goes for the H3 hypothesis which indicated a positive and influential relationship between customer loyalty and WoM with a significant influence scoring ( $\beta = .691$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), this value indicates that when Customer loyalty goes up by one standard deviation, WoM increases by 0.691 standard deviations which was also seen as full acceptance of hypothesis H3.

**Table 4.7. Result of Path Coefficients of Direct Relationships**

Hypothesis	Relationship	Beta	SE	C.R.	P value
H1	Airline service quality - - -> CL	1.138	.064	17.794	***
H2	Customer Loyalty - - - > RI	.295	.108	2.747	***
H3	Customer Loyalty - - - > WoM	.691	.106	5.396	***

\*Note: \*\*\* $p < 0.05$

Table 9 is to test the mediation hypotheses conducted through bootstrapping method recommended by Preacher and Hayes (2008). It appeared that the mediator (customer loyalty) mediates the relationship between airline services and both dependent variable (repurchase intention and WoM) since indirect effect with mediation is significant in the case of H4 ( $P < 0.05$ ) and for H5 ( $P < 0.05$ ). This

indicated that customer loyalty mediates the relationship between airline service and both repurchase intention and word of mouth with a higher mediation in the state of WoM and indicating that both hypotheses were valid and accepted. It means that customer loyalty has the ability to gather – in influence – between independent and dependent variables of study leading to the acceptance of the main hypothesis which is that airline service quality has a positive influence on repurchase intention and WoM that is attributed to the influence of customer loyalty.

From that, it can be said that study hypotheses were realized through analysis and based on examining the relationship between variables in the model, and there is a relationship that gathers between airline quality of service and dependent variables that are driven by customer loyalty (as a mediator).

**Table 4.8. Results of Mediating Relationships**

<b>Hypotheses</b>	<b>Direct Effect without Mediator</b>	<b>Direct Effect with Mediator</b>	<b>Indirect Effect</b>	<b>Results</b>
<b>H4</b>	<b>1.138*</b>	<b>0.016</b>	<b>.336</b>	<b>Supported</b>
<b>H5</b>	<b>.293*</b>	<b>0.026</b>	<b>.787</b>	<b>Supported</b>

Note: \*p<0.05.

#### **4.6. Discussion and Conclusion**

Current studies aimed at examining the influence of airline service quality on customers repurchase intention and word of mouth through the mediating effect of customer loyalty. Through adopting the quantitative approach and through utilizing a questionnaire as a tool, results indicated that there are positive influences of airline service quality on customers repurchase intention and word of mouth through the mediating influence of customer loyalty.

### ***Influence of Airline Service Quality on Customer Loyalty.***

Results indicated that airline service quality can influence customer loyalty, which in its turn can influence customers' intentions to repurchase again from the brand and engage in positive recommendations regarding the brand. Such results were in agreement with previous studies including Kharim (2013) who saw a mediating effect of customer loyalty on the relationship that gathers between airline service quality and WoM. Also, Yunus et al. (2013) argued that customer loyalty can be reached if more work is done on customer satisfaction. Furthermore, Al-Khafagi (2012) saw a relationship between service quality and customer loyalty if more work is done on customer satisfaction.

### ***Effect of Customer Loyalty on Repurchase Intention and WoM.***

In examining the concept of the relationship between customer loyalty, variables of repurchase intention and word of mouth, it was seen through analysis that the relationship was confirmed. Basically, customer loyalty can influence the degree of customers' involvement in changing their behaviour towards dealing again with the organization and recommending its services to friends and family members. Curtis et. al. (2011) agreed with this allegation, arguing that there is a strong positive relationship between customer loyalties and repurchase intention, as well as a strong positive relationship between customer satisfaction and customer loyalty.

Customer loyalty was seen in the current study as influential on the behaviour of customers in general. This influence was connected with an enhanced level of service quality especially in the field of airline services. Many studies presented earlier indicated that developing the level of service quality can have many benefits for the organization on the level of customers, their satisfaction and their loyalty to the organization. This was proved by the current study and referred to by previous studies including (Sandada and Matibiri (2016); Al-Mtairi (2010); Al-Khafagi (2012); Jiang and Zhang (2016); Curtis et al. (2011); Vlachos and Lin (2014); Kharim (2013); Chen and Liu (2017) and Yunus et al. (2013).

### ***Importance of Company Image & Personnel Interaction in Attracting Loyalty in Customers***

Going deeper into analysis, it was seen through analysing the influence of each sub-variable of airline service quality (image, terminal tangibles, airline tangibles, personnel and empathy) that both variables of image and personnel were the highest in influence as according to Table 5 and scoring a mean of 0.415 and 0.408 respectively. This was attributed to the fact that the image of the organization, in addition to its personnel, plays a role in grabbing the attention of customers towards appreciating the service that they get and increases their loyalty to the brand. In general, the image of an organization is the impression that consumers have about it as a result of the organization's behaviours, ideas, goals, and aspirations. From that point, the connection can be made depending on how customers look at the organization in terms of its approaches, mission and vision, in addition to its involvement in society. Kharim (2013) also agreed with results presented in the current study, arguing that there is a significant impact of the airline's image with regard to customer behavioural intentions. Quality of service contributes to changing customer behaviour towards more loyalty, associated with the intention of dealing with this company again. In addition, there is the possibility that the customer recommends this company to one of their friends or family members, which leads to a significant impact on the quality of service, in relation to the behavioural intentions of customers.

Chen and Liu (2017) seemed to have the same attitude developed in the current study regarding image when they reached results in their own study stating that an airline's image enhances the relationship between service quality and customer loyalty. They meant that the image enjoyed by the airline would increase the degree of passenger loyalty, if the quality of the service was focused on.

On the same track, we see that Braxton and Lau-Gesk (2020) also agreed with this connection, arguing that the image of an organization is a set of impressions made by individuals (who have previously dealt with this organization), based on what they receive from it. This includes services, goods, and even advertising and marketing messages. Accordingly, image is a group of subjective impressions about the organization, and its being subjective and mental at the same time, makes it

intangible and differing from one person to another. Due to the importance of image in service quality, many organizations are aware of this role and its importance. It works to create a state of public support for the organization through the activities, programs, services, and products it provides, and even in the way its employees interact with customers.

Personnel of an organization were seen to be influential in changing customer behaviour towards repurchase intention and WoM, as results have indicated. Personnel and their influence on the attitudes of customers towards a certain brand or organization should not be neglected. This includes even minute details regarding personnel; the way they dress, their general appearance, the way they deal with customers and the degree of their resilience to customers' needs and desires.

Such aspects were seen as influential in affecting the behaviour of individuals, especially at the levels of repurchase intention, which was seen before by Koklic et al. (2017). They stated that tangibility and personnel are important factors in achieving consumer satisfaction. In its turn, consumer satisfaction can influence how a customer behaves in terms of dealing again with the organization and adopting this specific brand as their main choice every time. More agreement from Şimşek and Demirbağ (2017) whose study indicated that tangibles and personnel quality positively affect satisfaction, and satisfaction positively influences intentions to both repurchase and WoM.

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1. Introduction

Turkey is one of the countries with the highest number of flight networks in the world with a strategic role in aviation. Many factors were instrumental in the rise of its civil aviation to phenomenal worldwide success. The country's geographical position is key and its modernized fleet as well as its continuous pursuit of excellence, attracts discerning customers and steadily builds a loyal clientele. That is the focus of this paper, which links Air Service Quality to customer behaviour, and highlights the importance of the human element in achieving lasting success.

Today, Turkey is one of the countries that make contributions in flight safety and aviation security at the international level. This fulfils the vision of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the founder of the republic, who said to the Turkish nation 'The future is in the skies'. The visionary leader pioneered the steps that would encourage the development of Turkish aviation to become the shining example of determination and success we see today.

The aviation sector is progressing at an accelerated rate, yet with a steady step towards leading the national economy by increasing its contribution to the country's GDP. The Turkish government's steady support of the aviation sector includes facilitating the granting of entry visas, opening the atmosphere, and providing an encouraging economic environment for investors to support the sector, which in turn supports the tourism and travel sector. The Turkish government recognizes the aviation sector as most important to further stimulate the country's economy while, at the same time, remaining competitive on the world stage.

More recently, Turkish Airlines has adopted the new "Safe Travel Guide" during the Corona pandemic and provides two new services for inside the aircraft to protect the health of its guests. Relying on available scientific data, the national carrier is distributing "sterilization bags" to its guests, containing a mask and a sanitizing handkerchief. "Sterilization experts" have also been appointed among the flight crews to implement all relevant sterilization procedures and to ensure social distancing inside the plane, for a safe and healthy travel experience for its passengers.

## **5.2. Summary of Findings**

The current study aimed at examining the influence of AirQual variables (Image, Empathy, Terminal, Airline Tangibles, and Personnel) on customers' repurchase intention and Word of Mouth within Turkish Airlines through the mediating influence of customer loyalty. In other words, the study targeted to measure the extent of influence that air quality services may have on customers' repurchase intentions and word of mouth distribution to attain the level of full customer loyalty to Turkish airlines.

The results of study indicated that there is a positive influence of 'AirQual' on customers repurchase intention and Word of Mouth, that is attributed to how satisfied and loyal they are to the organization. It was evident through the study that the quality of service, and specifically the service related to aviation services and airlines, has a direct relationship and a clear effect on customer loyalty. The study also demonstrated that each of the 'AirQual' variables has a different effect on customer loyalty. It is natural for the relationship between the customer and the producer to be affected by various matters and factors.

Generally speaking, it can be said that airline service quality is able to influence – in a positive manner – both repurchase intention and word of mouth through influencing customer loyalty. This is made possible by focusing on developing the level of customer loyalty. That, in turn, plays a role in defining a more valid

environment for customers to change their purchase behaviour (repurchase again), and spread positive words about the airline to their friends and family (WoM).

The current study came to the conclusion that, in order to increase customer loyalty to the product or service provided, the organization must strive to eliminate the causes of weak loyalty or a change in customer loyalty, whether due to natural causes or artificial ones.

It is natural that the tangible and intangible criteria of service quality are important in evaluating either a customized overview of an organization or customer confidence in an organization. It has been pointed out that service quality is very important and affects customer satisfaction, leading to loyalty. Studying and understanding the relationship and its merits between the client and the organization, helps in identifying the underlying motives behind the client's conviction and loyalty to an organization over others. This would positively influence his thinking about repurchasing from the same organization or encouraging others to do so, with the support of the organization itself.

It can be claimed that there is a case of limited studies that dealt with the quality of service and its relationship to the purchasing behavior of customers in addition to their loyalty. There are also studies claiming that the quality of service determines the extent of customer satisfaction and loyalty to a service. On the other hand, other studies have found that customer satisfaction and their loyalty to the organization or brand is the motivation behind the continuous improvement and development of service quality.

### **5.3. Implications**

This study shows how the three variables of customer loyalty, repurchase intentions and word of mouth are able to form the nature of the relationship between the organization and its customers. The airline industry must remain aware of their customers' preferences and desires, in order to keep them satisfied, which in the end will reflect positively on the company's sustainability and profitability.

Pushing for quality of service within airline organizations and based on results attributed to 'AirQual' variables, the findings from this study are important on a wider scale than the relationship between the organization and its customers. The two most important variables of AirQual, which are Personnel and Image, can be implemented at HR management level when dealing with employees as well as between higher managers of other departments and their staff.

Also, the variable of personnel is so influential on customers' loyalty, that organizations should pay more attention to it and become more involved in seminars, workshops and training courses for their employees on how to deal with customers and increase their ability to meet their desires and expectations. Having said that, customer behaviour isn't a fixed trait. With ongoing developments and increased awareness from customers, their behaviour may change over time. The current study presents a tool for organizations to develop their awareness of customer behaviour and reach a higher level of examination and appreciation.

Image of an organization is something that plays a role in developing different attitudes of individuals towards a certain organization. In that sense, the organization may consider working more on the image level. They can develop a better image of their brand by engaging the organization in social and communal activities to help in presenting a brighter image of the organization.

#### **5.4. Limitations and Future Research**

Like any other study, current study also has some limitations and below we point out some of them:

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the lockdown that was imposed on many countries, Researcher faced many problems in reaching customer "passengers". Uploading the questionnaire online was the only possible solution that enabled the researcher to gather data in the most unbiased way possible.

Many questionnaires were filled in an improper manner, which urged Researcher to eliminate them and analyse only the properly filled ones.

The pandemic also played a role in decreasing the number of individuals reachable for research purposes. Researcher was hoping to distribute the questionnaire in person, in order to be able to answer respondents' queries and offer them more information regarding the study. However, the pandemic didn't give much chance to implement this plan due to the lockdown of the airport.

Researcher recommends examining the influence of 'AirQual' variables on marketing approaches of airline organizations. It is also recommended to examine how marketing strategies and campaigns are influenced if the organization follows a well-structured airline quality service.

As a future study, it is recommended to examine how the nature of airline services may change after the COVID-19 pandemic, what new measures will be adopted by airline organizations, and how they are going to deal with their status after the pandemic is over.

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## APPENDIX

### **A Survey on Measures of Airline Service Quality on Customer's Loyalty, Repurchase Intention & Word-of-Mouth**

Dear Ms/Mr.

We would like to invite you to participate in a confidential survey undertaken by Ibn Haldun University (Istanbul, Turkey) and Turkish Airlines as a part of a Master's Thesis in Air Transportation Management program. The purpose of this research is to investigate measures of Airline Service Quality on customers' loyalty to Turkish Airlines.

Your cooperation will greatly assist this survey. We would be grateful if you could complete the online questionnaire. In appreciation of your participation, we will send you a **summary report** of the research findings when the study is completed.

Answering the questionnaire will take about **5 minutes**, and you will make a valuable contribution to our research project. We assure you that your individual responses will be analyzed *anonymously* and they will be held in **strict confidence**.

Dina Alghzawi,

MSc in Air Transport Management,  
Regional Marketing Representative, Turkish Airlines,  
Email: [xxxxx@ibnhaldun.edu.tr](mailto:xxxxx@ibnhaldun.edu.tr)  
Aqaba-Jordan

Thank you for your participation.

## PART I. DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONS

**1. How old are you?**

- Less than 25     25 - 34     35 - 49     50 - 65     Over 65

**2. What is your gender?**

- Male     Female

**3. What is your level of education?**

- High school     Bachelor's     Postgraduate (masters/Ph.D.)

**4. What is your occupation type?**

- Full-time     Part-time     Self-employed     Unemployed

**5. What is your marital status?**

- Single     Married

**6. What is your average monthly income approximately (in US\$)?**

- 2,000 or less     2,001 - 4,000     4,001 - 6,000     6,001 - 8,000     Over 8,000

**7. Please identify your country of residence**

**8. The frequency of using Turkish Airlines:**

- Only once     2 - 5 Times     6-9 Times     10 Or More     Never

**9. Are you Turkish Airlines Frequent Flyer Program Member - FFP (Miles & Smiles)**

- Yes     No

## PART II. Airline Service Quality (AirQual)

Please indicate your level of agreement on the following statements related to Turkish Airlines services.

(1=Strongly Disagree; 2=Disagree; 3=Neutral; 4=Agree; 5=Strongly Agree)						
<b>Airline Tangible</b>						
1	All aircrafts within Turkish airlines are well-maintained, new, and modern.	1	2	3	4	5
2	Food and drinks in the flight are of high quality and sufficiently varied.	1	2	3	4	5
3	In-flight toilets are clean and easy to use.	1	2	3	4	5
4	In-flight seats are comfortable.	1	2	3	4	5
5	In-flight entertainment is sufficiently varied to meet any taste.	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Terminal Tangible</b>						
1	Waiting halls, toilets, and facilities in the terminal are clean and easy to use.	1	2	3	4	5
2	Luggage is all handled with the greatest care and attention.	1	2	3	4	5
3	Signs and guidance are available in the terminal with multi-languages and easy to understand.	1	2	3	4	5
4	Adequate numbers of trolleys are available at the airport.	1	2	3	4	5
5	Parking spaces are always available either self-parking or through valet.	1	2	3	4	5
6	The airport offers friendly security and reliable control system.	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Turkish Airline Personnel</b>						
1	Turkish airlines staff's behavior instills trust in customers.	1	2	3	4	5
2	Turkish airlines staff consistently are courteous with you.	1	2	3	4	5
3	Turkish airlines staff are experienced and well-trained to answer your questions.	1	2	3	4	5
4	Turkish airlines staff are able to communicate in different international languages.	1	2	3	4	5
5	Turkish airlines staff are neatly dressed.	1	2	3	4	5
6	Turkish airlines staff do error-free reservations and ticketing transactions.	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Empathy</b>						
1	Turkish Airlines compensate for any damages arising from service disruption (e.g., damage luggage, lost luggage, lost connection, canceled flights) in the shortest time possible.	1	2	3	4	5
2	The locations of Turkish Airlines offices are easy to find.	1	2	3	4	5
3	Turkish Airlines flight schedules are convenient and satisfy my demands.	1	2	3	4	5
4	When you have a problem, Turkish airlines show a sincere interest in solving it.	1	2	3	4	5
5	Turkish airlines have operating hours convenient to all its customers.	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Image (IMG)</b>						
1	Turkish airlines provide services at the promised time.	1	2	3	4	5
2	Turkish Airlines offer a high level of the secured online transaction.	1	2	3	4	5
3	When thinking of flying comfortably, Turkish airlines always come to my mind.	1	2	3	4	5
4	Turkish Airlines is a reputable airline company and globally noted.	1	2	3	4	5
5	Turkish Airlines ticket prices are consistent with its services.	1	2	3	4	5

### PART III. Customer Loyalty, Repurchase Intention and Word-of-Mouth

Please indicate your level of agreement on the following statements:

(1=Strongly Disagree; 2=Disagree; 3=Neutral; 4=Agree; 5=Strongly Agree)						
1	I generally find the quality of services provided by Turkish Airlines excellent.	1	2	3	4	5
2	I am very much satisfied with the services provided by Turkish Airlines.	1	2	3	4	5
3	Even in the presence of an alternative airline, I always tend to use Turkish Airlines.	1	2	3	4	5
4	I generally have a good impression of Turkish Airlines.	1	2	3	4	5
5	My previous experience with Turkish Airlines motivates me to choose it for my future flights.	1	2	3	4	5

(1=Strongly Disagree; 2=Disagree; 3=Neutral; 4=Agree; 5=Strongly Agree)						
1	I believe using the services of Turkish Airlines is a proper decision.	1	2	3	4	5
2	The price I pay for the ticket is worth the services I get from Turkish Airlines.	1	2	3	4	5
3	I would always consider Turkish Airlines my first choice regardless of the ticket prices.	1	2	3	4	5
4	I would continue to use the frequent flyer program of Turkish Airlines for my future flights.	1	2	3	4	5



(1=Strongly Disagree; 2=Disagree; 3=Neutral; 4=Agree; 5=Strongly Agree)						
1	I would recommend Turkish Airlines to someone who seeks my recommendation.	1	2	3	4	5
2	I encourage my friends and relatives to fly with Turkish Airlines.	1	2	3	4	5
3	I always tend to talk positively about Turkish Airlines on social media platforms.	1	2	3	4	5
4	I regularly follow Turkish Airlines' social media accounts and share them with others.	1	2	3	4	5

Thank you very much for your participation.

If you are interested in the results of the survey, please indicate your e-mail:

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# CURRICULUM VITAE

## Personal Information:

Name - Surname: Dina Alghazzawi

## Education:

2018 to 2020      Holder of MSc in Air Transport Management (Thesis).

Ibn Haldun University ( Istanbul- Turkey) CGPA: 3,62

2004 to 2008      Holder of B.Sc. in Physical Therapy

JORDAN UNIIVERSITY OF SCINSE AND TECHNOLOGY (Irbid- Jordan)

2003 to 2004      Aqaba secondary school, Jordan

Secondary Education Certificate, Scientific with a very good GBA.

## Experience:

Turkish Airlines – Aqaba Office

Full time job    May,2013 to Present

## Marketing Representative

Contribute to increase of revenue of the Company, by inquiring the conditions and requirements of the market. In charge of organizing workshops, social events, communications, agreements and coordination of corporate agreements, agencies, M.I.C.E., designing/running incentive schemes, contributing to brand awareness.

Supporting the key performance targets by designing and suggesting dynamic pricing policies to keep within revenue-generating parity on a highly competitive market.

## Organizing and participating:

B2B workshops with DMCs & regional travel agents between target destinations to support cross-market sales.

Fam and Press Trips to promote niche markets to unlock highly revenue-generating potentials.

Local motivation events, inter-corporate sport activities & mini-sponsorships to create loyalty, promo events and local conferences to share opinions about future of the market with travel-related industry players.

Participating to global activities with potential customers to increase loyalty and/or to build ways to corporate agreements.

Maintaining constructive relations with all related market players (DMCs, local/regional/global sales agents, corporations, government bodies, etc.)

Managed to negotiate and successfully proceeded with several corporate agreements.

Business Development center-USAID

Full time job

Project Coordinator

Sep 2008- Aug 2012

Recruit student candidates for the Maharat internship Programs; The On-the-job, and Pioneer programs from Aqaba and surrounding governorates;

Prepares and formats reports using data gathering techniques and established tracking standards.

Assist in organizing periodic professional development training sessions in Aqaba for the Maharat program, and other trainings as deemed necessary;

Follow up on intern's recruitment, placement, and performance once they have been placed with a client;

Coordinate and assist in organizing road shows and awareness seminars. Conduct presentations and seminars to potential clients;

Coordinate and assist in organizing and implementing graduation ceremonies for the intern graduates and job fairs as deemed necessary;

Maintain the Maharat database of interns, clients, and service providers;

Liaise with other departments on press releases, and PR events related to the Maharat program;

Conduct sector specific research using publications, Internet, etc.

Develop a Scope of Work in coordination with the project manager for the type and level of service required by the client.

Assist the project managers in preparing the annual sector plan and budgets.

Work and cooperate with other TATWEER departments as required by senior management, and function as an effective member at TATWEER.

Project Coordinator may, in all sectors, be assigned to different sectors or required to work in more than one sector as workload defines project activities.