Investigating the factors influencing customer attraction in the aviation industry using regression, variance analysis and Pearson correlation

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ABSTRACT

One of the most important environmental factors of any business is the customer that organizations must meet their needs for their survival and development. Therefore, one of the most important issues in today's business community is attracting and retaining customers. Hence, the purpose of this paper is to identify and evaluate the factors affecting customer attraction in the aviation industry using regression, variance analysis and Pearson correlation. In 2019, this study was conducted as a descriptive-survey and the statistical population entered the study by random sampling method. The statistical population is 19 experts in the field of aviation industry. In this research, data was obtained through a standard questionnaire, Nami et al. (2007) and also the data has been analyzed by regression analysis, variance analysis and Pearson correlation between indicators. Results considering the correlation of research hypotheses have shown that all hypotheses have a significant positive relationship with customer value in the aviation industry with the value of (P = 0.01). Examining the findings of the statistical demographic information hypothesis test, with attracting customers in the aviation industry, it is shown that age, gender, education and marital status have a significant positive relationship, but there was no significant relationship between any of them. The results showed that the aviation industry for customer attraction must focus on knowledge, skills, education, as well as the quality of service, competitive price, advertising, and management experience.

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1. Introduction

Today's world is a world of technological advancement, and in recent years there have been profound changes. Therefore, the third millennium is the field of new information and technology in a highly complex environment (Taghavi Fard et al., 2015). The era has caused the transition from industrial economy and the disappearance of geographical borders and consequently the intensification of competition in the business environment (Mozaffari et al., 2015). With rapid advancement of information technology and the expansion of globalization, has increased products and services dramatically. In other words, technology has enabled organizations to provide their diverse products and services to customers with the highest quality and lowest possible price (Al-Badavi and Haj Zaman Ali, 2005). Therefore, it can be said that the most important asset of most organizations is their customers. Due to their direct relationship with the actions of an organization, customers are a valuable resource for discovering opportunities, threats and operational questions related to each area (Taghizadeh, 2015). The concept of customer in the initial definition refers to the recipients of goods and services in the organization, but today the customer is beyond this meaning and it refers to someone who benefits from the services and products of organizations (Ngo, 2015). Customer is the boss, the only boss you have to keep happy. Customer is the owner of all assets and the owner of everything we have. The word customer has different names in other countries. In the United States and the United Kingdom, he is called the king and omnipotent in Japan he is called the king in India he is called the boss but in Iran he is called the returned lord. Because when this concept entered the country, it was ruled in a villeinage way and the Iranian people had a lot of respect for their masters who came back from abroad. The customer was mentioned as a lord who has returned and they should be honored (Javid et al., 2014).

So, if organizations can satisfy, retain, or increase customer satisfaction, they will be just as successful. Therefore, the leading and transcendent organization is always seeking to ensure customer satisfaction (Yaghoubi et al., 2015). Experts also consider customer satisfaction management and customer attraction as the most important tasks and priorities of company management and consider the need for permanent and sustainable commitment of top managers to attract customers and pay attention to customer expectations as the main prerequisite for the success of firms, companies or organizations. Since every business needs to understand and recognize its customer in order to be able to optimize its product or service and provide it to the customer in the best way and be able to attract and target customers, there is a necessity for firms, companies or organizations to study customer behavior, and ways to attract and retain them. Therefore, attracting customers and gaining customer satisfaction in order to improve the level of performance is one of the priorities of firms, companies or organizations, especially commercial enterprises (Dalir et al., 2017).

In order to attract customers and increase productivity in this research, a case study of the aviation industry has been considered. The reason for this choice is that today the aviation industry has a special place due to its unique features. The growth of published scientific articles and studies in this field is a clear proof of this fact.

Finally, the purpose of this paper is to investigate customer attraction in the aviation industry using regression, analysis of variance and correlation. The next part of this article examines the background of the research. In the third part, the research method is discussed. In the fourth part, the results regarding customers attraction are examined and finally in the fifth part, the result of the article is stated.

2- Literature review

Domestic and foreign studies on customer attraction and this research over the past decades include:

Haghighi and Nayebpour (2017) in an article entitled "Ranking of Iranian Airlines with Combined Fuzzy Assessment and Genetic Algorithm" states that in order to achieve this goal in the first stage, the Euclidean gap between Satisfaction of one by one criteria and general satisfaction using Combined fuzzy evaluation and genetic algorithms were calculated and the weight of the criteria was obtained. In the second phase, using combined fuzzy evaluation, Iranian aviation industry companies were ranked. The statistical sample of this research consists of passengers of several airlines named Aseman, Mahan, Taban, Zagros and Homa. The results of this study show that the importance of criteria in different groups of passengers is different and as a result, the ranking of airline companies is different from the perspective of passengers.

Fazli and Rashidi Astaneh (2014) in an article entitled "The role of effective factors on the success of customer relationship management strategy in car sales representations of Gilan province", states that serious attention to the customer is necessary to continue operating in today's competitive markets. The research findings show that knowledge management, organizational variables, quality of communication and technology are directly related to the success of customer relationship strategy in the province's car sales agencies, but the experience of using customer relationship system does not necessarily lead to success of customer relationship management strategy.

Modiri et al. (2014) in an article entitled "Identification and prioritization of motivational factors affecting knowledge sharing among knowledge workers with a multi-criterion fuzzy decision-making approach" states that this study aims to identify motivational factors affecting knowledge sharing of organizational staff and the prioritization of these factors has been studied. Based on the results of ranking the trust index to management, with the highest weight, it is ranked first. Also, after examining the effect of each of the 21 indicators on the four stages of the knowledge sharing process, internalization in the study area is more important than other stages of the knowledge sharing process.

Akhavan and Rahimi (2013) in an article entitled "Identification and ranking of motivational factors affecting knowledge sharing of an industrial organization", states that in the competitive environment of today's world, one of the main challenges is managers. The results of this study show that in order to share knowledge, effective internal motivational factors have a higher priority than external motivational factors in employees and motivational factors of friendly and intimate communication and career

promotion are respectively known as the most important internal and external motivational factors affecting knowledge sharing.

Bahadori et al. (2012) in an article entitled "Prioritizing the components affecting the job motivation of employees of a military center by hierarchical analysis method", states that the purpose of this article is to identify the components affecting job motivation and prioritization of them by analytical methodwithin a military center. The findings of this study show that the component of job security and appropriate salaries are in the first and second priority with coefficients of importance of 0.29 and 0.20 and the components of communication and policy with the coefficient of importance of 0.02 are in the last priority.

Nami et al. (2017) in an article that evaluates the factors affecting customer behavior in Iran's aviation industry using AHP technique, states that this article uses a hierarchical method, namely AHP, to evaluate the indicators affecting customer behavior in Iranian Airlines industry. From the data analysis, it can be seen that the competitive price had the highest weight in the criteria.

In an article entitled "The Impact of Service Quality and Confidence in Payment Needs - Pakistan Aviation Industry", Salim and Yassin (2017) examined the effect of service quality on retaining Pakistani aviation industry passengers with a mediated role of customer satisfaction. Their results show that the quality of services has a positive and significant relationship with passenger satisfaction and increasing passenger satisfaction leads to the recurrence of their purchase.

Hussein (2016) in an article entitled "The mediating role of customer satisfaction: a case study of aviation industry, has examined the mediating effect of passenger satisfaction in the aviation industry. The results of this study through analysis of variance show that the quality of services has a significant relationship with passenger satisfaction. They also reported a significant relationship between satisfaction and perceived value.

Hajizadeh Moghadam et al. (2014) in an article entitled "Investigating the effect of communication quality on passenger loyalty in the aviation industry, states that the purpose of this study is to understand the impact of relationship quality on passenger loyalty in the field of aviation services." In this paper, the relationship between the dimensions of communication quality (satisfaction, trust, commitment and quality of services) and the dimensions of loyalty (emotional, cognitive and behavioral) is based on the responses of 500 passengers collected in 2013 and structural equation modeling has been used. The results show that satisfaction, trust, commitment and quality of services are the factors that determine the quality of positive relationship with the dimensions of travel loyalty related to emotional, cognitive and behavioral.

Kheiry et al. (2013) in an article entitled "Customer Response to Loyalty Programs: a case study of Mahan Airlines" states that many studies today are conducted on the impact of loyalty programs on customer satisfaction and loyalty, however this type of programs have another aspect of customers such as response and reaction to the implementation of such programs. Based on the research model, it can be claimed that there is a direct relationship between the independent and dependent variables.

3- Research method

The present study is descriptive-survey and applied, and the method of collecting data was from library materials and getting information from experts in the field using questionnaires and the method of data analysis was both qualitative and quantitative. The correlation study in order to attract customers in the aviation industry was conducted in 2019. The statistical population of the present study is experts in the aviation industry who have the conditions to enter the study. The sample size in this study using the formula with 95% confidence level and 80% test power is 19 samples that are selected randomly.

Data collection tool of the present study is a standard research questionnaire conducted by Nami et al. (2007) with 23 items which has been done by aerospace industry experts. This questionnaire consists of 9 dimensions. The dimensions of this questionnaire include: advertising (3 items), service quality (3 items), competitive price (3 items), customer loyalty (2 items), market share (2 items), customer service (2 items), e-commerce (3 items), management experience (3 items) and brand (2 items). The score of this questionnaire was based on Likert scale. The validity of this questionnaire has been confirmed by 24 experts. In addition to the questionnaire, demographic information, age, gender, education and marital status of the statistical population were also considered. The theoretical definition of each dimension of the questionnaire is as follow:

Customers: The only source of current profit and growth of the organization. Of course, recognizing, attracting and retaining a good customer is always difficult due to the increase in customer awareness and as a result, changing the level of their expectations and also the existence of close competition (Tarzi and Blorian Tehrani, 2012).

Advertising: Advertising in the airline business is a means of motivating customers to buy and use the products and services of the airline or to ensure continuous marketing efforts (Al Koch, 2004).

Product Quality: Product quality in the airline business consists of a process that begins with the purchase of a ticket and includes the behavior and characteristics of the crew and cabin managers (Gurses, 2006).

Competitive Price: Proper calculation of service costs in aviation business plays a decisive role in determining ticket costs (Nami et al., 2017).

Customer Loyalty: Airlines are constantly developing and improving their products and services to meet customers' needs (Yildirim, 2004).

Market share: Market share is one percent of the total market that a company provides for certain categories of products or a specific product (Karasu, 2007).

Customer Service: Airlines must be aware of the needs of their customers when planning products and services. Services offered in the airline business include: cabin orders, aircraft type, reservation ticket privileges, exact time and travel time services (Shaw, 1986).

E-Commerce: Although air travel is one of the fastest types of travel, it is very expensive for many people. Therefore, airlines need to invest in e-commerce infrastructure and expand their operations to get the most out of e-commerce and be able to meet the demands of their customers as well as increase their profits (Kaya and Kuyucak, 2004).

Management experience: Aircraft management is very important to maintain costs. Management should guide employees to use effective strategies to reduce costs.

Employee motivation is one of the key factors in doing job in a better way and reducing costs (Nami et al., 2017).

Brand: The American Marketing Association considers a brand as a name, phrase, design, symbol, or any other feature that can distinguish manufactured goods or services provided by suppliers from the goods or services of other suppliers (Tabatabai Nasab and Avarpour, 2016).

4- Evaluation and results
In this section, the evaluation and research results are examined.

4-1 Research environment
Descriptive correlation and regression statistical analysis were done in SPSS software.

4-2 Evaluation criterion
In statistical multivariate analysis, there are different computational methods for measuring dependence or relationship between two random variables. The correlation between two variables is the ability to predict the value of one in relation to another. One way to show the relationship between two variables is the "correlation coefficient" between them. The larger the value of these two indicators, the greater the relationship or dependence between the two variables. One of the most popular ways to measure the relationship between two quantitative variables is to calculate the Pearson correlation coefficient. This index has also been used in this study. The Pearson correlation coefficient is calculated in Equation 1. If X and Y Are two random variables that have Expected value E (X) and E (Y) and variance V (X) and V (Y). The correlation coefficient between X and Y is denoted by ρ (X, Y) or corr (X <Y) and is calculated as follows:

$$\rho (X, Y) = corr (X, Y) = \frac{E[(X-E(X))(Y-E(Y)]}{[V(x)V(Y)]^{\frac{1}{2}}} \quad (1)$$

The numerator of this fraction is the covariance between the two variables X and Y. E also means Expected value of two random variables X and Y. The correlation coefficient is always a number between 1 and -1. The correlation coefficient between 0 and 1 means that there is a positive correlation, and the closer this coefficient is to 1, the stronger the correlation. The correlation coefficient between 0 and -1 means having a negative correlation between the two variables, and the closer the number is to -1, the stronger the negative correlation. Also, the Sig value is significant for P-Value, which if it is less than 0.01 indicates the significant relationship between the two variables.

The next criterion is linear regression, which models two different data samples as a straight line. The regression line is a tool for predicting the value of a variable in terms of the variable to which it depends. In fact, to model two specific adjectives, we find a line that is closer to all pairs of values of these two attributes. If the pairs are not aligned on a straight line, there is an error for each pair and the regression line. This line is selected so that the error is minimized. For the two variables X and Y, the line equation is calculated as Equation 2.

$Y = \alpha + \beta X$ (2)

The values of α and β are known as correlation coefficients. If the specific attributes in the data set are equal to n, equation 3 is called the regression equation, which is calculated as follow:

$$Y = W_0 + W_1 X_1 + W_2 X_2 + \cdots + W_n X_n \quad (3)$$

Where X_i are the values of specific attributes in the data set. The regression test, the ANOVA test, or the one-way analysis of variance is used to compare the mean of a small variable between more than two independent groups. The conditions of the analysis of variance test are that the data have a normal distribution; The variance should be equal in groups; Observations in groups must be independent of each other. The calculation of F in the analysis of variance is as follow: the general pattern is sst = ssb + ssw, sst is equal to the sum of the squares, ssb is the sum of the intergroups, and ssw is the sum of the intragroups (error).

4-3 Validity and reliability of the questionnaire
In reviewing the validity and reliability of the questionnaire, it should be stated that its validity has been tested by two methods of Face validity and KMO and Bartlett test and for reliability, two methods of Cronbach's alpha and double halving method have been used, which are as follow.

In review by Face validity method, the results show that the relationship between customer attraction in the aviation industry and the total score of 1832 has a strong limit. In the KMO and Bartlett test, the results are shown in Table 1, which shows the good quality of the data.

Table1. Measuring KMO and Bartlett test for the sample quality		
Statistical value	**extent**	
KMO Index	0.767	
	Statistics	87.67
	df	36
	Probability (sig)	0.0001

The reliability of the questions with Cronbach's alpha method was 0.919 and with the double-half method was 0.853, which indicates the good reliability of the questionnaire and its dimensions. The reliability of each criteria of the questionnaire is given in Table 2.

Table 2. reliability of each questionnaire index	
index	Cronbach's alpha
anagement experience	0.759
E-commerce	0.871
Advertisement	0.814
Market share	0.567
Brand	0.539
Service quality	0.696
Customer Service	0.569
Customer Loyalty	0.491
Competitive price	0.143
Total Cronbach's alpha coefficient	0.919

4-4 Examining the normality of the data
Analyzing normality using skewness and kurtosis has shown that most of the questions in the questionnaire are in the range of (-2 , 2), so it shows that the data is normal and

with the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, it can be said that most of the data are normal with high confidence.

4-5 Findings

The research findings for demographic information are: age of statistical population is less than 30 years; 3 people (16%) between 31-35 years, 2 people (10%) between 36-40 years, 6 people (32%) over 41 years and 8 people (42%) Has formed the population. Thus, the highest percentage of the statistical population is over 41 years, which is 42%. The marital status of single people is 26% and that of married 15 people is 74%. The education of the statistical population, associate degree of 2 people is equal to 10%, bachelor's degree of 7 people is equal to 37%, master's degree of 8people is 42% and doctorate of 2 people is equal to 11%. Therefore, the highest percentage of statistical population's education is of master's degree which is 42%.

The results of regression, variance analysis and correlation of the problem hypotheses are given in Table 3. In this analysis, the correlation between management experience in customer attraction in the aviation industry shows that with strong Pearson correlation with a value of 0.798 and a sig value of 0.000 there is a significant relationship. The value of the determination coefficient indicates that there is a mean linear relationship.

Examining the correlation of e-commerce in customer attraction in the aviation industry, the results show that there is a significant relationship with strong Pearson correlation with a value of 0.927 and a sig value of 0.000. The value of the coefficient of determination indicates that there is a large linear relationship.

In the study of advertising correlation in customer attraction in the aviation industry, the results show that there is a significant relationship with average Pearson correlation with a value of 0.639 and a sig value of 0.003. The value of the determination coefficient indicates that there is a mean linear relationship.

Examining the correlation of market share in customer attraction in the aviation industry, the results show that there is a significant relationship with strong Pearson correlation with value of 0.753 and a sig value of 0.000. The value of the determination coefficient indicates that there is a mean linear relationship.

In the study of brand correlation in customer attraction in the aviation industry, the results show that there is a significant relationship with average Pearson correlation with value of 0.684 and a sig value of 0.001. The value of the determination coefficient indicates that there is a mean linear relationship.

Examining the correlation of services quality in customer attraction in the aviation industry, the results show that there is a significant relationship with strong Pearson correlation with value of 0.769 and a sig value of 0.000. The value of the determination coefficient indicates that there is a mean linear relationship.

Examining the correlation of Customer Service in customer attraction in the aviation industry, the results show that there is a significant relationship with average Pearson correlation with value of 0.577 and a sig value of 0.01. The value of the determination coefficient indicates that there is a weak linear relationship.

Examining the correlation of customer loyalty in customer attraction in the aviation industry, the results show that there is a significant relationship with average Pearson correlation with value of 0.637 and a sig value of 0.003. The value of the determination coefficient indicates that there is a weak linear relationship.

Examining the correlation of Competitive price in customer attraction in the aviation industry, the results show that there is a significant relationship with strong Pearson correlation with value of 0.759 and a sig value of 0.000. The value of the determination coefficient indicates that there is a mean linear relationship.

The study of demographic information of statistical population is listed in Table 4.

In the study of age, it has a positive effect on customer attraction in the aviation industry, there is a positive relationship with 0.3133 correlation and there is no significant relationship with sig value of 0.193. The value of the determination coefficient indicates that there is no weak linear relationship. In the study of gender by attracting customers in the aviation industry, no effect was observed because the statistical population is only one type and male.

The study of education has a positive effect on customer attraction in the aviation industry, there is a weak positive correlation of 0.207 and there is no significant relationship with sig value 0f 0.395. The value of the determination coefficient indicates that there is a weak linear relationship.

The study of marital status has a positive effect on customer attraction in the aviation industry, there is a positive correlation of 0.033 and there is no significant relationship with sig value 0f 0.892. The value of the determination coefficient indicates that there is a weak linear relationship.

* Comparing this research with the research of Salim and Yassin (2017) in an article entitled "The effect of service quality and trust in the needs of repayment - Pakistan Aviation Industry, in both studies, the service quality index has the highest value."

* Comparison of this research with Hossein (2016) in an article entitled "The mediating role of customer satisfaction: A case study of the aviation industry, there is a significant relationship between customer satisfaction and customer service quality, which also in this study srvices have a significant positive relationship with customer engagement.

5. Conclusion

The transition from an industrial economy caused the disappearance of geographical boundaries and, consequently, the intensification of competition in the business environment. Today's world is a world of technological advancement, and in recent years there have been profound changes. The most important asset of most organizations is their customers. So if organizations can satisfy, retain, or increase customer satisfaction, they will be just as successful. Therefore, the leading and transcendent organization is always looking to ensure customers' satisfaction. Experts also consider customer satisfaction management and customer attraction as the most important tasks and priorities of company management and consider the need for permanent and sustainable commitment of top managers to attract customers and pay attention to customer expectations as the main prerequisite for the success of firms, companies or organizations.

Data collection tool of the present study is a standard research questionnaire conducted by Nami et al. (2007) with 23 items which has been done by aerospace industry experts. This questionnaire consists of 9 dimensions. The

dimensions of this questionnaire include: advertising (3 items), service quality (3 items), competitive price (3 items), customer loyalty (2 items), market share (2 items), customer service (2 items), e-commerce (3 items), management experience (3 items) and brand (2 items). To assess the face validity and reliability of the questionnaire, Cronbach's alpha was used. In face validity, the results show that the relationship between customer attraction in the aviation industry and the total score of 1832 has a strong limit. The reliability of the questions with Cronbach's alpha method was 0.919 and with the double-half method was 0.853, which indicates the good reliability of the questionnaire and its dimensions. In this study, SPSS software was used to analyze the samples. Analyzing normality using skewness and kurtosis has shown that most of the questions in the questionnaire are in the range of (-2 , 2), so it shows that the data is normal and with the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, it can be said that most of the data are normal with high confidence.

As can be seen in the study of the correlation of research hypotheses, all hypotheses have a significant positive relationship with customer attraction in the aviation industry. Examining the findings of the statistical demographic information hypothesis test, with attracting customers in the aviation industry, it is shown that age, gender, education and marital status have a significant positive relationship, but there was no significant relationship between any of them.

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Table 3. Examining the correlation between problem hypotheses dimensions

Relation	Pearson correlation	R^2	STD	Results	Test
Management experience / Customer attraction	0.798	0.636	7.08	P = 0.000 df= 1 f= 29.745	ANOVA
E-commerce / Customer attraction	0.927	0.859	4.41	P =0.000 df= 1 f= 103.493	ANOVA
Advertising / Customer attraction	0.639	0.408	9.03	P = 0.003 df= 1 f= 11.71	ANOVA
Market share / Customer attraction	0.753	0.567	7.72	P = 0.000 df= 1 f= 22.271	ANOVA
Brand / Customer attraction	0.684	0.468	8.56	P =0.001 df= 1 f= 14.928	ANOVA
Service quality / Customer attraction	0.769	0.592	7.5	P = 0.000 df= 1 f= 24.63	ANOVA
Customer Service / Customer attraction	0.577	0.294	9.59	P =0.001 df= 1 f=8.48	ANOVA
Customer Loyalty / Customer attraction	0.637	0.405	9.05	P = 0.003 df= 1 f= 11.58	ANOVA
Competitive price / Customer attraction	0.759	0.576	7.64	P = 0.000 df= 1 f= 23.08	ANOVA

Table 4. Examining the correlation between demographic information and customer attraction in the aviation industry

Relation	Pearson correlation	R^2	STD	Results	Test
Management experience / Customer attraction	0.313	0.098	11.15	P = 0.193 df= 1 f= 1.84	ANOVA
E-commerce / Customer attraction	0.207	0.043	11.48	P =0.395 df= 1 f= 0.762	ANOVA
Advertising / Customer attraction	0.033	0.001	11.73	P = 0.892 df= 1 f= 0.019	ANOVA