

Assessment of Service Quality at Bandaranaike International Airport, Katunayake

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Abstract

Service quality at airports as perceived by air passengers is a comparison between their expectations and airport's actual performance which is measured by the performance of service delivery of the airport. Delivering high quality service to passengers by airports is vital for their market competitiveness and ultimately for promoting the image of the country. Since, service quality is an important factor in customer satisfaction, the study aims to assess the current service quality level which is being perceived by air passengers and their satisfaction levels for Airport Facilities at Bandaranaike International Airport (BIA), Katunayake comparing other Airports in other geographical regions (Indian Subcontinent, East Asia & Asia Pacific, Middle East and Europe).

The main objective of the study was to understand importance of customer expectations and level of satisfaction perceived by passengers concerning the facilities, services and service quality of BIA, Katunayake. For data collection, an online questionnaire (created based on Google® forms) was provided and the population of the study was comprised of those who have experienced the services offered by BIA, specifically frequent air travelers of national origin. The questionnaire was developed using the SKYTRAX questionnaire as a benchmark. The questionnaire was distributed online to the target population who have travelled using BIA during last three years of time. The Likert survey was the selected questionnaire type as this enabled the respondents to answer the survey easily based on their evaluation levels. A total of 147 completed questionnaires were selected out of 163 due to incompleteness of some answers.

Results shows that, responders (almost 50%) who have travelled within last three years through more than 05 airports in more geographical areas have less satisfaction level for most of questions than other responders who have visited five or less than five airports. Further responders (almost 20%) who have travelled through many airports (more than 10 airports within last three years) in more than two geographical areas have neutral or dissatisfied responses for most of questions than other responders who have visited ten or less than ten airports those were in one or two geographical areas. This indicates that service quality at

BIA for some areas does not match the satisfaction level of passengers who have experienced many airports in several geographical areas. The identified areas were

- Availability & Service assistance from airport staff
- Public transportation options
- Waiting times at check-in counters
- Waiting times / service efficiency at immigration
- Security staff attitude / courtesy
- Washrooms cleanliness and location
- Other miscellaneous amenities

Moreover the study also concludes that the satisfaction level of passengers on service quality was significantly different based on number of airports which passengers have visited and geographical areas where those airports are located, especially passengers who have travelled only in Indian subcontinent had more satisfied responses on BIA comparing others.

There were no significant difference in observations on satisfaction levels based on passenger's gender, age group and reasons for travel, since 90% of passengers had travelled on business / employment purposes. In conclusion, the study suggests that policy makers as well as airport management need to comprehensive survey on passenger's satisfaction level on their services offered and take workable measures to improve upon airport service quality.

Key Words: Airport operations, Service quality, Airport terminals

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