

# 6

## **Examining Intangible Choices & Tangible Perceptions Influencing Passenger ‘Airport Transfer’ Options – An Empirical Study of Dubai International Airport, UAE**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This research aimed to observe the intangible choices & real perceptions that affect the choice of Dubai airport as a transfer point for a passenger along their journey. Most of the new airport research and management initiative focuses on performance, effectiveness, processing speed and international world rankings. Such incentives have seemed to value airports that are uniquely capable of moving the grandest number of customers and their baggage.

The researchers noted that when it is recognized that the experience economy could add value & build consumer loyalty, the airport customer's experience is critically prominent.

The research paper deserves analysis, as hubs play a significant role in modern society, whether for personal or business purposes and also to enable families from all over the world to stay linked. The core part of this thesis aims to establish and analyze passengers' personal decisions flying from a representative set of connecting airports.

The analysis involves Comprehensive Data obtained from two hundred seventy-five travelers that had engaged with the services of DXB. The methodology here had to be adapted to published research material used as a case study approach conducted at Terminal 3 on the same subject.

In this study, the researcher will attempt to investigate a travelling customer ' different habits and how they manage their time before departing. There are significant variations in the time management approach depending on the intent of the trip and profiles. This research would examine if recognizable characteristics are seen in the different segmentation of travelers and use these findings if a market dynamics approach achieves managerial benefits.

## INTRODUCTION:

A gasoline-powered, propeller-driven biplane that lasted 12 seconds in length on December 17, 1903 by the Wright brothers changed the face of transportation (Onion, et al., 2009). Aircrafts in the early days used to land on any flat piece of strip, till 1908 when the first official airport was opened with a designated landing strip in Albany, New York, The United States of America (Hakes, 2019).

Aviators always found a need to return to the ground, however boundless their flights were, in all aspects it commences and terminate at airports. The term on its own advocates a haven at the finish of each flight, a safe harbor (Bedanrek, 2001). In past century airports have transformed as drastically as airplanes themselves.

There grew a lot of enthusiasm amongst people for commuting by air that translating it into a whole new practice could not be resolved at one go, especially when designing skills took to market. It was in 1930's in Europe that the dramatics of new-age travel was expressed as the first successful airports and the proposal of a first-generation airport was characterized as 'naked airport style' (Gordan, 2012)

### ***1.1 Background:***

Airports have always been a representation of trade, improved global connectivity, employment & innovation. As the demand for air transportation peaks upwards, airports around the world has played a critical part in justifying a steady development. Airports are considered as a vital link in helping steer the economy benefiting communities that it is located and operated in (Gittens, 2018).

Amongst the various global aviation hubs, Middle East is one the largest in the world.

It is estimated that in the next two decades air travel will peak at a rate of 5.8% per year in the Middle East region. Air travel in the Middle East is expected to peak at about 5.8% per year over the next two decades. This increase will in turn drive growth in the economic market and jobs that are supported by the industry over the 20 years. It is forecasted by an Oxford Economics study that the aviation industry within Middle East will increase and support some 4.3 million employment a 345billion dollar contribution to the overall GDP (Kareen El Beyrouty, 2015).

The three most striving airlines emerging from the Middle East are Emirates, Etihad and Qatar airways and they all have a thriving fleet of aircrafts with the highest standards of safety and luxury.

Within this study we shall explore the needs of the customer, using phenomenological approaches with the focus being on the customers experience at the airport and choice of offerings that make an influential factor of the journey.

## ***1.2 Significance of the study:***

It has been a vision and desire to make Dubai on the top list of cities not just in this region but also the world (Maktoum, 2012).

Dubai Airport has taken the global stand of being the busiest airport in terms of International traffic. The airport is designed to and handling ninety million passengers per annum and is contributory to the aviation success. Passenger figures over the last nine years of those passing through this airport has been in two-folds. It was not long ago that in 2014, Dubai International airport surpassed London Heathrow as being the busiest International hub in the world. In 2019, Dubai International; was able to retain the position as the number one hub for six consecutive years with an annual traffic reaching 86.4 million passengers (Griffiths, 2019).

Airports are generally regarded as a major economic driver not just for the city it is situated in or the region but often for the whole country. The city generally acts as a gateway of culture & is symbolic to the country (Gui Lohmann, 2014). The Airport Management largely face considerable challenges to ensure that those using the airport always has a positive experience. This is because of the various segments of airport users from luxury to budget, frequent flyers to holiday goers. Every passenger profile has a different need and the airport management should create different offerings to suit specific requirements of the air travelers across all profiles (Gupta, 2015)

## ***1.3 Aim of the research:***

Considerable attention has been focused on performance of the airport by means of effectiveness, speed of processing & operational efficiency (Sarkis, 2000). The purpose of this study will be to observe the Intangible choices & Tangible perceptions that influences a passenger's choice of Dubai airport as a transfer point through their journey.

## ***1.4 Research Objective:***

Air travel has played its own important role in helping to break down barriers to meet & learn from each other. The objective of this research is

- ▶ to examine the choices of Intangible and Tangible airport customer experience factors;
- ▶ to evaluate the factors influencing passengers' choice of an airport as a transfer point;
- ▶ to explore trends & provide recommendations to help make travelers feel welcome and perceive the airport as a destination.

## ***1.5 Research Questions:***

The research questions are

1. How to identify customer experience choices and factors at an airport?
2. What factors influence a passenger's choice of an airport as their transfer point?
3. How can an airport, inspire a new age of aviation, across all demographics to be perceived as a travel destination?

In this paper, the researcher studies if a shift to Dubai makes sense for an international traveler when they have to travel from East to West or vice-versa, examining the concept of hub and spoke system, measuring customers and their demands along with their expectations.

## 2.2 Development of Airports

The excitement of travelling through the air was immense, and the question of translating this whole new experience into an architectural language was not solved all at once. It was in the 1930s in Europe that the ‘drama of modern air travel’ was expressed in terms of the first successful airports and the design of the first-generation airports have been characterized as ‘naked airport style’ (Gordon, 2008).

Le Corbusier when he was the President of the Infrastructure Section of the first congress of French Aviation proclaimed: ‘once on the ground, only one kind of architecture seems tolerable and perfectly admissible: that of the magnificent airplanes which have brought you or will take you away, and which in front of you occupy the visible space.

The Airport then seems to have to be naked, entirely open to the sky, full in the center of the field, with the concrete runways. The beauty of an Airport is in the splendor or wide-open space’ (Mironov, 2020).

## 2.3 COVID19 Impact on Airports

COVID19 has not just placed a halt on life in general but has also led many businesses in various industries to close, and this has led to the stock market collapsing drastically. With such a massive impact, one of the first industries to affect is aviation. Planes have been parked on runways and taxiways, stowed away with a view it will be operated sometime soon. Airports are operating bare basics, catering to those traveling from their foreign country to origin or native for seeking assistance.

Incidents that occurred in the past have deemed aviation to decline but never has one incident of this magnitude ever taken place that has brought the industry to stand still, closing airports and airlines to stop operating at all (Juniac, 2020).

Recent studies have shown that the COVID19 impact on global scheduled passenger traffic, when compared to previously planned historically for this time, would mean an overall reduction in the seats offered by airline dropping to 51% with an overall decrease of 2,931 million passengers and an approximate loss of gross passenger operating funds to 395 billion dollars all from Jan to Dec 2020.

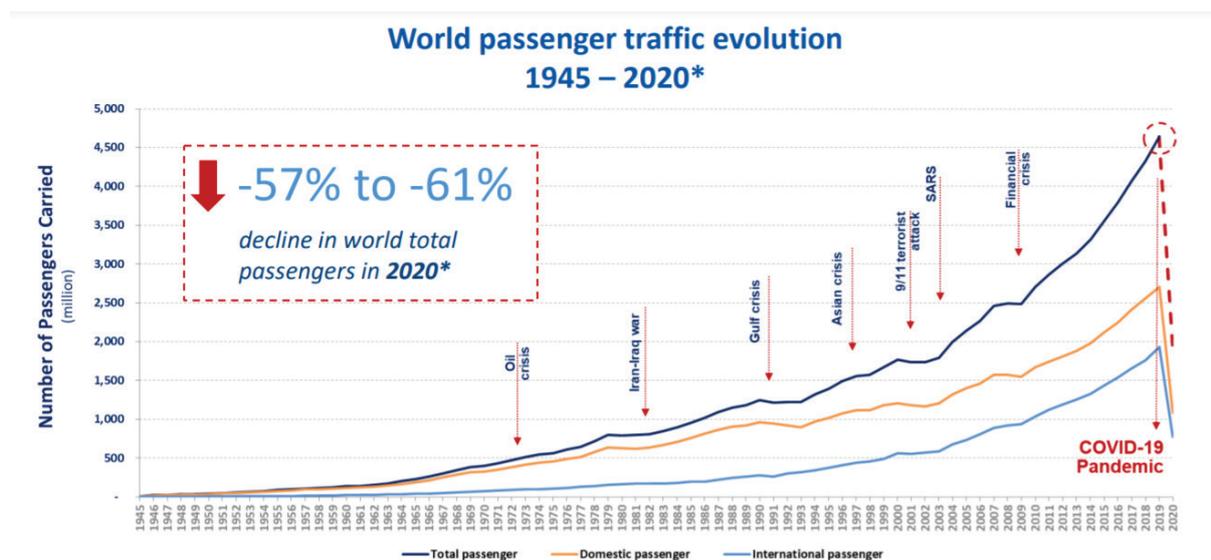


Figure 4: Passenger traffic evolution

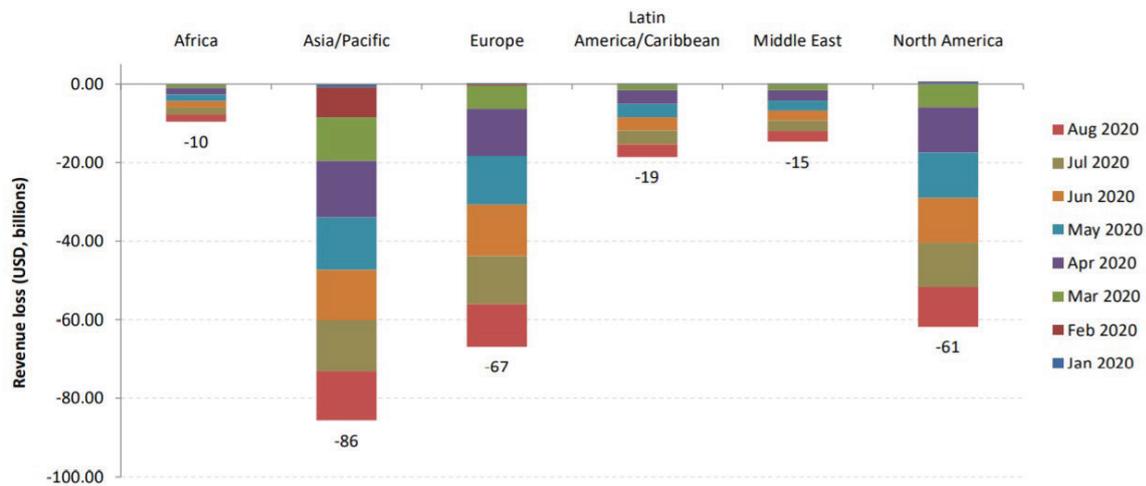


Figure 5: Passenger Revenue loss Jan to Aug 2020

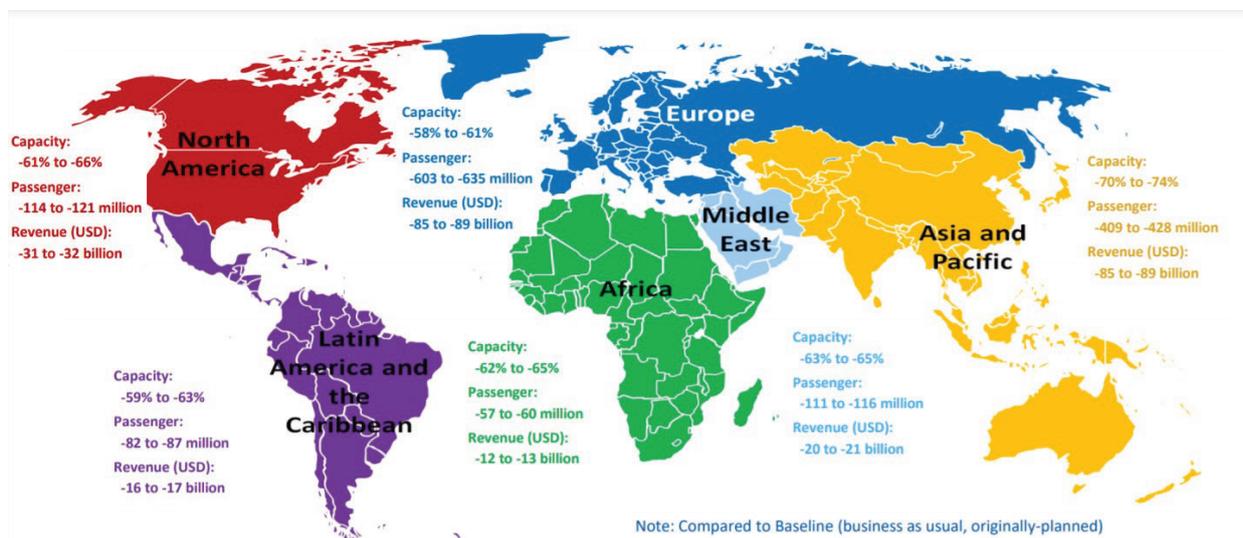


Figure 6: Impact on International Traffic

While it is difficult to predict how many such tragedies will unfold precisely, we must learn from the current and ready ourselves for any diverse set of scenarios in the future. Practices like temperature checks before entering the airport and the need to travel with a health certification clear any illness is probably the new norm. Many different solutions are being deployed, and further work is required to determine the most efficient and useful best practices. Now we must ponder resolutions for extremely autonomous, hands-free customer self-processing all the way through the journey.

Being an ecosystem, the industry will need to recover in a balanced manner across the different areas, not being partial to any (Gittens, 2020). Air transport participants like airports, will have added influence for support from the government if they join efforts to deal with climate change that could affect multiple participants from within and without the sector.

### 3.4 Research Methodology

The researcher adopted a Mono-Method Quantitative methodology approach for this analysis, analyzing interactions between numerically calculated variables and interpreted using a variety of mathematical and graphical techniques

### ***3.5 Research Strategy***

The case here is the secondary data already collected & published by a focused community through interviews, surveys & online analysis to assess the drivers & expectations of Dubai International Airport travelers was the case in this research (Awad, et al., 2019). The model suggested by the community to perform the case study was hypothetical, and the two models used for interpretation were CFA & SEM (Confirmatory Factor Analysis & Structural Equation Model respectively).

#### ***3.7.1 Quantitative Data Collection & Analysis Method***

There are three critical stages of methodology used in this study: construct/survey architecture, collection & processing of data being the second & third. This phase consists of the validation of observations, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), ordinal regression, and modeling of structural equations (SEM).

SkyTrax website (SKYTRAX, 2018) and the Emirates Skywards system web feedback was also reviewed for passengers who arrived or departed or were in transit during the period from April 2017 to April 2018.

The survey consisted of five categories representing the critical stages of their trip for passengers, namely: check-in, terminal, airport-wide accessibility in addition to a system that addresses assurance and assurance, empathy, and welfare for staff.

A five-point scale for Likert (Strongly Oppose, Oppose, Moderate, Accept, Agree Strongly) was used to gain input on survey questions from respondents.

#### ***3.7.2 Sample Size & Sampling Technique***

The study contains Quantitative Research gathered from 275 travelers (Awad, et al., 2019) who interacted with DXB services on the date of testing and launch of the survey (16th August, 25th September, 28th October (2018) and 13th March 2019).

The researcher evaluated the survey using SEM of partial least squares that are optimal for multivariate data with assumed mediation relations. It is believed that the law of mediation between structures and experience reaction is played out by nationality and intention of visit.

The following model has many assumptions, such as:

- H1. Each construction affects the experience of consumer trips.
- H2. There is a clear connection between the building of others.
- H3. Using satisfaction and impression, the experience is better described.
- H4. Nationality partakes an effect on happiness & sensitivity.
- H5. Travel purposes have an impact on happiness and impression.

## **Data Analysis**

The three objectives are as explained in Chapter One being;

- i. How to identify customer experience choices and factors at an airport?
- ii. What factors influence a passenger's choice of an airport as their transfer point?
- iii. How can an airport inspire a new age of aviation, across all demographics to be perceived as a travel destination?

As its conventional in case study research papers, this study used published literature (secondary data) to identify the airport passenger experience. (Eisenhardt, 2014) establishes that successful analysis would be

intensely iterative, and this is something the study aims to determine. This section has great importance in any research as it presents the data or findings. In addition to this, the researcher also relates the findings to the existing literature in order to provide evidence

## 4.2 Themes

The thematic process was a quest for similar concepts that developed as essential to the explanation of the phenomena (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006). By deeply understanding their interactions, the goal remains to recommend a pattern that illustrates the incorporation of passengers into the real sphere. The method of travelling within a terminal or concourse and understanding behaviors & perceptions and view the liminal space in which travelers often spend time in, and whether a sense of freedom makes them move better. For a diverse group of people who are often under immense emotional stress and time strain, airports are massive networks open to the public and have a variety of objectives. A greater understanding of this experience can benefit not only airport management but also the management of every prominent structure, such as the hospital, museum, government house, shopping mall or theme park.

Many scholars have looked at the significance of the perspective of air travelers. The airport provides the very first perception of the visiting region and is the starting point for an impressive tourist experience with good service at the airport (Awad, et al., 2019). With new digital technology and tense rivalry, the Passenger Loyalty Project is becoming an ever-expanding challenge. Visitors have become more knowledgeable; fewer committed and expect a more comprehensive range of airports and air services. Airports and ground aviation facilities are essential to complete airport services. In Europe, nearly 70% of all flight delays are reported to be due to problems caused by ground airport facilities (EU Commission, MEMO/11/857, 2011).

## 4.3 Airport Service Quality Dimensions

Given the wide range of air passengers and the complexity of the process itself, ASQ evaluation remains a complicated process. Considering the significance of evaluating ASQ and the difficulty of the method, several researchers have attempted to quantify ASQ by various mathematical models or through concentrating on the critical drivers of ASQ (Awad, et al., 2019). A crucial challenge persists to extract the essential parameters of ASQ applying a detailed and fair measuring instrument, by means of a survey or questionnaire. Numerous academics explored and proposed that ASQ should be grouped into tiny measurements or structures to promote and verify the efficiency of the calculation (Fodness & Murray, 2007).

Table 1 offers provides a model description of the theories used to test the ASQ discovered in the literature.

Dimension	Suki (2014)	Hussain et al. (2015)	Trischlera and Lohmann (2018) ACC	Subha and Archana (2013)	Wiredja et al. (2015)	Farahani and Törmä (2010)	Kratudnak and Tippayawong (2018)	Bezerra and Gomes (2015)	Bezerra and Gomes (2016)
<i>Reliability</i>									
Check-in process efficiency		X			X	X	X	X	X
Flight punctuality	X	X							
Complaints handling		X				X			
Service performance				X					
Boarding efficiency					X				
<i>Tangibility/Availability</i>									
Cleanliness of the airport	X				X	X	X	X	X
Availability of washrooms					X		X	X	X
Availability and variety of shops	X				X	X	X	X	X
Employees' attire		X		X		X		X	X
Up-to-date technology		X		X	X	X			
Lounge seating area			X		X		X	X	X
Airport is visually appealing				X		X			
Availability of ATM					X		X	X	X

Availability of information desks, Wi-Fi				X				
Availability of information on city		X			X			
Mobility within Airport				X	X		X	
Parking space, Air condition	X							
<i>Empathy</i>								
Transportation to airport	X							
Care paid to luggage	X							
Individualized attention		X		X		X		
<i>Responsiveness</i>								
Willingness to help		X		X				
Check-in waiting time			X	X	X	X	X	X
Immigration waiting time			X	X	X			
Baggage delivery time			X	X	X			
Security checkpoint waiting time						X	X	X
<i>Assurance</i>								
Employees' knowledge/skill		X		X		X		
Employees courtesy		X		X	X	X	X	X
Confidence/trust/kindness of employees		X		X				
<i>Security</i>								
Secured baggage		X		X				
Individual security		X	X	X		X	X	X
<i>Communication</i>								
Flight information display screens			X			X	X	X
Signage and wayfinding			X			X	X	X
Clear & up-to-date information		X		X				

Table 1: Airport Service Quality Measurements

A SERVQUAL model proposed that, irrespective of the nature of assistance, the experience of customers can be assessed by five separate constructs: responsiveness, durability, assurance, empathy, and tangible (Parasuraman, et al., 1988).

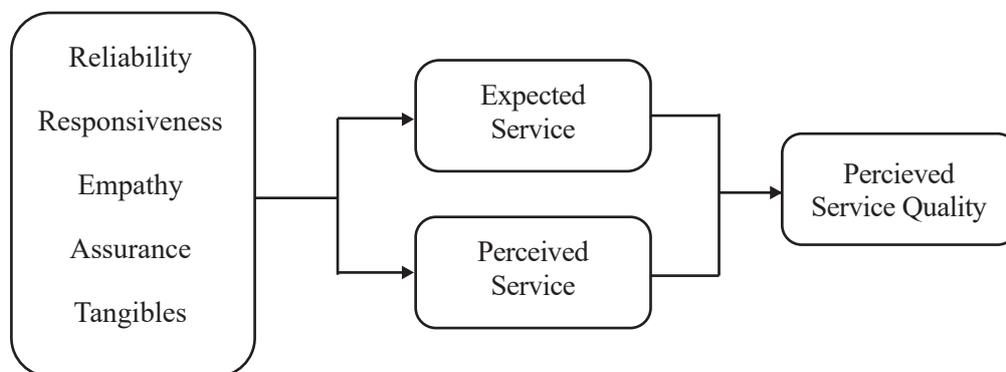


Figure 1: SERVQUAL model

Other research reasoned about SERVQUAL being general and predominantly not encompassing all aspects of passenger transport at airports. Using the Rash modelling, which involves service, service, signage, and illustration where Service includes a mix of duration of wait and the service aspect itself, while the service landscape includes reliability, social causes, noise, and the atmosphere at the airport (Pantouvakis & Renzi, 2016). Finally, certain scholars used facilities, defense, environment, tangibles, staff, and private involvement in a part of their airport passenger experience report. They emphasized that standardized service quality metrics do not extend to the airport industry because of its simplistic methodology and that various considerations, such as check-in, protection, comfort, ambience, essential services, mobility, and price, should be weighed (AncorSuárez-Alemán & Luis-Jiménez, 2016).

### 4.3 Evaluation of Data

As mentioned in the previous literature there are three critical steps to the methodology used in this study; construct/survey design, collection, and analysis of data. The phase consisting that of analysis of data includes authentication of measurements, CFA & SEM modelling.

#### 4.3.1 Survey

As can be seen from Table I, to measure the latent constructs, researchers used distinct observed variables. This becomes mainly due to the number of countries, airports' potential and geography, management strategies, and travelers' backgrounds and desires. The authors gathered preliminary data in this paper that helped define the areas of concern for DXB Terminal 3 travelers. Management interviews, online feedback, and query surveys are the origins of this preliminary data. In Table II, a description of the critical areas of interest to travelers is given.

Interviews	Online reviews	One-question survey
Communication challenges with wide range of languages Check-in delays due to language barriers Signage are written in Arabic and English only	Facilities availability like seating, restaurants and bathrooms Walking distance throughout the terminal Staff behavior	97% are satisfied, reported no issues Areas of improvement are check-in waiting time, check-in process efficiency, and long walking distances from check-in to boarding gates

Table 2: Preliminary Data Collection

Online feedback from the SkyTrax website (SKYTRAX, 2018) and the Emirates Skywards system for travelers who landed or exited or were en-route from April 2017 to April 2018 was also reviewed. Although most of these reviews were found to be positive in nature, there were passengers who indicated that changes were required. Although most of these reviews were positive, few passengers indicated that changes were required. Also, a focused questionnaire with only one query asked passengers in February 2018, to select what would perceive to be an aspect of enhancement from a range of several airport locations.

Based on the above preliminary data collection and literature review, a survey of five factors addressing the critical aspects of their experience for passengers, namely: check-in, terminal, airport-wide mobility, and a building that addresses employee assurance and empathy, and safety. Every other model is supported in the defined survey by measured factors affecting / parameters translated into the questionnaire. As this study explains, because it is a complex concept without a single model that suits everyone, ASQ dimensions vary at different airports (Awad, et al., 2019). Nonetheless, the selected systems are comparable to other domestic and multilateral studies. To gain data on survey questions from respondents, a five-point Likert scale is used to (strongly oppose, oppose, neutral, accept, strongly agree).

#### 4.3.2 Data Collection

Over four separate instances (Aug16, Sep 25, Oct 28 of 2018 and Mar 13 of 2019), the analysis got tested and launched. This self-administered survey was performed right before boarding at DXB 's departure boarding gates. Passengers were approached whether they would like to reply to the structured questionnaire and, if they accepted, were required to answer in a printed version of the survey.

Around 80% of travelers decided to fill out the survey which was only in two languages (English & Arabic) which was believed to be a drawback to the study's authenticity. Two hundred seventy-five passengers in total participated to this study. Though, because they were partially filled out, 20 of these filled-in surveys were omitted.

Table III lists the portfolios of respondents. 41.7 percent were females in particular, and the remainder were males. Over two third of the respondents were observed to be below the travelling age of 40 years. From a background perspective, the majority were origins of Middle East (ME) (34.5%) or Asia (36.5%).

Characteristic	Frequency	%	Characteristic	Frequency	%
<i>Gender</i>			<i>Purpose of travel</i>		
Male	147	58.3	Visit family and friends	84	32.9
Female	105	41.7	Tourism	90	35.3
			Business	77	30.2
			Medical treatment	2	0.78
			Other	3	1.2
<i>Age</i>			<i>Traveling</i>		
18–30	103	40.3	Alone	131	51.3
31–40	86	33.7	Group	28	11.1
41–50	22	8.6	Family	97	37.6
51–60	32	12.5	No kids	64	25
60+	12	4.7	1 kid	11	4.2
			2 kids	14	5.6
			3 kids	4	1.4
			4 kids	4	1.4
<i>Nationality</i>					
Asia	93	36.5			
Africa	15	5.9			
Australia	9	3.5			
Europe	29	11.4			
Middle East	88	34.5			
N. America	15	5.9			
S. America	6	2.3			

Table 3: Survey Respondent's Portfolio

Nonetheless, about 30 percent of those filled up were from other nationalities. There seem to be three primary reasons for traveling: wanting to visit relatives and friends, business, and leisure. More than half of passengers make the journey solo, while 37.6% travel with families & 25% do not have any kids. The ethnicity of the participants and the differences in their cultures, in general, allow them to appear on DXB ASQ.

### 4.3.3 Data Analysis

The questionnaire is examined using structural equation modeling of partial least squares suitable for multivariate data with supposed mediation relations. The rule of mediation between structures and reactions to experience is assumed to be determined by nationality and intention to visit.

Table IV recaps the crucial reliability coefficients statistics of the analysis, including the constant correlation coefficient with the total indicators identified within the same construct, the average variance extracted (AVE), CR, and Cronbach alpha. In comparison to the amount of conflict due to the measurement error, AVE calculates the amount of variance that is captured by the construct. It is considered appropriate to have an AVE value of 0.5 or above. Except for the versatility construct, all constructs demonstrate reasonable AVE meaning.

Those variables found to be having low Spearman correlation within the build have been excluded. For example, CHK4 fails to correlate with CHK1–CHK3 variable due to the Spearman being close to 0 when compared to others. The Cronbach reliability coefficient alpha for the construct will be reduced from 0.86 to 0.73, including the CHK4 portion of the CHK construct. This being the reason, CHK4 was excluded and not included henceforth in any study. AVL4 also fails to correlate with AVL1–AVL3 and is also withdrawn. Generally, observational indicators CHK4 and AVL4 being omitted from upcoming conversations, the survey findings are accurate and reliable.

### 4.3.3.2 CFA Analysis

The loads for each build in the CFA will be restricted by its observational indicators and checked by fit tests. As captured in the Table IV the structured loadings for the relevant p-value indicators are shown. Meanwhile, we have to also consider the CFA model showed substantial probabilities between certain concepts, as emphasized in Table V. The structure of availability did not comply with any other constructs.

Construct	Correlation with total	Cronbach's $\alpha$	CR	AVE	CFA parameter estimate (p-value)
<i>Check-in (CHK)</i>		0.866 <sup>a</sup>	0.874	0.701	
CHK1: Check-in process efficiency	0.826				0.903 (0.000)
CHK2: Waiting time at check-in	0.771				0.905 (0.000)
CHK3: Willingness of check-in employees to help	0.644				0.683 (0.000)
CHK4: Availability of online and kiosks to check-in	-0.03				
<i>Terminal (TERM)</i>		0.898	0.886	0.667	
TERM1: Individual security	0.68				0.623 (0.000)
TERM2: Luggage and belonging security	0.809				0.746 (0.000)
TERM3: Cleanliness of terminal	0.812				0.948 (0.000)
TERM4: Willingness of terminal employee to help	0.792				0.908 (0.000)
<i>Assurance and empathy of employees (A&amp;E)</i>		0.789	0.784	0.482	
A&E1: Knowledge and courtesy	0.600				0.778 (0.000)
A&E2: Employees are trustworthy	0.581				0.640 (0.000)
A&E3: Individualized attention	0.661				0.783 (0.000)
A&E4: Care paid to luggage	0.544				0.548 (0.000)
<i>Availability (AVL)</i>		0.709	0.741	0.508	
AVL1: Availability of washrooms	0.473				0.746 (0.000)
AVL2: Availability of parking	0.528				0.893 (0.000)
AVL3: Seating availability	0.306				0.414 (0.000)
AVL4: Availability and variety of restaurants	-0.102				
<i>Mobility (MOB)</i>		0.612	0.450	0.214	
MOB1: Walking distance to gates	0.527				0.466 (0.000)
MOB2: Clarity of signs and wayfinding	0.553				0.451 (0.000)
MOB3: Keeping passenger updated with information	0.242				0.471 (0.000)

**Note:** <sup>a</sup>Cronbach coefficient  $\alpha$  after removing insignificant variables (CHK4)

Table 4: Survey Measurement Validation

CHK	TERM	AVL	A&E	MOB
CHK	0.459 < 0.0001	0	0.568 < 0.0001	0.669 < 0.0001
TERM		0	0.764 < 0.0001	0.715 < 0.0001
AVL			0	0
A&E				1.18 < 0.0001

Table 5: Covariance among constructs

However, there is a strong indication that the connection between check-in, terminal, assurance, and empathy, and mobility is high. Both of these four structures include an interaction between travelers and air personnel. To meet their needs, a correct and polite response from employees to travelers' inquiries is essential. There is evidence that, based on the covariance table shown in Table V, the second hypothesis is accurate. In the case of terminal check-in, reassurance and empathy, and versatility, it is apparent.

Finally, reassurance and sympathy for mobility. The partnership with airport employees is essential in this entire construction. The employee's ability to connect efficiently and fulfill their needs is vital.

#### 4.3.3.3 Effect of nationality and purpose of travel

The effect of nationality and purpose of travel on satisfaction and impression was investigated by performing a Kruskal-Wallis (K-W) test to compare medians. There is evidence of a difference in comfort and perception in the K-W test for nationality differences between travelers. Pairwise analysis of medians between nationalities shows that the Middle Eastern and Asian are the only nationalities that are substantially different.

The happiness and impression of the Middle East is at least 1 higher than that of Asian tourists. A Mann-Whitney test demonstrates clear proof of a satisfaction discrepancy and a mild proof of impression. About the aim of traveling, the K-W does not produce any proof of a disparity in the satisfaction or impression of the visit's purpose. Finally, a correlation study shows no critical correlation between the degree of happiness and the number of children traveling with the family.

Many agreed that such classes, particularly the elderly, families with small children, and inexperienced travelers, faced additional difficulties in being processed. It appeared to be determined that these airport passengers just would not fit into the regular networks. Participants expected that the airport would have to speed up these classes so that others could easily follow their necessary procedures.

#### 4.3.3.4 SEM modeling

This method examines influence of predictor variables, taking their correlation into account. In order to take into consideration of the parsimonious model, irrelevant variables were omitted during the modeling process. The findings (fig.2) show that check-in is driven by endogenous latent variable experience and confirmation and empathy constructs only.

The research suggests that the majority of uncertainty is explained by the perception in the construction of perception. The combined impact of Check-in on Expectation and Fulfillment and the overall impact of Assurance and Empathy Build on Impression and Satisfaction. Although the results show that both constructs have a significant effect, Check-in shows a more significant impact on impression and satisfaction than Validation and Empathy.

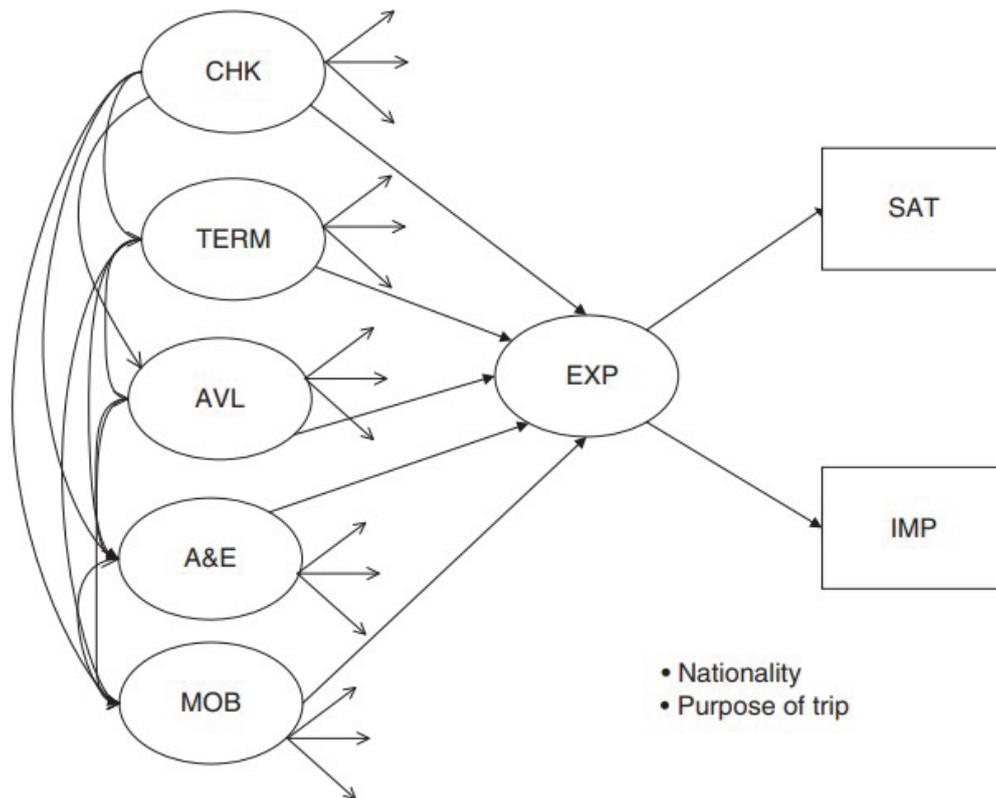


Figure 2: DXB travelers Experience SEM Model

#### 4.4 Discussions of the finding

In this case-research study, the researcher examined the crucial factors leading to Dubai International T3 passengers' travel knowledge. To be precise, those elements associated to the phase of check-in, terminal facilities, movement from check-in area to the gate (mobility), readiness of facilities, employee assurance and empathy, and interaction. In particular, researchers have constructed a theoretical model that describes the influence of check-in, assurance, and empathy, and availability on traveler satisfaction and impression. CFA models indicate that travelers' satisfaction is primarily influenced by check-in, confirmation and empathy, and almost equal contribution availability. Surprisingly, the model did not recognize mobility as a substantial provider to fulfillment or impression. It may be due to the close association between the three essential constructs and mobility. Travelers communicate with airport or service staff when traveling from the terminal to the concourse and use the available services and facilities. Providing multiple facilities along the travel route was a strategic move adopted by airport management to improve travelers' experience.

The perception is primarily motivated by check-in, accompanied by employee guarantee and empathy. In the satisfaction and not in appearance, the effect of availability is noticeable. The suggested framework emphasizes the importance of ethnicity mediation between satisfaction and impression. In contrast, satisfaction and appearance are clarified on the one hand and travelers' impression on the other.

Results also show statistical proof of disparities between the Middle East and Asia, where DXB is more pleased with the Middle East and has a more optimistic view than Asia. Communication networks with travelers may be attributed to this. All signboards and information boards are posted in Arabic, the native language of ME, and English. The main languages in Asia are Urdu, Hindi, and Chinese. Also, most staff, especially at check-in and immigration, speak both Arabic and English. This result is consistent with studies

(Pantouvakis & Renzi, 2016), who studied the perception of satisfaction and dissatisfaction of travelers at an Italian airport according to their nationalities. There has been a suggested significant statistical disparity amongst English and Italian travelers. Because of its essential role in shaping overall experience, these results warrant a detailed and comprehensive overview of airport service requirements dependent on ethnic background/language.

Likewise, the suggested model suggests that the trip's target does not have any fulfillment or understanding of the effect of moderation. This result is in line with the study, which, due to the ride's encouragement, showed no significant difference in the perception of travelers. However, it is not consistent with a study in which it was reported that individuals who travel for work generally appreciate time than those who travel for leisure (AncorSuárez-Alemán & Luis-Jiménez, 2016).

It is essential to realize that the CFA model disclosed a strong covariance among all the constructs except for availability. A common factor in all of these structures, unlike availability, is the contribution of the human element and the elegance of architecture and layout. Lastly, there is a strong relationship between satisfaction and perception. This is in line with literature indicating that offering a quality of service; it increases the perceived value (Parasuraman, et al., 1988).

The CFA and SEM models emphasize the importance of investing in improving check-in efficiency and the vital law of employees' competence and authority in ensuring excellent traveler services. Based on further analysis of check-in staff, it was found that luggage and visas were the most recurring check-in process problems. As a result, travelers with a visa issue or an excess luggage weight/dimension slow down and build longer waiting times.

## CONCLUSION

This research used an interpretive approach to explain airport passenger service phenomena, culminating in their preference of airport as their favorite transition point along their journey. As such, it aims to draw on the idea that it is possible to understand the viewpoint of anyone traveling through an airport, such as Dubai International.

UNWTO forecasts that foreign travel will increase by 3 % to 4% by 2020 and by 3.3% annually by 2030 (Pololikashvili, 2020). A description of the results is given in this final chapter, and the contribution to the information that this research has made is addressed. Any research has drawbacks, and they are known before providing proposals for use in managing the airport in the study.

The sense of being physically anywhere is where the real world and the person come together. They are both empirical and emotional, both in the world and in the individual (Larson & Urry, 2011).

Could this be what airports are to be passengers and the airport experience is to be passengers?

This research used phenomenological methods and applied them to an environment that many people are very acquainted with and thus tried to uncover some of the implications that, although unstated, impact how airport customers interact with the physical environment, procedures, and other space uses.

It would be possible to represent an increasingly diverse and demanding cultural community more profitably in a secure setting by having a better understanding of these effects on the customer's behavior and the approach to the airport environment. An open mind and relying on what is already known from the researchers' knowledge were involved in studying and analyzing the phenomenon of people's airport experience.

In 2009, Alain de Botton was invited to spend a week capturing people's experiences at London Heathrow

Airport using Terminal 5 & he defended his decision saying that the terminal appeared to be a worthy and fascinating haven of elegance and reason in a world full of mystery and irregularity. If one has been asked to take a Martian to visit a single place that easily captures the spectrum of themes that flow through our society, from our faith in technology to our destruction of nature, from our interconnectedness to our travel idolization, then it will have to be the departure and arrival halls that one will go (Botton, 2009).

## 5.2 Research Objectives

This research began with three primary objectives:

- i. How to identify customer experience choices and factors at an airport?
- ii. What factors influence a passenger's choice of an airport as their transfer point?
- iii. How can an airport inspire a new age of aviation, across all demographics to be perceived as a travel destination?

The research was focused on a systematic literature analysis in the hospitality, regional, and academic tourism sectors, supplemented by a case study approach with an already published research that included organized interviews and surveys with airport clients and other airport operators. The interpretive approach was used to perform the research journal cyclically and iteratively.

## 5.3 Evaluation of Research Objectives achieved

S/N	Original Research Objectives Set	Research Objectives Met
1	How to identify customer experience choices and factors at an airport?	The case study approach established setting expectations and guidelines by prioritizing customer service in airport business plans to ensure that the customers are always considered in any airport decision
2	What factors influence a passenger's choice of an airport as their transfer point?	This research shows that there are a variety of main variables. They included: 1. Physical setting and services are given to the airport 2. The procedures and deliveries of the airport 3. Citizens at the airport; employees and customers at the airport 4. The sense of place generated by the synthesis of all of the above. 5. Personal attitude on the part of airport customers
3	How can an airport inspire a new age of aviation, across all demographics to be perceived as a travel destination?	Research showcases how Dubai International is focusing on elements of 1.Passenger segmentation 2.Investment in Technological Development 3.Investment in Process Improvement

## ***5.4 Contribution of the Study***

Knowledge growth is the primary focus of research. This study has led to a better understanding of how humans communicate with and react to the built world (Caelli, et al., 2003). More precisely, it explored the intimate and emotional nature of flying through the International Airport Terminal. It is essential to understand how people respond to shared spaces, primarily through increasingly commercial ways of managing travelers' arrival and departures to a country's territory. Suppose the transition of individuals to and from a nation can be a pleasurable and hospitable experience.

Dubai International is good at what they do, and this can be seen with over 33 awards it has won till date. From being awarded for

1. Airport Duty-Free Operator of the year, 1985 to
2. Best Airport for Overall Passenger Satisfaction at the IATA Global Airport Monitor in 2004 to
3. Favorite Airport for Layovers in 2015 to
4. Best Airport Middle East in 2019 to bag the most recent
5. Best Airport Digital & Social Media Award at the 2020 Travel Retail Awards.

Dubai International Airport has long been established as the biggest airport in the Middle East and is now regarded as one of the best in the world. It was the mission to be acknowledged as such, and this recognition is a reaffirmation of efforts to provide our clients with the best quality of service and facilities. Its goal is to offer full customer loyalty and awards to consumers, making it much more critical (Maktoum, 2020).

All the above categories of achievements demonstrate that the concerns of size, protection, cleanliness, leisure facilities, dining and personnel are all part of the overall ranking.

For the sixth year, Dubai International Airport has been recognized as the world's busiest airport for international travelers. The airport, headquarters to long-haul Emirates, had 86.4 million passengers in 2019, 6 million more than London's London-based Heathrow Airport. According to the current list of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) on the ten most dynamic and appealing airports in the world, Dubai International Airport, DXB, placed third in the rankings of Atlanta and Beijing airports. The World Tourism Organization has listed ten most diverse and crowded airports with excellent facilities and services as aesthetic destinations, and Dubai airport has been recognized as the largest of its kind in the world in the provision of duty-free shopping areas. One can stay at DXB for four days without leaving one's premises.

In terms of growth, Dubai has shown few decline signs, and GDP and airport growth are inextricably related. In the economic growth of the state itself, DXB naturally plays an important role, with 97 percent of all UAE tourists arriving by air and Dubai being the main port of call in this respect. Dubai is looking forward to the next decade or so. Over the last few decades, growth has been exponential in airports and aviation. As we continue to bear witness to the democratization of air travel worldwide, records are continuously broken every year.

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