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Consumer Behavior while Choosing Air Travel in India

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Abstract: ***The domestic airline industry of India has been witnessing an enormous transformation over the period. Different class of people can avail this service due to modern specifications, affordability rates, ease of reachability, frequency of flights, quality of service, etc. The recent studies depict that the number of customers opting for domestic air travel has a steep increase when compared to the past numbers. This has been possible due to increase in connectivity of different areas and reducing the flight fares to increase the accessibility and reachability for the customers. Reducing fares and increasing connectivity does not only help the customers but it has also helped a lot to contribute to the business of airlines to a very large extent. This research mainly focuses on the consumer behavior while choosing different airlines. There are multiple factors which affect while choosing the appropriate flight company for travelling. There are different class of customers and accordingly the airline companies need to match their preferences. Some consumers want affordable rates whereas some customers want better quality o service. This research will basically give an idea which factors pertain the most while choosing the perfect flight for domestic travel within India.***

Keywords: Quality Service, IndiGo, SpiceJet, Go Air, Air Asia, Vistara, Air India, Statista, Holidify

I. INTRODUCTION

The airline sector of India is seeming to have a terrific and booming transformations likely: advancement in technology better quality service, advancement in case of data handling, better communication services, better information handling processes and most importantly the ease of accessibility and online ticket booking system.

The major credit behind the success of this industry is for understanding the consumers' needs and providing services accordingly [1]. Rapid decision making and market analysis algorithms are carried out to understand the needs of the customers in a very effective manner and then to provide such services accordingly. The ease of availability of flights within different areas was a major issue earlier. These limitations have been reduced to a very far extent by increasing the number of flights and accessing those less-visited areas so that customers of all need can actually avail this service in a very effective manner.

There are a varied set of customers according to different age groups which have different preferences while choosing any flight. The airline companies need to adhere to these preferences of varied customers to stay in business and help provide these customers the best experience ever. There are many leading airline brand or companies in India which have a big competition within themselves. This research paper mainly will depict the different factors which carry the most value while choosing the appropriate airline and the leading airline companies in India which are providing different benefits to the customers as per there need. This research mainly involves around Primary research and Secondary research. Various conclusions are drawn from the primary research according to which the secondary research will be carried out to check the collinearity between the different methods of research.

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In case of Primary Research, survey was carried out with the help of forms including all closed ended questions. The questions mainly included: Age band of varied customers, frequency of travel of the customers within a year, add-in services included or not, type of flights preferred, factors which matters the most while choosing an airline, the purpose of travel in major cases, the preferred brand of airline chosen the most and the airline which provides the best quality of service. The primary data was collected from varied customers of different age groups across the country of India. The questions asked to these different customers were all close ended questions to generate an accurate set of data. The sample size considered for this research was 128 different responses from individuals of varied age bands. The data collected was sufficient to draw different conclusions about the preferences of customers while choosing a particular airline and to generate the hypothesis about which airline is dominating the aviation sector in different areas. The secondary data is collected from most visited and popular websites to prove the hypothesis and determine whether the inferences or hypothesis generated from primary data research is colinear with the secondary data research. The secondary data is taken from trusted and known websites such as Statista and Holidify.

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III. PRIMARY RESEARCH

Primary Research is basically done over the collected sample size of 128 responses. These responses were collected through survey procedure wherein different customers had their individual preferences while choosing an appropriate airline. The primary research revolves around different objectives, according to which different hypothesis are to be generated purely over the data received. The table of data consists of 11 columns which help in determining the consumer choosing behavior while choosing any airline. This table has a total of 128 responses which is mainly considered as the sample size of this primary research.
A total of 3 objectives are considered for this research to generate different hypothesis over the data collected. These 3 objects will have different data combinations and accordingly the analysis over the data will be done to draw hypothesis which would be then compared with the secondary data research to check the collinearity between these two research.

1) Objective 1: Which parameter affects the most while choosing a flight for different age groups?
Different set of customers will have different set of parameters according to which they will be choosing an appropriate airline. This objective basically deals with the understanding of consumer behavior of different age groups of different individuals to know their preference while choosing an airline. With total of 128 responses a graph was generated in order to study the behavior of consumers of different age groups.

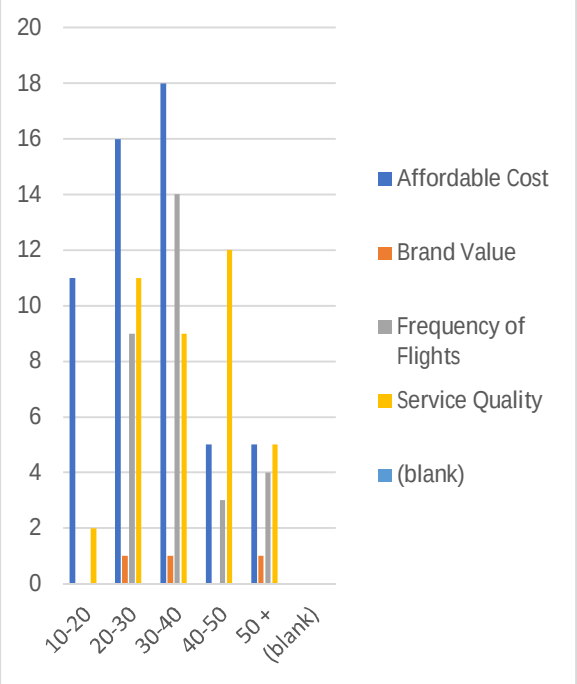


Fig 1

The above graph has specifications such as the X-axis depicts the age bands or customers of different age groups. The Y-axis depicts the maximum frequency which the customers have selected to be the major parameter while choosing an appropriate airplane. A total of 128 responses of different individuals of different age groups are recorded in this graph.
The major inference or hypothesis which can be carried out from this graph is that the age group between 10 – 40 have a preference of choosing those flights which are more affordable. This age group mainly consists of those individuals who are working extensively or belong to the student group wherein the affordability rates matter more than that of the other parameters while choosing an appropriate flight. The age group of 40 and prefer better service quality than that of affordability rates. These age group are comprised of working-class people to business class people to retired individual as well. The inferences from this data create the hypothesis that as the age increases the preference of service quality increases subsequently while choosing a particular flight. The parameter of frequency of flights or mainly the accessibility and reachability between different areas of country is continued to be of a great need across all the age groups.

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2) Objective 2: Which brand of airline is more successful in case of providing better quality of service to the customers?

The parameter of service quality matters a lot when it come to the set of customers for whom quality matters the most. There are various business class people who prefer to travel in a qualitative manner than that of opting for affordable rates. The primary research has a total of 128 responses from different set of customers wherein they have rated different flight companies with different rating in terms of quality of service.

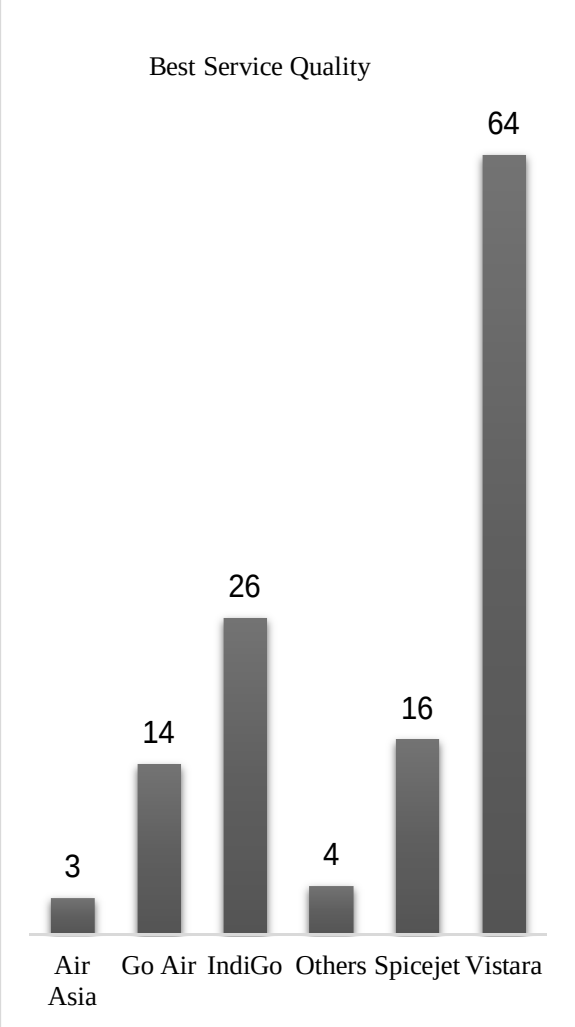


Fig. 2

The above graph has the specifications such as the X-axis represent the different companies of flights available to the customers to choose from namely: Air Asia, Go Air, IndiGo, SpiceJet, Air India, Vistara, Others. The Y-axis represents the different set of responses received from the customers. The sample size considered for the primary research is 128 and hence there are a total of 128 responses.

From the data analyzed it is quite clear that the Vistara airlines are leading the charts when it comes to providing best quality of service. Vistara airlines provide easy of check-in and check-out services to the customers along with magnificent quality of services provided to the customers. The customers have given high rating to Vistara for providing delicious and fresh food during their flying journey. The add-ins selected by the customers such as priority check-in and specific seat preferences are allocated quite perfectly by the Vistara airlines. When it comes to Business related travel, Vistara airlines is one of the most preferred airlines for this collected sample data. Most of the people of age 40 and above opt for quality service as compared to affordable rates and hence Vistara airlines is a very common airline selected by the customers o this age band. The business class and corporate class customers also have a trend of selected service quality over affordable rates and hence in all the aspects the Vistara airlines leads the charts when it comes to providing the best quality of service.

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3) Objective 3: Which brand of airline have affordable rates and have the maximum frequency of flights?

Most of the customers choosing any airline brand will have the major parameter to check whether the flights are affordable or not. Affordability criteria is a major parameter while checking airline because there are all set of customers who opt for airline service in India. Another important factor while choosing any flight is the frequency and accessibility of those flights. The flights should be easily accessible to many places of the country and at the same time the frequency of those flights should also be up to satisfactory levels. There are many instances wherein travelers opt for a round trip within the same day and in such cases enough frequency of flights is really important to satisfy the customer's needs.

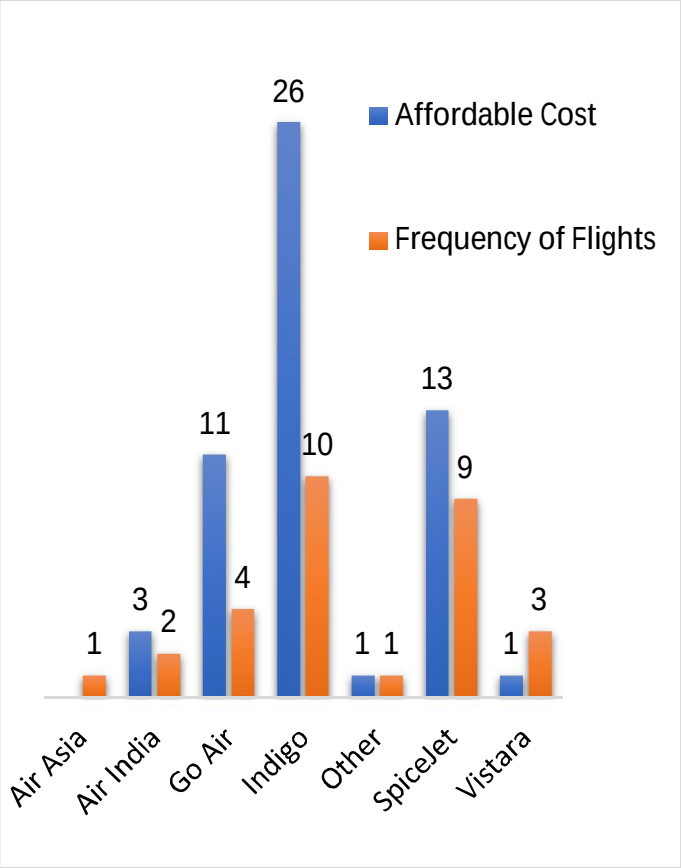


Fig.3

The above graph has the specifications such that the X-axis represents the different flight brands namely: Air Asia, Air India, Go Air, IndiGo, Others, SpiceJet, Vistara. The Y-axis mainly represents the different responses of customers from the primary dataset wherein customers who have chosen the main factors such as affordability of rates and frequency of flights as important parameters. The responses re filtered out to display mainly the affordability rates and frequency of flights for given airlines.

From the data, the hypothesis can be easily generated that the most affordable rates in case of air travel in India is provided by IndiGo airlines. IndiGo airlines have proven to be leading the charts at almost every table where the main factor of affordability comes into consideration. The cheaper and moderate quality of service provided by IndiGo is a major preference by lot of customers. The IndiGo airlines also leads the charts when it comes to providing the maximum frequency of flights within various destinations. indigo has the highest number of running flights in India. The easy reachability and accessibility between different areas with high frequency of flights makes IndiGo one of the best and most opted airline in India. The young age group mainly from 10-40 years age prefer IndiGo airlines the most due to affordable rates and ease of reachability. There are different set of customers who book round trip tickets mainly because of business related purpose and in such cases frequency of flights need to be maximum. The important cities in India should have a high frequency of flights running between these cities at regular intervals of time to satisfy the customer requirements.

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IV. SECONDARY RESEARCH

The secondary research is carried out by different surveys already carried by different websites. This secondary research is carried to check the hypothesis generated by the primary research is in collinearity with the secondary research. There were two different data collected for secondary research. The first data is taken from the Statista website [2] wherein different market shares domestic airlines are given to analyze the leading airline brand. The second data collected for secondary data is determined mainly for different airlines showing different qualities such as affordability criteria, service quality, etc.

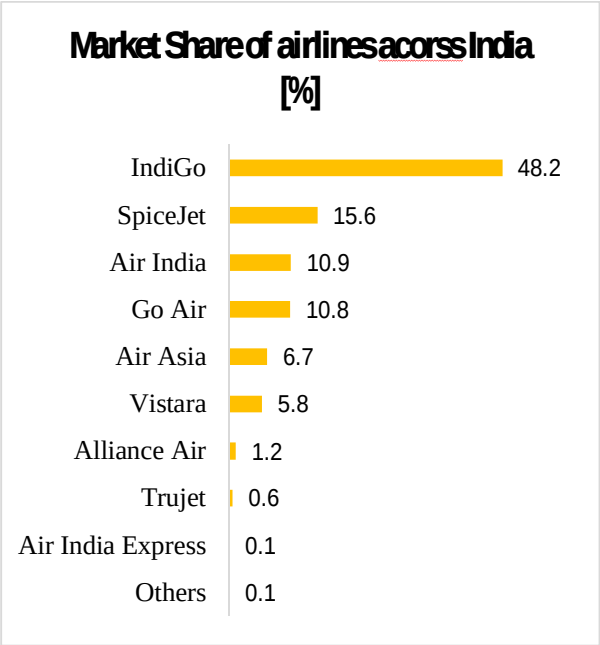


Fig.4

This figure shows that the maximum market share of airlines across India in the recent year. The chart clearly states that IndiGo leads the charts in case of maximum market share in domestic airlines. IndiGo airlines are leading the charts because of better affordability rates and better frequency of flights makes this the most chosen flight in India. Also, as per the primary data the results were matching that when it comes to affordable rates and frequent flights IndiGo was leading the charts.

RANKING	AIRLINE	AFFORDABILITY	SERVICE
1	VISTARA	MODERATE	BEST
2	INDIGO	LOW	MODERATE
3	AIR INDIA	HIGH	BEST
4	SPICEJET	LOW	MODERATE
5	GO AIR	LOW	MODERATE
6	AIR ASIA	LOW	MODERATE
7	AIR INDIA EXPRESS	LOW	MODERATE

Fig.5

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This table depicts the different airlines wit different affordability and quality of services. This table depicts that Vistara flights is rated the maximum for quality of service. Holidify website [3] states that Vistara leads the quality of service. Vistara flights is opted the most by the age band 40 and above. These age group choose the most for service quality than that of affordability. Also, IndiGo airlines leads the charts when it comes to providing the most affordable rates and having the most frequent number of flights between different destinations. IndiGo is the most opted airline by Indian customers.

V. HYPOTHESIS TESTING

The results generated from primary research depicts that IndiGo airlines leads the charts when it comes to affordable rates and more frequency of flights and opted by maximum customers in the sample size. The sample size is of 128 customers. The variance of the population size when considered with this sample size for considering the parameters which affect the most while choosing the best flight. The variance calculated for this 128-sample data is 474.25. When the variance of secondary data is calculated on the parameters when choosing the appropriate flight, is calculated as 396. As per the variance obtained by these two data it is quite similar. This shows that the hypothesis obtained from these two data are highly colinear.

VI. CONCLUSION

As per the data received from both the primary and secondary research it is quite observant that IndiGo airlines is the most preferred when it comes to affordable rates and having the highest frequency of airlines. When it comes to providing the best quality of services Vistara airlines leads the charts. The different age groups have different preferences, and the data concludes it as well.

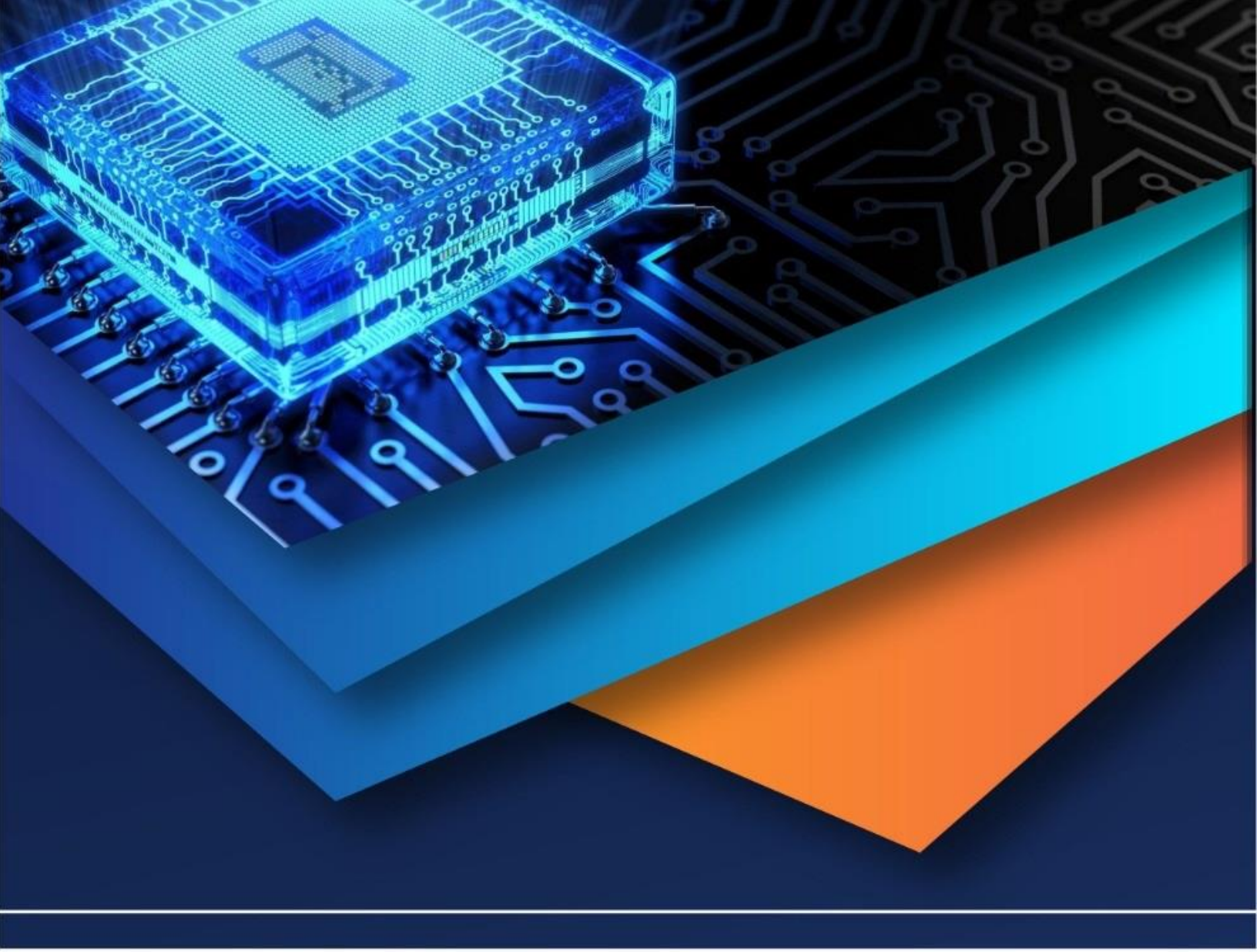
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