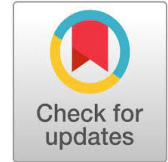




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# Impact of SERQUAL Model on the Customer Citizenship Behavior in the Airline Services Companies of Pakistan: Mediating Role of Behavioral Intention

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## ABSTRACT

The study was carried out to explore the Impact of SERQUAL Model on the Customer Citizenship Behavior (CCB) in the Airline Services Companies of Pakistan with mediating role of Behavioral Intention (BI). The data was collected from frequently users of the sample airlines. The data of these frequent users were collected from the travel agents. These frequent users were approach and then after taking consent, paid visit for the data collection. A questionnaire was the main tool used in the current study to collect data. There was 27-item question sheet. The researcher emailed the airline's concerned HR division to make contact. The list of frequent and devoted airline customers, along with their email addresses and phone numbers, was obtained from them. The findings of reliability statistics showed that the variables included in the data collection were found reliable. The results of correlation test showed that reliability, responsiveness, tangibility, assurance, empathy and BI are having positive and significant correlation with CCB. The findings of regression model showed that reliability, responsiveness, tangibility, assurance and empathy have significant impact on the CCB. Reliability, responsiveness, tangibility, assurance and empathy have significant impact on the BI. BI showed significant effect CCB. The findings of mediating analysis showed that BI are having significant mediating role between reliability, responsiveness, tangibility, assurance and empathy and CCB.

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## INTRODUCTION

Due to the swift transformations in business sectors, the behavior, expectations, and demands of consumers are also progressively evolving. The airline firms, although implementing these modifications, also neglected to prioritize the demands and requirements of their passengers (Ali et al., 2021). Aviation firms prioritize

client demands and desires, primarily emphasizing cost efficiency to ensure effective operations. In 1955, Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) was established, and it remains the only airline in Pakistan. The Pakistan Civil Aviation Authority (PCAA) was established to oversee aviation-related operations in Pakistan. It has also served as a regulatory entity responsible for overseeing the operations of the airline. During its early stages, this regulatory power encountered significant opposition from the PIA (Kraisat et al., 2017).

In the early 1990s, the Pakistani government implemented the open skies aviation policy and entered into Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) with several countries beyond the area. The actions were successfully executed within a brief timeframe. PIA faced competition from other airlines in the region (Farooq et al., 2018). Carriers such as Fly Emirates and British Airlines are engaged in

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competition with Pakistan International Airlines (Jahmani, 2017). These airlines are regarded as the top airlines globally due to their exceptional service quality. Passengers on PIA (Azhar, 2020) have low confidence. In order to identify and analyze this lack of confidence, the services and marketing managers began paying close attention to the consumers' wants and actions (Raza, 2020).

Amidst intense competition, researchers are prioritizing their survival in the market, a goal that may be effectively accomplished through exceptional customer service (Liao et al., 2022). It is important to note that customer behavior is the primary focus of service domination. The standard deviation logic incorporates passengers as an essential component in the process of service creation (Luseh & Vargo, 2021). Consumers proposed a range of support activities, such as providing help, promoting their brand, tolerating uncomfortable situations, and giving feedback to improve their brand (Khudhair et al, 2019). Pakistan has experienced a notable transition in its customer base, with a move from primarily local passengers to an increasing number of foreign travelers. Furthermore, a study conducted by Raza et al. (2019) revealed that the market shares of local brands had a decline from 57% to 44% between 2010 and 2013. There is a good correlation between the behavioral goals of passengers and their pleasure.

### Problem Statement

The twenty-first century is witnessing a significant increase in the dominance of the services industry. Currently, the most advanced nations are anticipating the future. Individuals in Pakistan, particularly those belonging to the upper class, are considered to require a transformative experience for their own wellbeing and the betterment of their nation. This is because they are adjusting their lives to align with those of Western nations (Gong & Yi, 2021). The government is not prioritizing this issue and allowing its residents to utilize services offered by other nations without much regulation. The expectations of passengers from these airlines, beyond safety, will become evident. While certain clients may have confidence in other aspects of Pakistan Airlines' service quality, they specifically trust in the safety of their flights. Despite the little number of persons associated with it, the clients who are connected to it express concerns about client satisfaction (Hwang & Lyu, 2020). The level of service provided by different airline service providers varies. The variability in the quality of service motivates clients to change providers. Customers evaluate several criteria related to the quality of service, and these elements have an impact on their decision-making process. The present study seeks to examine the impact of these dimensions of service quality on consumer citizenship behavior.

### Research Objectives

- To assess the relationship between reliability, responsiveness, tangibility, assurance, and empathy and Behavioral intention (BI).
- To assess the mediating role of Behavioral intention (BI) between Reliability, responsiveness, tangibility, assurance, empathy and Customer Citizenship Behavior (CCB).

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The definition of service quality provided by Shen et al. (2021) states that it is determined by the disparity between the expected service and the customer's impression of the actual service received. This concept has sparked significant study attention in the field of services marketing. Extensive study has been conducted to provide a conceptual framework and measurement methods for it. Hassan et al. (2021) examined the first notion of service quality by analyzing the discrepancy between customers' service expectations and their ratings of the actual service provided. According to Badrillah et al. (2021), customers can assess the relative excellence of a company's products or services by comparing them to their expectations, which are shaped by past experiences, input from others, and personal recollections. Perceived service quality refers to the characterization of this connection (Rahman et al., 2023).

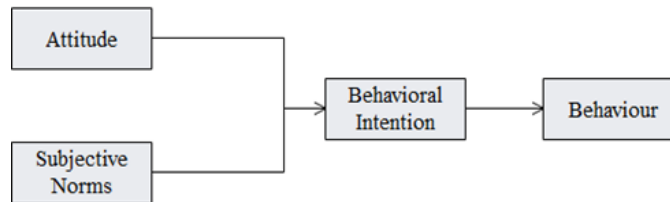
Customer citizenship behavior (CCB) refers to the philanthropic efforts made by customers to aid brands and other consumers, as described by Norouzi & Teimourfavian (2023). Consumers voluntarily engage in citizenship behavior by providing assistance to enterprises and their fellow consumers, even when it is not obligatory (Prentice & Kadan, 2019). Woo (2019) identifies four crucial elements of CCB: good behavior, support, constructive criticism, and acceptance. Customers who actively assist brands and other customers in the provision of services are participating in helpful behavior. Advocacy is comprised of two elements: fostering favorable word-of-mouth and defending the firm against criticism. The marketing literature underscores the significance of the interaction between firms and customers. The company-client interaction enhances the sharing of information and facilitates a shared understanding of expectations (Sharma et al., 2014). In order to cope with the increasingly fierce competition, organizations must establish stronger and enduring relationships with their customers. Businesses have prioritized the management of both consumers and workers as part of their human resources in order to enhance performance.

Hanif et al. (2020) define valued customers as those who consistently contribute significant value to the organization. Engaging in both domestic and international travel has resulted in a diverse range of experiences. Kim (2007) applied the push and pull theory of motivation to determine that local and international visitors had different reasons for picking holiday destinations. Foreign visitors mostly see knowledge and family visits as their primary reasons, whereas local tourists primarily perceive entertainment and leisure as their key incentives. Domestic and international tourists may have different experiences throughout their journeys because of their varying goals (Bonn et al., 2005). This argument is based on the expectation-performance theory (Richard, 1997) and assumes that travel distance can be used as a proxy variable to differentiate between different types of trips, specifically short-haul trips (domestic travel) and long-haul trips (international travel) (Fang and Mckercher, 2008). Long-haul travelers, who go on foreign journeys, often have

higher expectations for the services they receive compared to those on short-haul domestic trips. This is because long-

haul travelers may need to allocate more funds for both the trip itself and any expenses incurred afterwards.

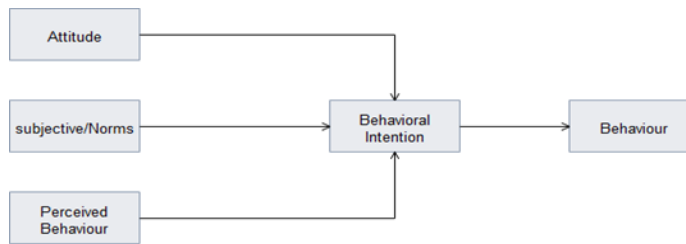
Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA)  
Presented by Fishbein and Ajzen  
(1980)



**Theory of Reasoned Action**

The Theory of Planned conduct (TPB) is a psychology theory that establishes a connection between ideas and conduct. The idea posits that an individual's behavioral intentions are influenced by three core factors: attitude, subjective standards, and perceived behavioral control. Behavioral intention, a fundamental premise of TPB, is the closest predictor of human social behavior. Icek Ajzen created the theory to improve the predictive capacity of

the theory of reasoned action (TRA). The concept of TPB aimed to include the element of perceived behavioral control. Perceived behavior control was excluded from the TRA. The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) has been utilized to examine the connections between behavioral intentions, actual behaviors, and beliefs across several areas of human activity. Advertising, public relations, advertising campaigns, healthcare, sport administration, and sustainability are among the several fields of expertise.

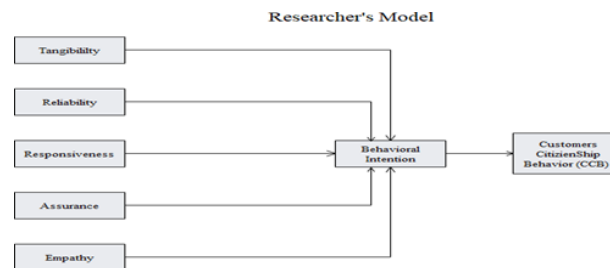


Source: Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) Presented by Ajzen 1991 Modified/ Extended Version of Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA)

**Researchers framework**

The framework is developed based on the idea of planned behavior and SERQUAL Model. The independent variables consist of the dimensions of the SERQUAL model. The SERQUAL paradigm, introduced by Fishbein and Ajzen in 1980, has five distinct dimensions: tangibility,

dependability, assurance, empathy, and responsiveness. Based on the aforementioned theories and the SERQUAL model, the current study proposes a modified version of the Theory of Planned Behavior that aligns with its dynamics. One of the new features of the current study is the incorporation of the SERQUAL model into the Theory of Planned Behavior.



Source: Researcher's Framework

**Hypotheses**

H<sub>1-5</sub>: Reliability, Responsiveness, Tangibility, Assurance & Empathy positively influences the behavioral intention of the customers.

H<sub>6-10</sub>: Behavioral intention mediates the relationship between Reliability, Responsiveness, Tangibility,

Assurance, Empathy and customer citizenship behavior (CCB).

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The research population, also known as the target population, refers to the entire group or set of individuals, objects, or events that possess specific characteristics and

are of interest to the researcher. It represents the larger population from which a sample is drawn. All the frequent users of the airline services constituted the population of the study. Since the nature of the study is such that the actual population of the study cannot be traced as the airline services providers never shares information related to the number of customers. Therefore, the researcher went on for the practices done in the previous research studies. The data were collected from International Air Transport Association (IATA) and all airline services companies (PIA, AIR BLUE, SHAHEEN, EMIRATES etc. and all other head offices of the airlineservices companies.

The convenience-random sampling technique was used in this study and the data collection shall be done from all the frequent users. Since the population size is unknown therefore as per the previous practices the formula  $n = \frac{z^2 \cdot [p \cdot q]}{d^2}$  suggested by Roseco (1975) has been followed. The questionnaire for the current study was adapted from Para Suraman et al., (1988), a very dependable instrument that has been used in many other types of research. The tool will be modified to meet the needs of the current study's equipment. There will be 22-item question sheets. The

items of the behavioral intentions are taken from Venkatesh et al., (2003). While the items for the customer citizenship behavior are taken from Groth (2005) all the items have been modified with the requirements of the current study, in other words we can say that the questionnaire for the study are adapted.

Data collection is the process of gathering and measuring information on variables of interest, in an established systematic fashion that enables one to answer stated research questions, test hypotheses, and evaluate outcomes. Data were collected by the researcher himself. The researcher send email the airline's concerned HR division to make contact. The list of frequent and devoted airline customers, along with their email addresses and phone numbers, can be obtained from them. For the purpose of gathering the data, the researcher was in touch with these users via email and other social media platforms, including WhatsApp and service request forms. This technique refers to the self-administration concept. This technique is used to avoid discrepancies and misunderstandings of the concept.

## RESULTS & DISCUSSIONS

### Reliability Statistics

Variable	Cronbach Alpha	Status
Behavioral Intention	0.917	Reliable
CCB	0.872	Reliable
Tangibility	0.869	Reliable
Reliability	0.904	Reliable
Responsiveness	0.803	Reliable
Assurance	0.918	Reliable
Empathy	0.928	Reliable

The above table in this chapter is the final results of reliability statistics which has been included in this study to check the internal validity and reliability of the instrument used for the data collection. The cronbach alpha value in this table can be used for the range of reliability of the

variables of the study. The literature suggested that the value of cronbach alpha needs to be higher than .70 which recommended that the reliability. The values in the table are more than .70 which means that the included variables were reliable and significant for the data collection.

### Pearson Correlation

	BI	CCB	TNG	REL	RES	ASU	EMP
Behavioral Intention	1						
CCB	.646**	1					
Tangibility	.619**	.083	1				
Reliability	.616**	-.037	.650**	1			
Responsiveness	.414**	-.071	.660**	.752**	1		
Assurance	.632**	-.076	.441**	.416**	.608**	1	
Empathy	.509**	-.078	.573**	.608**	.765**	.631**	1

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The table is the results of Pearson Correlation model which has been used in the current study to check the correlation between the variables of the study. The objective of the study was to explore the relationship between the tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, behavioral intension and customer citizenship behavior.

There are multiple tests which can be used in this regard. The present study has included Pearson Correlation model due to the fact that it can measure the two-tailed and one-tailed correlation along with the significance of the relationship. The value of correlation between behavioral intension and customer citizenship behavior is .646. The value

showed that behavioral intension and customer citizenship behavior are having positive relationship between each other. The value also recommended that there is a positive and strong correlation between behavioral intension and customer citizenship behavior.

Both the variables have been found 64 percent correlated with each other. The p-value in the table has been found significant as lower than .05. This has been concluded that behavioral intension and customer citizenship behavior are having significant and positive correlation with each other. The value of correlation between behavioral intension and tangibility is .619. The value showed that behavioral intension and tangibility are having positive relationship between each other. The value also recommended that there is a positive and strong correlation between behavioral intension and tangibility. Both the variables have been found 61 percent correlated with each other. The p-value in the table has been found significant as lower than .05.

This has been concluded that behavioral intension and tangibility are having significant and positive correlation with each other. The value of correlation between behavioral intension and reliability is .616. The value showed that behavioral intension and reliability are having positive relationship between each other. The value also recommended that there is a positive and strong correlation between behavioral intension and reliability. Both the variables have been found 61 percent correlated with each other. The p-value in the table has been found significant as lower than .05. This has been concluded that behavioral intension and reliability are having significant and positive correlation with each other. The value of correlation between behavioral intension and responsiveness is .414. The value showed that behavioral intension and responsiveness are having positive relationship between each other. The value also recommended that there is a positive and strong correlation between behavioral intension and responsiveness. Both the variables have been found 41 percent correlated with each other.

The p-value in the table has been found significant as lower than .05. This has been concluded that behavioral intension and responsiveness are having significant and positive correlation with each other. The value of correlation between behavioral intension and assurance is .632. The value showed that behavioral intension and assurance are having positive relationship between each other. The value also recommended that there is a positive and strong correlation between behavioral intension and assurance. Both the variables have been found 63 percent correlated with each other. The p-value in the table has been found significant as lower than .05. This has been concluded that behavioral intension and assurance are having significant and positive correlation with each other. The value of correlation between behavioral intension and empathy is .509. The value showed that behavioral intension and empathy are having positive relationship between each other. The value also recommended that there is a positive and strong correlation between behavioral intension and empathy. Both the variables have been found 50 percent correlated with each other. The p-value in the table has been found significant as lower than .05. This has been concluded that behavioral intension and empathy are having significant and positive correlation with each other.

Customer citizenship behavior (CCB) refers to the philanthropic efforts made by customers to aid brands and other consumers, as described by Norouzi & Teimourfavian (2023). consumers voluntarily engage in citizenship behavior by providing assistance to enterprises and their fellow consumers, even when it is not obligatory (Prentice & Kadan, 2019). Woo (2019) identifies four crucial elements of CCB: good behavior, support, constructive criticism, and acceptance. Customers who actively assist brands and other customers in the provision of services are participating in helpful behavior. Advocacy is comprised of two elements: fostering favorable word-of-mouth and defending the firm against criticism.

Regression

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.854	.169		5.057	.000
	Reliability	.623	.045	.619	13.93	.000
2	(Constant)	.410	.226		1.811	.071
	Reliability	.632	.044	.628	14.27	.000
	Behavioral Intention	.217	.074	.128	2.911	.004

R: .619, R-Square: .384, F-value: 194.21, P-value: .000  
 R: .632, R-Square: .400, F-value: 103.62, P-value: .000

The above table shows the findings of mediating analysis used by Barren and Kenny (1986) model. The mediating variable in the above table is behavioral intention. The results suggested that value of R-square in the model

has been increased when the behavioral intention used as mediating. The value of coefficient in the table is also increased when the behavioral intention was introduced as mediating.

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.037	.157		6.588	.000
	Responsiveness	.581	.042	.616	13.80	.000
2	(Constant)	.584	.218		2.674	.008
	Responsiveness	.590	.042	.626	14.15	.000
	Behavioral Intention	.221	.075	.131	2.963	.003

R: .606, R-Square: .379, F-value: 102.03, P-value: .000

R: .729, R-Square: .496, F-value: 190.53, P-value: .000

The above table shows the findings of mediating analysis used by Barren and Kenny (1986) model. The mediating variable in the above table is behavioral intention. The results suggested that value of R-square in the model

has been increased when the behavioral intention used as mediating. The value of coefficient in the table is also increased when the behavioral intention was introduced as mediating.

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.080	.143		7.562	.000
	Tangibility	.566	.038	.646	14.94	.000
2	(Constant)	.723	.201		3.597	.000
	Tangibility	.570	.038	.650	15.15	.000
	Behavioral Intention	.182	.072	.108	2.510	.013

R: .646, R-Square: .417, F-value: 223.39, P-value: .000

R: .655, R-Square: .429, F-value: 116.74, P-value: .000

The above table shows the findings of mediating analysis used by Barren and Kenny (1986) model. The mediating variable in the above table is behavioral intention. The results suggested that value of R-square in the model

has been increased when the behavioral intention used as mediating. The value of coefficient in the table is also increased when the behavioral intention was introduced as mediating.

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.915	.160		11.951	.000
	Assurance	.375	.047	.414	8.039	.000
2	(Constant)	1.515	.238		6.372	.000
	Assurance	.383	.046	.423	8.243	.000
	Behavioral Intention	.197	.087	.116	2.266	.024

R: .414, R-Square: .176, F-value: 64.16, P-value: .000

R: .430, R-Square: .185, F-value: 35.30, P-value: .000

The above table shows the findings of mediating analysis used by Barren and Kenny (1986) model. The mediating variable in the above table is behavioral intention. The results suggested that value of R-square in the model

has been increased when the behavioral intention used as mediating. The value of coefficient in the table is also increased when the behavioral intention was introduced as mediating.

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.090	.147		7.40	.000
	Empathy	.617	.043	.632	14.42	.000
2	(Constant)	.540	.211		2.557	.011
	Empathy	.634	.042	.649	14.99	.000
	BehavioralIntention	.261	.073	.154	3.564	.000

R: .632, R-Square: .400, F-value: 208.04, P-value: .000

R: .651, R-Square: .424, F-value: 114.27, P-value: .000

The above table shows the findings of mediating analysis used by Barren and Kenny (1986) model. The mediating variable in the above table is behavioral intention. The results suggested that value of R-square in the model has been increased when the behavioral intention used as mediating. The value of coefficient in the table is also increased when the behavioral intention was introduced as mediating.

## CONCLUSION

With the increasing importance of consumers in the service industry, service organizations may set themselves apart from their rivals by regarding their customers as valuable assets and promoting responsible behavior. Customer citizenship behaviors, as defined by Chiu et al. (2015), refer to voluntary acts undertaken by consumers that benefit service providers but are not essential for the success of service operations. Van Tonder et al. (2018) suggest that engaging in extra-role actions can improve the relationship between clients and service providers, boost the quality of services, and ultimately contribute to the growth of service firms. Consequently, service managers progressively get knowledge about the civic activities of their consumers, who function as virtual employees. The topic of promoting excellent customer citizenship is gaining popularity and importance in the service industries.

The factors that influence consumer citizenship behaviors were less understood compared to the well studied corporate citizenship behaviors of personnel. Previous studies have mostly focused on customer-related factors such as commitment, satisfaction, and service engagement when examining the factors that influence consumer civic activity. However, there is far less emphasis on the procedures involved in service design and delivery. The social exchange theory posits that a firm should prioritize providing clients with benefits and value from its services before promoting their engagement in civic behaviors as acts of goodwill (Zhao et al., 2017). The service environment is a crucial factor that provides consumers with value and benefits. Kim (2007) applied the push and pull theory of motivation to determine that local and international visitors had different reasons for picking holiday destinations. Foreign visitors mostly see knowledge and family visits as their primary reasons, whereas local tourists primarily perceive entertainment and leisure as their key incentives. Domestic and international tourists may have different experiences throughout their journeys because of their varying goals (Bonn et al., 2005).

There exist several constraints and possibilities for

more investigation. The data for the current study was first gathered from Gambia, hence it is unclear if the relationship between CSR, SQ, and CCB is constant in other nations. Moreover, the conventional method of addressing all issues may be susceptible to prejudice. While we were unable to precisely pinpoint the deficiencies of the approach used in this investigation, it is not possible to completely rule them out. Moreover, this analysis is carried out utilizing cross-sectional data. This information can only reveal the full impact that an indicator variable has on a certain model variable at a specific moment. Hence, it is recommended to carry out a longitudinal study instead, in order to acquire more significant insights from the participants. The marketing literature underscores the significance of the interaction between firms and customers. The company-client interaction enhances the sharing of information and facilitates a shared understanding of expectations (Sharma et al., 2014). In order to cope with the increasingly fierce competition, organizations must establish stronger and enduring relationships with their customers. Businesses have prioritized the management of both consumers and workers as part of their human resources in order to enhance performance.

Pakistani airlines are currently facing substantial pressure due to increased customer influence resulting from new government regulations. Telecommunication companies must allocate significant resources to prioritize investments in service quality. The achievement of superior service quality mostly depends on the behavior of personnel and their willingness to put in extra effort when providing services. Therefore, this study provides airline management with a scientifically validated framework that can improve their understanding of the factors that influence SQ.

## Conflict of Interests

The authors has declared that no competing interests exist.

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