

Exploring personality moderation effects on satisfaction and loyalty in the airline industry

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Abstract

Purpose: The United States airline industry is a highly competitive industry. Airlines could benefit from satisfied and loyal customers. This study investigates the effect of personality traits of airline consumers on satisfaction and loyalty in the U.S. airline market.

Design/methodology: An online survey was constructed to measure the “big five” personality traits, service quality, satisfaction, and loyalty. Data were collected using Amazon Mechanical Turk, resulting in 624 respondents. Factor analysis was conducted using principal component extraction and varimax rotation.

Findings: The results show that age, education, employment, service quality, extraversion and agreeableness are found to be significant and influence satisfaction. When examining the moderation effects of personality on the service quality and satisfaction relationship, extraversion is influential. Gender, education, and satisfaction are found to be significant and influence loyalty. Personality was found to be non-significant when examining both direct and moderation effects on loyalty.

Originality/value: This research examined the big-five personality traits, often not investigated in airline satisfaction and loyalty studies. This study offers several managerial insights and theoretical implications that practitioners and researchers who are interested in airline satisfaction and loyalty might use. Further, this study may provide a foundation for future research in airline and airport satisfaction, loyalty and service quality.

Keywords: Airline, loyalty, personality traits, satisfaction, service quality

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1. Introduction

Business organizations strive to improve customer satisfaction and loyalty and for good reason, researchers have found that satisfied customers tend to express loyalty behaviors (Ranaweera & Prabhu, 2003). Loyal customers tend to pay less attention to competing brands and advertising, are less price sensitive, and create positive word of mouth (Desai & Mahajan, 1998). Business practitioners consequently believe there is a positive relationship between satisfaction and loyalty. While satisfaction was found to have a positive influence on loyalty (Heckman & Guskey, 1998; Mittal, Kumar, & Tsiros, 1999), this finding is not universal. Arnett, German and Hunt (2003) and Reynolds and Beatty (1999) did not find a significant relationship between these two constructs. King and Dennis (2003) assert that one reason for the inconsistency in this finding is that every consumer has a unique individual cognitive process that influences their satisfaction, loyalty, and behavioral intention perceptions. While cognitive processes may be one reason, personality traits could be another reason. Personality traits have been shown to affect consumer complaint behavior (Huang & Chang, 2008), employee retention (Barrick & Zimmerman, 2009), and job satisfaction (Bui, 2017).

Characteristically, much of the customer satisfaction and loyalty research includes intrinsic attributes such as service quality. Service quality has been a central part of satisfaction and loyalty research. Service quality has been shown to have a positive influence on customer satisfaction in various industries such as, airline (M. S. Farooq, Salam, Fayolle, Jaafar & Ayupp, 2018; Hussain, Al Nasser & Hussain, 2015), tourism (Lee, Yoon & Lee, 2007), conventional retailing (Cronin Jr, Brady, & Hult, 2000), and health care services (Cronin Jr et al., 2000). Airlines invest in service quality initiatives for several reasons. One reason is that service initiatives that improve service quality encourage customer satisfaction and loyalty behaviors like intention to repurchase and providing recommendations (Nadiri & Hussain, 2005). Etihad Airways is confident that service is central to achieving differentiation among airlines and provides for future profitability and growth for the airline (Laming & Mason, 2014).

Even though airlines have invested considerable amounts of money in service quality initiatives, the airline industry often ranks near the bottom of customer satisfaction when compared to other industries. The 2018 American Customer Satisfaction Index, ranked U.S. airlines 41 out of 46 industries (ACSI, 2018). A low satisfaction ranking is alarming since satisfied airline customers are more likely to repurchase tickets, voice positive word-of-mouth, recommend an airline, and complain less frequently (Kim & Lee, 2011). Moreover, airlines see increases in profitability, market share, and return on investment when customers are satisfied (Buttle, 1996; Dagger, Sweeney & Johnson, 2007; Devlin & Dong, 1994). Although service quality has been shown to positively influence satisfaction and loyalty, service quality's positive influence on satisfaction and loyalty is not certain (Hapsari, Clemes & Dean, 2017; Prentice & Correia Loureiro, 2017; Suki, 2014).

To a lesser degree, extrinsic attributes like personality traits have been included in customer satisfaction and loyalty research, particularly in the airline industry. Extrinsic attributes may therefore explain some of the shortcomings of previous satisfaction and loyalty research. Thus, this research explores additional factors that may influence satisfaction and loyalty in the airline industry. Using the U.S. airline industry, the objective for this research is to explore direct and moderating effects of personality on satisfaction and behavioral intention loyalty. The research questions for the study are:

- 1) Does personality influence airline satisfaction?
- 2) Does personality influence airline loyalty?

The remainder of this paper is as follows: Literature review, Methodology, Analysis and Results, Discussion, and Conclusion.

2. Literature review

2.1. Satisfaction and Service Quality

According to Oliver (1980), consumer satisfaction is the result of a cognitive evaluation between a consumer's expectation and perception of what was received, whereas Kotler and Caslione (2009) refer to customer satisfaction as feelings of pleasure or disappointment when comparing expectations versus what was received. Descriptions of satisfaction tend to be similar, where there are comparisons between prior service expectations and perceptions of actual performance. The results of the comparisons evolve into feelings of happiness or disappointment, or attitude changes, measured as satisfaction (Cina, 1990; Halstead, Hartman & Schmidt, 1994; Kotler & Keller, 2011; Mano & Oliver, 1993). Customer satisfaction remains a significant construct for organizations to understand. It has been linked to positive effects on market share and profitability (Anderson, Fornell & Lehmann, 1994), customer loyalty and retention (Roger, 1996), and brand equity (Pappu, Quester, & Cooksey, 2006). Service industries find it more problematic to attain and preserve customer satisfaction (Li, Yu, Pei, Zhao & Tian, 2017) especially when an industry is multidimensional and requires multiple service encounters, like the airline industry (M. Farooq & Radovic-Markovic, 2016; M. S. Farooq et al., 2018; Han & Ryu, 2012).

Analogous to customer satisfaction, service quality involves the comparison of expectations with perceptions of performance (Parasuraman, Zeithaml & Berry, 1985). Service quality denotes "a measure of how well the delivered service level meets the customer's expectation" (Ding, Hu & Sheng, 2011) and moreover, service quality has been recognized as a key driver of organizational performance in the areas of market share, profit, and cost reduction (Buttle, 1996; Dagger et al., 2007; Devlin & Dong, 1994). Service companies, such as airlines, are predominately customer facing organizations where their tasks primarily and routinely involve customer interaction. Interaction between service organizations and their customers affect emotional connections and feelings of respect and therefore, the interaction between airline representatives and consumers can reasonably influence satisfaction. Extant airline literature has shown that there is a significant and positive relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction (Calisir, Basak & Calisir, 2016; Rajaguru, 2016; Saleem, Zahra & Yaseen, 2017). However, service quality is not consistently found to lead to satisfaction (Prentice & Correia Loureiro, 2017) and given the low satisfaction scores in the airline industry, perhaps other factors that could impact satisfaction and loyalty ought to be considered. And while service quality and customer satisfaction have been considered critical antecedents to airline loyalty, they have not been found to always produce a significant positive influence on loyalty (Calisir et al., 2016; Forgas, Moliner, Sánchez & Palau, 2010; Hapsari et al., 2017; Prentice & Correia Loureiro, 2017). In other words, satisfied customers do not always lead to loyal customers.

2.2. Loyalty

Loyalty has been defined in numerous ways. Loyalty is an attitude or behavior that customers explicitly vocalize or exhibit (Gremler & Brown, 1996; Yi, 1990). It is the degree to which a customer exhibits repeated purchasing behavior from a service provider, possesses a positive attitudinal disposition towards the provider, considers using this provider when a need for this service arises, or recommends the seller through word-of-mouth. Reichheld (2003) go on to state that customer loyalty is the proportion of existing customers who are having lots of enthusiasm to recommend a specific good or service to their associates. Oliver (1999) defined loyalty as a deeply held commitment to repurchase or repatronize consistently in the future, despite situational influences and marketing efforts that might cause switching behavior. While extant airline literature has shown that there is a significant and positive relationship between customer satisfaction and loyalty (An & Noh, 2009; Kim & Lee, 2011), some studies have found this is not always true (Jiang & Zhang, 2016). In this study loyalty is considered behavioral intention, which is the intent to act, such as intent to purchase, to recommend, or to provide word-of-mouth.

2.3. Personality Traits

Individuals have unique personality attributes, which make people different. Personality can be described as a dynamic, internal organization of psychological systems that influence a person's behaviors, thoughts, and feelings (Carver & Scheier, 2012). Personality determines an individual's disposition and their response to the

environment (Mishra & Vaithianathan, 2015). There are two schools of thought related to trait theory. One school believes that everyone has the same set of traits, though there is variation in personality because each trait is more or less prominent from one person to another. So, the same traits are common among all people but to different extents. The second school believes that every person is different from one another because everyone has a select and limited number of traits. McCrae, Costa Jr, and Busch (1986), adopters of the first school of trait theory, classified personality traits into five factors. The five-factor model or the “big five” personality traits consists of neuroticism, extraversion, openness, agreeableness, and conscientiousness (Table 1). The five-factor model is a prominent classification of personality and categorizes a large number of traits into five dimensions and has been consistently used to explain individual differences in a variety of empirical settings (McCrae & Costa Jr, 1985). This study examines the effects of the five personality traits on airline satisfaction and loyalty.

Personality Type	Meaning
Neuroticism	Individuals who are high in neuroticism are likely to be anxious, easily depressed, irritable, and prone to psychological distress, whereas those who are low in neuroticism are calm, even-tempered, and emotionally stable.
Extraversion	Extraverts are individuals who are lively, cheerful, and sociable, while introverts are sober and taciturn. Extraverted individuals also have a greater quantity and intensity of energy directed outwards into the social world.
Openness	These individuals are curious, original, and artistic, while closed people are conventional and down-to-earth. They actively seek new experiences and appreciate experiences for their own sake.
Agreeableness	These individuals are characterized by trust, compassion, and modesty, and they prefer compassion rather than toughness.
Conscientiousness	These individuals are seen as organized, punctual, and purposeful, and they have a degree of persistence, control, and motivation in goal-directed behavior.

Table 1. Personality Types (Yoo & Gretzel, 2011)

Several studies have examined the influence of personality on satisfaction. Customers who are agreeable, neurotic, or open, tend to be more satisfied with their mobile services than those with other personality types (Smith, 2020). Ciunova-Shuleska and Palamidovska-Sterjadovska (2019) studied extraversion and neuroticism in the Macedonian banking industry. They found that extraversion had a direct and positive influence on satisfaction, while neuroticism negatively and indirectly influenced satisfaction. In another study, extraverted workers had higher career satisfaction, while neurotic workers were less likely to be satisfied with their careers (Seibert & Kraimer, 2001).

While extant literature examining personality traits and satisfaction is well developed, few studies investigate personality traits and its influence on loyalty. Joshi, Pathak, Agarwal and Priya (2021) examined consumer personality and loyalty in the automobile industry. They found that extraversion, agreeableness, and conscientiousness positively influence behavioral loyalty. In comparison, openness, extraversion, and conscientiousness have an influence on attitudinal loyalty. Another study demonstrated that neuroticism negatively influences affective loyalty, and while weakly significant, agreeableness and openness positively influence affective and action loyalty (Lin, 2010). Given the varied studies in the personality, satisfaction, and loyalty domains, it is reasonable to expect that personality traits influence airline satisfaction and behavioral intention loyalty.

Even though previous personality trait research has been conducted in areas such as banking (Al-Hawari, 2015), retail (Bove & Mitzifiris, 2007), and tourism (Faullant, Matzler & Mooradian, 2011), the research rarely examined the airline industry or each of the “big five” personality traits. If research examines all five personality traits, it tends to investigate direct effects rather than moderating effects. This research examines two models. The first model examines the direct and moderating effects of the “big five” personality traits between service quality and satisfaction (Figure 1). The second model examines the direct and moderating effects of the “big five”

personality traits between satisfaction and behavioral loyalty (Figure 2). Behavioral intentions refer to word of mouth, recommendations, and intent to repurchase.

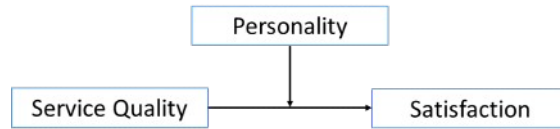


Figure 1. Conceptual Model 1

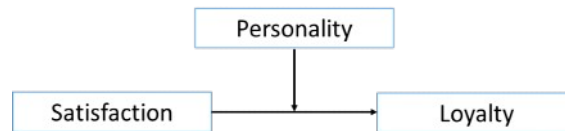


Figure 2. Conceptual Model 2

3. Methodology

3.1. Data Collection

Data for this research was collected in 2018, prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, using an online survey distributed via Amazon Mechanical Turk (MTurk). MTurk has been found to be a reliable data collection source that is as reliable as those from other data collection sources (Buhrmester, Kwang & Gosling, 2011; Germine et al., 2012; Holden, Dennie & Hicks, 2013). The survey was intended for respondents who have flown at least one commercial airline flight in the previous 12 months, who are at least 18 years old, who live in the United States, and who will complete the survey from within the United States. The survey returned 708 responses. After screening for incomplete and duplicate responses, and for surveys completed from outside of the United States, 624 usable observations remained. To ensure completion of the survey, to lessen the likelihood of duplicates, and to deter respondents from outside of the United States from answering the survey, respondents were given \$1.00US to complete the survey.

Service quality, satisfaction, loyalty and personality constructs are based on a 5-point Likert scale where 1 = “Strongly disagree” and 5 = “Strongly agree.” To minimize common method variance, the survey was developed in accordance with the recommendations from Podsakoff, Mackenzie, Lee and Podsakoff (2003). The survey items were constructed as closely as possible to validated items from previous studies (Tables 3 and 4), the directions for the survey stated that the survey was anonymous, and respondents were asked to provide honest answers. The analysis was conducted using IBM SPSS v.25 and SPSS Process 3.5 macro. Items were first analyzed using factor analysis and second, the resultant constructs were analyzed for direct and moderating effects. The latent variables for the analysis include service quality, satisfaction, behavioral intention (loyalty), and five personality traits: neuroticism, extraversion, openness, agreeableness, and conscientiousness.

Data for this study were obtained from the Angolan Ministry of Finance and the World Bank. The dependence variable is economic growth (GDP). The independent variables are investment in airports infrastructure, exports and imports. The data contains 21 observations, which is why the ARDL approach was adopted. The choice of the study period was due to lack of data on investment in airport infrastructure.

4. Analysis and Results

The socio-demographic distribution of the sample (Table 2) consists of fewer females (43.9%) than males. The educational level of the sample is mostly characterized by 4-year college degree (45.8%) and some college (29.6%). Respondents selected economy seat class the most (84.6%) and the majority of the sample flew for leisure (83.5%).

Variable	Options and Code	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Female	274	43.9
	Male (0)	350	56.1
Birth Year	1988-2000(0)	242	38.8
	1968-1987	235	37.6
	1946-1967	148	23.6
Annual Income	Less than \$25,000	79	12.7
	\$25,001 – \$45,000	144	23.1
	\$45,001 – \$65,000	138	22.1
	\$65,001 – \$100,000 (0)	154	24.7
	Greater than \$100,001	109	17.5
Seat Class	First Class	26	4.2
	Business Class	70	11.2
	Economy Class	528	84.6
Reason for Flying	Business	103	16.5
	Leisure	521	83.5
Education	Less than high school	2	0.3
	High school graduate	71	11.4
	Some college	185	29.6
	Four-year college degree (0)	286	45.8
	Graduate or professional degree	80	12.8
Employment Status	Employed (0)	554	88.8
	Unemployed	70	11.2

Notes: n=624, (0) = reference category

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics

Factor analysis was conducted using principal component extraction and varimax rotation (Tables 3 and 4). Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy = .925, and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity is significant at $p < .001$, indicating that factor analysis may be useful for the data. The measurement items showed high levels of internal consistency reliability, with Cronbach's α values at 0.84 and greater, above the cutoff value of 0.70 (Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson, & Tatham, 2006). Convergent validity was assessed by evaluating composite reliability, with values of .80 and greater, exceeding the recommended value of 0.70, and average variance extracted (AVE), with values of 0.50 and greater, which are acceptable (Chin, 1998; Fornell & Larcker, 1981). The loadings and cross-loadings of factor analysis show that each item loads highly within its corresponding latent construct showing sufficient discriminant validity. Indicator reliability can be assumed if all indicator loadings are above the threshold value of 0.70 (Hair et al., 2006). Correlations among constructs is provided in Table 5.

Constructs and item	Loading	Mean	SD
<i>Neuroticism (NEUR)</i>		2.64	1.170
1 I get stressed out easily	0.871	2.69	1.327
2 I worry about things	0.840	3.07	1.374
3 I fear for the worst	0.868	2.57	1.334
4 I am filled with doubts about things	0.878	2.60	1.319
5 I panic easily	.0828	2.25	1.231
<i>Extraversion (EXTR)</i>		3.07	1.090
1 I talk a lot to different people at parties	0.869	2.87	1.337
2 I feel comfortable around people	0.743	3.35	1.238
3 I start conversations	0.846	3.23	1.291
4 I make friends easily	0.735	3.15	1.240
5 I don't mind being the center of attention	0.786	2.72	1.309
<i>Openness (OPEN)</i>		4.01	0.780
1 I get excited by new ideas	0.778	3.97	0.888
2 I enjoy thinking about things	0.817	4.06	0.916
3 I enjoy hearing new ideas	0.792	4.10	0.901
4 I enjoy looking for a deeper meaning in things	0.774	3.96	0.993
5 I have a vivid imagination	0.748	3.99	1.036
<i>Agreeableness (AGRE)</i>		3.81	0.780
1 I sympathize with others' feelings	0.749	4.07	0.902
2 I am concerned about others	0.742	4.04	0.940
3 I believe that others have good intentions	0.784	3.68	1.004
4 I trust what people say	0.704	3.46	1.058
<i>Conscientiousness (CONS)</i>		4.04	0.740
1 I carry out my plans	0.729	4.05	0.873
2 I pay attention to details	0.778	4.28	0.825
3 I am always prepared	0.765	3.84	0.992
4 I make plans and stick to them	0.820	3.98	0.917
5 I am exacting in my work	0.808	4.06	0.874

Table 3. Personality Constructs, Items, and Loadings (Yoo & Gretzel, 2011)

Constructs and item	Loading	Mean	SD
Satisfaction (Etemad-Sajadi, Way, & Bohrer, 2016)		3.79	0.920
1 My choice to use this airline was a wise one	0.753	3.96	0.933
2 I am satisfied with my overall experience with this airline	0.825	4.07	0.948
3 My expectations of service with this airline had been met	0.851	4.06	0.918
Service Quality (Cronin Jr et al., 2000)		3.61	1.030
1 I would say that this airline provided superior service	0.809	3.49	1.113
2 I believe that this airline offered excellent service	0.784	3.65	1.103
3 This airline provided high-quality service	0.774	3.70	1.087
Behavioral Intention (Fullerton, 2005)		3.93	0.900
1 I intend to fly this airline again	0.865	4.13	0.925
2 I will speak favorably about this airline to others	0.744	3.81	1.083
3 I will recommend this airline to my relatives and friends	0.719	3.77	1.102
4 I will use this airline for flights to other destinations	0.853	4.01	0.946

Table 4. Other Constructs, Items, and Loadings

	Intention	Satisfaction	Neuroticism	Extraversion	Openness	Agreeableness	Conscientiousness
Intention	1.000	0.791	-0.113	0.169	0.220	0.373	0.325
Satisfaction	0.791	1.000	-0.090	0.141	0.245	0.403	0.346
Neuroticism	-0.113	-0.090	1.000	-0.454	-0.122	-0.160	-0.324
Extraversion	0.169	0.141	-0.454	1.000	0.344	0.314	0.309
Openness	0.220	0.245	-0.122	0.344	1.000	0.441	0.379
Agreeableness	0.373	0.403	-0.160	0.314	0.441	1.000	0.457

Table 5. Correlations of Latent Variables

Hierarchical regression analysis was conducted to evaluate the independent variables effect on the dependent variable. Hierarchical regression is a successive approach that involves the entry of independent variables in steps and is a method used to analyze the effect of independent variables after controlling for other variables (Lewis, 2007). The means of the items for each construct were used to calculate a mean composite score for its associated construct. The composite construct score was then used in the regression analysis instead of using factor scores from factor analysis. OLS regression assumptions were evaluated and all assumptions were satisfied. Further, all variance inflation factors are less than 3, suggesting the absence of multicollinearity (Hair et al., 2006).

When examining the direct effects in Model 1, birth year 1946-1967 ($\beta = .295, p < .001$), high school graduate ($\beta = -.151, p < 0.05$), unemployed ($\beta = .150, p < 0.05$), service quality ($\beta = .646, p < .001$), extraversion ($\beta = -.191, p < .05$) and agreeableness ($\beta = .277, p < .05$) are found to be significant and positively influence satisfaction. When examining the moderation effects of personality on the service quality and satisfaction relationship,

extraversion is found to be significant ($\beta = .038, p < .10$). Direct effects of openness were found to be significant ($\beta = .088^{***}, p < .001$) until moderation effects were tested (Table 6).

Variables	Step 1		Step 2	
	Unstandardized Coefficient	Standard Error	Unstandardized Coefficient	Standard Error
Gender				
Female	0.180**	0.070	0.073	0.047
Birth Year				
1946-1967	0.330***	0.119	0.310***	0.080
1968-1987	0.104	0.075	0.080	0.050
Income (miles)				
Less than \$25	-0.289**	0.123	-0.109	0.082
\$25-\$45	-0.207**	0.101	-0.110	0.068
\$45-&65	-0.013	0.101	-0.002	0.067
Greater than \$100	0.024	0.108	0.027	0.072
Education				
Less than high school	1.145*	0.606	-0.768*	0.406
High school graduate	-0.088	0.116	-0.145	0.078
Some college	0.043	0.082	-0.020	0.055
Graduate or professional degree	-0.076	0.111	-0.056	0.074
Employment				
Unemployed	0.092	0.111	0.162**	0.074
Service quality			0.612***	0.022
NEUR				
EXTR				
OPEN				
AGRE				
CONS				
SQ*NEUR				
SQ*EXTR				
SQ*OPEN				
SQ*AGRE				
SQ*CONS				
<i>Adj.R2</i>	0.035		0.568	
<i>ΔR2</i>			0.533	

Variables	Step 3		Step 4	
	Unstandardized Coefficient	Standard Error	Unstandardized Coefficient	Standard Error
Gender				
Female	0.007	0.048	0.005	0.048
Birth Year				
1946-1967	0.290***	0.078	0.295***	0.078
1968-1987	0.060	0.049	0.052	0.049
Income (miles)				
Less than \$25	-0.111	0.081	-0.112	0.081
\$25-\$45	-0.080	0.066	-0.076	0.066
\$45-&65	0.007	0.065	0.002	0.065
Greater than \$100	0.025	0.069	0.022	0.070
Education				
Less than high school	-0.432	0.392	-0.418	0.392
High school graduate	0.155**	0.075	-0.151**	0.075
Some college	-0.022	0.053	-0.030	0.054
Graduate or professional degree	-0.081	0.072	-0.090	0.072
Employment				
Unemployed	0.143**	0.072	0.150**	0.072
Service quality	0.565***	0.023	0.646***	0.162
NEUR	0.010	0.022	-0.060	0.077
EXTR	-0.056**	0.025	0.191**	0.088
OPEN	0.088***	0.034	0.111	0.111
AGRE	0.160***	0.037	0.277**	0.120
CONS	0.080	0.037	0.144	0.121
SQ*NEUR			0.020	0.020
SQ*EXTR			0.038*	0.023
SQ*OPEN			-0.007	0.030
SQ*AGRE			-0.034	0.033
SQ*CONS			-0.020	0.033
Adj.R2	0.603		0.603	
ΔR2	0.035		0.000	

Notes: $p < 0.10^*$, $p < 0.05^{**}$, $p < 0.01^{***}$; Reference variables: Male, Birth year 1988-2000, Income \$65,001-\$100,000; Four-year college degree, Employed.

Table 6. Results of Model 1 Service Quality – Satisfaction

When examining the direct effects in Model 2, gender-female ($\beta = .096$, $p < 0.05$), Graduate or professional degree ($\beta = .173$, $p < 0.05$), and satisfaction ($\beta = .553$, $p < 0.01$) are found to be significant and influence loyalty. Personality was found to be non-significant when examining both direct and moderation effects (Table 7).

Variables	Step 1		Step 2	
	Unstandardized Coefficient	Standard Error	Unstandardized Coefficient	Standard Error
Gender				
Female	0.235***	0.074	0.088**	0.046
Birth Year				
1946-1967	0.272*	0.124	0.001	0.078
1968-1987	0.051	0.078	-0.034	0.049
Income (miles)				
Less than \$25	-0.305**	0.128	-0.069	0.080
\$25-\$45	-0.215**	0.106	-0.046	0.066
\$45-&65	-0.027	0.105	-0.016	0.065
Greater than \$100	-0.015	0.112	-0.034	0.070
Education				
Less than high school	-1.001	0.633	-0.065	0.395
High school graduate	-0.014	0.121	0.058	0.076
Some college	0.031	0.086	-0.004	0.054
Graduate or professional degree	0.107	0.116	0.169**	0.072
Employment				
Unemployed	0.037	0.115	-0.038	0.072
Satisfaction			0.818***	0.026
NEUR				
EXTR				
OPEN				
AGRE				
CONS				
SQ*NEUR				
SQ*EXTR				
SQ*OPEN				
SQ*AGRE				
SQ*CONS				
<i>Adj.R2</i>	0.053		0.626	
<i>ΔR2</i>			0.573	

Variables	Step 3		Step 4	
	Unstandardized Coefficient	Standard Error	Unstandardized Coefficient	Standard Error
Gender				
Female	0.096**	0.048	0.096**	0.048
Birth Year				
1946-1967	-0.025	0.079	-0.021	0.079
1968-1987	-0.049	0.049	-0.039	0.050
Income (miles)				
Less than \$25	-0.024	0.081	0.001	0.082
\$25-\$45	-0.019	0.066	-0.020	0.066
\$45-&65	-0.002	0.066	0.001	0.066
Greater than \$100	-0.039	0.070	-0.034	0.070
Education				
Less than high school	-0.010	0.396	-0.037	0.396
High school graduate	0.065	0.076	0.060	0.076
Some college	0.012	0.054	0.016	0.054
Graduate or professional degree	0.177**	0.072	0.173**	0.072
Employment				
Unemployed	-0.024	0.072	-0.027	0.072
Satisfaction	0.793***	0.029	0.555***	0.166
NEUR	-0.021	0.023	-0.130	0.100
EXTR	0.035	0.025	0.148	0.117
OPEN	-0.014	0.034	-0.130	0.139
AGRE	0.038	0.038	0.006	0.167
CONS	0.031	0.037	-0.046	0.155
SQ*NEUR			0.027	0.024
SQ*EXTR			-0.028	0.028
SQ*OPEN			0.032	0.034
SQ*AGRE			0.009	0.041
SQ*CONS			0.021	0.038
Adj.R2			0.629	
ΔR2			0.000	

Notes: $p < 0.10^*$; $p < 0.05^{**}$; $p < 0.01^{***}$, Reference variables: Male, Birth year 1988-2000, Income \$65,001-\$100,000, Four-year college degree, Employed.

Table 7. Results of Model 2 Satisfaction – Loyalty

5. Discussion

This research examined the big-five personality traits, often not investigated in airline satisfaction and loyalty studies. This study offers several managerial insights and theoretical implications that practitioners and researchers who are interested in airline satisfaction and loyalty might use. Further, this study may provide a foundation for future research in this area.

The findings from this research provide support for service quality's positive and significant effect on satisfaction and the same for satisfaction's influence on behavioral intention loyalty. The sample statistics highlight that service quality has a lower mean and a higher standard deviation than do satisfaction and loyalty. Given that service quality drives satisfaction, there appears to be room for improvement in this area. Further, this study finds that respondents are somewhat satisfied with their airline experience, which appears to contradict the satisfaction study by ACSI (2018), where airlines rank very low on satisfaction. Additionally, previous research has shown conflicting results when examining the relationship between satisfaction and loyalty. This study provides evidence that supports the notion that satisfaction has a positive and significant effect on loyalty. It appears then, that satisfaction remains an important antecedent to behavioral intention loyalty.

When investigating previous personality research from several industries, results are diverse. In a study examining mobile services (Smith, 2020), with the exception of extraversion, the remaining four personality traits were found to be influential on satisfaction, though conscientiousness was negatively influential. In the banking services industry, Ciunova-Shuleska and Palamidovska-Sterjadovska (2019) examined only neuroticism and extraversion and found that extraversion negatively influenced satisfaction. In a hotel setting, Jani and Han (2014) found extraversion and agreeableness to be positively influential and neuroticism negatively influential on satisfaction. In the automobile industry, Joshi et al. (2021) found the personality traits of extraversion, agreeableness, and conscientiousness have a positive and significant influence on loyalty. Given the mixed results from previous studies, the current study provides personality research insights from an airline industry perspective. This study uncovered that agreeableness positively influences satisfaction directly, while extraversion negatively influences satisfaction directly. Additionally, it was found that extraversion moderates the effect of service quality on satisfaction. Moreover, this study found that personality did not have direct or moderating effects on behavioral intention loyalty. When considering the influence of personality on satisfaction, since agreeable personalities tend to be trusting and compassionate, they may be more willing to accept service failures when they occur and remain satisfied with their overall airline experience. Extraverts on the other hand, are less likely to be satisfied airline passengers. Extraverts are known as lively and cheerful and have a greater amount and intensity of social energy. Extraverts, when on an airline flight where there is little opportunity to wander and to be social, are unable to flourish in this environment.

Given the findings of this research, managers might acquire consumer personality attributes to improve satisfaction, which could lead to higher levels of loyalty. Granted, identifying personality traits could prove difficult. However, the process of identifying personality traits could be enhanced by knowing basic qualities and behaviors that people exhibit for each personality trait. To identify passenger personalities, airline employees could be trained to identify passenger personality traits by focusing on what passengers say and how they behave, whether it be face-to-face conversation or through social media. As airline employees speak or engage with passengers they might ask probing, though conversational questions that could lend clues to which personality category passengers fall into. For example, at the airport, via online chat, or in marketing surveys, airline employees might ask, what is most important to you or how do you feel about certain matters? The answers can prove fruitful. Answers and observations that are related to social interaction, being talkative, and active could lead to conclude a person leans toward extraversion. Responses related to innovation, curiosity, and being intellectual could be seen as being open, whereas, being sympathetic, cooperative, helpful, and kind could be perceived as being agreeable. Furthermore, in the era of big data, the difficulty of collecting personality information could be minimized through the use of artificial intelligence and machine learning. The digital channels to which airline passengers are migrating, such as an airline's website, mobile apps, chat bots, and self-service kiosks produce substantially more data than in-person interactions. Machine learning models therefore, can provide personality insights from examining passenger digital behaviors. As another reasonable option,

airlines can incorporate attitudinal scales in marketing communications and surveys to capture personality traits (John & Srivastava, 1999).

Moreover, knowing airline passengers' personality traits, the customer experience could be enhanced in several areas. Airlines might improve their customer experience in the areas of introducing innovative ideas, technology, and interpersonal interaction especially during dispute resolution and service recovery. Airlines that implement or test innovative ideas related to customer experiences might seek out passengers who are classified as open to be their test group. Individuals who are open have an array of interests, are receptive to new ideas, and are more inclined to think of alternative ways to solve problems. Therefore, these customers are likely to be satisfied with their overall airline experience, even as new and innovative ideas are being tested, and they are more likely to provide useful feedback about the new innovations. Further, the implementation of technology such as mobile apps, chatbots, and digital media communications through Twitter as an example, ought to consider personality traits too. For example, extraverts find technology to be more amenable when the technology is responsive and has a social or feedback mechanism. Next, during dispute resolution and service recovery scenarios, machine learning and artificial intelligence methods can route or connect airline customer service agents with passengers who have similar personality traits when using digital communications. It has been shown that when disputes occur, more favorable outcomes are observed when agents and customers have similar personality traits. This approach alleviates the possibility of "butting of heads." As a separate example, though during normal operations, if an employee demonstrates sympathy/empathy, or is concerned or respectful of others when an agreeable customer is encountered, an agreeable person is likely to be satisfied with their experience. Correspondingly, if an extravert is encountered, an employee ought to engage in conversation and allow the extravert to speak freely (respectfully of course). This social experience is likely to be seen as favorable to the extraverted customer.

Although some personality traits in this study are not significant or influential moderators, this outcome in some ways is advantageous. It allows airline managers to implement loyalty programs and service processes without the need to consider every personality type. However, it could be beneficial to the airline if non-significant personality traits are considered by customer service agents. For example, neurotics may become more satisfied with their experience if customer service agents learn to recognize their presence and they minimize frustrating situations and to placate them. And more noteworthy, this research paper is an introduction or spring board to more personality research in the airline industry.

6. Conclusion

This research explored the direct and moderating effects of the "big five" personality traits on satisfaction and loyalty. Such studies are rare in the airline literature. Although not all personality traits examined in this study were found to be significant, this study provides a starting point in which future studies in personality research in the airline industry may branch from. The study is not exempt from limitations that can pave the way for future research. To improve this line of research, future studies might explore reasons why certain personality traits are significant and others are not. Particularly, one might explore why extraversion moderates the path between service quality and satisfaction. Additionally, future research might explore other factors such as, belonging to loyalty programs, how often passengers travel, domestic vs. international travel, and market competition.

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