

## **Retail Services at Dubai Airports Company**

**Dr. Dina Alkhodary & Dr. Mohammed Shehada**

*Isra University*

---

**ABSTRACT:** The aim of this paper is to focus on retail stores at Dubai Airports Company by giving a general idea about the status of businesses, number of clients and nature of different processes that happen on daily bases. Furthermore, to check out customers' satisfaction at the services offered by the retail stores. A questionnaire will be designed and distributed to the staff that is running the retail stores. After reviewing the questionnaire results, statistical analysis will be made to find the strengths and weaknesses of each process and display the suggested remedies for each constrain in details. At the end, based on the observations and the analysis a conclusion and recommendations will be established on the given subject.

**Key Words:** Retail service, Dubai Airports Company, Customer Service, Performance, Staff, Procedures.

---

Date of Submission: 20 -02-2017

Date of acceptance: 26-07-2017

---

### **I. INTRODUCTION**

Dubai's business friendly environment, open skies, geocentric location, fast growing home airlines and emergence as a leading global city for tourism, trade and commerce continued to propel the aviation sector. 85 million passengers projected to visit Dubai in 2016. The new enlargement that has taken place in Dubai's Airport facility has elevated passenger experience at Dubai X Box (DXB), with open boarding gates allowing them more time and freedom to enjoy the great variety of opportunities for shopping, food and relaxation. Dubai Airport also delighted our little travelers by opening a special Kid Zone complete with creative play equipment, television screens featuring children's programming, and family area in Concourse B. A large proportion of the refurbishment and modernization of Terminal 1 was completed during 2015. 2015 was also a year of increased passenger engagement and the title of the most 'liked' airport on Facebook with 1.5 million fans. In Dubai Airport they launched a unique initiative called music DXB to entertain and engage a multi-cultural and cosmopolitan audience of nearly seven million music lovers that pass through DXB every month. The programme was launched in November with Katy Perry wowing fans at the Dubai Air show Gala Dinner, and UK swing kings Jack Pack performing to an enchanted crowd of travelers at the airport. Since the launch, the music DXB stage has hosted nearly a dozen local and international artists. DXB won numerous awards in 2015, including the Condé Nast Traveler's Awards, Frontier Awards, the World Travel Awards and the Global Routes forum among others.

Retail Services at Dubai Airport is an area with great potential of revenue streams a remarkable change to the way the retail services run at Dubai Airport. Retail services also have high business performance, and reaching revenue of more than \$45 million a year. [www.dubaiairports.ae](http://www.dubaiairports.ae)

### **Objectives of Study**

The objectives of the study are:

1. To inform others on the major development of Dubai Airport in the last years.
2. To measure travelers and clients satisfaction of Dubai Airport facilities.
3. To give an idea of the kind of services offered at Dubai Airport, and how is it different from other class airports in the world.
4. To check out the problems and constraints that faces the retail business.
5. To reach out conclusions and put down recommendations for the study.

### **Research Problem and its Elements**

Aviation sector's contribution to the economy of Dubai and the UAE is well established. The sector contributed nearly 27% of Dubai's GDP and accounted for over 21% of the city's employment in 2013 according to a study conducted by Oxford Economics. The study estimates that the overall economic impact of both aviation and tourism related activities will rise to \$53.1 billion in 2020 or 37.5% of Dubai's GDP, and support 754,500 Dubai-based jobs. The forecast suggests dramatically, rising to \$88 billion or 44.7% that by 2030 the contribution of aviation to GDP will increase of GDP to new heights in 2015.

While the new concourse has made Dubai International Airport bigger and better, and earned applaud from the global aviation industry, obviously the ongoing growth will require continued planning and increase capacity at both our airports (new and old) and it needs more client and customer satisfaction at retail services. [www.dubaiairports.ae](http://www.dubaiairports.ae)

### **Hypotheses**

Ho: Staff is satisfied at Dubai Airport Retail Stores

## **II. LITERATURE REVIEW**

Dubai Airports Company shall be “Managing the world’s leading Airports”. Keeping in mind the mission statement of the Department of Civil Aviation “to be the best in the world”, it is a priority to maintain the high standards of service that is now customary at Dubai International Airport. Visualizing the customer demands in the coming years, the Department of Civil Aviation commenced the 2nd phase of Dubai International Airport expansion few years ago. The US\$ 4.1 bn expansion programme includes the construction of Terminal 3, Concourse 2 and Concourse 3, all of which will be exclusive to Emirates airlines, a Mega Cargo Terminal and a major upgrade of Terminal 2. [www.dubaiairports.ae](http://www.dubaiairports.ae).

More than 78 million passengers were welcomed in 2015, with 85 million expected in 2016 Dubai International has grown at an annual average growth rate of over 13% since it was opened 55 years ago. Not surprisingly the growth story continued in 2016, with both airports collectively welcoming more than 78 million passengers. With traffic expected to surpass 85 million passengers in 2016 and more than 100 million by 2020, Dubai Airports is working on long term plans to expand its infrastructure to ensure that the growth of Dubai’s aviation sector remains unhindered in the decades to come. The opening of Concourse D in February 2016 signaled the completion of Strategic Plan 2020, a US \$7.8 billion airport and airspace expansion programme that was launched in 2011 to boost capacity at DXB from 60 million to 90 million passengers. Considering there is no room for further expansion at DXB, Dubai Airports is working with its stakeholders to design product innovation and operational improvements that will provide capacity for 118 million passengers in 2023 without adding any additional infrastructure while delivering an exceptional customer experience. At the same time, another expansion project is underway at DWC to increase its capacity to 26 million passengers by 2018 ahead of the second phase of expansion that will accommodate Dubai’s aviation growth well into the future. [www.dubaiairports.ae](http://www.dubaiairports.ae)

**Retail Service Division** has a lot of processes that involve both external and internal customers. In general, Retail Services manages the engagements of customers with the Commercial Unit of Dubai Airports. Retail Services division is responsible for taking care of 150 clients, who have rented spaces at commercial services areas. This Division is working towards increasing the revenue targets from last year 39 million to 45 million. In addition it is intended to reduce cost and maintain better management resources. Customers are the second main focus, as they are the sources of business within the airport, being international or local.

The paper was carried out to get customers’ feedback on both categories - retail services and Food and Beverages (F&B) divisions. In an interview with Mr. Huraiz the Vice President of Commercial until he said “We shall maintain the same level of customer satisfaction in both divisions Retail Services and F&B”. He insisted on distributing the questionnaire to F&B clients as well, as they are about 35% of the clients of Dubai Airport

### **Main/Core Processes at DARS:**

The main Processes include: New business opportunity proposals, Renew Contracts, Apply for airport passes, and Apply for advertising opportunity,

New business opportunity proposals include: Proposal evaluation (manually), and customers’ notification of acceptance or rejection (electronically)

Create / Renew Contracts include: Preparing terms of agreement as per business type (manu.), sending the contract to legal advisor for revision (elec.), and entering standard info in the customers master file to create or renew (elec.)

Applying for airport passes include: Taking customers’ requests, feed in the pass office system (elec.), forwarding request to the pass office (elec.), following up passes with the pass office (manually), and informing clients when passes ready (manu. and elec.)

Applying for advertising opportunity includes: Taking customers applications (elec. and manu.), approving contents/visuals (elec. and manu.), and forwarding to the Advertisement Concessionaire for application (elec.)

### III. LITERATURE SURVEY

Eight major conceptual categories relating to quality of work life/satisfaction (Walton 1975): (1) adequate and fair compensation, (2) safe and healthy working conditions, (3) immediate opportunity—to use and develop human capacities, (4) opportunity for continued growth and security, (5) social integration in the work organization, (6) constitutionalism in the work organization, (7) work and total life space and (8) social relevance of work life.

There have been several recent studies that critically evaluate the measurement of job satisfaction. One recent review by Van Saane, Sluiter, Verbeek, and Frings-Dresen concluded that any measure of job satisfaction should include assessments of the following dimensions of job satisfaction in order to have content validity: (a) work growth and development opportunities (b) autonomy (c) financial rewards (d) task meaningfulness and (e) quality of supervision (support, fairness) (f) communication (feedback, counseling opportunities) (g) coworkers (adequacy of coworkers, relationships with them) (h) workload (time pressure, stress) (i) demands (insecurity of work situation, involuntarily doing extra work) (j) promotion/advancement opportunities (k) job content (i.e. variety in skills, challenge).

Literature also evidences findings of various satisfaction studies revealing the necessary actions. For example, a Finnish quality of work life survey revealed that despite of various improvements, an action for better working life and well-being had become more urgent.

Table (1) summarizes quality of work-like/satisfaction factors listed in the literature.

**Table (1)**

Sr #	Satisfaction Factors	Researchers
1	Identified several needs for Quality of work life as such as Skill variety, Task Identity, Task significance, Autonomy and Feedback.	Hackman and Oldham (1976)
2	Basic extrinsic job factors including wages, hours and working conditions, and the intrinsic job notions of the nature of the work itself.	Taylor J C in Cooper, CL and Mumford, E (1979)
3	Work involvement, intrinsic job motivation, higher order need strength, perceived intrinsic job characteristics, job satisfaction, life satisfaction, happiness, and self-rated anxiety	Warr, P, Cook, J and Wall, T (1979)
4	Satisfaction with wages, hours and working conditions, describing the “basic elements of a good quality of work life” as; safe work environment, equitable wages, equal employment opportunities and opportunities for advancement.	Mirvis, P.H. and Lawler, E.E. (1984)
5	Job satisfaction, job involvement, work role ambiguity, work role conflict, work role overload, job stress, organizational commitment and turn-over intentions and reutilization of job content	Baba, VV and Jamal, M (1991)

The purpose the present study is to explore the perception of employees in context of Dubai Airport Retail Stores (DARS). As widely noted, Dubai has a culturally diverse workforce and diverse work-environments. How does then a typical Dubai worker perceive his/her satisfaction? What bearings would that have to his/her performance, and consequently the performance of (DARS)?

### IV. RESEARCH DESIGN

The investigator of the present study feels that satisfaction should be addressed by formulating the hypotheses anchored on the ability of the workplace to meet human needs, as theorized, for instance, by Maslow. Leaving that broader objective for an important follow up research, this study employed a survey method to capture the positive and negative attitudes towards the quality of work life. A questionnaire was developed broadly drawing on evaluation of satisfaction by Van Saane, Sluiter, Verbeek, & Frings-Dresen and the existing literature to stay close to the relevant (workplace) context.

The survey was administered to measure employees’ of the Airport retail stores staff’s attitude about a range of 11 key factors affecting their satisfaction:

1. Staff overall knowledge about the airport procedures
2. Management Availability to help customers
3. Staff Helpfulness
4. Fair timeliness of response
5. Clarity of information and docs required for business set up
6. E-services comprehensiveness and effectiveness
7. Information about change of procedures
8. Value of money services

9. Business setting up easiness
10. Rent fees fair in comparison to market
11. Marketing support services available for customers

A seven-point scale with 1 being “strongly disagree” and 7 being “strongly agree” was used to measure the responses. The questions asked participants to select one response within a seven point scale (Very Dissatisfied, Dissatisfied, Somewhat Dissatisfied, Neutral, Somewhat Satisfied, Satisfied, and Very Satisfied). The responses were then grouped into three categories, namely, those who indicated they were very satisfied were recorded as “very satisfied”, satisfied were recorded as "satisfied" while all others were recorded "not satisfied".

The target population for the study included samples of employees from several independent retail stores in Dubai Airport. In addition to answering the formal questions, respondents were asked to identify and note in writing any other important factor that they perceived affected their overall quality of work life/satisfaction. The data was analyzed by using SPSS Version 17. A reliability test was conducted to check the validity of questionnaire instrument. The reliability coefficient for this measure was good (Cronbach alpha = 0.84).

## V. EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE

This section presents empirical evidence gathered through the administration of the survey instrument, again we note, in a pilot mode, to guide future studies. 150 questionnaires were personally given by this researcher to respondents. 83 valid questionnaires were returned to the author. Of the respondents, 35% per cent were female while the rest were males. The respondents' age ranged from 20-45 years.

The study indicates that only 49% of employees are satisfied with their quality of work life. The elements of satisfaction that are perceived as unsatisfactory are the management availability to help customers, staff helpfulness, rent fees fair in comparison to market and the value of money services This observation is much consistent with the other studies conducted on quality of work life/satisfaction.

An independent sample t-test was conducted to compare the perceptions of satisfaction for males and females. There was no significant difference noted in scores for males ( $M = 4.9$ ,  $SD = 0.88$ ), and females [ $M = 4.7$ ,  $SD = 0.99$ ] since a t-test yielded  $t(83) = 1.81$  with  $p = 0.24$ . The magnitude of the differences in the mean QWL between the genders thus was very small ( $\eta^2 = 0.039$ )

However satisfaction perceptions on financial reward differed. There was a significant difference in scores of rent fees fair in comparison to market for males ( $M = 4.91$ ,  $SD = 1.6$ ), and females [ $M = 3.97$ ,  $SD = 1.8$ ,  $t(83) = 2.4$ ,  $p = .01$ ].

Table 2: Attitude of employees about their quality of work life results:

Table (2)

Employees satisfaction Factors	Very Satisfied		Satisfied		Unsatisfied		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Staff overall knowledge about the airport procedures	16	19.3	18	22	49	59	83	100
Management Availability to help customers	5	6.02	26	31	52	62.7	83	100
Staff Helpfulness	3	3.61	23	28	57	68.7	83	100
Fair timeliness of response	13	15.7	29	35	41	49.4	83	100
Clarity of information and docs required for business set up	18	21.7	25	30	40	59	83	100
E-services comprehensiveness and effectiveness	12	14.5	34	41	37	44.6	83	100
Information about change of procedures	11	13.3	32	39	40	48.2	83	100
Value of money services	7	8.43	17	20	59	71.1	83	100
Business setting up easiness	20	24.1	25	30	38	45.8	83	100
Rent fees fair in comparison to market	9	10.8	22	27	52	62.7	83	100
Marketing support services available for customers	20	24.1	27	33	36	43.4	83	100

Furthermore, female employees responded in writing that adoption of a 'flexi time' time system would considerably improve their quality of working- life/satisfaction. It has been generally noted in past studies that flexi-timings benefit employee as well the employer—the employer gains from better labor input and while employees benefit as it would help better fit their domestic needs with workplace commitments

The Value of money services being one significant factor causing dissatisfaction, literature suggests that one key HRM practice of a firm to affect employee motivation is closely linked to the employee promotion system. If this is indeed so, the quality of work life/satisfaction can be improved considerably. Employees' dissatisfaction feedback on the elements of staff overall knowledge about the airport procedures suggests that many employees lack the freedom to make own decisions. The other important factor is the Clarity of information and docs required for business set up as employees are found dissatisfied with the Clarity of information provided to them.

Table (3) shows the frequency distribution of attitude of Employees' satisfaction by their "Job Title" seen as a formal indicator of whether they are empowered to make decisions. It seems the employees with managerial position are more satisfied with their quality of work life. The overall percentage of dissatisfaction for managerial ranks is lower than the non-managers.

Table 3: Attitude of Employees' satisfaction by their designations

**Table (3)**

Managerial Position	V satisfied		Satisfied		Unsatisfied		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Yes	5	33	7	47	3	20	15	100
No	12	18	24	35	32	47	68	100

## VI. CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS, LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH SUGGESTIONS

This pilot study intended to assist in short listing the significant workplace issues perceived by employees in (DARS), building upon the suggestions made by researchers who probed satisfaction in Western work environments and culture. Even if this researcher believes that meaningful insights may be developed by anchoring the perception of satisfaction on, for instance, Maslow's version 21 of the hierarchical needs that humans seek to satisfy, this present research represents the first step of an ongoing inquiry process. For example, it is well known that creative people—artists, writers, engineering designers, etc.—do not particularly worry about the physical features of the environment. As long as certain basic convenience is provided, they only seek the challenge and the opportunity to freely engage in their pursuit. Given these conditions, they would rate the quality of their work life high.

Our goal is to eventually link inferences about the level of satisfaction to employee performance in order to facilitate decision makers in DARS on strategies to improve organizational performance. Such an approach, we admit, accepts that the premise that a "content" employee would be a better contributor to organizational excellence.

The findings presented here only do the first step—these indicate the elements of satisfaction that DARS employees are generally unsatisfied with and also a few elements that they found to be satisfactory. Overall, however, only 49% of employees were found to be satisfied. This suggests that a more expanded and insightful study should be undertaken, for, at least prima facie, the DARS workforce is perhaps only partially contributing at its full potential.

The study also compared the satisfaction of managerial and non managerial positions and it appears that the managers and positions of power, experience better satisfaction than those of the non-managerial positions. Also there was no significant difference found between the male and female employees' perceptions towards their quality of work life. This study is exploratory. It has produced incomplete evidence.

However, such initial knowledge of employee attitudes about their quality of work life in DARS would surely assist in the second phase of this research study. The second phase of this research aims to study employees of specific organizations—in order to find any organizational contextual issues that are affecting overall quality of work life in UAE and their possible linkage to organizational performance. Managerial implications of such a study would be to redesign the work, workplace, responsibilities, supervisory methods, and other aspects to improve satisfaction since a satisfied worker generally has been found to be more productive, hence of more value to the organization.

Thus this pilot survey of satisfaction in DARS has tossed up several interesting questions. These will be probed in a larger survey to help DARS managers and administrators better design the work environment in order for DARS to gain productivity, a satisfied and motivated workforce, raising the sense of involvement and contributions, for example. This is expected to cut losses in productive time wasted on the job or due to low

motivation. It will also make it possible for us to compare the DARS results with other similar studies to reveal any unique aspects of managing the multi-cultural white-collar workforce that is here to help build a globally competitive Dubai Airports. We would suggest that a customer satisfaction survey is to be done every year, by having a continual feedback channels such as CRM discussion board and should be always available for the customers' feedback, and have an internal committee to look at the suggestions, evaluate them, and make them possible to act upon.

### REFERENCES

- [1]. Axtell, C., Wall, T., Stride, C., Pepper, K., Clegg, C., Gardner, P., et al. (2002). Familiarity breeds content: The impact of exposure to change on employee openness and wellbeing. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 75, 217-231.
- [2]. Balloub, Godwitch, O. H. (2007). Quality Of "Work Life" Have You Invested In Your Organization's Future. *Strategic Finance*
- [3]. Dargahi.H. Yazdi,S.(2007). Quality of work life in Tehran University Of medical sciences hospitals' clinical Laboratories employees, *Pak J Medical Sciences* Vol. 23 No. 4 630-633
- [4]. Darwish A. Yousef (2001). Islamic work ethic – A moderator between organizational commitment and job satisfaction in a cross-cultural context, *Personnel Review*, Volume: 30, Issue: 2, Page 152 - 169
- [5]. Dubai Airports Company website [www.dubaiairports.ae](http://www.dubaiairports.ae)
- [6]. Gospel,H.(2003) Quality of working life: A review on changes in work organization, conditions of employment and work life arrangements , *Conditions of Work and Employment Series* No. 1
- [7]. Havlovic, S.J. (1991). Quality of Work life and Human Resource Outcome, *Industrial Relations*,vol 30,No.3.
- [8]. Huselid M.A.(1995). The impact of Human Resource Management practices on turnover, productivity and corporate financial performance, *Academy of Management Journal* Vo 38 No 3, pp 635-672
- [9]. Interview with VP Commercial Unit Mr. Huraiz bin Huraiz. Nov. 23, 2016.
- [10]. Lau R.SM. Bruce E.M (1998). A win-win paradigm for quality of work life and Business Performance. *Human Resource Development Quarterly*, 9(3): 211-26
- [11]. Lehto,A.(2005). Finnish quality of work life survey, available at [tp://www.eurofound.europa.eu/publications/htmlfiles/ef04111.htm](http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/publications/htmlfiles/ef04111.htm)
- [12]. Maslow, Abraham (1943). A Theory of Human Motivation, *Psychological Review* 50(4):370-96.
- [13]. Reilly,P.A.(1998). Balancing Flexibility—Meeting the Interests of Employer and Employee *European Journal of Work & Organizational Psychology*, 1998, 7 (1), 7–22
- [14]. Roy, Rishu (2007). Impact of Quality of Work Life on Job Performance: A Study of Print Media Employees. *ICFAI Journal of Organizational Behavior*, Vol. V, No. 1, pp. 26-31.
- [15]. Shamir, B. and Salomon,I., (1985). Work-at-home and the quality of working life. *Acad. Manag.*, 10:455-64
- [16]. Straw, R.J. and Heckscher,C.C(1984). QWL: New working relationships in the communication industry. *Labor Studies J.*, 9: 261-274
- [17]. Successful Travel Retail, article from the Harvard business review Magazine, July 08
- [18]. Suleiman A.M. and Abdulla M.H (2005). Towards a high-performance workplace: managing corporate climate and conflict, *Management Decision*, Volume: 43 Issue: 5, Page: 720 – 733
- [19]. Van Saane, N., Sluiter, J. K., Verbeek, J. H. A. M., & Frings-Dresen, M. H. W. (2003). Reliability and Validity of Instruments Measuring Job Satisfaction: A systematic review, *Occupational Medicine*, 53(3), 191-200.
- [20]. Walton, R.E. (1975). Criteria for Quality of Working Life. In Davis, L.E., Cherns, A.B. and Associates (Eds.) *The Quality of Working Life*, The Free Press, New York, NY, 1: 91-104
- [21]. Worrall, L. & Cooper, C. L. (2006). *The Quality of Working Life: Managers' Health and Well-being*. Executive Report, Chartered Management Institute

Dr. Mohammed Shehada . "Retail Services at Dubai Airports Company." *IOSR Journal Of Humanities And Social Science (IOSR-JHSS)* 22.7 (2017): 70-75.