
Analyzing the Influence of Dimensions of Customer Based Airline Brand Equity Toward Brand Trust. Case Study of Customer of Citilink

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Abstract

Indonesia's airline industry has rapidly grown from the past 10 years for both full-service carriers and low-cost carriers. Customers are faced by lots of LCC airlines; these airlines brand performance being independently surveyed by Frontier Research three times a year and awarded with "Top Brand Award". Therefore, the purpose of this research is to determine the factor that influences Citilink Indonesia brand trust in order to increase their position in Top Brand Award. The model used in this study incorporated Flight Service Quality, Brand Affect, Self-Congruence, Brand Awareness and Brand Association compatibility into Customer-Based Airline Brand Equity as a determinant of Brand Trust. The findings revealed that Flight Service Quality had a significant influence followed by Brand Awareness and Brand Association. However, neither Brand Affect nor Self-Congruence was found to have an influence on Brand Trust. These findings provided implications for management and recommendations to step their Brand Trust.

Keywords: Customer Based Airline Brand Equity, Brand Trust, Airline Industry, Low-Cost Carrier

I. INTRODUCTION

As it was included in the world fastest growing sector; tourism is the world's main economic sector (The World Tourism Organization, 2019). Global travel and tourism sector have recorded growth at 4% between January and March 2019 compared to the same period on 2018 (The World Tourism Organization, 2019) and tourism industry in 2018 has provide more than 319 million jobs to the world economy; this rise was higher than the growth rate of the world's GDP, which was also the second-highest development sector in the world for eight consecutive years (World Travel & Tourism Council, 2019). Despite the global economy is heading into recession, the tourism sector plays an important part in minimizing the effect of global economic recession (The World Bank, 2018). As a result, many countries depend on the profits of the travel and tourism industry in order to cover the budget deficit and support the country GDP growth (Mammadov, 2012).

In Indonesia, the tourism industry is booming. The data from Indonesia Ministry of Tourism (2020) shows that Indonesia received over 16 million foreign visitors in 2019, with more than 3 million increase of visitors compared to the previous year. This dramatic rise in the number of tourists is not simply the product of ambitious policy initiatives and attempts to fuel business growth (Guild, 2018). In 2018, Indonesia's travel and tourism growth increased by 7.8% twice as much as the global average growth rate; and it contributed as much as USD 62.6 billion as well as providing 13 million jobs in Indonesia (World Travel & Tourism Council, 2019).

Indonesia's aviation industry is currently facing a robust growth market which indicates from the increased passenger numbers, increased number of flights and new routes also the number of new planes purchased by the local airlines (Global Business Guide Indonesia, 2017). Indonesia airline business value and new aircraft order just beneath China which was in the first place; consequently, Indonesia aviation industry growth was the second fastest in the world after China (Global Business Guide Indonesia, 2017). In the next 20 years, The World Bank estimates that Indonesia air travel will grow from 130 million to more than 240 million people (Traveller, n.d.)

Top Brand Award is recognition of a certain brand that has been chosen by the consumers through the online survey with three parameters which are Top of Mind Share, Market Share and Commitment Share as based on the survey (Top Brand Award, n.d.). Citilink successfully reached the fourth position in 2015 after its first debut in 2012 and currently it was one of the top brands in the airline category in Indonesia for five consecutive years. However, Lion Air was still above Citilink and placed in 2nd place for 5 consecutive years despite all the cases and problems that happened in Lion Air. Therefore, this research

is necessary to be conducted to analyze the impact of Citilink Indonesia Customer Based Airline Brand Equity (CBABE) dimensions on its brand trust.

II. RESEARCH MODEL AND HYPOTHESIS

Brand equity is believed to add incremental value, utility, and primary capital for a large number of organizations. Resilient brands have capitalized by increasing the number customer service and product purchase, by understanding intangible factors that emboldens customer's trust (Keller, 2015; Chen & Chang, 2008). Both researchers and practitioners have discussed the importance of brand equity to the service industry in terms of marketing and business management. In addition, brand management is essential for an aviation sector. Nonetheless, brand equity research and literature on the airline industry is so scarce that more research is needed (Chen & Tseng, 2010).

Chen and Chang (2008) tackle the value of brand equity in the aviation sector. The correlation between purchase intention, brand preference and brand equity were examined on a customer-based brand equity basis. Their findings indicated a positive impact on the customer's buying intention and brand preference on brand equity. Furthermore, Chen and Tseng (2010) conveyed the importance of CBBE in the aviation sector and carried out further research using consumer perspective and operationalization, With four variables specifically: brand awareness, brand image, perceived quality, and brand loyalty. It has defined inter-relationships and their impact among these four dimensions.

Thakshak (2018) in his study developed a CBABE model with quality of flight service, brand effect, self-congruence, brand recognition and mark association as their element.

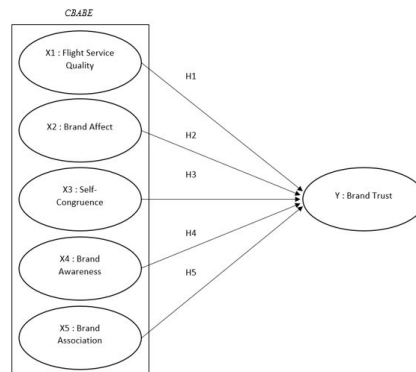


Figure 1. Research Model

Source: Author

2.1. Flight Service Quality and Brand Trust

Perceived quality is the consequence of features such as basic functions, characteristics, functionality, efficiency, economic life of the company product and actual quality of service of the company (Aaker, Managing Brand Equity, 1991) (Aaker, Measuring brand equity across products and markets, 1996). Customer's decision on brand service, overall service performance and service efficiency is known to be perceived quality. It is not, however, the only distinguishing characteristic of brand service and of actual service excellence (Bamert & Wehrli, 2005). The emotional stage of customer purchase activities consists of the image of the brand and perceived quality. This indicates the customer's assessment of the purchase experience and its association with the brand. Both intangible and tangible attributes of the brand have an impact on perceived quality. A positive service experience of the customer's quality leads to a positive image in the memory of the customer. Positive cognitive outcomes are derived from the customer's attitude towards the brand and the positive impact of the customer's actual observations. Consideration of purchase willingness and positive cognitive outcomes will enhance customer loyalty, recommendation and future repurchase (Chen & Tseng, 2010) (Taneja, 2016) (Keller K., 2015). Increased service quality in the airline brand focuses on flight safety, on in-flight services, on the aptitude of the airline cabin crew and on the staff, who build brand trust (Chen & Tseng, 2010) (Taneja, 2010) (Shaw, 2016). Marketing benefits and outcomes are derived from brand loyalty, leading to brand trust. This is due to the positive effect of brand marketing and, therefore, to the generation of brand trustworthiness (Delgado-Ballester & Munuera-Alemán, 2005). Therefore:

H1.0 : Flight service quality does not influence brand trust

H1.1 : Flight service quality influence brand trust

2.2. Brand Affect and Brand Trust

Positive brand effect directly triggers the intention of the consumer to purchase and strengthens customer loyalty (Oliver, Rust, & Varki, 1997). Researchers also recognized that positive word-of-mouth marketing impacts more on consumer loyalty than cognitive elements such as price and quality (Yu & Dean, 2001). It is considered that behavioral goals such as consumer loyalty and brand recommendation are driven by strong emotional satisfaction. Despite the fact, the brand's positive reputation is strengthened by fulfilling consumer needs and accommodating the consumer wants (Ladhari, 2009). Chaudhuri & Holbrook (2001) affirm that the hedonistic advertising appearance and the symbolic portrayal of the brand have no significant advantages. It creates a greater possibility for creating positive brand effects if the emotional elements are positive and superior to the brand product. Brand effect and brand trust was strongly affected by the personal loyalty of the consumer and by the quality of the

brand product. Brand improved performance factor indirectly relates brand effects to brand trust (Steven, Dong, & Dresner, 2011). Therefore:

H2.0 : Brand affect does not influence brand trust

H2.1 : Brand affect influence brand trust

2.3. Self-Congruence and Brand Trust

The self-concept of the customer is expressed by means of a symbolic consumption of service and product. Positive self-perception and self-congruity through brand experience and customer satisfaction have a positive impact on the customer's behavioral intentions (Hosany & Martin, 2012). Tourist customers revisiting tourism destinations, for example, are increasing when self-image and symbolic meanings match the image of a tourist destination. As well as tourism, hospitality and other services, the main factors affecting the revisiting of customers are mainly due to self-congruity (Ekinci, Sirakaya-Turk, & Preciado, 2013) (Aaker, 2011). According to the scholar Ekinci and Riley (2003) the reasons that consumer behavior has an impact on ideal self-congruence and actual self-congruence in the context of service evaluation. The study indicates a variable influence between ideal self-congruence and actual self-congruence. It is argued that the theory of self-congruity is relevant to the tourism industry, which is derived from the post-consumption assessment. Ideal self-congruence is more important than actual self-congruence, which is related to customer satisfaction (Hosany & Martin, 2012). Other literature has shown that the leading driver of brand equity and brand trust is supported by the brand loyalty component. On the other hand, customer satisfaction and brand recommendations are key characteristics of a high level of brand loyalty (Delgado-Ballester & Munuera-Alemán, 2005). Therefore:

H3.0 : Self-congruence does not influence brand trust

H3.1 : Self-congruence influence brand trust

2.4. Brand Awareness and Brand Trust

Brand recognition is a key prerequisite and deciding factor, whether or not the organization is involved in the customer's selection process. The appreciation of brand services arising from the awareness-raising impact is the first step towards the potential purchase and repurchase of brand offerings (Nakprasit & Mason, 2012). Scholar Aaker (1991) It argues that brand recognition is the capacity of the potential consumer to recognize and recollect a particular brand that is part of the association of other product groupings. Based on CBBE's point of view, marketing communication strategies boost brand value by growing awareness of the brand. These marketing activities bring together the brand by associating the brand image in the memory of the customer, fostering positive feelings, and helping their judgment to develop a strong customer brand connection (Keller, 2009). It can be understood that the various

dimensions of brand knowledge are intended to have an interactive impact. For example, good brand recognition, familiarity and brand knowledge are important for certain forms of emotional feelings, attitudes and thoughts (Keller, 2015). Brand recognition of marketing promotions, the growth of consumer relationships and the affirmation of reliability are positive indicators for brand loyalty (Delgado-Ballester E. , 2004). The current research posits that brand awareness has an influence on brand trust. Therefore:

H4.0 : Brand awareness does not influence brand trust

H4.1 : Brand awareness influence brand trust

2.5. Brand Association and Brand Trust

Keller (1993) classifies the association of brands into three major groups, namely behaviors, qualities, and benefits. The buying behavior of the customer has a direct impact on the interpretation of the brand's attitudes, which are defined by individuality, favorability, and power. The quality of the brand is the tendency of the consumer to remember specific features of the brand product. Given these facts, it is clear that the quality of the brand's goods will improve the brand's favorability, fulfill the customer's needs, and wishes. The performance of the brand is determined by the degree to which the reputation of the brand is preserved in the minds of the consumer (Gordon, et al., 2010). Positive brand identity establishes and creates positive brand trust and brand value through ads, product branding, brand logo and brand symbols (Pitta & Katsanis, 1995) (Kapferer, 2012). Customers with a higher level of loyalty are ultimately associated with a strong brand trust organization (Delgado-Ballester & Munuera-Alemán, 2005). It is believed that brand trust is largely motivated by the affiliation of brands predominantly in the service sector. It is due to the identity of the service provider of the company, which is capable of providing the commitment and guarantee of the company to consumers (Phan & Ghantous, 2013). Therefore:

H5.0 : Brand association does not influence brand trust

H5.1 : Brand association influence brand trust

III. METHODOLOGY

3.1. The Sample Data and Data Collection

This research will use a causal analysis to describe the causes and effects of variables (Cooper & Schindler, 2014). It also includes quantitative analysis by means of a case study and questionnaire. Therefore, the collected data are represented in numerical form. Non-probability sampling specifically the purposive judgmental sampling technique used in this study. As defined by Sekaran & Bougie (2016), non-probability sampling means a sampling

method where the subjects are picked by a subjective approach. With purposive judgmental sampling, the samples are chosen underlying the researcher's predetermined criteria and judgement (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2016).

Respondent genders consist of 60% male or equivalent to 100 respondents. The remaining 40% or 67 respondents are females. Respondent age is dominated by those aged between 17-24 with amounts equal to 32% or 53 respondents. Followed by those aged 25-34 with a percentage of 27%, equaling to 46 respondents, aged ≥ 45 with a percentage of 23%, equaling to 38 respondents, and the rest 18% or equal to 30 respondents are those aged 35-44. The occupation of the respondents is dominated by employees with 37% or 62 respondents followed by students with 28% or 46 respondents, entrepreneurs with 24% or 40 respondents and the rest 11% or 19 respondents are unemployed or retired.

3.2. Measurements

Well-arranged questionnaires were drafted in a particular order and structure to engage with the participants encouraging them to complete all the survey questions. Most popular data collection method is the structured survey with the aid of questionnaire (Malhotra & Dash, 2008). The survey questionnaire had a predetermined set of responses with 5 – Likert scale, which was applied with alternative questionnaire patterns.

IV. FINDINGS

4.1. Validity and reliability of the measures

Prior testing the model, exploratory factor analysis was executed. The KMO value of Flight Service Quality 0.731; Brand Affect 0.747; Self-Congruence 0.500; Brand Awareness 0.857; Brand Association 0.668; Brand Trust; 0.703 exceeds the recommended value of 0.5 (Adam, 2018). Bartlett's Test of Sphericity illustrates statistical significance with ($p=0.000$). These values back the notion of factorability of the correlation matrix. The results obtained from factor analysis propose five factors solutions.

Cronbach's alpha value enabled to assess reliability of the scales, for each dimensional scale. Results from the data analysis, has revealed that Cronbach's alpha value for reliability of Flight Service Quality 0.773; Brand Affect 0.899; Self-Congruence 0.895; Brand Awareness 0.884; Brand Association 0.830; Brand Trust; 0.888, which is above the acceptable level of 0.70 (Hair et al.,2009).

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test		
Unstandardized Residual		
N		167
Normal	Mean	.0000000
Paramete	Std. Deviation	1.28912835
rs ^{a,b}		
Most	Absolute	.052
Extreme	Positive	.052
Differenc	Negative	-.044
es		
Test Statistic		.052
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.200 ^{c,d}
a. Test distribution is Normal. b. Calculated from data. c. Lilliefors Significance Correction. d. This is a lower bound of the true significance.		

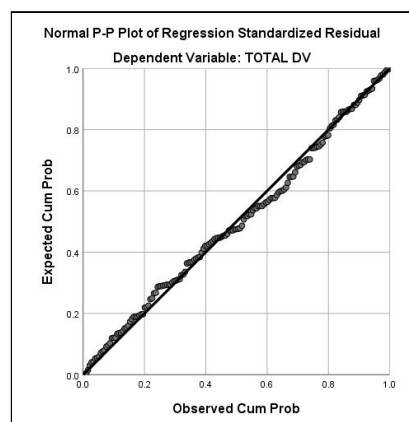
Table 1. Normality Test Result

Source: Author's from SPSS Output

The table above shows the value of Asymp. Sig as .200 which is higher than 0.05. This means that the data obtained is distributed normally.

Figure 2. P-Plot

Source: Author from SPSS Output



From the figure above, we can conclude that the data have a significant linear relationship because the data spread off around the line and it travels upward from bottom left to upper right corner.

Table 3. Multicollinearity Result
Source: Author's from SPSS Output

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	1.632	.673		2.425	.016		
	Flight Service Quality	.262	.061	.316	4.284	.000	.425	2.355
	Brand Affect	.184	.085	.192	2.154	.033	.290	3.445
	Self-Congruence	-.095	.093	-.075	-1.022	.308	.424	2.360
	Brand Awareness	.164	.044	.294	3.741	.000	.374	2.677
	Brand Association	.155	.069	.162	2.246	.026	.445	2.245

a. Dependent Variable: Brand Trust

From the data above we could see that the collinearity statistics based on tolerance of all variable results are all above 0.10 as well as the VIF score of all variables are all below 10.0. Therefore, there is no multicollinearity happening in the data and we can proceed to multiple regression processes.

4.2. Hypothesis testing

Table 4. ANOVA Result

Source: Author's from SPSS Output

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	464.672	5	92.934	54.238	.000 ^b
	Residual	275.867	161	1.713		
	Total	740.539	166			

a. Dependent Variable: Brand Trust
b. Predictors: (Constant), Brand Association, Self-Congruence, Flight Service Quality, Brand Awareness, Brand Affect

Table above shows that there was a simultaneous influence of the independent variables on the dependent variable since the f-count (54.238) was higher than the f-table (2.43). It also displays that the significance value (0.000) surpassed the α (0.05).

Table 5. Model Summary Result

Source: Author's from SPSS Output

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	1.632	.673		2.425	.016		
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	Brand Association	.155	.069	.162	2.246	.026	.445	2.245

a. Dependent Variable: Brand Trust

From the model summary table above, the value of R is 0.792. which means that there is a strong relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable (brand trust). The value of Adjusted R Square is 0.627 or 62.7% percent. This means that the independent variable as a whole contributes 61% in affecting the dependent variable while the rest (100% - 61% = 39%) is contributed by other factors that are not analyzed in this study.

Hypothesis	t-Test		F Test		Hypothesis Conclusion
	t-score > t-table (1.947)	Sig. < 0.05	F Score > F Table (2.43)	Sig. < 0.05	
H1 : FSQ - BT	4.284	0.000	65.17	0.000	Accepted
H2 : Baf - BT	2.154	0.033			Accepted
H3 : SC - BT	-1.022	0.308			Rejected
H4 : Baw - BT	3.741	0.000			Accepted
H5 : Bas - BT	2.246	0.026			Accepted

Table 6. Hypothesis Conclusion

Source: Author

4.2.1. First Hypothesis

H1.0 : Flight service quality does not influence brand trust

H1.1 : Flight service quality influence brand trust

Previous study (Thakshak, 2018) showed that 'flight service quality' has a negative impact on 'brand trust'. However, it was contrary to the result in this research where 'flight service quality' has a positive impact on 'brand trust' with a contribution of 31.6%. Nonetheless, the findings corroborate the study of Zehir, et al. (2011) and Parasuraman, et al. (1988)

4.2.2. Second Hypothesis

H2.0 : Brand affect does not influence brand trust

H2.1 : Brand affect influence brand trust

The study further revealed that 'brand affect' was found affecting 'brand trust' since Sig. value: $0.033 < 0.05$ and t-score : $2.154 > 1.947$. This result was similar to the result of Thakshak (2018). From the T-Test result, brand affect does influence brand trust as much as 19.2%.

4.2.3. Third Hypothesis

H3.0 : Self-congruence does not influence brand trust

H3.1 : Self-congruence influence brand trust

The study further revealed that 'self-congruence' has a negative effect on 'brand trust' since Sig. value: $0.874 > 0.05$ and t-score : $-0.159 < 1.947$. This result was contrary to the result of Thakshak (2018). However, these findings were in accordance with the study of Han, et al. (2015). This could be because customers see LCC as non-luxurious. Therefore, consumers that use Citilink Indonesia do not want to have congruence with other passengers who are in the same flight. Consumers flying with Citilink Indonesia as their functional value rather than symbolic value.

4.2.4. Fourth Hypothesis

H4.0 : Brand awareness does not influence brand trust

H4.1 : Brand awareness influence brand trust

Consistent with prior CBABE study (Thakshak, 2018), the result confirms that 'brand awareness' positively affects 'brand trust' (Sig. value $0.000 < 0.05$). In this study, it affects 'brand trust' by 29.4%. This explains that customer awareness of Citilink Indonesia brand should increase their trust in the brand.

4.2.5. Fifth Hypothesis

H5.0 : Brand association does not influence brand trust

H5.1 : Brand association influence brand trust

Regarding H5, this study reveals that 'brand association' has a positive effect on 'brand trust' (Sig. value $0.009 < 0.05$) with 16.2% contribution. However, this result was in contrast with previous study by Thakshak (2018) which showed that 'brand association' has a negative effect on 'brand trust'. However, these findings were in accordance with the study of Han, et al. (2015). This could be because of the positive association of Citilink Indonesia brand in its customer and society. Citilink Indonesia customers trust the Citilink brand because of the positive association of the brand.

V. CONCLUSION

This research wishes to find out the impact of different variables of CBABE toward brand trust with a case study of Citilink Indonesia. This research uses customer-based airline brand equity variables which are flight service quality, brand affect, self-congruence, brand awareness and brand association.

This study gathers questionnaires from previous study to be distributed to respondents and a total of 167 data are obtained and was used to find the results presented in chapter 4. Multiple linear regression was used to analyze the data gathered. Following the data gathered and presented in chapter 4, the following conclusions can be made:

1. The CBABE confirmed to have an effect on brand trust on Citilink Indonesia.
2. Four hypotheses named flight service quality, brand affect, brand awareness and brand association are accepted as they all have a significant effect towards brand trust. Flight service quality has the highest value in affecting the brand equity as much as 31.6% followed by brand awareness with 29.4%, brand affect with 19.2% and brand association with 16.2%.
3. Hypothesis 3 which is self-congruence is rejected as it has no effect on brand trust from the t-test result
4. All independent variables influenced the brand trust on Citilink Indonesia by 88.9%

VI. RECOMMENDATION

First, Citilink Indonesia expected to make more publication or advertising in digital advertising platforms such as social media advertising (Facebook, Instagram, etc), Google Display Ads as well as traditional platforms such as television or newspaper for their outstanding flight safety record with zero accident and high on-time performance record. By means of this publication, Citilink Indonesia able to get public interest and awareness of Citilink flight safety and on-time performance which according to Delgado-Ballester (2005) the positive effect of brand marketing generating more brand trust as well as flight safety and on-time performance able to escalate brand trust (Chen & Tseng, 2010).

Second, Citilink Indonesia expected to create a better organization culture which would increase employee engagement and empowerment. These organization culture used by The Ritz-Carlton by giving each of their employee a "Credo Card" which describes the core elements of their organization culture which include six aspects: Credo, Twelve Service Values, Mystique, Three Steps of Service, Motto, and Employee Promise. By these

organization cultures The Ritz Carlton is able to increase their customer experience (Borzykowski, 2018). Increasing customer experience can be done as simple as sending a reminder email or text message to customers a week or 3-days prior to their departure. Giving the empowerment for flight attendant to give a small gift for kids that fly with Citilink Indonesia also play an important role in building brand loyalty which lead to brand trust; according to Kurniawan and Haryanto (2011) children are easy to memorize small things that memorable for them and able to influence their family. Last but not least, assisting disable people start from the check-in process up to the boarding process which have been done in Garuda Indonesia and other flight attendants and ground staff aptitude and attitude was important to increase brand trust of Citilink Indonesia.

Third, from the picture above, some Citilink Indonesia passengers make a report on social media and online travel agents such as Traveloka and TripAdvisor that Citilink Indonesia failed to respond to their complaint and problem in a timely manner. For these reasons, it is important for Citilink Indonesia to improve their customer service skill, knowledge, and ability to handle customers that would like to make any complaints or assistance regarding their flight. Citilink Indonesia customer services also expected to be able to provide more information regarding refund policy and flight cancellation in order to prevent customers from making any negative publication into social media or online travel agent reviews that could decrease customer satisfaction and affect Citilink Indonesia brand trust.

Fourth, people are more aware of the capability of mobile application in this case was Citilink mobile app called "BetterFly Citilink", where people are able to do an online booking, online check-in up to online boarding pass and online customer services. Therefore, it is important for Citilink Indonesia to make any significant improvement on their "BetterFly Citilink" mobile app both in Google Play Store and App Store. From the picture above we are able to see that from both Google Play Store and App Store customer review, BetterFly Citylink gets 3.5 out of 5 rating, most customers that using BetterFly Citylink app are complaining about the reliability of the application. It is important that Citilink Indonesia make more significant improvements on their mobile application which could increase customer satisfaction, time efficiency as well as reducing the number of ground staff in the future.

Fifth, it is important for Citilink Indonesia to provide an additional or more premium services for their customer since from the data of this research it shows that more than 35% of the respondent having monthly income more than 10 million rupiah and almost 10% of the respondent are flying with Citilink Indonesia with more than 7 times a year. This indicates

that most of Citilink Indonesia customers are in wealthy condition and with the possibility of customers that their ticket was purchased by the company. Citilink Indonesia is able to provide additional services with additional cost such as pre-purchase course menu for in-flight meals such as full-service airlines or a premium line such as Sky Priority in SkyTeam group. This additional package could attract business passengers that their ticket was provided by the company, therefore they could spend more of their money on additional services that they can experience such as in full-service carriers. Citilink Indonesia also able to provide a newspaper as well as light snack such as bread with mineral water to all of their passenger as a competitive advantage compared to their competitor in LCC airline in Indonesia, this could lead to the higher customer satisfaction which according to Delgado-Ballester (2005) will increase brand loyalty and leading to brand trust; just by giving a light snack, customer are expected to perceived this attention as something that even Citilink was a LCC, Citilink Indonesia do pay attention to their customer basic needs.

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