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A STUDY ON DEMOGRAPHICS AND SATISFACTION IN ONLINE TRAVEL

Chakravarthi Koundinya

Associate Professor–Marketing, IBS Hyderabad,

Abstract

Consumers' satisfaction in an online environment is a function of lot many factors wherein demographics has a key role to play. The present study explores the association between consumers' demographics and the online satisfaction while consuming online travel service. Using chi-square test, various hypotheses were tested and the results were interpreted. It was found that 'Age, 'Income' and the 'Position in the organization' have association with the satisfaction in an online environment while consuming train travel service.

Keywords: *'online travel', 'online satisfaction', 'demographics'*

INTRODUCTION : Internet usage in India has increased tremendously during the last decade. Number of internet users in India has been on a continuous rise over the last few years and it was observed i.e., active internet users stand at 192 million out of 243 million overall internet users. The internet is one of the major developments in communications and information transfer. Consumers use internet to acquire some information regarding products and services and many a times they may approach the traditional outlets for actual purchase. Indian Internet penetration is just at 16% of the population, but when absolute numbers are considered, this can be much more. According to Internet and Mobile association of India (IAMAI) and IMRB, internet users in India has crossed 200 million mark and estimates that by June 2014, there could be 243 million internet users in the country making India as the world's second largest internet base after china.(Ping Zhang, 2006) in the study found that Demographics have significant impact on consumers' shopping intention

as well as behavior and satisfaction along with other external environmental factors, personal characteristics and e-store environment. Hence, this study focuses on select demographics (gender, age, education, income, profession) association with online satisfaction.

LITERATURE REVIEW: Much of a literature was on adoption of online channel with models like TAM, TPB and TRA etc., which was widely used by most of the researchers in studying the issues related to adoption/satisfaction. Few studies tired to identify the relationship between demographics and online adoption or satisfaction. Blanca Hernández (2011) analyzed whether the socio-economic variables…..Age, Gender and Income have an influence on the experienced e-shoppers ie., consumes who often purchase travel tickets online. It was found that these variables moderate neither the influence of previous use of internet nor the perceptions of e-commerce. According to Ellen Garbarin (2004), Gender plays a role in perception of level of risk in the online purchasing environment. The study opined that female perceive a higher level of risk in online purchasing than men. Also, compared to men, womens' willingness to buy online increases and there is a reduction in perceived risk if a site is been recommended by a friend. But, one of the earlier studies by Bhatnagar, A, Misra, S.,andRao (2000), found that the demographics are not significant in determining the online store though there is a difference in types of products bought by males and females online. Few studies made exclusively on travel industry, one of such study by Dae-Young Kim (2007) examined the gender differences in the context of online travel website content preferences and functionality. It was found that there were gender differences both in terms of attitudes to information channels and travel website functionality preferences.Study by Alejandro Gonzalez (2006) indicated that older consumers represent a sizable amount of market for the travel products and services. It was indicated that older consumers have greatest personal disposable income among effluent segment and so online travel companies are required to study to capture the

real marketing value. Related to this, Yun Wan (2011) studied whether the impact of Age differs across various types of goods and the study focused on Influence of Age & Shopping Experience on classification of search, experience and credence goods. It was identified that age of the consumer and webshopping experience are significant factors. Erlane K Ghani et.al.,(2009) studied on whether demographics' profile influence online shopping during which five demographic variables namely age, gender, job designation, salary and marital status were considered. It was found that males were more positive compared to female respondents towards online shopping attitude. Marital status was found to be insignificant, where as consumers with top management, income group tend to perform online shopping than with lower income or salary consumers. With the age group 30 to 39 online shopping is more compared to (20-29) and >40 years old indicating that online shoppers are mostly within the group of (30-39) age category. Michael Conyette(2011) studied the impact of demographics on online purchase intention and investigated which of these demographic variables should be considered to segment the online consumer base in travel industry. Data was collected from a sample of 1142 respondents and it was found that Age had no significant relationship with online booking intention, whereas with the rising education levels there is a positive relationship with online booking intention.

Table 1-1: DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENTS

		INTERNET USERS		ONLINE TICKET BOOKING	
Demographic Variable		Frequency	percentage	Frequency	percentage
Age	Below 20 years	15	2.1	10	1.9

	20-30 years	447	61.3	305	59.3
	31-50 years	246	33.7	188	36.6
	Above 50 years	21	2.9	11	2.1
	Total	729	100	514	100
Gender	Male	582	79.4	416	80.9
	Female	147	20.6	98	19.1
	Total	729	100	514	100
Profession	GOVERNMENT	72	9.9	53	10.3
	PRIVATE	519	71.2	371	72.2
	SEFL EMPLOYED / BUSINESS	138	18.9	90	17.5
	Total	729	100	514	100
Position in the organization	LOWER or JUNIOR LEVEL	153	21	94	22.2
	MIDDLE LEVEL	358	49.1	270	63.7
	SENIOR LEVEL	80	11	60	14.1
	Total	591	81.1	424	100
Software professional	SOFTWARE PROFESSIONAL	128	17.6	98	19.1
	NON-SOFTWARE PROFESSIONAL	463	63.5	326	63.4
	Total	591	81.1	328	82.5
Computer at Home	YES	622	85.3	461	89.7
	NO	107	14.7	53	10.3

	Total	729	100	514	100
Highest Education Qualification	Under Graduate	67	9.2	24	4.7
	Graduate	256	35.1	166	32.3
	Post Graduation& above	406	55.7	324	63
	Total	729	100	514	100
Income Levels	Below 20000	292	40.1	165	32.1
	20,000 to 50000	304	41.7	236	45.9
	Above 50,000	133	18.2	113	22
	Total	729	100	514	100
Internet connection at home	YES	526	72.2	401	78
	NO	203	27.8	113	22
	Total	729	100	514	100
Use internet at home	NO	344	46.8	238	46.3
	YES	388	53.2	276	53.7
	Total	729	100	514	100
Use internet at work place	no	448	61.5	336	65.4
	yes	281	38.5	178	34.6
	Total	729	100	514	100
Use internet at Internet café	NO	537	73.7	399	77.6
	YES	192	26.3	115	22.4
	Total	729	100	514	100
Use internet via Others-mobile	NO	674	92.5	469	91.2
	YES	55	7.5	45	8.8
	Total	729	100	514	100

METHODOLOGY: Consumers who use internet for their purchases were identified and were asked to answer a set of questions through a structured questionnaire. After capturing the Respondents demographics, they were asked the purpose of internet usage along with train tickets booking pattern on a scale indicating (Very Frequently, less frequently, Occasionally & Not at all). Purposive sampling' technique was used to identify the respondents from whom the primary data was collected. The respondent was chosen based on the criteria (i). Should be using internet; (ii). Purchased train ticket online during the past 6 months; (iii). Purchased using his/her own credit or debit card/online banking/ own online wallet; (iv) Should be staying in city of Hyderabad. Hypotheses were prepared and tested using Statistical tools like Chi-square and cross-tabs. The detailed information about the customers with their demographics are being captured in the table 1.1 given above.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION: Consumers who use internet for the purchase of different products and services were identified and were asked whether they also purchase train tickets online. Out of the total sample 952 surveyed, 729 of them are found using internet and rest 123 were not using internet. Hence the respondents who were using internet were 729, of which 514 were the respondents who were booking train tickets online and the remaining 215 were approaching traditional ways of booking train tickets though they use internet (via Agent or Railway ticket counter). The final sample size to measure the factors influencing online purchase intention as well as online purchase satisfaction is 729. This sample was identified from the city of Hyderabad who has been booking train tickets for their travel purposes. The detailed demographic profile of the respondents is shown in the table above. It was observed that 76.5% of respondents use internet and out of which almost 70% respondents use internet for their train tickets booking. As indicated in the table, the age group 20-30 years is the group that is using internet majorly. The respondents who use internet among the age group below 20 years and

above 50 years remained low because of the access to the internet usage devices. Within the age group (31-50) there are almost 34% of them use internet and a little more of them 36% use internet for booking train tickets.Out of 729 respondents who use internet frequently, only 19.6% of them trade share very frequently, 27.9% of them indulge in purchasing Electronic goods via internet; 55.6% of them purchase books, gifts etc., via internet and the highest percentage of frequently bought product is travel tickets, with travel services like booking travel tickets like air tickets, bus and cab services recording 56.5%. Out of 514 consumers who book train tickets online, the following tables provide us the usage pattern of internet for other purposes among online train travel ticket purchasers. Consumers buying Electronic goods may or may not buy train tickets online. Hence, analysis is also carried out by creating Hypotheses to understand whether there exists any association between consumers purchasing other products/service online and purchasing TRAIN tickets online.

Association of Online Satisfaction & AGE

H_1: There is an association between AGE of the consumer and ONLINE SATISFACTION

Table 1-2: ASSOCIATION OF ONLINE SATISFACTION & AGE

		SATISFACTION (Binned)		Total
		HIGH	LOW	
AGE	Below 20 years	5	5	10
	20-30 years	180	125	305
	31-50 years	86	102	188
	Above 50 years	8	3	11
Total		279	235	514

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	9.858[a]	3	.020

Here, p value is less than 0.05, and so null hypothesis is rejected&H_1 is accepted. Hence, it can be concluded that there is association between Online Satisfaction and Consumers' AGE.

Association of Online Satisfaction & GENDER

H_2: There is an association between GENDER of the consumer and ONLINE SATISFACTION

Table 1-3: ASSOCIATION OF ONLINE SATISFACTION & GENDER

		SATISFACTION (Binned)		Total
		HIGH	LOW	
GENDER	Male	224	192	416
	Female	55	43	98
Total		279	235	514

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	.166[a]	1	.684

Here, p value is not less than 0.05, and so null hypothesis is accepted& H_2 is rejected. Hence, it can be concluded that there is no association between Online Satisfaction and Consumer's GENDER.

Association of Online Satisfaction & PROFESSION

H_3: There is an association between CONSUMER PROFESSION an ONLINE SATISFACTION

Here, p value is not less than 0.05, and so null hypothesis is accepted & H_3 is

rejected. Hence, it can be concluded that there is no association between Online Satisfaction and Consumer Profession.

Table 1-4: ASSOCIATION OF ONLINE SATISFACTION & PROFESSION

		SATISFACTION (Binned)		Total
		HIGH	LOW	
PROFESSION	GOVERNMENT	22	31	53
	PRIVATE	205	166	371
	SELF EMPLOYED / BUSINESS	52	38	90
Total		279	235	514

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	1.315[a]	2	.131

Association of Online Satisfaction & INCOME

H_4: There is an association between ONLINE SATISFACTION and INCOME of the consumer

Table 1-5: ASSOCIATION OF ONLINE SATISFACTION & INCOME

		SATISFACTION (Binned)		Total
		HIGH	LOW	
Income per month	Below 20000	104	61	165
	20,000 to 50000	114	122	236
	Above 50,000	61	52	113
Total		279	235	514

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	8.490[a]	2	.014

Here, p value is less than 0.05, and so null hypothesis is rejected& H_4 is accepted. Hence, it can be concluded that there is an association between Online Satisfaction and Consumer's INCOME.

Association of Online Satisfaction & Education Qualification

H_5: There is an association between Highest Educational Qualification and ONLINE SATISFACTION

Table 1-6: ASSOCIATION OF ONLINE SATISFACTION & QUALIFICATION

		SATISFACTION (Binned)		Total
		HIGH	LOW	
Highest Educational Qualification	Under Graduate	17	7	24
	Graduate	96	70	166
	Post Graduation & above	166	158	324
Total		279	235	514

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	4.704[a]	2	.095

Here, p value is not less than 0.05, and so null hypothesis is accepted& H_5 is rejected. Hence, it can be concluded that there is no association between Online Satisfaction and EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION.

Association of Online Satisfaction & Software Profession

H_6: There is an association between ONLINE SATISFACTION and Consumer being SOFTWARE PROFESSIONAL

Table 1-7: ASSOCIATION OF ONLINE SATISFACTION & SOFTWARE PROFESSION

		SATISFACTION (Binned)		Total
		HIGH	LOW	
Software professional or Non-software prof	SOFTWARE PROFESSIONAL	55	43	98
	NON-SOFTWARE PROFESSIONAL	172	154	326
Total		227	197	424

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	.342[a]	1	.558

Here, p value is not less than 0.05, and so null hypothesis is accepted& H_6 is rejected. Hence, it can be concluded that there is no association between Online Satisfaction and Consumer being SOFTWARE PROFESSIONAL.

Association of Online Satisfaction & Position

H_7: There is an association between POSITION of consumer in the organization and ONLINE SATISFACTION

Table 1-8: ASSOCIATION OF ONLINE SATISFACTION & POSITION

		SATISFACTION (Binned)		Total
		HIGH	LOW	
POSITION in the organization	LOWER or JUNIOR LEVEL	61	33	94
	MIDDLE LEVEL	131	139	270
	SENIOR LEVEL	35	25	60
Total		227	197	424

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	8.162[a]	2	.017

Here, p value is less than 0.05, and so null hypothesis is rejected& H_7 is accepted. Hence, it can be concluded that there is an association between Online Satisfaction and Consumers' position in the organization.

FINDINGS: The association of Demographics with ONLINE SATISFACTION is being tested using Chi-square and the results are shown in the table 1-9 below. These results indicate the behavior among consumers who are already consuming online travel service. While the association of demographics with the online satisfaction gives an idea to the marketers about the variables that have association or no association, it is also important to measure the degree of association.

Table 1-9: ASSOCIATION OF DEMOGRAPHICS WITH ONLINE SATISFACTION

Demographic Variable	P value	Association with ONLINE SATISFACTION
AGE	0.020	YES
GENDER	0.684	NO Association
EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION	0.095	NO Association
PROFESSION	0.131	NO Association
SOFTWARE PROFESSION	0.558	NO Association
INCOME	0.014	YES
POSITION IN THE ORGANIZATION	0.017	YES

CONCLUSION: When it comes to association of Demographics with ONLINE SATISFACTION, two of them viz., AGE, INCOME, POSITION were found to have association as their p values were less than 0.05. There were other demographics like GENDER, PROFESSION, QUALIFICATION & whether he or she is a SOFTWARE professional which were found not significant (p>.05) with online satisfaction. This indicates that only few demographics (AGE, INCOME) only have an association with online satisfaction.

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