

Article

An Empirical Study on Consumer Attitude towards Online Reservation in a Selected City in India

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A B S T R A C T

Due to the emergence of the online reservation system, selections are made available online making it easy to book nearly any sort of trip at any time. Therefore, transport sectors spend a lot of time and money in developing online reservation systems to satisfy customers. Hence, this study was conducted to know about consumer's attitude towards online reservation. Empirical method and convenient sampling technique were used during the years 2015 to 2016 with 100 sample size. Data was gathered using a pre-tested questionnaire from the consumers in Madurai city, TN, India. Statistical techniques such as percentage analysis, weighted average method, intensity value method, Garret ranking were done for data analysis. It was found that log in is the main problem face by respondents and magazines ranked highest as the sources of awareness. In the study the attitude of the consumers found highly very positive towards online ticket booking than their negative attitudes.

Keywords: Consumer Attitude, Online Reservation, Online Booking

Introduction

The new era of information technology has brought multiple advantages to mankind. The world has seen a great technological boom in the last fifty years, with innovations in every field making it possible for human life to be more easier and comfortable. Tickets are documents that confirm the purchase and guarantee a seat on a chosen journey, hotel or for a show. Tickets are required as proof to get a boarding pass which is essential. Traditional tickets of earlier days were made of paper and were to be collected from the travel agencies or office for purchasing. Along with globalization and the development of the aviation industry, the process of ticket purchasing has also changed.

Since the rapid growth and use of the internet since the 2000s, reservation has been possible online. In particular, the internet has allowed us to search for any reservations or purchases right from our own place and find the best offers just at the click of a button. More and more people all over the world prefer to buy products through different websites.

Since the rise of online travel in the mid-1990s, it seems that there are an endless number of ways to fix one's travel itinerary. Due to the emergence of the online reservation system, selections are made available online making it easy to book nearly any sort of trip at any time. This turns into plenty of bookings. It has been projected that by

the year 2012, there will be 98.3 million bookings on the Internet, which translates into major profits for online travel companies. So, the recent scenario has changed the traditional booking systems into the newest electronic reservation system.

Objectives of the Study

- To study the awareness of Online reservation of consumers in Madurai
- To analyse the consumer attitude towards online reservation.
- To know the customer satisfaction level in online reservation
- To give suggestions based on the findings.

Statement of Problem

Customers meet many problems during ticket reservation. Problems arise in booking tickets through counters, spending time by waiting in queues, reservation form filling, carrying cash for lump booking, risk of confirmation and so on.

Now-a-days online reservation has become a highly sought after alternative for booking tickets. Therefore, transport sectors spend a lot of time and money in developing online reservation systems to satisfy customers. Hence this study, "Consumer attitude towards online reservation in Madurai city" was conducted to know about consumer's attitude towards online reservation.

Review of Literature

Sukpanich and Chen (2002), in their study found that there were three variables that affected the attitude towards online shopping. These three factors consist of awareness, preference and intention. Different people have different attitudes towards online shopping. These attitudes vary not only as the result of the activities performed, but as the result of personalities, lifestyles, social classes and other factors.¹

Kumaresh (2012) in his study titled, "Factors influencing consumers' attitude towards e-commerce purchases through online shopping" purported to determine the factors influencing consumers' attitude towards e-commerce purchases through online shopping. Pearson's correlation was used to assess the relationship between independent variables such as e-commerce experience, hours spent on the internet, product perception, customers' service, consumers risk and dependant variable such as attitude towards online shopping. The findings revealed that there is a significant relationship between an e-commerce experience and one's attitude towards online shopping among the respondents. This study also indicated that there is a significant relationship between product perception and attitude towards online shopping among the respondents.²

Bruner and Kumar (2000) in a study found that consumers'

attitude towards the website is a valid measure of a website effectiveness and is significantly correlated to a consumers' attitude towards the brand and its purchase. This was reinforced by website characteristics that include ease of use, product information, entertainment, trust, and currency. Their research has shown that several website factors will affect consumers forming a favourable attitude towards online purchase.³

Ramaprasad (2002) has done a study titled, "passenger amenities in railways", with the aim of knowing the level of awareness and satisfaction of customers on various services offered by the railways. He has examined the data collected from passengers of railways. His study revealed that a majority of the respondents, 34.52% used train for business purposes. He also analysed that there is no advanced reservation system to travel for important official work.⁴

Ravindran and Pradeep (2008) in a research showed that consumers have a strong positive attitude towards Green Marketing. These days, consumers are more aware of environmental issues, consumers agree that: "In future more and more consumers will prefer green products." Consumers also agree that companies which can establish themselves with a green image will have a distinctive advantage in the market place.⁵

Vathianathan and Roy (2009) identified, perceived usefulness and playfulness as the significant predictors of consumers' attitude towards using the Internet as an alternate channel for online reservation. They also found that novelty seeking and anxiety are not the significant predictors of attitude. These findings have implications for online travel agents, primarily because research has shown that a positive attitude leads to behavioural intention and hence, behavioural action i.e. purchases (online transactions).⁶

Horgnang (2013) in his paper entitled, "Tourist Behaviours in Online Booking" analysed the three stages of online booking; Online information search, determinants of online booking and online booking loyalty. This paper proposed a new research agenda for tourist behaviours in online booking, and recommends empirical methods for future research. The study not only provides a comprehensive understanding of consumer behaviours for tourism marketers, but also sheds light on future research in online booking.¹⁰

Methodology

This study was done using empirical method during the years 2015 to 2016 with 100 sample size using convenient sampling technique. A pre-tested questionnaire was used to collect data from the consumers in Madurai city, TN, India. Primary data is the chief source for the research work. Questionnaire method was utilized to collect the primary

data. Secondary data was gathered from journals, books, other projects and websites. Statistical techniques such as percentage analysis, weighted average method, intensity value method, Garret ranking were done for data analysis.

Data Analysis

Table 1. Classification on the Basis of Medium of Booking Tickets Online

S. No.	Sources of Booking Tickets Online	Number of Respondents	Percentage
1.	Myself	14	14
2.	Through Travel agents	14	14
3.	With the help of Knowledge persons	34	34
4.	Browsing centres	21	21
5.	Others	17	17
	Total	100	100

Source: Primary data

Table 1, shows that 14 percent of the respondents book tickets themselves, 14 percent of the respondents book tickets through travel agents, 34 percent of the respondents book tickets with the help of persons having knowledge, 21 percent of the respondents book tickets through browsing centers, and 17 percent of the respondents book tickets through other ways.

Table 2. Classification on the Basis of Medium of Booking Tickets Online

S.No.	Medium of booking	Number of respondents	Percentage
1	Mobile	18	18
2	Desktop	15	15
3	Laptop	23	23
4	Internet café	24	24
5	Others	20	20
	Total	100	100

Source: Primary data

Table 2, shows that 18 percent of the respondents book tickets using mobiles, 15 percent of the respondents book tickets using desktop, 23 percent of the respondents book tickets using laptops, 24 percent of the respondents book tickets through internet cafe, and 20 percent of the respondents book tickets through other medium.

Table 3, shows that 15 percent of the respondents reserve before 2 months, 19 percent of the respondents reserve before 1 month, 20 percent of the respondents reserve before a week, 18 percent of the respondents reserve in tatkal, 24 percent of the respondents reserve on the day

of travel, and 4 percent of the respondents reserves in other timings.

Table 3. Classification on the Basis of Prior Time Period of Booking

S.No.	Time Period	Number of Respondents	Percentage
1.	Before 2 months	15	15
2.	Before 1 month	19	19
3.	Before a week	20	20
4.	In tatkal	18	18
5.	On the day	24	24
6.	Others	4	4
	Total	100	100

Source: Primary data

Table 4. Classification on the Basis of Problems in Cancellation of Online Reservation

S. No.	Problems in Cancellation	Number of Respondents	Percentage
1.	High cancellation charge	9	9
2.	Network problems	17	17
3.	Delay in refund	12	12
4.	Refund is made through agents	13	13
5.	Double service charge	18	18
6.	Partial cancellation is not possible	8	8
7.	No refund for offer booking	13	13
8.	No problems	10	10
	Total	100	100

Source: Primary data

Table 4 shows that 9 percent of the respondents have problem of high cancellation charge, 17 percent of the respondents have network problem, 12 percent of the respondents have problem of delay in refunds, 13 percent of the respondents have problem of refund made through agents, 18 percent of the respondents have the problem of double service charge, 8 percent have chosen the problem of partial cancellation, 13 percent of the respondents faced the problem in refund when booked in offer.

Table 5 shows that 13 percent of the respondents recommend because of low price, 8 percent recommend because of anytime, anywhere, 4 percent for helpline facility, 6 percent because of easy access, 11 percent because it saves time, 8 percent because it is helpful for

senior citizens, 26 percent for secured and reliable, 12 percent for social status, 1 percent for avoiding crowd, 4 person because it needs no personal contact, 7 percent of the respondents do not recommend to others.

Table 6 shows that the respondents' consideration of the availability of original certificates of all those who travel ranks first, second rank for the consideration of comparison of prices of various websites, third is found to be their consultation with the travel agents, Fourth is search for top rated websites and reputation of travels or hotels, fifth is search for offers, sixth is quality of service, seventh is search in map, eighth is timings, and the least considered factor is facilities.

Table 7 shows that frequency for booking train ranks first, frequency for bus ranks second, hotel ranks third, shows/ movies reservation ranks fourth and frequency for flight reservation ranks last.

Table 8 shows the problems in online reservation online reservation among the respondents. It is observed that Log-in is the first problem faced by the respondents, difficulty in cancellation or refund found second, third is insecurity in payments, fourth problem found to be expensive, fifth is advanced technology, Sixth rank is busy network in peak hours, seventh rank is lack of online payment facility, eighth problem is difficulty in providing original certificate, ninth rank to lack of internet and the least faced problem is lack of privacy of personal information.

Table 5. Classification on the Basis of Reasons for Recommending Online Reservation

S. No.	Reasons for Recommending	Number of Respondents	Percentage
1.	Low price	13	13
2.	Anytime, anywhere	8	8
3.	Helpline facility	4	4
4.	Easy access	6	6
5.	Saves time	11	11
6.	Helpful for senior citizens	8	8
7.	Secured and reliable	26	26
8.	Social status	12	12
9.	Avoids crowd	1	1
10.	Needs no personal contact	4	4
11.	I do not recommend	7	7
	Total	100	100

Source: Primary data

Table 6. Weighted Average Ranking of the Things That Respondents Consider Before Online Reservation

S. No.	Reasons	SA	A	N	D	SD	Weighted Total	Rank
1.	Search for top rated website	200	100	20	54	7	25.4	IV
2.	Compare prices of various websites	105	180	32	54	0	24.73	II
3.	Search for offers	205	112	22	36	8	25.53	V
4.	Search for map or direction/ place	205	144	24	33	0	27.07	VII
5.	Ask to a travel agent	165	136	44	27	2	24.93	III
6.	Look for Facilities	225	136	8	51	0	28	IX
7.	Quality of Service of such service	130	180	18	60	0	25.87	VI
8.	Timings	195	140	12	60	0	27.13	VIII
9.	Availability of original certificates of all those who travel	85	180	32	39	9	23	I
10.	Reputation of travels or hotels	90	200	6	84	1	25.4	IV

Source: Primary data

SA: Strongly agree; A: agree; N: Neutral ; D: Disagree; SD: Strongly disagree

Table 7. Weighted Average Ranking of the Frequency of Online Reservation

S.No.	Reservation	VF	F	O	R	VR	Weighted Total	Rank
1.	Train	180	96	75	26	2	25.27	I
2.	Bus	105	144	54	36	7	23.07	II
3.	Flight	15	24	54	40	53	12.40	V
4.	Show/ movies	50	8	69	58	36	14.73	IV
5.	Hotel	40	36	45	94	21	15.73	III

Source: Primary data

VF- Very frequently, F- Frequently, O- Occasionally; R-Rarely; VR- Very rarely

Table 8. Intensity Ranking of the Problems While Using Online Ticket Booking

S.No.	Reasons	SA	A	N	D	SD	Total	Rank
1.	Insecure in payments	175	152	66	10	0	403	III
2.	Very busy network in peak hours	120	152	81	22	0	375	VI
3.	Difficulty in cancellation or refund	180	144	75	6	0	405	II
4.	Lack of online payment facility	110	152	96	16	0	374	VII
5.	Lack of privacy of personal information	95	116	138	8	2	359	X
6.	Advanced technology	125	188	84	0	0	397	V
7.	Problem in log-in	205	112	90	2	0	409	I
8.	Expensive	155	160	84	2	0	401	IV
9.	Difficulty in providing original certificate.	115	120	123	10	1	369	VIII
10.	Lack of internet	115	124	114	14	1	368	IX

Source: Primary data

SA: strongly agree; A: Agree; N: Neutral ; D: Disagree; SD: Stongly disagree

Table 9. Intensity Ranking of the Opinion of the Respondents about Online Reservation Service

S. No.	Reasons	SA	A	N	D	SD	Total	Rank
1.	It is best alternative for counter booking or direct booking.	160	144	87	6	0	397	III
2.	Easy to book and cancel tickets /bookings	115	148	117	0	1	381	VI
3.	It is benefitted to all levels of people	185	112	84	14	0	395	IV
4.	Difficult for Illiterates	155	116	111	6	0	388	V
5.	Complex procedures	175	128	96	2	0	401	II
6.	Timely receipt	215	104	84	6	0	409	I

Source: Primary data

SA: Strongly agree ; A: Agree; N: Neutral ; D: Disagree; SD: Strongly disagree

Table 9 shows that consumer has given first rank to timely receipt, second rank was given to complex procedures, best alternative for counter booking was given third rank, benefitted to all levels of people was given fourth rank, difficult for illiterates ranks five, and easy to book and cancel ranks last.

Table 10 shows that magazines ranks first, travel agents ranks second, third rank was given for newspapers by the respondents, fourth rank to search engines/email notifications, fifth rank to media, sixth rank to friends/colleagues and the last rank to other sources.

Table 11 shows that irctc.com ranks first, redbus.com ranks second, newindianexpress.com ranks third, indianrail.gov.in ranks fourth, zoomtra.com ranks fifth, yatra.com ranks sixth, bookmytrain.com ranks seventh, goibibo.com ranks eighth, cleartrip.com ranks ninth, ixigo.com ranks tenth and the last rank to other websites.

Table 12 shows that mybustickets.com ranks first, redbus.com ranks second, etravelsmart.com ranks third, ticketgoose.com ranks fourth, busindia.com ranks fifth, yatra.com ranks sixth, goibibo.com ranks seventh, abhibus.com ranks eighth, other websites ranks ninth, akbartravels.com ranks tenth, makemytrip.com ranks eleventh, travelyaari.com ranks twelfth, and ixigo.com ranks last.

Table 13 shows that spicejet.com ranks first, airindia.com ranks second, cleartrip.com ranks third, goibibo.com ranks

fourth, other websites ranks fifth, goindigo.in ranks sixth, yatra.com ranks seventh, ixigo.com ranks eighth, jetairways.com ranks ninth, makemytrip.com ranks tenth, and the last ranks to goair.in.

Table 14 shows that bigcinemas.com ranks first, ticketnew.com ranks second, ticketplease.com ranks third, bookmyevent.com ranks fourth, movietickets.com ranks fifth, ixigo.com ranks sixth, cinemax.com ranks seventh, justtickets.com ranks eighth, bookmyshows.com ranks ninth, last rank to other websites.

Table 15 shows that trivago.in ranks first, cleartrips.com ranks second, yatra.com ranks third, hotelsscanner.com ranks fourth, Others ranks fifth, akbartravels.com ranks sixth, ixigo.com ranks seventh, goibibo.com ranks last.

Table 10. Garret Ranking of Sources of Awareness

Sources of awareness	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Garret score	Average score	Rank
Magazines	17	31	17	14	8	6	7	5743	820.43	I
Travel agents	16	10	8	32	16	14	4	5210	744.28	II
Search engines/ email notification	24	3	10	15	10	23	15	4944	706.28	IV
News paper	18	10	13	13	16	14	16	4955	707.86	III
Friends/ Colleagues	12	16	15	7	18	10	22	4759	679.86	VI
Media	12	12	18	8	15	19	16	4782	683.14	V
Others	1	15	20	11	20	14	19	4468	638.28	VII

Source: Primary data

Table 11. Garret Ranking of Websites for Booking Train Tickets Online

Websites	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	Garret score	Average score	Rank
irctc.com	10	8	7	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	2089	189.90	I
yatra.com	1	8	2	-	-	6	2	-	-	-	-	1179	107.18	VI
redbus.com	12	-	-	3	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	1383	125.73	II
cleartrip.com	5	-	-	-	-	3	7	-	-	-	-	880	80	IX
indianrail.gov.in	-	-	9	-	5	3	6	-	-	-	-	1280	116.36	IV
newindianexpress.com	3	4	3	7	1	-	2	-	-	-	-	1290	117.27	III
zoomtra.com	2	5	-	3	4	5	2	-	-	-	-	1263	114.82	V
goibibo.com	2	1	3	-	6	6	-	-	-	-	-	1063	96.64	VIII
ixigo.com	-	2	-	2	5	1	-	-	-	-	-	587	53.36	X
bookmytrain.com	-	2	6	2	2	1	6	-	-	-	-	1082	98.36	VII
Others	-	-	3	2	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	403	36.64	XI

Source: Primary data

Table 12. Garret Ranking of Website Preferences for Booking Bus Tickets Online

Websites	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	Garret score	Average score	Rank
redbus.com	8	4	3	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1343	103.31	II
abhibus.com	-	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	518	39.85	VIII
yatra.com	4	-	-	-	8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	800	61.54	VI

makemytrip.com	2	-	4	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	498	28.31	XI
goibibo.com	1	-	7	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	677	52.07	VII
ticketgoose.com	-	-	5	4	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	989	76.08	IV
mybustickets.com	1	3	4	12	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1434	110.31	I
akbartravels.com	-	4	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	482	37.08	X
etravelsmart.com	4	4	1	-	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1047	80.54	III
busindia.com	6	2	1	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	905	69.61	V
travelyaari.com	1	2	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	209	22.31	XII
ixigo.com	-	1	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	198	15.23	XIII
Others	-	-	2	-	-	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	512	39.38	IX

Source: Primary data

Table 13. Garret Ranking of Website Preferences for Booking Flight Tickets Online

Websites	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Garret score	Average score	Rank
airindia.com	3	9	3	2	4	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1506	125.5	II
spicejet.com	11	-	-	2	6	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	1533	127.75	I
jetairways.com	2	-	-	-	4	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	498	41.5	IX
makemytrip.com	-	-	6	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	457	38.08	X
goindigo.in	-	-	9	1	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	883	73.58	VI
yatra.com	2	1	2	2	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	701	58.42	VII
cleartrip.com	-	9	-	6	-	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	1175	97.91	III
goibibo.com	4	5	-	3	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	1041	86.75	IV
akbartravels.com	3	2	3	2	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	876	73	VII
ixigo.com	2	-	-	4	-	5	1	-	-	-	-	-	718	59.83	VIII
goair.in	-	-	1	2	2	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	350	29.17	XI
Others	-	1	4	2	5	3	3	-	-	-	-	-	1044	87	V

Source : Primary Data

Table 14. Garret Ranking of Websites Preferences of Booking Shows/ Movie Tickets Online

Websites	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Garret score	Average score	Rank
ticketplease.com	16	16	9	12	8	-	-	-	-	-	4099	409.9	III
bookmyevent.com	20	3	11	5	10	13	-	-	-	-	3924	392.4	IV
movietickets.com	18	7	8	1	24	-	-	-	-	-	3775	377.5	V
justtickets.com	11	-	13	18	-	5	-	-	-	-	2987	298.7	VIII
bookmyshows.com	8	3	12	12	-	-	-	-	-	-	2306	230.6	IX
ticketnew.com	3	24	16	23	8	-	-	-	-	-	4661	466.1	II
bigcinemas.com	6	24	11	410	-	-	-	-	-	-	8053	805.3	I
cinemax.com	13	10	2	7	14	-	-	-	-	-	3019	301.9	VII
ixigo.com	3	10	6	6	11	31	-	-	-	-	3726	372.6	VI
Other	2	2	12	13	2	2	-	-	-	-	2001	200.1	X

Source : Primary Data

Table 15. Garret Ranking of Websites Preferences of Hotel Tickets Online

Websites	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Garret score	Average score	Rank
yatra.com	15	20	18	22	1	2	-	-	4935	616.87	III
cleartrips.com	25	11	11	6	28	9	-	-	5411	676.37	II
hotelscanner.com	29	1	8	10	9	21	-	-	4682	585.25	IV
goibibo.com	4	8	12	13	16	6	-	-	3271	408.87	VIII
trivago.in	9	37	18	11	11	8	-	-	5744	718	I
akbartravels.com	6	7	4	11	16	28	-	-	3679	459.88	VI
ixigo.com	10	9	4	9	11	17	-	-	3343	417.87	VII
Others	2	7	25	18	9	8	-	-	3841	480.12	V

Source : Primary Dataa

Suggstions

- It is suggested that instead of websites, applications can be launched for reservation
- It is suggested that many advertisements can be provided to increase the awareness about websites which are launched for online reservation
- It is suggested that the service providers can aware more regarding security measures like issues regarding digital signature, pin numbers can be made more prominent
- It is suggested that the service providers can make the prices more competitive and can provide more offers
- It is suggested that the service providers can emphasize on the advantages of online reservation to avoid crowding and save time
- It is suggested that re-payment or refund in case of cancellation can be made faster
- It is suggested that the hotel websites should be real and true in photos and the facilities which are posted in websites

Conclusion

As a commercial medium, the web offers a number of advantages for all the customer and companies. From the customer point of view, using the web instead of a traditional approach call for tickets or go to a travel agency means way in to a greater amount of information and also more flexibility in choosing, analyzing and comparing the offers. Having more choices with just a click away helps customers find a better deal, in possible less time. For the companies, the use of Web means decrease costs for information processing, reduced costs to suppliers, the possibility of building stronger customer relationships by having customers interact directly with the web site, the possibility of creating user profiles to be used in marketing development and also an easy way of information partnership, involving the cooperation between different companies. Online Reservation System has its effectiveness

in booking frequency, especially in keeping hotel contracting room and allotment updated in real-time manner. It helps the service providers in having them updated about the availability. In this study it is found that magazine is found to be the main source of awareness to the consumers. In the study the attitude of the consumers found highly very positive towards online ticket booking than their negative attitudes. The consumers have high level of satisfaction in online reservation because it is instant and since it has guide and help, it is found to be one of the major way for reservation than that of brick and portal model. The suggestions were given to the service providers to focus its attention mainly on delighting the customer and to fulfil the requirements and expectation. Thus, in this study the researcher had made an attempt to find out the customers' suggestions about the online reservation system and also varied solution have been given to improve the customers' requirements, and service which in turn could earn goodwill among public.

Limitations of the Study

- The following are important limitations of the study
- The limitation of time restricted the researchers to study only 100 samples
- The period of study was limited upto six months
- A lack of initiative and interest on the part of the respondents in answering questions was a difficulty faced by the researcher
- Since the sample size is small, this may not be the actual representation of the whole population

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