Impact of Social Media on Tourist Decision Making Process

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Abstract

Aim- *With social media profusely consuming the clock hours of an average individual, it evidently plays a role in impacting the person's choice either directly or indirectly. Thus, the study aims at assessing how the individual's social media presence are likely to impact its travel related choices in its decision making process. Determine the extent of usage, its reliability as a source of information, its impact on various travel decision, likelihood to share tourist's experience, its role in enhancing the decision making process along with various factors governing such behavior and interrelationship. Complete analysis is followed by suggestion that the study brings in for the marketer.*

Methodology- *Exploratory and descriptive analysis has been employed. For such purpose both primary and secondary data has been collected via structured questionnaire and journals, articles, reports respectively. Descriptive analysis was performed by running SPSS tool. Statistical analyses such as ANOVA, Chi-square and correlation tests are performed.*

Findings- *Major finding of the study reinforce the fact of increasing influence of social media in tourist purchase decision. Content communities like review forums, blogs etc. are on an additive edge in terms of the content relied by tourist for decision making over social media and exert major influence in determining leisure and outdoor activities to explore. Additionally social media being a reliable source does not govern its extent of usage in terms of social media activities including liking page, commenting, posting reviews etc. Unwillingness and inactive usage of social account were found to be major factor contributing to such attitude. The study also underlines that negative EWOM spreads expeditiously as the respondents showed higher tendency to share experience when feel dissatisfied. Overall respondents place significant reliability over social media channels thereby impacting one's choice and adding value to the decision making process. Study also showed significant role of gender, age and education in impacting tourist choice.*

Future Implication- *Study has huge implication for the tourism industry operators. As the role of social media is increasing with the passage of time it has huge bearing on the tourist purchase decision thereby impacting the strategies of tourism operators. Tendency of shift in the existing behavior and attitude in fast changing social world poses a word of caution to the marketers to keep abreast with the changing attitude and behavior of the tourist and social media impact on it.*

Suggestions- *Analysis of the results brought in significant insight for the marketers to stress on. Marketers though placing greater reliance over content on content communities highlighting the activities to explore, accommodation can get deeper outlook on how the customers perceive tier offering and their experience of the product offered. Tying up with such information vendors like Makemytripetc. can add to their competitive advantage. Formulating the strategies depending on the profile of respondents in terms of age, gender and education can further help in building its edge as these variables were found to be significant in terms of impacting tourist choice, tendency to share experience and reliability. Own social media groups by companies can further deepen insight into the tourist attitude and behavior.*

Keywords: *Social Media, Content Communities, Pre Trip, During Trip and Post Trip*

1. Introduction to the study

Social media is the virtual form of transacting/ interacting with the masses. With the advent of internet and various social media platforms, the mode and medium of interaction has changed. Being popular among the youngsters the same is being steadily adopted by the elders as well. As the social media base is widening and deepening along with the greater need to transact, the information shared on these channels is also intensifying. It has lead to more closely knitted web of people sharing information on real time and referring the same for decision making thus, impacting the attitude and behavior of the people using social media. Therefore, customer's social media activity forms an important constituent impacting any industry's demand and image.

Tourism being one of the industries heavily relying on the experience that it offers to its customer as primary product social media has a great bearing for the industry. Since,nowadays traveler's decision from where to travel, which flight to book, where to eat, which hotel to stay, each and every bit relies on the information gathered from various sources available online, one of the major source being social media channels. Ease convenience and access to the technology has made the modern consumer a digital consumer.Online reviews, recommendation, photos, videos, ratings, travel blogs have become the primary sources in forming customer's purchase intension. Various application and websites have also emerged catering to the distinct need of travelers for travel related information. TripAdvisor, Makemytrip, Yatra, wikitravel etc. have come up recognizing the gap that exists in terms of the access to competitive information. Tourism industry is experiencing an overhaul in terms of the factors influencing the customer intension to buy tourism product, moving away from the traditional means of communication to two way virtual exchange of information. Recognizing its potential and great bearing on reputation, Airline Company Lufthansa has created a social media app to facilitate two way communication enabling the company to share important updates with customers and allowing users to share their experience. Past studies have highlighted increasing role of social media in forming the customer's attitude. Current study aims at assessing usage of social media among the population for travel related decision, its impact on customer decision making process,constraints related to social media usage followed by recommendation to the marketers based on the analysis performed.

2. Review of Literature

(John Fotis, Dimitrios Buhalis and NiccosRossides) 2011, through its empirical study examines the usage levels, scope of use, level of influence and trust exert by tourist in their trip on social media channels and finds strong correlation between perceived level of influence from social media and changes made in holiday plans prior to final decision. (Dr. Irma Shyle and Dr. VjolkaHysi) 2015, highlights role of social media and its changing form covering not only users but also professional who can connect over such medium. It has emerged as an effective marketing tool by companies involve in tourism, having impact on tourism market. Ease of use, flexibility and interactivity offered act as prime booster for tourist to refer such portals. (Nindyta Aisyah Dwityas and Rizki Briandana), 2017 discover Indonesian

traveler decision making process through the use of social media by collecting primary data from community members and concludes significant role of social media in each stage of decision making. (Eleftherios Varkaris et al), 2017 investigates how social media impacts choice of hotel by tourists through primary data collection. structured in depth interviews and application of qualitative analysis reveals social media eminent role in transforming consumer search behavior then and now with implication on its decision making.(Nikita Singhal and Dr. Varsha Khattri), 2018 explores social media intervention in tourist decision making. By conducting primary data analysis the study unfolds the role of online reviews in forming customer's attitude, trustworthiness bestowed by users and its implication in consumer tendency to change their plans.

3. Research Objectives

New technologies and services and the resultant shift in the consumer behavior has dwelled the need to determine what role does new technology play in influencing the customer's purchase decision. This study aims to achieve the following objectives

1. To determine the extent of usage of social media channels for travel decision making

2. To understand the reliability, influence of social media in customer travelling process-information search, taking decision and sharing experience

3. To identify the constraints with respect to social media usage.

4. To identify role of social media in enhancing the customer decision making process

5. To suggest strategies that can be accompanied to better accommodate the customer attitude based on the analysis.

4. Research Methodology

Both primary and secondary data has been used for the purpose of study. To identify the major social media platforms, secondary data was collected and analyzed via exploratory analysis. Primary data was collected through structured questionnaire among the targeted segment to attain the aforesaid objectives. Analysis of primary

data was performed using SPSS and applying statistical tests like ANOVA, Chi-square and Correlation. To deepen understanding of social media role in tourist decision making various articles, journals, magazines and reports were referred
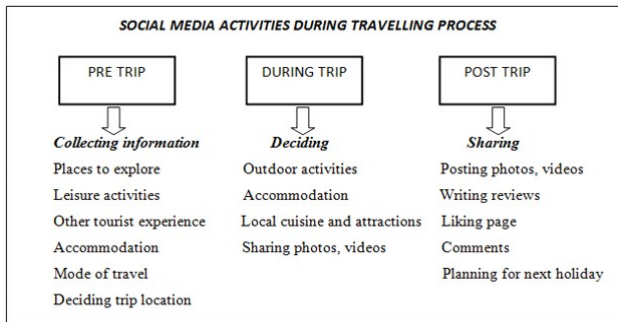
5. Social Media

Social media itself is understood as a medium that enable users to create and share content through online communication channel. But, there has been discontentment over what exactly social media comprise of. Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) have identified six types of social media: social media networking websites (Facebook), blogs, content communities (YouTube, Slideshare, Pinterest, Quora, TripAdvisor), collaborative projects (wikitravel), virtual social world and virtual game world. Evidently, social media does not only comprise of social networking websites, content sharing communities, projects but also review rating websites and microblogs (twitter). Though social media is expanding forms but profusely plays role in encouraging people to express, post, comment, like and share their experiences thereby adding value in the decision making process.

5.1 Role of social media in tourist decision making process

A tourist purchase basket does not only consist of the place one decides to visit, but the overall experience consisting of hospitality, accommodation, food, infrastructure and everything that the place has to offer. Due to multitudinous decision, associated risk, cost and experiential factor correlated with travel related decision makes such decision much more vulnerable and complex.Tourist purchase decision generally initiates with extensive information search wherein tourist heavily relies on other tourist experiences as a source of informationdue to its experiential nature. It helps in reducing the cost of uncertainty and increasing one's utility. Social media serves this purpose as it is the best channel that accommodates creation and exchange of user generated content. In addition low cost and unbiased nature of information shared on social media,makes it much

more credible over paid advertisement and promotion on these channels. In making final decision reviews of bloggers, comments, traveler's experiences, YouTubevideos, photos etc. plays a dominant role. Tourist purchase does not end with buying of product but also includes the post purchase behavior. Social media has become one of the major platforms reflecting the post purchase behavior through the tourist social media activities. In today's world it has become a trend to post check-ins, photos, videos; stories to keep update others of one's visit. Nowadays tourist also post reviews, give rating and share their experience on other social networks. Thus, social media finds a significant space in each block of travelers buying process. Tourist social media activities can be bifurcated into three distinct groups i.e. pre trip, during trip and post trip actions.

Source: Author's Calculation

6. Assessing social media usage and impact on tourist behavior

In order to assess the impact of social media on tourist choices, a structured questionnaire was circulated among the targeted group. Responses were gathered from 350 respondents if whom 312 responses were undertaken for the analysis. These 312 respondents referred social media for travel related decision making. Convenience sampling was undertaken to collect the sample. Basic analysis and hypothesis testing was done to attain the aforesaid objectives.

6.1 Basic Demographics

Out of 350 respondents 89.14% respondents have referred social media channels for the purpose

of travel related decision. The sample undertaken for the purpose of analysis accounted for 51.3% male respondents and 48.7% female respondents. Majority of respondents belong to the younger age group of 19- 25 (50.96%) followed by 28.2% respondents from 26- 40 age group

Table 1*
Gender * Age Crosstabulation

Count		Age				
		0-18	19-25	26-40	above 40	Total
Gender	Male	4	75	60	21	160
	Female	20	84	28	20	152
	Total	24	159	88	41	312

On education front majority of respondents possess post graduation degree (57.69%) followed by graduation (34.61%).

Table 2*
Gender * education Crosstabulation

Count		Education			Total
		Metric	Gradua-tion	Post grad-uation	
Gender	Male	4	68	88	160
	Female	20	40	92	152
	Total	24	108	180	312

6.2 Hypothesis Formulation

Ho1:   There is no significant relation between gender and frequency of travelling.

Ho2:   There is no significant relation between age and frequency of travelling.

Ho3:   There is no significant relation between education and frequency of travelling.

Ho4:   There is no significant difference in reliability of social media on the basis of gender of respondents

Ho5:   There is no significant difference in reliability of social media on the basis of age of respondents

Ho6:   There is no significant difference in reliability of social media on the basis of education of respondents

Ho7: There is no significant difference in impact of social media on the basis of gender of respondents

Ho8: There is no significant difference in impact of social media on the basis of age of respondents

Ho9: There is no significant difference in impact of social media on the basis of education of respondents

H10: There is no significant correlation between reliability of social media and social media impact on tourist decision making

H11: There is no significant association between gender and social media activities

H12: There is no significant association between age and social media activities

H13: There is no significant association between education and social media activities

H14: There is no significant association between gender and tourists sharing experience

H15: There is no significant association between age and tourists sharing experience

H16: There is no significant association between education and tourists sharing experience

H17: There is no significant association between satisfaction score and reliability

6.3 Hypothesis Testing

Ho1: There is no significant relation between gender and frequency of travelling.

Table 3*
Gender * On an average how frequently do you travel within or outside city in an year ? Crosstabulation

Count		less fre-quently	Fre-quently	Total
		On an average how frequently do you travel within or outside city in an year?		
Gender	Male	80	80	160
	Female	64	88	152
	Total	144	168	312

Table 4*
Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	1.955[a]	1	.162		
Continuity Correction[b]	1.650	1	.199		
Likelihood Ratio	1.957	1	.162		
Fisher's Exact Test				.174	.099
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.949	1	.163		
N of Valid Cases	312				

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 70.15.

b. Computed only for a 2x2 table

Interpretation

The test was performed at 5% level of significance. From table it can be seen that the Pearson Chi square significance value is 0.162 (>0.05) with degree of freedom 1. Therefore, null hypothesis is not rejected and hence, it is found that there is no significant association between gender and frequency of travelling.

Ho2: There is no significant relation between age and frequency of travelling.

TABLE 5*
Age * On an average how frequently do you travel within or outside city in an year?Crosstabulation

Count		less fre-quently	frequently	Total
		On an average how frequently do you travel within or outside city in an year?		
Age	0-18	12	12	24
	19-25	72	87	159
	26-40	36	52	88
	above 40	24	17	41
	Total	144	168	312

Table 6*
Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	3.695ᵃ	3	.296
Likelihood Ratio	3.696	3	.296
Linear-by-Linear Association	.411	1	.521
N of Valid Cases	312		

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 11.08.

Interpretation

The test was performed at 5% level of significance. From table it can be seen that the Pearson Chi square significance value is 0.296 (>0.05) with degree of freedom 3. Therefore, null hypothesis is not rejected and hence, it is found that there is no significant association between age and frequency of travelling.

Ho3: There is no significant relation between education and frequency of travelling.

Table 7*
Education * On an average how frequently do you travel within or outside city in an year? Crosstabulation

		On an average how frequently do you travel within or outside city in an year?		
Count		less frequently	frequently	Total
Education	Metric Grad-	12	12	24

	uation	64	44	108
	Post grad- uation	68	112	180
	Total	144	168	312

Table 8*
Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	12.688ᵃ	2	.002
Likelihood Ratio	12.743	2	.002
Linear-by-Linear Association	8.149	1	.004
N of Valid Cases	312		

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 11.08.

Interpretation

The test was performed at 5% level of significance. From table it can be seen that the Pearson Chi square significance value is 0.002 (<0.05) with degree of freedom 2. Therefore, null hypothesis is rejected and hence, it is found that there is significant association between education and frequency of travelling.

Ho4: There is no significant difference in reliability of social media on the basis of gender of respondents

Table 9*
ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Which information source you find reliable? Score them from 1	Between Groups	4.372	1	4.372	2.246	.135
	Within Groups	603.474	310	1.947		

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
(not reliable) to 5 (fully reliable) [Facebook/ Instagram posts]	Total	607.846	311			
Which information source you find reliable? Score them from 1 (not reliable) to 5 (fully reliable) [Youtube reviews]	Between Groups Within Groups Total	.026 557.768 557.795	1 310 311	.026 1.799	.015	.904
Which information source you find reliable? Score them from 1 (not reliable) to 5 (fully reliable) [Review forums/ travelblogs]	Between Groups Within Groups Total	3.586 528.363 531.949	1 310 311	3.586 1.704	2.104	.148
Which information source you find reliable? Score them from 1 (not reliable) to 5 (fully reliable) [Wikitravel/Wikipedia]	Between Groups Within Groups Total	21.163 537.453 558.615	1 310 311	21.163 1.734	12.207	.001
Which information source you find reliable? Score them from 1 (not reliable) to 5 (fully reliable) [Whatsapp status]	Between Groups Within Groups Total	7.773 616.842 624.615	1 310 311	7.773 1.990	3.907	.049
Which information source you find reliable? Score them from 1 (not reliable) to 5 (fully reliable) [Tripadvisor]	Between Groups Within Groups Total	10.656 526.216 536.872	1 310 311	10.656 1.697	6.278	.013

Interpretation

From the above results it is seen that since the significance value is greater than 0.05 therefore, there is no sufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis thus, there is no significant difference in the reasons for adoption on the basis of gender.

Ho5: There is no significant difference in reliability of social media on the basis of age of respondents

Table 10*
ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Which information source you find reliable? Score them from 1 (not reliable) to 5 (fully	Between Groups Within Groups	2.901 604.945	3 308	.967 1.964	.492	.688

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
reliable) [Facebook/ Instagram posts]	Total	607.846	311			
Which information source you find reliable? Score them from 1 (not reliable) to 5 (fully reliable) [Youtube reviews]	Between Groups	23.476	3	7.825	4.511	.004
	Within Groups	534.319	308	1.735		
	Total	557.795	311			
Which information source you find reliable? Score them from 1 (not reliable) to 5 (fully reliable) [Review forums/ travelblogs]	Between Groups	14.806	3	4.935	2.939	.033
	Within Groups	517.143	308	1.679		
	Total	531.949	311			
Which information source you find reliable? Score them from 1 (not reliable) to 5 (fully reliable) [Wikitravel/Wikipedia]	Between Groups	7.200	3	2.400	1.340	.261
	Within Groups	551.416	308	1.790		
	Total	558.615	311			
Which information source you find reliable? Score them from 1 (not reliable) to 5 (fully reliable) [Whatsapp status]	Between Groups	19.045	3	6.348	3.229	.023
	Within Groups	605.570	308	1.966		
	Total	624.615	311			
Which information source you find reliable? Score them from 1 (not reliable) to 5 (fully reliable) [Tripadvisor]	Between Groups	20.575	3	6.858	4.091	.007
	Within Groups	516.297	308	1.676		
	Total	536.872	311			

Interpretation

Since the significance value is less than 0.05 for most of the social media channel thus there is significant evidence to reject the null hypothesis. Hence, it can be concluded that reliability for different social media channel varies among different age group.

Ho6: There is no significant difference in reliability of social media on the basis of education of respondents

Table 11*
ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Which information source you find reliable? Score them from 1 (not reliable) to 5 (fully reliable) [Facebook/ Instagram posts]	Between Groups	5.417	2	2.708	1.389	.251
	Within Groups	602.430	309	1.950		
	Total	607.846	311			

Which information source you find reliable? Score them from 1 (not reliable) to 5 (fully reliable) [Youtube reviews]	Between Groups	1.587	2	.794	.441	.644
	Within Groups	556.207	309	1.800		
	Total	557.795	311			
Which information source you find reliable? Score them from 1 (not reliable) to 5 (fully reliable) [Review forums/ travelblogs]	Between Groups	17.341	2	8.671	5.206	.006
	Within Groups	514.607	309	1.665		
	Total	531.949	311			
Which information source you find reliable? Score them from 1 (not reliable) to 5 (fully reliable) [Wikitravel/Wikipedia]	Between Groups	8.675	2	4.337	2.437	.089
	Within Groups	549.941	309	1.780		
	Total	558.615	311			
Which information source you find reliable? Score them from 1 (not reliable) to 5 (fully reliable) [Whatsapp status]	Between Groups	39.371	2	19.685	10.394	.000
	Within Groups	585.244	309	1.894		
	Total	624.615	311			
Which information source you find reliable? Score them from 1 (not reliable) to 5 (fully reliable) [TripAdvisor]	Between Groups	17.761	2	8.880	5.286	.006
	Within Groups	519.111	309	1.680		
	Total	536.872	311			

Interpretation

There is no sufficient basis to reject the null hypothesis since the significance value for most of the social media channel is more than 0.05. Thus, no significant difference in the reliability scores among respondents was observed based on their education profile.

Ho7: There is no significant difference in impact of social media on the basis of gender of respondents

Table 12*

ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
How likely the information on social media is going to impact your travel decision for the following? (1: no influence - 5: strongly influence) [Accommodation]	Between Groups	7.709	1	7.709	4.657	.032
	Within Groups	513.163	310	1.655		
	Total	520.872	311			

How likely the information on social media is going to impact your travel decision for the following? (1: no influence - 5: strongly influence) [Choosing excursion and leisure activities]	Between Groups	37.623	1	37.623	22.783	.000
	Within Groups	511.916	310	1.651		
	Total	549.538	311			
How likely the information on social media is going to impact your travel decision for the following? (1: no influence - 5: strongly influence) [Food and beverages]	Between Groups	33.067	1	33.067	20.609	.000
	Within Groups	497.395	310	1.604		
	Total	530.462	311			
How likely the information on social media is going to impact your travel decision for the following? (1: no influence - 5: strongly influence) [Mode of transportation]	Between Groups	70.154	1	70.154	54.671	.000
	Within Groups	397.795	310	1.283		
	Total	467.949	311			

Interpretation

The significance level is less than 0.05 thus there is significant reason to reject the null hypothesis. Significant difference is observed the level of influence exerted by different social media channels on the basis of gender of respondents

Ho8: There is no significant difference in impact of social media on the basis of age of respondents

Table 13*

ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
How likely the information on social media is going to impact your travel decision for the following? (1: no influence - 5: strongly influence) [Accomodation]	Between Groups	31.944	3	10.648	6.708	.000
	Within Groups	488.928	308	1.587		
	Total	520.872	311			
How likely the information on social media is going to impact your travel decision for the following? (1: no influence - 5: strongly influence) [Choosing excursion and leisure activities]	Between Groups	78.577	3	26.192	17.129	.000
	Within Groups	470.962	308	1.529		
	Total	549.538	311			

How likely the information on social media is going to impact your travel decision for the following? (1: no influence - 5: strongly influence) [Food and beverages]	Between Groups	33.693	3	11.231	6.963	.000
	Within Groups	496.769	308	1.613		
	Total	530.462	311			
How likely the information on social media is going to impact your travel decision for the following? (1: no influence - 5: strongly influence) [Mode of transportation]	Between Groups	37.366	3	12.455	8.910	.000
	Within Groups	430.582	308	1.398		
	Total	467.949	311			

Interpretation

There is significant reason to reject the null hypothesis as the significance value is less than 0.05. Thus, it can be concluded that there is significant difference among the respondents of various age group in terms of the level of impact that social media exert on their decision making.

Ho9: There is no significant difference in impact of social media on the basis of education of respondents

Table 14*
ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
How likely the information on social media is going to impact your travel decision for the following? (1: no influence - 5: strongly influence) [Accomodation]	Between Groups	29.375	2	14.688	9.234	.000
	Within Groups	491.496	309	1.591		
	Total	520.872	311			
How likely the information on social media is going to impact your travel decision for the following? (1: no influence - 5: strongly influence) [Choosing excursion and leisure activities]	Between Groups	88.664	2	44.332	29.723	.000
	Within Groups	460.874	309	1.492		
	Total	549.538	311			
How likely the information on social media is going to impact your travel decision for the following? (1: no influence - 5: strongly influence) [Food and beverages]	Between Groups	41.810	2	20.905	13.219	.000
	Within Groups	488.652	309	1.581		
	Total	530.462	311			

| How likely the information on social media is going to impact your travel decision for the following? (1: no influence - 5: strongly influence) [Mode of transportation] | Between Groups Within Groups | 36.171 431.778 | 2 309 | 18.085 1.397 | 12.943 | .000 |
| | Total | 467.949 | 311 | | | |

Interpretation

Significance level is found to be less than 0.05 thus there is significant evidence to reject the null hypothesis. Thus significant difference is observed in level of impact among the respondents on the basis of education of respondents

H10: There is no significant correlation between reliability of social media and social media impact on tourist decision making

Table 15*
Correlations

	Which information source you find reliable? Score them from 1 (not reliable) to 5 (fully reliable) [Facebook/ Instagram posts]	**Which information source you find reliable? Score them from 1 (not reliable) to 5 (fully reliable) [Youtube reviews]**	**Which information source you find reliable? Score them from 1 (not reliable) to 5 (fully reliable) [Review forums/ travelblogs]**	**Which information source you find reliable? Score them from 1 (not reliable) to 5 (fully reliable) [Wikitravel/ Wikipedia]**	**Which information source you find reliable? Score them from 1 (not reliable) to 5 (fully reliable) [Whatsapp status]**	**Which information source you find reliable? Score them from 1 (not reliable) to 5 (fully reliable) [Trip advisor]**
How likely the information on social media is going to impact your travel decision for the following? (1: no influence- 5: strongly influence) [Accommodation]	.315 .000	.445 .000	.271 .000	.274 .000	.143 .011	.192 .001
	312	312	312	312	312	312

How likely the information on social media is going to impact your travel decision for the following?	444	.390	.447	.220	.113	.246
	.000	.000	.000	.000	.046	.000
(1: no influence - 5: strongly influence) [Choosing excursion and leisure activities]	312 .	312	312	312	312	312
How likely the information on social media is going to impact your travel decision for the following?	.407	.343	.447	.218	.088	.262
	.000	.000	.000	.000	.120	.000
(1: no influence - 5: strongly influence) [Food and beverages]	312	312	312	312	312	312
How likely the information on social media is going to impact your travel decision for the following?	.338	.234	.246	.381	.053	.237
	.000	.000	.000	.000	.351	.000
(1: no influence - 5: strongly influence) [Mode of transportation]	312	312	312	312	312	312

Interpretation

Correlation is observed between the reliability and influence of social media on customer decision making. Significant correlation is observed among them as the significance value is less than 0.05. Among different social media options relatively whatsaap is found to have less significant correlation with the influence of it on customer decision making for various purpose.

H11: There is no significant association between gender and social media activities

Table 16*
Gender * Measure of social media activity Crosstabulation

Count		Measure of social media activity		Total
		Non active users	active users	
Gender	Male	60	100	160
	Female	68	84	152
	Total	128	184	312

Table 17*
Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	1.687[a]	1	.194		
Continuity Correction[b]	1.401	1	.236		
Likelihood Ratio	1.688	1	.194		
Fisher's Exact Test				.207	.118
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.682	1	.195		
N of Valid Cases	312				

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 62.36.

b. Computed only for a 2x2 table

Interpretation

There is no significant evidence to reject the null hypothesis as the significance value is greater than 0.05 (i.e. 0.194) with degree of freedom 1. Thus, there is no significant association between gender and social media activities.

H12: There is no significant association between age and social media activities

Table 18*
Age * Measure of social media activity Crosstabulation

Count		Measure of social media activity		Total
		Non active users	active users	
Age	0-18	8	16	24
	19-25	67	92	159
	26-40	32	56	88
	above 40	21	20	41
	Total	128	184	312

Table 19*
Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	3.220[a]	3	.359
Likelihood Ratio	3.213	3	.360
Linear-by-Linear Association	.739	1	.390
N of Valid Cases	312		

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 9.85.

Interpretation

There is no significant evidence to reject the null hypothesis as the significance value is greater than 0.05 (i.e. 0.359) with degree of freedom 3. Thus, there is no significant association between gender and social media activities.

H13: There is no significant association between education and social media activities

Table 20*
education * Measure of social media activity Crosstabulation

Count		Measure of social media activity		Total
		passive users	active users	
Edu-cation	Metric	8	16	24
	Graduation	44	64	108
	Post graduation	76	104	180
	Total	128	184	312

Table 21*
Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	.697[a]	2	.706
Likelihood Ratio	.711	2	.701
Linear-by-Linear Association	.523	1	.469
N of Valid Cases	312		

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 9.85.

Interpretation

There is no significant evidence to reject the null hypothesis as the significance value is greater than 0.05 (i.e. 0.706) with degree of freedom 2. Thus, there is no significant association between gender and social media activities.

H14:   There is no significant association between gender and tourists sharing experience.

Table 22*
Gender * share experience Crosstabulation

Count		Share experience media activity		Total
		do not share	share	
Gender	Male	44	116	160
	Female	76	76	152
	Total	120	192	312

Table 23*
Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	16.673[a]	1	.000		
Continuity Correction[b]	15.735	1	.000		
Likelihood Ratio	16.827	1	.000		
Fisher's Exact Test				.000	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	16.619	1	.000		
N of Valid Cases	312				

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 58.46.

b. Computed only for a 2x2 table

Interpretation

There is significant evidence to reject the null hypothesis as the significance value is less than 0.05 (0.00) thus indicating significant association between gender and sharing of experience on social media

H15:   There is no significant association between age and tourists sharing experience

TABLE 24*
Age * share experience Crosstabulation

Count		Share experience media activity		Total
		do not share	share	
Age	0-18	20	4	24
	19-25	64	95	159
	26-40	20	68	88
	above 40	16	25	41
	Total	120	192	312

Table 25*
Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	29.842[a]	3	.000
Likelihood Ratio	30.618	3	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	11.831	1	.001
N of Valid Cases	312		

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 9.23.

Interpretation

There is significant association between age and tourist sharing experience as the significance value is found to be less than 0.05 (i.e. 0.000). thus, age is also a determining factor guiding tourist sharing activities

H16: There is no significant association between education and tourists sharing experience

Table 26*
Education * Share Experience Crosstabulation

		Share experience media activity		
Count		do not share	share	Total
Edu-cation	Metric	20	4	24
	Graduation	36	72	108
	Post graduation	64	116	180
	Total	120	192	312

Table 27*
Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	22.259[a]	2	.000
Likelihood Ratio	22.349	2	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	8.557	1	.003
N of Valid Cases	312		

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 9.23.

Interpretation

As the significance value is less than 0.05 therefore there is significant evidence to reject the null hypothesis thus concluding that there is significant association between education and tourist sharing one's experience.

H17: There is no significant association between satisfaction score and reliability

TABLE 28*

		Does usage of social media has enhanced your decision making choice ?
Reliability of social media	Pearson Correlation	312 .360**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	312

Interpretation

There is a significant correlation between reliability and customer satisfaction with the social media as the significance value is found to be less than 0.05 (i.e. 0.000) thereby rejecting the null hypothesis

7. Summary of the Findings-

The following table shows the result of hypothesis testing for the entire hypothesis.

Hypothesis	Accept/ Reject
Ho1: There is no significant relation between gender and frequency of travelling.	Accept
Ho2: There is no significant relation between age and frequency of travelling.	Accept
Ho3: There is no significant relation between education	Reject

and frequency of travelling.	
Ho4: There is no significant difference in reliability of social media on the basis of gender of respondents	Accept
Ho5: There is no significant difference in reliability of social media on the basis of age of respondents	Reject
Ho6: There is no significant difference in reliability of social media on the basis of education of respondents	Accept
Ho7: There is no significant difference in impact of social media on the basis of gender of respondents	Reject
Ho8: There is no significant difference in impact of social media on the basis of age of respondents	Reject
Ho9: There is no significant difference in impact of social media on the basis of education of respondents	Reject
H10: There is no significant correlation between reliability of social media and social media impact on tourist decision making	Reject
H11: There is no significant association between gender and social media activities	Accept
H12: There is no significant association between age and social media activities	Accept
H13: There is no significant association between education and social media activities	Accept
H14: There is no significant association between gender and tourists sharing experience	Reject
H15: There is no significant association between age and tourists sharing experience	Reject
H16: There is no significant association between education and tourists sharing experience	Reject
H17: There is no significant correlation between satisfaction score and reliability	Reject

Hypothesis testing throws significant insight into the tourist attitude and its interrelationship with other variable. Education is found to have significant association with the frequency of travelling thus indicating that educated people are likely to travel more and explore different tourist spot. But, since the population was dominated by young generation pursuing graduation and post graduation the test results holds less significance. Significant difference in the reliability and social media impact on purchase decision was observed based on the age of the respondents. Additionally difference in gender and education were found to be significant factor contributing to the difference in how the social media impacts tourist decision making. Among age, gender and education no factor was found to be a significant factor governing the extent of usage of social media for the purpose of check-in location, sharing photos etc. while, age, gender and education showed significant association with likelihood to share experience. Correlation testing among variables indicated significant correlation exist between reliability of social media and its impact on decision making and thus enhancing the tourist decision making.

7.1 Other Findings

Based on the responses collected through questionnaire following results were found:

- 89.14% of respondents referred social media channel for travel related decision making.

- Majority of respondents on an average travel more than thrice in an year accounting for 42.3% of respondents followed by 25.6% of respondents travelling once in an year

- Review forums/ travel blogs, Wikipedia, TripAdvisor followed by YouTube were found to be the most reliable among social media channels while WhatsApp and Facebook were found to be relatively less reliable. As opposed to reliability, respondents showed preference to post review on Facebook followed by WhatsApp and review forums

- Information on social media impacts significantly tourist in determining excursion and leisure activities followed by accommodation, food and beverages and lastly mode of transportation

- During vacation social media is primarily used for check in location. Post vacation it is being used for sharing photos videos and sharing stories. While respondents showed reluctance in writing reviews, commenting on related stories, hitting like button of webpage of places tourist visits and tweeting about their experience.

- People showed preference to post review on the leisure activities of the tourist place followed by shopping experience. Historical place and local cuisine were least preferred. While 16.7% of respondents were not interested to post review on any.

- Respondents are much likely to share their experience in case when they feel highly dissatisfied, dissatisfied and delighted. While are not likely to share experience if had satisfactory or not bad experience.

- Majority of respondents use social media for information search but restrict to share their experience through social media and indicate unwillingness as major reason not to share experience on review forums, commenting followed by inactive usage of social accounts

- Majority of respondents agreed that the social media usage has lead to improved decision making.

8. Conclusion and Suggestions

Social media has become the new lens modifying the panorama of tourist in determining its purchase decision, thereby transforming the landscape for tourism industry by offering significant insight into the tourist behavior. Above analysis braces the fact of tourist resting significant reliance and increasing influence of social media channels in their travel decision making. Among the imminent social media platforms respondents showed higher reliance on content communities than social networks. This includes review forums, travel blogs, wikitravel, TripAdvisor while YouTube, WhatsApp and Facebook find last stop in the reliability ladder. On the reliability continuum age was found to be a significant factor contributing to the difference in the quantum of reliability bestowed by different age groups. Content on reliable sources significantly impacts tourist decision in determining the excursion and leisure activities followed by decision related to accommodation, food and beverages. Impact of social media for different decision varies significantly for respondents belonging to different age, their education level and gender. Social media activities evidently form an important constituent in post purchase behavior of tourist. Though the sampled respondents referred social media channels for information search but were found dormant when measured in terms of sharing their experience. Respondent's social media activities primarily comprised of check-in location (during trip) and sharing photos, videos (post trip) while were reluctant to post review or rating. Unwillingness and inactive usage were found two significant reasons governing such behavior of respondents. No factor was found significant, determining the extent of social media activities of respondents. On the satisfaction bar, respondents are much likely to post review on leisure activities followed by shopping experience, historical place and local cuisine when either tourist is highly dissatisfied, dissatisfied or delighted by the experience and prefers not to share if were satisfied or neutral with the experience. Tendency to share experience by tourist showed significant association with the age, gender and education of respondents. Overall the analysis validated the usage and influence exerted by social media in today's digital world on tourist purchase decision. As the tourist attaches increased utility with the extent of

reliability confer by respondents thus impacting their decision making.

8.1 Suggestions

Based on the findings of the study, following inferences can be made for the marketers that can be accommodated to redefine its offering to its customer in context of social media behavior of tourist:

- Education showed significant association with the frequency of travelling thus, education profile of tourist forms an important demographic of the tourist profile. Marketing communication must be formulated considering the education level as an significant factor.

- Large base of content communities as a social media platform effectively engages tourist as a reliable source of information thus act as a significant area seeking continuous monitoring. Analysis of such content can proffer insight into its offering and leakages to fill in the gaps.

- Since, significant difference in reliability was observed among different age groups, thus the marketing offering should be based upon which age group does tourist belong. Younger generation tend to put more faith on content over content communities thus insight drawn from such sources should be attuned in its offering for different age groups.

- Social media content primarily influence the choice of leisure and outdoor activities followed by accommodation thus content related to reviews, blogs over fun activities, accommodation are of prime importance for marketers. Associating with various venders of such information like Makemytrip, Yatra etc. can add to their competitive advantage.

- Again age, gender and education as a factor influence the decision of tourist differently, thus marketing strategy for different profile of tourist must be customized. Thus, younger generation, higher qualified, male are likely to be more influenced by content on social media thereby spurting an area for marketers to focus on.

- As the activities on social networks are found to be less reliable and generally undertaken when it comes to sharing experience via check-ins, photos and video and also such activities are not governed by the age, gender and education thus, carries less significance for the marketers but cannot be ignored completely.

- Results explicitly indicated tourist tendency to share experience when they had either extreme experience highly dissatisfied or delighted with more weightage to dissatisfactory experience, thus signaling negative electronic word of mouth forms prominent part of tourist post trip activities. Thus incorporating tourist changing need and reducing the dissonance of tourist post purchase act as a determinant in success of the operators

- Age, gender and education were found to be the variables moderating the tourist behavior post trip i.e. sharing of one's experiencethus, impacting other tourist behavior. Marketers need to formulate marketing strategies taking extra care of the segment which have a higher tendency to express through their social media activities. Sample indicated male, higher qualified and young generation likely to have greater tendency to share.

- Companies own social group allowing tourist to share their experience immediately can provide company with important data related to customer experience and attitude

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