

An Analysis of the Relationship between Social Media Dimensions and Demographic profile Of Tourists

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ABSTRACT

Social media is a computer-based technology that facilitates the sharing of ideas, thoughts, and information through the building of virtual networks and communities. The present research is focusing on the relationship between social media dimensions and demographic profile of tourists. Data was collected from the customer's of Punjab area. The time frame of collecting the data was September 2022 to January 2023. The Convenience Sampling Technique was used in the study to collect data from the respondents. Friedman Rank test was used to achieve the first objective. The first objective of the present research paper was to identify most important dimensions of social media which impacts tourism. The findings of the first objective revealed that Images of different places, Feedback, Presence of social travel sites, Sharing experiences and Advertisement of the unexplored destinations are the top five dimensions of social media which influence more to tourists to select their destinations. Non-Parametric tests like Mann Whitney U test and Kruskal Wallis Test was performed to achieve the second objective. The second objective of the study was to examine the relationship between social media dimensions and demographic profile of tourists. The findings of the second objective concluded that Educational Qualification and Occupation do not create difference in any of the Dimensions of Social Media, Annual Income creates difference only on "Presence of social travel sites" with highest rank for income Up to 3 Lakhs, Internet Usage also creates no difference in any of the dimensions of social media excepting for word of mouth with internet usage of more than 8 hrs. There were other important findings of the second objective are discussed in the research paper.

I. INTRODUCTION

The way tourism is managed has changed as a result of the usage of ICT and the Internet. The Internet has emerged as a potent instrument for marketing travel to any nation, area, state, or tourist destination in the twenty-first century, ushering in a new era of tourism promotion (Gohil, 2015). In the history of advertising, the 1990s are viewed as a decade of change towards a new era known as digital advertising. According to Bruns & Bahnisch (2009), social media is a website developed using Web 2.0 technology that enables extensive social engagement, community creation, and the launch of joint initiatives. A tourist location is a natural entity having particular conditions and characteristics with reference to tourism, unlike other destinations. Visitors form an opinion and a list of expectations about a place before travelling there based on prior encounters, reports in the media, advertisements, and general beliefs (Baloglu & Brinberg, 1997; Chon, 1992).. Through logical and intuitive interpretations, they create a spiritual image of the destination (Konecnik, 2004; Kavoura and Bitsani, 2013). Attractive locations reflect travellers' perceptions of their suitability to satisfy their needs and offer personal advantages (Mayo & Jarvis, 1981). Visitors today have a wide range of options for vacation spots, but decision-making time is condensed. Your destination must stand out from your rivals if you want to be successful in the target market. The relationship between travel destinations and their guests has undergone a fundamental alteration as a result of the invention and widespread usage of information and communication technologies. Social media is playing a bigger and bigger part in the travel industry. Social media has been successfully used to market travel destinations (Kiráová & Pavleka, 2015).

Gretzel et al. (2007) discovered that online testimonials published on a travel-related consumer review and rating website boost decision-makers' self-assurance, lower risk, help them choose accommodations, and generally simplify the decision-making process. Additionally, it was discovered that travellers read hotel reviews at all stages of the travel planning process: prior to departure as a source of inspiration, as a way to narrow choices, and after selecting a hotel to confirm the decision; while on vacation; after returning home to compare and share experiences; and even when no trip is scheduled. Mack et al.'s (2008) investigation of the legitimacy and influence of travel blogs revealed that traditional WOM is more reliable than blog posts, indicating that WOM originating from people to whom travellers have close social links is more reliable than WOM from strangers. While there is opportunity for future improvements in blog reliability as the number of bloggers increases over time, users who post to blogs are aware that blog permissions are comparable to conventional WOM permissions (Technorati, 2010). The current study focuses on the various social media

platform characteristics and how they affect travellers' choice of destinations. The demographic profile of tourists is another aspect of the current research that is being looked at.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1.Social Media Platforms

A social media platform, according to DeNardis and Hachl (2015), must offer the following three technical features: 1 User-generated content mediation 2. User interaction and the potential for direct content participation, 3. The capacity of a person to explain network connections to other users. Social networking sites like Facebook, microblogging platforms like Twitter, content aggregators like YouTube and Reddit, reputation engines like Yelp, mobile image messaging services like Snapchat, and e-commerce websites like Etsy are examples of these common traits. It can be found in different kinds of information brokers and online gaming services like Xbox Live. Information research is an essential step in the consumer's decision-making process, according to both the traditional industry and the travel sector. This first phase has been revolutionised by the Internet (Mattila, 2004). In addition to conventional Internet use, social media raises travel quality while lowering anxiety and perceived dangers (Buhalis and Law, 2008; Zeng and Gerritsen, 2014). Before purchasing a new good or service, over 60% of individuals typically read online reviews, blogs, and other customer feedback (O'Connor, 2010). In the travel and tourism sector, this ratio exceeds 80% (Fotis et al., 2012; Pantano and Di Pietro, 2013). In addition, more than 80% of those who referred to such material stated that it had at least some influence on subsequent purchase decisions (O'Connor, 2010).

2.2 Dimensions of Social Media Platforms

11 dimensions of social media platforms promoting tourists destinations are identified based on previous researches. Which are as follows:

Table 1: Dimensions of Social Media

Dimensions of Social Media	Sector	Reference
Disclosure of Information	Tourism	Tham et al. (2013)
Sharing Experiences	Tourism	Munar and Jacobsen (2014)
Word of Mouth	Tourism	Gunawan et al. (2020)
Feedback	Tourism	Xiang et al. (2017)
Images of Different Places	Tourism	Zhao et al. (2018)
Advertisement of These Unexplored Destinations	Tourism	Kirářová and Pavlíček (2015)
Ease of Question Answers	Tourism	Aych et al. (2012)
Presence of Social Travel Sites Location Based App	Tourism	Walden et al. (2011)
It's Easy to Find People with Similar Interests	Tourism	Buhalis and Wagner. (2013) Xiang and Gretzel (2010)
They Can Cater to A Niche	Tourism	McIntyre (2014)

2.3 Relationship between Social Media Dimensions and Demographic Profile of Tourists

According to Thebault et al. (2013), seniors use a variety of search engines and travel websites to find information on trips. However, the same authors claim that seniors hardly ever use Facebook and Twitter for organising vacations. Pesonen et al. (2015) discovered that the use of social media for travel-related objectives was relatively low among Finnish seniors. On the other hand, study by Reisenwitz, et al. (2007) reveals that seniors spend more time online overall and feel more at ease doing so. Younger people have been found to be more active users and creators on the majority of social media platforms (Jones and Fox 2009, Lenhart et al. 2007, Verna 2009). When social media users are restricted to preteens, teens, and college students, males are more active social media makers than females are (Verna 2009). According to research conducted in the US, social media users are more likely to be white, have full-time jobs, and have college degrees (eMarketer 2009b). Additionally, the levels of education and income of social media users vary each social media type. In contrast to Facebook and MySpace users, who often have lower salaries and are more likely to be students, LinkedIn users tend to be more educated, earn more money, and work full-time.

Several earlier research have looked into the factors that influence social media engagement behaviours with regard to travel-related social media use and creation. Travellers should participate in online travel communities, according to Wang and Fesenmaier (2004), for their utilitarian, social, psychological, and hedonistic benefits. Similar findings were made by Chung and Buhalis (2008), who discovered that travellers participate in online communities for informational, social-psychological, and hedonistic reasons. According to a research by Yoo and Gretzel (2008), most people who write travel reviews on TripAdvisor do so because they enjoy doing it, because they care about other travellers, or because they want to support the business; just a small percentage are driven by the chance to vent. Recent research (Parra-Lopez et al. 2010) shows that when

people perceive larger benefits and greater availability, altruism, individual predilection, or trust, they are more likely to intend to utilise social media. It was also discovered that costs associated with social media use, such as time, privacy issues, or technical challenges, have no impact on people's intents to use them. Additionally, Yoo and Gretzel (2008) found that travellers' gender, income level, nationality, culture, membership in a generational cohort, involvement in trip planning, and personality (Yoo and Gretzel, 2010) were all factors that affected their social media use and creation behaviours. This suggests that the individual characteristics of travellers are important. Looking especially at the creation of travel-related social media, Yoo and Gretzel (2009) found that these makers are typically male, younger, and have higher earnings as well as better online skills. Additionally, they are more prone to plan their trips in-depthly and frequently (Yoo and Gretzel, 2008). Additionally, it was discovered that belonging to a collectivist culture increased the likelihood of producing blog contents geared towards a broad audience, whereas individualistic values result in the production of materials that reflect personal experiences and serve the purposes of ego-enhancement and documentation (Lee et al. 2009). Additionally, it was discovered that younger generations are more inclined than boomers and elders to submit trip images online (Yoo and Gretzel, 2009).

III. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the present research paper are:

1. To identify most important dimensions of social media which impacts tourism.
2. To examine the relationship between social media dimensions and demographic profile of tourists.

IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The current study has been conducted on customers in the following cities of Punjab, as Amritsar, Anandpur, Chandigarh, Ludhiana and Mohali. The data was collected based on customer demographics as age, gender, educational level etc. The current study's questionnaire was created using both primary and secondary data. Customers looking for a vacation destination were asked open-ended questions. Consumers were given a questionnaire to collect responses from their social media usage and feelings about what satisfies them and their intention to choose a destination. The current study also used previous research papers and studies to develop the various parts of the questionnaire. Suggestions from academicians of Hotel Management Institutes were also included in the development of the questionnaire. Thus, the final draft of the questionnaire includes feedback from hoteliers, academics, and consumers, as well as various variables used in previous studies in the questionnaire. Data was collected from the customer's of Punjab area. The time frame of collecting the data was September 2022 to January 2023. The Convenience Sampling Technique was used in the study because it draws a sample from the population that is close to hand. The appropriate sample size given the specified combination of precision, confidence and variability is 683. The researcher has collected a total of 701 responses. To establish Objective 1 To identify most important dimensions of social media which impacts tourism, Friedman Rank test was performed to check which dimension of social media most important for impacting tourism. To establish Objective 2 i.e. To examine the relationship between social media dimensions and demographic profile of tourists, Non-Parametric tests like Mann Whitney U test and Kruskal Wallis Test was performed.

V. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

5.1: Demographic Profile of Tourists

Table 2: Demographic Profile of Tourists

Variables		(%)
Gender	Male	60.6
	Female	39.4
Age	18-25 years	50.6
	26-35 years	38.8
	36-45 years	10.6
Marital Status	Single	65.2
	Married	32.7
	Preferred not to say	2.1
Educational Qualifications	Undergraduates	34
	Graduate	28.7
	Postgraduate	23.5
	Doctorate	3
	Others	10.8

Ares of Residence	Rural	30.6
	Urban	69.4
Occupation	Students	40.8
	Government Job	21.3
	Private Job	21.4
	Others	16.5
Annual Income	Not earning	39.9
	Up to 3 Lakhs	6.3
	3-6 Lakhs	10.7
	6-10 Lakhs	30.1
	More than 10 Lakhs	13

5.2: Objective 1: To identify most important dimensions of social media which impacts tourism

To establish this objective 11 items were identified based on previous researches. Which are as follows: -

- Disclosure of Information
- Sharing Experiences
- Word of Mouth
- Feedback
- Images of Different Places
- Advertisement of These Unexplored Destinations
- Ease of Question Answers
- Presence of Social Travel Sites
- Location Based App
- It's Easy to Find People with Similar Interests
- They Can Cater to A Nich

Friedman Rank test was performed to check which dimension of social media most important for impacting tourism. The Friedman test is a **non-parametric statistical test**. The procedure entails ranking each row (or block) together, then taking the values of ranks by columns into account.

Table 3: Friedman Rank test

Dimensions	Mean Rank
Images of different places	6.54
Feedback	6.38
Presence of social travel sites	6.31
Sharing experiences	6.24
Advertisement of these unexplored destinations.	6.22
Location based app	6.13
It's Easy to Find People with Similar Interests	5.97
Ease of Question answers	5.96
Word of Mouth	5.82
They Can Cater to a Niche	5.58
Disclosure of Information	4.86

It was found that the top 5 dimensions which impacts tourism the most are:-

- Images of different places
- Feedback
- Presence of social travel sites
- Sharing experiences
- Advertisement of these unexplored destinations

Followed by Location based app, It's Easy to Find People with Similar Interests, Ease of Question answers, Word of Mouth, They Can Cater to a Niche and Disclosure of Information.

Which means those social media sites or apps impact the choice of destination by tourists which has Specifically features like Images of different places, Feedback, Presence of social travel sites and Sharing experiences.

5.3: Objective 2: To examine the relationship between social media dimensions and demographic profile of tourists

To establish this objective hypothesis H01 has been proposed.

H01: Demographic profile does not create any difference on social media dimensions

To establish this hypothesis the first step was to check the distribution of **Social Media Dimensions** scale. K-S (Kolmogorov-Smirnov) test was performed.

The K-S test (Chakravarti, Laha, and Roy, 1967) is used to decide if a sample comes from a population with a specific distribution. In other words, the one-sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov test is used to test if a variable follows a given distribution in a population.

Results shows that p value is significant ($p < .05$), thus, the scale is not normally distributed.

Table 4: KS Test

Social Media Dimensions	Test Statistic	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)
Disclosure of Information	.162	.000 ^c
Sharing Experiences	.254	.000 ^c
Word of Mouth	.200	.000 ^c
Feedback	.225	.000 ^c
Images of different places	.231	.000 ^c
Advertisement of these unexplored destinations.	.227	.000 ^c
Ease of Question answers	.208	.000 ^c
Presence of social travel sites	.232	.000 ^c
Location based app	.221	.000 ^c
It's Easy to Find People with Similar Interests	.208	.000 ^c
They Can Cater to a Niche	.182	.000 ^c

Since the data is non normally distributed, Mann Whitney U test, and Kruskal Wallis test has been performed to check whether demographics creates any difference social media dimensions or not.

All the demographic variables had more than one groups expect for Area of Residence.

Thus Man Whitney U test was performed on Area of Residence and Kruskal Wallis was performed on rest of the demographic variable. Mann Whitney test is the non-parametric equivalent of T-Test. And Kruskal Wallis is a non- parametric equivalent of ANOVA.

It was found that Area of residence created a difference on all the Social Media Dimensions and higher mean rank is showed by Urban.

Table 5: Man Whitney U test

Grouping Variable	Social Media Dimensions	Mann-Whitney U	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Rank
AREA OF RESIDENCE	Disclosure of Information	49888.500	.000	Urban 372.39
	Sharing Experiences	49300.000	.000	Urban 373.06
	Word of Mouth	49498.500	.000	Urban 377.17
	Feedback	47439.000	.000	Urban 382.29
	Images of different places	46347.000	.000	Urban 384.99
	Advertisement of these unexplored destinations.	48144.000	.000	Urban 380.53
	Ease of Question answers	50162.500	.000	Urban 375.52
	Presence of social travel sites	50674.500	.000	Urban 374.25
	Location based app	52964.000	.006	Urban 368.56
	It's Easy to Find People with Similar Interests	51419.000	.001	Urban 372.4
	They Can Cater to a Niche	50703.500	.000	Urban 374.19

Further on performing Kruskal Wallis Test it was revealed that Educational Qualification and Occupation do not create difference in any of the Dimensions of Social Media, Annual Income creates difference only on **“Presence of social travel sites”** with highest rank for income **Upto 3 Lakhs**, **Internet Usage** also creates no difference in any of the dimensions of social media excepting for word of mouth with internet usage of **more than 8 hrs**.

Table 6:Kruskal Wallis for Gender, Age, Marital Status, Educational Support

	Gender			Age			Marital Status			Educational Qualification		
	Chi-Square	Asymp. Sig.	Mean Rank	Chi-Square	Asymp. Sig.	Mean Rank	Chi-Square	Asymp. Sig.	Mean Rank	Chi-Square	Asymp. Sig.	Mean Rank
Disclosure of Information	7.215	.027	Female 374.31	6.676	.036	18-25 368.05	9.729	.008	Single 365.89	5.486	.241	NA
Sharing Experiences	10.256	.006	Female 377.59	6.832	.033	18-25 362.68	16.711	.000	Single 370.44	6.094	.192	NA
Word of Mouth	3.565	.168	NA	3.180	.204	NA	8.677	.013	Single 365.06	5.745	.219	NA
Feedback	6.093	.048	Female 371.46	3.109	.211	NA	8.032	.018	Single 365.90	5.592	.232	NA
Images of different places	11.313	.003	Female 378.03	1.367	.505	NA	6.496	.039	Single 362.89	6.573	.160	NA
Advertisement of these unexplored destinations.	3.180	.204	NA	.704	.703	NA	2.943	.230	NA	3.449	.486	NA
Ease of Question answers	5.534	.063	NA	3.078	.215	NA	3.900	.142	NA	5.197	.268	NA
Presence of social travel sites	13.772	.001	Female 384.52	5.169	.075	NA	12.325	.002	Single 369.57	6.656	.155	NA
Location based app	11.655	.003	Female 378.50	6.432	.040	18-25 366.50	5.902	.052	Single 364.15	8.248	.083	NA
It's Easy to Find People With Similar Interests	5.917	.050	Female 370.33	3.677	.159	NA	6.934	.031	Divorced 369.53	3.677	.452	NA
They Can Cater to a Niche	3.002	.223	NA	.344	.842	NA	2.721	.257	NA	6.256	.181	NA

Location doesn't create difference on the dimensions of social media except **“Disclosure of Information”** with highest mean rank for **“Amritsar”**, **“Presence of social travel sites”** and **“Location based app”** with highest mean rank for **“Mohali”**, **“It's Easy to Find People With Similar Interests”** shows highest mean rank for **“Ludhiana”**.

Table 7:Kruskal Wallis for Occupation, Annual Income, Location, Internet Usage Per Day

	Occupation			Annual Income			Location			Internet Usage Per Day		
	Chi-Square	Asymp . Sig.	Mean Rank	Chi-Square	Asymp . Sig.	Mean Rank	Chi-Square	Asymp . Sig.	Mean Rank	Chi-Square	Asymp . Sig.	Mean Rank
Disclosure of Information	7.072	.215	NA	6.129	.294	NA	18.776	.001	AMRITSAR 285.92	3.132	.372	NA
Sharing Experiences	4.993	.417	NA	8.247	.143	NA	6.327	.176	NA	3.626	.305	NA
Word of Mouth	1.157	.949	NA	7.521	.185	NA	6.204	.184	NA	8.010	.046	> 8 Hrs 392.73
Feedback	4.197	.521	NA	4.689	.455	NA	7.200	.126	NA	.791	.852	NA
Images of different places	3.599	.608	NA	6.697	.244	NA	8.970	.062	NA	2.286	.515	NA
Advertisement of these unexplored destinations.	2.970	.705	NA	3.380	.642	NA	8.479	.076	NA	.614	.893	NA
Ease of Question answers	5.174	.395	NA	3.176	.673	NA	6.275	.180	NA	1.462	.691	NA
Presence of social travel sites	7.168	.208	NA	11.912	.036	Upto 3 Lakhs 380.73	10.261	.036	MOHALI 370.99	.090	.993	NA
Location based app	3.538	.618	NA	3.186	.671	NA	16.531	.002	MOHALI 395.26	.374	.946	NA
It's Easy to Find People With Similar Interests	4.913	.427	NA	3.296	.654	NA	12.148	.016	LUDHIANA 380.31	2.277	.517	NA
They Can Cater to a Niche	.871	.972	NA	3.449	.631	NA	6.032	.197	NA	.863	.834	NA

Marital Status creates difference in majority of the dimensions of social media as in “**Disclosure of Information**”, “**Sharing Experiences**”, “**Word of Mouth**”, “**Feedback**”, “**Images of different places**”, “**Presence of social travel sites**”, Location based app with highest mean rank for “**Single**” and “**It's Easy to Find People With Similar Interests**” with highest mean rank for **Divorced**.

Thus, the hypothesis is partially rejected accepting the alternate hypothesis i.e., *Demographic profile creates difference on social media dimensions*.

Thus, H01 was partially rejected accepting the alternate hypothesis that demographics creates a difference on the social media dimensions.

VI. CONCLUSION

The first objective of the present research paper was to identify most important dimensions of social media which impacts tourism. The findings of the first objective revealed that Images of different places, Feedback, Presence of social travel sites, Sharing experiences and Advertisement of the unexplored destinations are the top five dimensions of social media which influence more to tourists to select their destinations. The second objective of the study was to examine the relationship between social media dimensions and demographic profile of tourists. The findings of the second objective concluded that Educational Qualification and Occupation do not create difference in any of the Dimensions of Social Media, Annual Income creates difference only on “Presence of social travel sites” with highest rank for income Upto 3 Lakhs, Internet Usage also creates no difference in any of the dimensions of social media excepting for word of mouth with internet usage of more than 8 hrs. Further the findings revealed that Location doesn't create difference on the dimensions of social media except “Disclosure of Information” with highest mean rank for “Amritsar”, “Presence of social travel sites” and “Location based app” with highest mean rank for “Mohali”, “It's Easy to Find People With Similar Interests” shows highest mean rank for “Ludhiana”. The findings of the second objective also concluded that Marital Status creates difference in majority of the dimensions of social media as in “Disclosure of Information”, “Sharing Experiences”, “Word of Mouth”, “Feedback”, “Images of different places”, “Presence of social travel sites”, Location based app with highest mean rank for “Single” and “It's Easy to Find People With Similar Interests” with highest mean rank for Divorced.

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