Drivers and Inhibitors in Online Ticketing in Civil Aviation Sector

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ABSTRACT

The rapid growth of the Internet over the past two decades as a platform for buyer - seller interaction is analytical of the degree of growing acceptance of online buying transactions worldwide. Despite the slowing penetration of regular Internet users, the number of consumers using the Internet as a shopping medium is still growing. Online buying has increased significantly over the years and the number of internet travelers has been rapidly growing. Although consumers recognize the benefits of the Internet, managing the dynamics of drivers and inhibitors in online ticketing in civil aviation sector is a research area worth exploring. What leads a buyer to shop online as a research question has evoked a lot of interest both in academics and practice, although the findings appear to be fragmented and disintegrated. several perceived risks make customers reluctant to buy online ticketing. So far as India is concerned, the number of individuals buying products and services online continues to increase in India, given its wide population base. Identification of drivers and inhibitors for online buying and its impact on online buying intention emphasize the need for an in-depth analysis from the customers' or users' behavioral perspective. The aim of this paper is to examine the drivers and inhibitors in online ticket purchasing in civil aviation sector and analyses the relationship between drivers, inhibitors and customer's intention to buy online. It also finds out the significant mean differences among respondents belonging to different age groups regarding perceived drivers and inhibitors on the basis of data obtained from 201 randomly selected customers from major Indian airlines viz. Air India, Jet Airways and Kingfisher. A specifically designed questionnaire has been used for obtaining the relevant data. The reliability is examined by using the split half test and Cronbach Alpha. The data were purified and summarized with exploratory factor analysis. After purification and validation through factor analysis, data were subjected to univariate and bivariate research tools. The results reveal positive correlation between perceived drivers and intentions to buy online and there exists negative correlation between perceived inhibitors and intentions to buy online. In addition to this, there exists insignificant difference among different age groups regarding drivers and significant difference in inhibitors in online ticket purchasing.

Key words: Information Technology, Facilitators, Inhibitors, Civil Aviation Sector.

Introduction

Technological adoption has overpoweringly changed the way consumers buy and use products and services. Customers use the IT to buy products and services online, compare prices, product features and after sale service. Moreover, Information technology has enabled many companies to reduce the price of their products and services and stay ahead in highly competitive markets. Many industries including the airline industry are increasing using technology to market their product. IT is the ultimate medium for delivering travel services to consumers as it offers many benefits such as time and cost savings, ease of comparing offers and price reductions. With regard to the airline industry, IT enables customers to book flights rapidly and conveniently, and often with substantial price savings. Moreover, IT has led to significant changes in the e-business processes in the airline industry such as reduces ticket processing charges, eliminates the need for paper and allows the passenger and the travel agent greater flexibility to make changes to the schedule.

Convenience perceived by customers regarding online airline tickets purchase positively influences their motivation as IT eliminates all displacement problems because consumers can reserve airline tickets without leaving home and have freedom and time to choose their purchases. IT has become one of the most important platforms to provide services to their target customers (Ho and Lee, 2007) and the use of IT enabled services is generally regarded as the most cost effective for airlines online services such as flight booking, selecting seats, web check-in, and more importantly buying tickets are essential for airline companies to succeed (Lubbe, 2007). Despite all the major airlines invested huge sums of money, not only to make booking features available, but also to integrate them into attractive, easy-to-use web offerings and given the cost advantages of online sales for airlines, many travellers are still reluctant to use the IT as a procure channel, it is therefore constructive for organisations to identify the drivers and barriers affecting the use of the IT to purchase tickets. Exploiting new opportunities of rapid technological changes and customer focus is the key point of success business. Understanding factors that are imperative for customers to adopt IT enabled services is the challenge for researchers and service providers. There are quite numerous studies that came across the online customers' behaviour such as their browsing attitudes, continuance intention to use a website, willingness to purchase, or their shopping interests. Also research has been conducted in various sectors such as retailing, banking,

governmental transactions, hotel booking etc. This study intends to focus particularly on a significant yet under investigated industry that is the airline industry. So it is important to gain comprehensive understanding on how travellers behave during online travel arrangements and learn the factors that could influence users to adopt airlines websites for their air ticket purchasing needs.

Review of literature

Mafe *et al.* (2009) analysed the influence of risk, perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use on the airline ticket online purchase intention and concluded that perceived purchase risk and perceived usefulness exercise a direct influence on airline ticket purchasing intentions. In another study Shima *et al.* (2007) found that attitude and perceived usefulness significantly affect customers' intention to purchase e-ticket. Sulaiman *et al.* (2008) identified e-ticketing trends among urban communities particularly in Kuala Lumpur. The study found that convenience and ease of use are among the factors that motivated the respondents to purchase tickets online. Kim *et al.* (2005) examined the effect of perceived risk on purchase intention in online airline ticket purchases. The results revealed that the seven risk dimensions were negatively correlated with customer's purchase intention.

Nikhashem *et al.* (2011) investigated peoples" perception of online buying tickets (e-ticketing) as well as why some people use this facility while some who do not use it stick to the traditional way to fulfill their needs. The outcome of this research showed a comprehensively integrated framework in order to understand the dynamic relationships among dimensions of perceived risk, user trustworthiness, usefulness, familiarity and confidence. Enrique Bigné *et al.* (2010) attempts to identify the determinant variables that make some Internet users not to buy airline tickets online. The results revealed that internet users who never have purchased an airline ticket online suggest that both subjective norm and attitude have a direct influence on airline ticket purchase intention. Ease of use has an indirect influence on behaviour through perceived usefulness, trust and risk. Zhao *et al.* (2008) identified risk factors that discourage Chinese consumers from adopting online services. The results indicate that the concept of perceived risk has merit in explaining Chinese consumers' decisions on whether to use online services.

Bukhari (2012) aims to measure consumers' intention to purchase tickets from airlines websites taking into consideration the following nine constructs namely information quality, system quality, perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use ,e-trust, airline reputation, price perception, e-satisfaction, and intention to purchase. The results provide better understanding on the factors that attract travellers to adopt the most cost effective distribution channel for airlines for ticketing needs. Morosan *et al.* (2008) examined benefits travelers enjoyed while searching for travel information online, and effects of benefits and satisfaction on their intentions to repeat the search process. Both respondents' perceived benefits and satisfaction with online information were strong determinants of their usage of travel information websites. Gureş *et al*. (2011) measures and compares differences in passengers' expectations of the desired airline service quality. The findings demonstrated that for domestic flight passengers "assurance" was ranked as the most important service quality dimension and 'reliability' was ranked by international flight passengers as the most important dimension. Llach *et al.* (2013) understand the impact of e-quality on consumer's loyalty in the context of the online airplane ticket purchase. The results show that the functional and hedonic quality are positive significant for loyalty through perceived value.

Ruyter et al. (2001) stated the perceived risks in online ticketing significantly explain the customers intensions to buy online, including time, privacy, security, and trust risks. . Constantinides (2005) studied factors influencing the online consumer's online behaviour and found four main categories of barriers in e-service: functional factors including usability and interactivity, psychological factors including trust, and content factors including aesthetics and marketing mix (Constantinides 2005). Empirical findings show that the inhibitors of online ticketing are are security risks (the fear of fraud and risk of loss), long delivery time, lack of trust, lack of Internet access or poor connection speed, lack of customized service, and the difficulty in finding what you are looking for. Security risks, such as the credit card number being picked up by third-party hackers, are mostly accepted as the biggest problem in online ticketing , and it is one of the more complex barriers to be overcome. Lack of trust is another big barrier in intensions to buy online for customers (Gefen and Straub, 2003, 2004; Vassilakis et al. 2005; Hackney et al. 2006).

Objectives

- To identify the perceived drivers and inhibitors in online ticket purchasing.
- To analyse the relationship between drivers and customer's intention to buy online.
- To examine the relationship between inhibitors and customer's intention to buy online.
- To find out the mean difference among different age groups regarding perceived drivers and perceived inhibitors.

Hypotheses

H 1: There exists positive correlation between perceived drivers and intentions to buy online.

H2: There exists negative correlation between perceived inhibitors and intentions to buy online.

H3: There exists significant difference among different age groups regarding drivers and
inhibitors in online ticket purchasing.

Instrument

They data were collected through a purposely developed questionnaire framed after reviewing extant literature (Bukhari , 2012; Shima *et al.*, 2007; Kim *et al.* ,2005) and discussions with the experts relating to the topic under reference. The questionnaire comprised of 6 items of general nature, 36 items relating to perceived drivers and inhibitors. All the statements other than the statements relating to general information were based on 5 points Likert scale ranging from 5 = Strongly Agree and 1 = Strongly Disagree. For making the study more comprehensive, exhaustive and representative, the respondents have been surveyed from the Jammu and Srinagar airport travelled in three major airlines viz., Air India, Jet Airways and Kingfisher. A total of 201 customers from Jammu and Srinagar airports selected through stratified random sampling.

Profile of Respondents

Among the total number of respondents, 67 (33%) respondents are from Air India, 67 (33%) respondents are from Jet Airways, 67 (34%) respondents are from Kingfisher. The number of male respondents figured higher 124 (62%) than their female counterparts 77 (38%). About half of the total respondents are post graduate. Out of the total respondents, 10 (5%) fall in the age group of Less than 21 years, 92 (46%) of the respondents fall in the age group of 21-40 years, 88 (44%) of the respondents fall in the age group of 41-60 years, 11 (5%) of the respondents have their age above 60. About 117 (58%) of the respondents are married. However, 36 (18%) respondents are self-employed, 65 (32%) respondents are employed (private sector), 75 (37%) respondents are employed (public sector), 25 (13%) respondents are occupied in other areas (Table1).

Table 1 Customer Profiling (Demographics)

Variables	N	%
Airline		
Air India	67	33
Jet Airways	67	33
Kingfisher	67	34
Gender		
Male	124	62
Female	77	38
Qualification:		
Up to graduation	65	32
Post graduation	101	50
Professional	35	18
Age		
Less than 21	10	5
21 to 40	92	46
41 to 60	88	44
Above 60	11	5
Marital Status		
Single	84	42
Married	117	58
Occupation		
Self employed	36	18
Employed(private sector)	65	32
Employed (govt./public sector)	75	37
Others	25	13

Reliability and Validity

To check the internal consistency and reliability of data, split half test and Cronbach Alpha (Malhotra 2008, p. 285) have been applied twice i.e. before and after factor analysis by dividing the respondents into two equal halves. The data were found reliable before the Factor analysis as mean values of both groups (Group I= 3.734 and Group II =3.87) are almost similar. Similarly, after factor analysis, the data again proved quite satisfactory in terms of split half reliability as mean values obtained from both halves of respondents are (Group I=3.754 and Group II =3.832) are quite similar. Moreover, Cronbach Alpha values also found reliable before and after factor analysis as it came to be .749   and .816   respectively being much higher than standard value of 0.7 (Table 2). The Content/Construct Validity was duly assessed through review of literature and discussions with the experts.

The higher Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measures of Sampling, Adequacy values and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity and Variance Explained represent the construct validity. Convergent Validity has also been satisfied as communalities of all items were above .50 (Field, 2003, p. 432).

Table 1 Split half Reliability and Cronbach's Alpha

Group	Before Factor Analysis	After Factor Analysis
Group I	3.734	3.754
Group II	3.870	3.832
Cronbach's Alpha	.749	.816

Factor Analysis

Factor analysis is a data purification technique which is used to reduce a large number of variables to a smaller number of factors. High KMO value (.642) revealed required adequacy of the data for factor analysis. The result exceeds 0.60 the lower limit of acceptability (Hair et al., 2009).The technique of exploratory factor analysis has been used through Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS, 17 Version) with Principal component analysis along with varimax rotation for summarisation of the total data in to minimum meaningful factors. The items having factor loading less than 0.5 and Eigen values less than 1 were ignored for the subsequent analysis (Hair et al., 2009). With the application of factor analysis, questionnaire comprising of total 36 statements has been reduced to 25 statements that converged to five factors with 81.231% of variance explained (Table).

Findings

The exploratory factor analysis results in emergence of the five factors viz., Psychological risk, Performance risk, Perceived ease of use, Perceived Usefulness, Intention to buy online.

The factor wise analysis is as under:-

Psychological risk (F1): The first factor having Mean = 3.85 with Eigen value 5.580 comprised of six items (Table). The item 'I would feel uncomfortable using internet to buy airline tickets.' has the highest factor loading (.957) indicating high association with this factor. The mean values of the items under this factor range from 3.22 to 4.34. About 84% of the total respondents agreed that I would feel it could be risky using internet to buy airline tickets. (4.34).

Performance risk (F2): The second factor having Mean = 4.06 with Eigen value 4.726 comprised of five items. The item 'I would be worried that the online ticket purchasing didn't provide the flight advantages listed on the website' has the highest factor loading (.929) indicating high association with this factor. The mean values of the items under this factor range from 3.89 to 4.29. About 90% of the total respondents agreed that I would be worried about paying with my credit card if I used Internet to buy airline tickets (4.16).

Perceived ease of use (F3): The third factor having Mean = 3.83 & with Eigen value 3.847 comprised of five items. The item 'Internet would not require much mental effort to buy airline tickets.' has the highest factor loading (.845) indicating high association with this factor. The item 'Using internet would be simple to buy airline tickets' having the least factor loading (.735) and therefore stands least associated with this factor. The mean values of the items under this factor range from 3.67 to 4.06.

Perceived Usefulness (F4): The fourth factor having Mean = 3.84 with Eigen value 3.548 comprised of four items. The mean values of the items under this factor range from 3.31to 4.11. About 78% of the total respondents agreed that internet would make the purchase of airline tickets easier (4.07). About 70% of the total respondents agreed that Internet would be useful for my airline ticket purchases (3.88).

Intention to buy online (F5): The fifth factor having Mean = 3.83 with Eigen value 2.607 comprised of five items. The item 'I will probably buy airline tickets online in the near future.' has the highest factor loading (.886) indicating high association with this factor. The item 'I would be flying on this airline again in the future.' having the least factor loading (.661) and therefore stands least associated with this factor. The mean values of the items under this factor range from 3.42 to 4.10.

Table Factorial Profile of facilitators and inhibitors for online airline ticket purchasing

Variables	M	SD	FL	C	EV	VE	CA
Psychological risk	**3.85**				**5.580**	**20.407**	**.955**
I would feel it could be risky using internet to buy airline tickets.	4.34	0.89	.921	.824			
I would feel anxious in buying airline tickets online.	3.98	0.54	.932	.921			
I would experience unnecessary stress using internet to buy airline tickets.	3.53	0.43	.937	.671			
I would feel uncomfortable using internet to buy airline tickets.	3.22	0.74	.957	.634			
I would feel the purchase could not meet my expectations in buying airline tickets online.	3.89	0.59	.785	.932			
I would feel that my personal information could be used without my consent using internet to buy airline tickets.	4.15	0.73	.792	.913			
Performance risk	**4.06**				**4.726**	**17.217**	**.959**
It would be difficult to find out about the flight characteristics (time schedule, plane characteristics.) in online ticket purchasing.	3.92	0.87	.921	.917			
I would be worried that the online ticket purchasing didn't provide the flight advantages listed on the website	4.05	0.78	.929	.936			
There would be a high probability of wasting time looking for the correct flight during online ticket purchasing.	3.89	0.94	.951	.827			
I would be worried about paying with my credit card if I used internet to buy airline tickets	4.16	0.67	.680	.746			
I would be worried that the ticket purchased was not worth the price	4.29	0.82	.780	.734			
Perceived ease of use	**3.83**				**3.847**	**16.777**	**.834**
Using Internet to buy airline tickets would be easy following the instructions on the website	3.95	0.82	.749	.752			
Internet would not require much mental effort to buy airline tickets.	3.72	0.94	.845	.743			
Using internet would be simple to buy airline tickets	3.78	0.81	.735	.913			
Using internet would be easy for me to learn buying airline tickets	3.67	0.54	.803	.900			
Internet would not require much mental effort to buy airline tickets.	4.06	0.63	.811	.907			
Perceived Usefulness	**3.84**				**3.548**	**13.776**	**.933**
Internet would make the purchase of airline tickets easier.	4.07	0.89	.918	.911			
Internet would be useful for my airline ticket purchases.	3.88	0.68	.961	.964			
Internet would help me to purchase airline tickets more quickly.	3.31	0.64	.768	.522			
Internet would help me to shop more efficiently.	4.11	0.79	.603	.661			

Intentions to buy online	3.67				2.607	13.054	.769
I think that I did the right thing when I decided to buy online airline ticket.	4.10	0.89	.823	.542			
I would be flying on this airline again in the future.	3.69	0.71	.886	.819			
I would recommend others to buy airline ticket online.	3.42	0.85	.825	.513			
I will certainly continue to use internet to buy airline tickets in the future.	3.60	0.68	.691	.693			
I will probably buy airline tickets online in the near future.	3.54	0.61	.661	.819			
Grand VE						81.231	

M = Mean, SD= Standard Deviation, FL= Factor Loadings, C= Commonalities, EV= Eigen Values and VE= Variance Explained and   CA= Cronbach Alpha

Hypotheses Testing

H3: There exists significant difference among different age groups regarding drivers and inhibitors in online ticket purchasing.

H3a : There exists significant difference among different age groups regarding drivers and inhibitors in online ticket purchasing.

On the basis of age, respondents have been classified into four categories viz. less than 21 (5.0 %), 21 to 40 (46.0%), 41 to 60 (44.0%), above 60(5.0%) (Table). To find out the mean difference

Table ANOVA(AGE) (PERCEIVED RISK)

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Psychological risk	Between Groups	2.937	3	.979	1.626	.185
	Within Groups	118.613	197	.602		
	Total	121.550	200			
Performance risk	Between Groups	3.787	3	1.262	2.043	.109
	Within Groups	121.732	197	.618		
	Total	125.519	200			
Overall risk	Between Groups	2.586	3	.862	2.800	.041
	Within Groups	60.653	197	.308		
	Total	63.239	200			

among different age groups regarding perceived risk, Univariate Analysis of Variance has been applied. On the whole, ANOVA reveals significant mean difference of perceived risk among the respondents belonging to different age groups (F=2.800 Sig. =.041, Table).This supports the hypothesis that there exists significant difference among different age groups regarding inhibitors in online ticket purchasing.

H3b : There exists significant difference among different age groups regarding drivers in online ticket purchasing.

On the basis of age, respondents have been classified into four categories viz. less than 21 (5.0 %), 21 to 40 (46.0%), 41 to 60 (44%), above 60(5%) (Table). To find out the mean difference among different age groups regarding perceived facilitators, Univariate Analysis of Variance has been applied. On the whole, ANOVA reveals insignificant mean difference of perceived risk among the respondents belonging to different age groups (F=1.268 Sig. =.286, Table). This rejects hypothesis that there exists significant difference among different age groups regarding drivers in online ticket purchasing.

Table ANOVA(AGE) (PERCEIVED DRIVERS)

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Perceived ease of use	Between Groups	4.451	3	1.484	2.598	.054
	Within Groups	112.515	197	.571		
	Total	116.966	200			
Perceived Usefulness	Between Groups	1.118	3	.373	.639	.590
	Within Groups	114.760	197	.583		
	Total	115.877	200			
Overall Drivers	Between Groups	1.319	3	.440	1.268	.286
	Within Groups	68.294	197	.347		
	Total	69.613	200			

H 1: There exists positive correlation between perceived drivers and intentions to buy online.

To test the first hypothesis, correlation analysis was performed between facilitators and intentions to buy online. As shown in the table, there was positive association in all the

Table Correlation analysis between perceived drivers and Intentions to buy online

		F3(Perceived ease of use)	F4(Perceived Usefulness)	Over all facilitators	(Intentions to buy online)
F3(Perceived ease of use)	Pearson Correlation	1	.196[**]	.774[**]	.524[**]
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.005	.000	.000
	N	201	201	201	201
F4(Perceived Usefulness)	Pearson Correlation	.196[**]	1	.772[**]	.513[**]
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.005		.000	.000
	N	201	201	201	201
Over all facilitators	Pearson Correlation	.774[**]	.772[**]	1	.670[**]
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000
	N	201	201	201	201
F5(Intentions to buy online)	Pearson Correlation	.524[**]	.513[**]	.670[**]	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	
	N	201	201	201	201

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

three cases (p<0.05).This supports hypothesis that there exists positive correlation between perceived drivers and intentions to buy online. Thus it shows that Perceived ease of use, Perceived Usefulness has a positive influence on Intentions to buy online.

H2: There exists negative correlation between perceived inhibitors and intentions to buy online

Examining the correlation between inhibitors and intentions to buy online. As shown in the table, there was negative association in all the three cases (p<0.05). This supports hypothesis that there exists negative correlation between perceived inhibitors and intentions to buy online. Thus it shows that Psychological risk, Performance risk has a negative influence on Intentions to buy online.

Table Correlation analysis between inhibitors and Intentions to buy online

		F1(Psychological risk)	F2(Performance risk)	F5Intentions to buy online	Overall inhibitors
F1(Psychological risk)	Pearson Correlation	1	.774[**]	-.527[**]	.943[**]
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000
	N	201	201	201	201
F2(Performance risk)	Pearson Correlation	.774[**]	1	-.552[**]	.940[**]
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000
	N	201	201	201	201
F5(Intentions to buy online)	Pearson Correlation	-.527[**]	-.552[**]	1	-.573[**]
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000
	N	201	201	201	201
Overall inhibitors	Pearson Correlation	.943[**]	.940[**]	-.573[**]	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	
	N	201	201	201	201

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Conclusion

The application of technology-based online shopping has grown rapidly in recent years. Therefore, an understanding of how to attract, retain and satisfy customers in the context of online buying needs to be explored and studied in detail. Although the number of individuals buying products and services online continues to increase in India, managing the dynamics of drivers and inhibitors in online ticketing in civil aviation sector is a research area worth exploring. What leads a buyer to shop online as a research question has evoked a lot of interest both in academics and practice, although the findings appear to be fragmented and disintegrated. The combined interactive effects of the drivers and the facilitators would lead to an increase in the revenue generation of civil aviation sector on account of volume of online booking .The results of Factor analysis, Correlation and ANOVA revealed there exists positive correlation between perceived drivers and intentions to buy online. However, there exists negative correlation between perceived inhibitors and intentions to buy online and there exists insignificant different among different age groups regarding drivers and significant difference among different age groups regarding inhibitors in online ticket purchasing. A major limitation of this research has been the sample size of 201 respondents. The generalization of the findings could be more strengthened by encapsulating more responses from the relevant user groups across demographics. The present study is based on the perceptions of customers of three airlines namely Air India, Jet Airways and Kingfisher. Further research, thus, needs to be focused on other airlines in civil aviation sector

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