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Exploration of the communication of e-service dimensions across different groups of customers

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Abstract

With a growing interest in service in online contexts, an increasing number of research studies have focused on understanding different aspects of online service quality. These days development of online retailing in India has led to expansion of consumers' purchasing in electronic commerce. The current research is directed towards consumers' purchasing in electronic commerce and its different e-service dimensions. This study specifically focuses on exploring the difference of e-service quality dimensions across age and gender groups. Different statistical techniques are used for compliance of objectives of study. The results show that there is no difference in the attitude and perception of customers about e service quality dimensions according to gender and age.

Keywords: e-service dimensions, electronic commerce, quality.

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1. INTRODUCTION

E services are now a part of life of the customers across various groups. The prosperity of ecommerce denotes that consumers have more and better service quality when they purchase then before. Online shopping is increasing day by day because of updating of technology, busy schedule of human being and changing buying behavior. Everybody wants: save time, quick delivery of product & service, good service quality. Many critical factors affects on consumer trust in online shopping environment in India. Website design, reliability, customer service and privacy are four key factor which influence consumers' perceptions of online shopping. Website design, website reliability are first influence factors of consumer to buy online but after that customer services and privacy play very important role which influence customer's willingness to buy again and again from same site and increase customer retention, customer loyalty for that particular site. Consequently, understanding the factors that influence the trusting beliefs in an online environment is of considerable necessary and important to researchers (Kim and Lenno, 2006).

2. Literature Review on e-Service Quality Dimensions

The most widely used SERVQUAL instrument gives five dimensions (Parasuraman et al. 1988), which is based on the original ten dimensions of service quality put forward by Parasuraman et al. (1985). The five dimensions of SERVQUAL are: Tangibles, Reliability, Responsiveness, Assurance, and Empathy. With the increase of e-service adoption in business field, Dabholkar (1996) conducted a research work on the dimensions of eservice quality focusing on website design, and he argued that 7 dimensions of e-service quality can be illustrated as the basic parameters in the judgement of e-service quality, including website design, reliability, delivery, ease of use, enjoyment and control. Cox and Dale (2001) set up 6 dimensions of online retailing service quality with the comparison of the traditional dimensions of service quality, and the six dimensions are website appearance, communication, accessibility, credibility, understanding and availability.

Research on the antecedents to eservice adoption also suggests that e-service experience has impact on customers' perception and evaluation of eservice quality (Cristbal et al., 2007).

Different dimensions suggested by different researchers are Security/privacy (Parasuraman et al, 2005), Web site design (Wan, 2000), Responsiveness, Assurance (Zeithaml et al, 2000), Emapathy and Reliability (Madu and Madu, 2002).

3. Methodology

Sample and Data Collection: Students of colleges and universities were used as subject in our study. Drennan et al (2006) argued that university students are representative of a dominant cohort of online users. They are experienced and regular users of the Internet, representing the most appropriate population of e-commerce user for e-commerce research. Sample size for the study is 202. Details of the respondents such as age and gender are depicted in the table below.

Table-1 and 2. Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Age of respondents

	No of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Age less than 20	72	35.6
20-35	102	50.5
>35	28	13.9
Total	202	100.0

Gender

	No of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Female	50	24.8
Male	152	75.2
Total	202	100.0

Variables: In the survey, items of variables were developed by adapting existing measures to the research context. All items were scored on a five point Likert-type scale. Variable nomenclature and the items considered for measuring service quality of the study are:

Security/privacy - It does not share my personal information with other sites.

Web site design - Easy to access and navigate;

Responsiveness - Adequate and timely response;

Empathy - Address complaints friendly and consistently courteous;

Reliability - The delivery service is accurate;

Test of Analysis: The key statistical tools used for the study are Mann–Whitney U Test and Kruskal-Wallis test. Bivariate correlations are calculated for different variables under study.

4. Empirical Analysis

4.1 Comparison of factors of e-service quality dimensions on the basis of gender and age

The non parametric test for 2 independent samples is run on the sample to understand whether there existed any significant difference of male and female respondents about e-service dimensions (see Table-3).

Table- 3: Comparison of factors of e-service quality dimensions on the basis of gender

Mann–Whitney U Test

	Security/ privacy	Responsiveness	Reliability	Empathy	website design
Mann-Whitney U	3773.500	3645.500	3749.000	3.688E3	3794.000
Wilcoxon W	15401.500	4920.500	5024.000	4.964E3	5069.000
Z	-.077	-.452	-.148	-.323	-.018
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.938	.651	.883	.747	.986
a. Grouping Variable: Gender					

The second test was run on the sample to understand whether there is any significant difference on the age basis of respondents about e-service dimensions and results shown in Table-4.

Table-4: Comparison of factors of e-service quality dimensions on the basis of age

Kruskal-Wallis test					
	Reliability	Security/privacy	Responsiveness	Empathy	website design
Chi-Square	2.200	.203	2.442	2.175	.254
df	2	2	2	2	2
Asymp. Sig.	.333	.903	.295	.337	.881
a. Kruskal Wallis Test					
b. Grouping Variable: Age of respondents					

The Mann-Whitney U test results show that there is no significant differences in all the five factors on the basis of their gender (Table-3). The same results the researches got from Kruskal Wallis Test that there is no significant differences in all the five factors (Table-4).

4.2 Correlation Analysis

Correlation is a statistical method used for measuring or describing the relationship between two variables. The information gives us an indication of the strength of relationship among variables (Dimitriadi, 2000). Correlations among the six factors are presented in Table 5.

Table –5: Correlations

Correlations						
		Responsiveness	Security/ privacy	Reliability	Empathy	website design
Responsiveness	Pearson Correlation	1	.431**	.497**	.662**	.600**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	202	202	202	202	202

Security/privacy	Pearson Correlation	.431**	1	.540**	.530**	.437**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.000
	N	202	202	202	202	202
Reliability	Pearson Correlation	.497**	.540**	1	.572**	.560**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000	.000
	N	202	202	202	202	202
Empathy	Pearson Correlation	.662**	.530**	.572**	1	.682**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		.000
	N	202	202	202	202	202
website design	Pearson Correlation	.600**	.437**	.560**	.682**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	202	202	202	202	202
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).						

From the above it is safe to say that there is a significant correlation between each other in the e-service dimensions.

5. Findings and Conclusion

E-Service quality dimensions have been revealed as a key factor in search for sustainable competitive advantage, differentiation and excellence in the service sector. Customers' evaluations of the e- service quality are critical to service firms that aim to improve their marketing strategies so accurate measurement of e-services quality that a major concern to management. But, whereas measuring criteria of e-services quality and satisfaction of customer are fuzzy and ambiguous but available methods measuring them generally is classic kind. So being a manger of any e-service provider company that it is necessity to design appropriate and suitable model about e-service quality dimensions, which can directly impact on customers' willingness to buy so that customer feel more satisfied and more attracted to transact with e-service provider. In our analysis of e-service quality dimensions on the basis of gender and age, there is no significant difference among these customer groups. And there is positive correlation between all these service quality dimensions with willingness to buy and directly impact on

customers buying behavior.. Vender should think about this dimension carefully so that purchase intention of customer about their service does not harm.

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