



E-Tourism and the Modern Traveller: Insights into Online Satisfaction

Dr.Dhanapackiam Kuppusamy

Senior Lecturer,
School of Business and Management,
IBS University,
National Capital District,
Papua New Guinea,
Australia.

Mr.Balamurugan Nadesan,

Senior Lecturer,
School of Information Technology,
IBS University,
National Capital District,
Papua New Guinea,
Australia.

Abstract

This study investigates tourist satisfaction in the context of e-tourism, with a focus on the emerging digital travel landscape in Papua New Guinea (PNG). As the tourism sector increasingly integrates Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), understanding the factors that influence e-satisfaction becomes critical for enhancing service delivery and competitiveness. Drawing on primary data collected from 50 respondents who have purchased tourism services online, the study evaluates satisfaction across key dimensions including convenience, merchandising, serviceability, site design, and security. Findings reveal that convenience driven by time efficiency, cost savings, and flexible access—is the most influential factor, while security features, particularly the protection of financial data, remain a concern. The study also highlights generational and educational trends in digital tourism

engagement, with younger and graduate-level users showing higher adoption rates. The results underscore the need for improved website responsiveness, personalized offerings, and robust data protection to foster trust and loyalty. These insights offer practical implications for tourism stakeholders in PNG aiming to leverage e-tourism for sustainable growth and global visibility.

Keywords: E-tourism, Tourist satisfaction, Information and Communication Technology (ICT), Online booking behaviour, Website usability, Security in e-commerce.

Introduction

The Digital Evolution of Travel

The tourism industry has undergone a significant transformation with the advent of digital technologies, giving rise to what is now widely recognised as **E-Tourism**. This term



refers to the application of information and communication technologies (ICT) in the travel and tourism sector, enabling Travelers to plan, book, and manage their trips through digital platforms such as websites, mobile applications, and social media channels.

E-tourism offers numerous advantages, including convenience, real-time access to information, and personalised services, which have reshaped the expectations and behaviours of modern Travelers. As a result, **tourist satisfaction** a key determinant of customer loyalty and business success has become increasingly dependent on the quality of digital interactions. Factors such as website usability, information accuracy, transaction security, and customer support play a pivotal role in shaping the overall travel experience.

Understanding the dynamics of tourist satisfaction in the context of e-tourism is essential for service providers aiming to remain competitive in a rapidly evolving digital marketplace. This article explores the critical elements that influence satisfaction in e-tourism and highlights how technology continues to redefine the global travel landscape.

Information and Communication Technology in E -Tourism

In the realm of e-tourism, **Information and Communication Technology (ICT)** serves as the foundation for delivering seamless, efficient, and personalised travel experiences. ICT encompasses a wide range of digital tools including websites, mobile applications, booking engines, and social

media platforms that enable tourists to plan, book, and manage their journeys with ease. These technologies have revolutionised the tourism industry by enhancing accessibility, reducing transaction time, and offering real time information, which collectively contribute to higher levels of tourist satisfaction. For instance, online booking systems allow Travelers to compare prices, read reviews, and make reservations instantly, while mobile apps provide location-based services and virtual tours that enrich the travel experience. Moreover, ICT facilitates effective communication between service providers and tourists through chatbots, feedback systems, and customer support channels, ensuring that Travelers feel supported throughout their journey. As highlighted in recent studies, the integration of ICT in tourism not only improves operational efficiency but also plays a crucial role in shaping tourists' perceptions and satisfaction levels in a digitally driven marketplace.

The tourism industry in **Papua New Guinea (PNG)** is a developing sector with immense potential, rooted in the country's rich cultural heritage and stunning natural landscapes. Known for its diversity over 800 languages and countless tribal traditions PNG offers Travelers a unique experience through vibrant cultural festivals, traditional villages, and untouched ecosystems. Key attractions include the Kokoda Track, world-class diving sites in Kimbe Bay and Tufi, and events like the Goroka and Mt Hagen shows, which showcase traditional dance, music, and dress. Despite these strengths, the industry faces



challenges such as limited infrastructure, safety concerns, and a shortage of skilled tourism professionals. To address these issues, the government has launched initiatives like the **Tourism Sector Development Plan 2022-2026**, which aims to improve accessibility, promote sustainable tourism, and increase international arrivals. With growing interest in eco-tourism and cultural travel, PNG is positioning itself as a distinctive destination in the Pacific, offering authentic experiences that appeal to adventurous and culturally curious Travelers.

Study Area

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Scope and Importance of E -Tourism in Papua New Guinea

E-tourism presents a powerful opportunity to overcome many of the challenges facing Papua New Guinea's tourism sector. By leveraging digital platforms such as travel websites, mobile apps, and social media, PNG can increase its global visibility and attract more international visitors without relying solely on physical infrastructure. Online booking systems and virtual tours can make remote destinations more accessible, while user-generated content like reviews and travel blogs can build trust and interest among potential Travelers. E-tourism also enables local operators to market their services directly to global audiences, reducing dependence on intermediaries and increasing revenue. Importantly, digital tools can help address safety concerns by providing real-time updates, secure payment options, and verified information. As PNG continues to invest in its Tourism Sector Development Plan, integrating e-tourism strategies will be essential for promoting sustainable growth, empowering local communities, and showcasing the country's rich cultural and natural heritage to the world.



Literature Review

It is widely recognised that information & communication technologies are rapidly expanding and have affected the way businesses are performed and the way organizations compete (Porter, 2001) especially in business like tourism which is closely been connected to the progress of information & communication technologies (ICTs) almost three decades in the form of Computer Reservation Systems (CRSs), Global Distribution Systems (GDSs) and the Internet have transformed operational and strategic practices dramatically in tourism (Buhalis and Law, 2008). Therefore, it is of paramount importance to offer tourism product search and booking online.

Since, several tourism practitioners increased their efforts to develop the online booking of tourism products and services such as airline or train service, hotel rooms, vacation packages, car rentals and so on. The implementation of e-tourism created expectations among tourists in terms of the quick response to enquiries, more detailed and tailored information on tourism destinations, possibility of booking travel, accommodation and restaurants online, able to check out competition easily at the click of a button, importance of destination management and marketing of tourism products and services, tourism marketing (Scottish Parliament, 2002). These expectations are essential for measuring tourist satisfaction. Satisfaction with these expectations are seen as the basis to which the customer relates for their requirements. In time, expectations rise, so, in order to maintain

the level of satisfaction continuous improvement is needed (Flavian et al., 2006). When customers get what they had anticipated, a great amount of satisfaction is achieved which plays a major role in impacting their outlook while shopping online, decision making, and purchasing (Wu & Ho 1999). However, if perceived performance falls below initial expectation, then the tourist may be dissatisfied (Masoomah, 2006). For the travel sector, it is inevitable choice to provide online booking for improving service efficiency, enhancing service quality and gaining competitive advantages (Pen & Chen, 2013) and more importantly enhancing e-satisfaction.

The examination of consumer satisfaction in an online context is not only a critical performance outcome, but also a primary predictor of customer loyalty (Masoomah, 2006) because satisfied tourists are more likely to recommend the tourist destination to others, which is the cheapest and most effective form of marketing and promotion by positive word of mouth and development of long-term loyalty to the destination. Moreover, an increment in the tourist numbers and overall earning as economic objectives will increase when the tourists feel satisfied. Consequently, destination managers should establish a higher tourist satisfaction level to create positive post-purchase tourist behaviours (Yoon & Uysal, 2005) by decreasing the existing gap between expectations made by



customers and noticeable experiences for around the globe.

ICT is expected to improve the quality of services and enhancing the level of clients' satisfaction as well. It is stated that while e-commerce is mainly related to the utilization of a new technological asset, it is very crucial to be receptive towards online environment which would create an upbeat relationship with satisfaction. Bai et al. (2008) believe that in online environments, there should be a significant effort to fulfill customers' satisfaction because it increases their intentions for actual purchase of tourism products online. So, a good understanding of factors that affect online customer satisfaction is very important to the electronic marketing.

Cyr (2008) has done research on e-satisfaction in the hotel industry. He examined a total of three segments of website design which included virtual design, navigation and information while assessing relationships between faith and fulfilment with allegiance within the setting of multiple cultures. On the other hand, Chang & Hsu (2013) investigated online customer perceived value in relation to the online purchase of tourism products in Thailand. The study revealed that online purchasing has become more prevalent recently due to relatively lower prices and convenience for customers which in turn focus on promoting online purchase in tourism.

Similarly, Yang et al. (2003) identify a total of 14 dimensions and 42 sub-dimensions of internal service quality although as they report, only five are the principal drivers of customer satisfaction. They are

responsiveness, credibility, ease of use, reliability and convenience. There are some very significant components for online consumers satisfaction which are confidentiality, usability, location plan and privacy, ease, usability, trust and trustworthiness delivery, and merchandising, product quality, product value and product customisation. These factors proved to be the most important indicator in determining buyer satisfaction online. These are important as they affect buyers' online behaviour.

Szymansky & Hise, (2000) in a study on online satisfaction reveals several antecedents of satisfaction such as convenience, site design, product information, financial security etc. Though, economic security is not the key predictor of e-satisfaction amidst ebuyers. Phuong (2010) conducted a study in order to determine tourists' satisfaction on E-tourism in Vietnam. The study showed that the greatest influences on e-satisfaction are site design and convenience. It was also found that perception of superior product information and product offering do not have an impressive effect on online satisfaction level. In fact, these two are tied together as the first most important determines of e-satisfaction.

Alagha (2013) in a study analysed that convenience factor has the greatest influence on user satisfaction of online services. After that specialisation, accessibility and web-site design strongly effect on user satisfaction. Hence convenience and specialization can be introduced as the two most important factors of e-tourism. Website design should be



improved in order to be faster and more user friendly. Increasing time efficiency, possibility of purchase from anywhere, at any time and cost efficiency are some of the factors which can increase users' convenience. Lack of special offers and lack of complete packages from websites, comparing with travel agencies are some of the main reasons that people still have tendency to produce their packages by agencies.

Cho & Park (2001) in study identified that duration of delivery, accuracy of delivery duration, delivery costs, variety of accepted credit cards, variety of payment methods, quality of product information, site design, ease of use and suitable information provided on delivery are characteristics used to assess satisfaction. Furthermore, Schaupp & Belanger (2005) declared that since the transactions occur electronically and the customer can only get the product subsequent to placing the order, providing a tracking number and minimising the delivery time is important. In terms of convenience, ease of shopping has proven to be more important in relation to the ability to compare prices and get information. Coker (2013) conducted a study by focusing on website navigation, website performance, trustworthiness of website in order to determine antecedents to website satisfaction, loyalty and word of mouth. The author further identified several variables for measuring website satisfaction and loyalty such as ease of use, ease of search, information quality & relevance and visual appeal etc.

Dargah & Golrokhshari (2012) in their study aimed on E-tourism and customer

satisfaction stated that ICT are rapidly expanding and have affected the business and the way organisations complete. They further explored that time efficiency, possibility of purchasing anywhere & anytime, direct access to information and customer service are the factors which build convenience in e-tourism comparing with traditional travel agencies. In conclusion there are many factors that can be considered as basis to measure satisfaction of tourists in e-tourism. While ICT have its great significance in tourism business but despite the importance of E-tourism there has been less research on its different aspects. In this research the gap in previous research will be attempted to be filled by finding the satisfaction in tourism industry.

Objectives of the Study

The present study is focused on empirically identifying the satisfaction level of tourists in etourism environment.

Research Methodology

The present study is going to investigate satisfaction of tourists while they are purchasing online. The study used primary data sources. An extensive review of literature were reviewed in order to find out the suitable factors for the study and then interviews are conducted with both, people who travel a lot and also experts. These experts are professional in tourism and customer online buying behaviour. Next step for answering research question is to prepare a self-structured questionnaire to collect primary data from respondents through. The



respondents were those who electronically purchased the tourism services such as airline tickets, train tickets, hotels, car rentals, package tours etc at least once. The data were collected from 50 respondents through online questionnaire in order to receive quick feedback. The questionnaire starts with socio-demographic information. After that there were asked about responding to their level of satisfaction towards electronic tourism purchasing by adopting five-point Likert scale ranging from highly satisfied (5) to highly dissatisfied (1). After collection of data, it was tabulated and analysed with the help of suitable statistical tools such as frequency distribution, percentage, mean and rank method and so on. The result of the study was presented through diagrams and figures in order to make it more attractive.

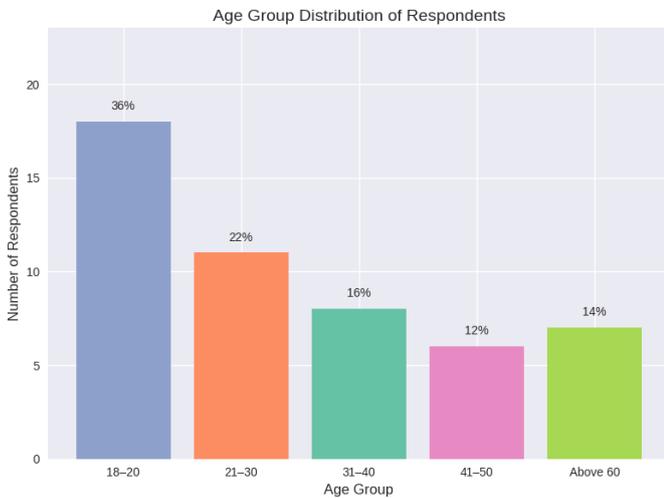
Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Age Group	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
18-20	18	36
21-30	11	22
31-40	8	16
41-50	6	12
Above60	7	14
Total	50	100

Source: Primary Data

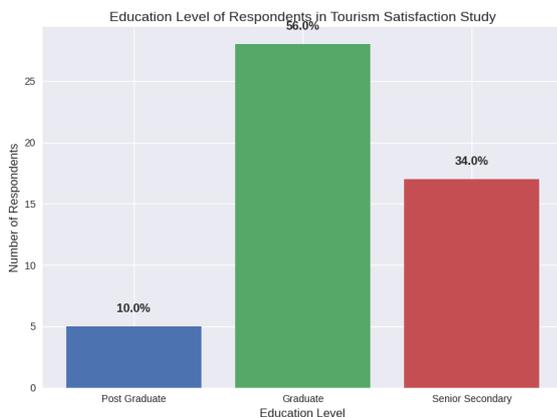
The age wise distribution of respondents in this study reveals a diverse demographic profile, with a notable concentration of younger participants. Out of

the total 50 respondents, the largest group falls within the 18–20 age range, comprising 36% of the sample. This suggests that younger individuals are more actively engaged in purchasing tourism services online, likely due to their familiarity with digital platforms, mobile apps, and e-payment systems. The 21–30 age group follows with 22%, indicating continued digital engagement among early career adults who often seek budget-friendly travel options and flexible booking features. Respondents aged 31–40 and 41–50 represent 16% and 12% respectively, showing moderate participation from middle aged individuals who may prioritise reliability, family-oriented packages, and customer support. Interestingly, 14% of respondents are aged above 60, reflecting that older adults are also adopting online tourism services, though at a lower rate. This age distribution provides valuable context for interpreting satisfaction levels, as preferences and expectations such as ease of navigation, trust in digital transactions, and clarity of information may vary significantly across age groups, influencing how different users perceive and experience electronic tourism purchasing.



Education level of the respondent

Education level	Number of Respondent	Percentage (%)
Post Graduate	5	10%
Graduate	28	56%
Senior secondary	17	34%
Total	50	100

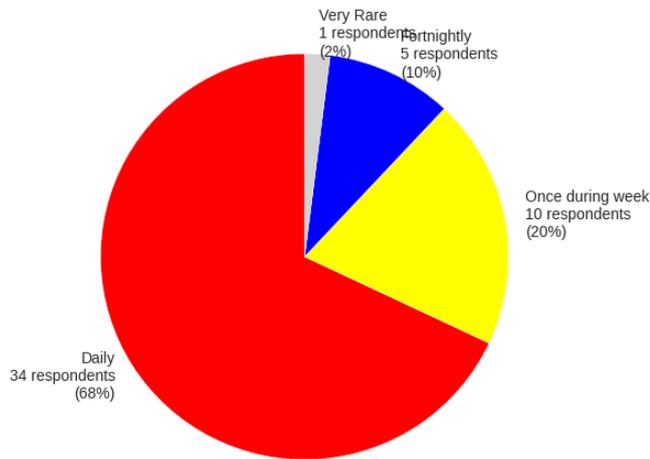


The educational background of the respondents shows a predominance of graduate-level qualifications. Out of 50 participants, **56%** had completed **graduate education**, indicating a strong representation of individuals with undergraduate degrees who are likely familiar with digital platforms and online purchasing systems. **34%** of respondents had attained **senior secondary education**, suggesting a younger demographic or those in transitional academic stages who are increasingly engaging with online tourism services. A smaller portion, **10%**, held **postgraduate degrees**, reflecting advanced academic backgrounds and potentially more critical expectations regarding service quality and digital reliability. This distribution suggests that most respondents possess the educational foundation necessary to navigate online tourism platforms confidently, which may influence their satisfaction levels and purchasing behaviour.

Frequency of Online Tourism Purchases

Frequency	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Daily	34	68
Once during week	10	20
Fort nightly	5	10
Very rare	01	2
Total	50	100

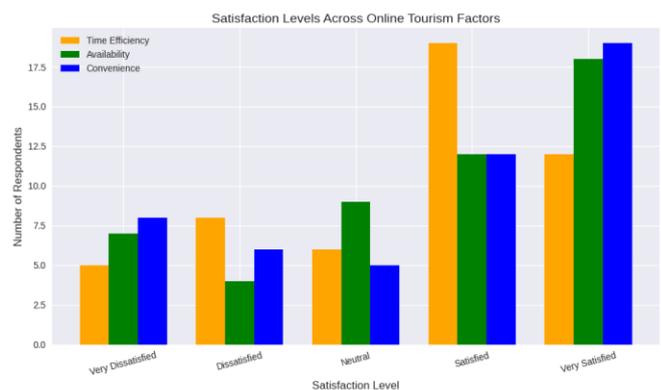
Frequency of Online Tourism Purchases Among Respondents



The frequency data reveals that **daily engagement** with online tourism platforms is dominant among respondents, with **68%** indicating they make purchases every day. This suggests a high level of digital fluency and routine use of online services for travel planning. **20%** of respondents reported making purchases **once during the week**, reflecting regular but less frequent interaction. A smaller group, **10%**, engages **fortnightly**, while only **2%** indicated **very rare** usage. This distribution highlights the growing reliance on digital platforms for tourism services, especially among frequent Travelers, and underscores the importance of maintaining user-friendly and reliable systems.

Satisfaction Levels for Key Online Tourism Factors

Factor	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Mean Score
Time Efficiency	5	8	6	19	12	3.46
Availability	7	4	9	12	18	3.54
Convenience	8	6	5	12	19	3.50



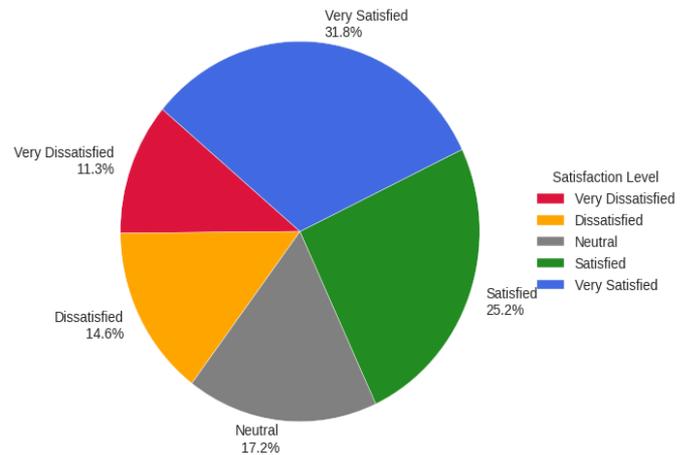
Most respondents were happy with the **availability** of online booking options. It had the highest average score (3.54), meaning people felt there were enough choices and services online. **Convenience**, which refers to how easy and friendly the booking process is, also scored well (3.50). This shows that many users found the websites easy to use. **Time efficiency** had the lowest score (3.46), but still shows that most people feel online booking saves time. Overall, users are generally satisfied with these three areas, but improving speed and simplicity could make the experience even better.

Attribute	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Mean Score
Variety of Services Offered	6	7	9	13	15	3.46
Quality & Relevance of Information	4	7	9	13	15	3.58
Cost Efficiency (Merchandising)	7	8	8	12	18	3.46

Most respondents were generally satisfied with the **quality and relevance of information** available online, which received the highest average score of **3.58**. This suggests that users find the content about tourism products and services to be useful and accurate. The **variety of services offered** such as airline tickets, hotels, car rentals, and package tours had a mean score of **3.46**, showing that while many users are satisfied with the range of services, some feel there could be more options. Similarly, **cost efficiency** (how affordable and worthwhile users find online bookings) also scored **3.46**, indicating that while many users see value in booking online, others may have concerns about pricing or hidden costs.

Overall, the results show that users are mostly satisfied with these aspects of online tourism services, especially the quality of information. However, there is still room to improve service variety and pricing transparency to better meet user expectations.

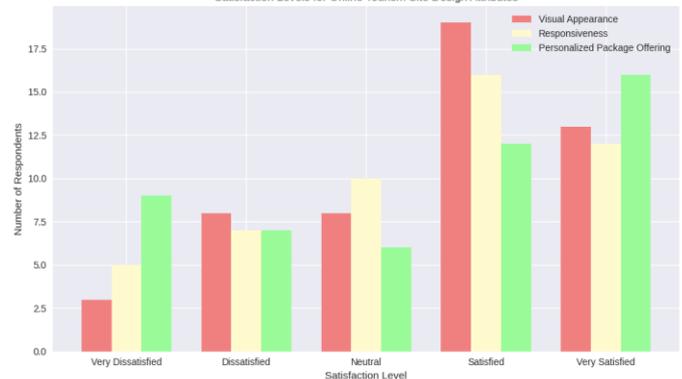
Overall Satisfaction Distribution Across Online Tourism Attributes



Satisfaction Levels for Site Design and Functionality

Attribute	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Mean Score
Visual Appearance/ Attractiveness	3	8	8	19	13	3.58
Responsiveness of Website/ Booking Portals	5	7	10	16	12	3.46
Personalized Package Offering	9	7	6	12	16	3.42

Satisfaction Levels for Online Tourism Site Design Attributes



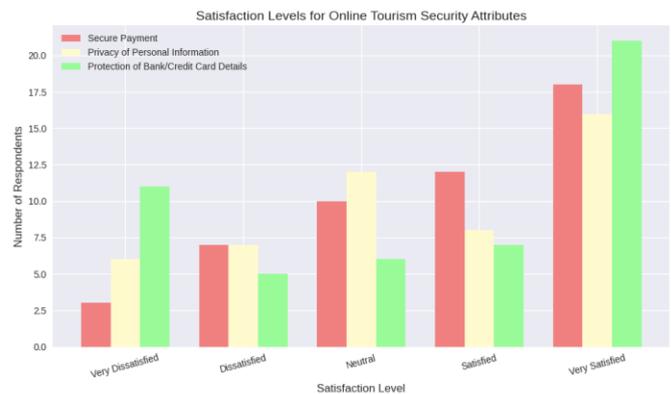
Most respondents were satisfied with the **visual appearance** of tourism websites, which received strong ratings in the “Satisfied” and “Very Satisfied” categories. This suggests that users generally find the websites attractive and well-designed. The **responsiveness** of the websites how quickly and smoothly they function also received mostly positive feedback, though a few users rated it lower, indicating that some experienced delays or technical issues. The **personalised package offering** had the most mixed responses, with more users expressing dissatisfaction or neutrality. While many appreciated tailored options, others may have found them limited or not well matched to their needs.

comfortable sharing their data, others may have concerns about how their personal details are handled. The lowest score was for protection of bank and credit card details (mean score 3.30), with a notable number of users expressing dissatisfaction or neutrality. This points to a need for stronger security measures or clearer communication about how financial data is protected.

Overall, while users generally feel secure making payments online, there’s room to improve trust in how personal and financial information is safeguarded. Enhancing transparency and reinforcing visible security features could help boost user confidence in these areas.

Satisfaction Levels for Security Features

Attribute	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Mean Score
Secure Payment While Purchasing Travel Services	3	7	10	12	18	3.58
Privacy of Personal Information	6	7	12	8	16	3.38
Protection of Bank Account and Credit Card Details	11	5	6	7	21	3.30



Most users felt confident about the security of online payments, which received the highest average score of 3.58. This suggests that many respondents trust the payment systems used on tourism websites. However, satisfaction was slightly lower for privacy of personal information (mean score 3.38), indicating that while some users are

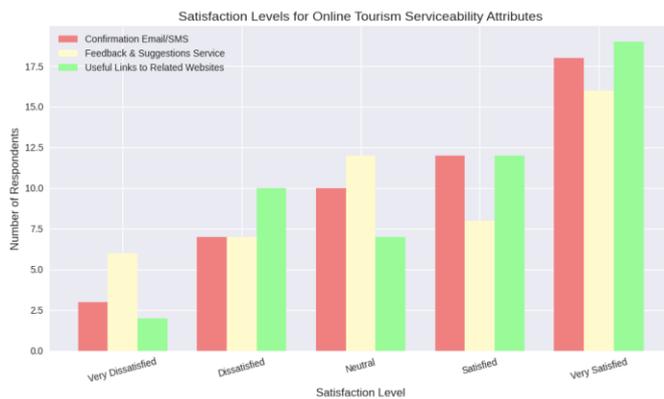
Satisfaction Levels for Confirmation & Serviceability

Attribute	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Mean Score
Confirmation Email/SMS After Booking	3	7	10	12	18	3.58
Feedback & Suggestions Service Availability	6	7	12	8	16	3.38
Useful Links to Related Websites or Portals	2	10	7	12	19	3.62

Most users were satisfied with receiving **confirmation emails or SMS messages** after booking, which had a strong average score of **3.58**. This shows that timely communication is well-handled and appreciated by users. The highest score (**3.62**) was for providing **useful links to related websites or portals**, suggesting that users value additional resources that help them explore or plan further. However, the **feedback and suggestions service** scored lower (**3.38**), indicating that while some users find it helpful, others may feel it's limited or not easily accessible.

Overall, users are happy with confirmation and support features, especially when they receive clear follow-up and helpful links. Improving feedback channels and making them more visible or responsive could further enhance user satisfaction and engagement.

security. Among these, convenience emerged as the most influential, driven by time efficiency, cost savings, and the flexibility of purchasing from anywhere at any time. Merchandising also played a significant role, particularly through wider product offerings and competitive pricing, though product information had limited practical impact. Serviceability received generally positive feedback, with users appreciating feedback options and helpful links, while the lack of consistent booking confirmations via email or SMS highlighted a gap in communication. Site design contributed meaningfully to satisfaction, especially when websites were fast, uncluttered, and user friendly. However, personalised package offerings had minimal influence, likely due to incomplete options compared to traditional travel agencies.



Conclusion

The present study investigated e-satisfaction in online tourism services by analysing five key factors: convenience, merchandising, serviceability, site design, and

Security was the weakest area, with respondents expressing concern over the protection of personal and financial data. This lack of trust presents both a challenge and an opportunity for e-tourism firms to improve online payment systems and data safeguards. The findings underscore the need for strategic investment in secure infrastructure, multilingual and regularly updated content, and user centered design. By addressing these areas, e-tourism platforms can enhance customer satisfaction, foster loyalty, and remain competitive in a rapidly evolving digital marketplace. These insights are especially valuable for managers and travel agencies planning to enter or expand within the e-tourism sector, as they highlight the



importance of building trust, improving service delivery, and offering accessible, reliable online experiences.

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