

Influence of Demographic Factors on Visitor Loyalty and Visitor Switching Behaviour: A Study on Bangalore Amusement Park Visitors

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ABSTRACT: Indian amusement park industry is on its robust growth at 17.50% (CAGR). Many players are in the process to leave their foot prints in the most dynamic and ever growing industry in terms of revenue and competition. The existence of more than 100 amusement parks in India, has led to fierce competition to acquire and retain the customers. In this process the whole amusement park industry is in the process to determine the factors which influences the visitor to switch between the amusement parks. Considering the population size of India and the enormous growth aspects in the industry, the need of the hour is to understand the visitor behaviour and to satisfy the expectations. To compete and survive successfully in today's dynamic environment, all the service providing organizations focus on enhancing their diverse customer base having different age groups and other different demographical patterns that arise after the fulfilment of needs and wants of customers to maximize their ultimate profitability. Therefore this study aims to understand the influence of demographic factors on visitor loyalty and visitor switching behaviour.

KEYWORDS: Amusement parks, Visitor Loyalty, Visitor Switching Behaviour, Demographic Factors.

I. INTRODUCTION

The Indian amusement park industry started its journey with the advent of Appu Ghar in 1984 as the first amusement park of India. Thereafter many entered and started their operation in major cities of India. At present India is an abode to 120 amusement and theme parks, concentrated majorly in populated big metro and other cities throughout its territory. According to the Indian Association of Amusement Parks and Industries (IAAPI) there are over a dozen-odd large and medium projects are under development currently.

The Indian amusement and theme park industry is set to more than double revenues to Rs. 4,000 crore from Rs 1,700 crore now in annual revenues by 2020. The sector is growing at compounded annual growth rate (CAGR) of 17.5% over the past few years. According to IAAPI, the amusement park industry is approximately worth 1700 crore. The amusement parks industry has picked up its pace in the last few years as players have been creating compelling experiences and the present growth has been achieved over a revenue base of Rs.700 crore four years ago [1].

The major constraint to the amusement park industry is its inability to draw people from conventional recreation activities such as movies, theatres, plays etc. The features of the parks are also the matter of concern when it comes to the attracting of the visitors. There has to be a focus on safety and hygiene with right people in place to offer services to the visitors in satisfying the expectations.

Demographic factors are used to define the characteristics of a person or a population. Some commonly used demographic factors include variables such as race, age, income, marital status, and educational achievement, among others. Demographic factors define a particular group within a population. Demographic factors play a vital role in the individual's behaviour that intern decides the visitor's loyalty and switching behaviour. Various researches have tried to establish the relation between demographic factors with loyalty and switching behaviour. The researches were

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conducted in many industries from retail to banking; results were widely varying and contradict to each other. Most of the studies were aimed to explain the relation between demographic factors with loyalty, satisfaction [2], but very few attempted to understand the impact of demographic factors on satisfaction [3]. Therefore, current research endeavours to examine the impact of customer demographics on visitor loyalty and visitor switching behaviour.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

All the service providing organisations now a days focusing on the satisfaction level of customers to improve organizational productivity and profitability, that leads to customers' loyalty because a satisfied and gratified customer is the free advertiser of business, whether large or small [4]. Enhancing customer satisfaction is considered as an essential element in sustaining long term customer relationship, loyalty [5]. Focus only on satisfying the customers is not sufficient as it does not retain the customer, because of service quality and loyalty issues, customers mostly switch [6]. Hence, customer value enhancement must be the prime management focus [7].

Poor services may also end the relation [8], because it involves the customers in deciding the service to avail so as the amusement park. Every study on consumer behaviour proposes customer satisfaction extensively as a construct [5] [9]. Customer satisfaction is perceived as a result of purchase and consumption experience valued for a product or service over a period of time [10] [11]. Customer satisfaction nurtures the loyalty up to an extent that develops attitude to select and recommend and eventually adopting the same service provider or to a product or to an amusement park. Loyalty can also be generated when customer recommends the same amusement park to others and this will only be possible when the customer will first be satisfied having a positive attitude towards the services of the park [12].

Customer loyalty is the long and uninterrupted retention of the relationship by offering service that meets and even goes beyond the customer needs [13]. Customer loyalty should be the ultimate objective of organizations [12]. A highly satisfied customer will be more loyal to the bank and that loyal customer will be less inclined towards attractive marketing by competitors [5]. The possibility of recommending the services of same banking channel and maintaining long term relationship which generate high profits are positively related with the satisfaction level [14]. Long term buying patterns can be examined by loyal and gratified customers [15].

Similarly, all the repeated customers are mostly satisfied ones and they never think to switch to other financial institution [16]. The satisfied customers are less likely to switch and the relationship with switching intention would depend on the ability of the market leaders to continuously satisfy their customers [17].

III. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objective of the study is to establish the relation between demographic factors, visitor loyalty and switching behaviour in the amusement park industry special reference to the visitors of amusement parks in Bangalore. The study tries to understand and examine the relation between the following:

- A. Visitor's demographic factors and visitor loyalty.
- B. Visitor's demographic factors and visitor switching behaviour.

IV. CONCEPTUAL MODEL

Based on the reviewed literature of research works in the field of loyalty and switching behaviour in various industries the following conceptual model is developed. The motive of the study is to find the relation between different demographic factors of the visitors of Bangalore-based Amusement Parks with Visitor Loyalty and Visitor Switching Behaviour. The demographic variables such as visitor Gender, Age, Income, Education and Occupation are considered as independent variables whereas perceived value and Visitor satisfaction as dependent variables.

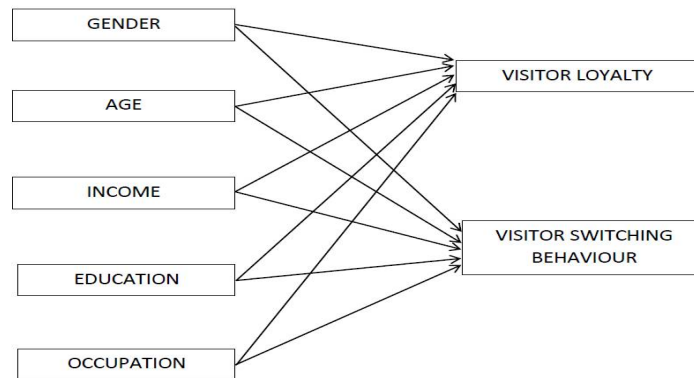


Figure 1: Conceptual model

V. HYPOTHESIS

The following hypotheses are formulated to establish and test the relation and its significance of different demographic factors with perceived value and visitor satisfaction of the amusement park industry in general and Bangalore-based amusement parks in particular.

Impact of Demographic Factors on Visitor Loyalty.

- H 1.1: Visitor Age has a significant influence on Visitor Loyalty
- H 1.2: Visitor Gender has a significant influence on Visitor Loyalty
- H 1.3: Visitor Income has a significant influence on Visitor Loyalty
- H 1.4: Visitor Education has a significant influence on Visitor Loyalty
- H 1.5: Visitor Occupation has a significant influence on Visitor Loyalty

Impact of Demographic Factors on Visitor Switching Behaviour.

- H 2.1: Visitor Age has a significant influence on Visitor Switching Behaviour
- H 2.2: Visitor Gender has a significant influence on Visitor Switching Behaviour
- H 2.3: Visitor Income has a significant influence on Visitor Switching Behaviour
- H 2.4: Visitor Education has a significant influence on Visitor Switching Behaviour
- H 2.5: Visitor Occupation has a significant influence on Visitor Switching Behaviour

VI. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employs a quantitative method of research in which primary data is collected from a random sample of 150 visitors of Bangalore amusement Parks. The data collection method is based on the survey method, research questionnaire adopted from previous studies [2] due to the benefit of collecting significant information from the respondents. The data was collected in June 2016 to August 2016 period from 8 important amusement parks in and around Bangalore which has a significant number of footfalls and have a considerable size of the operation.

While selecting the amusement park, qualification criteria were fixed with respect to size, footfalls, revenue, the area of operation, games, rides and other recreational facilities on their campus. Likert's five point scale is employed in the questionnaire to record the responses with 1- strongly Disagree, 2- Disagree, 3- Neutral, 4- Agree and 5- Strongly Agree. The questionnaire consisted of three portions Visitor Loyalty, Visitor Switching Behaviour.

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VII. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The data was processed and analyzed using SPSS. Descriptive and Inferential statistics were used to interpret the data. The findings are recorded and interpreted as follows. Reliability check was done using Croanbach's Alpha and it was found significant of 0.815. The demographic details and their frequencies were found as the following.

SL NO	DEM. FACTOR	VARIABLE	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
1	GENDER	MALE	89	59.30
		FEMALE	61	40.70
2	AGE	10-20	3	2.00
		20-30	55	36.70
		30-40	15	10.00
		>40	77	51.30
3	INCOME	< 1 Lakh	30	20.00
		1-3 Lakhs	33	22.00
		3-5 Lakhs	43	28.70
		> 5 Lakhs	44	29.30
4	EDUCATION	<SSLC	3	2.00
		PUC	26	17.30
		UG	41	27.30
		> PG	80	53.30
5	OCCUPATION	Student	15	10.00
		Employed	80	53.30
		Business	41	27.30
		Home maker	14	9.30

From Table 1, it is evident that, approx. 59% of the respondents were Males and Females constitutes only 41% of the sample population. It shows a whopping 51% of the respondents are from the age group of Above 40 years and 37% of the respondents fall in the age group of 20-30 years. In case of income level, almost 59% of the respondents are earning More than 3 lakhs per annum.

Out of the contacted respondents, 80% have at least a graduate degree and 53% have Post graduate degree and above. It also shows the different occupations of the respondents, Employed constitutes nearly 53% of the total respondents, 27% pursue business as their profession and 10% each constitutes Students and Homemakers.

DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLE	CHI-SQUARE VALUE	DF	P-VALUE
VISITOR AGE	31.240	3	0.694
VISITOR GENDER	21.494	1	0.440
VISITR INCOME	26.380	3	0.880
VISITOR EDUCATION	27.463	3	0.846
VISITOR OCCUPATION	25.612	3	0.901

The above Table 2 shows the association between various demographic factors and Visitor Loyalty in terms of Chi-square value. From the above table, the following results can be inferred.

The Visitor Age v/s Visitor Loyalty has a Chi-Square value of 31.240 and significance value of 0.694 which is greater than the critical value of 0.05. The hypothesis H 1.1: Visitor Age has a significant influence on Visitor Loyalty is rejected. That means there is no relation between Visitor Age and Visitor Loyalty.

The Visitor Gender v/s Visitor Loyalty has a Chi-Square value of 21.494 and significance value of 0.440 which is greater than the critical value of 0.05. The hypothesis H 1.2: Visitor Gender has a significant influence on Visitor Loyalty is rejected. Implies there is no relation between Visitor Gender and Visitor Loyalty.

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The Visitor Income v/s Visitor Loyalty has a Chi-Square value of 26.380 and significance value of 0.880 which is greater than the critical value of 0.05. The hypothesis H 1.3: Visitor Income has a significant influence on Visitor Loyalty is rejected. Hence there is no relation between Visitor Income and Visitor Loyalty.

The Visitor Education v/s Visitor Loyalty has a Chi-Square value of 27.463 and significance value of 0.846 which is greater than the critical value of 0.05. The hypothesis H 1.4: Visitor Education as a significant influence on Visitor Loyalty is rejected. So, there is no relation between Visitor Education and Visitor Loyalty.

The Visitor Occupation v/s Visitor Loyalty has a Chi-Square value of 25.612 and significance value of 0.901 which is greater than the critical value of 0.05. The hypothesis H 1.5: Visitor Occupation has a significant influence on Visitor Loyalty is rejected. It concludes that there is no relation between Visitor Occupation and Visitor Loyalty.

TABLE 3: DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS * VISITOR SWITCHING BEHAVIOUR			
DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLE	CHI-SQUARE VALUE	DF	P-VALUE
VISITOR AGE	42.304	3	0.458
VISITOR GENDER	20.667	1	0.110
VISITR INCOME	46.927	3	0.278
VISITOR EDUCATION	44.354	3	0.373
VISITOR OCCUPATION	38.519	3	0.625

The above Table 3 shows the association between various demographic factors and Visitor Switching Behaviour in terms of Chi-square value. From the above table, the following results can be inferred.

The Visitor Age v/s Visitor Switching Behaviour has a Chi-Square value of 42.304 and significance value of 0.458 which is greater than the critical value of 0.05. The hypothesis H 2.1: Visitor Age has a significant influence on Visitor Switching Behaviour is rejected. That means there is no relation between Visitor Age and Visitor Switching Behaviour.

The Visitor Gender v/s Visitor Switching Behaviour has a Chi-Square value of 20.667 and significance value of 0.110 which is greater than the critical value of 0.05. The hypothesis H 2.2: Visitor Gender has a significant influence on Visitor Switching Behaviour is rejected. Implies there is no relation between Visitor Gender and Visitor Switching Behaviour.

The Visitor Income v/s Visitor Switching Behaviour has a Chi-Square value of 46.927 and significance value of 0.278 which is greater than the critical value of 0.05. The hypothesis H 2.3: Visitor Income has a significant influence on Visitor Switching Behaviour is rejected. Hence there is no relation between Visitor Income and Visitor Switching Behaviour.

The Visitor Education v/s Visitor Switching Behaviour has a Chi-Square value of 44.354 and significance value of 0.373 which is greater than the critical value of 0.05. The hypothesis H 2.4: Visitor Education has a significant influence on Visitor Switching Behaviour is rejected. So, there is no relation between Visitor Education and Visitor Switching Behaviour.

The Visitor Occupation v/s Visitor Switching Behaviour has a Chi-Square value of 38.519 and significance value of 0.625 which is greater than the critical value of 0.05. The hypothesis H 2.5: Visitor Occupation has a significant influence on Visitor Switching Behaviour is rejected. It concludes that there is no relation between Visitor Occupation and Visitor Switching Behaviour.

As per this study, as revealed by chi-square test the Demographic Factors of the amusement park visitors has no relation with Visitor Loyalty and Visitor Switching Behaviour. This result resembles the study conducted [2] on influence of demographic factors on the visitor perceived value and visitor satisfaction in Bangalore Amusement parks.

VIII. CONCLUSION

The major thrust of this study is to find the influence of demographic factors on Visitor Loyalty and Visitor Switching Behaviour of the visitors of Bangalore amusement parks. The loyal customer is the one who is satisfied with the services of the institution and do like to avail the same services at the same or more level in all his future visits. Loyalty

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can only be achieved by satisfying or fulfilling all his expectations. There are very less chance for a loyal customer to switch the services of organisations when all his expectations are met. The loyal customer is most likely to switch the amusement park. The conversion of a satisfied customer to loyal customer is a challenging task and needs to be tackled carefully to make him be with the park in all his future visits.

Though the demographic factors influence the consumer behaviour in various other industries, but in this study with respect to the visitors of Amusement Parks of Bangalore different demographic factors are not so significant or crucial with respect to Visitor Loyalty and Visitor Switching Behaviour. The study concludes that the various demographic factors have no influence on the visitor Loyalty or Visitor Switching Behaviour. Therefore, just by focusing on the demographic factors to retain the customer with the park will not yield a fruitful result. But, to retain them there is a need to focus on improving the visitor perceived value and visitor satisfaction by means of value creation, needs fulfilment, meeting customer expectations.

IX. LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study takes into consideration the opinions of the Bangalore Amusement Park Visitors only. So, the geographical restriction affects the Consumer preferences. The sample size being considered here are only 150 respondents, hence the research with good sample size reflects the good result. Hence the sample size itself is a limitation for this study. There always a space for improvement of any study, so is with this research too. Collection of data can be better designed and organized to capture the true representation of the population through structured methods of data collection.

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