Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter briefly explains the concepts covered in this study. The chapter begins with the elaboration of the main concept under study namely Consumer Trust. Thereafter, components or factors that build trust have been highlighted. Since the study is undertaken for online tourism industry, e-tourism and its importance have been emphasized. Finally, the chapter discusses the genesis of the idea, objective & scope of study along with delimitations. The detailed organization of the chapter is as follows:

1.1 Consumer Trust
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   1.1.2 Components of Consumer Trust as used in the Study
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The transformation of Indian Consumers is seen in India from the last decade. Digitization in every industry has laid a new foundation in the consumer market. On one end, the company’s exposure to a larger audience has increased; while on the other, the challenge to retain the customers has also enlarged. Therefore, some initiatives are to be taken to retain the most important asset – “customers” of the company for its smooth functioning. Travel and Tourism Industry, one of the booming sector of the nation, has widened its horizon from being an offline industry and enter this virtual world.

Gaining consumer trust in this blooming online industry is of great importance and the study of Consumer Trust in Online Tourism Companies is of immense significance which may help understand the overall Consumer Trust on virtual world in Indian context.

1.1 CONSUMER TRUST

Consumer Trust is the degree to which the consumers rely on the seller and take some positive action. Where, positive action can be in terms of: purchase, framing positive image about the company, recommending friends about the company and showing loyalty for the company. Consumer trust can be described in terms of belief of the consumer that the company is: fair in presenting the facts, reliable, efficient, customizes services, responds on time and in a way tries every possible thing to provide satisfaction to the customer availing that company’s product or service.

Every business, big or small, is simply running after increasing its profit margins by hook or crook. The changing paradigm of marketing orientation from merely selling to societal marketing, however, has given some importance to the consumer. Gradually, the organizations are also becoming conscious of the relevance of Consumer trust (CT) in enhancing the company’s reputation and hence sales.

Trust is an important element which affects the consumers’ purchasing decision. And, there is a scarcity of research on trust in consumer marketing. Trust is a social lubricant that allows consumers to transact with merchants who are not part of their immediate network. Moreover, it mitigates the consumer’s perception of the risks involved in a purchase situation. The higher the initial perceptions of risk, the higher the trust needed to facilitate the transaction (Mayer et al., 1995).
E-commerce relationships are based on trust. Lack of trust is the most terrifying obstacle in building relationships with the customers online, as it involves transactions of personal and financial nature submitted to web merchants. The term “Trust” can be defined as, “confidence in or reliance on some quality or attribute of a person or thing, or the truth in a statement” (Furman, 2009). Trust is not only difficult to define, but it is also not easy to identify the elements that encompass trust.

Trust is a result of several positive interactions with the web vendor or positive viewpoints of friends and relatives. It is built gradually on an ongoing basis. One negative experience may also break this trust building process. As outlined by Wang and Emurian (2005), Online Trust can be characterized by – two parties (trustor - Customer and trustee - website), vulnerability (complexity and anonymity associated with e-commerce), produced actions (purchasing behaviour) and subjective matter (directly affected by individual differences and situational factors).

It also encourages cooperation and agreement while having the ability to increase the persuasive power of a company in a transaction, since a trusting consumer is less price-sensitive.

1.1.1 CONSUMER CHARACTERISTICS

**Consumer Characteristics:** Each and every person is unique in himself/ herself. They have certain beliefs and values, which generally do not change easily. To build trust amongst its customers, a company must first understand its customers. It helps in not only retaining the existing customer base, but also help in attracting the new ones without incurring much of an expenditure. Consumer trust for an online environment is a critical element for the success of any and every type of organization, which is perfectly achieved via understanding its customers in the exact sense what they want. In this study, consumer characteristics have been studied in terms of behaviour of the customers in response to online shopping in general. Customers with similar tastes and preferences can be clustered together for deriving good results.

For the purpose of this study, Consumer characteristics has been further broken down into variables like: consumer’s shopping orientation- Recreational Orientation (Consumers who enjoy shopping whether they buy or not), Experiential Orientation (Consumers who purchase the products only if they see and touch them once before
its final purchase), Convenience Orientation (These consumers are busy in their routines and wish to spend least time in shopping), Economic Orientation (Consumers of this category look out for best deals whether online or offline, where they can avail maximum price benefits); Consumer’s attitude towards online shopping (Determining the customer’s general attitude towards shopping online) and what is their perceived risk of shopping online (What risks have they associated with online shopping).

Analyzing these factors will give an estimate as to how the customer perceives the idea of shopping if given an option to purchase online or offline. This will let us understand as to which type of consumers opt for online shopping.

1.1.2 COMPONENTS OF CONSUMER TRUST AS USED IN THE STUDY

Website Characteristics: Website characteristics represent varying features of a website that distinguish it from the others. Since, physical presence of the company is not visible, online companies are evaluated by its customers in terms of its design and structure. A good website is able to attract more number of people towards itself and selling job of the company becomes easier if the website is easy to understand, informative but still uncluttered.

People prefer to visit those websites, where everything is easy, simple to understand, informative, availability of good options, etc. In other words, consumers who seek convenience in everyday shopping are more prone to online shopping. Hence, the online companies should focus on ways of improving their websites.

This research study will analyze and identify significant Website Characteristics as evaluated by Indian tourists in e-tourism companies in order to increase the number of online bookings.

For clear understanding of these factors, this factor has been further categorized into six variables. The factors are: Likeability of Site (to know whether the visitors get attracted towards their website), Functionality of Website (which tries to measure the website is functioning properly or not), Usage Convenience in Web Design (this feature is studied to determine the convenience level of the user in using this website),
Site’s Efficiency: (Efficiency of website will be evaluated in terms of its ease in finding and comparing different locations and its cost vis-à-vis travel agents) Website Information (it is included with an intention to identify requisite quantity and quality of updated information in the website) and Reliability of the Website (whether the site has created any kind of trouble for the user of the website in terms of information and financial security)

Service Quality: “Service Quality is a focussed evaluation that reflects the customer’s perception of specific dimensions of service: reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, tangibles.” Hence, Service Quality (SQ) can be referred as an assessment of how well a delivered service conforms to the client’s expectations. It is provided with an objective to improve the services while identifying the customer’s problems quickly and simultaneously assessing the level of customer satisfaction.

The first formal definition of e-service quality or website service quality was provided by Zeithmal et al. (2001) as the extent to which a website facilitates efficient and effective shopping, purchasing and delivering of products and services. The service is comprehensive which includes both pre and post website service aspects.

Service Quality is one such important variable which not only initiates one-time exchange relationship rather will help in establishing a long-lasting relationship with consumers. Although customers wish that all their needs would be satisfied at once, but marketers must understand the needs as well as most importantly their priorities.

This research study will analyze and identify significant Service Quality dimensions by Indian tourists in e-tourism companies in order to create more value for the customers.

Indian Tourists will be investigated for SQ dimensions on six variables namely: Communication (to analyze as to how the company responds to the customer), Service Customization (this aspect will analyze as to whether the site personalizes its services to its customers to make them feel special), Availability (to determine the ease in availability of good options every time by the website), Promotional Deals (to study the promotional offers/ deals offered by the company to its customers), Value for Money (to check whether the company provides full value for money in terms of entire package vis-à-vis travel agents and other competitors) and
Cancellation or Refund Policy (to see if the company adopts a good refund policy and provision for cancellation to its customers).

An in-depth analysis and knowledge of customers (tourists) will help in this industry to understand its tourists and simultaneously ways to remove those barriers which act as a hindrance for online travel commitments.

1.2 CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

Customer satisfaction is an important objective of every company, which is always strived for survival in the competitive market. Market has evolved since few decades. Earlier, companies use to simply sell the products they were manufacturing. But now, goods are manufactured on the basis of customer expectations. If the goods or services provided by the company meets or exceeds the level of customer expectations, more will be the satisfaction level of the consumers.

Customer Satisfaction frameworks have been very popular among researchers. Satisfaction may be defined as the perception of pleasurable fulfilment of a service (Oliver, 1997) which can be assessed as the sum of the satisfactions with various attributes of a product or service (Churchill and Surprentant, 1982). Individual customers have different motivations for shopping like daily routine, learning about new products, or enjoyment of bargaining (Tauber, 1972). These differences mean that they will derive satisfaction from diverse aspects of the shopping experience (Clottey et al., 2008). Therefore, customer satisfaction describes how content an individual is with the consumption of the goods or services provided by the company. High customer satisfaction will result in increased loyalty for the firm (Fornell et al., 1996). Moreover, satisfaction is positively associated with repurchase intentions, likelihood of recommending a product or service, loyalty and profitability (Anderson, 1994; Anton, 1996; Bitner, 1992).

Customer satisfaction might be felt by customer conducting online shopping since shopping could be done practically everywhere and anytime, and it has lower cost in accessing information (Kuo et al., 2005) with wide product options, competitive prices and easy access on information. It can be stated that customer satisfaction is customer perception from service experience given to them (Khristianto et al., 2012).
Also, customer loyalty is a function of customer satisfaction, where satisfied customer would come and tell others about the service he/she received.

Early research on the antecedents of online customer satisfaction has done by Szymanski & Hise, 2000. The study revealed the major antecedents of online customer satisfaction namely: convenience, product merchandise, website design and financial security. Information quality, Security/privacy, convenient payment system, good delivery management and good customer service have been identified as having a good level of impact on online customer satisfaction (Dipta Dharmesti, 2013).

Online customers are increasing rapidly and thereby the companies now need to understand as to how their trust as well as satisfaction level can be increased.

1.3 CONSUMER TRUST IN E-TOURISM

1.3.1 TOURISM: INTRODUCTION

The word “tour” has been derived from the Latin word ‘tornare’ and the Greek ‘tornos’ which means ‘a lathe or circle; the movement around a central point or axis.’ The suffix –ism is defined as ‘an action or process; typical behaviour or quality’ whereas the suffix –ist denotes one that performs a given action. Hence, tour is similar to a circle where a tourist undergoes a journey by leaving a place and then returning at the starting point. Over the years, tourism industry has become the blooming sectors with major contributions towards economic growth both in developing as well as developed economies.

1.3.2 INDIAN TOURISM INDUSTRY: EARLY DEVELOPMENT

The formal support provision to this sector dates back to 1945 when a committee was set up by the Government of India under the Chairmanship of Sir John Sargent, the then Educational Advisor to the Government of India. Since then, the development of the sector has been incremental as per the five year plans. It was only in Sixth five year plan, tourism industry was being considered as an instrument for social integration and economic development.

In late 1990’s the roles of central and state governments, public sector undertakings and private sector undertakings were considered. Later, the need for the participation
of non-governmental bodies, local bodies and youth were intensively involved in the creation of tourism facilities.

### 1.3.3 TOURISM INDUSTRY IN INDIA: CURRENT SCENARIO

Tourism as an industry; has a wide scope in our economy. Travel and tourism is one of the world's largest and fastest growing industries. The GDP of the tourism sector has expanded 229% between 1990 and 2011. Moreover, the prediction for this sector’s annual rate of growth is expected to be 7.7% in the next decade. Out of 181 countries, India’s travel and tourism industry secured 5th rank in growth prospects and 14th rank in considering the size of the industry. World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC), 2011 research confirms the recovery in Travel & Tourism in 2010, with the industry’s direct contribution to global GDP increasing by 3.3% directly contributing 1.9% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in the year 2011 and the recovery is forecast to strengthen further by 4.5% creating an additional 3 million direct industry jobs. Taking into account its wider economic impacts, Travel & Tourism’s total economic contribution in the year 2011 is expected to account for 9.1% of global GDP and 258 million jobs.

As a young country, India is in the midst of the process of honing, developing and expanding its tourism industry. From 1996 to 2008, foreign tourist arrivals in India grew from 2.29 million to 5.37 million, a 134 percent increase. In that same period, foreign earnings from tourism grew from $2.83 billion to $11.74 billion, more than a three-fold increase. During the global economic downturn in 2009, the number of foreign tourists arrivals declined 3.3% from the previous year’s figures. However, during that same period, domestic tourism increased 15.5% from the previous year.

In India, Leisure travel spending (inbound and domestic) generated 73.8% of direct Travel and Tourism GDP in 2011 as compared to business travel spending whose contribution is 26.2%. The same are expected to rise by 7.6% pa in 2022 for both leisure and business travel spending. Domestic travel spending has also generated almost 5 times more revenue than international tourism receipts. The breakdown of indirect contribution from travel and tourism industry is categorized into: Supply
Chain (44.8%), Investment (7.3%) and Government Collective (1.5%) with a total collection of 53.7% of the total contribution (WTTC, 2012).

The influx of high-tech companies and domestic jobs has fundamentally altered the Indian tourism industry. Domestic tourism has become a priority as expendable income rises and the middle class expands.

1.3.4 TYPES OF TOURISM

World Tourism Organization defines tourism as, “Tourism comprises the activities of persons travelling to, and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes.” The industry has developed through the years and currently is one of the most diversified and specialized services providing customized services. The most popular types of tourism worldwide can be categorized as under:

1. **Inbound International Tourism**: When non-residents travel in the given country.
2. **Outbound International Tourism**: Residents travelling in another country.
3. **Domestic Tourism**: Residents of the given country travelling within the country.
4. **Leisure Tourism**: It includes holiday for relaxation, visiting friends, shopping, etc.
5. **Business Tourism**: Travelling for the purpose of business/ trade/ conferences.
6. **Medical Tourism**: Travel to a different place to receive treatment for a disease.
7. **Cultural Tourism**: Travel to understand a region’s culture, lifestyle, etc.
8. **Adventure Tourism**: Outdoor activity that takes place in an unusual/ remote area.
9. **Wellness Tourism**: Travel to maintain/ enhance personal health.
10. **Eco Tourism**: Travel to natural areas that conserve the environment.
11. **Sports Tourism**: Travel either for viewing or participating in a sporting event.
12. **Religious Tourism**: Travel to holy cities for pilgrimages.
13. **Wildlife Tourism**: Travelling for observing animals in their natural habitat.
The constant support by the Indian government to the industry has led to a phenomenal growth of this sector in general and all types of tourism in particular as well. Our economy has been doing well in all types of tourism because of its attributes like - hospitality, uniqueness and charm; which attracts the foreigners to India. To boost tourism in the country, the Indian government has set up Ministry of Tourism and Culture.

1.3.5 DIGITAL REVOLUTION: E-TOURISM

Internet has brought about a revolution in every sphere of life. It has given business (whether big or small) an equal opportunity to expand by reaching out to a wide range of customers throughout the world. By increasing this world wide exposure, it has raised the competitiveness of the firms who have become more creative and competitive in providing new and better services to the customers. Be it a manufacturing sector or service sector; Information & Communication Technology (ICT) is getting key component of every industry and Tourism Industry is not an exception to it. E-Tourism describes a new way of doing business. It communicates faster and access global markets with minimal costs for new businesses.

Buhalis (2003) suggests that e-tourism reflects the digitization of all processes and value chains in the tourism, travel, hospitality and catering industries. At the tactical level, it includes e-commerce and applies ICTs for maximizing the efficiency and effectiveness of the tourism organization.

The growing number of Internet users that want to obtain tourism-related information and the growing demand for new travel experiences has opened huge opportunities for developing countries. ICTs also help destinations and national tourism providers to develop, manage and sell their offerings worldwide. The reorganization of the tourism market together with effective use of ICTs could allow developing countries to build their own brand images, develop new products, promote their tourism resources and expand their customer base to ultimately increase tourism foreign earnings and contribute to local development (UNCTAD, 2005). Growth in online travel is noted world-wide with online travel sales doubling in the U.S., Europe and Asia. As consumers continue to use the web for travel and hospitality resources, there is a need to examine the business-to-consumer online environment and the issues
facing the continued acceptance and use of web by the consumers. Even the inclination of tourism industry is towards the understanding of the customer needs, preferences and behavior, like all industries. E-Tourism is a blooming sector. Most of the tourism companies are involved in developing their internet services for generating more business and hence revenues. It has also widened the scope for business expansion in all geographical, marketing and operational senses. E-tourism companies can now be considered as powerful ‘travel supermarkets’ as they provide integrated travel solutions and a whole range of value added services. Role of traditional tour operators is being threatened by the dynamic packaging of new online entrants in tourism industry.

Fig. 1.1 Online Shopping Trends: India

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What product/services do you intend to purchase online in the next 6 months?</th>
<th>APAC</th>
<th>IN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Books</strong></td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Music (not downloaded)</strong></td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Videos/DVDs/Games (not downloaded)</strong></td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Clothing/Accessories/Shoes</strong></td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cosmetics/nutrition supplies</strong></td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Electronic equipment (TV/Camera etc.)</strong></td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Toys/Dolls</strong></td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Computer Hardware</strong></td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Computer Software (not downloaded)</strong></td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Airline ticket/reservations</strong></td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tours/Hotel Reservations</strong></td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Automobiles &amp; Parts</strong></td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Event Tickets</strong></td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sporting Goods</strong></td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sports Memorabilia</strong></td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Groceries</strong></td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Neilson Report on Online shopping trends in India (September 20, 2010)

According to the survey, conducted by Neilson, about 40% of the Indians are most likely to buy airline tickets and reservations online; which is the second highest option in the minds of Indians in terms of online purchasing as well as 29% of the Indians opt to plan for online Tours/ Hotel reservations. With the increasing level of
consumer confidence, online travel industry has seen rising stocks and improved conditions for air and hotel suppliers in the industry’s ecosystem (Juman, 2012).

Reports from Phocuswright reveal that despite of many odd factors (like slow economy, rising fuel prices and a troubled aviation sector); India's travel marketplace is expanding rapidly, and is poised for strong double-digit growth for the next several years. The total travel market advanced 14% in 2011, and will continue to expand at a similar pace. The country's upwardly mobile middle class is growing, they are increasingly tech-savvy, and they have a strong appetite for travel. "A new breed of traveler is emerging from India – more independent, affluent, technology savvy and hungry for travel," as stated by Douglas Quinby, senior director, research at PhoCusWright. "Even amid a decelerating economic climate for the country, India's expanding traveler class is fueling rapid growth in the total travel market and increasingly eager to embrace online travel planning and booking tools."

Fig. 1.2: Top Travel Websites in India

Source: State of the Internet In India - June 2011 - A Report by ComScore (June 8, 2011)
A report by Shrey Gandhi (comscore), provided insights into the analysis of top online activities such as buying behavior, web search, online travel, social networking and more across India with comparison to Bric countries, US, Japan and European Nations. Also, it gives insights into the top online brands across different sectors. Growth rate of travel in India is 13%. Indian railways top the chart in online travel sites with 19.4% users. Other websites which follow it are Yatra online (7.5%), Make my Trip (6.9%) and Cleartrip (5%).

In order to stay ahead in the highly competitive industry, marketers require a deep understanding of the digital landscape and rich insights into consumers’ online research and booking activity in this sector (comscore). The result is that it leads to the selection of proper supply components and benefits that suit different market segments. Tourist behavior studies in the field of travel and tourism have examined the relationship between satisfaction level and online bookings. However, no study has looked at the factors influencing trust in Indian consumers using e-tourism websites.

Major Indian players in this industry include Yatra, MakeMyTrip, Expedia, Clear Trip, Ibibo, kyoni, etc.

1.3.6 IMPORTANCE OF E-TOURISM

Oorni and Klein (2003) undertook two experiments to compare consumer search behavior electronically and through conventional markets in travel and tourism industry. They examined the effect of Internet-based electronic markets on consumer search in travel and tourism industry. They pinpointed that same forces promote consumer search in conventional markets act in electronic markets as well. They further elaborated that locating prospective sellers and suitable products in electronic travel markets seems to be more difficult than has been previously believed. Although the information can be gathered quickly, provided the relevant information sources are identified. Identification of prospective sellers with suitable offerings on internet seems to be less efficient than previously expected. They identified barriers to search and the topmost barrier to search as rated by the respondents was unavailability of Information, difficult to locate the prospective sellers, frustration due to technical errors as well as flaws in the site design.
Sahadev and Islam (2005) highlighted that the use of internet for the purpose of communicating and transacting with customers has been growing rapidly in the worldwide tourism industry. Moreover, the internet usage also varies across countries, even within a country there are large variations among different enterprises.

Tejada and Linan (2009) in their study explored the major global factors that have an impact on the forces of demand and supply of the tourism industry. They enlisted Internet and decreased cost of air travel in affecting the supply side of this industry. And on the other hand, increasing income, changing lifestyles and development of newer tourist sites have been evaluated as factors leading to higher demand. They concluded that tourism industry is facing many new challenges in the form of intense competition and increasing costs. The same can be resolved only if the entire value chain is restructured and the service package is of good quality with much more value.

Qirici, Theodhori and Elmazi (2011) indicated the importance of information technology in context of changing consumer needs and thereby corresponding by delivering appropriate products to the targeted segments. Internet enabled tourism businesses to improve their flexibility, interactivity, efficiency and competitiveness. A key issue for all tourism business is how to evolve their companies from old economy to a new one. They pinpointed that it should be implemented in a manner to create value.

Daghfous and Barkhi (2009) concluded that IT applications in the hotel industry, which have been largely devoted to the handling of routine operational problems, has contributed much in the form of service excellence and high profits.

Morrison et al. (2001) in his research study developed and tested predictive models for the likelihood of booking travel online and for being a repeat booker of travel online. In the year 1999, the number of Americans, who booked travel online, increased by more than 80%. He distinguished the internet travellers into lookers and non-lookers. After finalizing travel plans, some lookers turn into bookers while the rest are offline bookers. Most of the bookers, reserve either travel tickets or a combination of the same with hotels. Only, once they are comfortable they plan for other services as well.
1.4 GENESIS OF IDEA

Despite the increasing number of internet users and forecasting the future prospects of online travel industry, practitioners have encountered problems and challenges, including how to win consumer trust. There are no statistics showing the exact number of travellers who have purchased travel-related products online. It is apparent that not all online users make their purchases online. There is a quick need for finding as to what are the concerns that prohibit/ restrict online users from purchasing online.

This research work has been undertaken with an objective of an in-depth analysis of reasons for low level of trust for tourism websites and simultaneously ways to remove those barriers which act as a hindrance for online travel commitments. **Trust is one such important variable which not only initiates one-time exchange relationship rather, will help in establishing a long-lasting relationship with consumers.** Analysis of factors affecting consumer trust will help in providing solution of winning consumer trust and thereby increasing the number of online travel bookers.

1.5 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objective of the study is to discover the factors responsible for building trust in e-tourism (online tourism) companies by Indian consumers. In this study; tourists’ perceptions, preferences and expectations from e-tourism companies will be identified to meet and exceed their demand. The study revolves around these variables for domestic (Indian) tourists undertaking leisure tourism.

1.6 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

- The study is very useful for the e-tourism companies to understand the factors responsible for creating trust in tourism websites.
- It is very helpful in designing the strategies for retaining the existing customers with the company.
- It is useful for the researchers to give them insight into the concept of Consumer Trust for consumers shopping online.
- Since, it is an emerging concept in India, it gives an impetus to the building of a more advanced and convenient mode of shopping.
• It will also help the consumers to convey their expectations from online companies and thereby enjoy this convenient mode of shopping freely.

Apart from the above mentioned points, the study is useful for the emerging online tourism companies to understand tourists’ perceptions, preferences and expectations from them in order to meet and exceed their demand. Since, the study revolves around domestic (Indian) tourists undertaking leisure tourism; better understanding of them will increase the revenue of the Indian Tourism Industry.

1.7 DELIMITATIONS

• Some constraints as far as resources and width of the study is concerned can be expected.
• Consumer Behaviour is too complex to predict and theoreticise.
• Consumer Trust is quite a wide concept, only few important dimension of the concept have been incorporated into the study.
• Customer Satisfaction depends on the psychological perception of self as well that of organizational settings, so it will be a difficult task to accurately quantify it.
• Respondents were not easily approachable. A number of times appointments had to be taken for getting the questionnaires filled. Researcher also had to resort to the telephonic interviews.
• Respondents were not very honest a number of times. Researcher had to rephrase the questions to get to the correct response.
• Since population of online shopping is large, collection of data itself was a big task. The researcher had to resort to simple random sampling for the collection of data. She has tried to overcome this limitation by enhancing the depth of the study.

The researcher has tried to remove these deficiencies by corroborating the secondary findings with the enlightened opinion of Ministry of Tourism, tourism industry experts and management academicians.