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The Indian Digital Lending Market: Motivations from a Socio Demographic Perspective

ASAMANI AKHILESHWARI,
Assistant Professor, School of Management, Sapthagiri NPS University, Bangalore

Abstract: This study aims to evaluate the influence of demographic variables on persons' attitudes and perceptions regarding digital lending. The individuals comprising the sample are those who are now utilising digital lending services. Previous research has mostly focused on moderating variables, such as gender, age, education and income. The study found age, education, income, and marital status as the most important moderating variables. However, the factors of gender, employment, and marital status did not show any noticeable moderating influence. The findings imply that demographic characteristics strongly impact user opinions on digital lending, especially in circumstances when the adoption of these services is limited. To optimize the use of their services, digital lending platforms should provide applications that are user-friendly, convenient, secure, and efficient. In addition, it is advisable to prioritise the attraction of female and elderly clientele, and develop tailored services to cater to the special demands of different demographic segments.

Keywords: Digital Lending, Attitude, socio demographic variables, Moderating effect, Regression analysis

1. Introduction:

The practice of providing and getting loans using digital platforms and electronic channels, which eliminates the need for conventional face-to-face contacts between borrowers and lenders, is referred to as digital lending. Technology is used to enhance the lending process, which includes many stages such as loan application, underwriting, disbursement, and repayment. This is often achieved by utilising algorithms and automated systems, which assist in assessing the creditworthiness of applicants and efficiently overseeing the entire loan process. It involves the application of digital technology to ease the commencement, evaluation, and administration of loan transactions. The utilisation of internet platforms, mobile applications, and various digital technologies has enhanced the efficiency and accessibility of the loan process. The rising prevalence of digital lending has been steadily expanding due to its ability to offer enhanced convenience, efficiency, and transparency for both borrowers and lenders.

In the existing body of academic work, adoption intention and actual usage are often considered similar since they both reflect an individual's level of knowledge with adoption. At the individual data level, a number of scholarly investigations have focused on various aspects of digital lending. (Calebe de Roure, 2016) (Seth Freedman, 2017), (Berg, 2019). Nevertheless, a number of cross-country studies have been conducted (Stijn Claessens, 2018) (Cornelli, 2023). Using aggregated data from many levels, we continue our investigation by examining the components that effect digital credit. Much of the recent research on this subject has concentrated on determining how financial literacy and development have affected various outcomes. (Oh, 2020), economic conditions, and technological infrastructures (Bazarbash, 2020), (Cornelli, 2023) (Stijn Claessens, 2018), as well as the efficacy of the global banking system (Anmol Gupta, 2021).

Multiple studies have employed the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) to clarify consumer behaviour and their tendency to embrace technology advancements. The main components of the TAM model are perceived utility, perceived ease of use, attitude, trust, and adoption intention. Furthermore, several inquiries have been carried out to analyse the impact of demographic characteristics on user attitudes towards technology adoption. India's developing position has resulted in a substantial section of its people coming from middle-class or low-income backgrounds. An inherent problem arises when relying on banks and other financial instruments to seek loans and acquire the loan monies. Due to the COVID-19 epidemic and the need to comply to social distancing measures, traditional banks have seen a decrease in client visits. An article in a trade journal emphasizes the importance of online lending platforms. The Fintech Report for 2020 in India, created by MEDICI, assesses technological accomplishments such as Aadhar authentication, eKYC, and digital payment systems like UPI and Google Pay. These developments have made it easier for borrowers in both urban and rural areas to get credit assessments and speed up the distribution of their loans. Efficient digital technology is utilised by financial institutions with a social goal to provide loans to low-income persons, hence meeting the demand for social lending. This is where digital lending plays a significant role. This caters to a particular demand that cannot be met by conventional offline loan options. The objective of this research is to examine the factors that impact the behavioral intentions of

consumers in India with respect to the implementation of digital lending. It acknowledges the reality that this method is still in its early phases of development in India.

The unified theory of acceptance and use of technology (UTAUT), introduced by Davis in 2003, aims to explain why users choose to adopt a particular information system and how they actually use it. This model is developed by doing a thorough investigation and combining eight existing models that previous researchers have used to understand how information systems are used. The technique integrates the components of the Technology Acceptance approach (TAM) with the Diffusion of Innovations (DoI) theory. The researchers subsequently elucidated the correlation between the aforementioned factors and intention by considering four moderating variables: voluntary utilization, age, gender, income, educational attainment, and marital status. While the model effectively accounts for a substantial portion of the variation in behavioural intention and actual consumption, there are other demographic factors that have not been taken into account. The article utilises constructs borrowed from two models, specifically the innovation diffusion theory and the TAM. TAM regards perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness as key factors in the creation of attitudes. The perceived utility is the conviction that utilizing a specific technology would enhance performance. Given the finite number of hours available to individuals each day, it is essential for mobile lending to enhance productivity with little exertion and convenience. Expanding on the previously indicated rationale, people are more likely to use digital services when they perceive them to be favourable and beneficial for improving the efficiency of their work. (Ja-Chul Gu, 2009). Efficiency is the measure of the advantages consumers obtain in comparison to the sacrifices or expenses. It is seen cognitively as the ratio of benefits to sacrifice.

In addition, convenience has been identified as another significant element that affects the adoption of technology, alongside efficiency. Convenience, in the context of self-determination theory, is defined as the degree to which users see a system or technology as helpful in accomplishing their goals. (Chi Cheng Chang, 2012). (Leonard L. Berry K. S., 2002) have posited a framework consisting of five distinct dimensions that characterize service convenience. These dimensions encompass various aspects such as ease of choice, ease of transaction, ease of receiving benefits, ease of access, and ease of post-benefit experience. In a research conducted by (Vinita Kaura, 2013) on Indian banks, it was shown that private sector banks provided more convenience across all five dimensions when compared to public sector banks.

Furthermore, demographic features are incorporated to examine how these factors moderate the link between the antecedents of digital lending and user attitude, in addition to the components of the two models. Although there has been much study on consumers' acceptance of online banking, there is a lack of studies examining the factors that impact the adoption of digital lending in India. The influence of demographic factors on the propensity to use digital lending is restricted to gender, age, and income. This research study seeks to investigate the moderating impact of various demographic factors, including gender, age, qualifications, educational background, experience, occupation, income, and marital status. By incorporating additional moderator elements into the model, the goal is to address the disparities that have been identified in previous research inquiries.

The subsequent section provides an analysis of a literature review that examines the moderating effect of a number of demographic variables that have been the subject of prior research. Following that, the study outlines the areas where further research is needed and the objectives it wants to achieve. This section elucidates the rationale for the study and the conceptual framework employed in the research. Afterwards, the research examines the technique, followed by an analysis of the data and the findings. The second-to-last section of the paper presents a concise overview of the results and their potential ramifications, while also addressing the constraints of the research and proposing new avenues for future exploration.

2. Literature Review:

There have been significant shifts in the economy as a result of the introduction of digitization, which is frequently referred to as the modern industrial revolution. They are considered to be a component of the Industry 4.0 framework, which places an emphasis on the generation of value through the close collaboration of all economic entities due to the fact that digitalization has made this feasible. (Bilan Yu., 2019).

There is a wide range of theories, models, and conceptual frameworks that form the foundation for studying the acceptance of new information technologies in the financial sector, particularly those used by FinTech. Their theoretical framework enables the identification and study of the factors and rationales that impact intentions and/or

facilitate the implementation of innovative technical advancements.To identify and evaluate the elements that effect the acceptability of different FinTech services, several recent research on the adoption of FinTechs use the Technology acceptability Model (TAM). This is apparent in the literary compositions of (AYE, 2021)), (Janella Jhojani Merino Balcázar, 2021), (Bijith Marakarkandy, 2017). The efficiency of this technique in forecasting and explaining the adoption of new technology is the single most important factor contributing to its widespread appeal and practicality (Budi Setiawan, 2021). In addition to this, its adaptability makes it possible to incorporate more aspects into the analysis, which in turn broadens our comprehension of the elements that determine the adoption of contemporary information technologies as well as the reasons that motivate people to do so. (Zhongqing Hu, 2019)

2.1 Technology Adoption Model:

Within the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) framework, the adoption of information systems is influenced by the perception of their utility, sometimes referred to as PU. It refers to the extent to which new technology enhances the efficiency of consumers' tasks. As per the results of this study, "PU" stands for the occurrence where clients are more inclined to utilise a digital lending platform if they expect favourable results. A significant corpus of research undertaken over the past decade has shown that customers' impression of utility can result in an upsurge in their utilisation of mobile wallets, fintech, and financial services.

One further essential component of TAM is known as PEU, which stands for perceived ease of use. The term "workload" alludes to the sheer volume of labour that must be performed in order to make use of this revolutionary technology. For the purpose of this study, PEU assesses the level of comfort and motivation that consumers have about the acquisition of the information and skills necessary to make use of the digital lending platform. Research conducted in the past in the fields of mobile banking, mobile peer-to-peer lending applications, fintech, and banking has shown that customers' adoption of new technologies is heavily influenced by perceived utility (PU). Additionally, the adoption of a new technology in mobile learning is influenced by the perceived utility (PU) of the technology. In the context of mobile banking and digital lending apps, this concept is referred to as PU adoption intention.

(Weinberg, 2002) proposed that trust (TR) is a multidimensional notion that has major implications for the transactions that take place in the economic sphere. The adoption of TR has been constantly regarded as a high priority, and it is utilised in conjunction with PU and PE in order to attract and retain customers. TR's significance stems in the fact that it possesses a vast and intricate dataset, which makes it an indispensable component in the realm of financial technology applications. The adoption of financial innovation is driven by a number of factors, some of which are customer happiness, perceived risk, brand reputation, information accuracy, assistance from the government, and service excellence. As a result, it is of the utmost importance to investigate the influence that TR has on the viewpoints and propensity towards adoption of potential users.

Convenience, in the context of user evaluation of service experiences, pertains to an individual's preference for products and services that are easy and convenient to use. The convenience of a product or service is contingent upon minimising both the duration and exertion required (Leonard L. Berry K. S., 2002). (Brown, 1989) delineated five convenience dimensions: time, location, procurement, utilisation, and implementation. In a study conducted by (Cheolho Yoon, 2007), the convenience of wireless LAN was analysed, specifically focusing on elements related to acquisition and usage. This study was based on the previous work of (Brown, 1989). In a study conducted by (Sumeet Gupta, 2014), it was shown that convenience has a beneficial impact on consumers' willingness to make purchases online. The study conducted by (Chi-Cheng Chang, 2012) revealed that the perception of simplicity of use had a favourable influence on the perception of convenience, utility, and attitude towards using PDAs for English learning.

The paper focuses on socio-technical issues and establishes connections between lifestyle and preexisting characteristics. There has been limited study conducted so far that has explored the moderating influence of various demographic demographics on the connection between attitudes towards digital lending and its underlying causes. In addition, there has been no research that has compared the results of different ways used to examine the moderating impact utilising multiple methodologies.

Researchers have utilised extensions of models to elucidate the uptake of different types of technologies. In their study, (Xiaoni Zhang, 2003) investigated the impact of gender as a moderating factor on the intention to make online shopping purchases. The findings revealed that gender plays a significant role in influencing online commerce.

According to research, males demonstrate a greater propensity to embrace bank technology (Wendy W.N. Wan, 2005), and mobile banking (Amin, 2006) compared to females. In their study, (Nysveen, 2005) discovered that men had a higher perception of the utility of mobile chat services compared to women. (Demirci, 2008) discovered that males exhibited considerably more innovativeness than females in terms of gender. (Shin, 2009) discovered that the influence of gender on technology usage is substantial. The study presented empirical evidence demonstrating that demographic characteristics have an indirect influence on the variability in the utilisation of retail self-service checkouts. This impact is exerted through consumer characteristics, and the diversity in consumer characteristics can be related to demographic considerations. Furthermore, their investigation uncovered that women exhibit a higher level of unease towards technology, whereas males display a stronger inclination towards embracing technological progress. Furthermore, the effect of social standards is more conspicuous in groups consisting of females, whereas the sway of enjoyment is more notable in groups consisting of males. (Viswanath Venkatesh, 2020) (Nysveen, 2005) discovered that there were no discernible gender-based variations in the moderating impact of ease of use on views. The study conducted by (Gu, 2009) revealed that the influence of gender on intention is not statistically significant. The influence of gender is not substantial among experienced users. (Jambulingam, 2013) study on Malaysian students concluded that the link between the factors influencing the adoption of mobile technology and behavioural intention is not affected by age or gender.

When it comes to adopting new technology, studies have shown that younger users act differently than older users. This is the case across all age groups. As a result of the fact that older users are more likely to be suspicious of technology and prefer to conduct transactions in person, they are more easygoing when it comes to employing technology for transactions. When it comes to consumer electronics, a research by (Subin Im, 2016) indicated that age is a significant predictor of new product ownership. According to (Constance Elise Porter, 2006), there is a moderating influence of age on the relationship between technology usage and attitudes. Studies have shown that various age groups are affected by technology anxiety to differing degrees; for example, (Gu, 2009), all found that older customers had larger technological worries. According to research by (Faqih, 2015), when it comes to healthcare facilities in Jordan utilizing mobile technologies, gender and age have a major moderating effect. Perceptions of self-efficacy in gaining Internet skills are lower among older adults due to their limited experience to computers, mobile phones, and the Internet (Constance Elise Porter, 2006). According to (Demirci, 2008), elder respondents reported higher levels of uneasiness and discomfort compared to younger respondents. Consumers over the age of 50 exhibit lower levels of technological innovation and more technology fear. As a result, new ideas, services, and products tend to be embraced by younger generations more quickly (Gu, 2009).

On the other hand, other research suggests that users' internet habits are unaffected by their age. Irrespective of age or socioeconomic status, a larger segment of the population now has easy access to and can afford modern technology, including computers, the internet, mobile phones, and more. As (Blanca Hernández, 2011) points out, there was a noticeable bias in the user profile when the technology was first introduced. However, as time goes on, the variations in demographic profile are becoming less pronounced. Age does not have a direct impact on user intention when it comes to retail self-checkouts, according to (Ja-Chul Gu, 2009)

The term "educational background" refers to the individual's previous academic experience as well as the kind of degrees that they have obtained. Due to the fact that certain educational courses include a higher level of sophistication in contrast to others, the categorization of background is an important aspect. In India, the two most popular academic disciplines are engineering and the arts and humanities. Engineering is concerned with the practical application of scientific and mathematical knowledge to the creation, design, construction, and implementation of various tools, systems, processes, and organizations. The arts and humanities also include fields like philosophy, history, literature, psychology, and political science. The amount of study that has been conducted on the relationship between an individual's educational background and their attitude and purpose with regard to the adoption of technology is quite limited.

A person's principal means of earning a livelihood is referred to as their occupation, which is a specific activity that falls under this category. The sample that we used for this research includes both students and professionals who are currently employed. As a result, occupation is defined as the activity that the mobile banking user is now engaged in, namely that which is either studying or working. Other prospective demographic moderating variables were given

more attention in earlier studies, however occupation received less attention than those other variables. Based on a study conducted on retail banking customers in Nigeria, it was found that the clients' employment level plays a crucial role in shaping their perspective on Internet banking. (Tagg, 2011).

The concept of "income" pertains to the financial compensation that individuals or businesses acquire in return for providing goods or services. Income levels have an effect on the behavioural patterns and attitudes of users. There have been previous studies that have studied the influence that income has on the motivation of users to either accept or reject the adoption of technology. (Constance Elise Porter, 2006) discovered that customers with lower incomes report the highest level of concern regarding the pricing of the product or service. The cost, which includes the device and access charge, is considered by them to be rather costly in comparison to the perceived benefit of the service. Prosperous clients, on the other hand, have the financial resources necessary to acquire high-end equipment and to gain access to high-speed internet. Disparities in the availability of technology result in varying degrees of worry among users, with those with less financial resources having higher levels of anxiety than those with more financial means. Therefore, the quantity of money used has a direct influence on both the timeliness of technology adoption and the degree to which it is implemented.

(Blanca Hernández, 2011) discovered that those with greater incomes had a tendency to perceive fewer dangers while making purchases online, but people with lower incomes are less likely to engage in online transactions. One may reasonably infer that when people's incomes improve, their perceptions of how simple, effective, convenient, and trustworthy technology is will influence their behaviour and their intention to utilise it. This is a valid assumption to make. This is apparent from the results of a research conducted by (Gu, 2009) research demonstrated that there is an inverse relationship between anxiety about technology and income level. Individuals who fall into the high-income bracket generally demonstrate high levels of engagement with communication technology, which ultimately results in a heightened sense of expertise in the utilisation of such instruments. On the other hand, since the costs of computer technology and the Internet have fallen, a sizeable fraction of people who come from socioeconomic situations that are lower have also began to use online services.

Marital status pertains to an individual's present condition of being married or not. It can be categorized as single, married, divorced, or widowed. According to the findings of our research, the marital status can be classified as either being single or currently married. Existing research has demonstrated that married people have a propensity for conducting their financial transactions through the use of electronic means. (James Katz, 2001), however, a separate study conducted by (Christopher Gan, 2006) shown that the use of electronic banking is not influenced by marital status. In a study conducted by (Munnukka, 2007) a strong correlation was shown between marital status and the extent to which individuals adopted mobile communication services. Consumers who are in a solid relationship tend to utilise mobile communications less frequently compared to those who are in a less stable relationship or are single.

2.2 Hypothesis:

H1: Attitude has a substantial effect on perceived usefulness with regard to the intention to utilise digital lending services.

H2: Attitude has a substantial effect on perceived ease of use with regard to the intention to utilise digital lending services.

H3: Attitude has a substantial effect on convenience with regard to the intention to utilise digital lending services.

H4: Attitude has a substantial effect on trust with regard to the intention to utilise digital lending services.

H5: Attitude has a substantial effect on lifestyle with regard to the intention to utilise digital lending services.

H6a: Age moderates attitudes towards adoption intention in utilising digital lending services.

H6b: Gender moderates attitudes towards adoption intention in utilising digital lending services.

H6c: Education moderates attitudes towards adoption intention in utilising digital lending services.

H6d: Marital status moderates attitudes towards adoption intention in utilising digital lending services.

H6e: Occupation moderates attitudes towards adoption intention in utilising digital lending services.

H6f: Income moderates attitudes towards adoption intention in utilising digital lending services.

3. Research Gap:

The literature review indicates that the attitude towards embracing digital lending is influenced by several aspects, namely the perceived ease of use, convenience, efficiency, risk and privacy (trust), and lifestyle compatibility. Their influence on the adoption is positive. Demographic factors, such as gender, age, educational attainment, educational history, employment position, income level, and marital status, have a role in influencing the relationship between the listed factors and attitude. This study utilises two criteria, efficiency and convenience, in order to improve understanding of perceived usefulness. The study enriches the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) by include trust, convenience, and efficiency as important factors. The study integrates lifestyle into existing components and highlights both socio-technical factors. There has not yet been a study that has used all demographic parameters to analyse how certain aspects affect the relationship between the causes of digital lending adoption and the attitude towards digital lending. Furthermore, there has been no research undertaken that use many approaches to examine the moderating effect and later compares the results of various methodologies.

While TAM, DoI, and UTAUT have been extensively employed by researchers, the primary aim of this study is to enhance the application of these models. The study's main objective is to evaluate how demographic factors influence the connection between the factors that come before and the user's attitude and behaviour towards adopting digital lending.

Prior studies have investigated how socio-demographic factors influence the connection between perceived ease of use (PEOU) and its effects. A specific study investigating the implementation of mobile banking revealed that gender significantly influenced the ability to forecast the perceived ease of use (PEOU) and mobile commerce. The provided text is insufficient and lacks the necessary details to be rewritten in a clear and concise manner.

The study intends to analyse the impact of several elements that come before digital lending on persons' attitude towards digital lending, based on these studies. Furthermore, it aims to evaluate how demographic variables, such as gender, age, qualification, educational background, occupation, income, and marital status, influence the connection between things that come before digital lending and individuals' inclination to embrace digital lending.

4. Research Model:

Extensive study has been conducted on the determinants that impact the willingness of users to adopt technology. Examples of these elements include various demographic characteristics. To analyse variations across different demographic groups in terms of the factors that impact the acceptance and perception of mobile usage, we suggest employing a model that integrates both the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) models. To illuminate customers' views towards the adoption of mobile banking services, this combination model might serve as a framework. Our model considers a comprehensive range of parameters derived from many models, as well as demographic characteristics acting as moderator variables, to elucidate the factors impacting user attitudes towards technology adoption. There are five elements believed to influence attitude. The attributes encompassed are perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, perceived convenience, perceived lifestyle, and perceived trust. Demographic data such as gender, age, qualifications, educational background, employment, income, and marital status are being considered. "Perceived convenience" is the measure of how well clients may handle their financial matters at any time and place, with immediate updates. The phrase "perceived efficiency" refers to the capacity of customers to obtain a higher value from a transaction while exerting the same or reduced amount of effort overall. The construction of consumers' perceived lifestyles is influenced by factors such as their personalities, degrees of innovativeness, the frequency of their interactions, and the quality of their connections. Figure 1 depicts this.

The integration of the literature review with qualitative research, namely research carried out through focus group discussions, resulted in the formulation of the five components. In addition, additional specific information about these structures will be given in the next section. The bulk of the measures, derived from previous research and obtained from various sources, were validated using confirmatory factor analysis.

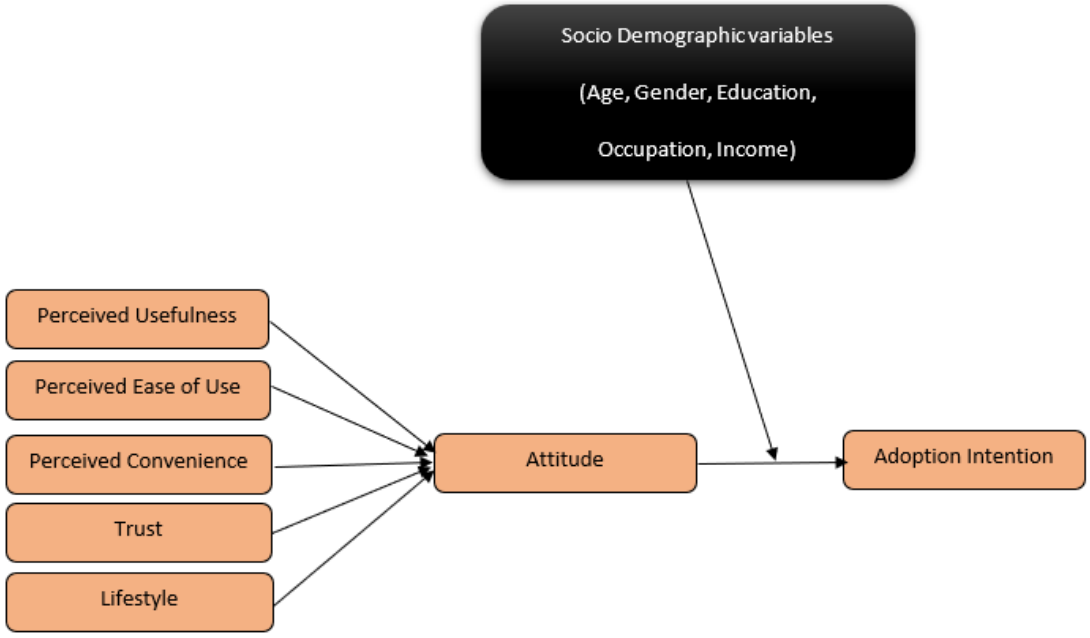

Figure 1: Proposed research Model

Source: Author's own

5. Methodology:

5.1 Data Collection:

The constructs were established according to the preexisting literature about the technology adoption, attitude, and intention. The elements were adapted from prior research and subsequently consolidated into clusters. A five-point Likert scale was created to evaluate the constructs. Preliminary research was conducted to evaluate the general dependability of the questionnaire. The final version of the questionnaire was achieved via obtaining expert opinions and implementing required adjustments to the language and organisation. The study's aim was explicitly presented at the beginning of the questionnaire, along with a concise summary of the digital lending platform. The inquiry uncovered many occurrences of sanctioned digital lending schemes. The examples include many forms of lending, including peer-to-peer (P2P) lending, collateral lending, buy now pay later (BNPL) loans, point-of-sale (PoS) finance, crowdfunding, and online and mobile lending platforms. A Likert Scale, consisting of five points (strongly agree, agree, disagree, neutral, and strongly disagree), was used to score the 19 items.

To ascertain the minimal sample size for structural equation modelling (SEM), it is advisable to adhere to the heuristic guideline. This recommendation recommends a minimum need of 15 cases per variable. (Stanny Dias, 2022). Additionally, it is generally advised to have a range of 200 to 400 cases when the number of indicators is between 10 and 15. Therefore, the minimum required sample size for this investigation was 400 instances.

An assessment of the items' acceptability was conducted in the SPSS programme using Cronbach's alpha to evaluate the reliability of both the questions and the scale. Data was gathered from individuals residing in the Andhra Pradesh area using an online survey that utilised convenience sampling. It was determined that the respondents of the questionnaire were already utilising digital lending services prior to completing it. 600 distinct individuals submitted the finalised surveys. Out of the whole set of replies, only 561 were deemed suitable for further examination.

The suitability of Partial Least Squares (PLS) for modelling was determined by using Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) in combination with the SMART-PLS version 2.0 software. To examine the influence of demographic parameters on the relationship between attitude and behavioural intention, the data was categorised into several files based on the different categories to which the cases belonged. Subsequently, the individual case files were employed for the bootstrapping procedure, aiming to ascertain the presence of disparities among the demographic categories. The comparison between groups was conducted using standard means, standard errors, and sample sizes derived from the

results of route coefficients obtained by bootstrapping. This was done for each demographic factor. To determine the significance of any differences between the groups, the following formula by (Chin, 2000) was utilised:

$$t= \frac{Path\ sample1 - Path\ sample2}{\left[\frac{(m-1)\sqrt{2}}{(m+n-2)} * SE + \frac{(n-1)^2}{-2} * \frac{1}{SE}\right] * \sqrt{(sample1\ m+n)\ (\ sample2\ m+n)}}$$

where m = number of samples in group 1, n = number of samples in group 2, Pathsample(i) = sample mean for group (i), and SE2sample(i) = square of standard error for group (i).

A further significance test was carried out in order to investigate the presence of the moderated-mediated effect for demographic parameters that demonstrated a significant degree of moderation between attitude and intention. As a consequence of this, the moderated-mediation effect was investigated solely for the components that shown a significant moderating influence on the relationship between attitude and adoption intention. When it comes to PLS-SEM, moderated-mediation is a strategy that is advised for determining the significant difference between groups in terms of the overall influence on endogenous variables, which includes the indirect effects of exogenous factors. (Ahmad Nazim Aimran, 2015). The approach and formula utilised for moderated-mediation stays unchanged, as previously mentioned in the context of moderation in PLS-SEM.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics

Demographics	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Female	226	40.3
Male	335	59.7
Age		
18-24	377	67.2
25-34	105	18.7
35-44	47	8.4
45 and above	32	5.7
Education		
Doctorate	24	4.3
Graduate	314	56.0
High school graduate	6	1.1
Post Graduate	217	38.7
Occupation		
Business	64	11.4
Employee	287	51.2
Student	210	37.4
Monthly Income		
0-25000	401	71.5
25000-50000	108	19.3
50001 and above	52	9.3
Marital Status		
Married	130	23.2
Unmarried	431	76.8
Total	*561*	*100%*

The demographic information of people was studied by surveys, and the descriptive data is shown in Table 1. Age, gender, educational attainment, employment, income, and customer status are among factors considered when evaluating an individual's eligibility for a digital lending business. The age distribution is predominantly defined by the age group 18-24 years old, which represents the largest proportion, making up 67% of the total. This cohort consistently embraces and adapts to novel technologies and methodologies. This sampling has been deemed suitable. Around 80% of

responders and technology users have quickly adopted digital lending services, highlighting the broad appeal of these services.

6. RESULTS

A confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was performed to evaluate the measurement model. Given that the model utilised in the study is a reflective model, the outer loadings were utilised to evaluate the first assessment. Initially, all items reflecting each variable were loaded, and the outer loadings were thoroughly examined to identify indications with significantly lower outer loading values. Optimally, a loading estimate of 0.7 or greater is desired, however values of 0.5 are generally deemed acceptable. Thus, all markers have been preserved since they were estimated to be over 0.5.
The PLS algorithm was subsequently executed utilising the path weighing method. Nevertheless, the discriminant validity is deemed good according to the criteria established by (Chin, 2000), which states that discriminant validity is present when indicators that load onto their respective latent variables have larger loadings than those on other variables (Joseph F. Hair, 2019).

Using composite reliability (CR) and average variance extracted (AVE) metrics, we carried out convergent validity tests in order to evaluate the correctness of the components that were included in the study model. Each and every value that was linked with the AVE evaluation was greater than the threshold of 0.5, and each and every value that was associated with the CR evaluation was greater than the prerequisite of 0.70. Validation of convergent validity was accomplished with success. A presentation of the findings may be found in Figure 3. As a result of the intrinsic limitation of Cronbach Alpha (CA), which is that it has a "lower bound value" that underestimates the true reliability of the instrument, it was not utilised as a measure of validity in this particular research endeavour. To put it another way, this indicator functions on the presumption that each and every component in the composition carries the same amount of weight. Because of this, the reliability of its internal coherence is likely to be overestimated, and the amount of items that are contained in each construct is a factor that influences this.

	AI	Attitude	L	PC	PEU	PU	T
AI	1.000	0.661	0.096	0.082	0.184	0.658	0.732
Attitude	0.661	1.000	0.133	0.085	0.242	0.995	0713
L	0.096	0.133	1.000	0.120	0.114	0.124	0.135
PC	0.082	0.085	0.120	1.000	0.149	0.080	0.026
PEU	0.184	0.242	0.114	0.149	1.000	0.163	0.174
PU	0.658	0.995	0.124	0.080	0.163	1.000	0.708
T	0.732	0.713	0.135	0.026	0.174	0.708	1.000

Table 2: Correlations of variables

Source: By Author

	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_a)	Composite reliability (rho_c)	Average variance extracted
AI	0.730	0.739	0.847	0.649
Attitude	0.718	0.796	0.820	0.504
L	0757	0.776	0.861	0.674
PC	0.807	1.375	0.897	0.814
PEU	0.798	0.823	0.881	0.712
PU	0.800	0.801	0.870	0.625
T	0.835	0.840	0.901	0.752

Table 3: Construct reliability and validity

Source: By Author

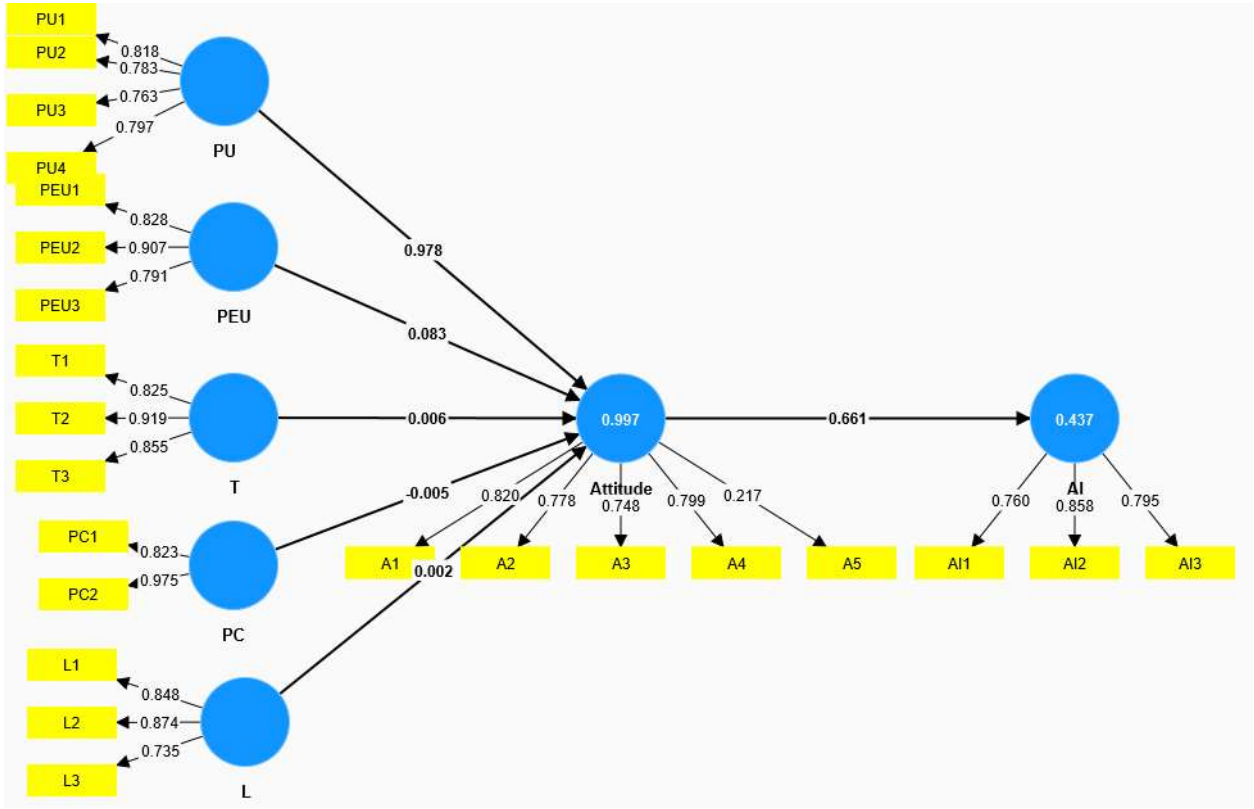

Figure 2: Data analysis result in SmartPLS software

Source: By Author

According to the aforementioned model, which yielded a Standardised Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) of 0.916—a value below 0.10 or 0.08 (Li-tze Hu, 1999) is deemed a good fit—it can be concluded that the attitude towards adoption is significantly influenced by the perceived usefulness, ease of use, convenience, trust, and lifestyle. The H1, H2, H3, H4, and H5 can be deemed acceptable based on this outcome.

6.1 Moderation Effect of Socio-demographic variables on Attitude and Adoption Intention:

Table 4: Data analysis result in Smart PLS software (modified)

Demographic factors	**t statistic**	**p-value (2-tailed)**	**Interpretation**	**Conclusion on moderating effect on attitude and Adoption Intention**	**Hypothesis**
Age	3.945	0.000	Significant	Moderation	H6a: Accepted
Gender	0.424	0.672	Not Significant	No Moderation	H6b: Rejected
Education	4.291	0.000	Significant	Moderation	H6c: Accepted
Marital Status	0.108	0.914	Not Significant	No Moderation	H6d: Rejected
Occupation	1.395	0.163	Not Significant	No Moderation	H6e: Rejected
Income	3.187	0.002	Significant	Moderation	H6f: Accepted

Source: By Author

Table 2 displays the moderating effects of several samples of each demographic factor on the correlation between attitude and intention. The study revealed that neither gender nor occupation had a moderating effect on the connection between attitude and intention ($p > 0.05$ or $t < 1.96$). However, the impact of attitude on intention varies significantly among different age groups ($p < 0.05$ or $t > 1.96$). A substantial disparity has been discovered between the samples of low and middle income groups ($p = 0.003$) and income groups ($p = 0.006$) regarding the impact of attitude on intention.

There is a notable disparity between the impact of attitude towards intention on individuals with a low level of education compared to those with a high level of education (p = 0.016).

7. Conclusion

7.1 Conclusion

The fact that the age factor has an effect on the correlation between attitude and adoption intention of digital lending is demonstrated by a t value of 3.945. Additionally, when compared to younger respondents, older respondents (those aged 35 and older) are more likely to hold this interpretation. Age is a factor that plays a role in determining the association between technology use and attitudes, according to earlier study, which is consistent with these findings. ((Demirci, 2008), (Constance Elise Porter, 2006). According to (Yehoshua Liebermann, 2002) The sense of risk that older users have in relation to new technology is higher than the perception of risk that younger users have. In light of this, it is of the utmost importance that senior citizens see new technology as trustworthy.

It is shown that income has a moderating influence on the link between attitude and intention to adopt digital lending, as indicated by a t-value of 3.187, which is statistically significant. This indicates that there is a strong association between the two variables.

The fact that the educational background has a moderating effect on the attitude towards the intention to use digital lending is demonstrated by the fact that the t value to be 4.291. According to the findings, which are consistent with those of previous studies, those who have completed greater levels of education are more likely to rapidly adopt new technologies in comparison to those who have completed lesser levels of education. (Weinberg, 2002).

It is clear from the remaining t values (t=0.424, 1.395, and 0.108), however, that the respondent's gender, occupation, and marital status do not operate as moderators in the link between the characteristics that influence the adoption of digital lending and the attitude towards embracing digital lending. Previous investigations have been contradicted by this finding. ((Subin Im, 2016); (Viswanath Venkatesh, 2020); which indicated that the influence of perceived ease of use on intention was slightly more pronounced for women compared to men.

This study reveals that demographic characteristics such as gender, age, income, employment, qualification, and marital status have a significant role in affecting the influence of independent factors (usefulness, ease of use, trust, lifestyle, convenience) on user attitude towards digital lending. It is essential to take into consideration the fact that these demographic factors have a moderating effect on user attitudes, despite the fact that the adoption rate of digital lending is very low. A significant managerial and commercial lesson that can be gained from this study is that digital lending platforms ought to boost the usage of digital lending services. This is an essential suggestion. This can be accomplished by delivering digital lending applications that are user-friendly, convenient, secure, and efficient, and that are also in line with the lifestyle expectations of their users. The fact that, with the exception of educational background, all other demographic characteristics influence the link with user attitude is the source of the second implication that may be drawn from this finding. As a result, digital lending platforms ought to make an effort to improve and publicise the characteristics of mobile banking, such as its user-friendliness, ease, and efficiency, with a particular focus on female customers. In a similar vein, financial institutions had to devise different approaches in order to strengthen the faith of senior citizens in the convenience and safety of digital lending channels. In addition, the development of individualised services that are designed to meet the specific needs of particular demographic subgroups is another potential component.

7.2 **Practical implications**: The study's results suggest that consumers' demographic and socio-economic attributes, familiarity with digital lending, and assessment of the impact of digital lending on their lifestyle all have an influence on their digital lending behaviours. This would aid them in identifying more effective strategies to tackle issues related to credit card usage, repayment patterns, and other reckless conduct in the field of digital lending. Moreover, gaining insight into consumer sentiments and behavioural patterns about the use of digital lending might aid in formulating marketing tactics for digital lending organisations.

8. LIMITATIONS

Notwithstanding the previous findings, the study contains certain shortcomings that must be addressed in future research. These faults should be rectified. The majority of participants in this study endeavour are of Indian origin and come from the southern area. The major areas of India, including the North, South, East, and West, are

characterised by significant population and socioeconomic disparities. The problem might likely be attributed to India's extensive population. In order to get insight into the similarities and variations across different regions, it is necessary to apply the model utilised in this inquiry to each of the four regions. Further investigation is required. By utilising this information, financial institutions and technology businesses may develop strategies that are precisely customised to meet the expectations of consumers in these areas. Furthermore, it is feasible to do further research to expand the range of the concept to encompass other emerging countries. Moreover, it is possible to illuminate the similarities and differences that exist across different civilizations. The objective of our research is to examine the correlation between the antecedent variables and attitudes towards the adoption of digital lending, while also considering the moderating influence of other demographic characteristics. Additionally, research may be conducted to see if there are any causal links between the preceding factors and whether demographic features affect the causal relationship. This study makes a small yet important contribution to the examination of usage patterns on digital lending platforms, progressing in the intended direction.

To summarise, professionals may use the study's findings to understand how consumers' demographic and socio-economic characteristics, knowledge of digital lending, and perception of the lifestyle effects of digital lending usage influence digital lending practices. This would assist them in discerning more efficient tactics to address issues pertaining to credit card usage, repayment trends, and other imprudent behaviour in the realm of digital lending. Furthermore, understanding customer feelings and patterns of digital lending usage might help in developing marketing strategies for digital lending institutions.

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APPENDIX–1 (QUESTIONNAIRE)

ANALYSING THE DRIVING FORCES BEHIND ONLINE LENDING PLATFORMS ADOPTION

1. Please select your age-group *
   - 18-24
   - 25-34
   - 35-44
   - 44 and above
2. Please select your gender
   - Male
   - Female
3. Education qualification *
   - Doctorate
   - Post Graduate
   - Graduate
   - High school graduate
4. Occupation *
   - Student
   - Employee
   - Business
5. Do you use digital lending apps? *
   - Yes
   - No

Respondents are required to choose their opinions about digital lending apps on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1: Strongly disagree 2: Disagree 3: Neutral 4: Agree 5: Strongly agree

Perceived usefulness

- Customers' needs can be fulfilled by digital lending platforms
- Customers save a lot of time when they use digital lending services.
- Customers using digital lending platforms can access several facilities.
- I find the digital lending systems to be helpful overall.

Perceived ease of use

- Customers may easily operate the digital lending apps with ease.
- It is clear and easy to understand how to use the Digital lending app
- Utilising an online lending platform is effortless.

Perceived Convenience

- Digital lending systems facilitate convenient and flexible borrowing of funds, allowing individuals to access loans at any location and at any time.
- Customers save a lot of time when they use digital lending services.

Trust

- Digital lending has robust data security
- Customers utilise the digital lending platform with trust
- I perceive digital lending as secure.

Perceived Lifestyle

- Digital lending is compatible with my lifestyle
- Adopting digital lending fits well with the way I like to manage my finances.
- I find that digital loan apps work well with my job and pay.

Attitude

- Digital lending platforms are good

- Digital lending platforms are relevant
- Digital lending platforms are useful
- Digital lending platforms are beneficial
- Digital lending platforms are affordable

Adoption Intention

- There is still ample potential for the growth and expansion of digital lending apps
- People are more likely to tell their family or friends about digital lending platforms
- In the future, I intend to utilise the Digital lending platform