JETIR.ORG ISSN: 2349-5162 | ESTD Year : 2014 | Monthly Issue
JOURNAL OF EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES AND INNOVATIVE RESEARCH (JETIR)
An International Scholarly Open Access, Peer-reviewed, Refereed Journal

AN ASSESSMENT ON STUDENTS AWARENESS AND ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE GOODS AND SERVICES TAX (GST)

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ABSTARCT

Since the introduction of GST into the system, different responses, debates, and views have been voiced by members of society. Because the implementation has resulted in higher costs for products and services initially, and because this has resulted in an increased burden of tax on people, some of them supported it, while others offered unfavorable feedbacks. This is because the implementation has resulted in higher prices. It was discovered that many individuals still had questions and did not comprehend GST. As a result, this research is being carried out to evaluate the level of knowledge and awareness that students have about the recently introduced GST. The sample size was determined by utilizing a convenience sampling approach and consisted of one hundred students. The primary data were gathered with the use of a standardized questionnaire. Data was gathered, and then using SPSS version 21.0 for windows, descriptive analysis, t-test analysis, and cluster analysis were used to analyses the data. According to the findings of the research, pupils do not possess sufficient understanding on a variety of aspects pertaining to GST. The vast majority of respondents have shown a lack of support for the recently adopted GST due to the widespread belief that it would lead to an increase in the cost of living, will not be user pleasant, and will drive up the price of products.

Keywords: *Goods and Services Tax (GST), Awareness, Knowledge, Perception*

I. INTRODUCTION

The Goods and Services Tax, often known as GST, is poised to have a significant impact on the economy of India. The Goods and Services Tax (GST) is not only a new tax; rather, it will be one of the most significant forces in bringing about change in the manner in which business is conducted in India. The introduction will have an impact not only on the operational procedures that are now in place inside the organization, but also on how companies function within the unified national market. It is anticipated that the Goods and Services Tax (GST) would remove the cascading impact of taxes, raise the gross domestic product of the economy, and lower prices. In India, the federal government and individual state governments each levied their own

unique indirect taxes on a variety of commodities and services. The Goods and Services Tax (GST) consolidated all of these different levies into a single tax that offered streamlined Input Tax Credit and was levied on both products and services. Because it would eliminate the influence of tax on tax and allow smooth credit, it is anticipated that it will result in a decrease in prices and, as a result, the inflation rate. It is anticipated that this would result in financial gain for the nation. The Goods and Services Tax (GST) would make exports from India more competitive and make India a more attractive location for foreign investment.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Since the Goods and Services Tax (GST) was just implemented in India on July 1, 2017, there is not nearly as much written about it as there should be since it is still a relatively new problem. Prior to the actual introduction of the GST, there were a number of preliminary studies conducted on it.

According to the results of Saira, Zariyawati, and Yoke-(2010) May's research, a significant number of Malaysians do not have a high degree of trust in the government in regards to GST.

Palil and Ibrahim (2012) were able to gather a complete overview of the preparedness, views, and acceptability of GST among consumers. It was determined that people's consumption patterns will shift noticeably as a result of the introduction of GST.

Lau, Tam, and Heng (2013) examined the impact of the goods and services tax (GST) on the Malaysian economy and compared it to the present tax structure in the country. As a result of consumers bringing forward future purchases to avoid paying GST, it was discovered that quarterly earnings previous to the full introduction of GST showed faster increase in spending.

According to the findings of a research that was carried out by Abdullah, Idrus, and Mehat (2013), more than half of the people who responded to the survey do not have a clear understanding regarding GST since the announcement was made on the introduction of it. This is evident from the questions that were asked in the poll, which included inquiries on the rate of GST, the categories of goods that are exempt from GST, and other similar topics. According to the findings of a research that was carried out by Shamsuddin and colleagues (2014), there was a low degree of knowledge about the introduction of GST in Malaysia. Many people in Malaysia are still unsure about the implementation of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) because they do not comprehend the rationale that behind the introduction of this new tax system.

Ishak et al. (2015) conducted research to determine how students in Malaysia felt about the recently introduced Goods and Services Tax (GST), which went into effect on April 1, 2015. An examination of the students' levels of satisfaction was used to gauge their perceptions. After collecting primary data from 242 students at International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM) in the form of a questionnaire survey, the data were then analyzed using SPSS. The outcome shown that the vast majority of the pupils do not concur with the procedures that were used to carry out the GST.

III. PROBLEM STATEMENT

It is believed that the Goods and Services Tax (GST) would be one of the measures that will be taken in order to make India a nation that has a tax system that is comprehensive, efficient, and transparent. It has been shown that the Goods and Services Tax (GST) is one of the most effective tax systems ever adopted in a variety of nations. The government is continuing its efforts to educate the public on the Goods and Services Tax (GST) in an effort to reduce the level of uncertainty that exists. People often bring up the Goods and Services Tax (GST) as a topic of conversation in their day-to-day lives. It is essential to determine whether or not future generations, particularly students attending higher education institutions, are well informed with information connected to their roles as the nation's future human resources and whether or not taxation issues which affect their daily lives are fully known to them. In their study on the implementation of new tax reform in Malaysia, Mansor and Illias (2013) emphasized how important it is to provide students and graduates of higher education institutions with sufficient knowledge on taxation in order to ensure the successful implementation of the goods and services tax (GST). In their research, Shaari et al. (2015) focused on GST awareness among higher education students. They demonstrated that despite the fact that students were aware of the government's intention to introduce GST, they still had little information regarding to it. This article examines the understanding and perception of the Goods and Services Tax (GST), particularly among students at the undergraduate and postgraduate levels.

IV. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The study aims to achieve the following objectives:

- To assess the student’s knowledge on the various provisions of GST
- To study the student’s perception on GST
- To provide suggestions based on the findings of the study.

V. HYPOTHESIS

Students are more likely to respect the tax system if they have knowledge about the changes that have been made to it, leading to an increase in both understanding and compliance when they have this knowledge. For this reason, it is essential for students to have a solid understanding of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) in order to have a favorable perception and outlook of the recently implemented tax system. The hypothesis that may be drawn from this is as follows:

Ho1: Students have adequate knowledge or understanding of various aspect of GST.

Ho2: All the students perceive positive impact of GST on economy

VI. RESARCH METHODOLOGY

The current investigation makes use of both primary and secondary sources of information. Data from secondary sources, such as research papers, online articles, print publications, and newspapers, were collected. For the purposes of the research, primary data was gathered via the use of a structured questionnaire to get information on the students' levels of knowledge and perception of the recently introduced GST. Convenience sampling was used for this purpose. The questionnaire was broken up into three distinct sections. The first

section, labelled "A," included demographic data such as gender and educational attainment. In Section B, you'll find a series of questions that test your knowledge and comprehension of many aspects of the GST, such as the differentiated tax rate, the input tax credit, the composition system, and a few more. To determine how they felt about the Goods and Services Tax (GST), respondents were asked Likert-type questions in Section C. The scale ran from 1 (strongly agree) to 5 (strongly disagree). A questionnaire was sent to 250 students, and of them, only 100 students properly filled it out and returned it. Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 21.0 for Windows was used in order to gather the data and conduct the following analyses, which included descriptive analysis and cluster analysis.

VII. DATA ANALYSIS

A. Descriptive Analysis

The initial stage in any data analysis process is doing descriptive statistics. This kind of statistics serves as a system that will aid in explaining or summarizing the data that has been gathered, and its goal is to do this task (Chua, 2014). Using descriptive statistics, the researcher is able to properly characterize a large amount of data using just a small number of indices. The sample includes two hundred students who participated in the survey as responders. As can be seen in the following table, the frequency distributions for the respondents' gender and education were successfully acquired.

Table 1. Demographic Profile of Students

Demographic Profile			
Gender		Frequency	Percent
	Male	33	33
	Female	67	67
Education			
	Under Graduate	55	55
	Post Graduate	45	45

The gender distribution of the respondents showed that the majority of them are female students, as the proportion of female students to the total was 67 percent, while the proportion of male students to the total was only 33 percent. In terms of the amount of education they had obtained up to that point, 55 percent of them were undergraduate students and the remaining 45 percent were postgraduate students.

B. T-test ANAYSIS

The second component of the questionnaire consisted of nine questions, each of which asked about a different specific provision of GST.

The responses of the participants were compiled in Table 2, which shows how well they comprehend certain GST laws. It is evident from the table that students are not ignorant of the many different provisions of GST. It was discovered that respondents had knowledge of differential tax rates, with the mean score being the lowest possible at 1.02 and the standard deviation being 0.14. Respondents had a good understanding of the

threshold limit for GST registration (mean 1.18, standard deviation 0.385), which was then followed by the composition scheme for small businesses (mean 1.23, Std. dev. 0.422). Their mean scores ranged from 1.32 to 1.36, indicating that many students still lacked knowledge on the provisions of taxable and non-taxable supplies, the method of reverse charging, the site of supply, and the time of delivery. The provision involving the value of the supply of goods and services had the highest score (mean of 1.52, standard deviation of 0.501), showing that almost half of the students do not have knowledge about this provision.

Table 2. Sample Statistic of Students Knowledge towards GST

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Limit for registration	100	1.18	.385	.027
Tax rate	100	1.02	.140	.010
Taxable - Nontaxable	100	1.32	.489	.035
Input Tax Credit	100	1.27	.442	.031
Time of Supply	100	1.36	.481	.034
Value of Supply	100	1.52	.501	.035
Place of Supply	100	1.33	.470	.033
Composition Scheme	100	1.23	.422	.030
Reverse Charge	100	1.32	.468	.033

Table 3. One-Sample Test

	Test Value = 1					
	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Limit for registration	6.609	199	.000	.180	.13	.23
Different Tax rate	2.015	199	.045	.020	.00	.04
Taxable -Nontaxable	9.261	199	.000	.320	.25	.39
Input Tax Credit	8.470	199	.000	.265	.20	.33
Time of Supply	10.580	199	.000	.360	.29	.43
Value of Supply	14.683	199	.000	.520	.45	.59
Place of Supply	9.789	199	.000	.325	.26	.39
Composition Scheme	7.710	199	.000	.230	.17	.29
Reverse Charge	9.677	199	.000	.320	.25	.39

Based on the data shown in the table above, it was discovered that, with the exception of the differentiated

tax rate, there was a considerable disparity in the distribution of the main provisions of GST in relation to their mean scores. In this instance, the hypothesis is disproved, which suggests that the pupils do not have sufficient knowledge or comprehension of the numerous sections of GST. The degree of knowledge that was found to be the highest was in relation to differential tax rates, and this was followed by awareness of the threshold limit for registration under GST. The respondents, on the other hand, have a lower level of knowledge or comprehension about provisions such as taxable and non-taxable supplies, the mechanism for the reverse charge, the location of supply, the time of supply, and the value of supply. According to the findings as a whole, the level of knowledge that students have about GST is not very high. As, this is going to be the most important factor in determining whether or not the GST is successfully implemented, steps need to be done to raise their understanding of it.

C. CLUSTER ANALYSIS

Cluster analysis is a statistical approach that is used to divide cases (individuals or objects) into homogenous groupings called clusters based on responses to variables. These clusters are determined by the similarities between the instances (Shaw, Kobrin, Packman & Schmidt, 2009). The objects (or examples, observations) that belong to a certain cluster have a lot in common with one another, but they are substantially different from the objects that don't belong to that cluster (Reddy & Ussenaiah, 2012).

There are three different methods for clustering data: the two-step, k-means, and hierarchical approaches. The number of clusters that will be employed is determined by the K-means clustering algorithm, and the technique may be used to datasets ranging from modest to large in size. An approach known as cluster analysis was used, with each of the fifteen questions being used to categories the respondents according to how they felt about the goods and services tax. Table 4 shows the distribution of the clusters that developed between the two different perceptions that emerged among the students.

The Initial Cluster Centers table presents the results of the k-means clustering method's initial stage, which is to locate the k centers.

Table 4. Initial Cluster Centers

	Cluster	
	1	2
Zscore: Move to developed Nation	1.43144	-1.25671
Zscore: Cascading Effect	-1.12533	.21435
Zscore: Mechanism	.88861	-2.57352
Zscore: Dual Mode	-.39045	-.39045
Zscore: Efficient & transparent	2.13239	-1.67545
Zscore: More revenue	.94127	-1.34059
Zscore: Positive Impact	-.37681	-.37681
Zscore: Reduce Tax	1.63147	-.50816
Zscore: Boon for country	1.98824	-1.79889

Zscore: Beneficial	1.82436	-1.50274
Zscore: Increase Cost of Living	-.38051	-.38051
Zscore: Increased Hardship	-.24378	-1.23881
Zscore: Non-User Friendly	-1.74078	2.00283
Zscore: Increased Price	-.34672	.59036
Zscore: Confusion	-1.37068	-.27414

The number of iterations that were sufficient to ensure that the cluster centres did not shift appreciably is shown in the table titled "Iteration History."

Table 5. Iteration History a

Iteration	Change in Cluster Centers	
	1	2
1	3.845	4.031
2	.229	.168
3	.069	.050
4	.218	.144
5	.098	.062
6	.000	.000

The final cluster centers are broken down into their constituent variables in the following table. Students in Cluster 1 have a tendency to be in favor of the implementation of the Goods and Services Tax (GST), as shown by higher values above the mean for all of the aforementioned variables. These students see the GST as a step toward developing a developed nation, having a well-defined mechanism, having an efficient and transparent tax system, reducing the tax burden, and being a boon for the country. Students in Cluster 2 have a tendency to be opposed to the implementation of GST. This is because the students in this cluster believe that the implementation of GST will result in an increase in the cost of living, will not be user friendly, and will result in an increase in the price of goods, as evidenced by higher mean values for the aforementioned variables.

Table 6. Final Cluster Centers

	Cluster	
	1	2
Zscore: Move to developed Nation	.50093	-.32027
Zscore: Cascading Effect	.30022	-.19195
Zscore: Mechanism	.54832	-.35056
Zscore: Dual Mode	.11861	-.07583
Zscore: Efficient & transparent	.65156	-.41657
Zscore: More revenue	.25378	-.16225
Zscore: Positive Impact	.33273	-.21273
Zscore: Reduce Tax	.65766	-.42047
Zscore: Boon for country	.58021	-.37095
Zscore: Beneficial	.47361	-.30280
Zscore: Increase Cost of Living	-.50965	.32584
Zscore: Increased Hardship	.12616	-.08066
Zscore: Non-User Friendly	-.42892	.27422
Zscore: Increased Price	-.40679	.26008
Zscore: Confusion	-.11950	.07640

The table with the results of the ANOVA analysis will show you which factors contribute the most to your cluster solution. When trying to differentiate across clusters, the variables that have the largest mean square errors are the least helpful. For instance, dual model acceptability, confusion, and greater hardship owing to GST had the largest mean square errors and the lowest F statistics; hence, these three factors were not as useful as the other variables in constructing and discriminating clusters as the other variables were. It is plain to see that the means of the clustering variables for the majority of the variables vary considerably between the two clusters. As a result, the null hypothesis has been refuted, which indicates that the majority of students do not believe that GST will have a favorable influence on them.

Table 7. ANOVA

	Cluster		Error		F	Sig.
	Mean Square	df	Mean Square	df		
Zscore: Move to developed Nation	32.086	1	.843	198	38.062	.000
Zscore: Cascading Effect	11.525	1	.947	198	12.173	.001
Zscore: Mechanism	38.444	1	.811	198	47.410	.000
Zscore: Dual Mode	1.799	1	.996	198	1.806	.180
Zscore: Efficient & transparent	54.285	1	.731	198	74.273	.000
Zscore: More revenue	8.236	1	.963	198	8.548	.004
Zscore: Positive Impact	14.156	1	.934	198	15.163	.000
Zscore: Reduce Tax	55.306	1	.726	198	76.207	.000
Zscore: Boon for country	43.046	1	.788	198	54.651	.000
Zscore: Beneficial	28.682	1	.860	198	33.344	.000
Zscore: Increase Cost of Living	33.213	1	.837	198	39.666	.000
Zscore: Increased Hardship	2.035	1	.995	198	2.046	.154
Zscore: Non-User Friendly	23.524	1	.886	198	26.543	.000
Zscore: Increased Price	21.159	1	.898	198	23.558	.000
Zscore: Confusion	1.826	1	.996	198	1.834	.177

The distribution of cases into clusters was represented by the Number of Cases column in each Cluster table. A significant number of instances, namely 122, were placed in the second cluster, which was composed of respondents who did not provide help.

VIII. CONCLUSION

Since the announcement that the government will begin implementing GST on July 1, 2017, one of the most popular subjects of conversation among Indians has been the Goods and Services Tax (GST). It has been shown that the Goods and Services Tax (GST) is one of the finest tax systems that different countries have ever embraced. It is believed that introducing a GST would result in more income for the country, which will eventually translate into increased benefits for its residents. On the other hand, this requires the collaboration and dedication of a wide variety of stakeholders. Students are, in point of fact, very valuable to our nation, and they are going to be its future leaders.

The findings of this study are comparable to those of another study (Shaari, Ali, and Ismail, 2015) that also focused on GST awareness among higher education students. That study discovered that although students were aware of the decision by the government to implement GST, they still have limited knowledge pertaining to this subject matter. The findings of this study are parallel to those of the study by Shaari, Ali, and Ismail (2015). Even though the majority of students have had the provisions of GST taught to them as part of their curriculum, they still do not have a clear understanding of the many aspects of GST and how it affects the

economy. According to the findings of Mansor and Illias (2013)' research, students and graduates of higher education institutions should be provided with enough and broader understanding of GST in order to assure favourable receptions of GST implementation.

According to the results of the research, pupils do not have sufficient knowledge or grasp of the numerous requirements of GST. Students have sufficient knowledge on the differential tax rate and the threshold limit for registration under GST. On the other hand, responders do not have a good grasp of the provisions, such as taxable and non-taxable supplies, the mechanism for the reverse charge, the site of supply, the time of supply, and the value of supply. According to the findings as a whole, the level of knowledge that students have about GST is not very high. In addition, it has been shown that not one single student has a favourable attitude toward the recently implemented GST. The respondents were categorised according to their views on whether or not the Goods and Services Tax (GST) was a step toward developing a developed nation, whether or not it had a well-defined mechanism, whether or not it was an effective and transparent tax system, whether or not it reduced the tax burden, whether or not it was a boon for the country, whether or not it increased the cost of living, whether or not it was user friendly, Students in cluster 1 had the perception that the Goods and Services Tax (GST) would lead to an increase in the cost of living, that it would not be user friendly, and that it would increase the price of goods. Students in cluster 2 had the perception that the GST would lead to an increase in the cost of living, that it would not be user friendly, and that it would increase the price of goods. Students in cluster 1 had the perception that the GST would move the nation toward a developed nation, have a well-defined mechanism,

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