

An Empirical Study on Measuring Awareness of Cloud Accounting

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Abstract: *The accounting plays an important role in the success or failure of any business and it has been evolved with the need of time, technology and business. Nowadays human beings are surrounded by machines because machines and technologies make their work easier. In accounting field the latest technological trend is of cloud accounting. In very simple words cloud accounting means application of cloud computing in accounting function of business, which means internet based online accounting. Cloud accounting provides cost saving, time saving, real time financial reporting, collaboration in accounting, security of data, extended role of accountant, automatic updates, backup, restoration, and maintain the focus and efforts of business on main operating activities of business. Even after having so many reasons to shift from traditional accounting to the cloud accounting system, the cloud accounting is not necessarily used by all because of the lack of awareness among the potential users and professionals of the field. Therefore the study focused on awareness of cloud accounting among accounting professionals and practitioners. To meet the objective the data collected through primary sources using survey design. The study concludes that 48% of respondents are aware of relevant emerging concept.*

Keywords: Cloud Accounting, Professionals, Awareness, Ahmedabad City.

1. Introduction

The money considered as a life blood of any business as it is the most necessitous part of all the functions of a business. To manage this blood in business accordingly accounting is must. It identifies, records, measures, classify, verify, summarize and communicate all the day to day monetary transactions of business. The accounting has evolved with the need of time, technology and business. Today's accounting system is the result of many eminent peoples contribution throughout years. Today's era is of technology. Nowadays human beings are surrounded by machines because machines and technologies make their work easier. Accordingly when technology is applied in accounting system, it makes accounting system progressively easier. Which results into time saving, cost saving, lower labour, accurate reporting, precise and critical decision making. One of the latest technology used in accounting is cloud computing. Cloud accounting means application of cloud computing in accounting system.

Cloud accounting means the accounting software is hosted on remote servers, similar to the SaaS (Software as a Service) business model. Data is securely sent and stored into "the cloud," where it is processed and returned to the user. It is similar to traditional, on-premises, or self-install software based computerized accounting, in simple words it is the internet based online accounting. The reasons which accelerated use of cloud accounting are as follows:

Reduced Costs: In a cloud-based system, businesses do not make a lump-sum purchase of a program, or buy and set up a server to host it. This minimizes IT professional fees and

helps to avoid installation fees altogether. As accounting rules and tax regulations change, one won't have to purchase and install updates. Instead, the monthly or annual subscription cost includes the updating cost, and these are completed by the provider as needed.

Real time Financial Information: The adoption of cloud accounting solutions will facilitate not just daily but minute by minute financial position of the enterprise. Further, this information can be accessed from anywhere at any time and on any device which is connected with internet. The current efficiency of the business can be ascertained by the business owner at any time which would help them in taking decisions related to the business at an appropriate time.

Reduced Capital Expenditures: Large capital investments can be minimized altogether in favor of small monthly payments. Cloud accounting converts capital expenditure into revenue expenditure for accounting function.

Linking Bank Account: The bank account of the business can be linked with the cloud accounting solution. This functionality automatically imports your bank statements into your cloud based software, you are able to memories repeating transactions and the software will automatically match customer receipts and supplier payments to invoices raised. This results in a significant time saving in data entry and in reconciliation of your bank accounts. The memorization functionality also ensures the data is coded to the correct accounts.

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Collaboration in Accounting: No more backing up files and sending them to your accountant. Third parties can access your data with your authorization, which is then saving you time. Several users can access your file at once on most of the cloud based products. This means that your staff can work simultaneously or your accountant can access your file and assist you with a query you may be having all in real time. Most importantly with your data being up to date this allows for real time collaboration with your accountant to assist making business decisions based on current and reliable data.

Elasticity in Scale: Businesses that have peak seasons or different seasonal staffing demands can benefit from cloud services by letting them temporarily dial up more capacity for the seasonal business peaks, without purchasing the hardware or software that would otherwise go unused during the slower times of the year. Cloud accounting software has the ability to grow and shrink capacity with demand.

Security of Financial Information: Cloud accounting is also important, because it keeps all financial information secured. A person may think- by storing on one desktop, will keep the data safe, but this is likely to cause problems in the long run. Not only might there be someone in the workplace looking to steal the financial information, but also the personal desktop may become susceptible to a virus and there may be no way to recover it. If all the financial records are stored via the Internet, however, there is no matter of loss even if the desktop and hard drive files were deleted. After all, they are still accessible via cloud.

Automatic Data Back Up and Restoration: Cloud accounting allows automatic data backup, removing the possibility of forgetting to do it, and reducing the opportunity to make human errors. Instead, accounting information is backed up automatically and saved to an offsite location. This helps secure the information in the event of a break-in, fire, or other incident that could put sensitive and important information at risk.

Maintaining Focus on the Operating Activity: Businesses are realizing that running an IT department is not their core competency, they are better lawyers, doctors or plumbers. Buying cloud services, either in the form of a single application or their entire data center is often more cost effective, more reliable and lets them reallocate their limited resources to growing their business. Cloud accounting enables the management and human resources of the company to focus on the main operational activity of the business to maximize the profit and shareholders wealth.

Extended Role of Accountant: The automation of accounting data in cloud accounting has shifted the focus of accountants work from being that of a book keeper to be the one who analyses and interprets the financial information in such a way that it is helpful to the management and the users of the information in taking important decisions. As a result, the modern era of cloud accounting, an accountant is made a

participant in the management decision making process.

Experts Accounting Professional: Cloud services can help to maintain an efficient technology staff, outsourcing key technical specializations or technology staff, with cloud accounting solution. The expert of accounting can handle the accounting function from anywhere at any time with internet connection and it makes sense for the business to outsource or hire an accounting expert from anywhere in the world for efficient handling of accounting function.

There are so many reasons for which cloud accounting can be used but there are also certain risks and drawbacks to the use of cloud accounting. It can be possible that there is a loss of sensitive and confidential data, laws and regulations can be broken, and dependency on service provider, divergent opinion in collaboration of accounting can be possible which are harmful to the health of an organization.

The effectiveness of cloud accounting based on the cloud service providers. Some of the major service providers of cloud accounting solution are Online QuickBook, Fresh Book, Zoho One, Wave Accounting, Xero Accounting, Sage Accounting these are more suitable for small and medium sized business enterprises. This cloud-based software allows businesses to collaborate with colleagues, bookkeeper, or accountant, to log in simultaneously and work directly with company's data online. For this purpose, access privileges are created when users are added and the extent to which they have the authority to access and manage data is also determined. The type of collaboration accounting service provided by service provider may be different from other service providers. Some of the service providers have limited number of users while some may have no limit for number of users that can have access to and manage accounting function, while some may charge additional cost to add a user. Before selecting any accounting solution, a person should ask the service provider about the security issues, features, user interface, scalability, hidden costs, exit option and post-sales support and if at all are these suitable to the needs of an organization.

The decision of selecting accounting solution should be taken with due caution because accounting is the most important function in business which affects all the other area of business, and it has great influence on operation & working of an organization. The success of any business is highly influenced of how efficiently accounting function is handled.

Even after having so many reasons to shift from traditional accounting to the cloud accounting system, the cloud accounting is not necessarily used by all because of the lack of awareness among the potential users and professionals of the field. Therefore the study focused on awareness of cloud accounting among accounting professionals and practitioners.

2. Literature Review

Molnar & Schechter (2006)^[1] undertook a theoretical study which focused on potential security impacts of transitioning to cloud hosted infrastructure by surveying the security costs and benefits of using cloud-hosted infrastructure (shared infrastructure). They focused on security costs which explore new threats and classified them as technological, contractual, jurisdictional, and organizational. They also surveyed potential countermeasures to address these threats and classified them into contractual or procedural as technological. According to them transitioning to a cloud hosted infrastructure might benefits in some security measures which have high up-front costs, which may become affordable when amortized at cloud scale.

Bhat (2013)^[2] undertook a study on adoption of cloud computing by Indian SMEs and its implications using theory of transaction cost economies. The study aims to inform policy making on some aspects specific to SMEs on cloud computing adoption in India. Therefore the study compared various dimensions of the transaction costs economies (Asset specificity, Uncertainty, Frequency, and Laws and regulations) of cloud computing with the inhibitors of IT adoption by SMEs and identified the institutional factors which encourage cloud adoption by SMEs. The study resulted in three forms of institutions to support SMEs adoption of cloud computing which are 1. Markets – to encourage a market for software products and SaaS for SMEs with appropriate incentives for players and to encourage domestic IT outsourcing to cater to the IT service requirements of SMEs. 2. Public Ordering – regulatory body which can regulate the cloud providers and enforce cloud contracts. 3. Private Ordering – an industry body which can create awareness and promote cloud adoption among SMEs, and facilitate aggregation of cloud requirements and negotiate contracts with CSPs.

Stieninger et al. (2014)^[3] undertook a study for reconceptualization and operationalization of widely accepted factors on technology adoption in relation to cloud computing. They considered theories of Rogers' DOI (Diffusion of Innovation) Theory and Davis' TAM (Technology Acceptance model), based on these theories the study explored reconceptualization and operationalization of main factors for use in the context of cloud computing which provided a rigorous basis for model and theory development. They also explored the factors influencing intended and actual usage of cloud services by undertaking reconceptualization and operationalization of five factors that are compatibility, relative advantage, complexity, image, security & trust.

Dimitriu & Matei (2014)^[4] undertook a theoretical study which highlighted the usefulness and downsides of cloud accounting software to the accounting professionals. They found that technology can empower accountant by making their work easier and more effective. They also found that business can also gain from the use of cloud accounting solutions in various areas such as security, expenses and collaboration.

Ebenezer et al. (2014)^[5] undertook a study for applicability of cloud computing in the accounting function and its related positive effects on businesses with reference to Ghanaian perspective by knowing accountants and accounting students awareness & opinion about cloud accounting. They found that the accountants in Ghana who knows about cloud computing express that some risks are associated while performing accounting function in cloud. They considered security of the data as the major drawback of cloud computing because of the fact that financial information is confidential, and cloud accounting still be applied successfully for accounting purposes. They are of the opinion that in every organization financial information is vital for making every meaningful important decision of the business and if financial information is provided with all timeliness and speed, decision making is enhanced in the whole organization, which is feasible through cloud accounting. They suggested that organizations with financial and technical resources can take advantage of this and provide cloud services to local businesses.

Mahalakshmi (2017)^[6] undertook a study among 30 Chartered Accountants and 30 Post Graduate Accounting Teachers in Bangalore city and found that only 6.67% Chartered Accountants and 6.67% Post Graduate Accounting Teachers has strong level of awareness, while 13.33% Chartered Accountants and 33.33% Post Graduate Accounting Teachers doesn't know about cloud accounting. The study concluded that there was no significant difference in awareness of cloud accounting between Chartered Accountants and Post Graduate Teachers teaching Accounting Subject.

Research Gap:

Numerous studies on cloud computing technology were undertaken in relation to adoption of cloud computing technology by businesses and its associated costs, benefits, digital security and privacy issues, measures for security solution, and suitability with technology are analyzed with reference to cloud computing. However, very few studies has been done in the field of cloud accounting and its future aspects, it is the most emerging and untouched area in the field of accounting.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Problem Statement

The only thing that remains constant is change and it seems that in the field of accounting that change is cloud accounting in the feasible future, so professionals of the field has to learn to embrace it. The core objective of the study is to measure the awareness of cloud accounting among accounting professionals & practitioners as there are very few literature available on cloud accounting in India and especially in Ahmedabad city.

3.2 Objectives of the Study

1. To measure the awareness of cloud accounting among accounting professionals & practitioners.
2. To identify the relationship between respondents demographical variables and awareness of cloud accounting.

3.3 Significance of the Study

1. The study gives better understanding of cloud accounting.
2. The study is helpful to the cloud service providers to target their customers.
3. The study is helpful to the accounting professionals to understand the trend of cloud accounting.

3.4 Hypotheses

H_{0.1}: There is no association between Gender and Awareness of cloud accounting.

H_{1.1}: There is an association between Gender and Awareness of cloud accounting.

H_{0.2}: There is no association between Age and Awareness of cloud accounting.

H_{1.2}: There is an association between Age and Awareness of cloud accounting.

H_{0.3}: There is no association between Educational Qualification and Awareness of cloud accounting.

H_{1.3}: There is an association between Educational Qualification and Awareness of cloud accounting.

H_{0.4}: There is no association between Experience and Awareness of cloud accounting.

H_{1.4}: There is an association between Experience and Awareness of cloud accounting.

H_{0.5}: There is no association between City and Awareness of cloud accounting.

H_{1.5}: There is an association between City and Awareness of cloud accounting.

3.5 Research Design

A descriptive research design has been used to identify various categories of awareness of cloud accounting among accounting professionals & practitioners. To meet this core objective of the study a qualitative approach to research is applied by using survey design among target sample. For this study a questionnaire in Google form is prepared & forwarded to 18,000 target respondents by using purposive sampling through E-mail & Social Media during January 2018 to June 2018. The responses on 151 questionnaires were received & recorded. To make data more meaningful and understandable the chi-square test is applied.

3.6 Sampling Design

The target population for the study is accounting professionals & practitioners. As the total population is

unknown non-probability sampling method was used for sample selection. For collecting data a survey study is undertaken and a questionnaire in Google form is prepared and forwarded to 18,000 target respondents through E-mail and Social Media by using purposive sampling design. In total 151 responses were received & recorded, which includes 66 Auditors & Practitioner CA, 47 Accountants and 38 other Accounting Professionals & Practitioners.

3.7 Period of the Study

The period of the study is ranging from January to June 2018

3.8 Sources of the data

The study is based on the data collected from primary sources by using survey design.

3.9 Research Tool

The chi-square test for independence, also called Pearson's chi-square test or the chi-square test of association, is used to discover the relationship between two categorical variables i.e. demographical variables and awareness of cloud accounting. To meet the objective of the study and to make collected raw data more meaningful and understandable the chi-square test is run in IBM SPSS Statistics 20.

3.10 Limitations of the Study

1. The results of the study may not be completely generalizable on whole population because the sample was restricted to 151 respondents only.
2. The data was collected within the limited period of time from January to June 2018.
3. The data is collected by using purposive sampling and it has certain limitations the same are applicable to the study.

4. Data Analysis

The collected data (raw data) is coded in the excel sheet and with the help of excel formulas and SPSS crosstab the collected data is summarized and presented in frequency tables and charts. To present data in more meaningful and understandable format, the study made use chi-square for statistical analysis with IBM SPSS Statistics 20 package.

The awareness among APP was determined by dividing the APP in five categories based on their knowledge and understanding about cloud accounting. The first category labeled as "NH-Never Heard" which indicates that the person is first time listening about cloud accounting. The second category labeled as "HO-Heard of" which indicates that the person had heard about cloud accounting but doesn't know anything more about it. The third category is labeled as "BK-Basically Known" which indicates that the person know that what is cloud accounting but doesn't know that how it works and how to operate accounting function in cloud. The fourth category labeled as "FK-Fairly Known" which indicates that the person known that what cloud accounting is and how it

works but doesn't know how to operate accounting function in cloud. The fifth category labeled as "SK-Strongly Known" which indicates that the person know that what is cloud accounting and how it works, with the knowledge of how to operate accounting function in cloud.

4.1 Influence of Gender on Awareness

Table 1: Relationship between Gender & Awareness

Gender	Awareness (COA) Among Accounting Professional & Practitioners					Total
	NH	HO	BK	FK	SK	
Male	36	24	16	26	26	128
Female	9	10	1	0	3	23
Total	45	34	17	26	29	151

Analysis:

The above table presents awareness of cloud accounting among accounting professional and practitioners. It also presents that out of 151 APP there were 128 Male and 23 Female. The table also indicates that out of 128 Male APP there were 36 (28.1%) who had "Never Heard", 24 (18.8%) who had "Heard of", 16 (12.5%) who had "Basically Known", 26 (20.3%) who had "Fairly Known", and 26 (20.3%) who had "Strongly Known" category of awareness. The table also indicates that out of 23 Female APP there were 9 (39.1%) who had "Never Heard", 10 (43.5%) who had "Heard of", 1 (4.3%) who had "Basically Known", 0 (0%) who had "Fairly Known", and 3(13%) who had "Strongly Known" category of awareness. In total 151 APP includes 45 (29.8%) who had "Never Heard", 34 (22.5%) who had "Heard of", 17 (11.3%) who had "Basically Known", 26 (17.2%) who had "Fairly Known", and 29(19.2%) who had "Strongly Known" category of awareness about cloud accounting.



Figure 1: Awareness among Male & Female APP

Statistical Test:

Chi-square calculated: 12.446

Degree of Freedom: 4

P – Value: 0.014

Spearman's Correlation: -0.181

The test result presents p-value of 0.014 which is less than 0.05 which indicates that $H_{0.1}$ is rejected which means there is an association between Gender and Categories of awareness.

Remarks:

- From this analysis it is observed that professional of the filed are 45% to 50% aware with emerging and relevant concept.
- The proportion of lack of awareness in female respondents is high against the male respondents.
- The test result indicates that here is an association between Gender and Awareness of cloud accounting.

4.2 Influence of Age on Awareness

Table 2: Relationship between Age & Awareness

Age	Awareness (COA) Among Accounting Professional & Practitioners					Total
	NH	HO	BK	FK	SK	
24 or below	14	4	3	2	2	25
25 - 34	19	16	5	10	12	62
35 - 44	5	7	5	3	10	30
45 - 54	5	4	1	4	4	18
55 - 64	2	2	3	5	1	13
65 or above	0	1	0	2	0	3
Total	45	34	17	26	29	151

Analysis:

The above table presents awareness of cloud accounting among accounting professional and practitioners. It also presents that out of 151 APP there were 25 who are in age group of 24 or below, 62 who are in the age group of 25 – 34, 30 who are in the age group of 35 – 44, 18 who are in the age group of 45 – 54, 13 who are in the age group of 55 – 64, 3 who are in the age group of 65 or above. The table also indicates that in the age group of 24 or below out of 25 APP there were 14 (56%) who had "Never Heard", 4 (16%) who had "Heard of", 3 (12%) who had "Basically Known", 2 (8%) who had "Fairly Known", and 2 (8%) who had "Strongly Known" category of awareness. The table also indicates that in the age group of 25 – 34 out of 62 APP there were 19 (30.6%) who had "Never Heard", 16 (25.8%) who had "Heard of", 5 (8.1%) who had "Basically Known", 10 (16.1%) who had "Fairly Known", and 19.4 (8%) who had "Strongly Known" category of awareness. The table also indicates that in the age group of 35 – 44 out of 30 APP there were 5 (16.7%) who had "Never Heard", 7 (23.3%) who had "Heard of", 5 (16.7%) who had "Basically Known", 3 (10%) who had "Fairly Known", and 10 (33.3%) who had "Strongly Known" category of awareness. The table also indicates that in the age group of 45 – 54 out of 18 APP there were 5 (27.8%) who had "Never Heard", 4 (22.2%) who had "Heard of", 1 (5.6%) who had "Basically Known", 4 (22.2%) who had "Fairly Known", and 4 (22.2%) who had "Strongly Known" category of awareness. The table also indicates that in the age group of 55 – 64 out of 13 APP there were 2 (15.4%) who had "Never Heard", 2 (15.4%) who had "Heard of", 3 (23.1%) who had "Basically Known", 5 (38.5%) who had "Fairly Known", and 1 (7.7%) who had "Strongly Known" category of awareness. The table also indicates that in the age group of 65 or above out of 3 APP there were 0

(0%) who had “Never Heard”, 1 (33.3%) who had “Heard of”, 0 (0%) who had “Basically Known”, 2 (66.7%) who had “Fairly Known”, and 0 (0%) who had “Strongly Known” category of awareness.

Statistical Test:

Chi-square calculated: 30.813

Degree of Freedom: 20

P – Value: 0.058

Spearman’s Correlation: 0.243

The test result presents that p-value is 0.058 which is greater than 0.05 which indicates that the study fails to reject $H_{0.2}$ which means there is no association between Age and Awareness of cloud accounting.

Remarks:

- From this analysis it is observed that the proportion of lack of awareness in the respondents who are in the age group of 24 or below is high against the respondents from all other age group.
- The proportion of awareness in the respondents who are in the age group of 55 -64 is high against the respondents from all other age group.
- The study found that there is no association between Age and Awareness.

4.3 Influence of Educational Qualification on Awareness

Table 3: Relationship between Educational Qualification & Awareness

Educational Qualification	Categories of Awareness (COA) Among Accounting Professional & Practitioners					Total
	NH	HO	BK	FK	SK	
CA	6	18	12	23	27	86
Other	39	16	5	3	2	65
Total	45	34	17	26	29	151

Analysis:

The above table presents awareness of cloud accounting among accounting professional and practitioners. It also presents that out of 151 APP there were 86 who have professional degree of CA and 65 who have other professional or graduate or master degree in accounting. The table also indicates that out of 86 who have professional degree of CA, there were 6 (7%) who had “Never Heard”, 18 (20.9%) who had “Heard of”, 12 (14%) who had “Basically Known”, 23 (26.7%) who had “Fairly Known”, and 27 (31.4%) who had “Strongly Known” category of awareness. The table also indicates that out of 65 who have other professional or graduate or master degree in accounting, there were 39 (60%) who had “Never Heard”, 16 (24.6%) who had “Heard of”, 5 (7.7%) who had “Basically Known”, 3 (4.6%) who had “Fairly Known”, and 29 (31.4%) who had “Strongly Known” category of awareness.



Figure 2: Awareness among APP who have professional degree of CA & who have other professional or graduate or master degree in accounting.

Statistical Test:

Chi-square calculated: 62.423

Degree of Freedom: 4

P – Value: 0.000

Spearman’s Correlation: -0.630

The test result presents that p-value is 0.000 which is less than 0.05 which indicates that $H_{0.3}$ is rejected which means there is an association between Educational Qualification and awareness of cloud accounting.

Remarks:

- From this analysis it is observed that those who have CA as a professional degree in accounting among them 72.1% has the awareness of cloud accounting while those who have any other graduate or post graduate or professional degree in accounting among them only 15.4% has the awareness of cloud accounting.
- The data analysis clearly indicates that the proportion of awareness of cloud accounting in APP with the CA as a professional degree is high as compare to APP with any other graduate or post graduate or professional degree in accounting.
- The test result indicates that there is an association between Educational Qualification and Awareness.

4.4 Influence of Experience on Awareness

Table 4: Relationship between Experience & Awareness

Experience	Categories of Awareness (COA) Among Accounting Professional & Practitioners					Total
	NH	HO	BK	FK	SK	
1 or less than 1	9	4	3	0	1	17
1 – 3	11	7	1	2	1	22
3 – 5	9	5	1	3	3	21
5 - 10	7	8	4	8	10	37
10 - 15	4	1	2	1	4	12
15 or more than 15	5	9	6	12	10	42
Total	45	34	17	26	29	151

Analysis:

The above table presents awareness of cloud accounting among accounting professional and practitioners. It also presents that out of 151 APP there were 17 who had experience of 1 or less than 1 year, 22 who had experience of 1 – 3 years, 21 who had experience of 3 – 5 years, 37 who had experience of 5 – 10 years, 12 who had experience of 10 – 15 years, 42 who had experience of 15 or more than 15 years. The table also indicates that out of 17 APP who had experience of 1 or less than 1 year, there were 9 (52.9%) who had “Never Heard”, 4 (23.5%) who had “Heard of”, 3 (17.6%) who had “Basically Known”, 0 (0%) who had “Fairly Known”, and 1 (5.9%) who had “Strongly Known” category of awareness. The table also indicates that out of 22 APP who had experience of 1 - 3 years, there were 11 (50%) who had “Never Heard”, 7 (31.8%) who had “Heard of”, 1 (4.5%) who had “Basically Known”, 2 (9.1%) who had “Fairly Known”, and 1 (4.5%) who had “Strongly Known” category of awareness. The table also indicates that out of 21 APP who had experience of 3 - 5 years, there were 9 (42.9%) who had “Never Heard”, 5 (23.8%) who had “Heard of”, 1 (4.8%) who had “Basically Known”, 3 (14.3%) who had “Fairly Known”, and 3 (14.3%) who had “Strongly Known” category of awareness. The table also indicates that out of 37 APP who had experience of 5 - 10 years, there were 7 (18.9%) who had “Never Heard”, 8 (21.6%) who had “Heard of”, 4 (10.8%) who had “Basically Known”, 8 (21.6%) who had “Fairly Known”, and 10 (27%) who had “Strongly Known” category of awareness. The table also indicates that out of 12 APP who had experience of 10 - 15 years, there were 4 (33.3%) who had “Never Heard”, 1 (8.3%) who had “Heard of”, 2 (16.7%) who had “Basically Known”, 1 (8.3%) who had “Fairly Known”, and 4 (33.3%) who had “Strongly Known” category of awareness. The table also indicates that out of 42 APP who had experience of 15 or more than 15 years, there were 5 (11.9%) who had “Never Heard”, 9 (21.4%) who had “Heard of”, 6 (14.3%) who had “Basically Known”, 12 (28.6%) who had “Fairly Known”, and 29 (19.2%) who had “Strongly Known” category of awareness.

Statistical Test:

Chi-square calculated: 33.396
 Degree of Freedom: 20
 P – Value: 0.031
 Spearman’s Correlation: 0.375

The test result presents that p-value is 0.031 which is less than 0.05 which indicates that $H_{0.4}$ is rejected which means there is an association between Experience and awareness of cloud accounting.

Remarks:

- From this analysis it is observed that the respondents those who have experience of 15 or more than 15 years among them 66.7% aware, while those who have experience of 1 to 3 years among them only 18.1% aware with the emerging and relevant concept.
- The proportion of lack of awareness in respondents who have less experience is high against the respondents who have more experience.
- The test result indicates that there is an association

between Experience and Awareness.

4.5 Influence of City on Awareness

Table 5: Relationship between City & Awareness

City	Categories of Awareness (COA) Among Accounting Professional & Practitioners					Total
	NH	HO	BK	FK	SK	
Ahmedabad	32	16	8	6	7	69
Other	13	18	9	20	22	82
Total	45	34	17	26	29	151

Analysis:

The above table presents awareness of cloud accounting among accounting professional and practitioners. It also presents that out of 151 APP there were 69 who are working in Ahmedabad City and 82 who are working in other selected cities of India. The table also indicates that out of 69 who are working in Ahmedabad city, there were 32 (46.4%) who had “Never Heard”, 16 (23.2%) who had “Heard of”, 8 (11.6%) who had “Basically Known”, 6 (8.7%) who had “Fairly Known”, and 7 (10.1%) who had “Strongly Known” category of awareness. The table also indicates that out of 82 who are working in other selected cities, there were 13 (15.9%) who had “Never Heard”, 18 (22%) who had “Heard of”, 9 (11%) who had “Basically Known”, 20 (24.4%) who had “Fairly Known”, and 22 (26.8%) who had “Strongly Known” category of awareness.



Figure 3: Awareness among APP in Ahmedabad city and other selected cities of India.

Statistical Test:

Chi-square calculated: 22.544
 Degree of Freedom: 4
 P – Value: 0.000
 Spearman’s Correlation: 0.372

The test result presents that p-value is 0.000 which is less than 0.05 which indicates that $H_{0.5}$ is rejected which means there is an association between City and Awareness of cloud accounting.

Remarks:

- From this data analysis it is observed that in Ahmedabad city only 20.2% aware while in other selected cities of India 47.4% aware with the emerging and relevant concept.

- The proportion of lack of awareness in respondents of Ahmedabad city is high against the respondents of other selected cities of India.
- The test result indicates that there is an association between City and Awareness.

5. Findings, Suggestions and Conclusion

5.1 Findings

In total only 19.20% APP know that what cloud accounting is and how it works with the knowledge of how to operate accounting function in cloud. While 17.22% know that what cloud accounting is and how it works but doesn't know how to operate accounting function in cloud, 11.26% know that what is cloud accounting but doesn't know that how it works and how to operate accounting function in cloud. In total 22.52% heard about cloud accounting but doesn't know anything more about it and 29.80% are those who are first time listening about cloud accounting.

The data analysis also found that 47.68% accounting professionals & practitioners has the awareness of cloud accounting.

The data analysis revealed that 53.1% male has the awareness of cloud accounting while only 17.3% of the female has the awareness of cloud accounting, which clearly indicates that awareness of cloud accounting among male APP is more as compare to female APP.

The data analysis also revealed that in the age group of 55 – 64, 69.3% has the awareness of cloud accounting which is highest as compare to all other age groups, while in the age group of 24 or below, only 28% has the awareness of cloud accounting which is lowest as compare to all other age group.

The data analysis revealed that who has CA as a professional degree in accounting among them 72.1% has the awareness of cloud accounting while who has any other graduate or post graduate or professional degree in accounting among them only 15.4% has the awareness of cloud accounting. The data analysis clearly indicates that the awareness of cloud accounting in APP with the CA as a professional degree is more as compare to APP with any other graduate or post graduate or professional degree in accounting.

The data analysis revealed that who has experience of 15 or more than 15 years, 66.7% has the awareness of cloud accounting which is highest among all others while who has experience to 1 to 3 years, only 18.1% has the awareness of cloud accounting which is least among all others.

The data analysis also revealed that in Ahmedabad city only 20.2% has the awareness of cloud accounting while in other selected cities of India 47.4% has the awareness of cloud accounting.

The analysis also found that Gender, Educational Qualification, Experience, and City have the relationship with the Awareness of cloud accounting.

5.2 Suggestions

This concept is relevant and will be more appropriate in the future. So the awareness of this concept needs sufficient care. Necessary initiatives should be taken by professionals themselves and by the professional bodies. The real wealth of any county is their youngsters and India has the highest number of young people and they are playing with the technology and ready to embrace with new technologies. Therefore, cloud accounting should be included in the syllabus of commerce & accounting students because out of them many will become businessmen and accounting professionals or practitioners in future. Government or ICAI or Cloud service provider should organize awareness program for all the business owners and accounting professionals & practitioners to make them aware about cloud accounting & security solutions which are used by service providers to secure their confidential data in cloud. The awareness program should ensure no risk & high security of data stored in cloud for cloud accounting users.

5.3 Future scope of the study

A number of areas of future research have arisen while conducting the study and those are listed as follows:

Further study can be extended by considering accounting professionals attitude towards the future use of the relevant emerging concept.

Further study can be done on pre and post profitability status of companies who has adopted cloud accounting and effects of cloud accounting on business performance along with profitability should be analyzed.

The study can be undertaken by taking those businesses who are using cloud accounting and the problems which are encountered by them while adopting and using cloud technology should be identified and the benefits which they are getting personally and business as a whole should be identified and discussed.

5.4 Conclusion

The primary objective of the study is to determine awareness among accounting professionals & practitioners to meet this objective a questionnaire is prepared in Google form and questions are framed to identify their knowledge and understanding about cloud accounting. The study concludes that in total the proportion of accounting professionals & practitioners who don't know (52.2%) about cloud accounting is greater than those who know (47.8%) about cloud accounting. The study also concludes that there is a relationship between variables like gender, educational qualification, experience and city and awareness of cloud accounting. The awareness of cloud accounting among Chartered Accountants is highest as compare to any other accounting professionals or practitioners.

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Authors Profile



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