Research Article

Embracing Technology in the Workplace: Evaluating Employee Adoption of the Mobile Application for Restaurant Search and Reservations (MARSR)

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Abstract
The study of employees' technology acceptance such as the Mobile Application for Restaurant Search and Reservation (MARSR) system has not been widely researched on. The study examines factors influencing restaurant employees' intention to use the MARSR system in Klang Valley hotel restaurants. Using the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT), data from 132 respondents reveals that facilitating conditions significantly impact employee intention to use MARSR. Performance expectancy and social influence also influence acceptance, while effort expectancy does not. These findings can help restaurant and hotel managers increase MARSR system adoption among employees, enhancing productivity and customer experience.

Keywords:

Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology; Mobile Application for Restaurant Search and Reservation.

1 Introduction

In the realm of hospitality, digital technologies have become ubiquitous, revolutionizing the operations of hotels and restaurants. Traditionally reliant on manual labor, the hospitality industry now embraces digitalization to improve efficiency and competitiveness (Ahmad & Scott, 2019). Notably, hotel managers recognize technology as a pivotal factor in setting their establishments apart from rivals (Bilgihan et al., 2016). The integration of digital tools allows hotels and restaurants to streamline operations, enhance customer experiences, and adapt to the fast-paced demands of modern consumers.

With the advent of self-service technologies, robots, blockchain, big data analytics, and mobile applications, among others, the landscape of hotel and restaurant operations is undergoing profound changes (Anser et al., 2020). Self-service technologies, for example, empower guests to check in, order room service, or make reservations independently, reducing the need for human intervention and minimizing operational costs. Robots are increasingly being deployed in roles ranging from concierge services to housekeeping, providing consistent service while freeing up staff to focus on more complex tasks.

Blockchain technology, though still in its nascent stages within the hospitality sector, offers promising applications in enhancing security, transparency, and efficiency in transactions and data management. Big data analytics enables hotels and restaurants to personalize services by analyzing customer preferences and behaviors, leading to more targeted marketing strategies and improved customer satisfaction.

Among these technologies, mobile applications have emerged as indispensable tools, deeply ingrained in consumers' daily routines (Law et al., 2018). These apps facilitate a wide range of functions, from booking rooms and dining reservations to ordering services and providing real-time updates on promotions and events. The convenience and accessibility of mobile apps have made them a critical component of the customer experience, allowing hospitality businesses to maintain a direct and continuous connection with their clientele. Furthermore, mobile applications offer valuable data insights that help businesses tailor their offerings, optimize pricing strategies, and respond swiftly to market trends.

As digital technologies continue to evolve, their role in shaping the future of the hospitality industry cannot be overstated. Hotels and restaurants that effectively harness these technologies are better positioned to enhance operational efficiency, improve customer satisfaction, and gain a competitive edge in an increasingly crowded marketplace.

Research into digital technologies within the hospitality sector underscores their transformative potential. Azdel et al. (2023) found that mobile reservation systems offer myriad benefits for hotels and restaurants, allowing real-time booking modifications and enhancing guest experiences. Similarly, the MARSR application, akin to mobile hotel reservation systems, facilitates dining reservations and streamlines employee operations (Gregorash, 2016). However, despite these advancements, employee acceptance of such technologies remains a challenge. Resistance to change persists, with some preferring traditional methods over digital alternatives (SevenRooms, 2023).

The reluctance of restaurant employees to embrace mobile reservation systems poses a significant problem for the industry. Despite the potential benefits, including enhanced efficiency and customer service, apprehension and inadequate training hinder successful implementation. The complexity of new technologies and the need for retraining exacerbate performance expectancy issues (Latona, 2016). Insufficient training may lead to low confidence and reluctance among employees to utilize the MARSR system effectively (Azdel et al. 2016).

This paper's significance lies in its exploration of the challenges surrounding the adoption of mobile reservation systems in restaurant operations (Lo et al, 2011; Nkosana & Skinner, 2016). By shedding light on employee acceptance barriers, it contributes to a deeper understanding of technology integration in the hospitality sector (Hamid et al, 2023). Furthermore, this study addresses an important gap in the literature by examining the relationship between employee performance expectancy and intention to use MARSR systems. The findings of this research are pertinent to restaurant managers, policymakers, and technology developers, offering insights to enhance training programs and facilitate smoother technology adoption processes within the industry.

2 Literature Review

2.1 Mobile application for restaurant search and reservation (MARSR)

Mobile applications (apps) have become indispensable tools in various domains, including the hospitality industry. Specifically, mobile applications for restaurant search and reservation (MARSR) have gained significant traction in recent years. MARSRs, such as Zomato, Yelp, and Urbanspoon, allow users to access restaurant-related services, including searching for restaurants, viewing reviews, making reservations, and exploring menu options (Bai, 2015). These applications, often offered by third-party entities, aggregate restaurant information and provide online reservation services to enhance customer convenience (Palau-Saumell et al., 2019).

The popularity of MARSR applications is particularly pronounced in the hotel restaurant environment, where they offer seamless experiences for both customers and restaurant owners (Redzuan et al., 2023). MARSRs facilitate reservation management, menu browsing, and real-time updates on restaurant availability,

thereby meeting evolving consumer demands for convenience and enhanced dining experiences (Pickard-Whitehead, 2022). Additionally, these applications empower restaurant employees by providing them with tools to efficiently manage reservations, communicate with customers, and personalize dining experiences (Palau-Saumell et al., 2019).

2.2 Intentions to use mobile applications for restaurant search and reservation (MARSR) system

While MARSR systems offer numerous benefits for restaurant operations, the acceptance and adoption of these systems by restaurant employees remain underexplored. Understanding employees' intentions to use MARSR systems is crucial for maximizing their potential benefits. The Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) model, which encompasses performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence, and facilitating conditions, provides a theoretical framework for studying technology adoption (Chang, 2013; Ho et al., 2021; Palau-Saumell et al., 2019).

2.3 The relationship between Performance Expectancy (PE) and intention to use the MARSR system

Performance expectancy, which refers to users' beliefs about the system's capability to enhance their performance, is a key predictor of technology adoption (Venkatesh et al., 2003). Previous studies across various contexts, including mobile e-wallets, internet banking, and mobile restaurant applications, have consistently demonstrated a positive relationship between performance expectancy and intention to use (Ho et al., 2021). However, the specific relationship between performance expectancy and MARSR system adoption among restaurant employees remains unexplored.

H1: Performance expectancy positively influences employee intention to use the MARSR system

2.4 The relationship between Effort Expectancy (EE) and intention to use the MARSR system

Effort expectancy, which pertains to the perceived ease of use associated with technology, is another critical factor influencing adoption (Venkatesh et al., 2003). While previous research has shown a significant impact of effort expectancy on technology adoption in various contexts, such as mobile e-wallets and internet banking, its relationship with MARSR system adoption requires further investigation (Esawe, 2022; Ho et al., 2021; Kuciapski, 2017).

H2: Effort expectancy positively influences employee intention to use the MARSR system

2.5 The relationship between Social Influence (SI) and intention to use the MARSR system

Social influence, reflecting the perceived importance of others' opinions and recommendations, has been shown to significantly impact technology adoption (Venkatesh et al., 2003). Prior studies in contexts such as internet banking and mobile restaurant applications have demonstrated the positive influence of social influence on intention to use (Rahi et al., 2019; Palau-Saumell et al., 2019). However, its specific role in MARSR system adoption among restaurant employees remains unexplored.

H3: Social influence positively influences employee intention to use the MARSR system

2.6 The relationship between Facilitating Conditions (FC) and intention to use the MARSR system

Facilitating conditions refer to users' perceptions of the resources and support available to facilitate technology use (Venkatesh et al., 2003). While prior research has demonstrated the significance of facilitating conditions in various technological contexts, including mobile applications and internet banking, its impact on MARSR system adoption among restaurant employees requires examination (Abdullah et al., 2020).

H4: Facilitating conditions positively influences employee intention to use the MARSR system

3 Methodology

The researcher selected Kuala Lumpur as the focus location due to reports indicating that MARSR systems such as Eatigo, OpenTable, and TableApp have partnered with hotels in Kuala Lumpur (Kandavisam, 2017). This strategic choice facilitated access to a diverse range of hotel restaurants utilizing these MARSR systems. Specifically, 4-to-5-star hotel restaurants in Kuala Lumpur were targeted for inclusion in the study, as these establishments were identified as users of Eatigo, OpenTable, and TableApp, as evidenced by listings within the applications (OpenTable, 2023b). Focusing on this segment ensured alignment with the scope of the MARSR systems, which predominantly cater to hotel dining reservations in Kuala Lumpur. The data collection process involved gathering responses from 132 participants through an online questionnaire, employing a purposive sampling method to ensure representation from the target population.

4 Findings

The researcher used Multiple Regression Analysis to test whether the intention to use and acceptance depends on the UTAUT dimensions (performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence and facilitating conditions). The analysis yielded results that addressed the research objective RO2, which was to identify how UTAUT

dimensions influence restaurant employees' intention to use and acceptance of the MARSR system.

4.1 Relationship between UTAUT [Performance Expectancy (PE)(zperfexp), Effort Expectancy (EE)(zeffexp), Social Influence (SI)(zsocinfl), Facilitating Condition(FC)(zfaccon)] and Intention to Use (INT)(zinttouse)

According to the model summary in Table 1, the R2 value was 0.782, indicating that UTAUT dimensions can explain 78.2 percent of the variation in Intention to Use (Performance Expectancy, Effort Expectancy, Social Influence and Facilitating Conditions).

Next, the ANOVA output in Table 2 shows that the R2 value was significantly greater than zero. The p-value was less than 0.001, implying that the overall regression was significant. The results are interpreted by the equation $F(4, 127) = 296.275$, $p < 0.001$ with R2 of 0.782. The ANOVA table shows a p-value of less than 0.05 ($p<0.001$), indicating that at least one of four variables (performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence, and facilitating conditions) can influence employee intention to use.

Table 1: Model Summary of UTAUT and Intention to Use

Model Summary[b]

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.884[a]	.782	.775	1.61386	1.693

a. Predictors: (Constant), zfaccon, zperfexp, zsocinfl, zeffexp
b. Dependent Variable: zinttouse

Table 2: ANOVA results for UTAUT and Intention to Use

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1185.101	4	296.275	113.753	<.001[b]
	Residual	330.778	127	2.605		
	Total	1515.879	131			

a. Dependent Variable: zinttouse
b. Predictors: (Constant), zfaccon, zperfexp, zsocinfl, zeffexp

The coefficient value in Table 3 demonstrated that not all UTAUT are significant predictors of Intention to Use. Based on the results, the p-values for performance expectancy (p-value = 0.005), social influence (p-value = 0.003), and facilitating conditions (p-value = 0.001) were all less than 0.05. However, the p-value for effort expectancy was greater than 0.05 (p-value= 0.171), indicating that it is not a significant predictor of intention to use. As a result, the findings indicate that performance expectancy, social influence, and facilitating conditions all have a significant impact on intention to use. As intention to use technology is a crucial factor in determining its acceptance (Zhou et al., 2022), the research can also relate that performance

expectancy, social influence and facilitating conditions influences employee intention to use and acceptance of the MARSR system.

Table 3: Coefficient Table

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients B	Unstandardized Coefficients Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B Lower Bound	95.0% Confidence Interval for B Upper Bound
1	(Constant)	4.550	1.038		4.384	<.001	2.496	6.603
	zperfexp	.180	.062	.219	2.892	.005	.057	.304
	zeffexp	.101	.073	.113	1.376	.171	-.044	.246
	zsocinfl	.191	.063	.240	3.012	.003	.065	.316
	zfaccon	.343	.077	.391	4.454	<.001	.191	.495

a. Dependent Variable: zinttouse

The information and results of the data collected from all tables were used to answer the hypothesis of the study. The hypotheses proposed were tested using Multiple Regression Analysis which indicate that performance expectancy, social influence and facilitating conditions have a significant relationship with intention to use. This shows that the hypothesis H1, H3 and H4 were supported indicating performance expectancy, social influence and facilitating conditions positively influences employee intention to use and acceptance of the MARSR system. Similarly, the result for the correlation analysis also supported this statement as all the UTAUT dimensions (performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence and facilitating conditions) show positive correlations to intention to use. However, the regression analysis contradicts as it shows that effort expectancy is not a significant predictor to intention to use. As such, this shows that hypothesis H2 is unsupported indicating effort expectancy does not influence employee intention to use MARSR system.

Table 4: Summary of Hypotheses

Hypothesis	Results
H_1: Performance expectancy positively influences employee intention to use MARSR system.	Supported
H_2: Effort expectancy positively influences employee intention to use MARSR system.	Not supported
H_3: Social influence positively influences employee intention to use MARSR system.	Supported
H_4: Facilitating conditions positively influences employee intention to use MARSR system.	Supported

5 Discussion

The primary objective of this study was to investigate the factors influencing restaurant employees' intention to use the Mobile Application for Restaurant Search and Reservation (MARSR) system, utilizing the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) model. Our findings underscore the significance of performance expectancy, social influence, and facilitating conditions in shaping employees' intentions to use the MARSR system.

Consistent with previous research by Palau-Saumell et al. (2019), our study reveals that performance expectancy, reflecting employees' perceptions of how the MARSR

system enhances work productivity, significantly influences their intention to use it. Similarly, social influence, capturing the impact of influential individuals' recommendations, emerges as a significant predictor, aligning with existing literature (Rahi et al., 2019). Additionally, facilitating conditions, encompassing resources and support available for system usage, significantly influence employees' intention to use the MARSR system, consistent with prior research (Abdullah et al., 2020).

However, contrary to expectations, effort expectancy did not emerge as a significant predictor in our study. This finding contradicts previous studies on MARSR system acceptance (Palau-Saumell et al., 2019). Nevertheless, this result aligns with Kuciapski's (2017) study, which found that the effort required for using mobile technologies may not directly impact intention to use. It suggests that employees, mandated by hotel restaurant management, prioritize system usage over perceived ease of use.

6 Recommendation and Conclusion

The implications of our findings are manifold, offering critical insights for both industry practitioners and technology developers. Performance expectancy, social influence, and facilitating conditions emerge as essential factors influencing employee acceptance of the MARSR system. Thus, efforts to enhance these factors can bolster system adoption and utilization among restaurant employees, ultimately leading to more efficient operations and improved customer satisfaction.

Given the highest influence of facilitating conditions on employees' intention to use the MARSR system, hotel and restaurant managers should prioritize providing comprehensive training and ongoing technical support. This approach ensures that employees are well-equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to navigate the MARSR system effectively. For instance, regular training sessions, accessible online tutorials, and a readily available technical support team can significantly reduce the barriers employees may face when adopting new technology. Ensuring that the system is user-friendly and operates seamlessly is crucial to maintaining high levels of employee satisfaction and preventing frustration that could lead to resistance or abandonment of the system.

Moreover, leveraging social influence can be a strategic approach for encouraging MARSR system adoption. Social influence can be cultivated through various means, such as promoting success stories of peers who have effectively used the MARSR system to enhance their productivity or achieve recognition within the organization. Managers can identify and promote the most widely used and positively reviewed MARSR systems in the market, thereby aligning employee system usage with customer preferences and industry standards. This alignment not only motivates employees but also ensures that the systems in use are those most likely to meet customer expectations, thereby enhancing overall service quality.

Furthermore, emphasizing the performance-enhancing capabilities of the MARSR system can incentivize employees to utilize it more effectively. For example, showcasing how the MARSR system can streamline reservation processes, reduce errors, and improve overall efficiency can encourage employees to embrace the technology as a tool that enhances their job performance rather than as a burden. Managers could implement reward systems that recognize and reward employees who demonstrate proficiency and consistent usage of the MARSR system, thereby reinforcing positive behavior and encouraging widespread adoption.

To ensure that these strategies are successful, managers should consider implementing ongoing feedback mechanisms that allow employees to voice their concerns and suggestions about the MARSR system. Regularly gathering and acting on this feedback can provide valuable insights into potential areas for improvement, making the system more user-friendly and aligned with employee needs. Additionally, involving employees in the decision-making process regarding technology updates and changes can foster a sense of ownership and increase their commitment to using the system effectively.

In conclusion, this study underscores the importance of considering various factors in understanding employee acceptance and use of technology in the hospitality industry. By utilizing the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) model, we identified performance expectancy, social influence, and facilitating conditions as significant predictors of employees' intention to use the MARSR system. Interestingly, effort expectancy did not emerge as a significant predictor, suggesting that employees may not perceive the system as particularly difficult to use, or that other factors such as organizational support and perceived benefits outweigh any concerns about effort.

The findings from this research provide valuable insights for enhancing system adoption and utilization in hotel restaurants. Understanding the specific factors that influence employee acceptance of technology allows managers and technology developers to tailor their strategies to address these factors effectively. For instance, technology developers could focus on creating systems that are not only functionally robust but also easy to use and well-supported by training and resources. By addressing employees' perceptions and concerns, stakeholders can facilitate the seamless integration and utilization of technology, ultimately enhancing operational efficiency and customer satisfaction in hotel restaurants. This approach not only benefits the organization but also empowers employees by providing them with the tools and support they need to succeed in a rapidly evolving technological

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