SELF-SERVICE TECHNOLOGY

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ABSTRACT

Self-service technologies (SST) have become prevalent in human daily life. SSTs are technological interfaces that allow customers to perform the service on their own without having to engage with employees of the organisation. Given the growing importance of self-service, this paper aims to review past research and discover new agendas about the SSTs in Malaysia. Recently, Malaysia has opened a first unmanned, self-service convenience store in Subang Jaya. Also, Mcdonald's Malaysia has launched self-service kiosks in Klang Valley for customers to place customised orders and make payments on the machine. Therefore, it is deemed worth to investigate the determinants and outcomes of customers' use of SSTs in Malaysia.

Key words: Self-service technologies, Malaysia

INTRODUCTION

Self-service technologies (SST) have become prevalent in human daily life. More and more face-to-face service industries are replaced by SST, such as banking, tourism and hospitality, food and beverages, retail and airlines. Recently, Amazon launched the first high-tech grocery store that allows shoppers to scan their smartphone at a turnstile, pick out the items they want and leave (CBCNews, 2018). SSTs are technological interfaces that allow customers to perform the service on their own without having to engage with employees of the organisation (Robertson et al., 2016).

According to Meuter et al. (2000), there are four major categories of SSTs in use: telephone/ interactive voice response systems, online/Internet-based interfaces, interactive kiosks, and video or compact disc (CD) technologies. For examples, the telephone/interactive voice response systems include checking order status and flight information. The online/Internet-based interfaces are widely used in package tracking, retail purchasing and financial transactions. The interactive free-standing kiosks provides services such as ATMs, hotel checkout and tourist information. The video or compact disc (CD) technologies encompass tax preparation software and CD-based training.

Given the growing importance of self-service, this paper aims to review past research and discover new agendas about the SST in Malaysia. Recently, Malaysia has opened a first unmanned, self-service convenience store in Subang Jaya. The Irispay E-Concept

Store requires customers to download the Irispay application using their personal details and scan the QR code on the products for payment (Sinchew, 2017). Also, McDonald's Malaysia has launched self-service kiosks in Klang Valley for customers to place customised orders and make payments on the machine. Therefore, it is deemed worth to investigate the determinants and outcomes of customers' use of SSTs in Malaysia.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Many extensive academic studies have explored the SSTs in terms of the different industries, outcomes, determinants and motivations for SSTs adoption. Lee and Yang (2013) highlighted that self-service technology service quality is critical to increase retail patronage. In a similar vein, Demoulin and Djelassi (2016) compared users and non-users of SSTs at the exit of a grocery store, and found that usage behaviour (i.e. usage frequency) and situational factors including coupons, basket size, time pressure and queue length at the SSTs and staffed checkouts affect users to continue utilising SSTs. In contrast, perceived behavioural control, perceived usefulness, need for interaction, perceived ease of use and enjoyment are closely linked to non-users' intention of using SSTs. Most of these key drivers of non-users' attitude toward the SST are aligned with the study of Weijters et al. (2007).

Poushne and Vasquez (2015) found that customers' motivations to use SSTs include perceived crowdedness, time pressure, companion's effect, and other customers' helping behaviors. Other motivations for SST's usage compose of convenience, access to lower prices, forced usage, eco-friendliness and empathy for other customers as found by Kelly (2015) in tourism sector.

Taillon and Huhmann (2017) evaluated the outcomes of SST from customer perspective (word of mouth, trust and loyalty) and business perspective (enterprise value and profitability) to provide guidelines for future researchers and practitioners to better recognise the potential benefits and risks associated with satisfied and dissatisfied SST customers. Meuter et al. (2000) found that customer satisfaction using SSTs are closely linked to complaining behavior, word of mouth, customer attributions, and re-patronage intentions. In addition, Susianto and Fachira (2015) concluded that SST enhances overall customer satisfaction of a restaurant that uses SSTs in food ordering, billing statement, and calling assistance of waiters.

There are some studies emphasise on business perspective. For examples, Considine and Cormican (2016) focused on SST adoption for a single multi-national financial services organisation and found that SST as an alternative to service representative solutions. Ong (2010) proposed a framework consisting of six phases to guide hoteliers in Singapore to adopt SSTs in hotels. The process starts with defining the current service flow, establishing the risk and opportunity of using SSTs, evaluating constraints and outcomes from using SSTs, testing and examining the types of SSTs in market.

In Malaysia, limited studies are found in SST. For examples, Chai (2008) focused on consumer trial of SST in the banking industry by investigating consumer readiness variables of role clarity, motivation and ability as mediators for the relationships

between various established innovation characteristics and individual differences and the likelihood of trial. Ujang et al. (2016) found that SSTs in tourism and hospitality industry include check-in kiosk in hotels, hotel room booking using mobile application such as Agoda.com and booking.com, navigation application such as WAZE for directions, Ticket Vending Machine (TVM) for train, self-service kiosk for food ordering and tourism information.

CONCLUSION

Nowadays, technology is gaining proliferation in the customer service industry. Customers become familiar to interact with technology to create services through the use of SSTs. As such, it is vital for providers of SSTs to understand how customers involvement in the systems so that the firms can improve them by providing the goods and services faster, easier and more convenient.

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