

*Impact of web communication on usage intention of self-service kiosks in
the hospitality industry.*

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Abstract

Impact of web communication on usage intention of self-service kiosks in the hospitality industry.

In a world of constant technological evolution, it's surprising to see how automation seems invisible to the eyes of hotel consumers; they appear to be interested in nothing but internet access when it comes to hotel technology. Despite various studies and models for adapting self-service technologies that have been conducted to explain the low adoption of self-service kiosks (SSKs) in hotels, no previous research had questioned the extent to which marketing practices impact this, and more specifically, how specific communication channels, like the hotel website, influence people's willingness to use these kiosks. Most studies have rushed to examine the impact of SSKs on the demographic characteristics of consumers and to measure the consequences of replacing people with machines, but they have overlooked the importance of adequately preparing individuals before their first encounter with the kiosk.

To carry out this study, an interpretative philosophy and an inductive method were applied, employing a qualitative research approach. A total sample of 8 individuals, considered active travellers based on certain characteristics explained in the study's methodology, was selected. A semi-structured interview was used to gather data, which was then analysed. All ethical considerations appropriate for an optimal study were taken into account, and the limitations of the research were also highlighted.

This study confirmed that there is a significant impact between the web communication offered by hotels and the intention to use self-service kiosks (SSKs) in hotel establishments. This web communication should be considered a preliminary stage in all future models of new technology adoption, thus challenging the gaps in all previous models presented in the literature review. This study demonstrates that the web can be a decisive influencer in the prolonged use and subsequent adoption of kiosks. This research is a significant contribution to the hotel industry, scholars of digital marketing communication strategies, as well as to developers and distributors of SSK but is especially important for all hotel consumers.

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Table of Contents

<i>Dissertation Cover</i>	<i>i</i>
<i>Abstract.....</i>	<i>ii</i>
<i>Research Students Declaration Forms</i>	<i>iii</i>
<i>Checklist for dissertation submission</i>	<i>vi</i>
<i>Acknowledgements.....</i>	<i>ix</i>
<i>Table of Contents</i>	<i>x</i>
<i>List Of Figures and Tables.....</i>	<i>xiv</i>
<i>Abbreviations List</i>	<i>xv</i>
1. INTRODUCTION TO THE THESIS AND TOPIC RESEARCH	1
1.1 Research Background.....	1
1.2 Gaps in the Literature	2
1.2.1 The "Before" of the First Interaction with Self-Service Kiosks	2
1.2.2 Lack of IMC (Integrated Marketing Communication) in the Models of Self-Service Technology Adoption in the Hospitality Sector	3
1.3 Research Objectives	4
1.4 Research Question	5
1.5 Academic Justification.....	5
1.6 Scope of Methodology	6
1.7 Overview Dissertation Structure	7

2. LITERATURE REVIEW	9
2.1 Chapter Introduction	9
2.2 Marketing of the new Era	10
2.2.1 Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC)	10
2.2.2 Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) as the origin of Marketing Transformation	11
2.3 Websites as a communication channel	12
2.3.1 The importance of websites	12
2.3.2 Characteristics of an effective website	13
2.3.3 The importance of Websites in Hotel Marketing	14
2.4 Self-service Technologies	15
2.4.1 Overview of Self-service Technologies (SSTs)	15
2.4.2 Theories and Models on the Adoption of SSTs and SSKs	16
2.4.3 Self-service Kiosks (SSK) in the Hotel Industry	19
2.5 Impact of Website content on the use of SST and SSK	21
2.5.1 SST and SSK as a content strategy	21
2.5.2 Websites and SST / SSK	22
2.6 Chapter Conclusion	24
3. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY	25
3.1 Chapter Introduction	25
3.2 Objectives of the Research	25
3.3 Proposed Methodology and Research Structure	27
3.3.1 Research Philosophy	28
3.3.1.1 Ontology, Axiology and Epistemology Approaches	28
3.3.1.2 Pragmatism, Positivism, Realism, and Interpretivism	29
3.3.2 Research Approach	30
3.3.2.1 Deductive Vs. Inductive	30
3.3.2.2 Descriptive Vs. Exploratory	31

3.4 Research Strategy	31
3.4.1 Quantitative Vs. Qualitative Research	31
3.5 Research Design	33
3.5.1 Qualitative Primary Data Collection	33
3.5.2 Secondary Data Collection.....	33
3.5.3 Research Sample	33
3.5.4 Qualitative Data Analysis	34
3.5.5 Research Instrument	35
3.6 Limitations to the research	35
3.7 Ethical consideration.....	36
3.8 Chapter Conclusion	36
 4. RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION	37
 4.1 Chapter Introduction.....	37
4.2 Results of the qualitative research	38
4.2.1 OBJECTIVE 1: “Assess the importance of hotel websites as a communication medium for hotel customers.”	38
4.2.1.1 The website as the primary channel for hotel consumers.....	38
4.2.1.2 Websites vs. other channels in hospitality	40
4.2.1.3 Perspectives on a good website	41
4.2.2 OBJECTIVE 2: “Investigate individuals' knowledge of self-service kiosks in hotels and where they obtained this information.”	42
4.2.2.1 General knowledge about SSK.....	42
4.2.2.2 Knowledge about SSK in hotels	43
4.2.2.3 Promotion and advertisement on SSK for hotels.....	44
4.2.3 OBJECTIVE 3: “Determine if individuals value obtaining information about self-service kiosks in hotels through the web.”	45
4.2.3.1 The value of the rational content	45

4.2.4 OBJECTIVE 4: “Investigate whether website communication can outweigh personal judgments about using self-service kiosks (SSKs).”	46
4.2.4.1 Generational judgments and emotional content	47
4.2.4.2 Other compatibility judgements.....	48
4.2.5 OBJECTIVE 5: “Examine how a website can increase the willingness to use SSK in hotels.”	49
4.2.5.1 “The attempt” (skills – role clarity and motivation).....	49
4.3 Chapter Conclusion	51
5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	52
5.1 Answer to the research question.....	52
5.1.1 Website Relevance in the Hotel Industry	52
5.1.2 Individuals' knowledge of self-service kiosks in hotels	53
5.1.3 The value on being informed through a website	53
5.1.4 Web communication as a solution to people's judgments about the use of new technologies	54
5.1.5 Web communication capable of increase the willingness to use self-service kiosks in hotels.....	54
5.2 Gaps in the Literature	55
5.2.1 The “before” of the first interaction with self-service kiosks.....	55
5.2.2 Lack of Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) in self-service technology adoption models in the hotel sector.....	55
5.3 Recommendations	56
Reference List	57
Appendix 1 Interview Questions	65

List Of Figures and Tables

Figures

<i>FIGURE 1 Literature review structure chapter.....</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>FIGURE 2 Technology Acceptance Model.....</i>	<i>16</i>
<i>FIGURE 3 Multi Step Flow Theory Diffusion of innovation Model.....</i>	<i>17</i>
<i>FIGURE 4 Self Service Technology Adoption - Theoretical Model.....</i>	<i>18</i>
<i>FIGURE 5 Saunders Research Onion.....</i>	<i>27</i>

Tables

<i>TABLE 1 Interviewee Information.....</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>TABLE 2 Research Objectives.....</i>	<i>26</i>

Abbreviations List

<i>Term</i>	<i>Definition</i>
<i>SSTs</i>	<i>Self-service technologies.</i>
<i>SSKs</i>	<i>Self-service kiosks.</i>
<i>IMC</i>	<i>Integrated Marketing Communication.</i>
<i>ICTs</i>	<i>Information and Communication Technologies.</i>
<i>EAT</i>	<i>Expertise, Authoritativeness, Trustworthiness.</i>
<i>ATMs</i>	<i>Automated teller machines.</i>
<i>TAM</i>	<i>Technology Acceptance Model.</i>
<i>IDT</i>	<i>Innovation Diffusion Theory.</i>
<i>WBSS</i>	<i>Web-Based Self-Service.</i>
<i>IV</i>	<i>Interviewee.</i>

1. INTRODUCTION TO THE THESIS AND TOPIC RESEARCH

1.1 Research Background

The technological rollout has enabled various self-service technologies (SST), including self-service kiosks (SSKs), to make their way into different industries, including the hotel industry (Ivanov and Webster, 2017). However, it seems that the adoption of these new technologies has not been as significant in the hospitality sector (Ivanov, 2019) as it has been in other industries, where they are even a differentiating factor, such as in banking (Guzovski et al., 2022). Currently, there are no identifiable efforts in communicating these new technologies, whether through advertising or informational content, on the part of hotels. There are no examples of memorable hotel marketing campaigns that highlight, for instance, the ability to control the safe, lighting system, or temperature via a mobile device, or the convenience of checking in with a QR code or using self-service kiosks. It is worth investigating why, in a rapidly evolving world, hotel promotions continue to emphasize the same boring features from decades ago, such as the hotel's location, the size of the pool, or the number of restaurants.

At the same time, websites have become a fundamental channel for the marketing of hotel services. Research indicates that 88% of hotel bookings are made through them, and the hotel reservation system via e-commerce and websites reports an annual global growth rate between 12% and 20% (Agag et al., 2019). In a world where multiple digital communication channels as powerful as websites have emerged to promote products and services (Osterwalder and Euchner, 2019), there is a limited presence of self-service kiosks (SSKs) in these communication channels because they are not included in hotel marketing strategies. This lack of presence leads to a lack of recognition (Fill and Turnbull, 2016) and, consequently, a lack of user adaptation to new self-service technologies in hotels.

1.2 Gaps in the Literature

1.2.1 The "Before" of the First Interaction with Self-Service Kiosks

Throughout the study of the literature on the implementation and reception of new self-service technologies like SSKs, it is possible to identify that numerous studies have focused on highlighting the advantages and disadvantages of these kiosks in both the hospitality industry and other sectors (Kucukusta et al., 2014). Some studies have examined how the implementation of these technologies can project a positive image for organizations (Kim et al., 2012), while other research has focused on the impact of the lack of human interaction in a service industry like hospitality (Bitner et al., 2002). There are also many studies that concentrate on identifying the potential consumer of this type of technology (Kim et al., 2012) based on general characteristics such as age, education level, gender, and type of tourism. Additionally, the effect of these kiosks on customer satisfaction in the hospitality industry has been studied multiple times (Wang et al., 2013).

Although advances on this topic have been valuable, the previous summary highlights that the literature has exclusively focused on the moment of interaction with the kiosks and has overlooked multiple factors that can influence the experience before this first interaction. In other words, it has neglected the importance of proper preparation before encountering the kiosk. Communication methods are perhaps one of the most influential factors in the stage prior to the interaction with the kiosks. The concern of previous researchers should not have been limited to the pure technology of SSK without first questioning how the existence of this technology is communicated to the consumer before they encounter it for the first time.

1.2.2 Lack of IMC (Integrated Marketing Communication) in the Models of Self-Service Technology Adoption in the Hospitality Sector

Among the four most important models proposed throughout history regarding the acceptance of new technologies in society and especially in the hospitality industry (Gupta and Sharma, 2021), the following stand out: the Technology Acceptance Model (Yousafzai et al., 2007), the Innovation Adoption Theory (Kucukusta et al., 2014), the Diffusion of Innovations Theory (Bakkabulindi, 2014), and lastly, the Theoretical Model of Self-Service Technology Adoption (Bitner et al., 2002). All of these models were established with the aim of breaking down the stages that individuals go through before deciding to adopt frequent use of a new technology or a new self-service technology such as kiosks. What is interesting is that only one of these models briefly and superficially mentions the term "awareness" as an initial stage.

There is an evident gap in understanding the impact of marketing communication channels—in this case, web communication—for preparing individuals for their encounter with any new technology. There is no evidence of consistent marketing practices concerning self-service kiosks in the hospitality industry. There is inadequate use of integrated marketing communication plans because there are still no studies that have recognized the importance of this discipline as a fundamental part of the process of adopting new technologies.

1.3 Research Objectives

The first objective aims to justify and reaffirm the importance of the chosen communication channel for this research, which is the website, considering that there are currently many different channels that could have been used. The subsequent four objectives aim to base the research on the Self-Service Technology Adoption Model (Bitner et al., 2002), it is the only model that vaguely incorporates the discipline of marketing. This model asserts that a person decides to try and accept a new technology into their daily life through four stages: **Awareness, Research, Evaluation, and intention to use.**

Research Objectives:

OBJECTIVE 1: Verify the importance of web pages as a means of communication for the hotel consumer. **(CONFIRM WEBSITE RELEVANCE)**

OBJECTIVE 2: Investigate individuals' knowledge of self-service kiosks in hotels and where they obtained it from. **(AWARENESS)**

OBJECTIVE 3: To find out if individuals place value on being informed through the website about self-service kiosks in hotels. **(INVESTIGATION - Usefulness – Rationale Content)**

OBJECTIVE 4: Investigate whether the communication of a web page can weigh up the personal judgments of trying to use SSK. **(EVALUATION – Appealing: Attitude, Compatibility, Perceive Risks – Emotional Content)**

OBJECTIVE 5: Examine how a website can increase the willingness to use self-service kiosks in hotels. **(TRIAL STAGE, Skills, Role Clarity, Motivation)**

1.4 Research Question

Based on the gaps highlighted in the literature review, this study will achieve its objectives by addressing the following research question:

Overarching Research Question:

"To what extent does website communication influence the willingness to use self-service kiosks (SSKs) in the hospitality industry?"

Additional sub-questions supported the research question and Objectives **(See Appendix 1)**.

1.5 Academic Justification

Currently, all industries are leveraging new technological advances. Most of them aim to improve their processes, services, profitability, or customer loyalty (Kucukusta et al., 2014), among many other reasons. However, they all share the undeniable truth that the world is moving towards automation, and failing to prepare to stay at the forefront will cause many companies to become obsolete. The transition for the hospitality industry has been particularly challenging because it relies on the human element for its service (Ivanov, 2019). There is evidence that the adoption of self-service kiosks in hotels has not been as well received as expected (Tung, 1999). Despite this, the multiple advantages of these kiosks continue to be demonstrated (Bitner et al., 2002). Therefore, it is important for hoteliers to understand whether improvements can be made in the implementation process of these new self-service technologies, if users can be considered differently, or if factors previously overlooked can be taken into account. In the view of this researcher, this new difference lies in the power of integrated marketing communication. The lack of emphasis on this aspect in the hospitality industry must be addressed so that new technologies in the hospitality sector are as valued as they are in other industries.

1.6 Scope of Methodology

The researcher chose to apply a qualitative method for this research, rejecting both the quantitative method and the mixed-method approach (Saunders et al., 2009). Primary qualitative data were obtained through semi-structured interviews, which captured the perspective (Adams et al., 2007) of 8 different participants, who answered an average of 24 questions (see Appendix 1). Each question addressed one of the 5 objectives previously established for this study.

The interviewees met the following characteristics:

- Ages: Between 20 and 49 years old. This age range is generally more adaptable to the use of self-service kiosks (Kucukusta et al., 2014).
- Travellers for any reason, whether for leisure or business.
- None or some minimum level of interaction with a self-service kiosk in a hotel.
- Considered active travellers, meaning they had booked a hotel in the past six months and travel more than three times annually.
- The sample was selected to ensure different genders, ages, roles, and income levels to provide a more enriched result.

INTERVIEWEE (IV)	SECTOR	ROLE	TOURISM TYPE	GENDER	AGE	SSK Knowledge Other Industries	SSK Knowledge in Hoteles
1	IT	Application Engineer	Vacation	Male	33	Si	Si
2	Administration	Sales Executive	Business	Female	45	No	No
3	Congress & Conventions	MICE Director	Business	Female	34	Si	No
4	Business Administration	Business Owner	Vacation	Female	38	Si	No
5	Hotel Management	Consultant	Business	Male	40	No	Si
6	Pharmaceutical	Tech Ops-4 MfgOps Support	Vacation	Female	40	No	No
7	Arts	Student	Vacation	Female	22	Si	Si
8	Accounting	Payroll Analyst	Vacation	Female	28	No	No

Table 1. Interviewee Information

1.7 Overview Dissertation Structure

CHAPTER 1 – Background to the Research Topic

This chapter clearly presents the research question. It contextualizes the topic and briefly discusses previous research on the subject, highlighting existing gaps. The chapter also defines the research objectives and justifies the choice of topic. Finally, it explains the scope of the methodology used.

CHAPTER 2 – Literature Review

This chapter consists of a thorough review of the literature relevant to the research question. It is presented through a logically organized flow of topics, ranging from the most general to the most specific. The chapter aims to synthesize and critically analyse relevant authors, concepts, theories, and models for the study. Additionally, whenever possible, the chapter highlights the gaps identified in previous research.

CHAPTER 3 – Research Design and Methodology

This chapter outlines the development of the proposed research methodology. It also examines various research approaches and philosophies that justify the choice of this method over other possible alternatives. Additionally, the chapter details the sample, research instrument, and procedures for data collection, processing, and analysis.

CHAPTER 4 – Research Findings and Discussion

This chapter presents an analysis and interpretation of the research findings, distinguishing between expected and surprising results. The chapter displays the findings in an organized manner according to each objective set for the study. Throughout its development, efforts are made to

situate each finding within the context of the reviewed literature, highlighting both debatable differences and similarities with previous research.

CHAPTER 5 – Conclusions and Recommendations

This final chapter provides a concrete conclusion of the work done, highlighting the contribution of this study to academia. It also clarifies that the research question was effectively addressed and explains how the gaps identified in the literature review presented in Chapter Two were covered. In the recommendations section, future studies are suggested.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Chapter Introduction

The following literature review positions the project within existing literature and academia, initially addressing the concept of modern marketing based on the definition of clear strategies that are materialized through multiple tactics supported by current technology. This technology would not have been possible without the development of new information technologies. The literature review takes a journey that invites the hotel industry, through the proper use of web pages, to embrace strategic marketing that encourages the adoption of new self-service technologies. It presents a critical stance, synthesis, and comparisons of previous studies. Finally, it guides the reader to recognize the existing gap produced by the lack of research regarding the role of web communication and its impact on the adoption and use of SSTs (self-service technologies), such as SSKs (self-service kiosks), in the hotel industry.

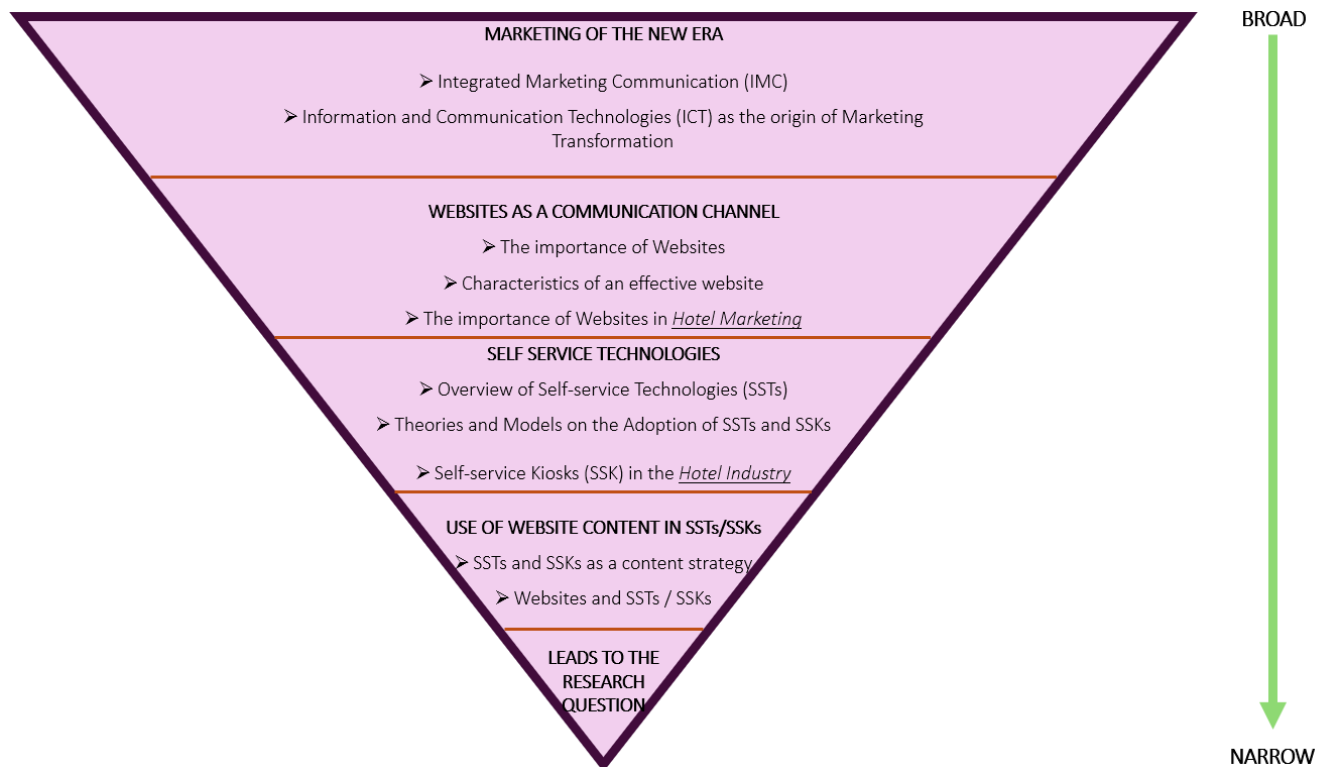


Fig 1. Literature review structure chapter

2.2 Marketing of the new Era

2.2.1 Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC)

Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) is an innovative model that seeks to surpass the well-known marketing mix by utilizing technology (Bakalo and Amantie, 2023), such as maximizing the potential of newly available communication channels like web pages. However, it is not enough to merely make effective use of web pages, as marketing tactics cannot be applied effectively without first defining a strategy. The development of a marketing plan must always begin with strategy (Fill and Turnbull, 2016). The strategy should start with consumer research to ensure that a value proposition is being developed where the consumer's voice is heard (Osterwalder et al., 2015), giving the recipient exactly what addresses their pain points (Osterwalder and Euchner, 2019).

Once the value proposition is clear, it proceeds to be communicated through a coordinated and compelling message (Porcu, Barrio-García, and Kitchen, 2012). Many other authors refer to this message as the big idea (Loc, 2020), a creative message capable of generating incredible emotions. It is a simple yet special message with significant meaning, implicitly including the characteristics of the product or service. It is a promise of fulfilment that immediately captivates the consumer.

This project aims to identify the impact of communication provided by hotel industry web pages on user behaviour towards new technology. It supports the premise that current marketing in this industry lacks strategy and requires significant effort in designing the appropriate message to influence the adoption of new technologies (Bitner, Ostrom, and Meuter, 2002). Projects like this seek to promote marketing that acknowledges the power of technology to effectively communicate technological advancements. It seems that hotels have remained in a comfort zone, where many are interested in acquiring new technologies but overlook the importance of ensuring that users recognize their value. Otherwise, the lack of use would not be evident (Tung, 1999).

2.2.2 Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) as the origin of Marketing Transformation

When attempting to relate the influence of web page communication with the use of SSTs (self-service technologies), both variables have a high technological component that would not have been possible without the existence and evolution of ICTs (Information and Communication Technologies). Therefore, these must be the starting point. Researchers like Rust and Varki (1996) argued that the emergence of ICTs posed a threat, creating a new cyber world in which, from a marketing perspective, the management of audiences ceased to be small and manageable, expanding to much larger and more heterogeneous audiences. On the other hand, Novak (1997), an author with whom the author of this text wholeheartedly agrees, defended the idea that taking risks equates to great challenges. He argued that the invention of the internet challenged and continues to challenge traditional marketing to its fullest extent, and it is these types of challenges that ultimately drive the evolution of this fascinating discipline.

According to Coviello, Milley, and Marcolin (2001), the development of ICTs provides significant advantages for the marketing discipline. These benefits can be summarized as the creation of relationships with customers in massive environments, the enhancement of content creation creativity, and the ability to potentiate transactional marketing, a term that defines the interaction between buyers and sellers. Ultimately, terms like e-marketing began to replace the concept of interactivity and became part of the common language along with terms like e-commerce and e-business, whose meanings derive from mere economic activity between buyers and sellers, but in this case, it is done through the use of technology (Coviello et al., 2003).

Numerous studies dating back to the 1990s agree that ICTs gave rise to a new way of doing marketing and that it is imperative for companies to adopt this new paradigm to survive in the market (Brady, Fellenz, and Brookes, 2008). Thanks to the evolution of ICTs, companies can access multiple communication channels, and it is within this diversity that web pages emerge.

2.3 Websites as a communication channel

2.3.1 The importance of websites

Given the need to justify why web pages were chosen for this study over other communication channels, it is important to assert that they are no longer considered merely auxiliary communication channels. Their design, content, and the success of their features should be part of corporate marketing strategy (Bilgihan, Kandampully, and Zhang, 2016). The urgency for companies to establish a web presence compels them to innovate how they present their offerings. Several authors have concluded that companies should aim to create a good browsing experience on their website, as this is perhaps the ultimate expression of competitiveness in the digital world. A positive browsing experience encompasses marketing objectives such as dissemination, building trust, brand recall, and customer loyalty, among others (Johnston and Kong, 2011).

According to Bilgihan, Kandampully, and Zhang (2016), a poor experience on a website represents an average loss of 25% of annual revenue for companies in markets like the USA and UK. Websites play a crucial role in today's e-commerce landscape because competitors are literally just a click away. Furthermore, research indicates that creating positive experiences on websites becomes more challenging when consumers use different devices and electronic channels, requiring total synergy in both content and presentation (Wagner, Schramm-Klein, and Steinmann, 2013). Currently, revenue from e-commerce sales made via mobile devices exceeds \$1.5 trillion USD, which accounts for more than half of total retail e-commerce sales (Statista, 2023).

2.3.2 Characteristics of an effective website

Today, when a consumer hears even a slight mention of a product, service, or event, their immediate response is to search for it online. This happens in an instant, but it occurs millions of times in a small fraction of time, across thousands of people and on numerous types of devices. This moment is referred to by many researchers as the "moment of truth" (Biçer, 2020), and it is crucial because it is where marketing comes to life. This underscores the importance of studying its significant impact, particularly calling upon the hotel industry to make better use of this power. All web users are now viewed as potential consumers. Capturing their attention amidst a high level of exposure to advertisements signifies the beginning of effectiveness (Geissler, Zinkhan, and Watson, 2001).

Over the past 20 years, numerous studies have been conducted on best practices for designing web pages. In summarizing these studies, they all agree on the following characteristics: A website should have fast navigation speed, an appropriate number of landing pages based on the product or service offered (Gunjan, Kumari, and Kumar, 2012), a design focused on clear objectives with call-to-action buttons, efficient management of keywords (Ziakis et al., 2019), responsive design adaptable to all types of devices (Pinandito et al., 2017), and lastly, optimization efforts should be frequent and successful enough to ensure the website appears among the top options in organic searches. All of this should also include the use of excellent images and high-quality content (Zilincan, 2015).

2.3.3 The importance of Websites in Hotel Marketing

In this digital era, online purchases have shown an unstoppable rise, especially in the hotel sector (Bilgihan and Bujisic, 2015). Communication channels such as websites have become indispensable in the online hotel booking process. The purchasing decision is based on the appearance of the website and the information presented on it. Previous research categorizes hotel searching on websites as a hedonistic consumption behaviour, meaning it is a process enjoyed by consumers. This hedonistic behaviour is undoubtedly linked to consumer perception of value (Kazakeviciute and Banyte, 2012), and this value is cultivated through the design, content, and overall experience of each website.

The literature review concurs that consumers in the hospitality sector make decisions based on a set of considerations they establish themselves (Jones and Chen, 2011). It would be interesting if someday in the future, SSTs (self-service technologies) and SSKs (self-service kiosks) become part of consumers' considerations. However, for these technologies to be ingrained in people's mindsets, they must first be integrated into the content of hotel websites, become a central message in their marketing campaigns, and be part of the comprehensive offering of the hotel establishment. Websites must ensure the synergy advocated by multiple studies regarding the quality of their content and ease of use (García, Carrillo-Durán, and Tato, 2017). Among these aspects, literature prioritizes content because it significantly influences user behaviour (Thielsch and Hirschfeld, 2019).

The websites of any industry, but especially those in the hotel sector, encompass all current digital marketing concepts: They serve as a platform for various Display ads (Le and Vo, 2017) and Video ads (Stevenson, Bruner, and Kumar, 2000), they are the final destination for multiple Email marketing strategies (Budac, 2016), and they integrate seamlessly with various social media platforms (Gonçalves Curty and Zhang, 2013).

If websites are considered a realm of endless possibilities, why is there so little content evidence regarding SSTs and SSKs on hotel pages? Hospitality establishments must continuously evaluate and create new content that encourages the use of their own technology. Currently, there exists the E.A.T. model (Expertise, Authoritativeness, Trustworthiness) developed by Google, which precisely focuses on evaluating the quality of content on web pages through a scoring system that influences page rankings. This, in turn, determines their appearance among the top pages in any organic search related to the industry (Sugandhika and Ahangama, 2022). Ultimately, this is the goal of all SEO strategies (Zilincan, 2015).

2.4 Self-service Technologies

Up to this point, we have reviewed the challenges of current marketing in terms of strategy and tactics, emphasizing the importance of websites as a communication channel. Although we have consistently mentioned the concepts of SSTs (self-service technologies) and SSKs (self-service kiosks), it is worth delving deeper into these concepts as they represent the other key variables in this study.

2.4.1 Overview of Self-service Technologies (SSTs)

Self-Service Technologies (SSTs) are those that allow consumers to serve themselves without the intervention of an employee (Galdolage, 2021). Currently, SSTs are ubiquitous, ranging from navigating a phone menu at any company, scanning products at supermarkets, using ATMs at banks, making purchases through e-commerce platforms, online courses and to the healthcare industry with the implementation of appointment scheduling systems (Bitner, Ostrom, and Meuter, 2002). While these examples may not encompass all possibilities, they illustrate the diversity, evolution, and widespread adoption that these technologies have seen in recent years.

2.4.2 Theories and Models on the Adoption of SSTs and SSKs

Many theories have been redefined over the years in an attempt to understand the processes underlying the adoption and use of new technologies. However, multiple studies and new proposals consistently emerge from what we have termed in this research as **foundational theories**.

The TAM (Technology Acceptance Model) is a powerful model that marked a milestone in explaining technology adoption (Davis, 1989). It proposes that the use of technology is based on two factors: perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use. It argues that technology usage is based on a voluntary intention to use it and one's attitude toward its use, which the author refers to as a subjective possibility (Yousafzai, Foxall, and Pallister, 2007).

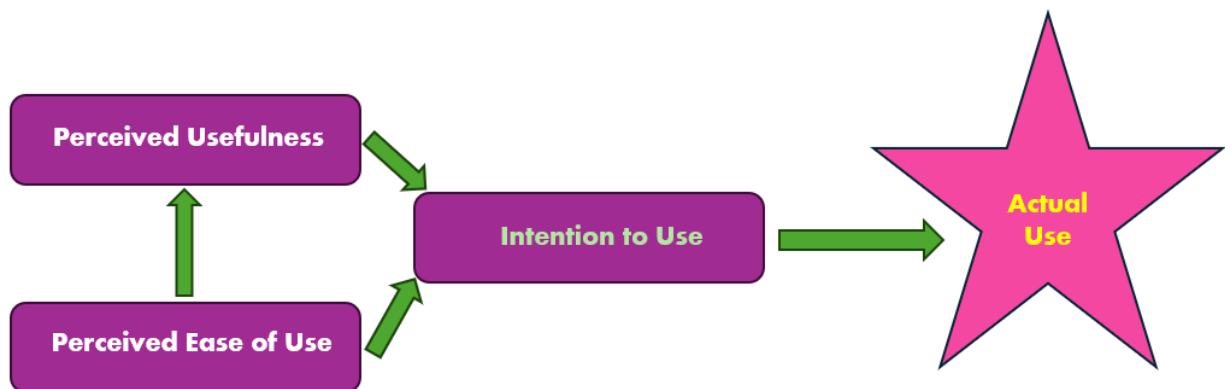


Fig 2. Technology Acceptance Model.

The IDT (Innovation Diffusion Theory) emerged from Rogers' contribution in 1958 (Bakkabulindi, 2014) with the objective of explaining how innovative technologies are introduced into society (Wani and Ali, 2015). This theory attributes the rate of diffusion to individuals' perceptions of the technology (Armstrong and Yokum, 2001). The term "perception" here is closely related to TAM, but in this context, it relates perceptions to the power of persuasion. This theory examines seven characteristics that, through perception, persuade individuals in the adoption process of a particular innovation. These characteristics include: the technology's superiority, compatibility with existing systems, the extent to which consumers can experiment with the technology, the

definition of the ideal consumer for this technology, the complexity of understanding its use, technical risks, and psychological risks of its use (Kucukusta, Heung, and Hui, 2014).

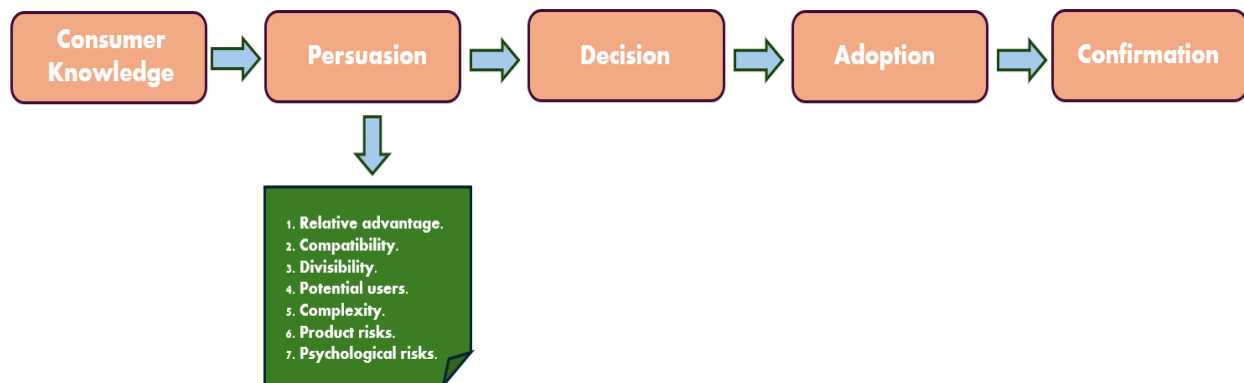


Fig 3. Multi Step Flow Theory Diffusion of innovation Model.

The key distinction between IDT (Innovation Diffusion Theory) and TAM (Technology Acceptance Model) is that IDT is focused on any type of innovation, not necessarily technological, whereas TAM specifically focuses on new technologies (Bakkabulindi, 2014).

Finally, the theoretical model of SST adoption seeks to explain the complexity involved in a user's decision-making process when using a new technology for the first time. This model encompasses all characteristics of perception and persuasion, but additionally acknowledges that the consumer must be aware of the technology's existence beforehand, which marks an initial approach to marketing intervention. Subsequently, the user investigates to form a personal judgment about the technology, and if this judgment is favourable, it is much more likely that they will decide to try using the technology for the first time. This initial attempt is also subject to three major factors identified in the theoretical model: the individual's ability or capacity to use the technology, clarity on what to do when interacting with the technology, and individual motivation to do so (Bitner, Ostrom, and Meuter, 2002).

It is noteworthy that among these models, this one will primarily influence the construction of the research instrument for this project, as it is the first to minimally recognize the role of marketing in this process, even if only mentioning it briefly.

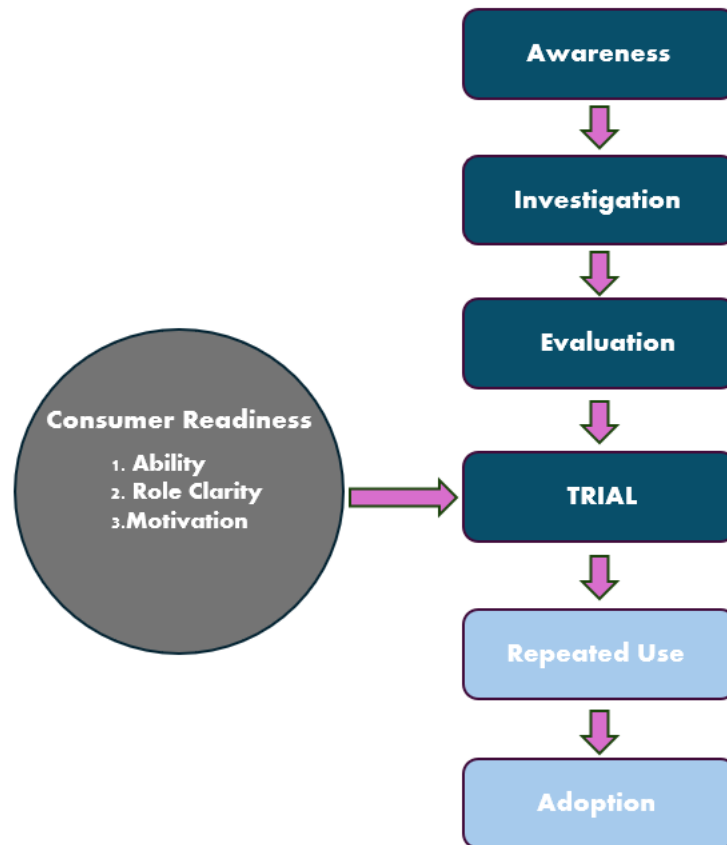


Fig 4. SST Adoption - Theoretical Model.

Through the literature review of all theories in this field, it is possible to conclude that all have been approached from the same perspective, which is to relate consumer behaviour to technology (Kim and Qu, 2014). There are many other studies in this field that examine the effects of adopting this technology, particularly how it impacts customer service or whether it increases or decreases brand loyalty (Gupta and Sharma, 2021). It is here that the need to investigate why the power of marketing has been overlooked in all these studies becomes evident. **There is no evidence of studies that relate the impact of a specific marketing communication channel to any of the aforementioned root theories, which is the gap this study aims to fill.**

This research will relate the impact of using a communication channel such as websites by integrating it as a primary component within the flowcharts of these theories. This investigation will open the door to linking many other communication channels with these same theories or their redefinitions. In this way, studies will move away from focusing solely on consumer interaction with technology and/or its outcomes, and instead return to the beginning by emphasizing the impact of an effective communication channel. This preparation is crucial for the consumer's encounter with new self-service technology, ensuring positive outcomes such as initial usage, repeat usage, and adoption.

2.4.3 Self-service Kiosks (SSK) in the Hotel Industry

The travel and tourism industry, which includes hospitality, has undergone significant transformations throughout history where technology has played a pivotal role. Examples include the advent of trains in the 19th century, cars and airplanes in the 20th century, and the Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) in the 21st century, which completely revolutionized travel. This revolution also encompasses the implementation of self-service technologies (SST), manifested in various forms such as self-service kiosks in airports, hotels, restaurants, travel agencies, and tourist information points (Ivanov, 2019).

Self-service kiosks (SSKs) in hotels are electronic devices equipped with a touchscreen interface. They allow guests to perform various functions such as verifying their reservation, confirming their identity, selecting their room if the option is available, or assigning a room based on the system's recommendation considering the reservation type and hotel occupancy. Additionally, these kiosks enable guests to make payments, generate room keys, and receive receipts. These are the general functions, but depending on their programming, they can perform many more tasks such as offering tourist information, making restaurant reservations, booking laundry services, or requesting changes or additional towels and pillows, among others (Gupta and Sharma, 2021).

During the literature review, it was found that various studies agree on the prominent advantages of self-service kiosks (SSKs). These include effective data collection capabilities (Kim, Christodoulidou, and Brewer, 2012), attracting new markets (Vakulenko, Hellström, and Oghazi, 2018), cost efficiency, and minimizing human error (Bitner, Ostrom, and Meuter, 2002). Other benefits focus specifically on the check-in function, such as reducing check-in time, the ability to check in advance, and operating 24 hours a day (Kucukusta, Heung, and Hui, 2014).

On the other hand, disadvantages noted in the literature include system failures leading to poor consumer experiences, public apprehension about revealing personal information on a screen in a crowded lobby (Bitner, Ostrom, and Meuter, 2002), and the lack of human interaction, which is considered a significant drawback (Kucukusta, Heung, and Hui, 2014). Additionally, studies indicate that frequent users of SSKs are typically individuals aged between 20 and 49 years with a high level of education. The likelihood of usage is higher in the business tourism sector compared to leisure tourism (Kucukusta, Heung, and Hui, 2014).

The introduction of SSKs has represented a drastic change for the hotel industry, much stronger than in other industries because hospitality is still measured by the non-negotiable principle of being service-oriented. This impact must be mitigated by adequately preparing the user for the first interaction with SST through an effective communication channel, as proposed by this study. The truth is that the world is in a fast-paced technological race, and it is time for the hotel sector to ask itself what it could do better to promote SSTs because they are not only a reality, but they are here to stay and continue evolving.

2.5 Impact of Website content on the use of SST and SSK

As the culmination of this literature review approaches, it would have been ideal to have examples of a website that promotes the use of SST or SSK in the hotel industry. However, this has not been an easy task, highlighting once again the lack of research and the gap that exists in this field, which underscores the significance of this research project. Nevertheless, relevant information has been gathered about the marketing content used by the hotel industry on their websites, and some examples from other industries closely related to the aim of this research have been identified.

2.5.1 SST and SSK as a content strategy

The fact that researchers have shifted their focus to explaining consumer behaviour towards SST and SSK has completely overlooked the role of marketing. It is worth questioning why there is not more discussion about the power of communication channels in the new era, using them for educational purposes rather than purely commercial ones. Studying the impact of web communication on the adoption of SSK in hotels could represent a complete shift in current hotel marketing campaigns. There is minimal presence not only of SSK but of all SST in general in the marketing campaigns of hotel chains, and there seems to be little interest in promoting self-service as an added value for consumers.

Based on the literature review, the most influential factors in the decision to book a hotel room are the room price, followed by the hotel's location and the quality of food (Sohrabi et al., 2012). However, it is somewhat disappointing to note that these studies do not even mention technological advancements in hotels; they only touch upon internet speed or whether the television is in colour. According to Mittal and Baker (2002), hotel marketing campaigns should emphasize aspects that provide a competitive advantage. Yet, it is common and uninspiring to see more of the same: pools, spas, restaurants, and packages focused on the lowest price.

It becomes a challenge, therefore, to analyse how customers would value consuming content about the multiple payment platforms available for a hotel, content about the use of a specialized chat box, or how users would respond to a tutorial on using an SSK. Could SST like SSKs be a decision-making factor for users? How do hotels promote their technology? Are they giving it the importance it deserves? All these questions could be future case studies generated from this research.

2.5.2 Websites and SST / SSK

In the task of identifying direct relationships between the impact of website communication with any SST, in other industries because in the hotel industry is not possible, the concept of E-service quality emerges. E-service quality explains the extent to which a website can facilitate a process (Mukerjee, 2020), and although this concept was originally developed in industries like banking, it is applicable to our research. For instance, what if hotel websites facilitated the use of SSKs through effective communication? Furthermore, studies have demonstrated that the E-service quality of a website has positive implications for word-of-mouth and contributes positively to the relationship between new technology and the consumer (Blut, 2016).

According to (Wang, Harris, and Patterson, 2013), part of the banking industry's success as a pioneer in the deployment and adoption of SSTs lies in the continuous effort by executives to enhance perceived user capabilities, thereby increasing trust among their customers. For example, some banks have introduced greeting voices in their kiosks, a feature that research suggests reduces user anxiety. When people believe that interacting with technology will be comfortable and feel internally capable, there is a positive trend towards its use. Similarly, providing clear instructions and simulations through websites can be effective tools to increase confidence. The only example that may exist of this is the step-by-step demonstration of online banking that banks have implemented on their websites.

There are also types of services called Web-Based Self-Service (WBSS), which fall within the category of Self-Service Technologies (SST), such as online bookings, for example. Although they are not like Self-Service Kiosks (SSK), they heavily rely on the content and information provided by the website. According to Yang et al. (2010), a website's ability to answer users' questions about successfully completing processes like online booking is crucial for encouraging self-service usage. Furthermore, the study argues that users like to have control over the actions they are about to perform and find comfort in knowing they can make mistakes and know how to fix them. These premises are not much different from those proposed for SSKs; a website that, through creative tactics, offers potential users' knowledge, perceived ease of use, control over the technology, and flexibility will have incentives for immediate usage.

According to the literature review conducted, the Hilton chain appears to be the one that has put the most effort into this type of marketing content. A single advertisement belonging to a marketing campaign by Hilton called "For the Stay" was found, which was launched just months ago, and in which it is possible to identify the use of some Self-Service Technologies (SST) (Hilton. For The Stay. | Digital Check In, 2023). It is noteworthy that hotel chains like Hilton and Radisson at least mention Self-Service Kiosks (SSK) as part of their services on their website, which represents minimal progress. However, there is little to no further evidence, whether informational, promotional, or otherwise, of SSTs or SSKs on the websites of the hotel industry.

2.6 Chapter Conclusion

To conclude this literature review, it is a fact that a large portion of the literature has focused on studying consumer attitudes towards the adoption of SSTs and/or SSKs, while another significant body of literature has examined the consequences of this interaction, such as customer satisfaction, loyalty creation, and service quality evaluation. However, there is a notable research gap concerning the influence of marketing communication channels, specifically the impact of website content on the adoption process of new SSTs. This research provides valuable information for the hotel industry to improve its Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) plans and also challenges future marketing professionals to establish better communication strategies. Otherwise, how does the hotel industry plan to survive in a future world that will be fully automated if it cannot effectively communicate the added value and encourage the use of new self-service technologies?

3. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Chapter Introduction

According to Saunders et al. (2009), research is present in everything that surrounds humanity; it often serves as the justification for actions and consequences of all human beings. However, to use this term, it is necessary that the process involves collected data that have a logical relationship—not just beliefs. This data must undergo a process of identification and ultimately have a purpose, specifically to discover something. Complementing this, according to Kothari (2004), research is the art of seeking to expand knowledge, and its purpose is to define and redefine problems to suggest solutions; it is about finding something that was previously undiscovered. The uses of research are numerous, with some of the most important including gaining competitive advantages on a specific topic, securing a new product or service launch (BPP, 2015), making predictions about a phenomenon, explaining human behaviour, and achieving better financial performance (Adams et al., 2007).

3.2 Objectives of the Research

It is not possible to make decisions about the research methodology to be used if the research question is not clear beforehand (Saunders et al., 2009). Let's remember that for this project, the research question is the following: To what extent does website communication influence the willingness to use self-service kiosks (SSKs) in the hotel industry? In order to answer this broad question, the research objectives were established. The first research objective aims to verify the importance of the website in the hotel industry as a communication channel.

The following four objectives were constructed in order based on the self-service technology adoption model by Bitner et al. (2002), which was also discussed in the literature review. In this model, an individual develops a high willingness to try a new self-service technology through a process that begins with **awareness** of the technology, followed by **research** and knowledge about the technology. This leads to a preliminary judgment, whether positive or negative, and, as a consequence, a probable **attempt** to use it. This attempt to use will always depend on how prepared the consumer is in terms of their technological skills, motivation, and the role they will play in interacting with the technology (Bitner et al., 2002). To make the relationship between the research objectives and the stages of the technology adoption model clearer, the following table is presented:

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES	
CONFIRM WEBSITE RELEVANCE	OBJECTIVE 1: Verify the importance of web pages as a means of communication for the hotel consumer.
SST Adoption - Theoretical Model.	
AWARENESS ↓	OBJECTIVE 2: Investigate individuals' knowledge of self-service kiosks in hotels and where they obtained it from. ↓
INVESTIGATION (Usefulness – Rationale Content) ↓	OBJECTIVE 3: To find out if individuals place value on being informed through the hotel website about self-service kiosks. ↓
+/- EVALUATION (Appealing, Attitudes, Compatibility, Perceive Risks, Perceive ease of use, Emotional Content) ↓	OBJECTIVE 4: Investigate whether the communication of a web page can weigh up the personal judgments of trying to use self-service kiosks. ↓
TRIAL STAGE (Skills, Role Clarity, Motivation)	OBJECTIVE 5: Examine how a website can increase the willingness to use self-service kiosks in hotels.

Table 2: Research Objectives

3.3 Proposed Methodology and Research Structure

This exploratory study (Kothari, 2004) seeks to understand the impact that communication offered through hotel websites can have on individuals' willingness to adopt self-service kiosks (SSKs). There are different research frameworks developed to help researchers structure projects. The author has chosen Saunders' research onion as a methodological guide for this study because its clear illustrative analogy makes it easy to understand that successful research has several layers to uncover. It is through the ordered discovery of these layers that it becomes possible to define the appropriate research methods (Saunders et al., 2009).

According to Saunders et al. (2009), research method decisions are a consequence of initial paradigm choices, or in other words, different beliefs or ways of viewing the world. The research onion suggests exploring the research philosophy first before defining the tactical approaches to be used. By unwrapping each layer in order, a chain of choices becomes evident before reaching the final step, which is data collection (Saunders et al., 2009). The following section will analyse and justify the selection of certain methods over others and their relevance to the present research.

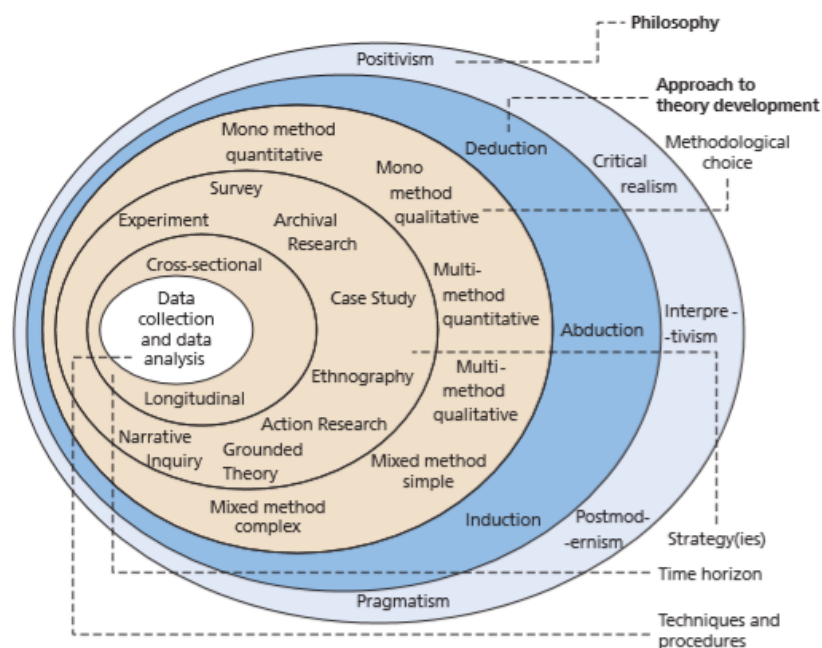


Fig 5. Saunders Research Onion (Saunders et al., 2009)

3.3.1 Research Philosophy

One of the first tasks defined in the outer layer of the research onion is to align the research question with a philosophy. According to Saunders et al. (2009), philosophy reflects individuals' beliefs or assumptions about a fact or knowledge, which are usually influenced by their experiences. Philosophy can have three different approaches: epistemology, ontology, and axiology, with four central paradigms: positivism, realism, pragmatism, and interpretivism.

3.3.1.1 Ontology, Axiology and Epistemology Approaches

These three approaches are what correctly frame the present research. According to Saunders et al. (2019), ontology is the study of being that invites reflection on how reality is perceived; without it, it would not be possible to share or classify knowledge. They also argue that ontology in the world of business and companies includes everything that is subject to investigation. Applying this definition to this research, ontology allows the researcher to recognize the existence of the influence of website communication on the use of self-service kiosks (SSKs) and to perceive the relationship of this topic under their own interpretation of reality. However, this does not mean that it is the same reality perceived by the participants regarding the same topics (Aliyu et al., 2015).

Axiology, on the other hand, supports the assumption that research is linked to the ethical values of both the researcher and the participants, and that these values affect the outcome of the study (Saunders et al., 2019). Although the researcher acknowledges that this may happen, she prefers to align with the epistemological approach. Epistemology concerns knowledge, validity, the world of accurate information, specific facts, and opinions (Saunders et al., 2019). Epistemology opens up a range of possibilities for different approaches, where all knowledge is received, valued, and accepted, and it detaches from the researcher's personal knowledge or subjectivity (Aliyu et al., 2015). This is why the researcher chooses to align this study more with the epistemological

approach rather than the ontological or axiological ones, as they intend to treat the respondents' information as legitimate and reliable data.

3.3.1.2 Pragmatism, Positivism, Realism, and Interpretivism

Pragmatism is a philosophy that values various ideas and theories, arguing that results are worthwhile when they solve problems (Wilson, 2014). The fact that communication channels have not yet been studied as having a significant impact on the use of self-service kiosks (SSKs) represents more of a gap in the literature than a problem. Additionally, the researcher argues that resolving this, as well as the limited use of SSKs in hotels, will naturally follow from interpreting respondents' perspectives. Therefore, pragmatism is not chosen as the philosophical foundation for this research.

On the other hand, the positivist philosophy emphasizes human experiences to create generalizations (Al-Ababneh, 2020). However, generalizing individual experiences is equivalent to minimizing the importance of each individual and overlooking their uniqueness (Wilson, 2014). The process each person follows to decide whether to interact with an SSK is unique and unrepeatable, making it impossible to create a single reality acceptable to everyone, which completely rules out this approach (Quinlan et al., 2024). Regarding realism, this philosophy holds that the senses determine perceptions, leaving the mind out of the equation (Saunders et al., 2009). Although this study considers the motivations of users in their use of SSKs, the researcher decides that it is not appropriate to limit reality solely to sensory experience.

Considering the justifications presented above, the researcher rejects the previous approaches and decides that the most appropriate for the research is the interpretivist philosophy. This philosophy invites a deep analysis of respondents' perspectives and their realities (Bell Emma et al., 2022). In this philosophy, all individual knowledge is valid for interpretation (Quinlan et al., 2024), and consequently, it values what distinguishes each perspective, seeking, in other words, to put oneself in the respondent's shoes (Bell Emma et al., 2022). Interpretivism focuses on how

each person's complexity drives their actions (Saunders et al., 2015). Given that the impact of communication from a website on one individual can be very different from its impact on another, and that the consequences of interacting with self-service technology (SST) and self-service kiosks (SSKs) can also vary greatly, this philosophy is the suitable one for this study. Despite considering human uniqueness, this philosophy still allows for the continued extraction of knowledge about society (Bell Emma et al., 2022).

3.3.2 Research Approach

3.3.2.1 Deductive Vs. Inductive

There are two types of approaches that frame research projects. According to Bell Emma et al. (2022), choosing between them provides clarity in the development of the study. These approaches are inductive and deductive.

Saunders et al. (2019) argue that the deductive approach focuses on formulating hypotheses by analysing the influence of variables on each other. It concentrates on what is considered an investigable concept rather than pure experience, taking an existing concept and proposing various causes around it (Wilson, 2014). This approach is considered less flexible because it primarily works with quantitative data, where hypotheses are tested through generalization (Saunders et al., 2019).

In contrast, the approach of this study is considered inductive because it focuses on understanding personal attitudes and perceptions of individuals who are impacted differently by website communication, leading them to develop a level of intention to use SSKs all through qualitative data analysis (Saunders et al., 2019). The different experiences of each person are what hold value for this study, which aligns closely with the philosophy of interpretivism (Al-Ababneh, 2020). The literature review presented in the previous chapter demonstrates that the most representative

studies on the adoption of new self-service technologies have been both deductive and inductive, and there are even many that have combined both approaches (Vakulenko et al., 2018).

3.3.2.2 Descriptive Vs. Exploratory

Research can also be classified as descriptive or exploratory (Wilson, 2014). Descriptive research, as the name suggests, provides a very specific description of facts. It does not allow for discussion and is limited to pure explanation (Saunders et al., 2019). Additionally, it does not relate causes or effects (Wilson, 2014). A descriptive classification would not be sufficient for this study. Exploratory research, on the other hand, becomes essential for qualitative studies like this one. It promotes open-ended questions to provide more opportunities for analysis on how respondents perceive their reality concerning the type of communication they receive and the adoption of self-service kiosks (SSKs). This study is considered exploratory because it offers much flexibility to the researcher, is open to changes and modifications throughout the process, and does not aim to suggest a single universal conclusion (Saunders et al., 2019).

3.4 Research Strategy

The strategy of a research study refers to the choice of a qualitative or quantitative method (Saunders et al., 2009).

3.4.1 Quantitative Vs. Qualitative Research

The quantitative method is one that collects and analyses numerical data and consequently aligns with the deductive approach and a positivist philosophy (Saunders et al., 2019). It also does not allow for freely expressing participants' perspectives (Bell Emma et al., 2022). Based on this explanation, the quantitative method is rejected for this research, and the qualitative method is

chosen instead, as the approach defined in the previous layers of the onion (Saunders et al., 2009) is inductive and framed within the philosophy of interpretivism.

It is important to highlight that this study takes into account previous research, particularly that of Bitner et al. (2002), who proposed an innovative model for the adoption of new service technologies. The proposal of this model was possible because the researchers applied a mixed methodology, combining both qualitative and quantitative approaches. However, there was a particular inclination towards the qualitative method, as it revealed how each respondent felt about the possibility of trying a self-service technology (SST).

Bitner et al. (2002) considered different viewpoints to explain the phenomenon and **proposed future qualitative research** to further expand knowledge on the subject. This is **where the need arises** to understand the influence of website communication on the intention to use self-service kiosks (SSKs).

The adopted qualitative method had the following characteristics:

- Data collection involved eight semi-structured interviews.
- Participants responded to a pre-established interview lasting between 30 and 40 minutes.
- The aim was to capture the perspective of the interviewees by asking 24 questions that corresponded to the five established objectives related to the main research question.

3.5 Research Design

3.5.1 Qualitative Primary Data Collection

In the attempt to understand people's experiences, data is generated (Adams et al., 2007). The data must be reliable and should encourage other researchers to either reinforce the topic or challenge it with their own arguments. There are different methods for collecting primary qualitative data, among which the interview was chosen. The interview consists of a series of questions posed by the researcher to individuals, with the aim of listening to them attentively to capture their perspective through interpretation (Aliyu et al., 2015).

3.5.2 Secondary Data Collection

It is crucial to remember that this research was made possible by the initial literature review, where through critical analysis, gaps were identified. The information from the literature review was obtained from the National College of Ireland library and from academic journals in databases with a positive reputation in the scientific field, which also ensures the validity and reliability of the secondary data.

3.5.3 Research Sample

The sample consists of the individuals selected for the research, on whom inferences will be made and subsequently extrapolated to the entire population (Wilson, 2014). The size of the sample has always been a challenge in qualitative research, as it is typically smaller compared to quantitative methods (Walle, 2015). However, despite its small size, it does not mean that it is not carefully planned and does not meet certain characteristics to achieve the proposed objectives.

The researcher conducted a total of eight complete interviews. The interviewees had to meet the following criteria to be selected:

- Individuals of any gender between the ages of 20 and 49, as this age range was the most frequently mentioned in the literature review as having the highest adaptability to using SSKs (Kucukusta et al., 2014).
- Travelers for business or leisure purposes.
- Having had no or minimal interaction with an SSK in a hotel.
- Having made a hotel reservation by any means in the last 6 months and traveling more than three times per year, to be considered active travelers.
- They were strategically chosen to represent different genders, ages, roles, purchasing power, and types of tourism to provide the most diverse and comprehensive perspective possible.

3.5.4 Qualitative Data Analysis

The interviews were conducted using Microsoft Teams. The participants were scheduled according to the availability reported by each interviewee. Each participant authorized the recording of audio and the use of video during the interview, which allowed for attention to details in their facial expressions. Personal data from each interviewee was excluded as a protection strategy and replaced with a number. During the 'Findings and Discussion' chapter, the researcher will refer to each interviewee using a number, for example, Interviewee #5 (IV 5).

The researcher was the sole handler of the data throughout the entire process, responsible for recording, transcribing, and analysing it. Additionally, she facilitated the grouping of similar responses among interviewees, the discovery of new themes, and connections to topics directly related to the literature review. To clarify the limits of the data for this study, the researcher admits the audio and transcription of the interviews, as well as the facial expressions observed during the interviews and the notes taken during each interview.

3.5.5 Research Instrument

The interviews were conducted remotely, each supported by an independent audio recording. This recording was subsequently transcribed. Interviews were chosen because they allow for open-ended questions (Walle, 2015), making them an efficient tool for capturing attitudes, feelings and various expressions (Yin, 2016).

Within the general field of interviews, semi-structured ones were chosen. These start with base questions previously associated with past research (Saunders et al., 2019). The goal was to introduce the interviewee to the topic of self-service kiosks (SSKs). Subsequently, the questions became more exploratory, considering the interpretative philosophy of the research (Al-Ababneh, 2020) and its inductive nature (Bell Emma et al., 2022).

Initially, a pilot test was conducted with a family member of the researcher to evaluate the research instrument in terms of duration and clarity of the questions. This test led to revisions in the wording. The final structure of the interview used, can be found in **Appendix 1**.

3.6 Limitations to the research

One initial limitation is the representativeness of the study, as a sample of eight interviews may not be representative of the entire population and, consequently, may omit different perspectives (Bell Emma et al., 2022). Another limitation is the time constraint, as proper handling of qualitative data and a thorough analysis require time, and a lack of it could affect the quality of the study. The researcher admits that she aimed for an initial total of at least ten interviews; however, the limited time available for development was a factor. Conducting a larger number of interviews would have reduced bias and strengthened the robustness of the results.

3.7 Ethical consideration

Ethics is defined as a set of moral principles that determine a particular way of acting for individuals (Quinlan et al., 2024). Since this research involves the nature of human beings, it inherently involves ethical dilemmas (Saunders et al., 2019). Before carrying out this work, the researcher had to complete a full ethical review, which was formally submitted to the educational institution via a form. This ensured that all interviewees were treated properly and in accordance with the ethical guidelines for this type of research. Additionally, it is worth noting that all participants provided written consent to participate in response to an email sent by the researcher, which introduced the topic and explained the objective of the research. This email clarified that they could withdraw voluntarily at any stage of the process. Furthermore, all interviewees authorized the researcher to record the interviews, use the camera, and transcribe the recordings for the proper collection of data. The data from this research was stored only on the researcher's computer in a password-protected folder while in use. This folder was deleted after the research results were presented.

3.8 Chapter Conclusion

This chapter is of great value because it is crucial to the success of this project, reflecting careful planning and a strong commitment to using the most representative research theories. This chapter underpins the validity and reliability of the results of this work. It is possible to conclude that this study was conducted based on the research onion framework by Saunders et al. (2009), where through the gradual exploration of its layers, a series of strategic decisions were made that defined the research. Among these decisions were adopting an interpretivist philosophy while rejecting all other possible philosophies, choosing an inductive rather than deductive approach, and consequently employing a qualitative research method. This was realized through the collection of data via semi-structured interviews, the analysis of which involved a meticulous process to ensure the optimal quality of the results.

4. RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Chapter Introduction

The literature review analysed in Chapter 2 has shown that research has focused on consumer behaviour (Kim and Qu, 2014) in relation to SSKs (Kim et al., 2012), as well as the consequences of their interaction with multiple studies on the need for human interaction in service (Gupta and Sharma, 2021). However, attention has not yet been given to the impact that marketing discipline and communication channels can have on the adoption of these technologies. The qualitative method of this research enabled the author to gather the interviewees' perspectives on the influence of website communication on the intention to use SSKs in the hotel industry.

With the intention of facilitate findings organization and ensuring that the research question was answered: **To what extent does web communication influence the willingness to use SSKs in hotels?** This chapter presents the key findings, highlighting each main objective, the findings show similarities and differences with the research presented in the literature review, as well as recurring patterns. Additionally, it directly addresses the previously identified gaps in the literature.

4.2 Results of the qualitative research

All the questions in the research instrument, were designed to address each objective. Each objective tackles a fundamental issue to answer the research question (see Appendix 1).

4.2.1 OBJECTIVE 1: "Assess the importance of hotel websites as a communication medium for hotel customers."

This section synthesizes and analyses the importance of the website for the participants, who are all hotel customers.

4.2.1.1 The website as the primary channel for hotel consumers

All the interviewees indicate that the website is their primary means for making any hotel reservations. It is undeniable that for all participants, technology is a tool that facilitates and streamlines processes. This is a predictable finding that supports the argument of Coviello et al. (2001), discussed earlier in the literature review, which states that information technologies expand the ability to interact with customers on a large scale and stimulate the creation of transactions between buyers and sellers.

The website has a positive reputation among all the participants in the study, and everyone recognizes its immense power through statements such as: "On the website, you can have a large amount of information all at once, which allows you to evaluate options in less time and without communication errors because everything is there" (IV 7). "The website is a full-time showcase of the hotel's or hotels' offerings; it is more efficient, faster, and above all, informative" (IV 2). "It's very rare these days to hear someone who prefers to research or make hotel reservations by phone or through a travel agency if everything is on the websites" (IV 6).

There were also noticeable differences in preferences regarding certain types of websites when it comes to searching for hotel information. These differences are considered a recurring finding in the research studies by Jones and Chen (2011) and Kazakeviciute and Banyte (2012), who state that hotel consumers make decisions based on criteria they set for themselves, and that these criteria are based on individual perceptions. It is interesting to note that 25% of the interviewees go directly to the official hotel websites for information, 37.5% prefer search engines like Booking.com, Expedia, Despegar, and Trivago, and make their decisions solely based on these sites without viewing the hotel's official website at all. Finally, another 37.5% conduct a more thorough search and use both types of sites: search engines and the official website of each hotel.

Statements such as: "I stick with the photos on Booking.com, but especially the reviews on Booking.com are everything for me" (IV 4) or "Everything I need to know is on these sites that compare hotels like Booking.com or Despegar; the truth is I never have additional questions" (IV 1). "I stick with search engines because I don't like taking so much time deciding; the information is summarized—why go to the hotels' direct websites?" (IV 8). Conversely, other interviewees state: "I don't like search engines; I prefer to go straight to hotel brands and visit each site; search engines always seem to inflate prices" (IV III). "I always prefer to visit each hotel's page because I like to make the reservation directly through their site; I don't like dealing with intermediaries in case there is a problem with my reservation, just like when I book flights" (IV 7).

These differences are important because, although this research focuses on the impact of the communication provided on each hotel's official website to encourage the use of new technologies, it would be worthwhile for future studies to consider the role of promoting self-service technologies through these other websites, such as search engines, which support hotel marketing.

4.2.1.2 Websites vs. other channels in hospitality

The interviewees agree on numerous positive features of the website. However, as discussed in the literature review, Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) goes far beyond choosing a single communication channel (Osterwalder et al., 2015). When asked to be more specific about why they consider the website the most suitable channel for obtaining hotel information compared to other potential communication channels, all interviewees agree that the informational capacity of a website makes the difference.

- “I like being able to see images, I like knowing every detail of what my rate includes, especially being informed about breakfast, and I like to know what activities are available in the destination beyond the hotel” (IV 3).
- “I like being fully informed; I even like to read about how many towels I have available at the pool. This level of detail cannot be offered by other communication channels” (IV 7).

Some interviewees even acknowledged that, in terms of reach and power, social media could be another tempting communication channel, but they do not trust its content as much as they trust that of a website:

- “For me, social media is an emotional testimony from other people who have stayed at the hotel I’m interested in, but the website is the serious part, it handles a more formal, informed communication that encourages decision-making” (IV 2). “Plus, it’s no secret that influencers on social media are driven by money; they don’t make honest recommendations” (IV 2).
- “When thinking of other media, only Instagram comes to mind, but more because I enjoy the image content it offers. In the end, it’s the same images I can see on the website, but the website has much more interesting information” (IV 8).

Only one interviewee referred to communication channels categorized within offline marketing.

- “I value the information about new hotels that I can find in airplane magazines and the advertising billboards at the airports themselves” (IV 3). However, this represents only 12.5% of the total

sample, which contrasts with the conclusions of Rust and Varki (1996), who suggested that the digital world would be an unmanageable threat to marketing communication. While we do not claim that the evolution has been easy, the current preference is clearly for digital media.

4.2.1.3 Perspectives on a good website

When asking the interviewees about what makes a website good for them, all these responses support the theories reviewed in the earlier chapters regarding best practices for website design and optimization (Gunjan et al., 2012). Interviewees specifically mentioned that websites should be purpose-driven (Ziakos et al., 2019), some pointed out that the design should be appropriate for the type of device (Pinandito et al., 2017), and all agreed that it should have easy navigation.

- "Easy for me means that it looks attractive, well-designed, and organized logically" (IV 1). "I feel good when the website is clean and easy to read, light; too much detail disturbs me" (IV 3). "A good website for me is one where I find what I'm looking for" (IV 7).

However, there was one response that caught the researcher's attention. For (IV 5), a good website is one that does not create false expectations for users. They stated that it is common to find websites with wonderful images, but the reality of the hotel experience does not meet expectations. In other words, the interviewee measures the quality of the navigation experience only after interacting with the hotel service. This can be considered a significant finding because literature tends to think that the navigation experience is limited to the time spent on the website, while for some people, it is not just that. This "false expectation" of websites was somewhat considered in the literature review when studying the issue of content reliability (Sugandhika and Ahangama, 2022). This finding is important because when considering the purpose of this study—using web communication to incentivize the use of SSKs, it is crucial to ensure that the information presented about these technologies on the web is not only facilitative but also honest; otherwise, the desired acceptance will not be achieved.

4.2.2 OBJECTIVE 2: "Investigate individuals' knowledge of self-service kiosks in hotels and where they obtained this information."

The findings for this objective clearly highlight the gap in previous research on the adoption of self-service technologies. It is evident that individuals lack knowledge about SSKs, which is also a direct consequence of the lack of strategic marketing by the hospitality industry.

4.2.2.1 General knowledge about SSK

Throughout the literature, it was possible to identify other industries where SSKs are indeed recognized by individuals. This was confirmed by asking the interviewees if they had heard of this type of technology in any industry or if they had had any contact with it. All interviewees confirmed having knowledge of this technology in industries such as healthcare (hospitals and clinics), airports, fast-food restaurants, and cinemas. Surprisingly, 100% of the interviewees did not recognize ATMs or parking machines as types of self-service kiosks.

When asked if they had had any contact with these kiosks, only one of them reported having used them in restaurants like McDonald's, and 50% of them said they had used them at airports. Some responses particularly caught the investigator's attention:

- "I feel that ATMs and parking machines, for example, are things you're used to seeing because they're everywhere, but not because there was a formal introduction to what they do; it's almost taken for granted that they exist.

- "With kiosks in hospitals and clinics, or in airports, there is a lot of missing information about what they do and how they do it" (IV 7).

- "I remember that the first time I used a kiosk at the airport was because there was a line of people all trying to figure out what the machine did and regarding ATMs, I think everyone uses them because it's a necessity " (IV 8).

- "What I believe has happened with ATMs, compared to other industries, is that they have had more time to evolve. What is needed in other industries is more time" (IV 4).

The previous comments demonstrate that, although SSKs have found their place over time in other industries, their adoption is not necessarily due to a well-developed adoption process or informative advertising campaigns about their introduction, nor is it due to a premeditated and conscious awareness. Instead, the data collection reveals more of an unexpected and unprepared encounter with the technology. This also supports the argument proposed in this study: to develop strategic marketing plans that communicate an appropriate message through effective channels like websites, preparing users with prior knowledge before their encounter with SSKs.

4.2.2.2 Knowledge about SSK in hotels

As shown in the literature review, it was (Bitner et al., 2002) who, in their proposed model of service technology adoption, first mentioned "awareness" as the initial stage an individual must go through to accept these technologies. Knowing about the existence of the technology, although it seems quite logical, appears to have been overlooked by other studies that focused first on consumer behaviour before even informing them.

To what extent has the hotel industry overlooked the power of marketing in this area, as evidenced by asking participants if they have heard about self-service kiosks (SSK) in hotels? Only one of them mentioned the following: "I like to read about technological innovations being implemented. Although I don't know about SSKs, I know that Asian hotels have developed this area quite well, and regarding the functions, I know that users can check in by themselves" (IV 5). Two other participants responded as follows: "I have heard that they exist in hotels, but I don't know much more about it" (IV 7) (IV 1). The remaining five interviewees were unaware that SSKs exist in the hotel industry. All were briefly explained what SSKs are and their functions, to which they also showed complete unfamiliarity.

When probing the interviewees about why kiosks are more recognized in other industries than in the hotel sector, most responses indicated that in the hotel industry, personalization of service still prevails, and that automation will take more time. "Even if a hotel is selling a room, it is also selling the service of welcoming you and making you feel special" (IV 4). This aligns with the literature review, where most studies agree that one of the major disadvantages of SSKs is precisely the minimization or elimination of human interaction (Kucukusta et al., 2014). However, other interviewees argue that this human interaction depends significantly on the type of trip being made. "For my business trips, I would love to use the kiosks because you arrive tired and just want to get to your room and sleep. For family trips or higher-end resorts, I wouldn't use them; my sisters love to be attended to by people" (IV 3).

The lack of awareness about SSKs in hotels is a clear indication of the gap in the literature, as previous research on SSKs has not addressed the importance of industry awareness of the technology as a starting point. Another evident gap is the lack of investigation into how communication through different tactics and channels can impact the intention to use SSKs. Currently, hotels utilize multiple communication channels, including their own websites, which could be leveraged to inform about SSKs, their functions, and their benefits.

4.2.2.3 Promotion and advertisement on SSK for hotels

To make it even clearer that no effort has been made to communicate the existence of SSKs in hotels, participants were asked if, amidst the daily bombardment of advertising through various media, they had heard any recognized hotel chain or hotel mentioning that they have installed SSKs. They were also asked if they had seen any advertising campaigns about SSKs in hotels or if they had encountered any information about these, whether on websites, social media, articles, blogs, or even offline tactics like magazines, newspapers, radio, television, airport ads, or travel magazines. All participants responded negatively. Users deserve to be informed about technological advancements developed for their benefit through a well-thought-out and

deliberate process, not because they happened to encounter the technology by accident, out of obligation, or because there was no other alternative.

The call is for the hotel industry, which has forgotten to inform that it is working on sector innovation, striving to offer better facilities and alternatives to its clients every day. This study shows that there is currently no genuine interest in making technology a fundamental part of the hotel offering. Similarly, this is an invitation to scholars of hotel marketing to start instilling in clients the value of different kinds of conveniences. Why not start thinking that technology will be a factor in booking future hotels? Technology will become a comparative advantage for hotels, but this level will never be reached if communication is not used to influence individual behaviour. This is something marketing has done for a lifetime; why then does it remain obsolete in this case?

4.2.3 OBJECTIVE 3: “Determine if individuals value obtaining information about self-service kiosks in hotels through the web.”

Once users are informed through communication that SSKs exist, they should be given the opportunity to research them further.

4.2.3.1 The value of the rational content

According to Bitner et al. (2002) in their SST adoption model, after an individual is exposed to the "awareness" stage, they must proceed to the investigation stage. During this process, each individual values the rational information provided about the technology. It is at this stage that the self-service technology adoption models reviewed in the literature converge. The user can perceive the usefulness of the technology and its ease of use, concepts inherent to the well-known TAM (Technology Acceptance Model) (Davis, 1989), and they may also be persuaded by the advantages recognized through the research process (Kucukusta et al., 2014). Additionally, at this crucial stage, the user may respond to other characteristics of the IDT (Innovation Diffusion Theory) model, such

as the complexity it represents or if they identify any risks associated with the technology (Bakkabulindi, 2014).

When asking the interviewees about their opinion on having complete information about self-service kiosks (SSKs) on hotel websites that feature this technology, the responses uniformly indicated that they would value having all possible information just a click away. This is especially because it provides an opportunity for preparation before encountering the technology.

- "I believe that if hotels mention SSKs on their website, many people would be inclined to use them, especially if the benefits are explained" (IV 1).

- "Being able to understand how SSKs work before arriving at the hotel will attract me because I can serve myself if I want to" (IV 5).

- "I would like to be information about SSKs on the website because it lets me know in advance that I can complete the process more quickly if I arrive tired" (IV 7).

- "Most of the time, when approaching new technologies, it's because I see the machines upon arriving and they pique my curiosity, or at least that's always been my experience. The effort to inform in advance would make all the difference" (IV 8).

4.2.4 OBJECTIVE 4: "Investigate whether website communication can outweigh personal judgments about using self-service kiosks (SSKs)."

Continuing with the next stage of the technology adoption model, following the "investigation" stage, the individual encounters the "evaluation" stage, which is shaped by the sum of favourable or unfavourable judgments the person makes about the self-service technology (Bitner et al., 2002). The literature review revealed that in multiple studies, these judgments are a direct consequence of factors such as having a positive or negative attitude toward the technology, which also strongly relates to generational issues. These judgments are also influenced by perceived social or psychological risks (Kucukusta et al., 2014).

4.2.4.1 Generational judgments and emotional content

This study confirms findings from other research, such as that by Kucukusta et al. (2014), where the majority of interviewees indicate that a favourable inclination towards using kiosks heavily depends on a person's age. In fact, IV 7, the youngest participant at 22 years old, states: "Anything I can do myself; I don't hesitate. It's like a chip in my generation; it works the same way with my closest friends. We don't even consider getting assistance from another person."

When asked if a website could mitigate the judgments and insecurities that the interviewees believe older adults have, the following responses were found:

- "I honestly don't think that even with the support of a website, older adults will develop a favourable inclination towards new technologies. They only function well if someone assists them with the kiosk" (IV 5).
- "I identify with these new technologies, but I definitely don't see my older sisters using them" (IV 3).
- "Especially in the tourism industry, I don't see how older adults will develop a taste for new things because they love being attended to and understand that, in addition to the hotel stay, they are paying for a service" (IV 6).

Indeed, although communication through the website may not be the definitive solution for all generational challenges, this author continues to argue that one can refer to what was reviewed in the literature as emotional content. According to Ziakis et al. (2019), the success of a website is determined by a balanced amount of both rational and emotional content. Even if older adults do not feel compatible with such developments, they will value knowing that upon arriving at the hotel, the use of technology will be optional, which will alleviate a concern thanks to having access to prior information. They will also appreciate knowing that they are not the only ones who have faced these challenges before. This type of information can only be communicated by creating emotional content through inspirational stories with which they can identify.

4.2.4.2 Other compatibility judgements

Interviewees highlighted, among other factors, the fear of having to operate a machine in a public place, exposing their personal data. Many compared it to using ATMs and the sense of privacy violation that can be felt. Others mentioned it as a matter of social fear or rejection due to a lack of knowledge on how to use the kiosk. “People dislike feeling publicly embarrassed for not knowing how a kiosk works, and thus many choose to avoid it” (IV 2).

When asked how the content provided on a website could mitigate these types of judgments, the responses were 100% favourable. The interviewees acknowledged that, setting aside generational issues and considering all other possible judgments, it makes complete sense that a website could help resolve these insecurities with quality content. This unanimous finding further confirms the gap identified in the literature review, as it seems that no one had previously questioned, especially in the hotel industry, the significant influence that appropriately and preventively communicating the adoption process of a new SST can have on changing personal judgments, which in turn influence their adoption intention.

The results of this study also suggest that judgments are highly modifiable when individuals have the appropriate tools to address them. Those who do not initially have a positive inclination towards technology can completely change their attitude if they have prior access to information about the technology on the hotel’s website before their first interaction. A person with security concerns about handling their personal data will appreciate reading about the topic on the hotel’s website and learning that the kiosks’ screens are designed with strategic angles to avoid visibility to others.

4.2.5 OBJECTIVE 5: "Examine how a website can increase the willingness to use SSK in hotels."

Reaching the final stage considered in this study, as defined by (Bitner et al., 2002), participants were asked, based on their perceptions, how website communication could help increase the willingness to attempt using SSKs in hotels.

4.2.5.1 "The attempt" (skills – role clarity and motivation)

To better organize the participants' responses, the theory of "the attempt stage," also discussed in the literature review, was considered. This theory asserts that the likelihood of attempting to use these technologies is higher if the individual feels **competent** to use them, understands their **function** upon encountering them, and is **motivated** to use them (Bitner et al., 2002). 90% of respondents agree that step-by-step tutorials and guided videos are the best options to include on a website. These resources not only help advertise the availability of the technology but also provide informative content that clarifies the specific skills needed to use SSKs and offers a detailed, step-by-step explanation of how to use them, specifying the tasks the individual needs to perform.

Some comments that corroborate the above are:

- "The more complex transactions the kiosk can handle and not just check-in, the more attractive the technology might become, and that is what the website should inform" (IV 1).
- "The information on the website should focus on highlighting the advantages of the kiosk, perhaps through guided videos" (IV 6).
- "The website's proposal about kiosk information should be very visual to avoid becoming boring, and could be supported by email marketing when confirming the reservation to remind customers about the kiosk service and provide the tutorial link for using it" (IV 3).

- "It would be interesting if the visual material were animated, as some airlines are now doing to explain what to do in emergency situations on planes" (IV 4).

- "Tools like tutorials or videos in multiple languages or the famous FAQs could work very well" (IV 8).

As evident, it has been confirmed that it is possible to use web communication to clarify users' roles with kiosks and to develop their skills. These proposals also align with the theory of website optimization discussed in the literature review (Johnston and Kong, 2011). Finally, when discussing the topic of motivation, several proposals were received from participants, once again proving that a website has the versatility needed to encourage individuals to use SSKs. Some responses were:

- "If they offer me a discount percentage for completing the tutorial on the website and using the kiosk, I wouldn't hesitate to do it. I think it would be a good incentive" (IV 5).

- "I like the idea of the kiosk giving me a discount voucher after using it, which could be for the bar, restaurant, or breakfast at the hotel" (IV 7).

- "I believe that anything involving a discount will be well received by people and will achieve the goal of motivating the use of kiosks" (IV 6).

A website allows for all the creative ideas one wants to communicate, as long as they are based on strategic marketing principles and consciously studied, as proposed by Osterwalder et al. (2015).

4.3 Chapter Conclusion

Several findings were identified that support the literature reviewed in the second chapter, as well as addressing gaps evident in previous studies. After analysing each objective, it is possible to answer the central research question posed initially and affirm that web communication has a significant impact on the intention to use SSKs in the hospitality industry. To achieve changes in this intention, it is necessary for the hotel industry to focus on well-executed strategic and tactical marketing that communicates a high-quality message, preparing potential SSKs manipulators for their use and positively predisposing them before their encounter with the technology.

5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Answer to the research question

The main purpose of this research was to answer the research question: "To what extent does the communication of a website influence the willingness to use SSKs (Self-Service Kiosks) in the hotel industry?" This question was addressed by achieving the established objectives through the collection and analysis of the obtained data. Below is a summary of the key points derived from the fulfilment of each objective.

5.1.1 Website Relevance in the Hotel Industry

As testified by the participants in this research, without exception, all of them turn to websites when researching a future hotel reservation. They themselves acknowledge that the reach and influence of websites are significant. There were even comparisons made with other communication channels, such as social media; however, the unanimous conclusion is that websites convey an informative and secure image that social media does not possess. Additionally, websites were recognized as a highly versatile communication medium due to their ability to combine many creative elements such as images, videos, blogs, and even interactive solutions.

The numerous advantages of websites recognized by the interviewees are also supported by the literature, which suggests that the hotel industry has a continuous responsibility to work on the optimization and constant improvement of their websites. With their power and reach, websites should be used as an informational tool to communicate the technological advancements implemented in hotels. This effort should not only be carried out at the individual or brand level, but the entire tourism industry is called upon to begin informing individuals about the sector's technological advancements directly through search engines. Websites are the appropriate medium to achieve this goal.

5.1.2 Individuals' knowledge of self-service kiosks in hotels

The study clearly revealed that people are unaware of the existence of SSKs in the hotel industry, unlike in other industries such as banking, food and beverage, and airlines. They are even less aware of the multiple functions these kiosks can offer. You cannot adopt a technology that is simply unknown, it's like trying to run before you can walk. The proper starting point for any model of SST adoption is an integrated marketing communication strategy that allows individuals to gain knowledge and identify added value. Perhaps then, we may start seeing marketing campaigns focused on promoting the technology achieved by hotels, and in the future, technology may become an influential factor in hotel booking decisions.

5.1.3 The value on being informed through a website

The fact that individuals have the opportunity to explore a topic presented on the web is highly valued by everyone. When information is available to all, the research process becomes voluntary, and in the case of new technologies like SSKs, information is a treasure. Having this content on a website allows hotel consumers to prepare themselves before encountering the kiosk for the first time. This makes a significant difference, something that previous literature had not considered. Many participants reflected on the first time they had to use an ATM, a SSK in a cinema, or even a parking machine. None of these experiences included prior information; they used the machines because they saw them and had no choice, not because there was a conscious preparation process that allowed them to understand the advantages and disadvantages.

The adoption of technologies would take a different course if it didn't have to be done abruptly. If mass communication channels like websites were used to gently explain their operation and benefits. This is a call to hotels and the tourism sector to start doing things better because that is supposed to be the purpose of evolution.

5.1.4 Web communication as a solution to people's judgments about the use of new technologies

In the course of this research, there was also an opportunity to reaffirm various observations made in many previous studies, such as: that older adults are less willing to use kiosks, that using kiosks poses a risk of disclosing personal information, that some people experience social anxiety and feel embarrassed about not knowing how to use new technologies, and that some users are reluctant to try new technologies due to laziness.

According to the data collected in the interviews, participants agreed that communication through a website could mitigate these self-imposed concerns, leading to an increase in kiosk usage and, consequently, adoption. While rational content is fundamental in the communication process, the recommendation in this case is not to overlook the emotional content that allows people to connect with their most vulnerable side. Using the website to prepare them emotionally as well, making them feel fully capable of using the kiosks.

5.1.5 Web communication capable of increase the willingness to use self-service kiosks in hotels

Guided videos and tutorials were the most suggested options to meet this specific need. The biggest challenge lies in creating purposeful and creative proposals, tactics based on a solid marketing strategy that communicates a unified message. This message is essential at this moment, both for the industry and for consumers, who deserve to have effective tools to navigate an increasingly technological world.

5.2 Gaps in the Literature

5.2.1 The “before” of the first interaction with self-service kiosks.

In the course of developing this research, it was highlighted as a gap in the literature that previous studies had not considered the "pre-interaction" phase with self-service technologies, with all efforts having been focused on the singular moment of interaction and even the subsequent consequences. This study demonstrated that focusing on the moment before the interaction has a significant impact on the willingness to use and the adoption of kiosks. It is during this pre-interaction phase that the powerful role of marketing communication comes into play, which is realized through the presence of a website that not only raises awareness about the topic but is also enriched with rational and emotional content. This content helps users gain real understanding of what the technology is, how it is used, its purpose, and the added value it can offer.

5.2.2 Lack of Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) in self-service technology adoption models in the hotel sector.

There is a wealth of literature, research, and prominent authors who advocate for IMC (Integrated Marketing Communication) plans for contemporary companies because these plans can integrate a variety of marketing tactics necessary to deliver a strong message to the end consumer. However, this study demonstrated that strategic marketing plans focused on communicating advancements in self-service technologies in the hotel industry are non-existent, and it is crucial that this is recognized. Until there are more compelling studies like this one that highlight to hotels their lack of effective communication about the future of the industry, they will not make the decision to act. As a result, there will be no progress on the issue, and successful marketing campaigns conveying these types of messages will not be possible.

5.3 Recommendations

Considering that the main desire of the researcher is to encourage further investigation into the identified gaps, the following specific recommendations are proposed:

- An invitation is extended to conduct research that considers communication channels other than websites, as there are many other options that could be utilized. It would be very interesting to offer hoteliers multiple alternatives for informing users in advance about the existence of technologies like kiosks. Exploring other communication channels would significantly contribute to the academic field.
- An invitation is extended for future research on the willingness to use and the adaptation process for other self-service technologies in the hotel sector, aside from kiosks. Technologies that contribute to the continuous evolution of the sector would be of particular interest. This would help shape the image of a hotel industry committed to providing useful tools to its consumers.
- A call is made to future researchers to explore other topics related to the “pre-interaction” phase with any self-service technology. The discoveries resulting from focusing solely on this phase could be surprising and could reshape the narrative that has been told thus far.
- It is recommended that future marketing practitioners move away from traditional hotel marketing and embrace out-of-the-box thinking. They should promote marketing campaigns focused on topics that have not been previously explored in the hospitality industry, such as self-service technologies.

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Appendix 1 Interview Questions

Research Question: "To what extent does website communication influence the willingness to use SSK (Self-Service Kiosks (SSKs) in the hospitality industry?"

To start the questionnaire, the researcher thought of first confirming the **websites relevance** in the hotel industry and the rest of the questions were developed based on the **SELF - SERVICE TECHNOLOGY ADOPTION MODEL** proposed by (Bitner, Ostrom and Meuter, 2002). This model explained in chapter two is composed of the following stages: **Awareness, Research, Evaluation and The attempt** (See Fig. 2- Chapter 2). This model frames the work the researcher wanted to develop. Basing the construction of the questionnaire on this model allowed her to reach the objectives that clearly answer the research question.

OBJECTIVE 1: Verify the importance of web pages as a means of communication for the hotel consumer. (**CONFIRM WEBSITES RELEVANCE**)

Q1. In your opinion, what is the best way to book a hotel nowadays and why?

Q2. Do you think that websites can provide you with all the information you need to make a hotel reservation?

Q3. What is a good website for you?

Q4. Do you think that having a good website is a differentiating factor when making a hotel reservation?

Q5. In your opinion, what other communication channels do you consider having the potential for great impact on the hotel market?

OBJECTIVE 2: Investigate individuals' knowledge of SSK (self-service kiosks) in hotels and where they obtained it from.

(AWARENESS)

Q1. What do you know in general about SSK. Where you have seen or heard of them?

Q2. What do you know about self-service kiosks in hotels. How did you learn about them?

Q3. Why do you think kiosks have more recognition in other industries than in the hotel industry?

Q4. Have you heard of any well-known hotel chains implementing kiosks and what do you think about it?

Q5. Have you seen any information on a hotel website about this technology? Or any marketing campaigns promoting the SSK use? Do you think this promotion is positive and why?

OBJECTIVE 3: To find out if individuals place value on being informed through the website about self-service kiosks in hotels. **(INVESTIGATION- Usefulness – Rationale Content)**

Q1. Do you remember your first encounter with a new technology such as an ATM, a parking payment machine or a self-service kiosk in any industry? Can you share with me how was this experience? Did you have the chance to read or learn about this technology before using it?

Q2. Do you think having more knowledge about SSK in hotels can lead to wanting to use them?

Q3. Do you think there is a benefit in being able to study the use of the kiosks through the web site before having a first encounter with them?

Q4. What information do you expect to find on the website about these kiosks, in what form do you expect to visualize this information or how do you imagine it? (instructions, functions, advantages).

Q5. In your opinion, what would be the added value of being able to have information about this technology in advance?

OBJECTIVE 4: Investigate whether the communication of a web page can weigh up the personal judgments of trying to use SSK.

(EVALUATION – Appealing: Attitude, Compatibility, Perceive Risks– Emotional Content)

Q1. In your opinion, can a blog, an advertisement, a video, an explanation, a story, or any of the many digital content used on websites influence a change of attitude towards the use of kiosks?

Q2. How do you feel about learning how to use a new technology through a web site? Does it generate positive or negative feelings in you and why?

Q3. In your opinion a website could help people who are limited to the use of new technologies such as the elderly generation?

Q4. In your opinion, what are the most common fears that people show when faced with interacting with these SSK for the first time? Can the website content help to overcome them?

OBJECTIVE 5: Examine how a website can increase the willingness to use self-service kiosks in hotels.

(TRIAL STAGE, Skills, Role Clarity, Motivation)

Q1. In your opinion how can a website help you in developing skills to use the kiosk for the first time?

Q2. How can a website help you clarify your role in using the SSK?

Q3. What creative ways do you think can be implemented on web pages that allow users to learn about kiosks? And why do you think they would be a good alternative?

Q4. In your opinion can a website motivate individuals to try to use the SSK in a hotel? What other motivations do you think would be attractive to increase usage and why?

Q5. What would you think about being informed by the hotel webpage about being rewarded for using the SKK and what kind of reward can you visualize?