Chapter 6

Discussion & Concluding Remarks

6.1 Introduction

To discuss the result and to present concluding remarks on the research work is the objective of this chapter. The chapter starts with a detailed evaluation of the investigation then it explains all the conclusions drawn from the finding of this study. It further discusses significant contribution from this study. The chapter ends with the discussion on the limitations of this research work and scope for future research in this research area.

6.2 Evaluation of the Investigation

This research identified relative advantage, complexity, compatibility, upper management support, training and education, and technological competence as important variables for affecting attitude towards electronic distribution system adoption using perceived usefulness, and perceived ease of use as mediating variables. From the result, it is also observed that competitive pressure and trading partner support were found directly affecting attitude towards using electronic distribution system.

- The finding of the study shows that relative advantage has a strong impact on perceived ease of use where as it does not have much impact on perceived usefulness. From several research literature, it has been witnessed that electronic distribution system adoption by hospitality organizations is dependent on various advantages of key strategic importance such as mobility, the economy of scale, etc. As such it allows the hospitality organization employees to understand how the adoption of the electronic distribution system is easy to use in their day to day online room booking and transaction. It is found that employees are not in a position to appreciate how this EDS technology shall be advantageous for their
guest relationship and better manage their internal and external management interfaces.

- The study tried to identify complexity from the point of electronic distribution system design, functionality, implementation, and operation. It is observed that hospitality employees perceive that although EDS technology is complex to some extent it is useful to them, and it has no negative effect on the usefulness. However, it is found that users are finding it to be complex to use and at time reluctant to change, adapt and upgrade their electronic distribution system because of the perceived difficulty in learning and using. Majority of hospitality employees are having a fear of vulnerability of the electronic distribution system which might lead to system breakdown and the extent of loss of important operational and transactional data. Some of the employees perceive that it is very difficult to integrate their existing work with the EDS technology. As any technology adoption takes time to settle down, EDS technology is no exception. Some of the new users feel that this technology takes too much of their time to feed data and retrieve those for further process. To improve the confidence and ease of use of EDS technology developers and vendors need to improve EDS systems to be more handy and relevant to their job. Research findings indicate that EDS technology is not complex to those who have a minimum level of understanding and experience to use the application and have no or little resistance to adopting changes. It is the duty and responsibility of the service provider to reduce the anxiety of the users by the ease of use tools and to ensure a smooth transition from the manual or traditional system to the electronic distribution system.

- It is observed that compatibility has very strong impact on perceived usefulness as EDS is found to be consistent with other electronic data management systems used in the hospitality organizations. It is further observed that employees find that EDS system integrates well and perform most of the needed functions of other programs. It is suggested that managers along with the technology vendors need to take initiatives to ensure optimum compatibility is achieved among the entire technology infrastructure. EDS technology needs to be compatible with the
customers, business, and processes need. Each organization needs to access their compatibility issues among the entire technology architecture they have and accordingly prioritize to have smooth integration with them. It is further observed that employees feel that the vendor company in most of the cases oblige them by customizing the necessary software as per their requirement. Therefore users perceive that customization in EDS technology is easy. Most of the users opined that EDS is compatible with their organization’s existing format, interface, and other structural data. As the EDS technology is highly compatible it is found that users do not find much difficulty in importing or exporting applications and data to or from the system.

- In a hospitality organization, upper management has considered and opted for EDS technology as strategically important. It is observed that upper management is fully aware of the possible advantages of switching to ES technology. Therefore, they are strategically willing to take risk and opportunity involved in the adoption of EDS technology. It is further observed that although upper management has convinced their staffs about the potential benefits to the organization but a large extent are unable to create a positive atmosphere and instill the confidence of learning and change for the adoption of EDS technology. Upper management needs to find innovative ideas to support their subordinated to feel that EDS technology is easy to learn and use. Upper management may consider involving and engaging key user groups right from the requirement identification, vendor negotiation stage. The upper management may need to foster a culture of organization wide information sharing. The organizations with higher readiness for technology adoption are most likely to use electronic distribution system. The upper management needs to invest in the physical information technology infrastructure and hiring right resources having adequate IT knowledge and skills to maintain the IT infrastructure.

- Training enables employees to be adequately knowledgeable to use EDS technology effectively. Hands-on practical training will help employees to understand and perform the operational and functional perspective of EDS technology. It leads them to appreciate the role of the technology in improving
their job performance. Therefore hospitality managers must develop effective training programs having different modules for different set and level of users so that EDS technology can be implemented smoothly in their organization. Continuous training will create a large pool of trained workforce to handle EDS technology. Very significant and positive relationship between training and education with the adoption of EDS technology is being observed. Most of the respondents have indicated that their understanding of EDS technology has substantially improved after participating in EDS technology training sessions. The users of this EDS technology have felt that their organization has provided adequate hands-on training before switching to the new technology operation in real time. The finding indicates that training and education have very positive effect on both perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness of EDS technology in hospitality organizations.

- Good training leads to technological competence. It is observed that EDS technology users perceive that technological competence boosts their confidence to adopt this technology as they could see value in it. Most of the employees are aware of the external technological environment and are well informed that their competing organizations have also adopted are in the process of adopting EDS technology. They understand that for survival and growth in their competitive market set it has become necessary to upgrade and update their distribution channels and technology.

- It is observed that competitive pressure creates a positive attitude towards using EDS technology among the employees of hospitality organizations. They fully understand the competitive advantages offered by the EDS technology in the hospitality industry. The positive relationship between competitive pressure and attitude towards adoption implies that when competitor implements EDS technology early other organizations feel the pressure of adopting EDS technology to maintain their competitive parity. For hospitality organizations, it is very important to realize that stiff competition drives them to switch from manual distribution systems to electronic distribution systems.
• Adoption of EDS technology requires the full support and coordination from the trading partners. It is observed from the finding that adoption of EDS technology essentially driven by the trading partners. EDS technology has the capabilities which support to form the desired network among all the trading partners. Through the supported network, trading partners can share valuable resources, which will enable them to provide competitive services to their end users. To maintain privacy and integrity trading partners have a collective role in proving security to the system.

• It is observed that attitude towards the use of EDS technology gets influenced positively by the perception of hospitality employees on the technology’s relative advantage; less of complexity; compatibility; training and education; and technological competence. The influences of these factors are high because the employees perceive the technology to be useful and easy to use.

6.3 Significant Contribution

This study has accomplished the broad objectives of evaluating several dimensions which are affecting adoption of EDS technology in the hospitality industry from the employees’ perspective. The modified conceptual model developed based on the integration of technology adoption model, and technological-organizational-environmental framework helps researchers and industry practitioners to examine the perception of EDS technology in the hospitality organizations. This intergraded model is expected to address several key concerns for EDS technology adoption. It has much relevance to the technology professionals exclusively working for the hospitality organizations. From this findings, they may formulate suitable adoption strategies for smooth transition from manual distribution to advanced technology enabled electronic distribution system. They may work proactively, take all the preventive measures and avoid all the pit falls which will lead to a successful implementation of EDS technology in their organization. This study may also help hospitality marketer to make the best use of EDS technology in their organization. Cost of operation could be substantially reduced with the right training of EDS technology to the hospitality employees. Hotel operators and decision makers must appreciate critical comments and opinion of employees who are using EDS technology in
their work. They need to understand and accept their unique challenges and accordingly formulate a strategy. Hospitality organizations may strategically focus on holistic adoption and uses of EDS technology, link industry partner and the above create opportunities for their employees to share their concerns and observations. Hotel operators need to evaluate reliability and adaptability of the EDS technology before formulating any strategy on new technology adoption. The findings are expected to provide hotel managers, scholars timely knowledge and insights on how to strategically embrace EDS.

6.4 Limitations

The most prominent limitation of this study is the sample. The sample consisted of the employees of hospitality industry operating in the state of Odisha in India which may not be generalized to the entire body of the employees of the hospitality industry in the globe. In addition to this limitation, employees of hotels who have been using EDS technology were studied. To address the limitations of this study, similar research may be conducted elsewhere in the world, and the outcome of the same may be compared with the result of this research. Further research may be carried out to study the perception of nonuser vis-a-vis user of EDS technology in the hospitality industry.

The researcher has used convenience sampling method for many advantages, but it has a major challenge of ensuring complete devoid of biases which might have affected some of the findings in the study. It may be noted that the limitations of convenience sampling were carefully considered and due precaution was taken to avoid them while collecting the sample.

Lack of earlier research on the same theme in Odisha or elsewhere might have restricted the scope and direction of this study. In spite of the full assurance of confidentiality, the reluctance of sharing information and responding to the questionnaire was observed to a small extent.

When the researcher undertook the study, at that time 83 leading hospitality organizations among 258 member hotel organizations of Hotel & Restaurant Association of Odisha were using EDS technology. It is expected that the user of EDS technology will increase
rapidly and it will touch almost cent percentage in another few years, therefore a similar study may be undertaken with the changed scenario. Future research attempts may also examine and compare the perception of the experienced user and new user of EDS technology.

This study may be having the limitation of studying a very small in the range of eleven variables. This study has focused only on the adopters. This research has only considered the respondents who have already adopted EDS technology. The research finding may differ when both the adopters and non-adopters are considered.

### 6.5 Scope for Future Research

As this research has only considered the respondents who have already adopted EDS technology, future research may be undertaken considering the non-adopters exclusively, or a comparative study may be undertaken between adopters and non-adopters. Further research needs to be undertaken to find the perceptions of all the stakeholders such as investors, owners, suppliers and end users.

Further investigations are suggested to review the effect of relative advantage and complexity on perceived usefulness, and the effect of upper management support on perceived usefulness as these research outcomes are contradicting a priori expectation from other established research findings.

In the future, research may dig deeper into the three hypotheses which were not supported in this study. Future study may assess the influence of each exogenous factors such as relative advantage, complexity and upper management support on the mediating factors perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use.

The scope of this research is restricted to the hospitality sector in the geographic area of the state of Odisha in India which may be extended to hospitality organizations in other geographic areas, and the results may be revalidated.

The newly proposed integrated TAM and TOE framework to study the perception of employees for a new technology adoption may be equally valid for other organizations which need to be empirically tested.
6.6 Conclusion

To rip maximum benefit from the technology adoption, hospitality industry practitioners are striving hard to understand their employees’ behavior in the ever changing environment influenced by information and communication technologies. In this research, the researcher tried to find the hospitality employees’ motivation and rationale behind EDS technology adoption and appreciation. This study examined the key factors affecting electronic distribution system technology adoption in hospitality organizations.

From this research, it is found that if strategically managed well then EDS technology could contribute positively in multiple ways to a hospitality organization. The success of technology adoption is directly related to the level of involvement of the top management. The technological adoption process is carried out using the top down approach. The top management team needs to be fully convinced that the new technology is going to improve their bottom-line by improving their business opportunity, competitiveness, and internal operational efficiency. The leadership in hospitality organization has a definite role in motivating and convincing their employees for a perceived positive attitude towards EDS technology adoption. Top management needs to provide a conducive environment for smooth adoption of new technology by providing necessary resources such as people, equipment and time. Top management must share time with training manager, IT manager, departmental heads and vendor support lead to give direction to identify the training need and set their expectations of deliverables from each party involved. No doubt training enhances skills, but more so it builds confidence in the user. Due to the competitive pressure, the hurriedness on switching from manual distribution system to electronic distribution system sometimes does not allow organizations to invest sufficient time in inculcating the changing culture in the organization. To secure electronic distribution system from security threats various security measures such as access control, management standards need to be defined and incorporated into the system. Hospitality organizations need to treat the entire stakeholders as their co-creator for the new technology adoption efforts and updgradation. Hotel employees need to be taken care of as they are the internal customer to the hotel organization and the interface between the management and external guest.

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