

Paradoxes of Self-Service Technology Adoption: An Evidence from Airline Industry

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Abstract

With the accelerating speed of artificial intelligence and mobile technology so many companies have fully replaced the traditional services with technology-based self-services. However sometimes fully replacing the traditional service with self-service technologies develops negative attitude among users and they resist and inhibit that technology. For understanding that resistance behavior we draw inferences from psychological reactance theory. Grounded on this theory present study examines the role of some paradoxes (technology anxiety, insecurity) within the context of self-service technology environment. This research develops conceptual model to investigate the impact of two paradoxes such as: technology anxiety and insecurity on adoption attitude. We tested the model and relevant research hypotheses with survey data collected from 152 users of self-service technology in India. The results of the study recommend the service providers that instead of replacing whole service options some choices during the process develops positive attitude among users of technology.

Keywords: Technology Anxiety, Insecurity, Adoption Attitude, Psychological Reactance Theory, Self-Service technology.

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INTRODUCTION

The growth of self-service technology has revolutionized the service sector and implies benefits for both customers as well as service providers [1, 2]. These self-service options provide faster services for consumers as compared to traditional service encounters [3] and reduce anxiety among them [4]. With respect to companies these self-service options help to reduce labor costs and improve efficiency to compete in niche market [3]. Tremendous growth in supply of technology related products and services in the market have played a crucial role in the relationship between customers and service employees [5, 6].

Meuter *et al.*, [7] cites various examples of SSTs such as ATMs where the customer need not interact with bank employees for banking transactions, online shopping wherein there is no need to visit malls, self-scanning through barcodes at retail stores, collecting

boarding passes at airports using kiosks, SSTs usage for check in and bag drop at airports [8], ordering food online, various types of interactive vending machines [9] and using mobile apps for various payments [10, 11]. All these new innovations have terminated the old system, which typically consisted of eliminating the personal interaction mode. Various technological innovations cause anxiety among consumers. This negative attitude towards technology adoption becomes problem in companies' success [12]. Therefore, companies adopt variety of ways to steer their consumers towards the usage of technology, of which the most radical is forcing them to use systems by completely replacing the traditional method of service delivery [13, 2]. Customers as a passive receiver of this transformation may feel that the innovation is not for their benefits, even if that technological mode is much comfortable and beneficial [2].

Due to the technological advancement the focus of the organizations shifts towards the experience of customers towards the usage of technology [14]. Similarly, customers also evaluate the technology either in a positive or negative way [15]. Enumerable studies are available in existing literature focusing on constructs related to positive experience and adoption of technology [16, 7, 17, 18] but the prior studies have not sufficiently addressed the paradoxical nature of consumers experience towards self-service technology that have direct impact on satisfaction level and helps in evaluating technologies [15]. As this research is related with public transport services (airline sector), therefore, the results and implications can be valuable for transport companies who are planning to implement technology innovation for the first time [2]. Further the objective of this research is to explore those constructs that have negative impact on the mind of consumers towards the usage of self-service technology, this has rarely been addressed in previous literature so far. Based on theoretical perspective this study contributes towards the literature by examining the impact of psychological constructs such as: technology anxiety and insecurity on adoption attitude. We focus on these constructs to better understand the consumer resistance towards technology. The remainder of the paper is organized in a following way. First section includes introduction proceeds with theoretical background and research hypotheses. Next section delineates the research methodology and results of the paper. In the last section we discuss the implications, further research scope and limitation of the study.

THEORETICAL FOUNDATION AND RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

In this section, we discuss the theoretical viewpoints that have been used to figure out the contradictory behavior and unwilling nature of users towards self-service technology.

PSYCHOLOGICAL REACTANCE THEORY

Drawing upon researcher's point of view, present study follows psychological reactance theory given by Jack Brehm [19] who explains unpleasant motivational reaction which further eliminates specific behavioral freedom. There are numerous studies based on information technology that have applied psychological reactance theory to describe the reluctant nature of consumers towards self-service technologies [20, 8]. Concept of Psychological reactance can be expressed on both affective and cognitive aspects. While using the technology when the people feel that their freedom is being exposed, then they may react in a negative way. Moreover, people get motivated to reduce the distress related to high perceived threat and try to take back freedom by reacting opposite to the source of that threat [8]. Adoption of new technology depends on the benefits and merits, but resistance to any type of technology may not entirely depend on the value of

technology but it can be impacted by psychological barriers. Brehm's Reactance Theory explains unpleasant motivational reaction that eliminates specific behavioral freedom. One of the most important psychological aspects suggested by previous literature is technology anxiety which negatively impact SST usage [1, 13]. The reason of anxiety among consumers also depends on insecurity towards its usage. So, we also consider insecurity construct in our study to understand why people develop negative attitude towards technology.

PARADOXES OF TECHNOLOGY ADOPTION

(a) TECHNOLOGY ANXIETY

Technology anxiety term is derived from the studies related to computer anxiety [21] which is defined as "the fear, apprehension and hope people feel when considering use or actually using computer technology" [22, 23, 1]. Technology anxiety plays an important role to influence the consumer regarding usage or non-usage of technology [13, 1]. Anxiety is characterized by "excessive timidity in using computers, negative comments against computers and information science, attempts to reduce the amount of time spent using computers and even the avoidance of computers in the place where they are located" [1, 24]. The focus of technology anxiety is on the consumer's state of mind which effect negatively on SST trial [13, 25]. Therefore, this construct plays a vital role in assessing consumer behavior towards adoption of SST.

(b) INSECURITY

Parasuraman [26] defines insecurity as "distrust of technology and skepticism about its ability to work properly". Feeling of insecurity towards technology usage develops resistance behavior such as postponement, rejection and opposition that will directly affects the business operations. Consumers having negative attitude towards technology might avoid it because they feel that the innovation might be unhealthy for them [27]. In this study insecurity is a negative feeling that trigger negative behavior which obscure consumers to accept the technology innovation [27].

ADOPTION ATTITUDE

Eagly and Chaiken [28] define attitude as "a psychological tendency that is expressed by evaluating a particular entity with some degree of favor or disfavor". It can be referred as positive or negative evaluation of objects, people, activities, events, environment or ideas [29]. According to Blackhall *et al.*, [30] it becomes very difficult to measure people's attitude towards technology as it keeps on changing with advancement in technology. Usage of technology in one context may vary in another context [29]. Curran *et al.*, [31] also mentioned multiple attitudes of consumers towards SSTs adoption. On the basis of above discussion present study figures out the following constructs that have adverse impact on consumer attitude.

**DEVELOPMENT OF RESEARCH HYPOTHESES
TECHNOLOGY ANXIETY AND ADOPTION
ATTITUDE**

Numerous studies have confirmed a significant role of computer in the life of people by simplifying their work. However, many researchers have also investigated the anxious and negative attitude of users towards the usage of computers [21]. Research related to innovation suggests that initial trial of something new is hardly a neutral process and before trying something new, most of the consumers experience strong emotions [32, 33], and anxiety is one of these emotions [1, 33]. In the case of self-service technology, Liljander *et al.*, [12] found that technology anxiety has negative relation with adoption attitude towards self-service technologies. It was also reported by the researchers, that consumers who have tried less technology in their life they have more anxiety to use it [1]. Oyedele and Simpson [25] also showed negative relation between technology anxiety and usage of SST [33]. Previous researches greatly contributed to why people use self-service technology but there is a dearth of literature that deals with the phenomenon that why people ignore the technology. Hence based on previous literature, the present study tries to provide novel outlook on relation between technology anxiety and adoption attitude therefore, following hypothesis is put forward:

H1: Technology anxiety has negative impact on user’s adoption attitude towards SSTs.

INSECURITY AND ADOPTION ATTITUDE

Insecurity is another variable that affects the attitude of potential adopter [29]. Cunningham [34] mentioned about the risk factor as a probability of certain negative behavioral outcomes [35]. In the context of service, Murray [36] also found that every customer will seek relevant information in order to minimize the negative consequences of purchasing experience [35]. Risk and insecurity during service process negatively impact the mind of customer. Numerous studies mentioned that insecurity is an important construct for adopting any type of new technology because in present days customer easily adopt those technologies that have some features such as ease of use, convenience, enjoyable [7, 37], low cost and low risk [38, 14]. There are so many studies on technological framework that discussed the relation of insecurity with adoption attitude but no research discusses that relation in the area of airlines using self-service technology therefore we propose:

H2: Insecurity has negative impact on user’s adoption attitude towards SSTs.

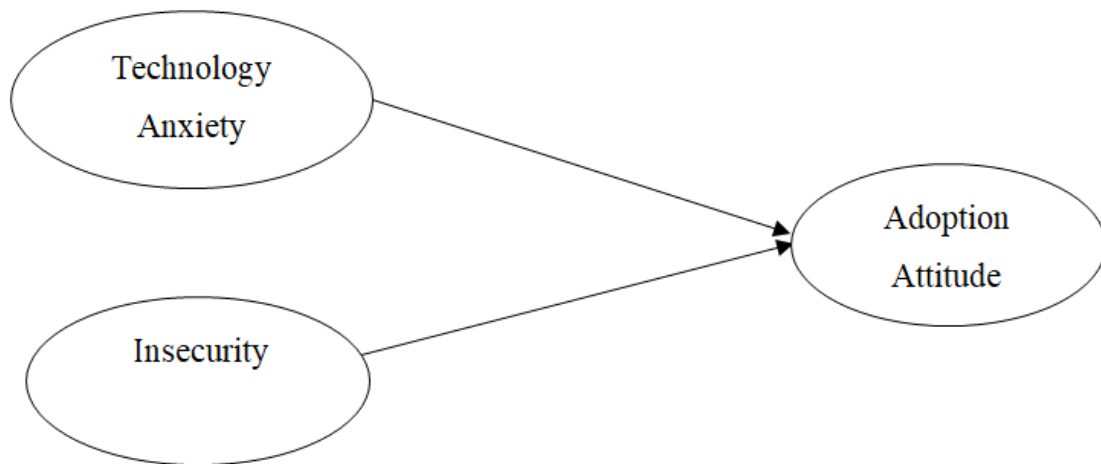


Fig 1: Conceptual Model

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY
STRUCTURE OF QUESTIONNAIRE**

The data for the study was collected through a self-administered questionnaire. Survey was conducted via online and paper pencil-based questionnaire. In the study convenience sampling was used. The data was collected by targeting the business class consumers because they are frequent travelers by airlines. The question embraced two sections:

First section deals with the demographics related to gender, age and qualification and another section was related to three constructs namely: - Technology anxiety, insecurity and adoption attitude. In this study all the items were measured on seven points likert scale in which 1=strongly disagree and 7=strongly agree. In the present study we defined the dependent and independent variables by considering previous studies in the literature. Table 1 shows the measures of constructs that we have taken in our study.

Table 1: Variables and indicators

Construct	Indicators
Technology anxiety Meuter et al. (2005); Reinders, Dabholkar and Frambach (2008); Lee, Castellanos and Choi (2012)	TA1: I avoided the technology because of unfamiliarity. TA2: I feel nervous to use technology because of making mistakes. TA3: I fear that I might damage it in some way. TA4: Technical/ difficult terms on system confuse me. TA5: I rarely/seldom use technology related services.
Insecurity Dabholkar (1996); Meuter and Bitner (1998); Lee, Castellanos and Choi (2012); Kaushik and Rahman (2015)	INS1: I do not feel secure while providing personal information over Kiosks/websites/apps. INS2: I feel worried that information seen by others. INS3: I do not feel safe to provide credit/debit card number over computer. INS4: I do not feel confident doing transactions using self-service technology. INS5: I feel trouble if something go wrong while using self-service technology.
Adoption Attitude Kaushik, Agarwal and Rahman (2015); Hsiao and Tang (2015)	ADATT1: I feel that using self-service technology is good idea. ADATT2: I have positive perception of using self-service technology. ADATT3: I like to use self-service technology. ADATT4: I intend to use self-service technology in future. ADATT5: I would recommend my friends/ relatives to use self-service technology.

The data for the study was collected from 210 respondents out of them, 152 valid responses were obtained. This sample size is medium which is acceptable as per transport research [39]. The respondents were asked to fill the questionnaire provided

they had experience of buying ticket and collecting boarding pass using either one or more of the mentioned ways such as airline websites, mobile apps and self-service kiosks at airports. Detail description of sample is in Table 2.

Table 2: Demographic characteristic

Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage%
Gender		
Male	79	48.0
Female	73	52.0
Age		
18-25	48	31.6
26-35	92	60.5
36-45	9	5.9
Above 45	3	2.0
Qualification		
High School	6	3.9
Bachelor Degree	57	37.5
Postgraduate Degree	89	58.6

CHOICE OF INDUSTRY AND DATA COLLECTION

Aviation Industry of India is one of the fastest growing industry which is going to be the 3rd largest industry in the world in the year 2024 [40]. We choose Airline industry for the study because this industry has its own identity. Due to tremendous growth of self-service technology about 80% of airlines all over the world focused on investing more on the technological equipment's [41, 42]. There are so many studies related to self-service technologies in different industries are available at international level but the study showing factors to use or not to use the technology by the

consumers in Indian airlines is not available. So, the focus of present research is on those factors that have adverse impact on the mind of Indian consumers due to which they avoid technology.

RESULTS

MEASUREMENT MODEL

For testing measurement model smart PLS3 software [43] was used. It's very important to test whether the measurement model has satisfactory level of reliability and validity before testing structural model [44]. Firstly, the measure we use to check the reliability of the construct is composite reliability. This measure

offers a more retrospective approach of overall reliability and estimates consistency of the construct itself including the stability and equivalence of construct [45].

Table 3 shows the composite reliability of all constructs which is above the recommended threshold value of 0.7. So, this shows that all the constructs in measurement model have good reliability. Composite reliability is a measure which is used to check the reliability of construct.

Table 3: Construct Reliability and Validity

Constructs	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Technology Anxiety	0.976	0.981	0.913
Insecurity	0.977	0.982	0.914
Adoption Attitude	0.981	0.985	0.931

After confirming reliability and validity the next step is to find discriminant validity. Discriminant validity shows the extent to which a construct is truly distinct from another construct [45]. Fornell and Larcker's [44] criterion demonstrated that the square root

Convergent validity:

Convergent validity shows that how much the indicators of specific construct converge or have a very high percentage of variance in common [45]. The value of AVE is well above the threshold limit of 0.5 [46]. This clearly shows that all the items are adequate or correspondent to their constructs. So, this research also confirms convergent validity.

of AVE values of constructs were higher than the inner-construct correlations, shows discriminant validity. Hence all the indicator loadings are higher than the cross loadings which confirms discriminant validity.

Table 4: Discriminant validity of measurement model

Constructs	TA	INS	ADATT
TA	0.956		
INS	0.954	0.956	
ADATT	-0.936	-0.932	0.965

(Note: TA- Technology anxiety, INS- Insecurity, ADATT- Adoption attitude)

STRUCTURAL MODEL

After confirming reliability and validity next step is to accessed structural model results. Table 5 represents the path coefficients that were obtained by

applying bootstrapping routine with 152 cases and 5000 sub-samples. Results show negative impact of technology anxiety and insecurity (H1, H2) on adoption attitude.

Table 5: Results of hypotheses testing

Paths	Path coefficients	SD	T-values	P-values	Conclusion
TA->ADATT	-0.336	0.105	-3.190	0.002	Supported
INS->ADATT	-0.359	0.104	-3.444	0.001	Supported

(Notes: path coefficient denotes un-standardized β ; S.D. denotes standard deviations; t-values signifies critical ratio, TA- Technology anxiety, INS- Insecurity, ADATT- Adoption attitude.)

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

In today's competitive environment, service industries introduced numerous SSTs in service process to enhance the experience of consumers. Most of the companies adopting approach of replacing traditional service mode to technology mode to reap the benefits, this approach might be counterproductive for them. Thus, present research based on real world situation focuses on the factors that hinder the acceptance of new technology by the consumers.

In this research we develop an empirical model that shows relation between technology anxiety and insecurity with adoption attitude in SST settings. The results of study are supported by literature. Our study found negative association between technology anxiety, insecurity with adoption attitude. These findings are

consistent with the results of previous literature [1, 12, 25, 15, 47, 13, 33].

The findings of our study also provide certain implications for service providers who want to introduce technology in service process with no choice. This study deals with initial phase of adoption process in which self-service technology is new for consumers. So, it becomes a challenge for service providers to motivate consumers to try new technologies. The results of this study recommend the service providers how to increase mental acceptance of SST among the people and think strategically for improving SST marketing. Results of the paper further suggest the managers to provide choice to customer regarding service delivery methods that best fits their requirements. This will also help in reducing technology anxiety. It is not required to provide whole range of services choices, even with limited choice

managers motivate consumers to adopt technology. Further service employees must educate people regarding how to use technology or also provide services like interaction with service employees in case of confusion or failure of machine which will definitely develop favorable attitude towards SST.

Apart from technology anxiety we further discuss another factor such as insecurity to understand the consumer resistance behavior. Due to the feeling of insecurity consumer avoid technology and this will negatively impact adoption behavior. Additionally, the results suggest the managers to imply risk reduction strategies to attract consumers, because people having perception of insecurity are in doubt whether the technology works in proper way or not. So, managers must focus on this aspect and more to invest for security (like: system as well as personal information).

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE SCOPE

Despite the above contributions and various implications, our study is also suffers from some constraints. Firstly, this study focuses on the paradoxes of technology adoption future research can consider positive aspects also (such as ease of use and speed) that develop positive attitude of consumers towards self-service technology (SST) in near future. Further researchers can evaluate the role of experience as a moderator in the relationship between the constructs (technology anxiety, insecurity) and adoption attitude. Another limitation of our study is that data were collected from business class only, other customers (travelers) can also be considered. Finally, in this research, we focused on specific type of service industry that is air transport future study could test the conceptual framework in other contexts by utilizing longitudinal research.

COMPLIANCE WITH ETHICAL STANDARDS:

Conflict of interest: The corresponding author on account of all the authors pronounces that there is no conflict of interest.

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