The Hotel Business Survived In Pandemic, Changing Their Acceptance And Use Of Technology And Modern Marketing Management

KANOKRATH PHONGPHOTNAKUL

Lecturer at department of business industrial and human resource development. Faculty of business and industrial development. King Mongkut's University of Technology North Bangkok. E-mail: Kanokrath.ph@gmail.com

Abstract

The objective of this study was twofold: (1) to determine the empirical congruence of the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with the data and (2) to explore the causal relationship model between acceptance and use of technology (UTAUT) and modern marketing (4E) adaptation concerning the survival of hotel businesses in Thailand amidst the challenging circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic. To achieve these goals, a questionnaire-based approach was adopted, gathering responses from a sample of 400 hotel owners in Thailand. Various statistical analyses, including means, percentages, and Path Analysis, were applied to the data. The results, significant at the 0.05 level, demonstrated that the Structural Equation Modeling provided an accurate representation of the hotel survival dynamics. The findings underscored the critical reliance of hotel businesses on the acceptance and use of technology (UTAUT) and marketing adaptations as key drivers for ensuring their survival during the challenging times posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Keyword: Adaptation, Acceptance and use of technology (UTAUT), Modern marketing (4E), Hotel business.

Introduction

There is no doubt that the pandemic has destroyed the hotel business around the world [1] . The number of people living in a home is going down all over the world, but it's worst in Europe and North America. The Bureau of Labor Statistics says that the unemployment rate for people who work in the leisure and hospitality industry in the US is at a record high of 28.9% [2, 3]. In the UK, the occupancy rate is expected to drop from 75.4% in 2019 to 37.6% in 2020, then rise to 59.2% in 2021 [4]. Even if the Coronavirus vaccines work, it will take four years for occupancy rates to get back to where they were before COVID-19[1]. Even though the pandemic is still causing a lot of damage, hotel sales and marketing teams are working

harder than ever to make as much money as they can now that the end of the pandemic may be near [4, 5].

Thailand has, Over the years, both Thai and foreign tourists have brought in more than 17% of the country's GDP in tourist income. Domestic tourism brings in the most money for Bangkok, Phuket, Chonburi, Krabi, and Chiang Mai. Bangkok brings in 9.47 billion baht, Phuket brings in 423 billion baht, Chonburi brings in 2.4 billion baht, Krabi brings in 1.05 billion baht, and Chiang Mai brings in 9.9 billion baht. But when COVID-19 breaks out, it will definitely hurt service businesses whose main customers were foreign tourists [6, 7]. Especially the hotels in Bangkok need to change the way they do business. It's not just about how much the service costs; it's also about how much business can be done. The trend toward less business has led to the discovery of the economic processes in the hotel industry. Thailand's consumers still want a lot of things, even though the strategy has changed [7]. One way that consumers and service professionals are adapting is by using digital technology in service. Before COVID-19, about 40 million international visitors came to Thailand in 2019. This was a record for the Thai tourism industry. Later in 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic will be over, and the situation for hotel workers in the tourism industry will be at its worst [8, 9]. Thailand's economy hit its worst tipping point in 2021. Because of the government's lockdown measures, which were meant to cut down on international travel, economic activity has to stop. This has a direct effect on hotel businesses, which have been forced to temporarily close [10, 11]. As a result, global tourism has dropped at a rate that has never been seen before. In the first ten months of 2020, the number of tourists dropped by 72%. In the first eleven months of 2020, the average occupancy rate was 29.30%, compared to 69.70% in the same time period the year before. Based on the fact that the average revenue per room fell by 73.60 percent across the country, business owners must quickly change in order to keep their businesses going [12]. For example, they could lower their room rates, change their service model, or put more emphasis on the domestic tourism industry (as of January 8th, 2021) [13]

The COVID-19 [1, 6, 13-15] crisis happened quickly and is hard to explain. Overall occupancy rates have dropped by 26.16 percent since the same time last year. The three places in Thailand where occupancy rates are dropping the least are the North, the Northeast, and the Western parts of the country. Also, it was found that the occupancy rate has gone down in all places when compared to the same time last year. At 30.26 percent, Bangkok has the biggest drop in occupancy rates. This is followed by the East at 30.10 percent and the South at 28.05 percent. The most worried about the situation are hotel owners (52.60%), followed by large hotel owners (50.50%), and then medium-sized hotel owners (41.20 percent). It showed that medium-sized hotels with between 30 and 100 rooms have the least to worry about (only 41.2%), while hotel businesses will be hit harder than large and medium-sized hotels with the same fixed costs and not enough money to pay for

them. As can be seen, the COVID-19 outbreak has hurt hotels the most, which has made the effects and severity worse. The rate at which hotels were booked, especially from April to May 2021, was 0%. When income is "zero," a temporary shutdown is the worst thing that can happen to a hotel business, and it's likely to close for good. In the case of hotel owners, this has already led to layoffs and lower pay for workers.

The Marketing Mix (Modern marketing (4E)) [13, 16] or digital marketing 4.0 era. There is a type of marketing that uses different technologies to reach more customers, and there is a type of marketing that uses different technologies to reach more customers. It also adapts marketing strategies to the new world of technology to make them more convenient and connected, because digital is more than just a way to communicate; it also changes people's perspectives and ways of life as the online and offline worlds come together. Because of this, it should be very important to help businesses win over customers and keep growing over time. When customers' habits change, business owners have to adapt by making their businesses more digital. After the COVID-19 crisis, the new normal is for operators to get used to online booking and payment systems and use them as marketing tools and facility resources while guests are staying at a hotel or other place to stay. The operators must build trust with tourists and stay competitive in order to grow their business, meet the needs of different tourists, and respond to the COVID-19 epidemic's direct exposure reduction behavior [6].

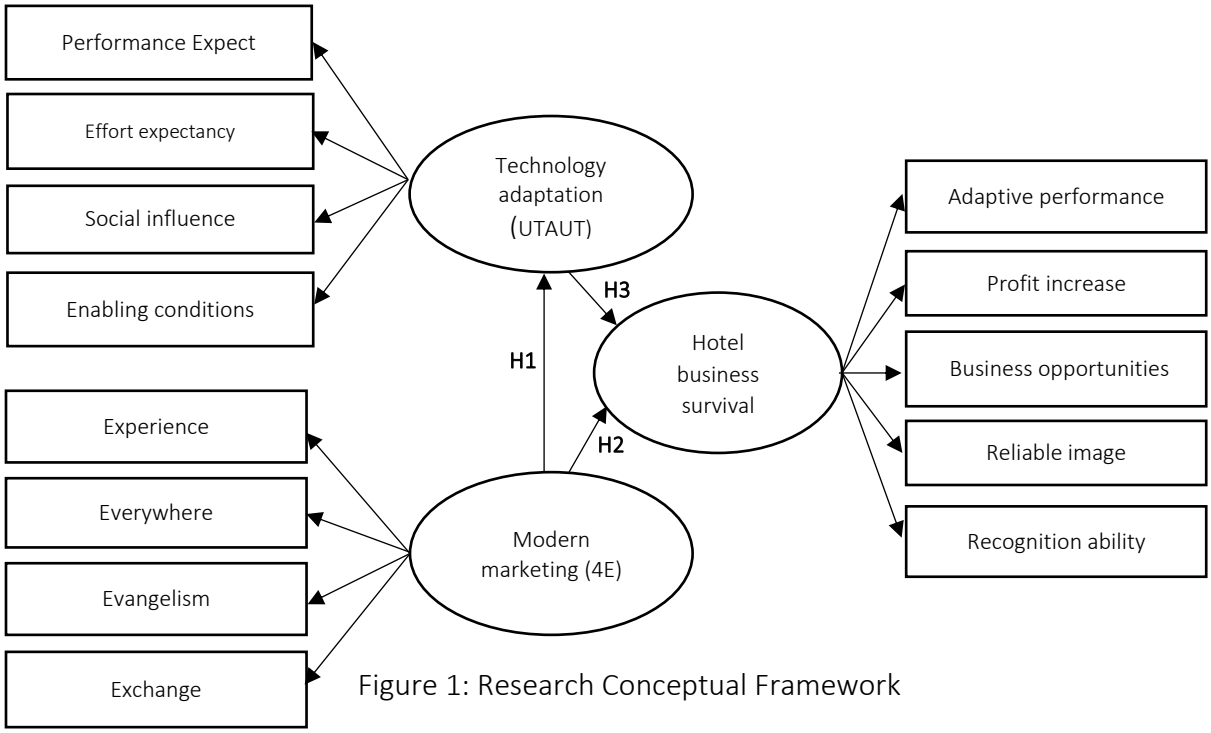

Figure 1: Research Conceptual Framework

Further, new marketing trends and current tourist interests can be retrieved by in-depth research of social media data, as well as by examining historical data to forecast the development of seasonal trends and traveler preferences. The goals of this research are to (1) examine the causal relationship model between technological and contemporary marketing adaptations and the survival of hotel businesses in Thailand during the COVID-19 pandemic, and (2) determine whether the Structural Equation Modeling is consistent with empirical data based on the assumption of congruence.

Research HypothesisH1: Modern marketing (4E) adaptation directly influences acceptance and use of technology (UTAUT).
H2: Modern marketing (4E) adaptation directly influences hotel business survival.
H3: Acceptance and use of technology (UTAUT) directly influences hotel business survival.

Expected Benefits

1. The new technology and Modern marketing (4E) adaptation measurement model that can assess the survival of the hotel businesses in the Thailand during the COVID-19 pandemic.

2. The recognition of the causal relationship model of acceptance and use of technology (UTAUT)and Modern marketing (4E) adaptions that affect the survival of hotel businesses in Thailand during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Scope of study

The researcher specified the study's population and samples as owners and managers of hotels. The sample group for this analysis comprised 400 Thai hotel owners and managers. The study focused on latent factors including the adoption theory and implementation of UTAUT technology, the cutting-edge marketing approach represented by 4E, and the potential for future success in the hotel industry. The observed variables encompassed the ease of technology use, recognition of technology benefits, social influence on technology use, facilitation of technology use, creation of experiences, trustworthiness of experiences, utilization of online channels for consumer reach, relationship-building, improvement of adaptive performance, increase in profits, and expansion of business opportunities.

Literature Reviews

The researcher has studied concepts, theories and related researches to apply as a guideline for research studies. The researcher presented a literature review with details as follows: Concept and theory of 4E's marketing mix.

Product to Experience- instead of focusing on just the product, marketers must adopt a holistic approach to customer experience when considering how to create value for their customers. A customer's journey doesn't begin when they buy your product, it begins when they first see your ad, or receive the first email from you. Price to Exchange- Your customers are not just paying for your product anymore. We are more than just buying and selling, we have graduated to exchanging. You are not only providing a product or service to your customer. Place to Everyplace- Today there are many different ways to interact with our customers, if its social media, your website, phone, email, ads, or even inhouse. Utilize all of your channels to create an integrated journey for your customers. Promotion to Evangelism- One of the best ways to promote your product is to be so great that your customers become your promoters. Hearing a recommendation from your current customers is more convincing than your LinkedIn campaign or your company's pitch. Here is an unbiased third party, who has experienced your product or service.

The unified theory of acceptance and use of technology (UTAUT) is a technology acceptance model formulated by Venkatesh and others in "User acceptance of information technology: Toward a unified view". The UTAUT aims to explain user intentions to use an information system and subsequent usage behavior. The theory holds that there are four key constructs: 1) performance expectancy, 2) effort expectancy, 3) social influence, and 4) enabling conditions.

RESEARCH TOOLS

Quantitative techniques were used for this study. The researcher employed a questionnaire as a data collection technique, distributing it to advisors and experts with the purpose of ensuring the questionnaire was both comprehensive and consistent. The questionnaire was reviewed by a panel of three highly-qualified specialists. The data was gathered by sending out online questionnaires to Thai hotel owners and operators. The likelihood of the test error (α) is 0.05 based on the sample estimation with an effect size of 0.05. Given that the total number of independent variables is 3, and the power of the test (1-β) is 0.95, we need 348 observations to draw conclusions. The study gathered information from 400 more samples than originally planned. In addition, between January 2022 and February 2023, the researcher sent out a questionnaire to the sample population.

The researcher used a statistical methodology and computer program to analyze the sample data. Here's how it's done: Quantitative and qualitative data can be described using descriptive statistics such as the mean, median, and mode. The association between technological and contemporary marketing adjustments and hotel company longevity was examined using inference statistics (i.e., the correlation coefficient between variables) with a significance level of 0.951 (Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient).

3. Relationship Analysis of Causal Variables

The data analysis was performed with the help of the AMOS tool to verify the consistency between the hypothesized structure of the data and the observed one. All aspects of Direct Influence, Indirect Influence, and Total Influence were considered. The hypothesis-based model was tested against the empirical data using significant statistical values to ensure consistency.

Data Analysis Results

In order to make the presentation of the results of the data analysis more manageable, the researcher broke it down into three sections: 1) the results of the descriptive statistical analysis of the sample group; 2) the results of the analysis to examine the data before the analysis using the Structural Equation Model; and 3) the results of the analysis using the hypothesis-based structural equation model.

Table 1: Variable

Variable	**Refers to:**
Acceptance and use of technology (UTAUT)	
Performance Expectancy	Ease with which technology can be used
Effort expectancy	Considering the positive aspects of technology
Social influence	The impact of society on people's use of technology
Enabling conditions	Making the use of technology easier
Marketing	
Experience	Bringing about new experiences
Everywhere	Trustworthiness
Evangelism	Consumers can be reached through several web platforms.
Exchange	Developing and maintaining rapport
Survival	
Anticipation	Efficiency through adaptation
Profit increase	Increase in earnings or profit
Existence	Reliable image
Control	Increasing my options in the corporate world
Skill	Capability to Recognize

1) The Sample Groups of descriptive statistical analysis

The study includes demographic data from 400 respondents, including the following details:

1.1 There were a total of 400 respondents; 203 were female (50.75 percent), 187 were male (46.75%), and 10 identified as LGBTQ (2.50 percent).

1.2 The respondents, 143 (35.75%) are between the ages of 46 and 55, while another 106 (26.50%) are between the ages of 36 and 45, while another 67 (16.75%) are between the ages of 25 and 35. Another 14.25% are between the ages of 56 and 65, while 5.75 percent are between the ages of 23 and 25. Four participants are older than 65.

1.3 There were 309 respondents with a bachelor's degree, representing 77.25 percent of the sample; this was followed by 66 respondents with an undergraduate degree, representing 17.50 percent, 26 respondents with an advanced bachelor's degree, 6.20 percent.

1.4 The largest group of respondents (192 people, or 48.00%) have been in business for 6-10 years; the next largest group (146 people, or 36.50%) have been in business for 1-6 years; the next largest group (35 people, or 8.75%) have been in business for 11 years or more; and the smallest group (27 people, or 6.75%) have been in business for less than 1 year.

Nearly half (49.25%) of respondents have monthly net incomes between 100,001 and 500,000 Thai Baht; another third (33.50%) earn between 50,000 and 100,000 Thai Baht; 10.25% earn less than 50,000 Thai Baht; 7% earn more than 500,000 Thai Baht; and 28 respondents earn more than 500,000 Thai Baht.

2) The Structural Equation Model Analysis

Analysis to validate the data before doing an analysis of the structural equation model (SEM) by considering an approximation of the observed variables based on the data collection and reconstructing the observed variable with details including the following:

2.1 The Outcomes Obtained from The Basis Statistical Analysis of the Variables That Were Observed

According to the third table. The majority of the observed factors that describe the characteristics of technical adaptation and Modern marketing (4E) [16] adaptation are at the most significant level, with an average score between 4.22 and 4.55, and the specifics are as follows:

Table 3: Statistical Values: Describing the Characteristics of Component Variables

Component	Variable	$\bar{x}$	S.D.
1. Acceptance and use of technology (UTAUT)	**Technology**	**4.462**	**0.54**
1.1 Performance Expectancy	Performance Expect	4.28	0.59
1.2 Effort expectancy	Effort expectancy	4.74	0.53
1.3 Social influence	Social influence	4.51	0.53
1.4 Enabling conditions	Enabling conditions	4.32	0.50
2. Modern marketing (4E) adaptation	**Marketing**	**4.412**	**0.54**

Component	Variable	$\bar{x}$	S.D.
2.1 Creating experiences	Experience	4.41	0.56
2.2 Trustworthiness	Everywhere	4.25	0.53
2.3 Reaching consumers through online channels	Evangelism	4.47	0.52
2.4 Relationship	Exchange	4.52	0.53
3. Business survival	**Survival**	**4.386**	**0.53**
3.1 Adaptive performance	Anticipation	4.28	0.56
3.2 Profit increase	Profit increase	4.38	0.56
3.3 Reliable image	Existence	4.42	0.49
3.4 opportunities of expanding business	Control	4.51	0.56
3.5 ability of recognition	Skill	4.34	0.49

The future of the hotel industry is discussed below. An SEM analysis was performed on the structural model for evaluation. Many different types of statistical analysis have been employed to evaluate model fit in prior research. Goodness-of-fit (GOF) tests were selected using a variety of quality indices, including Chi-squared ($\chi 2$) [17], degree of freedom (df), $\chi 2$/df, CFI, TLI, IFI, GFI, RMR, and RMSEA, in accordance with the study's criteria for weighing the correlation coefficient. These quality indexes provide constraints on the degree of model fitting that must be met. Chi-square goodness-of-fit statistics ($p > 0.05$), the comparative fit index (CFI, > 0.95), the ratio of the Chi-squared statistic to the respective degrees of freedom ($\chi 2$/df) 2 indicates a good model fit, root-mean-squared error (RMSEA) and root-mean-squared residual (RMMR) which should be 0.05, the comparative fit index CFI > 0.95, and the goodness-of-fit index (this research has taken into account the incremental-fit index (IFI) and Tucker-index Lewis's (TLI), both of which should be greater than 0.95.

No changes were made to the approved research model. The study's parameter estimates were within acceptable range, and the statistics shown here were used as the definitive numbers; they demonstrated that all tests satisfied the standards set for them. The results of the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) as well as the structural equation modeling (SEM) study, all of which were carried out using the Analysis of Moment Structures (AMOS) version 22.0.0 software.

3) The Hypothesis-Based Structural Equation Model

The researcher compared the hypothetical model to empirical data by assessing the relationship model between components, technical adaptation, current marketing adaptation, and hotel company survival. Based on the congruence criterion, the initial model analysis indicated that the congruence index is inconsistent with actual data or does not match the norms.

3.1 Model Modification of Empirical Evidence with Congruence with Empirical Data

The researcher then changed the model (Model Modification) by looking at the recommendations for changing the parameters in the Modification Index (MI) until the harmonization index matched the empirical data. The details of how to change a model so that it fits with real-world data (Model fit) are:

This indicates that the theoretical model is inconsistent with empirical evidence. After making some more adjustments to the model, the correlation between the new e1 and e10 adjusted error values χ2= 38.790, df = 29, GFI = 0.996, CFI = 0.988, RMR = 0.013, RMSEA = 0.013, NFI = 0.999, IFI = 0.998, and p = 0.270. These results confirmed that the hypothetical model is consistent with data from the real world.

3.2 The Causal Influence of Acceptance and use of technology (UTAUT)and Modern marketing (4E) Adaptation Affecting Hotel Business Survival

This study's hypotheses were refined through an examination of how the adoption of new technologies and strategies for marketing in the digital age have an effect on the long-term viability of the hotel industry. The study's findings regarding DE, IE, and TE (Total Effects, Indirect Effects, and Direct Effects) were provided. Findings from the study show that the model is consistent with the following sets of data:

Table 5: The Impact of Technological and Contemporary Marketing Adaptation on Business Continuity Analyzed

Statistical value			
χ^2= 38.790, df = 29, p = 0.270, GFI = 0.996, CFI = 0.988, RMR = 0.013, RMSEA = 0.013, NFI = 0.999, IFI = 0.998			
Variables / **Laten variables**	**Hotel business**		
	DE	**IE**	**TE**
Acceptance and use of technology (UTAUT)	0.88*	-	0.88
Modern marketing (4E)	0.25*	0.76	1.01
R-Square (R^2)	0.77		
Correlation matrix between latent variables			
Latent variables	**1**	**2**	**3**
Acceptance and use of technology (UTAUT) (1)	1.00		
Modern marketing (4E) (2)	0.85	1.00	
Hotel business (3)	1.07	1.10	1.00

Based on the findings presented in Table 5, the model demonstrates a strong alignment with empirical evidence regarding the causal impact of technological and modern marketing (4E) adaptations on business survival. The analysis reveals a Chi-Square value of 38.790 with 29 degrees of freedom (df), and the probability of rejecting the hypothesis is determined

to be 0.170. These results indicate that the model is statistically consistent with the observed data, substantiating the significant influence of technological and modern marketing adaptations on the survival of businesses. The chi-square value of the comparison ($\chi 2$ / df = 1.421). GFI = 0.996 indicates a very good fit. CFI = 0.988, which indicates a very close fit. The RMSEA, or Root Mean Square Error of Approximation, is equal to 0.013. Based on these numbers, that both the GFI and CFI are very close to 1, while the RMR and RMSEA are very close to zero. The specified model is consistent with actual data, as shown by the relative Chi-Square ($\chi 2$ / df).

Based on the analysis conducted, the authors of the study reached several conclusions regarding the factors directly impacting the ability of hotels to remain operational. The findings reveal the following details regarding the direct, indirect, and total influence of the latent variables within the model. Technological adaptation emerges as the most influential factor, with a significant impact at a 0.001 significance level and a total influence of 0.88. Modern marketing (4E) adaptation ranks second, with a significant impact at a 0.05 significance level and a total influence of 0.1.01. The direct effect of technological adaptation on the long-term viability of the hotel industry is determined to be 0.98. Additionally, the combined direct and indirect effects of embracing new marketing methods on the long-term viability of the hotel industry amount to 1.02. Furthermore, the study found that the predictive coefficient (R2) for the continued operation of hotels reaches 1.28 when considering the utilization of latent variables. Examining the correlation matrix between the latent variables, it was discovered that they exhibit high levels of correlation, with a correlation coefficient of 1.13 observed between the adoption of contemporary marketing strategies and the survival of the hotel business.

3.3 The factor loadings of observed variables analysis

Researchers looked at how different variables loaded onto a single metric called a "factor" to figure out what shared characteristics might account for the observed correlations. Table 6 displays the findings of the analysis. The following are the outcomes of factor loading value on the observed variables:

Table 6: Result of the analysis of factor loading value of observed variables

Latent variables / Observed variables	(b)	(S.E.)	(B)	(R^2)
Acceptance and use of technology (UTAUT)				
Performance Expectancy	0.84	0.05	0.77	0.60
Effort expectancy	1.00	-	0.93	0.87

Social influence	0.87	0.04	0.86	0.74
Enabling conditions	0.81	0.04	0.83	0.69
Modern marketing (4E) adaptation				
Experience	1.00	-	0.83	0.71
Everywhere	0.78	0.40	0.72	0.72
Evangelism	0.76	0.05	0.78	0.71
Exchange	0.85	0.04	0.81	0.65
Hotel business survival				
Adaptive performance	0.70	0.08	0.41	0.17
Profit increase	1.00	-	0.57	0.36
Expanding business opportunities	0.77	0.08	0.48	0.27
Recognition ability	0.82	0.90	0.54	0.32
Reliable image	0.88	0.80	0.51	0.28

In Table 6, the factor loadings for all observed variables are uniformly positive, indicating their positive influence. The factor loadings range from 0.72 to 1.00, with a mean of 0.001. The variables with the highest factor loading values, rated at 1.00, include Effort, Experience, and Profit increase, indicating their significant impact. Conversely, Anticipation has the lowest factor loading value of 0.72, suggesting it is the least influential variable in the analysis.

In the context of Acceptance and use of technology (UTAUT), recognizing the benefits of technology emerges as a critical factor in the first component. Technology adaptation has a factor loading value of 0.84 and a variance value of 88%, while societal influence on technology use has a factor loading value of 0.87 and a variance value of 74%. Encouraging the use of technology shows a factor loading value of 0.81, and the variance value for the technological adaptation component is 69%. The factor loading value for ease of technology use is 0.77, with a variance value of 60% for the technology adaptation component. In the realm of modern marketing, the most crucial aspects of adaptation likely involve developing experiences, establishing credibility, and connecting with the target audience through digital means. The component measuring the adaptability of traditional marketing to the present day exhibits a variance value of 71.1% and a factor loading value of 0.84. The component focusing on adjusting to changes in marketing displays a variance value of 65%, while the factor loading value for "Exchange" is 0.85. When considering factors essential to a hotel's sustained success, quantity consistently emerges as the most significant aspect. The components related to hotel industry survival have a factor loading value of 0.57 and a variance value of 32%. Competence closely follows with a factor loading value of 0.54 and a variance value of 29%. The

components crucial to the survival of the hotel industry account for a variance value of 28%, and the factor loading value for reliable image is 0.51. The profit component has a factor loading value of 0.48, and the variance value for survival components in the hotel industry is 26%. Finally, the recognition components of hotel business survival exhibit a variance value of 17%, with a factor loading value of 0.41.

3.3 Analysis of Research Hypothesis

The results of research hypothesis can conclude as follows:

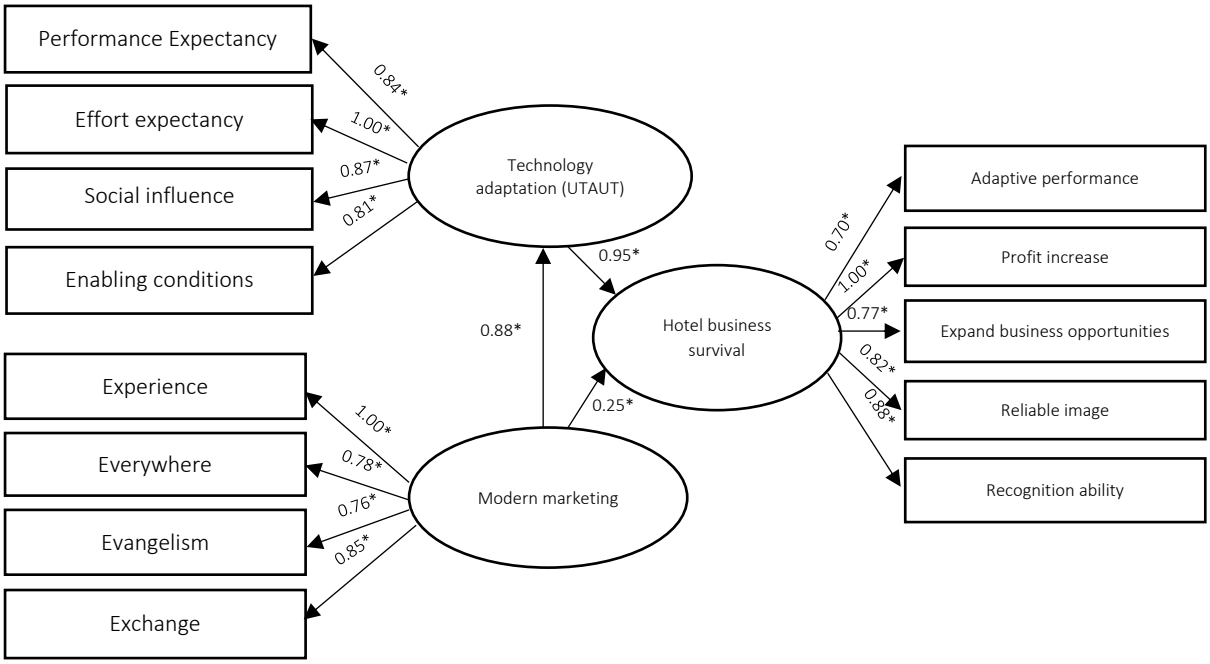

Figure 2: Research results

Table 7: Results of the research hypothesis test

	Hypothesis	Result
H1	H1: Modern marketing (4E) adaptation directly influences acceptance and use of technology (UTAUT).	Consistent
H2	H2: Modern marketing (4E) adaptation directly influences hotel business survival.	Consistent
H3	H3: Acceptance and use of technology (UTAUT) directly influences hotel business survival.	Consistent

Conclusion

In the aftermath of the 2009 COVID-19 outbreak, hotel owners in Thailand experienced the benefits of embracing technological and marketing innovations, which played a crucial role in enabling their businesses to remain operational. When consumer behavior undergoes a significant shift, it becomes essential for business owners to adapt by integrating digital

solutions. In the post-COVID-19 era, operators in the hotel industry will need to leverage technological advancements as marketing tools and utilize them to enhance their facilities in order to attract visitors. These innovations serve as instruments for preserving the commercial viability of independent hotels and enhancing public trust in the quality and safety standards of their operations. Failing to adopt contemporary marketing strategies can have long-term detrimental effects on the sustainability of the hotel industry. However, the availability of this data brings positive news for the hotel industry, particularly for independent motel owners. Armed with this information, hotel owners and managers can proactively make adjustments that best suit their establishments in anticipation of future crises. Amidst the aftermath of the 2009 COVID-19 outbreak, hotel owners in Thailand found themselves at an advantageous position by embracing a combination of technological advancements and innovative marketing strategies. These crucial adaptations played a vital role in ensuring the continuity of their businesses. As consumer behavior underwent a significant transformation, it became imperative for these business owners to swiftly transition into the digital realm.

In the new normal that emerged post-COVID-19, hotel operators realized the importance of harnessing technological advancements as powerful marketing tools and utilizing them to optimize their facilities in order to target prospective visitors effectively. This strategic approach not only helped preserve the commercial viability of independent hotels but also served as a means to strengthen public trust in their operations' standards of quality and safety. It is worth noting that failure to adopt contemporary marketing strategies can have long-lasting repercussions on the overall sustainability of the hotel industry. Recognizing this, the availability of data showcasing the positive impact of embracing these innovative measures comes as excellent news, particularly for independent motel owners. Armed with this valuable insight, hotel owners and managers can proactively make the necessary adjustments that align with their unique establishments, allowing them to be better prepared to navigate any future crises that may arise. By staying attuned to evolving market dynamics and leveraging technology as an ally, these proactive measures ensure that the hotel industry continues to thrive in the face of adversity.

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