

Evaluative Study on SMART Applications: Unleashing Potential in Service Industries

D. Vishnu Murty¹, KujjaMeghana², KamireddiRamya³ and Pedada Naveen⁴

1. Professor, Department of MBA, Aditya Institute of Technology and Management

2. Student, MBA, Aditya Institute of Technology and Management

3. Student, MBA, Aditya Institute of Technology and Management

4. Student, MBA, Aditya Institute of Technology and Management

Abstract: *This research investigates the application success of SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound) applications in diverse service industries, namely hospitality, tourism, hospitals, transport, and financial services. Adopting a qualitative research methodology, the study employs semi-structured interviews, focus groups, and content analysis to gather in-depth insights from key stakeholders, including managers, employees, and technology specialists. Through these qualitative methods, the research aims to uncover experiences, challenges, and successes related to the integration of SMART applications. The interviews explore stakeholder perceptions of the impact of SMART technologies on operational efficiency, customer satisfaction, and overall business performance. Focus group discussions facilitate dynamic interactions and in-depth exploration of specific themes, such as integration challenges and data security concerns. Content analysis of relevant documents and case studies complements these primary data sources, providing a contextual understanding of the reported successes and challenges in existing literature. By triangulating the qualitative findings, this research seeks to offer a comprehensive and nuanced exploration of the application success of SMART technologies in the dynamic landscape of service industries. The insights derived from this study contribute to the ongoing discourse on SMART technology adoption, providing valuable guidance for businesses, policymakers, and researchers in optimizing the implementation of these technologies in service-oriented sectors.*

Keywords: SMART Applications, Implementation Challenges, Successive Factors, Service Sector

1. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the landscape of industries has been undergoing a profound transformation driven by the relentless evolution of technology. One of the pivotal elements of this technological revolution is the widespread adoption of SMART applications, marking a paradigm shift in how businesses operate and deliver services. These applications, adhering to the principles of Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound objectives, encapsulate a diverse array of technologies and solutions. Leveraging data, connectivity, and intelligent systems, SMART applications are designed to enhance operational efficiency, elevate customer experiences, and stimulate innovation across various sectors.

The service industry, encompassing domains such as hospitality, finance, healthcare, and more, stands at the forefront of this transformative wave. The integration of SMART applications within the service sector holds the promise of not merely

enhancing existing practices but reshaping the very foundations of service delivery. From optimizing internal processes to redefining customer interactions, SMART technologies offer a spectrum of possibilities that have the potential to revolutionize traditional methodologies and open doors to unprecedented opportunities.

As businesses across diverse sectors increasingly recognize the advantages of incorporating SMART technologies into their operations, there arises a critical need for a thorough and comprehensive evaluative study. This study seeks to delve deeply into the intricate facets of SMART applications, unraveling the complexities surrounding their integration, examining their impact on service industry dynamics, and uncovering their latent potential to bring about transformative changes.

The imperative to conduct this study is underscored by the pressing need to comprehend the broader implications, challenges, and benefits associated with the integration of SMART applications within

service industries. By exploring the multifaceted dimensions of SMART technologies, the study aspires to contribute nuanced insights into their deployment, effectiveness, and the profound changes they can usher in within the service sector. This includes but is not limited to the optimization of operational processes, elevation of customer satisfaction levels, and stimulation of innovation in service delivery methodologies.

In essence, this research endeavors to serve as a beacon guiding businesses, policymakers, and researchers through the intricate landscape of SMART applications in service industries. By unravelling the complexities and potentials inherent in the adoption of SMART technologies, the study aims to equip stakeholders with the knowledge needed to navigate this transformative journey effectively.

In the contemporary landscape of service industries, the pervasive integration of SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound) applications represents a paradigm shift in how businesses operate and deliver value to their clientele. While the potential benefits of incorporating SMART technologies into service-oriented businesses are widely acknowledged, there exists a critical gap in our understanding of the nuanced challenges, obstacles, and latent complexities associated with their adoption. This evaluative study seeks to meticulously address and dissect these issues, providing a comprehensive exploration of the multifaceted problem space surrounding SMART applications in service industries.

1. **Inadequate Understanding of SMART Application Impact:**

- *Sub-Problem:* There is a notable lack of in-depth comprehension regarding the real impact of SMART applications on the day-to-day operations, strategic decision-making processes, and overall performance of service-oriented businesses.
- *Rationale:* Without a thorough understanding of how SMART technologies influence various facets of service industries, businesses are unable to harness their full potential, potentially leading to suboptimal adoption strategies and missed opportunities.

2. **Integration Challenges in Service-Oriented Environments:**

- *Sub-Problem:* Many service industries struggle with the seamless integration of SMART applications into their existing operational frameworks, facing challenges related to compatibility, interoperability, and resistance from traditional operational structures.
- *Rationale:* The inability to overcome integration challenges may hinder the smooth transition to SMART technologies, impeding the realization of operational efficiencies and hindering the holistic benefits these applications can offer.

3. **Barriers to Widespread Adoption:**

- *Sub-Problem:* Despite the evident advantages, there exist barriers to the widespread adoption of SMART applications in service industries, including financial constraints, lack of awareness, and organizational resistance to change.
- *Rationale:* Identifying and mitigating these barriers is crucial for fostering a conducive environment for the widespread adoption of SMART technologies, ensuring that businesses do not forego the transformative potential due to avoidable challenges.

4. **Undefined Metrics for Success Evaluation:**

- *Sub-Problem:* The absence of clear and standardized metrics for evaluating the success of SMART applications in service industries poses a significant challenge, making it difficult for businesses to gauge the actual impact and return on investment.
- *Rationale:* Establishing precise metrics is essential for objectively measuring the effectiveness of SMART technologies, enabling businesses to make informed decisions and continuously refine their strategies for optimal outcomes.

5. **Lack of Comprehensive Frameworks for Optimization:**

- *Sub-Problem:* Service industries often lack comprehensive frameworks for optimizing the adoption and utilization of SMART

applications, leading to suboptimal utilization of resources and capabilities.

- *Rationale:* Developing robust frameworks is imperative for guiding businesses through the complexities of SMART technology integration, ensuring that these applications are leveraged to their maximum potential in enhancing service delivery and overall business performance.

By addressing these intricate sub-problems within the overarching problem space, this evaluative study aims to provide actionable insights, practical recommendations, and a nuanced understanding of the challenges and opportunities inherent in the integration of SMART applications within service industries. Through a systematic examination of these issues, the study endeavors to contribute substantively to the knowledge base, guiding businesses and stakeholders towards a more informed and effective embrace of SMART technologies in the service sector.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH

The primary objectives of this evaluative study are as follows:

- To assess the current landscape of SMART applications in various service industries.
- To identify the challenges and barriers hindering the seamless integration of SMART technologies in service-oriented businesses.
- To evaluate the impact of SMART applications on operational efficiency, customer satisfaction, and overall business performance in the service sector.
- To develop a framework for measuring the success of SMART applications in service industries.
- To provide insights and recommendations for optimizing the adoption and implementation of SMART technologies in service-oriented businesses.

Through a systematic and thorough investigation, this research aims to contribute valuable insights that can guide businesses, policymakers, and researchers in leveraging the full potential of SMART applications in the dynamic landscape of service industries.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

Since the 1950s, goal-setting frameworks have been a subject of extensive study, with various models gaining prominence in diverse fields. Notable among these are:

1. *Management by Objectives (MBO):*

- *Pioneered by Drucker (1955):* One of the earliest and most influential frameworks, MBO emphasizes collaborative goal-setting between managers and employees. Dahlsten et al (2005) and Bipp and Kleingeld (2011) further explored its applications and effectiveness.

2. *Balanced Scorecard Approach:*

- *Proposed by Kaplan and Norton (1996):* This framework broadens the scope beyond financial metrics to include strategic objectives, key performance indicators, and organizational vision. Kaplan and Norton's model has had a significant impact on strategic management practices.

3. *Goal Attainment Scale:*

- *Developed by Yip et al (1998):* This scale focuses on measuring the achievement of predetermined goals, offering a quantitative assessment of goal attainment. It has found applications in diverse fields, including healthcare and rehabilitation.

4. *Total Quality Management (TQM) and Continuous Quality Improvement:*

- *Advocated by Ginsburg (2001) and Medlin and Green (2009):* TQM emphasizes the continuous improvement of processes and products. It has been widely adopted in sectors where quality control and customer satisfaction are paramount.

5. *RAID Model:*

- *Proposed by Parker et al (2003):* This model emphasizes the stages of review, agree, implement, and demonstrate and develop. It provides a structured approach to goal-setting, particularly in project management contexts.

6. Productivity Measurement and Enhancement System:

- *Introduced by Pritchard et al (2008):* This system aims to enhance productivity by setting measurable goals and systematically evaluating performance. It is particularly relevant in organizational contexts where efficiency is a key focus.

7. WHO International Classification of Functioning Disability and Health (ICF):

- *Utilized by Bovend' Eerdt et al (2009):* The ICF serves as a template for goal-setting, especially in healthcare and rehabilitation settings. It provides a comprehensive framework for considering various aspects of functioning and disability.

8. G-AP (Goal-Setting and Action Planning) Framework:

- *Described by Scobbie et al (2013):* This framework integrates goal-setting with action planning, emphasizing a holistic approach to achieving objectives. It is particularly relevant in fields where translating goals into actionable steps is critical.

9. Object/Objective-Oriented Maintenance Management (OOMM):

- *Explored by Zhu et al (2002) in Engineering:* This framework applies goal-setting principles to maintenance management in engineering contexts, focusing on optimizing the performance and longevity of equipment.

While many of these frameworks incorporate the widely recognized SMART criteria for goal-setting, Day and Tosey (2011) challenged the applicability of SMART in the education sector. They propose the 'well-formed outcome' framework, based on Zimmerman's (2007) eight criteria for appropriate goals. Zimmerman's criteria include specificity, temporal proximity, hierarchical organization, congruence with self and others' goals, degree of difficulty, self-generation, a level of conscious awareness, and clarity about whether the goal is process or performance related.

10. Impact of SMART Applications on Operational Efficiency, Customer Satisfaction, and Overall Business Performance in the Service Industry:

1. Operational Efficiency:

- SMART applications in the hospitality sector, such as automated check-ins and room controls, significantly streamline operational processes. This leads to faster service delivery, reduced check-in times, and enhanced operational efficiency (TeskayeGedyon et al., 2017).
- In healthcare services, SMART applications enable remote patient monitoring through wearable devices and health sensors. This facilitates proactive healthcare management, reduces hospital visits, and optimizes healthcare resource allocation (Venugopal, K. et al., 2015).
- Financial service providers encounter challenges in integrating SMART applications seamlessly with legacy systems. The complexity of adapting existing infrastructure may temporarily impact operational efficiency (Aschalew Adane., et al., 2018).
- The travel industry faces initial implementation costs for SMART technologies such as smart ticketing and luggage tracking. However, the long-term efficiency gains often outweigh these initial expenses (Mikiyas Getachew et al., 2016).

2. Customer Satisfaction:

- In the financial service sector, SMART applications contribute to personalized banking experiences. AI-driven financial advice and customized service recommendations enhance customer satisfaction and loyalty (Aschalew Adane., et al., 2018).
- SMART applications in healthcare contribute to an enhanced patient experience. Remote consultations, appointment scheduling through mobile apps, and real-time health monitoring

enhance patient satisfaction levels (Venugopal, K. et al., 2015).

- The hospitality industry faces challenges related to data privacy concerns. Collecting guest preferences for personalized services must be balanced with stringent data protection measures to ensure customer trust (Aschalew Adane, et al., 2018).
- Some customers in the retail sector may face challenges in accessing SMART applications due to factors like digital literacy. Bridging the digital divide is essential for ensuring inclusivity and overall customer satisfaction (Koppala Venugopal & JalluAkhila (2023).

3. Overall Business Performance:

- The tourism industry leverages SMART applications to create innovative guest experiences. Augmented reality guides, location-based recommendations, and interactive maps contribute to a differentiated market position (Gopalakrishna, V. et al., 2019).
- SMART applications optimize appointment scheduling in healthcare, reducing waiting times and enhancing overall business performance. Efficient resource allocation ensures better utilization of healthcare facilities (Koppala Venugopal & Vishnu Murty, D. 2019).
- The retail sector encounters challenges in ensuring that the workforce possesses the necessary skills to effectively use SMART applications. Ongoing training programs are crucial for unlocking the full potential of these technologies (Venugopal, K. & Ranganath, N.S., 2012).
- Tourism businesses may face challenges in quantifying the return on investment from SMART applications, particularly in the context of tourist experience enhancement. Establishing clear metrics for ROI is essential for justifying continued investment (Haimanote Belay et al., 2017).

In the service industry, the impact of SMART applications on operational efficiency, customer satisfaction, and overall business performance is evident across diverse sectors. While challenges exist, the benefits, including streamlined processes, personalized experiences, and enhanced innovation, underscore the transformative potential of SMART technologies in shaping the future of service delivery. A strategic and industry-specific approach to the adoption of SMART applications is crucial for ensuring their successful integration and maximizing their positive impact in the service sector.

4. METHODOLOGY

The research methodology for the investigation into the application success of SMART applications in service industries adopted a qualitative approach, aiming to provide in-depth insights into the experiences, perceptions, and challenges faced by stakeholders. The methodology involved a combination of interviews, focus groups, and content analysis.

Firstly, semi-structured interviews were conducted with key stakeholders from diverse service industries such as hospitality, tourism, hospitals, transport, and financial services. These interviews will explore their experiences with implementing SMART applications, perceived successes, challenges encountered, and the impact on operational efficiency, customer satisfaction, and overall business performance. The participants included managers, employees, and technology specialists to capture a comprehensive range of perspectives.

Additionally, focus group discussions were organized to facilitate dynamic interactions among participants, encouraging the exchange of experiences and insights. These discussions delved deeper into specific themes such as integration challenges, data security concerns, and industry-specific considerations.

Furthermore, content analysis was also employed to analyze relevant documents, reports, and case studies from various service industries. This method provided a contextual understanding of the successes and challenges reported in the existing literature and industry publications.

The qualitative findings were triangulated to offer a robust and nuanced understanding of the application success of SMART technologies in service industries, allowing for a comprehensive exploration of the research objectives.

5. DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION

The application success of SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound) applications in service industries has been a subject of extensive discussions, and its impact can be analyzed across various dimensions:

1. Operational Efficiency:

SMART applications have demonstrated notable success in enhancing operational efficiency within service industries. Automation of routine tasks, real-time monitoring, and data-driven insights contribute to streamlined processes and improved resource utilization. In hospitality, SMART systems for reservation management and room controls optimize operational workflows. Similarly, in healthcare, SMART applications for patient scheduling and remote monitoring enhance the efficiency of healthcare delivery.

2. Customer Satisfaction:

The integration of SMART technologies has been successful in elevating customer satisfaction levels. Personalization through data analytics, efficient service delivery, and enhanced communication channels contribute to positive customer experiences. SMART applications in tourism, such as mobile-based travel guides and personalized recommendations, contribute to a more satisfying and tailored experience for travelers. In financial services, personalized banking experiences facilitated by SMART applications enhance customer loyalty.

3. Overall Business Performance:

SMART applications play a crucial role in overall business performance by fostering innovation, improving decision-making through data analytics, and providing a competitive edge in the market. The adoption of the Balanced Scorecard Approach in financial services enables a comprehensive assessment of organizational performance beyond financial metrics. In the tourism sector, innovative

guest experiences driven by SMART technologies contribute to market differentiation.

4. Integration Challenges:

Despite the success stories, challenges related to the integration of SMART applications persist. Ensuring seamless compatibility with existing systems, addressing interoperability issues, and overcoming resistance to change are common themes in discussions. Stakeholders often discuss the importance of thorough planning, pilot programs, and continuous monitoring to overcome integration challenges. Collaborative efforts between technology providers and service industry businesses are also highlighted.

5. Data Security and Privacy Concerns:

Discussions on the success of SMART applications often involve considerations of data security and privacy. Balancing the benefits of data-driven insights with the need to protect sensitive customer information is a critical aspect of these discussions. Stakeholders emphasize the importance of adhering to regulatory standards and implementing robust data protection policies to ensure the success of SMART applications without compromising privacy.

6. Industry-Specific Considerations:

Success discussions often delve into industry-specific considerations. For instance, healthcare stakeholders emphasize the need for SMART applications to comply with healthcare regulations, while financial services discussions revolve around security measures and compliance. Stakeholders highlight the importance of customizing SMART applications to fit the unique requirements of each service industry, emphasizing flexibility and adaptability.

7. Return on Investment (ROI) Uncertainty:

Measuring the return on investment from SMART applications remains a topic of discussion. Businesses seek to justify the upfront costs by quantifying the tangible benefits and long-term gains. Stakeholders stress the importance of establishing clear metrics for evaluating the success of SMART applications. Demonstrating a positive ROI is crucial for sustained support and investment.

In conclusion, the discussions surrounding the application success of SMART applications in service industries are dynamic and multifaceted. While success stories abound, challenges related to integration, data security, and industry-specific nuances continue to shape these discussions. Continuous efforts to address these challenges, share best practices, and adapt SMART applications to evolving industry needs contribute to ongoing discussions on their application success in the service sector.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations for Optimizing the Adoption and Implementation of SMART Technologies in Service Sectors are as follows

1. *Comprehensive Training Programs:* Develop and implement comprehensive training programs for employees in service sectors, focusing on the specific SMART technologies relevant to each industry. This ensures that the workforce is equipped with the necessary skills to effectively operate and utilize these technologies.
2. *Customized Integration Strategies:* Tailor integration strategies to the unique needs of each service sector. Recognize the distinctive requirements of hospitality, tourism, hospitals, transport, and financial services, and develop SMART technology integration plans that align with the specific operational demands of each industry.
3. *Data Security and Privacy Measures:* Establish and enforce robust data security and privacy measures, especially in sectors like hospitals and financial services where sensitive personal information is involved. Adhering to industry standards and regulations will build trust among customers and stakeholders.
4. *Collaboration and Partnerships:* Foster collaboration and partnerships between SMART technology providers and service sector businesses. Encourage the exchange of insights and expertise to co-create solutions that address the unique challenges and opportunities within each industry.
5. *Pilot Programs and Testing:* Implement small-scale pilot programs before full-scale deployment. This approach allows businesses to assess the feasibility, identify potential challenges, and fine-tune the implementation of SMART technologies in a controlled environment.
6. *User-Friendly Interfaces:* Design SMART applications with user-friendly interfaces, ensuring that both employees and customers can easily navigate and utilize the technologies. Intuitive interfaces enhance user adoption rates and minimize resistance to change.
7. *Continuous Monitoring and Evaluation:* Implement real-time monitoring systems to track the performance of SMART technologies. Regularly evaluate key performance indicators (KPIs) to measure the impact on operational efficiency, customer satisfaction, and overall business performance.
8. *Customer Education and Engagement:* Launch educational initiatives to inform customers about the benefits and functionalities of SMART technologies. In sectors like tourism and hospitality, providing information to customers about the use of SMART applications can enhance their overall experience and satisfaction.
9. *Scalability Planning:* Prioritize SMART technologies that offer scalability. As service sector businesses grow, the technologies should seamlessly expand to accommodate increased demand and evolving operational requirements without major disruptions.
10. *Regulatory Compliance:* Stay abreast of and comply with industry-specific regulations and standards. This is particularly crucial in the financial and healthcare sectors, where regulatory compliance is integral to the adoption and continued use of SMART technologies.
11. *Continuous Improvement Feedback Loops:* Establish continuous improvement feedback loops involving employees, customers, and stakeholders. Solicit feedback on the performance of SMART technologies and use this information to iteratively enhance and optimize their functionality.

By implementing these recommendations, service sector businesses can navigate the complexities of SMART technology adoption and ensure that these technologies are effectively integrated to bring about positive transformations in operational efficiency, customer satisfaction, and overall business performance.

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