Interactivity and Credibility of Website on Website Usage Intention

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Abstract

With the emergence of new information and communication technology, the presence of concept of interactivity in the field of marketing empirical investigations has dramatically increased. To expand the knowledge of the domain of interactivity, this study was conducted to examine the influence of perceived website interactivity on website usage intentions, and the mediation effect of perceived website credibility on the relationship between interactivity and intention. For this empirical research study, the framework was mainly drawn from TAM and MAIN models, which are related to technology acceptance and adaptation. Moreover, this study aims at enhancing customers' intention to use the hotel's official websites through interactive features rather than the involvement of a third party. The study was conducted by collecting data through close-ended questionnaires from 200 international visitors to Sri Lanka, who also have visited a Sri Lankan Hotel's official website at least once. The results indicate that the more the viewers of the website perceive that the website is interactive, the more the viewers perceived that the website is credible, which in turn leads to several behavioral intentions. Also, this study highlights the importance of each of the three major dimensions of interactivity (active control/user control, two-way communication/reciprocal communication and responsiveness/synchronicity) in the hotel sector. Its general conclusion, theoretical contribution, societal implication, managerial contribution and implications for future research were discussed at the end.

Keywords: Credibility, Intention, Interactivity, Usage, Website

1. Introduction

The concept of the interactivity is highly associated with modern communication technologies especially with the internet and World Wide Web (Kiousis 2002; Ni, 2018). Therefore, the interactivity has become a central concept of marketing communications literature (Kim

2008). Many research studies have found that website interactivity in marketing domain has expanded over the years (Van Noort et al. 2012). Interactivity is enhancing the accessibility of the information to the consumer, which causes the enhancement of the trustworthiness, and it also is a precondition of online purchases (Huang et al. 2013). However, when considering the effect of website interactivity such as behavioral responses to website interactivity, the research studies that have been conducted is scarce, and have failed to recognize the significance of the concept of interactivity within the area of marketing communication (Van Noort et al. 2012). Interactivity is one of the key dimensions of assessing the quality of the information provided by the website, and it increases the virtual experience with positive effects on media perception, such as trusting beliefs (credibility) (Huang et al. 2013). Credibility in the context of online platforms, and how does the website design convey the trustworthiness to the user, are ongoing debates and growing areas of scholarly research (Corritore et al. 2005; Machackova, 2018). Online commercial transactions often suffer from the problem of risk, compared to the traditional offline transaction, and because of that reason almost all the consumers that engage in online transactions tend to assess the credibility of information provided by the websites (Flanagin et al. 2014). Specific design features such as ease of navigation, good use of visual design elements, the professional look of the website, ease of use, ease of carrying out transactions, appropriate content etc. have been identified as strong cues to perceived credibility of the website, and in contrast, poor website design affects negatively to the evaluation of credibility (Corritore et al. 2005; Machackova, 2018). In other words, dynamism of the website leads to positive credibility assessment in the mind of the online user, but the effects of dynamism of a website, which is reflected by website design features or degree of perceived interactivity on perceived website credibility, have been rarely explored and discussed in research literature (Kalbfleisch 2003).

Although e-commerce transactions are getting significant attention nowadays because of a lot of exposure on internet, companies within the online environment are still facing low purchasing conversion rates (Flanagin et al. 2014). Main reasons for the issue of not using website arise from the poor website designing (Agarwal 2002; Akram, 2018). Before placing an online order, consumer navigates through web pages, and looks for more information about the product. Their involvement with the website before committing purchasing is high (Jiang et al. 2010). website interactivity has received much attention as a characteristic of a website, which has the eligibility to obtain more online user attraction as it enhances customer involvement with the website (Agarwal 2002; Shatnawi, 2018). Generally, an interactive website allows the user to modify the content, to get more tailored information within a shorter period of time, to communicate with customers more effectively and to customize their offerings, etc., which are not usually possible with traditional media, and this may result in positive consumer reaction to the company offerings. Yet, conflicting results of interactivity can be seen throughout literature that may be because interactivity can affect in a

different way within a different context (Liu 2003). Cyr (2009) explained how the interactive website is so important to attract and retain online users as a novel concept. They proposed a model that validates the relationship between interactivity and trustworthiness. Their research finding proves that higher level of perceived interactivity of the website will predict a higher level of efficiency, effectiveness, trust, and enjoinment of the website, in turn, the perceived trust, efficiency, effectiveness and enjoinment leads to loyalty (Cyr et al. 2009). Despite the importance, only a few research studies have been conducted to examine the direct relationship between interactivity and website usage intention, and indirect impact of interactivity on website usage intention through perceived website credibility (Kalbfleisch 2003).

Therefore, this research study tries to fill the above gap by examining the effect of interactivity on perceived website credibility and perceived website usage intention. The study also examines the role of perceived website credibility as a mediator. As far as current knowledge is concerned, there is no research available in the Sri Lankan context dealing with the issue. In many Asian countries, there is a slow trend of adapting to the new technology and to the internet by hoteliers; on the other hand, although there is a high rate of hotel website visits, those hotel websites have failed to convert it into an online registration or purchase. Nevertheless, nowadays it is difficult to survive in this rapidly growing hotel industry without effective digital marketing, and hotel's official website will be the core of their digital strategy (Abdullah, 2016). Hence, it is critical to maintain an effective website that has an ability to attract more online users, and this research finding will also highlight the need for the hospitality industry to maintain an effective website with relevant interactive features, in order to make a credible presence on the internet, so as to grab international customers.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Perceived Website Interactivity

Website interactivity is a crucial tool of persuading online customer, and it receives extensive attention in the literature of management, marketing and communication etc. (Van Noort et al. 2012). Many scholars highlight the term interactivity as a key difference between traditional and new media. Hence understanding the influences of interactivity in online context is important for effective marketing communication (Sundar, 2008; Farook, 2016). However, the compelling problem in the domain of interactivity is that, although these studies implicitly assume how these effects of interactivity can be explained, these assumptions are not explicitly tested (Van Noort et al. 2012). This study hopes to fill the gap by explaining explicitly the impacts of website interactivity on the perceived website

credibility, that leads to the website usage intention. "Websites can be conceptualized as information repositories that represent organizational or individual sources, while also reflecting the characteristics of those sources through design features of the sites themselves." (Flanagin 2007, p.320; Más-Bleda, 2013). Blattberge (1991, P64) defined the interactivity as "the facility for persons and organizations to communicate directly with one another regardless of distance or time" (Blattberg 1991; Stafford, 2015) and Steuer (1992, P14) identified the interactivity as one of two dimensions that contributes to the tele-presence, which is the variable makes the foundation for the virtual reality within the field of communication and defined interactivity as "the extent to which users can participate in modifying the form and content of a mediated environment in real time."(Steuer 1992; Rodríguez-Ardura, 2016). Furthermore, Liu (2002, P54) defined interactivity as "the degree to which two or more communicating parties can act on each other, on the communication medium, and on the message and the degree to which such influences are synchronized" (Liu 2002). This definition of interactivity is more relevant to both marketing and communication literature, and reflects the multidimensional aspects of interactivity: two-way communication, active control, and synchronicity (Van Noort et al. 2012).

2.2. Perceived Website Credibility

The internet has become an essential tool of information and communication, and the demand for the information on the internet, a large amount of information available from a large number of sources, easy accessibility of information, information production, and dissemination of information on the internet has raised the issue of credibility (Sundar 2008). Within the online context there are no standards for posting digital information, and some of them can easily be altered, plagiarized, misrepresented and created under false identities, which ultimately created the need for evaluating the credibility of websites, and viewers of websites tend to evaluate its' credibility consciously or unconsciously (Flanagin 2007). Credibility is a multifaceted concept, which consists of primary dimensions, such as expertise and trustworthiness, and secondary dimensions, such as credibility perceptions, which are affected by the source attractiveness and dynamism (Flanagin 2007). Credibility also has been defined as "not as an objective property of the source [of information], but as a receiver perception", rather than as an estimation of the real quality of the website (Freeman 2004, p2). Credibility of the online environment has received significant attention since the late 1990s when internet started to provide a new experience to its users with an interactive environment that allowed them to look for more information and communicate with one another (Hilligoss, 2008).

The credibility is traditionally measured by considering the source of information (Flanagin et al. 2014). Accordingly, if the source of information is reliable or is a reputable person or

organization, then the information provided by them is also considered credible or reliable; but in reality, internet is a very complicated environment, and in many cases there are multiple layers of sources relevant to the transmission of information that leads to the confusion of credibility. Therefore, in the literature of credibility assessment, scholars suggest the credibility of message and credibility of the medium in addition to the credibility of source (Sundar, 2008).

2.3. Web Site Usage Intention

Website usage intention which is also known as website revisit intention, purchasing intention and registering intention, has received considerable attention in management decision making since it is considered one of the critical determinants of implementing internet technology in the business environment (Abdullah et al., 2016). Online users have several intentions of using websites, and among them purchasing on the site, recommending a good website to friends, and registering on the website can be considered the most common reasons behind using websites (Bart et al. 2005). Moreover, website usage intention has been found to be a major consequence of perceived interactivity of the website, and perceived credibility of the website (Kalbfleisch, 2003; Chang, 2014).

2.4. Hypothesis Development

Consumers in the modern era have different skills in managing and controlling websites. Hence they may perceive different levels of risk when they are interacting with a website(Belanche et al. 2012). Many research studies have found that perceived website interactivity influences consumer intentions by means of other variables (such as perceived credibility) (Jiang et al. 2010). Fogg (2003) conducted a research to find out what features of a website get noticed when people evaluate credibility of the website, and results mentioned that people seemed to consider four broad categories of elements when they were evaluating website credibility. Interestingly two of the four categories relevant to website interactivity, were site presentation including visual design elements such as the graphics and readability of the site, the site's navigability, functionality such as search function and the information provided by the website, including its organization, accuracy, relevancy and usefulness (Fogg et al. 2003). Fritch (2001) presented a model by attributing "cognitive authority" to internet information. Cognitive authority is a term they used to include both concepts of credibility and quality. This model emphasized more on the technological tools, which make the website more interactive and persuade the user to find more information about the organization, and ultimately enhances the credibility of the website (Fritch 2001;Kakol, 2017). In the light of foregoing research findings of perceived website interactivity and credibility, following hypotheses were constructed.

H1. Perceived website interactivity has a positive impact on the perceived credibility of the website

Perceived credibility of the website plays a critical role in online transactions, as purchasing from a site requires user trust on website credibility because of obvious financial risk, and it ultimately relates to user's intention to purchase online (Everard 2005). Jarvenpaa (1999) has argued that a customer's willingness to buy from the online store shall be increased if the seller is able to evoke the customer's trust on the website (Jarvenpaa et al. 1999; Winnie, 2014). Flavian (2006) stated that an individual's loyalty to a web site is closely linked to the levels of trust on the website. Thus, the development of trust not only affects the intention to buy, but it also directly affects the effective purchasing behavior, in terms of preference, cost, and frequency of visits (Flavián et al. 2006). Thus, we propose the following hypothesis.

H2. Higher the credibility of the website, higher will be the website usage intention

Usable websites, which are considered to have aspects such as the ease of understanding the structure of a website, its functions, interface and the contents, simplicity of use of the website, the speed of the website, the perceived ease of site navigation in terms of time required, action necessary in order to obtain the desired results, and the ability of the user to control what they are doing and where they are at any given moment, may affect customer's perceptions and behaviors positively ; whereas , less usable websites have the opposite effect(Flavián et al. 2006;Tandon, 2017). These usable interactive websites tend to create more positive attitudes towards the online store and increase conversion rates (Becker 2001;Palla, 2017). Jiang (2010) conducted a research with the aim of understanding how website interactivity can impact purchase intention, and results indicated that websites with high level of active control and reciprocal communication increases customer involvement with the website, that ultimately leads to higher purchase intention (Jiang et al. 2010;Jiang, 2015). In the light of several research findings of perceived website interactivity and website usage intention following hypotheses were constructed.

H3. Perceived website interactivity has a positive effect on consumer intention to use the website

There are several models that have been developed to measure the acceptance of technology. TAM (Technology Acceptance Model) is one of the most popular models extensively used in examining the acceptance of technology, and according to this model, attitude influences intention, and in turn influences actual behavior (Lee, 2003; Lai, 2017). TAM distinguished attitudes toward using information technology are affected by users' perceptions (Hsiao, 2016). Likewise, a well-designed website can enhance viewer's favorable feelings, opinions,

and perceptions towards the website, and a viewer with favorable feelings, opinions, and perceptions towards the website is more likely to become a regular user (Hsin Chang, 2008). In the online purchasing context, the website provides the first impression of the organization; the positive site perceptions, therefore, lead to emergence of high credibility perceptions, and develop a willingness to purchase online (McKnight, 2004; Tuch, 2012). Sundar, 2007 presented the MAIN model introducing four kinds of affordances or capabilities in digital media named modality(M), agency(A), interactivity(I) and navigability(N), which have the ability to cue cognitive heuristics relevant to the credibility assessment. According to the MAIN Model, interactivity has been identified as a major affordance on websites, which works as a heuristic cue to assess the credibility that in turn leads to some action possibilities (Sundar, 2008; Kim, 2016)

H4.Perceived website interactivity has an indirect positive impact on website usage intention through perceived website credibility.

3. Research Methodology

This research study can be classified as a conclusive research, because the objective of this study is to test the specified hypothesis, and examine the specific relationship among perceived website interactivity, perceived website credibility, and website usage intention. This requires clearly specifying the information needed. Therefore, a more formal and structured method was used to conduct this research.

Moreover, this research is categorized under a single cross-sectional, descriptive design. The sample survey was conducted among 200 potential participants, who were conveniently available for participation. To become an eligible participant, the respondent had to be an international visitor to Sri Lanka, who also has visited a Sri Lankan Hotel's official website/webpage at least once.

The online users' data was gathered through a carefully constructed questionnaire, which included 35 close-ended Likert scale type questions (See table 01 for detailed Operationalization of variables). In order to minimize the weaknesses of the self-report method, the questionnaire was pre-tested among a sample of 20 people, and very clear instructions were provided to the respondents. The questionnaires were delivered to the participants through both online and offline methods.
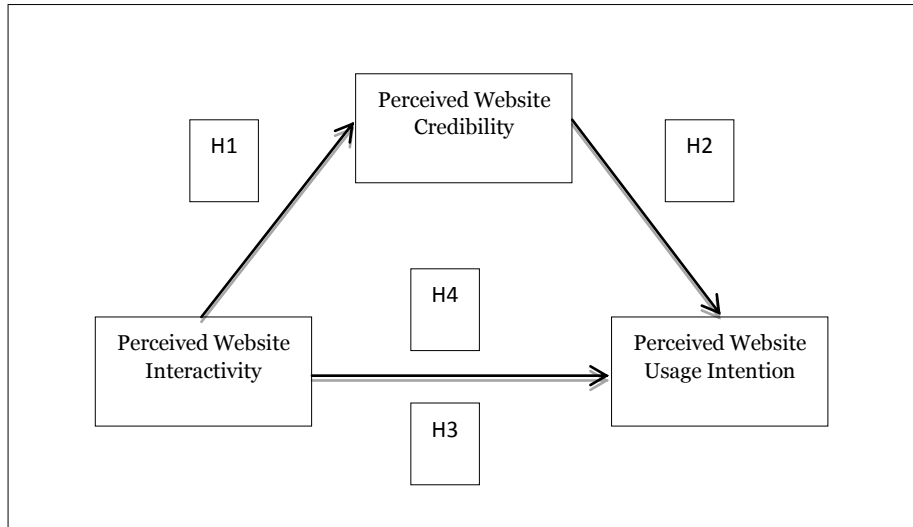
Figure 01: Research Framework

Table 01: Operationalization of variables

Main Variable	Sub-variable	Author of the Scale	Scale Item
Perceived Website Interactivity	User Control	Song (2008)	While I was on the site, I was always aware of where I was.
			While I was on the site, I always knew where I was going
			While I was on the site, I was always able to go where I thought I was going
			I was delighted to be able to choose which link and when to click
			I feel that I have a great deal of control over my visiting experience at this site.
			The Web site is not manageable. (r)
			While I was on the site, I could choose freely what I wanted to see.

			While surfing the site, I had absolutely no control over what I could do on the site. (r)
			While surfing the site, my actions decided the kind of experiences I got
	Respoonsivness	Song (2008)	The website processed my input very quickly.
			Getting information from the website is very fast.
			I was able to obtain the information I want without any delay.
			When I clicked on the links, I felt I was getting instantaneous information
			The website was very slow in responding to my request. (r)
			The website answers my question immediately
	Two-way Communication	Song (2008)	This website facilitates two-way communication
			The website gives me the opportunity to talk back.
			The website facilitates concurrent communication.
			The website enables conversation.
			The website does not encourage visitors to talk back. (r)
			The site is effective in gathering visitors‟ feedback.
Percived Website Credibility		Rodgers (2003)	Untrustworthy / trustworthy
			Not credible / credible
			Biased / unbiased
			Not believable / believable
			Not reputable / reputable
			Not experienced / experienced

		Not knowledgeable / knowledgeable
		Not qualified / qualified
		Compromising / uncompromising
		Unethical / ethical
		Not objective / objective
Website Usage Intention	Bart (2005)	I would purchase an item at this site.
		I would recommend this site to a friend.
		I would register at this site.

4. Data Analysis

The direct relationship between the independent variable, the perceived website interactivity, and dependent variable, website usage intention was analyzed using multiple regression. The indirect relationship in which, the independent variable perceived website interactivity affect the mediate variable perceived website credibility that in turn affect dependent variable website usage intention was examined using PROCESS macro SPSS. The PROCESS macro of SPSS was conducted to examine the mediating effect of perceived website credibility on the relationship between perceived website interactivity and website usage intention. To examine this effect simple mediating model introduced by Hayes (2010) was used. According to this model path "a" represents the effect of perceived website interactivity on perceived website credibility, path "b" represents the effect of perceived website credibility on website usage intention, and path "c" represents the indirect effect of perceived website interactivity on website usage intention. Path c` represents the direct effect of perceived website interactivity on website usage intention.

This model, wherein a mediator (M; perceived website credibility) is proposed to explain the relationship between an independent variable (X; perceived website interactivity) and an outcome variable (Y; website usage intention,) is a simple mediation because there is only one mediator. Perceived website interactivity is proposed to have an influence on perceived website credibility (path a), which in turn would affect website usage intention (path b). This is called the indirect effect (ab) of perceived website interactivity on website usage intention through perceived website credibility. This indirect effect is obtained by multiplying path "a" and path "b", the two effects associated with this pathway (Bolin 2014). In addition, there is a direct effect (c`), which is the effect of perceived website interactivity on website usage intention, while keeping levels of perceived website credibility constant. By combining the

indirect and the direct effects, total effect (c) can be obtained. Before running the mediation analysis, variables of the model should be examined to determine if mediation is appropriate. In order to do that, firstly, the statistical assumptions should be proved. Linearity is one of the assumptions of regression analysis. For the regression analysis, there should be a linear relationship between predictor variable, and outcome variable, to minimize the error, but there is no suggested way of assessing the overall model linearity in mediation. However, according to Hayes (2010), there is a procedure of determining and testing the indirect effect. According to that procedure, a series of regression were conducted (independent variable predicting the dependent variable, independent variable predicting mediate variable, mediate variable predicting the dependent variable, independent variable and mediate variable predicting dependent variable) to examine these assumptions for mediation (Hayes 2010).

4.1. Reliability Analysis

Cronbach's alpha coefficient ranged between .917-.959 for all variables in this model; while required level is 0.7 (Cronbach, 1947),which signals excellent internal consistency (refer table 02 for more details).

Table 2: Reliability Statistics

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Items
User Control	.959	9
Responsiveness	.941	6
Two-way Communication	.958	6
Perceived Website Credibility	.951	11
Website Usage Intention	.917	3

H1. Perceived website interactivity has a positive impact on the perceived credibility of the website.

Table 3: Correlation

		Credibility	User Control	Responsiveness	VIF Values
Pearson Correlation	Credibility	1.000			
	User Control	0.711***	1.000		1.878
	Responsiveness	0.812***	0.680***	1.000	2.657
	Two-Way Communication	0.798***	0.523***	0.698***	1.965

*** P<0.001

As per table 05, we can identify that the highest correlation is between the responsiveness and two-way communication, which is significant at a .01 level (r = .698, p = .000). Despite the significance of this correlation, and the moderately high coefficient, there are no threats of multicollinearity, since the highest VIF value recorded is 2.657, which less than the conservative assessment of 5(Hair 2007). It can also be noted that all the predictors correlate best with the outcome (between perceived credibility and user control r = .711, between perceived credibility and responsiveness r= .812, between perceived credibility and two-way communication r= 798), which indicates that all predictor variables will best predict the dependent variable.

Overall Model Description

Table 4: Model Summary[d]

R	R Square	Adjusted Square	R Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
.894[c]	.799	.796	.53335	1.914

c. Predictors: (Constant), Responsiveness, Two-Way Communication, User Control
d. Dependent Variable: Credibility

As per table 6, R square value of this model is .799 which means responsiveness, two-way communication, and user control account for around 80% of the variation in perceived website credibility. Therefore, the conclusion is that these three predictors explain quite a large amount of the variation in perceived website credibility. Here Durbin–Watson statistic is used to determine whether the assumption of independent errors is tenable. Generally, Durbin-Watson value should be greater than 1 and less than 3 to be the better. According to the above table 4, Durbin Watson value is 1.914, which is so close to 2, and the assumption has been met.

Table 5: ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
	Regression	221.607	3	73.869	259.676	.000[d]
1	Residual	55.755	196	.284		
	Total	277.362	199			

Above ANOVA table is used to determine whether the model is a significant fit of the data. For this model, the F ratio is 259.676 which is highly significant (p < .001). On the other hand, the F ratio can be interpreted by looking at the critical value at the significance level .001. For this model, critical value at 3 and 196 degrees of freedom at the level of significance

.001 is 3.78 which is less than F ratio of the model 3 (259.676). Therefore, the conclusion is that this model is statistically significance of predicting the outcome. Thus the null hypothesis which stated that there is no positive relationship between amounts of interactive features on the credibility of the website is rejected.

Determining Equation of the Regression Model

Table 6: Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	.698	.169		4.134	.000
Responsiveness	.274	.042	.338	6.477	.000
Two-Way Communication	.376	.039	.428	9.530	.000
User Control	.226	.038	.257	5.861	.000

Perceived Website Credibility = 0.7 + 0.34 Responsiveness + 0.43 Two-way Communications +0.26 User Control The standardized b-values are indicating the relationship between perceived website credibility and each predictor (responsiveness, two-way communication, and user control). All the coefficients are taking positive values in the equation. Therefore, we can conclude that there is a positive relationship between the dependent variable (perceived website credibility) and each independent variable (responsiveness, two-way communication and user control). The coefficient value of responsiveness of this model is .34 which indicates that as responsiveness increases by one unit, perceived website credibility increases by .43 units. Standardized b value of two-way communication is .43 which is fairly high compared to other 2 predictors and indicates that as two-way communication increases by one unite, perceived website credibility increases by .43 units. Therefore, we can conclude that features that provide two-way communication have the highest positive impact on the perception of web user on the credibility of the website than other features which provides responsiveness and user control facilities.

In order to check whether b values are significantly different from 0the values given by the t statistics can be used. The t-test is measures whether the predictor is making a significant contribution to the model and determines whether the slope of the regression line is significantly different from horizontal. For this model, responsiveness, t = 6.48, p < .001, two-way communication, t = 9.53, p < .001, user control, t =5.86, p < .001 are all significant predictors of perceived website credibility. From the magnitude of the t-statistics we can see

that two-way communication has considerably higher ratio impact on perceived website credibility, whereas the responsiveness and user control features of the website has less impact compared to the two-way communication features.

H2.Higher the credibility of the website, higher will be the website usage intention

Overall Model Description

Table 7: Model Summary[b]

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.884[a]	.782	.781	.76979

a. Predictors: (Constant), Credibility

b. Dependent Variable: Website_Usage_Intention

Table 8: ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
	Regression	421.470	1	421.470	711.250	.000[b]
1	Residual	117.330	198	.593		
	Total	538.799	199			

a. Dependent Variable: Website_Usage_Intention

b. Predictors: (Constant), Credibility

When the predictor variable is perceived website credibility and the dependent variable is website usage intention, R square is .782 which means perceived website credibility can account for 78.2% of the variation in website usage intention.

Table 9:Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-1.369	.241		-5.688	.000
	Credibility	1.233	.046	.884	26.669	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Website Usage Intention

H3. Perceived website interactivity has a positive effect on consumer intention to use a website

Further, F value is 711.25 which is significant at the 99% confidence level. (P =0.000). Therefore, null hypothesis stating that there is no impact of perceived website credibility on

website usage intention is rejected. Equation of the model can be shown as below. Website Usage Intention= (-1.369) + 0.884 Perceived Website Credibility. Our model predicts that the perceived website usage intention increased by 0.884 units for every one unit change in the credibility. Refer to table 9 for more information.

Overall Model Description

Table 10:Model Summary[d]

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.856[c]	.733	.729	.85604	1.713

c. Predictors: (Constant), Responsiveness, Two-Way Communication, User Control

d. Dependent Variable: Website Usage Intention

To determine whether the model is successfully predicting the outcome variable, data given by above model summary in table 10 was used. R square value for this model is .733 which means responsiveness, two-way communication and user control accounts for 73% of the variation in website usage intention. Further according to the table 10 Durbin Watson value is 1.713 which is close to 2 (Generally Durbin-Watson value should be greater than 1 and less than 3 to be the better). Which means that the assumption of independent errors is tenable has almost certainly been met.

Table 11: ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
	Regression	395.169	3	131.723	179.750	.000[d]
1	Residual	143.631	196	.733		
	Total	538.799	199			

c. Predictors: (Constant), Responsiveness, Two-Way Communication

d. Predictors: (Constant), Responsiveness, Two- Way Communication, User Control

For this model the F ratio is 179.75 which is highly significant (p < .001). On the other hand, critical value at 3 and 196 degree of freedom at the level of significance .001 is 3.78 which is less than F ratio of this model (179.75). Therefore, the conclusion is that this model is statistically significance of predicting the outcome variable.

Table 12:Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics
	B	Std. Error	Beta			VIF
(Constant)	-.954	.271		-3.521	.001	
Responsiveness	.380	.068	.337	5.601	.000	2.657
Two-Way Communication	.418	.063	.341	6.596	.000	1.965
User Control	.374	.062	.306	6.062	.000	1.878

a. Dependent Variable: Website Usage Intention

Equation of this model can be represented as below.

Website Usage Intention = (-.95) + .38 Responsiveness + .42 Twoway Communication + .37 User Control.

Coefficient value of responsiveness of this model is.34 which indicates that as responsiveness increases by one unit, website usage intention increases by.34 units. The b value of two-way communication is .42, while Beta value of user control is .37. Refer table 12 for more details. Therefore, we can conclude that features that provide two-way communication has a slightly greater positive impact on the intention of website usage compared with responsiveness and user control facilities. Further for this model, responsiveness, t = 5.6, p < .001, two-way communication, t = 6.6, p < .001, user control, t =6.06, p < .001, qualifies them as statistically significant predictors of website usage intention.

H4. Perceived website interactivity has indirect positive impact on website usage intention through perceived website credibility

In order to test the 4th hypothesis, simple mediation analysis was conducted using the PROCESS macro on SPSS. Results indicate that perceived website interactivity is a significant predictor of perceived website credibility (B= .8725, p= .000) and that perceived website credibility is a significant predictor of website usage intention (B= .8205, p= .000). Even after controlling for the mediator effect, the perceived website interactivity remains a significant predictor of website usage intention. Further perceived website credibility, (B= .454, p= .000) is indicating a partial mediation between perceived website interactivity on website usage intention. Approximately 80% of the variance in website usage intention is accounted for by the predictors (R square= .8052). The indirect effect was tested using a percentile bootstrap estimation approach with 10000 samples, implemented with the PROCESS macro version 3. These results indicated the indirect coefficient is significant B=.7152 which means perceived

website interactivity is associated with approximately .72 points higher website usage intention scores as mediated by perceived website credibility.
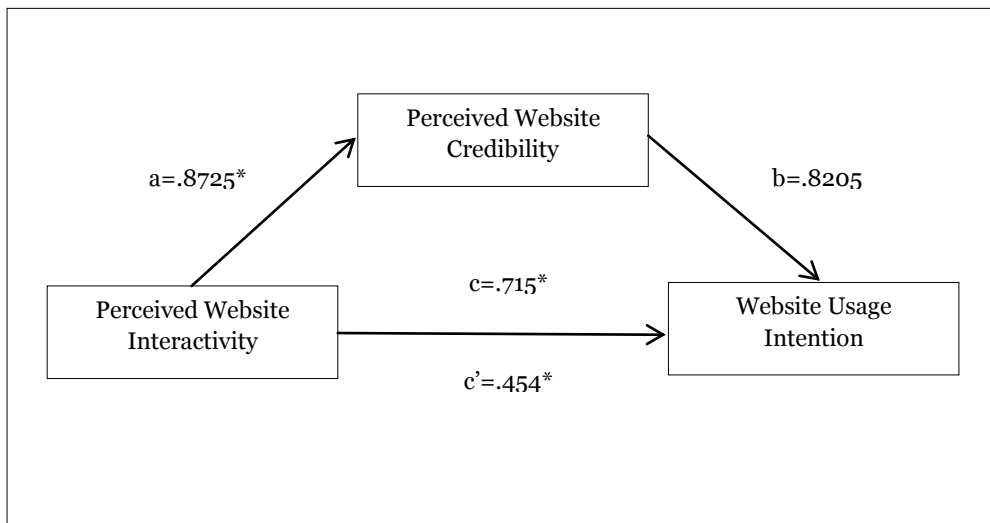

Table 13, 14, 15, 16 and 17, the mediating effect of perceived website credibility in the relationship between perceived website interactivity and website usage intention, Notes: *p < .001; All presented effects are unstandardized; a is effect of perceived website interactivity on perceived website credibility, b is effect of perceived website credibility on website usage intention; c` is direct effect of perceived website interactivity on website usage intention, c is total effect of perceived website interactivity on website usage intention

Table 13: Model Summary: OutcomeVariable-Credibility

R	R Square	MSE	F	Df1	Df2	P
.8899	.7919	.2916	753.3186	1.0000	198.0000	0.0000

Y: Website Usage Intention, X: Website Interaction, M: Credibility

Table 14: Model Coefficients: Outcome variable - Credibility

	Coefficients	SE	t	P	LLCI	ULCI
Constant	.7319	.1627	4.4978	0.0000	.4110	1.0528
Interaction	.8725	.0318	27.4467	0.0000	0.8098	0.9352

Table 15: Model Summary: Outcome variable - Website Usage Intention

R	R Square	MSE	F	Df1	Df2	P
.8973	.8052	.5327	407.2210	2.0000	197.0000	0.0000

Y: Website Usage Intention, X: Website Interaction, M: Credibility

Table 16: Model Coefficients: Outcome variable - Website Usage Intention

	Coefficients	SE	t	P	LLCI	ULCI
Constant	-1.5380	.2309	-6.6601	0.0000	-1.9934	-1.0826
Interaction	.4542	.0942	4.8222	0.0000	0.2684	0.6399
Credibility	.8205	0.0961	8.5413	0.0000	0.6311	1.0099

Table 17: Direct and Indirect Effects X on Y

	Effect	SE	T	p	LLCI	ULCI
Direct Effect of X on Y	.4542	.0942	4.8222	.0000	.2684	.6399
Indirect Effect of X on Y – Credibility	.7159	.0854	-	-	0.5549	0.8860

Table 18: provides a summary of the hypotheses that was tested.

Table 18: Results of Hypotheses Testing

H1	The hotel website which is having more interactive features has positive impact on evaluating the credibility of the website	Supported
H2	More positive evaluation on credibility of the website persuade online user for variety of website usage intention	Supported
H3	Perceived website interactivity has a positive effect on consumer intention to use a website	Supported
H4	Perceived website interactivity has indirect positive impact on website usage intention through perceived website credibility	Supported

5. Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to examine the direct effect of perceived website interactivity on website usage intention, and the mediation effect of perceived website credibility on the relationship between perceived website interactivity and website usage intention. It is expected that the more the customer perceived the hotel website is interactive, the higher the viewers' perceived credibility. Consequently, it may contribute to the viewers' favorable behavioral intentions, such as the intention to purchase, recommend or register. This study helped to discover whether the perceived website credibility has a mediating effect on the relationship between perceived website interactivity and website usage intention, and whether the effect is fully mediated or partially mediated by the perceived website credibility. Also, it helped to discover which interactive features are considered by website users as more important to determine the credibility of the website, and their website usage intention. Additionally, this research study is trying to enhance the existing knowledge relevant to interactivity of a website by applying the theoretical framework particularly to the context of the hotel industry.

Empirical findings and evidence demonstrate that there is an impact of perceived website interactivity on different website usage intentions, also demonstrate perceived website interactivity as a source of perceived credibility of the website, and credibility demonstrated as a prerequisite of the different behavioral intentions of web users. The research framework of this study is mainly adopted from the TAM model that suggested the intention to use new technology is determined by attitudes towards the technology, which is a result of the perceptions (Lee, 2003;Lai, 2017) and the MAIN model, that identified interactivity as a major capability of the website, which acts as a heuristic cue of determining the credibility of the website that in turn will influence behavioral intention (Sundar, 2008). In the context of the current study perceived interactivity results in perceived credibility, which in turn influences on website usage intention. In support of the definition of the interactivity provided by Liu (2002) in which "the degree to which two or more communicating parties can act on each other, on the communication medium, and on the message and the degree to which such influences are synchronized", user control, two way communication and responsiveness were identified as the three major dimensions to construct perceived website interactivity (Liu, 2002;Hui, 2014), and the behavioral intention was determined by website usage intention in terms of intention to purchase, recommend and register with the support of the scale introduced by Bart, 2005 (Bart, 2005)

According to the final findings of the study, both the direct effect of perceived website interactivity on website usage intention, and mediation effect of perceived website credibility on the relationship between perceived website interactivity and website usage intention was

identified as statistically significant, while the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable was found to be not entirely due to the mediator variable. Thus, the mediation effect of perceived credibility was found to be partial mediation of the study supporting the prior research studies, which have found other consequences, except perceived credibility such as cognitive perception (e.g.: efficiency and effectiveness), and affective perceptions (e.g. enjoyment) etc. of interactivity that in turn effect the behavioral intention. (Cyr, 2009) Despite of some earlier research findings that demonstrate no main effect of two-way communication on cognitive perception and only high affective perceptions (Jiang, 2010), the results of the current study showed that two-way communication can lead to higher credibility perception, which can be considered cognitive-affective perception, than belonging to the other two dimensions (user control and responsiveness) of interactivity. To conclude, there is a direct positive effect of perceived website interactivity on website usage intention, and at the same time there is a strong positive partial mediating effect of perceived website credibility on the relationship between perceived website interactivity and website usage intention in the context of hotel websites.

5.1. Theoretical Contribution

Many research studies have found that perceived website interactivity influences consumers' perceptions on the website credibility (Jiang et al. 2010). Some scholars have recognized interactive features of websites as noticeable elements of evaluating the trustworthiness of the website (Fogg et al. 2003). Furthermore, there are models which confirm the relationship between the perceived website interactivity and perceived website credibility (Fritch 2001; Wu, 2010). This research study also provides further support to these previous research studies' findings of the interactive website and perceived website credibility in the online context.   Researchers argue that in many contexts, perceived credibility of the website plays a critical role in online transactions, because unlike traditional transactions, in web transactions online user deals with the unseen and unknown seller (Everard 2005; Gao, 2015). Hence this research examined the impact of perceived website credibility and website usage intention, and revealed the critical role of the credibility of the website on behavioral intentions of web users.

This research also demonstrates that the development of trust on the website, not only affects the intention to buy, but it also affects the effective purchasing behavior, in terms of registering and recommending the website to others. Majority of studies take into consideration the interactive website in the context of marketing and communication, because nowadays consumers have different skills and abilities pertaining to internet usage, and they may perceive different levels of risk when interacting with a website, and decide their behavioral intention based on those perceptions; and organizations have started to focus

on developing easy to use websites, which interact with online customers comfortably (Belanche et al., 2012). Therefore, this research study also focused on determining the direct effect of website interactivity on website usage intention, and also the indirect effect of perceived website interactivity on website usage intention through perceived website credibility.

As a result, this research study supports previous research studies, which have demonstrated the existence of the direct effect of perceived website interactivity on website usage intention, and indirect effect of perceived website interactivity on website usage intention through perceived website credibility. This research study addresses the research gap by investigating the direct effect of perceived website interactivity on website usage intention and the mediating effect of perceived website credibility on the relationship between perceived website interactivity and website usage intention relevant to Sri Lankan hotels' websites, because this theoretical framework has not been applied to the context of hospitality and hotel industry in Sri Lanka. The data analysis of this study brings insight to the existing knowledge by demonstrating that interactive features, mainly user control, two-way communication, and responsiveness of hotels' websites in Sri Lanka have a considerable impact on consumer's assessment of the trustworthiness of the website, and in turn, decide their website usage intention, such as purchasing online, registering, and recommending the website to others based on their judgments and perceptions of the credibility of the website they visited.

5.2. Societal Implication

In this study, we have discovered that the perceived website interactivity has a great impact on website usage intention through perceived website credibility. It means that interactive features of a website are considered important in evaluating the trustworthiness of a website, which in turn influences the decisions to use the website with different intentions, such as making a purchase online. This study brings several implications for the society, such as based on the research findingsit can be recommended that making the hotel websites more interactive is necessary. It is important to make the website more interactive in order to be considered more credible and convincing by consumers. Such evaluation about the website can encourage consumers to increase their engagement with the hotel through the website. Additionally, this study found that reciprocal communication of a website has more impact on evaluating the credibility, than the other two interactive features (user control and responsiveness). Therefore, we can predict that features of the website, which are proving two-way communication may enhance the perceived website interactivity, and decrease the perceived risk of online purchasing, and encourage customers to spread more positive word

of mouth by recommending the website to others. Consequently, it will benefit hoteliers to decrease the cost of marketing, and increase their sales and customer base.

5.3. Managerial Contribution

Scholars and practitioners in the field of digital marketing and communication have long been concerned about the design issues of effective websites in different industries. But very few studies have attempted to discover how specific aspects of interactivity affect the successfulness of the websites (Jiang et al. 2010). This study addresses this concern by providing insight into website interactivity and its consequences. Practitioners in this field of digital marketing are trying to find pieces of advice to solve conflicts regarding the interactive features of websites in order to design a website in the most effective way (Jiang et al. 2010). One of the important managerial insights is that the interactive features of the website (such as active control, two-way communication, and responsiveness) improve the website involvement of online users. Among these three major interactive features, two-way communication has a greater ability to improve the credibility perception, and website involvement of online users. Managers should note that two-way communication is one of the critical aspects that make the website more interactive, and have a positive impact on improving the revenue of the organization. It is also imperative for managers to understand how interactive features should be implemented with greater consideration towards enhancing the trustworthiness of the website in order to make effective decisions. According to literature, "interactivity is a variable characteristic of communication settings. Formally stated, interactivity is an expression of the extent that in a given series of communication exchanges, any third (or later) transmission (or message) is related to the degree to which previous exchanges referred to even earlier transmissions." (Rafaeli 1988; Küng, 2008). By considering the findings of this research, managers should focus on improving their communication by creating more interactive platforms, where the company and consumer can meet virtually to exchange more information that may ultimately improve the trustworthiness and impact website usage intention.

5.4. Future Research

This research study has only taken three major aspects of interactivity into consideration. However, different scholars have identified different dimensions of interactivity. For example, McMillan (2002) identified five major dimensions of interactivity: playfulness, choice, connectedness, information collection, and reciprocal communication (McMillan 2002;Bowen, 2014). While this research has discovered how user controllability, responsiveness, and two-way communication affect perceived website credibility and website

usage intention, future research should investigate how other types of interactive features can affect different perceptions and intentions of web users.

According to the results of this study the indirect effect (mediation effect of perceived website credibility on the relationship between perceived website interactivity and website usage intention) is significant. Hence, it can be considered as successful mediation. When the indirect effect is significant, usually the direct effect may disappear or remain significant. If the direct effect disappears, then there is a complete mediation, whereas if the direct impact of independent variable on the dependent variable remains, then there is a partial mediation (mediator does account for a part of the relationship between the independent variable and dependent variable, but independent variable predicts the dependent variable, even after considering the effect of mediator (Kane 2017). For this research study, the indirect effect is significant and meanwhile, the direct effect also remains significant. That means there is a successful mediation effect of perceived website credibility on the relationship between perceived website interactivity, and website usage intention,yet perceived website interactivity predicts the website usage intention, even when the perceived website credibility is taken into account. Therefore, there is a possibility of the existence of some other factors that can mediate the relationship between interactivity and user intention, or this relationship is bound to be mediated by other factors completely. Hence, future researchers can investigate deeper into this relationship, and find some other mediation effects on this relationship.

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