Adaptation and Impact of QR Code Payment System in Kathmandu Valley, A Study on Consumer Behavior

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Abstract

This research investigated the adoption factors of QR code payment systems in Nepal's Kathmandu Valley, employing recognized technology acceptance frameworks and the UTAUT model. Using a mixed-methods approach that incorporated extensive literature analysis and an online survey featuring Likert-scale questions, the study analyzed responses from 362 participants. Statistical analysis demonstrates that perceived usefulness and ease of use most strongly predict QR payment adoption, with resource accessibility emerging as a fundamental enabler. Notably, while security and trust factors were present, they showed limited statistical significance in regression modeling, suggesting that practical advantages outweigh security considerations in this context. The researchers suggest strengthening digital infrastructure, improving user interfaces, and implementing financial literacy initiatives to assist regulators and payment service providers in fostering broader QR payment technology adoption throughout Nepal.

Keywords: *QR code payment, TAM, UTAUT, mixed method approach, perceived usefulness, resource accessibility, user interface, financial literacy, digital infrastructure.*

1. Introduction

QR code payment systems have gained significant popularity in Nepal, particularly in Kathmandu Valley. Originally developed for automotive scanning, QR codes have evolved into essential financial transaction tools globally, offering cost-effectiveness, ease of use, enhanced security, and interoperability across platforms. Digital payment providers like eSewa, Khalti, and Mobile Banking have spearheaded QR payment adoption in Nepal, supported by increasing smartphone penetration and government initiatives promoting a cashless economy (Dhamala, 2024). Despite growing popularity, there remains insufficient research on adoption patterns and impacts among consumers and businesses in Kathmandu Valley. The research aims to understand adoption dynamics, user challenges, and economic implications to help stakeholders develop effective strategies for widespread implementation. Key research areas include analyzing factors like access to resource, perceived usefulness, ease of use, trust, and security influences. The findings will potentially contribute to economic development, banking service expansion, policy development, and business planning in Nepal's digital payment ecosystem.

2. Problem Statement

Despite growing adoption of QR code payment systems in Nepal through platforms like eSewa, Khalti, and Mobile Banking, significant knowledge gaps exist regarding factors influencing consumer adoption. This multidimensional problem encompasses several critical challenges. First, there's limited understanding of socio-cultural motivators, technical barriers, infrastructure limitations, and regulatory issues affecting QR payment adoption in Nepal's unique cultural context (Maharjan, et al., 2024). This information gap disadvantages service providers, financial institutions, and policymakers who operate with incomplete information. Second, research is lacking on factors influencing consumer perceptions and intentions regarding QR payments, including technological self-efficacy, security concerns, trust, demographic variables, and prior digital payment experience (Kosim & Legowo, 2021). This knowledge gap hampers effective marketing strategies and service improvements. Third, a misalignment exists between service provider offerings and customer expectations, with limited

understanding of user pain points, trust-building mechanisms, and features that would drive transaction volumes (Kosim & Legowo, 2021).

These challenges have broader implications for financial inclusion, economic development, and regulatory frameworks. Without addressing these knowledge gaps, Nepal may not fully realize the benefits of QR code payments for digital economy advancement and financial inclusion.

3. Research Questions

RQ1: What are the major factors influencing customers to use QR payment systems in the Kathmandu Valley?

RQ2: Do Access to Resource, Perceived Usefulness, Perceived Ease of Use, Perceived Security, and Trust lead towards the adoption of QR payment systems in Nepal?

RQ3: What is the impact of each affecting factor towards customer's perception of QR payment systems?

RQ4: What are the challenges associated with the use of QR payment technologies, and how can they be addressed?

4. Research Hypotheses

- **Hypothesis 1 (H1):** Better access to resources positively influences QR payment adoption.
- **Hypothesis 2 (H2):** Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU) positively influences the intention to adopt QR code payment.
- **Hypothesis 3 (H3):** Perceived Usefulness (PU) positively influences the intention to adopt QR code payment.
- **Hypothesis 4 (H4):** Security concerns negatively influence the intention to adopt QR code payment.
- **Hypothesis 5 (H5):** Trust in QR payment platforms positively impacts adoption rates.

5. Objectives

- To identify the impact of financial and technological resources, perceived usefulness, ease of use, security concerns, and trust on QR payment adoption in Nepal.
- To evaluate the role of trust and security in adoption, focusing on data privacy, fraud prevention, user confidence, and the effectiveness of existing security measures.
- To provide actionable recommendations for banks, payment service providers, and regulators to enhance QR code payment adoption, and to investigate user experience and satisfaction to understand their impact on continued usage and sustained engagement with the system.

6. Significance of Research

This research provides valuable insights into QR code payment adoption in Nepal, identifying key factors influencing customer behavior and decision-making. The findings serve multiple stakeholders by highlighting opportunities and challenges in implementing QR-based payment technologies (Kautish & Dangol, 2019). The study benefits financial institutions, banks, and Fintech companies by guiding improvements in usability, security, and trust critical elements for developing user-centered digital payment solutions. It helps stakeholders prioritize investments in technology and infrastructure by identifying the most impactful factors driving adoption and satisfaction. By addressing technical limitations, security concerns, and awareness gaps, the research supports the development of effective strategies to overcome adoption barriers. Additionally, insights into promotional benefits and demographic relevance provide valuable direction for targeted marketing and outreach programs. Ultimately, this research contributes to building an inclusive digital payment ecosystem in Nepal,

potentially increasing financial inclusion, strengthening customer relationships, and supporting broader economic growth through a more digitally enabled society.

7. Literature Review

QR code payments are revolutionizing financial transactions in developing countries where cash still dominates. This review examines how these systems are being adopted and their effects in Nepal, with a focus on Kathmandu Valley. By combining important theoretical models, research findings, adoption obstacles, regional patterns, knowledge gaps, and future research possibilities, the review offers a complete picture of QR payment trends.

Consumers adopt QR payments based on two main frameworks: Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT). TAM, created by Davis in 1989, focuses on how users perceive usefulness and ease of use when deciding whether to use new payment technology. UTAUT builds on TAM by adding factors like social influence, infrastructure support, and user expectations. This expanded model is particularly relevant for Nepal, where social dynamics and available infrastructure strongly influence digital payment adoption. Both frameworks highlight that trust and security concerns significantly impact user decisions. Understanding these theoretical models helps Nepalese policymakers and financial institutions develop effective strategies to increase QR payment adoption as the country moves toward a more digital economy (Tamang & Aryal, 2024). QR payment adoption in Kathmandu Valley is hindered by three main types of obstacles. Technical challenges include unreliable internet connections, limited infrastructure (especially in areas outside city centers), and payment apps that sometimes malfunction. These issues affect the dependability of the payment system. User-related barriers stem from limited understanding of digital finance, preference for traditional cash payments, and worries about security breaches, hacking attempts, and personal data protection. On the business side, smaller merchants find QR payment systems difficult to implement and maintain (Dhamala, 2024). Many don't recognize significant advantages in switching from cash transactions, which don't incur processing fees. Some business owners haven't been educated about how QR payments could improve their operational efficiency and enhance customer experience. QR payment adoption varies significantly across different groups and locations. Young, educated, tech-comfortable people embrace QR payments more readily, while older generations and those with less education need extra encouragement and support to make the switch. Cities like Kathmandu show faster adoption rates thanks to better internet access, more banking options, and higher digital literacy. Rural areas face slower adoption due to infrastructure limitations and lower digital education level (Tamang & Aryal, 2024)s. When compared to neighbors like India and China, Nepal is behind in QR payment usage. These countries have advanced quickly through government programs, financial technology innovations, and widespread digital education. India's UPI system, in particular, has dramatically increased digital transactions. Nepal could benefit from studying these successful models to improve its own digital payment systems (Derian, Marciella, & Mariani, 2020).

Research on QR payments in Nepal still has significant gaps. Current studies mainly examine user perspectives, while merchants' experiences, challenges, and motivations remain largely unexplored. We also lack longitudinal research that would show how adoption patterns change over time in response to new policies and technological improvements. Comparing Nepal's situation with other South Asian countries could reveal effective strategies for addressing adoption barriers. To boost QR payment adoption in Nepal, infrastructure improvements are essential expanding 4G and 5G networks to rural areas and enhancing digital banking systems. Educational efforts should include public awareness campaigns about QR payment benefits and security features, while incorporating digital financial literacy into school programs to prepare younger generations (Susanto, Solikin, & Purnomo, 2022). Policies should encourage merchants to accept QR payments, and stronger cybersecurity laws with robust fraud protection mechanisms would build user confidence. Advanced technologies like AI-powered fraud detection systems and blockchain could improve security and transparency.

Partnerships with fintech startups would drive innovation in payment services. QR payments are growing in Kathmandu Valley because they're convenient and affordable, but widespread adoption faces obstacles related to infrastructure limitations, trust issues, and lack of awareness. To expand digital financial access, key players including government officials, banks, and tech companies need to collaborate on solving these problems, improving financial education, and utilizing new technologies (Rafferty & Fajarb, 2022). Researchers should study long-term adoption patterns, merchant experiences, and make comparisons with other regions to better understand how QR payments are spreading across Nepal. This analysis creates a foundation for developing better strategies to improve Nepal's digital payment environment and build a more inclusive, tech-driven financial system.

8. Research Methodology

The research design to observe QR payment adoption in Kathmandu Valley takes a general framework that is well positioned to ascertain the intricate nature of technology acceptance in Nepal's economy. Grounded in pragmatic philosophy, the research takes an addictive position that permits easy switching between theory and data, which opens doors for researchers to iterate theoretical concepts against empirical data (Davidaviciene, 2018). The mixed-methods design uses quantitative and qualitative approaches to ascertain adoption determinants, analyze user attitudes, and discover potential barriers, yet remains flexible to capture evolving trends within this rapidly evolving technological landscape. The research is focused on Kathmandu Valley based on a convenience sample of 362 subjects with knowledge of QR payment technology, selected based on availability and willingness to participate due to academic project time and resource limitations. Data collection employed primary sources through questionnaires with classification questions, single-item response, and Likert scales measuring such constructs as perceived ease of use, security, trust, and usefulness, while secondary sources comprised internet sources, journals, research articles, and books. Following a cross-sectional time period to record present consumer attitudes, the analysis was conducted in Microsoft Excel and SPSS software across three levels namely, general analysis, descriptive analysis, and inferential analysis supplemented by Structural Equation Modeling to check associations among primary drivers of adoption.

9. Research Framework

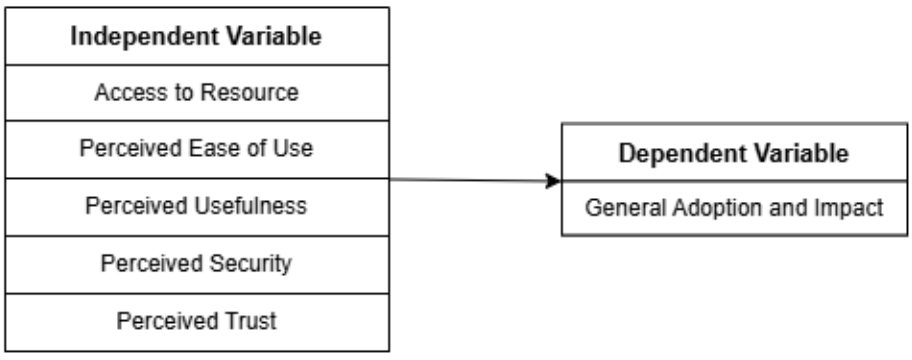

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

The paper investigates QR payment adoption in Kathmandu valley by combining two well-established theoretical frameworks the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) to create a combined analytical model. The study investigates five factors that potentially affect digital payment adoption in Kathmandu Valley: Access to Resources (measuring the availability of users with required technological infrastructure like smartphones and good internet connectivity), Perceived Ease of Use (measuring how easily users can use and operate the QR payment systems without a lot of effort or learning curve), Perceived Usefulness (measuring the actual benefits and efficiency gains users derive from conducting financial transactions), Perceived Security (measuring user's confidence that their financial information and transactions are safe from unauthorized access or fraud), and Perceived Trust (measuring users' trust in the technology itself and institutions operating these payment systems). These were chosen to reflect the various facets involved in technology adoption and understanding that effective digital payments implementation would need conformity in technical capabilities, user experience design, functional use, security frameworks, and trust mechanisms all within the context of Kathmandu, Nepal unique socioeconomic and cultural situation. The statistical analysis of these variables assists in portraying the reasons behind some users embracing QR payments and others being hesitant to adopt them, with valuable insights for financial institutions, technology providers, and policy makers keen on driving digital financial inclusion in emerging economies like Nepal.

10. Data Analysis

10.1. Reliability Testing

Cronbach's Alpha is a statistical measure used to assess the reliability and internal consistency of a scale or test.

Table 1: Cronbach's Alpha table

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha	No. of items
Access to Resource	.733	362
Perceived Ease of Use	.647	362
Perceived Usefulness	.792	362
Perceived Security	.750	362
Perceived Trust	.782	362
General Adoption and Impact	.851	362

The table summarizes the reliability analysis for the research constructs, showing Cronbach's Alpha scores for each factor measured in the QR payment adoption study. All constructs demonstrated acceptable to good reliability with Alpha values ranging from .647 (Perceived Ease of Use) to .851 (General Adoption and Impact). Each construct was measured across all 362 survey respondents. Perceived Usefulness (.792), Perceived Trust (.782), and Perceived Security (.750) showed good reliability, while Access to Resource (.733) was acceptable despite having value (.647) Perceived ease of use indicates acceptable reliability for exploratory research. The highest reliability was found in the General Adoption and Impact measure.

10.2. Descriptive Statistics of all variable

Descriptive analysis is conducted to transform raw data into meaningful summaries that provide an initial understanding of the information collected. This analysis establishes a foundation by identifying basic patterns, assessing data quality, characterizing variables through central tendency and dispersion measures, providing context for more complex statistical techniques, offering preliminary insights to guide research focus, and presenting findings in an accessible format for stakeholders before proceeding to inferential statistics.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics

Statistics

		Access To Resource	Perceived Ease of Use	Perceived Usefulness	Perceived Security	Perceived Trust	General Adoption & Impact
N	Valid	362	362	362	362	362	362
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		3.5210	3.7928	3.9000	3.6427	3.8343	3.9298
Median		3.8000	3.8000	4.0000	3.8333	4.0000	3.8000
Std. Deviation		.70349	.56593	.67570	.68142	.76135	.68497
Range		3.40	2.60	3.40	3.33	3.40	2.80
Minimum		1.20	2.00	1.60	1.50	1.60	2.20
Maximum		4.60	4.60	5.00	4.83	5.00	5.00

The analysis shows QR payment adoption has a high average score of 3.93 on a 5-point scale, indicating positive acceptance. Among the five independent variables, Perceived Usefulness has the strongest influence with the highest mean score (3.90), suggesting users value practical benefits most. This is closely followed by Perceived Trust (3.83) and Perceived Ease of Use (3.79), highlighting the importance of reliability and simplicity. Access to Resources scored lowest (3.52), potentially representing a barrier to adoption despite users' positive attitudes. All variables show moderate standard deviations (0.57-0.76), indicating relatively consistent responses across participants. The analysis suggests focusing on enhancing practical benefits while improving resource accessibility could further increase QR payment adoption in Nepal.

10.3. Correlation Analysis

Table 3: Correlation Table

Correlations

		Access To Resource	Perceived Ease of Use	Perceived Usefulness	Perceived Security	Perceived Trust	General Adoption & Impact
Access To Resource	Pearson Correlation	1	.528**	.612**	.542**	.121*	.672**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		<.001	<.001	<.001	.021	<.001
	N	362	362	362	362	362	362
Perceived Ease of Use	Pearson Correlation	.528	1	.787	.536	.236	.661
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001		<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001
	N	362	362	362	362	362	362
Perceived Usefulness	Pearson Correlation	.612	.787	1	.530	.225	.764
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	<.001		<.001	<.001	<.001
	N	362	362	362	362	362	362
Perceived Security	Pearson Correlation	.542	.536	.530	1	.191	.478
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	<.001	<.001		<.001	<.001
	N	362	362	362	362	362	362
Perceived Trust	Pearson Correlation	.121	.236	.225	.191	1	.165
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.021	<.001	<.001	<.001		.002
	N	362	362	362	362	362	362
General Adoption & Impact	Pearson Correlation	.672	.661	.764	.478	.165	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001	.002	
	N	362	362	362	362	362	362

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The correlation analysis shows which factors most strongly influence QR payment adoption in Nepal. Perceived Usefulness has the strongest relationship with adoption (0.764), meaning people who find QR payments useful are most likely to use them. Access to Resources (0.672) and Ease of Use (0.661) also strongly affect adoption, showing that having the right technology and finding the system simple to use are important. Security has a moderate impact (0.478), while Trust shows the weakest connection (0.165), though still significant. All these relationships are statistically meaningful. To increase QR payment use in Nepal, companies should focus on making the system more useful and ensuring people have the resources and skills to use it easily.

10.4. Regression Analysis

Regression analysis is a statistical approach that examines the relationship between a dependent variable and one or more independent variables. The dependent variable changes in response to variations in the independent variables. This analytical method allows researchers to predict outcomes,

observe how variables interact with each other, and evaluate the strength of these relationships. By using regression analysis, researchers can quantify how changes in independent variables affect the dependent variable, providing insights into causal patterns and enabling forecasting capabilities.

Table 4: Model Summary table

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Sig. F Change
1	.810[a]	.656	.651	.40459	<.001

a. Predictors: (Constant), Access to Resources, Perceived Ease of Use, Perceived Usefulness, Perceived Security, Perceived Trust

The Model Summary shows a strong fit between variables with an R value of 0.810 indicating a strong positive relationship. The R^2 value of 0.656 means that 65.6% of the dependent variable's variance is explained by the independent variables. The Adjusted R^2 of 0.651 accounts for the number of predictors. With a Standard Error of 0.40459, predictions are reasonably accurate. The p-value below 0.001 confirms the model is statistically significant, indicating the independent variables collectively have a meaningful effect on the dependent variable.

Table 5: ANOVA Table

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	111.103	5	22.221	135.744	<.001[b]
	Residual	58.275	356	.164		
	Total	169.378	361			

a. Dependent Variable: General adaptation and impact

b. Predictors: (Constant), Access to Resources, Perceived Ease of Use, Perceived Usefulness, Perceived Security, Perceived Trust

The ANOVA results demonstrate a statistically significant regression model ($F=136.744$, $p<0.001$) that effectively predicts General Adaptation and Impact. The model's five predictors (Access to Resources, Perceived Ease of Use, Perceived Usefulness, Perceived Security, and Perceived Trust) collectively explain a substantial portion of variance, with 111.103 units of variance explained (regression) versus 58.275 units unexplained (residual). The high F-statistic and extremely low p-value confirm that these five independent variables significantly influence General Adaptation and Impact, validating the model's predictive capability and statistical reliability.

Table 6: Coefficients table

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients B	Unstandardized Coefficients Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	.446	.169		2.635	.009
	AR	.315	.041	.324	7.769	<.001
	PEU	.150	.063	.124	2.390	.017
	PU	.485	.055	.478	8.759	<.001
	PS	-.016	.040	-.016	-.399	.690
	PT	-.007	.029	-.008	-.251	.802

The coefficients analysis reveals that Perceived Usefulness has the strongest positive impact on General Adoption & Impact (β=0.485, p<0.001), followed by Access to Resources (β=0.315, p<0.001). Perceived Ease of Use also shows a statistically significant but weaker positive effect (β=0.150, p=0.017). However, both Perceived Security (β=-0.016, p=0.690) and Perceived Trust (β=-0.007, p=0.802) have negligible negative effects that aren't statistically significant. The constant of 0.446 represents the baseline adoption level when all predictors are zero. Overall, usefulness and resource accessibility are the primary drivers of adoption, while security and trust concerns appear less influential in this context.

10.5 Summary of Findings

This study of QR payment adoption in Nepal found that customers have a positive attitude toward the technology, as indicated by an average adoption score of 3.93 on a scale of 5. The research measured five primary factors that may or may not have an effect on adoption. The strongest factor that spread adoption was Perceived Usefulness (0.764 correlation), which means people adopt QR payments primarily because of their perceived usefulness and advantage. Ease of Use (0.672) and Access to Resources (0.661) were equally strong, indicating access to the necessary technology and ease of use were highly influential in adoption decision-making. Security concerns had moderate impact (0.478), with Trust being the least significant (0.165), yet still statistically significant. Regression analysis affirmed these findings, and Usefulness, Ease of Use, and Access to Resources were statistically significant predictors in the multiple regression model together accounting for about 65.6% of variance in adoption levels. Security and Trust, to one's expectation, were not statistically significant in the regression model. These findings suggest that to encourage QR payment adoption in Nepal, companies must focus on highlighting useful benefits and equipping users with adequate resources and skills to use the system easily.

11. Conclusion

This study on QR code payment adoption in Kathmandu Valley reveals that access to resources, perceived ease of use, and perceived usefulness are the primary adoption drivers. Users with smartphones, reliable internet, and digital banking access demonstrate higher adoption rates, while intuitive interfaces and minimal technical requirements enhance appeal. Despite benefits like convenience and transaction automation, significant barriers persist, including technical issues (unstable connectivity, app crashes), limited merchant acceptance among small businesses, security concerns, and resistance to change from cash-based transactions. To address these challenges, the study recommends enhancing user awareness through educational programs, strengthening security measures with advanced protocols and fraud detection, establishing supportive regulatory frameworks, offering merchant incentives (tax benefits, reduced fees), improving digital infrastructure

in rural areas, and encouraging innovation in payment technologies. Future research directions include longitudinal adoption studies, regional comparative analyses, deeper investigation of merchant perspectives, exploration of the security-trust relationship, assessment of financial inclusion impacts, and examination of emerging technologies like blockchain and AI for payment system enhancement

12. Recommendation

This study on QR payment acceptance in Kathmandu Valley Nepal suggests several steps to increase consumer adoption: running education campaigns and training sessions to increase digital literacy, especially among rural users; improving security levels through sophisticated protocols, real-time fraud detection systems, and open safety communication; developing comprehensive regulation frameworks covering data protection, consumer protection, and transaction disputes; offering monetary incentives to merchants like tax benefits and lower fees to encourage wider participation of businesses, including street vendors; improving digital infrastructure by enhancing internet connectivity in under-served areas to enable more financial inclusion; and enabling ongoing innovation in payment systems by introducing features like offline capability, language diversity support, and incorporation of frontier technologies like artificial intelligence and blockchain. These recommendations target the specific technical, education, and infrastructural issues uncovered by research towards enabling an inclusive and more secure digital payments ecosystem in Nepal.

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