Chapter 7
The Lotus in the Mud: A Conceptual Model of Livestream Yoga Service Experience

Sandy H. M. Fitzgerald (née Ng)

Abstract   The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the service economy is substantive. People processing services—where customers are present at a physical environment for the service exchange in order to receive the service benefits—are experiencing business hardships as authorities around the world have ordered these businesses to shut down face to face operations in an attempt to curb the contagion. People processing services such as yoga studios have found an alternative way to deliver their service during this challenging time through digital technology. That is, the provision of livestream yoga classes. This chapter explores this service offering and posits a conceptual model of the livestream yoga service experience. It discusses key learnings, identifies managerial opportunities and proposes an agenda for future research.

Keywords Yoga · Transformative service research · Customer experience · Digital technology · Wellbeing

7.1   Introduction

As people around the world gathered with their loved ones—family and friends—on New Year's Eve 2019 to ring in Year 2020, filled with hope and anticipation for a positive future, little did they know that a once in a century global health crisis is unfolding. The emergence of the COVID-19 virus was first reported to World Health Organization (WHO) on 31 December 2019 and declared a pandemic on March 11, 2020 (Cucinotta and Vanelli 2020). COVID-19 is highly contagious (Johns Hopkins University 2020).

To stem the contagion, governments around the world began to enforce strict measures such as quarantine, isolation, social distancing, immigration and travel

S. H. M. Fitzgerald (née Ng) (✉)
RMIT University, Melbourne, VIC, Australia
e-mail: Sandy.fitzgerald@rmit.edu.au

restrictions. As a consequence of these public health measures, the impact on the global economy and community wellbeing are concerning. There is consensus that COVID-19 has severe negative impact on many industry sectors and that this dire global financial outlook can last for many years (McKinsey 2020; Statista 2020). Furthermore, COVID-19 situation also has a negative impact on general wellbeing as our normal daily lives and routines are disrupted (Baker 2020a).

People processing services, where customers are present at a physical environment for the service exchange in order to receive the service benefits (Lovelock et al. 2015), are most affected by COVID-19 public health measures. The health and fitness industry are an example of people processing services affected by COVID-19. With consumers having to be in close proximity and share exercise equipment in health and fitness studios, a feasible way to prevent the spread of COVID-19 does not exist (Cohen 2020). Therefore, this industry is mandated by governments to shut down.

The economic consequence of this mandated shutdown is problematic. Prior to COVID-19, consumer patronage of health and fitness studios is the major source of business income (Yeung and Johnston 2019). With the mandated shutdown, established fitness chains and others are struggling to survive. For instance, fitness chain such as Gold's gym has to permanently closed more than 30 gyms to stay viable (Stone 2020). Furthermore, many of these studios are operated by small business owners who may not be able to afford rent or pay their employees during shutdown and as such, many may not survive the imposed shutdown due to the pandemic (Robert 2020).

To prevent the spread of COVID-19, citizens are instructed to stay at home, to stay *safe* and *well* (Menon 2020). Ironically, our collective *wellbeing* is at stake as the new realities of remote working, home-schooling children, lack of contact with family and friends are having an impact on mental health and feelings of social isolation (Bas et al. 2020). So much so that government agencies (e.g., Ministry of Manpower 2020) and global authorities such as United Nations (UN) and World Health Organization (WHO) promptly issued advice to the general public on how to manage their wellbeing through this challenging period (World Health Organization 2020b; United Nations 2020b). As defined by the WHO, health is not merely the absence of disease or infirmity, but rather, it is a state of *complete* physical, mental and social wellbeing (World Health Organization 2020a). The Global Wellness Institute (GWI)—a leading global research and educational resource for the global economy of physical activity—went further and put forth a concept of well-being that consists of six dimensions, namely, physical, mental, emotional, spiritual, social and environmental (Yeung and Johnston 2020). Although the mandated shutdown of health and fitness industry is considered a necessary action, it does negate the function of this industry which exists to keep the communities healthy, resilient and well during this time. Notably, health and fitness services are services that have transformational potential as these services confer the sense of well-being on individuals, social groups, and communities (e.g., Rosenbaum et al. 2011).

Using GWI's definition of well-being as a benchmark, Yoga, an ancient practice that originated from India, and also classified as a type of mindful movement

(Yeung and Johnston 2019) has the capability to enhance all six dimensions of well-being (see Lewis 2008; Mace and McCulloch 2020; Monk-Turner and Turner 2010; Varambally and Gangadhar 2016; Yang and James 2014). With the imposed shut-down, yoga studios had to adjust or froze customer memberships to retain their clientele. In response, yoga studios leveraged on digital communications technology to continue teaching yoga through livestream class to their clientele and also, to the wider community (Kastrenakes 2020; Kwong 2020).

Serendipitously, what began as an ingenuine way of continuing business operations and remain in contact with studio members becomes a new service offering. In this chapter, the following question is explored: "*What are the antecedents and consequences of customer experience with a livestream yoga service?* Laying the groundwork to explore this question, the origin, globalization and the utility of yoga is first explained. Next, an overview of yoga consumers, the impact of COVID-19 and the emergent of livestream yoga class is explained. Following, drawing from disparate literatures, the question raised in this chapter is addressed. Although COVID-19 phenomenon created unforeseen challenges, this chapter will also discuss key learnings from which opportunities are identified to help yoga studio owners navigate and future proof their business and income. To end this chapter, an agenda for future research is discussed.

7.2 The Origin, Globalization and Utility of Yoga

Yoga is a group of physical, mental and spiritual practices which originated from ancient India some 5000 years ago (Askegaard and Eckhardt 2012). Yoga emerged from the Sanskritic cultural mold and is anchored on three Indian religious traditions: Hinduism, Jainism and Buddhism (Michelis 2008). The word Yoga is derived from the Sanskrit root "yuj" that means union—true union of our will with the will of God (Iyengar 2015). Therefore, from a traditional perspective, the original purpose of Yoga is designed to transcend 'ignorance and train the embodied mind to experience Truth' (Alter 2004) through its dynamic and diverse types of practices (Askegaard and Eckhardt 2012).

The globalization of Yoga, specifically its steadied spread to the West, can be largely attributed to Vivekananda's presentation of yoga practices at the 1893 Chicago World's Fair (Strauss 2005). Aware that his audience from the West is unfamiliar with the yoga's ostensibly religious traditions, Vivekananda repositioned yoga and make it accessible to an emerging market such that individuals from the modernizing world could relate to. Vivekananda repositioned yoga as a practical method to acquire, to enhance universalist nonsectarian spirituality pursuits, reduce stress, and regain health and freedom (Strauss 2005).

Modern yoga as it is now practiced globally, tends to have a focus on health and fitness (Campbell 2007; Strauss 2005). As such, yoga is considered as a type of mind-body exercise that typically make use of movement, breathing techniques and meditation to bring about general wellbeing to yoga practitioners (Lewis 2008). Yoga's

increased visibility in media, advertising and commercial enterprises is paralleled by the increased in number of yoga practitioners (Barnes et al. 2008). Considered as a form of mindful movement, Yoga is worth $16.9 billion with close to 165 million yoga practitioners worldwide (Yeung and Johnston 2019).

Yoga is primarily used for health maintenance and preventative purpose but is also considered for the treatment of specific physical and mental health conditions. As such, yoga's utility is evident along the illness—wellness continuum (Travis and Ryan 2004). Yoga has been an effective therapeutic intervention to treat mental health illnesses such as anxiety and depression; and also, obesity (Varambally and Gangadhar 2016; Yang and James 2014). On the wellness spectrum, yoga aligns with a *salutogenic* approach towards health, focused on prevention (e.g., stress reduction) (Riley and Park 2015) and attaining optimal wellbeing that encompass eudemonic pursuits (finding meaning in life) which helps human flourish (Ivtzan and Papantoniou 2014; Trulson and Vernon 2019).

Yoga improves wellbeing of specific population groups for the betterment of human functioning and performance. Notably yoga is applied to these three settings. First, yoga is applied to correctional settings (e.g., prison) to reduce inmates' depressive symptoms, anxiety, stress, anger as well as in the increased of behavioral control (Kerekes et al. 2017). Second, yoga has been applied to workplace as an intervention to reduce work stress and improve employees' wellbeing and work resilience (Hartfiel et al. 2011). Third, yoga has been applied in education context and was found to improve students' verbal and memory capabilities (Rangan et al. 2009). With substantive evidence that yoga can improve general well-being, it is obvious that yoga will continue to grow in popularity. Recognizing yoga has an international appeal and is a holistic approach to health and well-being, the United Nations proclaimed 21 June as the International Day of Yoga (United Nations 2020a).

7.3   An Overview of Yoga Consumers

There are a variety of yoga styles available in the marketplace (Cramer et al. 2016). It ranges from gentler form such as Yin and Restorative yoga to physically demanding types such as Vinyasa and Ashtanga yoga. Michelis (2008) attributes the variation in yoga styles is due to a lack of central authority and institutional structure over the years. The variety of yoga styles is probably another reason for yoga's popularity around the world as the choice of an individual yoga style is based on personal preferences and availability (Cramer et al. 2016). Due to the marketization effort of yoga in the West that started in the Twentieth Century, it is not surprising that the yoga participation rate is ranked 1st in the United States (Yeung and Johnston 2019) and that most yoga research is conducted in Western settings (e.g., Australia, New Zealand, Germany and so forth) (e.g., Park et al. 2015, 2019).

An aggregate of yoga consumption studies show that yoga practitioners (also known as yogis) are generally female, white, of upper socioeconomic status, and middle aged (Park et al. 2015). As such, several news articles constructed yoga as a

luxury commodity that secured social prestige for the affluent and upwardly mobile alike (Antony 2018). Differing from the West, yoga is ranked 9th place in terms of participation rate in India (Yeung and Johnston 2019), a yogi in India is more likely to be male, between 21 and 44 years of age, high school educated and a student (Telles et al. 2017). This is probably because yoga is traditionally practiced by Indian males and the learnings are transmitted in-person, from a teacher (otherwise known as Guruji) to student.

Even though the general profile of yogis differs between East and West (e.g., Park et al. 2015; Telles et al. 2017) the motivational drivers for yoga practice are similar. Leveraging on three yoga techniques, namely, yoga poses (i.e., asanas), breathing techniques (i.e., pranayama) and meditation (i.e., Dhyana) (Ayala et al. 2018), the motivations to practice yoga are to enhance physical fitness, disease management purpose, pursuit of yoga as a hobby, relaxation and spiritual growth (Park et al. 2019; Savelainen 2015; Telles et al. 2017). From a social perspective, yogis are also motivated to practice as they want to feel a sense of belonging and closeness to the yoga community (Savelainen 2015).

7.4 The Impact of COVID-19 on Yoga Service Sector

Although yoga is traditionally delivered and practiced in face-to-face setting; digital technology has afforded contemporary yogis the option to practice remotely. As such, yogis can choose to attend yoga studio classes or subscribe to digital yoga platforms to practice. It is interesting to note that although physical attendance remains the preferential mode of practice for most yogis, a significant portion of the growth in yoga practice worldwide is due to online yoga digital platforms (Yeung and Johnston 2019).

For yogis that prefer to attend yoga classes in studios, these are some of the benefits they seek. They are able to enjoy (1) the group energy, be inspired and motivated by others in the room practicing yoga together; (2) receive hands on adjustments and guidance from the yoga teacher; (3) have access to a range of yoga props (e.g., bolsters, yoga blocks); (4) have access to unique yoga styles that require special equipment such as aerial yoga (e.g., yoga swing or hammock) and hot yoga (a room that the temperature is set between 35–42 degrees celsius); (5) access to a yoga servicescape and finally (6) the opportunity to socialize with fellow yogis and form new friendships (D'Onofrio 2020; Wrigley 2020). For yogis that predominantly practice through online yoga digital platforms, the benefits are as follow. They (1) have the flexibility and convenience to practice at any time of the day in their own homes; (2) access to affordable, pre-recorded online yoga classes; (3) tailor their own yoga practice; and (4) prefers to practice privately (D'Onofrio 2020; Hunsberger 2020; Wrigley 2020). What is clear is that yoga studio classes versus online yoga digital platforms offer different value propositions. As such, yoga businesses either focus on offering yoga studio classes or create pre-recorded yoga classes to be offered through digital platforms e.g., Alomoves. For yogis, whether they prefer to practice

yoga physically in class or via online are driven by different motivations and personal preferences.

The COVID-19 pandemic is unlikely to have substantive impact on yoga digital platforms such as Alomoves and Yoga International that produce pre-recorded online yoga classes as yogis have no other options but to practice yoga remotely. With certainty, COVID-19 has disrupted the operations of yoga studios. With no alternatives, yoga studio owners adopt digital communications technology such as YouTube, Instagram and Zoom, to connect with their members by offering on livestream yoga classes. Understandably, this transition from offline to online yoga service delivery is likely to cause angst to the yoga studio owners as they navigate through the process of offering classes online. Naturally, the peak yoga professional body, that is, Yoga Alliance offers business support to help yoga studio owners navigate this change (Yoga Alliance 2020). With no prior guidelines available, yoga studios launched livestream yoga classes (e.g., Ang and Chew 2020; Whitbread 2020), which are impromptu and organic in nature to maintain its operations at a reduced scale.

As this type of online class is targeted at yogis who value physical yoga classes over online delivery, most studios initially offer it for free (e.g., trial period of two weeks) in the hope that consumers will sign up and get familiar with this type of online class. Subsequently, members are charged a substantive reduced fee to attend the livestream yoga classes as compared to studio classes (see Exhibits 7.1 and 7.2 in Appendix). That is the typical approach to monetize livestream yoga service. On the other hand, yogis are also grappling with whether they should pay or not to pay for these classes offered by yoga studios during the COVID-19 shutdown (Cadena 2020). Some yogis may view that these interim classes should be offered in good faith, to help maintain their yoga practice till studios re-open again. Nevertheless, it is purported that live streamed yoga classes are likely to continue i.e., Post Covid-19 (Handley 2020). First, with social distancing norms and measures established, only a limited number of people are allowed to be at a yoga studio at any given timepoint (e.g., Baker 2020a). Hence, getting a mat to practice in a physical class will be more challenging and as such members may still have to rely on livestream yoga service to practice. Second, consumers may remain wary of going out to public spaces for fear of 'catching' COVID-19 as there is no vaccine in sight at the time of this writing (Koslow and Lee 2020). Given livestream yoga service is going to stay, it would be useful to identify the factors that contribute to the experience of these classes and provide some guidelines on creating a purposeful and engaging experience for yogis. Towards this end, I employ education, marketing and human-computer interaction literature to forward a conceptual customer experience model of livestream yoga service.

7.5 The Case for Studying Livestream Yoga Service Experience

Research has shown that individual needs for a sense of belonging are particularly acute in times of flux, stress, and transition (Strayhorn 2012), liken COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, the mandatory closure of all yoga studios to 'flatten the curve' disrupt yogis' need for belonging and affect their psychological and social needs (e.g., Hagerty et al. 1996) during this difficult period. Utilizing digital communications technology, studio owners address members' need to feel belonged to the yoga community and continue yoga practice in spite of COVID-19's movement restrictions by responding to their 'crisis of immediacy'—defined as "the need for consumers to receive content, expertise, and personalized solutions in real time" (Parise et al. 2016)—through the offer of livestream yoga service. Livestream yoga service provides a means to (1) socially connect yoga studio teachers with their students and (2) the capability to organize 'live' yoga classes and deliver it online (e.g., Korn and Pine 2011). The emergence of livestream yoga service therefore becomes a new digital touchpoint that augments the way that studio members 'attend' yoga classes and transform their experience (e.g., Parise et al. 2016).

Holbrook and Hirschman (1982) were the first to introduce the experiential perspective of consumer behavior and marketing. Since then, the experiential aspect of consumption has been recognized in general business literature (e.g., Grove and Fisk 1997; Klaus and Maklan 2012; Meyer and Schwager 2007). Customer experience is broadly defined as "events that *engage* individuals in a personal way" and that experience is subjective and contextual (Pine and Gilmore 1998). In further detail, customer experience is conceptualised as the customer's subjective response or assessment of all attributes based on their direct and indirect engagement between the firm and the customer (Klaus and Maklan 2012; Lemke et al. 2011). The notion of engagement is therefore important in studies of online environment experience (e.g., Thakur 2019; Verhagen et al. 2015). After all, the engagement is a state that arrives from customer experiences of a product or service over time (Calder et al. 2016).

Businesses will gain benefits and competitive edge if they pay attention to the management of customer experiences (Pine and Gilmore 1998). Two well-known practical examples are Walt Disney and Starbucks. As technology becomes more ingrained in our daily lives since early 2000s, the study of customer experience with online environments intensify. For example, customer experience with the online environments (e.g., websites, online stores) has predominantly been studied within the hospitality and retail shopping contexts (e.g., Jeon et al. 2018; Wagner et al. 2020). Interestingly, the study of customer experience with synchronous instructional service such as livestream yoga service is lacking in the Service Marketing literature. The emergence of livestream yoga class therefore provides a unique context to study.

Managerially, it is important for yoga studio owners to manage this new service offering as the total customer experience should be managed across complex and diverse offerings, touch points and channels (Ostrom et al. 2015). Importantly the

enhancement of customer experience is identified as a value creation research priority and that the integration of customers, employees and technology roles for value creation is noted as a specific issue worthy of further investigation (Ostrom et al. 2015). Therefore, it is necessary to study customer experience of livestream yoga service as it has the potential to create value for businesses (e.g., the contribution of online reviews to a service) (Brodie et al. 2011). As voiced by Ostrom et al. (2015), there is a need to leverage cross-discipline research to move the service marketing field forward. This chapter integrates education, human-computer interaction as well as marketing literature to forward a customer experience model of livestream yoga class.

To frame the conceptual model, the stimulus-organism-response (S-O-R) theoretical model by (Mehrabian and Russell 1974) is employed to guide this inquiry as per prior studies that have used it to understand online consumer behavior and environment (e.g., Parise et al. 2016; Zhang et al. 2014, 2015). Broadly, the S-O-R model posits that the environmental stimuli (S) can affect an organism's internal states (O), which then drives an organism's behavioral response (R).

7.6   Conceptual Model of the Yoga Livestream Service Experience

Applying the S-O-R framework (Mehrabian and Russell 1974), based on cross-disciplinary research and also informed by personal experience of consuming yoga livestream service for since 7 April 2020—the start of Singapore circuit breaker (Baker 2020b), a parsimonious model is forwarded as show in Fig. 7.1.

Consumers who consume a livestream yoga service are yogis who wish to have a consistent and enhance their yoga practice from a qualified yoga teacher during the imposed COVID-19 movement restriction measures. I draw on education literature to identify key factors that can affect a learner/customer experience. Cognizant that this service exchange is mediated by digital technology, it is also necessary to
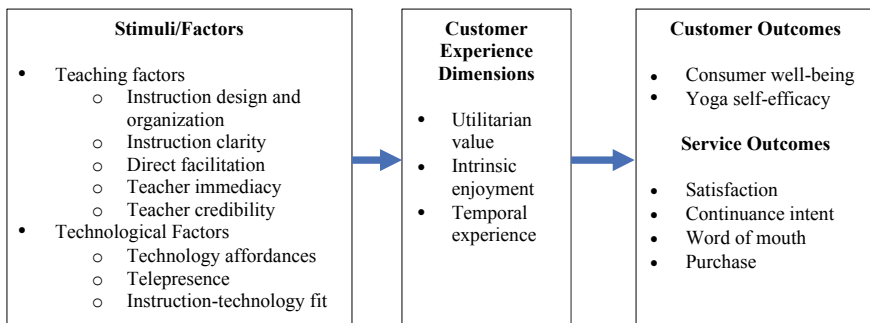

Fig. 7.1 Conceptual model of the livestream yoga service experience

consider human-computer interaction literature to identify key factors that facilitate this learning/customer experience.

7.6.1 Antecendents of Livestream Yoga Service Experience—Teaching Factors

Traditionally, the pedagogical practice of imparting yoga knowledge in India is through oral tradition. This perspective of yoga teaching focuses on the embodied relationship between teacher, his/her tradition/lineage, the student and the knowledge of yoga (Bourne 2010). Since the West has embraced Yoga as a technology for health and well-being and through the process of marketization, yoga teaching is increasingly becoming a regulated profession, with official pedagogic discourse that recognized entry standards and formal procedures for continuous professional development (Bourne 2010). As such, yoga teaching benefits from good pedagogical practices informed by education literature (e.g., Bourne 2010). Yet, pedagogical education frameworks for yoga teaching via different modalities (e.g., face-to-face, online or blended) are lacking (e.g., Antony 2016; McIIwain and Sutton 2014).

At present, practicing yoga in studios remains the most popular option (Yeung and Johnston 2019). A common reason that prevents yogis from practicing yoga online is the perception that it may be easier to incur yoga related injuries as one is not practicing in an environment with a trained instructor (Hunsberger 2020). However, this rationale may be misguided as there is no evidence to show that attending physical yoga class is more likely to prevent yoga-related injury. Consider this. It is unrealistic for a yoga teacher to provide personalized attention, feedback and adjustments to a group of students simultaneously. Therefore, yoga teachers are more likely to prevent yogis from getting yoga related injuries, simply through good teaching and instructing (McIIwain and Sutton 2014). Accordingly, teaching presence is a key determinant in engaging and retaining students online (Stone and Springer 2019). There are five factors that can be subsumed under teacher presence namely instruction design and organization, instruction clarity, direct facilitation, teacher credibility and immediacy. Research has shown that the service environment, be it physical or online can influence customer perceptions, experience and outcomes (e.g., Dong and Siu 2013; Hopkins et al. 2009; Rosenbaum et al. 2020). Given the impact of COVID-19 that has forced many yoga studios to deliver classes online, it is necessary to consider aspects of technology that helps to afford a good learning experience to yogis (Limperos et al. 2015). Specifically, there are three technical aspects namely, technological affordances, telepresence and instruction-technological fit are identified to have an impact on customer experience of livestream yoga service (Limperos et al. 2015; Mulik et al. 2020; Sun 2016). These factors that can influence livestream yoga class experience are now discussed.

7.6.1.1 Instruction Design and Organization

Instructional design and organization were defined as the learners' perceptions that instructor organizes and guides a class, in accordance with the intent/theme of the class (e.g., Jung and Lee 2018). To ensure that the class is well-designed and organised, it is necessary for yoga teachers to prepare their class content prior to teaching. In other words, good yoga teaching requires more than taking yogis through a series of yoga poses within a particular yoga style. To enhance the quality of the class, it would be helpful if the yoga teacher can send yogis digital information that relates to the aim/purpose of the livestream yoga class prior to the actual class. For example, relating a class to a theme such as "moving towards gratitude". By doing so, it would help yogis decide if the class resonates with them. Next, it would be important to organise the livestream yoga service through scaffolding technique. There are two reasons for doing so. First, students can feel supported as yoga teachers move students from yoga poses that establish their foundation to more challenging poses. Second, the sequence to move students from easy to advance poses can also help students experience flow (see Csikszentmihalyi 1990). Indeed, a study has demonstrated that students' perception of skill and challenge offered by the instructor are influential factors that determine their level of flow (Shin 2006). Flow refers to the experience of people "who are deeply involved in some activity…that they are completely and totally immersed in it…and nothing else seems to matter while engaged in the consumption event" (Lutz and Guiry 1994). In sum, yoga teachers should put effort into the design and organisation of a livestream yoga service, such that students have a good chance to flow as it enhances their experience of the class (Novak et al. 2000; Shin 2006).

7.6.1.2 Instruction Clarity

Next, instructional clarity is considered to be one of the fundamental cornerstones of effective teaching (Chesebro 2001, 2003). Instruction clarity is the extent to which the meaning stimulated in students' minds by an instructor accurately matches the meaning an instructor intends to convey (Chesebro 2008). To assure and prevent students from yoga related- injury, yoga teachers need to be are clear with their instructions given that yoga teaching is inherently a linguistically mediated learning context (McIIwain and Sutton 2014). Importantly, their word cues must be relatable to yogis. Consider this. Adho Mukha Svanasana (Sanskrit) meaning downward-facing dog pose. Yogis that have been practicing for a while may understand but unlikely, beginners. Another example, "Activate your quadratus lumborum", simply means activating your back muscles (Peacock 2017). Unless you are well-versed with anatomy, a technical cue is likely to cause confusion with most students!

In yoga, the effects that words have as they "alight" bodies are crucial as knowledge (learning of yoga poses) is literally incorporated simultaneously (McIIwain and Sutton 2014). Because digital technology is a rich medium, yoga teachers who conduct livestream yoga classes have the option to send a short yoga teaching cues that

will be used in the class prior to enrolled yogis for them to familiarise. As a result, the yoga instructions/cues may come across clearer to students during class. This approach may also help students feel more empowered to learn through livestream yoga service. It is also important that yoga teachers take considerable care and time to demonstrate to students and explain in-depth what a correct pose vs. incorrect pose looks like such that time students do not get injured during class. Furthermore, it was found that yogis who received specific instructions in yoga techniques had a higher perceived competence for performing these techniques (Birdee et al. 2016). As such, teacher knowledge to develop and deliver clear instructional messages is vital because when the word cues are clear and relatable, students will be able to comprehend the instructions, not hurt themselves in the process and have a good learning experience (Bolkan 2016).

7.6.1.3 Direct Facilitation

Direct facilitation was defined as learners' perceptions that instructors encourage students and provide them with feedback (Jung and Lee 2018). Based on personal experience, yoga teachers are always encouraging of students to "be present" and do their best to keep pace with the class. Therefore, it is oftentimes not possible for instructors to provide specific feedback to individuals during class, unless the feedback is applicable to *all* students in the class. In a physical environment, yoga teachers often encourage students to seek specific feedback after class. Therefore, it is equally important for yoga teachers who instruct online, to have that option available for students that seek specific feedback individually. Yoga teachers should make themselves available online for a short period of time after a livestream yoga class to provide accessibility to yogis who may have specific questions to ask. This component of teaching presence i.e., direct facilitation to support students is important as it can enhance student learning experience (Zhang et al. 2016).

7.6.1.4 Instructor Immediacy

The perception of teacher immediacy relates to any verbal (e.g., complimenting students) and nonverbal (making eye contact or smiling) behaviors that seek to enhance relational closeness or similarly reduce psychological distance (Mehrabian 1967). As opposed to a physical yoga class whereby teacher immediacy is easier to project, the delivery of livestream yoga service makes it more challenging as it is difficult for yoga teacher to read yogis' verbal and nonverbal behavior through a mediated environment. Therefore, yoga teacher might need to be cognizant and remember to encourage students periodically and intently display positive verbal and non-verbal behaviors so that yoga students feel engaged and a sense of closeness. For example, even though Instagram Live does not afford yoga teachers the ability to see the yogis, instructor immediacy can be demonstrated through teachers acknowledging and greet every yogis by their name/alias name when they login

prior to the start of the livestream yoga class. Through this minute act, it could make yogis feel a sense of closeness to the teacher. However, for most yoga teachers, the rapid transition from teaching face-to-face, to online becomes extraneous cognitive load for teaching livestream yoga class (e.g., Merriënboer and Ayres 2005). Therefore, some yoga teachers, may need to be supported and trained in surface and deep acting (Hochschild 1983) in order to demonstrate teacher immediacy competently. Because instructor immediacy can enhance student motivation (Pogue and Ahyun 2006), it is therefore important to bring across instructor immediacy in livestream yoga service, to ensure students find teachers relatable, and as a result, enjoy the experience (Arbaugh 2001).

7.6.1.5   Teacher Credibility

Teacher credibility constitutes "the degree to which the students perceive the teacher to be believable" (Banfield et al. 2006; Hochschild 1983). Teacher credibility has been conceptualized in terms of three distinct factors; competence, goodwill, and trustworthiness (McCroskey and Teven 1999; Teven and Hanson 2004). Because livestream yoga classes are offered by established yoga studios who would only hire certified yoga teachers, the credibility of teachers are already ascertained within the respective yoga communities who attend prior studio classes. Besides, the reputation of yoga studios also relies on word of mouth (Privin 2020). However, livestream yoga service has greater reach, this means that overtime, these classes may attract other yogis that are not current members through word of mouth. Therefore, to demonstrate credibility and reputation of the yoga studios and their teachers, it would be ideal to create a rating system for yogis to rate livestream yoga classes. By doing so, it will signify a teacher's credibility to potential future yogis. Importantly, it is reasonable to expect the more credible a teacher is, the more experienced he/she is competent with teaching yoga. Therefore, a credible teacher will be able to offer a good class experience (Finn et al. 2009).

7.6.2   Antecedents of Livestream Yoga Service Experience—Technological Factors

7.6.2.1   Technological Affordances

Technological affordances are perceptual feelings that people form regarding how they are supposed to interact or use a given mass communication tool or technology (Limperos et al. 2015). Simply put, technological affordances refer to how specific features of technology may be impacting the experience of livestream yoga service. To my knowledge, Instagram, Zoom, Facebook and YouTube are key digital mediums that livestream yoga classes are delivered on. Recently, Sundar (2007, 2008) proposed

the "MAIN" model that put forth four types of technological affordances that are present in almost every interaction that occurs via digital communication technology. The four affordances are modality, agency, interactivity and navigability (Sundar 2007, 2008).

Modality affordances are different ways in which yoga teacher can consider presenting his/her instructional content on livestream yoga (e.g., Sundar 2008). For example, a yoga teacher could opt to instruct his/her class using a mic and use good sound systems to play associated music or on the other hand, instruct his/her class without a mic and use the computer audio system to play the music that is required for the yoga practice. It would be reasonable to expect that with better microphone and sound system, it would afford a better experience for yogis. Agency affordances refer to the source of information provided by the instructor through the selected digital mediums (e.g., Sundar 2008). For instance, yoga studios use Instagram to publicize its livestream classes i.e., provision of time, date, cost, payment mode and delivery channel; typically, through Zoom.

Interactivity affordances encompass mechanisms whereby students can relate to instructors and others synchronously when required (e.g., Sundar 2008). Given the plethora of ways in which we can connect with each other online, it is necessary for yoga studios to decide on the types of digital communication tools, to value-add and enhance students' experience of livestream yoga class. For instance, if there are a group of yogis who commit to a series of livestream yoga classes (e.g., moving towards gratitude yoga series), yoga teacher that is responsible could consider creating a Facebook group, and post relevant content and engage students prior and also throughout this series. This interaction will enhance interaction and possibly collegiality within the group. After all, students online do enjoy feeling a sense of belonging (Peacock et al. 2020). Also, as flagged previously, it would be necessary for yoga instructors to provide an opportunity for students to seek feedback. To conduct direct facilitation (Jung and Lee 2018), yoga teachers would need to decide on relevant digital communication tools to interact with students.

Finally, navigability refers to the ease in which students can gain access to the livestream yoga service (e.g., Jung and Lee 2018). It is important that studio owners and yoga instructors ensure the process in which students enroll and gain access to the livestream yoga service is simple, straightforward and seamless. Afterall, literature has long established that good design of navigability will enhance student online experience (Kalbach 2007). In sum, the consideration of technological affordances to offer livestream yoga service is necessary as research has shown that it can influence the experience of students learning through this mediated class format (Limperos et al. 2015).

7.6.2.2 Telepresence

Telepresence is described as the extent to which one feels present in a mediated environment with which one is interacting with (Kim and Biocca 2006; Mulik et al. 2020; Steuer 1992). Telepresence can be a factor in influencing livestream yoga service experience (e.g., Mulik et al. 2020; Novak et al. 2000). Remembering that

the livestream yoga service is fundamentally for yoga studio members when COVID-19 restricts movement, it is important to consider ways to make yogis who prefer physical classes, feel absorbed and present throughout the livestream yoga class. For instance, studio owners/yoga instructors could design a virtual background that resembles the physical space of the studios. This could help yogis feel more "present" as though they are practicing in the actual yoga studio and get more immersed in the experience. If this is not possible, it would also be ideal for yoga teachers to create the mood, feel and space dedicated for yoga practice such that non-essential items (e.g., beds, sideboards) are not part of the backdrop as it could be distracting for students. Hence, it is important that telepresence is considered as part of affecting the student experience of livestream yoga class. Afterall, the more "realistic" the curated environment is perceived i.e., good telepresence, the better the livestream yoga service experience becomes (e.g., Mulik et al. 2020; Novak et al. 2000).

7.6.2.3 Instruction-Technology Fit

Instruction-technology fit follows the fit-as-gestalt approach to capture different aspects of the alignment between online instruction and course technology (Sun 2016). As mentioned, there are numerous digital communication technologies that can facilitate livestream yoga service. However, it is necessary to consider if the technology fits with the purpose and objective the class. For example, if the yoga teacher is leading a yoga class which has a set sequence, (i.e., Ashtanga primary series) and the purpose is to facilitate a class whereby all can practice at a specific time, then using Instagram Live to broadcast and lead the class as the technology of choice fits because there is not a need to offer specific guidance to students during the practice. However, if the intent of a class is to teach a new yoga sequence, to impart new skills, to lead a small beginners' class i.e., 10 people, then Zoom would be a good choice for instruction-technology fit. This is because Zoom affords yoga teachers the ability to synchronously view yoga students practicing their poses and communicate with them from time to time. Ultimately, having clear alignment between online instruction and technology is a critical success factor for students that have to experience remote learning (Bennett et al. 2012; Singh et al. 2010).

7.6.3 Dimensions of Livestream Yoga Service Experience

As customer experiences are events that *engage* individuals (Pine and Gilmore 1998), attention is now turn towards identifying the dimensions of customer experience that are relevant for livestream yoga service. In this context, it is reasonable to expect that students seek utilitarian value and at the same time, seek enjoyment when consuming these classes. Yoga is getting more popular than ever as people recognized the utility of practicing yoga (Yeung and Johnston 2019). Indeed, the importance of utility and value of yoga in our lives are now recognized (Bhardwaj 2012). Hence, the utilitarian

value of consuming livestream yoga service would be a dimension of customer experience. Next, it is equally important that the livestream yoga service is enjoyable. Consider this. Your experience of reading a riveting novel vs. reading a boring textbook. It is obvious that the former is a more enjoyable experience compared to the latter option. Hence, it is necessary to consider enjoyment as a dimension of the customer experience. Lastly, temporal experience is also an important component of a marketing offering (Hirschman 1987; Woermann and Rokka 2015) and is considered a component of customer experience within online channels (Calder et al. 2016; Malthouse et al. 2016; Pagani and Malacarne 2017). These dimensions of customer experience are now discussed.

7.6.3.1 Utilitarian Value

Utilitarian value is defined as an overall assessment of functional benefits and sacrifices (Overby and Lee 2006). For yogis who are used to or even preferred to practice yoga at a physical space to consume livestream yoga service during COVID-19 lockdown period signals that they associate livestream yoga service with necessity and instrumental in the achievement of higher-level goals (e.g., Botti and McGill 2011; Dhar and Wertenbroch 2000). In this instance, the practice of yoga through livestream classes help consumers achieve their goal of keeping well and advancing their yoga practice during this challenging period. Importantly, utilitarian value can be seen as an important aspect of the consumption experience (e.g., Calder et al. 2009; Thakur 2019). This is because the more yogis derive utilitarian value from livestream yoga service, the more satisfied and more likely they will continue to use and make repeat purchases in the future (Bridges and Florsheim 2008). Hence, it is crucial that yoga studios offer livestream yoga service that is supportive of yogis' learning and well-being goals.

7.6.3.2 Intrinsic Enjoyment

An intrinsically enjoyable experience is rewarding or serves as an end unto itself, without concern for practical considerations (Babin et al. 1994). It would be fair to assume that yogis intrinsically enjoy their yoga practice. Intrinsic enjoyment is derived through extreme states of mental stimulation from strong interest, intense involvement and absorbed concentration (e.g., Sullivan and Heitmeyer 2008). The experience with practicing yoga could offer escape from the demands of the daily world. Therefore, it is important that yogis find practicing through livestream yoga service is able to help facilitate the intrinsic enjoyment they get from practicing physically as a group in studios. If yogis' intrinsic enjoyment of yoga practice is supported through livestream yoga service, they will be more likely to make future purchase and even engage in positive word of mouth behavior (e.g., Thakur 2019).

7.6.3.3   Temporal Experience

The notion of temporal experience relates to people's perceptions about the passage of time (Wallace and Rabin 1960). This concept has been studied extensively within service settings (Thakur 2019; Woermann and Rokka 2015) and therefore, appropriate to consider in the offering of livestream yoga service. Research has shown that people's perception of time may be distorted and do not always concur with the real continuum of cosmic time (Thakur 2019). For instance, consumers may overestimate the time they spend waiting in queues, but underestimate time spent when they are having a pleasant time (Knoferle et al. 2012). Similarly, such temporal experience applies in consumer engagement with online environment and platforms (Calder et al. 2009; Malthouse et al. 2016; Pagani and Malacarne 2017). This is because consumers logged onto online environment and platforms for temporal experience that give them a pleasurable escape and help them disconnect from routine chores (Thakur 2019). In this context, it is reasonable to surmise that yogis consume livestream yoga service to (a) maintain their regular yoga practice and (b) to switch off from the possible stress associate with COVID-19 situation and (c) have a pleasurable outlet to maintain their individual wellbeing. Therefore, it is necessary to create a pleasurable temporal experience for yogis as it can prompt future purchase and word-of-mouth behaviors (e.g., Thakur 2019).

7.6.4   Consequences of Livestream Yoga Service Experience

The Transformative Service Research movement started approximately a decade ago (see Ostrom et al. 2010) and it urged researchers to focus on outcomes that are of benefit to consumers. To date, the proponent of research still focused on service outcomes that matter only to business (e.g., Jeon et al. 2018; Demangeot and Broderick 2007; Thakur 2019). Yet, the outcomes of service experiences could be potentially positive or negative for customers and/or service providers (Ajitha et al. 2019). Given the transformational potential of livestream yoga service in creating uplifting changes and improvements in the wellbeing of both individuals and communities (e.g., Ostrom et al. 2010) and also provide a way forward for yoga businesses to continue their operations through COVID-19 lockdown period, this model proposes both subjective wellbeing and yoga self-efficacy as customer outcomes and customer and satisfaction, word of mouth behavior, continuance intent and future purchase as service outcomes.

7.6.4.1   Customer Outcomes

The term wellbeing is used to describe the quality and state of a person's life and it is considered a multi-dimensional construct and there are many approaches to conceptualizing wellbeing (Linton et al. 2016). In this chapter, consumer wellbeing

is conceptualized in accordance to GWI's definition of wellbeing which consists six dimensions, namely; physical, mental, emotional, spiritual, social and environmental aspects. The influence of yoga on wellbeing is well-established (Ivtzan and Papantoniou 2014; Varambally and Gangadhar 2016). Therefore, if yogis have positive livestream yoga service experience, it should enhance consumer wellbeing.

Next, the purpose of consumer livestream yoga service is for yogis to continue with their yoga practice despite the constraints of COVID-19 lockdown. It is important that yogis find the livestream yoga class enhance their yoga self-efficacy. Self-efficacy refers to confidence in one's ability to organize and execute the actions required to achieve a desired outcome (Bandura 1977). Within yoga setting, Birdee et al. (2016) developed a yoga self-efficacy scale to measure students' competency with their yoga practice. As such, it is useful to examine if the experience of livestream class does enhance practitioners' yoga self-efficacy.

7.6.4.2 Service Outcomes

The delivery of positive livestream yoga service experiences is important as it would have an impact on business sustainability during this unprecedented period. In this conceptual model, four outcomes are identified. Customer satisfaction is conceptualized as the emotional state of a customer on the evaluation of livestream yoga class, combining the customer's affective and evaluative aspects of the service experience (e.g., Oliver et al. 1997). It would be important to measure if consumers derive satisfaction from the experience. Continuance intent is included in this model as a cognitive response whereby a positive experience will result in the likelihood that consumers will subscribe to livestream yoga service again (e.g., Lee and Kim 2017). From a business viability perspective, it is critical that yogis will purchase this service as this demonstrates loyalty towards the organization (Zeithaml et al. 1996). Therefore, this conceptual model includes purchase as a service outcome. Finally, this model also includes the consumer action of word of mouth. Word of mouth behavior is characterized by customer making informal communication, such as recommendations and evaluations of goods and services (Zeithaml et al. 1996) and is considered as a credible source of consumer information. This is because the information is conveyed from personal networks rather than from third-party channel i.e., advertising. As such, positive word of mouth behavior can help grow the clientele of livestream yoga service.

7.7 Discussion

Bill Gates described COVID-19 phenomenon as a once-in-a-century pandemic (Gates 2020). Apart from the devastating death tolls, this virus has disrupted service ecosystems around the world (Kabadayi et al. 2020). There is no doubt that COVID-19 represents significant adversity. But, in every adversity, there are always lessons to be learned. This virus has placed a spotlight on the integral role of digital technology

plays in our daily lives and in business. Service organizations need to re-imagine ways to use digital technology, to bring meaningful digital service experiences to consumers as an alternative to face-to-face service consumption. As consumers get used to remote working and now, forced to consume what was typically a physical service i.e., yoga studio class through remote means i.e., livestream yoga class, it is fair to assume people will be receptive, and may even demand more access to livestream yoga classes post COVID-19 due to time and cost factors.

Having a livestream yoga class as another mode of service delivery also expands yoga studios' service offering. Now that studios have set up infrastructure to offer both physical and livestream yoga classes, they are able to offer members different membership categories at different price points. For example, studio yoga membership versus livestream yoga class membership versus a hybrid of both options. The different membership categories will cater to different segments of yoga practitioners and as a result, studios may be able to attract more clientele (i.e., achieve service outcomes) and achieve customer outcomes (i.e., enable continuous yoga practice through different means). For example, some customers who have to travel regularly (i.e., once a fortnight) will not find 'studio yoga only' membership appealing. However, with the existence of livestream yoga service now available, customers who travel regularly are more likely find livestream yoga service or hybrid option more suitable. Furthermore, consumers who are price-sensitive i.e., students would be able to benefit from livestream yoga class as it is more affordable than studio class (based on current market rates).

Whilst it is acknowledged that in current situation, remote working is a challenge (i.e., juggling the demands of family and work concurrently without much fore-planning), it is likely remote work will be normalized post COVID-19 as employees' value flexible working arrangements (Melian et al. 2020). Therefore, for studio owners, there are benefits. Livestream yoga services are appealing to yoga teachers who now have the option to work remotely instead of facing a daily commute to work at various studios. From a business perspective, the emergence of livestream yoga classes means yoga studios can better manage their resources through offering more classes to their clients by scheduling both studio and livestream yoga classes.

Importantly, livestream yoga service provides yoga teachers with another income stream independent of the income they get from studio yoga teaching. At present, most of the teachers that work at different yoga studios are freelancers. The main reason that they teach at studios is so that they need not worried about business-related matters. Now, freelance yoga teachers can start their own online business and teach online to their followers as livestream yoga service becomes normalized and widely accepted within the yoga community (Yoga Alliance 2020). The emergence of livestream yoga class, serendipitously, provides benefits for both yoga community and industry in the long term (Kemp 2018) as it provides greater accessibility, reach and lower cost. Nonetheless, as more livestream yoga classes become available in the marketplace, the industry will need to focus on ensuring the experience and outcomes of this type of yoga class is fruitful. To this end, this chapter has put forward a customer experience model for livestream yoga service anchored on educational, marketing and human-computer interaction literatures.

Future research will need to explore, measure and test the conceptual model posited in this chapter. First, it is necessary to explore the factors i.e., stimuli, dimensions of customer experience and customer and service outcomes that are identified from the literatures through interviews and/or focus groups. Next, it is necessary to find suitable or develop measures for each construct and finally, to test the conceptual model. Given livestream yoga service has gained traction and is expected to be the "yoga of the future" (Kemp 2018), this proposed research agenda will advance service knowledge and managerially, offers useful insights and benefits to the yoga and wellness industry and community.

Appendix

Spaceandlight yoga offered free livestream yoga class to their clients when COVID-19 circuit breaker begun on the 7 April 2020 in Singapore (See Exhibit 7.1). From 4 June 2020, they will start charging a reduced fee (compared to studio class rates), to continue offering livestream yoga class (See Exhibit 7.2). The pricing of Spaceandlight yoga studio classes as provided in Exhibit 7.3.

Exhibit 7.1 The offering of livestream yoga class

Exhibit 7.2 Fee for livestream wellness services

Exhibit 7.3   In-studio yoga class fee

ADULTS
GROUP CLASS PACKAGES (Mat Yoga/ Pilates; 60 TO 90 Minutes)

Single	SGD 40*
Block of five	SGD185 (valid for 2 months)*
Block of 10	SGD 330 (valid for 4 months)*
Block of 25	SGD 725 (valid for 6 months)
Block of 50	SGD 1,300 (valid for 12 months)
Unlimited one month	SGD 350 (valid for 30 days)
Unlimited three months	SGD 960
Unlimited six months	SGD 1,800

PRENATAL PACKAGES (Mat Yoga/ Pilates)

Single	SGD 45*
Block of 5	SGD 210 (Valid for 2 months)*
Block of 10	SGD 400 (Valid for 4 months)*

TEENS (12-18 yrs old)

Single	SGD 30*
Block of 5	SGD 130 (valid for 2 months)*

KIDS (5-11 yrs old)

Single	SGD 25*
Block of five	SGD 110 (valid for 2 months)*

PILATES PRE NATAL REFORMER & GROUP REFORMER / SUSPEND

Single	SGD 55*
Block of five	SGD 250 (valid for 2 months)*
Block of 10	SGD 480 (valid for 4 months)*
Block of 20	SGD 850 (valid for 6 months)

OFFPEAK SPECIALS
(Only for Monday to Friday Group Mat classes starting 1230pm to 5pm)

Single	SGD 20

INTRODUCTORY SPECIAL RATES

First Time Promo Group Mat	SGD 25

Author's Insights

COVID-19—the once in a century pandemic—left an indelible footprint on our prior normal daily lives and routines. As this contagion spreads worldwide, we are required to rapidly transition to a 'new normal' way of living (e.g., social distancing, smaller gatherings, contact-tracing and so forth). Also, the way we operate our economic activities during these uncertain times have changed. Naturally, a lot of us will miss the old ways of living and in some cases experience a sense of unease and loss. However, as we pivot and adjust to the 'new normal', we need to, according to American author Wayne W. Dyer, "change the way we look at things and things we look at, change". Serendipitously, some of the changes implemented may be more advantageous than prior norms and practices.

This chapter selects yoga service—a segment of health and fitness industry -as an exemplar to showcase that it is a beneficial form of mental and physical activity for communities to practice during COVID-19 lockdown. It also explains how the yoga industry leveraged technology to deliver yoga services remotely to their clients; and the factors that yoga studios need to take note of in order to offer a valuable livestream yoga experience to the students. In this writing, I want to share with you my personal forecasts and thoughts of the yoga industry operating in a Post COVID-19 world.

If you are a yoga practitioner, I am certain that you would have experienced going to a yoga studio during peak hours and felt like you were "jammed in" as the studio is filled to the brim with other fellow students. Some of you might have felt claustrophobic and intimated as you try to get into different yoga poses with others surrounding you, affording you minimal space to relax into any poses! From the yoga business perspective, they attempt to fit as many people in a class for to maximize revenue. Post COVID-19, I forecast that such cram classes will be a thing of a past and moving forward, the yoga classes will be less crowded.

At present, the regulation (e.g., in Singapore) is that the yoga mats in the studio must be placed at least 2 meters apart and facemasks can only be taken off when the yoga practice begins. Currently, the teacher's facemask must remain on while he/she instructs. It is my belief that Post COVID-19, studios will continue to keep the yoga mats further apart as they would not want their clients/students to feel at risk or worried of being infected by others' respiratory droplets that could cause illness. After all, the consciousness of public hygiene is heightened due to COVID-19 and should continue to be the case Post COVID-19.

Next, amenities that yoga practitioners have come to expect at studios such as access to complimentary drinks (such as coffee and tea), snacks, changing and shower amenities, phone charging and communal space for interactions are suspended at present in Singapore to prevent the spread of virus due to communal use of these services. In other words, yoga practitioners are currently receiving a sub-par service experience even though they are paying their full membership. This presents an interesting discussion. Some predict that yoga fees will need to be increased for studios to remain viable, as class capacities are reduced for public health reason. Others suggest that yoga fees will be reduced as the yoga service offering shifts from full service (i.e. with added amenities) to no frills i.e., yoga studios providing just a

physical space to practice yoga. It is not easy to determine potential changes to yoga membership fees and structures at present as businesses are still subjected to weekly advisory from authorities with regard to operation guidelines. Notwithstanding, I project that as a result of COVID-19, any changes to yoga membership fees and structures will need to consider livestream yoga service as an additional offering to yoga students.

I project that livestream yoga service will continue to grow. As an example, apart from yoga studio owners who offer livestream yoga service during COVID-19 in response to mandated shutdown, online yoga business such as *Alomoves* that only offers online yoga videos began to offer livestream yoga classes during COVID-19 as well. The question is, who does it best (i.e., the offer of invaluable livestream yoga classes) will hold the hearts and minds of yoga practitioners and earn well-deserved profits at the same time. On this note, this chapter posits a conceptual model that provides guidelines towards implementing a worthy livestream yoga service experience. The offer of livestream yoga classes also maximise the utility of physical studio spaces for business to operate both physical and livestream classes concurrently. It is clear that this pandemic has forced many organizations to re-imagine their service delivery and there is general consensus within the yoga community that yoga pricing and membership structures will change. What is clear though, is that yoga businesses must extend and bundle their service offerings (e.g., physical class, livestream yoga class, online yoga short courses and so on), to remain competitive, viable and accessible by yoga practitioners.

Now turning the focus towards yoga consumers and practitioners, I expect that more yoga students will be amendable to bring their own yoga mat, towel and props. This behavior harkens back to the heightened individual awareness of public hygiene these days. Yes, a key drawcard of practicing at a yoga studio is that one does not need to lug yoga gear with them all day long just to practice for an hour. However, I believe that by and large, yoga studios will strongly encourage practitioners to do bring their own yoga equipment for their own health and safety and I do believe that yoga practitioners will comply. Where the carrying of yoga prop such as yoga hammock for Aerial yoga is not feasible, I think that yoga businesses may have to consider rebranding Aerial yoga as a niche. As such, it opens up possibilities for yoga owners to charge a special levy, as a way to pass on the cost of sterilizing/cleaning the hammock after every single use to students, in the interest of public health and safety.

For yoga practitioners, one of the key benefits of practicing in-person at the studio, is that the student can get appropriate, manual hands-on assistance when required from the yoga instructor. I see this as an important aspect of an in-person yoga experience. The hands-on assists are useful as they help students understand and be more aware of their body mechanics so that they can get into a yoga pose better and importantly, safely. Obviously with COVID-19 shadowing our every move and decisions we make, understandably, yoga studios are being extremely cautious, with some mandating a no hands-on adjustments for the foreseeable future. Whilst I understand the rationale (i.e., to limit the spread of germs), an astute consumer/yoga practitioner would ponder if there is any real difference between an in-person yoga

experience (without the hands-on assist) from a yoga livestream experience? Given at present, the yoga livestream experience is more affordable than physical classes, would the ban on hands-on assists from yoga instructors in a physical class lead to a critical shift from in-person memberships to yoga livestream memberships? From my perspective, I would advocate that appropriate, manual hands-on assists from yoga instructors is an integral part of a student learning in a physical class. Consider this. Imagine practicing and getting into an inverted pose such as handstand with no support nor assist from a yoga instructor! The risk of getting yoga-related injury is great. Without negating the risk of public health safety, I suggest that hands-on assists can be executed safely to support student learning. Make it a rule that prior and post assisting students physically in class (when necessary), the instructor must always sanitize his/her hands. This would fulfil the public health hygiene criterion, whist also fulfilling and not compromising the purpose of an in-person yoga class.

COVID-19 pandemic has driven home the point that each and every one of us needs to collaborate to prevent the spread of this virus. While at present, the 'new normal' conditions may seem to be an imposition, it is important to remind ourselves that Post COVID-19, we would have adopted a new set of rules and behaviors that could improve our yoga consumption experience. That is, yogis have the flexibility to attend either livestream of physical classes. Imagine practicing in the comfort of a spacious yoga studio environment that you can only hope for prior to COVID-19. Year 2020 will be remembered as a year of great human tragedy with COVID-19 wrecking our prior normal lives as we knew it. Drawing from a quote by Ralph Blum "nothing is predestined: The obstacles of your past can become the gateways that lead to new beginnings". I am certain that the new beginnings are around the corner and yoga services will transform to serve the ever-growing yoga community more effectively. Circling back to the aim of this chapter, that is, to provide guiding principles on the delivery of livestream yoga service experience, I do expect empirical research will be necessary to assess the quality of livestream yoga service experience. In this space, it will be mutually beneficially for yoga studio owners to collaborate with academics to investigate this phenomenon and collectively, design a new beginning i.e., new yoga experience for your members/students. I have a strong interest to continue my work in this area and welcome discussions via email with potential collaborators.

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Dr. Sandy Fitzgerald (née Ng) is a Senior Lecturer from College of Business and Law, RMIT University. She is an experienced academic and have taught undergrad and postgrad students and also supervised PhD students. She is currently residing in Singapore and is the senior academic responsible for RMIT-SIM business and law programs that are available at SIM Global Education. She has presented at international conferences and also published numerous academic and trade journals and a book chapter. She has three streams of research interests. First, she has interest in investigating the impact of service experience on consumer well-being. Second, she is passionate about understanding the impact of digital technologies on consumer behavior and finally, she has a niche interest in studying student academic performance and mental wellbeing. She enjoys collaborating with industry partners on teaching and research projects. She is contactable at sandy.fitzgerald@rmit.edu.au.