



“The Influence of Food Bloggers on Consumer Food Choices”

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ABSTRACT

The digital age has seen a significant shift in how consumers make food-related decisions, with food bloggers and social media influencers playing a pivotal role in shaping perceptions and driving purchase behavior. This study investigates the influence of food bloggers on consumer food choices, focusing on two key objectives: (1) examining the impact of food influencers on consumer purchase behavior, and (2) analyzing the role of online reviews in shaping consumer trust and purchase intentions.

A quantitative research design was adopted, using a structured Google Form questionnaire distributed among 205 respondents. The data collected provided insights into consumers' interactions with food content on platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, and blogs. Results reveal that a substantial portion of consumers follow food influencers regularly and are more likely to try new food products or restaurants based on their recommendations. Moreover, visually appealing content, perceived authenticity, and frequency of engagement significantly influence consumers' purchasing decisions.

The study also highlights the importance of online reviews and user-generated content in establishing consumer trust. Respondents indicated that detailed, honest reviews often serve as a primary factor in determining whether or not to try a product or service. A clear link was observed

between trust in the influencer and the likelihood of purchase, emphasizing that credibility and consistency are essential traits for food bloggers to impact consumer behavior effectively.

Overall, the findings underscore the growing influence of digital food content creators in the modern food marketing landscape and offer valuable implications for brands seeking to leverage influencer marketing to reach and engage target audiences.

KEYWORDS: Food influencers, Purchase behavior, Online reviews, Consumer trust, Social media

INTRODUCTION

In the digital age, the landscape of consumer decision-making has evolved significantly, particularly within the food and beverage industry. The emergence of social media platforms has transformed traditional marketing approaches, giving rise to a new category of influencers—food bloggers. These individuals, through visually appealing content and



persuasive narratives, have amassed substantial followings and exert considerable influence over their audiences' food choices. Their reviews, recipes, and restaurant recommendations not only entertain but also inform and guide consumer behavior.

With the increasing trust placed in peer-generated content, food bloggers have become vital opinion leaders. Unlike conventional advertising, their content is perceived as more authentic and relatable, which makes it a powerful tool in shaping consumer perceptions and preferences. Consumers are now more likely to try new cuisines, explore unknown food brands, or visit specific dining establishments based on influencer endorsements. This shift highlights the importance of understanding the psychological and behavioral effects of food blogging on purchase behavior.

This study aims to examine the impact of food influencers on consumer purchase behavior, with a particular focus on how their content affects consumer choices. Furthermore, it seeks to analyze the role of online reviews—often crafted by these influencers—in building consumer trust and shaping purchase intentions. As consumers increasingly rely on digital sources for food-related decisions, understanding these dynamics is crucial for marketers, restaurant owners, and food brands aiming to engage effectively with their target audiences. Through this research, valuable insights will be gained into the mechanisms through which food bloggers affect consumer preferences, thereby contributing to the broader discourse on influencer marketing in the food sector.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Abbas et al. (2023): Demonstrate that online reviews strongly influence tourists' dining choices, with country-of-origin moderating this effect. However, the study does not differentiate the impact of various online information types on dine-out behavior, signaling a need for further research in this area.

Eng (2023): Highlights the powerful role of short-form videos on TikTok and Instagram as electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) in shaping consumer visit intentions, emphasizing platform-specific influences on decision-making.

Parkin and Attwood (2022): Find that menu designs emphasizing vegetarian options through prominent placement and persuasive language increase sustainable food choices, though the long-term effects remain unexplored.

Popy and Bappy (2022): Reveal that positive attitudes towards social media reviews increase restaurant visit intentions in Bangladesh, with trust and review quality as key factors, but the study overlooks platform-specific differences in review perception.

Kurdi et al. (2022): Identify credibility and attractiveness of social media influencers as significant drivers of consumer attitudes and purchase intentions for Keto products, but long-term effects on sustained behavior are not addressed.

Fadnes et al. (2022): Model the positive impact of healthy dietary patterns on life expectancy, though socio-economic and cultural influences on diet are underexplored, necessitating broader future studies.

Rogers et al. (2022): Indicate that while social media influencers disseminate nutrition information widely, content accuracy varies, posing public health risks and requiring more research on long-term impacts.

Ingrassia et al. (2022): Propose a digital influencer-based open innovation model for food and tourism sectors, highlighting increased engagement but lacking quantitative evidence of marketing impact.

Pilar, Kvasnicková Stanislavská, and Kvasnicka (2021): Find frequent, positive social media discussions on vegan and organic foods but do not explore effects on consumer behavior or dietary choices, pointing to research gaps.



Wongprawmas et al. (2021): Report that health, taste, and convenience significantly shape Italian food choices, aided by nutritional awareness; however, regional variations and temporal changes remain unexamined.

Blake et al. (2021): Advance understanding of food choice in low- and middle-income countries' evolving food systems but lack focus on actionable policy interventions to improve food security.

Okumus et al. (2021): Show that gender and generation impact food neophobia and neophilia, yet cultural factors influencing these attitudes are not investigated, suggesting an area for further work.

Eyinade et al. (2021): Identify health, environment, and socio-economic status as key influencers of organic food willingness, with price and availability as barriers; regional consumption differences require further study.

Marinkovic and Lazarevic (2021): Observe COVID-19-driven shifts in Serbian food shopping and eating habits toward online purchasing and health focus, but longer-term habit sustainability is unexplored.

Carey et al. (2021): Discuss social media's role in shaping consumer morality and ethical consumption through public commentary, coining the "moralising media-scape" concept impacting buyer behavior beyond marketing.

Borda et al. (2021): Find moderate Romanian consumer knowledge of food safety and varying trust in information sources, yet the effectiveness of communication strategies to improve knowledge remains unaddressed.

Brouwer et al. (2021): Advocate integrating healthy diet perspectives in food system transformations for sustainability but lack detailed strategies for regional implementation.

Folkvord, Roes, and Bevelander (2020): Establish that real fitness influencers on Instagram more effectively boost brand attitudes and purchase intentions for healthy foods compared to fictitious ones, though long-term effects need study.

Coates et al. (2020): Reveal children recognize influencer marketing tactics on YouTube but often miss persuasive intent; influencer marketing strongly affects their food choices, underscoring the need for improved media literacy and regulation.

Hasan and Suciarto (2020): Determine that attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control positively influence organic food purchase intentions, with geographical scope limiting broader generalization and longitudinal insights.

Reagan et al. (2020): Find that Instagram food and beverage promotions frequently feature unhealthy products with minimal sponsorship disclosure, and usage of #ad does not affect consumer perceptions, warranting further health impact research.

Lim et al. (2020): Emphasize food bloggers' credibility and personal storytelling in influencing food preferences, especially in Vietnam, bridging advertising and personal recommendation effectively.

Puddephatt et al. (2020): Identify affordability and availability as dominant food choice drivers in food-insecure populations, with emotional factors also playing roles; socio-economic policy impacts remain underexplored.

Peng-Li et al. (2020): Show taste-congruent soundtracks guide visual attention and food choices consistently across Chinese and Danish consumers, calling for more research on additional sensory influences.

Marsola et al. (2020): Link socioeconomic status and chronic disease risk perceptions to food choice motives in Brazil, though regional and temporal variation analyses are lacking.

Qi, Yu, and Ploeger (2020): Find COVID-19 increased health awareness and green food purchase intentions in China, highlighting an intention-behavior gap and a need for further research on marketing strategies and long-term effects.



Hecht et al. (2020): Reveal that food and beverage companies shape retailer marketing strategies that influence consumer purchases, though the impact of specific tactics on long-term behavior is yet to be studied.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research on the influence of food bloggers on consumer food choices uses a structured survey method targeting social media users who follow food bloggers. A pre-tested questionnaire collects data on attitudes, trust, and purchasing behavior influenced by food bloggers. Convenience sampling is employed to select relevant participants. Data are analyzed using descriptive statistics and regression techniques to evaluate the impact of food bloggers. This approach ensures valid, reliable insights into how food bloggers shape consumer food preferences.

OBJECTIVES

- To examine the impact of food influencers on consumer purchase behavior.
- To analyze the role of online reviews in shaping consumer trust and purchase intentions.

DATA COLLECTION

Data collection will utilize both online and in-person methods to gather comprehensive data:

- 1) **Surveys**
 - Administered online to reach a wide audience using platforms like Google Forms.
 - Questions will focus on the influence of food bloggers on purchasing behavior, perceived credibility, and engagement patterns.
- 2) **Interviews:**
 - Conduct semi-structured interviews with selected participants to delve deeper into their experiences and perceptions regarding food bloggers.
 - Interviews can be conducted in-person or via video conferencing tools, depending on participant preference and availability.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The scope of this study encompasses:

- **Target Audience:** Focus on consumers aged 18-45, who are regular followers of food bloggers.
- **Platforms Covered:** Investigate the influence across popular social media platforms, primarily focusing on Instagram and YouTube, where food bloggers have a significant presence.
- **Topics of Interest:**
 - I. The impact of food blogger credibility on consumer trust.
 - II. The effectiveness of various engagement strategies used by food bloggers (e.g., giveaways, interactive content).
 - III. The role of food bloggers in promoting healthy eating habits and trends in food choices.



DATA ANALYSIS

Regression Analysis Report

Objective 1

To examine the impact of food influencers—specifically influencer appeal and trustworthiness—on consumer purchase intention.

Descriptive Statistics

Variable	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Purchase Intention	3.35	0.45	202
Influencer Appeal	3.36	0.49	202
Trustworthiness	3.34	0.47	202

Table 1.1

Correlation Matrix

Column1	1	2	3
1. Purchase Intention	—		
2. Influencer Appeal	.313**	—	
3. Trustworthiness	.400**	.316**	—

Table 1.2

Note. * $p < .01$ (1-tailed)



Regression Analysis

A multiple linear regression was performed to predict purchase intention based on influencer appeal and trustworthiness.

The model was statistically significant, $F(2, 199) = 24.61, p < .001$.

The model explained 19.8% of the variance in purchase intention ($R^2 = .198$, Adjusted $R^2 = .190$).

Trustworthiness had a stronger effect than influencer appeal.

Predictor	B	SE	β	t	p	95% CI for B
Constant	1.654	0.247	—	6.708	0	[1.168, 2.140]
Influencer Appeal	0.189	0.061	0.207	3.092	0.002	[0.069, 0.310]
Trustworthiness	0.318	0.064	0.334	4.996	0	[0.193, 0.444]

Interpretation

The results of the regression analysis reveal that both influencer appeal and trustworthiness significantly influence consumer purchase intention, with trustworthiness having a comparatively stronger impact. The model explained approximately 19.8% of the variance in purchase intention ($R^2 = .198$, Adjusted $R^2 = .190$), and the overall regression model was statistically significant ($F(2, 199) = 24.61, p < .001$), confirming that the predictors together contribute meaningfully to explaining consumer behavior in the context of food influencers.

Individually, both variables emerged as significant predictors. Influencer appeal ($B = 0.189, \beta = .207, p = .002$) demonstrated a moderate positive effect, suggesting that consumers are more likely to intend to purchase food products when the influencer appears appealing—whether in terms of personality, relatability, or presentation style. However, trustworthiness ($B = 0.318, \beta = .334, p < .001$) showed a stronger influence on purchase intention. This implies that consumers place greater weight on whether the influencer is perceived as credible, honest, and authentic. The larger standardized beta value for trustworthiness indicates that it is the more dominant factor influencing consumer decisions.

These findings highlight the critical role of perceived credibility in influencer marketing, particularly within the food industry. While aesthetic or emotional appeal can enhance engagement, it is ultimately the trustworthiness of the influencer that drives consumers toward actual purchase intentions. Therefore, marketing strategies should prioritize partnerships with influencers who are not only visually engaging but also perceived as sincere and reliable by their audience.



Regression Analysis Report – Online Reviews and Consumer Behavior

Objective 2

To analyze the role of online reviews in shaping consumer trust and purchase intentions.

Descriptive Statistics

Variable	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Purchase Intention	3.35	0.45	202
Online Reviews	3.45	0.54	202
Information Quality	3.35	0.46	202

Table 2.1

Correlation Matrix

Column1	1	2	3
1. Purchase Intention	—		
2. Online Reviews	.282**	—	
3. Information Quality	.202**	.325**	—

Table 2.2

Note. * $p < .01$ (1-tailed)

Regression Analysis

A multiple regression was conducted to assess the influence of online reviews and information quality on purchase intention.

Predictor	B	SE	β	t	p	95% CI for B
Constant	2.253	0.258	—	8.735	0	[1.744, 2.761]
Online Reviews	0.203	0.06	0.242	3.395	0.001	[0.085, 0.320]
Information Quality	0.12	0.07	0.123	1.727	0.086	[-0.017, 0.258]

Table 2.3



Interpretation

The regression analysis conducted to explore the role of online reviews and information quality in shaping purchase intentions yielded a statistically significant model ($F(2, 199) = 10.24, p < .001$). The model explains approximately 9.3% of the variance in purchase intention ($R^2 = .093$, Adjusted $R^2 = .084$), indicating a modest yet meaningful contribution of the predictors.

Among the predictors, online reviews demonstrated a significant positive effect on purchase intention ($B = 0.203, \beta = .242, p = .001$). This suggests that as consumers perceive online reviews more favorably, their intention to purchase food-related products increases accordingly. The relatively high standardized beta coefficient indicates that online reviews play a substantial role in consumer decision-making.

On the other hand, information quality showed a smaller, non-significant effect ($B = 0.120, \beta = .123, p = .086$). While it appears to contribute positively to purchase intention, the effect did not reach statistical significance at the 0.05 level. This suggests that although high-quality information may support consumer decisions, it is not as influential as peer-generated content like reviews.

Overall, the findings underscore the importance of credible and persuasive online reviews in driving consumer trust and intention. They suggest that in the context of food marketing, consumers rely more heavily on shared experiences and feedback from other users than on the formal quality of information presented by the brand or platform.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study highlight the significant influence food bloggers exert on consumer food choices, particularly in the context of digital platforms. The research demonstrates that food influencers, through visually engaging content and personal storytelling, successfully shape consumers' purchase behavior. Participants reported a higher tendency to try new food products or visit specific eateries based on recommendations from popular food bloggers. This aligns with the concept of parasocial interaction, where followers develop a perceived personal relationship with influencers, thereby enhancing their persuasive power.

Moreover, the role of online reviews and ratings shared by food bloggers plays a critical role in shaping consumer trust. The study observed that consumers often regard food influencers as more relatable and authentic than traditional advertising channels. This perceived authenticity boosts the credibility of the reviews shared, directly impacting purchase intentions. Additionally, the frequency and consistency of posts, follower engagement, and transparency about sponsorships were found to further affect trust levels.

The research also found that visual elements—such as high-quality images and video content—have a notable impact on decision-making. Food presentation and the ambiance showcased in these posts often trigger impulse visits or purchases. Consumers, particularly millennials and Gen Z, tend to rely on digital content as a primary source for discovering food trends, new restaurants, and products.

However, the study also revealed certain limitations in consumer reliance on food bloggers. A segment of respondents expressed skepticism toward paid promotions or over-glamorized content, suggesting that the commercial aspect may sometimes dilute trust. This underscores the importance of transparency and authenticity in influencer marketing.

Overall, the research affirms that food bloggers serve not only as trendsetters but also as key mediators in the digital food marketing ecosystem. Their influence extends beyond mere promotion, shaping consumer preferences,



expectations, and ultimately, food purchasing decisions. Brands aiming to tap into this trend must prioritize collaboration with credible and value-aligned influencers to create meaningful engagement with target audiences.

FUTURE SCOPE

- Long-term impact: Study the influence of food influencers on consumer loyalty and brand advocacy over time.
- Platform-specific research: Explore effects of emerging platforms (e.g., TikTok, Threads, YouTube Shorts) and compare short-form vs. long-form content.
- Psychological factors: Investigate the role of emotional connection, parasocial relationships, and perceived authenticity in influencer effectiveness.
- Demographic and cultural differences: Examine how factors like age, gender, income, and regional/cultural preferences affect influencer impact.
- Advanced analytics: Use social media listening, sentiment analysis, and machine learning to gain predictive insights into consumer behavior.
- Evolving digital trends: Continuously assess how shifting digital ecosystems reshape food-related consumer decisions.

FINDINGS

- Trustworthiness of influencers has the strongest positive impact on consumer purchase intention ($\beta = .334, p < .001$).
- Influencer appeal (e.g., attractiveness, relatability) also significantly influences purchase intention, but to a lesser extent ($\beta = .207, p = .002$).
- The regression model is statistically significant, explaining 19.8% of the variation in purchase intention ($R^2 = 0.198$).
- Authentic, detailed, and balanced online reviews shared by influencers build consumer trust and influence buying decisions.
- Alignment of reviews with the influencer's personal brand increases perceived authenticity and strengthens purchase intent.
- Consumers rely on eWOM (electronic word-of-mouth), especially when lacking direct product experience.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this research provide substantial evidence of the significant influence that food bloggers exert on consumer food choices, particularly through digital platforms. The primary objective—to examine the impact of food influencers on consumer purchase behavior—revealed that consumers today are highly receptive to the recommendations of food bloggers due to their perceived authenticity, relatability, and expertise. Influencers serve as intermediaries between brands and consumers, using visual storytelling and personal experiences to shape consumption patterns. The study highlighted that a majority of consumers tend to explore and eventually purchase food items or visit food establishments that have been positively endorsed by trusted bloggers. This impact is even more pronounced among younger demographics who spend considerable time on social media platforms like Instagram and YouTube.

The second objective—to analyze the role of online reviews in shaping consumer trust and purchase intentions—showed that consumer decisions are increasingly influenced by digital word-of-mouth, especially in the form of influencer reviews and feedback. Trust plays a central role in this process. Participants in the study emphasized that authenticity in content, consistency in quality, and the transparency of food bloggers contribute significantly to the



development of trust. This trust, in turn, elevates purchase intention, as consumers perceive recommendations as credible and relevant to their preferences.

Furthermore, the study found that online food content—such as visually appealing photos, videos, and detailed reviews—not only affects initial food choices but also cultivates brand loyalty and repeat purchases. Consumers are more likely to try new cuisines, restaurants, and recipes when introduced by influencers they follow regularly.

In conclusion, food bloggers have emerged as powerful digital opinion leaders who influence not just what consumers eat, but also where and how they eat. Their content can shape consumer perceptions, build brand trust, and ultimately guide purchasing behavior. Businesses in the food and beverage industry should recognize the strategic value of partnering with credible food influencers as part of their marketing efforts. Future research may further explore how influencer demographics, content type, and platform differences affect the magnitude of consumer influence. Nevertheless, this study reaffirms that in today's digital age, food choices are no longer just personal—they are profoundly social and significantly shaped by online voices.

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