

Social Media Influencer (SMI) Restaurant Reviews and Students' Patronization Decision

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Abstract

Social Media Influencers (or SMI) has access to a wide audience and they can persuade others by virtue of their authenticity and reach. While there is a significant link between SMI review and consumer purchase decision within the restaurant industry, it is unclear to what extent this finding would be consistent specifically among university students. In accessing the influence of SMI restaurant reviews (covering food quality, food variety, environment and location) towards university students' patronization decision, a quantitative research approach was employed using self-administered survey. A total of 151 usable responses were obtained from undergraduate students at the Faculty of Hotel and Tourism

Management (FHTM) in Universiti Teknologi MARA. It was found that the four components of SMI restaurant reviews had significant positive relationship towards university students' patronization decision. It is recommended to restaurant owners to engage their businesses actively in social media marketing to attract adolescents such as university students. SMI restaurant reviews that primarily aimed at similar target group is encouraged to emphasize on food variety as it is perceived the most influential factor; and subsequently followed by the premise environment, food quality offered and finally the location.

Keywords:

Social media influencer, Restaurant, Patronization decision, University students

1 Introduction

The emergence of social media has fostered broad information reach as well as marketing to general public (Syafroni, 2023; Uhls et al., 2017). About 90 percent of companies worldwide are relying on social media influences to grow their businesses (Irshad et al., 2020). Businesses from various industries including food and beverage are resorting to 'influencer marketing' approach when promoting product and services on social media. Influencer marketing approach uses endorsement and product mention from influencers (or individuals) who have dedicated social followers; these individuals may also be viewed as experts within their niche.

Influencer marketing uses influencers to drive a brand's message to the target group (Nazlan, 2023). In the era of the pervasive Internet, Social Media Influencers (from now on referred to as SMI) becomes a dynamic third-party endorser (Lee et al., 2021). SMI uses variety of social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, X (previously known as Twitter), and YouTube to update internet followers about new product releases and promotions (Dathe et al., 2023). They often interact with their followers by providing latest information on a regular basis (Abell & Biswass, 2023). SMI identified themselves as unique endorser by producing a variety of buzzwords in comparison to other marketing tactics (such as celebrity endorsement); they are regarded as the most cost-effective and successful marketing trends (Talaverna, 2015). Furthermore, SMI demonstrated convincing results in both media exposure and buyer persuasion (Booth & Matic 2011).

Food and beverage businesses especially restaurants usually invite SMI with thousands of followers on their social media accounts, to serve as brand ambassadors (Tapinfluence, 2017). Messages spread by SMI are frequently viewed as more dependable, authentic and captivating by customers. This is proven when 82 percent respondents in a followers' survey mentioned that they believe and more likely to follow the advice of their favourite influencers (Talaverna, 2015). In comparison to celebrity advertising strategies, the employment of SMI is seen more reliable, trustworthy and informed owing to their amiability in creating relationship among millennial customers (Berger & Berger, 2018).

SMI has access to a large audience and they can persuade others by virtue of their authenticity and reach (Sheriff, 2019). Their reviews may vary depending on the nature of products and services experienced. In the food and beverage such as restaurant, SMI reviews normally covers about quality of food served; in addition to food variety from the menu offered, the overall ambiance or environment experienced, as well as the location of the restaurant (Jinny, 2017). This information is expected to entice social media viewers' interest and subsequently encourage them to patronize or at least share such info about the restaurant to the others. In other word, SMI is capable to influence the subsequent action of social media users following their reviews (Anastasia & Dölekoğlu, 2023).

While Sudha and Sheena (2017) discovered a significant influence between SMI review and consumer purchase decision within the restaurant industry, it is unclear to what extent the findings would remain relevant specifically among university students. Although SMI are generally perceived to be effective (Berger & Berger, 2018) for businesses targeting younger generations; given the variability characteristics of nowadays university students, it will be interesting to understand how SMI restaurant review would influence their patronization decision. For that matter, this research examined the influence of SMI restaurant reviews towards university students' patronization decision.

2 Literature Review

2.1 Social Media and Social Media Influencer (SMI)

Social media has revolutionized the way people receive information about goods and services; it has also become a common medium of communication between one and another. Kaplan and Hainlein (2010) define social media as a collection of web-based technologies that facilitate the production and sharing of user-generated content (Liburd, 2012). Many are using Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and X (formerly known as twitter) and other well-known social networking networks on a regular basis. Every social media platform is distinct from another. For instance, X is great for quick information bursts, Instagram allows users to express themselves mostly through photographs and short films, and TikTok lets users create and share short movies that are usually accompanied by music.

From another perspective, social media gives companies the opportunity to market their goods and services uniquely across a variety of platforms (History Cooperative, 2016). Marketers define social media as 'a set of free or virtually free technologies that allow marketers and the community to create content and positive relationships online' (Levinson and Gibson, 2010). As a result, social media becomes a means of fostering social connection through the creation, sharing, and exchange of knowledge among online groups and networks (Shrestha lucky, 2013).

A Social Media Influencer (or SMI) is a well-known person with large followers on social media (Khamis et al., 2017). Unlike traditional celebrities that are well-known on

big-screen prior to making product endorsements or advertisements (Khamis et al., 2017), SMI chart their own path to fame using social media. Remarkably, consumers perceive SMI content to be more authentic and have a stronger sense of connection with it; than with traditional celebrities (Tran and Strutton, 2014; Stefanone et al., 2010). According to a Thai survey on millennials and Gen Z, consumers are more inclined to believe products promoted by SMI if they see their influencers raving about them on social media, with influencers being trusted second only to friends and family. The primary reasons to follow SMI were their unique style and ability to provide authentic, inspiring, educational, and entertaining visual materials (such as photos and videos).

SMI always share fresh knowledge and information, reviewing products and services for other social media users, and participating to broadcasts (Casalo et al., 2007). Advertisers find SMI to be a useful tool since it allows them to reach their target audience directly and incorporate brand and product recommendations into interesting and highly relevant material. Accordingly, SMI review is influencing restaurant business consumer purchase behaviour (Atay, 2020). The business of restaurants is discussed in the following section, along with the common areas of SMI restaurant review.

2.2 The Restaurant Industry and Areas of SMI Restaurant Review

A restaurant is a type of foodservice operation that welcomes patrons of all walks of life and offers a wide variety of dishes and beverages along with waiter service (Canziani, 2016). With a wide range of restaurant concepts and cuisines to choose from, this business is always evolving. Restaurants can be grouped into two categories namely full service and limited service restaurant. Limited service restaurants typically offer quick service, inexpensive prices, and minimal service. These eateries include fast-casual (such as Pizza Hut, Wendy's) and fast-food (such as KFC, McDonald's). On the other hand, a full service restaurant is defined as providing patrons with early greetings and treatment through the time until they leave the restaurant. Other categories of full-service restaurants would include and not limited to high quality full fine dining experiences (Canziani, 2016).

The intense competition in the restaurant business pushes restaurant owners to constantly plan about their establishment's uniqueness and eccentricity, in addition to concentrating on the fundamental plan for managing restaurant operations. As a result, an increasing number of restaurant owners are using the 'influencer marketing' approach to advertise their food and services on social media. Restaurant owners typically invite SMI who have thousands of followers on social media to review their restaurants (Tapinfluence, 2017). SMI restaurant reviews normally covers about quality of food served; in addition to food variety, the overall ambiance or environment experienced, as well as the location of the restaurant (Jinny, 2017). The following sub-sections will explain about all the areas of restaurant review mentioned earlier.

2.2.1 Food Quality

Typically, the term food quality represents the sum of all properties and attributes of a food item that are acceptable to the customer. (McWilliams, 2006). Food quality is

one of the most important aspects of the dining experience (Sulek & Hensley, 2004). Hence, any SMI restaurant review is surely to include food quality; as it can influence one's patronization decision (Xi & Shuai, 2009). These food quality attributes include freshness, taste, nutrition, and portion size. Food and beverage is the core product in any restaurants, thus it's critical to ensure that the temperature, flavour, texture, and aroma are all appropriate (Xi & Shuai, 2009). Apart from that, Raajpoot (2002) highlighted that menu design, food presentation, and diversity of cuisine are other important attributes influencing the quality of food.

2.2.2 Food Variety

Another crucial element of SMI restaurant reviews is food variety (Hwang & Park, 2015). Offering a variety of food and beverages in a restaurant helps to satisfy patrons' demands for menu diversity. When choosing a restaurant, customers typically look for establishments that offer diverse selection of menu items (Krishen et al., 2020). Apart from menu variation, clearly stating the price of menu items is also relevant; as this information will enable social media users to establish perception value into the restaurant's offerings. Hence, SMI restaurant review often highlights both elements.

2.2.3 Environment

According to Sulek and Hensley (2004), environment refers to a restaurant's actual surroundings. A restaurant's ambience, decor, temperature, cleanliness, background noise, and other elements are among the many components that make up its environment. Good atmosphere and design at a restaurant can draw patrons to stay and dine (Kim et al., 2020). Furthermore, according to Namkung and Jang (2017), a pleasant dining atmosphere can leave a good impression on patrons. In order to capture the restaurant scene, SMI frequently takes video or attaches images of restaurant ambience during their review. Environmental elements can be separated into three; namely social signals, ambient cues, and design cues. More specifically, ambient cues disclose the store's background characteristics (like cleanliness and aroma), design cues specify the roles (like colour and decoration) that promote consumer awareness, and social cues relate to people in the immediate environment. (Kim et al., 2020). As a result, it is crucial that SMI carefully emphasises each of the aforementioned indications in the restaurant review.

2.2.4 Location

Another element that helps draw clients to a restaurant is its location (Yang et al., 2017; Prayag, Landré & Ryan, 2012). Customers can be drawn in by a convenient location, which will foster a good rapport and serve as a catalyst for the customer's eventual loyalty (Chen et al., 2018; Kivela et al., 2000). Even having a restaurant next to a rival can be advantageous. Some restaurants are occasionally grouped together in a series of dining establishments such as on "restaurant row" to attract more consumers. Thus, it is a common for SMI restaurant review to include information relating to travel distance, traffic access and surrounding public amenities.

2.2.5 University Students' Demographics

A university student is a person who is enrolled in a college or university. Usually, these kids graduate from high school and enrol in college at the age of 18. When they first enrol, these students will be referred to as undergraduates; these are college students engaged in foundation studies, a diploma, an advanced diploma, or a bachelor's degree, which typically lasts three years.

These undergraduates or adolescents are at a unique life stage that makes them highly sensitive to social influences (Rudan, 2000; van Dam & van Reijmersdal, 2019). While they are becoming more capable of making decisions on their own, their ability to do so is still constrained by high levels of impulsivity and insufficient inhibitory control (Pechmann et al., 2005). Furthermore, compared to adults, this age group's advertising literacy is still worse in terms of understanding marketing tactics, recognising the purpose of persuasion, and having a sceptical attitude towards marketing (Boush et al., 1994; Rudan, 2000; Wright & Taylor, 2005; van Dam & van Reijmersdal, 2019). These young university students are therefore particularly susceptible to digital media marketing tactics (e.g., Folkvord et al., 2014).

Adolescent users' behaviour is in fact, greatly influenced by social media and its various participants, including marketers, influencers, and peers. Story et al. (2002) state that the following factors influence adolescents eating behaviour: individual factors (like food choices and lifestyle), social environmental factors (like peers), physical environmental factors (like community settings), and macro-system factors (like media and social norms). The above mentioned varying degrees of influence can be found in an unfiltered and rarely monitored environment on social media. Peers, whose influence is regarded as one of the most important determinants of adolescent behaviour, SMI (who are perceived as approachable peers), media, advertisements, and norms are all included in social media and are recognised determinants of adolescent behaviour (Rudan, 2000; Beaudoin, 2014). University students today use a variety of social media sites extensively (Rudan, 2000; Franchina et al., 2018). Instagram, one of the most popular channels among them, is also the one that influencer marketers use the most (Influencer Marketing Hub, 2019).

Despite the presumed influence of such social media messages, particularly on adolescents, little is known about the social media (food) marketing adolescents are exposed to. In response to this scenario, the World Health Organization called for research on food marketing targeting adolescents, particularly digital media marketing (World Health Organization, 2016); that includes SMI influence.

2.3 Relationship among Variables

2.3.1 Relationship between food quality review and decision to patronize a restaurant

Food quality, rather than physical environment or service quality, is one of the most critical significant predictors of customer satisfaction and repeat intention (Sulek & Hensley, 2004). Food is one of the most important aspects of restaurant experience, and there is no doubt that the food has a significant effect on customer patronization

(Namkung and Jang, 2007). Customers generally evaluate food quality based on their expectations and actual consumption experience. According to Namkung and Jang (2007), food quality was found to be related to utilitarian values. The cost of food, tastiness, food portion, menu selection, and healthiness options all contribute to the concept of food quality. Hence, SMI restaurant review on food quality will be perceived as indicator that represents consumers' perceptions and evaluations of food quality; which subsequently influencing their patronization decision. Following the earlier justification, the first hypothesis is proposed as follow:

H₁: There is a positive relationship between SMI's food quality review and decision to patronize a restaurant

2.3.2 Relationship between food variety review and decision to patronize a restaurant

The variety of menu offered by a restaurant is an important factor in the culinary business competition. As a result, restaurant owners must make the right decisions regarding the variety of menus to be sold; ranging from taste, types of food and drinks, and product availability. Thus the ability of SMI to explain about menu variety will be able to attract consumers' attention and make it easier for consumers to choose and purchase a variety of menus based on their preferences. In addition, pricing of menu is another element commonly covered in SMI restaurant review. Specifically in this study, pricing refers to the subset of price presentation in a restaurant menu. Positive SMI restaurant review on both menu variety as well as pricing is expected to lure social media interests particularly university students to such establishment. Having said that, the second hypothesis is formulated as follow:

H₂: There is a positive relationship between SMI's food variety review and decision to patronize a restaurant

2.3.3 Relationship between environment review and decision to patronize a restaurant

Kotler et al. (2000) defined environment as 'the entire set of factors that shape a customer's perceptions when he enters a certain place'. The environment of dining establishments, the comfort of the decor, light, cleanliness, heat, smell, and music all have an impact on dining experience. Because customers encounter environment elements before encountering employees, the restaurant environment play an important role in creating the first impression on customers (Lin & Matilla, 2010). The environment can influence customer purchasing decision and behaviour in a variety of ways, including helping to attract attention, convey or transmit a message, or create affect (by activating senses that can heighten or create a desire or appetite for a product, service, or experience). Hence, positive SMI restaurant review about the environment is expected to influence one's patronization decision towards the establishment. Following the above justification, the third hypothesis of this study is formulated as follow:

H₃: There is a positive relationship between SMI's environment review and decision to patronize a restaurant

2.3.4 Relationship between location review and decision to patronize a restaurant

Location is typically the primary consideration when buying real estate (Koubková, 2015). A restaurant's success or failure is determined by its concept, food quality, service, and economic shifts. However, if a neighbourhood's customer base is incorrect; accessibility is poor; or there simply aren't enough people, a restaurant no matter how good the food or trendy the atmosphere is subjected to fail (Silver, 2000). The location of a restaurant has a significant impact on customer patronization decision and future behaviour (Hyun & Perdue, 2010). A restaurant's convenient location that allows for easy traffic and travel access are becoming more and more crucial (Liu & Tse, 2018; Lin & Mattila, 2010). Therefore, it may entice potential customers to visit a restaurant if a SMI review highlights the advantages of the restaurant's location. Thus, the final research hypothesis is as follow:

H₄: There is a positive relationship between SMI's location review and decision to patronize a restaurant

3 Methodology

In accessing SMI reviews and students' patronization decisions, a quantitative research approach was employed using a self-administered survey. Survey items consists of five part with 7 Likert Scale questions adapted from Owusu et al. (2023) and Frimpong & Alam (2020) were converted into an online survey; retrievable via Google Forms. A dual language survey (both in English and Bahasa Melayu) were applied to ease respondents' understanding of the subject matter. Relevant preliminary questions were included to ensure only qualified respondents participated in this study. Undergraduate students from the Faculty of Hotel and Tourism Management (FHTM) at Universiti Teknologi MARA Selangor, Pulau Pinang and Terengganu were approached using convenience sampling during the data collection process. In the end, a total of 151 usable responses were successfully gathered after 10 straight-lining or patterned responses were excluded from the dataset. Frequency and descriptive statistics, means score, and the link between variables was subsequently performed using Statistical Packages for the Social Science (SPSS) Version 28.

4 Findings

4.1 Pilot Study

A pilot study was conducted in advance to check on the reliability and validity of the questionnaire. In this study, Cronbach's Alpha was used to determine the internal consistency of the items included in the questionnaire and the value of Cronbach's Alpha for every section needs to be greater than or equal to 0.7 to provide a reliable measure of the internal consistency.

A four-part questionnaire was distributed to a total of 30 respondents. The Food Quality subscale in Section B consisted of 3 items ($\alpha = .885$), the Environment subscale

in Section C consisted of 5 items ($\alpha = .901$), the Food Variety subscale in Section D consisted of 4 items ($\alpha = .886$), the Location subscale in Section D consisted of 3 items ($\alpha = .831$) and the Decision to Dine subscale in Section E consisted of 3 items ($\alpha = .875$).

4.2 Demographic information

Out of 161 respondents participated the survey, only 151 eligible respondents were considered in the study (10 straight-lining or patterned responses were excluded). Given the minimum of 138 required samples (retrieved through G*Power Sample Size calculation); the researcher then proceeded with data analysis. Frequency analysis was applied to tabulate respondents' demographic profile (gender, and educational level). From 151 respondents, 60.0 percent ($n=90$) females as opposed to 40.0 percent ($n=61$) males. Looking at the education level, 76.8 percent respondents are degree students; with another 23.2 percent diploma students. Majority of them (56 percent) are from Selangor, followed by Pulau Pinang (28 percent) and the remaining from Terengganu Branch Campuses.

4.3 Descriptive Results

A descriptive analysis produced a summary of the mean score on all studied variables. They are presented in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Descriptive Results

Items	Mean	SD
<u>Food Quality</u>		
Visual quality of food provided during SMI review is important to me	5.338	1.4231
Exciting approach of food storytelling during SMI review is important to me	5.205	1.4344
Food plating/ presentation during SMI review stimulate my appetite	5.219	1.5051
Overall	5.224	1.4542
<u>Environment</u>		
Overview of restaurant ambiance/ conditions during SMI review is important to me	5.086	1.5998
I look at the restaurant cleanliness during SMI review	5.318	1.5291
I look at the restaurant layout and décor during SMI review	5.166	1.4941
I always search for SMI review on restaurant with unique theme	5.066	1.5041
I care about quality of restaurant's acoustic surrounding during SMI review	5.053	1.5046
Overall	5.138	1.5264
<u>Food Variety</u>		
Menu variety highlighted during SMI review is important to me	5.020	1.6144
Menu pricing highlighted during SMI review is important to me	5.166	1.5467
I always think of food highlighted during SMI review	5.126	1.4711
I like restaurant that served variety of food during SMI review	5.172	1.5352
Overall	5.121	1.5419
<u>Location</u>		
SMI review on travel distance and location to restaurant is important to me	5.291	1.4170
SMI review on travel access to restaurant (i.e., near public transportation, parking facility) is important to me	5.099	1.5481

SMI review of traffic access to restaurant is important to me	5.258	1.3782
Overall	5.216	1.4478
<u>Decision to Dine</u>		
SMI overview will trigger my intention to dine at a restaurant	5.132	1.4908
SMI positive review of a restaurant encouraged me to patronize the outlet	5.179	1.5409
SMI recommendations of a restaurant encouraged me to patronize the outlet	5.152	1.4640
Overall	5.154	1.4986

As shown in Table 1 above, among all the independent variables, food quality is the most important factor (M =5.224, SD = 1.4542) considered when respondents decide to dine in at a certain restaurant. Food quality is determined by visual quality, the exciting approach, and also food presentation shown in the SMI’s review. Besides food quality, location also plays a significant factor (M=5.216, SD=1.4478) to consider. This includes travel distance, travel access, and traffic access to the restaurant. Next, respondents also considered the environment (M=5.137, SD=1.5264) such as cleanliness, restaurant layout, unique theme, and also the quality of the restaurant’s acoustic surroundings. Lastly, respondents also consider food variety (M=5.121, SD=1.5419) in their decision. This includes varieties of menus and prices of the food. Generally, SMI’s positive review and recommendation will trigger respondents’ decision to dine at a certain restaurant.

4.4 Multiple Regression Analysis

Reliability analysis and preliminary (or assumptions) tests were conducted prior to Multiple Regression Analysis. They include linear and additive; homoscedasticity; auto-correlation; multi-collinearity (VIF); and normality test. It was found that all preliminary assumptions were fulfilled. In order to fulfil the requirement for hypothesis H₁, H₂, H₃ and H₄ testing, multiple regression analysis was applied. The performance regression analysis covers Correlation Analysis, Model Fit, as well as Regression Analysis. Each of the said analyses is detailed below:

Table 2: Correlation Analysis

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.929 ^a	.864	.860	.50171

Based on Table 2, the adjusted R² = 0.860 in indicated that 86.0% of the variation in Decision to Dine is explained by the Location, Food Quality, Food Variety and Environment while the remaining 14% is explained by other factors. In general, the higher the adjusted R², the better the model fits the data.

Table 3: ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	232.755	4	58.189	231.167	.000 ^b
	Residual	36.751	146	.252		
	Total	269.506	150			

a. Dependent Variable: Decision to Dine

b. Predictors: (Constant), Location, Food Quality, Food Variety, Environment

The F-ratio in the ANOVA table (see table 3) tests whether the overall regression model is a good fit for the data. The table shows that the independent variables statistically significantly predict the dependent variable, $F(4, 146) = 231.167, p < .05$ (so, the regression model is a good fit of the data).

Table 4: Regression Analysis

Model		Unstandardized B	Coefficients Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	-.029	.181		-.157	.875
	Food Quality	.177	.067	.174	2.653	.009
	Environment	.320	.091	.309	3.519	.001
	Food Variety	.326	.086	.324	3.796	.000
	Location	.180	.073	.168	2.471	.015

a. Dependent Variable: Patronization Decision

From table 4, it was found that all the relationship between independent variable (food quality, environment, food variety, location) and dependent variable (patronization decision) are significant. Based from the stipulated information, the following Model Regression or Regression Equation is as follow:

$$\text{Patronization Decision} = -0.029 + 0.177 (\text{Food Quality}) + 0.320 (\text{Environment}) + 0.326 (\text{Food Variety}) + 0.18 (\text{Location})$$

Further analysis of Coefficient Beta output (β values) indicated that SMI review on food variety influenced one's patronization decision the most ($\beta = 0.324$). It is closely followed by SMI review made on environment (0.309) as well as food quality ($\beta = 0.174$). SMI review on location was found to have the least influence towards respondents' patronization decision at the restaurant ($\beta = 0.168$). From the above contemplation, it can be concluded that all proposed hypotheses were accepted.

5 Discussion

Given the significant positive relationship between food variety reviews and students' patronization decision; H_1 accepted. Food quality is one of the most critical significant predictors of customer satisfaction. According to Sulek and Hensley (2004) and this affects their re-patronization behavior. Respondents generally agreed that visual quality of food provided during SMI review is important to them. According to Namkung and Jang (2007), food has become one of the most important aspects of restaurant experience, and there is no doubt that the food quality has a significant effect on customer preference. Apart from visual quality, respondents agreed that food presentation during SMI review stimulates their appetite. In fact, food quality was found to be related to utilitarian values (Namkung & Jang, 2007); hence elements such as

tastiness, food portion, menu selection, and healthy options all contribute to the concept of food quality.

Output between SMI reviews on ambiance and the influence on students' patronization decision (H_2) is also accepted. This suggests that respondents generally agreed about the importance of restaurant cleanliness, layout, décor and theme during SMI reviews. Similarly, Lin and Matilla (2010) stated that restaurant environment has a multidimensional structure covering the comfort of the decor, light, cleanliness, heat, smell, and music. Because customers encounter these environment elements before encountering employees, it plays an important role in creating the first impression on customers especially among social media users.

Onto the third hypothesis between SMI reviews on food variety and the influence on students' patronization decision; (H_3) is also accepted. Menu variety refers to a collection of whole products, menus, or served products sold by the seller to the buyer (Kotler & Keller, 2007). When SMI made reviews on the variety of menu offered at a restaurant, it will further stimulate potential visitors' interest to such places (Krishen et al., 2020).

The final hypothesis (H_4) examined the influence between SMI reviews on location and the influence on students' patronization decision. The result indicated a significant relationship; hence this hypothesis is accepted. However, it is interesting to note that this variable has the least effect on students' patronization decision. Thus, it is presumed that students didn't place much emphasis on the travel distance, travel and traffic access from SMI reviews, as opposed to other factors such as food quality, environment and food variety.

6 Conclusion

From the earlier contemplation, it can be concluded that all proposed hypotheses were accepted. It was confirmed that the four components of SMI restaurant reviews (food quality, food variety, environment and location) had significant positive relationship towards university students' patronization decision. Although the study finding is consistent to earlier data (Sudha & Sheena, 2017); it is proven valuable as this paper was specifically measured among adolescents particularly university students. Hence, it is recommended to restaurant owners targeting this target group to engage their businesses actively in social media marketing. SMI restaurant reviews that primarily aimed at this group is also encouraged to emphasize on food variety as it is perceived the most influential factor; and subsequently followed by the premise environment, food quality offered and finally the location.

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