

ANALYSING THE INFLUENCE OF WEBSITE QUALITY ON CONSUMERS CHOICE OF FOOD AND BEVERAGE OUTLETS SELECTION IN LUCKNOW

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ABSTRACT

A well-designed food and beverage outlet's website is generally considered a very effective tool for establishing the brand. A superb website for the food and beverage outlets professionals allows them to present both the ambiance and services that they provide to their target demographic of consumers. An effective website is critical to a hotel's capacity to attract and retain the most motivated guests. Therefore, the aim of the present study is to analyse the influence of website quality on consumers choice of food and beverage outlets selection in Lucknow. A structured questionnaire was developed to collect information from the consumers of food and beverage outlets in Lucknow city and distributed to them through online platform using Google Forms. The major findings of the study revealed that websites optimised for mobiles, readily available contact and location, user friendly layout and secured payment gateways are the features of website quality which influences their choice of food and beverage outlet selection in Lucknow city.

Keywords: Website Quality, Food and Beverage Outlet, Consumers, Selection.

Introduction

"Marketing is not the art of finding clever ways to dispose of what you make rather this is the art of creating genuine customer value". This quote of "Philip Kotler" gives real picture of marketing of products from customers point of view and how the well planned marketing strategies can help the organizations to earn profits from the customers. Food and beverage outlets follows many marketing strategies for the promotion of their outlet, products and services (Kara et al., 1995; Akroush et al., 2013; Davronov et al., 2020; Lee & Hwang, 2011; Cohen et al., 2021; Quan et al., 2021). Food and beverage outlets utilises various marketing strategies like digital platforms for the marketing of their outlets (Dabas et al., 2021; Horta et al., 2021; Epifani, 2020; Kumar et al., 2020; Li et al., 2021). Websites are one of the highly effective digital platform utilised by food outlets for the promotion of their products (Hadamitzki, 2016; Miranda et al., 2015; G & Uca, 2017; Daries et al., 2018; Elsayed et al., 2017). A well designed websites of food and beverage outlets gives advantage over its competitor (Baloglu & Pekcan, 2006; Aday & Phelan; 2015). Website quality and content features influences consumers buying behaviour (Thongpapanl & Ashraf, 2011; Akram et al., 2018; Parboteeah et al., 2009; Kumar & Benbasat, 2006; Vila et al., 2021; Mart-Gonzlez, & -Albelo, 2021).

Website content can be defined as the information given on website related to products, services and facilities provided by any organization (Djonov, 2007; Hasley et al., 2010; King et al., 2016; Thielsch & Hirschfeld, 2019). Website content includes information about the outlet, price, location, discount & offers, operational timing, online reviews etc. (Banerjee & Poddar, 2021; Bilgihan et al., 2018; Daries et al., 2018; Jadhav et al., 2021; Nguyen, 2019; Yan et al., 2015). Website quality is different from website content as it includes features like appearance, usage of audio-visual displays, user friendly layout, easily searchable on search engine optimization etc. (Alshehri et al., 2012; Kim & Mattila, 2011; Patil et al., 2013; Ricard, 2015). The quality of a website makes a website user friendly and accessible

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(Darvishy & Good, 2013) and it also offers reliable and useful information (Fryc, 2010;), providing good design (Beaird et al., 2020) and visual appearance (Kuusmanen et al., 2010) to meet the users needs and expectations (Kim & Chang, 2007; Sørnum, 2010). Thus, the present study is focussing on the features of website quality and its impact on consumers criteria to choose food and beverage outlets.

Review of Literature

• Identification of Features of Website Quality

Many researches in the past has been conducted on the impact of website quality and how these features influences consumers buying behaviour. The present research is also based on website quality and its influence on consumers of Lucknow city in their selection of food and beverage service outlets. Various variables of website quality has been identified from previous researches and table 1 is indicating the various features of website qualities:

Table 1: Features of Website Quality

Author/s	Sector	Features of Website Quality
Xiang et al. (2007)	Food and Beverage Service	Clear language
Abou-Shouk and Khalifa (2017)	Hotel	Easy to understand
Moreo et al. (2007)	Food and Beverage Service	User friendly
Šmahel et al. (2018)	Food and Beverage Service	Optimised for mobile
Kimes (2011)	Food and Beverage Service	Readily available contact & location
Yang et al. (2017)	Food and Beverage Service	High resolution images for outlets & food products
Kent et al. (2013)	Food and Beverage Service	Videos related to products & services
Vila et al. (2021)	Tourism	Well organized information
Chrisjatmiko (2019)	Food and Beverage Service	Good color combination
Ganesh and Malavika (2020)	Food and Beverage Service	Secured payment gateways
Moreo et al. (2007)	Food and Beverage Service	Ease of navigation
Miranda et al. (2015)	Food and Beverage Service	Page loading speed

From the previous studies, twelve features of website quality have been identified and these features are used in structured questionnaire for taking the review of the respondents.

• Influence of Website Qualities on Consumers Choice of Food and Beverage Outlets

Bai et al. (2008) in their study concluded that website quality has a positive influence on customers satisfaction and purchase intentions of consumers. According to Alshibly and Chiong (2015), it is critical to the success of any outlet to examine the quality of their website in order to improve and understand the competition and industry benchmarks in order to strengthen their position in the online channel. Website quality can assist consumers become more interested in buying (Shin et al., 2013) and motivated to shop online (Hernandez et al., 2009). The aesthetic, layout, and navigation of a website all contribute to its overall excellence (Cyr, 2008; McKnight et al., 2002). According to Chu (2001), consumers expect a website to be appealing, interactive, and informational. Other academics such as Abdinnour-Helm and Chaparro (2007) indicated in their studies that factors such as the website's user-friendliness and marketing efficacy must be considered as well. Customers are more likely to buy if the seller can gain their trust (Jarvenpaa et al., 2000), which enhances their purchasing intent (Sultan et al., 2005). A user-friendly website is simple to use (Hernandez et al., 2009), functional, and safe, and protects users' privacy (Pavlou et al., 2007; Wang et al., 2015) and meets the needs and expectations of the user (Cyr et al., 2008). Good website navigation improves content accessibility and makes it easier for customers to navigate the sites (Sutcliffe, 2002).

Singh and Singh (2018) in their research paper based on consumer buying behaviour towards online shopping in Lucknow city concluded that discounts, variety, all time availability and satisfaction through websites and other online mode are the key factors affecting the buying behaviour. Singh and Pathak (2021) in their research paper on consumer buying behaviour in Lucknow city mentioned that websites plays a very important role in purchase behaviour of women in Lucknow city. Yang et al. (2017) in their study concluded that images of physical environment of outlets and of food and beverage items leads to review enjoyment of customers and influence their food outlet selection. Miranda et al. (2015) in their study mentioned that very few restaurants in Spain uses videos in their websites but it has positive influence on customers selection of food and beverage service outlets. Ling and Aun (2018) in their study revealed that the quality of website increases the effectiveness of websites to deliver the best information to audience and viewers. Website quality also leads to positive customers experience and conformance with the expectations of stakeholders (Octavia & Tamerlane, 2017).

Objectives of the Study

- To identify the key features of website quality based on past research.
- To analyse the influence of features of website quality on consumers food and beverage outlet selection in Lucknow city.
- To suggest measures to food and beverage outlets professionals to improve the website quality parameters.

Research Methodology

Structured questionnaire was distributed to 200 respondents of Lucknow city and out of which 174 respondents have given their response. Questionnaire was divided into three sections. First section included questions on the demographic profile, second section were based on profile of consumers related to their food and beverage outlets preferences and third section consisted questions on the influence of website quality on consumers selection of food and beverage outlets in Lucknow city. Questionnaire was distributed in the first week of September, 2021, through online platform Google Forms and respondents had submitted their response through the same platform. Closed ended questions were asked for the third section on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 indicates not at all influential, 2 indicates slightly influential, 3 indicates somewhat influential, 4 indicates moderately influential and 5 indicates extremely influential. The primary source of data collection is structured questionnaire and secondary sources of data collection were Government reports, National and International reports, theses, journals, research papers, websites, publishes articles, magazines, newspapers etc. Descriptive analysis has been used for the findings of the result. Central tendency technique has been utilised for the findings of the second objective in which weighted mean score is calculated and ranking has been given based on the weighted mean score.

Analysis and Findings

Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

To achieve the objectives of present study, a structured questionnaire was prepared and distributed to 200 respondents all over India in the month of September, 2020 through online platform using Google Form. 174 out of 200 respondents have filled and submitted the surveyed questionnaire. Table 2 represents the demographic characteristics of consumers of food and beverage outlets. The gender distributions showed that 74.1% of the respondents were males and 25.9% of the respondents were females. 82.2% of respondents were of the age group between 18-30 years, 14.9% between 31-40 years and 2.9% between 41-50 years of age.

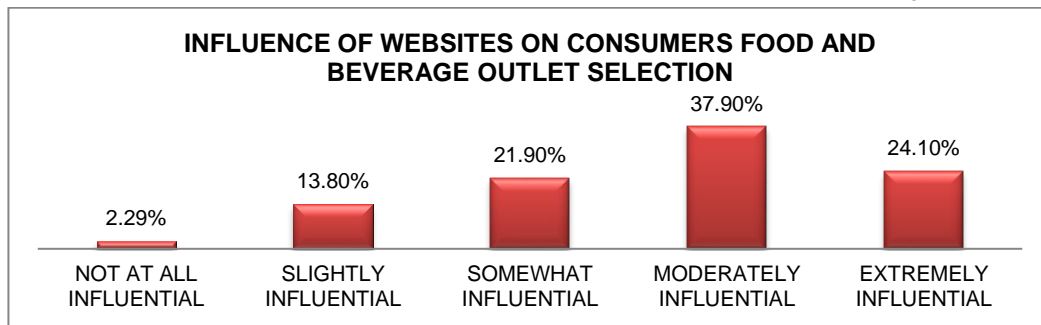
Table 2: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Variables		(%)
Gender	Male	74.1
	Female	25.9
	Preferred not to say	----
Age	18-30 years	82.2
	31-40 years	14.9
	41-50 years	2.9
	51-60 years	--
	Above 60 years	--
Marital Status	Single	80.5
	Married	18.4
	Preferred not to say	1.1
Educational Qualifications	Undergraduate	9.2
	Graduate	59.2
	Postgraduate	29.3
	Doctorate	2.3
	Others	----
Occupation	Students	20.1
	Government Job	8
	Private Job	59.8
	Business	8.6
	Others	3.4
Annual Income	Not earning	21.8
	Up to 3 Lakhs	39.1
	3-6 Lakhs	24.7
	6-10 Lakhs	8
	More than 10 Lakhs	6.3

80.5% of the surveyed population are single whereas 18.4% of the respondents are married. 59.2% of respondents are graduates, 29.3% are postgraduate, 9.2% undergraduate and 2.3% of respondents are having Doctorate degree. 20.1% of the respondents are students, 8% are having Government job, 59.8% having private job and 8.6 % of respondents are pursuing their own business. 39% of the respondents are earning up to 3 lakhs of annual income, 24.7% of the respondents are earning annual income of 3-6 lakhs, 8% 6-10 lakhs whereas 6.3% of the respondents are earning more than 10 lakhs of annual income.

- Profile of Respondents Related to their Food and Beverage Outlet Selection**

94.3% of the respondents mentioned that they prefer to visit different food and beverage outlets in Lucknow city, 1.7% do not usually prefer to visit whereas 4% of the respondents are not sure about the same. 35.6% of respondents visits two times a month in food and beverage outlets, 19.5% three times, 9.8% four times and 35.1% of the respondents visits more than four times a month in the restaurants of Lucknow city. 25.3% of the respondents mentioned that they prefer to visit fine dine restaurant, 32.8% fast food outlets, 17.2% food courts and 24.7% of the respondents prefer to visits café. 19% of the respondents mentioned that they spend less than Rs. 1000 on their visit to food and beverage outlets, 43.1% spends 1-3 thousand, 31% spends 3-6 thousand, 5.7% spends 6-10 thousand and 1.1% of the respondents spends more than 10 thousand per month on their visits to food and beverage outlets.



Bar Graph 1: Influence of websites on consumers food and beverage outlet selection

Bar graph 1 indicates influence of websites on consumers food and beverage outlet selection. 2.29% of respondents mentioned that websites do not influence their selection of food and beverage outlet selection, 13.8% mentioned that websites slightly influence their food and beverage outlet selection, 21.9% of the respondents mentioned that websites somewhat influence their food and beverage outlet selection, 37.9% of the respondents mentioned that websites moderately influence their food and beverage outlet selection and 24.1% of the respondents mentioned that websites of outlets extremely influence their food and beverage outlet selection.

- Identification of Key Features of Website Qualities**

The first objective of the study was to identify the various features of food and beverage outlets and the findings of this objective have been achieved through the studies of previous literature and the previous studies revealed that clear language, easy to understand information, user friendly layout, optimised for mobile, readily available location on Google map, high resolution images, videos related to outlets, products and services, well organised information, good color combination, secured payment gateway, ease of navigation and page loading speed are the various features of website quality.

- Influence of Features of Website Quality on Consumers Selection of Food and Beverage Outlets**

Second objective of the study was to analyse the influence of features of website quality on consumers food and beverage outlet selection. Central tendency technique has been used and ranking was given to various features according to their weighted mean score. Weighted mean score of various features concluded that websites optimised and easily accessible on mobile phones are ranked first with weighted mean score of 4.33. Readily available contact details and location on websites has been ranked second by the respondents with a weighted mean score of 4.29. User friendly feature has got third rank with a weighted mean score of 4.28. Thus it has been found that websites optimised for mobile, readily available contact details and location on websites, user friendly layouts of websites are the most influential features of website quality towards food and beverage outlet selection. Features of website

quality which moderately influence consumers food and beverage outlet selection are secured payment gateway (Weighted Mean Score= 4.25), ease of navigation (Weighted Mean Score= 4.23), well organised information (Weighted Mean Score= 4.226) and easy to understand information (Weighted Mean Score= 4.221). Page loading speed ranked 8th (Weighted Mean Score= 4.15) and clear language ranked 9th (Weighted Mean Score= 4.14). Three features of website quality which has least influence on consumers food and beverage outlet selection are high resolution images (Weighted Mean Score= 4.06), good color combination (Weighted Mean Score= 3.98), and videos related to outlet, products and services (Weighted Mean Score= 3.97).

Table 3: Influence of Features of Website Quality on Consumers Food and Beverage Outlet Selection

Parameters	Not at all Influential	Slightly Influential	Somewhat Influential	Moderately Influential	Extremely Influential	Total	Weighted Total	Weighted Mean	Rank
Clear language	6	17	23	44	104	194	805	4.14948	9
Easy to understand	2	18	16	57	101	194	819	4.22165	7
User friendly	1	15	20	50	108	194	831	4.28351	3
Optimised for mobile	2	15	19	38	120	194	841	4.33505	1
Readily available contact & location	3	13	20	46	112	194	833	4.29381	2
High resolution images for outlets & food products	8	15	27	50	94	194	789	4.06701	10
Videos related to products & services	8	19	23	60	84	194	771	3.97423	12
Well organized information	3	14	30	36	111	194	820	4.2268	6
Good color combination	20	22	28	53	85	208	773	3.98454	11
Secured payment gateways	3	16	21	42	112	194	826	4.25773	4
Ease of navigation	3	14	23	49	105	194	821	4.23196	5
Page loading speed	5	20	20	44	105	194	806	4.15464	8

Table 3 indicates the order of features of website qualities which influences consumers of food and beverage outlets of Lucknow city in their outlet selection. As more people around the world access internet through their mobile devices than from laptops or computers. That may be the reason why consumers had given first rank to feature of mobile optimization of websites. As mobile phones are normally used by every person, therefore websites must be optimised for mobile devices. As the business of food and beverage outlets is expanding and new restaurants are emerging in the city, therefore, food and beverage outlets must provide their location on the Google and must provide their contact details on the websites. As from the mobile phones they can easily access location and contact details. This may be the reason, why readily available contact details and location had got second rank. Websites must be user friendly, as now a days, this is the trend that, every customer visits websites for obtaining the information about the food, outlet atmosphere and any special event, discount and offers. This may be the reason that why feature of user friendly layout of website has got third rank. In recent years, several measures have been taken by Indian Government to promote and encourage digital payments in India and this is the reason many outlets has started the facility of online payments from their websites. Now a days, consumers can book their table in the restaurant through online mode or they can order online food items and for the same, they can pay through online mode. Thus, consumers expect secured payment gateways on websites so that they can easily pay for the food items and at the same time it should be free of risk. Ease of navigation, well organised information, easy to understand information and page loading speed of websites moderately influence consumers decision towards food and beverage outlets selection. But the most surprisingly high resolution images of outlet and food products got 10th rank and short videos related to outlet and food products have obtained 12th rank i.e. these features of website quality least influence consumers selection of food and beverage outlets. The reason for this may be that consumers who have filled the questionnaire are loyal customers of their restaurants from many years and they know many things in details about the outlets and that is why images and short videos does not influence their decision towards food and beverage outlet selection.

- **Suggestive Measures for Food and Beverage Outlets Professionals for Improving the Website Quality**

The third objective of the study was to suggest measures to improve website quality by food and beverage outlets professionals. The analysis of features of website quality indicates many suggestion by

consumers of Lucknow city. Outlets websites must be easily accessible through mobile phones. As optimised website content easily flows in laptops as well as in mobile phones. Websites must provide readily available contact details and location on Google map. Layout of websites must be user friendly. Restaurant website creates a common ground where all of your promotions and news can share the same space. Website needs to have an active presence on social media. A fast food outlet's websites presence on Facebook, Instagram and Youtube creates a difference in mindset of consumers to visit fast food outlet. Websites must provide easily accessible and secured payment gateways. Food and beverage outlets professionals must emphasize on the high resolution photographs, good color combination and videos related to outlet, products and services while designing their websites.

Conclusion

Websites are likely to create first impression a potential guest for food and beverage service outlets. A good website always helps to build brand image of the restaurants in the mind of the customers. Websites gives a restaurant the platform to communicate their own story, in their own words (unlike third party sites) with their consumers. Through websites customers gets a good idea about the outlets, as well as get an idea of the overall atmosphere of the restaurant. High quality photographs and videos inform customers about the food products, ambiance and atmosphere of the restaurants. This is also a great opportunity for food and beverage outlets to show how much your staff is appreciated by including pictures and bios of management, lead chef(s), etc. Thus, the present research was focussing on the influence of website quality on consumers food and beverage outlet selection. The findings of the first objective concluded that user friendly layout, easy accessibility, good color combination, ease of navigation, high resolution images, videos, optimised for mobile phones, readily availability of contact details etc. are the features of website quality. The findings of the second objective concluded that websites optimised for mobile phones, readily available contact and location, user friendly layout and secured payment gateways are the features of website quality which influences consumers selection of food and beverage outlets in Lucknow city. The findings of the present research are matching with the findings of Chang & Chen (2008). Chang and Chen (2008) in their research concluded that customization, interactivity, convenience, and character (graphical design features) are the top most influential features of website quality. Kim and Lennon (2013) in their study mentioned that website structure, client service, accuracy/completion, and privacy/safety are the most influential features of website quality which positively influence purchase decision of consumers. Therefore, food and beverage outlets professionals must emphasize on user friendly layout, secured payment gateways, websites optimised for mobile phones, quality images and videos of outlets while designing their websites.

Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

Since the sample size was of 174 respondents, thus findings of the study cannot be generalised for all the consumers of Lucknow city. Since the research was conducted in Lucknow city, Thus the findings of the study cannot be generalised for the State of Uttar Pradesh and entire India. Since the survey was conducted through online mode, there are chances that face to face communication regarding the questions could have impacted the findings. The present research was conducted on food and beverage consumers of Lucknow city, thus, future research can be conducted on influence of website quality on consumers of food and beverage in the state of Uttar Pradesh. Future research can also be conducted on website content and its relation with the consumers decision making while selecting food and beverage outlets.

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