

The Impact of Food Quality on Customers Experience in Egyptian Restaurants: The Mediating Effect of Food Critics

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Abstract

Over the past few years, food critics have become the new influencers in the restaurants industry. Their reviews affect people in choosing where to eat and what to order and how worthy a restaurant is before visiting it. This research aims to investigate how food critics impact the restaurants' seeking towards improving the food quality and to explore the factors that influence consumers' experience after reading food critics' reviews. A questionnaire form was developed and directed to a sample of restaurants' customers, of which 386 electronic questionnaires were valid to analyse. The structure modelling equation and path analysis were used to analyse the relationship between the variables. The results indicated that the effect of food quality on customers' experience in the presence of food critics' reviews is higher than the direct effect of food quality on customers' experience, which means that food critics' reviews help increase the effect of food quality on customers' experience. Based upon the findings, it is recommended to invite the celebrities and influencers in food reviews who have many followers to try the restaurant's food and transfer their experience to their followers as a new marketing method.

Keywords: Food Quality, Customers Experience, Food Critics, Restaurants.

Introduction

By a way or another food critics started having a significant impact because people follow them to seek advice before visiting a restaurant.

They get influenced by their reviews and editing in making the plates look more appealing and appetizing (Hanifati, 2015). As a result, restaurant managers started using them as a powerful tool of marketing. They invite food critics over their place to taste, review, critic and give feedback on their blogs, thus consumers would hear more about the restaurant and crave visiting it (Anthony, 2017). This actually turned food reviewing from a hobby to an occupation which can bring a good amount of money to some food critics (Khalid *et al.*, 2020).

The research problem lies in the possibility of a negative impact on the quality of food, which negatively affects customers' experience due to the unprofessional evaluation of food critics of the food served in the restaurant (Khalid *et al.*, 2020). Therefore, carrying out a study combining those three variables is a key factor for finding solutions for this problem. Hence, the study aims to determine the impact of food critics reviews on improving food quality and customers' experience in Egypt. The study targets restaurants customers' by distributing questionnaire forms in the period from August 15, 2021, to September 21, 2021 to investigate their views about the research's topic.

Review of literature

Food quality as a driver to customer experience

Food quality is the major factor in determining the customers' satisfaction and experience. Food quality includes taste, menu diversity, food presentation, freshness, and healthiness (Hanaysha, 2016). Food quality is considered as a key marketing strategy for restaurants that can satisfy customers and increase their loyalty through providing a happy purchasing experience for them (Abdullah *et al.*, 2018). A high level of food quality can have a considerable effect on customer satisfaction, loyalty, and behavioral intentions. (Zhong and Moon, 2020).

Customers' purchasing decisions and behaviors in restaurants are related to their perceptions and the overall experience of food quality. Food quality can clearly affect customer loyalty and experience, which is very significant to the restaurants' success. High levels of food quality can lead to a good customer experience, on another hand if the

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quality of food fails to match customers' expectations, that lead to a bad customer experience (Solunooğlu, 2020).

According to Omar *et al.*, (2016), the demand for food quality issues has increased during recent decades which creates market pressure, as requests from knowledgeable consumers, in addition to other factors, such as environmental and health concerns. Customers nowadays have a greater concern about health and quality issues with respect to the food (Khadka and Maharjan, 2017). The quality of food is a significant issue in food economics, and the recent decades testify that customers' concerns for ensuring a healthier lifestyle and food sustainability are driving forces for increasing food issue intentions and their perspectives on the quality of food in restaurants (Hanaysha, 2016).

As posited by Kasiri *et al.*, (2017), food quality includes several attributes, for instance, physical properties, sensory attributes, chemical composition, toxicological and microbiological contaminants, labeling, packaging, and shelf-life) that determine food's expiry for eat, are in dynamic interrelation and influence the customers in rejecting or accepting the food. Petrescu *et al.*, (2020) described the perceived quality as the customers' judgment about a food's overall superiority or excellence". Food characteristics used by the customers to determine food quality are not only numerous, but also dynamic, changing according to the customers' concerns, needs, interests, or knowledge (Beeton and Morrison, 2019).

Food quality is the most significant issue of an overall restaurant experience, and it is an essential requirement to meet the customers' needs and expectations (Baiardi *et al.*, 2016). Many customers are knowledgeable of food taste at restaurants, so it has gained much higher importance from the restaurants' management (Brecic *et al.*, 2017). Food quality is considered one of the most important factors that attract the customers' and encourages them to revisit a restaurant again (Caputo *et al.*, 2018). Restaurants with a high level of food quality have an intense demand from the customers (Saba *et al.*, 2019). Ismail *et al.*, (2016) noted that a restaurant's food quality has a direct effect on the customer experience. There is a significant interaction

between the customers' perceptions about the quality of the food served in restaurants and the customer experience and the intention to revisit. In the light of the literature studies mentioned above, the first hypothesis of the research was developed as follows;

H1: There is a significant impact of food quality on customer experience.

Customer Experience in Restaurants

Hwang and Seo,(2016) described the customer experience as the events that engage the customer in a personal way. Customers' intellectual, emotional, physical, or spiritual engagement is relevant to the experiences, and thereby intensifying the subjective character of customer experience. Subsequent Bascur and Rusu, (2020) extended the description to experiences that emerge when customers acquire knowledge or sensation and that they require a chain of consumption and occur throughout active interaction between the restaurants and their customers. On another hand, experiential marketers consider customers to be both emotional and rational and hold that customers tend to value pleasure when making their purchasing decisions (Hendijani, 2016).

The customer experience is a traditional concept related to the mix of marketing and services efforts. The customer experience is one of the most significant attributes in the maintenance of a restaurant's competitive advantage among its competitors. Customers have greater influence with the restaurants and have the tools to compare them among others via social media (i.e., Facebook – Instagram) or websites. Customers became more knowledgeable about restaurants' food, services, prices, and validate them among competitors. Customers are looking for a memorable and unique experiences that includes the food quality, services and delivery systems,. The relation between restaurants and customers creates from the initial awareness of a potential customer, through the food experience, until after the service experience (Hwang J. and Seo, 2016; Quiñones *et al.*, 2019 ;Bascur C., and Rusu, 2020).

The value delivered by a customer experience is not limited to

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emotional appeal. As mentioned above, Mohamed *et al.*, (2020) stated that the customer experience creates by a broad group of values that can be delivered to the customers. There are five attributes of customer experience composed of sensory experiences including the sensorial experiences such as sight, smell, and touch; feeling experiences capture emotional experiences (i.e. feelings and moods); cognitive experiences which associated with thinking or cognitive processes); acting experiences, which concern the physical aspects of a customer experience that are attributable to behaviors and lifestyles through the product itself or its use); and relationship identity experiences which resulting from relating to a reference culture or group. Furthermore, Rachão *et al.*, (2020) determined six factors that affect food customer experience by adding the pragmatic component of customer experience (sensorial, affective, physical, pragmatic, cognitive, and relational dimensions) for broadening the range of experience for the restaurants' customers to create holistically integrated experiences by possessing those values.

It is generally accepted that customer experience affects the customer's overall satisfaction with the services brand. Satisfaction or dissatisfaction is an essential result of customer experience about the restaurant. Marketing scholars and authors seem to be in agreement with a distinction between the concept of customer satisfaction and customer experience (Björk and Kauppinen-Räisänen, 2016). Hendijani (2016) claimed that customer satisfaction creates by the accumulated series of customer experiences, where a degree of customer satisfaction is the final result of a good experience minus negative experiences. Similarly, Hwang and Seo (2016) considered the total customer experience as a comprehensive concept, which is a function of customer satisfaction derived at different steps of the transaction.

The relationship between the customer experience and their satisfaction has been mentioned in the marketing literature. Kumar and Kaushik, (2018) agreed with Vanharanta *et al.* (2015) that actual experience and expectations are an important predictors of customer satisfaction. The restaurants' customers who have good experience

matches with their expectations would evaluate satisfaction positively while those who have negative experience would have dissatisfaction. Lai *et al.*, (2019) concluded that the more favorable the experience with expectations is, the higher is the satisfaction. Emotional, sensory, intellectual, physical, and behavioral attributes contribute to the overall value which increases the customers' positive experience in the restaurants especially when the service providers interact with customers. The more a customer engagement with the food through the restaurant experience factors, the more favorable the customers' attitudes will be about the restaurant experience. Thus, customers will be more satisfied with the restaurant or food provided (Kumar and Kaushik, 2018).

Food quality is considered the most fundamental component of the dining experience that affects customers' perceptions and satisfaction (Hendijani, 2016). Food is the most significant part of the total restaurant experience and is an important requirement in satisfying the expectations of restaurant customers (Mohamed *et al.*, 2020). Food is considered the main restaurant product that influences the dining experience and customers' satisfaction. While there is no consensus concerning the individual factors or attributes that represent the quality of food, the literature reveals that the common depiction of food quality in food studies focuses on freshness, taste, presentation, quantity, and portion size (Lai *et al.*, 2019; Rachão *et al.*, 2020; Mohamed *et al.*, 2020).

Food Critics impact on Food Quality and Customer Experience in Restaurants

According to Reynolds and Lynch (2010), the terms food critic, food writer, and restaurant critic can all be used to describe a writer who analyzes food or restaurants and then publishes the results of their findings. While these terms are not strictly synonymous they are often used interchangeably, at least in some circumstances. Those who share their opinions via food columns in newspapers and magazines are known as food columnists. They are often experts in the field (Kimberly, 2013). The internet has slowly become more important in forming opinions about restaurants. Food criticism on the Internet has

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allowed creation of shows with specific audiences. Food writing is a genre of writing that focuses on food and includes works by food critics, food journalists, chefs and food blogger (Lynn, 2018).

Food critics come in different forms depending on the blogger's preference; it could be specialized in cooking as a hobby and sharing recipes, it could be a motivational one to healthy clean eating and it could be about restaurants reviews and best places to eat from. Food bloggers prefer to share their experience publicly by writing it down for friends and family so they can benefit from. In the past, the word of mouth was the medium used to deliver a review about a certain restaurant or café, now food critics are the benchmark (Hanifati, 2015). Arceo *et al.*, (2017) claimed that food critics reviews or recommendations of a certain restaurant or café, quickly start spreading to people beyond friends and family. In addition, they do not only use blogs as their platforms to express their food experiences only, but also they use social media; which is an online smartphone photo sharing, becomes one of the tools to connect with food bloggers due to its easy access to follow and view the updates of food blogs in their feed directly. Which it may cause users much more cravings just by looking at the food images. In other words, people not only seem to enjoy the delicious food pictures, but they consider them influential people, they may get information about an old restaurant that is still recommended for visiting or a modern, trendy café in the area, they guide individuals whether or not some restaurants are worth visiting (Nur, 2015).

If a restaurant's post gets posted on a food blog and goes viral, it could create a huge influence on this restaurant and create awareness about it and its reputation, as a result, more visits and more sales to it (Khalid *et al.*, 2020). Restaurants use the critics to highlight their menu items, their new services and to describe the advantages or offers the restaurant has. They tend to use critics more than other forms of advertising because of the influence they have (Anthony, 2017). In the light of the literature studies mentioned above, the second hypothesis of the research was developed as follows;

H2: There is a significant effect of food critics reviews on customers' experience..

Previous studies have confirmed that trust is strongly associated with attitude toward products and services and toward purchasing behavior. It is very important to understand the nature of the blog and the reputation of the critic. The more reputable a critic is, the higher chances of important food chains and restaurants inviting him over for paid reviews to market their place (Vishal, 2018).

According to Reynolds and Lynch (2010), 60% of diners browse social media for food images and 75% of them say they chose a restaurant based solely on those photos. Kimberly, (2013) showed that adolescents use social media as a means of showing off their food. They purposely arrange food in a visually appealing way to serve almost as advertisements to their peers. However, unfortunately, most of the time the food they post is unhealthy, high in calories, and low in nutrients. The customer's food journey mapping of selecting a restaurant comes in main three steps; pre-purchasing, purchasing, and post purchasing. It is no more a one-way journey where the customer sees a review and directly goes to the restaurant. Instead, its nature has changed into a dynamic process, it involves media interchanges between the consumers and the blogger (Wells, 2013).

Consumers who show interest in food are also divided into two categories; the goal-directed group and the Spontaneous group (Anthony, 2017). The researcher found that most people in the group look and ask for dish prices and food quality prior to their visit to a restaurant a blogger posted about. They are goal-directed knowing exactly their needs. Their choice of a restaurant is based on how much information a critic provides in the caption, the more information available, the quicker their decision of selecting a restaurant becomes. Eventually, before making their decision towards a specific restaurant, they visit its page and read other reviews from other critics to ensure credibility. The second category is the spontaneous group. They are the people who simply visit the restaurant and try their food. They don't read much about the restaurant's reputation or look for more posts related to it, on the contrary, they visit it spontaneously and try it. They usually have a positive attitude towards the critics' recommendations

always (Lynn, 2018; Khalid *et al.*, 2020). In the light of the literature studies mentioned above, the third hypothesis of the research was developed as follows;

H3: Food critics' reviews mediates the relation between food quality and customer experience.

Based on the literature review, the study proposes the following theoretical framework and research hypotheses as shown in Figure 1.

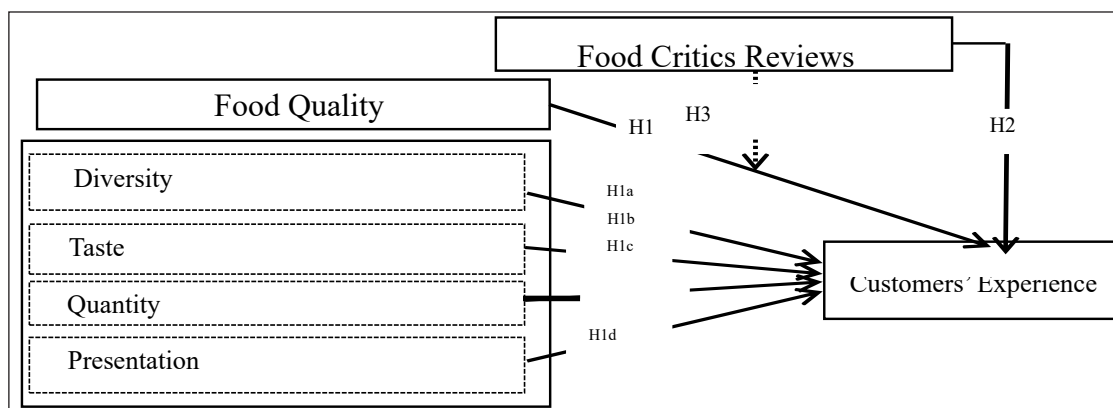


Fig. 1: Theoretical Framework and Research Hypotheses

Research methodology

Measurement tool and sample size

Research variables were measured based on previous studies to ensure data validity. Food critics' reviews were measured using 6 items adopted from Williams and Jacobs (2004); Hanifati (2015); Vishal (2018). Food quality and its dimensions (diversity, taste, quantity and presentation) were measured using 8 items adopted from Getz and Robinson (2014); Hanaysha (2016); Abdullah *et al.*, (2018). Customers' experiences were measured using 5 items adopted from Richards (2015); Hendijani (2016); Bascur and Rusu (2020); Volker *et al.*, (2021). The sample equation was applied to unlimited society

(Thompson, 2012) as follows:

$$N1 = \left[\frac{z^2}{d^2} \right] + p(1 - p)$$

Note: P: Percentage of the purpose of this study 0.50, **d:** Percentage of the error limit allowed 0.05, **Z:** The standard degree used for giving general results is 95%. Thus, the standard degree = 1.96

$$N1 = \frac{3.84}{0.0025} * 0.25 = 384$$

According to the previous sample size equation the lower limit of respondents, that suitable in this study are 384. A number of 450 questionnaires were distributed randomly by electronic form from September 2021 to November 2021 and only 386 questionnaires (85.8%) were valid to analyse. The respondents were asked to answer these statements by using a Five-point Likert-type scale from 1= strongly disagree to 5= strongly agree. . The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25.0 and AMOS V.26 were used to analyse the collected data.

Results and Discussion

Reliability and validity Analysis

All variables scale tested for the validity and reliability. For testing the reliability, composite reliability (CR) and Cronbach's alpha were used. AVE (Average Variance Extracted) was used to test the convergent validity.

Table 1: Internal Consistency Estimates

Variables	Statements	Composite Reliability (CR)	Cronbach's Alpha	AVE
Food critics' reviews	6	0.812	0.779	0.713
Food quality	8	0.887	0.841	0.733
Customers' experience	5	0.838	0.836	0.756

Table 1 shows that all values of composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha were higher than the minimum limit of 70% (Taber, 2018). Additionally, it depicts that the value of AVE was more than 0.71 which is higher than the minimum value of convergent validity (0.5 or higher) (Zainudin, 2012).

Table 2: Assessing Divergent Validity

Variables	Food critics' reviews	Food quality	Customers' experience
Food critics' reviews	0.913		
Food quality	0.853	0.901	
Customers' experience	0.779	0.754	0.922

Note: Bold values indicate the square roots of AVE.

AVE's square roots were tested to assess the validity of the variables. AVE's square roots should be greater than a couple of variables correlation, as shown in bold type along the diagonal in Table 2 (Zainudin, 2012). For example, the correlation between food critics' reviews and Food quality was 0.853, which is less than the respective squared roots of AVE of food critics' reviews (0.913) and environmental commitment (0.901). In this vein, Table 2 illustrates that the AVE's square roots for all latent variables are larger than the highest correlations with any other variables.

Table 3: Model (Goodness of Fit Indices)

Fit Index Ranges Model

Chi ²	1-3	1.881
Goodness-of-fit index (GFI)	More than 0.90	0.957
Comparative fit index (CFI)	More than 0.95	0.981
Normed Fit Index (NFI)	More than 0.90	0.980
Tucker-Lewis index (TLI)	More than 0.95	0.976
RMSEA	0.05-0.08	0.003

Note: RMSEA stands for Root Mean Square Error of Approximation

Table 3 showed that $X^2/df = 1.881$, $GFI = 0.957$, $CFI = 0.981$, $NFI = 0.980$, $TLI = 0.976$, and $RMSEA = 0.003$. All these values fell within the recommended ranges (Hooper *et al.*, 2008; Wesolowski, 2018). These results indicate that the sample data fit the proposed model.

Descriptive analysis

Descriptive analysis was used to discover participants' responses. The results obtained were computed and analysed in the following tables.

Table 4: Customers' responses towards the research dimensions

Attributes	\bar{x}	SD	CV%	R	T-test	sig.
Food Critics' Reviews						
I follow food critics to discover new restaurants	3.45	.950	28	5	119.25	.000 *
I decided to visit a restaurant based on a food critic's recommendation	4.40	.747	17	2	11.37	.062
I actively read reviews from food critics before making a decision of visiting a restaurant	3.96	.606	15	3	44.16	.000 *
If my favourite food critic recommends a place, I'm more likely to visit it	4.63	.484	11	1	125.09	.000 *
I trust the recommendations of food critics	3.35	.966	29	6	173.48	.000 *
food critics review helps in improving restaurants' food quality	3.82	1.06	43	4	61.44	.000 *
Average of Responses	3.94	.802	24	--	----	----
Food Quality						
The food served in the restaurant is varied	3.99	1.18	30	3	16.30	.029 *

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The price of food is vary matches its quality	4.37	.660	15	2	77.01	.000 *
The taste of food served is delicious and special.	4.58	.495	11	1	123.98	.000 *
The taste of food is stable Throughout shifts	3.82	.628	16	4	66.21	.000 *
The amount of food provided is adequate and appropriate	3.72	.971	26	5	99.11	.000 *
Food quantity matches its price	3.67	1.13	31	6	62.33	.000 *
The food is beautifully decorated and presented	3.59	1.01	28	7	107.48	.000 *
The plate presentation is simple and suitable with the components	3.54	.975	27	8	85.06	.000 *
Average of Responses	3.91	.881	23	--	----	----
Customers' Experience						
I am happy with the dining experience at the restaurant	4.00	.940	24	2	124.51	.000 *
I am satisfied with the quality of the food served in the restaurant.	3.91	.488	13	3	84.09	.000 *
I plan to visit the restaurant again to try more dishes.	4.53	.500	11	1	117.60	.000 *
I will write a positive comment about the quality of the food in the restaurant	3.75	.771	21	4	129.24	.000 *
I will invite my friends, colleagues and relatives to visit the restaurant and eat the same dishes	3.38	.774	23	5	71.22	.000 *
Average of Responses	3.92	.695	18	---	----	----

Table 4: Customers' responses towards the research dimensions N=447 \bar{x} : Mean SD: Standard Deviation CV: Coefficient Variance ($SD \div \bar{x} \%$) R: Rank T Test value = (0.05) *sig. \leq (.05)

Table 4 revealed that there was a significant difference among almost all respondents' answers ($p < 0.05$). The average responses of customers were agreement on the majority of statements with an average mean of 3.94 for food critics' reviews dimension, 3.91 for the dimension of food quality, and 3.92 for customers' experience dimension.

With regard to the impact of food critics' reviews on restaurants customers' attitudes, the respondents strongly agreed that they were

more likely to visit the restaurants recommended by food critics (Mean = 4.63, CV = 11). in addition they decided to visit a restaurant based on a food critic's recommendation (Mean = 4.40, CV = 17). Moreover, they tend to read reviews from food critics before making a decision of visiting a restaurant (Mean = 3.96, CV = 15). In addition they are convinced that food critics review helps in improving restaurants' food quality (Mean = 3.82, CV = 43), so they follow food critics to discover new restaurants (Mean = 3.45, CV = 28). As it can be observed from Table 4, restaurants' customers trust partially the recommendations of food critics (Mean = 3.35, CV = 29). These results clarify the significant impact of food critics' reviews on restaurants customers' attitudes and decisions. This result matches what found by Khalid *et al.*, (2020) that if a restaurant's post gets posted on a food blog and goes viral, it could create a huge influence on this restaurant and create awareness about it and its reputation, as a result, more visits and more sales to it.

According to the dimension of food quality, the respondents showed a positive tendency towards all of the attributes (taste is delicious "4.58" and stable "3.82", food is varied in the price "4.37" and the dishes "3.99", amount of food provided is adequate "3.72" and matches the price "3.67", finally dishes are good presented "3.59;3.54") and that means they are happy with the experience of eating in the recommended restaurants. This belief coincides with the view explained that customers' decisions and purchasing behaviors in restaurants are closely related to their evaluation of the overall experience of product quality. Product quality can significantly affect customer satisfaction and experience, which is critical to a restaurant's success. High levels of product quality lead to a high customer experience (Solunoğlu, 2020).

With regard to the dimension of customers' experience, the respondents showed a positive tendency towards most of the attributes and that means their experience were good (mean= 3.92). In details, they planned to visit the restaurant again to try more dishes (Mean = 4.53, CV = 11), because they are happy with the dining experience at the restaurant (Mean = 4.00, CV = 24), and satisfied with the quality of the food served in the restaurant (Mean = 3.91, CV = 13). In the same

sense, they will write a positive comment about the quality of the food in the restaurant (Mean = 3.75, CV = 21), and will invite their friends, colleagues and relatives to visit the restaurant and eat the same dishes (Mean = 3.38, CV = 23). This result agreed with that the more a customer engages with the product through the restaurant experience dimensions, The more a customer engagement with the food through the restaurant experience factors, the more favorable the customers' attitudes will be about the restaurant experience. Thus, customers will be more satisfied with the restaurant or food provided (Kumar and Kaushik, 2018). Food is the most significant part of the total restaurant experience and is an important requirement in satisfying the expectations of restaurant customers (Mohamed *et al.*, 2020).

Relationship Path Analysis and Structure Model

Path analysis for the direct effect of food quality on customers' experience through role of food critics' reviews as a mediator.

Table (5): Path analysis for the research variables

Path	Path Coefficient	C.R.	Sig.	Result
DIV → CX	0.580	10.424	*	Accepted
TST → CX	0.724	15.302	*	Accepted
QUAN → CX	0.675	13.752	*	Accepted
PRES → CX	0.733	15.748	*	Accepted
FQ → CX	0.651	16.970	*	Accepted
FCR → CX	0.801	19.758	*	Accepted
FQ × FCR → CX	0.732	14.995	*	Accepted

C.R. Critical Ratio, * $p < 0.01$

It can be showed from Table 5 that food quality has a significant and positive effect on customers' experience ($\beta = 0.651$, $p < 0.01$) with C.R. value 16.970. This result agrees with Caputo *et al.*, (2018) who claimed that food quality is considered one of the most important

factors that attract the customers' and encourages them to revisit a restaurant again. Table 5 also showed that four attributes of food quality including diversity ($\beta = 0.580, p < 0.01$), taste ($\beta = 0.724, p < 0.01$), quantity ($\beta = 0.675, p < 0.01$) and presentation ($\beta = 0.733, p < 0.01$) have a positive influence on customers' experience. In addition, Table 5 indicated that food critics' reviews affects significantly and positively customers' experience ($\beta = 0.801, p < 0.01$) with *C.R.* value 19.758.

Regarding the moderated role of food critics' reviews in the relationship between food quality and customers' experience; Table 5 and Figure 2 revealed that food quality has a significant positive effect on customers' experience in the presence of food critics' reviews ($\beta = 0.732, p < 0.01$) with *C.R.* value of 14.995 was obtained. This result indicates that the effect of food quality on customers' experience in the presence of food critics' reviews is higher than the direct effect of food quality on customers' experience ($\beta = 0.651$), which mean that food critics' reviews helps increasing the effect food quality on customers' experience.

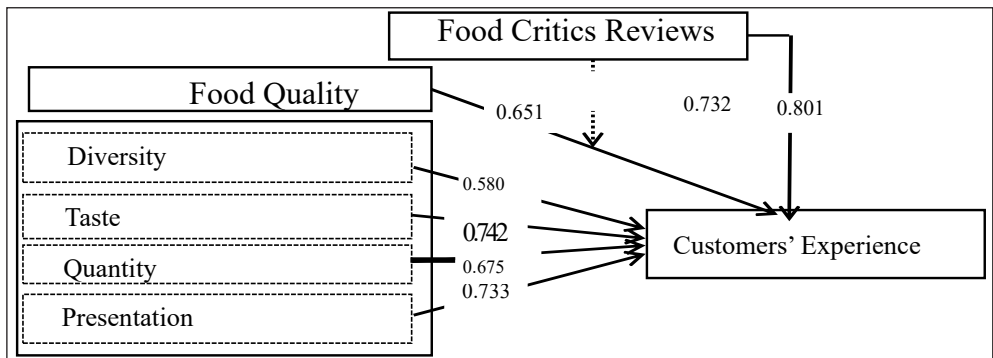


Fig. 2: Model Generating with Path Analysis

Conclusion

This study has presented an investigation into determining how food critics are impacting the restaurants' seeking towards improving the food quality and explores the factors that influence consumers' experience after reading food critics' reviews. With regard to the

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impact of food critics' reviews on restaurants customers' attitudes, the respondents strongly agreed that they were more likely to visit the restaurants recommended by food critics. The result clarify the significant impact of food critics' reviews on restaurants customers' attitudes and decisions. With regard to the dimension of customers' experience, the respondents showed a positive tendency towards most of the attributes and that means their experience were good. The results indicated that the effect of food quality on customers' experience in the presence of food critics' reviews is higher than the direct effect of food quality on customers' experience, which means that food critics' reviews help increase the effect of food quality on customers' experience. Therefore, the restaurants should increase the utilization of food critics within their market plan to increase the number of customers, which would, in turn, result in higher restaurant revenues.

Recommendations

According to the literature review and the results extracted from the field study, the following recommendations could be suggested:

1. Inviting the celebrities and influencers in food reviews who have many followers to try the restaurant's food and transfer their experience to their followers as a new marketing method.
2. The restaurants' management should develop multiple strategies to improve the total dining experience to ensure the competitiveness in the restaurant industry. particularly, the restaurants should increase the utilization of food critics within their market plan to increase the number of customers, which would, in turn, result in higher restaurant revenues.
3. The restaurants should use a star rating system and online rating platforms to track total ratings over the long term. It should prioritize main attributes such as food quality, and total restaurant rating to create a good reputation in the market.
4. Using of a restaurant review website as a communication channel can facilitate the restaurants' customers and owners in providing feedback to one another. Whenever either a success or a failure

occurs in food quality or service quality, customers can provide direct feedback to the restaurant owners (as fair critics). This would enable the restaurant owners to build a relationship with their customers and create a good experience that may lead to customer loyalty.

5. Relying on well-known food critics for their trust and honesty in evaluating the quality of food, provided that they are used to improve the quality of food served to customers and not to deceive customers and increase sales only.
6. The food critic should be concerned with criticizing all elements of food quality (variety - quantity - price - texture - general appearance .. etc.) and not focus on the element of taste only. Mentioning all the elements during food criticism helps customers to form a comprehensive view of the food before trying it, which contributes to increasing its predictability, which in turn leads to an improvement in customer experience.

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أثر جودة الطعام على تجربة العملاء في المطاعم المصرية: نقاد الطعام كمؤثر وسيط

المستخلص

أصبح نقاد الطعام على مدى السنوات القليلة الماضية هم المؤثرون الجدد في صناعة المطاعم، حيث تؤثر آراءهم على الأشخاص في اختيار مكان تناول الطعام وماذا يطلبون ومدى جودة المطعم قبل زيارته. يهدف هذا البحث إلى التحقيق في كيفية تأثير نقاد الطعام على سعي المطاعم نحو تحسين جودة الطعام واستكشاف العوامل التي تؤثر على تجربة العملاء بعد قراءة آراء نقاد الطعام. من أجل تحقيق هدف البحث، تم تطوير استمارة استبيان وتوجيهها إلى عينة عشوائية من عملاء المطاعم ، منها 386 استبيانًا إلكترونيًا صالحة للتحليل الإحصائي. تم استخدام نمذجة المعادلة البنائية وتحليل المسار لتحديد العلاقة بين متغيرات الدراسة. أشارت النتائج إلى أن تأثير جودة الطعام على تجربة العملاء في ظل وجود آراء نقاد الطعام أعلى من التأثير المباشر لجودة الطعام على تجربة العملاء، مما يعني أن آراء نقاد الطعام تساعد في زيادة تأثير جودة الطعام على تجربة العملاء. بناءً على النتائج، يوصى بدعوة المطاعم للمشاهير والمؤثرين ونقاد الطعام الذين لديهم العديد من المتابعين لتجربة الأطباق الموجودة بقائمة المطعم ونقل تجربتهم إلى متابعيهم كطريقة جديدة للتسويق.

الكلمات الدالة: جودة الطعام ، تجربة العملاء ، نقاد الطعام ، المطاعم.