

The Influence of Food Bloggers' Ewom Credibility on Promoting Authentic Saudi Cuisine, a Cross-Sectional Web-Based Survey

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Abstract

The study aims to investigate the influence of food bloggers' eWOM credibility on promoting authentic Saudi cuisine. After investigating the previous similar studies, Stimulus–Organism–Response (SOR) Model and Electronic Word of Mouth (eWOM) theory were adopted to explain the relationships between study's variables. A sample of 385 Saudi participants was used to response a self-administrated questionnaire which was distributed through different social media platforms. After that, Smart-PLS software was used to analuze these responses. The study's findings show that the credibility of food bloggers' electronic word of mouth positively influence authentic food taste awareness and consumer attitude towards authentic cuisine. The results also showed that authentic food taste awareness positively mediates the relationship between credibility of food bloggers' electronic word of mouth and consumer attitude towards authentic cuisine.

Keywords: eWOM, Food Blogger, Authentic Cuisine, Saudi Arabia, Saudi Vision 2030

Introduction

Influencer marketing, which involves working with well-known social media users, has emerged as an exceptional strategy used by business owners to increase their worth. The success of influencer marketing is linked to customers' strong perceptions of the veracity of information and advertisements, according to numerous studies (Ho, 2023). According to Leung et. al, 2022, businesses are finding it more challenging to draw in and sway customers as a result of consumers' growing mistrust of traditional marketing. To advertise their companies and goods on social media platforms, many marketers go to online influencers. Driving the expansion of influencer marketing, a communication tactic where a company chooses and rewards online influencers to interact with their followers on social media in an effort to promote the company's product. So that, some firms select and pay (e.g., pay-per-post) online influencers—individuals, groups of individuals, or even virtual avatars who have built networks of followers on social media (De Veirman, Cauberghe, and Hudders 2017).

Nowadays many people regard social networking as an essential instrument. Currently, there are more than 4.6 billion social media users that generate a digital footprint via their online engagements. The extensive data offer significant study opportunities for elucidating the social and cultural dimensions of the observed subject (Pilar et. al, 2022).

Blogging has grown in popularity as a way to influence consumers' purchase decisions in recent years. The food and beverage sector is among those that are significantly impacted by digital contact, particularly in regards to social media platforms, which are highly effective at fostering relationships with clients (Basiouny, 2022). Moreover, eating habits have been found to be impacted by social media use. Therefore, it is crucial to analyze these social networks in order to comprehend the elements that affect eating behaviors. (Pilar et. al, 2022). In order to influence customer attitudes and behaviors in the food industry, food bloggers and food-focused influencers have arisen as a unique class of digital intermediaries whose persuasive power combines visual aesthetics, narrative testimony, and perceived expertise. In contrast to traditional advertising, blogger content often combines recommendation with experiential description to create persuasive messages that function through both informational and affective channels; survey and experimental research demonstrates that influencer endorsements can change brand attitudes and purchase intentions, particularly when parasocial relationships with followers are strong (Folkvord et. al, 2022).

According to StarNgage (2024) report, food bloggers and food-related social media influencers play an increasingly central role in shaping food marketing dynamics within Saudi Arabia. Recent industry data indicate the presence of over 2,106 food and beverage influencers active in the country, with more than 654 having registered contact information suitable for brand partnerships. Furthermore, the platform also lists 1,423 food brands that actively follow and engage these influencers, underscoring the maturity of the influencer–brand ecosystem in the Saudi market. This high density of food-focused digital creators reflects not only the growing popularity of gastronomic content but also brands' recognition of influencers as credible intermediaries for consumer engagement. The effect of food bloggers is further enhanced by Saudi Arabia's social media consumption tendencies. With 14 million active Instagram users, Saudi Arabia has one of the highest social media usage rates in the world, making Instagram a major platform for the production and consumption of culinary content, according to a recent analysis on food and beverage market entry. Further boosting the reach and penetration of food-related digital content are platforms like WhatsApp, which is utilized by 87% of internet users between the ages of 16 and 64, and TikTok, which has a rapidly growing cohort of Saudi food makers with profiles with more than 30 million followers. According to studies on influencer credibility, the persuasive channels via which food bloggers impact consumer perceptions and purchase decisions are strengthened by such extensive platform interaction (ACCI, 2023).

With 70% of consumers saying they trust influencer endorsements more than traditional advertising formats, the Saudi market exhibits remarkably high consumer trust in influencer recommendations from a marketing standpoint (Catchers Agency, 2024). The nation's larger influencer economy reflects this trust: Saudi Arabia is the main hub for digital endorsement activity in the GCC, accounting for over 40% of the market for influencer marketing.

Prominent Saudi food influencers, some of whom have millions of followers, act as key opinion leaders whose posts affect restaurant tastes, culinary trends, and the visibility of food brands. As a result, food bloggers are now crucial to marketing plans for eateries, packaged food manufacturers, and delivery services looking for genuine, high-engagement customer touchpoints (PS Market Research, 2024).

Background

One of the major focus of Saudi Vision 2030 is strengthening national identity through the promotion of authenticity, cultural heritage, and the preservation of traditional values. Saudi Vision 2030, is a comprehensive cultural agenda that aims to revitalize Saudi Arabia's rich historical past through investments in museums, cultural festivals, and heritage sites, as well as by promoting creative businesses that highlight regional customs (Saudi Vision 2030, 2016). In line with global sustainable development frameworks that acknowledge heritage as a stimulant for both economic progress and societal well-being, a key component of this endeavor is the strengthening of cultural authenticity as a driver of social solidarity and national pride. The Vision's dedication to integrating legacy into modern cultural expression is demonstrated by initiatives like the restoration of Diriyah, the growth of the Ministry of Culture's programs, and support for traditional culinary arts. By formalizing these initiatives, Vision 2030 aims to guarantee that the nation's modernization is based on a strong sense of identity, allowing Saudi nationals to interact with international markets while retaining a genuine connection to their cultural roots (Saudi Vision 2030, 2016).

As part of its larger goals for cultural development, Saudi Vision 2030 expressly promotes the preservation and international promotion of authentic Saudi food. Saudi food is positioned as a strategic cultural asset that supports national identity, tourism growth, and the creative economy under the Vision's cultural initiatives, especially those run by the Ministry of Culture and the Culinary Arts Commission (Saudi Vision 2030, 2016). In addition to promoting innovation and entrepreneurship in the food industry, the Culinary Arts Commission's programs, like "National Culinary Week," "Year of Saudi Coffee," and the documenting of traditional regional recipes, seek to preserve culinary heritage. By promoting Saudi food as a distinctive and genuine aspect of the country's legacy, these programs support the Vision's objective of raising the Kingdom's cultural profile abroad. Additionally, the government's emphasis on promoting regional eateries, growing culinary education initiatives, and incorporating traditional meals into travel experiences shows a conscious attempt to include culinary heritage into economic diversification plans. By taking these steps, Saudi Vision 2030 presents authentic food as a catalyst for socioeconomic development and cultural diplomacy in addition to being a cultural emblem (Saudi Vision 2030, 2016).

In Saudi Arabia's quickly growing food and beverage (F&B) industry, food bloggers have become powerful opinion leaders that have a big impact on customer behavior, restaurant visibility, and culinary trends. Due to the Kingdom's remarkably high level of social media engagement—more than 70% of consumers say they trust influencer recommendations more than traditional advertisements—food bloggers have a great opportunity to influence consumer

choices and brand impressions (PWC,2023). Prominent Saudi food influencers with millions of followers act as gatekeepers in the F&B industry in particular, curating culinary experiences, reviewing restaurants, and introducing new items to sizable, intensely interested audiences. Their content, which is frequently centered around openness, authenticity, and personal taste, increases brand awareness and encourages customers to visit nearby cafés and restaurants. Influencer-generated food content, particularly visually appealing photographs and short-form films, improves customers' desire to visit new dining places and promotes local and traditional foods, according to recent studies on digital gastronomy in Saudi Arabia (Bakr et al., 2025). As Vision 2030 encourages the development of culinary tourism and authentic Saudi cuisine, food bloggers have become indispensable partners for restaurants, delivery apps, and food entrepreneurs seeking high-engagement and culturally resonant marketing channels.

Stimulus–Organism–Response (SOR) Model

The (S-O-R), originally proposed by Mehrabian and Russell (1974), model presents a fundamental framework for comprehending how internal psychological states and subsequent consumer behavior are influenced by exterior marketing stimuli. The concept defines stimuli (S) as external environmental signals that cause internal evaluations, such as digital communications, product displays, or visual content. The consumer's internal processes, such as cognitive evaluations (like perceived value and trust), emotional responses (like pleasure and arousal), and psychological states, are reflected in the organism (O), which is influenced by these stimuli. Responses (R), such as attitudes, buying intentions, or actual behaviors, follow these internal shifts.

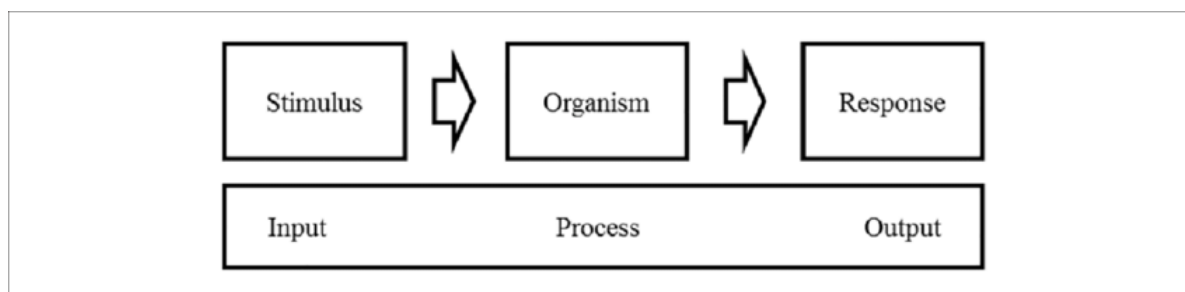


Figure 1: SOR Model (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974)

According to Guo et. al, (2024) SOR model has been extensively used and researched in consumer behavior and marketing. However, its application in food destination marketing is relatively scarce. Guo et. al, (2024) adopted the SOR model, taking the source credibility of bloggers as the stimulus variable, inspiring taste desire and forming taste awareness as the organism variables, and intention to visit as the response variable. Based on the SOR model, Guo et. al, (2024) discovered the influence of food's review videos on consumer behavior. The findings of this study showed that source credibility (S) has a significant positive predictive effect on inspiring taste desire (O) and forming taste awareness (O). It indicates that the blogger's trustworthiness, expertise, attractiveness, and similarity are closely linked to consumers' cognition and behavioral responses to culinary locations. These results emphasize

how important source credibility is to customers' decision-making, especially when it comes to arousing their appetites and creating unique visions of dining venues.

In addition to that, The SOR model guided Truong et. al, (2025) analysis, offering a framework to predict consumer intentions to visit restaurants after viewing food vlogs. This model suggests that environmental stimuli (S) impact an individual's organism (O), leading to a behavioral response (R). The organism encompasses cognitive processes, informed by information, and affective states, reflecting emotional experiences. Responses are the actions or intentions triggered by the stimuli. Truong et. al, (2025) concluded that, the food vlogs on viewers' attitudes influences the intentions to visit restaurants. Particularly, this study sought to determine the desirable attributes of food review vlogs and vloggers that act as stimuli prompting viewers' content engagement and parasocial relationships, and subsequently their attitudes and visit intentions. Overall, the results confirmed most relationships among the main variables (i.e., attributes of food vlogs and vloggers, content engagement, parasocial relationships, attitudes, and visit intentions).

Electronic Word of Mouth Theory (eWOM)

Social media's growth and maturation have enabled online users to create electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) on a variety of websites and platforms, which may have an impact on a person's decision-making process (Rahman et al, 2022).

Any comment about a good or service that is readily available and accessible to a large number of people on the internet is referred to as eWOM information systems (Gvili & Levy, 2018). Social media websites are thought to be among the most ideal and relevant venues for electronic word of mouth (eWOM), and they have provided a new communication channel for the dissemination of information (Herrero & Martí'nez, 2021). Individual users can readily leave comments and share any information on these websites by writing text, uploading a video, or publishing a photo. Online consumers seem to find eWOM information more obvious and engaging when social media websites have more material (Zhou et. al, 2020). Online consumers typically like reading and reviewing different comments, ideas, and other people's firsthand accounts of goods or services on social media platforms (Bilal et. al, 2021). As a result, online shoppers are more deliberately using a variety of social media sites to obtain the necessary brand information (Barreda et. al, 2015).

In general, eWOM information can appear on social media platforms in a number of ways. For example, online users can express their preferences for any company by joining an online fan club, or they can purposefully share their ideas about businesses by posting on social media. On the official site of their social media accounts, marketing professionals can deliberately post a variety of useful brand information (Alboqami et. al, 2015). Therefore, eWOM information may have a significant impact on the things that online shoppers choose to buy. Since eWOM aids people in making better purchasing decisions (Bronner & De Hoog, 2011), it is crucial to identify the elements or traits of eWOM information that may influence consumers' intentions to make purchases on social media platforms. The results of Intan et. al, (2023) indicated that electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) positively

and significantly influences consumers' purchasing decisions. As a result, consumers consider Electronic Word-of-Mouth (eWOM) when choosing what to buy. Consumers can obtain information by reading reviews left by other consumers who have already made purchases. When making decisions about what to buy, consumers mostly rely on the eWOM variable, which involves looking for recommendations from other followers in the social media comments section. Examining the details of food items purchased by other followers can inspire other followers to make a purchase.

Definition of key terms

Food Bloggers: According to scholarly literature, food bloggers are digital content producers that write structured, chronologically arranged blogs about food using multimodal platforms. According to Cesiri (2022), food blogging is a unique type of computer-mediated communication that is distinguished by recurring structural elements including narrative introductions, recipe sections, and a lot of visual content. The importance of self-presentation is also emphasized by academics. For instance, Tigner (2020) contends that food bloggers use cultural narratives, aesthetic choices, and personal storytelling to create and perform identity. Expanding upon this societal perspective, Partanen and Uusiautti (2023) show how food bloggers use their personal values to influence readers' views, dietary preferences, and lifestyle choices. From the standpoint of networked media, Pilař et al. (2022) broaden the concept of food bloggers to encompass producers who share food-related information on social media platforms like Twitter, highlighting their impact in broader online communities. These studies together characterize food bloggers as powerful, multimodal communicators who influence online food discourse by fusing social interaction, digital genre conventions, and personal narrative.

eWOM Credibility: In digital environments, customer perceptions and behavioral intentions are greatly influenced by the legitimacy of electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM). Customers' perceptions of online messaging as trustworthy, dependable, and objective are reflected in their credibility, which has a direct impact on how they understand and respond to user-generated content. Cheung, Luo, Sia, and Chen (2009) claim that important elements like argument quality, source expertise, and source trustworthiness—all of which boost consumers' confidence in the information—determine the credibility of eWOM. In a similar vein, Filieri (2015) contends that trustworthy eWOM improves perceived diagnosticity and lessens information asymmetry, empowering customers to make better decisions. Additionally, Hennig-Thurau et al. (2004) point out that when customers assess goods or services in high-risk, experience-based categories like food, hospitality, and tourism, they rely more on reliable internet reviews. As a result, eWOM credibility is a fundamental component that enhances persuasive communication, influences consumer opinion, and promotes the uptake of online recommendations. According to Alharbi and Ariffin (2023) results, credibility as part of 4Cs model (Clarity, Consistency, Credibility and Competitiveness) positively influence the attitude of dairy products' consumers in Saudi Arabia.

Authentic Saudi cuisine: Deeply ingrained cultural customs, historical trade routes, and regional diversity have all influenced the rich culinary legacy of authentic Saudi cuisine.

According to academics, Saudi cuisine reflects the interaction of the Arabian Peninsula's topography, tribal traditions, and the centuries-long influence of pilgrims and traders (Yehia, 2024). Particularly in places like Najd, Hejaz, and the Eastern Province, traditional cuisines like Kabsa, Jareesh, and Saleeg are strongly associated with regional identities through local ingredients and cooking methods (Alqurashi et al., 2025). According to research on heritage food practices, maintaining traditional recipes, keeping ingredients local, and upholding culturally ingrained culinary expertise are all necessary for Saudi cuisine to be authentic (Almansouri, Verkerk, Fogliano, & Luning, 2022). However, there are threats to authenticity associated with modernization and commercial food services, particularly when heritage recipes are modified using non-traditional equipment or produced by cooks who are not familiar with the culture (Almansouri, Luning, Almuhanha, & Verkerk, 2023). When taken as a whole, these studies demonstrate that real Saudi cuisine is a dynamic cultural expression that connects the past and present through food customs, identity, and regional history rather than just a collection of traditional meals.

Objective of Study

This study is designed to investigate the influence of food bloggers' marketing strategies, on promoting authentic Saudi cuisine to social media users. SOR model and Electronic Word of Mouth (eWOM) theory were adopted to explain the relationships between the study's variables.

Methodology

Conceptual Framework

Due to the similarities in main topic, variables and theories, this study has adopted the framework of Aisha et. al, (2024) shown in (Figure. 2) and adapted it to be fit to study's variables and theories.

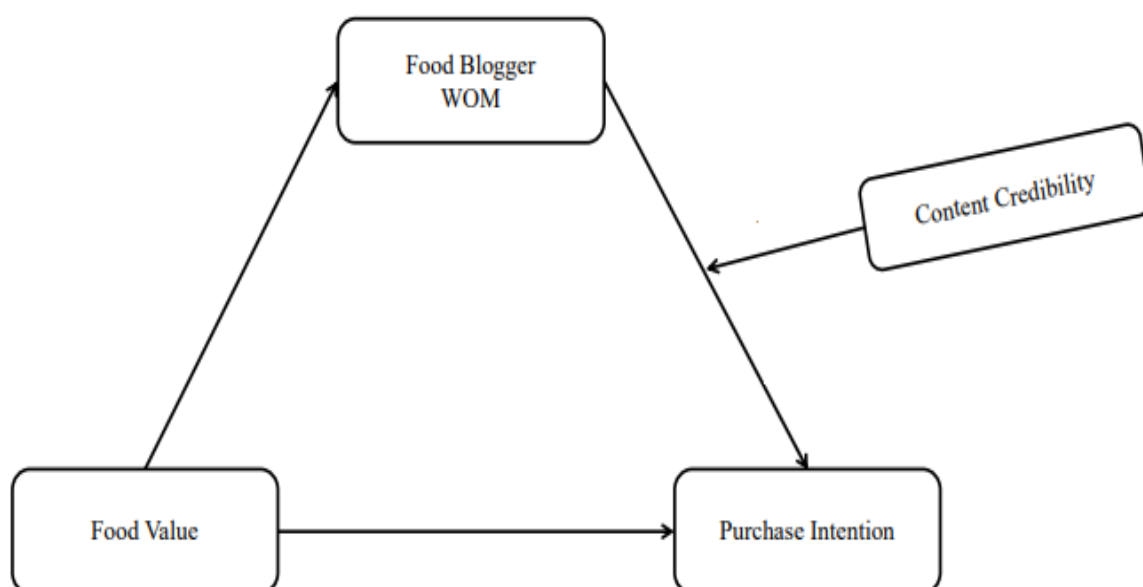


Figure. 2: Aisha et. al, (2024) Study's Framework

The proposed theoretical framework for this research is presented in (Figure. 3) below, the independent variables is food blogger eWOM credibility, mediating variable is authentic food taste awareness, and the dependent variable in this study is consumer attitude towards authentic cuisine.

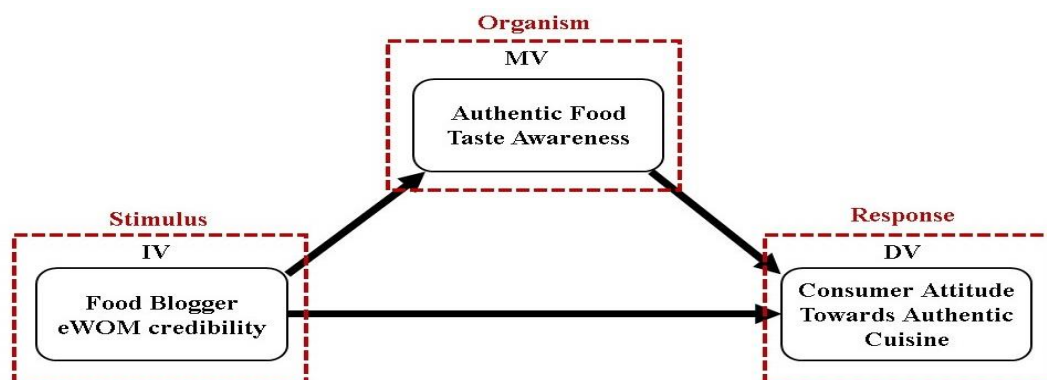


Figure 3: Research Conceptual Framework

Hypotheses Development

H1: Food blogger eWOM positively influence Authentic Food Taste Awareness.

H2: Food blogger eWOM positively influence Consumer Attitude towards Authentic Cuisine.

H3: Authentic Food Taste Awareness positively influence Consumer Attitude towards Authentic Cuisine

H4: Authentic Food Taste Awareness positivity mediates the relationship between Food blogger eWOM and Consumer Attitude towards Authentic Cuisine.

Population

A population is a group of people who share a common set of characteristics (Banerjee & Chaudhury, 2010). In this research, the target population is a group that consists of restaurants' customers of food bloggers' followers in Saudi Arabia. Convenience sampling was employed because of the rarity of statistics on the target group.

Research instrument

A self-administrative questionnaire is the primary research instrument used in this study to examine the association between each variable. One of the most popular tools for collecting data in the survey method is the questionnaire (Saunders et al., 2009). Because all respondents are required to complete the same set of questions, questionnaires are a helpful technique for gathering data from a large sample prior to performing quantitative analysis (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). The Likert 7-Point scale was used to improve the validity, reliability, and internal consistency.

The questionnaire items, which are included in Table 1 below, were taken from many earlier research and modified to make them appropriate for this investigation.

Construct	Item	Adopted from
Food blogger eWOM credibility	Information got from Food Bloggers is accurate	Aisha et. al, (2024)
	Information got from Food Bloggers is Credible	
	I follow food bloggers because of their advice and experience about restaurants in Saudi Arabia	
	Before selecting this restaurant, I search for food bloggers' reviews.	
Authentic Food Taste Awareness	The interior design reflected the authenticity of the restaurant	Wong & Baldwin (2018)
	I feel positive emotions when I visit authentic food restaurant	
	I feel that I learned about the Heritage Saudi culture when I visit authentic food restaurant	
Consumer Attitude Towards Authentic Cuisine	Positive eWOM from food blogger affect my decision to visit authentic food restaurant	Chen et. al, (2020)
	I recommend authentic food restaurants to my friends based on eWOM of food bloggers	
	I usually discover that eWOM of food bloggers are trustworthy after I visit the authentic restaurant	

Table 1: Questionnaire Items

Sample size

A sample is a subset of a larger population made up of individuals, objects, or things selected for evaluation (Mugo, 2002). This study used a self-administered questionnaire as its survey tool. The target population primarily focuses on participants who reside in Saudi Arabia. Ethnicity and gender are not barriers. We sincerely urged survey respondents to take part. An email containing a link to the web-based survey site and an explanation of the study's goals will be sent to Saudi Arabian food consumers and followers of food bloggers.

People who live in Saudi Arabia aged over 18 years were eligible to be included in this study. This study will use Raosoft sample size calculator to calculate the minimum required sample size because it achieves the needed confidence level with a margin of error of usually 5%. And it is strongly encouraged by McCrum-Gardner, E. (2010) when considering large population's size. By assuming that 50% of the population would have good information with a 5% margin of error and a confidence interval of 95%, the minimum sample size of 385 was determined as per formulas below:

$$X = Z(c/100) \sqrt{2r(100-r)}$$

$$n = N \times ((N-1) E^2 + x)$$

$$E = \sqrt{(N - n) \times n / (N - 1)}$$

Where:

N: Population size (Calculated as 20,000,000)

r: The fraction of responses

Z(c/100): The critical value for the confidence level (c)

Data Collection

The data collection process for this study was achieved by directly collecting from the field. Data was collected from the sample population through online survey which was distributed within Saudi food consumers and food bloggers' followers as mentioned above, electronically via social media different types of channels, such as, WhatsApp communities' groups, Facebook, Twitter and Snapchat.

Data Analysis

Smart-PLS version 4 was used in this study to examine and test the research model and hypotheses. A program called Smart-PLS uses the structural equation modeling (SEM) approach. One of the most popular statistical methods for simultaneously assessing correlations between several constructs represented by many variables is structural equation modeling (SEM) (Morin et al., 2020). The PLS-SEM method has been shown to be capable of handling challenging modeling problems, such as non-normal data or extremely complex models that are frequently seen in research (Hair et al., 2014). In addition, the PLS-SEM method provides a number of benefits for social science research, including its high effectiveness in handling complicated models, demonstrating the trustworthiness of dominating latent variables, and providing insightful evaluations of certain measurement models (Ghasemy et al., 2020). For this reason, Smart-PLS software, which uses a PLS-SEM approach, is considered suitable and selected for this investigation.

After running data on Smart-PLS, it was found that the model is reliable and valid as shown in Table.2 and Figure 4. According to Fornell and Larcker (1981), the acceptance criteria of loading factor is 0.7 or more, the acceptance criteria of Average Variance Extracted (AVE) is 0.5 or more, the acceptance criteria of Cronbach's alpha and Composite Reliability (CR) should be 0.7 or more.

Construct	Item	Loading	Cronbach's alpha	CR	AVE
Food blogger eWOM credibility (WOM)	Information got from Food Bloggers is accurate (WOM1)	0.828	0.812	0.814	0.640
	Information got from Food Bloggers is Credible (WOM2)	0.789			
	I follow food bloggers because of their advice and experience about	0.821			

	restaurants in Saudi Arabia (WOM3)				
	Before selecting this restaurant, I search for food bloggers' reviews (WOM4)	0.759			
Authentic Food Taste Awareness (AF)	The interior design reflected the authenticity of the restaurant (AF1)	0.839	0.767	0.770	0.682
	I feel positive emotions when I visit authentic food restaurant (AF2)	0.803			
	I feel that I learned about the Heritage Saudi culture when I visit authentic food restaurant (AF3)	0.836			
Consumer Attitude Towards Authentic Cuisine (CA)	Positive eWOM from food blogger affect my decision to visit authentic food restaurant (CA1)	0.798	0.756	0.757	0.672
	I recommend authentic food restaurants to my friends based on eWOM of food bloggers (CA2)	0.819			
	I usually discover that eWOM of food bloggers are trustworthy after I visit the authentic restaurant (CA3)	0.840			

Table 2: Cross Loading, Construct Reliability and Validity

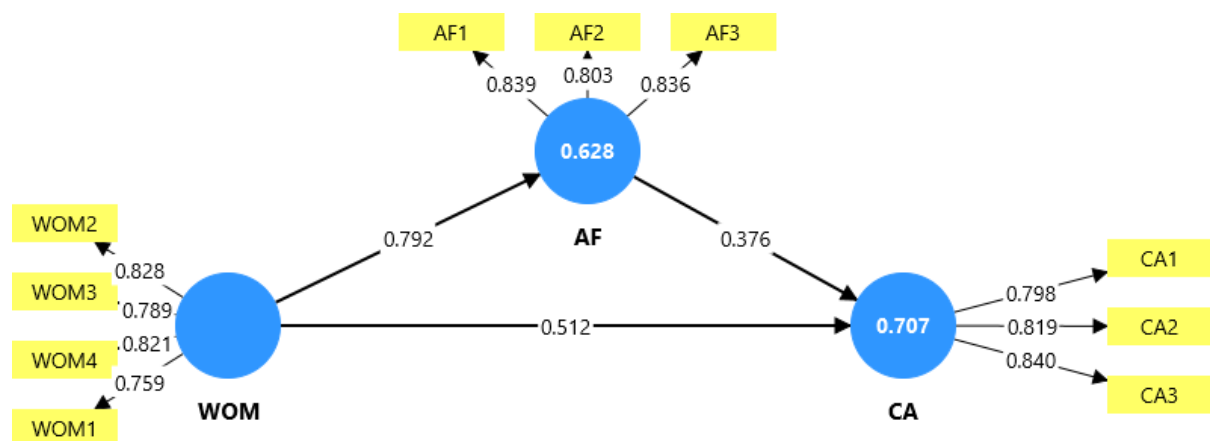


Figure 4: PLS Algorithm Measurement Model

As shown in Table 3, the result of the Fornell-Larcker criterion analysis indicates that the square root of the average variance extracted (numbers in bold) is higher than all the correlations between constructs, which can be decided the Fornell-Larcker criterion is met.

	AF	CA	WOM
AF	0.826		

CA	0.781	0.820	
WOM	0.792	0.809	0.800

Table 3: Result of Fornell-Larcker Analysis

Findings

In this study, the direct relationships between Food blogger eWOM credibility (WOM), Authentic Food Taste Awareness and Consumer Attitude Towards Authentic Cuisine were examined by using the following hypotheses:

H1: Food blogger eWOM positively influence Authentic Food Taste Awareness.

H2: Food blogger eWOM positively influence Consumer Attitude towards Authentic Cuisine.

H3: Authentic Food Taste Awareness positively influence Consumer Attitude towards Authentic Cuisine.

While the mediation effect of Authentic Food Taste Awareness was investigated by using the following hypothesis:

H4: Authentic Food Taste Awareness positivity mediates the relationship between Food blogger eWOM and Consumer Attitude towards Authentic Cuisine.

Figure 5 presents the above-mentioned relationships and hypotheses as well as their path coefficients in Smart-PLS software.

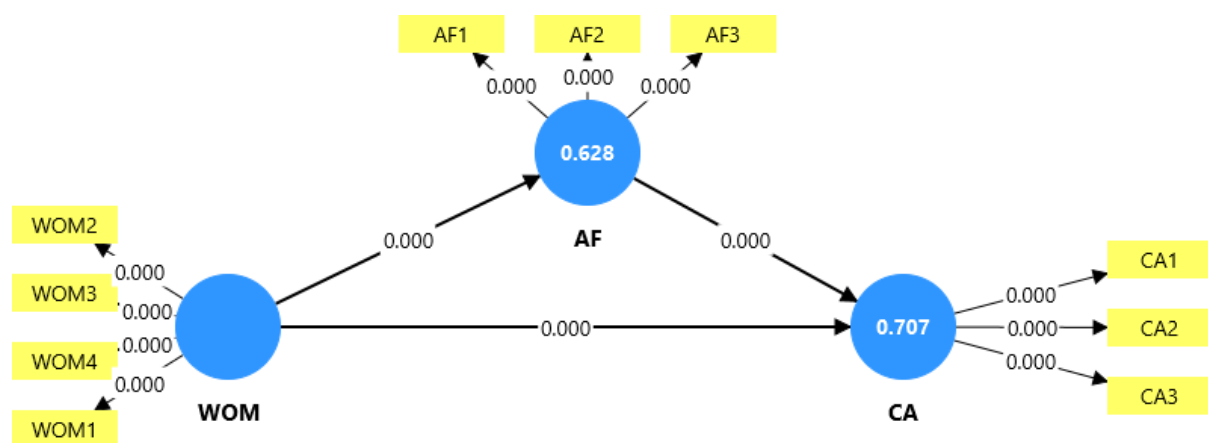


Figure 5: Path Coefficients in Smart-PLS

	Path Coefficients (β)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T-value	P-Values	Decision
AF -> CA	0.376	0.375	0.051	7.353	0.000	Supported
WOM -> AF	0.792	0.793	0.020	39.456	0.000	Supported
WOM -> CA	0.512	0.513	0.050	10.312	0.000	Supported

Table 4: Results of Direct Relationships Analysis

	Path Coefficients (β)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T-value	P-Values	Decision
WOM \rightarrow AF \rightarrow CA	0.298	0.297	0.042	7.152	0.000	Supported

Table 5: Results of Mediation Relationship Analysis

As shown in Figure 5 and Table 4, there were total three direct effects were tested by using two-tailed bootstrapping test, all hypotheses which are (H1,H2 and H3) were supported with reference to the criteria of two-tailed test which is: path coefficients (β) > 0, t-value > 1.65, p-values < 0.05. Also, the mediation effect which was represented by H4 was also supported as shown in Table 5.

Discussion

Conclusion

After employing Stimulus–Organism–Response (SOR) Model and Electronic Word of Mouth (eWOM) theory in this study, it was assumed that consumer attitude towards authentic Saudi cuisine and authentic food taste awareness could be positively influenced by the credibility of food bloggers' electronic word-of-mouth. This study also assumed the authentic food taste awareness could positively mediate the relationship between credibility of food bloggers' electronic word-of-mouth and consumer attitude towards authentic Saudi cuisine.

A sample size of 385 respondents was employed to investigate the relationships between the above-mentioned variables and the results showed that the credibility of eWOM of food bloggers in Saudi Arabia positively influence both authentic food taste awareness and consumer attitude towards authentic Saudi cuisine. Moreover, the results of this study showed that authentic food taste awareness positively mediates the relationship between credibility of food bloggers' electronic word-of-mouth and consumer attitude towards authentic Saudi cuisine

Implication of Study

Theoretically, this study combined between two theories which are Stimulus–Organism–Response (SOR) Model and Electronic Word of Mouth (eWOM) in one framework which enhanced their applications and contributed to understanding of them, especially in digital marketing field. So, this framework could be adopted by future researchers who are studying similar variables and relationships.

Practically, the results of this study could be adopted by digital marketing organizations in Saudi Arabia to train food bloggers and influencers on the credibility of their electronic Word of Mouth due to its effect on consumer attitude. Moreover, the results of this study could be

used by the government to promote the authentic Saudi cuisine within Saudi people or even tourists which contribute to achieve Saudi National Vision 2030.

Limitations and Further Research Directions

This study is applied on a wide range of population which may need to limit the population to include only certain range of age, degree of education, level of monthly income or certain region in Saudi Arabia because these factors may play vital roles in changing the study's results which gives more knowledge about the relationship between variables. Also, the sample used in this study includes only Saudi respondents while the results may differ in case the respondents were foreigners or expats.

So that, future researchers in similar subjects may focus on studying the effect of this study's relationships on tourists and include more variables related to tourism and hospitality industries in Saudi Arabia to investigate their effect of tourists' attitude towards Saudi Heritage and authentic cuisine.

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