






“Street food in digital era: Exploring the impact of social media reviews on consumer attitude and street food consumption intention”

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STREET FOOD IN DIGITAL ERA: EXPLORING THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA REVIEWS ON CONSUMER ATTITUDE AND STREET FOOD CONSUMPTION INTENTION

Abstract

The role of social media reviews in consumer food preferences is significant nowadays. Nevertheless, their impact on the informal markets of street foods in the developing economies has not been well explored. This study examines the effect of social media reviews on consumer perceptions and street food consumption intentions in Bangladesh, through an extended Technology Acceptance Model. A structured survey was conducted in Bangladesh because of the high rate of street food consumption and was administered using online and offline questionnaires to 411 street food consumers in February 2025. Respondents were selected through judgmental sampling, and quantitative results were analyzed using partial least squares–structural equation modeling in SmartPLS4. The result of the analysis reveals that Perceived Usefulness ($\beta = 0.149$, $p < 0.001$), Perceived Ease of Use ($\beta = 0.147$, $p < 0.008$), Source Credibility ($\beta = 0.289$, $p < 0.001$), and Information Quality ($\beta = 0.288$, $p < 0.001$) of social media reviews positively affect the customer Attitude and Street Food Consumption Intention significantly whereas Perceived Risk ($\beta = -0.118$, $p < 0.029$) has a negative impact. Also, Attitude ($\beta = 0.323$, $p < 0.001$) plays a key mediating role between these factors and consumption intention. These insights underscore the potential strength of social media in shaping consumer behavior among people towards Bangladeshi street food.

Keywords

street food, social media, reviews, attitude, consumption intention

JEL Classification

M31, D12, O33, L66

INTRODUCTION

The advent of digital technologies has profoundly changed social behavior, lifestyle, and cultural practices. Social media platforms have become primary spaces where consumers exchange experiences, evaluate products, and form purchasing orientations. The extensive use of social media, including Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, TikTok, and Twitter, has changed the nature of communication, allowed new forms of interaction, and reinforced the principles of personal and organizational discourse. The rapid increase in the number of people using social media across the globe has also reinforced the position of these media in daily life. Consequently, companies are communicating, branding, and engaging with the community via social media more (Verma & Grover, 2022). In particular, electronic word of mouth and online reviews have captured a niche as potentially decisive variables in determining customer attitudes and intentions to purchase.

Social media influences food choices, particularly through peer recommendations and influencer reviews. In the global food system, street food reflects local culture and contributes to employment generation and economic growth. The demand for street food is global, with far-reaching impacts on health, climate, social stability, environmental sustainability, and finance. In 2025, the street food market was valued at over 3.79 billion dollars and is projected to be over 7 billion dollars in 2029 in Bangladesh (Upturn, 2025). Rapid growth emphasizes the importance of understanding the factors affecting consumer decisions in this sector.

Although the role of social media and the rapid growth of the street-food industry cannot be denied, the mechanisms by which online reviews are activated and the attitudes and intentions towards street-food consumption change are not clearly outlined. Much of the existing literature has focused on the phenomenon of electronic word of mouth and Internet reviews in formal markets, such as hotels, cafes, and structured food service outlets; however, relatively limited empirical research has been conducted on how such dynamics apply in informal, out-of-context settings, such as street food stalls, particularly in developing countries like Bangladesh, where electronic activity is proliferating and the informal food economy is having a massive economic and cultural effect. Such a lack of context-specific evidence forms a salient scientific gap, which impairs our understanding of how digital influence acts in a setting of increased uncertainty, variability in quality, and perceived risk in the informal food setting. Consequently, the knowledge gap creates practical barriers to the development of effective marketing and communication guidelines and evidence-based policy interventions to enhance consumer confidence and further the sustainable growth of the street food industry.

1. LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES

As social media increasingly shapes consumer preferences and purchase decisions in food-related sectors, understanding the factors behind this influence becomes essential. Social media influences customer behavior across industries, particularly in the food sector. Previous research demonstrates that social media networks allow consumers and marketers to communicate and exchange reviews, photographs, and recommendations, which influence food preferences and intentions (Appel et al., 2020; Phang et al., 2013). These platforms are particularly important in informing food preferences of consumers, especially in the street food industry, through peer recommendations, influencer content, and user-generated reviews (Briliana et al., 2021). The impact of social media is not limited to street food but extends to the hospitality sector. For example, social network ratings have been discovered to be a better predictor of hotel performance than traditional satisfaction metrics (Simeone & Scarpato, 2020), while in cafes and restaurants, electronic word-of-mouth influences the decision-making of younger consumers, especially those in Generation Z and Millennials (Vita et al., 2021).

In the street food context, visual platforms play an important role in influencing customer attitudes. Previous studies indicate that consumer trust and purchase intentions depend greatly on the credibility and quality of online information (Song et al., 2021, as cited in Bhagat et al., 2024). Research conducted in regions such as North India, Indonesia, Jakarta, and Hanoi has also shown that perceived value, authenticity, and source credibility contribute to positive attitudes towards street food vendors (Briliana et al., 2021; Vita et al., 2021; Mai & Binh, 2023). All these findings highlight the significance of social media content that is credible and of high quality in influencing the attitudes and interests of consumers in consuming street foods.

Digital marketing strategies, including social media reviews, can have a substantial impact on consumer buying intention. For example, a cross-sectional study in Hanoi, based on the Theory of Planned Behavior, discovered that subjective norms, social media, and perceived behavioral control are important predictors of street food consumption (Mai & Binh, 2023). Similar findings from the fast-food industry suggest that digital marketing approaches can also shape consumers' street food consumption behavior (Ali-Alsaadi et al., 2023).

Despite numerous studies on consumer attitudes, behaviors, and intentions regarding electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM), online reviews, and online social content, especially in the context of restaurants and hotels (Hasan & Rahman, 2023), existing studies have predominantly investigated formal dining or luxurious food contexts. In Bangladesh, only one notable study by Popy and Bappy (2022) explored how social media reviews shape consumer attitudes and visit intentions towards restaurants. However, the fast-growing and culturally relevant domain of street food consumption remains unexplored.

As the consumption of street food continues to rise and digital platforms expand in Bangladesh, the nature of consumer attitudes and intentions towards street food, shaped by online reviews on social media, is a concerning issue that requires an empirical, contextualized study. This weakness in the literature does not support marketers, street vendors, and policymakers in developing effective communication strategies or interventions that resonate with consumer behavior. Hence, a more accurate reflection of the role of online reviews in affecting the consumption of street food is necessary to inform academic research and the practical implications of the food market in Bangladesh, which is rapidly growing with the influx of so-called street food.

This study employs the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), Davis et al. (1989), to forecast social network reviewers' attitudes and their corresponding behavioral intention. TAM originates from the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) and is conceptually related to the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), both of which contribute to the formation of behavioral intentions (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1977; Ajzen, 1991), both of which contribute to the formation of behavioral objectives (Hua et al., 2017). Consequently, this study explores the influence of attitude as an arbitrator between exogenous measurements and behavioral intentions.

The use of TAM constructs is well justified. First, the TAM dimensions, especially perceived ease of use and perceived effectiveness, have been shown to predict attitudes towards e-WOM and social media evaluations. Himel et al.'s (2021) and Kim's (2019) studies validate the significance of these constructs in forming customer engagement with

e-WOM, aligning with previous research (Erkan & Evans, 2016). Besides, recent studies have confirmed the dependability and predictive validity of the TAM model in digital contexts, including social networks (Rahaman et al., 2022; Alismaiel et al., 2022). While alternative constructs like consumer engagement have been examined, recent meta-analyses (Khan et al., 2023) suggest that engagement has a minimal direct effect on organizational outcomes through e-WOM. The TAM design remains a favored framework for forecasting the target constructs of this research because of its proven robustness and broad acceptance.

Furthermore, this study adds three constructs to the conventional TAM (source credibility, information quality, and perceived risk) to better understand consumer behavior in social media review contexts. Previous studies have reported that consumers' attitudes towards social media reviews depend on source credibility and information quality (Bhagat et al., 2024; Kang & Namkung, 2019; Popy & Bappy, 2022). Furthermore, perceived risk negatively affects customer attitudes and consumption intention (Zhang et al., 2024).

TAM is an established conceptual framework that analyzes and forecasts the nature of new technology adoption and use by people (Davis, 1989). TAM suggests that Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU) and Perceived Usefulness (PU) are the two primary criteria determining technology use (Zhong et al., 2021). PEOU indicates users' perceived ease of use and learnability, whereas PU indicates users' belief that using technology will improve their work performance or productivity (Al-Emran et al., 2020; Lin & Yu, 2023). Information Quality (IQ) is closely associated with TAM because of its influence on user behavior and technology adoption. Whereas TAM focuses on the usefulness and usability of technology, IQ targets the quality of the data that shapes people's perceptions of people (Machdar, 2019). The conceptual framework extends TAM by incorporating source credibility as an influential factor and provides a framework to understand how credible sources facilitate technology adoption. Source credibility significantly enhances acceptance when engaging with consumer-generated media, such as reviews and blogs (Ayeh et al., 2013). Figure 1 illustrates the conceptual framework of the study.

Perceived Usefulness (PU) denotes how a system or technology enhances performance or decision-making (Davis, 1989). In social media contexts, PU reflects how effectively users believe these platforms help them obtain valuable information to support their decision-making. Previous studies by Hua et al. (2017), Ing and Ming (2018), and Popy and Bappy (2022) confirm that PU plays a crucial role in shaping consumers' intentions and attitudes towards restaurant visits based on social media reviews.

PEOU is the belief that one can easily interact with any type of technological application (Davis et al., 1989). In social media contexts, PEOU refers to how easily a user can navigate any social media platform, access content, and interact with reviews without complications (Abang Othman et al., 2017). Previous studies (Davis et al., 1989; Hua et al., 2017; Popy & Bappy, 2022; Indarsin & Ali, 2017) confirm that higher PEOU fosters favorable attitudes towards social media and strengthens behavioral intention.

Source credibility refers to the trustworthiness and skills of the message sender (Wu & Wang, 2011). In the social media domain, it indicates the reliability and authority of influencers or reviewers. Previous studies (Ibrahim et al., 2024; Kang & Namkung, 2019) have shown that source credibility enhances consumer trust, reduces perceived risk, and influences consumers' behavioral intention.

Information Quality (IQ) refers to accuracy, clarity, relevance, and depth in social media reviews and significantly affects consumers' choices in street food consumption. The information acceptance model links IQ to correctness, consistency, comprehensiveness, and appropriateness. Prior research indicates that perceived IQ affects users' attitudes, excitement, performance expectancy, and behavioral intentions (Lee et al., 2019). In particular, a high IQ in social media feedback increases customers' discernment of the usefulness of e-WOM and restaurant visits (Popy & Bappy, 2022). Bhagat et al. (2024) also revealed that IQ directly drives customer attitudes and their intention to consume street food.

Perceived risk (PR) refers to a consumer's expectation of potential negative outcomes. Previous studies have shown that PR can negatively influ-

ence consumer attitudes towards using social media platforms and street foods. For instance, Zhang et al. (2024) revealed that different types of PR affect behavioral intention in various ways. Similarly, Zhang et al. (2024) provided empirical evidence that PR reduces positive attitudes towards social networking site use and the preparation of dishes. In Bangladesh, Salam (2019) also confirmed a similar negative effect on attitudes towards Internet banking.

Behavioral intention refers to an individual's likelihood of performing a specific action based on their attitude and perception (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2002). Perceived risk negatively influences consumer behavior in various contexts. For instance, purchases of suboptimal food (Zhong, 2024) and urban green agro food consumption intention (Xiao et al., 2023). Furthermore, several studies have demonstrated that perceived risk negatively influences prepared dish consumption intention, credit card use intention, and the intention to use Internet banking in Bangladesh (Salam, 2019; Xiao et al., 2023).

Models, including TRA, TPB, and TAM, use attitudes towards a product or action as a strong driver of behavioral intentions (Ajzen, 1991; Davis et al., 1989; Fishbein & Ajzen, 1977). Schiffman and Kanuk (2002) characterized attitude as a learned inclination to respond either positively or negatively towards a specific object, which may include products, brands, services, issues, websites, and information, among others. Hua et al. (2017) found that attitude towards social media positively influences trip destination choices in Malaysia. Additionally, studies have provided empirical support that attitude towards positive social media content published by bloggers can enhance consumers' buying intentions (Erkan & Evans, 2016; Grace & Ming, 2018).

Numerous studies have used attitude as a mediator to forecast the effect of numerous variables on behavioral intention (Koththagoda & Herath, 2018). Nagaraj (2021) found that attitude mediates purchase intention and food safety concerns. Besides, consumer attitude modulates the linkage between perceived behavioral control (PBC), subjective norm, religion, and the inten-

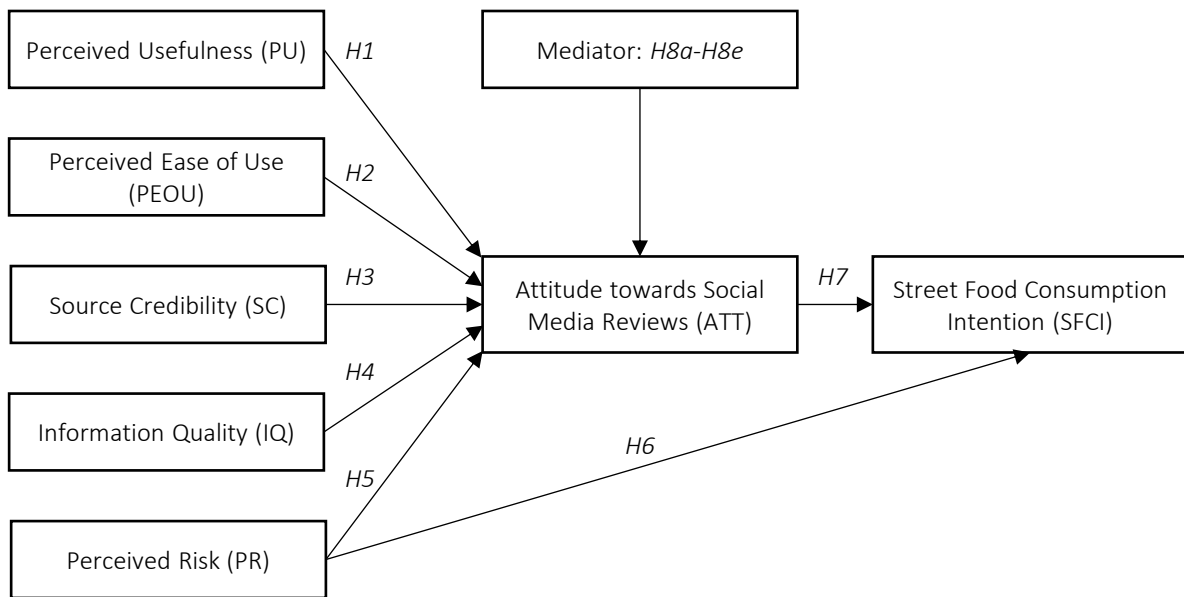


Figure 1. Conceptual framework

tion to eat Halal food when overseas, as reported by Hanafiah and Hamdan (2020). Additionally, Zaremohzzabieh et al. (2021) revealed that attitude mediates several variables. Junejo et al. (2022) found that attitude mediates various variables, including advertising appeal and brand emotions in the fast-food sector in Hyderabad, Pakistan.

In summary, the existing literature consistently demonstrates that digital engagement significantly influences consumer perceptions in the formal hospitality sector. However, there is a critical lack of empirical evidence regarding how these digital cues interact with the unique risk factors associated with informal street food markets in developing economies.

Therefore, this study aims to examine how social media reviews influence consumer attitudes and, in turn, street food consumption intention in Bangladesh using an extended Technology Acceptance Model.

The formulated hypotheses are based on the literature review as follows:

H1: Perceived Usefulness of social media reviews positively influences customers' Attitude towards Using Social Media Reviews for Street Food Consumption Intention.

H2: Perceived Ease of Use of social media reviews positively influences customers' Attitude towards Using Social Media Reviews for Street Food Consumption Intention.

H3: Source Credibility of social media reviews positively influences customers' Attitude towards Using Social Media Reviews for Street Food Consumption Intention.

H4: Information Quality positively influences street food customers' Attitude towards Using Social Media Reviews for buying street foods.

H5: Perceived Risk negatively influences customers' Attitudes towards Using Social Media Reviews.

H6: Perceived Risk negatively influences Street Food Consumption Intention.

H7: Favorable Attitude towards Social Media Reviews results in greater Street Food Consumption Intention.

H8: Attitude towards Utilizing Social Media Reviews acts as a mediator in linking between:

H8a: Perceived Usefulness of social media reviews and Street Food Consumption Intention.

H8b: Perceived Ease of Use of social media reviews and Street Food Consumption Intention.

H8c: Source Credibility in social media reviews and Street Food Consumption Intention.

H8d: Information Quality in social media reviews and Street Food Consumption Intention.

H8t: Perceived Risk in social media reviews and Street Food Consumption Intention.

from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Most measurement items were adopted from previously validated studies. The reliability of the constructs was assessed using composite reliability. Minor word modifications were made to align with the street food consumption context. All latent constructs demonstrated an Alpha value above 0.70. Four indicators measured PU, PEOU, and Attitude towards Social Media Reviews (ATT); five indicators assessed PR and Street Food Consumption Intention (SFCI); and three indicators measured IQ and Source Credibility (SC). The complete questionnaire is provided in Appendix A.

2. METHODOLOGY

This study used a descriptive cross-sectional design with a structured survey questionnaire. Data were drawn from respondents in a one-time wave to examine the association between variables. A pilot test with 20 participants evaluated reliability, and a feasibility study confirmed the suitability of the research procedures.

The latent constructs were assessed using a five-point Likert scale with response options ranging

A structured survey was conducted in February 2025, as it represents a peak period for outdoor street food consumption in Bangladesh, owing to favorable weather conditions, ensuring a high response rate from active consumers. Bangladesh was selected as the study context because of the high prevalence of street food consumption and the rapid growth of social media usage among consumers. Data were collected online through social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Messenger, and WhatsApp. Manual distribution

Table 1. Sample demographic description

Demographic variable	Description	Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	253	61.6
	Female	158	38.4
Age	18-22	121	29.4
	22-26	241	58.6
	26-30	26	6.3
	30-34	17	4.1
	34+	6	1.5
Level of education	Up to high school	16	3.9
	Intermediate	29	7.1
	Bachelor	299	72.7
	Master	67	16.3
Average monthly income	Less than 10,000	290	70.6
	10,000-20,000	73	17.8
	20,000-30,000	25	6.1
	30,000 and above	23	5.6
Monthly average expenditure on street food	Less than 500 taka	159	38.7
	500-1,000 taka	138	33.6
	1,000-1,500 taka	53	12.9
	1,500-2,000 taka	30	7.3
	2,000 and above	31	7.5
Time spent on social media per day	1-2 hours	35	8.5
	2-3 hours	81	19.7
	3-4 hours	94	22.9
	4-5 hours	87	21.2
	5+	114	27.7
Total		411	100

was conducted at major street food hubs and university campuses in Jashore and Dhaka to capture active consumers in real time.

A total of 723 questionnaires were distributed, and 470 were returned. After checking the responses, 59 questionnaires were removed due to respondents' incomplete or inconsistent answers. As a result, 411 valid responses were used for the final analysis. The demographic characteristics (see Table 1) revealed that 61.6% of the participants were men, compared to 38.4% of the women. Similarly, 58.6% of the participants were aged between 22 and 26 years, and most of the respondents (72.7%) had a Bachelor's degree. Most respondents (70.6%) had a monthly income of less than 10,000 taka, which justified the average income of the national citizens. Most respondents (80.30%) reported using social media for more than 2 hours daily. Thus, the demographic profiles of the respondents were perfectly aligned with the intended objectives of the study.

Non-probability judgmental sampling was applied, as the study specifically targeted social media users who search for or view food-related information. This approach was considered appropriate because the research required respondents who had prior exposure to social media reviews related to street food. University students, particularly those in the 18-26 age segment, comprised the larger portion of the sample, and their presence on social media is particularly high (Kim, 2019). The sample size was 411, which exceeded the number of respondents calculated using Cochran's formula (1977) for an infinite population, ensuring cost-effectiveness, accessibility, and time efficiency (Malhotra, 2020), for examining the conceptual model (Hulland et al., 2018). The data were collected exclusively for this study and have not been used in any parallel or prior publications.

This study involved human participants and strictly followed ethical research principles. The interaction was voluntary. The respondents provided informed consent, were assured anonymity and confidentiality, and were informed of the academic intent of the research before data collection. No personal identifiable information was collected. As the research was not invasive and was conducted in the form of a questionnaire, formal approval from an institutional ethics committee was not required.

The researchers utilized Microsoft Excel 2019 for data entry and screening. SPSS version 25 was employed for the demographic profile. The validity and reliability of the items and the underlying constructs in our conceptual framework were assessed by conducting a confirmatory factor analysis. The SmartPLS4 software was used for the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) analysis, as it is helpful for multivariate data analysis with non-normal data from a smaller sample size (Himel et al., 2021).

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The data were analyzed using PLS-SEM with SmartPLS4. PLS-SEM is ideal when latent constructs are unobservable variables estimated using observational items, which are a vital component of a questionnaire (Ndassi Teutio et al., 2023), as in this study. Besides, Dayour et al. (2020) found PLS-SEM appropriate for studies aiming to extend existing structural theories, and that in line with the study's aim. Compared with CB-SEM, where common variance is used to estimate statistical model parameters, PLS-SEM uses the estimation of total variance. There are a few other benefits of PLS-SEM compared to CB-SEM because it can be used to investigate complicated models and lacks the assumption of normal data. Stress-power and PLS-SEM are more prevalent as a causal-predictive form and exploratory study than that of CB-SEM (Hair et al., 2019; Shaheen et al., 2023). PLS-SEM accommodates the mediation effect more than regression analysis (Hair et al., 2019) and hence, using PLS-SEM resulted from the existence of a mediating variable in the proposed study model. When estimating our model, we were guided by the suggestions made by Hair et al. (2019).

Common method bias arises when researchers rely on a single method to collect data. To address this, researchers often conduct full collinearity assessments, as the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) method was revealed to be more robust in the identification of common method bias in the data (Kock, 2015). Following these recommendations, a full collinearity test was applied (see Table 2), and the results revealed that the VIF value against all items remained less than the maximum recommended

value of 3.3. Hence, there was no issue related to common method bias in the data.

After data collection and preliminary filtering, we computed the cross-construct and within-construct STDEV for each response in an attempt to deal with the straight-lining issue. We found no straight-line bias, as the STDEV against the responses was greater than 0.25. Factor loadings were then analyzed using the Partial Least Squares (PLS) algorithm (see Figure 2); all 28 items were heavily loaded into their respective constructs with a factor loading threshold value of 0.708, which is above the recommended minimum factor loading threshold value of 0.708 (Henseler et al., 2015).

Reliability of the scale was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability (CR) values, which exceeded the recommended threshold value of 0.70 for all components (Hair Jr et al., 2017). Besides, the CR value remained higher than

that of the Cronbach's Alpha value. Thus, the reliability of the scale was established (see Table 2).

To establish the scale's validity, face and content validity were verified with five experts in the relevant academic field, and slight modifications in the wording were made based on their reviews. Convergent validity, measured by the Average Variance Extracted (AVE), revealed an AVE value that remained above the minimum recommended threshold value of 0.5 (Hair Jr et al., 2017) for all constructs, confirming no issues (see Table 2).

Discriminant validity was tested and verified in three stages. First, the HTMT ratio (see Table 3) between all constructs remained below the maximum recommended value of 0.85 (Kline, 2011; Watson et al., 1995). Second, we employed Fornell and Larcker's (1981) criterion, and the variance among all model constructs was well below the variance within the construct (see Table 4). Finally, no cross-loading issues were observed, as none of

Table 2. Factor loadings, reliability, validity, and multicollinearity diagnostics

Latent variable	Item description	Outer loadings	Cronbach's Alpha	CR	AVE	VIF
Perceived Usefulness	PU1	0.780	0.816	0.877	0.641	1.651
	PU2	0.785				1.735
	PU3	0.787				1.685
	PU4	0.848				1.668
Perceived Ease of Use	PEOU1	0.833	0.865	0.908	0.711	2.118
	PEOU2	0.841				2.178
	PEOU3	0.855				2.082
	PEOU4	0.843				1.965
Source Credibility	SC1	0.750	0.768	0.866	0.683	1.435
	SC2	0.884				1.884
	SC3	0.840				1.631
Information Quality	IQ1	0.797	0.746	0.855	0.663	1.456
	IQ2	0.807				1.480
	IQ3	0.838				1.538
Perceived Risk	PR1	0.771	0.838	0.885	0.607	1.674
	PR2	0.829				2.080
	PR3	0.778				1.736
	PR4	0.783				1.769
	PR5	0.732				1.508
Attitude towards Social Media Reviews	ATT1	0.722	0.782	0.860	0.606	1.432
	ATT2	0.808				1.789
	ATT3	0.735				1.537
	ATT4	0.843				1.811
Street Food Consumption Intentions	SFCI1	0.788	0.861	0.899	0.641	1.980
	SFCI2	0.815				2.080
	SFCI3	0.781				1.815
	SFCI4	0.815				2.004
	SFCI5	0.806				1.877

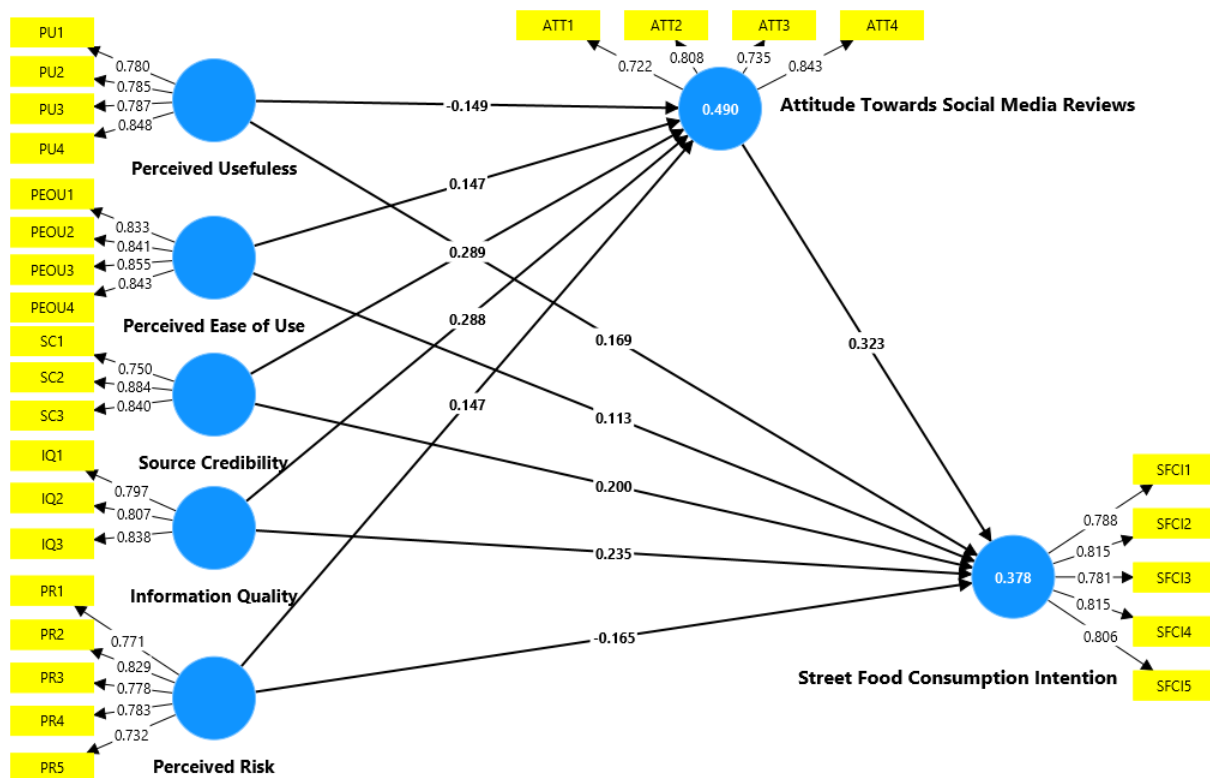


Figure 2. Measurement model estimation (PLS algorithm)

Table 3. Discriminant validity – Heterotrait-Monotrait ratio (HTMT) matrix

Variable	ATT	IQ	PEOU	PR	PU	SC
IQ	0.680					
PEOU	0.584	0.486				
PR	0.430	0.192	0.491			
PU	0.496	0.263	0.482	0.415		
SC	0.679	0.596	0.425	0.208	0.371	
SFCI	0.581	0.593	0.335	0.067	0.085	0.528

Table 4. Discriminant validity – Fornell-Larcker criterion

Variable	ATT	IQ	PEOU	PR	PU	SC	SFCI
ATT	0.778						
IQ	0.528	0.814					
PEOU	0.482	0.392	0.843				
PR	0.349	0.151	0.418	0.779			
PU	-0.408	-0.211	-0.416	-0.345	0.800		
SC	0.536	0.446	0.340	0.160	-0.299	0.826	
SFCI	0.482	0.479	0.290	0.004	-0.062	0.439	0.801

the factor loadings significantly loaded on other constructs other than their relevant construct (Chin, 1998). This led to the conclusion that our scale contained significant discriminant validity.

Structural model estimation involved five independent variables: PU, PEOU, SC, IQ, and PR, whereas attitude towards social media reviews was considered a mediator and street food consump-

tion intention a dependent variable. The PLS-SEM approach attempted to maximize the explained variance (R^2) of the endogenous variable. The understanding of explained variance is grounded in the references of Cohen (1988), who considers R^2 value of 0.26, 0.13, and 0.02 as substantial, moderate, and weak. value of both endogenous variables, “Attitude towards Social Media Reviews” and “Street Food Consumption Intention,” remained

0.490 and 0.378, respectively (see Table 5), indicating the substantial explanatory power of the model. Further, the PLS prediction analysis revealed Q^2 predict values of 0.468 for “Attitude towards Social Media Reviews” and 0.298 for “Street Food Consumption Intention,” both above zero, showcasing adequate predictive relevance; hence, the model has substantial predictive relevance (Hair Jr et al., 2017).

3.1. Hypotheses Testing

The inner model estimation began with the estimation of total effects without mediation, including 11 effects (see Figure 3), and the results revealed that the PU effect on ATT ($H1$) was significant (β : -0.149 , t : 3.177, p : 0.001). The effect of PEOU on ATT ($H2$) was also significant (β : 0.147, t : 2.664, p : 0.008). Similarly, the SC effect on ATT ($H3$) was significant (β : 0.289, t : 5.884, p : 0.000), as was $H4$, that is, the IQ effect on ATT (β : 0.288, t : 5.829, p : 0.000). The effect of PR on ATT ($H5$) was also substantial (β : -0.147 , t : 2.980, p : 0.003), as was $H6$,

Table 5. Structural model: hypothesized total effects

Path	β	STDEV	t-value	p-value	Bias-corrected confidence intervals		Decision	R^2	Q^2
					2.50%	97.50%			
$H1$: PU→ATT	0.149	0.047	3.177	0.001*	0.242	0.057	Supported	0.490	0.468
$H2$: PEOU→ATT	0.147	0.055	2.664	0.008*	0.036	0.252	Supported		
$H3$: SC→ATT	0.289	0.049	5.884	0.000*	0.189	0.382	Supported		
$H4$: IQ→ATT	0.288	0.049	5.829	0.000*	0.190	0.383	Supported		
$H5$: PR→ATT	-0.147	0.049	2.980	0.003*	-0.049	0.242	Supported		
PU→SFCI	0.121	0.048	2.502	0.012**	0.027	0.217	Supported	0.378	0.298
PEOU→SFCI	0.161	0.057	2.823	0.005*	0.047	0.271	Supported		
SC→SFCI	0.293	0.055	5.312	0.000*	0.181	0.397	Supported		
IQ→SFCI	0.328	0.061	5.344	0.000*	0.205	0.447	Supported		
$H6$: PR→SFCI	-0.118	0.054	2.190	0.029**	-0.222	-0.012	Supported		
$H7$: ATT→SFCI	0.323	0.063	5.120	0.000*	0.189	0.440	Supported		

Note: * significant at 0.01, ** significant at 0.05.

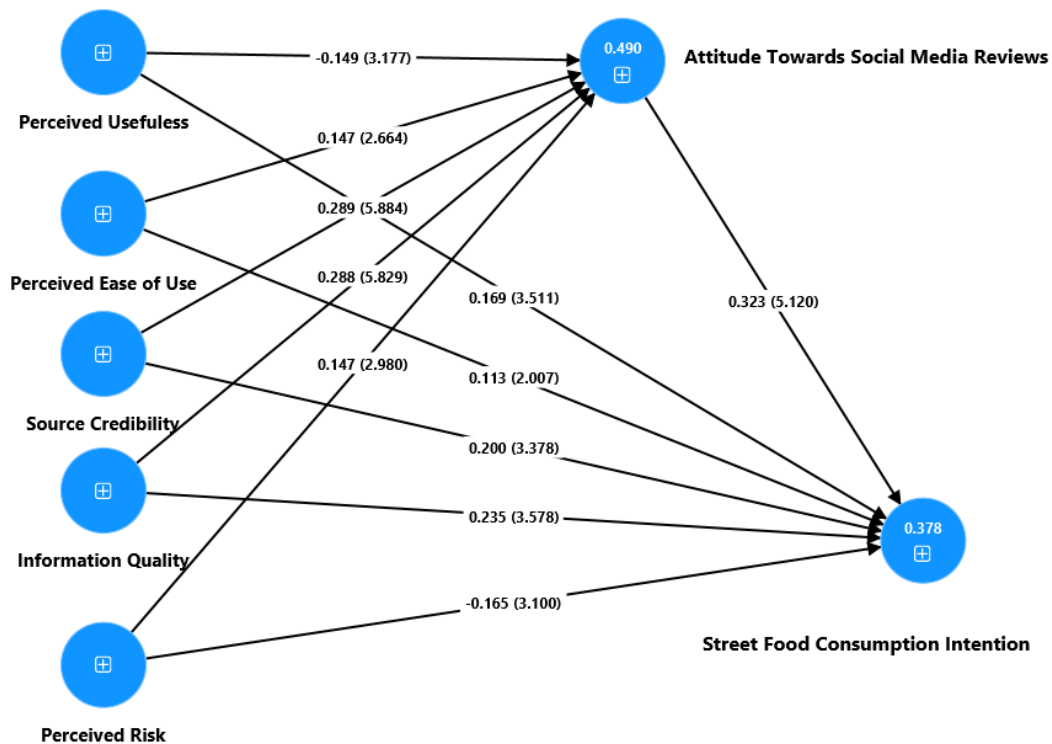


Figure 3. Structural model estimation (at 10,000 sample bootstrap)

that is, the PR effect on SFCI (β : -0.118, t : 2.190, p : 0.029). Finally, *H7*, the effect of ATT on SFCI, was substantial (β : 0.323, t : 5.120, p : 0.000). In addition to these hypothesized effects, researchers also assessed other direct effects without mediation present in the model, including PU on SFCI (β : 0.121, t : 2.502, p : 0.012), PEOU on SFCI (β : 0.161, t : 2.823, p : 0.000), SC on SFCI (β : 0.293, t : 5.312, p : 0.000), and IQ on SFCI (β : 0.328, t : 5.344, p : 0.000), all of which were significant. Further, given the revealed path coefficient values in Table 5, which revealed that SC contributed most to ATT, whereas IQ was the major contributor to SFCI, with these path coefficients and significance supporting the hypothesized effect, indicating strong model quality (Chin, 1998; Duarte & Amaro, 2018).

As presented in the model, our structural assessment included five mediation effects, including Perceived Usefulness (PU), Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU), Source Credibility (SC), Information Quality (IQ), and Perceived Risk (PR) on Street Food Consumption Intention (SFCI) through attitude towards social media reviews (ATT) was analyzed (*H8a-H8e*). In Table 6, the mediation effect of perceived usefulness on SFCI through ATT is significant (β = -0.048, t = 2.584, p < 0.010). Total effect (β = 0.121, t = 2.502, p = 0.012) and direct effect of perceived usefulness on SFCI in the presence of ATT (mediator) is still significant (β = 0.169, t = 3.511, p = 0.000). According to the set criteria by Hair Jr et al. (2017), which illustrates that when specific indirect effect is significant while direct effect in the mediator is also found significant, this shows partial mediation effect, hence complimentary partial mediation of ATT between perceived usefulness and SFCI is observed. Similarly, the mediation effect of perceived ease of use on SFCI through ATT (*H8b*) is significant (β = 0.048, t = 2.293, p = 0.022), with total effect (β = 0.161, t = 2.823, p = 0.005) and direct effect (β = 0.113, t = 2.007, p = 0.045) confirming partial mediation role of ATT between perceived ease of use and SFCI as per Hair Jr et al. (2017) criteria. The mediation effect of source credibility on SFCI through ATT (*H8c*) is significant (β = 0.094, t = 3.628, p = 0.000), along with total effect (β = 0.293, t = 5.312, p = 0.000) and direct effect (β = 0.200, t = 3.378, p = 0.001), partial mediation is observed. The specific indirect effect of information quality on SFCI through ATT (*H8d*) is also significant (β

= 0.093, t = 4.115, p = 0.000), with the total effect (β = 0.328, t = 5.344, p = 0.000) and direct effect (β = 0.235, t = 3.578, p = 0.000) supporting partial mediation. Finally, the specific indirect effect of perceived risk on SFCI through ATT (*H8e*) is significant (β = -0.047, t = 2.619, p = 0.009), along with significant total effect (β = -0.118, t = 2.190, p = 0.029) and direct effect (β = -0.165, t = 3.110, p = 0.002), confirming partial mediation. The findings revealed that all our hypotheses involving mediation effects, *H8a*, *H8b*, *H8c*, *H8d*, and *H8e*, are accepted.

Sarstedt et al. (2020) argue that linearity issues affect the exogenous variable effect through both magnitude and value. To address this nonlinear effect, we performed quadratic effect estimations, as recommended by Sarstedt et al. (2020), and found no significant quadratic effects in our model (Table 6), indicating no linearity issues.

This study included seven latent constructs in the model, five (PU, PEOU, SC, IQ, and PR) serving as independent variables, while ATT served as a mediator and SFCI served as a dependent variable. The initial estimation of our measurement model ensured its reliability and validity, and common method bias was assessed through full collinearity, indicating no bias. The quality of the structural model was assessed through the estimation of total effects without mediation, and some hypothesized effects were also assessed. All proposed paths were significant with path coefficients of > 0.1, which depicts good inner model quality, as recommended by Chin (2010).

The findings indicate that the perceived usefulness (PU), perceived ease of use (PEOU), and the Source Credibility (SC) positively affect the consumer attitude (ATT), which proves *H1*, *H2*, and *H3*. The results align with the results of earlier research by Prastiawan et al. (2021), Sari et al. (2022), Kumar et al. (2023), and Zhang and Cheng (2024) which suggest that consumers develop positive attitudes toward social media reviews when the information is useful, easily accessible, and provided by credible sources. Information quality (IQ) has also been found to play a positive role in attitude, supporting *H4*, showing that the quality and relevance of online information influence the evaluation of street food choices by consumers.

Table 6. Mediation analysis

Total effects			Direct effect			Hypothesis	Indirect effect						Decision
β	t-value	p-values	β	t-value	p-values		β	Standard deviation	t-value	p-values	Bias corrected confidence interval		
											Upper	Lower	
0.121	2.502	0.012**	0.169	3.511	0.000*	<i>H8a</i> : PU → ATT → SFCI	0.048	0.019	2.584	0.010*	-0.090	-0.017	Supported
0.161	2.823	0.005*	0.113	2.007	0.045**	<i>H8b</i> : PEOU → ATT → SFCI	0.048	0.021	2.293	0.022**	0.011	0.092	Supported
0.293	5.312	0.000*	0.200	3.378	0.001*	<i>H8c</i> : SC → ATT → SFCI	0.094	0.026	3.628	0.000*	0.048	0.150	Supported
0.328	5.344	0.000*	0.235	3.578	0.000*	<i>H8d</i> : IQ → ATT → SFCI	0.093	0.023	4.115	0.000*	0.054	0.142	Supported
-0.118	2.190	0.029	-0.165	3.100	0.002*	<i>H8e</i> : PR → ATT → SFCI	-0.047	0.018	2.619	0.009*	0.015	0.087	Supported

Note: * significant at 0.01, ** significant at 0.05.

Table 7. Quadratic effect assessment for linearity

Path	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	t-value	p-values
QE (PU) → ATT	0.011	0.006	0.028	0.389	0.697*
QE (PU) → SFCI	0.073	0.075	0.048	1.521	0.132*
QE (PEOU) → ATT	0.059	0.058	0.035	1.696	0.090*
QE (PEOU) → SFCI	0.066	0.064	0.035	1.859	0.063*
QE (SC) → ATT	0.015	0.013	0.029	0.536	0.592*
QE (SC) → SFCI	0.044	0.046	0.034	1.287	0.198*
QE (IQ) → ATT	0.078	0.103	0.800	1.592	0.115*
QE (IQ) → SFCI	0.029	0.030	0.038	0.761	0.447*
QE (PR) → ATT	-0.072	-0.077	0.047	1.532	0.129*
QE (PR) → SFCI	-0.005	-0.006	0.034	0.138	0.890*
QE (ATT) → SFCI	0.069	0.066	0.045	1.533	0.129*

Note: * insignificant effect.

Conversely, Perceived Risk (PR) had a negative impact on Attitude (*H5*), which is in line with Utama et al. (2022) and negatively influenced Street Food Consumption Intention (SFCI) (*H6*), which is in line with Fanea-Ivanovici and Baber (2021). This means that food safety or the trustworthiness of information online might make consumers not trust social media reviews. Moreover, the attitude played a significant positive role in influencing the intention to consume street foods (*H7*), which confirms the results of Singh and Shah (2024), and the positive perception of social media reviews can be converted to stronger consumption intentions. Besides, some non-hypothesized relationships were also found to be positive and significant, such as the effects of PU, PEOU, SC, and IQ on SFCI, demonstrating that social media review characteristics can directly affect consumer intentions, in addition to indirectly affecting them through attitude.

The significant associations among the variables highlight important aspects. First, perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use of social media reviews increase users' consumption of them. Second, source credibility level and information quality significantly affect attitudes towards social media reviews. Third, perceived risk negatively affects attitudes towards social media reviews. Furthermore, PU, PEOU, SC, and IQ were positively associated with Street Food Consumption Intentions, whereas Perceived Risk decreased Street Food Consumption Intentions.

A mediation analysis was conducted to verify the role of Attitude (ATT). The findings suggest that ATT is a strong mediator between the independent variables and Street Food Consumption Intention (SFCI). In particular, ATT is a substantial mediator between Perceived Usefulness (PU),

SFCI (*H8a*), Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU) and SFCI (*H8b*), Source Credibility (SC) and SFCI (*H8c*), Information Quality (IQ) and SFCI (*H8d*), and Perceived Risk (PR) and SFCI (*H8e*). These results indicate that consumers' attitudes towards reviews on social media can be very important in converting the perception of online information into a tangible consumption intention. The findings align with those of Palau-Saumell et al. (2021), Hasan (2022), Walten and Wiedmann (2023), Najib et al. (2022), and Cabeza-Ramírez et al. (2022), who also identified the mediating role of attitude. The serial mediation results indicated a significant mediating effect of attitude towards social media reviews between PU, PEOU, SC, IQ, and SFCI. The model demonstrates substantial explanatory power (R^2) and predictive power (Q^2) was moderated, indicating substantial explanatory power.

This study enhances our understanding of how attitudes towards social media affect the intention to purchase street foods in Bangladesh, a developing nation in South Asia. By applying and expanding the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) to encompass variables such as source credibility, perceived risk, and information quality, this study fills the literature gap, which usually focuses on developed economies. The research also provides practical data to street food vendors, such as the necessity to convey meaningful and personalized information on social media to enhance customer perception. Vendors can gain influence and persuade consumers to make a purchase by ensuring that the information they post is credible and that they manage consumer risks. Cooperation with reputable food bloggers or social media influencers can also enhance positive word-of-mouth, which will help attract more customers and increase sales.

CONCLUSION

The study aims to examine the effect of social media reviews on consumer attitudes and street food consumption intentions in Bangladesh using a modified Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) with source credibility, perceived risk, and information quality. The results indicate that perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, source credibility, and information quality have a favorable influence on attitudes, and perceived risk influences them negatively. Attitude is a strong predictor of consumption intentions and partially mediates between all the antecedents and intention. The contribution of the study is in generalizing the TAM to an emerging market and providing practical recommendations on how lever-

aging trustworthy, high-quality social media content can effectively encourage street food consumption and enhance consumer engagement. Social media is demonstrated as a significant source of behavioral change towards the street food industry, with implications for other regional or similar markets worldwide. Future research should explore a longitudinal or cross-cultural design that analyzes the shift in consumer attitudes towards street food. Adding variables, such as engagement, brand image, or sustainability, to the model may provide insights towards a richer outcome.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

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APPENDIX A. SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

Personal details of the respondent(s): Please indicate your appropriate choice by placing a tick (☑) in the box:

Table A1. Personal details of the respondent(s)

No.	Demographic variable	Description	
1	Name		
2	Gender	Male	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Female	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Age	18-22	<input type="checkbox"/>
		22-26	<input type="checkbox"/>
		26-30	<input type="checkbox"/>
		30-34	<input type="checkbox"/>
		34+	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Level of education	Up to high school	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Intermediate	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Bachelor	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Master	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Average monthly income	Less than 10,000	<input type="checkbox"/>
		10,000-20,000	<input type="checkbox"/>
		20,000-30,000	<input type="checkbox"/>
		30,000 and above	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	Monthly average expenditure on street food	Less than 500	<input type="checkbox"/>
		500-1,000	<input type="checkbox"/>
		1,000-1,500	<input type="checkbox"/>
		1,500-2,000	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	Time spend on social media per day	2,000 and above	<input type="checkbox"/>
		1-2 h	<input type="checkbox"/>
		2-3 h	<input type="checkbox"/>
		3-4 h	<input type="checkbox"/>
		4-5 h	<input type="checkbox"/>
		5+	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement by ticking (☐) ONE that corresponds to your answer (5 = strongly agree, 4 = agree, 3 = neutral, 2 = disagree, 1 = strongly disagree).

Table A2. Constructs

Constructs	Items	Statement	
Perceived Usefulness (PU)	PU1	Social media reviews and recommendations enhance my knowledge about street food	<input type="checkbox"/>
	PU2	I find social media reviews to be a useful source of information about street food	<input type="checkbox"/>
	PU3	Social media reviews help me better understand street food options	<input type="checkbox"/>
	PU4	Reading social media reviews improves my ability to evaluate street food choices	<input type="checkbox"/>
Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU)	PEOU1	Finding street food reviews on social media is easy	<input type="checkbox"/>
	PEOU2	I can quickly access street food reviews through social media	<input type="checkbox"/>
	PEOU3	Using social media to gather information about street food is convenient	<input type="checkbox"/>
	PEOU4	Social media allows me to evaluate street food options effortlessly	<input type="checkbox"/>
Source Credibility (SC)	SC1	Social media reviews about street food are credible	<input type="checkbox"/>
	SC2	Social media reviews about street food are trustworthy	<input type="checkbox"/>
	SC3	Social media reviews about street food are believable	<input type="checkbox"/>
Attitude Towards Social Media Reviews (ATT)	ATT1	I have a positive attitude towards street food reviews on social media	<input type="checkbox"/>
	ATT2	I enjoy sharing my street food experiences with others on social media	<input type="checkbox"/>
	ATT3	I like learning about others' street food experiences through social media	<input type="checkbox"/>
	ATT4	I trust the information provided in social media reviews about street food	<input type="checkbox"/>

Table A2 (cont.). Constructs

Constructs	Items	Statement	
Information Quality (IQ)	IQ1	Reviews about street food on social media are clear	<input type="checkbox"/>
	IQ2	Street food review posts on social media are easy to understand	<input type="checkbox"/>
	IQ3	Social media provides high-quality recommendations for street food	<input type="checkbox"/>
Perceived Risk (PR)	PR1	I am concerning that consuming street food may causes me to health risks such as food poisoning	<input type="checkbox"/>
	PR2	I am concerned that street food vendors may not follow proper hygiene and food safety practices	<input type="checkbox"/>
	PR3	I feel that the quality and freshness of ingredients used in street food are unreliable	<input type="checkbox"/>
	PR4	I believe that consuming street food contributes to environmental issues, such as excessive waste and pollution	<input type="checkbox"/>
	PR5	I sometimes feel hesitant to eat street food due to concerns about cleanliness and public perception	<input type="checkbox"/>
Street Food Consumption Intention (SFCI)	SFCI1	I intend to visit street foods in the upcoming days	<input type="checkbox"/>
	SFCI2	I plan to visit street food within one month	<input type="checkbox"/>
	SFCI3	I predict that I would visit street foods recommended by the social media reviews	<input type="checkbox"/>
	SFCI4	I will intend to pay more for street foods	<input type="checkbox"/>
	SFCI5	I will encourage my friends and families purchase to street foods	<input type="checkbox"/>

Note: 5 = strongly agree, 4 = agree, 3 = neutral, 2 = disagree, 1 = strongly disagree.