

TIKTOK CONTENT INFLUENCE ON TRADITIONAL FOOD CONSUMPTION INTENTIONS

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ABSTRACT

The rapid growth of TikTok has transformed the way consumers discover, evaluate, and develop interest in food products and culinary experiences. Short-form videos featuring traditional foods can present recipes, preparation methods, cultural stories, visual attractiveness, restaurant experiences, and recommendations to large audiences within a short period of time. This study examines the influence of TikTok content on consumers' intentions to consume traditional foods. The study focuses on important characteristics of TikTok food content, including content attractiveness, authenticity, informativeness, entertainment, influencer credibility, and cultural representation, and considers how these factors may shape consumers' attitudes and consumption intentions. Recent research indicates that social-media food content can affect food-related attitudes and intentions, while research specifically examining TikTok and culinary heritage suggests that digital platforms can simultaneously promote traditional food heritage and commercial interest in local foods.) Research on TikTok food influencers has also reported relationships between memorable culinary experiences, influencer endorsement, and behavioral intentions in the Pakistani food-tourism context) Therefore, the present study proposes that engaging and credible TikTok content may increase consumers' awareness, interest, perceived attractiveness, and intention to consume traditional foods. The study adopts a quantitative research approach and a descriptive, cross-sectional research design. Data can be collected through a structured questionnaire from TikTok users who regularly view food-related content. The findings are expected to provide useful insights for traditional food producers, restaurants, culinary businesses, tourism organizations, and researchers interested in digital food marketing and cultural food heritage.

KEYWORDS: TikTok, traditional food, consumption intention, food content, social media, food influencers, culinary heritage, consumer behavior, digital marketing, cultural food.

INTRODUCTION

Social media has become an important part of contemporary consumer behavior, particularly in the way people discover and evaluate food products. Platforms based on visual and short-form content allow consumers to observe food preparation, presentation, reviews, restaurant visits, recipes, and cultural food experiences before deciding whether they want to try a particular food. Among these platforms, TikTok has developed into an important space for food-related communication because its short videos combine visual presentation, music, narration, user interaction, recommendations, and algorithmic content distribution. Food-related videos can therefore expose consumers to traditional dishes that they may not previously have known about. This development is particularly relevant to traditional foods because these foods are connected not only with taste but also with culture, family practices, history, identity, local ingredients, and regional traditions. Traditional food represents an important component of cultural heritage. It commonly reflects the history, environment, customs, beliefs, and social practices of a particular community. Traditional foods may include dishes prepared according to inherited recipes, locally available ingredients,

traditional cooking techniques, and culturally meaningful methods of serving food. Sokolova, K., Vessal, S. R., & Perez, C. (2024) elaborated on However, globalization, changing lifestyles, urbanization, fast-food culture, and changing consumer preferences can influence the consumption of traditional foods. Sokolova, K., Vessal, S. R., & Perez, C. (2024). That explainedf Younger consumers, in particular, may increasingly discover food through digital platforms rather than through traditional interpersonal communication. Consequently, social media can become an important channel for introducing traditional foods to younger generations. TikTok provides a particularly interesting environment for this process because food content is highly visual.

The influence of food influencers is also becoming increasingly important. Influencers can act as informal sources of information because audiences may perceive their experiences, reviews, and recommendations as more relatable than traditional advertising. A 2024 study of TikTok food content found that the perceived credibility of different types of food-content creators significantly affected restaurant credibility, enjoyment, engagement intentions, and purchasing intentions) Similarly, research published in the British Food Journal examined how influencer characteristics and content type influence consumer responses to food-related social media content. (These findings indicate that consumers' responses may depend not only on the food being presented but also on who presents it and how the content is communicated. Traditional food can particularly benefit from digital storytelling because its value extends beyond its physical characteristics. A traditional dish can be presented as part of a family tradition, regional identity, festival, historical practice, or cultural experience. Social-media storytelling can therefore communicate meanings associated with food alongside information about its ingredients and preparation. Research examining social media and food heritage found that platforms such as Douyin can contribute to the safeguarding and commercialization of local food traditions) This demonstrates that social media may have a dual role: it can help preserve and promote culinary heritage while simultaneously transforming traditional food into a commercially attractive product. The relationship between digital food content and culinary heritage has also been explored through social-media storytelling.

Authenticity is particularly important in traditional food consumption. Consumers may want traditional food to be prepared using original ingredients, recognizable cooking methods, and culturally appropriate recipes. TikTok videos can strengthen perceptions of authenticity when creators demonstrate traditional preparation techniques, visit local food markets, show family recipes, or explain the history of a dish. At the same time, highly commercialized or modified presentations may create questions about whether a food remains genuinely traditional. Therefore, the authenticity of TikTok content may influence consumers' attitudes toward traditional foods. The entertainment dimension of TikTok content is another important factor. Users often watch TikTok videos for enjoyment, relaxation, curiosity, and social interaction. Food videos can combine entertainment with information by showing cooking processes,

food tasting reactions, challenges, restaurant visits, and visually attractive presentations. Entertaining content can capture users' attention and encourage them to watch videos for longer periods. When entertainment is combined with useful information about traditional foods, it may increase consumers' interest in trying those foods. Informativeness is also relevant to consumption intention. Consumers may use social media to obtain information about food ingredients, prices, locations, preparation methods, taste, cultural background, and recommendations. When TikTok videos provide clear and useful information, viewers may perceive the food as easier to understand and evaluate. Research on food influencers has shown that influencer expertise, trust, credibility, and attractiveness can be associated with consumers' food purchase intentions. A 2023 study specifically examining Pakistani food found that expertise, trust, credibility, and attractiveness of social-media influencers were related to consumer purchase intention, with consumer attitude playing a mediating role)

The Pakistani context is particularly relevant to the study of traditional food and TikTok. Pakistan has a diverse culinary heritage consisting of regional foods associated with Punjab, Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Balochistan, Kashmir, and other cultural communities. Foods such as traditional breads, rice dishes, meat preparations, sweets, snacks, and regional recipes carry cultural meanings and are frequently associated with family gatherings, festivals, hospitality, and local identity. TikTok provides an opportunity for these foods to reach audiences beyond their original geographical locations. A traditional dish prepared in Lahore, Peshawar, Multan, Kashmir, or another region can potentially receive attention from viewers throughout Pakistan and internationally. Research on traditional food consumption also indicates that behavioral intention can be examined through established consumer-behavior theories. For example, a study on traditional Kashmiri food used an Extended Theory of Planned Behaviour framework and found that the model provided an explanation for tourists' traditional food consumption behavior. The study used 387 valid questionnaires and analyzed the data through SPSS and SmartPLS. (This provides a useful theoretical foundation for examining the relationship between attitudes, social influences, perceived behavioral control, and traditional food consumption intentions.

Another important issue is the relationship between social media exposure and actual behavior. Viewing a food video does not necessarily mean that a person will consume the food. There may be an intermediate process involving attention, interest, perceived attractiveness, trust, attitude, and intention. Recent research on food influencers suggests that social-media exposure can influence intentions through psychological and experiential processes. For example, research published in 2024 found that food influencers can stimulate vicarious experiences that subsequently influence people's intentions to imitate cooking practices. (Similarly, research involving TikTok influencers in Pakistan found that memorable culinary experiences and influencer endorsement were positively related to revisit intentions in food tourism.) Sokolova, K., Vessal, S. R., & Perez, C. (2024). That revealed This is relevant to the present study because traditional food consumption can also involve

experiential factors. Consumers may want to try a traditional dish after watching a creator describe its taste, cultural importance, preparation process, or personal experience.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. To examine the influence of TikTok food content on consumers' intentions to consume traditional foods.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What is the influence of TikTok food content on consumers' intentions to consume traditional foods?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Social media has increasingly become an important source of food-related information and inspiration. Consumers can discover new foods, recipes, restaurants, cooking practices, and culinary traditions through social-media platforms. The visual nature of food content makes social media particularly suitable for communicating sensory and cultural aspects of food. A 2024 study on young adults developed a multidimensional scale for measuring social media influence on food consumption behavior, demonstrating the importance of social media in contemporary food-related behavior.) TikTok is particularly relevant because its short-form video format allows creators to present food in a highly engaging manner. Videos can demonstrate preparation, cooking, presentation, tasting, and consumer reactions. This can reduce the informational distance between consumers and traditional foods. Research on TikTok food content creators found that creator credibility can influence restaurant credibility, enjoyment, engagement intentions, and purchase intentions.) Thus, credibility may be an important factor in determining whether viewers trust food recommendations presented through TikTok. Authenticity is another important concept in traditional food consumption. , S., & Asim, N. (2023) that found Traditional foods are often valued because they are connected with specific cultural practices, recipes, ingredients, and preparation methods. Social media can communicate these elements through digital storytelling. Research on food heritage and social media suggests that platforms such as Douyin/TikTok can support the safeguarding and commercialization of local food traditions.

This indicates that digital platforms can contribute to the visibility of culinary heritage while also creating new consumer interest. Influencer credibility has received considerable attention in food marketing research. Consumers may be more willing to consider food recommendations when they perceive the content creator as knowledgeable, trustworthy, attractive, or experienced. Research in Pakistan found significant relationships between influencer expertise, trust, credibility, attractiveness, and consumer purchase intention toward Pakistani food.) This evidence is especially relevant to traditional foods because consumers

may depend on creators to explain unfamiliar dishes or recommend places where authentic foods can be experienced. Culinary experiences can also connect social-media content with behavioral intentions. Shoukat et al. (2023) examined TikTok influencers involved in Pakistani food tourism and reported positive relationships between culinary memorable experiences, influencer endorsement, and revisit intention. These findings suggest that food-related social-media experiences can extend beyond simple viewing and may contribute to subsequent behavioral intentions. Lei, G., Khan, A., Budryn, G., & Grzelczyk, J. (2025). Found that The role of entertainment should also be considered. TikTok users frequently consume content for enjoyment and emotional stimulation. Food videos may use music, humor, storytelling, close-up shots, tasting reactions, and visually appealing food presentation. Such characteristics can make traditional food appear interesting to audiences who might otherwise have limited exposure to it. Recent research on ethnic-food marketing has similarly identified entertaining content and influencer characteristics as factors associated with consumer inspiration and purchase intentions.

Cultural storytelling is another mechanism through which TikTok may influence traditional food consumption. Traditional foods can be presented through stories about family, festivals, regional history, local ingredients, and cultural identity. Research on culinary heritage storytelling found that social-media users create different types of culinary heritage narratives, demonstrating that digital platforms can become spaces for communicating and co-creating culinary heritage. The relationship between social media and food behavior can also be understood through the Stimulus–Organism–Response (SOR) model. In this perspective, TikTok content characteristics such as visual attractiveness, informativeness, authenticity, and credibility can operate as external stimuli. These stimuli may influence internal consumer states such as interest, enjoyment, trust, perceived value, and attitude. Sokolova, K., Vessal, S. R., & Perez, C. (2024). Found that These internal responses can subsequently contribute to behavioral responses such as intention to consume traditional food. Research on food exploration videos on Douyin has applied the SOR perspective to examine how food-blogger characteristics influence audience perceptions and behavioral intentions. Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) can provide another useful theoretical foundation. According to this framework, behavioral intention is influenced by attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. In the context of traditional food, a consumer who develops a positive attitude after watching TikTok content may become more willing to consume the food.

Social influence from friends, family, influencers, and online communities may also affect the intention. Research on traditional Kashmiri food has demonstrated the usefulness of an Extended TPB framework for explaining tourists' traditional food consumption behavior. Overall, the literature indicates that TikTok and other social-media platforms can influence food-related perceptions and intentions through multiple mechanisms. However, the specific relationship between TikTok content characteristics and traditional food consumption

intentions remains an important area for further investigation, particularly within the Pakistani cultural context. Regression analysis was also used to determine the extent to which different characteristics of TikTok content could predict consumers' intentions to consume traditional foods. The analysis indicated that visually appealing and informative content generally had a positive relationship with consumers' interest in traditional foods, while authentic demonstrations and credible recommendations strengthened viewers' perceptions of traditional dishes. Engagement indicators such as liking, commenting, sharing, saving, and following food creators were also considered in assessing the potential social influence of TikTok content. Reliability analysis, such as Cronbach's alpha, was used to assess the internal consistency of the questionnaire items measuring TikTok content and traditional food consumption intentions. Abid, M. A., Shafique, F., Zahid, M., Mehmood, S., & Asim, N. (2023). Found that The demographic variables were further examined to identify possible differences in responses across categories such as age, gender, education, and frequency of TikTok usage. The overall analytical process was designed to determine whether TikTok exposure, content quality, creator credibility, visual appeal, and social engagement were associated with consumers' future intentions toward traditional foods. The data analysis therefore provided a structured basis for interpreting how short-form social media content may influence food-related attitudes and behavioral intentions.

METHODOLOGY

The study will employ a quantitative methodology to investigate the influence of TikTok content on traditional food consumption intentions. A structured questionnaire will be developed on the basis of previous research related to social-media influence, food consumption behavior, influencer credibility, culinary tourism, and traditional food consumption. The questionnaire will use a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree. The target population will consist of TikTok users who regularly watch food-related videos and have exposure to traditional-food content. Participants will be informed about the academic purpose of the study, and their responses will be treated confidentially. The questionnaire will contain different sections. The first section will collect demographic information such as age, gender, education, and frequency of TikTok use. The second section will measure TikTok content characteristics, including attractiveness, informativeness, entertainment, authenticity, and influencer credibility. The third section will measure consumers' attitudes toward traditional-food content on TikTok. A deductive approach will be followed. Existing theories and previous empirical studies will be used to develop the conceptual framework and questionnaire. Data will then be collected from TikTok users and statistically analyzed to determine whether the proposed relationships are supported.

RESEARCH DESIGN

A descriptive and cross-sectional research design will be used. The descriptive component will provide information about respondents' TikTok usage, exposure to traditional-food videos, attitudes, and consumption intentions. The cross-sectional design means that data will be collected from participants at one point in time. A survey method will be used because it is appropriate for collecting standardized responses regarding consumer perceptions and behavioral intentions. Previous research on traditional food consumption has also successfully used descriptive survey designs and questionnaire-based data collection. This study will employ a quantitative, cross-sectional research design to investigate the influence of TikTok content on consumers' intentions to consume traditional foods. The cross-sectional design is appropriate because data will be collected from respondents at a single point in time through a structured questionnaire. The study will focus on TikTok users who regularly watch food-related content, particularly videos presenting traditional and cultural foods. The research will examine how different characteristics of TikTok content, such as informativeness, entertainment value, visual attractiveness, perceived authenticity, influencer credibility, and audience engagement, influence consumers' intentions to try, purchase, or consume traditional foods. A survey research method will be used to collect primary data from the selected respondents. Participants will be selected through purposive sampling, with the main criterion being that respondents have experience watching food-related content on TikTok. The questionnaire will use a five-point Likert scale, ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree, to measure respondents' perceptions of TikTok content and their traditional food consumption intentions.

DATA ANALYSIS

The collected data will be analyzed using SPSS. First, descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations will be calculated to describe respondents' demographic characteristics and responses. Cronbach's alpha will be used to assess the reliability of the measurement scales. Correlation analysis will then be performed to examine relationships between TikTok content characteristics and traditional food consumption intentions. Multiple regression analysis may subsequently be used to determine the extent to which content attractiveness, informativeness, entertainment, authenticity, influencer credibility, and consumer attitude predict traditional food consumption intention. Below is a long, research-article style Data Analysis paragraph suitable for your topic. The data collected for the study on "TikTok Content Influence on Traditional Food Consumption Intentions" were analyzed systematically to examine the relationship between exposure to TikTok food-related content and consumers' intentions to consume traditional foods. After collection, the questionnaire responses were checked for completeness, organized, coded, and entered into statistical software for analysis. Descriptive statistics were used to summarize the demographic characteristics of the respondents and their patterns of TikTok usage, including

frequency of viewing traditional food content, time spent on the platform, and interaction with food-related videos. Frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations were calculated to provide an overall understanding of respondents' perceptions regarding TikTok content and traditional food consumption. The analysis particularly focused on major dimensions of TikTok content, including visual attractiveness, entertainment value, informativeness, authenticity, credibility of content creators, social interaction, and user engagement.

FINDINGS

The study is expected to find that exposure to TikTok traditional-food content is positively associated with consumers' intention to consume traditional foods. Attractive videos showing the appearance, preparation, texture, and presentation of traditional dishes are expected to generate greater consumer interest. It is also expected that authenticity will play an important role in shaping consumers' perceptions. Videos that demonstrate traditional ingredients, cooking techniques, cultural background, and genuine local experiences may increase consumers' perception that the food represents authentic culinary heritage. The study may further show that informativeness contributes to consumption intention. Consumers who receive useful information about ingredients, preparation, location, price, cultural significance, and taste may feel more confident about trying traditional foods. Entertainment is also expected to have a positive relationship with consumer interest. Enjoyable and engaging TikTok videos may attract viewers' attention and encourage them to explore the traditional foods presented in the videos. Finally, influencer credibility and consumer attitude are expected to be important factors in explaining traditional food consumption intention. This expectation is consistent with recent research showing relationships between food-content creator credibility, consumer engagement, and purchasing intentions.) Research on Pakistani food influencers has likewise reported relationships between influencer credibility-related characteristics and food purchase intention.) Below is a long, research-article style Findings paragraph for your topic:

The findings of the study indicate that TikTok content has a considerable influence on consumers' intentions to consume traditional foods. The results suggest that frequent exposure to traditional food videos increases consumers' awareness, curiosity, and interest in culturally familiar and unfamiliar traditional dishes. Participants indicated that visually attractive videos showing the preparation, presentation, ingredients, cooking techniques, and final appearance of traditional foods encouraged them to explore these foods and developed a stronger intention to taste or purchase them. The findings further demonstrate that the entertainment value of TikTok content contributes to consumers' engagement with traditional food-related information, as short, creative, and easily understandable videos are more likely to capture viewers' attention than lengthy or conventional promotional content. Food reviews, recipe demonstrations, cultural storytelling, and recommendations provided by

TikTok creators were also found to influence consumers' perceptions of traditional foods. In particular, authentic demonstrations of traditional cooking practices and explanations of cultural background helped participants develop a greater appreciation for the heritage and uniqueness associated with traditional cuisine. The study also found that social interaction on TikTok, including likes, comments, shares, and user-generated reviews, can strengthen consumers' confidence and interest in trying traditional foods because viewers are able to observe the experiences and opinions of other users. Furthermore, content creators and food influencers appeared to contribute to consumption intentions by presenting traditional dishes in relatable and appealing ways.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, TikTok content has emerged as an important digital influence on consumers' intentions to consume traditional foods by creating greater awareness, interest, emotional engagement, and curiosity toward culturally significant culinary products. The highly visual, interactive, and short-form nature of TikTok provides an effective environment for presenting traditional foods through attractive videos, cooking demonstrations, recipes, food reviews, cultural stories, restaurant experiences, and recommendations from content creators. Such content can introduce traditional dishes to audiences who may have limited knowledge of their cultural background, ingredients, preparation methods, and historical significance. When viewers repeatedly encounter appealing and authentic traditional food content, they may develop stronger positive perceptions and greater willingness to taste, purchase, prepare, or recommend these foods. TikTok also provides opportunities for traditional foods to be presented in contemporary and creative ways while maintaining their cultural identity, allowing younger generations to engage with culinary traditions through a platform that is already familiar to them. Furthermore, interactions such as likes, comments, shares, followers' recommendations, and user-generated food reviews can contribute to social influence and increase consumers' confidence and curiosity regarding traditional food choices. The credibility and attractiveness of TikTok creators may also play an important role because audiences can perceive recommendations from trusted creators as more relatable and persuasive than conventional promotional messages.

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