

## **Impact of Virtual Gazing of Culinary YouTube Experiences on Millennials’ Purchase Intention in Sri Lanka**

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### **A B S T R A C T**

Technological revolution and development of the mass media are constantly providing tremendous and massive opportunities for users and there is an enormous impact on the purchase intention of millennials. YouTube is a video-sharing platform which becomes a value creation and information-sharing option, affiliated with Google. Further, YouTube is a mainstream media and micro-influencer which becoming an aspiration figure that has a strong influence on consumers’ mindsets. This paper aims to determine the impact of virtual gazing of culinary YouTube experiences on millennials’ purchase intention. The current study is extended to a conceptual framework with the impact of video characteristics, perceived enjoyment and telepresence on purchase intention. The SPSS software was employed to predict the effect by occupying 100 valid responses undertaken from an online questionnaire filled by the millennials and snowball sampling method was used to collect data. The study adapted to the quantitative research approach and multiple regression analysis is used to explore the impact of virtual gazing of culinary YouTube experiences on millennials’ purchase intention in Sri Lanka. The overall regression analysis outcomes revealed that independent variables such as video characteristics, perceived enjoyment and telepresence are highly impacting the purchase intention through the virtual gazing of YouTube videos. This is one of the rare investigations that combine the virtual gazing of YouTube videos on millennials’ purchase intention in the Sri Lankan context. This research greatly helps the YouTube vloggers in re-branding their channels with more understanding while helping the country’s economy indirectly and the nature of the fascinating technology will help enhancing the brand awareness of the users.

**Keywords:** Social media, YouTube, Purchase intention

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## **1. Introduction**

Food can be a powerful influential material, assembling with humans to generate forceful necessities and intensities. In food-related domains, the affordances for reaching extremely large audiences of social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Snapchat, Telegram and content-sharing sites including Pinterest and YouTube, combined with the compelling force of visual media that can be uploaded, shared, curated and tagged on these platforms. Among the mentioned platforms, YouTube is one of the new channels that help in broadcasting entertainment videos to the viewers' causing a huge impact on their minds. Chiou (2013) has explored that Consumers seek advice on social media before making purchase decisions and they usually rely on user-generated content in their decisions. YouTube allows consumers to define their relationships with products or brands freely and in a creative way (Pace, 2008) and millions of internet users have become self-broadcasting consumers (Bucic, 2012). Millennials receive virtual trips to culinary gardens through YouTube, both nationally and internationally.

The culinary YouTube experience is a new form of entertainment perceived by millennials in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It has the power to influence peoples' mindsets, thus being opinion leaders. Culinary YouTube experiences have supported the internal impression of millennials through the display of food and beverage and has motivated them to purchase. Culinary, being an interesting topic around the research world, has created several avenues for exploration. Gratifications towards culinary, emotional attitudes, street food venturing, and culinary marketing are some of the fields in which the researchers have shown more concentration. Still, there are under-revealed and uncharacterized areas relevant to the field of study. One such uncharacterized area is YouTube culinary experience and purchase intention, especially addressing the generational effect. The study supports bridging the mentioned gap effectively. At the same time, current studies link the perceived benefits of online vlogger reviews and the usefulness of mobile apps likewise. Perceived enjoyment factors have not been a research topic of research to date (Vita et al., 2020). Thus, this study directly contributes to bridging the empirical gap in the field.

### **1.1. Research question**

**RQ:** What is the impact of virtual gazing of culinary YouTube experiences on millennials' purchase intention in Sri Lanka?

### **1.2. Research objective**

**RO:** To identify the impact of virtual gazing of culinary YouTube experiences on millennials' purchase intention in Sri Lanka.

The paper adopted a multiple regression analysis method to identify the impact of virtual gazing of culinary YouTube experiences on millennials' purchase intention in Sri Lanka. This study adds insight to changing consumer buying behaviour. Further, this will be significant to create marketing strategies as well as understanding of marketing trends which need further investigation.

## **2 .Literature review**

### **2.1. YouTube as video sharing option**

E-commerce has spread to every nook and corner of the world, with the help of online broadcasting platforms. Video-sharing websites provide their users and followers with low-cost broadcasting tools which are easy to use and which allow them to share their content on personal profiles and interact with other users (Rigby, 2008). One of the most popular video-

sharing websites is YouTube, which was founded in 2005. Time magazine has declared that, due to the high number of users and videos YouTube has, it has reached incredible growth since it was invented. As there is a tremendous lifestyle change occurred across the globe due to the COVID pandemic and accompanied practices of social distancing and quarantine, a remarkable increase is visible in the usage of social media platforms like YouTube (Jarrett, 2008).

The development of the internet and social media provide new platforms for marketers as marketing strategies and influence millennials' purchase intention. YouTube is one of the new social media platforms. Before making purchase decisions consumers seek social media for advice. According to Bouhleb et al., (2010), many researchers investigated the effect of social media platforms on consumers' purchase behaviour from a different perspective. However, there is a lack of studies regarding video-sharing websites and especially YouTube (Mir and Rehman, 2013). When comparing video-sharing websites, YouTube is listed on the top level. Lots of user-generated content is uploaded through YouTube every day related to products and services. Nowadays, YouTube has become one of the major platforms that consumers search for innovative product information before making purchase decisions. It is also considered a market determinant factor which affects purchase intention (Yuksel. H, 2016). The slogan of YouTube is "Broadcast Yourself", and it clearly defined the nature of the sharing centre (Jarrett, 2008.)

## **2.2. Video characteristics**

Consumers' perceptions regarding the content of the video can be influenced by the interactions of other followers. Comments and reviews on virtual content about a product may be perceived as a sign of product popularity and can affect purchase intentions (Lee, 2009). For consumers who find online information credible, the number of comments increases the credibility of that information (O'Reilly & Marx, 2011). YouTube users who seek user-generated content also take into account the comments and the number of comments increases the credibility and usefulness of the videos (Mir & Rehman, 2013). The number of views, likes, comments and replies positively affect the perceived credibility of the information in the videos (Yuksel. H, 2016). Specific features of YouTube videos may have an effect on purchase intentions. The high quality of the video is a factor that influences the purchase decisions of the consumers. Regarding the culinary, the availability of online information displayed on YouTube, such as food vlogger reviews or recommendations, makes reviewers easily accessible. This effectively causes potential consumers to use the internet to compare the features and prices of the products and services offered before making a purchase decision. The effectiveness of the YouTube channel basically depends on the reviews, attention, interest, desires and action model in which desire leads to purchase.

## **2.3. Perceived enjoyment**

If users or followers feel happy when they access certain sites, it is referred to as perceived enjoyment. The more consumers experience pleasure when shopping virtually on a particular site, the users mostly prefer to make purchases on that site. It has become a millennial habit to focus on social media. Users consider watching YouTube as an exchange of information which is funny and it confirms their identity as experienced consumers who love to share positive experiences with others who have the same interests. Viewers with stronger motives caused to achieve a high level of seller's marketing targets Briliana et al., (2020) and Ho & Wu (2012) found that when individuals experience innovative or enjoyable and useful experiences while using virtual apps, they are motivated to use them again. Marketers need to develop pleasure and enjoyment advertisements that will delight the potential audience. The nature of the

entertaining, fun and pleasure in video content will increase the level of the audience (Febriyantoro, 2020).

#### **2.4. Telepresence**

Telepresence represents a mental state where consumers feel immersed in a virtual shopping environment. A pleasurable mental state in a virtual shopping environment directly impacts the consumers' enjoyment and consumers' purchase intention. When the website is wonderful, consumers are more likely to stay on the particular website. According to the Gao (2018), telepresence is positively related to stickiness. With the nature of the transparent, trustworthy, informative telepresence, the consumer feels safer in their decision-making. Further, telepresence enhances the sense of psychological intimacy.

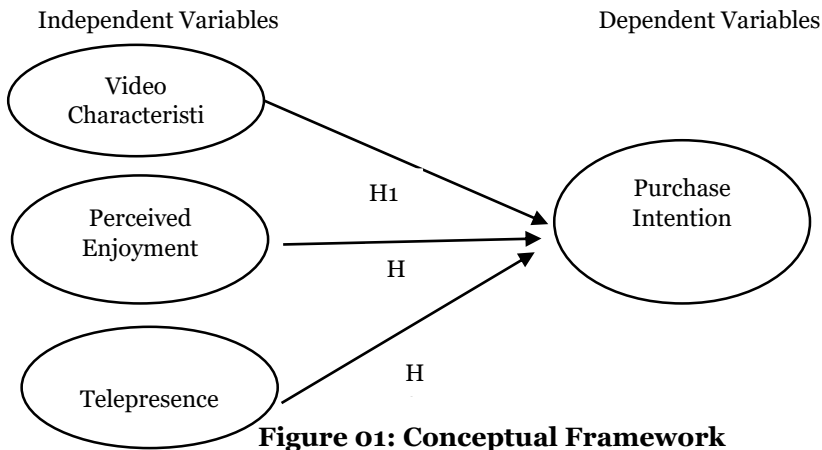
#### **2.5. Purchase intention**

The real purchase behaviour of the consumers can be predicted by using purchase intention. There are several studies related to the factors that affect consumers' purchase intention for online platforms such as websites (Yuksel, H, 2016). The nature of the entertainment, information and customizations of the websites such as YouTube channels positively effect on purchase intention and irritation and repetitive nature had a negative affect the purchase intention. Further, brand awareness and continued purchasing behaviour were positively associated with the value that the viewer gives to advertisements (Sebastian et al., 2021). The purchase intention investigated is highly dependent on the recommendations and brand values shared by other consumers on social media channels (Dehghani & Tumer, 2015). Positive responses and the advertising value of YouTube channels have a positive effect on consumers' purchase intention. According to Ko et al., (2005), consumers show a favourable attitude towards particular products when purchase intention increase.

### **3. Methodology**

In order to test the proposed conceptual framework, SPSS software was adopted. That allows researchers to analyze the impact of virtual gazing of the Culinary YouTube experience on millennials' purchase intention. This study examines how video characteristics, Perceived enjoyment and Telepresence impact purchase intention. Data was collected through Survey questionnaires (Online platform) and the questionnaires included the items to measure the identified variables on a five-point Likert scale (1= strongly disagree, 5= strongly agree) which was administered online. All 100 valid responses were included for SPSS software. To collect data, researchers distributed questionnaires to YouTube users aged between 18–35 years who were millennials. The research was based on a quantitative approach. The study adapted to the snowball sampling method and collected data analyzed by using the multiple regression analysis method.

### 3.1. Conceptual framework and hypothesis development



**Figure 01: Conceptual Framework**

**Source: Developed by researcher based on the literature**

#### 3.1.1. Hypotheses development

**H1:** There is a positive relationship between video characteristics and purchase intentions.

**H2:** There is a positive relationship between perceived enjoyment and purchase intentions.

**H3:** There is a positive relationship between telepresence and purchase intentions.

## 4. Results analysis and discussion

### 4.1. Cronbach's alpha reliability test

Cronbach's alpha analysis determines the reliability of the questionnaire. The questionnaire of the study was considered to be significant when the alpha value results in more than 0.6. Cronbach's alpha value was 0.921 and it indicated that the internal reliability of the questionnaire was acceptable.

### 4.2. Regression analysis

Results and findings pertaining to identifying the impact of virtual gazing of culinary YouTube experiences on millennials' purchase intention in Sri Lanka.

$$PI = \beta_0 + \beta_1 (A_1) + \beta_2 (A_2) + \beta_3 (A_3) + \varepsilon$$

Where;

PI- Purchase Intention

$\beta_0$  = intercept of the equation

A1- Video Characteristics

A2= Perceived Enjoyment

A3= Telepresence

$\varepsilon$  = error term

**Table 1: Regression Analysis Coefficients**

Coefficients					
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	3.758	.295		4.224	.000
Video Characteristics	.808	.034	.212	2.475	.000
Perceived Enjoyment	.704	.036	.372	5.037	.000
Telepresence	.538	.098	.363	3.447	.001

a. Dependent variable: Purchase intention  
Source: Survey output (2022)

In accordance with the regression equation, the constant value is +3.758. It implies that the value of purchase intention of millennials when all the independent variables equal to zero. Furthermore, the coefficients of video characteristics, perceived enjoyment and telepresence are 0.808, 0.704 and .538 respectively. It is the average change in purchase intention due to one unit change in independent variables. When Video characteristics increased by one unit, the purchase intention changes by +0.808 times. When perceived enjoyment increases by one unit, the purchase intention changes by +0.704 times. When telepresence increased by one unit, the purchase intention changes by +0.538 times. This suggests that video characteristics have the highest impact on virtual gazing of culinary YouTube experiences on millennials' purchase intention in Sri Lanka while telepresence is the least. Perceived enjoyment too plays a considerable role in impacting the purchase intention of millennials through virtual gazing of culinary YouTube experiences.

**Table 2: Model Summary for Dependent and Independent Variables**

Figure	Value
R Square	0.781
Adjusted R Square	0.626
Std. Error of the estimate	0.19421

Source: Survey Output (2022)

When considering the linear regression model summary, the R square value was 0.781. In accordance with that, it can be concluded that 78.1 percent of the total variation of the dependent variable is explained by the independent variables. Following that, it can be concluded that 78.1% of the total variation of the dependent variable is explained by the independent variables.

**Table 3: ANOVA Table for Dependent and Independent Variables**

ANOVA <sup>a</sup>						
	Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	17.750	3	5.917	37.689	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	15.071	96	.157		
	Total	32.821	99			

a. Dependent Variable: Purchase Intention

b. Predictors: (Constant), Video characteristics, Perceived Enjoyment, Telepresence

Source: - Survey Output (2022)

If the regression ANOVA result is significant, the model is appropriate. It indicates that the independent variable influences the dependent variable. According to the above table, the P-value is less than 0.05 ( $P < 0.05$ ). Hence, the model is appropriate.

## 5. Conclusion and implications

The results of the study suggested that all three independent variables are highly impacting the millennials' purchase intention through the virtual gazing of YouTube videos in Sri Lanka. Video characteristics have enriched the purchase intention of millennials immensely. Replaying and pausing, attractive and high-tech video techniques, stunning way of presentation, number of views, like tags and comments, reliable information required for the right purchases, channel ID and Video ID and the presenters' skills of presenting make the video characteristics more powerful in impacting the purchase decisions of millennials. Perceived enjoyment refers to when consumers feel happy when they access certain videos online. It has made the millennials decide to spend more on culinary when they watch the videos. Especially, the vloggers' way of presenting the video make more influence on them. The digital impact allows consumers to easily concentrate on the prices and compare the benefits offered. The availability of online information displayed on culinary YouTube, vlogger reviews or recommendations, makes them easily accessible.

Since most of the respondents do not have a proper understanding of the term "telepresence", it can be concluded that they show little hesitation in this phase. But, in the sense, they all engaged with telepresence unintentionally while watching the culinary YouTube videos. Traditional Me, The Nature Girl Poorna, Village Cooking, cooking with Grandma, travel with Banda, Chinese Mukbang videos and Korean Mukbang Videos are the most popular culinary YouTube experiences among millennials. This implies that irrespective of the nations, this was very popular among the generation in deciding their purchase. Further, it can be elaborated that, Culinary YouTube has a greater impact on purchase intention in Sri Lanka. Next with COVID 19, the tendency of having Culinary YouTube experiences has shown an incredible acceleration since, time to time isolations.

This research greatly helps YouTube Vloggers in re-branding their channels with more understanding while helping the country's economy indirectly. Consumers get the chance to explore and expose to different food cultures, food tastings and food-related experiences. Proper investigation and clear supervision over the videos will help to reach the next level of culinary experience for the consumers. It is recommended to have a Sri Lankan Television channel authentic to food videos as a method for relating people to new food culture instead of traditional food Vivendi. The best implication of this paper goes to street food vendors. They

can receive advantages through virtual gazing. At the same time, this paper provides a platform for service providers in all streams where they can get used to YouTube streaming. COVID 19 was a hindrance to data collection physically and the authors have to adjust for online collection.

Overall, it can be concluded that there is an immense impact of virtual gazing of Culinary YouTube experiences on millennials' purchase intention in Sri Lanka. Moreover, reviewing the literature and findings suggest that, research can be consummated in the future focusing on the generation effect of Sri Lanka and how the YouTube culinary experiences impact them in deciding their purchases.

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