AN INVESTIGATION OF THE FACTORS INFLUENCING CONSUMERS OF DIFFERENT GENERATION'S BEHAVIORAL INTENTION TOWARDS FRANCHISED JAPANESE RESTAURANTS IN BANGKOK, THAILAND

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Abstract: *This research attempts to investigate the factors that impact consumer's behavioral intention towards franchised Japanese restaurants in Bangkok as the number of franchised Japanese restaurants in Bangkok is decreasing which is different from the overall number of franchised Japanese restaurants in Thailand, and to examine the differences among three generational groups (Generation X, Generation Y and Generation Z). A conceptual model was developed based on previous studies that include quality of physical environment, service quality, food quality, customer perceived value and customer satisfaction to explain consumer's behavioral intention. The questionnaire was distributed to 402 respondents by convenience, quota and judgment sampling methods. The statistical techniques used in this study are Multiple Linear Regression (MLR) and One-Way ANOVA. The findings reveal factors impacting behavioral intention towards franchised Japanese restaurants in Bangkok, and the differences among three generational groups. The outcomes of this study indicate that different generations have different perspectives towards franchised Japanese restaurants in Bangkok, and variables in the conceptual framework are linked. Hence, the franchised Japanese restaurants in Bangkok should focus on the variables mentioned in this study, integrate this study to consider their target customers by identifying them according to their generations, or serve different generations differently.*

Keywords: *Behavioral intention, Franchised Japanese restaurant, Generation, Bangkok*

Introduction

Nowadays, there are more than 5 living generations in the world with the major population of generation X, generation Y and generation Z. Each generation of people has distinctive generational history, values, demographics, influence, expectations, values and lifestyles that affects their behaviors (Pawan, Langgat, & Marzuki , 2014) including their dining preferences and appetite.

According to the study of Reynolds and Hwang (2006) and Restaurant Association (2015) about ages and international cuisine in the USA, the younger generation is more open towards the diversity of food cultures and satisfied with the international restaurant experiences, especially Japanese restaurant. However, other from these mentioned researches, there is a little to know about the relationship between each generation and international restaurant.

In Thailand, there are a various number of international cuisines. Although the competition among Asian restaurants such as Chinese, Japanese, Thai and Korean is getting tenser as there are more opened restaurants (Ryu, Lee, & Kim, 2012), Japanese restaurant is considered as a continuously rapid growing type of restaurants in the dining industry, which has the latest growth rate of 10% with the market value of 21,000 to 22,000 million baht as the grilled meat and ramen restaurants are the most popular types of restaurants in Thailand, while the average growth rate of overall restaurant industry is

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around 2-4% (Positioning Magazine, 2018).

Although Japanese restaurants all over Thailand are growing in number, according to JETRO Bangkok Company, the number of franchised Japanese restaurants in Bangkok is slightly decreasing by 2% at the end of 2016 (Marketeer Team, 2017). Hence, the research aims to examine the factors influencing Bangkok consumer's behavioral intention, which factor has the most impact on customer perceived value that leads to customer satisfaction and behavioral intention in the end, and differences among three generational groups to develop the better understanding and to provide suggestion to franchised Japanese restaurant entrepreneurs.

- ***Behavioral Intention (BI)***

Behavioral intention represents two actions which are word-of-mouth communication and repurchasing (Han & Ryu, 2009; Kivela, Inbakaran & Reece, 1999). Negative word-of-mouth, complains and switches occurred when the customers are dissatisfied (Oliver, 1997). In contrast, if the customers are satisfied, they are likely to spread positive word-of-mouth and repurchase the products or services (Barsky, 1992). Sulaiman and Haron (2013) referred the behavioral intentions as it was frequently developed from the service experiences of customers towards the specific firm as same as the findings in the research of Burton, Sheather and Roberts (2003). These mentioned studies can be concluded that the customer satisfaction impacts behavioral intention as there are numerous research and studies that have confirmed the positive relationship between satisfaction and behavioral intentions. While other researchers focused on the behavioral intention's factors, Han and Ryu (2009) proposed that behavioral intentions leads to the customer loyalty.

- ***Customer Perceived Value (CV)***

Customer perceived value is 'the customer's overall assessment of the utility of a product based on perceptions of what is received and what is given' (Zeithaml, 1988). As mentioned in the previous chapter that customer perceived value is the evaluation of how customers compare the overall benefits and costs, this variable is an important variable to consider for the service business. Hutt and Speh (2007) classified the benefits into two categories for the customer value: core benefits and add-on benefits. The core benefits are the core of what customer required for supplier-customer relationship, while add-on benefits are stated to be attributes that are not listed in the requirements, but it created more value for this supplier-customer relationship. In the service context, perceived value consists of five dimensions which are emotional response, monetary price, quality, reputation and behavioral price (Petrick, 2002).

- ***Customer Satisfaction (CS)***

Customer satisfaction has several definitions depending on the types of industries, and fields. Customer satisfaction's definition that was given by Rust, Zahorik and Keiningham (1995) is a marketing term for corporate level strategy measuring how services and products that a firm offers reach the expectation of customers. Customer satisfaction determines the organization's future customers, and its performance. It also benefits companies in several aspects including costs from marketing activities reduction, customer loss prevention, organization's reputation enhancement, and establishing consumer loyalty (Fornell, 1992). According to Michael and Fornell (1991) and other researchers, customer satisfaction can

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be generally summarized as the overall evaluation of a customer's satisfaction on an offering's performance, or the measures of how the perception of products and services meet the expectation of customers.

- *Food Quality (FQ)*

Food quality is acknowledged as an important criterion for the customers to select the restaurant (Dube, Renaghan, & Miller, 1994) as Liu and Jang (2009) stated that food quality is one of the three aspects for the success of the restaurants which are food quality, services, and ambience. More importantly, food quality is a main part to push the perception of customers to exceed their expectations and needs (Peri, 2006). There are four key dimensions for the food quality which are proposed by Kivela et al., (1999); presentation, temperature, tastiness, and the variety of menu.

The four key dimensions preferences vary depending on each customer perception of customers to exceed their expectations and needs (Peri, 2006). There are four key dimensions for the food quality which are proposed by Kivela et al., (1999); presentation, temperature, tastiness, and the variety of menu. These four key dimensions preferences vary depending on each customer.

- *Physical Environment Quality (PE)*

Physical environment can be referred to the man-made physical surrounding including all the physical factors that help organization or service providers to improve both internal and external customer responses (Bitner, 1992). Thus, it is important for customers to form the views of intangible restaurant services (Edvardsson, Enquist, & Johnston, 2010). To support the idea of how importance physical environment is

towards the service industry, Baker, Grewal and Parasuraman (1994) also conducted a study whether physical environment could stimulate the purchase behavior of customers, and the result was positive. This implies that there is a linkage between physical environment and customer satisfaction

- *Service Quality (SQ)*

One of the most common factors of customer satisfaction in service industry is mentioned to be 'Service Quality' or so called 'SERVQUAL'. SERVQUAL is defined as the service perceptions and expectations of customers (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1988). On the other hand, Stevens, Knutson and Patton (1995) referred service quality as it is often viewed through intangible benefits like caring, understanding, professional, and responsiveness from the restaurant staff. Although the given definitions are somehow different among the researchers, most of the service quality measures emphasize on how the staff manages service delivery by dealing with tangibles (Sureshchandar et al. 2002). However, the determinants that are used to measure the service quality are different for each model proposed by different researchers as well such as the variable called 'IT' or 'Information Technology'. In SERVQUAL tool that is used by Sureshchandar et al. (2002), IT variable is neglected. However, the study conducted by Lenka, Suar and Mohapatra (2009) also includes technology aspect as same as the study proposed by Kaura (2013) since technology is a mandatory factor for running the service business in these days. Stevens et al. (1995) once stated that service quality in the restaurant industry is recognized by using the intangible benefits provided by staffs in that particular restaurant (e.g. professional attitudes and behaviors, politeness, responsiveness, and caring).

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of this research (Figure 1) is developed from theoretical framework of Ryu et al. (2012) who investigated the influence of factors on restaurant image, customer perceived value, customer satisfaction, and behavioral intentions, and Han and Ryu (2010) who studied about the effect of factors on Customer Satisfaction and Behavioral Intention in quick-casual restaurants.

This research examines six hypotheses in order to accomplish the research objectives as shown in Figure 1. The hypotheses are defined as follow:
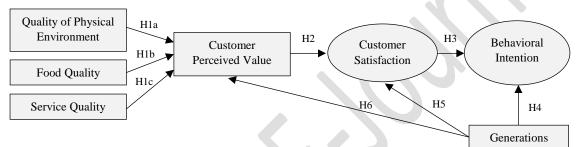

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Hypothesis 1:
The physical environment quality (H1a), food quality (H1b) and services quality (H1c) have positive impact on customer perceived value towards franchised Japanese restaurant in Bangkok.

Hypothesis 2:
Customer perceived value significantly influences customer satisfaction towards franchised Japanese restaurant in Bangkok.

Hypothesis 3:
Customer satisfaction significantly influences behavioral intention towards franchised Japanese restaurant in Bangkok.

Hypothesis 4:
There are mean differences of generations on consumer's behavioral intention towards franchised Japanese restaurant in Bangkok.

Hypothesis 5:
There are mean differences of generations on customer satisfaction towards franchised Japanese restaurant in Bangkok.

Hypothesis 6:
There are mean differences of generations on customer perceived value towards franchised Japanese restaurant in Bangkok.

Research Methodology

A quantitative approach was used to examine the hypothesis. The judgment, convenience and quota sampling techniques were used to collect the data from target population. This survey was distributed both online and offline. A 5-point Likert scale questionnaire ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5), was developed to investigate six hypotheses in this study.

Measurement of Variables

The target respondents of this survey were Thais who are living in Bangkok, born on or after 1965 and have

experienced in franchised Japanese restaurant in Bangkok at least once.

Population and Sample

Screening questions were used to verify target responses in order to select Thais who have experienced in franchised Japanese restaurant in Bangkok at least once, and are living in Bangkok. Questionnaires were launched to 402 participants in top three shopping centers in Bangkok (Siam Paragon, Central World and MBK) by applying convenience, quota and judgment sampling methods.

Reliability Test

The test of reliability was applied to six variables: quality of physical environment, food quality, service quality, customer perceived value, customer satisfaction and behavioral intention. The coefficient alpha is considered as acceptable when it is greater than 0.6 and can be used as a research instrument (Sekaran, 2003). Regarding Table 1, this study has achieved the reliability test standard.

Table 1: Consistency of the scales test (N=26)

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
Quality of Physical Environment	.708	5
Service Quality	.846	4
Food Quality	.859	6

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
Customer Perceived Value	.804	3
Customer Satisfaction	.883	3
Behavioral Intention	.913	5

Results and Discussion

- Data Analysis

The conceptual framework was evaluated by applying statistic application to analyze the data and investigate the impact between variables. Multiple linear regression (MLR) was utilized to measure the influence of independent, mediating and dependent variables. One-Way ANOVA was applied to examine the mean differences among three generational groups (generation X, generation Y and generation Z).

- Demographic Information of Respondents

The data used in this study was collected from the three generational groups of participants living in Bangkok and have experienced franchised Japanese restaurants in Bangkok. The total number of respondents is 402 (100%) with 134 for each generational group. Table 2 exhibits all demographic information.

Table 2: Demographic Information of Respondents (N=402)

Demographic Factors	Frequency (*f*)	Percentage (%)
Gender		
• Male	171	42.50%
• Female	231	57.50%
Generation (Year Born)		
• Generation X (1965-1976)	134	33.33%
• Generation Y (1977-1995)	134	33.33%
• Generation Z (1996 or onwards)	134	33.33%
Income		
	173	43.00%

Demographic Factors	Frequency (*f*)	Percentage (%)
• Lower than 20000 Baht a month	143	35.60%
• 20001-50000 Baht a month	43	10.70%
• 50001-100000 Baht a month	43	10.70%
• Over 100001 Baht a month		
Most Visited Franchised Japanese Restaurant		
• Yayoi	195	48.50%
• Ootoya	9	2.20%
• Hachiban Ramen	45	11.20%
• Sukishi	28	7.00%
• Fuji	119	29.60%
• Other	6	1.50%
How Frequent to Visit Franchised Japanese Restaurant		
• More than 3 times a week	35	8.70%
• 1 - 3 times a week	51	12.70%
• 1 - 3 times a month	131	32.60%
• 1 - 3 times a year	185	46.00%
Total	402	100%

To examine each variable, the 5-point Likert scale was applied. Table 3 reveals the correlation between descriptive analysis and independent variables.

Table 3: Descriptive Analysis and Correlation Matrix

Variable		PE	SQ	FQ	CV	CS
Service Quality (SQ)	Pearson Correlation	.664**				
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000				
	N	402				
Food Quality (FQ)	Pearson Correlation	.622**	.640**			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000			
	N	402	402			
Customer Perceived Value (CV)	Pearson Correlation	.562**	.584**	.686**		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		
	N	402	402	402		
Customer Satisfaction (CS)	Pearson Correlation	.587**	.568**	.686**	.696**	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	402	402	402	402	
Behavioral Intention (BI)	Pearson Correlation	.580**	.540**	.709**	.675**	.808**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	402	402	402	402	402
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).						

In reference to the shown evidence above, all independent variables have positive relationships with each other.

- **Inferential Analysis**

Hypothesis 1 of the research model examined by Multiple Linear

Regression, using three independent variables which are quality of physical environment, service quality and food quality. Table 4 exhibits the summary of the results.

Table 4: Results of Multiple Linear Regression for Hypothesis 1

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Sig.
.718[a]	.516	.512	.000[b]

Variable	Unstandardized Coefficients B	Standard Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	Sig.	VIF
Constant	-.608	.213	-	.005	-
avg_pe (Average Physical Environment)	.186	.065	.142	.004	2.028
avg_sq (Average Service Quality)	.217	.060	.182	.000	2.105
avg_fq (Average Food Quality)	.653	.066	.480	.000	1.920

The result shown in Table 4 indicates that 51.2% (Adjusted R^2) of the dependent variable (customer perceived value) was indicated by three independent variables which are quality of physical environment, food quality and service quality. All independent variable are statistically significant at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, hypothesis 1 is supported.

Three regression coefficients of independent variables are significantly greater than zero *(β = 0.186; β = 0.653; β = 0.217)* which can be interpreted as positive impact to behavioral intention which is served as the dependent variable.

Furthermore, variance inflation factors (VIF) was revealed to be lower than 5.000. Hence, the multicollinearity is not critical problem for this research.

Table 5: Results of Regression for Hypothesis 2

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Sig.
.696[a]	.485	.484	.000[b]

Variable	Unstandardized Coefficients B	Standard Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	Sig.	VIF
Constant	1.913	.113	-	.000	-
avg_cv (Average Customer Perceived Value)	.575	.030	.696	.000	1.000

To measure the impact of customer perceived value (CV) toward customer satisfaction (CS) the simple linear regression is applied as shown in Table 5. The result exhibits that customer perceived value accounted for a significant amount of customer satisfaction for franchised Japanese restaurant customers in Bangkok, $R^2 = .49$, $F_{(1,400)} = 376.39$, sig. $< .05$,

indicating that customer perceived value effected customer satisfaction.

Table 6: Results of Regression for Hypothesis 3

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Sig.
.808[a]	.652	.651	.000[b]

Variable	Unstandardized Coefficients B	Standard Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	Sig.	VIF
Constant	.622	.126	-	.000	-
avg_cs (Average Customer Satisfaction)	.843	.031	.808	.000	1.000

A regression analysis was conducted to the research to evaluate the predictors of customer perceived value and customer satisfaction. Table 6 presents that customer perceived value accounted for a significant amount of customer satisfaction for franchised Japanese restaurant customers in Bangkok, $R^2 = .65$, $F_{(1,400)} = 750.54$, sig. $< .05$, indicating that customer satisfaction had positive impact towards behavioral intention.

Table 7: Results of One-Way ANOVA for Hypothesis 4

ANOVA Table of Behavioral Intention

	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	2	6.203	15.945	.000
Within Groups	399	.389	-	-
Total	401	-	-	-

Multiple Comparisons of Behavioral Intention

Generations 1	Generations 2	Mean Difference (1-2)	Standard Error	Sig.
Generation X	Generation Y	-.38060*	.07620	.000
	Generation Z	-.36418*	.07620	.000
Generation Y	Generation X	.38060*	.07620	.000
	Generation Z	.01642	.07620	.977
Generation Z	Generation X	.36418*	.07620	.000
	Generation Y	-.01642	.07620	.977

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

From Table 7, a One-Way ANOVA was conducted to evaluate the relationship between behavioral intention and the generation of respondents from generation X to generation Z. The independent variable, age range or generation, consist of

generation X (between 1965-1976), generation Y (between 1977-1995), and generation Z (born in 1996 or onwards). The dependent variable is behavioral intention.

The ANOVA was significant, $F_{(2,399)} = 15.95$, sig. = .000. Follow-up test of Scheffé revealed that there were significant differences in the means between generation X (between 1965-1976) and generation Y (between 1977-1995), and generation X (between 1965-1976) and generation Z (born in 1996 or onwards). However, there was no significant difference between generation Y (between 1977-1995) and generation Z (born in 1996 or onwards). The groups of generation Y and generation Z show greater values of behavioral intention in comparison to generation X group.

Table 8: Results of One-Way ANOVA for Hypothesis 5

ANOVA Table of Customer Satisfaction

	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	2	5.779	16.207	.000
Within Groups	399	.357	-	-
Total	401	-	-	-

Multiple Comparisons of Customer Satisfaction

Generations 1	Generations 2	Mean Difference (1-2)	Standard Error	Sig.
Generation X	Generation Y	-.28856[*]	.07295	.000
	Generation Z	-.40299[*]	.07295	.000
Generation Y	Generation X	.28856[*]	.07295	.000
	Generation Z	-.11443	.07295	.293
Generation Z	Generation X	.40299[*]	.07295	.000
	Generation Y	.11443	.07295	.293

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Table 8 shows a One-Way ANOVA was conducted to evaluate the relationship between customer satisfaction and the generation of respondents from generation X to generation Z. The independent variable, age range or generation, consist of generation X (between 1965-1976), generation Y (between 1977-1995), and generation Z (born in 1996 or onwards). The dependent variable is customer satisfaction.

The ANOVA was significant, $F_{(2,399)} = 16.21$, sig. = .000. Follow-up test of Scheffé revealed that there were significant differences in the means between generation X (between 1965-1976) and generation Y (between 1977-1995), and generation X (between 1965-1976) and generation Z (born in 1996 or onwards). However, there was no significant difference between generation Y (between 1977-1995) and generation Z (born in 1996 or onwards). The groups of generation Y and generation Z showed greater values of customer satisfaction in comparison to generation X group. The group of generation Z had the highest value of customer satisfaction.

Table 9: Results of One-Way ANOVA for Hypothesis 6

ANOVA Table of Customer Perceived Value

	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	2	8.970	17.260	.000
Within Groups	399	.520	-	-
Total	401	-	-	-

Multiple Comparisons of Customer Perceived Value

Generations 1	Generations 2	Mean Difference (1-2)	Standard Error	Sig.
Generation X	Generation Y	-.25373*	.08807	.016
	Generation Z	-.51741*	.08807	.000
Generation Y	Generation X	.25373*	.08807	.016
	Generation Z	-.26368*	.08807	.012
Generation Z	Generation X	.51741*	.08807	.000
	Generation Y	.26368*	.08807	.012

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Table 9 presents a One-Way ANOVA was conducted to evaluate the relationship between customer perceived value and the generation of respondents from generation X to generation Z. The independent variable, age range or generation, consist of generation X (between 1965-1976), generation Y (between 1977-1995), and generation Z (born in 1996 or onwards). The dependent variable is customer perceived value.

The ANOVA was significant, $F_{(2,399)} = 17.26$, sig. = .000. Follow-up test of Scheffé showed that there were significant differences in the means between generation X (between 1965-1976) and generation Y (between 1977-1995), generation X (between 1965-1976) and generation Z (born in 1996 or onwards), and generation Y (between 1977-1995) and generation Z (born in 1996 or onwards). The group of generation Z had the highest value of customer perceived value, while the group of generation Y had

higher value of customer perceived value than a group of generation X.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The main objectives of this study are to determine the factors influencing behavioral intention towards the franchised Japanese restaurant in Bangkok, and to investigate the differences among three generations of Bangkok respondents by applying Multiple Linear Regressions (MLR) and One-way ANOVA. Based on the result from ANOVA Regression Line table and Multiple Regression Line of hypothesis 1, it is revealed that quality of physical environment, service quality and food quality impact customer perceived value with food quality having highest positive effect on customer perceived value.

Regarding to hypothesis 2, the effect of customer perceived value to customer satisfaction is confirmed by the statistical analysis as well as hypothesis 3

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which could be stated that customer satisfaction has significant impact toward behavioral intention.

For hypothesis 4, hypothesis 5, the results of One-Way ANOVA tables reveal that there are mean differences of age ranges on consumer's behavioral intention towards franchised Japanese restaurant in Bangkok between generation X (between 1965-1976) and generation Y (between 1977-1995), and generation X (between 1965-1976) and generation Z (born in 1996 or onwards) whereas there is no mean difference between generation Z and generation Y. In contrast, the result of hypothesis 6 testing shows that there are mean differences of age ranges on consumer's customer perceived value towards franchised Japanese restaurant in Bangkok between generation X (between 1965-1976) and generation Y (between 1977-1995), generation X (between 1965-1976) and generation Z (born in 1996 or onwards), and generation Y (between 1977-1995) and generation Z (born in 1996 or onwards).

From the findings of this study, it can be seen that three restaurant attributes impact customer perceived value which led to customer satisfaction that affected behavioral intention in the end. This implied that franchised Japanese restaurants in Bangkok could increase the behavioral intention such as returning to the restaurant and positive word-of-mouth by increasing the linked factors. If the franchised Japanese restaurant entrepreneurs want to increase the customer perceived value, the most effective restaurant attribute from this study is the food quality. By increasing the food quality, the customers will have higher perceived value which leads to higher customer satisfaction and behavioral intention in the end.

Moreover, the research outcome also indicates that different generations had different perspectives towards franchised Japanese restaurants in Bangkok as exhibited in the previous chapter. Thus, the

franchised Japanese restaurant owners may use this data and results to consider their target customers by identifying the generations. Generation Z has the highest mean value of customer perceived value, although this group of customers aren't revealed to be different from generation Y in terms of customer satisfaction and behavioral intention. However, both generation Y and generation Z have greater mean values comparing to generation X in all three variables tested in this study. Therefore, targeting generation X and generation Y will also help franchised Japanese restaurants in Bangkok to improve the customer's satisfaction and behavioral intention which can link to the customer loyalty as stated by Han and Ryu (2009).

This research lays on the solid theoretical fundamental, aims to achieve its objectives based on the appropriate identifies, and it is limited to conduct under the new integrated model. Hence, other models of behavioral intention or revising the research model should be considered carrying on further studies. In fact, there are more variables that might influence behavioral intention, customer satisfaction and customer perceived value such as restaurant image and perception of price (Han & Ryu, 2009; Ryu et al., 2012; Liu & Jang, 2009). Furthermore, this study was conducted in the context of franchised Japanese restaurants in Bangkok, yet with the rapid growth and diversity of franchised Japanese restaurants in other provinces in Thailand or other countries, it is possible to conduct the study with the different contexts in terms of areas or the other types of restaurants such as local restaurants. In addition, the survey method was only applied for gathering data. Therefore, to strengthen the understanding and further the implication of customer's behavioral intention, various methods such as qualitative approaches and the expanding of sample size could be applied to analyze and investigate the variables impacting behavioral intention in different scenarios and contexts.

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