



Original Article

Study of Consumer Preference Toward Food and Beverage Services Post COVID-19 Pandemic

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Abstract:

This study aims to identify the determining factors of consumer preferences in choosing food and beverage services, especially restaurants and cafés, after the COVID-19 pandemic. The study was conducted using a mixed methodology, incorporating both qualitative and quantitative research methodologies. Qualitative research was conducted through focus group discussions with selected target markets to determine the factors that encourage consumers to visit certain restaurants and/or cafes. The insights gained from the FGDs were then used to develop questions in the questionnaire, which formed part of the quantitative research. The questionnaire was distributed online and received approximately 200 responses, which were subsequently processed using SPSS software. Three main factors determining consumer preferences for food and beverage services were identified in this research: consumer behavior, consumer motivation, and the role of social media. These factors were further analyzed and processed into key variables to better understand consumer preferences. It is hoped that the results of this research can provide strategic insights for restaurant and café businesses to navigate changes in consumer behavior following the COVID-19 pandemic.

Keywords: Consumer Preference, Consumer Motivation, The Role of Social Media.

Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly altered consumer behavior in various aspects of life, including the selection of venues offering food and beverage services such as restaurants and cafes ([Barokah, S., Andina, A.N., & Anggiany, Z., 2020](#)). The impact of this pandemic extends beyond health considerations, encompassing shifts in people's consumption patterns and preferences for food and beverage services ([Shimpo M., Akamatsu R., & Kojima Y., 2022](#)). Amidst these changes, the restaurant and cafe industry faces the significant challenge of adapting to the new needs and expectations of post-pandemic consumers. Research on consumer preferences in selecting restaurants and cafes after the COVID-19 pandemic has become increasingly



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important to provide in-depth insights into how consumer behavior has changed and how the culinary industry can respond to these changes. Consumer behavior can be defined as the processes and activities undertaken by individuals in searching for, selecting, purchasing, using, evaluating, and disposing of products and services to satisfy their needs and desires ([Belch, G. E., & Belch, M. A., 2003](#)). These decisions are influenced by a variety of internal and external factors, including emotions, attitudes, preferences, demographics, social groups, and cultural backgrounds ([Martínez-Ruiz, M. P., & Gómez-Cantó, C. M., 2016](#)). Consumer behavior plays an important role in shaping preferences, determining the choices consumers make when purchasing goods and services, as well as the factors that influence these choices. Understanding consumer behavior is essential for companies to develop effective marketing strategies and meet the needs and preferences of their target audience ([Vishesh, 2020](#)).

Motivation is a psychological incentive or reason to do something. This information about the motives that drive human behavior is used in marketing, social sciences, and various other fields where understanding and influencing behavior is crucial ([Atkinson, J. W., 1966](#)). Understanding motivation is critical for comprehending individual differences and how people are driven to achieve their goals. Motivation can be interpreted as a person's direction in behavior or what causes someone to want to repeat a behavior and vice versa. Motivation can be influenced by various factors, including internal and external forces. One significant factor in motivation is the concept of needs ([Hattie, J., Hodis, F. A., & Kang, S. H., 2020](#)). The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on consumer motivations and preferences for food and beverages. During the pandemic, consumers experienced various changes in their lifestyles and priorities, leading to changes in their purchasing behavior and preferences for food and beverages. One major influence on consumer motivations and preferences for food and drink post-pandemic is the increased emphasis on convenience ([Mayasari et al., 2020](#)).

Social media has become an integral part of our daily lives, transforming how we communicate, gather information, and make purchasing decisions. This transformation significantly influences consumer preferences and shapes their perceptions of and interactions with brands and products ([Dhingra, A., 2023](#)). Research indicates that social media platforms are effective in building brand awareness and influencing consumer purchasing decisions. This is evident in the cited research, which highlights a positive relationship between the intention to purchase a product and actual purchasing behavior via social media. Moreover, social media serves as a valuable source of information for consumers when they search for product-related information ([Pütter, M., 2017](#)).

By understanding the factors that influence consumer preferences, restaurant and café business owners can develop more effective strategies to attract customers and maintain their market share. In this context, this research aims to investigate consumer preferences in choosing restaurants and cafés after the COVID-19 pandemic. Through a mixed methodology approach that combines qualitative and quantitative methods, this study will identify the factors that are the main considerations for consumers when selecting a place to eat after experiencing the pandemic. Thus, it is hoped that this research can make a significant contribution to understanding the dynamics of the restaurant and café market post-COVID-19 pandemic and provide valuable guidance for business owners in addressing new challenges and opportunities that arise in the culinary industry.

Methods

The research method used in this study is a mixed method, which means the author utilizes both qualitative and quantitative data collection. Mixed methods data collection is necessary to define the research problem and gain a broader perspective on potentially reliable factors ([Pluye & Hong, 2014](#)). In this study, the qualitative research method employed was focus group discussions. Focus group discussions

involve bringing together people from similar backgrounds or experiences to discuss a particular topic of interest ([Malhotra, N. K., 2010](#)). This is a form of qualitative research in which questions are asked about perceptions, attitudes, beliefs, opinions, or ideas. In focus group discussions, participants are free to interact with other group members; unlike other research methods, it encourages discussion among participants. Typically, it involves group interviews with small groups usually consisting of 8 to 12 people.

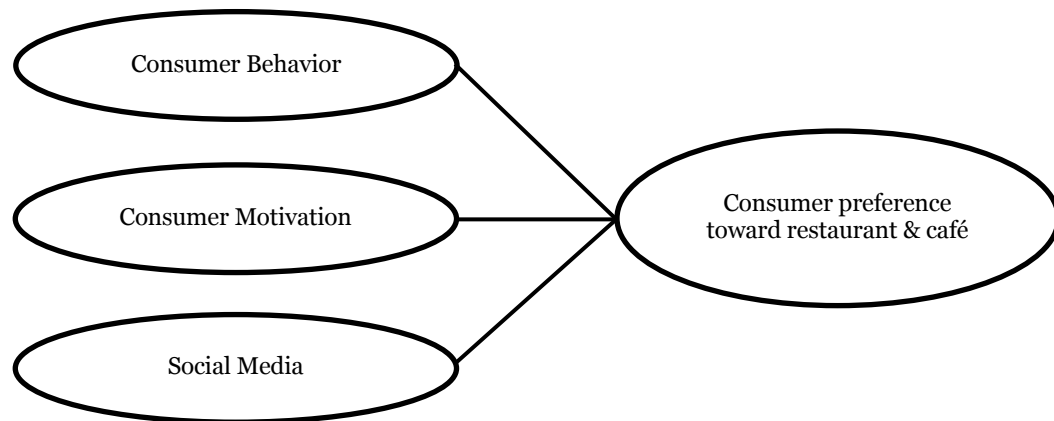


Figure 1. Analysis Model

After identifying keywords from the FGD results, the author processed these keywords into a questionnaire to assess the reliability of the variables identified. The keywords used for further data processing were consumer behaviour, consumer motivation, and the role of social media. The questionnaire comprised 15 questions about consumer behaviour, 20 questions about consumer motivation, and 12 questions about the role of social media. The survey method involved posing questions to respondents about their behaviour, intentions, attitudes, motivations, demographics, and lifestyle ([Malhotra, N. K., 2010](#)). The questionnaire was distributed online and received 213 responses, as per Malhotra's recommendation that a minimum of 200 respondents is needed for the data to be valid and representative of the population. In this research, three main aspects will be used to identify consumer preferences when visiting restaurants and cafes. From these aspects, the author will describe the factors to identify the variables to be tested.

Table 1. List of Questionnaire of Consumer Behavior Variable

No	Question
1 (x1.1)	The pandemic changed my view in making decisions about choosing a restaurant/cafe
2 (x1.2)	Post-pandemic, I often dine out
3 (x1.3)	Post-pandemic, I pay attention to the cleanliness reputation of restaurants/cafés
4 (x1.4)	Post-pandemic, I tend to seek recommendations regarding the cleanliness and comfort of a restaurant
5 (x1.5)	Post-pandemic, I prefer ordering food and drinks via delivery apps rather than directly from restaurants
6 (x1.6)	Post-pandemic, active communication from restaurants about the hygiene measures taken has increased my confidence in ordering food and drinks
7 (x1.7)	Post-pandemic, contactless payment options are a factor that influences my

	choices in ordering food and drinks
8 (x1.8)	Post-pandemic, I feel more comfortable ordering food and drinks for delivery or take-out rather than dining in
9 (x1.9)	Post-pandemic price changes influence my decisions in ordering food and drinks
10 (x1.10)	Post-pandemic, discounts or promotions influence my decisions in ordering food and drinks
11 (x1.11)	Post-pandemic, I seek information on the cleanliness and comfort of restaurants/cafes via social media
12 (x1.12)	I look for information about restaurants/cafés through Instagram
13 (x1.13)	Post-pandemic, I prefer clean/hygienic food
14 (x1.14)	Post-pandemic, the experience of ordering food and drinks online is more satisfying for me
15 (x1.15)	A customer satisfaction guarantee policy related to cleanliness increases my trust in a restaurant/café

Table 2. List of Questionnaire of Consumer Motivation Variable

No	Question
16 (x2.1)	Special discounts or promotions
17 (x2.2)	An opportunity to socialize or gather with friends or family
18 (x2.3)	A positive experience on previous visit
19 (x2.4)	Offering food or drinks that suit my preferences or desires
20 (x2.5)	The presence of additional facilities such as an outdoor area, free Wi-Fi, or a relaxing room
21 (x2.6)	Affordable prices or prices in accordance with the value provided
22 (x2.7)	Offering trending or unique menus or food concepts
23 (x2.8)	Good reputation of the restaurant/cafe
24 (x2.9)	The atmosphere or decoration of the restaurant/cafe
25 (x2.10)	Trending restaurant/café
26 (x2.11)	Cleanliness quality of food and drinks
27 (x2.12)	Receiving a high rating on Google or food and drink delivery service applications
28 (x2.13)	I have known and trusted this restaurant/cafe before
29 (x2.14)	Customer loyalty or reward programs from restaurants/cafes
30 (x2.15)	Innovation in providing a unique dining experience
31 (x2.16)	The restaurant/cafe is not too busy with visitors
32 (x2.17)	Ease of access or strategic location of the restaurant/cafe
33 (x2.18)	Comfortable and clean environment
34 (x2.19)	Availability of healthy or special diet food or drink options
35 (x2.20)	Friendly and good service from the restaurant/cafe staff motivates me to visit again

Table 3. List of Questionnaire of Social Media Role Variable

No	Question
36 (x3.1)	I always look for information before visiting a restaurant/café
37 (x3.2)	Easy access to find information about restaurants/cafes is important to me
38 (x3.3)	Social media makes it easier for me to find information about restaurants/cafés

- 39 (x3.4) I choose the restaurant/café based on recommendations from friends
- 40 (x3.5) I choose a restaurant/café that is trending on social media
- 41 (x3.6) I read reviews about restaurants/cafes on social media
- 42 (x3.7) Reviews (good or bad) about restaurants/cafes influence my decision-making
- 43 (x3.8) I use Google to find information about cafes/restaurants
- 44 (x3.9) I prefer visiting a restaurant/café that provides more complete information on social media compared to those that don't
- 45 (x3.10) I use Instagram to look for information about restaurants/cafés
- 46 (x3.11) I need complete information (address, menu, cleanliness information)
- 47 (x3.12) I expect restaurants/cafes to provide information about cleanliness on their Instagram

Results

Instrument Validity Test

The calculation involves correlating the score of each item with the total score using the Pearson Correlation technique. The test criteria state that if the correlation coefficient (r_{xy}) exceeds the critical r-table value of 0.361, the questionnaire item is deemed valid and considered a reliable data collection tool. A summary of the r_{xy} calculation results is provided in the table below.

Table 4. Validity Testing Results

Variable	Item	Correlation Coefficient	r table	Information
Consumer Behavior	1	0,577	0,361	Valid
	2	0,420	0,361	Valid
	3	0,538	0,361	Valid
	4	0,422	0,361	Valid
	5	0,586	0,361	Valid
	6	0,461	0,361	Valid
	7	0,556	0,361	Valid
	8	0,392	0,361	Valid
	9	0,643	0,361	Valid
	10	0,596	0,361	Valid
	11	0,605	0,361	Valid
	12	0,847	0,361	Valid
	13	0,632	0,361	Valid
	14	0,433	0,361	Valid
	15	0,596	0,361	Valid
Consumer Motivation	16	0,708	0,361	Valid
	17	0,417	0,361	Valid
	18	0,576	0,361	Valid
	19	0,370	0,361	Valid
	20	0,591	0,361	Valid
	21	0,641	0,361	Valid
	22	0,636	0,361	Valid
	23	0,543	0,361	Valid

	24	0,598	0,361	Valid
	25	0,572	0,361	Valid
	26	0,639	0,361	Valid
	27	0,686	0,361	Valid
	28	0,578	0,361	Valid
	29	0,500	0,361	Valid
	30	0,503	0,361	Valid
	31	0,504	0,361	Valid
	32	0,584	0,361	Valid
	33	0,367	0,361	Valid
	34	0,444	0,361	Valid
	35	0,596	0,361	Valid
Social Media Role	36	0,480	0,361	Valid
	37	0,467	0,361	Valid
	38	0,727	0,361	Valid
	39	0,682	0,361	Valid
	40	0,630	0,361	Valid
	41	0,691	0,361	Valid
	42	0,697	0,361	Valid
	43	0,761	0,361	Valid
	44	0,815	0,361	Valid
	45	0,549	0,361	Valid
	46	0,602	0,361	Valid
	47	0,598	0,361	Valid

According to the results of the instrument validity test, all correlation values exceed the critical r-table value of 0.361. Therefore, the question items related to these variables are deemed valid and can be utilized as a reliable data collection tool in this research.

Instrument Reliability Test

Instrument reliability testing is employed to ascertain the consistency of the instrument as a measuring tool, ensuring the trustworthiness of the measurement. Cronbach's alpha is utilized for this purpose, with an instrument considered more reliable if the alpha coefficient exceeds 0.60. A summary of the results of the questionnaire reliability test, as per the SPSS output, is presented in the table below.

Table 5. Reliability Testing Results

Variable	Cronbach Alpha	Cut Off	Information
Consumer Behavior	0,814	0,600	Reliable
Consumer Motivation	0,867	0,600	Reliable
Social Media Role	0,858	0,600	Reliable

According to the table, it is evident that the Cronbach's Alpha values for all variables exceed 0.6, indicating that all variables are deemed reliable and suitable for use as data collection tools.

Data Description

Table 6. Consumer Behavior Variable Table

Indicator	SD		D		N		A		SA		Avg
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	
X1.1	0	0,0	34	16,0	37	17,4	111	52,1	31	14,6	3,65
X1.2	8	3,8	60	28,2	30	14,1	103	48,4	12	5,6	3,24
X1.3	0	0,0	44	20,7	27	12,7	126	59,2	16	7,5	3,54
X1.4	0	0,0	41	19,2	21	9,9	134	62,9	17	8,0	3,60
X1.5	0	0,0	112	52,6	18	8,5	74	34,7	9	4,2	2,91
X1.6	5	2,3	19	8,9	9	4,2	147	69,0	33	15,5	3,86
X1.7	5	2,3	93	43,7	21	9,9	75	35,2	19	8,9	3,05
X1.8	0	0,0	112	52,6	17	8,0	73	34,3	11	5,2	2,92
X1.9	0	0,0	15	7,0	17	8,0	152	71,4	29	13,6	3,92
X1.10	0	0,0	1	0,5	3	1,4	165	77,5	44	20,7	4,18
X1.11	0	0,0	32	15,0	27	12,7	146	68,5	8	3,8	3,61
X1.12	0	0,0	3	1,4	6	2,8	161	75,6	43	20,2	4,15
X1.13	0	0,0	0	0,0	0	0,0	153	71,8	60	28,2	4,28
X1.14	0	0,0	100	46,9	23	10,8	79	37,1	11	5,2	3,00
X1.15	0	0,0	16	7,5	17	8,0	158	74,2	22	10,3	3,87
Average Consumer Behavior Variable											3,58

Based on the data provided, it is observed that respondents' responses to the Consumer Behavior variable yielded an average score of 3,58, indicating that the Consumer Behavior variable falls into the high category. The indicator rated highest by respondents was X1.13, "After the pandemic, I prefer clean/hygienic food," with an average score of 4,28. Conversely, the lowest-rated indicator was X1.5, " Post-pandemic, I prefer ordering food and drinks via delivery apps rather than directly from restaurants " with an average score of 2,91.

Table 7. Consumer Motivation Variable Table

Indicator	SD		D		N		A		SA		Avg
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	
X2.1	0	0,0	12	5,6	16	7,5	151	70,9	34	16,0	3,97
X2.2	0	0,0	22	10,3	21	9,9	161	75,6	9	4,2	3,74
X2.3	0	0,0	2	0,9	0	0,0	160	75,1	51	23,9	4,22
X2.4	0	0,0	3	1,4	18	8,5	169	79,3	23	10,8	4,00
X2.5	0	0,0	49	23,0	18	8,5	120	56,3	26	12,2	3,58
X2.6	0	0,0	14	6,6	27	12,7	129	60,6	43	20,2	3,94
X2.7	0	0,0	24	11,3	14	6,6	145	68,1	30	14,1	3,85

X2.8	0	0,0	0	0,0	0	0,0	135	63,4	78	36,6	4,37
X2.9	0	0,0	0	0,0	0	0,0	116	54,5	97	45,5	4,33
X2.10	1	0,5	29	13,6	8	3,8	103	48,4	72	33,8	4,01
X2.11	0	0,0	0	0,0	0	0,0	121	56,8	92	43,2	4,46
X2.12	0	0,0	0	0,0	6	2,8	156	73,2	51	23,9	4,21
X2.13	0	0,0	52	24,4	23	10,8	120	56,3	18	8,5	3,49
X2.14	0	0,0	146	68,5	15	7,0	52	24,4	0	0,0	2,56
X2.15	0	0,0	103	48,4	20	9,4	82	38,5	8	3,8	2,98
X2.16	0	0,0	44	20,7	27	12,7	122	57,3	20	9,4	3,55
X2.17	0	0,0	11	5,2	7	3,3	168	78,9	27	12,7	3,99
X2.18	0	0,0	0	0,0	0	0,0	142	66,7	71	33,3	4,43
X2.19	0	0,0	79	37,1	31	14,6	95	44,6	8	3,8	3,15
X2.20	0	0,0	6	2,8	13	6,1	148	69,5	46	21,6	4,10
Average Costumer Motivation Variable											3,85

Based on the data provided, it is evident that respondents' responses to the Consumer Motivation variable resulted in an average score of 3,85, categorizing it as high. The indicator rated highest by respondents was X2.11, "Cleanliness quality of food and drinks," with an average score of 4,46, followed closely by indicator X2.12 "Receiving a high rating on Google or food and drink delivery service applications" with an average of 4,43. On the other hand, the lowest-rated indicator was X2.14, "Customer loyalty or reward programs from restaurants/cafes" with an average score of 2.56.

Table 8. Social Media Role Variable Table

Indicator	SD		D		N		A		SA		Avg
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	
X3.1	0	0,0	17	8,0	23	10,8	145	68,1	28	13,1	3,86
X3.2	0	0,0	0	0,0	0	0,0	156	73,2	57	26,8	4,27
X3.3	0	0,0	0	0,0	0	0,0	150	70,4	63	29,6	4,30
X3.4	0	0,0	45	21,1	49	23,0	107	50,2	12	5,6	3,40
X3.5	0	0,0	28	13,1	24	11,3	148	69,5	13	6,1	3,69
X3.6	0	0,0	0	0,0	0	0,0	168	78,9	45	21,1	4,21
X3.7	2	0,9	69	32,4	35	16,4	98	46,0	9	4,2	3,20
X3.8	0	0,0	19	8,9	18	8,5	144	67,6	32	15,0	3,89
X3.9	0	0,0	0	0,0	0	0,0	122	57,3	91	42,7	4,43
X3.10	0	0,0	0	0,0	0	0,0	132	62,0	81	38,0	4,38
X3.11	0	0,0	0	0,0	0	0,0	131	61,5	82	38,5	4,38
X3.12	0	0,0	18	8,5	8	3,8	173	81,2	14	6,6	3,86
Average Social Media Role Variable											3,99

Based on the data provided, it is evident that respondents' responses to the Role of Social Media variable resulted in an average score of 3,99, categorizing it as high. The indicator rated highest by respondents was X3.9, "I prefer visiting a restaurant/café that provides more complete information on social media compared to those that don't" with an average score of 4,43. Conversely, the lowest-rated indicator was X3.7, "Reviews (good or bad) about restaurants/cafes influence my decision making," with an average score of 3,20.

Factor analysis in this research is employed to identify and determine the key factors influencing individuals in selecting a cafe/restaurant. This objective is achieved by conducting factor analysis on the factors reflected in the questionnaire items distributed to respondents. Following validity and reliability tests conducted previously on the questionnaire items, it was established that all items served as valid and reliable research instruments, warranting their inclusion in the factor analysis. To ascertain the factors individuals consider when choosing restaurants and cafes in the post-COVID-19 pandemic era and assess their appropriateness, a factor interdependence test is conducted initially.

Variable Interdependence Test

The factor interdependence test assesses whether a factor is correlated with other factors. It aims to identify factors that exhibit correlation with one another, as it is possible for multiple factors to be correlated. Only factors demonstrating correlation with other factors are retained for further analysis, while those showing minimal correlation with other factors are excluded. This testing process is conducted using Measures of Sampling Adequacy (MSA), Keizer-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) values, and Bartlett test results.

Measures of Sampling Adequacy (MSA)

The MSA value serves as an index for each factor to determine whether the sample taken in the research is adequate to establish partial relationships among the existing factors. Factors with MSA values below 0,5 must be excluded from the analysis, as a minimum MSA value of 0,5 is necessary to ensure sampling adequacy. This threshold indicates that the factor contributes significantly to the factors considered by individuals when choosing a restaurant/cafe. The MSA values from the anti-image correlation matrix are summarized in the following table:

Table 9. MSA Value

Factor	MSA Value
Consumer Behaviour	0,522
Consumer Motivation	0,512
Social Media Role	0,527

Table 9 presents the MSA value results, indicating that all factors produce an MSA value greater than 0,5. Therefore, it can be inferred that these three factors make a substantial contribution to consumer preferences in choosing a restaurant/café in the post-pandemic era.

Keizer-Meyer-Olkin Value (KMO)

Table 10. KMO Value

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		0,518
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	115,704
	df	3
	Sig.	0,000

The KMO table above displays a KMO value of 0,518, indicating that this research is suitable for conducting factor analysis as the KMO value exceeds the minimum threshold of 0,5.

Factor Extraction

Table 11. Factor Extraction

Component	Initial Eigenvalues		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	1,770	58,993	58,993
2	0,844	28,143	87,136
3	0,386	12,864	100,000

From the table above, one of the components has an eigenvalue above one, which means it is one of the groups of factors most considered by people when choosing a cafe/restaurant. Factors that have an eigenvalue of 1,770 are the main factors that people consider when choosing a cafe/restaurant, where the group of factors consisting of Consumer Behavior, Consumer Motivation, and the Role of Social Media are able to explain the variability of the model formed, namely 58,993%.

Loading Factor

After assessing the variability of Consumer Behavior, Consumer Motivation, and the Role of Social Media on the primary factors influencing people's choices in selecting a cafe/restaurant, a component matrix is employed to determine the contribution of each factor. The role of Social Media is particularly crucial in measuring consumer preferences in choosing a cafe/restaurant. The following are the results of the Loading Factor:

Table 12. Loading Factor

Factor	Loading Factor
<i>Consumer Behavior</i>	0,721
<i>Consumer Motivation</i>	0,886
<i>Social Media Role</i>	0,682

According to the results of the factor analysis in this research, the first factor that consumers consider when choosing a café/restaurant is Consumer Motivation, with the highest factor loading of 0.886. The second factor considered by consumers is Consumer Behavior, with a factor loading of 0.721. Finally, the factor that consumers consider when choosing a café/restaurant is the Role of Social Media, with a loading factor of 0.682.

Conclusion

In this research, the author identifies consumer preferences for food and beverage services (restaurants and cafés) after the COVID-19 pandemic. Through a mixed methodology approach that combines qualitative and quantitative methods, the author succeeded in identifying three main factors that influence consumer preferences, namely consumer behavior, consumer motivation, and the role of social media. The research results show that consumers tend to choose restaurants and

cafés that provide information about cleanliness and sanitation, comfort, ease of access, menu variations, quality of food and drinks, and prices. In addition, social media, especially Instagram, plays an important role as a source of information for consumers in searching for food and beverage services. This research provides strategic insight for restaurant and cafe businesses to be able to adapt their strategies to changes in consumer behavior after the COVID-19 pandemic. By understanding new consumer preferences, business owners can develop more effective marketing strategies to attract customers and maintain their market share.

Suggestion

1. Restaurants and cafes must pay special attention to cleanliness and sanitation in order to provide a sense of security to consumers. Information regarding the hygiene measures implemented must be clear and transparent.
2. Considering the important role of social media in influencing consumer preferences, business owners should be active in updating and managing content on social media platforms such as Instagram. Interesting and informative content can help attract the attention of potential consumers.
3. Restaurants and cafés need to continue to develop and update their menus to offer attractive variety to consumers. Apart from that, maintaining the quality of food and drinks is the key to maintaining consumer loyalty.
4. While quality and cleanliness are important, price remains the deciding factor for most consumers. Business owners must ensure that the prices they offer are competitive with the value offered by competitors while providing a decent profit for their business.
5. Building strong relationships with consumers can increase loyalty and increase long-term business opportunities. Providing positive experiences to consumers and responding to their feedback quickly and effectively can help strengthen those relationships.

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