Culinary destination consumer-based brand equity: exploring the influence of tourist gaze in relation to FoodPorn on social media

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ABSTRACT

The present paper investigates the impact of FoodPorn, or food photographs, on user-generated content (UGC) and its role in influencing the perceptions of 'food trippers' toward local culinary precincts in a metropolitan area in Australia. Adopting a mix-methods approach, 20 semi-structured interviews with food trippers revealed four antecedents of why they gaze upon FoodPorn on UGC, including usefulness, ease of use, affective gratifications and source credibility. Findings from interviews informed a large-scale online survey investigating residents' perceptions of three local culinary precincts. Data (n=593) was analysed using structural equation modelling (SEM). Results from SEM revealed that the effectiveness of UGC in relation to FoodPorn and culinary precinct attractiveness largely depends on the benefits food trippers perceive when gazing upon the food imagery. This research advances our understanding of how gazing upon FoodPorn enhances culinary destination consumer-based brand equity. This study developed an extension of a model that measures culinary precinct destination attractiveness, and the role of FoodPorn in influencing perceptions held by Brisbane consumers of culinary precincts. Findings provide important recommendations for destination marketing organisations (DMOs) both in Australia and worldwide.

Keywords: foodporn; tourist gaze; consumer-based brand equity; culinary precincts; user-generated content.

Introduction

Cuisine is often used in destination branding to achieve differentiation from rival places in fiercely competitive markets (Stone et al., 2018). FoodPorn, or food photographs on social media, gives travellers opportunities to 'pre-taste' culinary destinations before visiting. FoodPorn allows people to create user-generated content (UGC) to document and share their culinary travel experiences with others through food photographs on social media (Liu et al., 2013; Ranteallo & Andilolo, 2017). The term FoodPorn emerged from pornography of food which the need for sex as thus is for food (Taylor & Keating, 2018). Viewing FoodPorn on UGC is comparable to watching online pornography particularly in terms of photographs being made to look appealing for stimulating psychological consequences of viewers (de Alarcón et al., 2019; Ranteallo & Andilolo, 2017). As viewing online pornography leads to higher engagement in various gratifying sexual activities, FoodPorn exposure may also bring pleasure and enjoyment to viewers, eventually gratifying their needs and increasing UGC adoption to view FoodPorn.

While UGC research in tourism focuses largely on factors affecting the adoption of UGC in sharing travel experiences and its influence on traveller's destination choices, existing studies are limited in terms of content types, travellers and destinations (Shakeela & Weaver, 2016). What is equally important, but often overlooked is the exploration into antecedents and consequences of adopting UGC from the media receiver's perspective (Ayeh et al., 2013). This limitation also extends to the role of FoodPorn in attracting travellers to a destination. Given that FoodPorn is a growing trend, further research is needed to understand why travellers utilise FoodPorn, and what role this plays in their attraction toward a destination (Wong et al., 2019). With increasing influence of UGC, destination marketing organisations (DMOs) are gradually

losing their influence as travellers are searching online for ‘real’ information generated by ‘real’ visitors. UGC, therefore, creates challenges for DMOs in managing their desired image and creating congruency with traveller perceptions (Munar, 2012).

The present paper responds to these limitations by investigating the impact of FoodPorn on UGC and its role in influencing the perceptions of ‘food trippers’ toward local culinary precincts in a metropolitan area in Australia. Conceptually underpinned by a distinct market segment called ‘day-tripper’, food trippers are people who travel locally to specific destinations for food experiences including day trips or shorter distances (Chhabra, 2006; Lenglet & Giannelloni, 2016). While the model of consumer-based brand equity (CBBE) is applicable to assess perceptions held by consumers of a destination, merely utilising this model may overlook incorporating other theoretical frameworks in order to fully understand the impact of UGC on destination brand performance in this digital age. Therefore, synthesising theoretical frameworks of the technology acceptance model (TAM), the uses and gratifications theory (UGT) and the tourist gaze with the model of CBBE was expected to assist in achieving the aim of this paper.

To address the overall aim, the following two research objectives were developed: i) to explore the antecedents of gazing upon FoodPorn on UGC and ii) to develop and test a model of culinary destination consumer-based brand equity for measuring culinary precinct destination attractiveness. To achieve these research objectives, a mixed methods approach was designed. However, it is important to note that the purpose of this research was only to develop an extended model of CBBE which enabled measuring culinary precinct attractiveness and the role of FoodPorn in influencing CBBE of culinary precincts.

The remainder of this paper is organised as follows. First, aforementioned theoretical underpinnings and existing research gaps are reviewed. Second, research methods and data

analysis techniques are discussed. Third, findings derived from interviews and hypothesis testing results are discussed to answer the research objectives. Finally, this paper concludes by highlighting theoretical contributions practical implications while limitations as the suggestion for further research are provided.

Study area

The context of this study is culinary precincts in a metropolitan area in Australia. It is acknowledged that precincts are points of concentration where visitors possibly spend most of their time and money during the trips (Griffin & Hayllar, 2009; Howard, 2010). In turn, precincts can generate economic growth and become financial hubs for many cities and countries. However, little attention has been paid to understanding the importance of development culinary precincts. Therefore, the culinary precincts of interest are: i) South Bank; ii) Sunnybank; and iii) Broadbeach.

For South Bank, it is a recreation precinct situated in the heart of the Brisbane city with a key focus for convenience, multi-cultural and culinary. South Bank's promotional marketing activities are managed by South Bank Cooperation through integrated marketing communication channels including Eat South Bank website (www.eatsouthbank.com.au) and @EatSouthBank and @VisitSouthBank on Instagram (Brisbane Marketing, 2018; South Bank Corporation, 2017).

Sunnybank is home to the city's largest Asian community in Brisbane, where the biggest Asian food festival in Brisbane is held. Although there is no official DMO responsible for Sunnybank's promotional marketing activities, Brisbane City Council has worked with the local businesses to contribute to the revitalisation of Sunnybank as a culinary precinct with a focus on Asian street food. This encourages effective and genuine community engagement where visitors,

local residents and businesses can reconnect (Shopping Centre News, 2019; Sunnybank Plaza, 2019).

Within driving distance for a day trip, Broadbeach, as a leisure precinct, is situated in the coastal town of the Gold Coast city (City of Gold Coast, 2014, 2016). This precinct hosts food, wine and music festivals where visitors can experience a range of leisure activities. Broadbeach Alliance and Destination Gold Coast are DMOs responsible for promoting Broadbeach mainly through Destination Gold Coast website (www.destinationgoldcoast.com) and @DestinationGoldCoast on Instagram (Broadbeach Gold Coast, 2020).

Literature Review

Importance of destination image for competitiveness

With increasing global competition by destinations for visitors, today's consumers are spoilt by destination choice for them to consider. This has led to the development of alternative destinations, whereby a destination can easily be substituted by one another due to similarities in destination attributes (Cimbaljević et al., 2019). However, the only Top-of-Mind (ToM) destinations with attributes perceived as attractive and salient to consumers still can achieve sustainable competitive advantage (Kozak & Baloglu, 2012; Stepchenkova & Li, 2014). Therefore, it is challenging for DMOs who are responsible for developing promotional strategies to ensure that their destination brand resides well the minds of consumers. To overcome such challenges, the rise of destination branding as a powerful marketing tool has attained recognition among destination researchers and practitioners as it can assist destinations in their sustainable positioning in fiercely competitive markets (Pike & Page, 2014).

Although a destination can be branded, branding a destination is more complex due to the intangible nature of travel experiences. Since there is no way for potential visitors to directly experience such unique destination attributes in advance, image has been widely acknowledged as a core construct when branding a destination (Blain et al., 2005; Pike et al., 2018). Much tourism research considers image as a way of communication between a destination and its potential visitors by giving them a pre-taste of what a destination has to offer without actual visits. Nevertheless, while an image of a destination is formed residing well in the minds of consumers, Beerli and Martín (2004) noted that their perceptions toward a destination still can be changed over time especially when they are exposed to media or noted as image formation agents in the destination image literature.

Given media exposure can produce effects on consumers' perceptions of destinations, the importance of perception research in tourism has been raised because of the 'perception is reality' proposition earlier stated by Thomas's theorem in 1920 (Thomas & Thomas, 1928, p. 572 cited in Patton, 2002, p. 96; Pike, 2016, p. 200). Similarly, as Pike (2016, p. 200) further emphasised that, "whether an individual's perceived images are correct is not as important as what the consumer actually believes to be true". That is, utilising media to create unrealistic experiences can be problematic for DMOs in the future since consumers' perceptions toward a destination become their reality yet powerful in determining subsequent attitudinal and behavioural outcomes (Dolnicar & Huybers, 2007; Dore & Crouch, 2003).

Visiting through gazing: destination image formation and the tourist gaze

Within the destination image literature, Gunn (1972) proposed that an individual's image of a destination can be formed through two types of information sources: organic and induced. Key

differences that distinguish one from another are the degrees of control, market penetration and credibility that a DMO has over on the formation of an image and its development. Building on the work of Gunn's (1972), Gartner (1993) identified eight different types of image formation agents. This typology argues that organic agent receives highest credibility since it comes from individuals' long-term knowledge and their actual visitation. However, when individuals have little direct experience or knowledge about a destination, they actively search for information from other people who are perceived as credible and knowledgeable. This refers to solicited organic agent which often comes into play in the form of word-of-mouth (WOM). Conversely, unsolicited organic agent corresponds to the situation when individuals receive unsought information from others who may have visited a destination.

Although these image formation agents are different in nature, what these have in common is that offering potential visitors the opportunity to vicariously travel to many destinations at the same time without having to travel. Indeed, this proposition of destination image formation lies in the concept of the tourist gaze coined by Urry (1990). The tourist gaze believes a destination can be perceived through a way of seeing which later becomes one's travel experience through photography. Thus, when individuals visit a destination, taking photographs is a means of capturing reality. While there is no conclusive evidence indicating key outcomes from gazing, Woodside and Martin (2015) assumed that the nature of the tourist gaze can have direct impacts on; i) understanding/interpretation; ii) evaluation; iii) indexing; iv) descriptions; and v) intents to visit, revisit or recommend destinations.

Following pioneering studies of Gunn (1972) and Gartner (1993), tourism research applied the tourist gaze to explore the influence of media on consumers' destination choice. However, much of the research largely focused on traditional agents such as films, commercials,

postcards, newspapers and magazines. Although these traditional agents have previously proven to create favourable destination imagery among viewers, the effectiveness of these agents is being questioned as they may be executed covertly by DMOs (Huang & Lee, 2010; Jeong et al., 2012; María Munar, 2011; Markwick, 2001).

During the last decade, the power of social media has broadened new opportunities for content creation among consumers. This has led to the emergence and proliferation of user-generated content (UGC) which destination images are increasingly formed by consumers' actual travel experiences shared on social media. Since UGC is created by 'actual' visitors without being controlled by DMOs, UGC has become a trusted source of information among consumers (Cox et al., 2009). However, due to the growing power of conversations on UGC, brands have tried to make use of UGC for marketing purposes. In fact, this has led to the emergence of two different UGC content types: organic and sponsored (Kim & Song, 2018). Organic UGC refers to when consumers share their opinions on social media which are completely genuine and not being compensated with rewards from the brands. Contrastingly, sponsored UGC refers to when marketers compensate consumers in exchange of spreading positive conversations about their brand on social media; hence, consumers may reduce their genuine opinions and respond favourably as requested by the content sponsors. While sponsored UGC is widely used by marketers to minimise consumers' sceptical attitudes toward the brands on social media, the integrity of sponsored UGC itself has become an issue and increasingly discussed in the existing literature. One plausible reason is that consumers become more sophisticated in their media content preferences and understand that sponsored UGC is another form of overt commercials covertly controlled by the brands.

Likewise, recent research considers UGC as the double-edged sword. DMOs can make use of it or loss of control of their online destination brand reputation over UGC, especially when UGC exaggerates or misleads consumers into thinking more than what a destination can offer. As consumers are spoiled for choice of available destinations and media consumption alternatives, further research should be carried out to investigate the impact of UGC adoption on the formation process of destination image throughout destination brand attractiveness within this growing social media environment (Chung & Buhalis, 2008; Parra-López et al., 2011).

Antecedents of user-generated content (UGC) adoption for gazing

Since UGC has grown in popularity, UGC research in tourism has been paid to understanding consumers' adoption of UGC from the perspectives of the technology acceptance model (TAM) and the uses and gratifications theory (UGT) which have been commonly cited in the tourism literature (Lee et al., 2012; Oliveira et al., 2020; Ukpabi & Karjaluoto, 2018).

Technology acceptance model (TAM)

Originally proposed by Davis (1989), TAM was in fact developed based upon Ajzen and Fishbein's (1980) theory of reasoned action suggesting that perceived usefulness (PU) and perceived ease of use (PEU) are key determinants of individuals' acceptance of the technology adoption. In the tourism literature, PU and PEU have proved salient in determining consumers' adoption of UGC in different travel phases and contexts (Ukpabi & Karjaluoto, 2018). In relation to the adoption of UGC for gazing, previous research noted that since photographs on UGC can portray destination attributes, consumers who adopt UGC for gazing upon such photographs can vicariously travel to different destinations at the same time without actual visits. By having virtually travelled to destinations in advance, UGC adoption is considered useful as it gives

viewers many chances of making their best possible travel decisions (H. Kim & Stepchenkova, 2015; Wong et al., 2019). More importantly, when time becomes a barrier for consumers to process detailed information, photographs are most useful as storylines are portrayed in a relatively straightforward manner (Li et al., 2016).

Over time, features of social media platforms accommodating UGC have been developed. Such features make all forms of participation easy for consumers to adopt and achieve their intended tasks including but not limited to sharing travel experiences and connecting with other like-minded people (Ayeh, 2015; Casaló et al., 2010; Kang & Schuett, 2013; Lee et al., 2012). Similarly, Bilgihan et al., (2016) believe UGC adoption means the less time spent searching for trusted information. Often, this can be seen in the case of highly dedicated food-themed UGC which consumers make use of the content of interest to ease out irrelevant, less credible or exaggerated content on social media. Consequently, they can quickly find tailored information about restaurant recommendations as intended at ease (Andersson et al., 2016; Wang, 2011; Wong et al., 2019). This is particularly evident in the context of gazing upon photographs on UGC given the fact that textual UGC may require users more time to process the text. Thus, adopting UGC for gazing photographs is often more effective in helping potential visitors easily visualise destination attributes offered at a destination (Casaló et al., 2011; Muñoz-Leiva et al., 2012).

Uses and gratifications theory (UGT)

Since social media has changed the landscape of promoting destinations online, what never changes is the need of high-quality informative content to assist potential visitors during the decision-making process. However, it is noted that consumers may indeed also seek for different

affective stimuli from UGC adoption for their needs to be gratified (Cyr et al., 2006; Lee et al., 2012; Teo et al., 1999; Wang et al., 2017). One theoretical based approach that has been commonly used to understand how people utilise specific media to gratify, or fulfil, their needs is the uses and gratifications theory (UGT). Earlier UGT studies noted that key gratifications commonly sought from media usage include information, personal identity, social interaction and entertainment (Cheung et al., 2011; Jahn & Kunz, 2012; McQuail, 1994).

Given the rise of UGC, research has over time progressed attempting to better understand changing gratifications sought from different types of new media and consumption patterns (Chen et al., 2014; Kang & Schuett, 2013). For example, some studies proposed that affective gratifications may be able to incorporate complex aspects of affective stages beyond enjoyment and entertainment, as seen in the case of gazing upon touristic photographs on UGC (Bartsch, 2012; Bartsch et al., 2010; Oliver, 2008). Recent UGC research in culinary tourism notes that consumers adopt UGC for gazing upon food photographs because they merely want to feel gratified with the feelings of pleasure, enjoyment and entertainment. Likewise, research on food blogging shows that witnessing other people's culinary travel experiences on social media can make them feel nostalgic about their culinary trips in the past. Thus, UGC adoption for gazing upon FoodPorn, for example, can both retrieve memories and prolong pleasure as well as enjoyment of culinary tourism experiences (Liu et al., 2013; Ranteallo & Andilolo, 2017).

It is interesting to note that when consumers feel gratified after adoption of UGC, their perceived enjoyment, for example, may produce greater intensity and engagement on UGC leading to increased loyalty toward the brand. Jahn and Kunz (2012) applied the UGT in conjunction with involvement and consumer engagement theories to investigate the impact of brand fan-pages on brand loyalty. Their research shows that gratifications obtained can lead to

higher usage intensity and higher engagement of the brand fan-pages. In other words, both intensity and engagement can mediate the relationships between antecedents of participating on brand fan-pages and brand loyalty.

Source credibility

UGC research in tourism acknowledges the importance of source credibility in determining consumers' UGC adoption for travel planning purposes (Ayeh, 2015; Cosenza et al., 2015; Veasna et al., 2013). Source credibility as a multifaceted construct being composed of two dimensions: trustworthiness and expertise. Trustworthiness is extent to which the content creators are perceived as honest and believable with integrity. Expertise refers to the content creators are considered being experts in particular areas given their extensive knowledge and skills.

With greater access to information on UGC, recent research stressed that confusion arising from information overload can negatively contribute to the formation of destination images. This in turn may be misleading causing negative disconfirmation of expectations, and perhaps less willingness to adopt UGC for travel planning purposes (Johnson & Kaye, 2015; Tham et al., 2013; Thomson et al., 2012). To avoid such information overload, consumers are more selective when searching for credible information sources on UGC that also they can trust. Although it is possible for DMOs to make use of UGC to increase reach wider audiences, current research shows that consumers may not be entirely convinced to visit a destination simply because of credible information sources (Hsiao et al., 2013; Lee et al., 2012; Veasna et al., 2013).

Destination consumer-based brand equity

Within the destination branding literature, one theoretical model that has been commonly used to assist destination brand performance measurement is the model of consumer-based brand equity (CBBE) originally proposed in the marketing literature by Aaker (1995) and Keller (1993). The concept of destination CBBE is to indicate how well a destination lies in the consumers' minds. Given the multidimensional nature of destination CBBE, the model typically consists of the following five core constructs: destination brand awareness, destination brand image, destination brand quality, destination brand value and attitudinal destination brand loyalty.

The process of building destination CBBE begins with increasing consumers' destination brand awareness which refers to the ability of potential visitors to retrieve information about a destination from their past travel experiences. In addition, either having seen or heard of a destination from external sources of information such as photographs on UGC, this can make potential visitors become more aware of a destination (Horng et al., 2012). If a destination brand can be easily recognised by potential visitors, it is likely to secure a favourable place in their minds. Subsequently, destination brand image can alter their perceptions when it comes to evaluating destination alternatives (Boo et al., 2009; Horng et al., 2012).

Destination brand quality refers to what potential visitors think of the overall superiority of destination attributes. Hence, the higher quality of destination attributes is perceived by them, the more they are likely to feel satisfied leading to increased loyalty, as well as their intention to visit, revisit or make recommendations about a destination to their social networks (Dedeoğlu et al., 2019; Horng et al., 2012). For destination brand value, potential visitors often compare in relation to what is to be perceived and what to be given. For instance, when they want to experience local cuisine only available at this particular destination, they may however become

less interested in this choice given money and time spent for travelling to this destination (Boo et al., 2009; Pike et al., 2010; Tasci, 2016).

Considering the dependent variable of the destination CBBE model, previous research suggests that destination brand loyalty can be measured by two different but intertwined dimensions: behavioural and attitudinal destination brand loyalty (Bianchi et al., 2014). Behavioural destination brand loyalty is used for measuring the visiting frequency or time spent at a destination per visit. Attitudinal destination brand loyalty is most appropriate when measuring the attitudinal commitment of a consumer has toward a destination. This refers to when potential visitors intend to visit or revisit a destination themselves, or simply having this destination as their preferred choice for a travel trip in the future (Pike & Bianchi, 2016).

Given different travel contexts and the heterogeneity of potential visitor preferences, the importance of these destination CBBE constructs may be different and vary depending on certain contexts (Boo et al., 2009; Horng et al., 2012; Pike et al., 2010; Tsai et al., 2013). Therefore, some modifications may be required to improve suitability. For example, Tsai et al., (2013) argued that since the concept of brand equity is multidimensional in nature, the brand equity itself can be posited as a higher-order construct to measure which construct within the CBBE model contributes most to the brand equity.

However, although the importance of branding has gained recognition in the tourism literature since the late 1990s, it remains unclear on how the destination CBBE should be developed to best measure destination brand performance over time (Horng, Liu, Chou, et al., 2012; Pike & Bianchi, 2016). Furthermore, since UGC has grown in relevance and gazing upon FoodPorn may aid in forming images of culinary destinations, this is challenging for DMOs to track how well a culinary destination brand lies in the consumers' minds and monitor the level of

congruence between the destination brand identity and the actual destination brand image as perceived by consumers on social media.

Considering the proceeding discussion, the present research aimed to develop an extended model that measures culinary precinct attractiveness, and the role of FoodPorn in influencing perceptions of three unique local culinary precincts held by residents. The following hypotheses guiding this present research are highlighted in Figure 1.

H1: Intensity of gazing upon food photos on social media positively *mediates* the relationship between antecedents of consumers' gazing and destination brand equity.

H2: Engagement when gazing upon food photos on social media positively *mediates* the relationship between antecedents of consumers' gazing and destination brand equity.

H3: Antecedents of consumers' gazing upon food photos on social media positively *influences* destination brand equity.

Methodology

Study One – exploring the antecedents of gazing upon FoodPorn on UGC

Research design

As an exploratory stage of this research, Study One involved using semi-structured interviews with a photo-elicitation technique to explore why food trippers gaze' upon FoodPorn on UGC. Although the use of semi-structured interviews is primarily based on an interview guide, this does not restrict the conversation that research participants might want to bring out during the

interviews. By incorporating a photo-elicitation technique into semi-structured interviews, this is particularly useful as the use of photographs in each interview can trigger conversations allowing the researcher to further explore narratives of culinary precincts held by participants as food trippers (Andersson et al., 2016; Kim & Stepchenkova, 2015).

For these reasons, Study One thus required information-rich participants. Using a combination of purposive and snowball sampling techniques, participants were recruited mainly through the researchers' networks on a basis that they would: i) best inform and enhance understanding of the FoodPorn phenomenon; ii) be more familiar to three unique culinary precincts under investigation; and iii) be more realistic in their intentions for first-time or repeat visitation to local culinary precincts. While a purposive sampling technique is open to the potential for bias in selection, a snowball sampling technique was employed to maximise the diversity aiming at reducing biases (Baltar & Brunet, 2012; Teddlie & Yu, 2007). Although there is no total agreement on the sample for qualitative research, it is recommended to conduct interviews until data saturation is reached (Guest et al., 2006). For Stage One, 20 semi-structured interviews were conducted with food trippers who had a special interest in online food photography and culinary tourism.

Underpinned by the uses and gratifications theory (UGT), the tourist gaze and the technology acceptance model (TAM), interview questions were pre-determined and sequenced in a logical order of topics. When a photo-elicitation technique was applied, participants were presented with eight photos of FoodPorn chosen from different sources on social media such as accounts controlled by consumers, DMOs, restaurants, and private companies. Some of these FoodPorn were merely presented without being embedded with geographic locations, hashtags,

the names of restaurants or even the descriptions. This was purposely sought to observe whether features of social media affected participants' gazing and guessing abilities.

These interviews were carried out in a metropolitan area in Australia over a period of month in December 2016. Each interview typically lasted 30 to 45 minutes and was audio-recorded and professionally transcribed. Coding of data was performed using NVivo, a qualitative data analysis software, for subsequent qualitative data analysis. To discover patterns and make comparisons in data, thematic analysis was deemed appropriate since themes emerged during interviews were to explore antecedents of UGC adoption for gazing upon FoodPorn. (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Tseng et al., 2015). Once the process of data coding was completed, thematic maps were created by the researchers to visualise high-level main themes and respective sub-themes. Although simple counting of words used by participants may aid in indicating level of importance, Sandelowski (2001) exemplified that when participants who mentioned the word 'angry' less frequently, they were not actually less angry than anybody else. Thus, the following presentation of themes was thus sequenced based on how they emerged from the interview transcripts.

Research findings

Of 20 participants, there was a relatively equal representation of females and males. These participants aged between 20 to 52 years and they all resided in the same metropolitan city in Australia, where this present research was undertaken. Overall, findings revealed four antecedents of food trippers' gazing upon FoodPorn on UGC including usefulness, ease of use, affective gratifications, and source credibility. These four antecedents contribute to the destination branding literature in the context of culinary tourism within the social media

environment. Table 1 presents antecedents and descriptive categories. Each of the antecedents is discussed in greater detail below.

Insert Table 1 here

Perceived usefulness

Some participants believed that gazing was considered useful if it was possible to gratify their informational, decisional utility and surveillance needs. Due to the intangible nature of travel experiences, gazing enabled participants as food trippers to learn from other people's past travel experiences through the way of gazing. When cost and time considerations constituted as important elements of their travel decisions, gazing reassured participants by eliminating the risks possibly associated with culinary precinct choices prior to making their travel decisions and the actual visits. The following selected quotes highlight how gazing assisted participants to accomplish tasks making gazing upon FoodPorn considered useful to participants as food trippers:

> "it is kind of […] helps you decide where you are going to go […] we have become a society where it is kind of we are based on social media now" (P9, F).

> "I want to be able to learn more about food styling or learn more about a particular cuisine or learn more about the photography style of things" (P11, F).

Perceived ease of use

Participants believed that the practice of gazing was free of effort; consequently, gazing helped them easily accomplish their intended tasks such as planning, seeking inspiration and

information, and staying connected with other like-minded people on UGC. Furthermore, giving likes or comments on UGC when gazing was convenient yet impulsive. One participant explained, "that [like] is the instant reaction thing, especially if my first reaction, oh, I really like this photo, I will just like it; so, it is impulsive. I think it is also to acknowledge the work that other people do" (P14, F). In other words, the ease of use causes impulsivity involving participants' immediate responses and unplanned reactions to visually pleasing FoodPorn.

With advance technologies and social media platforms freely available for food trippers to gaze upon other people's FoodPorn, gazing does not necessarily need to be complicated in order to gratify one's convenient utility needs. Thus, FoodPorn can even further intensify the dynamics of the gaze since gazing is free of effort to achieve such intended tasks.

Perceived affective gratifications

When purely in hopes of enjoyment, fun, excitement, pleasure, relaxation and nostalgia, participants believed gazing was able to gratify such affective needs. Furthermore, gazing was believed to evoke their emotions, and subsequently developed participants' feelings toward culinary precincts. What is more interesting is that when participants enjoyed gazing FoodPorn on UGC, continuous usage of UGC resulted in increased time spent for gazing and the frequency of usage in culinary travel planning. The following quotes illustrate why participants believed gazing brought both pleasure and enjoyment to them:

> "We are built to like and look at pretty things. The idea of FoodPorn has made – it is to make food look more attractive and mouth-watering and amazing" (P13, F).

> "Beautiful food is an art [..] everyone is attracted to beautiful stuff […] just to see what is on trend" (P14, F).

Source credibility

Participants believed gazing upon FoodPorn on UGC provided them with opportunities to search genuine reviews and quality information from more publicly trusted sources. However, they admitted that they were more selective when it came to seeking such information to support their decision-making process with unfamiliar destination for example. The following quote emphasised why the credibility of UGC was important to participants:

> "I think I am drawn more to accounts that have a personality behind it and have someone genuinely behind it. I think honesty and sincerity is what is important. If they engage and they respond to your comment – it is a little bit of validation, but it is the engagement" (P11, M).

Photo-elicitation: manifest and latent levels of gazing

Findings from the gazing upon FoodPorn activity using a photo-elicitation technique revealed two distinct levels of gazing exhibited by participants: manifest and latent levels. When participants were invited to gaze upon eight FoodPorn in the interviews, some of them gazed more deeply than others to elicit and understand hidden meaning embedded in FoodPorn. Beyond a manifest level where culinary precinct attributes appeared on the surface structure of FoodPorn content, these participants gazed more deeply at the latent level. Table 2 summarises a list of manifest and latent culinary precinct attributes elicited by participants.

Table 2 inserts here

Interestingly, manifest and latent attributes were shown to both positively and negatively affect perceptions of three culinary precincts held by participants as food trippers. For example, one attribute identified as food and restaurant scenes featuring in two different FoodPorn content was shown to reduce the likelihood of visitation to culinary precincts among participants. The following quotes exemplify how food and restaurant scenes elicited at a manifest level affected participants' perception differently:

> "The place is beautiful because I can imagine – I can see myself siting there, drinking cocktails and looking at the river" (P14, F).

> "I don't even know what that is. If you are going to show photos of food, it needs to be clear what it is" (P20, M).

Similarly, latent attributes also affected perceptions of culinary precincts held by participants as food trippers in different ways. The following quotes contrast how cleanliness and dirtiness identified as latent attributes change the perceptions of participants towards culinary precincts:

> "It is really clean. It looks like it is a beautiful place to eat; be a lovely experience; and I am drawn to clean access" (P11, F).

> "That photograph, to me, wreaks of mess and untidiness and it puts me off going there" (P9, F).

Implications for Study Two

These findings addressed the first research objective by exploring the antecedents of consumers' gazing upon FoodPorn on UGC namely: usefulness, ease of use, affective gratifications and source credibility. These four antecedents led to the development of an extended model of

destination CBBE for measuring culinary precinct attractiveness, and the role of FoodPorn in influencing perceptions of three unique local culinary precincts held by residents. Despite the fact that Study One was exploratory in nature, the pattern of findings was somehow similar yet still different from what other previous studies earlier identified in relation to the UGT, the tourist gaze and the TAM as theoretical underpinnings of this present research. Therefore, findings of Study One were to assist the development of an online questionnaire in Study Two.

Insert Figure 1 here

Study Two: investigating residents' perception of three unique local culinary precincts

Study Two aimed to investigate the role of FoodPorn in influencing CBBE of three unique local culinary precincts. Data was collected for testing the proposed theoretical model for measuring culinary precinct attractiveness from the perspective of residents. Measures of all constructs presented in the proposed theoretical model (see Figure 1).

The population of interest was a representative sample of Brisbane residents who both engaged and did not engage in FoodPorn activities on social media. This was to see whether different levels of intensity and engagement when gazing upon FoodPorn influenced their perceptions of three local culinary precincts held by residents. Thus, one inclusion sampling criterion was residing in the areas of Brisbane and aged over 18 to participate in this study. Convenience sampling was applied for respondent recruitment. Members of an online marketing research panel were invited by email to participate during February 2018. From a total of 614 questionnaires completed by respondents, data screening and cleansing recommended removing

21 unengaged responses from the data set which resulted in 593 usable responses from Brisbane residents.

Results

Sample characteristics

The characteristics of respondents are presented in Table 3. There was equal representation of both gender groups while most respondents were in middle-aged. Given that more than half (59.3%) of them were married, 66% of them had no children. Almost half of the respondents completed high school education (45%) and 49.5% had annual household incomes of less than $50,000. Over 70% of them had been living in Brisbane for more than 5 years, and nearly half (42.7%) was willing to travel more than 15 kilometres for a meal. However, using their private car was the most preferred mode of transport (89.5%), meaning that visiting a culinary precinct for a meal may be influenced by travel distance and mode of transport.

Insert Table 3 here

Previous visitation and likelihood to visit culinary precincts

Over the last 6 months, most of respondents (93.4%) had previously visited restaurants and cafes. Among three culinary precincts, 79.3% of the respondents had mostly been to South Bank however less than half (39.3%) had visited to Sunnybank. The likelihood is relatively higher that respondents will be considering visiting and revisit South Bank than Sunnybank and Broadbeach in the next 6 months for restaurants and cafes. One plausible reason is that South Bank as a culinary precinct destination is centrally located in Brisbane's inner city while the respondents

recruited for this study are Brisbane residents. However, given lower levels of interest in visiting these destinations as compared to their previous visitation responses, these results might be of interests to practitioners to measure their destination brand performance over time.

The influence of gazing upon FoodPorn on previous visitation

While 46 % admitted that they visited a restaurant and café because of the food photos which they had previously seen on social media, less than 40% had been used to post food photos on social media. Result suggested that most respondents tended to be passive than active users when coming to creating engaging with activities on social media. Furthermore, results showed that a minority of them admitted that they regularly went looking for food photos on social media (5.2%), but most of them never liked or commented on food photos on social media (55.1%).

Descriptive statistics

Table 4 compares the means for the CBBE scale items across three culinary precincts. Independent samples t-tests on the data facilitated a direct comparison between two groups of respondents: previous visitors and non-visitors. Statistically significant differences were found for all, except one destination brand value scale item that belongs to South Bank. Overall, the implication here is that actual visitation can positively change perceptions.

Table 4 inserts here

For destination brand salience, South Bank was most aware among respondents while the means were significantly higher for previous visitors than non-visitors. Although the average

means of Sunnybank and Broadbeach were relatively low, the means were high among previous visitors meaning that previous visitation experience could improve residents' perceptions towards these culinary precincts. For destination brand image, Sunnybank still had the lowest average mean. Nevertheless, the means were higher among previous visitors of these three precincts. For destination brand quality, it was not surprising for South Bank to have the highest average mean given the fact that it was actively promoted as Brisbane's premier dining precinct. For destination brand value, Sunnybank had no mean score siting lower than the scale midpoint meaning that Sunnybank was excellent value for money to visit. Furthermore, this was evident among previous visitors. For attitudinal destination brand loyalty, South Bank had the highest average mean thus making it as respondents' most preferred destination for restaurants and cafes.

Testing of measurement models

Exploratory factory analysis (EFA) was performed using IBM SPSS25. Given themes emerged as four antecedents of gazing in the present research were consistent with scale items of the TAM which existing studies have well validated these scale items, EFA was only to summarise underlying patterns of these antecedents (Hair et al., 2010). Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sample adequacy was at .96 showing the appropriateness, yet adequacy of sample for EFA. Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was found statistically significant at $p = .000$, indicating that there were significant correlations among variables within the data collected. As shown in Table 5, EFA resulted in a four-dimensional model with factors including usefulness, ease of use, affective gratifications, and source credibility. In addition, all 17 measurement items had extracted commonalities greater than .65 supporting that a four-dimensional model clearly explained most of the variance in the variables being analysed in EFA (Hair et al., 2010). While

EFA identified underlying complex patterns of perceived usefulness and ease of use, other previous studies also noted that measurement items of these two constructs were often similarly worded and highly interrelated (see, for example, Ayeh et al., 2013; Casaló et al., 2011). After careful consideration, these problematic items were sufficiently reasonable to be retained in the four-dimensional model since they were theoretically developed based on the TAM. Table 6 outlines Cronbach's alpha coefficient and item-to-total correlations indicating the reliability of the constructs throughout the consistency of the measurement items. Although PEU 2 and PAG 4 were considered problematic, the alpha coefficient could be slightly improved; from $\alpha = .948$ to $\alpha = .969$, and $\alpha = .963$ to $\alpha = .968$ respectively if these two items were removed. At this stage, these items were only noted for removal.

Insert Tables 5 to 6 here

Since the CBBE model and its scale items were strongly developed based on existing scales found in the destination branding literature, reliability and internal consistency tests were sufficient for assessing the CBBE scale items (Baglin, 2014; Bagozzi & Yi, 2012; Williams et al., 2010). Results report great internal consistency reliability among 22 measurement items falling within the range of .80 to .97. Although the reliability test results suggested to remove SB_DBQ 4 and SN_DBV 1, Cronbach's alpha of South Bank Brand Quality and Sunny Brand Value could be slightly improved. Given all CBBE measurement items were theoretically developed, they were flagged for further investigation. Therefore, the proposed theoretical model comprised of eleven constructs with intensity and engagement posited as mediators of the present research were retained for further examination in confirmation factor analysis (CFA). Prior to proceeding further with CFA, multivariate normality of data distribution was assessed in

IBM AMOS25. The values of skewness and kurtosis were in the satisfactory ranges of +/- 2 and +/- 7 respectively as recommended by Hair et al. (2010) and Kline (2011).

CFA with maximum likelihood estimation was conducted on the same data set using IBM AMOS25. Results of initial CFA measurement models of three culinary precincts indicated strong and highly statistically significant correlations between four antecedents of gazing (e.g., ≥ .82). Likewise, the correlations were moderately high among the CBBE constructs ranging from .64 to .84. Although indicators specified to measure antecedents of gazing and the CBBE all loaded highly on their respective constructs (≥ .70), highly significant correlations between constructs outweighed which they were supposed to be less than .85. This problem signified poor discriminant validity within the initial CFA measurement models across three precincts. From this perspective, indicators were arguably difficult to measure and interpret nine distinct constructs.

Respecification of first-order as second-order CFA measurement models was strongly recommended (Murray & Johnson, 2013; Tsai et al., 2013). Following Kline's (2011) recommendation, relations among lower-order constructs must be theoretically defensible after being respecified as a higher-order CFA model. Therefore, the 'antecedents of gazing' construct was believed to cause its lower-order constructs including usefulness, ease of use, affective gratifications and source credibility. Likewise, for example, the 'South Bank Equity' construct was assumed to predict its five lower-order constructs of the CBBE model. In the respecification of the second-order CFA measurement models, the following measurement items were removed resulting the better fit models suitably for three precincts while the models were still theoretically justifiable: PU 3, PEU 2, DBS 2, DBQ 4, DBV 1 and DV4. A comparative Table 7 shows the fit values of three versions of a CFA measurement model. These show that all standardised factor

loadings of lower-order constructs loaded highly onto their respective higher-order constructs (≥ .76). In addition, measurement items were above .70 (except for SB DBV3) and significant at $p <$ .01 level.

Confirming internal consistency, across three precincts, composite reliability values were well beyond the threshold levels suggested by Fornell and Larcker (1981). Construct reliability and the average variance extracted values are summarised in the tables of inter-factor correlations. Results of inter-factor correlations showed evidence of acceptable discriminant validity of constructed outlined in the modified second-order CFA measurement models, with all AVEs greater than 0.50. These results suggest that the measures possess good level of discriminant and convergent validity for testing the relationships in the models.

Table 7 inserts here

Testing of the structural models and hypotheses

Hypotheses were tested using structural equation modelling (SEM) in IBM AMOS25. The second-order structural model was assessed for each of the three culinary precincts separately with the same data set. Table 8 compares the overall fit statistics of the modified second-order CFA measurement models and the second-order structural models of three culinary precincts. As can be seen, the overall model fit statistics were improved indicating good overall model fit for hypotheses to be tested across three culinary precincts without any further modifications required following the recommendations of (Browne & Cudeck, 1993; Hair et al., 2010). All hypotheses were tested and replicated across three precincts. ‘Intensity’ and ‘Engagement’ as two mediators were included to test for mediation effects. Each mediation analysis was conducted using a bias-

corrected bootstrap procedure with 5000 resamples (Preacher & Hayes, 2008). Across three precincts, the hypothesis testing outcomes were consistent. However, only one of the three hypotheses was supported. The results are presented in Tables 9 and 10.

Insert Tables 8 to 10 here

H1: Antecedents of gazing → Intensity of gazing → CBBE

The first mediation test was conducted to assess whether a mediation effect of antecedents of gazing on brand equity through intensity of gazing was significant. Results indicated that no mediation relationship was found significant across three precincts: South Bank (β = -.070, p = .101, CI: -.152 -.107), Sunnybank (β = .035, p = .348, CI: -.045 -.119) and Broadbeach (β = .009, p = .939, CI: - .084 -.092). These results imply that residents as UGC users feel encouraged to gaze upon FoodPorn on UGC because of the benefits they can perceive from gazing. However, gazing intensely does not influence or improve residents' perceptions toward three culinary precincts. Therefore, since intensity of gazing does not strengthen CBBE, H1 is not supported.

H2: Antecedents of gazing → Engagement when gazing → CBBE

Similarly, the second mediation test results indicated that there was no significant indirect effect of antecedent of gazing on CBBE through engagement when gazing: South Bank (β = .003, *p* = .850, CI: -.042 -.045), Sunnybank (β = .303, *p* = .256, CI: -.042 -.072) and Broadbeach (β = .009, *p* = .718, CI: -.037 – .050). Gazing upon FoodPorn on UGC can be useful, effortless, and enjoyable for residents to participate leading to higher levels of engagement such as giving likes, comments and sharing their own FoodPorn. However, highly engaged in FoodPorn activities

while gazing does not guarantee that residents' perceptions toward culinary precincts will be improved. Thus, H2 is not supported.

H3: Antecedents of gazing → CBBE

Considered as the last and only direct effect to be tested, a positive significant relationship was hypothesised for each of the three culinary precincts. As expected, there was a positively significant relationship between antecedents of gazing and CDBBE of South Bank (β = .668, p = <.001), Sunnybank (β = .357, p = <.001) and Broadbeach (β = .496, p = <.001). Four antecedents of gazing show to have great influence on residents' UGC adoption for gazing upon FoodPorn. Furthermore, gazing is believed to also influence residents' perception of culinary precincts. In turn, residents may recommend others to visit, or visit culinary precincts themselves after gazing upon FoodPorn on UGC. However, as discussed earlier, gazing intensely and/or highly engaged when gazing upon FoodPorn does not mean to change the perceptions of culinary precincts held by residents. H3, as the only hypothesised direct effect in the present research, is thus supported.

Discussions and Implications

This present research developed a model of culinary precinct destination attractiveness to measure the role of FoodPorn in influencing CBBE of culinary precincts. While the model of CBBE is applicable for measuring consumers' perceptions toward a destination, there has been limited research into culinary destination brand performance measurement in this digital age. Since the present research is the first investigation into the growing trend of FoodPorn on food trippers and their destination choices, Study One provides a better understanding of why food trippers gaze upon FoodPorn on UGC and possible effects on their destination choices. Study

Two incorporated antecedents of gazing to assist in the development of an extended CBBE model for measuring culinary precinct destination attractive, which was also strongly underpinned by the TAM, the UGT and the tourist gaze.

Overall, the data supported only one of the three hypotheses in the proposed model. Nevertheless, an extended model of CBBE is valid and applicable for measuring the attractiveness of culinary precincts in relation to gazing upon FoodPorn on social media. A similar pattern of the results reveals a positive relationship between antecedents of gazing and the brand equity of three culinary precincts. This suggests that gazing upon FoodPorn can enhance consumers' perceptions toward culinary precincts. Furthermore, gazing is considered most useful when consumers can find out what restaurants and cafes their friends visit, which supports previous research focusing on the adoption of UGC for travel planning purposes (Lee et al., 2012; Rauniar et al., 2014).

Surprisingly, source credibility had the weakest association with 'antecedents of gazing'. This implies that today's content creators become less credible and ambiguous to other users on social media. One plausible reason is that while the use of influencer marketing enables DMOs to reach wider audiences, influencer endorsement is considered as an alternative to direct endorsement of destinations but only if this is executed covertly by DMOs (Ayeh, 2015; Femenia-Serra & Gretzel, 2020; Kang & Schuett, 2013; VanMeter et al., 2015). Interestingly, this finding can both support and contrast the results found in the existing literature. For example, previous studies stated that credibility of the UGC influences the travellers' adoption of UGC, especially when they are not familiar or have not previously visited a destination (Cosenza et al., 2015; Veasna et al., 2013). Conversely, the proliferation of UGC possibly makes

consumers feel overwhelmed about different sources of information available for them. As a result, they become more selective and sceptical about credibility of UGC than ever before.

In this present research, attitudinal loyal exhibited the strongest association with the brand equity of three culinary precincts. Thus, consumers' perceptions toward culinary precincts can be positively influenced by gazing upon FoodPorn on UGC. Furthermore, they are likely to recommend others to visit or visit culinary precincts themselves after gazing. In this way, FoodPorn content creators and anyone can become culinary destination image formation agents through their FoodPorn activities on UGC. This is consistent with previous studies in the existing literature examining the influence of UGC on consumers' intentions in various disciplines (Shakeela & Weaver, 2016; Tseng et al., 2015).

However, neither 'gazing intensely' nor 'higher engagement level while gazing' strengthened the brand equity of three culinary precincts. Therefore, the results here did not support the previous research of Jahn and Kunz (2012) who had found a significant indirect effect of the adoption of UGC on brand loyalty through engagement in the context of brand fan pages. Nevertheless, the results here were not surprising since most respondents in the present research stated that they rarely noticed or sometimes looked at FoodPorn. Furthermore, 55% of the respondents said they never liked or gave comments even though they noticed FoodPorn on social media. Due to passive consumption on media among most respondents, it was not surprising to have indirect effects not supported in this present research.

Apart from being considered as passive FoodPorn viewers on UGC, these results may be explained by the fact that respondents would not perceive other fellow consumers as genuine content creators when generating such FoodPorn content on UGC. Thus, gazing intensely or actively engaged in FoodPorn activities may not provide meaningful outcomes to them since

they become aware that most sponsored posts are coming from business entities and/or DMOs. This is supported by the work of Johnson and Kaye (2015) who earlier pointed that social media credibility is still questionable yet consumers tend to perceive traditional media more credible than new media (Thomson et al., 2012). Another possible explanation for this is that the respondents are local residents, meaning that they might be already familiar and know what to expect from culinary precincts under investigation (Horng et al., 2012). From a resident's perspective, gazing can be useful, effortless, and enjoyable but not necessarily worth gazing intensely or actively engaged to improve their knowledge about local culinary precincts.

Theoretical contributions

This present research contributes to improve understanding of the role of FoodPorn in influencing CBBE of culinary precincts by offering deeper insights into antecedents and consequences of gazing upon FoodPorn on social media. Study One, an exploratory stage of this present research, provides additional theoretical evidence with respect to the antecedents of gazing upon FoodPorn on social media. These four key antecedents include: i) perceived usefulness; ii) perceived ease of use; iii) perceived affective gratifications; and iv) perceived credibility. Since previous research has broadly focused on, for example, adoption of UGC and intentions to use social media for travel planning, the findings of this present research add to a growing body of literature on the concept of the tourist gaze specifically in the context of FoodPorn gazing. Furthermore, antecedents of gazing identified in this present research are consistent with the notions of perceived usefulness and ease of use which can be found in the original TAM proposed by Davis (1989). Thus, this present research offers a new perspective

underpinned by an extended TAM to examine the antecedents of gazing and the role of FoodPorn in influencing CBBE of culinary precincts.

As discussed, after more than a decade of destination CBBE modelling was first introduced in the marketing literature, there has been limited research into the development of a model to measure culinary precinct attractiveness within the social media environment. Thus, the strength of this present research particularly Study Two is incorporating the TAM, UGT and the tourist gaze into a model of destination CBBE. This modelling enables measuring the role of FoodPorn in influencing culinary precinct attractiveness in this digital age. Furthermore, this extended model of CBBBE for measuring culinary precinct attractiveness is applicable to all other culinary precincts. However, as discussed earlier, it is important to note that 'intensity' and 'engagement' posited as two mediators in this present research are rejected. Although these two mediators do not work in the context of FoodPorn gazing, the authors of this research paper encourage other researchers to test these two mediators in other different contexts. Especially, whether the relationship between antecedents of gazing and the CBBE of culinary precincts is mediated by either intensity or engagement, or both mediators.

Managerial implications

Findings highlight important recommendations for DMOs both in Australia and worldwide to recreate the unbiased medium of UGC as favoured by food trippers and gain some control back by creating the most realistic representation of food and dining experiences.

DMOs can engage more with food trippers and other travellers by encouraging a more systematic approach to FoodPorn such as highlighting hidden places within culinary destinations

that remain unphotographed. DMOs may consider developing the ultimate guide to food-travel photography. This type of systematic approach can also include suggestions for food trippers and travellers such as 'which photogenic dishes to order' and 'which point of view' to best capture FoodPorn and increase engagement on their social media posts organically. Moreover, since Brisbane consumers in the present research were more passive than active considering their intensity and level of engagement when gazing upon FoodPorn on UGC, this co-branding strategy can make every of consumers feel seen and engaged. While FoodPorn on UGC can misrepresent the truths about culinary destinations, the use of hashtags and tagging locations can assist DMOs in monitoring their brand position over time, especially on what is being projected and perceived by FoodPorn viewers.

Considering the on-going COVID-19 pandemic, gazing upon FoodPorn is a great way for consumers to stay socially connected with hospitality businesses and culinary destinations even while physically distancing. For DMOs, this is a great opportunity to document and show consumers how local businesses are dealing and their journey to reopening. In the wake of COVID-19, this kind of 'behind the scenes' content can help consumers relieve their anxieties about dining out and make them eager to come in for a whole new dining experience when dining restrictions are lifted.

That is to say, consumers might hesitate to travel, but gazing can help them feel less worried and safe to visit culinary precincts. Therefore, DMOs and restaurant businesses need to understand which culinary precinct attributes or features should be embedded in FoodPorn photos which also can inspire potential visitors to dream and feel reassured to visit culinary precincts when they are ready and the time is right.

Limitations and suggestions for further research

In terms of recruiting a highly targeted group of participants in Stage One using a purposive sampling technique, caution needs to be taken when generalising the results to other groups of FoodPorn viewers or in other different contexts of gazing. Therefore, mixing views of different participants can yield greater understanding of antecedents of gazing, and whether the importance of these antecedents varies across the groups, with low to high levels of intensity and engagement in terms of gazing upon FoodPorn. It is also recommended that further research consider culinary destinations beyond urban locations such as regional areas like Ballarat and the Yarra Valley in Australia.

Inherently, perceptions in relation to destination brand performance held by consumers can be changed over time, as well as the impact of FoodPorn photos on UGC could have on this emerging modelling of culinary destination CBBE. Therefore, further studies are encouraged to conduct longitudinal studies to track changes in culinary destination brand performance.

Using an online marketing research panel also limited to certain groups of residents who subscribed to the company's database. As some of the unengaged responses were detected during data cleansing, this indicated that respondents recruited through a marketing research company were likely to be professional respondents, meaning that they attempted to complete this questionnaire solely for monetary gain. Therefore, applying different sampling techniques can be useful to overcome unengaged responses, and also to better attain generalisability of the questionnaire results (Maronick, 2011).

Although testing the model of CBBE was acceptable yet applicable conceptually to run as a higher-order model, it should be noted that running a higher-order model can neglect such fine-grained analyses and a detailed assessment of each antecedent of gazing and its influence on CBBE (Bagozzi & Heatherton, 1994; Tsai et al., 2013) Thus, there is a potential for further

research to test and uncover different dimensions of antecedents of consumers' gazing upon FoodPorn. More importantly, as these four antecedents were taken from an exploratory stage of this present research, further research might also discover similar or new antecedents of gazing upon FoodPorn on UGC.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

Ethics approval details

This study obtained ethics approval from Queensland University of Technology (QUT) Human Research Ethics Committee (UHREC), QUT, Australia and the reference number is 1600000999.

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Figure 1: Proposed model of culinary precinct destination attractiveness

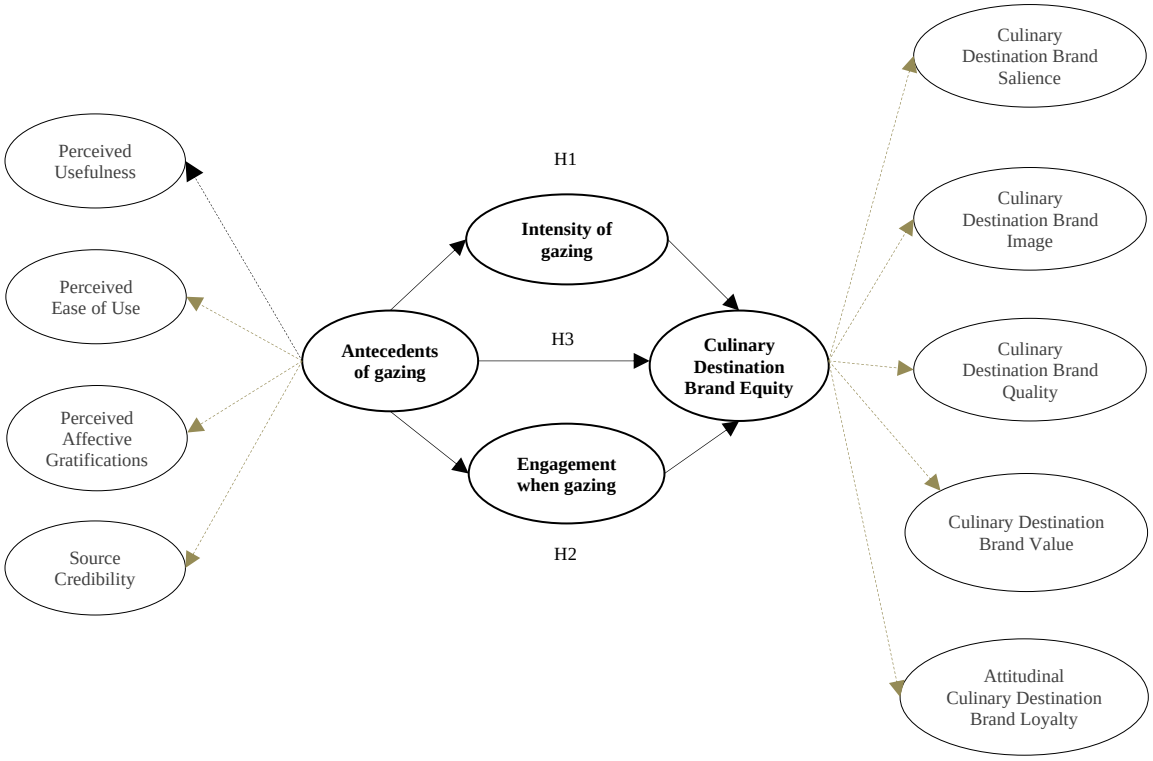

Table 1: Overall themes – Antecedents of consumers' gazing

Construct	Theme
Perceived Usefulness	Depicts the degree to which respondents believe looking at food photos on social media is considered useful to them. The usefulness that they perceive from looking at food photos would enhance their performance in searching and making new connections.
Perceived Ease of Use	Depicts the degree to which respondents believe looking at food photos on social media is considered easy to them. The ease of use that they perceive from looking at food photos would help them accomplish different tasks ranging from searching, planning, and making their decisions.
Perceived Affective Gratifications	Depicts the degree to which respondents believe they would be gratified by looking at food photos on social media. Their emotions could be subsequently developed in several ways after looking at food photos.
Source Credibility	Respondents are aware that there are sources of advice available for them on social media. Source credibility depicts the degree respondents trust and choose to perceive information from the content with integrity created by users who are more credible and reliable.

Table 2: Photo-elicitation technique: summary of destination attributes elicited

Level of gazing	Culinary destination attributes elicited
Manifest level	Food and restaurant scenes (+/-)
	Natural landscapes (+)
	Manmade landmarks and buildings (+)
	Recreational activities (+)
	People (-)
Latent level	Cleanliness (+)
	Pleasant (+)
	Arousing (+)
	Excitement (+)
	Dirtiness (-)
	Gloomy (-)

(+) indicates positive reasons provided when eliciting

(-) indicates negative reasons provided when eliciting

Table 3: Characteristics of respondents

Question		N	Valid %
Age	18-25	77	13.0
	26-34	98	16.5
	35-49	176	29.7
	50-64	141	23.8
	65+	101	17.0
Gender	Male	283	47.7
	Female	308	51.9
	Other	2	.3
Education	High School	271	45.7
	University Graduate	161	27.2
	University Post-Graduate	53	8.9
	Professional Qualification	108	18.2
Marital	Prefer not to say	10	1.7
	Single	154	26.0
	Married/Permanent partner	346	58.3
	Same-sex couple	9	1.5
	Separate/Divorced/Windowed	74	12.5
Income	Prefer not to say	71	12.0
	Under $25,000	121	20.4
	$25,001-$50,000	173	29.2
	$50,001-$75,000	102	17.2
	$75,001-$100,000	71	12.0
	Over $100,000	55	9.3
Dependent Children	None	397	66.9
	1-2	148	25.0
	3 or more	48	8.1
How long in Brisbane?	Less than a year	42	7.1
	1-5 years	83	14.0
	Over 5 years	468	78.9

Table 4: Overview participant responses of Culinary Destination Consumer-based Brand Equity

Items	South Bank				Sunnybank				Broadbeach			
	Mean	*Group 1: Visited*	*Group 2: Not visited before*	*T-test*	*Mean*	*Group 1: Visited*	*Group 2: Not visited before*	*T-test*	*Mean*	*Group 1: Visited*	*Group 2: Not visited before*	*T-test*
Destination Brand Salience	4.17				3.46				3.86			
I can easily name restaurants or cafes	3.38	3.69	2.21	*	2.82	3.75	2.21	*	3.29	3.97	2.56	*
This food suburb has a good reputation	4.78	5.04	3.80	*	3.97	4.86	3.40	*	4.39	5.07	3.69	*
This food suburb is very famous	4.64	4.87	3.73	*	3.73	4.63	3.15	*	4.26	4.96	3.53	*
The characteristics of this food suburb come to my mind quickly	4.34	4.71	2.94	*	3.70	4.91	2.91	*	3.91	4.76	3.02	*
When I am thinking about dining out, this food suburb comes to my mind immediately	3.72	4.01	2.62	*	3.13	4.15	2.47	*	3.46	4.13	2.74	*
Destination Brand Image	3.79				3.29				3.81			
This food suburb fits my personality	4.13	4.40	3.12	*	3.44	4.23	2.93	*	3.96	4.62	3.26	*
My friends would think highly of me if I visited this food suburb	3.74	3.92	3.06	*	3.30	3.88	2.93	*	3.80	4.32	3.25	*
The image of this food suburb is consistent with my own self-image	3.77	3.97	2.98	*	3.26	3.87	2.87	*	3.79	4.37	3.17	*
Visiting this food suburb reflects who I am	3.56	3.73	2.89	*	3.19	3.82	2.79	*	3.69	4.23	3.11	*
Destination Brand Quality	4.64				4.05				4.43			
This food suburb provides food offerings of consistent quality	4.79	5.00	3.98	*	4.16	4.79	3.76	*	4.52	5.13	3.88	*
This food suburb provides quality experiences	4.83	5.03	4.04	*	4.15	4.82	3.72	*	4.55	5.20	3.87	*
From this food suburb's offerings, I can expect superior performance	4.65	4.81	4.07	*	4.02	4.63	3.62	*	4.40	5.01	3.78	*
This food suburb performs better than other food suburbs	4.30	4.41	3.89	*	3.89	4.48	3.51	*	4.26	4.80	3.71	*
Destination Brand Value	3.82				4.16				3.96			
This food suburb has reasonable prices	4.10	4.23	3.64	*	4.36	5.04	3.93	*	4.16	4.60	3.69	*

Considering what I would pay to experience this food suburb, I will get much more than my money's worth	3.84	3.91	3.58	*	4.14	4.74	3.75	*	4.03	4.47	3.56	*
The costs of visiting this food suburb are a bargain relative to the benefits I receive	3.66	3.72	3.46	n.s.	4.06	4.71	3.63	*	3.87	4.21	3.51	*
Visiting this food suburb is economical	3.65	3.72	3.41	*	4.11	4.85	3.63	*	3.80	4.13	3.45	*
Visiting this food suburb is a good deal	3.85	3.95	3.46	*	4.16	4.87	3.70	*	3.96	4.35	3.55	*
Attitudinal Destination Brand Loyalty	4.09				3.57				3.94			
I would recommend others to visit this food suburb	4.54	4.79	3.59	*	3.87	4.78	3.29	*	4.27	5.02	3.49	*
I enjoy visiting this food suburb	4.65	4.94	3.54	*	3.89	4.76	3.32	*	4.37	5.13	3.57	*
This food suburb would be my preferred choice for dining out	3.69	3.82	3.18	*	3.32	4.07	2.83	*	3.63	4.18	3.05	*
Overall, I am loyal to this food suburb	3.50	3.63	3.02	*	3.22	3.97	2.74	*	3.50	3.96	3.00	*

* P-value is significant at the 0.05 level (two-tailed) for t-test: two-sample assuming unequal variance, n.s: non-significant

South Bank – Visited: 470/Not visited before 123; Sunnybank – Visited: 233/ Not visited before: 360; Broadbeach – Visited: 306/ Not visited before

Table 5: Exploratory factor analysis loadings – Antecedents of consumers' gazing

Items		Factors			
		PEU	**PU**	**PAG**	**SC**
PEU 1	Looking at food photos on social media makes it easy;- To find out information about restaurants and cafes	.838			
PEU 2	Looking at food photos on social media makes it *easy*;- To find out what restaurants and cafes my friends visit	.323			
PEU 3	Looking at food photos on social media makes it easy;- To plan what restaurants and cafes I visit	.826			
PEU 4	Looking at food photos on social media makes it easy;- To choose a restaurant or cafe	.860			
PU 1	Looking at food photos on social media is useful;- For finding inspiration about restaurants and cafes to visit	.582			
PU 2	Looking at food photos on social media is useful;- For finding restaurants and cafes	.716			
PU 3	Looking at food photos on social media is *useful*;- For finding out where my friends eat out		.842		
PU 4	Looking at food photos on social media is useful;- For connecting with like-minded people		.657		
PAG 1	Looking at food photos on social media;- is enjoyable			-.950	
PAG 2	Looking at food photos on social media;- is pleasant			-.897	
PAG 3	Looking at food photos on social media;- is fun			-.972	
PAG 4	Looking at food photos on social media;- Makes me feel nostalgic about things			-.669	
PAG 5	Looking at food photos on social media;- Makes me feel more confident about selecting a restaurant or cafe			-.486	
SC 1	To what extent do you agree with the following statements?- I trust consumers' food photos on social media more than advertising				.652
SC 2	To what extent do you agree with the following statements?- I trust food photos on social media posted by cafes and restaurants				.676
SC 3	To what extent do you agree with the following statements?- Customers who post food photos about restaurants and cafes on social media are trustworthy				.965
SC 4	To what extent do you agree with the following statements?- Customers who post food photos on social media are knowledgeable about restaurants and cafes				.744

Note: Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring; Rotation Method: Oblimin with Kaiser Normalisation; n = 593.

Table 6: Construct reliability - Antecedents of consumers' gazing

Construct items	Item-to-total Correlation	α if Item Deleted
Perceived Usefulness		**.908**
PU 1	.793	.888
PU 2	.839	.865
PU 3	.806	.878
PU 4	.757	.895
Perceived Ease of Use		**.948**
PEU 1	.879	.930
PEU 2	.783	.959
PEU 3	.931	.914
PEU 4	.908	.921
Perceived Affective Gratifications		**.963**
PAG 1	.936	.948
PAG 2	.933	.948
PAG 3	.931	.949
PAG 4	.810	.968
PAG 5	.870	.959
Source Credibility		**.919**
SC 1	.807	.900
SC 2	.805	.898
SC 3	.863	.879
SC 4	.791	.903

Table 7: Comparative fit values of CFA measurement models

		$\chi 2$	df	Sig. p >.05	CMIN/DF ≤ 5	CFI >.90	RMSEA <.08	SRMR <..10
Initial first-order models	SB	3833.846	726	p<.00	5.281	.897	.085	.0518
	SN	3821.138	726	p<.00	5.263	.907	.085	.0418
	BB	4246.504	726	p<.00	5.849	.894	.091	.0474
Second-order models	SB	4070.235	766	p<.00	5.314	0.891	.085	.0583
	SN	4096.927	766	p<.00	5.348	0.897	.086	.0658
	BB	4394.319	766	p<.00	5.737	0.890	.089	.0499
Modified second-order models	SB	2377.093	547	p<.00	4.346	0.927	.075	.0561
	SN	2398.124	547	p<.00	4.384	0.930	.076	.0690
	BB	2525.312	547	p<.00	4.617	0.928	.078	.0491

Table 8: Comparative overall fit values of CFA measurement and structural models

		$\chi 2$	df	Sig.	CMIN/DF	CFI	RMSEA	SRMR
				p >.05	≤ 5	>.90	<.08	<..10
Modified second-order CFA measurement models	SB	2377.093	547	p<.00	4.346	0.927	.075	.0561
	SN	2398.124	547	p<.00	4.384	0.930	.076	.0690
	BB	2525.312	547	p<.00	4.617	0.928	.078	.0491
Second-order structural models	SB	2101.093	514	p<.00	4.088	.934	.072	.0550
	SN	2106.413	514	p<.00	4.098	.940	.072	.0502
	BB	2237.582	514	p<.00	4.353	.935	.075	.0480

Table 9: Hypothesis testing - direct paths

Destination			β	*P*
South Bank				
Antecedents of gazing	→	Intensity of gazing	.717	< .001
Antecedents of gazing	→	Engagement when gazing	.457	< .001
Antecedents of gazing	→	South Bank Culinary Destination Brand Equity	.668	< .001
Engagement when gazing	→	South Bank Culinary Destination Brand Equity	.046	.295
Intensity of gazing	→	South Bank Culinary Destination Brand Equity	-.122	.033
Sunnybank				
Antecedents of gazing	→	Intensity of gazing	.717	< .001
Antecedents of gazing	→	Engagement when gazing	.458	< .001
Antecedents of gazing	→	Sunnybank Culinary Destination Brand Equity	.357	< .001
Engagement when gazing	→	Sunnybank Culinary Destination Brand Equity	-.018	.233
Intensity of gazing	→	Sunnybank Culinary Destination Brand Equity	.058	.777
Broadbeach				
Antecedents of gazing	→	Intensity of gazing	.717	< .001
Antecedents of gazing	→	Engagement when gazing	.457	< .001
Antecedents of gazing	→	Broadbeach Culinary Destination Brand Equity	.496	< .001
Engagement when gazing	→	Broadbeach Culinary Destination Brand Equity	.018	.700
Intensity of gazing	→	Broadbeach Culinary Destination Brand Equity	-.003	.961

Table 10: Hypothesis testing - indirect effects

Destination			β	*P*
South Bank				
Antecedents of gazing	→ (Intensity)	South Bank Culinary Destination Brand Equity	-.070	.101
Antecedents of gazing	→ (Engagement)	South Bank Culinary Destination Brand Equity	.003	.850
Sunnybank				
Antecedents of gazing	→ (Intensity)	Sunnybank Culinary Destination Brand Equity	.035	.348
Antecedents of gazing	→ (Engagement)	Sunnybank Culinary Destination Brand Equity	.030	.256
Broadbeach				
Antecedents of gazing	→ (Intensity)	Broadbeach Culinary Destination Brand Equity	.009	.939
Antecedents of gazing	→ (Engagement)	Broadbeach Culinary Destination Brand Equity	.009	.718

(End)