

# Photo-taking and Online-sharing Behaviors of Culinary Products among Travellers: A Comparison on Generation X, Y and Z

Mohd. Hafiz Hanafiah, Mohd. Salehuddin, Mohd. Zahari and Feri Ferdiana  
*Faculty of Hotel and Tourism Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Selangor, Malaysia*

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**Abstract:** This study examines the photo-taking and photo-sharing behaviours of culinary products while travelling, specifically focusing on the behavioural differences in the generation membership (Gen-Y, Gen-X, and Gen-Z). A total of 400 respondents take part in this survey. The result of this study shows that photo-taking and online-sharing behaviours of culinary products vary between the three main generations. However, all three generations like to take pictures during travelling using mobile phones and the majority of them will upload and share the images while relaxing in the restaurant or hotel room, in order to share them with family and friends. These results provide information which can be used to assist the restaurant sectors in identifying the opportunities of co-creation in generating visitor experience intensification.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Photographs taken during travel are partly motivated by the willingness to bring home aspects of private tourism experiences to share and revive their own experiences with others. A basic shift in nearly all aspects of tourism photography occurred from the photography motion to digital recording using print film. Digital photos are now inexpensive, easy to store, easy to modify, easy to copy and, most importantly, easy to transmit with little or no difference between sharing and taking. With an ample amount of online photo available on the web, travellers use these pictures as a reference when deciding where to spend their holidays. It can, therefore, be seen that tourism and photography are interconnected. As a consequence, all these modifications have developed a crucial favourable attitude in the behaviours of photography and sharing.

On the other hand, social media has become a traveller platform for sharing their private experience of tourism with others. Social media is usually characterised as a group of internet-based apps that are publicly accessible and produced by internet consumers rather than marketers or vendors. The amount of internet users continues to rise year after year – now more than half of the total population (more than 3.6 billion people) worldwide

use the Internet. As an example, Facebook has more than 1.6 billion users worldwide (an average of 1.23 billion daily active users), there are 313 million active users (who log in at least once a month) and 500 million tweets a day on Twitter's most popular microblogging site.

At the same moment, more than six billion hours of video are watched each month on YouTube's video-sharing site, and there are more than 1 billion active monthly users. In addition, many researchers anticipated a dramatic rise in the potential effect of social media on travelling by people. This is because the use of social media in travel planning is not limited to the search for travel data before the journey, but also a tool for exchanging private travel experiences after the journey.

## 2 RESEARCH ISSUES

Prior study on photography in a tourism environment focuses more on a wide range of issues and variables, including content, and using pictures, type of photo equipment used, how photographs are drawn, how photographs are shared, the impact of photography on the tourism sector. However, there is limited study assessing the online photo sharing behaviours differences among travellers' generations. Due to the absence of researchers to

study a more holistic evaluation based on the above-mentioned various aspects, the public or private sector in the tourism industry are unaware of the significance of sharing photography as a marketing tool.

The initial aim of this study is to define the need to explore the features of taking photographs in gastronomic tourism to encourage government and the private sector to define policies that can be applied in gastronomic tourism marketing. Conscious of the importance of marketing in gastronomic tourism, this study focuses on foods as a picture content, photo sharing, camera types, and picture taker comparisons to produce more thorough research on how marketers in subsequent studies can use these characteristics. To achieve the original purpose of this study, the investigation into the role of photo-taking dimensions include food as the photo content, photo-taking and photo-sharing technologies, and demographic factors are required. The objectives of this study, therefore are: i) to examine the traveller photo-taking behaviour of culinary products, and; ii) to examine the travellers' online sharing behaviours based on the generation gap.

### 3 LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 3.1 Photo Taking Behaviour

Photography is a significant aspect of the picture content. Many factors affect the image's content. Before beginning a holiday journey, tourist placed high expectations on what they're going to experience based on the data they've been looking for, and these expectations can be expressed through pictures. Taking pictures also enables visitors to document or demonstrate their presence at a specific location or to participate through particular content in a particular case. In addition, photography endorses excellent travel destination memories and reflects photographic travel experiences. In addition, photographing becomes a component of tourism operations that are deeply rooted in the experiences of visitors as most visitors take pictures of locations and share photos with others as well as their travel experiences.

Photos also provide information on how people experience the world. For instance, pictures of food were taken for personal and public sharing. This also reflected the various contextual uses of pictures such as exchanging pictures related to tourism with friends and family (private) and posting pictures on

(public) restaurant review pages. Photographs also demonstrate the range of views that visitors have of destination pictures that can be viewed as an individual's distinctive visual experience. Famous traveller destinations are still actively photographed as part of unique experiences.

In addition to these unique journeys and activities, however, individuals are also increasingly taking pictures of almost any kind of experience, including the more mundane details of their daily life, such as the food they eat while travelling. An increasingly prevalent phenomenon has been taking pictures of one's dining experience. Every traveller today can share their culinary experiences digitally with friends and strangers around the globe, fueling a true social media arms race to determine who has the most special food and drink experiences. Indeed, #food, #foodporn #instafood and #yummy are among the top 100 Instagram hashtags. Based on this evidence, it is clear that taking photographs to keep a photographic food diary is an increasing phenomenon. From the citations, it is shown that with the assistance of today's technology, the trend of taking photographs of food has increased.

#### 3.2 Photo-Sharing Technologies

Due to the fast development of various innovations in technology, the presence of the Internet and its broad accessibility have substantially altered the way customers search and access data or share their own experiences with others through feedback. Photo-sharing has become a daily and worldwide activity for millions of individuals with the latest technological developments and the extensive accessibility of camera phones. Digital cameras, many of which are now integrated into smartphones, provide travellers with more control over the photography process and the sharing of pictures. In addition, a researcher cited LeadSift study in 2013 on the impact of social media in the tourism sector in which claimed that 74% of travellers use social media while travelling and 48% of travellers use social media to share videos and pictures. This behavioural phenomenon emphasises that social media platforms can be seen as a major source of social interaction.

In addition, social media offers a convenient and straightforward way to remain in contact with friends due to the busy nature of our life and the restricted time we must socialise. Besides that, middle-aged and older adults' value social media as an instrument for connecting with others around a hobby and interest. Given the fast development of

the internet setting and the extensive penetration of web-based services including travel, entertainment, data, communications and acquisitions, marketers are increasingly using social media to advertise their services and products.

### 3.3 Generation Gap

Generations are defined in the social sciences as cohorts of individuals with a collective character based on their shared historical moment and space. The impact of membership of a particular generation was recognized as a significant factor in the development of tourism experiences and the description of tourism behaviour. Understanding different type of consumer generation behaviour, particularly traveller behaviour, enables tourism organizations to design their products and services, enhance their policies and satisfy their customers.

The theory of generational cohorts describes these changes over millennia. According to this theory, the values, attitudes, beliefs and inclinations of people influence significant historical events and social changes in society. The primary option to the theory of generational cohorts is to assume that values, attitudes, views and inclinations are mainly a function of age and maturity rather than a generation. In this study, it was discovered that many studies compared Generation X, Generation Y and Generations Z such as Generational Cohort Theory; how three generations choose to spend holidays and how baby boomers to Gen Z to explore the elements of the experience of tourism.

Based on the literature, many researchers proposed Generation X was born from 1965 to 1979, Generation Y was born from 1989 to 1994, and Generation Z was born from 1995 to 2015. Each generation has distinct variables that influence their tourism choices and indicates that individuals involved in marketing destinations must consider each generation individually. Generation X chooses to remain at home instead of exploring. This generation, which involves adults from 35 to 50 years of age, is mainly settled in their households and their families are built. Also, Generation X is a budget-conscious generation, and travellers frequently use OTAs to discover their deals, and they can't book longer journeys or spontaneously getaways.

Meanwhile, Generation Y is a distinctive and creative group. This group includes multiple age cohorts, including both adolescents and young adults. They are the first generation that grew up full of fresh technology with the setting. Generation Y

had a tendency for semester breaks to travel, staying in hotels, eating local cuisine and travelling with family and friends to relax and explore new destinations. On the other hand, Generation Z is regarded as the world's most digital-savvy generation to digitalise and challenge the traditional methods of doing stuff. They utilise various mobile devices, commenting on reality, the environment and the environment in which they reside. They use Twitter, blogs and internet forums to express their views and attitudes and share pictures (Instagram, Pinterest, Snapchat) and movies (YouTube, Instagram, Snapchat). Generation Z not only utilises the Internet material but also creates and controls it.

## 4 METHODOLOGY

A two-part survey instrument was developed where Section A enquires on the respondents' basic demographic information while Section B asked the respondents on their photo-taking and photo-sharing behaviours. The questions used are close-ended, and multiple choices are given where the respondents need to choose one best answer that suits them best on their photo-taking and photo-sharing behaviours. The questions were first piloted and then adjusted to several questions to increase its clarity.

The sampling method chosen is the convenient sampling where the information collected is selected based on the availability and willingness of the respondents to take part in responding to the questionnaires distributed through online sharing among Malaysian travellers. The data that has been collected through online surveys using Google Forms platform. The data collection lasted four weeks. Once the data collection process is complete, the responses are coded and analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 20. The data set was then evaluated by applying descriptive and cross-tabulation statistical methods.

## 5 FINDINGS

A total of 400 respondents take part in this survey, with the majority of the respondents are from Generation Z which accounted to 48.8%, followed by Generation Y at 37.3% and Generation X that accounted at 14%. Table I report the rest of the respondent demographic information.

Table 1: Demographic Information

Profile	Frequency	%
Generations		
Gen-X (1965-1979)	56	14.0
Gen-Y (1980-1994)	149	37.3
Gen-Z (1995-2015)	195	48.8
Occupation		
Employed	277	69.3
Unemployed	123	30.8
Monthly Income		
2,000 or below	137	34.3
2,001-4,000	105	26.3
4,001-6,000	99	24.8
6,001-8,000	33	8.3
8,001 or above	26	6.5
Gender		
Male	160	40.0
Female	240	60.0
Educational attainment		
Primary school	38	9.5
Secondary school	108	27.0
Diploma	145	36.3
Degree	95	23.8
Postgraduate	14	3.5

N=400

Based on Table I, 60% of them are female, and the remaining 40% of the respondents are male. Majority of respondents are employed at 69.3% while 30.8% of them are unemployed. The monthly income of the respondents is mostly around RM2,000 and below (34.3%), and the least of the respondents earned RM8,001 and above (6.5%). The majority of the respondents (36.3%) reported possessing at least a Diploma compared to the minority of postgraduates (3.5%).

### 5.1 Photo-taking Behaviour

The first objectives of this research are to examine the traveller photo-taking behaviour in a gastronomy setting. A cross-tabulation analysis was opted to answer the research questions: What are the travellers photo-taking and photo-sharing behaviours in a gastronomy setting? Table II below reports the behaviour.

Table 2: Photo-taking Behaviour

		Generation			Total
		Gen-X (1965-1979)	Gen-Y (1980-1994)	Gen-Z (1995-2015)	
Do you like to take pictures or videos of food while travelling?	Yes	47	144	178	369
	No	9	5	17	31
Total		56	149	195	400

N=400

Table II shows the generation who prefers to take pictures or videos of food while travelling where Generation Z stands at 48.24%, which is acknowledged as the world's most digital knowledgeable generation and challenges the system's traditional way of working followed by Generation Y at 39.02% which often utilizes social networking websites more frequently. The result showed that the generation who least prefer to take pictures or videos of food while travelling is Generation X at 12.74% since they use social media for travel thoughts and inspiration in terms of social media users, but they are probably discovered on distinct platforms than younger adults. Table III reports the preferred equipment used by travellers while travelling.

Table 3: Preferred Photographic Equipment

		Generation			Total
		Gen-X (1965-1979)	Gen-Y (1980-1994)	Gen-Z (1995-2015)	
How did you capture the photos or videos of foods while travelling?	Compact Digital Camera	2	7	6	15
	Mobile Phone	24	62	122	208
	DSLR Camera	11	28	16	55
	Tablet	3	7	9	19
	Go-Pro	6	30	18	54
	Video Camera	6	10	19	35
	Disposable Camera	3	3	4	10
	Others	1	2	1	4
Total		56	149	195	400

N=400

The preferred photographic equipment based on generation membership is also investigated in order

to investigate their photo-taking and online-sharing behaviours. Table III reports that mobile phones are the most preferred tool used since digital cameras are now incorporated into smartphones, in which give travellers more control over the photography method and photo sharing [40, 68, 69]. Generation Z (58.65%) actively uses mobile phones and the results discovered that 80 per cent of Gen Z respondents said their primary camera was a smartphone, more than 60 per cent said they owned or used a digital camera. The result also founded that Generation Y has used a mobile phone as their preferred photographic equipment at (29.81%) followed by Generation X who have rated at (11.54%).

### 5.2 Photo Sharing Behaviour

The second objectives of this research are to examine the photo taking and online-sharing behaviours based on the generation gap. A cross-tabulation analysis was opted to answer the research questions: What is traveller photo-taking and online sharing behaviours in a gastronomy setting? Table IV reports the social media sites used for photo sharing based on generations.

Table 4: Social Media Used For Photo-Sharing

		Generation			Total
		Gen-X (1965-1979)	Gen-Y (1980-1994)	Gen-Z (1995-2015)	
What are the social media sites that you used for food's pictures or videos sharing?	Facebook	29	19	21	69
	Instagram	13	91	129	233
	Google+	3	8	10	21
	Twitter	1	8	12	21
	YouTube	4	19	13	36
	Others	6	4	10	20
Total		56	149	195	400

N=400

Table IV reports on travellers' usage of social media sites for pictures or video sharing. Generation X mostly use the Facebook to share their photos and videos. As for Generation Y and Generation Z, they prefer to share their photos and videos through Instagram. This finding supports previous studies [39, 44, 67, 70] that found although Facebook is still the network with the highest number of active users on the global scale, millennials tend

to prefer Instagram and Snapchat, with an observable popularity growth of Pinterest as well, while Generation Z also highly attuned to social media, similar to younger millennials, and experiencing the world in a way that can be instantly shared with social networks via photos and videos on platforms like Instagram and Snapchat. Table V reports the time of uploading and sharing of pictures based on generations

Table 5: Photo sharing Behaviour

		Generation			Total
		Gen-X (1965-1979)	Gen-Y (1980-1994)	Gen-Z (1995-2015)	
When would you upload and share the pictures or videos of foods in social media sites?	As soon as the pictures or videos of foods were taken	12	27	54	93
	While relaxing (in the restaurant/hotel room)	19	77	85	181
	Right after you are back at your hometown	8	22	24	54
	It took some time for me to share the pictures/videos.	10	19	25	54
	Others	7	4	7	18
Total		56	149	195	400

N=400

Table V reports the preferred time for the respondents to upload and share the pictures and videos of food on social media sites. Majority of Generation X prefer to share as soon as the pictures or videos of foods were taken since they did not prefer to spend too much time in editing before uploading the photos or videos of foods. This behaviour is as per expected since they are family-oriented generations. Meanwhile, both Generation Y and Z tend to share the pictures and videos while relaxing (in the restaurant/hotel room). Table VI reports their motivations for photo sharing based on generations.



Table 6: Motivation For Photosharing

		Generation			Total
		Gen-X (1965- 1979)	Gen-Y (1980- 1994)	Gen-Z (1995- 2015)	
What are the motivations for you to share the food's pictures/videos while travelling?	To share with family and friends	24	52	67	143
	To keep a personal record for myself	11	19	36	66
	To socialise with others through the photos/videos	3	27	28	58
	To create a social history of my trip	11	45	58	114
	Others	7	6	6	19
Total		56	149	195	400

N=400

Based on Table VI, the strongest motivation for all three-generation membership is to share with family and friends. The second motivation is “to create a social history of my trip” where Generation Y and Generation Z prefer to create their social history of trips to remain their moment during the trips. From the previous finding of photo editing preferences reveal that Generation Y and Z prefer to edit the photos and videos of foods because they want to create a social history of their trips. The third motivation is ‘to socialise with others through the photos/videos’ where mostly the participant used the photos or videos to share and comment on content, consumers' strength has increased over time.

## 6 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This study aimed to investigate photo-taking and photo-sharing behaviour based on the proposition that there may be differences based on generation membership. This study confirms that different

generation behave differently. The study results also proved that food-taking and sharing food photos on social platforms activities in the gastronomy setting during travelling is norms among the three generations. The most popular subjects for photo-taking of each generation were family and friends. Besides, the finding has also been proven that technological advances had a profound impact on photo-taking and photo sharing in gastronomic settings among generations.

Food photos are huge on social media because they're both easy-to-produce and relevant to everyone. People take photos of their food not only for themselves but also to share with others. However, the findings demonstrated the behaviour of photo-taking and photo-sharing of foods behaviour among travellers are different based on their generation. Indeed, photo-taking and sharing is a must-have activity for Generation Y and Generation Z when they go travelling since; they are having a similarity about the technology advance in their generation. However, Generation X does not pay attention to the trend, but they unintentionally followed these trends. Thus, social media platforms could be regarded as a significant source of social interaction. Given the reality of our lives is naturally busy and have limited available time to engage and socialise with friends and families. Knowing this truth, social media provides an easy and convenient way to remain in touch with relatives and friends.

However, despite the prevalence of photo-taking, empirical studies on how taking food photos affect their dining experiences are obviously lacking. While this study does not focus on the effect towards dining experience, it has shown that it is a growing trend and one should test it. Nonetheless, the available results provide information which can be used to assist the restaurant sectors in identifying the opportunities of co-creation in generating visitor experience intensification.

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