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## **Predictors of purchase intention in gastronomic establishments in the City of Medellin**

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**Abstract:** The pandemic caused by COVID-19 adversely impacted the gastronomy sector, affecting company-customer interactions. This research aimed to identify the variables influencing purchase intentions within Medellín's gastronomic establishments, for this, a quantitative exploratory approach was conducted, and 418 consumers were surveyed. Data analyses were conducted via RStudio, entailed confirmatory factor analysis for construct validation and structural equation modelling to examine causal relationships. As results factors like hedonic value, user-generated content, perceived risk, corporate image, perceived quality, attitude towards the restaurant, and restaurant type were assessed for their impact on purchase intention. Notably, while the perceived quality was statistically significant, it is inversely correlated with purchase intention, implying a diminished inclination to dine upon perceiving quality decline. These insights provide a comprehensive understanding of consumer decision making during the pandemic, facilitating strategies for optimal market positioning amidst evolving demographic-cultural dynamics and business chaos. This assessment has broader implications than the gastronomic domain.

**Keywords:** hedonic value; perceived quality; purchase intention; restaurant type; structural equation modelling; SEM.

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## 1 Introduction

The gastronomy industry is identified within the tertiary or service sector of Colombian economy (Perfetti del Corral et al., 2017), where the aim of these establishments is to create positive experiences based on attributes related to the quality of the dishes, ambience, decoration, and staff service (Rabanal de Dios, 2021). These aspects are

articulated to the growing and demanding demands of consumers for food whose tastes change considerably over time (Yusof et al., 2021). It is therefore imperative that today's consumers' food choices can be seen as more complex than ever before (Pérez et al., 2020). It is therefore necessary to create links with foodies to strengthen an industry that has proven to contribute greatly to countries' national income (Asghar et al., 2021). A situation that has been seen in recent years in Colombia with a positive behaviour in terms of its contribution to the national gross domestic product, where in 2016 it had a contribution of 1.6% of the total, and for 2017 it presented an increase of 12.6% in its contribution with respect to 2016, 85.71% for 2018 and, finally for 2019, it presented a variation of 99.61% with respect to 2016 (DANE, 2020). In addition, the gastronomic industry represents 8.2% of the number of registered companies in Medellín, with approximately 8,781 legally constituted businesses, distributed between legal entities and individuals, of which 6,248 are establishments identified as restaurants, cafeterias and mobile food establishments (Zapata, 2020).

As a result of the public health contingency caused by COVID-19 during 2020, sustained growth was disrupted. This is supported by the report issued by the National Administrative Department of Statistics of Colombia (DANE, for its Spanish acronym) (DANE, 2019), where GDP was reported to have contracted by approximately 6.8%, reflecting a very negative impact on the economy compared to the positive trend experienced in previous years (DANE, 2019). This number also reflected the early consequences of the pandemic contingency, it also represents a demonstration of confinement outcomes and the restrictions imposed on public policy in the country (Cacares, 2020), it can be concluded that this situation led to it being one of the most affected industries (DANE, 2020). However, according to the president of the National Federation of Colombian Traders, this decrease is related to the restrictions on productive activities, particularly in general trade (Cabal, 2020), i.e., those activities that require interaction through physical spaces such as restaurants, hotels, cinemas, and public transport.

In addition, DANE recorded a decrease of approximately 15.1% in the gastronomy industry's GDP contribution to the total GDP of the commerce sector, a percentage that was significantly higher than expected in the national projections (Cabal, 2020). This panorama forced Medellín's gastronomic establishments to reinvent themselves in the face of new market challenges; for example, strategies such as *Antioquia a cielo abierto* (Antioquia outdoors) were implemented, which purpose was to use public spaces such as parks, squares, and pavements for table service (BLU Radio, 2020). Furthermore, different activities were carried out to activate trade in the city, namely: 'Medellín Gourmet', 'Friends and Tastes', 'Antioquian East', 'All at the Table' and 'Burger Master', which are planned by representative members of the sector (Arango, 2020).

In accordance with the above and based on the limited literature on strategies that promote the gastronomic industry's growing participation in the local economy, it is necessary to identify those variables that have positive effects on the intention to purchase in gastronomic establishments in the city of Medellín, as this provides entrepreneurs with key information for making strategic decisions regarding marketing actions aimed at the target market. In addition, a variable reflecting the possible effect of the type of restaurant frequented by consumers has been included in this study in accordance with the limitations and suggestions mentioned by Anderson et al. (1988).

## **2 Literature review**

### *2.1 Perceived quality*

Perceived quality (PQ) refers to the consumer's perception of the value perceived or superiority of a product or service when compared to other available alternatives (Schivinski and Dabrowski, 2015). In addition, it is considered as a dimension that reflects the value, loyalty, engagement, and multiple associations of the brand in general (Aaker, 1991). Gotlieb et al. (1994) define it as the consumer's total assessment of the excellence or superiority of a product or service, a definition that is often associated with the consumer's attitude toward the brand experience. Thus, work such as that of Ugalde (2014) noted that perceived quality is a variable that is often included in models that seek to understand behavioural intentions directly with purchase intention, e.g., a positive perception is likely to increase the intention to buy the product or consume the service. Yan et al. (2018) examined the influence of electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) on Perceived quality and based on eWOM, the effect it has on purchase intention in fast food establishments, showing that perceived quality is positively associated with and significantly influences purchase image and purchase intention. In this context, the following hypothesis is defined:

Hypothesis 1 (H1) Perceived quality has a positive effect on purchase intention in restaurants.

### *2.2 Hedonic value*

Hedonic value (HV) aims to measure how a consumer enjoys a pleasurable experience and, by extension, how he/she develops positive emotion (Wang and Fesenmaier, 2004). On the other hand, HV is often a rather subjective and personal construct, whose measurement becomes more complex compared to other dimensions (Muntinga et al., 2011). Xu et al. (2022) established that a good hedonic experience can contribute to people developing positive emotions and building brand loyalty. Jo (2022) argued that this construct reflects the pleasure and enjoyment that a consumer can experience. Also, hedonic value may include aspects associated with curiosity and excitement which are aspects articulated with interactive processes (Adwan and Aladwan, 2022). However, work such as Nejati and Moghaddam (2013) shows the effect of hedonic value on purchase intention and satisfaction when visiting fast food restaurants, finding that its value significantly influences customer satisfaction, suggesting that the higher the hedonic values after dining at a restaurant, the higher the level of satisfaction and thus the higher the intention to eat at these places. Moreover, Pérez et al. (2020) examined the effects of hedonic value and utilitarian value, as well as people's attitudes towards hamburger consumption and purchase intention, showing that the strongest effect was reflected in Hedonic value, also finding a positive association in attitudes towards hamburger consumption and purchase intention. This suggests the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 2 (H2) Hedonic value has a positive effect on purchase intention in restaurants.

### *2.3 Attitude towards the restaurant*

Belch et al. (2011) suggest that attitude towards restaurants (ATR) can be attributed to the fact that it is relatively stable and long-lasting and is therefore useful for predicting consumer behaviour. The authors argue that this attitude can be attributed to the fact that it is relatively stable and long-lasting and is therefore useful for predicting consumer behaviour. According to Mitchell and Olson (1981), Attitude towards the restaurant often influences whether consumers buy or not. Also, works such as that of Kartika and Kusuma (2016) describe that a positive attitude towards a particular restaurant will enable consumers to make a purchase at a particular establishment; conversely, a negative attitude will have an adverse effect on consumers. Romero et al. (2021) suggest that people's ATR reflects their engagement with the brand, stating that the intention to visit a recommended restaurant can be a good indicator of actual customer behaviour. Ugalde (2014) investigated the relationship between ATR and its influence on purchase intention. The results showed that, when remembering the brands, people attributed positive attitudes and therefore expressed their intention to purchase them. In consideration of the above, the hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesis 3 (H3)    Attitude towards the restaurant has a positive effect on purchase intention in restaurants.

### *2.4 User-generated content*

User-generated content (UGC) is defined as information that is shared online by users of a specific platform (Chua et al., 2014). Xiang and Gretzel (2010) propose that this content can be any image, video, text, audio, or personal experience that consumers share on platforms, social media, and websites. On the other hand, studies such as Dennhardt (2014), where suggest that user-generated content plays an important role in the online sales of hotel products and services; a situation that leads to the recognition of other studies such as the work of Najar and Hamid (2021), who studied how user-generated content influences purchase intent in restaurants and how it provided a benefit to establishments. These authors found that this construct positively and significantly influenced purchase intention. As well, Fotis et al. (2012) explained how social media content influences those interested in buying package tours. The authors concluded that it has a significant effect on the decision of prospective travellers. These online consumer motivations cover their needs and preferences and play an important role in consumers' decision-making processes, including their purchase intentions (Zhang and Mao, 2016). Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesis (H4)    User-generated content has a positive effect on restaurant purchase intention.

### *2.5 Perceived risk*

A certain level of risk is implicit in every purchase decision. The concept of perceived risk (PR) can be considered as a psychological state (Cho and Lee, 2006). This refers to beliefs about the reliability or negative impact on the process of purchasing products or consuming services (Shamsi et al., 2022). Ambad et al. (2022) suggest that this represents

the uncertainty implicit in choice processes and the possible repercussions of choosing an unfavourable action. Hence, this risk is often a powerful way of explaining customer behaviour, as customers avoid making mistakes to optimise utility in product and service consumption processes. The definition of PR has changed as online transactions have become more popular (Mitchell, 1999).

Kim et al. (2008) define perceived risk as a belief that customers have about the uncertain possible negative outcomes of an online transaction. It is also a biased evaluation of a risk situation, where its assessment depends to a large extent on the psychological and situational characteristics of each individual (Cho and Lee, 2006). Therefore, Chang et al. (2019) observed how this risk has been used to clarify customer decision-making behaviour and how it affects purchase intention. These authors concluded that company managers should pay more attention to improving customers' perception of a branded website to increase their trust and reduce their perception of risk. Moreover, work such as that of Rouibah et al. (2016) demonstrates how perceived risk negatively affects purchase intention, thus corroborating that trust towards websites is directly related to this construct. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesis 5 (H5) Perceived risk has a positive effect on restaurant purchase intention.

## 2.6 *Corporate image*

Corporate image (CI) refers to the interactive effects of the feelings, experiences, and thoughts that consumers attribute to the perception of a company (Barich and Kotler, 1991; Dichter, 1985). Thus, a positive brand image increases purchase intentions (Yoo et al., 2000), because consumers use CI to evaluate the perceived risk of a product or service (Wu et al., 2017). Therefore, commercial organisations that can maintain positive feedback and relationships with consumers can create a good brand image and promote higher purchase intentions among consumers (Bao et al., 2011; Wu et al., 2017). Harun et al. (2018a) studied the factors that affect purchase intention in the fast-food sector based on perceived capability and corporate image. These authors found that there is a significant relationship between trust and corporate image, indicating that trust is a highly influential factor in purchase intention. Bhattacharya and Sen (2003) suggest that due to affective identification, consumers become emotionally involved with the company and they are positively motivated towards purchase intentions. In this vein, the following hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesis 6 (H6) Corporate image has a positive effect on purchase intention in restaurants.

## 2.7 *Restaurant type*

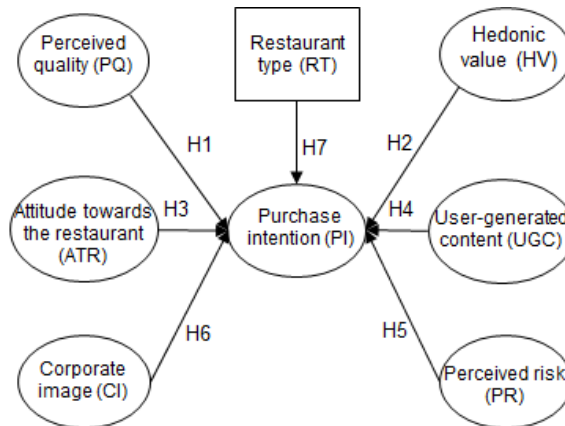
According to Rodríguez et al. (2020), restaurant type (RT) refers to those categories in which a gastronomic establishment can be classified according to related factors such as human resources, infrastructure, type of dishes, among others. Accordingly, the National Restaurant Association (2011) defines that fast-food restaurants, fast-food-casual restaurants, medium-scale restaurants, moderate or casual restaurants, and fine or exclusive restaurants can be categorised. In accordance with Boo (2017), it was found that human factors in exclusive restaurants, fast food, and street stands significantly influenced consumers' satisfaction and their intention to revisit this area. This implies

that the human resource directly reflects the representing features of a certain type of restaurant. Heung and Gu (2012) found that aspects related to ambience and aesthetics were good predictors of satisfaction and consequently, intention to return to fine or exclusive dining establishments. A situation that corroborates how some attributes of each type of restaurant are definitive aspects in the preferences and intentions to consume in a particular establishment. In this regard, the hypothesis to be posed is:

Hypothesis 7 (H7) Restaurant type has a positive effect on purchase intention in restaurants.

From the above conceptualisations, a structural model is proposed as shown in Figure 1.

**Figure 1** Proposed structural model



Source: Own elaboration

### 3 Methodology

It was conducted a quantitative study to investigate purchase intention in gastronomic establishments, using a five-category Likert scale questionnaire. This instrument was designed after reviewing existing literature and was validated through expert consultation and a pilot test, the questionnaire's reliability was examined using Cronbach's alpha and exploratory factor analysis (EFA), both of which met the acceptable criteria. The survey was administered 418 online to residents of Medellín, and it was used the bootstrapping resampling technique to examine the stability of the estimates. Data analysis involved a two-step approach: firstly, applying confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to validate the underlying structure of the constructs; and secondly, using structural equation modelling (SEM) to examine hypothesised causal relationships. This analysis was performed using RStudio software.



### 3.1 Measurement instrument

After reviewing the literature on the different dimensions associated with purchase intention in gastronomic establishments, the necessary input was obtained for the preparation of the questionnaire used in this research. The instrument was structured with a Likert's scale of five categories from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The items that relate to each of the constructs are shown in Table 1. It should be noted that the scales were initially taken from studies of Carrillo et al. (2011) and Hussain et al. (2021). For the validation process, according to Ramírez et al. (2014), the questionnaire was shared with experts in the field and a pilot test was applied to validate the reliability and internal consistency of the instrument.

**Table 1** Construct measurement scales' authors

<i>Construct</i>	<i>Scale's authors</i>
Perceived quality (PQ)	Gotlieb et al. (1994) Micuda and Cruceru (2010) Gayatri et al. (2011) Gayatri and Chew (2013)
Hedonic value (HV)	Muntinga et al. (2011) Wang and Fesenmaier (2004) Eroglu et al. (2005) Babin et al. (1994) Izquierdo et al. (2019)
Attitude towards the restaurant (ATR)	Mitchell and Olson (1981) Fishbein and Ajzen (1977) Brown et al. (1998)
User-generated content (UGC)	Voramontri and Klieb (2018) Xiang and Gretzel (2010)
Perceived risk (PR)	Corritore et al. (2003)
Corporate image (CI)	Dichter (1985) Barich and Kotler (1991) Nguyen and Leblanc (2001)
Purchase intention (PI)	Mkedder et al. (2021)

*Source:* Own elaboration

According to Ledesma et al. (2002) and Vega et al. (2019) Cronbach's alpha was used to test the consistency between questions for each construct, and EFA as an additional technique for validating data collection instruments. In this case, the results show that, for the first, each of the constructs exceeded the minimum acceptable value ( $\alpha \geq 0.7$ ), while in the case of the EFA, the factor loadings per question also exceeded the minimum acceptable 0.3, in line with the recommendations of previous investigations (Vega et al., 2019). Table 1 shows the associated reference used to the scales of each construct.

The first section of the survey was designed to collect socio-demographic information from all participants. Questions related to gender, age, highest level of education obtained, socio-economic status and occupation were some of the aspects collected. In addition, a question was included in which participants were asked to choose the category of the last gastronomic establishment visited according to the different definitions given in the description. Based on this choice, the survey was structured under seven different sections addressing each of the constructs with the questions previously refined from the expert validation and psychometric measures mentioned above. The first of these seven sections (two items) aimed to address the dimension of perceived quality; the second (five items) was oriented towards aspects referring to the consumer's attitude towards the restaurant; the third (four items) asked people to respond to the corporate image of the gastronomic establishments according to the category of their last visit; in the fourth (four items), people were asked to rate the hedonic value based on the pleasure they felt during their last visit to the gastronomic establishment; the fifth (three items), referred to the rating of the perceived usefulness of the user-generated content; in the sixth dimension (three items), people were asked to rate the perceived risk and, finally, the last (three items) sought the rating of the purchase intention. Each of the related indicators by construct (dimensions) are shown in Table 2 together with the factor loadings and Cronbach's alpha values for the general construct.

**Table 2** Reliability and internal consistency values of the survey

<i>Dimension</i>	<i>Item</i>	<i>Descriptor</i>	<i>Factor loading (EFA)</i>	<i>Cronbach's alpha</i>
Perceived quality (CQ)	PQ1	The food price was reasonable	0.593	0.82
	PQ2	The price of drinks was reasonable	0.651	
Attitude towards the restaurant (ATR)	ATR1	I would recommend this restaurant to my friends and family	0.824	0.96
	ATR2	fully intention to come back to this restaurant	0.94	
	ATR3	I would say positive things about this restaurant to other people	0.77	
	ATR4	I will be visiting this restaurant in the next 12 months	0.753	
	ATR5	Visiting this restaurant was a good decision	0.823	
Corporate image (CI)	CI1	I have a better impression of the restaurants belonging to the above-mentioned category.	0.632	0.87
	CI2	Restaurants in this category have a good reputation	0.67	
	CI3	I think the restaurants in this category have a good global image.	0.772	
	CI4	I believe that one can have full confidence in restaurants in this category.	0.774	

*Source:* Own elaboration

**Table 2** Reliability and internal consistency values of the survey (continued)

<i>Dimension</i>	<i>Item</i>	<i>Descriptor</i>	<i>Factor loading (EFA)</i>	<i>Cronbach's alpha</i>
Hedonic value (HV)	HV1	The comments made by others when they recommend a restaurant give me pleasure	0.607	0.9
	HV2	Searching for information about the restaurant I am going to visit gives me pleasure	0.568	
	HV3	When a dish is well presented, it gives me pleasure.	0.848	
	HV4	Having a good experience while consuming food in a restaurant gives me pleasure	0.85	
User-generated content (UGU)	UGC1	It was useful to collect updated information from the restaurant	0.621	0.86
	UGC2	I find it useful to exchange and share information/experience of the restaurant	0.557	
	UGC3	The current and available information from the restaurant helped me to trust the brand	0.511	
Perceived risk (PR)	PR1	Even if I have enough information about a restaurant, I feel anxious when I visit it for the first time	0.563	0.82
	PR2	Not having enough information about a restaurant, I do not feel psychologically comfortable if it is the first time, I visit it	0.725	
	PR3	When I visit a restaurant for the first time and when I try a dish for the first time, I become unnecessarily tense	0.768	
Purchase intention (PI)	PI1	The probability of returning to this type of restaurant is high	0.581	0.71
	PI2	My disposition to buy again in this type of restaurant is very high	0.678	
	PI3	Soon, I would consider buying from this type of restaurant again	0.623	

*Source:* Own elaboration

### 3.2 Data collection

The final survey was self-administered online to people living in the City of Medellín, using quota (convenience) sampling. Data were collected between June 2021 and July 2022, reaching a total of 418 valid responses, which is higher than the sample average of previous literature (280 responses). However, according to Ramírez et al. (2014) bootstrapping resampling technique is a reliable technique to evaluate stability of estimates, so it was used to examine the stability of the estimates since this method considers the data as a total population.

### 3.3 Data analysis

For the socio-demographic aspects, frequencies and proportions were used from the selection of respondents. The survey data collected around the constructs were analysed following a two-step approach as recommended by Anderson and Gerbing (1988). Therefore, the first step is the application of CFA to ensure that the underlying structure of the constructs has validity (Jun et al., 2017). Subsequently, Structural Equation Modelling was used to examine the hypothesised causal relationships in accordance with the hypotheses. Both analyses were carried out with RStudio software version 4.1.1.

## 4 Results

### 4.1 Demographic profile of the sample

Table 3 details the socio-demographic information of the sample of participants in the study. 41.10% of the respondents were male, while 58.90% were female; a situation that allows us to see that there is no proportional imbalance that could bias the results of the study. Regarding the age of the respondents, more than half of the respondents were condensed in the range of 15–39 years old (63.64%). On the other hand, the highest level of education was that most of the sample had technical and technological studies or a foundation degree (42.6%). On the other hand, regarding the socio-economic level of the respondents, it is observed that the vast majority belong to levels 2–4 (84.4%) and, finally, most people prefer to attend casual and fast-food restaurants (68.9%).

**Table 3** Socio-demographic information

<i>Characteristic</i>		<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Proportion</i>
Gender	Female	246	58.90%
	Male	172	41.10%
Age	15–19 years	61	14.59%
	20–24 years	92	22.01%
	25–29 years	46	11.00%
	30–34 years	29	6.94%
	35–39 years	38	9.09%
	40–44 years	31	7.42%
	45–49 years	37	8.85%
	50–54 years	33	7.89%
	55–59 years	28	6.70%
	60–64 years	22	5.26%
	65–70 years	1	0.24%

*Source:* Own elaboration

**Table 3** Socio-demographic information (continued)

<i>Characteristic</i>		<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Proportion</i>
Last level of education obtained	Primary education	52	12.40%
	Secondary education	118	28.20%
	Foundation degree HNC	92	22.00%
	Foundation degree HND	86	20.60%
	University degree	68	16.30%
	Post graduate degree	2	0.50%
Socio-economic level	1	5	1.20%
	2	131	31.30%
	3	136	32.50%
	4	86	20.60%
	5	59	14.10%
	6	1	0.20%
Restaurant type	Fast food restaurant	184	44.02%
	Casual restaurant	104	24.88%
	Franchise restaurant	56	13.40%
	Luxury restaurant	54	12.92%
	Self-service restaurants	12	2.87%
	Cafeteria, drive-in, roadside restaurants and similar	8	1.91%

*Source:* Own elaboration

#### 4.2 Measurement model

CFA is a statistical procedure applied in this study to verify the factor structure of a set of observed variables (Anderson and Gerbing, 1988). This is performed in the context of structural equation modelling, a multivariate statistical analysis technique that is used to analyse structural relationships. The performance of the CFA is determined by several fit indices. In this case, the standardised root mean residual (SRMR), which it is a measure of the average discrepancy between the observed and predicted correlations. In practical applications, a lower value (typically, less than 0.08) is indicative of a good model fit; the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) is a measure of the discrepancy between the hypothesised model, with optimally chosen parameter estimates, and the population covariance matrix. It is usually used to compensate for the model complexity (i.e., the number of parameters in the model), values up to 0.08 generally considered reasonable; Tucker-Lewis index (TLI) is designed to reflect the degree to which a given model is a better fit than a null or independent model. TLI ranges from 0 to 1, and values greater than 0.90 are generally considered indicative of a good fit; and the comparative fit index (CFI), which compare the specified model with a baseline null model, gave high values of 0.93 and 0.98 respectively, where values close to 1 are considered to indicate a good fit. These measurement fit properties are in acceptable ranges and are shown in Table 4.

**Table 4** CFA goodness-of-fit indices

<i>Goodness-of-fit indices</i>	<i>Acceptable range</i>	<i>Obtain value</i>
Standardised root mean residual (SRMR)	$\leq 0.08$ (Hu et al., 1992)	0.066
Root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA)	$\leq 0.08$ (Browne and Cudeck, 1992)	0.079
Tucker-Lewis index (TLI)	$\geq 0.9$ (Tucker and Lewis, 1973)	0.93
Comparative fit index (CFI)	$\geq 0.95$ (Hu and Bentler, 1999)	0.98

*Source:* Own elaboration

Once again, the reliability of the constructs was confirmed by means of Cronbach's alpha superior to 0.6 according to Jun et al. (2017) and, additionally internal consistency of each of the questions with respect to the constructs was corroborated by the standardised factor loadings obtained by estimating the model. As shown in Table 5, both the minimum expected Cronbach's alpha and factor loadings confirm the underlying validity of the proposed structure across the different constructs.

**Table 5** Cronbach's alpha and CFA factor loadings

<i>Dimension</i>	<i>Item</i>	<i>Descriptor</i>	<i>Standardised path coefficient</i>	<i>Cronbach's alpha</i>
Perceived quality	PQ1	The food price was reasonable	0.941	0.82
	PQ2	The price of drinks was reasonable	0.724	
Attitude towards the restaurant	ATR1	I would recommend this restaurant to my friends and family	0.922	0.96
	ATR2	fully intention to come back to this restaurant	0.954	
	ATR3	I would say positive things about this restaurant to other people	0.918	
	ATR4	I will be visiting this restaurant in the next 12 months	0.833	
	ATR5	Visiting this restaurant was a good decision	0.928	
Corporate image	CI1	I have a better impression of the restaurants belonging to the above-mentioned category	0.784	0.87
	CI2	Restaurants in this category have a good reputation	0.938	
	CI3	I think the restaurants in this category have a good global image	0.938	
	CI4	I believe that one can have full confidence in restaurants in this category	0.859	

*Source:* Own elaboration

**Table 5** Cronbach's alpha and CFA factor loadings (continued)

<i>Dimension</i>	<i>Item</i>	<i>Descriptor</i>	<i>Standardised path coefficient</i>	<i>Cronbach's alpha</i>
Hedonic value	HV1	The comments made by others when they recommend a restaurant give me pleasure	0.889	0.9
	HV2	Searching for information about the restaurant I am going to visit gives me pleasure	0.868	
	HV3	When a dish is well presented, it gives me pleasure.	0.81	
	HV4	Having a good experience while consuming food in a restaurant gives me pleasure	0.69	
User-generated content	UGC1	It was useful to collect updated information from the restaurant	0.884	0.86
	UGC2	I find it useful to exchange and share information/experience of the restaurant	0.864	
	UGC3	The current and available information from the restaurant helped me to trust the brand	0.871	
Perceived risk	PR1	Even if I have enough information about a restaurant, I feel anxious when I visit it for the first time	0.809	0.82
	PR2	Not having enough information about a restaurant, I do not feel psychologically comfortable if it is the first time, I visit it	0.862	
	PR3	When I visit a restaurant for the first time and when I try a dish for the first time, I become unnecessarily tense	0.783	
Purchase intention	PI1	The probability of returning to this type of restaurant is high	0.707	0.71
	PI2	My disposition to buy again in this type of restaurant is very high	0.36	
	PI3	Soon, I would consider buying from this type of restaurant again	0.406	

*Source:* Own elaboration

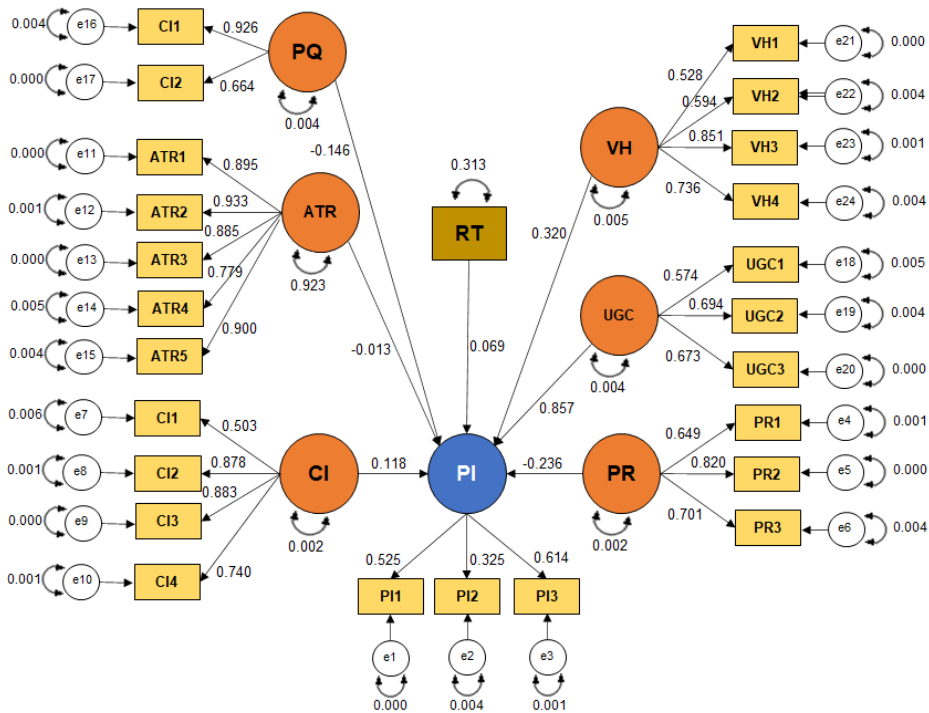
### 4.3 Structural model

Structural Equation Modelling estimation was carried out to evaluate the validity of the hypotheses proposed in this study. The estimation results validated the proposed model according to the SRMR = 0.066, RMSEA = 0.079, TLI = 0.93 and CFI = 0.98. Figure 2 shows the proposed structural model with each of the standardised coefficients on the defined paths. According to these results, the dimensions: hedonic value ( $\lambda = 0.32$ ,  $p < 5\%$ ), user-generated content ( $\lambda = 0.857$ ,  $p < 5\%$ ), perceived risk ( $\lambda = -0.236$ ,  $p < 5\%$ ), corporate image ( $\lambda = 0.108$ ,  $p < 5\%$ ) and perceived quality ( $\lambda = -0.146$ ,  $p < 5\%$ ), significantly contributed to the purchase intention, which implies H1, H2, H4, H5 and H6 acceptance. Moreover, the construct attitude towards the restaurant ( $\lambda = -0.013$ ,  $p > 5\%$ )

and restaurant type ( $\lambda = 0.069$ ,  $p > 5\%$ ) were not found to be determinants of purchase intention in gastronomic establishments.

explain the standardised path coefficients in structural equation model, and give me an example where standardised path coefficients of hedonic value with purchase intention to eat in restaurants is ( $\lambda = 0.32$ ,  $p < 5\%$ ); user-generated content with purchase intention to eat in restaurants is ( $\lambda = 0.857$ ,  $p < 5\%$ ); perceived risk with purchase intention to eat in restaurants is negative with value ( $\lambda = -0.236$ ,  $p < 5\%$ ); corporate image with purchase intention to eat in restaurants is ( $\lambda = 0.108$ ,  $p < 5\%$ ); perceived quality with purchase intention to eat in restaurants is ( $\lambda = -0.146$ ,  $p < 5\%$ ).

**Figure 2** Structural model with standardised factor loadings (see online version for colours)



Source: Own elaboration

## 5 Results discussion

This study investigated the effects of constructs such as the hedonic value, user-generated content, perceived risk, corporate image, perceived quality, attitude towards the restaurant and restaurant type about purchase intention in gastronomic establishments in Medellin. The results show that, based on the factor loadings estimated in the structural equation model, the hypothesis of perceived quality construct effect, despite having a statistically significant effect, is inversely proportional to the intention to consume. These results suggest that if the consumers' perception of quality is diminished regarding service, it is expected that the intention to go to eat at a certain type of restaurant will also



be reduced. This differs from the findings of Ugalde (2014) and Yan et al. (2018), possibly by the inclusion of different types of restaurants.

On the other hand, the construct referring to hedonic value raises a hypothesis in which it is shown to have a significantly positive effect on purchase intention, it refers to the subjective enjoyment or pleasure that an individual derives from a specific activity, also it emphasises the experiential and emotional aspects of consumption, which are integral to dining at restaurants. This value, hence, encapsulates the idea that individuals are motivated to engage in certain behaviours not solely because of the functional benefits they obtain, but also because of the pleasure and enjoyment they experience through the behaviour involved. These results are confirmed by Nejati and Moghaddam (2013), who suggest that a higher hedonic value of a person after having visited a restaurant, higher will be the intention to buy there again, were influence of social validation and recommendations from others can enhance an individual's anticipated pleasure, thereby increasing their intention to visit the restaurant (Wirtz et al., 2003), and associated with the anticipatory pleasure that can be associated with planning and expectation of a future dining experience as is suggested by Ryu et al. (2010) and Kim et al. (2018).

Subsequently, as user-generated content has a significant effect on purchase intention, it confirms the existence of an inverse relationship, in which Najjar and Hamid (2021) describe that user-generated content serves as a motivator, either positively or negatively, for anyone interested in visiting a restaurant, directly influencing their purchase intention and any perception that the consumer may have of the establishment. This means that other people's online comments or evaluations of the category of the gastronomic establishment they wish to visit are negative, which has a negative impact on the intention to visit these establishments. Also, it is confirmed that user-generated content, in the context of restaurant marketing, refers to any content – text, videos, images, reviews, etc., created by people, rather than by the restaurants themselves, where current research indicates that consumers often rely on UGC as an important information source to make dining decisions, so people believe UGC provides real, timely, and trustworthy information, which could influence their visit intentions (Filiari et al., 2015).

In addition, consumers not only consume content but also actively engage in creating and sharing it. This exchange creates a sense of community and mutual trust among consumers, fostering positive attitudes and encouraging dining intentions. This people's trustworthiness feeling in their networking plays a pivotal role in shaping consumers' attitudes and behaviour towards a brand. The availability and transparency of UGC can enhance perceived trustworthiness, thereby positively influencing intentions to visit a restaurant (Cheung et al., 2009).

Perceived risk was found to have a significant effect on purchase intention. These results are confirmed by work of Chang et al. (2019) and Rouibah et al. (2016), who also show how perceived risk negatively affects behavioural and purchase intentions. This means that the greater the uncertainty in the choice of a given gastronomic establishment category, a lower the intention of consumers will be to visit that establishment. Also, this perception of risk can significantly influence a customer's intention to visit a restaurant, as is suggested by Mitchell (1999), where the role of uncertainty and fear of the unknown in shaping perceived risk, and the first visit to a restaurant can be seen as a risky decision due to the uncertainty about the quality of food, service, and overall dining experience. These feelings of anxiety can negatively impact the intention to visit a restaurant.

In particular, the role of information reduces perceived risk, as suggested by Laroche et al. (2003), when potential customers lack sufficient information about a restaurant, they may perceive a higher level of risk, which can deter their intention to visit. Moreover, the stress or anxiety associated with uncertainty and the potential for a negative dining experience, can affect customers' dining decisions and intentions. Reducing perceived risk, therefore, is crucial for restaurants seeking to attract new customers. Providing transparent and accurate information about the restaurant and its offerings can help alleviate customers' feelings of risk and uncertainty.

In the corporate image construct, a factor loading was obtained that confirms its significantly positive effect on purchase intention. This result is articulated with the work of Harun et al. (2018b), who attribute these results to the existence of trust as a highly influential factor in purchase intention; in other words, a better experience for people during the act of consumption of the gastronomic service, greater will be the intention to return to establishments in the same category. Additionally, Nguyen and Leblanc (2001) suggest that when a restaurant has a favourable image, customers are likely to form positive impressions that can enhance their intention to visit. This is important because, Walsh and Beatty (2007) also propose that a key aspect of corporate image is often linked with expected quality and trustworthiness, both of which can significantly impact customer intentions to dine.

Results also shows, a restaurant corporate image of a restaurant or restaurant group can impact consumer perceptions on a broad scale, which a positive global image can influence customer expectations and intention to visit (Kandampully and Hu, 2007). This demonstrates the trust-inducing effect of a strong corporate image. Trust is a crucial factor that can positively influence customer attitudes and behaviours towards a restaurant, including their intention to visit (Erdem and Swait, 2004). These statements underline practical implications on the importance of managing and enhancing a restaurant's corporate image as a strategy to attract and retain customers.

Finally, for the factor attitude towards the restaurant no significant effect was found with respect to purchase intention, this result differs from the findings of Belch et al. (2011), Mitchell and Olson (1981) and Kartika and Kusuma (2016) and this is attributable to the fact that many attitudes that consumers develop regarding a brand are due to a stable and lasting process over time (Belch et al., 2011). Therefore, going to a gastronomic establishment often does not depend on the category to which it belongs, but is already a process attributable to previous experiences that gave them a positive evaluation of the brand.

Additionally, it should be noted that the present study constitutes a contribution in the sense that it is the first to empirically analyse the relationship between the aforementioned constructs with respect to Purchase Intention in gastronomic establishments in the city of Medellin, as well as the antecedents of the effects exerted by the type of restaurant that people attend.

## **6 Conclusions**

Given the enormous growth and success of the food sector in culture and local business development, scholars have been keen to analyse the strategies of major brands and translate them to other sectors. This is in line with the desire of many companies not only

to seek greater market share and better positioning in the eyes of consumers, but also to adapt to the changing lifestyles and demographic-cultural patterns of consumers. On this basis, this paper analysed the variables that have an effect on consumers' decision making. Specifically, the effects of the hedonic values of restaurant brands, their corporate image, perceived risk, perceived quality of food consumed in gastronomic establishments and their related benefits on people's attitudes towards the consumption of different types of restaurants and attitudes towards the intention to buy from such establishments were examined.

The psychological mechanisms underlying the intention to visit restaurants highlight the interconnected nature of various factors like hedonic value, user-generated content, perceived risk, corporate image, and perceived quality. Hedonic value and user-generated content significantly contribute to the positive motivations to dine out. They amplify the pleasures associated with the dining experience and validate one's choices through the shared experiences of others. Conversely, perceived risk, associated with uncertainty and potential negative outcomes, can serve as a deterrent to visiting restaurants, particularly for first-time customers. Corporate image plays a crucial role in shaping customer trust and overall impressions of a restaurant, potentially attracting customers and instilling confidence in them.

In the context of restaurant marketing, management and decision making, these insights suggest that enhancing the hedonic value of the dining experience, managing, and promoting positive user-generated content, mitigating perceived risks through transparency and reassurance, and maintaining a positive corporate image can collectively increase the intention to visit among potential customers. These efforts to understand and align with customers' psychological processes will likely result in improved customer satisfaction, loyalty, and positive word-of-mouth, ultimately contributing to the overall success of the restaurant.

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