

ABSTRACT

During the COVID 19 pandemic, Sri Lankan Restaurants lost millions of dollars, and shutdown entire operations irrespective of the size. Some of them converted operation into online food ordering platform with their capabilities. However, it drives benefits for both consumer and the operators as of unique characteristics associated with. These Online Food Delivery Services (OFDS) heavily rely on food photography in order to attract and make a potential customer into a buyer. Therefore, this research aims to identify the importance of food photography on online food delivery in restaurants located in Colombo City and the types of issues faced by the restaurant operators due to the usage of food photography on OFD to achieve the objectives of the study, primary data was collected using the semi-structured interview method. The sample of 12 restaurant operators running OFDS and 10 food consumers who are ordering those OFDS was selected using purposive sampling technique. The collected data were analyzed using thematic analysis. The results revealed that seven importance factors; Easiness of describing dishes, Effective linkage with social media sites, Positive effect on sales, Convenience of online food ordering, Easiness of remembering restaurant's online menu ,Understand the food and Use for food order customization and four major issues and challenges such as issues to comply with consumer's food photography expectations, to engage in professional food photography, lack of support from outsourced partners and OFD System issues faced by operators because of food photography use in OFDS. Based on the findings, the study recommends to enhance the awareness and knowledge of employees, Quality, Use of mobile photography, display descriptive food photographs, daily visual aspects on social Medias and Use of realistic food illustrations. Future researchers could use a mixed research method to broaden the scope of the study. Furthermore, researchers can focus their studies on a different geographic area and a different niche restaurant OFD service area.

Key Words: Restaurants; Online Food Delivery Service (OFDS); Online Food Ordering; Food Photography