

Understanding of International Tourists' Engagement in YouTube-Mediated Gastronomy Tourism Through the Lens of Actor-Network Theory

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ABSTRACT

YouTube, a digital streaming platform, serves as a gateway that connects cultural ideas and provides a deep understanding of local cuisine in Bangladesh, an emerging gastronomy tourism destination in the Global South. Although there has been a rise in the use of digital media for tourism promotion, few studies have explored how YouTube food vlogs act as actor-networks in shaping international tourists' perceptions of emerging gastronomy destinations, including Bangladesh. Therefore, by drawing on relational ontology and sociomateriality perspectives of Actor-Network Theory (ANT), this study explores international tourists' engagement in YouTube-mediated gastronomy tourism. In doing so, using an ANT-informed qualitative research methodology, data was collected through YouTube content analysis and semi-structured interviews with 25 international tourists. The unique and explicit findings reveal that international tourists' engagement with local cuisine is not simply an individual response; it results from ongoing interactions and networked relationships among human and non-human actors. Additionally, the research highlights that the decision-making process is not merely individual and rational, but rather relational and process-oriented, in which the sociomaterial perspective significantly influences its outcome. Overall, this discourse demonstrates how ongoing interactions and relational effects of heterogeneous actors, such as tourists, food vloggers, food vlogs, food practices, and technologies, shape international tourists' engagement in YouTube-mediated gastronomy tourism. Finally, the managerial implications suggest that destination authorities could leverage YouTube as a promotional tool to promote gastronomy tourism by encouraging food vloggers to create high-impact content.

KEYWORDS: Gastronomy Tourism, YouTube, Actor-Network Theory (ANT), Relational Ontology, and Sociomateriality

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ARTICLE HISTORY: *Received:* 23-Feb-2026; *Revised:* 23-Mar-2026; *Accepted:* 09-May-2026; *Published:* 10-Oct-2026

1. Introduction

YouTube has emerged as one of the greatest media to promote gastronomy tourism in the Global South. It focuses on the development of knowledge about local foods and destinations, creates expectations among tourists, makes a link between food and culture, and motivates foodies to visit a place to taste unique food items (Rauf & Pasha, 2024), for instance, Macau (Hsu & Scott, 2020), Gaziantep in Turkey (Suna & Alvarez, 2021) and Melaka in Malaysia (Ibrahim et al., 2025). Moreover, as a digital streaming platform, YouTube, through food vlogging content, influences tourists' perception, intention, expectation, and purchase decisions, which have significant impacts on their overall travel experience (Bigne, Fuentes-Medina, & Morini-Marrero, 2020; Jara-Amézaga, 2023; Liu, Ye, & Yu, 2024). Analysis of previous literature shows that earlier YouTube-based gastronomy tourism studies covered several areas, such as factors influencing tourists' attitude, behavior, motivations, and experience alongside brand engagement (Truong, Piscarac, Kang, & Yoo, 2025). However, several empirical and conceptual gaps still remain. For instance, recent scholarships by Ahmed, Tisha and Roy (2025) examined the impact of YouTube as a digital platform in promoting gastronomy tourism, urging further investigation to scrutinize the broader aspects of YouTube in the context of gastronomy tourism. Beyond this, most of the studies represented YouTube just as a channel whose main function is providing information rather than considering it as a mediator which can create, mobilize and stabilize relations between foods, vloggers, tourists, and destinations (Kuhn, dos Anjos, & Krause, 2024). Moreover, contemporary research is mostly human-centric while ignoring the role of non-human actors (Özaslan & Doğan, 2025). Furthermore, existing research analyses gastronomy as a content and concentrate on linear behavioral models rather than considering relational and sociomaterial practices where humans, elements and technologies can co-produce gastronomy experience (Kuhn, dos Anjos, & Krause, 2024). Therefore, this discourse highlights the need for theoretically innovative gastronomy tourism research, which will enhance understanding of how gastronomy tourism is relationally and sociomaterially enacted through platforms such as YouTube (Björk & Kauppinen-Räsänen, 2016).

To address the aforementioned concerns, this research employs Actor-Network Theory (ANT) as a theoretical framework. Drawing from ANT, it is a mechanism of figuring out the relationship between human and non-human actors (Latour, 2005). Based on the perspective of relational ontology, ANT explains that actors act their best when they form and continue relationships by residing in the network. ANT also suggests that actors usually do not have influence when they are separate; rather, they gain authority and agency by creating relationships with other actors by residing in a network (Callon, 1986; Law, 1992). That indicates that, for getting the best output from the actors, social, technological and material elements should not be treated separately (Cai & McKenna, 2021). Hence, from this viewpoint, tourism must be considered as an effect of networks where network formation and evolution are continuous. Besides this, tourism should not be considered as a pre-defined structure or a set of pre-determined actors (Deason, Seekamp, & Barbieri, 2021; Dedeke, 2017; Van der Duim, 2005;), although traditional tourism approaches consider these entities as pre-defined and separate. On the other hand, agnosticism, generalised symmetry, and free association are three principles of ANT (Farias, 2009; Roy, 2025). In brief, ANT applies similar logics to explain nature and society (Law, 1994), which is closely aligned with the concept of sociomateriality, where the concept focuses on the inseparability of both social and material elements (McLean & Hassard, 2004; Tomazos & Murdy, 2023).

Applying the relational and sociomateriality standpoint of ANT to YouTube-mediated gastronomy tourism shifts the focus from the question of what influence YouTube has to how YouTube intercedes and ratifies within gastronomy tourism. For instance, using relational ontology of ANT in gastronomy tourism challenges the straightforward viewpoint that online content on YouTube shapes the perception and behavior of tourists. Rather, it describes how the perception and intention of tourists are shaped by the active participation of both food vloggers and tourists in the network, where YouTube, as a digital platform, serves as a mediator. Some of the examples of actors' participation are uploading food vlogs by content creators, watching and commenting by viewers, re-commenting by content creators and other viewers and sharing moments by the members within the same network. In brief, actors reassemble and reconstruct their views and positions continuously instead of being static by residing within a network. On the other hand, the sociomaterial perspective of gastronomy tourism highlights that tourists' engagement in gastronomy tourism not only depends on the active participation of human actors but also highly depends on non-human actors such as foods, places, cooking practices, digital platforms, cameras, algorithms and metrics such as views, likes, and comments.

Hence, this discourse aims to address the following questions: 1. How do relational aspect of actors contributes to shaping international tourists' engagement with Bangladeshi local cuisine? 2. Through what processes do international tourists make decisions to participate in local cuisine in Bangladesh? In doing so, this study contributes by responding to existing human-centric, individualistic, and atomistic gastronomy tourism studies through the application of ANT, offering to trace that realities are relationally built while bringing sociomaterial aspects to establish the impact of heterogeneous actors in tourists' engagement in gastronomy tourism.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Platform-Mediated Gastronomy Tourism Experiences

Gastronomy tourism has seen conspicuous progress over the last few decades (Barzallo-Neira & Pulido-Fernández, 2025) although earlier studies set gastronomy tourism as a part of cultural tourism where gastronomic experiences are only seen in a secondary role, and the main aim of tourists was to discover local traditions and heritage (Quan & Wang, 2004). In contrast, recent scholarships take a broader view, such as now gastronomy is not only seeing as a medium of cultural exchange but also considered as a key mechanism to sustainable development (Recuero-Virto & Valilla Arróspide, 2024). More precisely, these studies illustrate how gastronomy tourism is accountable for creating a unique destination identity, influencing tourists' satisfaction, cultivating and strengthening host-tourist relationships, and linking culinary traditions with cultural heritage (Sartika, Kusumawati, Rahimah, & Abdillah, 2025). In brief, this shift of focus highlights the growing significance of gastronomy tourism towards multi-facet effects on economy, culture, society, environment, and the use of new technologies (Purnami & Setyawan, 2024). Consequently, scholars are now turning their attentions to scrutinise the aspects of gastronomy tourism through the lens of digital technology (Chan, 2025; Martins-Rodal & Patiño Romarís, 2025). This is because tourists have now opportunity to look for and experience gastronomy tourism in real-time through platforms like

YouTube, Instagram, Facebook, X (Twitter), and TikTok (Jara-Amézaga, 2023; Rauf & Pasha, 2024; Truong, Piscarac, Kang, & Yoo, 2025).

Empirical evidence shows that technological advancements influence tourists' decision-making process by spreading gastronomic content and reviews through platforms like Google Reviews, TripAdvisor, and other social media applications (Charlee & Ahmed, 2023; Kim & Cake, 2025; Rauf & Pasha, 2024). Besides, the use of technology enhances tourists' experience by offering virtual tours, online booking, social media interaction, a tailor-made gastronomic experience, and customized culinary recommendations (Sims, 2009). In this regard, several forms of technology such as mobile applications, social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and TikTok, and streaming platforms like YouTube are playing their role (Acharjee & Ahmed, 2023).

Specifically, several studies have highlighted that YouTube, as a digital platform, has become a crucial tool in promoting gastronomy tourism. On the other hand, food vloggers have the opportunity to create and upload content on YouTube that highlights the various cuisines, cooking methods, and culinary traditions, which positions them as an influential force that guides the audience in selecting where to travel and what to eat. Supportably, food-related content on YouTube is significant due to its ability to attract a larger audience as a visual means of storytelling, thus supporting culinary tourism and informing the audience about diverse cultural approaches as well as encouraging gastronomic tourism through the use of exploration-based narratives. Consequently, previous research on YouTube and gastronomy tourism has analyzed the influence of food-related content on travel preferences, the formation of online communities, how YouTube functions as information source and authenticity construction, role in the formation of destination image, and how it can be used as a promotional tool to destinations and local food sectors (Truong, Piscarac, Kang, & Yoo, 2025; Wadhwa, & Bansal, 2022).

However, a significant gap in existing literature still remains. Previous studies were mostly human-centric where focus was given on the nature of the human experience of food tourism but only to a limited extent considered the role of technology in the formation of such experiences (Chen, 2025; Martins-Rodal & Patiño Romarís, 2025). In addition, much of the previous research treated humans and technology as independent entities without considering the relational and sociomaterial aspects between digital platforms like YouTube, tourists, food vloggers and their contents (Zrnić, 2024). Besides this, materialisation and algorithmic processes that YouTube entails have received little theoretical consideration in the gastronomy tourism literature (Cakmak, Agarwal, & Oni, 2024). Thus, further research is required to determine how YouTube mediates the shaping of international tourists' engagement in gastronomy tourism, alongside an investigation of the decision-making process through the lens of a best-fitted theoretical framework. Hence, this discourse uses Actor-Network Theory (ANT) as a theoretical lens that explains social phenomena as relational and sociomaterial accumulations in which the authority of actors emerges through interactions among humans, technologies, and material elements.

2.2 Actor-Network Theory (ANT) and Tourism Research

For studying science and technology, Actor-Network Theory (ANT) emerges as a relational approach in the 1980s (Latour, 2005) where the fundamental focus of the theory is relational materiality (Law, 1992). This concept describes that the central task of the ANT is to analyze the relational practices of the actors in the network, which makes the network stable (Van der Duim, Ren, & Johannesson, 2013). Moreover, ANT investigates the social situation based on relational perspectives (Callon, 1986) and believes that the central point of discussion should be figuring out the relationship between actors (Law, 1994). In this regard, ANT gives focus on relational factors such as association, interaction, negotiation, collaboration, conflict, and trust (Arnaboldi & Spiller, 2011). In brief, ANT considers that the world consists of both human and non-human actors who have intricate relationships between them, whereas the task of ANT is to explain the process through which different actors create relationships by coming under an actor-network (Law, 1994; Scott, Baggio, & Cooper, 2008). ANT also tries to explain the process by which social and material elements become actors (Murdoch, 2001) and how agency emerges relationally through networks of humans and materials (Latour, 2005). In doing so, ANT confronts different views (Latour, 2005; Law, 1992) and proposes that social and materials need to be analyzed together (Beard, Scarles, & Tribe, 2016; Van der Duim, 2005).

ANT is well recognized as a theory and for its translation mechanism (Wang & Xiao, 2020), whereas translation explains how actors create relationship among themselves (Povilanskas & Armaitiene, 2011). Callon (1986) described translation in the best way by introducing several stages of translation process. For instance, problematization, obligatory passage point (OPP), interessement, enrolment, mobilization, and black boxing are stages of translation process (Callon, 1986; Rodger, Moore, & Newsome, 2009).

Although ANT was initially used in the field of technology, scholars are now using ANT in tourism studies to find out the contribution of tourism in the transformation of socio-economic condition, to explain the tourism development in towns, role of tangible and intangible items in tourism development and flourishing, impact of non-human actors on attaining sustainability, to analyze spatial evolution, to study the interactions of stakeholders in the tourism industry, and to explore the tourism development process in a particular context such as wildlife tourism and volunteer tourism (Jørgensen, 2017; Law, 1992; Rodger, Moore, & Newsome, 2009; Tomazos & Murdy, 2023; Van der Duim, Ren, & Jóhannesson, 2013). In brief, by applying ANT in tourism studies, scholars contributed to describe the importance of relational materialism of tourism, significance of non-human actors such as technologies in tourism development, introduction of the concept of tourism-scapes, and the application of translation process in different forms of tourism development (Paget, Dimanche, & Mounet, 2010; Ren, Pritchard, & Morgan, 2010; Van der Duim, 2005; Van Der Duim & Caalders, 2008).

However, a few previous studies used ANT as a theoretical lens in gastronomy tourism and limited studies have been conducted in relation to gastronomy tourism and technology (Ahmed, Tisha, & Roy, 2025; Björk & Kauppinen-Räsänen, 2016). Moreover, findings from existing studies show that

researchers considered digital platforms only as sources of information and as marketing channels in the context of gastronomy tourism (Kuhn, dos Anjos, & Krause, 2024; Rauf & Pasha, 2024). Therefore, this study focuses on broader aspects, specifically how digital platforms mediate in shaping international tourists' engagement in gastronomy tourism alongside their decision-making process. In doing so, this discourse adopts a theoretical lens that integrates relational ontology and sociomateriality perspectives to explain how interactions among human and non-human actors co-construct their perception regarding engagement in gastronomy tourism. Taken together, in the context of this study, relational ontology describes that actors such as tourists, food vloggers, and food vlog content do not have any agency unless they become a part of a network. In this regard, tourists' perceptions, vloggers' credibility and food vlogs' influence are constituted relationally when they work in alignment by residing in a network.

Moreover, the sociomateriality concept highlights that materials and technological entities such as foods, YouTube food vlogging, cameras, lighting, and video algorithms are active participants in shaping international tourists' engagement in gastronomy tourism. In brief, this integrated lens demonstrated that the decision of engagement is the co-produced outcome of complex networks comprising both human and non-human actors.

The ANT provides a unique analytical perspective, unlike conventional theories of tourism behavior. Though most tourism studies are based on human-centered frameworks, which are mainly based on attitudes and motivations of the tourists, ANT pays more attention to relational interactions and the sociomaterial interactions between human and non-human participants. This analytical view allows examining the role of digital platforms (e.g. YouTube), technological artefacts, algorithms, and measures of engagement in the construction of tourism experiences. With the help of ANT, the present study transcends the individualistic explanations but rather forms its concept of gastronomy tourism engagement as a dynamic actor-network product. Based on the ANT principle of agnosticism, this paper is not going to presume that any actor has more significance than others. Rather, it analyses the interaction of both human (tourists and food vloggers) and non-human (YouTube, algorithms, engagement metrics) actors within a network to determine how these actors influence the participation of tourists in Bangladeshi cuisine.

3. Methodology and Methods

3.1 Research Design

This study aims to investigate the role of YouTube in shaping the international tourists' engagement and decision-making process to participate in local cuisine in Bangladesh. By drawing on Actor-Network Theory (ANT) as a theoretical and methodological lens, this discourse adopts a qualitative and interpretive research approach to apprehend subjective emotions and perceptions of research participants through conducting content analysis alongside semi-structured interviews of international tourists to trace the significant contextual factors that influence engagement with local cuisine, where YouTube plays a role as mediator. In this regard, by focusing on relational and sociomaterial perspectives of ANT, the methodology of this discourse examines how different

heterogeneous human and non-human actors create an actor-network and co-construct gastronomic knowledge, which influences international tourists' engagement in local cuisine (Latour, 2005; Law, 1992; Orlikowski, 2007). Furthermore, this study produces a perceptual map through ANT to facilitate the decisionmakers and strategists of the respective industry (Tang, Chen, & Chiu, 2018).

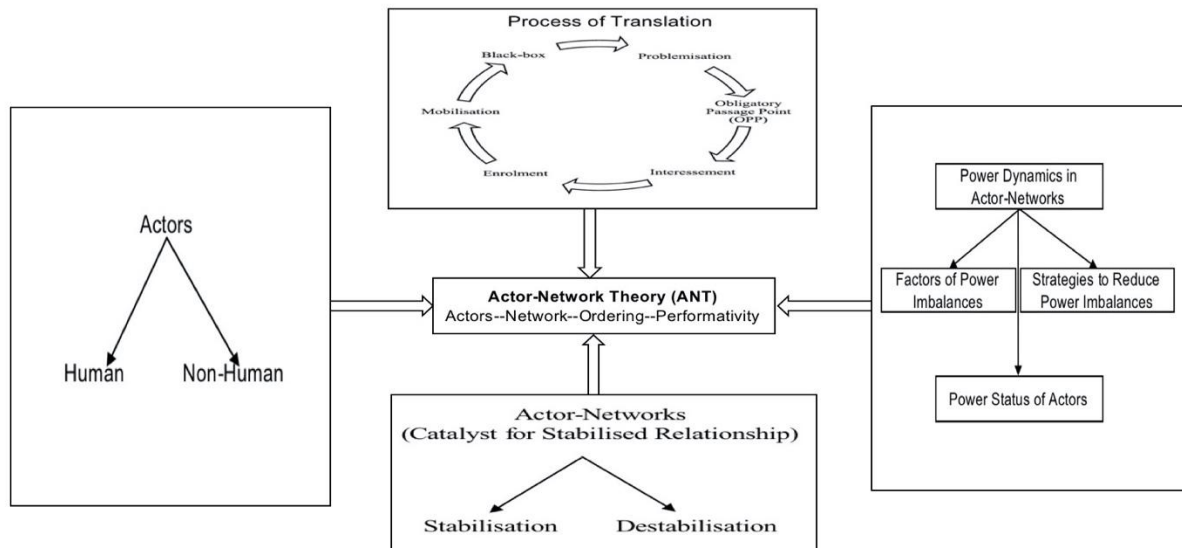


Figure 1: Conceptual diagram of ANT (Source: Authors)

3.2 Context of the Study

Bangladesh, an emerging gastronomic tourism destination in the Global South, has all the essential components to be a distinctive culinary hotspot (Amin & Roy, 2016; Hossain et al., 2025). For instance, Bangladesh has extensive culinary offerings that showcase a vibrant space for culinary tourists (Sarker, 2022). However, Bangladeshi local cuisine faces a challenge in its recognition (Talukder & Kumar, 2025), therefore, Bangladesh requires a unified national effort to overcome the obstacles (Hossain et al., 2025). Consequently, the food vlogging sector has emerged as a prominent, influential force in present-day food industries, where digital content from food vloggers now showcases the richness, along with subtlety and complexity of Bangladeshi cuisine (Rahman & Zaman, 2018). The vloggers show viewers multiple types of dining venues that range from street food stalls to upscale restaurants alongside traditional home-cooked meals, which make their content attractive and demonstrate the multiple flavors and dining traditions of the country. Through their interesting material, these vloggers offer both entertainment and educational content about Bangladeshi food customs, which has positioned them as prominent figures in Bangladesh's culinary sector (Sarker, 2022).

3.3 Data Collection

This study incorporated YouTube vlog analysis of Bangladeshi food contents combined with semi-structured interviews of international tourists as qualitative research methods. These research methods deliver important findings concerning how people view and present Bangladeshi food culture across digital platforms.

Table 1: Summary of Study Dataset

Data Source	Sample Size	Purpose
YouTube Food Vlogs	50	Analyze digital food representations
Viewer Comments	500	Examine audience perceptions
Semi-Structured Interviews	25	Understand tourists' experiences

3.3.1 YouTube Video Content Analysis

Content analysis allows researchers to visualize patterns and themes and count frequencies through systematic evaluation of written and visual communication materials (Krippendorff, 2018), to understand data meanings and relationships (Neuendorf, 2017), to make simpler complicated information, and to present clear interpretations of hidden meanings (Weber, 1990). Besides, through this analysis method, researchers can access explicit and implicit communication signals, thus making the technique useful for media studies together with social sciences, psychological and marketing investigations including one of the updated research streams gastronomy tourisms (Mayring, 2014; Rauf & Pasha, 2024).

Hence, for content analysis, based on purposive sampling this study selects fifty YouTube food vlogs (see Appendix 1) featuring Bangladeshi cuisine with minimum fifty thousand views which indicates that the content has effectively reached and engaged viewers across a wide audience, level engagement of international viewers through like, comments and sharing, content richness including food dining sessions along with cooking lessons and visits to local streets to taste street food, and recent videos that has been uploaded in last four years period. In addition, data from five hundred viewers' comments on YouTube helped analyze audience responses which included viewers' inquiries about Bangladeshi cuisine and cultural observations and particular meal interests.

To provide an overview of the interaction between the audience and a selected set of food vlogs on YouTube, the measures of engagement, such as views, likes, and comments, were considered.

Table 2: Engagement Metrics of Selected YouTube Food Vlogs

Engagement Indicator	Minimum	Maximum	Average
Views	50,000	1,200,000	210,000
Likes	900	28,000	4,800
Comments	45	1,350	320

These indicators of engagement provide contextual data on the visibility and interaction with the audience of the sampled and vlog content.

3.3.2 Semi-Structured Interviews

A total of twenty-five international visitors were interviewed for this study (see Appendix 2), focusing on their perspectives regarding Bangladeshi food vlogs. The participants were selected through purposive and snowball sampling where main considerations were given on tourists who watched videos before visiting Bangladesh and lived outside of the destination country. Data saturation plays a pivotal role in deciding participants' number (Malterud et al., 2016). The data saturated after 21 interviews and four more interviewees were interviewed for verification. Also, the data gathered were analyzed till saturation was reached that indicates nothing new would appear through collecting data (Kisely & Kendall, 2011). Interviews conducted with participants lasted between thirty to sixty minutes to explore how participants experienced the food options in vlogs, their knowledge of Bangladeshi cuisine, expectations during the visits, and gastronomic impressions. The theory-based questions (see Appendix 3) were asked to understand participants' views (Galletta, 2013). The participants' views are edited slightly for readability by retaining the intended meaning. Therefore, a denaturalized transcription process was followed (Oliver, Serovich, & Mason 2005). The participants were interviewed after returning to their home country. The participants engaged in semi-structured dialogues which had open-ended questions that stimulated extensive conversations also.

3.4 Data Analysis

Inductive thematic analysis was applied to analyze the qualitative data. Following Actor-Network Theory (ANT), the identified themes were not considered separately as categories, but as a relational result, created during the interaction of heterogeneous actors. The interview transcripts, the video materials on YouTube, and the comments of 500 viewers were reconsidered several times to reveal the useful patterns. The principal ideas revealed by open coding included authenticity, cultural curiosity, hygiene concerns, trust in vloggers and travel intention. The comparable codes were then merged into broader thematic exhaustions that explain how YouTube food vlogs can influence the perceptions of international tourists towards gastronomy tourism, and their participation.

Table 3: Example of Coding Process for YouTube Viewer Comments

Raw Comment	Initial Code	Category	Theme
"This street food looks delicious and authentic!"	Authenticity perception	Food representation	Authenticity
"I want to try this food if I visit Bangladesh"	Travel intention	Tourism motivation	Engagement
"Looks tasty but I'm concerned about hygiene"	Hygiene concern	Perceived risk	Trust

Source: Field Data

Table 3 illustrates how viewer comments were coded and grouped into themes during the analysis. Following ANT, based on YouTube content analysis, several human and non-human actors were identified and mapped first. This helps researchers to get a general idea about the interrelationship among actors in a YouTube-mediated gastronomic network. Beyond this, YouTube video comments revealed viewers' sentiments about trustworthy vlogging choices and food safety doubts and their

understanding of genuine content delivery. Researchers combined these observations into several thematic areas whereas thematic organization improved researchers' understanding of the effects of digital platforms on gastronomic experiences.

Moreover, researchers examined interview transcripts alongside YouTube comments several times for the purpose of establishing a clear understanding of participants' perspectives and recognizing new patterns. Through an inductive method the research allowed themes to grow naturally instead of predetermining them. The authors showed how international tourists emerged with local cuisine through aligning several human and non-human actors showcasing their conflicting views towards each other (Tomazos & Murdy, 2023). It is to be mentioned that here both the human and non-human actors were given equal importance following the 'general symmetry' principle of ANT (McLean & Hassard, 2004). Furthermore, data analysis required an inductive thematic analysis which followed systematic procedures to generate themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Hence, the analysis began with open coding that focused on marking important sequential thoughts within the recorded data and comments. The authors combined recurring patterns into generalised groupings which expressed the essential meanings discovered from the data.



Figure 2: ANT Informed Perceptual Map of YouTube-Mediated Gastronomy Tourism

(Source: Authors)

The perceptual map of the actor-network that influences YouTube-mediated gastronomy tourism is shown in Figure 2. This model shows that the engagement of tourists is co-produced through networked relationships, as opposed to the actor alone. Local food vendors and culinary practices provide the cultural foundation that food vloggers capture and translate into digital narratives

through YouTube food vlogs. The YouTube platform and its engagement mechanisms, including views, likes, comments, and algorithmic visibility, function as non-human actors that amplify these representations. Through this digital network, international tourists engage with the content and develop perceptions of authenticity, cultural curiosity, and trust toward Bangladeshi cuisine. These perceptions may ultimately influence their in-gastronomy tourism experiences.

In brief, the evaluation of interview transcripts against content analysis results allowed researchers to verify recurring themes across cultural immersion, authenticity and culinary storytelling. Research findings from various data sources united the main themes which resulted in a detailed comprehension of how digital food vlogging shapes tourists' food experience in Bangladesh.

4. Analysis and Findings

4.1 YouTube as a Mediator in Shaping International Tourists' Engagement in Local Cuisine

Drawing relational ontology of Actor-Network Theory (ANT), this section of analysis tries to investigate how international tourists' engagement in local cuisine is shaped by heterogeneous actors such as tourists, food vloggers, food vlogs, food practices and technologies. Rather than considering engagement as an individual response, the findings illustrate that it is the result of ongoing interactions among human and non-human actors. Based on the field data, several interrelated themes were generated: 1. impact on decision-making, 2. setting expectations, 3. mediated culinary authenticity and representation, 4. performative cultural appreciation, and 5. building trust through transparency. Notably, this study is intended to treat these identified themes as the outcome of relational effects rather than as discrete.

4.1.1 Impact on Decision-Making

The argument regarding decision-making from the perspective of relational ontology is that decision-making does not solely depend on the judgment and desire of the individual, but rather it is influenced by the actors of the network. In the case of gastronomy tourism, YouTube videos serve as valuable resources for tourists who wish to understand Bangladeshi food culture. Vlogs serve as fundamental information sources because they present reliable insights into local food traditions. Through watching vlogs, viewers gain a sense of being in Bangladesh, although they have never physically visited as well as gain self-assurance and motivational power to experience new food items. A traveler from Australia (RP_24) stated that:

"I follow YouTube food vlogs of Rafsan the Chotobhai since his food tastes similar to mine. His contents help and guide me to choose what to eat, where to eat and when to eat. I feel his recommendations are trustworthy."

The above statement indicates that decisions were co-produced through the interaction of network actors. Besides, in this network, YouTube video works as intermediaries to shape tourists' preferences and intention in decision-making through presenting foods in lucrative ways, showing cooking processes, and capturing food vloggers' reactions and facial expressions while eating. In this regard, a Swedish participant stated that he tries to make his travel plans by viewing multiple

YouTube videos that provide information about local food and distinctive tourist sites attractively. Others also stated that after seeing cuisine featured on a vlog, they try to travel to different destinations. For instance, a German (RP_03) viewer commented that:

“From YouTube food vlogs, I have come to know that Sylhet, a district of Bangladesh, is famous for its different kinds of tea. Among all the variations, seven-layer tea is the most popular. The way the vloggers describe and show the seven-layer tea is fascinating. Therefore, I had to experience it myself.”

However, sometimes contradictory food videos create confusion among tourists in decision-making. Some of the respondents stated that after watching the first few videos, they were determined to taste certain local cuisine, but later, when they saw content with negative reviews, they became confused. In brief, relationally, the decision-making process is influenced by the alignment of different actors, such as the motivation of individuals, presentation of foods in the YouTube food vlogs, credibility of the vloggers, quality of foods, and availability of technological devices while visiting.

4.1.2 Setting Expectations

Apart from helping in decision-making, YouTube food vlogs also shape visitors' expectations of local cuisine. Vloggers make an enduring effect on their audience through vivid imagery and compelling storytelling, which shows viewers their upcoming gastronomic possibilities. For example, the act of watching someone eat chotpoti from the street or bargain in crowded markets helps future visitors emotionally prepare to experience unique food sensations and dining conditions. A Spanish (RP_21) respondent stated that:

“Food vlogs, which I enjoy, help me to set expectations. These videos create an imaginary picture and feelings regarding the actual taste and quality. Different factors, such as high-quality images, sounds of cooking and eating of other food lovers, expressions and reactions of content creators, description of the foods, and ambient conditions, work together to set my expectations towards certain cuisine.”

This observation reveals that expectations regarding local cuisine not only depend on the perception and prior knowledge of individuals, but also on the current context, which largely depends on the engagement with YouTube content and other actors who reside in this network. However, there is always a difference between seeing something on a screen and experiencing things in person. Several visitors reported that the local dishes were spicier than they anticipated based on expectations, while compared to vlog previews. Upon watching the vlogs, the Australian participant first sensed confusion because the videos misrepresented the actual spiciness of the food. Still, instead of feeling disappointed, many saw these discrepancies as adding to the authenticity of their experience. A participant from the United Kingdom (RP_19) said that:

“Vlogs are a great starting point, but it's important to be flexible and ready for things to be different. I see mismatches of expectation in the experience. Therefore, I am flexible rather than rigid while tasting particular local cuisine.”

The above narrative features that expectations create when all the actors in a network work in alignment, and it is flexible in nature. Moreover, the formation of expectation is an ongoing process where unmet expectations don't have to lead to disappointment.

4.1.3 Mediated Culinary Authenticity and Representation

International tourists search for authentic food experiences while engaging in local cuisine. In this regard, visitors' opinions and their relationship with vlogs depend strongly on how authentic the content appears. Many vlog viewers found personal connections to the normal food items shown in markets and simple stalls rather than high-end dining places. Tourists focused on content creators who displayed authentic local cooking methods by showing street-food vendors and their equipment and food markets in their videos. This method of presenting Bangladeshi cuisine allowed viewers to experience its depth while gaining a stronger sense of connection with the food culture. One of the respondents from India (RP_08) highlighted that:

"I love to watch food vlogs. I have some favorite content creators and channels. I trust them. Specifically, when they make videos in natural settings, including in crowded places, show live cooking besides streets, capture real-time expression of foodies, and upload videos without editing, then I can feel the real authenticity of the cuisine and become interested in visiting and tasting the food."

This illustrates that authenticity does not solely depend on the food, YouTube content or food vloggers. It is the effect of the network where each human and non-human actor interacts. However, several respondents mentioned that food vloggers of Bangladesh prefer to recommend a culinary destination where high-priced restaurants and international franchises are available. Besides, instead of showing genuine examples of authentic Bangladeshi food culture, vloggers choose to show artificial images to their viewers. In this regard, one of the respondents from Sweden (RP_04) expounded that:

"Bangladeshi cuisine is a vibrant celebration of tastes and spices. Simple dinners are more memorable when employees at family-run restaurants and street food stands are polite and helpful. Numerous flavors across the nation, with its fresh food ingredients, enable Bangladeshi cuisine to offer an immersive culinary journey. Throughout, I have found their interactions more valuable due to the friendly behavior of Bangladeshi residents. In my view, authenticity means a simple and genuine presentation of foods and the perceived relationship between food vloggers, tourists and viewers."

4.1.4 Performative Cultural Appreciation

Tourists prefer to engage in local cuisine because they feel a sense of cultural attachment. Markedly, most of the respondents said that YouTube food vlogs act as a mediator to understand and connect with local culinary practices. One of the respondents from China (RP_07) described that:

"I prefer to engage in local cuisine when I see food vlogs present cultural elements together with food content. I also search for food vlogging contents which address food significance

and give detailed information about ingredients in their dishes, along with describing their taste characteristics. For example, before visiting Bangladesh, I watched a YouTube food video which showed the presentation of hilsa fish with fermented rice. Later, from the video, I came to know that this is a well-known and popular Bengali New Year tradition and an inseparable part of Bangladeshi local cuisine culture.”

This indicates that YouTube food contents create scope for viewers to learn about cultural practices. In addition, the background information vloggers present about cuisine allows viewers to develop meaningful connections with it. The video transformed into a story about Bangladesh through its history while sharing cultural values and traditions instead of focusing solely on food. Visitors also receive exceptional guidance through vlogs, which provide them comfort when exploring the culinary attractions of Bangladesh. People who have problems with language comprehension would likely face challenges when ordering meals and describing their nutritional needs. If this is the case, then vlogs with educational videos provide information which makes travelers feel confident during their visits because the videos demonstrate food requesting protocols and safety guidelines. The combination of practical information and cultural storytelling transformed an uncertain situation into a wonderful experience of discovery as an American (RP_12) traveler mentioned that:

“Knowing how to say, ‘thank you’ and ‘delicious’ in Bengali added a personal touch to my interactions.”

4.1.5 Building Trust Through Transparency

Trust is considered one of the most crucial catalysts in consolidating tourists’ engagement in local cuisine. From the relational background, trust is considered as the outcome of a strong relationship among actors rather than treated as an individual and static feature of tourists, food vloggers or digital platforms. Therefore, to ensure trust in particular, YouTube food vloggers need to maintain openness with their audience who watches their content. Beyond this, honesty is essential for vloggers who want to establish devoted followership and influence actual behaviors. People trust vlogging content more when vloggers reveal their monetary relationships with businesses or how they generate revenue. The need for transparency has grown stronger since the internet contains numerous paid content pieces, while people struggle to identify genuine and harmful intentions. Tourists develop a favorable impression of vloggers who reveal their payment status before giving recommendations. Vloggers achieve more popularity and acceptance by showing both positive and negative aspects of their trips. When content creators express their negative opinions about food dishes or reveal unattractive aspects of street food, they remain honest as a virtue of earning trust. The advice becomes more credible because their honesty is transparent. Audiences mostly pay attention to content showing unexpected challenges faced by vloggers during their spice acquisition and market navigation. Viewers who follow vloggers trust their genuine portrayal of Bangladeshi food culture since vloggers maintain authenticity in their content. One of the respondents from Italy (RP_06) specified that:

“When I enjoy food vlogs on YouTube regarding Bangladeshi cuisine, I trust them because food vloggers show each thing, from buying raw materials to preparing food. It feels more

reliable to me than written reviews because the video shows everything in real time and in a transparent way.”

In a nutshell, by drawing a relational ontology perspective, this discourse moves beyond individualistic to process-oriented understandings, where it reflects that YouTube cannot solely ensure tourists' engagement in local cuisine. However, rather, it works with other actors closely to produce, negotiate, and sustain the network to mobilize international tourists' engagement.

4.2. Decision-making as Translation in YouTube-Mediated Culinary Engagement

This study conceptualizes the decision of international tourists to engage with local cuisine as a process of translation (Callon, 1986). By applying ANT, this discourse examines the decision-making process that emerges through relational negotiations among actors. In doing so, relational and sociomaterial perspectives have come to consider tracing the decision-making process by following the stages of translation of ANT. Therefore, the findings are discussed based on the several interrelated moments of the translation process to illustrate how culinary decisions are made and stabilized (Callon, 1986; Rodger, Moore, and Newsome, 2009).

4.2.1 Problematization

At the problematization stage, the primary actor faces obstacles, explains the situation, recommends solutions to the problems, and seeks out other actors for participating in problem solution (Huxford, 2010; Tang, Chen, & Chiu, 2018; Van der Duim and Caalders, 2008; Wang & Xiao, 2020). Findings suggest that international tourists try to engage in local cuisine while visiting Bangladesh. But lacking information about local cuisine, they feel confused about what to eat. They even treated local foods as an ambiguous object and risky to eat. One of the respondents from the United Kingdom (RP_02) stated that:

“A few years ago, for the first time, I visited Bangladesh. I had no information or idea about Bangladeshi food. Because of limited knowledge about culinary practices, the quality and hygiene of foods, and the manners of eating food, I was demotivated to taste Bangladeshi foods.”

In this stage, international tourists who are considered as principal actors face several problems such as risk and uncertainty about food, limited prior culinary knowledge, lack of sources for gathering authentic information, fear of taking wrong decisions, lack of trust in food and vendors, socially unacceptable attitudes, and communication barriers. To solve these problems, tourists search for other actors who can come forward to solving these issues.

4.2.2 Obligatory Passage Point (OPP)

Obligatory passage point of translation process describes a common platform through which actors can solve their problems (Tang, Chen, & Chiu, 2018). Probable actors bring their problems to OPP (Liu & Wang, 2013), and they connect to actor-networks through the OPP (Wang & Xiao, 2020). In this study, respondents stated that YouTube functions as a central OPP, which was the starting point for them to make a decision to participate in local cuisine. On the other hand, for food vloggers, YouTube

acts as a proper medium to place their video content, from where they get the chance to earn from viewership. Regarding this YouTube video, one of the respondents from Malaysia (RP_15) expressed that:

“I had no plan to taste the street food in Bangladesh. But after watching a video on YouTube, I became too motivated to taste the local food. YouTube videos actually helped me to decide what to eat, where to eat, how to eat and when to eat.”

4.2.3 Interessement

One of the crucial stages of the translation process is interessement, where principal actors motivate other actors to join the network (Huxford, 2010; Liu & Wang, 2013; Zhao, 2011). In the context of international tourists' engagement in local cuisine, YouTube functions as an interest device which mediates between tourists and local cuisine. Most of the respondents posited that YouTube not only provides culinary information but also motivates content by ensuring safety, authenticity and its cultural significance. Henceforth, food vloggers attractively create their videos by taking close shots of food, providing descriptive narratives, showing hygiene practices, interacting with vendors, and ensuring the credibility of the content. One of the respondents from Canada (RP_11) contended that:

“I travel frequently to different countries. Previously, I had no option for gathering culinary information. But now I can know every detail of food by watching vlogs. This platform motivates me to try local foods.”

4.2.4 Enrolment

In the enrolment stage principal actor sets the functions of other actors (Rodger, Moore, & Newsome, 2009). In this stage, potential actors express their concern to join the network (Dedeke, 2017). In this study, enrolment occurs when international tourists not only enjoy food vlogs but also search for foods which they have come to know from the food vlogs. This stage describes the active participation of international tourists in local cuisine. One of the respondents from Denmark (RP_25) agreed that:

“I saw a video regarding Bangladeshi foods, where I saw that different places are famous for different types of food. For example, old Dhaka is famous for Biryani, Chattogram is famous for mejban, Chadpur is famous for hilsa, and north Bengal is famous for sweet items. Therefore, I can know in advance where to eat and what to eat. It becomes easier for me now to engage in local cuisine.”

4.2.5 Mobilization

This is a stage where the prescribed solution of the identified problems is accepted widely by the other actors. In this stage, few actors play roles as spokesperson (Dedeke, 2017; Ibrahim, 2009). In the context of this study, prominent food vloggers act as spokespersons; they speak on behalf of Bangladeshi cuisine. Their frequent video uploads, number of likes, comments and sharing, and algorithm amplification create trust about them to represent Bangladeshi cuisine to the outer world.

Tourists also mobilize this network through several activities. In this regard, one of the respondents (RP_18) said that:

“After watching videos on YouTube, I try local foods while visiting different countries. Most importantly, after enjoying local foods, I share photos, videos and comments on my platform as well as post these under the YouTube video content. As a consequence, many people from my network come to know about the local cuisine, and they also try to engage while visiting these countries.”

4.2.6 Black-Boxing

This is the final stage of the translation process where complex networks become taken for granted (Latour, 2005). In this stage, actions of the network stabilize, which helps to increase the performance of the created network (Fountain, 1999). In this study context, participants hold that after watching lots of videos and several engagements in local cuisine, it had become normal to them to participate in Bangladeshi local cuisine. They also asserted that at this stage, they feel safer and confident about local cuisine. However, at this point, the influence of YouTube, the role of algorithms, the popularity and credibility of vloggers have lessened, although tourists still watch food vlogs to get the latest update on a particular culinary experience.

To sum up, the above description highlights that international tourists' engagement in Bangladeshi cuisine produce through a process rather than an individual choice where relational and sociomaterial aspects play a crucial role. Eventually, YouTube, as a digital platform, plays a mediator's role by aligning the interests of both international tourists and food vloggers.

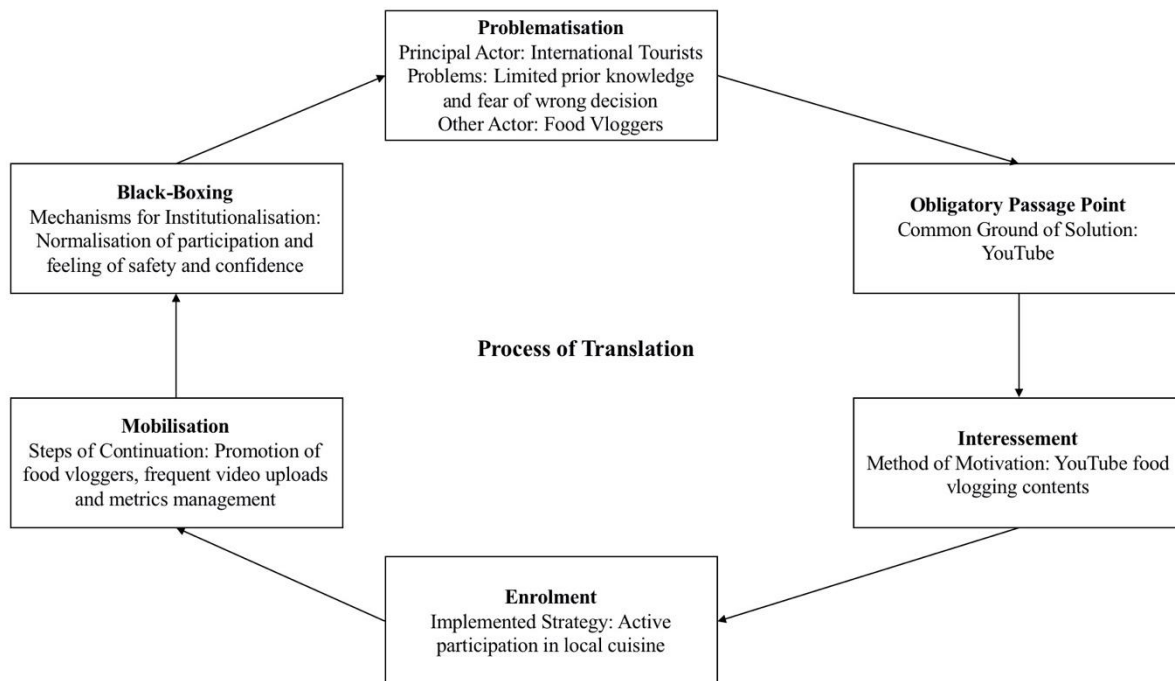


Figure 3: Process of Translation in Decision-making in a Nutshell (Source: Authors)

5. Discussion

Drawing on relational ontology and sociomateriality perspective of Actor-Network Theory (ANT), this study scrutinized how human and non-human actors interact relationally to shape the engagement of international tourists in YouTube-mediated gastronomy tourism. Findings of the discourse suggest that this engagement does not solely depend on an individual, rather it is the results of heterogeneous actors-networks. In doing so, this study makes several theoretical contributions to gastronomy tourism research in several aspects. Initially, it applies ANT in gastronomy tourism while revealing how technology, specifically, YouTube as a digital platform acts as a mediator in shaping international tourists' engagement in Bangladeshi cuisine. Then, by drawing relational ontology perspective this discourse shows engagement in local cuisine is a network and relational effects which are co-produced through assemblages of human and non-human actors. Finally, this discourse highlights the significance of translation process for exploring decision-making process while proving the involvement of sociomaterial and relational perspective in this negotiation process.

5.1 YouTube as a Mediator in Determining International Tourists' Engagement in Bangladeshi Cuisine

Precisely, the answer of the first research question shows how YouTube acts as a mediator to determine international tourists' engagement in Bangladeshi cuisine. While investigating the first research question, this discourse identified five interrelated themes: impact on decision-making, setting expectations, mediated culinary authenticity and representation, performative cultural appreciation, and building trust through transparency. The findings illustrate that YouTube helps international tourists to make decision for engaging in Bangladeshi local cuisine while respondents claiming that they take decision not only based on their individual thinking and mindset but also several other factors related to YouTube food vlogs. This claim suggests the agency of actors in a network and the significance of relationship among them in influencing the decision-making process (Latour, 2005). Prior studies also posited that decision-making process is the outcome of relation among actors (Emirbayer, 1997). Similarly, in line with several studies that examined the role of digital media in decision-making (Gretzel, Sigala, Xiang, & Koo, 2015), this study contributes to literature by highlighting the role of non-human actors in decision-making processes.

Most respondents asserted that formation of expectation about food largely depends on sociomaterial aspects, such as live cooking process, street ambience and sounds, personal traits of vendors, explanation of vloggers and their credibility. This indicates expectation shaped by sociomaterial assemblages rather than abstract thinking (Law, 2009). Moreover, expectation functioned as performative outcome (Jansson, 2018). On the contrary, this study also claims that authenticity of Bangladeshi cuisine is not an inherent property, rather this study shows perception of authenticity through the networks of relationship among actors such as perception of tourists, credibility of vloggers, and nature of food vendors. This viewpoint challenges traditional notion of authenticity (Björk & Kauppinen-Räsänen, 2016) and supports the findings of Cohen and Cohen (2012) who stated that authenticity is increasingly mediated. In brief, this study contributes to

existing literature by demonstrating that perception of authenticity is the outcomes of network effect (Latour, 1999).

The results of this discourse also highlight that YouTube accelerates to gather idea about cultural aspects of the Bangladeshi cuisine. Previous studies also explained the role of digital influencers in enhancing cultural understanding through culinary experiences (Ingrassia et al., 2022). Many respondents considered YouTube vloggers as cultural ambassadors who connect people worldwide by presenting Bangladeshi cuisine with cultural explanations and historical accounts. Respondents also mentioned that while watching food vlogs they focus on local eating practices, local pronunciation of food items, and audience feedback. This signifies cultural appreciation performs in relational and collective ways (Callon, 1986). Thus, cultural appreciation forms through a networked performance of both human and non-human actors. On the other hand, foreign tourists engage in local cuisine when they have trust. Most of the respondents said that YouTube mediated to build trust in local cuisine. However, existing studies mostly focused on human-centric role in trust building (Kim, Eves, & Scarles, 2009) while this study contributes by highlighting the roles of non-human actors alongside human actors and their relational aspects in trust building.

5.2 International Tourist's Decision-Making Determinants to Engaging Bangladeshi Local Cuisine

By drawing translation framework of ANT, the answer of second research question illustrates how international tourists make decisions to engage in Bangladeshi local cuisine. The findings of this study highlight the significance of sociomaterial and relational perspective within translation model. For instance, before engaging local cuisine international tourists face multidimensional problems, such as lack of information regarding local food culture. Therefore, they search for other actors who have the capability to solve their problems. In doing so, YouTube emerges as a mediator to solve the previously identified problems. This platform acts as a bridge for both tourists and food vloggers whereby watching food vlog contents tourists take decision to engage in local cuisine while uploading content food vloggers reach to their audience and earn money from viewership. Later, applying several mechanisms such as boosting and high-quality video contents food vloggers motivate tourists to take decisions in favor of engaging local cuisine. On the contrary, tourists also get motivation from other members of the network. In the next stage, based on the YouTube video, international tourists decide which food they will eat, which vendor they will select, when they will eat and how they will eat. Essentially, tourists mostly follow popular food vloggers. As a consequence, they become spokespersons on behalf of other food vloggers. Lastly, decisions become normalized and tourists not fully depend on YouTube regarding decision-making aspect.

It is to be mentioned that this study challenges traditional views such as decision-making is individual and rational process. Instead, the findings suggest that decision-making process is relational and process-oriented where sociomaterial perspective such as both human and non-human actors combinedly shape the decision-making process and its outcome. More precisely, by analyzing decision-making process through translation process, this study proves that tourists do not take decision alone rather decisions are co-produced by tourists, YouTube as a digital platform,

food vloggers, food vlogs, metrics such as like, comment, share, and reactions, YouTube algorithms, recommendation from other viewers, credibility and popularity of vloggers, video quality and boosting. Significantly, this aligns with sociomaterial perspective which rejects the separation of subject and object (Latour, 2005).

6. Conclusion

By drawing Actor-Network Theory (ANT), this study investigates how sociomateriality and relational aspects of both human and non-human actors come into consideration to shape international tourists' engagement in local cuisine and the decision-making process. The findings illustrate ongoing interactions and relational effect of heterogeneous actors' shape engagement of tourists in gastronomy tourism. Besides this, by tracing the translation process of ANT, findings also reveal that the decision-making process of tourists does not solely depend on their individual choice, but rather it emerges through ongoing relational negotiations among actors. In doing so, this discourse contributed to ANT literature by identifying digital streaming platform YouTube as an active non-human mediator-actor. Gastronomic experience is co-constructed through interactions and negotiations, and engagement in gastronomy tourism is not only a subjective matter but also an alignment of human, technological and material factors. In brief, this discourse contributes by explaining that tourists' engagement and decision-making processes depend not only on psychological factors but also result from networked relationships.

Moreover, by tracing non-human actors such as YouTube metrics besides following human actors this discourse also contributed methodologically. This methodological approach enriches the understanding of how digital tracing can be applied to explain tourists' engagement and decision-making process. Importantly, the findings of this study have significant implications for tourism practitioners, including destination and restaurant managers, governance authorities, tourism policymakers, and local food stakeholders. Findings of this study posited that food vloggers and content creators play a crucial role in creating perception regarding local cuisine. Therefore, destination authorities, including local food stakeholders, can use them appropriately to promote and create a positive perception regarding local cuisine. Besides, the authority can also use YouTube as a promotional medium alongside traditional print and digital media.

Still, this discourse is not beyond its limitations. This study only focuses on YouTube as a mediator in gastronomy tourism. Future research can focus on the role of other digital platforms, such as Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok, as well as more modern technologies like Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Virtual Reality (VR). Moreover, this study was conducted from the perspective of Bangladesh, which raises serious concerns about the generalizability of the results. Hence, future research can be a comparative study involving countries from both the Global South and the Global North. Furthermore, this study uses interviews and content analysis as research methods, whereas future research can use netnography as a research method and be longitudinal in nature. Finally, future studies could also explore the ethical dimensions of YouTube-mediated gastronomy tourism.

Funding

This research received no external funding.

Acknowledgments

The authors would like to thank all the research participants who willingly and enthusiastically participated in the research.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Citation

Ahmed, S., Tisha, N. J., & Roy, B. (2026). Understanding of International Tourists' Engagement in YouTube-Mediated Gastronomy Tourism Through the Lens of Actor-Network Theory. *Bangladesh Journal of MIS*, 12(1), 107–137. <https://doi.org/10.61606/BJMIS.V12N1A5>

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Appendix 1

List of YouTube Videos Analyzed

Indicative YouTube Channels Included

Bangladesh:

- AroundMeBD
- Rafsan TheChotoBhai
- Khudalagse
- Petuk Couple
- Bangladeshi Food Reviewer
- Adnan Faruque
- ZoltanBD

International:

Collaborative Videos:

Bangladeshi Food Vlogger	International Collaborator	Description / Representative Video
Rafsan TheChotoBhai	Khalid Al Ameri	<i>Exploring The World's Most Crowded City! (Featuring @Rafsan TheChotoBhai)</i> street food tour in Dhaka during Ramadan.
The Petuk Couple	Mark Wiens	Collaborated with Mark Wiens in Old Dhaka food exploration videos.

International Vloggers / Channels	Country of Origin	Representative Bangladesh Cuisine Content
Mark Wiens	USA	Multiple food videos featuring Bangladeshi street food, tribal dishes, mezbani beef, and market cuisine
The Food Ranger (Trevor James)	Canada	Bangladesh street food tour videos in Dhaka and local eateries
Best Ever Food Review Show (William Sonbuchner)	USA	<i>Old Dhaka Street Food!!!</i> and local dish tastings
Khalid Al Ameri	UAE	Bangladesh food vlogs with emphasis on local foods during Ramadan and street food exploration
Gus1TheGo (Gustav)	Denmark	Food exploration videos in Bangladesh - local foods, markets, street specialties
Foodka Series	India	Foodka Bangladesh, Foodka meets dine out with Adnan, Street Food Dhaka

Others are Doug Barnard, Brent Timm, Harry Jaggard, Carrie Patsalis, Dawood Kim, Drew Binsky, TheLifeOfJord, Khai-Dai.com, Bangladeshi Food Reviewer – Fahim, MetroMan, Adnan Faruque / Dine Out with Adnan, among others

Appendix 2

Profile of interview respondents

Respondent Code	Gender	Age Group	Country of Origin	Travel Purpose	YouTube Usage for Food Information
R1	Male	25–34	Australia	Leisure	Frequent viewer
R2	Female	35–44	United Kingdom	Leisure	Frequent viewer
R3	Male	25–34	Germany	Cultural tourism	Regular viewer
R4	Male	45–54	Sweden	Leisure	Moderate viewer
R5	Female	25–34	Spain	Leisure	Frequent viewer
R6	Male	35–44	Italy	Leisure	Frequent viewer
R7	Female	25–34	China	Leisure	Regular viewer
R8	Male	35–44	India	Visiting friends	Frequent viewer
R9	Male	25–34	Netherlands	Leisure	Regular viewer
R10	Female	45–54	France	Cultural tourism	Moderate viewer
R11	Male	35–44	Canada	Leisure	Frequent viewer
R12	Female	25–34	United States	Leisure	Frequent viewer
R13	Male	55–64	Japan	Cultural tourism	Moderate viewer
R14	Female	35–44	South Korea	Leisure	Regular viewer
R15	Male	25–34	Malaysia	Leisure	Frequent viewer
R16	Female	25–34	Germany	Leisure	Moderate viewer
R17	Male	35–44	Norway	Leisure	Regular viewer
R18	Female	25–34	Philippines	Leisure	Frequent viewer
R19	Male	55–64	United Kingdom	Visiting friends	Moderate viewer
R20	Female	35–44	Australia	Leisure	Frequent viewer
R21	Male	25–34	Spain	Leisure	Regular viewer
R22	Female	45–54	Italy	Cultural tourism	Moderate viewer
R23	Male	35–44	United States	Business & leisure	Frequent viewer
R24	Female	25–34	Australia	Leisure	Frequent viewer
R25	Male	45–54	Denmark	Leisure	Regular viewer

Source: Field data

Appendix 3

Semi-structured Questions

Demographic Information:

Age:

Gender:

Country:

Occupation:

Grand Tour question

When did you start seeing YouTube?

How often do you see YouTube videos?

Mini Tour Question

Do you record videos when you visit a new place?

Do you upload videos on any social platforms?

Must ask questions

1. Can you briefly describe your travel experience in Bangladesh?
2. Had you watched any YouTube food videos about Bangladesh before your visit?
3. What types of Bangladeshi food-related YouTube videos did you watch most frequently?
4. Which food vloggers or channels did you trust the most, and why?
5. How did YouTube recommendations or suggested videos influence your viewing behavior?
6. How did YouTube food vlogs influence your decision to try Bangladeshi local cuisine?
7. Did the videos shape your expectations regarding taste, hygiene, or dining environments?
8. Were there any moments when videos confused or reassured you about food choices?
9. What makes a food vlog appear authentic to you?
10. How did food vlogs help you understand Bangladeshi food culture and traditions?
11. Did transparency (e.g., live cooking, unedited content, disclosure of sponsorships) affect your trust in vloggers?
12. How did your actual food experiences compare with what you saw on YouTube?
13. Have you shared your own food experiences online after visiting Bangladesh?
14. Looking back, how important was YouTube in shaping your overall gastronomy experience?

If you'd like, you can share whatever you want.

Screenshots of Comments

