

SURVEY OF CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR IN SELECTED INTERNATIONAL CATERING ESTABLISHMENTS IN CZECHIA

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ABSTRACT:

Conducting research in the field of consumer purchasing behaviour gained an attention during the period of the COVID-19 pandemic. The authors of this study decided to focus their attention on selected factors influencing tourism. Since consumer purchasing behaviour is a broad topic, only selected factors that influence tourism demand are addressed. The expected research result is an insight into consumer behaviour in selected international catering establishments in Czechia. Moreover, at a time when the COVID pandemic is slowly fading, purchasing behaviour is becoming increasingly important. The aim of this contribution was to find the factors that most influence the choice of selected tourism facilities in Czechia. Among the key factors that influence the choice of international catering establishments in the Czech Republic, the majority of customers consider the atmosphere of the establishment, the opinion of friends, the right choice of music, and the location of the restaurant as the most important based on their preferences. A more detailed analysis of the survey results revealed that more than one-third of men consider the ability to pay by card to be an important factor that influences their choice of international catering establishments and the right choice of music is moderately important for most respondents in terms of their education. The exceptions to this are respondents with a university diploma who mention the factor of the right choice of music for selecting international catering establishments as the most important.

KEY WORDS:

Czechia, consumer behaviour, factors, international catering establishments, tourism, tourism facilities

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1 Introduction

The SME sector is the backbone of developed economies. Most of the businesses operating in tourism sector are represented by small and medium-sized business. During the period of COVID-19, even after they faced challenges to survive or to find solutions for the negative impact of the pandemic. Beside the



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international chains dominating the tourism sector, SMEs operating in this sector are those which can make tourist destinations attractive again.¹

Today, tourism plays a unique role not only on a global scale, but also at regional and local levels.² In several countries and regions, tourism can be seen as a solution to the problem of how to promote regional development.³ As Kajzar states, the COVID-19 pandemic and the restrictions imposed in response have had a massive impact on the hospitality sector worldwide. The bar and restaurant industry has been severely affected by regulations and restrictions, such as the closure policy introduced for several weeks in many countries. Therefore, in addition to consumer purchasing behaviour, we must also consider the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.⁴

The current situation has created new challenges and is very difficult for service providers, travel agents, and travel agencies. This situation can be a new opportunity for innovation.⁵ The COVID-19 respiratory disease has hit all sectors and services directly or indirectly associated with tourism. Dedeoglu and Bogan state that before the COVID-19 pandemic, dining motivations included hunger, social status, health, hedonic value, atmosphere, subjective well-being, celebrations or special occasions, socialisation, convenience, natural concerns, traditional food and price.⁶

According to Novotný and Duspiva, the factors that influence consumer buying behaviour are very important for companies, because on the basis of these factors it is possible to target business policy. This can lead to better business results in terms of increased sales volume, market share, etc.⁷ There are some new factors of consumer behaviour, too.⁸ The issue of purchasing behaviour has been highlighted by a number of authors, including Renner et al.; Kotler and Keller; Huamin and Xuejing; Kim and Lee, Stefko et al., etc.⁹

For research on selected factors influencing consumer buying behaviour, international catering establishments in Czechia were selected. Based on the pre-survey, 17 factors were selected as the most influential factors for respondents to choose from when selecting international catering establishments. The study summarises the results of the research on consumer behaviour and consumer preferences. This serves as a basis for further research, which the author and his colleagues have decided to extend to other V4 countries.

2 Literature Review

As Shaw et al. pointed out, customer-oriented business strategies are increasingly gaining importance in today's highly competitive marketplace. Therefore, a deep understanding of consumer needs and expectations is becoming crucial for the development of effective business strategies.¹⁰ Due to globalisation and increasing competition, in a turbulently changing business environment, only those companies that understand current trends and consumer behaviour in the global economy can survive.¹¹

According to Musová et al., the importance to monitor customer needs in the tourism industry has become important.¹² Based on examining the changes in customer need, they can make steps that might help to increase their competitiveness.¹³ Keeping up with the trends of current consumers is a crucial issue nowadays. To predict and analyse these trends, companies use advanced tools, including those based on artificial intelligence.¹⁴ The turbulent market environment forces the companies to follow, react and accommodate themselves to change and challenges.

Solomon et al. focused their research on consumer behaviour. The target group of the research were the individuals and groups and their changing purchasing behaviour. Researchers on consumer behaviour are trying to explore the factors motivating the consumer to buy products or use services. The factors influencing purchasing behaviour fall into the following groups: individual, cultural, social, situational elements etc.¹⁵

Small and medium-sized companies faced greater difficulties than ever before with the outbreak of COVID-19 at the end of 2019. They encountered many financial problems under the conditions of such a complicated issue due to having more fragile structure in comparison with their larger counterparts.¹⁶ The daily lives of people have gradually recovered and returned to normal since the outbreak of the pandemic. However, the negative impact on the economy has continued, with especially some small and medium-sized enterprises and individual businesses with weak resistance to pressure experiencing difficulties.

Authors Kim and Lee concentrate on factors that influenced purchasing behaviour and consumer decisions in the catering industry during the pandemic. The consumers who perceive COVID-19 as a high risk will focus their attention on individual dining or prefer restaurants where social distancing rules are kept.¹⁷ According to Zhang et al., many restaurants have been significantly affected by COVID-19. Consumers' preferences for the catering industry in China have changed, such as environmental hygiene, variety of dishes and service methods. Research highlighted that the emotional well-being of the consumer was more positive after the epidemic than before. COVID-19 has changed the lifestyle of consumers, consumption concepts, and consumption habits.¹⁸

1 MURA, L., KAJZAR, P.: Small Businesses in Cultural Tourism in a Central European Country. In *Journal of Tourism and Services*, 2019, Vol. 10, No. 19, p. 40.

2 See: VASANICOVA, P. et al.: Cultural and Natural Resources as Determinants of Travel and Tourism Competitiveness. In *Transformations in Business & Economics*, 2021, Vol. 3, No. 54, p. 300-316; SHPAK, N. et al.: Strategic Planning of the Recreational and Tourist Industry Development. In *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Knowledge*, 2022, Vol. 10, No. 1, p. 100-122.

3 Compare to: PEROVIC, J., RAICEVIC, M., DELIBASIC, M.: Foreign Direct Investment, Tourism, Economic Growth and Trade: Panel Vector Auto Regression (Var) Model. In *Transformations in Business & Economics*, 2021, Vol. 1, No. 52, p. 140-153; ONUFEROVÁ, E. et al.: Analysis of Modern Methods for Increasing and Managing the Financial Prosperity of Businesses in the Context of Performance: A Case Study of the Tourism Sector in Slovakia. In *Oeconomia Copernicana*, 2020, Vol. 11, No. 1, p. 95-116; DEVKOTA, N. et al.: Rethinking Westernization in Destination: Tourists' Perception of a Touristic City. In *Journal of Tourism and Services*, 2021, Vol. 23, No. 12, p. 1-25.

4 See: KAJZAR, P.: The Impact of Different Factors on Repeat Visits to Selected International Tourism Enterprises: Case Study from Czechia. In *Frontiers in Psychology*, 2022, Vol. 13, p. 1-9; WALISZEWSKI, K., WARCHLEWSKA, A.: Comparative Analysis of Poland and Selected Countries in Terms of Household Financial Behaviour during the COVID-19 Pandemic. In *Equilibrium. Quarterly Journal of Economics and Economic Policy*, 2021, Vol. 16, No. 3, p. 577-615; ČVIRIK, M. et al.: Influence of Health-Conscious Consumer Behaviour on Consumer Ethnocentrism during the COVID-19 Pandemic. In *Economic Research – Ekonomska Istraživanja*, 2022, Vol. 36, No. 1, p. 1510-1526.

5 For more information, see: KUBIČKOVÁ, V., BENEŠOVÁ, D.: Impact of Innovative Background of the Economy on Performance and Competitiveness in the Tourism Industry. In *African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure*, 2020, Vol. 9, No. 2, p. 1-13.

6 See: DEDEOGLU, B. B., BOGAN, E.: The Motivations for Visiting Upscale Restaurants during the COVID-19 Pandemic: The Role of Risk Perception and Trust in Government Non-National. In *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 2021, Vol. 95, p. 1-11.

7 NOVOTNÝ, J., DUSPIVA, P.: Factors Influencing Consumers' Buying Behavior and Their Importance for Enterprises. In *E+M Ekonomika a Management*, 2014, Vol. 17, No. 1, p. 152.

8 See: PLESNÍKOVÁ, T., LHOTÁKOVÁ, M.: How Czech Children and Their Parents Perceive Advertising. In *Acta Oeconomica Universitatis Selye*, 2017, Vol. 6, No. 1, p. 113-127; DRÁBIK, P. et al.: Rational Consumer in the Context of Environmental Protection. In *Ekonómický časopis*, 2021, Vol. 68, No. 10, p. 1081-1104.

9 See: RENNER, B. et al.: Why Eat What We Eat. The Eating Motivation Survey (TEMS). In *Appetite*, 2012, Vol. 59, p. 117-128; KOTLER, P., KELLER, K. L.: *Marketing Management*. 13th Edition. New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 2009; HUAMIN, L., XUEJING, Z.: A Study of Factors of Leisure Tourism Intention: Based on the Theory of Planned Behaviour. In *Transformations in Business & Economics*, 2019, Vol. 18, No. 1, p. 163-182; KIM, J., LEE, J. C.: Effects of COVID-19 on Preferences for Private Dining Facilities in Restaurants. In *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management*, 2020, Vol. 45, p. 67-70; STEFKO, R. et al.: Effect of Service Quality Assessment on Perception of TOP Hotels in Terms of Sentiment Polarity in the Visegrad Group Countries. In *Oeconomia Copernicana*, 2020, Vol. 11, No. 4, p. 721-742.

10 SHAW, S., CHOVANCOVÁ, M., BEJTKOVSKY, J.: Consumer Behaviour and Warranty Claim: A Study on Czech Consumers. In *Economics and Sociology*, 2017, Vol. 10, No. 3, p. 90.

11 See: ZHANG, H. et al.: Influence of Task-Technology Fit on Consumer Perceived Value from the Perspectives of Man-Machine Interaction and Interpersonal Interaction. In *Transformations in Business & Economics*, 2021, Vol. 20, No. 2A, p. 515-538; BARTÓK, O., KOZÁK, V., BAUEROVÁ, R.: Online Grocery Shopping: The Customers' Perspective in the Czech Republic. In *Equilibrium. Quarterly Journal of Economics and Economic Policy*, 2021, Vol. 16, No. 3, p. 679-695.

12 MUSOVÁ, Z., MINÁROVÁ, M., POLIACIKOVÁ, E.: Consumer Behavior and Internet. In PETRANOVÁ, D., ČÁBYOVÁ, L., BEZÁKOVÁ, Z. (eds.): *Online Rules – part II. Conference Proceedings*. Trnava: FMK UCM, 2017, p. 172-183.

13 MAJEROVÁ, J., KRÍŽANOVÁ, A.: The Black Box of Consumer Behaviour and Brand Value Perception: Case Study of the Slovak Republic. In *Contributions to Management Science*, 2020, p. 97-121.

14 See: ROSHCHYK, I. et al.: IT Products, E-Commerce, and Growth: Analysis of Links in Emerging Market. In *Transformations in Business & Economics*, 2022, Vol. 21, No. 1, p. 209-227; BENCŠIK, A.: The Sixth Generation of Knowledge Management – The Headway of Artificial Intelligence. In *Journal of International Studies*, 2021, Vol. 14, No. 2, p. 84-101.

15 For more information, see: SOLOMON, M. R., BARMOSSY, G., ASKEGAARD, S.: *Consumer Behavior: A European Perspective*. 2nd Edition. Harlow: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2002; BOCA, G. D.: Factors Influencing Consumer Behavior in Sustainable Fruit and Vegetable Consumption in Maramures County, Romania. In *Sustainability*, 2021, Vol. 13, No. 4, p. 3; NOVOTNÝ, J., DUSPIVA, P.: Factors Influencing Consumers' Buying Behavior and Their Importance for Enterprises. In *E+M Ekonomika a Management*, 2014, Vol. 17, No. 1, p. 152-166.

16 Compare to: CIVELEK, M. et al.: How Innovativeness of Family-Owned SMEs Differ Depending on Their Characteristics? In *Equilibrium. Quarterly Journal of Economics and Economic Policy*, 2021, Vol. 16, No. 2, p. 413-428; KLJUČNIKOV, A. et al.: Financial Performance and Bankruptcy Concerns of SMEs in Their Export Decision. In *Oeconomia Copernicana*, 2022, Vol. 13, No. 3, p. 867-890.

17 KIM, J., LEE, J. C.: Effects of COVID-19 on Preferences for Private Dining Facilities in Restaurants. In *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management*, 2020, Vol. 45, p. 67-70.

18 ZHANG, C. Y. et al.: The Impact of COVID-19 on Consumers' Psychological Behavior Based on Data Mining for Online User Comments in the Catering Industry in China. In *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 2021, Vol. 18, No. 8, p. 1.

Among other findings of researchers, for example, Jeong et al. indicated that three key factors (i.e., dining environment in the restaurant, communication and hygiene, and contactless features) made customers feel comfortable in a restaurant during the pandemic.¹⁹ Results from the Serbian researchers Marinković and Lazarević indicate that the perceived risk and precautions related to COVID-19 virus have a statistically significant influence on consumers' eating habits which have changed during the pandemic, finally resulting in significant effects on consumers' shopping behaviour for food products.²⁰ We agree with Shivanna, that understanding consumer behaviour is extremely significant for every marketer. Understanding consumer behaviour and the factors influencing consumer behaviour is essential.²¹

Sometimes, the purchaser prefers a simple decision-making process instead of a complex solution. Decisions are then made on the basis of a few criteria. Instead of comparing many characteristics, the consumer will decide based on price, quality etc.²² Businesses that want to succeed not only at home, but also in foreign markets, must focus their attention on selected trends that currently characterise individual consumers. Consequently, they should take decisions that will lead to the satisfaction of consumers' needs and wishes.²³

3 Methodology and Data

The study is based on research results from the past 3 years in the field of Czech tourism trends, both from the perspective of tourism related businesses and customers.²⁴ However, the research was extended to different aspects of the issue; the current study deals with selected factors that influence consumer purchasing behaviour. The basic criterion of the research was that the respondents had to be older than 14 years, and at the time of research they had permanent residence in the Czech Republic. Based on the formula presented by Kozel et al.; Novotný and Duspiva:²⁵

$$n \geq (z^2 * p * q) / \Delta^2$$

- n is the minimum of participants of survey;
- p is % of participants of survey who are inclined to select choice one;
- q is % of participants of survey who are inclined to select choice two;
- Δ is the highest error tolerance;
- z is significance level of the test. For 95% confidence level is z=1.96.

In order to obtain representative data based on the chosen criteria, more than 383 respondents were required to participate in the survey. The survey was anonymous and the printed or electronic form of questionnaire was distributed randomly to the target audience from March to November 2021 in the Czech Republic. The Czech Association of Hotels and Restaurants cooperated in our research. The survey was

19 JEONG, M. et al.: Key Factors Driving Customers' Restaurant Dining Behavior during the COVID-19 Pandemic. In *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 2021, Vol. 34, No. 2, p. 836-858.

20 MARINKOVIĆ, V., LAZAREVIĆ, J.: Eating Habits and Consumer Food Shopping Behaviour during COVID-19 Virus Pandemic: Insights from Serbia. In *British Food Journal*, 2021, Vol. 123, No. 12, p. 3970-3987.

21 SHIVANNA, B. K.: Measuring Impact of COVID-19 on Consumer Behaviour and Factors Driving Consumer Behaviour through Statistical Tools a Study with Respect to Bengaluru Urban. In *Advances and Applications in Statistics*, 2021, Vol. 68, No. 2, p. 225-240.

22 STÁVKOVÁ, J., STEJSKAL, L., TOUFAROVÁ, Z.: Factors Influencing Consumer Behaviour. In *Agricultural Economics – Czech Republic*, 2008, Vol. 54, p. 276-284.

23 See: MUSOVÁ, Z., MUSA, H.: Global Trends Influencing Responsible Behaviour of Consumers and Businesses. In KLIESIK, T. (ed.): *Globalization and Its Socio-Economic Consequences. Part V. – Digital Single Market. 18th International Scientific Conference Proceedings*. Žilina: University of Žilina, Faculty of Operation and Economics of Transport and Communications, 2018, p. 763-770.

24 KAJZAR, P., KOSTKOVÁ, M., PELLEŠOVÁ, P.: Results of the Questionnaire Survey among Selected Tourism Companies and Their Reflection on Trends in Tourism in the Moravian-Silesian Region. In *Journal of Environmental Management and Tourism*, 2020, Vol. 11, p. 236-249.

25 For more information, see: KOZEL, R., MYNÁŘOVÁ, L., SVOBODOVÁ, H.: *Moderní metody a techniky marketingového výzkumu*. Prague: Grada Publishing, 2006; NOVOTNÝ, J., DUSPIVA, P.: Factors Influencing Consumers' Buying Behavior and Their Importance for Enterprises. In *E+M Ekonomika a Management*, 2014, Vol. 17, No. 1, p. 152-166.

conducted in the largest Czech cities, by population, such as Prague, Brno, Ostrava, Pilsen, etc. Criteria for selection of participants were also established (permanent residency in Czechia, and all the participants involved in the survey had to be older than 14). The data set representing the population in these cities and meeting the set criteria amounted to 1.9 million inhabitants. Based on a simple random sampling, we obtained 510 responses. Due to incomplete answers, 10 questionnaires were discarded from the survey.

The purpose of random sampling is that each element, each unit of the base set has an equal chance, an equal probability of becoming an element of the sample set. Thus, the representativeness of the selection is based on the principle of randomness. This study is also based on the findings of Kajzar, who focused his research on factors that influence revisiting selected catering establishments in Czechia. The research objective was to identify the factors that have the biggest impact on the choice of catering facilities in Czechia.²⁶

We used international journals and professional publications as secondary sources for this study. The primary sources of this research have been processed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) and Chi-square test. Statistical hypotheses were formulated, reflecting the relationship between the difference in customer responses and the chosen items influencing the choice of international catering establishments.

In this study, we focus only on chosen factors that most influence the choice of international catering establishments, where respondents had to evaluate 17 selected factors in order of importance on a five-point rating scale, where 1 = not important and 5 = very important. The results of the responses are shown in Table 2. The evaluation was carried out in the following way: The scores were multiplied by the number of responses, for example, when 20 respondents answered not important for 1 point, then 20 x 1 = 20. These points were summed for each factor. We formulated two hypotheses:

H1: The possibility provided to a customer to pay by card differs by gender as the most important factor influencing the choice of international catering establishment.

H2: There is correlation between the highest qualification of the respondent and the appropriate choice of music in international catering establishments.

A Chi-square test (a test of independence) can test whether these observed frequencies are significantly different from the frequencies expected. Rejection of the null hypothesis means that there is a statistically significant correlation between the two phenomena.

The Chi-square is denoted by χ^2 . The chi-square formula is:

$$\chi^2 = \sum (O_i - E_i)^2 / E_i$$

where

O_i = observed value (actual value)

E_i = expected value.

26 See: KAJZAR, P.: The Impact of Different Factors on Repeat Visits to Selected International Tourism Enterprises: Case Study from Czechia. In *Frontiers in Psychology*, 2022, Vol. 13, p. 1-9.

4 Results

Analysis of Factors Influencing the Choice of Selected Catering Establishments

A total of 164 men and 336 women participated in the survey. The second question addressed the age of the participants. A total of 4 participants over the age of 75 participated in the research, 71 participants were aged between 41 and 54, and 44 participants were aged between 55 and 64. Only 7 participants were aged between 15 – 17. The data is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Number of participants according to age

Age Range	Number of Participants
15 – 17	7
18 – 25	226
26 – 30	84
31 – 40	53
41 – 54	71
55 – 64	44
65 – 75	11
over 75 years old	4

Source: Own processing

The survey also addressed the qualification of the respondents. More than 266 participants in the survey had high school degrees with completed final exams, 80 participants had high school qualifications, 138 participants had university degrees, and 15 had primary school degrees.

The following question addressed the importance of individual factors in the choice of international catering establishments by the participants of the survey. The respondents had to evaluate 17 selected factors in order of importance, using a five-point rating scale. As presented in Table 2, the most important factors influencing the choice of international catering establishments include atmosphere of the place, opinion of friends and the right choice of the music. Factors such as membership cards, famous chef, gift cards, and preparing food in front of the customer are not considered important by the respondents for choosing international catering establishments. The difference in scores between the most important and least important factors was more than 450 points (1.9%). Reviews of the restaurants and catering facilities on social media provided by customers are an efficient tool to attract guests. Facilities offered by the establishments are particularly important for families with children.

Table 2: The importance of individual factors

Rank	Factor	Points	Points (%)
1	Atmosphere of the place	1,635	6.83
2	Opinion of friends	1,610	6.73
3	Right choice of music	1,545	6.45

4	Location of the international catering establishments	1,526	6.38
5	Reviews of the place by other customers, e.g., on social media	1,518	6.34
6	Method of serving meals	1,507	6.3
7	Facilities of the complex	1,505	6.29
8	A new way of preparing a well-known meal	1,400	5.85
9	New service	1,397	5.84
10	Parking	1,374	5.74
11	Possibility of payment by card	1,371	5.73
12	Organised events	1,329	5.55
13	New meal	1,320	5.51
14	Membership cards	1,296	5.41
15	Famous chef	1,255	5.24
16	Gift cards	1,181	4.93
17	Preparation of meals in front of customers	1,168	4.88

Source: Own processing

When choosing an international catering establishment, we can mention at least two basic elements to consider if we want our business to succeed versus the competition. Among these elements, we can include the cuisine and the service. If we also pay attention to the overall atmosphere in the catering establishments connected with an interesting experience, we will not make a mistake. We will also enhance the overall impression and make the place unforgettable, regardless of minor mistakes in gastronomic rules. The overall atmosphere of international catering establishments can include the overall design of the catering establishments, lighting, appropriately selected music, as well as cleanliness, how the food is served, and the use of information technology.

SPSS Verification of Hypotheses

Testing Hypothesis H1

H0 hypothesis and an alternative hypothesis H1 were formulated about the correlation of gender and the payment option used.

H0: Using bank card as a payment option does not differ based on gender of the respondent.

H1: Using bank card as a payment option differs based on the gender of the respondent.

$$(\chi^2(5) = 15,278, p = .009)$$

$$.0090 < 0.05$$

According to the result, the H0 hypothesis is rejected, while the H1 hypothesis is accepted. It means that using a bank card as a payment option differs based on personal identity.

Table 3: Results from SPSS (statistical result of using bank card based on the gender of respondents)

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	15,278 ^a	5	.009
Likelihood Ratio	15,322	5	.009
Linear-by-Linear Association	7,212	1	.007
N of Valid Cases	500		

a. 0 cells (0,0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected counts is 5,58.

Source: Own processing in SPSS

A more detailed analysis of the survey results revealed that more than one-third of male participants in the survey consider the option to pay by card an important factor that influences their choice of international catering establishment. These survey results were also confirmed by the responses provided by our female participants. They do not consider the option of payment by bank card as a significant factor when choosing an international catering establishment.

Testing Hypothesis H2

Hypothesis H2 tested the correlation between the highest qualification of the respondent and the right choice of music in the catering establishment. There were 2 alternative hypotheses formulated.

H0: The highest qualification of respondents and the right choice of music in catering establishments shows no correlation.

H1: The highest qualification and the right choice of music in catering establishments shows correlation.

$$\chi^2(15) = 24,920, p = .051$$

$$.051 > 0,05$$

Based on the result, the H0 hypothesis is accepted since the P value is near the cut-off point in comparison to alpha= 0.05. It is considered marginal, and the hypothesis needs more attention to be addressed.

Table 4: Results from SPSS (statistical relationship between the highest qualification of the respondent and the right choice of music by the catering establishment)

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	24,920 ^a	15	.051
Likelihood Ratio	26,296	15	.035
Linear-by-Linear Association	,036	1	.850
N of Valid Cases	500		

a. 8 cells (33,3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is ,39.

Source: Own processing in SPSS

A more detailed analysis of the survey results shows that such factor as the choice of appropriate music is moderately important for most of the respondents in terms of their qualification. The exception is provided by respondents with university degrees, who mention the factor of the right choice of music as the most important when selecting international catering establishments.

5 Discussion and Conclusions

The main trends in gastronomy during the pandemic have shifted to takeaway services, food delivery, high hygienic norms and contactless payment. There is also a growing demand for the use of modern payment methods, with restaurants allowing their customers to pay quickly online using their mobile phones or via an app. There is also a focus on sustainability. As mentioned in the article earlier, the overall atmosphere of international catering establishments can include the overall design of catering establishment, lighting, appropriately selected music, as well as cleanliness, how the food is served, and the use of information technology. Guests will have positive feelings when the interior design and decoration are harmonised. Business owners should put emphasis on the right choice of dining tables and chairs that satisfy both functionality and design. The size, colour and functionality are crucial. Manufacturers offer furniture in a variety of materials, shapes and designs. The interior should always reflect the type of establishment, whether we are in a Michelin-starred restaurant or a brasserie. Another important factor is the lighting, which can influence the feeling of guests, ensure intimacy or can create a positive impression of a back street pub.

The guest experience can be made pleasant by the right choice of music. It has to be selected wisely, and reflect the image of the place. As Kajzar states, business owners do care about the selection of the appropriate genre of music, as not only younger generation customers visit the restaurants, and the overall impression of the place is the most important. Various research was conducted on how to select the appropriate genre of music for guests to make them feel relaxed and spend quality time in a bar or restaurant. Few business owners know that they can increase their income by making people feel better and more relaxed, and the whole team can benefit from a relaxed atmosphere and high quality of hospitality.²⁷

²⁷ See: KAJZAR, P.: The Impact of Different Factors on Repeat Visits to Selected International Tourism Enterprises: Case Study from Czechia. In *Frontiers in Psychology*, 2022, Vol. 13, p. 1-9.

However, one of the most basic prerequisites for a pleasant atmosphere in a chosen catering establishment is the clean environment of the dining areas and toilets. 'Foodstagramming' or sharing images of food on social media is a way to express that guests were satisfied with their visit.

An equally important aspect that can determine the success of catering businesses is information technology. Many restaurants have worked hard to change their operational process radically in order to take full advantage of innovative digital technologies. The COVID -19 pandemic has accelerated the digitalisation process of many restaurants in various destinations. The benefit of online ordering is that companies not only save on staff expenditure, but can also display more photos of dishes and menus to the customer. This makes it much easier for the customer to choose. The kitchen staff can also work faster because the order goes directly to the chef.

Social distancing forced businesses to introduce smart technology, which resulted in widespread use of table-top kiosks, and provided customers with the ability to order and pay on-demand. Mobile phones are used by approximately two-thirds of the world's population, with a simple restaurant app or a scanned QR code being enough to order. A good atmosphere in a restaurant is one of the strongest factors that influence the overall impression of a visit. The research reported the results of the research analysis of the factors influencing the choice of international catering establishments based on the preferences of customers in Czechia. The objective of this study was to identify the factors that most influence the choice of selected tourism facilities in Czechia. The primary sources obtained were analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) and Chi-square test. Two statistical hypotheses were formulated, reflecting the relationship between the difference in customer responses and selected factors that influence the choice of international catering establishments.

The first hypothesis provides enough evidence to suggest a correlation between the highest qualification level of survey participants and the possibility provided to pay by bank card at catering facilities. Based on the results, it can be concluded that the importance of providing this option to customers (to pay by bank card) differs in terms of gender.

In the case of our second hypothesis, the P value is near the cutoff point in comparison to the significance level, and so the right choice of music is a moderately important factor for most of the respondents in terms of their highest level of education. An exception is created by participants with university degrees, who mention the right choice of music as the most important factor when selecting international catering establishments.

Among the key factors that influence the choice of international catering establishments in the Czech Republic, the majority of customers consider the atmosphere of the establishment, the opinion of friends, the right choice of music and the location of the restaurant. On the other hand, such factors as membership cards, famous chef, gift cards, and preparing food in front of customers are not considered important by the respondents for choosing international catering establishments. Research results are in line with previous findings, including Kotler and Keller; Renner et al.; Novotný and Duspiva; Huamin and Xuejing; Kim and Lee; Kajzar et al.; Kajzar.²⁸ Consumer behaviour is influenced by many factors e.g., cultural, social, personal and psychological factors. It is valuable for businesses to understand them since it helps them to tailor their marketing initiatives to marketing efforts that have successfully influenced consumers to buy in the past. In the hotel and restaurant industry, it is difficult to maintain a stable demand for services when customer behaviour is highly dependent on many factors.

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28 For more information, see: KOTLER, P., KELLER, K. L.: *Marketing Management*. 13th Edition. New Jersey : Prentice Hall, 2009; RENNEN, B. et al.: Why Eat What We Eat. The Eating Motivation Survey (TEMS). In *Appetite*, 2012, Vol. 59, p. 117-128; NOVOTNÝ, J., DUSPIVA, P.: Factors Influencing Consumers' Buying Behavior and Their Importance for Enterprises. In *E+MEkonómie a Management*, 2014, Vol. 17, No. 1, p. 152-166; HUAMIN, L., XUEJING, Z.: A Study of Factors of Leisure Tourism Intention: Based on the Theory of Planned Behaviour. In *Transformations in Business & Economics*, 2019, Vol. 18, No. 1, p. 163-182; KIM, J., LEE, J. C.: Effects of COVID-19 on Preferences for Private Dining Facilities in Restaurants. In *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management*, 2020, Vol. 45, p. 67-70; KAJZAR, P., KOSTKOVÁ, M., PELLEŠOVÁ, P.: Results of the Questionnaire Survey among Selected Tourism Companies and Their reflection on Trends in Tourism in the Moravian-Silesian Region. In *Journal of Environmental Management and Tourism*, 2020, Vol. 11, p. 236-249; KAJZAR, P.: The Impact of Different Factors on Repeat Visits to Selected International Tourism Enterprises: Case Study from Czechia. In *Frontiers in Psychology*, 2022, Vol. 13, p. 1-9.

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