



Master of Business Administration

Module Code - LCMB7035 Dissertation Proposal

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Date - 20/03/2026

Word Count - 3907

Research Topic: The Impact of Menu Labelling (such as nutrition information, calorie counts, and health-related labels) on Customer Satisfaction, Decision-making and Retention in the UK restaurant settings

Table of Contents

1. Introduction	4
Topic Background	4
Problem Statement	5
Research Aim, objectives and Questions	5
2. Literature review	6
Theoretical Perspective	6
Reviewing literature	7
Conceptual Framework	9
Hypothesis	9
Literature Gap	10
3. Methodology	10
Research philosophy:	10
Research Approach:	10
Research strategy	11
Sampling	11
Data Collection	11
Data Analysis	12
Ethical Consideration	12
4. Expected Findings	12
5. Limitations	13
6. Timeframe	13
7. Conclusion	14
8. References	15

1. Introduction

Topic Background

Menu labelling has become increasingly fundamental in today's restaurant chains' food service environment due to increasing health consciousness among customers. According to Roseman et al (2017), restaurant chains are generally perceived as socially responsible by customers when they offer detailed menu labelling combining nutrition information, calorie intake and health-related information. As a result of these useful insights, trust gets reinforced within customers, which improves their satisfaction level and facilitates their purchase decision-making. Since 2022, menu labelling has become mandatory across the UK restaurant industry in order to address the poorer nutrition quality among the British population (Finlay et al., 2025). According to Finlay et al (2025), about 80% of UK businesses now use calorie labelling in their food options to cater to health-conscious customers.

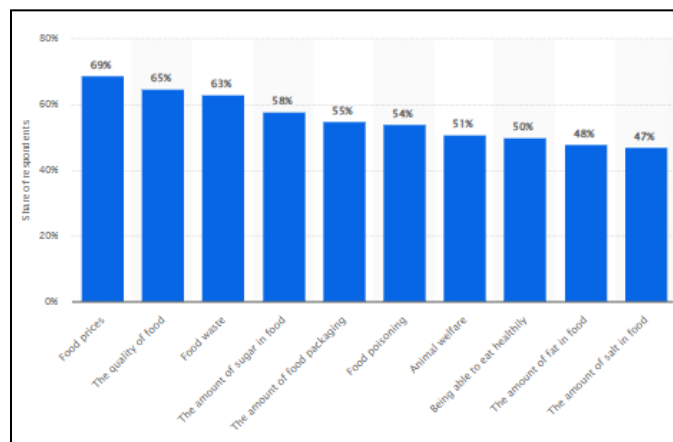


Figure 1: Common food-related concerns among UK consumers

(Source: Ozbun, 2025)

More than 50% of UK customers are concerned about the quality of food, particularly about its calorie, sugar and fat levels, which shapes their purchase decision-making (Ozbun, 2025). Therefore, when UK-based restaurants are failing to offer clear and accurate labelling information, customer distrust is increasing, which makes menu labelling essential for UK restaurants to build better customer relations.

Problem Statement

Although menu labelling has become an integral part of restaurant businesses, a significant implementation gap within UK restaurant chains has arisen as most of the chains lack nutrition expertise, thereby failing to offer proper labelling (Thomas, 2016). Similarly, accuracy concerns are also arising as the majority of businesses are now providing false nutrition information in their menu labelling (Lynn et al., 2024). The BBC found that about 27 restaurants in East London publicly showcased false labelling of their menu items (Lynn et al., 2024).

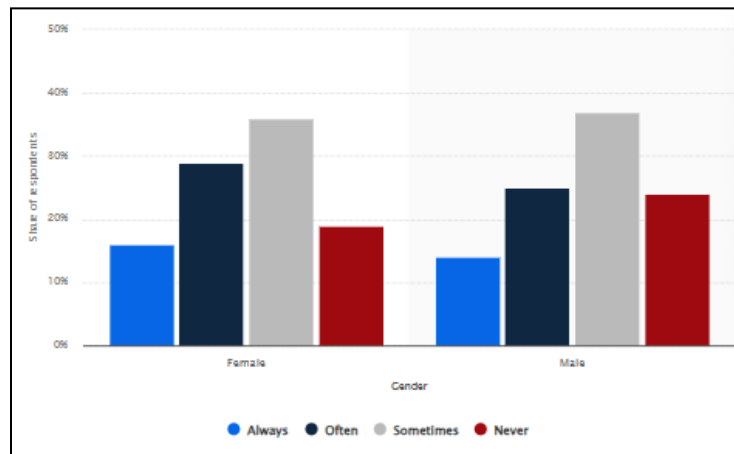


Figure 2: Frequency of food calorie checking by UK consumers
(Source: Ozgun, 2025a)

The false labelling negatively affects over 30% of UK people who check food labels when buying to see if their menu is healthy or not (Ozgun, 2025a). Hence, due to increasing information inaccuracy, customer dissatisfaction is increasing, which negatively affects the sales of restaurants. According to Carron (2024), sales of UK restaurants decreased by 3.0 % in 2024 due to fake labelling, which lowered customer spending. Therefore, exploring how menu labelling is influencing customer satisfaction, retention and decision-making across the UK restaurant industry has become increasingly important to help the chains boost sales by addressing customer dissatisfaction.

Research Aim, objectives and Questions

Aim

The aim of this research is to examine the impact of menu labelling in influencing customer satisfaction, decision-making and their retention across the UK restaurant settings.

Objectives

- To identify how menu labelling influence customer decision-making in UK restaurants
- To explore the impact of menu labelling on customer satisfaction within the UK restaurant services.
- To investigate the relationship between authentic menu labelling and customer retention in the UK restaurant chains.
- To investigate the challenges UK restaurants encounter in offering transparent labelling.

Questions

- How does menu labelling influence customers' purchase decision-making within the UK restaurants?
- What impact does menu labelling have on improving customer satisfaction within the UK restaurant chains?
- How does transparent menu labelling influence customer retention rates across the restaurant chains in the UK?
- What are key challenges UK restaurants face in implementing accurate food labelling in their menu?

2. Literature review

In this section, all the topic-relevant previous studies are critically evaluated, besides highlighting the theoretical backgrounds and research hypothesis.

Theoretical Perspective

Theory of Planned Behaviour

This framework is extremely relevant to the research topic since it explains how human behaviour and intentions are influenced by behavioural, normative, and control beliefs (Bosnjak et al.2020).

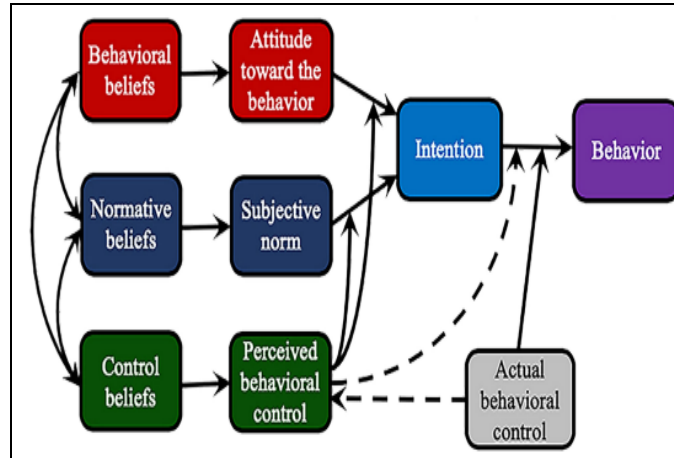


Figure 3: TPB Framework

(Source: Bosnjak et al., 2020)

The menu labelling system within the restaurant settings significantly shapes the behavioral intentions of customers by convincing them to choose healthier food choices by offering nutritional information.

However, the application of TPB can limit the understanding between customer intentions and actual buying actions, since strong intentions do not necessarily lead to actions (Ajzen, 2020). To balance out this limitation, the application of TPB should be combined with a trust-based theory, which will reduce perceived risk and address the intention-action gap.

Commitment Trust Theory

This is another pertinent theory, which posits that the market success of businesses significantly relies on trust and long-term relationship building between customers and businesses (Aydin, 2026). In terms of the UK restaurants, transparent and accurate menu labelling works as a significant trust-building mechanism, which usually strengthens long-term brand commitment and customer retention.

Yet, the application of commitment trust theory can also be ineffective as it only relies on rational factors such as trust and commitment, while avoiding situational influences such as taste, price and convenience (Surakhman et al., 2026). This limitation can be balanced by combining it with information-based quantitative perspectives of restaurant customers.

Reviewing literature

Implication of Menu labelling on customer's purchase decision-making in the food restaurant

Menu labeling is becoming a central force in the restaurant chain for attracting customers through the introduction of healthier food information. Customers increasingly desire menu labeling, including product characteristics and nutritional information, which shapes customers' behaviors towards restaurants. As stated by Erdem (2022), informing customers about nutritional information of food via menu labelling, particularly calorie content, helps to encourage consumers to make healthier food choices. Likewise, according to Sobaih and Abdelaziz (2022), the introduction of nutritional information, including fat calories, and total calories on restaurant menus, assists consumers in making informed decisions and strengthening their intention to purchase food. Therefore, customers are influenced by restaurants' menu labelling with nutritional value that shapes their attitudes towards purchasing low-calorie food for maintaining a healthier life. Conversely, another study by Liddiard and Hamshaw (2024) revealed that there is no notable impact of menu labelling on customers' ordering behaviors. It indicates that people may not be influenced by menu labelling, including nutrition information; rather they are attracted by menu prices and taste. Hence, restaurants must label healthier menus by focusing on food price and taste that help to influence them to make purchase decisions.

Role of Menu Transparency in Enhancing Customer Satisfaction and Retention in Restaurants

Menu transparency is presently becoming a driving factor for customer retention and satisfaction in the global food and restaurant sector since it completely shapes behaviour and purchase decisions. According to Lo et al (2024), when restaurant chains use calorie and other food nutrition labelling, people perceive them as transparent and socially responsible to public health. Similarly, another study by Alia et al (2024) stated that clear menu labelling usually helps customers to make informed dietary choices, which improves their health and increases trust. Therefore, restaurants' menu labelling decisions became increasingly essential for creating a transparent image and supporting health benefits, which helps in boosting customer satisfaction and retaining customers in the long term.

However, there are also contrasting perspectives, as Aggarwal et al (2016) argued that when customers make food choices, they often prioritise taste, cost and convenience besides nutritional

value. Moreover, Bogliacino et al (2023) underscored that despite having increased awareness, menu labelling often contains excessive amounts of complex information about nutrients, which causes customer confusion. Thus, restaurants must ensure clear and concise food labelling in order to avoid customer confusion, increase satisfaction and retain most of the existing customers.

Conceptual Framework

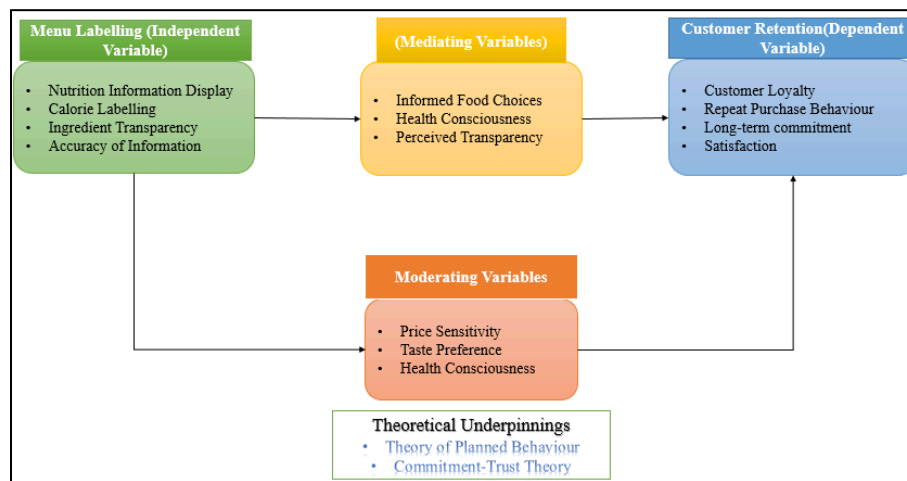


Figure 4: Conceptual Framework

(Source: Self-Created)

The above conceptual framework highlights Menu labelling as an independent variable, which directly contributes to customer retention through influencing loyalty, repeat purchases and long-term commitment. Accurate calorie labelling, nutrition information display and ingredient transparency significantly shape the mediating factors like helping customers to make informed and healthy food choices, which ultimately allows restaurants to achieve significant customer retention (Werle et al., 2022). Yet, the moderating variables, including price sensitivity, taste preference and health consciousness, can either strengthen or weaken the overall relationship between menu labelling and customer retention.

Hypothesis

H1: Menu labelling transparency positively influences customers' purchase decision-making in restaurants.

H2: Menu labelling transparency positively influences healthy purchase intention.

H3: Customer trust moderates the relationship between menu labelling transparency and customer retention.

H4: Menu labelling transparency has an indirect positive effect on customer retention through healthy purchase intention.

Literature Gap

Although previous studies, such as Erdem (2022) and Abdelaziz (2022), have examined menu labelling and its impact on customer purchase decisions, their discussion still lacks critical information about how labelling should be transparent to foster long-term customer retention. The present study will evaluate these factors by highlighting evidence-based insights. Moreover, existing studies such as Aggarwal et al (2016) and Bogliacino et al (2023) indicate issues in maintaining transparent labelling and consistent customer satisfaction; they did not provide any strategic suggestions, which this present study will offer.

3. Methodology

Here, the key methods and approaches of carrying out this research are being highlighted.

Research philosophy:

For this research, positivist philosophy will be selected, which is favourable for providing empirical evidence regarding the impact of menu labeling on customers' behaviour. As stated by Lim (2023), positivist research philosophy focuses on quantitative methods to understand phenomena such as consumer decision making and purchasing behaviour by generalising larger populations. Alternatively, interpretivist philosophy is often criticised as it obtains an in-depth understanding of phenomena, instead of generalising the results, and is unable to verify research gaps by using scientific procedures (Pham, 2018). Due to this limitation, this philosophy will not be used in this study. Hence, positivist philosophy is justified to use in this research that helps to understand the actual effect of menu labeling on customers' attitudes within restaurant chains.

Research Approach:

The deductive research approach will be effective since it has the ability to derive themes considering the existing theories. Additionally, it allows research to test hypotheses and predict outcomes based on prior knowledge (Robinson and Bailey-Rodriguez, 2026). Thus, the validity of hypotheses related to customer satisfaction and purchasing behaviour regarding restaurant menu labelling will be determined in this study by analysing numerical data. In contrast, the inductive approach has a limitation as it relies on developing a theory through empirical observation, signifying its lack of generalisability (Kumar and Ujire, 2024). Following this approach can be time-consuming and unable to generalise data regarding customers' satisfaction, which can lead to misinterpretation, hence it will not be applied in this research. Therefore, a deductive research approach will be a more relevant approach to obtain insights regarding the impact of menu labelling on customers.

Research strategy

In this research, a quantitative research strategy will be incorporated to analyse the numerical data in the context of customers' satisfaction and decision-making approach towards restaurant chains. As opined by Kotronoulas et al (2023) the quantitative research method helps to recognise the relationship and trends related to the research topic. However, qualitative research strategy has some limitations, such as resource constraints and subjectivity, which can negatively impact research findings (Ahmed, 2024a). Thus, this research will prefer a quantitative research method, which allows researchers to gain a comprehensive perspective of customers regarding their restaurant choices.

Sampling

To conduct this research, a random sampling technique will be followed that enhances the reliability and validity of the research outcomes. Probability (Random) sampling method makes the research fair as every participant has an equal chance to be selected, which reduces the selection biases and provides more generalisable findings (Ahmed, 2024). On the basis of this, 50 customers from UK restaurants will be selected randomly to find out the actual behavioural patterns regarding menu-labelling. In contrast, the non-probability strategy will not be selected in this study as it contains no randomisation, which gives biased results (Ahmed, 2024). Therefore,

owing to this limitation, the probability sampling strategy is more reliable for this study to understand the customer's behaviour.

Data Collection

For this study, primary information, particularly the behavioural intentions of approximately 50 UK-based restaurant customers, will be collected through a structured online survey questionnaire. This process will be effective in collecting large amounts of first-hand insights from a larger demographic (Ball, 2019). Although there are other alternative methods like interviews, which can offer in-depth raw insights, it is still more time-consuming than the online survey method due to scheduling issues (Braathen, 2022). Hence, an online survey process is more convenient and cost-effective in collecting primary information about the menu choices of UK restaurant customers.

Data Analysis

After collecting the primary information, it will be statistically analysed by involving descriptive statistics, correlation and regression analysis, which will help in summarising the large raw dataset combining the UK restaurant customers' responses while predicting research outcomes (Cooksey, 2020). Compared to the thematic analysis process, which qualitatively identifies and analyses data patterns from secondary data sources, statistical analysis will be more beneficial in quantitatively examining the relationship between variables like menu labelling and customer satisfaction. Hence, for the chosen phenomena, the statistical analysis process will be more appropriate and feasible.

Ethical Consideration

As this research relies on primary quantitative research methods, it is important to maintain ethical standards throughout the research, specifically during data collection. In particular, all participants' information will be kept confidential while collecting consumers will respond via survey. Informed consent, anonymity, and safeguarding participants from any potential harm are crucial considerations in conducting research, which will be maintained responsibly (Ajemba & Arene, 2022). Therefore, maintaining this set of ethical principles will ensure research integrity and also increase trustworthiness that research leads to favourable outcomes.

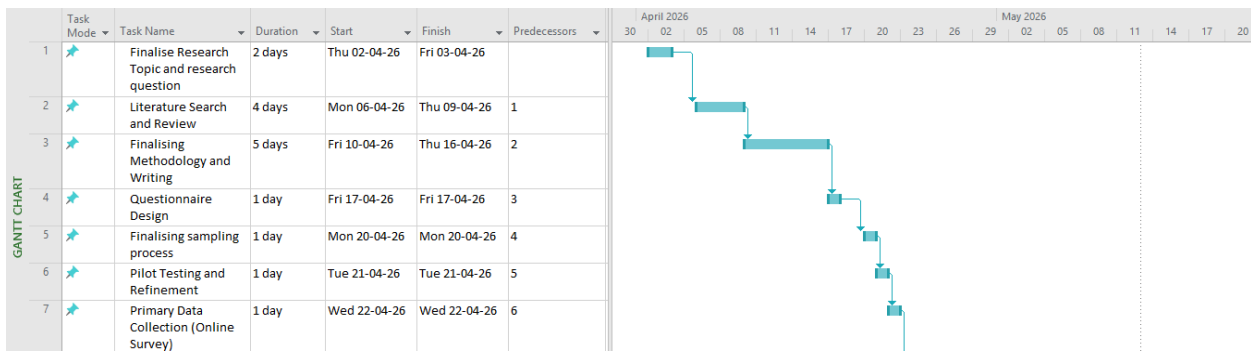
4. Expected Findings

From this research, it can be expected that it will successfully discover the importance of integrating menu labelling in restaurant businesses that positively influence customers’ repeat purchase decisions and long-term brand commitment by evaluating evidence-based quantitative insights. The study outcome will further confirm that by transparently highlighting the nutritional benefits of the menu, businesses can allow customers to make healthy and informed choices, which will facilitate long-term brand commitment and loyalty. Thus, the outcome of this project will ultimately contribute to customer satisfaction and deliberate retention.

5. Limitations

Despite the effectiveness of this research, some limitations may affect the research’s viability. In this research, time constraints can restrict the ability to find long-term trends regarding customer behaviour for menu labeling. As per Mohanasundaram and Harsha, (2024) choosing a large sample size increases external validity and ensures appropriate results. However, as this research will choose small sample sizes, it will limit the possibility of discovering in-depth viewpoints from wider customers on how menu labelling influenced their decision-making. Despite these possible limitations, this research will maintain the study's relevancy and get favourable results without affecting the research credibility.

6. Timeframe



GANTT CHART	8	★	Data cleaning and Coding	1 day	Thu 23-04-26	Thu 23-04-26	7
	9	★	Statistical Analysis of Raw Dataset	2 days	Fri 24-04-26	Mon 27-04-26	8
	10	★	Interpretation of findings and discussion	6 days	Tue 28-04-26	Tue 05-05-26	9
	11	★	Concluding research by analysing future outcomes	3 days	Wed 06-05-26	Fri 08-05-26	10
	12	★	Final Proofreading	1 day	Mon 11-05-26	Mon 11-05-26	11
	13	★	Final Submission	1 day	Tue 12-05-26	Tue 12-05-26	12

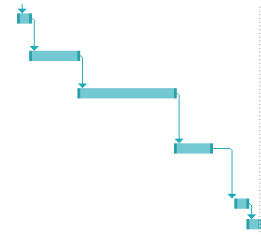


Figure 5: Dissertation Timeline
(Source: Self-Developed)

7. Conclusion

To conclude, the research proposal centres around evaluating the impact of menu labelling on customers' attitudes in the restaurant setting. Setting relevant aims and objectives, this research has reviewed literature by underpinning theoretical perspectives, including the theory of planned behaviour and Commitment Trust Theory. Additionally, the methodology section revealed that this study will rely on primary quantitative research methods that will be statistically analysed. Overall, this research proposal highlights that menu labelling positively impacts customers' decision-making and satisfaction, which facilitates restaurants' customer retention.

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