

**JGB 1549**

**The Influence of Mukbang on the Emotional and Cognitive-Behavior of Consumers on their Food Consumption Patterns**

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**Abstract**

*The world first heard Mukbang in 2009 from South Korea and got picked up to be a popular trend by the 2010s (Parker, 2020). This study examines how the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) constructs can affect the consumers' food consumption patterns through the emotional and cognitive-behavior influence of watching Mukbang. According to Gerbens-Leenes et al. (2002), the term food consumption pattern may be defined by the quantity and combination of repeated food consumption. The researcher used an extended framework adding Mukbang as an independent variable that directly translates to "broadcast eating," which drives the dependent variables. Namely, (1) emotional when watching Mukbang in their desire to eat, increased salivation, and amusement value that affects the consumer's food consumption pattern; and (2) cognitive-behavior, associated with the eating experiences, attitude, and perception built when watching Mukbang.*

*The study used convenience and purposive sampling of 202 respondents that watch Mukbang at least at a particular amount of time daily. With the tool SmartPLS 3.0 (Ringle et al., 2015), the researcher tested the consistency and reliability, garnering Chronbach's alpha results of 0.785 to 0.892. The path model coefficient showed that the subjective norm is the most significant predictor of consumers' food consumption pattern among the TPB constructs. Having the subjective norm as the highest preference suggests that the consumers are likely to get influenced by the people around them with their food consumption pattern. Using the same tool, the researcher tested the probability that resulted in the overall framework. It showed that all constructs of the TPB framework and the extended variables are of a significantly high level.*

*The study suggests that marketers and advertisers should develop strategies and concepts that lean towards the appeal of broadcast eating behavior or Mukbang that shares reliability results at a significant level. Furthermore, this study aims to identify further the psychological effects of watching videos like Mukbang and its impact on the consumer's behavior.*

**Keywords:** *Mukbang, Convenience Sampling, Theory of Planned Behavior, Emotional Influence, Cognitive-Behavior Effects*

**Introduction**

People have been greatly influenced by everything they see and hear by watching and browsing through the internet in this day and age. As a result, many have discovered ways to

entertain themselves with what the internet offers. The Mukbang trend arose in South Korea throughout the 2000s and 2010s (Wikipedia contributors, 2021). It is a play on words combining "eating" (meokneun) and "broadcast" (bangsong), which directly translates Mukbang as "broadcast eating." Many people have heard of it as a live internet audiovisual broadcast show where the host eats an incredible amount of food while telling a story or simply overemphasizes the way of devouring food. People have found the trend to be both fulfilling and intriguing. Before it became popular on social media and streaming sites, Mukbang was produced and aired primarily on Afreeca TV. This site allows anyone to view live streams on various subjects.

The researcher aims to study the emotional and cognitive-behavior influence of Mukbang on the food consumption pattern that may affect businesses and consumers alike in identifying factors that change their perception of food consumption. According to Cairns et al. (2013), food advertising videos have been shown to alter attitudes and preferences, nutritional awareness, and purchasing requests in prior research resulting in higher consumption of the advertised foods and calorie intake, leading to overweight and obesity (Russell et al., 2019). These studies on food consumption prove the effectiveness of broadcast video format to translate a message.

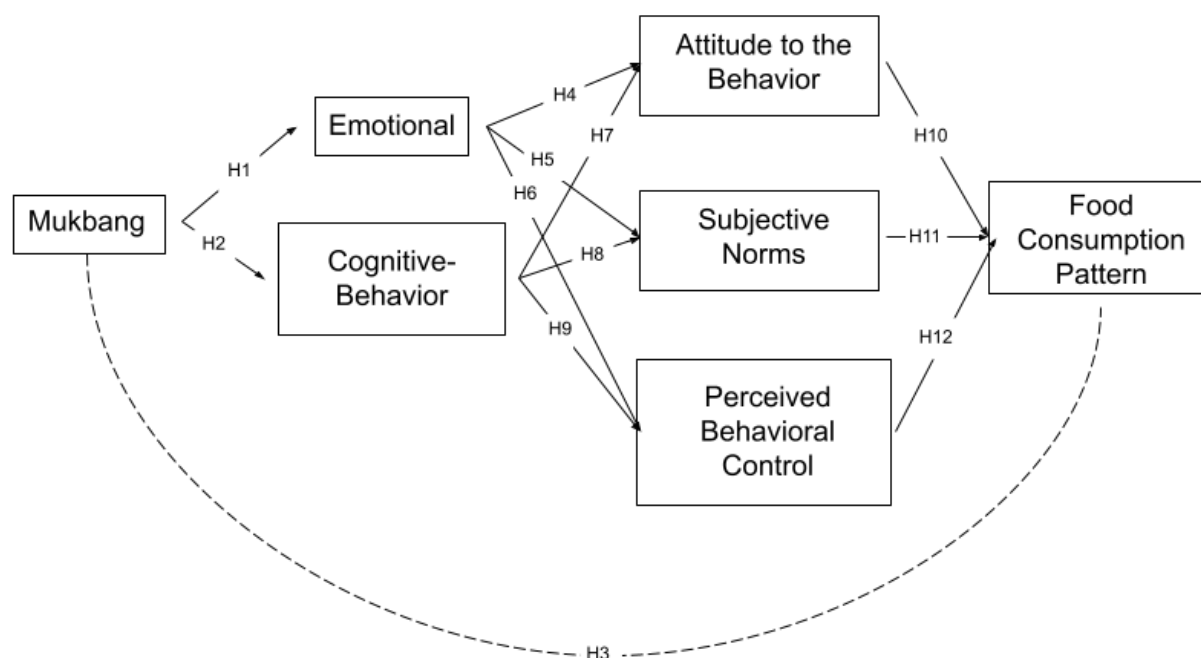
Many have conducted studies on the influences and effects to the physical and psychological impact of watching Mukbang. The study developed and validated the Mukbang Addiction Scale (Kircaburun et al., 2021) to assess problematic Mukbang watching (MAS). People with high endorsements are more likely to be in danger than addicted. According to Yoo et al. (2021), on the impact of viewing Mukbang, obesity resulted in an unhealthy media culture of eating and imitative behavior that encourages obesity-promoting media. Another study by Zhong (2020) stated that "Mukbang" carries on the appropriate exaggeration and entertainment while having the live meal creates a food-seeking audience the satisfaction and way to ease loneliness. In comparison, the emotional and cognitive-behavior components that influence this study are limited to factors of high amusement value, visual and auditory gratification, stress reliever, and attitude towards the behavior.

In this study, acknowledging the influence and effectiveness of watching Mukbang in previous research on the psychological factors, the researcher opted to focus on the behavior that translates influence to consumer's food consumption patterns.

**Framework**

**Figure 1**

*Conceptual framework Adopted from the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991) with Emotions and Cognitive- Behavior as Moderators*



The conceptual framework shown in Figure 1 adopts the TPB framework while adding Mukbang as an independent variable and dependent variables; emotion and cognitive-behavior affecting the three constructs; attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control to the consumer's food consumption pattern. Tested in this research are the following hypotheses derived from the Theory of Planned Behavior:

- H10: Attitude has a positive effect on the consumer's food consumption pattern
- H11: Subjective norm has a positive effect on the consumer's food consumption pattern
- H12: Perceived behavioral control positively affects the consumer's food consumption pattern.

The framework aims to answer the questions:

1. Does the emotional value of watching Mukbang affect the consumers' food consumption pattern in terms of amusement value, satiety, stress, and mood improvement?
2. Does consumers' cognitive behavior when watching Mukbang affect their food consumption pattern in terms of imitative behavior of volume intake and kinds of food featured?

### Inclusions of Variable

#### *Mukbang*

Since its launch in Asia in the early 2000s, the Mukbang phenomenon has become popular in the East Asian region; particularly, in China, considering the massive number of internet users, Mukbang has an even more excellent potential fan base. Babenskaite and Yang (2019) stated that because of the main activity of the Mukbang phenomena, it is almost sure that this kind of marketing strategy is the likely choice of firms in the food industry rather than anything else. This phenomenon has also reached greater heights in Southeast Asian countries. In Malaysia and Singapore, restaurant owners were left with no choice but to join the bandwagon; the objective was straightforward to help merchants discover alternative ways in promoting their business. According to Cheema (2020), each live streaming reached about 5,000 views. With little knowledge on the risks it may cause on the psychological factor of obesity-promoting media (Yoo et al., 2021), marketers have pursued the undertaking for the sake of business. In the Philippines, Mukbang is seen as eating an ample amount of food with no clear management implications and just a mere addition of content that offers amusement value. Although all hypotheses under Mukbang result as great predictors in the study, the emotional aspects have seen a higher T-statistics of 29.08.

H1: Mukbang positively affects the emotional aspects of consumers

H2: Mukbang positively affects the cognitive-behavior aspects of consumers

H3: Mukbang positively affects the consumers' food consumption patterns

#### *Emotional*

In the book of Harvard professor Gerald Zaltman, "How Customers Think: Essential Insights into the Mind of the Market," the professor reiterated that how and why consumers purchase a product is directly related to the subconscious mind (Manda, 2003). Emotion is what drives the purchasing behaviors and also decision-making in general. Overall, in the study, the researcher found that the emotional aspect of watching Mukbang positively responds to all TPB constructs towards the consumers' food consumption patterns. Out of the three, perceived behavioral control has the highest influence (T-Statistics= 7.05), which means, with the emotions from watching Mukbang, the consumer's perception of adapting its consumption pattern increases. In the questionnaire, the researcher limits the emotional scope to the amusement value, stress or mood improvement, loneliness, and reaction after watching Mukbang.

H4: The emotional aspect of watching Mukbang positively affects attitude towards the consumers' food consumption patterns

H5: The emotional aspect of watching Mukbang positively affects subjective norm towards the consumers' food consumption patterns Emotional to Subjective norm

H6: The emotional aspect of watching Mukbang positively affects perceived behavioral control towards the consumers' food consumption patterns

### ***Cognitive- Behavior***

Overall, cognitive behavior showed positive results with the three TPB constructs. In Kakosche et al.'s (2019) study, the mental components that drive compulsivity are distinctive in attentional set-shifting, disengagement, and habit learning. The researchers asked questions about consumers' food volume intake and how consumers adapt to consumption patterns to support imitative behavior as part of the survey. Actual satiety caused by visual hunger and perception of consuming food on the spot are also factors of cognitive behaviors related to consumer attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control.

H7: The cognitive-behavior aspect of watching Mukbang positively affects attitude towards the consumers' food consumption patterns

H8: The cognitive-behavior aspect of watching Mukbang positively affects subjective norms towards the consumers' food consumption patterns

H9: The cognitive-behavior aspect of watching Mukbang positively affects perceived behavioral control towards the consumers' food consumption patterns

### **Methodology**

#### ***Data Collection***

The study employed convenience and purposive sampling wherein respondents explicitly identified as viewers of Mukbang videos. In this study, 202 respondents were collected, 26.7% male, 71.3% female, and 2% non-binary aged 18 to 35 years old with an average age of 25. The occupation of the respondents has been grouped into three; 32.2% students, 62.8% working professionals, and 5% unemployed. The majority of the respondents watch Mukbang for less than an hour daily with 84.2%. The platform used in data collection is Google Form.

#### ***Measurements***

The conceptual framework used by the researcher adopts the Theory of Planned Behavior framework while adding Mukbang as the independent variable and emotions and cognitive behavior as dependent variables affecting attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control of consumers' food consumption patterns. In measuring the variables in the conceptual model, the researcher produced a 46- item questionnaire using a 7-point Likert scale (with 1 = Strongly Disagree to 7 = Strongly Agree).

The constructs under Mukbang are referred to the literature of Kircaburun et al. (2021) discussing the development and validation of the Mukbang addiction scale and the study of Kim, B.K, and Kim, K.O (2020) to the relationship of viewing motivation to TV reality-variety shows. Eight questions were employed to measure consumers' emotional and cognitive approaches to the independent variable.

The independent variables emotional and cognitive-behavior tested for relation with the attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control. In addition, the study investigates how the dependent variable of the influence of watching Mukbang affects the TPB variables through a

7-point Likert scale (with 1 = Strongly Disagree to 7 = Strongly Agree). The questionnaire used is relevant to attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control in testing this model.

### *Data Analysis*

The reliability and validity of the collected data were scanned using SmartPLS 3.0 (Ringle et al., 2015), and each variable was compared and run through Cronbach's Alpha. According to Hair et al. (2013), the general rule of reliability coefficient should be 0.7 above to be acceptable, values less than 0.7 would have to be adjusted. Upon analyzing data, results showed that Chronbach's alpha value with all constructs ranged from 0.785 (attitude) to 0.892 (subjective norm).

### **Discussion of Results**

**Table 1**

*Construct Reliability and Validity the Alpha Cronbach Value (Cronbach, 1951)*

	<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>	<b>rho_A</b>	<b>Composite Reliability</b>	<b>Average Variance Extracted (AVE)</b>
<b>Attitude</b>	0.785	0.787	0.853	0.539
<b>Cognitive-Behavior</b>	0.850	0.857	0.893	0.625
<b>Emotional</b>	0.891	0.896	0.912	0.538
<b>Food Consumption Pattern</b>	0.881	0.887	0.906	0.551
<b>Mukbang</b>	0.872	0.877	0.900	0.532
<b>Perceived Behavioral Control</b>	0.819	0.826	0.881	0.650
<b>Subjective Norm</b>	0.892	0.899	0.918	0.650

In the model assessment presented in Table 1, the researcher tested the reliability and validity of the model factors such as indicator and composite reliability; Chronbach's alpha and average variance were calculated. Findings show that all TPB constructs showed a reasonable interpretation of watching Mukbang on food consumption patterns. Furthermore, the study validates that the psychological aspects, emotional and cognitive-behavior, are significantly tapped when watching Mukbang shares a vital role in consumers' purchase behavior.

In evaluating the p-values, the results showed a high significance level of the conceptual framework. In the presented table 2, data showed results of the p-values ranging from 0.000 -

0.013. Although having acceptable results for all constructs in the t-statistics, Mukbang has significant predictive power over the variables Emotional and Cognitive-Behavior. As an overall result, watching Mukbang influences the consumer's emotional and cognitive behavior that significantly affects the consumer's food consumption pattern with approval and support of the people around them (subjective norm), attitude, and perceived behavioral control.

**Table 2**  
*Path Coefficient*

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics ( O/STD EV )	P Values	Results
H1: Mukbang -> Emotional	0.797	0.798	0.027	29.080	0.000	Supported
H2: Mukbang -> Cognitive-Behavior	0.691	0.693	0.037	18.478	0.000	Supported
H3: Mukbang -> Food Consumption Pattern	0.147	0.145	0.059	2.482	0.013	Supported
H4: Emotional -> Attitude	0.451	0.449	0.082	5.477	0.000	Supported
H5: Emotional -> Subjective Norm	0.231	0.233	0.093	2.472	0.013	Supported
H6: Emotional -> Perceived Behavioral Control	0.482	0.486	0.068	7.054	0.000	Supported
H7: Cognitive-Behavior -> Attitude	0.401	0.405	0.086	4.689	0.000	Supported
H8: Cognitive-Behavior -> Subjective Norm	0.449	0.450	0.094	4.783	0.000	Supported
H9: Cognitive-Behavior -> Perceived Behavioral Control	0.342	0.341	0.074	4.616	0.000	Supported
H10: Attitude -> Food Consumption Pattern	0.421	0.423	0.061	6.873	0.000	Supported
H11: Subjective Norm -> Food Consumption Pattern	0.261	0.261	0.059	4.454	0.000	Supported
H12: Perceived Behavioral Control -> Food Consumption Pattern	0.177	0.178	0.070	2.531	0.011	Supported

**Conclusions**

According to a study by Spence et al. (2016), any food-related advertisement increases food consumption without regard for food quality; all required is to satisfy the need with whatever

food is available. This behavior is seen as a result of virtual hunger, and it emphasizes an automatic food-consuming habit: see food, crave food, and eat anything within consumption reach. The study explored factors affecting the consumer's food consumption pattern, given the positive results, needless to say, that the emotional and cognitive-behavior consumers experience from watching Mukbang affects the three constructs of TPB such as attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control.

### ***Managerial Implications***

With the rise of different video entertainment content trends, the researcher would like to recommend this study to marketers and advertisers to consider Mukbang as an effective means of promoting businesses; study shows that there is a significant change in the consumers' behavior to their food consumption but limits confirmation of changes in their pattern of imitative behavior of volume and kinds of food intake. This study is an effort to introduce and adapt creative trends that may improve and level up the interest of the masses to today's creative executions.

The use of Mukbang as an accessory or concept in consumptive marketing goods (food) has proven in the study to stir emotions that may cause curiosity for consumers in purchasing a product. The subjective norm or the people's belief is an excellent strategy to use Mukbang in a saturated platform that may influence consumers and easily absorb content. Finally, the researcher would like to reiterate the implication that this study may cause to the different aspects of marketing and business:

- For marketers and businesses to collaborate with online content creators and have social media as the recommended avenue to promote their businesses in using the concept of Mukbang to showcase the company's products and get actual feedback from the content creators.
- The study is an eye-opener for Philippine advertisers to produce materials that adapt the concept of Mukbang in terms of the visual appeal and audio sensory that affects a consumer's emotions and cognitive behavior in the subject of devouring food.
- In the relativity of economic growth, this study can help marketers and advertisers encourage more sales to increase demands for products that enable consumers to spend more. Furthermore, through effective advertising, its ability to support competitiveness among brands of different levels affects demands in any form of food-related business.

Despite the recommendations in using Mukbang as an accessory to visually communicate with the audience, the researcher would like to remind the high risk of presenting Mukbang as a concept in promoting a product or business. Furthermore, considering factors like overeating and food waste concerns should be well thought as not to mislead the audience of the suggestive negative aspects.

Businesses need this research because it may give a wealth of information about the emotions and behavior of the consumers to help sell their products more successfully and efficiently. In addition, having Mukbang as an internationally known phenomenon or trend, using



it as a strategy for marketing is an advantage for businesses that want to expand globally. It may attract audiences that understand the concept and idea of Mukbang.

### Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research

For future research, the researcher recommends the study to a larger sample of participants with specific aspects that drive consumers for the immediate act of food consumption and changes it may cause to their food choice patterns. Even though all results share a significant positive level, the researcher would like to improve the questionnaire to create significant differences for a more direct impact that may reflect clear food choice patterns.

The researcher would also like to restate that although the researcher presented positive effects of the emotional and cognitive behaviors based on the factors related to advertising. Other positive studies similar to the study of Zhong (2020) stated that "Mukbang" carries on the appropriate entertainment that gives consumers the way to ease loneliness. However, studies draw the line in using Mukbang to promote a product or business. Furthermore, previous studies have validated that factors like overeating and food waste concerns should not mislead the audience of the suggestive negative aspects.

Therefore, this study is recommended with high precaution and consideration on the other psychological effects it may cause.

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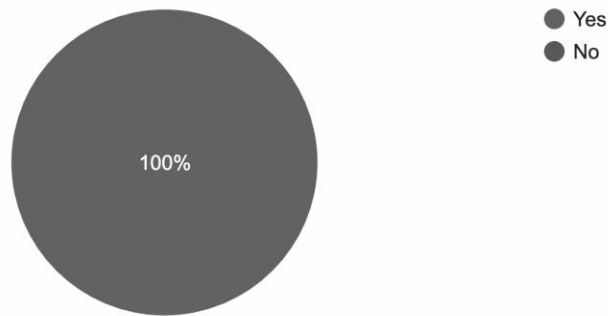
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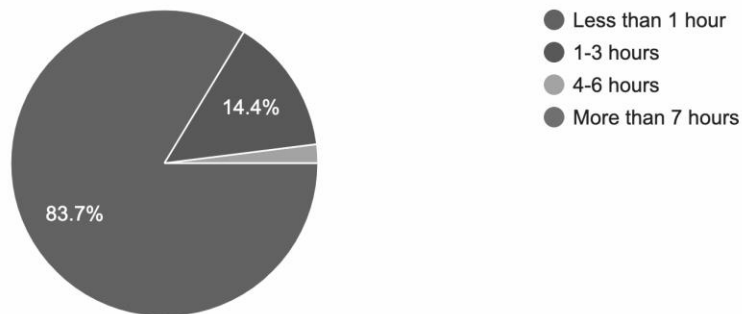
**Appendix**

**Appendix A: Survey Results**

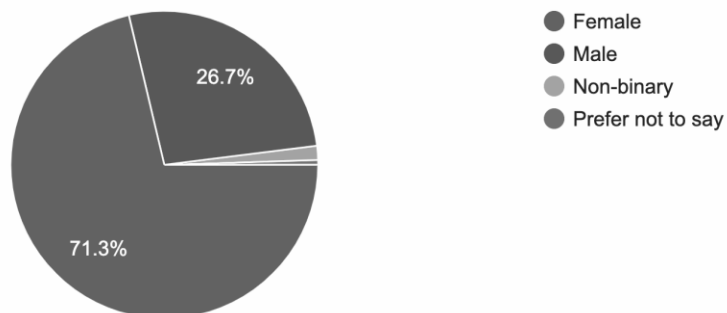
Do you watch Mukbang videos?  
202 responses



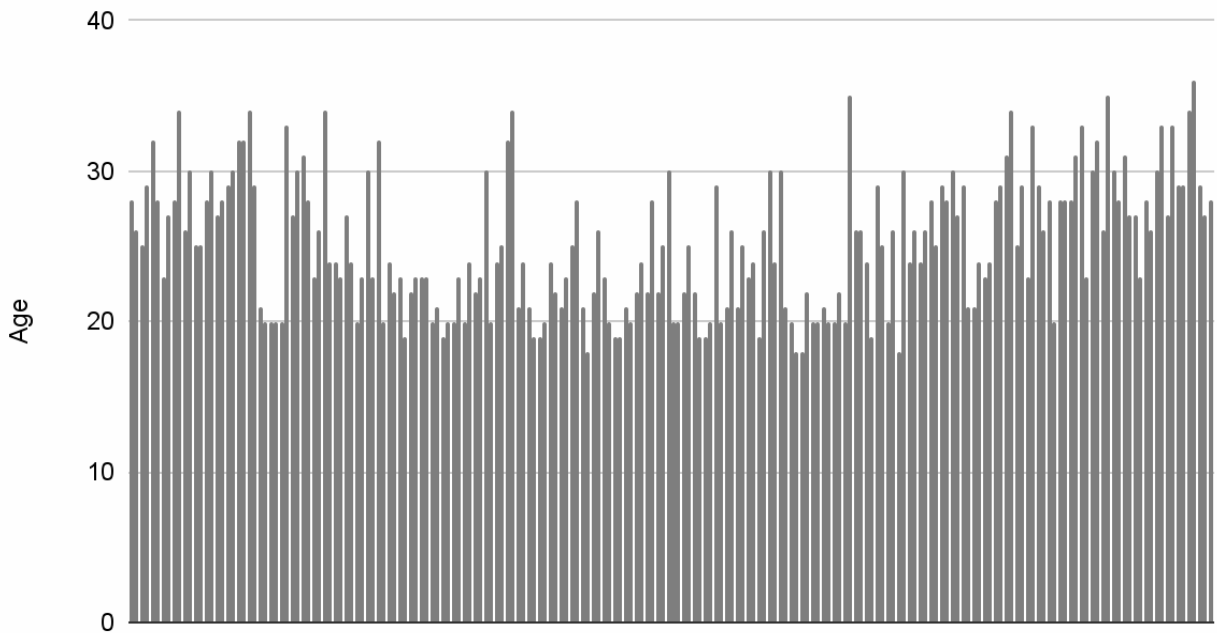
How many hours do you spent watching mukbang per day?  
202 responses



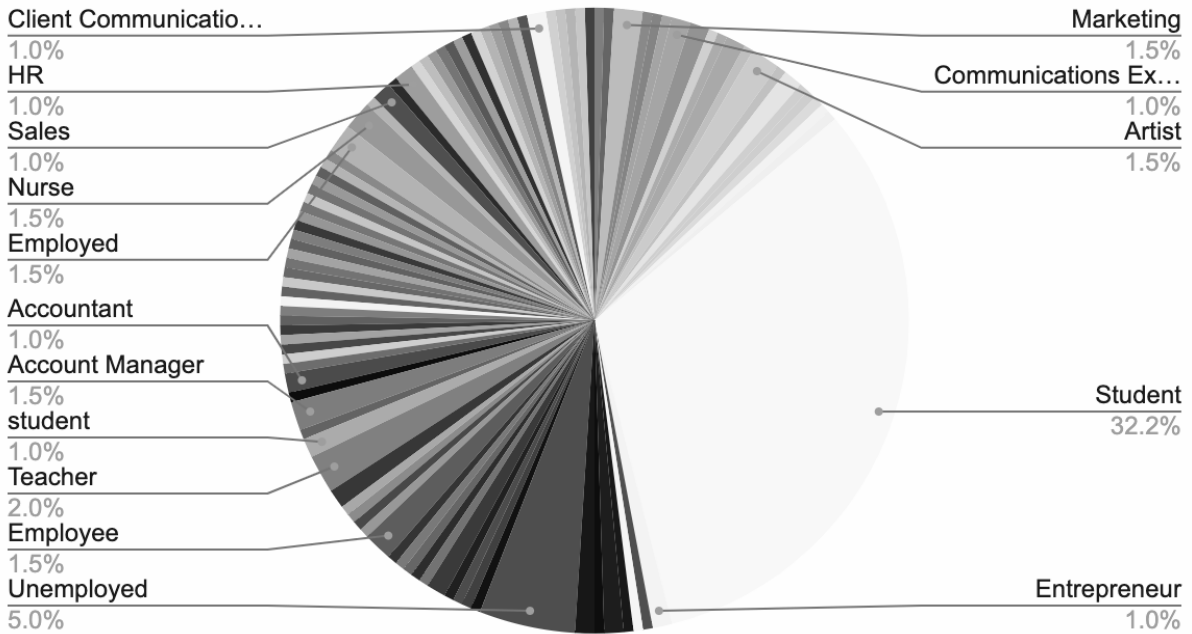
Sex  
202 responses



## Age

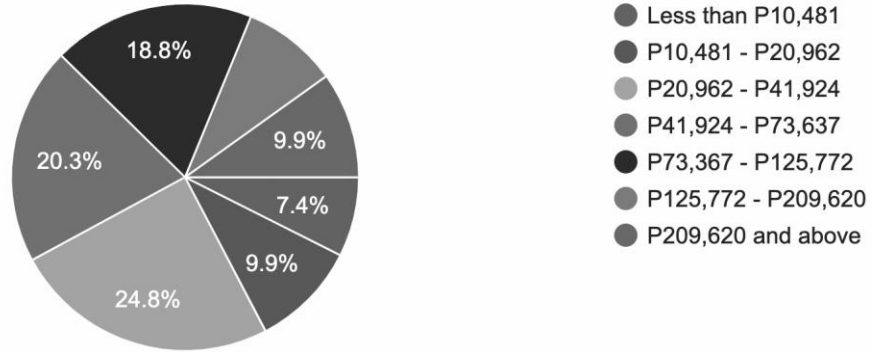


## Occupation



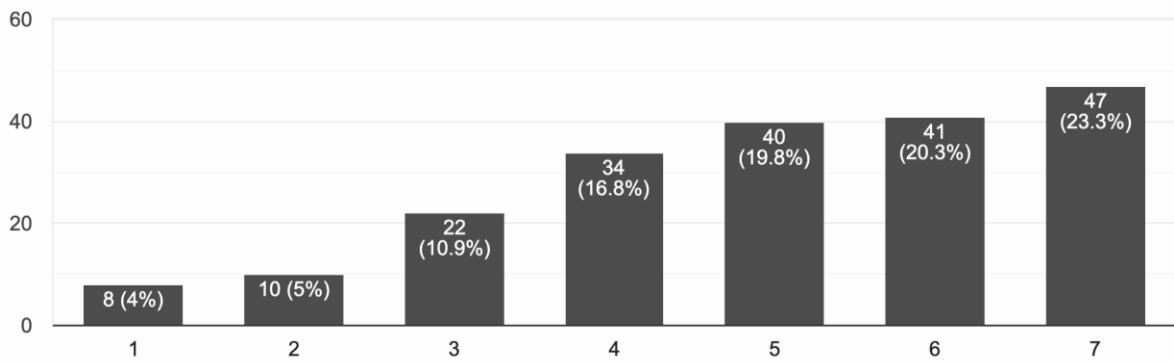
**Monthly Household Income (PHP)**

202 responses



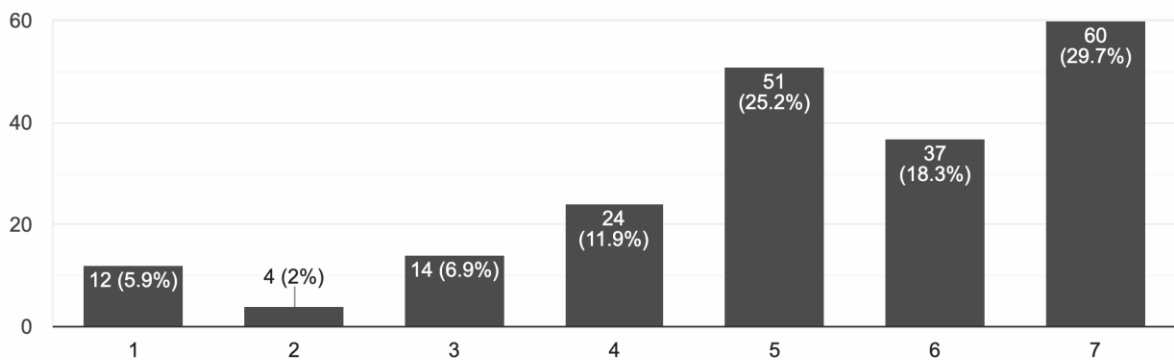
**I find watching mukbang videos good for personal time alone**

202 responses



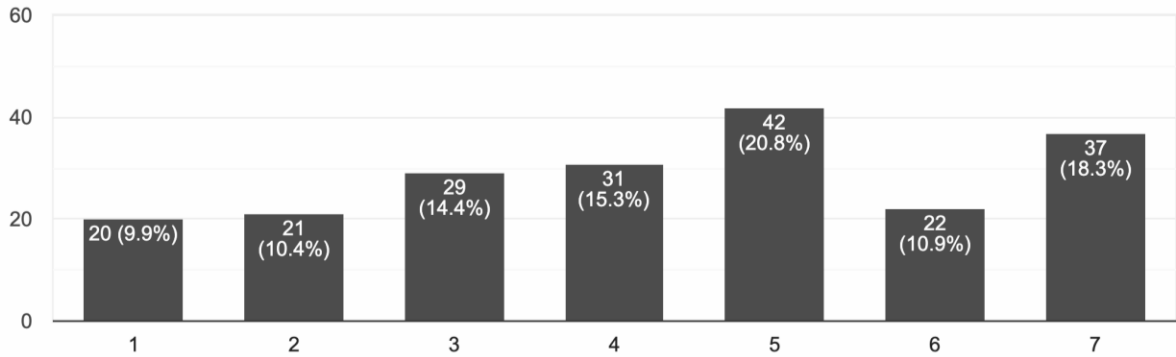
**I find the content mukbang videos good to watch without having to think**

202 responses



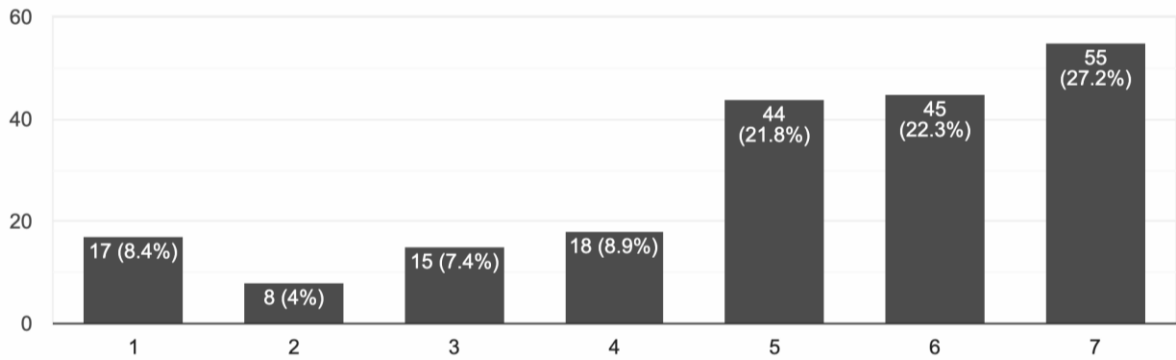
**I watch mukbang videos habitually without a special purpose**

202 responses



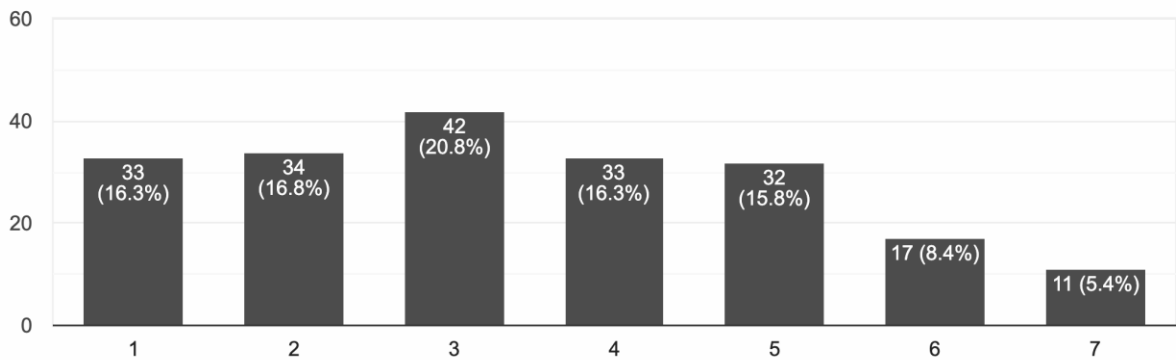
**Watching mukbang can affect my decisions with the kinds of food to intake**

202 responses



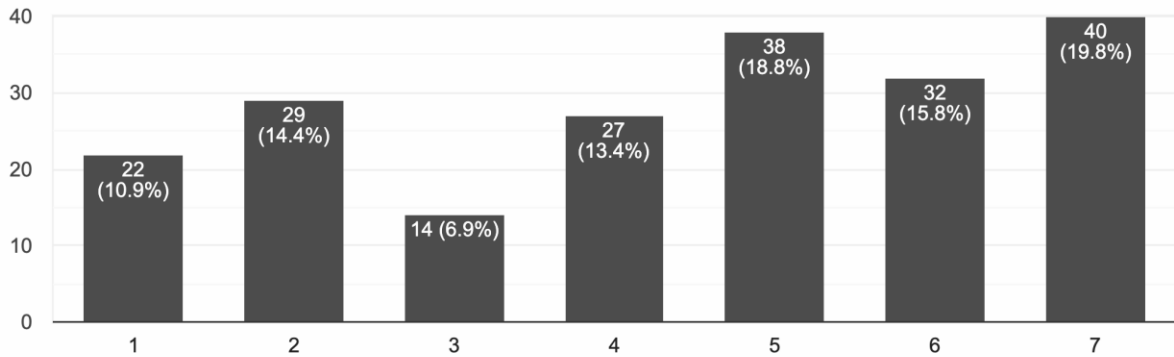
**There is an urge to watch mukbang more**

202 responses



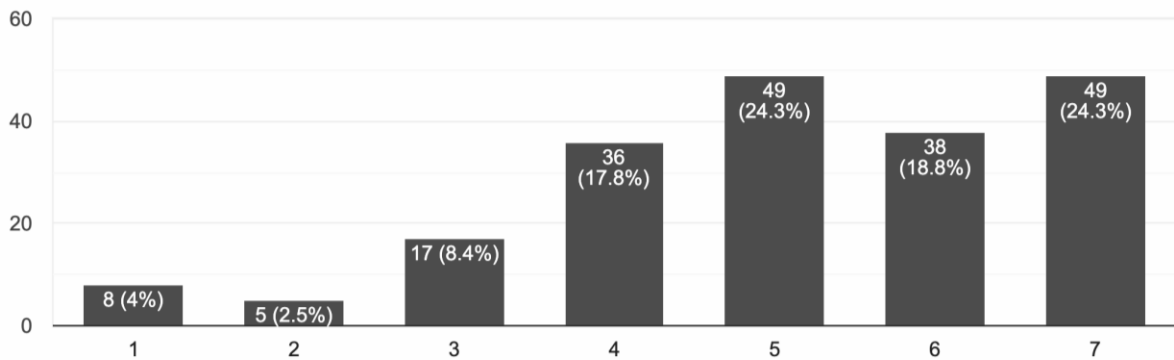
**Watching mukbang can affect my decisions with the amount of food intake**

202 responses



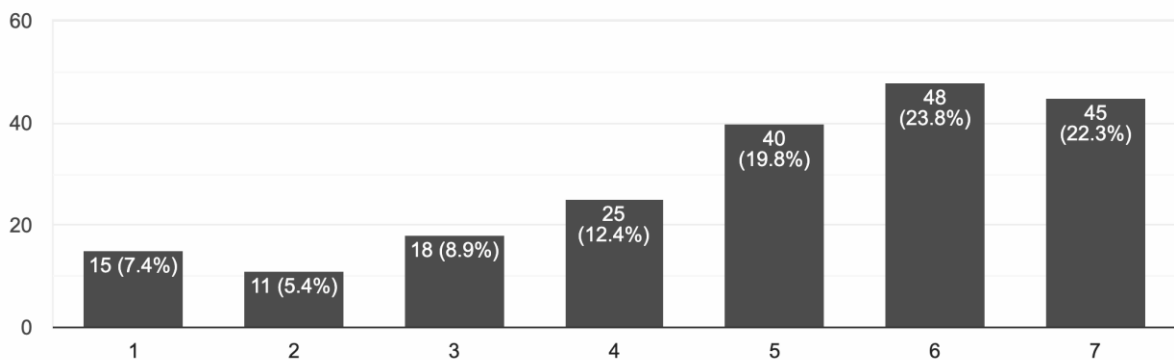
**I watch mukbang because it offers a great amusement value**

202 responses



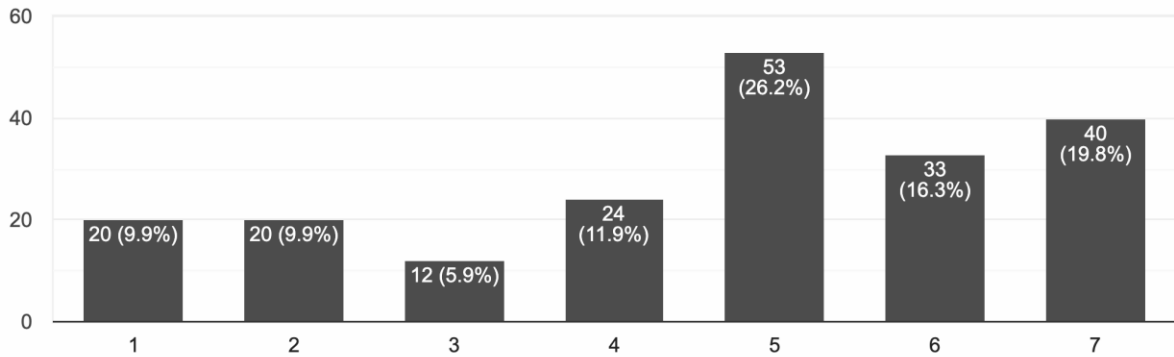
**I take pleasure in thinking about what I see and hear [ASMR] in mukbang**

202 responses



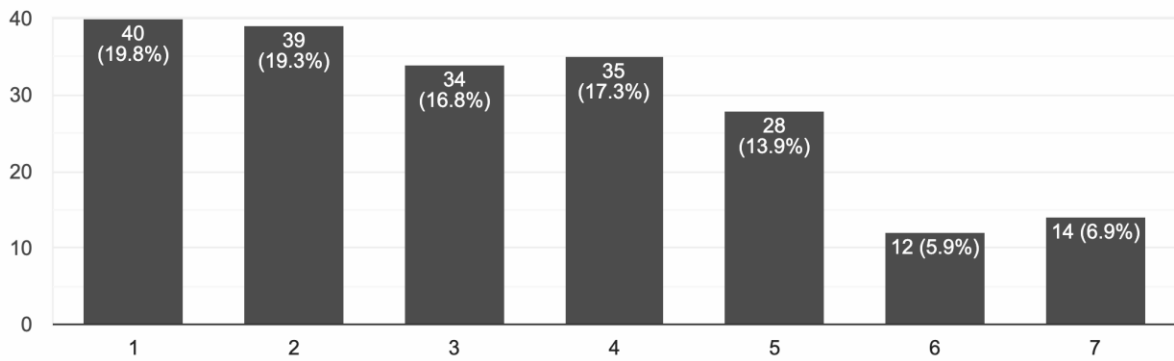
**I notice that I watch mukbang to ease stress**

202 responses



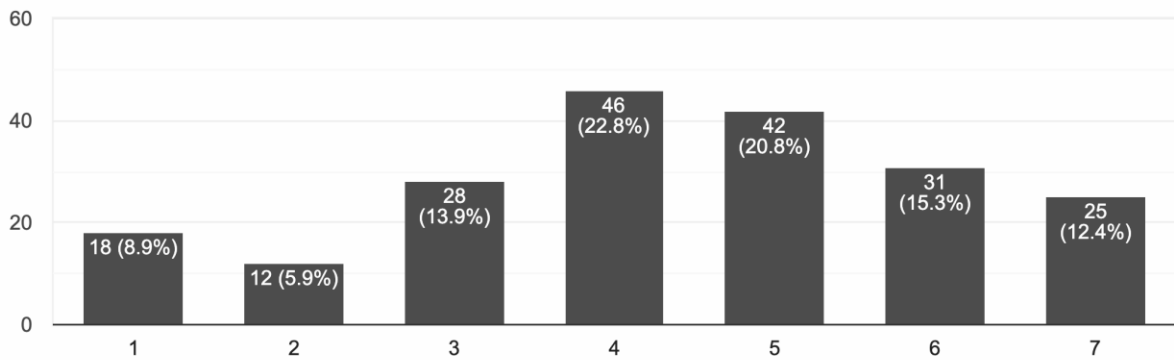
**The more emotions I go through, the more need to watch mukbang videos**

202 responses



**Mukbang watching help improve my mood**

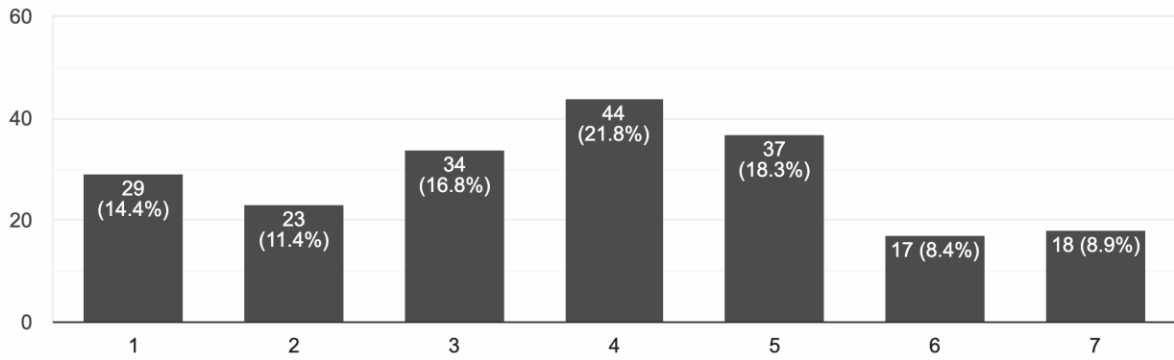
202 responses





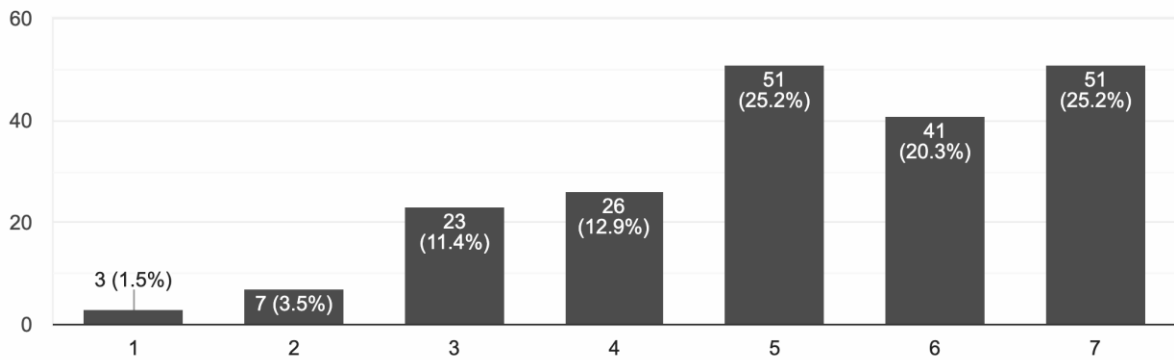
**I feel less alone and isolated whenever I watch mukbang videos**

202 responses



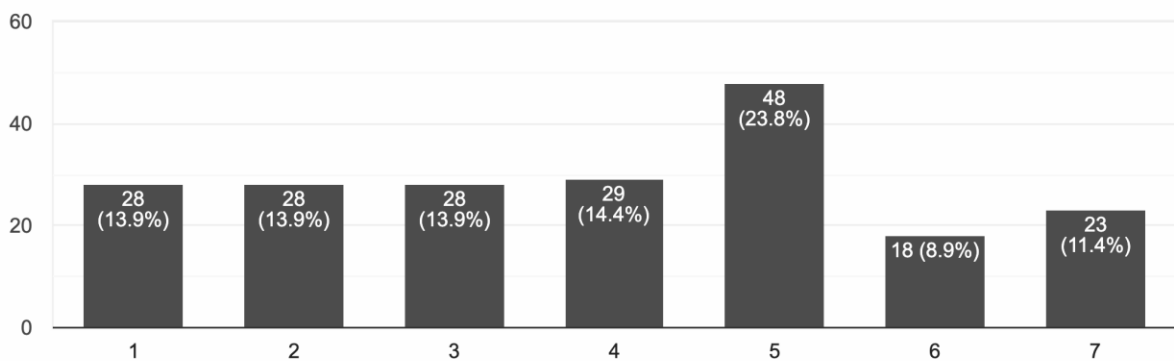
**When I feel great about the food featured, there's an instant reaction for consumption**

202 responses



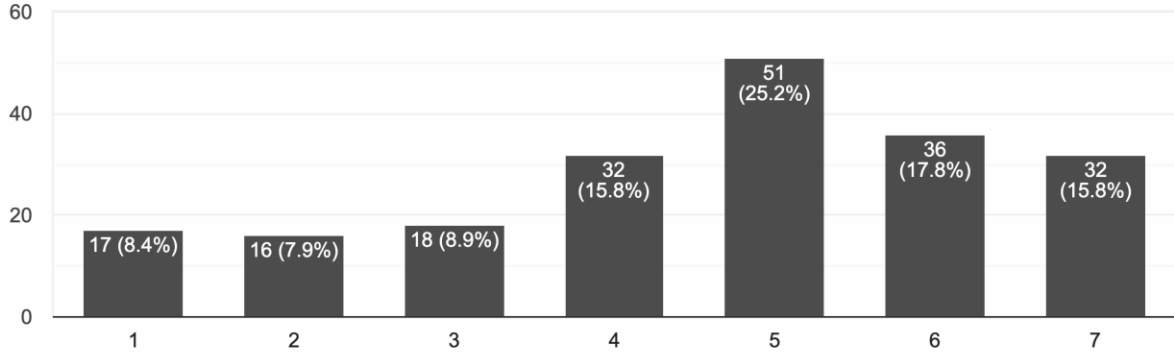
**The volume of food I consume depends on the emotions I have after watching mukbang**

202 responses



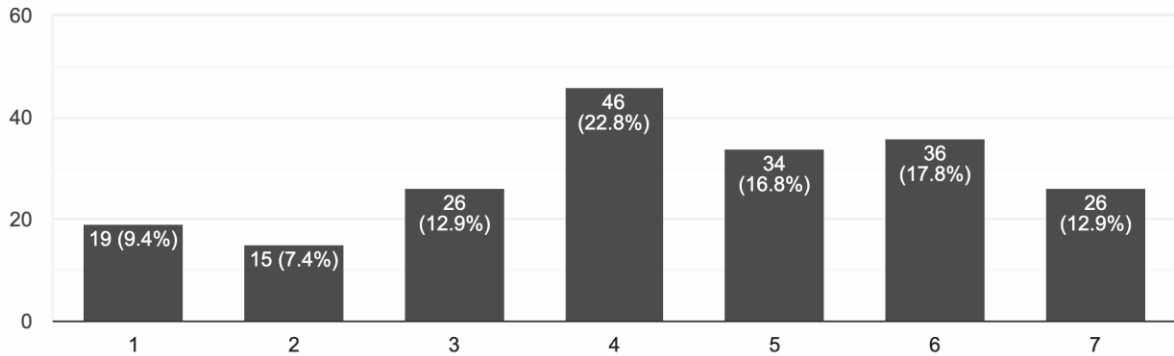
I have specific kinds of food combination that depends on my mood after watching mukbang videos

202 responses



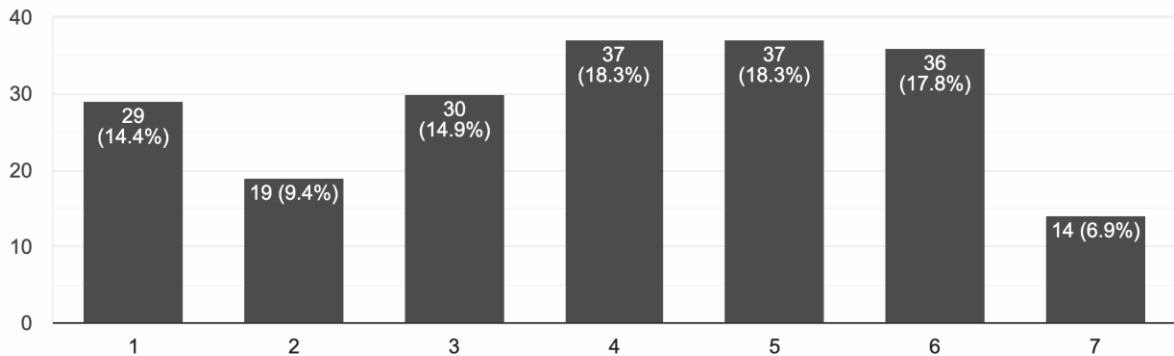
Watching mukbang promotes a positive attitude towards food consumption

202 responses



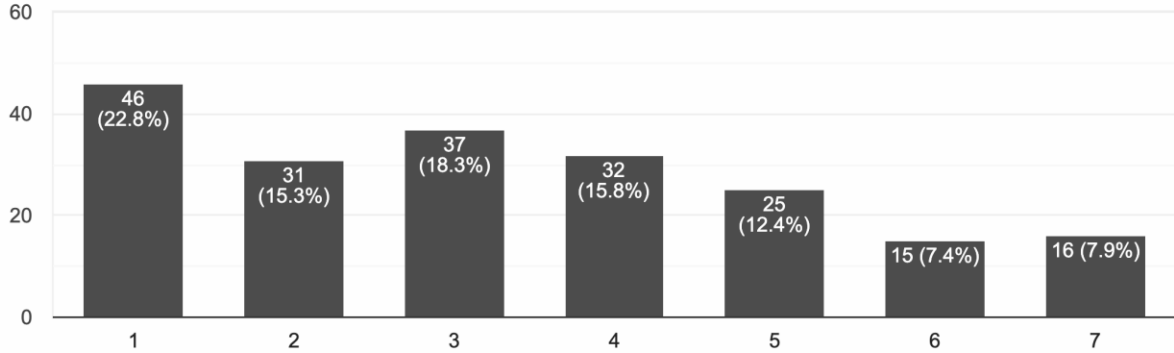
I am motivated to replicate the attitude of consumption in terms of the kinds of food featured in the mukbang video

202 responses



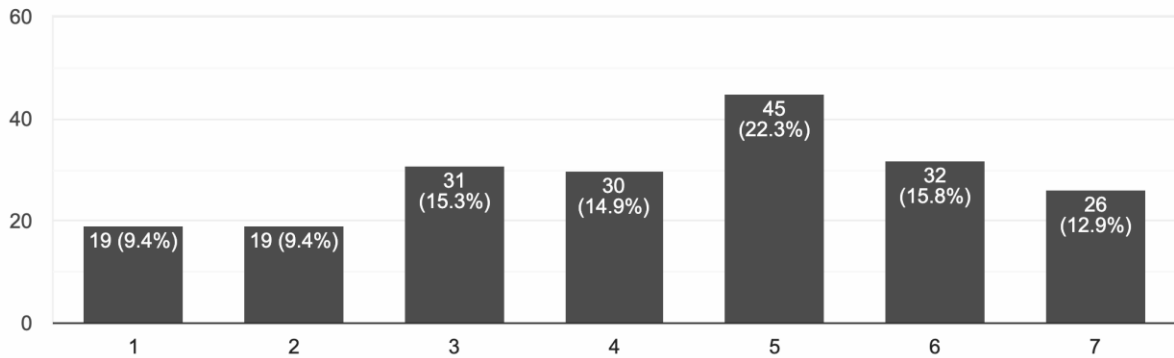
I am motivated to replicate the attitude of consumption in terms of the volume of food intake featured in the mukbang video

202 responses



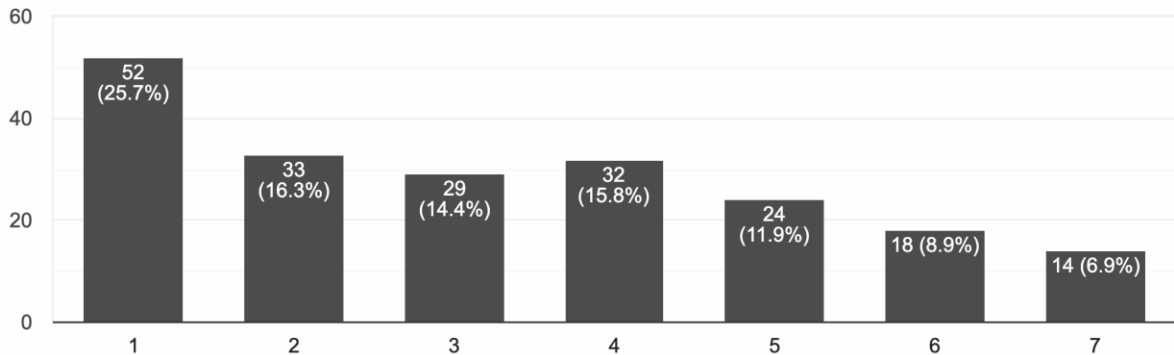
I can feel actual satiation after watching mukbang videos

202 responses



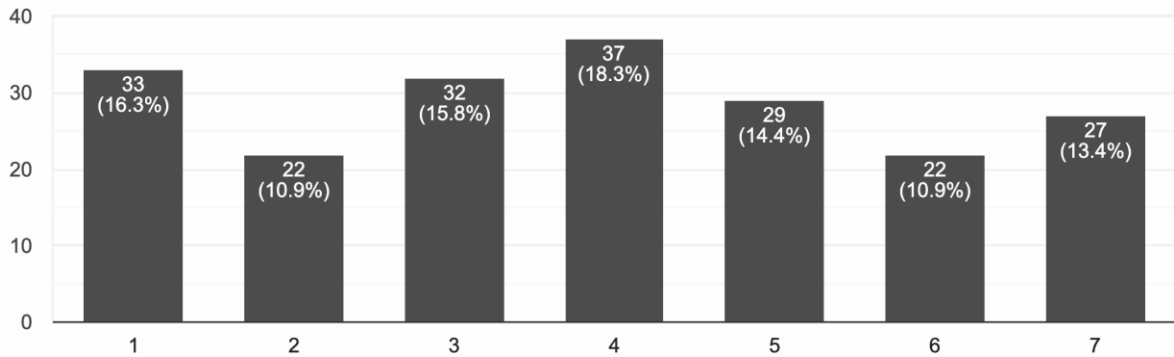
My perception on food consumption is highly based on the mukbang videos i watched

202 responses



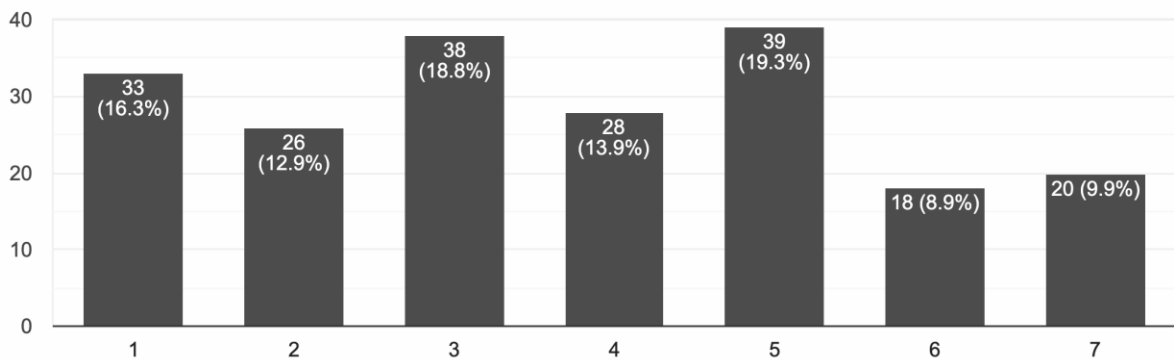
**I watch mukbang videos to boost my appetite**

202 responses



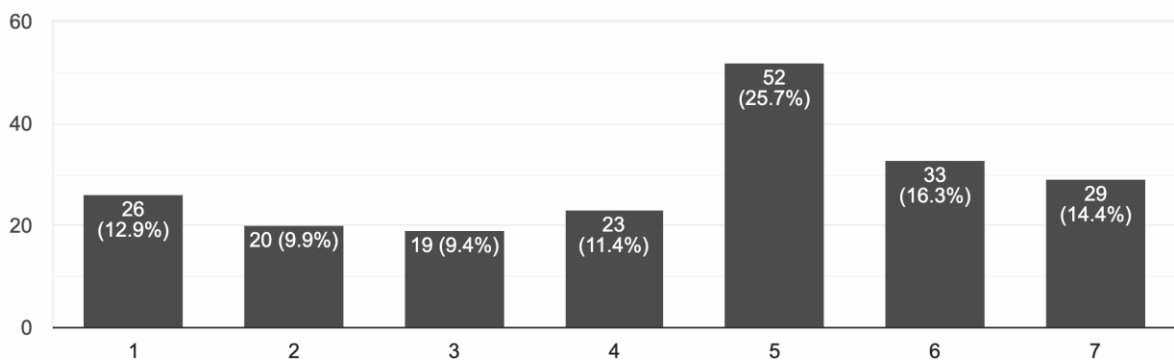
**I feel less alone when watching mukbang videos**

202 responses



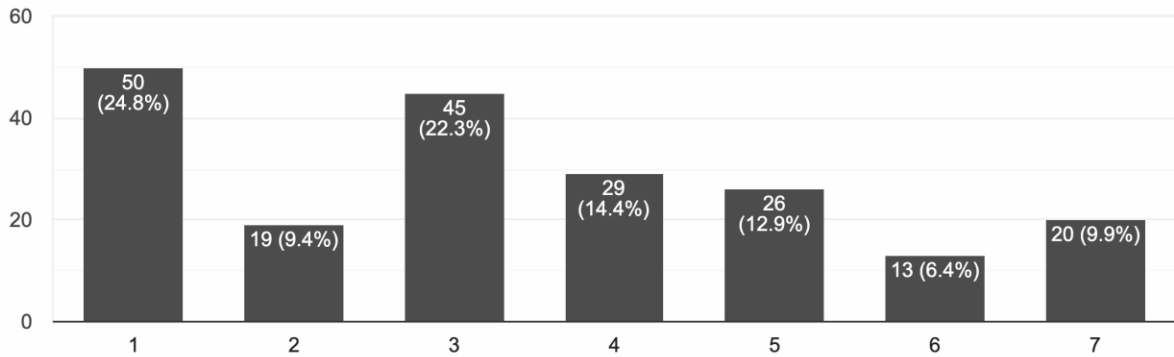
**I think it is good to watch mukbang videos because it eases my visual hunger**

202 responses



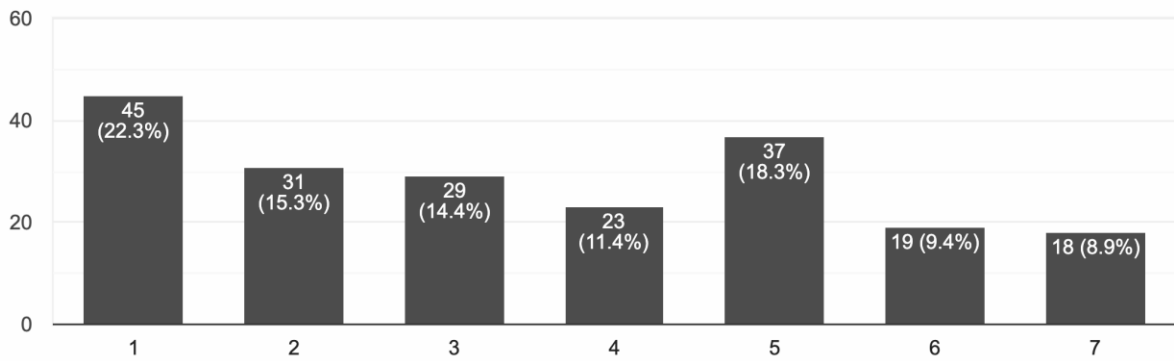
**I tend to overeat when watching mukbang videos**

202 responses



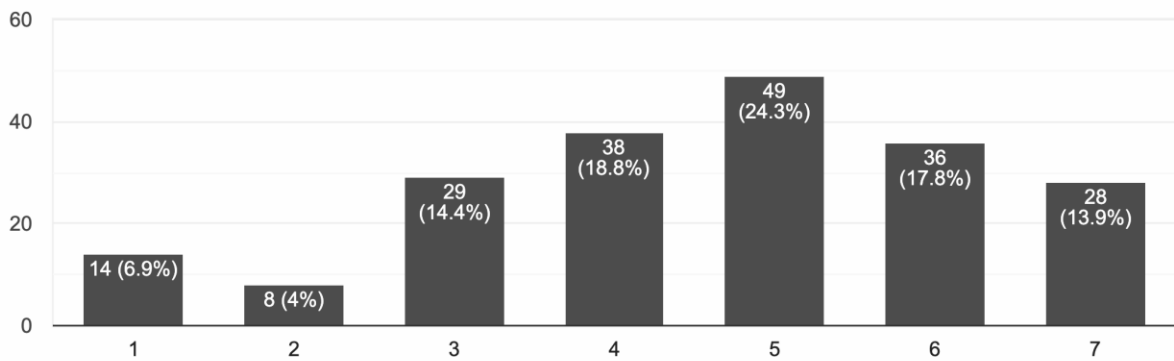
**My attitude to the food I consume depends on the last mukbang i watched**

202 responses



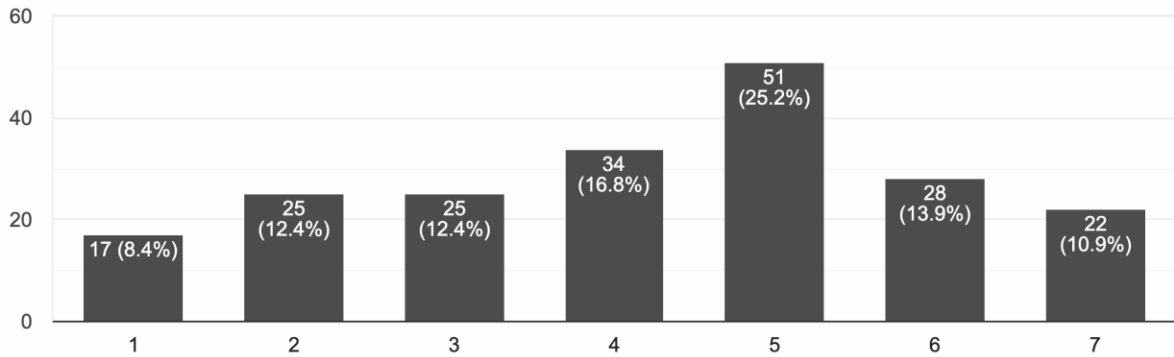
**The trend on mukbang watching around me is increasing**

202 responses



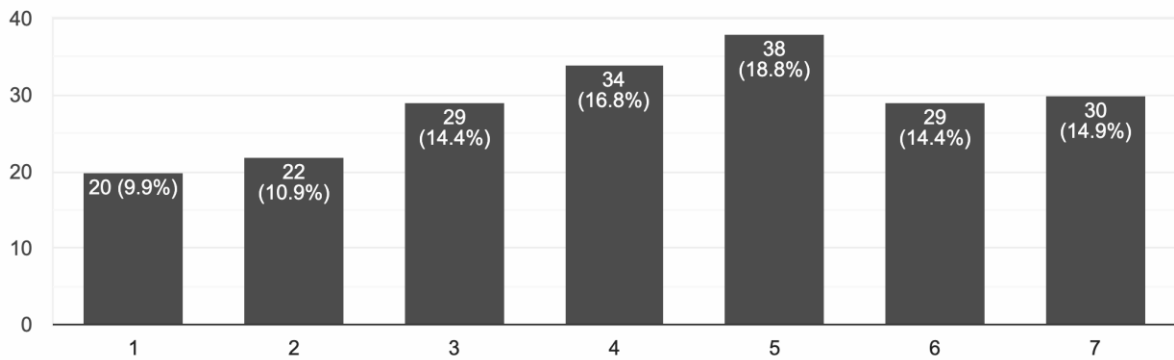
**People around me are influenced with the food featured in mukbang videos**

202 responses



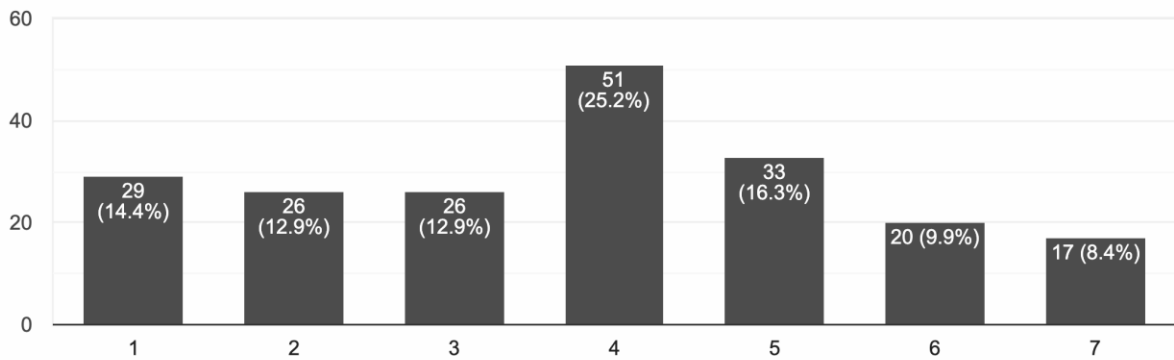
**My family and close friends watches mukbang videos**

202 responses



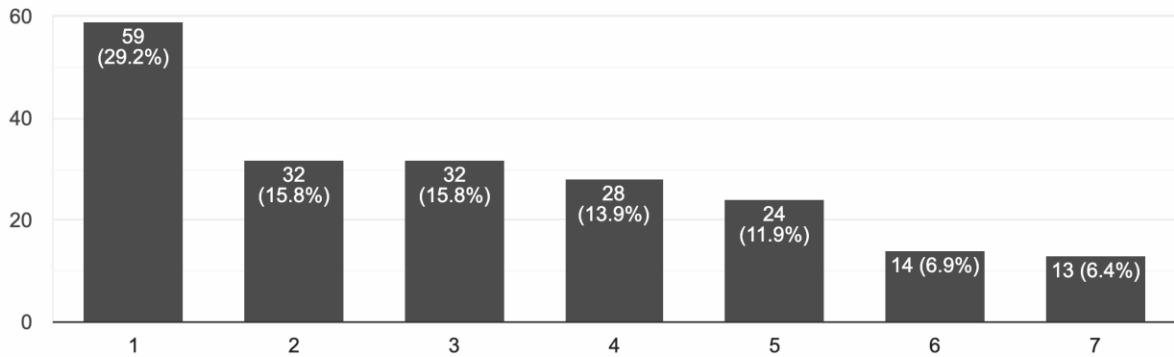
**I get the support of my close friends and family to watch mukbang videos**

202 responses



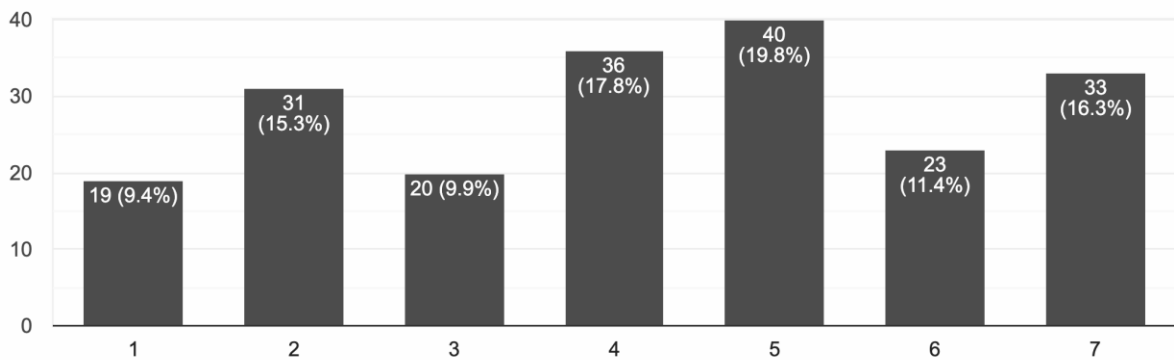
My family is adapting the food consumption pattern as seen on mukbang videos

202 responses



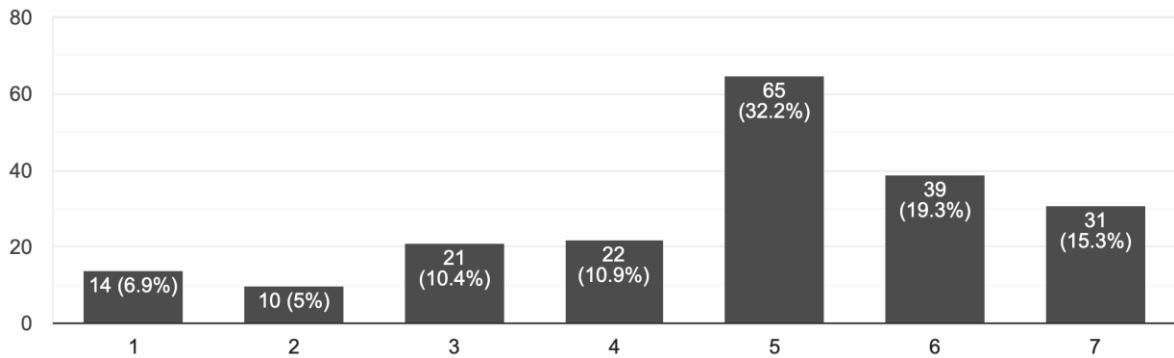
I watch mukbang videos whenever I can

202 responses



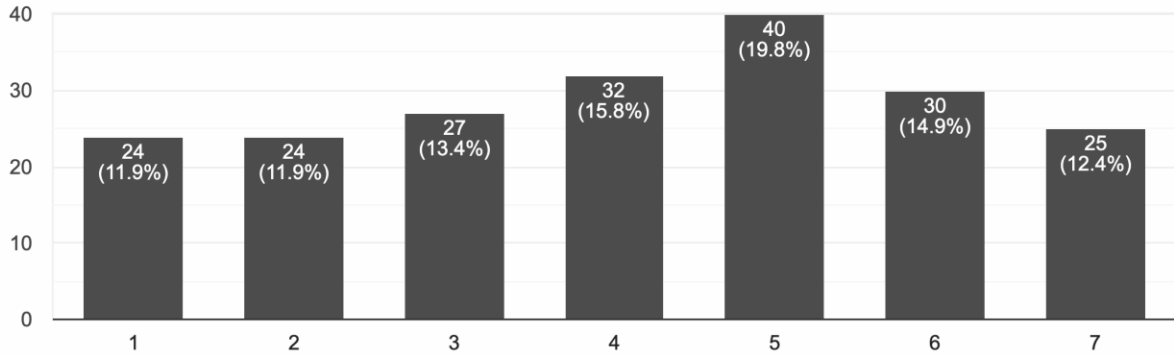
I believe that watching mukbang videos can affect my behavior and attitude in the kinds of food I buy

202 responses



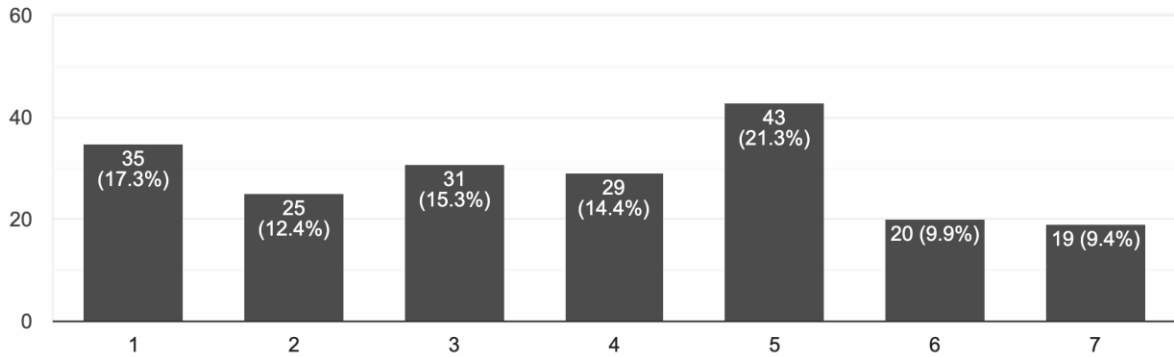
I believe that watching mukbang videos can affect my behavior and attitude in the volume of food I buy

202 responses



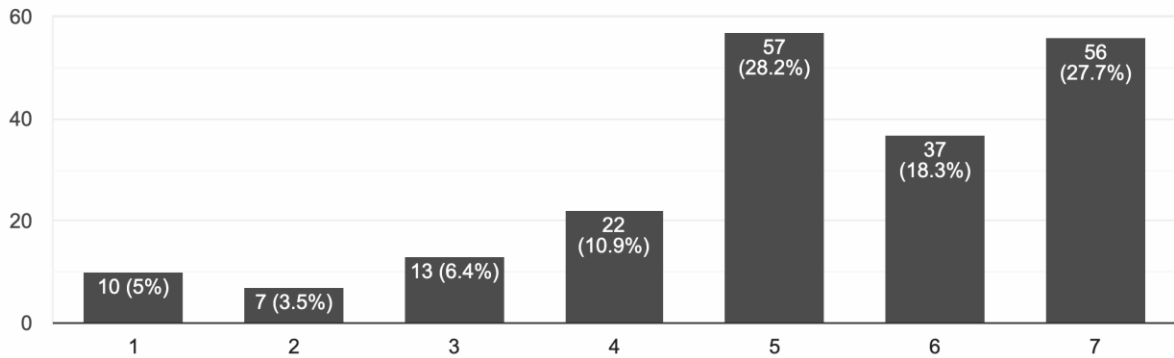
I think I will be able to watch mukbang videos to satisfy my emotional desires

202 responses



I get an idea on what to eat and buy when watching mukbang

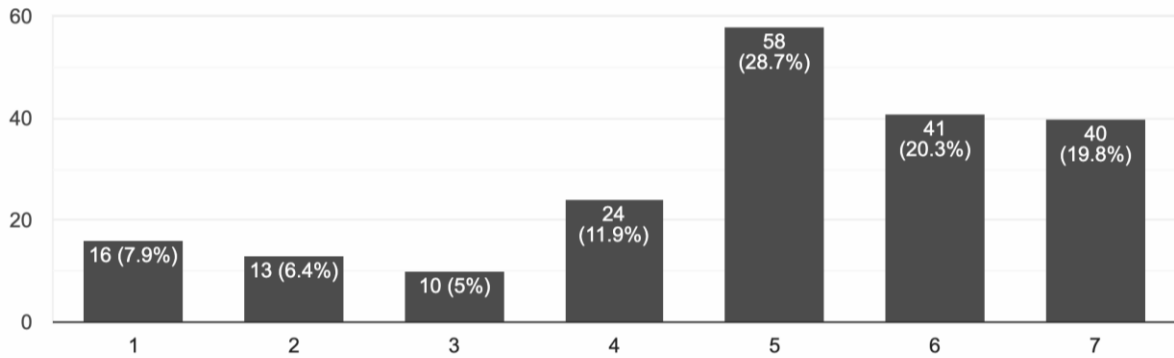
202 responses





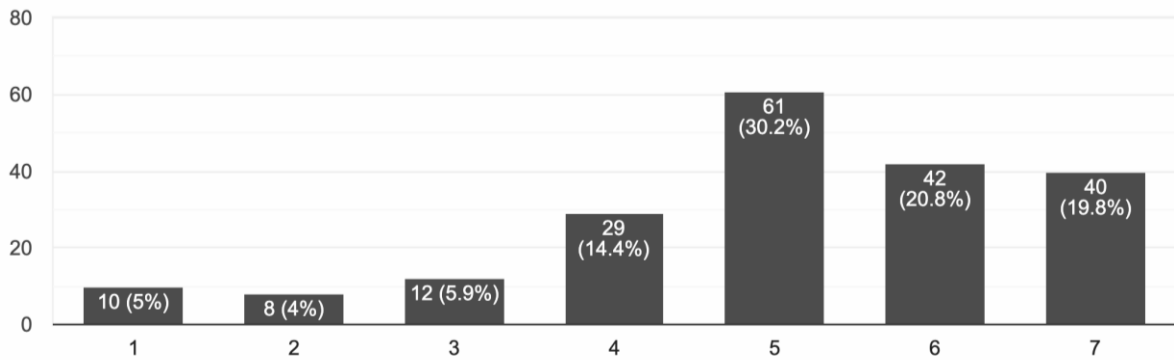
I plan to learn about the food featured in the mukbang i watched

202 responses



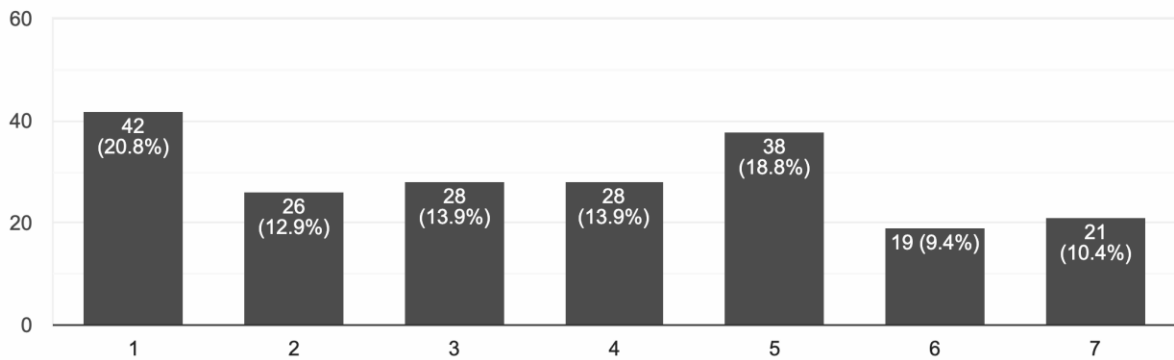
I have a greater intention to purchase the food that was featured in the mukbang i have just watched

202 responses



I get satisfaction in indulging the same amount of food featured in the mukbang

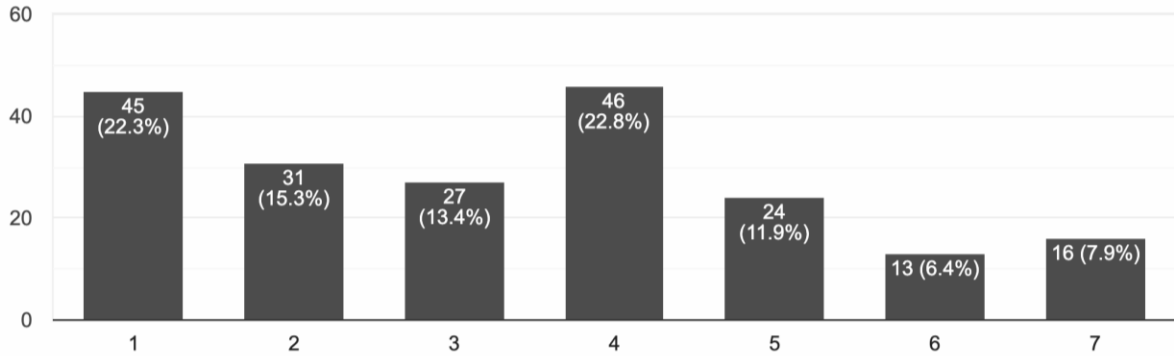
202 responses



Z

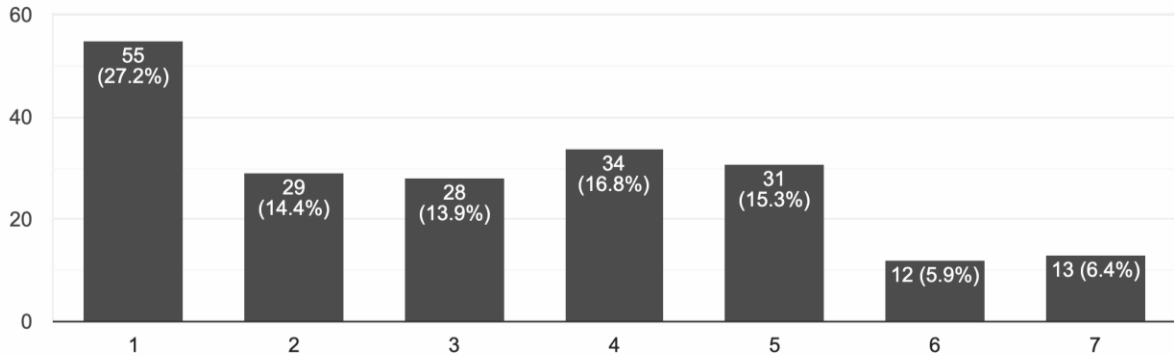
I can say that I am greatly influenced by the mukbang influencers on social media

202 responses



I noticed a change with my food consumption pattern due to watching mukbang videos

202 responses



**Appendix B: Conceptual Framework**

