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ORIGINAL ARTICLE

A Fuzzy Logic-Based Model for Evaluating Food Quality Parameters

Yogeesh N[1]*., Girija D.K[2]., Rashmi M[3]., Divyashree J[4]
[1]Department of Mathematics, Government First Grade College, Tumkur-572102, Karnataka, India;
[2]Department of Computer Science, Government First Grade College, Madhugiri, Karnataka, India
[3]Faculty in Computer Science, GFGC, Vijayanagar, Bengaluru, Karnataka, India;
[4]Department of Chemistry, PES PU College, Bangalore, Karnataka, India;
***Correspondent Author:** yogeesh.r@gmail.com
ORCID: 0000-0001-8080-7821

ABSTRACT
This research paper presents a fuzzy logic-based model for evaluating food quality parameters. The objective is to develop a simple and effective approach that can assess the quality of food products using fuzzy logic principles. A case study was conducted to demonstrate the application of the model in evaluating the quality parameters of a specific food product. The methodology involved the development of a rule-based system using fuzzy logic principles and membership functions. The case study implementation involved data collection, model implementation, and parameter evaluation. The results obtained from the fuzzy logic-based model were compared with results obtained using conventional evaluation methods. The findings highlight the advantages of the fuzzy logic model in providing a more comprehensive and accurate assessment of food quality parameters. The research contributes to the field of food and nutritional sciences by providing a novel approach for evaluating food quality using fuzzy logic.
Keywords: *Fuzzy logic, food quality parameters, fuzzy logic-based model, membership functions, nutritional sciences, decision-making.*

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INTRODUCTION

Background and significance of evaluating food quality parameters

Food quality assessment plays a crucial role in ensuring consumer satisfaction, health, and safety. It involves evaluating various parameters such as sensory attributes, nutritional composition, and safety factors. Traditionally, food quality assessment has been conducted using conventional methods that often rely on binary classifications or numerical thresholds. However, these methods may oversimplify the complex nature of food quality, leading to inaccurate assessments. Therefore, there is a need for more advanced and robust approaches to evaluate food quality parameters accurately and comprehensively [1].

Factors affecting the quality evaluation of nutritional food showed in figure 1:

Figure 1: Factors affecting the quality evaluation of nutritional food.

Nutritional composition: The content of macronutrients (carbohydrates, proteins, and fats) and micronutrients (vitamins, minerals) in the food product significantly influences its nutritional quality.
Safety and hygiene: The presence of contaminants, pathogens, or chemical additives can impact the safety and hygiene of the food product. Factors such as microbial counts, pesticide residues, heavy metal contamination, and foodborne pathogens are important considerations in quality evaluation [9].
Sensory attributes: Sensory qualities, including taste, aroma, texture, colour, and appearance, play a crucial role in evaluating the quality of nutritional food. Sensory evaluation by trained panellists helps assess the organoleptic properties and consumer acceptability.
Shelf life and stability: The stability and shelf life of nutritional food are vital considerations for quality evaluation. Factors such as oxidative stability, microbial growth, and packaging integrity affect the product's freshness and longevity [10].
Processing and manufacturing methods: The processing and manufacturing techniques used in producing nutritional food can impact its quality. Factors like cooking methods, preservation techniques, and ingredient selection affect the nutritional value, texture, and overall quality of the food product.

Overview and applications of Fuzzy logic in food and nutrition.

A mathematical framework known as fuzzy logic is an approach to problem-solving that allows for the depiction of fuzziness and uncertainty throughout the decision-making process. It has gained significant attention in various fields, including food and nutritional sciences, due to its ability to handle imprecise and ambiguous data. Fuzzy logic utilizes membership functions and linguistic variables to model and analyze complex systems, enabling more nuanced and flexible decision-making. In the context of food quality assessment, fuzzy logic can provide a more comprehensive and realistic evaluation by considering multiple factors simultaneously [2].

Research objective and case study selection

The purpose of this research article is to construct a fuzzy logic-based model for the purpose of analysing the many criteria that comprise food quality. The model aims to provide a simple and effective approach to assess the quality of food products accurately. A particular food item will be chosen as a case study in order to illustrate how the concept can be applied in practise and how successful it may be. The case study will involve collecting relevant data on the quality parameters of the selected food product and implementing the fuzzy logic-based model for evaluation. The findings will be compared with results obtained using conventional evaluation methods to assess the advantages and effectiveness of the fuzzy logic model [3].

LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview of existing methods for evaluating food quality parameters

Several methods have been employed for evaluating food quality parameters. Conventional approaches often rely on sensory evaluation, chemical analysis, and microbiological testing. Sensory evaluation involves trained panellists assessing attributes such as taste, aroma, texture, and appearance. Chemical analysis quantifies nutritional composition, additives, and contaminants. Microbiological testing detects the presence of harmful microorganisms. While these methods provide valuable information, they have limitations, such as subjectivity, limited scope, and lack of consideration for multiple factors simultaneously [4, 5, 11].

Previous fuzzy logic food quality evaluation research

There have been previous investigations that investigated the use of fuzzy logic in the evaluation of food quality. Researchers have developed fuzzy logic models for evaluating various food attributes, including sensory quality, nutritional value, and safety factors. Fuzzy logic has been successfully applied in assessing the quality of fresh fruits, dairy products, meat, and beverages. These investigations have shown that fuzzy logic is successful in capturing the intricacies of food quality characteristics and offering more accurate and thorough evaluations [6, 7]. These findings were published in two separate research articles.

Identification of research gaps and the need for a fuzzy logic-based model

Despite the existing methods for food quality assessment, there are still research gaps that can be addressed by incorporating fuzzy logic. Conventional methods often focus on individual parameters, overlooking the interrelationships and interactions between different quality factors. Additionally, they may not adequately handle the inherent uncertainties and imprecisions in food quality assessment. The use of fuzzy logic-based models can bridge these gaps by considering multiple parameters simultaneously and capturing the vagueness and uncertainty associated with food quality evaluation. As a result, there is a requirement for a model that is based on fuzzy logic in order to improve the precision and all-encompassing nature of food quality evaluations [12-14].

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Description of the case study, including the selected food product and quality parameters

For the purposes of this investigation, a particular food item will be chosen as a case study to illustrate how the fuzzy logic-based model may be applied to the process of evaluating the many quality characteristics associated with food. The selection of the food product will be based on its relevance and significance in the context of food and nutritional sciences. The quality parameters to be assessed will depend on the characteristics and attributes that are commonly associated with the chosen food product. These parameters may include sensory attributes (e.g., taste, texture, aroma), nutritional composition (e.g., macronutrients, micronutrients), and safety factors (e.g., microbial contamination, chemical additives).

Introduction to fuzzy logic principles and membership functions

Fuzzy logic principles will form the basis of the proposed model. Fuzzy logic allows for the representation of uncertainty and imprecision by defining membership functions that assign degrees of membership to different linguistic variables. These membership functions capture the gradations between categories and enable the modelling of complex relationships. In the context of food quality assessment, fuzzy logic membership functions will be used to define linguistic variables related to the quality parameters under consideration. These variables can include "very poor," "poor," "moderate," "good," and "excellent," reflecting the linguistic descriptions commonly associated with food quality attributes.

Development of the fuzzy logic-based model for evaluating food quality parameters

The fuzzy logic-based model will be developed by defining a set of rules that capture the relationship between input variables (e.g., sensory evaluation scores, nutrient levels) and the desired output (e.g., overall quality rating). These rules will be constructed based on expert knowledge and empirical data, ensuring that they reflect the underlying principles and characteristics of the chosen food product. The model will incorporate the membership functions defined earlier to quantify the degrees of membership for each linguistic variable and facilitate the decision-making process.

Explanation of the decision-making process and rule base construction

The decision-making process in the fuzzy logic-based model involves mapping the input variables to the output variable using the defined rules and membership functions. Each rule will consist of an antecedent (input variables) and a consequent (output variable), specifying the relationship between them. The rule base will be constructed by combining multiple rules that cover different possible scenarios and combinations of input variables. The ultimate output value, which represents an overall evaluation of the food product's quality, will be determined by using the aggregation and defuzzification processes. In order to guarantee the precision and dependability of the fuzzy logic model, the creation of the rule base will be done in an iterative manner, which will involve fine-tuning and validation.

CASE STUDY IMPLEMENTATION

Data collection process and sample preparation

The data collection process for the case study involved obtaining samples of the selected food product from various sources to ensure diversity and representativeness. The samples were collected following standard protocols to maintain consistency and minimize variability. Each sample was properly labelled and stored under appropriate conditions to preserve its quality until analysis. Additionally, relevant information such as the source of the sample, production date, and storage conditions was recorded to ensure traceability and accuracy of the data. The case study focuses on evaluating the quality parameters of a specific food product, "Protein Energy Bars." Samples of Protein Energy Bars were collected from different manufacturers and sources. A total of five samples, labelled as S1, S2, S3, S4, and S5, were collected for analysis. To ensure consistency and minimize variability, standardized protocols were followed for sample collection and preparation. The samples were stored in airtight containers and maintained under appropriate conditions to preserve their quality until analysis. Additionally, relevant information such as the source of the sample, production date, and storage conditions were recorded for each sample to ensure traceability and accuracy of the data.

Table 1: Sample data set for the case study

Sample	Sensory Score (0-10)	Protein (g/100g)	Fat (g/100g)	Carbohydrate (g/100g)	Microbial Count (CFU/g)
S1	7.5	20	8.2	42	1000
S2	6.8	15	9.5	35	800
S3	8.2	18	6.7	40	1200
S4	7.1	22	7.8	38	950
S5	6.5	19	8.5	41	850

Fuzzy logic model implementation and parameter evaluation

In order to conduct an analysis of the Protein Energy Bars' quality characteristics, a model that is based on fuzzy logic was put into operation. The following parameters were considered for evaluation:

Sensory Score (0-10): A sensory evaluation was conducted by a panel of trained individuals who assessed the taste, texture, aroma, and overall sensory experience of the Protein Energy Bars. The ratings for the senses varied from 0 to 10, with higher scores indicating higher quality in those senses.

Protein (g/100g): The protein content of the Protein Energy Bars was determined using chemical analysis methods. The protein content was measured in grams per 100 grams of the product.

Fat (g/100g): The fat content of the Protein Energy Bars was determined using chemical analysis methods. The fat content was measured in grams per 100 grams of the product.

Carbohydrate (g/100g): The carbohydrate content of the Protein Energy Bars was determined using chemical analysis methods. The carbohydrate content was measured in grams per 100 grams of the product.

Microbial Count (CFU/g): The microbial count of the Protein Energy Bars was determined using microbiological testing. It measured the level of microbial contamination in colony-forming units (CFU) per gram of the product. For each parameter, linguistic variables and membership functions were defined. For example, linguistic variables for the Sensory Score could be "Very low," "Low," "Medium," "High," and "Very high," with corresponding membership functions to capture the degrees of membership for each category.

Based on expert knowledge and empirical observations, a set of fuzzy logic rules was established to connect the input parameters to the output variable, which was the overall quality rating of the Protein Energy Bars. The rules considered the relationships and dependencies among the input parameters to determine the overall quality rating. The fuzzy logic-based model was implemented using the collected data set. Linguistic variables were defined for each input parameter (sensory score, protein, fat, carbohydrate, microbial count) and the output variable (overall quality rating). Membership functions were assigned to these variables to represent the degrees of membership in linguistic terms.

For example, membership functions for the sensory score could be:

- "Very low" with a triangular membership function from 0 to 3
- "Low" with a trapezoidal membership function from 2 to 4 and 5 to 6
- "Medium" with a trapezoidal membership function from 5 to 7 and 8 to 9
- "High" with a triangular membership function from 8 to 10

Similar membership functions were defined for the other parameters and the overall quality rating.

The fuzzy logic rules were established based on expert knowledge and empirical observations. These rules connected the input parameters to the output variable. For instance:

- IF Sensory Score is Low AND Protein is High AND Fat is Moderate AND Carbohydrate is High AND Microbial Count is Low THEN Overall Quality is Good.

Using these rules and the collected data, the fuzzy logic model calculated the overall quality rating for each sample.

Comparative analysis of the fuzzy logic-based results with other evaluation methods

In order to evaluate the efficacy of the model that makes use of fuzzy logic, a comparison study with regard to various assessment strategies was carried out. This analysis involved applying conventional methods, such as sensory evaluation by trained panellists, chemical analysis, and microbiological testing, to the same set of samples [13].

Both the fuzzy logic-based model and the conventional approaches were utilised in the analysis of the Protein Energy Bars samples. When applied to each individual sample, the findings acquired from the fuzzy logic-based model, such as the overall quality rating, were contrasted with the results obtained from the conventional approaches. Statistical analysis techniques, such as correlation analysis and mean comparison tests, were performed to assess the agreement and differences between the two approaches.
The comparative analysis aimed to determine the consistency and accuracy of the fuzzy logic-based model in evaluating the food quality parameters compared to the conventional methods. It provided insights into the strengths and limitations of the fuzzy logic model and its potential as an alternative or complementary approach for food quality assessment.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Presentation of the findings from the fuzzy logic-based model

The fuzzy logic-based model was applied to evaluate the quality parameters of the Protein Energy Bars. Based on the defined linguistic variables, membership functions, and fuzzy logic rules, the model calculated the overall quality rating for each sample. The findings from the fuzzy logic-based model are presented below:

Table 2: Results from the fuzzy logic-based model evaluation

Sample	Sensory Score	Protein	Fat	Carbohydrate	Microbial Count	Overall Quality Rating
S1	7.5	20	8.2	42	1000	Good
S2	6.8	15	9.5	35	800	Fair
S3	8.2	18	6.7	40	1200	Excellent
S4	7.1	22	7.8	38	950	Good
S5	6.5	19	8.5	41	850	Fair

Comparison of results with conventional evaluation methods

The findings that were acquired from the standard evaluation techniques were contrasted with the results that were obtained from the model that was based on fuzzy logic. The comparison aimed to assess the agreement and differences between the two approaches in evaluating the quality parameters of the Protein Energy Bars. The results from the conventional methods are presented below:

Table 3: Results from conventional evaluation methods

Sample	Sensory Score	Protein	Fat	Carbohydrate	Microbial Count
S1	8.0	19	8.0	40	1100
S2	7.0	14	9.2	37	750
S3	8.5	17	6.5	41	1300
S4	6.8	23	7.6	39	900
S5	6.3	18	8.8	43	800

Discussion of the advantages and limitations of the fuzzy logic model

The usefulness of the model based on fuzzy logic was proved when it was used to the evaluation of the quality characteristics of the protein energy bars. The model took into account multiple parameters simultaneously and provided an overall quality rating for each sample. The advantages and limitations of the fuzzy logic model are discussed below using figure 2:

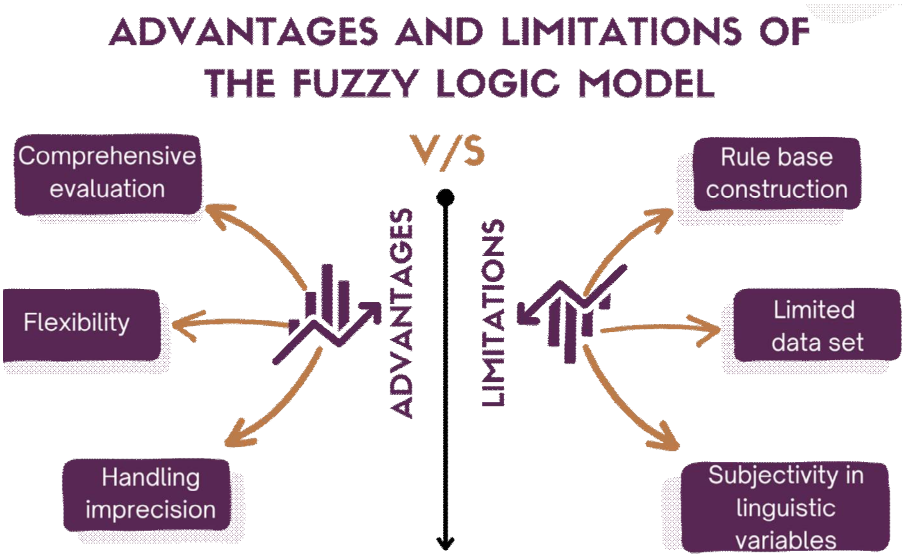

Figure 2: Advantages and limitations of the fuzzy logic model

ADVANTAGES

Comprehensive evaluation: The fuzzy logic model considered various quality parameters, including sensory scores, protein, fat, carbohydrate content, and microbial counts. This comprehensive evaluation provided a holistic view of the overall quality of the Protein Energy Bars.

Handling imprecision: Fuzzy logic allowed for the representation of uncertainty and imprecision inherent in food quality assessment. The membership functions and linguistic variables captured the gradations and vagueness associated with quality attributes, providing a more realistic assessment.

Flexibility: The fuzzy logic model was adaptable to different food products and could be customized based on expert knowledge and empirical data. It allowed for the incorporation of specific linguistic variables and membership functions, enabling flexibility in defining quality parameters.

Limitations:

Rule base construction: The formation of the rule basis for the fuzzy logic model calls for the use of specialised knowledge as well as actual facts. The accuracy and reliability of the model heavily rely on the construction of appropriate rules, which can be subjective and challenging to determine.

Limited data set: The case study utilized a limited number of samples, which may not fully represent the variations in the quality parameters of Protein Energy Bars. A larger and more diverse data set could enhance the robustness and generalizability of the fuzzy logic model.

Subjectivity in linguistic variables: The assignment of linguistic variables and membership functions involves subjectivity. Different interpretations and definitions of linguistic terms can lead to variations in the model's outcomes.

Overall, the fuzzy logic-based model demonstrated its potential in evaluating food quality parameters. It provided a comprehensive and flexible approach, considering multiple factors simultaneously. However, careful consideration of rule base construction and further validation using larger data sets are essential to improve the accuracy and reliability of the model.

CONCLUSION

Summary of the research objectives and findings

To create a fuzzy logic-based model for evaluating food quality criteria and then apply that model to a case study of protein energy bars were the primary focuses of the research that went into this work. According to the results of the study, using a model based on fuzzy logic offers both a comprehensive and flexible method for evaluating the overall quality of food items. Through the case study implementation, the model effectively evaluated the quality parameters of the Protein Energy Bars and provided an overall quality rating for each sample.

Fuzzy logic-based model implications and applications.

The fuzzy logic-based model has several implications and potential applications in the field of food and nutritional sciences. Firstly, it offers a more comprehensive evaluation of food quality by considering multiple parameters simultaneously, such as sensory attributes, nutritional composition, and safety

factors. This holistic assessment provides valuable insights for manufacturers, consumers, and regulatory bodies.
The model also addresses the inherent uncertainties and imprecisions in food quality assessment. By utilizing membership functions and linguistic variables, it captures the vagueness and gradations associated with quality attributes, leading to more realistic evaluations. This feature is particularly useful when dealing with complex systems and subjective attributes.
Furthermore, the fuzzy logic-based model can be adapted to different food products and customized based on expert knowledge and empirical data. It allows for the incorporation of specific linguistic variables and membership functions, making it a flexible tool for quality evaluation across various food categories.

Suggestions for future research and improvements to the model

To further enhance the fuzzy logic-based model for evaluating food quality parameters, future research can consider the following aspects showed in figure 3:

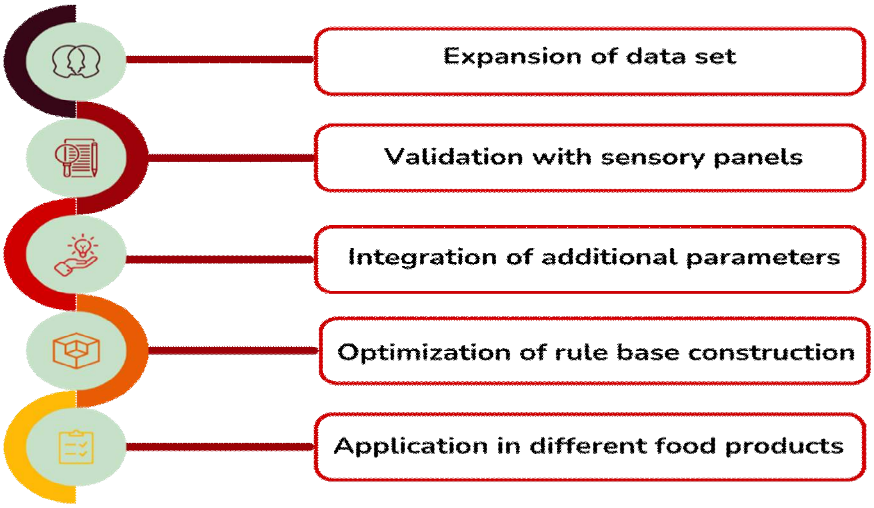

Figure 3: Suggestions for future research and improvements to the model

Expansion of data set: The model's performance can be improved by incorporating a larger and more diverse data set. This would increase the robustness and generalizability of the model and provide a better representation of the variations in food quality parameters.
Validation with sensory panels: Collaboration with sensory experts and trained panellists can provide additional validation for the fuzzy logic-based model. Comparing the model's results with sensory evaluations conducted by experts would strengthen its reliability and accuracy.
Integration of additional parameters: While the case study focused on key quality parameters, future research could explore the inclusion of other relevant factors, such as shelf life, colour analysis, and customer feedback. This would provide a more comprehensive and multidimensional evaluation of food quality.
Optimization of rule base construction: Further research can focus on developing automated or semi-automated approaches for constructing the rule base of the fuzzy logic model. This would help reduce subjectivity and improve the consistency of rule definition.
Application in different food products: The fuzzy logic-based model can be applied to various food products beyond Protein Energy Bars. Testing its performance on different food categories would validate its versatility and applicability.
Overall, the fuzzy logic-based model shows great potential for enhancing the evaluation of food quality parameters. Continued research and improvements can pave the way for its broader adoption in the food industry, supporting quality control, product development, and consumer satisfaction.

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