



National  
College *of*  
Ireland

***THE STUDY OF THE EFFECT OF THE INTERNET  
INFLUENCERS ON SMALL SCALE  
RESTAURANTS IN DUBLIN USING  
INSTAGRAM***

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**Under the guidance of Dr. Frank Devitt**

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## **Abstract**

**Purpose** - The determination of this thesis is to find the effect of nano-influencers on Instagram when they are used for influencer marketing for small scale restaurant in Dublin. The study aims at studying the effects of these nano-influencers on Instagram and how they can be used for marketing purposes. This study also aims at studying the relationship between the trust of the consumers on influencers and the effect on their intention to buy services, goods or products from businesses.

**Design/Approach/Methodology** – A mixed methodology approach was adapted by the researcher which consists of both qualitative and quantitative methodology. The qualitative study was carried out with the help of an experiment involving a small-scale restaurant in Dublin and four nano-influencers. The experiment was carried out in real time to see the effects of the nano-influencers on the sales of the restaurant. The quantitative study was carried out using a survey to study various factors that revolve around influencer marketing, social media application Instagram and the relationship between trust and intention to buy considering the Bruns-Siddiqui model.

**Findings** – The findings directed towards a conclusion that nano-influencers do have a positive effect on the sales of the restaurant and creating brand awareness amongst their followers. The findings from the survey also suggested that, Instagram is one of the most preferred social media application over other social media applications. It was also found that people of Generation Y and Generation Z are the major users of social media applications and online content.

**Value/Originality** – This research study using experimental analysis is one of its kind in Ireland using real time nano-influencers study on a small-scale restaurant in Dublin.

**Paper Type** – Academic Dissertation Research

# Submission of Thesis and Dissertation

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उद्यमेन हि सिध्यन्ति कार्याणि न मनोरथैः।  
न हि सुप्तस्य सिंहस्य प्रविशन्ति मुखे मृगाः ॥

*Which translates to*

***Work gets accomplished by putting in efforts,  
and certainly not by mere wishful thinking.  
Deer certainly do not enter a sleeping lion's mouth***

*Which means that no work is complete without putting in efforts and hard work no work is complete just by thinking about it.*

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## Introduction

Internet is considered to be one of the fastest growing and one of the most rapidly adopted technologies in the world. Internet has become a part of our daily life, from the way one communicates and searches information to how one manages relationships (Firth *et al.*, 2019). Continuous improvements in the technology sector and that internet becoming a key aspect of communication, the process of communication has seen a global change. As per the reports of International Telecommunication Unit, a special unit of the United Nations concerned with information technologies, around 51.2% of the total world population in the world was to be seen using internet by December 2018. These advances have changed how humans and computers communicate, changed the way of livelihood and the way of leading life (Ruzgar, 2005; Barwise *et al.*, 2002). Internet with its everyday advancements has become ‘on the go’ technology and ubiquitous enabling people to get straightforward answers to their straightforward questions (Firth *et al.*, 2019; Lloyd, 2005).

Internet opened new dimensions on the way of doing business and to new competitions (Varnali, 2010). It has transformed information from a “scarce resource” to “information democracy” and “information transparency”, giving the power of control of market knowledge to the consumers from suppliers (Sawhney and Kotler, 2002; Deshpande, 2002; Urban, 2004). The advancement in technology led to new ideas to market goods and services where marketers focused on the ways that consumers would be using internet technology (Corley, Jourdan and Ingram, 2013). Since then, the field of marketing has been through enormous changes and improvements in the thought process and practice. These changes and improvements have led to many important and new insights that shed light on the research area of marketing discipline (Kumar, 2015).

One important development that came into existence was digital marketing in the 1980s when an advertising company Soft Ad group focused on digital advertisement campaigns. Digital marketing can be defined as using and utilising new technologies to create and mediate dialogues between the companies and consumers, and, advertising the marketing objectives through the application of digital technologies (Kamal, 2016; Verma and Verma, 2018). Digital marketing as a broader topic can be further divided or used in a number of ways. Some of them are email marketing, search engine optimization, social media marketing and viral marketing.

As previously mentioned, the internet access to worlds 51.2% of the total population opens up opportunities and platforms for businesses to showcase, market and sell their products on the internet. As far as this thesis is concerned, the author particularly focuses on social media marketing. Social media used by billions of people around the world acts as a platform for business to showcase their marketing campaign to large number of people (Appel, Grewal, Hadi and Stephen, 2019; Chi, 2011). Social media applications like Facebook and Instagram have reported around 1.56 billion daily users and expected to grow to a total of 3.29 billion users till 2022 (Appel, Grewal, Hadi and Stephen, 2019). Extensive growth in the social media sector has had an impact on both consumer psychology and marketing practice. To study the impact of social media in marketing, Appel *et al* (2019) outline two important underlying aspects, one being the social media platform itself (the underlying technology and industry environment) and second being the users of the social media platforms (the way the users use them in different scenarios).

This thesis specifically focuses on small scale restaurant in Dublin and to study the effect of using social media as a tool for marketing purposes. The social media tool is explained in detail in the sections which will be a part of this report. In traditional scenarios, big businesses or big organizations have an upper hand in marketing as the difference between the marketing budgets is quite large. To spend on ATL (Above the Line) activities like TV, radio stations and banners is difficult for small scale businesses as the cost incurred for them is quite high. Hubspot (2020) conducted interviews with 10 small scale business owners who were successful in implementing social media marketing strategies and listed out some important factors that made them successful. Following are some of the factors:

1. Regularly create content through blogs and other social media platforms.
2. Not to engage in each and every platform available but stick to one that can drive best results.
3. Have basic understanding of how social media marketing works.
4. Using social media to drive offline participations in the business.

To achieve high standards, from the research that Hubspot (2018) conducted, it is indicative that it can pose a high level of difficulty for small businesses to implement social media strategies. Though these can be achieved by using traditional tools of social media platforms like content creation and blog posting, some tools are available in the market that are new and in trend. One of those tools is influencer marketing which can be used across various social

media platforms. Of the many effective strategies on the internet, viral marketing is one of them. Viral marketing explores social media platforms and networks by encouraging influencers in a specific market to share information about the services and products to their followers (Leskovec, Admic, & Huberman, 2008; Richardson & Domingos, 2012). Aaker (2004) says that risk of brand building on the basis of relevance and relationships still exist though it is quick and inexpensive. Viral marketing uses WOM (Word of mouth) to spread and encourage people through influencers of specific industry to create brand awareness on social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. This is done with the view of increasing sales through different viral marketing strategies (Kaikati and Kaikati, 2014; Larson, 2009; Borade, 2013). The impact of social networking sites like Facebook, Instagram and Twitter on the people is quite powerful. Though there are millions of users on these various platforms, very few are acknowledged for their content. These people or users are the ones who set trends, create opinions about someone or something over the internet. These people are called as the influencers over the internet or 'internet influencers' in the field of marketing (More and Lingam, 2019). A way of promoting products or services and creating brand awareness through the content produced by influential social media influencers is called influencer marketing (Carter, 2016).

Though there is no particular definition for the levels of influencers, Yuki (2019) recognizes various types of internet influencers as celebrities (influencers who achieved fame through TV, famous personalities and the rest.), Macro-influencers (social-media celebrities with more than one million audiences), rising creators (those content creators who still climbing the path to macro influencers with following between 250k-999k) and micro-influencers( influencers with less than 250k). Recent industry reports suggest that firms spend anywhere between \$125000 - \$250000 per year for influencer marketing. This said, it was estimated that the influencer marketing industry was going to increase by 39% in 2018 as compared to that of 2017. Some famous influencer marketing examples are that of Nike hiring Cristiano Ronaldo (professional football player and celebrity) at whopping \$1 billion for a 10-year span of time to product Nike's products. It is stated that celebrities and macro influencers can charge anywhere around \$5000 to \$300000 per post. Even micro influencers who don't have a large following charge anywhere around \$250 per post (Gretzel, 2018). This is far from what small-scale businesses and small-scale restaurants can afford. Restaurant industry is highly competitive and has low entry barrier. In order to stand out from the competition, restaurant owners need to have an idea about the wants and needs of the customers and what they perceive. With minimum budgets

for promotions and advertisements, restaurants highly depend on WOM (Word of Mouth) advertisement. Also, there is very little research in the restaurant industry except the paper presented by Longart (2010), which focuses on word of mouth drivers for restaurants in London. It becomes impractical and illogical for restaurants to hire celebrities, macro-influencer and in some of the cases micro-influencer too. This means that, either the restaurants cannot hire influencers of any kind, because of budget constraints or there is some other alternative which can help small scale restaurants boost their business. For the same reason, the researcher aims at identifying such people who might be potential influencers on social media and have the same characteristics as other types of influencers. But some important factors that need to be acknowledged are the cost incurred and the reach of these potential influencers. These potential influencers are identified as nano-influencers throughout the thesis. This leads to two questions for small scale restaurants which will be part of this thesis:

1. Can small scale restaurants use nano-influencers for promoting their services as a part of their marketing strategy and at what costs?
2. What will be the effect of using nano-influencers for businesses like small scale restaurants?

Apart from readable posts, photos make a huge impact on the people. A social media platform that could help meet the needs of this research is Instagram. Instagram was identified as the social media platform as a part of this study because of the following reasons (Bellavista, Foschini and Ghiselli, 2019),

1. Instagram has daily users of 500 million who share around 95 million photos and videos every day.
2. Besides, because of the high user engagement and networking capability, Instagram suits very well to the research environment.
3. Reach to a wider audience.

Starting from the literature survey, the researcher aims to understand the background, previous research studies and to fill in the gaps for this research. This research aims to study the effect of ‘nano-influencers’ on the small-scale restaurant in Dublin using Instagram. The literature survey is followed by Methodology, which will give a deep insight about the tools and methods used carry out the study. Methodology is then followed by findings and analysis which will shed light on the study and will help in better understanding of the results obtained.

This thesis is a combination of experimental work, explorative study and quantitative analysis using a survey, which is accomplished in studying the effect of the proposed research topic with discussion and conclusive remarks at the end of this paper.

## **Literature Review**

Continuous developments in the technology sector have altered social relations, and many authors agree that the existence of the internet and social media to be the key driver in the course of the change (Ellison and Vitak, 2015; Rainie and Wellman, 2014). It becomes easy for people to communicate with friends, family and acquaintances through internet and also keep up to date information through social media sites (Hampton *et al.*, 2011; Wellman *et al.*, 2003). Social media platforms on the internet allow people to communicate with each other and help marketers to engage with consumers in many different ways. Reports from March 2019 showed that the daily activity on Facebook was up to 1.6 billion users and monthly active users of about 2.38 billion (Appel *et al.*, (2020)). Marketing on the internet has transformed the meaning of core marketing concepts like customer segmentation, customer target, brand promotion and brand awareness. Internet provides a better understanding of customer data which is sometimes not readily available. Also, internet is a platform for businesses to showcase their products and offers better understanding over customer choices (Kursal *et al.*, 2010).

As this research is concerned with the Irish market, it becomes important to understand the scope of social media in Ireland considering the facts about how any people use social media applications like Facebook and Instagram. According to Irish Times (2020), around 90% of the Irish population aged between 19-24 use social media applications. Also, according to Ronan Leonard (2018), he states the reports of usage of social media applications in Ireland. According to his research, in Ireland Instagram takes the first spot for population aged between 18-34, whereas Facebook secures the first spot in the usage of the population between 35-54 and Instagram on the third. Around 20% of old population use social media and engage less in content. But the question that arises here is, does age of the population and the usage of social media platforms by them matter to the market. In order to understand and answer this question, it is important to understand the various generations that exist in the world and what characteristics they possess.

The academicians and the west have a tradition of differentiating and sorting the population into different generations, which are Generation X, Generation Y and Generation Z. Brosdahl and Carpenter (2011) classify these generations with respect to their birth years, in other words, Generation X (1961-1980), Generation Y (1981-1990) and Generation Z (1991 and after). According to the reports presented by Ronan Leonard (2018), it is evident that it is Generation Y and Generation Z who engage most on the social media platforms. From the section below, it is possible to understand how these generations can impact the use of social media and the market they can create for businesses.

## **Generation Y**

There are widespread disagreements amongst researchers on the classification of Gen Y group of population as there is no clear evidence on the distinguishable characteristics of different generations (Zemke *et al.*, 2000; Bolton *et al.*, 2013). Hence, this thesis intends to follow Brosdahl and Carpenter (2011) classification of generations which are Generation X (1961-1980), Generation Y (1981-1990) and Generation Z (1991 and after). One of the most important characteristics of Gen Y is that this category of population was exposed to the internet and technology at the very early stages of their life (Immordino-Yang *et al.*, 2012). It is observed that most of the population of Gen Y had computers when they grew up which led them to be called ‘digital natives’ rather than ‘digital immigrants’ (Prensky, 2001), who have spent their entire lives in the digital environment and which affected how they live and work (Bennet *et al.*, 2008; Wesner and Miller, 2008).

The usage of social media and buying behaviour of the Gen Y population has been influenced heavily by external factors such as instant communication technologies, social networking and globalization (Park and Gursoy, 2012). These digital natives of Gen Y are either students or people who are fresh to the professional industry and its workforce and the need of interaction is one of the key reasons behind using social media (Palfrey and Gasses, 2008). It is found that 75% of the Gen Y population has an online presence to that of 30% of Gen X population. Gen Y are “want it all” and “want it now” type in terms of pay scale and benefits, work life balance and contribution to society. There is more awareness in the purchasing power of Gen Y, and they can cash out quickly to acquire personal goods, products or services (Ordun, 2015).

This shows that Gen Y makes a large percentage of all the generations who use and engage on social media. Also, this opens up a big space for marketers to showcase their products to a generation which are tech savvy, financially independent and know about online purchases.

## **Generation Z**

Gen Z is the generation to have readily available internet and access to latest trends so much that the web revolution in the 1990's exposed them to unprecedented level of technology. Gen Z are looked upon as a population which is comfortable with the virtual world, where virtual bonding is one of the way of interacting over social media. These people are technology savvy and are conscious about getting involved on social media platforms. They are the topmost contributor to the purchase of brands and services online, and the topmost of the category to provide feedbacks and reviews for the same (Yadav and Rai, 2017).

According to the survey conducted by Francis and Hoefel (2018), Gen Z believed in one thing which is 'search for truth'. They see the world problems in an analytical and pragmatic way which influences the way they consume and perceive brands. Generation Z is connected online at their fingertips and vigorous contributor to online content and online communication. Studies suggested that there is an increase in the usage of social media from the Gen Z population but less study on the impacts on their behaviour.

Though there is lack of study on the behavioural impact of internet and social media on Gen Z, it is evident that Gen Z is virtually connected to everything, from their relationships to the marketplace. It is also seen that; they are the topmost contenders in the use of social media for online purchases of goods and services. This opens up many opportunities for businesses and marketers to showcase their product on online platforms.

From the above literature and learnings of Gen Y and Gen Z, it can be said that these tech savvy generations believe in online content and value virtual connections. At the same time it becomes important to understand the scope of social media marketing. This particular thesis is concerned with Internet influencers, particularly on Instagram and their effect on the small-scale restaurants. As the most engagement is through Gen Y and Gen Z of the total population, it is also important to understand the effect of influencers on these generations and the marketplace. This section is then followed by the types of influencers that work online and if Instagram is a better suited platform for small scale restaurants to engage on through influencers.

## Scope of social media marketing

Billions of people around the world use social media and it has become one of the fastest growing technologies. It is estimated that around 42.3% of the world, in other words, 3.29 billion people will be using social media by 2022. This massive number on social media bridges the gap between marketers and consumers.

Social media in practical sense is a collection of digital technologies based on software in the form of websites or applications which provides the users with the accessibility of sharing digital information in the form of content, photos, videos and other formats over a social network. Some of the most used social media networks are Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. Social media is a social instrument which allows bi-directional or multidirectional communication by sharing information over a defined network. Social media can be as simple as posting comments, giving feedbacks or recommending each other on the basis of similar preferences, lifestyle and interests (Barshad, Ahmed and Wasiq, 2012).

The unique factors of social media have given a different aspect to the marketing industry such as to branding, advertisement and promotions. Social media given the power to consumers to participate in post purchase activities like expressing their opinions in the form of feedbacks and reviews, either good or bad (Hanna, Rohm and Crittenden, 2011; Mangold and Faulds, 2009). Considering the level of efficiency of social media, it prompted companies to make use of platforms like Facebook, Twitter and Instagram in order to succeed in this highly populated online environment (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010; Laroche *et al.*, 2012). This online environment has people who share similar mindset and share the idea of contributing, creating and joining various communities online to fulfil the need of belongingness, be recognized and be connected to their peers (Laroche *et al.*, 2012).

These factors help businesses reap the benefits of consumer engagement and advertisement to potential customers in a sense of encouraging intimacy of customer relationship and build meaningful relationships with potential customers (Vinerean, Cetina, Dumitrescu and Tichindelean, 2013). The dynamic nature of social media marketing brought many challenges for the marketers to measure the effectiveness of social media marketing strategies. Though there are some papers which measure or help to understand some factors like reputation management (Rokka *et al.*, 2014), the drivers behind benefits and profits (Tsimonis and Dimitriadis, 2014), B2B adopting social media strategies, the research into social media marketing strategy and its effectiveness is very limited. Some studies guide towards indirect

measurements for a firm, for example, Goh *et al.*'s (2013) study reveals that user generated participation in a firm's strategy had a great impact on profits as compared to a firm generated content. Online content produces a large amount of data which is difficult to evaluate and poses challenges to analyse the metrics of social media activity (Larson and Watson, 2011).

It can be said that, though there is a considerable amount of research on the effectiveness of social media, there are no metrics or drivers that can calculate the actual return on investment on the social media strategies. Hence Hoffman and Fodor (2010) suggest that marketers or businesses should assess the investment made by consumers in terms of brand engagement and their motivation to use social media, instead of calculating the return on investment on the actual strategy. They state that the investments that consumers make in social media turns not into just short-term payoff, but also long-term payoff.

### **Expectations from social media marketing**

Hoffman and Fodor (2010) give an excellent explanation on how the return on social media marketing strategies should be calculated. The traditional marketing mediums gave a way of calculating return on investment using certain drivers like deducting the amount of campaign costs, advertising costs, and other factors from the income gained. Though managers understand the importance of social media and know that it is difficult to quantify the returns, the top management need 'actual numbers'. This constant pressure questions the emergence of calculating returns on social media marketing. This pressure results in inconsistent ways of calculating return on investments, for example, when calculating the return on investment on blog, companies or managers calculate the cost of building the blog and compare it to the return on sales.

As social media marketing gives more power to consumers than marketers and creates a consumer based environment (Hanna, Rohm and Crittenden, 2011; Mangold and Faulds, 2009), Hoffman and Fodor (2010) list out 4 important perspectives or 4Cs that lead to evaluation of consumer controlled social media. These 4Cs are connections, creation, consumption and control. Marketers who do not consider these parameters might face failure in their campaign. If considered properly, Hoffman and Fodor (2010), list out two advantages that are directly visible:

1. Social media marketing really helps to cut costs.
2. Market research activities become more efficient and improvised.

Three metrics which can be considered while measuring the efficiency of social media marketing are:

### **1. Brand awareness**

Online marketers have a number of ways to measure online brand awareness. This can be done by seeing the increase or decrease in the exposure of the business in the online environment. Brand awareness helps in making a customer consider a brand that he relates to (Aaker, 1991). Brand awareness also relates to a customer's loyalty when a customer thinks of buying the same product if he is given the same quality and the same experience every time (Keller, 2003). One example when Starbucks ran a promotion for a free coffee 'Saturday Night Live', the people on Twitter mentioned Starbucks tagged them so much that every eight seconds there was a mention for Starbucks which in turn exposed the brand to a large extent. Strategy like this can enhance awareness of the brand amongst people, that is why it is an important metric that should be considered while social media marketing.

### **2. Brand engagement**

Brand engagement can have a positive effect on the businesses on social media. One of the ways which can boost brand engagement is through social campaign that can be circulated online. It is also found that a consumer may engage more if the engagement is more interesting, entertaining and educational (Liu-Thompkins and Rogerson, 2012). Consumer engagement resulted into more brand awareness and brand loyalty and also resulted into potential purchases from the consumers (He and Bond, 2013). One best example of brand engagement is with Gretsch Guitars when they held a competition on MySpace for finding the best independent band. This campaign gave them 900 sign ups for the competition and almost 55000 site visitors who voted for their favourite bands. By engaging both bands and visitors, Gretsch Guitars created more brand awareness and increased their realm for potential customers (Hoffmon and Fodor, 2010).

### **3. Word of mouth**

Consumer awareness and engagement allows them to share opinions about the brand to others. The satisfaction and the positive experience by the consumers lead them towards a positive attitude for the brand itself. This attitude is then transferred to potential customers both online and offline environment. Burger King's campaign to offer a free Whopper burger to the customers who unfriended 10 of their friends on Facebook was a huge success. This resulted in people unfrinding almost 2,34,000 of their

acquaintances overall on Facebook (Hoffmon and Fodor, 2010). One of the best strategies of E-word of mouth is by using Internet influencers.

As this thesis is concerned with Instagram, a social networking site, Hoffmon and Fodor (2018) list down some of the metrics that should be considered while measuring the efficiency of the social media strategy using social networks. This can be understood from Table (1).

Social media application	Brand Awareness	Brand Engagement	Word of Mouth
Social networks (Facebook, Instagram etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of followers.</li> <li>• Number of installations of the application</li> <li>• Number of impressions and bookmarks</li> <li>• Number of reviews (positive and negative)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of active users and number of comments.</li> <li>• Number of likes</li> <li>• Number of user generated content like photos, posts etc.</li> <li>• Impressions to interaction ratio</li> <li>• Rate of activity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Frequency of appearances in timelines</li> <li>• Number of posts on their page</li> <li>• Number of reposts and shares</li> <li>• Number of responses to the referral invites.</li> </ul>

Table 1. Metrics to be considered while evaluating efficiency of social media strategy over social networks by Hoffmon and Fodor (2018).

### Electronic Word of mouth (e-WOM)

One of the many important activities that have been identified on social media is ‘Electronic-Word of mouth’. It is a rapidly increasing and quickly evolving type of marketing in the digital world. It can be called as an extension of traditional ‘word of mouth’ marketing. (Hennig-Thurau *et al.*, 2004; Mangold and Faulds, 2009). E-WOM can be defined as any positive or negative feedbacks (reviews and opinions) given by consumers which have impact on a product, good or a service of a company and that reaches to a large number of audience through the social media or the internet (Hennig and Thurau, 2004). A general E-WOM framework can be understood from the figures below. Unlike traditional marketing when firms were the only one to communicate with consumers, in E-WOM, we can see that, it is multi-directional communication between firms-consumers and consumers-consumers as well in the figure below (Figure 1. and Figure 2.).

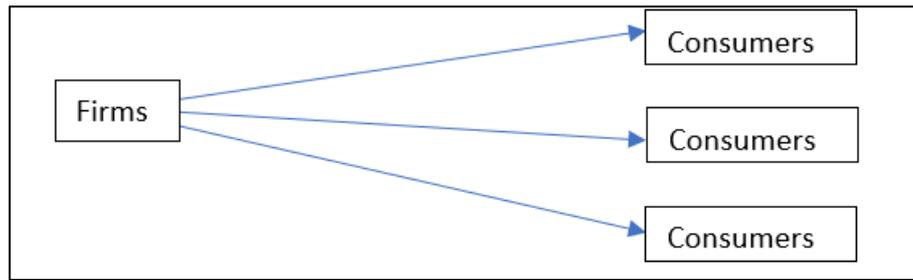


Figure 1. Traditional marketing

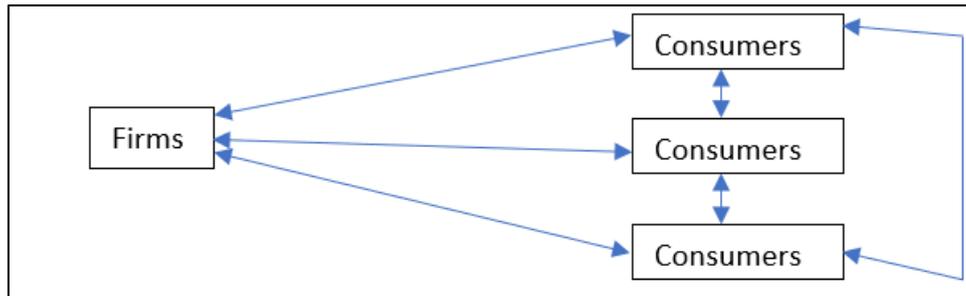


Figure 2. Electronic word of mouth

Social media provides consumers with multiple platforms to share, interact and advocate brands and also communicate with each other to share information and provide feedback on their experiences. It is found that 57% of the consumers trusted online reviews from people they did not even know and 70% of consumers trusted more online reviews than the advertisement of the brand itself (Fogel, 2010; Nielsen, 2009). As said in the previous section, E-WOM can be measure in the form of how much is the brand being talked about in the online environment, how many people are following the brand, how many people are discussing about the brand and other factors. A study by Trusov *et al* (2009) used vector autoregressive modelling approach in which they found that online E-WOM has a greater impact than traditional marketing and produces more actions and higher response rate. Hence, marketers now heavily rely on E-WOM as an important marketing strategy that can increase product demand (Bruce *et al.*, 2012). Though E-WOM might have a heavy impact, Herr *et al* (1991), say that it does not have a very good impact when the consumers have experienced or have a history with the brand or the product. Also, one of the most important factor that Liu *et al* (2015) listed is, the trust factor. This is because, sometimes E-WOM can be anonymous and not face to face, and also it is not necessary that the people recognize each other in the online environment.

Though there are a number of researches that can measure the efficiency of electronic word of mouth advertising, none of them have developed a model that can directly relate sales to the E-WOM (Fogel, 2010). One of the efficient ways of E-WOM can be Influencer marketing. Influencers are often referred as E-WOM masters.

### **Who are the influencers?**

The section below aims at understanding how social media influencers work, the types of social media influencers and how they work, and the platforms they work on. The capacity of changing or guiding an individual or group of individuals towards a specific opinion or action is called as influencing. The people who possess the quality of influencing are called influencers. Influencers vary from industry to industry and their followers range from a few hundreds to a few millions or more (More and Lingam, 2019).

Individuals or the decision makers used two types of sources to influence opinions or actions. The first source was printed media like newspapers and magazines. which covered topics like experiences, macroeconomic reports and current trends from various industries. Whereas the second source was included the analysts from various industries, from technology to pharmaceuticals and other industries (Brown and Hayes, 2008). The technological sector has made rapid advances due to innovation globally and has changed how people communicate. Innovation in the technology sector has made rapid advances all around the world due to which there is huge change in how people communicate.

Internet becomes a key aspect in the field of marketing with such a large number of people using it. Mixing internet and marketing can bring one's products and services online which help the businesses reach globally. Some factors which are fundamental in the use of marketing over the internet are (Barwise *et al*, 2002):

- Fast, cheap and more personal interaction.
- Reduces overall cost and can analyse purchase decisions of consumers.
- Global outreach to any corner of the world.

Of the many effective strategies on the internet, viral marketing is one of them. The impact of social networking sites like Facebook, Instagram and Twitter on the people is quite powerful. Though there are millions of users on these various platforms, very few are acknowledged for their content. These people or users are the ones who set trends, create opinions about someone

or something over the internet. These people are called as the influencers over the internet or ‘internet influencers’ in the field of marketing (More and Lingam, 2019).

Large growth in the digital sector has led to the new generation to trust and believe the opinions of these influencers over social media (Turner, 2006). Influencer marketing is where influencers engage their audience in brand promotion, brand advertisement and brand marketing (Sammis *et al.*, 2019). The current status is that like never before, the ordinary people are able to attain status of being a celebrity because of social media (Turner, 2006). This has in turn increase the number of people seeking fame but only a few get through. Only a few from those people get recognized and amongst them only a few convert their fame into monetary value. Zulli (2018) says that not everyone who has become the centre of attention reap the benefits, but the ones who create the right kind of content and interest in the brand can turn the chance into some monetary value. Celebrity over the internet or social media is the part of the industry structure, which is again dependant on the business platform, the technicality of the business, the market and the commercial and cultural intermediates. It is also important to understand that, it is not just the hunger for fame or the influence on social media but also the communication of commercial messages through the marketers and publishers (Hou., 2018). The content generated by the influencers in 2018 got 72 per cent of actions like share, tweet, retweet, likes and comments on various platforms such Twitter, Facebook and Instagram in the United States. The influencers accounted for engagements more than 1.3 billion when it came to branded activity (content sponsored by an advertiser like images, videos and links) (Yuki, 2019). As compared to traditional marketing strategies, influencers have proved themselves to be potential advertisers and also to be more cost – effective and more efficient on the marketing trends (Harrison, 2017). It is very likely that the consumers will follow their favourite influencers and recommendations. Internet influencers are perceived to be more reliable and admiring to their followers (Talaverna, 2015).

According to a survey by Nielsen Marketing, the “return on investment” from the influencer marketing was eleven times higher than that of digital marketing. Media Kix conducted a survey in which they found that 80 per cent of online marketers tend to think that influencers can be potential way who can boost their businesses to next level (Forbes, 2017). Not all influencers work on the same level, which means that not all the influencers have the same number of audience or followers. Each influencer works in his own segment and with his own target audience (Hou., 2018). Various researchers propose the differentiation between different types of influencers mainly on the basis of number of followers. Some other factors that include

are time horizon and cost efficiency (Yuki, 2019; Tilton, 2011; Chen, 2013; Hou, 2018). From the above researches, we can classify influencers into three categories as micro-influencers, macro-influencers and mega-influencers. The section below explains the use, the scope and the various characters that these type of influencers possess.

## **Types of influencers**

### **1. Mega-influencers**

These are the type of influencers that can turn into brand into a culture or a trend because of their massive outreach. They have a very high number of following and generally those followers are very loyal to them (Yuki, 2019). These top class or the most elite of all the influencers are known as Mega – Influencers. Generally mega – influencers have a following about more than 500,000 which can go to their highest potential. That is why they are generally used in big events like mass awareness campaign (Hou, 2018). Mega – influencers are generally those who are millionaires on Youtube, Instagram and other platforms. or the ones with high profile accounts. On Youtube, the content creators are differentiated into Gold category having more than 1 million followers and Diamond category having more than 10 million followers (Youtube Creator Academy, 2018). These influencers are the most expensive influencers and charge anywhere between thousands to millions of dollars per post. One of the best example is that of Kylie Jenner, who charges \$1 million per post shared on her social media pages.

### **2. Macro-influencers**

Macro – influencers are the one who gained popularity out of their creative content they make for their audiences especially on social networks. Content creators who have followers or audiences in the range of 100,000 to 500,000 are known as macro – influencers or as some people like to call them as ‘power middle’ influencers. These macro – influencers turn their content into a full-time professional activity keeping business in mind. They use various platforms on social media efficiently to promote different brands and products (Chen, 2013).

At Snap, the head of Brand Integration Rita Drucker says that although macro – influencers are celebrities, they are first creators who have achieved a significant amount of fame like Zach King, Lele Pons and Ninja. As a part of creative family, it becomes a problem sometimes for the brand to collaborate with the influencers. The

process can become quite uncomfortable if the companies don't ease on process approval and monitor the creators in a reliable way (Taniya Yuki, 2019). These influencers can be as expensive as the mega-influencers and they are budding 'mega-influencers' which makes them more potential and more creative in their content. These type of influencers work across multiple platforms and have a strong presence on social media platforms (Ruiz - Gomez., 2019).

### **3. Micro-influencers**

Micro – influencers are the ones who don't have a large following, but they can be a credible source to a particular subject or a topic in a specific demography (Taniya Yuki, 2019). These influencers are the ones that form the largest part of the influencer group or the content creators. But the most important point to note here is that they have the smallest number of followers, in other words, they have their reach to a small number of audience. Companies or organizations generally use these types of influencers in targeting demographic specific audiences (Tilton, 2011). A typical micro – influencer has a size of 5000 to 50000 audiences and up to 100,000 audiences or followers. But this cannot be true to every platform on social media as the technical aspects, categories and policies of each social media platform differ. For example, Youtube needs a minimum of 1000 subscribers and 4000 hours of watching from the followers to be able to get the influencer into a partner program (Ruiz - Gomez., 2019).

Micro-influencers are known to be authentic in their content and accessible at any time compared to their counterparts (Hatton, 2018; Bernazzi, 2018).

### **4. Nano-influencers**

They are relatively new breed of influencers who have a following less than what micro-influencers have. These influencers are people who have influencer inside their community or neighbourhood. These influencers might have high influence on their family, friends and acquaintances. Despite high level of engagement, the drawback of not having a large number of audience still persists (Ismail, 2018). Hence, Bughin *et al* (2010) suggest that nano-influencers are the best influencers to grab the opportunity of reaching people more naturally and because of the ways they interact with their followers.

Based on the various researches, the table below shows the various factors and characteristics of all types of influencers.

Factors	Types of Influencers			
	Mega-Influencers	Macro-influencers	Micro-influencers	Nano-Influencers
Size of audience	1 million or more	100k to 1 million followers	10000 to 100k	<10000
Content creation	Diversified content	Digital entrepreneurs. Specialize in many sectors.	Self-recognized in certain topic or subjects.	Specific subject/topic intelligence
Demographics	Reach in many countries	Reach in many cities in one country	Reach in specific geographical locations.	Local community or neighbourhood.
Platforms	Usually work on one platform.	Work on different platforms which suit their content	Work on multiple platforms.	Usually work on single platform.
Cost	Very expensive	Costs according to the subject	Less expensive than macro-influencers.	Not specified.

Table 2. The different types of influencers and their characteristics

Till, Stanly and Priluck (2008) from their study discovered that the influence from influencers triggered the purchase intentions and buying behaviour of their followers. A lot of research has been done using mega-influencers and macro-influencers in the fashion and hospitality industry, but there is wide gap between the research of restaurant industry and small-scale business using micro or nano-influencers.

Some reasons that why mega-influencers and macro-influencers be used in the marketing strategy for small scale restaurants and small-scale businesses are (Konstantopoulou *et al.*, 2019):

1. Small scale businesses such as restaurants are prone to fierce competition.
2. Fierce competition exists because of low entry barriers.

3. Budget for marketing is very limited and small-scale restaurants do not generally have a dedicated marketing team.
4. Mega-influencers and macro-influencers have followers from a very diversified geographical locations. Most small-scale restaurants serve local, mostly in the neighbourhoods.

#### Real life examples using Nano-influencers

Dunkin Donuts strived in reaching authentic audience by engaging with micro and nano influencers. They branded about their new Espresso coffee keeping the content more realistic and relatable to authentic audience. They used Instagram as a social media network to achieve following goals:

- Raise awareness about their new coffee.
- Raise awareness about their handcrafted coffee to capitalize in the beverage industry.
- To improve their social media presence.

They primarily used female influencers from the Generation Y to keep it natural and authentic. They had a reach to 1,136,000 Instagram users with 21975 likes, 965 comments and an engagement rate of 5.2%.



Photo 1. Nano-influencer for Dunkin Donuts on Instagram

## **Influencer Maximization (IM) problem**

The Influencer Maximization (IM) problem was proposed by Domingo and Richardson (2001) to study the propagation of information in a social network. The Influencer Maximization model is used to select initial seeders to maximize the influencer on the users on a social media network. In short term horizon campaign, the initial seeders (influencers) are selected to influence their followers through social media network. The objective of these seeders is to maximize the effect on the campaign. In practice, an influencer marketing strategy or campaign can run over a few days (Short term horizon) to a few weeks (Long term horizon) (Carusele, 2019). In regard to this thesis, the campaign was run over 4 weeks of time, which can be defined under short term horizon campaign.

In order to address this problem, one needs to choose the influencer carefully. The section below explains, what factors should one consider while choosing an influencer.

### **Short term horizon campaigns**

As short-term horizon campaigns run for a few days, it becomes very important to choose the influencers very carefully. Three important factors that need to be considered while running short term campaigns are (Mallipeddi *et al.*, 2020):

#### **1. The audience size of the influencer and the influencer strength**

It is very important to consider the audience size to see the reach of an influencer and the strength means to check the level of engagement that an influencer puts in. Choosing only one of the two is not optimal because the influencer may have a large following but low engagement level which can result into less shares, less retweets and less reposts. In the same way it is not wise to see just the engagement level as the reach of the influencer is equally important.

#### **2. Network Overlap**

Two or more influencers can have the same set of followers which means that the engagement overlaps on a particular network and same message is transferred more than once via different influencers.

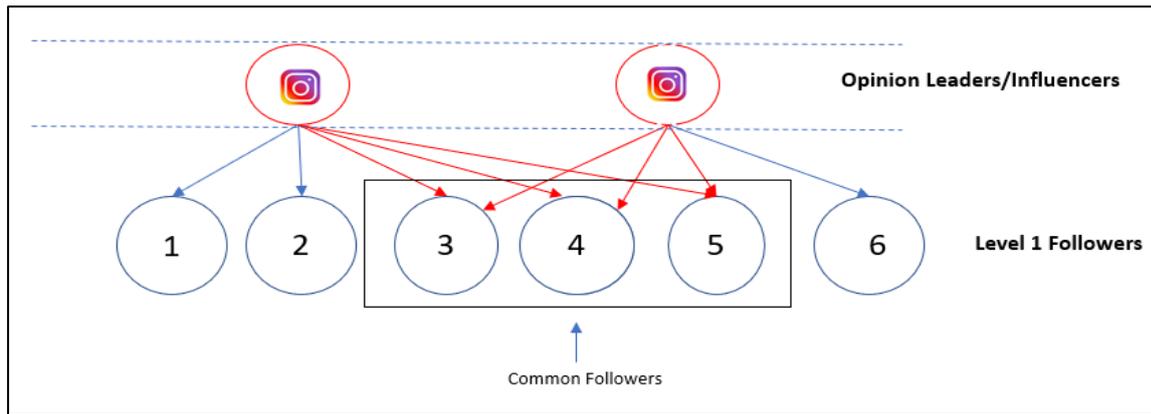


Figure 3. Network Overlap

### 3. Multiple exposure effect

This is the effect when a follower gets exposed to a post multiple times, one is through the influencer himself and the second through the peer influencer. Peer influencer here is the one who influences a person who is already influenced through the main influencer. For example, if Y and Z follow influencers X1 and X2 and Z follows Y. When X1 and X2 put a message on a social network and again Y decides to share it, this message is shared again to Z through Y.

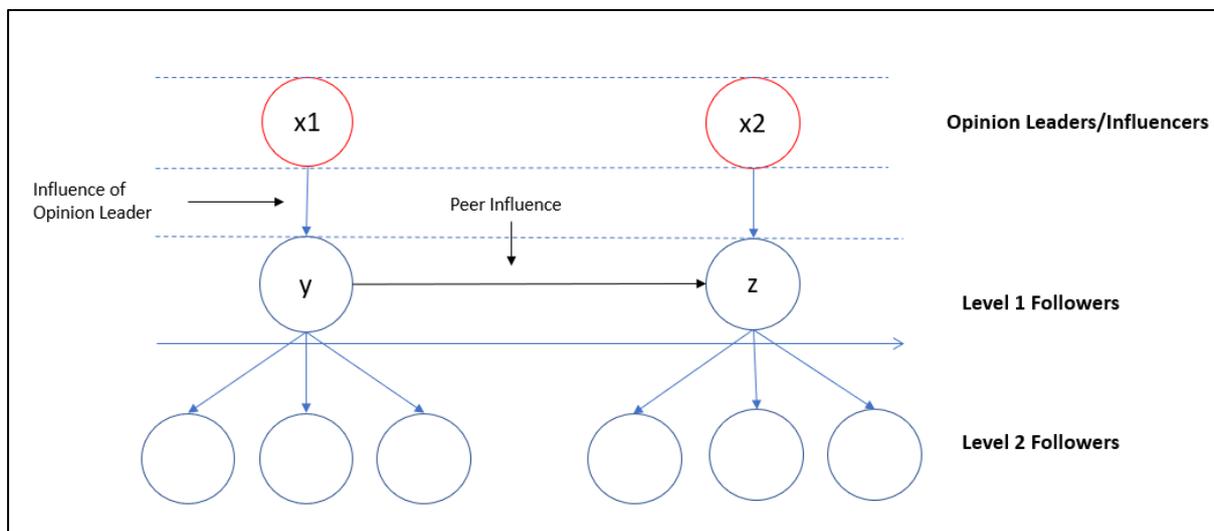


Figure 4. Multiple Exposure

### Bruns-Siddiqui Intention to buy model

Bruns-Siddiqui in their study list out two factors that determine the consumer outlook on a product. The two factors are trust on the customers of influences and the perceived credibility. This model explains that the customer will have an intention to buy only when customer

perceives the influencer to be authentic. This authenticity builds trust in the influencer which results into intention of buying a product or a good promoted by an influencer (Gautam, 2020).

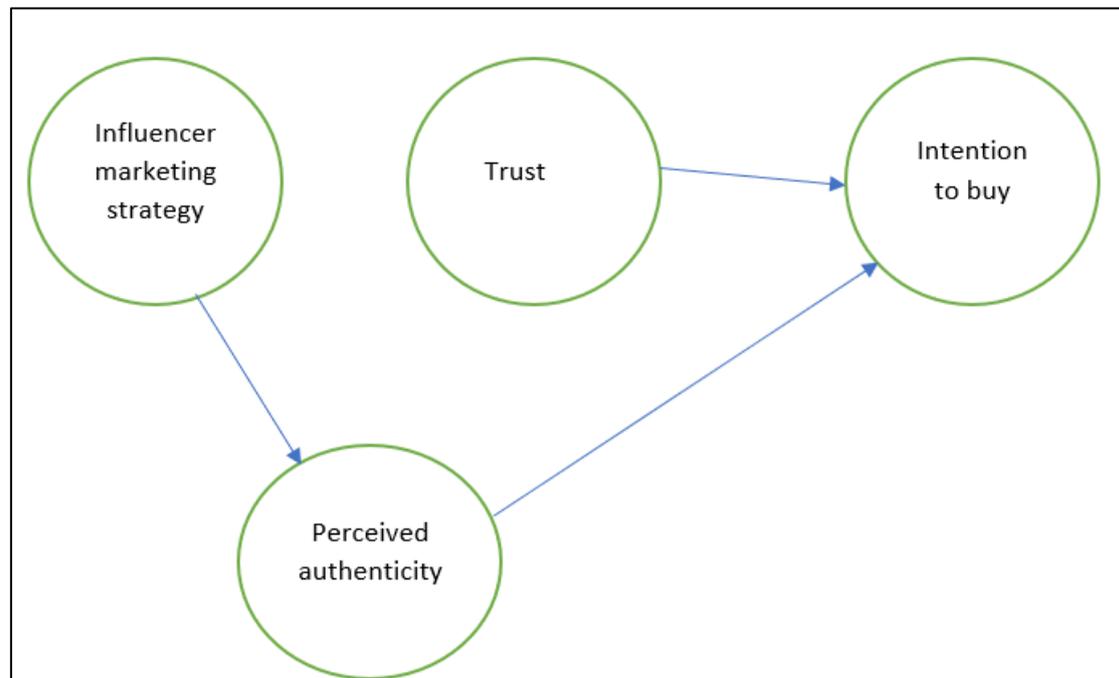


Figure 5. Bruns-Siddiqui model of Intention to buy (2018)

### Problems pertain

Influencer marketing creates a pathway for brands to reach its target audience through various platforms. Brands shell out billions of dollars every year to promote their products through influencer marketing. Apparently, some of the ‘so called’ influencers to appear more influential, buy fake followers through bots that can produce actions like ‘comment’ and ‘likes’. A report from Cheq and Roberto Cavazos, professor from University of Baltimore, states that this type of fraudulent activity costed the advertisers 1.3 billion dollars in 2019 (Graham, 2019).

One example of unethical practices is when of group of 6 bloggers in their 20s were hired by Dr. Pepper to write favourable posts about their new beverage in the market. This was carried out without disclosing the fact that the bloggers received incentives and gifts from the company in return of spreading positivity and good reviews to their followers. Though there was nothing suspicious in the blogs that would link to the unethical practice of this strategy, some suspicious bloggers found out that the company was in fact paying them. Apparently, the product had to

be taken off the market because of the boycotts from the blogger's community (Hoffmon and Fodor, 2010).

Also, some businesses and influencers received written warning from Competition and Markets Authority (CMA), UK's official consumer regulator, regarding disclosure of payments for online content. Nisha Arora from CMA says that, it is therefore important that independent influencers don't misled people when they decide to buy something.

According to SheSpeaks, in a poll of 347 influencers, vast majority revealed that they were paid by endorsers to endorse their products. But 25 per cent of those were told by the brands not to disclose about their collaboration (WARC News, 2016). It is very important to educate the influencers and the businesses about the regulations as half of UK marketers are not aware of the rules of influencer marketing or tend to ignore them (WARC NEWS, 2016).

General manager of Ahalogy, an influencer and social media firm, aims at cleaning up the industry and anyone who tries to disrupt the principles as it would be better for the influencer industry (Graham, 2019).

## **Instagram**

One of the fastest growing social media platform where users can share their content is Instagram. The company expected to reach \$2.18 billion in 2017 which is greater than Twitter and Google in the United States (Djarfonova and Rushworth, 2019). A research by Sheldon and Bryant (2016) shows that individuals spend more time on Instagram compared to other social media platforms and Instagram's report shows that it has more than 400 million active users monthly. Emerging popularity, accessibility through phones and other devices has resulted in electronic word of mouth on Instagram to become more persuasive and influential source (Thoumrunroje, 2014). Due to increasing demand and rapid growth, Instagram has become a hunting ground for marketers (Djarfonova and Rushworth, 2019).

Instagram is a breeding centre for celebrities and influencers with a huge number of followers (Sheldon and Bryant, 2016). Djarfonova and Rushworth (2019) predicted that there might be more engagement with micro-influencers as the audiences felt most comfortable with. Due to growing influencer marketing, advertisers have started to seek out new ways to target segments on Instagram and it has already reached over 500 million daily users and engagement from influencers of all types (Audonsson, 2018). Due to the growing influencer marketing, marketers have started to seek out different ways to target segments on Instagram and tie up with

influencers to tap the trust factor between them and their audience. Audonsson (2018) also states that bigger budgets are being allocated to micro-influencers on Instagram for whom word of mouth still holds true and for their content being authentic and the close bond with their followers.

Instagram function 'hashtag' or simply '#' allows users to search for convenient photos and videos related to a business or a product. For example, if someone mentions '#food' in their post, then the user is able to browse all the photos and videos related to this particular hashtag. Instagram now also has an option of following hashtags just like users follow other users (Instagram, 2020).

As of July 2020, 2,033,000 people were using Instagram in Ireland as compared to 1,826,000 in February 2019. This indicates that 41.4% of the total population in Ireland uses Instagram compared to 37.2% in February 2019. This indicates that there is an increase of almost 4% in one year. One important point is the age group of 25-34 (6,10,000) are the major users of Instagram in Ireland (napoleancat.com, 2020). This means that Gen Y population who are either studying or have just entered into workforce are the major users of the application.

The above researches point to a direction where influencer marketing is an important tool for businesses who are looking to boost their productivity. Also, different types of influencers cater to different types of businesses and work on different or multiple platforms. It becomes necessary for marketers to identify the right type of influencer for them with respect to cost, reach and time horizons.

Also, from the research it is evident that Instagram can outweigh other social media platforms in content generation, creation and reach to the audiences. Because of its rapid growth and social engagement, this study aims to consider Instagram as a platform for influencing. Small scale restaurants are demographically located and have budgetary constraints. It is very difficult for such businesses to allocate a budget for marketing purposes other than traditional marketing techniques like distributing pamphlets and word of mouth advertising. Though there is relevant research regarding big brands like Dunkin Donuts, or examples where mega-influencers are used, the question of having budget like Dunkin Donuts and hiring a mega-influencers is out of question for small scale restaurants. This business needs someone who is local, who is active on Instagram, who has high credentials and who can engage his followers. These factors meet the characteristics of a nano-influencer. Hence, the research hopes to find the effects of using

internet influencing on Instagram using nano-influencers as a marketing technique for such businesses.

## **Research Problem**

Ellis and Levy (2008) theorize that the deduction of research problem is very important to form the research hypothesis which also becomes the base for the research question. Keeping this in mind, the researcher has deduced a research problem for this thesis which is as follows:

*“The study of the effect of Internet influencers on small scale restaurants in Dublin using Instagram”.*

The research on this will address a few important points that will help researches understand the effect, efficiency of the influencers and the perception of customers towards these influencers. These points can be understood from the next section Research Questions and Hypothesis.

## **Research questions and Hypothesis**

A research question alongside hypothesis helps a researcher understand, explore and answer the research problem which makes it important for a research question to be clear and concrete so that the pillars and the foundation of the research study remain strong (McCabe, 2018). The research question is divided into a number of sub questions that will help the researcher to answer it more clearly. The questions are as follows:

1. Is Instagram an optimal social media platform to be used in Dublin for marketing strategy with the use of influencers?
2. What effect do the nano-influencers have on small scale restaurants as a part of restaurant’s marketing strategy?
3. Would users trust nano-influencers and their recommendations?

## **Hypothesis**

**Hypothesis 1 (H1):** *Generation Y and Generation Z spend a large amount of time on social media applications.*

**Hypothesis 2 (H2):** *Users have an intention to buy after seeing the recommendations from the nano-influencer (Bruns-Siddiqui model).*

## Methodology

Researchers adopt various research strategies depending on their topic which can be experiment, survey case study, ethnography and other strategies. (Crotty, 2004; Saunders *et al.*, 2009). The choice of the research strategy depends on multiple factors like research question, the underpinning theory and current literature. The nature of the research problems determines the methods of data collection and data analysis which can be quantitative, qualitative or a mixed approach. The argument by Creswell (2003) holds true when the research says, none of the research methods have an advantage over each other, but the underpinning theory should be the base and foundation of the research method that is going to be used.

It is not possible for a researcher to collect data from the entire population. Instead, the collection of data for any research method is collected in samples to represent a larger population. The collection of data in samples from a particular segment of the entire population is called sampling (Saunders *et al.*, 2009; Gray, 2006).

The theory of Golden Circle was coined by Simon Sinek, a motivational speaker. The Golden Circle answers three questions with respect to a research study. The questions are ‘What’, ‘How’ and ‘Why’. The purpose of the Golden Circle was for the organizations to understand the core purpose of their projects, “what project is to be done?”, “How it is to be done?” and “Why it has to be done?”.

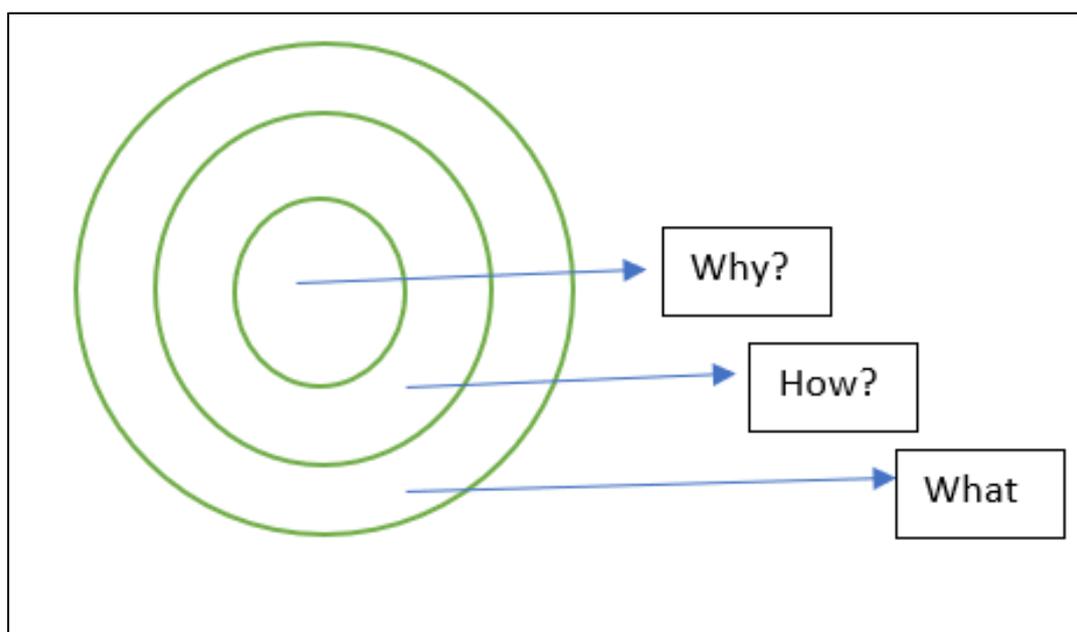


Figure 6. Golden Circle (Sinek, 2009)

The answers to the above questions for this research study are as follows:

**1. What?**

This research aims at studying the effect of nano-influencers on the purchase intentions of the followers of the influencers. This research carried out an experiment using four nano-influencers in Dublin who would campaign for the restaurant chosen in Dublin.

**2. How?**

The research will be studied using exploratory design and qualitative methodology and a survey as a quantitative methodology. The thesis is conducted as an experimental study, the subject of study being the effect on a restaurant in Dublin using 4 nano-influencers on Instagram.

While choosing the restaurant, the researcher first had the meeting with the restaurant owner. The owner was briefed about how the research will be carried out and in what stages. The researcher then met with four potential influencers who worked as nano-influencers on Instagram for the advertisement of the restaurant. The influencers were then briefed about the campaign which took place over a period of four weeks. For calculating the number of orders which the restaurant received through these influencers, a special code was created which could be used on the restaurant's website and their application at the time of order.

The quantitative methodology was used by using a survey designed using Google Forms which was sent to a sample population using WhatsApp.

**3. Why?**

From the literature survey it is evident that there is a wide gap between the practical applications and the research carried out in the small-scale businesses sector using influencer. This research aimed at understanding how the nano-influencers on Instagram would affect the sales of the restaurant. This helped in understanding whether the influencers had an influence over their followers, whether users trust the nano-influencer and whether they would follow their recommendations. This results are then compared to the Bruns-Siddiqui model of 'intention to buy' mentioned in the Literature Review.

## Research methodology

The research methodologies should be based on the researcher's beliefs, interests and convictions (Goulding, 2002). The philosophical base and the framework that are related to the whole process of the research is called as methodology.

The three accepted methodologies are qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods. One of the increasingly accepted and now widely used research method is the mixed methods. Mixed method gives a researcher an opportunity to follow both qualitative and quantitative methodologies (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009; Johnson *et al.*, 2007). Using mixed method helps a researcher draw the strengths and reduces the weaknesses of both qualitative and quantitative methods but not replace either of those (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004). Because of these factors, the researcher has chosen mixed methodology for this study.

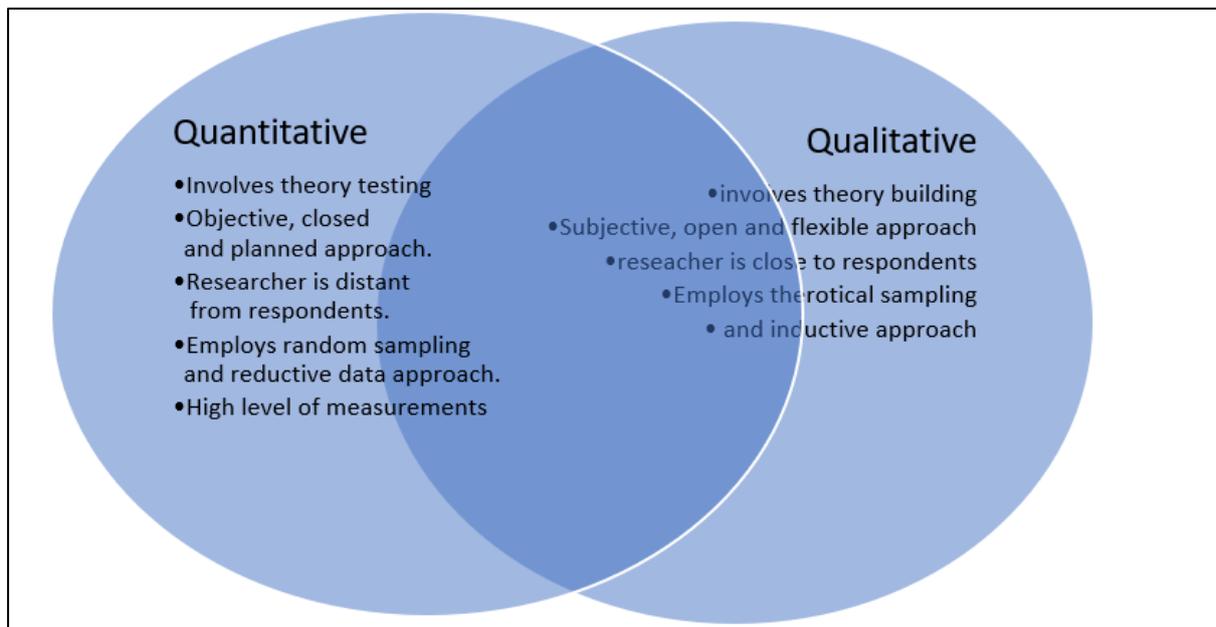


Figure 7. Mixed methodology as a mix of both quantitative and qualitative methodologies (Source: Adapted from Sarantakos, 1999).

## **Research approach**

The researcher has chosen mixed approach as the methodology which includes both qualitative and quantitative approach. The reasons for choosing mixed methodology approach are as follows:

1. To study the actual effect of nano-influencers on the purchase intention of the consumers, it was necessary to carry out exploratory methods using an experiment. Without conducting a real-life experiment, it would have been difficult for the researcher to comment on influencer strategy.
2. Referring to Bruns-Siddiqui model in the literature review, it was also necessary to conduct a survey using quantitative methodology to validate two factors of the model, trust and intention to buy.

The section below explains the how both qualitative and quantitative methodologies were used.

## **Qualitative approach**

From the literature survey it is evident that, very less is known about the nano-influencers and their use for small scale restaurants. To understand the effect of the nano-influencers on small scale restaurant, an experiment was carried out in 2 stages which longed for four weeks. For this experiment, three variables come into the picture. The first is the restaurant for which the campaign will take place, second are the nano-influencers who will work as advertisers and the third are the people to which this campaign is exposed. The process of this experiment was as follows:

### **1. Choosing the restaurant**

For this study, it was necessary that the restaurant should be small scale. The researcher identified one restaurant in a suburb of Dublin which was an Indian takeaway. Once the restaurant was identified, the initial step taken was to get in contact with the owner of the restaurant through a phone call. The researcher then set up a meeting with the owner at the restaurant and the owner was briefed about the campaign. The researcher then tried to understand the business and made key points about their best-selling dish, the offers they gave and most important, their marketing techniques.

It was understood that, the restaurant did not engage much in digital marketing other than traditional marketing like distributing pamphlets to housing societies and was

mainly dependant on word-of-mouth. Though they had their presence on Facebook and Instagram, there was minimum engagement with their followers.

## 2. Choosing the nano-influencers

The table (2) in the literature survey describes about the various factors that need to be considered while choosing an influencer. Referring to table (2) which takes factors into considerations from various researches, the researcher also applied these factors while choosing the nano-influencers. The researcher chose 4 nano-influencers for the campaign and their unique factors can be understood from the table below:

Factors	Nano-influencer			
	Influencer 1	Influencer 2	Influencer 3	Influencer 4
Size of audience	1986	1548	924	551
Content creation	A local Irish who lives in the neighbourhood of the where the restaurant is located.	A budding Irish food blogger in Dublin who visits restaurant around the city and posts about them.	A peer mentor at a college in Dublin, who had a following of both Irish and International students.	An international student ambassador for an organization in Ireland who had the most following from students in Dublin.
Demographics	Neighbourhood and local reach.	People from all over Dublin follow the blog, so covered most of the Dublin.	Indian student, who could attract Indians and other students from the college.	Indian ambassador who was well connected with students from different colleges.
Platform	Instagram			
Cost	Free meal for every post.			

Table 3.Choosing on nano-influencers

One important point that has to be noted here is, each of the influencers were hired at the cost of ‘one post-one meal’. This means that, each and every time an influencer posted content on Instagram, a free meal was offered.

These nano-influencers were contacted through Instagram and were briefed about the campaign over a phone call.

### **Instagram as campaign platform**

The reasons behind choosing Instagram as the platform for this experiment was:

1. Leonard (2018) states the reports of usage of social media applications in Ireland and in Ireland, Instagram takes the first spot for population aged between 18-34, whereas Facebook secures the first spot in the usage of the population between 35-54 and Instagram on the third.
2. As of July (2020), 2,033,000 people were using Instagram in Ireland as compared to 1,826,000 in February 2019. This indicates that 41.4% of the total population in Ireland uses Instagram compared to 37.2% in February 2019. This indicates that there is an increase of almost 4% in one year. One important point is the age group of 25-34 (6,10,000) are the major users of Instagram in Ireland (napoleancat.com, 2020). This means that Gen Y population who are either studying or have just entered into workforce are the major users of the application.

### **The qualitative research process**

This Instagram campaign using nano-influencers in Dublin was carried out over a period of four weeks. Before starting the campaign, the restaurant and the nano-influencers were identified. The important point to study the effect of the nano-influencers on the restaurant was to measure how many people ordered from the restaurant because of the endorsement on Instagram by the nano-influencers. The researcher introduced a voucher or an offer code for the website of the restaurant. This voucher was created with the intention of advertising only through the nano-influencer. This specific voucher was not advertised anywhere else on social media and not even the restaurant's Facebook page and their website. This code was only displayed on the posts of the nano-influencers on Instagram. Carrying out the strategy helped the researcher to directly measure the number of orders that came to the restaurant from consumer because of influencer from the nano-influencers.



## **Limitations of the methodology**

Using a single voucher for all the nano-influencers did not help determine, which consumer came through which nano-influencer. The measurement of individual influencer still stays a question. At the end of the campaign, the results were analysed, and the effect was studied. But this qualitative approach only explains the effect of the nano-influencers which depend on various external factors, and Covid-19 being on surge, the researcher thinks that there must have been some effects that could have altered the results.

The qualitative methodological process and its results could not be compared to Bruns-Siddiqui model of Intention to Buy. For this to measure, the task would have been tedious as it would have required to interview the consumers who ordered from the restaurant because of the influence about their trust and their intention to buy. This is the reason it was necessary to conduct a survey which can answer these questions. The section below explains the quantitative methodological approach.

## **The quantitative approach**

Quantitative methodology can be objective in nature or can be defined as researching the social or human problems where hypothesis can be tested and analysed using statistical methods (Creswell, 2003; Naoum, 2013). Quantitative methods can be controlled, systematic and help investigate facts in a natural phenomenon (Seale, 2002). The data collection was done through a questionnaire which was developed on Google forms and sent to the participants on Whatsapp and requested to send it further in their community.

While designing the questionnaire, it is necessary to design the questions in a way that will address the research questions in a way that will address the research questions (Burghess, 2001). Developing a questionnaire has following advantages (Bryman, 2001):

1. Flexibility in designing questions
2. Diversify the questions in various theories.
3. Very little cost, fast responses and easy administration

The survey was close-ended questionnaire as it allows to get specific responses from the respondents (Fellows and Liu, 2003). To measure the Bruns-Siddiqui 'Intention to Buy' model, it was necessary to build straightforward, direct and short questions. Closed ended questions allow the researcher to get readily available responses, and can be used to confirm specific

data, fact or opinion from the respondent (Saunders *et al.*, 2009). Some sample questions from the questionnaire that were straightforward are:

1. *“Do you prefer Instagram over other social media apps like Facebook, Snapchat, etc.?”*

This question gave a definite answer from the respondent in either ‘Yes’ or ‘No’.

2. *“How much time do you spend on Instagram in a day?”*

This question helped the researcher to find the amount of time spent by the respondents on Instagram.

However, the main disadvantage of using the questionnaire is, though the set of questions may be specific, controlled and measured, the environment in which the respondents attend the survey is not (Fellows and Liu, 2003).

## **Sampling**

Research is carried out with the motive of drawing sufficient information to extract meaningful data to deduce necessary conclusions (May, 2011). Researchers often face a challenge while selecting the population of respondents who can provide the information and the data that can be processed to produce conclusions (Sarantakos, 1998). It becomes impractical, expensive and time restrictions make it impossible to study the whole population. A technique by which a population from the total population is estimated to address the objectives of the research study is known as sampling (Burgess, 2001).

The quantitative approach for this research study used the quota sampling process. In quota sampling, the researcher chooses his sample population with specific characteristics that can be used to answer the research objectives. These characteristics can be age, gender, demographics and other characteristics. In this case of research study, the researcher intended for a sample research that used Instagram in Dublin (NK and YS, 2000). For the same reason, the questionnaire was sent to that population that used Instagram.

The sampling in the qualitative study used purposive sampling process. The sample which included nano-influencers and a restaurant which participated in the campaign. Purposive sampling is done when the motive behind the research study is well known, and when it is necessary to have a defined sample population that can participate in the research study. In the case of this research study, the researcher recruited the nano-influencer and the restaurant on pre-defined characteristics which can be understood from Table (3).

## **Data analysis**

The qualitative data that was obtained from the Instagram campaign included the number of orders that the restaurant received using the special code and the revenue that the restaurant generated from these orders. This data was extracted on a .csv file from the restaurant's website which was easily available. The analysis which was to be performed on this data is to find the number of orders and calculate the return on investment (ROI) from the nano-influencer campaign. For calculating the actual ROI, several costs had to be considered that the restaurant had to face towards preparing the orders for their customers and for the influencers as a part of 'Free meal per post' deal. After deducting all the costs, the final amount which the restaurant is left with will be the return on investment from the nano-influencer campaign. By calculating the actual ROI, it would help the researcher to understand whether this campaign made a successful impact on the sales of the restaurant, what can be improved in the campaign and the answer to the most important question, whether nano-influencers can be used as a marketing strategy for small scale restaurants.

The quantitative data was obtained from Google Form that was sent as a survey to respondents in the form of .csv file. The data that had to be analysed was the Bruns-Siddiqui 'Intention to Buy' model that compares the trust and intention to buy factor (Fig). Also, data was analysed to which extent the respondents use Instagram as a social media application and to understand their preference. The data was analysed using IBM SPSS, a statistical tool which allows to perform various manipulations on the data available.

To study the Bruns-Siddiqui model of intention to buy, Chi-square test was used. The results of these tests are explained in the analysis and findings chapter.

## **Ethical considerations**

All ethical considerations were given due diligence during this research study. Participants in the campaign, restaurant owner and the nano-influencers were each given a consent form of participation in the study with all the information regarding the confidentiality, transparency and all the details about the campaign.

For the questionnaire, an introductory message was displayed about the confidentiality and the anonymity of the respondents. The responses were stored according to NCI storage guidelines and maintained in a password protected file. The respondents were also made aware of the type

of participation which was voluntary and that they could step back from the survey at any point of time.

## Findings and Analysis

### Qualitative Study-Experimental campaign on Instagram

This study was carried out to study the effect of the nano-influencers on small scale restaurant. The study was an experiment to understand these effects. A special voucher 'NINDIA' was made for the restaurant in order to get 20% off on any amount of order. This voucher was shared with the nano-influencers in order to endorse the restaurant on Instagram. This voucher was strictly advertised only and only by the nano-influencers and not by any other means. This voucher helped the researcher to measure the number of orders that the people ordered from the restaurant website and application. All the orders that used 'NINDIA' on the website were collected and stored in a separate .csv file which included the order number, the name of the person who ordered, the date and time when it was ordered, the amount for which it was ordered and the discount that they received on the order and other details. The .csv file (see Appendix 1) has all the details about the total revenue generated. From Appendix 1. it is visible that the restaurant received a total of 56 orders and the total revenue that was generated was €1278.05. To calculate the actual return on investment (ROI), it is necessary to subtract the costs that were incurred by the restaurant owner.

Before calculating the returns, the researcher discussed with the restaurant owner about the production costs that goes into preparing one meal. The other costs or deductions that have to be made to calculate the ROI is given below:

- The production cost that goes into producing one meal is around 25%-30% of the total price. That means that a meal of €10 incurs a production cost of €3 if we consider the production cost as 30%.

The **total revenue** that was generated was **€1278.05** with 56 orders over a period of four weeks. Considering this, the average cost of each order comes to €22.82. A **30%** of production cost on each order ,in other words, €6.84 means that, the restaurant earned €15.97 for each order. According to this, the total cost on 56 orders is **56 \* €6.84** (where €6.84 is the production cost of one meal) ,in other words, **production cost is €383.04**

which becomes the initial investment, and the return on this investment will be the **total revenue generated – the investment**, which is  $€1278.05 - 383.04 = €895.01$ .

Also, the **cost of providing meals for the nano-influencers** should be considered as per the ‘Free meal per post deal’. In the span of four weeks, each nano-influencer posted for two times which means that a total of 8 meals were provided by the restaurant to these nano-influencers. The price of each meal was €15 which means that a production cost of €4.5 was incurred per order at a total cost of €36 for 8 orders. This means that the real return on investment becomes  $€895.01 - €36 = \underline{859.01}$ .

This means that the actual return on investment, which is €383.04, after considering all the costs comes to €859.01 which shows a **ROI of 233.65%**.

Another simple method that can be used to calculate return on is as follows:

$$\text{ROI} = \frac{\text{Net return on investment}}{\text{Cost of investment}} * 100$$

Where in this case,

Net return on investment = €895.01,

Cost of investment = €383.04,

$$\text{Which gives us, } \text{ROI} = \frac{895.01}{383.04} * 100 = 233.65\%$$

## **Quantitative Study analysis – The questionnaire**

The questionnaire in the form of survey prepared on Google Forms and was analysed using the IBM SPSS tool. This survey included 14 mandatory questions which were straightforward and close-ended. As suggested by Fellows and Liu, (2003) and Saunders *et al* (2009), close-ended questions help the researcher get specific answers and help to confirm data, facts and opinions. These questions covered all aspects of the necessary information required for survey which included demographics, trust on the influencers, intention to buy, the time spent on social media and other factors. The data was programmed to tabular and graphical form in IBM SPSS itself for analysing.

This survey was sent to a total of 80 people from which the survey received 54 responses. The aim of this survey was to validate the following hypothesis:

**Hypothesis 1 (H1):** *Generation Y and Generation Z spend a large amount of time on social media applications.*

**Hypothesis 2 (H2):** *Users have an intention to buy after seeing the recommendations from the nano-influencer (Bruns-Siddiqui model).*

To validate the hypothesis Chi-Square test was used which works on categorical data. To use Chi-Square test, the questionnaire should have one categorical value and one hypothesised proportion (Pallant, 2016). This survey is best suited for Chi-Square test as it includes categorical values like Yes/No answers and hypothesised proportions like trust factor.

The sections below contain the various findings from the survey and the analysis done on the results by comparing different variables. The analysis is then discussed in the ‘Discussion’ part of this thesis.

From the 54 responses that were received for the survey, 53.7% (29) were males and 46.3% (25) were females (Figure. 3). With reference to the Generation Y and Generation Z of the population (Brosdahl and Carpenter, 2011), the age group of the respondents were divided into 15-24, 25-29, 30-49, 50-64 and 64+. Out of which the respondents for Generation Y (30-49) and Generation Z (15-29) made a count of 48 and 5 respectively (Figure 4).

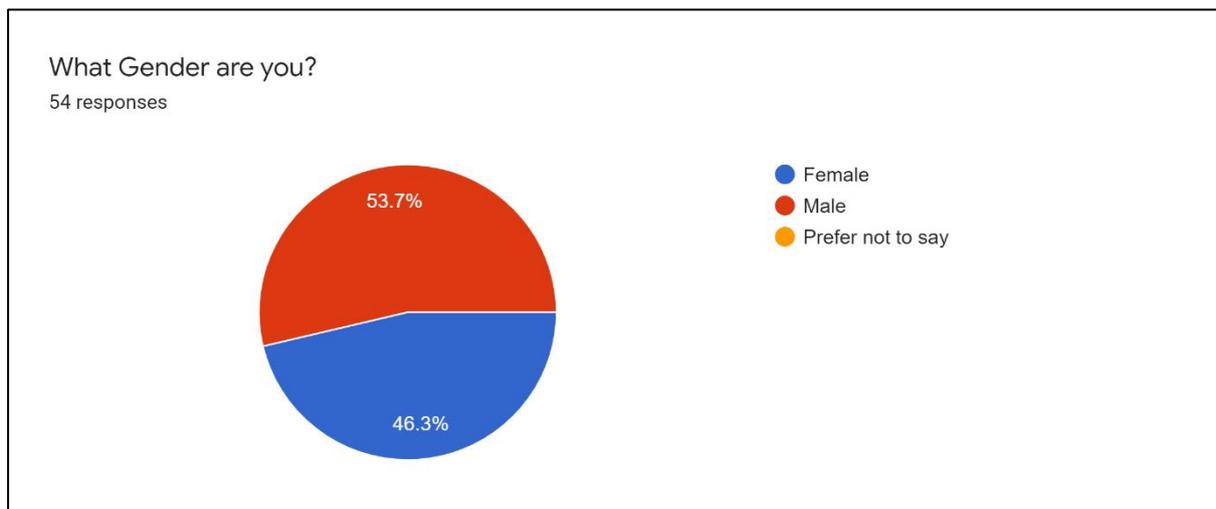


Figure 8. Gender based question in survey

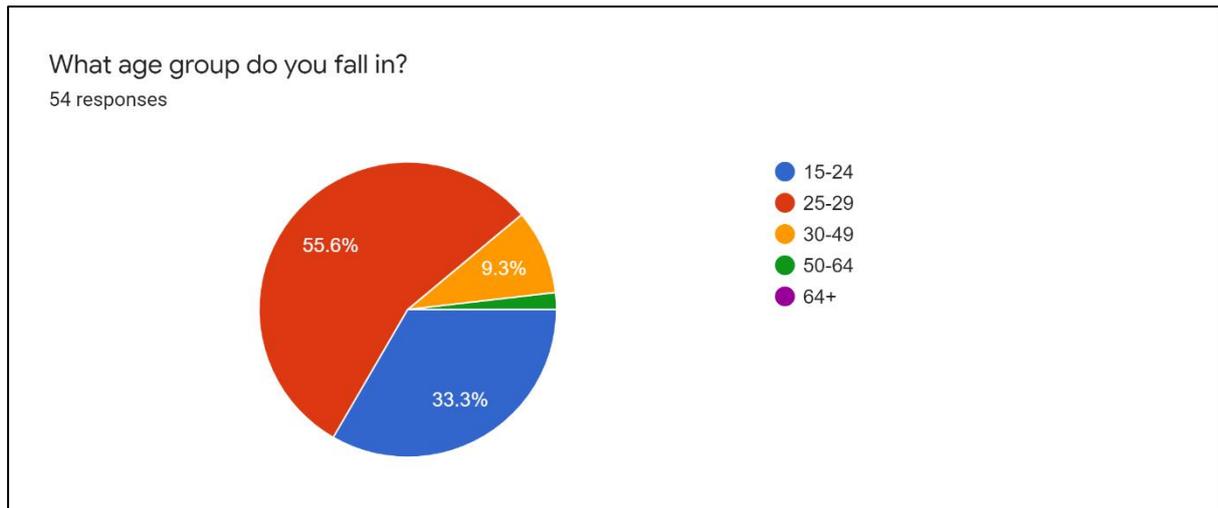


Figure 9. Age-group based question in the survey.

### Usage of social media by different Generations

As per (Yadav and Rai, 2017; Bennet *et al.*, 2008; Wesner and Miller, 2008), generation Y and generation X engage in social media at a large extent and are always online at their fingertips. They are described as the Internet generation major contributors of online content and online communication. This section compares the results obtained from the survey in which the researcher compares the age group of people to the time they spend on social media.

		<u>timeyouspendonsocialmediaapp</u>					
		0-2 hours	2-4 hours	4-6 hours	6+ hours	Total	
<u>agegroup</u>	15-24	Count	5	5	6	2	18
		<u>% within agegroup</u>	27.8%	27.8%	33.3%	11.1%	100.0%
		Adjusted Residual	-.8	-1.4	2.3	.7	
25-29	Count	9	17	3	1	30	
	<u>% within agegroup</u>	30.0%	56.7%	10.0%	3.3%	100.0%	
	Adjusted Residual	-.9	2.7	-1.5	-1.3		
30-49	Count	4	0	0	1	5	
	<u>% within agegroup</u>	80.0%	0.0%	0.0%	20.0%	100.0%	
	Adjusted Residual	2.2	-1.9	-1.0	1.1		
50-64	Count	1	0	0	0	1	
	<u>% within agegroup</u>	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	
	Adjusted Residual	1.4	-.8	-.5	-.3		
Total	Count	19	22	9	4	54	
	<u>% within agegroup</u>	35.2%	40.7%	16.7%	7.4%	100.0%	

Table 4. Comparison of Age group and the time spent on social media

Chi-Square Test			
	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	16.562 <sup>a</sup>	9	.056
Likelihood Ratio	18.080	9	.034
N of Valid Cases	54		

Table 5. Chi-Square test for AgeGroup Vs Time spent on social media

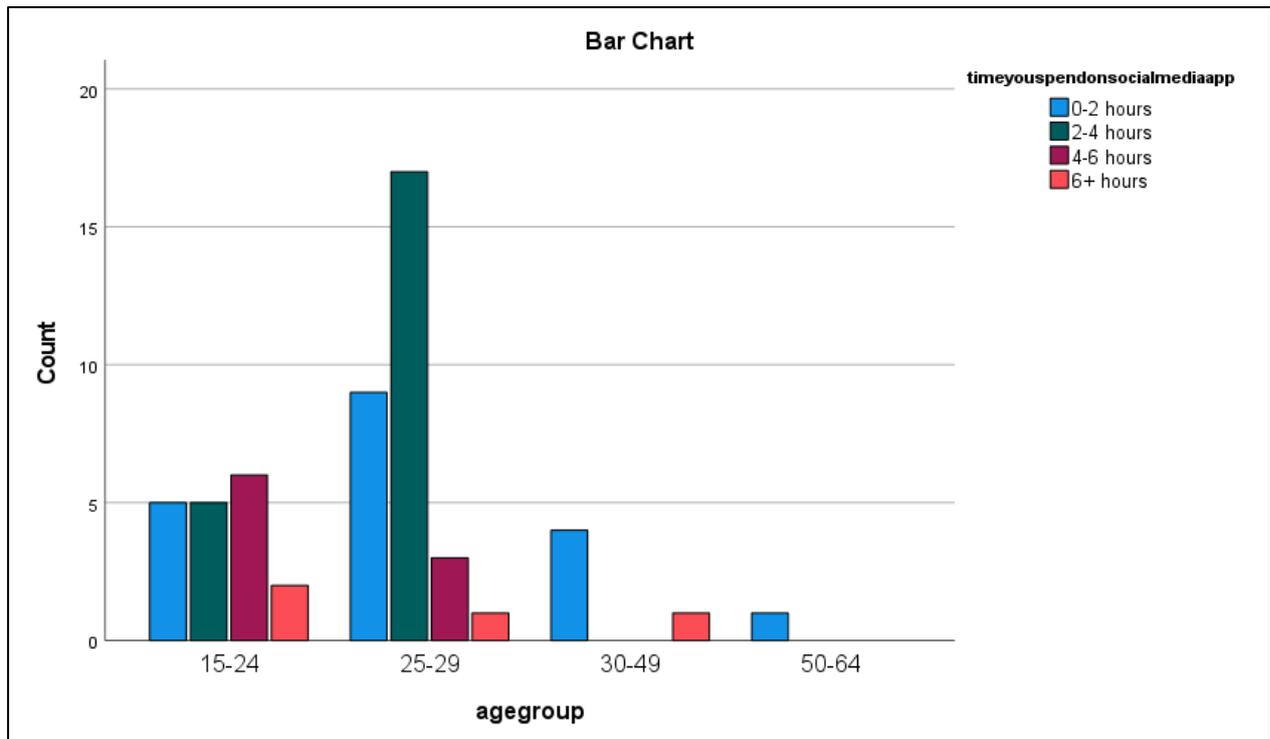


Figure 10. Graph for Age group vs time spent on social media

### Preference of Instagram over other social media applications

As of July (2020), 2,033,000 people were using Instagram in Ireland as compared to 1,826,000 in February 2019. This indicates that 41.4% of the total population in Ireland uses Instagram compared to 37.2% in February 2019. This indicates that there is an increase of almost 4% in one year. One important point is the age group of 25-34 (6,10,000) are the major users of Instagram in Ireland (napoleancat.com, 2020).

		prefer Instagram over other social media apps			
			No	Yes	Total
agegroup	15-24	Count	2	16	18
		% within agegroup	11.1%	88.9%	100.0%
		Adjusted Residual	-1.2	1.2	
25-29		Count	6	24	30
		% within agegroup	20.0%	80.0%	100.0%
		Adjusted Residual	-.1	.1	
30-49		Count	3	2	5
		% within agegroup	60.0%	40.0%	100.0%
		Adjusted Residual	2.3	-2.3	
50-64		Count	0	1	1
		% within agegroup	0.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		Adjusted Residual	-.5	.5	
Total		Count	11	43	54
		% within agegroup	20.4%	79.6%	100.0%

Table 6. Age group Vs preference of Instagram over other social media applications

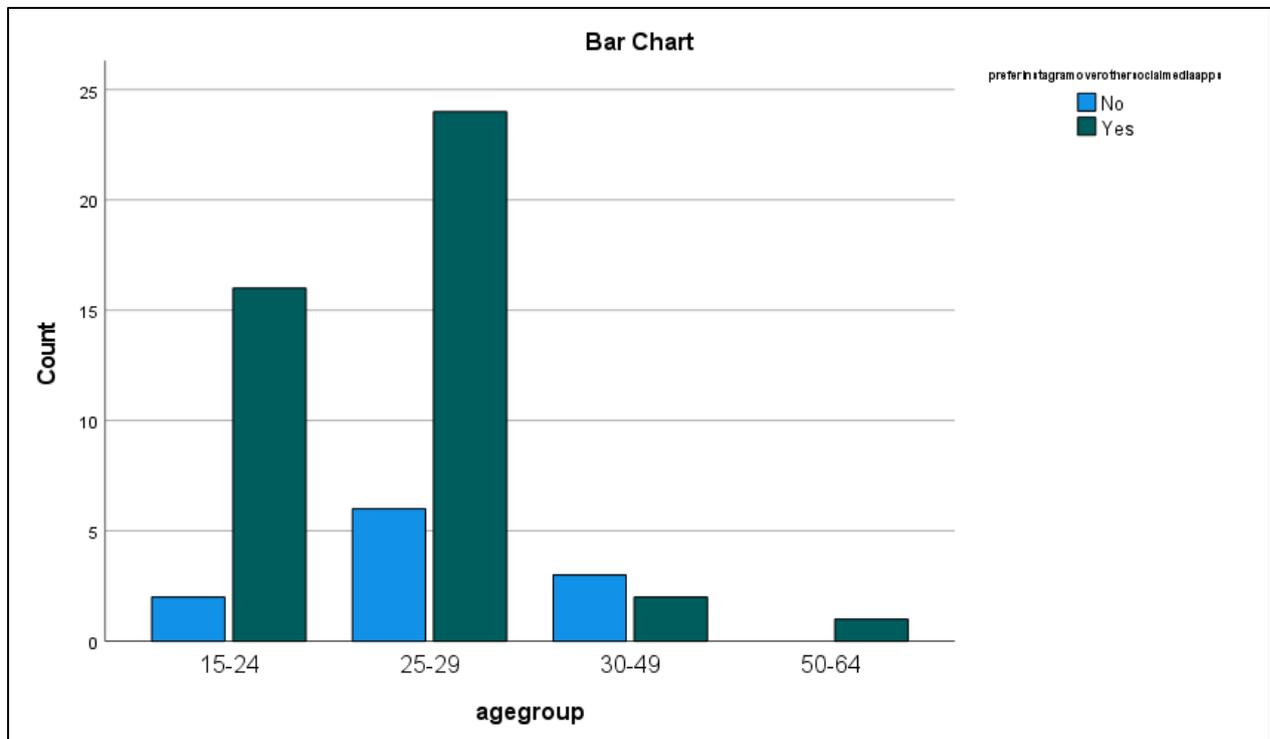


Figure 11. Preference of Instagram over other social media applications for different age groups

## The Bruns-Siddiqui model of Intention to buy

The Bruns-Siddiqui model states that, if a user perceives an influencer to be true and trusts the influencer, it is likely that the user will have an intention to buy (Gautam, 2020). To validate Hypothesis (H2), Chi-Square test is used.

		Would you visit a restaurant or order from a restaurant recommended by a friend?				
		Maybe	No	Yes	Total	
If you like the recommendation of the restaurant would you recommend it to a friend?	Maybe	Count	3	0	0	3
		% within	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
		Adjusted Residual	2.3	-.5	-2.0	
	No	Count	0	2	0	2
		% within	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	100.0%
		Adjusted Residual	-1.1	5.1	-1.6	
	Yes	Count	17	2	30	49
		% within	34.7%	4.1%	61.2%	100.0%
		Adjusted Residual	-1.1	-2.9	2.6	
Total	Count	20	4	30	54	
	% within	37.0%	7.4%	55.6%	100.0%	
	Adjusted Residual					

Table 7. Validating the Bruns-Siddiqui model of Intention to Buy.

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	31.188 <sup>a</sup>	4	.000
Likelihood Ratio	17.594	4	.001
N of Valid Cases	54		

Table 8. Chi-square test for Bruns-Siddiqui Intention to buy model

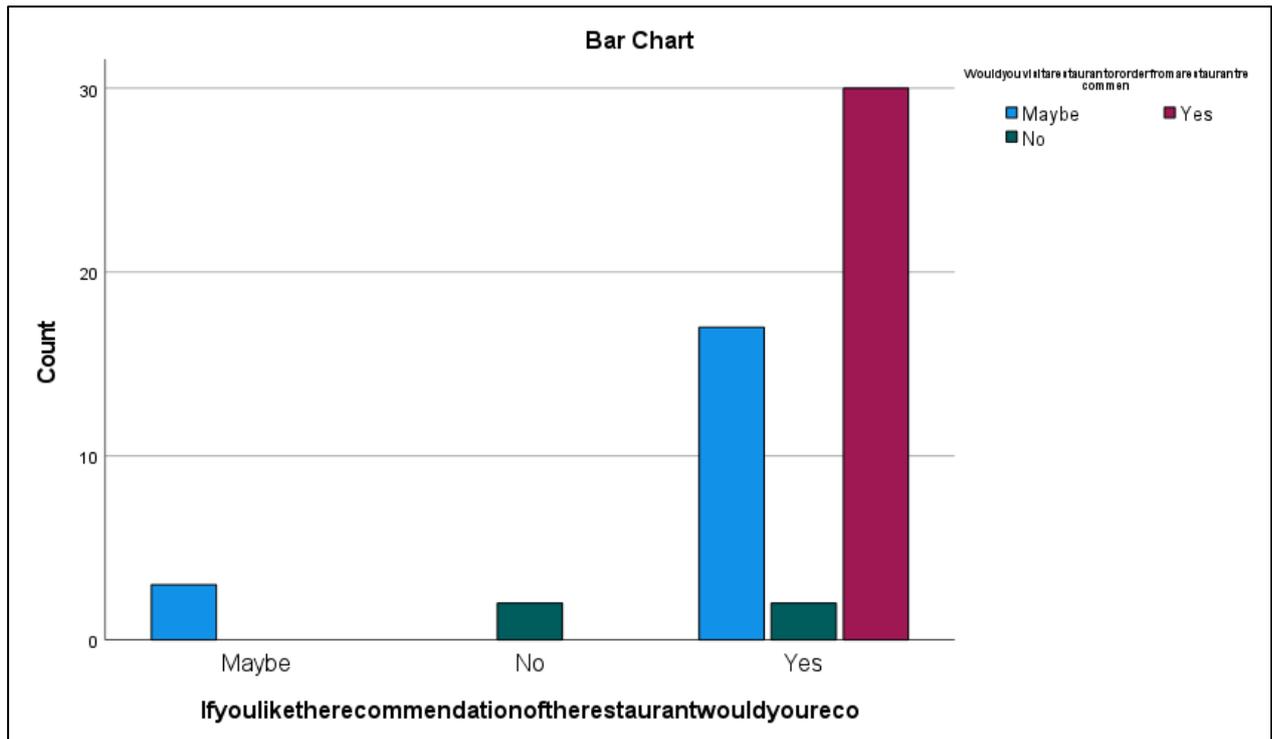


Figure 12. Graph for Bruns-Siddiqui model of Intention to Buy.

## Trust

According to Bruns-Siddiqui model of intention to buy, trust is important factor that leads to buying intention. The comparison between recommendation and the effect on trust after disliking the recommendation by the nano-influencer is done in this section.

Would you visit a restaurant or order from a restaurant if you receive a recommendation from a nano-influencer?	May be	Count	If you don't like the restaurant would you stop trusting your friend?			Total
			Maybe	No	Yes	
Would you visit a restaurant or order from a restaurant if you receive a recommendation from a nano-influencer?	be	% within	35.0%	60.0%	5.0%	100.0%
		Adjusted Residual	-.4	1.1	-1.1	
		Count	7	12	1	20
Would you visit a restaurant or order from a restaurant if you receive a recommendation from a nano-influencer?	No	% within	25.0%	75.0%	0.0%	100.0%
		Adjusted Residual	-.6	1.0	-.7	
		Count	1	3	0	4
Would you visit a restaurant or order from a restaurant if you receive a recommendation from a nano-influencer?	Yes	% within	43.3%	40.0%	16.7%	100.0%
		Adjusted Residual	.7	-1.6	1.5	
		Count	13	12	5	30
Total		% within	38.9%	50.0%	11.1%	100.0%
		Count	21	27	6	54

Table 9. Validating the Trust factor.

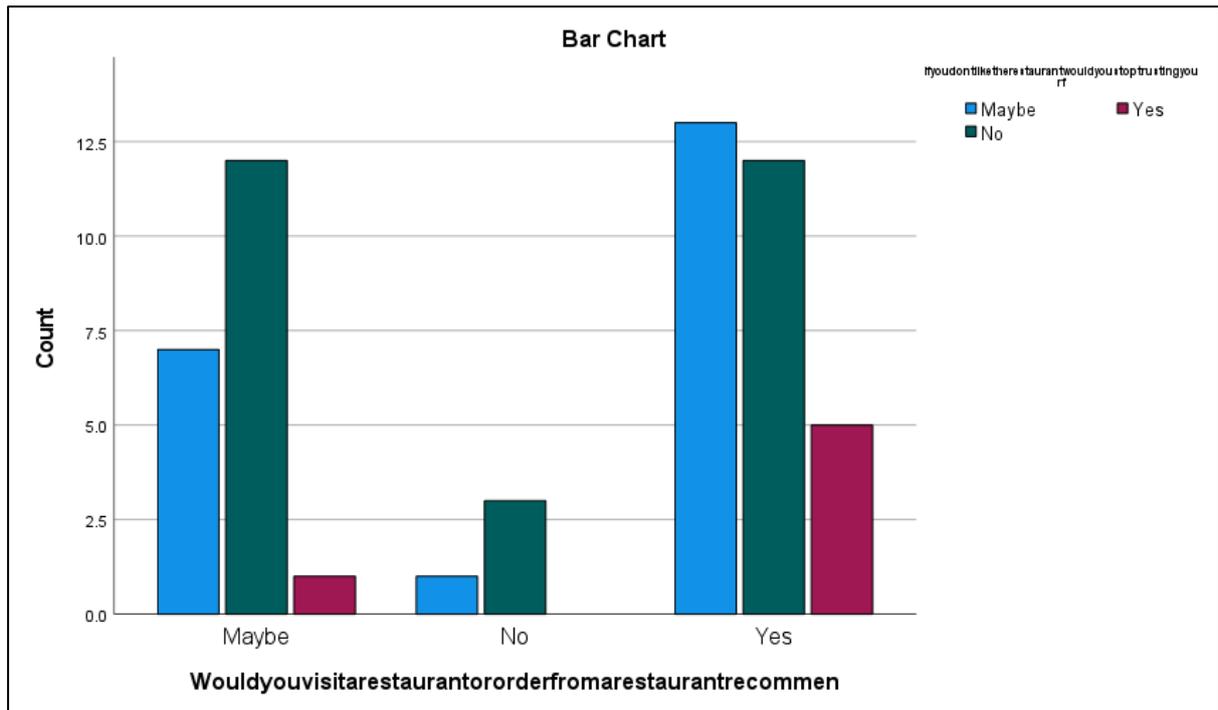


Figure 13. Graph for Impact of trust on nano-influencers.

## Discussion of Findings

### Discussion of Qualitative analysis

The qualitative study involving nano-influencers was successfully conducted by the researcher and this study gave a return on investment of 233.65%. A total of 56 orders were placed with the help of nano-influencers which means that these orders added value to the restaurant in terms of money and in terms of new customers as well. As seen from the literature survey, influencers are one of the best agents of EWOM (Electronic Word of Mouth) (Fogel, 2010). Though we measured the direct sales that came through the use of voucher, which means influenced by the influencers, there is no way someone can measure the impact of these new customers. The questions that arise are as follows

1. Did the influenced customer influence someone else in the community about the restaurant?
2. How did this influenced customer perceive this restaurant, whether they liked the restaurant, or it created a negative viewpoint for the customer?
3. What percentage of return on investment is a good return on investment for a small-scale restaurant?

These questions remain unanswered from this study. On the other hand, the researcher can say that, the effect on nano-influencers is positive and that followers find them to be a trustable source. Also, it can be said that Instagram can be a platform to make the use of nano-influencers for marketing strategies. But the researcher also thinks that, working on only just one platform with the nano-influencers is not enough and working with only four influencers will only minimize the return on investment. As for Ireland, one of the most used platforms alongside Instagram is Facebook. Making use of multiple platforms can accelerate the value of the results.

Small scale restaurants should engage in brand awareness and brand engagement alongside using marketing strategies like these. Brand engagement or engagement with the consumers boosts business and has a positive impact on the consumers. Customers find a brand more interesting if the brands engage in a different, educational and entertaining experience which directly helps in EWOM (Liu-Thompkins and Rogerson, 2012).

Apart from the positive effects, the researcher lays down some points that are important with respect to the restaurant. As this was a research study, the recruitment of nano-influencers was done by the researcher for the restaurant, which is a tedious task. This means that, the restaurant owners have to reach out to the nano-influencers directly which can cost time and if they go to a marketing agency, that will cost them money. It means that, restaurant owners have to lose one of the two, either time or money.

### **Impact of Covid-19**

The year 2020 has seen a lot of changes, shifts and disappointments due to the pandemic of Covid-19. According to Marie Digby (Irish Times, 2020), Dublin is without tourists and very less responses from the home market, the Dublin restaurant industry is like a grave. Many of the businesses in city centre closed at 6pm and one of the old restaurants in Dublin commented about them making only 20% of their usual business. The researcher feels that, some factors of Covid-19 may have affected the experiment that was conducted due to the changed eating habits of the people. The researcher also feels that, the results could have been more better if not for the pandemic and the lockdown.

To summarise the qualitative study, the researcher is sure about the positive impact that was brought upon by the nano-influencer on the small-scale restaurant. Restaurants can make use of more than one platforms for these nano-influencers and design a marketing strategy likewise. Also, more brand engagement increases the likelihood of getting new customers for the

restaurant. These amendment and changes can really help a restaurant go beyond the calculated return on investment for this study

## **The quantitative analysis discussion**

### **Usage of social media by different Generations**

This analysis was done in order to validate various researches which say that the population that belongs to Generation Y and Generation Z are the topmost contenders in the usage of social media. They were born in the digital age and are always online at their fingertips. Also, these generations are the major contributors of social media communication and social media content.

From the Table (3), we can see that how different age groups spend time on social media. As per the literature survey (Brosdahl and Carpenter, 2011; Zemke *et al.*, 2000; Bolton *et al.*, 2013; Immordino-Yang *et al.*, 2012; Prenskey, 2001), the Generation Y and Generation Z make the population from age 15-49. The population which falls under the category of age group 15-24 on an average 2-4 hours on social media. Whereas, from the age group 25-29, more than 50% of the sample population spends their time on social media for 2-4 hours.

The age group 15-24 and 25-29 are the ones who are still studying or new entrants in the professional world. For these people, social media is not a luxury factor or something that is optional, but a necessity. These results show that, the major users of social media applications spend time on the networks anywhere between 2-6 hours. This opens up opportunities for businesses and brands to showcase their products or services to the right people. If social media is used efficiently by businesses and if they are found to be authentic by the Generation Y and Generation Z population, they can expect continuous engagement from these generations.

Chi-Square test was conducted in order to validate the *Hypothesis 1 (H1): Generation Y and Generation Z spend a large amount of time on social media applications*. From the table (Chi square test), we can see that, to accept the hypothesis the p-value should be less than or equal to .05 (the alpha value), in other words,  $p\text{-value} \leq .05$ . After performing the chi-square test on the two factors, age group and time spent on social media, the p-value resulted .056. According to Chi-Square tests, p-value is greater than alpha value by a small difference which is .056 (p-value) and .05 (alpha value). We can say that, the relation between the age groups and the amount of time that they spend on social media is somewhat significant and that the hypothesis cannot be completely ruled out.

We can say that Generation Y and Generation Z do make an impact on social media and this should be addressed by the businesses accordingly.

### **Preference of Instagram over other social media applications**

Instagram takes the first spot for population aged between 18-34 and people from age group 25-34 are the major users of this platform in Ireland (Leonard, 2018; napoleancat.com, 2020). The results are quite clear from Table (5), that 88.9% of the respondents aged between 15-24 prefer Instagram over other social media applications and 80% of the people aged between 25-29 prefer Instagram over others. These people are students, new entrants in the workforce and are pioneers in the digital sector and are also called ‘digital immigrants’ (Prensky, 2001). Usage of Instagram by these populations has led to breeding of celebrities on Instagram and many influencer marketing campaigns. Businesses are making the best use of Instagram and the increasing popularity of Instagram has become a hunting ground for marketers (Audonsson, 2018; Djarfonova and Rushworth, 2019; Sheldon and Bryant, 2016).

### **The Bruns-Siddiqui model of Intention to buy**

The Bruns-Siddiqui model states that, if a user perceives an influencer to be true and trusts the influencer, it is likely that the user will have an intention to buy (Gautam, 2020). The question “*Would you visit a restaurant recommended by your friend, family, relative or a person you may know?*” validates whether they *trust* the recommendations from their closed ones. Nano-influencers are someone with a less following and someone who is from the same community, neighbourhood as their followers. Knowing a person automatically builds trust on them (Audonsson, 2018; Liu *et al*, 2015).

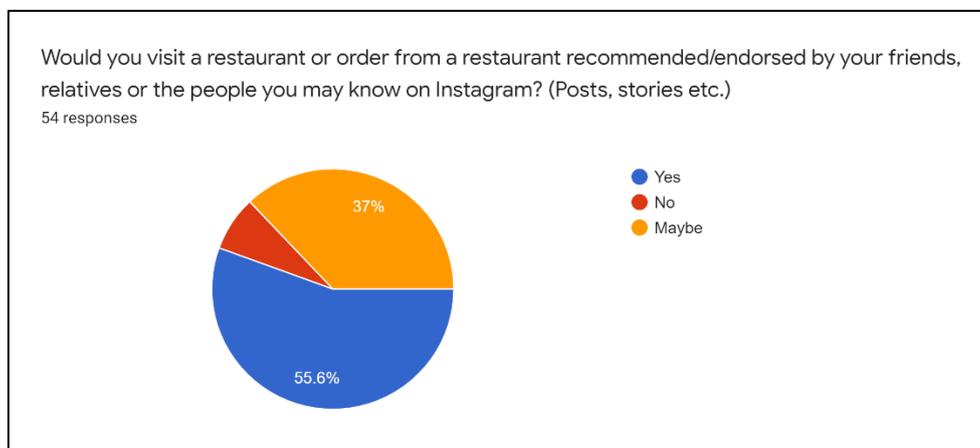


Figure 14. Graph for question *Would you visit a restaurant or order from a restaurant recommended/endorsed by your friends, relatives or the people you may know on Instagram? (posts, stories and others.)*

From the above pie chart, it is visible that 55.6% of the sample population say that, they would visit the restaurant if endorsed by someone they know on Instagram and 37% say that they may visit. Whereas only 7.4%, which is 4 respondents out of all the respondents say no to visit because of recommendations.

The second question “*If you like the recommendation, would you recommend it to other people in your community?*” answers the factor of intention to buy. The idea of buying and recommending it to other people from the community shows that, the respondents trust the nano-influencer and are also ready to recommend it to others. The relationship between trust and intention to buy was checked using Chi-Square test (Table 8), where the alpha value is .05. To validate the hypothesis, *Hypothesis 2 (H32): Users have an intention to buy after seeing the recommendations from the nano-influencer (Bruns-Siddiqui model)*, the p-value for the cross-tabulation of these two factors should be less than or equal to the alpha value, in other words,  $p\text{-value} \leq .05$ . According to the calculations using Chi-Square test, p-value is 0.00 which is less than alpha value .05. These results show that the result or the hypothesis considered is significant.

It validates the fact that, when a user perceives a nano-influencer to be true and authentic, the user may have an intention to buy because of the influence.

## **Trust**

According to Bruns-Siddiqui model of intention to buy, trust is important factor that leads to buying intention. Liking a restaurant is very subjective or for that matter any product, service or good is liked by customers only if it meets their intentions and likings. The question that arises here is whether users would lose their trust on the nano-influencer if they do not like the restaurant. For this reason, a cross tabulation was done between the questions “*Would you visit a restaurant recommended by your friend, family relative or a person you may know on Instagram?*” vs “*if you don't like the restaurant, would you stop trusting the friend, relative, family or the person you may know on Instagram?*”. The results can be understood from Table (9), where the respondents who chose to visit the restaurant because of the influencer and those who still would not stop trusting the influencer because of the restaurant not meeting their expectations make 40% of the total sample population. On the other hand, the people who would completely stop trusting the influencer make only 16.7% of the sample population and those who are unsure about the outcome make 43.3%.

The results are quite inconsistent to arrive at a particular explanation. On one hand, 40% of the respondents say that they would not stop trusting the influencer, on the other hand, 43.3% are unsure about what they would feel. The 43.3% of the population who are unsure about the outcome may be influenced by various factors. These factors can be perception of the users towards the influencer, the content that the influencer creates, the type of engagement that influencer projects (Yuki, 2019; Talaverna, 2015; Forbes, 2017).

## **Conclusion**

Both the quantitative and qualitative study showed some interesting results. From the research study, it is evident that nano-influencers do have a positive impact on if used for influencer marketing for small scale restaurants. Although it can be a tedious task to allocate nano-influencers for influencer marketing, they can be very cost effective. To summarize, the unique factors of the nano-influencers like the local reach, authenticity, trust factor and the cost factor make them more attractive for small scale businesses. The survey showed results where it is evident that, users perceive nano-influencers to be a trustable source as they are someone from their own community. It would not be wrong to say that nano-influencers will be more effective if worked on multiple platforms instead of only one like Instagram. Each platform has its own advantages and small-scale restaurants can benefit from each of these platforms through the nano-influencers. It becomes important at the same time for restaurants to engage more on social media as consumers and customers love brands who engage with them on regular basis. As more and more people are getting connected through social media networks, it becomes important for small scale restaurants and small-scale businesses to prove their existence on the network. It is not just limited to social media applications, but they also need to cope up with the innovation that is happening around them. As far as the nano-influencers are concerned, small scale restaurants should mix their traditional marketing strategies with influencer marketing and other digital marketing techniques.

The Bruns-Siddiqui model holds true for the intention to buy scenario where trust is an important factor which leads the consumers to an intention to buy. Though nano-influencers are small, it was evident from the literature survey what Dr. Pepper had to face when there were no ethical considerations. Unethical practices directly lead the consumers to lose trust on the influencers, hence it becomes necessary for the small-scale businesses to consider all ethical implications.

The future market will be made of only Generation Y and Generation Z population, who are from the world of Internet. These generations are always connected virtually, and they respect that fact. It becomes important for businesses to amend and change their business strategies according to these generations and keep up the pace as there are technological advances every minute. For generations like these, nano-influencers play an important role as a part of marketing strategies for small, medium and large companies as they are connected online, they are part of the generation and they are found to be authentic and trustable source of information.

## **Future Recommendations**

Though this study conducted a successful experiment with nano-influencers, the researcher still feels that there is a much wider scope in this area of study. The impact of Covid-19 led to choosing of only one restaurant and recruiting four influencers. The study on only one restaurant with four nano-influencers cannot speak for all the restaurants in Dublin and all the nano-influencers. A study with more restaurants and more nano influencers can help shed light on this less studied area.

Also, this study was carried out on only one platform which was Instagram. Studying nano influencers and their effect using multiple platforms combined with the forces of other social media marketing strategies could lead to extraordinary results for small scale restaurants. Limited time and Covid-19 might have manipulated the effect of nano influencers, but this study can be used as basis for future studies. The author believes that studying on the behaviour patterns of Generation Y and Generation Z alongside working with nano influencers could discover many new possibilities.

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## Appendices

1	<b>OrderId</b>	<b>PaymentMethod</b>	<b>total_price</b>	<b>discount</b>	<b>DeliveryCost</b>	<b>Order Status</b>
2	538821	creditcard	10.2	1.8	2.5	accepted
3	539290	creditcard	36.87	8.6	2	accepted
4	540572	creditcard	25.29	5.7	2	accepted
5	541469	creditcard	10.89	2.6	0	accepted
6	541472	creditcard	10.9	2.6	0	accepted
7	541474	creditcard	9.65	2.3	0	accepted
8	541471	creditcard	10.5	2.5	0	accepted
9	541476	creditcard	10.1	2.4	0	accepted
10	541478	creditcard	11.3	2.7	0	accepted
11	541488	creditcard	23.25	5.7	0	accepted
12	541698	cash	14.99	3	2.5	accepted
13	542340	creditcard	27.25	6.2	2	accepted
14	542695	creditcard	9.3	2.2	0	accepted
15	543074	creditcard	9.3	2.2	0	accepted
16	543079	creditcard	9.25	2.2	0	accepted
17	543081	creditcard	8.5	2	0	accepted
18	543086	creditcard	9.3	2.2	0	accepted
19	544131	creditcard	39.05	8.9	3	accepted
20	545511	creditcard	26.98	6	2.5	accepted
21	547267	creditcard	10.8	2.6	0	accepted
22	547903	creditcard	30.7	7.6	0	accepted
23	549120	creditcard	22.9	5.6	0	accepted
24	551339	creditcard	23.35	5.2	2	accepted
25	551416	creditcard	25.65	6.3	0	accepted
26	551528	creditcard	32.25	7.5	2	accepted
27	551900	creditcard	28.8	6.6	2	accepted
28	552130	creditcard	29.9	6.6	3	accepted
29	552235	creditcard	30.9	7.6	0	accepted
30	552421	creditcard	28.5	7	0	accepted
31	552661	creditcard	23.95	5.4	2	accepted
32	553355	creditcard	8.5	2	0	accepted
33	554329	cash	39.2	9.2	2	accepted
34	554753	creditcard	8.5	2	0	accepted
35	555761	creditcard	23.15	5.2	2	accepted
36	556774	creditcard	49.89	11.9	2	accepted
37	556834	creditcard	28.35	6.5	2	accepted
38	556833	creditcard	37.15	8.7	2	accepted
39	557517	creditcard	23.25	5.7	0	accepted
40	557790	creditcard	36.5	8.5	2	accepted
41	558663	creditcard	28.09	6.3	2.5	accepted
42	559933	creditcard	34.75	8.1	2	accepted
43	560854	creditcard	26	6.4	0	accepted
44	561767	creditcard	14.05	3.4	0	accepted
45	561774	creditcard	17.25	4.2	0	accepted
46	561782	creditcard	18.45	4.5	0	accepted
47	561786	creditcard	7.7	1.8	0	accepted
48	562175	creditcard	28.55	6.3	3	accepted
49	562840	creditcard	16.05	3.9	0	accepted
50	563358	cash	35.68	8.3	2	accepted
51	563844	creditcard	39.45	9.3	2	accepted
52	564252	creditcard	31.15	7.2	2	accepted
53	566748	creditcard	29.64	6.8	2	accepted
54	570056	creditcard	26.65	6.6	0	accepted
55	570134	creditcard	26.48	6	2	accepted
56	570444	creditcard	21.55	5.3	0	accepted
57	571416	creditcard	21.5	5.3	0	accepted
58		<b>Total revenue</b>	<b>1278.05</b>			

Figure 10. (.csv) file of the orders that the restaurant got.

## Survey Questions

**1. What age group do you fall in?**

- a) 15 – 24
- b) 25- 29
- c) 30-49
- d) 50-64
- e) 64+

**2. What Gender are you?**

- a) Male
- b) Female
- c) Prefer not to say
- d)

**3. How much time do you spend on social media applications?**

- a) 0-2
- b) 2-4
- c) 4-6
- d) 6+

**4. Do you prefer Instagram over other social media apps like Facebook, Snapchat etc.? (It would tell me about the preference of people)**

- A) Yes
- B) No.

**5. How would you rate Instagram with respect to the content it provides (photos, stories, videos, etc.) when compared to other social media applications like Facebook, Snapchat etc.? ( 1 being the lowest rating and 5 being the highest).**

- a) 1
- b) 2
- c) 3
- d) 4
- e) 5

**6. How much time do you spend on Instagram in a day?**

- A. 0-2
- B. 2-4
- C. 4+ hours

**7. Do you know that Influencers on Instagram promote products and services to their followers?**

- A) Yes
- B) No

**8. In any case, have you ever brought a product or availed a service influenced by the influencers on Instagram?**

- a) Yes
- b) No

- 9. How many of the people who follow you on Instagram are your friends, family, relatives or the people you know personally?**
- a) A few
  - b) Half of them
  - c) Most of them
  - d) All of them
- 10. Have you ever visited or ordered from a restaurant recommended by your friends, relatives or the people you know and how often? (In general, not on Instagram)**
- a) Yes, always
  - b) Yes, most of the times
  - c) Yes, sometimes
  - d) Never
- 11. Would you visit a restaurant or order from a restaurant recommended/endorsed by your friends, relatives or the people you may know on Instagram? (Specifically related to Instagram)**
- a) Yes
  - b) No
  - c) May be
- 12. If you like the recommendation of the restaurant, would you recommend it to other people from your community? (Inside and outside of Instagram)**
- a) Yes
  - b) No
  - c) May be
- 13. If you like the restaurant, would you try the future recommendations from your friend, relative or the person you may know on Instagram?**
- a) Very likely
  - b) Most likely
  - c) May be
  - d) Never
- 14. If you don't like the restaurant, would you stop trusting your friend, relative or the person who you know on Instagram in terms of recommendation?**
- a) Yes
  - b) No
  - c) May be

