



Examining female Millennials' purchase intentions for dining
in Irish independent restaurants through content engagement
on Instagram.

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Abstract

Generation Y, also known as ‘digital natives’, was exposed to technology from a very early age. The Web 2.0 and Millennials traits on social media such as hyperconnectivity, co-creation, and self-broadcasting have led to the shift from disruptive marketing communications to tradigital marketing strategies – two-way dialogue communication between brand and consumer, fostering content engagement. Corresponding with it, marketing specialists in the restaurant industry have no choice other than to invest resources in developing a content strategy on Instagram, that can attract female Millennials, using several types of content: user-generated content, firm-generated content, photo, video, and text-based content.

The main objective of this research is to investigate the topic of purchase intentions through content engagement on Instagram of female millennials in the sector of Irish independent restaurants. After the defined gap in the literature is filled, the author aims to contribute to independent restaurant industry marketing by developing a list of recommendations of best practices usage content engagement for purchase decisions.

The research methodology is interpretivism in epistemology, supported by an inductive approach with a qualitative method of collecting data. The way of collecting data is semi-structured in-depth interviews conducted with three female Millennials residents of Ireland, active Instagram users.

The findings of this study propose that Instagram content has a great impact on the purchasing decisions of female Millennials in the independent restaurant industry in Ireland. Because of Instagram's constant development and updates of features, future research in the field can be done to monitor the consumer behaviour of the platform.

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This section is a supplement to the main assignment, to be used if AI was used in any capacity in the creation of your assignment; if you have queries about how to do this, please contact your lecturer. For an example of how to fill these sections out, please click [here](#).

AI Acknowledgment

This section acknowledges the AI tools that were utilized in the process of completing this assignment.

Tool Name	Brief Description	Link to tool
Otter AI	Transcribing the recording of interviews	https://otter.ai/
Microsoft Teams	Transcribing the recording of interviews	https://www.microsoft.com/en-ie/microsoft-teams/log-in
Grammarly on Microsoft Outlook	Grammarly plugin for checking grammar on Microsoft Outlook	https://www.grammarly.com/

Description of AI Usage

This section provides a more detailed description of how the AI tools were used in the assignment. It includes information about the prompts given to the AI tool, the responses received, and how these responses were utilized or modified in the assignment. **One table should be used for each tool used.**

Otter AI
Transcribing the recording of interviews

Microsoft Teams
Transcribing the recording of interviews

Grammarly on Microsoft Outlook
Grammarly plugin for checking grammar on Microsoft Outlook

Evidence of AI Usage

This section includes evidence of significant prompts and responses used or generated through the AI tool. It should provide a clear understanding of the extent to which the AI tool was used in the assignment. Evidence may be attached via screenshots or text.

Additional Evidence:



Anna and two unknown speakers discussed their experiences and opinions on Instagram use and influence in small business marketing. Anna shared her daily use of Instagram and preferences for diverse content, while the others inquired about her followership and preferences. Speakers 1 and 2 shared their preferences for restaurant content strategies, with Speaker 1 preferring updates, fun facts, and user-generated content, and Speaker 2 focusing on offers and reviews from other users. The speakers also discussed the effectiveness of user-generated content in restaurant marketing, with Speaker 1 emphasizing credibility and authenticity, and Speaker 2 highlighting the importance of captions and hashtags.

Action items

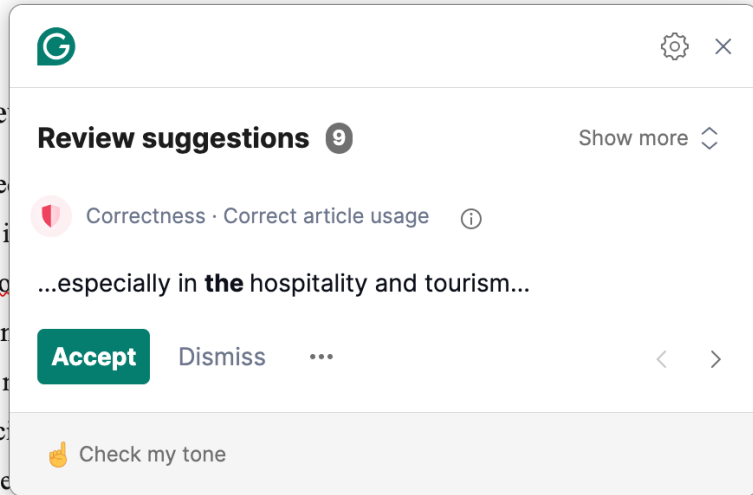
- ☐ Follow up with Anna in a couple months to share research insights.

Evidence of Otter AI Transcribing

Additional Evidence:

2.0. Literature Review

Nowadays, social media has become an integral part of many industries, especially in the digital marketing world. Mourtada and Alkhou discuss the evolution of marketing and disruptive marketing in the world have now – social media and collaboration. They also mention or famous as “Digital Natives”.



Evidence of using Grammarly

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Table of contents

Chapter 1. Introduction	12
Chapter 2. Literature Review	16
2.0. Evolution of marketing communications: tradigital, Web 2.0 and Social Media Explosion.....	16
2.1. Millennials as Digital Natives	20
2.2. Content engagement for purchase intentions in hospitality industry	21
2.3. Instagram content as a purchase driver in the restaurant industry	23
2.3.1. Types of content on Instagram: UGC, FGC, photo, video, and text content ..	24
2.4. Irish Context in researching purchase intentions of Female Millennials regarding Irish independent restaurants.....	25
2.5. Conclusion.....	26
Chapter 3. Research Question and Research Objectives	28
3.0. Research Question.....	28
3.1. Research Objectives	28
3.1.1. Research Objective One	28
3.1.2. Research Objective Two.....	29
3.1.3. Research Objective Three.....	29
3.1.4. Research Objective Four	30
3.1.5. Research Objective Five	30
3.2. Gaps in Research.....	31
Chapter 4. Research Methodology.....	32
4.0. Introduction	32
4.1. Research Onion	32
4.1.1. Layer One: Research Philosophy	34
4.1.1.1. Epistemology	34
4.1.1.2. Ontology	35
4.1.1.3. Interpretivism, positivism, pragmatism, and realism.....	36
4.1.2. Layer Two: Research Approach	37
4.1.2.1. The Grounded Theory	37
4.1.3. Layer Three: Research Strategies.....	38

4.1.3.1. Qualitative research approach	38
4.1.3.2. In-depth interviews structure	39
4.1.3.3. Sample	40
4.1.3.4. Theoretical Saturation.....	41
4.1.4. Layer Four: Research Method	41
4.1.5. Layer Five: Time Horizons	42
4.1.6. Layer Six: Data Collection and Data Analysis.....	42
4.1.6.1. Data Collection	42
4.1.6.1. Data Analysis.....	43
4.2. Ethical Considerations	43
4.3. Limitations.....	44
4.4. Conclusion.....	44
Chapter 5. Findings, Analysis and Discussion.....	46
5.1. Research Objective One	46
5.2. Research Objective Two	48
5.3. Research Objective Three	50
5.4. Research Objective Four	53
5.5. Research Objective Five.....	55
Chapter 6. Conclusion and Recommendations	58
6.0. Recommendations for future academic research	60
Bibliography	62
Appendices.....	76
Appendix A. Interview questions	76

Chapter 1. Introduction

Marketing communications experienced a big transformation throughout the years. Armano (2009) says that the world of marketing moved to a Web 2.0 phase from a disruptive marketing model with lower engagement to a tradigital world, where users are more engaged with co-creation, sharing, and collaboration. The main supporters of this shift are Millennials, or “digital natives” because of their early exposure to modern technology (Prensky, 2011). Millennials have traits of hyperconnectivity, tech-savviness, and self-broadcasting on social media (Armano, 2009), finding it important to socially connect with each other and have immediate access to Internet information (Turner, 2015).

These circumstances and Web 2.0 have led to a social media explosion with real-time updates and user engagement. Applications like Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Instagram (O'Reilly, 2004) allowed users to create, share, and engage with content easily, fostering collaborative consumption with sharing recommendations.

According to Filieri et al. (2021), content engagement impacts attributes of brand loyalty, purchase intentions, and trust in the brand. Phua et al. (2017) state that consumers on Instagram have the highest level of brand community and content engagement, which compared to other sources of social media has the best potential for independent restaurants to reach their perfect target audience – Millennials. Moreover, according to Statista (2021), social media like Facebook and Instagram impact 50% of Millennials and Centennials choosing travel destinations. Furthermore, Statista (2024) says that women are 58.3% of users on Instagram and the largest group is 25 to 34.

Tourism and hospitality industries are highly important for the Irish economy, contributing approximately €9.3 billion every year (Failte Ireland, 2020). According to Bord Bia (2020), Ireland is experiencing growth of independent restaurant facilities with local food production and innovative cuisine, which correlates with Millennials' interest in finding new dining places on Instagram.

The rationale for this study was developed to assess and understand how content engagement on Instagram can influence purchase decisions of female Millennials

regarding dining choices of independent restaurants in Ireland. To support the main research question there are five objectives to explore:

Objective 1. To explore the inner motivations and behaviours of why Irish female Millennials engage with Instagram content posted by Irish Independent restaurants.

Objective 2. To assess how Instagram content engagement impacts the purchase intentions of Irish female Millennials regarding Irish independent restaurants.

Objective 3. To understand the types of Instagram content that female Millennials are mostly interested in terms of their purchase decision through the platform.

Objective 4. To assess the role of UGC (user-generated content) on Instagram in consumer behaviour and purchase decisions of Irish female Millennials regarding Irish independent restaurants.

Objective 5. To create recommendations for restaurant industry marketers on how to engage with female Millennials on Instagram and attract them to dine in independent restaurants in Ireland.

The research methodology is interpretivism in epistemology, supported by an inductive approach with a qualitative method of collecting data. The way of collecting data is semi-structured in-depth interviews conducted with three female Millennials residents of Ireland, active Instagram users. Interviewees were introduced to the phenomena of the research. Qualitative research methods allowed the researcher to understand the inner motivations of the audience regarding purchase intentions through content engagement on Instagram, and further, discuss opinions and beliefs by comparing them with information founded on the literature review step. For analysis and findings production the thematic analysis was chosen as a tool for data interpretation, developing conclusions and recommendations. The findings and recommendations of the research can bring valuable insights for marketers in the Irish restaurant industry are listed below:

1. Female Millennials keep emerging interest to communicate with Irish independent restaurants on Instagram. So, for the industry marketers, it is important to continue investing resources into Instagram content strategy and promotion, to engage with the audience.

2. Instagram is an important yet not extensive source for female Millennials in Ireland to seek dining options. There are several other sources where Female Millennials check the reviews about places to eat, such as TripAdvisor, Google Maps, Google Reviews, and the New York Times. From the perspective of independent restaurant marketing specialists, it is essential to maintain not only Instagram accounts of the restaurant but also pages on other review resources.

3. The variety of content preferences mentioned by interviewees such as video, text photo, and stories, can prove that the Instagram page of a restaurant must be filled with different content types to be relevant for all female Millennials.

4. User-generated content can play a significant role in content engagement, however, some respondents showed scepticism about the authenticity of user-generated content, doubting the possibility of fake and paid reviews. So as an overall recommendation user-generated content can be used as a tactic for a content strategy of independent restaurants, however, the content strategy must contain professional firm-generated content as well.

5. Firstly, short vertical videos (Reels) can leverage the awareness of the brand on Instagram. Secondly, for independent restaurants it is highly important to feature their chef and staff, creating pieces of content showcasing people who work in the restaurant. Thirdly, it is essential to divide the type of content the establishment produces, so for a local pub or coffee store it is rather appropriate to publish updates and interactive content, engaging people to learn about what is going on. However, for the expensive one-off places, it is better to show the overall experience, menu and atmosphere of the place.

The potential for future research emerged regarding the purchase decisions of female Millennials through content engagement on Instagram in the restaurant industry. The same study can be conducted with a bigger sample, to build up a more relevant list of

recommendations. Furthermore, quantitative research can be done afterwards to prove or disprove the importance of purchase decisions through content engagement on Instagram on a bigger scale. Apart from that, the research can be done in different countries and/or with Generation Z, because it is important to see cultural and generational differences to monitor consumer behaviour on Instagram.

Chapter 2. Literature Review

Nowadays, social media is one of the most powerful tools for businesses in different industries, especially in the hospitality and tourism sectors, according to Leung et al. (2013); Mourtada and Alkhowaiter (2018). According to Armano (2009) and the idea of the evolution of marketing communications the world moved to a Web 2.0 phase from a disruptive marketing model with lower engagement through tradigital phase to what the world has now – social networks where users are more interested in co-creation, sharing and collaboration. The main audience involved in this shift is Generation Y or millennials famous as “Digital Natives”.

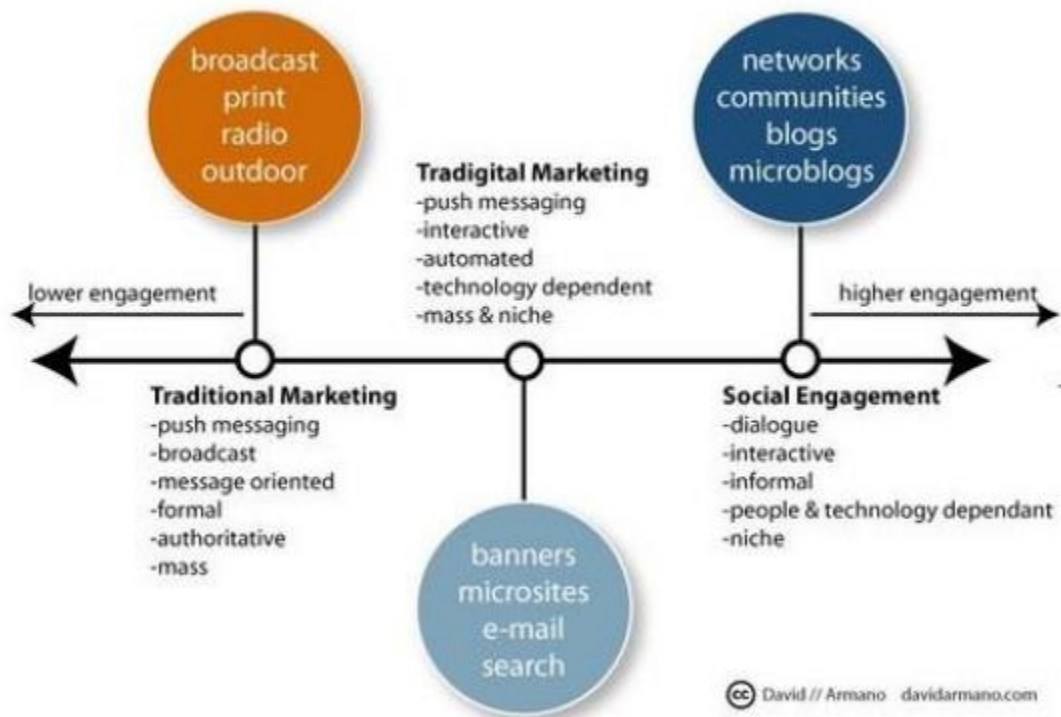
In this study we will discover how especially female millennials interact with social media networks, what content became more engaging for them and how independent restaurants in Ireland can improve their marketing communications on Instagram to benefit from this target audience.

2.0. Evolution of marketing communications: tradigital, Web 2.0 and Social Media Explosion

In this chapter, we will oversee the evolution of marketing communications to better understand the study's background.

For the past years, marketing communications shifted to digital formats, with a special focus on social media (Adeola, Hinson and Evans, 2020). Because of this, from the early 90's the spreading of the Internet and smartphones took place (Faraj, Kwon and Watts, 2004). The transformation led to people's attitudes, how they communicate, buy, socialize completely with the worldwide digital population of 5.44 billion users (Statista, 2024) and 5.07 billion of social media users (Ibid, 2024). Different generations have different levels of engagement in marketing communications. So, earlier generations such as Baby Boomers (1946-1964) and Generation X (1965-1979) have lower engagement for advertising with a preference for traditional marketing, Generation Y (1980-1994) and Generation Z (1995-2009) while were raised with technology, considered as having more

engagement in any marketing activity (Chaney et al., 2017; Williams and Page, 2011). In the picture below we can see the evolution of the marketing communications scheme developed by Armano, where we can see a transformation of communications to the ‘Tradigital’ stage. ‘Tradigital’ term is defined by Armano (2009) as the stage of modern marketing communications with the collaboration of technology and individuals, which gives brands an opportunity to build long-lasting relationships with their customers, based on dialogue.



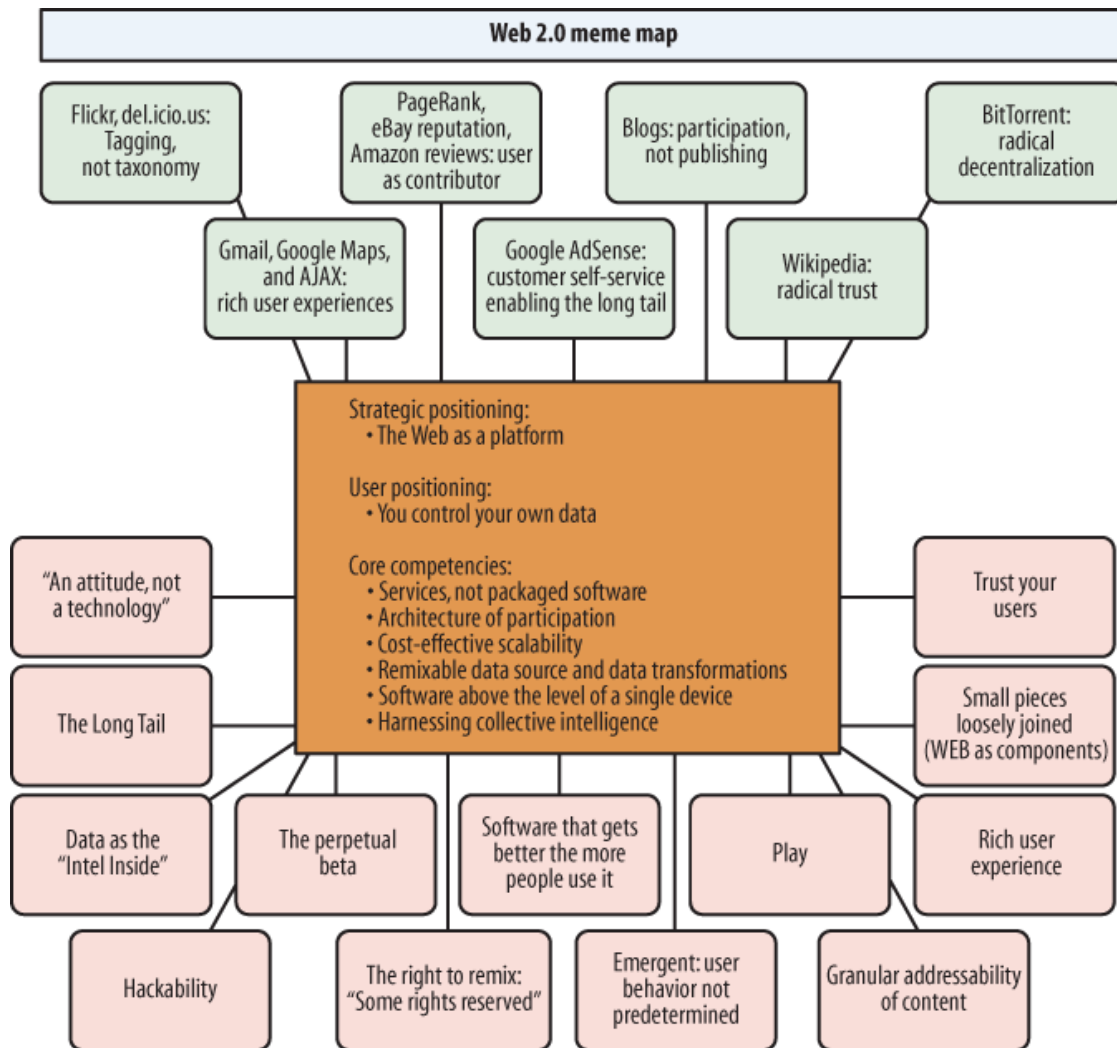
Picture 1. *Evolution of Marketing Communications (Armano 2009)*

Source: Armano, 2009

Armano’s scheme explains the evolution of marketing communications and how they shift from disruptive, traditional approaches to modern methods emphasising interaction and high engagement and focusing on hyperconnectivity that can be seen in digital formats such as networks, communities, blogs and microblogs (Paul and Mas, 2020). Exploring

Florenthal research insights, Armano (2009) explains how marketing specialists in the new modern environment can implement new marketing communications methods to engage with modern consumers with traits of hyperconnectivity, tech-savviness and cynicism on social media. Digital users find it important to socially connect with each other, thus when moved online, incorporation of digital interactions and connections is still essential (Turner, 2015). According to Armano (2009), the traditional marketing mix focuses on 4Ps: product, place, price, and promotion, however, the modern marketing mix emphasises conversation, connection, consumption, community, contact and consideration (Constantinides, 2006). A contemporary marketing mix of 6Cs attributes empowers conversation between brand and consumer, as well as loyalty and deeper relationships (Al Nawas et al., 2021). That leads to the transformation of brand communications, marketers more often explore new ways to minimise monologue and include consumers in the communication, empowering two-way communication which helps to satisfy consumers' desire for more engaging, collaborative and co-creative content (Araujo et al., 2020; Grönroos and Gummerus, 2014). Another aspect of brand strategy is the consumer-centric approach, which focuses on customers' wants, allowing a more targeted reach of the right audience. This practice amongst marketers is called 'search engine optimisation', which helps specialists to lead customers to the application or the website by using keywords as a tool (Papagiannis, 2020).

This shift from one-way communication to a dialogue with focus on user-driven content creation, real-time engagement and personalised marketing led to Web 2.0 development (Wirtz *et al.*, 2014). Web 2.0 revolutionised marketing communications and how the Internet works. When Web 1.0 was more about static web pages and restricted user interaction, Web 2.0 gives the opportunity of user interaction, collaboration and content sharing. The term Web 2.0 was explained in 2004 by Tim O'Reilly where the researcher emphasised the transformation to web applications, allowing users to collaborate and interact through social media, blogs, wikis, and other platforms. In the scheme below O'Reilly (2004) explained how Web 2.0 applications radically changed the position of users, enhancing them to be an important part of the communication process.



Picture 2. Web 2.0 Meme map

Source: O'Reilly, 2004

As we can see on the Web 2.0 meme map proposed by O'Reilly (2004) Web 2.0 emphasises the concept of the web as a platform for applications to be built on the web itself rather than separate software. The network effect is another important attribute contributing to the collaborative aspect, where the value of a product increases as more people use it. Plus, adding to a customer-centric approach, marketers and developers improve their products by collecting and implementing user feedback. The benefit of all these attributes lies in the creation of self-sustaining growth of the business models (Constantinides et al., 2008).

Furthermore, Web 2.0 led to a social media explosion. So, in 2023, there was 1.35 billion MAU – monthly active users (Statista, 2024). Because Web 2.0 is the time of dynamic content, real-time updates, and user engagement/participation has started, which gave a boost for social media growth. Applications like Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Instagram (O'Reilly, 2004) allowed users to create, share, and engage with content easily, positively impacting user engagement and enhancing content sharing. The focus on UGC (user-generated content) during the Web 2.0 shifted marketing strategies (Wirtz *et al.*, 2014): brands want to produce quality authentic content and build trust with customers by participating in trending conversations and making marketing campaigns more relevant (History Tools, 2024). Additionally, Web 2.0 fostered data-driven marketing, that became possible of user data gathered by social media. Marketing specialists from that time can not only analyse data to understand consumer behaviour but also target marketing campaigns for specific audiences, growing conversion rates (Publishing Services, 2024). Finally, Web 2.0 empowered brands for storytelling in more engaging ways, enhancing communities around products and building loyal audiences – advocates of the brand. The democratisation of content creation changed the marketing landscape, where small brands can more easily compete with larger ones (PW Skills, 2024).

2.1. Millennials as Digital Natives

In this paragraph the focus is narrowed down to millennials as “Digital Natives”, investigating how they evolved in social media.

Generation Y (Millennials) are defined as people born from 1981 to 1995 (Bergh, 2018). Generation Y accounts for a large share of the world's population, around 1.8 billion in 2023 which is 23% of the global population (World Economic Forum, 2023). Millennials are expected to spend over \$170 billion per year (Young, 2015). Vogel (2015) says that in the early 90s, Web 1.0 was launched and has been growing until Web 2.0, where users communicate and engage today. According to Prensky (2011), millennials were growing in this environment which is why they are extremely tech-savvy and digital-first generation. Millennials are also called “Digital Natives”, the term was proposed by Prensky (2011),

because of their immersion in the technology from a very young age. They are exposed to instant messaging, emails, and smartphones (Vogel, 2015) and mostly use social media for entertainment, interacting with others and socialising (Bolton *et al.*, 2013). Millennials spend a lot of their time researching products online and monitoring the reviews (Reisenwitz and Iyer, 2009). This aspect of millennials' engagement is called hyperconnectivity – they are constantly connected to the Internet and social media platforms, preferring real-time communication and immediate access to information (Tapscott, 2009). Millennials are inclined towards collaborative consumption which involves sharing recommendations on social media and the usage of goods and services, instead of using them individually. This characteristic leads to the development of a sharing economy with products like AirBnB, Uber, and Instagram (Botsman & Rogers, 2010). Through platforms like Instagram, we can see the tendency of millennials to another digital behaviour characteristic – self-broadcasting (Marwick, 2015). The concept of self-broadcasting is about sharing personal content widely on social media, creating a continuous narrative of personal identity. The idea of user-generated content is highly tied to self-broadcasting, and shared and consumed widely (Jenkins, 2006), adding to Armano's (2009) idea of tradigital communication and how it bypasses traditional communications through higher user engagement.

Female millennials have been engaging with Instagram as avid users, utilising the platform not only for interactions, but to boost their professional and personal branding. Their engaged behaviour on this platform highlights the shaping of contemporary communication and consumption patterns among this demographic (Sheldon and Bryant, 2016). According to Duffy and Hund (2006) Instagram is the preferred choice for millennials, because of its visual centrality and user-friendly interface, allowing quick and impactful communication.

2.2. Content engagement for purchase intentions in hospitality industry

According to Statista (2021) shows that social media like Facebook and Instagram impact 50% of Millennials and Centennials choosing travel destinations. Chung and Koo (2015)

debate that the influence of social media on how users digest information, share their experiences, choose products and services, as well as travel destinations is significant.

According to Bilgihan *et al.* (2016) more and more often users interact with different content on different Social Media platforms. The most popular visual, video, and textual content about products and services on Instagram and Facebook is the content produced by consumers' peers (Filieri *et al.*, 2021). Usually, on social media users share content with positive, negative, and neutral sentiments about products and services. This content is viewed, reflected on, and acted on upon friends, shaping the interactive nature of electronic word-of-mouth. Through social media platforms, consumers can communicate with friends, while sharing important moments. Social media in this situation helps them to express their identity, and at the same time disseminates information about products (Wang, Mai, and Thai, 2021). By sharing their reviews of using the products on social media, consumers co-create value-in-use, which encompasses the benefits derived from using products and services (Lusch & Vargo, 2006).

The interaction of electronic word-of-mouth has benefits for the evaluation of options in the hospitality sector, such as travel destinations or restaurant choices. According to Giglio *et al.* (2019), products in the hospitality sector require extra mental efforts from consumers, because of their multi-serviced nature. Dwiwedi *et al.* (2021) debate that social network platforms can impact other users' views, attitudes, and intentions. When it comes to behavioural engagement researchers found different premises why consumers use social media to find suppliers in the hospitality sector, such as travel planning (Chung and Koo, 2015); motivations for sharing travel moments (Filieri *et al.*, 2015); destination visit intention (Liu, Wu, and Li, 2019); the comparison of photographs in the city (Giglio *et al.*, 2019); the use of visual and textual content for expressing emotions towards the travel destination (Filieri, Yen and Yu, 2021) and others. Consumers' behavioural engagement in digital can be explained by their level of energy, effort and time spent interacting with a particular brand account on social media. According to Hollebeek, Glynn, and Brodie (2014), this interaction is likes, shares, and comments in consumers' social media feeds. Engaged consumers on social media are highly beneficial for the hospitality sector because their brand engagement leads to positive outcomes such as self-brand connection, brand

usage intention, reputation of corporate, purchase choice, brand evaluations, and building long-lasting relationships with two ways of communication (Harrigan, Evers, Miles, & Daly, 2018; Li, Teng, & Chen, 2020; So et al., 2016).

To narrow down the focus of our research we will uncover the content engagement for purchase decisions in the travel and tourism sector. So, Filieri et al. (2021) state that content engagement impacts such attributes as brand loyalty, commitment to buy, trust in the brand etc. According to Phua et al. (2017), consumers on Instagram have the highest level of brand community and engagement. Instagram, compared to other sources of social media, has the best potential for independent restaurants to reach their perfect audience. As mentioned before, millennials prefer collaboration and co-creation, and specifically, they are very interested in visual-first content with emotional and informative appeals (Filieri et al., 2021).

2.3. Instagram content as a purchase driver in the restaurant industry

According to Statista (2022), Instagram is the fastest-growing social media platform, it reached 1.18 billion users in 2023. However, Kim and Kim (2019) say that there is still a lack of knowledge about this social media platform. Casalo et al. (2021) say that Instagram as a social media platform continues to develop year-by-year and more and more become a driver for purchase intention that helps different businesses promote their products and services (Djafarova and Bowes, 2021). Instagram commerce and interactions between users and brands to build strong relationships leading to purchases have been recognised by different researchers worldwide (Casalo et al., 2021). Mohsin (2020) says that Instagram is the second most attractive interaction platform after Facebook, however many researchers consider Instagram as a sales channel (Djafarova and Bowes, 2021).

According to Nguyen et al. (2022), business accounts on Instagram prefer to measure success by the ‘engagement score’ of a post. Engagement score means how many likes and comments compared to views the post has received. Moreover, an important statistic to collect for businesses is two ‘real’ metrics: reach and impressions. The ‘reach’ metric shows the real number of people who saw the post, giving a possibility to further understand who

saw the post through a hashtag, by mentioning, the account's current followers and other profiles, who accidentally saw the post. However, impressions can show the owner of the account the actual number of times people viewed the post. This metric can be used when the business tries to grow awareness of the brand.

This study is mainly focused on the purchase intentions of millennials, so we are going to consider Instagram as a sales channel. To better understand how Instagram influences the purchase intentions of female Millennials in Ireland, the variety of content types that engage the target audience will be explored further.

2.3.1. Types of content on Instagram: UGC, FGC, photo, video, and text content

There are many types of content that can be produced on Instagram. Content can be divided into two categories: user-generated content and firm-generated content, both categories play a pivotal role in establishing the popularity and engagement of the brand on Instagram. Content created by consumers is called UGC (user-generated content) and often is perceived as more authentic than content produced by brands. According to Pentina, Zhang, and Basmanova (2013), reviews and posts produced by users themselves have more credibility in terms of driving purchase intentions rather than content created by the firm. However, as stated by Smith, Fischer, and Yongjian (2012), sometimes UGC can have an unpredictable influence on the brand picture, misaligning with the brand guidelines. At the same time, firm-generated content is created by the brands themselves and can reinforce the quality and consistency of messaging. As Gensler et al. (2013) say the firm-generated content can provide a more polished and controlled picture of the brand, however, usually lacks the organic appeal, that UGC has. Furthermore, Mangold and Faulds (2009) state that sometimes professional visuals created by brands can be accepted by audiences with scepticism.

Instagram is considered the most visual platform in the world, so photos and videos are predominantly used as the main types of content. Photos and videos have greater user engagement because of their visual-centric nature (Gensler et al., 2013), however, the role

of text, comments and captions cannot be underestimated. According to Hollenbeck and Kaikati (2012), textual content provides more context and fosters deeper interactions within the Instagram community.

According to Statista (2024), 58.3% of users on Instagram are women with a significant increase from previous years. The largest age group using the platform the most is millennials from 25 to 34. As mentioned in Statista (2024) women dominate the amount of user-generated content with the number 83.9% out of all UGC content. Additionally, over 30% of these posts are created by Millennials. UGC content is one of the most important tools for independent restaurants to encourage Millennial customers to choose their dining experience (Ibid, 2024). These trends allow us to choose the ideal criteria for the study, the participant should be female, a Millennial, an active Instagram user, and living in Ireland.

2.4. Irish Context in researching purchase intentions of Female Millennials regarding Irish independent restaurants

The choice of Ireland for this study was necessary because of several reasons. Ireland as a country provides an important context to research female Millennials' purchase intentions regarding the restaurant industry through content engagement on Instagram. Firstly, the tourism and hospitality industries are highly important for the Irish economy, contributing approximately €9.3 billion every year (Failte Ireland, 2020). Moreover, according to Bord Bia (2020), Ireland is experiencing the growth of independent restaurant facilities that emphasise local food production and innovative cuisine, which correlates with Millennials' interest in finding new dining places and sharing about that on Instagram. Secondly, the particular interest in the research and further implementation of the recommendations has place because small businesses have many challenges in not only running businesses themselves but also struggling to deal with economic problems: fluctuating costs and larger enterprises competitors. Those pressures have a crucial role: even Irish economy is robust in many aspects, there are many challenges for small businesses in the tourism and hospitality sector, such as costs of sourcing, and using locally produced ingredients (Bord Bia, 2020). While businesses struggle with rising inflation and costs, they must balance the

cost-management of marketing budgets and choose the right platform to promote their services in the proper way for the right audience. However, the lack of topic research particularly in Ireland shows that small businesses in the restaurant industry struggle to define all of it.

2.5. Conclusion

For the past 30 years marketing communications have had a big shift from traditional disruptive marketing approaches (Adeola, Hinson and Evans, 2020) to more engaging practices, allowing interaction with audiences (Armano, 2009). As Internet development to Web 2.0 raises social media networks, where users can co-create, share and collaborate with users and brands, staying online longer than previous generations. Millennials can be considered the consequence and reason for marketing communications shift to tradigital. Being introduced to technology from a very early age, the main attribute of their social media behaviour is hyperconnectivity – being in real-time connected to the Internet and having immediate access to the information on the Internet (Tapscott, 2009). As a result, we can see exponential growth of social media, especially Instagram as it allows users to consume and produce content with two-way communication rather than monologue (Harrigan, Evers, Miles, & Daly, 2018; Li, Teng, & Chen, 2020; So et al., 2016). Moreover, Instagram is the preferred choice for female millennials, not only because of its visual centrality and user-friendly interface but opportunities to boost their professional and personal branding (Sheldon and Bryant, 2016). Casalo et al. (2021) say that Instagram as a social media platform continues to develop year-by-year and more and more become a driver for purchase intention that helps different businesses promote their products and services (Djafarova and Bowes, 2021), especially in tourism and hospitality industries. Instagram is considered the most visual platform in the world, so photos and videos are predominantly used as the main types of content. Photos and videos have greater user engagement because of their visual-centric nature (Gensler et al., 2013), however, the role of text, comments and captions cannot be underestimated. According to Hollenbeck and Kaikati (2012), textual content provides more context and fosters deeper interactions within the Instagram community. Plus, the content on Instagram can be described in two

categories: user-generated content and firm-generated content. UGC can appeal to users because of its authenticity (Pentina, Zhang, and Basmanova, 2013), however, it often lacks alignment with brand guidelines, whether firm-generated content is always more polished and controlled, but lacking spontaneity (Gensler et al., 2013).

Overall, this research after a thorough literature review from the perspective of female Millennials aims to develop practice-oriented recommendations for independent restaurants in Ireland on how to encourage the target audience by content engagement.

Chapter 3. Research Question and Research Objectives

3.0. Research Question

Creswell and Poth (2016) say the research study must be based on the research question. This recommendation of a centralised approach of focusing on the research question has to be done towards every part of the research. According to Easterby-Smith et al. (2018), research questions are highly important for the study and help researchers to investigate narrow topics, focused on the research question. The literature review of this study revealed that there are many impacts of purchase decisions caused by content engagement on Instagram in the hospitality sector, specifically in the independent restaurant industry. Moreover, female millennials, famous as Digital Natives, enhanced the development of social media by shifting their online digital behaviour towards co-creation, sharing experiences, and two-way deeper communication with the brands. So, the research question asks: “How does content engagement impact Female millennials’ purchase decisions on Instagram in the Irish independent restaurant industry?”

3.1. Research Objectives

According to Creswell and Poth (2016), research questions are sub-questions that investigate central themes by adding extra layers of exploration. The main objective of this study is to investigate the topic of purchase intentions through content engagement on Instagram of female millennials in the sector of Irish independent restaurants. To fully discover the main research question, we have developed the structure of the following research objectives.

3.1.1. Research Objective One

To explore the inner motivations and behaviours of why Irish female Millennials engage with Instagram content posted by Irish Independent restaurants.

According to Kaplan and Haenlein (2010), social media content can engage users by several attributes, such as personal interests, social interactions (Adeola et al., 2020), and perceived authenticity (Adorno, 1973). As Phua, Jin, and Kim (2017) stated in previous research consumers' interactions with social media content are conditioned by how it resonates with their identity, values and beliefs. The first research objective focuses on exploring the specific motivations, and psychological and social factors (Beverland (2005) of Irish female Millennials' engagement with Instagram content from local restaurants in Ireland.

3.1.2. Research Objective Two

To assess how Instagram content engagement impacts the purchase intentions of Irish female Millennials regarding Irish independent restaurants.

According to Godey et al. (2016), social media engagement has a significant influence on consumers' purchase intentions (Hudson et al., 2015; Araujo et al., 2020). The second research objective aims to understand how social media content can impact the purchase decision and consumer behaviour of female Millennials in Ireland. According to Ashraf et al. (2014) gathering data about this insight is essential for the study because based on the knowledge of actual consumers the proper recommendations of digital marketing strategies can be made because of this work.

3.1.3. Research Objective Three

To understand the types of Instagram content that female Millennials are mostly interested in terms of their purchase decision through the platform.

According to Ashley and Tuten (2015), there is a variety of social media content with different levels of engagement from the target audience (Filieri et al., 2021). Kim and Ko (2012) say that visual parts, such as photos and videos, are crucial for building strong emotional connections between consumers and brands. Visual content on Instagram is considered to have higher engagement rather than text-based posts (Ibid, 2012). The third

research objective aims to understand the types of Instagram content that can show successful results in terms of purchase decisions of Irish female Millennials regarding independent restaurants in Ireland. When achieving this objective, the list of recommendations for industry marketers (Bolton et al., 2013) will be designed so the restaurants can leverage their Instagram marketing strategy and attract more female Millennials (Bellman and Clark, 2009).

3.1.4. Research Objective Four

To assess the role of UGC (user-generated content) on Instagram in consumer behaviour and purchase decisions of Irish female Millennials regarding Irish independent restaurants.

According to Muntinga, Moorman, and Smit (2011), user-generated content on social media is considered more authentic and trustworthy rather than firm-created content (Eggers et al., 2013). The research shows that content like UGC can have a huge positive impact on the purchase intentions of different target audiences (Patterson, 2012). The fourth research objective focuses on understanding how user-generated content can be perceived by female Millennials in Ireland and what impact on purchase choice it can have on independent restaurants in Ireland.

3.1.5. Research Objective Five

To create recommendations for restaurant industry marketers on how to engage with female Millennials on Instagram and attract them to dine in independent restaurants in Ireland.

According to Tuten and Solomon (2017) for businesses to be effective on social media and resonate with the right target audiences they must consider the audience's preferences and opinions while creating the Instagram content strategy (Harrigan et al., 2017). The final fifth objective focuses on generating recommendations for restaurant industry marketers based on the research of actual female Millennials in Ireland. According to Smith (2012) and Constantinides (2006) identification of the actual content preferences of the audiences

while combining it with user-generated content can be highly beneficial for driving engagement and customer traffic to the independent restaurants in Ireland.

3.2. Gaps in Research

Previous research has already been done on the topics of brand marketing and user-generated content (De Veirman et al., 2017). However, there is a gap in research on how content on Instagram can engage Irish female Millennials to choose a restaurant facility in Ireland. This study aims to fill the gap of knowledge, conducting the research specifically in the unique context of Irish independent restaurants and the impact of Instagram content on Irish female Millennials' consumer behaviour (Dabija et al., 2018). As a result, by addressing the research question and objectives, the study will contribute to local restaurant marketers' knowledge of social media and boost customer traffic to independent Irish restaurants (Bergh, 2018).

Chapter 4. Research Methodology

4.0. Introduction

In this chapter, the methodology of this research will be thoroughly discussed and outlined. The main approach of this study is Research Onion and will be based on the work of Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2019), where academics discuss the principles of how the research should be conducted. Research Onion outlines the variety of layers, such as research method and philosophical reasoning, research approach and strategy, the explanation of the sample group, data collection and analysis, ethical considerations and limitations.

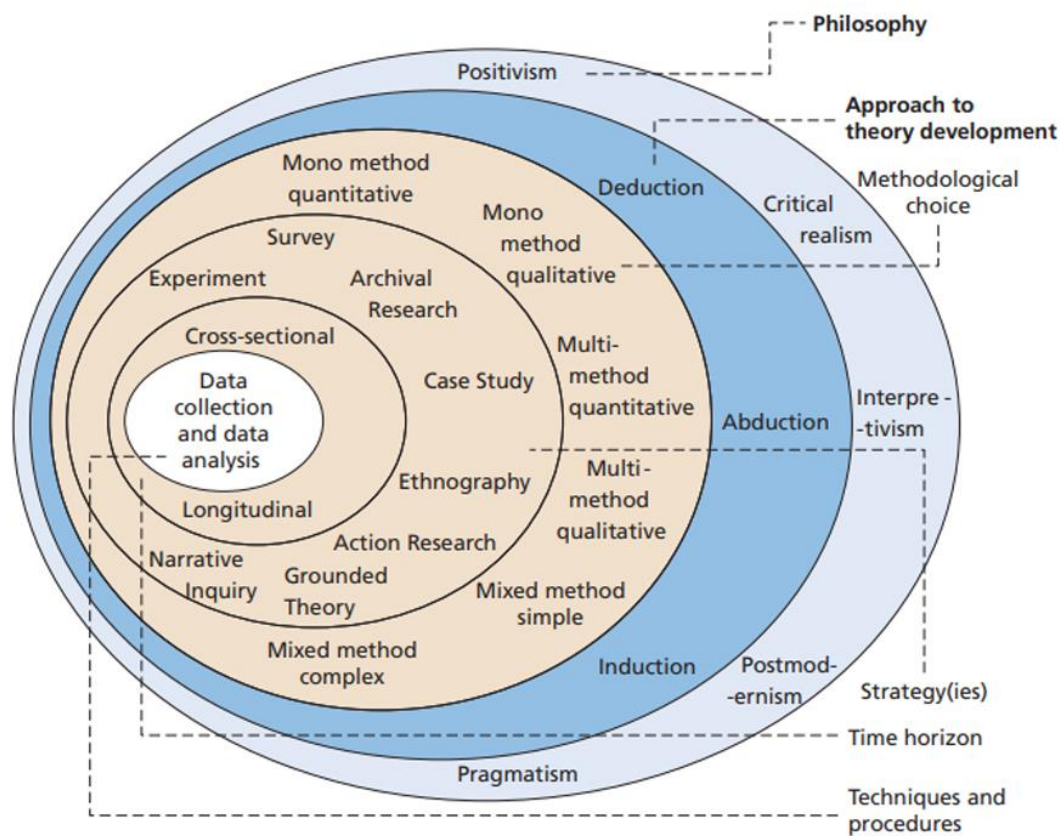
The research methodology that has been chosen for this study is qualitative research. According to Bell, Brymen and Harley (2019) this method in the most appropriate way will help researchers in exploration and understand persons' subjective opinions and perceptions towards the research question and objective, and only then in comparison the results with the existing literature. Even though quantitative research investigates an objective through data and numerical analysis (Quinlan, 2011), this method would not help researchers to understand in-depth behavioural motivations and perceptions of Irish female millennials. Moreover, the qualitative research methods of this study will be approached by using informal 45-minute one-to-one interviews with individuals and will be explained further in section 4.1.3.2.

4.1. Research Onion

According to Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2009; 2016) 'Research Onion' is a necessary tool for developing the best way of research design. Saunders (2019) argues that research design is not only a useful template for data collection and data analysis but also a tool to answer research questions and achieve research objectives. All the attributes of research design are achieved by justifying when choosing data sources, collection methods, and analysis techniques. The method of research design determines an effective way to formulate best practices, which can represent many layers for exploration during the design

process. According to Saunders et al. (2016), the framework was developed to support several stages of the research methodology process, allowing the researcher to formulate a successful strategy and approach for the study. According to Bryman (2016), these attributes are usually based on the topic of study and the researcher's views on ontology and epistemology.

By overseeing the six layers represented in Picture 3 we can navigate the course of this study.



Picture 3: Saunders' Research Onion

Source: Sanders et al., (2019, p.130)

4.1.1. Layer One: Research Philosophy

According to Saunders (2019, p.815), research philosophy is determined as a “system of beliefs and assumptions about the development of knowledge and the nature of that knowledge about research”. Saunders et al. (2016) say that there are many philosophical perspectives when it comes to business, and it is never unified. So, researchers can amplify different philosophical approaches, if it is required by the topic. Every study is underpinned by similar philosophical frameworks, as stated by Quinlan (2011). According to Saunders et al. (2019), the first layer of the Research Onion outlines the philosophies, regarding ‘the ontological perspective, which is based on beliefs about objective reality. The ‘epistemology’ at the same time is how we believe we can understand the knowledge of our ontology (Saunders et al., 2019).

4.1.1.1. Epistemology

According to Krauss (2005, p.758) ‘epistemology’ is created from two Greek words: where ‘episteme’ means understanding, or knowledge and ‘logia’ means study or science. Epistemology as the study of knowledge in its breadth, validity, legitimacy, and scope (Saunders et al., 2016), provides a template for researchers to define what constitutes acceptable knowledge within a discipline (Bruman and Bell, 2011). This research adopts an epistemic approach to understand the impact of content engagement on purchase decisions on Instagram through in-depth interviews and ethnography. Brey (2005) argues that computer systems’ problem-solving and information-processing capabilities enhance human cognition, thus justifying the use of epistemic netnography in this context. According to Saunders et al., (2019) philosophical epistemology distinguishes between empiricism and rationalism. Empiricism asserts that knowledge originates from empirical observations and experiences (Quinlan, 2011), exemplified in this study through in-depth interviews exploring the impacts of content engagement on the purchasing intentions of independent restaurant consumers in Ireland. Moreover, rationalism relies on logical reasoning rather than empirical evidence, viewing the human mind as the source of new knowledge (Bryman and Bell, 2011; Saunders et al., 2019).

4.1.1.2. Ontology

Ontology, much like epistemology, originates from the Greek words ‘onto’, meaning existence or reality, and ‘logia’, meaning study or science (Slevitch, 2011). Ontology is the examination of what exists or what is considered real in a general sense. According to Quinlan (2011, p.95), ontology is the ‘study of being, the nature of being, and our ways of being in the world’, focusing on the reality of these aspects (Slevitch, 2011). This approach facilitates discussions on research questions aimed at building theory to understand the ontological status of the world. This aligns with the study’s paradigm, as the researcher seeks to uncover multiple subjective realities and the societal factors that may influence them. The study explores female millennials' experience with Irish independent restaurants, their purchase intentions, and the rationale behind these intentions. According to Saunders et al. (2019), ontology can be divided into ‘ontological materialism’ and ‘ontological idealism’. Materialism positions that material objects are more ‘real’ than the human mind, while idealism holds the opposite view. The Research Onion methodology emphasises the importance of establishing a research perspective or tool to ensure robust prospects and validate the research topic, determining the relationship between relevant theory and practice (Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill, 2012; Crotty, 1998). The four philosophies discussed within the ‘Research Onion’ are ‘positivism’, ‘realism’, ‘interpretivism’, and ‘pragmatism’ (Saunders et al., 2016). Bryman and Bell (2011) refer to ‘positivism’ and ‘interpretivism’ as epistemological factors in sociological research. Positivist research is typically quantitative and scientific, whereas interpretivism offers objective knowledge on subjective matters in a positivist manner, fulfilling researchers’ needs. Unlike positivism, which relies on universal laws or principles, interpretivism addresses the subjective views of the female millennial consumer cohort, making it more suitable for this study.

4.1.1.3. Interpretivism, positivism, pragmatism, and realism

In this study the interpretivist approach was taken to investigate the Generation Y consumer perceptions in the independent restaurant industry of Ireland, how they make their purchase decisions, and it will result in marketing recommendations to improve user experience on Instagram.

According to Brand (2009), this method of research collects data and information from a rather small sample group. It means that qualitative study has to be chosen as the main type of approach (Ibid, 2017). Any type of study that gains findings without any statistical methods or quantitative approaches is determined as qualitative research (Rahman, 2017). According to Saunders et al. (2019), the first and main goal of qualitative research is to learn and understand the cohort's motivations and points of view for the particular problem or topic, second – to investigate what they experienced (Schwartz-Shea and Yanow, 2012; Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2007), and third – learn about their opinion within the Irish restaurant industry purchase decisions on Instagram. According to Weber (2017), generation Y has subjectivity when it comes to their opinions. For literature validation due to the choice of inductive method and grounded theory, in-depth interviews have to be adapted (Ibid, 2017). Alfred Schutz's study explored millennials' life and experiences in the world and impacted the choice of interpretivism approach for this study (Bryman and Bell, 2011).

Another approach is positivist, which according to Brand (2009) is usually focused on the empirical scientific analysis of language and logic, however for this study, this approach has not been chosen. At the same time, according to McBride, Misnikov, and Draheim (2021), the pragmatist method gains insights from practice and usually has subjectivism in its nature. Usually, this approach has a mix of methods in methodology, however, this research aims to gain insights specifically from Generation Y through investigation of their motivations and beliefs during what they experienced throughout their lifetime.

On the one hand, it may look like a pragmatist approach and mixed methods can be most appropriate for this study, but on the other hand, these methods are not suitable for this research due to several reasons. Firstly, the discussed approaches have limitations in

variables, secondly, pragmatism and mixed methods put time restraints such to the investigator, limiting the possibility of making a thorough investigation and properly analysing the data.

Even though the realist approach can be used for qualitative and quantitative research methods (Easterby-Smith et al., 2018), it is also not suitable for this study, because of the focus on the belief of how real entities impact human experiences in a 38 manner with no prediction (Bryman and Bell, 2011). However, a realist approach has not been considered for this research as the study is focused on investigating Irish female millennials' consumer behaviour and motivations, and it is essential to understand to follow the research question.

4.1.2. Layer Two: Research Approach

According to Easterby-Smith, it is essential to choose a proper research approach, and it helps to further develop the research design. Research philosophy usually informs research design (Thorpe and Jackson, 2005). According to Saunders et al. (2016), there are two research approaches: induction and deduction, however, for this study, inductive research has been selected, because of the qualitative method for a small cohort of people. Therefore, deduction as an approach mainly analyses data and theories that existed before and mostly is selected in combination with quantitative research on big cohorts of people (Ibid, 2016). Even though using both approaches can benefit any study, because of some limitations and time constraints in the current study, an inductive approach has been selected as a prior research method.

4.1.2.1. The Grounded Theory

According to Corbin and Strauss (2015), grounded theory helps to gain complex data, explaining and understanding the motivations and behaviour of the sample group, that is why the grounded theory approach has been selected for this study. Grounded theory was developed by Glaser and Strauss (2017) to prove qualitative research, where theory is usually derived from insights collected periodically with proper analysis during the study

process. This theory is called ‘grounded’ because of gathering the information and analysis enablement for further theories, allowing the collection of data for further research (Ibid, 2017). According to Chapman, Hadfield and Chapman (2015) usually research with grounded theory, starting with the research question and then using a qualitative approach to gather data to answer it. Furthermore, for this research thematic analysis has been selected as a prior approach to analysing collected data, however before it the researcher will uncover the main ideas and motivations before categorising them into the thematic analysis. Key thematic analysis categories will become the basis for the new theory, which differentiates qualitative and quantitative approaches. In the stage of analysis, the researcher will oversee the in-depth interview recordings to highlight the key themes mentioned by Irish female millennials in terms of their purchase decisions, resulting in an ‘inductive’ approach (Khan, 2014).

4.1.3. Layer Three: Research Strategies

4.1.3.1. Qualitative research approach

Collis and Hussey (2003) state that the nature of the study and the researcher’s philosophical preferences influence the research project. In this study, an interpretivist epistemology is applied, utilising an inductive approach and qualitative methods, with a focus on conducting in-depth interviews.

Qualitative research is closely aligned with a philosophy of interpretivism, as described by Denzin and Lincoln (2005). This methodology involves observing individuals through techniques like ethnography or netnography (Kozinets, 2010) and collecting verbal data via in-depth interviews or focus groups (Hair et al., 2010). Typically conducted with small samples, qualitative research provides profound insights into individual perspectives. In marketing, it aids in understanding how social culture, lifestyles, and trends influence consumer behaviour and purchasing decisions. Specifically for this study, the choice of in-depth interviews helps to enable participants’ discussions honestly with the feeling of freedom, allowing them to share details about their experiences, thoughts, and opinions. According to Hair et al. (2010), in-depth interviews allow the researcher to ask more

specific questions and deeply explore the participants' background on the topic, at the same time revealing emotions, behaviours, motivations, and attitudes. Additionally, as stated by Quinlan et al. (2018), qualitative research is perfect for developing a detailed and in-depth understanding of phenomena. According to Brenner, Brown, and Canter (1985), in-depth interviews help to explore the research question in a dual way, where both the participant and the researcher delve into topics together, producing rich and timely information that enhances the study's quality. Moreover, according to Bryman and Bell (2011), qualitative research methods can generate new theories or align with existing ones, focusing on the depth of findings rather than standardisation. This method can also be combined with other data collection methods to ensure reliable conclusions. However, the qualitative approach also has its disadvantages. For example, according to Quinlan et al. (2015), qualitative methods require fieldwork, which can be cost-inefficient and time-consuming. For researchers it is essential to manage their roles to avoid personal bias and manipulation during data collection and analysis (Hair et al., 2010; Quinlan et al., 2015; Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill, 2012). Still, the debate between qualitative and quantitative methods is ongoing, but Quinlan et al. (2018) suggest that the choice depends on the study's nature, rather than researcher preference, and both methods have their merits.

In this study, semi-structured questions are designed for in-depth interviews with participants selected based on the project's target audience. Questions like "How", "What", and "Why" are used to explore participants' perceptions of independent Irish restaurants in Dublin and the influence of social media content created by firms on Instagram on their purchasing decisions. As Malalgoda et al. (2018) note, such research requires real-life settings where the researcher does not control behavioural events, allowing for deeper insights into the phenomena being studied.

4.1.3.2. In-depth interviews structure

This study utilised a qualitative research approach through in-depth, one-on-one interviews. Despite considering the potential disadvantages previously discussed, the researcher selected this methodology to gain a deeper and more authentic understanding of consumer

behaviour related to purchase decisions within the study context. Moreover, this approach aligns with Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2012), who assert that research interviews are effective for collecting valid data for the research.

According to Hair et al. (2010) and Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2012) for this study, a structure of semi-structured probing questions was created for the interviews to reveal interviewees' thoughts and opinions. Initial conditional questions ensured participants met the study criteria, including female residents of Ireland, within the Millennial age range, visitors of Irish independent restaurants, and active Instagram users. All three participants met these criteria.

To explore the research question, a set of questions regarding Instagram content preferences and consumer behaviour were asked to understand the motivations of the cohort. A set of questions helped to discover unique thoughts and experiences of the Female millennials' content preferences on Instagram and will help businesses meet their expectations, enriching the research findings.

4.1.3.3. Sample

Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2012, p.186) state that in qualitative research, “the purpose of sampling is to pursue theoretical lines of enquiry rather than to achieve representatives.” Consequently, this study targeted a small sample of three Millennial women. As discussed in the literature review, as of 2023, women make up 58.3% of Instagram users in Ireland, an increase from previous years (Statista, 2023). This demographic has a significant presence on the platform, particularly in the age group of 25 to 34, which is the largest user group at 27.7% (Ibid, 2023).

Additionally, women dominate nearly 83.9% of user-generated content (UGC) on Instagram globally, with Millennials contributing to over 30% of these posts (DataReportal, 2023). Independent restaurants frequently leverage UGC by partnering with food influencers and encouraging customers to share their dining experiences, particularly targeting this demographic (Ibid, 2023).

Given these trends, the criteria for participating in the study were appropriately set to include being female, a Millennial, an active Instagram user, and a resident of Ireland.

4.1.3.4. Theoretical Saturation

The concept of theoretical saturation was first introduced by Glaser and Strauss (1967) in their work of Grounded Theory and became pivotal in qualitative research methods. According to Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2012), theoretical saturation can be achieved when further data collection does not uncover new properties relevant to a category, indicating that the categories are properly developed and their interrelationships validated (Strauss and Corbin, 1998). Starks and Trinidad (2007) describe it as the point where the data fully represents the complete range of constructs within the theory. Regardless of the specific definitions, both perspectives underscore the critical role of theoretical saturation in deriving important insights related to the research topic. According to Fusch and Ness (2015) failing to reach saturation can compromise research quality, however, Morse (2015) views it as essential for ensuring rigorous results in qualitative research. The theoretical saturation concept can be integrated into both participant sampling and data coding stages of the Grounded Theory. Bryman (2012) states that saturation involves integrating sampling, data collection, and data analysis, rather than treating them as distinct stages. To adhere to these standards in this research, interviews continued until no new themes or topics emerged, ensuring the comprehensiveness of the research.

4.1.4. Layer Four: Research Method

In the “Research Onion” model presented by Saunders et al. (2019), two primary data collection and analysis methods are highlighted: the mono method and the multi-method. The mono method involves using a single data source, relying on either a quantitative or qualitative research design for analysis. However, the multi-method gathers and analyses data from various sources, offering a more complex but comprehensive approach that enables multiple perspectives and interpretations. Despite the advantages of the multi-

method, this study is focused on a mono-method due to time constraints and limited resources. Consequently, the research employed a qualitative approach, specifically through in-depth interviews for data collection.

4.1.5. Layer Five: Time Horizons

In the “Research Onion” model, two separate time horizons are identified, with their suitability depending on the specific nature of each study. According to Saunders et al. (2019), this study employs a cross-sectional approach, given the time constraints associated with completing a dissertation within a limited timeframe. However, if the study were designed to be extended or revisited over a longer period to observe changes over time, it would be described as having a longitudinal time horizon, as noted by Goddard and Melville (2004).

4.1.6. Layer Six: Data Collection and Data Analysis

The last layer of the “Research Onion,” as developed by Saunders et al. (2019), highlights the interconnected and interactive aspects of qualitative data collection and analysis.

4.1.6.1. Data Collection

For this project’s proposal, a qualitative research method was selected, utilising in-depth interviews as the primary data collection tool. Semi-structured open-ended questions were developed to align with the study’s main objectives and to encourage participants to share their thoughts and opinions freely. Interviewees were randomly selected from Dublin over two weeks, spanning late June to the first week of July 2024. Upon meeting the participants, the study’s topic was introduced, and permission to record the interviews was obtained. The interviews were then conducted using two types of recording and transcribing software: “Microsoft Teams” when conducting interviews online and “Otter.ai” when having interviews in person. In both methods, supplementary notes were taken to facilitate the subsequent data analysis. Themes discussed during interviews included Instagram content, User-generated content, types of content, reviews, electronic word-of-mouth, the

restaurant industry, and decision-making. Prior to interviewing the target demographic, the questions were tested with students in class to ensure they effectively addressed the study's objectives.

4.1.6.1. Data Analysis

Qualitative data, being non-standardised and non-numerical, presents challenges in analysing large and complex sets of textual information. Each participant's unique opinions allow for various interpretations of each response. To begin analysing the collected data the interviews were voice-recorded and transcribed into individual Word documents. Adopting a rigorous approach based on the inductive process of Grounded Theory, as previously explained, enhances the study's credibility. The initial stage of Grounded Theory, described by Charmaz (2006) as "initial coding", involves breaking down the data into conceptual units and assigning labels. These units can range from single words to several sentences and paragraphs, making the research more manageable and focused. The next step, "focused coding", involves re-evaluating the initial data and comparing units to test which codes will categorise larger data segments effectively. Strauss and Corbin (1998) further elaborate on Grounded Theory with "axial coding", which rearranges data to identify relationships that emerged during initial coding, and "selective coding", which develops principal categories and subcategories over time. According to Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2012), Charmaz's (2006) version of Grounded Theory is more flexible and constructivist, relying on the interaction between researchers' and participants' interpretations to construct social contexts. Therefore, this study followed Charmaz's approach continuing the coding process until no new themes or topics emerged, ensuring thorough analysis and reliable conclusions.

4.2. Ethical Considerations

When conducting the study, researchers may encounter challenges in accessing participants or organisations, making it essential to address ethical considerations in the research design.

According to Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2012), studies that pose risks of “embarrassment, pain, harm, or any other kind of disadvantage” to participants should be reevaluated. Participants have the right to privacy, confidentiality, anonymity, and voluntary participation, including the right to withdraw at any time. These principles are consistent with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) in Europe, which requires researchers to obtain participants’ consent to collect and store personal data. In this study, following the National College of Ireland’s ‘Ethical Guidelines and Procedures for Research Involving Human Participants’, interview participants received an “information sheet” outlining the study topic and a “participant consent form” for written consent to participate in the interview.

4.3. Limitations

This study faced some limitations due to its cross-sectional design, characterised by a limited timeframe and a qualitative mono-method approach, which can be time-intensive. As a result, it was not feasible to employ multiple methods, such as focus groups, which are known to enhance the reliability and validity of qualitative research findings (Yin, 2009). The time required for data collection during interviews, as well as the subsequent analysis and coding, was substantial. A longitudinal study on the same topic could provide more comprehensive insights. Furthermore, there is a scarcity of articles and journals examining the influence of social media on purchase decisions through Instagram, which may lead to weaker and less consistent criticism. Nonetheless, the findings and conclusions of this study highlight its importance from a marketing perspective and suggest that this topic requires further research.

4.4. Conclusion

This study adopted an interpretivist epistemological framework and an inductive approach, utilising a qualitative mono-method. The primary objective was to understand the consumer behaviour influencing the purchase decisions of Millennial Instagram users

regarding the Irish independent restaurant industry. To achieve this, semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted. Thematic coding was employed to analyse the data and produce reliable and valid findings, following the Grounded Theory methodology outlined by Charmaz (2006). To ensure rigour and high quality, theoretical saturation, as defined by Glaser and Strauss (1967), was applied during the coding process and in establishing the participant sample. The methodology followed the “Research Onion” model proposed by Saunders et al. (2019), ensuring a structured and credible research process.

Chapter 5. Findings, Analysis and Discussion

According to the methodology chapter, following the completion of interviews, the gathered data has been analysed to identify shared patterns in participants' responses and to advance the research objectives. This chapter presents the recurring themes identified during interviews, integrating them with existing literature and participants' statements to enhance understanding of the findings connecting to each topic and the study's objectives.

5.1. Research Objective One

To explore the underlying motivations and reasons why female Millennials engage with content related to Irish independent restaurants on Instagram.

The interview's themes arose: Instagram content, connection, recommendation, communication, restaurants, content engagement, purchase decision, statistics

The first finding at the start of the interview was about motivations and reasons for interacting with Irish local restaurants' Instagram pages. According to Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) and Adeola et al. (2020) mentioned in the literature review, there are many reasons for people to interact with content on Instagram, such as social interactions and personal interests. Moreover, as stated by Phua, Jin, and Kim (2017) consumers more often engage with content that resonates with their values, identity, and beliefs.

“All my Instagram feed is kind of like full of places where to go, places to visit, places to eat.”

“So if I see their content before I actually arrive there, I would feel more familiar and less like a stranger.”

P1, 35 years old, from Russia, living in Ireland for more than 8 years.

“So like I have a folder on Instagram like you can save stuff and and if I see some restaurant or a cafe that I wanna visit I save that post to that folder and I'd say I have maybe 4 posts in there so it's not a very long list.”

P2, 29 years old, from Russia, living in Ireland for more than 7 years.

“I think the first factor is just the connection with the person recommending the place. So if I know this person really well, and I know that their tastes are kind of similar to mine, then I might even not check the Google reviews. I might just go there because I know that we are kind of connected to this person. Or another factor might be something unusual about the place itself. So it can be the interior or it might be as the menu so something really interesting on the menu. Or it might be just the location in which it's in. And then the third one, I would say it's maybe like the kind of the style or the account itself so if the target the Instagram account was the restaurant, I usually would check it as well. And I would see how they know how they talk about the restaurant in which styles that communicate with users. Because usually you can see, like use the restaurant is engaging in the comments. And it's really like a really positive sign for me. Like if someone you know left a feedback in the comments. I usually check that and it kind of contributes to my decision to go there. And in general, if I like the style of the Instagram page that really helps me to make a decision as well. Like if it kind of resonates with my kind of post statistics of how I think about, you know, a beautiful place like you know, going for brunch or something like that would help a lot.”

P3, 33 years old, from Russia, living in Ireland for more than 5 years.

Overall, the analysis of the interviews reveals several key motivations driving female Millennials in Ireland to engage with Instagram content from independent Irish restaurants. So, interviewees, P1 and P2 emphasise that Instagram interactions help to discover new places to visit, create a feeling of familiarity and allow them to prepare before actually arriving at the restaurant. Next, P2 mentions the ability to save and organise posts, which helps to indicate a practical approach in planning visits to these restaurants. However, P2

mentions that the list is not long, which questions Instagram as the top choice for interactions with restaurants overall. Finally, P3 highlights the importance of personal recommendations. Unique aspects of the restaurant, and the engagement style of the restaurant's Instagram page. These attributes collectively show how Instagram content effectively attracts Irish millennials' interest in communication with Irish independent restaurants.

5.2. Research Objective Two

To investigate how engagement with Instagram content influences the purchase intentions of female Millennials towards dining in Irish independent restaurants.

The interview's themes arose: research, reviews, rating, recommendations, decision.

According to Godey et al. (2016), Hudson et al. (2015) and Araujo et al. (2020) social media engagement has been shown to significantly impact consumer purchase intentions.

“So it depends if it's a new restaurant in Ireland, I'll probably do a good bit of research before I commit to that, and for that reason I might use not Instagram only, but also like Google reviews and maybe even TripAdvisor.”

P1, 35 years old, from Russia, living in Ireland for more than 8 years.

“So just reviews and and not only like the rating and in general, but also how many reviews and whether or not the businesses respond to to the critique that is posted and and then if it is not in Dublin, then I just follow New York Times reviews so they do not only review New York Times they review restaurants globally and that's that's like 95% of the restaurants that I go to like New York Times recommended ones.”

“So like, it (e.g. Instagram) is not a consistent source of recommendation. So if like for example, let's say I find out tomorrow is that I'm going. And I'm going for dinner. I'm not

gonna open Instagram and hope that someone posts a story that was a good recommendation and so.”

P2, 29 years old, from Russia, living in Ireland for more than 7 years.

“I really like only all these accounts, I think they are genius in terms of marketing, social media marketing because their posts are not really substantial. So they don't have a lot of insider information about oat milk but they just play a busy visit concept. And I think they just go beyond the traditional approach. And they experiment with the visit text with the copy with the visual so it's like always something unusual. Just makes you stop, do you kind of like checking their Instagram every once in a while or you like to follow them and they appear in your feed. They appear in my feed I think I rarely check commercial accounts in purpose”

“So I'm a like a very factual person. So I like to read reviews and I like to read opinions from other people. So I make a decision to go somewhere only when it's coming from a person that I respect to where I know, so it might be a friend who went to a restaurant and shared their genuine recommendation. It can be a blogger that I have been following for a while, and it really trusts their, you know, their opinion. So essentially, based on their recommendation, I might decide to go to a specific restaurant. I wouldn't say that it happens very often. So usually, when I see something that attracts my attention, I just add it to my bookmarks on Google Maps, and then when I'm in the area, I can just decide to go there.”

“I saw a story from my friend who went to a restaurant that I really loved in Dublin, so it kind of reminded me to go there. You remember, we've been there for brunch.”

P3, 33 years old, from Russia, living in Ireland for more than 5 years.

Analysing the interviews, further insights were found. Engaging Instagram content can significantly impact the dining choice of Irish female Millennials; however, it has always been mentioned in the collaboration with different review sources. P1 and P2 emphasise

the role of comprehensive research, including Google Reviews and publications with decent reputation such as the New York Times, rather than relying only on Instagram. However, Instagram has innovative visual marketing strategies, as mentioned by P3, that capture attention and inspire interest, even if it is not always the primary decision-making tool. For Irish female Millennials, recommendations from people they know and social proof from influencers on Instagram also play a crucial role, providing a reminder to visit a local restaurant. Having the mix of visual appeal, social influence, and thorough research Instagram shapes female Irish millennials' purchase intentions in Irish independent restaurants, however missing the availability to share the reviews, for which consumers go to the other platforms.

5.3. Research Objective Three

To identify the types of Instagram content (e.g. photos, videos, stories) that are most influential in shaping purchase intentions among female Millennials.

Interviews themes arose: video content, photo content, content engagement, text content, visual content, Instagram content, authenticity, marketing content, Instagram stories, interaction, feeling

As mentioned by Ashley and Tuten (2015) in the literature review different formats of content on social media. According to Kim and Ko (2012) visual content like photos and videos often creates stronger emotional responses and higher engagement from consumers rather than text.

“I think uh, video format, probably it could be just like a short video of the location and the food they do. Or maybe a short video where they're talking to their staff, to their guests? I don't know or just a video of the guests having dinners and having fun conversations and stuff like that. Photos would work as well, but because I think they are more static compared to the videos, I find them a bit. Can I say and maybe less engaging

or less can umm? I mean, they won't push you to do something or like to look up that place. Maybe as much as videos might do."

P1, 35 years old, from Russia, living in Ireland for more than 8 years.

"And so I think it's well, it's definitely not videos for me. So I don't watch videos that often. I'd say like the best option for me would be like a picture and a long text. So I really like to read stuff and when it comes to the text I would like to see a story behind the dish or some historical detail about the building of the restaurant or maybe something like a special menu."

"So like a historical facts about the restaurant or maybe a chef's perspective on what went into the dish, like, you know why he's making the dish. So like, there's a guy on Twitter and I've never been to his place because he owns a seafood restaurant and I don't eat seafood, but and he posts primarily about things like the ingredients and where he gets, where he gets them, local suppliers, et cetera, et cetera."

"And when it comes to visual content, I don't mind if it's polished, but I would really like the text to be authentic. So like something a chef would actually write and without too much editing from like chief perspective or like marketing perspective and visual."

P2, 29 years old, from Russia, living in Ireland for more than 7 years.

"I actually mostly engaged with stories. I almost never read posts right now. Only when I'm really bored. And I almost never go to reels or like the discovery section."

"I think in general, I like the content to be at least somehow useful. So essentially, you're sharing not a lot of interesting information, but at least something to engage this when it's just beautiful content. It's like it's just additional noise, which I don't really care about right now because I guess there are too many really nice pictures and nice videos. So if I don't get any value from the content, it's like, I'm likely to just unfollow this account. I'm really looking to get something out of it. So either some communication with a brand or

maybe some tips, how to make coffee, or maybe some kind of fun stories or something really.”

“So I usually would only check stories from a restaurant only if it's somewhere not very far from me. So I go somewhere often so that I can check out the agenda and just go there. So for example, there is a pub nearby where I leave and I would check those stories to see what's happening there because I can just go there. It's five minutes from my house, and it's just easy, but I will not do that for a restaurant, which I need to travel to like for 30 minutes and I don't go there often. So like stories are only for updates where I'm like a local resident or something. Then for restaurants. In general, I would typically go to my boss so I would typically just take a look at their feed, just to have a general feeling of how they think about their aesthetics and their communication with customers. I do not engage with reels as much in general. And I think like in general when I'm trying to choose a restaurant, I won't be checking serials. I will just take a look at their kind of insider view of how it feels to be there in this restaurant. And maybe some yeah some interesting updates on what's going on there. As I said, I think in general, like I like to go to different restaurants. So I kind of, I'm always up for trying something new. So it would be too much, too much content from different restaurants in my feed if I would just follow every one of them. So I'm typically limiting this content to just interaction when I need to choose. So I just go to their feed, have a general feeling and it's okay”

P3, 33 years old, from Russia, living in Ireland for more than 5 years.

The thematic analysis uncovers a variety of preferences amongst female Millennials regarding Instagram content that impacts their purchase intentions toward dining choices in Irish independent restaurants. P1 finds short videos of the restaurant environment and interactions with customers to be the most engaging and influential. However, P2 prefers photos with long, authentic texts that provide values and insights about restaurant personnel or menus. P3 primarily engages with Instagram stories, aiming to gather updates for local restaurants, at the same time they value practical and useful content over just aesthetic posts.

5.4. Research Objective Four

To assess the role of user-generated content (UGC) in influencing perceptions and decisions related to dining in Dublin independent restaurants among female Millennials.

Interview's themes arose: user-generated content, reviews, genuine and fake, video content, photo content, text, content credibility, authenticity, professional blogger, artificial, advertising, unprofessional footage

As mentioned in the literature review, user-generated content is perceived as more authentic and trustworthy content rather than firm-generated content (Muntinga, Moorman, and Smit, 2011; Eggers et al., 2013). The research has indicated that UGC can significantly influence consumer attitudes and purchase intentions (Patterson, 2012).

“Yeah, it's again kind of the same with like if you compare it with other sources where you can live reviews. Yeah, you can't be 100% sure that they (e.g. User Generated Content) are genuine and not fake or they didn't pay these customers for those reviews. Yeah. It's kind of like, yeah, a bit of sometimes you might have that at the back of your mind and I think it's OK because it's just like, like anything else. I mean, it's not just about restaurants, other areas as well. So I'd say it's good.”

P1, 35 years old, from Russia, living in Ireland for more than 8 years.

“So if I see like, uh, rest, uh business reposting like reviews or customer generated like. Texts in I might feel more interested in visiting, but if it's like more of you know, user generated videos or photos, I don't think it will affect me much.”

P2, 29 years old, from Russia, living in Ireland for more than 7 years.

“I think in general, I prefer user generated content, because it adds more credibility. And it kind of adds authenticity to the content. At the same time. If it's an upscale restaurant like a Michelin star restaurant, I was kind of expecting the professional footage as well, because it also adds credibility in some way that they kind of invest in production of this content. But for a coffee shop, I would not expect any professional shots. And I would rather look for some shots from someone visiting this coffee shop and just sharing their authentic view.”

“I mean, that was the story from my friend. So essentially, that was the user generated content, but also sometimes I see some restaurants promoting some user posting a review about their restaurant, and they just made an ad out of it. And that just leads me to, you know, to explore this restaurant more because it feels a bit more authentic. But I guess if it's, if it's created by a professional blogger, I kind of trust this less because it feels a bit more artificial. So it feels like a paid advertising rather than a genuine review. And in this case, I kind of skip it as an ad, but if it feels really genuine like someone doing really unprofessional footage and just talking, you know, and sharing their views, then in this case, I might be interested to explore. But also sometimes I also follow those kinds of aggregator accounts which share some interesting places in London, for example, and they kind of share their views, different places they go to and they do really nice kind of trials of different items on the menu, and I trust the editorial team. So in this case, I would be quite open to explore those restaurants as well because I know that they usually would share an honest review or someplace. Okay, good.”

P3, 33 years old, from Russia, living in Ireland for more than 5 years.

The analysis of interviews for the fourth objective highlights that user-generated content plays a significant yet nuanced role in impacting dining decisions among female Millennials regarding Irish independent restaurants. P1 shows scepticism about the authenticity of user-generated content posted on Instagram from the firm, noting the possibility of fake or paid reviews. P2, with the opposite opinion, is more impacted by text-based reviews and reposts by businesses but finds videos and photos less impactful. P3 values user-generated content for its authenticity and credibility, especially for casual

dining, but expects professional content for upscale restaurants. Finally, genuine, relatable, and credible user-generated content can positively affect perceptions and dining choices, though its impact can change based on content type and context.

5.5. Research Objective Five

To generate recommendations for marketing strategies tailored to effectively engage female Millennials on Instagram and encourage dining in Dublin independent restaurants.

The interview's themes arose: content suggestions, video content, attention, photo, text, explore, restaurant, inspiration, dish, professional content

As mentioned by Tuten and Solomon (2017) in the literature review, effective social media marketing requires strategies that resonate with the target audience's preferences and behaviours (Tuten and Solomon, 2017; Harrigan et al., 2017).

“It would be a suggestion for all of the places in Dublin, but I'd say probably more video content in terms of, yeah, can be shorts or reels or something like that, because I think they don't have to be super long. Like a few minutes long, they could be even like under a minute, but I think it does. Umm, definitely grab more attention rather than just a photo and some text.”

P1, 35 years old, from Russia, living in Ireland for more than 8 years.

“So, uh, like chefs, even waiters especially, you know, with the at kind of like Gordon Ramsey house kitchens situation or like the bear, you know, like chefs are very often super involved in the restaurant marketing because the profile of the chef usually guides

the the menu and the style and the the target audience of the restaurant. So it would be really nice to get to know the chef and his team, his or her team.”

P2, 29 years old, from Russia, living in Ireland for more than 7 years.

“I think it depends on the type of the restaurant because I would maybe divide them into first of all like local versus one off. So like restaurants that you go to typically and regularly versus restaurants that you would go to just to know, explore and to try something new. Because for restaurants that I go to often I would like to not to see content about their interior or about the menu because I already know that but rather some updates on things like what's on the agenda? What are they planning to do? What's happening? You know, maybe some fun facts or something funny, like something to engage with. Or maybe even just having a forum to share feedback and to you know, to share some suggestions. And restaurants feature more of a one off. I would expect content about the kind of introducing them to me as a customer. So kind of sharing the atmosphere in general feels like maybe some interesting items on the menu which are bestsellers or some things that they recently introduced or the inspiration that they got for this particular dish. And then the second kind of categorization I would use is maybe something that is more casual, like a coffee shop or like a lunch restaurant to go to for lunch. And in this case, I would like to have quite factual information about what kind of offers they have and maybe seeing more reviews from the users, like user generated content then reposting someone else tagging them versus like more upscale restaurants. Like if I'm choosing an upscale restaurant for fine dining like in this case, I would like to see a really professional content to be more confident that it will be like a really amazing evening. Like an amazing time.”

P3, 33 years old, from Russia, living in Ireland for more than 5 years.

After careful analysis, we can conclude that for effective interaction between female Millennials in Ireland and independent Irish restaurants, marketing strategies on Instagram should focus on dynamic and diverse content. P1 suggests publishing more Reels (vertical

videos) to capture the attention of the target audience. P2 emphasises the importance of featuring chefs and their teams, which can personalise the restaurants' experience and highlight their characteristics for the target audience. The last interviewee P3 recommends connecting content to the type of the restaurant: local spots should share updates and interactive content, while upscale venues should focus on professional visuals and detailed introductions to the menu and atmosphere. As stated by all participants, the mix of UGC and professional content can gain the expected engagement from Irish female Millennials.

Chapter 6. Conclusion and Recommendations

The main goal and rationale for this study was to investigate how content engagement on Instagram can influence the purchase decisions of female Millennials regarding independent restaurants in Ireland. By conducting in-depth interviews with Irish female Millennials, we found that user-generated content plays a crucial role in fostering content engagement on Instagram. By posting real experiences shot by consumers themselves, independent restaurants in Ireland can attract more female Millennial consumers. Also, a variety of content has a particularly positive impact on purchase and visiting intentions. Millennials seek information about what they want to visit on the Internet, particularly on Instagram, interacting with different types of content – user-generated content, firm-generated content, photos, videos, and texts.

So, the first objective *“to explore the underlying motivations and reasons why female Millennials engage with content related to Irish independent restaurants on Instagram.”* has been explored in research. There are several different motivations why female Millennials in Ireland interact with content from independent restaurants in Ireland such as discovering new places to visit, preparation before the visit, and the option to save and organise posts. Overall, we can see the emerging interest in communicating with independent restaurants’ pages on Instagram from female Millennials in Ireland. From a business perspective, we can recommend independent restaurants to consistently invest their time into Instagram as a promotional tool for their services, posting engaging for attracting Irish female Millennials.

The second objective *“to investigate how engagement with Instagram content influences the purchase intentions of female Millennials towards dining in Irish independent restaurants”* gave an understanding of the correlation between content engagement and purchase decisions regarding the restaurant industry. As a result, we can see that not only Instagram predominantly influence the purchase decisions of female Millennials when it comes to the choice of dining. All participants were involved in exploring the Instagram pages of restaurants in Ireland, however, services such as TripAdvisor, Google Maps, Google Reviews, and the New York Times came up in conversations. Overall, as a general recommendation, we can provide insight for independent restaurants that they need to not

only maintain Instagram accounts but also promote their Google Maps page by inviting customers to share reviews.

The third objective *“to identify the types of Instagram content (e.g. photos, videos, stories) that are most influential in shaping purchase intentions among female Millennials”* uncovered several valuable insights about female Millennials' content preferences on Instagram. The variety of content preferences mentioned by interviewees such as video, text, photo, and stories, can prove that the Instagram page of a restaurant must be filled with different content types to be relevant for all female Millennials.

The fourth objective *“to assess the role of user-generated content (UGC) in influencing perceptions and decisions related to dining in Dublin independent restaurants among female Millennials”* explored some insights about user-generated content preferences and how they impact purchase decisions amongst women Millennials in Ireland. After thematic analysis we can see that user-generated content can play a significant role in content engagement, however, some respondents showed scepticism about the authenticity of user-generated content, doubting the possibility of fake and paid reviews. So as an overall recommendation user-generated content can be used as a tactic for a content strategy of independent restaurants, however, the content strategy must contain professional firm-generated content as well.

The fifth objective *“to generate recommendations for marketing strategies tailored to effectively engage female Millennials on Instagram and encourage dining in Dublin independent restaurants”* opened respondents to share their opinions, providing valuable insights from the target audience about what content they prefer to engage with. Firstly, short vertical videos (Reels) can leverage the awareness of the brand on Instagram. Secondly, for independent restaurants it is highly important to feature their chef and staff, creating pieces of content showcasing people who work in the restaurant. Thirdly, it is essential to divide the type of content the establishment produces, so for a local pub or coffee store it is rather appropriate to publish updates and interactive content, engaging people to learn about what is going on. However, for the expensive one-off places, it is better to show the overall experience, menu and atmosphere of the place.

General recommendation for independent restaurants in Ireland is to mix different types of content whether it is UGC, FGC, photos, videos, or texts to maximise the reach of the proper audience.

6.0. Recommendations for future academic research

The topic of content engagement on Instagram regarding purchase decisions of female Millennials in the restaurant industry has been studied by a few researchers, so we can see the potential for future research. Moreover, social media networks have a changing nature of trends, so consumer behaviour is better monitored often. Apart from that, we have realised that there is a lack of longitudinal studies, so the new features from social media platforms can be tracked in terms of their engagement with customers. There are some recommendations for future research:

1. Due to a lack of resources, such as time constraints, current research has been done only on three in-depth interviewees, so future research can be conducted on a bigger sample in the future to build up a more relevant list of recommendations.
2. After careful thematical analysis of a bigger sample's responses the hypothesis on how the content engagement on Instagram influences the purchase decisions of Female millennials in the restaurant industry can be developed, and in future research, it can be proved or disproved by conducting quantitative research.
3. To further explore Instagram as a tool for the promotion of independent restaurant industry services, the sample can be extended to Generation Z. Centennials are more hyperconnected than Millennials, so it is crucial to monitor their consumer behaviour as well.
4. During current research in every interview the theme of vertical videos (Reels) appeared of any kind, as it has become a big new trend for consumer behaviour. Future research can be done regarding vertical video tools and their content engagement possibilities.

5. The same research can be conducted in different countries for a better understanding of cultural differences in how purchase decisions are connected to content engagement on Instagram regarding the independent restaurant industry.

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Appendices

Appendix A. Interview questions

Introduction (5 minutes)

- **Objective:** Build rapport, explain the interview purpose, and obtain consent.
- **Questions/Activities:**
 - Briefly introduce yourself and your research.
 - Explain the purpose of the interview.
 - Obtain verbal consent to record the interview (if applicable).
 - Ask the participant to introduce themselves (name, age, occupation, etc.).

Section 1: Understanding Motivations (10 minutes)

- **Objective:** Explore the underlying motivations for engaging with Instagram content related to Dun Laoghaire independent restaurants.
- **Questions:**
 - How often do you use Instagram?
 - What kind of content do you usually engage with on Instagram?
 - Do you follow Instagram accounts of any independent restaurant in Dublin? What attracts you to follow and engage with them?
 - Can you describe any specific instances where a post from a restaurant caught your attention? What about it was appealing?

Section 2: Examining Purchase Intentions (15 minutes)

- **Objective:** Investigate how engagement with Instagram content influences the participant's purchase intentions.
- **Questions:**
 - How often do you decide where to dine based on Instagram posts?
 - Can you recall a time when an Instagram post influenced your decision to visit a restaurant in Dublin?
 - What factors in the Instagram content contribute most to your decision to dine at a particular restaurant?
 - How does Instagram content compare to other sources (e.g., online reviews, recommendations) in influencing your dining choices?

Section 3: Content Preferences (10 minutes)

- **Objective:** Identify the types of Instagram content that are most influential in shaping purchase intentions.
- **Questions:**
 - What type of content (photos, videos, stories, etc.) do you find most appealing from Dublin restaurants on Instagram?
 - Do you prefer professionally shot content or user-generated content? Why?
 - How important are captions, hashtags, and other text elements in the posts for your engagement and decision-making?
 - Are there any specific themes or styles of content that resonate more with you?

Section 4: Impact of User-generated Content (10 minutes)

- **Objective:** Assess the role of user-generated content in influencing perceptions and decisions.
- **Questions:**
 - How do you feel about user-generated content (e.g., customer photos, reviews) on a restaurant's Instagram page?
 - Do you trust user-generated content more or less than the restaurant's own posts? Why?
 - Can you share an example where user-generated content influenced your decision to visit a restaurant?
 - How does user-generated content affect your perception of the restaurant's authenticity and quality?

Section 5: Recommendations for Marketing (10 minutes)

- **Objective:** Generate recommendations for marketing strategies to engage female millennials on Instagram.
- **Questions:**
 - What suggestions do you have for Dublin restaurants to improve their Instagram content?
 - How can restaurants encourage more engagement from followers like you?
 - Are there any specific types of promotions or campaigns on Instagram that you find particularly compelling?
 - What role do influencers play in your decision-making, and how can restaurants leverage this?

Conclusion (5 minutes)

- **Objective:** Wrap up the interview, thank the participant, and provide next steps.
- **Questions/Activities:**
 - Thank the participant for their time and insights.
 - Ask if they have any final thoughts or questions.
 - Explain the next steps in your research process (e.g., analysis, follow-up).
 - Offer to share the research findings with the participant if they are interested.