

TripAdvisor reviews vs. Instagram posts: Influence on consumer restaurant choice from Viennese perception

Bachelor Thesis for Obtaining the Degree

Bachelor of Science

International Management

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Affidavit

I hereby affirm that this Bachelor's Thesis represents my own written work and that I have used no sources and aids other than those indicated. All passages quoted from publications or paraphrased from these sources are properly cited and attributed.

The thesis was not submitted in the same or in a substantially similar version, not even partially, to another examination board and was not published elsewhere.

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Abstract

Online review platforms have become significantly important for consumers' restaurant choice and they are gaining more influence than ever before. Instagram posts and TripAdvisor reviews affect consumers' decision and perception about restaurants due to a very fast transmission of electronic Word of Mouth and valuable user generated content. This thesis aims to research what platform Vienna residents' use for their restaurant selection process and the impact of social media marketing on their restaurant decision. The research question to be answered in this thesis is:

What has more influence on consumers' restaurant choice from Viennese perception: TripAdvisor reviews or Instagram posts?

This research was conducted through an online questionnaire that was answered by 130 participants in total. The close ended questionnaire analyzed what is the preferred social media platform in the restaurant selection process and the importance of information distribution through the platforms. Collected quantitative data were analyzed with the statistical tests which helped the author to determine the relationship and difference between variables in the predefined hypotheses. Initially, this research used convenience sampling because the author focused on answers from Vienna residents.

The findings of the research indicate that Instagram posts have more influence on consumers' restaurant choice from Viennese perception. The argument that Instagram is used rather than TripAdvisor for a restaurant selection process is found to be of a significant difference. Moreover, participants indicated that there is a significant relationship in having an Instagram account, following restaurants on Instagram and in quality of content and information distributed through this platform. This research provides significant managerial implications as it emphasizes the immense importance of social media marketing in restaurant business.

Key words: electronic Word of Mouth (eWOM), user generated content (UGC), restaurant, social media marketing, Instagram, TripAdvisor

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Abbreviations

UGC- User generated content

eWOM- electronic Word of Mouth

WOM- Word of Mouth

1 Introduction

1.1 Background information

The expansion of digital technology completely changed human reality. The invention of the Internet and social media platforms comprehensively influence the way consumers communicate and socialize (Salleh et al., 2016). New marketing paradigm that was developed by the social media platforms relates to the fact that customers frequently share their opinion and experience online (Gretzel & Yoo, 2013). This paradigm is known as a user generated content (UGC) and it is defined as an online networking platform for evaluation of customers' experience about specific products (Moe & Schweidel, 2012). Nowadays, taking photos in restaurants and posting meals on social media platforms became a common thing (Tucker et al., 2017). People come to restaurants, look at the menu, try food, take a photo and write their individual opinion about the place they have visited. Customer's review, usually very honest, of the dining experience tends to massively influence the decision of other customers and their future restaurant choice (Goyal et al., 2019).

Social media is widely present in the hospitality industry worldwide (Tucker et al., 2017) Many organizations, hotels and restaurants use this tool as a way to advertise their brand and to reach out to their target customers. Online review platforms and advancement of electronic word of mouth (eWOM) contributed to the recent technological development by which people today are mostly influenced. Vienna is the capital city of Austria and it has a large number of restaurants with various cuisine types. There are many different types of restaurants in the city with historical, modern, luxurious, vegetarian and traditional characteristics that suit different customers' preferences. According to Statista (2020b) people in Austria spent more than \$31, 649 million on restaurants and hotels in 2019 and it was forecasted that the amount would rise even more in the future years. Among a variety of social media networks, Instagram application and TripAdvisor platform appeared to be very popular in online reviews due to the enormous amount of people who use them daily. Reasons for Vienna residents to use online review platforms, while making the restaurant choice, are because of the notable level of perceived usefulness due to the timely and easy way of platform's use.

1.2 Research question and aim

Considering the proceeding discussion, it is clear that social media platforms have a lot of potential in the restaurant field, especially in consumer generated reviews of dining experience. However, there has not been a lot of research on where Viennese tend to look for restaurant recommendations and which platform has the most influence on their restaurant choice. The goal of this research is to provide a better understanding of restaurants social media marketing and user online review influence on customer restaurant choice. Additionally, this research aims to investigate in which platform Vienna residences' have more trust for their restaurant choice: Instagram or TripAdvisor. This study could be interesting for the restaurant owners and managers who want to improve restaurant popularity. The central research question of this thesis is:

What has more influence on consumers' restaurant choice from Viennese perception: TripAdvisor reviews or Instagram posts?

1.3 Research process

The topic of this thesis is broadly discussed in many journal articles and academic books where authors study the influence of eWOM on customers' buying behavior and what factors customers consider when making a restaurant choice. In order to comprehensively answer the stated research question of this thesis and fill out the research gap a quantitative research approach was applied. A questionnaire-based survey has been developed by the author and filled out by a sample of 130 respondents. Collected data of the survey was used to clearly analyze the hypothesis of the research.

This thesis is structured as follows: First of all, a broad overview of already existing literature, together with the key definitions of the important concepts related to the thesis topic, is presented in the section of literature review. Next, the appropriate type of methodology for this research is elaborated as well as the design of the online survey. Moreover, data collection and data analysis are also identified in the section of methodology. Following the next section, results of the online survey are presented

in the two parts: sample description and inferential statistics. Findings of conducted research and hypothesis testing are explained in discussion section. Lastly, a conclusion of the research was made, limitations were identified and suggestions for future research were given. In addition, advices and managerial implications were also discussed in the conclusion section of the research.

2 Literature review

2.1 Online review platforms

The advancement of the Internet emerged in a wide range of virtual platforms such as social media. Social media is often defined as an “online social networking platform” that attracts billions of users worldwide and represents a virtual place where people “connect and communicate with others” (Wang et al., 2020, p. 1). This platform completely transformed the usual interaction from the traditional-offline communication to the online-instant communication (Clow & Baack, 2018). With continual change of new technology, marketing and customer behavior are also adjusting to the ‘new’ online environment. The innovative service of social media platforms has many benefits such as enabling customers to share their experience with others anytime and anywhere with the use of technological devices (Tucker et al., 2017). Additionally, review platforms serve as a recommendation and data storage of products’ information (Park et al., 2007). According to O’Connor (2008), during the decision-making process, the customer is in control of the information they are seeking and making, since virtual platforms are defined to be user-driven and non-linear. This feature established the consumer generated review platforms such as TripAdvisor and Instagram, where people post a photo, describe and rate the place they visited. Among many different topics tourism and restaurants appeared to be enormously popular in online discussions (Miguéns et al., 2008). These reviews happen to be more important than ever before and to significantly influence customer eating-out decisions (Tucker et al. 2017).

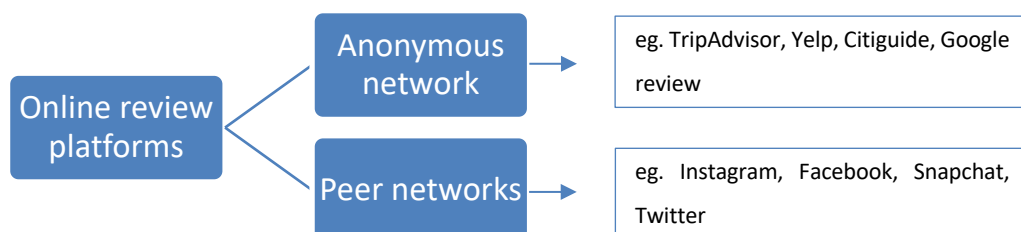


Figure 1: Framework of online review platforms

In addition, UGC platforms can be divided by the creator into two categories of peer and anonymous networks (Richards & Tiwari, 2014). According to Richards and Tiwari (2014) peer networks are used by the people whose identity is known and it includes networking with people that the user already knows or is familiar with them through various levels of connections. Examples of peer social platforms are Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, etc. Anonymous platforms involve an unidentified author of the content and his/her review is most of the time characterized as more honest (Richards & Tiwari, 2014). Examples of these platforms are online communities such as Yelp, TripAdvisor, Citiguide and others, where users are welcomed to share their opinion with other readers. In order to properly understand the relevance and function of TripAdvisor and Instagram platforms, it is essential to define them.

2.1.1 Definition of TripAdvisor

TripAdvisor is part of the American electronic-commerce company named Expedia and represents the world's biggest online platform of travelers and residents (O'Connor, 2010). Over the past decade this platform has grown and spread its usage all over the world in different languages (TripAdvisor 2013a, cited in Yoo et al., 2016). Additionally, TripAdvisor performed as a very popular platform considering Statista data (2020c) showing constant increase in user generated reviews from 200 million in 2014 to more than 859 million reviews and opinions shared in 2019. O'Connor (2008) clarifies that the purpose of TripAdvisor is to collect and distribute content created by customers about hotel and restaurant experiences. Besides collecting reviews, TripAdvisor also aims targeting customers and constantly improving its features in order to satisfy needs and requirements of both travelers and citizens globally (Yoo et al., 2016). This platform is available for customers' usage as an application for smartphones and on the website, and it serves as a place where people can easily read reviews, discover new places, compare prices and rate other locations that they visited.

In addition, TripAdvisor enables customers the most current information regarding the restaurants' location, contact information, photos of the place and the food

specialties. This platform contains an option to reserve a table online and restaurants' rating is classified in four categories of being food, service, value and atmosphere. The rating scale consists of 1 to 5 categories, where 1 rating star stands for unsatisfied, 5 stands for an amazing experience. All of the above-mentioned features classify TripAdvisor as a blog, social network and virtual community (O'Connor, 2008).

2.1.2 Definition of Instagram

Instagram is the most widely used social media network that was created in 2010 primarily for smartphones. Barker et al. (2017) claim that this platform experienced enormous growth from the moment of its implementation and that it had more than 100 million monthly users in 2015. This channel is available in the form of an application, but it can also be reached through a web page. The primary purpose of Instagram network was creating and sharing of users' photos and videos with followers, however due to the widespread use of the social media, especially with young adults, this application has experienced the usage expansion (Bahcecik et al., 2019). Currently, Instagram is used not only for leisure but also for business inquiries as a peer influential platform that is essential for business-to-customer and business-to-business businesses (Kingsnroth, 2019). Additionally, Instagram peer reviews are considered as reliable since they are created from the side of a familiar person unlike anonymously generated reviews (Richards & Tiwari, 2014). Instagram has a unique power of visual marketing and hashtag (#), that both significantly influence users and reaches the target audience (Tucker et al., 2017).

Based on the 2017 SM Benchmark report by RivalIQ (Tucker et al., 2017) Instagram indicates a significant engagement role in the Food & Beverage industry due to the high user engagement in posting, commenting and following food and restaurant accounts. Nowadays, people practice taking pictures of food and caption their opinion about the meal and location they visited. Currently, restaurants have created their business Instagram profiles as it appears to be essential for their business popularity and brand awareness. Often these profiles serve for reposting the customers post and contest creation as they generate higher follower reach and activity (Tucker et al.,

2017). In addition, these options serve to the restaurants as a cost effective way to reach and target new customers.

2.2 Social media marketing

To properly understand the purpose and benefits of social media marketing, it is necessary to define this phenomenon. Social media marketing is explained as advertising of a product or brand on online platforms with the use of digital techniques (Agarwal, 2020). Social media platforms became an essential part of successful marketing, since this platform is daily used by more than 3.6 billion people worldwide (Clement, 2020). This means it is most likely that every customer or potential customer is using this platform. Based on the recorded data by Clement (2020) the number of social media users have significantly grown in the past years and it is predicted that they will rise even more in the future due to the rapid worldwide digitalization. According to Kingsnorth (2019) it is important for businesses to be concerned about where their customers are and to get involved in the world of social media. Frequent use of social media intensified the power of its influence on users and increased the potential opportunities on the market (Bruning et al., 2020).

The following graph (Figure 2) shows the most discussed topics on social media platforms in Austria, based on the survey conducted by Statista Global Consumer Survey in 2020 (Statista, 2020a). People in Austria mostly searched and discussed "Vacation and travel" topics being equal to 27% and with the same yield of 21% they were interested in "Music", "Politics", "Movies and series" topics. Topics such as "Sports" and "Food and drinks" were reviewed by the smaller percentage of people, 20% and 18% respectively. Besides previously mentioned subjects at the social media platforms the following topics were as well present: "Fashion" (13%), "Books" (12%), "Art and culture" (11%), Beauty (11%) and Games (10%). Considering the fact that "Food and drinks" (18%) takes a 5th place in survey of the most researched topics on social media, one can claim that it is crucial for the restaurants and bars to have social media accounts and use it to spread their advertising and increase their brand awareness (Kingsnorth, 2019).

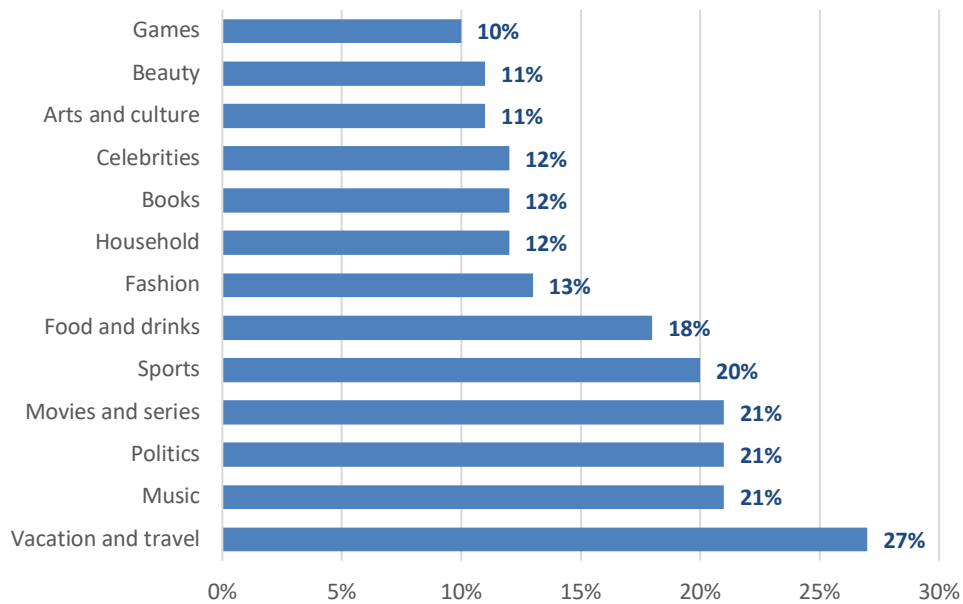


Figure 2: Most discussed topics on social media in Austria, May 2020 (Statista, 2020a)

The phenomenon of social media completely transformed traditional forms of marketing into cheaper and 24/7 available online marketing. The return on investment for social media campaigns are mostly higher than for traditional media advertising because this channel is free and inexpensive, although the creation of content tends to be costly (Kotler & Armstrong, 2018). Additionally, restaurants have an opportunity to show their menu and specialties in creative and more attempting ways by posting, filming and writing about their best meals. Customers are able to engage with the restaurant, provide their insight and shape their content by commenting on the posts and sharing their expectations and preferences (Kotler & Armstrong, 2018). Most importantly this tool enables restaurants to talk to their customers and develop a network with target customers.

For instance, every restaurant no matter where it is located, in the city center, close to offices, near the school or mountains needs to use social media marketing, which would target the right audience and allow its audience to have the right sort of experience. In the case of the restaurant located near the work, they should promote on the social networks quick lunch menus and happy hour, this should be different for the restaurant located in the mountain where the long family lunch options in a

comfortable surrounding should be advertised. But one thing is common for the two examples: no matter who they would like to attract locals, tourist, young adults or families, they should make a strong appearance on apps like TripAdvisor, Yelp, Google review listing, Facebook and Instagram as this is the way how the right client could be easily found (Tucker et al., 2017).

An example of a successful coordination of social media marketing is the Starbucks coffeehouse. According to Kotler and Armstrong (2018) its social media marketing team communicates with the consumers all around the world, including Austria as well, through 30 accounts on 12 social media platforms. Starbucks' team creates engaging content that attracts millions of customers daily before even entering the coffeehouse. This tends to be challenging but it creates significant success and high return on investment as stated by the Starbucks team *"Social media is not only about engaging customer, but it has also material impact on the business"* (Kotler & Armstrong, 2018, p.525). Engaging contests and coupons appear to attract more consumers to experience their coffee and increase the revenue (Jain & Shah, 2017). In fact, Starbucks introduced a recent "Tweet-a-coffee" campaign that enabled customer to give their friends a 5\$ gift card by posting a tweet with their friends using hashtag #tweetacoffee (Kotler & Armstrong, 2018). This campaign generated more than \$180,000 in less than one month of the campaign's start.

2.3 Electronic word of mouth (eWOM)

EWOM is an advanced concept that emerged from the traditional word of mouth and it is defined as "Informal communication between consumers over particular product or service" (Litvin et al. 2008, cited in Jeong & Jang, 2011, p. 356). Today, word of mouth (WOM) is transforming from physical to digital where 'electronic' in front of the concept represents usage of online platforms to spread informal reviews, comments and opinions of consumers (Verma & Yadav, 2020). In comparison to the traditional WOM, the eWOM enables consumers to access to the real-time and real-life information that were beforehand nonexistent (Sun et al., 2020). Jeong and Jang (2011, p. 356) described eWOM as an "innovative venue for gathering reliable information" since it gathers customers' online reviews which have a powerful

influence on consumer's future decision-making process. As reported by researchers Katz and Lazarsfeld (1955, cited in Verma & Yadav, 2020) WOM appears to have a powerful effect on the people along with a mass media, likewise advertising.

This concept has many characteristics such as the huge volume, ability to reach a significant number of users and anonymity (Dellarocas 2003, cited in Ismagilova et al., 2017). Use of the Internet in the concept of eWOM enabled users to write their honest opinion and to share the information with other consumers from all around the world through social media and other online platforms (Verma & Yadav, 2020). According to Varadarajan and Yadav (2002, cited in Verma & Yadav, 2020, p. 112) this concept changed the buying environment since now consumers are able to access "the comparative evaluation of product attributes" with use of technology.

EWOM as person-to-person communication, can be positive and negative (Zhang et al., 2010). Positive UGC is made by satisfied customers that are contented with the product or experience (Buttle 1998, cited in Ismagilova et al., 2017). Positive word of mouth appears to be important for many companies as Sun et al. (2020, p. 1) stated "proliferation of international brands across borders is a key contributor to the global economy". Negative WOM tends to be created from a dissatisfied consumer that is complaining about a product or service (Richins 1984, cited in Ismagilova et al., 2017).

The influence of eWOM is particularly important in the hospitality industry, since people tend to choose intangible services such as restaurant and hotel, that were previously recommended from the people they know or on an online platform (Jeong & Jang, 2011). This UGC helps diners and tourists to decide where to go and what to experience and according to Basri et al. (2016, p. 324) it is the "ultimate driver for success of restaurant". Based on Jeong and Jang's research (2011) customers' restaurant experiences are created by their subjective opinion of contemporary and former experiences. Restaurant customers tend to trust the comments published by former diners on social media platforms more than descriptions on restaurant websites (Pantelidis, 2010, cited in Mhlanga & Tichaawa, 2017). Positive WOM creates the positive brand image and as perceived by consumers high restaurant quality that affects the purchasing behavior in particular loyalty and positive WOM (Boulding et al. 1993, cited in Jeong & Jang, 2011).

2.4 Consumer choice

Consumer choice is explained as a customers' decision behavior towards purchase of a certain product or service (Danish et al., 2019). This construct tends to be specifically important to the marketers and business analysis as they persistently study customer behavior and aim to predict demand for the product (Bettman et al., 1998). As the market constantly advances with global and technological development, so does the customer's taste. Customers tend to make a purchasing decision based on their income, price of a good and product features.

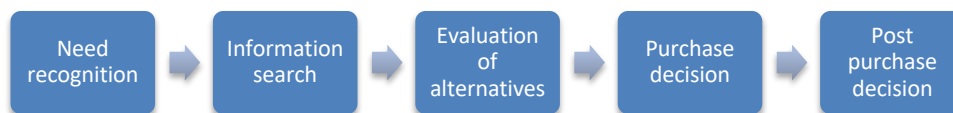


Figure 3: Customer decision process (Kotler & Armstrong, 2018)

In order to understand the process of customer's decision towards restaurant selection there is a need to address certain steps in the creation of the final decision. According to Kotler and Armstrong (2018) the decision process can be classified into five stages (Figure 3). Firstly, most choices begin with a customer's recognition of the need to try a certain product. This is usually caused by factors such as recommendation or desire to satisfy certain feelings (Chua et al., 2020). Regarding the restaurant choice diners usually make choices according to the specific factors such as level of hunger, meal specialties or dining companion (Chua et al., 2020). Secondly, a consumer is searching for an adequate solution to satisfy the desire. In this stage diners mostly visit online review platforms or Instagram pages of restaurants to get motivated to visit and experience specific meals and service. Turning on the evaluation of alternatives, diner assesses elected restaurant options by critical restaurant selection factors and chooses one of the selected alternatives. Next, diners

make choices based on the most preferred restaurant option and enjoy the restaurant experience. Finally, post purchase behavior can be associated with sharing their opinion about the overall experience and grading the restaurant on social media platforms based on the critical factors.

2.4.1 Critical restaurant selection factors

One of the challenging tasks for restaurant businesses is satisfying customer's expectation due intense competition on the market (Hwang et al., 2019, cited in Chua et al. 2020). According to Skinner et al. (2019, cited in Chua et al., 2020) competitors offer customers a broad range of dining choices that create advancement of customers perception and demand in seeking the best possible dining option. Consequently, the most important thing that affects the consumer restaurant choice is quality of restaurant, that is usually perceived through ratings (Jeong & Jang, 2011). In the world of online review platforms users are able to rate and review the restaurant experience by certain critical attributes such as food quality, price, ambient, service and location, nowadays mostly all customer-review websites contain "relevant functions to support content delivery on these frequently mentioned factors" (Qi et al., 2014, p. 357). These factors tend to act as a guidance for forthcoming diners and according to Hlee et al. (2016, p. 339) both text and photo-based reviews are "significant predictors of the perception of review evaluation". Moreover, customers are actually seeking for the unique experience that depends on the quality level of flowing attributes.

As reported by Auty (1992, cited in Hwang & Park, 2015) diners firstly focus on food quality and cuisine type in a decision making process and later on restaurant's style and ambient. Food quality is usually perceived through a food variety in a menu, freshness, taste and presentation of prepared meal. These attributes have a significant role in consumers' positive WOM and influences them to share their experience with others (Jeong & Jang 2011, cited in Gunden, 2017). Based on Sulek and Hensley's (2004) study, food quality is essential for consumer's satisfaction in restaurant selection. Customers usually comment on food quality by describing the taste and smell together with an image of the meal that completes their subjective

opinion. In addition, in order to maintain the food quality at highest level restaurants “must consistently and dependably represent the food with appropriate freshness, temperature, taste and presentation” (Namkung & Jang, 2007; Liu & Jang, 2009; Kim et al., 2009, cited in Canny, 2013, p. 2).

Secondly, consumers pay attention to the value of the experience and fairness of how much they are charged (Jeong & Jang, 2011). Price for dining is usually criticized through food quality, cleanness and restaurant service. In addition, price is usually used to classify the service quality as it acts as a first indicator of the restaurant excellence (Raghubir & Corfman 1995, cited in Chua et al., 2020). According to Liu and Jang (2009, cited in Jeong & Jang, 2011) price fairness is recognized as the positive satisfaction and loyalty, while unfair price is recognized through customers dissatisfaction and complaining.

Thirdly, quality of restaurant’s service is one of the most important concerns in the hospitality industry (Canny, 2013). As discussed earlier, service classifies the restaurant quality since a pleasant employee at a restaurant affects customers overall opinion. Furthermore, friendly and nice employees’ behavior creates a good relation between customer and restaurant. Consequently, a satisfied customer creates the positive WOM and tends to come again to enjoy the pleasant and welcoming dining experience.

Fourthly, dining experience in today’s modern world should enable customer a pleasant environment and culinary service, reason being that an interesting physical environment of a restaurant would constantly attract new customers (Canny, 2013). According to Ryu and Han (2011) customers usually expect something different in terms of not only food but also environment and esthetics when eating in a restaurant. Warm colors, pretty or unusual interior, interesting table and chair design influence how consumers feel during the dining experience and affect the overall rating of a restaurant. Warm atmosphere, urban location, nice music and colors of restaurant influence restaurant’s image and customer’s perception about a certain dining place.

2.5 Hypothesis development and conceptual model

To determine the relationship of consumers' restaurant choice and online review platforms different variables were used such as online activity on Instagram and TripAdvisor platforms, importance of critical factors and online rating (see Appendix 1). With the help of quantitative hypotheses, the predicted relationship between variables and the outcome are presented (Creswell, 2014). Indeed, hypotheses are often defined as researchers' predictions about the specific phenomenon and their proposed relationship between tested variables (Marczyk et al., 2005). Proposed hypotheses and their relationships are visualized in the conceptual model (Figure 4). In addition, collected data of the research were used to evaluate the proposed statements and help determine which platform is more preferred by Vienna residents.

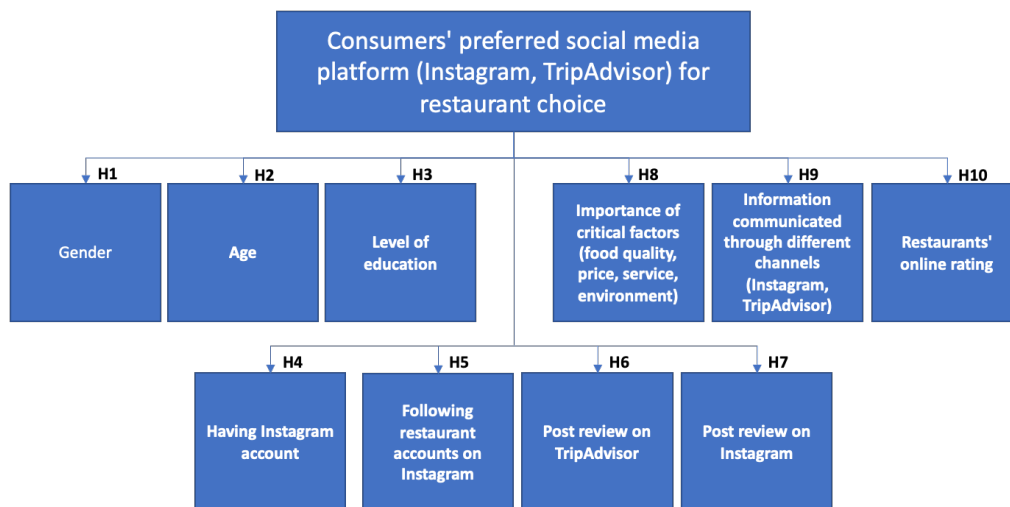


Figure 4: Hypotheses effects on consumers restaurant choice

3 Methodology

3.1 Research design

One of the most important stages in the research process is choosing the suitable method for the specific study. According to Kazdin (1992), methodology represents the procedures that lead the study and research design in the way to investigate the stated research question. In general, the research method can be classified into following types: quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods (Creswell, 2014).

Quantitative research methods objectively test theories by statistically investigating large amounts of data and the relationship between quantifiable variables (Creswell, 2014). The data in this method could be collected experimentally or non-experimentally for instance through survey. In addition, bigger sample size tends to create more accurate and reliable results, hence it appears to be easily reached with surveys (Fowler, 2002). Qualitative research method aims to gain in depth understanding of concept, thoughts and feelings of the research topic (Creswell, 2014). This method is usually conducted with in-depth interviews and open-ended answers. Mixed methods represent the combination of the quantitative and qualitative research approach. In the mixed methods research, researcher collects both quantitative and qualitative data in order to answer the research question (Creswell, 2014).

The appropriate quantitative research method was chosen for this deductive study as it enables researcher to test the relationship between predefined variables and answers on the research question, which online platform has more influence on consumer's restaurant choice. This qualitative research is non-experimental and uses online survey to collect data. In addition, online survey enables explanatory research to test causality of tested variables and gain understanding of the problem.

3.2 Survey design

In order to determine whether Instagram posts or TripAdvisor reviews have more influence on consumers' restaurant's choice, an online survey was created by the author via Google Forms. According to Fowler (2008, cited in Creswell, 2014, p. 42-43) a survey research enables "quantitative or numeric description of trends, attitudes or opinions of a population by studying a sample of that population". The survey was available in English language and it was distributed to respondents through online channels by the author. The method of convenience sampling was used in this quantitative research, in order to target population because of their attributes and geographical locations (Etikan et al., 2016).

The questionnaire consists of sixteen close-ended questions divided into three sections, where participants were able to quickly and easily choose only one of the available options (see Appendix 1). In this way the survey was not overwhelming for participants to answer the required questions, hence the author collected data quickly and cost-effectively.

The first part of the questionnaire contains questions regarding the participant's gender, age, place of residence, level of education and preferred online review platform. This part of the survey incorporated nominal binary scales for the gender, the place of residence and questions regarding the usage of online platforms Instagram and TripAdvisor. The possible answers for these questions were coded in 1= yes, 2=no and 3= none of the two. The second part of the questionnaire consists of questions regarding the influence of critical factors (food quality, price, service, atmosphere) on consumer's restaurant choice. This part of the survey uses a 5-point Likert scale to determine the importance level of critical factors. The answers to these questions were coded as 1=very important, 2=important, 3=neutral, 4=less important and 5=not at all important. Third part of the questionnaire consists of both nominal binary scale and Likert scale. Participants were able to visually select between TripAdvisor or Instagram review photos (coded as TripAdvisor=1, Instagram=2 and none of the two=3). In the end of the questionnaire, participants could assess the importance of online ratings using 5-point Likert scale coding (1=very important, 5=not at all important). A list of the questions in the conducted online survey can be found in the appendix (Appendix 1).

3.3 Research ethics

In order to protect participants' privacy and any potential ethical issues, an online questionnaire was conducted anonymously and confidentially in a way that answers could not be linked to the participant and exclude the possibility of any further misuse of the collected data. In the beginning of the questionnaire participants were able to read the aim of the survey and to voluntarily choose to participate, without any pressure. Through binary and Likert scale questions respondents were able to neutrally answer the questions with the option none of the two or 3=neutral. Furthermore, findings of the research will not be given to any other person in order to protect participants' responses.

3.4 Data collection and analysis

The data of conducted research were collected as primary data, since researcher gathered data from the self-made questionnaire. Based on the Etikan et al.'s (2016) research, the convenience data sampling in the study enabled researcher to easily approach target participants being from the Vienna region.

The total number of 130 valid responses were collected in the period of one month. Collected data from Google Forms was exported to the Excel file and then uploaded to software IBM SPSS, where they were analyzed with the use of different statistical tests. IBM SPSS is a statistical software that was used by the author to analyze collected quantitative data. This software enables a user to input valid data from Excel and run statistical tests such as the *Pearson Chi-Square test and Mann-Whitney U test* (Christensten et al., 2015). SPSS software is generally used by social scientists since it is designed in a way to solve complex statistical problems and test hypotheses (Matthews & Ross, 2010).

Pearson Chi-Square test (χ^2) is used to statistically test whether there is a significant relationship between mean values of two groups (Matthews & Ross, 2010). The acceptable level of significance is determined according to the 0.05 probability which means that there is no significant relationship between variables (Matthews & Ross, 2010). According to p value, the null hypothesis is either rejected (implicitly meaning

that an alternative hypothesis is accepted), or once fails to be rejected. Hence, this test enables researcher to comprehend the difference between expected and observed count by comparing the values and to tell which variable caused such relationship (Christensten et al., 2015). This crosstab test provides the value of Cramer's V correlation. Value of Cramer's V determines the association level between variables in the range from 0 to 1 (Matthews & Ross, 2010). Namely, 0 stands for very low correlation, while 1 stands for very strong correlation between tested variables. The non-parametric *Mann-Whitney U test* is applied when the researcher aims to compare the differences among two groups (Ai et al., 2020). The level of significance is also determined according to 5% chance that there is no significant difference between variables (Matthews & Ross, 2010).

Collected data were analyzed with the mean and following statistical tests: *Pearson Chi Squared test and nonparametric Mann-Whitney U test*. Accordingly, data statistically analyzed the significance level of the predefined hypotheses and based on the results they were either rejected or accepted. However, to properly analyze the collected data from the survey, data cleaning is essential. Therefore, the researcher processed and coded provided responses in order for data to be useful, valid for statistical tests and related to the research.

4 Results

The data from the primary conducted study will be explained and presented through tables and diagrams that were created in Excel and IBM SPSS. In that way the explanation and the answer to the research question of this study will be given and analyzed. The questionnaire had 130 participants in total.

4.1 Description of sample

In order to get a feeling for the generalization of results, it is important to explain general and demographic characteristics of the respondents.

4.1.1 Gender

The gender of participants is shown in Figure 5 and Table 1. Overall, primary participants of the survey were female with 63.8% in total 83 women. Moreover, 35.4% of male participants in total 46 men and 0.8% participants preferred not to specify the gender.

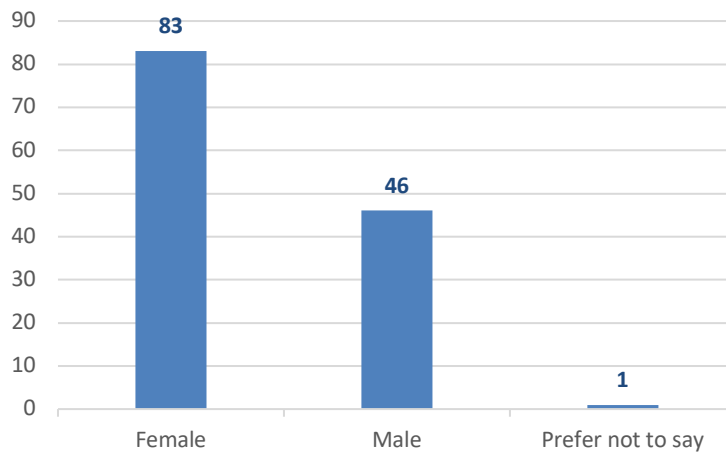


Figure 5: Gender

Gender		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	Male	46	35.4	35.4	35.4
Female	83	63.8	63.8	99.2	
Prefer not to say	1	0.8	0.8	100.0	
Total	130	100.0	100.0		

Table 1: Gender

4.1.2 Age

The age of participants is between 19 and 40. Indeed, the majority of respondents are in the mid-twenties. In total 80% (104 respondents) are in the age group 20-25. Therefore, the mean age of the participants is 25.19 with the median of 24. In addition, 12% correspond to 15 respondents that are in the age group 25-30, 3% correspond to 4 respondents in the age group 30-40 and 5% correspond to 6 respondents that are older than 40. Results are shown in Figure 6.

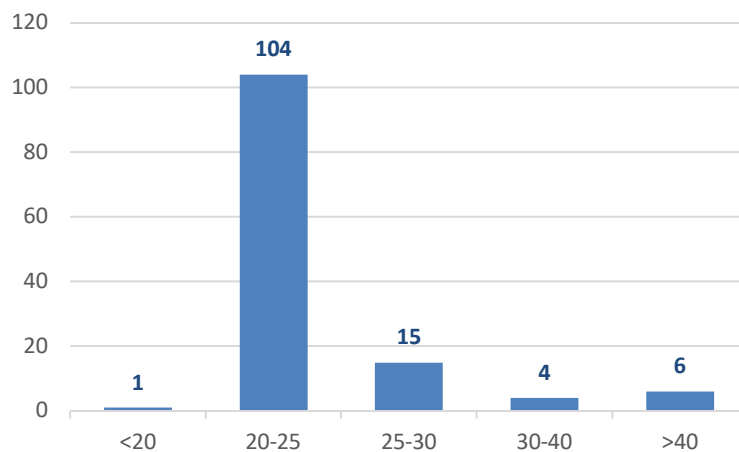


Figure 6: Age

4.1.3 Level of education

The majority of participants 36.2% have “post-secondary level” of education (47 respondents) and 31.5% (41 respondents) have “lower-level tertiary” education, while 18.5 % (24 respondents) have “Master and Dr degree”. Furthermore, 10% (13 respondents) have “upper secondary” education, while 2.3% (3 respondents) mentioned “other” as their level of education. One respondent selected “no formal education’ and the other one choose “lower secondary” education. (Figure 7)

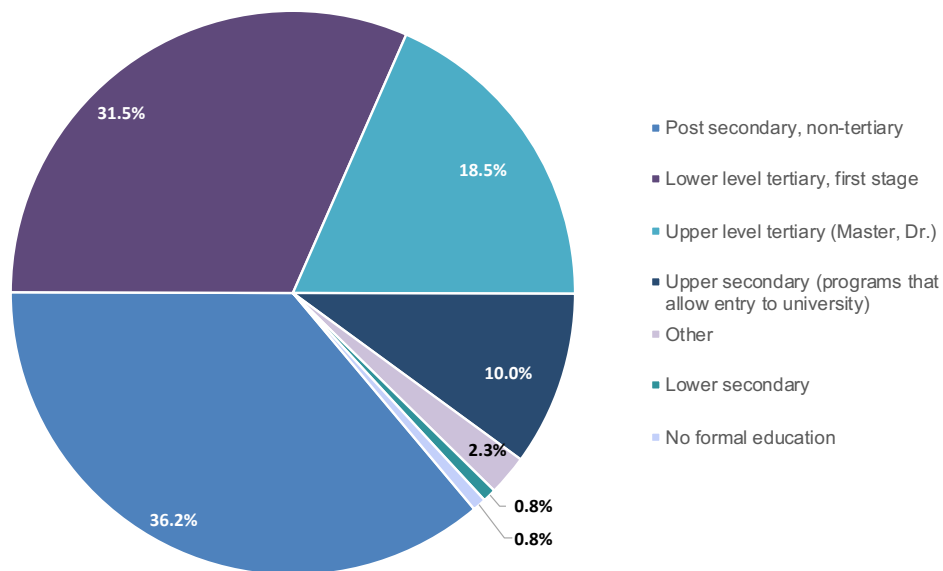


Figure 7: Level of education

4.1.4 Place of residence

The place of residence for the majority of survey participants is Vienna (88.5% or 115 respondents), while only 11.5% (15 respondents) live in the place other than Vienna. Place of participants' residence is shown in the Figure 8.

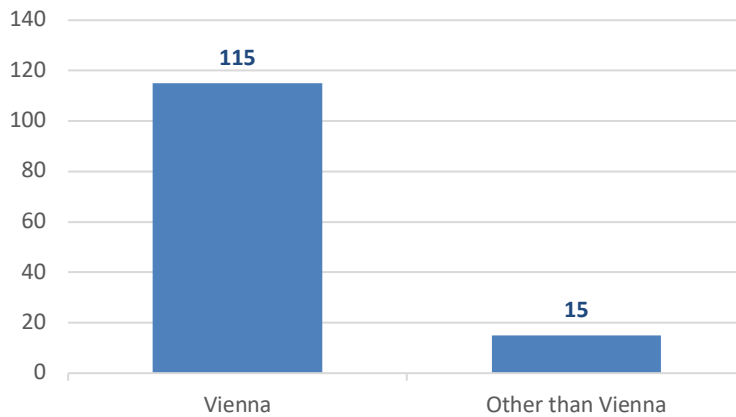


Figure 8: Place of residence

4.1.5 Social media platforms

The following Table 2 represents the comparison of participants activity on Instagram and TripAdvisor platforms. Indeed, a significant number of respondents in total 117 (90%) have an Instagram account while only 13 respondents (10%) do not have an Instagram account. Moreover, the majority of respondents, 80% (104 respondents) follow restaurant accounts on Instagram. In total 86 respondents indicated that they have posted a review on TripAdvisor. In addition, 80 respondents indicated they have posted a review on Instagram page while 50 respondents did not post review on Instagram.

N= 130	Yes	No
Do you have an Instagram account?	117	13
Do you follow restaurant accounts on Instagram?	104	26
Did you ever post review on TripAdvisor?	86	44
Did you ever post a restaurant review on Instagram page?	80	50

Table 2: Comparison of social media activity on Instagram and TripAdvisor

The Figure 9 shows the most preferred online platform that is used by respondents before choosing the restaurant. Most of the participants appear to use Instagram 73.8% (96 respondents), while TripAdvisor is used by 20.8% of participants (27 respondents) and only 5.4% of participants (7 respondents) answered that they do not use any of the two offered options. Respondents' answers regarding preferred social media platform are shown in Table 3.

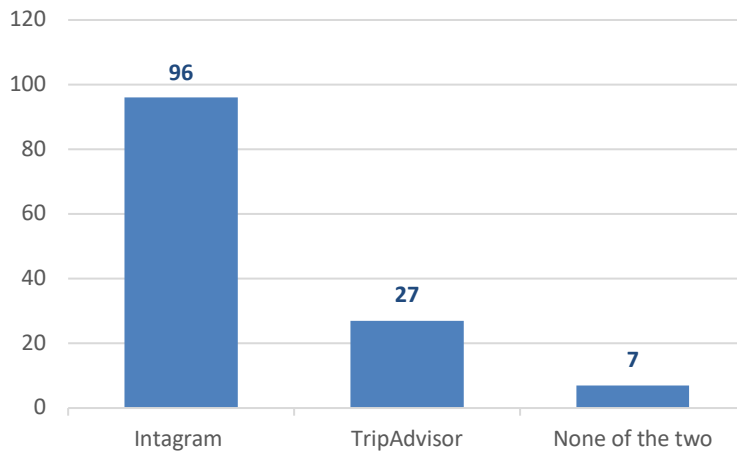


Figure 9: Preferred social media platforms

Social media platform		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	TripAdvisor		27	20.8	20.8
Instagram		96	73.8	73.8	94.6
None of the two		7	5.4	5.4	100.0
Total		130	100.0	100.0	

Table 3: Preferred social media platform

4.1.6 Critical factors

Figure 10 shows the importance of critical factors: food quality, price, service and environment in consumers' restaurant choice. The following Figure 11 contains four critical factors and the level of their importance is divided into five groups of: 1- very important, 2- important, 3 -neutral, 4- not important and 5- not at all important. Majority of respondents (71%) indicated that food quality is very important for them, while 15% indicated that food quality is not important at all. Price appears to be important for 40% of respondents and very important for 31%, while 11% of them answered that it is not at all important. Moreover, 52% of respondents indicated that service is very important for their restaurant choice and 24% indicated it as important while 8% of respondents indicated service as not at all important. Environment appears to be very important for 54% of respondents, 21% indicated it as important and only 14% as not at all important.

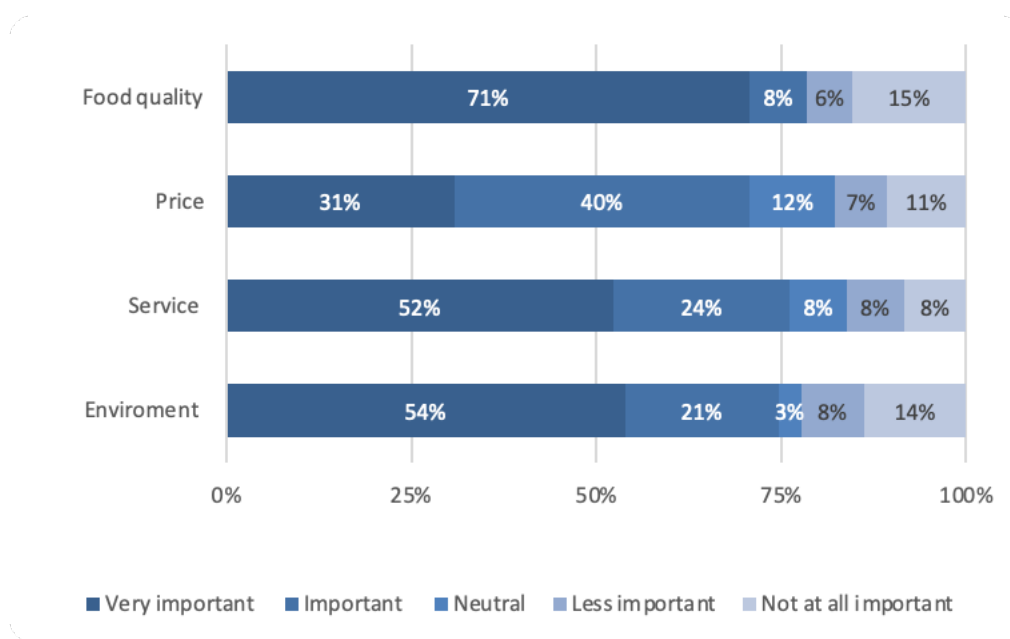


Figure 10: Critical factors (food quality, price, service and environment

4.1.7 Trusted social media platform

It is found in this survey that the majority of participants 60% (80 respondents) have more trust in Instagram posts for choosing a restaurant and only 40% (50 respondents) indicated TripAdvisor review posts as the one in which they have more trust for restaurant selection. (Figure 11)

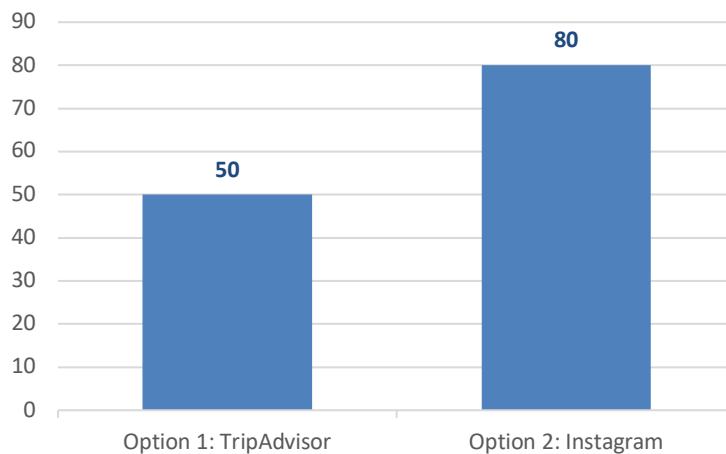


Figure 11: Trusted social media platform before choosing restaurant

4.1.8 Preferred social media platform

Figure 12 shows that the majority of respondents indicated Instagram platform as the one they would rather choose, 71% (92 respondents), while 29% (38 respondents) indicated TripAdvisor as the option they would check before selecting a restaurant.

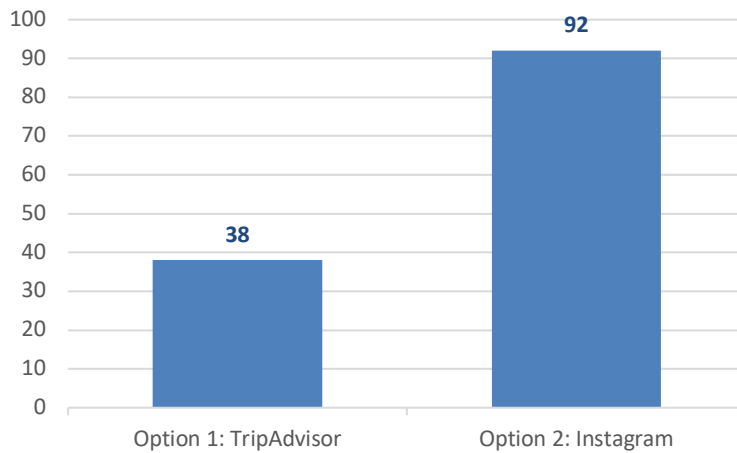


Figure 12: Most preferred social media platform before choosing restaurant

4.1.9 Importance of online rating for dining choice

Overall, participants were asked to indicate how important is online rating in their restaurant choice decision making. Participants answered as follows: 52.3% (68 respondents) indicated online rating as very important for their dining choice, 19.2% (25 respondents) considered restaurants' online rating as important, 10.8% (14 respondents) were neutral, while 13.1 % (17 respondents) indicated it as less important and 4.6% (6 respondents) indicated not at all important. Results are shown in the Figure 13.

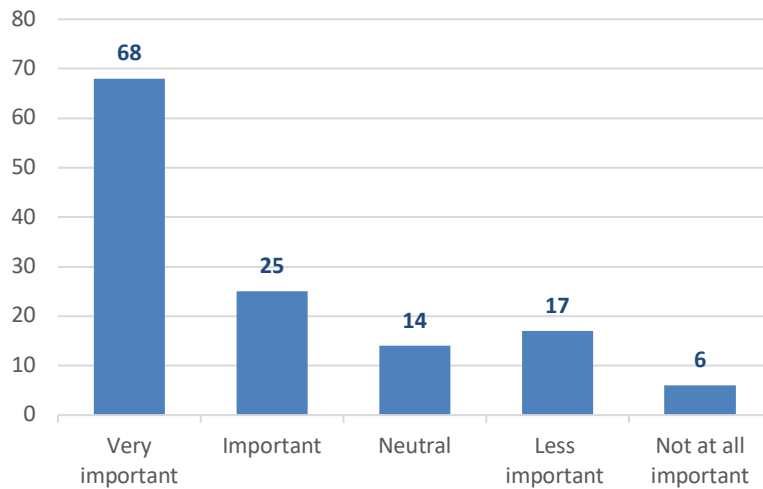


Figure 13: Level of online rating importance for dining choice

4.2 Inferential statistics

This section provides an overview of the calculations on whether TripAdvisor reviews or Instagram posts have more influence on consumers' restaurant choice. Each of hypotheses contains two independent sets of variables therefore, *Pearson Chi-Square* test and independent *Mann Whitney U test* were conducted.

4.2.1 Hypothesis 1

H0: There is no significant relationship between gender and the preferred platform (TripAdvisor vs. Instagram) for the restaurant choice.

H1: There is a significant relationship between gender and the preferred platform (TripAdvisor vs. Instagram) for the restaurant choice.

The hypothesis 1 was analyzed through the first (Q1) and seventh (Q7) in the online survey.

Q1: Gender (Mark only one): Male, Female, Prefer not to say

Q7: Which platform do you prefer to visit before choosing a restaurant?

		Value	Approximate Significance
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	0.544	<0.001
	Cramer's V	0.385	<0.001

Table 4: Chi squared test for Hypothesis 1

The selected test for Hypothesis 1 analysis is the *Pearson Chi Squared test*. According to the Table 4 p-value is <0.001, which is smaller than 0.05 indicating that the relationship between tested variables is significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis (H1) is accepted. Indeed, there is a significant relationship between gender and preferred platform for consumers' restaurant choice. The strength of the relationship can be defined as moderate as the Cramer's V value is 0.385 (in the range of 0 to 1).

			Q7			Total
			TripAdvisor	Instagram	None of the two	
Q1	Prefer not to say	Count	0	0	1	1
		Expected Count	0.2	0.7	0.1	1.0
		Adjusted Residual	-0.5	-1.7	4.2	
	Female	Count	11	72	0	83
		Expected Count	17.2	61.3	4.5	83.0
		Adjusted Residual	-2.8	4.4	-3.6	
	Male	Count	16	24	6	46
		Expected Count	9.6	34.0	2.5	46.0
		Adjusted Residual	2.9	-4.2	2.9	
Total		Count	27	96	7	130
		Expected Count	27.0	96.0	7.0	130.0

Table 5: Chi squared test for Hypothesis 1

Moreover, by comparing the expected count and observed count, scores in Table 5 are significantly different from each other. Females who choose TripAdvisor are underrepresented with the expected count of 17.2 and the observed count is 11. While females that choose Instagram are overrepresented with the expected count of 61.3 and observed count 72. Therefore, preference of females in choosing Instagram is higher than in choosing TripAdvisor. Males who chose TripAdvisor are overrepresented with expected count of 9.6 and observed count of 16, while chosen Instagram results appear to be underrepresented with 34 expected count and 24 observed count. Males prefer to use TripAdvisor than Instagram for their restaurant choice decisions.

4.2.2 Hypothesis 2

H0: There is no significant difference in the age between people who prefer Instagram and people who prefer TripAdvisor for their restaurant choice.

H1: There is a significant difference in the age between people who prefer Instagram and people who prefer TripAdvisor for their restaurant choice.

The hypothesis 2 was analyzed through the second (Q2) and seventh (Q7) in the questionnaire.

Q2: How old are you? (in years)

Q7: Which platform do you prefer to visit before choosing a restaurant?

Test Statistics ^a	
	Age
Mann-Whitney U	1130.000
Wilcoxon W	5786.000
Z	-1.057
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	0.291

Table 6: Nonparametric Mann Whitney U test for Hypothesis 2

The selected test for Hypothesis 2 analysis is the nonparametric *Mann Whitney U test*. According to Table 6 the p value yields 0.291 which is higher than 0.05 and indicated that there is no significant difference in the age between people who choose Instagram or TripAdvisor. Therefore, we fail to reject the null hypothesis. However, according to the mean rank in Table 7, there is a slight tendency that people in the older age group prefer TripAdvisor (68.15) rather than Instagram (60.27) before choosing their dining place.

Q7		N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Q2	TripAdvisor	27	68.15	1840.00
	Instagram	96	60.27	5786.00
	Total	123		

Table 7: Nonparametric Mann Whitney U test for Hypothesis 2

4.2.3 Hypothesis 3

H0: There is no significant relationship between the highest completed level of education and the preferred platform (TripAdvisor vs. Instagram) for the restaurant choice.

H1: There is a significant relationship between the highest completed level of education and the preferred platform (TripAdvisor vs. Instagram) for the restaurant choice.

The hypothesis 3 was analyzed through third (Q3) and seventh (Q7) question in the questionnaire.

Q3: What is your highest completed level of education?

Q7: Which platform do you prefer to visit before choosing a restaurant?

		Value	Approximate Significance
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	0.509	<0.001
	Cramer's V	0.360	<0.001
N of Valid Cases		130	

Table 8: Chi Squared test for Hypothesis 3

To test the significance of relationship between the variables, level of education and preferred platform for restaurant choice, for Hypothesis 3 analysis using the *Pearson Chi Squared* test was selected. In the question three (Q3) there are eight education

level groups: no formal education, lower secondary (secondary education completed that does not allow entry to university: end of obligatory school but also short programs (less than 2 years)), upper secondary (programs that allow entry to university), post-secondary, non-tertiary (other upper secondary programs toward the labor market or technical formation), lower level tertiary, first stage (also technical schools at a tertiary level), upper level tertiary (Master, Dr.) and other.

Table 8 shows that the p-value is 0.001, which is lower than 0.05, this means that the relationship between tested variables is significant. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis (H1) is accepted. Therefore, there is a significant relationship between the highest completed level of education and preferred platform for consumers' restaurant choice. The strength of the relationship is defined as moderate as the Cramer's V value being 0.360 (in the range of 0 to 1).

While comparing the expected count and observed count, scores in Appendix 2 are significantly different from each other. Expected count for post-secondary level of education who have chosen TripAdvisor is underrepresented with a score of 9.8 and the observed count is 4. While post-secondary level of education expected count for Instagram is overrepresented with the 34.7 and observed count 43. Therefore, preference for post-secondary level of education in choosing Instagram is higher than choosing TripAdvisor. Furthermore, respondents with upper-level tertiary education who have chosen TripAdvisor are overrepresented with the expected count 5 and the observed count is 8. Upper-level tertiary education that chose Instagram is underrepresented with the expected count 17.7 and the observed count is 13. It appears that people from a post-secondary education level to upper-level tertiary tend to use more than other educational levels the TripAdvisor platform to decide on the restaurant choice.

4.2.4 Hypothesis 4

H0: There is no significant relationship between people who have an Instagram account and those who do not and their preferred platform (TripAdvisor vs. Instagram) for the restaurant choice.

H1: There is a significant relationship between people who have an Instagram account and those who do not and their preferred platform (TripAdvisor vs. Instagram) for the restaurant choice.

The hypothesis 4 was analyzed through the fifth (Q5) and seventh (Q7) question in the online survey.

Q5: Do you have an Instagram account? Yes/no

Q7: Which platform do you prefer to visit before choosing a restaurant?

		Value	Approximate Significance
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	0.505	<0.001
	Cramer's V	0.505	<0.001
N of Valid Cases		130	

Table 9: Chi Squared test for Hypothesis 4

The selected test for Hypothesis 4 analysis is the *Pearson Chi Squared test*. According to the Table 9 p-value is <0.001, which is below 0.05, meaning that the relationship between the people who have an Instagram account, those who do not have Instagram and their preferred platform for the restaurant choice is significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis (H1) is accepted. Indeed, there is a significant relationship between people who have an Instagram account, those who do not have Instagram and their preferred platform for restaurant choice. The strength of the relationship is defined as medium as the Cramer's V value is 0.505 (in the range of 0 to 1).

			Q7			Total
			TripAdvisor	Instagram	Prefer not to say	
Q5	Yes	Count	17	95	5	117
		Expected Count	24.3	86.4	6.3	117.0
		Adjusted Residual	-5.3	5.7	-1.7	
	No	Count	10	1	2	13
		Expected Count	2.7	9.6	0.7	13.0
		Adjusted Residual	5.3	-5.7	1.7	
Total		Count	27	96	7	130
		Expected Count	27.0	96.0	7.0	130.0

Table 10: Chi Squared test for Hypothesis 4

Moreover, by comparing the expected count and observed count, scores in the Table 10 are significantly different from each other. Having an Instagram account and actually choosing to check the TripAdvisor before selecting a restaurant is underrepresented with the expected count of 24.3 and the observed count is 17. While having an Instagram account and actually preferring to use it for a restaurant selection process is overrepresented with expected count of 86.4 and observed count 95. Therefore, people who have an Instagram account prefer using Instagram platform for their restaurant selection rather than TripAdvisor. People who do not have an Instagram account and choose TripAdvisor are overrepresented with expected count of 2.7 and observed count of 10, while chosen Instagram results appear to be underrepresented with 9.6 expected count and 1 observed count. It appears that people who do not have an Instagram account prefer using TripAdvisor for their restaurant selection.

4.2.5 Hypothesis 5

H0: There is no significant relationship between people who follow restaurants on Instagram and those who do not and their preferred platform (TripAdvisor vs. Instagram) for the restaurant choice.

H1: There is a significant relationship between people who follow restaurants on Instagram and those who do not and their preferred platform (TripAdvisor vs. Instagram) for the restaurant choice.

The hypothesis 5 was analyzed through sixth (Q6) and seventh (Q7) question in the questionnaire.

Q6: Do you follow restaurant accounts on Instagram?

Q7: Which platform do you prefer to visit before choosing a restaurant?

		Value	Approximate Significance
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	0.468	<0.001
	Cramer's V	0.468	<0.001
N of Valid Cases		130	

Table 11: Chi Squared test for Hypothesis 5

To complete the Hypothesis 5 analysis the *Pearson Chi Squared test* was chosen. Hypothesis 5 refers to testing the significance of relationship between the variables meaning people who follow and those that do not follow restaurants on Instagram and their preferred platform for restaurant selection.

Table 11 shows that the p-value is <0.001, which is lower than 0.05 and this indicates that the relationship between tested variables is significant. The null hypothesis is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis (H1) is accepted. Therefore, there is a significant relationship between the people who follow restaurants on Instagram and

those who do not and their preferred platform for the restaurant choice. The strength of relationship is defined as medium association because the Cramer’s V value is 0.468 (in the range of 0 to 1).

			Q7			Total
			TripAdvisor	Instagram	Prefer not to say	
Q6	Yes	Count	15	87	2	104
		Expected Count	21.6	76.8	5.6	104.0
		Adjusted Residual	-3.6	5.1	-3.5	
	No	Count	12	9	5	26
		Expected Count	5.4	19.2	1.4	26.0
		Adjusted Residual	3.6	-5.1	3.5	
Total		Count	27	96	7	130
		Expected Count	27.0	96.0	7.0	130.0

Table 12: Chi Squared test for Hypothesis 5

In comparing the expected count and observed count, scores in the Table 12 are significantly different from each other. Following restaurants on Instagram and choosing TripAdvisor page before selecting a restaurant is underrepresented with the expected score of 21.6 and the observed count of 15. While following Instagram account and preferring to use it for restaurant selection process is overrepresented with expected count of 76.8 and observed count of 87. Therefore, people who follow restaurants on Instagram prefer to use Instagram platform for their restaurant selection process, rather than TripAdvisor. People who do not follow restaurants on their Instagram account and choose to consult TripAdvisor in their restaurant selection are overrepresented with expected count of 5.4 and observed count of 12, while choosing Instagram appears to be underrepresented with 19.2 expected count and 9 observed count. It appears that people who do not follow restaurants on their Instagram account prefer using TripAdvisor for their restaurant selection.

4.2.6 Hypothesis 6

H0: There is no significant relationship between people who post reviews on TripAdvisor and those who do not and their preferred platform (TripAdvisor vs. Instagram) for the restaurant choice.

H1: There is a significant relationship between people who post reviews on TripAdvisor and those who do not and their preferred platform (TripAdvisor vs. Instagram) for the restaurant choice.

The hypothesis 6 was analyzed through Q8 and Q7 in the questionnaire.

Q8: Did you ever post a review on TripAdvisor?

Q7: Which platform do you prefer to visit before choosing a restaurant?

		Value	Approximate Significance
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	0.263	<0.011
	Cramer's V	0.263	<0.011
N of Valid Cases		130	

Table 13: Chi Squared test for Hypothesis 6

The selected test for Hypothesis 6 analysis is the *Pearson Chi Squared test*. According to the Table 13 p-value is 0.011, which is smaller than 0.05 and this indicates that the relationship between tested variables is significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected, and an alternative hypothesis is accepted implying that there is a significant relationship between people who post reviews on TripAdvisor and those who do not, and the preferred platform for the restaurant choice. In addition, the strength of the relationship can be classified as low due the Cramer's V value yielding 0.263 (in the range of 0 to 1).

			Q7			Total
			TripAdvisor	Instagram	Prefer not to say	
Q8	Yes	Count	18	67	1	86
		Expected Count	17.9	63.5	4.6	86.0
		Adjusted Residual	0.1	1.5	-3.0	
	No	Count	9	29	6	44
		Expected Count	9.1	32.5	2.4	44.0
		Adjusted Residual	-0.1	-1.5	3.0	
Total	Count	27	96	7	130	
	Expected Count	27.0	96.0	7.0	130.0	

Table 14: Chi Squared test for Hypothesis 6

In addition, by comparing the expected count and observed count, scores in the Table 14 are significantly different from each other. Posting a restaurant review on TripAdvisor and choosing a TripAdvisor page before selecting a restaurant is overrepresented with the expected count of 17.9 and the observed count of 18. Moreover, posting restaurant reviews on TripAdvisor and preferring to use Instagram platform for restaurant selection process is overrepresented with expected count of 63.5 and observed count 67. Accordingly, people who post restaurant reviews on TripAdvisor prefer using it also for their restaurant selection rather than Instagram. People who do not post restaurant reviews on TripAdvisor platform but choose TripAdvisor are underrepresented with expected count of 9.1 and observed count of 9, while not posting restaurant review on TripAdvisor but choosing Instagram platform for their restaurant choice appear to be underrepresented with 32.5 expected count and 29 observed count. Therefore, people who post restaurant reviews on TripAdvisor prefer this platform for their restaurant selection rather than Instagram.

4.2.7 Hypothesis 7

H0: There is no significant relationship between people who post restaurant reviews on Instagram and those who do not and their preferred platform (TripAdvisor vs. Instagram) for the restaurant choice.

H1: There is a significant relationship between people who post restaurant reviews on Instagram and those who do not and their preferred platform (TripAdvisor vs. Instagram) for the restaurant choice.

The hypothesis 7 was analyzed through ninth (Q9) and seventh (Q7) question in the questionnaire.

Q9: Did you ever post a restaurant review on your Instagram page?

Q7: Which platform do you prefer to visit before choosing a restaurant?

		Value	Approximate Significance
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	0.397	<0.001
	Cramer's V	0.397	<0.001
N of Valid Cases		130	

Table 15: Chi Squared test for Hypothesis 7

The selected test for Hypothesis 7 analysis is the *Pearson Chi Squared test*. According to the Table 15 p-value is <0.001, which is smaller than 0.05 and this indicates that tested relationship is significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis is accepted. Indeed, there is a significant relationship between people who post restaurant reviews on Instagram and those who do not and their preferred platform for the restaurant choice. The strength of the relationship can be defined as moderate as the Cramer's V value is 0.397 (in the range of 0 to 1).

			Q7			Total
			TripAdvisor	Instagram	Prefer not to say	
Q9	Yes	Count	11	69	0	80
		Expected Count	16.6	59.1	4.3	80.0
		Adjusted Residual	-2.5	4.1	-3.4	
	No	Count	16	27	7	50
		Expected Count	10.4	36.9	2.7	50.0
		Adjusted Residual	2.5	-4.1	3.4	
Total		Count	27	96	7	130
		Expected Count	27.0	96.0	7.0	130.0

Table 16: Chi Squared test for Hypothesis 7

Comparing the expected count and observed count, Table 16 shows that scores are significantly different from each other. Posting a restaurant review on Instagram and choosing a TripAdvisor page before selecting a restaurant is underrepresented with the expected count of 16.6 and the observed count of 11. While posting restaurant reviews on Instagram and preferring to use Instagram platform for restaurant selection process is overrepresented with expected count of 59.1 and observed count 69. Therefore, people who post restaurant reviews on Instagram prefer using it also for their restaurant selection rather than TripAdvisor. People who do not post restaurant reviews on their Instagram page and choose TripAdvisor are overrepresented with expected count of 10.4 and observed count of 16, while not posting restaurant review on Instagram but choosing Instagram platform for their restaurant choice appear to be underrepresented with 36.9 expected count and 27 observed count. It appears that people who do not post restaurant reviews on their Instagram account prefer TripAdvisor for their restaurant selection rather than Instagram.

4.2.8 Hypothesis 8

H0: There is no significant difference in the importance of critical restaurant factors (food quality, price, service, atmosphere) regarding the preferred platform (TripAdvisor vs. Instagram) for the restaurant choice.

H0: There is a significant difference in the importance of critical restaurant factors (food quality, price, service, atmosphere) regarding the preferred platform (TripAdvisor vs. Instagram) for the restaurant choice.

The hypothesis 8 was analyzed through tenth (Q10), eleventh (Q11), twelfth (Q12), thirteenth (Q13) and seventh (Q7) question in the questionnaire.

Q10: Food quality Choose on scale from 1 to 5 (very important, important, neutral, less important, not at all important)

Q11: Price Choose on scale from 1 to 5 (very important, important, neutral, less important, not at all important)

Q12: Service Choose on scale from 1 to 5 (very important, important, neutral, less important, not at all important)

Q13: Environment Choose on scale from 1 to 5 (very important, important, neutral, less important, not at all important)

Q7: Which platform do you prefer to visit before choosing a restaurant?

	Q10	Q11	Q12	Q13
Mann-Whitney U	1262.000	1250.000	1155.500	1201.000
Wilcoxon W	5918.000	1628.000	5811.500	5857.000
Z	-0.264	-0.297	-0.949	-0.641
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	0.792	0.767	0.343	0.521

Table 17: Nonparametric Mann Whitney U test for Hypothesis 8

In order to test the differences between the importance of critical factors and the preferred platform in Hypothesis 8 analysis the nonparametric *Mann Whitney U test* is selected. In this hypothesis there are four critical factors: food quality, price, service and environment. According to Table 17 the p values are 0.792 (food quality), 0.767 (price), 0.343 (service) and 0.521 (environment), and they are all higher than 0.05. This implies that there is no significant difference in the importance of critical restaurant factors (food quality, price, service, atmosphere) regarding the preferred platform for the restaurant choice. Therefore, we fail to reject the null hypothesis.

However, according to the mean ranks in Appendix 3 there is a slight tendency that people who prefer Instagram before choosing their dining place evaluate the importance of food quality higher (61.65) than people who prefer TripAdvisor (63.26). The same is true for the importance of service and environment. People who prefer Instagram evaluate the service and environment importance higher (60.54 and 61.01) compared with people who prefer TripAdvisor before choosing their dining place (67.20 and 65.52). The opposite is true for price. People who prefer TripAdvisor evaluate the importance of price higher (60.30) compared with people who prefer Instagram (62.48).

4.2.9 Hypothesis 9

H0: There is no significant difference in the evaluation of the information communicated through the different channels (TripAdvisor vs. Instagram) for the restaurant choice.

H1: There is a significant difference in the evaluation of the information communicated through the different channels (TripAdvisor vs. Instagram) for the restaurant choice.

The hypothesis 9 was analyzed through fourteenth (Q14) and fifteenth (Q15) question in the questionnaire.

Q14: Which of these two social media platforms you have more 'trust'?

Q15: Please select which restaurant you would rather choose?

		Value	Approximate Significance
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	0.743	<0.001
	Cramer's V	0.743	<0.001
N of Valid Cases		130	

Table 18: Chi Squared test for Hypothesis 9

The Pearson Chi Squared test was selected to analyze Hypothesis 9. Based on the Table 18 p-value is <0.001, which is below 0.05 and indicating that the relationship between tested variables is significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis is accepted. There is a significant difference in the evaluation of the information communicated through the different channels in the restaurant choice. The strength of relationship is defined as strong because the Cramer's V value is 0.743 (in the range of 0 to 1).

			Q15		
			TripAdvisor	Instagram	Total
Q14	TripAdvisor	Count	36	14	50
		Expected Count	14.6	35.4	50.0
		Adjusted Residual	8.5	-8.5	
	Instagram	Count	2	78	80
		Expected Count	23.4	56.6	80.0
		Adjusted Residual	-8.5	8.5	
Total	Count	38	92	130	
	Expected Count	38.0	92.0	130.0	

Table 19: Chi Squared test for Hypothesis 9

By comparing the expected count and observed count, Table 19 shows that scores are significantly different from each other. Information communicated through TripAdvisor and choosing TripAdvisor page before selecting restaurant is overrepresented with the expected count of 14.6 and the observed count of 36. While information communicated through TripAdvisor and prefer using Instagram platform for restaurant selection process is underrepresented with expected count of 35.4 and observed count of 14. Therefore, people who have more trust in TripAdvisor tend to select restaurants on TripAdvisor rather than on Instagram. People who prefer evaluation of information through Instagram are overrepresented with expected count of 56.6 and observed count of 78, while people who prefer information evaluated through Instagram, but choose TripAdvisor platform for their restaurant choice appear to be underrepresented with 23.4 expected count and 2 observed count. It appears that those who rather trust the information evaluated through Instagram prefer the same platform for their restaurant selection, instead TripAdvisor.

4.2.10 Hypothesis 10

H0: There is no significant difference in the importance of restaurant online ratings between the preferred channel (TripAdvisor vs. Instagram) for the restaurant choice.

H1: There is a significant difference in the importance of restaurant online rating between the preferred channel (TripAdvisor vs. Instagram) for the restaurant choice.

The hypothesis 10 was analyzed through sixteenth (Q16) and seventh (Q7) question in the conducted online survey.

Q7: Which platform do you prefer to visit before choosing a restaurant?

Q16: How important is restaurant online rating for your dining choice?

Q16	
Mann-Whitney U	1163.000
Wilcoxon W	5819.000
Z	-0.893
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	0.372

Table 20: Nonparametric Mann Whitney U test for Hypothesis 10

To test the differences between following variables: the importance of online ratings and the preferred channel, in the Hypothesis 10 the nonparametric *Mann Whitney U test* is selected. According to Table 20 the p value is 0.372 and it is higher than significance level (0.05). Thus, meaning there is no significant difference in the importance of restaurant online ratings and the preferred channel for the restaurant choice. We fail to reject the null hypothesis (H0). Based on the mean rank in the Table 21 online ratings on TripAdvisor (66.93) are less important than Instagram (60.61) ratings for consumers' dining choice.

Q7		N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Q16	TripAdvisor	27	66.93	1807.00
	Instagram	96	60.61	5819.00
	Total	123		

Table 21: Nonparametric Mann Whitney U test for Hypothesis 10

5 Discussion

In this section findings of the conducted research, that were presented in the previous section, will be discussed. Currently, in the period of the Internet expansion and fast eWOM, providing consumers with a memorable dining experience became an essential part of restaurants business (Deloitte, 2017). According to Yilmaz and Gültekin (2016) information on social media is utilized by consumers and aims to drive their restaurant choice.

Therefore, the goal of this research was to investigate restaurants' social media marketing, the influence of online reviews on consumer's restaurant choice and in which platform Vienna residents' have more trust-Instagram or TripAdvisor for dining choice. In fact, some findings of this primary research may be different from existing researches and some confirm the literature discussed in the section of literature review. Among defined hypotheses there were multiple ones with the significant relationship result between tested variables. However, there were also few results that supported non-significant difference between variables.

The first hypothesis tested the relationship between independent variable "gender" and dependent variable "preferred platform for the restaurant choice (Instagram vs TripAdvisor)". These variables were included into two questions of the conducted survey. According to results of the *Pearson's Chi Square test* ($0.001 < 0.05$) it was found that there is a significant relationship between these two variables. Moreover, findings of this statistical test further showed that females tend to use more Instagram application for their restaurant selection than TripAdvisor. Additionally, based on the results of this primary research, males appear to use TripAdvisor more than Instagram in the process of choosing a restaurant. This corresponds to the findings of Statista (2021) which state that females use more Instagram than male and this can be explained by the fact that a higher percentage of females have an Instagram account than males. Hence, Kladou and Mavragani (2015) support findings in their research that men use TripAdvisor more often than women. Therefore, we can conclude that Instagram application is considerably used by women and men tend to use TripAdvisor for restaurant selection.

The second hypothesis tested the relationship between “age” and “preferred platform for the restaurant choice (Instagram vs TripAdvisor)”. The results of the *Mann Whitney U test* suggest there is no significant difference between these two variables as p value indicated the non-significant value ($0.291 > 0.05$). These variables were included in the two questions of the survey and these questions were used to test this relationship. However, mean ranks of the non-parametric *Mann Whitney U test* suggest that older people tend to use TripAdvisor, while young adults prefer using Instagram for their restaurant choice. In fact, the reason for this “non significant relationship” could be that this survey was not answered by a significant number of respondents from an older age range.

The third hypothesis analyzed the relationship between “highest completed level of education” and “preferred platform for the restaurant choice (Instagram vs TripAdvisor)”. These variables were included in two questions of the questionnaire. The independent variable level of education was divided into eight groups from no formal education to upper-level tertiary (Master, Dr.). The *Pearson’s Chi square test* was taken in order to determine the level of significance and correlation. According to the results of this statistical test there is a significant relationship between variables as p value is $<0.001 < 0.05$. Even though majority of participants use Instagram platform, TripAdvisor tends to be used by respondents that are from post-secondary education level to upper-level tertiary. Indeed, these results indicate interesting findings that people from a post-secondary education level to higher level of education choose TripAdvisor platform for restaurant choice.

The fourth hypothesis analyzed the relationship between “people who have an Instagram account or do not” and “preferred platform for the restaurant choice (Instagram vs TripAdvisor)”. The variables were tested in two questions of the conducted survey. The result of the *Pearson Chi-square test* shows there is a significant relationship between variables $<0.001 < 0.05$. According to results people who have an Instagram account chose this application for their restaurant choice, while people who do not have an Instagram account tend to use TripAdvisor. In general, Instagram users tend to spend a considerable time on their Instagram account and therefore they appear to be greatly influenced by the content they read and see on this platform (Jang et al., 2015).

The fifth hypothesis analyzed the relationship between “people who follow restaurants on Instagram” and “preferred platform for the restaurant choice (Instagram vs TripAdvisor)”. These variables were tested in two questions of the questionnaire. The result of the *Pearson Chi-square test* shows there is a significant relationship between people who follow restaurants on Instagram and preferred platform for restaurant choice as the p value indicates $<0.001 < 0.05$. As per results, people who follow restaurants on Instagram use Instagram for their restaurant selection process, while people who do not follow restaurants on Instagram tend to use TripAdvisor. This finding can be supported by the fact that people who do not have an Instagram account cannot see content posted on Instagram page and therefore they use another social media platform (Tafesse & Wood, 2021).

The sixth hypothesis analyzed the relationship between “people who post a review on TripAdvisor” and “preferred platform for the restaurant choice (Instagram vs TripAdvisor)”. These variables were tested in two questions of the survey. The result of the *Pearson Chi-square test* shows there is a significant relationship between these variables as p value is $0.011 < 0.05$. Based on these results, people who post a review on TripAdvisor tend to use this platform more often for their restaurant selection than Instagram. According to Jeacle and Carter (2011) TripAdvisor website tends to create trust in content and therefore its users like to use this social media platform.

The seventh hypothesis analyzed the significance of the relationship between “people who post a restaurant review on Instagram” and “preferred platform for a restaurant choice (Instagram vs TripAdvisor)”. According to the p value $<0.001 < 0.05$ there is a significant relationship between these variables. Moreover, these variables were tested in two questions of the survey. These findings indicate people who post a restaurant review on their Instagram account use Instagram platform for their restaurant choice, while people who do not tend to post restaurant review on their Instagram account use TripAdvisor for their restaurant selection process. This finding is supported by O’Connor (2008) research that states that TripAdvisor’s primary feature is to collect all reviews from a restaurant, while Instagram provides user only with comments under specific restaurant post and in that way TripAdvisor illustrates a clearer restaurant overview to all users.

The eighth hypothesis analyzed the difference between “importance of critical factors” and “preferred platform for the restaurant choice (Instagram vs TripAdvisor)”. The independent variable of critical factors was divided in four groups of food quality, price, service and environment. These variables were tested in five questions of the questionnaire. The results of the *Mann Whitney U test* show there is no significant difference in importance of critical factors. However, it is found that people who consider food quality, service and environment as very important tend to use Instagram, while people who consider price as important tend to use TripAdvisor for restaurant selection process. In the meantime, this finding is supported by Jeacle and Carter (2015) that state that TripAdvisor’s ranking is a powerful tool of verification which helps consumers to clearly see required rating and make a restaurant choice.

The ninth hypothesis analyzed the difference between “evaluation of information” and “different channel (Instagram vs TripAdvisor)”. These variables were tested in two questions of survey. The result of the *Pearson Chi square test* shows there is a significant difference between variables as $<0.001 < 0.05$. These results indicate interesting findings that quality information has an influence on social media and that people who have more trust in TripAdvisor tend to use it for the restaurant selection process, while people who believe in information distributed through the Instagram platform tend to use Instagram for restaurant selection. We can draw a parallel between these results and the findings of Hwang and Park (2015) that state that the consumers are highly influenced by information acquisition on social media which influences their restaurant choice.

The tenth hypothesis analyzed the difference between “the importance of restaurant online rating” and “preferred platform for the restaurant choice (Instagram vs TripAdvisor)”. These variables were tested in two questions of the questionnaire. The results of the *Mann Whitney U test* show that there is no significant difference in importance of restaurants online rating and preferred platform for restaurant choice as $0.372 > 0.05$. However, based on the results of this statistical test, ratings on Instagram tend to be more important than ratings on TripAdvisor. This finding is supported by Richards and Tiwari (2014) research that states that peer reviews, such as Instagram reviews, are more credible and have a stronger influence on users in

comparison to anonymous networks, such as TripAdvisor reviews, even though its users often do not clearly share rating on their Instagram post.

6 Conclusion and recommendations

The purpose of this research was to assess and analyze which platform Vienna residents' most preferably use before visiting a restaurant: TripAdvisor or Instagram. Therefore, this research was set out to understand the influence of social media marketing and UGC on the consumer restaurant choice. The literature and previous researches on the topic of the online review platforms and restaurant's marketing were reviewed by the author. This primary research was conducted through an online questionnaire that was created based on ten previously defined hypotheses. The questionnaire was distributed through online platforms and was answered by 130 participants. Namely, results of the study strongly support some of the hypotheses. Seven of ten hypotheses determined a significant relationship between tested variables, while three hypotheses carried out the non-significant differences.

The relation between having an Instagram account, following restaurants on Instagram and choosing Instagram as a preferred platform is found to be significant due to many important features that this platform enables its users, such as timely and visually appealing content with all necessary information. Also, a significant relationship was found in posting restaurant reviews on Instagram, trusting information distributed through Instagram platform and choosing Instagram platform for restaurant selection process because of the opportunity to take instant photo, share opinion and also stay in connection with restaurant brands (Deloitte, 2017). When examining the relationship between gender and preferred social media platform for a restaurant selection process, females appear to choose Instagram significantly more than male. A reason for this result could be that in general females use Instagram more often and tend to interact and engage on this platform more than male.

Calculations were taken in order to understand whether there is a relationship between importance of restaurants critical factors and social media platforms

(TripAdvisor or Instagram). Namely, no relation was found between importance of restaurants' food quality, price, service, environment and preferred social media platform as consumers demand restaurants that can accomplish their expectations. Although more clear results could be accomplished with a higher number of survey's participants because critical factors can have immense effect on consumers' decisions (Ha & Jang, 2013). Moreover, no significant relationship was found between age and preferred platform due to the dominant number of participants that were in the age group of young adults, more accurate results could be found with larger sample of respondents. The relation between posting a review on TripAdvisor page and using this platform in the restaurant selection process is found to be significant since its users trust reviews and form integrity with the phenomenon of TripAdvisor (Jeacle & Carter, 2011).

Research findings appear to support a significant relationship of hypotheses that draw an answer to the stated research question of this study. Dominant level of favor towards Instagram platform found to be positively correlated with the process of restaurant selection. Results reveal that an argument can be made as Instagram review posts demonstrate powerful influence on consumers restaurant choice from Viennese perception. No previous findings were made regarding this particular topic however, results of this research can be associated with a study of Richards and Tiwari (2014), who state that peer networks are more credible for consumers over anonymous networks. Due to the inevitable presence of this powerful social media platform in daily life, Instagram's aim to engage and inspire customers, and it being an indispensable asset for restaurants to recognize its power (Pookulangara et al., 2018).

6.1 Limitations and future research

Even though this research had significant results, there are a number of limitations that should be identified. First of all, a sample size was relatively small with 130 participants in total. For this reason, in hypothesis testing the Type II error might be present as the sample size was not large enough to gain clear results and the null hypothesis was failed to be rejected. Most of participants were female and limited to

its geographical location Vienna, considering that research was focused on Vienna residents'. As the research was limited by the focus region of Vienna, results cannot be generalized to the world. In consideration of the fact that people across the world tend to be influenced by different cultures, norms and habits in contrast to people from Vienna.

Moreover, the survey was distributed only online through certain platforms and participants were mainly young adults. Hence, people who did not have access to these platforms were not able to participate in the survey. There is a room for future research in order to get more reliable results as author could conduct survey not only online but also offline and, in that way, collect opinion from the people in older range groups. The research was quantitative and by that fact did not enable the author to gain in-dept understanding and subjective thoughts of participants regarding this research topic, since participants gave answers based on close ended questions and five-point Likert scale options. Above all, a general conclusion could not be made which platform has more influence on consumers' restaurants choice as this research used convenience sampling in the initial formulation.

6.2 Managerial implications

This study created useful managerial implications. In the time of the Internet and social media outbreak restaurant managers should understand the importance and benefit of using these tools in order to advance their business and improve restaurant popularity. People tend to spend a significant amount of time every day on the Internet, therefore social media appears to influence and attract a significant number of new customers to different kinds of restaurants.

Good social media reputation with creative, engaging and inspiring content not only triggers customers to experience new restaurants, but also to stay loyal to that dining place. Hence, hospitality is an industry that highly depends on the eWOM and the information that is created on online review platforms. Nowadays, due to intense competition the restaurants should not only prepare good food but also aim to entertain customers and make their experience as pleasant and tasteful as possible

(Deloitte, 2017). Instagram platform enables managers to initiate a good relationship with customers, make contest and reward customers as UGC creates a valuable impression of dining experience and impacts restaurant choice of numerous future customers. It is of immense importance that managers recognize social media marketing as a continuous, evolving process and not as a periodical campaign (Charlesworth, 2018).

Overall, the findings of this research show there are a lot of advantages of implementing good social media marketing and focusing on Instagram and TripAdvisor platforms. Hence, a good social media management should be established to attract customers, create loyalty, spread a good message around and rise restaurant popularity.

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8 Appendices

Appendix 1

Questionnaire: Influence on consumer restaurant choice: TripAdvisor vs. Instagram

Note: Dear Participant,

This survey tries to find out more about the influence of online review platforms on consumers' restaurant choice. In the last years, influence of user generated content has been observed by many researchers as it appears to significantly impact consumer behavior.

Participation in this survey is completely voluntary and confidential. Please be aware if you choose to participate in this survey it will be anonymous and will never be linked to your personality. If by any reason you decide not to participate, there will not be any negative consequences.

Thank you in advance for your time and participation!

Survey questions:

1. Gender (please mark only one):
 - Male
 - Female
 - Prefer not to say
2. How old are you? (in years)
3. What is your highest completed level of education? (please mark only one)
 - No formal education
 - Primary school
 - Lower secondary (secondary education completed that does not allow entry to university: end of obligatory school but also short programs (less than 2 years))
 - Upper secondary (programs that allow entry to university)
 - Post secondary, non-tertiary (other upper secondary programs toward the labour market or technical formation)

- Lower-level tertiary, first stage (also technical schools at a tertiary level) –
- Upper level tertiary (Master, Dr.)
- Other: _____

4. Place of residence?

1 – Vienna

2 – other than Vienna

5. Do you have an Instagram account? Yes/no

6. Do you follow restaurant accounts on Instagram? Yes/no

7. Which platform do you prefer to visit before choosing a restaurant? (please mark only one)

- Instagram

- TripAdvisor

- None of the two

8. Did you ever post a review on TripAdvisor? Yes/no

9. Did you ever post a restaurant review on your Instagram page? Yes/no

Critical factors

Choose on scale from 1 to 5 (very important, important, neutral, less important, not at all important)

10. How important is food quality in your restaurant selection?

1 2 3 4 5

11. How important is price in your restaurant selection?

1 2 3 4 5

12. How important is service in your restaurant selection?

1 2 3 4 5

13. How important is atmosphere in your restaurant selection?

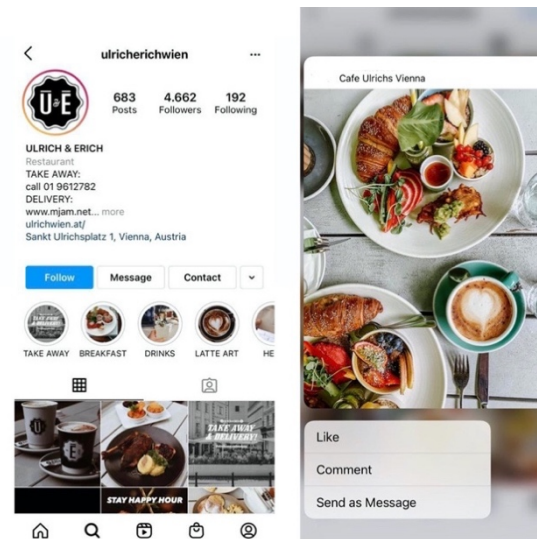
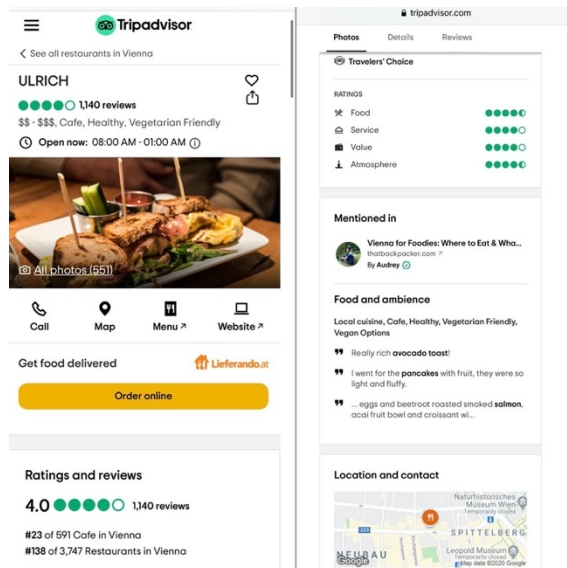
1 2 3 4 5

Please choose one photo:

14. Which of these two social media platforms you have more 'trust'?

-Option 1: TripAdvisor

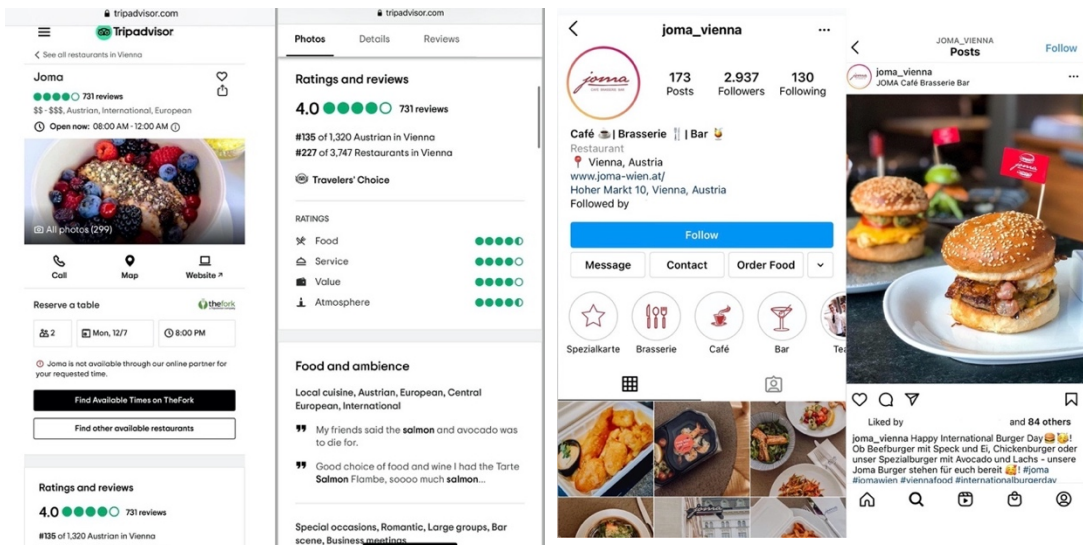
-Option 2: Instagram



15. Please select which restaurant you would rather choose?

-Option 1: TripAdvisor

-Option 2: Instagram



16. How important is restaurant online rating for your dining choice? (very important, important, neutral, less important, not at all important)

1 2 3 4 5

Appendix 2

			Q7. Which platform do you prefer to visit before choosing a restaurant			Total
			TripAdvisor	Instagram	None of the two	
Q3. Level of education	No formal education	Count	0	0	1	1
		Expected Count	0.2	0.7	0.1	1.0
		Adjusted Residual	-0.5	-1.7	4.2	
	Lower secondary	Count	0	1	0	1
		Expected Count	0.2	0.7	0.1	1.0
		Adjusted Residual	-0.5	0.6	-0.2	
	Upper secondary	Count	2	10	1	13
		Expected Count	2.7	9.6	0.7	13.0
		Adjusted Residual	-0.5	0.3	0.4	
	Post secondary, non-tertiary	Count	4	43	0	47
		Expected Count	9.8	34.7	2.5	47.0
		Adjusted Residual	-2.6	3.4	-2.0	
	Lower level tertiary, first stage	Count	12	27	2	41
		Expected Count	8.5	30.3	2.2	41.0
		Adjusted Residual	1.6	-1.4	-0.2	
	Upper level tertiary (Master, Dr.)	Count	8	13	3	24
		Expected Count	5.0	17.7	1.3	24.0
		Adjusted Residual	1.7	-2.4	1.7	
	Other	Count	1	2	0	3
		Expected Count	0.6	2,2	0.2	3.0
		Adjusted Residual	0.5	-0.3	-0.4	
	Total	Count	27	96	7	130
		Expected Count	27.0	96.0	7.0	130.0

Table 22: Chi Squared test for Hypothesis 3

Appendix 3

Q7. Which platform do you prefer to visit before choosing a restaurant?		N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Q10. Food quality: Choose on scale from 1 to 5 (very important, important, neutral, less important, not at all important)	TripAdvisor	27	63.26	1708.00
	Instagram	96	61.65	5918.00
	Total	123		
Q11. Price: Choose on scale from 1 to 5 (very important, important, neutral, less important, not at all important)	TripAdvisor	27	60.30	1628.00
	Instagram	96	62.48	5998.00
	Total	123		
Q12. Service: Choose on scale from 1 to 5 (very important, important, neutral, less important, not at all important)	TripAdvisor	27	67.20	1814.50
	Instagram	96	60.54	5811.50
	Total	123		
Q13. Environment: Choose on scale from 1 to 5 (very important, important, neutral, less important, not at all important)	TripAdvisor	27	65.52	1769.00
	Instagram	96	61.01	5857.00
	Total	123		

Table 23: Nonparametric Mann Whitney U test for Hypothesis 8