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TITLE:

Navigating Culinary Preferences: Exploring How Online Reviews Shape Dining Choices

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Abstract

This thesis examines the influence of sensory and non-sensory online reviews on consumer decision-making in restaurant selection, using a quasi-experimental design with a scenario-based questionnaire. By analyzing data from 115 participants, the study assesses how preferences for review types change across different dining contexts, focusing on the balance between sensory-rich descriptions and practical information.

Findings indicate a strong preference for sensory assessments during special occasions and travel, where detailed, immersive descriptions significantly improve anticipation and decision-making. Conversely, in routine situations such as arriving in a new city, consumers initially favor concise, non-sensory reviews for practical guidance. However, as the likelihood of using reviews increases, so does the preference for detailed sensory content, suggesting a nuanced interplay between immediate needs and the desire to engage sensory information. The study also highlights that important restaurant attributes – taste, cleanliness, and value – are central in shaping consumers' choices and emphasizes the role of both sensory and non-sensory factors. By integrating these findings with the Theory of Planned Behavior, the research shows that attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control are crucial in mediating the relationship between review content and consumer behavior.

Overall, this research contributes to a broader understanding of how sensory information in online reviews influences consumer behavior in the hospitality sector, offering practical insights for marketers and review platforms to refine their strategies. Future research should expand demographic diversity and include actual user-generated reviews to confirm these findings and improve their applicability in real-world settings.

Keywords: Sensory marketing, online reviews, dining occasion, review influence, multisensory perception, consumer decision-making, theory of planned behavior

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Preface

Five years of study are coming to an end, and the time has come to express my great gratitude to everyone who has contributed to the completion of this thesis. As I reflect on how my academic journey is approaching the finish line, I am honored to be able to present this work that represents the end of this chapter, while also a new beginning for wherever the journey may go next!

The choice of topic for this master´s thesis lies in a personal curiosity for the impact of online reviews on consumer decisions, and the concept of sensory marketing. The topic also fits well as a conclusion to the five-year study which first started with a bachelor's degree in marketing and management of tourism experiences, and which is now coming to an end with the master's study in Service Leadership in International Business. It is with great enthusiasm that I get to share the insights and findings gained from this endeavor.

I am truly grateful to have had such good help from the supervisor, Olga Gjerald, who has played a central role in shaping the path of this research, with her expertise, unwavering guidance, and encouragement! Thanks to the supervisor's constructive feedback and advice along the way, the thesis has been carried forward, and at the same time left an indelible mark on my professional growth and development. Great gratitude is also extended to the 115 participants who generously shared their time, perspectives, and insights through their survey participation, which were crucial for capturing the interesting findings.

Not least, I would like to thank my family and friends for their invaluable support, encouragement, and understanding throughout this academic journey. Their patience, love, and faith in my abilities have been a constant source of inspiration and strength. This thesis is dedicated to all who have contributed to its realization, and it is my sincere hope that the research will contribute new knowledge and interesting discoveries!

Navigating Culinary Preferences: Exploring How Online Reviews Shape Dining Choices

The culinary world has long been known for offering food enthusiasts worldwide with multisensory experiences, through an endless selection of restaurants (Chua et al., 2020; Spence et al., 2021). While the demand for unique dining experiences has increased, it has also become increasingly popular for potential consumers to read reviews posted online by previous guests, before choosing where to dine. Today, the modern dining landscape is more than ever characterized by digital communication, and online review systems have become remarkably widespread (Le et al., 2022). With a growing number of consumers from both the supply and demand side, online reviews can easily act as sales assistants at no costs for restaurant owners, while as decision-making assistants for restaurant consumers. With the trends accompanying the digital age, consumers' restaurant experiences are not only shaped by the flavors they are served on the plate, but also by the digital narratives that precede them.

Research Background

Restaurants act as more than just food providers, but also as experiential destinations where sensory stimulation is intertwined with practical considerations to shape consumers´ perceptions and choices (Hooley et al. al., 2020). In recent years, the restaurant industry has further witnessed a significant shift in consumer behavior, driven by the proliferation of online review platforms and thus increased reliance on digital resources for decision-making (Chua et al., 2020). Using platforms such as Yelp, TripAdvisor and Google Reviews, consumers have access to an infinite amount of information, allowing them to explore and evaluate a wide range of dining options. By navigating this vast sea of information, more informed decisions can be made, based on the experiences and recommendations of others. From casual diners to food enthusiasts, a growing number of consumers are showing a tendency to look to reviews as reliable sources of guidance for making restaurant choices, seeking insight into factors such as food quality, service, and atmosphere.

Understanding how review content influences consumer choices is crucial for both restaurant owners and marketers who seek to better optimize their online presence, look after their customers, and not least attract more of them to come. By studying the nuances of review content and its impact on consumer decision making, the aim of this study is to provide valuable insight into today's evolving dynamics in the restaurant industry. While restaurant experiences are known as multi-sensory experiences, sensory marketing is known to be one of the most effective strategies for restaurant owners and marketers to adopt, to ensure their guests with the best experiences (Krishna, 2012). Although it may be challenging for restaurants to adopt sensory marketing strategies that appeal to potential consumers' senses through online review systems, an interesting question is whether consumers' senses are possibly influenced through previous guests' reviews. These typically describe sensory experiences, and provide details about factors such as taste, sound, and smell. In this way, restaurant consumers contribute sensory marketing content, which can act as a sales strategy in itself for restaurant owners.

Literature Gap

Marketing literature has long been highlighting the effectiveness of sensory stimuli on consumer behavior, as well as how sensory triggering effects created by marketers has the effect of influencing product- and service perceptions among consumers (Krishna, 2012; Lopez & Garza, 2022). With the growing abundance of online reviews, researchers have begun to explore their content and its impact on consumers decision-making related to restaurants (Spence et al., 2022). While review length and structure have received attention, less focus has been placed on studying the effects of non-sensory, sensory, and multisensory review content on consumers decisions. There is thus a literature gap regarding how consumers may communicate sensory-appealing information through user-generated content (UGC), specifically through online restaurant reviews, which is further referred to as ORRs through this thesis. Non-sensory aspects in the context of ORRs typically refer to practical information

about such as restaurant location or price (Chua et al., 2020; Krishna, 2012). Sensory aspects refer to elements that appeal to the senses, such as taste, smell, and visual presentation of food. Multisensory reviews combine these sensory elements and provide a comprehensive description of the dining experience.

Lopez and Garza (2022) appear to be of few researchers having studied how sensory aspects in reviews may influence consumers. The researchers analyzed the relationship between sensory and non-sensory content of reviews shared on Amazon (www.amazon.com). The researchers' findings showed that sensory reviews were perceived as the exact opposite of helpful among Amazon users, based on the number of thumbs-up votes given for the various reviews being analyzed (Lopez & Garza, 2022). The non-sensory reviews, on the other hand, were considered way more helpful to the majority of users. However, this may prove to be different in other contexts, such as for restaurant experiences and associated online reviews, where typically what is assessed and presented is actually linked to experiences that are sensory in reality. This is also indicated by Lopez and Garza (2022) and is put forward by the researchers as a suggestion for future research.

Research Rationale

This thesis is motivated by contributing knowledge to fill this literature gap, and to possibly arrive at a better understanding of the nuanced roles that sensory and non-sensory attributes play in ORRs when it comes to shaping consumer preferences and perception. By examining the relationship between these aspects, this study attempts to uncover any underlying mechanisms that drives consumer choices in the area of restaurant experiences. By identifying the key sensory and non-sensory cues influencing consumers, this research could provide valuable insights for marketers and restaurant owners seeking to optimize their online presence and future strategies related to the collection and processing of guest's reviews.

Research Questions

Motivated by being able to contribute knowledge to fill the literature gap, and to follow Lopez and Garza's (2022) suggestions for future research, the following research questions are set to guide this exploration:

1. How do sensory vs. non-sensory textual reviews influence consumers´ decision-making process when choosing restaurants?

2. How does the dining occasion affect consumers´ preferences for sensory and non-sensory reviews?

Research Aim and Objectives

The overarching aim of this research is to investigate the interplay of non-sensory, sensory, and multisensory attributes within online restaurant reviews (ORRs). And the ultimate goal is to understand their influence on consumers restaurant choices. Figure 1 has been drawn to present the objectives identified to guide this exploration towards its achievement.

Figure 1

Research Objectives

OBJECTIVE 1	OBJECTIVE 2	OBJECTIVE 3	OBJECTIVE 4
To examine the role of sensory vs. non-sensory aspects in ORRs	To examine the role of reviews describing multisensory experiences	To analyze the relationship between consumers preferences and ORRs content	To investigate how the likelihood of using reviews affects review content preferences
AIM	**AIM**	**AIM**	**AIM**
To understand it´s impact on consumer perception and decision-making	To explore their significance in shaping consumers preferences and restaurant choice	To identify recurring patterns in reviews connected to different dining occasions	To gain insight into possible differences across variables

Note. This figure describes the thesis´ research objectives. Own work.

Significance of the Study

The study contributes to the literature by advancing the understanding of how today's consumers and their decision-making processes may be influenced by online reviews (Lopez & Garza, 2022). The exploration of the role of sensory and non-sensory aspects, and their impact on consumer behavior and preferences, contributes to new knowledge with potential to fill a gap in the existing literature. The study provides new insight into the complexity of the modern dining landscape and provides opportunities for theoretical development within sensory marketing and online consumer behavior. The study also provides opportunities for further research within a minimally explored aspect of electronic word of mouth and digital sensory marketing. For industry practitioners, especially restaurant owners and marketers, the study may provide practical implications to help improve their online review strategies and to optimize their business' sensory appeal (Krishna, 2012; Li et al., 2023). By identifying key non-sensory and sensory attributes that influence consumer choice through reviews, the information can be used by restaurant operators to tailor their own marketing strategies to better meet the expectations of their target customers.

Thesis Structure

The thesis is divided into central chapters and sections through a structured format, where each part contributes to the exploration of the research topic and its following objectives. Table 1 gives an overview of the thesis´ structure and simply describes the main content of each chapter.

Table 1

Thesis Structure

Chapter	Description
Introduction	Research background and rationale, research questions, aims and objectives, the study's significance, and literature gaps. Introduces the concepts of non-sensory, sensory, and multi-sensory reviews.
Literature Review	Reviews relevant literature and establishes the theoretical foundation for this research.
Methodology	Describes the research design and rational for choosing a quantitative approach and a scenario-based questionnaire. Provides details about participants and recruitment, sampling methods, reliability and validity, and potential biases.
Results & Analysis	Presents results and findings through statistical analyzes of data materials collected through Nettskjema. Describes the analytical approaches used and presents descriptive statistics and frequencies through several tables.
Discussion	Discusses results in light of research questions and objectives. Discusses implications and makes comparisons with the literature that has already been highlighted throughout the study´s literature review.
Conclusion	Summarizing key findings, restates objectives, reflects on limitations and contributions, provides future research recommendations
References	Provides a structured list of all references cited throughout the thesis, according to APA 7 reference style.
Appendices	Appendix A: The Scenario-based Questionnaire Appendix B: Crosstabulation Analysis Performed in SPSS Statistics (version 29.0.2.0) Appendix C: Chi-Square Tests Performed in SPSS Statistics (version 29.0.2.0).

Literature Review

The landscape of consumer decision-making in today´s dining sector is multifaceted and interwoven with sensory experiences and the pervasive influence of online reviews (Chua et al., 2020; Le et al., 2022). While today's technology has become an integral part of the dining journey, consumers tend to rely on online platforms to explore, evaluate, and retrieve information, to make informed decisions about their restaurant experiences. The importance of online reviews influencing perception and choice has thus become more pronounced.

The theoretical framework guiding this research encompasses established theories rooted in sensory marketing, online consumer behavior and decision-making process, and the social dynamics of online reviews. This chapter begins with an exploration of theories rooted in sensory marketing, where researchers have attempted to understand the profound impact sensory stimuli have on consumer behavior and perception.

Sensory Marketing

Sensory marketing refers to any marketing activity or strategy that has the potential or purpose of activating or engaging consumers´ senses and thus influence their judgement, perception, and situational behavior (Krishna, 2012). Whether being present at any destination, hotel, restaurant, or physical store, the overall experience can be affected by different surroundings appealing to our senses. Sensory marketing is designed to capture consumer´s emotions by appealing to one or a combination of the five classic senses, known as sight, touch, sound, smell, and taste.

Krishna (2012) describes the concept as a strategy where the understanding of perception and senses is implemented to a company´s marketing strategy. Such marketing strategies can have great influence on a consumers experience of a brand, as well as their trust and emotional attachment to it (Hooley et al., 2020; Shahid et al., 2022). In physical environments, anything from table decorations to room size, can act as triggers to consumers´

senses. The same applies to such as the quality of surroundings, the experience of customer service and sales skills, or just how the energy in a room makes the consumer feel. Different sounds, the tasting of food, or by sensing a smell, all presents the potential to activate a person´s senses and thus play a role in shaping their experience. Even when grocery shopping, consumers tend to put the products found to be most sensory satisfying to them into their shopping carts (Krishna, 2012; Petit et al., 2022; Petit et al., 2019). These perceptions may come from the smallest details and trifles, such as whether others have touched the product before them, or how a product´s packaging is found to be inviting or not.

Digital Sensory Marketing

Sensory elements and effects have long been considered as significantly important for customers´ physical experiences (Petit et al., 2019). Now, this has also become increasingly important in online environments, where human interaction and physical context is not an option, at the same time as consumers need more reassurance before any purchase or decision-making. The integration of sensory engaging elements in a company's marketing strategy can thus be understood as important triggers for the general online consumer experience. The use of sensory triggers in online environments also has the potential to create a positive influence when it comes to meeting consumers' increased need for more detailed information and more reassurance ahead of their choices and actions. Sensory triggering effects also have the potential to influence consumers´ purchase intention and behavior significantly, by engaging their senses more effectively.

The Five Senses in a Sensory Marketing Context

The five classic senses are in a sensory marketing context all important, and at the same time challenging to stimulate at all times using any marketing strategy (Krishna, 2012). How our senses are affected in different situations varies and it is impossible to control every effect, which largely depends on each recipient's attitude, expectations, previous experiences, and

other individual characteristics. Figure 2 presents a conceptual framework created by Krishna

(2012), which visualizes how the various aspects of sensory marketing are connected and can

influence consumers in both offline and online environments.

Figure 2

A Conceptual Framework of Sensory Marketing
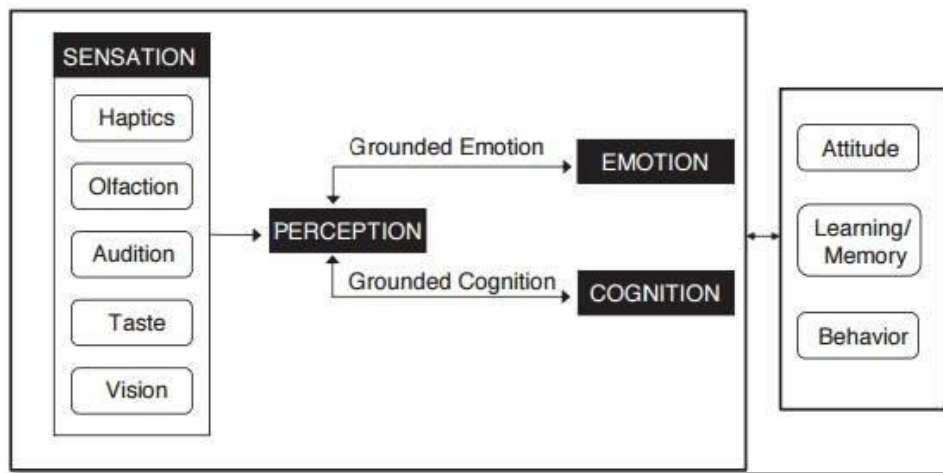
Note. This figure shows the relationship between consumers´ senses and their perception of

these, that can affect their emotions and cognition and thus have impact on their attitude,

learning/memory, and behavior. From "An integrative review of sensory marketing: Engaging

the senses to affect perception, judgement and behavior", by A. Krishna, 2012, *Journal of

Consumer Psychology, 22*(3), p. 335. Copyright © 2011 by the Society for Consumer

Psychology. (https://doi.org/10.1016//j.jcps.2011.08.003).

Haptics. Different features and experiences that affect consumers´ sense of touch offers

the ability to arouse both psychological and physical responses (Jai et al., 2021). The sense of

touch and communication by touch, can in a product or marketing context relate to letting

customers feel or touch a product (Krishna, 2012). It can also involve the use of electronic

movements and mechanisms to influence consumers digital or online experience through the sense of touch. Examples of the use of haptics in digital contexts can be about enabling consumers to evaluate or select products through touchscreens, or the implementation of haptic feedback. An example of this is how SONY (2020) has implemented haptic technology into their PlayStation controllers, enabling players to feel such as driving through the mud more real and realistic, by having the controller vibrate in the player's hands during gameplay.

In a digital restaurant context, the sense of touch can be stimulated through such as digital menus with touchscreens for ordering (Liu et al., 2022a). Touch is seen as an important way of creating confirmation, as touching an object or a product commonly gives a better indication of such as quality, material, and general feel. Furthermore, the tactile aspect of restaurant experiences can be linked to feeling of temperatures, the texture of food, or the comfort of furnishings. When it comes to ORRs, tactile sensations can further be woven into textual descriptions of the dining experiences. Reviews related to the sense of touch could be highlighting the same aspects, i.e., such as temperatures or comfortable seating. On some occasions, reviewers also tend to use quite more descriptive language, making readers almost feel like they are being transported straight to the dinner table themselves, through vivid images and sensory narratives. As the case may be, a touch-related review may involve anything from vivid to limited descriptions of anything from a crispy feeling or a steaming hot soup, to how a restaurant's wine glasses were experienced as being so light and easy to toast with.

Olfaction. The sense of smell is powerful, yet such an underestimated sense of consumer perception and behavior in marketing (Krishna, 2012). Unlike other senses, olfactory signals are transmitted directly to the limbic system, i.e., the part of our brain that is connected to our memory and emotions. Any smell that a potential consumer becomes aware of, thus has the power to influence their attitudes, feelings, behavior, and decision-making. This sense plays an important role in a product or marketing context as it can have major impact on how a

situation is remembered and to how the next one is perceived. Any smell can act as a trigger for past memories and experiences, and in that way arouse emotions linked to these past events. An example that may be relevant to a lot of people is how the smell of citrus commonly leads to a perception of cleanliness. For restaurant guests, elements that can trigger their sense of smell can have significant impact on the overall experience (Errajaa et al., 2021). The smell of freshly brewed coffee, seared meat on the grill, or aromatic herbs and spices, can all improve or worsen any dining experience. Based on research conducted by Liu et al. (2022a), it has been demonstrated that the dining experience can be significantly influenced by various aromas encountered in restaurant environments. These scents encompass a spectrum of sources, from the smells that come with the dishes served at their tables, to the smells that permeate the atmosphere of the dining room. Liu et al. (2022a) also emphasizes the impact of olfactory stimuli, including odors that may come from toilet facilities, on the overall perception and satisfaction of consumers during their restaurant visit.

Audition. The sensation of hearing is affected through elements of sound and may in some marketing contexts be more important than in others (Krishna, 2012). In some cases, this sensory communication comes naturally, such as in marketing through live performances, television, or radio channels. Music and sound effects, and even the voice of spokespeople can influence consumer perception, experience, and emotions. In physical environments, audition can be sensed in situations such as when music is being played in-store, where the intention is to influence consumers´ mood and behavior. In the digital world, this sense can be stimulated through videos and various sound clips and effects, such as by adding sounds to signal the completion of tasks or received messages in different applications, or by adding original sounds to be recognized with specific brands and experiences, e.g., Microsoft Windows´ startup and shutdown sound, or the sound being played through a Disney movie´s intro.

The auditory environment in a restaurant, typically referred to as soundscape, contributes significantly to the overall dining experience (Novak et al., 2010). In the case of ORRs, these can often comment on experiences of noise or sounds, such as background music playing in a restaurant, the sound of chatter from other guests, clinking of utensils, or other ambient sounds that may have been present during their dining experience. Positive mentions of a buzzing and lively atmosphere may indicate a lively food scene, while complaints of excessive noise levels or disruptive music, on the other hand, may indicate that the dining experience was not as good nor quite as expected.

Taste. The sense of taste can further be awakened by the five different tastes known as salty, sour, sweet, bitter and umami (Krishna, 2012). Prior research has also shown that sounds of consuming food play an important role in the perception of taste, especially when it comes to chips and other crispy products. Humans are not very good at distinguishing one taste from another through the sense of taste alone, and food may not taste as good if being fed blindfolded as "we eat first with our (digital) eyes" (Petit et al., 2022). In other words, expectations of the sensory properties of food are strongly influenced by our sense of sight.

A central part of food experiences and expectations is naturally how it tastes, which is often commented on through ORRs (Tripadvisor, 2021). Descriptions of well-balanced flavors and food combinations can provide readers with valuable details that can initiate the taste experience long before they have even visited the restaurant. If, on the other hand, reviews describe dishes as too spicy, or too poorly cooked, these may signal weaknesses in taste, which in turn may further impair consumers' enjoyment of the meal.

Vision. Through the sense of sight, we develop expectations for nearly everything that is framed in the changing picture we see in front of us at all times (Krishna, 2012). Sight is perhaps the sense that receives the most attention within the field of marketing, as it is the most influenced sense in both offline and online environments. What we see can also affect more of

our senses than just our vision (Fong et al., 2023; Krishna, 2012). It can also arouse different emotions and shape our perception of both place, product, and situation. In a restaurant context, the visual presentation of food plays a significant role in shaping consumers´ perception of food quality, creativity, and attention to detail (Li et al., 2023; Liu et al., 2022b). ORRs often comment on the aesthetic appeal of dishes being served, noting their appearance, vibrant colors, and artistic presentations. Positive mentions of food´s visual impressions have the potential of increasing consumers' expectations and enjoyment of food experiences, while the duller presentations rather reduce consumers' expectations.

Sensory Triggers Online

Compared to physical environments, fewer senses are likely to be affected online, as consumers are naturally deprived the opportunity to taste, smell, or touch products (Krishna, 2012; Veflen, 2023). Usually, the only senses being stimulated online is sight and hearing, through visual and auditive effects that commonly takes place in digital environments. However, it is known that previous experienced stimuli from reality can form into impressions that are integrated and stored as sensory representations in our brain. This means that consumers store their experiences of products and services in their memory, so that future situations can bring up mental images and thus act as sensory triggers to them. In other words, it will also be possible to trigger more than just the sense of sight or hearing in digital environments, despite the fact that consumers can neither taste, smell, nor touch the product they are looking at online.

Mental Imagery

Mental imagery refers to the ability to create mental representations of sensory experiences in the absence of the actual stimuli (Elder & Krishna, 2021). One can imagine when a consumer looks at a restaurant´s food images online. While looking, these images may appeal to the sense of sight primarily as they do not offer such as a real taste through the image, or through a digital platform in the first place (Veflen, 2023). However, the consumer´s sense of

smell or taste may still be triggered, as an image presenting food may evoke their memories of such as how that dish once tasted (Krishna, 2012; Veflen, 2023). Or maybe it will remind them of the good smell of freshly baked buns, if that is what the images presents or remind them of.

Images posted by a restaurant may also give an indication of which ambience was present in the moments of when these photos were taken (Elder & Krishna, 2021; Veflen, 2023). Images have the potential to trigger viewers´ senses by allowing them to imagine being present in these situations themselves. They can bring out consumers stored memories and lead to the formation of mental imagery. And the same applies to sound, which stimulates the sense of hearing. Sound effects are known for being able to create mental images in the minds of listeners (Veflen, 2023). As when listening to an audiobook, one might imagine the characters and different events described through the story. And by means of hearing and imagination, mental images are being formed, further having potential to awaken several senses and possibly create fictional multisensory experiences.

Electronic Word-of-Mouth

Similarly, marketing through word of mouth can help create mental images for the recipients, based on the image that is drawn to them through either text, sound, smells, touch, and taste, or a combination of these sensory elements (Krishna, 2012; Liu et al., 2022a; Veflen, 2023). Word-of-mouth (WOM) has long been known as to have a major impact on the impression and image created of a company or brand, and to any product, service, or experience (An et al., 2020; Liu et al., 2022). And as of today, consumers have the opportunity to share their experiences with far more than just friends and acquaintances, compared to what is known for traditional WOM. This form of marketing has become even more diverse online, to the extent that it is often expressed by researchers in the field with a more modern twist (Lopez & Garza, 2022; Wu et al., 2022). This includes such as electronic word of mouth (eWOM), word of mouse, and word of click.

In digital environments, consumers from anywhere around the world are able to share their experiences and opinions about any service or product, for anyone to see (Zinko et al., 2020). The online review platform known as Tripadvisor is one great example, visited by millions of travelers every year (Tripadvisor, 2021). Traveler's visits the review platform in advance of their experiences to read previous travelers experiences and opinions, with the intention of becoming more confident in their own travel decisions.

User-Generated Content

User-generated content (UGC) refers to all digital content created and posted by consumers (Li et al., 2023). This can be anything from a video or status update posted on Facebook, to a product review on eBay, or a photo shared on Tripadvisor. Ratings and evaluations of products are typical features of UGC, which according to Filieri et al. (2020) can be defined as performance heuristics, connected to visual information being presented as levels of satisfaction expressed by users of a product or service. The examples are many and varied, depending on the digital platform, product, or service in question. Both after an online purchase or a such as after a restaurant visit, consumers might be asked by the company in question to evaluate the product bought or the service experienced (Li et al., 2023). Typically, consumers will be encouraged to rate various features of their product or service experience, by either rating a set of attributes, or by elaborating through text on their perceived value. When a consumer chooses to respond to such requests, they will be producing UGC that, to the benefit of the company, has the potential to create greater social engagement and awareness of their services or products. It is thus not without reason that online reviews are considered to be the most important category of UGC, as they provide both benefits for the companies while also having a significant effect on subsequent consumer decisions as well.

Online Restaurant Reviews (ORRs)

As the culinary realm and the digital landscape converge, online restaurant reviews (ORRs) are emerging as more than just testimonials, but also as powerful influencers that possibly shape consumer preferences and choices (Li et al., 2023; Tripadvisor, 2019; Zheng; 2021). Food experiences are increasingly intertwined with technology, and the influence of UGC is increasing accordingly. ORRs have become a popular culinary compass for today's discerning diners, and their content can take all kinds of visual forms, such as text, images, and videos. Well or poorly worded, quality images or not, credible websites and reviewers, or at worst just a scam. Despite the quality encountered, the information presented still has the potential to influence a consumer's perception or attitude towards the product, service, or experience in question. According to Tripadvisor (2019), the majority of users agree that online reviews generally increase both confidence and feeling of making more informed choices when it comes to booking decisions related to hotels, attractions, and restaurants. The proliferation of online reviews has also made it more attractive to make restaurant decisions based on the information retrieved from ORRs (Yang et al., 2017). Statistical insights provided by Tripadvisor (2019), also shows that their average user appears to read up to 9 reviews on average, before making a final decision on which restaurant to experience.

Written Reviews. "The Power of Reviews" report by Tripadvisor (2021), shows that travelers find the content of reviews to be the most important review element. The platforms so-called "bubble-ratings" showed to be less important among consumers compared to textual reviews in the context of experiences related to accommodations, attractions, and restaurants. Within the category of restaurant reviews, the most important review element appeared to be food, while details about food clearly topped the priority list as 80% of respondents placed this as no. 1. of what they find most useful when looking at ORRs.

Textual reviews refer to comments or feedback in textual form that may reflect on the consumption or experience of a product- or service experience (Le et al., 2022). In these reviews, anything from readability to language style or depth of what is being described, has the potential of influencing consumers´ decisions. According to Tripadvisor (2021), travelers look for guidance and sufficient information to support their own choices. They want more insights beyond a simple statement of a good or bad experience. They want to know more about why, and to receive more guidance on, for example, which dishes they should order if they are going to the restaurant in question, or which attraction they should visit if they are going to a destination in question. Longer textual reviews were also proven to be the biggest influencer on consumers´ decision-making process through Tripadvisor´s report (2021). However, the result from other recent studies have shown that too much information in textual reviews can lead to lower purchase intention and trust (Zinko et al., 2020). At the same time, insufficient amounts of information can lead to readers feeling they are not getting enough information to form a good enough picture of what they can expect. Regardless, adding photos to the review has been shown to add more value to consumers, according to a study by Zinko et al. (2020). The reason behind this is believed to be linked to how these images can give consumers a more realistic insight into the situation in reality.

Images. Images are known to have the ability to capture consumers attention a lot faster than text (Zinko et al., 2020). Images are often combined with text to reinforce the reality of what is being described, or to give examples based on what is defined though the text. The effect of images shared through online reviews has been a frequent topic for research in recent years, studied by several researchers (Li et al., 2023; Pittman & Reich, 2016; Zinko et al., 2020). Despite having studied different aspects of the topic, several of them agree on how "a picture is worth more than a thousand words".

In ORRs, the category of which images is being presented can have significant impact on which impression the viewers get of a restaurant (Liu et al., 2022a). In order to be able to expect a great dining experience, insurance of certain conditions may be necessary for many of them in advance. According to Liu et al. (2022b), an important element for many may involve making sure in advance that the restaurant is run on a sufficiently hygienic basis and with a high level of food safety. Pictures showing how food is being prepared in restaurants thus turn out to be perceived as useful information for this purpose. Such pictures have also been mentioned to give better insight into other aspects, such as the quality of food, service, and the totality of the experience. Whether the restaurant and their dishes are perceived to be of quality through online review images has further shown to depend on the quality of colors (Liu et al., 2022b). The higher the color saturation, the higher the purchase intention, as strong colors and contrasts can create a better visual expression than pale colors with no contrast, especially when it comes to food. And not least, will the perceptions of review images quality depend on the consumers dining- motivation and previous experience.

Bubble Ratings. Ratings through bubbles or stars, they both serve the same purpose, which is to provide a quick and visually intuitive way for online users to express their opinions through a set scale (Tripadvisor, 2021). Such systems are both easy to use, and easy to read the results of. Nevertheless, travelers and users of Tripadvisor considers content found in longer textual reviews to be more and most valuable, followed by the platforms bubble-ratings. These systems show a series of circular icons (bubbles) that users can click or tap in order to indicate their level of satisfaction. Each bubble represents a specific rating, and users select an appropriate number of bubbles to convey their opinions, commonly though a 5-bubble scale system where 1 bubble indicates the lowest level of satisfaction and five bubbles thus indicate maximum satisfaction. The same applies to star ratings, which are basically the exact same system, only using different figures to illustrate votes being given.

These scale rating systems are widely adopted as part of various online review systems today, in different e-commerce platforms and social media (Reviewgrower, n.d.; Tripadvisor, 2021). Not least, are reviews from various platforms collected and presented through Google´s Star-rating system. When a review is to be posted on Tripadvisor, for example, the reviewer is always asked to assess their experience through the platform´s bubble-rating system (Tripadvisor, 2021). To rate a restaurant visit, consumers are further asked to indicate a number of bubbles through a scale of 1-5 to show their level of satisfaction. Furthermore, they are asked to state the timeframe, followed by who may be their travel companion, and their main reason for visiting. These systems make it possible for businesses to gather consumer feedback easily in one place, while at the same as providing subsequent consumers with valuable information that may be helpful for making informed purchase decisions by being offered this kind of insight into the collective experiences of past customers.

Sensory Aspects of Online Reviews

There is a lot of research in the field of marketing that sheds light on how sensory stimuli can effectively create subconscious triggers that indicate the abstract notions and perception a consumer has of a product (Krishna, 2012; Lopez & Garza, 2022). Previous studies have focused on how a company or brand communicates sensory appeals directly to consumers but seem to have overlooked or paid less attention to how consumers also experience this through other consumers and their feedback found in reviews and recommendations shared online.

Lopez and Garza (2022) are among few researchers who have studied how consumers respond to sensory vs. not sensory reviews. More specifically, the researchers performed a topic modelling analysis for a dataset of over 400.000 product-reviews from the platform Amazon (www.amazon.com). The analysis could reveal that the communication between consumers through product reviews was not always received as the most positive experience, or as anything close to useful for their assessment of whether to buy a product or not. Rather, the

findings showed a significant difference between sensory and non-sensory reviews regarding how consumers found the reviews useful or not. It turned out that the non-sensory reviews were perceived as far more useful than the sensory ones, and that the latter category rather had the effect of reducing purchase intentions among the majority of Amazon users.

Lopez and Garza (2022) defined non-sensory reviews as the reviews that described and evaluated products based on non-sensory characteristics, such as reviews describing a product´s performance, features, and functions, as well as the product´s installation process. Sensory reviews were further categorized as reviews describing and evaluating products in light of the consumers sensory experiences of it. This included textual reviews, that described the reviewers personal experience of touching, smelling, tasting, hearing, or looking at the product in question. While the findings from their research showed that sensory reviews were perceived as both less objective and less helpful among consumers of Amazon, their data material couldn't tell anything specific about possible differences within the different product categories. This further indicated that the chances of getting a different result if studying other products or stores within e-commerce with similar review systems could not be ruled out. The researchers thus suggested future research to look more into whether their result applies to other product categories, such as food, cosmetics, or modeling clay.

Non-Sensory Reviews

Non-sensory reviews, as described by Lopez and Garza (2022) as to involve the reviews that describe such as a product´s installation process and performance, typically focus on aspects that are not directly connected to the five senses. In the context of ORRs, this category of reviews may present such as practical information related to a restaurant's location, quality, pricing, or other intangible attributes that may affect consumers evaluation (Li et al., 2019). In a fine-dining context, an example of a non-sensory review could be about discussing factors

like attentiveness of the restaurant's staff, their pricing strategy, or some unique features that enhances or detract from the overall experience without explicitly addressing sensory elements.

Sensory Reviews

Lopez and Garza (2022) performed a topic modeling analysis, where sensory words were defined in advance, and further determined how the analysis picked up reviews that could be categorized as sensory. In order to find reviews that descried experiences possibly stimulating such as the sense of taste, a search was made for words as "taste", "flavor", and "sweet". Furthermore, sensory reviews were described as to be publications of UGC presenting their sensory experiences with products. Sensory reviews have also been defined based on similar criteria through a study by Li et al. (2019), where the researchers defined sensory cues in online reviews as reviews containing words such as "feel", "see", and "taste".

From product reviews on Amazon, to the current study of restaurant reviews, a definition of non-sensory and sensory reviews may show significant similarities (Huang & Liang, 2021). That being said, there might be more to restaurants reviews that needs to be considered in order to distinguish between the categories. Experiential goods, such as restaurant experiences, often involve multisensory engagement, something that is less present in a product context, as were studied by Lopez and Garza (2022). Restaurant consumers rarely looks for the easiest way to ingest food, as they commonly seek a more memorable experience than that (Chua et al., 2020). In addition to seeking food and experiences of quality, they also seek the right ambience, overall atmosphere, and service.

Based on previous research and theory, sensory reviews in the culinary realm can be described as reviews focused on the tangible and perceptible aspects of a restaurant experience, which emphasizes the engagement of one or more of the five classic senses (Huang & Liang, 2021; Li et al., 2019; Lopez & Garza, 2022; Veflen, 2023). In the context of fine-dining restaurants, a sensory review might describe the different flavors of a dish, the aroma of the

cuisine, the visual presentation of food, or the texture and mouthfeel of each bite. And not only can reviews be sensory, but also multisensory.

Multisensory Reviews

Multisensory reviews go beyond individual senses and consider the integration of multiple sensory elements in the overall experience (Huang & Liang, 2021; Li et al., 2019). Multisensory reviews emphasize how different senses work together to create a holistic and immersive impression. In fine-dining context, a multisensory review can be a textual description of how combinations of elegant décor, relaxing music, flavors of the cuisine, and the delicate aroma of dishes, collectively contributes to a memorable dining experience. It may also be that the entirety of a review creates a multisensory impression, as for example through a combination of textual descriptions and images.

These distinctions provide a framework for understanding online reviews, but in practice they might overlap. A review can easily describe both the taste of a dish (sensory) and the pricing (non-sensory) in the same text (Lopez & Garza, 2022). How real online reviews are interpreted to belong to one category or the other will vary based on the context and specific criteria used by the reviewer. Even if a review mentions elements that can be linked to any of the five classic senses, this does not automatically make the review a sensory one. If a review were to mention, for example, the sense of hearing, it can still be classified as non-sensory if what was being described was something like which brand supplied the sound system in the restaurant. A sensory review, on the other hand, would have described attributes or situations triggering their sense of hearing directly. This could be such as descriptions of music being played in the dining room, the noisy sounds coming from the kitchen, or the pleasant hum of chatter. Furthermore, for the review to be classified as multisensory, it would provide even more details and descriptions of the aspects of auditory stimuli affecting their experience, combined with other sensory aspects.

Trust and Credibility

Trust, security, or credibility issues has received minimal attention through prior studies of physical stores´ service quality (Hooley et al., 2020). However, these topics may not have been nearly as relevant as they are now, in today´s growing digital markets with growing numbers of online consumers (Klarna, 2023). Today´s online consumers face several issues of trust, such as whether they should expect companies to deliver a product or service as promised, whether their privacy will be respected, or whether companies might release their personal information to third parties (Hooley et al., 2020). Not least are today´s consumers worried about online fraud and fake reviews, which have become widespread problems globally, affecting the perceptions of any online environment in general.

Online reviews have been a popular topic among researchers for several years, and the literature consists of hundreds of articles related to the topic (Zheng, 2021). Prior research has commonly focused on studying how review viewers perceive these reviews. Through a systematic review by Zheng (2021), it appears that the literature has clearly proven that experienced reviewers, or a reviewer's expertise, can play a major role in credibility. Studies related to credibility and review helpfulness also appears to be of the most common research topics within the field of online reviews. Several empirical studies can also confirm that certain characteristics of online reviews have a significant effect on consumer´s decision-making process, and especially on their purchase decision.

Review Content

Consumers receive information about the different options available on a market through both marketers and other customers (Shukla & Mishra, 2023). And prior studies have shown that consumers tend to have less trust in marketers compared to peer consumers and their reviews shared online. Finding information through reviews that share experiences based on similar motivations to their own is considered more likely to provide credible information

to support consumers own decision-making. If a consumer's dining motivation is to celebrate Valentine´s Day with their partner, it may also be more relevant to look for information in reviews that rate experiences from that day, or at least reviews that express restaurant experiences as a couple. These reviews can naturally be perceived as more credible in the context, compared to reviews that evaluate experiences based on completely different motivations, such as a birthday celebration or a job interview. Consumers perception of review credibility can further be influenced by factors such as text length and the use of images (Zinko et al., 2020). According to Zinko et al. (2020), an unsatisfactory amount of text in reviews can lead to reduced trust and lower purchase intention. This applies both to textual reviews containing too much textual information, or too little. If images are added to reviews within these categories, however, the images can act as effective aids in reducing potential negative effects and thereby strengthening credibility.

Publication Channel

At the same time as the actual content of reviews may influence consumers perception of credibility, the publication channel can also have something to say for whether the information can be trusted (Filieri et al., 2020). UGC platforms are used and seen as independent travel guides among travelers worldwide, that enables consumers to read honest reviews of different experiences, thus gaining valuable insight into the experiences of real travelers. At the same time, several platforms, including Tripadvisor (2023), has unfortunately been mentioned as to being exposed to several fake reviews, which calls into question the credibility of the platforms in question and the content of these channels´ published reviews.

Fake Reviews. Tripadvisor (2023) describes fake reviews to include reviews submitted by people who do not really have any experience with what is being discussed or assessed in the review. This could, for example, be the case if a manager or someone else associated with a company, posts a positive review related to a company in which they manage, co-own, or

work for. Or it could be reviews published by competitors who, for example, try to weaken a company by giving them bad reviews and low ratings. And some businesses may even go as far as to buy themselves positive reviews from companies or individuals offering such services.

Consumer Behavior and Decision-Making

The behavior of consumers plays an important role in shaping each individual's preferences and choices, which in this context revolve around restaurant experiences (Chua et al., 2020; Dedeoğlu et al., 2022). When consumers are about to make choices regarding where to dine, there are several factors that may be taken into consideration. This may involve such as their social expectations for the restaurants, perceived quality, or their belief in their own ability to afford the experience. According to Chua et al. (2020), consumers restaurant choices tend to be particularly influenced by factors such as menu variations, price, reputation, location, and not least the restaurants promotion and information channels.

The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB)

The theory of planned behavior (TPB) provides valuable insight into understanding consumer behavior and decision making (Ajzen, 1991). The TPB is a well-established theory in social sciences and psychology, originally developed by Icek Ajzen in 1985. Since then, the theoretical framework has been widely adopted to research on consumer behavior. This includes studies of such as consumer decisions regarding environmentally friendly restaurants (Kim et al., 2013), responsible tourist behavior in local dining experiences (Dedeoğlu et al., 2022) and consumer knowledge about wine influencing restaurant purchases (Yang & Choi, 2022). When studying how ORRs takes part in restaurant decisions, the TPB has the potential of providing valuable insight into how consumers intentions of experiencing restaurants takes shape, as well as how they perceive and make decisions based on information obtained from online review systems. Figure 3 presents the TPB as proposed by Icek Ajzen (1991) and shows

how consumers behavioral intentions are influenced by their attitudes, subjective norms, and

perceived behavioral control.

Figure 3

The Theory of Planned Behavior
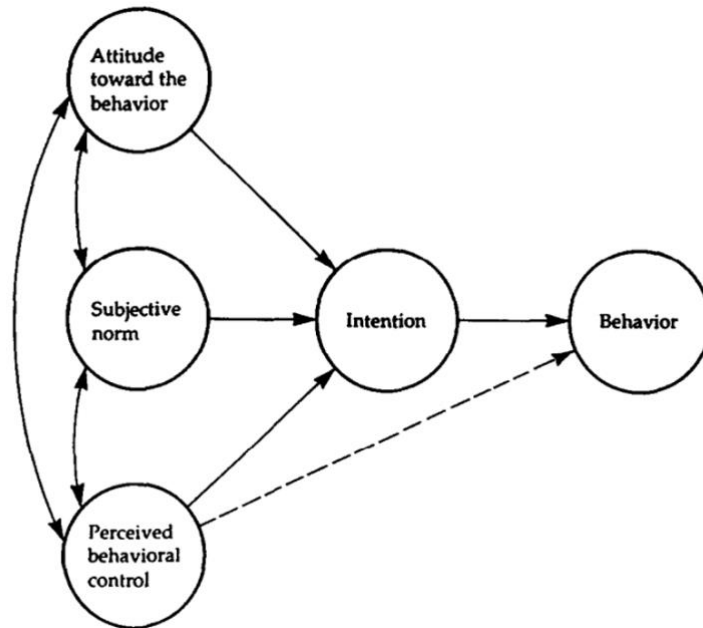
Note. Theoretical framework of consumers behavior. From "The Theory of Planned Behavior,"

by Icek Ajzen, 1991, *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes, 50(2),* p. 182.

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Attitude Toward the Behavior. Consumers commonly expects their actions to bring

favorable results (Yang & Choi, 2022). With such expectations, more positive attitudes may be

adopted towards the action, which further bring greater engagement to the activity in question.

However, the disappointment can be all the greater if the result did not turn out as expected.

Attitudes toward ORRs plays a central role in shaping consumers´ intentions of using them as

decision aids when seeking to find the perfect place for dining out (Li et al., 2023; Tripadvisor,

2021; Zheng; 2021). According to Ajzen (1991), attitudes are determined by individuals´ assessments of the behavior, which reflect the extent to which they perceive it as favorable or unfavorable.

In the context of restaurant choices, attitudes towards online reviews include perceptions of their credibility, perceived helpfulness, and relevance for guiding choices related to which experience they seek (Li et al., 2023; Lopez & Garza, 2022; Tripadvisor, 2021). Consumers trust in reviews in general, will definitely have an impact on their attitudes towards online reviews and to which degree they choose to follow their recommendations. Positive experiences shared on trusted review sites, containing a history of accurate information, may promote positive attitudes toward online reviews. If consistently finding reliable and unbiased reviews on a particular platform, it is likely that the consumer will develop more positive attitudes toward using online reviews as decision aids in general when choosing their dining experiences. If, on the other hand, the consumer has been experiencing the opposite, or on repeated occasions has been disappointed after having followed advice received through reviews, then they may not have the strongest intention to continue trusting in these experiences of others.

In scenarios where the consumer is more dependent on online reviews to find new options for fine-dining experiences, their attitude towards it could also be different (Tripadvisor, 2021; Yang & Choi, 2022). In situations where consumers might find it absolutely necessary to obtain information from others online, the experience of finding useful information could contribute to a more positive attitude towards using reviews as a decision-making assistant. How online reviews are perceived by each individual is quite varied, while the perception clearly affects attitudes toward using them as decision aids (Krishna, 2012; Liu et al., 2022). Online reviews can be perceived as more positive or helpful if the consumer considers them to match their own tastes, preferences, or expectations. If a consumer's preferences are exclusive dining experiences, the consumer may appreciate reviews giving

more insight into the food itself, the restaurants selection of wine, or the elegant atmosphere (Tripadvisor, 2021). The more positive experiences with ORRs, and the more the contents is perceived as to be tailored to the consumer´s preferences, the attitudes of including them as part of the decision-making process naturally increases.

Subjective Norm. Subjective norms, as stated in the TPB, represent individuals´ perceptions of social pressure, or expectations regarding a behavior (Ajzen, 1991). Social norms are about how one individual accepts other individuals´ opinions and experiences (Yang & Choi, 2022). It is about how a person´s assumptions about other people´s expectations should be able to perform certain behaviors or stand for the choice of certain alternatives of behavior. In the context of dining decisions and the use of online reviews as decision aids, subjective norms are shaped by the influences of social references and peer recommendations (Chua et al., 2020; Tripadvisor, 2021). Peer recommendations can have significant influence on consumers´ subjective norms regarding the use of online review systems, when seeking dining experiences.

Word-of-mouth, especially positive referrals from acquaintances, as well as social media, help form favorable subjective norms (Chua et al., 2020; Yang & Choi, 2022). If a consumer receives strong recommendations from their friends about how trustworthy ORRs are when choosing unique dining experiences, these positive peer endorsements can reinforce the subjective norms, indicating that trusting online reviews is socially accepted and encourage behavior. Consumers´ subjective norms can further be shaped by their perceived importance of how decisive or important it is with social references in order to make valuable restaurant choices. Whether the opinions and experiences of others are trusted can have a significant impact. Among consumers where social validation and conformity are a priority, there may be more inclination to adopt to subjective norms that emphasize the significance of peer recommendations in guiding restaurant choices.

Perceived Behavior Control. Each individual´s belief in their own ability to perform an action that leads to positive outcomes or success (Ajzen, 1991). To move from behavior to action will naturally have its consequences, which can be both positive and negative (Ajzen & Sheikh, 2013). The possibility that any choice made may end up with regret is thus inherent in most consumers behavioral decisions. In a context of consumers´ choice of restaurant and use of ORRs as decision aids, perceived behavioral control refers to the consumers´ perception of how difficult or easy it is to access, use, and interpret ORRs as information for their restaurant choices (Dedeoğlu et al., 2022) The perceived behavioral control can be influenced by consumers perceptions of how accessible or user-friendly the review platforms are. If factors such as search functions, interfaces or accessibility on different devices are perceived positively, the perception of control over access to review information will also improve. This also enhances the likeliness of consumers to experience higher levels of control over their own ability to access review content relevant to their restaurant decisions.

Consumers' perceived behavioral control further encompasses the beliefs in their own competence related to the interpretation and evaluation of ORR´s contents effectively (Dedeoğlu et al., 2022). Consumers' confidence in, for example, how safe they may feel about discovering information of relevance in ORRs, will further influence their perception of control over their own use of review information. This may concern how confident they are to extract information of value or being able to distinguish between biased and credible reviews.

Behavioral Intention. A central part of the TPB refers to the individuals´ inclination and readiness to be able to perform specific behaviors (Ajzen, 1991). Individuals´ attitudes, subjective norms and behavioral control shape their behavioral intention. Related to the problem under study, when consumers decide on places to eat, and use ORRs as decision assistants, their behavioral intention includes trusting the information they find in the reviews when choosing a restaurant (Chua et al., 2020; Yang & Choi, 2022). Favorable attitudes toward

online reviews, positive subjective norms related to using them, and stronger perceptions of behavioral control, all contributes to enhanced intentions to use review information in eating-out decisions. If consumers hold positive attitudes toward ORRs, feel supported in using them, while being confident in their own ability to utilize review insights, they are more likely to develop strong behavioral intentions to trust ORRs when selecting restaurants.

According to the TPB, behavioral intentions are to be considered as robust predictors of actual behavior (Ajzen, 1991). Consumers with strong behavioral intentions to trust online reviews will naturally be more likely to actively seek out this type of information, and to spend more time assessing the content found through ORRs and further integrate these insights into their decision-making process. The behavioral intentions to adopt online reviews in restaurant decisions may also be influenced by sensory appeals inherent in the content of ORRs (Chua et al., 2020; Wang et al., 2022). Positive attitudes towards sensory ORRs, combined with strong intentions to trust these reviews, can drive consumers' engagement with the information found in reviews and shape their decision-making behavior, especially in the context of fine dining.

The Five-Step Decision-Making Process

Online reviews have become a significantly important part of word-of-mouth marketing, and an increasingly popular aid in consumers´ decision-making process (Huang & Liang, 2021; Liu et al., 2022). Any online purchase decision today has most likely been influenced by information obtained from online environments, and more importantly from online reviews which is considered to be the No. 1 source of UGC today (Li et al., 2023; Wang et al., 2022). Especially when it comes to decision related to experience goods such as hotels, destinations for travel, and restaurants, the modern consumer will most likely be searching for more information online about any available option and possible outcome. Consumer´s attitude and needs are influenced by their lifestyle and previous experiences, which further influences their decision-making process (Fahy & Jobber, 2015; Haksever & Render, 2013). Consumer

decision-making process is typically defined as to involve five main steps that individuals go through when deciding whether to purchase a product or service.

Problem Recognition. The first step involves becoming aware of a need, or to recognize a problem that needs to be solved (Fahy & Jobber, 2015; Haksever & Render, 2013). For restaurant consumers, this may refer to the moment of recognizing a need that naturally can be fulfilled by experiencing a restaurant (Chua et al., 2020). Such needs can be triggered by internal factors such as thirst or hunger, or external factors such as recommendations or advertising (Haksever & Render, 2013). The main reason for sensing a need for restaurant experiences will further vary depending on the consumer and occasion in question (Chua et al., 2020). The occasion could be anything from a quick meal to a more important celebration dinner. Regardless, once a consumer has realized a need, it becomes their own problem and task to find a solution to it. And according to Haksever & Render (2013), there are two categories of information that are necessary for consumers to find when searching for information of relevance in this context. Firstly, they should look for information that can help them develop criteria's for making the most appropriate decision. And secondly, it is necessary for them to obtain information about all options available.

Information Search. The process is further woven into the second step, involving information search (Fahy & Jobber, 2015; Haksever & Render, 2013). A consumers first response after recognizing a need is typically to search for information in order to make informed choices. This search may involve internal sources such as past experiences and memories, or external sources such as friends, advertising, or online reviews (Klarna, 2023). Today´s consumers typically search for information online, both prior to purchasing a product or service, or such as before choosing a destination for travel, accommodation, or which restaurant to go to (Tripadvisor, 2021). A recent report by Klarna (2023) showed that even in-

store shopping, often starts with webrooming, meaning that potential customers commonly browse through information online in advance of their in-store shopping experiences.

In restaurant contexts, when consumers search more information to decide on where they should eat, online reviews act as important information sources (Tripadvisor, 2021). Whether they are travelling, or looking for a restaurant close to where they live, they use online reviews as guides towards their final choice. Consumers are increasingly using ORRs as well as social media, to become more aware of where they are most likely to have their best dining experiences. At the same time, it has become more important for restaurant operators to manage their reputation that possibly abounds in these online environments.

An insight report by Fairway Foodservice (2019) showed that the majority of consumers aged 18 - 24 were not necessarily looking for a specific restaurant to visit, but rather searched for a place where they could eat the dish that they craved that day. For as much as 74% of this age group, the type of food showed to be the no. 1 topic causing greater interest for further information search, followed by searching for information related to what options they had of where to eat it. When first having decided on what to eat, the next step showed to commonly involve searching for information that can possibly tell which restaurants might be serving the best version of the dish they are craving.

Evaluation of Options. After having gathered information and gained an overview of available options with potential to cover the need, the consumer moves into the third step of the decision-making process (Haksever & Render, 2013). At this stage, the consumer considers and evaluate the available options, preferably based on several criteria of importance. This can, for example, concern quality, price, access, reputation, and convenience, in addition to other criteria that may be considered as important for the consumer´s perception and thus their final decision. This stage often involves consumers making comparisons on different services and products as well, for them to determine which option best meets their preferences and needs.

As mentioned, in the report by Fairway Foodservice (2019), where consumers aged 18-24 firstly decided on what to eat before searching information about where to, the following step in their decision-making process naturally involved the evaluation of available options that were found through information search. And based on this knowledge, options were further narrowed down based on the restaurants´ location, online textual reviews, and star-ratings.

Purchase Decision. When having formed an opinion about the most relevant alternatives, the next and fourth step involves making a purchase decision (Haksever & Render, 2013). Based on the evaluation, consumers decide and chooses a product or service to purchase. At this stage, the final decision may also be influenced by factors such as availability, discounts, or membership benefits. The choice of purchase and point of sale will naturally be made at the same time in many cases, but not necessarily. The choice of what to buy can also be decided before knowing where to buy, and vice versa. Restaurant consumers may not have looked for which type of restaurant they want to eat at, but rather guide their choices based on their desires on what to eat (Fairway Foodservice, 2019). However, online reviews may still have influenced their decision, especially if having found information that suggests particular restaurants to be more likely to serve them a better version of this specific dish that they have such cravings for.

Post Purchase Evaluation. Finally, the consumer moves into the stage of post-purchase process and behavior (Haksever & Render, 2013). After having made a purchase, the consumer assesses their satisfaction with the decision. This phase can offer several outcomes, as the consumer can be anything from strongly dissatisfied to overwhelmingly satisfied, depending on how the service or product performance in question may have confirmed their expectations or not. If having met their expectations, it reinforces their decision, and possibly leads to brand loyalty. If there is dissatisfaction, on the other hand, it could result in negative feedback or returns, while affecting their future purchasing decisions negatively. Either way, many consumers choose to share their experiences and evaluations online, through online review

systems and social media. And by that, electronic word-of-mouth is created, and the available amount of information increases, further providing potential benefits to future consumers and their decision-making processes.

In conclusion, this literature review has provided insight into the existing literature, with particular focus on consumer behavior in the context of online restaurant reviews (ORRs) and the theoretical frameworks that underlie. Sensory marketing has also been a key topic throughout the chapter and has contributed to a better understanding of the review types under study, i.e. non-sensory, sensory, and multi-sensory reviews. Overall, this literature review provides valuable insight into the complex dynamics at play in consumer decision-making processes within dining experiences.

Based on the insights gained from the literature review, the following chapter moves into a methodological exploration. Informed by theoretical frameworks and previous research findings, the methodology chapter outlines the research design, various data collection methods, and analytical techniques used to achieve the study's objectives, and to examinine the research questions posed in this study: (1) How do sensory vs. non-sensory textual reviews influence consumers´ decision-making process when choosing restaurants? and (2) How does the dining occasion affect consumers´ preferences for sensory and non-sensory reviews?

Methodology

Navigating the complexities of understanding consumer choices within restaurant experiences is no easy task and requires a carefully considered approach. This chapter presents this thesis´ research design and methods, the procedures, and the rationale underlying the investigation - centered around a quasi-experimental design supplemented by the presentation of carefully designed scenarios through a quantitative structured questionnaire.

Quasi-Experimental Design

The research aims at investigating the impact of online reviews on consumers´ choice of restaurant experiences, which is considered crucial for today´s restaurant owners and marketers to understand (Wang et al., 2022). An understanding of how both sensory, multisensory, and non-sensory reviews may affect potential restaurant consumers can be quite valuable for both restaurant owners and marketers for better positioning their establishments and to both attract and retain customers. ORRs often play a significant role in shaping consumer perceptions and decisions, and anything from a review's sentiment to the length of its textual content can be of importance to which impression is given off.

To gain more knowledge about the impacts of online reviews in consumers restaurant choices, the basis of this study lies in a quasi-experimental research design, carefully designed to balance the need for internal validity with the practical limitations inherent in studying naturally occurring behavior in online environments (Meltzoff & Cooper, 2017). Quasi-experimental studies commonly involve collecting data through direct contact with participants, while there is no requirement for random participation. The approach enables observation and categorization of participants based on their exposure to different review categories while providing insight into causality within the framework of ethical considerations. The design allows for exploring the impact of the different review categories on consumers choices of restaurant experiences, while recognizing the practical limitations of random assignment in the context of online consumer behavior.

Research Design Rationale

Choosing a quasi-experimental design for this study lies in the possibilities of being able to manipulate independent variables and observe its effects, which is consistent with the nature of this study (Stevenson, 2020). Considering the logistical limitations and ethics of manipulating online consumer behavior in the real world, a quasi-experimental design allows

for striking a better balance between internal validity and external applicability. Within quasi-experimental designs, there is no requirement for participants to be assigned randomly, which is normally the case within classic surveys (Meltzoff & Cooper, 2017). The selection of participants and the conditions for the survey rather tend to take place by self-selection, while at the same time having a certain control over which choices are made. In the context of this research, it may not have been sufficiently useful to recruit participants who have minimal knowledge of online rating systems or restaurant experiences in general. A quasi-experimental design was thus considered appropriate, as this allows for the recruitment of participants to be more predetermined. In this way, the questionnaire can be distributed to people who are likely to contribute valuable insight into the research questions.

Quantitative Approach

Based on what this research aims to achieve, as well as it´s available resources, a quantitative approach has been chosen for data collection. Quantitative methods are typically used by researchers when the goal is to be able to look at what is typical within a problem, by collecting data from a varied and larger sample (Thagaard, 2018). A quantitative approach facilitates for the collection of structured data, while making it possible to analyze patterns, trends, and relationships between variables (Neuman, 2013). The approach further provides a standardized framework for assessing the effect of ORRs on consumer behavior across samples of participants, while making it easier to compare different review types and their influence on consumers´ restaurant choices.

Scenario-Based Questionnaire

A central part of the thesis' quantitative approach has been to design a scenario-based questionnaire in Nettskjema, which is an online survey tool developed by the University of Oslo (2022). The online questionnaire was distributed to relevant participants, with the intention of collecting primary data (Meltzoff & Cooper, 2017). Participants were presented with carefully

constructed scenarios simulating non-sensory, sensory, and multi-sensory ORRs, in order to possibly capture their real-life response to these categories of contents.

This approach provides a controlled environment for the study's participants to evaluate and express their preferences based on hypothetical, yet realistic online reviews of restaurant experiences (Neuman, 2013). Participants were asked to navigate four hypothetical scenarios, which simulated realistic decision-making situations in different dining occasions. Several scenarios were tested by a small sample in advance, before any decisions were made on which scenarios should be taken further. Four scenarios were finally chosen, on the assumption that they present recognizable situations to the majority of respondents, based on the results from pre-testing and the feedback that followed from both participants and supervisor.

By presenting participants with realistic scenarios, the idea was to be able to capture possible nuances of their decision-making and further identify which factors actually drive them towards their final choice of restaurant. Without using scenarios, it could have been difficult to capture how they would actually respond to either sensory, multisensory, or non-sensory aspects of reviews. During the preparatory work for the study, which included conversations with several students and acquaintances, a manipulation check, and several pretests, it became known early on that the terms were unfamiliar to a significant majority. It could thus have become challenging to ask direct questions such as "how important is sensory content in reviews to you?" (Neuman, 2013). The participants were therefore rather asked to imagine themselves in given situations, which gave them a clearer basis for perceiving the examples of reviews as either useful or not, in the context of different dining events.

Pros, Cons, and Biases. The use of scenario-based questions can be beneficial in several ways (Potts, 1995; Stevenson, 2020). First, they make it possible to manipulate and isolate specific variables of interest, and to facilitate a more controlled examination of the impact of sensory, multisensory, or non-sensory assessments on consumers. Additionally,

scenarios provide a standardized structure for eliciting responses, while minimizing variations interpreted by participant, and ensuring a more systematic exploration of their perceptions. The scenarios allow for simulating real-world decision-making situations and provide participants with contextually relevant events that can resemble their actual (real) experiences.

Disadvantages that may come with using scenarios through the questionnaire, on the other hand, is the risk that important aspects of the topic are omitted. In addition, given how the scenario descriptions are self-formulated and present a set of self-made reviews, the risk of bias could potentially increase (Meltzoff & Cooper, 2017). On the other hand, it has been carefully considered how the data should be collected in the best possible way in order to achieve the highest possible reliability of findings. Based on the knowledge acquired during the process, the inclusion of scenario-based questions has remained considered an appropriate approach for the study and its resource constraints. Although self-created scenarios have potential to introduce bias, it is worth noting that the scenarios have been optimized on repeated occasions, based on the feedback received from the participants, during a series of pre-tests. However, it is still important to acknowledge that the validity of the results remains subject to scrutiny, as future research efforts may yield divergent findings despite similar measurement methods.

Standardization and Control. The questionnaire followed a standardized format, in the way that questions of similar categories were designed in similar ways and size (Frost, 2023). Especially within the scenario-based questions, all four sections were structured the same way, and were presented in a specific order what was the exact same for all participants. The use of standardized scenarios ensured consistency and comparability across participants, while minimizing potentially uncertain variables and biases (Potts, 1995; Neuman, 2013). Each scenario was carefully designed to possibly reflect real decision-making situations, and to be as uniform and short as possible in both structure and content, without this affecting whether the reviews presented either non-sensory, sensory, or multisensory assessments. This was to ensure

that all participants would be exposed to the same stimuli, and that the length of the content would be manageable to read through.

Participants were first presented with a brief description of the scenario and then asked to rate the likelihood of using reviews as guidance. Following this probability Likert-scale, the follow-up question within all four scenarios involved asking participants to choose 1 of 3 review examples, all of which presented different restaurant options. Their choice could further indicate which restaurant they would most like to visit, based on which review they found most useful in the given situation. The review examples were designed to look just like real reviews, mostly inspired by how they appear on Tripadvisor (www.tripadvisor.com). Each review was presented by including textual content and a user's profile picture, to illustrate different reviewers. These fictitious users, or reviewers, were given the usernames X, Y and Z, in order to create a clearer distinction between reviews, and to give respondents a better overview of the options which they had to choose from.

Measurement of Variables. The study involves measurements of key variables related to consumers' decision-making process and preferences related to their dining choices. As mentioned, these variables are assessed using scenario-based questions, and further they are quantified using standardized calculations (Thrane, 2018). In order to measure participants' probability of choosing a restaurant based on either non-sensory, sensory, or multisensory recommendations, they were presented with both probability scales, scenarios, matrices, and statement rankings. The variety of ways that questions were asked, was designed with the intention of being able to create greater commitment to participation, and to possibly reduce the risk that the form would be tedious to fill out.

When creating the questionnaire, fictitious examples of reviews were designed to simulate realistic scenarios that consumers are considered likely to face when making restaurant choices. The examples were carefully designed to represent a range of assessment types,

including non-sensory, sensory, and multi-sensory reviews, to assess participants' preferences and decision-making processes. The use of fictitious examples allowed for controlled experimentation while capturing the complexity of real-world decision-making. Participants´ responses to Likert-scale questions and review selection tasks provided primary quantitative data offering valuable insights into their decision-making tendencies.

Sampling Method

Participants were selected using a multifaceted approach that aimed to attract diverse individuals from diverse backgrounds and demographics (Neuman, 2013). Methods used to recruit participants have involved social media announcements, QR codes distributed in public places and encouraging participation during university lectures. When the potential respondents first got access to the questionnaire in Nettskjema, they were primarily asked to answer some introductory questions that determined their relevance for further participation (University of Oslo, 2022). This division ensured that only those individuals who met the predetermined criteria were included in the final selection.

Sample Size. The scenario-based questionnaire involved 115 participants, while the pre-tests initially included 4 individuals, followed by an additional 3 participants in subsequent pre-tests, resulting in a total of 7 participants across all pre-test sessions. The manipulation test conducted prior to the main study also involved 7 participants, who were not the same participants as those who took part in pre-testing.

Participants

Participants were selected based on predetermined criteria, which included being familiar with online review systems and being likely to use ORRs to guide their restaurant choices. Generation Y, also known as millennials, was set as the main target group when recruiting study participants (Klarna, 2023; Melović et al., 2021). This was largely due to how the generation is known to be both tech-savvy and active internet surfers, compared to other

generations. Furthermore, based on their age, it was thought that many of them may have sufficient restaurant experience, stable incomes, and sufficient knowledge of how online reviews can have the power to influence decision-making. Table 2 further summarizes the main criteria for inclusion.

Table 2

Participants Inclusion Criteria

Characteristics	Description
Age Range	Millennials, Gen Y. Individuals within the age range from 28 to 43
Restaurant Consumers	Individuals having experienced a restaurant at least once in the past three months
Demographically diverse individuals	Individuals from diverse backgrounds, from different geographical locations in Norway, gender, and age variations
Users of online reviews	Individuals actively using online review systems (e.g., Google Reviews, Tripadvisor)

Note. This table shows the inclusion criteria for participants for the questionnaire.

Participant Recruitment

Relevant participants were initially invited to take part in the study through a targeted social media announcement, posted on Facebook, and designed to encourage participation through a text that described the value of their contribution. To facilitate easy access, a link and QR code was added to the post, so that anyone interested could quickly navigate into the online

form. The post further described the purpose and aim of the study. The idea was that a post on Facebook, possibly were to reach a sufficient number of individuals from different places of residence in Norway, and with different backgrounds, especially as the post allowed further sharing. However, the number of participants did not appear to grow very quickly, so it became necessary to resort to other methods in order to collect more responses.

As an attempt to collect more responses, a QR code was placed in various public places so that anyone interested could easily access the questionnaire. QR codes were placed at a hotel and restaurant in central Stavanger, where some employees also helped with participant recruitment. Guests perceived as suitable for the study's target group were encouraged by the staff to participate. Here they were also sufficiently informed about what their participation entailed, and once again the principles of anonymity were highlighted. Not least, everyone was informed about the aim and purpose of the study, and how their answers were crucial to being able to answer the research problem linked to a master's thesis.

After this session, and as a final step to collect more answers, the questionnaire was shared with students at the University of Stavanger, during a lecture. This approach was suggested by the supervisor as an opportunity to reach a diverse and larger sample of participants. Students were briefly introduced to the research study during a lecture and further invited to participate. It was clearly stated that their participation was voluntary and that all responses would remain confidential and anonymous. Instructions were given on how to access the form, which was by scanning a QR code displayed on a large screen in the auditorium. This method made it possible to engage individuals who might have an interest in the research topic, and to further encourage their participation. It also gave the opportunity to collect responses from students with different backgrounds, which in turn contributed to a more varied sample.

Representativeness

Although the use of various approaches for recruitment made it possible to reach a diverse sample of participants, it is important to assess the representativeness of the sample in relation to the wider population of interest (Meltzoff & Cooper, 2017; Neuman, 2013). The population of relevance for this study includes all individuals from generation Y in Norway who at least have visited one restaurant in the past 3 months, and who at least once have used online reviews for guidance to their restaurant choice. However, determining the exact size and characteristics of this population is challenging and nearly impossible, as it encompasses a wide range of potential participants with varying demographics, behaviors, and preferences.

It is also noteworthy to consider the potential discrepancy between the intended target population of millennials and the actual demographics of the study sample (Meltzoff & Cooper, 2017). Despite attempts to target younger individuals through social media announcements and university lectures, it was observed that a significant proportion of participants belonged to other generations. A great proportion of those who were interested in responding to the survey were just as likely to be individuals who extended slightly and further above the "age limit". This deviation from the intended target demographic may affect the generalizability of the study findings, especially in relation to younger age groups.

Furthermore, the recruitment methods used in this study may introduce biases that affect the representativeness of the sample (Meltzoff & Cooper, 2017). An example of this includes how individuals who are more active on social media or who attend university lectures more frequently may have been overrepresented, while those not engaging as much in such activities may be underrepresented. Additionally, by using QR codes in public places may primarily attract individuals who are already inclined to participate in research activities, potentially biasing the selection toward individuals with higher levels of interest or engagement.

While the sample for the study provide valuable insight into the behavior and attitudes of individuals in Norway regarding restaurant reviews and dining preferences, it is as mentioned

important to acknowledge its limitations in terms of representativeness (Meltzoff & Cooper, 2017; Neuman, 2013). Primarily, the study has focused on studying the effect of sensory content in reviews on restaurant consumers, and to be able to arrive at some idea of how the different content in restaurant reviews possibly has any influence on consumers restaurant choices. Furthermore, it was interesting to possibly be able to see how these results compare to what was shown for Amazon users through Lopez´s and Garza´s study (2022). The main focus of this research has thus not been to arrive at any generalizable results, or to find an answer that can represent an entire population of consumers who have used reviews for guidance and have been to a restaurant at least once in the past three months. If this were to be a future goal, future research efforts could have benefited from using more varied recruitment strategies and may rather consider more alternative methods to ensure a more representative sample.

Manipulation Check

Prior to conducting the main study, a manipulation check was conducted to validate the research instruments and ensure their reliability (Ejelöv & Luke, 2020). The manipulation check was carried out to test the effectiveness of research instruments, through a categorization task and two scenario-based questions, before administering them in the main study. Five participants were given a short, structured paper, that presented some examples of ORRs. They were further asked to categorize these reviews into the predefined categories: non-sensory, sensory, and multisensory. Prior to asking participants to categorize these made-up reviews, they were informed through a short textual introduction about each of the review categories being studied. The descriptions clearly led to an understanding of the concepts, while it also became noticeable that such descriptions should not take part in the main questionnaire, considering how the participants spent an unnecessary amount of time trying to understand. This may cause the respondents to lose interest long before the actual question is asked.

After the categorization task, participants were asked to select the review that they believed to be most influential to their restaurant choice in two given scenarios. In this way, it was indirectly assessed whether the scenarios effectively manipulated the variable of interest, i.e., the influence of online reviews on consumers decision-making. The participants choices here, gave insight into whether they perceived certain review types as more influential in a specific context. It became noticeable that different elements of reviews may affect their decision-making. Where it was initially intended for participants to assess the textual content of a review, other elements such as star ratings or thumbs up votes, typically showed to create confusion or became part of what influenced their choice. At the same time, it became clear that with a selection of reviews to choose from, regardless of sensory content, it was often the dish being described that seemed to be decisive to their choice. This was especially the case within the scenario named "Just Arrived", where participants were asked to imagine that they had just arrived at a destination after several hours of travel.

Pre-testing

After conducting the manipulation check, a small sample was asked to answer a pre-test for the main questionnaire. First, 3 relevant respondents were asked to answer, and to give feedback on whether they found the questions and the information in general to be comprehensible in terms of language, wording, layout, content, and so on (Meltzoff & Cooper, 2017). The 3 respondents were all Norwegians, who rarely used English in their everyday speech. According to Neuman (2013), it is common to encounter problems with formulation in surveys, which through this pre-test proved to be the case this time as well. These problems were largely linked to language barriers, as feedback from half of the participants was that several words and sentences were difficult to understand because they were not used to either reading or speaking English. It was therefore appropriate to design two questionnaires, one in

English and one in Norwegian. In this way, the questionnaire could become more user-friendly for all participants, while the risk of collecting invalid answers could be reduced.

In the first draft of the questionnaire, several words and expressions were questioned beyond this as well. The meaning of terms such as "culinary" or "hedonism" was repeatedly questioned. So, instead of describing these terms in detail, they were changed to other terms of similar meaning. Furthermore, after several changes and adjustments had been made, mainly related to wording, the questionnaire was tested again by the same people. It was then confirmed by the participants that the questionnaire had been given significantly better wording and structure. The same pre-test was then shared with four other relevant respondents to see if their feedback was any different. This resulted in 3 out of 4 participants mentioning that the form was perhaps a bit too time-consuming to complete, while 2 of them also mentioned that it felt as if some questions were asked more than once.

Further improvements were made, based on all respondents' feedback. Questions were formulated more concretely, while attempts were made to make the scenarios and reviews even shorter, without removing important contents. After each question, participants could also see a percentage line filling up, so that they could better know how much time were left to complete the form. Textual information was added to each part and were intended to act as a motivation for the participants to continue. After even more changes, a new pre-test was carried out with the same sample, including at total of 7 respondents to check whether any further changes were necessary. Since none of them had any specific comments for improvement, the questionnaire was finally considered ready for official publication.

Validity and Reliability

For the study to result in reliable findings, it was important to collect as many answers as possible (Meltzoff & Cooper, 2017; Sander, 2022). The study´s reliability can be assessed based on the extent to which the findings refer to what the situation being studied really is like,

and the extent to which these findings can be verified. The relevance and accuracy of the study's measurements can further indicate the study's validity, which should be considered when carrying out an online questionnaire.

Quasi-experimental designs are rarely the primary choice if any powerful causal inferences are to be drawn (Meltzoff & Cooper, 2017). However, whether or not the design leads to validity of results can still vary based on how the study in question is designed and structured, and it´s degree of validity threats. Quasi-experimental designs are rather used more often in situations where true experimental designs might be impractical or unethical. This includes situations as when random assignment of participants to experimental conditions is nearly impossible. Achieving perfect validity or reliability of this study is believed to be impossible, something which generally applies to all quantitative research measurements (Neuman, 2013). This is largely due to how social theories are both diffuse and commonly inconclusive constructions that are quite difficult to observe. So even if this study, like so many others, aims to achieve a result that is as reliable and valid as possible, the result will hardly give grounds for claiming that the findings point to any immutable truths.

According to Neuman (2013), the credibility of quantitative research studies involves numerical measurements that cannot be varied based on which measurement process or measurement instruments are used. In this study's questionnaire, where the aim has been to measure what kind of review content consumers find most useful to their restaurant choices, it will, on the other hand, be difficult not to make variations in the measurement methods. However, there are other ways to improve reliability, and according to Neuman (2013), there are four methods in particular to be highlighted. This includes how constructs should be clearly conceptualized, and how the researcher should use precise measurement levels, multiple indicators, and pilot testing. The study's questionnaire was designed to provide valuable insights to the research topic, by presenting clear descriptions and questions. This can be linked to

Neuman's first proposal for how the reliability can be strengthened by clearly conceptualizing the study´s constructs (Neuman, 2013). The questionnaire was constantly adopted along the way to improve and clarify all contents in the best way possible, and to ensure all texts were formulated adequately. It was ensured on several occasions that all unnecessary information was removed before the questionnaire was opened for data collection to the general public.

Measurements has been made under the same or similar conditions, something which increased the study´s stability (Neuman, 2013). Repeated tests were carried out to strengthen the online questionnaire, and several methods were used to repeat the same measurements. An example of this, is how the questionnaire asked participants to indicate their answers based on given scenarios, followed by giving their opinions on the same topic through Likert scales.

Internal Validity

The internal validity is a term used to describe whether research products have been carried out without internal errors (Neuman, 2013). When assessing the study's internal validity, it can be mentioned that several factors have been assessed to ensure the accuracy and reliability of findings. First, the design has been characterized by a quasi-experimental approach, which enabled the comparison of different types of ORRs while allowing the control of choices based on restaurant preferences. To minimize threats to internal validity, participants were also recruited through both social media, QR codes in public places and through university lectures. In addition, an attempt was made to increase the reliability of the measures by using validated Likert scale instruments to assess the participants' perception of assessment utility and preferences related to restaurant experiences. Treatment integrity was maintained through standardized procedures for presenting reviews to participants and monitoring their responses. However, despite these efforts, the data collection process may have been influenced by potential sources of bias, such as participant compliance and attrition that are recognized and addressed through rigorous data collection and analysis procedures. Overall, the study's internal

validity has nevertheless been carefully assessed to ensure that the results accurately reflect ORRs on consumer decision-making.

Data Analysis Plan

When analyzing the data collected for this study, a mixed methods approach is used to provide a comprehensive understanding of consumer perceptions and behaviors regarding ORRs. The scenario-based questionnaire was created in nettskjema.no, which is a survey tool developed and hosted by the University of Oslo (nettskjema@usit.uio.no). The data set from questionnaire responses were imported from Nettskjema into Excel (version 16.84), where the data was sorted, and errors corrected. After an extensive data editing process, the materials were finally imported into IBM SPSS Statistics (Version 29.0.2.0), to perform various data analyzes. By using this software for analyzes, the descriptive statistics, including means, standard deviations, frequencies, and percentages, will be analyzed first, to summarize the characteristics of key variables. Statistical findings will further be presented through tables added to the text, while some tables will be attached as appendices after the reference list, depending on its scope and size. Where possibly data is missing data, this will be made visible to the reader.

Following the general analysis of descriptive statistics, inferential statistical analyzes will be performed to test how one variable affects the other, and for further being able to answer the research questions (Neuman, 2013). More specifically, this will first involve a crosstabulation analysis, where the main aim is to look at relationship between key variables. The crosstabulation analysis will primarily involve analyzing the relationship between participants´ indicated probability of using reviews for guidance in the four scenarios through Likert-scale measures, and their choice of restaurant or review within these dining occasions. Chi-square tests will then be performed to determine if there are significant differences between the observed and expected frequencies within these contingency tables.

Ethical Considerations

Several factors have been taken into consideration throughout this work to ensure that the research process followed some basic ethical principles and certain ethical standards (Meltzoff & Cooper, 2017). Participants were clearly informed that the online survey was both voluntary and anonymous, before choosing to participate or not. To protect personal and sensitive data, answers were collected through the online survey tool known as Nettskjema, that has been developed by the University of Oslo (nettskjema@usit.uio.no). The survey tool enables researchers to design anonymous questionnaires with particular regard to security and privacy. Participants could thus be assured in advance of giving their answers, that no personal data were to be asked for, collected, or stored in any way. Nor could their IP address, or the like, be saved or traced back to them in any way.

The scenario-based questionnaire, which can be seen in Appendix A, began with a brief description, where participants were informed that they had the option to skip questions they preferred not to answer (Meltzoff & Cooper, 2017). A brief explanation of the study's significance was given, outlining the purpose in a simple yet informative way. The textual content was further designed to be as user-friendly as possible, ensuring participants' engagement without overwhelming them with unnecessary complexity.

In conclusion, this methodological chapter has outlined the research design, various data collection methods used in this study, and the plan for further data analysis. Following the exposition of the study's methodologies, the subsequent chapter delves into the presentation of research outcomes. This section provides a comprehensive summary of the data analysis carried out in this study and highlights key findings related to the thesis´ research questions. By examining the results in light of the study´s aims and analytical approach, the aim is to uncover insights into consumer decision-making process within the context of online restaurant reviews (ORRs) across different dining occasions.

Results and Analyzes

The online questionnaire collected a total of 115 responses during one week of publicity starting on 15 April 2024. Initiated forms that were never fully completed, nor submitted, is not counted. Participants were, on the other hand, able to skip questions, meaning that presented findings may still show to varying numbers of valid observations across the measured variables (Neuman, 2013). As analytical functions were limited on Nettskjema, the dataset was first downloaded from the survey tool's codebook (University of Oslo, 2024). The data were further sorted using Excel (version 16.84), where any errors arising from the import of data could be corrected and made ready for analysis. Furthermore, the dataset was finally uploaded into the software program IBM SPSS Statistics (version 29.0.2.0), which was used to perform manual processing and statistical analyses, and to generate results.

Descriptive Statistics

Using IBM SPSS Statistics (version 29.0.2.0), descriptive statistics of various variables were analyzed, including measures of central tendency, such as mode, median and mean (Neuman, 2013). Related to demographics, participants were only asked about their age, and the age statistics were further derived from the frequency distribution of respondents based on 7 alternatives to age groups (See Appendix). The analysis revealed that the average age of the respondents was approximately 31.07 years. The median age, which represents the middle value of the data set, was found to be 26-31 years, suggesting that half of the respondents fell within this age range (Thrane, 2018). Furthermore, the mode, or the most frequently occurring age category, was 26-31 years, reaching 44 respondents. Furthermore, in order to better understand participants´ review usage- and dining frequency, descriptive statistics were calculated for responses to two key screening questions:

1. How many restaurant experiences have you had in the past 3 months?
2. Do you look at online reviews before choosing which restaurant to go for?

When participants were asked the first screening question, they could choose between 5 options ranging from "None" to "7 or more", to indicate their number of restaurant visits within the specified timeframe (see Appendix A). The question related to review usage frequency further involved five answer options, ranging from "Never" to "Always". Table 3 shows the results from the analysis of the two variables' descriptive statistics.

Table 3

Descriptive Statistics of Screening Questions

Variable	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	Median	Mode	Std. Deviation
1	115	1	5	3.23	3.00	3	1.216
2	115	1	5	3.19	3.00	3	1.139

Note. This table shows the descriptive statistics of two key questions, linked to the number of restaurant visits (Var. 1), and frequency of using reviews among survey participants (Var. 2).

As shown in Table 3, the median for both variables are 3, indicating the most common answer for variable 1 was "3-4", meaning that the majority of respondents have been to a restaurant at least 3-4 times during the past three months. For variable 2, the most typical answer was also option 3, which in this context refer to "Sometimes" on the Likert scale. For Variable 1, the standard deviation of 1.216 indicates that the individual responses tend to deviate from the average of 3-4 visits by approximately 1.216 times on average, as can be seen in Table 3. This suggests that there is some variation in where respondents often visit restaurants, with answers scattered around the average value (Thrane, 2018). Similarly, the std. deviation of 1.139 for variable 2, "review use frequency," indicates that the individual responses regarding

review use tend to deviate from the most common response "sometimes" by approximately 1.139 times on average. This means that there is variation in how often respondents use reviews, with answers scattered around the most common frequency.

Likert Scales

Descriptive statistics were further calculated for items in the Likert scales to assess the participants´ likelihood of using reviews for guidance in the four scenarios: (1) Celebration, (2) Just Arrived, (3) Holiday in Rome, and (4) The Local Restaurant (See Appendix A for scenario descriptions). Participants' likelihood of using reviews in each of the scenarios were measured using a 5-point Likert scale, where 1 indicates "very unlikely" and 5 "very likely". Table 4 summarizes the descriptive statistics of these responses and provides insight into participants attitudes and behavior in this context.

Table 4

Participants Likelihood of Using ORRs for Guidance

Variable	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	Median	Mode	Std. D.
Celebration	115	1	5	3.83	4	4	1.011
Holiday in Rome	115	1	5	3.91	4	5	1.064
Just Arrived	114	1	5	3.31	3	3	1.304
The Local Restaurant	113	1	5	3.34	3	3	1.236

Note. This table shows how participants rated their likelihood of using ORRs for guidance in the four scenarios presented in the online questionnaire.

As shown in Table 4, the number of valid observations (N) was not the same within each variable, as a result of some participants choosing not to answer all questions. The

"Holiday in Rome" scenario appeared to have the highest probability of making consumers use online reviews, while it was least likely to use reviews in the "Just arrived" scenario (see Table 4). Across all scenarios, participants generally reported using reviews with moderate frequency, with mean scores ranging from 3.31 to 3.91. At the same time, variations of likelihood of using reviews were evident, with standard deviation values ranging from approx. 1.011 to 1.304. In particular, participants tended to be more likely to use reviews in scenarios associated with festive dining events and traveling, as indicated by higher mean scores in these scenarios compared to others (see Table 4). Despite some variation in responses, the consistency of median and mode values across scenarios suggests that, although there is diversity in the likelihood of review usage among participants, there are also common trends observed across dining contexts. These findings emphasize the importance of considering the contextual factors that influence consumers' reliance on online reviews when making dining decisions.

Statements. In the final part of the questionnaire, Likert-scales was used to measure participants level of agreement to five different statements (see Appendix X). Through statistical analysis, it was revealed that the average respondent chose 4 on the scale that ranged from 1 to 5, where 1 indicated "strongly disagree" and 5 indicated "strongly agree". The second statement was related to finding help in reviews for fine dining occasions. This statement received the highest percentage of respondents choosing 5 on the scale to indicate their level of agreement (45%). Furthermore, the average for the other statements turned out to be 4.02 for statement 1 related to how carefully the review examples were read. For statement 3 related to finding help in reviews when traveling, the mean was 4.06. Statement 4 related to reviews helpfulness when looking for local restaurants further resulted in a mean of 3.36. For the final statement, which intended to measure the participants' trust in online reviews, the mean resulted in 3.61, indicating that the average respondent rated their level of trust in online reviews as 3.6 on a scale of 1 to 5.

Review Types. Followed by the statement measures, a Likert scale ranging from 1 to 5 was also used to gain insight into participants´ perceptions of different review types and their helpfulness, with 1 indicating "not helpful at all" and 5 indicating "very helpful". Table 5 shows the descriptive statistics for the 4 variables that were measured.

Table 5

Helpfulness of Review Elements

Variable	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	Mode	Median	Std. D.
Content-rich / descriptive text	115	1	5	3.44	3	3.00	1.036
Short texts / practical information	115	1	5	4.01	4	4.00	.941
Images (of food, design, etc.)	115	1	5	3.95	5	4.00	1.025
Star-ratings	115	1	5	4.07	4	4.00	.925

Note. This table shows the perceived helpfulness of review types among the participants.

Importance of Restaurant Attributes. Respondents were further asked to rate the importance of various restaurant attributes, typically mentioned through ORRs (Tripadvisor, 2023). A 5-point Likert scale was used to collect responses, where 1 indicated "not important at all", and 5 "very important". 11 restaurant attributes chosen to take part of this section on the basis of previous research that has highlighted their importance (Liu & Tse, 2018). Table 6 shows how the participants of this study assessed 11 restaurant attributes, classified as either non-sensory or sensory. The sensory attributes are presented in the table by the letter S, while the non-sensory ones are marked as "NS".

Table 6

Participants' assessment of 11 restaurant attributes

Variable	NS/S	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	Median	Std. D.
Restaurant location	NS	115	1	5	3.48	4	.976
Scent / Aroma	S	115	1	5	3.58	4	1.051
Service quality	NS	115	1	5	4.40	5	.804
Dietary options	NS	115	1	5	3.13	3	1.246
Visual food presentation	S	115	1	5	3.81	4	.936
Seating Comfort	S	115	1	5	3.83	4	.920
Price to value ratio	NS	115	1	5	4.43	5	.795
Sounds (music/noise)	S	115	1	5	3.75	4	1.033
Tasty Food	S	115	1	5	4.78	5	.548
Cleanliness	NS	115	1	5	4.69	5	.654
Ambiance	S	115	1	5	4.15	5	. 871

Note. This table shows the descriptive statistics for participants assessments of 11 attributes.

Review Choices for Different Dining Occasions

In each scenario, participants were asked to select 1 of 3 restaurant reviews to indicate their restaurant choice (see Appendix A for questions and scenario descriptions). Participants had no prior knowledge of the review categories under study. Table 7 summarizes the participants' assessments of the reviews and indicates which category each review belonged to.

Table 7

Choice of Restaurant Through Online Reviews in Four Scenarios

Scenario	Category	Review No.	Frequency	Percent
Celebration	Multisensory	1	52	45.2
	Non-Sensory	2	17	14.8
	Sensory	3	46	40.0
Total			115	100
Just Arrived	Non-Sensory	1	56	48.7
	Multisensory	2	28	24.3
	Sensory	3	31	27.0
Total			115	100
Holiday in Rome	Sensory	1	36	31.3
	Non-Sensory	2	22	19.1
	Multisensory	3	57	49.6
Total			115	100
The Local Restaurant	Non-Sensory	1	26	22.6
	Multisensory	2	40	34.8
	Sensory	3	49	42.6
Total			115	100

Note. This table shows the frequency and percentage of how 115 study participants indicated their preferences for reviews and choice of restaurant related to four different scenarios.

The analysis of the participants´ choice of restaurant based on the selected review across four different scenarios contributed interesting insights into participants preferences (see Table 7). In the first scenario, "Celebration", a notable preference for multisensory reviews was observed, with 45.2% choosing this type of review, followed by 40% choosing sensory reviews. Conversely, non-sensory reviews showed to be less favored, chosen by only 14.8% of participants. For the second scenario, "Just Arrived", on the other hand, the non-sensory review emerged as the most popular choice, chosen by 48.7%. The frequency of choosing sensory reviews for this scenario was also significantly lower compared to the first scenario, "Celebration". As shown in Table 7, it appears that the highest percentage across scenarios

where participants chose the multisensory review, was in the "Holiday in Rome" scenario. Overall, 93 out of a total of 115 participants based their choice of restaurant on reviews that presented sensory content in this scenario.

Although the "Holiday in Rome" scenario shows the highest frequency of multisensory review choices, the "celebration" scenario captured slightly more participants in total, if counting who chose a review with sensory content rather than the non-sensory alternative (see Table 7). On the occasion of celebrations, a total of 98 participants chose one of the two options presenting sensory content. Furthermore, in "The Local Restaurant" scenario, sensory reviews were slightly favored by 42.6%, closely followed by the multisensory review with 34.8%, and the non-sensory review with 22.6%. These statistical findings suggest that participants´ preferences varies across different dining scenes. This further highlights the importance of how contextual factors should be considered when evaluating the perceived helpfulness of ORRs.

Crosstabulation Analysis

A crosstabulation analysis was further conducted to examine and interpret the relationships between variables of interest in this study (see Appendix B). By using this technique, more insight was gained into the relationships between the participants' degree of probability for using reviews in the various scenarios, and their review or restaurant preferences indicated in these contexts. The results of the cross-tabulation analysis can be seen in Appendix B and show that the distribution of review choices varies for each Likert scale point (from 1 to 5), indicating potential differences in the participants' decision-making process and preferences.

Celebration Scenario

On the Likert scale point 5 (very likely) for scenario 1 (Celebration), it appears that the participants have a stronger preference for multisensory reviews compared to non-sensory ones (see Appendix B). This indicates that when participants are highly likely to use reviews for guidance, they tend to prioritize the more detailed and immersive descriptions of the

experiences, as typically depicted in multisensory reviews. The analysis shows that the higher the probability of finding guidance in reviews for this scenario, there is a noticeable trend towards higher frequencies of sensory reviews being chosen. At the highest probability (scale point 5), participants overwhelmingly favor sensory reviews, with more than half of the responses choosing this type of review. This suggests that as participants become more inclined to use reviews, they place greater emphasis on sensory aspects such as taste, smell and visual presentation when making decisions.

Residuals were also fond through the analysis and provide further insight into the deviations from expected frequencies (see Appendix B). Positive residuals of review types indicate that they were chosen more frequently than expected based on chance, while the negative residuals suggest the opposite (reference). Overall, the celebration crosstab shows patterns in participants´ preferences for reviews, highlighting the interplay between the likelihood of using reviews for guidance and the perceived sensory appeal of restaurant experiences. These findings contribute to a greater understanding of consumers evaluations and restaurant choices based on online reviews, with implications for marketing strategies and consumer decision-making models.

Just Arrived Scenario

In the "Just Arrived" scenario, the crosstabulation analysis reveals a preference for non-sensory reviews at lower Likert scale points (see Appendix B). This is particularly evident on scale point 2, where 47.4% of responses favor the non-sensory review. However, the analysis also shows that the proportion of indications for the non-sensory review decreases as the probability of using reviews increases. As the likelihood of using reviews increases, from scale 1 to 5, there is a noticeable shift towards multisensory reviews. These findings may indicate that the participants who are more inclined to use reviews for guidance, prioritize reviews that provide holistic sensory experiences when making restaurant choices.

The analysis further shows that at scale point 4, for example, the non-sensory review has a negative residual (see Appendix B). This indicates that this review type is chosen less often than expected based on chance. Conversely, the positive residual for the multisensory review, which on scale point 4 shows 4.3, indicates that this review type is favored more than expected. Overall, the analysis of this scenario has highlighted the dynamic nature of participants´ preferences regarding ORRs, as their likelihood of using them for guidance changes. The divergences from non-sensory to multi-sensory reviews reflect a multifaceted decision-making process influenced by the perceived sensory appeal of restaurant experiences. The findings also contribute to a better understanding of how consumers navigate online reviews when making dining decision, with implications for marketing strategies and consumer behavior research.

Holiday in Rome Scenario

In the "Holiday in Rome" scenario, the crosstabulation analysis shows several notable findings regarding the participants' preferences for different types of reviews across Likert scale points (see Appendix B). It appears that the participants clearly showed a preference for multisensory reviews, especially among participants who were highly likely to use reviews as guidance for this dining occasion. Nearly 70% of responses at Likert-scale 5 favor the multisensory review (see Appendix B). This may indicate a strong preference for reviews that provide extensive sensory experiences, or that engaging content is prioritized when looking for dining options when being on holiday in Rome. As the likelihood of using reviews increases, on the Likert-scale from 1 to 5, the proportion of responses favoring non-sensory reviews also decreases. This trend appears as evident in the decreasing percentages of non-sensory review selected across the scale points. This may suggest that participants are less interested in using reviews for guidance if they lack sensory elements.

Based on the interpretation of the analysis shown in Appendix B, the listed statistics for this scenario may suggest that the sensory review occupies an intermediate position between the non-sensory and the multisensory review, in terms of participants preferences. The sensory review was selected slightly less frequently than the multisensory one, but still maintain a significant proportion of responses across Likert scale points, indicating their relevance in influencing dining decisions during a holiday in Rome. It also appears that the non-sensory review never reached a higher proportion of participants than the two other review examples, regardless of which value was indicated on the Likert scale. The non-sensory review has nevertheless received remarkable attention, but which seems to have decreased steadily as the degree of probability increased. At scale point 5, the multisensory review option shows a positive residual of 8.7. This indicates the option is chosen more often than expected, given the distribution of responses across Likert scale points. Conversely, the negative residuals for the non-sensory review indicate that this option is chosen less often than expected.

The Local Restaurant Scenario

Based on the crosstabulation analysis for the fourth scenario (The Local Restaurant), it appears that the higher the score on the Likert scale, the more likely it is to use reviews for guidance (see Appendix B). On Likert-scale point 1, it is the non-sensory review that dominates, but the further up the scale, the more participants choose one of the sensory examples. Compared to the first three scenarios, this scenario shows a more balanced distribution of review preferences across Likert scale points. The number of participant choices within each of the review categories were quite varied across scale points, as the non-sensory review varied from 2 to 12, the sensory from 3 to 13, while the multisensory from 2 to 12. Additionally, the patterns of residuals also showed some differences, compared to previous scenarios. Overall, these variations in the distribution of responses across all three review categories and Likert-

scale points may suggest there is unique variations in participants' preferences based on the specific context of this scenario.

Following this extensive descriptive analysis, which has included techniques such as cross-tabulation to explore relationships between categorical variables, the next section involves presenting the results of the inferential statistics analyzes.

Inferential Statistics

While the descriptive analysis provided valuable insight into the characteristics of the study's variables, inferential analysis techniques help to bring out details and create a better opportunity to uncover patterns from the data material (Meltzoff & Cooper, 2017). And even within quasi-experimental designs, this is often necessary to perform. Although the statistics will not be used to draw conclusions about the participants or generalize results in this case, the statistics can help give an idea of what the study´s results may indicate.

Chi-Square Tests

Followed by the cross-tabulation analysis, Chi-Square tests were performed of the same data set. The Chi-square tests included symmetric measures of Phi and Cramer´s V and were performed to see whether the relationship between participants likelihood to use reviews for guidance in the four scenarios, and their review choices, is statistically significant (Neuman, 2013). The results of these tests can be seen in Appendix C, where all statistics from these tests is presented through a table.

For scenario 1 (Celebration), the Pearson chi-square value is 4.534, with 8 degrees of freedom, while the asymptotic significance (2-sided) is 0.806 (see Appendix C). This indicates that the relationship between Likert-scale responses and review choices are not statistically significant at the conventional significance level, which is typically referred to as $p < .05$, .01, or .001 (Neuman, 2013). The likelihood ratio in this scenario further shows to be 4.817, with 8 degrees of freedom. The degree of freedom (df) represents the maximum number of

independent values, which typically varies in a given dataset. The asymptotic significance (2-sided) for the likelihood ratio is 0.777, which shows constituency to the findings from the Pearson chi-square tests, and which again emphasizes that the relationship is not statistically significant. The linear-by-linear association value shows to be 0.164, with 1 degree of freedom, while the asymptotic significance (2-sided) is 0.686. This suggests that there is no linear relationship between the Likert-scale responses and the review choices in scenario 1. Furthermore, the symmetrical measures show a Phi coefficient value of 0.199, while a Cramer's V value of 0.140. Both are measures of association for nominal variables, which in this case appears with values of 0.806 for both measures. This suggests that there is a weak correlation between the variables being studied, as both coefficients are close to zero.

For scenario 2 (Just Arrived), the Pearson Chi-Square value is 11.296, with 8 degrees of freedom, indicating a probability value (p) of 0.185 (see Appendix C). This suggests no significant relationship between Likert-scale responses and review choices. Similar results were obtained with Likelihood ratio and Linear-by-Linear Association tests. The symmetric measures Phi and Cramer´s V also showed non-significant results. In scenario 3 (Holiday in Rome), the Pearson Chi-Square value is 12.922, corresponding to its p-value of 0.115, indicating no statistically significant relationship between the variables. The Linear-by-Linear Association test, however, revealed a significant association, with a p-value of .003.

The Pearson Chi-Square value for scenario 4 (The Local Restaurant), yielded a value of 15.142, resulting in a p-value of 0.056, which suggests a marginally significant relationship between Likert-scale responses and review choices. Both the Likelihood ratio and the Linear-by-linear association test further showed non-significant results. And since both p-values for these measures were found to be greater than the conventional significance level of 0.05, the null hypothesis cannot be rejected (Neuman, 2013). Both the Phi and Cramer´s V also indicated

a non-significant relationship, and evidence are insufficient to conclude that there is a significant relationship between the variables in this scenario as well, based on these tests.

In summary, scenario 1 (celebration) showed non-significant results, while scenarios 2 (Just Arrived) and 4 (The Local Restaurant) showed no significant associations. Scenario 3 (Holiday in Rome) revealed a significant relationship between the variables according to the test of Linear-by-linear association. This suggests that there may be a linear trend or pattern in the relationship between likelihood of using reviews and the chosen review, for this specific scenario. However, Phi and Cramer's V values for all scenarios did not reach statistical significance, indicating weak associations between the variables in each scenario. This implies that the relationship between likelihood of using ORRs for guidance and the selected review indicating restaurant choice, may not be strong or consistent across scenarios.

In this chapter, the results were presented and analyzed according to the research objectives. Key themes and patterns emerged from the data, shedding light on how sensory, multisensory, and non-sensory aspects of online reviews may influence restaurant choice. Additionally, the results gave valuable insight into the relationship between review content and consumer preferences, and for dining occasions and likelihood of using reviews.

Discussion

The discussion chapter serves to interpret the findings that have emerged as a result of this study, within the wider field of research on consumer decisions and online reviews. This chapter will integrate the key findings, compare them with existing literature and explore their implications for theory, practice, and future research. The primary objectives of this study were to investigate how sensory versus non-sensory textual ratings influence consumers' decision-making processes when choosing restaurants, and to investigate how the dining event influences consumers' preferences for these types of reviews.

Key Findings and Interpretations

This study has revealed several important insights into consumer behavior regarding online reviews and restaurant choices. Through a quasi-experimental design and a scenario-based questionnaire, the data collected from 115 participants provided a rich source of information to answer the research questions.

Research Question 1: How do Sensory vs. Non-Sensory Textual Reviews Influence Consumers´ Decision-Making Process When Choosing Restaurants?

Preference for Sensory and Multisensory Reviews. Findings related to the scenario of celebration, shows that participants indicate a strong preference for multisensory reviews when there is a high probability that they will use reviews for guidance for this dining event. This suggests that for special occasions, consumers value detailed and immersive descriptions that enhance their anticipation and decision-making process. Similar results also emerge for the holiday in Rome scenario, where participants increasingly favored multisensory reviews as their likelihood of using reviews in this scenario increased. This trend emphasizes the importance of rich sensory information for restaurant choices during travel.

Initial Preference for Non-Sensory Reviews in Practical Contexts. At lower probability points in the just arrived scenario, participants showed a preference for non-sensory reviews, indicating a need for practical, simple information when they are new to a place, or after having traveled a long way. However, as their likelihood of using reviews increased, their preference shifted toward sensory and multisensory reviews. This shift suggests that while initial practical information is essential, detailed sensory experiences are becoming more important as consumers seek to improve their eating decisions with richer information.

Balanced Preferences for Local Food. In the local restaurant scenario, a more balances preference across sensory and non-sensory reviews emerges, which suggests that both practical and sensory information are important for local dining decisions. As participants became more

likely to use reviews, their preferences included a mix of sensory and non-sensory reviews. This indicates that local dining choices are influenced by a combination of practical and sensory information, depending on how likely participants are to use reviews.

Research Question 2: How Does the Dining Occasion Affect Consumers´ Preference for Sensory and Non-Sensory Reviews?

Restaurant Attributes Preferences. The assessment of various restaurant attributes revealed distinct preferences among participants: Tasty food (sensory) appears as the highest rated attribute with a mean of 4.78, indicating that taste is the most crucial factor for participants. Cleanliness/hygiene (non-sensory) was the second highest rated attribute with a mean score of 4.69. The lowest rated attribute was dietary options (non-sensory), with a mean score of 3.13. Overall, the analysis indicates that both sensory and non-sensory attributes are important, but taste, cleanliness and value for money are the top three priorities.

Responses to Likert Scale Statements. Participants' responses to how much they agree with various statements related to online reviews and dining experiences indicated that for "I find online reviews useful when I travel" statement, the mean score was 4.06, suggesting that reviews are considered very useful for travel-related dining decisions. The "I find online reviews as trustworthy" statements shows a mean score of 3.61, indicating a moderate level of trust in online reviews.

Interpretations

The analysis of participants' responses revealed several notable findings regarding the influence of online reviews on restaurant decision-making across different scenarios. Overall, while some scenarios showed no significant associations between Likert-scale responses and review choices, others showed intriguing patterns that suggest varying degrees of reliance on online reviews. The holiday in Rome scenario proved to present the occasion with the highest probability among participants to use reviews to guide their choice of restaurant.

Perceived Helpfulness of Different Review Types. The descriptive statistics of variables that intended to measure participants perceived helpfulness of four different review types, showed that "content-rich/descriptive texts" received a moderate rating, with a mean score of 3.44. This suggests that although participants find detailed descriptions useful to some extent, they may not perceive them as highly informative or influential compared to other review types. "Short texts/practical information" shows the second highest mean score of 4.01, indicating that participants find concise and practical information quite useful when making restaurant choices. This finding may indicate that participants value reviews that provide quick and relevant details about restaurants. As the standard deviation for short texts shows approximately 0.941, the variability in ratings is slightly lower in this category compared to content-rich texts. This suggests participants´ perceptions are relatively consistent regarding practical information compared to the more detailed texts.

In lights of the research´s attempt to understand the influence of sensory vs. non-sensory content in textual reviews, these findings suggests that star-ratings and short texts have stronger impact on consumer decisions compared to rich descriptions and visual content. This might indicate that consumers prefer simple information as well as quantitative judgements when evaluating restaurant options. At the same time, this could possibly reflect a preference for non-sensory reviews just as the findings in the study of Lopez and Garza (2022) on Amazon consumers have already indicated.

Comparisons With Existing Literature

The findings of this study are consistent with and extend previous research on consumer behavior and online reviews. By examining the influence of sensory versus non-sensory textual reviews and the impact of dining occasions, this study provides nuanced insights that contribute to a broader understanding of how consumers use online reviews in their decision-making processes. In order to contextualize these results within the wider literature, it will be through

comparing the findings with key studies in the field, focusing on the types and content of reviews, the role of dining events and specific restaurant attributes.

Review Type and Content:

According to Tripadvisor (2021), consumers tend to seek detailed information through textual reviews to support their restaurant choices, seeking details about such as different dishes on the menu. This is consistent with the preference for multisensory reviews observed in the scenarios related to celebration and travel, where detailed descriptions improved participants´ dining decisions. However, Zinko et al. (2020) found that too much information in textual reviews can lead to lower purchase intention and trust. This suggests that a balance is needed in the amount of information provided to avoid overwhelming consumers. This may also correspond to findings from this study, which showed that the category "short texts" received a mean score of 4.01, indicating that the participants find concise and practical information quite useful when choosing restaurants.

According to Zinko et al. (2020), adding pictures to online reviews could create more value for consumers, by providing realistic insight into how the food experience can be imagined to be in reality. Li et al. (2023) also highlights how images capture consumers' attention faster than text. This study's finding that indicated sensory and multisensory reviews are preferred in scenarios requiring detailed information supports the idea that images, along with text, enhance the perceived helpfulness and trustworthiness of reviews. Liu et al. (2022b) also emphasized that high-quality images with strong color saturation increase purchase intention, especially in food reviews.

Dining Occasion and Review Preference:

Shukla and Mishra (2023) noted that dining motivation (e.g., celebrating Valentine's Day) influences the type of information consumers seek in reviews. This study confirms this

by showing varying preferences for review types based on different eating occasions. For example, festive scenarios favored multisensory reviews, which provide a more immersive experience. At the same time, according to Tripadvisor (2021) and Yang & Choi (2022), the consumer's attitude towards reviews can be influenced by whether they depend on using them to find restaurant options in a given situation. Seen in the light of findings from this study, this may also have influenced the choice of review in such as the holiday to Rome scenario, for example. It could be, that possibly several of the participants who chose the non-sensory review for this scenario, may have already been to Rome. Or maybe the participants that chose the multi-sensory review has never been there, but if they were going, they would at least ensure to have the most memorable dining experience on this journey.

Tasty food at Hygienic Restaurants:

Through the Likert scale rankings of important restaurant attributes, distinct preferences among the participants were revealed. While "Tasty food", perhaps for natural reasons, showed the highest mean score of 4.78, which clearly emphasizes that the taste of food is the most decisive factor for the participants when choosing a restaurant in general. Following this attribute, surprisingly enough, "cleanliness/hygiene" shows to be about equally important to the participants' decisions regarding restaurants. With a mean of 4.69, cleanliness appears to be the second most important attribute from a total of 11 attributes measured. This is consistent with previous research by Liu et al. (2022b), where hygiene and food safety are highlighted as very important elements to the overall restaurant experience.

Connecting Study Results to The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB)

The attitudes a consumer has towards reviews influence the perception they have of their credibility, perceived usefulness, and their willingness to use these for guidance in restaurant selection (Li et al., 2023; Lopez & Garza, 2022; Tripadvisor, 2021). The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) provides a robust framework for understanding how attitudes,

subjective norms and perceived behavioral control influence behavioral intentions and actual behavior (Ajzen, 1991). The findings of this study on the influence of sensory versus non-sensory textual reviews and the impact of dining events can be effectively analyzed through the lens of the TPB to understand consumer decision-making processes when choosing restaurants.

Attitudes Towards Online Reviews. The findings indicate that participants have strong preferences for multisensory reviews in scenarios such as for celebration and holiday in Rome. This preference suggests a positive attitude toward reviews that provide rich sensory detail, which improves their anticipation and decision-making process. Consumers value detailed, immersive descriptions that enhance their dining experience, reflecting a favorable evaluation of multisensory content. The mean score for the statement "I find online reviews to be reliable" was 3.61, indicating a moderate level of trust. Confidence in the credibility of online reviews influences positive attitudes toward using them as reliable sources of information.

Subjective Norms. Refers to the perceived social pressure to perform or not perform a particular behavior. This study's results suggest that the influence of social norms may indicate that participants' likelihood of using online reviews may be influenced by social norms, especially in scenarios involving special occasions or travel. If peers or social groups highly value the use of online reviews to make dining decisions, individuals may feel stronger social pressure to consult reviews, thereby influencing their review usage behavior.

Perceived Behavioral Control. Refers to the perceived ease or difficulty of performing the behavior, which can influence both intentions and actions (Ajzen, 1991). The study's findings highlight the preference for short texts/practical information with an average score of 4.01 suggesting that participants value easily accessible and concise information. Which may indicate that they feel more in control when they can quickly obtain relevant details, which improves their perceived behavioral control.

Behavioral Intentions and Actual Behavior. The combination of supportive subjective norms, positive attitudes, in addition to and high perceived behavioral control, leads to stronger behavioral intentions to use online reviews, which can be translated into actual behavior: Participants' strong preferences for multisensory reviews in specific contexts (celebrations, travel) and the practical use of concise reviews reflects high behavioral intentions to trust online reviews for dining choices. These intentions are likely to translate into actual behavior, where consumers actively seek out and use online reviews when making decisions about restaurants, especially on important dining occasions.

Theoretical Implications

This study's findings contribute to the theoretical understanding of consumer behavior by highlighting the important role of sensory information in online reviews. The findings extend the theory of planned behavior (TPB) by demonstrating that attitudes towards review types, subjective norms related to the use of reviews, and perceived behavioral control significantly influence consumers' intentions and behavior. In addition, this research emphasizes the dynamic nature of the consumer decision-making process, showing how the need for practical versus sensory information shifts depending on the eating context.

Practical Limitations

For restaurant marketers and review platforms, these results suggest several practical applications. Marketers should consider including rich sensory detail in reviews for special occasions and travel-related dining, while providing concise, practical information for the everyday dining contexts. They can encourage their consumers to use sensory elements in their reviews, such as pictures from the dining experience or through texts that highlight the sensory experiences. While review platforms can improve the user experience by balancing detailed sensory content with practical, easy-to-digest information, which caters to different consumer needs. To build trust is also important, which can emphasize the reliability of reviews through

verified user feedback and high-quality images can increase consumer confidence and influence their dining choices.

Limitations and Future Research

The study´s sample size and demographic constraints may limit the generalizability of findings. Additionally, participants of this study were not fully representative of the general population, which may have affected the applicability of these results to broader aspects. Future research could involve more diversity and larger samples, in order to validate these results. Potential biases may also have occurred from self-reported data, which in turn may affect the accuracy of findings. Using alternative data collection methods, such as observational studies, could possibly mitigate these biases. Both the descriptions of scenarios and review examples that took part in the questionnaire for this study, were also self-made. While this allowed for having control over content and ensured consistency, it could also have limited the ecological validity of the findings. Real reviews often present variety of nuances, credibility factors, and writing styles, that were not fully replicated in the reviews that were self-made for the questionnaire. The hypothetical scenarios used to describe situations which participants were asked to imagine themselves in may not fully capture the dynamic nature of real-world decision making, as in reality, consumers continuously access and update their information status based on new reviews and experiences.

Future studies could explore these dynamics across different demographical groups and cultural context, to improve the generalizability. Conducting longitudinal studies could possibly provide deeper insight into how consumers´ preferences and behavior develop over time. Future research can also incorporate actual user-generated online reviews to improve ecological validity. Analyzing real reviews posted in various review systems could possibly provide nuanced insights into how consumers perceive and use content found in reviews.

Conclusion

This study has contributed valuable insight into the role of sensory and non-sensory online restaurant reviews (ORRs) in shaping consumer behavior in the context of dining decision-making. Through a quasi-experimental design and a scenario-based questionnaire, nuanced understandings of how different dining contexts influence the preference for, and impact of these reviews were uncovered. The study´s findings has emphasized that while sensory reviews are particularly valued in scenarios involving special dining occasions or travel, non-sensory reviews retain importance in more routine dining decisions. This dual preference highlights the complex interplay between the desire for immersive sensory information and the need for concise practical details in various dining contexts. The theoretical implications of this study enhance the understanding of the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) within the domain of online reviews and consumer decision making. By integrating sensory information into the TPB framework, this research not only extends the theory's applicability, but also emphasizes the importance of contextual factors in shaping behavioral intentions. Practically, these insights can guide restaurant marketers and review platforms to tailor their content strategies to meet the diverse needs of consumers more effectively, increasing user engagement and satisfaction.

However, the study shows some limitations related to the sample size and the controlled nature of the scenario-based methodology, which may have an impact on the generalizability of the findings. Future research should aim to include a wider demographic to validate these findings across different consumer groups and cultural contexts. In addition, using real user-generated reviews and observational study designs can improve the ecological validity of the research, providing a deeper understanding of consumer interactions with online reviews in naturalistic settings.

In conclusion, this research highlights the dynamic nature of consumer preferences in the digital age, where online reviews serve as a crucial tool for navigating the complex landscape of dining options. As digital influence continues to grow, understanding nuanced preferences and consumer behavior will continue to be critical for businesses aiming to create meaningful connections with their clientele. Future research in this area holds the promise of further uncovering the intricate relationship between online content and consumer behavior, offering richer insights for both theoretical progress and practical application in the evolving market landscape.

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Appendix A

The Scenario-Based Questionnaire

Page 1

Instructions

Online Reviews' Influence on Restaurant Choice

Welcome to the questionnaire designed for the purpose of collecting data for the master´s thesis in Service Leadership in International Business (University of Stavanger). The focus of this research is to investigate How Online Reviews Influences Consumers' Choice of Restaurants.

No questions are mandatory.

(Feel free to skip any question that you do not have an answer to, or simply do not want to answer)

All answers will remain completely <u>anonymous</u>.

Thank you for your contribution!

Page 2

Introduction

How many restaurants have you experienced in the past 3 months?

  None

  1-2

  3-4

  5-6

  7 or more

Do you look at Online Reviews before choosing which restaurant to go for?

(e.g. star-ratings, textual reviews, or images – posted online by previous travelers/guests)

  Never

Rarely

Sometimes

Often

Always

Your age?

18 or younger

19-25

26-31

32-37

38-43

44-49

50 years or older

Continue→

Scenarios

(!)

You will now be asked to imagine yourself in different scenarios where you´re about to decide on which restaurant to experience. Within each scenario, 3 reviews will appear - and your task is to choose the one you believe would have had the greatest influence on your choice. Which review do you find most helpful in guiding your choice of restaurant? Consider which one best reflects you, and what kind of experience you would have been looking for in the given scenario.

Scenario 1: Celebration

Imagine - You´re planning a special dinner with your closest friends, to commemorate a significant milestone. You want to make the occasion special by dining at a fine restaurant.

You would like to book a table right away, but first you need to find out what your options are

- To make sure you choose the best restaurant available for this special evening.

On a scale from 1 to 5, how likely are you to use Online Reviews for guidance in this scenario?

    1 (very unlikely)

    2

    3 (fairly likely)

    4

    5 (very likely)

These are reviews of three different restaurants. Which one would you have chosen?

Choose 1 of 3 review examples to indicate your choice.

1   User X   ★★★★★ Reviewed 5 days ago

The best evening

Relaxing music, a remarkable hum of quiet conversation, as well as aromas of tasty delights... not to mention the rustic yet elegant interior, and the tasty colorful dishes we were served! It was even the smell of fresh herbs and spices from outside that led us into this unique find of a restaurant! Where every little detail really set the perfect stage for the best night we've ever had!

2   User Y   ★★★★☆ Reviewed 1 week ago

Nice place

A nice place, located right outside our hotel. Their menu and service were quite ok, and there were also some nice shops nearby that we spent too much money in... But I can definitely recommend this place if you want to have a decent meal while exploring the city.

3   User Z   ★★★★★ Reviewed today

So tasty!

Just had the most amazing dinner here as we were served some perfectly prepared dishes, that was even better than what I expected! Everything we ordered was just incredibly tasty! All kinds of spices, and the wildest flavor combinations!

Review 1: "The best evening"

Review 2: "Nice place"

Review 3: "So tasty!"

Next scenario →

Scenario 2: Just Arrived

Imagine - You´ve just arrived at your hotel on your travel abroad, after several hours on a plane and an hour-long taxi ride from the airport. After settling in, you and your travel companion feel completely exhausted, yet you're still a little eager to explore the local restaurant offerings that you've been looking forward to for so long. Although you would have preferred to relax a little more, it becomes increasingly clear from your mood that food is needed immediately...

On a scale from 1 to 5, how likely are you to use Online Reviews for guidance in this scenario?

1 (very unlikely)

2

3 (fairly likely)

4

5 (very likely)

These are reviews of three different restaurants. Which one would you have chosen?

Choose 1 of 3 review examples to indicate your choice.

Review 1: "Great find in the city center

Review 2: Surprisingly good"

Review 3: "Great place for a snack!"

Next scenario →

Scenario 3: Holiday in Rome

Imagine - You're on holiday in Rome, Italy, and you're eager to experience authentic Italian pizza. Strolling through the historic streets, you notice many charming pizzerias hidden in alleys and busy squares. You´re not sure which one to choose, as most of them seem to be quite similar...

On a scale from 1 to 5, how likely are you to use Online Reviews for guidance in this scenario?

1 (very unlikely)

2

3 (fairly likely)

4

5 (very likely)

These are reviews of three different restaurants. Which one would you have chosen?

Choose 1 of 3 review examples to indicate your choice.

① ★★★★★ Reviewed yesterday

The best pizza

Very nice restaurant that serves the tastiest pizza in town. Here you will be greeted by a lovely staff, and I guarantee, you will definitely have an unforgettably tasty dining experience!".

User X

② ★★★★★ Reviewed yesterday

Great service and location

At this place you can order on a weigh and pay basis. Choose what you want from the menu and which size. They will customize your pizza just how you like it. Excellent service, and not far from Colosseum. The restaurant is open every day from 10am to 11pm.

User Y

③ ★★★★★ Reviewed yesterday

My favorite pizzeria in Rome

From the moment I entered this place, I was struck by the most amazing smell, which took me straight to the heart of Italy. The room was filled with lively chatter from other guests, while the delicious aroma of freshly baked pizza dough wafted from the wood-fired oven. All tables were covered with red checkered tablecloths, and the pizza we were served just oozed perfection. With a golden crust, topped with a vibrant mix of ingredients... Just thinking about this tasty experience makes me long for just one more slice!

User Z

Review 1: "The best pizza"

Review 2: "Great service and location"

Review 3: "My favorite pizzeria in Rome"

Scenario 4: The Local Restaurant

Imagine that you want to explore the local restaurant offerings in an area you are reasonably familiar with, such as in a city or a neighborhood in your home country.

On a scale from 1 to 5, how likely are you to use Online Reviews for guidance in this scenario?

1 (very unlikely)

> 2

> 3 (fairly likely)

> 4

> 5 (very likely)

These are reviews of three different restaurants. Which one would you have chosen?

Choose 1 of 3 review examples to indicate your choice.

① ⭐⭐⭐⭐⭐ Reviewed today

Great choice

User X

The central location made this place a convenient choice and the menu offered a range of options to suit different dietary preferences. The service was top notch and the food was quickly served to our table. (Tables can be booked on their website). The restaurant is open every day from 2 pm.

② ⭐⭐⭐⭐⭐ Reviewed yesterday

Dinner party with a wonderful view

User Y

Hosting our annual dinner here was once again a success! For the fifth year in a row, we had the pleasure of enjoying the sunset and wonderful view from our table on the terrace. A soothing sound of waves, combined with a fresh gentle breeze, ensured us the most relaxing atmosphere. A delicious aroma of fresh herbs and spices created expectations of tasty food, and that's exactly what we got! A combination of beautiful surroundings, delicious food and interesting conversations around the table really made this evening special!

③ ⭐⭐⭐⭐⭐ Reviewed 4 days ago

Very tasty!

User Z

Had a great dining experience at this restaurant last week! We were greeted by lovely staff, and a wonderful smell that made us excited to taste the many dishes on their menu. Everything we were served was perfectly cooked and tasted so incredibly good!

Review 1: "Great choice"

Review 2: "Dinner party with a wonderful view"

Review 3: "Very tasty!"

How much do you agree with the following statements?

On a scale from 1 to 5, where **1** refers to **"strongly disagree"** and **5** refers to **"strongly agree".**

1: "I carefully read through all the reviews in this questionnaire."

1 (strongly disagree)

2

3 (neutral)

4

5 (strongly agree)

2: "I find online reviews helpful when looking for a finer dining experience."

(Fine dining refers to high-class restaurants characterized by luxurious dining experiences, often commanding higher prices.)

1 (strongly disagree)

2

3 (neutral)

4

5 (strongly agree)

3: "I find online reviews helpful when looking for a restaurant while traveling".

1 (strongly disagree)

2

3 (neutral)

4

5 (strongly agree)

4: "I find online reviews helpful when looking for a local restaurant to experience".

1 (strongly disagree)

    2

    3 (neutral)

    4

    5 (strongly agree)

5: "Online reviews are trustworthy."

1 (strongly disagree)

    2

    3 (neutral)

    4

    5 (strongly agree)

Final Questions

How helpful are the following review elements to your choice of restaurant?

On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 refers to "Not helpful at all" and 5 refers to "Very helpful."

Content-rich / Descriptive texts	1	2	3	4	5
Short texts with practical information	1	2	3	4	5
Images (of food, design, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5
Star ratings	1	2	3	4	5

How important are the following elements to your overall restaurant experience?

On a scale of 1 to 5, where **1** refers to **"Not at all important"** and **5** refers to **"Very important."**

Cleanliness/Hygiene	1	2	3	4	5

Ambiance	1	2	3	4	5
Tasty Food	1	2	3	4	5
Price-to-value ratio	1	2	3	4	5
Sounds (e.g. music, noise level)	1	2	3	4	5
Seating comfort	1	2	3	4	5
Visual food presentation	1	2	3	4	5
Service quality	1	2	3	4	5
Dietary Options	1	2	3	4	5
Scent/Aroma	1	2	3	4	5
Restaurant location	1	2	3	4	5

Thank you for taking the time to fill out this questionnaire!

Your contribution is greatly appreciated and will be of great help to this study.

The data collection was carried out through an online questionnaire, created in nettskjema.no, which is a survey tool developed and hosted by the University of Oslo (nettskjema@usit.uio.no).

Appendix B

Crosstabulation Analysis Performed in IBM SPSS Statistics (Version 29.0.2.0)

Scenario	Scale Point		Non-sensory	Sensory	Multisensory	Total
Celebration	1	Count	1	0	1	2
		% within Likert-scale	50%	0%	50%	100%
		% within Review choice	5.9%	0%	1.9%	1.7%
		Residual	.7	-.8	.1	
	2	Count	2	4	3	9
		% within Likert-scale	22.2%	44.4%	33.3%	100%
		% within Review choice	11.8%	8.7%	5.8%	7.8%
		Residual	.7	.4	-1.1	
	3	Count	5	13	13	31
		% within Likert-scale	16.1%	41.9%	41.9%	100%
		% within Review choice	29.4%	28.3%	25.0%	27%
		Residual	.4	.6	-1.0	
	4	Count	6	15	17	38
		% within Likert-scale	15.8%	39.5%	44.7%	100%
		% within Review choice	35.3%	32.6%	32.7%	22%
		Residual	.4	-.2	-.2	
	5	Count	3	14	18	35
		% within Likert-scale	8.6%	40%	51.4%	100%
		% within Review choice	17.6%	30.4%	34.6%	30.4
		Residual	-2.2	.0	2.2	
Total		Count	17	46	52	115
		% within Likert-scale	14.8%	40%	45.2%	100%
		% within Review choice	100%	100%	100%	100%
Just Arrived	1	Count	9	2	1	12
		% within Likert-scale	75%	16.7%	8.3%	100%
		% within Review choice	16.1%	6.5%	3.7%	10.5%
		Residual	3.1	-1.3	-1.8	
	2	Count	9	5	5	19
		% within Likert-scale	47.4%	26.3%	26.3%	100%
		% within Review choice	16.1%	16.1%	18.5%	16.7%
		Residual	-.3	-.2	.5	
	3	Count	16	11	7	34
		% within Likert-scale	47.1%	32.4%	20.6%	100%
		% within Review choice	28.6%	35.5%	25.9%	29.8%
		Residual	-.7	1.8	-1.1	
	4	Count	5	6	9	20

		% within Likert-scale	25%	30%	45%	100%
		% within Review choice	8.9%	19.4%	33.3%	17.5%
		Residual	-4.8	.6	4.3	
	5	Count	17	7	5	29
		% within Likert-scale	58.6%	24.1%	17.2%	100%
		% within Review choice	30.4%	22.6%	18.5%	25.4%
		Residual	2.8	-.9	-1.9	
Total		Count	56	31	27	114
		% within Likert-scale	49.1%	27.2%	23.7%	100%
		% within Review choice	100%	100%	100%	100%
Holiday in Rome	1	Count	0	1	1	2
		% within Likert-scale	0	50	50	100%
		% within Review choice	0	2.8	1.8	1.7%
		Residual	-.4	.4	.0	
	2	Count	3	5	3	11
		% within Likert-scale	27.3	45.5	27.3	100%
		% within Review choice	13.6	13.9	5.3	9.6%
		Residual	.9	1.6	-2.5	
	3	Count	6	10	9	25
		% within Likert-scale	24	40	36	100%
		% within Review choice	27.3	27.8	15.8	21.7%
		Residual	1.2	2.2	-3.4	
	4	Count	7	13	14	34
		% within Likert-scale	20.6	38.2	41.2	100%
		% within Review choice	31.8	36.1	24.6	29.6%
		Residual	.5	2.4	-2.9	
	5	Count	6	7	30	43
		% within Likert-scale	14	16.3	69.8	100%
		% within Review choice	27.3	19.4	52.6	29.6%
		Residual	-2.2	-6.5	8.7	
Total		Count	22	36	57	115
		% within Likert-scale	19.1	31.3	49.6	100%
		% within Review choice	100%	100%	100%	100%
The Local Restaurant	1	Count	6	3	2	11
		% within Likert-scale	54.5	27.3	18.2	100%
		% within Review choice	23.1	6.1	5.3	9.7%
		Residual	3.5	-1.8	-1.7	
	2	Count	2	9	5	16
		% within Likert-scale	12.5	56.3	31.3	100%

		% within Review choice	7.7	18.4	13.2	14.2%
		Residual	-1.7	2.1	-.4	
3	Count		12	13	9	34
	% within Likert-scale		35.3	38.2	26.5	100%
	% within Review choice		46.2	26.5	23.7	30.1%
	Residual		4.2	-1.7	-2.4	
4	Count		4	12	12	28
	% within Likert-scale		14.3	42.9	42.9	100%
	% within Review choice		15.4	24.5	31.6	24.8%
	Residual		-2.4	-.1	2.6	
5	Count		2	12	10	24
	% within Likert-scale		8.3	50	41.7	100%
	% within Review choice		7.7	24.5	26.3	21.2%
	Residual		-3.5	1.6	1.9	
Total	Count		26	49	38	113
	% within Likert-scale		23%	43.4	33.6%	100%
	% within Review choice		100%	100%	100%	100%

Appendix C

Chi-Square Tests Performed in IBM SPSS Statistics (Version 29.0.2.0)

Scenario	Chi-Square Tests	Value	df	Asymp. Sig.	Approx. Sig.
Celebration	Pearson Chi-Square	4.534 [a]	8	.806	
	Likelihood Ratio	4.817	8	.777	
	Linear-by-Linear Association	.164	1	.686	
	N of Valid Cases	115			
	Symmetric Measures				
	Phi	.199			.806
	Cramer´s V	.140			.806
Just Arrived	Pearson Chi-Square	11.296 [a]	8	.185	
	Likelihood Ratio	11.273	8	.187	
	Linear-by-Linear Association	.321	1	.571	
	N of Valid Cases	114			
	Symmetric Measures				
	Phi	.315			.185
	Cramer´s V	.223			.185
Holiday in Rome	Pearson Chi-Square	12.922 [a]	8	.115	
	Likelihood Ratio	13.703	8	.090	
	Linear-by-Linear Association	8.808	1	.003	
	N of Valid Cases	115			
	Symmetric Measures				
	Phi	.335			.115
	Cramer´s V	.237			.115
The Local Restaurant	Pearson Chi-Square	15.142 [a]	8	.056	
	Likelihood Ratio	14.681	8	.066	
	Linear-by-Linear Association	3.453	1	.063	
	N of Valid Cases	113			
	Symmetric Measures				
	Phi	.366			.056
	Cramer´s V	.259			.056