INSTITUTE OF TOURISM STUDIES
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Exploring the influence of French pastry techniques in Traditional bakeries and confectioneries in Malta

Mariah Ruggier
31502L

Bachelor's Degree in Culinary Arts
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Abstract

Author	**Date**
Mariah Ruggier	01/04/2025
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Research/Project Title Exploring the influence of French pastry techniques in Traditional Bakeries and Confectioneries in Malta.	**Number of words excluding abstract, references and appendices:** 15528 words

This thesis title arose from the researcher's passion for pastry and French pastry techniques, as well as an interest in gaining knowledge and exploring this subject. Having practiced French pastry techniques throughout their studies and career, one can say that the researcher's passion for pastry fuelled this research study, especially after having worked in several pastry shops and studied at a culinary school in France.

This research has strived to identify how French pastry techniques are influencing Traditional Bakeries and confectioneries in Malta. Two sub-research questions have been created in unity with the central research question:

- In what ways can consumer behaviour be affected by French Pastry Techniques when buying bakery products?
- What will be the future of Traditional Bakeries and confectioneries in Malta adopting French pastry techniques in the next five years?

Secondary data was collected to identify in which ways consumer behaviour is impacted when purchasing pastry products created with French pastry techniques, while several factors affecting consumer behaviour have been studied and analysed to further justify the data gathered further. Secondary data also aimed to identify the main factors affecting traditional bakeries and confectioneries in Malta and what the holds within the next five years, based on the data analysed.

A mixed-methods approach was chosen, which was primarily qualitative. The two methods of choice for this research were surveys and observations, in order to achieve a wider variety of data. These two methodological approaches were chosen triangulate the results from both approaches while comparing the findings.

The results from this survey were mainly positive and showed a positive outlook and promising future for the pastry scene in Malta, for both current traditional pastries, as well as new up-coming ones.

The author of this study has identified pertinent factors that impact consumer behaviour, thereby affecting the decision-making process of consumers within this scenario. Price, physical presentation, quality of ingredients, taste, as well as health considerations were amongst the most variable factors affecting consumers' decision-making processes when purchasing items created with French Pastry techniques from Bakeries and traditional Confectioneries in Malta.

By managing to gain a deeper knowledge and perspective of what consumers' think, as well as their current knowledge and perspectives are, the author was able to determine the demand for items made with French Pastry techniques and clearly see what the future for traditional bakeries and confectioneries in Malta will look like in the next five years.

The final conclusions of this thesis were that, while there is an increase in demand for French pastries and French pastry techniques in Malta, especially among the younger generation, Traditional Maltese pastries must not be forgotten. This can be done through maintaining, promoting and nurturing these cultural pastries through marketing, promotion and consumer behaviour and spreading knowledge and awareness on their background and story.

Keywords

Pastry, French, Techniques, Bakeries, Confectioneries, Local

Declaration of Authenticity

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Student Name and Surname : Mariah Ruggier
Student ITS Number **:** 31502/L
Programme **:** BA In culinary arts 2024-2025
Research Title **:** Exploring the influence of French pastry techniques in Traditional Bakeries and Confectioneries in Malta

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Declaration:

I hereby declare that this research study is based on the outcome of my own research. I, as the author, declare that this research study is my own composition which has not been previously produced for any other qualification.
The research study was conducted under the supervision of Mr. Aaron Rizzo

27/04/2024

Date

Student's Signature

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1. Introduction

For this thesis, research will be conducted, analysed, and studied thoroughly to explore influence of French pastry techniques in Traditional Bakeries and Confectioneries in Malta. It is essential to further investigate and understand the profound influence France has had on Malta over the centuries, which has not only shaped the Maltese language, history, environment, and culture, but also the food and desserts prepared today in many establishments, bakeries, and confectioneries throughout the Island. It is said that the French have perfected the art of pastry-making and pastry techniques. (Bakeology Studio, 2016). The globalisation of French techniques, especially in the pastry world, is something outstanding and may have arisen from the fact that there is nothing quite like French culinary and pastry techniques. It is nothing new that French cuisine and French pastry cuisine hold a rich history that is rooted deep in tradition. French Pastry is built on three pillars: precision, passion and patience. (The Canny Chocolate Company, 2024).

This thesis title arose from the researcher's passion for pastry and French pastry techniques, as well as an interest in gaining knowledge and exploring this subject. Having practiced French pastry techniques throughout their studies and career, one can say that the researcher's passion for pastry fuelled this research study, especially after having worked in several pastry shops and studied at a culinary school in France. This goes with the aim of acquiring a deeper knowledge into the world of pastry and French pastry techniques and how they have evolved into what we know them as today, as well as how they have influenced Maltese bakeries and confectioneries and their products in today's modern day and age. This thesis aims to benefit those wishing to understand and explore the history of French techniques and how they have evolved over the decades, as well their impact on local Maltese bakeries and confectioneries including their products.

1.1 Research Aim, Objectives and Hypothesis or Question

The central research question will be focusing on how French pastry techniques are influencing bakeries and Confectioneries in Malta.

The two subsidiary research questions are as follows:
1. In what ways can consumer behaviour be affected by French Pastry Techniques when buying bakery products?
2. What will be the future of Traditional Bakeries and confectioneries in Malta, adopting French pastry techniques, over the next five years?

These two subsidiary research questions will aid in supporting the central research question in this study, which will aid in achieving a better understanding of the overall impacts of French pastry techniques in Malta.

1.2 Subject Area

This study will investigate the impact and influence of French pastry techniques on local Maltese bakeries and confectioneries, as well as their pastry products. This includes any way or form French pastry techniques have influenced local bakeries and their products, whether it's a slight impact or a drastic one.

1.3 Thesis Structure

For this thesis, the Harvard reference style has been used. This is the most common referencing style used in UK universities. In this style of referencing, both the author and the year of the source used are cited within the text, and then full details related to the source are listed in the reference list or bibliography at the end of the document. (Caulfield, 2020). For this template, the Harvard-Anglia 2008 version provided in WORD has been utilised.

The following chapter of this research study (labelled as literature review), will discuss all the factors and sub-factors all over the world that have influenced French pastry products and techniques and made them what they are today. The researcher will also

investigate and explore the evolution and growth of French pastry products and techniques over the years. The researcher will delve deeper into the history and examine pivitol moments in time that have significantly impacted our current perspective on food, and its consumption and its collective significance in society and culture worldwide.

The third chapter of this study will outline the methodology used for this research study, with observations and surveys being conducted - as a form of qualitative research in order to fulfil the objectives. The fourth chapter will present the results and researcher's findings for this research study and discuss the several outcomes and comparisons of the results.

The final chapter will outline the limitations of this study and provide recommendations for further research in specific areas related to this topic.

The thesis will then conclude by ensuring that the central research question and two subsidiary objectives have been addressed and will be beneficial to consumers, pastry chefs, and businesses seeking to gain a deeper understanding of how and why French pastry techniques have influenced local bakeries and confectioneries in Malta.

2. Literature Review

Food and culture are two aspects that come naturally to humans, and some might say are non-negotiable, playing a role in shaping one's character and life. How food is prepared, cooked, and consumed says a lot about a person and distinguishes one from another and from any other species. There is a German saying that goes, "Tell me what you eat and how you eat, and I'll tell you who you are." This briefly highlights that culture and food are intertwined globally in society, no matter the region. (Kilewer, 2008).

2.1 The History of the French in Malta and their influence on the country

Wednesday, the 9th of June, 1798 marks a day that forever changed Malta's history. This was the day the French invaded Malta, forever changing its culture, language, upbringing and history. *(The Siege and the Taking of Malta*, 2024).

It is important to understand this part of history before moving on to the influence of French pastry products in Malta. During this day, approximately 50,000 men headed to Malta, whom Admiral Brueys commanded. However, there was an issue. Grand Master Hompesch did not have enough troops available. (Approximately 332 knights, 3,600 men in the harbour and about 13,000 men from the countryside). *(The Siege and the Taking of Malta*, 2024).

The next morning, French forces attacked simultaneously from four different locations all around the island. Desaix had successfully taken over Marsaxlokk Bay and attempted to cross the Cottonera lines in an effort to seize Valletta. Vaubois, who was to become the future governor of the island, was planning on taking over Sliema and Qawra, then moving inland to seize Mdina and the surrounding Villages. D'Hilliers was instructed to take over St Paul's Bay and Mellieha and move further onto Mdina and Madliena, while Reynier was to take over Gozo, which was poorly defended. By that afternoon, all of Malta except the Grand Harbour, the Marsamxett Harbour and Fort St

Lucian, were successfully taken over by the French. On June 12th, Hompesch surrendered after negotiating the terms. *(The Siege and the Taking of Malta*, 2024).

Napoleon found himself stuck, as he had finally realised that he may have acted too quickly. This could be due to the fact that he was a diplomat. Because of this, he decided to surrender due to the situation he found himself in. This meant that French rule ended very abruptly, in 1800, making the French occupation last only two years. Although brief, this period had a profound impact on Malta's history, culture, language, upbringing, as well as its food and eating habits. (Grima, 2022).

2.2 The History and Origin of Baking Bread

Baking as we know it today is built on multiple traditions, cultures, and practices that have existed since the beginning of time. The art of baking can be traced back to the Egyptian and Mesopotamian Era. The early civilians created the first stepping stone in developing techniques for crushing grains into flour to form dough for bread and bread products. Bread was a staple food for the Egyptians and was often cooked in mud ovens. According to hieroglyphics found in tombs, the Egyptians highlighted the importance of baking and bread in their lives. In Mesopotamia, bread was baked in clay ovens. These primitive civilians recognized the nutritional value that bread holds and thus realised its importance for human sustenance. (Baketivity, 2024).

2.3 The History and Origin of Traditional French Pastries

The earliest roots of French pastries can be traced back to the Middle Ages. (Mahmoud, 2024). The Middle Ages is a period in European history that started with the collapse of the Roman Civilization and lasted until the Renaissance era. (Brittanica, 2018). During that period, sugar was a scarce and expensive commodity to source. Pastries were only made for and consumed by the rich and wealthy, with royal courts and monasteries hiring highly skilled pastry chefs to create elaborate desserts for their patrons. The base of these early desserts mainly consisted of ingredients such as honey or almonds, which perhaps could be the reason why so many French pastries in today's modern day and age are heavily almond based. (Mahmoud, 2024).

It has been found that Régnaut-Barbo, a French man living during that period in time, invented the first "*oublies*", which refers to a thin wafer or crisp, which eventually made its way into European culture. (Eudy, 2020).

Another sweet product originating from France is whipped cream, or 'crème Chantilly'. 'Crème Chantilly' was first introduced to France in the sixteenth century. In the early nineteenth century, eclairs were invented by Pastry Chef Antonin Careme. The first ever recorded recipe for Eclairs in the English Language was found in the "Boston Cooking School Cookbook", Which was a very famous American cookbook during its time. Nowadays, eclairs remain extremely popular all around the world and come in various variations and flavours, both sweet and savoury. (Eudy, 2020).

Pastry chefs in France were not recognized until the sixteenth century, with the introduction of desserts such as sponge cakes and macarons, as well as marzipans imported from Italy. (Roth, 2020). The distinction between cooks and pastry chefs was not recognized until the Middle Ages. (Theeditor, 2021). It was at this time that pastry chefs were recognized for their work and thus seen as a reputable career. In 1645, a pastry cook apprentice, known as Claudius Gele, created the first ever prototype and recipe for puff pastry in France. Although it is said that the oldest recipe for puff pastry can also be found in thirteenth century Spanish Arabic cookbooks, it is quite unclear where it first originated from. Despite its unclear origin, it was a profound moment in history. Following the introduction of puff pastry, one of the most popular French pastry products that comes to mind is the croissant, a distinctive pastry made from puff pastry itself. The first ever croissant was known as a *"kipfel"*, which was the name it was referred to at the time, and was brought to Paris in the late 1830s by a man named August Zang, all the way from Austria, who then founded "Boulangerie Viennoise" in Paris. (Roth, 2020).

Another popular traditional French pastry item would be the French Macaron, not to be confused with the Macaroon, which is a coconut-based confection. However, they are very commonly confused and misspelt. The macaron is a meringue-based almond biscuit consisting of two shells, one on each side, sandwiched together with a filling of choice in between. (Roth, 2020). The macaron is first made by making a meringue. (A meringue is a combination of hot sugar syrup boiled at a temperature of 121 degrees Celsius mixed into egg whites and whipped until over double in size and volume). This

meringue mixture is then folded into finely sieved ground almonds and then mixed together to form a paste. This paste is then piped onto a mat in small circles and left to dry. The macarons are then baked at a low temperature and filled with either a ganache or cream.

The ‘macaron’ was brought to France in the early sixteenth century by a woman known as Catherine di Medici, who was originally from Florence and married the Future King of France, Henri II. In 1792, two Carmelite nuns were seeking shelter in Nancy during the Famous French revolution, and in order to pay for their housing, they decided to bake and sell macarons to their community and the citizens. (Roth, 2020). This chef, Pierre Desfontaines, single-handedly designed the popular “double-decker” French macaron of today’s age. Beyond their complex and tantalising flavour profile, macarons are said to be a combination of culinary history and modern innovation, a testament to the enduring legacy of French Patisserie. (Mahmoud, 2024).

Nowadays, the ten most popular classical French pastry desserts that have a wide history attached to them would be the ‘Tarte Tatin’ which is an upside down caramelized apple tart, the ‘Paris Brest’ which is a choux pastry filled with a hazelnut and almond praline infused cream, the ‘Éclair’, the ‘Mille-Feuille’ which translates to “a thousand layers” which is a layered puff pastry dessert with layers of pastry cream in between the puff pastry, the macaron, the ‘Saint-Honoré’ tart, the ‘Opera Gateaux’, the ‘Tarte citron meringue’ also known as lemon meringue pie, and finally, the ‘Fraiser’ which is a strawberry cake with pastry cream. (The Editor, 2021).

2.4 The history behind Maltese Bread and Traditional Maltese Pastries and their cultural impact

When discussing Maltese culture, it is impossible not to mention food and the impact it has had on culture and society, as well as where Maltese cuisine has originated from, and how it’s been influenced and evolved over the years. This is a key part of Maltese Culture due to the fact that the Island was taken over and colonized by so many different countries and cultures; which, in the researcher’s opinion, over time intertwined themselves together into what we know today as Malta and its rich Mediterranean culture. (Ruggier, 2024).

It has been found that the Maltese diet prior to the arrival of the Order, had a great North African influence on its culture as well as the food and ingredients used in preparing meals. Malta was conquered by Arabs in AD 870, which led to them influencing the country's culture as well as food. This brought about the introduction of candied fruits, fruit paste and dried fruits by the Arabs, which slowly made their way into Maltese desserts. (Grima, 2022).

According to a research study conducted by Greta Kilewer on Maltese bread and its impact on Maltese culture, the author notes that Maltese bread is a symbol of the Maltese islands that is constantly evolving. The author goes on to say that the entire process of baking Maltese bread, from the very start, ties communities together, as bakers would gather in bakeries to make their bread, thereby strengthening their community. In today's modern day and age, the vast majority of society has an oven within their own home, giving them the option to either bake their own bread from scratch or still have the option to purchase it from the shop or bakery. Nowadays, baking Maltese bread is still a common practice, and those who continue to make Maltese bread the traditional way in traditional bakeries consider themselves to be preserving a heritage, that is slowly fading away as time passes and technology advances. This change is inevitable, and has surfaced due to various factors such as tourism. However, according to most Maltese citizens, breadmaking plays a major role in Maltese history and identity. (Kilewer, 2008).

In an article written by Meike Peters from the online blog "Eat in My Kitchen", the author explores the topic of 'Mqaret', a traditional Maltese deep-fried date-filled pastry that dates back to 870AD, and has Arabic roots. Part of Malta's history and culture is its upbringing and the foreign countries and cultures that had previously ruled it, which not only influenced Malta's culture, but the language and food habits, amongst other factors. (Peters, 2015). It was during the time Malta was colonised by Arabs that the 'mqaret' was born. According to Peters (2015), Maltese pastry recipes tend to stick to simple steps and ingredients, incorporating citrus and spices, two very important ingredients abundant to Malta and the Maltese culture. Mqaret are also considered to be "scrumptious remnants" of the Arabic taking over Malta, somewhere around 870 AD. (Peters, 2015).

When discussing Maltese cuisine and culture, it would be a sin not to mention ‘pastizzi’. ‘Pastizzi’ are an extremely traditional Maltese savoury snack, which are also considered pastries. It is regarded as Malta’s national snack. ‘Pastizzi’ consist of a flaky pastry enclosed with two main popular types of filling: a savoury ricotta pastes, or a pea and curry paste. However, there are other flavours too, which aren’t so common. These delicate and savoury pastries are made by hand using phyllo pastry, which is a very thin dough stretched and rolled onto itself with layers of fat submerged in between each layer, so that when it cooks, the fat creates steam between each layer of dough, which in turn makes all those flaky layers in between. This method of folding phyllo pastry over itself with fat in between to make layers, seems to have originated from the Ottoman Period. (Zammit, 2015). ‘Pastizzi’ are a nationwide favourite due to their availability and price. It is extremely convenient, as one can to find them on nearly every corner of every street in every town on the island. And not only that, but these savoury treats are extremely cheap, only costing fifty cents, after inflation, of course. These pastries are also extremely calorie-dense and it is not recommended to consume them often as they can cause health issues due to their contents.

According to an article written by Annie Muscat (2022), on “The Medium”, the author of the article mentions that it had recently come to their attention that pastizzi had in fact originated among “indigenous peasantry.” The author goes on to mention that poor farmers had access only to flour and goat’s milk, which they used to create meals to nourish themselves. As a result of poverty and necessity, the ‘pastizzi’ emerged as a staple of Maltese cuisine during that time, and soon became an iconic part of Maltese cuisine. (Muscat, 2022).

To name another few traditional Maltese desserts, there are the famous cannoli, which, from their name, one is able to tell that they are inspired from the Sicilian ‘Cannoli’. Considering that Malta’s culture is greatly influenced by Italian culture, and the language shares many similarities with Italian and Sicilian, it would make sense for Maltese desserts to also be influenced by Italian and Sicilian Cuisine. (Zammit, 2015). Some Other Traditional Maltese desserts and pastries include Qagħaq Tal-Għasel; also known as honey rings, almond biscuits, almond cake, ‘figolli’, ‘kwarezimal’, November Bones, bread pudding, and ‘prinjolata’. All of these Traditional desserts have one factor in common, as previously mentioned: simple ingredients and simple steps. (Muscat, 2022).

Another traditional Maltese dessert that particularly stands out when it comes to this research study is the ‘Prinjolata’, a traditional Maltese cake prepared during carnival time, around February. The name comes from the word “prinjol”, which means “pine nut”, which is the main ingredient of the cake. This cake consists of a madeira cake covered in French or Italian meringue, topped with candied cherries and pine nuts. In this case, French pastry techniques are incorporated from the creation of the meringue used in this dessert. (Rejec, 2022). The prinjolata is said to have been created during the 16th century, during the time the Knights of St John had taken over Malta. This dessert was created for masquerades and balls, which is probably why it is still being prepared during carnival time. (Azzopardi, 2017).

Looking at the Traditional Maltese pastries listed earlier, it can be observed that one factor most of these pastries share in common is that they are almond-based or consist of some sort of almond filling, which is also a common characteristic shared with many French pastry products. A few examples of French pastry products consisting mostly of almonds, include French macarons, frangipane tart, madeleines, almond croissants, and pear ‘jalousie’. Something that can be observed between these pastries, is the common ingredient shared between most Maltese and French pastries: almonds.

2.5 The Evolution of French Pastries

> “French pastries go beyond food, they are a form of art. The evolution of French pastries is an interesting historical tale intertwined with Culture and social development; built on tradition and innovation”. (Mahmoud, 2024).

As previously mentioned, sugar was a scarce ingredient during the Middle Ages when French pastries began to emerge. Over time, sugar became a much more accessible ingredient globally as trade routes expanded, and French pastries were enjoyed by many more other than just the rich and wealthy. (Mahmoud, 2024).

During the Renaissance era, there was an increased interest in culinary arts, and so French pastry chefs took this as an opportunity upon themselves to try new recipes and experiment by creating new elaborate dishes and pastries, as they were bound to be

welcomed due to this strong found interest in culinary arts during this period in time. During this period of experimentation, imported spices and fruits were widely used in French pastry dishes, thereby creating an additional layer of complexity and flavour to these pastries. Not only did this era bring about experimentation with food and flavour, but it also encouraged French pastry chefs to refine and enhance their baking techniques into something more complex and advanced. This led to the development of puff pastry into what it is known as today. (Mahmoud, 2024).

This refinement of skills and techniques led to the creation of lighter and more delicate pastries, further solidifying France's reputation for the art of pastry making. (Mahmoud, 2024). Surprisingly, French pastries did not originate in Parisian patisseries, but rather on the other side of the world, in Egypt. Egypt is known to be one of the very first civilisations to experiment with baking, as it was a common practice back then to use wild yeast to create fermented dough products to create bread. These early forms of experimentative baking built the foundation, which then grew into what we know today as Classical French pastries and viennoiseries. These techniques vastly spread across cultures, which then influenced the traditions of baking in the Roman Empire. The Romans then took this groundwork laid down by the Egyptians and further built upon it, by taking recipes and further refining them into much more complex forms of bread and pastries. It is said that the brioche originated during this era and the very first form of brioche was created by the Romans. (Mahmoud, 2024).

> "The influence the Romans on others was more than just that of food and recipes, but it led to building a culture that celebrated the indulgence of sweets and rich pastries, combining the addition of fruits, nuts and honey into their sweets and pastries, which further built the foundation for the flavour profiles that define French Patisserie". (Mahmoud, 2024).

It is said that there is a clear historical connection between Ancient Roman confections and Modern French Pastries, and it is evident in the pastries we prepare, purchase and consume today. Many French pastry chefs retained the idea of incorporating fruits and nuts into their pastries, and rather than modernizing or completely revising these recipes, they built upon them. (Mahmoud, 2024).

2.6 The popularity and demand for French Pastries

It is without a doubt that, over the years, the reputation and demand for French Pastries globally have continued to grow. Statistical Data published by the Statista Research Department reveals that in 2023, the purchasing frequency of Pastries in France was equal to or greater than the baking frequency, highlighting that the demand was at an all-time high. *“In 2023, over 57 percent of French People stated they would buy pastries at least once a month”.* (Statista, 2024). An article written by Gill Hyslop on 'Bakery & Snacks' in 2024 reveals that the organizers of Sirha Europain told Hyslop, “The French bakery market is growing. 12 million consumers visit bakeries and pastry shops daily”. (Hyslop, 2024).

2.6 Exploring French Pastry Techniques

French Cuisine is said to be the very foundation of the modern culinary world, with French pastries being the most sold in bakeries and patisseries globally. (Le Cordon Bleu, 2021). According to an article written by the Institute of Cordon Bleu in Paris, one of the most prestigious culinary schools, it is mentioned that there are five essential French pastry techniques that have revolutionised the culinary world. This study outlines that these five pastry techniques are essential when learning how to prepare French pastry, and that these French pastry techniques are crucial in learning how to master them when becoming a pastry chef. (Le Cordon Bleu, 2021). However, many other popular French pastry techniques should be mentioned.

2.6.1 ‘Pâte à Choux’

‘Pâte à Choux’ is a type of French pastry dough used for the preparation of both savoury and sweet pastries such as ‘eclairs’, ‘profiteroles’, and savoury ‘gougères’. (Anastopoulo, 2022). This dough is different from other types of dough as it is cooked over the stove in the beginning stages of the dough-making process, before being baked in the oven as the final step of the baking process. The process starts by boiling fat into liquid, in this case it would be butter and milk or water, or a combination of both. Flour is then added and cooked into the mixture. (Le Cordon Bleu, 2021).

After cooling, the egg is gradually incorporated, which results in a smooth, glossy, elastic, sticky dough which can be piped into long strips or small circles. The mixture is then baked (or fried to form other desserts such as beignets or churros). It is worth noting that gluten plays no role in the final outcome of choux pastry. When making choux pastry, a flour with a low-gluten content should be used to ensure the pastry keeps its light, delicate, texture. (Mariana, 2022).

The main ingredient essential for the result of choux pastry is the protein found in eggs. When baking choux pastry, they must be baked for the entire duration of time stated in the recipe without opening the oven until they are ready. This is because the protein in the egg will not have finished hardening until the choux is fully cooked. If the oven is opened at any point in time during the baking process, it will hinder the egg protein from forming correctly, as it is extremely sensitive to heat. The shock of cooler air flowing into the hot oven will cause the egg proteins to form incorrectly. This will cause the choux to collapse, resulting in a flat pastry that will not have the perfect hollow inside there would normally be. This hollow pastry allows it to be filled with various creams and custards of one's choice, which is what makes this dessert so unique, and also why it is so imperative that it is prepared correctly. The egg is responsible for the structure and shape of the choux. This is why it is essential that the proteins are formed correctly.

2.6.2 'Pâte Viennoise'

This type of pastry dough originates from Vienna and is sweet, leavened dough similar to bread in terms of look and texture, but overall must be sweeter and richer in taste. Nowadays, in the modern world, it has become a popular technique and foundation in creating popular 'viennoiserie' such as brioche. (Le Cordon Bleu, 2021).

2.6.3 'Pâte Feuilletée'

This type of pastry dough is commonly known as puff pastry or laminated dough in English, and is, in the author's opinion, the most well-known cultivated French pastry technique that is essential in the world of pastry, both back then and now. The dough is chilled, and cold sheets of butter are 'laminated' into the dough by a specific folding

technique called ‘lamination’. The dough must be folded with precision in order to achieve optimal results. Folding the fat into the dough multiple times will result in creating over a thousand layers, which is also why there is a French puff pastry dessert called “Mille-feuille”, which translates to thousand layers. When baked, all these layers of butter melt and evaporate and form air pockets within the pastry, resulting in evenly distributing flaky pastry layers and giving puff pastry its signature look and result. This type of pastry can be used for both sweet and savoury items such as a ‘Vol-Au-Vent’. (Le Cordon Bleu, 2021).

2.6.4 ‘Pâtes Battues’

This type of dough quite literally translates to a dough that is beaten, and used to make a variety of French desserts. A type of ‘beaten dough’ would be the ‘pâte génoise’, which is a type of dry sponge used as a base for most French and other desserts, such as opera cakes, tiramisu, financiers, and madeleines. (Le Cordon Bleu, 2021). This type of dough is ideal for French pastries that are normally dense and crunchy rather than light and airy in texture. This dough requires a larger number of eggs when compared to other types of pastry dough, making it a heavier dough that requires more kneading, hence the term ‘beaten dough’. (Pouillot, 2017).

2.6.5 ‘Pâtes Friables’

This type of pastry dough is used as the base for most tarts and quiches, both sweet and savoury. And resembles a crumblier dough in terms of texture. (Pouillot, 2017). The simplest version of this dough can be prepared by mixing together flour, water, salt and butter, whereas the more complex version, known as the ‘Pâte Sablée’ is made with sugar, eggs, and perhaps ground almonds, overall enriching its flavour and sweetness. (Le Cordon Bleu, 2021). This type of pastry also embodies the true quality and showcases the technique and artistry that make it a standout dessert. (Pouillot, 2017).

2.6.6 Meringue

Meringue is a key component in many French desserts, which has evolved to be used in various other desserts worldwide, including Local Maltese dessert mentioned earlier in this research study. (The Canny Chocolate Company, 2024). There are three types of Meringues, all of which are prepared somewhat differently and yield slightly different

results. The main concept of meringue is that air is incorporated into egg whites and sugar to form a stiff, stable consistency. (KitchenAid, 2022). The first one is French meringue, the simplest one. This is done by whipping egg whites and sugar together to form a stiff, glossy, aerated mixture that can be used to create dried meringues through piping and baking them in the oven at a low temperature overnight. The next type of meringue is the Swiss meringue, which is prepared by whisking egg whites and sugar over a bain-marie until the mixture has reached 79 Degrees Celsius and forms stiff peaks. The final, and perhaps most popular type of meringue is the Italian Meringue. This and the Swiss tend to be the most stable two types of meringue. This Meringue preparation is the most complex. The process begins by boiling a sugar syrup until it reaches a temperature of 118-121 degrees Celsius. (Also known as the low-ball stage in the pastry world). The sugar syrup is then gradually poured into the egg whites as they are whipped until the mixture has doubled in size, formed stiff peaks, and cooled completely. It can then be used to decorate desserts or mixed into other liquids to form stable mousses. (KitchenAid, 2022).

2.7 Consumer Behaviour on French Pastries and techniques

A study done by Hiral Patel in 2023 explores the impact of consumer behaviour towards bakery products and discusses the importance of consumer behaviour. Consumer behaviour is evolving at a rapid rate, with each individual having their own unique preferences when it comes to the decision-making process when making a purchase. There is an endless variety of the types of consumers; these can be drawn over a spectrum of high to low involvement, where the significance of buying a certain product or service heavily relies on the amount of time making a decision on a purchase. (Patel, 2023).

There are many different types of complex buying habits. According to the author of this research’s opinion, those who purchase from Pastry shops, confectioneries and bakeries fall under three specific categories. The one that the author feels resonates the most with this type of product or service, would be ‘Variety-Seeking Buying Behaviour. This type of behaviour requires low effort, and in this case, the consumer would have a variety of options and brands of the same product or service to choose from. Leading customers, such as repeat or loyal clients, will have a specific preference for what they want or will pick a certain brand over how satisfied they were with the

product in the past. The other category that the author believes many pastry consumers relate to is ‘Habitual Buying Behaviour’. This type of buying behaviour refers to the habit of purchasing several inexpensive, regularly bought items, such as toothpaste, which requires little to no thought or involvement whatsoever. This can be the case for a repeat customer or client looking to purchase a pastry frequently buy, such as a box of mixed pastries for a corporate office, or a small treat as a quick gift. Many consumers tend to do this when they are in a hurry or are looking to purchase something for someone else at the last minute. The third category that most pastry consumers fall under would be the ‘Dissonance-Reducing Behaviour’. (Patel, 2023). This type of behaviour occurs when a consumer is heavily involved in the decision-making process prior to making a purchase. Factors such as price and quality are heavily determined, sought after, compared and considered before making a purchase. An example of this in a bakery or confectionery would be a higher-quality pastry item that would have been pre-planned, such as a bespoke cake order for a special occasion where the consumer would have been in liaison with the company regarding their ideas, wants and needs. This type of product requires more time and effort, resulting in a higher price, which increases the involvement in purchasing prior to making a decision. (Patel, 2023).

2.8 Ways consumer behaviour can be affected by French Pastry techniques when buying bakery products

According to a research study conducted by Gustavo Quiroga Souki et. Al (2015), in the world of consumer behaviour, there is a term known as ‘Willingness to Pay’, which refers to the maximum amount of an item or service consumers are willing to pay for. This amount can be determined and influenced by their specific wants and needs, as well as their culture and upbringing. (Souki, G.Q. et al. (2015). It can be seen that through the years, consumers, especially local consumers in Malta, are showing an increased interest in experimenting and trying new flavours and foods they might not be familiar with. This led to the realisation that in order to attract a higher demand in the world of pastry nowadays, one must think outside the box and push boundaries. This can be achieved by developing new products that have never been seen before. (Bakels, 2022). It is also becoming an increasingly new popular trend, especially in the world of French pastry techniques, to fuse French pastry techniques or popular French pastry products together, to form new exciting pastries and products. An example of this ‘hybrid’ product would be the “Cronut”, which is a combination of techniques and

ingredients found in the doughnut, fused with the methods and ingredients found in a croissant. Another popular hybrid pastry product in the culinary world is the ‘scuffin’ which is a scone and a muffin. Thus, by combining two different processes together, these two separate confections are fused together with their own different techniques into one hybrid creation, which is commonly seen to spark a growth and interest in current food trends, especially in a smaller, more densely populated region such as Malta. This popular trend of hybridisation can be used as a market tool for businesses, in ways such as collaborating with other brands to combine familiar flavours and products, to crossover popular flavour combinations, for brands to expand in a range other than what they are known for, as well as to push boundaries in the culinary world where traditional baked goods are given a new lens and a new perspective for consumers wanting to try something different. (Bakels, 2022).

2.9 The future of traditional bakeries and confectioneries in Malta adopting French Pastry techniques in the next five years

According to the author’s personal experience having previously worked and currently working in the field of traditional Maltese bakeries and confectioneries that are adopting French Pastry techniques, the demand for said market is expected to grow and expand due to a higher demand in French pastries and French pastry techniques as well as increased exposure on social media and current food trends. (Ruggier, 2024). The effects of COVID-19 have, without a doubt, changed buying habits for consumers. (Bakels, 2022). After the author had experienced the COVID-19 pandemic, during that time, a lot of pastry chefs were being made redundant. Pastry shops, as well as traditional confectioneries and bakeries in Malta were being temporarily closed, and it can be said that a visible loss was seen in the market of selling French pastries and other desserts and sweets, simply due to factors that cannot be controlled, which in this case was the lockdown. Another factor that contributed to the loss for traditional bakeries and confectioneries in Malta was that locals were staying at home and pursuing baking as a full-time hobby, as they had the time since they were not pursuing anything else, not even their jobs. (Ruggier, 2024). However, since the end of that pandemic, it has been visibly noticed that consumers have become more likely to try new foods and are more confident in making new choices. (Bakels, 2022). It was also seen that after the pandemic, traditional bakeries and confectioneries all over Malta were back with a bang, and their sales skyrocketed as people were going back to their

full-time jobs, thus relying on others to bake and prepare their sweets and confections for their occasions. (Ruggier, 2024). It was also seen by the author that in the past two years, many popular French pastry shop chains started opening in Malta, such as ‘Laduree’, one of the most popular French pastry shops in France, having opened its franchise and pastry shop in Malta in October of 2024. This showed that there was a higher demand for French pastry influenced products and products made with French pastry techniques. The author is confident in this due to the fact that there is a high demand which is ongoing for French pastries at the place of occupation of the author, which in this case would be a French pastry shop and bakery. (Ruggier, 2024).

3. Methodology

A mixed methodology consisting of two qualitative research methods have been chosen in order to pursue the aims and objectives of this study. The type of research chosen for collecting data for this study are surveys and observations. Firstly, a qualitative survey is given to consumers buying from local bakeries. This may be in the form of a physical sheet that will be filled in, or a short verbal survey that will only take a few minutes, and will consist of asking the consumer various questions regarding their shopping experience and opinions on buying from local bakeries as well as questions related to French pastry and French pastry products and techniques. The survey questions may be found in Appendix 1.

This research is strictly qualitative. The author has chosen to opt for surveys and observation as the primary research method for this thesis due to the fact that these two research methods have proven to be far more efficient and less time consuming than other research methods such as interviews. Surveys can reach a wider audience and receive a larger number of responses in a much shorter time, resulting in a higher yield-to-efficiency ratio compared to other research methods. This particular research allows the researcher to delve deeper and explore this particular subject further. (Crowe et. al., 2011). Observations were also chosen in order to maximise time management and efficiency during data collection. The questions used for the observation checklist may be found in Appendix 4. The author preferred not to use other research methods for this specific reason. Apart from the data collected by the researcher through observations and surveys, this research study primarily relies on secondary data. This type of data refers to already existing information regarding the topic that has been collected by other researchers. (Largan, et. al, 2019). If the author had chosen to pursue interviews as the main form of data collection, it would have ended up being more time-consuming to arrange and meet various individuals, as well as compile and analyse the data. That is also one of the main reasons the author did not choose focus groups which they would have been more time consuming, while the chosen methods are more efficient for this research. The target participants for this study are consumers and clients who tend to visit pastry shops and/or bakeries at least once a week or are repeat clients of a certain pastry shop and/or bakery. Some examples are clients who order from the same bakery for their preferred occasions, or purchase on a repeat basis, such as corporate

workers buying desserts and coffee for their lunch, or individuals buying a cake for anniversaries, birthdays, and celebrations, or perhaps individuals or groups hosting parties where pastries or desserts would be required.

The author aims to observe and investigate the impact and influence of French pastry techniques on Maltese bakeries and confectioneries, and to do so by gathering the consumers' opinions and thoughts on this topic. Qualitative methods are able to give an overall view of the participant's thoughts and opinions and are also able to understand their views on a particular topic. (Petrovic, et. Al, 2017).

> "Qualitative research is a type of research that provides a deeper insight into real-world problems." (Tenny, et. al, 2022).

Qualitative research consists of asking open-ended questions, which gives the person answering them room for interpretation and invites them to discuss and express their thoughts and opinions rather than a simple Yes or no question.

To further analyse and strengthen this research, the two chosen research methods will be combined through triangulation. This method will help contrast and compare results from both approaches, aiding the researcher in gaining a deeper understanding.

This study will be split into two phases. For the first phase, the survey will be conducted via Google Forms and will be targeted towards locals who have previously purchased from or frequented Maltese confectioneries and bakeries. This survey is going to cover all three of the objectives.

For the second phase, the data collection tool used will be an observation checklist. Observations will be carried out in the following establishments:

- An old traditional bakery in Birkirkara (has been operating for over fifty years)
- A modern bakery in St Julian's (opened in the past five years)
- An artisanal bakery in Birkirkara (opened in the past five years)
- Two commercial confectioneries in Hamrun, one of which specialises in pastry and the other which specialises in cakes and cake products. (Both have been operating for over twenty years).

The questionnaire will also have the option to be sent online to Facebook groups for increased exposure. The estimated number of responses forecasted will be between seventy-five to a hundred responses. There will be a wide variety of participants. Therefore, the number of responses received will be calculated by dividing the total number of participants and multiplying them by a hundred to find the response rate percentage. These survey questions aim to cover all three research question objectives. The second form of research method used will be observation. A qualitative observation checklist will be created to cover all three research questions. For this study, the author will be visiting a total of five local bakeries and conduct participant observation. This will allow the researcher to gain an understanding of both the bakery and the consumers' cultures, beliefs and practices from an insider's perspective. This method allows the researcher to immerse themselves within the given context, aiding in the collection of information and a deeper understanding of the subject through both assessing the company and other consumers and their behaviour. (George, 2023).

3.1 Pilot Study of Survey Questions

Upon completion of the survey, a pilot study was conducted. This survey was sent to ten participants, all of whom are chefs and are also currently in their third year of bachelors in culinary arts at the Institute of Tourism Studies (ITS). Minimal adjustments were made to the survey after the pilot study was completed and the results were evaluated. One of the first participants to fill in the survey suggested adding in the option "other" in most survey questions so that those who do not relate to them or have a particular answer/knowledge on the subject are able to give their own opinion or an alternative response. The author decided to include this option for those who would not be sure or have an appropriate answer, which could be a result of a lack of knowledge and expertise within the region or study, which in this case would be French pastry techniques. Another comment expressed by one of the participants was that the more-detailed questions should be put at the very beginning of the survey and the less time-consuming ones such as the demographic questions to be put towards the end as the participants would have the most interest and motivation towards the beginning and start to lose interest towards the end. The author disagreed with this and decided to keep the questions as they were, with the demographic related questions being at the

beginning of the survey. Another suggestion received by the participants and tutor was to include questions regarding the future of pastries and bakeries in the next five years. This was added in order to answer all the research questions in the study. Another suggestion was to add more questions regarding consumer behaviour, so this suggestion was also put in the survey questions.

3.2 Ethical Considerations

The research study conducted followed all ethical guidelines and considerations put into place by the Institute of Tourism Studies (ITS). The author has ensured that these considerations are taken into account and adhered to throughout the entire research study process. Participants answering the survey questions were given all necessary information regarding the process and were not asked to provide any type of information such as identification details, meaning the procedure was anonymous at all times. Regarding the observation checklists, the author chose to employ covert observations as a means of gathering primary data for the research study. The author chose the establishments listed earlier in this study, where the research was conducted anonymously as a participant observer. The author, as a consumer, visited several establishments listed in this research study, purchased pastries, and conducted research based on their findings. However, the author had taken the decision not to mention the establishments visited and studied to follow ethical guidelines and prevent the identification of said establishments, thus accepting the duty to preserve the anonymity of the chosen establishments, even in the final write-up. All of this will be done in order to safeguard all information and protect the anonymity of the participants. This data received will be used for the sole purpose of the thesis. The observation consent form may be found in Appendix 3.

3.3 Limitations

A limitation the author encountered during the observation checklists was that, due to a lack of responses, the checklists could not be conducted within the kitchen or preparation area of the mentioned establishments. Due to this, the author took it upon themselves to act as a consumer and visit the establishments, observe the pastries, assess the consumer behaviour within the establishment(s) and conduct the research based off that. (George, 2023). In this case, the author and researcher took the role of

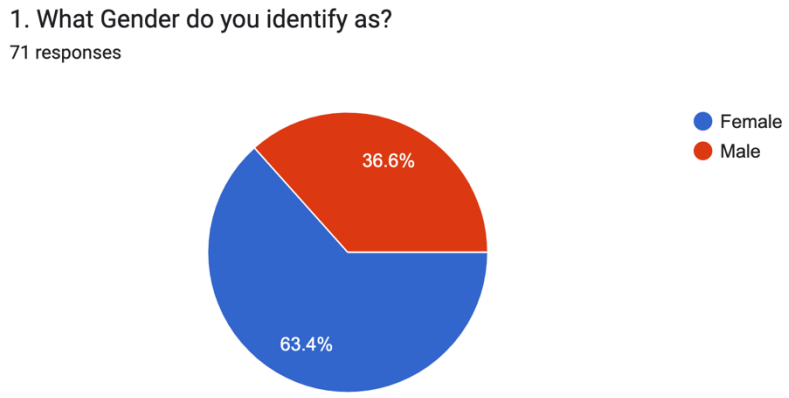
participant observer, and the participants were the establishments or companies visited during the observation checklists.

The next limitation the author and researcher came across when conducting this research study was that due to financial restrictions and word limit, the author only conducted an observation at each establishment once, which can be seen as a limitation. In an ideal scenario, multiple observations would be conducted to create a control for the study allowing for the analysis and tracking of various data and options.

4. Results, Analysis and Discussion

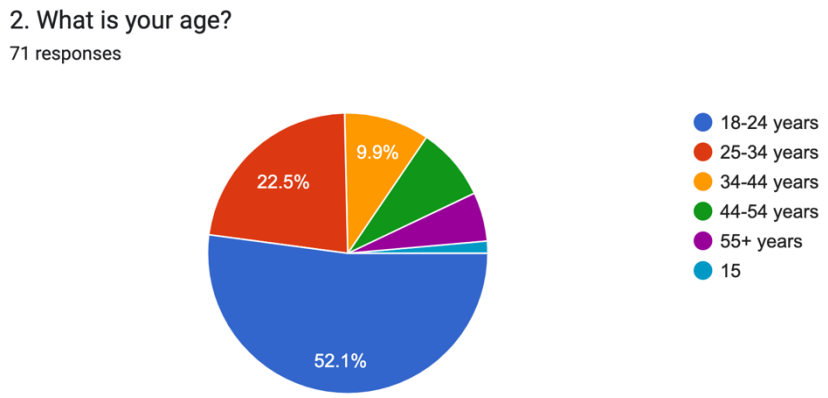
4.1 Results from the survey

A total of 71 respondents have agreed to participate in this research study by completing the survey. A total of 100 surveys were sent, having a response rate percentage of 71%. The total number of responses collected is enough to compile a detailed analysis from the survey questions. This survey consisted of a total of 32 questions, three of which were demographic questions used to identify the participants in this study.



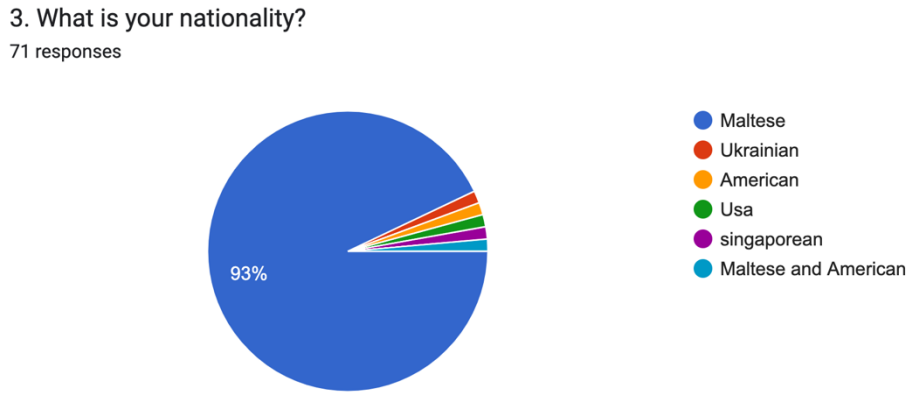
(Figure 1)

Q1 was a demographic question with the aim to identify the gender of the participants of this survey.



(Figure 2)

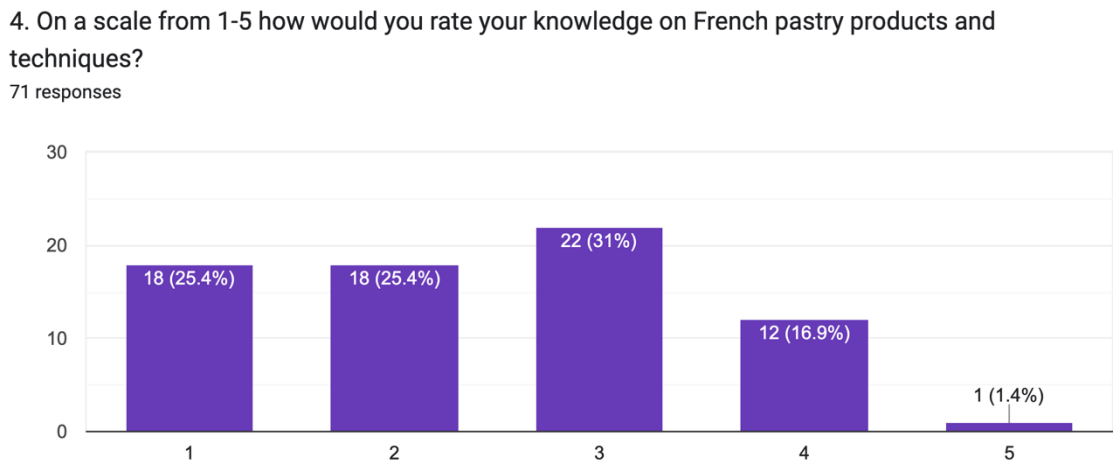
Q2 was also a demographic question to gain an understanding of which age group the participants fall under. From the 71 respondents, 37 of them are between the age of 18-24 years, 16 of them are between the age of 25-34 years, 7 of them are between the age of 34-44 years, 6 of them are between the age of 44-54 years, and 4 of them are aged 55 and above. There was a respondent who identified that they are also fifteen years of age.



(Figure 3)

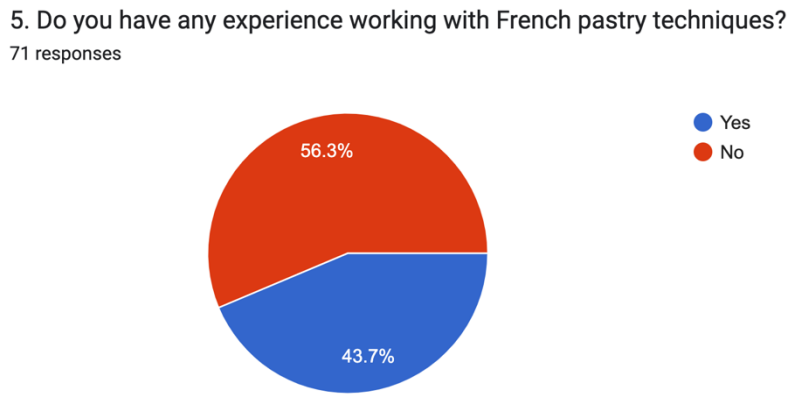
Q3 was an essential demographic question to understand the participants' nationality. As the study is based on local bakeries and confectioneries in Malta, there is a higher

chance that Maltese people will be able to have more information and knowledge on the topic as it is based on local establishments.



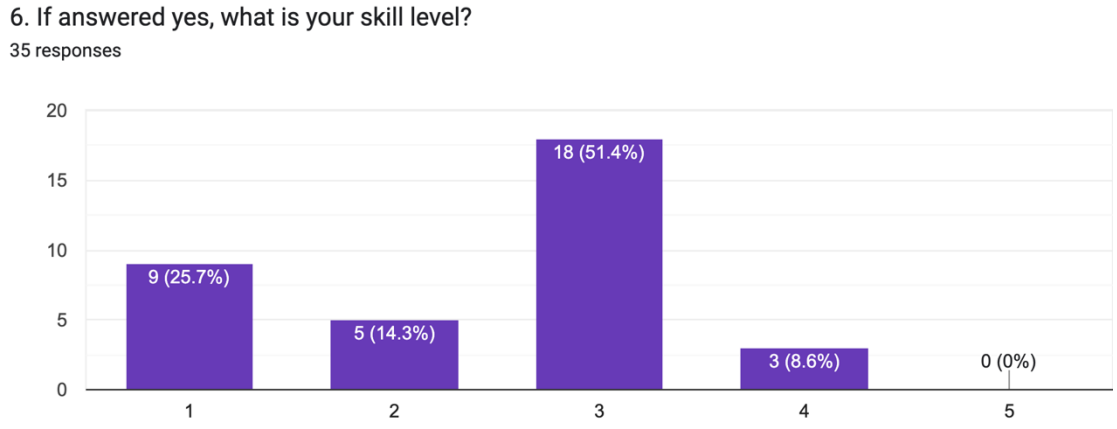
(Figure 4)

Q4 was a question aimed at understanding the level of knowledge and awareness Maltese consumers currently have about French pastry products and their techniques. Kilewer (2008), strongly believed and shared the belief that culture and food are globally interwined in society, No matter the region. (Kilewer, 2008). The type of scale used is known as a Likert scale, which has been used to more accurately measure the level of knowledge of the participants. Only one participant voted that they are very knowledgeable on French pastry products and techniques, while the most dominant answer in this case was that 22 participants voted that they are moderately knowledgeable about French pastry products and techniques. 18 participants voted that they are not knowledgeable on French pastry products and techniques.



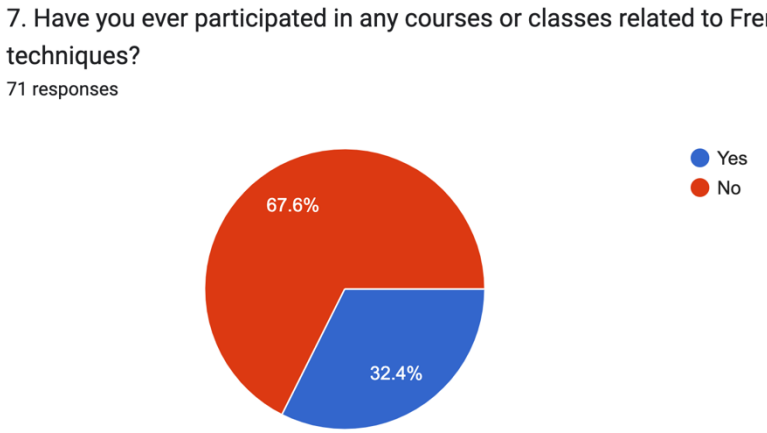
(Figure 5)

Q5 was a question aimed to understand whether the participants have had any hands-on experience working with French pastry techniques in any aspect or environment. The majority (56.3%) stated that they had not, while the minority (43.7%) reported having experience working with French pastry techniques. Although many participants answered that they do not have any experience working with French pastry techniques, that does not necessarily correlate to ancient cooking methods that are still being used today that they perhaps have No idea they are subconsciously using in their day-to-day lives. According to Mahmoud (2024), the earliest roots of French pastry preparation can be traced back to the Middle Ages. (Mahmoud, 2024).



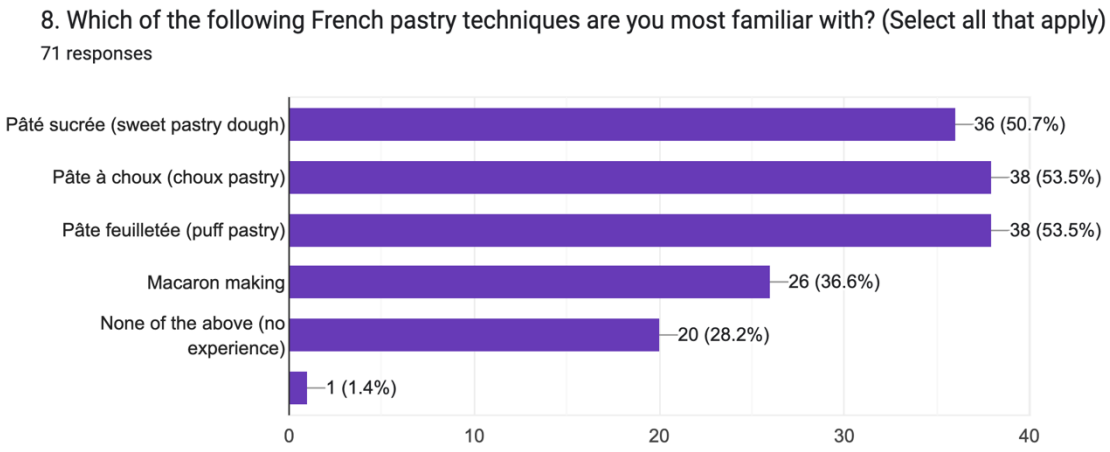
(Figure 6)

Q6 was a question directed to the participants who answered the previous question with “Yes”. This question was created to further assess the skills of participants who indicated they have had previous experience working with French pastry techniques, using a Likert scale format. Out of the 35 respondents, the majority, comprising of 18 respondents, voted that they have a moderate skill level, while No one voted that they have a high skill level. Only 9 out of the 35 respondents reported having a very low skill level.



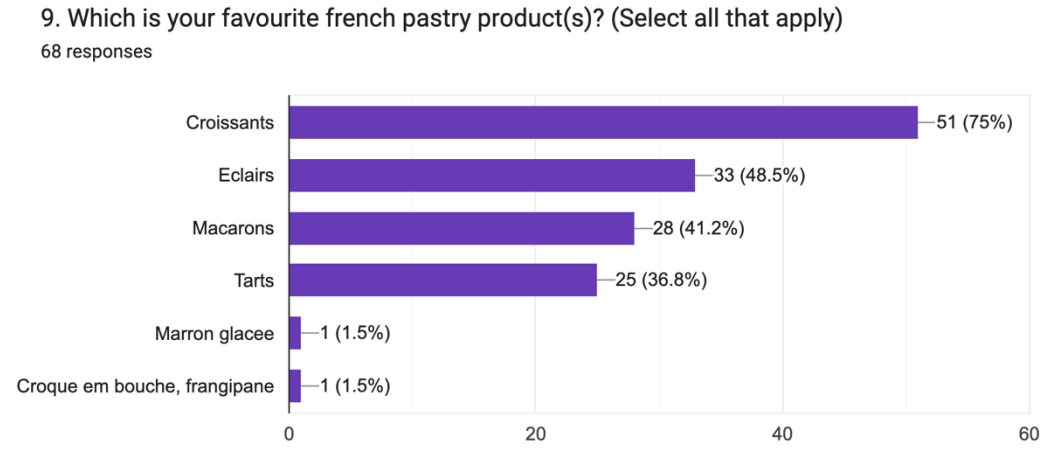
(Figure 7)

Q7 was a question used to determine whether the participants of this survey have participated in any courses or classes related to French pastry products and techniques in the past. The majority, 48 respondents (67.6%), voted that they have not. Only 23 respondents (32.4%) out of the 71 respondents reported having participated in any courses or classes related to French pastry products and techniques in the past.



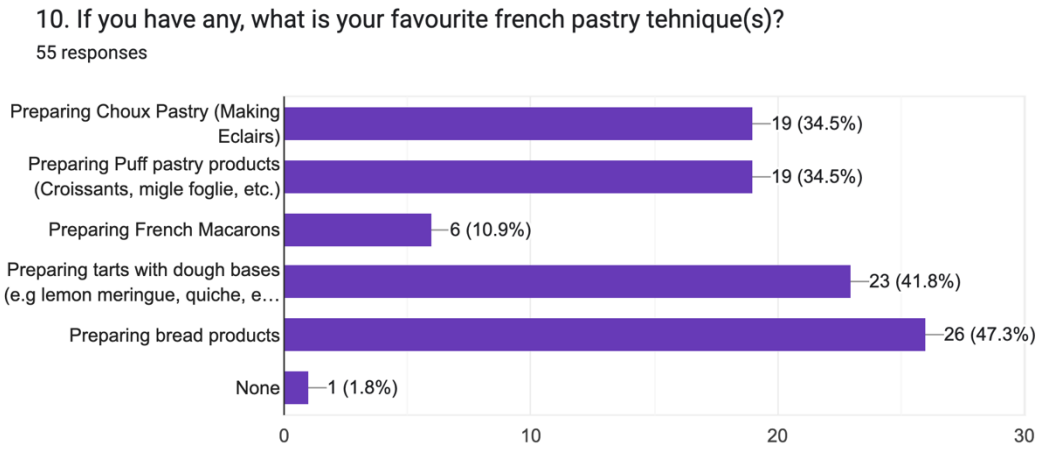
(Figure 8)

Q8 was a pivotal question used to gain a better understanding of which of the following French pastry techniques the respondent is most familiar with. Participants were able to select more than one answer to this question. The most commonly ticked techniques in this question were sweet pastry dough with 36 votes, choux pastry with 38 votes, and puff pastry with 38 votes, while 20 participants voted that they had no familiarity with any of the above techniques. It has been found that French Pastry chefs were not officially recognised until the sixteenth century, with the introduction of desserts such as sponge cakes and macarons, as well as marzipans imported from Italy. (Roth, 2020).



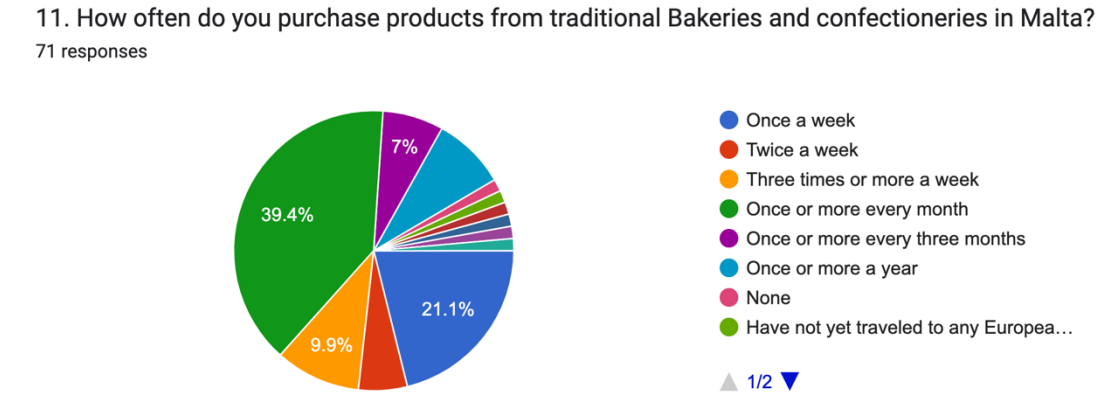
(Figure 9)

Q9 was used to identify the participants' favourite French pastry products and gain a deeper understanding of their perception of French pastry products and techniques. Out of the 68 that responded, the most-voted French pastry product was Croissants, with 51 votes, while the lowest was tarts with 25 votes. There were two participants that added their own French pastry products, which included 'Marron glacee', 'Croque en bouche' and 'Frangipane'.



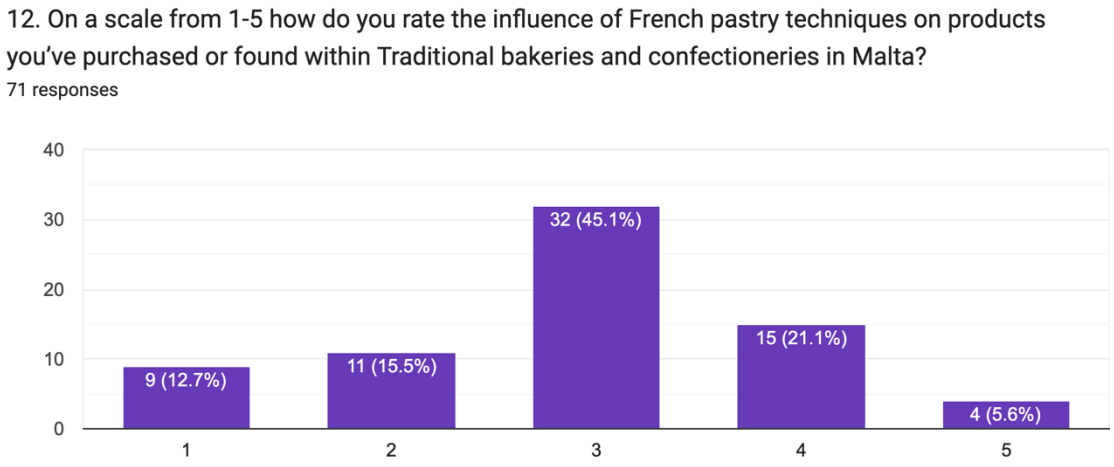
(Figure 10)

Q10 is similar to Q9, where it asks the participants what their favourite French pastry technique(s) are rather than products. Out of the 55 respondents, the most popular technique was preparing bread products with 26 votes, while the least popular was "none". The second-highest vote was for preparing tarts with dough bases, which received 23 votes.



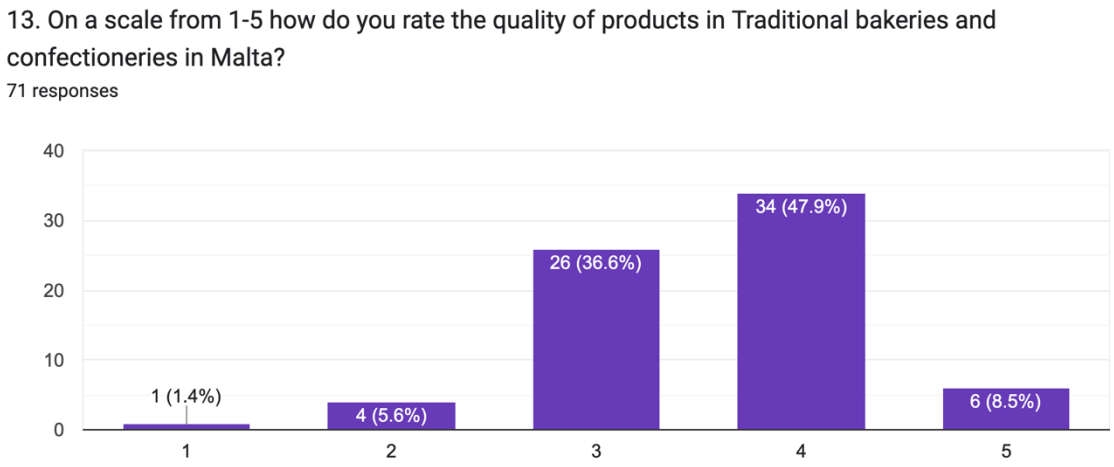
(Figure 11)

Q11 was a pivotal question used to understand the participants' purchasing habits and how often they purchase from traditional bakeries and confectioneries in Malta. The highest vote was purchasing once or more every month, with a total of 28 votes (39.4%). The second highest voted purchasing habit was once a week with 15 votes (21.2%). A lot of participants added their own votes, as seen in the pie chart. According to Hiral Patel (2023), consumer behaviour is evolving at a rapid rate, with each individual having their own unique preferences when it comes to the decision-making process when making a purchase. (Patel, 2023).



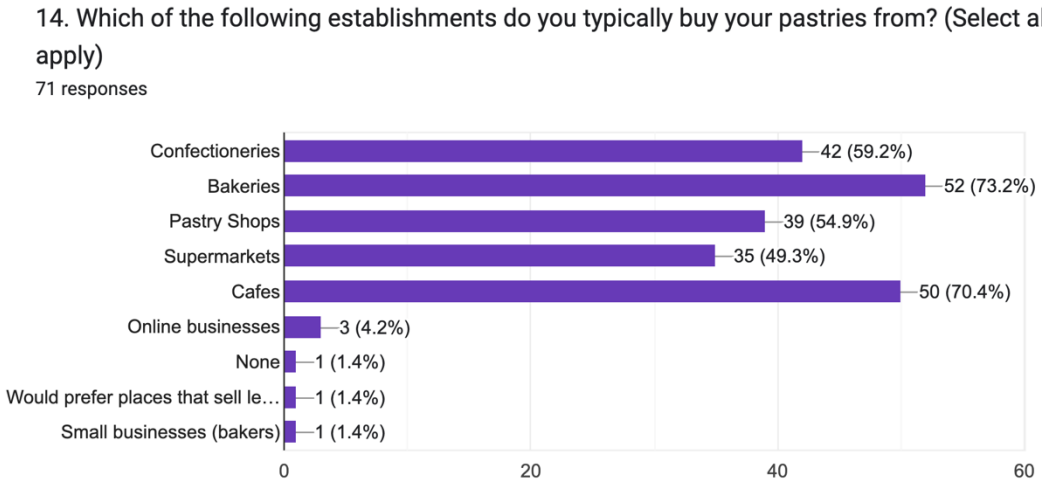
(Figure 12)

Q12 was used to understand how the participants would rate the influence of French pastry techniques on products they had purchased within Traditional bakeries and confectioneries in Malta. The majority, 32 of the respondents, voted with a moderate influence, while only 4 voted for a high influence, and only 9 voted for little to No influence at all. According to Gustavo Quiroga Souki et. al (2015), the consumer's willingness to pay can be affected by their needs/wants as well as other factors. (Souki, G.Q. et al., 2015). It has been noted that local Maltese consumers are showing an increased in interest in trying unfamiliar foods, which in turn has led to a higher demand in the world of pastry and French pastry products. (Bakels, 2022).



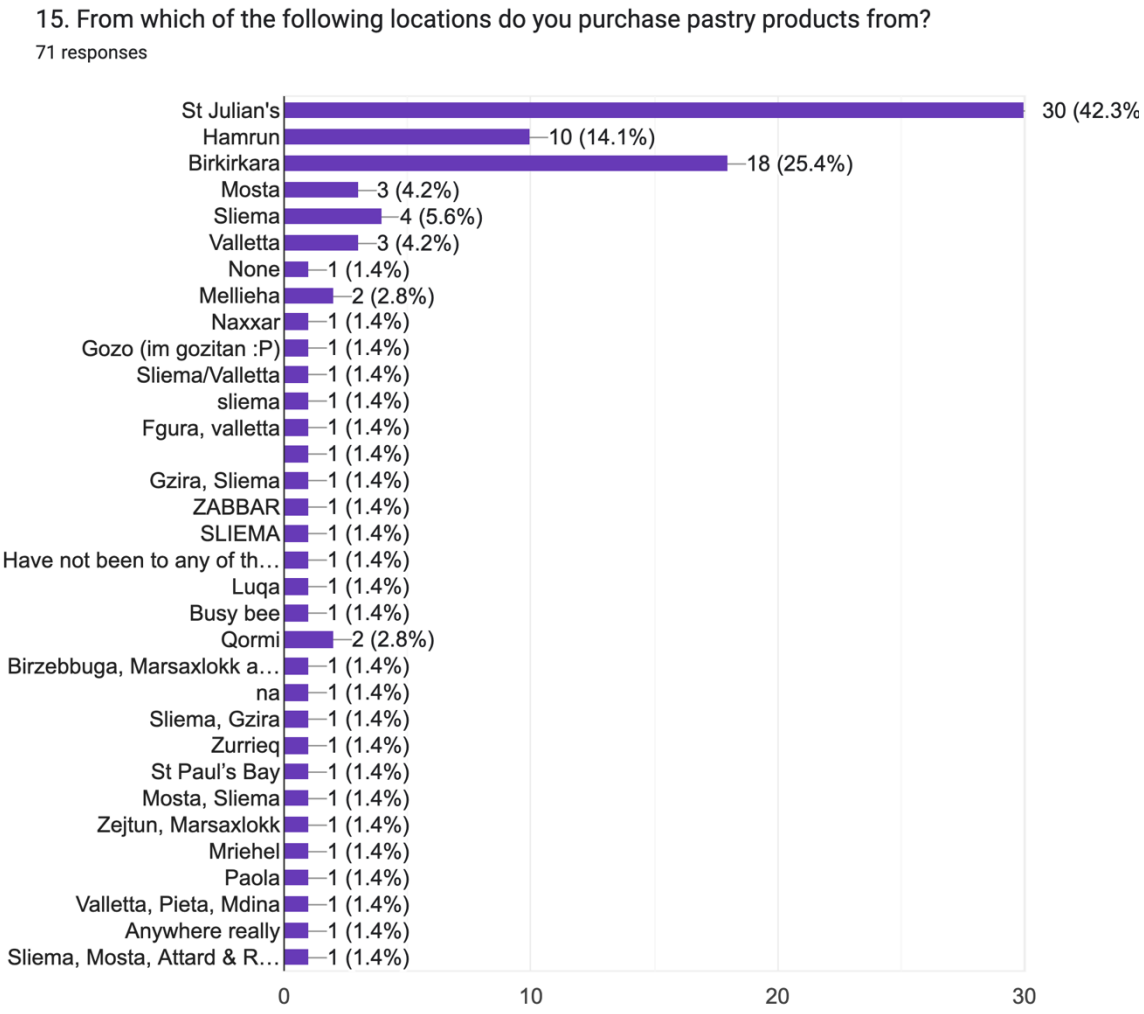
(Figure 13)

Q13 was used to determine how the participants would rate the quality of the products they had purchased from Traditional bakeries and confectioneries in Malta, as well as gain a deeper understanding of consumer behaviour and Local purchasing habits. (On a scale of 1-5, with 1 being the lowest and 5 being the highest). The majority, being 34 participants (47.9%) voted at a scale of 4, while the minority, only 1 person voted for 1, being the lowest on the scale. The second-highest vote was for the quality, which received a 3 on the scale.



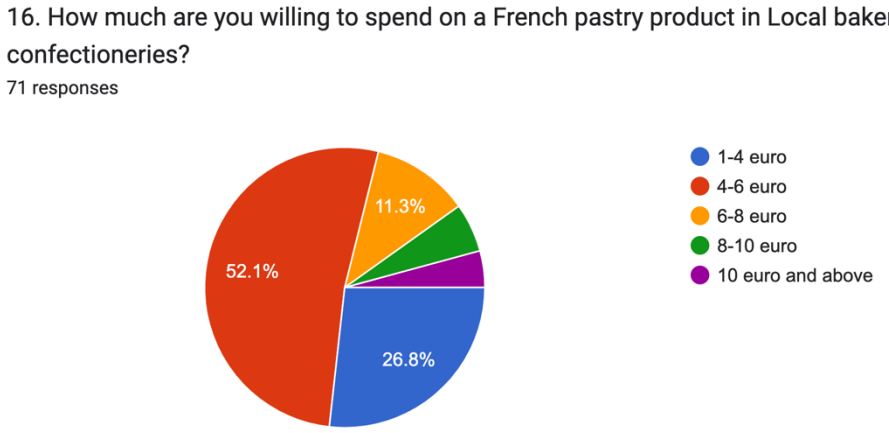
(Figure 14)

Q14 was a pivotal question used to identify which establishments the participants would typically purchase their pastries from as well as gain a deeper understanding of consumer behaviour and local purchasing habits. Out of the 71 responses, 50 voted that they are buying their pastries from Cafes, 52 voted for bakeries, 42 voted for confectioneries, 39 voted for pastry shops and 35 voted for pastry shops, while only 3 voted for online businesses. It can be seen that some participants have also added their own responses.



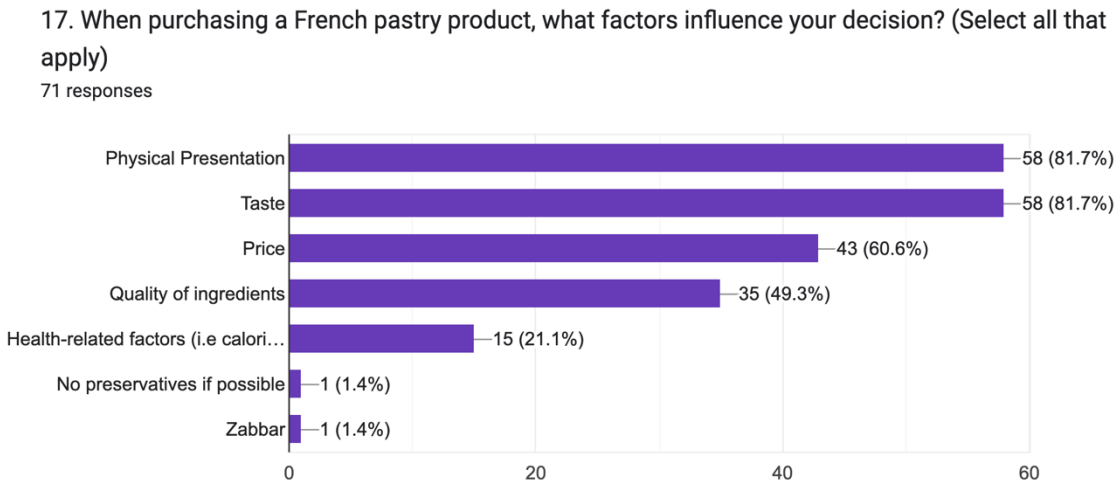
(Figure 15)

Q15 was yet another pivotal question used to determine from which geographical locations participants prefer to purchase their pastry products in Malta. The highest vote was St Julian's with 30 votes, while the second highest was Birkirkara with 18 votes. It can also be seen that the participants have decided to add their own locations.



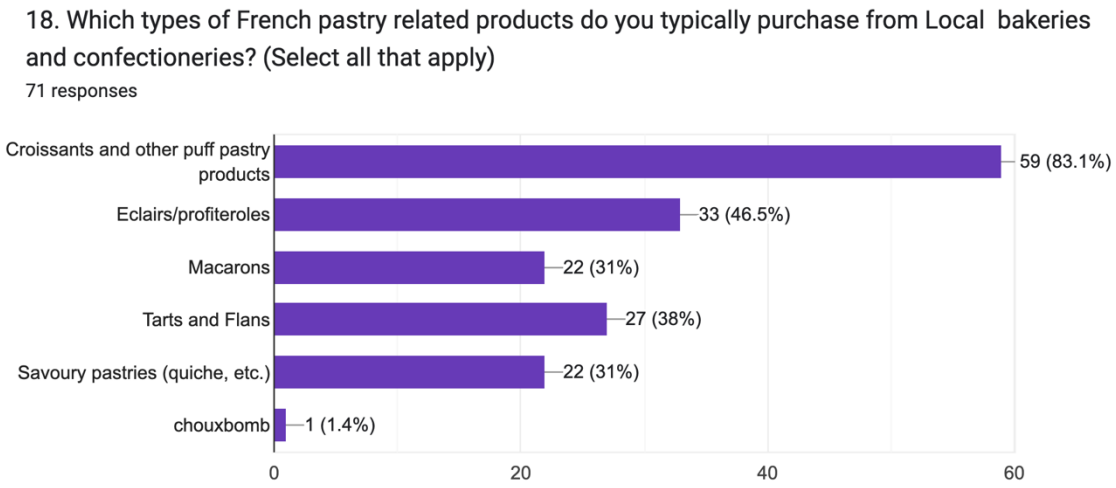
(Figure 16)

Q16 was used to identify how much participants were willing to spend on a French pastry product in local bakeries and confectioneries as well as gain a deeper understanding of consumer behaviour and local purchasing habits. The highest vote was between 4 and 6 euros per pastry item with 37 votes (52.1%). The second-highest vote was between 1 and 4 euros, and the lowest voted for was 10 euros and above. Patel (2023), states that the pricing and quality of an item impact the decision-making process for consumers before purchasing. (Patel, 2023).



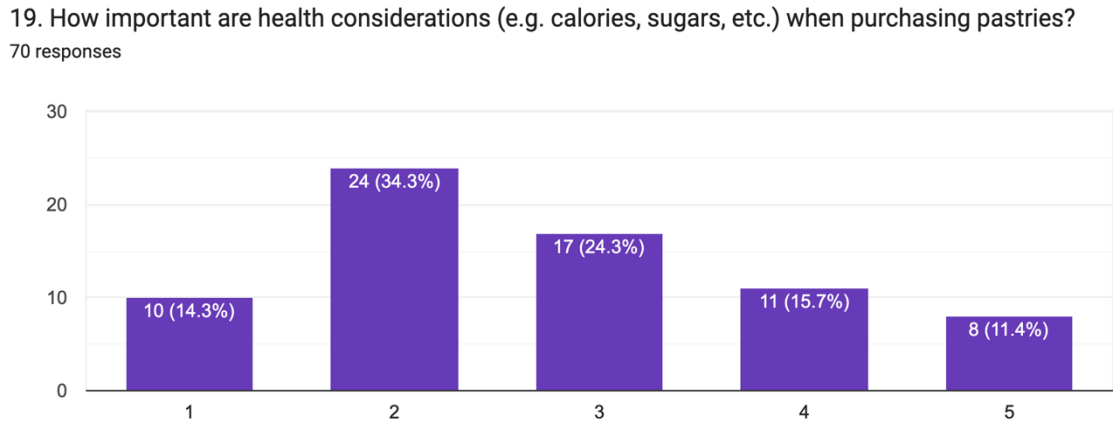
(Figure 17)

Q17 aimed to identify which factors influence the participants' decision when purchasing French pastry products, as well as gain a deeper understanding of consumer behaviour and local purchasing habits. The majority, 58 out of the 71 respondents (81.7%), voted that the two biggest factors when deciding whether or not to purchase a French pastry product would be physical presentation and taste. The second-highest voted category was price with 43 votes (60.6%), while the quality of ingredients came after that with 35 votes (49.3%). The lowest voted category was health-related factors such as calories, etc., with 15 votes (21.1%). A participant also added their own responses highlighting they would likely prefer the products not to contain any preservatives. According to Patel (2023), factors such as price and quality impact the decision-making process for consumers when purchasing French pastries or items prepared with French pastry techniques. (Patel, 2023).



(Figure 18)

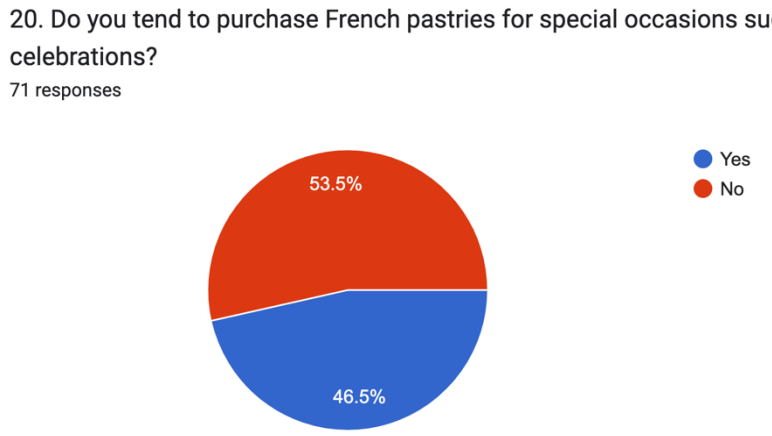
Q18 aimed to understand which types of French pastry products participants typically prefer to purchase, as well as gain a deeper understanding of consumer behaviour and local purchasing habits. The majority, being 59 out of the 71 respondents (83.1%), voted for Croissants and other puff pastry products. The second highest voted category was eclairs and profiteroles with 33 votes (46.5%), while the lowest voted category was savoury pastries and macarons with 22 votes (31%).



(Figure 19)

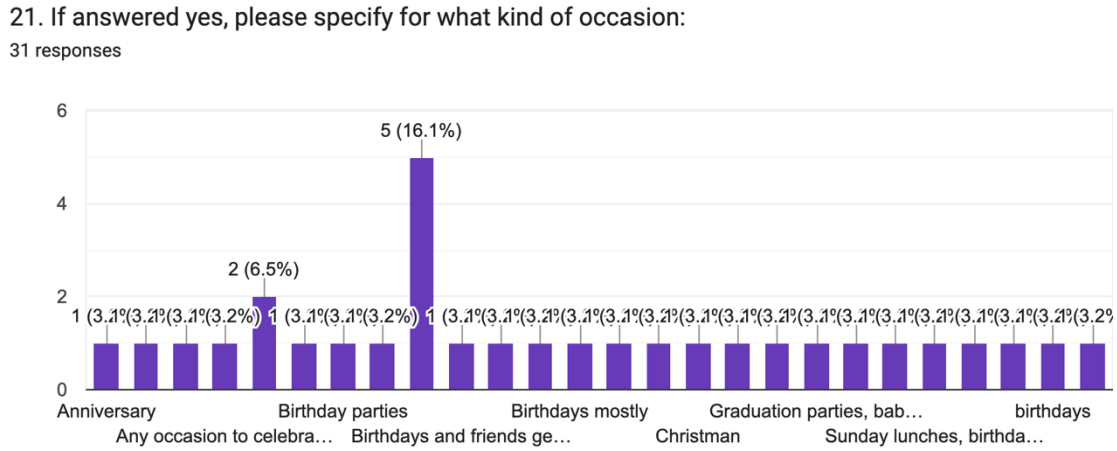
Q19 determined to understand the importance of health considerations for participants when purchasing pastries, on a scale from 1-5, with 1 being the lowest and 5 being the

highest. 24 out of 70 respondents voted on a level of 2, while only 8 voted on a level of 5.



(Figure 20)

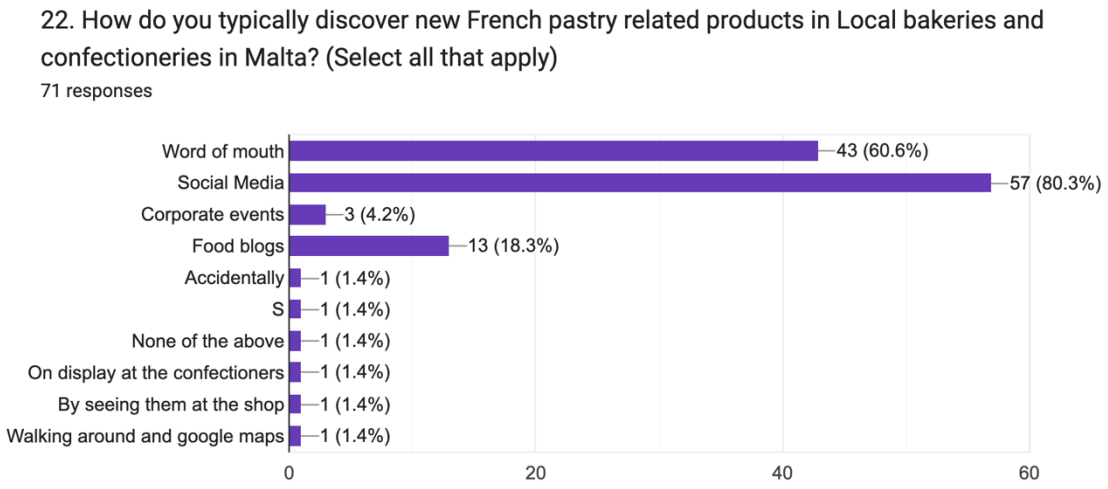
Q20 aimed to understand whether the participants purchase French pastries for special occasions. The majority (53.5%), voted for 'No' while the minority (46.5%), voted 'Yes'.



(Figure 21)

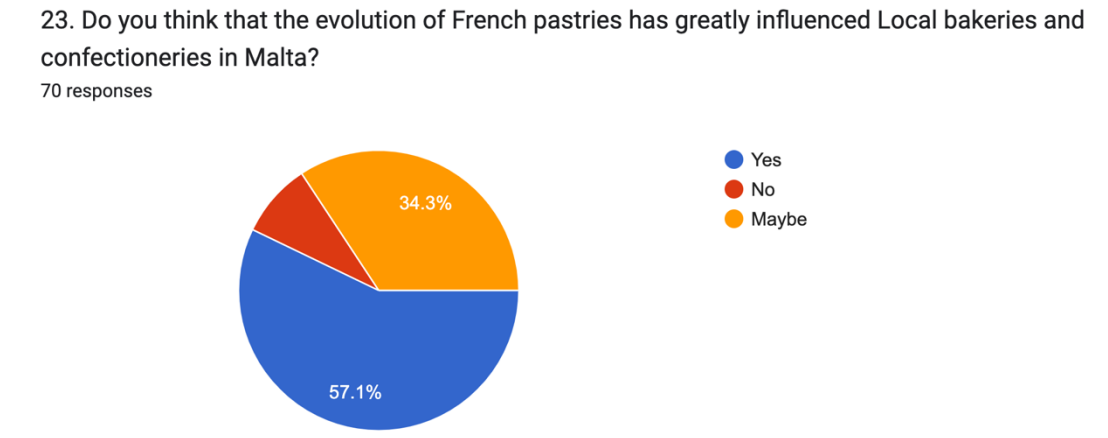
Q21 was a sub-question derived from question Q20 for the participants that voted 'Yes', to the previous question. This question aimed to specify and understand for which kind of occasion participants would purchase their pastry products. The highest-voted for category was birthdays and gatherings (5 votes). A study done by Patel (2023), shows

that the heavy involvement of consumers prior to purchasing within this scenario is the occasion for which they are purchasing the pastries. An example of this would be for a birthday cake order where the cake would have been pre-planned and perhaps even paid in advance, making the consumer more heavily involved in the decision-making process (Patel, 2023).



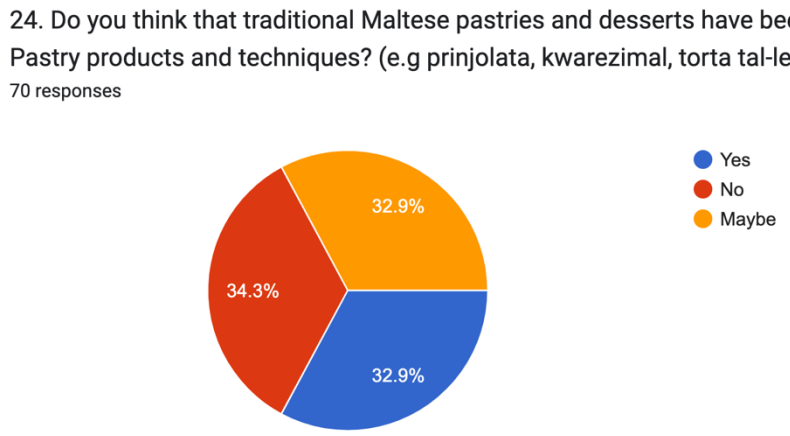
(Figure 22)

Q22 aimed to determine how participants would typically discover new French pastry-related products in local bakeries and confectioneries in Malta. The majority voted for social media, with 57 votes (80.3%), while the second-highest voted category was by word of mouth, with 43 votes (60.6%).



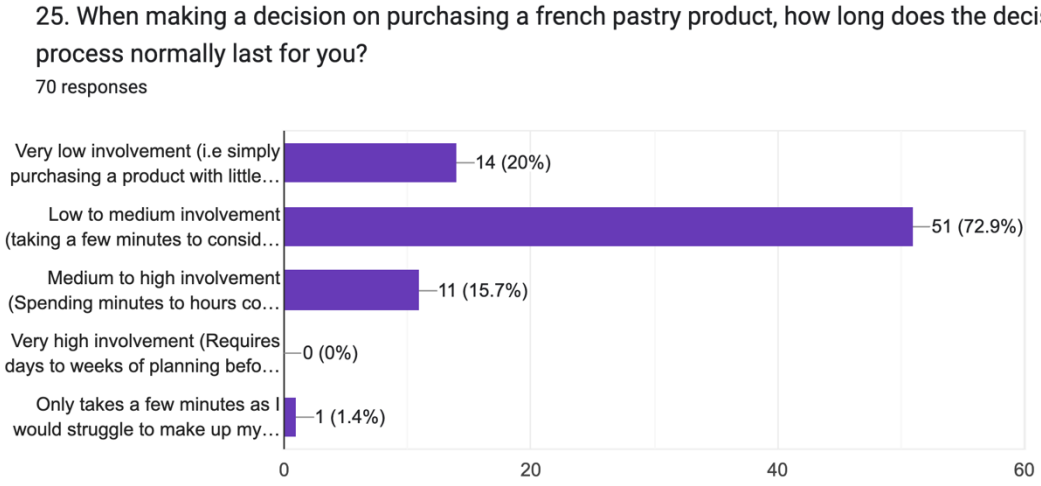
(Figure 23)

Q23 aimed to understand the participants' view towards the evolution of French pastries and whether it has greatly influenced local bakeries and confectioneries in Malta. The majority (57.1%), voted for 'Yes' while 34.4% voted 'Maybe', and the minority (8.6%), voted for 'No'.



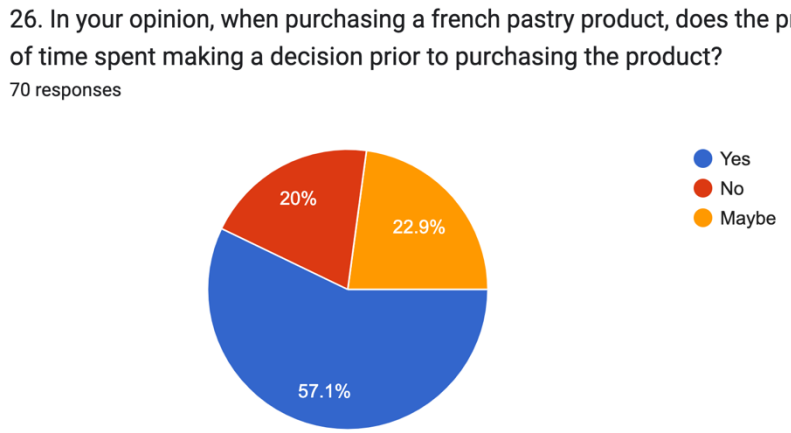
(Figure 24)

Q24 aimed to discover whether the participants' think that traditional Maltese pastries and desserts have been influenced by French pastry products and techniques. In this question, the answers 'Yes' and 'Maybe' were equally voted for, each with a score of 32.9%, while 'No' was at 34.3%.



(Figure 25)

Q25 aimed to understand the decision-making process in relation to consumer behaviour and purchasing habits of the participants, and how long the decision process would normally take when purchasing French pastry products. The highest voted category, which was 51 votes, all unanimously voted that the decision-making process would include low to medium involvement, while the lowest voted category added by the researcher was medium to high involvement with 11 votes.



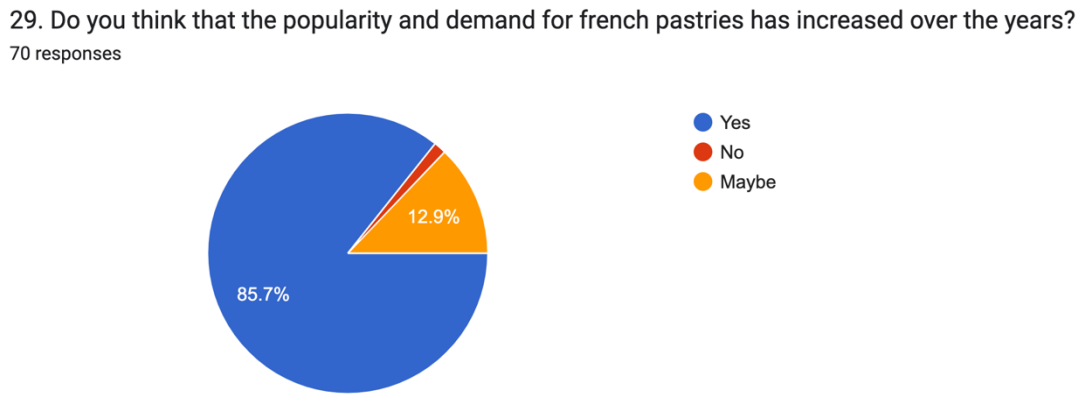
(Figure 26)

Q26 aimed to understand the participants' opinions on purchasing French pastry products, specifically whether the price influences the amount of time spent making a decision prior to purchase in relation to consumer behaviour. The majority, being 57.1% voted 'Yes', while the minority, being 20% voted 'No'. According to Patel (2023), a common factor that affects consumer behaviour within these establishments is that if a product takes a longer time and more effort to create, it will naturally hold a higher price-point, which in turn will increase the involvement in purchasing, thus affecting the decision-making process and potentially lengthen the time spent making the decision and purchasing the item(s). (Patel, 2023).

Q27 aimed to understand the participants' personal views and thoughts on how French pastry techniques influence bakeries and confectioneries in Malta. 35 Participants responded with their personal opinions on the matter. Overall, there was very good feedback. However, some locals mentioned that although they enjoy this integration of French pastry techniques and products, they wish to hold onto and keep the originality

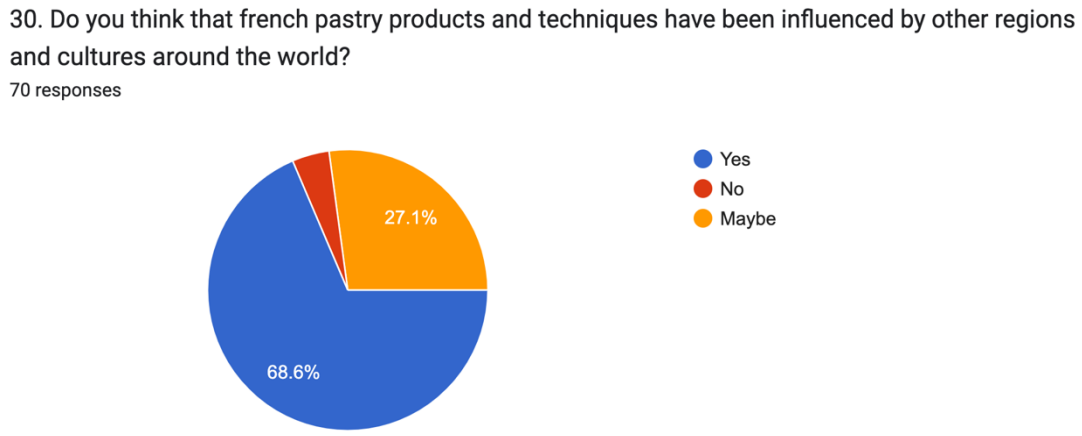
and tradition of Maltese pastries, keeping them as two separate identities. Some individuals said that they trust it is more a food trend, which is why some French pastries and techniques such as French macarons are currently on the rise and becoming more easily available in most pastry shops and other establishments in Malta. An individual mentioned that the integration and addition of French pastry products and techniques within these establishments, add a more aesthetically pleasing display, which is more appealing to the consumer, without compromising the originality and uniqueness of the classical French pastry and its presentation. Some have added that it has improved the quality of the ingredients and the outcome of these establishments. Some participants mentioned that it is a good way of including cultural diversity within the pastry world and how the products are sourced and produced.

Q28 was a question aimed at understanding the participants' personal views and thoughts on how they think the future will look for traditional bakeries and confectioneries in Malta. This question was used in order to gain a deeper understanding from a consumer's point of view regarding the topic. Out of the 71 participants, 38 responded to this question. A high number of participants mentioned that there is a 'heavy influence' from multiple global cultures which are influencing the culinary and pastry scene within Malta, which in turn is limiting the demand and source for traditional Maltese pastries due to factors such as food trends, demand, popularity, etc. A few participants mentioned that the rise of the pastry scene will, in turn, become more expensive due to the high demand and use of high-quality ingredients and other factors such as availability, knowledge and skill in French pastry techniques. Some locals are deeply concerned that Maltese pastry techniques and Maltese pastry culture may become extinct due to the potential takeover of French pastry products and techniques. A high number of participants also mentioned that they think the quality of pastries will deteriorate when it comes to competing with larger commercial businesses already known for producing a large turnover of pastries for low prices, thus having to compete by either using lower quality products to keep costs low or have a quicker turnover rate of production. Overall, it seems that there is an even divide between looking at a promising future and a downfall for Maltese culture.



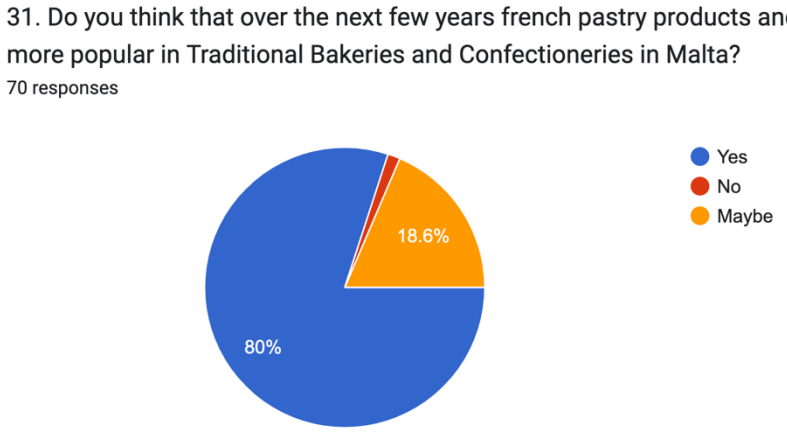
(Figure 29)

Q29 aimed to understand whether the participants' think that the demand for French pastries has increased over the years. The majority, at 85.7%, voted for 'Yes', while only 1.4% voted for 'No'. The demand for French pastries is constantly and rapidly growing. Data published by The Statista Research Department reveals that the purchasing frequency of pastries in France was equal or greater than the baking frequency in the year 2023, thus reaching the conclusion that the demand for French pastries is higher than ever. (Statista Research Department, 2024). According to the author, the demand for French pastries as well as pastries prepared with French pastry techniques are on the rise, especially due to a high involvement on social media and increased exposure to current and ever-evolving food trends. (Ruggier, 2024).



(Figure 30)

Q30 aimed to understand whether the participants' think that French pastry products and techniques have been influenced by other regions and cultures around the world. The majority, at 68.6%, voted for 'Yes', while the minority, at 4.3%, voted for 'No'.



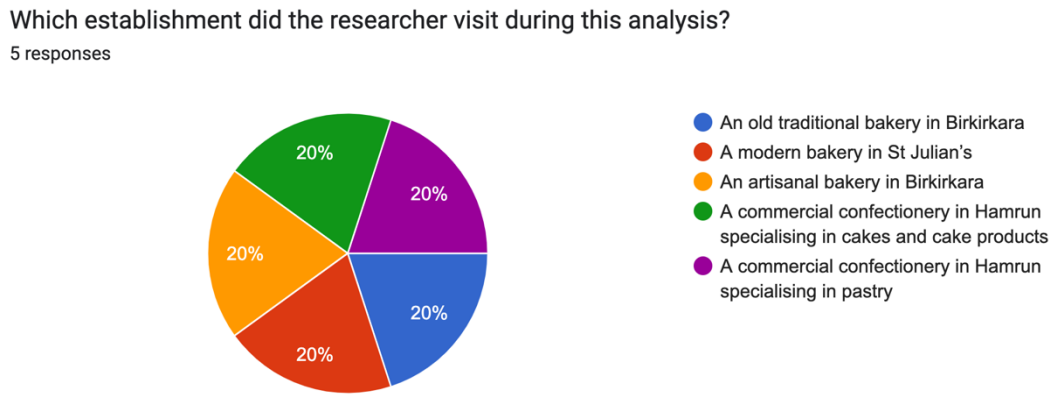
(Figure 31)

Q31 aimed to understand the participants' views on whether French pastry techniques and products would become more popular in the coming years within traditional bakeries and confectioneries in Malta. The majority, being 80% of 70 responses, answered 'Yes', while the minority, being only 1.4%, answered 'No'.

Q32 asked the participants to share any opinions and thoughts they might have, related to French pastry products and techniques when purchasing from local bakeries and confectioneries in Malta. An interesting comment made by one of the participants was that they suggested pastry products and other sweet items should have nutritional information available on the packaging to make consumers aware of calorie intake and other information such as preservatives, etc., in order to raise nutritional awareness.

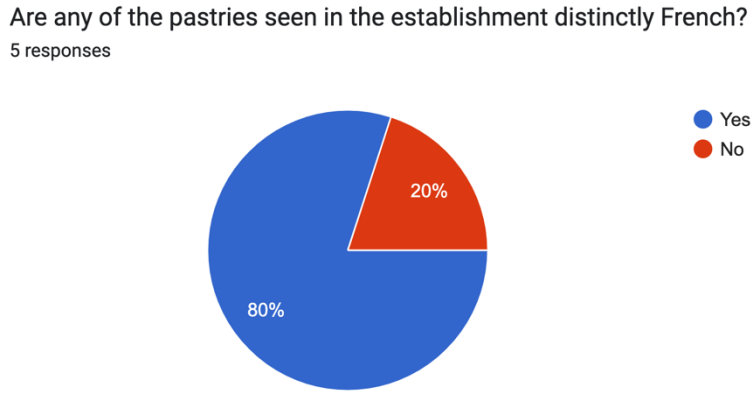
4.2 Observations analysis conducted within Traditional Confectioneries and Bakeries in Malta

While conducting this study, observations were picked as the second method of primary data collection. Observations were intentionally chosen among other methods of data collection to enable the author to gain a deeper understanding and knowledge of what was seen and found during these visits at the establishments. This also enabled the author to understand various consumer behaviour patterns in relation to the type of establishment and environment the consumer would be in, as well as the relationship between the establishment, consumer, and product, and how these factors all affect the outcome of the results. The author chose to conduct each visit on different days, including weekends and weekdays, to make the observation more realistic and open to other factors thereby avoiding bias and ensuring an unbiased result. Due to the thesis-level nature of this research, the author decided that conducting visits and observations within only five establishments would be sufficient to collect enough data for this study. However, to gain a much deeper understanding, multiple other factors need to be considered and studied. For the purpose of this thesis, the author has decided to limit the number of establishments observed, as well as the questions and factors to examine. The author recommends that more information be studied and collected if a deeper understanding of the topic is wanted. Therefore, there is an opportunity to continue researching on the chosen subject by conducting more observations, if need be. This may also be seen as a limitation.



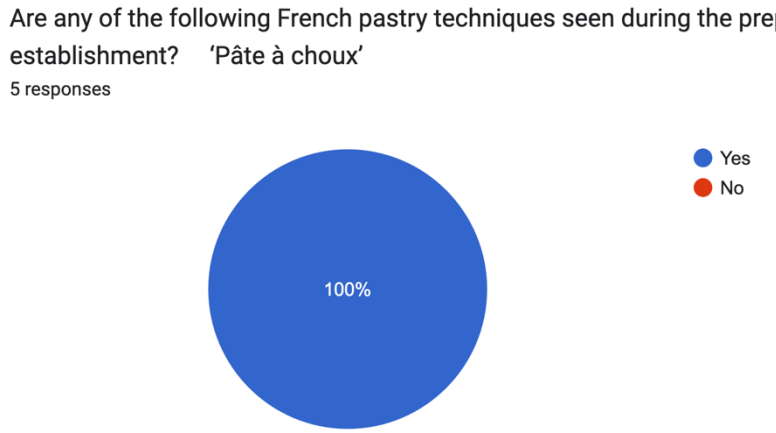
(Figure 32)

To ensure that the names of the establishments visited stay anonymous, the author has chosen not to name them but rather refer to them as the type of establishment and their respective location. The author felt that this was crucial information to include when compiling and analysing the information, and found that there is a relation between the type of establishment and the location it is found in, as each one determines different results, all of which are affected by multiple factors, especially location. “An old traditional bakery in Birkirkara” was visited on a Monday between 11:00-12:00, while “A modern bakery in St Julians” was visited on a Saturday between 13:00-14:00. “An artisanal bakery in Birkirkara” was visited on a Friday between 16:00-17:00. “A commercial confectionery in Hamrun specialising in cakes and cake products” was visited on a Sunday between 11:00-12:00, and lastly, “A commercial confectionery in Hamrun specialising in pastry” was visited on a Tuesday between 15:00-16:00.



(Figure 33)

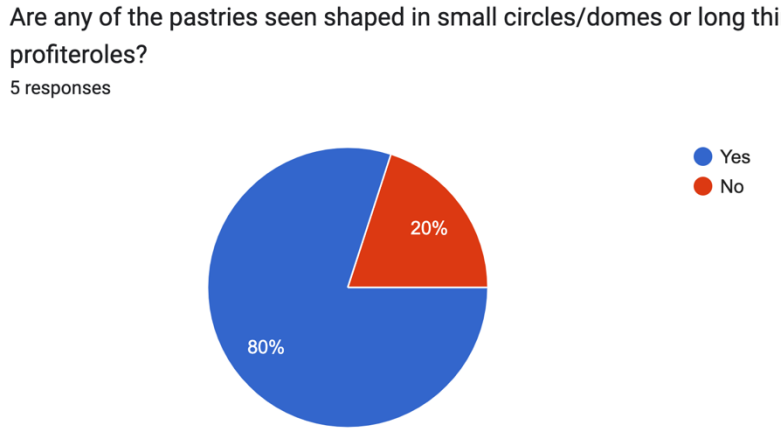
This question was created to observe, upon first glance while visiting each establishment, if there were any pastries that are distinctly French. Examples of these would be any form of shape or éclair, choux, puff pastry products such as croissants and Danish pastries, meringue-based products, French macarons, etc. It was found that in most of them, apart from the traditional ones, there were distinct French pastries seen upon first entering the establishment(s).



(Figure 34)

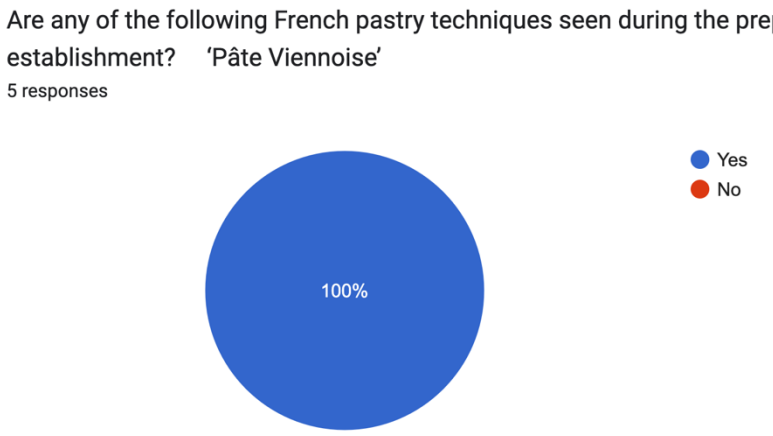
Earlier on during this research study, it was clarified that the author was not able to visit the back-of-house and preparation areas of the establishments and, therefore, could not conduct observations of the preparation process of the pastries that the establishment(s) were selling. However, due to the level of skills and accumulated knowledge from working in the kitchen as a pastry chef, the author was able to immediately distinguish and identify, simply by visually observing the pastries; whether or not French pastry techniques were involved in the preparation process of the desserts observed in the establishment(s). The researcher was able to identify that French pastry techniques were observed in all of the establishments visited, regardless of whether the final result of the finished pastry item was a French pastry item or not. This specific technique of making choux was also seen in traditional Maltese bakeries, in the form of 'zeppoli', which is a deep-fried Maltese dessert with Italian influence that consists of this French-pastry dough. It has been noted previously within the literature

review that a lot of Malta's culture is impacted by Italian and Sicilian culture, thus also influencing Maltese desserts; zeppoli are an ideal example of this. (Muscat, 2022.)



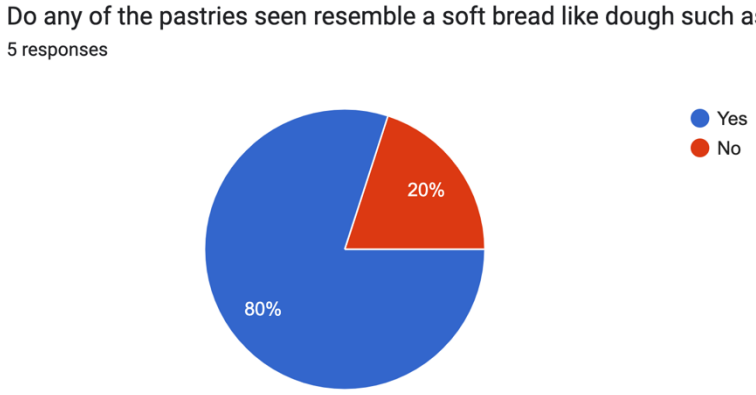
(Figure 35)

In this question of the observation, the researcher found that although French pastry techniques were evident in all of the establishments visited, it does not mean that they were presented in a traditional French method, as mentioned in the previous question where the process of preparing 'choux pastry' was used to prepare a completely different Maltese/Italian style dessert, and therefore was not included in the answers of the figure above, as it was presented in a non-traditional matter. However, it was observed that the other 4 out of 5 establishments visited all had some sort of distinctive and traditional 'éclair' or 'profiterole' available, which simply means it was made and presented in the traditional French way, unlike the "zeppoli" mentioned earlier. (Muscat, 2022).



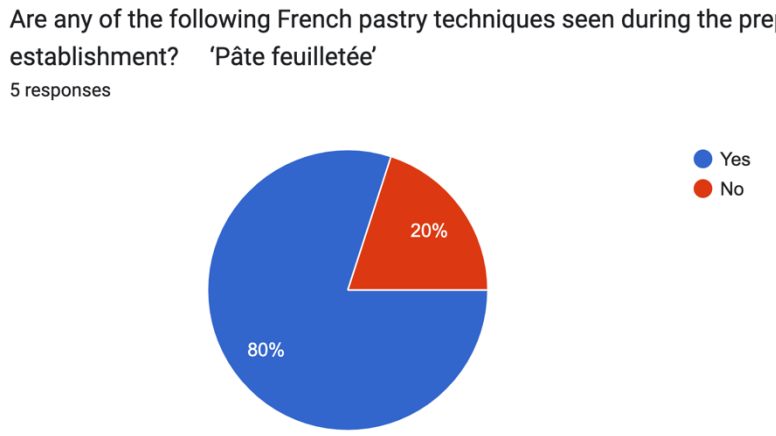
(Figure 36)

It can be seen that in this part of the observation, this type of pastry preparation process was used in all of the establishments, from observing the pastries available. However, it does not mean that they were presented in the traditional way, as stated earlier. The researcher noticed that two establishments, namely the traditional ones, used this type of French pastry technique in their preparation process but did not present it in the traditional French way in the final product. This can be seen in a chocolate and plain brioche, which was presented in a different shape rather than the classical one. It can be said that brioche originated sometime during the reign of the Roman Empire. (Mahmoud, 2024).



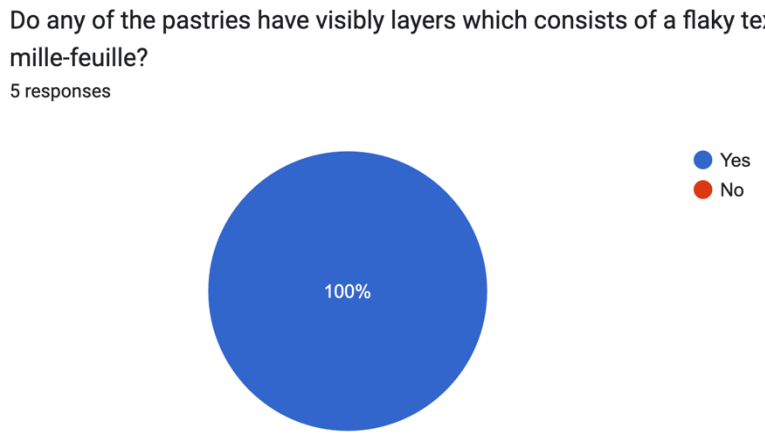
(Figure 37)

In this part of the observation, there was only one establishment that provided pastries that resembled a traditional soft bread such as a typical brioche, and this was one of the traditional bakeries.



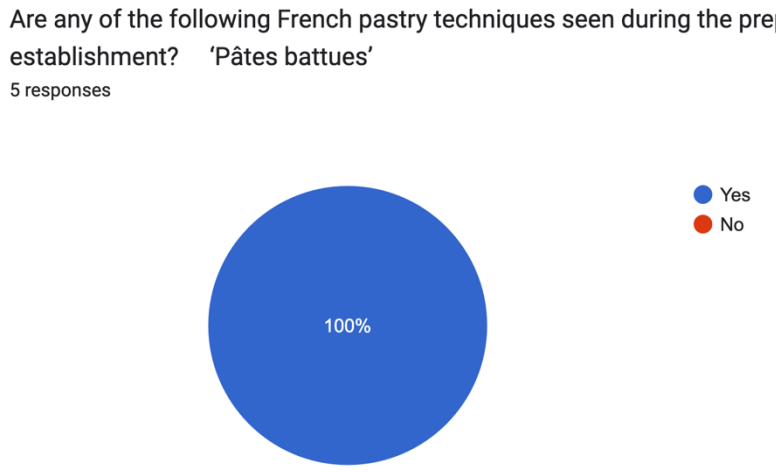
(Figure 38)

In this part of the observation, there was one establishment where the researcher was uncertain whether the French pastry technique was used, even though the final product looked similar. This can be the case in French pastry, as different methods of preparation can be used to yield similar results in desserts, and some may still be considered to fall under the same category even though different preparation processes have been employed. From this observation, it was noted that there was only one establishment which did not use this type of French pastry technique, based on the slight difference in the physical appearance of the desserts and pastries available. This was observed in one of the traditional bakeries.



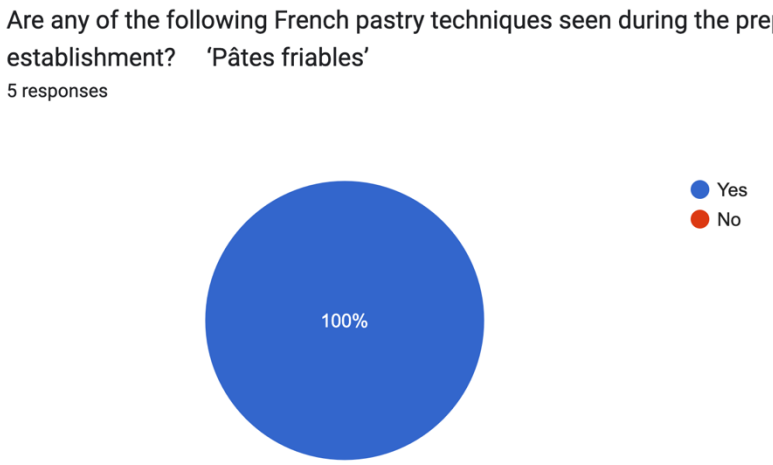
(Figure 39)

This French pastry technique is one of the most distinguishable and unique ones in terms of looks and can be distinguished from its noticeable flaky layers. It was observed that all establishments had some type of pastry or food item available with visible flaky layers.



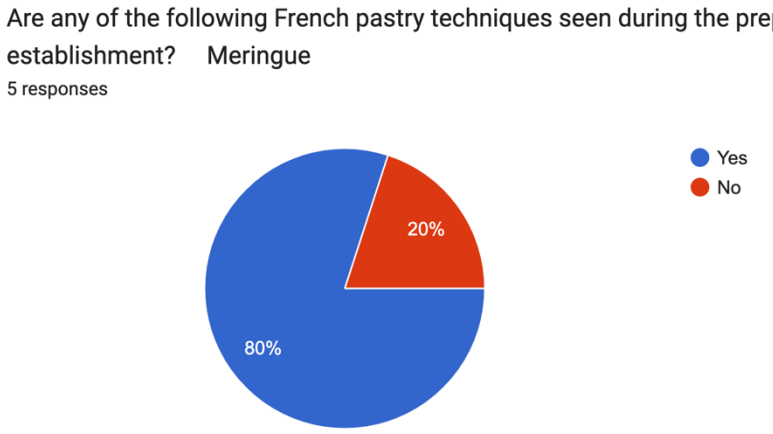
(Figure 40)

This type of pastry technique refers to the process used when creating most sponge cakes, as well as other types of cakes, such as opera cakes, tiramisu, madeleines, etc. This type of technique is also referred to as a 'beaten dough.' This Popular French pastry technique was observed in all establishments, regardless of whether the final result was a French pastry item or not, as it forms the base of most cakes and sponges. An example of a typical French pastry created from this French pastry technique would be a tiramisu or an opera cake, and an example of a non-traditional French pastry item made with this French pastry technique would be a lemon sponge cake or a red velvet cake. (Le Cordon Bleu, 2021).



(Figure 41)

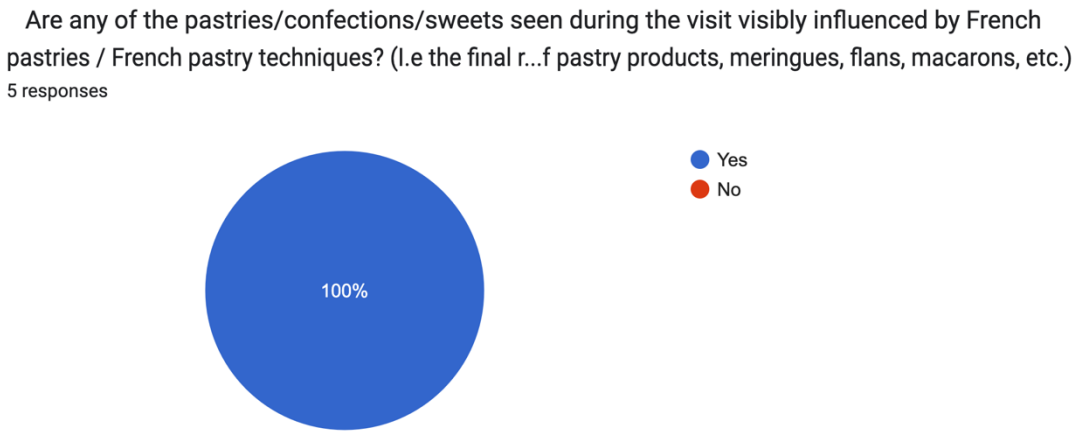
This type of French pastry technique is used to prepare the base for sweet and savoury tarts and quiches, and was seen in all of the establishments, as all of the establishments visited were selling some sort of tart or quiche, for example a lemon meringue tart, or a Quiche Lorraine, or a baked chocolate tart. (Le Cordon Bleu, 2021).



(Figure 42)

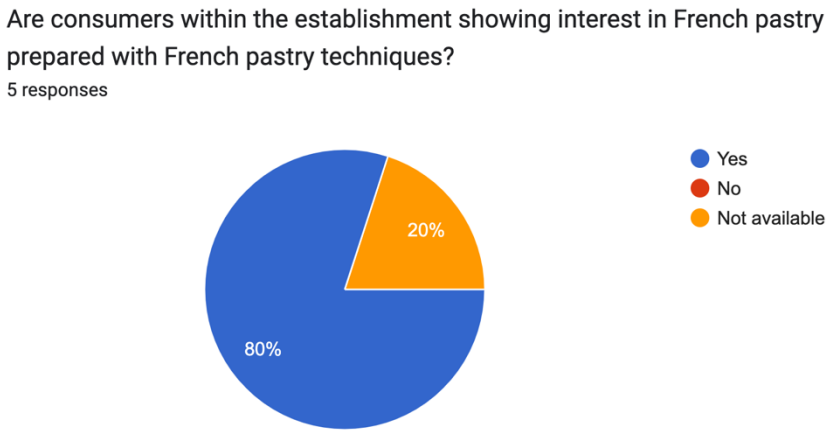
In this part of the observation, only one of the establishments observed did not seem to have any items with this type of French pastry technique available. However, this is solely based on seasonality and time of year, as the response to this question would vary if this observation were conducted at a different time during the year. At the beginning of the year, the Maltese would celebrate carnival, and during this time,

bakeries and confectioneries would prepare and sell a traditional carnival dessert known as ‘prinjolata’, which is prepared with ‘Meringue’, a popular French pastry technique used to make a non-French dessert. Therefore, if this observation had been conducted a few months later, then it would have been observed that all establishments visited would have had some sort of pastry item which included meringue. (Rejec, 2022).



(Figure 43)

It has been observed that in every establishment visited by the researcher, a correlation existed between the food products available and the influence of French pastry techniques, even if it was in slight or through only one similarity, which is very interesting to observe. This can also be seen in certain pastry items that are not traditionally or distinguishably French but have been prepared or are composed of an item which was made with a French pastry technique. (Previously mentioned examples include Maltese ‘zeppoli’ prepared with the choux pastry method and Maltese ‘prinjolata’ prepared with meringue.) (Muscat, 2022), (Rejec, 2022).



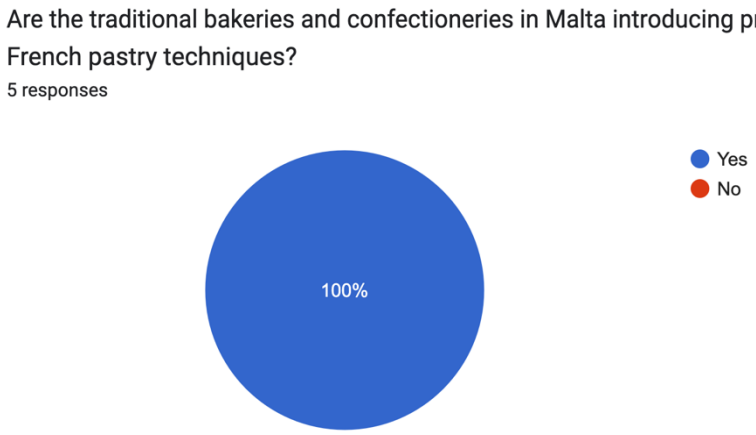
(Figure 44)

During this part of the observation, the researcher found that this question was quite subjective and could have different meanings for consumers regarding what it means to

‘show interest’. In this context, it was observed that the consumers’ interest was based on how long they spent looking at or searching for a specific item, asking about it, asking for it specifically, and knowing beforehand that it’s what they came in for and purchased. Therefore, based on the actions and body language of the consumers, it can be seen that lack of interest in French pastry products or items produced with French pastry techniques was only observed in one establishment, that being the traditional bakery. (Souki, G.Q. et al. 2015).

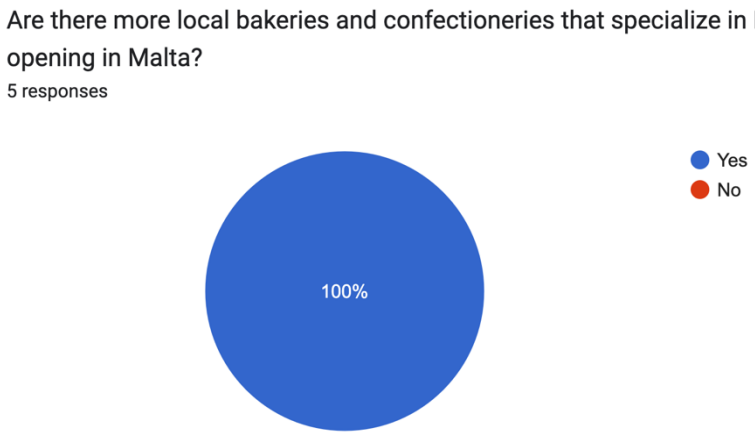
(Figure 45)

This part of the question is very similar to the previous one, where the interest in French pastry product(S)/techniques is subjective and can be based on different factors. In this case, the result may be pre-determined and therefore biased as some consumers tend to pick and choose which establishment they go to based on knowing what they already have to offer, so it is difficult to say, even on a larger scale, whether or not consumers seek certain establishments based on wanting French pastry products, especially if they are choosing to visit a traditional Maltese bakery.



(Figure 46)

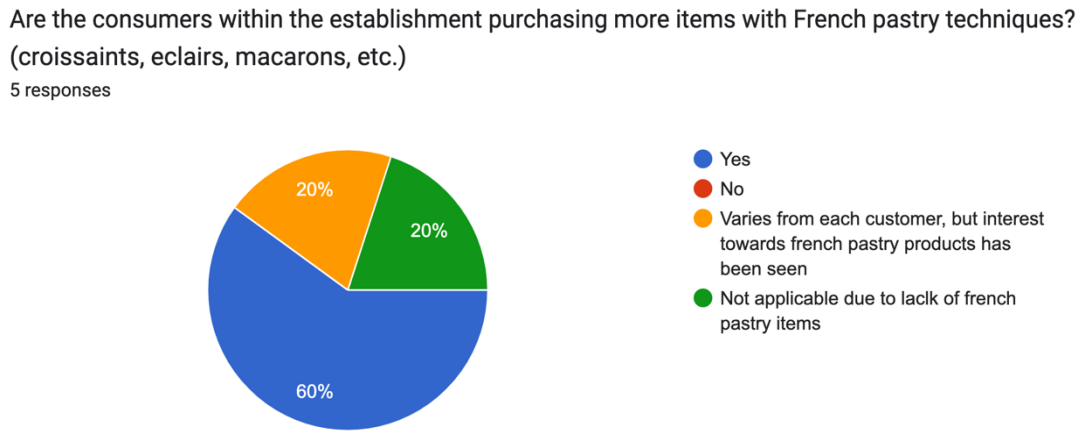
As mentioned previously, it can be observed that in every single establishment observed in this research study, there is an evident relation between the food products available and the influence of French pastry techniques. It is, therefore extremely evident to the researcher that all establishments have prepared/ are preparing items influenced by French pastry techniques, whether it may be consciously or subconsciously. This can be observed in the introduction of new products into the culinary world, including hybrids that combine French pastry techniques, such as the 'cruffin' and other pastry products mentioned earlier in this study.



(Figure 47)

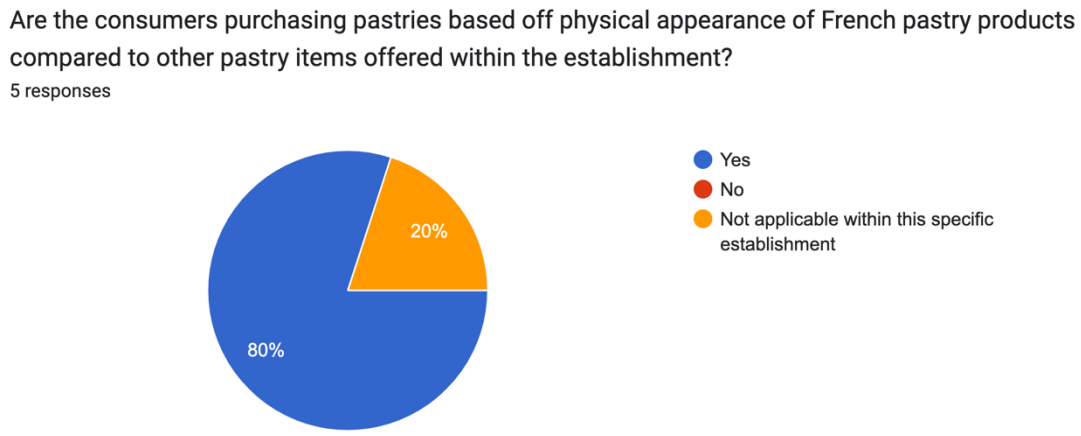
This observation is particularly evident, not just in this instance, but also in today's world and in the media, as well as in the news. It can be seen that over the past five years,

tens, if not hundreds of shops specialising in French pastry products and techniques have opened up all over the Maltese islands. The researcher can further back this up as they are currently employed at two French pastry shops, one of which is a French pastry shop chain specialising in French pastry products and techniques, which has opened up in Malta towards the end of 2024, and another one that also specialises in French pastry and bakery items, which has opened in the beginning of 2025.



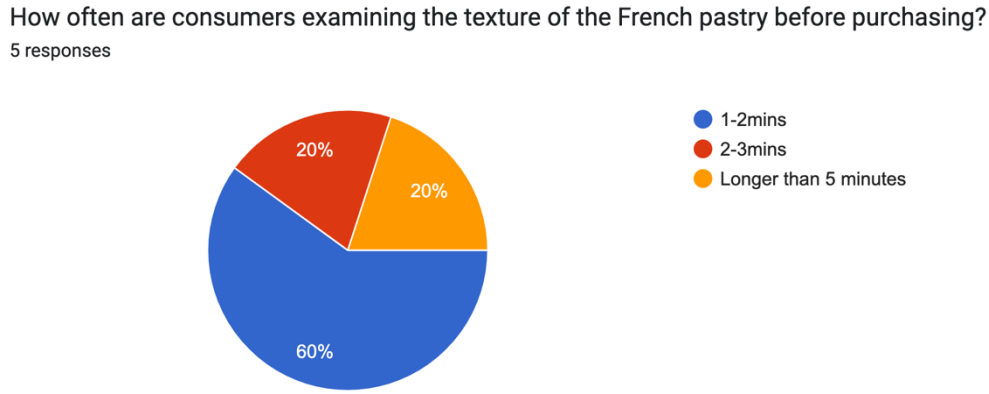
(Figure 48)

In this part of the observation, this question heavily depended on the type of establishment the author observed. In one of the traditional bakeries with the least amount of pastry items influenced by French pastry techniques, it was difficult to decipher whether or not there was interest towards items with French pastry techniques, considering there was not many available, but other than that, there was definitely an interest in consumer behaviour, as the consumers were seen gravitating more towards the items that visibly had French pastry techniques. (Bakels, 2022).



(Figure 49)

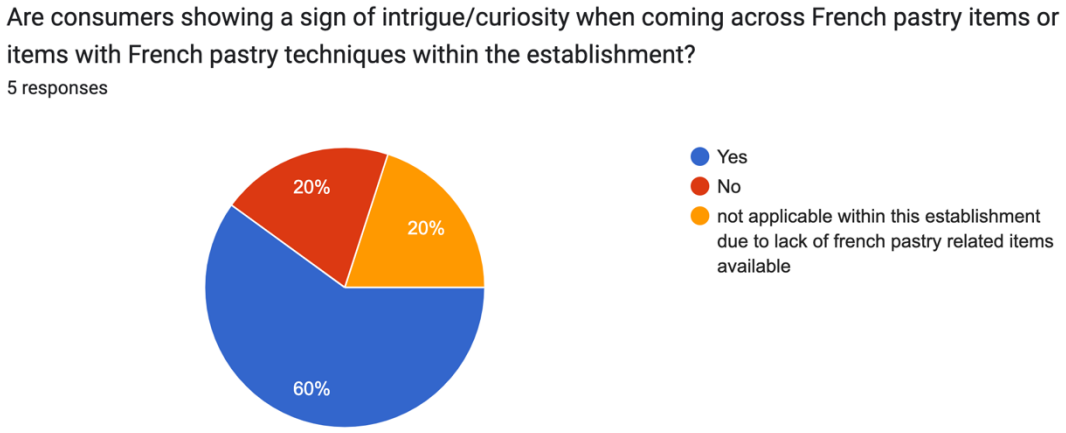
Like the previous question, this part of the observation depended on the type of establishment being observed. It has been found that in only one establishment, the traditional bakery, it was not evident whether consumers where purchasing pastries based on their physical appearance in relation to French pastry techniques due to a limited menu being offered. Other than that, in every other establishment, the researcher noticed that consumers were visibly drawn to typical French pastry products such as croissants, eclairs, profiteroles, and lemon meringue pies. (Souki, G.Q. et al. 2015).



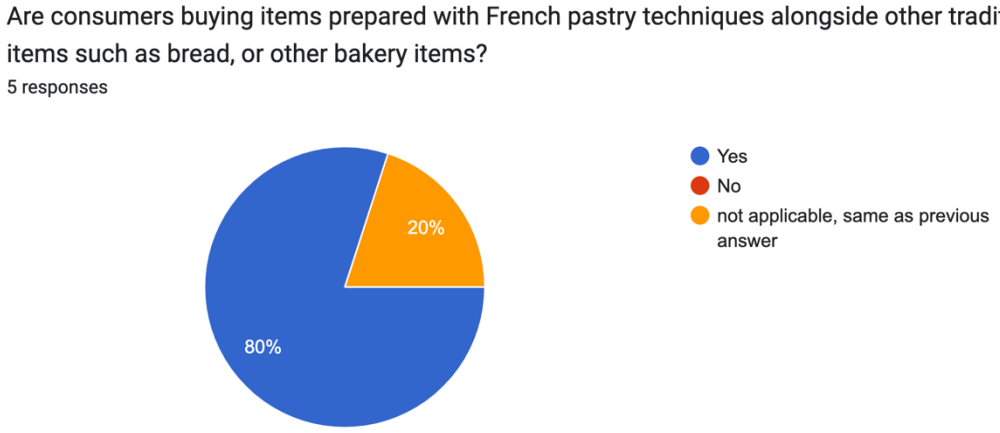
(Figure 50)

In this part of the observation, the researcher noticed that the type of establishment affected the amount of time it would take consumers to assess and examine the French

pastry products they were purchasing (George, 2023). This was more evident in establishments with higher-priced items that give the appearance of being ‘more luxurious’ and costly. Whereas in establishments such as the traditional bakeries that were selling their items for less, it took the consumers less time before deciding to purchase the French pastry products. (Bakels, 2022).

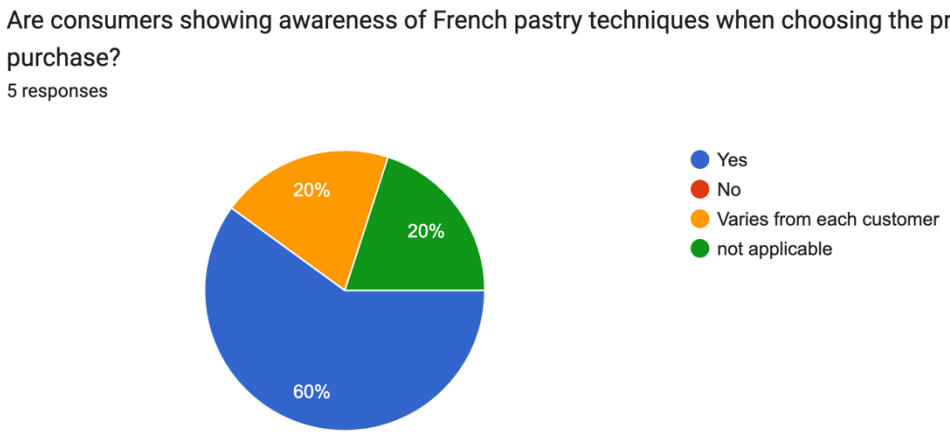


(Figure 51)



(Figure 52)

In this part of the observation, it was noticed that most consumers were buying items prepared with French pastry techniques alongside other items within the same category, for example, croissants alongside brioche, choux items, etc. (Bakels, 2022).



(Figure 53)

One detail that was common among most of the establishments visited was that the consumers who were purchasing French pastry products or items prepared with French pastry techniques, seemed to initially know what they were purchasing upon entering the establishment and had a good knowledge and perspective on these items. This was evident in consumers inquiring about whether the croissants were prepared fresh, the type of dough used (whether sourdough or regular), the specific properties of the ingredients, their origin, and so on. It was interesting to see that the consumers purchasing these types of items had a profound interest in them, acknowledged the preparation process, and purchased them with purpose. (Patel, 2023).

4.3 Discussion

The researcher has found that the perception of French pastry techniques, as well as their influence on traditional bakeries and confectioneries in Malta, is positive. Through the data that has been analysed, it seems that the next five to ten years look promising for traditional bakeries and confectioneries in Malta. Furthermore, local consumers are developing a profound interest in both traditional pastry products and new and modern pastry inventions. The scope of this research study was to explore the influence of French pastry techniques in traditional bakeries and confectioneries. To do so, the author came up with a central research question and two sub-research questions, with the main aim being to gain a deeper knowledge and answer these questions listed below.

- How are French pastry techniques influencing bakeries and confectioneries in Malta? (Central research question).
- In what ways can consumer behaviour be affected by French pastry techniques when buying bakery products? (Sub-research question 1).
- What will be the future of traditional bakeries and confectioneries in Malta adopting French pastry techniques in the next five years? (Sub-research question 2).

Aside from employing and analysing secondary data methods, the author also conducted surveys and observations to gain a deeper understanding of the subject from different establishments.

To answer the first sub-research question, the author utilized a survey, observations, and secondary data, employing the triangulation method. Previous studies, analysed by the author, show a link between knowledge of French pastry techniques and the decision-making process when purchasing French pastries or Pastries prepared with French pastry techniques. Patel (2023), states that consumer behaviour is evolving at a rapid rate, with each individual having their own unique preferences when it comes to the decision-making process when making a purchase. Patel goes on to explain what ‘variety-seeking buying behaviour’ is. The author felt that this type of behaviour is what

resonated the most in this research study, as it was the most common type of behaviour seen during the observations. This type of behaviour requires low effort, typically for a variety of pre-made pastries and desserts that simply need to be purchased and require No customisation/ pre-planning or other factors that may hinder the level of involvement. (Patel, 2023). The second most popular type of consumer behaviour the author noticed when doing this research is known as ‘habitual buying behaviour’, where according to Patel (2023), refers to a habit of purchasing several inexpensive, regularly bought items, which in this case, correlating to this study, would be pastries such as croissants, macarons, ‘pain au chocolat’, etc. The third pattern noticed among consumers when doing the observations was ‘Dissonance-reducing behaviour’, which according to Patel (2023), is when a consumer is heavily involved in the decision-making process prior to purchasing the item(s). The author felt that this applied the most when a consumer would be liaising with the establishment staff to pre-order a cake or a large bespoke order, which requires much more involvement than simply purchasing a fresh pastry. Souki et. al (2015) further strengthened this argument by mentioning that consumers are typically more inclined to try new flavours and experiment with new products they might have never seen before, which in this case would be new modern pastry products being introduced into traditional bakeries and confectioneries. (Souki, G.Q et al., 2015). As time goes on, consumers are becoming more adventurous in trying new foods, which also allows establishments to introduce new items while maintaining their current consumer base and menu. (Ruggier, 2025).

To answer the second sub-research question, being, ‘What will be the future of Traditional Bakeries and confectioneries in Malta adopting French pastry techniques in the next five years?’, the author chose to employ the triangulation method to gather data and information from past literature reviews and surveys and analyse and contrast whether the results and observations within these documents where homogeneous with the ones found by the researcher. Since the end of the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been a global increase in consumers taking an interest in trying to new foods and pastries, while becoming confident in trying new choices. (Bakels, 2022). The author also strengthens this argument by stating that after the pandemic ended, the demand for all pastries, especially French Pastries and those created using French pastry techniques, has rapidly and significantly increased. (Ruggier, 2025).

Aside from the previous factors mentioned above, the secondary data that has been collected showed that price, physical presentation, taste, quality of ingredients, and health-related factors (such as calories, etc.) are the most common variable factors affecting the decision-making process of consumers in traditional bakeries and confectioneries. Patel (2023) states that a consumer habit known as ‘dissonance-reducing behaviour’ is distinguished based on two main factors of this habit. These two factors, which correlate with this consumer behaviour habit, are price and quality, as they are heavily sought after and compared before making the initial purchase. (Patel, 2023). According to the author, this type of behaviour is one of the most commonly seen behaviours among three total consumer habits when observing traditional bakeries and confectioners in Malta. (Ruggier, 2025).

5. Conclusions

The results that have been collected from the triangulation method taken from the literature review and applied with the surveys and observations have given the author a deeper understanding and knowledge of how French pastry techniques are influencing bakeries and confectioneries in Malta. By doing so, the author was able to identify essential factors and theories that can affect consumer behaviour when purchasing bakery products or items with French pastry techniques. The author has also gained a profound knowledge and deeper understanding of what the future is going to look like for traditional bakeries, confectioneries and pastry shops within the next five years. The author has also found that from the data collected through the surveys and observations as well as the findings in the literature review, the cultural and culinary significance of French pastry techniques has highly impacted traditional bakeries and confectioneries in Malta.

Regarding the first sub-research question, the author first identified the types of consumer behaviour and took them into account while conducting the observations. Then the author contrasted the type of behaviour observed with the type that was digitally recorded to examine the relationship between consumer behaviour and French pastry techniques. Regarding the second sub-research question, the author first identified any online sources, literature and documents that depict the current picture for bakeries and their future, and then went on to collect data on what the population

currently thinks, and their own opinions and perspectives on the reputation and future of traditional bakeries in Malta, and then contrasted that data found with existing documents and literature regarding consumer behaviour.

5.1 Recommendations

In order to increase demand and interest in French pastries and French pastry techniques, the author aimed to identify the factors affecting consumer behaviour as well as the decision-making process within traditional bakeries and confectioneries in Malta. The results and data analysed help gain a clear view of what the current perspective is among consumers and how this positive result can be further magnified to achieve better results.

As part of the recommendations, the author would like to propose that the results or factors most voted upon, which have the greatest effect on consumer behaviour and perspective regarding French pastry techniques, be taken into consideration. These factors include price, physical presentation, taste, quality and health factors such as calories, etc. The author, therefore, proposes that physical presentation is given the outmost importance in such a scenario where French pastries and French pastry techniques are present, as the first thing that will meet the eye is the presentation of the pastry. (Bakels, 2022), (Kilewer, 2008), (Hyslop, 2024).

The second most important factor, would be price, as local consumers also feel strongly about it. (Bakels, 2022). As a pastry chef, quality is one factor that cannot be substituted nor sacrificed when preparing a high-quality pastry item. However, cheaper ingredients may be sourced or purchased in bulk to bring down the cost of ingredients. Another factor that may help bring down the overall price altogether is to prepare certain desserts or singular components in larger quantities to reduce labour cost. Doing these two tasks will greatly aid in lowering the overall cost, if done and organised properly. Thus, making the price point for these pastries more affordable and appealing to local consumers within Malta who are more accustomed to paying lower prices for more traditional sweets and pastries. Some examples of ingredients that may be ordered in bulk to reduce overall recipe cost include: ground almonds, sugar, flour,

dried nuts, chocolate, and other dry-ingredients, keeping in-mind correct storage procedures. As mentioned before, some pastry components may be prepared in bulk and can potentially reduce labour cost if stored and kept properly, these include frozen items, such as: mousses, glazes, sponges, stabilized buttercreams, garnishes, and so on. This is all said from the author's experience working at a French pastry shop as of writing this thesis.

Regarding quality, from the data analysed from the survey, it seems that consumers purchasing from local bakeries and traditional confectioneries are consciously aware that the price for such pastries (especially those consisting of higher quality ingredients and preparation) is increasing. These consumers are also aware that, in most cases, price does reflect quality and are therefore aware that when looking at a pastry they wish to purchase, the higher price point will most of the time signify a higher quality product. (Ruggier, 2025).

From the observations and surveys, it has been found that the influence of French pastry techniques on traditional bakeries and confectioneries in Malta is positively rising, and offering training to staff can only further improve this outcome as it raises awareness and knowledge which in turn can be shared to educate consumers and potentially further increase demand. It can also be seen from the observation analysis that there is a niche group of consumers that focus on nutritional information and include it as a factor in their decision-making when purchasing pastry items. Establishments can easily involve this group of consumers by including nutritional information on packaging of desserts available, including caloric intake, use of preservatives and so on. In certain cases, most establishments are required to have this readily available, especially outside the EU, and it should be implemented more in Malta in today's modern age. This may also create a deeper relationship with the consumer as the company is building trust by showcasing what is used within the pastry item being purchased, which creates a sense of trust and honesty between business and consumer. (Ruggier, 2025). One thing that a business may choose to consider is experimenting with trendy hybrid desserts and cultivate a Maltese and French hybrid pastry item, similar to the 'cruffin' or 'cronut'. Doing so may create interest, whilst honouring both cultures and creating something modern and exciting in the pastry world, and at the same time, appreciating the culinary roots of the traditional desserts.

Time spent on decision-making is also an important factor for consumers that is not always considered. Time spent making a decision can be frustrating for some. Businesses may opt to include cards for each pastry item on display which would include the main ingredients, allergens, calorie count, and other crucial information a consumer may seek. All of these may also be available in digital form through social media such as an online website showcasing the establishments' desserts (with the option to view the nutritional information and other information more in-depth.)

To conclude, this study is beneficial for both upcoming and current traditional bakeries and confectioneries, as well as all types of pastry shops and establishments, in understanding and identifying what their clients want and expect in the future. As seen from the data collected, the respondents have a liking and general understanding of current existing French pastries and items prepared with French pastry techniques; however, they wish to try new products related to those two factors. Hence, this study is beneficial to gain insights from the consumers' perspective and their behaviour. By managing current classic menu items and simultaneously introducing new ones, all while balancing variable factors such as the quality of ingredients, presentation, taste and price-point, it is likely that these establishments will continue to flourish and grow in the years to come. It can be said that all three research questions have been indeed accomplished whilst conducting this research, and the results were satisfactory.

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7. Appendices

7.1 Appendix 1. Survey Questions

My name is Mariah Ruggier, and I am currently undergoing my bachelor's degree in Culinary Arts (Hons) at the institute of tourism studies in Malta. I am currently conducting research for my thesis, titled "Exploring the influence of French pastry techniques in Traditional Bakeries and Confectioneries in Malta".

The reason I am conducting this study is to gain a deeper knowledge on how French pastry techniques have influenced how traditional bakeries and confectioneries prepare their pastries and confections, rooted from my passion for pastry and French pastry techniques, after having worked in various pastry and fresh pastry shops as well as having studied at an Institute Lyfe (Ex. Institut Paul Bocuse) in Lyon, France.

This thesis will aid Traditional bakeries and confectioneries to further promote their businesses and pastries by gaining a deeper understanding of the pastry techniques used within these establishments, and understand the impacts of these techniques as well as how they impact consumer behaviour.

I'd like to invite you to participate in this short online survey, which should only take a few minutes to complete. Your participation is entirely voluntary and participation may be withdrawn at any time during this process without justification. Answers may be changed at any time while filling in the survey, but cannot be amended once submitted. All responses will be anonymous since no identification details will be requested.

Your participation is greatly appreciated, and will aid in my research. Should you have any queries or further questions, please feel free to contact me via my email address: mariah.ruggier001@its.edu.mt

Exploring the influence of French pastry techniques in Traditional Bakeries and Confectioneries in Malta

My name is Mariah Ruggier, and I am currently undergoing my bachelor's degree in Culinary Arts (Hons) at the institute of tourism studies in Malta. I am currently conducting research for my dissertation, titled "Exploring the influence of French pastry techniques in Traditional Bakeries and Confectioneries in Malta".

The reason I am conducting this study is to gain a deeper knowledge on how French pastry techniques have influenced how traditional bakeries and confectioneries prepare their pastries and confections, rooted from my passion for pastry and French pastry techniques, after having worked in various pastry and fresh pastry shops as well as having studied at an Institute Lyfe (Ex. Institut Paul Bocuse) in Lyon, France.

This dissertation will aid Traditional bakeries and confectioneries to further promote their businesses and pastries by gaining a deeper understanding of the pastry techniques used within these establishments, and understand the impacts of these techniques as well as how they impact consumer behaviour.

I'd like to invite you to participate in this short online survey, which should only take a few minutes to complete. Your participation is entirely voluntary and participation may be withdrawn at any time during this process without justification. Answers may be changed at any time whilst filling in the survey, but cannot be amended once submitted. All responses will be anonymous since no identification details will be requested.

Your participation is greatly appreciated, and will aid in my research. Should you have any queries or further questions, please feel free to contact me via my email address: *mariah.ruggier001@its.edu.mt*

* Indicates required question

1. What Gender do you identify as? *

- ◯ Female
- ◯ Male
- ◯ Other: _____

2. What is your age? *

- ◯ 18-24 years
- ◯ 25-34 years
- ◯ 34-44 years
- ◯ 44-54 years
- ◯ 55+ years
- ◯ Other: _____

3. What is your nationality? *

- ◯ Maltese
- ◯ Other: _____

4. On a scale from 1-5 how would you rate your knowledge on French pastry products and techniques? *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not Knowledgeable	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Very Knowledgeable

5. Do you have any experience working with French pastry techniques? *

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

6. If answered yes, what is your skill level?

	1	2	3	4	5	
Beginner	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Advanced

7. Have you ever participated in any courses or classes related to French pastry products and techniques? *

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

8. Which of the following French pastry techniques are you most familiar with? (Select all that apply) *

- ☐ Pâté sucrée (sweet pastry dough)
- ☐ Pâte à choux (choux pastry)
- ☐ Pâte feuilletée (puff pastry)
- ☐ Macaron making
- ☐ None of the above (no experience)
- ☐ Other: _____

9. Which is your favourite french pastry product(s)? (Select all that apply)

- [ ] Croissants
- [ ] Eclairs
- [ ] Macarons
- [ ] Tarts
- [ ] Other: _____

10. If you have any, what is your favourite french pastry tehnique(s)?

- [ ] Preparing Choux Pastry (Making Eclairs)
- [ ] Preparing Puff pastry products (Croissants, migle foglie, etc.)
- [ ] Preparing French Macarons
- [ ] Preparing tarts with dough bases (e.g lemon meringue, quiche, etc.)
- [ ] Preparing bread products
- [ ] Other: _____

11. How often do you purchase products from traditional Bakeries and confectioneries in Malta? *

- ◯ Once a week
- ◯ Twice a week
- ◯ Three times or more a week
- ◯ Once or more every month
- ◯ Once or more every three months
- ◯ Once or more a year
- ◯ Other: _____

12. On a scale from 1-5 how do you rate the influence of French pastry techniques on products you've purchased or found within Traditional bakeries and confectioneries in Malta? *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not influenced at all	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Extremely Influenced

13. On a scale from 1-5 how do you rate the quality of products in Traditional bakeries and confectioneries in Malta? *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very Low	○	○	○	○	○	Very High

14. Which of the following establishments do you typically buy your pastries from? (Select all that apply) *

- [ ] Confectioneries
- [ ] Bakeries
- [ ] Pastry Shops
- [ ] Supermarkets
- [ ] Cafes
- [ ] Online businesses
- [ ] Other: _____

15. From which of the following locations do you purchase pastry products from? *

- [ ] St Julian's
- [ ] Hamrun
- [ ] Birkirkara
- [ ] Other: _____

16. How much are you willing to spend on a French pastry product in Local bakeries and confectioneries? *

- ○ 1-4 euro
- ○ 4-6 euro
- ○ 6-8 euro
- ○ 8-10 euro
- ○ 10 euro and above

17. When purchasing a French pastry product, what factors influence your decision? (Select all that apply) *

- [ ] Physical Presentation
- [ ] Taste
- [ ] Price
- [ ] Quality of ingredients
- [ ] Health-related factors (i.e calories, sugars, etc.)
- [ ] Other: _____

18. Which types of French pastry related products do you typically purchase from Local bakeries and confectioneries? (Select all that apply) *

- [ ] Croissants and other puff pastry products
- [ ] Eclairs/profiteroles
- [ ] Macarons
- [ ] Tarts and Flans
- [ ] Savoury pastries (quiche, etc.)
- [ ] Other: _____

19. How important are health considerations (e.g. calories, sugars, etc.) when purchasing pastries?

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not important at all	○	○	○	○	○	Highly important

20. Do you tend to purchase French pastries for special occasions such as birthdays and celebrations? *

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

21. If answered yes, please specify for what kind of occasion:

Your answer

22. How do you typically discover new French pastry related products in Local bakeries and confectioneries in Malta? (Select all that apply) *

- [ ] Word of mouth
- [ ] Social Media
- [ ] Corporate events
- [ ] Food blogs
- [ ] Other: _____

23. Do you think that the evolution of French pastries has greatly influenced Local bakeries and confectioneries in Malta? *

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No
- ◯ Maybe

24. Do you think that traditional Maltese pastries and desserts have been influenced by French Pastry products and techniques? (e.g prinjolata, kwarezimal, torta tal-lewz, etc.) *

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No
- ◯ Maybe

25. When making a decision on purchasing a french pastry product, how long does the decision process normally last for you? *

- [ ] Very low involvement (i.e simply purchasing a product with little to no time spent making a decision)
- [ ] Low to medium involvement (taking a few minutes to consider other options, etc.)
- [ ] Medium to high involvement (Spending minutes to hours comparing products, options, prices, establishments to purchase from)
- [ ] Very high involvement (Requires days to weeks of planning before purchasing)
- [ ] Other: _____

26. In your opinion, when purchasing a french pastry product, does the price determine the amount of time spent making a decision prior to purchasing the product? *

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No
- ◯ Maybe

27. In your opinion, How are French pastry techniques influencing bakeries and Confectioneries in Malta?

Your answer

28. In your opinion, what do you think the future will look like for traditional bakeries and confectioneries in Malta?

Your answer

29. Do you think that the popularity and demand for french pastries has increased over the years? *

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No
- ◯ Maybe

30. Do you think that french pastry products and techniques have been influenced by other regions and cultures around the world? *

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No
- ◯ Maybe

31. Do you think that over the next few years french pastry products and techniques will become more popular in Traditional Bakeries and Confectioneries in Malta? *

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No
- ◯ Maybe

32. Please share any opinions and thoughts you may have related to French pastry products and techniques when purchasing from Local Bakeries and confectioneries in Malta.

Your answer

7.2 Appendix 2. Research Matrix for Survey Questions

Survey Question	Research Scope	Correspondence to Literature Review	Related Research Question
1. What gender do you identify as?	To find out the gender of the participant	Knowing the participant	Sub Objective 1
2. What is your age? - 18-24 years - 25-34 years - 34-44 years - 44-45 years - 55+ years - Other	Demographic question	Identifying participant age	Sub Objective 1
3. What is your nationality? - Maltese - Other	Demographic Question	Identifying the nationality of Participants	Sub Objective 1
4. On a scale from 1-5, how would you rate your knowledge of French pastry products and techniques? - 1- Not knowledgeable - 5 - Very knowledgeable	Understanding consumers' knowledge of French pastry techniques	Understanding the level of expertise of the participant	Sub Objective 1
5. Do you have any experience working with French pastry techniques? -Yes -No	Understanding consumers' knowledge of French pastry techniques	Understanding the level of expertise of the participant	Sub Objective 1
6. If you answered Yes, what is your skill level? - 1 - Beginner - 2 - Advanced	Understanding consumers' knowledge of French pastry techniques	Understanding the level of expertise of the participant	Sub Objective 1
7. Have you ever participated in any courses or classes related to French pastry products and techniques? -Yes -No	Understanding consumers' knowledge of French pastry techniques	Understanding the level of expertise of the participant	Sub Objective 1

8. Which of the following French pastry techniques are you most familiar with? (Select all that apply.) - Pâté sucrée (sweet pastry dough) - Pâte à choux (choux pastry) - Pâte feuilletée (puff pastry) - Macaron Making	Understanding consumers' knowledge of French pastry techniques	Understanding the level of expertise of the participant	Sub Objective 1
9. Which is your favourite French pastry product(s)? (Select all that apply.) -Croissants -Eclairs -Macarons -Tarts -Other	Understanding participants' opinions	Understanding consumer behaviour and buying habits of participants	CRQ
10. If you have any, what is your favourite French pastry technique(s)? -Preparing choux pastry (making eclairs -Preparing puff pastry products (croissants, mille-feuille, etc.) -Preparing French macarons -Preparing tarts with dough bases (e.g., lemon meringue, quiche, etc.) -Preparing bread products -Other	Understanding participants' opinions	Understanding consumer behaviour and buying habits of participants	CRQ
11. How often do you purchase	-Identifying consumers' input	Understanding consumer	Sub-Objective 1

products from traditional bakeries and confectioneries in Malta? -Once a week -Twice a week -Three times or more a week -Once or more every month -Once or more every three months -Once or more a year -Other	towards traditional bakeries and confectioners	behaviour and buying habits of participants	
12. On a scale from 1-5, how do you rate the influence of French pastry techniques on products you've purchased or found within traditional bakeries and confectioneries in Malta? 1 – Not influenced at all 5 – Extremely influenced	Finding out consumers' thoughts on the influence of French pastry techniques on products they've purchased from traditional bakeries and confectioneries	Understanding consumer behaviour and buying habits of participants	CRQ
13. On a scale of 1-5, how do you rate the quality of products in traditional bakeries and confectioneries in Malta? 1 – Very Low 5 – Very high	Understanding the perception of locals with regards to product quality in traditional bakeries and confectioneries.	Understanding participants' thoughts on product	CRQ
14. Which of the following establishments do you typically buy your pastries from? (Select all that apply.)	Understanding participants' preferred type of establishment.	Understanding the future of Traditional Bakeries and confectioneries in Malta adopting French pastry techniques in the next five years	Sub-Objective 2

-Confectioneries -Bakeries -Pastry Shops -Supermarkets -Cafes -Online businesses -Other			
15. From which of the following locations do you purchase pastry products? -St Julian's -Hamrun -Birkirkara -Other	Understanding participants' preferred type of purchasing location.	Understanding consumer behaviour and buying habits of participants	Sub-Objective 1
16. How much are you willing to spend on a French pastry product in Local Bakeries and confectioneries? 1-4 euro 4-6 euro 6-8 euro 8-10 euro 10 euro and above	Understanding participants' willingness to pay for a product.	Understanding consumer behaviour and buying habits of participants	Sub-Objective 1
17. When purchasing a French pastry product, what factors influence your decision? (Select all that apply.) -Physical presentation -Taste -Price -Quality of ingredients -Health related factors (i.e., calories, sugars, etc.) -Other	Identifying which factors mentioned influence consumer's product choice when purchasing from traditional bakeries and confectioneries.	Understanding consumer behaviour and buying habits of participants	Sub-Objective 1

18. Which types of French pastry related products do you typically purchase from local bakeries and confectioneries? (Select all that apply.) -Croissants and other puff pastry products -Eclairs/profiteroles -Macarons -Tarts and flans -savoury pastries (quiche, etc.) -Other	Understanding the participants' preferred French pastry-related product(s) purchased.	Understanding consumer behaviour and buying habits of participants	Sub-Objective 1
19. How important are health considerations (e.g., calories, sugars, etc.) when purchasing pastries? 1 – Not important at all 2 – Highly important	Understanding participants' thoughts and opinions on health considerations.	Understanding consumer behaviour and buying habits of participants	Sub-Objective 1
20. Do you tend to purchase French pastries for special occasions such as birthdays and celebrations? Yes No	Understanding participants' need to purchase French pastries and when.	Understanding consumer behaviour and buying habits of participants	Sub-Objective 1
21. If answered Yes, please specify for what kind of occasion	Same as above.	Understanding consumer behaviour and buying habits of participants	Sub-Objective 1
22. How do you typically discover new French pastry-related products in Local bakeries and	Understanding how participants discover new products.	Understanding the future of traditional bakeries and confectioneries in Malta adopting	Sub-Objective 2

confectioneries in Malta? (Select all that apply.) -Word of mouth -Social Media -Corporate Events -Food blogs -Other		French pastry techniques in the next five years	
23. Do you think that the evolution of French pastries has greatly influenced Local bakeries and confectioneries in Malta? Yes No Maybe	Understanding participants' thoughts and opinions.	Understanding how French pastry techniques are influencing bakeries and confectioneries in Malta	CRQ
24. Do you think that traditional Maltese pastries and desserts have been influenced by French Pastry products and techniques? (ex. prinjolata, kwarezimal, torta tal-lewż, etc.) Yes No Maybe	Understanding participants' thoughts and opinions.	Understanding how French pastry techniques are influencing bakeries and confectioneries in Malta	CRQ
25. When deciding on purchasing a French pastry product, how long does the decision process normally last for you? -Very low involvement (i.e., simply purchasing a product with little to no time spent making a decision)	Understanding participants' thought process and level of involvement when purchasing a French pastry product.	Understanding consumers' behaviour and buying habits of participants	Sub-Objective 1

-Low to medium involvement (taking a few minutes to consider other options, etc.) -Medium to high involvement (Spending minutes to hours comparing products, options, prices, establishments to purchase from) -Medium to high involvement (Spending minutes to hours comparing products, options, prices, establishments to purchase from) -Very high involvement (Requires days to weeks of planning before purchasing) -Other			
26. In your opinion, when purchasing a French pastry product, does the price determine the amount of time spent making a decision before purchasing the product? Yes No Maybe	Understanding participants' thoughts and opinions.	Understanding consumers' behaviour and buying habits of participants	Sub-Objective 1
27. In your opinion, how are French pastry techniques influencing bakeries and	Understanding participants' thoughts and opinions.	Understanding how French pastry techniques are influencing bakeries and	CRQ

confectioneries in Malta?		confectioneries in Malta	
28. In your opinion, what do you think the future will look like for traditional bakeries and confectioneries in Malta?	Understanding participants' thoughts and opinions.	Understanding the future of traditional bakeries and confectioneries in Malta adopting French pastry techniques in the next five years	Sub-Objective 2
29. Do you think that the popularity and demand for French pastries have increased over the years? Yes No Maybe	Understanding participants' thoughts and opinions.	Understanding how French pastry techniques are influencing bakeries and confectioneries in Malta	CRQ
30. Do you think that French pastry products and techniques have been influenced by other regions and cultures around the world? Yes No Maybe	Understanding participants' thoughts and opinions.	Understanding how French pastry techniques are influencing bakeries and confectioneries in Malta	CRQ
31. Do you think that over the next few years, French pastry products and techniques will become more popular in traditional bakeries and confectioneries in Malta? Yes No Maybe	Understanding participants' thoughts and opinions.	Understanding the future of traditional bakeries and confectioneries in Malta adopting French pastry techniques in the next five years	Sub-Objective 2
32. Please share any opinions and thoughts you may have related to	Understanding participants' thoughts and opinions.	Understanding how French pastry techniques are influencing	CRQ

French pastry products and techniques when purchasing from local bakeries and confectioneries in Malta.		bakeries and confectioneries in Malta	

7.3 Appendix 3. Observation Consent Form

Information Letter

INSTITUTE OF TOURISM STUDIES
IN ACADEMIC AFFILIATION WITH THE EMIRATES ACADEMY OF HOSPITALITY MANAGEMENT

Name and Surname of Researcher: Mariah Ruggier

ID Number of Researcher: 31502L

Email address: mariah.ruggier001@its.edu.mt

Mobile Number: +356 9972 6665

Course: Bachelor's Degree in Culinary Arts (Hons)

Tutor Name and surname: Aaron Rizzo

Tutor Email: aaron.rizzo@its.edu.mt

Title of long essay/dissertation: Exploring the influence of French pastry techniques in Traditional Bakeries and Confectioneries in Malta

Aims of the research: The central research question will be focusing on how French pastry techniques are influencing bakeries and Confectioneries in Malta.

The two subsidiary research questions are as follows:

1. In what ways can consumer behaviour be affected by French Pastry Techniques when buying bakery products?

2. What will be the future of Traditional Bakeries and confectioneries in Malta adopting French pastry techniques in the next five years?

Dear Sir/ Madam,

I, Mariah Ruggier, a student at the institute of tourism studies, am currently undergoing my bachelor's degree in Culinary Arts (Hons), I am currently conducting research on the above-mentioned title.

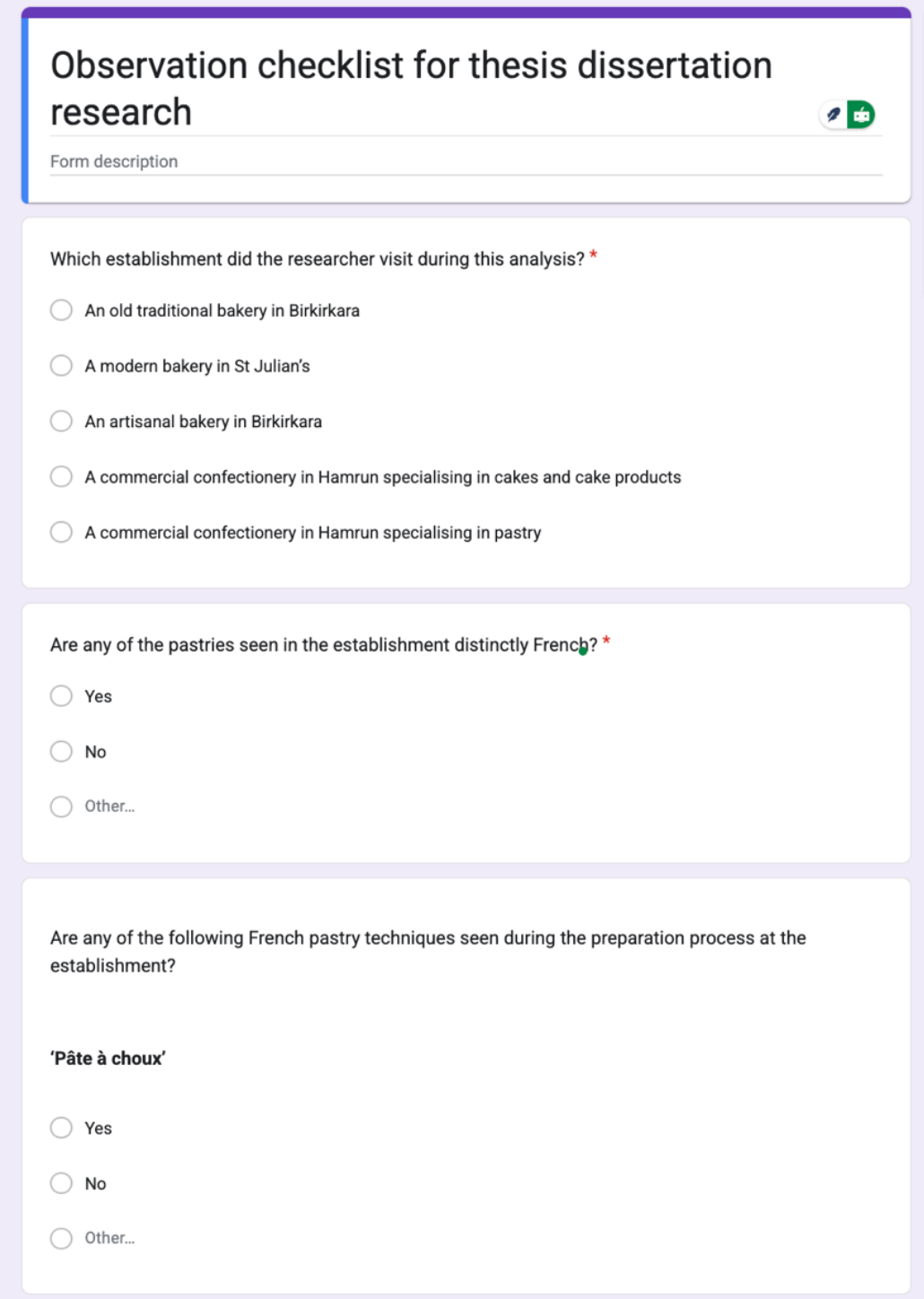
My research is about how French pastry techniques have influenced traditional bakeries and confectioneries in Malta. The method of data collection will be an observation. The data collected from the observation will be used for the sole purpose of this research. The data will be recorded using a checklist that will be completed whilst visiting your establishment. The data will be collected and thoroughly analysed. I am kindly asking for your consent to conduct an observation at your bakery/confectionery. The purpose of this letter is to provide you with all relevant information so you may decide whether or not to participate in this study. Any questions you may have will be answered by myself, the researcher. The information will be strictly confidential and your establishment shall be kept anonymous. All data will be stored securely and will be made available only to the researcher. No reference will be made in oral or written reports that could potentially link you to the study. Your identity will not be revealed in any publications that result from this study. Your participation is entirely voluntary and participation may be withdrawn at any time during this process without justification. Your participation is greatly appreciated, and will aid in my research.

Participant's declaration

I have read this consent form and am giving the researcher the opportunity to carry out the research at "**INSERT BAKERY/CONFECTIONERY NAME HERE**". I hereby grant them permission to use the information provided as data in the above-mentioned research project, knowing that it will be kept anonymous.

Name of Participant	Signature	Date

7.4 Appendix 4. Observation Checklist Questions



Observation checklist for thesis dissertation research

Form description

Which establishment did the researcher visit during this analysis? *

- An old traditional bakery in Birkirkara
- A modern bakery in St Julian's
- An artisanal bakery in Birkirkara
- A commercial confectionery in Hamrun specialising in cakes and cake products
- A commercial confectionery in Hamrun specialising in pastry

Are any of the pastries seen in the establishment distinctly French? *

- Yes
- No
- Other...

Are any of the following French pastry techniques seen during the preparation process at the establishment?

'Pâte à choux'

- Yes
- No
- Other...

Are any of the pastries seen shaped in small circles/domes or long thin strips such as eclairs or profiteroles?

- Yes
- No
- Other...

Are any of the following French pastry techniques seen during the preparation process at the establishment?

'Pâte Viennoise'

- Yes
- No
- Other...

Do any of the pastries seen resemble a soft bread like dough such as a brioche?

- Yes
- No
- Other...

Are any of the following French pastry techniques seen during the preparation process at the establishment?

'Pâte feuilletée'

- Yes
- No
- Other...

Do any of the pastries have visibly layers which consists of a flaky texture, for example a mille-feuille?

- ○ Yes
- ○ No
- ○ Other...

Are any of the following French pastry techniques seen during the preparation process at the establishment?

'Pâtes battues'

- ○ Yes
- ○ No
- ○ Other...

Are any of the following French pastry techniques seen during the preparation process at the establishment?

'Pâtes friables'

- ○ Yes
- ○ No
- ○ Other...

Are any of the following French pastry techniques seen during the preparation process at the establishment?

Meringue

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No
- ◯ Other...

Are any of the pastries/confections/sweets seen during the visit visibly influenced by French pastries / French pastry techniques? (I.e the final result physically resembles French pastries or French pastry techniques, e.g croissiant, 'religieuse', puff pastry products, meringues, flans, macarons, etc.)

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No
- ◯ Other...

Are consumers within the establishment showing interest in French pastry products or items prepared with French pastry techniques?

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No
- ◯ Other...

Are consumers preferring and seeking out bakeries and pastry shops that specialize in French pastry techniques as opposed to other bakeries/pastry shops?

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No
- ◯ Other...

Are the traditional bakeries and confectioneries in Malta introducing products that are influenced by French pastry techniques?

- ○ Yes
- ○ No
- ○ Other...

Are there more local bakeries and confectioneries that specialize in French pastry techniques opening in Malta?

- ○ Yes
- ○ No
- ○ Other...

Are the consumers within the establishment purchasing more items with French pastry techniques? (croissaints, eclairs, macarons, etc.)

- ○ Yes
- ○ No
- ○ Other...

Are the consumers purchasing pastries based off physical appearance of French pastry products compared to other pastry items offered within the establishment?

- ○ Yes
- ○ No
- ○ Other...

How often are consumers examining the texture of the French pastry before purchasing?

- 1-2mins
- 2-3mins
- Longer than 5 minutes

Are consumers showing a sign of intrigue/curiosity when coming across French pastry items or items with French pastry techniques within the establishment?

- Yes
- No
- Other...

Are consumers buying items prepared with French pastry techniques alongside other traditional items such as bread, or other bakery items?

- Yes
- No
- Other...

Are consumers showing awareness of French pastry techniques when choosing the product(s) to purchase?

- Yes
- No
- Other...

7.5 Appendix 5. Observation Checklist Questions

Observation Checklist Question	Linked research question
Which establishment did the researcher visit during this analysis? - An old traditional bakery in Birkirkara - A modern bakery in St Julian's - An artisanal bakery in Birkirkara - A commercial confectionery in Hamrun specialising in cakes and cake products - A commercial confectionery in Hamrun specialising in pastry	CRQ
Are any of the pastries seen in the establishment, distinctly French? - Yes - No	CRQ
Are any of the following French pastry techniques seen during the preparation process at the establishment? **'Pâte à choux'** - Yes - No	CRQ
Are any of the pastries seen shaped in small circles/domes or long thin strips such as eclairs or profiteroles?	CRQ
Are any of the following French pastry techniques seen during the preparation process at the establishment? **'Pâte Viennoise'**	CRQ
Do any of the pastries seen resemble a soft bread like dough such as a brioche?	CRQ
Are any of the following French pastry techniques seen during the preparation process at the establishment? **'Pâte feuilletée'**	CRQ
Do any of the pastries have visible layers which consist of a flaky texture, for example a mille-feuille?	CRQ
Are any of the following French pastry techniques seen during the preparation process at the establishment? **'Pâtes battues'**	CRQ
Are any of the following French pastry techniques seen during the preparation process at the establishment? **Meringue**	CRQ
Are any of the pastries/confections/sweets seen during the visit visibly influenced by French pastries / French pastry techniques? (I.e., the final	CRQ

result physically resembles French pastries or French pastry techniques, ex. croissant, 'religieuse', puff pastry products, meringues, flans, macarons, etc.)	
Are consumers within the establishment showing interest in French pastry products or items prepared with French pastry techniques?	Sub-objective 2
Are consumers preferring and seeking out bakeries and pastry shops that specialise in French pastry techniques as opposed to other bakeries/pastry shops?	Sub-objective 2
Are the traditional bakeries and confectioneries in Malta introducing products that are influenced by French pastry techniques?	Sub-objective 2
Are there more local bakeries and confectioneries that specializes in French pastry techniques opening in Malta?	Sub-objective 2
Are the consumers within the establishment purchasing more items with French pastry techniques? (croissants, eclairs, macarons, etc.)	Sub-objective 1
Are the consumers purchasing pastries based on physical appearance of French pastry products compared to other pastry items offered within the establishment?	Sub-objective 1
How often are consumers examining the texture of the French pastry before purchasing?	Sub-objective 1
Are consumers showing a sign of intrigue/curiosity when coming across French pastry items or items with French pastry techniques within the establishment?	Sub-objective 1
Are consumers buying items prepared with French pastry techniques alongside other traditional items such as bread, or other bakery items?	Sub-objective 1
Are consumers showing awareness of French pastry techniques when choosing the product(s) to purchase?	Sub-objective 1