

The role of food microbusinesses and SMEs in alternative food networks (AFNs) in connecting people with and facilitating them to revalue food.

Sophia Alexandra Lingham

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Abstract

Alternative Food Networks (AFNs) have been described as values-based food supply networks. This PhD study has two foci arising from this description. Firstly, it investigates networks, specifically those of food microbusinesses and small and medium sized businesses (SMEs) in Gloucestershire, focussing on the types of connections within the networks and businesses' perception of values. Secondly, it considers the concept of alter-values, including non-financial values, and in particular, emotio-cultural value (ECV), including its benefits, and the network and consumer activities that aid its development.

Initial scoping interviews in Greece and the UK found a tendency for the Greek responses to show a greater emotional and cultural value for, and respect of, food itself and those who produced it i.e., communities were more centred around food than in the UK. Further casing interviews with twenty food microbusinesses/SMEs in Gloucestershire investigated both foci: the ECV and respect for food of consumers from the perspective of businesses, and business perception of their networks and connections via the creation of business network sociograms. Lastly, a consumer survey investigated the ECV and respect for food from the consumer perspective, whilst also ascertaining whether the location of shop influenced these values.

The overall investigation into ECV revealed that holding ECV for food has multiple benefits for businesses and consumers. Benefits for businesses were both financial and non-financial, whereas benefits for consumers were mostly non-financial. Connective community was a particularly strong benefit felt by both. Various characteristic differences were found within the consumers, revealing that those who conducted most of their shopping at microbusinesses/SMEs (group 2) more often reported greater respect for food, and emotions characteristic of ECV, as well as greater levels of active food emotions compared to the greater levels of educational emotions reported by those conducting the majority of their shopping at supermarkets (group 1). Activities contributing most to ECV development are, for group 1s, primarily growing food, and for group 2s, all activities, but especially food swapping. Microbusinesses/SMEs may have a role in providing

opportunities associated with neophilic curiosity and connective exposure where they can be enacted to ensure their continuation. These businesses also have a role in providing the experience for both groups of consumers which results in the favourable emotions of both groups when shopping there. Microbusinesses are therefore a catalyst for individuals feeling certain emotions not stated as being felt when shopping in supermarkets.

The overall investigation into business networks had two main outputs. Firstly, it revealed the characteristics of these business networks, and secondly it established the role of these businesses in connecting people with and facilitating them to revalue food. Characteristics of these networks included the influences on and connections within networks. Businesses identified what they considered to be an ideal network. Networks were found to be mediated by constructs such as trust, shared values, and conversely the barriers created through disconnections. Business values differed in their degree of purity, a concept which arose during the study. Connections within networks can be categorised into financial, holistic, and non-financial groupings.

Secondly, business interviews and the consumer survey found that microbusinesses/SMEs have a role in nurturing ECV within their consumers generally centred around five Cs: Continuance, (re-) Calibration, Connection, Commitment, and Context. These businesses also feel they have a role in adapting food culture by altering their own business and network values, changing eating behaviours of consumers, and facilitating the ownership/empowerment of food by consumers.

Novel outputs of this study include the development of the non-financial 'alter-values', a focus on non-financial business connections, differentiating between food culture and the cultural value of food, and the comparison between purchase location and developing a consumer respect for food. Suggestions for policy changes and initiatives, as well as business-specific support are provided.

Declaration

I declare that the work in this thesis was carried out in accordance with the regulations of the University of Gloucestershire and is original, except where indicated by specific reference in the text. No part of the thesis has been submitted as part of any other academic award. The thesis has not been presented to any other education institution in the United Kingdom or overseas. Any views expressed in the thesis are those of the author and in no way represent those of the University.

Signed

Sophia Lingham

Date 29th April 2024

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Chapter 1- Introduction

1.1 Introduction

Throughout history countries have been subjected to changes in their food culture, whether it be through colonisation, immigration, or globalisation (Wilk, 2006). However, the differences in how people view food currently are vast and some have tried to geographically categorise them very broadly, by countries or regions. For instance, the Mediterranean is generally seen as having a healthier diet (Gokhisar & Turhan, 2021; Martínez-González et al., 2017), with consumers displaying a more wholesome relationship with food, where it is vital in community and culture (Dernini et al., 2017; Sandro Dernini & Berry, 2015; Salas-Salvado & Papandreou, 2020; Serra- Majem & Medina, 2020). Other regions, like Western Europe and North America, are broadly seen as unhealthier where natural food is not so intrinsic to their cultural values (Martínez-González et al., 2017).

Speaking generally, Carolyn Steel described how we are often distanced from the most important relationship, that between us and food, whilst being dependent on unsustainable, trapping systems (Steel, 2009), a feeling seconded by many (for instance Pollan & Gibney, 2016). There are many bodies of work related to the impacts of this diminished relationship with food, including regarding consumer mental and physical health, environmental health, and economic and food system resilience (Bruce et al., 2021; Engler-Stringer, 2010; Garthwaite et al., 2015; Lang et al., 2021; Macaninch et al., 2020; Pollan & Gibney, 2016; Son et al., 2020; Swinburn et al., 2015). Other negative aspects of the food system are food price volatility, lack of “trust, confidence and morale”, and food scandals, which have led to the questioning of whether the UK provides food security (Lang et al., 2021). Additionally, a reliance on ultra-processed food, and perceptions of lack of affordability of local or high-quality foods may also contribute to a lack of security, food neither fulfilling the requirement to be appropriate or credibly affordable (Contento, 2011; Garthwaite et al., 2015). Added to this, some worry the lack of intergenerational cooking and knowledge exchange may have detrimental consequences:

“how much more unfortunate can a society get, when it loses its most basic knowledge:

knowledge to be able to cook for itself” (Narain in Pollan & Gibney, 2016).

And finally, in the UK, Brexit and responses to the Covid-19 pandemic has further fuelled these debates on food security (Lang, 2021; Lang, 2020; Lang & McKee, 2018).

More recently, however, consumers and businesses appear to be re-evaluating their relationship with food, and new food environments have emerged in line with these changing attitudes and emotions. For example, by 2020,

“attitudes and values are shifting and the channels through which individuals and households purchase food are diversifying” (d’Angelo et al., 2020, p.39).

There is a vast literature on these diverse channels, generally termed alternative and local food networks (AFNs and LFNs) (see for example Goodman and DuPuis, 2002, Ilbery and Maye, 2005, Kneafsey et al., 2007 for a wider explanation), including farmers’ markets (notably Kirwan, 2004, 2006), both in the UK and abroad. Recently, and especially following Brexit and the Covid-19 pandemic, there has been increased engagement and drive of consumers to participate in AFNs and a resurgence for an interest in more natural and local products (Maye, 2013; Speciality Food Magazine, 2021; Zoll et al., 2018) demonstrating at least a desire to change the value they assign to food and possibly the emotions surrounding it. This provides existing food microbusinesses and small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) within these AFNs with a golden opportunity to fill this market, taking local food beyond the niche, and helping create a new food system for all. Indeed, the impact of these businesses is already understood: “small, family-owned businesses make considerable contributions to local economies” (Seaman et al., 2017, p. abstract). Perhaps surprisingly, nine out of every 10 UK enterprises are SMEs (European Commission, 2020) and many food SMEs exist within AFNs. Whilst larger organisations are concentrating on value co-creation at a larger scale (Ollivier de Leth & Ros-Tonen, 2021), these microbusinesses and SMEs work from the bottom- up, creating more social impact, using the current values of society (such as animal welfare, environmental sustainability, circularity and fair wages and prices) as a catalyst for social

change (Barbera & Dagnes, 2016; Fonte & Cucco, 2017; Petropoulou, 2016; Psarikidou & Szerszynski, 2017; Renting et al., 2012a; Testa et al., 2020). With many failings of the food system, as highlighted in Lingham et al. (2022a), there is a need to go 'back to basics', to understand the people involved in the system, those using the system and what each value; understanding peoples' emotions and the importance they give to certain situations where people interact with food and how this is fundamental to a resilient, appropriate and suitable food system. Thus, this researcher wanted to investigate food values from the consumer perspective, and from the perspective of the food microbusinesses and SMEs.

Multiple studies, and much literature surrounding consumer relationship with food, concentrates on financial value or consumer perceptions of different products like organic or local, or analyses specific AFN examples or health studies (Anderson et al., 2014; Barons & Aspinall, 2020; Bos & Owen, 2016; Cakici & Tekeli, 2022; Curvelo et al., 2019; Davis et al., 2019; Fonte & Cucco, 2017; Nomura & Miyata, 2020; Seyfang, 2008). The work of Jehlička & Daněk (2017) particularly struck a chord with this researcher, who is fascinated by the idea of food as culture and what value (nonfinancial) people place on food; essentially what food means to them, their emotions towards it, and its importance in their lives apart from basic nutrition. This stems from the food culture conversations arising from living in an Anglo-Greco household. Due to the high proportion of SMEs in the county, and certain initiatives in Gloucestershire which make for particularly interesting case studies, this researcher wanted to see what influence these smaller businesses have regarding non-financial food values, especially as food requires, as Matacena & Corvo (2020) elucidated, a 'deeper meaning', culturally, socially, and environmentally, if AFNs and their food businesses are to have a chance of changing the tide of aspects of the conventional food system. Businesses need to work together to help with this (Matacena & Corvo, 2020). This background leads us to question the following: Are SMEs creating different emotional values towards food? If they are, how do these affect the business and the consumer? How important are their food networks in achieving this emotional connection? This thesis therefore begins to investigate these values and relationships and starts by looking into alternative food networks and the concept of value versus values, before

continuing to study particular non-financial values surrounding the activities of food micro-businesses/SMEs.

1.2 Research aims and objectives

After conducting the literature review, presented in chapter two, this researcher wished to test some of the concepts that emerged before then deciding on the final research questions for this PhD study. One of these concepts that emerged was the difference between the importance of, and value associated with, food and food businesses in Mediterranean countries versus in the UK. Another emerging concept was that terminology relating to non-financial values of food required updating (shown in chapter 2.4), an explanation of which was published as a paper in Sustainability in 2022 (see Lingham et al., 2022). As such, to provide this opportunity to scope out the study interviews were conducted in Fthiotida, Greece, and Gloucestershire, UK, with academics, politicians and food business owners. This allowed for the exploration and sense-testing of these concepts (see chapter 3 for methodology) and for the concept of ECV to emerge. The findings from these interviews (shown in chapter 4) provided the basis for designing the final research questions to support research based in Gloucestershire, the focus of this study (displayed in chapters 5 and 6), detailed below:

1. What networks are food microbusinesses and SMEs are involved with within Gloucestershire and what types of connections do they have within those networks?
2. Is having emotio-cultural value (ECV) beneficial in those networks, and if so, what activities develop ECV the most?
3. What is the role of food microbusinesses and SMEs in nurturing ECV for both consumers and themselves? What is their perceived role in changing food culture?

1.3 Definitions

For this research, the definition of AFN used is that of Barbera & Dagnes (2016), being any food network which differs from the conventional supermarket system.

The European economy is characterised by SMEs and particularly the agri-food sector (Minarelli, et al., 2013). According to Article 2 of Recommendation 2003/361/EC, the SME definition includes

enterprises “which employ fewer than 250 persons and which have an annual turnover not exceeding EUR 50 million, and/or an annual balance sheet total not exceeding EUR 43 million” (European Commission, 2020).

A microbusiness is defined in the Small Business, Enterprise and Employment Act, 2015, as a company which has two of the following: a turnover of £632,000 or less, £316,000 or less on its balance sheet, or 10 employees or less (GOV.UK, n.d.; UK Government, 2015).

Other definitions are laid out in the thesis, and the development of the ECV definition is explained.

1.4 Thesis and methodological overview

This work offers much in terms of understanding the multitude of SME types which exist, along with the varying types of connection they have with other businesses and groups within AFNs. This research addresses research gaps pertaining to the lack of investigation into the non-financial connectivity between businesses within AFNs, and the non-financial values consumers place on food. It provides the first detailed investigation into the role of food microbusinesses and SMEs within AFNs in changing food values for their consumers, with a particular focus on the non-financial values attributed to food.

The thesis includes an additional 6 chapters. Chapter 2 is a literature review into AFNs, the idea of value versus values, and non-financial values, both in current business strategies rooted in financial concerns, and as ‘alter-values’, with specific consideration of emotio-cultural value (ECV). The concept of ‘alter-values’ was published as Lingham et al. (2022a). Chapter 3 explains the epistemology, methodology and methods used in this research; being based in social constructivism, the study also displays elements of pragmatism and critical realism. This interpretivist phenomenological research uses a mixed method inductive and deductive approach using both quantitative and qualitative methods. These methods are set out in a 4-stage programme, described below. Chapters 4-6 are results and discursive chapters, chapter 4 pertaining to the scoping interviews with a concluding discussion of the concept of ECV, chapter 5 to the casing

interviews and sociograms, and chapter 6 analysing the results of the consumer survey. Chapter 7 concludes the thesis, drawing together the results to answer the research questions.

This thesis is multi-faceted, with four stages of research encompassing quantitative and qualitative data collection, and insights gained for microbusinesses, SMEs and consumers. The first stage encompasses sense-testing interviews in the UK and Greece to ascertain if and how these connected values, and the role of food, changes in different locations (i.e., to connect with people, to share, to eat et cetera). The reasons for this particular comparative analysis are numerous. Culturally, Mediterranean countries are known to have a strong food culture, so a UK comparison with a proven strong food culture is valuable. However, much research has been conducted in Italy, and comparative to the UK, and references are included in the literature review. There is much less empirical research in Greece, especially outside main cities, and even rarer the comparison with the UK. Greece is a particularly fascinating country because it is still suffering the effects of the 2007 financial crisis through the associated austerity measures, so the perfect storm idea associated with the 2007 financial crisis and its socio-economic and geopolitical aftermath is relevant in both countries. Both countries suffered the disruptions associated with the financial crisis and the 2020 Covid pandemic that followed, and the UK is still dealing with the additional effects of Brexit. It is also interesting to compare the more individualistic UK culture with a more collectivist culture, which Greece is perceived to be (Hofstede Insights, 2021; Nezlek et al., 2008). The personal family connection to Greece, resulting discussions and comparisons of food culture, and the ease of organisation of interviews, sealed the comparative area choice for the first stage of research. It was compared with the UK county of Gloucestershire, which was chosen, firstly due to this being the location of this author's university and where funding was offered to investigate, and secondly because of the author's interest in various small food businesses within Gloucestershire which she wanted to investigate further.

The first research stage investigated, using scoping interviews, the factors influencing non-financial values, coined as 'alter-values' here, assigned to food, and part of this work examined if and how

these values had changed due to impacts of different crises. Secondly, it investigated the perceived role of microbusinesses and SMEs in renegotiating cultural norms and values associated with food. Thirdly, it examined what geo-political and socio-economic factors mediate activities of microbusinesses and SMEs, and lastly, the importance of microbusinesses and SMEs being part of an AFN. These interviews were also used to test the alter-values typology conceptualised after the literature review.

The second and third research stages built upon the scoping interviews, by engaging with 20 Gloucestershire food microbusinesses and SMEs as casing examples. Stage 2 interviews began with the newly coined concept of ECV and examined business perception of its importance (research question 2). It then examined what businesses felt their role is in nurturing ECV, both for consumers and more widely, and in changing food culture (research question 3). Next, the networks these businesses were involved with and the connections within these networks were ascertained to look at the connectivity, especially nonfinancial connectivity, with other businesses or groups. This was conducted through stage 3, via the creation of business network diagrams during stage 2 interviews. The aim of stage 3 was to establish business networks and connection types and strengths. Ergo, it answers research question 1. Levkoe (2014, p. 388) suggested that networks are good at “encouraging alliance building, facilitating the diffusion of ideas and practices, contributing to a more sustained level of activity, and establishing a more desirable, legitimate, and democratic form of organising”, which arguably focuses on the financial or business expanding side of networking. This research, whilst looking at this also, focusses more on the non-financial connections and relationships between businesses. As highlighted by the popular TV series, Clarkson’s Farm, where various local farmers met together to discuss supplying a new restaurant, it became clear that working together and finding new ways to sell their product was the only means of survival (Yapp, 2023). The final stage of research, stage 4, undertook a consumer survey, to serve as a form of triangulation of the perceptions of the businesses regarding ECV. This mainly concentrated on consumer aspects of food ECV, and whether the food buying environment

(supermarkets versus AFNs) related in any way to the ECV of food held by those consumers when purchasing, cooking and eating food.

Chapter 2 now provides an overview of the literature.

Chapter 2 Investigating Alternative Food Networks (AFNs) and their relationship with values

2.1 Introduction

“Buying and selling food used to be a social activity, now its anonymous. We used to cook, now we just add water. Instead of trusting it, we fear it, and instead of valuing it, we throw it away.” (Steel, 2009)

In a Ted talk in 2009, Carolyn Steel, architect and leading thinker on food and cities, described how we are distanced from the most important relationship, that between us and food, whilst being dependent on unsustainable, trapping, conventional supermarket systems (Steel, 2009). Such dependence, she argues, is due to a range of factors including reduced consumer food knowledge, changes in lifestyles coupled with supermarkets providing the answer to time constraints, and globalisation, all of which have led to such issues as obesity, reducing food culture, and the illusion that food is cheap (Pollan & Gibney, 2016b; Steel, 2021). Interestingly, by 2020, “attitudes and values are shifting and the channels through which individuals and households purchase food are diversifying” (d’Angelo et al., 2020, p.39), and this chapter will examine these changing values and a mechanism that is allowing them to evolve: Alternative Food Networks (AFNs).

AFNs provide an alternative outlet to supermarkets, to purchase food. However, they are not a new phenomenon. Indeed, many major supermarket chains began as what are now known as ‘alternative’ systems. For instance, Morrisons was started by an egg and butter merchant in 1899 as a stall in Bradford Market (Morrisons, 2021). Despite the rise of such supermarket chains in the latter half of the C.20th, community participation in AFNs has endured throughout, via neighbourhood food growing projects like Ashram Acres (Cressey, 1988) and the continuation of many local butchers and grocers shops. In fact, their numbers and diversity has been rising in recent decades (Bos & Owen, 2016; Ilbery & Maye, 2005), accompanied by a desire to reconnect

consumers, producers and food (Bos & Owen, 2016; Sage, 2003). For instance, there were less than 10 UK farmers' markets in 1997, which rose to over 200 in 2002 and 750 in 2012; UK farm shops, too, have risen in number, with 4000 in 2017, a factor Shaw also correlates with affluence (Shaw, 2017). Consumers growing their own food has also become popular, especially shown by city dwellers (Dobson et al., 2020). Allotment numbers since 1909 peaked in 1944 at 1,750,000, and in 2010 were at 330,000 (Shaw, 2017, p.148). Demand has risen recently, with 69% of 87 UK councils having 100-400 people on waiting lists for allotments in 2019. Indeed, the Covid-19 pandemic accentuated this trend, with 90% of local authorities witnessing a rise in demand for allotments, in one local authority, by 300% (APSE, 2020).

Research has unveiled many reasons for the rise of AFNs over the years. Political disenchantment, for instance, via subsidies issues, genetically modified (GM) foods, and differences throughout the world on the perceived importance of animal welfare, has led to a discontent with capitalist structures, and a "rejection of capitalist produced and retailed food" (Bell & Valentine, 1997, p.86; Whatmore et al., 2003). A similar trend has been occurring throughout the European Union (EU) with a basis in politics (Anthopoulou & Partalidou, 2019; Calvário & Kallis, 2017). From an economic standpoint, financial influences have meant a loss of purchasing power within sections of the middle classes (Castells et al., 2012; Maurano & Forno, 2017). Environmental and social awareness has also driven the rise in AFNs with more consumer awareness, throughout the EU, of economic, social and environmental sustainability issues and injustices within the agri-food chain (Anthopoulou & Partalidou, 2019; Calvário & Kallis, 2017; Castells et al., 2012; Maurano & Forno, 2017). All of these factors, combined with Brexit and the Covid-19 pandemic exacerbating these trends in the UK, has led to a breakdown of the conventional food system, due to unequal food distribution, the rise of food aid (e.g., food banks), and a questionable level of food resilience in these crises (Caraher & Davison, 2019; Moran et al., 2020; Shanks et al., 2020).

Despite their rise as an alternative to large food retailer supply chains, access to many AFNs is not guaranteed. Indeed, the lack of agri-food knowledge, the continued dominance of supermarkets,

and current food cooking norms, have, Lutz & Schachinger argue, made it difficult for local food networks to “reach the “average” consumer... [or to] make healthy and sustainable food accessible to everyone” (2013a, p.4791). The inference is that the ‘average’ consumer continues to shop mainly at supermarkets. This has led to much debate over how much control consumers have over their own food choices, and suggests that their relationship with food, and thus how they value it, remains disconnected. Twenty years ago, Laroche et al. (2001) demonstrated how consumers were becoming increasingly aware of the power of their purchasing behaviour, directly impacting the agricultural environment, suggesting the active analytical potential of customers. More recently, Chiffoleau et al., (2019) argue that consumers are merely persuadable parts of the chain at the mercy of the market-based system. Further, Bliss (2019) believes markets force consumers to maximise what they get and minimise what they give, triggering, he contends, a form of “moral decay” (p.8), concentrating as a result only on the financial value of food. Whilst moral decay may be difficult to prove, markets and the supermarkets within them seem to have disconnected consumers from food, and control what consumers buy. By giving so many choices of nonenvironmentally friendly or unhealthy products, this further alienates them from agri-food production whilst cementing convenience as an attribute of value (Manning, 2015).

What constitutes value is different for each individual and can relate to financial and non-financial values of food. Living in a capitalist society, the default is to value food from a purely money exchange perspective, de-linking economics from social values, and purchasing without thought to culture or the nuances of other possible valuable aspects within the food system (Bliss, 2019; Hirsch, 1976; McMurty, 2010; Sandel, 2013). Additionally, food is often used as a politico-economic tool to further the aims of other political priorities (Lang, 2021; Lang & McKee, 2018; Lingham et al., 2022a; Millstone et al., 2019). Businesses have attempted to adapt their business models to include less financial foci via Values Based Supply Chains, Shared Value, and Value Co-creation (Kramer & Pfitzer, 2016; Stevenson & Pirog, 2008; Vargo & Lusch, 2004), with some success.

AFNs are a mechanism by which emphasis more readily lies within non-financial values, whether that be within a market-based system or outside it, creating food-related “circuits of value” (Gritzas & Kavoulakos, 2016). Such values take many forms. Indeed, values held by individuals determine the choices people make (Schwartz, 2012). From a more food-centric perspective, Dagevos & van Ophem (2013) constructed food consumption values. Both value sets can also be applied to food behaviours, both as a collective of individuals and alone. These values impact the way people see food and the connections they may develop with it, influenced also by their knowledge. However, this chapter positions an updated typology of non-financial values of food, as ‘umbrella’ groupings of values. Individuals can develop a value associated with food relating to any point within the supply chain, whether that be relating to how a product was produced or how the consumer accessed it. Food values are very much ‘embedded’ in food environments, where emotions and the culture around individuals play significant role in determining consumer connection with food and the people associated with it. As such, people can develop a value related to how the food makes them feel and what context they enjoy it within, rooted in their own food culture. Lastly, people can develop a value associated with food related to characteristics of the food itself, its intrinsic value.

This literature review chapter will therefore explore how AFNs work and the values they display, both by producers and consumers, drawing on the AFN and values literature. Section 2.2 reviews literature on the diversity of, need for, and players within AFNs. Section 2.3 investigates the idea of value, looking into the default value of the current politico-economic system, to contrast with a broader differentiation of values. Finally, Section 2.4 marries the two concepts and considers how non-financial values for food held by producers and consumers are embedded within AFNs, and explains the updated non-financial value typology ‘alter-values’ from Lingham et al., (2022).

2.2 Alternative Food Networks (AFNs)

AFNs “embody alternatives to industrial modes of food supply” (Murdoch et al., 2000; Venn et al., 2006, p. 249). They, AFNs, are any food network which differ from the conventional supermarket system (Barbera & Dagnes, 2016). AFNs “create and maintain new synergies” (Marsden et al., 2000a, p. 435), reducing physical and organisational distances in the food supply chain, otherwise coined as ‘an agriculture of proximity’ (Dubois, 2018). As such, they facilitate close producer consumer interaction (Zoll et al., 2018), via direct or indirect exchange, and thus are relationship defining networks, consisting of a type of “organisational polymorphism”, referencing the importance of community and democratic relations, and can be contrasted to ‘isomorphic’ market-based food systems (Duncan & Pascucci, 2017, p.318). The rest of section will consider the characteristics of AFNs.

2.2.1 Beginnings and Characteristics

As AFNs are not new systems, some forms predating current conventional models, the term ‘alternative’ is paradoxical. Additionally, as their diversity is so wide-ranging, they cannot be appreciated within the dichotomy of conventional food networks versus AFNs (Holloway et al., 2007; Thorsøe & Kjeldsen, 2016). Academics have found it more fruitful to consider alternatives to the conventional food systems “less in a fixed, dualistic sense and [instead to] appreciate the different agendas, interdependencies, and synergies that are implicit throughout agri-food systems” (Bos & Owen, 2016, p. 2; Lamine, 2015). Indeed, some networks consist of a mix of conventional system elements and elements of alternative networks, such as Slow Food International¹ and Urgenci². Indeed, Nemes et al., (2023) position the term AFNs as an umbrella under which are included various initiatives featuring multiple production systems, marketing channels and differing actors.

¹ <https://www.slowfood.com>

² <https://urgenci.net/>

Some academics extend this approach, suggesting that AFNs must work with the conventional system because the latter can provide opportunities to expand beyond the niche (Barbera & Dagnes, 2016). Considering their various forms, whilst also exhibiting the ‘promise of difference’, moving away from global, industrialised and corporate agri-food-systems (Le Velly, 2019), providing a ‘food’ network includes at least one of the following characteristics as set out by Venn et al. (2006), it can be classed as an AFN:

1. It connects producers, consumers and food,
2. It consists of non-conventional supply and distribution channels,
3. It is socially embedded, and/or 4. Emphasis is on quality.

To further extend the typologies associated with AFNs, face-to-face (including websites), proximate (consumers made aware of locality of product at point of retail), and spatially extended networks (value of the food related to consumers outside the local area) can exist (Renting et al., 2003, Marsden et al., 2000a, Lombardi et al., 2015). Similar differentiation is used for short food supply chains (SFSCs), demonstrating how interchangeable the terms AFNs and SFSCs are in literature and highlighting the similar traits they both exhibit. However, a distinction can be made between AFNs which are purely SFSCs and more business orientated in terms of their goals and strategic intent, and Civic Food Networks (CFNs) and/or Community Supported Agriculture (CSA), for example, which are more socially focussed, where delivering value for the community is of greater importance in terms of strategic intent than delivering financial value i.e., profit (Bos & Owen, 2016).

Regarding the varied actors within AFNs, AFNs may be led by consumers acting as producers, producer-consumer partnerships, direct selling initiatives by producers, or by specialist retailers, expanding on the differing roles of consumers (Venn et al., 2006; Agrawal & Rahman, 2015). Those involved in AFNs have been described as engineers of the system or bricoleurs, by aiming to escape the “constraints imposed by a particular state of civilisation” (Lévi Strauss, 1962. p.13), capitalist

neoliberalism in this case. Grivins et al. (2017) extend this theme, explaining how AFNs created via bricolage (the act of using what is to hand through improvisation) are derived from the available resources, opportunities and inspiration of an area, ergo highlighting the importance of relevance and appropriateness of any intervention in food supply. Here 'area' can be imagined from geographic, relational or financial aspects. This contrasts with the one-size-fits-all food system where supermarkets and their modes of operation and resource used are increasingly similar, being aligned via competition pressure and the maintenance of institutional norms to form a conventional, isomorphic, regime (Duncan & Pascucci, 2017). As such, both engineers and bricoleurs can be seen in varying AFN examples, some examples arising and self-orientating more organically (bricoleurs), and some AFNs forming in a more organised manner (engineers). Both forms of origination have the capacity to develop the social values of food in an 'area' by means of encouraging consumer interest in foods from local/alternative sources, but perhaps engineering a new network has greater capacity to change and enhance the values people assign to food.

AFNs "tend to exhibit features which consumers increasingly value... traceability and provenance, organic, familiarity, tradition or a connection to a specific place and culture" (Delicato et al., 2019, p. 75). Thus, AFNs allow the 'thickening' of producer-consumer relationships via increased social and geographic proximity (Whatmore et al., 2003) from which respect for food and gradually value for the AFN can emerge. AFNs therefore are based within a separate set of values compared to conventional supermarkets. They form part of a diverse range of methods aiming to reorganise and contest the neoliberal food system, acting as a counterculture placing emphasis on social values such as food democracy, environmental sustainability, or improving farmer incomes (Kneafsey et al, 2021; Maye & Duncan, 2017). Tregear (2011) co-relates these efforts to improve social value with the desire for economic viability and ecological sustainability, all of which require an embeddedness in a specific area. To exhibit each of these characteristics, the inference is that an AFN cannot merely differ from the conventional system but must also actively assume a social responsibility within a community, suggesting that only CFNs would qualify, rather than merely SFSCs. This positioning

thus reduces the number of AFNs which would qualify under Venn et al.'s (2006) requirements as to those being CFNs. Research has further proved AFN contribution to increased food sovereignty, control and allowing communities to carve out a role in their food system (Bos & Owen, 2016; Lamine et al., 2012). Such reorganising of a food system is arguably the basis of not just a new food revolution, but also a political, social, cultural and health revolution, and thus allows a recalibration of food value within the existing neoliberal paradigm. Despite this, Kneafsey et al., (2021) cite an argument of AFN critics that the limited scale and scope of AFNs reduces their meaningful contribution when it comes to global food security. However, Kneafsey et al., (2021) suggest that by “rescaling” the concept of food security from national and global to micro-level individual, household and communities, then AFNs do have a greater contribution.

An interesting recent development has attempted to redefine and collate what were previously titled AFNs, local food systems, CFNs and SFSCs, into a new concept: ‘values-based territorial food networks’ (VTFNs) which “connect agro-food and related stakeholders within a defined territory, operating according to a coherent set of ethical values that centre on social justice and wellbeing, environmental integrity, participatory governance and economic fairness” (Nemes et al , 2023, p.8). Replacing the terms ‘alternative’ with ‘values-based’ and ‘local’ with ‘territorial’, emphasises the greater importance of ethical values within food systems and the necessity to understand food system relationships as interlinked networks rather than linear supply chains. The importance of territory was also suggested with AFNs ‘reclaiming’ space and place, with “a territorial mode of food governance that reflects place differences” (Kneafsey et al, 2021, p. 234). Additionally, their argument that the word ‘local’ can be a trap by not ensuring high welfare or environmental standards is somewhat combatted by ‘territorial’ and its emphasis on ethics. Although, as highlighted in their AFN chapter, such an ‘ethics of care’ is not immune to globalisation, as seen in Fair Trade networks, part of the ‘first generation’ of AFNs. Perhaps FairTrade networks could be characterised within value-based supply chains, and Nemes et al., make clear the difference of their use of ‘values-based’ within VTFNs from how the meaning of value in other such value chains and values-based

supply chains. Therefore Fair Trade may or may not come within their VTFN definition despite being part of an ethical, moral-related economy. However, perhaps any term projected to classify these 'other' food systems under one umbrella is too simplistic; indeed, with that aim, as considered in this work differentiation of 'supermarket' and 'non-supermarket' would probably suffice. The types of 'other' food system are so multitudinous that arguably each deserve their own categorisation and definition rather than being defined under the one catch-all acronym as 'alternative'.

This section has discussed AFNs both historically and in contemporary times and seen how they may fit within, or sit outside, the conventional neo-liberal food system. Section 2.3 delves into the conventional idea of value as opposed to values.

2.3 Value and values

Value is defined as the "capacity of goods, services or activity to satisfy a need or provide a benefit to a person or legal entity" (Haksever et al., 2004, p.292). This section firstly considers the conventional food system dominated by supermarkets and the associated value of food. It then considers how the idea of need or benefit-related value within this conventional system is leading to a reframing and development of new forms of food-related value(s).

2.3.1 Politico-economic value

Food production and provision is a politically and economically charged topic (Lingham et al., 2022a). Academics postulate that instead of responding to the real needs of humanity and public good, food benefits the economy by markets allocating food supply towards economic return (Bliss, 2019; Fassio & Minotti, 2019). In an emotionally fuelled paper, Bliss states: "food systems ransack ecosystems and fail to meet a basic human need" (p.1) and advocates for research and promotion of non-market orientated food systems, many researchers obliging.

The UK economy is dictated to by capitalism, a market-based economic system. Part of the appeal of financial capital-based markets is that they allocate the value of goods non-judgmentally; if

someone is willing to pay for a kidney and someone is willing to sell their kidney per se, “the economist does not ask whether the parties have valued the goods appropriately” as this would require them to judge the virtue of goods and decisions and thus “violate the strictures of a purportedly value-neutral science” (Sandel, 2013, p. 127). However, this framing of transactions then de-links the economic aspects from the social (McMurty, 2010), especially as money-exchange value alone cannot capturing the different values different actors may place on things (Bliss, 2019). Whilst economics itself has been described as “value-neutral” regarding human behaviour and social choice (Sandel, 2013, p.2), markets debatably taint the goods they exchange, changing the “character and meaning of a social practice” (Sandel, 2013, p. 132) by corrupting any moral, social or cultural pre-existing beliefs by assigning a purely currency-related value to them. Indeed, this “commercialisation effect” was described by Hirsch (1976), as how something innate in an object changes by supplying it on commercial terms instead of other mutual terms such as obligation, altruism or love. Goods traded this way often become sources of revenue alone, changing peoples’ perception of them from being based on other non-financial characteristics, thereby facilitating a supply and demand market emphasis where price and actual intrinsic value may differ.

Food is one such good for which price is the predominant means of trade, with food products traded internationally irrespective of product seasonality and provenance. This leads to two conflicting actions. From one perspective, the United Nation’s Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) fights for food security which “exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life” (FAO, 1996). On the other hand, there is much evidence of food instead being used as a politico-economic tool, where access is market orientated rather than a human or intrinsic right. The developing two-tier food economy demonstrates this, with the UK especially post-Brexit, importing cheaper, lower quality food, and exporting more expensive, higher quality food (Benton et al., 2019). Indeed, our food environments (discussed later) are built on the expectation and illusion

that food should be 'cheap', undervaluing of both food and life (Steel, 2021). Even so, the poorest 10% of UK households would still have to spend 76% of their disposable income to meet the UK Government's recommended Eatwell Guide, significantly more than those on higher incomes (The Food Foundation, 2020), raising the question as to whether this revaluation of food is attainable. Food being used as a bartering tool in global trade negotiations is uncondusive to attaining household level food security, even in a developed nation such as the UK.

Food has been described therefore as an example of a 'boundary object' (Bowker & Star, 1999; Star & Griesemer, 1989; Whatmore et al., 2003), i.e.: "an entity shared by several different communities but viewed or used differently by each of them" (Star & Griesemer, 1989). Ergo, whilst food is used politically, it can also be considered as a tool to further alternative aspects of economic value. For instance, within the conventional economy food can be used in developing economic theories, to further social development and environmental targets (Lingham et al., 2022a). Although, much change is required before the utility-based value (i.e., calorie or nutrition provision to reduce food insecurity) is perceived as more important than the exchange value of food, i.e., providing food for financial return (money) (Vivero-Pol, 2017). In summary, considering exchange value of food alone only provides a 2D vision of the holistic worth of food to the human population (Lingham et al., 2022a).

The dominance of supermarkets and large corporate agribusinesses supports physical, logistical, technical, and transport infrastructure, scale and capacity, and private agri-food governance structures such as third-party certification; leading to cost reduction and aggressive competition in a commoditised retail market (Arboleda, 2020; Peddi, 2014; Pradella & Cillo, 2021; Sanchís Pedregosa & Pennano, 2021; Kowalska et al. 2023b). Indeed, Peddi posited that foreign-direct investment induced, and multinational corporation-led retail models need to be re-imagined as "a single global movement spearheaded by a handful of powerful corporations", where the debate has focused on the negative consequences for more traditional (pre-existing) retail models (Peddi, 2014). Such traditional models can still be seen in less 'westernised' countries. For instance, of great

contrast to the dominance of the UK conventional supermarket system, Greece is characterised by a social and solidarity economy (SSE) based on reciprocity and the need for an equitable, and just economy (Anthopoulou & Partalidou, 2019; TFSSE, 2014). SFSCs promote alternative lifestyles and values and help to increase social capital, improve democratic competencies and encourage ongoing and direct relationships, mutual solidarity, and coproduction between producers and consumers (Forno & Graziano, 2014; Petropoulou, 2016). They thus divert from capitalism and large corporates to alternative framings of food networks. Such social values are demonstrated by surpassing the idea of affordable food for consumers and subsidy-driven protection of farmers, “towards genuinely challenging the structural power of the corporate agribusiness sector and advancing popular alternatives” (Anthopoulou & Partalidou, 2019; Backes et al., 2018). Indeed, Greek SSE enterprise numbers have risen from 372 in 2013 to 907 in 2016 (Backes et al., 2018). However, only 283 appear to be active due to lack of financial resources (Anthopoulou & Partalidou, 2019; British Council, 2017), suggesting that such economies cannot escape the dominance of capitalism fully in terms of the need to deliver economic viability.

To that effect, there are multiple alternative economic theories being mooted and trialled globally, to develop a more sustainable economic system, not just within neoliberal political economies, but more left-wing ideologies too. Examples include ecological economics and ethnoecological economics (Cavalcanti, 2016), and Foundational and Doughnut economies (Heslop et al., 2019; Raworth, 2017). Indeed, some academics suggest using food as a mechanism to help move away from ‘a classic “anthropocentric” vision’ where humans are central in the system to an “ecocentric” one, which sees humans as an essential part of an ecosystem (Fassio & Minotti, 2019). Thus, food itself and the way it reaches consumers can change what people perceive as being valuable.

2.3.2 Summary

Using the UK capitalist economy to position financial value as a backdrop, this section explored how politico-economic factors have influenced the monetary and market-based value assigned to food at a national and international level. Section 2.4 looks explores the concept of non-financial values, and places AFNs centrally within this debate, i.e., the ‘values’ assigned to food which do not always fit within purely financial transactions.

2.4 Non-financial values

Within the current economic system, there are various methods which try and redress the dichotomy of money and society, and economics with values, advocating a relationship with food beyond simply buying it in a supermarket with little understanding of its origins or methods of production. One major limitation is that market-mediated economies deprive people of citizenship empowerment, social relations and the spirit of mutual aid (Fleming & Chamberlin, 2016). At a national level, attempts to re-balance this limitation exist, with new forms of values being assigned to food, and indeed to human beings themselves, by positioning ‘food as a human right’ through food democracy. Food democracy reflects “citizens having the power to determine agro-food policies and practices locally, regionally, nationally, and globally” (Hassanein, 2003b, p. 79), expanding beyond the orientation towards enlightened citizens and building new economic patterns (Booth & Coveney, 2015; Chiffolleau et al., 2019). Food democracy is thus an example of appropriate action driven by bricoleurs being enacted by pressurising supermarkets for more supply chain transparency, advocating more locally produced food and food security, the rise of AFNs and CFNs, and the pressure placed on the Government during the free school meals campaign (EndChildFoodPoverty, 2021; Hassanein, 2003a; Renting et al., 2012b; The Food Foundation, 2021). The latter demonstrates how public intersectoral collaborations can challenge the existing system (Moragues-Faus., 2017). Empowerment includes both people’s physical access to resources, and a critical understanding of the socio-political context in which they live, giving them the opportunity to control

their destiny and influence decisions affecting their lives (Zimmerman, 1995), giving them power to create social change (Rappaport, 2002). This debate of food democracy or food empowerment is wider than the narrative of affordability of food, indeed, “the fact that we expect food to be cheap...is just wrong” (Steel, 2021).

A greater respect for humans and food is paramount to achieving citizenship power: as Carolyn Steel stated, “food is life... if we don’t value food, we don’t value life” (Steel, 2021). The Covid-19 pandemic aided the cause of food democracy as consumers were able to control their food consumption choices, becoming “active citizens”, and producers gained empowerment, allowing smaller producers and farmers to thrive, adapting to the rise in demand (Petetin, 2020, p. 333). Food supply was therefore, partially redesigned, although arguably it is returning to the status quo.

Food can therefore provide the cascade effect for systems change (Fassio & Minotti, 2019, p. 7) as a natural outcome of connecting parts of the food system:

“Interpreting food as an essential and fundamental right of the citizen will be the only way to give back the right value to food, not only as a product, but as the keystone of a more complex urban architecture.”

As Fourat et al. (2020) suggest, food democracy theoretically means that all people have an “equitable contribution to make through participation” (p.51), meaning action could be appropriate and inclusive, representing all demographics, and providing equal access to quality food. However, obtaining food democracy can be challenging, fairness often being a matter of differing interpretations (Feyereisen et al. 2017). Also, there is concern that in order to maintain any new form of food democracy, not only must changes in consumer behaviour be maintained, but also extra support is required for smaller producers. Additionally to financial support, Petetin suggests cooperative business forms should be encouraged to improve the finances of small producers, enhance access to food and strengthen a democratic agri-food system (2020). Hassanein argues that food democracy “is essentially a pragmatic device” and splits it into political pragmatism and philosophical pragmatism (2003a, p. 83). Whatever theoretical descriptions are assigned to food

democracy, its potential to change the food system from grassroots upwards depends on the ability to co-relate and plan collective values that communities assign to food, personal participation preferences, and socio-economic lifestyles.

The questioning of the conventional food system has arguably been necessary to improve the intrinsic and extrinsic values associated with the food that is consumed (Lang et al., 2018, 2021; West & Domingos, 2012) and put pressure on supermarkets and governments to re-evaluate the food provided. However, the combined shocks in the UK of the financial crisis, Brexit and Covid-19 pandemic may have led to a separate, independent questioning of the food system (Lang et al., 2021; Lang & McKee, 2018; Kowalska et al. 2023a). To question the conventional system and to develop and engage with non-financial values associated with food, knowledge is required. Whilst a segment of society wishes to know more about their food, and make purchasing decisions based on personal knowledge, paradoxically, another segment of consumers also value trust more than knowledge and will trust a producer even if they have limited knowledge about their product (Thorsøe & Kjeldsen, 2016). This may be due to a predisposition to associate smaller businesses/producers with honesty and transparency, providing an antithesis to longer-supply chain related supermarkets which have on multiple occasions lost consumer trust due to food-related scandals. This leads into the academic exploration around relational and institutional trust (Elliott, 2014; Manning & Kowalska, 2021; Manning & Monaghan, 2019; Mount, 2012; Thorsøe & Kjeldsen, 2016). However, notably, the idea of consumers having an institutional trust associated with the level of performance and delivery of supermarkets in meeting their needs must not be confused with valuing the food(s) they purchase from supermarkets, in the same way that transactional aspects of willingness to pay for the food must not be confused with the non-financial values attributed to the food by the purchaser. Food from supermarkets has been financially valued by supermarkets, often with a desire to undercut their competitors, often rendering the food offering to the consumer as being 'cheap'. Herein begins the conceptual overlap between value and values, as, due to the food being cheap i.e., perceived as of less economic value, the non-financial value assigned to it by the

consumer can reduce it to mere commoditisation. It is interesting to consider whether it is possible for supermarkets to offer consumers products which they may value non-financially, where the innate aim is not to differentiate purely by the consumers' willingness to pay for given attributes.

The conventional system provides huge diversity and variety of products (Manning, 2015), arguably contributing to a situation of 'peak stuff' where consumers are faced with too much choice. Considering the innovation and trends within the food industry, such as the growth in vegan/protein-based foods, and with more AFNs, microbusinesses and SMEs providing alternative products and experiences to the mainstream, a confusion of consumer values and needs, resulting in dissatisfaction with the offering is arguably unsurprising (Goodall, 2011). This rise in SMEs over the past few years, may suggest consumer desire for less choice, for more simply produced products which they see as traditional or local, rather than desiring products from global origins or perhaps consumers seek different/unique territorial products. Either way, the inference is that consumers do not necessarily co-relate choice with value or values. Indeed, having too many food options can discourage consumers from buying at all, and 'choice overload' appears to reduce accuracy of judgment (Buratto and Lotti, 2023; Iyengar and Lepper, 2000), thus reducing consumer ability to differentiate the options and then buy according to their values. Perhaps, too much choice reduces the non-financial value of each option by reducing consumer ability to recognise each food as something special i.e., as emotionally or culturally significant. For instance, supermarkets derive financial value from pizza, a food associated with Italian culture. However, with all the differing topping options available, the connection of the consumer to the original cultural value of pizza in Italy may reduce, even be absent, turning the food into merely another quick dinner solution. Of note here is that options such as Hawaiian pizza, which was not part of Italian food heritage, may arguably mean supermarkets are appropriating cultural heritage into a commercially lucrative food culture to suit their own ends, again distancing the consumer from the original cultural value of food in the food culture in which it originated. A paradox exists here, identified by Prahalad & Ramaswamy (2004), that consumers have more choice in terms of products and services than ever before, but

still seem dissatisfied with the options available. Companies/businesses invest in greater product variety but are less able to differentiate themselves in a food system swamped with food choices. Perhaps this is due to consumers developing knowledge, leading to a change in their values, and product offerings then being misaligned with these values; or perhaps the emphasis with product offerings is misplaced, especially as much evidence demonstrates a consumer desire for deeper connection with food, (Holloway & Kneafsey, 2017; Marsden et al., 2000a), a value which cannot be quantified economically. How some SMEs are using consumer(s) desire for knowledge and connection will be explored in the next section.

2.4.1 Value Co-creation

When analysing existing research, many sources discussing AFNs could relate their discourse just as well to the SMEs within them, and occasionally it is difficult to draw the line between whether an enterprise is an AFN itself or an SME within an AFN. For instance, many food delivery companies, such as Riverford Organics, are SMEs, but also create their own alternative means of food supply. Whilst there are various examples of how businesses throughout the capitalist market are attempting to diversify from their profit-focussed product positioning to include within their strategic plans the non-financial values seemingly important to consumers, the power and role of the consumer remains the same, the financial transaction being the key motivator within the market. Examples include shared value creation via reconceiving products and markets, redefining productivity in the value chain, and strengthening local clusters (Kramer & Pfitzer, 2016). Value based supply chains (VBSCs) which, like shared value initiatives, are still based primarily on financial incentives, ostensibly work to capture greater value for a greater number of players within the chain (Stevenson & Pirog, 2008). However, with many SMEs within AFNs, a less financially focussed model can be witnessed, via value co-creation, changing values for both the producers and consumers and extending mutual transactions beyond the purely financial. Value co-creation has a different emphasis to value related to capacity to deliver to needs or benefits, and there has been a chronological development of the term (Table 2.1).

Table 2.1 Development of the term 'value co-creation'

Date	Definition/features	Author
1996	Shared creation of value between a company and its customers.	Kambil et al.
2004	Consumer focussed development where customers are the sole creators of value whilst businesses are merely value proposers. Goods dominant logic to service dominant logic	Vargo & Lusch
2004	Co-creation of personalised experiences with the customers.	Prahalad & Ramaswamy
2011	Continuation of service-dominant logic theory, highlighting reciprocal value within this. Defined as customers participating in the co-creation of value, “which they assess through the sharing and integrating of resources with suppliers, especially their skills and knowledge” (p.202).	Ballantyne et al
2012	Co-creation as a practical three phase cycle: (1) joint crafting of value propositions, (2) value actualisation, and (3) value determination.	Lambert & Enz
2012	Overarching definition of being “a joint collaborative activity by parties involved in direct interactions, aiming to contribute to the value that emerges for one or both parties.”	Grönroos'
2014	Value co-creation consists of co-production (knowledge, equity, and interaction) and ‘value-in-use’ (experience, personalisation, relationship).	Ranjan & Read
2015	Investigated the literature into roles of customers in value co-creation. The more contemporary roles found were co-innovator, co-ideator, co-producer, co-designer, co-developer and co-promoter.	
2017	There are three major components in the concept of value co-creation: the value, the actors involved, and the engagement platform. It is mediated by reciprocity. Life satisfaction has strong effect on value cocreation; interaction more likely if they (residents/locals in this case) are happy with their lives	Lin et al.
2020	Consisting of two dimensions: firstly, participation behaviour (including information seeking/sharing, responsible behaviour, and personal interaction), and secondly, citizenship behaviours (involving advocacy, feedback, helping, and tolerance).	Asiah Omar et al.

The general concept of value co-creation involves producers and consumers working together to practice values. This differs from the conventional financially focussed shared value approach, by non-financial and financial foci instead having equal emphasis, or non-financial becoming more important. Over time, the understanding of value co-creation has also grown to include more varied consumer roles, blurring lines between producer and consumers through relationship and knowledge exchange, and latterly roles providing greater community value. Value co-creation therefore allows everyday transactions to cultivate new meanings and enables consumers to develop production-related respect for the food and the producer, and can have a wider-community focus, making the producer more relevant to the local area. Producer-consumer roles and values therefore change within the food system, thereby going further than financially focused shared value concepts or VBSCs.

Value co-creation has been described as a development from 'goods dominant logic' to 'service dominated logic' (Ballantyne et al., 2011; Vargo & Lusch, 2004, 2008), defined as customers participating in the co-creation of value, "which they assess through the sharing and integrating of resources with suppliers, especially their skills and knowledge" (Ballantyne et al., 2011, p. 202). This revolution changes the roles of businesses and consumers, moving companies and supermarkets from dictating and merely providing to becoming enablers of value, and changing consumers from recipients of marketing and buyers of pre-determined products to becoming product developers and valued members of a more inclusive food supply system. Therefore, there is a need to see consumers as 'pre-requisites' (Kowalkowski et al., 2012) for value and values creation, and whilst it may be an iterative process, there is a need for consistency between actors (Agrawal & Rahman, 2015) in terms of mutual support and reciprocity (Ballantyne et al., 2011). Thus, the need for co-creation should not be seen as a 'pressure' by SMEs on businesses (Tardivo et al., 2017), but perhaps as the natural way to develop as a community-minded and embedded business.

With the internet broadening customer bases and market possibilities, SMEs, particularly in the food and beverage sector, are increasingly aware of the importance of customers and the ease of their

involvement in value creation (Tardivo et al., 2017). Indeed, possibilities to involve consumers as value co-creators, with minimal costs, largely compensates for any resource limitations SMEs may have. Whilst two major outcomes of the co-creation process are relationships and social capital creation (Agrawal & Rahman, 2015), value co-creation, the literature shows, is still very business-consumer centric, with limited capacity to change the intrinsic values of food within wider communities. The reasoning behind consumers participating in co-creation is interesting. Bendapudi & Leone (2003) found that when customers have no choice but to participate in co-production, they are more likely to do so through the lens of a self-serving bias, giving personal credit to achievements, but assigning the causes of failures to external factors (Cristofaro & Giardino, 2020). Conversely, those given a choice of whether to participate in co-production are less likely to demonstrate a self-serving bias and more willing to take both the credit and the blame for the outcome of a product. However, it would be interesting to see if results differed, from the US undergraduate students engaged in this 2003 study, with individuals of different age or nationality. Secondly, research suggests that consumers will focus on production-related values like animal welfare, rather than a more holistic engagement with multiple production factors when engaged in co-creation (Bentsen & Pedersen, 2020), so perhaps value co-creation is easier when concentrating on single issues rather than more holistic and nebulous framings of value or benefit.

Ostensibly, locational cultural differences influence SME willingness and capacity for value cocreation. For instance, Dadura & Lee (2011) found Taiwanese SMEs were less willing to co-create with their customers, whereas Tardivo et al. (2017) found that Italian SMEs were very willing (however, with only 3 SMEs analysed, this finding may not be nationally representative). This finding could instead be cultural rather than locational. Indeed, research indicates that individuals of more collectivist cultures are less likely to be subject to self-serving bias than more individualistic cultures, with Asian cultures being compared to more westernised and US cultures, although these studies concentrated on interpersonal relationships rather than co-creation, (Bendapudi & Leone, 2003; Heine & Lehman, 1997). Despite these differences, it is generally recognised that “the customer is

the most important and active stakeholder in value co-creation... can assume many roles in the process” (Agrawal & Rahman, 2015; Tardivo et al., 2017, p.2361).

Additionally, Asiah Omar et al. (2020) described customer value co-creation behaviour as consisting of participation behaviour and citizenship behaviours (see Table 2.1). These dimensions position a significant relationship between value co-creation behaviour and brand equity for SMEs. Thus, effective and long-term value co-creation could “lead the firm towards gaining a competitive advantage and the customer towards greater satisfaction, thus proving a win-win proposition for both” (Agrawal & Rahman, 2015, p.156). However, this argument focusses less on the social values and more on individual gain, even if created collectively. Arguably, value co-creation should concentrate on more inclusive social/societal values, even in an individualistic society.

In summary, value co-creation focuses on changing attitudes and values of producers and consumers. This section highlighted cultural variations in the willingness to participate in value cocreation, the difference choice makes in participation, and the different roles consumers may undertake in the shared values versus the value co-creation paradigm. The next section concentrates on values relevant to individuals.

2.4.2 Individual related values development and the ‘alter-values’.

After considering the positioning of value co-creation in food supply chains, this section returns to the concept that value and values are separate entities, focussing on the non-financial values consumers may hold. Looking at personal values as an umbrella term, Schwartz defined them as follows:

“values are one important, especially central component of our self and personality, distinct from attitudes, beliefs, norms, and traits. Values are critical motivators of behaviours and attitudes”

(2012, p. 17).

The Schwartz values range from more altruistic to more egotistic: 'self-enhancement' (achievement, power), 'openness to change' (hedonism, stimulation and self-direction), 'conservation' (security, conforming, tradition), and 'self-transcendence' (universalism, benevolence). These values are held by every individual, albeit with different priorities, influenced by an individual's level of anxiety, goals, and ability to take risks. The internal negotiations that individuals have define which values are most important to satisfy them at a given time and "may be subconscious, automatic, or less deliberate" but are generally conscious, and can be linked with the values of others, such as family (Connors et al., 2001; Monterrosa et al., 2020, p. s63). In the food context, these "ideational aspects of food practices" are linked with feelings and emotions, meanings and symbolism (Monterrosa et al., 2020). Although ostensibly such internal, personal values are non-financial, self-enhancement as a value may also include elements of financial benefit if achievement or power are achieved via values being related to money.

Additional to such personal values, research has determined specific consumption-based values perceived as important by individuals: Sheth et al. (1991) listed values as *functional* (price, utilitarian and physical performance considerations), *conditional* (choices depending on situation), *social* (social class and/symbolic quality), *emotional* (capacity to arouse feelings), and *epistemic* (capacity to arouse curiosity, provide novelty or satisfy desire for knowledge) as influencing consumer choices, although not specifically in a food context. These values are independent constructs but can work together in how they inform consumption related decision-making. More recently, Dagevos, and van Ophem (2013) created a typology specific to food consumption value (Table 2.2) looking at four value types emotional, locational, product and process.

Whilst these typologies are interesting, much has changed since the 2013 typology. For example, in the UK, Brexit and the Covid-19 pandemic may have changed consumer and producer food habits and therefore possibly values, temporarily or long-term, especially regarding community connection around food (South et al., 2020). Additionally, food culture may become more apparent as a

distinguishing factor. Food culture, tradition and memories did not factor within the previous individual or consumption-based value typologies. Thus, a re-assessment of food-related individual and consumption-based values is prudent. Firstly, there is a need to present producer-centric as well as consumer-centric values, the omission in most typologies being values related to producers, and to place food as the focus of the value creation. Next, Schwartz and Sheth et al. excluded the intrinsic value of the food itself, only considered more recently by Dagevos and Ophem in their 'product value' definition.

Table 2.2 Dagevos and van Ophem's Food Consumption Values

Value type	Characteristics	Internal/external
Emotional	Experience, entertainment, (self)indulgence, identity or the story behind products or brands, Internal "evocative meanings of food products and food production processes and producers' reputation as well as the emotive appeal of places of consumption and points-of-purchase situations".	Internal
Locational	Setting in which food is purchased or consumed, such as physical setting, product variety, External experience, presentation, convenience etc	External
Process	Consumers' interest in the practices and processes of food production, specifically Internal ecological, environmental, societal matters. "Other-oriented" (p.1478) – commitment and concern for the (dis)value the food product has for other people or other parts of the world, mediated by extrinsic factors like success and reputation and intrinsic factors like justice or spirituality (Holbrook, 1999).	External
Product	Characteristics of the food itself. Self-oriented- the primary source of value is what the consumption of a food product provides the consumer with (extrinsic factors like convenience or quality or intrinsic factors like fun and beauty (Holbrook, 1999)).	Internal

That said, product value, as currently positioned in the literature, relates mostly to the price-quality relationship value, where value for money is "instrumental" (p.1477), which arguably is very subjective and fails to appreciate the intrinsic characteristics of food for what they are.

Furthermore, only Dagevos and Ophem considered other aspects of the agri-food system which may have value to the consumer, such as production and supply, although mostly in reference to

large scale inter/national ethical movements. Although they include emotional value, their explanation of this omitted any reference to the food culture or food background individuals come from. This is an important distinction as many emotions are rooted in culture. Therefore, in considering this theoretical gap, this section introduces an alter-values typology (Table 2.3) which has since been published, as a first attempt in this research at reassessing intrinsic, production-related, supply-related and emotion-cultural values (Lingham et al. 2022a).

Table 2.3 The 4 alter-values. Source: (Lingham et al., 2022a)

Value/respect	Characteristic
Emotio-cultural	Respect for the food based on the connection one has with it, whether that be based on food memories, food culture, as well as how it makes us feel.
Intrinsic	Characteristics of the food itself valued for themselves alone, with no reference to price, such as taste, feel, look, the experience of growing/creating something
Production-related	Respect for the food due to features of its production, such as locally produced or organically grown
Supply-related	Respect for the food based on how it was obtained. This includes market and non-market methods, such as AFNs like the sharing economy

‘Alter’ relates to the alternative nature of these values relating to food, and their basis within AFNs. The word ‘respect’ is used to begin to change the language around food, making the central feature respect for the food, rather than the value the food has to someone, where the emphasis is on the someone, rather than the food.

Intrinsic values

Intrinsic values relate to characteristics of the food itself. The Mediterranean Diet, for instance, is valued for taste and for its health benefits (Dernini et al., 2017), both qualities which are intrinsic to the product. O’Kane (2016, p. 224) found that community gardens facilitated consumers engagement with intrinsic values especially “the taste benefits of a salad made with freshly picked ingredients” and “the visual entertainment” of colourful seasonal food, giving consumers a “real thrill.” Growing food whether as part of a community project or on a personal allotment,

demonstrates a form of self-transcendence/conservation via sharing food and knowledge, as well as intrinsic values of food via hedonic and stimulating pleasures such as aesthetics of enjoying the outdoors and wildlife (Dobson et al., 2020), all arguably creating a deeper appreciation or respect for the food shown by the aspect that consumers waste less of it (O’Kane, 2016). Indeed, this also demonstrates how developing an understanding of seasonal and healthy produce can change consumer values without requiring change to existing food systems and supply chain infrastructure, something necessary for AFNs responding to rising demands for local food (Bloom & Hinrichs, 2011; Gwin & Thiboumery, 2014; Morley et al., 2008), and an example of bricolage.

Production-related and Supply-related values

Food can also be respected in terms of how it was produced or supplied to the consumer. European research shows the value customers assign to purchasing goods at farmers’ markets relates to social issues, such as supporting local farmers, strengthening local food systems or other ethical, responsible or green values (Cassia et al., 2012; Conner et al., 2010; Onianwa et al., 2005; Pokorná et al., 2015). This could involve a consumer focus on personal benefit by feeling good for buying such foods, demonstrating self-enhancement (via achievement) or openness to change (via stimulation), according to Schwartz’s values. Alternatively, it could demonstrate consumer focus on self-transcendence via benevolence.

Redefining values takes time and “the missing (agricultural) education, the everyday presence and dominance of food-corporations and supermarkets and the dominant cooking and purchasing patterns make it difficult for local food networks to reach the “average” consumer, that is, to make healthy and sustainable food accessible to everyone” (Lutz & Schachinger, 2013a, p.4791). However, Lutz and Schachinger showed that, by constantly reaching out to and connecting with local actors who are not part of the local food network, SpeiseLokal, helped make people aware of the social and environmental consequences of conventional food production and consumption, thereby involving more people in AFNs, changing consumer behaviours and promoting food

sovereignty (2013b). Consumers here were being facilitated by an AFN to develop a production-related and supply-related respect for food, based on Schwartz's values of self-transcendence, openness to change, and to some extent, self-enhancement via achievement.

This connection is both derived from and supports a knowledge exchange partly based upon the importance of the grower's story (Collet & Mormont, 2003), facilitating consumers to develop respect for the producer and the way food is produced. Indeed, the literature demonstrates how AFNs reposition the consumer importance and respect of food production from quantity to quality (Renting et al., 2003), the production itself having social value (Murdoch et al., 2000) as well as production-related respect. Knowledge, however, is a valuable mediator. In a 2013 Which? Report, participants were 'surprised and concerned' regarding their lack of knowledge of the 'complex global food system' (Benton et al., 2017), expressing "a strong desire to know more about the processes that bring food to our tables". Therefore, the growing use of AFNs may correlate with attempts to combat this (Grylls, 2020), and knowledge and food stories derived from sourcing food differently have become powerful tools in developing new AFNs, with such extra information differentiating AFN produce from produce from conventional food networks (Marsden et al., 2000b; Venn et al., 2006).

Recent years have seen the rise of local food, veganism, alternative proteins, the 100mile diet and transferability of the Mediterranean Diet (Martínez-González et al., 2017; Partalidou, 2015; Rose et al., 2008; Sexton et al., 2022; Sexton et al., 2019). This may either suggest that consumers have developed a production and/or supply related respect for such foods, or that consumers develop values based on a belief they are aiding a cause, or certain values being on-trend. Indeed, the popularity of these foods does not guarantee that the food itself is valued differently to conventional supermarket food and/or that new emotional connection/relationships with food are created via these channels (Darnhofer & Strauss, 2015; Feyereisen et al., 2017; Lutz & Schachinger, 2013a; Thompson & Kumar, 2018).

Production and supply values have made activists out of producers and consumers. Looking towards Europe, with people acting collectively with parallel values, the Markets Without Middlemen

(MWM) form of AFN in Greece, arose as a financial crisis response. The resultant bailout package and neo-liberalist austerity measures, which many argued contravened international human rights law, increased food insecurity, and particularly hurt small-scale food producers (Backes et al., 2018; Clifton et al., 2018; Petropoulou, 2016; Tzekou Irini-Erifili, 2020). MWM demonstrate a common desire to act in solidarity and to close the gap between urban dwellers and small farmers (Anthopoulou & Partalidou, 2019; Calvário & Kallis, 2017; Rakopoulos, 2017), thereby promoting production and supply-related values by putting emphasis on direct-to-consumer sales and producer security. This attitude has encapsulated agri-food production and supply within the community, aiding food security by such means as providing consumers with the right to unmediated, free consumer choice and donating 2–5% of their goods to families facing hardship; and they aid wider security by organising community events like social clinics, children's activities and free lessons (Anthopoulou & Partalidou, 2019; Backes et al., 2018; Calvário & Kallis, 2017). By supporting small family farming, they connect local producers in remote areas at risk of disappearing with a wider community, building solidarity and social bonds (Anthopoulou & Partalidou, 2019).

Cooperatives also demonstrate production and supply-related respect for food. There are numerous in Greece, from large scale cooperatives like Agricultural Cooperative of Zagora-Pilio, which exports apples of PDO status internationally (Zagorin, 2021), to small women's cooperatives. Security through Schwartz's conservation value mainly drives consumers towards cooperative food products then being considered better quality and safer, and affordable (Anthopoulou & Partalidou, 2019; Tremma et al., 2021). From a producer perspective, conservation values of financial safety and sustainability are key through the good prices they receive for their produce; plus, elements of self-enhancement are evident through better bargaining power and development opportunities due to access to finance (Batzios et al., 2021; Kalogiannidis, 2020; THES gala Cooperative Company, 2019). Further, women's cooperatives in Greece help change the status of rural agricultural women and promote collective action and economic self-reliance (Koutsou et al., 2003; Tsartas & Thanopoulou, 1994, p.49), demonstrating self-enhancement values through empowerment,

openness to change through stimulation and self-direction, and conservation via security of their farms.

Emotio-Cultural Value

Within non-financial values, connection is facilitated by the rise in AFNs, which suggests that perceptions of food culture and quality are being re-evaluated, to include social criteria, going beyond solely taste and food safety considerations (Lombardi et al., 2015), i.e., to have food from somewhere versus food from nowhere (Fonte, 2010). From a connection perspective, community connectedness, the relationship between producers and consumers, and rethinking consumer relationship with food (face to face, spatially proximate, spatially extended) suggest that connection to people and food differs within AFNs to conventional systems (Holloway & Kneafsey, 2017; Marsden et al., 2000a). This framing begins to adapt the culture surrounding food to focus on connection, beginning with its purchase.

Some countries may be pre-disposed to have a greater culture of, and values for, food than others. For instance, food sharing in Eastern Europe is based on connection and provides means by which social support and mutual appreciation is facilitated through an emotional and cultural importance placed on food (Jehlička & Daněk, 2017). Food thus provides an opportunity for conviviality and social support, conversation, social exchange and communication between individuals, families and villages so intrinsic to their sociocultural heritage that it cannot be separated from their lifestyles (Dernini et al., 2017; Serra- Majem & Medina, 2020). Whilst demonstrating mainly self-transcendence through solid universalism, elements of conservation values also exist here, through a desire to continue cultural traditions providing a form of security.

Homegrown food sharing is rooted in emotional rather than economic motivation, the sharing aspect/non-obligatory interactions making people feel good (Jehlička & Daněk, 2017), therefore displaying hedonic pleasure as well as benevolence. Although popular in the Czech Republic, such

systems are less supported in more westernised nations, being regarded as inappropriate (Jehlička & Daněk, 2017). Interestingly though, even the most seemingly removed from financial models, the sharing economy/ exchange is still a business model as monetary currency is just a construct (Hill, 2021). This understanding leaves the field open to all kinds of varying constructs within the exchange business model: the mere swapping of vegetables for instance creates constructs such as those of time-saving, gratitude, collective looking after of elderly community members, and promoting health, all of which have an intrinsic and extrinsic value. For this to work, it requires a disassociation/decoupling of food from money at least on a local/regional level.

Community connection in the UK was aptly demonstrated during the Covid-19 pandemic (Macaninch et al., 2020; Royal Voluntary Service, 2020), and food was often the medium through which community spirit flourished, with the giving of time, donating and sharing of food, and a gradual appreciation for community members experiencing different circumstances, led partly by the Rashford campaign (Barker & Russell, 2020; Butler, 2020; Jones et al., 2020; South et al., 2020). Food became the catalyst to connect people, by necessity, and thus gave the opportunity for many products to gain emotional values, being valued through the lens of self-transcendence and conservation security.

Even annual or one-off events like food festivals have been found to bring local food (Cleave, 2016) and home cooking into focus, as these events become part of the culture and allow consumers to connect with food, giving them the opportunity to re-value it emotionally and determine whether they want it to play a part in their own personal food culture, and also to consider aspects such as traditional or artisan foods (Lingham et al. 2022c). Being able to determine whether a food plays a part in one's own food culture, may suggest that one can perceive a cultural value for a given food without it being already within their own culture (mentioned briefly earlier, and considered throughout this thesis). Sagre food festivals in Italy celebrate daily cooking, making it a form of identity, "heritage cuisine", which also aids social and economic development (Ascione & Fink, 2021). Therefore, food is used to bring a more holistic social purpose to preserve and reinvent cultural heritage (Lingham

et al. 2023b), supporting Schwartz's conservation value predominantly, but also self-transcendence through the importance of food in the universal community culture. Although interestingly, Moreno & Malone (2021) found that in US agricultural production, food identity did not always correlate throughout the country. This may also suggest that value may not always be assigned to local/regional foods, but perhaps more to authenticity of food. Additionally to these internal paradigms of connection and relationships with people and food, external factors also affect food choice and food-related behaviours. These factors could be otherwise referred to as food environments, relating to the context in which foods are produced, purchased, and consumed, and therefore sit between the food system and our consumption choices, affecting the value given to food. This value could change in different physical and socio-politico-economic contexts, time, and relate to financial and non-financial value.

Food environments have been defined as the “physical, economic, political and socio-cultural context in which consumers engage with the food system to make their decisions about acquiring, preparing and consuming food” (HLPE, 2017, p. 28). Thus, a food environment is a complex mix of contextual factors, the priority of each differing between individuals and within an individual's continued interaction with the dynamic food environment. According to the ‘Discovering the role of food environments for sustainable food systems’ report (2021), seven dimensions of food environments exist within three themes: *economic* (economic and commercial), *socio-technical* (demographic, local and community based, social and cultural, physical infrastructures, trade, and technological), and *environmental* (European Public Health Alliance, 2021). In terms of a shock affecting a food environment, the recent Covid-19 pandemic led to economic and socio-technical dimensional changes in the food environment because of physical lockdowns and global disruption. Research has investigated many of these food environment dimensions to inform the thinking on the creation of sustainable food systems (Albrecht & Smithers, 2017; Boullenger, 2019; Choe & Kim, 2018; Cucagna & Goldsmith, 2018; Garcia-Herrero et al., 2018). However, food environment literature falls short of addressing the interaction between financial value and non-financial values,

and the importance of how consumers perceiving stronger non-financial values of food could contribute to more sustainable food systems. This gap was partly synthesised by the contemporary alternative values or 'alter-values' typology in the work of Lingham et al. (2022a) and briefly explained earlier.

Therefore, a combination of internal and external influences affects the values given to food and the way individuals interact with it through the choices they make. These can be based within culture, relate to how products have been produced or supplied, or be intrinsic to the product itself (Lingham et al., 2022a). Whilst the review of literature herein does not suggest that such non-financial values cannot be found in conventional food systems, arguably they are easier to identify within AFNs. Considering that so many forms of AFN are built upon such values, their ability to also create values and meaning facilitates "the basis for a relationship of regard" for food (Sage, 2003, p. 49). Much food consumption occurs within previously established routines, showing the importance of stability, despite awareness and good intentions to alter eating habits (Mylan et al., 2016). Thus, developing AFNs is as much about changing culture and social values as it is about changing the mind of an individual or creating an alternative possibility they can engage with.

Redefining the values ascribed to food is arguably the most important task in attempting to change the current major food-related problems, to create a more just food system, inspire food democracy, encourage healthy eating (Berti & Mulligan, 2016; Porter & Kramer, 2011), and ensure agri-environmental sustainability. Demand for products that meet societal needs is growing in advanced economies. AFNs, described as "food related circuits of value" (Gritzas & Kavoulakos., 2016), are particularly well placed as a health-focused alternative, with consumers engaged with such networks displaying healthier consumption patterns such as buying more fruit and vegetables (Baez et al., 2020; Lee, 2022). The food businesses within AFNs especially have the ability to become embedded into cultures and society, with small farms also having the ability to create regional and local food hubs (Berti & Mulligan, 2016).

The next section will consider further emotio-cultural respect for food, through the cultural food environments affecting consumers throughout life, experiences and memory.

2.4.3 Consideration of ECV

Emotions are key to developing a deeper meaning for food. Emotions are consciously or unconsciously felt, arise from short- or longer-term factors, appear when the brain is generally alert, and are short-term phenomena (APA Dictionary of Psychology, n.d.; Bagozzi et al., 1999; Cabanac, 2002; King & Meiselman, 2010; Köster & Mojet, 2015; Leigh Gibson, 2006). Some foods are more “emotional” than others; chocolate has stronger emotions associated with it than, for example, carrots or oatmeal (Cardello et al. 2012). Generally in studies, low levels of negative emotions are attached to foods (Cardello et al., 2012; King & Meiselman, 2010b), although this could be simply because there are so few negative choice options within the data collection lexical options in empirical studies. However, food memories related to war and marginalisation experienced by the participants in Katto's research (2020) show individuals can create strongly negative emotions associated with certain foods. However, the link between food and emotions is explored in various contemporary public discussions. For example, in the podcast of food writer Grace Dent, ‘Comfort Eating’, she talks with celebrities about their food memories, emotions from food, how food makes us feel and what we use food for (Dent, 2023). Indeed, in this context, food can be the ‘vehicle’ by which many individuals attempt to combat certain negative personal feelings or concerns.

There are multiple papers on respecting the right to food and food security, whether that be from the perspective of different economic systems, political changes, or pandemic impacts (Anderson et al., 2021; Fassio & Minotti, 2019; Gomes Fiore et al., 2018; Lambek, 2014; Lang & McKee, 2018; Power et al., 2020). The themes explored here extends beyond personal physical and nutritional security. There are many papers, described herein, about cooking, identity, culture, and commensality (examples being Kemmer et al., 2017; Yngve et al., 2021). However, there is very little focus in the literature relating to respecting food itself, how eating together changes the way we respect for food,

or about whether the cultural or emotional connections which occur around food lead to people respecting food more, or if this respect for food, and respect for others through food, is beneficial to people/society. Even less literature considers the idea of eating with neighbours or cooking with different cultures and its personal and societal value. The rest of this section aims to draw together a number of concepts to partially fill some of these gaps and identify areas for further research.

2.4.3.1 Food environments

Familial

Much literature considering familial grounding relates to the dynamic between parents and children. Food practices are learned mainly through transmission from parents to children (Garine, 2010), both explicitly, through verbal communication regarding what to eat and exposure to information (Kelly et al., 2016), and implicitly through daily routines and in modelling of food behaviour (Birch & Doub, 2014; Cruwys et al., 2015; Garine, 2010; Gelman, 2009; Kelly et al., 2016). Cooking together is one such transmission mechanism, being described as the relational, embodied, and experiential “in-between space,” allowing meanings for food to unfold in the relationships created and fostered between people, something argued to be intangible cultural heritage (Lee, 2023). Thus, the act of cooking together and the connection created with people and food could be considered a form of food culture. However, Colatruglio & Slater (2014) highlighted the irony between parents saying they want to spend less time “cooking” but also desiring more “family time”, seemingly suggesting the two are incompatible (Agriculture and Agri-food Canada, 2005; Pronovost, 2007).

Lack of time or different priorities are another issue with busy and hectic lifestyles providing less time for meal preparation and reducing the potential for children to be part of shopping and preparation activities (Lichtenstein & Ludwig, 2010). This challenge is described as ‘missed opportunities’ for teaching children about food and for “family time” (Colatruglio & Slater, 2014).

Indeed, as Michael Pollan suggested, “if we’re going to rebuild a culture of cooking, we need to bring our kids back into the kitchen” (Pollan & Gibney, 2016b), and thus merge cooking and family time.

Pollan goes on to ask, “Is there any practice less selfish, any labour less alienated, any time less wasted than preparing something delicious and nourishing for the people you love?” (Pollan & Gibney, 2016a). Indeed, at its most basic level, home cooking provides an opportunity to fulfil a duty or desire to care for dependents or loved ones and involves enacting the role of a provider (Mills et al., 2020), transforming the emotions around food so provision is seen less as a burden and more as a privilege. Appreciation for, and taking pleasure in, the food itself can also be increased by higher levels of cooking activity and dynamism (high use of kitchen tools like cooking appliances, prolonged time dedicated to meal preparation), and high levels of togetherness (Piochi et al., 2022). When parents cook with their children at home, for instance, it impacts their children’s liking of vegetables, and their vegetable intake (Radtke et al., 2019). This is due to what is termed “the IKEA effect” where individuals like the objects that they create more than those created by a 3rd party; in this case, the children liked the experience of being involved in cooking activities with their parents and liked the vegetables they produced together. Ergo, there is a clear link between cooking together and ECV creation for food appreciation created by searching on-line differs from that of cooking-related appreciation, instead being based in a level of control and input into choosing the food, rather than creating ECV through creating food together. Therefore, perhaps satisfaction and self-worth are contributing emotions to developing pleasure with and appreciation for food.

2.4.3.2 New food experiences

The capacity for consumers to develop ECV for food is impacted by the experiences they may have with food. Relating specifically to food, there are two antithetical conditions at least partly influenced by emotions and identity which individuals may possess. These are neophobia, the reluctance to eat/avoiding new/unfamiliar foods (De Kock et al., 2022), and neophilia, where consumers are happy to sample anything, their choices being generated by curiosity (Szakály et al., 2021). The

propensity for each may be partly genetic, with Western cultures exhibiting lower levels of neophobia than Eastern cultures (Choe & Cho, 2011; Rabadán & Bernabéu, 2021; Szakály et al., 2021). Some believe neophobia is much more emotive, encompassing a “fear or loathing (perhaps even disgust) of novel food, which may result in the rejection of the unfamiliar food item” (Szakály et al., 2021, p.1) often deriving from childhood experiences and parental preferences (Knaapila et al., 2010; Vaarno et al., 2011). Holding this feeling may be physically detrimental, with neophobic consumers consuming a limited, narrow and monotonous diet (Alley & Potter, 2011; Siegrist et al., 2013), leading to lower dietary quality (due to lower consumption of fruit, vegetables and meats) and higher body mass index (BMI) (Alley & Potter, 2011; Knaapila et al., 2015). Conversely, neophilic consumers consequentially have much more diverse diets and food experiences (Alley & Potter, 2011; Szakály et al., 2021).

Interestingly, there appears to be a negative association between education, income, urbanisation, and neophobia, the latter reducing when the others increase (Cardello et al., 2012), meaning those who travel more and are more open to other cultures tend to show less neophobic behaviour. This suggests that experiences can change emotions allowing ECV to develop and follows Bourdieu's theory of cultural capital. Equally, higher levels of neophobia are found, for instance, within those who rarely visit restaurants offering different ethnic foods (Alley & Potter, 2011; Bäckström et al., 2004; D'Antuono & Bignami, 2012; Olabi et al., 2009; Szakály et al., 2021). Additionally, commensality affects neophobic/neophilic behaviours, as the more people eat together, the greater the willingness to try out a new food item and the lower the neophobia. Children especially are more likely to eat new foods if their parents, or others eating with them, are eating the same type of food as them (Addessi et al., 2005; Dovey et al., 2008; Szakály et al., 2021). This suggests the existence of a positive feedback mechanism when eating similar foods. Whilst studies have also shown that neophobic consumers, when given new foods to sample, find them less tasty after sampling than those with neophilia (Fernández-Ruiz et al., 2013; Henriques et al., 2009; Knaapila et al., 2010; Szakály et al., 2021), and perhaps this is dependent on the environment the food is tried in:

laboratory settings or an impersonal questionnaire versus commensality in-situ setting at a restaurant, for instance.

However, being neophobic does not mean that an emotional value cannot be developed for specific foods. For instance, consuming comfort food creates familiarity representing “security, home, or a link with a specific person, place, or time with which the food has a positive association, providing familiarity and psychological satisfaction” and when consuming such foods in potentially hostile food environments, individuals can use this developed ECV for the comfort food to regulate emotions (Chang et al., 2022, p. 2; Evers et al., 2010; Ji et al., 2016). It is possible that neophobic consumers develop ECV less frequently or for fewer foods purely due to the lack of exposure/trying of other foods, thus, remaining in their “bubble” (Chang et al., 2022; Cohen, 1972). The only way, it seems, to reduce neophobia, is by personal experience of trying something new/different (Szakály et al., 2021; Tuorila et al., 2001). Interestingly, neophilics are often willing to sample foods they initially don’t like multiple times, showing that they give multiple chances to foods (Knaapila et al., 2015), to then include them in their diet, almost as if they want to like them. Is a possible barrier to neophobics trying foods perhaps because they don’t want to like certain new foods, or they find comfort in having limited choice?

Two forms of new food experiences will be considered here, a direct form (commensality) and an indirect form (social media).

Commensality

Possibly the most obvious way of developing an ECV of food is by eating specific foods with others as suggested above. Commensality is the act of eating with other people at the same table (Fischler, 2011; Jönsson et al., 2021; Phull et al., 2015). When considering the difference between commensality and conviviality, if commensality is the act of eating together, conviviality is the friendly and enjoyable aspect of being together, or community, which designates a group of people sharing

characteristics or interests (Jönsson et al., 2021). Conviviality therefore provides the platform for commensality.

Statista (2023b) investigated how important people think it is to eat together as a family. They didn't define 'family,' so the results are based on the respondents' perception of family. A clear majority of people in the study think eating together as a family has some importance, with around 88% finding it 'important', 'fairly important' or 'very important'. This concurs with Dunbar's (2017) research where 76% of respondents felt sharing a meal was a good way to bring people closer together. However, in the Statista (2023b) study only between 20-30% of all age groups ate together at the table daily, and just over 10% ate together a few times a week, with between 10-20% doing so only a few times a year (Statista 2020a). Supporting this, a study by Oxford University found that a third of weekday evening meals were eaten alone, and the average adult ate 10 out of 21 meals alone every week (University of Oxford, 2017). Clearly, despite Dunbar's (2017, p.199) assertion that "family meals are widespread and commonplace in all cultures, and inviting friends or visitors to dine remains a regular social activity in most societies," and the best intentions of the public, the data presented here regarding the practice does not support the respondents' stated desire. Indeed, the frequency of family meals together is neither regular nor 'commonplace'.

There is much literature looking at the benefits of commensality. Personality strength and resilience are cited, with those who eat socially being "more likely to feel better about themselves and to have a wider social network capable of providing social and emotional support" (Dunbar, 2017, p.206). Research in South Korea has also found that people who ate fewer meals together had poorer mental health (Son et al., 2020). Further, Dunbar (2017) found a clear association between commensality and increased life satisfaction, happiness, trust in others and a sense that life is worthwhile. As Teoh Synn Ee (2023) states, although food may not be the primary reason for family gatherings happening, they facilitate conversation and are often a reminder of participants' cultural heritage. Thus, this nurturing through commensality improves trust and life satisfaction. Further benefits for mental health are attributed to things like laughter and storytelling, both common when

eating with others, which are both known to trigger the endorphin system (Dunbar et al., 2016; Van Vugt et al., 2014), facilitating social bonding (a form of conviviality). Highlighting associations between these factors is challenging however, with acts such as laughter potentially causing the social bonding, rather commensality itself (Dunbar, 2017). In the qualitative part of Dunbar's research, he found that many respondents believed that having a meal together was an important way of making or reinforcing friendships, suggesting that this may be why they ate with others. The fact that having eaten together increased respondents' sense of closeness to the person concerned is likely to be causal. Indeed, he asserts that social eating may have evolved as a mechanism for facilitating social bonding (Dunbar, 2017), which may be more successful than other forms of engagement.

When thinking about physical benefits, a Brazilian study found how increased pleasure in commensality may be a part of successful health intervention among women with obesity (Sabatini et al., 2019). Conversely, other studies have found evidence for people eating more when with friends and family compared to eating alone, and eating faster; where these changes depend on the familiarity with those people we eat with (Klesges et al., 1984; Ruddock et al., 2019). Indeed, meals eaten with friends were found to be larger, but of a longer time duration (de Castro & Brewer, 1992). Therefore, commensality with family and friends could also be detrimental for weight maintenance, depending on the nutrient density of the food eaten (Jönsson et al., 2021), and the frequency of the activity. However, eating together as a practice has even made its way into national nutrition policy in some countries (Jönsson et al., 2021) possibly due to the association found between eating a main meal with others and higher intakes of fruit and vegetables (Larson et al., 2009).

Commensality also has developmental benefits. The frequency of families having breakfast together is directly associated with adolescent involvement in preparing breakfast meals and positive attitudes to the importance of mealtimes, interactions between family members and having structure (Larson et al., 2016). Additionally, increased consumption of healthy foods such as fruits and vegetables, whole grains, calcium-rich food, protein, and micronutrients, and less consumption of

fried food and sugary drinks have been associated with higher family meal frequency, and having positive family meal attitudes and behaviours (Woodruff & Kirby, 2013). There is even evidence that those eating socially are more “engaged with their local communities” (Dunbar, 2017), thus extending the benefits beyond family relationships. Indeed, sharing a regular meal together is often a way by which people with different experiences and memories of food can find collective structure and safety (von Essen & Mårtensson, 2017).

On a wider community scale, the concept of sitting together at the same table, eating the same food, engenders social relationships developed by the continuous encounters between those involved. In fact, Marovelli (2019) argues that the ‘ritual of the meal’ reduces anxieties around social differences because cooking and eating together creates somewhere, a space, which facilitates communal ways of thinking and acting. Eating out is one way of engendering connection. Indeed, many have suggested that eating out is largely a social activity (Julier, 2013b; Spang, 2020; Spence, 2017a) and one which was missing for so many at mealtimes during the Covid-19 pandemic (Spence et al., 2021), with the sense of community becoming a “narrative of decline” more generally (Watt, 2022).

However, food sharing initiatives and places where people can eat together have the effect of bridging communities (Marovelli, 2019). Examples such as urban gardening and joint cooking and eating activities play an important role in advancing urban food systems towards sustainability and food swapping or Food Self Provisioning can reduce food insecurity and enhance community (Ančić et al., 2019; Hennchen & Pregernig, 2020; Sovová et al., 2021). Eating together in the sense of ‘feasting’ with a wider community and larger scale, but less frequently, can develop inter-community relationships between communities rather than within community (Dunbar, 2017). Dunbar does not expand further, although does comment that the infrequency of such feasting occasions makes meaningful research into this field difficult.

The incidence of more regular cross-cultural and cross-community ‘feasts’ in such forms as The Long Table³ in Stroud, Gloucestershire, and platforms such as EatWith⁴, albeit on a smaller scale, may be more recent evidence of the benefits of such commensality which can be meaningfully measured. Eatwith links those who want to cook and share their cultural foods with those who want to eat these foods, providing opportunity for consumers to interact with the host and other diners to learn more about the culture and food, this experience giving the food a higher level of meaning than it might otherwise have had if eaten at a restaurant (Lingham et al., 2023; Stowe & Johnston, 2012). This might even be classed as a celebration of food and food culture. Food culture in this sense may relate to the culture the food comes from or the development of a new food culture of eating together with a like-minded community. The existence of such platforms does signal desire for connection, knowledge and a sense of belonging.

Whilst there is much evidence of enjoyment of and respect for food from other cultures, and data showing the majority of all UK age groups consider that different cultures/backgrounds in their local area get along well together (Statista, 2019), there is limited literature extending this to cross-cultural cooking connection. Literature about cooking food from different cultures provides context (Figueira et al., 2019; Kemper, 2020; Lăcătușu et al., 2019) and considers ‘inter-cultural host-guest relationships’ in reference to western AIRBNB hosts and Chinese guests (Cheng & Zhang, 2019): i.e., the host-guest paradigm. Commensality via cooking within community cooking initiatives also arises where “guests and volunteers enrich the repertoire of dishes by sharing recipes from their own cultural backgrounds” (Marovelli, 2019, p.199), providing opportunities to develop a respect for a different cultural food. Existing research is limited on the practices and relationships of cooking within an informal domestic setting with people from different cultures. Marovelli (2019) referenced

3 <https://www.thelongtableonline.com>

4 <https://www.eatwith.com>

the work of Longhurst et al., (2009) and Meah & Jackson (2015) when describing research into kitchens being important for food memories, and in their “affective potential and as emotional spaces” (2019, p.193) but again this did not extend to cross-cultural memory creation or emotion development. Another relevant study focussed on a campaign called “Cook a pot of Curry” by Aw Yeong (2011) which was initiated to bring together people after a disagreement between families of different cultures. Whilst this demonstrated daily cooking together, it was a formal campaign to address a perceived problem. Thus, a research gap exists within the literature, and part of this research attempts to gain more information around the incidences and impacts of cross-cultural cooking in informal, domestic settings.

Interestingly though, when it comes to local community, the idea of cooking or eating together does not generally extend to being in the company of neighbours. Indeed, the Anatomy of Neighbour Relations (Ruonavaara, 2022) didn’t mention food, sharing, dinner or inviting neighbours over for dinner. This demonstrates the lack of awareness or research around the idea of eating with neighbours and the benefits that are derived.

Facilitating customers to develop ECV for their products is an aim for many food businesses. In the bakery sector for instance, four trends have been identified for the next few years (Alba-Martínez et al., 2022). Firstly, the idea of “eatertainment/innovative” experiences, in the form of impressive designs which are ‘instagrammable’. Indeed, researchers have found that increasing consumers’ exposure to images of desirable foods on social media might exacerbate their desire for food, termed ‘visual hunger’ (Spence et al., 2016), because viewing these images means the gustatory area of human neural circuits “produce conceptual inferences about taste” (Simmons et al., 2005). Secondly, the idea of fusion has emerged, inspired by global flavours, “sweet-and-salty combinations, and unexpected textures”, whether that be between different cultural baking recipes, mixing new ingredients, or between traditional and modern. Indulgence is the next trend, with consumers wanting to feel like they’ve had a treat/ something special and to be celebrated perhaps,

with the guilty pleasure feeling it gives. The last trend centres around the demand for pastries and comfort bakes which remind people of their identity and tradition (Alba-Martínez et al., 2022). These, being trends, are not generally associated with an embedded long-term connection with food; however, the last trend does rely on ECV already being held for a product, with businesses attempting to play to comfort nostalgia. These trends arguably require little food knowledge, instead based on strong sense emotions such as sight and taste.

Social media

An interesting new development in how food is experienced is using social media for food-related activities.

“People are inherently social eaters, making social media and food a perfect pair... Consumers virtually break bread by sharing their food experiences, uploading photos and posting stories.”

(The Hartman Group, 2012, p. 2).

Indeed, there are a multitude of people who post regularly about food, ranging from celebrity chefs, to home cooks and food bloggers, and ‘foodie influencers’ (Barnes, 2022; Miguel et al., 2023; Naulin, 2019; Rowe & Grady, 2020), many of whom may be described as ‘micro-influencers’ (Miguel et al., 2023). In fact, the trend has become so popular it is argued that such content creation is a cultural activity (Arriagada, 2021). Further, a Breaking Travel News study in 2022 found that 30% of people post images on social media of meals they’ve eaten during their travels (2022). Wang et al. (2016) suggest the reasons for sharing food photos are multiple: social and relational, self-image projection, emotion articulation, self-archiving, and information sharing. A variety of hashtags can draw attention to food-related photos. The hashtag #food, for example, is one of the top 25 most popular hashtags on Instagram (Ofcom, 2015; Turner & Lefevre, 2017). But what is the link between social media and ECV development? Aspects of interest include knowledge sharing and exposure, identity forming and independence, and self-expression.

As considered earlier, food ECV can become a large part of identity formation and can also provide a means of expressing independence. Social media aids this by expanding food choices for young people through creating access to a variety of recipes, providing a venue for showcasing the food young adults eat or prepare (Vaterlaus et al., 2015). The Hartman Group (2012) found in the USA that 49% of those surveyed said they learn about food via social networking, and 40% of online adults say they learn about food via websites, apps or blogs. There is evidence that social media can actually inform actual food choices, with 54% of consumers using social media to discover and share food experiences, and 42% using social media to seek advice about food (The Hartman Group, 2012; Turner & Lefevre, 2017). Also, 31% of people in a non-academic study said that

Facebook was their main source of inspiration when choosing restaurants to visit, 28% citing Instagram and 23% citing Twitter (Breaking Travel News, 2022).

There are numerous Instagram accounts related to food, many featuring food videos showing respect for food and culture. Examples include *foodie_by_mind*, *originalflava*, *gastroobscura*. From the number of followers they have (*originalflava* have 189k), clearly a definite interest in different foods and cultures exists, whilst keeping in mind the potential for cultural appropriation. Arguably, seriously wrongful cultural appropriation occurs infrequently on social media (Lenard & Balint, 2019), and so these platforms may also help in exposing people to other cultures and foods and ways of thinking about food that may otherwise not be seen, giving consumers the means to become independently-minded and creating their own identities around food, reducing the possibility of cultural appropriation via disrespect. Consumers also share personal ECV by uploading photos, which can serve as a form of self-expression, expressing identity to others, which can then lead to an enhanced dining experience (Zhu et al., 2022), suggesting therefore that it may improve either confidence levels, satisfaction, or even a perceived flavour of food. Self-expression through ‘foodstagramming’ is becoming popular, combining blogging and food photo sharing (Goktepe et al., 2022). According to FONA (2019), this is about more than just seeking that which is “Insta-worthy”, rather the search for something to savour, such as different textures in food and global flavours,

once again aiding knowledge development through sharing. Therefore, photos not only stimulate the senses, but the surrounding food experience expresses self-identity (Goktepe et al., 2022).

Whilst food posts can be a personal experience, creating a community of like-minded people through 'authentic voices, sincere posts, and meaningful content' (The Hartman Group, 2012), such community support may instead manifest itself into a less desirable trait, becoming instead a need for social approval. For instance, users posting with healthy hashtags have an average of 1,000 more followers than those with unhealthy ones (Mejova et al., 2016). Further, higher rates of orthorexia nervosa, an unhealthy obsession with eating healthy food, have been correlated with higher Instagram use (Turner & Lefevre, 2017). This is because users of social media select which accounts they wish to follow, and thus will be exposed to only the content these filtered sources provide. Turner & Lefevre (2017) argue that this filtered exposure could lead to users believing a behaviour is more prevalent or normal than in reality, creating perceived social pressures to conform to such behaviours. This does not necessarily demonstrate a respect for the food, but a desire to 'fit-in' or be seen as someone you are not. Arguably, a true respect for food, or even for a food culture, would result in social media posts about food irrespective of the opinions of others.

Interestingly, however, there is a clear international domination, social media posting-wise, of chocolate, cake, and sugary desserts over local foods and food cultures (Mejova et al., 2016). Yet, Mejova et al. (2016) also found that there was an association between emotion and health-related topics with #foodporn, which may suggest that either there is a shift towards respecting cultural foods, a shift towards the desirability of healthy foods, or even that emotio-cultural foods can provide motivation for a healthy lifestyle. As social media platforms are image-focused, this enhances the so-called 'picture-superiority effect', images being more likely to be remembered than words (Turner & Lefevre, 2017), meaning that much influencing can be achieved by a single photo leading people to change their behaviours more than any verbal descriptions, expressions or arguments. There is also a risk of 'precarious digital mothering', coined by Barnes (2022), after her investigation of the bento accounts of Japanese mothers who are also food influencers. She found that posting online

can obligate women to create more food to cater for this social media success, normalising greater labour to both the poster and their followers (Barnes, 2022). Despite beginning as a display of personal ECV for cultural foods and creating a knowledge community, posting as an influencer has the potential to associate cultural food with stress or feelings of inadequacy, thereby eliminating their ECV.

2.4.3.3 Knowledge exchange

Knowledge is a thread woven throughout the topics of this chapter. Much knowledge, as shown earlier, is passed between generations or communities. However, whilst humans can learn from others, they are “also remarkable for their apparent disinclination to do so” Neubauer et al., (2019, p.90), stated when describing the difference between ability and inclination often seen with cooking. Much research concentrates on the notion that food knowledge has been lost (Colatruglio & Slater, 2014; Contento, 2011; Pollan & Gibney, 2016b), and thus limited knowledge of food and food processes may reduce an individual’s capability to develop an embedded, long-term connection with and respect for food. Perhaps individuals have lost sight of what it truly means to cook. Samin Nosrat explained, “it seems like it’s getting in the way of life but actually this [cooking] is life” (Samin Nosrat in (Pollan & Gibney, 2016b)). Losing traditional foods is of greater detriment than just for those individuals affected; it impacts society and the development of the population as a whole. Indeed, “how much more unfortunate can a society get, when it loses its most basic knowledge: knowledge to be able to cook for itself” (Sunita Narain in (Pollan & Gibney, 2016b)).

Research shows how the Covid-19 pandemic provided the opportunity for change. It gave people time to rediscover cooking and baking, aiding knowledge and making more meals from scratch, and parents and children eating and preparing food together more often, often resulting in greater consumption of vegetables (Benson et al., 2021; Gerritsen et al., 2021; Hoolohan et al., 2021; Lindsay et al., 2022). For instance, more than half of respondents from a survey in New Zealand found have increased frequency and enjoyment of home cooking and baking from scratch (Gerritsen

et al., 2021). Further, meal dedication, and particularly online food engagement, were particularly helpful in aiding resilience (Piochi et al., 2022), likely because food engagement activities, especially ones involving learning about new foods and recipes, helped reduce stress (Finlay et al., 2021). Thus, both food memories and food knowledge development aided consumers during stressful times. Positivity and enthusiasm for meals was particularly seen in youngsters during the pandemic (Piochi et al., 2022). Although there was a slight shift towards a less healthy diet during the pandemic, there is no suggestion that cooking more together at home aided this shift. Post pandemic, 22.8% of respondents in Spain stated they would keep their newly acquired cooking habits (Romeo-Arroyo et al., 2020). Thus, the pandemic provided the opportunity to gain new knowledge and develop long-term connective food behaviours; whereby this knowledge may increase the frequency of food preparation activities. Hagmann et al. (2020) found that more frequent involvement in cooking activities during childhood predicted better cooking skills in adulthood for both men and women, and healthier diets. During the pandemic, cooking together was also a mechanism employed to reduce screen time for children (Carroll et al., 2020), instead children participating in meal preparation, cooking, and eating together.

Knowledge is particularly important for developing an emotional connection with food through growing food. 35% of British adults use their garden or outdoor space to grow herbs, fruit and vegetables (HTA, 2021). On a practical level, there is evidence that growing food contributes to food security at all income levels by encouraging a more nutritious diet (Kortright & Wakefield, 2010), benefitting both physical and mental health, and economic health and family relationships, primarily because the families often garden together (Carney et al., 2011). There is also evidence to suggest that those growing their own food also are more responsible when dealing with waste both from the garden and kitchen, especially if following the caring and sharing behaviours of Food Self Provisioning (Sovová et al., 2021). This may result from the knowledge gained via growing-related activities. As shown during this chapter, knowledge can be gained, and exchanged, through

engaging in many activities, and is often important in the development of ECV by offering another means of connection to the food.

2.5 The alterity of AFNs

It is presumed that people naturally act egotistically and individualistically to pursue their own interests unless the acquirement of knowledge leads them to change this default (Barnett & Land, 2007). AFNs, therefore, following Barnett & Land's (2007) narrative, arise due to care and responsibility for one another (whether that be humans, animals, the environment, or the food itself) and are fuelled by consumers being educated/exposed somehow to make them change their behaviour (Shove, 2010). They are generally seen as reformist examples of responsible consumption behaviour (Sovová et al., 2021) and may be classed as a form of 'counter-cuisine' (Ranta & Ichijo, 2022). Some examples may be described as socio-political movements, which shape and are shaped both by collective identity and shared emotional experiences (Brown, 2010). When such non-financial values are linked with food via cognitive beliefs and attitudes, a food lifestyle results (Grunert et al., 1993; Monterrosa et al., 2020), but arguably these only become food cultures when these lifestyles do not waiver easily with external factors.

Interestingly, the type of values consumers have for AFNs appears to have a country specific variation. Martindale et al., (2018, p.4) argue that their "alterity" is dependent on particular social and spatial contexts, locality, scale, and food materialities. Their research suggested that UK consumers participate in AFNs more for the relationship value, rather than to buy local produce, which the protagonists argue can also be bought from supermarkets. From Schwartz's perspective, these values are likely to be based on a desire to either create security, whether of self or within community, or to promote benevolence. Either way, emotional connection with other consumers and producers, in a culture of food relationships, is perhaps more valuable than provenance or intrinsic features per se. Whereas, in Italy, instead of focussing on relationships (possibly because these already exist), Martindale et al., highlighted that many families would still know where to buy a good

oil directly from the producer. AFNs provide a “culinary adventure”, something which cannot be found in supermarkets, linking with traditional practices and rural development, and possibly also an intrinsic value based on taste. An example being dirty or bitten organic produce which proves its organic authenticity (Martindale et al., 2018). This value combines Schwartz’s openness to change through hedonism and stimulation, with conservation of tradition. These food experiences ensure traditions remain relevant (Lingham et al. 2023b), suggesting that food culture is not static, but adaptive. This means everyone can maintain respect for foods, based on emotional and community connection. Interestingly, the research of Martindale et al. contrasts with new visible consumer trends seen since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic which have highlighted four main foci when purchasing food: health benefits and traceability, sustainability, huge e-commerce support, provenance and supply chain ethics (Speciality Food Magazine, 2021).

Greece again differs from UK values, consumers generally preferring a direct supply chain where they can see the quality of the produce, how it is made, ensure the provenance, and have the personal relationship with the producer (Krystallis et al., 2007; Verinis, 2018). Indeed, Koutsou et al. (2015) found that over 76% of consumers prefer to purchase milk via SFSC than from a conventional supply chain. Organic, seasonal and fresh are necessities for consumers, and at least regional but often local produce is preferred, with minimal processing (Martindale et al., 2018; Petropoulou, 2016; Serra- Majem & Medina, 2020). This is because consumers associate local produce with higher quality standards, demonstrating Schwartz’s conservation values via security through quality; they also want to support local production for environmental and ethical reasons (Eaton, 2008; Petropoulou, 2016). This aspect suggests an appeal towards Schwartz’s conservation values due to the desire for such security for environment, and self-transcendence if this is done through a benevolent lens. The way a product is produced and the way it reaches the consumer are important values for them. Many of these relationships are based on a connective trust between producers and consumers, greater than that found within the supermarket system. Trust will be examined in the final part of this review.

2.5.1 Trust

Trust appears regularly in the literature surrounding values, from building trust back into politico-economic structures and supply chains (Gardner et al., 2019; iPES Food, 2019; Jurgilevich et al., 2016; Murphy, 2016; Rossing et al., 2020), to trust within specific food cultures (Bildtgård, 2013; Dernini et al., 2012; Murphy et al., 2021; Reguant-Aleix, 2012; Rockenbach & Sakdapolrak, 2017), trust relating to specific production methods such as organic (Curvelo et al., 2019; Watanabe et al., 2020), and regarding the impact of crises on consumer trust (Abiral & Atalan-Helicke, 2020; Jeżewska-Zychowicz et al., 2020).

A large and growing literature surrounding trust comparisons between AFNs and supermarket systems also exists. This literature generally suggests a greater degree of trust within AFN producer-consumer relationships than the conventional supplier-consumer relationships, where AFNs “reconvene” trust between producers and consumers through connection (Burgess et al., 2023; Koutsou et al., 2015; Manning & Kowalska, 2021; Martindale, 2021; Thorsøe & Kjeldsen, 2016; Whatmore et al., 2003, p. 389). Harmoniously, a recent collaborative YouGov and Red Tractor consumer survey, found that food safety and quality were trusted ‘a great deal’ by UK consumers and more when bought from a specialist shop (such as a butcher 48%) or farmers’ market (32%) than when bought from a supermarket (24%) (Red Tractor, 2021). Although trust is not assured for those participating in AFN/direct exchange methods (Martindale, 2021), AFNs provide a space for consumers to rebuild this trust in, and respect for, food and in the food system.

According to Thorsøe & Kjeldsen (2016), three forms of trust are relevant for producer-consumer relationships, producer-producer relationships and consumer-consumer relationships. The first is trust based on *reason*, developed by showing forms of competency (demonstrated in the work of (Martindale, 2021)); the next is trust based on *routine* (e.g.: producers trust the consumers to the point that no formal contracts are made); and the third is trust based on *reflexivity* (i.e.: the outcome of repeated interactions and open communication). Reason, routine and reflexivity are trust forms

which can be found within conventional and alternative food systems. In conventional systems, they exist with an “asymmetry” in the supplier-consumer relationship, often mediated by institutional trust (Manning & Kowalska, 2021). Relational trust is distinguishable from institutional trust. With institutional trust consumers purchase based on certification, logos or international standards, but trust lies in forms of verification often by third parties (Manning & Kowalska, 2021). Trust witnessed within AFNs is a relationship connection between producers and consumers which facilitates consumers to buy credence-based foods based on relational trust, because ‘I know you, so I trust you’. Relational trust cannot be replicated at scale, although the brand itself is often a dislocated proxy for relational trust.

Research has discovered that cultural requirements for trust creation differ globally. For instance, Finnish and UK consumers have been found to have higher levels of trust in food and food-related organisations than Germans or Greeks (Murphy et al., 2021). Additionally, in Western countries like the UK, consumers have “exceptional levels of trust” for small and/or local farmers (Martindale, 2021; Mount, 2012, p.114), encouraging them, where they can afford to or have access, to increase food purchases from more local sources, even if this is without a direct producer-consumer connection. This may suggest that UK consumers have greater institutional and relational trust than consumers in other countries regarding organisations within the supply chain or the governance structures around them. Alternatively, the UK has been described as having ‘dis-embedded’ trust (Sassatelli & Scott, 2001, p.220), trust which is universalistic and institutional rather than traditional and localised, which countries like Italy display. Perhaps, the change from displaying dis-embedded trust to relational trust may mean that trust can have varying depths, rather than being a single level or binary attribute, and that trust can become deeper, perhaps with repeat purchase. This would support the idea of trust based on routine from Thorsøe & Kjeldsen (2016), and support brand loyalty shown by consumers. As merely equipping consumers with knowledge may be insufficient to reconnect them with food (Eden et al., 2008), trust enables AFN actors to engage with each other despite a lack of knowledge: trust “enables action despite uncertainty” (Thorsøe & Kjeldsen, 2016,

p. 4). Arguably, however, neither trust nor vast knowledge is required when food networks are transparent.

2.6 Chapter summary

This chapter has explored the difference between value and values, how AFNs and non-financial values are interrelated, the role of SMEs within AFNs in creating new forms of value, what values consumers hold and how they relate to food, a developing food democracy, and how different forms of trust exist and may be system appropriate. This chapter has investigated the reasoning behind alternative networks for food, before analysing financial and non-financial values, building on existing literature to identify a series of non-financial alter-values people may hold for food, and concentrating on the idea of emotio-cultural value and its relationship with trust.

ECV has been considered in terms of where it originates and how it develops, its relationship with a consumer's identity, and how food memories, new food experiences and knowledge exchange can influence it. It is suggested that ECV originates from familial and wider culture food environments and becomes part of our identity. Whilst developing ECV for new foods and food experiences can occur throughout life, having a deep-rooted ECV for food generally cannot be strongly mediated or reduced by external factors such as food fashions. Food memories are formed from occasions where ECV is developed, and these memories then can inform later food decisions and behavioural practices. The possibility of developing ECV for new foods and experiences depends much on whether a consumer is neophobic or neophilic and on the levels of commensality enjoyed by them and whom this commensality it with. Whilst social media provides exposure to new foods and food experiences, which the consumer could develop an ECV for in practice, it often sways consumers between food fads meaning that a deeper rooted ECV cannot be formed. Holding ECV for a food stems greatly from a consumer's knowledge and understanding of that food, either environmentally or socially.

This study gives greater context to such values going forward, especially regarding the importance of connections and relationships for consumers and found that all value(s) are benefit or need related, with just the focal point of need and benefit changing.

Drawing together literature, this chapter has explored AFNs and the values they are based upon, using both UK and global examples, identified patterns between culture and food values, and analysed how values individuals hold affect their interaction with and respect for food and how these evolve into values held for food. It appears that values have changed as d'Angelo et al (2020) suggested, with consumers turning to alternative forms of food provision during certain catalysts such as the pandemic, but the longevity of these changes is yet unproven. Indeed, AFN polymorphism may aid their continuing and rising patronage. The main findings from this aspect of the literature are:

1. A difference exists between value and values, which much literature conflates.
2. A difference exists between financially-driven shared value models and co-created values models iteratively developed or co-created between the producer and their customers.
3. The alter-values typology has been developed to consider non-financial value more specifically in the context of AFNs.
4. There is much literature concentrating on the consumption-based values consumers develop for food when participating in community food schemes, or when businesses attempt to include non-financial values within their business plans, but little about how SMEs are aiding individually held values development on a more informal basis when value co-creation is not possible.
5. Connection between food, producers and consumers is the most obvious way to facilitate development of values, but requires further empirical investigation. In essence, non-financial

relationships with food are mediated by trust and knowledge, which are potentially facilitated by connection with AFNs and the microbusinesses and SMEs within them.

As the aim of this PhD study is to explore the role of microbusinesses and food SMEs in the development of food ECV in Gloucestershire, the following research questions have been developed to address the research gap, and will be addressed through interviews with food microbusinesses and SMEs, and via a consumer survey:

1. What networks are food microbusinesses and SMEs are involved with within Gloucestershire and what types of connections do they have within those networks?
2. Is having ECV beneficial in those networks, and if so, what activities develop ECV the most?
3. What is the role of food microbusinesses and SMEs in nurturing ECV for both consumers and themselves? What is their perceived role in changing food culture?

The next chapter presents the methodology proposed for answering these research questions.

Chapter 3 Methodology

3.1 Introduction

The methodology that informed the previous chapters was developed as follows. Chapter 2 is a structured, iterative review open to whole range of thinking, and focused on alternative food networks (AFNs) and food values. The literature identified themes, factors and characteristics around food values, but a possible knowledge gap within the existent findings in the literature was identified. A knowledge gap is a “disparity between the knowledge goal (target knowledge) and background knowledge” (Zhao et al., 2016, p. 976). It consists of three dimensions: cognitive (gaps in understanding), affective (is the information in the correct format for what is required?), and situational (looks at the uncertainties and ambiguities and whether the knowledge or information is appropriate for the methodology or research approach) (Stojanovic, 2005). The knowledge gap identified here was a lack of understanding of the non-financial values of food which food microbusinesses/SMEs can contribute to with their activities. The literature review found that food microbusinesses/SMEs within AFNs may aid the renegotiation of non-financial values of food for consumers, and that there were types of non-financial value (or alter-values) worthy of further exploration, especially emotio-cultural value (ECV). Having found previous theories and research to be limited, research questions rather than a ‘theoretical framework’ was used in the research.

To justify and develop these alter-values, primary research was conducted in the form of scoping interviews with academics and microbusiness/SME owners to compare stakeholder positioning with academic literature. This is described in stage 1. As chapter two revealed country differences in cultural food value, interviews were conducted in the UK and Greece. Through data collection, implicit knowledge was enhanced to develop experience and know-how (van Daal et al., 1998). As such, these findings were explored further to fill the gap in existing knowledge. This review and scoping exercise informed the alter-values typology and thus this author’s first published academic

paper: Reimagining food: Readdressing and Respecting Values (Lingham et al. 2022a). This paper contributes to explicit knowledge (van Daal et al., 1998). The second half of chapter 4 considers the concept of one of these values, ECV. There were multiple sources on organic and local food et cetera which relate directly to alter-values such as Production Related Value (PRV) and Supply Related Value (SRV), thus there is less of a knowledge gap to fill here. Intrinsic Value (IV) is a deep value and overlaps (but is not synonymous with) Emotio-cultural value (ECV). As such, the second part of chapter 4 focusses on ECV in light of findings from the scoping interviews where many differences between the emotional and cultural importance of food between Greece and the UK emerged. From the development of, and critique in, chapter 2, a series of research questions were developed, set out at the end of that chapter.

This methodology chapter outlines how these research questions were addressed. Section 3.2 outlines the research approach; 3.3 explains the 4-stage methodology, and finally 3.4 reflects on the methods used, limitations, controls and the role of the researcher. Peer-reviewed papers and book chapters published by this author during this research are listed in Table 3.1. They have been cited where appropriate throughout the thesis.

Table 3.1 Author publications

Title	Publication type	Authors	Citation
Reimagining food: Readdressing and Respecting Values	Academic paper	Lingham, Sophia Manning, Louise Maye, Damian	Sustainability 2022, Vol. 14, Page 7328
Artisan Food Production: What Makes Food 'Artisan'?	Book chapter	Lingham, Sophia Hill, Inge Manning, Louise	In 'Artisan and Handicraft Entrepreneurs', 2022, p.101-117
Culinary tourism: dualistic erosion and enhancement of food cultures.	Book chapter	Lingham, Sophia Manning, Louise Maye, Damian	In 'Routledge Handbook of Trends and Issues in Tourism Planning, Development, Management and Technology', 2023
Food Insecurity: Is Leagility a Potential Remedy?	Academic paper	Kowalska, Aleksandra Lingham, Sophia Manning, Louise Maye, Damian	Foods 2023, Vol. 12, Issue 16. 3138

3.2 Research Approach

This section explains the theoretical perspective, methodology, and methods used during this PhD study to answer the research questions. The Research Onion (Saunders & Bristow 2023) is used to explain the components of the research approach components, and to explain the stance and practicalities of this research.

3.2.1 Theoretical perspectives

Firstly, the concepts of ontology and epistemology, the former informing the latter, are considered. Ontology was defined by Crotty (2003, p. 10) as “the study of being”, including the study of existence and the concept of reality. This built on two fundamental ontological questions asked by Guba & Lincoln (1989, p. 83): “what is there that can be known?” and “what is the nature of reality?”. As such, ontological philosophies range from naïve realism, which believes there is one single truth about a topic and one reality, to relativism which believes there are multiple truths and realities. This PhD research consists of two elements as discrete but connected studies: business centric and consumer centric. Firstly, it focuses on food microbusinesses/SMEs coming from very different positions within the supply chain: farmer-producers, product-only producers, distributors, and those providing food experiences. Secondly, it focusses on consumers and their emotions and experiences relating to different food-related activities. Ergo, a philosophical perspective which recognises the different situations, experiences, nuances of each of these individuals and businesses, and does not try to generalise these experiences, is required. Therefore, both these studies are based on relativism which assumes that reality differs for each individual and an objective reality does not exist. Clearly, many different influences may evolve or change a person’s version of reality at any given time and place. Reality is thus intangible and dynamic. For the business-centric study, the reality for each business will be different, not least because they differ in size, set up, location, product, networks and business type, but also their realities may have changed since the pandemic, for instance. For the second, consumer-centric, study, the reality of each consumer will differ with their culture, location, age, and affluence, and therefore affect their responses.

It has been suggested that relativism leads to conclusions that “nothing can ever be known for definite, that there are multiple realities, none having precedence over the other in terms of claims to represent the truth about social phenomena” (Andrews, 2012, p. 42). Although ostensibly a disadvantage, it does not constitute a disadvantage here, as these multiple realities and how they affect different people and businesses are of interest. Firstly, it is not claimed that one account of reality is better than another, but instead this research attempts to find individual business instances of how their realities are impacting others’ realities and values. Secondly, the realities are definite for those experiencing them, and in the case of businesses, these realities, although not felt by all businesses may apply to more than one, and thus any appropriate interventions will be specific, diverging from the ‘one size fits all’ policy measures generally in place to aid businesses. Supporting this assertion, both Frechette et al. (2020) and Guba & Lincoln (1994) suggested that by describing the context and reality of one individual in great detail, readers can assess any possible transferability to their own realities.

This relativist ontology affects the choice of epistemology used. Epistemology “is a way of understanding an explaining how we know what we know”(Crotty, 1998, p. 3) and is inherent in the theoretical perspective (or ontology) underpinning the research. Crotty describes the three main epistemological pillars of objectivism, constructivism and subjectivism, and these seem to have formed the basis for further sub-categories. Personal epistemological assumptions govern what is considered as legitimate and appropriate for the research, and thus are important factors to consider when thinking about how the data will be collected, interpreted and understood. Whilst an analysis of the various philosophies available to base the research within is beyond the scope of this chapter, suffice is to say that this research uses a social constructionist epistemological perspective. It is often said that constructivism and social constructionism are used interchangeably (Andrews, 2012); constructivism argues that individuals mentally construct their world via cognitive processes, emphasising that “humans are different from physical phenomena because they create meanings” (Saunders et al., 2016, p. 140), and the different backgrounds, circumstances, and times mean

people create different versions of reality, and as such interpretivism/constructionism frees the research from generalisation of food businesses or their consumers. Additionally, the constructivist umbrella generally dictates that social realities and their meanings are produced via social interaction and are constantly changing (Grix, 2002). More nuanced is social constructionism which focuses on social rather than an individual perspective, looking at how concepts are defined at the societal level and then accepted as norms (Andrews, 2012). Therefore, this epistemology allows the comprehension of nuanced and changing idiosyncrasies that constitute reality and help gain a richer insight into the perceptions of businesses and consumers. The approach of social constructionism in understanding “realities are socially and experientially based, local and specific in nature” (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 110) is therefore more helpful in understanding the contexts each individual is working within to assess the varying importance they place on food, their emotions towards food, and, in the case of businesses, how fundamental they each are for their networks and communities in changing the non-financial value of food.

Many interpretations of constructionism show that subjective data derived from qualitative research can be as valuable as objective traditionally empiricist positivist paradigmatic research (Darlaston Jones, 2007). The reasoning here being that, despite the propensity for multiple interpretations of the same data, the richness provided mirrors the complexity and nebulous nature of ‘values’, and that one type of AFN, approach of an SME, or belief of an individual/community is not ubiquitous to all. The slimming down of such complicated examination by using only quantitative methodologies would arguably oversimplify the subject and not grasp the detail required to create any resulting actions required. Indeed, as Berger & Luckman (1966) argue, having more interpretations allows researchers to delve more into the ‘truth’ of such a complex problem.

For the business-centric side of the project, to look more in-depth into the relationships’ businesses had with other businesses, communities and individuals, it is advantageous to think outside the box and incorporate an even more dynamic research technique to achieve this. Thus, the pragmatist paradigm can be observed here. Indeed, Al-Ababneh (2020) asserted that there may be more than

one appropriate philosophy for the research, and pragmatism itself argues that it is possible to work with variations in epistemology. Pragmatism asserts that concepts are only relevant where they support action (Kelemen & Rumens, 2008; Saunders et al., 2016), and whilst this research did not start with a problem to solve as is usual for pragmatist research (Saunders et al., 2016), it became apparent that, to ascertain food business networks, methods needed to be innovative and dynamic. By using both qualitative emergent data collection techniques and quantitative techniques (discussed later), various methods being used to help understand the value of food and small food businesses in the UK (Creswell, 2009; Rossman & Wilson, 1985), pragmatism became relevant. As shown later, throughout the process the critical realism paradigm became a minor philosophy here also.

Constructivism allowed for reflexivity through procedural rigour and credibility of the data (Burns & Grove, 2001; Darlaston-Jones, 2007; Ryan et al., 2007), with this research and theories being scrutinised in multiple ways, for instance by the participants of the sense-testing interviews being academics. However, the reflexivity demonstrated by this researcher, partly negates inherent biases of the constructivist epistemology and shows the appropriateness of using constructivism instead of positivism as a research basis. This is because positivism, being objective, does not assume any reflexivity is required and thus has no means of evaluating the impact of bias on the data or individual responses. Sections 4.3 further reflects on this research, its limitations and controls, and the author's role within the project developing the themes here.

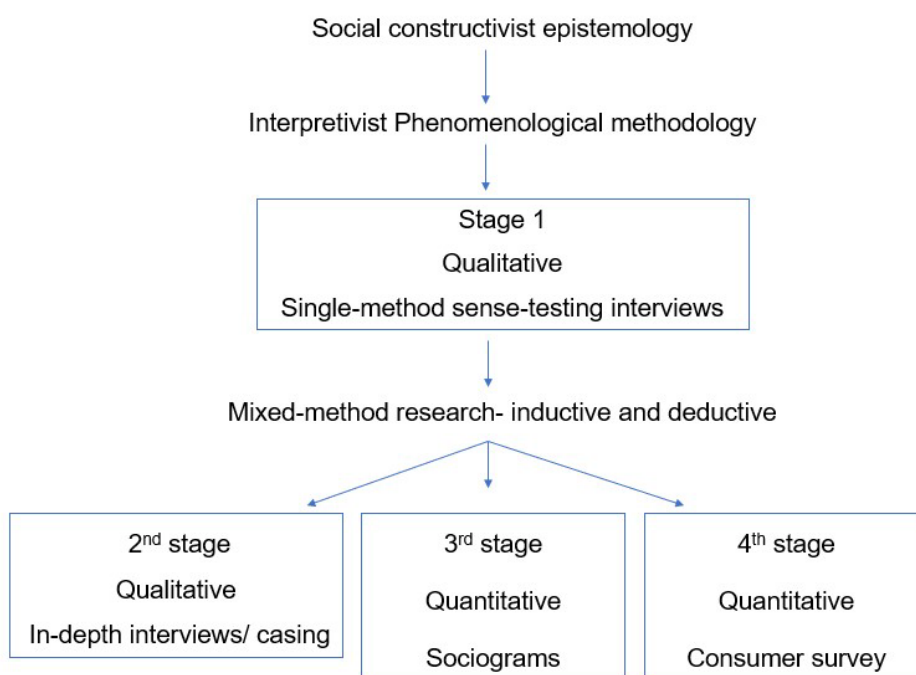
These paradigms inform the research methodology, defined as the 'overall approach to research linked to the paradigm or theoretical framework' (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006, p. 6). The literature gives much merit to the idea that epistemology influences methodology which then both influence the choice of methods used (Creswell, 2009; Michael Crotty, 1998; Gray, 2014; Mertens, 2005). To understand the differences in values individuals and communities assign to food, rich, focussed and personal research methods were required. Thus, direct questions and other forms of data verification to look at the topic from different angles were needed, reducing the possibility of

participants giving only a version of the truth they thought the researcher wanted to hear/ what they would like to be the truth.

3.2.2 Methodology

Described as “the strategy and plan of action” by Al-Ababneh (2020, p. 77), setting out the research design and providing “a rationale for the choice of methods”, the methodologies in action here differ with research stage. Methodology combines different forms of data collection (e.g.: interviews), methods of research (phenomenological, for instance), and related philosophical issues (ontology, epistemology) (Anguera et al., 2018; Greene, 2006). Figure 3.1 shows the chronology of this research.

Figure 3.1 Chronology and progress of research



The constructivist paradigm uses mainly qualitative methods, largely reliant on conversation (Gergen, 2001; Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006; Silverman, 2013). The qualitative semi-structured interview method is employed during stages 1 and 2. Qualitative research is defined as “the systematic collection, organisation, and interpretation of textual material derived from talk or

conversation. It is used in the exploration of meanings of social phenomena as experienced by individuals themselves, in their natural context” (Malterud, 2001, p.483). Qualitative research is subjective and subject to researcher bias (Koch & Harrington, 1998), affecting reliability/objectivity, however, credibility and thus consistency between the participants’ views and the researchers’ representation of them (Ryan et al., 2007) is high here.

Additionally, as will be explained in section 4.3, stages 3 and 4 involved quantitative methods. Quantitative research involves the collection and analysis of numerical data to describe, explain, predict or control particular phenomena (Gay et al., 2009; Mertler, 2016). Here, stage 3 involved creating a novel sociogram to examine the business networks studied, and stage 4 consisted of a consumer survey. Methods within research are defined as “systematic modes, procedures or tools used for collection and analysis of data” (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006). As all methods have their advantages and disadvantages, combining different methods was intended to compensate and produce more credible and rich results (Hunter & Brewer, 2016).

By involving both qualitative and quantitative research methods at different stages (Figure 3.1), it can be described as using a mixed methodological approach, from which is assumed a “better understanding of research problems than either approach alone” (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007, p. 5) as method pluralism aids complex investigation (Henao & Franco, 2016; Y. Wang et al., 2018). Using a mixed method approach to research has gained popularity in recent years (Anguera et al., 2018). Plus, combining data derived from non-spontaneous behaviour (the survey responses) with narrative data derived from natural settings (the interviews and sociogram formation) provides “breadth and depth of understanding and corroboration” (Johnson et al., 2007, p. 123). According to Creswell & Plano Clark (2007, p. 7), “There are three ways in which mixing occurs: merging or converging the two datasets by actually bringing them together, connecting the two datasets by having one build on the other, or embedding one data set within the other so that one type of data provides a supportive role for the other data set”. From these groupings, the strongest use of mixing occurs via embedding the quantitative sociogram data in the qualitative interview data, the latter

supporting the former. Thus, the raw data was qualitative, but the results are quantitative. This is similar to the liquifying method described and used by Anguera et al. (2017, 2018), consisting of schematically transforming “solid” textual material into “liquid” matrices of codes apt for quantitative analysis.

The inductive approach and method triangulation proved helpful, using multiple methods to establish different views (Gray, 2014). The methods used are partly due to a trial-and-error approach to see which were most effective in gaining in-depth information, data richness and capturing feelings from participants. This research approach being grounded mainly in a constructivist perspective, phenomenological methodologies were most appropriate in order to gain an understanding of the lived experiences, ways of life and values business participants had, and to describe the common meaning for various individuals of their ‘lived experiences’ (Creswell, 2013; Neubauer et al., 2019). Although using a constructivist paradigm means one person’s reality may not be shared by anyone else (Darlaston-Jones, 2007), it is necessary for a business/market to have an understanding of consumer values and thus some insight into the realities of their consumers, and many consumers may share similarities in their realities where they purchase food from the same place. Thus, hermeneutic rather than descriptive phenomenology is enacted here; the former wishes “to understand the deeper layers of human experience that lay obscured beneath surface awareness and how the individual’s lifeworld, or the world as he or she pre-reflectively experiences it, influences this experience” (Bynum & Varpio, 2018, p. 252; Neubauer et al., 2019). It does so by focusing on the meaning of experiences and realities by searching for themes and attempts to interpret these phenomena within the data (Sloan & Bowe, 2014). This creates very rich data helping to understand, from the business perspective, what their experience within food networks can reveal about AFNs and their role within these networks, and from a consumer perspective, how their food values are impacted by food microbusinesses/SMEs.

Phenomenology requires the researcher to “contemplate horizons of significance, embodiment, and being-in-the-world”, therefore allowing consideration and reflection on being a researcher,

interviewee, participant, et cetera (Frechette et al., 2020, p. 4). Indeed, hermeneutic phenomenology specifically allows past experiences, research, and knowledge of this researcher to become valuable guides to the investigation (Neubauer et al., 2019). Instead of trying to be unbiased, this researcher instead acknowledges any existing broad preconceptions and reflects on this subjectivity and its part in collating and analysing the data. This is particularly relevant considering the differences witnessed regularly by this researcher relating to how food is perceived in both Greece and the UK during the timeframe of the study. Additionally, inevitably, despite great self-expectations, to be approachable to all interview participants, especially in stage 2, better rapport was developed with some than others. It is important, given the methods employed that the extent to which a researcher and interviewee get along may impact the data in so far as, those with better rapport may be willing to talk or explain answers more thoroughly than others, and vice versa, so the portrayal of the lived experience may be qualified. In stage 2 especially, informal interviews turned into discussions, providing evidence of the hermeneutic aspects of the research.

3.3 Methods

This research follows a 4-stage programme as set out in table 3.2. The scoping interviews of stage 1 were conducted first, followed by stages 2, 3, and 4 concurrently. Each stage is explained in section 3.3. This is empirical research which enriches knowledge (van Daal et al., 1998). The first stage of interviews was more observatory whereas the second and third stages were more participatory by the researcher. Therefore, the data gained from these two interview stages especially will potentially be different to how someone else doing the same research and asking the same questions may have approached the study. This section details the chronology and approach to the different aspects of research.

Table 3.2 The 4-stage research programme

Stage	Research question	Outcomes
1 Scoping interviews	N/A	General overview and knowledge expansion for AFNs and values between UK and Greece. Presented in chapter 4
2 Informal business interviews	1, 2, 3	Indication of business food values Indication of business view of consumer food values. Presented in chapter 5
3 Sociogram development	1	Investigated business networks and connections Presented in chapter 5
4 Consumer survey	2, 3	Indication of consumer food values, culture and respect for food Presented in chapter 6

3.3.1 Stage 1: Scoping interviews in Greece and the UK

For stage 1, Greece was chosen as a comparative area for three main reasons. Firstly, the literature review revealed some country differences regarding attitudes and norms towards food and food activities and it was felt useful to compare a different culture with the UK. Secondly, it felt useful to compare the more individualistic UK culture with a more collectivist culture, of which Greece is one.

Thirdly, the author's partner is Greek and has family living in Greece; and many fascinating discussions have shown differences in the importance of food and food culture in Greece compared to in the UK. The researcher witnesses regularly how families and friends get together around food, the relationship they have with food producers and the importance of traditional dishes and recipes being handed down through generations. These are all things the author sees much less in the UK, and as such wanted to gain comparative data. Tables 3.3 a, b and c compare the two comparative areas of Gloucestershire, UK, and Fthiotida, Greece for a range of variables.

The first stage of research involved scoping interviews, to sense-test the alter-values typology and to gain an inter-country understanding of food cultures and the non-financial importance of food. The aim was to expand knowledge rather than answer a specific research question. Understanding the social culture in Greece, this author deemed informal interviews the most appropriate and fruitful method of data collection. The first scoping interviews continued until data saturation was reached. These provided rich, detailed data from a variety of actors within the food system. The data from each scoping interview enriched the picture developed, allowing development of ideas and theory. This stage was inductive because the research started by collecting data to explore the phenomenon of importance of food in different countries, and the next stages of research and indeed the research questions were then built upon this first stage, partly in the form of a conceptual framework (Saunders et al., 2016). To provide more thorough information, it made sense to interview people in the academic world and those on the ground with businesses in the food industry.

Table 3.3a Area comparison

Factor	UK	Comments	Greece	Comments
Description of area geographically	Gloucestershire is a county in the South-West of England which covers an area of 3,150km ² (Council, 2018). There are 6 districts of Gloucestershire: Cheltenham, Cotswold, Forest of Dean, Gloucester, Stroud and Tewkesbury.	Gloucestershire is a predominantly rurally populated county in the west of England.	Fthiotida is an area located in central mainland, northwest of Athens; it is part of the Sterea Ellada region. It covers an area of 4,440km ² .	From a google scholar search conducted on 25th October 2023 entitled 'Fthiotida Greece', only 403 results appeared.
Population	In 2020, Gloucestershire had a total population of just over 640,000, fairly evenly between men and women (NOMIS, 2020). Whilst 17% of people live in rural areas nationally, this rises to 29% in Gloucestershire (gfirst LEP, 2019). The Cotswold population is 100% rural and the Forest of Dean population is 95% rural (Collinson, 2019).		In 2020, Fthiotida had a population of 158,926 (Authority, 2020), consisting of more females than males: c.82k versus 77k.	Fthiotida has a lower population density than Gloucestershire.

Table 3.3b Area comparison

Factor	UK	Comments	Greece	Comments
Food industry facts and figures	Gloucestershire end to end food chain accounts for 8.8% of the local economy, and employed nearly 15% of the workforce in 2017 (Collinson, 2019). The wider Gloucestershire food chain comprises just 1% of the national total, which Collinson believes is less than expected and suggests that the value added part of the chain is “relatively underdeveloped”; this is an opportunity for “substantial economic growth”, even if county farm output did not increase (Collinson, 2019, p. 14). Gloucestershire’s food and agriculture sector is valued at nearly £1.5bn and supports over 50,000 jobs in the county’s wider economy (Collinson, 2019; gfirst LEP, 2019). The dominance of value-added and end of chain agri-food activities within the agricultural supply chain in Gloucestershire in 2018 demonstrates the importance of food SMEs businesses in the sector (GFirst LEP, 2019): the food service industry alone was worth £416m.	Aim 1: Create a healthy circular economy in food and farming that cools the climate, builds natural capital, and reduces food related illness, using organisations like the RAU and CCRI; this would make Gloucestershire as the first place in the world to do so (gfirst LEP, 2019). Aim 2: Be a ‘magnet county’ which “attracts and retains young talent and supports all its residents to live life to the fullest” (C. B. Council, 2023). Aim 3: The many educational bodies in the county often aid such business development, Gloucestershire being home to the Royal Agricultural University, Gloucester University, Hartpur University and College, Campden BRI, and Farm 491. Aim 4: The Growth Hub is also particularly active, having supported over 4000 SMEs (not just food-related) in the last 3 years, and developing a network of support (Hub, 2023).	Large percentage of the Fthiotida population works in the agricultural sector: arable, pastoral and forestry; out of those in livestock, 74% are men, 45% are between 36-45, 68% state a profit of below 10k euros pa (Papaspypopoulos et al., 2010). It produces large quantities of edible oils, horticultural products, cotton, tomatoes, citrus fruits, as well as PDO products, such as: Fthiotida shelled pistachio, and Sperchiou kiwi. They produce nearly 50% of national production of table olives (green) and 30% of the black olives (Karsioti, 2022); various olive oil producers have received international awards. In the area of central Greece, of which Fthiotida is part, c.50% of all businesses produce food (animals, crops, fish, and forestry), compared to 37% across the whole country; c.11% of central Greece’s economic turnover is from these businesses and employs 22% of the population here (compared to 10% of the country’s population). Businesses adding value (food, drink and tobacco) are 1.5% of the businesses in the region, with 9% of the economic turnover and 4% of the population (compared to c.1%, 5% and 3% respectively across the country) (Skilakaki & Benos, 2023).	The food industry accounts for 28% of all manufacturing enterprises in the country. The food sector is dominated by small companies: both in food (95%) and drinks (87%). The vast majority of enterprises are small, employing no more than nine people (Export.org, 2023). Despite being a large employer, the turnover of primary production businesses does not reflect their dominance. The value-added sector has potential to develop, especially considering the number of PDO products the region produces.
	Gloucestershire in 2018 had a predominantly small and micro business base, with businesses employing under 50 people comprising 97.3% of the business base, compared to 97% across England which “appears to suggest that Gloucestershire has a healthy culture of entrepreneurialism and micro-business formation” (GFirst LEP, 2019, p. 62). The Forest of Dean had the highest proportion of microbusinesses (GFirst LEP, 2019). The county is also home to many large-scale international companies like Lucozade, and some medium sized players such as Cotteswold Dairy, the Severn and Wye Smokery.	1. Finding a figure for the number of food SMEs in Gloucestershire proves tricky 2. According to the Vice Chair of GFirst LEP, Gloucestershire has the largest and fastest growing network of Agri-Tech SMEs (Mean, 2022). 3. The figures do not necessarily translate to scaling up and further employment provision, especially considering Cotswold and Forest of Dean have 50% survival rate of new businesses in the first 5 years of business when they started in 2012; however, this was higher than for England which was 43.1% (GFirst LEP, 2019).		

Table 3.3c New trends in Gloucestershire

Factor	UK	Comments
New trends in Gloucestershire	New grants for technology and equipment as well as advice (GFirst LEP, 2020).	1. Various activities to raise the interest in food and agriculture have been initiated. Focus on developing its agri-food sector. 2. Are these activities creating a new type of supplementary food network? 3. This is arguably mainly steered towards tourists. Agrifood sector is important tourism-wise, with 32% of tourists' spending in Gloucestershire being devoted to food and drink: £340m annually (Collinson, 2019). 4. GFirst LEP (2019) highlights the importance food tourism has within the Gloucestershire tourism sector. 5. A few of these businesses are interviewed during stage 2 of this research
	Rural skills courses and experiences such as Foraging are being hosted by many small businesses and collages, such as the Eating Wild course at Hawkwood College, or the Foraging and Wild Foods experience with The Cotswold Forager Rob Gould.	
	Increasing emphasis on food and agri-tourism, most recently: Visit Gloucestershire project creates a Food and Drinks map of the county, using cycle paths, walking routes and sustainable means of travel to link Pioneer businesses (e.g: Wholly Gelato, Hayles Fruit Farm, Hart's Barn, and the Sibling Distillery (Gloucestershire, 2023)).	
	Gloucester Food Dock opened in 2023 and aims at supporting local food SMEs grow their businesses. It has a very different form of landlord/tenant relationship, one feature of which is that rent is paid as a percentage of sales, without a base rate (Hub, 2022).	

For the UK interviewees, various academics from the Royal Agricultural University and other institutions were approached, and for those who were happy to be interviewed, an interview time was arranged. These interviews were conducted online via Zoom and recorded on an audio recorder, transcribed partly by Otter.ai and partly manually. The transcripts were saved onto the author's computer for later analysis. For the business interviews, various food microbusinesses/SMEs were approached via email and telephone call. They were selected according to the following requirements:

1. To align with size requirements of microbusinesses/SMEs,
2. Food businesses the author found particularly interesting in the context of the study,
3. Of different sizes, with different foci, and within different parts of the chain, and
4. Within Gloucestershire (as this was the area research funding was received for).

For those businesses who replied and were happy to be interviewed, interviews were conducted in-person at the business location, at the preference of the business. All the UK interviews were conducted between January and February 2022.

In Greece, the area of Fthiotida was selected as a comparison with Gloucestershire due to family connection, for ease of access, communication, and knowledge. Many of the most appropriate academics (those within agri-food research) were based in Thessaloniki and so were too distant to interview in person. This researcher preferred to interview in person due to the language barrier and the need for the researcher's partner's accompaniment for the interviews, and so it was decided that approaching local politicians with experience in food sector or food politics would be preferable, providing good and expert knowledge from a broader perspective. As most small food businesses in Greece are only contactable by phone or in person, the author's contacts helped with approaching various small local businesses from different industries, many of which the family regularly uses.

Thus, the sampling approach was convenience based.

The interviews were conducted in March 2022, again recorded on an audio recorder, later transcribed manually by this author and her partner as translator. Because he was present during the interviews, he could ensure that the translation accurately reflected what the interviewee was saying; one could describe this as subjective translation, but it felt more accurate than finding an official translator who did not know the context of what was being said. These transcripts were again saved to the computer ready for analysis. The interview method had to be adapted when working in Greece, as shown in Table 3.4.

Table 3.4 Interview adaptation in Greece

Action	Reason
The original questions in English did not directly translate into Greek.	The interview questions had to be rewritten.
The follow-up questions/clarification questions were less effective than in the UK.	Despite the mediocre level of the author's Greek, the depth of the topic meant that her partner was required to translate answers ad hoc.
Keeping to the interview questions was difficult	Due to the conversational nature of the participants and the desire for a discussion
Interviews were more conversational and informal	It was necessary to gain a certain level of trust from participants, contrasting with UK participants, some of whom preferred to finish the interview pronto.

The background to the final interviewees is shown in Tables 3.5 a and b.

Table 3.5a Stage 1 interviewees - Greek

Greek politicians	Acronym	Greek businesses	Comment/ Location	Acronym
Government Spokesman (sent answers via email as could not meet in person due to the start of the Ukraine war)	GP1	Extensive farm with outdoor goats, sheep, animal feed, fruits, olives, cereal	Sperhiada	GB1
Deputy Regional Governor of Central Greece Administrative Region	GP2	Milk cooperative	Lamia	GB2
		Farm with intensive indoor pork production	Lamia	GB3
		Fishermen cooperative	Stilida	GB4
		Vegetable producer	Lamia	GB5

Table 3.5b Stage 1 interviewees- UK

UK academics/policy representatives	Acronym	UK businesses	Comment/location	Acronym
Representative of Gloucestershire Food and Farming Partnership	UKA1	Goat meat farmer.	Since ceased trading	UKB1
Representative from GFirst LEP	UKA2	Service station	Gloucester	UKB2
Academic	UKA3	Social enterprise community kitchen	Stroud	UKB3
Representative from NICRE	UKA4	Farmers' market group	Stroud	UKB4
Representative from Sustainability Organisation	UKA5	Farm Shop	Cirencester	UKB5
Representative from Cotswold District Council	UKA6			
Representative from AHDB	UKA7			

Nvivo 12 was used to start analysing the scoping interviews due to its systematic and rigorous nature. However, due to an update with Nvivo resulting in the loss of initial work, analysis was finished manually. Through Nvivo, firstly content analysis was conducted to look at what was actually said and compare the businesses and academics intra-country, followed by inter-country. Then, thematic analysis was conducted, which, along with using Nvivo, is discussed in s.3.3.2. One interview question related to business networks. Spider diagrams were created to visualise networks in broad terms, but it was felt that in the next stage of research, delving more deeply into business networks would be prudent not only to see their connections, but also the strength and types of relationships they had with other businesses. Thus, it is only the more detailed secondary versions of the spider diagrams which are presented in the results.

3.3.2 Stage 2: Interviews in Gloucestershire

Stage 2 involved a further set of interviews to primarily combat research questions 1 and 3. They were designed to look firstly into business connectivity (their networks, connections, and values), and secondly into how businesses perceive their consumers' relationship with food. Therefore, food microbusinesses/SMEs at different stages of the food chain (n=20) within or close to Gloucestershire were interviewed.

Many academics highlight, when studying the content and structure of networks, the importance of analysing via both network analysis methods and qualitative methods such as interviews (Crossley, 2010; Luxton & Sbicca, 2020; Marin & Wellman, 2011). Thus here, to look visually into the networks and connections between businesses, and to accompany the main interview, the last section of the interview involved the creation of a business sociogram with the interviewee (discussed in s.3.3.3). These two methods were used to create richer data and from different perspectives. Similarly with stage 1, analysing the interview data took an inductive reasoning approach.

The interviews were semi-structured to create casing of businesses rather than case studies, as described by Yin. Although deep case studies were the original plan, when it came to investigating particular businesses to better understand in-depth realities and processes 'on the ground' (Durrenberger, 2003; Tewari et al., 2018), to have a 'picture' of what's happening in Gloucestershire, many case studies were necessary. Therefore, conducting deep case studies was impossible timewise given the resources of the PhD study. Using this exploratory case study approach allowed thorough examination of a contemporary phenomenon (Yin, 2018).

Choosing business interviewees followed the same criteria as used in stage 1 and included businesses representing different parts of the food supply chain. Final businesses were chosen primarily due to their willingness to participate in interviews. Twenty interviews were conducted. Where possible, where interviewees mentioned certain other business connections, interviews were

set up with these businesses, although this was not often possible and presents a future opportunity for further research to triangulate this data. Data saturation was reached between interview 15 and 20, with similar comments being made, but twenty interviews was felt a good sample from which to analyse data. Although arguably a low number of cases, it was sufficient considering the detail these interviews exhibited. As explained by Frechette et al., (2020, p. 6),

“A small purposive sample with rich and diverse lived experiences of the phenomenon is most coherent with phenomenological studies’ main objective of uncovering the multiple layers of hiddenness of a phenomenon within its context.”

Table 6.1 shows the businesses interviewed and groups them according to business size and type. Business size reflects headcount rather than being financially based, but this is in keeping with the EU definition of business size described earlier. Overlaps exist between these iterative categories; for instance, many of these businesses also have a café and could either fall into a new category or be a Distributor. B17 is a farm shop supplied by the farm it is on and by other producers, but as it was the person responsible for the farm shop being interviewed, the coding was assigned to the distributor rather than the farmer-producer category.

Interviews generally lasted forty minutes to an hour and interview questions were sent to interviewees in advance and a printed-out version was also supplied on the day for interviewees as a guide to follow. Some interviewees had made notes beforehand, whilst others had not read the questions until the interview. Those who had read them previously seemed to have considered their answers, and in some cases, businesses stated the questions had provided them an opportunity to self-analyse and reflect, allowing them the opportunity to re-evaluate and think about their business from a different perspective. This, they felt, was not only helpful for their business development but also helped inform strategies to overcome various hurdles they have experienced. The interviews were recorded on audio recorder, transcribed using a mixture of Microsoft Word’s own transcription

facility, Otter.ai, and manual transcription. They were analysed using Nvivo for content analysis and then were manually analysed for thematic analysis.

Nvivo

Requiring efficient management of qualitative interview data and the ability to conduct thematic analysis in an effective and user-friendly manner, Nvivo was suggested to this author by multiple academics as a useful software for effective coding. Due to the researcher's limited knowledge or experience with analysis software, having previously conducted all analysis manually for previous qualifications or with the use of Excel, this suggestion was perceived more rigorous, and transparent analysis was also desired. Nvivo is a qualitative data analysis software (QDAS) which has been used on many occasions within relativist constructivist research (eg: by Bonello & Meehan (2019), Clarke et al. (2023), and Onuh et al. (2023)). Essentially, it is an "advanced pack of highlighter pens" (Fallin, 2019, p. 244), where segments of the data are highlighted and coded, allowing comparison with other segments within the same code (Khan, 2014) and comparison of relationships between the coding categories (Clarke et al., 2023). The codes developed into themes, which then aided answering the research questions. However, instead of using all the functions Nvivo could offer, it was used here purely as an organisational tool, allowing easier multistage coding during the inductive discovery process and more coherent indexing and restructuring of developing codes and themes. It likely produced more robust analysis than if conducted manually via printing out each interview and coding by hand.

Thematic analysis

According to Braun and Clarke, "thematic analysis should be seen as a foundational method for qualitative analysis" (2006, p. 78) enabling the identification, analysis and reporting of data patterns (Braun & Clarke, 2006), going from description to interpretation. They argue thematic analysis is a method in its own right, chiefly because it can be applied across a range of theoretical and epistemological approaches, its flexibility enabling provision of rich, detailed and complex data

(Braun & Clarke, 2006). Ergo, it fits within the field of constructionism. At the beginning of the research process, when deciding on the research questions and approach, a constructivist epistemology was chosen. However, when analysing the data, the author desired to go beyond constructivism towards contextualism, and so research became based on a mix of these two paradigms chiefly because of the use of the critical realism approach which looks at how people “make meaning of their experience” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 81), and how the broader social context may impact these meanings and reality. The stance of critical realism asserts that there are two steps to understanding the world: firstly, the feelings and events we experience, and secondly, the mental processing of these experiences (Saunders et al., 2016). Here, this stance enables a focus on explaining these sensations and events by looking at their underlying causes. For instance, relationships with other businesses were discussed, and via these, the situation regarding local council support and government aid for small businesses. Helpfully, thematic analysis can be used in both constructionist and contextualist paradigms.

Thematic analysis involves finding the patterns within the data. When interview responses produced patterns around a certain topic, these were classified as Themes. As described by Braun & Clarke (2006, p. 86), these are “repeated patterns of meaning”. These themes were identified, named and collated using Nvivo. There is no minimum number of entries relating to a particular topic required to class something as a theme (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Here, generally if a topic was discussed by more than four respondents, these quotes were collated as potential themes. Thus, through the course of several iterations of thematic analysis, many different themes were found. Themes, although stemming from research questions, were strongly linked to the data itself (Patton, 1990) and often consisted of topics beyond the realms of the questions asked. Themes particularly relevant to the research questions were then further analysed, as well as those which were described in a particularly strong/emotive manner. For instance, the lack of support from Councils was discussed by eight businesses and was a particularly emotive topic. Although themes were identified by this author, the theme topics themselves were inductive, driven by the data and not

personal epistemologies, theories or preconceptions, although arguably it is impossible to omit these completely. Indeed, the themes that emerged or were discovered, see Taylor & Ussher (2001), were attributable to balancing the passive and active roles of the researcher who played an active role in finding themes within the data and selecting those of interest. However, they were careful not to fall into the trap described by Ely et al:

“The language of ‘themes emerging’: can be misinterpreted to mean that themes ‘reside’ in the data, and if we just look hard enough they will ‘emerge’ like Venus on the half shell. If themes ‘reside’ anywhere, they reside in our heads from our thinking about our data and creating links as we understand them” (1997, p.205-6).

The thematic analysis analysed went further than the semantic level, towards the latent level, from description and meaning to identifying the “features that gave it that particular form and meaning” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 84). Conducting the thematic analysis was a recursive rather than linear process (Braun & Clarke, 2006), and therefore the actions within the thematic analysis (see Table 3.6) occurred not via set design approaches, but by moving back and forth between each.

Table 3.6 Actions within thematic analysis

Analysis action	Description	Process and comments
1.	Transcribing the data using a mix of Otter.ai, Dragon, Microsoft Word transcription feature, and manual transcription.	Occasionally, the words of the interviewee were hard to decipher and had to be changed to what the digital transcriptions typed, or where they had typed nothing, the author had to guess what the interviewee had said by listening to the context of the sentence (and replaying multiple times) and also by remembering what the interviewee had meant at the time of the interview. All attempts were made to ensure the transcribed account was as close to the verbal account as possible.
2.	Uploading the interview data into Nvivo	
3.	Reading through all interviews and familiarising with the data, looking at potential code groupings and ideas, but mainly getting a feel for the data	
4.	Highlighting text and creating codes in Nvivo	Codifying interesting and recurring ideas across the whole dataset
5.	Re-reading all interviews to gather further information for each code.	As codes arose during the reading process, there were many occasions where a new idea arose in one interview which was not identified in the ones previously. Therefore, when re-reading all the interviews, there were many codes which had not been applied to the first interviews which were then added.
6.	Identifying themes	Going through the codes and refining, combining or separating codes. This led to identification of themes.
7.	Refining the themes to create coherent patterns around a particular topic and re-coding where necessary.	As there were so many codes about many different interesting but not always entirely relevant topics, the author and their supervisor chose the coded themes and subthemes of particular interest to focus analysis on to help answer the research questions.
8.	Concisely naming the themes and subthemes	
9.	Final analysis of the themes via latent analysis, finding quotes and, where relevant, support from the literature for the drafting of the analysis section of this thesis.	

3.3.3 Stage 3: Business network diagrams

The results from stage 1 were the reason for further enquiry via stage 3, as stage 1 uncovered many different forms of AFN and linkages between SMEs uncommon in the UK. Answering research question 1, the aim of stage 3 was to establish business networks and connection types and their strengths, looking at financial and non-financial connections and relationships between businesses. This involved the creation of business sociograms, effectively spider diagrams, during the final part of each interview. As described earlier, this embeds quantitative data within qualitative. The process for transforming, or liquifying, qualitative interview data into quantitative data followed a similar pattern to that of Anguera et al. (2018): through:

- (1) establishing criteria to divide the text into meaningful units, here creating groupings for businesses, the other businesses within their network, and the type and strength of connection,
- (2) creating a spreadsheet which could collate the data and provide the correct calculations,
- (3) coding of information using the spider diagrams and the interviews themselves,
- (4) data quality control, and
- (5) quantitative analysis of data.

Semi-inductive and semi-abductive reasoning was used. It was inductive because interviews were used to collect qualitative data to explore themes around the ideas of business role, priorities and connections; and abductive because interviewees were given a rudimentary business sociogram/concentric circle model to complete with this author, and thus the interviews were used to test the model.

3.3.3.1 Method choice

As the stage involved some form of visualisation of the network or the linkages between businesses, there were various forms of visualisation methodology which could be used. Because this

researcher wanted to gain the information during the stage 2 interviews, similar to Gaitán-Cremaschi et al. (2022) who used interviews to gain information for the Social Network Analysis (SNA), the methodology needed to be appropriate for qualitative data and analysis. Davis et al. (2019) identified various forms of qualitative methods used in the literature (art, mapping, multimedia, narrative, and visual), and a type of visual mapping was used here.

“Methodologically, if one accepts that the intangible, the subjective, and the immaterial are important to what culture is as an object of study, then quantitative methods alone are inadequate.” (Garrett-Petts et al., 2015, p. 18).

Focusing here on tangible and intangible, multi-methods were required to triangulate and “produce an integrated picture of the problem and have more ways to verify theoretical concepts” (Repko, 2008, p. 209). These business sociograms started as qualitative data and were translated into quantitative data, to triangulate with the qualitative data from the interviews, creating a more reliable overall dataset. This researcher wanted to include a form of quantitative methodology for stronger, more triangulated results, and thus needed a methodology which had the potential to be quantified. This hybridisation of different methodologies allows for both qualitative and quantitative forms of analysis. This hybrid stemmed from Social Network Analysis (SNA) and cultural mapping, which are now considered.

Cultural mapping

The practical research process is an interdisciplinary methodology consisting of a hybrid of mixed research methods and can include visual and verbal methods (Garrett-Petts et al., 2015; Redaelli, 2019). It may be seen “both as a social practice and a methodological point of intersection informing academic research, local governance, and community empowerment and change” (p.3) due to its symbolism. From the literature there appear to be five main mapping trajectories: community

empowerment and counter-mapping (a map-making process whereby communities make their own maps), policy mapping, municipal governance mapping, mapping as an artistic practice, and mapping for academic inquiry (Garrett-Petts et al., 2015; Ribeiro et al., 2020). Ostensibly mapping here is for academic inquiry, but this research hopes that it will transpire, as an indirect output, to be a form of community empowerment on a small business scale. From a pragmatic approach, cultural mapping is “a process of collecting, recording, analysing and synthesising information in order to describe the cultural resources, networks, links and patterns of usage of a given community or group” (Stewart, 2007, p. 8) and is considered “a systematic tool to involve communities in the identification and recording of local cultural assets, with the implication that this knowledge will then be used to inform collective strategies, planning processes, or other initiatives” (Garrett-Petts et al., 2015, p.2), both tangible and intangible. A type of cultural mapping, indigenous mapping, and intangible cultural heritage are endorsed by UNESCO (Longley & Duxbury, 2016). Cultural mapping may divulge the attachment we have to where we live, and how we understand, use, and are affected by them, and identify issues within these ‘storied landscapes’ (Duxbury, 2019) and thus provides “an integrated picture of the cultural character, significance, and workings of a place” in order to help communities recognise, celebrate, and support cultural diversity for economic, social and regional development (Duxbury, 2019; Pillai, 2013).

Such cultural mapping is not only epistemological, it is also “deeply ontological”: mapping is “both a way of thinking about the world, offering a framework for knowledge, and a set of assertions about the world itself” (Kitchin et al., 2009, p. 2). With synergies with Bourdieu’s cultural capital, Costa & Chiesi (2016, p. 158) described cultural mapping as “a tool to list the tangible and the intangible instances of the cultural capital of a place” and can be used to build identity or knowledge. These seemed relevant considering the form of mapping needed to allow concentration on the nonfinancial links with other businesses, within the culture of AFNs in Gloucestershire, involving the intangible capital between businesses and how this strengthens the local food culture and its identity in this area.

Many of the non-financial relationships involved types and levels of emotions. Geographers have described emotions as subjective, relational flows between places and people (Davidson et al., 2012), adding a crucial spatial dimension (Pánek & Benediktsson, 2017). Mapping emotional and intangible aspects is therefore a technique in itself (Graybill, 2013; Longley & Duxbury, 2016; Pánek & Benediktsson, 2017; Ribeiro et al., 2020; Shakeela & Weaver, 2012). “Emotional maps chart human feelings onto a cartographical landscape and allow users to devise and customise their own emotional landscape, choosing what kinds of thoughts or experiences, feelings or passions, to map” (Perkins, 2009, p.130 in Pánek & Benediktsson, 2017). The type of mapping used in this PhD study was created to combine emotions in the form of, level, and type of relationships businesses had with others, and so stops short of building an ‘emotional landscape’; thus, ‘emotional mapping’ per se was not used.

Reed et al. (2006) defined the two ideological paradigms of cultural mapping: the expert-led and top–down paradigm, and the community-based and bottom–up paradigm. The mapping here is the latter, being led by the businesses, with a few introductory framing questions from the author, to better understand the local context, integrated relationships, and encourage empowerment and holistic business-to-business development/relationship building. Integration of both paradigms provides a more holistic approach. The benefits of such cultural mapping are mainly knowledge based to inform innovations and policy interventions with future planning and decision-making, creating scenarios and sustainable bridges. Increasing academic, and from this, community awareness, supports the marketing and promotion of these cultural assets to both residents and visitors/tourists. Finally, cultural sector development strengthens networks and collaboration across a wide range of cultural groups and activities (Garrett-Petts et al., 2015; Gibson et al., 2010; Hu et al., 2015; Ribeiro et al., 2020; Smith et al., 2015; Zha et al., 2018). As mentioned above, the mapping approach used also involves aspects of emotional mapping.

Social network analysis (SNA)

Social mapping is a quicker form of ethnography (Davis et al., 2019) than the traditional ethnographic techniques and therefore was an appropriate method for this stage of data collection. SNA is the established methodology for mapping connections. Networks specifically have been used to understand how local food system networks evolve (Brinkley et al., 2021), the role of actor networks in public food procurement from family farming (Gaitán-Cremaschi et al., 2022), and, particularly relevant here, to investigate how social networks are important for food system resilience (Bruce et al., 2021). The premise of SNA is that social life is created primarily and most importantly by relations and the patterns formed by connections (Luxton & Sbicca, 2020; Marin & Wellman, 2011), and it can help to map the networks of actors and their connections within their support structures (Gaitán-Cremaschi et al., 2022) such as flows of knowledge, support, goods, and services. SNA can contribute to understanding resilience by providing insights into how social networks facilitate collective action, enable knowledge diffusion and promote social support for households and communities to cope with change (Bruce et al., 2021; Rockenbach & Sakdapolrak, 2017). Many research examples focus on the networks within social movements (Blay-Palmer et al., 2016; Goodman et al., 2012; Levkoe, 2014; Luxton & Sbicca, 2020) but this PhD instead looks at the relationships between businesses from the perspective of their own welfare and benefit instead of a wider social movement. Being particularly capable of examining how organisations mobilise their resources to create collaborative and cooperative networks (Krinsky & Crossley, 2013; Luxton & Sbicca, 2020), SNA is a relevant methodology here considering the aim is to look at different connection types between food businesses.

Practically, SNA measures the number and frequency of connections between individuals (Tubaro et al., 2016) and is thus traditionally a quantitative methodology. However, because abstract mapping reduces relationships to numerical data (Luxton & Sbicca, 2020) whilst in reality, they are much more complicated, more recently it has also been used qualitatively (Crossley, 2010; Luxton

& Sbicca, 2020; Marin & Wellman, 2011). Luxton & Sbicca (2020, p. 164) described the quantitative and qualitative aspects of SNA as the 'structure and story': "while quantitative data helps illustrate this networked structure, qualitative data provides an interpretative framework for identifying the forces shaping networks and the nature of ties". A combination of qualitative methods and SNA "enriches understanding of how respondents characterize structural aspects of the network, such as clusters and connected individuals, as well as further explains how actors come to occupy such positions" (Luxton & Sbicca, 2020, p. 164; Pesci & Brinkley, 2021). Indeed, the decision to use a form of SNA relied heavily on the work of Luxton & Sbicca (2020), and so the qualitative interviews were used as a platform to initiate the development of sociograms for each business; these sociograms produced both qualitative and quantitative data.

Methodological hybridity

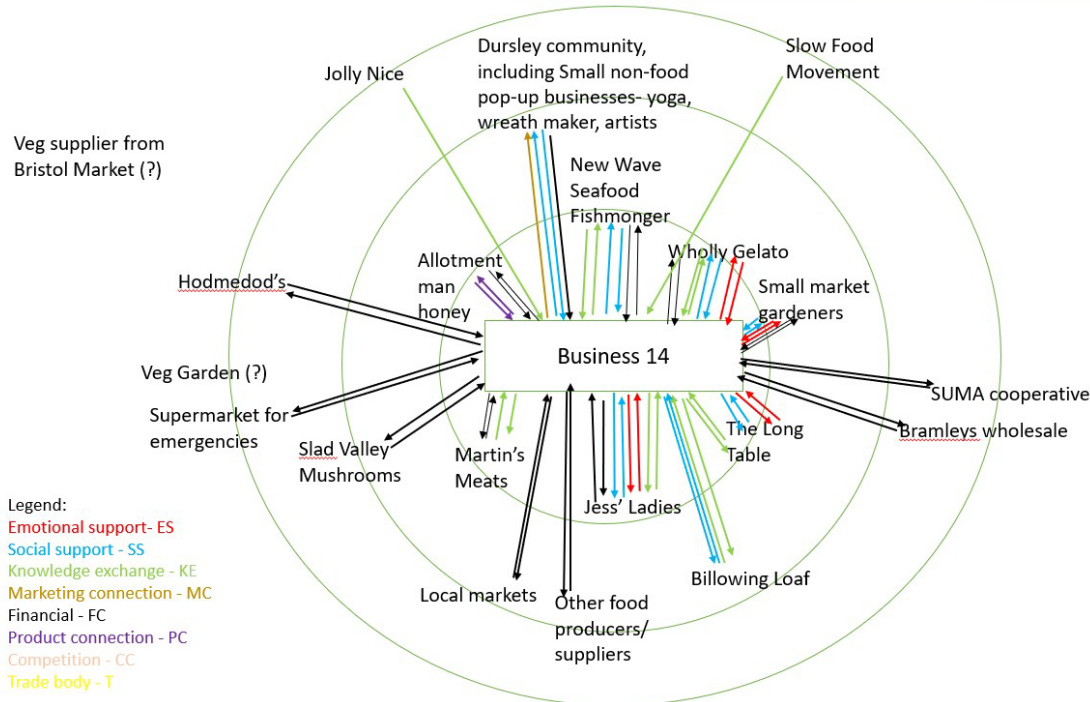
The form of methodology used encompasses features of SNA and cultural mapping and builds a new version of SNA concentrating on various cultural non-financial connections of food businesses. Brinkley (2018) created a geo-social layout map showing AFN layout. They used six degrees of separation and small world theory to support highly mathematical data captured from qualitative data collection. This research uses a lower level of mathematical response to the data, displayed in the form of sociograms. Because the focus of this stage was to look at the non-financial connections between businesses, egocentric sociograms, "a visual representation of an individual's relationships with others", were another possible methodology (Benchekroun, 2020, p. 1; Gabb & Singh, 2015). Indeed, Dobbie et al. (2017) even described egocentric diagrams as an extension of SNA. A form of business sociogram was required here, and the construction of the business sociograms constitutes narrative (rather than numerical) SNA (Contandriopoulos et al., 2018). This creates depth and diversity of social networks which SNA may otherwise fail to capture (Bellotti, 2015).

The form of network diagram used was developed following the logic of Dobbie et al. (2017) who created sociograms using concentric circles. Figure 4.2 shows a very similar approach was adopted

here and extended to include different connection types (here shown as emotional support, et cetera), and the direction of relationship (whether bi-directional or one direction in or out). This extends the work of Brinkley (2018) by delving into what those relationships consist of and the business' perception of these connections.

The diagrams consisted of three concentric circles, each inside the other, with the business being interviewed being labelled in the middle of the innermost circle. Thus, the outer circles radiated from this inner circle to represent the strength of connection with other businesses: the closer to the middle, the stronger the connection. These were constructed with the interviewee during the interview. Instead of using Visio Microsoft mapping software to create a visual representation of links, a participatory method asked interviewees to physically map their network. They listed their connections, which were then added to the diagram where the interviewee felt appropriate. Next, the type and strength of connection was discussed. Examples of the types of connection possible were listed at the bottom of the page and used as cues for interviewees; however, it was made clear during the interview that these were only ideas, and they were free to add other connection types. The interpretation of certain connection descriptions was often left open; therefore, differences exist between what some businesses think of as 'social' connection and what they define as 'product connection' for instance. This aptly demonstrates the nuances within Chiesi and Costa's cultural mapping theory of three continua: knowledge vs. identity, inside vs. outside, and past vs. future (Costa & Chiesi, 2016). Many of the businesses preferred to describe the connections and relationships whilst the researcher added them to the diagram, whilst others took the initiative of completing the diagrams themselves whilst discussing with the author. Later, the connection types were colour coded and the diagrams were created on the computer. Figure 3.2 is an example diagram from one of the businesses including the *typology of connections*.

Figure 3.2 Example business network diagram



Each business was later sent their diagram/sociogram and asked if there was anything they wanted to change, giving them the opportunity of reassessing the connections and whether they had changed or whether they had misrepresented them previously. These sociograms were then used to codify, rate, and numerify the relationships between businesses. Firstly, a dataset of those connective actors the interviewed businesses listed connections with was created. These actors were coded on their type of link with the business being interviewed (Social network focal community et cetera) seen in column B of figure 3.3 and explained later. Secondly, business connection types were coded, looking into their *characteristics* using excel to catalogue the types of connection (ES, SS et cetera), their strength (coloured red for the strongest (3), orange for the neutral (2) , and pink for the weakest (1)) and their direction (in, out, bi-directional).

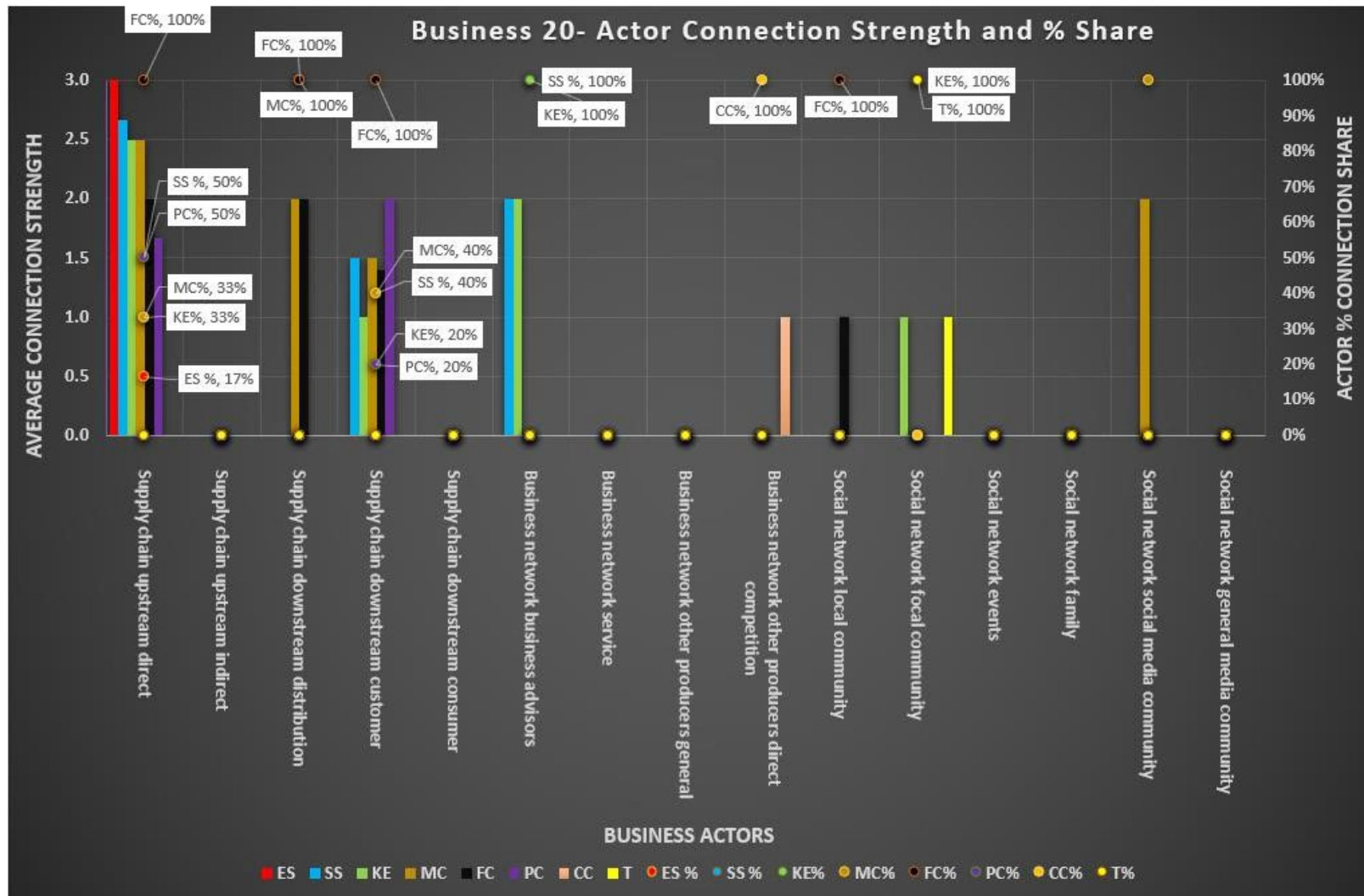
The information gained from the Excel spreadsheet abstractions was then put into a graph sociogram to show the whole picture for each business. Figure 3.4 is one such business sociogram. On the X axis, the business actor types are listed. The left-hand side Y axis shows the average

connection strength each of the connection types has within the business actors. The connection types are colour coded with the legend at the bottom of the chart. For example, in the Supply Chain Upstream Direct column, the average strength of the emotional connections (in red) B20 has in this connective actor category is 3, the highest strength. The right-hand side Y axis shows the percentage share that each connection type has within the connective actor categories. For instance, in the Social Network Focal Community actor group, 100% of these actors displayed both knowledge exchange and trade connection with B20, whereas in the Supply Chain Downstream Customer actor group, only 20% of these had any product connection with B20.

Figure 3.3 Excel spreadsheet of business actors and connection type and strength

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S
1		A																	
2	Cooperating Business	Category		ES						SS						KE			
3				IN	OUT	BI				IN	OUT	BI				IN	OUT	BI	
4	Made in Gloucestershire	Social network focal community		0	0	0			0	0	0	0			0	1	0	0	
5	Gloucester services	Supply chain downstream customer		0	0	0			0	0	0	2			2	0	0	0	
6	Elmore Court estate farm	Supply chain upstream direct		0	0	0			0	0	0	3			3	0	0	0	
7	Local visiting clubs and school groups	Social network local community		0	0	0			0	0	0	0			0	0	0	0	
8	Mid Counties co-op	Supply chain downstream customer		0	0	0			0	1	0	0			1	1	0	0	
9	Gin distillery	Supply chain upstream direct		0	0	0			0	0	0	0			0	0	0	0	
10	Eastington Farm shop	Supply chain downstream customer		0	0	0			0	0	0	0			0	0	0	0	
11	Frocester Fayre farm shop	Supply chain downstream customer		0	0	0			0	0	0	0			0	0	0	0	
12	Cherry Moo ice cream	Business network other producers direct competition		0	0	0			0	0	0	0			0	0	0	0	
13	Wall's ice cream	Business network other producers direct competition		0	0	0			0	0	0	0			0	0	0	0	
14	Winstone's ice cream	Business network other producers direct competition		0	0	0			0	0	0	0			0	0	0	0	
15	Gloucester food dock	Supply chain downstream distribution		0	0	0			0	0	0	0			0	0	0	0	
16	Hetty's brownies	Supply chain upstream direct		0	0	0			0	0	0	0			0	0	0	0	
17	Elmore fruit farm	Supply chain upstream direct		0	0	3			3	0	0	3			3	3	0	0	
18	Local honey supplier	Supply chain upstream direct		0	0	0			0	0	0	2			2	2	0	0	
19	Other business collaborations for flavours	Supply chain upstream direct		0	0	0			0	0	0	0			0	0	0	0	
20	The Growth Hub	Business network business advisors		0	0	0			0	2	0	0			2	2	0	0	
21	Leaf and Ground	Supply chain downstream customer		0	0	0			0	0	0	0			0	0	0	0	
22																			
23																			
24																			
25		Total Actor Count	Actor Share %				AVG Strength	Connectio n Share %	Count				AVG Strength	Connectio n Share %	Count				AVG Strength
26	Supply chain upstream direct		6 33.3%	0	0	3	3	17%	1	0	0	8	2.666667	50%	3	5	0	0	2.5
27	Supply chain upstream indirect		0 0.0%	0	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0	0
28	Supply chain downstream distribution		1 5.6%	0	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0	0

Figure 3.4 Sociogram of business 20



Little research currently systematically maps the structure of inter-organisational collaboration (Luxton & Sbicca, 2020), instead most research concentrates on individual participation. Whilst the connections between businesses could have been considered, exploration couldn't guarantee that the businesses interviewed would have connections with each other. Despite this, it is possible to see the shared meaning, purpose, knowledge, understandings, and identities that greatly influence who the businesses interviewed connect with and how (Crossley, 2010). Much qualitative SNA research has tended to focus more on the content and context of social ties (Tubaro et al. 2016), such as their meanings and the narratives that are used to express them, and less on the structure or mechanics of the relationships, and this research goes some way to combatting this.

In summary, the mapping undertaken is the visual representation of the existing connectivity between twenty Gloucestershire food businesses. This methodology is a novel output from the study, using aspects of different research methods. The resulting business network diagrams are visceral and non-representational. Stake (2005) makes a distinction between intrinsic case studies (those where a researcher undertakes to understand the specifics of a case and not to generalise) and instrumental case studies (those where a researcher undertakes to support or build understanding of general phenomena by looking in depth at one typical example). This research is an example of the former, although some lessons learned from some businesses may be similar with others and therefore could be used as a theme worthy of broader generalisation.

3.3.3.2 Breakdown of methodology inception

From literature review and scoping interviews, the need to categorise actors, connections and characteristics arose. This section details the coding process into levels one, two and three. This process is complex (Anguera et al., 2018) and, potentially subjective. Although, the groupings for the business links were developed in discussion with supervisors, providing a source of quality control. Once the typologies had been developed, quantitative statistics were conducted using Excel.

Level 1- A typology of connections which businesses may have with other businesses, entities, communities or individuals was developed. These were, in the first iteration, financial and nonfinancial (Table 3.7).

Table 3.7 Connection typology

Financial connections	Non-financial connections
Financial	Emotional
Marketing	Social
Trade	Knowledge exchange
Product	

However, during the thematic analysis, this typology was re-evaluated and extended to include three categories financial, non-financial and holistic connection types (Table 3.8). This was because in the thematic analysis process it emerged that product connection was found to potentially fit within financial and non-financial groups and depended on the business' interpretation of the term in each case. For instance, some businesses considered product connection to mean the act of selling their product in a joint selling area with another business, such as sharing a stall with another business at an event. Other businesses understood it as developing a new product with another business, them being equal partners in the product co-creation activity. This latter definition is what was the author's original intention.

Table 3.8 Connection typology update

Financial connections	Holistic/ fusion connections	Non-financial connections
Financial	Product connection	Emotional
Marketing		Social
Trade		Knowledge exchange

During the thematic analysis of stage two interviews, it emerged that there were examples of *disconnections* too. For instance, the lack of useful or meaningful effects of Council support, and reflections on the societal misunderstanding of food. However, these were left as qualitative analysis instead of being coded for quantitative comparison.

Level 2 consists of the coding of connective business actors. As there were so many businesses listed with connections with the interviewed business, to reduce some ambiguity, codes for the different actor types were developed with definitions (Table 3.9). This made the codes more discreet.

Table 3.9 Coding of connective business actors

Supply chain upstream	Definitions	Supply chain downstream	Definitions	Business network	Definitions	Social network	Definitions
<i>Direct</i>	Suppliers of ingredients/feed/animals/ landlord/ anything necessary for the business to run	<i>Distribution</i>	Distributors of product: wholesale customers, postal service and couriers, markets, food festivals	<i>Business advisors</i>	Those advising on business: trade bodies, nutritionists, analytics companies	<i>Local community</i>	Local community, Schools, council, village pop-ups during pandemic, local charities receiving financial donations (not product)
<i>Indirect</i>	Suppliers of other products which the business sells, both food and non-food	<i>Customer</i>	Businesses the product is sold to for further resale: restaurants farm shops, other businesses who resell the product	<i>Service</i>	Businesses providing a necessary service to the business: abattoir, lairage, butcher	<i>Focal community</i>	Topic related community groups, animal societies, general farming community, award/ accreditation groups
		<i>Consumer</i>	Generally non-financial group of receivers of product, such as charities	<i>Other producers general</i>	Other businesses in their network	<i>Events</i>	Events hosted or attended by the business which do not include food festivals, generally for a purpose other than to/not only to sell the product: Open Farm Sunday
				<i>Other producers-direct competition</i>	Other businesses and producers in direct competition with the business	<i>Family</i>	Family
						<i>Social media community</i>	Social media-Instagrammers
						<i>General media community</i>	Media in general: BBC, celebrity chefs, Parish magazine

Level 3 consisted of the *characteristics of connections*: strength of connections and whether they were bidirectional or one directional, in or out were considered.

3.3.4 Stage 4: UK-wide consumer survey

This final stage consisted of an online consumer survey investigating ECV impacts/influence, positioned to answer research questions 2 and 3. A method of consumer data collection was required to provide a level of triangulation of data, the previous methods looking only at the businesses. A survey was chosen due to its ability as a tool to gain much information from many consumers efficiently and quickly and could be conducted simultaneously with stages 2 and 3. It was also a useful means by which to differentiate between consumer groups. Additionally, following Garrett-Petts et al. (2015), a survey provided quantitative data to correlate with the previous qualitative methods and see whether business and consumer thinking were aligned. Although surveys are generally considered a positivistic methodology (Al-Ababneh, 2020), a survey is used here despite the constructivist perspective, in line with Romm & Litt et Phil (2013) who argued that questionnaires can be employed within a qualitative-constructivist outlook. The type of reasoning used here is arguably deductive, the conclusions drawn being derived logically from a set of premises, the conclusions being true when all the premises are true (Saunders et al., 2016). Here, the implicit premise was that if consumers displayed many characteristics defined as ECV, they had a high respect for food, and secondly that if the high level of ECV correlated with those individuals who declared themselves as majority food microbusiness/SME shoppers, it could be concluded that there was potentially an association between food microbusinesses/SMEs and the level of respect given to food by consumers who purchased food there. With 200 responses to the survey, it fulfils the final criteria, generalisation, for deductive reasoning (Saunders et al., 2016). Arguably, there are issues with such deductions, such as the rationale that food microbusiness/SME consumers held higher values of food before they engage, rather than positioning that the microbusinesses/SMEs

alone are creating this higher value. This section outlines how the survey was designed, explaining the question types used, and the literature influence behind them. For quality control, the survey was sent to an expert statistician at Harper Adams University to review and provide feedback prior to piloting.

3.3.4.1 Survey design

An online questionnaire was designed using the Online Survey tool. Originally intended for Gloucestershire consumers, later it was opened to consumers countrywide. Distribution methods are shown in Table 3.10.

Table 3.10 Survey distribution

Location	Example
Social media platforms	Linked In, Twitter, Instagram
University newsletters	Published in the online RAU student and staff newsletters
Interviewed businesses	Interviewed businesses were asked to post the link to the survey on their social media pages and in their newsletters.
	Consumers were surveyed in-person, on the business premises, with the consent of the business.
Link sent via email	Link to survey and information about it sent to family and friends
	Link to survey and information about it sent to food writers

The survey (appendix 8.3.1) consisted of nine sections, presented in Table 3.11.

Table 3.11 The nine sections of the survey

Section	Justification/ literature review section
Socio-demographic	To gain basic consumer information with which to compare results
Buying food	The normal beginning of a consumer's journey/relationship with food. Wanted to see if where food is bought affects how it is valued by consumers
Cooking food	S. 2.4.3 - Wanted to investigate cooking generally but also with different cultures informally and cooking with neighbours. Plus, much research exists regarding multigenerational cooking- wanted to update this research
Eating food	S. 2.4.3 – much research on commensality- wanted to extend this to eating with different cultures and neighbours- post-covid research so may show differences
Cultural connections	S. 2.4.3
Food memories	King et al. (2013) found that memories of the product appear to elicit a stronger emotional response to the mental image of the product than when consuming a product in a Central Location Test: emotional response to the names of spices was greater than for the spices themselves. This demonstrates the power of memories, and the difference between ECV and IV, and justifies the need for questions on food memories during the research. S. 2.4.3
Social media	S. 2.4.3.2 role in identity, self-expression, and community.
Food swapping	S. 2.4.2, S. 2.4.3- people share food within certain communities. Wanted to know if certain types of consumers were more likely so share food than others.
Growing food	S. 2.1, S.2.4.2, S. 2.4.3

Question types

Within the survey, various question types were used which will be discussed below:

1. Questions requiring 'yes' or 'no' answers.
2. Questions asking respondents to rate their emotions or a statement on a form of Likert scale.
3. Questions asking respondents to select emotions from an emotional lexicon relevant to them in particular circumstances.

Use of yes and no questions

Many questions, such as ‘do you eat with extended family?’ required a yes/no response, and this was then followed by a question asking what emotions they associated with this activity. This secondary question did not specify to only answer if respondents had said “yes” to the previous question. This was an oversight and interestingly, many of whom said ‘no’, continued to click emotions regarding the activity. Therefore, there were instances such as where 103% existed in the chart for the extended family in the ‘enjoyment’ category, after which it was decided to include only the ‘yes’ responses.

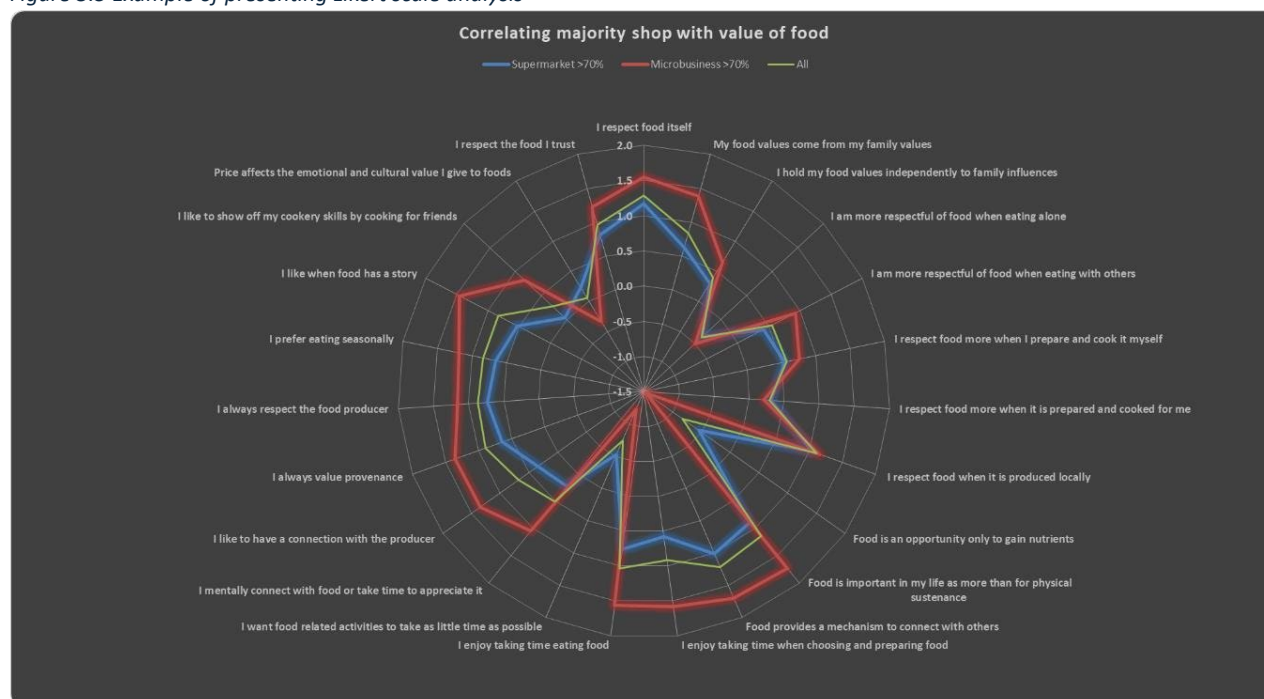
Likert scale/rating emotions

Some questions within the questionnaire required respondents to rate the strength of their emotions or their agreement with different statements on a Likert scale. The basis for this scale was informed by various research examples using different scales. Gerritsen et al. (2021) conducted a survey very similar to part of this one; they assessed enjoyment of shopping and of food preparation using six items adapted from Hagmann et al. (2020) on a 7-point response scale from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7). Similarly, Cardello et al. (2012) used the EsSense Likert scale to rate each emotion (1=“not at all”, 2=“slightly”, 3=“moderately”, 4=“very”, and 5=“extremely”). The Likert scale options were modified here, as it is arguably very subjective whether something is ‘very’ or ‘extremely’, and also ‘moderate’ was ambiguous. Attempts were made to use less ambiguous terms making it easier for respondents, and to allow for greater reliability that the answer they gave is actually what they feel. Thus, in most cases, “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree” was the scale used.

Inspiration for constructing the statements to be scaled came primarily from Pliner & Hobden (1992) who developed the first Food Neophobia Scale. Their scale consisted of five statements in favour of and another five against the target (new or unfamiliar food), rated on the Likert scale. Examples of their statements are: ‘I am constantly sampling new and different foods’, ‘I don’t trust new foods’,

and 'ethnic foods look too weird to eat'. Statements for the present survey were of a similar style to theirs, with the negation of more colloquial words like 'weird'. Due to the difficulties researchers face in making scales appropriate to their own studies, using other researchers' scales for this study seemed limiting considering its concentration on different aspects. For questions relating to strength of agreement with a statement, such as what increases respondent respect for food the most (question 28), a radar graph was chosen to represent the data, following the research of Cardello et al. (2012). It provides a useful way of viewing the strength (scale) of multiple options/emotions in a clear and precise manner. Strongly disagree to strongly agree were codified as -2 to 2 (giving 5 values), and then the average score for each food value was calculated. Thus, the scores are an average from all respondents for each food value. Figure 3.5 demonstrates this approach.

Figure 3.5 Example of presenting Likert scale analysis



If follow-up research is conducted, the scale developed by Nezlek et al. (2021) would be helpful: the two-part Motivation to Eat New Foods (MENF) instrument, including two subscales: Motivation to Approach New Foods and Motivation to Avoid New Foods. This would take the research beyond the current survey which aimed to ask, for instance, whether consumers ate with their neighbours, to asking their motivations for doing so.

Emotional lexicons

Many questions ask respondents to select emotions related to different food-related activities.

Because the aim was to investigate which situations were most likely to develop ECV, detailed and multiple emotion options were required, to reduce likelihood of response bias. Via an extensive literature review, Kaneko et al. (2018) identified over fifty emotional measures for data collection questionnaires, an 'overabundance', and they could not identify a 'golden standard' for measuring food-evoked emotions. Their research suggests there is a growing interest in understanding emotions evoked by foods with ten times more articles published on food-evoked emotions in the last four years of their study (2012-2016) than the first four years (1997-2001). The articles they read differ from this research as many evaluated an individual's emotions for a sole product, not for a full meal or meal experience. Examples of emotional measures they found include: blood pressure response, buying behaviour, CATA and CD-CATA, EmoSensory Profile, EsSense Profile and EsSense 25, facial expression response, RATA, and word association. Kaneko et al. (2018) put the measures into groups: lower processing level (sensory), intermediate processing (perception and early cognitive processing), and higher processing level (conscious reflection and decision making).

For this research, a cognitive higher processing level method is used for this research, as with most of the articles Kanoko et al., researched, using an emotional lexicon within the survey. Whilst Kaneko et al. (2018) suggests it is unwise to use a little tested instrument or one's own instrument, this survey used words from tested methodologies and added to them with the author's own words to make them more relevant to this study. The grounding literature for the emotion words will be further discussed.

Identifying words for emotional lexicon

Developing the emotions options arose from several different academic examples. As explained by Nestrud et al, there are various different emotional scales used in emotion measurement, most with

huge numbers of words, e.g. the CES or GEOS (Cardello et al., 2012; Nestrud et al., 2016a). The work of Nestrud et al., (2016a), for example, reduced the EsSense Profile developed by King & Meiselman, (2010) containing 39 emotions, to a list of 25. EsSense is considered the most validated and referenced, even being translated into different languages (Alba-Martínez et al., 2022; Gmuer et al., 2015; King et al., 2013). Thus, examples of these emotions (e.g.: boredom, nostalgia, happiness) were picked for this research. However, using the complete EsSense 25 profile list was inappropriate, some words being inappropriate. Additionally, many of these lists and scales are to measure emotions in a product development context, which has a different stance to this research. Alternatively, CATA (check all that apply) has been found to minimise the length of the data collection task (Adams, Williams, Lancaster, and Foley, 2007; King et al., 2013). As King et al., discovered from research into internet questionnaires, people tend to select the strongest emotions compared to if they had done a rating scale for the same product. Rating scales, they suggest, are more sensitive, and recommended for “where more sensitivity is needed” (King et al., 2013, p. 14). Whereas, here a more blanket result of which emotions were relevant for which scenarios was required. However, neither CATA nor RATA (Ares et al., 2014) were used here as too many variables within them exist which then require analysis (Schouteten et al., 2015). Ng et al. (2013) used a variant, the Consumer Defined Check All That Apply (CD-CATA). This provided a rich and more balanced list of positive and negative emotions specific to the product category although it did lack some terms found to be differentiating on the EsSense lexicon. Ergo, somewhere in between, this survey was informed by the EsSense profile and other literature (Ackerman, 2019; Cardello et al., 2012; Foroughi et al., 2019; Ratnasari et al., 2020; Szakály et al., 2021). Discussions with supervisors led to the addition of/omission of particular emotions. This provided three means of creating the emotions lists. Plus, a version of CATA was used by asking respondents to choose their top five emotions relating to a particular topic. This gave a wealth of data and a more reliable picture of what respondents felt, rather than marking all that apply where some emotions may have been weakly felt. This made respondents think more deeply about which emotions to choose, hopefully

ensuring that responses were are honest and immediate. A few drawbacks of using emotional lexicons have been described in the literature and are collated in Table 3.12.

Table 3.12 Drawbacks of emotional lexicons

Drawback identified	Literature	Considerations for present survey
Emotions are difficult to verbalise- the “emotional” lexicon varies across cultures and languages- even in the same language, different cultures or background may understand words differently, and many words may be ambiguous.	(Gutjar et al., 2015; Kaneko et al., 2018; Köster & Mojet, 2015; Venkatraman et al., 2015).	It is possible that, due to the various cultural groups which answered the survey, the understanding of some of the words and phrases in the survey may differ, especially as the survey was not built with consumer input and nor words sense-tested with different cultural groups.
Answers may be biased		None
Do not include unconscious emotions		None
There may be other emotions felt by respondents but not on the list		This was addressed by an ‘other’ option
There may be important context effects in which the meaning of words may change across product categories. For instance, the word ‘guilty’ can be considered both positive and negative: guilt may relate to giving children fast-food or relate to a more positive “guilty pleasure”. Guilt appears as a term in the majority of emotion questionnaires found in the literature.	(Gmuer et al., 2015; Nestrud et al., 2016b)	‘Guilt’ is included here.
Since emotions are based on personal experiences, they may not have agreed-upon definitions... consumers may not always agree on word usage.	Nestrud et al. (2016a, p. 116)	In this survey, ‘cooking’ was not defined within the question and so is open to interpretation by consumers as to what constitutes cooking.
Most of the emotions within the lists are positive: the EsSense Profile has only four negative emotions, and the GEOS (for odours) has only 8 out of 36.	Cardello et al. (2012)	Addressing this was by including many more negative options; however, by doing so, it became impossible to create a list smaller than that of Nestrud et al. A larger number of emotions may be needed to fully describe people’s reactions to food names and food products so perhaps the number of emotions is not a negative feature.

Order of emotions:

According to King et al. (2013), presenting the emotion terms in random order may offer a slight advantage over alphabetical order, but they didn't look into a scale of emotions starting with more positive and ending with more negative. Emotions were placed randomly here, attempting to avoid respondents being blinded by a group of positive emotions and then a group of negative ones, and not being able to differentiate between individual emotions within the groups.

Validity of data

From the 200 survey responses, 196 were valid due to 4 respondents not answering any questions. Descriptive and inferential statistical analysis was used. In inferential analysis, the work of Aikenhead (2021) informed the decision to use 70% as a statistic of majority. Thus, respondents that conducted over 70% of their food shop in either a supermarket or food microbusiness/SME were said to conduct the majority of their shop in these places. 'Food shop' as a term arises from this research rather than the literature. Here, 179 of the 196 valid responses were within a 70% or over bracket (in either microbusinesses/SMEs or supermarkets), and only 19 were in neither category. Each graph shows the data for all respondents and the data for majority shoppers in each category. Due to the non-parametric nature and the type of data, the Mann Whitney U Test was used to test for statistically significant difference in responses between the two majority groups. The p value used for determining statistical significance was 0.05. Standard deviation was used to find the range of variability of results.

3.4 Reflections

The researchers' horizon of significance should allow readers to make up their own minds about the "potential or actual interaction between researchers' characteristics and the research questions, approach, methods, results, and/or transferability".

(Frechette et al., 2020; O'Brien et al., 2014). This section analyses the limitations of the methodologies used in this research, the controls placed upon the methods, and the author's role as a researcher. Tables 3.13a and b below outlines some of the limitations with the methodologies used.

Table 3.13a Limitations of methodologies

Challenge	Limitation	Inference and other comments	Literature evidence	Action
External				
Covid pandemic	The aftermath of the pandemic meant that some of the businesses to be interviewed at stage 1 or 2 went out of business.			I found other businesses to interview
Timing of methodologies	Stages 2, 3 and 4 were conducted simultaneously, so analysis of one could not inform the next stage.	Stage 1 informed the next stages.	Stage 1 led to deductive reasoning but the following stages were inductive.	
Questionnaire too long	Out of 200 responses, only 1 negative comment was received; when posting the survey on Linked In, one respondent said it was too long, but he still completed it. Due to its length, it is possible that the survey results for the last couple of questions may be an inaccurate representation of the respondents' views.	Many other comments said how interesting it was and how it made them think about their habits and priorities in a different way.	(King et al., 2013) suggested that respondent fatigue could affect some results.	
Functional				
Researcher influence	Possibility of bias in results or interviewees being led to respond in a certain way.	It is quite easy for an interviewer to subtly start filling in silences, accept a phrase said by the participant at face value (ambiguity), and go on a tangent out of curiosity.	(Frechette et al., 2020).	Effort was made not to fill silences and wait for the interviewee to continue without prompt. However, a couple of tangents were made either by the interviewee or interviewer.
	Lack of interviewer experience in interviewing or real knowledge of the pitfalls before beginning. What the interviewer considered as probing questions may well be conceived as leading questions even though that was not the intention. Equally, the interviewer desire to keep interviews informal and friendly may have moved interviews towards the realms of discussion - obviously, only the interviewee responses were used in data analysis.	This may have been beneficial as it meant interviewees gained a trust in my allowing them to speak more freely than they might otherwise have.		

Only one consumer centric method	No triangulation of consumer data	Would be useful to have another method to compare with this. Results relating to consumer data could not be triangulated due to only one data collection method being used.	(Kaneko et al., 2018). Need to have a mix of methods to have both implicit and explicit measures. This research may be flawed as, although it uses a mix of methods for business data, it did not use a mix of methods for consumers. Therefore, the data cannot be triangulated.	This is why multiple question types were used in the survey.
Issues categorising business actor links	Businesses could fit into more than one category	Great Taste Awards and Taste of the West in 'social network focal community' in the end.		Set more stringent definitions for each category. Such as 'other goat meat producers' could have gone in competitors or close community.
Sociogram layout	Using concentric circles meant that the business connection had to be placed on the graph according to the strength of connection they felt with the business, rather than each type of connection being a different strength.	Sometimes there might be a strong SS but weak FC but this could not be shown.		

Table 3.13b Limitations of methodologies

Inherent data related				
Interviewee preference	Many stage 1 UK interviews were conducted online	Only a couple of UK businesses preferred to talk in person. These businesses gave the most information and were happy to speak for longer and provide a site tour. Academics especially, and some other businesses were keen to keep the interview short and online, making building a rapport more difficult. One academic even ran out of time before the questions were finished.		I ensured that stage 2 interviews were conducted in person, which all businesses preferred.
Connections included by businesses	Different businesses included different things.	Some businesses which were owned by families for instance, didn't mention family, whereas others did. MCs can be surprisingly low considering the number of products from other businesses they stocked in farm shops, for instance. This could be an error, being obvious to the interviewee and, therefore, did not need mentioning. Or they may not consider it an MC to stock products, believing it requires something else to qualify. This is a flaw when explaining the categories during the interview.		
Memory	The responses in the interviews relating to the creation of the business sociograms depended on what/who they remembered at the time.	This led to some inconsistencies. For instance, the interviewees of B11 and B18 are good friends, but one put the connection down as social and one as emotional. Others, when the sociogram was sent back to them, suggested additions or different responses.		
Emotions are complicated	Emotions include aspects of cognitive thinking, affected by time, location, habits, feeling and behaviour, and other people, that they are rather unreliable.	Using a scale of agreement to a statement is unlikely to demonstrate accurate feelings towards the statement.	Liking ratings do not predict food choice behaviour accurately (Griffioen-Roose et al., 2013; Kaneko et al., 2018; Zandstra & El-Dereby, 2011)	This is why a variety of different question types were used, to gain a more reliable picture of respondent characteristics.

Verbalising emotions	Emotional lexicons vary across cultures and languages (even within the same language many words may be ambiguous), and answers may be biased, and do not assess unconscious emotions; there may be other emotions not on the emotional lexicon list felt.	Respondents interpreted them in different ways to each other and to the author- hard to define and words were not tested beforehand. For instance, asking home much of their 'food shop' was conducted in different establishments could relate to volume or frequency.	(Gutjar et al., 2015; Kaneko et al., 2018; Köster & Mojet, 2015; Venkatraman et al., 2015).	(Kaneko et al., 2018) argues the need to have a mix of methods to have both implicit and explicit measures, which is why there are many questions with more than one means of testing the response. I included a 'other'
	Plus, terms used in the questionnaire such as 'cooking', 'traditional family recipe' and 'food shop' were ambiguous so comparisons may be flawed.			option too, which some respondents used.
Sample size	It would have been useful to have more respondents.			The survey was sent to many connections known to the author and her supervisors, uploaded to various online platforms, and in-person business visits were made to survey consumers. Despite these actions, response numbers were fewer than expected.

Control of methods

Table 3.14 indicates what measures were put in place to provide rigour and reflection in the data.

Table 3.14 Control of methods in chronological order

Action	Effect	Impact	Limitations
Theories arising from first desk-based research and first literature review discussed with academics in sense-testing interviews	Ensuring my theories and plans for research had mileage	Research continued with my theories and plans being supported	
Publication of Reimagining Foods paper	The alter-values typology was peer-reviewed by academics and published in a well-respected journal.	The typology could be more credibly relied upon in the rest of the PhD.	
Discussion with supervisors along the way, including for concepts like business actor typology	The typology created for the types of business actor within business interviewee networks can be better relied upon as a business index		
Sending back the finished sociograms to business interviewees, post interview	They corrected the diagrams where necessary and added new additions where required. Although, very little was changed.	The resulting business-reviewed sociograms provided a realistic picture of their networks at the time.	Not all businesses responded to this email. This could be due to lack of time, or perhaps the diagrams were correct and they didn't feel the need to change them.
Sending draft survey to statistician at Harper Adams University	They confirmed that the survey would be able to be analysed quantitatively		

Role as a researcher

The researcher roles outlined by Wittmayer & Schapke (2014) provide a good basis upon which to judge the author's role in the PhD research. From these, table 3.15 shows the main roles this researcher assumed throughout the different stages of this research project, that of reflective scientist, process facilitator, and self-reflexive scientist.

Table 3.15 Role of this researcher (Adapted from Wang et al., 2018)

Researcher role	Role description	Example situation from the research project
Reflective scientist	Performs activities closest to what is conventionally understood as 'research', such as collecting, analysing, interpreting and reporting data from an observer point of view.	Desktop research for the literature reviews
		Desktop and fieldwork combination research to find small food businesses in Gloucestershire
		Analysing the results of the stage 1 to inform the next stages of research
Process facilitator	Facilitating the learning process via the selection of participants and initiation and facilitation of concrete short-term actions. Learning from thinking and learning from doing	Selecting and communicating with business interviewees and conducting interviews
		Creating visual and interactive methods (the sociogram) to increase interest and participation in the interviews
Self-reflexive scientist	"The way in which the attributes of the subject help condition the representation of the object and how these representations themselves can help recondition the subject" (Stirling, 2006, p. 227)	Cross-examining the author's own judgements in the project, balancing the relevance of their pre-dispositions with the boundaries of research.
		Developing author skills in conducting interviews and balancing the desire to exchange opinions to create discussion with the need for unbiased data.
		Improvement of academic writing abilities, learning to document along the research timeline the changes in direction and decisions.

This chapter has outlined the methodology for the research. Next, chapters 4-6 present the findings from each of the research stages, focused on answering the research questions.

Chapter 4 A preliminary analysis of intrinsic and cultural food values: insights from scoping interviews

4.1 Introduction

This chapter details the results of the scoping interviews instigated following the literature review and conceptual ECV chapter. For reasons outlined in chapters 1 and 2, a comparison of Greek and UK academics/politicians, and food SMEs is undertaken regarding their views on non-financial food values, primarily intrinsic value and cultural value. These scoping interviews were conducted between December 2021 and March 2022; and as shown in this chapter, the responses from both countries were impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic. The Greek interviews were also impacted by the austerity measures relating to the 2008 financial crisis, the effects of which were still being felt, affecting Greece much more than the UK. The UK interviews were also impacted by Brexit, the long-term effects of which on agriculture and food businesses are still uncertain. Details of these interviewees can be found in chapter 3.3.1 and the questions in appendix 8.1. These interviews sought to provide in-depth background knowledge to inform the next stages of research and the research questions for subsequent research phases. This chapter is split into three parts. The first part will briefly establish the varying business networks interviewees were involved in. It will then present findings relating to the concepts of intrinsic and cultural food values and how the respondents articulated these values in the interviews, followed by exploring the factors that influenced these values. Penultimately, the role food microbusinesses and SMEs have in renegotiating cultural food norms is evaluated. The final part of this chapter summarises how these interviews inform the framing of the concept of ECV.

4.2 Business networks

Figure 4.1 Business networks of interviewed businesses

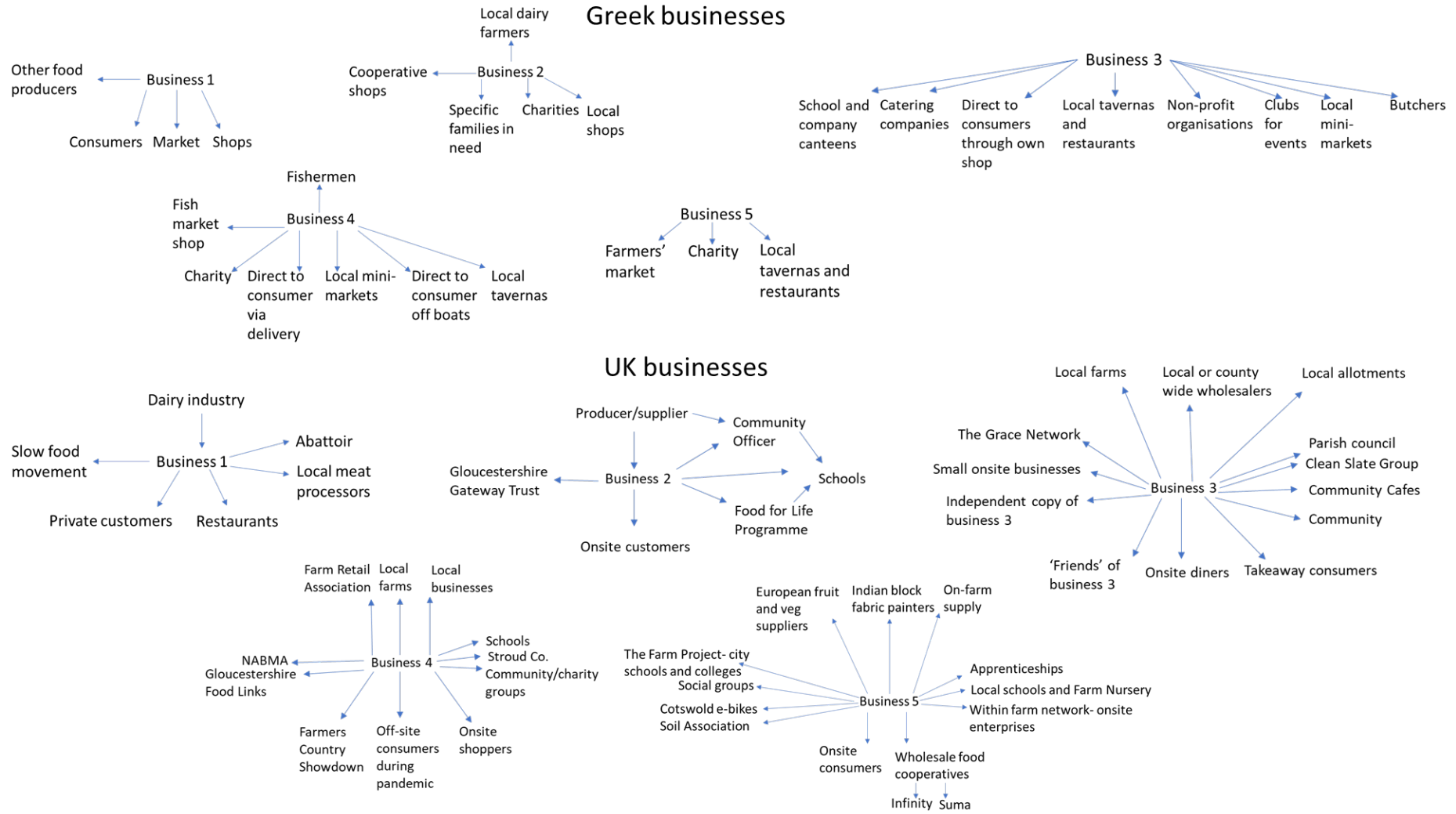


Figure 4.1 shows the diversity of business networks both inter- and intra-country and vertical and horizontal relationships are shown. Actors in the networks are described by type or individual entity. Interestingly, 4 out of 5 businesses in each country had links with charities. The Greek businesses interviewed were characterised by keeping it local, with direct contact with their buyers (consumers or restaurants et cetera) without using 'middlemen', having multiple means of direct sale, and all producing their own produce. Greek businesses (GB) GB2 and GB4 are cooperatives. Whilst the GB2 and GB4 networks show few, if any, horizontal connections, their suppliers (dairy farmers and local fishermen) are also cooperative members, forming access to horizontal links by virtue of being a cooperative.

UK businesses were also characterised by local connections. Only two of the UK businesses (UKB), UKB1 and UKB5, grow their own produce. UKB2, UKB3, and UKB4 ostensibly represent the middleman, distancing the primary producer from consumers, especially UKB3 and UKB4, acting as facilitators of the connection between producers and consumers. The UK businesses generally have a greater number of different horizontal linkages than the Greek businesses. This is perhaps surprising considering how culturally embedded Greek businesses are perceived to be within their communities. Cultural embedding and horizontal links may not therefore be mutually dependent but perhaps too Greek businesses failed to mention horizontal links in the interviews as they were taken for granted as they are so implicit. Despite horizontal linkages, there were no cooperatives amongst the UK interviewees, thus connections for these businesses were mainly marketing, social or knowledge exchange related. However, UKB5 did suggest that "in an ideal world lots of small producers could form co-ops and sell together." What became apparent were different forms of connection between businesses in both countries. Most relationships highlighted by respondents were based around **financial** connections i.e., money-exchange, through beginning to end-of-chain vertical relationships with producers, customers and consumers essentially exchanging money for product. However, many other connection types existed.

Firstly, **knowledge** was exchanged between businesses and consumers, between businesses, and between businesses and their staff/apprentices. GB4 explained a “special feature” of direct social contact being how they impart knowledge to their consumers. Each morning when the boats come in with the catch, they post on Facebook information on the fish available, how many kilos, photos, so “when people wake up, they know what is available”, adding relational trust (considered in chapter 2) to their connection with their customers. UKB1 mentioned knowledge exchange with the Slow Food Movement. From an intra-business level, UKB3 described how, an apprentice from a “super working-class low educational output background”, whilst working with their founder, “he got into it so much that he started making his own butter at home” because it was nicer and easy to make; he then made his own ice-cream because he appreciated “nicer” food. UKB3 impressed the importance of trust for such development of knowledge. UKB3 also demonstrated an element of bias as to the relationship between UK class structure and appreciating food.

Secondly, **marketing** became a form of connection. UKB2, being a hub and distributor, marketed and sold the products of many local SMEs, providing them greater exposure to potential consumers. No Greek interviewees mentioned selling the products of other businesses, the stalls/shops where they sell their products being specifically for their own produce. Thirdly, some businesses talked about creating **products** together, the most notable examples being the Greek cooperatives. For instance, the milk from 65 local dairy farms was supplied to the GB2 cooperative. There weren’t any examples of co-creating products in the UK businesses. Fourthly, with many interviewees being community focussed, an element of **social activity** was not unsurprising. UKB4 explained how the regularity of connection between producers and consumers meant that food became a social facilitator, “providing a place where people are being nice to each other, which markets have always been good for.” With this relationship comes more knowledge exchange between producer and consumer. Additionally, many instances of **emotional relationships** occurred through business connections. Friendship was common, between businesses and between businesses and their consumers, with GB1 explaining the importance of “friendship, between the producer and the

customer”, for resilience and community support of the business, but also for the continuation of food values by consumers. Mutual understanding and friendship featured constantly in Greek interviews. In the UK, UKB3 found that by making friends with people, their network grew especially horizontally. For instance, making friends with people from the Clean Slate group meant that they host an event called Beautiful Brunch together. This event provides a further emotional connection and knowledge exchange between UKB3/Clean Slate group and their consumers, being targeted at single mothers with children. The connection combines “having a lovely coffee and a cake” with onsite debt advisers and others, creating a strong community bond.

Social community extends beyond direct relationships; GB2 described how their customers were “conscious of the fact that by supporting us they support also around 250-300 families of local milk producers”, really embedding the idea that food production is a community operation based partly on social conscience. Lastly, some UK businesses used **institutional trust mechanisms** e.g., being certified by a **trade body** governing the quality of produce, such as the Farm Retail Association. Interestingly, Greek businesses did not discuss trade bodies or certifications, although GB3 alluded to being within EU minimum animal welfare standards. What is not obvious from the network diagrams is the level and strength of connection each business had with each contact. In both countries, some businesses mentioned a high level of connection with consumers and community. However, whether such relationships are normalised across food microbusinesses/SMEs in either or both countries cannot be discerned from this stage of the research. The strength of business connections will be explored further in chapter 6 as a result of the second set of interviews. These business connections are grouped into financial and nonfinancial categories in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1 Financial and non-financial connections

Financial	Non-financial
Financial	Emotional relationships
Marketing	Social activity
Trade or Institutional relationships	Knowledge exchange
Product	

The next section considers the intrinsic and cultural values of food expressed in the interviews.

4.3 Intrinsic and cultural values of food

4.3.1 Intrinsic value

This section concentrates on how the concept of an intrinsic value (IV) of food, one of the alter-values formulated within chapter 2, and Lingham et al. 2022, was articulated and critiqued during the scoping interviews. From the Greek perspective, IV was an understood, but nebulous, concept. Greek politicians alluded to the taste and freshness of local food throughout the interviews but did not define IV specifically. However, they discussed its importance in gastronomic tourism both in-country and with food products for export, playing on the products' health and taste attributes. Greek businesses also discussed the unique taste of Mediterranean food:

“Bringing cheap fish from the Atlantic is completely different fish in terms of taste and nutrients, even if it's the same fish, because it's proven such open oceans in terms of water, they have inferior quality of food for the fish in comparison to the Med, that's why the Med fish taste differently” (GB4).

Consumers seemingly taste the difference and appreciate these attributes. The perception of quality, an attribute of IV, is passed between generations (GB2), appreciating the best quality ingredients and using them within the “secrets and traditions of well-cooked food”. This demonstrates the

relationship between IV and ECV, and that IV is an important element of Greek ECV of food. Therefore, interviewees clearly understood what IV entailed.

For UK academics, there was less of a consensus. UKA3 felt that those being brought up as more aware of an IV of food was “great”, whilst others (UKA1 and UKA4) questioned the meaning of IV. UKA1 suggested that if organic growing would be classed as having IV, then IV has been growing for over a decade. He suggested that people buying organic foods were doing it predominantly because they want food grown without pesticides, a more selfish reason he felt, than for saving the planet. UKA3 also mentioned organic food as the catalyst for people intrinsically valuing food more in the UK. She also alluded to other practices (such as chlorine washed chicken) which affected consumer choice, although she didn’t specifically mention that these affected IV but more affected the awareness of quality. Perhaps then there has been a conflation here in this narrative of production-related respect (PRV) and IV, as organic indicates PRV ostensibly; or this may simply be an example of overlapping values where PRV is perceived to influence IV in terms of presence of pesticides or nutritional content. Interestingly, UKA7 posits that IV is more likely for a meal than for a specific ingredient or food, although she questions whether the value is in the food or the commensality, suggesting ECV rather than IV. Her self-analysis in other answers enables her to conclude that she is different to how she perceives ‘normal consumers’, and she describes her own IV of a tomato from her mother’s greenhouse and of obtaining milk from a vending machine where she loves the taste of the milk. Interestingly, she mentioned that the initial “incredible” feeling of buying milk there wore off because it became a regular part of her week. As such, perhaps she values it in a different intrinsic way to the specific context of IV, i.e., the value was captured in the initial intrinsic experience or sensation, and it became an intrinsic long-term appreciation. UKA3, conversely, mentions how her nutritionist stance impacts her buying and eating habits, meaning she values ingredients intrinsically almost daily. She finds it “crazy” that people don’t make soups from scratch, implying this is an activity and food which she believes consumers can develop much IV

for (additionally to any PRV and ECV) due to understanding each separate ingredient and what it brings to the table.

It was suggested that IV is more likely to be gained from somewhere local or an AFN rather than a supermarket. UKA7 feels that if she buys a tomato from a farm shop, she will already think that it will taste better even before trying it, perhaps due to memories of previous experiences cementing the idea that such tomatoes are more flavoursome, therefore affecting her perception when she does taste it. Similarly, UKB4 suggests there is a situational aspect to flavour, that things taste better when they are from the market rather than eaten at a restaurant where provenance is unknown. Arguably, merely tasting better than a counterpart may not guarantee that the consumer perceives IV within that food, it instead may mean they develop an appreciation of the characteristics of that individual food product, or the memories it evokes, which is not IV.

These findings raise several themes. Firstly, it is difficult for interviewees to separate IV from other alter-values i.e., whilst IV can exist independently by enjoying the taste, say, of a food, it often exists along with other values such as PRV or ECV. For instance, a tomato from a greenhouse can invoke memories of parents' food growing through senses such as smell or taste (UKA7), but the tomato is valued intrinsically in the moment also, for its taste and smell, irrespective of memories. Secondly, whilst IV can be perceived without much food knowledge (i.e. by enjoying the taste of a food), knowledge can enhance IV. Understanding the individual food attributes e.g. nutritional density and valuing it as a result demonstrates engagement with the IV of that food. Clearly, perceiving IV of a food does not require actual consumption. Ostensibly, IV seems a simple term: valuing a food for its individual attributes. However, it is hard to pin down what IV is for each of us in practice. Perhaps valuing food intrinsically does not come naturally to interviewees who have not thought about food that way before. In fact, UKA1, as with other interviewees in different answers, mentions how it is the job of academics and those already holding higher values for food to change and accelerate general consumer attitudes and valuing of food, thereby collating all positive values of food into one.

4.3.2 Cultural value

This section investigates how the cultural value of food was articulated during the interviews, with regularity and embeddedness, conflation with food culture, sense of place, exposure, and commensality emerging as key themes.

Regularity and embeddedness

All Greek interviewees felt cultural value of food in Greece was “very strong” because it is “entwined” with family and religion (GP2), and the production of local products is a common feature in local communities. It was described as “the eating habits of a place which have been created through the traditions of the inhabitants and the crops that thrive in it” (GP2), which implies some form of symbolic nature of food and these surrounding habits to these consumers. The strong consumer connection with, and preference for, local products and traditions, providing “emotional satisfaction” (GP2), can be seen daily at local markets, described as “festivals of local products” (GB1). People are regularly exposed to food production on the land, in the community, in the garden and in the kitchen.

Therefore, they are grounded in a sense of food being of daily cultural importance, production being “directly related to consumption”, due to a wide engagement with agriculture (GP1) and with face-to-face contact with producers (GB4). Extended families meet at weekends and cook the fresh fish catch, it being the reason to meet. (GB4) states “there is an evident link between our cooperative and cultural/social value of food and traditions”. For such informal occasions, it was normal to “just call” friends to invite them to share the fish that weekend/evening because it was fresh. Special events like village fests also showcase the traditional embedded linking of food with culture and religion. Thus, perhaps both regularity and special celebrations for food can develop ECV within a consumer.

In contrast to the Greek interviewees, the UK interviewees did not demonstrate in their answers a strong cultural value of food. Instead, UKB2, UKB4 and UKB5 did not immediately understand the term 'cultural value of food'. There could be many reasons for this, such as the UK not having a strongly recognisable food culture for which to hold cultural values from, as UKB2 suggests, with another stating food was not being "valued highly enough" (UKB1).

Whilst some may culturally value food, UKB5 was "not convinced that the majority embrace food in this way", although festive occasions involving specific foods was suggested as a form of food culture. Regularly, the terms cultural value of food and food culture were conflated. UKA3 described UK food culture as being based in specific traditional events like Christmas, Sunday lunches or afternoon teas, the last two of which we are "moving away from", being replaced by "television surfers" who do not sit down to eat together. Eating in front of the television is another form of food culture, but, considering food is somewhat incidental to watching the tv, this may demonstrate an active lack of a cultural value of the food they eat. Supporting this argument were perceptions that UK consumers consider food more as "fuel than food" (UKA1, UKA3) contrasting with Greek consumers, partly due to the transactional nature of food purchase taking the "immersion out of it" (UKA2). This has led, they position, to losing the connection with food in the UK in recent decades (UKA1, UKA2): "It is not something we cannot do in this country... we seem to have lost our way" (UKA1). This demonstrates that although there are new forms of food culture which have emerged, this does not guarantee a cultural value of the food (through connection with food) associated with these cultures. Therefore, food culture and cultural value of food are different concepts. Food culture was readily linked with contemporary forms, UKB4 describing shoppers visiting farm shops and having coffee and cake; this understanding is based on a more in-the-moment and individual feeling, rather than the wider engagement of community identity within cultural value. This may indicate plural forms of cultural value: **individual-centric** (the value is in the in the-moment consumption, affecting the self only) and **community-centric** (the value is in longer term food culture rooted in

family, religion, locality). Both are long-term values: individual-centric is rooted in a recurring food event done purely for in-the-moment enjoyment but recognised as a go-to 'fix', with food being the treat, accompaniment, or consolation. This is an active form of value creation. As a side note, it is interesting that, despite the reduced food culture in the UK, it is generally considered a neophilic country (Chang et al., 2022; Rabadán & Bernabéu, 2021; Szakály et al., 2021). This may suggest that generally the UK population are more able to develop a cultural value of food from other food cultures than other populations may be.

Sense of place

Cultural value can be gained for food with a sense of place, in relation to geographical region, history, and community, food which has an identity regionally or even just nationally (UKA1, UKA2, UKA6, UKA7). A sense of possessiveness and 'strong attitude' towards the food is invoked, and thus a link to the identity of an area and regional culture, perhaps due to the symbolism of the food reflecting this (UKBs 2, 3, and 4), where "local products and their production are a feature of local communities" (GP1). Pride for a dish or tradition can exist even if not local, such as "Northerners and gravy" (UKA7), demonstrating a more informal version of internationally recognised foods. Additionally, there may be an ethnicity variable, UKA1 suggesting other ethnicities to his own may have a stronger sense of tradition, which he links with cultural value.

Exposure

Whilst embeddedness and regularity provide exposure to food and production in Greece, such exposure is also required in the UK, to associate ingredients with the final product (UKA7). Connection to reality in this sense is thus also required. A situational aspect may apply to having cultural value, with city dwellers being disconnected from food production and being exposed to a wide variety of eateries, demonstrating a passive lack of cultural value; unless there is a city farm, they may not necessarily associate a cow with their steak (UKA7). Exposure to farming and cows

in fields in rural areas could result in consumers valuing food more. UKA7 thus argues that cultural value is dependent on regular exposure to the origins of the food.

Commensality

Chapter 2 explained the importance of commensality for consumers, and it was found to be important in ECV creation within these interviews. This theme also arose during the interviews. UKB3 believes people are “desperate for community” which he links with cultural value by the idea of eating food with someone, i.e. commensality. “Being able to congregate around a food-related activity” (UKA2) and buy, eat and share together, facilitates a longer-term connection with food with a “sense of importance for it” (UKA2). Indeed, food was described as “social glue” (UKA4), eating together being a social activity, without which “bonds between families and generations would deteriorate and people would only catch up together by phone which is a big no-no” (GB2). Less transitory areas may have more community and opportunity for conviviality, being easier to build community where people have settled with families and long commutes to work are not involved (UKB3). Again, regularity becomes a necessary part of this aspect of cultural value.

General observations

Particularly evident throughout these interviews is the differentiation between food culture and cultural value. As shown, in these findings cultural value can be individual-centric or community-centric. Community-centric cultural value is based within food culture. Although, having a food culture does not guarantee cultural value for individual foods within this culture. Equally, one can have a cultural value for food not in their food culture. Additionally, cultural value of food differs between countries, being stronger in these interviews in Greece. Greek cultural value, was community centric and, was based on tradition and thus was long-term and embedded within local communities; it involved connection with and exposure to food on a regular basis, with producers perceived as part of communities, and food eaten with family and friends. Thus, the interviews captured many aspects of ECV explored during the latter half of chapter 2.

UK food culture is, through the interviews, based more on occasions. Despite being less regular than the daily exposure enjoyed by the Greeks, occasions with important food practices and traditions form part of UK food culture. Cultural value is possible for occasional or celebratory food even if outside one's own food culture. If a food becomes important within their own personal food culture or relationship with food, either within an individual-centric cultural value or what can perhaps be termed an 'ego-culture' then cultural value is derived. Interviewees from the UK agreed that cultural value is based on identity and exposure and requires a level of knowledge which appears not always to transfer between generations. The scoping interviews have informed an understanding of cultural value. Clearly, emotions are present during any attributed cultural value of food. However, when considering the ECV concept, this differs from cultural value alone by drawing together cultural value and food culture, being an ability to gain all-round emotional relationship with food.

4.4 Factors influencing the alter-values assigned to food.

The interviews revealed that the main influences affecting non-financial values in Greece related to change, specifically, changing market pressures, the increasing popularity of western lifestyles, and the financial and health crises. Governance within these crisis or lack thereof was also cited. The effects of financial crises were also perceived as the predominant influences for UK interviewees.

4.4.1 Market pressure

For Greek respondents, change was the major influence affecting non-financial food values: the changing market especially affecting SMEs and changing lifestyles of consumers. Firstly, the everchanging market "never stops" demanding more (GP2). Coping with change requires agricultural systems, and the producers within them, to become more competitive, perhaps through certification and state aid (GP2) and "exploitation of know-how" to combat growth which can be limited in SMEs (GB1). As cooperatives like GB4 are limited in the number of employees available

“to promote us around the country, so we are limited by word of mouth to those in Lamia who know us and come and buy from us”. He explained, “if we could grow more or somehow raise awareness or promote ourselves, we would be able to represent the richness of the gulf better”. Although, GB4 and their finding of “closed doors” when attempting to develop, expand or improve, demonstrates that adapting to this market remains challenging. What influence might increasingly competitive microbusiness/SMEs bring to the non-financial value of their products? Competitiveness is financially focussed and is arguably likely to downgrade the importance of non-financial values, products becoming primarily ‘money-earners’. Conversely, SMEs could feel more appreciation and IV for their produce, due to the extra money it brings by selling more of it, and they could have greater pride knowing more consumers desire their product. The influence of these changing market demands on the cultural value of their food products held by local consumers is debateable, although it facilitates consumers further afield to develop a connection and perceived cultural value with their product.

4.4.2 Work

As mentioned earlier, sitting down to eat together is often replaced by “television surfers”, food often being perceived as fuel (UKA1, UKA3). This hinders food connection, as “there is so much to watch at home” (UKB5). This suggests that unless attitudes and habits regarding the primacy of engaging with media and technology change, alter-value development associated with food will always be hindered. Combined with this, UKA7 questioned the possibility of increasing the cultural value of food due to the UK being “too capitalist” to value food or eating together (UKA7). This is based on their perception that for many people:

“I’ve got to work really really hard, make more money, get more stuff” and as people are “time poor” they prioritise “work and then get all the other stuff done around it” (UKA7).

Ergo, taking time over food activities enough to connect with food and people around the food table at a deeper level is harder to achieve (although swapping watching television for food activities

would help) and suggests that, for many people, the food culture they are part of ironically does not centre around food. This echoes the perceptions seen in chapter 2.4.3 where cooking was described in the literature as getting in the way of life. UKA7 also suggested that as people are more spread geographically across the country, and they haven't got access to their family for multigenerational cooking, for instance. The inference is that work opportunities are prioritised over family, often as a necessity. She did feel that food still brings people together, through big social events, like going out for a birthday dinner, or having Christmas dinner together. Thus, normal UK working lifestyles are at odds with daily commensality; although, a daily connection with food may be possible if prioritised over other things (UKB4, UKA2).

The younger Greek generation, as explained by the politicians and businesses, are aligning themselves with the work schedule seen in countries like the UK, such as longer working hours, not coming home for lunch: "fast, mechanically and, often, too much" (GP2). This suggests an alignment with Schwartz's self enhancement value in pursuit of achievement and money, at the detriment of conservation values (and possibly openness to change value), discussed in chapter 2, and aligns with the literature relating to western work patterns analysed in chapter 2, (section 2.4.3). GB4 explained how:

"we don't want life to go and be like American but new generations need to work and some modern types of work means that you need to move or discontinue this lifestyle".

This change has been gradual throughout the last couple of generations, his father asking him why he did not eat together with his children some days a week. This cultural shift means families that cannot be at home the same time always to engage in daily family lunches, can threaten cultural food behaviours, and the symbolic twinning of food and family dissipates. This has led to some unhealthy eating practices, relating not only to the type of foods consumed, but the ways in which people eat, i.e. with family or not. Health in this case is aligned with tradition and quality produce and foods:

“when you’re at home, you’re focussing more on healthy recipes... traditional non-celebratory recipes ... in any occasion we always put effort ... the quality of the ingredients and raw materials” (GB3).

4.4.3 Media and fashion

The media is also an influential theme from the interviews. Despite the greater understanding and knowledge Greek consumers have, GB2 and GB4 worry that the media and education system threaten their future, being “influential in food fashions” (GB2), coupled with:

“lacking enough focus on health values and what is good in terms of nutrition... unfortunately what is taught and promoted to kids is crisps, sweets and not things of high nutritional worth” (GB4).

Thus, in urban areas and cities, traditions, generational and community influence must compete with national and international media, reducing the importance of food IV and cultural value or indeed any value which conflicts with the modern image individuals aspire to.

UKB2 also described the capacity for consumers to be swayed, with negative and positive outcomes such as environmental impact or animal welfare. He cited fads relating to PRV like “almond milk latte” and consumer use of emotive language to describe products they have heard about, saying “is it palm oil that’s killed an orangutan?”, suggesting they felt that that consumers are not well informed and swayed by media headlines (UKB3). Clearly, it is not possible to have a deep-rooted cultural value or an IV for such products if they are so easily subject to change. Food here becomes a changing symbol for various socio-environmental campaigns. When consumer values are based on production-related or supply-related ideals, it is arguably difficult to ascertain consumers with true PRV and SRV from those basing such values on hearsay or fashion. These proxy values deriving from trends may or may not meet deeper-rooted personal values. Perhaps to have true production-related or supply-related values, knowledge, understanding over the long-term are the differentiators. Not only does the lack of knowledge and understanding of food by UK consumers

(UKB4) create a barrier to food microbusinesses and SMEs and AFNs, the desire for fresh produce seen in Greece, frozen food being “second class” (GB4), is not the same in the UK where there is a tendency to stock up in food purchase locations:

“people only come once a month in the winter, people will buy £90 worth of meat and stick [it] in the freezer” (UKB4).

This reduces the need for frequent markets selling fresh produce and arguably the capacity for consumers to develop IV for foods.

4.4.4 Affluence

Whilst providing “good quality ...for all financial backgrounds” (GB3) was a common theme amongst Greek businesses, facilitating the continuation of high consumer values, the situation was less unanimous in UK interviews. UKA2 suggested that generally, IV is increasing, but not for all demographics; those experiencing food poverty or those who worry about putting food on the table being less able “to share” in holding this value, it being “the icing on the cake”. UKA3 also posited that those who have time and can afford to buy good quality food will be able to develop an IV, although affluence is not a pre-requisite for holding IV for food. UKA3 described people in Stroud, Gloucestershire, as “alternative”, who “live life” and are more aware of food values, being brought up in a culture and community which are more aware of food IV. Arguably, those with less financial resources could have a greater IV of food by appreciating each ingredient more for what it provides, but this requires knowledge of food, which also need not necessarily have any association with wealth. Such locations can be described as having a food culture which is partly based on having a Cultural value for food. UKB4 expanded this, describing Stroud’s inhabitants as

“particularly amazing ...People know what they are supporting... those values are really important to them: The environment, supporting small businesses, the local economy- they understand what all these terms mean and they see that as being more important to their personal wealth in a way”.

It is important to note that, for example, Extinction Rebellion, as an organisation had its origins in Stroud, demonstrating the support for environmental and cultural values more generally. Providing that local food markets and AFNs can be made 'convenient' then there is capability for IV to grow. Allotments especially facilitate this, with growers gaining satisfaction and enjoyment from growing their own flavoursome vegetables (UKA1). Perhaps raising IV, as with raising cultural value, is a clear choice, and some respondents in the interviews were making such connection a priority.

4.4.5 Tourism

Tourism may provide a means to develop alter-values further afield. For Greek politicians, attention concentrated on the potential of exporting Greek food culture as "a powerful tourist product" (GP2), being promoted by regional governments. The tourist demand for local products was described as an "emerging market" requiring support and coordinated promotional efforts. However, food culture as a tourist or within an export product and perceiving cultural value in food are different concepts. For instance, it is possible to experience food culture without it interfacing with one's identity or own food culture. Almerico (2014) outlined a similar example:

"Ethnic restaurants... appeal to natives of the homeland represented by offering familiarity and authenticity in foods served. For those who do not share the ethnicity of a dining establishment, the experience allows them to explore the novelty of a different and maybe even unfamiliar culinary adventure" (2014, p. 5).

Equally, IV and cultural value can be developed for foods from another food culture if they develop a meaning and value to the individual. This demonstrates how the 'openness to change' Schwartz value relates to alter-value creation at the individual level. Export markets are likely to aid foreign exposure to Greek products, but this does not guarantee tourists will cultivate a cultural value for these products, although it facilitates the possibility.

Sharing the IV and cultural value they have for their local foods and food culture is desirable for businesses, many wishing to showcase their products and way of life with domestic tourists:

“agritourism could have been much more developed in our area...specific farms stays with activities for families, but at the moment there’s nothing like that. It’s a shame because we are in the centre of the country, it’s not just Athenians who could come but people could come from northern Greece as well” (GB2).

Businesses would be happy to share experiences and knowledge as local food traditions could be “a pole of attraction” (GB5). They would like to facilitate IV and cultural value creation for their foods outside of their local area. GBs 2, 3 and 4 explain how domestic tourists stop to buy their produce on their way to somewhere else, thus demonstrating a non-financial value already associated with their products. Many businesses are limited by word-of-mouth and feel that:

“if we could grow more or somehow raise awareness or promote ourselves, we would be able to represent the richness” of the land, sea, and local food traditions better” (GB5).

The effects of showcasing their food culture further on their own food values are unknown, however, and may place self-transcendence values against conservation or universalist values in terms of how they are perceived.

4.4.6 Crises

The financial crisis, and the Covid-19 pandemic influenced all interviewees and their discussions around non-financial food values. In the UK additionally, Brexit, and Horsegate (horsemeat in beef incident) were discussed. This section is structured by each crisis, although the separate and individual effects of each of the crises were difficult for interviewees to discern, hence the coupling of certain crises here.

Politicians cited how Greece is “in a period of constant crises” (GP1), effects of the economic crisis still influencing food behaviours due partly to the increased cost of healthy eating. The financial crisis and the pandemic influenced both the market and lifestyles, but politicians and businesses differed in their perceived effects. The balance between quality and price was discussed, politicians stating consumer desire for local foods has risen since the financial crisis. Conversely, GB2 described how the financial crisis meant people could not afford the quality local foods they prefer, forcing a change in buying habits, conflicting with their IV and cultural value. Similarly, GB1 and GB3 describe the difficulty of rising production costs, attributable to these crises, coupled with consumers dropping their food standards due to reduced incomes:

“Now the consumer is interested in the quantity and not the quality of the food” (GB1).

This has led to accentuated universalist values, GB3 and GB4 giving produce free to local charities, “what is not sold is given away to charity for free” (GB4). Indeed, GB3 explained how SMEs can support local people compared to the supermarkets who would not “be very interested in supporting and reacting in extreme times”. Arguably, this could raise the cultural value of the product due to being recognised as the food which was given in support in hard times. However, both these SMEs also described a section of society who still prioritised IV irrespective of affluence levels:

“there are still people, considerable amount of people, that are putting their health and nutritional quality over everything and the price comes second” (GB3).

Conversely, GB2 and GB5 did not see a change in the way consumers value food, the pandemic only impacting their ability to socialise:

“people are generally scared to socialise since the pandemic, but I haven’t noticed any change in their food habits” (GB2)

and GB5 describing how the “consumer needs products at a lower price, but with the same quality”. One business actively benefited from the crises. With tavernas shut or consumers having less money to spend eating out, customers bought more fish to cook at home: “with the pandemic, business went up” (GB4). They preferred the quality over supermarket fish. Thus, arguably, how they view food becomes more important during crises, with IV and community support outweighing other parameters.

UK: Covid-19 pandemic and Brexit

In the UK, the pandemic influenced food availability and changed food behaviours at consumer and community levels. The pandemic especially influenced the food available for different reasons. For some, engagement with food reduced by not being able to go out to eat (UKA4). From a more financial perspective, furlough meant some consumers could not afford to buy more expensive items, restricting food shopping. UKA7 discussed how she “had to buy the cheapest because I was furloughed so I didn’t have the option”; when she had a proper wage again, she revisited the milk vending machine and local SMEs like the grocers, as she had before, reconnecting her with the food she values intrinsically and culturally. Communities also influenced food availability. For instance, increased food bank donations, described as “a rallying of people”, and an awareness of the inequality of food (UKA1), saw people looking out for one another, creating a valuable community (UKB2). A greater level of community spirit was shown also by farmers’ markets who set up deliveries for customers aiding food accessibility. People also shopped for one another, and places like The Long Table ensured food reached those who needed it (UKA4, UKA6, UB3, UB4).

Changes in food availability during the pandemic may have led to people valuing food more due to the realisation, or “shock” (UKA6) that other people cannot afford or cannot access food at all, “let alone nutritious good quality food” (UKA1), and required large scale food donations. Ergo, although perhaps not obviously creating IV or cultural value, food brought people together in a way that supermarket shopping would not, creating a food community if not a food culture. Interestingly, whilst

out-of-home food-related contact rose post-pandemic, home-based contact has fallen, according to UKB5, who described how, since the pandemic, people have “got out of the habit” of social food activities like inviting people around for dinner. Food cultural value thus begins to develop from a different base, away from the home.

Pandemic induced food behaviour changes were discussed extensively. These changes either supported more or acted against existing consumer values. Working from home meant some consumers were able to put certain values into action, such as growing vegetables for increased IV, making foods from scratch or going to the farmers’ market regularly to buy food of cultural value (UKA2). There was time to “recalibrate” and put food and its cultural value “centre-stage” (UKA2). Cultural value was developed from scratch in some instances, where baking sourdough, for instance, became a family tradition/ritual. There was a change in how consumers view food, including preparation and eating together, aligning with findings from chapter 2 (see 2.4). There was a shift in people baking with respondents giving examples such as their children at home, making food from scratch, and more people patronising farm shops (UKA1, UKA7), with farm shop visits being “like a day out” after lockdown (UKA7). These activities facilitated a greater appreciation and IV for local food, people having the time to appreciate food, with people putting more effort and time into food preparation, and more eating together as families, a good meal being something anticipated at the end of the day both for the food itself and the connection it brought (UKA7, UKA1, UB2).

Post-pandemic, academics (UKA4, UKA1, UKA7) conceded that people have returned to supermarkets as life becomes busy again and the novelties created during the pandemic cease, dependent on whether people continue to work from home and “how much is happening in the day” (UKA7). UKB1 and UKB5 discussed how lots of talk on positive changes in opinion of food did not translate into practical change. This appears to have been proved for UKB1, whom, since the interview, have stopped trading. This demonstrates the transitory impacts of different influences.

An immediate cultural shift around food (UKA3, UKA6) resulting from the pandemic, acted as a useful mechanism for knowledge exchange. Nutritional awareness and pandemic advice for exercise and healthy eating has, UKA3 argued, led to a cultural shift in combination with various TV cookery programmes, on how to cook: culture has evolved from cooking “the hell out of” vegetables to people “think(ing) you’re mad” if you boil them because they know you’ve taken all the goodness out of them. This correlates with the recent requirement for schools to have kitchens and cookery lessons for children, and the rise of Community Kitchens (UKA6). Thus, people are developing IV for foods through an understanding of how to maintain and mobilise their nutritional benefits and taking the time to facilitate this.

However, UKB1, UKB3 and UKB4 described cultural value being created by a “re-vamping of British food culture” in the last 20 years towards British quality and tradition which was “going down the plughole before” (UKB4), with increasing numbers of producers producing in traditional and quality ways, with people that really “take care” of their product. From a top-down scale, the Gloucestershire Food and Farming group is looking at how to “bring a joy about food”, and the Food for Life Programme from the Soil Association is taking an active role in the education of children in schools by people visiting to teach children how to grow fruit and vegetables (UKA1). Indeed, the mantra of UKB3 is providing access to great food and people to eat it with, thus creating connection and a new appreciation and community value of food. Raising cultural value is therefore associated with exposure to new food culture behaviours at least partly initiated by food SMEs. Whilst it is possible to develop IV for food by enjoying the taste of it, developing other forms of IV appear to rest on an understanding/knowledge of the food. As much emphasis now is being placed on plant-based diets (UKA4), it is interesting to ponder whether a knowledge-based IV of certain ultra-processed vegan or vegetarian products is possible, when deciphering the ingredients’ list is difficult. Interestingly, UKB5 discussed an aspect unmentioned by other interviewees, that of the UK alcohol culture and how more recently consumers have developed IV and cultural value for beverages such as real ales, whiskey, and home-brews; this is arguably greater than food culture, in contrast to

Mediterranean countries where alcohol plays second fiddle to food. Again, much of this is due to greater numbers of drink-related SMEs across the country. As such, the activities of SMEs are a major reason for why drink and food related cultural value is changing.

Brexit was discussed comparatively rarely, perhaps as it was less recent. UKA6 suggested the post Brexit trade deals make people think about food differently, especially regarding product-related and supply-related values such as welfare standards, food processing or distance of importation (food miles), at a time when environmental and animal welfare awareness amongst consumers is high. The climate change debate and the desire to reduce footprints and eat more sustainably became more central through Brexit (UKA6), but the pandemic provided an opportunity to rethink food and accelerate these changes (UKA2). Although, the proximity in time between Brexit and the pandemic may have masked any changes which could be directly attributable to Brexit (UKA7). Plus, the crises resulted in opposing foci, such as the push to buy British post Brexit but the pandemic and subsequent financial crisis reducing affordability and the ability for people to do so (UKA7). UKA2 posited that Brexit may lead to the opportunity for consumers to source local fresh food, but she warned of the possibility of “cutting off Peter to pay Paul”, by which, presumably she refers to the Government food policies. As food cultural value in the UK is not widespread, its creation relies on other factors, and Government policies do influence the opportunity consumers have to value food differently. Whilst interviewees differed in opinions on the impact of Brexit on the UK food system, it was suggested that longer-term the UK will become more insular, with local food being eaten locally, partly perhaps due to trust and knowledge leading to greater support and connection (UKB3 and UKB4). This may provide a catalyst for IV and cultural value creation, although does not guarantee them.

UK: 2007 Cost of living crisis

The financial crisis was discussed by UKB2, UKB3 and UKB4 as changing the way people view food due to the increase in the population’s economic divergence, the polarisation of consumers,

making the levelling up agenda crucial to include food more within our culture. As UKB5 explained, “The elephant in the room is price”, with the Government being unprepared to increase the price of food or support food SMEs or AFNs meaningfully. UKB4 was particularly forthcoming:

“And the financial crisis was a real kick in the goolies ... because of the ‘oh money, save money!’ and suddenly that became the main thing and suddenly all the supermarkets drove the prices down on the milk, drove the prices down on the veg”.

Like Greek businesses, UK businesses felt the effects were exacerbated by the media rather than the financial crisis itself: the advertising of cheap food and the “belt tightening talk” hindered local food uptake, something UKB4 said should be “criminal”: “every advice on the radio and every advert on the TV was about how to buy cheaper food: it was all focusing on cheaper food, cheaper food all the time...”. He described how the strong values of some communities like in Stroud meant local markets were less impacted but compared this to the Gloucester market where it was “devastating”. Some of these behaviours continue to the present day, as stated by one interviewee, “The trouble is that the TV advertising drives them all into Iceland because the advertising says, ‘this is a bargain’ and it’s all crap food” (UKB4).

UK: horsemeat

Another crisis mentioned was ‘Horsegate’, (horsemeat scandal in 2014) which led to “an absolutely discernible increase in footfall at the farmers markets” (UKA1), because people were unhappy with the lack of traceability and transparency within the food supply chain. Thus, education and knowledge led them to seek out alternative means of obtaining meat; clearly, they had better SRV associated with the markets, but this does not guarantee they developed an engagement with IV also. Since then, the respondents felt people have reverted to supermarkets due to the inconvenience of farmers’ markets, but there has been a permanent shift for some consumers towards valuing food and an “awareness of where we are” (UKA1): we’ve reverted “at a higher level” to food quality and transparency. Thus, some appreciated the food beyond SRV for its individual

attributes sufficient to create a new buying habit. Possibly also, the relational bonds developed at the farmers' market allowed cultural value creation too if this connection became important for them as consumers.

General Observations:

Many key themes have emerged from the interviews which are suggested to influence the development or continuation of the proposed alter-values in both countries. Constantly changing markets pressurise businesses to become more competitive, with the long-term impact on alter-values being unknown. Western lifestyles place availability of time and different home-work priorities at odds with food activities, separating consumers from time and family in both countries (although evidence from the pandemic suggests a temporary change). Media and food fads influence consumers and may limit their capacity to develop long-term alter-values, although core groups of people prioritise food quality and the cultural value associated with food. The 2007 and recent financial crises, Brexit, the Covid-19 pandemic, and events like 'Horsegate' have provided catalysts for a change, albeit in many cases temporary, in terms of realigning values associated with food.

The Greek interviewees discussed mainly negative influences, based on the difficulty crises have created for consumers to stay with purchasing higher cost food values such as IV and cultural value, and secondly, on challenges in the opportunity for business expansion for SMEs. Conversely, crises in the UK had the opposite effect for many, by facilitating the development of IV and cultural value for food where previously it did not exist widely, although various other reasons for this are given (organic movement, the pandemic, tv cookery shows). However, IV and cultural value were at different baselines prior to these crises. SMEs have been mentioned multiple times, in reflecting on the interviewees' responses within this section, as facilitators of change. Thus, section 4.5 will examine their role as change facilitators more deeply.

4.5 The role of food SMEs in renegotiating cultural norms and values associated with food.

Microbusiness/SMEs are influential in maintaining alter-values which already exist, whilst also facilitating their cultivation where they do not. Thematic analysis of the interviews has suggested that the role of microbusinesses/SMEs in renegotiating food cultural norms and values appears to rest on 5 Cs: continuance, (re-)calibration, connection, commitment, and context. These are now explored in turn.

4.5.1 Continuance

When considering values that are already existing, Greek interviewees believed SMEs were influential in maintaining high values of food within their consumers. The aspects they discussed, and which are important to consumers, included: the food produced/caught is seasonal, “high quality product for the everyday person” (GB2), local, and supports local producers and their families; thus, SMEs provide a stand against cheaper, lower quality food imports (GB2, GB3, GB4). GB4 explained their existence as sources of food meant that consumers don’t “have to rely on low quality, imported stuff”. Values associated with these foods are ostensibly PRV and SRV, but cultural value is held for such produce, and an appreciation that these factors create produce which is intrinsically superior to other produce that can be purchased invokes IV also. These values are perceived to continue because they are historically embedded so microbusinesses/SMEs maintain rather than change consumer values:

“the youngest are picking up food traditions from grandparents... there is an inherited level of understanding of how important food is and the perception of quality is passed through generations” (GB2).

Where some consumers bought cheaper products during the financial crisis, discussed earlier, there is no suggestion that their value they associated with food reduced, only their ability to choose, based on value, reduced (GB5). However, most consumers continued purchasing from

microbusinesses and SMEs during crises because food quality and supporting microbusiness and SMEs was a priority for them.

Similarly, in the UK also, when consumers already have high values of food, microbusiness and SMEs provide an outlet for these to continue (UKB5). For example, for those appreciating taste, freshness, and connection, farmers' markets provide a space to "live your values" (UKA1) because the food exhibits these qualities. Purchasing food from markets is linked with consumers wasting less food due to food and meal planning, thus displaying high IV (UKB4, UKA2, UKA3). This enables consumers to nurture multiple Schwartz values simultaneously. Conservation occurs through the security of connection, and self-transcendence is shown through the commitment to patronising markets, often at their own inconvenience. Arguably, the satisfaction of these values enables the feeling of self-enhanced achievement for the individuals who purchase these foods.

4.5.2 Re-calibration

The developing western lifestyles seen in Greek cities threatens traditional cultural food practices. According to Greek politicians, microbusiness and SMEs combat the advancement of western lifestyles (explored in 4.4.2) in various ways. They redefine healthy eating practices, focussing on quality, tradition, and a holistic form of consumption. Specific microbusiness and SMEs based in towns provide a healthy, fresh hot, affordable meal, often chosen in the morning and collected at lunchtime. They refocus healthy eating back to tradition and provide for "citizens who seek quality... to meet their needs for safer and healthier food" (GP2). However, this form of re-calibration does not address the issue of the family connection through food. Others suggest food via microbusiness and SMEs provides a "holistic" form of consumption: anthropocentric and sustainable rather than individual (GP1), and consumers consider these necessary in a modern environment. GB3 believes there should be incentives making it easier for new microbusiness and SMEs to start, so that "local produce and authenticity of traditional products are able to reach more markets and become more

popular". But perhaps of even greater help would be to address the barriers preventing advertising such businesses on national media.

Microbusiness and SMEs are the "embodiment of change" (UKB2), aiding consumers in understanding the virtues of quality, traceability and locality to develop an appreciation and understanding of food which they did not previously have (UKA3, UKA1). Knowledge exchange between the producer/SME and consumer helps consumers understand why products are priced differently or why they differ from supermarket versions (UKA1). For instance, UKB4 gave the example of when consumers ask for strawberries when they're not in season and the producer explaining seasonality, recalibrating consumers to how things "ought to taste and did taste once" (UKB2). Therefore, microbusiness and SMEs can change habits and lifestyle choices by education through direct contact, facilitating the growth of values such as PRV and SRV. Consumers learn to expect different things from their food, for instance, the flavour of microbusiness and SME products will be different from supermarket equivalents (UKA3). Appreciating the different taste of such foods encourages the development of IV, aided by an understanding of how to cook the meat, for instance, "properly" rather than "cooking the hell out of it" (UKA3). Some microbusiness and SMEs are very active here, UKB5 explaining how people visit and learn from their farm "definitely... find a new value" in food. Perhaps a certain level of understanding and appreciation thus comes from connective experiences, cementing food memories. Thus, microbusiness and SMEs aid food re-education and re-calibrate food connective experiences. Whilst this does not guarantee CV being created, as this requires an embedded long-term appreciation, it begins to re-define the place food has in UK food culture.

Another part of this re-calibration is changing consumer pre-conceptions. Farmers' markets (AFNs comprised of multiple microbusiness and SMEs and producers) attempt to change cost perceptions (UKB4, UKA1), with fruit and vegetable prices being comparable to supermarket prices. UKB4 argued that it

“is absolute rubbish that poor people can’t afford decent food, I’m sorry-it’s just all about (expletive) choice...I mean you can buy large quantities of organic potatoes at the market for peanuts, you know what I mean?”.

This suggests access rather than affordability is an issue that requires addressing. Due to the preconceptions regarding microbusiness and SMEs and AFNs or accessibility issues, the opportunity to demonstrate cost realities between microbusiness and SMEs supplying direct and supermarket supply is limited. Arguably, therefore, it may be easier for microbusiness and SMEs to change consumer perceptions alone rather than being part of an AFN like a farmers’ market, due to the better access microbusiness and SMEs may provide in terms of knowledge exchange. But the microbusiness and SMEs must be active in gaining interest and exchanging knowledge with consumers to change values and behaviours long-term.

4.5.3 Connection

Much of cultural value is about connection. The consumer-producer relationship is very influential. UKB4 suggested markets especially help change the value of food through this direct contact, described as a novelty. Not only is it direct contact, but it can be an ongoing relationship as the same producers are there weekly. Farmers also enjoy the social aspect of markets; perhaps this means that although markets demonstrate a conventional model of buying and selling, producer community is encouraged, and consumers become more co-sumers, playing more active roles (UKB4). This differs from co-creator consumer roles discussed in chapter two, instead changing from passive to active members of a joint food community. This could result in such food being valued for the sense of belonging and community it is associated with: a true cultural value. Indeed, UKA2 explained how markets especially are:

“much more than just the purchase of the food. It becomes a relationship ... there’s a guy at the farmers’ market who sells apple juice, Dave, and he’s pressed all my apples for me and again there’s a relationship built up there.”

Microbusiness and SMEs thus re-calibrate food from being purely a commodity, to an instrument of connection. Connection also occurs in the form of exposure: connecting/exposing consumers to new foods, businesses, and ways of value. Connective exposure is fundamental for changing consumer values, a lack of exposure being a drawback (UKA1). This term 'connective exposure' is novel to this research and will be returned to later in the thesis. Some microbusiness and SMEs, such as UKB2, are a platform to introduce local microbusiness and SMEs to consumers and vice versa: they have even enabled microbusiness and smaller SMEs to get off the ground by being their first customer. Exposing consumers to new products and local microbusiness and SMEs widens food choice availability. This has often led to consumers buying directly and regularly from the microbusiness and SME (UKB2), clearly having developed a greater value for the product. Widening ingredient and food horizons for consumers, tapping into their neophilic curiosity, creates a cycle, allowing microbusiness and SMEs to diversify and do what they love. Indeed, UKA2 explained how recent consumer interest and behaviour changes, means "people who are wanting to come into the food sector" now have a market. Neophilic curiosity with food is again a novel term which has emerged from the thematic analysis and will be reflected on further within the thesis.

4.5.4 Commitment

Next, is the importance of commitment. "Tenacity" of some microbusiness and SMEs makes them incredibly active in this space (UKA2), those particularly passionate and skilled showing consumers what other foods are available. Getting the balance right between commitment to changing values and causing offence can be difficult for microbusiness and SMEs with greater community focus, where:

"sometimes that can feel like what you are saying to those who are doing it a different way, 'you're not doing it well enough'... part of our role is just holding the line as a catalyst saying... 'why don't you make your own scotch egg' or 'have you thought about putting more vegetables in

your Bolognese?’ because actually you could hide 3 types of veg by blitzing it into your Bolognese, and all the kids would eat healthier food” (UKB3).

Such tenacious commitment from producer and consumer is also required, UKA2 explained, to seek help when building their business to the next level, this being “a real challenge.” Social media use by microbusiness and SMEs was not covered in the literature review but these interviews suggest that microbusiness and SMEs must be very active on social media, with marketing, and in the community; indeed, UKB2 explained, when “hunting for producers. We did it informally, via, you know, just social media channels” and UKB4 uses Facebook often to engage in food discussions, using it as an opportunity to “put somebody right” in their perception of farmers’ markets. Whilst changing values is desirable, UKA3 described how microbusiness and SMEs must do what is required to sell their product, passive by selling through traditional routes, but active by trying to educate and change attitudes towards food in this space.

Interestingly, the tenacity of consumers was also implied. Where microbusiness and SMEs have a more passive role, by merely providing high quality or local food and then seeking to sell it, this relies on consumer commitment to find and patronise the microbusiness and SME. UKA6 waited two hours outside the butchers to collect his turkey at Christmas, for instance. This behaviour may be tenacious but may also be evidence of a cultural value, as the action will be compared to the value ascribed to time as in some cases individuals will be making their life very inconvenient to achieve this level of commitment. This example is certainly evidence of cultural value held for the turkey from that particular butcher and the tradition of queueing with the community to collect it.

4.5.5 Context

Equally, microbusiness and SMEs can change industry behaviours. Because microbusiness and SMEs are agile, and can change more quickly than big businesses, they are important in raising awareness of issues and changing industry level values (UKA1); UKB3 described how Ben and

Jerry's ice cream made people aware of organic ice cream; and that selling out to a big company (Unilever) was irrelevant as they were still perceived as a benchmark for changing values which other big businesses followed. Therefore, microbusiness and SMEs are a catalyst for long-lasting value change for consumers, where niche values become normalised and expected. UKA1 feels that supermarkets are the ones who will "save the planet" but that consumer awareness and education is catalysed and "raised by other food networks", leading them to question their normal buying habits in supermarkets too, such as buying a local fruit rather than imported. This then leads to a behaviour shift, and this "awakening of values" is generated through microbusiness and SMEs.

Therefore, microbusiness and SMEs are influential in maintaining and creating greater values of food in given contexts, even redefining contexts, although have several hurdles to overcome in doing so. Interestingly though, UKB3 argued that patronising microbusiness and SMEs may not necessarily mean that consumers value the food more; they may instead prefer another aspect of the microbusiness and SME, like their social values of helping those on lower incomes.

4.6 What geopolitical and socio-economic factors mediate the activities of food microbusiness and SMEs?

Greece

Within Greece, due to microbusiness and SMEs being so integral to intrinsic and cultural food values, the geopolitical and socio-economic influences mediating food microbusiness and SME activities are the same as those explored in section 4.4 and will not be repeated here, with the exception of governance, which is explored below. However, the interviews with politicians were postponed on two occasions due to the beginning of the Russia-Ukraine conflict and thus this is likely to have impacted their answers and is possibly why the concept of the constantly changing market was so prominent in the interviews. GB4 was the only business to mention the Russia-Ukraine conflict and discussed prices/costs:

“price of fuels will go up. The difference between us as a cooperative, with no middleman and no transport, the only impact we will have is the price of the diesel for the boats, and we have a very short distributional chain. So, we think the role we will play is that we might be able even to absorb this rise of cost without really affecting the selling prices”.

Thus, the socio-economic impacts of the war could easily mediate the relationship between businesses and their consumers, if there is a lack of commitment, or ability to, to keep products affordable. GB4 shows how, in their network, maintaining cultural food values is prioritised over profit.

Aside from recent crises, the Greek Government influenced food microbusiness and SMEs in Greece strongly. An indirect means of influence is via the lack of state support for agriculture and aquaculture microbusiness and SMEs. GB4 described how “big fishing players” trespass into the Environmentally Protected Area in the gulf; complaints to authorities are met with silence, leading GB4 to feel they are “not doing their job well enough, to control and check”. They spoke of the disappointment they felt at the lack of Government support considering the high fertility of land and sea, and indeed considering the high esteem the Mediterranean Diet is held in internationally, and feel geopolitical forces may be to blame. Whilst perhaps not directly influencing IV or cultural value, such practices threaten the continuation and quality of cultural fishing practices. Where food cultural value is entwined with agri- and aquaculture practices, lack of Government support may dilute such values, although community appears central to keeping practices even where Government hinders their resilience.

From a local economy perspective, connection with the wider food network is not always positive. GB4 described the animosity between cooperatives and private sellers in Greece: “because we are cooperative, and we want and need to keep a clean record and be ethical, because we have enough enemies anyway ... we always will be very accurate with taxation”. This potentially puts them at a disadvantage with privateers who cheat the tax system as fish is taxed by weight caught not what

is sold. Despite this, they as food suppliers still remain at the centre of many families' food values, despite higher prices.

UK

The UK interviews were conducted post Brexit and the Covid-19 pandemic. To give context, research by the London School of Economics (LSE) found that Brexit alone cost each household £250 per annum, when only considering the impact on food prices since December 2019 (Bakker et al., 2023). Additionally to this geopolitical issue, the current cost-of-living crisis, aligned with the Russia-Ukraine conflict, had begun late 2021, with inflation reaching 11.1% in October 2022 (Francis-Devine et al., 2023). It was predicted that real household disposable income will fall by 4.3% in the 2022/23 financial year, the biggest fall in living standards since the mid-1950s (Clark, 2023a). For food and drink, the inflation rate was 10.1% in October 2023, down from 11.1% in October 2022; a reaction to these rates was that 56% of people reduced the amount of food they bought in 2022 (Clark, 2023a). Unsurprisingly, therefore, food prices were discussed extensively during the interviews.

Aside from the difficult socio-economic climate, many interviewees don't believe consumers pay enough for food (UKA3). For instance, UKB3 believes the price of a chicken is far too low, fuelled by eating too much of it. Markets especially feel this consumer pressure for cheap food, with "a lot of" consumers thinking market food should be cheap because it comes straight from the farmer (UKB4), forgetting the costs of land, inputs, and the handmade nature of products on a very small scale, especially with rising fuel/energy costs. UKB4 pointed out "the difference in percentage spend of wages on food from the 70s to now is ridiculous", insinuating a culture change is required, taking money from hobbies, for instance, and spending extra on food. This requires a connection between consumers and the cultural value and IV of food, to value food above other things.

However, interviewees recognise that consumers struggle to afford good food in this socio-economic climate, but they imply that consumer default perception that food which is sold anywhere that isn't

a supermarket is more expensive, means consumers limit their own ability to buy good food (UKA7). UKA7 suggests people may not even get as far as considering other factors, like the time it takes to go to a market, because “it is just expensive so not worth thinking more about”. UKA7 describes this as a “sheep culture”, mediating the impact microbusiness and SMEs can have, but doesn’t know how microbusiness and SMEs can change perceptions. Business interviewees were therefore keen to indicate both that organic vegetables are cheaper in the market, and the like-for-like comparisons, where buying supermarket “free-range organic sausages, they will cost about the same as the free-range organic sausages from the market” (UKB4). UKA2 went further, arguing that shopping at markets has reduced her food bill. Although conceding that she doesn’t struggle financially, working from home gives her more time to think about what she does with food she buys, meaning she wastes very little. She pays

“a little more for the raw ingredients... but when I buy it, because I’m walking around the farmers market talking to people... about what I’m going to be doing that week with the food that I’m going to buy, I don’t buy unnecessary stuff”.

Doing this provides a greater ability to manage food and cooking time. She recalls

“times when I would literally dash into a supermarket with a big trolley, fill it up as much as I could...and by the end of the week you’d find that half of the stuff you would have to throw away because you hadn’t used it”.

Despite this, microbusiness and SME and AFN ability to increase their market share continues to be mediated by consumer perception and their reliance on supermarkets. Thus, microbusiness and SME competition with supermarkets was another main topic. However, supermarkets have been under fire recently regarding profiteering claims; whilst there is no clear evidence of profiteering during the cost-of-living crisis, many, such as EFRA, continue to accuse them of this (English & Tobi, 2023). With this mistrust, it leaves opportunity for food microbusiness and SMEs to increase their

market share using connection and relational trust (described in chapter 2.5), providing the foods they sell are affordable. Currently though, capitalising on this and being able to change food-related values are limited by a lack of business skills to grow and sustain the business (UKA2); this stems in part from a lack of business support. UKB5 suggested additionally that political intervention is required as microbusiness and SMEs/producers will require subsidies to produce and sell high quality food or wages must rise, enabling more people to afford to pay more for high quality produce.

Local politics also plays a role here, as local councils do little to aid food microbusiness and SMEs, instead hindering their progression (UKA1, UKB3, UKB4). UKB3 described the following scenario:

“Let’s imagine you’re a district council- you own a couple of buildings, which they all do, just say for one of these buildings there is free rent for anyone selling street food, and suddenly, surprise surprise, everyone will go there to sell street food and it will become known as the street food place”.

But he highlighted, that as the council’s focus was on letting out such properties for housing for profit, this led to UKB3 moving location due to rent rises.

Legislation is another concern, with law and policy being “absolutely key to how people see food”, and government choice means eating New Zealand lamb is more popular than Welsh lamb because policy determines price and when “the two sit alongside each other, one that’s half the price of the other...” consumers are not encouraged to buy national produce (UKA3). This aids the preconception that UK produce is more expensive and by default, that the microbusiness and SMEs producing it must always be selling it as more expensive, reducing the pool of consumers available for microbusiness and SMEs to connect with. Additionally, another viewpoint was that local councils allow the destruction or marginalisation of microbusiness and SMEs and AFNs. UKA3, for instance, expressed her frustration at why councils allow large supermarkets to be built in areas already amply supplied by supermarkets and microbusiness and SMEs. She suggests that if they must be built, then such supermarkets should also sponsor or support a small local co-op or village shop, so areas

are not left with only large supermarkets. Again, local or national political intervention is required. Clearly, there are multiple political factors mediating the activities of microbusiness and SMEs.

For renegotiation of values in the long-term, the microbusiness and SMEs involved must be sustainable and resilient. The lack of networking and connection between microbusiness and SMEs mediates their capacity to expand and diversify (UKB4), by depriving businesses of social and business connection, and knowledge exchange. Being part of an AFN could aid this, but “it’s not just about creating a flowery food network... businesses (must be) sustainable” (UB4). Paradoxically though, microbusiness and SMEs and AFNs can compete for available resources. For instance, the Farm Retail Association previously supported a network of connected farmers’ markets, but this no longer exists due to a new focus for supporting farm shops. UKB4 attributes the rapid rise of farm shops to this, as well as the resulting disconnection of markets across the country. UKB5 also posited how they also compete for consumers: larger AFNs such as Able and Co and Riverford outcompete SMEs due to their relative cost of transportation, delivery capabilities, technology, and dependability of stock levels due to using many producers. She suggests forming cooperatives between food microbusiness and SMEs would be an “ideal world” strategy, especially if these coops consisted of growers of different crops to supply year-long.

Thus, microbusiness and SMEs have a large role to play in re-negotiating consumer alter-values of food, but this is mediated by a lack of support and infrastructure, lack of connection, omnipresent consumer desire for convenience, and financial constraints. They require adequate and appropriate support, whether locally or nationally, and be accompanied by effective knowledge exchange.

4.7 Importance of being part of an AFN

Microbusiness and SMEs as part of AFNs has been mentioned throughout the chapter. This section will see what importance the interviewed microbusiness and SMEs ascribe to being in an AFN.

4.7.1 Short supply chains

The Greek businesses highlighted that being part of an AFN allows microbusiness and SMEs to “sell at better prices”, and “the consumer buys the product cheaper” (GB1) due to lack of intermediaries. For the GB4 cooperative, they buy milk from the producers at “a decent price (50 cents/ litre) to offer them a decent standard of living, whereas the big players are importing milk from Balkans etc for like 15 cents/litre.” Often these prices are pre-agreed between members (GB4). Thus, AFNs can give more control to producers (discussed in ‘connection’), ensure a fairer price for their product and ultimately provide a more reliable standard of living than being at the mercy of bigger players. Access to their products is also easy for consumers compared to supermarkets due to multiple distribution channels which do not rely on transport to access: “as the supply chain consists of local producers, there is always coverage even in extreme conditions, for uninterrupted production and distribution of products to local communities” (GB2), with all these businesses having delivery options too. The short supply chain and knowledge exchange possible through AFNs was particularly important for the GB4 cooperative and their consumers, there being a quick turnaround time from the fish being caught to bought.

4.7.2 Connection

From a business-to-business perspective, UKB3 has, by linking with other businesses on-site, created their own AFN and enacts relevant, community-based activities with businesses and consumers, which cannot be done via a supermarket. Farmers’ markets also create such community, not just with the consumers but between local producers/SMEs and are described as “crucial” (UKB4) for connectivity. In Greece, being part of an AFN also allows microbusiness and SMEs to connect with each other, especially when part of a cooperative, where connection also provides control, something mentioned briefly in chapter 2.2.1. For instance, GB2 belongs to its 250

members, who decide through a general assembly for all cooperative decisions. GB4 describes how these decisions impact connection with the wider community:

“when we don’t sell everything, because we don’t freeze anything as it has to be fresh, what is not sold is given away to charity for free”.

From a business-to-consumer perspective, face-to-face contact with consumers which AFNs facilitate was deemed vital by all businesses, GB4 describing it as “a very special feature”.

“We’ve got a real small hard core of producers ... they all do well because they are always there, ... it’s the same people selling their own stuff and they create relationships with the people that come to the market... that is something that you can’t get anywhere else” (UKB4).

Although, as discussed earlier, there is still much improvement to be made in connecting producers with each other; AFNs such as markets provide a good starting point. It matters considerably for UKB3 that consumers eat meals together, sitting together rather than at separate tables or buying a meal to eat at home. This bottom-up approach means all demographics experience commensality together and gain a respect for the food and the people they eat it with. Similarly, UKB5 loves consumers “to feel the farm”, this being essential to developing the knowledge required especially for IV development. Being in an AFN and an SME allows them to share knowledge and connect. They share their love of farming with city children and local schools, as well as informally with customers in the farm shop. By not having a delivery van, consumers must connect with the farm and food when they purchase; as they have a strong local following, this attitude seems successful.

4.7.3 Product offer

Being part of an AFN is “essential” to being able to sell things consumers cannot buy in a supermarket (UKB2). For instance, UKB2 stocks products from “130 local producers in Gloucester from within 30 miles of the business”, and most of these cannot be found in supermarkets. This links

to having control over their business, choosing to support local SMEs over stocking cheaper imported food. Sometimes, the products on offer are less diverse than those offered in supermarkets. GB4 explained:

“If one year there is no octopus at all, like this year, other private fish mongers, big players or supermarkets will try and source octopus from other sources, no matter where it’s from simply because their customers want octopus”.

However, this appears to have little impact on their business due to their loyal following and desire for quality, seasonal and local fish, something not guaranteed by supermarkets. These findings correlate with chapter 2 (see 2.4 and 2.5), comparing appropriate food supply with the institutional norms provided by supermarkets.

Additionally, it appears hard to disconnect connection from the product offer, as the connection provided within AFNs such as markets, means that “you do feel that things taste better” in a market, irrespective of whether they do or not (UKB4). AFNs and their microbusiness and SMEs thus offer trust as part of the product: “what we found is the only way people try new food is if they trust the person offering it to them” (UKB3). In Greece too, the main difference for being associated with an AFN is the level of trust it creates that consumers have for their products. Consumers travel from big cities to the area to buy local meat products; GB3 described how consumers tell them that meat from supermarkets, who concentrate on profitability, tend to be imported, “with low trust levels of where they come from”. AFN connection facilitating relational trust aligns with the literature presented in chapter 2.5. Greek consumers patronise AFN microbusiness and SMEs due to the knowledge already embedded within their familial food culture. Thus, AFNs facilitate the maintenance of existing food values. Conversely, being part of an AFN in the UK allows microbusiness and SMEs to connect with consumers to share knowledge with them, create community, or in some way enhance the local food culture with something it was previously lacking.

4.8 ECV framing following the scoping interviews

The scoping interviews aligned considerably with the literature in the latter part of chapter 2 and thus informed the framing of ECV as a construct for the rest of the study. This chapter has highlighted the difference between cultural value and food culture and shown that the two are not mutually dependent. One may have an associated food culture with a certain food but may not perceive a cultural value for that food. Conversely, one may have a cultural value for food not in their existing food culture. The chapter has thus informed the understanding of the term ECV by framing it as a holistic concept drawing together both cultural value and food culture. As such, ECV describes the attributes pertaining to one's personal food culture, which could be termed 'food ego-culture'. These interviews found grounding elements, deriving from familial and wider food culture, and the importance of exposure and regularity in order to hold an ECV for food. Relationships around food, from intergenerational family relationships to community and culture understanding and connection were also found to be important.

And from these relationships, symbolism of the food or food practice/experience is arguably an additional element of ECV.

The importance of food microbusiness and SMEs (including producers) in developing and maintaining various non-financial values of food, and a respect for food, has been apparent throughout this chapter. What has also been found is that there are multiple instances described in the interviews where microbusiness and SMEs' ability to continue this role is hampered by factors such as lack of connection, lack of infrastructure, or perception of the cost of the food. Thus, the next chapter focuses on the results from in-depth casing interviews with food microbusiness and SMEs within and surrounding the county of Gloucestershire, UK, focusing particularly on one of these thematic factors that has emerged from this chapter: connection. Chapter 5 will explore and evaluate the networks that food microbusinesses and SMEs are involved in and the connections they have, to answer research question 1. It will also continue the empirical research relating to the

concept of ECV by presenting the voices of the businesses regarding this concept, its benefits, and their role in nurturing ECV, answering research questions 2 and 3 from a business perspective.

According to Ranta & Ichijo, (2022) food can be personal, festive, ethnic, regional, local, gender or generational specific, and this is based on a myriad of different values within those realms (see Chapter 2), and factors such as affluence and food trends. The cooking of food “means different things at different times to different people” (Pollan & Gibney, 2016a). In interviews conducted by Sumner et al. (2011), interviewees involved in CSA mentioned a “sacred connection” to what you eat, literally feeling the connection (p.59), so it can almost be spiritual. Clearly, this is not a mainstream viewpoint, and food generally requires, as Matacena & Corvo (2020) elucidated, a ‘deeper meaning’, culturally, socially, and environmentally, if the tide towards the conventional food system, with all its challenges, can be changed.

As shown in chapter 2, connection has a strong role in mediating the values we assign to food. This chapter positions that a deeper meaning of food can be engendered by an emotio-cultural value (ECV) being associated with food built through different components of connection, elucidated and developed via the scoping interviews. Although defined specifically at the end of this conceptual chapter, briefly ECV is a combination of those emotions and cultural connections around food which spark deeper emotions for food, resulting in a greater respect for and connection with food. This chapter will be structured according to the components of connection which impact ECV as positioned in this PhD study. Section 4.8.1 considers *grounding components* of food culture, the food memories rooted within this, and knowledge. Section 4.8.2 focuses on *experiential components* of commensality and new food experiences.

4.8.1 Grounding components

This section explores how connection and deeper meaning with food is facilitated via grounding paradigms, i.e: components which really solidify an emotio-cultural respect for food within an individual's way of life and psyche. Grounding components which have emerged are food culture,

both at a familial level and wider food culture, food memories and knowledge. Thus, the grounding aspect of ECV results from the foundations of our relationship with food. This initial grounding often occurs during childhood but is then later influenced by external factors such as a wider food culture found in schools, work, location et cetera. Food memories embed, ground and strengthen our ongoing relationship with food, whether that is positive or negative, whilst regularity of food ECV impacts its continuing strength.

4.8.1.1 The grounding of food culture

Found during the literature review were elements of grounding via wider cultural narratives. People's emotio-cultural respect for food rested on respect of food grounded in meaning, whether this existed through traditional foods/practices or a sense of belonging (Anthopoulou & Koutsou, 2014; Lara et al., 2019; Lee et al., 1999; Monterrosa et al., 2020; Verinis, 2018). These forms of grounding can exist at family and community levels and sit within a sense of solidarity through belonging, via intergenerational food activities, and commensality through connection. The scoping interviews showed, on the Greek side, a 'strong' food culture centred around connection with food and producers, entwined with family and religion. Tradition was also cited as particularly important for ECV by both the Greek and UK interviewees, although tradition for the Greeks was associated with familial and local community traditions, whereas for the UK, tradition alluded to more regional identity and sense of place, or had an ethnic factor. The sharing economy also embeds connection and sharing with people and a satisfaction of growing food into a deep grounding with food as community (Pottinger, 2018; Sovová et al., 2021). Therefore, as shown in these interviews, an ECV of food these is generally developed through relationships with others with food as the central feature.

Being able to resonate with food at a deeper level is more important than both huge food choice and being seen as fitting in with new food trends, often indeed being at odds with them. Deeper levels of connection with food are aided by 'daily' and weekly cultural food practices and instances where food is valued (non-financially), and the scoping interviews showed how such regularity is vital for ECV

formation in Greece. In the UK, it was more common that ECV was felt for special occasion foods, demonstrating a food culture centred around occasions rather than a daily experience. Whilst there was no suggestion that the ECV held for special occasion foods by UK consumers in the UK was any weaker than the ECV held by Greek consumers, the lack of exposure of UK consumers to foods they hold ECV for is likely to be why a food culture is difficult to find. Additionally, it was suggested that UK consumers would likely hold ECV for more foods if they understood how it was produced, thus exposure (and therefore knowledge) was highlighted by both Greeks and UK interviewees as a pre-requisite to ECV development.

What is also apparent is that food cultures can evolve both slowly and quickly (Barton, 2023; Benson et al., 2021; D'Sylva & Beagan, 2010; Pollan & Gibney, 2016; Spence et al., 2021), but those individuals with a respect for food do not lose or reduce this with different work cultures, for instance, as if they have an innate drive to continue their food culture or help evolve another. This was demonstrated in the pandemic with consumers and producers in Greece trying to continue their traditional food practices as much as possible despite external pressures. Work culture is a major disruptor for food culture, something being witnessed in Greece with more western work patterns emerging, and attempts being made to limit the impact. Indeed, balancing the UK work culture with a respect for food and food ECV is difficult (Lachat et al., 2012; Larson et al., 2009; Lavelle et al., 2016) and in recent years new food practices have emerged detrimental to our relationship with food, such as the “television surfers” described in the scoping interviews. However, in the UK, the pandemic provided a re-start for some, in how they value food (non-financially) (Benson et al., 2021; Murphy et al., 2021), the scoping interviews revealing cooking from scratch and beginning to grow their own food as mechanisms for this. Therefore, an active relationship with food may be required to gain a deep ECV, suggested also in the family food culture section below, especially as Pollan & Gibney (2016) suggested a strong culture of watching people cook on television but cooking less for ourselves. It is unlikely that such a passive form of food culture as watching someone cook on television can vicariously kindle new ECV held for the foods cooked, not least because interactive

connection with other people does not occur in order to find meaning in that food. If such cooking programmes inspire consumers to try their recipes at home, as highlighted in the scoping interviews with reference to the pandemic, then such a food culture may also have cultural value and the capacity to create ECV.

4.8.1.2 The grounding of family food culture

Family food culture was found in the literature review to be greatly influential in the importance of food and food-related activities within children and adults (see s 2.4.3). The emotion of satisfaction is part of this familial grounding, with children preferring participatory activities to being bystanders (Piochi et al., 2022). This participatory role was discussed in the scoping interviews, with Greek interviewees remarking the importance of inter-generational cooking, where knowledge, respect and recipes are handed down, along with the relationships with producers. Ergo, familial food culture has a strong role to play in a child's future respect for food and own food practices, through their learned emotio-cultural value of food when young.

These grounding experiences through family and culture result in the food or food practice gaining certain symbolism for the consumer, aligning with thoughts of (Monterrosa et al., 2020). It is the meaning, interpretation, and individual connection and appreciation of food that differs from person to person despite similar cultural food values or food cultures. Indeed, 'celebration of cultures' within the definition at the end of this chapter refers to both one's own culture and that of others, and thus suggests that culture may begin as purely knowledge or intellectual achievement but may develop into a social or individual custom.

4.8.1.3 Food memories

The literature on food memories explored in chapter 2.4.4.3 demonstrates a co-relation between positive memories of previous food experiences (often in childhood) and having a greater connection

and ECV for food (King et al., 2013; Knight et al., 2014; Sthapit et al., 2017). Memories having greater emotional response than an 'in-the-moment' visual, also shows just how powerful food memories are to an individual's relationship with food and how memories often control future food decisions (Gilbert et al., 2008; von Essen & Mårtensson, 2017; Ward et al., 2000). The scoping interviews highlighted this also, using the example of a tomato grown by parents during childhood and the memories associated with the smell and taste of it; this was found to be just as powerful as the in-the-moment IV held for the tomato present day. In fact, the memory was so strong that an interviewee felt that a tomato from a farm shop (which was somehow similar to those in her parents' greenhouse) would automatically taste better than one from a supermarket. Thus, food memories affect not buying decisions, but also the lasting ECV held for such tomatoes rekindles these memories when exposed to these tomatoes, suggesting a cyclical relationship between ECV and food memories. Therefore, food memories are important in continuing a previous grounding in food, reinforcing it each time the memory is rekindled perhaps, underpinning both neophilic and neophobic tendencies.

4.8.1.4 Knowledge

Knowledge about food, food practices and cultures is gained through a culmination of grounding and experiences throughout life as food knowledge expands after childhood when introduced to other foods, practices and cultures.

One interesting common factor for knowledge development is the presence of time. The pandemic is the best example of where people had more time and made the choice to cook from scratch or to learn how to make sourdough, for instance (Benson et al., 2021; Finlay et al., 2021; Murphy et al., 2021). Knowledge is also a choice therefore, irrespective of the pandemic, especially with so much information so readily available. Knowledge thus can be passive and active, passive perhaps by learning from parents when young, absorbing information, and active by seeking and trying out new recipes, food experiences or food shops. Displaying great knowledge or by seeking knowledge may

sometimes demonstrate a propensity to connect/want to connect with food more deeply. This links to the familial section earlier, and perhaps adds that responsibility and satisfaction of cooking or growing food arises through knowledge. Additionally, the scoping interviews revealed that one cannot truly value a food without understanding it in some way. As such, all the alter-values require some form of knowledge, about how a food is produced, or how it is used or seen in some cultures.

Scoping interviews also revealed a perceived lack of food knowledge of consumers in the UK, arising from new food cultures resulting from work culture or the greater importance of other activities meaning recipes and knowledge are not handed-down between generations or learned in schools. As such, the earlier discussion about cookery shows is relevant, as many consumers use these as sources of food knowledge not previously learned at home or school. In this capacity, as suggested in the interviews, such a televisual food culture can facilitate the creation of ECV for its viewers in the foods they are then inspired to cook, and the satisfaction felt at this achievement which may have previously not been within their own egoculture. The question of belonging, so important thus far for the idea of ECV, is interesting here. How do these forms of knowledge exchange impact any sense of belonging or connection around food?

4.8.2 The role of experiences associated with food

This section looks at how food experiences impact the ECV consumers can hold or develop. The experiences emerging from both the literature review and the scoping interviews were commensality and new food experiences. These occur at any point in time and combine the influence of both the food itself and whom it is eaten with.

4.8.2.1 Commensality

Commensality per se aids ECV development by building relationships around food. Whether these be the familial relationships grounding food values, or community relationships around food cultures,

commensality allows understanding of food and people to develop, thereby contributing to an emotio-cultural value (Dunbar, 2017; Larson et al., 2016; Marovelli, 2019; Synn Ee, Ashley, 2023). The scoping interviews added that commensality facilitates a longer-term connection with food with a “sense of importance for it”, and that food provides the “social glue” to keep communities and families strong, suggesting a form of food and family symbiosis and the symbolic value of food. The increased commensality reported within families during the pandemic within the literature review (Benson et al., 2021; Gerritsen et al., 2021; Murphy et al., 2021) and during the scoping interviews both suggested a positive association between eating (and cooking) together and the appreciation of the food and experience. Whether deep-rooted ECV for any of those foods or commensality resulted remains to be seen in the years following the pandemic.

The Long Table in Gloucestershire was discussed by UK interviewees in the scoping interviews, not only as a place providing food to those who needed it but also due to it facilitating eating together, with people from all walks of life, at the same table. Looking into the impact such commensality has for its consumers is worth further research, especially considering one interviewee felt that UK consumers were “desperate for community” which they linked automatically with commensality. Food eaten at such a place has the potential to invoke ECV in its consumers, as does The Long Table itself as being the location providing a commensal food experience with good food memories associated with it. A new food culture is also being created here, a community eating together rather than consumers eating only with people already known to them. The increase in support for The Long Table during and since the pandemic suggests its ECV is deeply rooted within the community it supports. Additionally, it shows that through new forms of commensality and ECV creation (both or the food and the experience of eating with people), even if not previously within a local food culture, can be developed and become part of a new food culture.

4.8.2.2 New food experiences

Having new food experiences provides opportunities for developing ECV. However, as the literature review showed, the development of ECV through new food experiences rests on whether the consumer enjoys new foods and new food experiences or not, i.e.: whether they are neophilic or neophobic. Those individuals less open to new foods and food experiences, and through that, less open to other food cultures and practices, are less likely to develop a respect for other foods per se, nor ones not within their food culture. As such, those with food neophobia may may have a strong ECV for a only a few foods, and respect them emotionally and as part of their ego or family culture (Chang et al., 2022; Evers et al., 2010).

What is relevant here is what causes the neophobia. If, for instance, it is due to having bad food experiences as a child, then an individual's capacity for positive food memories is limited by a food grounding they did not receive, reducing the possibility of the individual being able to diversify and develop ECV for more foods later on (Knaapila et al., 2010; Vaarno, 2011). Equally, when children see adults eating a new food, they are more likely to eat the new food too (Addessi et al., 2005), showing the importance of neophilia in parents for future neophilia in their children. The community importance of food and food activities highlighted in the Greek scoping interviews further shows how children learn the importance of food and connections with food producers from an early age. Daily markets and weekly familial food get-togethers are mechanisms by which children are exposed to choosing, cooking and eating different and seasonal foods, likely contributing to a neophilic tendency.

Developing ECV for new foods as a neophilic consumer creates its own positive feedback mechanism and is arguably easier with more opportunities to do so, especially with neophiles giving multiple opportunities to like and even develop ECV for a food originally disliked (Knaapila et al., 2015). They may also be more capable of assigning a cultural value to foods and food experiences not within their food culture, with new food experiences facilitating this (Lingham et al., 2023; Stowe & Johnston, 2012). Using food to create and continue culture and create community can lead to an

appreciation and respect for foods from other cultures/or the food practices of other cultures to their own (Cheng & Zhang, 2019; Davies et al., 2020; Marovelli, 2019). Such a celebration of cultural foods differs markedly from issues of cultural appropriation.

New food experiences of consumers did not feature highly in the scoping interviews apart from to explain that consumers, in the UK especially, are often swayed by food fashions and fads which are subject to continual change. As such, having a deep-rooted ECV for such foods is impossible. Additionally, discussed were the opportunities provided by the pandemic for new food experiences such as cooking as a family, attempting new foods, or visiting different food/drink establishments, such as farm shops, when allowed, facilitating a greater appreciation of food, according to interviewees. It remains to be seen whether consumers gained a deep-rooted and long-term ECV for new foods during this time, although interviewees weren't convinced and felt it rested on whether consumers could work from home or not. Thus, new experiences have the capacity to facilitate ECV creation within consumers but the success via regularity and exposure rests on external factors beyond the consumer's control. Debatably, what is beyond consumers' control is subjective, giving time to food activities being a choice to weigh up against other parameters.

4.9 Chapter summary

'Humans don't just randomly feed; we select, fashion, concoct, and make an edible assemblage that fits our imagining of food. This is an intimate relationship with an artifact, like no other; food is the only consumed cultural artifact that quite literally becomes us' (Crowther, 2018, p. xviii).

And yet this intimate relationship has arguably been declining in recent years (Pollan & Gibney, 2016b). The significance of food in our lives is generally over-looked in favour of convenience, as well as growing female employment, globalisation, the reduction in percentage of income spent on food, and the desire to spend time on other activities (Boussoco et al., 2015; Crowther, 2018).

However, whilst Crowther (2018) states that we only eat when hunger reminds us ‘we need fuel’, the vast numbers and varieties of restaurants, cafes, recipe books and food disputes this assertion.

The literature review proposed a number of non-financial alter-values which were explained in the Reimagining Values paper (Lingham et al., 2022), of which ECV is one. Whilst being a citizen and also with a community-related response to food, ECV was first explained in the Reimagining Values paper as:

“how foods make us feel, the memories they create, the relationships they build (incorporating pleasure and identity... It therefore encompasses experiences or past incidents when food is used to bring people together, such as intergenerational food preparation, the handing down of traditions (creating food memories), or the assemblage of villagers in the square after work... ECV may be less influenced by the media of the time, self-image, and opinions, choices of others (which may be classed within social value) and more by cultural ties and community feelings.” (Lingham et al., 2022, p. 9).

The scoping interviews provided opportunity for further reflection and a few themes became apparent as pre-requisites to developing a deeper understanding of, and respect, for food and through this, ECV. Much of the above explanation still holds, but a more nuanced working definition of ECV for this PhD study is now proposed as:

The non-financial, non-market-oriented value given to food. It is the **embedded** and **regular** value built upon a **grounding** of food within a person creating **understanding** and **respect** of food, combined with the **relationships** built around food, and a **celebration of cultures** through food.

ECV thus creates a symbolic food value as much as real value.

ECV is partly linked to the visceral nature of eating, combining feelings with cultural roots, and how this affects the perception of the food itself. ECV explains the central aspect of respect for food and

the values bringing individuals together as communities. It promotes multi-generational and inter-demographic commensality, conviviality, social support and food exchange, between individuals, families, and communities, creating an understanding between people and a continual development of cultures. However, as a novel concept within the wider construct conceptualised in Chapter 2 of the development of 'alter-values', then further investigation into the merits and use of ECV is required and this exploration will be partly answered by research question 2 throughout the next two results chapters.

Chapter 5 Examining food microbusiness and SME network connections through case analysis in Gloucestershire

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents and analyses the results of the twenty casing interviews and the corresponding sociograms, addressing stages 2 and 3 of the data collection phase (see Section 3.3.2 and 3.3.3, and appendix 8.2.2 for interview questions). The results are ordered by research question, contributing both qualitative and quantitative data to demonstrate findings. The interviews, with twenty food microbusinesses and SMEs within and near Gloucestershire, began by firstly using questions to investigate the connective networks of food microbusinesses and SMEs (section 5.2), continuing from the financial and non-financial connections within networks identified and explored in Section 4.2. Section 5.3 partly addresses research question two by considering whether having ECV is beneficial for businesses. Section 5.4 addresses research question two and three and explores the role food microbusinesses and SMEs have in nurturing ECV for both consumers and themselves, what activities develop ECV the most, and their perceived role in changing food culture. The businesses represent different parts of the supply chain, encompassing the richness and variety of business networks for different types of businesses in Gloucestershire. As such, the findings described are not intended to be quantitatively representative.

5.2 Research question 1: What networks are food microbusinesses and SMEs involved with and what types of connections do they have?

One business is common to both the scoping interviews and the interviews here: UKB2 is B8 in the second set of interviews. One of the roles of microbusinesses and SMEs in changing food culture was found to be connection (s.4.5), a theme which emerged in the previous chapter and which is the focus of this section, investigating business-to-business networks and the characteristics of connection. Apart from the network connections themselves, there are multiple constructs mediating the network relationships explored and this thematic analysis will be presented first. Next, the

section will present the content analysis of what defines a business network and analysis of the connection types between businesses that emerged.

To begin, businesses are grouped according to business size and type, see table 5.1. For instance, B16 is described as a very small, farmer-producer business. These groups will be referred to throughout the chapter and used to compare businesses. There are overlaps between categories; for instance, B9 is mainly a working farm producing goat meat but also had a café which sold products from other businesses; thus, it is a farmer-producer but also a distributor. Being primarily the former however, it was assigned to this category (see Table 5.1). The rationale for this approach was presented in the methodology section.

Table 5.1 Business size and type

	Very small (One man/couple band)	Small (One man/couple band with a couple of staff)	Mid-range (Family oriented and run, small with a few extra staff)	Medium (Small/medium sized-a few staff)	Larger (Family owned and run, larger with many extra staff)
Farmer producer					
Business 7			x		
Business 9			x		
Business 11			X		
Business 16	X				
Business 20			x		
Product only producer					
Business 2				x	
Business 5		X			
Business 8	X				
Business 12		X			
Business 13				x	
Business 18				X	
Distributor predominantly					
Business 3					x
Business 4		X			
Business 6					x
Business 14				x	
Business 17			x		
Business 19				x	
Education/Experience					
Business 1	X				
Business 10				x	
Business 15		X			

5.2.1 Constructs that mediate connections.

The bridging themes which emerged from the interviews that mediate connections are trust, aligned values, purism, and disconnections. Disconnections and aspects of trust were also highlighted in the previous chapter.

5.2.1.1 Trust

Trust was mentioned regularly throughout the interviews, in relation to other businesses and consumers. Four distinct aspects of business to business (B2B) trust were described: personal trust, mutuality or pre-determined trust, utility-related trust, and disconnection through losing trust.

Personal trust

Whilst trust mainly related to the whole business, personal trust differentiates the trust related to individuals within the business and is a form of relational trust. B16 described how the head chef of a customer restaurant said:

“the only reason we still deal with you is (be)cause we deal with YOU”.

As produce supply is irregular and depends on the progress of animal growth against the plan, the business relationship relies much on good communication between B16 and its customers. Clearly, those individuals within B16 conduct themselves to instil trust and confidence in their customers. This also involves utility trust i.e., in the quality of the product (discussed below). This personal trust was strongly implied by other businesses, such as B5:

“now we've got to [the] stage, they so trust what I will do with the granola, they will just give me the key ingredients that they want and then they get really excited”.

Customers trust in her ability to create products for them, giving her a large degree of creative freedom. In both examples, there was relational trust, (see Chapter 2.5), in the ability of the individual to provide a product of sufficient quality, and trust in the integrity of the person themselves.

Mutuality or Pre-determined trust

Trust can exist by virtue of trustee and trustor being in the same industry (Nooteboom, 2019), thus creating mutuality. This concept of mutuality was not found in the literature review and is a novel finding of this study. Whilst the review highlighted a growing interest relating to trust, this research takes this beyond the relational and institutional trust dichotomy, by considering two concepts here, B2B mutuality and the role of loyalty. Being a farmer producer, B9 described a pre-existing mutual understanding:

“I think it's because I'm a farmer, that I'm connected so well to my ... farming contacts... there's a mutual understanding and mutual trust even before we pick up the phone to each other”.

She explains the strong B2B relationship as being part of a “sort of club”. Further, this trust means that when their suppliers, for instance, raise their prices, she knows that they would only do so out of necessity, and thus she is happy to pay more. B7 explained mutuality by saying they know how much work has gone on “behind the scenes,” thereby giving them an understanding of others in their industry. Additionally, B17 described how understanding meant he was very loyal to other farmer suppliers of his farm shop, and this went beyond the utility trust he had for other product-only suppliers which could falter depending on quality. It may be inferred that if quality of produce from farmer-suppliers faltered, they may receive greater understanding/leeway from B17 than product-only producers would receive.

It can also occur generally within a community of small food businesses, as B4 mentioned, broadening the scope of mutuality:

“where pretty much everybody who's got a food business in the town that needs Pat's, actually has a key to the shop, so they go and help themselves when it's empty, when she's not there.”

Utility trust

Utility trust is B2B trust arising from an ability to deliver a product/service to the others' satisfaction or help to develop their knowledge, aligning with trust based on reason and reflexivity (see Chapter 2.6). This was generally found in relation to business suppliers, both the suppliers trusting distributors and vice versa. B4 described the former, and how their delivery drivers can sometimes go far out of their way to ensure the needs of suppliers are met (when picking up their produce) so product quality isn't compromised or product wasted. This, along with the weekly visits from their farm liaison officer, forms a large degree of trust from the suppliers and they remain loyal to the business.

B17 described how utility trust creates their loyalty to suppliers:

“we're fairly loyal to our suppliers. They've got to do something... pretty awful, for us to... It's loyalty.”

Therefore, utility trust ensures the relationship continues. This is because they trust their suppliers to provide a good service. B13 explained as follows:

“I... really... trust our suppliers ...if they do a good service... I don't want or expect them to be the cheapest, but I want the service to be top...quality”.

For B13, most of their ingredients are imported from France where B13 can find the quality desired. This trust differs from loyalty as it can be inferred that if the quality reduced or better quality was found elsewhere, they could change suppliers. Trust extends to include an ability to educate or expand the product offering. B20 described how their local fruit supplier will:

“let us know when he's got a punnet of something, and he's always bringing new different types of fruit... fruit I've never even heard of, different varieties and he's passionate about different types of individual berries as well because of sweetness and taste”.

This contributes to a mutually beneficial relationship based on product utility:

“so, we take a lot off his hands, which works brilliantly for him and works great for us as well.”

B20 trusts this supplier to share knowledge about new varieties of fruit, aiding the cycle of food business learning (Manning et al., 2023), trusting perhaps in both a personal capacity, additionally to a utility capacity. Equally, they may be buying into the supplier's knowledge as part of the package, filling their knowledge gaps, which is beneficial. However, considering the proximity of the businesses (both on the same estate-owned land), perhaps greater effort may have been put into the relationship by both parties, leading to a degree of loyalty, although not necessarily personal trust; thus, loyalty through utility trust and personal trust can be differentiated.

Losing trust

Occasionally, interviews revealed the aspect of losing trust. B5 referred to an instance where she believed another similar business had copied their ideas. However, it is unclear whether there was a relationship between the two businesses before this situation arose and what sort of relationship this might have been, and therefore it cannot be ascertained which type of trust was lost. B7, conversely, described an emotional journey during their re-branding process where it was clear that utility trust for the branding company wavered, it being a 'very difficult' decision to take the family photo off their label. Here it is prudent to mention that 'emotional' related to the journey of redefining their brand identity rather than the relationship with the company. Now with improved sales proving the capability of the branding company, they may not have lost trust in the company, rather being outside their comfort zone led to trust wavering.

5.2.1.2 Aligned values

Many businesses began their journey with certain ideals or values that informed their business practices. However, many interviewees stated that they have changed practices over time, whether driven by financial necessity, general practicality, consumer demand, or a mixture of these.

Interestingly, although multiple financial and non-financial values are likely to drive business strategy, interviewees when unprompted did not always describe a wide range of values. For instance, B3 did not mention aspects of IV such as high quality, focussing instead on customer service and supplier support rather than product characteristics, despite IV being implied at different points of the interview when mentioning “fresh milk”.

Tables 5.2 a and b show the values, broadly aligning with the alter-values that businesses reported that they held. Businesses are grouped by business-type. Predictably, farmer-producers and product-only producers generally focused more on PRVs than other categories, production being their primary focus. Distributors and EEs generally focused more on ECVs; this was predictable for EEs, but perhaps less so for Distributors. Distributors also had the greatest number of SRVs, which makes sense considering they exist in the middle of the network and mediate logistics across the network. Regarding PRV and pre-product values, seasonality was mentioned by four businesses, one of each business type; interestingly, using only seasonal foods (B12) or focussing on growing seasonal foods (B11) has reduced throughout the development of these businesses. Whilst B12 tries to shop as seasonally, sustainably and locally as possible, her “creativity ended up kind of overtaking that side of things”, it being what she excelled in, and so taking centre stage, demonstrating a trade-off between PRV and the ECV of enjoying creativity/openness to change at the expense of self-transcendence (see Schwartz values).

Table 5.2 a Business values characterised by alter-values

Business	IV	PRV	SRV	ECV	Internal financial
<i>Farmer producers</i>					
B6		A few simple ingredients: milk, salt and annatto.		To be trusted by customers	Adding value
B9	Good/high quality product	Supporting local businesses	Bargaining power on price		Doing something different to others
B11		Seasonal product		Community minded	Adding financial value
		Continuing food craft/traditional methods		Family business	
B16	To create high quality product	Self-sufficiency		Community minded	
		Continuing food craft/traditional methods-traditional breeds			
		Provenance/ integrity			
B20		Provenance		Family business	Adding value
				Knowledge exchange	
<i>Product only producers</i>					
B2		To make honey go further		Knowledge exchange	
		Environment minded-caring about bees			
B5	To create high quality product	Maximum of 45% oats			
		Hand-baked to order			
	Certain health parameters- gluten free	Small batches			
		Organic ingredients			
B7		Environmentally minded	To ensure fair price throughout chain	Knowledge exchange	
			Looking after coffee farmers/ supporting suppliers		
			Support local businesses		
B12	High quality	Seasonal			
		Sustainable			
		Supporting local businesses			
		Fresh ingredients			
B13	To create high quality product	Make everything from scratch			Competitive pricing
		Buy highest quality ingredients			
B18		Ingredient quality		Knowledge exchange	
		Provenance			

Table 5.2 b Business values characterised by alter-values

Distributors					
B3		Support local businesses	Supporting farmer suppliers	Community minded	Doing something different to others
				Family business	
				Knowledge exchange	
B4			Not competing with local businesses	Community minded	
B8		Continuing food craft/traditional methods	Support local businesses	Community minded	
				Importance of local	
B14		Fresh ingredients	Local ingredients and/or well-sourced	Community minded	Affordability and accessibility
		High quality ingredients			
		Mainly vegetarian products			
B17			Loyalty to suppliers		Diversification of business
B19	High quality produce sold	Local producers		Community minded	
		Seasonal produce		Family business	
Educators					
B1		Seasonal food		Knowledge exchange	
B10				Accessibility and affordability	
				Getting people together around food	
B15	Naturalness	Mainly vegetarian	Supporting local businesses	Knowledge exchange	
				Community minded	
				Getting people together around food	

With B11, the original focus of the business in selling seasonal fruits took a backseat, due to unpredictable weather and the reduction in consumer demand for things like plums, pears and cobnuts, therefore their focus switched to diversification: the café and selling Yeti products. Although provenance and product quality were cited nine times, for two businesses, these were their important values and why they started their business. One reason for this was integrity, explained

by B16: “We wanted to know what we were eating, it was what we thought we were eating, and we were

really disillusioned with supermarkets”.

This, coupled with a desire to be self-sufficient, led them to start their farm. The desire to make a business out of it was secondary, as they

“didn’t know if there was going to be a market for what we did”.

B6 echoed this; when hunting for a good cereal for their B&B, they were:

“really appalled by the amount of sugar that's added. And the amount of additives and ...cereals because in so many of them it's like 80%, you know, oats”.

Requiring gluten-free cereal herself, the business grew from a disillusionment with supermarket products and a desire for cereal to be “natural”. Neither of these businesses were set up to create large profits, and therefore a desire for higher quality through provenance or naturalness (IV and PRV) dominated their actions. Business 1, 13 and 15, found value in being able to produce the food they wanted to a high standard for themselves and to share it with others, either by teaching them how to produce it or to sell it to them as a product or experience. Related to this, surprisingly, only six businesses cited ‘to create a high-quality product’. Perhaps some thought this went without saying. For instance, B15 discussed teaching and providing natural vegetarian food, and quality was implied throughout but not stated explicitly.

PRV values related to localness, freshness of food, and traditional production methods. Environmental mindedness was mentioned surprisingly few times when discussing values, although it was mentioned throughout the interviews for other reasons. Arguably factors like seasonality and local food come within this theme, overlapping IV and PRV, and thus environmental factors could be more important than shown here. Few details were given relating to this value apart from “we care about the bees” (B2), using a local business to make their recyclable coffee bags (B3), and for

B12, supporting local businesses helps her be more sustainable “because there's been less food miles travelled to get those ingredients”. During the interviews, when supporting local businesses was mentioned, it was inferred this referred as much to the business itself as to its proximity.

ECV primarily took two forms: community values and knowledge exchange. Community values were discussed by fourteen businesses. The community described here could mean those who live locally, a customer community, or a community of businesses. Community-mindedness within the responses can be divided between ‘internal’ and ‘external’ themes. The internal manifestation relates to the level of involvement individuals within the business have personally within the community. B15, for example, does community work and cooks for GARAS (the Gloucestershire refugee centre), and B16 spoke of the importance of businesses, neighbours, and customers as their community:

“without the community, we wouldn’t be here. 100%. Without the support of each other, we wouldn’t be here.”

She described various examples:

“A local farmer, she came and scanned our sheep for us the other day”,

and

“one of our neighbours is coming to market with me on Saturday... Because they suddenly realised that we never get any time off... And so she said ‘look, why don’t I come and learn what you do at market’... so if we’re ill, we are extremely vulnerable.”

Perhaps advice comes more informally from the community rather than them having to seek it from formal outside sources. These are examples of integration within the community. Another internal manifestation was described by B4, whose employees take the time to have a cup of tea with a customer whilst on a milk delivery and make special efforts to ensure customers have products on

time even if this means driving to them personally after work to deliver if they have somehow been missed off the delivery list.

Alternatively, examples of external manifestation exist whereby community mindedness occurs in a less personal business-to-consumer (B2C) level. B11 has become a safe space for local families to enjoy together, attending different events at the farm, B14 provides space for local craft businesses

to hold classes, and B8 invests in the community by giving a percentage of their profits to the Gloucestershire Gateway Trust. These examples appear less hands-on, with distance between the

business individuals and the community they interface with. These activities represent a diversification from their original values, creating financial and non-financial benefits to themselves and these communities. Four of the distribution businesses displayed community-mindedness,

mainly by thinking about local customers. And taking this slightly further than the external community-mindedness above, B14 creates an appropriate menu and pricing for locals:

“We don't want to be offering prime cuts, you know £25 steaks...making homemade food is expensive... to have fresh ingredients, local sourced ingredients, costs money, so by keeping it vegetarian, as much as possible...costs down, so we can then hopefully not scare too many people away.”

This demonstrates desire to be relevant to the local community rather than being a tourist destination, for instance, and highlights how financial considerations relate to other non-financial values. When thinking about support within a community of local businesses, six interviewees listed this as a value of their business. Within ECV, knowledge exchange was discussed by eight businesses, although ‘education’ was the term they used in the interviews, perhaps because they felt it was one-way rather than an exchange. This manifested itself at different levels from a lower impact level to a higher, hands-on level. Those providing lower-level forms were Bs 2, 8, 18 and 20. Methods used here were knowledge boards (B20), social media posts (B20), information on their website and/packaging (Bs 2 and 3). Although, B2 has recently started a bee-keeping course which graduates them to a higher level of knowledge sharing. Predictably, those providing a high level of

knowledge exchange were the educator businesses. All educators mentioned knowledge exchange between customers and themselves. For instance, B15 used supper clubs as an occasion where she could showcase seasonality more than usual in her cookery classes:

“I do ... a little bit of foraging. You know, I like to use stuff, so I did a supper club.... I made dandelion fritters with the heads of the dandelion... to be able to showcase that is pretty special.

And people that are like, ‘wow!’.”

These activities allow her to teach customers greater possibilities with seasonal food and allows her to develop her own skills and “hone in on what is there and what I can do.” B1 also alludes to this, by developing many of her own recipes, continued from her earlier desire to be a food developer.

Two educators discussed getting people together around food,

“To try different things as well, but also to enjoy getting together around food and socialisation of food” (B10)

which has had benefits beyond their expectations, echoing UKB3 in the scoping interviews. B10 described a young boy who had a problem with sitting and eating in front of other people, and they were asked to allocate him a space where he could eat by himself; but on the day, he so much enjoyed the cookery class, that he sat with the other families to eat. This was described as a great achievement by his mother and the local authority. Clearly, sharing food with others, whether that be cooking or eating together, gives people the confidence to step outside their usual comfort zones. Therefore, they provided greater psychological and practical skills, giving confidence too, helping people “to be natural in the kitchen” (B15), and “feel empowered to go and make this recipe themselves when they've never had any experience before” (B1). Repeat customers were mentioned by all EEs.

Financial values were highlighted by five businesses, both internal financial (relating to the business alone) and in the form of SRVs. SRV financial values were mainly cited in relation to business and customer security, via access and affordability. Bs10 and 14 displayed consideration of customer

financial security, focusing on accessibility and affordability. B14 ensured that the food offered was affordable to customers from the local area and the menu consisted of appropriate options they would enjoy:

“because it’s a garden centre in Dursley, there’s like a market for quiche and sausage rolls and Scotch eggs and that sort of thing”.

Similarly, from a cookery school perspective, B10 didn’t want a cookery school that was elitist:

“where you have to pay £250 to come on a bread class... We’re going to be affordable and to make sure that people could experience these things without having to break the bank or feel that they were coming into an environment that was too high end for them”.

From the business security perspective, B13 aimed for “being generous” with the prices to remain competitive, whereas B9 saw the value from the perspective of independence as she “didn’t want to be dictated to on price. I wanted to have more bargaining power”. Thus, security values focus on businesses wanting to stay in business, pricing effectively and thus encouraging more consumers, but also on the idea of inclusion. Non-financial values at other times discussed, such as seasonality and localness (PRV), are therefore dependent on financial values. Internal financially-based values included doing something different to others, diversification, and adding value; the latter was cited by three farmer-producer businesses, understandable considering they produce raw product (Bs 7, 11, 20). Overlapping ECV and PRV, four businesses implied the importance of heritage values. These took the form of making the product from scratch (B13) and continuing traditional methods (B8, 11, 16). Whilst B8, a Distributor, cited the importance of

“the craft of producing food, whether it’s ... what is the dying craft of butchery, whether it’s working with very small/ artisan producers who use traditional methods and small-scale methods”,

Bs11 and 16 (farmer-producers) provided examples of this. B11 “make cider quite traditionally”, although, by their own admission, diversification means they are not a “traditional farm” anymore. There is an interesting contrast here: B11 is one of the oldest businesses interviewed (three generations), and B16 amongst the younger businesses, and they have almost reversed roles.

Whilst B11 has become less traditional as a farm, financially-based actions trading off against traditional farming ideals, B16 has used tradition to inform all their decisions, from wanting to keep heritage breeds such as Gloucester Old Spots and Shropshire sheep, knowing what they are eating, and even the way they farm:

“the reason we went for Shropshire’s is that we’d also planted a small orchard...Shropshire’s are known as orchard sheep- they don’t strip bark and they’re bred to... they’re bred to umm graze tree plantations”.

Therefore, they are working sustainably with the land. Being just above breaking even does not lead to alter-value trade-offs. For Bs 11 and 16, their ECV is mixed between openness to change, and conservation, financial concerns playing differing roles in each.

Most values are not business type dependent, such as knowledge exchange being present in all business types, although a couple of values are seen more within certain business types, such as ‘adding value’ within farmer-producers, and ‘getting people together around food’ within EEs. Businesses are described further in the ‘purism’ section which focuses on the respondents’ articulation of financial and non-financial trade-offs. Higher levels of values purism with the businesses were generally associated with greater strength of, and fidelity to, the non-financial values they embedded within their business strategy at the start of operations.

5.2.1.3 Purism

As businesses developed, their original business values were subject to differing levels of change, the purity of values often diminishing over time, demonstrating the need-related element of values. The focus of standard dictionary definitions of ‘purists’ and ‘purism’ is on tradition. Purists are those who aim at or insist on scrupulous adherence to an ideal of purity or correctness (Dictionary, 2023), and purism is defined as “scrupulous adherence to, or insistence upon, an ideal of purity or

correctness, esp. in language or style; strict adherence to a principle or doctrine” (Dictionary, 2024). In this context however, another definition is proposed, relating to the strength and longevity of values using initial business values as the point of comparison. A business may stick unwaveringly to their initial values throughout their business journey and thus display high levels of values purism. Others may change their values throughout their business journey, displaying divergence from their initial values and business and product positioning. Consumers may buy into the maintenance of values purism or may be the cause of change or realignment of business values, as will be shown in this section.

Purism comes within alter-values. Supermarkets cannot display purism of the same kind of alter-values that many of these businesses display, as they (supermarkets) begin from a primarily financially focussed strategy. They could indeed be argued to display purism to delivering against financial values. Starting at the highest level of purism, i.e., those businesses interviewed who have diverged the least from their original values, an example is B13. Their values arise from a desire to have “decent bread”, so B13 will not economise or compromise on ingredient quality. This extends to importing flour and butter from France because they cannot find suitable UK suppliers (UK mill options use Canadian and Ukrainian flour). However, this may change soon due to an alternative UK mill option who is starting to mill heritage wheat. Their eggs also come from France because “liquid egg free-range is not very common. Because I don't like the other egg!... so, the best quality we found are to be imported.” (B13)

They also make all product components such as cream and pastes from scratch: “if we can't make it, we don't sell it”. Whilst Brexit added another layer of complication to the import process, making it longer and more expensive, B13 does not waver in demanding top-quality ingredients. They trade-off price/convenience to follow their positioning of PRV, prioritising non-financial values over financial. Despite this, their competitive prices ensure their products, and the possibility of the

corresponding ECV, remains accessible to all consumers. This has served them well, with many loyal customers; the best testament to their efforts was given by B18 who sell their coffee to B13:

“What they've accomplished up there, it's just absolutely amazing... in terms of what they're delivering as a product is just...absolutely incredible. And you don't achieve that without a fantastic product behind you and really delivering what people want... and it doesn't matter what time of day that you go up there now, there's always people just coming up ... I think if you tell someone you're looking to open up a premium bakery on an industrial estate and expecting people to walk up there and buy they, they wouldn't... People would think you're crazy... Clearly, it's a testament to ...how good they are”.

B16 also demonstrates high-level purism. From a PRV and SRV stance, they aim to protect heritage breeds and for “people to know what they were eating.” They began being unsure if there would be a market for their produce, but the ideal of living their alter-values outweighed their concerns over the associated risk. Certain actions like changing abattoir to one mirroring their ethos of respecting the animal at every stage of life, and by giving up their previous successful lifestyles to live their values, demonstrate how they follow their values. Separating them from their business is difficult: they are one, showing their personal values being closely aligned to their business values. By finding restaurant and domestic customers with similar aligned values, they have developed a loyal following and customer base. They describe how their product “isn't 24/7, our product is when we've got it” and therefore they have had situations where the pigs haven't put on enough weight to be ready for slaughter, and their restaurant customers respond with “do it whenever you're ready. Let us know”, or “fine, no problems!”. Clearly, there is a market for such high welfare produce, and those buying it have greater values and respect for the animal than other customers who have not bought into this high level of values purism. Other businesses, they accuse of undervaluing their product.

The other form of purism B16 demonstrate is that of purity of life. Particularly impressive is how their values of provenance and high-welfare are changing the food habits and food culture in those sell product to. They find:

“vegetarians who buy from us. They’re vegetarian because of the animal welfare and ours is the only meat that they will eat”.

There are many others who desire such purism in their food and lives, with many customers who “love watching your life, because they live it through us”, suggesting a purity of life being demonstrated by them. Both businesses retain personal and business values purity in terms of integrity.

Other businesses explained during their responses that have stuck less to their original business values, displaying lower levels of values purism. B4 refuses to stock anything stocked in supermarkets, and B5 refuses to be stocked by supermarkets, despite being approached to do so. Although interestingly, this does not prevent B5 from creating a cereal for a larger cereal brand to be stocked in supermarkets (B5). B4 has also, due to recent price rises, had to move away from using as many organic products as was previously possible. Other factors have meant that their desire to buy as much of their products locally as possible, to support other local businesses, has been thwarted somewhat and they’ve “lost a lot of our suppliers as well, through rising costs, which is a real shame” having to replace them with ones further away or larger businesses. Although, it is implied that they will stock products from local businesses when they arise, thus the purism ‘value deviation’ may be temporary. B4 had ideals of a business community where all businesses helped each other out, however working with some players in this community has meant that they have had to stray further from their values. They describe how they had an:

“idealistic sense of business community I think when we started, and we’ve just got to the point of: we have to put ourselves first. And that really doesn’t necessarily sit with our value, our core values aren’t. But you have to ‘cause you’ve got to survive.” (B4)

Businesses demonstrating the lowest level of purism have changed their values considerably since starting their business. B19 could not keep to their values of having “everything as local as possible and everything in season”. Firstly, this was due to a supply issue, because they found that “just because food is local doesn't mean it's good” and so looked further afield for better products. Secondly, local consumers wanted to “do more of a shop here than they could do when we first opened”, and so they began stocking products such as bananas and oranges due to demand. Their desire to be sustainable meant they had to re-evaluate the whole service offering, including their customers rather than just calculate their sustainability as a business. The bananas have “come from the other side of the world” but equally “if that person in the village has got to come here and then has got to go somewhere else” that is less sustainable. Therefore, as they described, survival involves compromise:

“it took us like a while to abandon those original principles. But we realised if you wanna have a successful business...it's all very well-being principled, but if you're not making enough money, you're not going to be around for very long...it was a hard decision to make when you open up and you're so principled and that's what you want to do, but...”.

Different SMEs in AFNs display differing degrees of compromise (trade-offs) between financial and non-financial values. Those displaying the greatest purism of values concentrate on one product type, such as baking or meat production. They are the creators of their product, whether that is at farm level or producing only that product. They have a large enough customer base who align with these original values and value their strong story, which allows the business to display and continue greater value purism. Their products are arguably artisan, aligning with tradition and/or high quality (see Lingham et al., 2022b for a discussion into artisanal foods). In summary, purism may be framed by perceptions of the actions to take to deliver resilience and survival. Those with less values purism seem to be situated within the distributor category, selling the products of other businesses. Core values may still exist in less purist businesses, but they may have to sacrifice some values to

survive. This may demonstrate the disconnection between their original business values and the values of their consumers. Perhaps, as a distributor, their story may not be strong enough to gain sufficient consumer following to allow them to enact their core values in practice.

The next section considers disconnections.

5.2.1.4 Disconnections

In addition to constructs that mediate connections, various disconnections were articulated that exist within and between businesses, and between businesses and external bodies, and consumers. These align with the findings in chapter 5.4 related to how microbusiness/SME roles are hampered by factors such as lack of connection, infrastructure, and perception. These disconnections mediate their business relationships, their networks and their perceptions of potential business opportunities. Specific elements considered here are infrastructure, local players and societal understanding of food.

Infrastructure

In many respects some respondents stated that the wider support and opportunities provided at county level are ineffective or need extensive overhauling, there being many instances where businesses cannot sell at local markets for a variety of reasons, opportunities from the land are available only to the Forestry Commission, or basic infrastructure is insufficient, and funding does not reach those needing it. Problems relating to the council were cited by six businesses. In rural areas like the Forest of Dean, their support is limited. B10 joked that:

“I think even Gloucestershire County Council forget[s] it’s part of Gloucestershire, cause we have to fight hand-in-tooth for everything basically. If they’re going to cut any services, it’ll be in the Forest of Dean.”

Transport issues mean: “we’ve got hardly any buses, hardly any trains, transport. Nothing” (B10). B10 describes the irony that their local MP is also the MP for transport, it being “a bit of a joke”. He, the MP, also came under fire from B4, who described policy challenges for the Forest versus the rest of Gloucestershire, support generally concentrating in areas like Hartpury. She also described the lack of connection between council bodies:

“really sad part about it where some of the barriers you face are just so avoidable... yet you’ve got a town council in, you’ve got a district council; and their office is there (pointing left down the street) and their office is there (pointing right down the street), and they don’t talk, and then you’ve got three traders associations in this town and nobody talks to each other: there’s four streets!”.

Infrastructure at the most basic level also proved problematic. B16 stated they were not allowed to live on their land, being told they don’t have an essential need because “we’re not big enough. We don’t have enough animals,” despite their hands-on style of farming requiring them to be on their land daily and camp there during lambing season. Rules dictate that with sheep, it isn’t essential to be on the land, which they understand; for pigs, it is essential only if they are breeding from them, which they are not. Additionally, they’d need to show they have sufficient profit to pay a full-time wage, and on their scale of farming that is impossible. This highlights the impossibility of other people being able to live on a small-holding as a lifestyle choice unless they can independently finance themselves and buy somewhere which already includes a house. This creates a huge barrier to small-scale, ultra-high welfare meat production, and is inconsistent with the neighbouring Welsh ‘Our Food 1200’ policy.

When selling products, markets countered opportunities with difficulties. B9 found London farmers’ markets particularly difficult, being “very narrow minded”. They restrict B9 sharing a stall with other goat product producers, and she also cannot sell their products for them as:

“they [the council] only want...what’s produced on the farm... ‘hold on a minute... That’s not that’s not your butter, that’s not your cheese. You can come and sell your meat””.

She expands further:

“There's no way on Earth I can...produce all this myself. What person can? ... somebody's gotta be at home to tend the goats ... You're [the markets] wanting them [the producers] to turn up at 7:00 o'clock in the morning”

something she describes as “shooting yourself in the foot” especially as “you don't do any trade on Saturday until 10 really.” In comparison, she sees that those with fast food stalls are “never asked what ingredients they're sourcing” or their origin. By requiring only their own farm produce, B9 must be certain she would sell the equivalent of seven goats to make a profit, considering the non-trading hours of travelling. So, it only works if they don't pay themselves for their time. Additionally, B9 described the Farmers Market committee of XXX market; someone on the committee produced sheep cheese and “Didn't want anyone else selling cheese”, preventing others from selling there; plus, an organiser would:

“arrive, make sure all the stalls were in the right place and then go and do her shopping in xxxx [supermarket] and come back again!”.

This challenge was also highlighted in the scoping interviews (UKA1) and highlights a disconnect between Council values and the help businesses require. B9 believes “towns should be paying farmers to come to them.” B4 also found barriers with markets, describing how the town council:

“did a deal with a company based in Newport that they could set up markets throughout the Forest...they brought all their own traders and wouldn't let locals (traders) in”.

This prevented B4 and many potential local businesses using this platform. B4 highlighted issues with selling local products in her deli. Wild Boar, for instance, is something they cannot get in the Forest of Dean.

“Can you believe it? The Forestry Commission have their full licence, they have their own car which goes straight up to Birmingham wholesaler and goes to London”.

Therefore, she cannot get a commercial sustainable source of wild boar; she instead gets “the wild boar breed” from a local farm. This disconnects original foresters who cannot make a living with the traditional heritage of the area. This is worsened by the widening financial gap between locals and those moving into the area:

“the Forest of Dean is one of the lowest socially mobile...districts in the whole of the UK...just widen the gap between those who have come in...want to shop with us” and foresters.

Whilst new food businesses could help close this gap, the lack of Council funding/help locals receive means the potential for these businesses is not being reached. If there was “a programme to enable locals to set up their own small businesses...Because ... there’s a huge sense of loyalty,” this would be beneficial. She describes the effect of association, suggesting that:

“there’s one lady who has a successful business who’s just bought the pub, and other things... and if it’s like associated with her, because she’s proper forester and she’s self-made, then that is a way in”.

B4, being a distributor, has helped in some respect, providing a platform for small local businesses, although some businesses have “either gone bust or it’s just not viable anymore to run it.” She stated that losing her main producer for cooking ingredients “was pretty gutting”. The cost-of-living crisis is partly responsible, affecting both producers via higher costs, and consumers with higher prices or having less to spend. Thus, there are issues to be addressed not just in Gloucestershire, but further afield to help food businesses. Businesses have therefore found that, where possible, they must support each other, becoming “quite efficient in everything we do” (B10), especially in creating connections and collaborations. This is why many new small businesses look only to established businesses to act as distributors of their product (B10).

Within local players, disconnection with the local distributor base, competitors, and customers were cited. Firstly, B11 described his reaction to actions of local distributors:

“I was honestly, was absolutely aghast with the lack of willingness of these little chain pubs to work with locals... But it was almost like they didn’t want to promote a local product. They were happy that there’s a well-known brand on the bar”.

B11 has since found pubs which champion their produce. Secondly, competitors also surprised businesses. B9 describes the disconnection many farm shops have with food production, “you go round the farm shops and they’re supporting veganuary.” She posits this is because many farm shops are no longer farm owned and are stand-alone businesses, and thus may have lost touch with the primary focus of ‘farm’ shops. Thirdly, B9 found disconnection with their local customer base. During the pandemic, they would “comfortably take £600-700 hundred pounds in a day” and village pop-ups were “just a celebration: ‘Somebody’s come to us!’”. Since then, the community has proved “quite fickle” as now “no-one will support you... you might take £100, £200”, making it unviable. She describes the difference between the “warm feeling” consumers have, liking the idea of supporting a local business, and the practical support: “they’ve disappointed me to be honest with you.” She wondered whether it’s because the consumers live somewhere rural, and they’d rather visit town when they want a coffee or to shop. This also demonstrates disconnection between consumers and their own values, with some enjoying the:

“short-lived moments of, they’re feeling righteous and good about the world because they’re, they’ve supported local business. But then actually Monday comes and they’ve gotta get from A to B. They go to a drive-in Costa Coffee”. (B9)

Thus, convenience can, and does, outcompete non-financial values for many consumers.

The consumers' understanding of seasonality, raised as a concern during in the scoping interviews, was problematic here also.

"If you ask an awful lot of people as far as what the seasonality is of certain vegetables, they would be utterly clueless!" (B5).

These thoughts were echoed by others. B16 describes how

"if they [the consumer] want an asparagus out of season, then they've got no qualms in going to the local shop and buying it".

The ease of access to imported vegetables fuels this possibility, and unless UK seasonal vegetables were the only option, the problem will persist. B20 puts this down to people not being able to

"learn...in the old way anymore. Like people come out to the farm and they just they don't know where milk comes from or where the food comes from."

B20 tries to emphasise the provenance of the milk, but this is restricted to those visiting the farm or those who follow them on social media (which arguably already have an interest). Their new outlet at Gloucester Food Dock may aid re-education, their gelato being available to a wider audience. B4 described how, as cows are fed different things throughout the year, cheeses will have a seasonal taste variability. This was largely misunderstood "And that's something you really do have to re-educate" (B4), consumers saying that double Gloucester doesn't taste like double Gloucester. She argued that supermarket cheeses are:

"all the same cheese, they just put different dyes. Red Leicester, Caerphilly: it's all exactly the same cheese... They admit it."

Whether this is true or not, her concerns for lack of public understanding of cheese were also felt by B7, a farmer-producer making non-homogenised cheese. She compares “quite bland”, unmaturred supermarket cheese to their own:

“So, our cheese tastes hugely different, and sometimes you actually need to point it out. And I think if children have been brought up on supermarket cheese, they'll find our cheese maybe a bit weird. You know, there's something... Not as soft, but once you've... once you've explained it, then people can taste, kinda taste the difference.”

Her consumers relished learning why the cheese tasted different, making educating and sharing knowledge with them much easier. Interestingly, there is a disconnect between wealth and knowledge. B17 argues that knowledge is not wealth-driven. They have regular consumers whom he described as “fairly hard up” but can “live very well because they have... education”. He explains how they

“spend a fiver and they've gone out with a lot of food. And they know how to cook”.

They use cheaper cuts of meat for stewing and buy the unwashed potatoes and vegetables et cetera. Therefore, cooking knowledge, in their context, is driven by factors other than wealth. B10 also argued that farm shops are affordable, highlighting that some of the small producers she knows do price comparisons on Facebook:

“the prices were vastly different. I think it was from lamb, a leg of lamb, and their price per kilo was something like £2 or £3 cheaper than the supermarket”.

Producers taking this initiative is a welcome development for an industry for whom marketing is generally not their strong point. However, this approach being necessary show the misunderstanding consumers have regarding supermarkets versus AFN food procurement. This information has a great potential to trickle through the local population with businesses like B10, and other consumers, re-posting this information, but it does only apply in this small area. Similar action

is required from producers in other areas to make a greater difference. However, the customer must want to be educated, or access knowledge. B7 explains this further:

“The more you're on social media, then you're more likely to get some unpleasant comments ...
and they're usually vegan orientated”.

She finds answering these very difficult, most likely because, as B20 suggested, “I think people like to argue, don't they?” and so it becomes difficult to win an argument when someone is set against them. He feels farmers don't “fight back as much as we would like to” due to feeling “brow-beaten” by all the negative press and misinformation, with consumers often not listening to their point of view.

Lack of consumer knowledge also extends to misunderstanding practicalities of small businesses. B20 explains the misconception many consumers have relating to production size:

“They would think that, oh, just because we've done so many flavours that it's just to put it in the machine, press a button... and it mixes it and it's done”.

He finds this frustrating, as despite handmaking gelato in small batches, customers do not understand ‘small batch’ or if they do, they think production of all flavours is continual:

“Like just yesterday I had an e-mail from somebody saying, ‘can we order one tub of this flavour for next Wednesday?’ I mean, that's a flavour that we wouldn't be doing this time of year anyway.

We certainly wouldn't be able to just turn around one tub just like that”.

Clearly here as well, there is a lack of understanding as to what flavour ingredients are seasonal, and also a lack of engagement with PRV; thus, why do they choose this business? Another example is where consumers assume that if products are not labelled ‘organic’ they must be of a lower quality. B4 explained how recently many of their cheeses have lost their organic status due to switching to alternatives due to the rising costs of buying organic feed. These producers, she explains, care for their animals in just the same way and the cheese is just as good, but consumers are hesitant to

buy. Because producers must pay for organic status, they now try hard to re-educate their consumers. Distributors like B4 aid this, considering the influence and trust they have gained, but for others it may not be as simple. Similarly, B17 described his frustration at consumers valuing the idea of cows grazing all year round. This is he argues only possible as a lifestyle choice, as its not economic, cows only requiring c.100 days/ year out.

Having considered factors mediating the networks of businesses, the next section will consider the networks themselves.

5.2.2 Networks

When investigating business networks, interviews provided qualitative data, and the creation of business sociograms provided quantitative data, enriching the findings. This section will investigate the features businesses believed networks should have before looking at and evaluating the different networks these businesses were involved with.

5.2.2.1 Defining a network

During the interviews, businesses described their networks and what factors were important when developing a good network, highlighting working together, shared values and knowledge exchange, business size and type, and network involvement. These themes are now explored in turn.

Working together

“There's that kind of working with other businesses, supporting other businesses in... not financially, but just out of a sort of social and emotional support as well”. (B1)

Here, the aspect of working together is important to this business, as are the various types of support such a social and emotional between businesses. For EE business B1, much of the support with

other businesses comes from connections via social media rather than in-person. This contrasts heavily with product-only producer B5 who visits actors in her network each week:

“I still do all of my farm shops- I deliver by hand. So, that I can hear, I can speak to the owners and that the staff every week and just sort of find out, how's it going”.

This is probably because it is easier to see the connection with her product in person, whereas B1 does not sell any product at another establishment and therefore does not require this regular in person check-in. Both businesses speak warmly of other actors and their support, so clearly in person is not always a pre-requisite for support.

Shared values and knowledge exchange

“Working collaboratively and kind of building those network connections...So we're very particular about the businesses that we, we partner with...but we partner [with] some really great companies.”

“Knowledge exchange and you know you're switching ideas... it's a support network around you... an island, that's absolutely not what we are. You can't, you can't operate that way. You need the support of others, you need ... sharing of ideas and I came from outside the coffee industry in my in my previous career. So, it's... it was quite interesting to come into this and as soon as you walk in, you can see what a supportive industry it is”.

The above quotes are both from B18. Working together is mentioned again here. There is also an element, if they are particular about those who they work with, of also mutually sharing values with them. This was echoed by B12 when describing how to strengthen their business network, which requires:

“trying to talk to other like-minded businesses that kind of share kind of the passion for things and similar values”.

The third element B18 describes is sharing ideas/knowledge exchange. The inference is that there are two levels of network: the immediate level of those they work collaboratively with, which might be described as the micro-network level, and the industry in general which might be described as the macro-network level.

“That's something I think is really special about the farm, the farm shops and the delis, because there's a ...an amazing support network rather than ‘actually we're not going to share anything because you might pinch my ideas’, you know. And that's really, really important as well”. (B5)

Once again, the support of other businesses is mentioned. But also, what might be inferred from the ease of sharing ideas is a level of trust between businesses. Although, B4 did mention some animosity in this respect: “you always get people copying everybody else, that's as much as I'm going to say!”. Although, they implied during other parts of the interview the importance of trust with other businesses by sharing recipes and talking about the “that sense of community... we'll all pull together”. It is hard to distinguish between their local community and their business network as there are many overlaps, however their clarification that “we had an idealistic sense of business community I think when we started” was stated in relation to their local area business community rather than their business network.

Business size and type connotations

Interestingly, product-only producer B12, felt that the type of business affected the level of networking which occurred.

“I think there's two... types of small businesses ...like the farming-based businesses, they don't do that much kind of networking. They are like a, you know, kind of a producer, where I think the small... modern businesses, especially in like the foodie world where it's kind of a bit like trendy, like there's more kind of networking interaction. There's more like camaraderie... There's quite a

few of our smaller suppliers who put themselves personally into the business more are also the ones that I think I've connected with more personally and we'll do social things together and that kind of thing.”

B12 uses farms for only raw ingredients like butter, so her contact with farming businesses may be more limited, compared to the large number of other small product-only businesses she works with. This may partly explain her reasoning, although in the interview, she did come across as very knowledgeable about all levels of the food production system and grew up with her grandparents having a dairy farm. Thus, her summary may be reliable.

The network links shown by farming businesses such as B9 and B20 tend to focus on other farmer-producers rather than a product-only businesses, which supports B12's belief. Although, the others in the farmer-producer category have strong networks with many other business types. However, the need for greater networking and development of connections was echoed by a few, such as B10:

“A lot of suppliers out there, or producers out there in the Forest, know about us and you know, we do use a lot of local suppliers... there isn't a... sometimes I feel that needs to be like a little networking group of food producers in the Forest of Dean to then pull us together, so we know more... then we don't have to search for each other”.

As explained by farmer-producer B16, “basically I networked for England... networked networked, networked”. Examples from the interviews of how networking occurred included via groups such as Food for Thought who are a networking group for food businesses used by B10, joining networking groups like B16, and participating in events such as going on local radio stations: “for that, contacts, it's key. For that networking, it's key” according to B9 (Farmer-producer). Others mentioned participating in programmes on the radio or TV, not in relation to developing their business network, but more in relation to developing their customer network. For these businesses, networks should involve businesses with similar values working together and exchanging knowledge, creating a

network of trust rather than competition. The suggestion of a difference in business size and type and their involvement in networks will be explored further in the next section.

5.2.2.2 Network involvement

A main feature of these business interviews was to ascertain the characteristics of the business networks, looking at the types of businesses they have connections with, what forms of connections they have, and the strength of these connections. All businesses have a set of vertical commercial/financial networks, but this research also looked at horizontal non-financial links. Seven B2B connections emerged in section 4.2 and are used here to further test their validity. The respondents were asked to use the mapping tool to help describe their business networks. Figure 5.1 is an illustrative example of the diagrams, and the full complement of concentric diagrams can be found in the appendix 8.2.4. The closest circle to the centre presents the strongest connections, and the circle furthest away, the weaker connections. In the figure, this business cited SS, KE and T connections with the Gloucestershire Old Spot Breeders club at a medium strength. In many of the concentric diagrams, more generally, the further the actor from the centre of the diagram, the more likely that the connections will only be financially based (relating to financial, marketing, competition, or trade).

Table 5.3 Limitations of concentric diagrams

Limitation	Example/reasoning	Comment
Actors can only be placed in one location.	All the connection types with that actor are shown as the same strength level, when this may not always be the case.	Distance from the centre is irrelevant to the actual geographical distance of the actor to the business.
Diagrams are not an accurate representation of the numbers of connections.	Interviewees grouped actors on many occasions, for instance Distributor B6 listed '130 food producers' as one actor.	The diagrams do assist respondents in articulating and reflecting on their networks.
Diagrams represent the interviewee perception of the important connections with their actors and as such are subjective.	B2 cites their glass manufacturer as being a strong connection, yet they only have FC with them.	Five businesses follow the pattern of including actors with only financially-based connections within their strong connections; these are within the larger two business sizing groups. The other businesses appear to associate a strong connection with emotional or social connection; for instance, all the strong connections of the other businesses have either SS or EC.

Figure 5.2 Connection relationships with business type

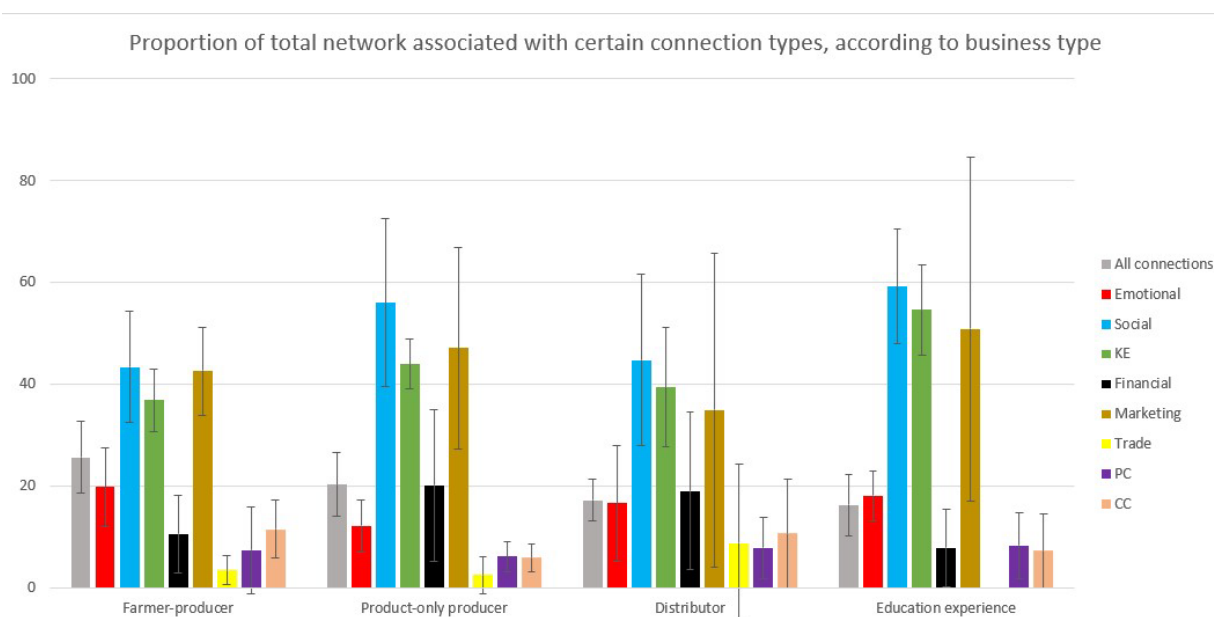
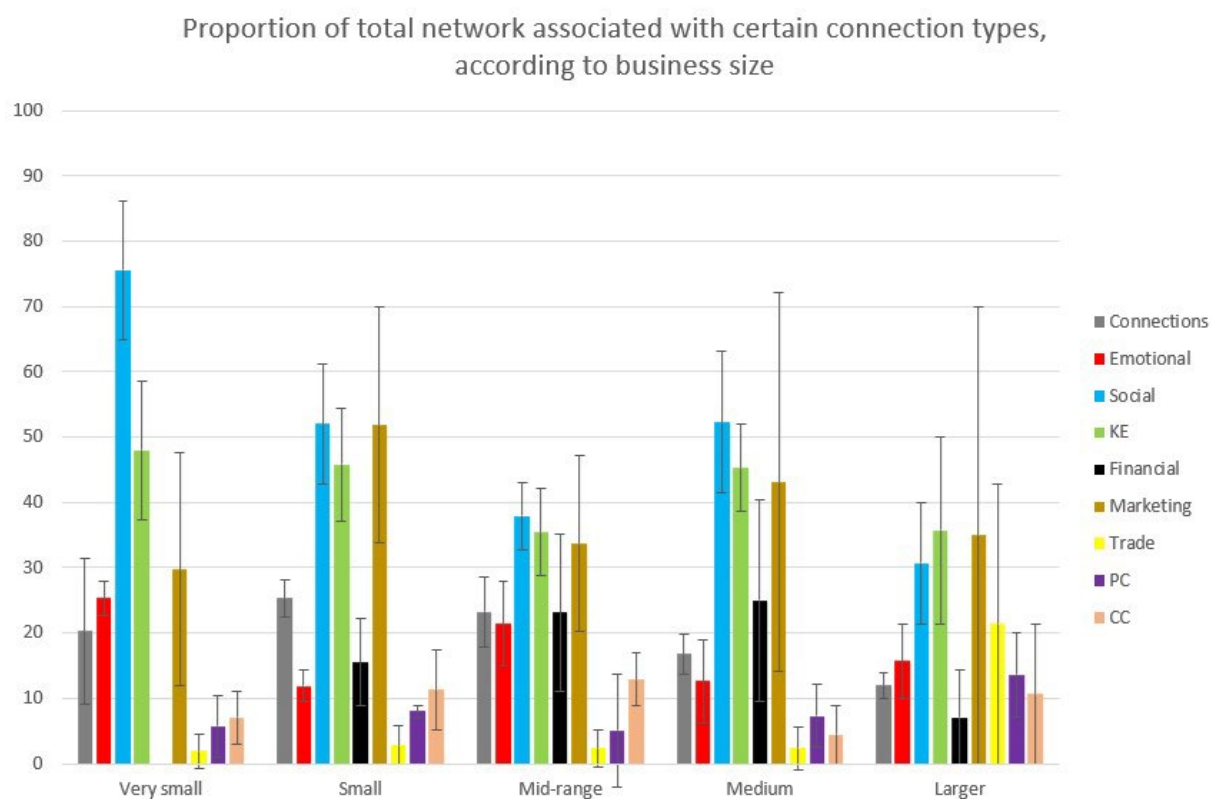


Figure 5.3 Connection relationship with business size



Farmer producers overall had low standard deviation (lowest of all the groups), each business within the group therefore answering more similarly (figure 5.2). The wider standard deviation shows that the businesses within the distributor and EE groups in particular answered very differently. No major trends can be drawn from this graph relating to business type, although several things are worth noting. Firstly, EEs reported the greatest number of SS connections, with low standard deviation, perhaps by teaching people daily, they have more social connections. Secondly, product-only and distributor networks have a greater proportion of financial only connections. Thirdly, what is arguably missing from the graphs are trade connections. The farmer-producers especially might be expected to have more; perhaps B20, for instance, did not consider any society relating to the breed of cattle or A2 related clubs as connections worth mentioning. However, when it comes to business size, stronger trends can be seen (figure 5.3). The greatest difference is between the very small

businesses and the larger businesses, the former having the largest number of connections (and low standard deviation) and the latter the smallest, being only around half of very small businesses.

The larger standard deviation for very small businesses here is due to B1 who had the smallest network of all businesses and may be considered an anomaly considering her work is part-time, and she does not rely on the success of the business to survive, unlike all other interviewees. Apart from B1, the standard deviation would be smaller.

A greater proportion of the network connections for very small businesses involved a degree of emotional connection (25%), compared to the larger businesses (15%), both with small standard deviations. Additionally, 75% of the actors very small businesses connected with had an element of social connection. This fell to 30% for larger businesses; the small standard deviation showing this is a trend across all the businesses in both categories. This may be because very small businesses must more regularly deal personally with other businesses and have greater chance to develop emotional and social relationships, or because many of these actors are also their friends whom they rely on for emotional and social support, such as the many discussed by B16. The outliers here are the small businesses considering how close in size they are to very small businesses, with only 11.9% of their connections being ES, on average.

Of the very small businesses, of the actors they connected with, just under 50% involved KE, which fell to 35% for larger businesses. Above 30% of all business networks across the sizes involved an element of KE, perhaps lower than expected, and worthy of further investigation. These businesses may have included KE, within their ES and SS connections suggesting a large degree of trust between them and the actors.

Trade connection was higher in the networks of large businesses (over 20%), compared to under 5% for very small businesses. The standard deviation for larger businesses highlights only one business from this category mentioned trade connections. The other (B6) stated they had no trade

connections. Of those businesses claiming connections, it is now prudent to look at the strength of these connections. The results are shown in figures 5.4 and 5.5.

Few trends can be found when considering whether business type affects the development of strong connections in their networks (Figure 5.4). Standard deviation is smallest once again for farmer-producers and largest for EEs; again, this is likely to be due to B1 being an outlier. Taking this into account, the EE businesses reported the greatest number of strong actor connections, at 40% of their networks, perhaps unsurprising considering the informal familiarity they have with many actors. Distributors had the lowest network proportion of strong connections. Generally, fewer trends can be drawn out considering the relationship between business type and strong connections.

However, when considering business size, various trends arise (Figure 5.5). The standard deviation is generally quite small, suggesting businesses within each group reported similar strength of connections. Once again, the greatest differences are between the very small and larger businesses. Interestingly, larger businesses have fewer actors with social connections, and where they do have connections they are generally weaker. Conversely, very small businesses report higher levels of social connections, and where reported these connections they are strong. Generally, the very small businesses have more diverse and stronger connection networks than any other business size. These findings make sense if very small businesses need to rely on a support network, as highlighted by B16.

Figure 5.4 Strong connection relationship with business type

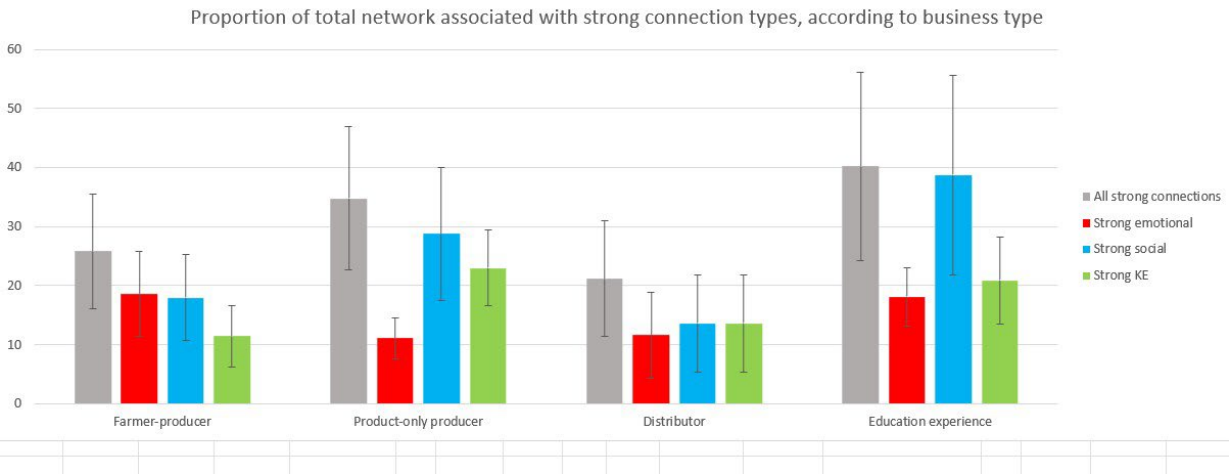
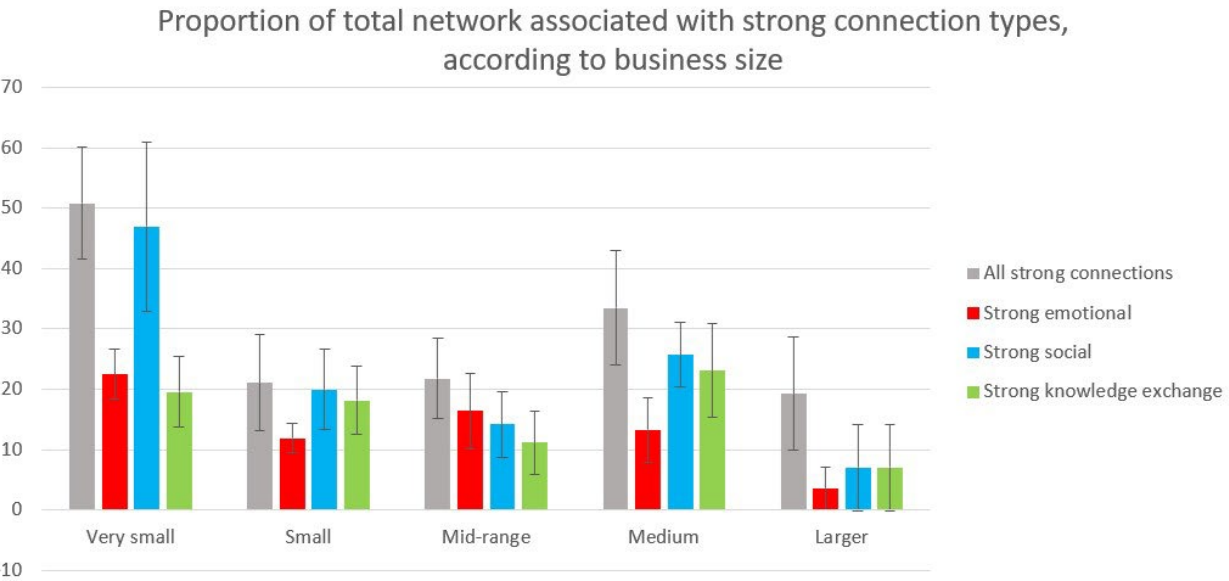


Figure 5.5 Strong connection relationship with business size



The concentric diagrams show the strength of connection, but do not show types of businesses actor the interviewee businesses had connections with. Therefore, the following section looks at the **who** part of the network.

This section will explore the relationship between actor category and connection type, using sociograms fashioned from interview concentric circle diagrams.

Business sociograms

Using the concentric diagrams developed during the interviews (figure 5.1) actor categories and connection types were coded (chapter 3.3.3). From this, sociograms for each business were created; figures 5.6 and 5.7 are illustrative examples for businesses B16 and B20, both farmer-producer businesses. The rest of the sociograms can be found in appendix 8.2.5, along with a comparison of the findings from B16 and B20 according to the actor groups (appendix 8.2.6). The legend for the sociograms is the same as for the concentric diagrams.

There being many types of connection, category of actor, and types and size of interviewee business, it was prudent to narrow down types of non-financial connection to analyse them relating to actor category. To be a strong connection for this analysis, only connections at strength 2.5 and over were included and had to contribute at least 70% of the connections in that actor category. These were then compared with business type and business size. Few connections fit these requirements and as such Table 5.4 shows the total number of connections rather than a percentage or average.

Figure 5.6 - B16 sociogram

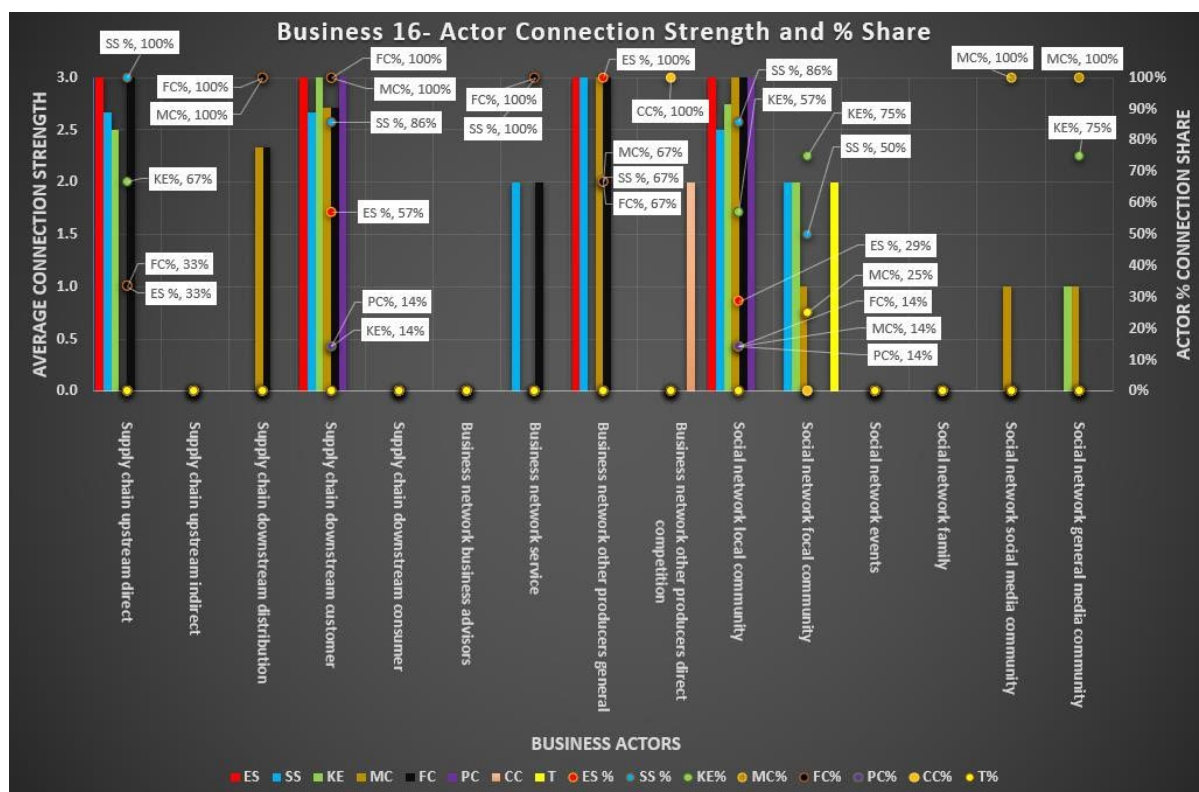


Figure 5.7 - B20 sociogram

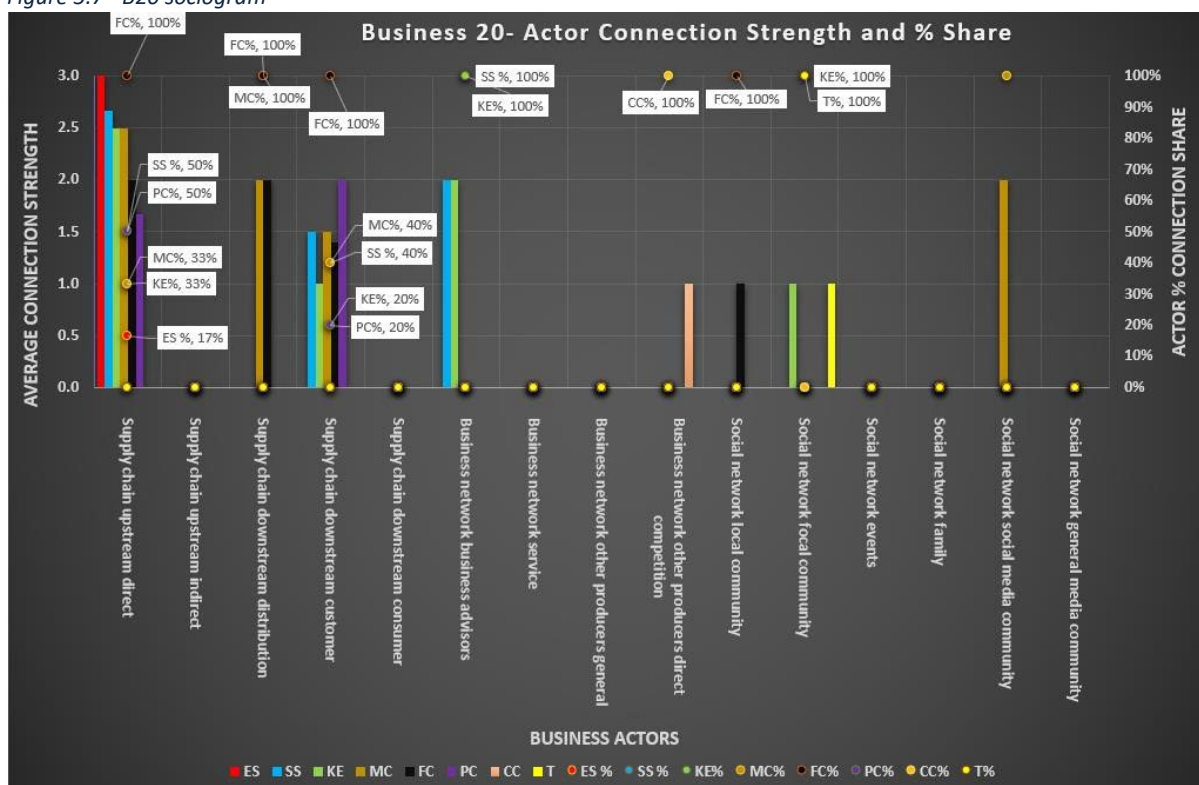


Table 5.4 Connection relationship with actor group, associated with business type

ES															
	SCUD	SCUI	SCDD	SCDC	SCD-Co	BNBA	BNS	BN-OPG	BNDC	SN-LC	SNFC	SNE	SNF	SN-SMC	SN-GMC
Farmer Producer	1		1					1	1				1		
Product only			1												
Distributor	1	1					1			1			2		
Education Experience								1	1					1	
SS															
	SCUD	SCUI	SCDD	SCDC	SCD-Co	BNBA	BNS	BN-OPG	BNDC	SN-LC	SN-FC	SNE	SNF	SN-SMC	SN-GMC
Farmer Producer	1		1	2		1	1		1	2					
Product only	1		3	2		2	1	2		1	1				
Distributor	1	1								1					
Education Experience								1	1					1	
KE															
	SCUD	SCUI	SCDD	SCDC	SCD-Co	BNBA	BNS	BN-OPG	BNDC	SN-LC	SN-FC	SNE	SNF	SN-SMC	SN-GMC

Farmer Producer	1		1			1			1				1		
Product only	2		2	1		2		1			1				
Distributor	1						1			1			2		
Education Experience									2	1				1	
Total	9	2	9	5	0	6	4	6	7	7	2	0	6	3	0

(Key for table shown in table 3.9)

Very few patterns emerge from Table 5.4, mainly due to the lack of strong connections contributing 70% of actor connector networks. No trends appear relating to strong ES and actor types. However, patterns exist for SS and KE. Product-only businesses reported strong SS and KE with the greatest number of actor types throughout the supply chain. This supports earlier findings from the interviews.

As the samples size was small, this identified trend is worthy exploring with a larger sample size. Regarding whether actor type had any bearing on connections, supply chain upstream direct and supply chain downstream distribution had the greatest number of connections (n=9) associated with them.

Table 5.5 Connection relationship with actor group, associated with business size

ES															
	SCUD	SCUI	SCDD	SCDC	SCD-Co	BNBA	BNS	BN-OPG	BNDC	SN-LC	SNFC	SNE	SNF	SN-SMC	SN-GMC
Very small			1					1	1					1	
Small															
Mid range	1		1				1		1				2		
Medium								1		1			1		
Larger	1	1													
SS															
	SCUD	SCUI	SCDD	SCDC	SCD-Co	BNBA	BNS	BN-OPG	BN-DC	SNLC	SNFC	SNE	SNF	SN-SMC	SN-GMC
Very small	3		1	2		1	1		1	2				1	
Small		1				1		2	1						
Mid range	1		1	1		1	1		1	1					
Medium			2	1				2		1	1				
Larger	1	1													
KE															
	SCUD	SCUI	SCDD	SCDC	SCD-Co	BNBA	BNS	BN-OPG	BNDC	SNLC	SNFC	SNE	SNF	SN-SMC	SN-GMC
Very small	1		1			1			1	1				1	
Small				1		1		1	1						
Mid range	1		1			1	1		1				2		

Medium	1		2							1	1		1		
Larger	1														
Total	11	3	11	5	0	6	4	7	8	7	2	0	6	3	0

For business size, very few trends emerge from relating to ES and actor groups (Table 5.5). However, some trends emerge with SS and KE actor connections. Very small businesses are more likely to have strong social connections, as shown earlier, but here this is quantified to 12 connections across many different actors across the network, from supply chain upstream to downstream, business network and social network actors. Large businesses, conversely, only have 2 actors, both within Supply Chain Upstream category. Additionally, larger businesses have fewer KE connections compared to all other business sizes (1 versus at least 4). This study shows very small businesses reported higher ES but most strong was SS. Where very small businesses identified SS, it was stronger, and with more of their network. Large businesses exhibited different connective networks. As each business is unique in pattern and strength of connection, but all demonstrate financial and non-financial connections in different ways. This demonstrates the difficulty in using the term 'AFN', as microbusiness/SMEs connections within AFNs vary considerably case by case.

How networks could be supported

Throughout the interviews, and unprompted, interviewees suggested five ways in which food microbusinesses and SMEs could be supported. These support mechanisms involved the work of an independent facilitator for specific help for the business, as well as a general facilitator for new business set-up schemes. Support was also discussed in relation to networking, education, and by accreditations. These themes are expanded upon further in chapter 6.

5.2.3 Summary of findings for research question 1

The varying, more holistic, nature of product connections identified in the cases means the categorisation of connections from table 3.7 requires updating (Table 3.8 and 5.6).

Table 5.6 Updated typology of connection types

Financial connections	Holistic/ fusion connections	Non-financial connections
Financial	Product connection	Emotional
Marketing		Social
Trade		Knowledge exchange

The typologies, and characteristics of SME connections are not what this research set out to find in the original research questions but have emerged from the data and could be explored in further research in the future. The responses from the interviewed businesses indicated that their networks involve businesses with similar values working together and exchanging knowledge, creating a network of trust rather than competition. Also, the responses suggested there was a difference in terms of business size and type and their connectedness and involvement in networks. When investigating this further, different businesses characteristics did suggest why different connections occur within networks. Whilst the type of business elicited few trends, the size of business was shown to be of influence with the greatest difference seen between very small and large businesses. A similar trend was found regarding strength of connections also, although less so for KE. Businesses have financial and non-financial connections with other multiple actor types within their networks, ranging from upstream direct to social media general media community. But these actor types have little impact on what type and strength of connection interviewee businesses have with them. The real narrative is about difference between very small and large businesses.

The output of this section is fivefold. Firstly, network characteristics have been identified by businesses, and various constructs were found which mediate them. Secondly, the networks these

microbusinesses/SMEs are involved with are not based on purely financial connections, and the typology of financial and non-financial connections was validated. Thirdly, certain sizes of businesses have more and stronger connections than others. Fourthly, the type of business and the type of actor these businesses have connections with was not shown to influence the type or strength of connection they have with them. And finally, the alter-values are sometimes perceived differently by businesses and consumers, for instance, where SRVs are different for businesses and their consumers, and this can create disconnection.

5.3 Research question 2: Is having ECV beneficial?

After having defined and framed ECV within chapter 5, it is further examined here, beginning with an exploration of its benefits from the point of view of businesses. Whilst the interviews focussed on the benefits of ECV for businesses, they also identified benefits for consumers. Appendix 8.2.7 provides further exemplar quotes to support this section investigation into how businesses and consumers can have ECV for business products and for the business itself and should be read alongside this section. Multiple benefits of having ECV exist for both businesses and consumers, both financial and non-financial. As the focus here is on non-financial values, financial will be presented briefly.

5.3.1 Financial

These themes related to business viability (consumers facilitating businesses to stay afloat and being happy to pay more for certain products), marketing (by consumers being willing to advertise in various ways), and resilience. The latter benefit ensures that not only that businesses can rely on loyalty during 'normal' times, but that consumer support also ensures their resilience during crises. Interestingly, B4 mentioned a few businesses who went out of business, mostly due to the pandemic; it would be interesting to see why they were less resilient than these interviewed businesses. These

are clearly benefits for the business, although B12 did describe certain smaller financial benefits for consumers also, although felt there was more they could do:

“We do offer a little bit of a discount when customers order from subscriptions.”

However, there was one financial benefit for consumers, described passionately by B17, relating to consumer resilience and food security. He differentiated between consumer types: some can afford more expensive products; others are able to buy a week's worth of seasonal, local and fresh food for £5. Where consumers have knowledge therefore, although not necessarily ECV, (and presumably can access the farm shop), SMEs can provide a means of food security and personal resilience.

5.3.2 Non-financial

The non-financial benefits featured connective community, knowledge exchange/education, and identity of both businesses and consumers. Community and education are themes that continue from chapter 5.4 relating to the role of microbusiness/SMEs in renegotiating cultural norms and value of food.

5.3.2.1 Connective community

Here, connective community took four forms. Firstly, community is created between consumers who met via the business. Secondly, community is created between the consumer and the business, either by making the consumer feel valued, or by a mutual friendship. Thirdly, the relationship between the business and the consumer can lead to business development and a continuing relationship based on shared values and business community. Fourthly, community can be created between businesses via shared values, mutuality and friendship, with shared experiences aiding business resilience and personal enrichment. Connective community, via consumer association with SMEs, also positively impacted consumer mental health, some businesses felt. During the pandemic

especially, SMEs fulfilled consumer desire for comfort treats and substitutions for holiday food, whilst also providing much needed personal contact. This is a new finding, differing from the emphasis on physical health (via healthy eating) mentioned throughout Chapter 4.

5.3.2.2 Knowledge exchange

Education was referred to multiple times and is described here as knowledge exchange. The use of the word 'education' is perhaps due to businesses feeling they imparted knowledge to consumers but didn't receive any in return. On many occasions, businesses felt consumers required knowledge, either educating their palates:

“It's kind of educating your palate, really” (B6)

or understanding foods:

“a bit more educational stuff about coffees because people just drink it and ‘oo that’s nice’, and they just really don't know anything about it other than that” (B8)

And

“with the events, particularly the educational events, I just think OK, that person is left that bit wiser.” (B9).

Educating consumers was aided by a strong business story and personality/character of the person running the business. These traits, plus personal contact with the business developing relational trust, and can aid neophilia within consumers.

5.3.2.3 Identity

Identity was considered in chapter 4.4. Here, business and consumer identity were found to benefit from having ECV. Business identity related to values: how their businesses started and how their values changed during the course of business. Part of the reported consumer identity focussed on

tradition, aligning with the findings in Chapter 4.4. However, this research revealed that consumers can live vicariously through businesses which demonstrate a life they desire but cannot have. Because businesses can resonate with their internal ideals, consumers develop ECV for the business and their products, and this connection continues and is even enhanced due to continued interaction with the business and consumption of their products. Interestingly, this paints a different picture to how B17 sees the future of “lifestyle businesses”, suggesting that “You’re either going to be a little niche lifestyle business... or you’re commercial. But I’m afraid the niche is going to get harder.” He explained further “They don’t have any money. They work all the time and they earn nothing”, when discussing a similar business to B16 (BX). Being a larger commercial farmer (although the interview focussed on the farm shop rather than the farm, hence why B17 is listed as a Distributor), B17 feels he couldn’t farm that way. Clearly, B16 and BX are happy to live their values without making a huge profit and gain much consumer following because they like the story. Also prudent to mention is that the BX, since the interviews, has a new deal selling to Co-ops and is now much more commercially viable.

5.3.3 Summary of research question 2

ECV has been found to be beneficial for businesses and consumers. Businesses benefit from financial and marketing advantages, as well as community connection and resilience. Consumers benefit from community connection, education and strengthening of identity.

5.4 Research question 3: What is the role of food microbusinesses and SMEs in nurturing ECV, and changing food culture?

Chapter 4.5 found that microbusinesses and SMEs are influential in developing and maintaining alter-values via the 5 C's. Thematic analysis here builds on this by concentrating specifically on their role in nurturing ECV (s.5.4.1) and in changing food cultures (s.5.4.2), and finds overlaps between all Cs.

5.4.1 Role in nurturing ECV

After having considered the benefits consumer ECV for food has for food businesses (section 5.3), this section investigates the inverse of this by defining the roles food microbusinesses and SMEs have in nurturing ECV in their customers (also see appendix 8.2.8 for further quotes). The main themes were food memories, ownership, attachment, and raising the bar, each of which are discussed below. All themes are consumer focussed.

5.4.1.1 Memories

Food memories are an important part of grounding of food within a person. They mostly relate to the 'continuance' and connective roles outlined in chapter 4.4. Businesses are influential in both creating memories and bringing back memories. They were specifically referred to by nine businesses but alluded to by nearly all. Early age experiences influence how we perceive things in adulthood (see section 3.2). B8 providing children with the benefit-related value via the experience of learning how to make coffee, the smell of it, along with the story he tells them about its origins, are likely to create memories for them, giving them an ECV for the coffee (providing they enjoyed the experience!) and markets perhaps. This also has the potential to develop a food culture, for example, B13 suggesting how children understanding bread to be sourdough rather than sliced white from the supermarket has the potential to create habits for their adult life and cement them in their personal food culture, their ego-culture.

A contemporary form of food culture was suggested by UKB4 as meeting for coffee and cake. B12 found that, apart from this cultural norm of friends meeting regularly at her café, life landmarks, such as positive examples like proposals and new births, and negative examples like commiserations, are celebrated with her brownies. Whilst the brownie is linked to the memories of these occasions via ECV and have become part of the culture of gift giving, by proxy, her business itself is linked with these life changes, she believes, with the relational trust she has built likely contributing to this. Memories of childhood were discussed regularly, and businesses felt they were influential in bringing back memories for consumers. B4 was an intermediary between the consumer and the past; the consumer holds an ECV for their milk because it is what they remembered drinking as a child, something B4 now nurtures for them. For B1, customers remembered cooking with their mother or grandma and enjoyed the ECV, reliving these memories and talking about them. Perhaps it also meant that they were more likely to copy the recipe at home because it made them feel closer to their roots and family: “bringing people back”. In this sense, perhaps this is evidence of a specific form of food culture, at the family level. Further, B2 believes consumers crave food from childhood; why might people wish to re-live these memories? Do they want to be taken back to a time with loved ones who are no longer around? Do they want the next generation to have similar memories for things they feel have positively impacted them? Perhaps it is both.

5.4.1.2 Ownership

Interestingly, a new dimension to developing and nurturing ECV became apparent during the interviews and relates to the symbolism of food. This was the idea of ownership, alluded to by five businesses.

Of business product

Themes here relate to the connective and commitment roles businesses enact, identified in chapter 5.4. Whilst some consumers of B20 visit the farm, buy gelato and leave, others immerse themselves

in the farm experience and post onto their social media, giving them some ownership of the cows through this connection. The connection provided by businesses can become part of consumer identity or persona they want to show the world, that they buy produce straight from the farm, they care about the cows et cetera. There is an identity value in demonstrating their ECV for the products and farm, and in showing they know the business personally. Indeed, making the journey to visit the business is another important factor, satisfying the primitive instinct to hunt and gather food (B7), the business providing this outlet. A modern nuance of this is being able to tell a story about the food, creating a sense of ownership of the food, resting on a sense of pride and perhaps of differentiation in that they went out of their way to find that product for the occasion, exhibiting a commitment of the consumer also.

Additionally, B16 shared how their customers “buy an animal and then split it between their family”, occurring regularly throughout the year. This is surely the nearest likeness to hunting and gathering of non-game meat possible in the UK and is likely to be accompanied by a ritual in preparing it (discussed in chapter 3), whether that be how it is prepared or who with. This possibility is facilitated by small farms like B16, who have carved out a role as provider of high-welfare, traditionally and environmentally reared meat, something that consumers would struggle to find elsewhere (thereby also providing IV, PRV and SRV). What better example of taking ownership of food than butchering a whole animal, an effort demonstrating high levels of meat ECV and potentially evidence of a type of food culture. In this respect, ownership must consist of a degree of knowledge, and an appreciation of high-quality food. This highlighted a difference between meat farms, as for sheep or goats, farmers are not allowed to sell the entire animal (B9), thereby potentially limiting the ownership potential they offer their consumers.

Product creation

Taking ownership of a product also has the potential to graduate people from being consumers to producers. Commitment, another of the 5 C's, through tenacity and passion of consumers and

businesses is witnessed here. B10, being an EE, on the surface has a role teaching consumers different food-related knowledge. However, the role they actually play in a consumer's life can be much greater than merely knowledge exchange. Indeed, B10 instilled such "passion" and confidence into a customer that the ECV they developed for chocolate empowered them to begin a new business and contributed to their personal food ego-culture. Additionally, B3 describes attachment from a very hands-on consumer perspective. He gives the example of consumers who had seen alcohol flavoured creams at the supermarket and wondered if B3 could make it. In this instance, lack of an alcohol license meant it wasn't possible, but the customer appreciated being taken seriously; therefore, here, the role of B3 was in making the customer feel valued and almost like a co-producer perhaps, through relational trust.

At a lower level, consumers can develop an ECV of food via the concept of ownership merely by making a recipe their own, the role of businesses in such cases being as providing knowledge and experience provider. For instance, B15 described a lady who attended her class about Middle Eastern food and went home to recreate the menu for fourteen other women she would soon travel to the Middle East with. She took ownership of that food, made it her own, and this gave the food ECV as it signified the start of their trip. Without B15's class, it is likely this creation of food for her companions, and with it the accompanying ECV, would not have occurred. The other example of B10 and the soup demonstrates that ownership also includes confidence, and a sense of freedom. This child took pride and ownership in the soup but also developed an appreciation and ECV of French onion soup which will likely stay with him as a memory. As B10 posited, an outcome of her role providing this connective exposure is, "you've changed someone's life, in a way, haven't you?".

Another form of taking ownership of food through ECV relates to with whom the food is prepared. Since the pandemic, participants in B15's classes are again working in pairs. Whilst also reducing B15's energy and food prices, she finds that participants sharing the experience of cooking together, sometimes with different cultures, often realise they have common ties and keep in touch. As such, this adds a different element to ownership, again through connective exposure: ECV is developed

for the food created due to the experience of cooking together, and secondly, participants then can take ownership of that experience by maintaining friendships made during the experience thereby creating a new community and possibly new food culture, actioning the cooking commensality discussed in chapter 2.4.3

Most of these examples relate to EE businesses, and it is perhaps unsurprising that they have a large connective role to play, considering how closely they work with consumers, both actively connecting with food and companions.

5.4.1.3 Attachment

Three businesses talked about attachment to food, related to the regularity found in the ECV definition, and described two forms: developing attachment and conversely attachment disruption.

Consumers develop attachment to food in such a way that it becomes important and/or a regular feature in their life and this is completely down to the businesses they buy the food from, and therefore links with the 'context' role of businesses outlined in chapter 4.5. Sometimes, consumers are happy that the business name is on the product even if they understand that it might not have been made by them. B3 found that attachment to the business is just as important as the attachment to the product, arguably due to it becoming part of their family food culture considering the many generations B3 has served. Others develop attachment to the product; consumers become so attached and loyal to B5's product that many subscribe to a monthly delivery, others making it their weekly treat. The "heartfelt" and lengthy reviews consumers write suggest B5's cereals have "enriched" (B18) their daily lives and thus hold ECV: "I feel as if I almost know piece of their life... so many of the reviews include the journey of how they came across...the granola" (B5). This is extended when consumers also express attachment to businesses by relying on them to express their emotions via food, shown by B12. This goes beyond impacting the consumer, to impacting other recipients. These examples show that businesses facilitating this attachment by proxy means

they have a role in consumer food culture, enriching consumer lives by facilitating ECV development, and enriching the lives of those around the consumer similarly.

Businesses also alluded to situations where the attachment is disrupted. For B14, it is difficult to tell whether consumers have developed an ECV for croissants from xxxx or whether they were annoyed at a change in something they considered routine. Arguably, there is a cultural value in expectation, the business providing a sense of security.

5.4.1.4 Raising the bar.

As discussed by Connors et al, having experiences with people who cooked certain things ‘really well’ often creates a taste ideal for those foods (an IV) and something to evaluate another version of the dish by (2001, p. 193) and thus turns food into memories which set the bar for future experiences. This demonstrates the interconnection and transcendence between IV and ECV, the IV leading to ECV. Here, five businesses talked about raising the bar, with customers associating their products with a higher level of quality. Mainly they described this in relation to the product itself, but in one instance, it related to the shopping experience. Therefore, this fits within the re-calibrative role of businesses (chapter 4.4).

Relating purely to IV, B12 explained how consumers described how they have “ruined all other brownies” for them, having developed a strong IV for her brownies, a feeling B9 aims for, where “nothing else quite compares” to her product. B16 was hesitant to use the word ‘education’, “but it is education. And your customers start to realise you can taste the difference. And once you’ve tasted the difference...” consumers don’t go back. For B13, consumer comments give him a great sense of achievement, especially when they take the higher bar discovered at B13 and applying it on holiday, especially France where his products are the cultural food.

It was the shopping experience provided by B4 which really raised the bar for their customers, likely due to the enthusiasm and knowledge of the owners, accompanied with an array of high-quality

products. Whilst this does not mean their customers do not shop elsewhere since discovering B4, it suggests that whenever they want food they place a value on or want to have an interaction with, they will go there; thus, they have an ECV for B4 irrespective of whether they have also developed an ECV of a particular product they bought there.

5.4.2 Changing food culture.

Previously, food culture was found to be the “myriad of ways in which food is grown, commodified, prepared, consumed and articulated by a particular society” (Ranta & Ichijo, 2022, p. 2), and this section investigates the influence of food businesses in changing such cultural activities. Research question one demonstrated that very small businesses have greater connections within their networks. But what about their connections with consumers? This section mostly investigates the business-consumer relationship regarding food culture, particularly aligning with how food is commodified, although examples were found of where the food culture of the business change too. Therefore, themes which emerged relating to business role in changing food culture were both business and consumer focussed (see appendix 8.2.8) and discussed below. Broadly, these are changing business priorities, changing consumer consumption habits, and empowering consumers. It is also prudent to mention here that ECV can exist within food culture although is not a pre-requisite to it, in the same way having a food culture is not a pre-requisite to an ECV held for certain foods.

5.4.2.1 Changing food business priorities.

Value alignment

Some businesses change due to developing values, such as signing up to the environmental and social goals of B Corp (B2), aligning with their own values and perhaps also the values they believe their consumers expect. This points to a food culture which replaces social connection and support

with certification and institutional trust, thereby paradoxically working towards a movement based on wider social goals rather than local social goals perhaps. Other businesses are swayed by more direct consumer expectations and values. B4's milk supplier felt they could not live their values and use glass bottles until they were pushed to do so by consumers and with the support from B4 which allowed them to take the risk. Clearly too, values must equate; to the consumers, the idea of more natural unhomogenised milk did not fit with unnatural single use plastic. They had an ECV of the unhomogenised milk, but the product packaging was at odds with either their food ego-, family or community culture, which may involve food with environmental considerations, or the food culture they felt the unhomogenised milk exists within. Thus, consumers had a role in changing the business practices of the supplier, but B4 facilitated the change in the food culture surrounding milk by aligning the values of consumers with the practices of the supplier. Ergo, here, the food culture relates to the wider food culture consumers believe the business exists within.

Businesses may also change their whole business model to align with consumer values. B19 described how their initial desire to sell meat from their family farm developed into being a farm shop, satisfying the requirements of their local consumers. By taking care of their customers, B19 now knows their main business value, to them and their consumers, is community-centred food culture. They have provided an outlet for the overriding desire of local consumers to shop locally, and have also created a local community food culture based on caring for their community.

Accreditation

Seven businesses discussed the Guild of Fine Foods (GFF) which creates the Great Taste Awards for independent food and drink businesses. Arguably, it forms a modern pillar of national food culture for both businesses and consumers and therefore suggests that food culture may include such forms of institutional trust. The difference between food culture and food CV is more obvious here; the latter arguably only including forms of relational rather than institutional trust. Some businesses were amongst those applying for the awards and had Great Taste Stars assigned to their products.

Sending all her products to GFF, B5 has been awarded stars for most. Whilst during the interview she concentrated on the support and advice they give, she and other businesses clearly find the stars very important, striving hard to achieve them and prioritising their attainment. This might be due to the assumption that consumers give weight to such accreditation (proved by the YouGov survey results shown in appendix 8.2.8). B19 agrees:

“I think as a consumer, I'm more likely to look for that”.

Indeed, despite B4's emphasis on local food:

“If something's got a 3-star great taste, then it doesn't really matter where it's from. If it's local and 3-star great taste, then happy days”.

Further, B2 felt the accreditation expands beyond a signal of quality, there being

“a certain emotive feeling and community feel around Great Taste... you know, that's a certain type of product.... and you know that that in itself is a mark of community in a way, and people recognise it, and I think that's important.”

This comment regarding community is interesting, as it shows B2 feels that being part of national community is important, more so perhaps than being part of a local community. Locality versus Star quality was also considered by B7 who sell their cheese country-wide; however, they are unconvinced of their benefits, using the word “might” (draw people in). Indeed, B4 posited whether businesses might be responsible for the importance consumers place on accreditations rather than the consumers valuing them themselves: because businesses like theirs put so much value by the Stars, their customers then follow suit. It might be interesting to see the difference if they were valued less by the business, especially considering B10 believes:

“The majority of consumers couldn't give a toss (about such accreditations), to be honest, they really couldn't, which is unfortunate”.

Other businesses remain unconvinced, refusing to conform with this new era of accreditations. B13 particularly shuns them, even the Michelin Stars, B18 describing B13's product as so "amazing", it "doesn't matter about accreditations". B13 and 18 considered the costs of registering products, describing Great Taste as a "money-making scheme" (B18), with the large numbers of products having stars reducing the accreditation value (over 14,000 entries were received in 2021 (Guild of Fine Food, 2023)). B8 did not think there was "an honest and truthful way of doing it... unless you have like your customers vote". Indeed, B8 felt the benefit Stars bring is not always guaranteed anyway, businesses not always seeing the benefits. Here, this institutional recognition of quality is being shunned by these businesses and by default also by their consumers, which suggests that businesses have a role to play in reducing institutional control or influence over food businesses, and that where clear product IV and ECV has been established, consumers value this and any relational trust more than an accreditation of even the most sought-after institutions. This may create a shift in attitudes as to what constitutes quality, consumers focussing on local or relationships within food culture more than national norms. Interestingly therefore, there is a shift in businesses wanting to be part of a national institution, and also those who want the opposite. It would be interesting to see the level of accreditation shunning across the country by food businesses to see if this is a trend unique to this area or not.

5.4.2.2 Changing consumption habits.

Chapter 4.4 found that microbusinesses and SMEs re-calibrated values, embodying changing values. This was apparent within this thematic analysis also. Businesses described occasions where their consumers' eating habits and through this, their food ego-cultures, had changed because of their product. Perhaps the greatest changes in eating habits can be attributed to Bs 16 and 20. B16 described a preference change, with vegetarian consumers eating their meat, whilst B20 described a health-related change, as consumers with lactose intolerance can drink their milk and eat their gelato, as despite still being cows' milk, it is A2, with a lower degree of lactose. These consumers

are increasing the reach of B20 but also changing the habits of many consumers whom previously avoided dairy by:

“spreading the word to other people they know or others in similar situations”.

This changes ego-cultures by diversifying the foods consumers eat, but also changes local or community food culture by changing attitudes towards different foods.

From a mental-health perspective, B18 found that his product had changed consumers’ drinking habits, benefiting their mental-health. He described how he had “probably misjudged how important some of these small things were in peoples’ lives”, and found that, during the pandemic especially, making the choice to go out and get their coffee is something “they enjoy it and it enriches their life”. The culture of meeting for beers in the evening at a pub has shifted for many to meeting for a coffee during the daytime (also found in the scoping interviews), he ponders, which had produced a greater cultural importance of coffee in peoples’ lives, and a change in their daily food habits and therefore food culture. Therefore, food culture does not have to be based on tradition, but must be something which resonates with or enhances the life of the individual.

B6 felt that they make people think more about their food, even if not changing their values. Being a distributor business on the motorway, perhaps opportunities for changing peoples’ values is more limited. Even so, changing habits starts with a change in thinking, something that can occur at the earliest of ages; B14 remembered certain different dishes they offered which were generally met with neophobic reactions, except for a 12-year-old boy, who greatly enjoyed a bisque dish, demonstrating his neophilia (sections 2.4.3, 4.5, 4.8). B14 considered this a personal triumph and hoped that the dish:

“might have steered his mind...”.

Similarly, the French onion soup opened a new world to the child described by B10. In fact, at younger ages, where the food habits adhered to are attributable to their parents, being exposed to new foods and food experiences could be influential to their future food ego-cultures, how they lead

their lives, or even make them question or encourage their parents to try new things and broaden family food cultures.

Neophobia was discussed by B9, finding it difficult to change the culture around goat meat. In 2023, they enlisted the aid of a nutritionist to help promote the virtues of goat meat, much of the problem being marketing. Interestingly, they have a large potential market in the middle Eastern communities especially, for whom goat is an important meat within their food culture. However, B9 cannot not fulfil their requirements as regulation means they cannot provide them with a whole goat, and thus this market imports the meat instead. It is ironic that a market exists that B9 cannot provide for, but the market they can provide for, does not value the product within their food culture.

Part of a food culture includes the context in which we eat, especially those we eat with. Here, results found that businesses can influence this. For those attending cooking classes with Bs 10 and 15, there is a sense of normalising eating with others, which can make consumers actively seek it, for instance by attending supper clubs at Bs 10 and 15. Commensality, facilitated mainly by education businesses and UKB3 (chapter 5.3.4), has many social benefits:

“it does break barriers down... I think it does people's well-being really good” (B10)

partly by increasing confidence and because it normalises cooking with different people, different generations, and normalises eating with new people, (suggested in chapter 3).

Businesses can have particular impact on family food activities which are part of a more traditional food culture. Generations of family and friends coming together at B11 for instance, to pick fruit from the fields, ties into the idea of bringing back memories and continuing family traditions. Not having to pay for entry means that it is accessible to all. However, whilst many might argue eating many strawberries whilst filling up punnets is ‘it’s part of it’, clearly B11 are taking a big cut in what they could sell strawberries for, reducing the viability of these events. Consequently, in more recent years most farms hosting such events charge an entry fee (B11), and thus inevitably contribute to a change in food culture, being less accessible to all.

5.4.2.3 Ownership/empowerment

There are numerous examples where food culture at an individual or family level has been changed due to the empowerment arising from a knowledge of cooking. B1 describes the shift in cooking patterns arising from her cookery lessons being about people “reevaluating their culture at home”. Firstly, an emotio-cultural change occurs, with women being empowered and given the tools to feed their families in the way they want to; through this, there is huge emotion associated with that responsibility and satisfaction. Secondly, this empowerment facilitates family commensality, all members able to eat the same food. Through this, as discussed in chapter 2.4.3, other impacts include the greater chance of children developing food memories and therefore having healthier diets. However, this empowerment must come from someone (mothers, in this case) wanting to make the change, wanting to learn, and able to pay for the privilege of learning from someone whom they can relate to.

Additionally, niche experiences, B18 suggests, can give people an interest in what they can achieve at home, creating again that sense of empowerment through knowledge, and changing the food culture. However, niche experiences can become less niche. The pandemic famously led to many people making their own sourdough. B10 believes changes to food culture are longer-term, businesses like theirs begin consumers “on their journey” which becomes part of a way of life and a new food culture. The irony here is that sourdough is the most historic, basic way of making bread, being the only bread made for centuries; ergo, instead of a new food culture developing, by people taking ownership of what they eat, they are returning to past food culture.

Instead of changing one part of someone's food life, empowerment can also lead to whole lifestyle changes, aptly demonstrated by B16. By actively and purely living and being committed to their values (chapter 4.4), they inspire others to do so and are becoming a mechanism for spreading empowerment, showing another way of life and another food culture is possible.

5.4.3 Summary of research question 3

These food microbusinesses and SMEs feel that their role in nurturing ECV for consumers centres around multiple foci and is both facilitative and supportive. They provide outlets for specific foods consumers have ECV for, already within their food culture, and allow them to develop new food preferences by providing connective exposure. Firstly, they facilitate memory creation and provide a means of reconnecting with food values and experiences of the past, through inspiring food memories. Secondly, they offer to their consumers and facilitate them to feel a sense of ownership for their products, aided by consumer knowledge, and encouraging them to become more active consumers involved in food production. Thirdly, consumers can develop an attachment to the business or their products which affects them when this is interrupted. Finally, businesses were found to have a particular role in nurturing IV also: they create a higher bar of quality with which their consumers then judge other businesses and products.

Businesses change food culture for themselves and for their consumers. The former occurs by businesses facilitating an alignment of business and consumer values leading to a specific product food culture change. Businesses facilitate the latter by causing consumers to reconsider changing their eating habits, both what and how they eat, and by empowering consumers with greater knowledge, confidence and by leading by example. It was found that food culture doesn't have to be related to tradition; it is just something that enhances day-to-day life; this aspect is a development of Ranta and Ichijo's definition. Additionally, businesses have a role in creating local food cultures. Albeit on a small scale, a few businesses attempt to refocus consumers and other businesses towards local and independent food cultures through an emphasis on relational trust and quality, actively shunning institutional expressions of food superiority. Others support local products and businesses but align with national institutional ideals suggesting conformation to a national institutional food culture. This differentiation is worthy of further research, especially considering

whether there are whole networks shunning these accreditations or merely a few individual businesses with shared values.

Adding to the literature around food culture, it has been found to exist at many loci, from ego-culture, family, local and national (Table 5.7). Food culture is not antecedent to ECV. Instead, ECV interacts and can exist with these multiple loci of food culture, but it is different to food culture. For example, someone can value a food for its cultural importance without it being part of their food culture. In the same way, a food which may be part of someone's food culture may not actually hold a cultural importance for them. Product food culture also exists.

Table 5.7 The 4 loci of food culture

Loci	Description	Explanation	Example from research
National	Cultures and communities coming together around food, or the individual possessing ECV for a food, tradition or activity they deem to have national value.	This cements collective and individual food culture. Often it centres around a wider relationship built around food which can be institutional or local. It can also present itself as individual-centric or community-centric. For instance, national foods, dishes or rituals which individuals feel pride for or interest in partaking in.	Institutional accreditations such as B Corp or Great Taste Awards. Coffee and cake culture UK food culture centred around specific occasions like Christmas, Birthdays, and Sunday roast lunches.
Community	Amalgamating old and new traditions within food cultures which allows for food community identity. This is informed by facilitated by groups or by businesses creating multi-generational cooking, a specific local food culture. and community eating.	This cements collective and individual ECV. The continual developing of interactions between food community rituals or commensality between friends or centred culture around food.	UKB3 providing and facilitating food culture through relationships build around good food and someone to eat it with. Religious food celebrations and B19 creating a local community and inclusive community.
Family	Old and new traditions informed by memories, experiences, and multigenerational cooking.	This cements family and individual food culture within a familial food culture through frequent multi-generational interaction, grounding food activities as pleasant experiences.	A traditional family recipe, or the ritual of making certain foods with parents/grandparents. B3 serving three generations of the same family demonstrates the importance of their products in that family's food culture. Specific family ways of making pastry or other foods, highlighted by B1.
Personal/ego	Personal food culture informed by wider food cultures above, experiences, beliefs, location, knowledge, and ECV.	This cements individual ECV and food culture through the other foci but is enhanced or continued in a personal capacity. This can also include 'product food culture' whereby a product or ritual (such as cream tea) can be part of a food culture but can have an ECV associated with it for an individual which is separate to the food culture through, for instance, food memories arising from experiences.	The new food business created by a student of B10 following the ECV development for chocolate and consequent rise of its importance in her life. Consumers may prefer to buy food which exhibit environmental considerations (B4).

This chapter has concentrated on business perceptions of their networks and role. The next chapter will provide the consumer perspective and see whether consumers of microbusinesses and SMEs are aligned with the findings here.

Chapter 6 Examining emotio-cultural value of food through consumer survey analysis

6.1 Introduction

“Emotio-cultural value is in part linked to the visceral nature of eating, combining feelings with roots, and how this affects the perception of the food itself”.

(Lingham et al., 2022, p. 8).

This chapter contributes to answering research questions 2 and 3 from a consumer perspective, involving the factors above. Firstly, section 6.2 presents basic respondent information to ascertain how answers are impacted by consumer characteristics. Section 6.3 partly answers question 3 by analysing how ECV differs during different food-related activities (e.g. cooking, eating), and how shopping location preferences of consumers is associated with this. Section 6.4 analyses data in association with research question 2, looking at the benefits of ECV. Question 3 is analysed before question 2 as the data shown in question 3 provides a grounding to understand question 2. Because research stages 2, 3 and 4 were conducted simultaneously, it was not possible to use the responses to the interview results to inform the consumer survey. The process thus was inductive not deductive; consumer data was not moulded into the themes of the business data, instead it was allowed to tell its own story. Therefore, themes arising from chapter 5 relating to ECV benefits are not totally aligned with ECV benefits found in this chapter. This research aspect will be considered and critiqued in the final chapter. Earlier in the thesis, the idea that alter-values related to a respect for food rather than values for food was mooted. Here, ‘respect for food’ was the key variable of interest to see if consumers identified with this term and what activities aligned with it.

Descriptive and inferential analysis was conducted (see section 3.3.4). The raw data is shown, and majority shop data is used to compare different activities.

6.2 Basic respondent information

This section looks at the basic respondent information from the survey (n=197), the univariate data, before the following sections answer specific research questions with bivariate data.

6.2.1 Age groups

A wide range of ages answered the survey (appendix 8.3.2.1a). The largest group was the 31-40 age group (25.4% of respondents). This is considerably higher than the UK proportion of 30-39 in the 2021 census of 13.7% (UK Government, 2023). The lowest percentage of respondents were between 71-80 (4.1% of respondents) compared with 8.6% of 70-79 year olds in the UK population. (UK Government, 2023). The most comparable age range was the youngest, those between 18-30 (16.2% of the sample), with 18-29s representing 14.8% of the UK population in 2021; and 41-50 age range (16.2%) compared to 12.7% in the comparable UK population (see appendix 8.3.2.1b). These differences in the sample population and the UK population will be considered in the analysis of the responses and the sample population's representativeness of the UK population.

6.2.2 Respondent gender

The majority (62.6%) of the respondents were female (see appendix 8.3.2.1c). As, in the 2021 census, women and girls made up 51% of the UK population, and men and boys made up 49% (UK Government, 2023). The gender bias of the sample population will be considered in analysis of the data.

6.2.3 Location of respondents

Despite asking the county in which the respondent lived in the survey, 14% of respondents wrote the country. Thus, table 6.1 shows England (9%), the UK (2%) and Wales (3%). Had respondents

answered correctly, there would be higher percentages seen in the counties listed or others. Looking purely at counties, Hampshire has the highest percentage of respondents (17%). Next, Gloucestershire has 11% and Oxfordshire, 9%. These results were expected due to survey distribution efforts in Gloucestershire, where the university is based, and the fact that many contacts, friends and family of the researcher live in these counties. Other higher frequency responses were from Buckinghamshire (6%) and London (7%), respectively. Most counties had only 1 or 2 respondents from them. Therefore, southern central and western counties are better represented here than other areas and are unrepresentative of the general population distribution in the UK, especially considering the south-east has the highest UK population (Clark, 2023b).

Table 6.1 Respondent location/distribution

Location of respondents	Number of respondents	Proportion of total number of respondents (%)	Location of respondents	Number of respondents	Proportion of total number of respondents (%)
Hampshire	34	17	Cheshire	1	1
Gloucestershire	21	11	Cornwall	1	1
England	18	9	Derbyshire	2	1
Oxfordshire	18	9	Denbighshire	1	1
London and Greater London	13	7	Dorset	1	1
Buckinghamshire	12	6	East Sussex	1	1
Devon	6	3	Essex	2	1
Scotland	5	3	Herefordshire	2	1
Somerset	5	3	Kent	1	1
Surrey	5	3	Kincardineshire	1	1
Wales	6	4	Lanarkshire	1	1
Worcestershire	5	3	Nottinghamshire	1	1
Cumbria	4	2	Northamptonshire	2	1
Cambridgeshire	3	2	Northern Ireland	1	1
Leicestershire	3	2	South East England	1	1
Lincolnshire	3	2	Staffordshire	1	1
Shropshire	3	2	West Midlands	1	1
United Kingdom	4	2	West Sussex	1	1
Wiltshire	3	2	West Yorkshire	1	1
Avon	1	1	Total	197	100
Berkshire	2	1			
Bristol	1	1			
	1	1			

Next, the univariate data will be presented.

6.2.4 Shopping preference and differences by age group

Around 62% of respondents conducted at least 70% of their shop at supermarkets, and 29% at microbusinesses/SMEs (appendix 8.3.2.1h). Figure 6.1 shows the percentage of respondents which have identified that over 70% of their food shop is undertaken at either supermarkets or microbusinesses/SMEs according to age. Generally, the higher the age group after the age of 30, the higher the preference for supermarkets. Starting from the 31-40 age group, with 53.2% preferring to shop at microbusinesses, with each decade, the percentage preference reduces approximately by about 10%. Before this, the 18-30s had a much higher preference (77.1%) for shopping at supermarkets (representative of UK population).

Figure 6.1 Shopping preferences according to age group. Supermarkets included online deliveries and microbusinesses includes SMEs, examples including farm shops, butchers, bakers, grocers, farmers' markets, small shops and online delivery from local businesses

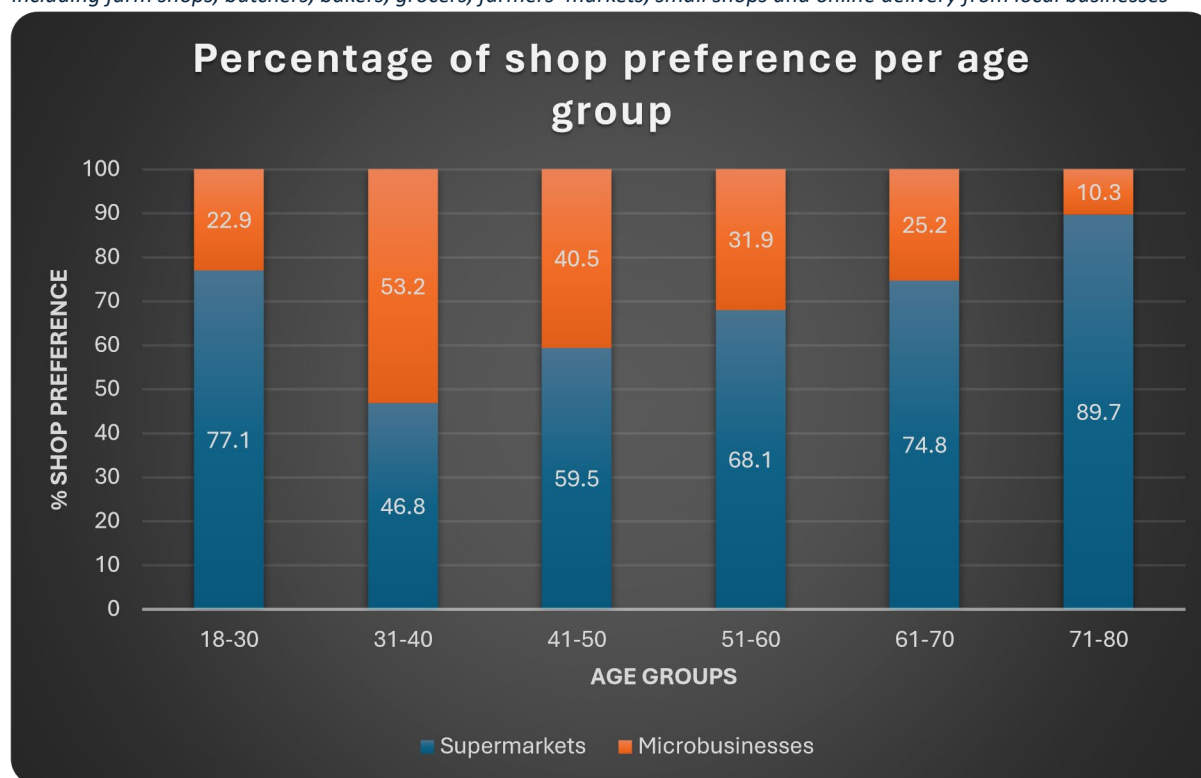
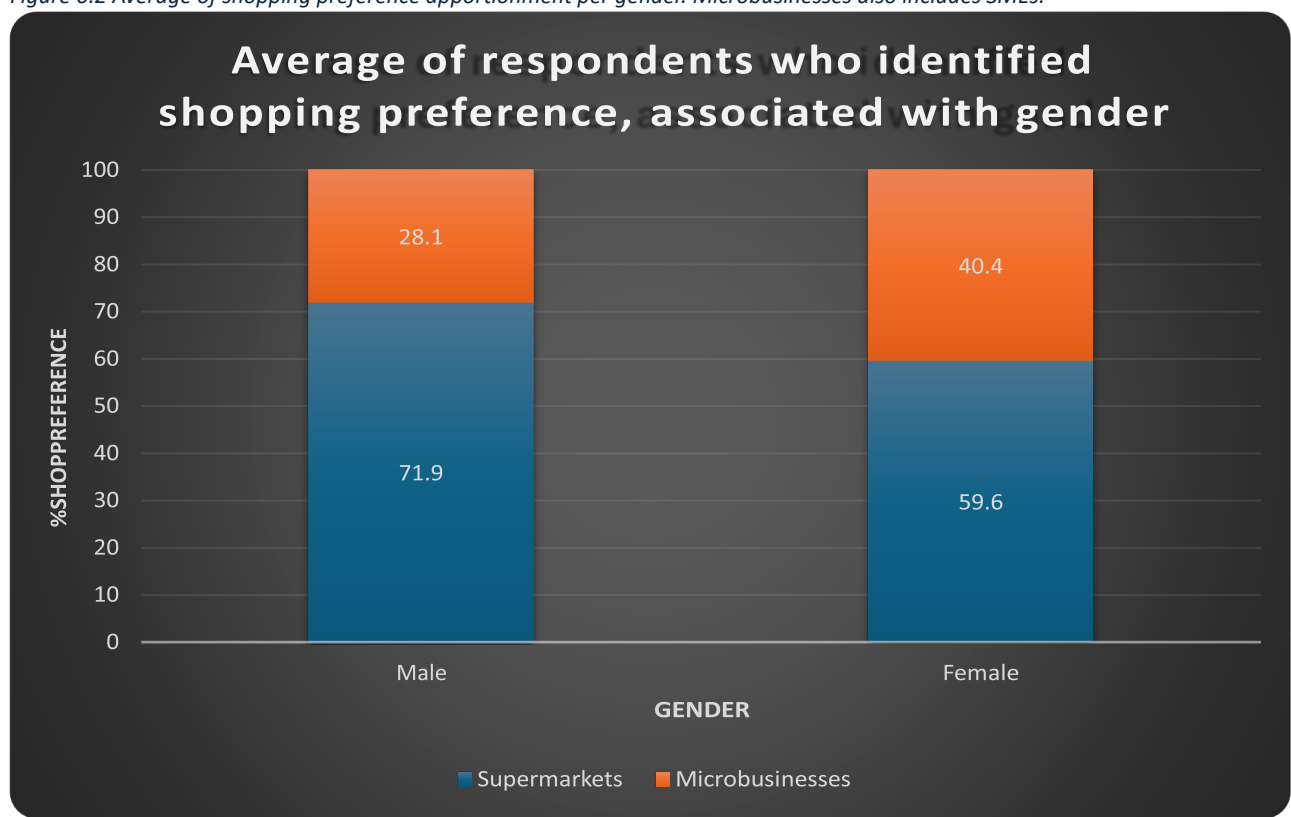


Figure 6.1 may demonstrate the connection/disconnection disparity identified in chapter 5. Here, the result for the 31-40s group may be due to better access to microbusinesses, or more disposable income than the other groups (if the microbusinesses available are more expensive), although may be unrepresentative of this UK age group, and are arguably the age group most likely to have young

children, possibly suggesting a desire to improve the quality of food purchased for their benefit. These results are consistent with Statista data revealing the highest average disposable income was within the 35-44year age group (Clark, 2023d). The group with the least preference for shopping at microbusinesses is the 71-80 group, with only 10.3% preferring them. As with the youngest group, this may relate to disposable income or accessibility, but this proposition would need to be tested in further empirical work as it did not form part of this study.

6.2.5 Shopping preference and gender

Figure 6.2 Average of shopping preference apportionment per gender. Microbusinesses also includes SMEs.



Within category, more male respondents prefer to shop at supermarkets than female respondents, with 72% of men in the sample population stating they were majority supermarket shoppers falling to 59.6% with women (figure 6.2). Whilst a trend is established here, being a small sample size and having a gender bias, this finding cannot be generalised to the UK population without more research with a larger and representative sample population.

6.2.6 Cultural background

The overriding cultural background of respondents was white/Caucasian (82%) (see appendix 8.3.2.1e-f). The next largest categories were Asian (8%) and mixed ethnic groups (6%). This is fairly representative of the UK population, 81.7% being Caucasian/white in the 2021 census and 18% being from other backgrounds (UK Government, 2021), with Black/African/Caribbean/black British (4%), Asian/Asian British (9%), and 'Other ethnic groups' (2.1%). A small difference was seen for the mixed/multiple ethnic groups category which constituted 2.9% of the UK population in 2021 (ONS, 2022). Therefore, respondents are generally culturally representative of the UK population.

In terms of the disclosed national cultural roots declared within the sample population, table 6.2.

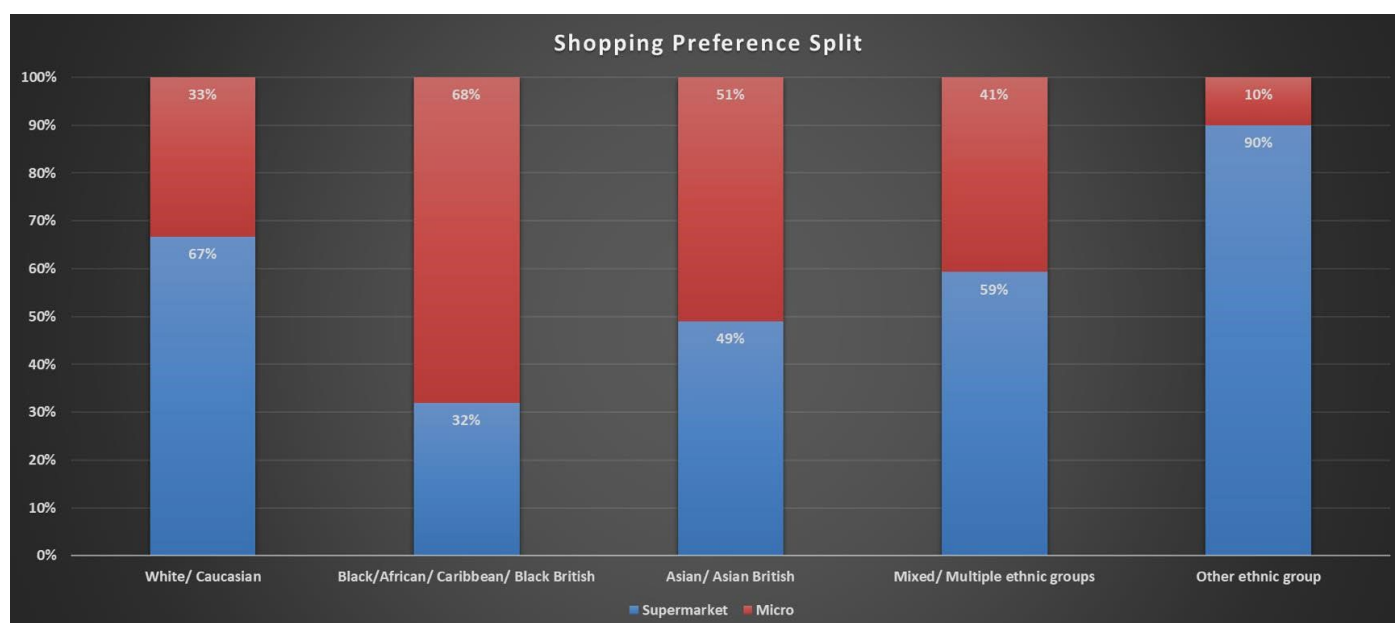
Table 6.2 Cultural roots of respondents

Cultural roots	Times noted	% of total	Cultural roots	Times noted	% of total
British	78	40%	Filipino	1	1%
N/A	27	14%	German	2	1%
English	16	8%	Irish	1	1%
Greek	16	8%	Lebanese	1	1%
UK	8	4%	Middle Eastern	1	1%
Indian	7	4%	New Zealand	1	1%
Caribbean	5	3%	Nigerian	1	1%
French	5	3%	N. Irish	1	1%
Polish	3	2%	Scottish	2	1%
Asian	1	1%	South African	1	1%
Belgian	2	1%	Spanish	1	1%
Chinese	1	1%	Thai	1	1%
Egyptian	1	1%	Ukrainian	1	1%
European	1	1%	Welsh	2	1%

Again, respondents distinguished between being British, English and from the 'UK', possibly demonstrating cultural affiliation. This was unhelpful in the ability to understand the data but demonstrates cultural loci, showing there are those who do not identify themselves as British.

Together these groups constituted 52% of the respondents. The next largest category described themselves as ‘N/A’ (14%), and then Greek, at 8%. This author having Greek family members and friends living in the UK who filled out this survey, this is unsurprising. 4% were Indian and 3% were French; apart from this, there are many examples where just one or two respondents come from a specific country (Ukraine, Nigeria, Lebanon, China, et cetera). The largest nationalities within the ‘other’ white ethnic groups in the 2021 census were Polish and Romanian, and the largest non-white nationality was Indian with just over 3% of the UK population (ONS, 2022). The percentage of respondents citing Indian nationality here is therefore fairly representative but those of Greek nationality are unlikely to be representative, there being only 73,000 in the UK in 2021 and therefore there being insufficient numbers to even class as a minority (Clark, 2023c). For cultural background (figure 6.3), as the sample size was small, creating very small cultural background subgroups, a Mann-Witney test found that only the white/Caucasian and the mixed/multiple ethnic groups are statistically significantly different, with p-values of less than 0.001 (see appendix 8.3.2.1f). Whilst trends in shopping preference are shown by cultural background, the study would require a larger sample population to explore the relationship between cultural background and shopping location preference.

Figure 6.3 Shopping preference (those conducting over 70% of their food shop) associated with cultural background. ‘Micro’ refers to food microbusinesses and SMEs

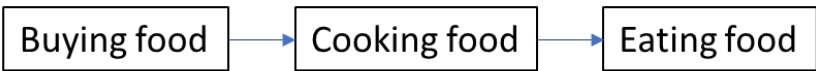


6.3 What is the role of microbusinesses in providing food related ECV for consumers?

Chapter 5 found that food microbusinesses and SMEs had a role in nurturing ECV (via memories, ownership, attachment, and raising the bar) and in changing food culture (by changing business priorities, eating habits, and via ownership/empowerment). By comparing the frequencies, emotions and preferences of consumers for different food-related activities, this bivariate and univariate data sheds light on the importance of microbusinesses and SMEs in changing consumer relationships with food and in the food ECV they hold.

This section is ordered according to the timeline of the consumer relationship with food before looking at microbusiness/SME involvement with food memories. For the purposes of this investigation, the timeline is suggested below.

Figure 6.4 Consumer chronological relationship with food



6.3.1 Buying experience

In the aftermath of the pandemic, people had been found to have a decreased enjoyment of grocery shopping (Gerritsen et al., 2021), although this applied less to microbusiness shopping, with Ha et al., (2021) finding greater usage of microbusiness during the pandemic. Part of the survey investigated whether the buying experience differed in different food environments and findings supported Ha et al., with consumers generally preferring microbusiness/SMEs as table 6.4 shows (n=196).

Table 6.3 Emotions for all purchasers when shopping at supermarkets and microbusinesses/SMEs.

Emotions for supermarkets	Times selected	% of total	Emotions for microbusinesses/SMEs	Times selected	% of total
Wish to shop somewhere else	28	27%	Respect for the food	45	43%
Satisfaction	24	23%	Satisfaction	36	34%
Inspiration for a meal	21	20%	Connectedness	26	25%
Confidence	21	20%	Responsibility	24	23%
Frustration	21	20%	Inspiration for a meal	19	18%
Other	19	18%	Respect	18	17%
Reluctance	18	17%	Individualism	15	14%
Loyalty	16	15%	Loyalty	15	14%
Guilt	16	15%	Happiness	15	14%
Impatience	15	14%	Belonging	14	13%

The top ten emotions reveal that microbusinesses/SMEs were generally associated with positive emotions, whereas supermarkets were fairly evenly associated with positive and negative emotions (full list in appendix 8.3.2.2a). Generally, in relation to supermarkets, the most reported emotion is 'wish to shop somewhere else'. Results for emotions relating to supermarkets are somewhat contradictory. 'Satisfaction', 'inspiration for a meal', and 'confidence', are contradicted by emotions such as 'frustration', 'reluctance', and 'guilt'. This could be explained by there being two polarised consumer groups within the sample population. Perhaps surprisingly 'confidence' was felt towards supermarkets more than microbusinesses, could this relate to institutional trust? This is worthy of further investigation. Ostensibly there is little evidence of developing ECV when shopping at supermarkets compared with emotions when shopping in microbusinesses/SMEs.

For microbusinesses/SMEs, 'respect for the food' featured most highly and directly links microbusinesses with ECV. 'Satisfaction' and many more positive emotions were more frequently reported for microbusinesses/SMEs than supermarkets ('intrigue', 'delight', 'belonging'), but two emotions are particularly interesting. 'Connectedness' was chosen by 25% compared to the 3% for supermarkets. This is particularly telling. What is it they feel connected to? The food? The story? The people? The other interesting emotion is 'responsibility' (23% compared to 9% for

supermarkets). Why might shopping at microbusinesses/SMEs make consumers feel greater responsibility than when shopping elsewhere? Does shopping at microbusinesses make people more conscientious? Does seeing the raw ingredients make them feel a responsibility for cooking traditional family foods, or pressure for not wasting the food?

Having ascertained the buying experience of all respondents, it is also useful to see whether there is a relationship between the groups who predominantly (over 70% of their shop) shop in supermarkets (Group 1 n=122) and those who predominantly shop in microbusinesses/SMEs (group 2 n=57). The emotions reported for buying food in supermarkets for each group are analysed in Table 6.4.

Table 6.4 Emotions for shopping at supermarkets by each group

Group 1			Group 2		
Emotions	Times selected	% of group 1	Emotions	Times selected	% of group 2
Inspiration for a meal	37	30%	Wish to shop somewhere else	38	67%
Satisfaction	33	27%	Disapproval	22	39%
Confidence	27	22%	Frustration	21	37%
Frustration	26	21%	Confusion	18	32%
Wish to shop somewhere else	24	20%	Impatience	18	32%
Impatience	23	19%	Anxiety	15	26%
Loyalty	22	18%	Reluctance	15	26%
Secure	22	18%	Stressed	11	19%
Other	21	17%	Guilt	11	19%
Stressed	17	14%	Other	9	16%

Group 1 felt positive and negative emotions towards buying from supermarkets fairly evenly, whereas group 2 felt only negative emotions. Group 1 reported emotions like 'satisfaction', 'inspiration for a meal', and 'confidence' in relation to supermarket food shopping overwhelmingly more than group 2 purchasers, demonstrating that it was this group reporting these emotions in Table 6.4. Respondents from both purchaser groups picked 'wish to shop somewhere else'. As

shown later, this may make little difference in whether group 1 will buy from supermarkets again but clearly there are some who do not wish to shop at supermarkets but have no choice, differing from the similar percentage who chose 'loyalty'.

Most of the negative emotions relating to supermarkets were picked by group 2: they become 'frustrated', experience 'disapproval', and 'wish to shop somewhere else'. 'Other' emotions cited by respondents were mainly negative. 'Necessity' was regularly cited, with some interesting concerns arising, including unhappiness with industrialisation, the "feeling of food turned into industrialised, profit-making product", and issues with plastic use provided in free text responses:

"(I) hate single wrap packaging and plastic abuse in general" and "frustration with plastic and cheap meats".

The desire for local food was felt by one respondent particularly who said:

"There is one supermarket I like called Booths which has only local produce. Otherwise, I do not like supermarket foods or the way they treat farmers".

Perhaps the respondents who cited these more environmental and social factors have a higher level of environmentalism, and if so, these emotions relating to supermarkets may have affected their attitude towards the level of environmental corporate social responsibility (ESCR) enacted by supermarkets (Godefroit-Winkel et al., 2022), thereby giving them the negative connotations described.

Table 6.5 shows a clear gap, with very few from group 2 picking ECV-related emotions like 'connectedness' or respect. Plus, there are many issues cited here which frustrate all purchasers, suggesting a difficulty in associating supermarkets with any kind of ECV (full list in appendix 8.3.2.2b). Table 6.6 analyses the responses for shopping at microbusinesses/SMEs.

Table 6.5 Emotions for shopping at food microbusinesses/SMEs by each group

Group 1			Group 2		
Emotions	Times selected	% of group 1	Emotions	Times selected	% of group 2
Respect for the food	53	43%	Respect for the food	34	60%
Satisfaction	44	36%	Inspiration for a meal	30	53%
Responsibility	29	24%	Inspiration for inviting friends for food	21	37%
Connectedness	28	23%	Satisfaction	17	30%
Loyalty	23	19%	Loyalty	13	23%
Inspiration for a meal	23	19%	Belonging	13	23%
Respect	22	18%	Responsibility	12	21%
Happiness	19	16%	Excitement	12	21%
Excitement	18	15%	Connectedness	12	21%
Individualism	15	12%	Respect	11	19%

Table 6.5 shows that mainly positive emotions are associated with microbusinesses/SMEs by both shopper groups (full list in appendix 8.3.2.2g). Interestingly, they do not mirror table 6.5 as both groups report 'respect for the food', something not reported at all for supermarkets. Other positive emotions were similarly reported, such as 'connectedness', and 'satisfaction'. 'Happiness' was slightly higher for group 1 than group 2 (16% to 12%) and interestingly this 16% was much higher than the 6% of group 1 who felt happiness when shopping at supermarkets, showing that more reported they feel happier shopping at microbusinesses.

The main differences lie in 'inspiration for a meal', 'inspiration for inviting friends round for food', and 'respect for the food', which group 2 picked overwhelmingly more compared to group 1. 'Belonging' and 'confidence' also had large variance in reporting between groups. Such emotions demonstrate a strong relationship with food when buying in microbusinesses/SMEs, a

confidence/ability with food, and a desire to share it with others and being part of something. Group 2's higher engagement with the food and people are supported by later results which suggest that sharing a meal as part of a group of people is something more common amongst group 2 than group 1, and points towards the development of ECV by facilitating commensality and conviviality.

Sumner et al. (2011) found that interviewees mentioned a 'sacred connection' to what they eat, and here emotions pointing to such connection, such as 'spiritual' and 'fulfilment', although not featuring highly, are associated with microbusinesses/SMEs and not supermarkets (see appendix 8.3.2.2 for full results). Generally, group 2 have greater tendency to associate supermarkets with negative emotions and microbusinesses/SMEs with positive emotions. However, group 1 have less dichotomy in their emotions but also generally exhibit fewer negative emotions for microbusinesses than group 2 do for supermarkets. Having ascertained the emotions reported at different locations, it is prudent to investigate whether these emotions impact the likelihood of purchasers buying again from each location.

Figure 6.5 Impact of emotions on buying from supermarkets

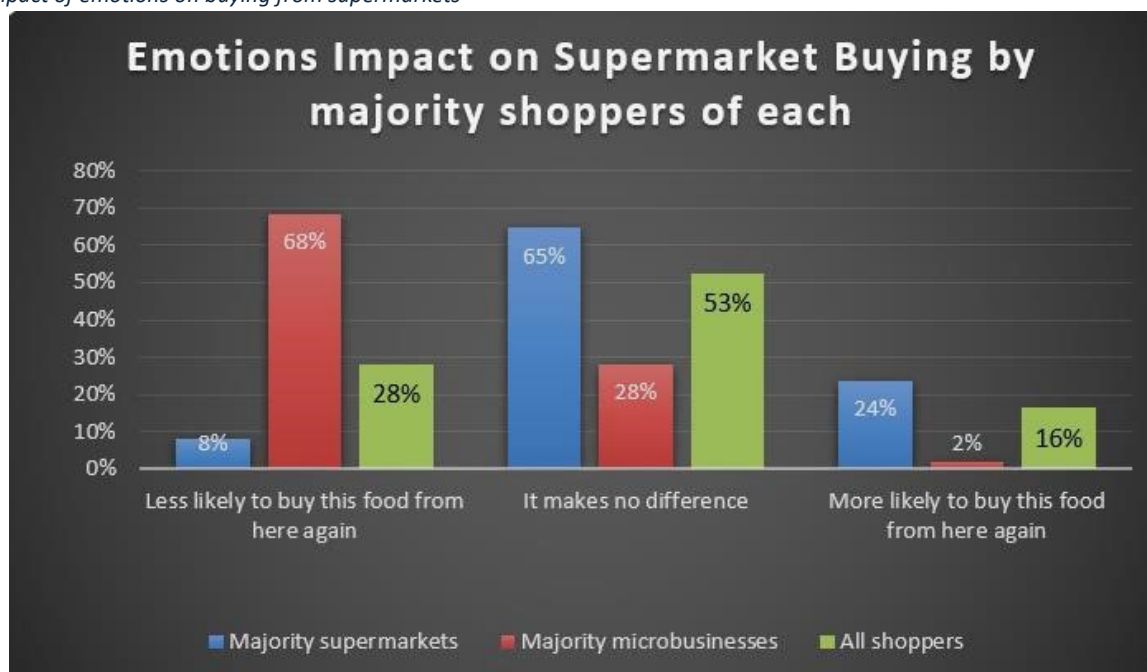
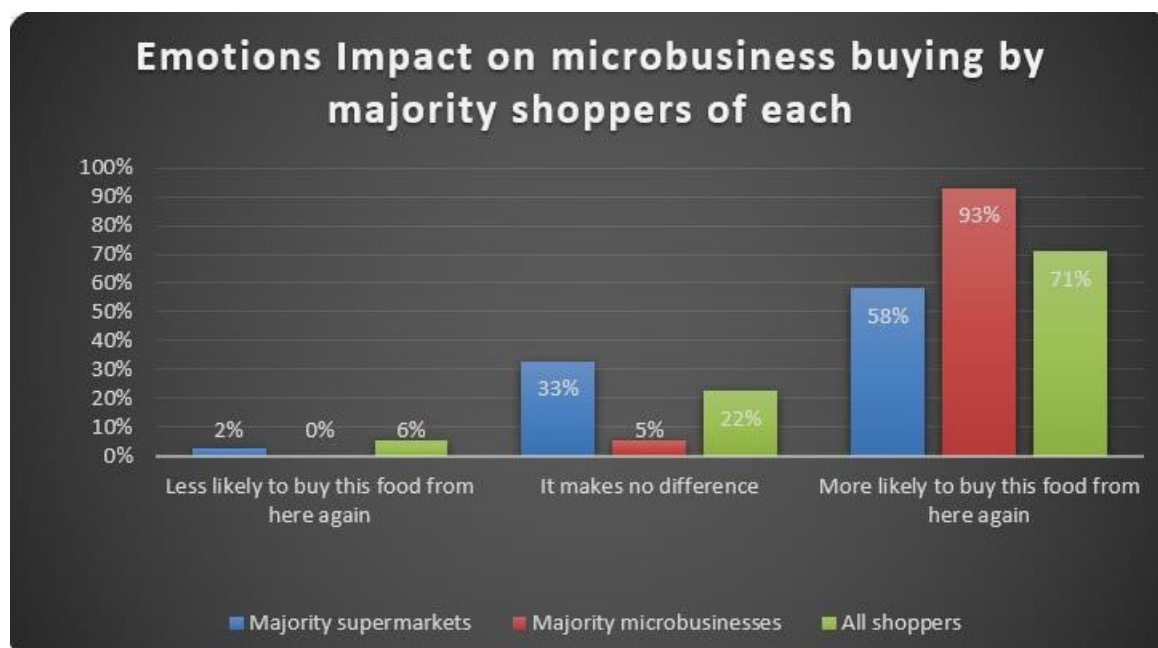


Figure 6.6 Impact of emotions on buying from microbusinesses/SMEs



It was demonstrated that there is a statistically significant difference between the responses of those who are likely to shop again at each establishment, those for whom it makes no difference, and those who are less likely to do so, significance determined at a p-value of 0.05 (see appendix 8.3.2.2e, j). Thus, the data in figures 6.5 and 6.6 is associated and shows a clear difference between the groups. Over 50% of all respondents said that their emotions ‘made no difference’ in whether they would shop at a supermarket again (figure 6.5). A much higher response was shown by group 1; suggesting that despite their negative emotions supermarkets are a necessity, with 27% of them being ‘satisfied’ with shopping in supermarket. Only 28% of group 2 felt that their emotions towards shopping at supermarkets made no difference on whether they shop there in the future, again suggesting that they are a necessity. Due to the emotions reported by group 2, it is unsurprising that 68% said they are less likely to buy from supermarkets again. Consistent with the findings of Foroughi et al., (2019), these results show that when consumers experience satisfaction and positive emotional reactions, they are more likely to repeat the experience. The picture differs for microbusinesses/SMEs. 71% of respondents reporting their emotions meant they were ‘more likely to shop here again’ (figure 6.6), possibly due to the positive experience of shopping at microbusinesses/SMEs (table 6.6). Interestingly, few respondents from either group

felt they were less likely to shop from microbusinesses/SMEs again, aligning with table 6.6 and the emotions reported. There is a clear suggestion of ECV in terms of respect for food perhaps demonstrating a wish to support microbusinesses/SMEs and buying direct from the producer.

Summary

Strong ECV emotions like respecting the food and connectedness were reported more by group 2 than group 1. This may mean that when buying food, the potential to action ECV is greatest for group 2s in microbusinesses/SMEs. As groups 2s predominantly respond they will continue shopping there the food environment microbusinesses/SMEs create may be partly responsible for the favourable emotions associated with them. However, group 1s also preferred the food environment of microbusinesses/SMEs, enough to encourage them to buy from there again. This data ostensibly supports Ha et al., (2021) and Gerritsen et al., (2021) as clearly, the food environment affects emotions and behaviours of consumers. From Chapter 5.4. the 5 C's defining the roles of microbusiness/SMEs, there is evidence here that microbusinesses/SMEs both continue and re-calibrate consumer values. They have a role in providing the food and experience both groups seek when shopping there, which are likely to differ considering the differing emotions felt by the groups. For instance, the engagement with food and people demonstrated by group 2s suggests their role facilitates connection between people as well as to food.

6.3.2 Cooking practices

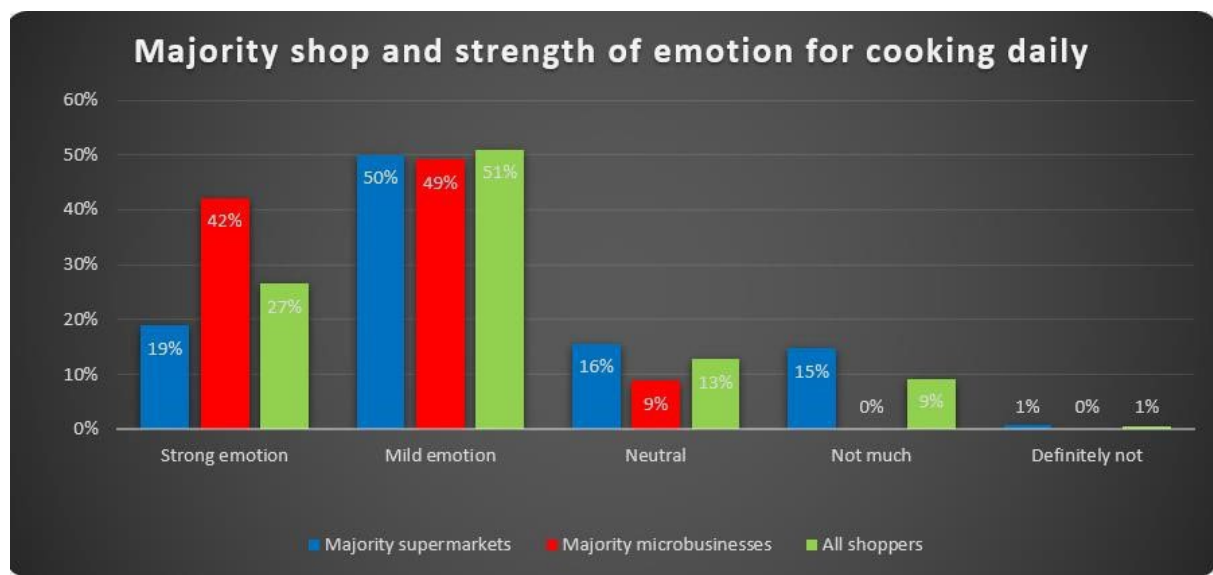
As shopping at microbusinesses/SMEs is at least partly responsible for the favourable emotions associated with them, it is interesting to investigate whether those conducting most of their food shop with them display different emotions or responses to their counterparts in relation to other experiences with food. This will give an indication of how important ECV is for their whole relationship with food. This section investigates the next stage in the consumer relationship with food: cooking practices. This includes daily cooking and cooking with others, where n=196 respondents completed this section. When the survey was circulated, a definition of 'cooking' was

not given. Therefore, respondents may hold varying ideas of what cooking constitutes. When designing the survey, cooking was considered as cooking from scratch with raw ingredients, but respondents may consider buying spice mixes, ready prepared meats, or even ready meals as cooking. This results in greater differentiation in the data, words having different meanings to different people. At a certain level, cooking has a certain meaning, but when communicating cooking in a sentence, its meaning and scope changes, demonstrating the difference between language and meaning.

6.3.2.1 Daily cooking

92% of respondents cooked food daily (appendix 8.3.2.3a). Statista’s 2020 survey asked a similar but not identical question: how often they cooked from scratch; only between 15% and 27% cooked from scratch every day (Statista, 2023a). The differences between their data and this could be for a variety of reasons: either these respondents do not count cooking every day as necessarily ‘cooking from scratch’, or more people cook from scratch daily now than they did in 2020, or these results are unrepresentative.

Figure 6.7 Groups and their emotions for cooking daily. Group 1 is “majority supermarkets” and group 2 is “majority microbusinesses”.



Despite “cooking seems ...to be an increasingly solitary practice” (Graf, 2022), more respondents overwhelmingly felt some kind of emotion when cooking daily than those feeling nothing (figure

6.7): 27% of respondents felt a strong emotion, and 51% a mild emotion. Interestingly, there was little difference between the groups with those with a milder emotion to daily cooking, with essentially half of each group experiencing this. It seems understandable that cooking daily may only result in mild emotion when people have such busy lives to fit cooking around. There was a clearer difference in the strong emotion expressed for cooking food between the majority shopper groups being reported as stronger in Group 2. Graf (2022) highlighted that despite cooking alone, people (she concentrated on women), “still (re)produce cooking knowledge through creatively employing new socio-material relations. These relations range from the food itself to new kitchen appliances and social technologies connecting with friends and virtual experts”. Cooking food could thus be an activity particularly suitable for developing ECV even if cooking alone. The specific emotions felt are discussed next.

Table 6.6 Emotions associated with cooking daily by all shoppers, and groups 1 and 2.

Emotions	Times selected	% of total of respondents	Emotions	Times selected	% of group 1	Emotions	Times selected	% of group 2
Satisfaction	71	36%	Satisfaction	46	38%	De-stress/ Calming	24	42%
Respect for the food	69	35%	Respect for the food	38	31%	Respect for the food	24	42%
Enjoyment	54	28%	Enjoyment	38	31%	Satisfaction	16	28%
Responsibility	49	25%	Responsibility	28	23%	Contentment	16	28%
Contentment	48	24%	Contentment	26	21%	Freedom	16	28%
De-stress/ Calming	47	24%	Fulfilment	25	20%	Responsibility	16	28%
Fulfilment	47	24%	Impatience	23	19%	Fulfilment	16	28%
Happiness	35	18%	Boredom	21	17%	Spiritual	13	23%
Impatience	26	13%	De-stress/ Calming	19	16%	Enjoyment	11	19%
Learning	25	13%	Learning	18	15%	Calmness	10	18%

Generally, cooking daily was associated with positive emotions (table 6.6) (full table in appendix 8.3.2.3c). These findings correspond with the work by Boussoco et al. (2015) who found that people with higher cooking proximity used more positive words towards cooking, compared to

those with low cooking proximity who instead talked more about boredom, tiredness and displeasure in association with cooking. Within the top ten emotions picked by each group, eight were positive for group 1s, compared to all ten for group 2s. The two negatives for group 1 were 'impatience' and 'boredom', supported by this quote: "After 30 years of cooking for family I do feel 'over it' and challenged to rediscover satisfaction in cooking" (by a group 1). These emotions exist despite the high frequency of 'respect for the food' and 'contentment' and this is worthy of further research. Why do more group 1s report impatience or boredom whilst cooking daily than their counterparts? Only three emotions were selected by over 25% of all respondents: 'satisfaction', 'respect for the food' and 'enjoyment'. These emotions particularly develop further the findings that cooking food increases the likelihood of the individual liking/appreciating the food more (Dohle et al., 2014; Charles. Spence, 2017b; Charles Spence et al., 2021). This suggests a development of emotional value towards either the food cooked or the act of cooking it, thus contributing to ECV. The respect for food being high for both groups here suggests a change occurs between the emotions experienced buying food and cooking the food, considering group 1s did not report high levels of respect for food when buying food at supermarkets. Is there a difference in the relationship with food when they cook to consume it?

The group 2 levels of 'de-stress' when cooking daily, coupled with 0% reporting 'anxiety' and 'stress', support the pandemic work of Finlay et al. (2021) that, at least for group 2, cooking and baking, cooking more and different foods, trying new recipes, and trying to improve cooking skills is likely to have been a way of coping with pandemic stress. This is less clear for group 1s, with fewer reporting 'de-stress'. The levels of de-stress, calming, and contentment appearing here, post-pandemic, however, is not aligned with the literature findings relating to lack of time.

Group 2 more frequently picked emotions such as 'spiritual', 'freedom', and 'de-stress/calming.' Perhaps group 2s not only cook for pleasure but really immerse themselves in the experience, gaining much mentally from cooking, at some deeper level. This idea is supported by group 2 levels of 'contentment', fulfilment', and feeling 'secure'. Indeed, 'other' comments included feeling 'lucky'

and “love for the person I’m cooking for”, suggesting deeper analysis has occurred. Whereas positive but perhaps less deep emotions such as ‘fun’ or ‘enjoyment’ were more frequently selected by group 1. As Pollan described, “those who cook, it’s because they want to: it’s pleasurable enough, important enough to us, necessary enough to health and happiness” (Michael Pollan & Gibney, 2016b), but as shown here, the pleasure can be multi-level. Thus, whilst cooking generally has positive connotations, group 2s may exhibit deeper connections with food when cooking daily. How does this relationship with food change when cooking with others?

6.3.2.2 Cooking with others

Chapter 2.4.3 found cooking with others is beneficial, although modern trends have meant cooking alone is more commonplace (Graf, 2022). Part of the survey was used to examine this theory. Appendix 8.3.2.3e-j shows the numbers of overall respondents who cooked with immediate family, extended family, friends and associated frequencies. Interestingly, the further away from the nucleus of the family, the less the respondents cook with others. Beginning with over $\frac{3}{4}$ of all respondents cooking with immediate family, it reduces dramatically to just over half (54%) cooking with extended family and to less than half when cooking with friends. Clearly these results relate to who lives with immediate family and therefore having greater opportunity to cook with them more frequently.

Figure 6.8- Scale from every day (8), once a week, more than once a week, only weekends, more than 2x/month, once in every 3 months, on special occasions, almost never (1).



When considering frequencies of cooking with social groups (figure 6.8), respondents (n=196) cooked more frequently with immediate family than extended family. Developing ECV via intergenerational cooking with extended family is less frequently reported, impacting ECV and knowledge exchange of traditional family recipes. Cooking with friends was even less frequent, although they may eat with these groups more frequently than they cook with them. This data also supports the fact that a small percentage (<15%) of respondents picked either 'learning' or adventurous' as emotions felt when cooking daily. This suggests respondents are less likely to cook unknown dishes or have very few different influences in their cooking that deviate from the norm. Therefore, the potential to develop new ECV is limited, although this does not prevent ECV for food that is already part of the cooking repertoire. An issue with this question is that the respondents did not know that the next question related to eating with others; there is the possibility that some answered that question here instead.

Inter-group differences were found. Group 2s (n=57) cooked with greater frequency with immediate family, extended family, and friends than group 1s (n=122). This suggests greater commensality associated with cooking food. A Mann Witney test demonstrated that the difference found between

the groups is statistically significant, at $p < 0.01$ (see appendix 8.3.2.3l). Regarding cooking with immediate family, Gerritsen et al., (2021) found that time was less of a barrier to cooking during the pandemic, Carroll et al., (2020) also stated many families spent more time cooking, making more meals from scratch, eating with their children more often, and involving children more often in meal preparation. Perhaps the Covid impact can still be seen in the results here, cooking with immediate family being much more frequent than cooking with other companions (for both groups). Group 1 and group 2 differences here were small.

Regarding cooking with extended family, low levels were reported by group supporting Graf's research. Why might group 2s cook much more frequently with extended family? Do priorities differ? This is worthy of further exploration. Regarding cooking with friends, it would be interesting to explore seasonal variations to see if cooking with friends related to BBQ cooking during summer months for example. In summary, Group 2's cooking practices more often involved others, than those of group 1, but how do they feel whilst cooking with others? This is considered in Table 6.7 where the top ten responses are reported (appendix 8.3.2.3k shows full table).

Table 6.7 Emotions whilst cooking with others

Emotions	Times selected	% of total of respondents	Emotions	Times selected	% of group 1	Emotions	Times selected	% of group 2
Enjoyment	79	40%	Enjoyment	54	44%	Respect for the food	27	47%
Strengthens bonds	53	27%	Strengthens bonds	34	28%	Belonging	26	46%
Respect for the people	49	25%	Happiness	24	20%	Respect for the people	23	40%
Belonging	47	24%	Connectedness	23	19%	Strengthens bonds	21	37%
Connectedness	45	23%	Belonging	23	19%	Connectedness	20	35%
Happiness	37	19%	Learning	23	19%	Fulfilment	17	30%
Respect for the food	37	19%	I appreciate the food more	22	18%	Enjoyment	17	30%
Learning	33	17%	Respect for the people	21	17%	Convivial	12	21%
I appreciate the food more	29	15%	Time is of less consequence	17	14%	Happiness	11	19%
Fulfilment	26	13%	Responsibility	13	11%	Adventurous	10	18%

Generally, all respondents associated cooking with others with positive emotions. The main emotions felt by all when cooking with others were ‘enjoyment’, ‘strengthens bonds’, ‘respect for the people’, ‘belonging’, and ‘connectedness’, all aligning with Graf’s (2022) belief that “stressing the importance of food in relation building and family making is not romanticising domestic cooking.” Although, more group 2s held these emotions than group 1s, ‘belonging’ having the largest difference at 46% to 19%. This coupled with the high levels of respect for food, fulfilment, and conviviality reported by group 2s suggests that cooking with others is felt at a deeper connective level and provides a reason for the research findings. The greater engagement with food and people when buying food generally continues here. Additionally, such belonging arguably aligns group 2 with Schwartz’s conservation values, specifically ‘conforming’.

Interestingly a larger proportion of group 1s reported appreciating the food than group 2s (18% to 7%). Appreciation and respect, as emotions, differ as respect refers to having respect for the food itself. As respect must be earned, this could suggest group 2s respect food more intrinsically,

perhaps by having greater food knowledge. Appreciation may refer to being grateful for the food or the experience of making the dish with others; this can arguably occur with less knowledge than respect. Interestingly though, group 1 respected the food more when cooking alone than when cooking with others, so perhaps cooking with others hinders the respect they develop. Group 2s respected the food similarly for both, suggesting respect is based on a deeper-rooted ECV.

In summary, group 2s again display a deeper level of emotion when cooking with others, but how might cooking practices change when doing so? Appendix 8.3.2.3n shows that over 58% of all respondents cook different foods to normal when cooking with others. The examples of different practices described by consumers generally fit within two themes: experimentation/new ways of cooking, and community-based activities (see appendix 8.3.2.3o, oo).

Experimentation included many activities. For instance, 'new/different recipes' was mentioned by 17 respondents fairly evenly distributed between groups, demonstrating neophilic curiosity. Within this, answers ranged from "I constantly cook with new people so always try new recipes" to "with friends we'll try different recipes and ideas, with family it's always favourites". This supports the work of Julier (2013) which found that diners can eat things they are otherwise unused to just because they eat with other people, friends in this case. However, family experimentation was also mentioned by a group 1: "Baking different treats with my daughter, trying new herbs/spices". The fact that the respondent thought of her daughter after reading 'cooking with others' may suggest a lack of frequency of doing so, it being a treat rather than a normality. More community-based activities included cooking within the community and learning new recipes from different cultures. 'Cook(ing) others' cultural foods so they feel included' was another popular trend, wholly from group 2. For instance,

"We have so many people from different backgrounds here and we like to make all feel included
by cooking their foods".

Responses at times fit into both categories, such as the following quote:

“I am always learning new recipes with my friends from different cultures. We each host dinners from our traditional cultures for each other, and other times we just all cook together and add in ingredients from each culture, and it somehow always works and tastes good! We often seek out different food producers too, like for goat meat or wagu beef”.

Therefore, when cooking with others, several of Schwartz’s values appear. The ‘openness to change’ dimension features particularly highly, with adventurousness and food exploration being examples of ‘self-direction’, and ‘stimulation’. The desire to make others feel included are also examples of ‘benevolence’.

Summary

Group 2 show greater tendency towards deeper emotions when cooking food alone, and they have greater opportunities to develop ECV for food due to the greater frequency they cook alone and with family, friends and people from different cultures. Respect for food continues for group 2s throughout, from buying to cooking to eating. There were overall many more positive emotions associated with cooking daily by all respondents than negative, corresponding with the work by Boussoco et al. (2015).

When cooking with others whom they do not normally cook with, over half the respondents like to try or constantly try to cook different foods to normal and neophilic behaviours were demonstrated by individuals from both groups. Interestingly, a particularly emotionally intelligent practice of cooking others’ cultural foods to make them feel included was described by only group 2s, suggesting an active consideration for others. This cultural consideration is worthy of further research. From the 5 C’s defining the roles of microbusinesses/SMEs from chapter 5, there is evidence here of connectedness, felt by both groups. However, that connection related to cooking with others and thus ostensibly does not suggest microbusinesses/SMEs play a role in that. However, as connection was reported much more by group 2s, and considering their greater frequency of cooking with others, there may be a link between shopping mostly at microbusinesses/SMEs and a propensity to

feel greater connectedness through cooking activities or to feel it more frequently than group 1s. As group 2s have greater engagement with food and people whilst buying and cooking food, demonstrating great respect for the food they appear to have bought from microbusinesses/SMEs, microbusinesses/SMEs have a role in providing connective exposure to food and people. Their role for group 1s may be more nuanced. Therefore, it is possible that the influence of the microbusiness/SME food environment impacts the cooking practices of its consumers, with those shopping primarily with them displaying deeper levels of ECV but also greater connective food activities with others.

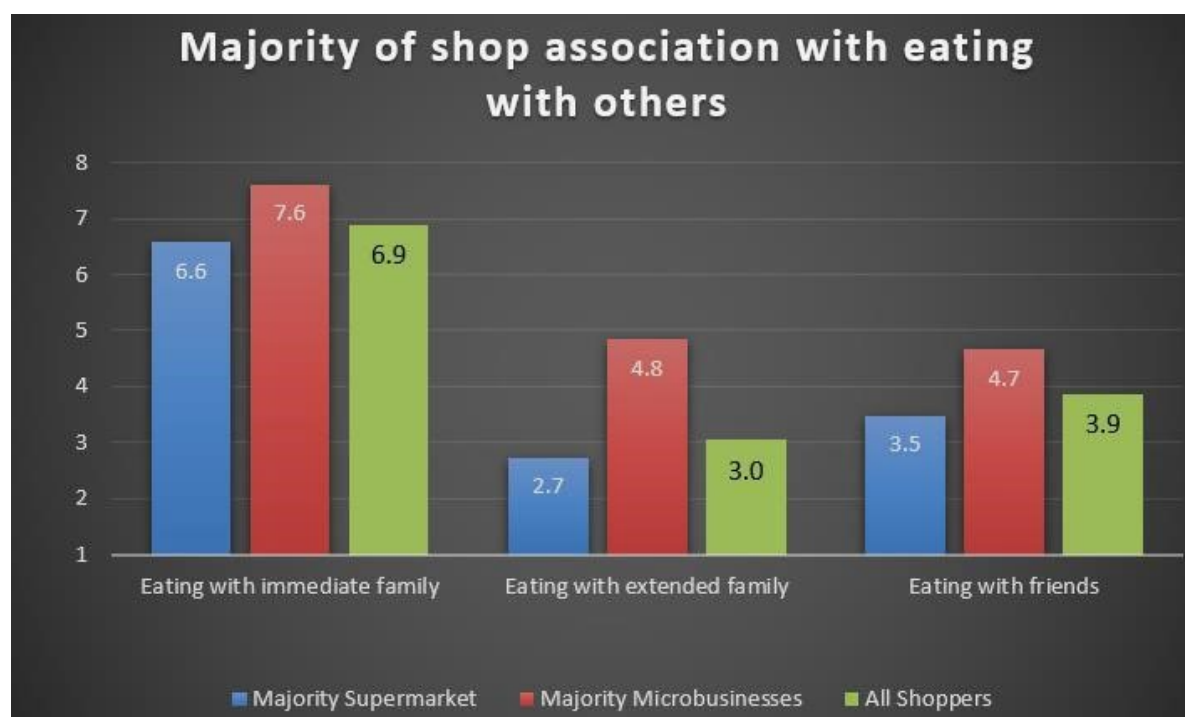
6.3.3 Eating practices

The final link in the chronological food relationship chain is eating food, and this section will investigate whether the groups display different eating practices with different companions and posit whether this may relate to the food environment the food was purchased within.

6.3.3.1 Daily eating

The survey found that whilst most of the respondents (n=196) eat with immediate family (93%), more eat with friends (95%); eating with extended family was reported least (79%) (see appendix 8.2.3.4 a-b, d-e, g-h). Figure 6.9 considers the frequency by group of majority shopping.

Figure 6.9- Group 1s and 2s associated with eating with others. The scale ranges from the least frequent (1) and the most frequent (8): almost never- on special occasions- once in every 3 months- more than 2x/ month – only weekends – once a week – more than once a week- every day.



Dunbar found that 76% of respondents said they thought sharing a meal was a good way to bring people closer together, yet a third of weekday evening meals are eaten in isolation, and the average adult eats 10 meals out of 21 alone every week (Dunbar, 2017; University of Oxford, 2017). Which meals these were would make a difference. Here, both groups ate frequently with immediate family, occurring at least once a week. Even so, this may be lower than expected if most respondents had immediate families. Greater differences between the groups appeared when eating with extended family, group 2s on average eating more than twice a month with extended family compared to only on special occasions shown by group 1s. This is more in line with Dunbar's (2017) research where a fifth of his respondents said it had been more than six months since they had shared a meal with their parents. Therefore, group 2s differ to Dunbar's research and thus the frequency of their eating with extended family is a new finding.

Again, group 2s ate more frequently with friends than group 1s did, but by a smaller margin than for extended family meals. However, both groups ate slightly more frequently with friends than with

extended family, possibly due to location differences as people may be more likely to have friends nearby, whilst their extended family may live further away. A Mann Witney test found statistically significant differences between the two groups $p < 0.005$, in respect of the frequency of eating with others by group 2 versus group 1 with extended family (see appendix 8.2.3.4j).

When comparing these with the responses on the respondents' cooking habits, a strange finding was that group 2 purchasers cook with extended family more frequently than they eat with them (4.7 to 4.3), although this may reflect internal respondent error in the survey. Otherwise, it appears that both groups eat more frequently than they cook with all companions, possibly due to only one family member cooking despite more individuals eating together, that people go out to eat more often than they cook, or the ordering of takeaways. The emotions associated with eating with others differed less between the groups than the frequencies. Emotions associated with eating with immediate family (top ten responses) are shown in table 6.8.

Table 6.8 Emotions associated with eating with immediate family

Emotions	Times selected	% of total of all respondents	Emotions	Times selected	% of group 1	Emotions	Times selected	% of group 2
Enjoyment	78	50%	Enjoyment	49	56%	Respect for the food	25	45%
Belonging	70	45%	Belonging	40	45%	Belonging	25	45%
Strengthens bonds	62	39%	Strengthens bonds	35	40%	Enjoyment	24	43%
Connectedness	59	38%	Connectedness	33	38%	Strengthens bonds	23	41%
Happiness	55	35%	Happiness	30	34%	Connectedness	19	34%
Respect for the food	39	25%	Respect for the people	17	19%	Happiness	17	30%
Respect for the people	30	19%	Gives deeper meaning to everyday eating	13	15%	Fulfilment	15	27%
Gives deeper meaning to everyday eating	28	18%	Respect for the food	12	14%	Responsibility	12	21%
Fulfilment	23	15%	I appreciate the food more	11	13%	Gives deeper meaning to everyday eating	11	20%
Convivial	22	14%	Nostalgic	10	11%	Respect for the people	10	18%

Table 6.9 shows that eating with immediate family was associated with positive emotions by all respondents and respondents shared many of the same emotions which Schwartz may see as altruistic: ‘enjoyment’ ‘belonging’, ‘strengthens bonds’, ‘connectedness’, ‘happiness’. This agrees with Statista data, where 56.42% of respondents thought it was ‘very important’ to eat together as a family (Statista, 2023b). There is little literature regarding how eating together changes our respect for food. Here ‘respect for the food’ was selected by 25% of all respondents but when looking at group 2s, this figure rises to 45% which suggests a link between eating together and respecting the food they are consuming. Additionally, ‘fulfilment’ and ‘responsibility’ were chosen more frequently by group 2s, arguably demonstrating deeper ECV. ‘Responsibility’ could be positive or negative in this case but may suggest a deep level of analysis for what their relationship with food is.

Similarly to previous figures, group 1s picked ‘enjoyment’ more frequently than the group 2s (56% vs 43%), possibly demonstrating a more surface emotion level.

Table 6.9 looks at the top ten emotions reported as associated with eating with extended family (full emotion lists in appendix 8.2.3.4f).

Table 6.9 Emotions associated with eating with extended family by all respondents, group 1 and 2

Emotions	Times selected	% of all respondents	Emotions	Times selected	% of group 1	Emotions	Times selected	% of group 2
Belonging	40	33%	Enjoyment	26	43%	Connectedness	22	46%
Enjoyment	37	30%	Happiness	22	36%	Respect for the people	22	46%
Happiness	35	29%	Belonging	19	31%	Strengthens bonds	22	46%
Connectedness	34	28%	Strengthens bonds	18	30%	Respect for the food	21	44%
Strengthens bonds	31	25%	Connectedness	15	25%	Belonging	19	40%
Respect for the people	30	25%	Respect for the people	11	18%	Fulfilment	15	31%
Respect for the food	21	17%	I am more likely to have dessert	11	18%	Convivial	12	25%
Fulfilment	18	15%	Nostalgic	10	16%	Happiness	11	23%
I am more likely to have dessert	18	15%	Excitement	8	13%	Enjoyment	11	23%
Convivial	17	14%	I appreciate the food more	8	13%	Gives deeper meaning to everyday eating	11	23%

All respondents associated eating with extended family with positive emotions, although greater difference existed between the groups. The most popular emotions amongst respondents were 'belonging', 'enjoyment', 'happiness', 'connectedness', 'respect for the people', and 'strengthens bonds', generally similar to when eating with immediate family. As before, group 1s more frequently chose more surface emotions of 'happiness' and 'enjoyment' compared to group 2s who more frequently chose deeper emotions of 'connectedness' and 'strengthens bonds.'

'Respect for the food' was much more highly reported by group 2s than group 1s. Group 2s demonstrate similar responses re. respect for the food when eating with immediate and extended family. A similar response exists for 'respect for the people'. Particularly interesting is that group 2s report respect the people much more when eating with extended family than immediate, and they respect the food and people when eating with extended family more than group 1s. Perhaps there is a link with the traditional importance of food for the families of group 2 respondents. Another pertinent question is what the respect for the people refers to: did they understand this as respect for their fellow diners or respect for the food producers? These findings extend the work of Kemmer et al. (2017) who found that eating together gave food a more symbolic importance for the diners, to show that eating together changes the way we view food itself. As group 2s reported respecting people more when eating with extended family, this may point to much importance being placed on traditional family food cultures/practices, again supporting the idea of symbolism.

Table 6.10 shows the situation regarding eating with friends.

Table 6.10 Emotions associated with eating with friends by all respondents, groups 1 and 2

Emotions	Times selected	% of total of respondents	Emotions	Times selected	% of group 1	Emotions	Times selected	% of group 2
Connectedness	65	35%	Connectedness	44	38%	Convivial	28	51%
Strengthens bonds	55	29%	Strengthens bonds	37	32%	Enjoyment	22	40%
Enjoyment	51	27%	Belonging	36	31%	A chance to develop a new food culture	19	35%
Belonging	49	26%	Happiness	31	27%	I am more likely to have dessert	18	33%
Happiness	47	25%	Enjoyment	23	20%	Connectedness	17	31%
Convivial	44	24%	Gives deeper meaning to everyday eating	18	16%	Strengthens bonds	14	25%
I am more likely to have dessert	33	18%	I appreciate the food more	16	14%	Respect for the food	11	20%
Respect for the people	29	16%	Respect for the people	14	12%	Respect for the people	10	18%
Respect for the food	28	15%	Respect for the food	13	11%	Fulfilment	10	18%
Gives deeper meaning to everyday eating	27	14%	I am more likely to have dessert	13	11%	Confident	10	18%

Emotions associated with eating with friends were positive by all respondents (table 6.10). The main standout emotions when eating with friends are ‘connectedness’, ‘strengthens bonds’, ‘enjoyment’, and ‘belonging’. ‘Belonging’ and ‘strengthens bonds’ were felt more by group 1s, suggesting that the role of the food itself was secondary to the importance focuses on the relationship and connection with people. Group 2, conversely, demonstrate greater engagement with people and food, specifically via conviviality and reporting more food-centred emotions such as ‘I am more likely to have dessert’ and ‘a chance to develop a new food culture’. The former may be due to eating with friends being seen as a treat worthy of a dessert as suggested in the interview data from Connors et al. (2001), and the idea that consumers change their diets when going out to eat (assuming eating with friends occurs outside the house). This is also being reflected in section 4.4 and 4.5, switching from healthy diets to a meal considered more tasty or ‘a good meal’. The latter finding is particularly interesting, possibly associated with the data on their frequency of cooking with different cultures

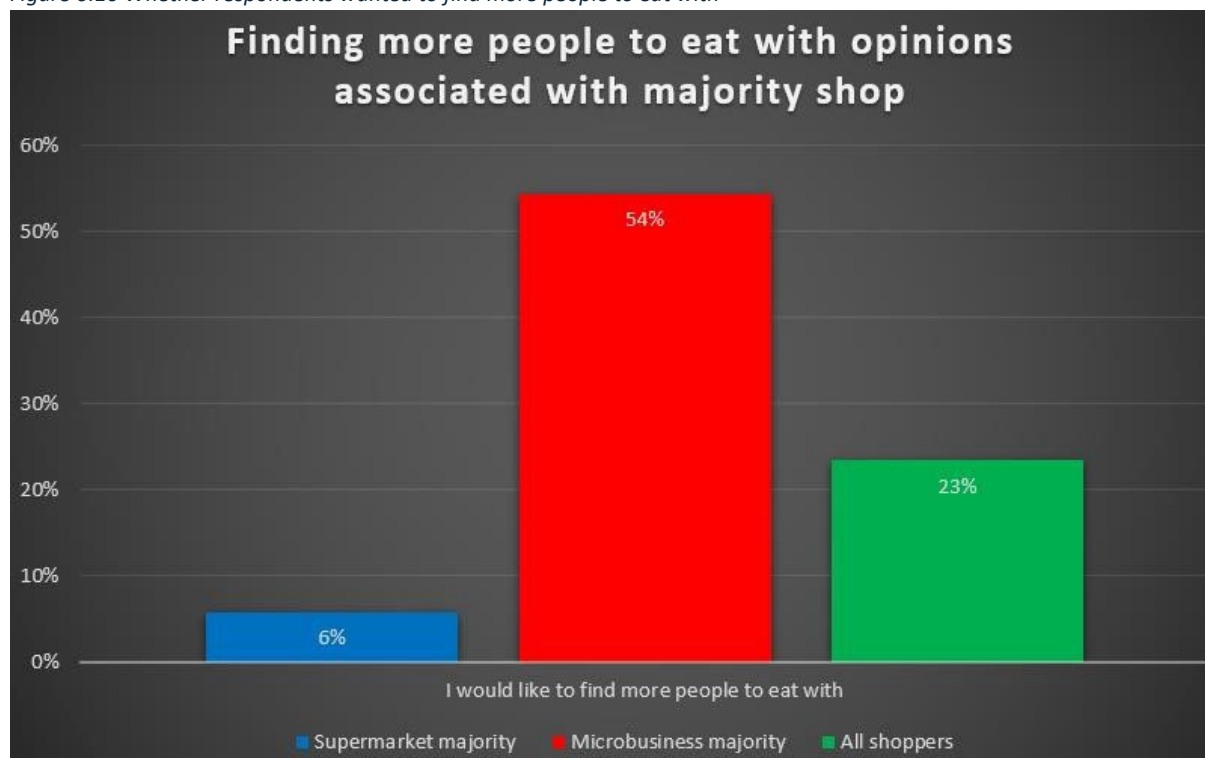
(s.6.3.2.2). The survey did not define 'food culture'; ergo, respondents' understanding of this term when they picked this emotion is unknown. Marovelli (2019, p. 199) defined food culture as "by sharing recipes from their own cultural backgrounds, bringing in ingredients...The meal and its preparation become an occasion for exchanging knowledge and creating memories around culinary production". This might suggest that more group 2s than group 1s have friends from different cultures or with different foods. Or perhaps they are open to a change in what they eat, the way they cook/eat it. A predictable companion emotion would have been 'learning', but this was picked by less than 5% of respondents.

Considering the numbers of respondents believing eating with friends strengthens bonds, it is a shame that eating with friends is not reported as a more regular occurrence. Although this is in line with Dunbar's (2017) finding that 30% of respondents in that study said they hadn't eaten with a best friend in the last six months, and 45% hadn't eaten with an old friend in the same time period. Interestingly, respect for food and respect for people were reported much less than when eating with family, suggesting a link does not exist between eating with friends and developing a respect for food. Perhaps suggesting that developing new food cultures may not automatically develop a respect for food, i.e., ECV.

Respondents were asked whether they wanted to find more people to eat with (figure 6.10), and of those who answered this question (8.4% of all respondents), group 2s wanted to find more people to eat with much more than group 1s. This is consistent with the data later in this chapter showing group 2s were more likely to want to develop a new food culture when eating with others and be convivial and being more likely to ask a neighbour to eat with them (s.6.4.1). Possibly synergies with neophilia exist, group 2s integrating food with engaging with people. There could be many reasons why group 1s do not generally want to find more people to eat with, ranging from lack of time to meet new people, being happy with their current eating habits and companions, or being uneasy meeting new people.

Either way, they may be missing out on an opportunity to widen their development of food ECV.

Figure 6.10 Whether respondents wanted to find more people to eat with



Summary

Both groups demonstrated positive emotions for eating with others, although the frequencies of doing so may not reflect this.

Connectedness, one of the 5 Cs was high for both groups when eating with all companion groups, suggesting a lesser role of microbusinesses/SMEs in driving the consumer ability or propensity to connect with others. However, there is a relationship between group 2s eating with family and respecting food. They also report greater chances to develop a new food culture, be convivial, and want to find more people to eat with. These again point to different characteristics from group 1. Group 2 are more likely to develop ECV whilst eating with family, and to widen their ECV in their wish to find more people to eat with.

Context, another of the 5 C's, is relevant here. Group 2s report different behaviours when eating with friends and family, like their greater propensity for dessert and developing a new food culture.

The characteristics of group 2 may suggest microbusinesses/SMEs have some influence on their behaviours/purchasing preferences.

6.3.4 Nurturing food connections

This section will briefly consider various means by which consumer connection with food may be nurtured. The survey split this part of the study into different parts, asking similar questions to triangulate data and see if consumer responses followed a pattern. Thus, s.6.3.4.1 considers connecting with food, s.6.3.4.2, looks at valuing food, and s.6.3.4.3 considers appreciating food.

6.3.4.1 Connecting with food

Connectedness was reported strongly when eating with other people. This idea of connection is now considered specifically in terms of connecting with food. Partly for triangulation purposes, figures 6.11, 6.12 and 6.13 show the value, appreciation and connection the sample respondents (n=196) have for food. This section will use these graphs to analyse some of the roles of microbusinesses/SMEs, whilst gaining an insight into respondents' characteristics. The respondents were asked which activities would increase their connection with food, the value of food, and appreciation of food.

Figure 6.11 Activities increasing respondent connection with food

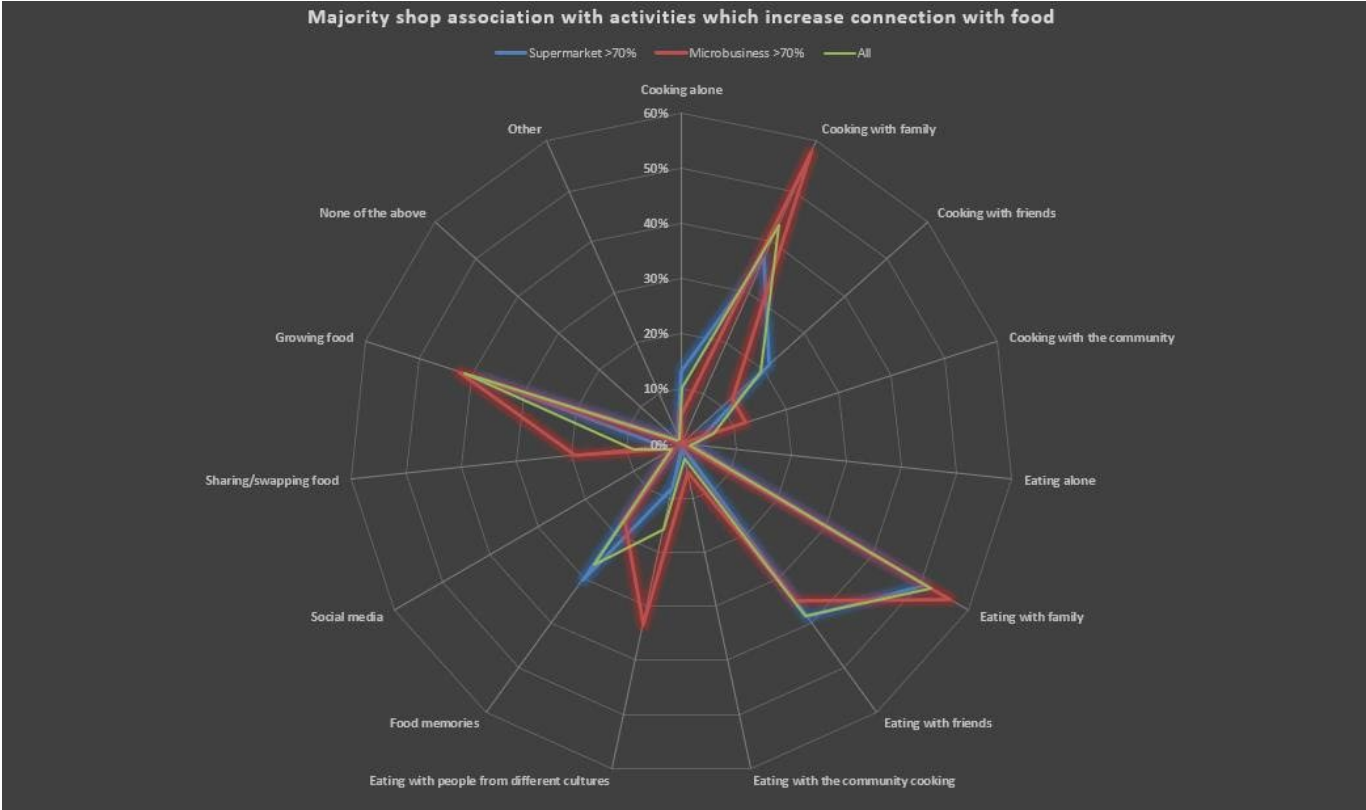


Figure 6.12 Respondent reaction when appreciating food

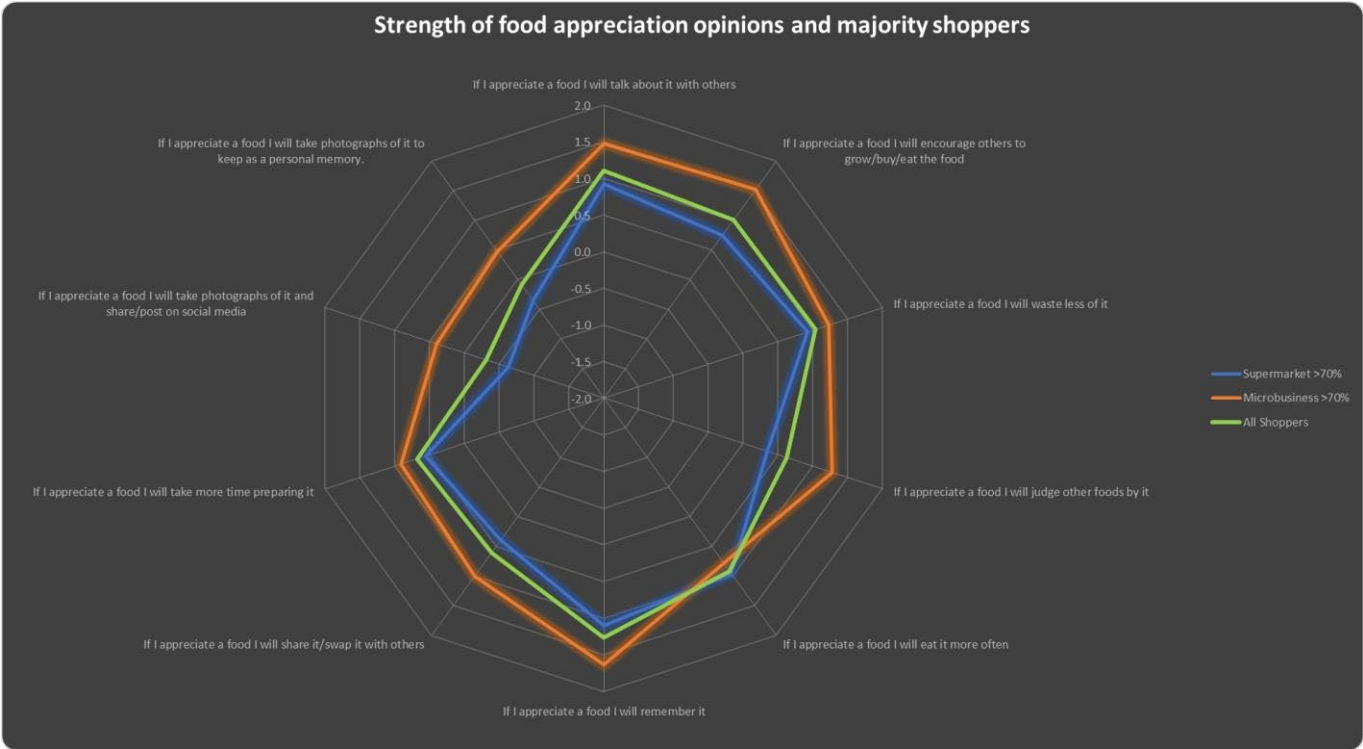
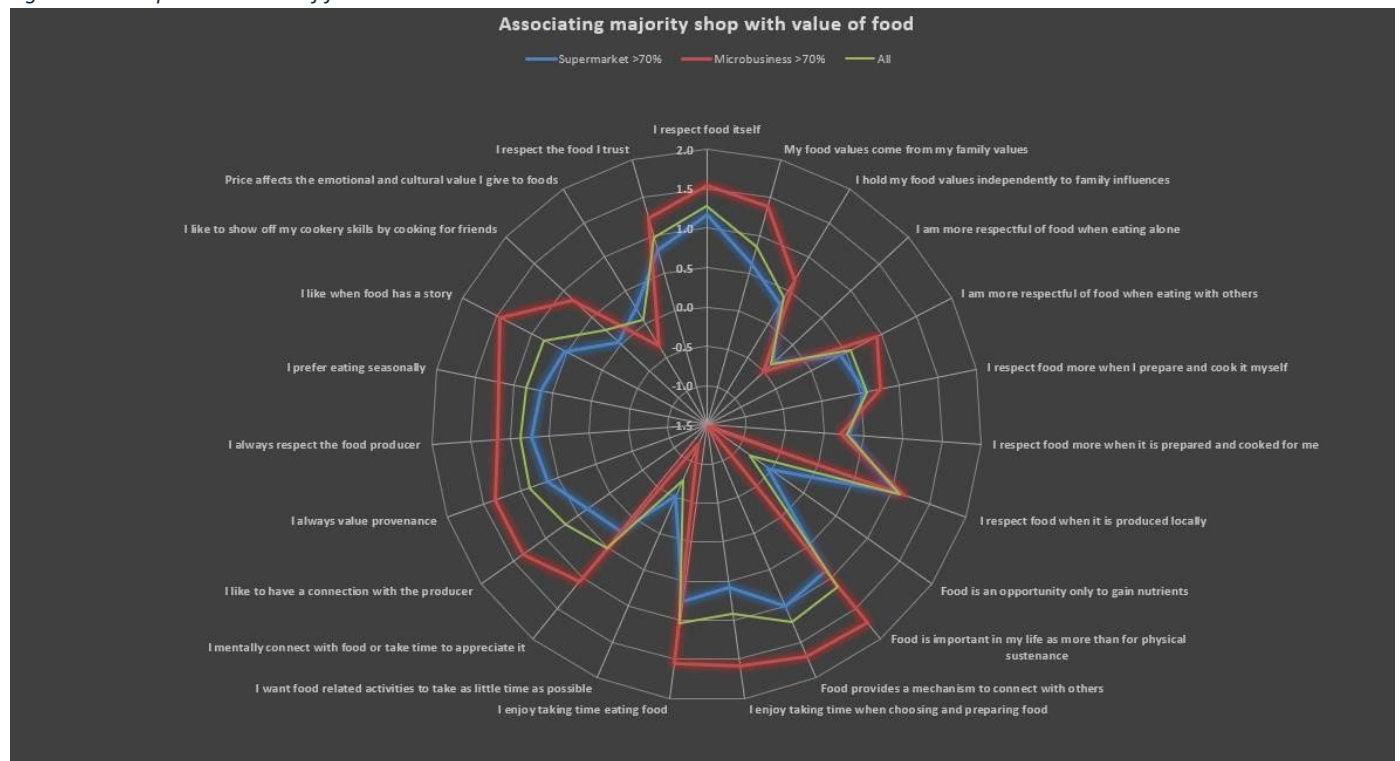


Figure 6.13 Respondent value of food.



All respondents reported that cooking with family, eating with family and friends, and growing food were activities that connected them with food the most (figure 6.11). Food memories are antecedent to ECV, and group 1 more frequently stated that food memories would connect them with food. Does this mean they feel disconnected to the present? Chapter 5.4.1 found that microbusinesses/SMEs felt they had a role in recreating food memories by providing products which reminded consumers of their childhood. As some group 1s cook traditional family recipes when they are “craving comfort or nostalgia” (see appendix 8.3.2.3r, t), microbusinesses/SMEs could encourage traditional recipes or provide knowledge allowing consumers to update or create new, meaningful food traditions. For instance, a group 2 respondent described such adaptation: “I have a recipe from my great grandma for spareribs, which I've altered and veganised” (see appendix 8.3.2.3v). Thus, the microbusiness/SME would have a connective role, whilst also facilitating the transcendence from continuance to re-calibration.

For group 2s, food swapping aids connection with food. Those making food especially to be given away may feel empowerment by being able to help others, being part of a community and feeling

purposeful (table 6.11), but also ownership of how they use their food. Perhaps shopping at microbusinesses/SMEs develops/enhances group 2 feelings of community, thus indicating the role of businesses in providing connective opportunities and a context in which people can swap food. Eating with different cultures (another food connector for group 2s) could be facilitated by providing experiences relating to different cultural foods, possibly easiest for EE businesses, but could occur at any microbusiness/SME. Indeed, farmer-producers particularly seek ways to add value via diversification; perhaps collaborating with EEs would be beneficial here.

6.3.4.2 Valuing food

Much about valuing food relates to ownership/empowerment. Group 2 agreed more strongly than group 1 that 'I enjoy taking time when choosing and preparing food' and 'I enjoy taking time eating food' (figure 6.13). This suggests an ownership of their time. Either group 1 don't have the time to choose and prepare food or they don't enjoy doing so even when they do have time. As group 1s disagreed with the statement 'I want food related activities to take as little time as possible', time is likely the issue. Much literature and chapter 5 data referred to time-saving food activities. Therefore, group 2 values contradict mainstream evidence. Why might group 2 have more time for food-related activities? This could relate to affluence (an idea receiving support and condemnation during chapters 5 and 6), or different character patterns between the groups. The role of microbusinesses/SMEs could be to provide the experience all respondents seek when looking for particular foods; it is perhaps easier to cater for group 2s who can spend more time in those locations.

Businesses described consumers taking ownership of their product by immersing themselves in the experience/story of the producer/business which can become part of their identity (chapter 5.4.1). Consumer evidence of this is shown here, by group 2s who like when the product has a story and like having a connection to the producer. This also points to a level of commitment by the consumer. Microbusinesses/SMEs have a connective role here too, connecting consumers with themselves or

other producers, and connecting consumers to their values, demonstrated by B4 connecting their suppliers with their consumers' values. The attachment role of businesses was seen here, with people and with food. For the former, group 2 felt that 'food provides a mechanism to connect with others' (figure 6.13), and that eating with people from different cultures' increases their connection with food (connection graph). Group 2 may connect with others via active neophilic curiosity and connective exposure through their connection with food. Whereas, group 1 may be more inclined to nurture their existing connection using family to do so. The differences here may indicate a role of microbusinesses/SMEs in supporting certain group 2 characteristics.

Considering attachment with food, PRVs such as seasonal, local, and provenance were valued particularly by group 2, suggesting a relationship between PRVs and shopping predominantly at microbusinesses/SMEs. Although, the rhetoric from Bs 5, 16 and 20 concentrated on the lack of understanding of consumers generally- perhaps group 2 are an exception? Group 1 only reported valuing respect for local food. The difference may be because identifying local foods in supermarkets may be easier than identifying provenance or seasonality, especially within a labelled local foods aisle. Whilst supermarkets may use local foods as a shortcut to consumers developing attachment to food, it does not appear to lead to ECV development due to the lack of respect for supermarket food. Thus, the role of microbusinesses/SMEs involves context, shifting group 1 behaviours to look in supermarkets for PRV-related food characteristics that they would find in a microbusiness/SMEs. This raises some interesting questions. Why, considering group 1 enjoy shopping in microbusinesses, do they value producer connection, provenance, seasonality, and story less than group 2? And why don't they report respect food or its producer in supermarkets more frequently compared to other emotions? Is supermarket food merely seen by consumers as a commodity?

Whilst microbusinesses/SMEs raise the quality bar for consumers (chapter 5.4.1), 'price effects the emotional and cultural value I give to foods' was scored between neutral and disagree for respondents (figure 6.13). This contradicts much research discussing the impact of price on shopper choices and suggests respondents can differentiate between foods which they have ECV for and

those which they do not, even if they cannot buy such foods. This finding may indicate that for some foods, consumers are less concerned about the price; this provides great possibilities for these businesses if consumers have ECV for their business or products. Indeed, B13 demonstrates the benefits of how consumer ECV has meant they are willing to pay for good quality food.

6.3.4.3 Appreciating food

Perhaps the most important finding from figure 6.12 is that group 2s agreed-strongly agreed that ‘if I appreciate a food, I will judge other foods by it’, providing direct evidence that microbusinesses/SMEs have raised the bar for their consumers and provides synergy with business perception of their role (chapter 5.4.1). Considering ‘respect for the food’ was the most popular emotion associated with buying from microbusinesses/SMEs, it is likely that this food then sets the bar for the quality or ECV value of that food in other establishments, re-calibrating perception and connection. Additionally, or those who don’t come from food culture or traditions, there’s a role for businesses to help consumers respect food more, raising their quality bar.

6.3.5 Conclusion for research question 3

Those purchasing food within AFNs report strong connection with food and people when buying, cooking and eating food, and when they grow it. This chapter brings out respect and appreciation of food which are part of ECV but can also be part of food culture; if respect sits within their cultural background, consumers continue to respect food. Where it is not in their background, they want help to respect food, via food memories and growing food. Whilst some similarities exist, the role of microbusinesses/SMEs is generally different for each group.

From the 5 C’s defining the roles of microbusinesses/SMEs from chapter 4.5, there is evidence here from the buying experience data of microbusinesses/SMEs both continuing and re-calibrating consumer values. Which is greater here rests on whether consumers held certain values before patronising microbusinesses/SMEs or developed them whilst there; it is likely to be a combination

of both and worthy of further exploration. From the cooking practice data, connectedness was felt by both groups. However, that connection related to cooking with others and thus ostensibly does not suggest microbusinesses/SMEs play a role per se. Considering that connection was reported much more by group 2s, and considering their greater frequency of cooking with others, there may be a link between shopping mostly at microbusinesses/SMEs and a propensity to feel greater connectedness through cooking activities or to feel it more frequently than group 1s, again this cannot be formally demonstrated in this research. As it has been found that group 2s have greater engagement with food and people whilst buying and cooking food, demonstrating a higher frequency of response with regard to respect for the food, microbusinesses/SMEs can have a role in providing connective exposure to food and people. As the potential to develop ECV is greatest for group 2s in microbusinesses, the businesses' role also involves facilitating the continuation of their food-related values and neophilic behaviours. Eating practices data also highlights the propensity for group 2s to develop new food cultures with friends, which again can be facilitated by microbusiness/SMEs.

Their role for group 1s may be more nuanced. As group 1s also reported more positive emotions with regard to the food shopping environment of microbusinesses/SMEs, this suggests they are open to gaining more from their microbusinesses/SME experience, for example with knowledge exchange and an emphasis on creating food memories. Additionally, microbusinesses/SMEs have a role in changing group 1 behaviours through context, providing food that group 1s can develop ECV for, and wish to continue buying. How can they increase numbers or increase the proportion of shop that group 1s buy there? This is worthy of further research.

Synergy was found with the roles businesses felt they had in providing food ECV for consumers in chapter 5.4.1, food memories being of great importance, especially for group 1, ownership/empowerment being demonstrated through consumers controlling their time and what they eat, attachment arising with people and food, and raising the bar being demonstrated by consumers judging other foods by the foods from microbusiness/SME. To conclude, this data establishes a relationship between microbusinesses/SMEs and ECV in multiple ways. Firstly, both

groups shop at microbusinesses/SMEs to buy certain items for which they associate respect, and to feel specific emotions, most notably connectedness. This ensures they return to microbusinesses, whether instead of or additionally to supermarkets. Microbusinesses are therefore a catalyst for certain emotions not felt in supermarkets. This feeds the ECV consumers already have and helps create new ECV; it is impossible to tell from this whether consumers possessed ECV prior to visiting a microbusiness or developed it during their visit.

Secondly, group 2s exhibit stronger, deeper emotions, and more frequent occurrences of cooking alone and with others. Their food practices involve others more, eating with family and friends each providing opportunities for different ECV-related practices. This may suggest that group 2s already have ECV ante microbusiness visit rather than developing it post visit, although the microbusiness nurtures and perhaps enhances it by providing an outlet for neophilic behaviours, connective exposure, fulfilling neophilic curiosity and providing the connection or community to meet others or cook with others.

6.4 Is having ECV beneficial in those networks, and if so, what activities develop ECV the most?

Chapter 5 identified financial and non- financial benefits for consumers and businesses of having ECV within AFNs, including connective community, knowledge exchange, resilience, and identity. Benefits did not have a specific section within the survey, instead being amalgamated into other questions. Therefore, this section uses the consumer data to provide supporting evidence and new insights to build on the business data findings. Examples fit within the themes of connective community and growing food, with knowledge exchange evident throughout. As group 2s have so far demonstrated their more frequent reporting of respect for food and fellow diners, the activities which group 2s more frequently or strongly participate in may indicate the propensity of such activities to facilitate ECV development.

6.4.1 Connective community

As shown in chapters 2, 4 and 5, ECV is highly dependent on the relationships built around food. This section investigates examples of these relationships arising from the survey, cross-cultural integration, neighbourliness, food swapping and commensality.

6.4.1.1 Cross-cultural integration

Celebrating cultures through food forms part of ECV. Little research exists around cooking food informally with people from different cultures (chapter 2.4.3). To begin research into this knowledge gap, data was collected to ascertain the frequency of, and emotions regarding cooking with different cultures informally, and whether purchaser group influenced responses.

Figure 6.14 Frequency of cooking with different cultures

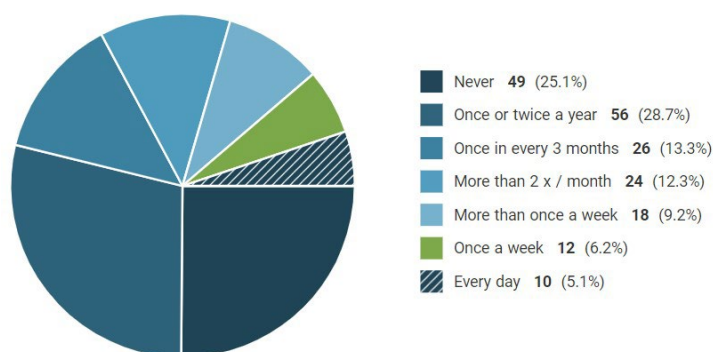
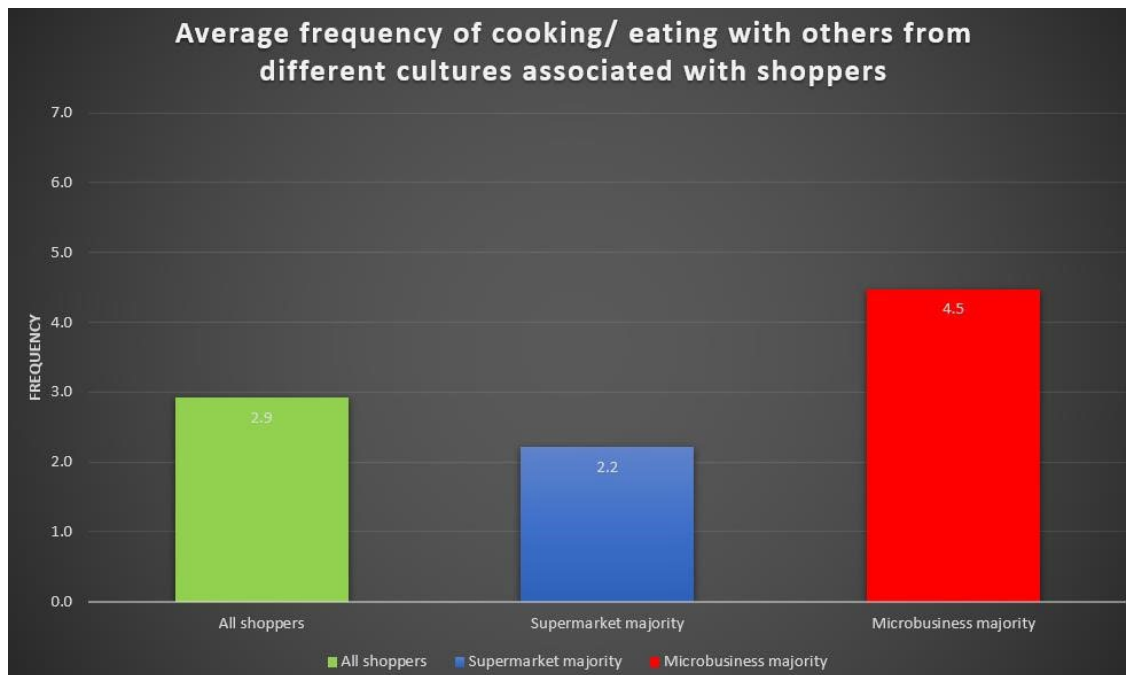


Figure 6.14 shows that 20.5% of respondents (n=196) cooked with others from different cultures at least more than once a week. 12.3% of respondents cooked with different cultures more than twice a month.

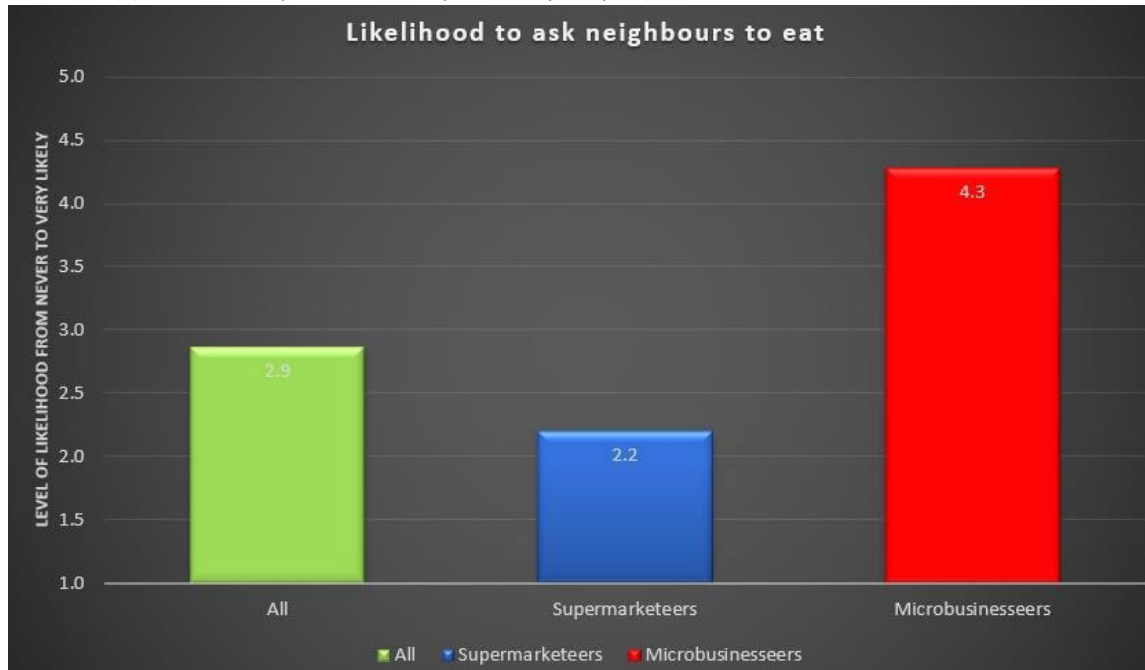
Figure 6.15 Purchaser groups and cooking with different cultures (1 representing 'never' and 7 representing 'every day').



The average frequency of cooking/eating with others from different cultures or was once every 3 months (figure 6.15). However, group 2 did so more regularly, between more than twice a month and more than once a week, compared to the once or twice a year displayed by group 1. This association was significant at $p < 0.001$ (appendix 8.3.2.3 zz). When considering the emotions reported by respondents when cooking with people from different cultures, 20% of all respondents reported developing a greater appreciation of their companion's cultural foods, and a greater understanding of their different culture, indicating knowledge exchange. There was a slight tendency for group 1s to report more educational emotions such as 'a desire to learn more about their culture', suggesting curiosity and learning but less active participation. Group 2s, alternatively, are more likely to report more active, hands-on, emotions, such as 'we create a fusion when we cook together'; whether this refers to a fusion within a dish or a fusion menu or cognitive fusion is unknown. However, emotions here were not highly reported (20% and under) compared with other activities.

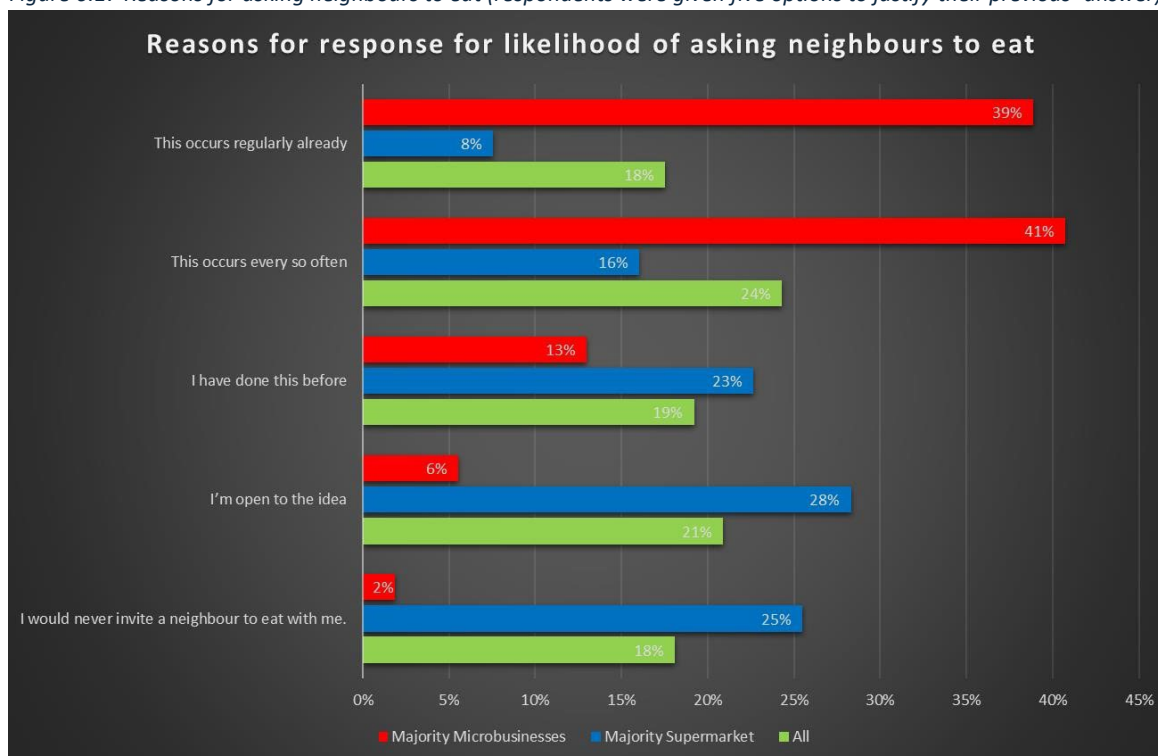
6.4.1.2 Neighbourliness

Figure 6.16 Scale: 'never' (1), 'not that likely', 'neutral', 'likely', and 'very likely' (5)



Chapter 2.4.3 established a lack of research relating to food activities with neighbours, although benefits of general commensality were found. Here, generally, respondents (n=196) were between 'neutral' and 'not that likely' to invite neighbours round to eat (figure 6.16 and appendix 8.3.2.4k). This ostensibly supports Dunbar's (2017) findings that 69% of respondents had never shared a meal with any of their neighbours. However, this generalisation is misleading, with group 2 respondents being 'likely' to do so, scoring an average of 4.3, with a statistically significant difference between groups ($p < 0.001$) (appendices 8.3.2.4 l-n).

Figure 6.17 Reasons for asking neighbours to eat (respondents were given five options to justify their previous answer)



39% of group 2's reported (compared to 8% of group 1s) inviting neighbours to eat 'regularly already' and 41% (compared to 16%) invite them 'every so often' (figure 6.17). This trend is worthy of further investigation. Lower levels of asking neighbours to eat with them were displayed by group 1 with qualitative responses (appendix 8.3.2.4n) including "I don't know any neighbours that much so as to invite them for lunch/dinner", and "I find it difficult enough to cater for friends and family". Interestingly, although not inviting neighbours to eat, one described food swapping instead, suggesting a level of neighbourliness: "We live very rurally! I've baked goods and delivered to the nearby farm but wouldn't think of asking them to dinner". 18% of all respondents 'would never invite a neighbour' to eat with them, although mainly from group 1. Group 2's greater frequency encourages social bonding and life satisfaction via commensality (chapter 2.4) and also indicates that eating with neighbours is an activity which increases ECV for food.

6.4.1.3 Food swapping

Relating to neighbourliness but not exclusively, food swapping and sharing promotes timesaving, gratitude and health, important for commensality, relationships and ECV creation (chapter 2.4). It is an activity which increases the circularity of food supply chains. Happening outside the traditional food economy allows it to create a new non-financially based food economy, with participants showing respect for food democracy, along with respect for the community and reducing waste. It can be inferred from the work of Ančić et al., 2019; Jehlička et al., 2018; Jehlička & Daněk, 2017 that food swapping person to person, rather than large scale redistribution can gain momentum as a community activity.

On average, respondents (n=196) swapped food once in every 3 months, with group 2 swapping more regularly, at around more than once a week, and group 1s swapping on special occasions (figure 6.18). The Mann-witney test found these group differences are reliable, with P-values of less than 0.001 (appendix 8.3.2.4q). Both groups swapped food by giving, swapping and receiving (figure 7.19) and it was generally seen as positive by both groups.

Figure 6.18 Frequency of food swapping ('Never' (1), 'Almost never', 'On special occasions', 'Once in every 3 months', 'More than 2 x / month', 'Only weekends', 'More than once a week', 'Once a week', 'Every day' (8)).

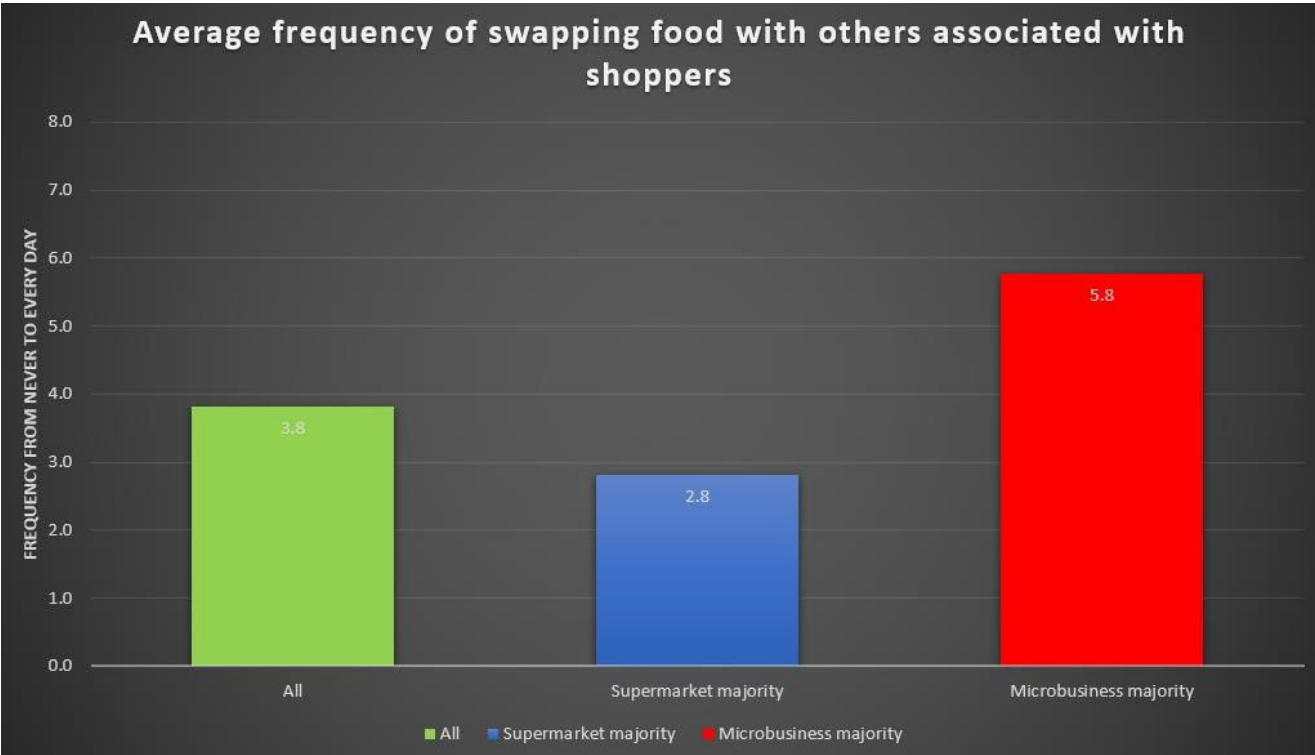
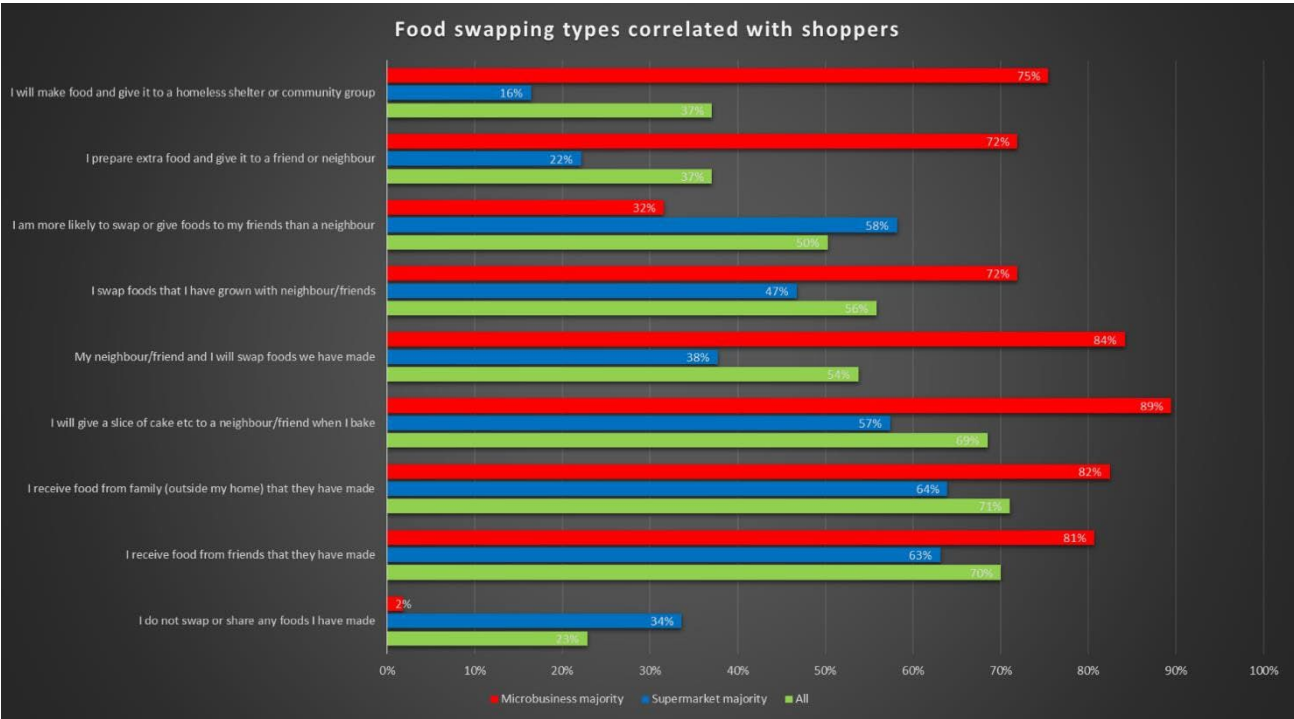


Figure 6.19 Food swapping types



Generally, group 2s display greater propensity for swapping foods than group 1, 34% of whom, conversely, did not swap any foods (compared to 2% in group 2) (figure 6.19).

Food was prepared especially to be given away: 75% of group 2s prepare food for community groups, and 72% prepare extra food for friends/neighbours. This existed for individuals in group 1 but much less so. Group 2s may reduce food insecurity within their communities by their food sharing actions, possibly driven by the responsibility 16% of them felt when swapping. Interestingly, giving away a slice of cake, perhaps considered more informal, or perhaps less aiding food security, was also dominated by group 2s. 28% of group 1s compared to 23% of group 2s felt they had done a good deed when giving food away. Instead, group 2 respondents said they felt purposeful, contented, and belonging to a community, demonstrating a care and respect for others. Does this suggest group 2s display more self-transcendence actions through benevolence? Future studies could explore food swapping in terms of respect for food and others and care. In Sovová et al.'s (2021) research, the more people produce, the more they give away, demonstrating that caring for fresh and healthy food is positively associated with caring for people. An inference is that group 2s have greater capacity for participating in a connective community and demonstrating connections and care through swapping food.

Group 1s were more likely to swap or give foods to friends than neighbours, supporting the dispropensity to invite neighbours for food but also further supporting the connection between food swapping and care. When it came to receiving foods, group 2s received much food from others, 82% receiving food from family outside the home, and 81% from friends. Whereas just over 60% of group 1s received foods from these groups. What food they received would be useful to further research, whether it pertains to aiding their household food security, broadens their diet, or merely provides a sweet treat on occasion. The lower levels of swapping displayed by group 1, associates with lower reported levels of 'belonging to/feeling part of a community' and wishing 'it could happen more' (table 6.11). This firstly points to a cyclical pattern: the more it happens, the more people want

it. Secondly, the frequency and variation in food swapping for group 2s alludes to a deeper connection with food or people. Fewer group 1s participate in food swapping, but when they do, they feel part of a community. Perhaps future research could investigate how to initiate food swapping for group 1, to enable this feeling of belonging to a community, and in turn, deeper emotions for food swapping and desiring reoccurrence. Clearly, food swapping is an activity highly associated with ECV development.

Table 6.11 Emotions of all respondents when food swapping, and of group 1 and group 2

Emotions	Times selected	% of total of respondents	Emotions	Times selected	% of total of group 1	Emotions	Times selected	% of total of group 2
Belonging to/feeling part of a community	88	45%	Belonging to/feeling part of a community	36	30%	Belonging to/feeling part of a community	43	75%
Happy	51	26%	Happy	36	30%	Wish it could happen more	26	46%
I feel like I have done a good deed	50	26%	I do not swap food	34	28%	Purposeful	18	32%
Wish it could happen more	46	23%	I feel like I have done a good deed	34	28%	Contented	17	30%
I do not swap food	39	20%	I like the feeling of a neighbourly economy	16	13%	I like the feeling of a neighbourly economy	14	25%
I like the feeling of a neighbourly economy	33	17%	Wish it could happen more	16	13%	I feel like I have done a good deed	13	23%
Contented	27	14%	I would like to swap but haven't found anyone to swap with	10	8%	Happy	11	19%
Purposeful	26	13%	Responsible	8	7%	Responsible	9	16%
Responsible	18	9%	Contented	8	7%	I do not swap food	1	2%
I would like to swap but haven't found anyone to swap with	11	6%	Purposeful	8	7%	I would like to swap but haven't found anyone to swap with	1	2%

6.4.1.4 Commensality

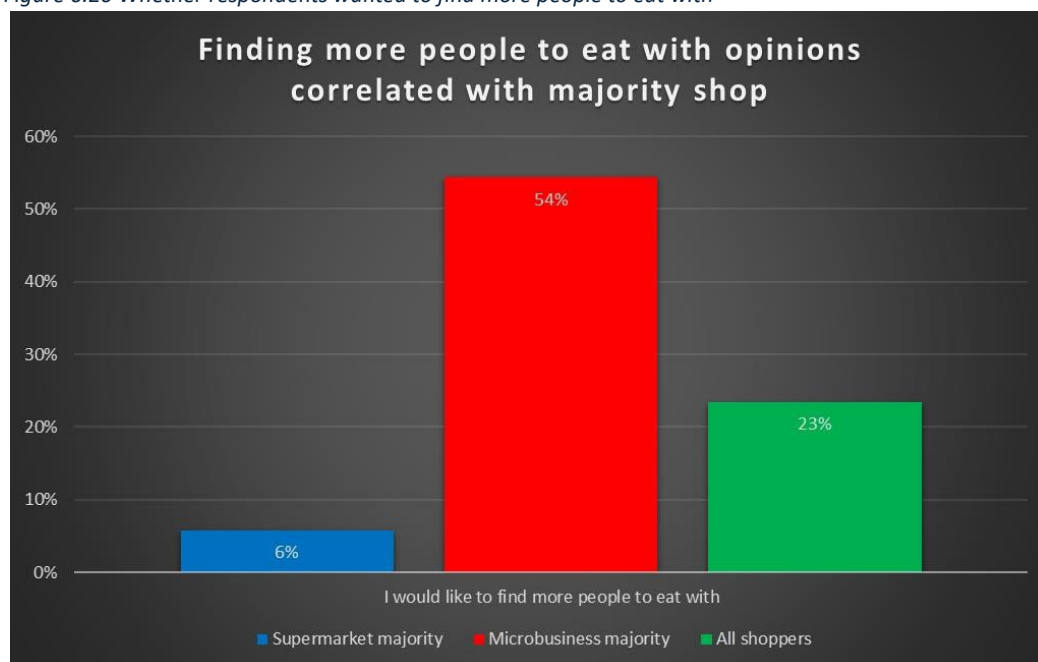
Much literature explores the benefits of commensality (chapter 2.4), and it is vital for ECV. Benefits range from physical to mental health, and community value. For mental health, those who eat socially are “more likely to feel better about themselves and to have a wider social network capable of providing social and emotional support” and have “better life satisfaction” (Dunbar, 2017) than those who do not eat with other people. Similar results were found in South Korea (Son et al., 2020) and a Brazilian study further showed how increased pleasure in commensality may be a part of successful health intervention among women with obesity (Sabatini et al., 2019).

Table 6.11 shows how connectedness, ‘strengthens bonds’, and ‘belonging’ were highly associated with eating with friends, in particular, supporting the more qualitative part of Dunbar’s (2017) research which found many respondents believed that having a meal together was an important way of making or reinforcing friendships. ‘Belonging’ and ‘strengthens bonds’ were felt more by group 1 (31% to 16% and 32% to 25%), whereas ‘enjoyment’ was felt much more by group 2 (contrasting with the emotions graphs relating to eating with family); this may suggest group 1 have a greater chance of benefiting from eating with friends. However, considering that eating with friends occurs ‘once in every 3 months’ for this group, the benefits that could be obtained are likely to be less potent than for group 2 who eat with friends more frequently.

Group 2 chose more frequently ‘a chance to develop a new food culture’, and ‘convivial’ when eating with friends. The former is particularly interesting, associating with the data regarding cooking with different cultures. ‘Food culture’ was undefined, thus respondents may have differing understandings of this. Developing new food cultures does create a potential benefit to society via understanding, cohesion, and mutual respect, learning being “a mechanism for social inclusion” (Lingham, et al., 2022, p. 8). ‘Learning’ would have been a predictable companion emotion, but this was chosen by less than 5% of respondents. Interestingly, figure 6.20 demonstrates the desire of

group 2 to find more people to eat with. Perhaps they are more willing to interact or become more involved in community than group 1s, beneficial to the local community due to knowledge exchange and social cohesion.

Figure 6.20 Whether respondents wanted to find more people to eat with



All this data indicates that eating with others is an activity which can develop ECV for all respondents, but in different ways, group 1s developing ECV with known companions, and group 2s via neophilic tendencies and connective exposure.

6.4.2 Growing food

Figure 6.21 Proportion of respondents who grow/ have grown food

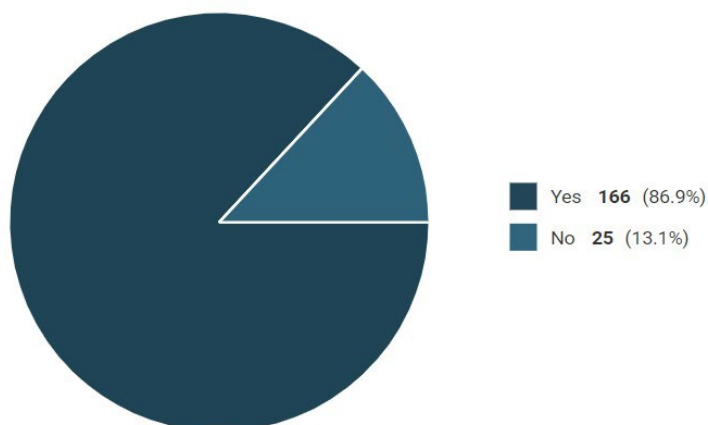
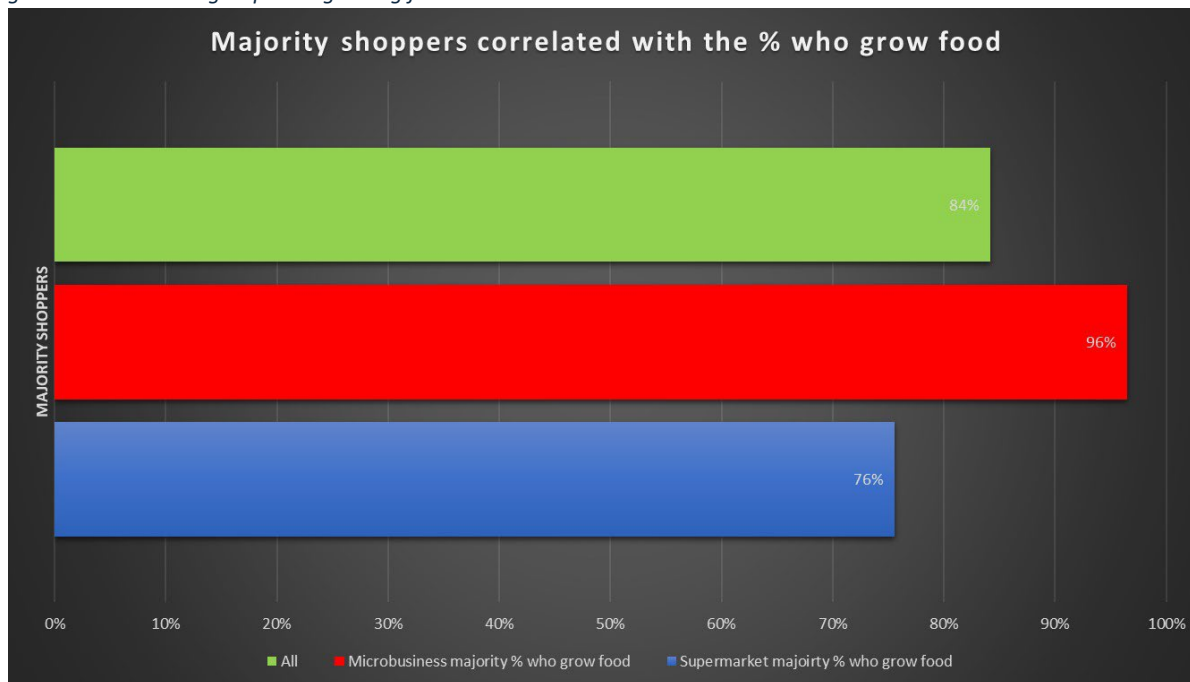


Figure 6.22 Purchaser groups and growing food



Over 80% of all respondents (n=196) have grown their own food either historically or currently. This is a high proportion, considering that according to the HTA YouGov 2021 data, only 35% of British adults said they used their garden or outdoor space to grow their own food (HTA, 2021). Ergo, this would suggest that the sample population is unrepresentative of the UK population, although the Mann Witney test demonstrated there was a statistically significant difference in response with Group 2's more likely to grow food at $p < 0.001$ (appendix 8.3.2.4r).

Interestingly, table 6.12 shows that growing food was an activity for which emotions were frequently reported by both groups, group 1 particularly reporting in higher numbers compared to all other activities. This suggests that for group 1s, growing food particularly increases their ECV with food. The benefits to the individual are physical and mental. Physical benefits were reported by 65% of respondents who believed that growing food gave them other benefits such as exercise, although only half of group 1 compared to nearly 90% of group 2. Why do more group 2s believe this? Perhaps they have more knowledge relating to physical benefits of growing food, or perhaps they have felt such benefits more.

Mental benefits were also highlighted. Growing food highlighted intrinsic aspects of the food such as the variety, look and taste, were reported more frequently by group 2. Additionally, group 2s frequently reported satisfaction that they had grown it, and thus respected it more, feeling a connection with it. These are all vital components of food ECV development, being an emotional connection and a deeper relationship with the food, and indicates a relationship between knowledge and ECV. Interestingly, as this data shows, group 1s are more likely to report that they respect food when they grow it compared to when they buy it from a supermarket; might this be because of the satisfaction and connection they reported or is it to do with supermarket food being seen as a commodity?

Table 6.12 Top 10 emotions of all respondents, and group 1 and group 2 when growing food- respondents were asked whether they agreed with a series of phrases relating to growing food, 'yes' or 'no' being the options.

Emotions	Times selected	% of total of all respondents	Emotions	Times selected	% of total of group 1	Emotions	Times selected	% of total of group 2
I have the satisfaction that I have grown it	144	82%	I have the satisfaction that I have grown it	90	73%	I have the satisfaction that I have grown it	54	95%
I have a connection with the food	137	78%	I have a connection with the food	83	67%	I have a connection with the food	54	95%
I prefer the taste	131	76%	I prefer the taste	78	63%	I prefer the taste	53	93%
I respect the food more	127	73%	I respect the food more	75	61%	I prefer the look	52	91%
I want to share the food with others	119	68%	I want to share the food with others	67	54%	I prefer the variety	52	91%
I waste less of it	117	67%	I waste less of it	65	53%	I respect the food more	52	91%
I prefer the variety	113	66%	I prefer the variety	62	50%	I feel it gives me other benefits (such as exercise)	51	89%
I feel it gives me other benefits (such as exercise)	112	65%	I use it in dishes where I can celebrate the food/it becomes an important component of a dish	62	50%	I use it in dishes where I can celebrate the food/it becomes an important component of a dish	50	88%
I use it in dishes where I can celebrate the food/it becomes an important component of a dish	112	64%	I feel it gives me other benefits (such as exercise)	62	50%	I want to share the food with others	50	88%
I feel relaxed	112	64%	I feel relaxed	62	50%	I feel relaxed	50	88%
I prefer the look	105	62%	I prefer the look	56	46%	I waste less of it	49	86%
I talk more with my neighbours/friends because we swap foods	85	50%	I talk more with my neighbours/friends because we swap foods	40	33%	I talk more with my neighbours/friends because we swap foods	45	79%
I do not grow/have not grown my own food	24	13%	I do not grow/have not grown my own food	20	16%	I do not grow/have not grown my own food	4	7%

Wider benefits of growing food included community connection and environmental benefits. Sharing grown food with others was highly reported by all respondents. This sense of connection is a vital part of developing the cultural part of ECV, but it also creates the sense of belonging to a community that comes from sharing food. This data may go some way in combatting the idea that sense of community was a “narrative of decline” (Watt, 2022). Indeed, also combatting this, and consistent

with the data regarding contact with neighbours, is that overall, 50%, but nearly 80% of group 2, talked more with their neighbours or friends due to swapping foods they had grown. This may create various benefits such as the feeling of belonging, purpose, and improve mental health and community resilience. Although environmental benefits have only been mentioned in passing throughout this thesis, there is evidence that when consumers grow their own food it is environmentally beneficial, as 86% of group 2 and 53% of group 1 waste less food when they have grown it.

6.4.3 Conclusion for research question 2

Whilst the literature found many benefits of activities related to ECV, this data supports some of these, demonstrating how having ECV has the potential to benefit consumers and society through social cohesion, knowledge exchange, community resilience, and environmental benefits. It appears that the activities which contribute most to ECV development are different for each group. For group 1s, it is primarily growing food, although commensality with friends is also a facilitator. For group 2s, all activities contribute to ECV development but especially food swapping.

These findings create many more questions than they answer, and as such, other interesting findings which would provide focus for further research are firstly to expand research into the ECV created through the act of cooking informally at home with people from other cultures, and the activity-based versus educationally based emotions dynamic and how that embeds a respect for food. Next, research might further the conversation around the role of food in creating neighbourliness, perhaps investigating the reasons for group 2 propensity for inviting neighbours for food, such as the relationship between counties group 2s live in and reported neighbourliness levels and their antecedents. Thirdly, research into how to spread the idea and normality of food swapping. Fourthly, commensality via eating with friends appeared to aid ECV development for group 1s by strengthening and increasing their food experiences with friends, perhaps through the development of food memories and for group 2s via their propensity to engage in neophilic experiences and

connective exposure. Research could investigate why relationships beyond family and friends are so important for group 2s. Lastly, this respondent sample had a higher reported propensity to grow food than the UK average. This may be due to the methods of survey distribution, or the idea that those interested in food are more likely to take the time to answer a survey about it but is worthy of further investigation considering it was particularly important for group 1 and their responses which could link to ECV.

Chapter 7 will conclude with the findings this PhD research.

Chapter 7 Conclusion

7.1 Introduction

The beginning of 2024 witnessed farmers, through demonstrations, lobbying against cheap food imports which undercut British farmers, following many similar demonstrations across the EU (Gupta, 2024). The 2024 NFU conference saw the announcement of new support for farmers, with much focus on technology innovation and diversification (NFU, 2024), but with little to address the problems highlighted by Liz Webster of

“...too much control to the supermarkets... and it's just been a drive to make everything...as cheap as possible...But we are tied to high standards as well, so it means that we are farming as a charity in many ways” (Prior & Fisher, 2024).

The Government reported how farmers’ “vital contribution to the British way of life must be protected for years to come” (Office, 2024). However, the difficulties farmers face demonstrates the value versus values debate central to this study, where currently being cheap is valued more highly than quality at a government and national level. This evolves the debate around what food really means to us as individuals and the current place of farmers, and others within the food supply chain, in British culture, providing another opportunity to re-evaluate our relationship with food and food production.

Chapter 2 explored the literature around AFNs, looked at the differences between value and values, and explored the inter-relationship between AFNs and non-financial values. It identified the need to update existing typologies relating to non-financial values within the context of AFNs, the so-called “alter-values”, and one in particular has been the focus of this research, ECV. Considering the vast literature surrounding AFNs, the subsequent dual-country scoping interviews revealed the

importance of microbusiness/SMEs within these AFNs in maintaining and developing nonfinancial values of food, and thus further data collection focussed on the SMEs and microbusinesses working within AFNs in Gloucestershire. The scoping study explored opportunities for microbusiness/SME facilitation of ECV for consumers. Equally, the scoping study explored the networks of businesses within these AFNs and their type and strength of connections.

This scoping study was iterative: it began by looking at how food was valued by consumers in the UK and in the comparative country of Greece, choosing a county in each to compare. Interviews with politicians, academics and producers demonstrated a tendency for the Greeks to have a greater emotional and cultural value of food itself and of those who produced it. Greek communities were more centred around food than in the UK, raising the question of the importance of connection. This led the focus of the study to look further into food producers and food values in the UK and what evidence there was of similar food values and connections within UK AFNs.

The final PhD study has three foci. Firstly, it considers the networks of food microbusinesses/SMEs in Gloucestershire, what types and strength of connection they have, and what their values are as businesses. It then considers ECV from business and consumer perspectives. Thirdly, it investigates the role of food microbusinesses/SMEs in facilitating the development of non-financial alter-values for consumers, specifically ECV. Combining data derived from non-spontaneous behaviour (the survey responses) with narrative data derived from natural settings (the interviews and sociogram formation) has here provided “breadth and depth of understanding and corroboration” (Johnson et al., 2007, p. 123). Thus, the evidence examined addressed the following research questions.

1. What networks are food microbusinesses and SMEs are involved with within Gloucestershire and what types of connections do they have?
2. Is having ECV beneficial, and if so, what activities develop ECV the most?

3. What is the role of food microbusinesses and SMEs in nurturing ECV, and what is their role in changing food culture?

Through answering these questions, this PhD research contributes to a greater understanding of the non-financial values for food, especially in the wake of multiple crises, all of which allowed people the opportunity to re-evaluate their relationship with food. It questions whether there are differences in these values according to where people undertake their majority 'food shop'. This PhD also provides an insight into the varying networks and connections of food microbusinesses and SMEs in Gloucestershire, their perceptions of their role, and provides recommendations on how these businesses may best be aided considering the need, since Brexit, to shop more locally, or at least nationally.

This final chapter is structured in three sections. Firstly, it addresses the research questions. Being an independently inductive rather than deductive research, chapter 6 was not used to inform chapter 7 or the design of the survey as the interviews and the data collection for the survey were carried out at the same time. Whilst the data was allowed to tell its own story, a critique of this approach would be that direct comparisons between the data types was more difficult and provided arguably too much data to succinctly analyse and directly answer the research questions. This is a challenge when seeking data saturation and data richness using a mixed method approach.

Secondly, the chapter details the policy implications of the work. Thirdly, potential future research to build upon these findings is considered.

7.2 Summary of results

7.2.1 Conceptual contributions and thematic insights pre research questions

Research began by ascertaining the cultural value of food in both countries. It was found to generally rest on the regularity and embeddedness of certain food behaviours, with a sense of place related

to food and consumer identity, exposure to the food and thus a connection to it, and the associated commensality. Cultural value was found to be strong in Greece, being of daily importance, linked with family, religion and communities, and embedded in tradition and connection to food, its production and producers. For the UK, there was less evidence of a cultural value of food, and an uncertainty with some interviewees, of what it actually was. Food was more associated with occasions, with daily connection with food or any perceptions of culture associated with it as being transactional. The findings suggest historically that cultural value did exist in the UK when there was a strong food culture but has since been lost. Interestingly, the concepts of cultural value of food and of food culture were often conflated.

From the literature review, the iterative definition of the alter value of ECV started out as 'respect for food' and was mainly associated with food memories. Through this journey of PhD research, many emotions and behaviours have been found to increase respect for food and provide associated values that all collectively contribute to having an ECV for food. Many different activities can create and enhance food ECV, but the extent to which this can be developed is likely to differ according to the attitudes, behaviours, traits or norms described by Schwartz (2012). ECV is dynamic, not static, and describes the attributes pertaining to one's personal food culture, or 'food ego-culture', where food symbolism is important. The separate dimensions of Intrinsic Value (IV) and ECV have merged frequently during this research, as it has become clear that having IV is often entwined with having ECV for food. The definition of ECV, re-assessed at the conclusion of this research, remains constant and is reproduced below:

The non-financial, non-market-oriented value given to food. It is the embedded and regular value built upon a grounding of food within a person creating understanding and respect of food, combined with the relationships built around food, and a celebration of cultures through food. ECV thus creates a symbolic food value as much as real value.

The concept of IV was also a novel output of this research. According to Greek interviewees, IV involves food exhibiting taste, freshness, and good quality. This involved food knowledge being passed through generations, demonstrating the link between IV and ECV. The UK interviewees often associated IV with being food being defined as 'organic', demonstrating an overlap between considering IV and using PRV to possibly infer quality. Taste and knowledge were also suggested features of IV. The idea that there could be an initial intrinsic experience and a separate long-term appreciation of food was mooted as was the feeling that IV could be situational, with food from an SME or AFN having greater IV than food from supermarkets. Features common to both countries where food was respected intrinsically were taste, quality, and knowledge.

The alter-values consumers, and indeed businesses, associated with food held were mediated by various factors. Firstly, market pressures, which were generally associated with limited business growth, an ever-changing market, and competitiveness (particularly mentioned by Greek interviewees). Also mediating these values are the western lifestyles that influence working patterns and consumerist tendencies, what is fashionable and being supported by the media, and affluence. Affluence was highlighted from an unexpected angle; whilst the difficulty of affording certain foods was mentioned, it was also posited that areas of less affluence but with more alternative cultures include people where such values are strong, such as in Stroud, Gloucestershire. This argues for a disassociation between always linking engagement with alter-values with having wealth. Tourism was the last factor mediating alter-values for consumers, with Greek interviewees keen to develop alter-values of Greek food beyond the borders; the IV and CV of food held by food producers was felt to be a mechanism by which to showcase their products further.

Various crises were discussed extensively as impacting alter-values. The most topical and influential crises for the Greek interviewees were the combined effects of the financial crisis and the Covid-19 pandemic, where the balance between price and food quality was debated. There was a disconnect

between Greek politicians' and businesses' assessment, with politicians believing consumer desire for local foods rose since the financial crisis, and businesses seeing consumers being less able to afford quality local foods, with the Covid-19 pandemic and the associated restrictions on movement reducing commensality. However, it was generally agreed that consumer engagement with alter-values and food remained unchanged. UK interviewees concentrated on the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic, affecting food availability negatively through financial limitations, and positively through community spirit and support, and knowledge exchange. Also discussed were various crises which had conflicting effects on one another. The financial crisis of 2007 led Government, media and consequently consumers to seek low prices, unhelpful to SMEs and producers who were perceived as more expensive. The temporal proximity of Brexit and the pandemic creates difficulties attributing consumer changes to one or the other, but consumer support for many local SMEs increased. Government advice pushing for local SME and producer support post Brexit was at odds with the restrictions of the pandemic and the secondary financial crisis (arising from the pandemic) limiting consumer opportunities to do so. Climate concerns and the horsemeat scandal of 2014 were also cited in this study, both helping the cause of local small businesses in times of crisis. Due to all these crises, the ability to purchase food in line with developed alter-values has in some cases become more difficult, although those individuals who associate alter-values with food have not lost them, and others are gaining more interest in such values due to the crises. This suggests there are complex reactions and interactions to and with these crises across the general population.

The findings of this study suggest that the activities of food microbusiness/SMEs are mediated by various geopolitical and socio-economic factors, namely lack of support, lack of infrastructure, connection and disconnection, consumer perceptions, and financial factors. In Greece, this involves the increasing prevalence of western lifestyles versus the traditional Mediterranean lifestyle in cities like Athens, the influence of media and fashion on perceptions of food, and the impact of on-going socio-economic crises. Additionally, governance practices can hinder microbusiness/SMEs, mainly due to lack of state support for food producers, although this is mostly counteracted by community

support. In the UK, food prices were a major concern, with much food perceived as being priced too low, according to businesses. On the other side of the coin, businesses wished to correct the perception that food from microbusiness/SMEs and AFNs is more expensive than that purchased from supermarkets. Ostensibly, unless they can debunk this perception, the recent food price inflation coupled with rises in other household costs, are likely to hinder the activities of food microbusinesses/SMEs as consumers seek even cheaper supermarket foods. These factors clearly contribute to discussions around the impact(s) of inflation and the linking of food price to average wages. Local councils and government were cited as hindering microbusiness/SME development, and arguably they are also hindering consumers currently in being able to access these sources of food supply. Thus, either radical high-level changes are required to increase the national respect for food and the people that produce it, or AFNs and their microbusinesses/SMEs need to use this gap as a commercial opportunity. As is already occurring in some areas, community initiatives and AFNs can instead facilitate consumers to connect via food and obtain healthier food than they could otherwise afford in other marketing channels.

Being part of an AFN was reported to be beneficial to businesses. Benefits focussed on short food supply chains reducing prices, facilitating knowledge exchange and easy access, for consumers in Greece. Connection was beneficial in both countries, both B2B and B2C. The product offer differs from supermarkets, in Greece focussed more on food quality rather than diversity, and in both countries part of the product offer from AFNs is the relational trust which surrounds it.

7.2.2 Thematic contributions towards understanding the networks of food business cases in

Gloucestershire (Research question 1)

This question can be segregated into different elements. Firstly, what do businesses think networks involve/ what is important to them in their networks? Secondly, what influences these networks? And thirdly, what can we learn from the specific networks of these businesses?

Firstly, business interviewees felt that business networks should involve working together, sharing values, and exchanging knowledge. They highlighted three forms of connection, namely financial (financial, marketing and trade), holistic with both financial and non-financial aspects (product connection) and non-financial (emotional, social, and knowledge exchange).

Secondly, constructs influencing the relationships within their networks were trust and shared values. Trust came in multiple forms, namely personal trust, pre-determined trust or mutuality, and utility trust. Respondents described how trust was also lost or wavered within networks. Business values aligned with the alter-values classification, with farmer-producers displaying more PRVs, and distributors and EEs displaying more ECV values, both predictable foci considering the business types. Business values differed in their degree of purity from business start-up to the present day. Businesses creating their own products (both farm level and product only level) displayed strong levels of purity, sticking to their values above all other considerations, whereas distributors stated they must balance their values with other factors. Disconnections were also found and included infrastructural issues, local politics, and knowledge. Infrastructure related to basic level provisions such as transport and land rights, and then to more focussed infrastructure relating to councils, such as barriers to markets and lack of business and AFN support. These disconnections occasionally resulted in greater community and business co-operation, but such connections are severely underdeveloped. Local players contributed to the disconnection felt by businesses, who felt let down by local distributors, competitors, and customers. Knowledge disconnection arose from the level of

society's understanding of food and food production; although, it was established that knowledge, or the ability to act upon it, was not necessarily wealth related.

Thirdly, results from the 20 business interviews revealed extensive microbusiness/SME (and therefore AFN) polymorphism. Businesses were iteratively classified into four categories representing the whole food supply chain: farmer-producers, product-only producers, distributors, and education experiences. My typology aligns with similar recent work looking to classify supply chain typologies and in relation to the use of concentric diagrams, where recent studies have used them to consider physical connections, whereas mine look at emotional connections (Laginova et al., 2023). The types of connection they could have, and the types of actors they could have these connections with, were multitudinous, ranging from supply chain upstream to social media. For these businesses, when considering their types of connections generally, no pattern emerges regarding business size or type. However, when considering the strength of connections, very small businesses on average have larger networks and were more strongly emotionally and socially connected with actors within their networks (but this does not apply to knowledge exchange). The biggest difference was seen between microbusinesses and the larger businesses, who displayed opposite network characteristics with much weaker emotional and social connections within their networks. What is clear is that the networks were multiple and individual to each business, and the way businesses operated and their values was very individual. Thus, any strategies to develop policies aimed at aiding microbusinesses/SMEs cannot be put into rigid packages but must instead be tailored to the needs of each. Having one term to describe the AFNs they each operate within seemed to be too simplistic.

7.2.3 Thematic insights into the benefits and occurrence of emotio-cultural food value (Research question 2)

Businesses felt that having ECV for food is beneficial for both them and consumers. Firstly, financial benefits arose from consumer ECV for their products via repeat business, and consumers also aided their marketing via word of mouth and taking ownership of products. Additionally, they felt that business resilience improved due to consumer loyalty arising from their ECV, aiding during normal times and during crises. Some businesses felt that consumers enjoyed greater food security. Secondly, businesses cited numerous non-financial benefits via their connective community between businesses creating understanding, support and personal enrichment. They were also able to live their personal values due to having a market for their product. Additionally, they believed consumers felt valued and gained much knowledge through these network connections; consumer identity was strengthened, allowing consumers to live vicariously through businesses, and continue family traditions.

The consumer survey found mainly non-financial benefits, aligning particularly with the connective community theme (here via cooking with others, cooking with different cultures, neighbourliness, commensality and food swapping), and through growing food, resulting in benefits such as social cohesion, knowledge exchange, community resilience, and environmental benefits. Growing food particularly contributed to ECV development for group 1s (those conducting at least 70% of their food shop at supermarkets), as did commensality with friends to a lesser extent. The survey found greater numbers of respondents growing food than the national data found. Indeed, similar recent studies found great numbers of people growing food (52% of households in a study in the Czech Republic), and argued that it, as a form of food self-provisioning, should be included within sustainability and food policies as an aid to food and nutritional resilience (Smutna et al., 2024).

For group 2s (those conducting at least 70% of their food shop at microbusinesses/SMEs), food swapping especially contributed to ECV development, although all activities played a contributory

role. Other interesting findings were firstly that there was a tendency for group 1s to demonstrate more educational emotions relating to cooking with different cultures, compared to the active emotions of group 2. This indicated that group 1s would be open to learning and participating more and provides ground for further research. Next, the more group 2s experience food swapping, the more they want it to happen, suggesting benefits could become more frequently felt. Thirdly, group 1s had a greater chance of experiencing the benefits of commensality when eating with friends, whereas group 2 had a greater chance when eating with family, suggesting, along with additional evidence throughout chapter 7, differing character profiles of the groups.

The feelings cultivated by both groups when visiting food microbusiness/SMEs, combined with the greater respect for food and people which group 2s particularly demonstrate, indicated that these businesses and the networks they existed within benefitted from developing ECV which could not be gained when visiting supermarkets.

7.2.4 Thematic insights into the role of Gloucestershire food microbusinesses/SMEs in nurturing ECV and changing food cultures (Research question 3)

Although using a constructivist paradigm means one person's reality cannot necessarily be shared by anyone else (Darlaston-Jones, 2007), it is necessary for a business/market to have an understanding of consumer values and thus some insight into the realities of their consumers, and many consumers may share similarities in their realities when they purchase food from the same place. As benefits of ECV have been found, how do the microbusinesses/SMEs nurture this? This question had two parts. Firstly, it investigated the role of food microbusinesses/SMEs in nurturing ECV within their consumers, the main concepts of which are outlined in table 7.1. Secondly, it looked at how these SMEs were changing food cultures (table 7.2).

Chapters 4, 5 and 6 referred to the same 5 Cs to demonstrate how food microbusinesses/SMEs nurture ECV. These were continuance, (re-)calibration, connection, commitment and context.

Continuance was firstly found to occur through businesses providing outlets for consumers to continue already existing food values and providing products fitting within these values. Chapter 6 built on this, showing how the businesses also enabled the continuation of food memories, whilst also helping to create new ones. Chapter 6 found nuances within this concept of continuance, there being a disconnect between food memories and traditional family recipes which, one could have assumed to be connected.

Re-calibration was firstly found to redefine certain healthy eating practices whilst also providing consumers with knowledge to develop an understanding of and an opportunity to create new alter-values for food. This process began to redefine the place food has in food culture at each level. Although, consumer pre-conceptions still provided a barrier. Businesses in chapter 6 felt that they recalibrated consumer values through raising the bar for consumers in terms of product or business quality level, encompassing multiple alter-values. Survey evidence supported this, with consumers appreciating microbusiness/SME foods more and judging other foods by their offering. Further, there is evidence that when consumers held specifically an ECV for a food, price was less important, supporting business interview data. This finding may give confidence to business owners, although the evidence did suggest that such ECV was more readily held for products from producers rather than distributors, where, with the former, the story associated with the food product may be more prominent.

Table 7.1 The role of food microbusinesses/SMEs in nurturing ECV within their consumers

Role of food microbusinesses /SMEs	Relevant Chapter	Key findings
Continuance	4.5	Microbusinesses/SMEs provide outlets for consumers to continue already existing food values, by providing products aligning with these values.
	5.4.1	Microbusinesses/SMEs enable the continuation of food memories, whilst also helping create new ones.
	6.3.4	Nuances in the above were found, there being a disconnect between food memories and traditional family recipes which, one could have assumed to be connected.
(Re)Calibration	4.5	1. Microbusinesses/SMEs redefine certain healthy eating practices 2. Microbusinesses/SMEs provide consumers with knowledge to develop an understanding of and creating new alter-values for food.
	5.4.1, 5.4.2	Microbusinesses/SMEs raise the bar for consumers in terms of product or business quality level.
	6.3.4	1. Consumers appreciate microbusiness/SME foods more and judge other foods by them. 2. When consumers hold ECV for a food, price is less important, supporting interview data.
Connection	4.5	1. Connection developed relationships between businesses and their consumers, meaning food was seen less as a commodity. 2. Connective exposure to different foods and people is provided by businesses, also widening consumer neophilic curiosity.
	6.3.4	1. Connection can result in consumer attachment to a food or business 2. Consumer ownership/empowerment occurred via ownership of specific products, finding the product, and via product creation. 3. Microbusinesses/SMEs also felt they facilitate consumer attachment to food resulting in new food habits, using the product to express emotions, and being impacted when this attachment is disrupted.
	6.3.4	1. Microbusinesses/SMEs have a role in creating new food habits, providing the food environment to support neophilic curiosity and connective exposure for group 2s. 2. Consumers take ownership of a business product and in finding the product. Ownership also occurred via adapting traditional family recipes, growing food, food swapping, and having control of their time.
Commitment	4.5	1. Microbusinesses/SMEs exhibited tenacity to survive and to impart knowledge to their consumers. 2. Microbusinesses/SMEs exhibited tenacity to hold on to original values/ their purity of values 3. Consumers exhibited tenacity, sacrificing time and convenience in order to patronise microbusinesses/SMEs regularly.
	5.4.1, 5.4.2	Ownership/empowerment crosses between Connection and Commitment, specifically relating the passion and tenacity of businesses and consumers to allow them to create a new food culture and/or business.
	6.3.4	Commitment was not found in consumer survey.
Context	4.5	Microbusinesses/SMEs were able and agile, enabling them to raise awareness and change values throughout the food industry.
	5.4.1	Context exists within attachment of consumers to the business. The context of the food environment within the consumer's personal ego-culture and food values, makes them an important facilitator for consumer identity.
	6.3.3	1. Microbusinesses/SMEs create the context in which people can swap food. 2. Microbusinesses/SMEs can create the context to enable group 1s to shift their behaviours. 3. Microbusinesses/SMEs may also have a role in how the context of eating food changes group 2 emotions and ability to create new food cultures.

Connection was the third C. Chapter 5 found that connection developed relationships between businesses and their consumers, meaning food was seen less as a commodity. Connective exposure to different foods and people, was provided by businesses, also widening consumer neophilic curiosity. Chapter 6 built on this to show that connection could result in consumer attachment to a food from a business or the business itself and introduced the idea of consumer ownership/empowerment. Businesses also felt they facilitated consumer attachment to food resulting in new food habits, using the product to express emotions, consumers being impacted when this attachment was disrupted. The consumer survey provides slightly nuanced examples of these roles. For 'new food habits', their role was to provide the food environment to support neophilic curiosity and connective exposure for group 2s. No synergies for 'expressing emotions' were found. And whilst examples of attachment disruption were not mentioned, the fact that consumers become attached to the buying environment was proven by all consumers feeling connectedness when shopping at microbusinesses/SMEs. Microbusinesses/SMEs may have a greater role than they think here. Businesses believed their consumers felt ownership in three ways: having ownership of specific products, finding the product, and via product creation. Additionally, the consumer survey also found ownership occurred by taking ownership of a product and in finding the product, because, for group 2s, the product story and connection with the producer were important parts of the experience and of their identity. Product creation was arguably found via consumers finding ownership when adapting traditional family recipes. Other mechanisms of ownership found in the survey were growing food, food swapping, and having control of their time.

Commitment was the fourth C. Chapter 5 found this concept related to tenacity of businesses to survive and to impart knowledge to their consumers and is particularly required when using media platforms when attempting to debate with consumers with differing views. It also related to the purity shown by some businesses to hold on to their original values. Consumers were also found to be tenacious, sacrificing time and convenience in order to patronise microbusinesses/SMEs

regularly. Chapter 6 built on Commitment to include another instance of ownership/empowerment which crosses between Connection and Commitment, specifically the passion and tenacity of businesses and consumers to allow them to create a new food ECV and/or value-driven business. Commitment was not found to be a factor of importance in the consumer survey.

Context was the final identified C and firstly related to the agility and ability of microbusinesses/SMEs to raise awareness and be a catalyst for long-term change in values throughout the food industry. Chapter 6 found context to exist within attachment of consumers to the business. The context of the food environment within the consumer's personal ego-culture and food values, made them an important facilitator of consumer identity. In chapter 7, microbusiness/SMEs create the context in which people could swap food and they may also created the context to enable group 1s to shift their behaviours. They may also have a role in how the context of eating food changes group 2's emotions and ability to create new food-related ECV. Whilst the consumers from the survey may not be the consumers patronising the interviewed businesses, and thus no definite conclusions can be drawn, business perceptions were fairly much in line with consumer behaviours, particularly relating to group 2s. Their nurturing of alter-values, as businesses, for consumers appeared strong and to facilitate what group 2 shoppers desired when patronising a microbusiness/SME. There was a slight disconnect within knowledge exchange as businesses felt consumers still required educating, although it wasn't clear if it was their consumers they referred to or consumers more generally, whereas consumers in the survey picked 'learning' relatively rarely as a response. Group 2s liked the story and connection with the producer and there was an aspect of peer-to-peer learning to this as they liked recounting the story to others, and this became part of their identity to be able to talk about what and who they supported.

In general, food microbusiness/SME's potential to cultivate ECV in consumers was greater for those consumers who predominantly shopped at microbusinesses. There was a link between those shopping predominantly at microbusinesses/SMEs and their displaying deeper levels of ECV and

greater connective food activities with others. Whilst this research cannot prove that the microbusiness/SME caused these characteristics, it is probable that they nurtured or enhanced them. Therefore, they would have a role in providing opportunities associated with neophilic curiosity and connective exposure (such as providing connection or community to meet or cook with others) where they can be enacted to ensure their continuation. However, food microbusinesses/SMEs do have a role in providing the experience for both sets of shoppers which results in the favourable emotions of both groups when shopping there. Microbusinesses/SMEs are therefore a catalyst for certain emotions not stated in the study as being felt in supermarkets. Different psychological profiles existing between shopper groups was suggested throughout chapter 7. This finding could be useful for microbusinesses/SMEs who might be able to provide different shopping experiences for different shopper types, those looking for a longer experience, and those without much time, where convenience was important.

The second part of this question related to microbusiness/SME role in changing food culture, the key themes of which are summarised in table 7.2.

Table 7.2 Role of food microbusinesses/SMEs in changing food culture

Role in changing food culture	Where answered	Key findings
Changing business and network values	Chapter 6	1.Involving accreditations 2.Involving value alignment
Changing eating behaviours of consumers	Chapter 6	1.Via changing food and food related activity preferences 2.Via improving health 3.Via supporting neophilia
Ownership/empowerment by consumers	Chapter 6	Via providing consumers with knowledge
	Chapter 7	Impossible to tell

Food microbusinesses/SMEs also change food culture, and this was investigated in chapters 5 and 6. Businesses suggested this occurred by changing business and network values (involving accreditations and value alignment), changing eating behaviours of consumers (via changing food and food-related activity preferences, improving health, supporting neophilia), and ownership/empowerment by consumers (via providing consumers with knowledge). From a consumer perspective, it is impossible to tell whether microbusinesses/SMEs change the food culture for their consumers, the survey being only one snapshot of time. During the research, it was suggested that food culture occurred at various loci: national, community/local, family, and ego/personal.

7.2.5 Novel outputs from this study:

Multiple outputs arose from this PhD research, including new typologies and concepts. Table 7.3 brings together the novel outputs and their importance. Table 7.4 highlights other more general findings of the study and their importance to existing knowledge.

Table 7.3 Novel outputs from PhD study

Novel output	Importance
Characterising non-financial values as alter-values	Updated categorisation of non-financial values associated with food in the context of AFNs.
Positioning that food culture is different to the cultural value of food	They can exist together but are not mutually dependent.
Identifying the role of purity of values (the degree of faithfulness in maintaining original business values)	The concept of sticking to original business values and how some businesses find this easier than others.
Connective exposure – exposure provided by AFNs is an antecedent of consumer connections	Highlighting a type of connection likely to only be found in SMEs, via KE and provenance et cetera, beyond what is found on a packet. It contrasts to the lack of connective exposure to anything in supermarkets (which display a disconnective exposure instead, perhaps).

Table 7.4 General findings of study

General findings	Importance
There are forms of cultural value (shared ideals within a group) focused on the individual and/or the community.	Individual centric cultural value relates to an in the moment but also long-term consumption value, for an individual. Community centric cultural value relates to a longer-term value which the consumer experiences which is associated with a form of community identity.
Differing foci of food culture	Food culture exists at 4 main levels: ego-culture, family, community, and national.
New typology of food microbusiness/SME characteristics and actor characterisation	Food SME is a very wide-ranging term. These categorise according to the business' part in the food supply chain.
New typology of connections and their characteristics	For ease of identifying types of connection businesses have within their networks
Network requirements – characteristics described by microbusinesses/SMEs required for a good network	Businesses described that networks should involve working together, shared values and knowledge exchange, and network involvement, and are often affected by business size and type.
Neophilic curiosity – degree of openness to new experiences, and new foods.	Extension of neophilia concept

This is the first research of its kind to be so multi-faceted and look at a range of experiences with food and who those experiences are with including informal cooking and eating with different cultures. Future research can build on the inter-cultural findings to investigate food activities as a mechanism for community resilience and social cohesion. The research is also useful to aid in building profiles of people with certain characteristics to inform future research in this area.

7.3 Policy implications

During both interview stages, businesses imparted their ideas for how their businesses and networks could be aided. These centred around policy and infrastructure changes at national government and local council levels, and facilitation of inter-business networking. This section will outline some policy changes and governance adaptation required to support food microbusinesses/SMEs in the UK.

7.3.1 Councils have much scope to improve their support of food microbusinesses/SMEs.

Interviewees in both stages described the shortfalls of council behaviour, how often they do not practice what they preach, and how much more council support was required. This provides much scope for policy and attitude changes.

Policy change 1- from profit to community focus

Changes here relate to both council and privately owned buildings.

Many council-owned buildings are rented out as accommodation, with a focus on profit. The idea of having an area of a council owned building for use by food start-ups, thereby facilitating them to get off the ground and create a new food hub, would benefit both the businesses and the council, something UKB3 believes would cement the area as a destination food hub. Once start-ups have a support network and customer base, they can be helped to find their own premises; on-going support if required facilitates growth, and they begin to contribute to the local economy; meanwhile

new start-ups can replace them in the food hub. This keeps the hub dynamic and exciting, whilst also empowering people to begin their own businesses.

The power of landlords was also a problem for food businesses. In March 2024, UKB3, a charity-business, was told by their landlord to vacate the property within the coming months, which will be sold to make way for warehousing. Thus, the social enterprises, cooked meals for those who cannot afford them, 53 jobs, and the hub of the community are at risk of being lost. Perhaps, extra council support should be given to such charity-businesses to ensure their security against landlords upon sale of such buildings, or perhaps they could provide secure rental opportunities specific to charity-businesses which greatly benefit the local community.

What would also be beneficial to local food businesses is for councils to give more holistic thought, or less financially focussed thought, to allowing new outlets for big supermarkets where areas are already saturated with food stores. Either councils must take a stand and not agree to additional supermarkets or must place upon supermarkets a condition that they support or sponsor local food networks.

Policy change 2- infrastructure improvements generally and more specifically Infrastructure at basic levels requires new strategies.

Firstly, less affluent and less socially mobile areas such as the Forest of Dean need better transport links to help businesses and consumers access one another.

Next, more specific forms of help are required to improve to ability of locals to begin local and relevant food businesses, aiding their job prospects. For instance, the suggestion of B4 of a council funded programme enabling foresters to set up their own businesses by reducing barriers and providing incentives. Expansion of and better access to groups like the Growth Hub would aid this; especially considering how important the story is to consumers, marketing is key for these businesses. Additionally, better still, foresters should be supported to use the traditional heritage of the area. For instance, this would involve not only a business support scheme but also local

foresters having a licence to sustainably hunt wild boar, rather than the Forestry Commission having full rights.

Since the interviews, the Jones Food Company has opened the world's largest vertical farm in Lydney, Gloucestershire (Company, 2021). Whilst it is set to be highly efficient and an example of new commercially successful agriculture, following much investment and infrastructure, is it relevant to area of the Forest of Dean? The Forestry Commission's control over wild boar commercial opportunities is an example of the institutionalisation of food, and arguably this vertical farm is another. The businesses interviewed wished to break this institutionalisation and instead for policy to focus on the support of more appropriate schemes which champion the area and its people. What it is to be a forester is very emotionally and culturally centred and part of their identity, an identity which could swiftly be eroded and marginalised.

Improving experiences of producers selling at markets is another required local policy change. Many academics and businesses in both interview stages had either witnessed or experienced difficulties with selling at markets. At the most basic level, those councillors assigned to oversee market organisation or set up ought to be chosen carefully to ensure their activities represent the values of the producers within the market. A very simple change here, one business owner stated, would be for the said person to practice what they preach and buy their food from the market rather than visibly be patronising a supermarket. Next, changes are required to better enable producers to more easily sell their produce at markets, either by allowing them to share a stall with another producer, to sell products of more than one producer at one stall, and/or to be more flexible and understanding with set up times.

Education may be seen as an infrastructural element and was frequently discussed throughout the interviews as a barrier for businesses and AFNs. B6 believed the education gap was partly being solved by younger generations who are much more interested than previous generations in food, food businesses, and the wider value a business brings to a community, and were looking for

more than merely a transactional relationship with who they buy food from. Additionally, schemes like the Soil Association's Food for Life programme are beneficial and extra government funding for such schemes would aid their spread. Equally, to engage consumers with food businesses and improve their connective exposure, more supported events at businesses or council run events involving businesses would be beneficial.

Policy change 3- councils to be given discretion

Councils ought to be given an element of discretion when implementing the law, in particular relating to micro-agriculture, whereby allowing small farmers such as B16 to build a dwelling on their land would help them considerably to build their business. It was suggested in the responses that farmers were better placed than lawmakers to know when it was essential to be on the land or not, and additionally that the idea of having to be an 'essential' reason for house building was outdated. Issues with land can be witnessed throughout the country, with many young farmers crowdfunding or grouping together to be able to farm, due to expensive land prices. Whilst there are Government plans to reduce bureaucracy surrounding permitted development rights (Prior & Fisher, 2024), the new ease of diversification appears to focus on commercial opportunities and is perhaps unlikely to stretch to dwellings for new start-up micro-farms.

7.3.2 Facilitate networking.

What was clear from both stages of interviews was the wish of those involved in AFNs and food microbusinesses/SMEs in particular to become connected. Businesses suggested two forms of external facilitation to support better connection and networking.

Firstly, through an independent facilitator to provide existing businesses with specific help, such as helping with funding or connecting businesses together. An existing example is The Growth Hub, which has successfully helped some of the interviewees.

Secondly, connection also needs to happen between established businesses. The time-consuming nature of networking provided a barrier for businesses to connect, and as such a special networking group was suggested. How a new body would operate to achieve this is a more difficult question. Whether they would be part of the council, although considering the council's perceived hindrance, perhaps not. Perhaps they should be an independent person, but this raises the question of how to fund such a role. The 'We are farming minds' scheme enables farmers to meet and walk together, aiding mental health. But connecting businesses throughout the chain would aid the formation of relational trust and support at the different levels.

In the case of farmers' markets, the solution appears simple: the FRA needs to rebalance networking events to encompass markets, or if they do not want to shift focus away from farm shops, perhaps a new branch of events is required for connecting markets specifically, something which markets found useful before but no longer exists.

7.4 Future research

Having updated typologies and introduced various new concepts throughout this thesis, table 7.5 outlines some ideas for further research relating to different findings of this PhD.

Table 7.5 Ideas for future research grouped by subject matter

Future research suggestions relating to business networks arising from this research.	1. Investigate how best to connect producers/businesses and ascertain whether the benefits can be measured. What difference would it make to connect them?
	2. Extend the research into connections between business types to see if support can be directed at specific connections. For instance, if EEs have more strong social connections than farmer-producers, what can be done to increase those of farmer-producers?
	3. Investigate the idea of business purism further. Why do some businesses stick to their values more than others? Those with high levels of purism appear to have very loyal followings. Perhaps those with less purism felt their followings were not loyal enough to stick to their values? Or perhaps their values did not strike such a chord with consumers.
	4. Investigate the local independent business level of food culture shunning institutional expressions of food superiority, to compare with local but institutional form of food culture.
	1. How can alter-values like ECV and IV be cultivated?

Future research suggestions relating to alter-values	2. Investigate further the merits and use of ECV. Can businesses use it to their advantage? Or can it be used to bring people together?
Future research suggestions relating to shopper groups	1. Is there a different psychological profile between the shopper groups? For instance, why do majority microbusiness shoppers have more time for food-related activities?
	2. Are these psychological characteristics within the consumer before shopping at a microbusiness/SME or can they be learnt/ cultivated after experiencing a microbusiness/SME?
	2. Investigate further the cooking and commensality with different cultures in a domestic setting. Can consumers exhibiting such traits benefit society/ what can we learn from them? Does this aid community resilience?
	4. If more attention was placed on trying to recreate memories for supermarket shoppers, would more of them buy more of their food shop from microbusinesses/SMEs?

7.5 Final remarks

The research here found the situation within Gloucestershire to be less bleak than the situation quoted by Carolyn Steel in chapter 2, reproduced below:

“Buying and selling food used to be a social activity, now its anonymous. We used to cook, now we just add water. Instead of trusting it, we fear it, and instead of valuing it, we throw it away”. (Steel, 2009)

Whilst the current model of supermarkets as suggested by the findings in this thesis and the quote above, have driven out respect for food, created disconnection and anonymity, reduced trust, and reduced food to a financial commodity, this research instead found evidence of the impacts and role of food microbusinesses/SMEs in changing this narrative and these relationships. Social activity between food businesses and other food businesses, food businesses and consumers, and between consumers was explored showing relational trust and connection. Lastly, the cases demonstrated businesses and consumers valuing food non-financially, it being part of their food cultures and identities. Thus, the findings of this study are more in line with Crowther’s thinking in chapter 3 (2018, p. xviii). Whilst much work is still required to examine these preferences and behaviours with more people, food microbusinesses/SMEs have been found in this study to enrich

the lives of consumers and facilitate ECV development, whilst also having a role in reducing institutional control over businesses.

To conclude, this research has resulted in four main new findings. Firstly, it has updated typologies relating to non-financial values of food through the alter-values typology. It has also established new typologies for connections, and business and network actor types which will be useful for future research. Secondly, within the alter-values, the focus on ECV has found that when individuals hold ECV for food, there are benefits for businesses and consumers, but that ECV cannot exist without a respect for food and food culture. Thirdly, this research has established that respect for food is not a primary emotion for consumers when shopping in supermarkets. Additionally, for various reasons, supermarkets are not locations where connective exposure with food and people is strong. As shown herein, without a combination of connective exposure and neophilic curiosity, consumers are unlikely to engage with a food or food experience, making them less likely to respect food in the supermarket setting. Thus, fourthly, and perhaps most importantly, this research has discovered that microbusinesses/SMEs within AFNs often provide these components, facilitating consumer engagement with food; as such, respect for food was a primary emotion associated with these businesses, and ergo their consumers have been associated with greater food ECV.

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8.0 Appendices

8.1 Supporting material for chapter 4

8.1.1 Forms

Consent form

CONSENT FORM

Study title: 'The role of microbusinesses and SMEs within alternative food networks (AFNs) in connecting people with and facilitating them to revalue food'.

Researcher name: Sophia Lingham

Please initial the box(es) if you agree with the statement(s):

I have read and understood the information sheet and have had the opportunity to ask questions about the study.	
I agree to take part in this research project and agree for my data to be used for the purpose of this study.	
I understand my participation is voluntary and I may withdraw (at any time) for any reason without my participation rights being affected.	
I understand that taking part in the study involves audio and/or video recording which will be transcribed and then destroyed for the purposes set out in the participation information sheet.	
I understand that should I withdraw from the study then the information collected through the discussions only up to this point may still be used for the purposes of achieving the objectives of the study.	

Name of participant (print name).....

Signature of participant.....

Date.....

Name of researcher (print name).....

Signature of researcher

Date.....

Optional - please only initial the box(es) you wish to agree to:

I agree that I may be quoted directly in reports of the research but that I will not be directly identified (e.g. that my name will not be used).	
I agree that I will be quoted directly in reports of the research and that my name will be used.	

Participant Information Sheet

PhD Study Title: 'The role of microbusinesses and SMEs within alternative food networks (AFNs) in connecting people with and facilitating them to revalue food'.

Researcher: Sophia Lingham, PhD candidate

University: Royal Agricultural University

You are being invited to take part in the above research study. To help you decide whether you would like to take part or not, it is important that you understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please read the information below carefully and ask questions if anything is not clear or you would like more information before you decide to take part in this research. You may like to discuss it with others, but it is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you are happy to participate you will be asked to sign a consent form.

What is the research about?

As part of the wider study defined above, I am undertaking research into the social values that consumers using alternative food networks (AFNs) assign to food, and the importance they place on food within communities. Within this, I am studying the part that microbusinesses and SMEs play in changing these social values of food. These preliminary informal interviews are part of a scoping exercise, and I would welcome your contribution to the research. The purpose of these interviews/questions is to sense test the general understanding of academics and business owners about the alternative food network system in Southern England and Greece and discuss ideas around non-financial value of food.

Why have I been asked to participate?

You have been asked to participate because you are an academic and/or food business owner with knowledge of or experience in alternative food networks. Your insights, feelings and experience are greatly valued when considering how the non-financial value of food is changing.

What will happen to me if I take part?

You will take part in a one-to-one interview where the discussion will be recorded and used to further our research and form some of the material for our publications. Direct quotes may be used and attributed to you but only if you consent.

Are there any risks involved?

There are no risks involved.

What data will be collected?

If you agree to take part in an informal interview, the following data will be collected: your name, your position/job title and organisation/business name, your email address.

Will my participation be confidential?

When you sign up to take part in the research, your participation will be kept confidential. Only members of the research team may be given access to data. All these people have a duty to keep your information, as a research participant, strictly confidential.

Do I have to take part?

No, it is entirely up to you to decide whether or not you wish to take part. If you decide you want to take part, you will need to sign a consent form to show you have agreed to take part.

What happens if I change my mind?

You have the right to change your mind and withdraw at any time without giving a reason and without your participant rights being affected. If you wish to withdraw, your participation will be kept completely confidential. If you withdraw from the study, we will keep the information about you that we have already obtained for the purposes of achieving the objectives of the study only.

If you wish to be withdrawn, then please email sophia.ingham@student.rau.ac.uk

If you have any concerns about any aspect of this study, please speak to Sophia who will do her best to answer your questions.

Thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet and considering taking part in our research.

8.1.2 Interview questions UK

Academics

1. What do you consider to be AFNs in the UK and in Gloucestershire?
2. What do you understand by the term 'cultural value of food'? How strong [intense] is the [attitude, perception of] cultural value of food in the UK and particularly in Gloucestershire?
3. The values-based approach to food supply recalibrates the idea of value beyond the purely economic. It focuses on 'the most important goods such as families, homes, communities, knowledge, and art. It places economic processes in their cultural context.' (Klamer, 2017). Do you feel the AFNs you have described place family/community and the food they eat in a different cultural context? Do AFNs allow for the repositioning of food and consumers to allow them to become less individualistic?
4. If 'AFNs promote the renegotiation of cultural norms' (Tzekou Irini-Erifi P., 2020), what part do food SMEs play in this renegotiation in Gloucestershire? What aspects of these cultural norms are being renegotiated and what are they transitioning to? Are SMEs an active, or passive actor in this process?
5. Has the way you view food changed since:
 - the pandemic?
 - Brexit?
 - the financial crisis?Do you see evidence of community being built since the Covid-19 pandemic using food as a catalyst? What about your friends' circle/family? Have their views changed? Communities have come together more for mutual support... Are we redefining the value of food? Is food having different importance in peoples' lives now?
6. Do you think about food differently when you eat at home vs when you eat out? Do you look for different attributes/do you value different things about it?
7. The Long Table is a Community Interest Company, which means it is a mix of being a charity and a profit-making company. By 'putting food at the centre of the community', they aim to ensure everyone has 'access to great food and people to eat it with' (food equality) (The Long Table, 2020), thereby nurturing conviviality and creating a social value to food. Is this a model which could be used in other areas and is this something we should be aspiring to?
8. Food system resilience is an important topic currently. What part do the SMEs and microbusinesses within AFNs play in this resilience?
9. Are short food supply chains (SFSCs), local food, the 100-mile diet, veganism etc just fads that change with time? Do you think any of these create lasting change in values associated with the food, its production or supply?
10. What changes would you like to see in local food systems? (Do we need an alternative value currency? [e.g. Totnes pound, Lewes pound], do we need to appreciate authenticity rather

than food fashions fads? More AFN connection? More independent businesses? Community cohesion?)

11. Do you see evidence of greater intrinsic value and / or greater/changing cultural value being assigned to food in the UK? In Gloucestershire? Is this due to AFNs or other factors?
12. In Mediterranean countries, the social bonding, conviviality and act of sharing food together and/or cooking together forms part of the food culture and is enshrined in their Mediterranean Diet triangle (produced below). Do you feel the sharing of food together and multi-generational cooking is important? Does food bring people together in the same way in the UK?

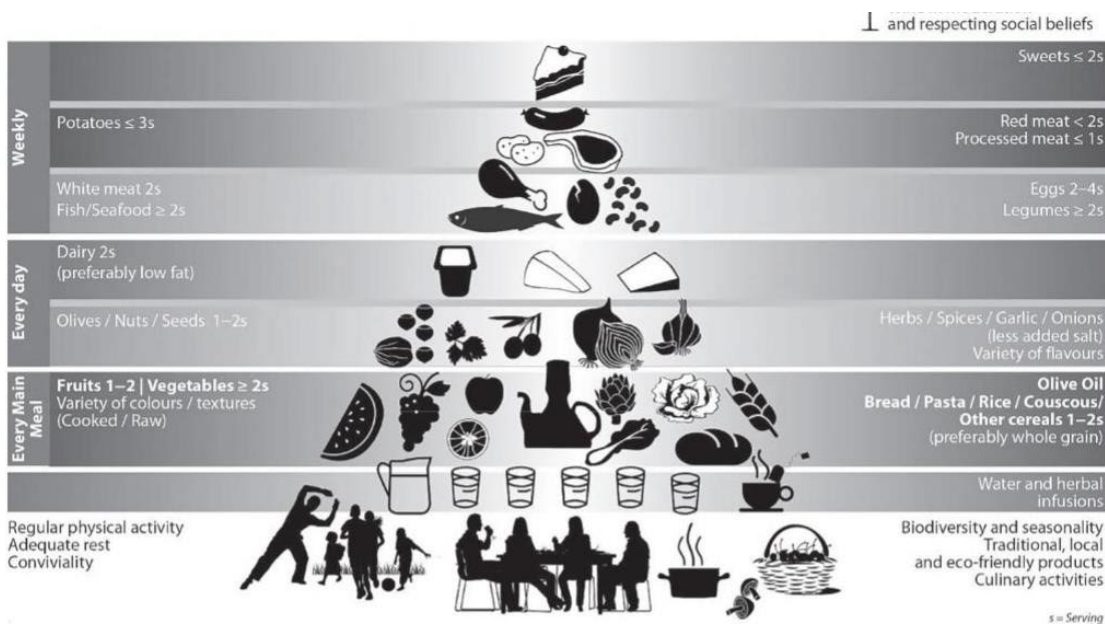


FIG. 1 The new Mediterranean diet pyramid: from an international consensus coordinated by the Mediterranean Diet Foundation. English version.²⁹ (Adapted from Bach-Faig A, Berry EM, Lairon D, Reguant J, Trichopoulos A, Dernini S, Medina FX, Battino M, Belahsen R, Miranda G, Serra-Majem L, Mediterranean Diet Foundation Expert Group. Mediterranean diet pyramid today. Science and cultural updates. *Public Health Nutr.* 2011;14:2274–84.)

(Serra- Majem

& Medina, 2020, p.19).

13. Agri-food tourism is becoming a catchphrase within academic and non-academic literature. Of how much importance do you think food is for the tourists visiting Gloucestershire and to the identity of Gloucestershire as a whole? Why?
14. Is there anything else you feel is important to discuss in this conversation?

Businesses

1. Describe your business... what values do you feel are important within this business?
2. Who are your main consumer demographics? (affluence, age, ethnicity, gender)? What do consumers value about your business/product, do you think?
3. Is trust or knowledge more important in informing the behaviour of your consumers, would you say?
4. What is your main focus/ secondary foci as a food business? (community development, profit gain, sustainability etc). Following from this, what do you perceive as your role within the community? (food provision for the affluent, food provision for all income levels, community creation, education, job creator, enhancer of food security etc)

5. Who is involved in your food network? (suppliers, consumers, different producers, charities etc). What networks are you involved with? Have you been involved in creating a new network?
6. How important is it for you to be part of an alternative food network? Does it matter to you how consumers reach your products?
7. What do you understand by the term 'cultural value of food'? And how strong is the cultural value of food associated with your business and more generally in Gloucestershire?
8. In Mediterranean countries, the social bonding, conviviality and act of sharing food together and/or cooking together forms part of the food culture and is enshrined in their Mediterranean Diet triangle, shown below. Do you feel the sharing of food together and multi-generational cooking is important? Does food bring people together in the same way in the UK?



FIG. 1 The new Mediterranean diet pyramid: from an international consensus coordinated by the Mediterranean Diet Foundation. English version.²⁹ (Adapted from Bach-Faig A, Berry EM, Lairon D, Reguant J, Trichopoulou A, Dernini S, Medina FX, Battino M, Belahsen R, Miranda G, Serra-Majem L, Mediterranean Diet Foundation Expert Group. Mediterranean diet pyramid today. Science and cultural updates. *Public Health Nutr*. 2011;14:2274-84.)

(Serra- Majem

& Medina, 2020, p.19). 9. Has the way you view food changed since:

- the pandemic?
- Brexit?
- the financial crisis?

Do you see evidence of community being built since the Covid-19 pandemic using food as a catalyst? What about your friends circle/family- have their views changed? (Communities have come together more for mutual support... Are we redefining the value of food? Is food having different importance in peoples' lives now?)

10. Do you think about food differently when you eat at home vs when you eat out? (Do you look for different attributes/do you value different things about it?)

11. How influential are food microbusinesses and SMEs in AFNs in changing the value of food/way people view food for consumers (social, environmental etc value) and in social/cultural changes/lifestyles?
12. What changes would you like to see in local/alternative food systems? (Do we need an alternative value currency? Appreciate authenticity rather than fads? More AFN connection? More independent businesses? Community cohesion?)
13. Food system resilience is an important topic currently. What part do the SMEs and microbusinesses within AFNs play in this resilience?
14. Agri-food tourism is becoming a catchphrase in food policy planning, regional development, and within academic and non-academic literature. Of how much importance is food tourism to your business? How important is it to the identity of Gloucestershire as a whole? Why?
15. Is there anything else you feel is important to discuss in this conversation?

8.1.3 Interview questions Greece

Academics

1. What do you consider "Alternative Agricultural Networks" (EATD) in Greece and more specifically in Fthiotida / Evritania? (By way of illustration, EATDs are considered alternative ways of accessing food that do not involve trivial methods such as large supermarket chains)
2. What would you consider the term "cultural / social value of food"? How strong do you think the perception of the cultural / social value of food is in Greece and more specifically in Fthiotida / Evritania?
3. Do you think that the AFNs you mentioned above reposition the concepts of family / community and the food they consume in a different cultural / social context? Do you think that EFSA ** helps to redefine the concept of "food" and to motivate consumers to avoid individualistic behaviours?
4. If we consider that "EATDs promote the renegotiation of cultural habits" (Tzekou Irini-Erifili, 2020), what role do you think the Agro-food media play in this "renegotiation" in Fthiotida / Evritania? What aspects of these cultural habits are being redefined and in which direction are they being transformed? Are the Agricultural Media an active, or passive "player" in this process?
5. Has the way you perceive food changed after:
 - The financial crisis?
 - The pandemic?Do you notice samples / indications of stronger collectivity forming after the appearance of the above crises? Do you think we are redefining the non-monetary value of food? Does food have a different importance in people's lives?
6. Do you approach food differently, between eating "at home" and eating "outside"? Are you looking for different characteristics, and / or do you value / evaluate different things?
7. The adaptability of the agricultural system is a major issue today. What role do you think SMEs, as part of the EFSA, play in shaping this adaptability?
8. Do you think that the "Short Food Supply Chains", the "No Intermediaries" movements, the "local" foods, the "vegan" movement, etc., are "fashions" that disappear from time to time? Do you think that any of the above can bring about permanent changes in the importance with which people perceive food, but also its production and distribution?
9. Do you think changes are needed in local farming systems? Do we need to further appreciate authenticity / purity, instead of "dietary fashions"? Further support for EADs? More independent media?
10. Do you notice signs of change / improvement of the inherent / essential value and / or cultural value of food in Greece? Specifically in Fthiotida / Evritania? Is this because of EADs or other factors?

Businesses

1. How would you describe your business? What values (non-monetary) do you consider important as part of your business?
2. What do you consider to be the demographic distribution of your consumers (age, nationality, gender, economic status)? What do you think your consumers value most about your business / production / products?
3. Do you think that building trust or transparency / knowledge is more important for consumer behaviour?
4. What are the main goals / functions of your business (local community development, profitability, sustainability, or other?) In addition, who do you consider to be your role in society (providing food for the well-off, providing food for all financial levels, support of local communities, education, employment, promotion of food security, or others;)
5. What does your agro-food network consist of? (suppliers, distributors, stores, cooperatives, consumers, other producers, charities, or others?) What networks / supply chains do you work with? Have you been involved in creating new networks / supply chains?
6. How important do you consider your participation in Alternative Agrotrophic Networks (EAD)? Does the way consumers access your products matter to you?
7. What would you consider the term "cultural / social value of food"? How strong do you think the perception of the cultural / social value of food is in Greece and more specifically in Fthiotida / Evritania?
8. In Mediterranean countries, social life, the concept of coexistence, the tradition of shared food consumption and / or joint preparation / cooking between people, are a key feature of food culture and are reflected in the well-known "Mediterranean Diet Triangle". Do you think that social contact through the joint consumption of food and the joint preparation / cooking of food by different age groups / generations, is of major importance? Do you think that food plays the same social role by bringing people closer to other countries outside Greece?
9. Has the way you perceive food changed after:
 - The financial crisis?
 - The pandemic?Do you notice samples / indications of stronger collectivity forming after the appearance of the above crises? Do you think we are redefining the non-monetary value of food? Does food have a different importance in people's lives?
10. Do you approach food differently, between eating "at home" and eating "outside"? Are you looking for different characteristics, and / or do you value / evaluate different things?
11. The adaptability of the agricultural system is a major issue today. What role do you think SMEs, as part of the EFSA, play in shaping this adaptability?
12. What do you think is the influence of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) as part of the FDA in the way consumers value food and the non-monetary values it attaches to it (social, environmental, etc.), as well as the relative influence on social / cultural changes and the general way of life?

13. Do you think changes are needed in local farming systems? Do we need to further appreciate authenticity / purity, instead of "dietary fashions"? Further support for EADs? More independent media?
14. How important do you think the food and the relevant local traditions of Central Greece and specifically of Fthiotida / Evritania are for tourism (domestic and foreign)? How important is Agrotourism in your business?
15. Would you like to add something else that you consider important in this interview / discussion?

8.1.4 Codebooks

Codebook for academic interviews analysis

Term	Term	Term
Agri-tourism	Demographics	Intrinsic value
AFNs and SME links	Education -Behaviour and value change -Fashions -Interest -Perception	Other value manifestations - Beyond the product and relationships -PRV -SRV
Authenticity and quality -Pride or enthusiasm of producer	Time	Producer point of view
Community	ECV -Connection and relationships -Ethnicity -Identity -Relationship with food	Resilience -Infrastructure -Seasonality
Conviviality	Growth and change -Disempowerment -Scale	Supermarket impacts
Crises impacts	Interviewee relationship with food	

Codebook for business interviews analysis

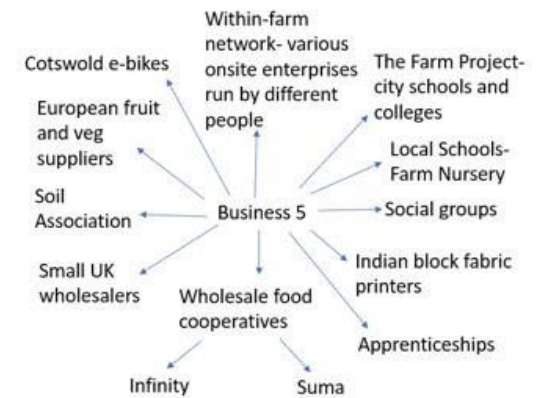
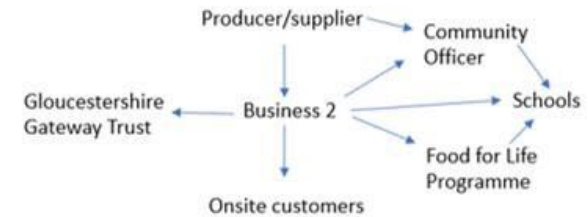
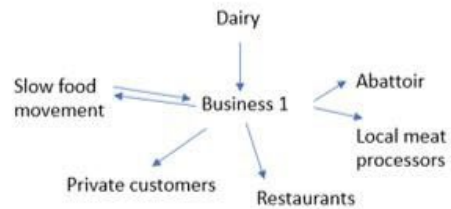
Term	Term	Term
AFN genesis	Consumer value -Altruism -Community -Education -Feel -Price -Quality -Reliability -Trust	Evidence of community
Agrifood tourism		
Benefits -Adaptability -Community development -Diversification of demographics -Feel -Inclusivity Needs met		

Business Values -Authenticity -Circular farming -Community enhancement -Connection -Giving purpose -Place -Promoting small businesses -Quality -Roots and integrity -Sustainability -Trust	Consumers -In-person regular -Membership -Private and domestic -Public institutions -Restaurants -Tourists	Focus -Charity and advice -Climate change -Community provision -Education -Employment experience -Franchise -Links -Profit -Resilience -Responsible product creation -Supporting local farmers -What is on offer -Year-round provision
Business Values -Authenticity -Circular farming -Community enhancement -Connection -Giving purpose -Place -Promoting small businesses -Quality -Roots and integrity -Sustainability -Trust	Crises impacts	
	Cultural value	Food at home vs out -Brand -Choice -Past -Subconscious -Taste
Changing systems -Authenticity	Customer analysis	Importance of SMEs

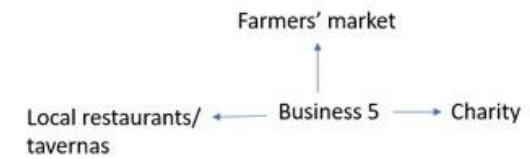
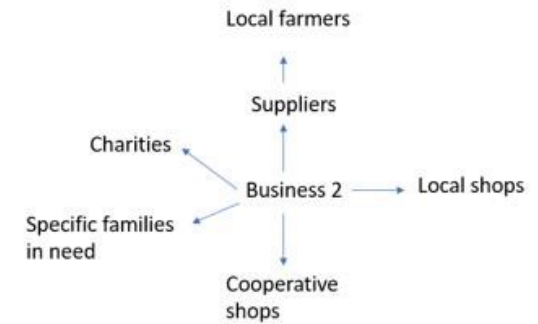
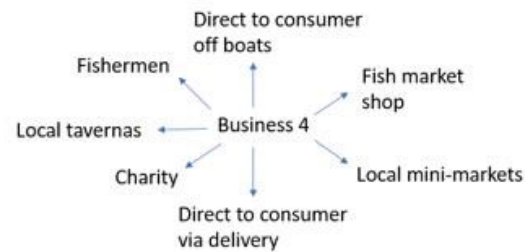
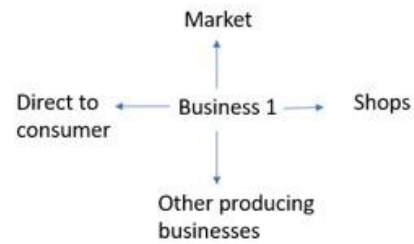
-Capitalism -Connection -Currency -Education -Emphasis -Environment -Exposure -Policy and funding -Technology -Tourism	Disadvantages -Knowledge -Perception -Scale -Support -Threats	Mediterranean conviviality
	Trust vs knowledge	System resilience -Adaptability
		Value for producers

8.1.5 Business network spider diagrams

UK



Greece



8.2 Supporting material for chapter 5

8.2.1 Forms

Consent form



CONSENT FORM

Title of Project: The role of food microbusinesses and SMEs in alternative food networks (AFNs) in connecting people with and facilitating them to revalue food

Name of person collecting data: Sophia Lingham

Name of RAU Researcher: Sophia Lingham

Please initial the box(es) if you agree with the statement(s):

I have read and understood the information sheet and have had the opportunity to ask questions about the study.	
I agree to take part in this research project and agree for my data to be used for the purpose of this study.	
I understand my participation is voluntary and I may withdraw (at any time) for any reason without my participation rights being affected.	
I understand that taking part in the study involves audio and/or video recording which will be transcribed and then destroyed for the purposes set out in the participation information sheet.	
I understand that should I withdraw from the study then the information collected through the discussions only up to this point may still be used for the purposes of achieving the objectives of the study.	

Name of participant (print name).....

Signature of participant.....

Date.....

Name of researcher (print name).....

Signature of researcher

Date.....

Optional - please only initial the box(es) you wish to agree to:

I agree that I may be quoted directly in reports of the research but that I will not be directly identified (e.g. that my name will not be used).	
I agree that I will be quoted directly in reports of the research and that my name will be used.	

Participant Information Sheet

PhD Study Title: 'The role of microbusinesses and SMEs within alternative food networks (AFNs) in connecting people with and facilitating them to revalue food'.

Researcher: Sophia Lingham, PhD candidate

University: Royal Agricultural University

You are being invited to take part in the above research study. To help you decide whether you would like to take part or not, it is important that you understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please read the information below carefully and ask questions if anything is not clear or you would like more information before you decide to take part in this research. You may like to discuss it with others, but it is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you are happy to participate you will be asked to sign a consent form.

What is the research about?

As part of the wider study defined above, I am undertaking interviews with food and drink businesses within alternative food networks (AFNs) to study their role in changing people's social values of food. The aim is to firstly, understand the connections business have with each other and with their consumers, including the type and strength of such connections; secondly, I wish to gain an understanding of business values and whether these are in line with consumer values; and thirdly, I wish to introduce and discuss an idea to increase the emotio-cultural importance of food to businesses and consumers. I would very much welcome your contribution to the research.

Why have I been asked to participate?

You have been asked to participate because you are a food or drinks business owner with knowledge of or experience in alternative food networks. Your insights, feelings and experience are greatly valued when considering how the non-financial value of food is changing.

What will happen to me if I take part?

You will take part in a one-to-one interview where the discussion will be recorded and used to further our research and form some of the material for our publications. Direct quotes may be used and attributed to you but only if you consent.

Are there any risks involved?

There are no risks involved.

What data will be collected?

If you agree to take part in an informal interview, the following data will be collected: your name, your position/job title and organisation/business name, your email address.

Will my participation be confidential?

When you sign up to take part in the research, your participation will be kept confidential. Only members of the research team may be given access to data. All these people have a duty to keep your information, as a research participant, strictly confidential.

Do I have to take part?

No, it is entirely up to you to decide whether or not you wish to take part. If you decide you want to take part, you will need to sign a consent form to show you have agreed to take part.

What happens if I change my mind?

You have the right to change your mind and withdraw at any time without giving a reason and without your participant rights being affected. If you wish to withdraw, your participation will be kept completely confidential. If

you withdraw from the study, we will keep the information about you that we have already obtained for the purposes of achieving the objectives of the study only.

If you wish to be withdrawn, then please email sophia.lingham@student.rau.ac.uk

If you have any concerns about any aspect of this study, please speak to Sophia who will do her best to answer your questions.

Thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet and considering taking part in our research.

8.2.2 Interview questions

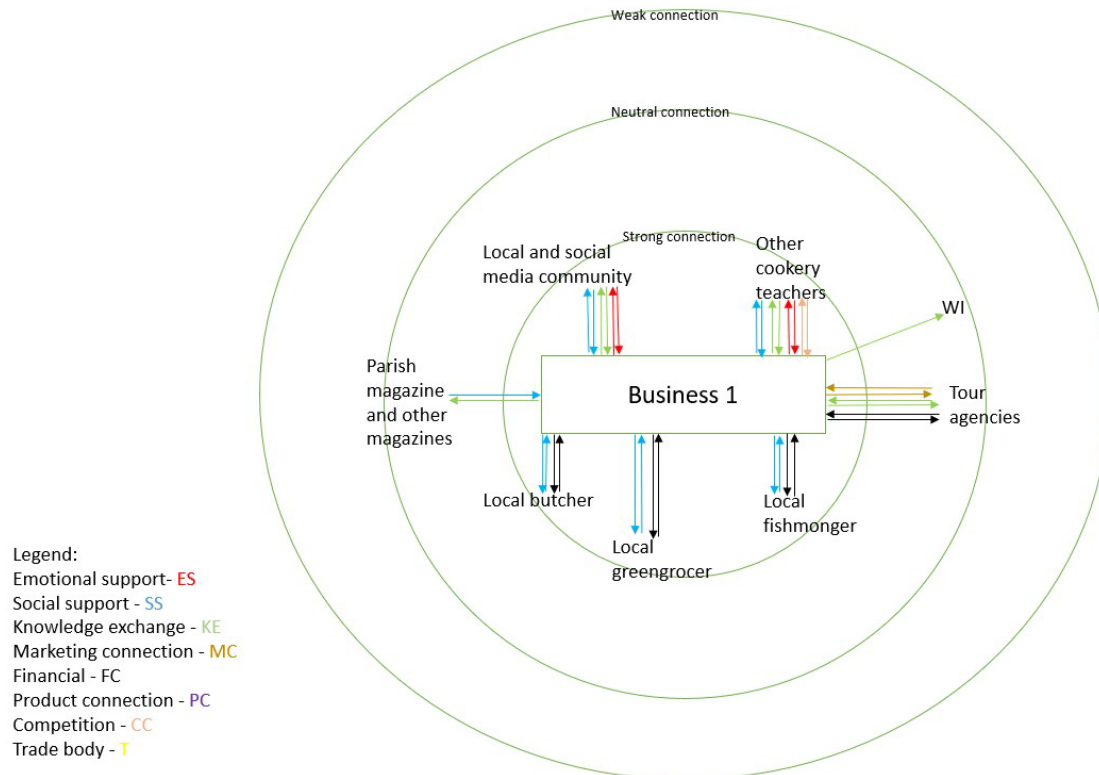
1. Opening discussion about principles, value and values, starting business, size, and have values changed since pandemic.
2. Are you happy with the level of interaction with other businesses? What would you like to change and why?
3. Are you happy with the level of interaction with consumers?
4. What is the CVP of your business and how does this CVP manifest itself?
(Consumer Value Proposition is a statement defining your promise to your (target) customers, stating the benefits (value) they will receive by buying your product/service)
5. Do you feel your CVP is in line with consumer expectations and what else might consumers expect?
6. Are consumers just consumers or do you feel part of a community with them?
7. Do you think consumers gain an emotional or cultural value from the food they purchase from you/the experience they have with you?
8. If so, do you think it is a short term/in the moment feeling or value or does it result in longer term value?
9. How might this be beneficial to you, them, and the wider community?
10. Do you encourage your consumers to post photos of the food on social media? Are you tagged by your consumers? and if so, how often? Do you find this useful?
11. Do your customers try new things/are they open to trying new things?
12. Do you hold events to celebrate certain foods?
13. Do you think it might be useful to have some form of emotio-cultural cue, stamp or seal on some products to encourage eating together? (discuss this concept together- has the food connected people, food memories, value to local area etc)
14. Build and talk through the drawing of a business sociogram together: representing all those you work with and at what level (supplier, horizontal, consumer etc), and determining the type and strength of these connections? (emotionally/support/community)?

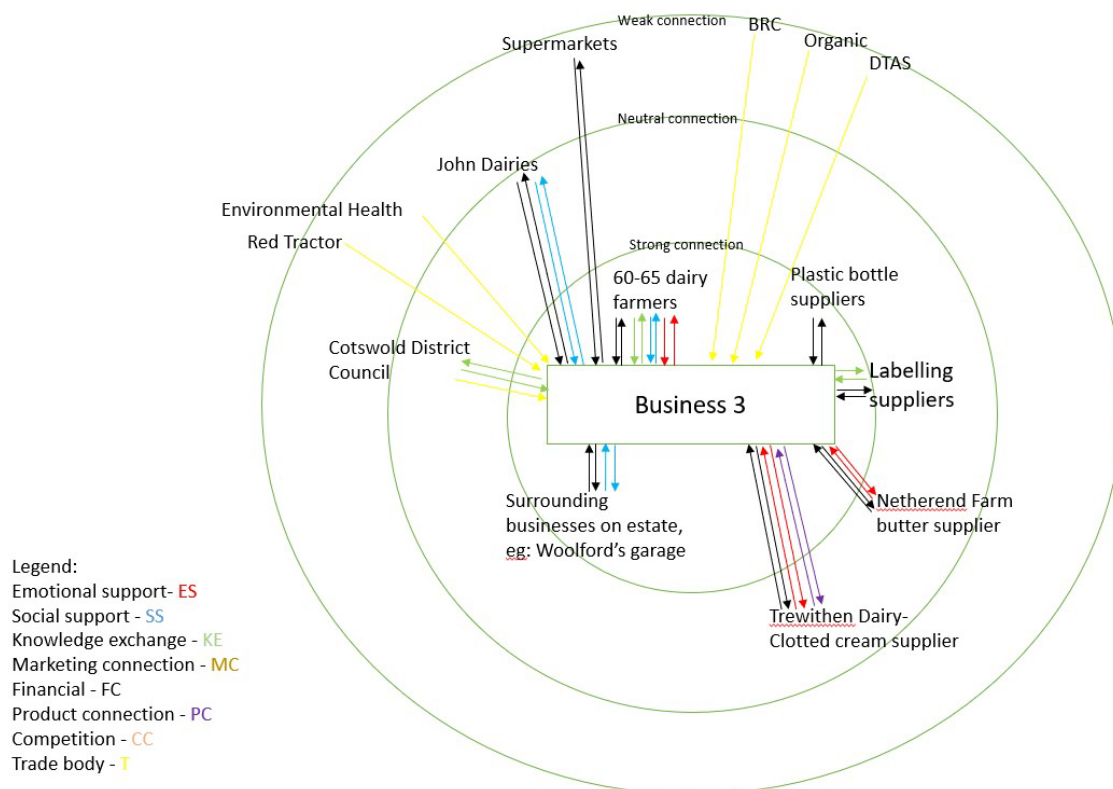
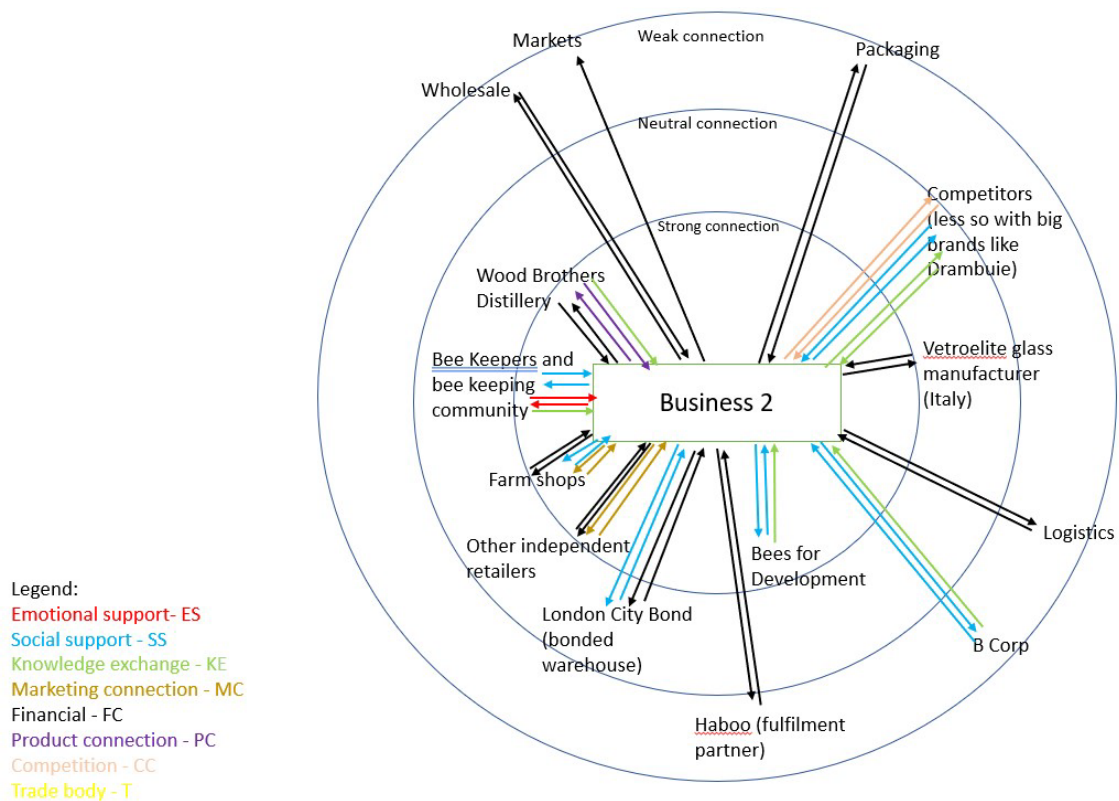
8.2.3 Code book for business interview analysis

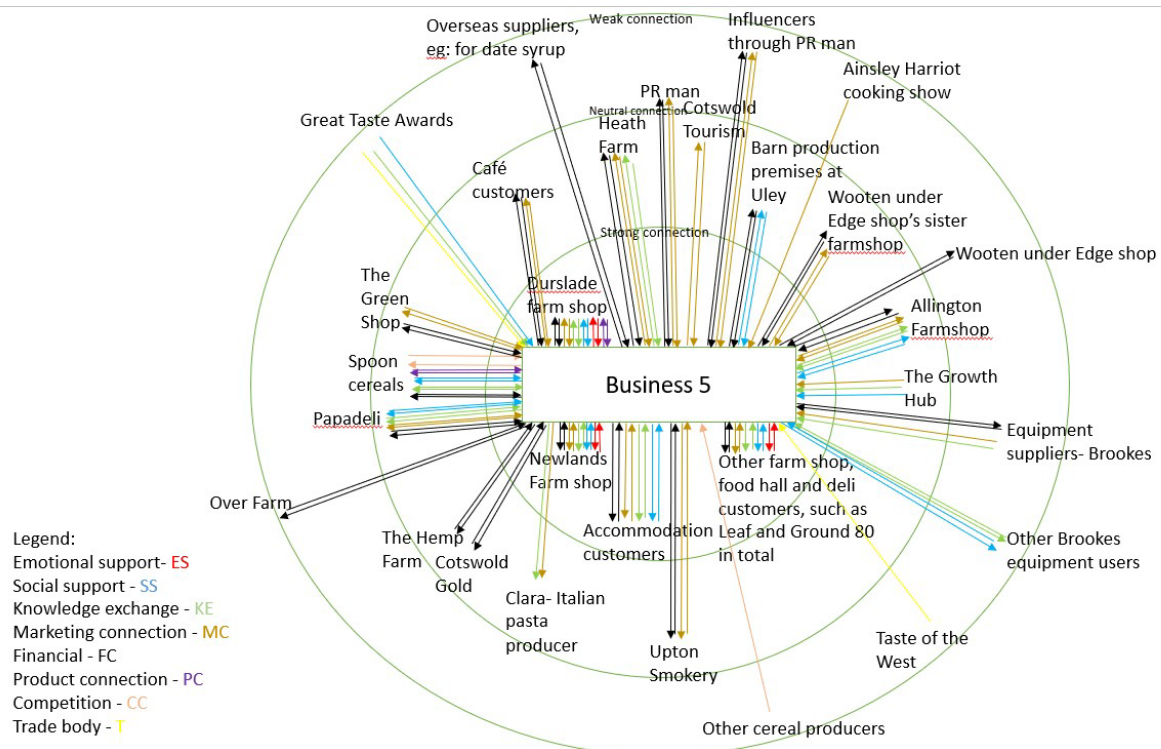
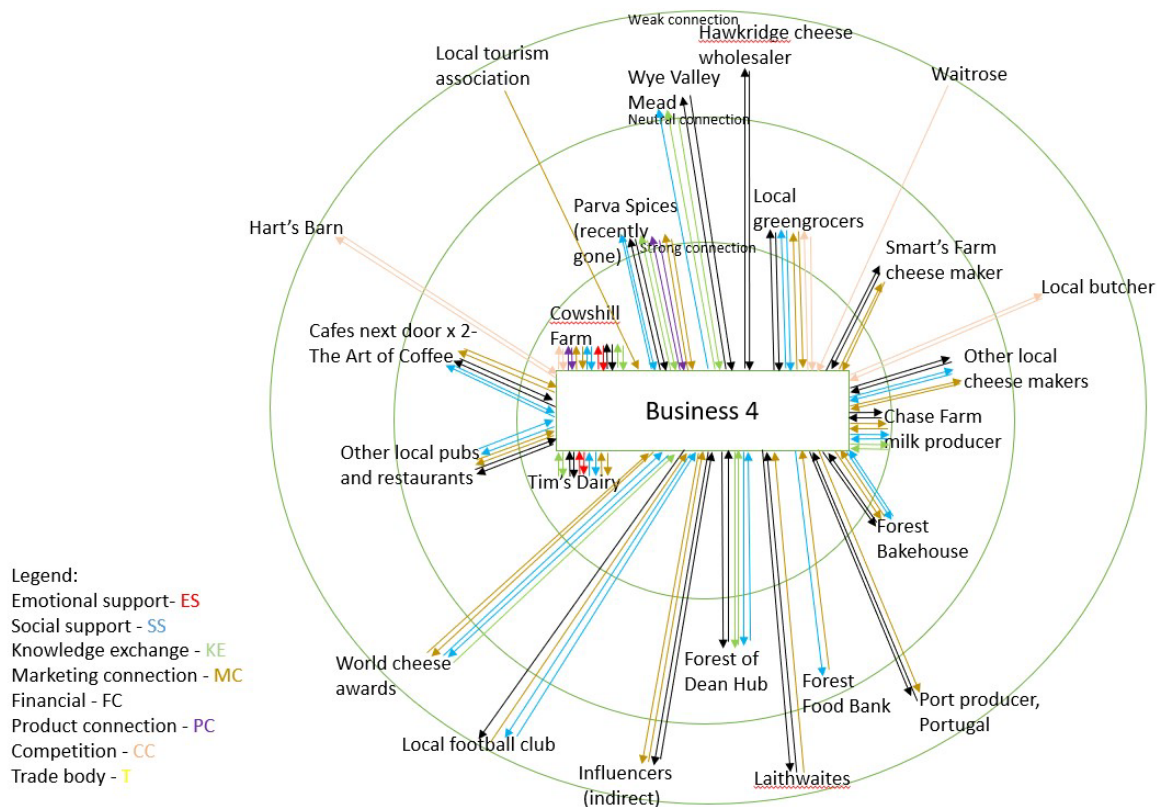
Term	Term	Term
Advertising and marketing -Celebrity and media -Newsletters -Newspapers, magazines -Reviews, social media- consumers -Website related comments -Word of mouth Business opportunities -What's needed	Education -Knowledge and service -Of business -Re-education -Via marketing or social media -Via visiting business -Wider education	Opinions on other businesses and how they run
		Packaging
		Provenance, local foods and foraging
	Food craft continuance	Quality and reliability
Business relationships and importance of networking -Associations, groups or trade bodies -Business service -Charities -Circular economy -Competition -Cooperative style business -Customer businesses -Emotional relationship -Financial relationship only -Freelancers -Horizontal connections -Ingredient exchange -International links -Knowledge exchange -Landlord -Larger non-local suppliers and wholesalers -Local suppliers -Marketing relationship -Product co-creation -Smaller non-local suppliers -Social relationship	Food security	Relationships with end consumers - Length of relationship
	General challenges for small businesses, AFNs and industry	Resilience of businesses and AFNs
	General culture comments	Running of business -Business product lines and business development -Business projection -Control and analysis -Costs -Family -Opinions on pandemic -Responsibility -Service and experience -Staff -Business challenges -Value proposition -Events -Association event -Competitions -Food festivals -Local traditions -National day
	Health	Business Events -Association event -Competitions -Food festivals -Local traditions -National day -New recipe or product or celebrating ingredients -Seasonal foods -Supper clubs -Workshops
	Importance of story	Seasonality
Capitalism	Links with community -Business community	Something extra about their product

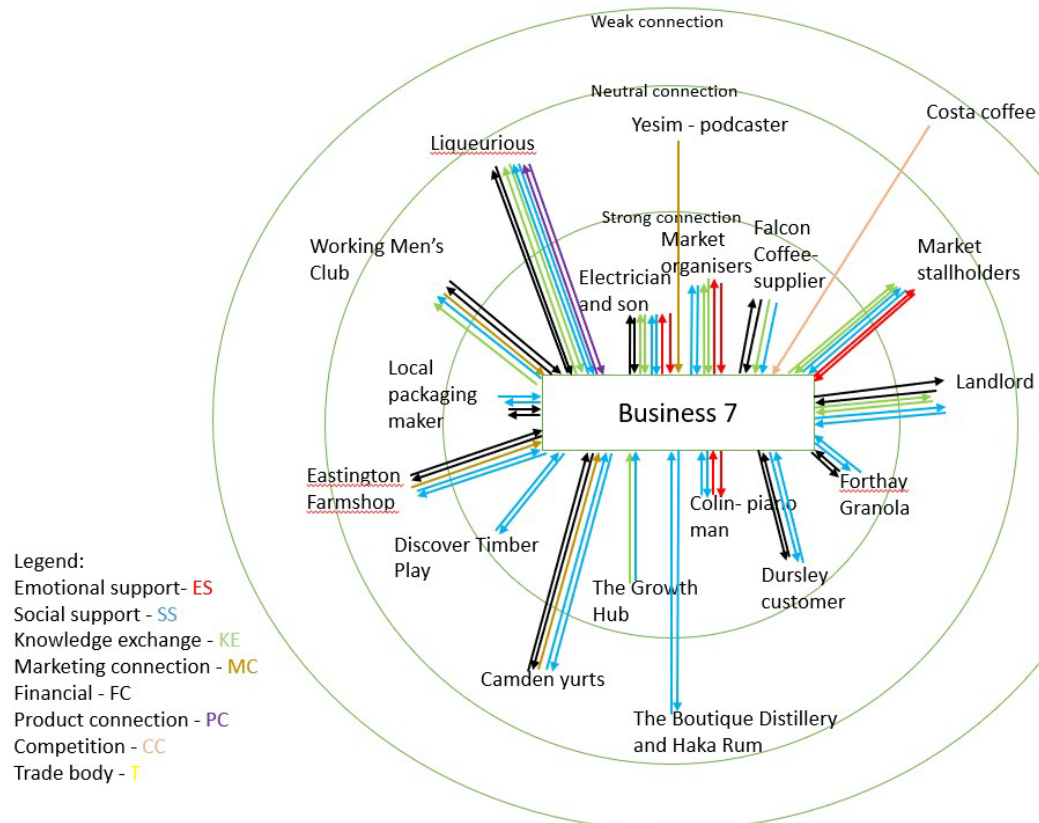
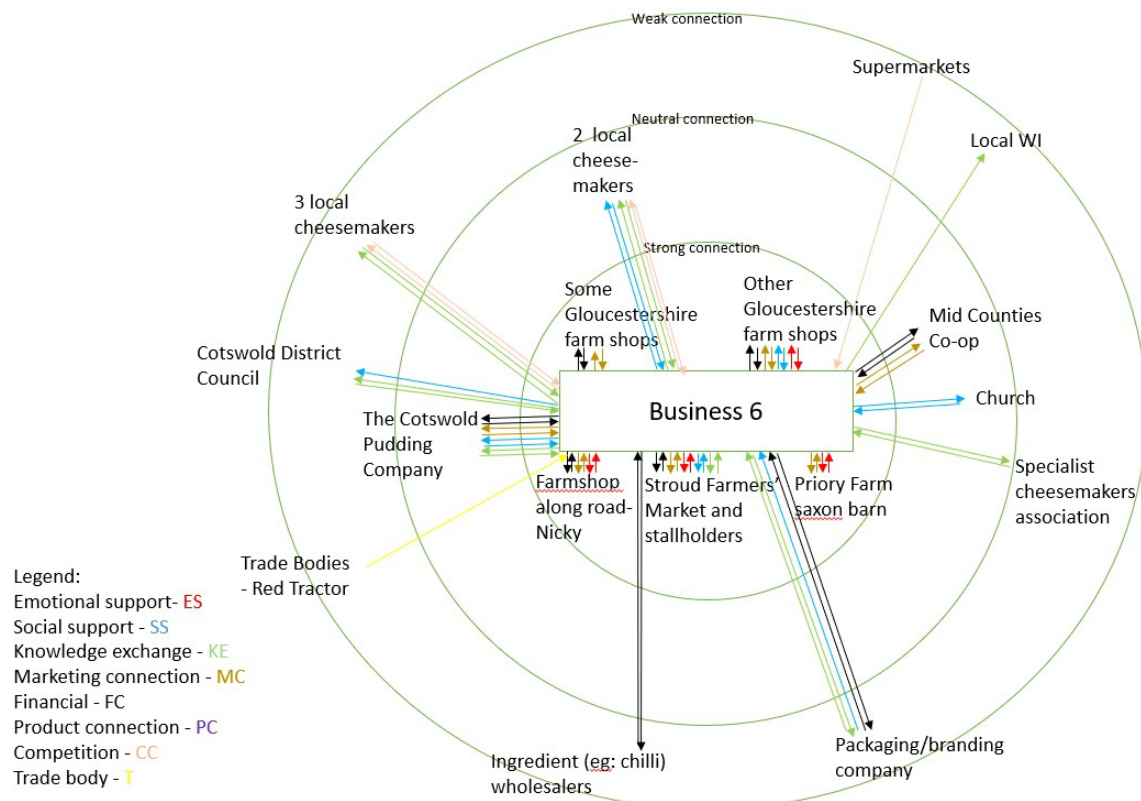
Consumer behaviour and value -Consumer expectations -Consumers - trying new things -Cost -Emotio-cultural value for consumers -Benefits of ECV for business -Food memory -Mental health -Short or long term ECV -Wider ECV benefits	-Farming community -Local small scale growers	Supermarket and chain opinions
Consumer demographics	Markets	Time and convenience
Consumers as community	New food culture	Tourism
Deliveries	New industry trends	Treat and gifts
Disconnection -Councils, government, and legislation -Environment, sustainability and land links -Ethics	Opinions on accreditations -Great Taste -Local -Organic trend -Soil Association -Supporting small businesses or social enterprise	Trust, honesty and integrity, loyalty - Giving consumers confidence
		Values -Artisan -Reaction to cultural value -Why started business and business values -Why they love their business

8.2.4 Business concentric diagrams

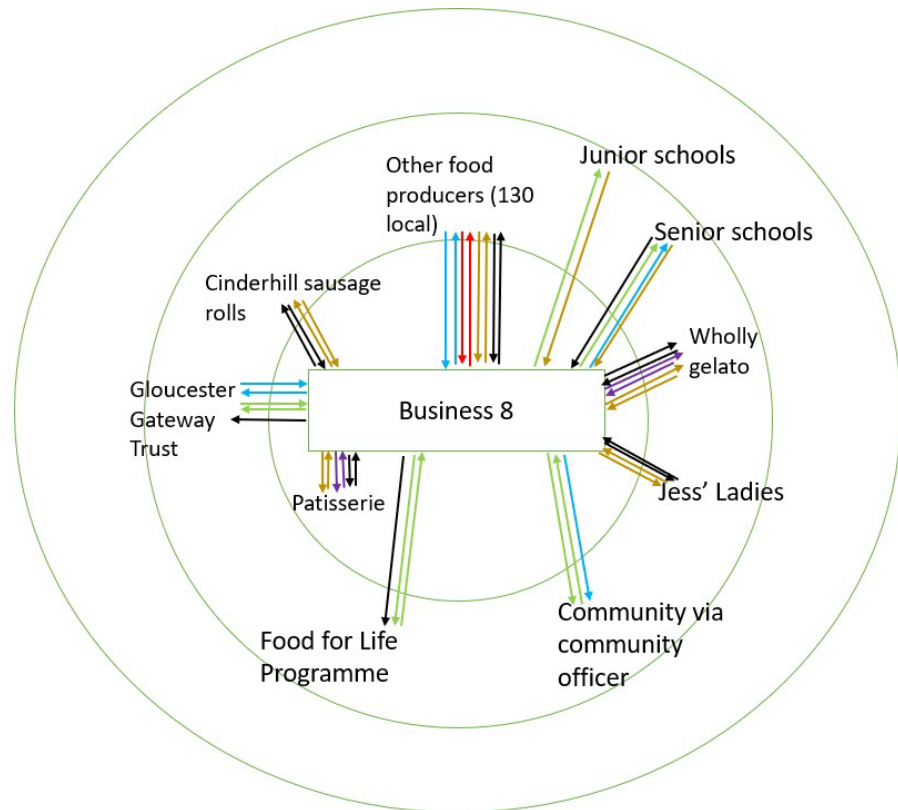




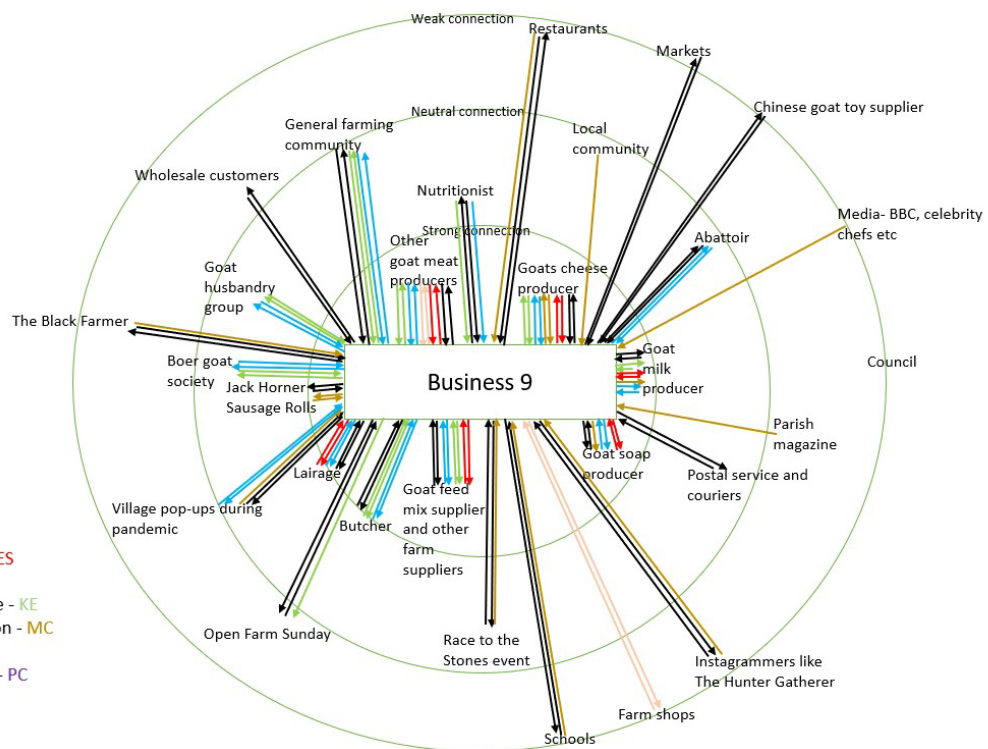


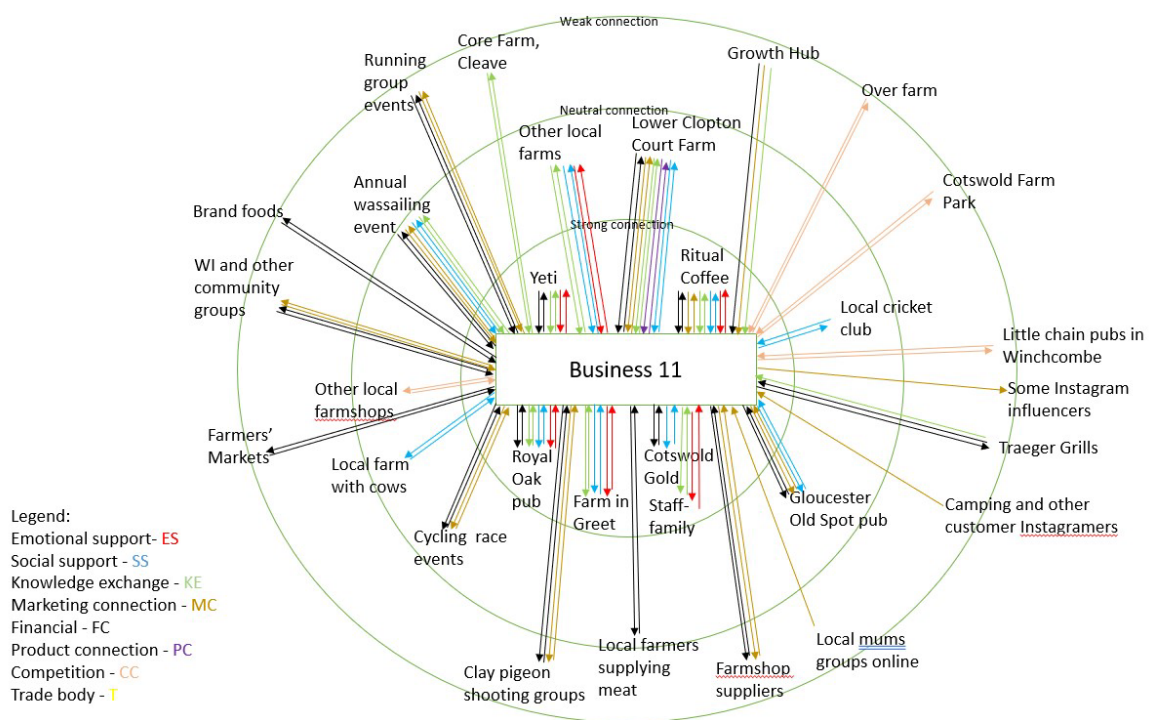
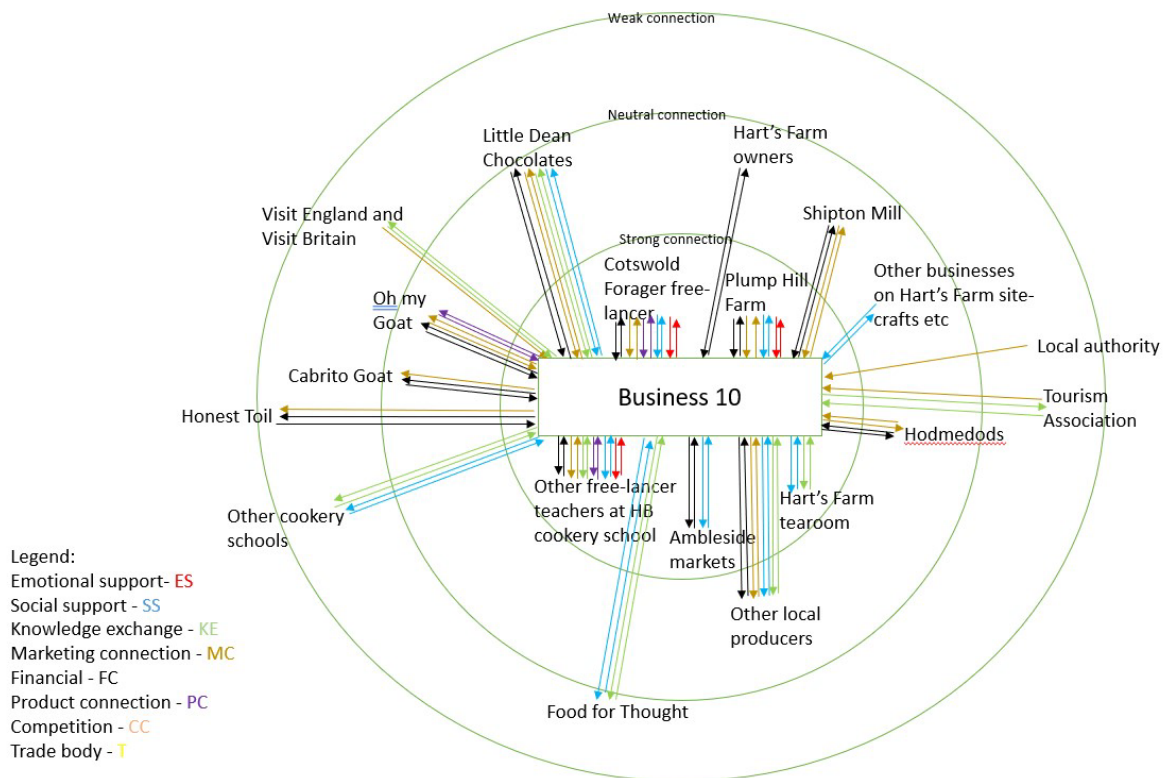


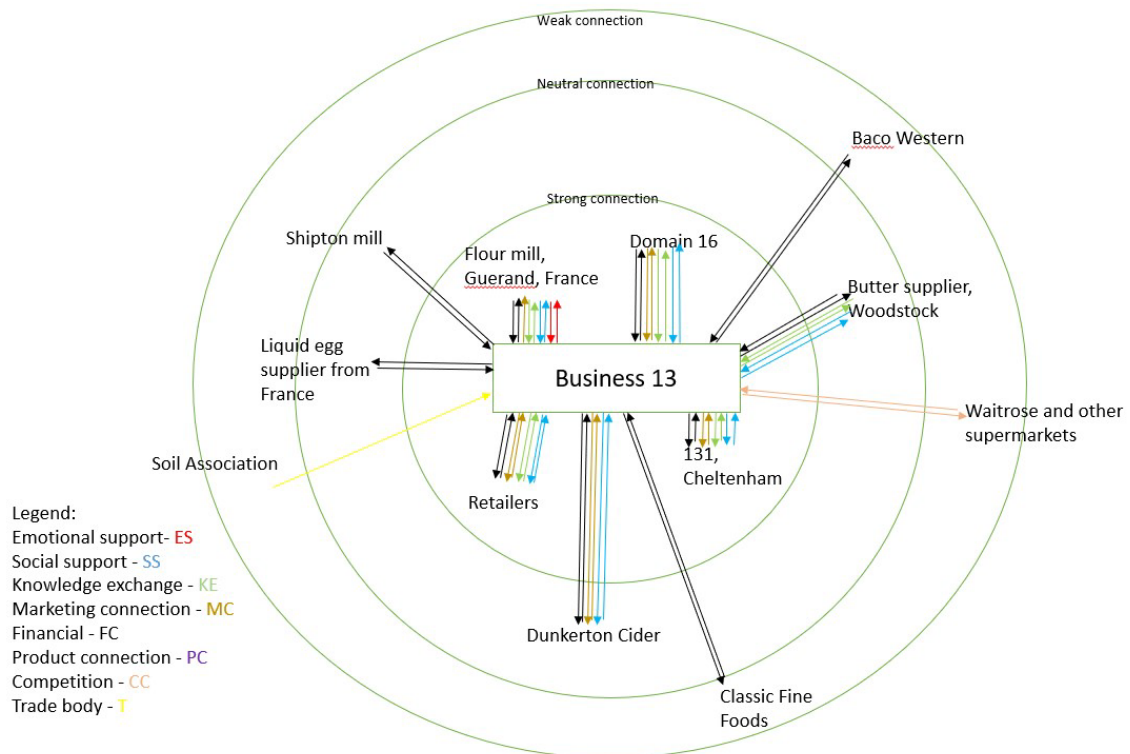
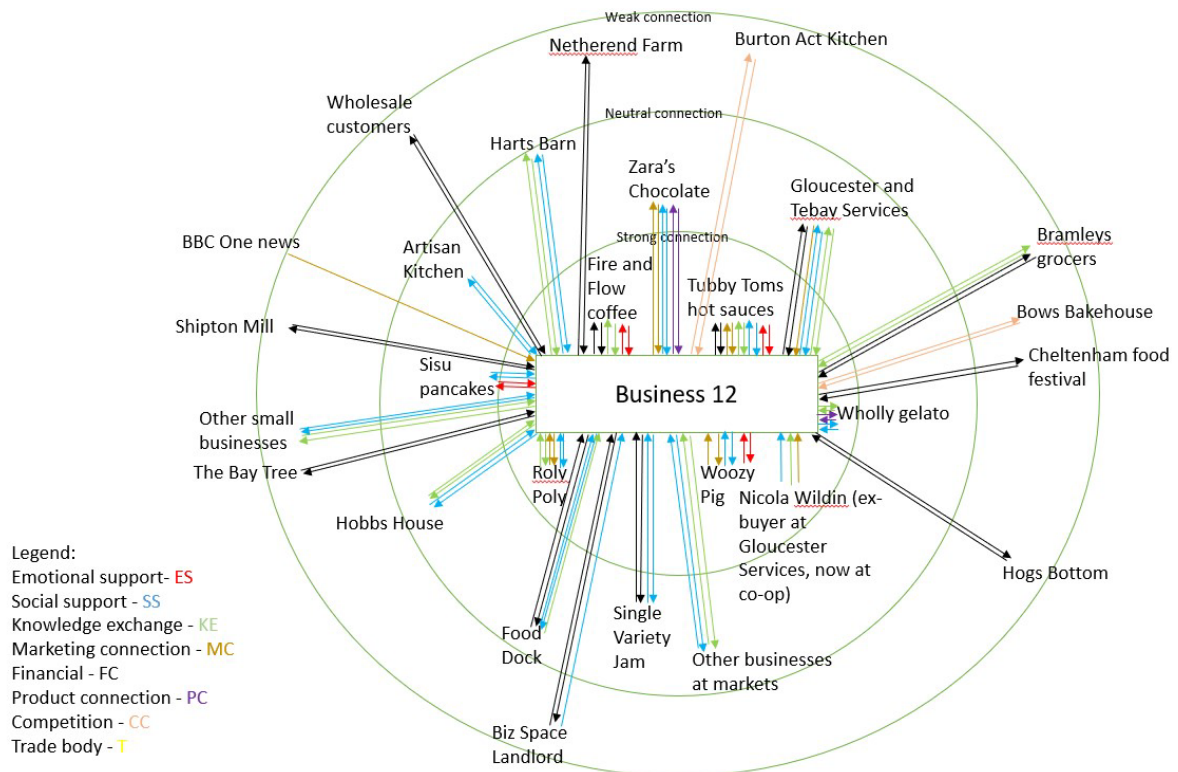
Legend:
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 Social support - SS
 Knowledge exchange - KE
 Marketing connection - MC
 Financial - FC
 Product connection - PC
 Competition - CC
 Trade body - T

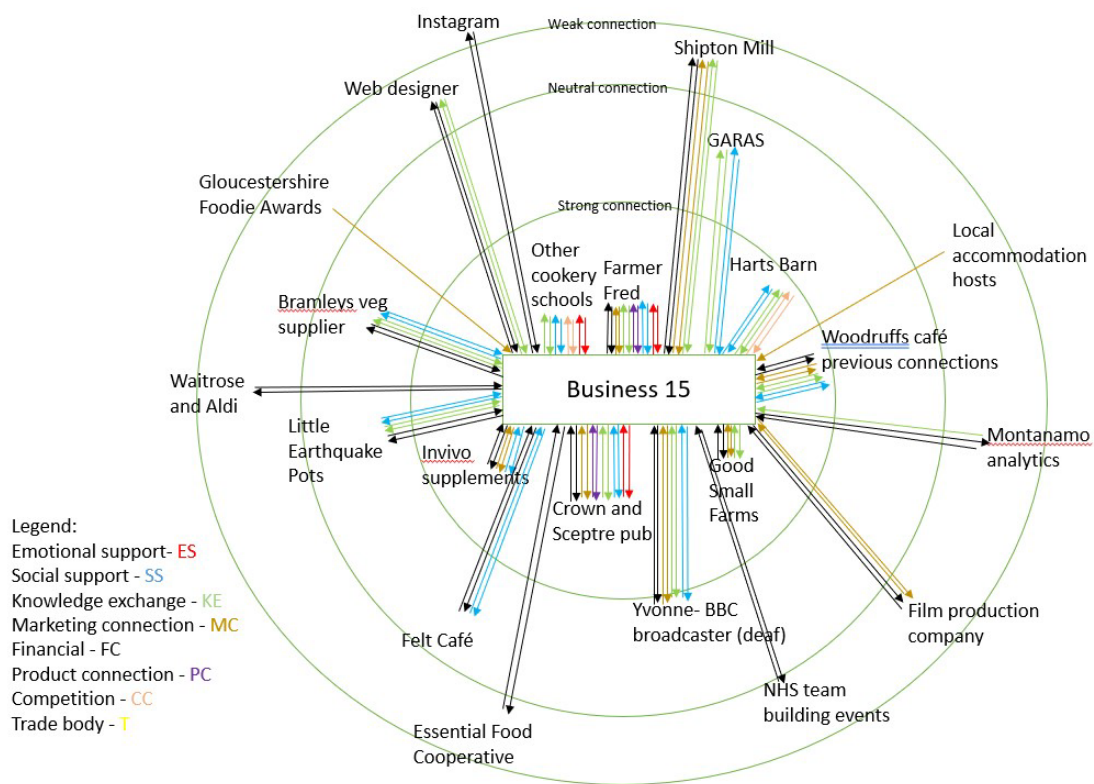
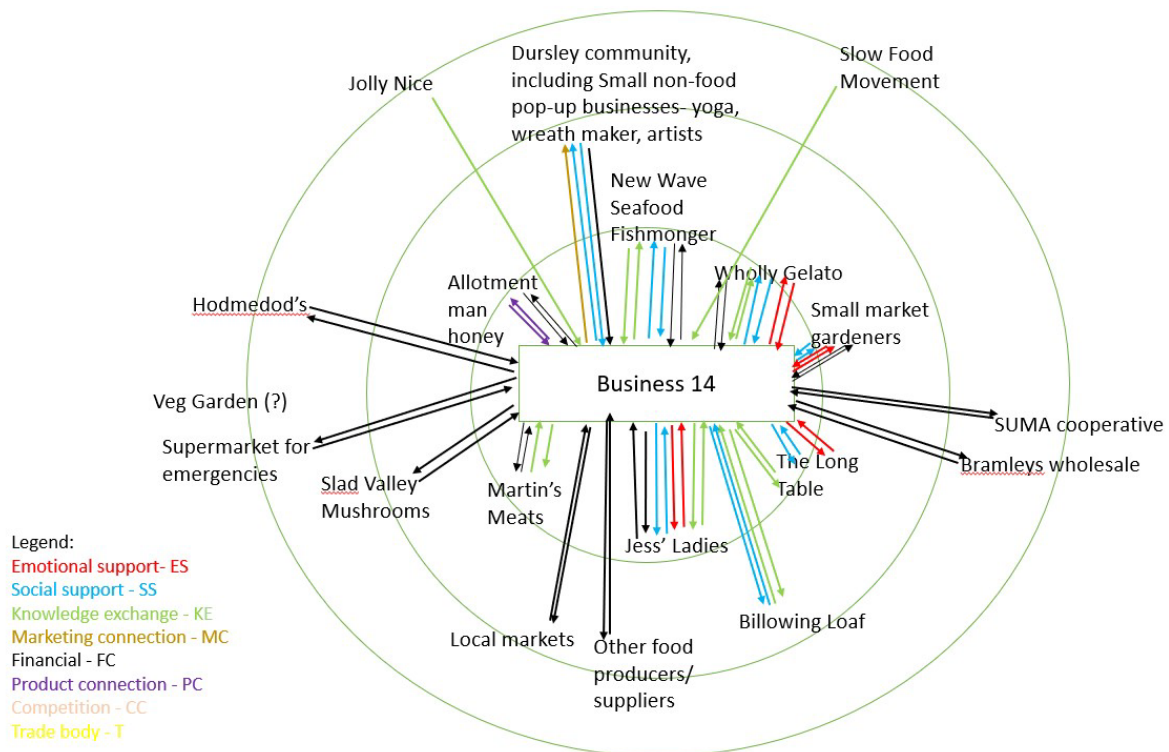


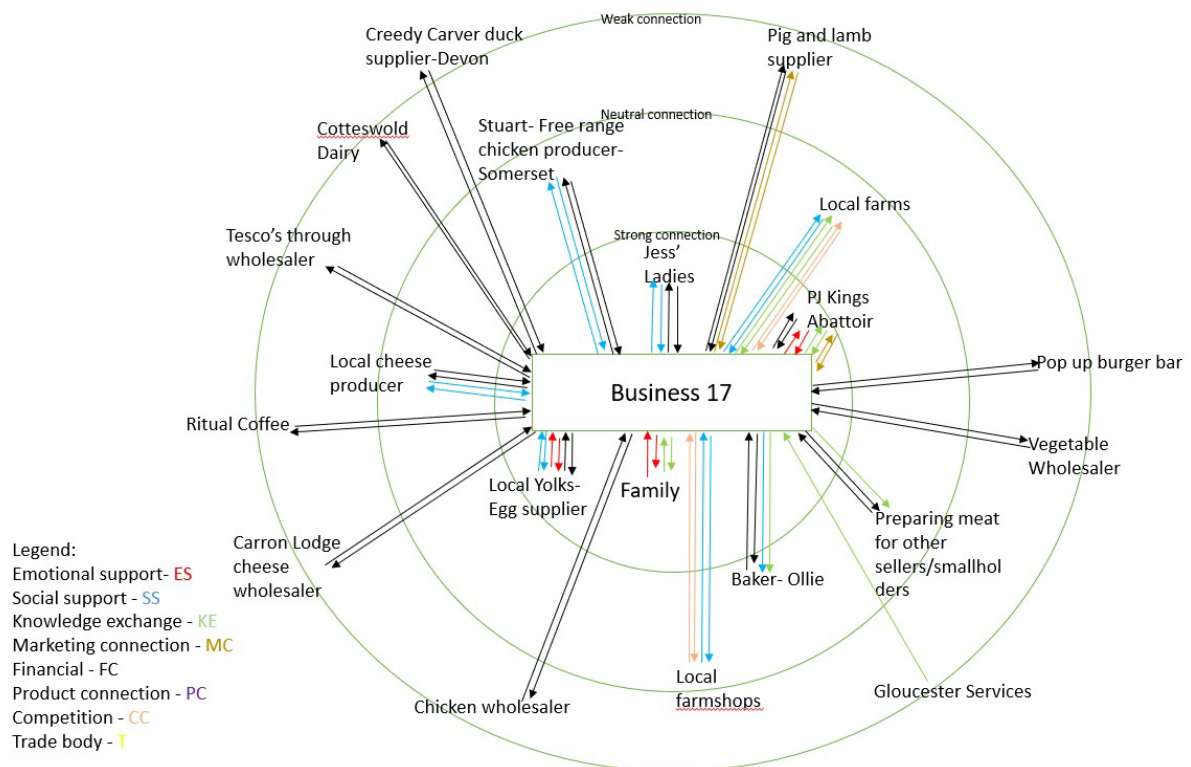
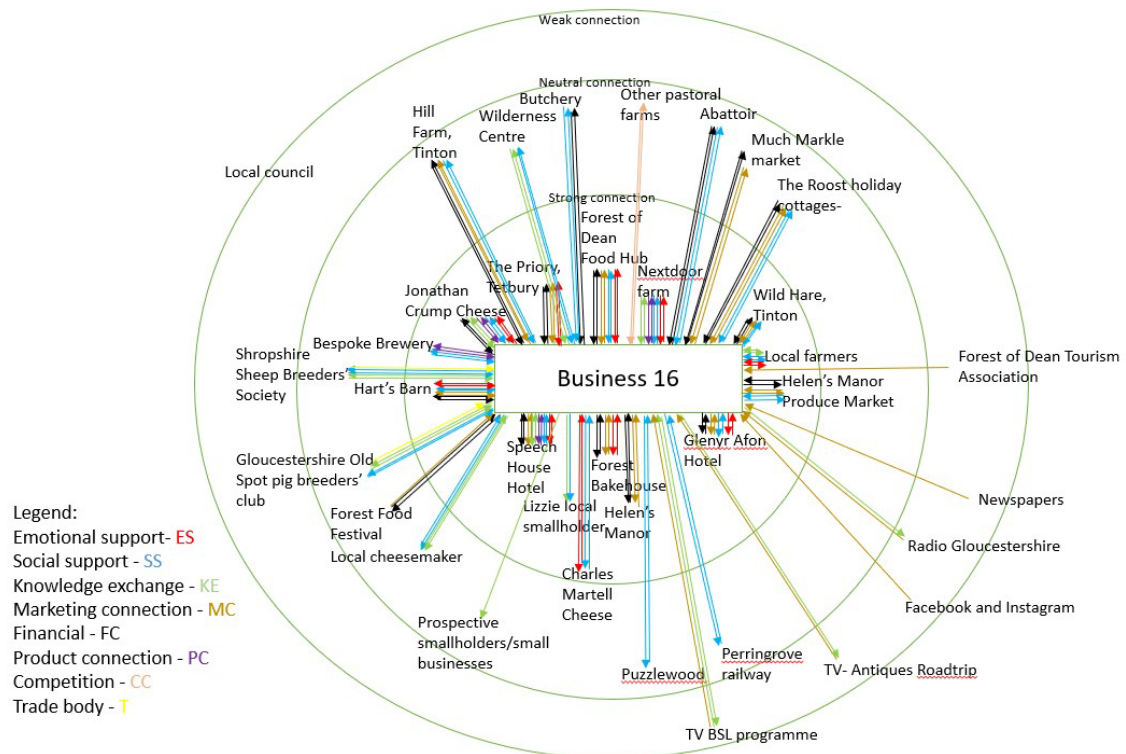
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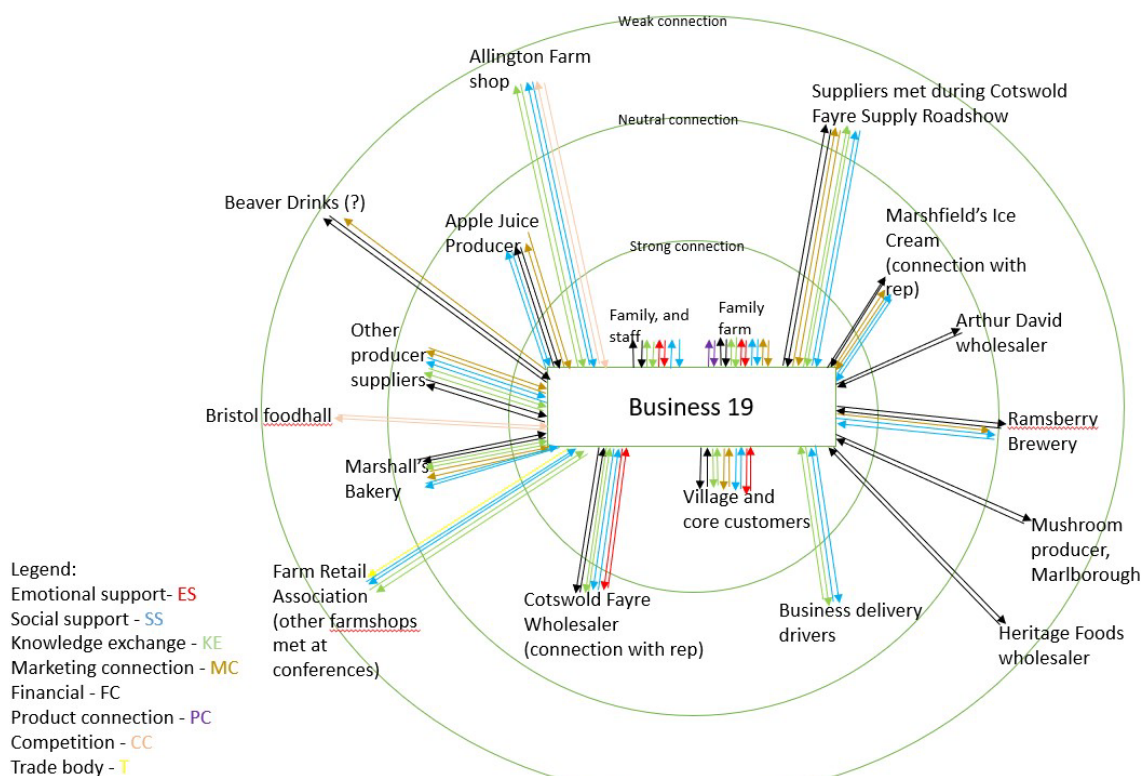
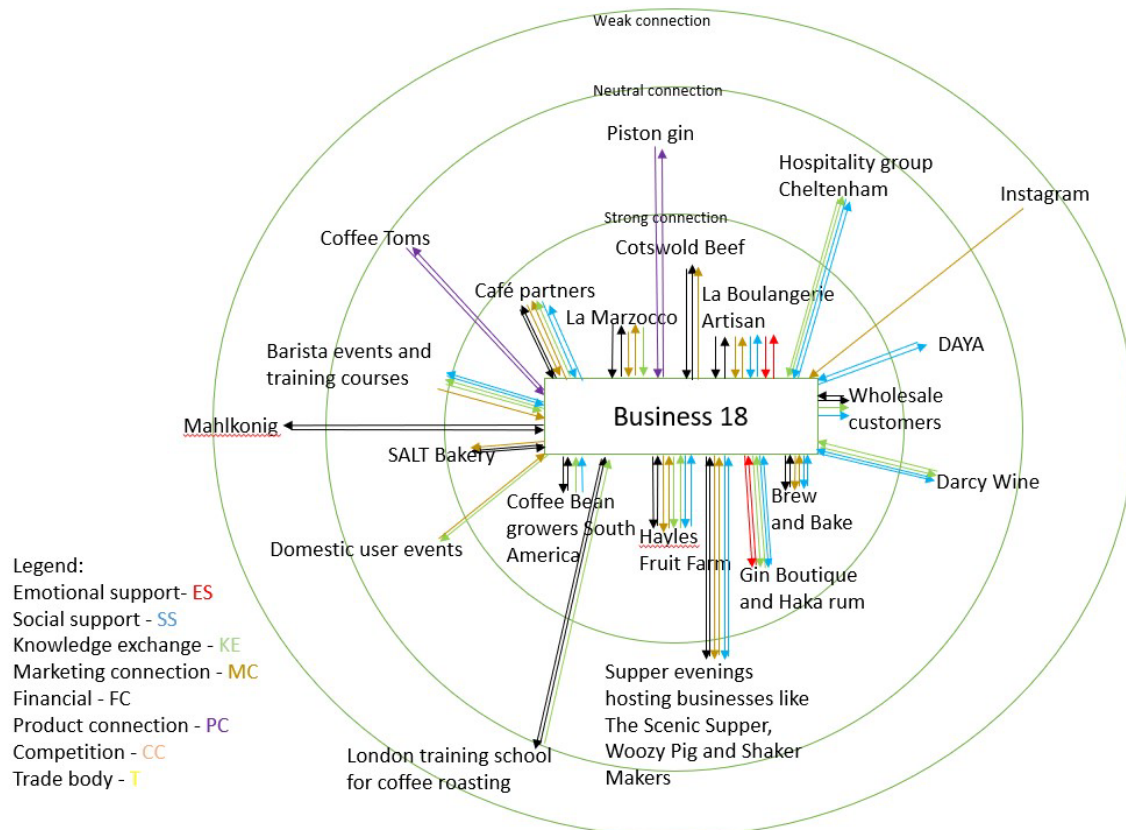


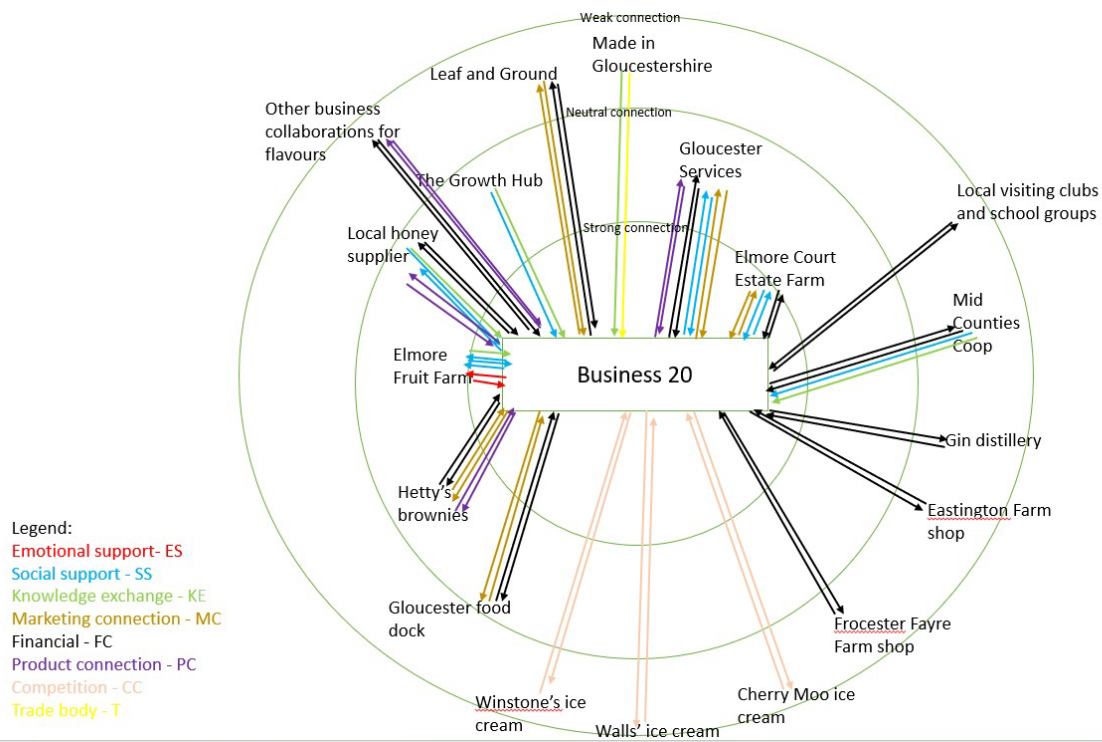




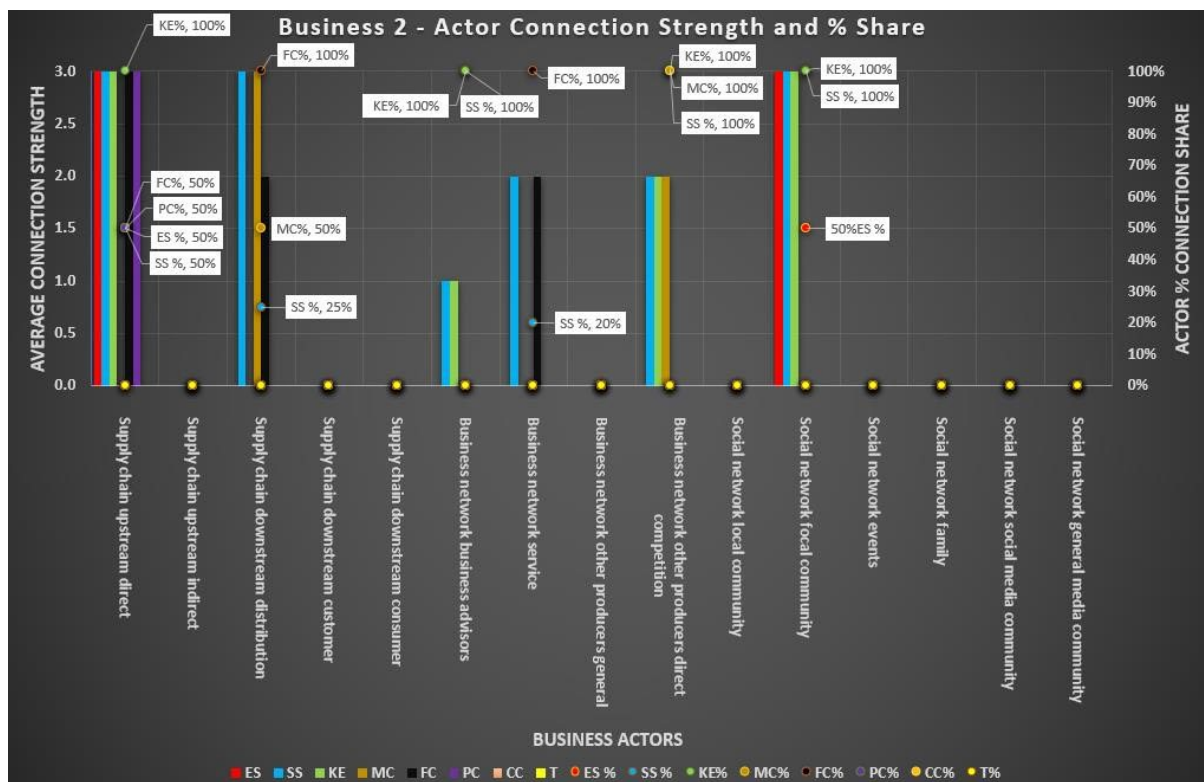
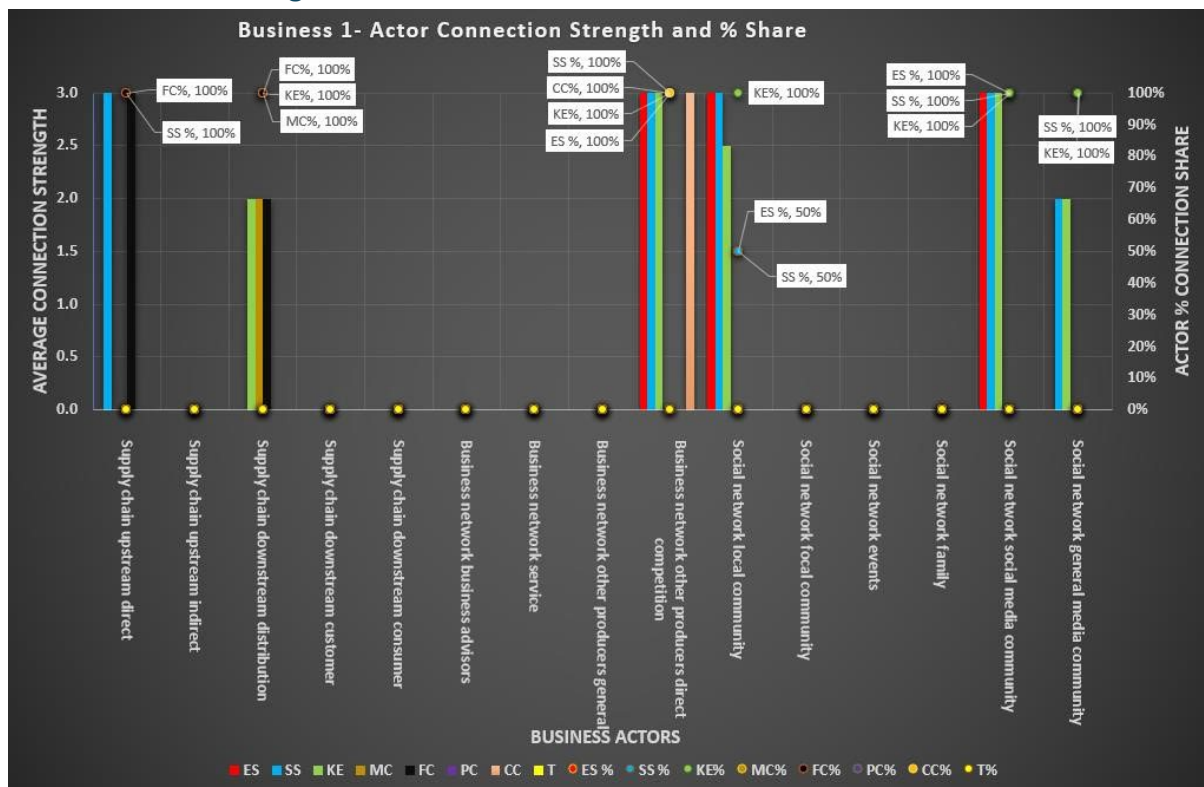


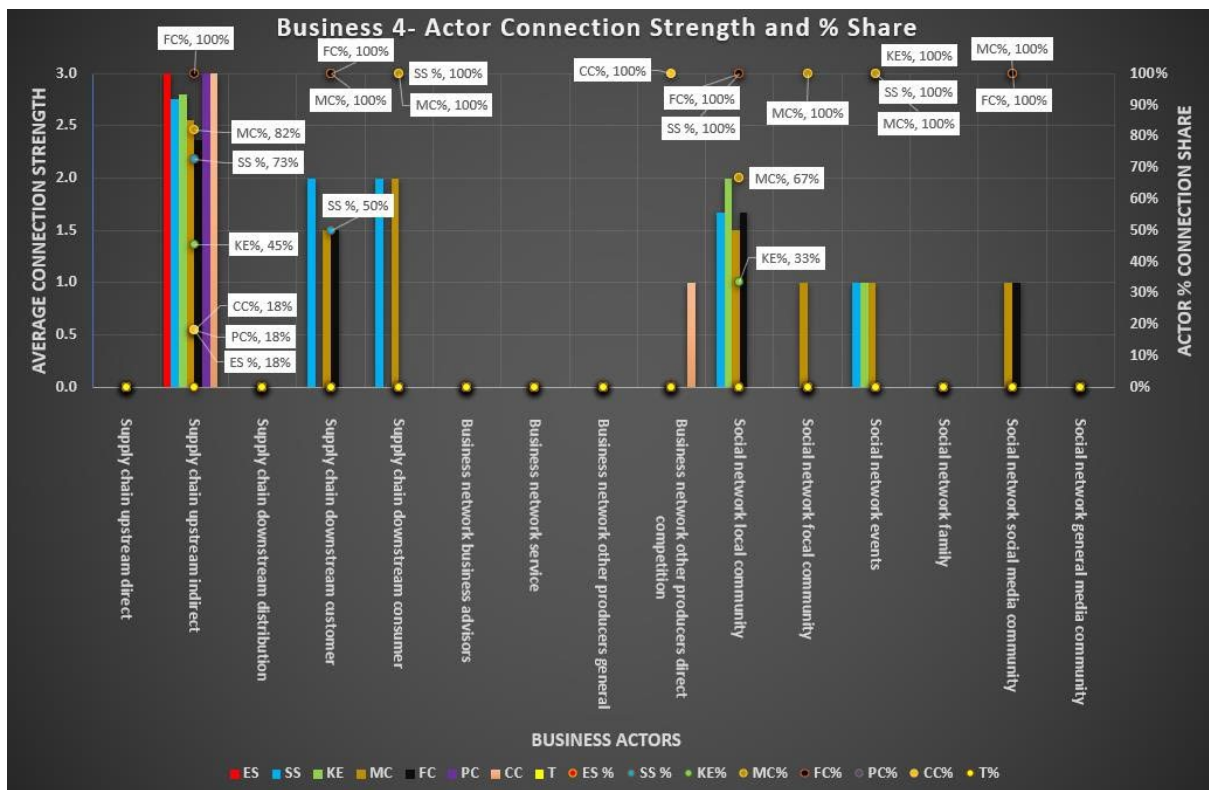
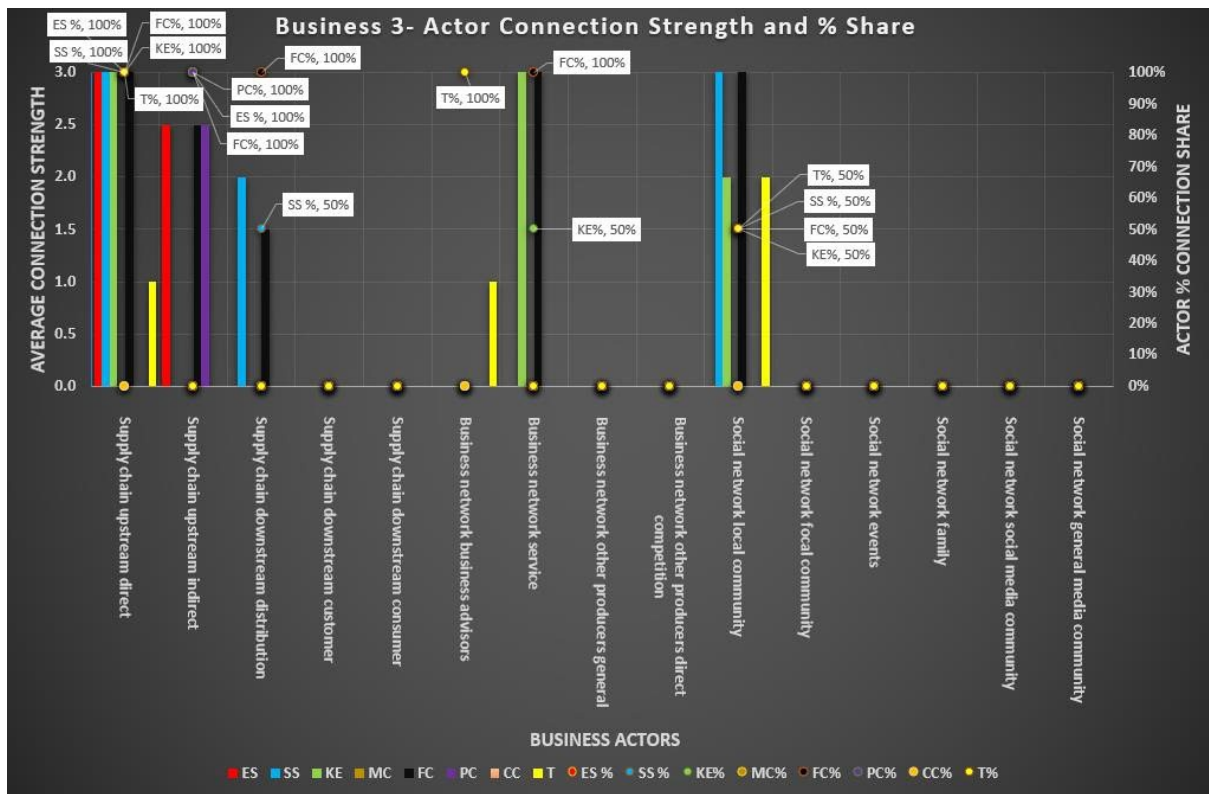


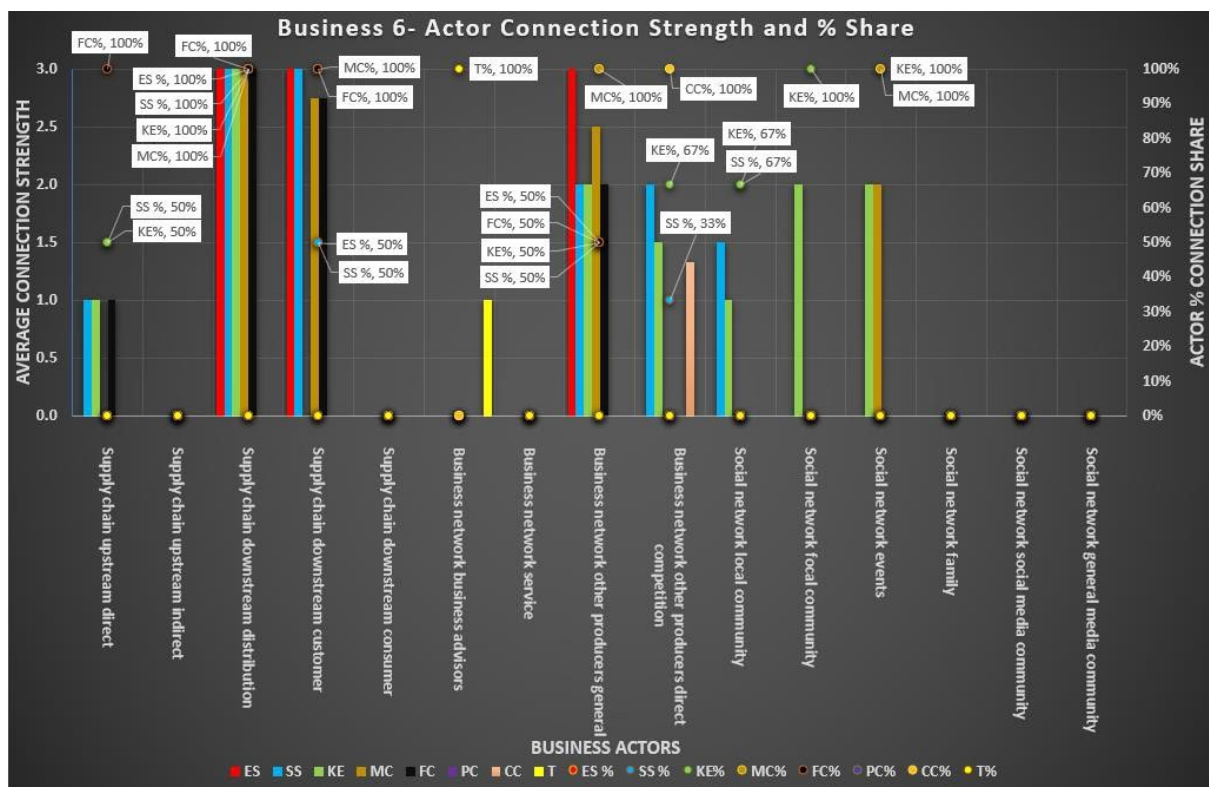
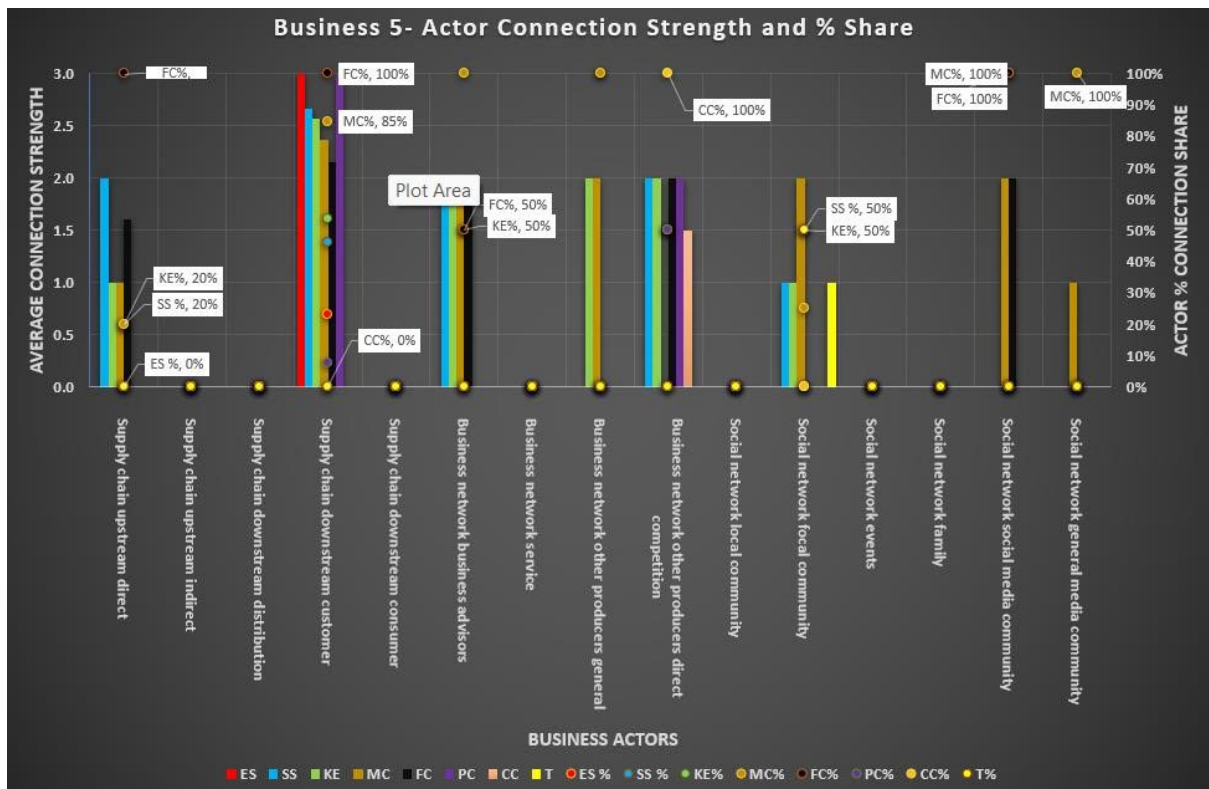


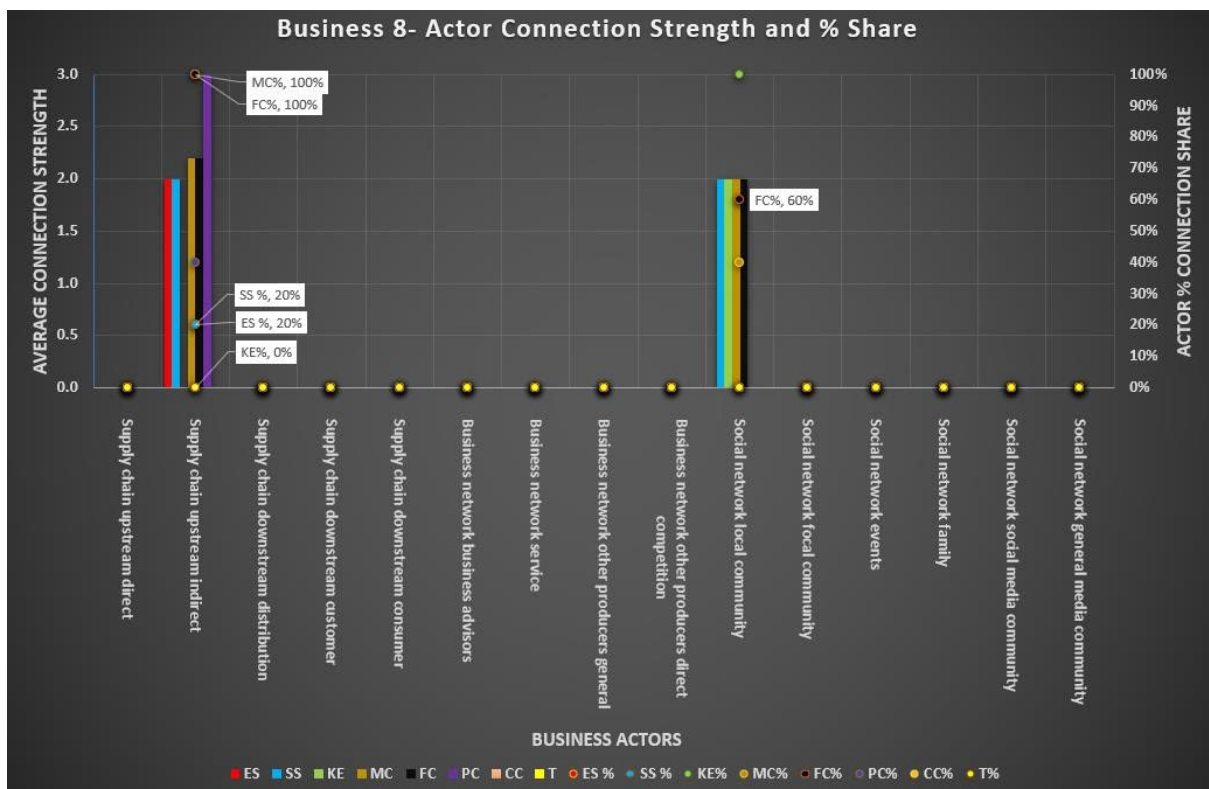
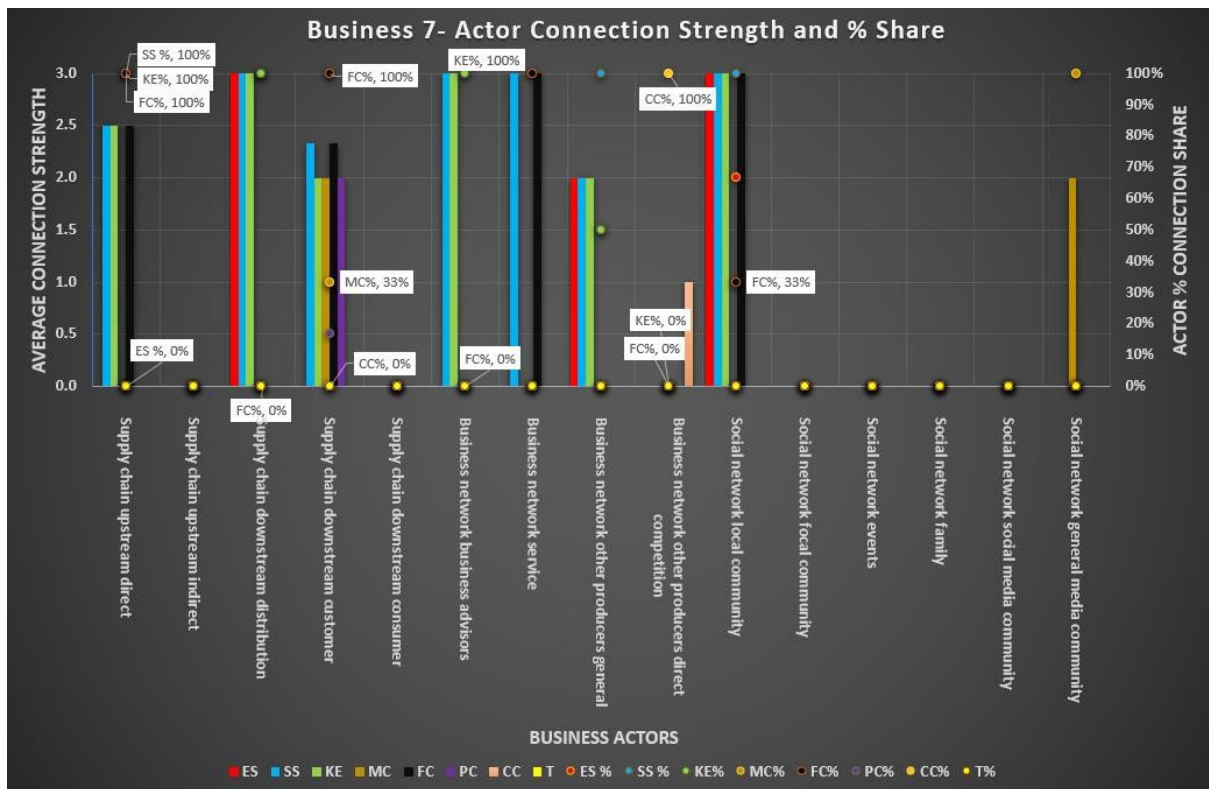


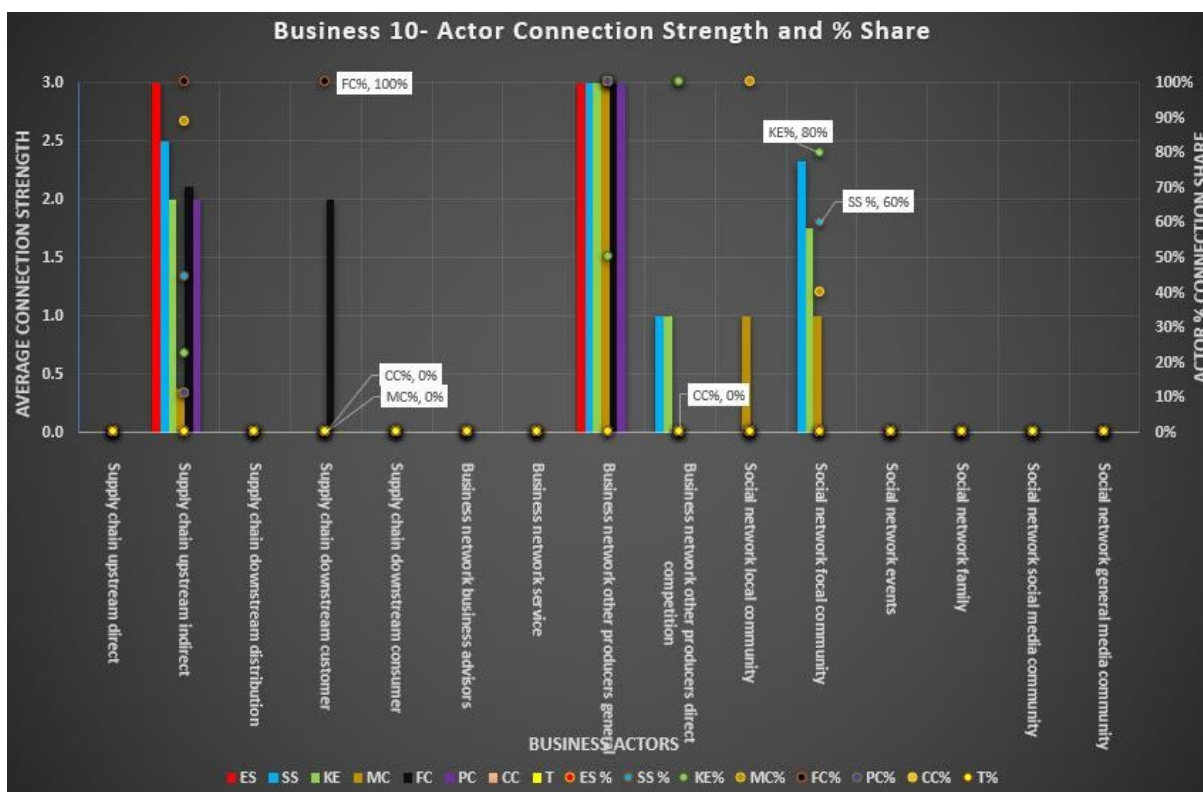
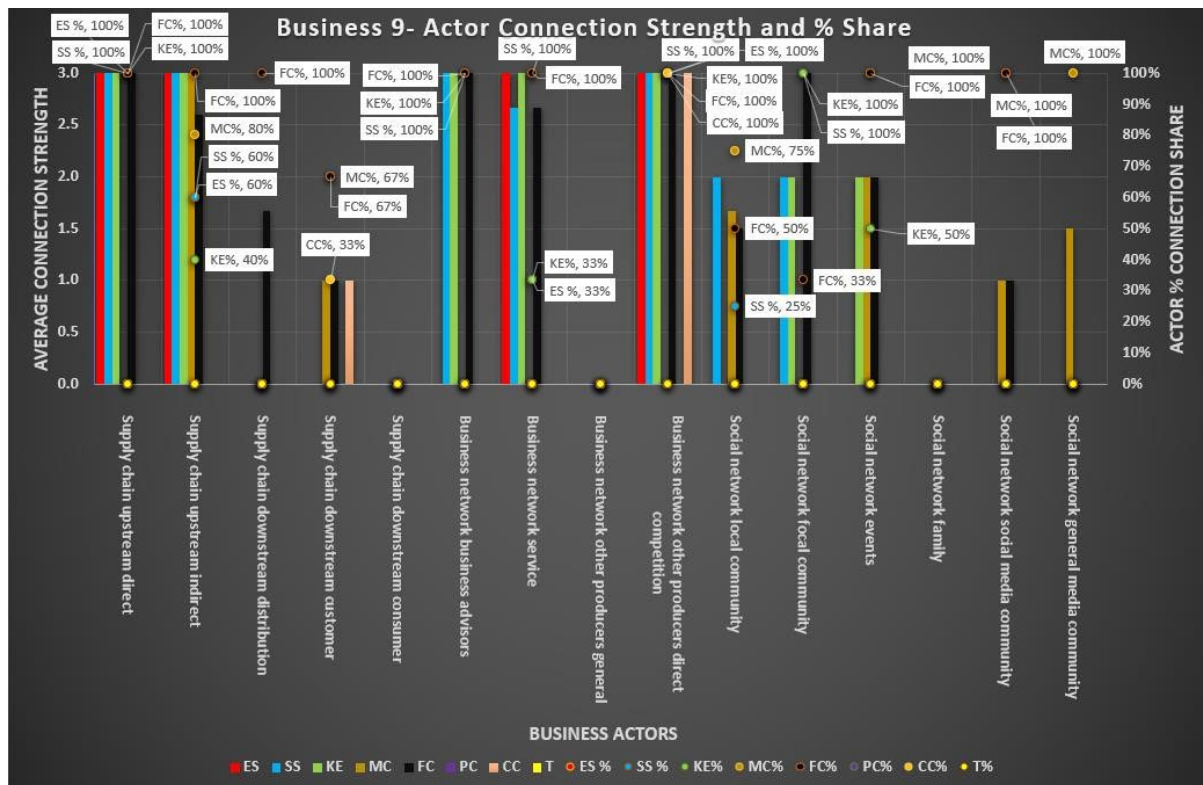
8.2.5 Business sociograms

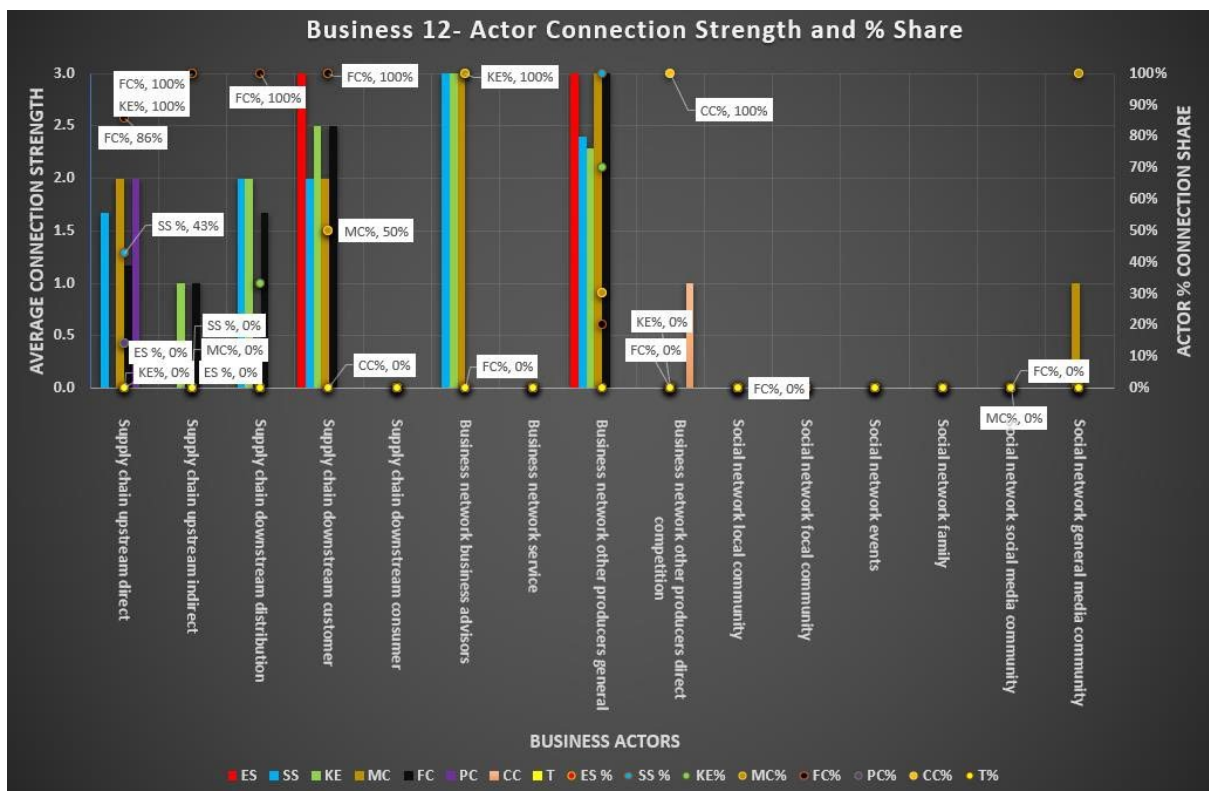
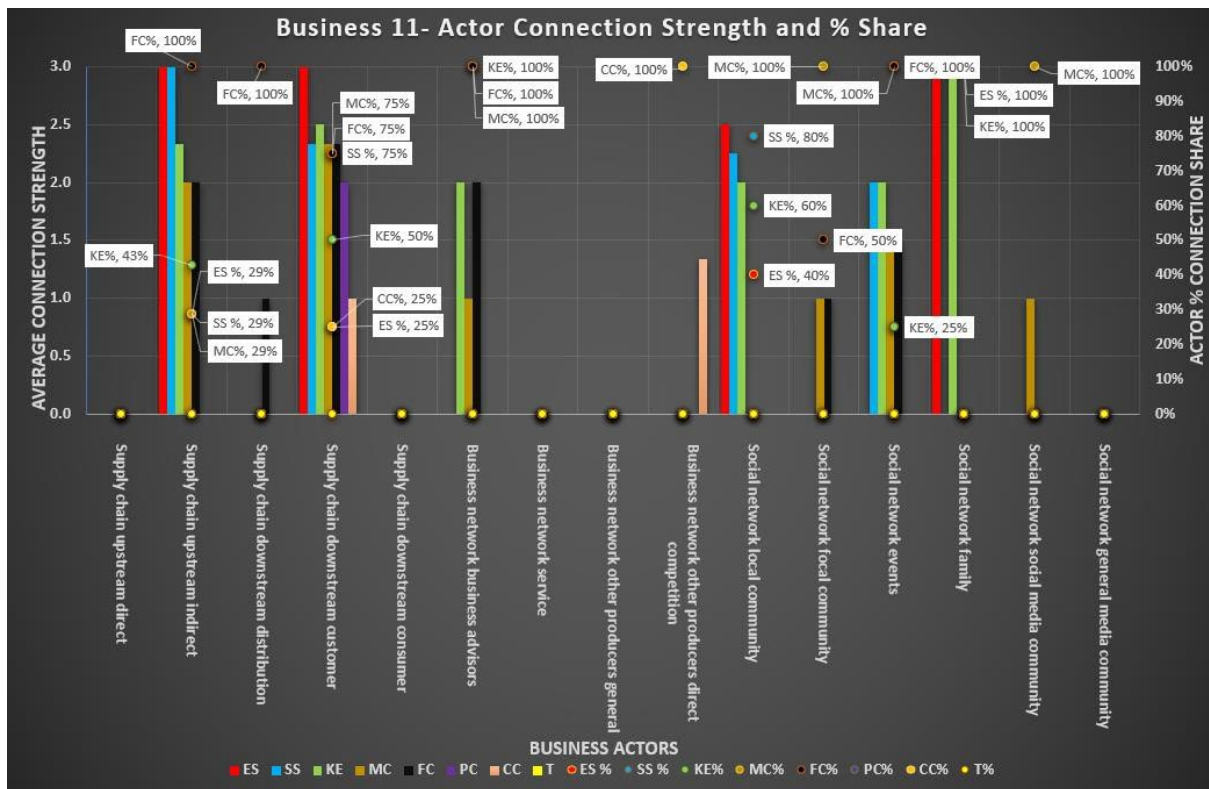


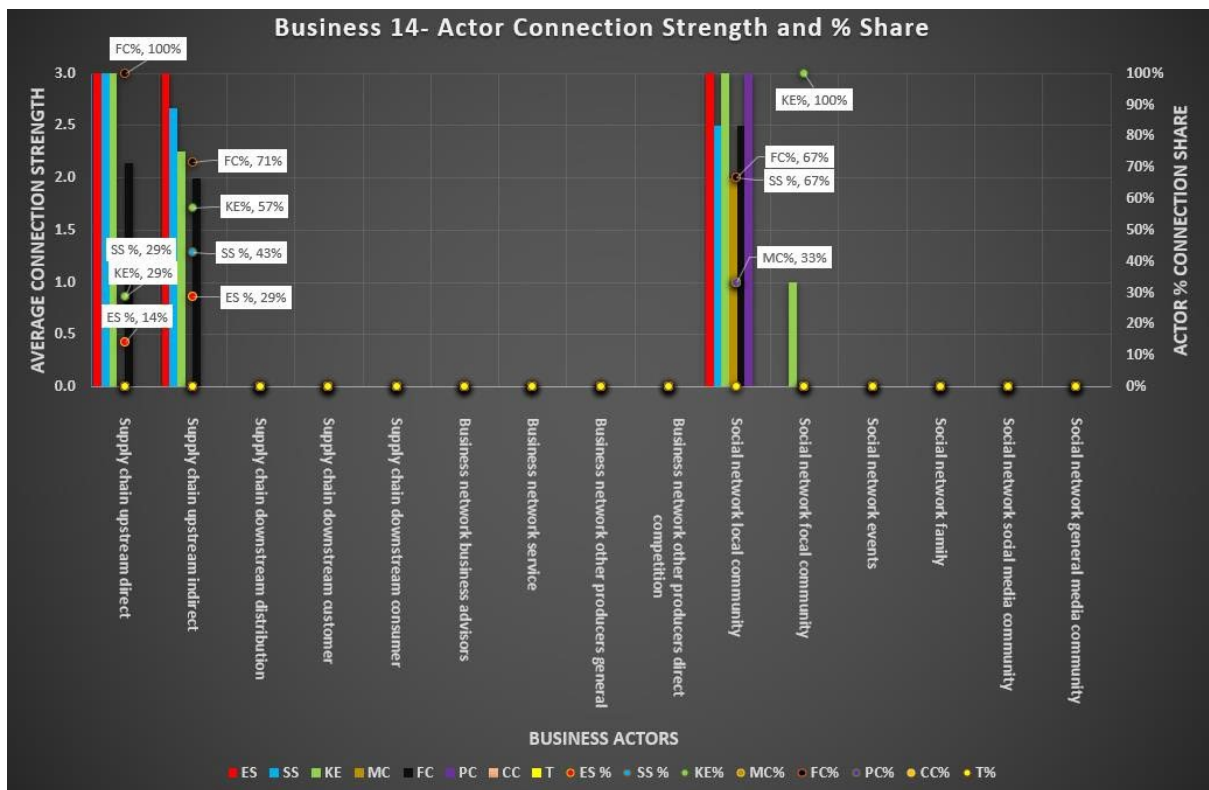
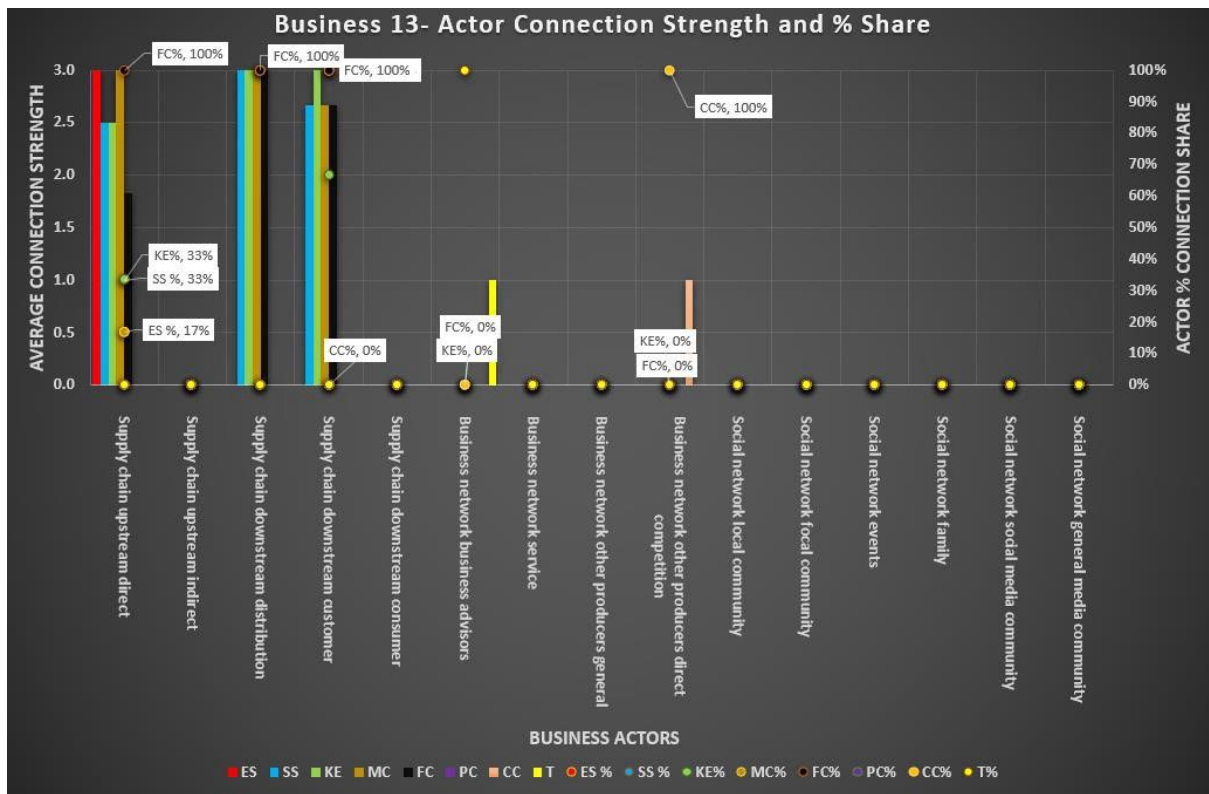


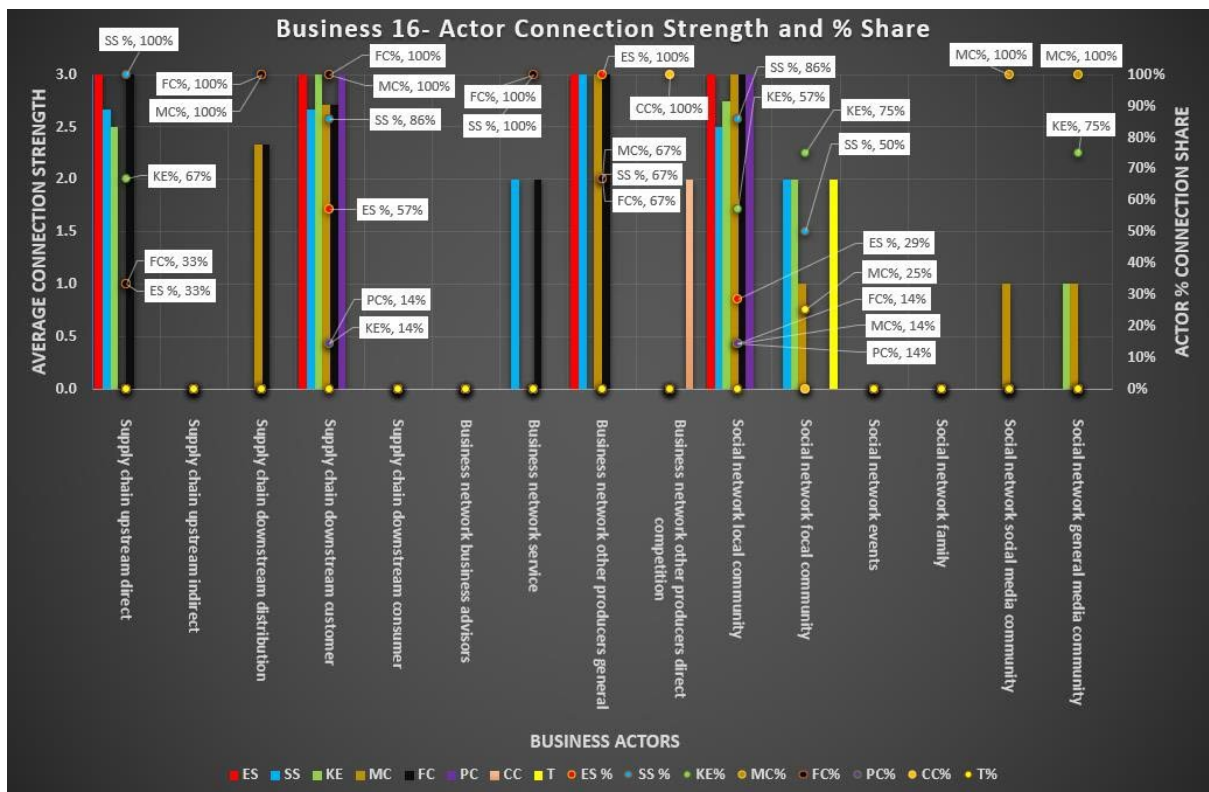
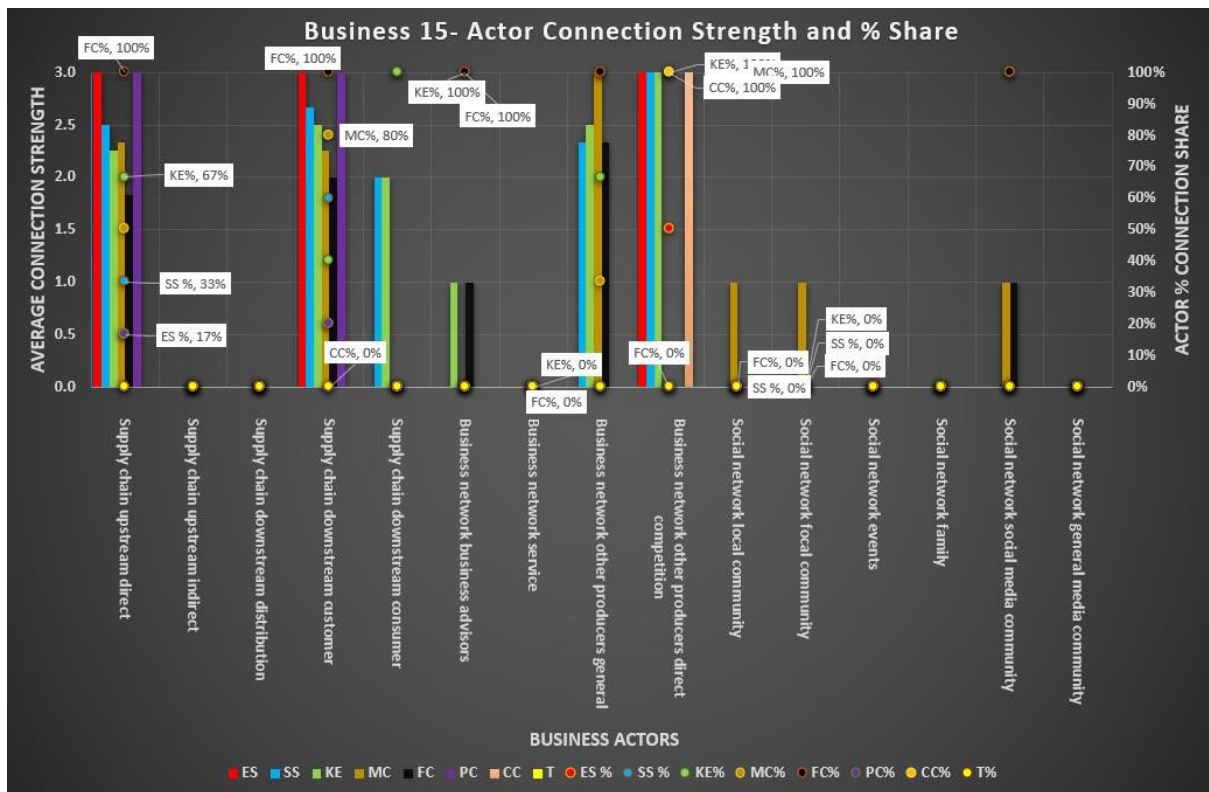


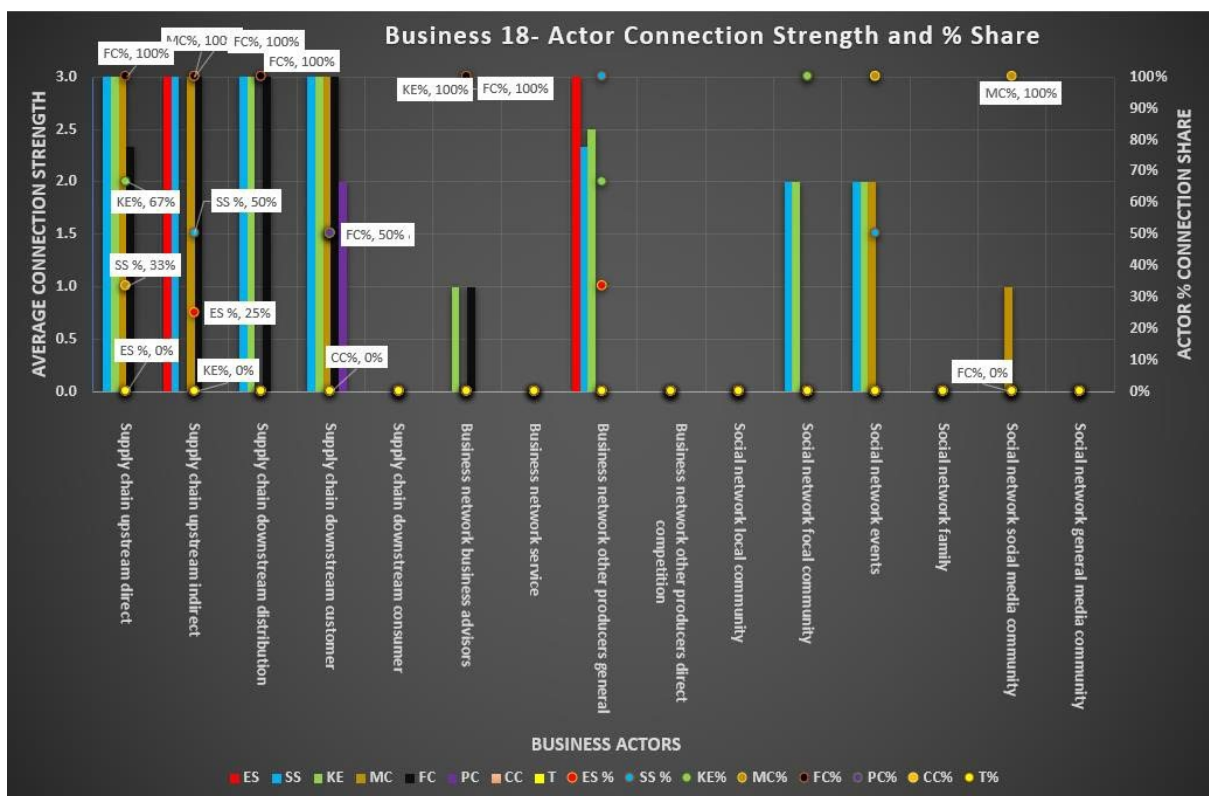
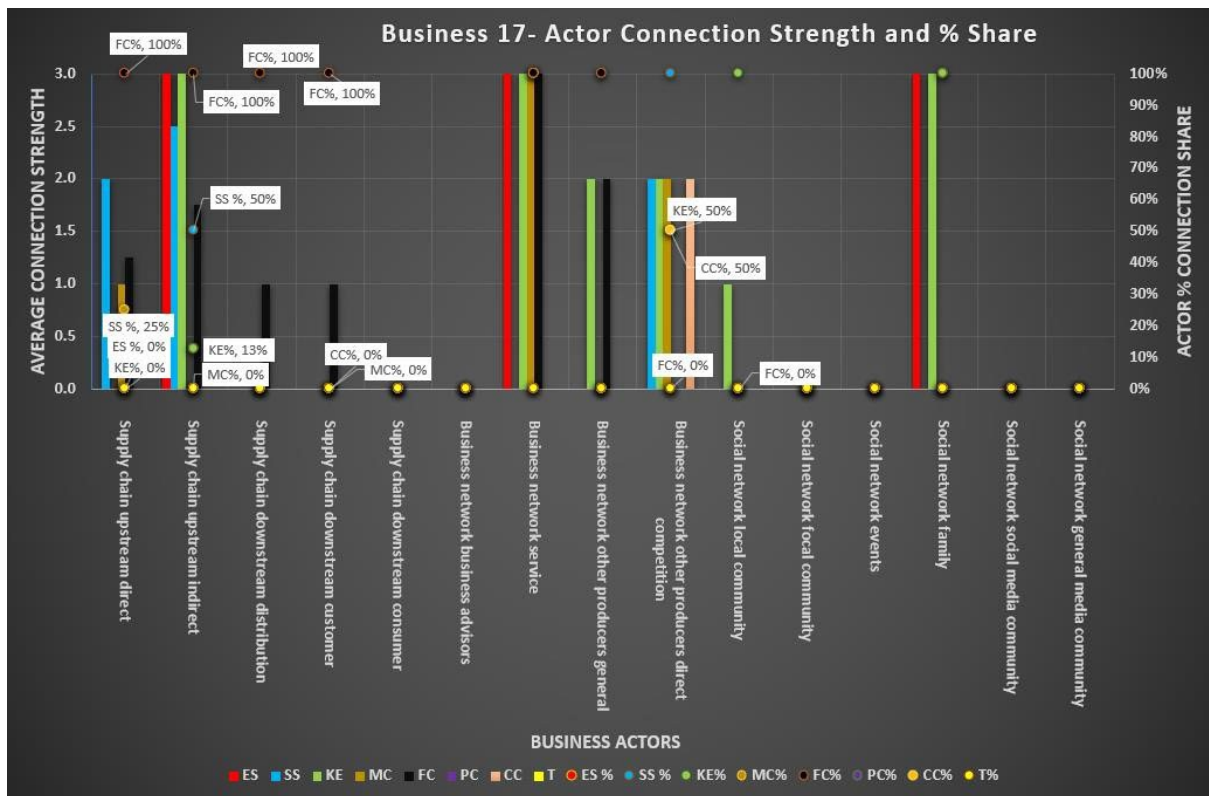


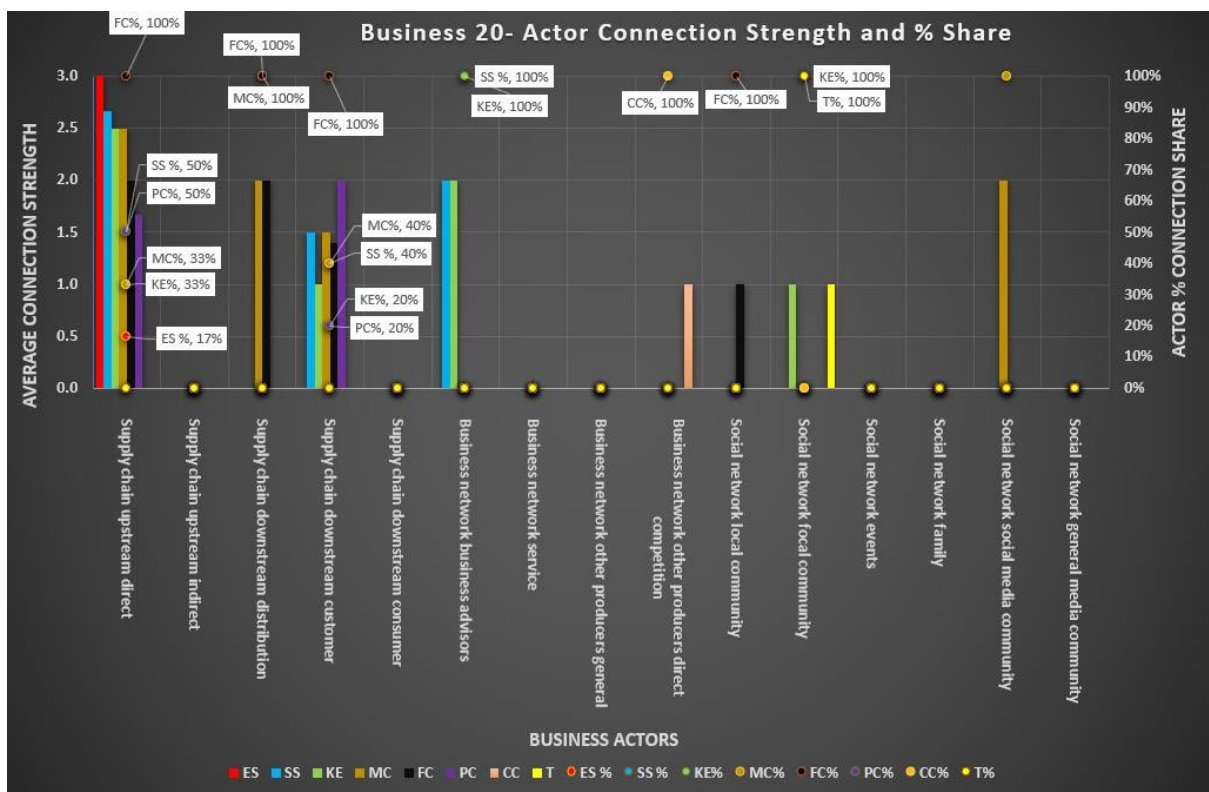
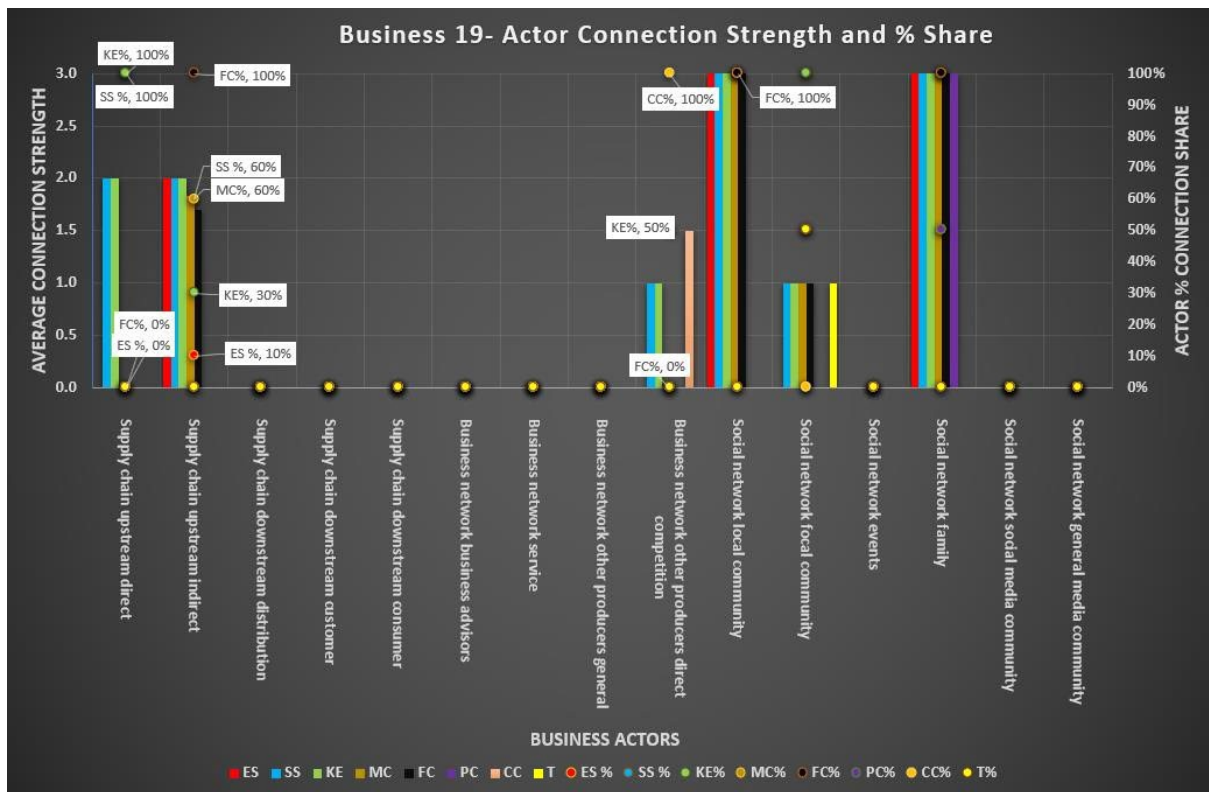












8.2.6 Research question 1

Example comparative analysis between businesses B16 and B20

Actor connection	Financial connection	Non-financial connection	Comments
Supply chain Upstream direct	-FC: B16 cited one connection, compared to all actors displaying FC with B20. This is a misrepresentation, however, with B16 overlooking other FCs. -MC: not apparent in any of the actor relationships for B16. Whereas, for B20, it made up 33% of their actor connections. These were Elmore Court Estate Farm and B12, averaging a fairly strong 2.5 strength for MC, the former of whom list B20 on their menus and as an option for their wedding celebrations. B12 also sells their gelato in the café and helps promote them on social media. -PC: Only B20 had PC with any of its actors, at 50% of this group as, whilst flavour ingredients are sourced from a variety of businesses, not all make the product together (such as the Gin distillery). The local honey supplier and B12 both have PC with B20, the latter having made a brownie gelato which is sold at both establishments, a connection which is also neutral. B20 use brownies instead of flakes on their gelato, which has become a signature. B12 described the relationship as “Really lovely... I've been around there for a cup of tea, talking about whether they could supply our butter at one point, but it would be too much for them... we'll like share ideas”, suggesting PC can be more than a financially based connection, including advice and support. ‘Other business collaborations for flavours’, listed as one actor, also has PC but weak (1), bringing down the average PC to c.1.6.	-ES: only one actor from each business displayed this connection, out of three for B16 (33%) and six for B20 (17%). Both instances were at strength 3. For B16 this was Jonathan crump cheese and the EC is likely to be due to the regular purchase of piglets from them by B16. Crump, incidentally, was also the only FC connection B16 discussed, again, due to the purchase of piglets. For B20, the EC is with the neighbouring Elmore Fruit Farm from whom they use fruit in their gelato. -SS: this was the only connection all B16 upstream direct actors enjoyed, at an average strength of just over 2.5, most likely because these connections contribute to the pigs, either by supplying the animals or contributing to their feed (Bespoke Brewery provides spent grains and another local cheesemaker provides cheese for their feed) and so the relationship is regular. SS seems to be coupled with KE in these instances, with the local cheesemaker and Jonathan Crump cheese both having KE with B16, the former at a neutral (2) strength and the latter at full strength (3) (which makes sense considering they only buy pedigree pigs and certain knowledge is required). As both the local cheesemaker and the brewery effectively supply by-products to B16, KE between them is arguably not expected from this relationship, so for it to exist with the local cheesemaker is a positive finding. In contrast, B20 only enjoyed SS with 50% of the actors in this category, which is the second greatest proportion of connection after FC (at 100%). Elmore Court Estate, Elmore Fruit Farm, and the local honey supplier all had an average strength of over 2.5. Again, SS seems to be entwined with KE regarding the fruit farm: “So, he'll let us know when he's got a punnet of something, and he's always bringing new different types of fruit by as well. So, fruit I've never even heard of” contributing to a mutually beneficial relationship: “so we take a lot off his hands, which works brilliantly for him and works great for us as well.” Their local honey supplier is the other business contributing to the 33% KE. For both, the KE is incoming rather than bidirectional, whereas the SS is bidirectional.	Here, the strengths of connections for both businesses with their actors are generally quite strong. The difference occurs when looking at the percentage of actors displaying each connection type.
Supply chain Upstream indirect			

Supply chain downstream distribution	-Both businesses displayed similar neutral strengths (between 2 and 2.4) of FC and MC with actors here. The potential for MC for B20 may increase when their outlet in Gloucester Food Dock gains following.	-Here, B16 had three actors: two markets and a food festival. B20 had one actor: Gloucester Food Dock. Neither business displayed ES, SS, KE with their actors in this category. However, B16 develops SS with consumers at the markets, but that was beyond the realms of the business network.	
	-Neither business displayed PC or T with their actors here.		
Supply chain downstream customer	-FC: B16 displayed much stronger FC with its actors here than B20, although both businesses had financial transactions with all actors in this group.	-ES: Four businesses had ES with B16 (57%), compared to none of B20's actors.	B16 had seven actors here with generally high strength connections, and B20 had five actors with generally lower strength connections.
	-MC: 40% of B20's actors displayed MC with them, weakly, at 1.5, with Gloucester Services.	-SS: Six businesses (86% of actors) enjoyed SS with B16. 40% of B20's actors displayed SS with them, the same percentage as for MC, fairly weakly at 1.5; both existed in their relationship with Gloucester Services.	
	-B20's highest strength connection was for PC, which they had with Gloucester Services: they have "regular discussions around flavours and seasonality and we've talked about the possibility of incorporating some of their supply products into our gelatos", so this may become stronger in the future.	-KE: only one actor displayed this with each business. B16 displayed strong KE and PC (3) with Speech House Hotel: "every year the Forest Food Festival, the head chef of the Speech House and me, we do a double act... choose a certain product... talk about it, and he prepares it on the stage and that sort of thing". Unsurprisingly, they also had strong ES, SS, MC, and FC with them. For B20, their only KE relationship was inbound and weak, with the Mid Counties co-op, with whom they also had and inbound weak SS relationship.	
Supply chain downstream consumer			None of the Farmer Producer businesses had any actors in this category, no charity connections or donations to community organisations. This is unlike other business categories which display such actor connections.
Business network business advisors	No financial connections were mentioned for this actor group.	B16 did not have any actors here, and B20 had only one, The Growth Hub, mentioned by a number of the business interviewees as a useful actor. Predictably, they exhibited KE but also SS, both at a neutral strength of 2. Equally, B20 mentioned how the nature of all family members working in the same business meant each brought different skills and less outside advice was needed; his brother-in-law, for instance, was responsible for marketing/photography. This reflects intra-business connections.	Despite B16 not listing any advisors here, they did mention many occasions where various people in their community had given them informal advice or help, such as "A local farmer, she came and scanned our sheep for us the other day", but they did not come under the more formal realm of business advisors which they had to seek out.

Business network service	With these actors, B16 has neutral (2) FC, who have the same values as they do.	With these actors, B16 has neutral SS, who have the same values as they do.	B20 presumably doesn't have such connections because they do all processes required for the product on the farm and do not require abattoir or butchery services that B16 requires.
Business network other producers general	Two out of the three actors B16 had here displayed strong (3) FC and MC connections.	Only B16 had actors here: Charles Martell cheese, Forest Bakehouse, and Harts Barn. All had strength 3 ES, being described as friends giving emotional support. All except the Bakehouse had 3 strength SS also.	
Business network other producers direct competition	-CC: Here, B16 listed only 'other pastoral farms' as competition. Clearly, within this there could be numerous farms competing with them- the number is unknown. As such, to compare them with the three actors of B20 has is unfair. For B20, their three consisted of Cherry Moo, Walls, and Winstones, all of which had only weak strength CC due to the different markets they were targeting or the different product they sold. For instance, Cherry Moo, is a small local ice cream producer: "a lot of it is home based...more on the wholesale sort of supply. Doesn't have a shop necessarily." This differs from their business who are a larger family run farm producing gelato from their own cows rather than buying the milk in; their customer base are restaurants, hotels and individuals. On the other hand, "Winstone up at Minchinhampton common, they've been there 96-97 years, so they are big...They're a big all over the county country kind of business" not small batch production of the kind that B20 produce. Whilst Winstones as a brand "command an affection around a lot of people" B20 has its own followers, concentrating on more the story-focussed, local, and sometimes lactose-intolerant market: "just by nature of our name we are a different cultural experience to Walls' or Winstones or something like that". They talked of the different levels of competition throughout the country, direct competition being higher in London, for example, which is why they don't sell there.		

Social network local community	-FC: B20 has one weak FC actor connection here (local visiting clubs and schools).	-ES, SS, KE: B16: With many of these, they swap food: “we’ll sit here sometimes and everything on our plate is either from us or within ½ mile radius...the bread from the Bakehouse, veggies from our nextdoor neighbour, our meat, our eggs.” Some help with farm jobs such as getting a harness on a ewe, display strong ES, SS and KE. 86% of the actors shared SS with B16, whilst more than half exchanged knowledge with them.	Whilst B20 has one actor here, with a weak FC connection (local visiting clubs and schools), B16 has seven, consisting of the farm next door, local farmers, Perringrove railway, Puzzlewood, Helen’s manor, Lizzie the local smallholder, and the Wilderness centre (who originally gave them the land).
	For B16, MC, FC occurred with Helens Manor.		
	PC: B16 displayed this strongly (3) with the farm next door.		
Social network focal community	-MC: B16 had one actor here, with weak (1) MC.	-KE: for B16, Knowledge (neutral) was exchanged with 75% of these (except tourism association) and was given rather than being bidirectional to prospective smallholder businesses and was neutrally bidirectional for the breeders’ societies. For B20, with Made in Gloucestershire, they had weak KE.	B16 had four actors here: the Forest of Dean tourism association, prospective businesses, Gloucester old spot breeders club, and the Shropshire sheep breeding society.
	-T: B20 had one actor here with weak T.	-SS: for B16, both breeders’ societies also enjoyed neutral strength SS with B16 (50% of this group).	B20, conversely, didn’t mention any society relating to the breed of cattle or A2 related clubs. Their only actor in this category was Made in Gloucestershire.
Social network events			Neither business held any events. B16 justified this by their locational deficiencies: “we don’t really hold anything here, cause obviously the access is not...we’re not set up for it” and security worries: “we did get broken into once, so we don’t want to sort of advertise where we are too much” because they don’t live on site.
			B20 provides gelato for other peoples’ events like for weddings at Elmore Court and used to have a shop but now don’t. However, they might hold events in the future at their new premises at Gloucester food dock.

Social network family			Neither business has any actors here. B20 is wholly dependent on family but the interviewee didn't cite family on diagram; perhaps they assumed this connection.
Social network social media community	-MC: B16 lists weak MC by Facebook and Instagram as their one actor here. However, this has caused issues, and this actor may cease to be in their network. They are asking people to do google reviews instead of social media ones "because of what Facebook are doing". They expanded on this: "how do I say it, the vegan brigade ... we had an issue recently where somebody reported us, not because of anything we'd done wrong, but because we produce meat, and we had a warning that our Facebook page was going to be removed. Now we have absolutely no idea where it came from". However, they suspect that it was a comment that someone else posted: "Somebody called one of our lambs a kamikaze lamb because it got stuck in the gap...It could have been a Facebook algorithm that picked up that word and sort of sent an automatic warning or something". They now feel vulnerable on social media. B20 also had one actor here, describing them merely as 'Social media'. They were a neutral strength connection due to their importance for their marketing "a lot of our kind of marketing promotions all been done by social media, word of mouth", so clearly their customers are providing a social media community.		
Social network general media community	All B16's actors here had weak MC and three of them had weak KE also (not newspapers). However, the Antiques Roadtrip and BSL programme were 'one-offs', "one of the chefs on BSL, programme... came and cooked in our polytunnel with our pork" and so arguably do not constitute part of their regular network. Their radio interviews, although not a regular occurrence, have occurred on multiple occasions talking about farming interviews like bird flu.	See MC section on the left.	B20 had no actors here, whereas B16 had four: newspapers, radio Gloucestershire, Antiques road trip, BSL programme.

8.2.7 Research question 2

Benefits of ECV from a business perspective

Value	Statement	Exemplar quote
<i>Financial</i>		
Financial only	Customers having an ECV for certain products can benefit the business producing them, for the basic reason that they can remain afloat.	"It's valuable to me because it keeps me in business. Haha!" (B12) and customers keep returning (cited by all).
	Having a stronger connection/respect can also mean consumers are prepared to pay more for the product. Adding to this the journey to reach the SME and the research into its seasonal opening times, the financial outlay is even more impressive.	B11 discussed how paying "£5 for a bottle of milk" shows the value they give to it: "the spending talks...you value something if you pay more for it."
	ECV for one product can lead to ECV for others. For example, despite B11 not making money from selling milk from another business, the ECV for the milk draws in consumers who can then be exposed to other goat products like the meat they produce, providing opportunity to develop ECV for this too.	B11 sells milk which is produced by another farm: "It's also a driver to our website is our milk...making money on milk, especially selling it, I haven't worked that one out yet."
Marketing	Businesses have also found that consumer ECV for products can contribute to marketing efforts, chiefly by word of mouth, customers as marketers. This links with resilience, with businesses having many repeat and regular customers.	Those participating in the cookery classes of B15 have enjoyed them so much, that they have recommended them personally to others; they described participants of a recent class being "recommended by the people that (host the AirBnB)". She explains the importance of word of mouth: "is massive, especially with small business and especially being quite, you know, niche like I am... the long term effect does ripple back in a positive way to me." B12 finds people are "passionate", "being ambassadors... for our product."
	Some consumers go further and take ownership of a product (discussed further below) and provide a form of free advertising for businesses. This as an interesting extension from valuing the product itself as it suggests a connection with and value of the business itself; perhaps customers feel part of a community of regular supporters, or perhaps they are taking ownership of the product, creating their own posts on social media.	B12 was told "one of the biggest assets that anyone can have is customers that are willing to be fans and go out there and tell other people about it". This links with identity as it suggests that ECV of the product has become part of the image they give to the wider world. As such, a benefit for the consumer is also provided.

	The characters of the people running the business can be one of the best forms of marketing. Business demonstrations or appearances at farm shops strengthens the ECV the existing customers have for business products and provides opportunities for education (see below). This may benefit the business by potential new customers witnessing the ECV others have for their products.	B5 has found one of the best forms of marketing is herself, and consumers desire a connection with her. "So, every Saturday I'm doing tastings in different parts of the country ...it's great because I can ...speak to their customers...I have people saying, 'can you sign my bag?!'...Which was so so funny...But they love the fact that realising that you're the maker and and, yeah, sharing that story".
	Exposure is a form of marketing. The Distributor businesses sell the products of other businesses. This benefits the producer with direct sales, but also the Distributor, where consumers know they will gain access to these high ECV products if passing. Exposure per se does not guarantee ECV, but the familiarity provides the potential for it, when translated into use.	B6 finds that with certain products that customers have developed ECV for, like the sausage rolls, "we know for a fact that they'll go online and find that producer and make a connection with them...customers who are a fan of our approach and how we work with producers et cetera and so yeah, they definitely buy into it." B12 also provides exposure "championing other small businesses that maybe don't have the same kind of platform as us." B2 discussed this on a larger-scale level: "think it's to do with building brands awareness and recognition. You know there are brands similar to us like Drambuie; it's like an old-fashioned brand that sort of makes a honey whiskey of sorts. And people mention it because they know it, they feel it's familiar. And so, you know, it's very emotive and they clearly remember it." Equally, "the more people try (their product) and the more often people are exposed to it, the more they see it in the supermarket or see it around or see great branding... the more connected they feel to that brand".
Business resilience	Customer ECV for business products can create loyalty to that business. Such loyalty can mean businesses are resilient during crises.	For B3, some of their consumers are "3rd generation customers in some families" and "some ... will buy the same thing in day in day out" providing a level of security to the business. Indeed, B12 also witnesses consumer loyalty associated with ECV or other alter-values for their products. She describes a business friend, Tubby Toms: "because his fans are so ridiculously loyal ...and really engaged foodies", they continue to support, even during times of crisis. Equally, because the products of B13 invoked such emotions within his customers, he felt that the pandemic benefitted his bakery business: because they have a French bakery, many customers "come to us because...it's a bit of France", to make them feel like they were on holiday. His products became a treat and fulfilled a desire to experience a different culture, "which is the French culture of bread and pastries". The desire to re-live food memories or experience the same emotion when eating French food made B13 resilient during the pandemic, counteracting other difficulties arising due to it.
Food security	SMEs can facilitate food security for the less affluent, allowing them to be resilient and independent.	B17 described a few customers who were: "fairly hard up. And I ...you can tell by the way they shop, but they can live very well because they have our education or whatever... and they'll come up and they'll buy a bit of beef for stewing or a bit of mince or breast of lamb. And they come and get some spuds, not the washed or the, you know, whatever... two or three grades here... just spuds, some veg. And they spend a fiver and they've gone out with a lot of food. And they know how to cook".
<i>Non-financial</i>		
Connective community	Consumer ECV provides opportunities for connective community, from consumer perspectives.	Consumer relationship with the business can also provide community, started by serving consumers coffees, for instance.

	For consumers, friendships can occur through the businesses.	B15 described how residential courses, where people would stay for a few days, meant that “they started WhatsApp groups and like all kept in touch with each other...there's definitely, you know, an emotional value added, an emotional aspect of it, as well as community.”
	Consumers feel valued and aids their mental health.	From a daily perspective, a sense of community culture and customers feeling valued was described by B19, who explained that the customers they regularly chat with makes them feel valued “because we remember them, their likes and dislikes”, something which is likely to be quite rare nowadays. B13 products fulfilled consumer desire for their holiday ‘fix’ of French baking during the pandemic. B19 described how “as soon as they saw us, you saw peoples’ faces light up as soon as they saw us... it was a very vital kind of link to the outside world and to to what they wanted... you’re making, sort of making someone’s day that little bit special, she said the great coffee you’re presenting, and you have a chat to them... there was people coming up to us two, three times a day, every single day.”
	The personal growth of consumers, facilitated by the business, also maintains the relationship between consumer and business.	B10 sells in their shop Little Dean chocolate (who started by attending a course at B10): “I can promote her and her products. And I can tell the story of her product, which then makes people want to go and buy it.” The ECV of the participant for the course led her to create her own products, providing her with a business and B10 with a supplier. B18 explained how “people have grown with us and I think they now feel very much part of (B18) and the growth that we’ve had...we still see them regularly and actually we’ve made some very good friends through this as well... Which is, which is a nice culture to be part of.”
	Consumer ECV provides opportunities for connective community, from business perspectives. Many businesses meet other businesses due to hunting for products which reflect their values and resulting friendships can form community and support.	Often there is beneficial mutual understanding between businesses. For B18, “a big part of our culture is who we choose our suppliers into the business...In terms of bread, we use the best products that we can, (B13), it’s the best products around. So, we choose our suppliers very carefully... We do it because it’s the right thing to do.” B18 became friends with B13 and B11, by supplying each other’s products in their establishments or by selling together during the pandemic.
	Businesses have ECV for their product but also for those of others’, especially if it involved working with others.	B12 also advocates high quality food and ingredients, “offering a cafe with feeling, with integrity about where we get our food from”. During the pandemic, B12 collaborated with other businesses for joint pop-up events, and ECV was developed due to being part of a network of businesses.
	Being part of a network provides personal enrichment.	B9, who often sells at markets, and “when I have weekends off... I have been missed. I’ve been told I’ve been missed. Even the stall holders say the market’s not the same when you’re not here cause there’s a big gap and you, we can’t go and get the coffee from you or something like that.” This benefits B9 on a personal level, his business as well as his product having ECV. B13 also suggested a more emotional benefit to him, there being “the prestige of bringing to the community here something to be proud of locally” which would be missed if it wasn’t there. B6 explained “for me... farm shops and delis are, you know, the people there... It’s all about the quality of the product and you... get what you pay for. And they’re not about quibbling about price... it’s all about the flavour.” With one distributor “I feel as if I’m part and this is what I always say to them, part of the Dursley family...and it’s not a case of I make the granola for them... I’m very much a partnership there.”

Knowledge exchange	There were many instances where businesses were able to educate consumers due to the enthusiasm the business has for their products (which comes from their ECV). This broadens consumer horizons and provides greater business for businesses.	B5 provides tastings at different distributors and many existing customers who already have an ECV for their other products attend. B6 can then introduce unknown “products like the cacao, orange and baobab, where they’ve never tasted baobab before”. This “gets them trying things that they wouldn’t before and and they go, ‘Oh my God, this is amazing. This is delicious’...I think your enthusiasm ends up being quite contagious with it.” B4 also described how her husband “just loves what he does and that comes across. So, people come in to chat to us and that sort of thing”, transferring a passion for other businesses’ products to their consumers.
Business identity	People can live their values through their business, holding ECV for their products by virtue of the fact they started a business producing them.	B13, for instance, started “to please myself, so that means you get decent bread for me” and posited that “People need bread and I believe our bread should be the bread”. Thus, his business is a manifestation of his values. Equally, with B16, described earlier. B12 believes “it’s not just cake, it’s not just brownies”, products holding a greater connective capacity, and customer ECV for B12’s brownies “gives me a sense of purpose and validation for what I’m doing”, demonstrating that they indeed are ‘not just brownies’.
	Interestingly, occasionally, businesses found that financial necessity catalysed values previously unknown to them.	B11 described the pandemic, when “there was a lot of small producers like ourselves who were struggling”, so they decided that as “we’ve got... this brand and nothing stopping us selling...anything goat, so let’s sell anything goat. Go and help other producers, help ourselves... you know, break those barriers... It meant that we were like a one stop shop for everything goat and so it was a nice story, supporting other people”. B11 found that working with other local businesses is “lovely and... really felt good for the soul to be honest with you, as it still does now.”
Consumer identity	Consumers may develop ECV for products through family continuity.	B4 described how “So, grandparents had it (milk) years ago. Parents have had it, and their son or daughters had it (at home). Now they’re son or daughters had it. So that’s the third generation”. This becomes entwined with family identity and normality, giving emotional stability throughout generations.
	Other businesses have found that they enable consumers to live their values virtually. They thus tap into parts of people’s identity that they cannot live, providing them an outlet to vicariously follow a life which fits better with their identity.	B16 described “people always say, cause I think, ‘oh am I posting too many pictures of lambs and this and that’: ‘no, we love watching your life’, because they live it through us”.

8.2.8 Research question 3

Microbusiness and SME roles in nurturing ECV

Factor	Statement	Example and quote
Memories	Early age experiences create memories to look back on.	B9 enjoys selling his coffee at markets due to the involvement you can have in peoples' lives. One family's daughters help him make coffee: "their daughters come round and help me make their mum a coffee... So, they get some milk out of it or something... it's just great." B13 described how the experience and taste of his food imprinted into consumer memories: "People will remember ...how messy it was...but they couldn't stop eating it...then kids will know... when every Sunday dad comes back with the sourdough loaf... somehow they'll print in their mind, and ...they'll like the taste."
	Businesses and their products can become part of daily and special experiences.	B12: "core memories have been developed with our customers".
	Businesses can bring back memories for consumers and link them to past experiences	B4 created a link for a customer to the past and to what he valued as a child; his memory expectations being fulfilled made him a regular and therefore his habits have changed regarding milk: "a proper Forester" said "I've heard... you got milk that actually tastes like milk" and upon trying, described it thus: "brilliant! It does, like I remember it as a kid!" B1: consumers described how "my mum used to make this pastry". B2 suggests that "people crave food from their childhood" after "nurtur(ing)" a food memory. He argues this is why their honey whiskey is so popular: "they might have had a hot toddy when they were younger. Or they often say, you know, 'I used to sit on my Grandma's lap and she'd give me a sip of her whiskey' or something like that".
Ownership	Consumers can take ownership of a business product by establishing a connection with the business or product	B20 described how some consumers "come and take it in", taking photos of the cows on the farm, taking an interest in seeing where the gelato is made, giving consumers "a bit of an ownership of the cows in a way" and providing a connection to the animals and the product they would not otherwise have had. B12 suggests that without this connection to the product or experience of eating it "they wouldn't share it on Instagram". They can make the photo theirs, establishing that connection with the business owner, and others then ask questions and comment on their posts, which makes them feel good. B12 described regular customers who had developed an acronym for their favourite brownie: "'SCMS' for salted caramel, middle slice"
	Consumers can take ownership of a business product by having a pride in finding it	B7 strongly believes that "we still have a need to...hunt and gather" our food. By going to the vending machine on their farm, customers have hunted down the food they buy from it, and "gather the products." She differentiates this with shopping in a supermarket and does not believe customers feel the same hunting experience. B7: "Especially if you're doing a dinner party or even a meal, you like to have a story to tell".

	Consumers can take ownership of a business product by helping create it (although not referring to product co-creation)	When B10 gave a class about chocolate, one participant “was so fired up by chocolate” that she went the next step, “tak(ing) that journey further”, and attended classes where she learned to roast the bean and turn it into chocolate. They now have their own business producing chocolates, some of which she sells in the shop of B10. B10: “We had a ... group of youngsters ...we were doing French onion soup and this one lad who's probably 14-15... getting to know his own ability of being able to say what he wanted to say. But he came up to me and said 'Well, miss, I don't like onions, I don't like onion soup, I'm not going to do any of this, and I'm certainly not going to taste it!'. 'That's fine...just chop and do what you need to do'. By the end of it, he tasted it, and it blew his head off, the taste, how amazing it was, and he actually came up to me afterwards and said, 'oh miss, I think that French onion soup is the best thing I've ever tasted.'”
Attachment	Developing attachment to food can lead to new food habits	B5 finds that many people discover her cereal when staying at a holiday cottage in Gloucestershire. The cereal is likely to have ECV associated with it due to being consumed during a holiday (providing the holiday was enjoyable!). B3's clotted cream is made with their cream, but an outside business actually makes it, so he tells loyal consumers “So, you've still got part of (B3) in you”, which consumers appear to appreciate.
	Developing attachment can lead to using the business to express emotions	B12 provides brownies not just day-to-day but also for special occasions like birthdays: “I kind of believe like it's not just cake, it's not just brownies. It's like it's...I don't know, it's joy”.
	Disrupting attachment can impact the consumer	B14 found that through changing their bread supplier, consumers “have real strong emotional reactions to like a change in their routine”. Consumers visit daily for croissant and coffee but questioned the staff when discovering it was made by a different supplier. As he pointed out “it's not that one croissant is any better or worse than the other one. It's just different”.
Raising the bar	Consumers experience a higher level of product quality which they judge other comparative foods by.	B11 describes how this first develops: “their first bite into a goat burger... How great was that? That glass of milk sets the bar.” B11 finds it difficult ordering meat whilst dining out because their own steaks “are just sublime”. B12 overhears consumers talking between themselves saying “yeah, but that's not a Hettie's brownie, is it?” B16 describes a similar phenomenon: “once they've had our sausages for example, they won't eat anybody else's because of the flavour...you can taste the difference”. B13's best received comment was from consumers who went on holiday to France and said “ohh there were three bakeries there, but none of them were as good as yours”.
	Consumers experience a higher level of shopping experience which they judge other shopping experiences by.	B4: “people come in the shop happy. This isn't a shop you come to because you have to come shopping”.

Factor	Statement	Example and quote
Changing food business priorities	Value alignment: Some businesses stand up against accreditations or don't agree they represent the highest quality products	B13 explains he is "suspicious" of the process of applying for them, sending produce off to an unknown place, for people to taste: "the thing is, I'd rather to be found". He explains that due to the GFF needing to recover their costs, business must pay for applying, so "it doesn't feel like the best are gonna be rewarded, you know?". B18: "realistically, a lot of people win and a lot of people have that". B9 discussed a customer business of theirs: "I sell coffee to a man who makes liqueurs and he set up a business about two years ago. And that was the first thing he did. He made some batches and sent it off. And err, got a stamp on it, it's going to help you sell it. Well, he still buys about, I don't know, only two kilos (of coffee) every four or five months, so obviously hasn't done that good!"
	Value alignment: Consumer values influence business to change or encourage them to live by their values	B4 discussed how her milk supplier previously used standard plastic milk cartons due to the perceived costs of using glass bottles. However, many customers could not equate the idea of buying unhomogenised milk in plastic bottles, thus the supplier had to reconsider. B4 provided the support and platform required: "well, just do them as reusable; see if they work, you can trial it here". Consumers pay a pound deposit, and B4 gets all the bottles back.
	Value alignment: Businesses may develop/change their values in order to meet customer requirements, thereby creating their own new values.	B19 now takes care of their customers and community by informing families if their relatives have not made their usual shop, dropping off food at elderly customers' homes, as well as understanding each regular customer's preferences and informing customers when they are about to make an order for one of their favourite products.
	Accreditations are increasing in popularity amongst businesses	The Guild of Fine Foods has grown massively since 1994, with 100 entries and 12 judges, to 2021, with over 14,000 entries, and 355 experts (during the pandemic- usually this reaches 500) judging the products (Guild of Fine Food, 2023). B9 described a fellow business: "that was the first thing he did" (apply for accreditations).
	Accreditations are popular amongst consumers	74% of respondents of a 2022 YouGov survey agreed they were a sign of quality, and 31% said they would be persuaded to buy a product because it had a Great Taste Award (Guild of Fine Food, 2023). Distributor B4 finds that products with Great Taste stars "holds more sway (with consumers) ... even to the point, I know we're more confident to promote them if it's, something's got a 2 or a 3". B7 felt that "within Gloucestershire, everybody knows us... If you go outside the country, then people don't know you, so then you might need something else to help draw them in."
Changing eating habits	Business can change the eating preferences of consumers	B16: "we've got vegetarians who buy from us. They're vegetarian because of the animal welfare and ours is the only meat that they will eat".

		B6: “we’d do very well if we actually change their values but I think we definitely have the opportunity to engage with people and make them think and perhaps reinforce the thought process.”
	Businesses can contribute to consumer health-related changes	Physical health: For B20’s consumers, the A2 milk has “kind of like reopened dairy to them in a way that they might not otherwise had previously, which has been thrilling kind of to see”. Mental health: B18 found during the pandemic there occurred a “cultural kind of change shift that people had” and explained that “No one needs to go out for a coffee... people need to make that choice to go out for coffee... they’re only gonna make that choice if they enjoy it and it enriches their life”.
	Businesses can contribute to neophilia	B14 remembered when they had put gurnard with clams in a bisque sauce on the specials menu, something that “nobody had chosen it, it’s probably like too difficult...” and not the right market, but the one person who ordered it was a 12 year old boy, who proceeded to finish the dish with great enjoyment. B11 complains that their main product is always either a special on a restaurant menu, or people have it once/twice a year as part of a treat or celebration. They find it difficult to change the culture around goat meat because “goats themselves are a marmite effect”. In 2023, they enlisted the aid of a nutritionist to help promote the virtues of goat meat, much of the problem being marketing.
	Businesses may change the way people eat or their food-related activities	B11 host various pick your own activities during the year. They are one of the few places that “never charged an entry fee” for such events but they are “now at that stage where we’re like, we probably should because ... you can watch out the window and you have adults and kids and they absolutely ... scoffing themselves”.
Ownership and empowerment	Businesses provide consumers with knowledge	B1 sees those in her cookery lessons “reevaluating their culture at home to instead of like just buying takeaways and having that on the run, actually having family meals together”. Her customer base consists of many “mums who are fed up with doing the same recipes” or those trying to find recipes that are going to be suitable for their children “so that they can enjoy food together”. B10 has taught classes on fermentation for many years and believes such a change in the kitchen is long-term: “a longer-term thing...a lot of these people will then go on a fermentation journey and learn other forms of fermentation such as curing and preservation”. B18’s coffee courses focus on different points of the extraction: “someone actually extracting the coffee and the difference that makes, and something about milk, milk texturing and building drinks”, allowing consumers to create speciality coffees at home. B16 demonstrates how businesses can empower life changes: “interestingly, we have quite a few people contact us who say, ‘we want to do what you’re doing; can we come and visit your farm?’... ‘we want to get a couple of pigs, can we come and see your set up, can we come and pick your brains?’”.

8.3 Supporting material for chapter 6

8.3.1 Survey design

p.2 Section 1- About you Jump

Add item

1 Which age range do you fall within? Please click on the appropriate age range

18-30

31-40

41-50

Show all (7)

Add item

Add item

2 What gender do you identify as?

Female

Male

Other

Add item

3 What cultural background do you identify as? Please click the appropriate background. Jump

White/ Caucasian

Asian/ Asian British

Black/African/ Caribbean/ Black British

Mixed/ Multiple ethnic groups

Other ethnic group

Show less

Add item

Add item

4 Which county in the UK do you live in?

Add item

Add item

5 What is your nationality/ where are your main cultural roots?

Add item

Add item

p.3 Buying food Jump

Add item

6 What % of your weekly food shopping do you purchase at supermarkets (including online deliveries from supermarkets)?

Add item

Add item

7 What % of your weekly food shopping do you purchase at food microbusinesses/Small and Medium sized Enterprises (SMEs) (including farm shops, butchers, bakers, grocers, farmers' markets, small shops and online delivery from local businesses or local box schemes)?

Add item

Add item

8 When buying food from supermarkets, what emotions does it ignite? Please click 4 to 5 of the most relevant descriptions.

Wish to shop somewhere else Disgust Disapproval Anxiety Stressed Confusion Impatience Responsibility Excitement Respect Nostalgia

Connectedness Fun Spiritual Individualism Loyalty Satisfaction Happiness Belonging Imagination Inspiration for a meal

Inspiration for inviting friends for food Delight Intrigue Confidence Fulfilment Adventurous Scared Guilt Challenged Calmness Frustration

Reluctance Respect for the food Energetic Secure Other Show less

Add item

a If you selected Other, please specify:

Add item

413

Jump

b
Do these emotions mean you are:

Less likely to buy this food from here again
It makes no difference
More likely to buy this food from here again

Add item

Add item

c
When buying food from food microbusinesses/SMEs, what emotions does it ignite? Please click up to 4 or 5 of the most relevant descriptions.

Wish to shop somewhere else Disgust Disapproval Anxiety Stressed Confusion Impatience Responsibility Excitement Respect Nostalgia
Connectedness Fun Spiritual Individualism Loyalty Satisfaction Happiness Belonging Imagination Inspiration for a meal
Inspiration for inviting friends for food Delight Intrigue Confidence Fulfilment Adventurous Scared Guilt Challenged Calmness Frustration
Reluctance Respect for the food Energetic Secure Other Show less

Add item

i T
If you selected Other, please specify:

Add item

ii
Do these emotions mean you are:

Less likely to buy this food from here again
It makes no difference
More likely to buy this food from here again

Add item

Add item

Add item

Add item

p.4
Cooking together

Add item

9
Do you cook food most days?

Yes
No

Add item

Add item

10
Does cooking food day-to-day ignite any emotion?

Definitely not
Not much
Neutral
Mild emotion
Strong emotion
Show less

Add item

11

☒ ☐

Please click up to 4 or 5 of the most relevant emotions when cooking day-to-day

Anxiety

Stress

Guilt

Confusion

Impatience

Boredom

Satisfaction

Happiness

Excitement

Contentment

Connectedness

Nostalgia

Fun

Spiritual

Freedom

Adventurous

De-stress/Calm

Respect for the food

Responsibility

Fulfillment

Belonging

Enjoyment

Learning

Willingness

Scared

Challenged

Calmness

Frustration

Reluctance

Quiet

Intrigue

Energetic

Secure

Confidence

Other

Show less

Add item

a

T

If you selected Other, please specify:

Add item

Add item

12

☒

Do you cook together with immediate family?

Yes

No

Add item

a

☒

If 'yes', please click on the most appropriate frequency.

Almost never

On special occasions

Once in every 3 months

More than 2 x / month

Only weekends

More than once a week

Once a week

Every day

Show less

Add item

Add item

Add item

Jump

13

☒

Do you cook together with extended family of different generations?

Yes

No

Add item

a

☒

If 'yes', please click on the most appropriate frequency.

Almost never

On special occasions

Once in every 3 months

More than 2 x / month

Only weekends

More than once a week

Once a week

Every day

Show less

Add item

Add item

b

☒

Do you cook together with friends?

Yes

No

Add item

If 'yes', please click on the most appropriate frequency.

Almost never

On special occasions

Once in every 3 months

More than 2 x / month

Only weekends

More than once a week

Once a week

Every day

[Show less](#)

Add item

Add item

Add item

Do you cook with people in your area/community groups?

Yes

No

Add item

ii

When you cook with others whom you do not normally cook with, do you buy or cook different foods from normal?

Don't cook with others

Feel reluctant

Only if it's something I know

I like to try

Constantly

Show less

Add item

a

T

If you do, please give details

Add item

Add item

Add item

iii

How often do you cook traditional family recipes? Click on the most appropriate frequency.

Never

Almost never

Once a month

Twice a month

Once a week

More than once a week

Show less

a

When might you cook traditional family recipes?

We don't have traditional family recipes

Whenever I have the time

On special occasions

Whenever I eat with family/extended family

Whenever we have friends round to eat

Other

Show less

Add item

i

T

If you selected Other, please specify:

Add item

Add item

Add item

b

What is a traditional family recipe for you? Please give an example

Add item

Add item

c Rate how much you agree with the following statement: 'Emotions arise when I cook traditional family recipes'

Strongly disagree

Disagree

Neutral

Agree

Strongly agree

Show less

Add item

Add item

d Which of these emotions arises when you cook traditional family recipes? Please click 4 or 5 of the most relevant emotions below.

Enjoyment Adventurous Belonging Learning Willing Impatience Guilt Scared I feel more stressed Challenged I feel less stressed

Happiness Calmness Frustration Reluctant Quiet Respect for the food Respect for the people Responsibility Intrigue Nostalgic

Excitement Energetic Secure Connectedness Fulfilment I appreciate the food more I appreciate the food less Strengthens bonds

Gives deeper meaning to everyday cooking Time is of less consequence A chance to showcase my cookery skills Confident

I want to cook with others more Convivial Other Show less

Add item

i **T** If you selected Other, please specify:

p. 5 Eating together

Add item

14 Do you eat with immediate family?

Yes

No

Add item

a If so, how often?

Almost never

On special occasions

Once in every 3 months

More than 2 x / month

Only weekends

More than once a week

Once a week

Every day

Show less

b How would you rate the healthiness of the food you eat with them?

Not healthy at all

Not that healthy

Neither healthy or unhealthy

Healthy

Very healthy

Show less

Add item

Add item

Add item

15 How does eating with immediate family make you feel?

Not happy at all

Not that happy

Neither happy or unhappy

Happy

Very happy

Show less

Add item

a

Please click on 4 or 5 of the most relevant emotions and phrases

Enjoyment

Adventurous

Belonging

Learning

Willing

Impatience

Guilt

Scared

I feel more stressed

Challenging

I feel less stressed

Happiness

Calmness

Frustration

Reluctant

Quiet

Respect for the food

Respect for the people

Responsibility

Intrigue

Nostalgic

Excitement

Energetic

Secure

Connectedness

Fulfilment

I appreciate the food more

I appreciate the food less

Strengthens bonds

Gives deeper meaning to everyday eating

Time is of less consequence

A chance to develop a new food culture

Confident

I want to eat with others more

I am more likely to have dessert

Convivial

Show less

Add item

Add item

Add item

16

Do you eat with extended family?

Yes

No

Add item

a

If so, how often?

Almost never

On special occasions

Once in every 3 months

More than 2 x / month

Only weekends

More than once a week

Once a week

Every day

Show less

Add item

Add item

b

How would you rate the healthiness of the food you eat with them

Not healthy at all

Not that healthy

Neither healthy or unhealthy

Healthy

Very healthy

Show less

c

How does eating with extended family make you feel?

Not happy at all

Not that happy

Neither happy or unhappy

Happy

Very happy

Show less

Add item

i

Please click on 4 or 5 of the most relevant emotions and phrases

Enjoyment

Adventurous

Belonging

Learning

Willing

Impatience

Guilt

Scared

I feel more stressed

Challenging

I feel less stressed

Happiness

Calmness

Frustration

Reluctant

Quiet

Respect for the food

Respect for the people

Responsibility

Intrigue

Nostalgic

Excitement

Energetic

Secure

Connectedness

Fulfilment

I appreciate the food more

I appreciate the food less

Strengthens bonds

Gives deeper meaning to everyday eating

Time is of less consequence

A chance to develop a new food culture

Confident

I want to eat with others more

I am more likely to have dessert

Convivial

Show less

Add item

Add item

d
Do you eat with friends?
Jump

Yes
No

Add item

i
If 'yes', please click on the most appropriate frequency.

Almost never
On special occasions
Once in every 3 months
More than 2 x / month
Only weekends
More than once a week
Once a week
Every day

Show less

Add item

a
How would you rate the healthiness of the food you eat with them

Not healthy at all
Not that healthy
Neither healthy or unhealthy
Healthy
Very healthy

Show less

b
How does eating with friends make you feel?

Not happy at all
Not that happy
Neither happy or unhappy
Happy
Very happy

Show less

Add item

i
Please click on 4 or 5 of the most relevant emotions and phrases

Enjoyment
Adventurous
Belonging
Learning
Willing
Impatience
Guilt
Scared
I feel more stressed
Challenging
I feel less stressed
Happiness
Calmness
Frustration
Reluctant
Quiet
Respect for the food
Respect for the people
Responsibility
Intrigue
Nostalgic
Excitement
Energetic
Secure
Connectedness
Fulfilment
I appreciate the food more
I appreciate the food less
Strengthens bonds
Gives deeper meaning to everyday eating
Time is of less consequence
A chance to develop a new food culture
Confident
I want to cook with others more
I am more likely to have dessert
Convivial

Show less

Add item

ii
How likely are you to ask your neighbour to eat with you?
Jump

Never
Not that likely
Neutral
Likely
Very likely

Show less

Add item

Add item

iii
Why have you given this response?

I would never invite a neighbour to eat with me.
I'm open to the idea
I have done this before
This occurs every so often
This occurs regularly already
Other

Show less

Add item

a
If you selected Other, please specify:

Add item

e Generally, does your pace of eating change when eating with others you do not normally eat with? Click on the most appropriate answer

- No, it doesn't change
- Yes, I eat more slowly
- Yes, I eat faster

Add item

Add item

Add item

17 Are you happy with the number of times you eat with other people (whether that be at your house, at their house, or out somewhere else)? Click on all the answers that apply to you.

- I would like to eat more regularly with immediate family
- I would like to eat more regularly with extended family
- I would like to eat more regularly with friends
- I would like to eat less regularly with immediate family
- I would like to eat less regularly with extended family
- I would like to eat less regularly with friends
- I am happy with the frequency of eating with immediate family
- I am happy with the frequency of eating with extended family
- I am happy with the frequency of eating with friends
- I would like to find more people to eat with
- Show less

Add item

18 How often do you cook or eat food together with people from other cultures/backgrounds to your own? Click on the appropriate answer

- Never
- Once or twice a year
- Once in every 3 months
- More than 2 x / month
- More than once a week
- Once a week
- Every day

Show less

a How does cooking or eating with people from other cultures/backgrounds make you feel? Click all that apply to you.

- Greater understanding of the different culture
- Greater respect for the people
- Greater appreciation of their cultural foods
- A desire to learn more about their culture
- A desire to learn more about their foods
- A desire to cook for them
- We create a fusion food when we cook and eat together
- We often cook our cultural foods for each other
- It has no impact
- I feel obliged to try their cultural food
- I don't try their cultural food
- No strong feelings
- A desire to only cook my cultural foods

Show less

Add item

Add item

p. 6 Connecting with and through food

Add item

19 How often might you post photos of food on social media?

- I don't have social media
- I have social media but don't post food photos
- Hardly ever
- A few times a month
- At least every week
- Every day

Show less

Add item

a **T** If so, what are the photos normally of?

Add item

20 Please fill in the following table by ticking/checking the most appropriate description for each statement

Jump

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
I respect food itself	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My food values come from my family values	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I hold my food values independently to family influences	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I am more respectful of food when eating alone	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I am more respectful of food when eating with others	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I respect food more when I prepare and cook it myself	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I respect food more when it is prepared and cooked for me	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I respect food when it is produced locally	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Food is an opportunity only to gain nutrients	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Food is important in my life as more than for physical sustenance	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Food provides a mechanism to connect with others	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I enjoy taking time when choosing and preparing food	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I enjoy taking time eating food	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I want food related activities to take as little time as possible	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I mentally connect with food or take time to appreciate it	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I like to have a connection with the producer	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I always value provenance	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

I always respect the food producer	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I prefer eating seasonally	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I like when food has a story	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I like to show off my cookery skills by cooking for friends	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Price affects the emotional and cultural value I give to foods	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I respect the food I trust	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Add item

21 Do you share or swap food with others? Please click the most appropriate answer

✎ ⚙

- Never
- Almost never
- On special occasions
- Once in every 3 months
- More than 2 x / month
- Only weekends
- More than once a week
- Once a week
- Every day

Show less

Add item

22 Please fill in the table below by clicking/checking 'yes' or 'no' to the following statements

✎ ⚙

	Yes	No
I do not swap or share any foods I have made	☐	☐
I receive food from friends that they have made	☐	☐
I receive food from family (outside my home) that they have made	☐	☐
I will give a slice of cake etc to a neighbour/friend when I bake	☐	☐
My neighbour/friend and I will swap foods we have made	☐	☐
I swap foods that I have grown with neighbour/friends	☐	☐
I am more likely to swap or give foods to my friends than a neighbour	☐	☐
I prepare extra food and give it to a friend or neighbour	☐	☐
I will make food and give it to a homeless shelter or community group	☐	☐

Add item

23 How does food swapping make you feel? Please click on the 3 most relevant statements or words.

I do not swap food I would like to swap but haven't found anyone to swap with Responsible Belonging to/feeling part of a community Stressed

I like the feeling of a neighbourly economy I feel like I have done a good deed Annoyed as the swapping isn't equal Wish it could happen more

It takes time out of my day Relief Pressure Happy Contented Purposeful Show less

Add item

24 Where are positive food memories most created for you? Please click on the 3 most relevant statements or words.

At home generally In the kitchen On holiday Eating at pubs/restaurants Eating outdoors Eating with family Eating with friends Eating at friends' houses

Community kitchens Religious meals Birthday meals Where I feel relaxed Where I eat something different/new Where I have a new experience Show less

Add item

25 How do positive food memories impact on you? Please fill in the table below by clicking/checking the appropriate description for each statement

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
I am likely to try and recreate the memory by returning to the place	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I am likely to try and recreate the dish by buying the ingredients for it	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I am likely to try and recreate the memory by eating with the same people	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I am more likely to eat with others more regularly soon after an event that creates a food memory	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
After creating a food memory, I think about that food differently to before	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I am likely to tell others about the food memory	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I appreciate ingredients more that are connected with a food memory	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Food memories have no conscious impact on me	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Add item

26 Please fill in the following table relating to appreciating a food, whether that be something you have grown, cooked at home, or eaten out

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
If I appreciate a food I will talk about it with others	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
If I appreciate a food I will encourage others to grow/buy/eat the food	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
If I appreciate a food I will waste less of it	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
If I appreciate a food I will judge other foods by it	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
If I appreciate a food I will eat it more often	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
If I appreciate a food I will remember it	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
If I appreciate a food I will share it/swap it with others	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
If I appreciate a food I will take more time preparing it	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
If I appreciate a food I will take photographs of it and share/post on social media	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
If I appreciate a food I will take photographs of it to keep as a personal memory.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Add item

27 Do you or have you ever grown your own food?

Yes

No

Add item

a Please click all the food you grow or have grown

Tomatoes Chard Lettuce Carrots Potatoes Rhubarb Beans Beetroot Onions (any variety) Strawberries Chillies Other Show less

Add item

i T If you selected Other, please specify:

Add item

ii When growing your own food, do you value that food more than if you had bought it from the supermarket? Please tick 'yes' or 'no' for the statements below

	Yes	No
I do not grow/have not grown my own food	☐	☐
I prefer the taste	☐	☐
I prefer the look	☐	☐
I prefer the variety	☐	☐
I have the satisfaction that I have grown it	☐	☐
I waste less of it	☐	☐
I use it in dishes where I can celebrate the food/it becomes an important component of a dish	☐	☐
I have a connection with the food	☐	☐
I respect the food more	☐	☐
I want to share the food with others	☐	☐
I talk more with my neighbours/friends because we swap foods	☐	☐
I feel it gives me other benefits (such as exercise)	☐	☐
I feel relaxed	☐	☐

Add item

28 Which of the following increases the connection/respect you have with food the most? Choose the 3 most appropriate phrases

- Cooking alone
- Cooking with family
- Cooking with friends
- Cooking with the community
- Eating alone
- Eating with family
- Eating with friends
- Eating with the community cooking
- Eating with people from different cultures
- Food memories
- Social media
- Sharing/swapping food
- Growing food
- None of the above
- Other

Show less

Add item

p. 7 Thank you

Add item

29 Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey; it is very much appreciated! We would like to contact you to take part in a focus group to discuss food memories and emotio-cultural aspects of food. If you would like to take part, please fill in your details below. These details will be used only for the purposes of the research and contacting you and will not be given to any third parties.

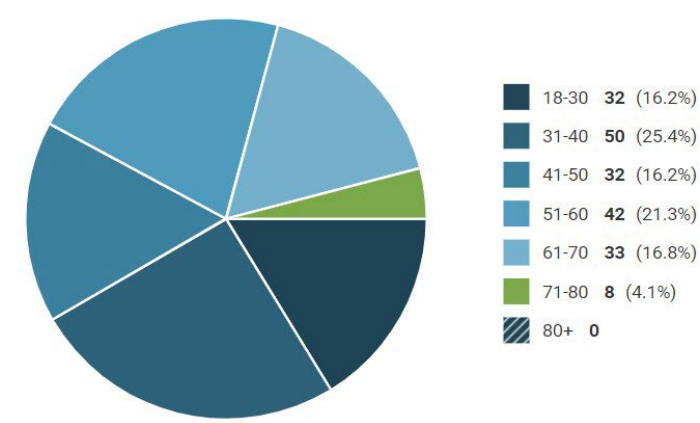
Add item

Add item

8.3.2 Raw data

8.3.2.1 Respondent basic information

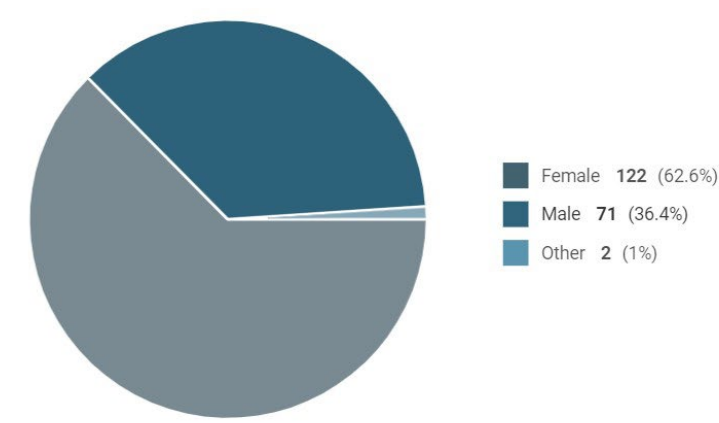
A) Range of ages in sample population



B) Research age categories compared with UK 2021 census data

Age group	Profile of research data proportion in each age category.	2021 census data equivalent (%) (UK Government, 2023)
18-30	16.2	18-30: (14.8)
31-40	25.4	30-39: (13.7)
41-50	16.2	40-49: (12.7)
51-60	21.3	50-59: (13.7)
61-70	16.8	60-69: (10.7)
71-80	4.1	70-79: (8.6)
80+	0	80+: (4.9)

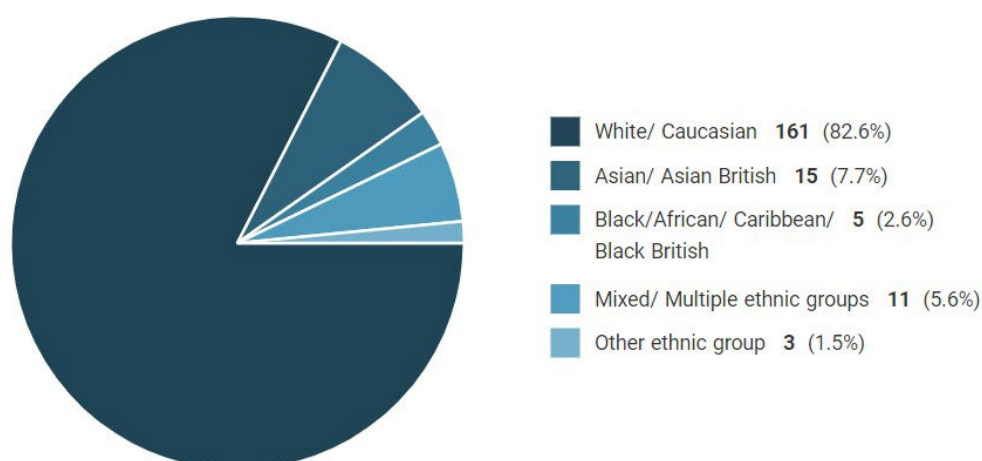
C) Gender proportions in sample population



D) Respondent location/distribution

Location of respondents	Number of respondents	Proportion of total number of respondents (%)	Location of respondents	Number of respondents	Proportion of total number of respondents (%)
Hampshire	34	17	Cheshire	1	1
Gloucestershire	21	11	Cornwall	1	1
England	18	9	Derbyshire	2	1
Oxfordshire	18	9	Denbighshire	1	1
London and Greater London	13	7	Dorset	1	1
Buckinghamshire	12	6	East Sussex	1	1
Devon	6	3	Essex	2	1
Scotland	5	3	Herefordshire	2	1
Somerset	5	3	Kent	1	1
Surrey	5	3	Kincardineshire	1	1
Wales	6	4	Lanarkshire	1	1
Worcestershire	5	3	Nottinghamshire	1	1
Cumbria	4	2	Northamptonshire	2	1
Cambridgeshire	3	2	Northern Ireland	1	1
Leicestershire	3	2	South East England	1	1
Lincolnshire	3	2	Staffordshire	1	1
Shropshire	3	2	West Midlands	1	1
United Kingdom	4	2	West Sussex	1	1
Wiltshire	3	2	West Yorkshire	1	1
Avon	1	1	Total	197	100
Berkshire	2	1			
Bristol	1	1			
	1	1			

E) Cultural background of respondents



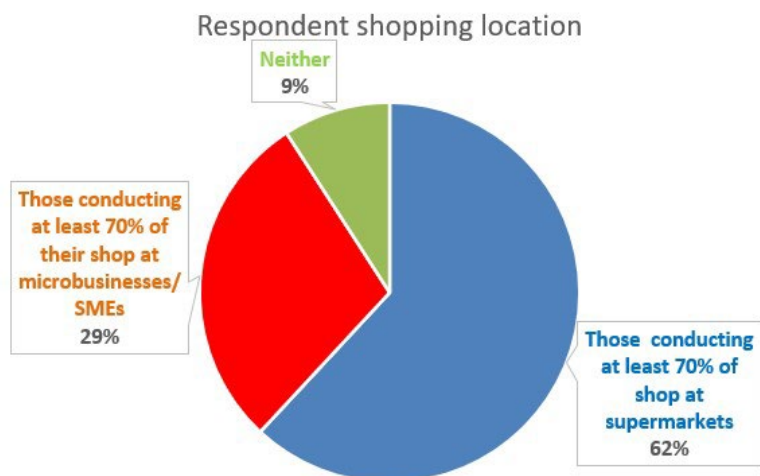
F) Mann Witney results for respondent cultural background

Cultural background	White/Caucasian	Black/African/ Caribbean/ Black British	Asian/Asian British	Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups	Other ethnic group
Value	0.0000000000000000154	0.08	1.0	0.2	0.0000000038
Statistically significant?	Yes	No	No	No	Yes

G) Cultural roots of respondents

Cultural roots	Times noted	% of total	Cultural roots	Times noted	% of total
British	78	40%	Filipino	1	1%
N/A	27	14%	German	2	1%
English	16	8%	Irish	1	1%
Greek	16	8%	Lebanese	1	1%
UK	8	4%	Middle Eastern	1	1%
Indian	7	4%	New Zealand	1	1%
Caribbean	5	3%	Nigerian	1	1%
French	5	3%	N. Irish	1	1%
Polish	3	2%	Scottish	2	1%
Asian	1	1%	South African	1	1%
Belgian	2	1%	Spanish	1	1%
Chinese	1	1%	Thai	1	1%
Egyptian	1	1%	Ukrainian	1	1%
European	1	1%	Welsh	2	1%

H) Respondent shopping locations



8.3.2.2 Buying emotions

A) Emotions for all purchasers when shopping at supermarkets and microbusinesses/SMEs

Emotions for supermarkets	Times selected	% of total	Emotions for microbusinesses/SMEs	Times selected	% of total
Wish to shop somewhere else	28	27%	Respect for the food	45	43%
Satisfaction	24	23%	Satisfaction	36	34%
Inspiration for a meal	21	20%	Connectedness	26	25%
Confidence	21	20%	Responsibility	24	23%
Frustration	21	20%	Inspiration for a meal	19	18%
Other	19	18%	Respect	18	17%
Reluctance	18	17%	Individualism	15	14%
Loyalty	16	15%	Loyalty	15	14%
Guilt	16	15%	Happiness	15	14%
Impatience	15	14%	Belonging	14	13%
Secure	14	13%	Excitement	13	12%
Stressed	12	11%	Fulfilment	12	11%
Anxiety	9	9%	Intrigue	11	10%
Responsibility	9	9%	Other	11	10%
Challenged	9	9%	Delight	10	10%
Respect for the food	9	9%	Imagination	8	8%
Disapproval	7	7%	Adventurous	8	8%
Fulfilment	7	7%	Nostalgia	6	6%
Calmness	7	7%	Fun	6	6%
Confusion	6	6%	Confidence	5	5%
Nostalgia	6	6%	Calmness	4	4%
Excitement	5	5%	Wish to shop somewhere else	3	3%
Happiness	5	5%	Impatience	3	3%
Fun	4	4%	Frustration	3	3%
Imagination	4	4%	Reluctance	3	3%
Respect	3	3%	Secure	3	3%
Connectedness	3	3%	Spiritual	2	2%
Individualism	3	3%	Challenged	2	2%
Disgust	2	2%	Disapproval	1	1%
Belonging	2	2%	Anxiety	1	1%
Delight	2	2%	Confusion	1	1%
Intrigue	2	2%	Guilt	1	1%
Adventurous	2	2%	Energetic	1	1%
Spiritual	0	0%	Disgust	0	0%
Inspiration for inviting friends for food	0	0%	Stressed	0	0%
Scared	0	0%	Inspiration for inviting friends for food	0	0%
Energetic	0	0%	Scared	0	0%

B) Emotions for shopping at supermarkets by each group

Group 1			Group 2		
Emotions	Times selected	% of group 1	Emotions	Times selected	% of group 2
Inspiration for a meal	37	30%	Wish to shop somewhere else	38	67%
Satisfaction	33	27%	Disapproval	22	39%
Confidence	27	22%	Frustration	21	37%
Frustration	26	21%	Confusion	18	32%
Wish to shop somewhere else	24	20%	Impatience	18	32%
Impatience	23	19%	Anxiety	15	26%
Loyalty	22	18%	Reluctance	15	26%
Secure	22	18%	Stressed	11	19%
Other	21	17%	Guilt	11	19%
Stressed	17	14%	Other	9	16%
Inspiration for inviting friends for food	16	13%	Challenged	6	11%
Reluctance	14	11%	Disgust	4	7%
Guilt	12	10%	Individualism	4	7%
Confusion	11	9%	Secure	4	7%
Responsibility	11	9%	Satisfaction	2	4%
Challenged	11	9%	Inspiration for a meal	1	2%
Anxiety	10	8%	Fulfilment	1	2%
Excitement	10	8%	Calmness	1	2%
Nostalgia	9	7%	Respect for the food	1	2%
Fulfilment	9	7%	Responsibility	0	0%
Calmness	9	7%	Excitement	0	0%
Respect for the food	9	7%	Respect	0	0%
Happiness	7	6%	Nostalgia	0	0%
Disapproval	6	5%	Connectedness	0	0%
Imagination	6	5%	Fun	0	0%
Connectedness	5	4%	Spiritual	0	0%
Fun	5	4%	Loyalty	0	0%
Respect	4	3%	Happiness	0	0%
Belonging	4	3%	Belonging	0	0%
Delight	4	3%	Imagination	0	0%
Adventurous	4	3%	Inspiration for inviting friends for food	0	0%
Intrigue	3	2%	Delight	0	0%
Disgust	2	2%	Intrigue	0	0%
Individualism	2	2%	Confidence	0	0%
Energetic	2	2%	Adventurous	0	0%
Spiritual	0	0%	Scared	0	0%

Scared	0	0%	Energetic	0	0%
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C) 'Other' responses for supermarket shopping

Feeling of food turned into industrialised, profit-making product.	Hate single wrap packaging and plastic abuse in general	Efficiency
Boredom	Aspirational	perfunctory
Reliability, Quality	necessity	offer-dependent, necessary-evil
Necessity	Sometimes relief as they are a good backup if required	Sometimes it's a necessity
Don't think I have feelings towards food shopping	Disappointment as the food is not what I remember from childhood as proper food	Sometimes it is necessary
Convenience, usually well priced,	No emotion, I just sometimes need to shop in supermarkets	Localism/nationalism
Resigned	Annoyance at the food quality	Our host family does the shopping/cooking
Not an emotional experience - it's convenience	Disappointment	
Lazy	Disappointment that this is the norm for most	
safe, reassurance, easy convenient	A hassle. But needed and I do not like online shopping due to not seeing it before you buy it	
means to an end	There is one supermarket I like called Booths which has only local produce. Otherwise, I do not like supermarket foods or the way they treat farmers	
Cost conscious	Frustration with plastic and cheap meats	
Boredom	Efficient	
Reluctance, necessity	Neutral	

D) Graphic of 'Other' emotions for supermarket shopping



Likelihood	Less likely to buy this food from here again	It makes no difference	More likely to buy this food from here again
P Value	0.00000000048	0.00000000000000000000017	0.0000000000114
Statistically significant	Yes	Yes	Yes

Response	Count	Percentage
Less likely to buy this food from here again	55	28.8%
It makes no difference	103	53.9%
More likely to buy this food from here again	33	17.3%

G) Emotions for shopping at food microbusinesses/SMEs by each group

Group 1			Group 2		
Emotions	Times selected	% group 1	Emotions	Times select ed	% of group 2
Respect for the food	53	43%	Respect for the food	34	60%
Satisfaction	44	36%	Inspiration for a meal	30	53%
Responsibility	29	24%	Inspiration for inviting friends for food	21	37%
Connectedness	28	23%	Satisfaction	17	30%
Loyalty	23	19%	Loyalty	13	23%
Inspiration for a meal	23	19%	Belonging	13	23%
Respect	22	18%	Responsibility	12	21%
Happiness	19	16%	Excitement	12	21%
Excitement	18	15%	Connectedness	12	21%
Individualism	15	12%	Respect	11	19%
Intrigue	15	12%	Confidence	10	18%
Fulfilment	15	12%	Adventurous	10	18%
Inspiration for inviting friends for food	14	11%	Fun	8	14%
Adventurous	14	11%	Individualism	8	14%
Belonging	12	10%	Imagination	8	14%
Delight	12	10%	Happiness	7	12%
Other	12	10%	Energetic	7	12%
Fun	10	8%	Delight	6	11%
Imagination	10	8%	Fulfilment	6	11%
Nostalgia	7	6%	Spiritual	5	9%
Secure	7	6%	Intrigue	5	9%
Calmness	5	4%	Nostalgia	4	7%
Confidence	4	3%	Challenged	3	5%
Wish to shop somewhere else	3	2%	Other	2	4%
Impatience	3	2%	Confusion	1	2%
Spiritual	3	2%	Wish to shop somewhere else	0	0%
Frustration	3	2%	Disgust	0	0%
Reluctance	3	2%	Disapproval	0	0%
Anxiety	2	2%	Anxiety	0	0%
Challenged	2	2%	Stressed	0	0%
Energetic	2	2%	Impatience	0	0%
Disapproval	1	1%	Scared	0	0%

Stressed	1	1%	Guilt	0	0%
Confusion	1	1%	Calmness	0	0%
Guilt	1	1%	Frustration	0	0%
Disgust	0	0%	Reluctance	0	0%
Scared	0	0%	Secure	0	0%

H) 'Other' responses for microbusinesses/SMEs

Same	I am excited that good food does exist here but sometimes it is hard	
	to find producers directly; I prefer going direct to producers rather than larger farm shops	
Quality is often better, supporting small businesses , often more expensive	Depends on the microbusiness. Sometimes I am disappointed by farmshops when they are so expensive unnecessarily. I like buying direct from the producer and a lot of that is online delivery from them	
Not an emotional thing - like variety and independence in food retail	Friendly relationship with market stall holders	
Just a change but sometimes unsure of the hygiene of the food.	local	
community spirit. kind	Localism/nationalism	
Interest	Our host family does the shopping/cooking but we choose ingredients together at the village shop	
Uncertain whether quality justifies the price		
Fear for my bank account lol		
Happiness with supporting local businesses		
Supporting local, environmentally friendly		
support of local business		

I) Graphic of 'Other' emotions for microbusiness/SME shopping

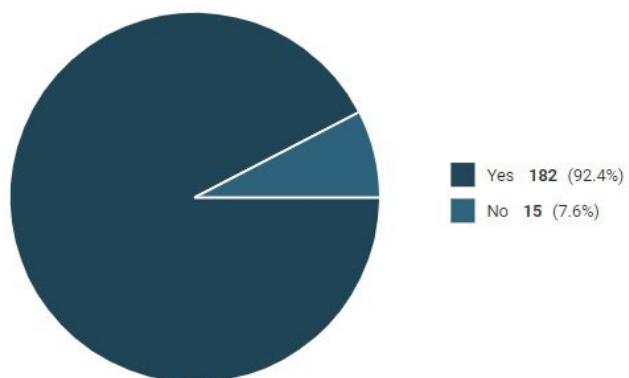


J) Mann Witney tests for impact of emotions on buying from microbusinesses/SMEs

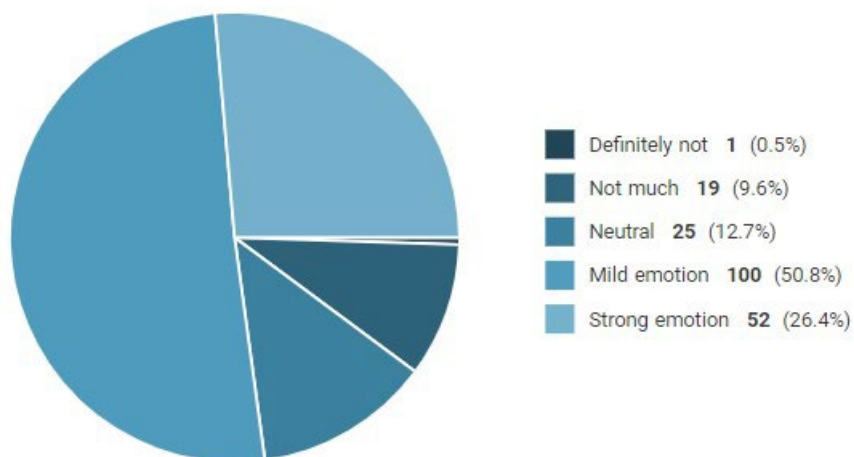
Likelihood	Less likely to buy this food from here again	It makes no difference	More likely to buy this food from here again
P Value	0.050	0.0000000000000011	0.0003
Statistically significant	Yes	Yes	Yes

8.3.2.3 Cooking emotions

A) Proportion of all respondents who cook daily



B) Response to whether cooking daily ignites any emotion



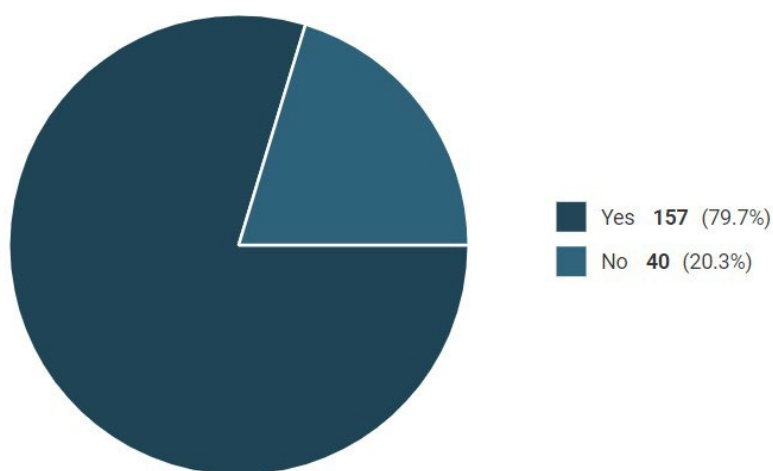
C) Emotions associated with cooking daily by all shoppers, and groups 1 and 2.

Emotions	Times selected	% of total of respondents	Emotions	Times selected	% of group 1	Emotions	Times selected	% of group 2
Satisfaction	71	36%	Satisfaction	46	38%	De-stress/Calm	24	42%
Respect for the food	69	35%	Respect for the food	38	31%	Respect for the food	24	42%
Enjoyment	54	28%	Enjoyment	38	31%	Satisfaction	16	28%
Responsibility	49	25%	Responsibility	28	23%	Contentment	16	28%
Contentment	48	24%	Contentment	26	21%	Freedom	16	28%
De-stress/Calm	47	24%	Fulfillment	25	20%	Responsibility	16	28%
Fulfillment	47	24%	Impatience	23	19%	Fulfillment	16	28%
Happiness	35	18%	Boredom	21	17%	Spiritual	13	23%
Impatience	26	13%	De-stress/Calm	19	16%	Enjoyment	11	19%
Learning	25	13%	Learning	18	15%	Calmness	10	18%
Freedom	23	12%	Fun	17	14%	Happiness	9	16%
Boredom	22	11%	Happiness	16	13%	Secure	9	16%
Fun	22	11%	Stress	15	12%	Excitement	7	12%
Calmness	21	11%	Challenged	13	11%	Confidence	7	12%
Excitement	20	10%	Excitement	12	10%	Learning	6	11%
Confidence	19	10%	Adventurous	12	10%	Belonging	5	9%
Spiritual	17	9%	Reluctance	12	10%	Quiet	5	9%
Challenged	16	8%	Confidence	10	8%	Connectedness	4	7%
Stress	15	8%	Connectedness	9	7%	Fun	4	7%
Adventurous	15	8%	Frustration	9	7%	Impatience	3	5%
Connectedness	13	7%	Anxiety	7	6%	Adventurous	3	5%
Reluctance	12	6%	Calmness	7	6%	Challenged	3	5%
Quiet	12	6%	Belonging	6	5%	Energetic	3	5%
Secure	12	6%	Quiet	6	5%	Other	3	5%
Belonging	11	6%	Freedom	5	4%	Willingness	2	4%
Frustration	9	5%	Intrigue	5	4%	Guilt	1	2%
Other	8	4%	Guilt	4	3%	Anxiety	0	0%
Anxiety	7	4%	Nostalgia	4	3%	Stress	0	0%
Energetic	7	4%	Energetic	4	3%	Confusion	0	0%
Guilt	5	3%	Other	4	3%	Boredom	0	0%
Nostalgia	5	3%	Spiritual	3	2%	Nostalgia	0	0%
Willingness	5	3%	Secure	3	2%	Scared	0	0%
Intrigue	5	3%	Confusion	2	2%	Frustration	0	0%
Confusion	3	2%	Willingness	2	2%	Reluctance	0	0%
Scared	0	0%	Scared	0	0%	Intrigue	0	0%

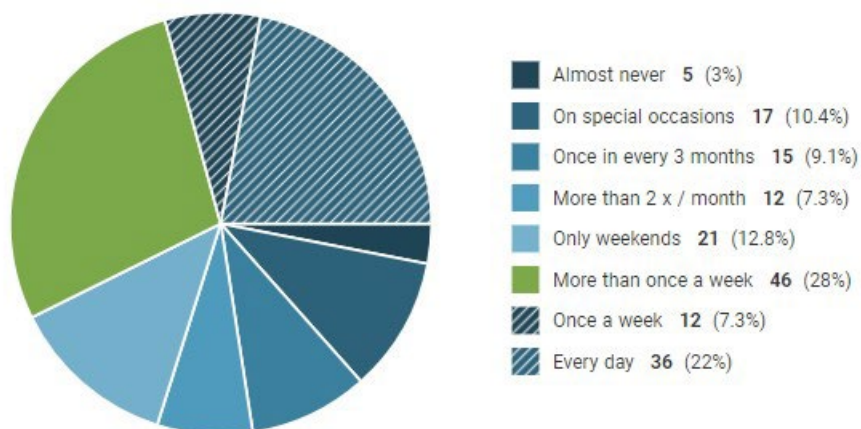
D) 'Other' responses to cooking daily

After 30 years of cooking for family I do feel 'over it' and challenged to rediscover satisfaction in cooking
Lucky
Necessity
healthy
No huge emotion cooking each day
Love for the person I'm cooking for
Often rushed
Often this is rushed due to work but calm when I have time
Normal
Annoyed, repetition

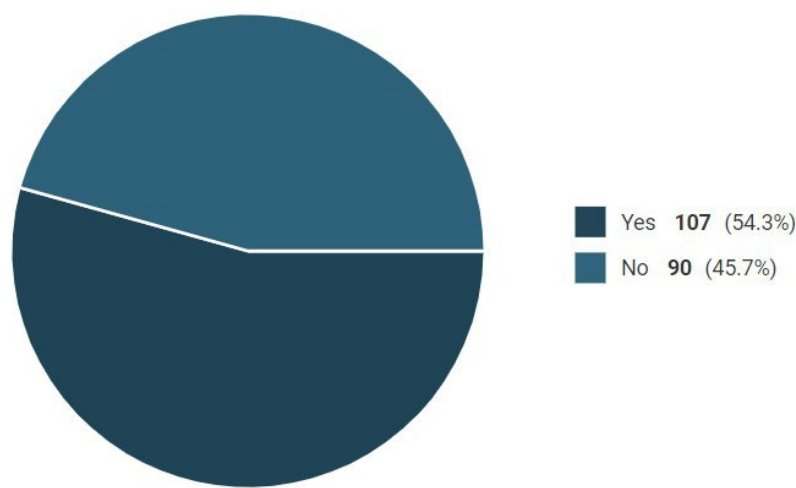
E) Cooking with Immediate family



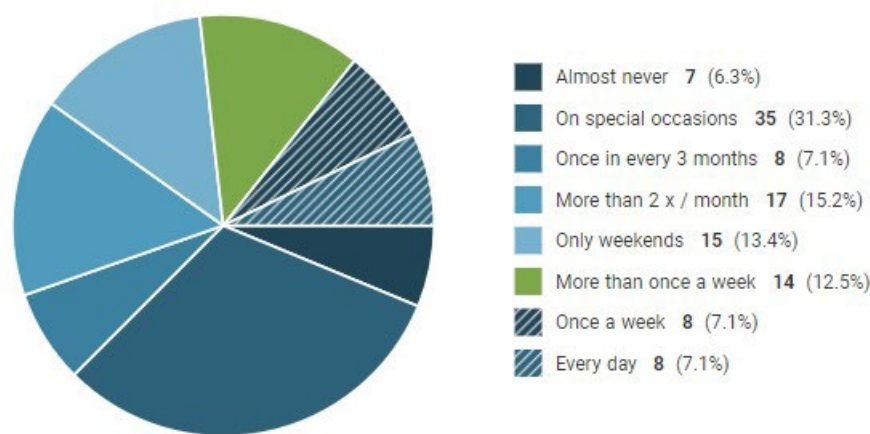
F) Frequency of cooking with immediate family



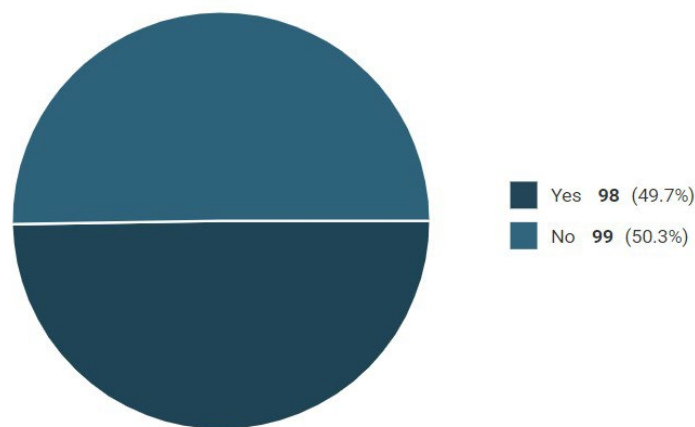
G) Cooking with Extended family



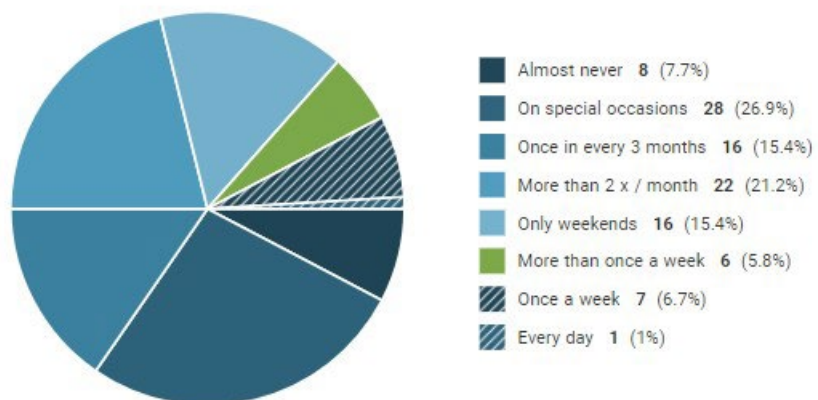
H) Frequency of cooking with extended family



I) Cooking with Friends



J) Frequency of cooking with friends



K) Emotions when cooking with others by each group

Emotions	Times Selected	% of total of respondents	Emotions	Times selected	% of group 1	Emotions	Times selected	% of group 2
Enjoyment	79	40%	Enjoyment	54	44%	Respect for the food	27	47%
Strengthens bonds	53	27%	Strengthens bonds	34	28%	Belonging	26	46%
Respect for the people	49	25%	Happiness	24	20%	Respect for the people	23	40%
Belonging	47	24%	Connectedness	23	19%	Strengthens bonds	21	37%
Connectedness	45	23%	Belonging	23	19%	Connectedness	20	35%
Happiness	37	19%	Learning	23	19%	Fulfilment	17	30%
Respect for the food	37	19%	I appreciate the food more	22	18%	Enjoyment	17	30%
Learning	33	17%	Respect for the people	21	17%	Convivial	12	21%
Appreciate the food more	29	15%	Time is of less consequence	17	14%	Happiness	11	19%
Fulfilment	26	13%	Responsibility	13	11%	Adventurous	10	18%
Convivial	23	12%	Excitement	11	9%	Learning	7	12%
Time is of less consequence	21	11%	I want to cook with others more	11	9%	Confident	7	12%
Want to cook with others more	17	9%	Convivial	11	9%	I feel less stressed	6	11%
Responsibility	16	8%	I feel more stressed	10	8%	Willing	6	11%
Feel less stressed	15	8%	Fulfilment	10	8%	Energetic	6	11%
Adventurous	15	8%	Other	9	7%	A chance to showcase my cookery skills	5	9%
Feel more stressed	12	6%	I feel less stressed	7	6%	I want to cook with others more	5	9%
Excitement	12	6%	Impatience	7	6%	I appreciate the food more	4	7%
Chance to showcase my cookery skills	12	6%	Nostalgic	7	6%	Secure	3	5%
Confident	10	5%	Frustration	7	6%	Nostalgic	2	4%
Patience	9	5%	A chance to showcase my	7	6%	Responsibility	2	4%

			cookery skills					
Nostalgic	9	5%	Respect for the food	6	5%	Challenged	2	4%
Challenged	9	5%	Challenged	6	5%	Calmness	2	4%
Other	9	5%	Calmness	5	4%	Intrigue	2	4%
Calmness	8	4%	Confident	5	4%	Time is of less consequence	2	4%
Frustration	8	4%	Adventurous	4	3%	I feel more stressed	1	2%
Willing	7	4%	Willing	4	3%	Impatience	1	2%
Energetic	4	2%	Secure	3	2%	Excitement	1	2%
Secure	3	2%	Guilt	2	2%	Scared	1	2%
Guilt	2	1%	Intrigue	2	2%	Guilt	0	0%
Scared	2	1%	Energetic	2	2%	Frustration	0	0%
Quiet	2	1%	Quiet	2	2%	Reluctant	0	0%
Reluctant	1	1%	Scared	1	1%	I appreciate the food less	0	0%
Intrigue	1	1%	Reluctant	1	1%	Gives deeper meaning to everyday eating	0	0%
I appreciate the food less	1	1%	I appreciate the food less	1	1%	Quiet	0	0%
Gives deeper meaning to everyday cooking	0	0%	Gives deeper meaning to everyday cooking	0	0%	Other	0	0%

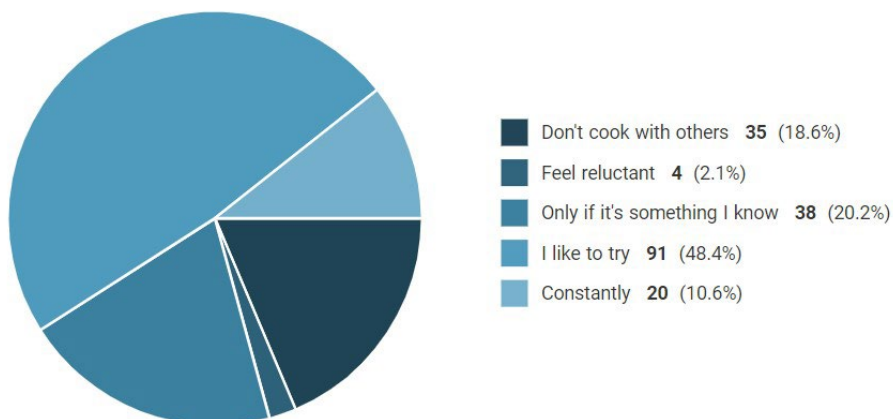
L) Mann Witney results for cooking with others

'Others'	Immediate family	Extended family	Friends
P- value	0.000002	0.0000004	0.0000001
Statistically significant	Yes	Yes	Yes

M) 'Other' responses for cooking with others

I hardly ever cook as my wife does it
anxiety
I can't remember the last time I cooked with anyone
Irritated
no applicable don't do it
Anxiety
It's just nice innit
Mindful
more fun
This is the way it should be
I never cook for/with others

N) Cooking different foods when cooking with others



O) Different cooking practices of all respondents when cooking with others- raw data

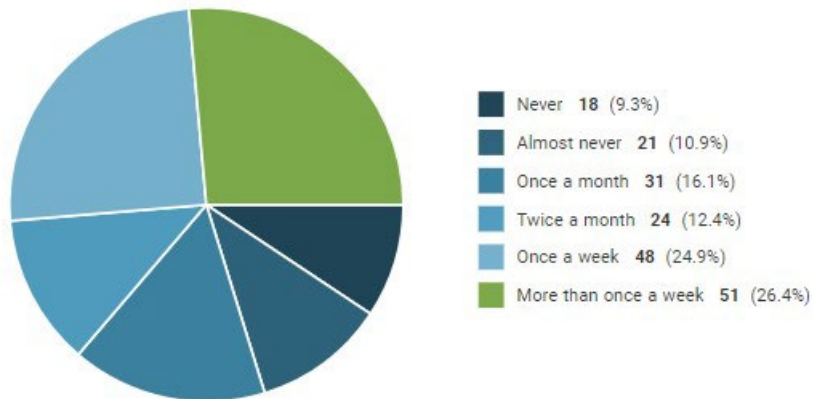
I enjoy sourcing ingredients/food from special/different and preferably SME/Artisan suppliers.	Often cook more adventurously	A good chance to learn new recipes	New sauces
Find a new recipe to bring	Their suggestions	In my community groups, we always try to cook and experiment with different ingredients. We do supper clubs to showcase different cuisines with an expert of that cuisine	Will often buy different or special ingredients
Interesting to cook for a different set of tastes.	New ingredients	We like everyone to feel included so we make each culture's food, which means we cook different things	With friends we'll try different recipes and ideas, with family it's always favourites
Many of my friends are 'foodies' and we often try to cook new and challenging recipes together	I like to share what I've been learning and learn from them too	Yes, I like to try out new recipes and gain a better understanding of the people and their foods. Usually, people don't have many others to cook their foods with, so I like to help with that	I like to try different recipes and ingredients constantly
Trying a different recipe	new recipes always welcome	I try things that I wouldn't usually cook	I don't often cook with completely new people as the same people come to community cooking etc but we like to try different recipes together
Always looking for new recipes	National brand/organic food	I will buy things that reflect my food background that they may not have tasted before	Buy ingredients different fruit & veg & meat from Overton Farm shop & butchery in Crossford
Good to experience new foods and ingredients that others use and I don't	Cook more meat	I always try to cook their dishes if they are from another culture. If they are from the same culture, we cook whatever we both want to try	Greek dishes
With family it tends to be dishes that have become part of the fabric of our family history so it brings us closer.	Baking different treats with my daughter, trying new herbs/spices	Open to ideas. Mainly done in BBQ or when out in the camper with friends	I cook something new each time I'm with new people
different meals - experimenting with different foods	I always try to cook something new which requires different ingredients, either because the others I cook with know the recipe or because we want to try something new	We have so many people from different backgrounds here and we like to make all feel included by cooking their foods	Scotch egg

Try to accommodate for dietary restrictions or taste	I am always learning new recipes with my friends from different cultures. We each host dinners from our traditional cultures for each other, and other times we just all cook together and add in ingredients from each	Always trying out new recipes	Try different spices, herbs
	culture and it somehow always works and tastes good! We often seek out different food producers too, like for goat meat or wagyu beef		
Try others' recipes	I have a group of people in the community I often cook with, so rarely do i cook with people which i don't normally cook with. but if someone new joins us then we will try new recipes	Cooking for more than one means I tend to be more adventurous and make dinner party food rather than everyday foods	Different sauces & spices
sometimes share recipes with friends	I enjoy trying new recipes and ingredients	Only occasionally, tend to stick with the favourites	When cooking with others in the local community, I like to cook things they want to eat/comforting foods, which are generally different to my home foods
Generally I try to adapt what I'm cooking to things they like to eat or excite them	Traditional European dishes	When I am trying to make someone feel at home, I will try to cook their foods with them	I constantly cook with new people so always try new recipes
Will always try to be more impressive	Like trying different cuisines	I always try different recipes with different people	I see who they cook things and try to remember to be able to replicate
I don't like feeling the food won't be well cooked or appreciated, and I am not keen to try anything new when under pressure	I like to share the type of food with others as it is mostly plant based	Tried and tested	I like to try more challenging/adventurous recipes
			I like to try new dishes but I make some cultural dishes for our host family
			Constantly cooking with different cultures and learning new recipes

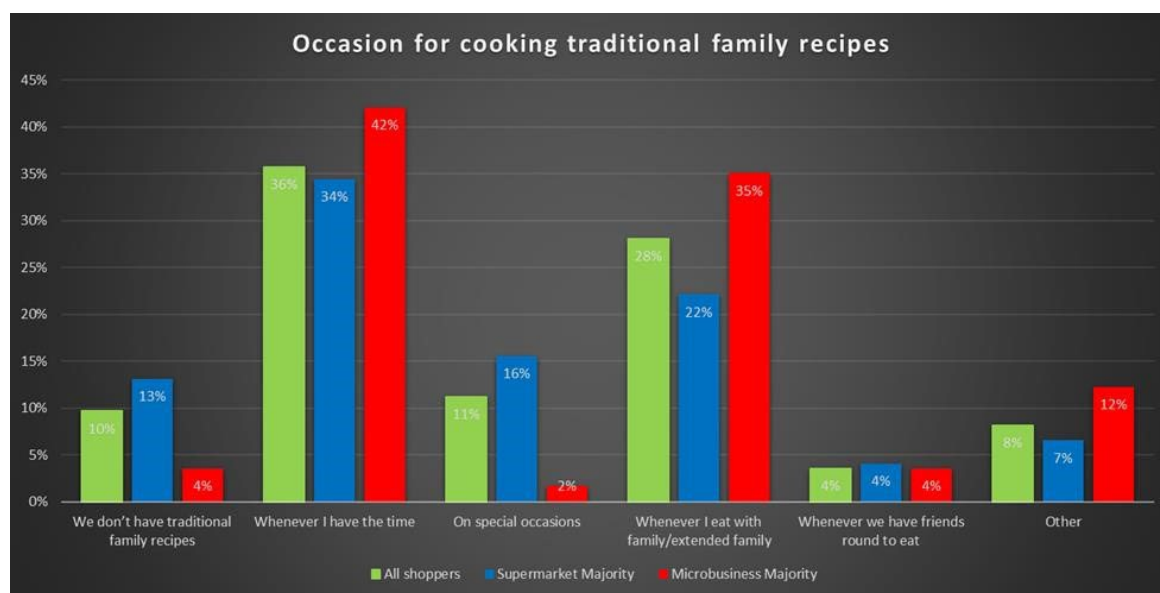
Cooking practice	Times cited	% of total
Experimentation and new ways of cooking/new experiences		
Find new/different recipes	17	23
More adventurous/ experimentation	6	8
New ingredients	6	8
Specific food/cuisine examples	6	8
Enjoy sourcing new ingredients from artisan/SMEs	3	4
Adapt for diet/taste/excitement	2	3
Try others' recipes	1	1
Try to impress	1	1
Community cooking		
Cook others' cultural foods so people feel included	6	8
Learning new recipes from different cultures	4	5
Share recipes/knowledge	3	4
Community cooking	2	3
Cooking together fusion foods	1	1
Specific food examples		
My cultural foods	3	4
Guest suggestions	1	1
More meat	1	1
Different cuisines	1	1
Often BBQ whilst camping with friends	1	1
National brand/organic food	1	1

Traditional recipes

P) Frequency of cooking traditional family recipes



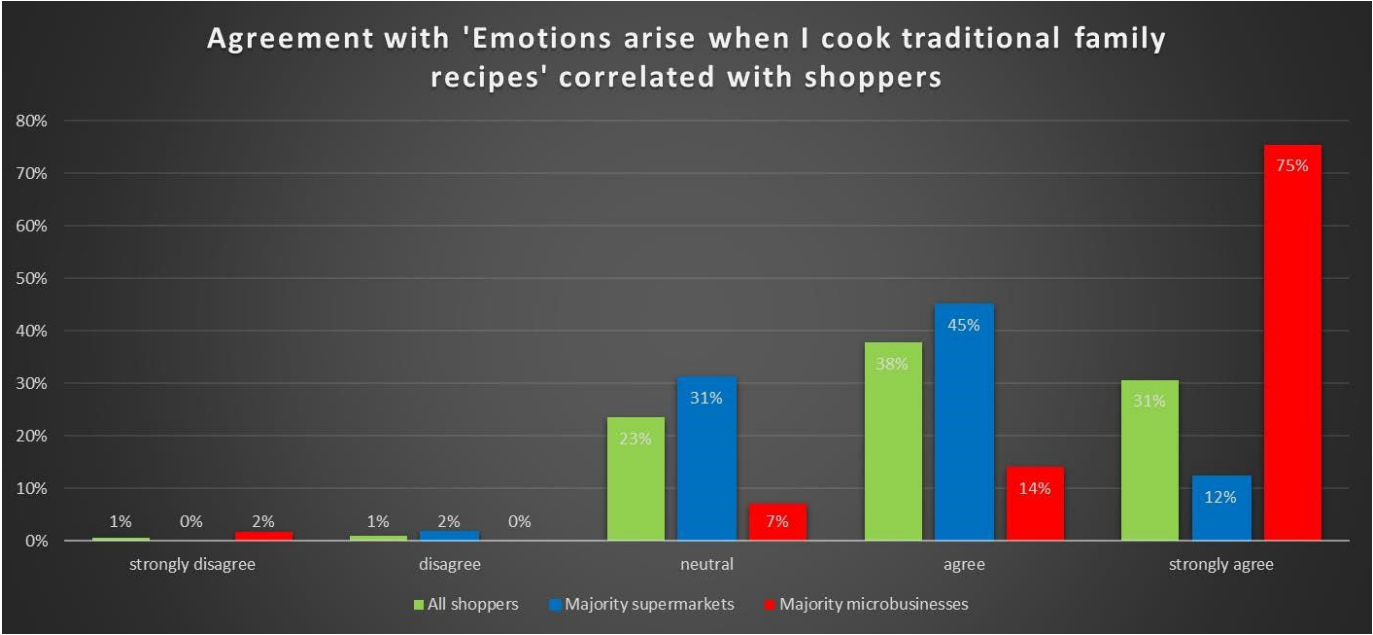
Q) Occasions for cooking traditional family recipes by all respondents, groups 1 and 2



R) 'Other' responses to cooking traditional family recipes

I don't cook - my wife does it
My dad's recipes have become part of my regular cooking repertoire
When I feel like it
Easy to make so all the time
Most days
I generally always have a traditional family recipe around at home, sweet or not
Very often, as part of normal cooking.
More favourites vs traditional
I always cook the things my mother cooked
Whenever I am craving comfort or nostalgia.
When I fancy a specific dish
Whenever I want to eat that recipe!
Depends on the season- more so in winter
Most weeks as many can be done with minimal effort
Most weeks as they are staple foods
at weekends

S) Graph showing whether respondents agree with the phrase "emotions arise when I cook traditional family recipes"



T) Emotions when cooking traditional family recipes

Emotions	Times selected	% of total respondents	Emotions	Times selected	% of group 1	Emotions	Times selected	% of group 2
Nostalgic	77	39%	Enjoyment	44	36%	Nostalgic	28	49%
Enjoyment	67	34%	Nostalgic	41	34%	Respect for the food	27	47%
Happiness	56	29%	Belonging	33	27%	Gives deeper meaning to everyday cooking	25	44%
Respect for the food	53	27%	Happiness	32	26%	Responsibility	20	35%
Belonging	48	24%	Connectedness	19	16%	Fulfilment	18	32%
Gives deeper meaning to everyday cooking	43	22%	Respect for the food	19	16%	Happiness	17	30%
Respect for the people	35	18%	Respect for the people	16	13%	Respect for the people	15	26%
Fulfilment	33	17%	Calmness	16	13%	Enjoyment	12	21%
Connectedness	30	15%	I appreciate the food more	16	13%	Belonging	11	19%
I appreciate the food more	27	14%	Gives deeper meaning to everyday cooking	16	13%	Secure	11	19%
Responsibility	26	13%	I feel less stressed	13	11%	I appreciate the food more	9	16%
Calmness	22	11%	Fulfilment	12	10%	Connectedness	7	12%
Secure	22	11%	Confident	11	9%	Time is of less consequence	7	12%
I feel less stressed	18	9%	Strengthens bonds	11	9%	I want to cook with others more	7	12%
Confident	18	9%	A chance to showcase my cookery skills	10	8%	Excitement	5	9%
Strengthens bonds	16	8%	Secure	8	7%	Energetic	5	9%
Time is of less consequence	16	8%	Other	8	7%	Confident	5	9%
A chance to showcase my cookery skills	15	8%	Learning	7	6%	A chance to showcase my cookery skills	5	9%
Other	11	6%	Time is of less consequence	7	6%	I feel less stressed	3	5%
Excitement	10	5%	Responsibility	6	5%	Calmness	3	5%
Energetic	10	5%	Excitement	5	4%	Strengthens bonds	3	5%
Learning	8	4%	Challenged	5	4%	Other	3	5%
I want to cook with others more	8	4%	Willing	3	2%	Adventurous	2	4%
Challenged	6	3%	Energetic	3	2%	Guilt	1	2%
Willing	4	2%	Quiet	2	2%	Learning	1	2%

Adventurous	3	2%	Convivial	2	2%	Challenged	1	2%
Quiet	3	2%	I feel more stressed	1	1%	Convivial	1	2%
Convivial	3	2%	Guilt	1	1%	I feel more stressed	0	0%
Guilt	2	1%	Impatience	1	1%	Impatience	0	0%
I feel more stressed	1	1%	Adventurous	1	1%	Willing	0	0%
Impatience	1	1%	Intrigue	1	1%	Scared	0	0%

U) 'Other' responses for emotions for traditional family recipes

I don't cook
I don't know any family recipes
Just feels quite normal which I guess is secure
not applicable
It's a way of giving my family or friends my care
I feel responsible to carry on our traditions of cooking together as a family, and supporting small local food producers- they are part of our community
Peaceful
Comfort
Bittersweet as I cannot cook with family anymore as they are in Egypt and I rarely see them
Reassuring
Bored

Pulse soups.	Something may parents or grandparents used to cook for me - homemade lemon jelly	Christmas dinner	We never had what could be termed trad family recipes
Choice up & over pudding	One that's been part of family mealtimes for long time. Often with a connection to a place or event that is meaningful for the family.	Sunday roast	Pasta sauces
Roast Lunch	Curries, meaty dishes, fish	Breadsticks	Stew/casserole
what mom and grandma used to make, always more complex and tasty than what I do. You need time to be able to complete them and nice/good in terms of quality ingredients	Roast chicken/potatoes/veg	Roast dinner	Pumpkin risotto
Roast dinner, Fish pie, Cottage pie	Not sure if 'traditional' but I often cook recipes taught to me by my family. This include spaghetti bolognese, a curry passed down from my grandma, shepherds pie and a casserole recipe from my grandpa.	I have a recipe from my great grandma for spare ribs, which I've altered and veganised	Roast dinner
Recipe handed down from generations	Lasagne, pasta dishes, BBQ, marmalade	Roast beef Sunday roast	Sunday roast
roast dinner	Roast	Roast beef, cottage pie, spaghetti bolognaise	Italian
No idea?	beef stew and dumplings, fruit crumbles,	Goulash Chicken in breadcrumbs	Thai green curries, ratatouille
Sausage in cabbage leaves	I don't understand what is meant by a traditional family recipe. I guess that means I haven't got any!	Roast chicken	Roasts
It is something that passes from generation to generation with new twists to elevate the flavour.	Chicken casserole with mushrooms, peppers, onions etc served with rice. Dad's beef curry	Spare ribs Breadsticks Chocolate roulade	Risotto
Roast dinner	Roast meat and veg, followed by wholesome fruit crumble	Crepes, raclette, duck	Fish pie
Roast chicken	Potato and beef hash, beef goulash	Curry	Basbousa is an Arabic sweetmeat and I like to cook it for my family and share it with friends
Xmas and Easter dinner-stuffing			Curry, lasagne, stir fry
Shepherd's Pie			

Leek pudding	Lamb kleftiko, my husband's roast lamb, Mum's homemade turkey soup at Christmas, Mum's trifle, my mother in law's stuffed courgettes and meatballs	Rhubarb crumble	tomato soup
Chicken and chestnuts and coriander with soybeans	My mother's Bolognese recipe. And anything with proper olive oil and balsamico!	The food I used to have at home when I was a child	Roast dinner
apricot tarts, apple & blackberry crumble	Cou-Cou and Fish	Bobotjie	Cottage pie Roast
Curry	Jamaican sunday dinner with curry chicken and plantain (bananas here) Jerk chicken kebabs or jerk chicken in one pot with rice and peas	We have traditional recipes like beef bourginion but really it's the way we eat that makes the different as often we will put lots of dishes out and all share and break bread together.	Fish pie Pineapple upside down cake
Lemon drizzle cake	Batch cooking	Slow cooked curry 🍲 with ancient recipes and Ingredients.	Lasange Most mince dishes Pasta meals Curry
Galettes Bretonnes / Crepes Lasagnes / Gratin	Something from childhood, past down from family. Classic tomato pasta sauce	Singapore noodles the way my ma makes them	Paska for Easter. Paska is a traditional Eastern European dairy dish for Easter. It is a mixture of Quark, cream, sugar, raisins and almonds which then is put in a cloth and left to hang for 24h.
Cakes from Brittany (France)	Gnocchi	Tostones and oxtail soup (not together!)	Any kind of stew, especially mutton stew Sticky toffee pudding
Bangers and mash	Moussaka	Jamaican rice and peas with jerk chicken	Hand raised pie, fish pie, trifle
Apple crumble	Fish & meat dishes	rosemary, balsamic+olive oil Marinated whole fillet steak on bbq	A big roast
Spaghetti Bolognese	A great British Sunday Roast Dinner	Minted Lamb	vine leaves stuffed with rice lentil dishes stews
Cottage pie	Giouvarlakia, Keftedes, Yemista, Lamb Kleftiko.	Butter chicken (murgah makhani)	Roast dinner Shepherds Pie Apple crumble
Fish pie	CABIN CASSEROLE	Onion samosas, Chaat, Paranthas	Apple Pie
Roast, lasagne	Roast Beef; chilli con carne; Victoria sponge; apple crumble	Lamb casserole	For me it's stews, homemade pies, suet dumplings etc.
Christmas cake	Indian food, biryani rice dish	A lamb curry my mother taught me	Roast dinner the way my grandmother made it

Beef Caldereta	Mum's 'omelette' - more like a frittata - or my grandmother's lemon meringue pie	Tortilla Espagnola	Dhal Curry
Fish Pie Roast Dinner Eves Pudding Trifle	Spanakopita, tiropita, Greek salad, trahanas	Braised pigs cheeks, mashed potatoes & red cabbage	Labneh Baba ganoush Kibbeh balls Namoura cake It is something that we cook altogether as a family. The act of cooking an important food together is very traditional- all family generations and friends together as a group.
Sweets and cakes	Gigantes- giant beans Kefthakia- meat balls Ekmek	Pav Bhaji masala	BBQ lamb BBQ fish Portokalopita Greek salad Something my parents cook together taken from both their cultural heritage foods Lentil soup
Minestrone Risotto alla Milanese	Fish pie Roast dinner Sweet suet pudding Eves pudding Tiramisu	Fish pie with plenty of mixed fish. Made with a rich cheese sauce to add plenty of flavour.	Stoemp chicken, fries and salad
Roast lamb	Lentil soup	Lasagne Spanakopita Lentils the way my father makes it Millionaire's shortbread the way my mother makes it Fish with huge Greek salad	Something that we cook at home frequently and I associate with my family
Gammon steak with colcannon. Or Irish stew	Keftedes	Yemista	Sunday roast with pork and potatoes
Pierogi	Fish pie Roast dinner Rock cakes	Dolmades Lentils Chickpea soup Meat balls in tomato sauce	Dolmades
Fish pie Roast dinner Apple crumble	Roast , fish & chips	Spinach pie	Traditional British food e.g. roasts
Cottage pie Sticky toffee pudding	Fermented dahl	Chocolate up & over pudding	Varenyky, Borshch
Pea and ham soup	Dolmades Meatballs Spanakopita	Beef casserole	Baked Mustard fish wrapped in Banana Leaf
Chicken with honey and bulgar wheat	Spanakopita Lentils Trahana Something to cook together and share with others- big shareable dishes	Fish pie	

noodles	Handed-down recipes which get tweaked with each generation	Jerk chicken Plantains	
Our cultural foods which are prepared by cooking raw food stuffs.	Casserole		
Shepherds pie	Roast dinner Recipes my mother taught me Sweet suet pudding Toad in the hole Chocolate pudding Also recipes that family friends taught me when I was younger which are traditional for them	(1) Pelau (rice, pigeon peas, vegetables) (2) Channa & Aloo (curry chickpeas & potato 😊)	
		Pav bhaji, Idli A recipe handed down or between families. something i remember all the females of our family cooking together. Often it is slightly changed each time, especially here where things taste different even though i can generally find the same ingredients	

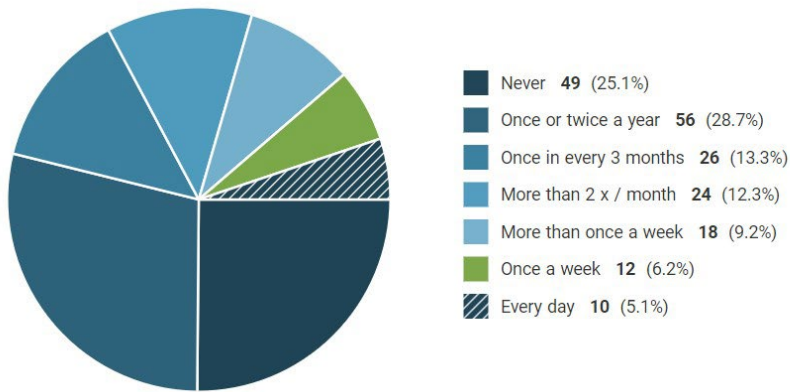
W) Examples of traditional family recipes



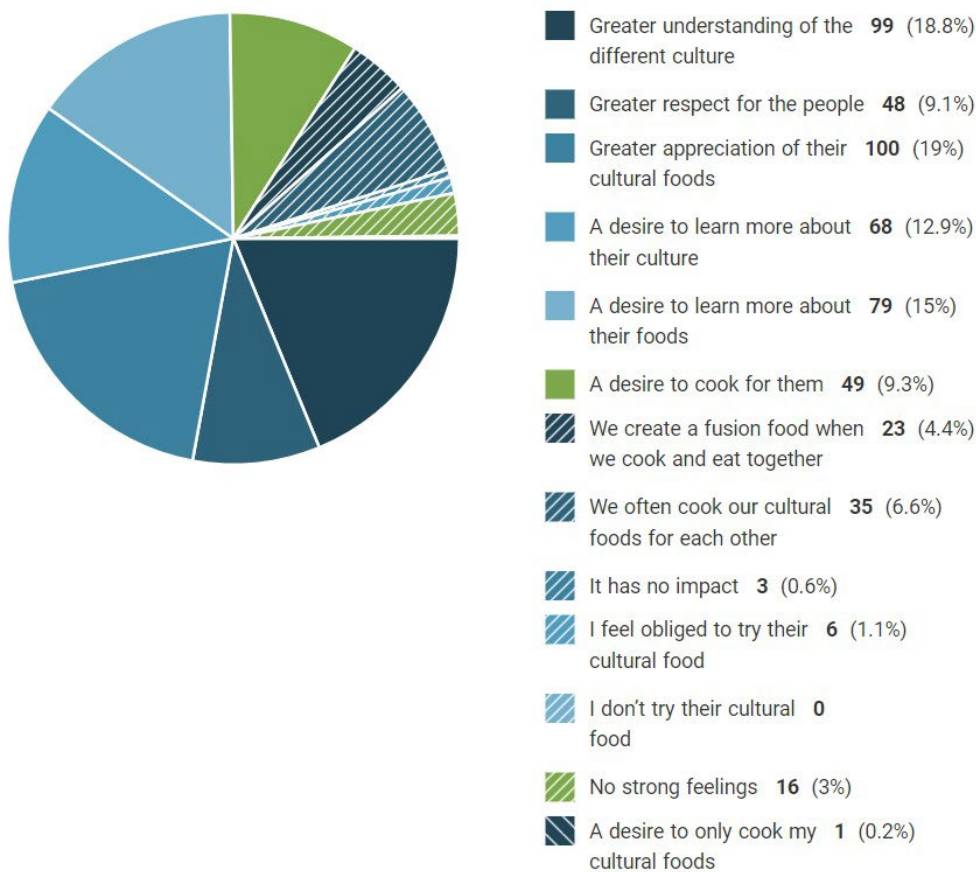


Cooking with others from different cultures

Y) Frequency of cooking with others from different cultural backgrounds



Z) Emotions when cooking with others from different cultural backgrounds



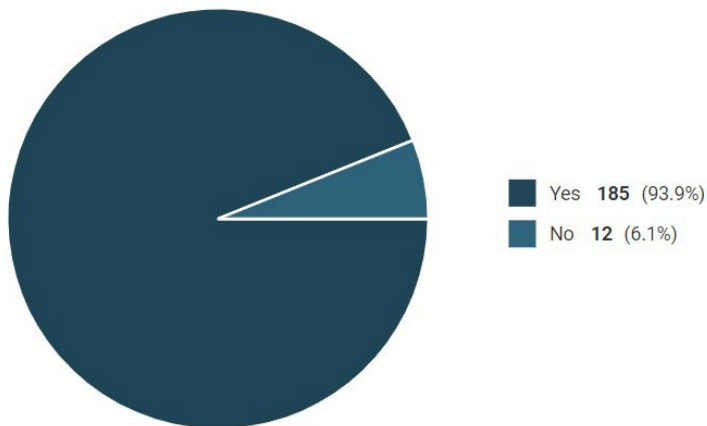
zz) Mann Witney U Test for association between groups and their frequency of cooking/eating with different cultures

	Difference of regularity of cooking/eating with different cultures between groups
P Value	0.0000000000070
Statistically significant	Yes

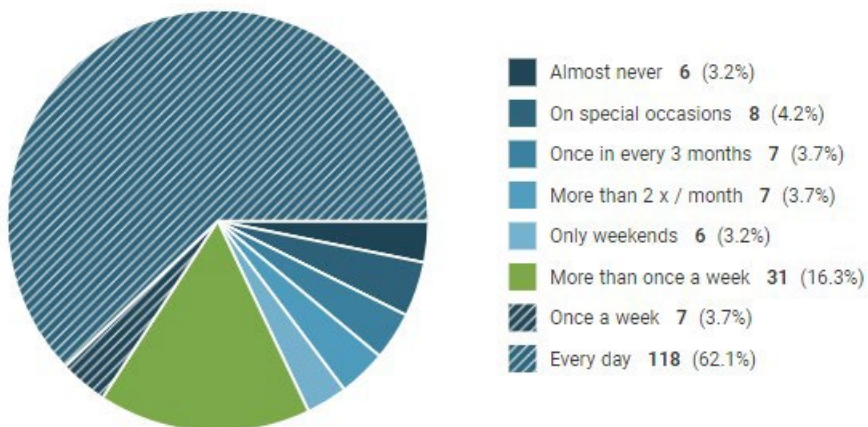
8.3.2.4 Eating emotions

Immediate family

A) Do respondents eat with immediate family?



B) Frequency of eating with immediate family



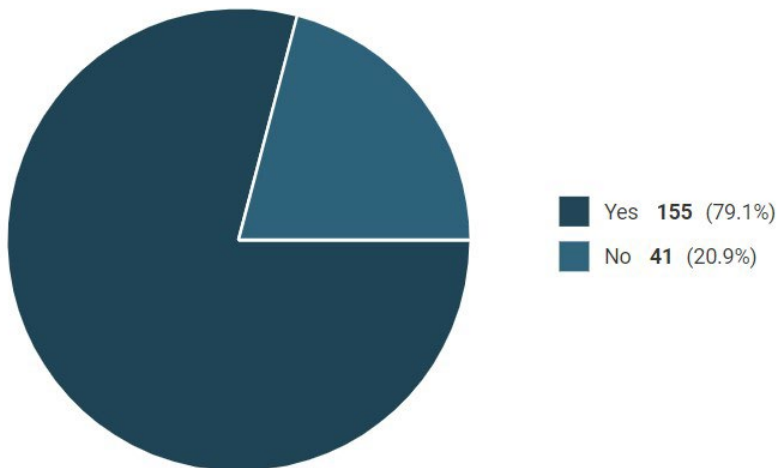
C) Emotions associated with eating with immediate family

Emotions	Times selected	% of total of all respondents	Emotions	Times selected	% of group 1	Emotions	Times selected	% of group 2
Enjoyment	78	50%	Enjoyment	49	56%	Respect for the food	25	45%
Belonging	70	45%	Belonging	40	45%	Belonging	25	45%
Strengthens bonds	62	39%	Strengthens bonds	35	40%	Enjoyment	24	43%
Connectedness	59	38%	Connectedness	33	38%	Strengthens bonds	23	41%
Happiness	55	35%	Happiness	30	34%	Connectedness	19	34%
Respect for the food	39	25%	Respect for the people	17	19%	Happiness	17	30%
Respect for the people	30	19%	Gives deeper meaning to everyday eating	13	15%	Fulfilment	15	27%
Gives deeper meaning to everyday eating	28	18%	Respect for the food	12	14%	Responsibility	12	21%
Fulfilment	23	15%	I appreciate the food more	11	13%	Gives deeper meaning to everyday eating	11	20%
Convivial	22	14%	Nostalgic	10	11%	Respect for the people	10	18%
Appreciate the food more	21	13%	Convivial	10	11%	Convivial	10	18%
Responsibility	20	13%	Calmness	9	10%	I appreciate the food more	9	16%
Secure	19	12%	Secure	9	10%	I feel less stressed	8	14%
Calmness	18	11%	Fulfilment	8	9%	Calmness	8	14%
I feel less Stressed	14	9%	I want to eat with others more	8	9%	Confident	8	14%
I am more likely to have dessert	12	8%	I feel less stressed	6	7%	Secure	6	11%
Nostalgic	11	7%	Responsibility	6	7%	Time is of less consequence	4	7%
I want to eat with others more	10	6%	I am more likely to have dessert	6	7%	I am more likely to have dessert	4	7%
Confident	9	6%	Time is of less consequence	5	6%	Excitement	3	5%
Time is of less sequence	9	6%	I feel more stressed	3	3%	Adventurous	3	5%
Excitement	6	4%	Challenging	3	3%	Willing	3	5%
Adventurous	5	3%	A chance to develop a new food culture	3	3%	Energetic	3	5%
Willing	5	3%	Quiet	3	3%	I want to eat with others more	2	4%
A chance to develop a new food culture	5	3%	Excitement	2	2%	Guilt	1	2%

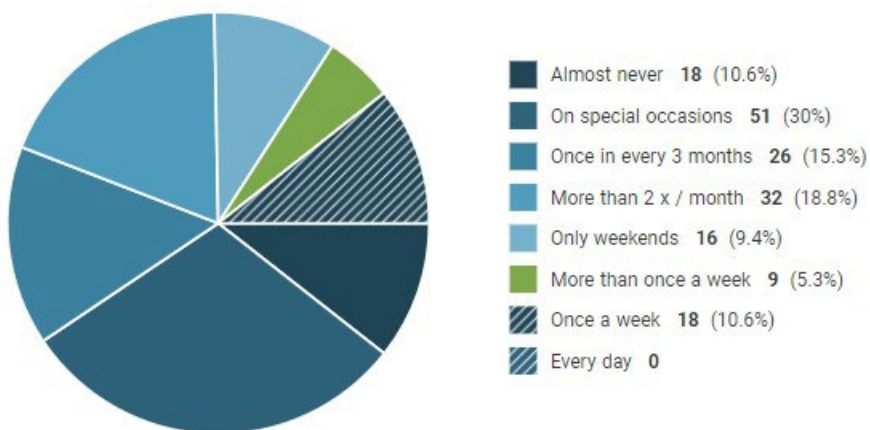
Quiet	4	3%	Adventurous	2	2%	A chance to develop a new food culture	1	2%
Feel more stressed	3	2%	Learning	2	2%	Quiet	1	2%
Challenging	3	2%	Willing	2	2%	I feel more stressed	0	0%
Energetic	3	2%	Impatience	1	1%	Impatience	0	0%
Learning	2	1%	Frustration	1	1%	Nostalgic	0	0%
Frustration	1	1%	Confident	1	1%	Learning	0	0%
Patience	1	1%	I appreciate the food less	1	1%	Scared	0	0%

Extended family

D) Do respondents eat with extended family?



E) Frequency of eating with extended family



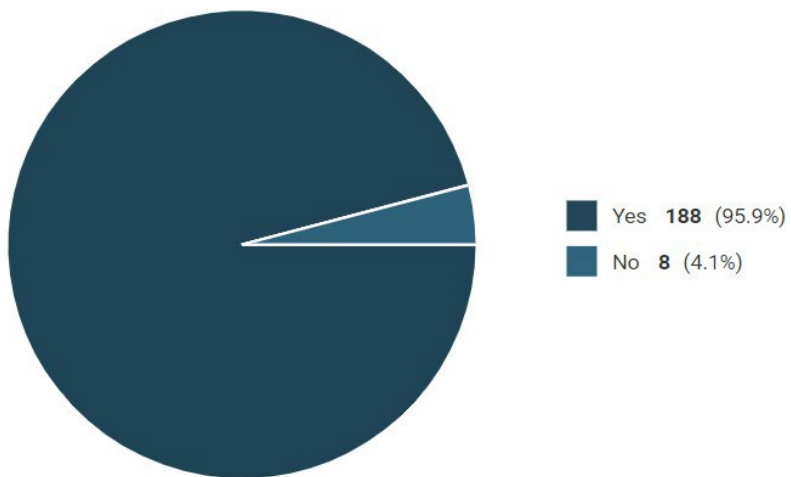
F) Emotions associated with eating with extended family by all respondents, group 1 and 2

Emotions	Times Selected	% of all respondents	Emotions	Times Selected	% of group 1	Emotions	Times selected	% of group 2
Belonging	40	33%	Enjoyment	26	43%	Connectedness	22	46%
Enjoyment	37	30%	Happiness	22	36%	Respect for the people	22	46%
Happiness	35	29%	Belonging	19	31%	Strengthens bonds	22	46%
Connectedness	34	28%	Strengthens bonds	18	30%	Respect for the food	21	44%
Strengthens bonds	31	25%	Connectedness	15	25%	Belonging	19	40%
Respect for the people	30	25%	Respect for the people	11	18%	Fulfilment	15	31%
Respect for the food	21	17%	I am more likely to have dessert	11	18%	Convivial	12	25%
Fulfilment	18	15%	Nostalgic	10	16%	Happiness	11	23%
I am more likely to have dessert	18	15%	Excitement	8	13%	Enjoyment	11	23%
Convivial	17	14%	I appreciate the food more	8	13%	Gives deeper meaning to everyday eating	11	23%
Nostalgic	14	11%	Gives deeper meaning to everyday eating	8	13%	I am more likely to have dessert	11	23%
Responsibility	11	9%	Respect for the food	6	10%	Responsibility	8	17%
Calmness	11	9%	Times is of less consequence	6	10%	Time is of less consequence	7	15%
Gives deeper meaning to everyday eating	11	9%	Convivial	6	10%	Energetic	6	13%
Excitement	10	8%	I feel less stressed	5	8%	Nostalgic	4	8%
I appreciate the food more	10	8%	Calmness	5	8%	Secure	4	8%
I feel more stressed	7	6%	A chance to develop a new food culture	5	8%	Learning	3	6%

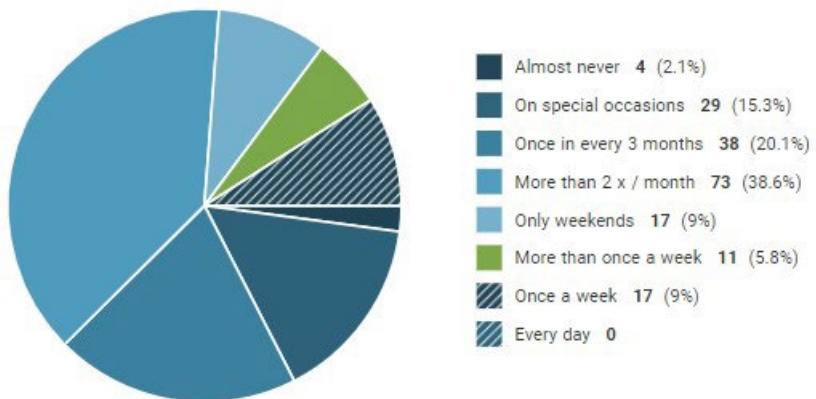
Learning	7	6%	I feel more stressed	4	7%	I appreciate the food more	3	6%
I feel less stressed	6	5%	I want to eat with others more	4	7%	I feel more stressed	2	4%
Time is of less consequence	6	5%	Impatience	3	5%	Guilt	2	4%
I want to eat with others more	6	5%	Learning	3	5%	Excitement	2	4%
Frustration	5	4%	Secure	3	5%	Willing	2	4%
Energetic	5	4%	Confident	3	5%	Challenging	2	4%
Confident	5	4%	Adventurous	2	3%	A chance to develop a new food culture	2	4%
Patience	4	3%	Responsibility	2	3%	I feel less stressed	1	2%
Secure	4	3%	Fulfilment	2	3%	Impatience	1	2%
Challenging	3	2%	Challenging	2	3%	Calmness	1	2%
Adventurous	2	2%	Frustration	2	3%	Confident	1	2%
Willing	2	2%	Energetic	2	3%	I want to eat with others more	1	2%
A chance to develop a new food culture	2	2%	Quiet	2	3%	Adventurous	0	0%
Quiet	1	1%	Willing	1	2%	Scared	0	0%
Scared	1	1%	I appreciate the food less	1	2%	Frustration	0	0%
Reluctant	1	1%	Guilt	0	0%	Reluctant	0	0%
Intrigue	0	0%	Reluctant	0	0%	I appreciate the food less	0	0%
I appreciate the food less	0	0%	Intrigue	0	0%	Quiet	0	0%

Friends

G) Eating with friends



H) Frequency of eating with friends



Emotions	Times selected	% of total respondents	Emotions	Times selected	% of group 1	Emotions	Times selected	% of group 2
Connectedness	65	35%	Connectedness	44	38%	Convivial	28	51%
Strengthens bonds	55	29%	Strengthens bonds	37	32%	Enjoyment	22	40%
Enjoyment	51	27%	Belonging	36	31%	A chance to develop a new food culture	19	35%
Belonging	49	26%	Happiness	31	27%	I am more likely to have dessert	18	33%
Happiness	47	25%	Enjoyment	23	20%	Connectedness	17	31%
Convivial	44	24%	Gives deeper meaning to everyday eating	18	16%	Strengthens bonds	14	25%
I am more likely to have dessert	33	18%	I appreciate the food more	16	14%	Respect for the food	11	20%
Respect for the people	29	16%	Respect for the people	14	12%	Respect for the people	10	18%
Respect for the food	28	15%	Respect for the food	13	11%	Fulfilment	10	18%
Gives deeper meaning to everyday eating	27	14%	I am more likely to have dessert	13	11%	Confident	10	18%
Chance to develop a new food culture	26	14%	I feel less stressed	12	10%	Happiness	9	16%
I appreciate the food more	22	12%	Time is of less consequence	12	10%	Belonging	9	16%
Fulfilment	21	11%	Nostalgic	11	9%	Adventurous	8	15%
I feel less stressed	20	11%	Fulfilment	11	9%	I feel less stressed	7	13%
Adventurous	19	10%	Convivial	11	9%	Gives deeper meaning to everyday eating	7	13%
Time is of less consequence	18	10%	Excitement	10	9%	Intrigue	5	9%

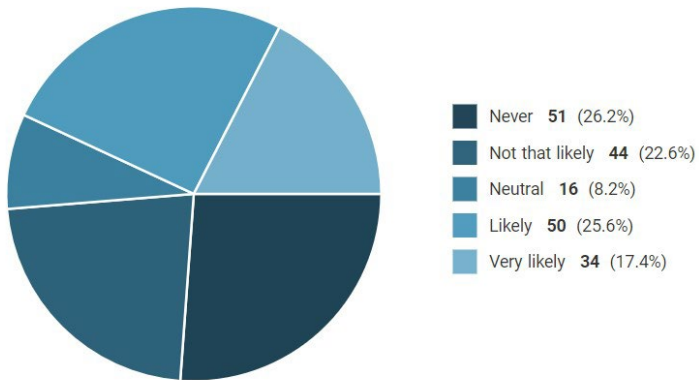
Excitement	14	7%	Adventurous	9	8%	Energetic	5	9%
Secure	12	6%	Secure	9	8%	Time is of less consequence	5	9%
Confident	12	6%	Calmness	8	7%	I appreciate the food more	4	7%
Nostalgic	11	6%	I want to eat with others more	7	6%	Excitement	3	5%
Calmness	11	6%	A chance to develop a new food culture	6	5%	Responsibility	3	5%
Energetic	8	4%	Guilt	3	3%	Learning	3	5%
I want to eat with others more	8	4%	Responsibility	3	3%	Calmness	3	5%
Responsibility	6	3%	Willing	3	3%	Secure	1	2%
Learning	5	3%	Challenging	3	3%	I want to eat with others more	1	2%
Intrigue	5	3%	Learning	2	2%	Quiet	1	2%
Quiet	3	2%	Energetic	2	2%	I feel more stressed	0	0%
Willing	3	2%	I feel more stressed	1	1%	Guilt	0	0%
Challenging	3	2%	Scared	1	1%	Impatience	0	0%
et	3	2%	Frustration	1	1%	Nostalgic	0	0%
I feel more stressed	2	1%	Reluctant	1	1%	Willing	0	0%
Scared	2	1%	Confident	1	1%	Scared	0	0%
Frustration	1	1%	I appreciate the food less	1	1%	Challenging	0	0%
Reluctant	1	1%	Quiet	1	1%	Frustration	0	0%
I appreciate the food less	1	1%	Impatience	0	0%	Reluctant	0	0%
Patience	0	0%	Intrigue	0	0%	I appreciate the food less	0	0%

j) Mann Witney results for eating with others

'Others'	Immediate family	Extended family	Friends
P- value	0.04	0.000000000005	0.0000007
Statistically significant	Yes	Yes	Yes

Neighbours

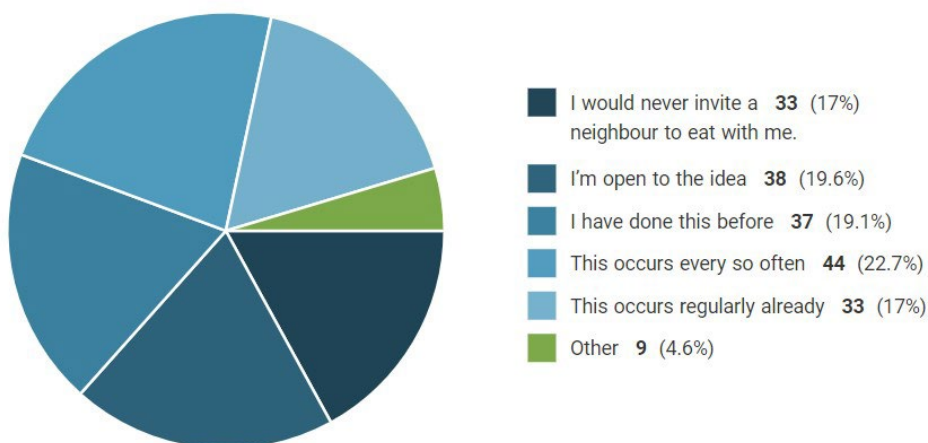
k) Likelihood of asking a neighbour to eat with you



l))

Likelihood	Never	Not that likely	Neutral	Likely	Very likely
Value	0.000000000000000001	0.0000000000000076	0.004987741649073	0.000000000000000000	0.000000000000000000
Statistically significant	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

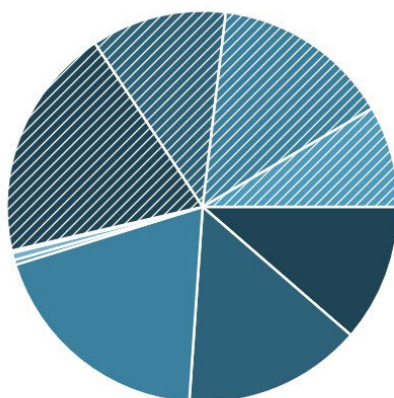
m) Reason for above



n) 'Other' responses

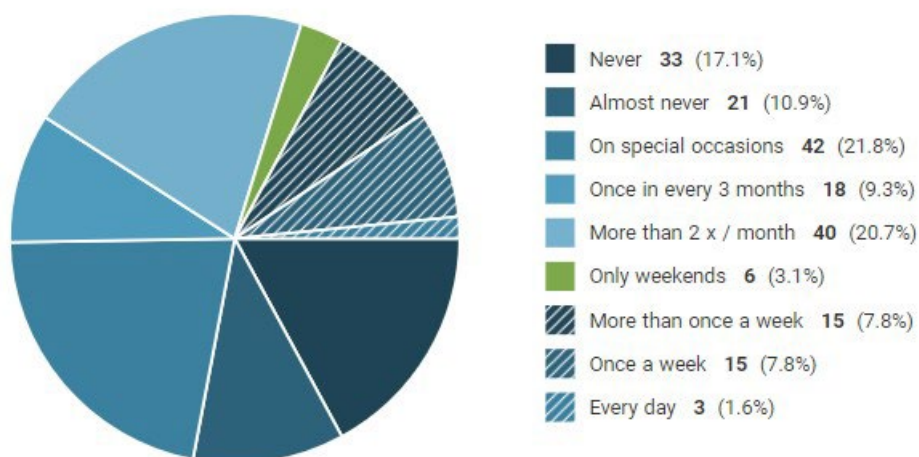
I don't know any neighbours that much so as to invite them for lunch/dinner
I find it difficult enough to cater for friends and family
No neighbours
Personality clash
Actually I have never met my current neighbours (after almost 3 years).
We live very rurally! I've baked goods and delivered to the nearby farm but wouldn't think of asking them to dinner
I don't know my neighbours
Can't envisage how it would about - would be out of the ordinary
It would not really occur to me

o) Happiness of frequency of eating with others



I would like to eat more	57	(11.4%)
regularly with immediate family		
I would like to eat more	74	(14.7%)
regularly with extended family		
I would like to eat more	96	(19.1%)
regularly with friends		
I would like to eat less	2	(0.4%)
regularly with immediate family		
I would like to eat less	3	(0.6%)
regularly with extended family		
I would like to eat less	1	(0.2%)
regularly with friends		
I am happy with the frequency	97	(19.3%)
of eating with immediate family		
I am happy with the frequency	56	(11.2%)
of eating with extended family		
I am happy with the frequency	74	(14.7%)
of eating with friends		
I would like to find more	42	(8.4%)
people to eat with		

p) Do respondents share or swap food with others?



q) Mann- witney test for differences in group frequency of food swapping

Frequency	P-value	Statistically significant
Never	0.0000000000000000	Yes
Almost never	0.0000000000000000	Yes
On special occasions	0.0000000000000000	Yes
Once in every 3 months	0.0000000000000000	Yes
More than 2x/ month	0.0000000000000000	Yes
Only weekends	0.0000000000000320	Yes
More than once a week	0.0000000000000000	Yes
Once a week	0.0000000000000000	Yes
Every day	0.000000003818194	Yes

r) Mann-witney test for reliability of differences in groups growing food.

Response	Yes	No
P- value	0.0000000000000000	0.0000000000000000
Statistically significant	Yes	Yes