Exploring meat-eating practices in Mumbai and Sydney with a view towards encouraging a reduced-meat diet

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Thesis submitted for the award of Doctor of Philosophy

September 2021

UTS UNIVERSITY
OF TECHNOLOGY
SYDNEY

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CERTIFICATE OF ORIGINAL AUTHORSHIP

I, Tani Khara, declare that this thesis, is submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the award of Doctor of Philosophy in Sustainable Futures, in the Institute for Sustainable Futures at the University of Technology Sydney.

This thesis is wholly my own work unless otherwise reference or acknowledged. In addition, I certify that all information sources and literature used are indicated in the thesis.

This document has not been submitted for qualifications at any other academic institution.

Signature:

Date:

21 September 2021

Acknowledgements

There are many people who provided invaluable support, guidance and sustenance to me throughout my research.

Firstly, thank you to my wonderful supervisors Professor Christopher Riedy and Dr Matthew B. Ruby. Your guidance and knowledge greatly inspired and challenged me, and helped me evolve from a passionate animal rights activist into a more critical and complete academic researcher. During the PhD journey, I experienced many moments of loneliness and solitude. However, what made my journey easier to endure was our fortnightly supervision meetings which I always looked forward to. Our regular interactions were encouraging, inspiring and uplifting. They motivated me to keep going and become a better version of myself. Your inspiration, guidance and encouragement have made my research experience one that I will carry with me forever. Thank you again.

This research would not have been possible without all of the participants who took the time to share their thoughts with me. I am grateful to every participant for inviting me into their lives, and for trusting me enough to share their views and experiences as well as shame and embarrassments with me. Thank you immensely.

In addition, I would like to deeply thank all the students and staff in the postgraduate program at the Institute for Sustainable Futures, the annual retreats, the Groups for Accountability and Support and the writing groups who have enriched my experience and expanded the horizons of my research.

Thank you to my best friend and life partner, Hamada Els, without whose incredible support, tolerance and love this thesis would not have been possible. I am also very grateful for the love and support of other family and friends throughout my PhD journey.

Last but not least I would also like to acknowledge and deeply thank Laura Wynne – my editor – who, at the end of my PhD journey, provided copyediting and proofreading services as per the guidelines laid out in the university-endorsed guidelines for editing a research thesis.

Abstract

This qualitative exploratory study focuses on understanding meat-eating practices in urban Australia and urban India, with a view towards encouraging a reduced-meat diet in both countries.

Australia has one of the world's highest levels of meat consumption—approximately 95 kilograms per capita annually. On the other hand, although meat consumption in India is relatively low (approximately four kilograms per capita annually), it is rising in response to growing levels of urbanisation, increasing disposable incomes and exposure to new global norms. A growing body of research has called for a reduction in global meat consumption and a shift towards plant-based diets for reasons relating to health and sustainability. Given this, this research develops an understanding of meat-eating practices and uses these insights as a basis for recommending more sustainable dietary practices in established and emerging markets like Australia and India.

This research used Shove, Pantzar and Watson's model of Social Practice Theory to understand meat-eating practices. In both countries, semi-structured face-to-face in-depth interviews were the main mode of data gathering. These were supplemented by observations of eating practices in various public places as well as data triangulation through secondary sources.

The key findings highlight that globalisation, changes to household structures, and exposure to new eating practices have encouraged a shift in meat-eating practices over time, in both countries. In India, many people discussed wanting to experiment with new meat-based dishes as meat eating has become synonymous with meanings of progression, social status, and health. In Australia, the opposite seems to have occurred as people are gradually moving away from diets heavy in red meats towards foods considered healthier, more ethical, and more environmentally friendly. In both countries, however, these new eating practices conflict with older meat-eating practices. In India, meat eating sits in contrast with long-standing socio-cultural practices that advocate vegetarianism. In Australia, norms of

masculinity and meat being perceived as a necessary dietary requirement have discouraged many people from further cutting back on meat consumption and increasing their consumption of plant-based foods.

Given these findings, this thesis concludes by outlining proposed intervention strategies designed to make plant-based eating more appealing and relevant in each country. In India, suggested interventions relate to making plant-based eating socially relevant again amidst the new globalised urban culture. In the Australian context, recommendations relate to continuing to dismantle masculine norms and widening the circle of empathy to include farm animals.

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Chapter 1: Introduction and Literature Review

1.1   Meat consumption and sustainability

The United Nations' (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) have been described as "a shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future" (UN, 2015, para. 1). These goals, which number 17 in total, cover a range of priorities such as addressing climate change, preserving oceans and forests, and improving global health and education (United Nations Development Programme, 2020). While all these goals relate to human and planetary health, food choices have a direct impact on several of the goals, including Goals 2, 3 and 12-15 (UN, 2015). Previous studies claim that reducing meat consumption is likely to have a profound and immediate impact on global sustainability (Allievi, 2017; Marinova & Bogueva, 2019). This is because a reduction in meat consumption is related to the broader goals of food security and improved nutrition (Goal 2), promoting healthy living and well-being (Goal 3) and reducing negative impacts on natural systems (Goals 12-15).

The global average per capita meat consumption has increased by approximately 20 kilograms since the 1960s (OECD, 2019). Meat production has grown faster than the rate of human population growth (Ritchie & Roser, 2017). A Lancet report titled 'Food, livestock production, energy, climate change, and health' states that the transition towards meat-based diets is related to income growth, urbanisation and rising levels of prosperity (McMichael et al., 2007). Given the significant environmental, health and animal welfare challenges associated with rising levels of meat consumption, several scholars and policy makers advocate for a reduction in meat-based diets (Friel et al., 2009; Steinfeld et al., 2006; Willett et al., 2019) along with

measures to promote dietary shifts towards more sustainable models of eating (Willett et al., 2019).

According to a recent Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) report, the livestock sector is responsible for 14.5% of human-induced global anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs) (Gerber et al., 2013). The livestock sector is also the largest single source of methane (CH_4) and nitrous oxide (N_2O), two of the most potent GHGs (Bailey et al., 2014). Studies on the livestock industry's environmental impact highlight its contribution to intensive water usage (De Boer & Aiking, 2011; de Vries & de Boer, 2010), land degradation (Henning, 2011; Willett et al., 2019), biodiversity loss (Marlow et al., 2009; Röös et al., 2013), threats to food yields (Aiking, 2011; Chemnitz & Becheva, 2014; Stanescu, 2010) as well as water, soil and air pollution (Bar-On et al., 2018; Hribar, 2010; Nierenberg, 2005). In view of this, the FAO has long cautioned against a "business as usual" approach in relation to the meat and livestock industry (Steinfeld, Gerber, et al., 2006, p. 284).

Dietary habits have health-related consequences. Several studies report links between increased levels of red meat consumption and various types of cancers (Chan et al., 2011; Larsson & Wolk, 2006; Nagle et al., 2015; Norat et al., 2002). The incidence of colorectal cancers tends to be higher in Western countries where red meat is more frequently consumed whereas the incidence is lower in less affluent countries where red meat intake is generally lower (Bingham & Riboli, 2004; Hariharan et al., 2015). Links have been found between increased meat intake and increased rates of diabetes (Raphaely & Marinova, 2016), cardiovascular disease (McAfee et al., 2010; Robert-Lamblin, 2004; Vormund et al., 2014), and mortality (Key et al., 2006, 1999; Singh et al., 2003; Westhoek et al., 2014).

On the other hand, a paper titled 'Red meat and colon cancer: should we become vegetarians, or can we make meat safer?' claims many of the studies which report links between meat intake and cancers are often retrospective (Corpet, 2011). Retrospective studies may overlook links between disease and more recent dietary habits and lifestyle factors (Corpet,

2011; Sedgwick, 2014; Talari & Goyal, 2020). Similarly, work published in the 'Annals of Internal Medicine' highlights that several studies on dietary choices and health rely on "notoriously unreliable self-reports" of consumption while others fail to appropriately control for potential confounders (Carroll & Doherty, 2019, para. 2). Thus, the authors advocate for a major change in the way data diet and health outcomes is collected and reported (Carroll & Doherty, 2019).

In comparison, cohort or longitudinal studies are more accurate as they consider more recent dietary and lifestyle factors, and also tend to include larger samples (White et al., 2004). Cohort studies give an indication of causality (Levin, 2006). Meta-analyses are another relatively more robust approach to understanding links between diseases and diets. Meta-analyses gather all data from previously published studies, while excluding studies of poor quality (Corpet, 2011). A meta-analysis study is equivalent to a single large study and includes sub-groups that were originally too small to be analysed (Corpet, 2011).

Several meta-analysis studies report links between increased levels of red and processed meat consumption and higher incidences of colorectal cancers (Larsson & Wolk, 2006; Norat & Riboli, 2001; Ollberding et al., 2012). Meta-analyses have found links between increased levels of red meat consumption and increased risks of pancreatic (Beaney et al., 2017; Nöthlings et al., 2005), endometrial (Genkinger et al., 2012) and esophageal cancers (Choi et al., 2013). It is likely for this reason that red and processed meats have been classified as carcinogens by the World Health Organisation (WHO) (Bouvard et al., 2015). Red and processed meats comprise pro-carcinogenic factors such as heme iron, nitrates, nitrites and mutagenic compounds which are generated during heating and processing (Bastide et al., 2011).

The link between adverse health effects and the consumption of meats such as poultry and fish are somewhat unclear to date (Kane-Diallo et al., 2018). However, a small amount of carcinogenic substances can be found on the surface of most meats cooked at high temperatures (Truswell, 2002). This reflects findings from older studies which reported the presence of

carcinogenic substances in pork (Sinha et al., 1998), chicken (Sinha et al., 1995) and fish (Yamaizumi et al., 1980) cooked at high temperatures.

In comparison to a meat-based diet, several studies highlight that a plant-based diet with minimal-to-no animal protein is deemed to be optimal for human health (Cooper et al., 2012; Dinu et al., 2017; Satija et al., 2017; University of California San Francisco, 2020). Furthermore, cohort studies on primary cancer prevention and causes and incidences of mortality (Link et al., 2013) over a number of years (Kane-Diallo et al., 2018), recommend a higher intake of plant-based foods and a lower intake of animal-based foods. Despite these recommendations, it seems that the negative ethical and environmental consequences associated with the meat and livestock industry hold stronger empirical evidence compared to the health-related impacts of meat consumption. Ethical and environmental concerns could potentially be sufficient to encourage a shift in dietary practices (Carroll & Doherty, 2019).

The ethical aspect of meat production is a significant issue given that, in 2017 alone, over 70 billion land animals worldwide were killed as part of the meat and livestock industry (FAOSTAT, 2017). Today, most meat animals are raised on factory farms (Nierenberg, 2003; Voiceless, 2012), in "conditions intended to maximise production at minimal cost" (Merriam-Webster, 2016). Numerous documentaries and audio-visual footage of factory farming reveal the confinement, abuse and slaughter these sentient animals undergo on a daily basis (Animals Australia, 2015b; Atos, 2014; Delforce, 2014; Iovino, 2011; Last Chance for Animals, 2016; PETA, 2015). Commonly documented practices in factory farming include animals confined in cages which barely allow room to move (Delforce, 2014; Teale & Simon, 2009), debeaked to prevent them from mutilating each other due to the stress of their cramped conditions (Animals Australia, 2008), and undergoing other forms of confinement and abuse before being killed in a frightening and painful manner (Andersen & Kuhn, 2014; Animals Australia, 2013a).

In view of all these environmental, health and animal welfare issues, a more sustainable approach to consumption will necessarily involve reduced-meat diets. This imperative can be also summarised in the words of poet and

peace activist Thich Nhat Hanh - "We have to put pressure on the livestock industry to change. If we stop consuming, they will stop producing" (Hanh, 2008, pp. 21–22).

1.2   Trends in meat consumption

Figures from 'Our World in Data' – a collaboration between research teams at the University of Oxford and the Global Change Data Lab (Global Change Data Lab, n.d.) - show that over the past 50 years, meat production has more than quadrupled (Ritchie & Roser, 2017). It has risen from 71 million tonnes in 1961 to over 320 million tonnes in 2017 (Ritchie & Roser, 2017). A FAO report predicts that, by 2050, meat production is expected to reach approximately 470 million tonnes (Steinfeld, Wassenaar, et al., 2006). Since the 1990s, levels of meat consumption in many wealthy Western nations have been higher relative to the rest of the world (OECD, 2019a). The latest figures from the OECD-FAO Agricultural Outlook report indicate the annual global average consumption of meat is approximately 35 kilograms per capita, although some countries—such as Australia, whose population consumes 95 kilograms of meat per capita annually—still have much higher levels of consumption (OECD-FAO, 2020). Given the impact of the livestock industry upon planetary health, consumers in nations with high levels of meat consumption are said to have significantly contributed to this wicked problem (Marinova & Bogueva, 2019; Osofksy, 2016).

Future growth in meat consumption is predicted to mainly come from large and rapidly increasing middle classes in developing regions across Asia, Latin America and the Middle East (Steinfeld, Wassenaar, et al., 2006). Developing regions are expected to contribute at least two-thirds to the global share of meat production (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 2015). The types of meats predicted to have the most growth are poultry and beef, both of which will also be driven by demand from developing regions (OECD-FAO, 2017). Factors driving demand include rising income levels, increasing levels of urbanisation (Delgado, 2003; World Health Organisation, 2017) and exposure to global eating patterns (Regmi,

2001) among growing middle classes who can afford to consume meat for nutritional, sensory and symbolic reasons (de Bakker & Dagevos, 2012).

As dietary choices—meat consumption in particular (Marinova & Bogueva, 2019)—have a significant impact on global resources, encouraging sustainable consumption is therefore a relevant and necessary issue for encouraging global sustainability (Horton & Lo, 2015; McMichael et al., 2007; Willett et al., 2019).

1.3   Significance of this study

A Lancet report titled 'From public to planetary health: a manifesto' highlights that there is a strong link between the health of our ecological environment and human wellbeing (Horton et al., 2014). To this point, Steinfeld, Gerber, et al., (2006) claim that it is impossible to maintain a decent standard of human health while our environment, which supports life, continues to deteriorate. Therefore, improving planetary health needs to focus on transforming current living practices to address threats facing human wellbeing as well as that of our planet (Horton et al., 2014).

As food is at the core of human existence, the focus on dietary practices requires our immediate attention (Willett et al., 2019). While there is ample evidence demonstrating that reducing meat consumption can make a significant environmental difference, many policy makers (Bristow, 2011; Dagevos & Voordouw, 2013) and the broader public (Marinova & Bogueva, 2019) find this issue difficult to acknowledge and embrace. This is largely due to the consumer obsession with meat consumption and the abundance of meat-based food choices today (Dagevos, 2016).

The reluctance among policy makers to address the issue of meat consumption may also arise due to their own discomfort (Doyle, 2011; Laestadius et al., 2014) as changes to individual liberties such as consumption could result in a public backlash (Thorndike, 2014). Thus, the question "do we know how to make people eat less meat?" (Marinova & Bogueva, 2019, p. 2) is a relevant one. In view of this, the aim of my study is

to explore meat-eating practices in urban Australia and urban India, with a view towards encouraging a reduced-meat diet. Through the use of social practice theory, I aim to explore how meat eating in both countries is shaped by social structures, norms, conventions and cultures. This is elaborated upon in *Chapter 2: Research methods and design* as well as in subsequent findings chapters 3 to 6. I further detail the rationale for focusing on urban regions in this study in *Section 1.4 Research objectives and questions*.

As previously highlighted, Australia's average annual meat-consumption levels are among the highest in the world (OECD-FAO, 2020). The country faces several sustainability-related challenges given its high levels of obesity, which tends to be a consequence of dietary practices, as well as its high production-based emissions (The Global Compact Network Australia, 2020). The majority of Australia's emissions come from its animal agriculture sector (Department of Agriculture, Water and Resources, 2019). According to a study on 'Greenhouse gas emissions in livestock production systems', animal agriculture accounts for 50% of Australia's total methane emissions (Henry & Eckard, 2009). This makes Australia a relevant country of focus for this study.

Although India has relatively lower levels of meat consumption—about four kilograms per capita annually (OECD, 2019b)—recent findings indicate only three in ten Indians self-identify as vegetarian (Census of India, 2014). Other reports similarly estimate the prevalence of vegetarianism in India to range from about 25% (Mintel Global, 2017a) to 40% (Euromonitor International, 2011). However, given religious and cultural taboos associated with the killing and consumption of animals, Indians are also said to underreport their levels of meat consumption (Bansal, 2016). This makes it somewhat challenging to gauge the full extent of meat eating and understand meat-eating practices in India.

At a global level, urbanisation is a major factor influencing demand for meat-based foods (World Health Organization, 2017). Over the next decade, urbanisation and population growth are projected to bring one billion people into towns and cities with the majority (85%) of the increase occurring in

Asia and Africa (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 2018). Given rising levels of urbanisation and disposable incomes, many in India are also shifting from strict plant-based diets towards diets containing greater amounts of meat (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 2006). In addition, several sources report that India's consumption growth for meats like chicken, mutton (goat/sheep meat) and fish is among the highest in the world (OECD, 2018; Robinson & Pozzi, 2011). Looking ahead, when it comes to global meat and milk production, India is also predicted to be a key player which will cater to both local and global demand (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 2018). All these factors make India a relevant country of focus for this study.

Culture plays a significant role when it comes to influencing and shaping meat-eating practices (Gossard & York, 2003; Panagiotou & Kadianaki, 2019). Cross-cultural psychologist Harry Triandis (1996, p. 408) defines culture as encompassing "shared attitudes, beliefs, categorizations, self-definitions, norms, role definitions, and values…organized around a theme that can be identified among those who speak a particular language, during a specific historic period, and in a definable geographic region." Other work on this subject similarly highlights that culture is a coalescence of shared norms and cognitions among a certain population of individuals, which are distinct from those shared by individuals from other populations (Hofstede, 1980; Lehman et al., 2004; Mead, 1955).

In a paper titled 'Many Forms of Culture', Cohen (2009) argues that religion, which essentially comprises a social structure of transmitted beliefs, norms, symbols and practices, can also be considered a form of culture. To this point, Clifford Geertz in the book titled 'Religion as cultural system' highlights that religious practice is a "historically transmitted pattern of meanings embodied in symbols, a system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic forms" (Geertz, 1993, p. 89). Thus, religion can thus be thought of as not only a part of culture but as something which influences and interacts with culture (Saroglou & Cohen, 2011).

In India, Hindu, Buddhist and Jain religious teachings emphasise the sanctity of all life and interconnectedness across life forms (Davidson et al., 2003). In comparison, some facets of Chrisitanity view animals as existing largely for the sake of man (Fiddes, 1994). This has implications for the way in which different cultures differ in their views towards animals (Bekoff, 2010) and in their eating practices (Puskar-Pasewicz, 2010). I elaborate upon this further in *Section 1.8 A review of meat-eating practices in Australia and India*. In the next section, I detail the objectives and questions of this study.

1.4 Research objectives and questions

The main objective of this study is to explore meat-eating practices in urban Australia and urban India. Building on this understanding of meat-eating practices, this study proposes potential opportunities for reducing meat consumption in each urban culture.

While the majority of Australians (86%) live in urban centres (Central Intelligence Agency, 2018a), India has a relatively smaller urban population (35%; Central Intelligence Agency, 2018b). However India's urban regions report higher levels of meat consumption as compared to its semi-urban and rural regions (National Sample Survey Office, 2012). This reflects what has been highlighted previously in that urbanisation is a key factor which contributes to increasing levels of meat consumption (Delgado, 2003; World Health Organization, 2017). Furthermore, changes in consumption also tend to occur within urban regions first, as there is greater exposure to a variety of eating practices (Gogineni et al., 2018; Sassatelli, 2015; Siegel, 2010). For these reasons, in this study, I explore urban meat-eating practices in the two countries, and do so via four key questions:

- What meat-eating practices are prevalent in each urban culture?

- How and why are these urban meat-eating practices changing?

- What role do materials, meanings and competences play within the contemporary urban practice of meat eating, and how are those roles changing?

- Based upon this understanding of meat-eating practices, what are the potential opportunities for reducing meat consumption in each urban culture?

As part of this, I explore the following themes in both Australia and India:

- **Exploring past meat-eating practices:** Understanding past meat-eating practices, in comparison to present day practices, is helpful in that it provides some context in relation to how meat-eating has changed over time. Understanding past meat-eating practices also means exploring the role of tradition in shaping these. In this context, understanding the role of tradition would involve understanding the "customs and ceremonials by means of which the past speaks to the present…reasons for the individual's actions…[along with the influence of] the sedimented wisdom of earlier generations" (Giddens, 1994, pp. 28–29) in each culture.

- **Exploring contemporary meat-eating practices**: Exploring contemporary meat eating encompasses understanding how various elements within a practice—materials, meanings and competences—shape the practice, and vice versa (Shove et al., 2012). This also involves exploring the influence of broader socio-cultural conventions, systems and resources on the practice of meat eating. Understanding the role of tradition is also important when it comes to understanding contemporary practices. This is because tradition facilitates the "reproduction and maintenance of the past in the present" (Halpin et al., 1997, p. 5). It is the "continuous 'work' of interpretation that is carried out to identify the strands which bind present to past" (Giddens, 1994) and thus the role of tradition can be timeless (Young, 1998).

- **Exploring plant-based eating practices**: As part of understanding meat eating, this study also explores how plant-based foods are perceived and situated within various meat-eating cultures. This also includes understanding cultural differences in

relation to the way a plant-based diet is perceived versus a meat-based diet (Puskar-Pasewicz, 2010).

- **Exploring views towards animals**: The study also explores views towards animals and animal welfare, as part of understanding meat eating. This is in view of different cross-cultural beliefs when it comes to the killing and consumption of animals (Bekoff, 2010).

These themes are further elaborated upon in *Section 1.8 A review of meat-eating practices in Australia and India*. In the following section, I detail the key frameworks used in this study to explore and understand meat-eating in the two countries.

1.5 Frameworks used to explore meat-eating practices

This study uses social practice theory as its main framework to explore meat-eating practices in Australia and India. Practices are broader spatio-temporal entities, which are larger than just behaviours, as they comprise configurations of elements within and across particular societies and cultures (Shove et al., 2012) While many social psychology frameworks tend to largely focus on individual attitudes and behaviours, practice theory focuses upon the organisation and evolution of practices which comprise multiple interconnected elements (Reckwitz, 2003). Practices can also be considered dynamic entities which evolve as practitioners develop new skills, new materials or meanings are circulated or as other interconnected practices evolve and change (Shove et al., 2012). In this regard, my study aims to understand meat consumption as not just an individual phenomenon "but as…socially shared practices in which the individual [also] participates" (Daly, 2020, p. 242). My study uses the three-element model of social practice theory by Shove, Pantzar and Watson (2012)—comprising materials (things, technologies, tangible physical entitites), meanings (symbolic meanings, ideas and aspirations) and competences (skills, know-how and technique) to explore meat-eating across the two cultures. This is discussed further in *Chapter 2: Research methods and design*.

Based upon this understanding of meat-eating practices across the two cultures, the study also proposes intervention strategies to help encourage a reduced meat diet. Spurling et al. (2013) highlight how interventions to help encourage sustainable behaviour change can be framed from a practice-based perspective. These forms of intervention include re-crafting practices through changing the elements which make up those practices; substituting practices by replacing less sustainable practices with more sustainable alternatives; and changing how practices interlock by changing the interactions between practices. In the findings chapters – Chapters 3 to 6 – and in the concluding Chapter 7, I refer to some of these practice-based interventions by Spurling et al. (2013) to propose strategies and opportunities to help encourage a reduced meat diet.

While social psychologists may favour methodological individualism and social practice theorists emphasise structural influences, a body of work argues that researching sustainable behaviour change can benefit from drawing upon a multitude of approaches (Burke et al., 2018; Chung, 2021; Lorenzoni et al., 2007; Whitmarsh et al., 2011; Wilson & Chatterton, 2011). A paper titled 'Multiple models to inform climate change policy: A pragmatic response to the 'beyond the ABC' debate' uses the analogy of blind men attempting to make sense of an elephant to emphasise the point (Wilson & Chatterton, 2011). In this paper, the authors refer to "the oft-invoked metaphor of blind men feeling different parts of an elephant…ultimately all the men are blind, all the men share a common objective, and all the men are confronted with the same elephant…[thus] The pragmatic challenge for policy makers concerned with behaviour change is to identify which insights are offered by which models about which…behaviour in which context" (Wilson & Chatterton, 2011, p. 2783).

Previous research has also highlighted the importance of norms when it comes to encouraging sustainable behaviour change (Cialdini, 2003; Cialdini et al., 1990; Goldstein et al., 2008). While in many Western cultures, one's sense of self tends to be based upon individual autonomy and the separation of self from others (Brewer & Chen, 2007; Triandis, 2004), in

collectivist cultures, such as India, many may view themselves from the perspective of others and may feel bound to adhere to social norms (Paul et al., 2006). The taboo associated with meat consumption in India (Bansal, 2016) explains why some Indians may display different public and private behaviours in relation to meat consumption (Khara, 2015). As part of exploring meat-eating in India, the study draws upon Erving Goffman's theory of frontstage (public) and backstage (private) behaviours (Goffman, 2012) to understand the different contexts in which meat-eating occurs in India. This is covered in *Section 1.8.3 A review of contemporary meat eating in India* and further elaborated upon in *Chapter 4: "We have to keep it a secret"—The dynamics of front and backstage behaviours surrounding meat consumption in India.*

Given attitudes towards animals can also influence dietary practices (Rothgerber & Mican, 2014; Ruby & Heine, 2012), the study uses cognitive dissonance theory to understand meat-eating across the two countries. Cognitive dissonance theory was developed by psychologist Leon Festinger who highlights that inconsistency between attitudes and behaviours can generate affective discomfort which, in turn, can motivate the individual to act more consistently (Festinger, 1957). To this point, other work highlights that the motivation to reduce dissonance can result in the adoption of environmentally-conscious behaviours (Thogersen, 2004). The meat paradox applies cognitive dissonance theory to meat consumption specifically in that it highlights how people might experience dissonance when it comes to wanting to eat meat while also not wanting the animals to suffer as a result (Loughnan et al., 2010). This is also covered in *Section 1.6 Philosophies underpinning meat consumption* and elaborated upon in *Chapter 6: A cross-cultural meat paradox: A qualitative study of Australia and India*.

In addition, this study also looks at the role of values in shaping meat-eating practices. This is because values can often transcend situations and guide the behaviour of individuals and social entities (Schwartz et al., 2001). To this point, previous work highlights the relationship between values and pro-environmental decision-making (Schultz, 2002; Stern & Dietz, 1994).

When it comes to meat consumption specifically, there is also a significant body of research which highlights the link between values and meat consumption attitudes and behaviours (Hayley, Zinkiewicz, & Hardiman, 2015; Ruby, 2012; Ruby, Heine, Kamble, Cheng, & Waddar, 2013). This is discussed further in *Section 1.7 The motivations and values of omnivores and plant-based consumers* and in *Chapter 2: Research methods and design.*

The next sections in this chapter will elaborate upon the key philosophies underpinning meat consumption.

1.6 Philosophies underpinning meat consumption

Meat on consumers' plates today is often distanced from the reality of animal suffering (Sollund, 2017). This is because the bodies of sentient animals often tend to be reduced to inanimate objects within the practice of meat eating (Arcari, 2018). When faced with the reality of animal suffering, as part of the meat-production process, previous research highlights that many experience a conflict in relation to not wanting the animals to suffer versus their love for meat-eating— a phenomenon known as the meat paradox (Loughnan et al., 2010).

To address this conflict, omnivores commonly use distancing as a coping strategy (Rothgerber, 2014). Previous research highlights that common strategies used to create distancing include detachment or not getting attached to the animal (Bastian & Amiot, 2019); shifting responsibility, such as producers and consumers shifting the blame onto one another (Rothgerber, 2014); concealing the truth in relation to the realities of animal suffering (Graça et al., 2016); and misrepresentation, which involves denying or downplaying the negative consequences of meat production (Serpell, 1996, 2004). Beneath all these factors, distancing arises mainly as a result of moral disengagement (Joy, 2010) and desensitisation towards the suffering and death of animals (Graça et al., 2016).

Distancing begins from the initial process of selecting animals as part of the farming process. As a key economic imperative for industrialised farms is to maximise profit, these farms focus on the mass production of docile animal bodies (Cole, 2011; Novek, 2005). Studies on this subject report that farm animals are initially put through tests of temperament by being confined or isolated from other animals (Haskell et al., 2014). The very act of confining an animal in a cage, pen or stall creates physical and psychological distance as it not only distances the animal from the human but also impedes the animal from displaying individual personality characteristics (Sollund, 2011). This reduces the animal from a sentient being to a captive entity. The animals are "routinely neutered and sterilized to make them 'just right', to improve their temperament. . . (as) 'animalistic' characteristics are oppressed" (Sollund, 2011, p. 441). Those who show extreme reactions during the initial handling process—such as aggression or fear—are more likely to be killed (Haskell et al., 2014) as more docile animals are considered better suited for modern intensive farming systems (Gibbons et al., 2009; Kilgour et al., 2006).

In an article entitled "From 'animal machines' to 'happy meat'?", Foucault's ideas of disciplinary and pastoral power are applied to 'animal-centred' welfare discourse". Cole and Morgan (2011) discuss how farm animals are distanced to a much greater degree than pets. This is depicted in Figure 1. Thus, greater levels of exploitation and objectification of farm animals occur with lower levels of visibility (Cole & Morgan, 2011).
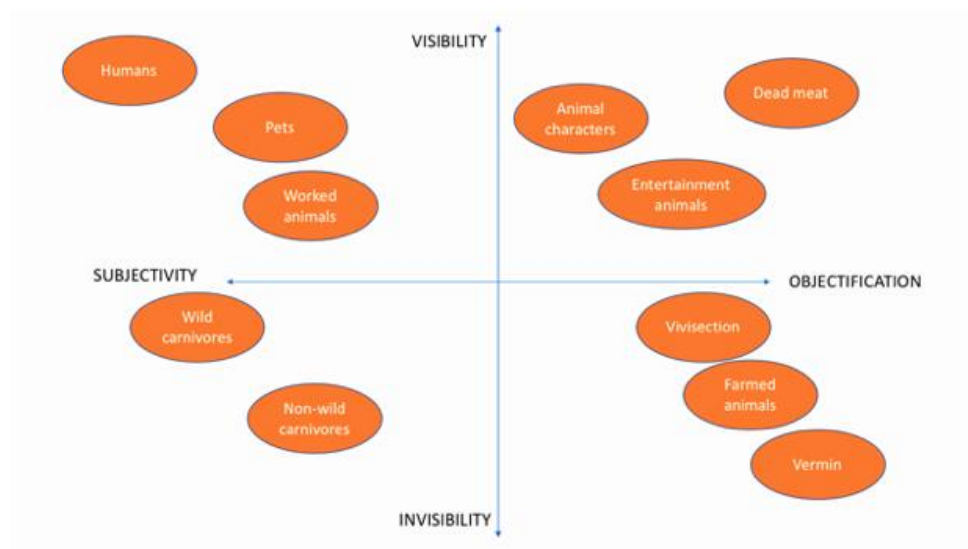
Figure 1 – The material and discursive positioning of animals

Through the suppression of uniqueness and individuality, farm animals are relegated to the category of the "lesser other". In such a system, which encourages distancing and moral apathy, abuse is rampant. The modern day abattoir encourages a "social and ethical distancing" from the realities of animal suffering (Smith, 2002, p. 50). Workers even become sadistic towards these animals (Pollan, 2007; Richards et al., 2013). This distancing is reflected in the following interviews with abattoir workers in previously published work:

> "You may look a hog in the eye that's walking around down in the blood pit with you and think, God, that really isn't a bad-looking animal. You may want to pet it. Pigs down on the kill floor have come up and nuzzled me like a puppy. Two minutes later I had to kill them—beat them to death with a pipe" (Eisnitz, 2007, p. 87).

> "Down in the blood pit they say that the smell of blood makes you aggressive. And it does. You get an attitude that if that hog kicks at me, I'm going to get even. You're already going to kill the hog, but that's not enough. It has to suffer" (Lebwohl, 2016, p. 1).

Thus, as part of industrialised animal agriculture, the abattoir is a place "where human and animal bodies meet, enacting…violence on one

another and spreading that violence outside of the abattoir's bloody walls" (Muller, 2018, p. 95).

Distancing is also created through our language and culture (Haslam et al., 2011). To this point, previous research highlights that killing is expressed differently for humans and animals where animals are slaughtered but humans are murdered (Stibbe, 2001). Furthermore, the uniqueness, individualities and relationships of farm animals are often not represented in meat-eating culture (Adams, 2010; Collard & Contrucci, 1989; Noske, 1989; Vialles, 1994). Meat on supermarket shelves tend to be presented as inanimate dismembered objects, divorced from the reality of these being the body parts of what was once a living being (Adams, 2010; Serpell, 1996). In addition, the very words used to describe these animals conveys distancing in that "we eat beef, not bull, steer or cow, and pork, not pig" (Singer, 2009a, p. 2005). This is despite fact that distanced and objectified animals are those with whom we have the most intimate of all relationships: "the incorporation of their flesh, eggs or bodily secretions into our own bodies" (Morgan and Cole 2011, p. 112).

Research which looks at the representation of animals in culture highlights that farm animal metaphors are used to create social hierarchies (Brandes, 1984; Goatly, 2006; Van Oudenhoven et al., 2008). For example, calling someone a 'sheep' might imply they lack a mind of their own, a 'chicken' could suggest timidity and the label of a 'cow' is often used in a demeaning manner to describe one's physical characteristics (Haslam, 2018). There are parallels in the manner in which distancing and objectification occurs to meat animals and women. In the book, 'The Sexual Politics of Meat', Carol Adams (2010, p. 58) highlights how language reinforces a "cycle of objectification" as we refer to sentient beings by merely their 'breasts' or 'legs'. Thus, both women and meat animals become the 'absent referents' which is where an individual is reduced to an inanimate object (Adams 1990). Haslam et al. (2005) claim that when people are denied uniquely human traits, they tend to be dehumanized. Previous research similarly highlights that objectified women tend to be dehumanized (Bongiorno et al., 2013) and,

like animals, they tend to be perceived as being "less than human" (Vaes et al., 2011, p. 775) and lacking agency (Gray et al., 2007; Vaes et al., 2011).

Underpinning dehumanisation is the ideology of 'hegemonic masculinity' (Greenebaum & Dexter, 2018; Potts & Parry, 2010) predicated upon the domination and exploitation of others (Bird, 1996; Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005; Hanke, 1998) including nature (Gaard, 2002; Plumwood, 1993). Parallels between the disregard and mistreatment of the environment and women have long been highlighted in the context of ecofeminist theory (Warren, 1987, 2000). Ecofeminism has been vital in also furthering our understanding of how the subordination and domination of other human groups based on gender, nationality, ethnicity, sexuality and ability are intertwined with the domination of the non-human world (Gaard, 2002; Rogers, 2008; Rogers & Schutten, 2004).

In the book 'Feminism and the Mastery of Nature', Val Plumwood (1993, p. 3) claims that "western tradition has been constructed as the privileged domain of the master, who has conceived nature as a wife or subordinate other…which the master has split off and constructed as beneath him." Thus, this 'master identity' forms the basis of exploitative and oppressive practices (Plumwood, 1993; Rogers, 2008) and also reflects the concept of hegemonic masculinity.

Other ideologies which underpin our objectification of animals, distancing and the creation human-animal hierarchies are detailed in the following sections.

1.6.1 Dominionism

The term "dominion" is synonymous with "control" (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.) and "supreme authority" (Merriam-Webster, 2020a). Similarly, dominionism is an ideology which emphasises a social hierarchy of living beings in which male humans are at the top (Jackson-Schebetta, 2009). It promotes the concept of supremacy over animals and nature within a

patriarchal paradigm (Jackson-Schebetta, 2009; Yates, 2009). Hence, dominionism is also referred to as human chauvinism (Fox, 2018).

Dominionism tends to be a predominantly Western ideology (Bekoff, 2010). Barbara Willard in a paper titled 'The American Story of Meat: Discursive Influences on Cultural Eating Practice' states that the earliest cultural symbols which supported meat eating were references in the Bible which emphasised human dominion over the Earth (Willard, 2002). These early references highlight how God is said to give Adam 'dominion' over animals (Tannenbaum & Rowan, 1985) with narratives such as "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion . . . over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth" (Willard, 2002, p. 110). Rubenstein in the book titled 'The Cunning of History: The Holocaust and the American Future' states that it is these dominionist ideologies which have also influenced the exploitation, subjugation and murder of other human groups such as the American Indians, the Nazi Holocausts and the nuclear annihilation of Hiroshima (Rubenstein, 1978).

While dominionism underpins the exploitation of animals (Yates, 2009), in 'absolute dominionism', there are no moral constraints on the use of nonhuman animals (Tannenbaum & Rowan, 1985). In 'absolute dominionism', it is believed that humans can and should use animals "as we like for the most important or the most trivial of human pursuits and interests" (Tannenbaum & Rowan, 1985, p. 34). This is also reflected in views of philosopher Descartes who claimed humans can treat animals as they wish because animals are mere automata without sensations (Cottingham, 1978; Hatfield, 2014; Regan & Singer, 1976).

In contrast to Western dominion practices, several Eastern philosophies espouse a symbiotic relationship between human beings and the natural world (Puskar-Pasewicz, 2010). However, certain beliefs even in these philosophies also appear to convey dominionistic leanings. For example, in Hinduism, there is the belief that the morally superior will be reincarnated as human beings while those less so are "doomed" to be reborn

as non-human animals (Bekoff, 2010, p. 8633). Similarly, Buddhism and Jainism classify living beings into several categories or 'gatis' where rebirth as a nonhuman, based upon previous karma, is deemed generally lower than rebirth as a human (Regan, 1986). In addition, there are records that the ancient Vedic diet included some animal proteins (Bhattacharya, 2015; Davidson, 2003; Jha, 2002; Robbins, 1999). It was believed that "Someone who eats meat, after honouring the gods...does nothing bad" (Doniger & Smith, 1991, p. 23). To this point, the 'Manusmriti' – the book which encompasses the traditional Hindu holy code - deems certain animals as inferior to humans (Bekoff, 2010; Doniger, 2009) and states that the consumption of things lower on the food chain is justified according to sacred law (Doniger & Smith, 1991)

On the dominionistic hierarchy, women are also considered to be a "step down" from men (Mason, 2006, p. 181) and have been de-humanized in a similar manner to animals (Rudman & Mescher, 2012). Some facets of Indian religious philosophy reflect similar views. For example, according to the Manusmriti, the ill treatment of women at the hands of men was legitimised (Bhattacharya, 2004; Duwadi, 2013) as the status of women was seen to be on par with that slaves and physical property (Mandal, 2011). To this point, one of the laws of Manusmriti highlights that an adulterous woman in particular faces the disgraced destiny to be "reborn as a jackal" (Doniger 2009, p. 316). This further reveals dominionistic perspectives given how certain animals are relegated as 'lesser' than human beings.

1.6.2 Speciesism

While dominionism is the broader ideology that humans occupy a divinely ordained space over nonhuman life forms, speciesism is the ideology where one species is superior to others (Pellow, 2014). Speciesism is a term originally coined by Richard Ryder in the 1970s to describe discrimination which non-human animals face on the basis of being 'not-human' (Ryder, 1975, p. 2). Ryder essentially describes speciesism as arbitrarily favouring the interests of one species over another (Ryder, 1975). This term refers to the

human–animal binary where animals are deemed 'non-persons' while human beings are viewed as 'non-animals' (Narayanan, 2018). Like dominionism, speciesism is based upon the assumption of human superiority (Dhont et al., 2019) and is a key reason for denying nonhuman animals moral consideration (Regan, 2004; Singer, 2009a).

Speciesism is also linked with humanism (Ehrenfeld, 1981; Shapiro, 1990; Singer, 2004) in that the latter prioritises the "human being over and against animal being" and highlights human consciousness as the centre of mind, reason and existence (Weitzenfeld & Joy, 2014, p. 4). While dominionism postulates that how human beings relate to and treat animals is a fundamental dimension of our relationship with God (Szucs et al., 2012), speciesism results from learnt cultural practices over time (Sollund, 2011). It is where our own socially-constructed hierarchies reinforce perceptions of human superiority (Elstein, 2003) and human-animal divisions (Cudworth, 2015; Stibbe, 2001). The social construction of a 'species' is similar to the social construction of race as it is based upon our perceptions and interpretations of physical differences (Elstein, 2003). Thus, the creation of a 'species' is "highly relativistic and culturally situated" (Rowe, 2011, p. 5).

Speciesism is similar to divisive aristocratic, Nazi and elitist worldviews which have denied other human beings moral equality (Bekoff, 2010). Examples such as the Apartheid regime in South Africa, female infanticide in China (Pluhar, 1995), casteism in India (Narayanan, 2018; Sathyamala, 2018) and slavery in many parts of the world (Singer, 2011) reflect how the notion of one's closest kin can be used to justify hierarchal and discriminatory practices (Pluhar, 1995; Singer, 2011). Newman and Adams (page 2014, p. 7) quote renown philosopher Gary Francione as saying, "animal exploitation is wrong because it involves speciesism. And speciesism is wrong because, like racism, sexism, homophobia, anti-semitism, classism, and all other forms of human discrimination, speciesism involves violence inflicted on members of the moral community".

Understanding cultural differences in relation to how certain species are viewed is helpful in determining how this might influence meat-eating. In

many Western societies - such as Australia (Chen, 2016) –people tend to ascribe greater moral consideration to companion animals – such as dogs and cats – over farm animals such as pigs, cows and sheep (Caviola et al., 2018). In India, on the other hand, certain farm animals – such as the cow – have historically been revered among certain Hindu sub-sects (Batra, 1986) and among the Brahmin castes in particular (Chigateri, 2008). The consumption of cow flesh was also a criteria which influenced the Hindu caste-based social classification of 'Brahmins', 'Non-Brahmins' and 'Untouchables' (Ambedkar, 2018). To this point, Wendy Doniger in her book 'The Hindus : an alternative history' notes that certain animal species and human castes were interlinked based upon their perceived shared qualities i.e., "sattva [the purest form of energy] is thought to predominate in cows and Brahmins, rajas [the next form of energy] in horses and Kshatriyas, and tamas [the basest form of energy] in dogs and the lower classes" (Doniger, 2009, p. 182).

Casteism itself can be considered a form of discrimination (Sathyamala, 2018). Narayanan (2018, p. 331) in her article title 'Cow Protection as 'Casteised Speciesism': Sacralisation, Commercialisation and Politicisation' highlights that the politicisation of certain animals, such as cows, as sacred can be deemed as a form of "casteised speciesism". This is in view of the fact that cows – their meat and flesh - are actually commodities in India today (Alam, 2017a; Mullan et al., 2020; Narayanan, 2018). The country currently stands as a major global exporter of beef (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 2019). However, other research highlights that right-wing Hindu groups tend to use the issue of cow protection as a politicised tool for discrimination (Chigateri, 2011; Narayanan, 2018; Sunder, 2019) and exclusionary practices directed towards other socio-cultural groups (Sathyamala, 2018; Staples, 2016). In addition, the issue of animal protection does not extend to other animal species to the same degree, and largely even excludes other bovine species such as buffalo (Narayanan, 2018). In this regard, speciesism may also encompass privileging certain animal species over others (Singer, 2011).

1.6.3 Carnism

'Carnism' is an ideology that makes people categorise animals into edible and inedible forms i.e., cows are for eating but dogs are not (Joy, 2010). In this regard, carnism can be considered a subset of speciesist beliefs and practices which relate to the categorisation of animals as food (Caviola et al., 2018). Through the lens of carnism, farmed animals are viewed as abstractions who lack individual personalities and this results in different attitudes and behaviours directed towards different animal species (Joy, 2010).

The exploitation of certain nonhuman animals is an omnipresent norm (Rogers, 2008) as many learn to justify the treatment of certain animals through the use of "Three Ns of Carnism"—Normal, Natural, and Necessary" (Joy, 2010). System justification theory states that individuals and groups tend to hold beliefs which reflect the societal status quo (Jost, 2019; Jost et al., 2004). Thus, the division of our world into humans and animals is one social categorisation, as societal norms influence other categorisations where some animals are treated as pets while others are killed for food (Serpell, 2009; Stewart & Cole, 2009).

Across cultures, there is considerable diversity in the extent to which it is considered acceptable to kill and consume certain animal species (Joy, 2010). "Koreans eating dogs, Indians not eating cows, or Westerners eating pigs but not dogs" are some examples of the normative use of carnism (Gibert & Desaulniers, 2014, p. 292). However, more research is needed in this space when it comes to understanding inherent cross-cultural influences on the perceived edibility of certain animals (Gibert & Desaulniers, 2014). This includes understanding the connections between ideology and the justification of animal exploitation in different cultures where the societal status quo might differ (Joy, 2010).

Beyond meat eating, carnistic behaviours can include activities like recreational hunting and the volitional killing of animals (Monteiro et al., 2017). Monteiro et al. (2017), who developed the Carnism Inventory (CI) scale, highlight two variables: carnistic defence (i.e., justifications for meat

eating) and carnistic domination (i.e., the belief that animals are inferior in comparison to humans). While the CI scale specifically focuses on behaviours surrounding the consumption and slaughter of animals (Monteiro et al., 2017), speciesism is a broader ideology where animals as well as certain groups of humans are perceived as having greater or lesser moral value (Beyond Carnism, 2021). The study also highlighted that carnistic defence and domination are associated with values like Right-Wing Authoritarianism (RWA), Social Dominance Orientation (SDO) and xenophobia (Monteiro et al., 2017). Right-wing adherents are more likely to consume more meat (Allen et al., 2000; Allen & Ng, 2003; Kalof et al., 1999), report being less concerned with environmental issues (Worsley & Skrzypiec, 1997) and demonstrate less empathy when viewing scenes of human and animal suffering (Filippi et al., 2010).

On the other hand, there is work which points to the contrary. A paper titled 'Understanding Nazi Animal Protection and the Holocaust' highlights that some factions within Nazi Germany believed that "civilization could be regenerated through vegetarianism" (Arluke & Sax, 1992, p. 17). Other work on this topic similarly indicates how certain factions within Nazi Germany endorsed plant-based eating (Herzog, 2011; Sax, 2000; Waite, 1993). However, in the book titled 'The psychopathic god: Adolf Hitler', Waite (1993) elaborates upon this by stating that one reason behind this was the disgust associated with meat eating which arose from the belief that the purity of Aryan blood could become contaminated through racial mixing just as much as through the consumption of animal flesh. This appears to share some parallels with certain Hindu religious right-wing practices who are reported to use vegetarianism to reinforce religious and caste-based superiority (Alam, 2017b; Roy, 2017) by promoting the concept of 'shudi' (Siddiqui, 2017, p. 143) or cultural purification (Banaji, 2018; Bose, 2009). This reflects how ethnic attachment (Branković, 2021) and social identity (Rothgerber, 2013; Ruby & Heine, 2011) can significantly influence one's attitudes towards animals and dietary practices.

Ideologies relating distancing, the creation of human-animal hierarchies, ecofeminism, objectification, dominionism and speciesism are

discussed further in *Section 1.8: A review of meat-eating practices in Australia and India*. The next section will focus on the key motivations and values of omnivores and plant-based consumers along with some key differences between these two groups.

1.7 The motivations and values of omnivores and plant-based consumers

Previous research has highlighted that meanings (imagery and symbolisms) of health and nutrition associated with meat are key factors which encourage meat consumption (Bogueva & Phau, 2016; Lea, Crawford, & Worsley, 2006; Lea & Worsley, 2001; Lea & Worsley, 2003). Other research has found that the sensory pleasure derived from meat is another factor motivating consumption (Lea & Worsley 2003; Worsley & Skrzypiec 1998b).

In addition, research on the link between meat and masculinity has indicated that men, particularly in Western societies, are more likely to endorse and follow a meat-based diet as compared to women (Beardsworth et al. 2002; Fraser et al. 2000; Ruby 2012; Worsley & Skrzypiec 1998b). This is because meat consumption is linked to male identity (Rothgerber, 2013; Rozin et al., 2012). In comparison, the vegetarian man is viewed as relatively less masculine (Ruby & Heine, 2011) as reducing meat intake is perceived as going against the norms of Western masculinity (Levi et al., 2006; Rothgerber, 2013; Sobal, 2005).

Similar to motivations surrounding a meat-based diet, previous studies have highlighted that a plant-based diet also tends to be adopted for health-related concerns (Barr & Chapman, 2002; Hoek et al., 2004; Jabs et al., 1998; Key et al., 2006; Wilson et al., 2004). Other reasons for adopting a plant-based diet include concerns about animal cruelty (Beardsworth & Keil, 1992; Fox & Ward, 2008; Kalof et al., 1999; Kenyon & Barker, 1998; Ruby, 2012); disgust with eating flesh (Fessler et al., 2003; Rozin et al., 1997); plant foods being tastier, lighter and having a better texture than meat (Beardsworth & Keil, 1992); and environmental concerns about the impact of

meat production (Gaard, 2002; Hoek et al., 2004; Lindeman & Sirelius, 2001).

The rejection of a meat-based diet may also be prompted by meat's association with patriarchy, dominance and oppression (Adams, 2010; Twigg, 1979) as the choice to opt for vegetarianism reflects an ideology that symbolises one's political, social and ecological orientations (Lawrence, 1993; Weinsier, 2000). The choice to adopt a plant-based diet, particularly in Western society, can be viewed as a form of deviance (Kellman, 2000; Monin, 2007; Potts & Parry, 2010) and it is through this deviance that one might seek one's own identity, outside the practices of mainstream society (Lindquist, 2013).

On the other hand, other research states that a plant-based diet may be adopted to conform to social norms (Jabs et al., 2000; Merriman, 2010; Povey et al., 2001) and religious beliefs (Dyczewska, 2008). This is a key reason for the adoption of vegetarianism in India (Sathyamala, 2018). Eating meat is thought to be spiritually polluting (Rozin et al., 1997) and the appetite for carnality and aggressiveness is thought to increase if meat is consumed (Twigg, 1979). These associations were also noted in a recent study among Hindu respondents in India who highlighted that the act of consuming meat—i.e., eating the flesh of a living being—conveys subhuman and animal-like characteristics (Khara, 2015).

When it comes to value orientations, previous research states that those with right-wing conservative value orientations are more likely to support meat consumption (Allen et al., 2000; Allen & Ng, 2003). As also highlighted in *Section 1.6.3: Carnism*, there is a positive association between the values of RWA, SDO and the endorsement of animal exploitation for human benefit (Dhont & Hodson, 2014). On the other hand, other research has found that those who follow plant-based diets are more likely to endorse universalistic values of peace, equality, and social justice (Kalof et al., 1999; Ruby et al., 2013). Followers of plant-based diet also tend to demonstrate relatively greater concern about the ecological consequences of their food

choices (Hoek et al., 2004) and report greater human-directed empathy than omnivores (Allen et al., 2000; Filippi et al., 2010; Preylo & Arikawa, 2008).

These findings in relation to the link between value orientations and dietary practices have been used to inform some aspects of this study's design. This is detailed further *in Chapter 2: Research methods and design.* Having provided an overview of the philosophies, motivations and values surrounding meat consumption, the subsequent sections will delve into the literature on meat-eating practices in Australia and India.

1.8 A review of meat-eating practices in Australia and India

This section encompasses a cross-cultural review of past and contemporary meat-eating practices in Australia and India. The section begins with an overview of past meat-eating practices in each country, and discusses the influence of tradition in each culture. It then discusses how some aspects of these practices have changed and what contemporary meat-eating practices look like. It then goes on to highlight the tensions that exist between past and contemporary meat-eating practices. The section concludes by focusing on the gaps within the literature and areas for further exploration.

1.8.1 A review of past meat-eating practices in Australia and India

Weitzenfeld & Joy (2014) in the paper titled 'An Overview of Anthropocentrism, Humanism, and Speciesism in Critical Animal Theory' highlight how some aspects of Western culture have been influenced by a speciesist worldview which places humans at the centre of value and meaning. Other work on this topic similarly highlight that Judeo-Christian teachings in particular, consider animals as "the outcasts of theology" with no mind, soul or moral status (Bekoff, 2010, pp. 8464–8465). Animals are proclaimed to have been placed on Earth merely to serve human beings (Kymlicka & Donaldson, 2014; Mullin, 2002; Rimbach, 1982; Thomas, 1984). In this regard, Judeo-Christian practices supported human dominion over animals (Austin & Flynn, 2015; Rimbach, 1982; Szucs et al., 2012). This

purpose or "telos" of animals is thought to have influenced subsequent Christian and Jewish practices (Bekoff, 2010) and, to some degree, meat-eating practices in Australia.

Meat has long been a staple of the Australian diet. While Indigenous Australians hunted native game as part of a varied omnivorous diet (Pascoe, 2014), they also shared the belief that humans were morally obligated to treat animals and the ecosystem with respect (King & Stewart, 1996). However, after the European colonisation of Australia, meat was largely sourced through cattle farming (McMichael, 1984). Meat came to be associated with social status whereas plant-based foods were associated with poverty (Crook, 2006). In a book chapter titled 'The Moral Economy of Red Meat in Australia', Ankeny (2008) states that the abundance of meat supply in Australia, which was not commonly available to working classes back in England, was used to attract early European migrants. To this point, the slogan "Meat Three Times a Day" was used to promote "the improved lifestyle" that one could have in the colonies (Ankeny, 2008). Decades later, the famous advertising tagline from Meat & Livestock Australia, "Red meat, we were meant to eat it" (Hicks, 2012), appears to be reflective of these early colonial meat-eating practices.

In comparison, Hinduism, with a history extending for thousands of years (Regan, 1986), highlights man's symbiotic relationship with nature (Chapple, 2012; Sharma et al., 2014; Venkatesh, 1994). Hinduism has several teachings which emphasise vegetarianism (Puskar-Pasewicz, 2010) and *ahimsa* or non-violence towards other life forms (Hamilton, 2000). Ancient Indian society was divided into four classes of people based upon their occupation – the Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Shudras (Spear et al., 2018). However, this later became hereditary and resulted in entrenched caste-based hierarchies (Sankaran et al., 2017). The Brahmins, who were traditionally at the top of India's caste hierarchy (Blunt, 1969), tended to dictate what were acceptable and unacceptable cultural practices for the rest of Indian society (Dolphijn, 2006). Previous research also highlights that the

Brahmins were traditionally associated with vegetarianism and the lower castes with "polluting non-vegetarianism" (Caplan, 2008, p. 118).

The work of social reformer Dr Ambedkar sheds further light on the dividing lines of this food pyramid where the work of socio-economically disadvantaged lower castes often involved clearing "the streets of carrion" (Sunder, 2019, p. 338). Other research on this topic reveals how certain sub-castes consumed beef because often that was all that they could access and afford (Sathyamala, 2018). Thus, it was this act "of consuming carrion which made the untouchables polluted" (Sathyamala, 2018, p. 5). This further reflects the practice of casteised speciesism (Narayanan, 2018), as previously discussed in this chapter. These historical influences might explain why meat eating – and the consumption of beef in particular - still continues to be associated with a certain baseness among certain Hindu groups (Caplan, 2008; Staples, 2016).

The marked gender hierarchy with authority being granted to male figures (Chari et al., 2012) reflect patriarchal practices in Indian society, which have and still continue to exist (Johnson & Johnson, 2001). When it came to meat consumption in particular, previous research has indicated that women consuming meat was frowned upon (Meyer-Rochow, 2009). In a paper titled 'Determinants of Well-Being among Widows: An Exploratory Study in Varanasi', Ranjan (2001, p. 4089) states that meat-based foods—or *tamasik* foods—were originally thought to arouse sexual desires which were considered "immoral" particularly among widows. Other work on this topic highlights that, in comparison to meat-based foods, vegetarianism was associated with social restraint (Donner, 2008). However, this link between meat and gender applied to men as well, to some degree, in that meat-eating men were deemed as being "more violent" and lacking in self-restraint as compared to vegetarian men (Donner, 2008, p. 149).

Across both India and Australia, some of these traditional views and beliefs appear to influence contemporary meat-eating practices. This indicates the important role of tradition as part of understanding routinised practices (Halpin et al., 1997).

The next section will detail contemporary meat-eating practices in both countries while highlighting the differences and similarities across cultures. I also draw upon concepts and theories previously discussed in this chapter and apply them to meat-eating practices.

1.8.2. A review of contemporary meat eating practices in Australia

This section begins with a review of contemporary meat-eating practices in Australia, followed by a review of the same in India. Australia currently has one of the world's highest levels of meat consumption (approximately 95 kilograms per capita annually) compared to the global average which is approximately 35 kilograms (OECD, 2019b). Chen (2016) in his book 'Animal welfare in Australia: Policy and politics' claims that Australians consume approximately half a billion animals per year which amounts to 22 animals consumed per person per year. Moreover, these figures only comprise beef, lamb, mutton, chicken and pork, and do not include fish or other various forms of seafood (Chen, 2016).

Poultry is the most widely consumed meat in Australia (44 kilograms per capita annually) followed by beef/veal (22 kilograms) and then pork (20 kilograms) (OECD, 2019b). The majority of animal-based foods in Australia originate from factory farms (Animals Australia, n.d.; Kirby, 2013; Voiceless, 2012). According to figures from The Australian Bureau of Statistics (2019), in just one month alone, approximately four million farm animals are slaughtered on Australian farms. Furthermore, a recent ABC news article titled 'Factory farming masks meat's true costs' claimed that Australians tend to "treat cheap meat as an entitlement" today (Kirby, 2013, para. 2).

The next section will delve into factors contributing to meat-eating in Australia today. In summary, it covers the following factors - the marketing of meat in Australia, meat's association with health and nutrition, the sensory appeal of meat-based foods and meat's association with masculinity in Australian culture.

1.8.2.1. The marketing of meat in Australia

Today, the two main meat advertisers in Australia are Meat and Livestock Australia (MLA), who represent the beef and lamb industry, and Australian Pork Limited, which supports the pork sector (Bogueva & Phau, 2016). The MLA alone spends approximately $20 million annually on marketing meat (Aikman, 2011; Locke, 2016). Meat-based advertising in Australia commonly portrays groups of people enjoying meat-based meals at barbecues, beaches and other venues that symbolise the Australian outdoor lifestyle. The use of colloquialisms in these advertisements such as "We love our lamb", "You never lamb alone" (Cheik-Hussein, 2019) and "Get some pork on your fork" (Lynchy, 2012) appear to encourage meat-eating norms. These advertisements attempt to present the biggest promoters of the meat and dairy industries as the individual's own social network i.e., their family members, friends, teachers and the wider community (Rowe, 2011). Similarly, other research on this topic highlights that meat eating in Australia tends to be associated with social occasions, family time and eating together (Bogueva et al., 2017; Worsley & Skrzypiec, 1998b).

As highlighted previously in *Section 1.6: Philosophies underpinning meat consumption*, social influence plays a significant role when it comes to meat-eating as people are more likely to eat meat when their family or friends eat meat (Jabs, Devine, & Sobal, 1998b; Ruby, 2012). Although the meat-paradox may cause some discomfort for meat-eaters, the dissonance is lessened if meat-eating is considered a normative and socially acceptable practice (Bastian & Loughnan, 2016). Some may also even engage in the practice even if they are not personally supportive (Bastian & Loughnan, 2016).

Moreover, while many meat-based advertisements reflect symbolisms of happiness, health and social cohesion, the meat animals themselves are the absent referent. By presenting "animal bodies [as]...consumer-friendly pieces and portions" advertisements tend to use the strategy of distancing (Kunst & Hohle, 2016, p. 759). In addition, while cows are often displayed in dairy advertisements, they are less commonly featured in advertisements about

beef products (Grauerholz, 2007). This omission of cues about animal origins further encourages distancing and dissociation (Kunst & Hohle, 2016).

In addition, humour is also commonly featured in Australian meat-based advertising. Studies indicate that humour increases positive attitudes towards the advertising and brands featured (Chung & Zhao, 2003; Cline & Kellaris, 1999; Lee & Mason, 1999). Furthermore, the humour used in Australian meat-based advertising tends to be mildly self-deprecating (Long, 2019; Meat & Livestock Australia, 2019), thereby also reflecting the Australian value of not taking oneself too seriously (Goddard, 2009). Thus, meat tends to be marketed and portrayed as an integral part of Australian culture and identity (Bogueva & Phau, 2016).

1.8.2.2 Associations between meat and a balanced diet in Australia

Previous research highlights that meat's association with health and nutrition is a key factor underpinning its consumption in Australia (Lea et al., 2006; Lea & Worsley, 2001). A more recent study in 2019 revealed that health-related factors are the most common reason for people turning to beef consumption (38%) as well as other forms of meat (Malek et al., 2019). Similarly, another recent study highlighted that terms such as "iron", "protein", "staple dietary requirement", "energy" and "goodness" are often used to describe meat-based foods (Bogueva et al., 2017). In addition, advertisements such as "Beef is the best natural source of iron" and "Beat fatigue with beef" (Meat & Livestock Australia, 2019) continue to reinforce the belief that "we are meant to eat meat" (Bogueva & Phau, 2016).

Australian parents view meat as important for their children's nutrition (Neale et al., 2015; Worsley & Skrzypiec, 1998a). This follows on from beliefs that a balanced diet should contain some amount of meat (Lea & Worsley, 2003). When it comes to sources of influence, recommendations from healthcare professionals to incorporate meat into one's diet are also a contributing factor (Bogueva et al., 2017). Nutritional guidelines from organisations like the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing, which advocate the consumption of meat for health-related reasons

(National Health and Medical Research Council, 2013a), also help encourage meat-eating.

1.8.2.3 Sensory pleasure and meat consumption in Australia

Sensory pleasure derived from meat eating is another factor which contributes to this practice (Lea & Worsley 2003; Worsley & Skrzypiec 1998b). A recent Australian study highlighted that common terms associated with meat-based foods include "juicy", "delicious", "bloody steak" and "mouth-watering" (Bogueva et al., 2017).

To this point, other research has shown that smell/aroma is an important contributor to the perceived palability of food (Klosse, Riga, Cramwinckel, & Saris, 2004) and that when smell declines, the perceived palatability of food also decreases (Schiffman, 1998, 2000; Wysocki & Pelchat, 1993). In addition, scents possess semantic meanings which can create a perception of congruence between the aroma and the material object (Elder et al., 2010). This might explain why meat-based advertising in Australia often features sizzling steaks and smoke-filled barbecues as these may also elicit positive socio-cultural associations.

The presence of an umami flavour, described as "brothy" or "meaty" (Klosse et al., 2004) tends to increase the palatability the food (Kawasaki et al., 2015; Klosse et al., 2004). The crispy texture of grilled steak tends to be associated with freshness (Klosse et al., 2004) and the sensory enjoyment from meat comes from the fact that it is seen to have a "bite to it: something to get one's teeth into, that puts up a bit of resistance" (Fiddes, 2004, p. 92). Other research has similarly shown that taste, sensory appeal and hedonic pleasure are key reasons for meat consumption in general (Piazza et al., 2015).

1.8.2.4 Masculinity and meat eating in Australia

Australia has had a long history of hegemonic masculinity (Broman, 2005; Murrie, 1998) as the typical images held up for Australian men to emulate include symbols of strength, toughness and endurance (Mahalik et al., 2007).

Many still continue to embrace this cultural ideal of masculinity (Monbiot, 2019) which revolves around "images of strong, white men such as convicts, bushrangers, lifeguards and explorers" (Connell, 2003, p. 19).

A recent study on Australian perceptions of traditional masculinity reveals that some of these social pressures around what it means to be a man continue to prevail which, in turn, have resulted in aversive consequences for many men (Irvine et al., 2018). This is because such views traditionally position those who don't conform to social stereotypes as outsiders which, in turn, encourages social exclusion and marginalisation (Reddin & Sonn, 2003).

Meat-eating in Australia is similarly associated with these stereotypical images of masculinity which symbolise strength and prestige (Bogueva et al., 2017). To some extent, the support for meat eating also appears to symbolise the Australian male's rejection of individualism and his "unswerving loyalty to his mates" (Murrie, 1998, p. 68) and mateship (Butera, 2008). Furthermore, studies on meat-based advertising reveal that advertisers commonly reinforce perceptions of "men's versus women's food" (Rogers, 2008, p. 282) and Australian campaigns are also found to perpetuate this stereotype with examples such as Burger King's "I am man" (Bogueva et al., 2017). These messages tend to be conveyed while also simultaneously mocking plant-based consumers and other groups of people who don't conform to the stereotype of the Australian omnivore (Bennett, 2018). This is because, according to previous research, a plant-based diet in Australia has long symbolised feminine ideals (Worsley & Skrzypiec, 1998b) and hence plant-based consumers continue to be viewed with some negativity (Bogueva & Phau, 2016; Potts & Parry, 2010).

To this point – and as also previously covered in *Section 1.6: Philosophies underpinning meat consumption* - studies on gender disparity highlight that dominant or hegmonic masculinity qualities tend to be emphasised upon and elevated over certain feminine qualities (Nakagawa & Hart, 2019). Furthermore, failing to live up to these social stereotypes can result in social shaming and ostracism (Edley & Wetherell, 1997; Pascoe,

2005). This is because this form of masculinity tends to serve as the standard for men in general and, if even a man personally rejects this, he is still evaluated by others against this ideal (Carrigan et al., 1985). There are parallels noted when it comes to meat-eating. Dietary alternatives to the dominant meat-eating culture can be perceived as a threat to western masculinity, virility (Potts & Parry, 2010) and hegemonic patriarchal ideals (Rogers, 2008).

On the other hand, distinctions between what is perceived as masculine and unmasculine are becoming blurred (Anderson, 2008; Buerkle, 2009). Findings from a recent study titled "Negotiations between progressive and 'traditional' expressions of masculinity among young Australian men" highlighted that, over time, Australian men have adopted "progressive, 'softer' attitudes expected of men in late modernity" (Elliott, 2019, p. 109). Social initiatives such as "Man Up", developed by The University of Melbourne, encourage men to acknowledge the potential harm caused by traditional masculine stereotypes (The University of Melbourne, 2016). Although there is scant literature on how these social changes might impact Australian meat-eating practices, one might hypothesise that they may help reduce some of the stigmatisation around plant-based eating, thereby making it more socially acceptable to be a vegetarian male within contemporary culture. This study aims to explore this further as part of understanding Australian meat-eating practices, as also detailed in *Section 1.8.2.7 Areas for exploration within the Australian study*.

1.8.2.5 The change in meat-eating practices in Australia

Despite Australia having one of the world's highest levels of meat consumption, recent findings from Roy Morgan Research indicate that the number of Australian adults whose diet is all or almost all vegetarian rose from 1.7 million people in 2012 to 2.1 million in 2016, which is 11% of the Australian population (Roy Morgan Research, 2016, 2019). In addition, another report from Australian NGO 'Food Frontiers' highlights that 20% of Australians identify as flexitarian (Food Frontiers & Life Health Foods, 2019), a practice which involves various forms of meat reduction (Dagevos,

2016). Recent news reports similarly indicate flexitarianism appears to be gaining momentum in Australia (Charlebois, 2019; Sakkal & Fowler, 2019).

Previous research claims that there is growing interest in buying kinder animal-based foods (Bray & Ankeny, 2017). Several reports from various NGOs reveal that the majority of Australians (86%) feel that keeping egg-laying hens in cages is unacceptable (The Vegetarian/Vegan Society of Queensland Incorporated, 2010). The Humane Research Council (2014) reports that 65% of respondents bought "humane" meat or "free range" products within the last 12 months. Health-related concerns (Roy Morgan, 2013) and concerns for animal welfare (Bray & Ankeny, 2017) are key factors which appear to have influenced these dietary changes.

On the other hand, despite these changes as well as recent media reports on the adverse health-related effects of meat-heavy diets (ABC, 2015; Dunlevy, 2015; Margo, 2017), meat remains an integral part of the socio-cultural fabric of Australia (Bogueva & Phau, 2016). Thus, it is hypothesised that there may be some resistance towards perceived anti-meat messages given people tend to be more receptive to information which supports their existing belief systems (Jones & Sugden, 2001). Furthermore, when people are presented with messages perceived to be threatening to their lifestyles, they may also become more resolute in maintaining their original behaviours (Eagly & Chaiken, 1993). This is explored further in this study as part of Australian meat-eating practices.

1.8.2.6 A summary of meat-eating practices Australia

In this study I use social practice theory to explore meat-eating practices. I do so using the framework by Shove, Pantzar and Watson (2012) who highlight that a practice comprises three elements: materials (tools and technology), meanings (imagery and symbolisms) and competences (skills and know-hows). I elaborate upon this in more detail in *Chapter 2: Research methods and design*. Based on the literature review, factors contributing to meat eating in Australia are summarised in Figure 2 using the Shove et al. (2012) three element framework.

Materials	Meanings	Competences
Widespread material availability of meat is supported by the Australian meat lobby. In comparison, access to a wide range of plant-based menus and recipes is a challenge.	Meat is associated with meanings of health, sensory enjoyment, social ocassions and masculinity. In contrast, plant-based eating is associated with some negative meanings.	There is relatively greater familiarity with meat-eating as a practice. In comparison, knowledge & skills relating to plant-based eating is less common.
As vegetarianism and semi-vegetarianism are on the rise, access to plant-based material elements might also be increasing.	However, there appears to be a recent emphasis on 'kinder meats' given the association with health and animal welfare.	As plant-based eating rises, it might be likely that competences in relation to cooking and eating plant-based foods may also be on the rise.

Figure 2 A summary of meat-eating practices in Australia

1.8.2.7 Areas for exploration within the Australian study

To develop an understanding of Australian meat-eating practices, I ask the following questions:

- What meat-eating practices are prevalent in urban Australia?

- How and why are urban meat-eating practices changing in Australia?

- What role do materials, meanings and competences play within the contemporary urban practice of meat-eating, and how are those roles changing?

- What opportunities for reducing meat consumption emerge from this understanding of meat-eating practices in urban Australia?

In the process of exploring these questions, I examine the following areas:

- **Past meat eating practices in Australia:** Exploring past practices helps provide a basis for understanding present day practices (Shove et al., 2012). As part of exploring past meat-

eating practices, I develop an understanding of the role of meat as part of Australian tradition, types of meats commonly consumed and meanings and competences associated with meat-based foods.

- **Contemporary meat-eating practices in Australia:** I look at various meanings given to meat—i.e., health and nutrition, eating together, sensory enjoyment and masculinity—and whether and in what contexts are these meanings still relevant. In addition, I develop an understanding of how broader customs, conventions, resources and systems have shaped individual perceptions (Spurling et al., 2013) in relation to meat-eating.

- **Plant-based eating practices in Australia:** As highlighted previously, there are several reports in the Australian media on the negative health-related consequences of meat intensive diets (ABC, 2015; Cancer Council, 2011; Margo, 2017; Steen, 2016) and other sources report an increase in the number of plant-based consumers (Roy Morgan Research, 2016, 2019). However, these also seem to coexist with perceptions that a meat-based diet is necessary for one's health (Bogueva et al., 2017). Thus, I explore the relevance of meat-eating practices versus plant-based eating practices and the implications for potential strategies to encourage a reduced-meat diet.

- **Views towards animals in Australia**: As attitudes and perceptions towards animals are strongly linked with meat consumption behaviours (Joy, 2010; Loughnan & Davies, 2019; Piazza et al., 2015; Potts, 2017), I explore this topic as part of developing an understanding of Australian meat-eating practices.

In addition to these areas, I also investigate the following theme:

- **Associations between meat and masculinity within Australia:** In many Western societies, including Australia (Bogueva et al., 2017), meat consumption is linked with meanings

of masculinity and power (Rothgerber, 2013; Rozin et al., 2012). However, given that traditional notions of Australian masculinity appear to be changing (The University of Melbourne, 2016), I aim to explore views towards these masculine norms and the implications for meat eating and plant-based eating practices.

1.8.3 A review of contemporary meat eating practices in India

While Australia has one of the world's highest levels of meat consumption, India is at the other end of the spectrum, with much lower levels of meat consumption at approximately four kilograms per capita annually (OECD, 2019b). However, India is witnessing a shift from vegetarianism towards diets containing greater amounts of meat (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 2006).

Although studies on meat eating in India are limited, cultural influences such as caste and religion shape how meat is perceived (Ahmad, 2014; Caplan, 2008; Chigateri, 2008; Sathyamala, 2018; Searle-Chatterjee, 1993; Staples, 2008). The majority (80%) of Indians are Hindus and a significant minority (13%) are Muslims.India is also home to numerous and diverse subfaiths and religions (The Registrar General & Census Commissioner of India, 2011) and each have their own peculiarities relating to food and cultural practices (Majumdar 2010; Sinha 2011). As pork is forbidden to Muslims and beef is prohibited for certain groups of Hindus, chicken is generally considered to be a more acceptable meat among many of India's omnivores (Devi et al., 2014; Jishnu, 2015). However, specific figures on meat consumption in India are difficult to obtain as Indians tend to underreport their meat consumption habits due to long-standing cultural taboos (Bansal, 2016). The subsequent sections cover meat eating in India in more detail.

1.8.3.1 Meat eating within urban Indian culture

Since the early 1990s, which marked the beginning of globalisation in India, traditional eating practices have been changing (Majumdar, 2010; Sinha,

2011) and religious and caste-based influences appear to be breaking down (Staples, 2016). Rising levels of urbanisation (Ali, Kapoor, & Moorthy, 2010) and exposure to new global practices (Khara & Ruby, 2019) are changing Indian consumption practices. Sinha (2011, pp. 5-6) in the book titled 'Consumer India: Inside the Indian mind and Wallet' claims that India is experiencing a shift in its social mindset as people are moving away from traditional Brahmin values of simplicity to embracing those which embody "success, winning, glory, and heroism". Other research on this topic similarly highlights that conspicuous consumption has become a status symbol in itself as many are embracing global (Mathur, 2010) and Western norms (Stigler et al., 2010) of consumer culture as symbols of upward mobility in society.

Amidst this changing urban landscape, several news reports indicate that meat is increasingly being viewed as a status symbol in India (Esselborn, 2013; Goswami, 2016; Roy, 2012). Similarly, research on changing cultural practices points to the emergence of meat shops in India's major urban centres, where different types of meats signify status. For example, imported meats are for India's higher income groups (Ahmad, 2014). In comparison, vegetarian restaurants are considered "utilitarian" while non-vegetarian restaurants stand as symbols of modernity (Staples, 2016). Thus, amidst the new globalised context, research on dietary practices points to how non-vegetarian food is associated with high-class status which presents a contrast to traditional attitudes where vegetarianism was equated with high-caste status (Dolphijn, 2006). In addition, some, particularly from minority religious groups and social castes, deliberately turn to various form of meat consumption in an attempt to question the claimed moral superiority of the Brahmin over other caste groups and as a rejection of caste-based practices (Staples, 2017).

To some degree, the shift towards meat consumption is also reflective of the growing divide between consumers and the animals consumed. As meat production in India gradually changes from small-scale backyard farming into large-scale factory farming (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 2006), consumption and production practices in India

are becoming increasingly disjointed (Kumar & Kapoor, 2014). This form of distancing may also be contributing to meat-eating, particularly in urban India.

On the other hand, despite the advent of globalisation and the change in meat-eating practices, long-standing traditions still maintain their influence within Indian society (Sinha, 2011). To some degree, there is still contempt expressed at meat eating (Staples, 2008, p. 48) as the term "non-veg", still used in everyday language in India to describe meat, conveys a certain "immorality and illegitimacy that meat carries" (Ahmad, 2014, p. 23). Local meat shops continue to be kept at specific distances from religious places (Alam, 2017a) thereby reflecting past practices where meat was marginal to city spaces politically, spatially and socially (Ahmad, 2014; Dolphijn, 2006; Sharan, 2006). News reports highlight that meat is also kept segregated from vegetarian food in schools and workplaces (Waghmore, 2017). In addition, there are many apartment complexes that do not allow their residents to prepare meat in their homes (Dhillon, 2014; Dolphijn, 2006). To this point, the research paper titled 'Delhi's Meatscapes: Cultural Politics of Meat in a Globalizing City' indicates that the question, "Are you vegetarian or non-vegetarian?" is still common in the context of urban housing in many Indian cities (Ahmad, 2014, p. 23).

Given the taboos associated with meat consumption (Caplan, 2008; Jishnu, 2015), many prefer to consume it in secret, away from the watchful eyes of the vegetarian family and their community (Khara, 2015). I explore the dissonance experienced in relation to meat-eating and the differences in meat consumption behaviours, as carried out in different public and private settings, in *Chapter 4: "We have to keep it a secret"—The dynamics of front and backstage behaviours surrounding meat consumption in India*.

1.8.3.2 A summary of meat-eating practices in India

Using Shove et al.'s model of social practice theory, factors contributing to meat eating in India are summarised in Figure 3.

Materials	Meanings	Competences
Globalisation and liberalisation of the Indian domestic market has encouraged access to meat	Meat is associated with meanings of novelty and progress.	In general, there is greater familiarity and knowledge in relation to plant-based cooking and eating.
However due to long-standing traditions, meat is still kept segregated from vegetarian food.	On the other hand, meat is also also viewed with contempt as it is considered a "base" food.	As access to meat is increasing, this may well bring about new competences in relation to meat-based cooking and eating.

Figure 3 A summary of meat-eating practices in India

1.8.3.3 Areas for exploration within the Indian study

In exploring Indian meat-eating practices, I ask the following questions:

- What meat-eating practices are prevalent in urban India?

- How and why are urban meat-eating practices changing in India?

- What role do materials, meanings and competences play within the contemporary urban practice of meat-eating, and how are those roles changing?

- What opportunities for reducing meat consumption emerge from this understanding of meat-eating practices in urban India?

In the process of exploring these questions, I examine the following areas:

- **Past meat-eating practices in India:** Like in Australia, understanding Indian meat-eating practices encompasses exploring the types of meat-based foods consumed when growing up, how often, when, where and the meanings and competences associated with various meat-based foods. I take into consideration key cultural differences given several facets of

Hinduism have traditionally emphasised vegetarianism in India (Puskar-Pasewicz, 2010), compared to the traditional Australian meal which comprises a diet heavy in red meat (Symons, 1984).

- **Contemporary meat-eating practices in India:** I explore current meat-eating practices—such as the various types of meats currently consumed and meanings given to these—as well as broader socio-cultural factors which influence this practice.

- **Views towards animals in India:** I explore views towards meat animals in light of traditional Hindu teachings which emphasise vegetarianism (Chigateri, 2011).

- **Plant-based practices in India:** Given India's rise in meat consumption (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 2006) spurred by rising levels of urbanisation, disposable incomes (Devi et al., 2014) and exposure to new global practices (Khara & Ruby, 2019), I develop an understanding of perceptions towards traditional vegetarianism within this new urban context.

Specific topics that I also explore as part of the Indian study include:

- **Different public and private behaviours in relation to meat eating**: Given stigmas and taboos associated with meat consumption (Devi et al., 2014) and differences in the way some carry out their consumption in different public and private settings (Khara, 2015), I delve further into this theme as part of understanding Indian meat-eating practices.

- **Views towards dairy alternatives**: In view of the ethical (Chatterjee, 2017b; Mullan et al., 2020; World Animal Protection, 2016) and environmental (Bava et al., 2014) challenges associated with intensive dairy production in India, I explore views in relation to vegan and dairy alternative foods.

1.9 Implications for this study

The traditional Western diet, with its heavy emphasis on meat-based foods, is linked to the deterioration of our planet's health as well as human health and wellbeing (Horton & Lo, 2015; McMichael et al., 2007). In view of this, the United Nations recommends a diet involving a substantial reduction of meat to help mitigate these effects (United Nations, n.d). Through this research, I aim to contribute to broader goals and narratives on sustainability by exploring meat eating and factors which contribute to this practice. One of my key aims is to encourage a reduced-meat diet, and I use a practice-based approach to understand and identify potential levers for dietary change. I detail this approach in *Chapter 2: Research methods and design* and in subsequent chapters within this thesis.

1.10 Organisation of this thesis

The various chapters within this thesis have been organised as follows:

Chapter 1: Introduction and Literature Review

In this chapter, I provide an introduction to the study, its significance and the literature review spanning various topic areas which form the basis for further exploration for this study.

Chapter 2: Research methods and design

In this chapter, I provide an overview of constructivist grounded theory, which is the main research paradigm used in this study. I then elaborate upon the use of social practice theory, which is the main theoretical framework. I then describe the research design, the key questions explored, the fieldwork process, and data analysis procedures used in this study.

Chapter 3: "I am a pure non-vegetarian": The rise of and resistance towards meat-eating in a globalised urban India

This chapter was submitted to the *Journal of Consumer Culture* on 25th May 2020 and is currently under review. In it, I explore meat-eating in urban India using social practice theory and aim to answer the four key questions

highlighted previously: what meat-eating practices are prevalent in urban India?; how and why are urban meat-eating practices changing?; what role do materials, meanings and competences play within the contemporary urban practice of meat-eating?; and what opportunities for reducing meat consumption emerge? The findings detail how globalisation has helped transform the urban Indian landscape into a new consumption space of international cuisines and fusion foods. This has encouraged access to new meat-based foods, the rise of new meanings associated with meat (such as health and status) as well as new competences involving meat-based cooking. Understanding the dynamics of meat-eating practices serves as a necessary foundation for identifying opportunities for interventions to reduce meat-eating. I elaborate further on these interventions in Chapter 3.

Chapter 4: "We have to keep it a secret"—The dynamics of front and backstage behaviours surrounding meat consumption in India

This chapter was published in the journal *Appetite* in June 2020. In this chapter, I focus on the tensions and dissonance that arise in relation to meat-eating in light of long-standing traditions which advocate vegetarianism. Using Goffman's theory of self-presentation, I elaborate on the dynamics of secret meat-eating in India, and how and why this occurs. In doing so, I detail the tensions that exist within Indian society where some seek to embrace practices deemed new and modern but also remain of conscious of conforming to traditional norms within India's collectivist culture. In this chapter, I provide an additional dimension of insight into meat-eating as a practice which symbolises aspiration but also holds associations of shame. Based on these findings, and as part of addressing the objective to reduce meat consumption, I propose strategies on how make plant-based eating relevant amidst India's new urban culture.

Chapter 5: An exploration of contemporary meat-eating practices in urban Australia

This chapter was submitted to the journal *Frontiers In Sustainable Food Systems* on 31st October 2020 and is currently under review. In this chapter,

I explore meat eating in urban Australia using social practice theory and aim to answer the four key questions previously highlighted: what meat-eating practices are prevalent in urban Australia?; how and why are urban meat-eating practices changing?; what role do materials, meanings and competences play within the contemporary urban practice of meat-eating?; what opportunities for reducing meat consumption in Australia emerge?. The findings highlight that many Australians are reducing their red meat consumption in favour of meats deemed healthier or more ethical. However, despite the desire to further cut back on meat consumption, there are several challenges noted in relation to the adoption of plant-based foods. Some of these include limited access to plant-based recipes, negative meanings associated with plant-based diets and a lack of competence in relation to preparing appetising plant-based meals. Through developing an understanding of these dynamics and potential barriers, I highlight strategies to help further reduce meat consumption and encourage the uptake of plant-based eating in Australia.

Chapter 6: A cross-cultural meat paradox: A qualitative study of Australia and India

The chapter was submitted to *Appetite* on 7th August 2020 and is currently under review. As part of exploring meat-eating practices, it aims to understand how animals are viewed and how the meat paradox is experienced across the two different cultures. In the chapter, I highlight that participants in both countries experience distress and dissonance after being exposed to animal suffering as part of the meat production process. Although there are common strategies used to reduce this dissonance, the reasons behind this and the various ways in which this dissonance manifests reflect the different socio-cultural influences on meat eating. In view of this, I propose various intervention strategies.

Chapter 7: Discussion and conclusions

I begin this chapter with an overview of the study's main findings. I highlight the contributions as well as limitations of this study. Following on from the findings, I elaborate upon the opportunities to reduce meat consumption

within the two cultures. In addition, I extend upon these opportunities and propose additional new strategies to encourage sustainable dietary practices in both countries. In summary, these strategies encompass various ways in which plant-based eating could be made more relevant while taking into account each country's unique socio-cultural context.

Chapter 2: Research methods and design

2.1 Introduction

This chapter covers the research paradigm, framework, methods and design of the study. Section 2.2 highlights the use of constructivist grounded theory as the research paradigm. Section 2.3 elaborates upon social practice theory as the main framework and Section 2.4 provides an overview of values theory used in the study. Following on from this, Section 2.5 details the research design. Sections 2.6 and 2.7 cover the data organisation and analysis. Finally, Section 2.8 conclude with the ethical considerations.

2.2 Constructivist grounded theory as the research paradigm

The main objective of this study is to explore meat-eating practices within urban Australia and urban India with a view towards encouraging a reduced meat diet. As previously highlighted, the literature on meat consumption in India is rather sparse. While there are relatively more insights on meat consumption in Australia, contemporary knowledge on urban meat-eating practices and factors influencing these are also somewhat limited. Thus, I use grounded theory as the main research paradigm in this study given it is well suited for exploring topics where previous research is limited or where a new perspective on a known topic requires further insight (Salkind, 2010). Grounded theory is likened to navigating new terrain (Hunter et al., 2011) or taking a "long walk through a dark forest" (Wu & Beaunae, 2014, p. 249) as it involves inductively gathering data and posing hypotheses that are confirmed or disconfirmed by subsequent data collection (Nagel et al., 2015).

Grounded theory seeks to construct theory about issues of importance in peoples' lives (Glaser & Strauss, 1999). The genres of grounded theory

include Classic Glaserian Grounded Theory, Straussian Grounded theory and Constructivist Grounded Theory (Chun Tie et al., 2019). While all these emphasise that theory should be developed from the data rather than relying upon the existing literature (Ramalho et al., 2015), there are also differences in relation to how each genre views the literature review, theory development and the role of the researcher (Chun Tie et al., 2019; Levers, 2013; Rieger, 2019). I elaborate further on this throughout this chapter.

Classic Glaserian Grounded Theory encompasses a positivist approach (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007). It highlights that, within the paradigm of objectivism, researchers ought to remain as detached observers (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007). It also asserts that the existing literature should have little bearing on the topic of investigation as this can constrain or muddy the waters in relation to the emerging theory (Charmaz, 2000). In contrast, Charmaz's Constructivist Grounded Theory views the world as comprising multiple individual realities influenced by social context (Charmaz, 2000). Charmaz states that "[d]ata do not provide a window on reality. Rather, the 'discovered' reality arises from the interactive process and its temporal, cultural, and structural contexts" (2000, p. 524). Other researchers, in support of Constructivist Grounded Theory, also claim that "realities are social constructions of the mind, and that there exist as many such constructions as there are individuals" (Guba & Lincoln, 1989, p. 43). Straussian Grounded Theory sits somewhere in the middle as it comprises both pragmatist and constructivist characteristics (Corbin & Strauss, 2008).

As part of exploring meat-eating practices, I develop an understanding of what meat eating means, how these meanings are created and how these practices are situated across different cultural contexts. The constructivist approach I draw upon, throughout this study, highlights that what we consider to be "true as opposed to false, objective as opposed to subjective, scientific as opposed to mythological, rational as opposed to irrational, moral as opposed to immoral" occurs through historical and culturally-oriented social processes (Gergen & Gergen, 2008, p. 818). Thus, I deemed a constructivist approach appropriate for this study as it focuses on

understanding meaning making (Charmaz, 2000), requiring researchers to go beyond the explicitly stated data and focus on tacit meanings about values, beliefs and ideologies (Charmaz, 1996, 2006, 2008).

Constructivist grounded theory also contests the view of classic Glaserian Grounded Theory which states that the existing literature should not be included as part of the theoretical development (Charmaz, 2000). Instead, constructivism highlights that preexisting knowledge should not and cannot be separated from the research process (Charmaz & Bryant, 2008) but that the researcher should commit to prioritising "what they actually observe in the field or in their data" over the existing knowledge (Charmaz, 1990, p. 1162). To this point, Corbin and Strauss (2008) also suggest that the researcher should not dissociate entirely from the literature but engage with it across various phases of the research as long as it does not impose itself upon the emerging theory. Although constructivism does not demand a particular method, many constructivist researchers favour qualitative research as a data-gathering approach (Gergen & Gergen, 2008).

I use social practice theory as the main theoretical framework for this study. This means that, through the constructivist paradigm, I focus on understanding how consumption is part of and influenced by the larger "webs of social change" (Halkier & Jensen, 2011, p. 105). In my exploration of social practices, I remain open to emergent ways of structuring the data as the identification of the elements of practices was grounded in the empirical data. The next sections elaborate on the use of social practice theory.

2.3 Using social practice theory as a framework

To date, many behaviour change frameworks have predominantly focused on individual attitudes and behaviours as there is an assumption that behaviour change is the outcome of a largely linear process undertaken by the individual (Bamberg, 2003; Hargreaves, 2011). For example, when it comes to identifying factors which influence meat consumption (Allen et al., 2000; Lea & Worsley, 2001; Milford et al., 2019) and strategies to reduce meat consumption (Apostolidis & McLeay, 2016), many studies focus upon altering

individual consumption behaviour. While focusing on individual behaviours—such as purchase patterns—can be somewhat useful, this also reveals only a "top of an iceberg" understanding of the everyday practices of consumption (Jaeger-Erben & Offenberger, 2014, p. 166). The limitations in individual behaviour-based studies is that, even upon taking all individual variables into account, the results often explain less than half of the variability in behavioural outcomes (Armitage & Conner, 2001; Cooke et al., 2016). In view of this, we need to question our focus on the "autonomous, reflective, deliberating, calculating, decision-making individual" as our unit of social analysis (Meier et al., 2018, p. 7).

Social practice theory has received growing attention to address approaches which focus largely upon individual attitudes and behaviour change strategies (Reckwitz 2002; Shove 2010; Shove & Pantzar 2005; Warde 2005). Social practice theorists focus on the interplay between agency and structure (Reckwitz, 2002; Shove & Pantzar, 2005; Shove & Pantzar, 2007). They consider the "'context' and the practice as inextricably bound" (Kurz et al., 2015, p. 116) and focus upon how individuals and macro forces come together within the dynamic unit of a practice (Hargreaves, 2011). In this way, they emphasise routinised behaviours across groups rather than individual behaviours (Schatzki, 2002).

A practice can be thought of as:

"a routinized type of behaviour which consists of several elements, interconnected to one other: forms of bodily activities, forms of mental activities, 'things' and their use, a background knowledge in the form of understanding, know-how, states of emotion and motivational knowledge" (Reckwitz 2002, p.249).

It is defined as an assembly of "images (meanings, symbols), skills (forms of competence, procedures) and stuff (materials, technology) that are dynamically integrated by skilled practitioners through regular and repeated performance" (Hargreaves, 2011, p. 83). Other definitions include an "open-ended, spatially-temporally dispersed nexus of doings and sayings" (Schatzki,

2012, p. 14) and "structures of knowledge that enable a socially shared way of ascribing meaning to the world" (Città et al., 2019, p. 1).

Understanding consumption goes beyond the focus on material products (Harrison et al., 2005) as every aspect of consumption is laden with values, symbolisms and meanings (Mathur, 2014; Warde, 2005). Individual acts of consumption are merely the "visible parts" of social practices (Jaeger-Erben & Offenberger, 2014, p. 167) as consumption is part of the broader production and reproduction of socially shared understandings, conventions and norms (Warde, 2005). In recent years, there has been growing interest in using social practice theory to encourage sustainable consumption (Sahakian & Wilhite, 2014). As one of the key aims in this study is to encourage a reduced meat diet, a practice-based approach is helpful for understanding the influence of various elements within the practice as well as how meat is positioned within a social context (Daly, 2020). It is also worth noting that there are not many studies that use a practice-based approach to exploring meat-eating in Australia and India. Thus, this approach offers the potential explore meat-eating through a different lens, identify new insights as well as potential levers for change.

2.3.1 Using Shove, Pantzar and Watson's model of social practice theory

There is no singular practice approach as there are various social practice frameworks which exist (Schatzki, Cetina, & Savigny, 2001). Some examples are as follows:

- The model by Shove, Pantzar and Watson (2012) highlights that a practice comprises three elements: competences (skills and know-hows); meanings (imagery and symbolisms); and materials (tools and technology).

- Reckwitz (2002a) proposes that a practice is made up of body (bodily movements and activities); mind (mental patterns of knowledge and meaning); things (objects); knowledge (ways of

understanding world); discourse (language and other sign-systems); structure/process (routines); and agent (carriers of practices).

- Schatzki (2002) states a practice comprises teleo-affective structures (normative views); practical understandings (implicit knowledge); general understandings (social appropriateness); and rules (principles and instructions).

- Strengers (2010) claims a practice is an arrangement comprising material infrastructures or tangible resources, practical skills, common social understandings and rules which are mandatory aspects of practices.

While the theories of practice may assume multiple forms (Reckwitz, 2002a), they all focus on performances of routinised behaviours, shared across groups of people (Sahakian & Wilhite, 2014). In addition, practice theorists emphasise the interconnectedness of various elements within a practice (Hargreaves, 2011). The elements are not viewed as separate entities but as interlinked and codependent as they adopt different roles through the dynamics of a practice (Shove et al., 2012). Every element can be seen as having equal weighting due to their presence in the performance of the practice and their connection with every other element (Shove et al., 2012). However, over multiple enactments of a practice, certain elements and the connections between them may emerge as more frequent (Schatzki, 2012).

Schatzki (1996) describes two central notions of practice i.e., practice-as-entity and practice-as-performance. The entity represents certain arrangement of elements within a practice whereas performance refers to the actual "doing" of the practice which involves the combination of various elements (Schatzki, 1996). While elements can travel between places and endure over time, practices are situated arrangements, localised to the place and context of the performance (Higginson et al., 2015).

This study used the three-element model by Shove, Pantzar and Watson (2012)—comprising materials, competences and meaning—to

explore meat-eating practices in Australia and India. The model has been presented in Figure 4.
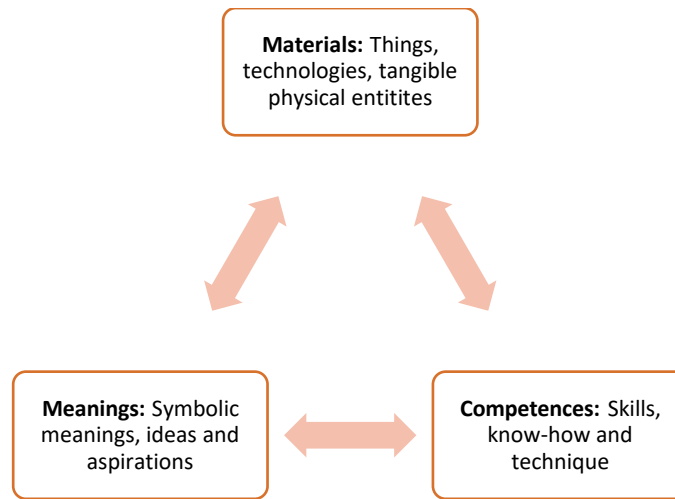
Figure 4 Three-element model of social practice theory (Shove et al., 2012).

This model is similar to other practice frameworks which highlight the need to focus on practices, rather than on individuals and societies, as the main units of social analysis (Meier et al., 2018). To date, theories of practice tend to describe practices as somewhat persistent entities as they emphasise the stability and continuity of practices (Reckwitz, 2003). In contrast, this model by Shove et al. focuses on how practices evolve or stay the same, how they circulate or disappear and how they link and break away from each other (Shove et al., 2012). In addition, this model has reformulated previously loose definitions of practice "elements" into concise conceptualisations of materials, meanings and competences (Shove et al., 2012). Thus, by avoiding long lists of elements and using a manageable set of three categories of elements, it allows for an exploration of meat-eating across Australia and India. Due to its relatively parsimonious approach, the framework is also deemed helpful in its application to behaviour change (Higginson et al., 2015; Spotswood et al., 2015) which is one of the key objectives of this study in relation to meat eating.

In addition, some practice theorists claim that material elements, whilst codependent on practices, are ultimately distinguishable from the practice itself (Meier et al., 2018). In comparison, the model by Shove et al. actively incorporates material elements within and as part of a practice (Shove, 2017b). Previous literature emphasises the important role of materials in eating practices in both countries— for example, in India access to new food products in a new globalised urban context appears to have shifted people away from traditional eating practices (Majumdar, 2010; Sinha, 2011). Similarly in Australia, access to material information on factory farming (Animals Australia, 2015a) and the plight of farm animals (Sinclair et al., 2018; Tiplady et al., 2012) have also brought about some changes to consumption (Bray & Ankeny, 2017). For this reason, I deem Shove et al.'s emphasis on the role of material elements useful for the study.

In the subsequent sections, I elaborate upon each of the three elements within the model: materials, meanings and competences.

2.3.1.1 Materials

Materials comprise the physical and tangible components of a practice (Shove et al., 2012) and are referred to as the visible "resource systems in everyday life" (Strengers & Maller, 2012, p. 4). They are also seen as "necessary, irreplaceable components" of practices (Reckwitz 2002, p.210). Like other models, the model by Shove et al. actively incorporates material elements within and as part of a practice but it also "does not differentiate between things which have a background role...and those which are more obviously or more directly mobilised in the conduct of a practice" (Shove et al., 2015, p. 6). Instead, it emphasises equally the role of material elements across social practices (Shove et al., 2015). This approach is useful considering how infrastructures such as fast food chains in India (Kulkarni & Lassar, 2009) and access to material information via the media in Australia (Animals Australia, 2015a; Tiplady et al., 2012) play a significant role in shaping meat-eating practices.

In addition to objects and infrastructures, Shove et al. (2012) also consider the body to be a material element. Other work similarly highlights that "bodily doings and sayings, and bodily sensations and feelings" are key components through which a practice is enacted as well as experienced (Schatzki, 1996, p. 41). This is because practitioners make sense of the world "via behaving and feeling bodies" (Green & Hopwood, 2015, p. 8). Thus, in addition to the role of inanimate material objects, the study aims to understand the body, as "an essential part of sensuous experience: as a sense organ in itself" (Rodaway, 1994, p. 26) as part of the practice of meat eating. This is in view of past literature which highlights that sensory appeal (Szczesniak, 2002), such as the taste and the texture of meat (Fiddes, 2004), is a key factor which encourages meat eating.

Material elements can also hold meaning in relation to the practices that they are part of (Shove & Pantzar, 2005; Shove et al., 2012). Reckwitz elaborates on this by stating that "[t]he material world exists only insofar as it becomes an object of interpretation within collective meaning" (2002b, p. 202). Given this, in this study I consider how material commodities can help create and reinforce symbolisms of personal and collective identity (Mathur, 2010; van Wessel, 2004). I explore this through semi-structured qualitative interviews, supplemented by observations of practices. I elaborate on this further in *Section 2.5 The research design*.

2.3.1.2 Meanings

While meat eating incorporates various material elements, previous work highlights that the sensory enjoyment of meat is also dependent on the context and experience associated with it (Booth, 1994; Gibson, 2006). This is because "perceptual sensitivity is learnt and…Each sense is not only physically grounded but also its use is culturally defined" (Rodaway, 1994, p. 22). In addition the body itself is more than its material features as "[i]t is the ultimate symbol of social interactions and cultural ideology and as such is laden with meaning" (Martin et al., 2013, p. 213). Thus meat eating, as a practice, is culturally situated (Daly, 2020) and meaning can play a significant influencing role.

The term "meaning" refers to collectively agreed-upon norms and conventions that underpin practices (Strengers, 2010). Meanings, as well as competences, circulate in different ways to materials as they are often modified across different situations and contexts (Strengers, 2010). In addition, meanings can provide a bridge between different practices (Shove et al., 2012). For example, as highlighted in the literature review, meat-eating in Australia is linked to and encouraged by meat's associations with masculine hegemony (Bogueva et al., 2017). Meanwhile, some in India are giving up meat and embracing vegetarianism given meat's associations with the practices of lower social castes (Robbins, 1999; Waghmore, 2017). I explore these trends further throughout this study.

Kashima (2014) highlights that one of the ways in which meaning is created and transmitted across individuals and groups is through the establishment of a "common ground". Common ground is "a set of meanings that are mutually known, believed, presupposed, or taken for granted by the participants of a joint activity" (Kashima, 2014, p. 84). Thus, institutions, although experienced as objective reality, are actually social constructions (Miranda & Saunders, 2003). Individualism and collectivism across cultures are also thought to influence how meaning is created, shared and experienced (Caldwell-Harris & Ayçiçegi, 2006). In collectivist cultures, deviations from social norms can create a sense of shame (Patel, 2018) and anxiety in relation to not meeting social obligations (Triandis, 2004). Given the cultural differences in each country (Hofstede Insights, n.d.) and the ways in which meat is perceived, I consider the implications these differences might have on meat-eating practices.

2.3.1.3 Competences

Competence, also known as "practical knowledge" or "embodied skill", encompasses the nonconscious skills that individuals employ to carry out practices (Shove & Pantzar, 2005). For example, when cooking or eating, one is often performing a set of movements with a set of materials without consciously thinking about every action. Previous work on "the entanglements of humans and things" highlights the relationship between

people, material objects and competences (Hodder, 2014). This work states that access to certain material objects can enable the rise of certain competences (Hodder, 2014). For example, replacing human labour with digital search functions—enabled by access to new technology—has created new competences (Chen et al., 2008). However, dependency between people and material objects can also occur which means that, competency-wise, this can "constrain and limit what each can do" (Hodder, 2014, p. 20).

When new material elements enter the arena, some competences may become redundant while others might be replaced by new ones (Shove et al., 2012). The emergence of new material cooking devices, for example, can encourage new competences while certain manual skills may become gradually redundant. The elements of competences can also lie dormant for a period of time in virtual or actual material reservoirs—such as in online material spaces or in books—between moments of practical enactment (Shove et al., 2012). Practitioners, in turn, can then refer to the knowledge reservoir in their own time and utilise these to enact and shape their practices (Shove et al., 2012). The role and relationship between material elements and competences is explored further in this study.

The differences between know-how and practical competence are also significant when it comes to enacting practices (Shove et al., 2012) where, for example, there is a difference between conceptually understanding how to cook a meal versus being able to actually do it. In addition, competences can encompass both conscious and unconscious forms (Le Deist & Winterton, 2005) and thus, for this study, using a combination of interviews and observations helped in identifying these various modes as part of understanding meat-eating practices. Competence can also be interlinked with meaning in that "without a common understanding there is little chance of integration, alignment or mobility in practice" (Le Deist & Winterton, 2005, p. 28). Competences are hence recognised in the social context in which a practice is being enacted (Sandberg, 2000). The study aims to further explore these themes in relation to meat-eating as well as meat-based cooking competences in each culture.

2.3.1.4 Carriers of practices

When it comes to the continuity of a practice, this is often contingent upon regular enactment of a practice by individual actors (Shove & Pantzar, 2007) who are also known as "carriers or hosts of a practice" (Shove et al., 2012, p. 7). Positive experiences of a practice can encourage its repetition and reproduction as it may attract and retain committed followers (Shove & Pantzar, 2007). In India, for example, positive associations with meat-eating appears to have encouraged this practice (Staples, 2008, 2016). Thus, practices can be thought of as "vampire like entities" which, over time, capture committed followers in order to survive (Shove & Pantzar, 2007, p. 11). Practices may stabilise over time as they continue to be reproduced by existing and new practitioners (Shove & Pantzar, 2005).

On the other hand, ongoing commitment to a practice requires a commitment of time and access to resources as well as skills (Reckwitz, 2002a). It is through "the less faithful performances" that change occurs (Shove et al., 2012, p. 63) as the manner in which practitioners go about their daily lives may change over time as well as across various settings (Sahakian & Wilhite, 2014). Thus, practices can change when external conditions change (Shove & Pantzar, 2007). They can also change when the experience of familiarity gives way to the desire for novelty (Sinha, 2011). Following on from this discussion, factors encouraging the practice of meat-eating and others which hinder the adoption of alternative practices are explored further in this study.

2.3.1.5 How practices change

No practice can exist in isolation (Hui et al., 2016). This is because social practices are performed based upon precedents of that practice (Reckwitz, 2002a) which follow certain historical dynamics and shared sets of cultural understandings (Spaargaren, 2011). Each performance also creates a precedent for future practices to follow (Reckwitz, 2002a). A practice may change over time with larger societal changes as each practice is shaped by a wider realm of infrastructures, technologies and society while each practice

also shapes these wider social systems (Giddens, 1984). For example, meat-eating is shaped by larger practices relating to urbanisation and globalisation (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 2006; Kennedy et al., 2002), which the study aims to explore in some detail.

Practices can also interact and intersect with other practices and "coevolve in complexes and bundles" (Keller et al., 2016). Thus, the interconnectedness in social practice theory stretches beyond the three elements in the practice to elements in "neighbouring" practices which can be intertwined in tight "complexes" or looser "bundles" (Shove et al., 2012). To elaborate, bundles are loose-knit patterns based on the colocation and coexistence of practices whereas complexes represent more integrated combinations of practices (Shove et al., 2012). One example is the relationship noted, particularly in Western society, between meat consumption and representations of masculinity (Potts & Parry, 2010; Ruby & Heine, 2011).

2.3.1.6 Practices and interventions

As previously highlighted, the study uses constructivist grounded theory to explore meat-eating and its social constructions. Based upon this understanding, the study proposes intervention strategies to help encourage a reduced meat diet. To this point, Spurling et al. (2013) indicate that understanding the dynamics of practices provides a "window" into interventions towards sustainability. This is because an understanding of practices provides insight into how routines, habits, customs and norms are shaped by larger social structures, and vice versa (Shove et al., 2012) and it is through this understanding that we can identify the levers of change.

When it comes to encouraging sustainable behaviour change, Spurling et al. (2013) highlight that problems and their target interventions can be framed from practice perspective. The three types of interventions to help encourage a shift in practices include the following - re-crafting practices by changing the elements which make up those practices; substituting practices by replacing less sustainable practices with more sustainable alternatives;

and changing how practices interlock by changing the interactions between practices such that change ripples through these interconnected practices (Spurling et al., 2013). When it comes to meat consumption, there is a limited amount of research on understanding and increasing the effectiveness of interventions to help encourage a reduce meat diet (Harguess et al., 2020; Lacroix & Gifford, 2020). Although this study has not tested interventions, it uses the findings to propose strategies and opportunities which could be further explored in future work. In the findings chapters – Chapters 3 to 6 – and in the concluding Chapter 7, I use the findings as a basis to discuss how meat consumption could potentially be reduced through intervening in multiple elements such as material availability, meanings and competences. I also discuss how meat-eating could potentially be substituted for more sustainable practices – such as plant-based eating – which could potentially fulfil similar consumer needs. I also highlight how changing interlocking practices – such as changing some of the gender-based social stereotypes and practices - can also effect and potentially reduce meat eating.

Having covered the use of social practice theory in this section, the subsequent section touches upon the use of values theory. As there was no discernible relationship noted between value orientations and meat consumption in the study, the results from the values survey are not discussed further in the findings of this thesis. However, details relating to why the survey was used and how it was administered and analysed are covered in the following section and also briefly discussed in Section 2.5 The research design.

2.4 The use of values theory

Given previous work highlights a link between one's value orientations and attitudes towards meat consumption (Hayley et al., 2015; Ruby, 2012), in this study I explore how meat-eating practices might differ by value orientations. I used the Schwartz value framework which is a widely-used tool for values measurement across cultures (Cieciuch et al., 2014; Schwartz et al., 2001; Vecchione et al., 2015). The framework encompasses ten basic

human values: Universalism, Benevolence, Tradition, Conformity, Security, Power, Achievement, Hedonism, Stimulation and Self-Direction (Schwartz, 1994). These are grouped under four broad segments: Openness to change, Self-Transcendence, Self-Enhancement and Conservation (Schwartz, 1994).

Studies highlight that people who are motivated to adopt a reduced meat diet are more likely to value Universalism (Hayley et al., 2015; Ruby et al., 2013). Those who prefer red meat, with its symbolism of masculinity and dominance (Rozin et al., 2012), are more likely to hold values relating to Self-Enhancement (like Power), Conservation (such as Security) and to also score lower on Universalism (Allen & Ng, 2003). This study used Schwartz's Portrait Values Questionnaire (PVQ) to understand different value orientations. The PVQ is designed to measure the same value orientations as the Schwartz Value Survey which was the first survey instrument developed to assess values based on Schwartz's model (Schwartz, 2003). However, the PVQ presents respondents with less cognitively complex questions which makes it suitable to administer among different populations, including those with little or no formal schooling (Schwartz, 2003). The PVQ has been successfully administered across several countries globally and across diverse geographic, cultural, religious, linguistic and demographic groups (Beierlein et al., 2012; Bilsky et al., 2011; Schwartz, 2008). It includes short verbal portraits of different people that are gender matched with the respondent. See Appendices 9 and 10 for the full PVQ questionnaire that was administered in this study. The respondents' values are then inferred from their self-reported similarity to the portraits in the questionnaire (Schwartz et al., 2001).

For this study, the English version of the PVQ 57-item questionnaire was administered in both Australia and India as it was deemed suitable for both countries (Schwartz, 2018, pers. comm., 28 May). It was also estimated that the entire questionnaire takes approximately 6-8 minutes to complete (Schwartz, 2018, pers. comm., 28 May). The PVQ questionnaire was administered in both the pilot and main phase of the study, which comprised 15 and 40 interviews respectively. The results from the PVQ survey were

analysed upon completion of all the interviews. The scores from the survey were calculated using each individual's mean rating score (MRAT) across all 57 value items (Schwartz, 2018). The score for each value statement was then subtracted from the overall MRAT to determine the participant's dominant values (Schwartz, 2018).

There was a range of different values noted among different participants. Among Indian respondents, the dominant value orientations were as follows: Conservation (N=6), Openness to Change (N=5), Self Enhancement (N=10) and Self Transcendence (N=7). There were 5 Indian respondents who were given unassigned scores and were thus not included in the analysis. This was based upon directives relating to the 'Proper Use of the Schwartz Value Survey' (Schwartz, 2009) as highlighted below:

- Subjects who leave 15 or more items blank are to be excluded from the analysis.

- Subjects who use a particular scale anchor 35 times or more should be excluded; e.g., if the anchor point "3" is selected 35 times or more.

- In calculating dimension scores, if greater than 30% of the items are missing for a scale, exclude the subject; e.g., for a 3 or 5-item scale, if two items are missing, exclude the subject.

Among the 'Unassigned' respondents, 2 out of the 5 chose the same scale anchor 35 times or more, and the remaining 3 left 15 or more items blank in the questionnaire.

Among Australian respondents, the dominant value orientations were as follows: Conservation (N=2), Openness to Change (N=6), Self Enhancement (N=7) and Self Transcendence (N=7).

The data was then analysed to identify potential similarities and differences in meat-eating practices within and across different value segments. One of our hypotheses was that participants with higher Conservative value scores would be more likely to be heavy meat-eaters and would perhaps be less likely to endorse a reduced meat diet. This was based on previous findings on meat consumption which indicate that those with

conservative value orientations are more likely favour the consumption of animals (Dhont & Hodson, 2014; Hodson & Earle, 2018) and also support various forms of animal exploitation (Allen et al., 2000; Allen & Ng, 2003; Dhont et al., 2016). In addition, we hypothesised that those with a meat-heavy diet would also be more likely to hold certain meanings in relation to meat-eating and gender. This was in view of previous research which has found that those support a meat-based diet often do so as they associate with meat with masculinity (Beardsworth et al. 2002; Fraser et al. 2000; Ruby 2012; Worsley & Skrzypiec 1998b) and male identity (Rothgerber, 2013; Rozin et al., 2012). On the other hand, in reference to previous research (Kalof et al., 1999; Ruby et al., 2013), we hypothesised that those who endorse plant-based eating would perhaps be more likely to score higher on the values of Universalism and Benevolence.

However, despite the range of values noted in our study, our preliminary analysis revealed no meaningful relationships or patterns between value orientations and the meat-eating practices of our participants. In view of the study's time and resource constraints, the findings from the PVQ were not analysed further and were not included in this study's analysis. The PVQ is mentioned here solely to ensure an accurate representation of the interview experience, which included completion of the PVQ.

One potential explanation for the lack of discernible patterns might be due to the study's small sample. Previous work has highlighted that findings from a small sample might not accurately conform to the Schwartz values theory (Rickaby et al., 2021) given that several other cross-cultural studies tend to have samples which comprise many thousands (Bilsky et al., 2011). Thus, as one potential way forward, future studies might need to consider the use of larger samples. This has also been highlighted in *Section 7.8: Future research directions*.

2.5 The research design

The main data source for this exploratory qualitative study comprises hour-long, semi-structured face-to-face in-depth interviews, conducted in

English in both countries. Exploratory research is used for the discovery of insights and ideas into the topic (Creswell, 2009). It is characterised by flexibility and versality as the focus of the investigation may shift slightly during data collection as new insights are uncovered (D'Alessandro et al., 2017). This mode of research rarely involves the use of structured questionnaires, large samples or a probability sampling approach (D'Alessandro et al., 2017). Qualitative research tends to be commonly used for an in-depth exploration into a phenomenon or experience (Thomas & Magilvy, 2011).

The use of semi-structured interviews means the researcher follows a schedule of pre-prepared questions, but is also able to deviate and probe where necessary to maximise the information obtained (Adams & Cox, 2008). During the discussion, participants were also given the freedom to explain their thoughts, highlight areas of particular interest and be questioned on certain topics in greater depth (Horton et al., 2004). This is elaborated upon in *Section 2.5.4 The in-depth interviews*.

The analysis for this study is based upon 55 individual in-depth interviews, comprising 22 Sydney residents and 33 Mumbai residents. Unlike positivist methods which tend to base saturation on reaching numbers and quotas of participants within a sample (Charmaz, 2000), data gathering for this process continued until it reached a point of redundancy—i.e., when new information largely ceased to emerge (Bisman & Highfield, 2012). As there is relatively less known about meat eating in India as compared to Australia, more interviews were needed in India to reach saturation. This is detailed further in *Section 2.5.4.5 In-depth interviews and saturation*.

The interviews are also supplemented by some field observations of meat-eating practices to build a richer picture in relation to the emerging themes. This encompassed observing various settings and material elements within these settings rather than observing practices carried out by individual participants. This is elaborated upon in more detail in *Section 2.5.5 Observations*. In addition, triangulation through the use of secondary data sources was used to validate some of the findings, although this did not form

part of the formal data collection process. This is highlighted further in *Section 2.5.6 Triangulation.*

The data gathering approach for the study is summarised in Figure 5 and elaborated upon in subsequent sections.
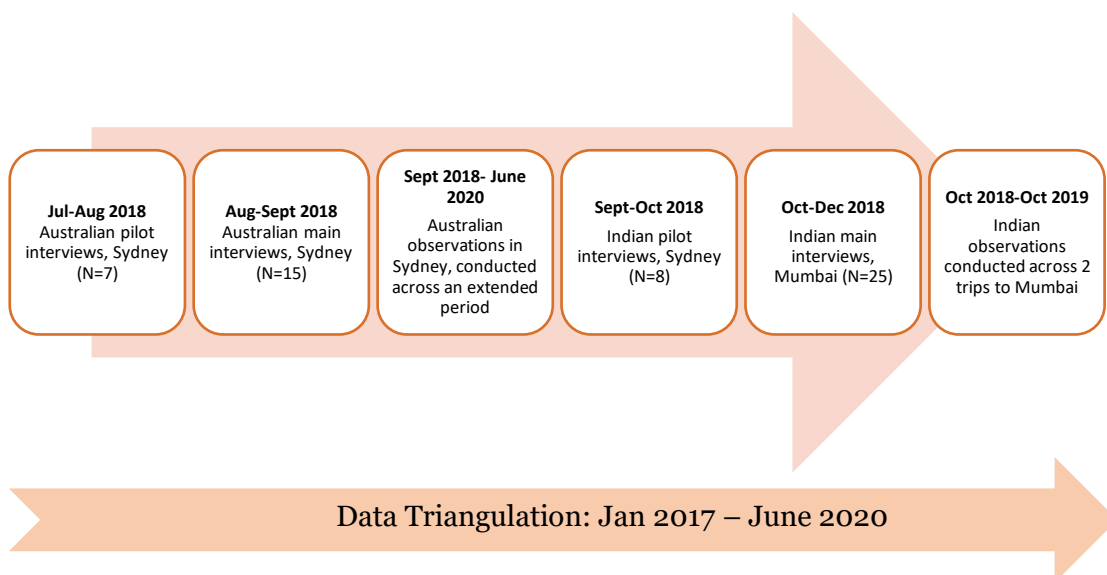
Figure 5 Summary of the research design

The study began with the Australian pilot interviews (7) followed then by the main Australian interviews (15) in Sydney. The total number of Australian interviews is 22. Upon completion of the Australian interviews, the Indian interviews commenced. Prior to the interview, all the participants were asked about their dietary practices and the interviews only commenced once participants confirmed that they consumed meat as part of their current diet. For this study, a meat-based diet was considered one which comprised poultry, beef/ veal and/or pork as these tend to be commonly consumed meats in both countries (OECD, 2019).

The Indian pilot interviews (8) were conducted in Sydney given the study's time and resource constraints. To this point, previous research highlights that the proposed sample in a pilot study can be subject to resource constraints (Leon et al., 2011). However, as it is also important for a pilot study to reflect the main sample as closely as possible (Kim, 2011), this pilot study included speaking to international students and recent arrivals

from India i.e., those who had lived in Australia for approximately 5 years or less.

All the pilot respondents had also previously lived in an urban setting in India. To this point, India's Ministry of Urban Development (2011, p.4) has defined urban as "statutory places with a Municipality, Corporation, Cantonment Board, or Notified Town Area Committee, and all places satisfying the following three criteria simultaneously: (i) a minimum population of 5000; (ii) at least 75 per cent of male working population engaged in non-agricultural pursuits; and (iii) a population density of at least 400 per sq. km (1000 per sq. mile)." Most Indian respondents in the pilot study were from cities classified as 'Class 1A', 'Class 1B' and 'Class 1C' cities which have a population of over 5 million people, and one respondent came from a 'Class III' city with a population ranging from 20,000 to approximately 50,000 (Ministry of Urban Development, 2011).

The sheer diversity of food culture across India means that the country has no one national dish or cuisine (Sen, 2004). Although the pilot respondents came from different parts of urban India - and indeed eating practices across the country tend to vary by geography (Sinha, 2011) - their diets appeared to be influenced more by the customary practices of their families rather than by geography. This was also noted in the main study in that although all our respondents lived in Mumbai, varying customs, beliefs and family traditions influenced their eating practices. To this point, Bhushi (2018) in the book 'Farm to Fingers: The Culture and Politics of Food in Contemporary India' highlights that there are numerous variations of food culture within India and these arise from not just regional differences but also from differences in caste, class, gender, age and income.

The main Indian interviews (25) took place in Mumbai. The total number of Indian interviews, including the pilot interviews (8), is 33. While the pilot data only comprises past or retrospective eating practices of Sydney-based participants when they were living in India, there were some differences noted in present-day eating practices between the Sydney-based participants and Mumbai-based participants. The former group mentioned

consuming greater amounts and varieties of meat-based dishes after arriving and living in Australia. The main reason behind this was the widespread availability and novelty of various meat-based cuisines and the relatively limited options for plant-based eating. Among some Sydney-based pilot participants, there was also relatively greater awareness of practices like veganism and various non-dairy milk alternatives. Their levels of awareness in relation to these eating practices seemed generally higher than what was noted among participants in Mumbai.

The main interviews, in both India and Australia, have been supplemented by observations conducted in these countries. In addition, data triangulation, which involved looking at various sources of secondary information relating to meat-eating practices, was an ongoing process and this helped corroborate some of the primary data gathered in both countries.

2.5.1 Sample for the in-depth interviews

The sample for the in-depth interviews comprises omnivores in urban India and urban Australia. The urban region was selected because the majority of Australians (86%) live in urban centres (Central Intelligence Agency, 2018a). In comparison, although India has a relatively smaller urban proportion of the population (35%; Central Intelligence Agency, 2018b), the levels of meat consumption are higher in urban India as compared to its semi-urban and rural regions (National Sample Survey Office, 2012). Therefore, participants in this study were drawn from urban centres. Sydney was chosen as it is Australia's most populated city (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2016; Central Intelligence Agency, 2018a) and for convenience as it is my home city. Similarly, Mumbai was chosen as it is one of India's largest and most populous cities (Central Intelligence Agency, 2018b).

Participants in both countries were aged 23 to 45 years. This age group was selected because changes in practices are more commonly noted among younger people (Sinha, 2011) as they are more likely to be open to experimenting with new ideas and trends (Mathur, 2014). This age range also captures a significant proportion of India's relatively young population, with

approximately two-thirds being under the age of 35 (Central Intelligence Agency, 2018b). For comparative purposes, the Australian sample also focuses on participants aged 23 to 45 years. In addition, most of the Australian sample is below the Australian median age of 39 years (Central Intelligence Agency, 2018a). Besides these characteristics, there were others which also helped form the basis for the sample in each country. These are detailed in Section 2.5.1.1.

It is worth noting that perhaps one of the potential limitations of the study's sample is that it does not include older meat-eating consumers. Previous research on this topic has found that, in Western societies in particular, a large majority of older adults, aged 65+, consume meat (Grasso et al., 2021). This group also tends to be more resistant to adopting diets perceived as starkly different to their current diets (Grasso et al., 2019) as they may also perceive messages promoting changes in their eating habits as irrelevant (Bertolotti et al., 2016). Other research has found that food fussiness (Staples, 2017) and neophobia are key barriers when it comes to adopting alternative eating practices among older consumers (Soucier et al., 2019; Stratton et al., 2015). Therefore, reflecting the larger aim of this study which is to help encourage more sustainable dietary practices, understanding and exploring the eating practices of older consumers and identifying potential intervention strategies would have also been helpful. This is discussed further in *Section 7.8: Future research directions*.

2.5.1.1 Additional sample characteristics: Sydney, Australia

The Australian sample comprises the following additional characteristics:

- **The balance of males and females:** As per the 2016 Census data (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2016), Sydney's population has an even split of females (51%) and males (49%). However, the sample for this study includes more men (15) than women (7). This is because previous studies on Western eating practices highlight that men are more likely to follow omnivorous diets (Gale et al., 2007; Ruby & Heine, 2012; Ruby

& Heine, 2011). Given a key aim of this study is to explore meat-eating practices with a view towards encouraging a reduced-meat diet, it was important to find willing participants who were omnivores and understand omnivore meanings and motivations in relation to meat-eating. Thus, the final Australian sample, which comprised 15 men (68%) and 7 women (32%) was different to the relatively even gender balance in Sydney, but was consistent with the research objectives.

- **Ethnicity:** The Census data of Greater Sydney highlights that people from English (25%) and Anglo-Australian (24%) ancestries form the largest segments and rest of the population encompasses mix of other European, Middle Eastern, Asian and African backgrounds (idcommunity.com, 2016). The largest non-white ethnic group in Sydney is Chinese (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2016). Approximately reflecting this breakdown, the sample comprised 13 Australian participants from European backgrounds (59%), five Australian Chinese participants (23%) and four participants (18%) from a mix of other backgrounds.

- **Value orientations:** Although the findings from the values survey are not included in this study, the study initially aimed to look at how eating practices might differ by different value orientations. This is in view of previous work which highlights that those with conservative orientations are more likely to have positive attitudes towards meat consumption (e.g., Hayley, Zinkiewicz, & Hardiman, 2015; Ruby, 2012; Ruby, Heine, Kamble, Cheng, & Waddar, 2013). This is briefly discussed in *Section 2.5.2 Recruitment for the in-depth interviews*.

Details on the Australian sample (N=22) are summarised in Table 1.

Table 1 The Australian sample

Gender	Age group	Ethnicity
Male (N=15) **Female (N=7)**	23-30 years (N=5) 31-39 years (N=8) 40-45 years (N=9)	Anglo-Australian/European heritage (N=13) Other heritage (N=9)

2.5.1.2 Additional sample characteristics: Mumbai, India

The socio-economic classification grid segments India's diverse urban households into 12 socio-economic classifications (SECs) or segments (The Market Research Society of India, 2011). This is based upon two questions: levels of education—from illiteracy to a postgraduate degree—and the ownership of eleven items which range from fairly basic (e.g., electricity connection, gas stove) to discretionary items (e.g., refrigerator, car, personal computer) (The Market Research Society of India, 2011). Please see *Appendix 7: Modes of recruitment (India)* for the full SEC questionnaire and segment classifications.

Out of these 12 segments, SEC A, SEC B and the top end of SEC C are considered to be the more "upwardly mobile" segments (Bijapurkar, 2009). However findings from a recent Indian qualitative study highlight that education and disposable incomes, which can vary quite widely across segments, can significantly impact a person's ability to make informed and deliberate consumption choices (Khara, 2015). Thus, the study chose to focus on urban participants from SEC A—which comprise India's upper socio-economic segments (The Market Research Society of India, 2011)—given meat is a relatively expensive commodity in India (Puskar-Pasewicz, 2010). Other work highlights that the urban affluent in India is also more likely to adopt new consumption trends (Sinha, 2011). Additional defining characteristics for the Indian sample, as presented below, largely reflect population breakdowns in the Indian Census data. This is in view of the sparse literature and knowledge on Indian meat-eating practices in general:

- **Religion:** The country's largest religious groups include Hindus (80%) and Muslims (13%) (The Registrar General & Census Commissioner of India, 2011). Thus, the sample includes 26 Hindu participants (79%) and 7 Muslim participants (21%) and this study focuses on their differences in eating practices.

- **Gender:** Although India's population comprises slightly more males (58%) than females (42%) (Census of India, 2014), the sample includes a fairly even split among males (16) and females (17). As little is previously known about gender-based differences in meat eating in India, an even gender balance was sought for the sample.

- **Language:** The interviews in India were conducted in English and the study includes participants who were comfortable speaking the language. This is view of the fact that English is India's subsidiary official language (Central Intelligence Agency, 2018b), spoken by a majority of its urbanites (88%) (Lok Foundation, 2019). Although interviews in Mumbai were predominantly in English, some Hindi words were occasionally used by some participants. The translations for these have been provided by me in subsequent findings chapters.

Details relating to the Indian sample (N=33) for this study are provided in Table 2.

Table 2 The Indian sample

Gender	Age group	Religion
Male (N=16) **Female (N=17)**	23-30 years (N=16) 31-39 years (N=13) 40-45 years (N=4)	Hindu (N=26) Muslim (N=7)

2.5.2 Recruitment for the in-depth interviews

The recruitment across both countries involved a mix of approaches. The Indian sample (33) was obtained through Facebook advertising as well as through a Mumbai-based market research agency. Prior to launching the advertisement asking people to be part of the study, a Facebook page called 'Urban India Eats' was created and the advertisement was promoted through this page. Given the cultural sensitivities related to meat consumption, the advertisement did not openly target meat-eaters but instead ran with the headline "Are you a Foodie?" to appeal to urbanites who enjoyed a range of different cuisines. The Facebook profiling tool was used to target specific audiences aged 23-45 years who lived within 25 kilometres of Nariman Point in downtown Mumbai. Within a week of its launch, the advertisement reached almost 14,000 people and generated hundreds of expressions of interest from potential participants, many of whom considered the topic "interesting". Potential participants were then screened to determine their consumption practices. Please see *Appendix 7: Modes of recruitment (India)*. The Facebook advertisement used to recruit Indian participants is shown in Figure 6.
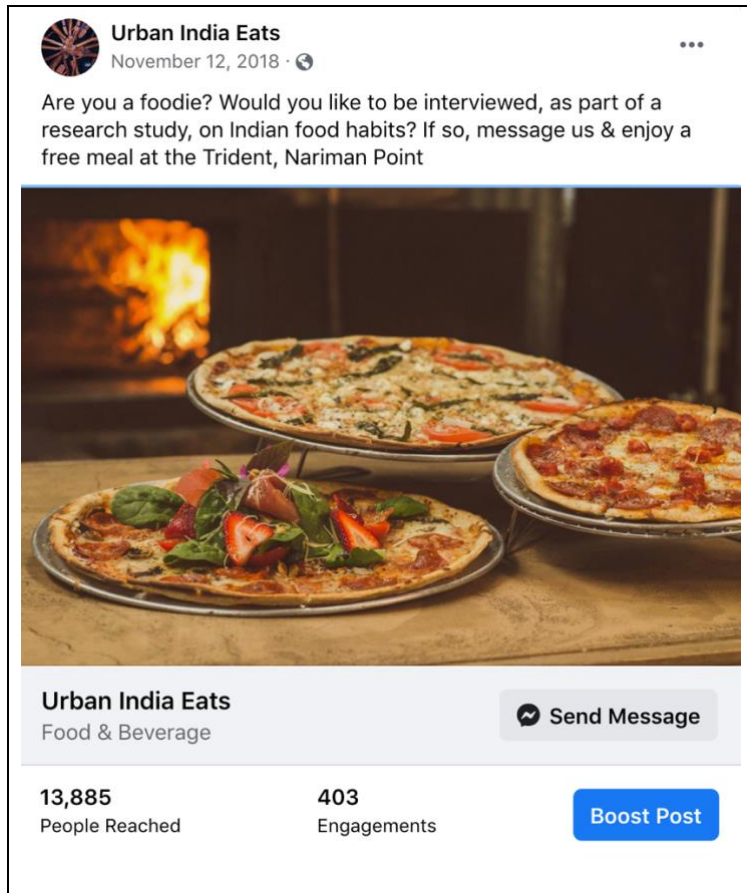
Figure 6 The Facebook advertisement used to target Mumbai-based participants

The learnings in this study reflects other literature which highlights that social media is an effective recruitment tool compared to traditional methods of recruitment (Ramo et al., 2014). This is because it can help with reaching a greater percentage of eligible participants and open up opportunities to recruit internationally (Kapp et al., 2013).

The Australian participants (22) were recruited using a mix of approaches. Some of these included the interviewer's professional contacts who were requested, via email and mobile messaging, to provide their views in relation to meat-eating. Snowballing was then used where these participants were asked to recruit other omnivores from among their acquaintances (D'Alessandro et al., 2017). The study was also advertised on career websites at The University of New South Wales and The University of

Technology Sydney calling for potential participants to discuss their meat consumption. Please see *Appendix 3: Modes of recruitment (Australia).*

To ensure that the Australian sample also included participants with conservative political views, a Facebook page called "Love Meat" was created. Similar to India, the page was then used to advertise the study, specifically targeting Sydney residents who "liked" things such as barbecues, hunting, conservative political parties, and conservative media channels. This was based on previous insights into meat consumption in that those with conservative right-wing ideologies are more likely favour the consumption of animals (Dhont & Hodson, 2014; Hodson & Earle, 2018), endorse human supremacy over animals (Hodson & Earle, 2018) and also support other means of animal exploitation (Allen et al., 2000; Allen & Ng, 2003; Kristof Dhont et al., 2016).

The term 'Love Meat' was also chosen for several reasons. It was used to encapsulate hedonic pleasure (Piazza et al., 2015) and sensory appeal (Bogueva & Phau, 2016) associated with meat, which are important contributing factors to meat-eating. The term was also considered more likely to attract those who followed a meat-heavy diet as opposed to those who occasionally consumed meat. This reflected the study's overall aims which was to develop an in-depth understanding of meat-eating practices given Australia's high levels of meat consumption (OECD-FAO, 2020). The Facebook advertisement used to recruit Australian participants is shown in Figure 7.
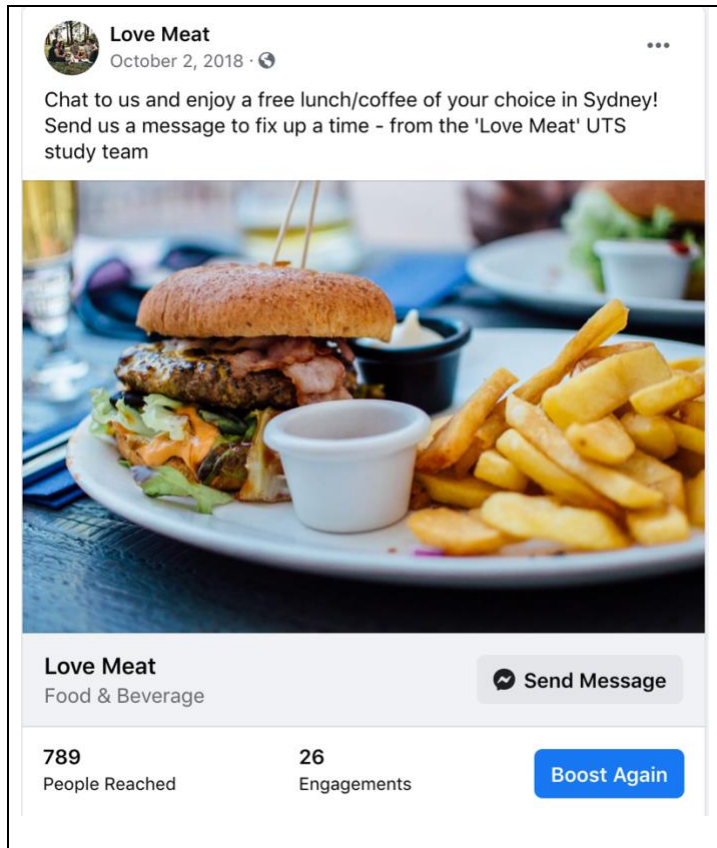
Figure 7 The Facebook advertisement used to target Sydney-based participants

The incentives in both countries included a meal or light refreshments and a chance to participate in a lucky draw where one participant, in each country, would receive AUD $200 or approximately INR 10,000.

2.5.3 The pilot study

Prior to the main interviews, a pilot study—comprising individual in-depth interviews—was conducted in Sydney. The pilot study was helpful for practicing face-to-face interactions with the target groups, before the start of the main fieldwork, and for providing initial insight into this topic (Schreiber, 2008). Given the topic areas in the discussion guide, an hour was estimated to be sufficient and the pilot interviews helped confirm this.

The Australian pilot study comprised seven interviews with Sydney-based participants. The sample was obtained through contacting professional

acquaintances and placing advertisements on university career websites. The Indian pilot study comprised eight interviews. The sample included international students from India. Other Indian participants were obtained through a post on the Facebook group called 'Indians in Sydney' which asked people to provide feedback on their eating practices. The pilot study with Indian participants also only focused on their views and experiences while they were living in India.

The pilot interviews, across both groups of participants, were conducted in English. As there were no significant differences noted in the interview data gathered between the pilot and main study nor any major changes required in relation to the questions asked or data gathering approach, the findings across the two data sources have been combined. The pilot interviews—comprising seven Australian interviews and eight Indian interviews—form part of the total 55 interviews analysed in the study.

2.5.4 The in-depth interviews

As highlighted previously, semi-structured face to face individual in-depth interviews (55), conducted in English, are the main mode of data gathering used throughout this study to explore meat-eating practices in both countries. The semi-structured interview approach meant that the discussion guide had some functional and researcher-directed questions to which answers were required, while still also preserving an interactive, respondent directed ethic (Whiteley, 2004). The participants were free to respond, as they wished, to open-ended questions as the researcher probed into some of these responses to gain a better understanding of the topic (Bartholomew et al., 2000). Each interview is about an hour long and was audio-recorded. At the start of each interview, participants in both countries were asked to complete the Schwartz values Portrait Values Questionnaire (PVQ). The survey was administered at the beginning of the interview to avoid participant responses potentially being biased by subsequent questions asked during the interview (D'Alessandro et al., 2017).

When it comes to using interviews to explore practices, previous work makes a strong argument in support of this mode of data gathering (Browne, 2016; Hitchings, 2012). A key reason is that language serves as an important conduit through which meanings are constructed (Gubrium & Koro-Ljungberg, 2005; Holstein & Gubrium, 2008) and interviews allow for a deeper understanding of the phenomena under investigation rather than relying on "generalizations devoid of context" (Charmaz, 2008, p. 402). Individual in-depth interviewing also seeks to obtain deeper information than what is normally sought even in focus groups as it probes into topics such as "an individual's self, lived experience, values and decisions, occupational ideology, cultural knowledge, or perspective" (Johnson, 2002, p. 104). In this way, the interviews helped enhance our understanding of various eating practices and socio-cultural conventions which have helped shape these practices. This included understanding the types of meat-based foods consumed, meanings attached to these various foods and the role of family, peer groups, the community and the media in influencing these meat-eating practices.

Individual in-depth interviews are also helpful in addressing some of the potential power imbalances that may arise in data collection approaches such as focus groups (McGinn, 2008). This was important to consider particularly in view of India's culture of "high power distance" which involves a strictly defined social hierarchy (Hofstede, 2001). In such a culture, someone of lower social status may look to someone from a higher social status and unquestioningly accept their views and opinions as the natural order of things (Sweetman, 2012).

Individual interviewing was also deemed useful for eliciting more authentic responses to sensitive topics (Low, 2008) such as cultural sensitivities associated with meat eating in India (Devi et al., 2014; Sathyamala, 2018) which encouraged clandestine meat-eating (Khara, 2015) and certain eating practices being associated with gender-based norms in Australia (Bogueva & Phau, 2016). This means that, unlike in focus groups where discussing sensitive issues within the group context may cause

embarrassment (Sim & Waterfield, 2019), participants are less likely to feel like they might be judged and therefore censor their responses (Ogden, 2008). This is because in-depth interviews, through one-on-one, face-to-face interaction between researcher and participant, seek "to build the kind of intimacy that is common for mutual self-disclosure" and resemble forms of talking that one might find among friends (Johnson, 2002, p. 103).

Probing –a research technique used by qualitative interviewers to generate explanation and elaboration from research participants (Roulston, 2008) - was used throughout the duration of each interview. Depending upon the topic, the interviews used a mix of probes. Some of these included probes for elaboration and clarification on a topic (Roulston, 2008). Examples of such probes included the following - "What is it about the colour that you don't like?" which was asked by the interviewer in relation to a participant saying she felt uncomfortable when looking at the colour of red meat; "So how do they [family] feel about you cooking non-veg at home?" which was asked by the interview when a participant mentioned that he cooked meat at home while living with his vegetarian family. In other instances, silent probes were used. This is where the interviewer refrains from commenting and, instead, allows participants to elaborate upon the topic in ways that are meaningful to them and with minimal intrusion (Gorden, 1987). In such instances, non-verbal communication such as head nods was used to facilitate and encourage further discussion (Gorden, 1987; Gordon & Langmaid, 1998).

Grady (1998, p. 26) states that "when the researcher begins to hear the same comments again and again, data saturation is being reached". Within the constructivist paradigm, saturation is defined as the point "when gathering fresh data no longer sparks new theoretical insights, nor reveals new properties of…core theoretical categories" (Charmaz, 2006, p. 113). On the other hand, reaching data saturation can be somewhat relative as the constant search for new information may eventually result in something novel (Saumure & Given, 2008). Thus, deciding on a minimum sample size and when theoretical saturation has been reached can be challenging,

particularly for qualitative exploratory research (Hancock et al., 2016) as there will always be potential for the new information to emerge (Corbin & Strauss, 2008).

Determining theoretical saturation for an exploratory study on meat-eating, particularly in a country like India with its diversity of foods and eating practices (Sen, 2004) was challenging. Van Rijnsoever (2017, p. 15) highlights that rather than looking to sample sizes, deciding on a 'sufficient amount' of themes and codes within the paradigm of the research objectives is one approach. Other questions used to guide our data collection included: How homogenous or heterogeneous is the population being studied? What is the timeline that the researcher faces? (Charmaz, 2006). Given this study's time and resource constraints and based upon some significant overlaps noted across key themes, we decided that 55 interviews - 33 for India and 22 for Australia – were sufficient given our study's objectives.

2.5.4.1 Exploring practices through in-depth interviews

As noted previously, the in-depth interviews were designed to explore the following research questions across both countries:

- What meat-eating practices are prevalent in urban Australia and urban India?

- How and why are urban meat-eating practices changing?

- What role do materials, meanings and competences play within the contemporary urban practice of meat-eating, and how are those roles changing?

- What opportunities for reducing meat consumption emerge from this understanding of urban meat-eating practices in each country?

To address these questions, I explored the following interview topics in each country. For more details on the topics covered, please see *Appendix 4: Interview Discussion Guide (Australia)* and *Appendix 8: Interview Discussion Guide (India)*.

- **Past meat-eating practices:** Understanding past meat-eating practices—such as the types of meat-based foods consumed when growing up, how often, when, and the meanings and competences associated with meat-eating—provided insight into how this practice has evolved over time. This also encompassed understanding key cultural differences, given several facets of Hinduism traditionally emphasize vegetarianism (Puskar-Pasewicz, 2010), whereas the traditional Australian meal comprises a diet heavy in red meat (Symons, 1984). Thus, exploring past practices helped provide a basis for understanding present-day practices (Shove et al., 2012).

- **Contemporary meat-eating practices**: Exploring contemporary meat-eating practices meant understanding individual beliefs and behaviours as well as how changes to broader conventions, resources and systems help shape these (Spurling et al., 2013). In addition to exploring the role of various elements within the practice of meat eating, the interviews covered broader factors which have directly and indirectly influenced the practice. As one example, based upon the findings of the literature review, the interviews focused on the influence of the media (Animals Australia, 2015a) and community (Khara, 2015) in shaping meat-eating practices in each culture.

- **Views towards animals**: As part of understanding meat eating, the study also aimed to explore participant views towards meat animals. Given previous work highlights that meat-consumption behaviours are strongly linked with our attitudes and perceptions towards animals (Joy, 2010; Loughnan & Davies, 2019; Piazza et al., 2015; Potts, 2017), this was an important topic to explore. This also helped contribute to our understanding of the 'meat paradox'—the psychological conflict between a person's love for meat and their moral discomfort in relation to animal suffering (Loughnan et al., 2010)—across the two cultures. This, in turn,

had further implications for understanding cross-cultural meat-eating practices.

- **Plant-based practices**: There are several reports in the Australian media on the negative health-related consequences of meat-heavy diets (ABC, 2015; Cancer Council, 2011; Margo, 2017; Steen, 2016) and other sources report an increase in the number of Australian vegetarians (Roy Morgan Research, 2016, 2019). However, these also seem to coexist with perceptions that a meat-based diet is necessary for one's health (Bogueva et al., 2017). Against this backdrop, the study aimed to understand the role and relevance of meat-eating versus plant-based eating in Australia and implications for potential strategies to encourage a reduced meat diet. Similarly, given India's rise in meat consumption (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 2006) spurred by rising levels of urbanisation, disposable incomes (Devi et al., 2014) and exposure to new global practices (Khara & Ruby, 2019) the study aimed to understand perceptions towards traditional vegetarianism within this new urban context.

2.5.4.2 Country-specific topics explored within the interviews

In addition to the aforementioned topics explored across both countries, the interviews covered topics and themes that were specific to each country, as identified in the literature review. These are detailed in the following sections.

Exploring meat's associations with meanings of masculinity (Australia)

Previous literature has shown that in many Western societies—including Australia (Bogueva et al., 2017)—meat consumption is linked with symbolisms of masculinity and power (Rothgerber, 2013; Rozin et al., 2012). On the other hand, vegetarianism is associated with femininity and weakness (Adams, 2010; Fiddes, 2004). However, Australian society appears to be undergoing change from rigid gender roles (O'Neil, 1990) towards embracing

more fluid representations of gender (The University of Melbourne, 2016). Against this backdrop of change, the interviews explored implications for meat-eating practices, specifically whether the shift in gender-based norms meant there is potentially less stigmatisation of men adopting plant-based diets.

Differences between public and private behaviours in relation to meat eating (India)

Previous qualitative work in India has uncovered differences in the way that some people carry out their meat consumption behaviours in different public and private settings (Khara, 2015). This is in light of the socio-cultural stigmas associated with meat consumption (Khara, 2015). Thus, the study aimed to further explore these meat-eating practices given that, in collectivist India, many feel bound to adhere to socially acceptable norms (Paul et al., 2006), especially when in front of an observing audience (Patel, 2018).

Views towards dairy alternatives (India)

Dairy has cultural significance within the traditional Indian diet (Narayanan, 2018) and India's consumption of milk and milk products, per capita, is among the highest in Asia (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 2006). As part of exploring consumption of meat-based foods in urban India, the study sought to also explore views towards other animal-based foods such as dairy. This was asked in light of the ethical (Chatterjee, 2017b; Mullan et al., 2020; World Animal Protection, 2016) and environmental (Bava et al., 2014) challenges associated with intensive dairy production in India. Thus, as part of its overall aim to encourage sustainable consumption, the study sought also to explore participant views in relation to dairy alternatives.

2.5.4.3 Interview venues

Rather than conducting interviews at a central location, such as at a focus group facility where the environment tends to be contrived (Creswell, 2009), the interviews were conducted within the participants' natural social

settings (Williams, 2008). These included places often visited, in order to yield further insight into their practices (Williams, 2008). This allowed for the gathering of rich sensory data such as "what is seen, felt, heard, and even tasted or smelled" (Given, 2008, p. 551). The interviews in Sydney were carried out at a mix of outdoor venues such as university campuses, cafes, and restaurants. The interviews in Mumbai took place at a single location, a popular restaurant in Nariman Point in downtown Mumbai, as the city's traffic can often result in unpredictable and delayed travel times (Acharya, 2019) which could have adversely impacted the fieldwork.

2.5.4.4 Memoing during the interview process

Memoing is an important part of constructivist grounded theory approach as it involves reflection and analysis during the data collection process (Charmaz, 2006). It encompasses recording reflective notes about what the researcher is learning from the data, and often involves creative freedom as it captures the spontaneous outflow of ideas, insights, and observations noted (Groenewald, 2008). Memoing took place during and immediately after the interviews and these notes were captured in an A4-sized notebook.

As the insights were captured almost immediately, they helped with arriving at a more profound analysis of the data (Mills, 2008). Complementary as well as contradictory perspectives were noted to build a richer picture of the phenomenon under investigation (Patton, 2002). These different perspectives helped flesh out major themes, and significant quotes from each transcript were noted down as they helped build upon the emerging picture. The notes from the memos were shared with the supervisors of this study through regular fortnightly meetings. This process also contributed to the data analysis which occurred simultaneously with the data collection (Charmaz, 2006).

2.5.4.5 In-depth interviews and saturation

During the interview process, the following themes were explored as part of understanding meat-eating practices in both countries – past and

present day meat-eating, plant-based foods and eating, gendered eating, views towards animals and sources of influence and information. Probing –a research technique used by qualitative interviewers to generate explanation and elaboration from research participants (Roulston, 2008) - was used throughout the duration of each interview.

Depending upon the topic, the interviews used a mix of probes. Some of these included probes for elaboration and clarification on a topic. (Roulston, 2008). Examples of such probes included the following - "What is it about the colour that you don't like?" which was asked by the interviewer in relation to a participant saying she felt uncomfortable when looking at the colour of red meat; "So how do they [family] feel about you cooking non-veg at home?" which was asked by the interview when a participant mentioned that he cooked meat at home while living with his vegetarian family. In other instances, silent probes were used. This is where the interviewer refrains from commenting and, instead, allows participants to elaborate upon the topic in ways that are meaningful to them and with minimal intrusion (Gorden, 1987). In such instances, non-verbal communication such as head nods was used to facilitate and encourage further discussion (Gorden, 1987; Gordon & Langmaid, 1998).

Grady (1998, p. 26) states "when the researcher begins to hear the same comments again and again, data saturation is being reached". Within the constructivist paradigm, saturation is defined as the point "when gathering fresh data no longer sparks new theoretical insights, nor reveals new properties of...core theoretical categories" (Charmaz, 2006, p. 113). Data saturation can also occur at a particular point within an interview when the researcher feels they have reached a full understanding of the participant's perspective and that probing no longer yields useful outcomes (Legard et al., 2003). As part of grounded theory, the types of saturation considered for this study include data saturation, theoretical saturation and inductive thematic saturation (Saunders et al., 2018).

Some questions used to determine data saturation during the interviews included: How homogenous or heterogeneous is the population

being studied? Are there key characteristics—such as demographic traits— that are important for an in-depth understanding of the topic? What is the timeline that the researcher faces? (Charmaz, 2006). Given differences in cultural practices across religious groups in India (Devi et al., 2014) and the fact that there less is known about meat consumption in India in general, this meant that more interviews were needed in India (33) to reach data saturation as compared to Australia (22).

On the other hand, reaching data saturation can be somewhat relative as the constant search for new information may eventually result in something novel (Saumure & Given, 2008). Thus data saturation is a "matter of degree" as there will always be potential for the new to emerge (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). To this point, Guest et al. (2006) state that the interview guide needs to be structured to ask multiple participants the same questions, otherwise data saturation will become a constantly-moving target. For this exploratory study, it was important that semi-structured interviews allowed for a certain degree of flexibility (Bartholomew et al., 2000) but this was also done within the parameters of the research objectives. Hence, defining the objectives of this study from the outset (Charmaz & Bryant, 2008b) and referring back to these during the fieldwork was helpful in determining when data saturation was reached. New data that did not contribute to the overall objectives was disregarded (Glaser & Strauss, 1999) and thus data adequacy was reached (Hancock et al., 2016).

Other forms of saturation in relation to the interviews included theoretical saturation—that is, the point at which no new dimensions or relationships emerge during analysis (Strauss & Corbin, 1998)—and inductive thematic saturation, when codes and themes developed during the analysis represent the completeness of the theoretical categories (Saunders et al., 2018). As part of this study, several themes relating to meat-eating practices emerged. These included differences in past and present meat-eating practices, the influence of various information sources, the relationship between meat and gender, the evolution of cooking practices and participant views towards animals. These various categories also had

subcategories, all of which comprehensively captured some key topics and themes surrounding meat-eating practices. Please see *Appendix 11: Nvivo codes and coding frame* for more details. The analysis of patterns and relationships, which emerged from the data, are detailed in the subsequent findings chapters within this thesis and also covered in *2.6 Data organisation and analysis*.

2.5.5 Observations

Observations were used to help supplement and add to the understanding of the emerging insights from the in-depth interviews. Observational data allows for access to certain "unspeakable aspects" of everyday practices which participants may not be fully cognisant of (Hitchings, 2012, p. 61). This meant that the observations helped with seeing and identifying unconscious materials, meanings and competences which may have been so deeply embedded within the practice of meat-eating that participants may not have been conscious about mentioning them as part of the interviews. In both countries, the observations commenced upon completion of most of the interviews. To this point, other work similarly states that although some researchers may enter the field and begin their observations without any preconceived notions, many rely on previous findings to inform their observations (Angrosino, 2004; Given, 2008). Thus, the observations helped complement the context provided by the interviews.

The observations for this study were "unobtrusive" in that they were conducted in public settings with minimal interaction with people and their social surroundings (Angrosino, 2004). Other terms used for these unobtrusive techniques are "non-reactive" or "indirect" methods (Payne & Payne, 2004). The observations did not encompass observing specific individuals performing the practice but visiting various places to understand how meat eating is carried out across various contexts and settings. These involved visits to public places such as shops, malls, restaurants and markets. Photographs were taken during the observations. These photographs were not intended for textual analysis but as a way of capturing the material

landscape and the objects within them (Collier, 2003). These form important elements of the practices analysed, and have been detailed in the subsequent findings chapters. This visual information was then compared to the memo notes and interviews to triangulate the findings and build a richer picture. The study's approach to triangulation is elaborated upon further in *Section 2.5.6 Triangulation*.

The benefit of conducting unobtrusive research is that researchers do not alert participants to their presence and are thus not concerned about the effect of the research on their subjects (Decarlo, 2018; Payne & Payne, 2004). This is unlike other forms of more direct participant observations where the presence of an interviewer might result in some participants becoming self-conscious, reacting to being under scrutiny and modifying their activities (Payne & Payne, 2004). The practices in this study were also observed in their natural settings, with minimal interference, interventions or changes made (Kellehear, 1993). Furthermore, as many of the "participants" observed were inanimate material elements, as opposed to human beings, this also allowed for easier access to the data (Decarlo, 2018).

The observations in Australia—which spanned a period from September 2018 to June 2020—were conducted at various times, A total of five Australian observations are included as part of the analysis in this study. The Indian observations occurred across two trips. The first round of observations commenced in October 2018, following from the in-depth interviews. The second round occurred as part of another trip to India in October 2019. A total of seven Indian observations have been included as part of the analysis. Details relating to these observations are outlined in Table 3.

Table 3 A summary observations conducted in this study

Observations in Sydney, Australia spanning a period from Sept 2018-June 2020
Observation was conducted at a restaurant following on from an in-depth interview. As part of the observation, the restaurant's largely meat-based menu and décor featuring animal products, animal body parts—such as animal bones—and the general celebration of an omnivorous diet were noted.

Observation was conducted at a prominent meat wholesaler located in Sydney's eastern suburbs. The large varieties of raw, pre-prepared and cooked meats sold were noted. The observation also noted its feature wall of omnivorous celebrities as a way of encouraging people to pursue a meat-based diet.

Observation was conducted at a major food court located in downtown Sydney. This is a popular eating place which features a wide variety of food stalls offering diverse global cuisines. The types of meat-based foods sold in comparison to plant-based foods were noted here. Promotion and messaging relating to various types of foods were also noted.

Observations were conducted on two different occasions at two of Australia's major supermarkets. The observations focused on the display and range of meat-based foods sold in each supermarket. In addition, the observations noted a variety of animal-based foods which were marketed as ethical, environmentally friendly and healthy. The promotions and packaging in relation to various meat-based foods relative to plant-based foods were also noted.

Observations in Mumbai, India which occurred in two phases, Oct 2018 and Oct 2019

Observation was conducted at one of Mumbai's largest suburban food markets. The focus was on the range of small stores which sold different varieties of frozen and freshly cut meats. In addition, various meat-based advertisements highlighting messages of health and well-being were also noted.

Observation was conducted at a Mumbai wet market. The observation focused on different varieties of live birds and animals that were sold for their meat.

Observation was conducted at a fine dining restaurant in downtown Mumbai. It focused on various meat-based items featured at the lunch buffet. It also noted how certain meat-based dishes were emphasised upon by being given their own dedicated space in the middle of the buffet area, relative to traditional vegetarian dishes were simply presented as part of the overall buffet.

Observation was conducted at a busy restaurant, during the lunch time, at Mumbai's domestic airport. This involved looking at the various meat-based dishes offered and how these were kept separate from vegetarian foods.

Observation was conducted at a food court located in a major mall in downtown Mumbai. The large variety of meat-based fusion dishes—foods which comprised a blend Indian and foreign flavours/dishes—was noted.

Observation was conducted at Mumbai grocery store. As part of this observation, the wide range of cooking sauces, condiments and spices specifically sold for meat-based dishes was noted. Promotion and packaging for these products were also noted.

Observation was conducted at a downtown Mumbai supermarket. This involved looking at the imported meat section and the various messages used to promote these meats. The observation also noted that despite the

use of some positive messaging, the meat-based section was cordoned off from the rest of the supermarket.

2.5.6 Triangulation

Triangulation involves gathering multiple types of data or integrating different research methods to enable the researcher to obtain diverse viewpoints and gain additional insight into the topic of study (Olsen, 2004). The key purpose of triangulation is to eliminate or reduce bias, increase reliability and validity (Flick, 2006) and provide more richness and understanding of the phenomenon under study (Payne & Payne, 2004). For this study, triangulation encompassed conducting interviews, observations and looking at various secondary sources, as part of the literature review, to help corroborate what participants had reported on (Polit & Beck, 2006).

In most research studies, the literature review precedes data collection and analysis as it helps the researcher to contextualise the findings within the existing frameworks of knowledge (Creswell, 2009). However, previous work by Glaser and Strauss (1967) argued against conducting a literature review before the data collection and even during later stages of the research. To this point, they state that one ought "to ignore the literature of theory and fact on the area under study, in order to assure that the emergence of categories (as part of grounded theory) will not be contaminated" (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 45).

On the other hand, within the constructivist paradigm, previously acquired knowledge provides a basis or reference for the general direction in relation to the data collection (Charmaz, 2006, 2014). Thus, an understanding of prior empirical phenomena is an important part of the constructivist approach (Charmaz & Bryant, 2008b). However, while knowledge of the literature is important, Charmaz (2006, p. 166) also suggests to let the literature review "lie fallow" until later stages of the research in order to encourage the findings to emerge. For this study, the literature review, as detailed in Chapter 1, commenced prior to the fieldwork in January 2017 and progressed throughout the duration of the fieldwork,

analysis and reporting of the findings. It was used to help identify gaps in the knowledge, areas for further exploration and triangulate the emerging data to build a more comprehensive understanding of meat-eating practices across the two countries.

It is also worth noting that one misconception in data triangulation is that different sources of inquiry ought to yield the same result (Flick, 2006; Patton, 2002). To this point, weak triangulation is thus described as the focus on confirming results whereas strong triangulation emphasises collecting new insights rather than confirming what has already been obtained (Flick, 2019). The study prioritised the latter approach as uncovering contradictions to the current theory can be as important, if not more important sometimes, for developing a deeper and a more multi-faceted understanding of the topic of study (Patton, 2002). In the literature review, it was noted that despite the adoption of new modes of consumption, the need to adhere to long-standing traditions, particularly in India, still prevails (Majumdar, 2010; Sinha, 2011). This, in turn, has created a consumption dissonance among some consumer groups in India (Mathur, 2010). These themes are explored further in this study.

2.6 Data organisation and analysis

Once the fieldwork was complete, the next step involved getting the data ready for analysis. The interviews were transcribed through an external agency but there was also an attempt made to preserve the flavour of the "natural conversations" (Patton, 2002, p. 441). This involved capturing participant responses and expressions, verbatim, through the use of exclamation marks and pauses.

The transcribed interviews were then uploaded into the qualitative software Nvivo 12 for analysis. Coding on Nvivo 12 helped sort and keep track of different categories and corresponding sections of text, thereby making it convenient to work through large amounts of data.

As part of the constructivist approach, each emerging theme was compared with other data, within the same interview or across different interviews, to build upon the rolling hypotheses (Mills et al., 2006). This involved comparing the data, codes, categories as well as memos among themselves (Charmaz, 2006, 2014). Thus, as Gordon & Langmaid (1998, p. 133) state, the inductive process was analogous to a "pattern of threads weaving through a piece of cloth" as the rolling hypothesis was continually developed and refined. The study also used an inductive method of coding (Charmaz 2000) which involved attaching labels to the data to identify occurrences and meanings while also grouping similar findings and taking note of what differed (Benaquisto, 2008). This constant comparative method helped support the task of favouring the data over any other input, and thus, helped ensure groundedness (Charmaz & Bryant, 2008b).

As part of this study, several themes relating to meat-eating practices emerged. These included differences in past and present meat-eating practices, the influence of various information sources, the relationship between meat and gender, the evolution of cooking practices and participant views towards animals. These various categories also had subcategories, all of which captured some key topics and themes surrounding meat-eating practices. Please see *Appendix 11: Nvivo codes and coding frame* for more details. The analysis of patterns and relationships, which emerged from the data, are detailed in the subsequent findings chapters within this thesis.

2.7 Validity and reflexivity during data analysis

Researcher reflexivity refers to the researchers' examination of how they might have influenced a research outcome (Dowling, 2008). This was made note of in the study given researchers, in general, need to be mindful of the perspectives they may bring to their analysis (Julien, 2008). To this point, it is worth noting that the primary researcher of this study follows a plant-based diet for ethical reasons. This was not disclosed to the participants given that participants, in general, may tend to have certain expectations

about what research investigators are looking which can influence the way in which they respond (Johnson et al., 2012). In this regard, the "courtesy bias" may encourage the participant to provide socially desirable information with a view towards maintaining a positive relationship with their investigator (Jones, 1983) and thus present as a 'good' participant (Johnson et al., 2012, p. 2). Thus, the decision was made to withhold this information, as reliability of the interview data outweighed the value of transparency.

Given the primary researcher of this study follows a plant-based diet, it also raised the possibility of subconscious bias on part of the researcher (Probst 2015) that may have coloured interpretations of participant accounts of their meat-eating practices. On the other hand, Charmaz (2000) states that subjectivity is an inherent part of constructivism. The researcher cannot be removed from data collection and analysis as both are "created from shared experiences and relationships with participants and other sources of data" (Charmaz, 2014, p. 239). Thus, when researchers make an interpretation of what they see, hear and understand, their interpretations cannot be separated from their own backgrounds, history and prior understandings (Charmaz, 2006; Charmaz & Bryant, 2008a; Creswell, 2009). Therefore, rather than presenting themselves as detached investigators, researchers, together with their research participants, ought to be considered as coauthors of a multi-faceted and interlinked reality (Charmaz, 2006; Miller, 2008). In view of this then, we should not attempt to remove researcher subjectivity from the resulting theory but rather aim to prioritise the data over any prior knowledge or views in relation to the topic (Charmaz, 2000).

Attempts to address bias and ensure validity was done through gathering perspectives from multiple researchers as part of the data analysis (Gordon & Langmaid, 1998), some of whom have different dietary practices. In addition, as highlighted earlier, the use of triangulation—through interviews, observations and secondary data sources—also helped with obtaining diverse viewpoints (Olsen, 2004). Ensuring validity in relation to the data was therefore done through conducting iterative analyses (Charmaz, 2000), seeking contradictory examples (Julien, 2008; Patton, 2002) and

examining data through various modes of triangulation (Olsen, 2004; Ramalho et al., 2015).

2.8 Ethical considerations

Prior to the commencement of this study, the research was approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee at the University of Technology Sydney (ETH18-2328). During the recruitment, each participant was informed of the purpose of this study and recruitment proceeded only once the participant was satisfied with the requirements of the study and provided written consent. Previous work highlights that when it comes to informed consent, particularly in constructivist research designs, neither the researcher nor participants really know where the interviews will lead as interview protocols may change as new data is uncovered (Ponterotto, 2010). Furthermore, it can be challenging to anticipate participant reactions during the interview and even after the interview has ended (Gubrium & Koro-Ljungberg, 2005). In some instances, the interview might even turn out to be an uncomfortable or a painful experience for the participant as certain sensitive topics are discussed (Gordon & Langmaid, 1998).

To this point, while the discussion on meat-eating practices covered some fairly innocuous topics, such as what does one normally eat for their main meals during the day, it also encompassed sensitive and potentially uncomfortable topics such as judgement, social approval/disapproval and validation. In the book titled 'Interviews: An introduction to qualitative research Interviewing', Kvale (1996) claims that when a participant's response is deeply affected by the interview, knowledge gained through the interview may provide the researcher with deeper insight into the topic of study as well as the broader human experience. In this regard, the researcher can be confronted with an ethical choice i.e., to proceed with interview and gain further insight into the topic of investigation or offer to stop the interview for the participant's benefit (Kvale, 1996). Other studies claim that researchers ought to be aware of potential vulnerability among participants (Patton, 2002; Sim & Waterfield, 2019). Furthermore, during instances of

distress, it is the moral obligation of researchers to stop the interview or at least ensure that participants have regained control of the situation (Orb et al., 2001). In this study, while the interviews did not appear to elicit painful recollections or extreme discomfort among participants, a few participants, at the end of the interview, mentioned that our discussion prompted them to think more about their consumption practices.

All participant information, across both the transcripts and the results for this study, was treated in a confidential manner. The participants in subsequent findings chapters have been identified by just their initials and some basic demographic characteristics. Individual participant details and the data also have been stored in a password protected computer and backed up on password-protected Google Drive and Dropbox. The data will later be archived at the University of Technology Sydney as part of the data storage procedure. While the data from this study has not been shared with the participants, some of the findings have been published and, hence, might be accessible to participants given it is in the public domain.

Chapter 3: "I am a pure non-vegetarian": The rise of and resistance towards meat eating in a globalised urban India

This chapter was submitted to the *Journal of Consumer Culture* on 25th May 2020 and is currently under review. The chapter includes the entire submitted manuscript, and therefore some of the material presented *in Chapter 1: Introduction and Literature Review* and *Chapter 2: Research methods and design* is repeated here. These details were necessary to include given the entire manuscript has been presented here.

The contribution by each author is detailed in Table 4 and in *Appendix 12: Author contributions*.

Table 4 Contributions of authors to the published manuscript

Coauthor	Nature of contribution	Extent of contribution (%)
Tani Khara	Data collection, analysis and write-up	80%
Professor Christopher Riedy	Guidance on analysis & write-up	10%
Dr Matthew B. Ruby	Guidance on analysis & write-up	10%

This chapter explores meat-eating in urban India using social practice theory and aims to answer the following questions as highlighted previously:

- What meat-eating practices are prevalent in urban India?

- How and why are urban meat-eating practices changing?

- What role do materials, meanings and competences play within the contemporary urban practice of meat eating?

- What opportunities for reducing meat consumption emerge?

The research questions addressed in this chapter are presented slightly differently, as this chapter delves into some specific issues—such as globalisation—which emerged from the data and which are relevant to these overarching research questions.

The findings detail how globalisation has been involved in transforming the urban Indian landscape into a new consumption space of international cuisines and fusion foods. This has encouraged access to new meat-based foods, the rise of new meanings associated with meat (such as health and status) as well as new competences involving meat-based cooking. By understanding the dynamics of meat-eating practices, this serves as a necessary foundation for identifying opportunities for interventions to reduce meat eating. I elaborate on these proposed interventions in this chapter.

"I am a pure non-vegetarian": The rise of and resistance towards meat-eating in a globalised urban India

3.1 Abstract

Most studies on meat consumption have been conducted among Western audiences and there are relatively few insights into meat consumption in emerging markets such as India. This qualitative study used the model by Shove et al. of social practice theory to explore meat eating in urban India, drawing on a sample of mainly Mumbai residents aged 23-45 years. The research used an iterative study design and an inductive analysis approach. Semi-structured face-to-face in-depth interviews were the main mode of data collection, supplemented by observations in markets, restaurants, and local neighbourhoods. The key findings detail how globalisation has helped transform the local urban landscape into a new consumption space of international cuisines and fusion foods. This has encouraged exposure and access to new meat-based foods as well as new associations of meat with novelty, status and health. The findings also highlight how meat eating is met with tension, conflict and dissonance, given long-standing traditions in India that emphasize vegetarianism.

3.2 Introduction

Economic liberalisation, which began from the late 1980s, has helped India become more integrated into the global economy (Upadhya, 2009). This, together with rising levels of urbanisation and increasing disposable incomes (Devi et al., 2014), has helped significantly transform the country (Majumdar, 2010). Today, the Indian market is flooded with an international array of fast food cuisines, clothes, accessories, films, books and music (Majumdar, 2010; Sinha, 2011). Among urban Indians, in particular, there is a shift from necessity-based consumption to various modes of conspicuous

consumption (Mathur, 2010). This has also brought about change in social mindsets as there is a gradual departure away from traditional Brahmin values—where "austerity was considered a virtue and indulgence a sin" (Shashidhar, 2007, para. 11)—towards embracing those which embody materialism, wealth and status (Sinha, 2011). In this regard, consumers in developing countries may also view the adoption of new values and consumption practices as symbolic of integrating into the global community (Filippini & Srinivasan, 2019).

On the other hand, the adoption of new practices does not come without critique. Global culture in India tends to be equated with Western culture (Stigler et al., 2010), and some view Westernisation as a form of cultural imperialism (Aarya & Tripathi, 2015) that is responsible for eroding traditional practices (Harrell et al., 2015; Khara, 2015). Therefore, the widespread use of Western culture as a symbol of upward social mobility exists in tension with a simultaneous critique of modern consumer hedonism (Mathur, 2010). In this regard, many urban Indian consumers are attempting to balance the adoption of new consumer culture with preserving long-held traditional values, which can sometimes cause dissonance (Khara et al., 2020).

One area where this conflict is particularly apparent is meat consumption. On one hand, there are several factors contributing to the rise of meat consumption in India. These include rising rates of urbanisation, increasing disposable incomes as well as greater exposure to new cultures and norms (Devi et al., 2014; Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 2006). Furthermore, meat eating is associated with meanings of novelty, modernity and progression (Khara & Ruby, 2019), and is sometimes viewed as a form of defiance against the entrenched traditions of vegetarianism (Staples, 2017).

On the other hand, for many Indians, vegetarianism is still at the top of their cultural and religious food hierarchy (Chigateri, 2008; Waghmore, 2017). Hinduism, followed by a large majority of India's population (80%; The Registrar General & Census Commissioner of India 2011), has several

teachings that emphasise vegetarianism (Puskar-Pasewicz, 2010). Furthermore, the Brahmins, who traditionally sat at the top of the Hindu caste hierarchy (Sinha, 2011), are also associated with vegetarianism (Caplan, 2008). Some Brahmin teachings consider meat as being "polluting" for the body (Caplan, 2008, p. 118) and, therefore, a base form of food (Dolphijn, 2006). The slaughter of animals and meat eating are also equated with lower-caste status (Ahmad, 2014). These associations are also why local meat shops continue to be kept at a distance from religious places in India (Alam, 2017a; Dolphijn, 2006; Sharan, 2006) and meat is segregated from vegetarian foods in local schools and workplaces (Waghmore, 2017).

It is against this backdrop of globalisation and changing urban culture that the present paper explores the practice of meat-eating in India, along with the tensions and conflicts that simultaneously exist as part of this practice.

3.3 A practice-based approach to exploring meat eating in India

As highlighted in the previous section, traditional eating practices in India are changing, often in response to new social trends and customs (Khara et al., 2020; Khara & Ruby, 2019). Social practice theory is a theoretical framework that is well-placed to explore the evolution of eating practices over space and time (Shove et al., 2012). A practice can be defined as an assembly of "images (meanings, symbols), skills (forms of competence, procedures) and stuff (materials, technology) that are dynamically integrated by skilled practitioners through regular and repeated performance" (Hargreaves, 2011, p. 83). Practice theorists view materials as being particularly important elements within a practice (Reckwitz, 2002b; Shove & Pantzar, 2007), referring to them as "necessary, irreplaceable components" of practices (Reckwitz, 2002b, p. 210).

Practices are both entities and performances (Shove & Pantzar, 2007; Warde, 2005). As an entity, a practice comprises its own unique and

recognisable make-up of elements (Shove, 2017a) and a nexus of doings and sayings (Schatzki, 1996) that intersect with other practices. The practice-as-performance refers to "the moment of doing" where elements are integrated by people in specific situations in ways that vary slightly each time a practice is enacted (Kuijer, 2014, p. 28). In addition, practice theorists view "'context' and the practice as inextricably bound" (Kurz et al., 2015, p. 116). For this study, the consideration of social context was especially important, as individual attitudes and behaviours are strongly shaped by social norms within collectivist Indian society (Paul et al., 2006).

Social practice theory is not a singular approach, but a family of social practice frameworks (Schatzki et al., 2001). This study uses the framework introduced by Shove, Pantzar and Watson (2012) for exploring the dynamics of social practices within India. They define a practice as comprising three elements: competences (skills and know-hows), meanings (imagery and symbolisms) and materials (tools and technology; Shove et al., 2012). This framework is helpful for studying a practice that is rapidly evolving, as is the case for eating practices in urban India. Attending to the elements of a practice focuses attention on how changes in the elements contribute to the evolution of the practice over time (Shove & Pantzar, 2005).

Considering the example of eating from a practice perspective, materials are the tangible physical elements that are integrated into the practice (Ropke, 2009). In the domain of eating, these include food resources that are transformed or used up as part of the practice, but also things like utensils used for eating, recipe books and the physical spaces in which eating takes place (Shove, 2017b). Competence is the practical knowledge or skill required to enact or perform the practice, which may be conscious or unconscious (Shove et al., 2012). Continuing the example of eating, important competences include knowing how to shop for food ingredients, how to prepare ingredients and how to find and follow a recipe. Meanings are the perceived norms and conventions that underpin certain practices (Shove et al., 2012; Strengers, 2010). The meanings associated with food go beyond the utilitarian goal of meeting physiological needs (Fischler, 1980; Messer,

1984). Food, as a material element, and eating, as a practice, are deeply imbued with cultural meaning (Devi et al., 2014). These meanings are commonly tied to religious and spiritual beliefs, associations derived from shared family histories, and broader social norms. Every time a practice such as eating is carried out in different settings and contexts, different combinations of materials, meanings and competences are brought together and in turn shape the nature of the practice (Shove & Pantzar, 2005).

A practice can also overlap and intersect with other practices and may then coevolve in complexes and bundles (Keller et al., 2016). The findings from this study detail how the practice of meat-eating in urban India has been shaped and influenced by other intersecting practices. Urban India is a focus for this study given it is at the forefront of the changing dynamics of meat eating (Devi et al., 2014; National Sample Survey Office, 2012) and that globalisation has had a significant impact upon Indian cities in particular (Majumdar, 2010; Mathur, 2010; Sinha, 2011).

3.4 Methods

This qualitative exploratory research study addressed these research questions, as highlighted below. These seemingly simple questions also present a challenge, given the sheer diversity of cultures within India.

- What eating practices are prevalent in urban India today?

- What is the influence of globalisation on urban Indian eating practices, focusing on meat eating in particular?

- What role do particular elements play within the contemporary urban practice of meat eating, and how are those roles changing?

The research methodology for this study drew upon constructivist grounded theory, where there is an emphasis on gathering rich, descriptive data (Charmaz, 1996). The study used semi-structured face-to-face in-depth interviews as the main mode of data gathering. Each interview was approximately 60 minutes in duration and was audio-recorded with the

participant's consent. The interviews were helpful for gaining a deeper understanding of meanings, conventions, histories and values associated with practices (Browne, 2016; Hitchings, 2012). Furthermore, as eating is such a frequent practice, conducted multiple times per day and often involving a high level of sensory input, we expected that participant reconstructions of their eating practices would be more accurate than for less mundane and frequent practices. Reflective notes, which captured ideas and insights, were written during and immediately after the interviews.

In addition, observations were used to corroborate and validate what participants had reported in the interviews (Patton, 2002). This involved visits to public places like markets, restaurants and local neighbourhoods to observe and record practices while they were being performed. Photographs were also taken as they helped create a "photographic inventory" of the field through capturing the material environment and objects that were important elements of eating practices (Collier, 2003, p. 241).

3.4.1 Participants

The sample comprised participants aged 23 to 45 years, consistent with India's relatively young population, which has a median age of 28 years and approximately two-thirds under the age of 35 (Central Intelligence Agency, 2018b). In addition, the majority of the participants were Hindu, as Hinduism is followed by a large majority of India's population (80%; The Registrar General & Census Commissioner of India, 2011). Other participants mainly came from Muslim backgrounds as they comprise the largest religious minority in India (13%; The Registrar General & Census Commissioner of India 2011). The sample included a fairly even split of men and women.

The total sample comprised 33 participants, 25 of whom were residents of Mumbai. Mumbai was selected as it is one of India's largest cities (Central Intelligence Agency, 2018b), is considered the country's commercial capital (Raghavan, 2019) and is a multicultural hub (Gulliver, 2008). The interviews were held at a restaurant in downtown Mumbai and were conducted predominantly in English as it is India's subsidiary official

language (Central Intelligence Agency, 2018b) and the participants were comfortable conversing in English. The remaining eight participants were interviewed as part of a pilot study in Sydney. This sample was made up of Indian citizens who were recent arrivals to Australia. The pilot study was helpful for practicing face-to-face interactions with the target groups, prior to the start of the fieldwork, and for also providing some initial insight into this topic (Schreiber, 2008). Some findings from the pilot study have been included in the main data, and only include the experiences of participants while they were living in India.

3.4.2 Procedure

Recruitment for the interviews in India was largely conducted via Facebook advertising, using a Facebook page created by the first author, called "Urban India Eats". Given the cultural sensitivities in relation to meat consumption in India, the advertisement did not openly target meat-eaters, but instead ran the headline "Are you a Foodie?" in order to appeal to urbanites who enjoy a range of different cuisines. The ad was targeted at people aged 23-45 years who lived within 25 kilometres of Nariman Point in downtown Mumbai.

Other Mumbai residents were recruited via a local market research agency. The recruitment method here used the socio-economic classification (SEC) grid, a segmentation tool developed by The Market Research Society of India. The SEC grid segments urban households into twelve categories based upon two questions: levels of education—from illiteracy to a postgraduate degree—and the ownership of eleven items which range from fairly basic (e.g., electricity connection, gas stove) to relatively sophisticated (e.g., refrigerator, personal computer; The Market Research Society of India, 2011). As previous work found that education levels and disposable incomes can significantly impact one's ability to make informed and deliberate consumption choices (Khara, 2015), and given meat is a relatively expensive commodity in India (Puskar-Pasewicz, 2010), the recruitment focused on affluent segments—SEC A.

The sample for the pilot study in Sydney was obtained through placing advertisements on career websites at The University of New South Wales and The University of Technology Sydney and through a post on the Facebook group "Indians in Sydney", asking potential participants if they were willing to be interviewed about their food choices.

The incentives, for both the pilot study and the fieldwork conducted in India, included light refreshments and a chance to participate in a lucky draw where one winner was awarded INR 10,000 (approximately AUD $200).

3.4.3 Data analysis

The research used an iterative study design, which entailed cycles of simultaneous data collection, analysis and adaptations to some questions to refine the emerging theory. Within the parameters of the research objectives, saturation of interview findings was adequately reached upon completion of the thirty-three interviews. Following Charmaz and Bryant (2008b), the data collection and analysis were conducted in tandem as they helped inform and shape each other. The mode of analysis used an inductive approach as each emerging theme was compared with other data, within the same interview or across different interviews, to identify similarities or differences and build upon the rolling hypotheses (Mills, 2008). The process involved attaching labels to the data to identify occurrences and meanings while also grouping similar findings and taking note of what differed (Benaquisto, 2008). New concepts and themes were constructed from the data itself (van Den Hoonard & van Den Hoonard, 2008). Coding was done using NVivo qualitative data analysis software to help sort and keep track of different categories and corresponding sections of text, thereby making it convenient to work through large amounts of data.

3.4.4 Ethics

Prior to the commencement of this study, the research was approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee at the University of Technology Sydney (ETH18-2328). During recruitment, each participant was informed of

the purpose of this study and the recruitment proceeded only once the participant was satisfied with the requirements of the study and provided written consent. All participant information was treated in a confidential manner. The participants and their accompanying quotes—as detailed in the next section—have been identified by just their initials and some basic demographic characteristics.

3.5 Research findings

This section will elaborate upon how globalisation has contributed to the rise of meat-eating in urban India. In addition, it will detail the resistance and conflicts that also exist in relation to meat eating given the long-standing cultural practices that advocate vegetarianism.

3.5.1 Globalisation and its impact on Indian eating practices

Vegetarianism has traditionally been a long-standing socio-cultural practice across many parts of Hindu India (Puskar-Pasewicz, 2010). Reflecting this traditional practice, many participants highlighted that they ate mainly vegetarian foods at home when growing up. Among meat-eating households, meat was consumed mainly on the weekends and was restricted to mostly chicken. In other instances, meat was occasionally consumed outside the home and by mainly male members of the family. This is because traditional norms neither favoured the practice of meat eating among women (Caplan, 2008), nor encouraged the practice within the sanctity of the home (Khara et al., 2020):

- Most of it (the food at home) was vegetarian, but we used to have meat on weekends ... So, Saturdays, Sundays (AM, Male, 31-39 years).[*]

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[*] The quotes from various participants have been identified by their initials and basic demographic characteristics.

- Basically it was all vegetarian meals (at home) ... mostly the weekends we do have a lot of non veg ... it's chicken mostly (AG, Male, 23-30 years).

- Growing up it (the food at home) was vegetarian, although my dad used to have non-vegetarian when he used to go out for work or something ... But at home it was always vegetarian. Non-vegetarian ... we preferred not to cook it at home (PK, Male, 31-39 years).

Many participants also mentioned that snack foods consumed outside the home largely comprised traditional vegetarian fare:

- In the childhood ... we used to eat normal things like ... vada pau (deep fried potato dumpling placed inside a bread) ... samosa pau ... nothing called this burgers, pizza and everything ... (It was just) ... normal to have Indian food only (RK, Male, 23-30 years).

However, economic liberalisation, which began in India in the early 1990s, paved the way for globalisation (Fernandes, 2000), which has encouraged changes to many traditional Indian practices (Sinha, 2011). Globalisation links "distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many thousands of miles away and vice versa" (Giddens, 1990, p. 64). In the domain of food, globalisation has resulted in international food brands entering the domestic market (Goyal & Singh, 2007; Vepa, 2004) which has brought about a new and increasingly diversified urban food culture (Siegel, 2010). This, in turn, has influenced local eating practices:

- We have been getting a lot of food variety now ... KFC is also bringing in ... new varieties. They are attracting people ... attracting kids (SR, Female, 31-39 years).

- Bombay has become so metropolitan, I mean it always was, but it's so much more in terms of food now (AB, Female, 31-39 years).

The foreign media, in particular, is an important material and meaning-carrying element that has encouraged cultural globalisation within India (Derné, 2003). Prior to globalisation, India was one of the most protected media markets in the world (Derne, 2008). When it comes to eating practices, globalisation has encouraged a shift from traditional plant-based foods to animal-based foods (Pingali & Khwaja, 2004). Below, a participant highlights how international television shows such as MasterChef Australia have changed the way urban Indians interact with food:

- MasterChef Australia ... has had such a phenomenal impact on our country. Probably ... more Indians watch MasterChef Australia...than Australians ... So you have now kiddie birthdays which are MasterChef birthdays ... everything now has that MasterChef tag ... food is very big and I think media has had a very, very large role to play in that (TS, Female, 40-45 years).

Access to new information—such as MasterChef, with its emphasis on meat-based dishes—has been facilitated by the market penetration of devices for watching media among India's middle class, which came about as part of globalisation. Shows like MasterChef have also promoted new competencies in relation to cooking and consuming meat. This is reflected in the example below where a participant expressed her enthusiasm for wanting to learn more about new modes of meat-based cooking. To this point, Shove, Pantzar and Watson (2012) state that when a practitioner has limited first-hand experience in relation to a practice, the circulation of meanings can often become dependent upon material infrastructures of communication such as TV or the internet:

- Oh wow this is also the technique. Sous vide ... There's something called "stir fried", there's something called "braising", there's something called "grilling". I was amazed wow there's so many kinds of techniques to cook food. The concept is very much changed now for me (ZM, Female, 23-30 years).

Globalisation in India has led to a rise in incomes (International Monetary Fund, 2007), which has given rise to a new middle class (Lakha, 2005). This wealthier middle class is more mobile and better able to experience new eating practices, as reflected below:

- In India, you got this few cities where the primary kind of jobs are … and there's so much disposable income at their disposal now. So, when people get a chance around food, they're pretty over to experiment and eat anything outside. So, I think that's probably bringing in the change [in eating] (RS, Male, 23-30 years).

- I have many friends, they are vegetarian … they have been to New Zealand for hotel management … they have been to Australia, they have been to US … you will not find a vegetarian everywhere. So, they start eating non-veg (SA, Male, 23-30 years).

Exposure to new global practices also appears to have encouraged some Indian consumers to use these eating practices to create new identities and differentiate themselves from their peers and community (Mathur, 2010). This is highlighted in the examples below:

- My parents were totally vegetarian … but I am a pure non-vegetarian. I love eating chicken, fish, meat (AN, Male, 31-39 years).

- He [my friend] just turned thirty … he was in Glasgow for a couple of years so he interacted with all these, I think Scottish things … they're also a meat heavy bunch of people so I think maybe that rubbed off on him because when he came back [to India] he changed … The lust for meat he had was insane … We went … out after a show … and he refused to have lunch with us because we went to … a thaali restaurant, it's veg—"Meh nahin aaonga" [I won't come]—and he went somewhere else. He … had his butter chicken and roti and then came back (KS, Male, 31-39 years).

On a broader level, globalisation in India tends to be viewed as synonymous with Western culture—especially culture from the United States

and the United Kingdom (Stigler et al., 2010). Its apparent influence ranges from contemporary workplaces in India (Upadhya, 2009), through to popular culture (Mathur, 2010) that has exposed the Indian consumer to new images, symbolisms and lifestyles (Fernandes, 2000; Upadhya, 2009). Some also view Western practices as being synonymous with social progress, which in turn has implications for the way traditional practices are viewed in urban India today:

- We really look up to the West and sometimes ... just because the West has propagated something, we will automatically accept it. It can start from modifying your Indian accent to blatantly copying something just because America ... has promoted it. I don't know if it's an after-effect of colonisation ... or it's because you're looking up to somebody who is successful ... for example, you would always want to be called modern and forward thinking, rather than being called traditional. There's almost stigma in the word traditional. And what is modern? Modern comes from the West mostly (SM, Female, 31-39 years).

3.5.1.1 Globalisation and glocalisation

While the contemporary urban Indian may refer to global practices, the resulting change is not a total departure away from older traditional practices and replacing these with entirely new practices (Deb & Sen, 2016; Maddox, 2020; Mathur, 2010, 2014). To this point, findings from a study by Favero (2005) indicate that amidst a new globalised urban India, being 'Indian' is synonymous with being progressive and cosmopolitan. On the other hand, the blatant "showing off" of modernity and indiscriminate adoption of Westernisation tends to be associated with a lack of sophistication as this implies one might not be familiar or comfortable with globalised culture (Favero, 2005, p. 4). In today's urban India, many prefer to amalgamate new practices with familiar long-standing customs (Majumdar, 2010; Sinha, 2011). International food companies have attempted to cater to this by offering material elements that symbolise a blend of the novel with the

traditional and familiar (Mathur, 2010). This "tailoring (of) … goods and services on a global or near-global basis to increasingly differentiated local and particular markets" is known as glocalisation (Robertson, 2012, p. 194). Therefore, while globalisation seeks to standardize, glocalisation encompasses practices that are customised to be relevant and acceptable within different cultural contexts (Matusitz & Reyers, 2010). Thus, certain elements can become separated from existing practices and recombine with new elements to form new practices (Rowe & Schelling, 1991). Some examples of glocalised practices—which comprise material elements customised for the Indian palate by international food chains – are depicted in Figure 8. 'Rice Bowlz' offered by KFC India (KFC India, n.d.). They comprise a mix of rice, which one of India's staple foods (Umadevi et al., 2012), together with meat-based materials. Rice is not normally present in KFC menus across many Western countries.
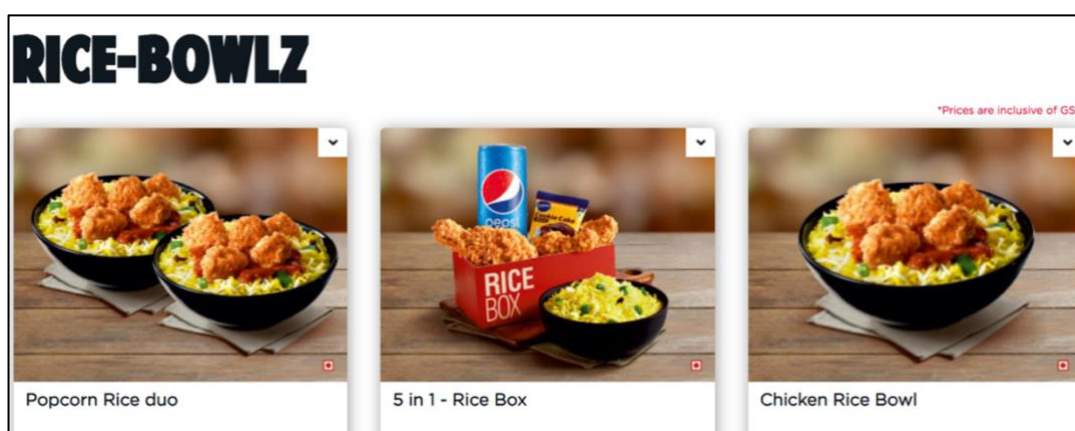
Figure 8 Meat-eating practices in India: KFC's adaption to Indian tastes

Figure 9 Meat-eating practices in India: McDonald's adaption to Indian tastes

The 'Green Chilli Chicken Kebab' from McDonald's India, shown in Figure 9 was part of the 'What's Your Spice Fest' campaign (McDonald's India, 2018). In this campaign McDonald's India offered a range of dishes made with local spices (McDonald's India, 2018), thereby giving familiar meaning to otherwise foreign material elements.

As part of glocalisation, the Indian urban landscape is increasingly reflecting a new bicultural identity—a blend of local (Indian) and global elements (Mazzarella, 2003). Many Indian food outlets have also begun to offer new localised adaptations of foreign cuisines (Siegel, 2010). In this regard, food companies are creating material consumption spaces that symbolise both the new and familiar (Mathur, 2010). This was noted in the photograph shown in Figure 10, taken around Nariman Point in downtown Mumbai, menu board at a food stall called 'Pao & Bao'. The name itself represents a fusion of cultures: 'Pao' means bread in Hindi, whereas 'Bao' refers to a bread-like dumpling in Chinese cuisine. The food stall also offered a mix of other international flavours from Thailand and the Middle East.

Figure 10 - Meat-eating practices in India: Pao & Bao's menu of fusion foods

Figure 11 Meat-eating practices in India: Indigo Burger Project's menu of fusion foods

Indigo Burger Project, pictured in Figure 11, offers an innovative variation on burgers with a blend of traditional Indian flavours and other new flavours (Business Standard, 2018a). Some meat-based varieties include Pan-Seared Lamb Burger and the Old Monk Infused Chicken Burger, which contains a dark Indian rum.

India is currently in the process of re-negotiating its identity amidst the forces of Westernisation and globalisation (Fernandes, 2006; Ray, 2014). Globalisation has given rise to the glocalisation of foods and consumption spaces which, in turn, have helped transform traditional eating practices. Having covered how exposure to new global norms has helped shape meat eating practices among urban India's upper and middle classes, the subsequent sections focus on how various elements—materials, meanings and competences—are changing and are, in turn, also shaping this practice.

3.5.2 The practice of meat eating and its elements

The elements that exist within a practice play different roles during the performance of a practice, interacting with and influencing one another as well as shaping the larger practice of which they are a part (Shove et al., 2012). We begin this section by exploring the link between meat and new meanings of status and wealth within urban India, followed by meat's association with nutrition, fitness and health, and pleasure.

3.5.2.1 Meat and status in contemporary urban India

Globalisation and Western-oriented consumerism have given rise to new meanings of wealth and status in India (Lakha, 2005). The upwardly-mobile social classes tend to view expensive status symbols, often associated with globalised consumption practices, as material differentiators from India's lower socio-economic classes (Lakha, 2005). When it comes to meat eating, other literature highlights that the rise of new meat-based material elements, such as meat shops and imported meats served in upmarket restaurants or five-star hotels, cater to high-income groups in India (Ahmad, 2014). In this regard, within class-conscious India (Butalia, 2013), the symbolic power of an item tends to be contingent upon its use by a limited elite, such that if the same item were to become popular, its symbolic worth would be reduced (Mathur, 2010). In the present study, participants similarly noted that meat was deemed an 'expensive' material element, reserved for special occasions:

- You would serve mutton ... It's more special because it's more expensive. You don't have it regularly. It's special for you, and it's also special for your guests, right? You would have it maybe twice a month or something ... at least in India it's more expensive (NB, Female, 31-39 years).

- People who are super rich who can afford to have the good quality meats, like mutton and beef. Like the actual beef, which is very difficult to get these days (TK, Male, 31-39 years).

Amidst this new cultural paradigm, traditional vegetarian practices were associated with blandness, a lack of excitement, and in some instances, low social status. In this regard, access to new material elements can often bring about a change in meanings within a practice, as old connotations change and new connections are made (Shove et al., 2012):

- We make *dal* [lentils] every day in our house like that but when we are calling a guest, we cannot make *dal* ... We cannot make a vegetable and serve them ... it can be mutton, or chicken, or fish, or prawns ... if you serve them veg, it looks too low grade, I guess ... I feel then like they would think like, see they cannot afford a meal then why are they inviting us? (FK, Female, 31-39 years).

- It's like, I just get bored to eat all that vegetables ... veggies and everything are made most of the time at home and so it's like you try to find out something new and different (RK, Male, 23-30 years).

- My family is kind of foodie ... so I have to try a lot of cuisine at home ... chicken chili and chicken *shish kabab* stuff. I make gravy also ...I do make non-veg at home and I do a lot of variations also ... but in *palak paneer* [traditional dish comprising cottage cheese and spinach], what variation you can do? Or in *dal tadka* [traditional dish with lentils]? Normal *dal tadka*, that's it (SR, Female, 31-39 years).

3.5.2.2 Meat and health in contemporary urban India

Beliefs about the healthiness of meat, which tend to be commonly reported in studies among Western audiences (Potts, 2017; Ruby & Heine, 2011), was noted in this study too. When asked about their views in relation to a meat-heavy diet and who is likely to adopt such a diet, several participants discussed meat's association with health, nutrition and a balanced diet. This has been reflected below:

- I remember watching a sport…And I did see this American athlete perform really well. So I remember this friend of mine making a comment that, "See this is all because they have this meat-heavy diet…Our fellows, they don't reach out anywhere because all they do is just feed on this grass and these kinds of food" (RS, Male, 23-20 years).

- Professional athletes or like a bodybuilder type of person [is likely to have a meat-heavy diet] (AM, Male, 31-39 years).

- Only recently, my friend's husband has an accident … And he's a pure vegetarian, he doesn't eat meat … We are telling him, "Can you just start eating non-veg to recover soon" (SR, Female, 31-39 years).

Exposure to new global norms has also encouraged the rise of the fitness culture in India (Gogineni et al., 2018). In addition, this study noted how meanings can be shared across multiple practices (Shove et al., 2012). For example, the practice of meat eating and going to the gym appeared to share common meanings of health, strength and wellbeing. Furthermore, women weight-training while being on a meat-based diet also reflects the rise of new meanings and competences in a new globalised urban India. In turn, traditional practices of the vegetarian woman (Staples, 2016) and weight training being predominantly an activity for men (Arora, 2016) appear to be gradually changing:

- I started keto … I go to a gym … and I do a little a bit of weight, squats, bar squats and all these things to help to tone my body.

And also I have these friends who help me out at the gym as well (VK, Female, 23-30 years).

- My gym instructor recommend to eat daily, one tandoori chicken … Tandoori chicken is good. If you're eating boiled chicken, it's good (JT, Female, 31-39 years).

Similar to the feedback from the participant interviews, the observation below highlights meat's association with health and fitness, as demonstrated in Figure 12. This is an advertisement for Venky's, which is a large homegrown meat-based food chain in India (Venky's India, n.d.). The image features meat-based foods along with tag line 'Smart Choice for an Active Life'. In addition, the spokesperson in the advertisement is featured wearing a sports T-shirt, which implies meat's association with fitness.

Figure 12 - Meat-eating practices in India: Venky's chicken advertisement

3.5.2.3 Meat and sensory pleasure

Several participants detailed the sensory pleasure they derived from meat as a material element. In this regard, the body can also be considered a material element within this practice, as it is "an essential part of sensuous experience" (Rodaway, 1994):

- There's the texture, there's the smell, there's aroma, there's the taste itself … Now imagine if chicken or beef was as soft as paneer [traditional Indian dish comprising cottage cheese], we probably wouldn't enjoy it as much. There's a bit of that pull (NB, Female, 31-39 years).

- When you are eating something juicy, having a bite, it's a mouthful thing. Vegetarian dishes are not mouthful. We feel they're [vegetarian dishes and meat] two different things. With meat, it's like all [blends well] together (AS, Male, 23-30 years).

Many participants highlighted how they also missed the sensory joy derived from meat, after a few days of having plant-based foods:

- I was doing one week of GM Diet … one day it was full of fruits, then one day it was full of vegetables. And then in the third day, when it was actually the chicken part, frankly speaking even I enjoyed … you just cannot have veggies everyday (TS, Female, 31-39 years).

- It [meat] is a food that we constantly need to have, we constantly want to have. After having veggies, after having salads and all that, any veggie item, you wouldn't be craving it for a long time … And meat lovers will totally understand this (AS, Male, 23-30 years).

Having covered how new materials, meanings and competences have encouraged meat eating in a globalised urban India, the subsequent sections explore the conflicts and tensions that also exist in relation to this practice.

3.5.3 Tensions in relation to the practice of meat eating

"The material world exists only insofar as it becomes an object of interpretation within collective meaning structures" (Reckwitz 2002, p.202). While, on one hand, meat eating is on the rise, participants also noted that meat-based material elements had some negative associations. This is because the practice of meat eating is in conflict with certain Hindu practices

that advocate vegetarianism (Puskar-Pasewicz, 2010) and non-violence towards animals (Hamilton, 2000). This is reflected below:

- We are killing animals and eating. And in our caste it's wrong. You should not eat by killing someone (PA, Male, 31-39 years).

- Non-veg smells in a way, non-veg has a specific aroma and characteristics which people who are vegetarian don't like. Especially bones and everything people are not used to it … some people see bones of chicken or mutton or whatever is left, they see it as something not good (AG, Male, 23-30 years).

- The larger part of India is quite intolerant to non-vegetarians … there's still a huge amount of people that will go to a veg only restaurant. In my own office, we have non-vegetarian and vegetarian plates. And we have non-vegetarian and vegetarian microwaves … my friend was actually pulled up for putting vegetarian food on non-vegetarian plate (NB, Female, 31-39 years).

Previous literature has highlighted that meat tends to be segregated from vegetarian foods in India (Ahmad, 2014; Dolphijn, 2006; Sharan, 2006). In this regard, a material element can include the space or physical setting where a practice is carried out (Shove, 2017b). In addition, common use of the term 'non-vegetarian' to describe meat-based materials also reflects the "immorality and illegitimacy that meat carries" in Indian society today (Ahmad, 2014, p. 23). Hence, despite the change in practices brought on by globalisation, traditional practices of segregating meat from vegetarianism still continue to persist amidst the new urban space. This was noted in this study, and is depicted in Figure 13.

Figure 13 - Meat-eating practices in India: Meat-based dishes are often separated from vegetarian dishes

Figure 13 was taken in a restaurant at Mumbai international airport that served a buffet of both meat and vegetarian dishes. Meat-based foods, labelled as 'non-vegetarian', were kept separate from vegetarian foods. This was a common practice observed at many other Indian restaurants.

Figure 14 - Meat-eating practices in India: The meat section is cordoned off from the rest of the supermarket

In Indian markets, meat-based materials were often separated from vegetarian materials. The meat section of this supermarket in Colaba,

Mumbai, shown in Figure 14, was cordoned off from the rest of the supermarket into own separate space, labelled as 'Meat and Fish'.

On a broader level, this also explains why new consumerism has not been adopted without some critique in India (Upadhya, 2009). This is because, in some ways, modern practices are seen to be eroding that which is considered "good" in traditional Indian culture (Seth, 2013, p. 279). Therefore, while much of the discourse about globalisation appears focused on the interplay between global and local cultures, it is important to also consider local resistance against the erosion of cultures (Hooper, 2000). Such sentiments were noted in this study:

- We have to restrict to the grocery shops and the manufacturers. Do not bring any of the new varieties in the market ... McDonald's, KFCs, Domino's ... the people who are attracting the youngsters to have non-veg food more rather than having veg (SR, Female, 31-39 years).

Cultural and religious practices in India can be presented as ways to counter the dominance of colonialism and westernisation (Banaji, 2018). One example appears to be Hinduised vegetarian practices, which include the recent beef ban enforced by religious vigilante groups, (Alam, 2017b; Biswas, 2017). Beef eating, in particular, is viewed as a threat to Hindu socio-cultural norms (Narayanan, 2018), and there have been incidents of violence towards beef-eating minorities (Lakshmi, 2015). Participants shared these concerns regarding both beef eating in particular and meat eating in general:

- In India mostly the news about meat is not good. They are totally criticising like people should avoid eating meat—What are they doing? How can one eat meat and all? How can someone kill and have it as a delicacy? ... The right-wing groups, actually ... The thing is, I kind of feel threatened by them (AS, Male, 23-30 years).

- With the political environment these days ... the Hindutva [reference to Hindu nationalist groups] came down really heavily on beef eaters and the lynchings and things. I think that is

atrocious behaviour … there was this journalist who came from Lucknow … He wanted to get kebabs. He's not Muslim, but he has a Muslim name. So he was coming in from Lucknow, and he wanted to carry back kebabs for his colleagues. His father said don't carry back kebabs, because you're traveling in a train, you have a Muslim name … I want you to be safe (RB, Female, 40-45 years).

3.5.3.1 Bundles of culturally inappropriate practices

Meat eating is also interlinked with other culturally-inappropriate practices in India such as alcohol consumption (Chaudhari, 2018; Staples, 2008). To this point, Shove, Pantzar and Watson (2012) state that meanings can often be shared across multiple practices which coexist in the form of loose knit bundles. Some participants spontaneously discussed vices such as meat eating in conjunction with alcohol consumption:

- I always say, the one who drinks eats non-veg because when they drink … non-veg is the best chakna [accompaniment] you can have with drinks (SS, Female, 40-45 years).

- I'm eating a non-veg. And people's mentalities like here, if you eat non-veg, that means they really drink also (PA, Male, 31-39 years).

In addition, meat eating was also associated with practices such as smoking, all of which had some degree of social stigma and shame:

- In my house, smoking is a definite no-no … Smoking, meat, then alcohol … In that order (TK, Male, 31-39 years).

- It's [meat-eating] like smoking, you know, which you hide from your parents and you think that they don't know (TS, Female, 40-45 years).

Women indulging in meat eating was more likely to be frowned upon. To this point, one participant stated that women tend to be traditionally seen as the "flag bearers" of Indian culture and therefore there is greater

intolerance towards women deviating from cultural norms. Such views also appear to reflect the broader practice of gender distinctions that exists within Indian society (Fadnis, 2018; Mahasakthi & Vasantha, 2019). Other literature has similarly highlighted that the 'Westernised Indian woman' also tends to be viewed with some disdain in India (Das, 2013). van Wessel (2004) notes when it comes to characterising a person as "good", people in India often use descriptions that qualify that individual as "non-modern" as well. This was apparent in participant responses:

- I'd say it's part of the general different standards for guys and girls when it comes to parents. It is probably applicable to smoking also and maybe drinking, depending on family background etc. So, we wouldn't really say it's specifically for maybe eating a food or eating non-veg food. It's part of the overall living standards, like boys can get away with more so to say (PK, Male, 31-39 years).

- If anyone eats meat, they will get angry. It could be because a large part of society is patriarchal, so yes, boys get away with many things (AK, Male, 31-39 years).

3.5.3.2 Secret meat eating in India

In view of the stigma attached to the practice of meat eating, some participants resorted to eating meat in secret, away from the knowledge of their vegetarian family and community. This is because in collectivist cultures such as India, individual deviations from socially-sacred practices are less likely to be tolerated (Fershtman et al., 2011). This has been elaborated upon below:

- In front of parents we have to keep it a secret because once they know, they start abusing and everything (SA, Male, 23-30 years).

- We wouldn't openly talk about eating non-veg when somebody from the locality is around … if my mother-in-law has eaten mutton in the afternoon, she would say "No, I made some vegetable and roti, and we ate that" … we know that it's a little bit

of a lie … I'd rather … not talk about it, than talk about it and get ostracised by the people (AB, Female, 31-39 years).

In this regard, despite the rise of meat-eating in India, the dissonance, tensions and resistance that exist in relation to it are also equally important to consider as part of the overall practice. More detailed discussion and analysis of secret meat eating is provided in *Chapter 4: "We have to keep it a secret"—The dynamics of front and backstage behaviours surrounding meat consumption in India*.

3.6 Discussion and conclusions

Several studies exist today that detail how globalisation has influenced various facets of Indian culture (Aarya & Tripathi, 2015; Fernandes, 2000; Mathur, 2010, 2014; Stigler et al., 2010; Upadhya, 2009). The findings from this study add to the current knowledge by highlighting how globalisation has helped transform traditional Indian eating practices, with a focus on the socially contentious and underresearched topic of meat eating. Apart from work discussing broad social trends, there is little literature on meat consumption in contemporary Indian society. In this regard, the study makes a contribution to the rather sparse literature by detailing how meat is viewed, positioned and interacted with in contemporary urban India.

A key finding is that globalisation has brought about greater awareness of new materials, meanings and competencies in relation to meat eating, many of which are seen as attractive due to their associations with Western cultures. However, glocalisation has enabled the customisation of these global practices to various local contexts (Scholte, 2008). In this regard, glocalisation has helped lower barriers of resistance towards meat eating - a practice considered to be a cultural taboo by some segments of Indian society - and has facilitated greater acceptance of this.

In addition, the study details how various elements have shaped one another while also influencing the practice of meat eating (Shove et al., 2012). As a material element, meat is associated with new globalised meanings of

status, health and social progression. The new elevated status of meat is reflective of contemporary class-based practices in India that sit in contrast to traditional caste-based practices, where vegetarianism, rather than meat eating, is valued (Staples, 2016). This is reflective of the broader clash between a more conservative and progressive India (Hensoldt-Fyda, 2018) as meat eating is symbolic of the divide between images of traditional rural life and images of modern urban consumption (Fernandes, 2009).

On the other hand, Indian society remains relatively conservative in many ways (Das, 2013; Hunt, 2011) and continues to value its long-standing traditions (Deb & Roy Chaudhuri, 2014; Majumdar, 2010). In this context, globalisation can be seen as a practice where "Western modernity (is currently) in the process of destroying pre-existent cultures" (Scholte, 2008, pp. 1476–1477). Other literature on India similarly reveals how some view modern symbolisms of consumption as 'artificial', 'depraved' and as representing the opposite of traditional simplicity (van Wessel, 2004). Similarly, negative associations arise around meat eating because meat is not only considered to have "polluting" and base characteristics (Caplan, 2008, p. 118), but is also seen to erode sacred customs (Khara, 2015). To the latter point, participants in a previous study on urban Indian consumption described the practice of meat-eating as "spoiling our tradition" (Khara, 2015, p. 116).

In addition, meat eating also contrasts with traditional gender-based conceptions of the vegetarian woman (Caplan, 2008). This study revealed that women indulging in meat eating were more likely to be met with social disapproval. This is reflective of the broader gender-based distinctions that continue to exist within Indian society (Fadnis, 2018; Mahasakthi & Vasantha, 2019) along with general disdain that some hold towards the practice of Westernisation (Das, 2013).

3.6.1 Limitations

India is often referred to as a "land of contradictions" (Biddle, 2017; Raman, 2013; Toderas, 2019) as it is home to a wide diversity of cultures,

each with their own customs, traditions and eating practices (Majumdar, 2010; Sinha, 2011). Therefore, the findings in this study may represent a small subsegment of India's varied population. For example, within the Brahmin caste itself, there have historically been large variations within the diet (Mahadevan et al., 2014). Fish has tended to be part of the menu for Brahmins living along the coast, whereas those living in the Northern regions of India have tended to eat chicken and mutton (Dolphijn, 2006). On the other hand, South Indian Brahmins have generally been known to be devout lacto-vegetarians, possibly consuming milk and milk products, but avoiding eggs, meat and fish (Mahadevan et al., 2014; Sen, 2004). Hence, future research could explore differences across classes, cultures, religions and geographies in order to truly gauge how eating practices might be shifting and how meat is perceived across these diverse Indian subgroups.

3.6.2 Conclusion

Meat eating in contemporary urban India carries multiple meanings. On one hand, the practice is symbolic of the shift away from traditional norms and is associated with novelty, status and a globalised lifestyle. On the other hand, meat-eating conflicts with long-standing socio-cultural practices and is often viewed with disdain and contempt. Like in many other developing countries (Steinfeld, Gerber, et al., 2006), meat eating is on the rise in India. At the same time, a growing number of interdisciplinary research teams are advocating for a global transition to more plant-based diets for sustainability-related reasons (e.g., Hertwich et al. 2010; Willett et al. 2019). Thus, future research should examine how plant-based eating can be made more relevant and appealing amidst the new globalised urban Indian context.

One potential area of focus is the practice of veganism. Findings from the current study revealed that participants had a moderate awareness of veganism, and those who were aware of it tended to associate it with being "a fad" and being "cool". Indeed, recent news reports have highlighted that veganism is on the rise in India (Chittilapally, 2019; The Tribune, 2020),

given the new and diverse culinary experiences it is seen to offer (Iyer, 2016). In addition, veganism is also attracting a following among India's younger generation (Chittilapally, 2019). For future research, it might be worth exploring whether veganism could present as a viable alternative to meat-eating in India, and whether it could potentially be a way forward in encouraging more sustainable dietary practices in a rapidly urbanising and globalising India.

3.7 Notes following on from Chapter 3

In view of my aim to use the findings of this study to encourage a reduced-meat diet, there is a further discussion on strategies to make veganism an appealing and viable consumption alternative in urban India's globalised culture in *Chapter 7: Discussion and conclusions*.

Following from the exploration of meat-eating practices in urban India described throughout this chapter, *Chapter 4: "We have to keep it a secret"— The dynamics of front and backstage behaviours surrounding meat consumption in India* specifically focuses on the differences in meat eating which occurs in different public and private settings. This is in light of the cultural taboos and stigmas that exist in relation to meat eating, which warrants further exploration. Throughout this analysis, I draw on additional theoretical approaches to shed light on this tension.

Chapter 4: "We have to keep it a secret"—The dynamics of front and backstage behaviours surrounding meat consumption in India

The chapter has been published in the journal *Appetite*, and the publication is included in its entirety in this chapter. Details relating to this publication are as follows: Khara, T., Riedy, C., & Ruby, M. B. (2020). "We have to keep it a secret"—The dynamics of front and backstage behaviours surrounding meat consumption in India. *Appetite*, 104615. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.appet.2020.104615.

Some of the material presented in *Chapter 1: Introduction and Literature Review* and *Chapter 2: Research methods and design* is repeated here. These details were necessary to include given the entire manuscript has been presented here.

The contribution by each author is detailed in Table 5 and in *Appendix 12: Author contributions*.

Table 5 Contributions of authors to the published manuscript

Coauthor	Nature of contribution	Extent of contribution (%)
Tani Khara	Data collection, analysis and write-up	80%
Professor Christopher Riedy	Guidance on analysis & write-up	10%
Dr Matthew B. Ruby	Guidance on analysis & write-up	10%

In this chapter, I focus on the conflict, tensions and dissonance that urban Indian meat-eating participants experience relation to their meat-eating practices. This is in light of long-standing traditions which advocate vegetarianism. Using Goffman's theory of self-presentation, this chapter elaborates on the dynamics of secret meat eating in India, and how and why this occurs. In doing so, it details the tensions that exist within Indian society where some people seek to embrace practices deemed new and modern but also remain of conscious of conforming to traditional norms within India's collectivist culture. Thus, this chapter provides an additional dimension of insight into meat-eating—a practice which symbolises aspiration but also holds associations of shame. Based on these findings, and as part of addressing the objective to reduce meat consumption, the chapter proposes strategies on how make plant-based eating relevant amidst India's new urban culture.

"We have to keep it a secret"—The dynamics of front and backstage behaviours surrounding meat consumption in India

4.1 Abstract

Meat consumption is on the rise in India. However, most studies on meat consumption, to date, are conducted among Western audiences and there are relatively few insights into meat consumption in emerging markets, especially India which tends to be stereotyped as a vegetarian nation. The aim of this qualitative study was to explore meat-eating practices among urban Indians aged 23-45 years. The sample comprised mainly Mumbai residents and semi-structured face-to-face in-depth interviews was the main mode of data collection. The research used an iterative study design and an inductive analysis approach. A key finding was that while meat consumption is on the rise, there are social stigmas still associated with it. This has led to discrepancies between consumption behaviours occurring in public (frontstage behaviours) and those carried out in private (backstage behaviours). Using Goffman's theory of self-presentation, the study provides insights into various ways in which backstage meat consumption occurs in urban India. The backstage setting can comprise places outside the home, such as restaurants, and, in some instances, segregated "safe" spaces within the home itself. Within these spaces, the study explores how consumption taboos are broken. In addition, it provides insight into various actions taken to cover up backstage meat consumption behaviours and present appropriate frontstage appearances before a vegetarian audience. This study is of significance as it contributes to the relatively sparse literature on meat consumption in India. It also uses Goffman's theory to explore the construction of different fronts in a new cultural context.

4.2 Introduction

Figures from The OECD highlight that India, compared to the world average, has much lower levels of meat consumption—about three kilograms per capita annually (OECD, 2019b). However, recent findings from the Indian Census indicate that only three in ten Indians self-identity as vegetarian (Census of India, 2014) and other studies similarly estimate the prevalence of vegetarianism in India to range from about 25% (Mintel Global, 2017a) to 40% (Euromonitor International, 2011). Among Indian vegetarians, approximately three-quarters are lactovegetarians (i.e., milk and dairy products are consumed but not meat or eggs) and about a quarter are lacto-ovo-vegetarians (i.e., eggs and dairy products are consumed but not meat) (Rammohan et al., 2012).

When it comes to meat consumption in India, chicken and fish have highest levels of consumption per capita (National Sample Survey Office, 2012). India is also reported to be one of the world's fastest growing markets in its consumption of poultry (Mintel Global, 2017b) and chicken is relatively popular due to its versatility and the fact that, unlike other meats, it is less likely to be associated with religious taboos (Devi et al., 2014). In addition, India's consumption of other types of meats such as beef and buffalo is also on the rise (Bansal, 2016). However, specific figures on meat consumption in India are difficult to obtain as some may underreport their consumption due to cultural restrictions and taboos associated with it (Bansal, 2016). These restrictions also explain why some Indians may display different public and private behaviours in relation to meat consumption (Khara, 2015). On the whole, meat consumption in India is a relatively underresearched topic and, apart from work discussing broad social trends, there is not much literature pertaining to meat consumption in contemporary Indian society.

The present-day food hierarchy in India still places vegetarianism at the top (Chigateri, 2008). Hinduism, followed by a large majority (80%) of India's population (The Registrar General & Census Commissioner of India, 2011), has several teachings that emphasise vegetarianism (Puskar-Pasewicz,

2010). These teachings highlight that all living beings share the same life force (Chapple, 2012; Sharma et al., 2014) and advocate *ahimsa* or non-violence towards living creatures (Hamilton, 2000). Like Hinduism, some of India's other religions such as Jainism and Buddhism also believe in reincarnation and karma (Davidson, 2003). Jains believe that "the entire universe is alive" (Davidson, 2003, p. 117) and that souls transmigrate across living beings; Jainism therefore advocates a vegetarian diet (Jayanthi, 2001). Some Buddhist traditions similarly encourage non-interference with the lives of other beings (Sharma et al., 2014) and emphasise vegetarianism for this reason (Puskar-Pasewicz, 2010).

The Brahmins, who historically sat at the top of the Hindu caste hierarchy (Sinha, 2011) and have wielded significant socio-cultural influence in India over centuries, are traditionally associated with vegetarianism (Caplan, 2008). In contrast, lower castes have been associated with "polluting non-vegetarianism" (Caplan, 2008, p. 118). Given this hierarchy, it is not uncommon to find some members from the lower castes turning away from meat and adopting vegetarianism as a way to claim greater social status (Robbins, 1999; Waghmore, 2017). The slaughter of animals and meat consumption are not only associated with a lower-caste status (Ahmad, 2014) but also with baseness (Caplan, 2008; Staples, 2016) and a certain impurity (Staples, 2008). This might also explain the term "non-veg", used in everyday language in India to describe meat, as it highlights the "immorality and illegitimacy that meat carries" (Ahmad, 2014, p. 23). The term conveys the cultural sense that vegetarianism is "normal" while meat consumption is a departure from that norm.

Today, local meat shops in India are still kept at specific distances from religious places (Alam, 2017a; Dolphijn, 2006; Sharan, 2006) as the "stench, the noise and the blood needed to be consigned to other spaces" and kept hidden from the public view (Ahmad, 2014, p. 24). In addition, many non-vegetarian restaurants remove meat-based foods from their menu during Hindu religious festivals while others are required to close shop during this time (Business Standard, 2018b; NDTV, 2019; Singh, 2017). In

schools and workplaces, non-vegetarian and vegetarian food are kept segregated (Waghmore, 2017) and many apartment complexes do not allow residents to prepare meat in their homes in order to avoid upsetting the vegetarian neighbours (Dolphijn, 2006). The question, "Are you vegetarian or non-vegetarian?" is still commonly asked across many Indian cities (Ahmad, 2014, p. 23).

Over time, however, India has been witnessing a shift from vegetarianism towards diets containing greater amounts of meat (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 2006). Rising rates of urbanisation, increasing disposable incomes and greater exposure to new cultures and norms are key factors driving the change (Devi et al., 2014; Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 2006). However, as highlighted previously, meat consumption is also at odds with several age-old customs and traditions which emphasise vegetarianism, which, in turn, tends to give rise to different consumption behaviours in different public and private contexts (Khara, 2015). The discrepancy, known as frontstage and backstage behaviours, is a concept that was explored by sociologist Erving Goffman in his seminal work, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (Goffman, 2012). In this work, Goffman uses the theatre as an example to highlight how stage performers have different behaviours in different contexts. On the front stage, the performer, conscious of being observed by the public audience, will perform according to cues and audience expectations (Goffman, 2012). Backstage, in a private environment, the performer may behave differently as there is no observing audience and therefore no role-playing is necessary (Goffman, 2012). Hence, public front-stage behaviours tend to have more role-playing elements to them compared to private backstage behaviours (Eckhardt & Houston, 1998).

In the social world, the different spaces in which one enacts different behaviours can be referred to as "front regions" or "back regions", similar to the "frontstage" and "backstage" in the theatre (Goffman, 1959). Behaviours carried out in the front region might be characterised by politeness and attention paid to the rules of decorum (Goffman, 1959). In contrast, the back

region can be a place for release and catharsis, and may also be a training ground for maintaining appropriate front region appearances (Goffman, 1959). In addition, appearances and impressions created in the front region might also be contradicted in the back region (Goffman, 1959).

Goffman's theory on frontstage and backstage behaviours has been applied across a wide range of contexts. Some examples include exploring different public and private behaviours that occur with regards to racism (Picca & Feagin, 2007), teasing (Sinkeviciute, 2017), behaviours that occur on social media (Persson, 2010), on the news (Thornborrow & Haarman, 2012), in court rooms (Portillo et al., 2013), in classrooms (Gilmore, 2014) and in hospices (Cain, 2012). However, the theory has also drawn some critique for depicting a world focused on superficial externalities (Gouldner, 1970; Habermas, 1984; Wilshire, 1982) and where the authentic self is bypassed or overlooked (Messinger et al., 1962). On the other hand, it is worth highlighting that one's sense of self is not entirely an independent entity but also composed of social constructions (Mead, 1962; Tseëlon, 1992; Zahavi, 2009). In collectivist India, for example, some may view themselves from the perspective of others and may feel bound to adhere social norms, traditions and moral obligations (Paul et al., 2006). It is also considered shameful, by some in India, to be seen in situations that are socially inappropriate, although the shame might not apply when it comes to doing the same thing in private (Patel, 2018). Furthermore, in response to the critique about Goffman's depicting a world of "manipulators" on the frontstage (Hall, 1977, p. 547), it is also worth noting that the theory is not focused on "'the psychology of deception' but rather 'the semiotics of dramatization'" (Tseëlon, 1992, p. 124). This makes it a useful framework for the study in India given the emphasis on self-presentation which exists in collectivist cultures (Leary & Kowalski, 1990) and that indirect and face-saving modes of communication are commonly used in collectivist cultures (Holtgraves, 1997). Goffman's emphasis on enactment therefore helps researchers gain deeper insight into latent meanings and symbolisms as focus is "not so much in what is said, as *in the act of saying*" (Gronbeck, 1980, p. 329).

When it comes to meat consumption, many Indians tend to consume it outside the home (Devi et al., 2014; Rukhmini, 2014; Suresh, 2016), away from the watchful eyes of the family (Khara, 2015), due to the social stigma associated with it. A recent qualitative study on urban Indian consumer attitudes towards ethical foods highlighted that "you eat it [meat-based foods] in secret, away from your family" (Khara, 2015, p. 119). These attitudes are also reflected in a recent newspaper article titled "8 types of vegetarians found in India", where the "restricted vegetarian" is a term given to people who are vegetarian at home, but eat meat outside (Times Food, 2018). This brings to mind Goffman's concept of the "setting" where the performer "cannot begin their act until they have brought themselves to the appropriate place and must terminate their performance when they leave it" (Goffman, 1959, p. 22). To this point, some Indians may consider "desh (place), kaal (time) and paatra (person)" when deciding how best to respond to different situations as collectivist behaviour normally occurs in the presence of the in-group, whereas it is only in impersonal settings, such as a public place, that an individualist approach is taken (Sinha, Sinha, Verma, & Sinha, 2001, p. 143). In India, the strongest judgement may come from the family group, and public places may become spaces that are free from that judgement, where backstage behaviour can take place, alone or with trusted friends. An example of this was highlighted in the urban Indian study on ethical foods where participants claimed: "In India there are a lot of restrictions, so if someone is doing something bad (such as eating meat) they will probably want to hide it from their home" (Khara, 2015, p. 119). Thus, we cannot simply associate frontstage behaviour with just public settings and backstage with private settings when discussing meat consumption in India. The relationship is more complex, as this paper will further elaborate.

4.3 Research design and methods

A key question for this qualitative research study was "What are meat eating practices like in urban India today?" As the levels of meat consumption are relatively higher in urban India compared to the semi-

urban and rural regions (Devi et al., 2014; National Sample Survey Office, 2012), the study focused on urban Indian meat eaters. In addition, this seemingly simple question presents a challenge, given the sheer diversity of cultures within the one country. The study therefore used a social constructionist paradigm as it aimed to understand "the world of lived experience" through exploring multiple perspectives (Andrews, 2012, p. 39) and how social context can influence meaning (Thomas et al., 2014). Within constructionist framework, language is an important conduit through which meaning is constructed (Gergen, 1994; Gubrium & Koro-Ljungberg, 2005; Holstein & Gubrium, 2008). Hence, individual face-to-face in-depth interviews were used as the main mode of data gathering as these helped enhance understandings of different practices, cultural conventions and how, in some instances, the prevailing norms were challenged. The interviews helped provide deeper insight into meanings and context whereas, in comparison, relying on simply observations was limiting as these can be interpretive and may result in researchers drawing potentially incorrect conclusions about reasons behind certain participant behaviours (Lashley, 2018). In addition, sensitive questions—such as how certain social taboos are broken—may not always easily lend themselves to an observational setting (Kawulich, 2005). In this regard, individual in-depth interviews were also useful for exploring sensitive topics (Low, 2008) such as cultural and religious sensitivities relating to meat consumption and frontstage and backstage behaviours that may arise due to these.

Each interview was approximately 60 minutes in duration and was audio-recorded with the participant's consent. Reflective notes were taken during and immediately after the interviews, which helped capture ideas and insights. In addition, the notes helped with preservation of key insights that were later found to be helpful during the course of the analysis (Charmaz, 2006; Polit & Beck, 2006).

4.3.1 Participants

The sample comprised participants aged 23 to 45 years, given India has a relatively young population with a median age of 28 years and approximately two-thirds under the age of 35 (Central Intelligence Agency, 2018b), In addition, the majority of the participants were Hindu as Hinduism is followed by a large majority of India's population (80%; The Registrar General & Census Commissioner of India, 2011). Other participants mainly came from Muslim backgrounds as they comprise the largest religious minority (13%) in India (The Registrar General & Census Commissioner of India, 2011). The sample included an even split across the genders.

The total sample comprised 33 participants, 25 of whom were residents of Mumbai. Mumbai was selected as it is one of India's largest cities (Central Intelligence Agency, 2018b), is considered the country's commercial capital (Raghavan, 2019) and is a multicultural hub (Gulliver, 2008). The interviews were held at a restaurant in downtown Mumbai and were conducted predominantly in English as it is India's subsidiary official language (Central Intelligence Agency, 2018b). Furthermore, the participants were comfortable conversing in English. The remaining eight participants included those interviewed as part of the pilot study in Sydney. This sample was made up of Indian citizens who were recent arrivals to Australia. The pilot study was helpful for practicing face-to-face interactions with the target groups, prior to the start of the fieldwork, and for also providing some initial insight into this topic (Schreiber, 2008). Some findings from the pilot study have been included in the main data and these only include the experiences of participants while they were living in India.

4.3.2 Procedure

Recruitment for the target sample used Facebook advertising and a market research agency based in Mumbai. Prior to launching the Facebook advertisement, a Facebook page was created called "Urban India Eats". The advertisement was subsequently launched through this page. Given the

cultural sensitivities in relation to meat consumption, the advertisement did not openly target meat eaters but instead ran with this headline—"Are you a Foodie?"—in order to appeal to urbanites who enjoy a range of different cuisines. The Facebook profiling tool was used to target Mumbai residents aged 23-45 years who lived within 25 kilometres of Nariman Point in downtown Mumbai. Within a week of the launch, it reached almost 14,000 people and generated hundreds of expressions of interest. This reflects other findings on how social media is an effective recruitment tool in comparison to traditional methods of recruitment (Ramo et al., 2014), as social networking sites can help with reaching a greater percentage of eligible participants and can also open up opportunities to recruit internationally (Kapp et al., 2013).

Mumbai residents recruited via the local market research agency needed to reflect similar sample characteristics as those recruited via Facebook. Therefore, the socio-economic classification (SEC) grid, which is a segmentation tool developed by The Market Research Society of India, was used to recruit participants. The SEC grid segments urban households into twelve categories based upon two questions: levels of education—from illiteracy to a postgraduate degree—and the ownership of eleven items which range from fairly basic (e.g., electricity connection, gas stove) to relatively sophisticated (e.g., refrigerator, personal computer; The Market Research Society of India, 2011). As previous work found that education levels and disposable incomes can significantly impact one's ability to make informed and deliberate consumption choices (Khara, 2015), and given meat is a relatively expensive commodity in India (Puskar-Pasewicz, 2010), the recruitment focused on affluent segments: SEC A1 and some of SEC A2. Furthermore, participants were required to be fluent in English.

The sample for the pilot study, in Sydney, was obtained through placing advertisements on career websites at The University of New South Wales and The University of Technology Sydney, through snowballing, and through a post on the Facebook group "Indians in Sydney" asking potential participants if they were willing to be interviewed about their food choices.

The incentives, for both the pilot study and the fieldwork conducted in India, included light refreshments and a chance to participate in a lucky draw where one winner was awarded INR 10,000 (AUD $200 approximately).

4.3.3 Data analysis

The research used an iterative study design, which entailed cycles of simultaneous data collection, analysis, and adaptations to some questions to refine the emerging theory. Within the parameters of the research objectives, saturation of interview findings was adequately reached upon completion of the 33 interviews. The data collection and analysis were conducted in tandem as they helped inform and shape each other (Charmaz & Bryant, 2008b). The mode of analysis used an inductive approach as each emerging theme was compared with other data, within the same interview or across different interviews, to identify similarities or differences and build upon the rolling hypotheses (Mills, 2008). This study used an inductive method of coding. The process involved attaching labels to the data to identify occurrences and meanings while also grouping similar findings and taking note of what differed (Benaquisto, 2008). New concepts and themes were constructed from the data itself (van Den Hoonard & van Den Hoonard, 2008). Coding was done using NVivo qualitative data analysis software to help sort and keep track of different categories and corresponding sections of text, thereby making it convenient to work through large amounts of data.

4.3.4 Ethics

Prior to the commencement of this study, the research was approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee at the University of Technology Sydney (ETH18-2328). During the recruitment, each participant was informed of the purpose of this study and the recruitment proceeded only once the participant was informed about and was satisfied with the requirements of the study. All participant information was treated in a non-identifiable and confidential manner.

4.4 Research findings

The research findings will elaborate upon the dynamics of frontstage and backstage consumption behaviours in India using Goffman's theory as the main framework. The main themes of this study include the various ways through which backstage meat consumption occurred in different settings—outside and within the home—and the integral role of the supporting accomplices as part of this practice. The secondary themes cover the instances when backstage meat consumption was discovered by the frontstage audiences and consequences that arose as a result of violating socio-cultural norms. However, we will start by first presenting an overview of the contemporary views and social stigmas towards meat-based foods and meat consumption in order to provide some context as to why different public and private behaviours arise in relation to meat consumption in India.

4.4.1 Religious and cultural taboos associated with meat consumption in urban India today

When it came to the topic of slaughtering animals for their meat, the Hindu concepts of *ahimsa* (Hamilton, 2000) and vegetarianism (Puskar-Pasewicz, 2010) were highlighted by several participants:

- My mom and my grandmom … they are like, "No, no. It's very bad. You can't eat it. It's killing another living organism and eating it" … So we had the strict rule for not bringing non-veg in the house … it's religious (Female, age 28).

- We are killing animals and eating. And in our caste it's wrong. You should not eat by killing someone (Male, age 32).

Meat's association with baseness, pollution (Caplan, 2008) and immorality (Ahmad, 2014) was also reflected in this study, as one participant recalled how some people refused to attend her wedding function simply because there were meat-based dishes present:

- During our wedding we had vegetarian and non-vegetarian foods served … the girl comes home after the wedding … she actually ended up telling me "I didn't come to your wedding because the food was dirty" (Female, age 33).

In a similar vein, several meat-eating participants reported facing judgement and discrimination from the wider community:

- I mean just because I am a non-vegetarian, they think that I'm somebody who is a person to stay away from. They have particular disgust or hatred towards particular people who are non veg (Male, age 29).

- In my complex … Some of them knew that we used to bring non-veg at home and cook it … they used to frown upon and bully me (Female, age 28).

Given these views towards meat, it is not surprising that meat was not permitted to be cooked or consumed within the sanctity of one's home or during Hindu religious festivals:

- My mom … she's like, "This is my house, so not here. Do it anywhere else" … Apparently it's the sanctity, and she has her gods placed in every corner [of the home] (Female, age 23).

- We have special days also when we don't eat non-veg—basically, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays … in Ganapati, we don't eat. For eleven days, we don't eat any of the non-veg because we have to go for a puja [prayer] and a Navaratri, Vaishnu time, so we don't eat. If I go to temple in a day … so I don't eat non-veg that day (Female, age 35).

4.4.2 Changes in relation to meat consumption in urban India

On the other hand, despite the stigmas and taboos, meat consumption is gradually becoming more acceptable and is even being seen as a trend among India's younger generation. This is in line with other literature which

highlights that India's younger consumers hold vastly different socio-cultural attitudes from their older counterparts (Shashidhar, 2007) and are more likely to embrace new cultural practices (Majumdar, 2010), particularly those from the West (Sinha, 2011):

- As far as our generation is concerned, eating non-veg food is now like a fad. So, it's like, okay you're eating non-veg, oh great, good for you (Male, age 32).

- West has propagated something, we will automatically accept it … you would always want to be called modern and forward thinking rather than being called traditional. There's almost stigma in the word traditional (Female, age 34).

Living away from home and having greater freedom to pursue one's own lifestyle choices, away from the gaze of one's family, is also encouraging new consumption practices:

- I think for urban Indians, we're hanging out away from our parents. It wasn't like earlier where people would go home and stuff like that, right? Now people are going for drinks. So it's much easier to do what you want to away from your parents' gaze. (Female, age 32).

Given the increasingly diverse array of food choices available in urban India today, traditional vegetarian food was deemed to be standard fare that was eaten at home on a regular basis. On the other hand, meat-based dishes offered a novel experience when dining out:

- Veggies and everything are made most of the time at home and so it's like you try to find out something new and different (Male, age 26).

- If I'm going out and I'm spending then I'm not going to eat the same thing which I eat at home every day which is veg food. So, if I'm going out I will always pick the non-vegetarian option over the vegetarian option (Male, age 32).

In addition, vegetarian foods appear to be associated with traditional practices which appear to be gradually losing their relevance. This has consequently resulted in vegetarianism, to some extent, also losing some of its appeal in contemporary urban culture. This has been highlighted in the examples below:

- Traditionally we have this 13-day thing where you eat … You know this whole 'Satvic khaana … you're supposed to have very simple vegetarian food like boiled food … nobody really goes into the depths of this anymore or at least we don't (Female, age 40+).

- Unless I become a monk, I don't think I will give up eating all meats (Male, age 30).

These findings reflect the tension in India today between the need to adhere to cultural norms that discourage meat consumption and the desire, particularly among younger people, to seek out novel experiences such as consuming meat-based dishes. This tension between tradition and the desire to embrace change has resulted in meat eaters needing to carefully navigate through various social contexts, which is explored further in the next section.

4.4.3 Backstage behaviours in relation to meat consumption in India

Having discussed some of the current perceptions towards meat consumption in India, the findings here on will highlight how different consumption behaviours in India occur in different settings and contexts and examine the roles of the various actors involved. Those who indulged in backstage meat consumption tended to come from religious and cultural backgrounds where meat consumption was discouraged. The frontstage audience commonly included the vegetarian family members and, in some instances, the neighbours who expected one to conform to the customary vegetarian norms.

4.4.4 Backstage meat consumption behaviours outside the home

The backstage is generally viewed by performers as a "safe area" because, unlike the frontstage, it is a place where deviations from the norm are tolerated and accepted (Picca & Feagin, 2007). Backstage behaviours, in many instances, also tend to be supported by other social actors who form an integral part of the backstage setting (Picca & Feagin, 2007). The "safe area" in this study was often described to be a place outside the home, such as a restaurant, in the company of friends who were a key part of this backstage setting as deviations from the frontstage vegetarian norms were accepted and even supported:

- I have friends who do it ... because when you are amongst friends, then it's no holds barred ... nobody's really telling on anybody (Female, age 45).

- Parents *ko pata hai par unke in-laws ko nahin pata* [parents know, but their in-laws don't know]. My friends ... if they're eating on that particular day with us, they hide (Female, age 35).

Backstage behaviours are also characterised by a casual informality as compared to frontstage performances which tend to be carefully controlled (Collins, 1988). In this study, the facade of religious vegetarianism, carefully maintained frontstage, was described to give way to a voracious appetite for meat, backstage:

- In the house, they'll be so religious ... but the moment they come to the restaurant ... they'll try each and every spare part of that animal (Female, age 35).

- I have few friends of mine, they are Jains and they are Gujaratis. They just wait for those days of nine days [of fasting] to get over and they really jump on to the non-veg! (Female, age 38).

One participant narrated how a family, forbidden to eat meat at home during a religious month of fasting, secretly ate meat backstage, at a restaurant:

- *Shradh* … it's supposed to be this month where you give some sort of … *puja* [prayer] and give respect to your ancestors … You're not supposed to eat non-veg. So there was this gentleman sitting in an oriental restaurant and he was at the next table … he and his son. Each of them had three bowls of food in front … one was prawn, one was chicken and one was something else, and that's all they ate … So, I was just really surprised because they were eating ferociously. So, later I asked the server … So then he said, "*Shradh hai na? Isi liye yaahan aa kar khaate hain*" [It's *Shradh* right? That's why they come here and eat] … So he will come here and he will have his meat fix or his prawn fix … and when they go home they will eat their *daal roti* … So, there's a very large population doing this (Female, age 45).

In some instances, the creation of back regions becomes necessary if the front regions that they offer refuge from are sensitive, risky or "high-stakes environments" (Ross, 2007, p. 316). In collectivist cultures such as India, deviation from socially sacred norms, which is perceived to impact upon the other members of one's community, can result in the individual being punished (Fershtman et al., 2011). The potential punishment for eating meat, in this study, ranged from being abused by one's family, being ostracised by the neighbours, to being potentially threatened by religious right-wing groups:

- In front of parents we have to keep it a secret because once they know, they start abusing and everything (Male, age 28).

- We wouldn't openly talk about eating non-veg when somebody from the locality is around … if my mother-in-law has eaten mutton in the afternoon, she would say "No, I made some vegetable and roti, and we ate that" … we know that it's a little bit of a lie … I'd rather … not talk about it, than talk about it and get ostracised by the people (Female, age 33).

- They are totally criticising like people should avoid eating meat ... The right-wing groups, actually ... The thing is, I kind of feel threatened by them (Male, age 27).

Therefore, given this rather harsh and unforgiving frontstage audience, participants tended to lie about where they ate or what they ordered when out:

- We're going to X to eat with friends, except that it just wasn't X, it was Y. It was the same place, there are heaps of restaurants. It could be the ... same exact restaurant, but instead of chicken we would do beef (Female, age 34).

- I made sure that I would never mention it [meat eating] to her [mother] so I stopped telling her about what I ate and I started telling that it was curried rice (Female, age 23).

In other instances, there were various actions that one resorted to in order to cover up the lingering evidence from what had transpired backstage:

- A friend in college would come to my house for my mom's fish curry and he would get crazy about washing his hands and his mouth to make sure that the smell wouldn't linger when he would go back home. He would have a couple of chloro-mints (Male, age 35).

- I have a friend of mine who is a doctor and he is a Jain. He usually eats when he is in his clinic. He calls for omelette ... Before going to home, he'll be all clean and fine ... His mother doesn't even come to know ... he's having eggs. He eats a little of chicken (Female, age 38).

When away from the observing audience and the pressures of frontstage conformity, the backstage setting can represent a sense of lightness, release and catharsis (Coates, 1999). A conversation with a young Muslim participant who ate pork, backstage without his family's knowledge, highlighted the joys of savouring the moment in private:

- I actually liked the taste of bacon, in that sauce … I'm away from them [parents], at that time don't think about it. Because if I have been thinking about what I've eaten at that time, I would rather remember the best part (Male, age 27).

Others similarly recounted how challenging prevailing frontstage norms can be enjoyable, thereby also reflecting the literature on the growing chasm between an experimental modern India and traditional India which is less tolerant of deviation from customs (Mathur, 2010, 2015; Sinha, 2011). The rebellion, as highlighted here, arose from a sense of weariness from having to constantly put up an act, frontstage:

- You have a face that you put up in India … it's a constant struggle … being rebellious, stems from you being able to do something that you know other people haven't done (Female, age 34).

4.4.5 Backstage meat consumption behaviours within the home

The other backstage setting, in this study, was the home itself. This reflects the point that any place has the potential to be spontaneously transformed into a backstage region if there is enough of a "symbolic or metaphorical disconnect" between the front and back regions (Ross, 2007, p. 315). There is also no one type of generic back region or backstage setting as different behaviours and dynamics can take place in different backstage regions which counterbalance the dynamics of the corresponding front regions (Ross, 2007). In this study, given the restrictions on cooking and consuming meat, certain parts of the home were transformed into a back region and, in other instances, the entire home depending upon whether or not one was being observed by the frontstage audience, i.e. the vegetarian family member(s). In the example below, some family members, as backstage performers, developed a shared understanding of what was appropriate or not with regards to violating social taboos, and ate meat at home in the absence of the vegetarian parent:

- My father brings a huge ass kingfish at home … and I remember him cutting it into three cool pieces for all three of us. That's when I saw that … I was like, "Oh, this is not vegetarian. Mom's going to kill us." So he's like, "You don't have to tell" (Female, age 23).

In other instances, the individual kept their backstage meat consumption private and separate from other backstage meat eaters. Hence it appears that, to some extent, these other backstage performers tended to represent a frontstage audience for the individual. This reflects the literature on how people from collectivist cultures are more likely to experience shame when seen, by others, as doing something socially inappropriate but might not feel shame when doing the same thing in private (Patel, 2018):

- This friend of mine who is eating meat in secret, her dad is also eating meat in secret. She has seen her dad eating chicken at a party … but they won't verbalise it. It's more these subtle digs at each other, like, "Hey, Dad, I'm at so and so restaurant, should I pack some tangdi kebab for you"? She'd message him on WhatsApp, and he'd be like, "No, no, no," and all of that, "I'm pure vegetarian." It's almost like they know, but they're scared to say it (Female, age 32).

In many instances, physical space tends to create a boundary or a barrier between the front and back regions (Marichal, 2013). In this study, cooking meat in the basement, below the rest of the home, or even away from one's home, were examples of how physical space was used to demarcate the front and back regions. In addition, time, an intangible barrier, was deemed equally effective in separating the front and back regions as meat was cooked at certain times of the day when no one at home was aware of what was being cooked:

- Since I am a pastry chef, eggs are the most important thing that I need to use, so I have my own quantity [industrial] kitchen at home in the basement … I took advantage of her [mother] bones

where she can't really go up and down that much [the stairs] (Female, age 23).

- Either she cooks it really early in the morning when nobody knows that what she's cooking, or she gets it cooked in a church friend's house (Female, age 33).

In addition to physical barriers, space can also be created aurally as in the example of the "thick glass panels of a radio broadcasting studio, which isolates an area aurally but not visually" (Pinch, 2010, p. 418). Similarly, in this study, the chimney and exhaust at home created multi-sensory barriers in that they were not only used to mask sound but also the smell in regards to what was being cooked:

- So, I am cooking chicken … he [father-in-law] was there at home and I made Thai curry … And we had put on the chimney, as well as the exhaust, and he didn't find out (Female, age 28).

In other instances, backstage behaviours were openly brought to the frontstage as certain materials—such as meat—were presented as vegetarian foods to the unsuspecting audience:

- My brother, he brings non-veg [home] … my brother tells her [mother] that it's not non-vegetarian, it's soya chunks, so that she believes that (Female, age 28).

A key reason for establishing a backstage region and indulging in backstage behaviours was the need to maintain collective harmony and avoid conflict. This reflects the fact that people from collectivist cultures can often derive meaning from being part of the web of social relationships whereas, in contrast, the autonomous individualist is viewed as "immature and uncultivated" (Fiske et al., 1997, p. 23):

- I could see everybody's happiness also as well. I can't see always me, me, me, me … I don't want to be … selfish (Male, age 29).

- Their [parents] idea has shaped differently, so instead of countering them, there is nothing wrong with keeping secrets. It sort of avoids confrontation (Male, age 30).

Given the complexities of keeping up appearances in the frontstage environment, several participants mentioned accomplices who assisted in the transition from the front to the backstage space by helping keep the meat consumption practices a secret.

4.4.6 The accomplices who assist with backstage meat consumption

Backstage meat eaters often mentioned the presence of accomplices—usually their friends and, in some instances, their partner—who helped keep their meat consumption a secret from the rest of the family. The accomplice, as a key performer and part of the backstage setting, tended to have an in-depth understanding of the norms and conventions related to the frontstage context. They were also chosen based on interpersonal trust, i.e. "the willingness of a party (in this case, the backstage meat eater) to be vulnerable to the actions of another party based on the expectation that the other will perform a particular action important to the trustor" (Mayer et al., 1995, p. 712). This also reflects how information relating to appropriate front and backstage behaviours may tend to go back and forth among the performers until a consensus is reached on which behaviours are acceptable and which are not (Goffman, 1959). The accomplices helped maintain the frontstage cues in several ways which ranged from getting rid of any evidence to carefully and articulately covering up for the meat eater when in the presence of the family:

- She [wife] helps me washing the dishes, everything ... She hides chicken bones—if I'm cooking egg and chicken together, so she hides all that egg shells and all—so she's very supportive in that way (Male, age 29).

- They [reference to friend's family] used to help me in keeping it a secret. They used to sneak it [the meat dish] under the table. And if she would hear my mom, I would hide under the dining table (Female, age 30).

The backstage can also become a training ground for front stage performances as, in these private settings, actors often teach one another how to perform in front of the audience (Picca & Feagin, 2007). Similarly, in this study, accomplices reported going through an elaborate planning process in preparation for an appropriate front stage performance:

- So if it's like Bade Miya [restaurant name], then they tell that we are going to have some rules that we are going to a different place … when a phone rings and the parents ask, "Where are you?" You have to be better prepared with the answer … You have to tell a lot of lies, be very accurate with the lies (Male, age 30).

The more knowledge individuals have about the norms and conventions of a particular front region, the more likely they are to "satisfy one another backstage" (Ross, 2007, p. 315) as there is shared insight, understanding and empathy. The solidarity among backstage performers and their accomplices was also noted in this study in that there was empathy felt, by the accomplice, in relation to the stress experienced by the backstage meat eater:

- I think oh my god … the stress he must have gone through when he entered home hoping there was no smell of fish or chicken or anything … I empathise with them and I think that is why I subconsciously made sure I didn't rat my friend out (Male, age 35).

- Slip of tongue if I say something which is not good … So you have to manage your words, quite precision at times … I normally am very talkative … So basically I talk as less as possible and very to the point (Male, age 30).

On the other hand, some might bring certain frontstage cues and expectations into private backstage settings by attempting to limit certain behaviours carried out backstage (Picca & Feagin, 2007). This was also noted in this study where a backstage meat eater was admonished by a friend who was an onlooker as part of the backstage setting:

- He said, "Beef hai sorry, I cannot offer you" ... and the Punjabi guy goes "No I'm...eating." *Woh dusre wallah bola ... tu kaisa khaa raha hai? tujhe itne paap lagega* [The other guy said ... how are you eating? you are going to face so much sin] (Female, age 42).

There were also other ways in which front stage expectations were brought backstage as some considered this type of meat consumption as a form of cheating:

- If it's just food that you're secretive about, I don't know what else you'd be secretive about. So, I'd kind of rather steer clear from a person like that (Female, age 41).

- You should be frank with your parents or in-laws. You are hiding ... Why they're hiding? I think they are cheating their family also (Female, aged 35).

Backstage behaviours can often comprise informalities such as "playful aggressivity and 'kidding'" which, in many instances, tend to be absent frontstage (Goffman, 1959, p. 128). Similarly, in this conversation below, a Muslim participant, aged 28 years, recalled how he teased his Brahmin friend who ate chicken in secret. In this regard, the participant, while part of the backstage setting, tended to bring some front stage cues into the arena. The view here also reflects the broader literature which highlights how some, from minority communities in India, tend to adopt an anti-Hindu stance as a protest against the religious and caste-based discrimination in relation to meat consumption (Staples, 2008):

> **Participant:** *Ke dekho* [Like see] he's a family of a Brahmin, and he's eating a chicken.

Moderator: OK, yeah.

Participant: Right? I'll say ... what your father will say? ... What your God will say? ... you will go to the hell ... Better you give your chicken to me ... I eat it. My God will not say anything, but your God will question it!

Despite the attempts to cover up one's backstage meat consumption, in some instances these were discovered by the frontstage audience, which lead to unpleasant consequences. This is elaborated upon in the next section.

4.4.7 Discovery of backstage meat consumption: causes and consequences

The discovery of the individual's backstage meat consumption behaviours by the family tended to bring about feelings of shame, disappointment and anger. This arose as the vegetarian frontstage audience became aware of the chasm between the performer's front and backstage persona and behaviours. There were several ways in which backstage meat consumption behaviours were discovered. Items discovered on credit cards and bills were rather common, as highlighted in this example below:

- My father would work for an organisation. So the organisation had a like a family club ... where the family members could go and dine. And all you had to do is probably enter your father's name and his organisation number ... the purchase amount would automatically get debited off his salary ... I did go out with a few friends and we dined out. So, when the amount was debited to my father, so my father did inquire about that. "This seems to be a substantial amount and what happened to it?" So, the organisation club, they served him the bill ... And it had fair bit of these non-vegetarian things to which he said, "That there seems to be some mistake because my family doesn't consume non-vegetarian." So, to which they cross-check ... And ultimately the blame came on to me and they found it out (Male, age 35).

Some mentioned being found out through the social networks and the local grapevine:

- Parents eventually get to know from the relatives, from the neighbours. It's a small world basically (Male, age 30).

- I think telling them [parents] is better than hiding because if they will be letting know by somebody else, "I saw your son or daughter-in-law eating on that particular day" (Female, age 35).

Social media was mentioned as another culprit:

- I started doing a proper non-vegetarian ... and she [mother] stumbled across a picture of a roasted turkey and she's like, "Where did this come from" (Female, age 23)?

Unlike individualist cultures, where the concept of self may exist as separate from others, individuals from collectivist cultures may experience shame and guilt based upon others' actions (Wong & Tsai, 2007). This might explain why, upon discovery of meat consumption behaviours, reactions from the family tended to include shame and the feelings of betrayal:

- I told my parents one time, that I ate pork and I remember the shame that sort of flashed on their face. They were like, "You should never tell this to anybody. Never even admit this in front your ... Aunties and uncles" et cetera (Female, age 34).

- He [father] was shocked ... it was like the biggest betrayal of his life (Male, age 35).

- Mom will start crying and will give all the, "This is not good. This is not religious" (Female, age 28).

In some instances, conflicts among families also arose as, here, a participant aged 23 years, recounted how her mother discovered her backstage meat consumption which took place at a friend's home which resulted in her mother "screaming" at the accused:

Participant: Auntie was just cutting the chicken at that time for the curry and it was cubed ... she had this big knife ... She [mother] immediately went to the house and she started screaming at her.

Moderator: At the auntie's house?

Participant: Yeah. She's like, "How could you feed my daughter non-vegetarian food?!"

4.5 Discussion

Some of the findings in this study are in line with previous findings as they highlight certain negative associations with meat consumption due to religious and caste-based practices. The findings reflect how meat tends to be kept segregated from vegetarian society in India (Ahmad, 2014; Dolphijn, 2006; Sharan, 2006) while also illustrating that consumption practices are gradually changing (Mathur, 2010, 2014) given the attitudinal differences between the youth and older generation (Majumdar, 2010; Sinha, 2011). Within the paradigm of collectivist culture, the study also details how shame (Patel, 2018), guilt (Wong & Tsai, 2007), and punishment (Fershtman et al., 2011) may occur if an individual is seen to be deviating from socially significant norms.

In addition to confirming some of the current literature, the findings make several new contributions. For one, most studies on meat consumption, to date, are conducted among Western audiences and there is relatively little information on meat consumption in emerging markets, especially India, which is stereotyped as a predominantly vegetarian nation. Therefore, in addition to contributing to the relatively under researched topic of meat consumption in India, the findings reveal some reasons why meat consumption tends to be underreported in surveys (Bansal, 2016) by highlighting the shame and stigma associated with this taboo practice, and how people navigate through these spaces while secretly breaking social norms. The study also builds upon learnings from a previous study, which

states how different settings can encourage individualistic and collectivistic behaviours in Indian society (Sinha et al., 2001) by detailing how Indians pursue their individualistic desires in impersonal public settings.

The other main contribution is that this study applies Goffman's theory to a new cultural context. Goffman's *Presentation of Self* has been previously criticised for not focusing enough on uncovering cultural divergences given that "much of what he has to say applies to all cultures" (Giddens, 2009, p. 290). To this point, while many of Goffman's overarching concepts have been used in similar ways in previous studies, it seems that cultural divergences may emerge when delving into specific details, aspects and nuances of behaviours within specific contexts. For example, within the constraints of the joint family arrangement in India, the study highlights the various ways in which physical space is used as a mode of demarcation between front and backstage settings and behaviours. In this regard, the study uses Goffman's theory to provide insight into how space is created, within this unique context, through erecting intangible barriers—such as cooking meat at home at different times of the day—or through multisensory barriers to prevent backstage meat consumption from being detected by the rest of the family within the home.

In addition, the study highlights various backstage characterisations, roles, moods, language and behaviours, the peculiarities of which might differ in different contexts. For one, some backstage personas in this study has helped challenge certain perceived stereotypes. For example, the caste-revering vegetarian Brahmin (Caplan, 2008; Dolphijn, 2006; Puskar-Pasewicz, 2010; Staples, 2016) presented rather differently in this study given that, backstage, the Brahmin individual was described to have a rather voracious appetite for meat. Similarly, there was the Muslim participant who claimed to enjoy consuming pork, without the knowledge of his family. In addition, although women in India tend to be associated with vegetarianism (Caplan, 2008; Donner, 2008; Gochhwal, 2015; Kumar, 2015; Ranjan, 2001; Staples, 2016), the findings revealed that some women have a penchant for meat and also indulge in backstage meat consumption. Furthermore, by

highlighting how accomplices go to great lengths to support the backstage meat eater, the study confirms the allocentric nature of relationships in collectivist cultures which differ from individualist cultures (Verkuyten & Masson, 1996). Finally, uniqueness can also be found in how diversions from socially sacred norms are deemed to reflect badly upon not just the individual, as the backstage performer, but also upon their in-group (Wong & Tsai, 2007) who, in many instances, are also the frontstage audience. In this regard, the study, while applying some of Goffman's overarching concepts, highlights some of the peculiarities that are unique to this context as it also helps extend our understanding of consumption practices within India.

In terms of limitations, as backstage meat consumption is a socially sensitive topic, there is a possibility that some participants in this study may have expressed certain views and experiences through projection—i.e., attributing one's own perceptions and behaviours to other people (Keegan, 2008). Others may not have disclosed the full extent of their backstage meat consumption practices due to the need for social desirability in collectivistic societies (Johnson & de Vijver, 2003). The "courtesy bias" which exists in many Asian cultures, may encourage the participant to provide socially desirable information with a view towards maintaining a positive relationship with their interviewer (Jones, 1983). Hence, as future studies continue to explore how taboos such as meat consumption are broken in the face of long-standing traditions, researchers could utilise a range of methods in addition to individual in-depth interviews. One could be the use of projective techniques in order to make it easier for participants to access thoughts and emotions that are otherwise difficult to publicly express (Keegan, 2008). Furthermore, some aspects of backstage behaviours may also need to be further explored through observations which might help provide deeper insight into the activities, rituals, meanings and relationships that occur during a practice (McKechnie, 2008). The triangulation of data sources will also be important in order to obtain diverse viewpoints (Olsen, 2004) and validate and corroborate the data gathered (Patton, 2002) given the socially sensitive nature of this topic.

In conclusion, given there is a growing body of research that advocates a shift to plant-based diets for health and sustainability-related reasons (Hertwich et al., 2010; Willett et al., 2019), it is important for future research to examine how to best encourage sustainable consumption in both the developed world, where meat consumption is currently high, and in the developing world, where meat consumption is on the rise. In the case of India, insight into what drives backstage meat consumption can help to identify strategies for reducing meat consumption. As the findings highlight, meat is not only eaten for its sensory appeal but also because of its sociocultural associations with exciting modern lifestyles. Plant-based foods, in comparison, are perceived as relatively uninteresting, which raises the question of how to make plant-based foods more appealing. Given that urban India today is a hybrid of traditional values and a desire for the "good life" (Mathur, 2014, p. 10), perhaps plant-based foods could be reintroduced as something which encapsulates a blend of modern novelty and traditional familiarity, with a view towards making such foods "cool" again (Rau, 2019, para. 1). Greater emphasis on the marketing of plant-based meats could potentially be one way moving forward given the popularity of these foods in other countries (Doherty & Brown, 2019; Saiidi, 2019; Soon, 2019). As there is relatively greater pressure in collectivist cultures to follow in-group norms (Paul et al., 2006; Triandis, 2004), people are also more likely to adhere to marketing norms adopted by the in-group (Yoo & Donthu, 2002). Therefore, making plant-based foods socially trendy and relevant again might be especially effective in a collectivist culture like India given the strong influence of reference groups (Cialdini & Goldstein, 2004). This may help not only to reduce the chasm between front and backstage consumption practices and alleviate the tensions involved in backstage meat consumption, but also to encourage more sustainable dietary practices.

Chapter 5: An exploration of contemporary meat-eating practices in urban Australia

The chapter was submitted to the journal *Frontiers In Sustainable Food Systems'* on 31st October 2020 and is currently under review. The chapter includes the submitted manuscript. Some of the material presented in *Chapter 1: Introduction and Literature Review* and *Chapter 2: Research methods and design* is repeated here. These details were necessary to include given the entire manuscript has been presented here.

The contribution by each author is detailed in Table 6 and in *Appendix 12: Author contributions*.

Table 6 Contributions of authors to the published manuscript

Coauthor	Nature of contribution	Extent of contribution (%)
Tani Khara	Data collection, analysis and write-up	80%
Professor Christopher Riedy	Guidance on analysis & write-up	10%
Dr Matthew B. Ruby	Guidance on analysis & write-up	10%

This chapter explores meat eating in urban Australia using social practice theory and aims to answer these key questions as previously highlighted:

- What meat-eating practices are prevalent in urban Australia today?

- What is influencing the changes to urban Australian meat-eating practices?

- What role do particular elements play within the contemporary urban practice of meat-eating, and how are those roles changing?

- What opportunities for reducing meat consumption in Australia emerge?

The findings highlight that many Australians are reducing their red meat consumption in favour of meats deemed healthier or more ethical. However, despite the desire to further cut back on meat consumption, there are several challenges noted in relation to the adoption of plant-based foods. Some of these include limited material access to plant-based recipes, negative meanings associated with plant-based diets and a lack of competence in relation to preparing appetising plant-based meals. By understanding these dynamics and potential barriers, the chapter highlights strategies to help further encourage the uptake of plant-based eating in Australia.

An exploration of contemporary meat-eating practices in urban Australia

5.1 Abstract

This qualitative study used social practice theory to explore how meat-eating practices are changing in contemporary urban Australia, drawing on a sample of Sydney residents aged 23-45 years. The research used an iterative study design and an inductive analysis approach. Semi-structured face-to-face in-depth interviews were the main mode of data collection, supplemented by observations in places such as markets and local neighbourhoods. Research participants explained that the role of meat in their diet has changed in response to shifting conventions and social infrastructures. They have reduced consumption of red meat in favour of meats considered healthier or more ethical. Key factors driving this evolution include exposure to alternative eating practices brought about through changes in political policy and the advent of globalisation. Changing discourses of masculinity and the move towards embracing more fluid representations of gender have, in turn, changed meanings in relation to the meat-eating man and a meat-heavy diet. Rising environmental and health consciousness, and concerns for animal welfare have also contributed to dietary changes. While several participants claimed to have increased their consumption of plant-based foods, meat still continues to maintain a significant presence within their diets. Many participants expressed interest in cutting back further on meat consumption and adopting more plant-based foods but they also identified several challenges—e.g., limited access to plant-based ingredients and recipes, negative meanings associated with vegetarian and vegan diets, and a lack of competence in relation to preparing and consuming appetising meals using plant-based foods.

5.2 Introduction

Australia has one of the world's highest levels of meat consumption, with a yearly average of approximately 95 kilograms per capita (OECD, 2019b). In comparison, the global average is roughly 35 kilograms per capita (OECD, 2019b). Meat has been a staple part of Australian diets for as long as the continent has been occupied by humans. Indigenous Australians hunted native game and seafood for inclusion in a varied omnivorous diet (Pascoe, 2014). Previous work on the history of colonial Australia highlights that, following on from the European colonisation, meat was largely sourced through cattle farming in Australia (McMichael, 1984). This made it a relatively accessible and inexpensive commodity (Chen, 2016). In the book, 'Vegetarianism in Australia - 1788 to 1948: A Cultural and Social History', Crook (2006) claims that since the middle ages, the British colonisers had associated meat eating, particularly beef, with social status. Therefore, immigrating to a land where meat was both accessible and abundant encouraged meat-eating, whereas in comparison, a plant-based diet was associated with poverty and low social status (Crook, 2006).

Recent research has highlighted that factors which continue to influence meat consumption in Australia include the common framing of meat as necessary for a healthy diet, using terms such as "iron", "protein" and "staple dietary requirement" (Bogueva et al., 2017). Other research has shown that meat eating is also often linked with masculinity (Rozin et al., 2012; Ruby & Heine, 2011) and with power, strength and virility (Adams, 2015; Potts & Parry, 2010). For many Australians, meat eating is also synonymous with social occasions (Bogueva et al., 2017) such as enjoying a meat-based meal with friends and family (Worsley & Skrzypiec 1998a). At the same time, many Australians consider plant-based diets to be nutritionally inadequate (Bogueva et al., 2017; Lea & Worsley, 2002, 2003). Some label plant-based eaters as being "wimps" and not "macho" enough (Lea & Worsley, 2002), and some vegetarians have reported being bullied (Wood, 2016) by meat eaters who represent the cultural norm.

However, these narratives around meat eating appear to be changing. Previous research on meat-eating has highlighted that public awareness of the ethical problems associated with livestock farming has resulted in greater consumer demand for humane foods (Rudy 2012). Data on dietary trends reveal that there has also been a gradual shift from the consumption of red meats to white meats (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development 2019) as the latter are deemed healthier (Taylor & Butt, 2017). In addition, figures from Roy Morgan Research (2019) show that nearly 2.5 million Australians (12.1% of the population) are reported to follow vegetarian or semi-vegetarian diets and this figure is up from 2.2 million people (11.2%) in 2014. Recent news reports have similarly highlighted that dietary practices like flexitarianism (Charlebois, 2019; Sakkal & Fowler, 2019) and reducetarianism (Elder, 2017; Goodyer, 2015) are gaining interest in Australia. These changes can partially be attributed to dietary recommendations put out by Australian health authorities, who have encouraged people to cut back on red and processed meats (National Health and Medical Research Council 2013) and increase their intake of fruit and vegetables (Pollard et al., 2009).

This paper draws on interviews with urban omnivores to explore how meat-eating practices are evolving in Australia in response to environmental, health and animal welfare concerns. It uses the lens of social practice theory to examine the dynamics of meat-eating practices.

5.3 A practice-based approach

Social practice theory is well-placed to explore the evolution of eating practices over space and time (Shove, Pantzar, & Watson, 2012). A practice is an assembly of "images (meanings, symbols), skills (forms of competence, procedures) and stuff (materials, technology) that are dynamically integrated by skilled practitioners through regular and repeated performance" (Hargreaves, 2011, p. 83). This study draws on work by Shove et al., who define a practice as comprising three elements: competences (skills and know-hows), meanings (imagery and symbolisms) and materials (tools and

technology; Shove, Pantzar & Watson 2012). This framework was specifically developed to support the study of practices that are evolving, as is the case for meat-eating within Australia. Attending to the elements of a practice also focuses attention on how changes in the elements contribute to the evolution of the practice over time (Shove & Pantzar, 2005).

Considering the example of eating from a practice perspective, materials are the tangible physical elements that are integrated into the practice (Ropke, 2009). These include not only food resources that are transformed or used up as part of the practice, but also things like eating utensils, recipe books and the physical spaces in which eating takes place (Shove, 2017). Competence is the practical knowledge or skill required to enact or perform the practice, which may be conscious or unconscious (Shove et al., 2012). Important eating competences include knowing how to shop for ingredients, how to prepare ingredients, and how to find and follow a recipe. Meanings are the perceived norms and conventions that underpin certain practices (Shove et al., 2012; Strengers, 2010). The meanings associated with food go beyond the utilitarian goal of meeting physiological needs (Arbit et al., 2017) as they are also tied to shared histories and broader social norms. Each time a practice such as eating is carried out in different settings, different combinations of materials, meanings and competences are brought together and in turn shape the nature of the practice (Shove & Pantzar, 2005).

A practice can also overlap and intersect with other practices and may then coevolve in complexes and bundles (Keller et al., 2016). The findings from this study detail how changes to traditional Australian meat-eating practices have been shaped and influenced by other intersecting practices.

5.4 Research design and methods

This qualitative exploratory research study addressed the following research questions:

- What meat-eating practices are prevalent in urban Australia today?

- What is influencing the changes to urban Australian meat-eating practices?

- What role do particular elements play within the contemporary urban practice of meat-eating, and how are those roles changing?

- What opportunities for reducing meat consumption in Australia emerge?

The methodology for this study drew upon constructivist grounded theory, where there is an emphasis on gathering rich, descriptive data (Charmaz, 1996). The study comprised semi-structured, face-to-face in-depth interviews as the main mode of data gathering. These interviews were helpful for gaining a deeper understanding of meanings, conventions, histories and values associated with practices (Browne, 2016; Hitchings, 2012). Furthermore, as the practice of eating is conducted multiple times per day and often involves a high level of sensory input, we expected that participant reconstructions of their eating practices would be more accurate than for less mundane and frequent practices. Each interview was approximately 60 minutes in duration and was audio-recorded with the participant's consent. Reflective notes, which captured ideas and insights, were written during and immediately after the interviews.

In addition, observations were used to corroborate and validate what participants had reported in the interviews (Patton, 2002). This involved visits to public places like restaurants and local neighbourhoods to observe and record practices while they were being performed. Photographs were also taken as they helped capture the material environment and objects that were important elements of eating practices (Collier 2003).

5.4.1 Participants

This study focused on young urban omnivores in Australia. Previous work has highlighted that urban Australians are more likely to consider

changes to their meat consumption practices than rural Australians (Bray et al., 2016). In addition, about two-thirds of the Australian population live in capital cities (Central Intelligence Agency 2018). We therefore sought a sample of meat eaters from a capital city and chose Sydney for convenience. We further anticipated that changes in meat-eating practices would be more evident among younger people, who are more open to experimenting with new practices. We therefore recruited participants aged 23 to 45 years, with a median age below the Australian median of 39 years (Central Intelligence Agency, 2018a). In addition, as previous studies have found that men are more likely to follow omnivorous diets (Ruby & Heine 2011; Ruby 2012), we recruited more men (15) than women (7).

Our recruitment used two approaches. First, we advertised the study on career websites at The University of New South Wales and The University of Technology Sydney. Then, in order to ensure that our sample also included a good number of participants with conservative political views, who past research has shown to have positive attitudes toward meat consumption (Hayley et al., 2015; Ruby, 2012), we used Facebook to advertise our study to users who "liked" things such as barbecues, hunting, conservative political parties and media channels. At the start of the interview, participants were asked to complete the Schwartz values Portrait Values Questionnaire (PVQ). This is a widely used tool for values measurement that is also considered suitable for cross-cultural research (Schwartz et al., 2001). We predicted that value orientation would help to explain meat consumption practices. However, the interview data did not support this prediction, and we do not discuss the PVQ any further in this paper.

5.4.2 Procedure

We conducted a pilot study of seven interviews in order to practice face-to-face interactions prior to the start of the fieldwork, and to provide initial insight into our topic (Schreiber, 2008). The sample was obtained through placing advertisements on university career websites and on social media. As there were no significant methodological changes between the pilot

and main study, we combined the two data sources. All interviews were conducted at a mix of outdoor venues such as university campuses, cafes, and restaurants. All participants were provided light refreshments and a chance to participate in a lucky draw where one winner was awarded AUD $200.

5.4.3 Data analysis

The research used an iterative study design, which entailed cycles of simultaneous data collection, analysis and adaptations to some questions to refine the emerging theory. Thus as data collection progressed, unexpected topics raised by a participant could be explored further with subsequent participants (Charmaz, 1996). Individual cases or experiences were then progressively developed into more abstract conceptual categories to synthesise the data and identify patterned relationships within it (Charmaz & Bryant, 2008b). Within the parameters of the research objectives, saturation of interview findings was adequately reached upon completion of 22 interviews. Coding was done via NVivo qualitative data analysis software to sort and keep track of different categories and corresponding sections of text, making it easier to process large amounts of data.

5.4.4 Ethics

Prior to commencement, this study was approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee at the University of Technology Sydney (ETH18-2328). During recruitment, each participant was informed of the purpose of this study and the recruitment proceeded only once the participant was satisfied with the requirements of the study and provided written consent. All participant information was treated in a confidential manner.

5.5 Research findings

We begin this section by briefly discussing past meat-eating practices, followed by why and how these practices are changing within contemporary urban Australia. Finally, we conclude this section by highlighting why many

Australians remain reluctant to adopt more plant-based foods into their diet despite feeling pressure to do so.

5.5.1 Past meat-eating practices

Since European colonisation, Australia's eating practices have largely mirrored British practices (Lupton, 2000). In the book titled 'One Continuous Picnic: a History of Eating in Australia', Symons (1984) states that the traditional colonial Australian meal typically comprised red meat, such as beef and lamb, as the main material element. In comparison, there was a limited amounts of plant-based foods (Lupton, 2000; Sheridan, 2000). Meat was a fairly abundant and inexpensive commodity, which further encouraged meat-eating during Australia's early years (Crook, 2006; Symons, 1984). These practices were also reflected among participants as many recalled that meat was a staple when growing up, with meat-heavy meals eaten on a regular basis:

- Meat was staple in the diet. Wouldn't surprise me if we had meat for every meal, it wouldn't surprise me at all (Male, 40-45 years).

- We'd usually have what I guess some would say a standard Australian meal … either steak or schnitzels or sausages … we ate a lot of meat with vegetables as well (Male, 30-39 years).

Many also discussed the sensory pleasure derived from meat-based material elements. Other work similarly highlights that sensory enjoyment is a key factor encouraging meat eating in Australia (Lea & Worsley 2003). To this point, Fiddes states that pleasure derived from meat eating comes from meat having a "bite to it: something to get one's teeth into, that puts up a bit of resistance" (2004, p. 92). These sentiments were also noted in the study:

- It [meat] tastes to me like the bass in song sounds … It sort of sits underneath it and it gives it a little bit of after taste. Like the texture itself. It … holds together relatively well. It separates a little bit easier than say the bread, but it's not mushy, it has a little bit of resistance to it, which is nice (Male, 30-39 years).

Materials can also serve as symbols of meaning (Warde, 2005), and meat continues to be associated with nutrition and health in Australia (Bogueva et al., 2017). Participants commonly used the term "protein" to refer to meat. In contrast, the association between protein and plant-based foods was less common. In this regard, meat was more synonymous with meanings of "real food" (Robert-Lamblin, 2004, p. 92) and therefore a balanced diet:

- Protein … Chicken, fish, red meat, any one of those three. My mother always made sure that our meals were balanced (Female, 40-45 years).

- It would always include a meat … roast pork or a roast … We'd be having a protein, I'd say 6 out of 7 days over a week (Male, 40-45 years).

As highlighted in previous work (Lupton, 2000; Sheridan, 2000) and as also noted in this study, vegetables were presented as side dishes within the main meal. As material elements have meaning in relation to the practices that they are part of (Shove & Pantzar 2005), vegetarian elements were largely relegated to the category of "less important" within traditional Australian dietary practices. Furthermore, eating one's vegetables was considered to be a chore. Other work has similarly revealed how the practice of "eating one's greens" is not deemed inherently pleasurable (Hesketh et al., 2005; Holden, 2007):

- We had vegetables … I didn't really like them that much. I just ate them because they were there and we had to eat them. I guess if I could have, I just would have eaten meat … we were told they [vegetables] were healthy, so we should eat them (Male, 40-45 years).

- I'd love to come home to steak. My mum would cook it … Occasionally she'd do the fillet beef as well … my dad was very big on eating broccoli and cauliflower … I didn't enjoy them (Male, 30-39 years).

Plant-based eating practices were also viewed as "unnatural" by some. This reflects previous findings that Australians traditionally consider meat as necessary (Bogueva & Phau, 2016) and view plant-based eating as a form of deviance from mainstream eating practices (Kellman, 2000; Monin, 2007; Potts & Parry, 2010):

- My family in the country ... I've heard them say they view it as unnatural, vegans. The whole "we're meant to eat meat because we're omnivores". They say it's just the cycle of life. Things die. It doesn't really matter who kills the animal or for what purpose (Male, 23-29 years).

Meat, as a material element, has featured heavily within the traditional Australian diet and is associated with meanings of health, a balanced diet, necessity and sensory pleasure. However, these meanings are changing which, in turn, is creating a shift in eating practices. This is elaborated upon in subsequent sections of this paper.

5.5.2 Exposure to alternative eating practices

A practice does not only comprise individual attitudes and beliefs, but also resources, conventions, systems and infrastructures (Spurling et al., 2013). This section elaborates upon how changing conventions and socio-economic infrastructures have encouraged a shift in traditional meat-eating practices. One influencing factor was the change to Australia's *Immigration Restriction Act* (Hugo, 2006) which, since the early 1900s, only permitted the migration of people from European backgrounds into the country (Hugo 2006). This change in immigration policy saw an increase in cultural diversity when more people, in particular those from South and South-East Asia, arrived in the country (Crook, 2006). These people played an important role in increasing vegetarian practices within Australian society (Crook, 2006; Wahlqvist, 2002). The onset of globalisation, later in the early 1990s, further encouraged exposure to an array of new cultural practices (Pickering, 2001). The rise of dual income households and disposable incomes, following on from globalisation (Hugo, 2006), also encouraged eating outside the home

more often (Finkelstein, 2003). All of this helped bring about a shift away from traditional meat-eating practices:

- I would have dinner at friend's places where they would be from a vegetarian backgrounds or religions, and I found it quite fascinating, like, "Wow, this is so different. There's no meat on the table." Kind of weird, but then it grew on me ... I started to think this was creative, and different, and interesting. You can make a whole balanced meal, still feel full, and live a healthy lifestyle without meat involved (Male, 23-29 years).

- In Australia, with a lot of multiculturalism, you get different cuisines everywhere ... I had the opportunity to try Vietnamese, Mexican and all of the different types of foods and their cooking methods are different as well (Female, 30-39 years).

5.5.3 Changing gender narratives

Changing discourses of masculinity have also brought about a shift in meat-eating practices. In many Western societies, meat eating was traditionally linked with symbolisms of masculinity and power (Rothgerber, 2013; Rozin et al., 2012) while vegetarianism was associated with femininity and weakness (Adams, 2010; Fiddes, 2004). However, Australian society is witnessing a change from "restrictive gender roles" (O'Neil, 1990, p. 25) towards embracing more fluid representations of gender (The University of Melbourne, 2016). This, in turn, appears to have influenced meanings in relation to meat eating as many participants considered stereotype of the "meat-eating man as somewhat "redundant today:

- If you could eat this giant, big steak, it bestows some kind of prowess on you? I don't know, people are supposed to be impressed by that? ... it's pretty dumb. I don't subscribe to it myself, it seems low-brow to me. If someone in my circle said that ... I'd feel like I don't like this person (Male, 30-39 years).

- I don't think people care if I'm eating vegetarian food. Some people just ask why do you do it? Or good on you … I don't think I would get shunned or socially ostracised because I didn't eat meat … I think it's stupid … If men want to eat vegetables, they can (Male, 40-45 years).

As a part of these changing narratives, the practice of eating meat-heavy meals was also associated with negative meanings:

- Well, my dad was a complete, stereotypical Australian bogan [slang for an uncouth person]. So there would be a lamb roast on the dinner every day … he's very likely to have meat at least once a day, if not always at dinner (Male, 23-29 years).

5.5.4 The rise of environmentalism

Another force that encouraged change was the growth of environmentalism across many Western societies, particularly in the 20th century (Grunert et al., 2014). Factors contributing to this include increasing media focus on environmental issues (Roberts, 1996), the rise of non-government organisations (NGOs) and lobbyists (Strong, 1996) and a shift in market power towards the consumer (Harrison et al., 2005). This, in turn, spurred the rise of the ethical consumer (Newholm & Shaw 2007) as people became more conscious of the socio-environmental impacts of consumption and production practices (Devinney et al., 2010). In Australia, the media has played a key role in shaping public opinion towards the livestock industry (Sinclair et al., 2018) and meat-eating (Animals Australia, 2015a). In this regard, the media can be considered an important material resource through which new knowledge is disseminated (Phillips, 1997) and practices are subsequently shaped:

- From reading or watching TV. I mean, basically, the cost of producing a cow is a lot higher to the environment than producing a similar quantity of, say, vegetables, so it's better for

the world if everyone just ate veggies rather than cows (Male, 40-45 years).

Global campaigns such as "Meat-free Mondays" and "Veganuary" that call for the reduction of one's meat intake (Mceachern, 2018) have also helped encourage dietary practices like reducetarianism (Kateman, 2017) as noted below:

- When the Titanic sank you don't say "oh I don't have room for everyone, throw everyone overboard, out of lifeboats", you do what you can. I guess that's the philosophy of reducetarianism, eating one bit of chicken a month is better than a person who eats it twice a day. I think it's arguably less harmful (Male, 40-45 years).

As part of this discussion, some mentioned that they would like to further cut back on their meat consumption and increase their intake of plant-based foods:

- There's an environmental impact to the way meat's prepared and while I don't think that I would want to be full vegetarian, I can at least make choices which minimize those impacts (Male, 30-39 years).

Others reported purchasing local meat as they considered it more environmentally friendly. This reinforces previous findings that locavorism—which involves supporting locally grown foods in order to reduce food miles—is viewed as an environmentally sustainable practice (Pollan, 2007; Rudy, 2012):

- I love kangaroo and it's also lean healthy meat … it's a sustainable meat source, it's good for the environment … yeah you have to kill the kangaroo unfortunately but you know it's actually quite an efficient part of the ecosystem (Male, 30-39 years).

- I like the idea of using native ingredients … I just wish there was an indigenous section in the supermarket or in the local deli …

included as just a part of everyday Australian eating … they would include kangaroo … worm, any native worm, any native grub, they would include crocodile, dugong and things like that (Female, 40-45 years).

The image below, taken at a supermarket, depicts how kangaroo steak has been labelled as "sustainable". In addition, the use of terms such as "iron" and "protein" further convey meanings of health and nutrition. Kangaroo steak, as shown in Figure 15, (Kozlenko, n.d.), is linked with meanings of environmental sustainability and health.

Figure 15 - Meat-eating practices in Australia: Kangaroo steak is promoted as sustainable meat

5.5.5 Rising health consciousness

In addition to environmental consciousness, rising levels of general health consciousness (Caldwell, 2019) and awareness of the health-related impacts of a meat-heavy diet (Lea, Crawford, & Worsley, 2006) brought about, in part, by the media, are also influencing eating practices:

- I listen to a lot of radio in the day … they had someone from Diabetes Australia … they were talking about the risk with eating

meat … I think it was bowel cancer … the more meat you eat, there's a higher risk (Male, 30-39 years).

Some mentioned advice from their healthcare practitioners had helped them change their eating practices. In this regard, the healthcare practitioner, like the media, can also be considered a material information resource:

- My father, for instance, whenever he goes to the doctor, they always say, "Oh, yeah, you should change your diet. Introduce more vegetables. Cut back on meat. You know, have a fresher diet" (Male, 23-29 years).

Others discussed replacing red meat with fish and chicken, predominantly for health-related reasons. This trend has also been reflected in previous work on Australian consumption patterns (Taylor & Butt, 2017; Wong et al., 2015):

- I think chicken and fish are pretty healthy for you. I think [eating] red meat very occasionally is fine (Male, 23-29 years).

- It's [chicken] leaner, it's lighter. Easy to prepare and cook … And yes, it's just more of a health thing (Male, 40-45 years).

5.5.6 Awareness of animal welfare issues

Previous work has indicated that increasing access to material information on unsustainable farming practices (Grandin, 2014) has encouraged consumers to pay more attention to "animal 'happiness'" when buying animal-based foods (Bray & Ankeny, 2017, p. 222). This was also noted in this study:

- I buy free range eggs, I don't buy the caged battery hen eggs, because I don't like the cruelty to the animals there … seeing advertisements or infomercials on TV or whatever, in regards to the caged hens … it's like being in a prison. You don't want to be in a prison, you ought to be free (Male, 40-45 years).

This change towards supporting more humane animal-based foods appears, in part, to be facilitated by access to material devices like smartphones and mobile apps. Among the many mobile apps available today, some are specifically designed to encourage sustainable consumption (Fuentes & Sörum, 2019). Thus, a mobile app can be mobilised and manipulated as part of a practice (Shove, 2017b) and can help shape a practice in one or more of the following ways: automation (i.e., replacing human labour with digital search functions which creates new competencies), information (i.e., provision of new material knowledge) and transformation (i.e., changing practices as a result of new materials, meanings and competences; Chen, Boudreau, & Watson 2008). This was also evident in the present study:

- I only ever buy free range eggs and I have an app on my phone which will tells me what the actual density of the farm is ... It's something that Choice [a non-profit consumer advocacy organisation] made called Cluck AR (Male, 30-39 years).

- I would always buy the one that gets the RSPCA app...the 10 Stars rating (Female, 40-45 years).

As part of the move towards kinder meat eating, some participants highlighted substituting certain meat-based elements for other meats like chicken and fish. Meanings associated with these elements played a key role here, in that participants reported feeling less morally conflicted about consuming chicken and fish compared to other animals, which they deemed relatively less sentient. Other literature has similarly highlighted that perceptions of an animal's intelligence is a strong predictor of people's willingness to consume it (Loughnan et al., 2014; Ruby & Heine, 2012). In this regard, carnism—which involves categorising certain animals as more acceptable to eat than others (Joy, 2010; Piazza et al., 2015)—appeared to underpin some of these meat substitution practices:

- I think that fish just aren't as smart [laughs] with the exception of the octopus. So prawns, oysters and fish, I don't think they have the same ability to feel as say a pig does (Female, 40-45 years).

- I try to consider it from a moral sense. I shouldn't consider a chicken any different … I'm not going to cross the line and eat lamb, beef or pork … I sometimes break the rules on chicken (Male, 40-45 years).

Changes to traditional Australian meat-eating practices have mainly included cutting back on meat intake and replacing certain meat-based elements with other meat-based elements deemed kinder, healthier and more environmentally friendly. Although some discussed wanting to further cut back on meat consumption and increase their intake of plant-based foods, this practice was relatively less common. This reflects other findings in that, in some Western contexts, meat reduction practices often revolve around limiting meat consumption for one or more days in a week rather than making vegetarianism the goal (Dagevos, 2016). The subsequent sections of this paper delve into why the adoption of plant-based foods was a barrier for many Australians.

5.5.7 Barriers relating to the adoption of plant-based foods as part of changing Australian eating practices

Previous literature has highlighted that strict vegetarianism in Australia is sometimes viewed as an extreme (Lea & Worsley, 2003). To some degree, this was also noted in the present study, as material accessibility, meanings and competences in relation to plant-based foods made vegetarianism a challenge for many.

5.5.7.1 The practicality of plant-based eating

Many participants highlighted that they had limited access to material elements such as plant-based menus and recipes. Indeed, practice theorists consider materials as important elements coconstituting a practice (Shove & Pantzar 2007), referring to them as "necessary, irreplaceable components"

(Reckwitz, 2002b, p. 210). Thus, their limited material access made any further attempts at meat reduction challenging:

- I have found that in regards to vegans … it's very hard for them to get food. Because, if I go out to normal places, there wouldn't be foods that are suitable for them … your choices are so limited (Male, 40-45 years).

- If you go to Woolworths and get those recipe books … you only have one or two vegetarian meals versus ten meat meals so I think they need to provide more options for a vegetarian diet (Female, 30-39 years).

To this point, the widespread availability of meat is captured in Figure 16 from supermarket chain Woolworths' *Fresh* magazine. It highlights how the encouragement of new cooking competences still revolves around meat-based material elements.

Figure 16 - Meat-eating practices in Australia: Fresh magazine's meat-heavy recipe index

The recipe index in *Fresh* magazine's May 2020 edition shows how meat-based materials still dominate Australian meals (Woolworths 2020). As shown in Figure 16 - Meat-eating practices in Australia: Fresh magazine's meat-heavy recipe index, there are only seven recipes in the meatless sections compared to 20 recipes in the meat, poultry and seafood sections.

Another aspect of material accessibility was the expense in relation to plant-based foods. Many mentioned such elements were more costly and therefore more difficult to access:

- I've seen all the vegetarian stuff you can get in the supermarkets now … it's expensive unless it's on mark down on a sale or on special (Male, 30-39 years).

- I got some vegan sausages a while ago, and they were actually really, really nice, but yeah, the other thing is cost. They're more expensive. Whilst I did like the taste ... I couldn't afford to get those as often as I could get real sausages or real meat (Male, 23-29 years).

Others highlighted that plant-based foods were not as filling as meat-based foods. This reflects other findings that meat, as a material element, is synonymous with feelings of fullness in many Western contexts (Lupton, 1996). Therefore, abstaining from meat can be associated with negative feelings of weakness and grief, which arise from the affective connections one may have with meat (Graça et al., 2015):

- [When] I just have vegetarian meals for a couple of days, I feel that I don't have enough energy. You're full but you're not content ... but if you have a piece of steak, you feel full for a longer time. But if you only have vegetables even though you have a lot, like you could have spinach, carrots, cauliflowers ... I feel like it's just gone quickly (Female, 30-39 years).

This lack of fulfilment associated with plant-based foods was linked to perceptions of such foods also being nutritionally inadequate. This reflects other literature which states that plant-based eaters tend to be viewed as physically weak (Allen et al., 2000; Mycek, 2018):

- With meat, you're sort of giving yourself a complete diet ... when you see a lot of these vegans, they don't look well, you know? I mean, their hair will be thinning, they'll look a tad underweight, their skin will be kind of pale (Male, 23-29 years).

Competence was another barrier to the adoption of more plant-based foods as many claimed that they did not know how to cook hearty and nutritionally balanced plant-based foods:

- I just don't have really great vegetarian recipes—I really struggle when my vegetarian friends come over (Female, 40-45 years).

- I guess they're bland unless you do something with them, that's the problem—and adding lots of fancy sauces to vegetables then doesn't make it good for you … The other thing is that a lot of people don't know how to prepare vegetables. They boil the hell out of them … that makes them pretty average as well (Male, 40-45 years).

5.5.7.2 Associations between meat and masculinity

While on one hand, the narratives around meat eating and gender are changing in Australian society, traditional views of meat's association with masculinity and virility (Potts & Parry, 2010; Ruby & Heine, 2011) were still noted by some participants. This, in turn, created negative meanings towards plant-based eating:

- I can tell you if I had a vegetarian or a vegan male friend in my group, they would definitely be mocked … They'd just call him a pussy … I guess the mindset that meat's for strong manly blokes and it's giving you all your iron and you need meat to survive (Male, 30-39 years).

- I will look twice, yeah. "What's that, rabbit food" (Male, 40-45 years)?

Previous work has highlighted that negative images portrayed in the media towards plant-based eating have also contributed to public perceptions towards these practices (D'Silva 2013; Mastermann-Smith, Ragusa, & Crampton 2014). Meat advertisers continue to reinforce gender stereotypes (Adams, 2015; Rogers, 2008) while also (not so) subtly mocking plant-based consumers who don't conform to these stereotypes (Bennett, 2018). An example of such a campaign is pictured in Figure 17. Sam Kekovich, featured here, is a former player for the Australian Football League and spokesperson for a long-standing meat-based campaign (Dawson, 2019). He is often portrayed as reflecting the tough-talking, meat-eating male stereotype (Cheik-Hussein, 2019).
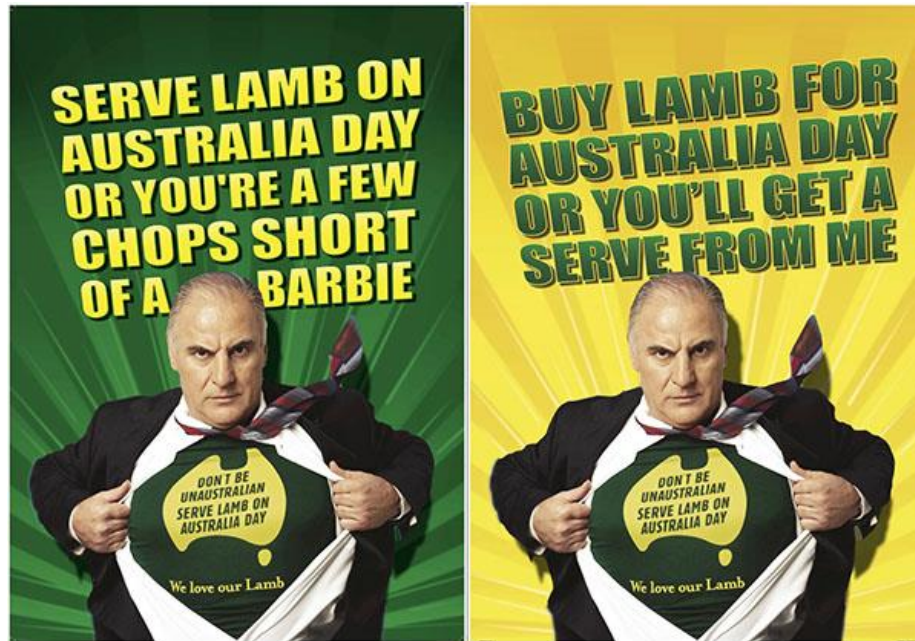
Figure 17 - Meat-eating practices in Australia: Meat & Livestock Australia's popular lamb campaign

5.5.7.3 Views towards plant-based meats

Plant-based meats are referred to as meat substitutes or fake/mock meats (Ismail et al., 2020) as they are designed to resemble the texture, flavour and appearance of meat (Joshi & Kumar, 2015). As part of Australia's changing meat-eating practices, the consumption of such foods are reported to be on the rise (Fulloon, 2020; Masige, 2019) for reasons relating to environmental and ethical sustainability (Cole & Augustin, 2019). Observations reflect the growing presence of these material elements within Australian supermarkets. By assuming the appearance of meat-based foods and terms such as mince and snags, these elements may shift meanings of health and sensory enjoyment—traditionally linked with meat—to include plant-based foods. This is shown in Figure 18.

Figure 18 - Meat-eating practices in Australia: A variety of plant-based meats in Australian supermarkets

Past literature has found sensory properties are a key barrier to the adoption of plant-based meats (Kumar et al., 2017; Sadler, 2004), and in the present study, participants largely found the sensory properties of plant-based meats to be unappealing:

- I've had the fake meat burgers and every time I've tried them, there's just been something off about the taste … Lord of the Fries sells 'Chick'n' … it's technically not chicken … it looks like a chicken drumstick, and you bite into it, and it tastes like compressed onion … It's a really disconcerting feeling when you're biting into it, 'cause you're going, "Oh my god it's worms!" (Male, 30-39 years).

- I think the texture is still not there, the flavour still not there and I think they are replicating another product which I think is crazy. They're just creating a new product, they're basically saying here is fake chicken (Male, 40-45 years).

A product can be reflective of a consumer's self-image (Devinney et al., 2010), as consumers often focus upon meanings beyond just the functional purpose of a material commodity (Shove et al., 2012). Previous literature has shown that counterfeit goods can be synonymous with meanings of deception (Hoe et al., 2003), and some participants reported similar associations to plant-based meats:

- I just don't like the idea ... if I want to eat a steak I will eat a steak, if I want to eat a vegetable I will eat a vegetable ... I don't like people who pretend and I don't like manufactured music either ... I don't like fake products, made like on the cheap, out of China and stuff like that ... my motto in life is have fewer things but have quality things and don't try and have a lot of rubbish (Male, 30-39 years).

The challenges in relation to adopting more plant-based foods arose due to several reasons: limited availability of plant-based menus and recipes, limited sensory appeal of plant-based meats, limited competences in relation to cooking nutritionally balanced meals and negative meanings associated with plant-based practices. Each of these elements were interlinked, shaping both one another and the practice of which they were a part (Shove et al., 2012).

5.6 Discussion and conclusion

Australia has been labelled the 'meat-eating capital of the world' (Fruno, 2017; Ting, 2015). Although OECD figures report that Australian meat-eating levels are still among the highest globally (OECD, 2019b), traditional Australian meat-eating practices—shaped by a broader array of shifting conventions, systems and social infrastructures (Spurling et al., 2013)—are changing. For one, changes in political policy (Wahlqvist, 2002) and the advent of globalisation (Pickering, 2001) have been fundamental in encouraging exposure to new eating practices. In addition, the departure away from rigid gender-based norms (James, 2010) appears to have further contributed to dietary change. Over subsequent decades, there have also been rising levels of environmental (Grunert et al., 2014) and health (Caldwell, 2019) consciousness as well as animal welfare concerns (Szmigin et al., 2009). Furthermore, the media—as the material conduit of information on meat eating (Animals Australia, 2013b) and farming practices (Sinclair et al., 2018)—has also played a significant role. This has been further enabled by

access to new technological materials (Fuentes & Sörum, 2019) that have encouraged new competences, and hence, new eating practices.

Although the participants in this study had reduced their previously high consumption of red meats, they largely turned to meats considered healthier and more ethical, rather than reducing their total meat consumption. More broadly, it is clear that meat-based materials continue to maintain a significant presence within the Australian diet. While many expressed interest in wanting to adopt more plant-based foods, they identified several challenges that made further evolution of their eating practices difficult. These included difficulties in accessing certain plant-based material elements, perceived lack of competence in preparing palatable plant-based meals and unappealing sensory experience associated with plant-based meats. In addition, philosophies such as carnism (Joy, 2010) and traditional notions of masculinity (Adams, 2015), both of which encourage the consumption of animals, were also key barriers to the adoption of plant-based foods.

5.6.1 Limitations

As highlighted previously, our sample comprised more men (15) than women (7). Thus, for future studies on eating practices, we may need to explore differences across various subgroups. For one, we may need to delve into differences across males and females given the latter are more likely to be semi-vegetarians (Derbyshire, 2017; Worsley & Lea, 2008). Furthermore, younger Australians are more likely to demonstrate greater concern about the environmental impacts of meat eating (Lea & Worsley, 2002, 2003) and people with higher levels of education have also been found to be more receptive to alternative dietary practices (Lea et al., 2006). Differences across urban and rural Australia may also need to be considered, given previous findings that urban Australians report feeling more conflicted about meat consumption (Bray et al., 2016).

The primary researcher of this study follows a plant-based diet for ethical reasons. Although this was not disclosed to the participants, it raises

the possibility of subconscious bias on part of the researcher (Probst 2015) that may have coloured interpretations of participant accounts of their eating practices. However, Charmaz (2000) highlights that researcher subjectivity is an inevitable part of constructivist grounded theory. Therefore, one should not attempt to remove researcher subjectivity from the resulting theory, but rather, should aim to prioritise the data over any prior knowledge or views in relation to the topic (Charmaz, 2000). In this study, this was done through gathering perspectives from multiple researchers as part of the analysis (Gordon & Langmaid, 1998), some of whom have different dietary practices. In addition, triangulation—through the use of secondary data sources—helped with obtaining diverse viewpoints (Olsen, 2004) and with validating and corroborating the data gathered for this study (Ramalho, Adams, Huggard, & Hoare, 2015).

5.6.2 Potential applications

Given the growing body of research calling for a global shift to a heavily plant-based diet for health and sustainability reasons (e.g., Hertwich et al., 2010; Willett et al., 2019), current attempts at meat reduction, in what is still a predominantly a meat-based culture, can be described as "inadequate" at best (Dagevos, 2016, p. 239). In order to encourage further shifts, one tactic might involve stronger promotion of strategies that have already been shown to support meat reduction and plant-based consumption. For example, the Meatless Monday and Meat Free Week campaigns aim to demonstrate the feasibility of eating plant-based meals without asking participants to give up meat entirely. They help to build new competences in preparing plant-based meals (Mullee et al., 2017) and create communities with a shared commitment towards a larger goal that can initiate participants into new social practices (De Boer et al., 2014). Thus, ongoing access to diverse and interesting plant-based foods, as part of a shared larger cause in support of sustainability, may incentivise Australians to further reduce their levels of meat consumption.

In addition, communication strategies, traditionally used by the meat industry, which aim to link meat eating with strength, health and wellness can also be utilised the plant-based industry. Documentaries such as *The Game Changers* which draws on a mixture of dramatic footage, scientific studies, and celebrity sportspeople to demonstrate the link between physical fitness and a plant-based diet (Psihoyos, 2019) is one such example. Another example includes the Forest Green Rovers, described as the UK's "only completely vegan" professional football club with an environmental conscience (BBC, 2016). Introducing other versions of sustainable meats— such as insect meat (Belluco et al. 2013; Caparros Megido et al. 2016) and in-vitro meat (Bhat et al., 2017)—could also encourage more sustainable versions of meat-eating. Overcoming consumption barriers, such as food neophobia (Hocquette, 2016), may involve presenting these newer meats in more familiar and recognisable food formats, such as an insect-based burger (Caparros Megido et al., 2016). Furthermore, increasing consumer knowledge of the health benefits of these alternative protein sources (De Boer et al., 2014) may also assist in overcoming potential consumption barriers.

5.6.3 Future research directions

For future studies, researchers may need to consider a segmented approach to meat-eating, considering there has been limited insight into the practices of heavy, medium and light meat-reducers (De Boer, Schösler & Aiking 2014; Dagevos 2016). Findings from a Dutch study on meat reduction revealed some significant differences in that "ethical meat-reducers" who consciously cut back on meat consumption differed from the "extravert meat-reducers" who were more motivated by social status (Dagevos & Voordouw, 2013). These segments, in turn, differed from "disengaged meat eaters" who reported low to moderate levels of motivation to change their consumption practices (Dagevos & Voordouw, 2013). These potential differences in consumption practices could also explored among Australian meat-eaters as well.

As highlighted previously, changes to Australia's immigration policy led to subsequent changes to Australia's cultural diversity (Hugo 2006) and eating practices (Crook, 2006; Wahlqvist, 2002). Thus, future research on this topic could further delve into the influence of different cultures on Australian eating practices and also how eating practices might potentially differ across Australian sub-cultures. This is in view of the fact that Australia has one of the most culturally diverse populations in the world (Gallegos et al., 2019) with more than a quarter (26%) of Australians born overseas, and 19% born in countries where English is not the first language (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2016).

In addition, future research could also look beyond consumption practices (Dagevos, 2016) and consider ways to engage policy makers to help increase public awareness of the unsustainability of meat and encourage receptiveness towards meat reduction practices in general (Dagevos & Voordouw, 2013). All of this, in tandem, might help encourage further shifts towards more sustainable eating practices within Australia.

Chapter 6: A cross-cultural meat paradox: A qualitative study of Australia and India

This chapter was submitted to the journal *Appetite* on 7th August 2020 and is currently under review. This chapter includes the submitted manuscript. Some of the material presented in *Chapter 1: Introduction and Literature Review* and *Chapter 2: Research methods and design* is repeated here. These details were necessary to include given the entire manuscript has been presented here.

The contribution by each author is detailed in Table 7 and in *Appendix 12: Author contributions*.

Table 7 Contributions of authors to the published manuscript

Coauthor	Nature of contribution	Extent of contribution (%)
Tani Khara	Data collection, analysis and write-up	80%
Professor Christopher Riedy	Guidance on analysis & write-up	10%
Dr Matthew B. Ruby	Guidance on analysis & write-up	10%

As part of exploring meat-eating practices, this chapter aims to understand how animals are viewed, how the meat paradox is experienced within Indian and Australian cultures and how this tends to influence meat-eating practices. In summary, the findings highlight that participants, in both countries, experience distress, conflict and dissonance after being exposed to animal suffering as part of the meat production process. Although there are common strategies used to reduce dissonance, the reasons for and various ways in which dissonance manifests reflect the different socio-cultural

influences on meat-eating. Given this dissonance, and as per the study's overarching aims, various intervention strategies have been proposed to encourage a reduction in meat consumption. These have been elaborated upon in this chapter.

A cross-cultural meat paradox: A qualitative study of Australia and India

6.1 Abstract

The meat paradox is the psychological conflict experienced by people who enjoy eating meat but dislike the resulting harm done to animals. To date, most studies on the meat paradox have focused on Western audiences and found that, to resolve the meat paradox, people resort to various dissonance-reducing strategies like objectification, speciesism, and carnism. However, the meat paradox has not yet been studied in developing countries where meat consumption is on the rise. Further, most studies to date have been quantitative. This study, hence, aims to bridge the knowledge gap by providing a qualitative comparison of experiences of the meat paradox in urban Australia and India. Australia has one of the world's highest levels of meat consumption but awareness of problems relating to animal farming is prompting some to question their dietary choices. On the other hand, India, given its exposure to new global norms, is transitioning towards diets containing more meat but remains conscious of maintaining traditional practices of vegetarianism and reverence towards animals. Using cognitive dissonance theory as a framework, the study explores how the meat paradox plays out across the two countries. We conducted in-depth interviews with twenty-two Sydney residents and thirty-three Mumbai residents, aged 23-45 years. Participants reported experiencing distress after being exposed to animal suffering and there were some common strategies used to reduce dissonance across both countries. These included distancing, beliefs in a human-animal hierarchy, carnism, and criticisms of alternative dietary practices. Although these general strategies were shared, the manner in which they manifested was different in each country, thereby reflecting some key socio-cultural and institutional differences that exist across Australia and India. These differences are further elaborated in the paper.

6.2 Introduction

The term "meat paradox", initially coined by Loughnan, Haslam, and Bastian (2010), refers to the psychological conflict between people's enjoyment of meat and their moral discomfort in relation to animal suffering. While meat eating is a norm globally, many meat eaters also find animal suffering disturbing and, at times, disruptive to their dietary habits (Loughnan et al., 2010).

The concept of the meat paradox is based upon social psychologist Leon Festinger's theory of cognitive dissonance (Bastian & Loughnan, 2016; Loughnan et al., 2010). Cognitive dissonance is the feeling of emotional discomfort which occurs when one holds conflicting attitudes or performs behaviours that conflict with one's beliefs or attitudes (Festinger, 1957). Being in a state of dissonance is psychologically uncomfortable, and this typically motivates people to change their beliefs or behaviours to reduce the dissonant state (McMaster & Lee, 1991; Steele, 1998).

When it comes to meat consumption, omnivores tend to use a variety of dissonance-reducing strategies. Some include hierarchical beliefs of human superiority over animals (Dhont et al., 2019); various forms of distancing (Bastian & Amiot, 2019; Rothgerber, 2014) such as referring to the bodies of sentient animals as just meat (Rowe, 2011); reliance on social norms (Loughnan & Davies, 2019); and categorising farm animals as less morally relevant compared to other species such as pet animals (Bastian & Loughnan, 2016; Joy, 2010). While justifying or rationalising decisions is part of human nature, this tends to manifest in different ways across different cultures (Hoshino-Browne et al., 2005). We begin by presenting an overview of the meat paradox in Australia.

6.2.1 The meat paradox in Australia

Australia currently has one of the world's highest levels of meat consumption, at approximately 95 kilograms per capita annually (OECD, 2019b). Some factors which have influenced meat consumption in Australia

include meat's association with healthy terms such as "iron", "protein", and "staple dietary requirement" (Bogueva et al., 2017). In addition, meat is often associated with masculinity (Bogueva et al., 2017), power, strength and virility (Adams, 2015; Potts & Parry, 2010). Other studies have highlighted an association between meat and social occasions (Bogueva et al., 2017; Worsley & Skrzypiec, 1998b). Meat commercials commonly depict groups of people enjoying meat-based meals at outdoor venues that symbolise the Australian lifestyle. Furthermore, advertising colloquialisms such as "You never lamb alone" (Cheik-Hussein, 2019) and "Get some Pork on your fork" (Lynchy, 2012) continue to perpetuate meat-eating norms. In this regard, individuals may look to social norms as a guide for their own actions (Leonidou & Skarmeas, 2017) and may use this to reduce their dissonance in relation to meat consumption (Bastian & Loughnan, 2016).

In comparison, a plant-based diet tends to not only be considered nutritionally inadequate (Bogueva et al., 2017; Lea & Worsley, 2002, 2003), but is also associated with negative terms such as "wimp" and not being "macho" enough (Lea & Worsley, 2002). Some vegetarians in Australia have also reported feeling socially left out (Bogueva et al., 2017) and even being bullied (Wood, 2016) by meat eaters who represent the cultural norm. Therefore, the prospect of adopting alternative diets is likely to increase dissonance because of potential social consequences (Harmon-Jones et al., 1996).

When it comes to animal welfare in Australia, Australian consumers report that farm animal welfare only plays a moderate role in their purchasing decisions compared to product characteristics such as quality and price (Bray & Ankeny, 2017; Coleman & Toukhsati, 2006; Coleman, 2018). To this point, Schröder and McEachern (2004, p. 172) state that when consumers are faced with the paradox of their own consumption choices and the ethics of animal farming, some may attempt to reduce the dissonance through personality reframing—i.e., they may refer to themselves "as harsh and uncaring in order to accommodate their current choices of animal products".

On the other hand, media exposure to instances of farm-animal suffering tends to create a public outcry. One example is the recent footage of farm-animal distress on the news, as part of the live-animal export trade, which resulted in many Australians calling for the trade to end (Sinclair, Derkley, Fryer, & Phillips, 2018). Other examples include advertising campaigns like "Make it Possible", run by activist group Animals Australia, which highlighted the plight of factory farmed animals and attracted a quarter of a million people pledging to end their support for factory-farmed produce (Animals Australia, 2015a). Exposure to animal cruelty in food production practices (Sinclair et al., 2018) has also resulted in many Australians (65%) claiming to support foods produced through more humane means (Humane Research Council, 2014) as part of their attempt to resolve their meat paradox. In addition, flexitarianism, which involves various ways of reducing or replacing meats (Dagevos, 2016), is also becoming increasingly popular in Australia (Charlebois, 2019; Sakkal & Fowler, 2019). The findings from this study will further elaborate upon these themes in relation to the meat paradox in Australia.

6.2.2 The meat paradox in India

While many Western nations have shown high but fairly consistent levels of meat consumption over the last two decades (OECD, 2019b), the growth in meat consumption is predicted to mainly come from emerging markets (The World Bank, 2009). However, the topic of meat consumption in many emerging markets, such as India, is relatively underresearched and the present study aims to address this gap.

Current data shows that India has much lower levels of meat consumption (approximately four kilograms per capita, annually) compared to the global average of approximately 35 kilograms per capita (OECD, 2019b). However, many are shifting from strict plant-based diets to diets containing greater amounts of meat (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 2006). This is due to an increasing number of people in the middle classes who can afford to eat meat for nutritional, sensory, and

symbolic reasons (Dagevos, 2016). Furthermore, since India's economic liberalisation in the early 1990s (Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania, 2008), exposure to new global norms (Sinha, 2011) has led to the adoption of new lifestyles (Mathur, 2010) and eating practices (Khara & Ruby, 2019). Chicken and fish currently have the highest levels of consumption per capita in India (National Sample Survey Office, 2012), but the consumption of other types of meats such as beef and buffalo—traditionally deemed taboo—is also on the rise (Bansal, 2016; Devi, Balachandar, Lee, & Kim, 2014).

On the other hand, Hinduism, followed by a large majority (80%) of India's population (The Registrar General & Census Commissioner of India, 2011), has several teachings which traditionally advocate vegetarianism (Puskar-Pasewicz, 2010) and non-violence towards living creatures (Hamilton, 2000). Given the cultural stigma still associated with meat eating today (Khara, Riedy, & Ruby, 2020), meat-based foods are kept segregated from vegetarian foods in many Indian schools, workplaces (Waghmore, 2017), and religious places (Alam, 2017a; Dolphijn, 2006; Sharan, 2006). This stigma has also resulted in some Indians underreporting their meat consumption (Bansal, 2016) and experiencing conflicting attitudes towards this practice (Khara et al., 2020). This reflects the present-day dissonance in contemporary urban India, which on one hand seeks to embrace new consumption practices (Mathur, 2014), but on the other hand is conscious of retaining familiar traditions (Sinha, 2011).

Against the backdrop of these current findings, this study aims to provide additional insight into the meat paradox in India and to compare this with data from Australia.

6.3 Research design and methods

This qualitative study is part of a larger project that examined meat consumption practices in urban Australia and urban India. The main data source comprised 55 hour-long, semi-structured face to face interviews, supplemented by observation of eating practices in public places. Interviews

were audio-recorded, and reflective notes were written during and immediately after the interviews. This article reports on a specific set of questions relating to animal welfare, which were asked at the end of each interview:

- What are your views towards animals in general?

- Is there a difference between pet animals and other types of animals?

- What do you think about the practice of animals being farmed for meat?

- When it comes to farm animal welfare, how important is this issue to you?

Several studies highlight the limitations of using quantitative approaches to understand the meat paradox (Buttlar & Walther, 2018; Kunst & Hohle, 2016; Piazza et al., 2015; Rothgerber, 2014). Some of these include an overreliance on predominantly correlational methodologies (Piazza et al., 2015) and that studies on decision making in contrived environments may not actually represent what occurs in the real world (Rothgerber, 2014). In contrast, this study drew upon constructivist grounded theory, using an iterative data gathering process rather than relying on prior hypotheses or survey instruments (Nath & Prideaux, 2011). Through semi-structured face to face interviews, there was an emphasis on gathering rich and descriptive data (Charmaz, 1996) and also getting an "insider's view on reality" (Fetterman, 2008, p. 249). This approach helped with understanding meanings behind certain actions as well as assumptions, intentions, and future actions (Charmaz, 1996).

6.3.1 Participants

This study focused on urban omnivores in Australia and India. The majority of Australians (86%) live in urban centres (Central Intelligence Agency, 2018a). In comparison, India has a relatively smaller urban proportion of the population (35%; Central Intelligence Agency, 2018b)

although the levels of meat consumption are higher in urban India than in the semi-urban and rural regions (National Sample Survey Office, 2012). Therefore, participants in this study were drawn from urban centres: 22 Sydney residents and 33 Mumbai residents. Sydney was chosen as it is Australia's most populated and most culturally-diverse city (Central Intelligence Agency 2017a; ABS 2017) and Mumbai was chosen is one of India's largest cities (Central Intelligence Agency, 2018b) and is a multicultural hub (Gulliver, 2008). Participants in both countries were aged 23 to 45 years.

We recruited Australian participants using two approaches. First, we advertised the study on career websites at The University of New South Wales and The University of Technology Sydney. Then, in order to ensure that our sample also included a good number of participants with conservative political views, which past research has shown are associated with more positive attitudes toward meat consumption (e.g., Hayley, Zinkiewicz, & Hardiman, 2015; Ruby, 2012; Ruby, Heine, Kamble, Cheng, & Waddar, 2013), we used Facebook to advertise our study to users who "liked" things such as barbecues, hunting, conservative political parties, and conservative media channels. The Australian sample also included more men (15) than women (7).

In India, the recruitment comprised a mix of Facebook advertising and using a market research agency based in Mumbai. As previous work found that education levels and disposable incomes can significantly impact one's ability to make informed and deliberate consumption choices (Khara, 2015), and given meat is a relatively expensive commodity in India (Puskar-Pasewicz, 2010), the recruitment focused on more affluent socio-economic segments (The Market Research Society of India, 2011). In addition, as religion is a key factor that determines attitudes relating to meat consumption in India (Devi et al., 2014), we focused on religion as a key criterion in the recruitment process. The Indian participants were mainly Hindu, which reflects the majority of the country's population (80%), while other participants came from Muslim backgrounds as they comprise a large

religious minority (13%; The Registrar General & Census Commissioner of India, 2011). The sample included a fairly even split of men (17) and women (16).

6.3.2 Procedure

A pilot study was conducted in Sydney prior to the main study. Seven pilot interviews were conducted with Australian participants, and eight with recent arrivals from India. The sample was obtained through placing advertisements on university career websites and on social media. The pilot study with Indian participants only focused on their views and experiences while they were living in India. As there were no significant methodological changes between the pilot and main study, we combined the two data sources.

All interviews were conducted predominantly in English as it is the most widely spoken language in Australia (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2016) and is also India's subsidiary official language (Central Intelligence Agency, 2018b). The interviews in Sydney were conducted at a mix of outdoor venues such as university campuses, cafes, and restaurants. The interviews in Mumbai were conducted in a single location—a restaurant in Nariman Point in downtown Mumbai—as the city's traffic can often result in unpredictable and delayed travel times (Acharya, 2019). All participants were provided light refreshments and a chance to participate in a lucky draw where one winner was awarded AUD $200 (approximately INR 10,000).

At the start of the interview, participants were asked to complete the Schwartz values Portrait Values Questionnaire (PVQ) (Schwartz et al., 2001), a widely-used tool for values measurement that is considered suitable for cross-cultural research. We theorised that value orientation would help to explain meat consumption practices. However, no relationship was found between values and either meat consumption practices or views towards animals. Therefore, we do not discuss the PVQ any further in this paper.

6.3.3 Data analysis

The research used an iterative study design, which entailed cycles of simultaneous data collection, analysis, and adaptations to some questions to refine the emerging theory. This meant that, as the data collection progressed, unexpected topics raised by a participant could be explored further with subsequent participants (Charmaz, 1996). Individual cases, incidents, or experiences were then progressively developed into more abstract conceptual categories to synthesize the data, and identify patterned relationships within it (Charmaz & Bryant, 2008b). Within the parameters of the research objectives, saturation of interview findings was adequately reached upon completion of the 55 interviews. Coding was done using NVivo qualitative data analysis software to help sort and keep track of different categories and corresponding sections of text, thereby making it convenient to work through large amounts of data.

6.3.4 Ethics

Prior to the commencement of this study, the research was approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee at the University of Technology Sydney (ETH18-2328). During recruitment, each participant was informed of the purpose of this study and the recruitment proceeded only once the participant was satisfied with the requirements of the study and provided written consent. All participant information was treated in a confidential manner.

6.4 Research findings

The research findings present Australian and Indian participant accounts of the meat paradox as well as the strategies used to resolve the paradox. The findings begin by presenting participant thoughts and feelings in relation to animal suffering to provide some context in relation to the meat paradox.

6.4.1 Participant reactions towards animal suffering

Participants in Australia and India unanimously reported feeling concerned and even distressed in relation to how farm animals are treated. They felt it was wrong that farm animals are mistreated and made to suffer when alive. Australian participants discussed being exposed to farm animal suffering mostly via the media and, in some instances, on farms as well. This is reflected below:

- Slaughterhouses—every now and then the media has come out where they treat animals terribly in there and I think those are really, really bad things ... it's just unnecessary suffering (RL, male, 23-29 years, Australia).

- She [friend] lives up in Toowoomba and she took us out on her rounds ... I saw how pigs were farmed...and I was really horrified ... you've got to keep them indoors in these pens because they get sunburnt in Queensland because you can't free range pigs up there because the sun is really strong ... I saw the barriers they have to live in and they can't turn around ... I don't know whether you've met a pig but they are like dogs ... I thought how could you let something that is that sentient live like that! ... that really deeply affected me actually (RH, female, 40-45 years, Australia).

Similar to previous research on negative public reactions towards the Australian live-animal export trade (Sinclair et al., 2018; Tiplady et al., 2012), some participants reported feeling alarmed and disgusted in relation to the recent news stories on the treatment of live animals exported overseas for slaughter:

- Remember the thing about the lambs on the way to Saudi Arabia or Indonesia that all died? ... That's terrible! That shouldn't happen ... the law should change to protect the animals (ML, male, 40-45 years, Australia).

- If you're going to export meat, there are a couple of things—like export the meat as meat, handle the animals here in a fair as possible manner instead of making them suffer and then kill them … so that's where you also keep the jobs in the country as well … I think it's disgusting the way they treat those poor animals, it's heartbreaking (NW, male, 30-39 years, Australia).

While the farming and slaughter of animals in Australia often occurs in remote locations away from public view (Bastian & Loughnan, 2016), in many developing countries, animal produce has traditionally been sold in open access wet markets (Trebbin, 2014). Many animals in the Indian wet markets are reported to be living in unhygienic conditions (Euromonitor International, 2020) while "cooped up in tiny cages" (Roy, 2017, para. 1). The slaughter of live animals is also often carried out at these markets (Chatterjee, 2017a; The World Bank, 2011). Exposure to live scenes of animal suffering and slaughter appeared to increase dissonance among some Indian participants. Some even reported temporarily losing their appetite:

- I've seen some of the chicken cages, you know the vehicles that travel in Mumbai, that is something that upsets me sometimes, the way they're crammed up (AB, female, 30-39 years, India).

- We went to a fish market, and we bought a live fish … And after we brought it home, my mom was like, "Oh my God, what am I gonna do? I can't kill it" … we actually saw the fish wriggling around as kids … She finally killed it or whatever. I didn't see it being killed. But she made it for dinner, and I couldn't eat it. Because I'd seen it alive, and I knew that same fish is on my table. I just lost my appetite (NB, female, 30-39 years, India).

Others chose to avoid scenes that caused emotional distress, as narrated below by a participant. Festinger (1957) has also stated that people may avoid situations that are likely to increase their dissonance:

- I went to buy fresh chicken … So I walked up to the guy and I said I want a kilo of chickens. So when he slaughtered the chicken in

front of me, I wept and I wept and I wept … and this poor man is looking at me saying, "You don't want the chicken?" I said, "No, no. I want the chicken." And then I came home, I couldn't eat chicken that day. However, after that, every now and then I will go to him … I'd tell him this is what I want and I'd walk off. So I'd come back after half an hour and he got it cleaned and cut. Still, I don't want to think … my conditioning is such that I am a meat eater (TS, female, 40-45 years, India).

In other instances, some Indian participants discussed becoming accustomed to animal slaughter over time. To this point, other literature has highlighted that repeated exposure to distressing circumstances may create emotional apathy (Moser & Dilling, 2004; Shome & Marx, 2009) and may also result in some repressing this information (McDonald, 2000):

- I've seen a hen cutting in front of my eye many times. But it pinches … It feels like you're not killing a hen, you're killing yourself sometimes … If someone cuts your head off from your body, how you feel? It feels like that … [but] it's a part of my life and I'm used to it…I can't change all of a sudden to become a vegetarian (AN, male, 30-39 years, India).

- My mom took me to the … chicken shop where I saw a chicken being cut for the first time … they smoke them and then suffocate them and defeathered them and chopped them up … I didn't cry, I ate the chicken still for dinner … you kind of learned to push that in the back [of your mind] you know (KS, male, 30-39 years, India).

The meat paradox was apparent across both cultures, as participants reported feeling emotional distress when exposed to animal suffering. Indian participants tended to have more direct experience of animal suffering whereas Australian participants were exposed to this mainly through the media. To this point, one might expect that a more direct experience of suffering is likely to cause greater dissonance, as other literature has

highlighted that exposure to graphic scenes of animal cruelty can trigger strong emotions (Munro, 2015; Tiplady et al., 2012). However, some Indian participants reported gradually becoming accustomed to this. In view of this, defence mechanisms such as numbing (Ross, 2003; Slovic, 2010) and emotional avoidance (Rothgerber, 2014) appear to have been used as coping strategies. The subsequent sections in this paper highlight different ways in which participants from both countries resolved their meat consumption dissonance, starting with Australia.

6.4.2 Strategies used to resolve the meat paradox among Australian participants

Meat is a central part of Australian culture and identity. However, it seems that awareness of ethical and environmental issues related to animal farming is also causing some concern. In an attempt to reduce emotional discomfort in relation to this as well as one's own dietary practices, Australian participants discussed using a variety of dissonance-reducing strategies. These have been elaborated upon in the following sections.

6.4.2.1. Ethical and environmental issues relating to meat consumption

Many Australian participants mentioned meat was often present at the dinner table at home when growing up, and that it was deemed necessary for a "balanced diet". One participant mentioned that his family of cattle farmers have also traditionally not been in favour of alternative diets. To this point, Bastian and Loughnan (2016) highlight that individual dissonance can be reduced through institutionalisation, wherein individual practices, such as meat consumption, are supported by and embedded within larger social practices:

- I think that [meat consumption] probably characterises quite well their [reference to family] food practices—and so if anything's a huge variation with that, then they're probably going to resist it some extent ... so they almost view it as an insult if you are consuming things that they don't make ... My understanding of

quinoa is that it isn't really made in Australia. Yeah, they would probably resist that because you're not supporting Australian farmers. It's a very big deal, supporting Australian farmers (RL, male, 23-29 years, Australia).

Among Australian participants, there was relatively greater awareness of factory farming and its related problems. However, for some participants, issues such as the growing human population and overconsumption were discussed as being the main contributors to the problem, rather than meat consumption itself being a moral concern. To this point, disengagement from a particular issue can be achieved through the diffusion of personal responsibility (Bandura, 1999) as people might view their individual actions as being "a mere drop in the ocean of collective harm" (Bastian & Loughnan, 2016, p. 281). Some participants expressed this view, as below:

- It's more about that there's a meat industry and it's the industrialisation of meat that I think would be the problem than the fact that we eat meat (LL, female, 40-45 years, Australia).

- The reason why there is more meat consumption is because … all those developing countries are getting wealthier … So that's the biggest driver. It's not the guy like me (NW, male, 30-39 years, Australia).

- The way to stop it [factory farming] is to stop population growth … You're populating the world at a greater rate than the food supply can keep up with so all of a sudden everyone is running around to look for more food choices (SG, male, 40-45 years, Australia).

Other participants discussed limiting their meat intake. To this point, previous literature has highlighted that some may seek to reduce consumption dissonance by looking at more ethical alternatives (Szmigin et al., 2009). One way in which an individual might adopt ethical alternatives is through engaging in more flexible forms of behaviour (Szmigin et al., 2009)

such as reducetarianism, which is also known as flexitarianism (Kateman, 2017):

- This is the analogy—when the Titanic sank you don't say "oh I don't have room for everyone, throw everyone overboard, out of lifeboats", you do what you can. I guess that's the philosophy of reducetarianism, eating one bit of chicken a month is better than a person who eats it twice a day (AL, male, 40-45 years, Australia).

- I think I've reached the point where I feel more balanced with what I eat ... you think that should you be an all or nothing person but then, over time, you reason that it's about trying to do the least harm you can (SR, female, 30-39 years, Australia).

In addition to reducetarianism, buying free-range and animal-based foods produced through more humane means were also used as ways of addressing the meat paradox:

- For me it's partly about the way things are farmed so the animal doesn't have a horrible existence ... So where possible it's free range and organic (RH, female, 40-45 years, Australia).

- At some point, a death of an animal is involved and there are ways that animals can be put down without pain ... it also ends up resulting in a better product because they don't get stressed (MC, male, 30-39 years, Australia).

As highlighted in this section, some participants, in their attempt to address the meat paradox, discussed changing their behaviours to adopt more sustainable dietary practices. Others chose to minimise individual roles and responsibilities in relation to the problem of meat consumption. In addition, other dissonance-reducing strategies involved criticisms directed towards alternative dietary practices such as vegetarianism. This is elaborated upon in the next section.

6.3.2.2. Criticisms of plant-based eating

Some Australian participants claimed to feel uncomfortable when in the presence of vegetarians/vegans. This reflects past work that omnivores sometimes feel conflicted in the presence of plant-based eaters (Adams, 2001) and may also fear moral reproach from them (Minson & Monin, 2012):

- Sometimes I feel like if I order some kind of meat dish, are they (vegetarian friends) going to be judgmental and negative towards it? (RK, male, 30-39 years, Australia).

Adams states that vegetarians may remind the omnivore of the fact that "there is a part of them that wants to avoid animal flesh ... but another part doesn't want to stop eating meat" (2001, p. 82). In this regard, vegetarians are a visible reminder that some have succeeded in making ethical food choices whereas others experiencing dissonance have failed to act in a similarly ethical way. When it comes to reducing dissonant beliefs, one tactic may involve drawing upon new information (Festinger, 1957) which either supports existing behaviours (Adams, 1961; Engel, 1963) or refutes the alternatives (Cummings & Venkatesan, 1976). This was noted in this study, as some participants discussed inconsistency in vegetarian/vegan dietary practices. In this regard, by pointing out flaws within the plant-based eater, Rothgerber (2014) states that omnivores may, to some degree, use this as a way to reduce their own dissonance:

- Hypocrite [reference to plant-based consumers] ... they just want to be seen to be doing the right thing and in the right environment ... I think it's more just for fitting in or they're trying to put themselves in a certain hipster category ... there are a hell of a lot of vegetarians and vegans who are not true to themselves ... it's just that to do it properly I think you've basically got to be making your own food (SG, male, 40-45 years, Australia).

- Oh I'm vegan I can't eat this, I can't eat that! I know people who come to dinner and go oh I'm vegan—and then they see the food

and then they want to dip into the food, the meat that is, and then I'm like how are you vegan? (NW, male, 30-39 years, Australia).

On the other hand, some mentioned that, while they were concerned about animal suffering, they also considered strict plant-based diets to be relatively unhealthy. This reflects previous literature in that some Australians may view vegetarianism as extreme (Lea & Worsley, 2003). In this regard, dissonance was reduced given the perceived lack of attractive alternatives (Festinger, 1957):

- With meat, you're sort of giving yourself a complete diet, but with veganism, not only are they shunning meat, but … No more dairy, no more eggs, no more cheese, nothing like that. You're really kind of depriving yourself of … the nutrients … when you see a lot of these vegans, they don't look well, you know? I mean, their hair will be thinning, they'll look a tad underweight, their skin will be kind of pale (DC, male, 23-29 years, Australia).

- Some animal products that I need to eat to give me the right nutrients. I think vegan diet's more about they're doing it for animals and the environment, whereas my diet's more about health (ML, male, 40-45 years, Australia).

While meat consumption is a norm in Australia, growing awareness of unsustainable farming practices (Voiceless, 2012) appears to be contributing to the meat paradox. Dissonance can be reduced by either changing one's beliefs or behaviours (McMaster & Lee, 1991) and Australian participants appeared to use a mix of strategies. Some behaviours were modified by adopting alternatives perceived to be more ethical. On the other hand, traditional belief systems such as meat being a necessary dietary requirement as well as cynicism towards alternative diets were also used to reduce dissonance.

6.4.3 Strategies used to resolve the meat paradox among Indian participants

Rising levels of urbanisation (Ali, Kapoor, & Moorthy, 2010) and exposure to new global practices (Khara & Ruby, 2019) are changing Indian consumption practices. This is also widening the divide between consumers and the animals consumed for meat. However, there are traditional practices that appear to create conflict in relation to eating animals and contribute towards the meat paradox. To some extent, this reflects the broader chasm between a more progressive and conservative India (Sinha, 2011). This is elaborated upon in the following sections of the paper.

6.4.3.1 Changing meat consumption practices in India

In comparison to the Australian participants, there appeared to be relatively less awareness of factory farming and its related problems among Indian participants. This is likely due to the fact that, until fairly recently, the practice of industrialised meat production was more widespread in developed countries (Thornton, 2010). However, meat production in India is gradually changing from small-scale backyard farming into large-scale factory farming (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 2006). Furthermore, the growth of the meat-retailing industry in India means that, similar to many industrialised nations, consumption and production practices in India are becoming increasingly disjointed (Kumar & Kapoor, 2014). In the present study, participants discussed how meat could now be purchased at supermarkets, which meant that one was no longer exposed to the suffering, blood, and gore of the animal slaughtering process. Hence, distancing (Bastian & Loughnan, 2016; Rothgerber, 2014)—a commonplace strategy in many industrialised Western nations, where one views the animal as separate from meat (Hoogland, de Boer, & Boersema, 2005)—appears to be increasing in India as well:

- Nowadays you know, when you go to the markets and all, especially supermarkets you get clean cuts. Even the chicken is very clean. They are nicely cut. They've removed everything, you

know, the blood and all. Nicely wrapped into a tray, cling wrap (FK, female, 30-39 years, India).

- See chicken, we don't see them cutting and all … If we would see, so we would not take that one, we are taking the package one (JT, female, 30-39 years, India).

Socio-economic changes in India have brought about immense change to urban Indian culture and consumption practices (Mathur, 2010). Not only are many urban Indians becoming increasingly distanced from the origins of meat, many also consider the practice of meat consumption to be novel and modern as compared to traditional vegetarianism (Khara & Ruby, 2019). This was also noted in the findings of this study. In this regard, any conflict experienced in relation to animal suffering also appears to be overshadowed by the desire to seek the new and different. On the other hand, India is in many ways still conscious of maintaining aspects of its long-standing traditions (Hensoldt-Fyda, 2018; Mathur, 2014). In some part, this contributes to the meat paradox, and is elaborated upon in the following sections.

6.4.3.2 Traditional consumption practices and the meat paradox

This section explores the meat paradox from the perspective of Hindu and Muslim participants in India, starting with the former. Some Hindu participants reported experiencing dissonance given the religion's emphasis on vegetarianism (Puskar-Pasewicz, 2010). Hindus tend to believe in reincarnation and karma (Davidson, 2003) and to view humans as being in a continuum with other life forms (Hutchinson & Sharp, 2008). In this regard, there was some conflict and discomfort expressed in relation to the concept of eating animals:

- It's always better to … pray for the meat … someone eats meat then he is described as cruel. Because you're not caring about the life, animals, and all those things (MN, male, 23-29 years, India).

- See, in our caste, we believe in God … we never eat non-veg. But from starting, my dad used to eat, and dad gave me the habit … even I was thinking that it was … wrong. In our caste, nobody eats and I was eating … It's wrong that we are killing (animals) (PA, male, 30-39 years, India).

When it came to reducing this dissonance, like the Australian participants, some Indian participants also pointed out the discrepancies and inconsistences in vegetarian practices. However, these were discussed in relation to religious and caste-based norms as highlighted below:

- Actually, we are killing plants … Jainism said you should not pluck onions … Over there also we are killing someone, and over here also they are killing someone to feed someone … so it's a life cycle. You cannot stop it (RK, male, 23-29 years, India).

- Even Brahmins in India have non-veg these days … They might be having a particular taste for non-veg, I don't know if such people would be indulging in an addiction of some kind you know? The way you keep addictions secret, if somebody has an addiction to a drug or something like that (AG, male, 23-29 years, India).

In a similar vein, the perceived hypocrisy of plant-based eaters, as pointed out by Australian participants, was also mentioned by Indian participants, albeit for different reasons. The beef ban in India, enforced by Hindu vigilante groups (Alam, 2017b; Biswas, 2017) has been criticised as hypocritical in that animal welfare has been used as an facade to promote religious far-right ideologies (Narayanan, 2018; Tharoor, 2017). Similarly, Indian participants in this study criticised the 'double standards' in relation to the beef ban and the promotion of vegetarianism. In this regard, it seems that by highlighting the religious hypocrisy, participants may have also looked to reducing their own meat-eating dissonance, particularly in a culture that can be relatively intolerant towards individual deviations from socially-sacred norms (Fershtman et al., 2011):

- India has BJP [a political party] who promotes a lot of vegetarianism and stuff, and that is mostly towards cows more than any other animal. I find that it's bullshit because if you love animals you should love each and every animal (AG, male, 23-29 years, India).

- I think there are double standards everywhere because I live in a country or I live in a state where beef has been banned. India remains one of the top exporters of beef in the world. We're number two or number three in the world (TS, female, 40-45 years, India).

Similar to Hindu participants, Muslim participants in India also reported experiencing dissonance in relation to animal suffering and their consumption practices. Many reported feeling conflicted about animal slaughter but attempted to resolve their dissonance by highlighting that meat eating, unlike in many Hindu practices, is justified in Islam. Other literature also details how some tenets in Islam advocate the slaughter and consumption of animals (Ali, 2015; Tlili, 2012). In this regard, religious teachings were a key factor when it came to resolving the meat paradox:

- See, I'm a human. I was made to eat everything … God said "eat". Why should I go vegan? (SS, female, 40-45 years, India).

- This is just an animal, the God has said only, you know this is thing, we have sent this thing to eat for you only … Those are the command of God. So we think and do it (SA, male, 20-29 years, India).

During the festival of *Bakri Eid*[2] in India—which is also known as the festival of sacrifice (Encyclopaedia Britannica, n.d.; First Post, 2019)—some Muslim participants reported experiencing pity and discomfort in relation to

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[2] Some sources refer to the festival of sacrifice as Bakri Eid whereas some participants called it Bakra Eid. Despite the different terms used, this refers to the same religious festival.

the animal's imminent death. Others discussed developing a bond with the animal, prior to its sacrifice, but chose to participate in the ritual for a larger cause deemed to benefit both the animal and person. To this point, Bastian and Loughnan (2016) highlight that benevolence, where humans may view themselves as custodians of the animals and therefore feel they have a right over an animal's life, is one strategy used to resolve the meat paradox. This was also noted below as participants discussed the benefits of animal sacrifice as part of religious salvation:

- You cut the goat, especially in *Bakra Eid* and all, okay? ... If you have a pity on your animal ... you can't do that ... they are having a newborn [being born again] as in a human. It's in the books, like in the Quran that when you're sacrificing that [animal] on a *Bakra Eid*, they are taking a birth as a human (FK, female, 30-39 years, India).

- I used to cry because the *bakra* [goat] used to come [home] two days before. We used to give it a name, and then, play with it ... The animal, it used to cry [before its sacrifice]. I know that. But then, we were used to it ... because we were told that they [the sacrificed animals] help you when you die ... the animal is innocent, he'll put you on your back and cross [the bridge which leads to heaven] ... Because he's innocent, he will be able to cross that bridge (SS, female, 40-45 years, India).

One participant reported feeling disturbed and losing her appetite during the festival of *Bakri Eid*. She, hence, chose to resolve her dissonance through the strategy of avoidance (Rothgerber, 2014) where she closed her windows at home, during the animal's sacrifice, as the experience was emotionally overwhelming:

- In my house, if that thing [reference to slaughter] is happening also, I just shut my windows and everything ... When you slaughter the animal, of course they'll make the noise, so that disturbs me ... And during that days, I cannot eat also so properly

> ... I mean half of the time I'm on the bread butter, it's like that ... two, three days I'm feeding that animal and all of a sudden, if it's slaughtered in front of you, it's quite disturbing for me (TS, female, 30-39 years, India).

Others resolved the dissonance by changing their behaviours. This involved refusing to participate in the festival of sacrifice or looking to alternative practices, such as marking the ritual by cutting a cake with a goat on it rather than an actual animal:

- Even on *Bakri Eid*, we don't like that ... they cut the goats and all. We don't do that ... my sister ... she's very connected to nature and me, too. Because we care (AA, male, 23-29 years, India).

- During *Eid* times, the goat's getting killed. So nowadays what people did was instead of killing goats, they cut the cakes ... they had a goat cake and they were cutting that, instead of killing the goats. It was like a protest ... A lot of goats are getting killed, the way they are brought in the trucks ... you feel very sad that it's happening in India, the way they have been treated it's very bad (LS, male, 23-29 years, India).

Muslim and Hindu experiences of the meat paradox appear to sit in contrast to one another. Muslim participants reported feeling conflicted in relation to animal suffering but claimed to feel compelled by religious practices to slaughter and consume the animal. On the other hand, the Hindu participants were conflicted due to religious teachings which emphasised the opposite—i.e., vegetarianism and non-violence towards animals. The next and final section of the findings highlights some strategies of categorisation used in both countries to help resolve the meat paradox.

6.4.4 Categorisation of animals across both countries

Carnism is a belief system where one learns to categorise certain species as suitable for consumption but not others (Joy, 2010). In this study, the perception of acceptable and unacceptable meat animals appeared to be

the same across the two cultures. The thought of killing and consuming a dog, considered a pet in both cultures, caused great distress among participants:

- No, I wouldn't eat a dog … I guess because, in Australian culture, they've never been considered as something you eat. It's something that you have as a pet (RK, male, 30-39 years, Australia).

- This dog festival thing, somewhere in China … I was quite horrified that somebody is eating dog meat … I wouldn't do it personally (PK, male, 30-39 years, India).

Perceptions of cuteness—in pets and baby animals—also created greater conflict as these animals were considered "too cute" to consume. This is concordant with previous findings that people report greater dissonance about eating animals that look cute (Ruby & Heine, 2012; Sherman & Haidt, 2011):

- Cute animals are a lot easier to empathise with … So things like puppies and dolphins … they're [lambs] quite cute … I am a little bit uncomfortable with the idea of lamb being killed (MC, male, 30-39 years, Australia).

- I've seen so many cat videos … It's the affection that keeps us going … they are so cute to have … A cat is not grown to consume, they are there to be kept as a pet (AS, male, 23-29 years, India).

In addition, perceptions of animal intelligence also seemed to create dissonance. Previous literature similarly indicates that perceptions of intelligence in an animal makes people less willing to consume it (Ruby & Heine, 2012):

- I think that an octopus is really smart and I feel really guilty if I've eaten an octopus and I love eating octopus [laughs] … I've seen videos of octopus coming up to divers and interacting. You know you've seen those videos of how they … choose the winner of

different things and people do say that they've got millions of these neuroreceptors and they're really smart (RH, female, 40-45 years, Australia).

On the other hand, some participants gave examples of how people in certain parts of the world tended to consume unusual animals. In this regard, by extending carnist meat-eating principles of Normal, Natural, and Necessary (Joy, 2010) towards other species, participants tended to justify their own meat consumption practices. To this point, other literature also highlights that when ethical dissonance arises, some may resort to redefining 'unethical behaviours' and, hence, may attempt to blur distinctions between right and wrong (Barkan, Ayal, & Ariely, 2015):

- If you go to Northeast, in Assam, in Nagaland (in India) … you will get to see a lot of delicacies made out of worms, insects and reptiles. It's very common for them. It's their delicacy. So it's the same with me … Just be open to eating everything without judging. No matter what it is (PG, female, 23-29 years, India).

- I don't think anything negative towards people in Asia that eat dogs that people have as pets because that's just what they do over there. And it's no different to us eating a cow (BP, male, 30-39 years, Australia).

The consumption of companion animals—such as dogs and cats—was more likely to create dissonance among participants in both countries. On the other hand, some stated that eating animals, irrespective of species, is a norm across several cultures. In this way, a reliance on external norms—as also similarly highlighted in other studies (Bastian et al., 2012; Loughnan et al., 2010)—can be used to resolve the meat paradox.

6.5 Discussion and conclusion

Traditionally, Australia and India have differed in their socio-cultural practices in many ways. However, globalisation (Majumdar, 2010; Sinha, 2011) and the modernisation of emerging countries (Firouzeh, 2004) have

helped to somewhat blur cultural distinctions and create greater cultural homogeneity. For many people in India today, meat eating is linked to social status and a sense of well-being (Khara & Ruby, 2019), similar to what has been found in Australia (Bogueva et al., 2017). Indeed, several common strategies to reduce dissonance towards meat eating emerged in both countries. These included various forms of distancing (Bastian & Amiot, 2019; Rothgerber, 2014), belief in human superiority over animals (Dhont et al., 2019; Regan, 2004; Singer, 2009), carnism (Bastian & Loughnan, 2016; Joy, 2010), and criticism of alternative dietary practices (Adams, 2001; Rothgerber, 2014).

Despite the similarities in dissonance reduction strategies, the ways in which these manifested reflected some of the socio-cultural and institutional differences that still prevail across the two countries. In Australia, the plight of animals on factory farms is a distant reality for many urban Australians. However, the mistreatment of farm animals has been a recent area of focus in the media (Sinclair et al., 2018; Tiplady et al., 2012) and among some activist groups (Bray & Ankeny, 2017). This appears to have created some dissonance towards the traditional meat-heavy diet. As a result, many Australian participants claimed they have reduced their meat consumption or have looked at kinder alternatives. On the other hand, in India, open-air wet markets, where live animals are slaughtered in public view, are still prevalent (Chatterjee, 2017a; The World Bank, 2011). Although many Indian participants discussed being disturbed by this, many used emotional numbing (Nabi, 1998) and avoidance (Rothgerber, 2014) to overcome their dissonance.

In addition, participants from both countries discussed instances of moral hypocrisy in relation to vegetarian/vegan practices. While Australian participants mentioned the self-proclaimed vegetarians who might succumb to a dietary lapse, Indian participants highlighted these inconsistencies in relation to religious and caste-based norms—i.e., the use of garlic and onion in Indian food despite some religious faiths prohibiting this, meat-consuming Brahmins, and the cow-protection movement being promoted by groups with

a hidden religious agenda. In this regard, the attempt to reduce one's dissonance involved judging the moral transgressions of others more harshly in comparison to one's own, is similar to findings from past work by Barkan, Ayal, Gino, and Ariely (2012).

Within India, there were also some differences noted across the two major religious groups: Hindus and Muslims. Some Hindu participants reported feeling guilt in relation to meat consumption as they were violating customary norms. In contrast, some Muslim participants felt conflicted about committing violence towards animals but felt mandated to do so according to their religious rituals. This reflects other findings that individuals from collectivist cultures, in general, are more likely to experience guilt if they are seen to violate sacred social norms (Wong & Tsai, 2007).

6.5.1 Limitations

When attempting to understand ambivalence or the "psychological tug-of-war between opposing evaluations", one limitation is that studies often tend to overrely on participants' potentially-biased reporting into their own psychological states (Schneider et al., 2015, p. 2). Another challenge with self-reported data is that participants may underreport their levels of meat consumption in order to reduce their dissonance (Dowsett et al., 2018; Rothgerber, 2013). This raises questions about the extent to which some participants changed certain behaviours—such as adopting more ethical alternatives, cutting back on meat consumption, or refusing to participate in sacrificial rituals—as a means to reduce their dissonance. Indeed, other literature highlights that some participants may emphasise certain behaviours that they think are appropriate while simultaneously downplaying perceived inappropriate behaviours in order to create a positive impression on the interviewer (e.g., Donaldson & Grant-Vallone, 2002; Jones, 1983).

In addition, the primary researcher of this study follows a plant-based diet for ethical reasons. Although this was not disclosed to the participants, it raises the possibility of there being some subconscious bias on part of the

researcher (Pillow, 2003; Probst, 2015) that may have coloured interpretations of omnivore accounts of the meat paradox. However, Charmaz (2000) highlights that researcher subjectivity is an inevitable part of constructivist grounded theory. Therefore, we should not attempt to remove researcher subjectivity from the resulting theory, but rather, should aim to prioritise the data over any prior knowledge or views in relation to the topic (Charmaz, 2000). In this study, this was done was through gathering perspectives from multiple researchers as part of the analysis (Gordon & Langmaid, 1998), some of whom have different dietary practices. In addition, triangulation—through the use of secondary data sources—helped with obtaining diverse viewpoints (Olsen, 2004) and with validating and corroborating the data gathered for this study (Ramalho, Adams, Huggard, & Hoare, 2015).

6.5.2 Potential applications

Cognitive dissonance is reduced when the alternative choices are not deemed as attractive as the current choice (Brehm, 1956; Festinger, 1957). This creates the need to make the alternatives to consuming animals more appealing. Previous studies have shown that humane education is effective in encouraging compassion towards animals (Bekoff 2012; Taylor & Signal 2005). This is because such programmes foster empathy (Daly & Suggs, 2010; Faver, 2010), which also helps mediate aggressive tendencies towards both humans and non-human animals (Ascione & Arkow, 1999). In addition, animal-related stories can also help foster stronger human-animal bonds (Faver, 2010). Some examples include the 90s movie *Babe*, which featured the story of a pig destined to be slaughtered and eaten. The movie helped turn some of its audience into vegetarians—a phenomenon known as "The *Babe* Effect"—after the audience developed empathy for the pig and were shown the social bonds that existed between the farm animals (Nobis, 2009). Another example is the recent Netflix film *Okja*, which features the relationship between a young girl and a "superpig" who had been genetically engineered to fulfil the world's growing appetite for meat (McCorry, 2017).

The film reportedly led many viewers to question their decisions to consume meat (Ellwood, 2017; McCorry, 2017; Ramsier, 2017). Therefore, removing perspectives that objectify farm animals while continuing to increase their visibility in popular culture (Morgan & Cole, 2011) is likely to change our views towards them because, for one, perceptions of animal sentience make people less willing to consume an animal (Loughnan et al., 2014; Ruby & Heine, 2012). In this regard, the continuing emphasis on "nearness, equality and recognition" may also help encourage greater empathy (Sollund, 2017, p. 9).

Looking ahead, it might also be worth asking "what could be done to widen our circle of compassion?" One suggestion might involve establishing a culture of kindness and compassion. Some animal welfare organisations, as part of their attempt to dismantle meat's association with power and dominance, have highlighted that kindness is a strength (PETA, 2013). In this regard, there is the underlying message that "it requires courage, self-control and resolve to feel and express compassion and empathy for animals" (Greenebaum & Dexter, 2018) and that, ultimately, our ability to extend compassion towards all sentient beings is something that would benefit us all (Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2015).

6.5.3 Future research directions

The findings from the present study highlighted similarities and differences in relation to the meat paradox in Australia and India. Looking ahead, future research should explore the meat paradox across different subgroups and subcultures. In Australia, for example, researchers could delve deeper into demographic differences, given previous findings that Australian women (Worsley & Lea, 2008), younger Australians (Lea & Worsley 2002; Lea & Worsley 2003), and people with higher levels of education (Lea, Crawford, & Worsley, 2006) are more receptive to information on changing their dietary practices. Similarly, India is home to a large diversity of subcultures, each of which have their own foods and cultural practices (The Registrar General & Census Commissioner of India, 2011). Hence,

understanding these different food practices and perceptions of animal welfare, across various Indian subcultures, would also be worth exploring. In addition, it is worth investigating the meat paradox in other developing countries, given the rising levels of meat consumption (Steinfeld, Gerber, et al., 2006). As part of this, researchers could examine the extent to which people experience dissonance around eating meat, the strategies people used to reduce this dissonance, and ways in which meat alternatives could be made more compelling.

Chapter 7: Discussion and conclusions

The main objective of this research is to explore meat-eating practices in urban India and urban Australia. The findings of my study—covered in Chapters 3 to 6—are presented as standalone papers which have either been published or are currently under review. The purpose of this concluding chapter is to bring these findings together, highlight the key learnings and discuss the contributions these learnings make to our current knowledge of meat-eating practices. This is covered in *Section 7.1 Main findings of this research.* I use these findings to identify potential opportunities for reducing meat consumption and propose potential strategies to encourage people to make more sustainable food choices. This is covered in *Section 7.7 Potential applications of the study*.

The broader context, which frames this research, is outlined in *Chapter 1: Introduction and Literature Review*. Australia was selected as a country of interest as it has one of the world's highest levels of meat consumption. The average Australian consumes approximately 95 kilograms per capita per year, in comparison to the global average level of roughly 35 kilograms per capita (OECD, 2019b).

While many Western nations have shown high but fairly-consistent levels of meat consumption over the last two decades (OECD, 2019b), the global growth in meat consumption is predicted to mainly come from emerging markets (The World Bank, 2009) such as India (Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations, 2006).

India currently has very low levels of meat consumption (approximately four kilograms per capita per year (OECD, 2019b). However many are shifting from strict plant-based diets to diets containing greater amounts of meat (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 2006). This shift is due to an increasing number of people in the emerging middle classes who can afford to eat meat for nutritional, sensory and

symbolic reasons (Dagevos, 2016). The topic of meat consumption in many emerging markets remains relatively underresearched to date.

In light of the many environmental (De Boer and Aiking, 2011; de Vries and de Boer, 2010; Steinfeld et al., 2006), ethical (Leder, 2012; Prunty & Apple, 2013; Regan, 2004; Singer, 2009a; Stanescu, 2010; Williams, 2008) and health-related challenges associated with a meat-intensive diet (Friel, 2010; Friel et al., 2009; Willett et al., 2019), the broader aims of my study include encouraging sustainability by reducing meat consumption in established and emerging markets like Australia and India.

I use social practice theory as the main framework to guide this research. This framework is well placed to explore the evolution of practices over space and time (Shove, Pantzar, & Watson, 2012). I draw upon the work by Shove, Pantzar and Watson (2012), who define a practice as comprising three elements: competences (skills and know-hows), meanings (imagery and symbolisms) and materials (tools and technology). This is described in detail in *Chapter 2: Research methods and design.*

Given that a body of work argues for using a multitude of approaches to understand and explore sustainable behaviour change (Burke et al., 2018; Chung, 2021; Lorenzoni et al., 2007; Whitmarsh et al., 2011; Wilson & Chatterton, 2011), I also draw upon two key frameworks from social psychology as part of my study. The first is Erving Goffman's theory of frontstage (public) and backstage (private) behaviours (Goffman, 2012). This was used to understand the different contexts in which meat-eating occurs in India and is further elaborated upon in *Chapter 4: "We have to keep it a secret"—The dynamics of front and backstage behaviours surrounding meat consumption in India.* In addition, I include the theory of cognitive dissonance. This is the view of previous research which highlights that attitudes towards animals can have a significant influence on dietary choices (Rothgerber & Mican, 2014; Ruby & Heine, 2012). The concept of the meat paradox uses cognitive dissonance theory to highlight how people might experience dissonance when it comes to wanting to eat meat while also not wanting animals to suffer as a result of their consumption choices (Loughnan

et al., 2010). I use cognitive dissonance and the meat paradox in *Chapter 6: A cross-cultural meat paradox: A qualitative study of Australia and India*.

Chapters 3 to 6 in this thesis present and analyse the main findings of the research. These chapters comprise published or submitted journal articles and are organised as follows:

- *Chapter 3: "I am a pure non-vegetarian": The rise of and resistance towards meat eating in a globalised urban India*

- *Chapter 4: "We have to keep it a secret"—The dynamics of front and backstage behaviours surrounding meat consumption in India*

- *Chapter 5: An exploration of contemporary meat-eating practices in urban Australia*

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- *Chapter 6: A cross-cultural meat paradox: A qualitative study of Australia and India.*

As previously highlighted, this concluding chapter reprises the main findings of this research in *Sections 7.1, 7.2, 7.3 and 7.4*. As part of this chapter, *Section 7.5* reflects upon how the findings from the study contribute to the current knowledge on meat-eating practices. *Section 7.6* outlines the key limitations of the study. *Section 7.7* discusses potential applications for this research. Based on the current findings, *Section 7.8* describes fruitful lines of inquiry to pursue in future research. Finally, closing thoughts are presented in *Section 7.9* .

7.1 Main findings of this research

The main objective of this study is to explore meat-eating practices in urban Australia and urban India. I explore these themes through considering four key questions:

- What meat-eating practices are prevalent in each urban culture?

- How and why are these urban meat-eating practices changing?

- What role do materials, meanings and competences play within the contemporary urban practice of meat eating, and how are those roles changing?

- What opportunities for reducing meat consumption emerge from this understanding of meat-eating practices in each culture?

In order to consider these questions on meat-eating practices, I investigate the following thematic areas in both Australia and India:

- **Exploring past meat-eating practices:** Understanding past meat-eating practices is helpful in that it provides context to how meat-eating has changed over time. Understanding past meat-eating practices also means exploring the role of tradition. Exploring the role of tradition involves understanding the "customs and ceremonials by means of which the past speaks to the present" (Giddens, 1994, pp. 28–29) in each culture.

- **Exploring contemporary meat-eating practices**: Exploring contemporary meat eating encompasses understanding how various elements within a practice—materials, meanings and competences—shape the practice, and vice versa (Shove et al., 2012). This also involves exploring the influence of socio-cultural conventions, systems and resources on the practice of meat eating. Understanding the role of tradition is also important here. This is because tradition facilitates the "reproduction and maintenance of the past in the present" (Halpin et al., 1997, p. 5).

- **Exploring plant-based eating practices**: As part of understanding meat eating, I explore how plant-based foods are perceived and situated within various meat-eating cultures. This includes understanding cultural differences in relation to the way a plant-based diet is perceived versus a meat-based diet (Puskar-Pasewicz, 2010).

- **Exploring views towards animals**: I explore views towards animals and animal welfare, as part of understanding meat eating. This is in view of different cross-cultural beliefs when it comes to the killing and consumption of animals (Bekoff, 2010).

A summary of the response to the four research questions is covered below. This is detailed further in this chapter and in the findings chapters within this thesis:

- **What meat-eating practices are prevalent in each urban culture?** Meat-eating practices in both urban India and urban Australia are diverse and contradictory, making any single response to this question a challenge. The central dynamic in each culture is the continuing conflict between incumbent and emerging meat-eating practices. The findings in response to this question are separated into a discussion of past meat-eating practices in India and Australia—as covered in *Section 7.2 Past meat-eating practices* and present day or contemporary meat-eating practices as presented in *Section 7.3 Contemporary meat-eating practices*. The clash between past and present day practices in each culture has been detailed in *Section 7.4 The conflict between past and contemporary meat-eating practices*. The response to this question has also been elaborated upon in the findings chapters.

- **How and why are these urban meat-eating practices changing?** Key factors contributing to the change in meat eating include globalisation, awareness of new eating practices brought about due to cultural exposure and access to new information via the media. However, given each country's unique socio-cultural context, there are some similarities and differences in the way meat-eating practices have changed in each country. This is detailed in *Section 7.3 Contemporary meat-eating practices* and *Section 7.4 The conflict between past and contemporary meat-eating practices*.

- **What role do materials, meanings and competences play within the contemporary urban practice of meat eating, and how are those roles changing?** As part of exploring meat-eating practices, I look at how various elements—materials, meanings and competences—have shaped one another as well as the overall practice of meat eating. In India, access to new meat-based materials has created new meanings of status, novelty and progress relating to meat. On the other hand, meat eating is also associated with negative meaning in view of traditional vegetarianism. In Australia, exposure to new material information about ethical and environmental implications of a meat-heavy diet are shifting meanings in relation to this practice. However, while there is some desire to further cut back on meat eating, there are several perceived challenges in relation to material availability of certain plant-based foods, competences in preparing hearty plant-based meals and meanings associated with a plant-based diet. This is elaborated upon in *Section* 7.2 Past meat-eating practices*, 7.3 Contemporary meat-eating practices* and *Section 7.4 The conflict between past and contemporary meat-eating practices*.

- **What opportunities for reducing meat consumption emerge from this understanding of meat-eating practices in each culture?** Based upon my exploration and understanding of meat-eating practices, a key question that has emerged is - how can plant-based eating be more relevant in each culture? In India, this would mean making plant-based foods more appealing from a sensory and cultural perspective given that meat-based foods are presently associated with status, novelty and progression. In Australia, although there is more awarenesss of the ethical and environmental implications of a meat-heavy diet, more needs to be done to further encourage the shift along this trajectory. Some key initiatives for Australia include

continuing to dismantle associations between meat and masculine stereotypes, finding ways to encourage empathy for farm animals and making plant-based eating appealing. This has been elaborated upon in *Section 7.7 Potential applications of the study*. In addition, there are common strategies that could be applied to both countries to further encourage sustainable consumption. This is discussed in *Section 7.7.3 Potential applications across the two cultures*.

The next sections, which elaborate on these findings in more detail, have been organised into the following themes:

- **Past meat-eating practices:** This section covers the key findings relating to how previous socio-cultural beliefs, norms and customs have influenced meat-eating across the two cultures.

- **Contemporary meat-eating practices:** This section details how meat-eating practices are presently changing across the two cultures, along with the shifts and changes from past practices.

- **The conflict between past and contemporary meat-eating practices:** This section highlights some of the tensions and dissonance which arise as a result of the conflict between past and present day meat-eating practices.

The opportunities to reduce meat consumption are briefly covered within this section and elaborated upon in Section *7.7 - Potential applications*.

7.2 Past meat-eating practices

This section begins focusing on past meat-eating practices in India, while also highlighting some of the key similarities and differences noted across the two countries.

Figure 19 provides a summary of the findings using the three elements from the social practice theory framework by Shove et. al (2012).

Materials	Meanings	Competences
India - Meals at home were predominantly vegetarian. Meat was eaten ocassionally and reserved for only special ocassions.	**India** - Ancient teachings advocated vegetarianism & prohibited the killing and consumption of non-human sentient life forms.	**India** - Meals, which were often vegetarian, were cooked and consumed at home.
Australia - Meat was the centrestage of meals at home. Vegetables were presented as accompaniments to the main meat-based meal.	**Australia** - Some Western teachings highlighted that humans are superior to animals & thus the consumption of animals as 'lower' life forms was deemed acceptable.	**Australia** - Meals, which often comprised meat-based dishes, were commonly cooked at home. There was also more care/emphasis on preparing meat-based meals as opposed to vegetables.

Figure 19 - A summary of past meat-eating practices across the two cultures

7.2.1 Past eating practices in India

Hinduism, the dominant religion in India (The Registrar General & Census Commissioner of India, 2011), has several teachings which emphasise vegetarianism (Puskar-Pasewicz, 2010). These teachings also highlight a symbiotic relationship between human beings and nature (Sharma et al., 2014) and hence advocate *ahimsa,* or non-violence, towards other life forms (Hamilton, 2000). Although previous work indicates that meat consumption was and still is allowed as part of certain Hindu religious ceremonies (Alsdorf, 2010; Doniger, 2009), vegetarianism is deemed integral for achieving positive health and spiritual progress according to some traditional Hindu teachings (Filippini & Srinivasan, 2019).

The Brahmins—who were at the top of the Hindu caste hierarchy (Blunt, 1969) and traditionally dictated what were socio-culturally acceptable practices for the rest of Indian society (Sinha, 2011)—ate mainly vegetarian foods (Dolphijn, 2006). The traditional Brahmin diet comprises *saatvik* foods, or foods deemed "natural and 'good for the soul'", whereas *tamasic* foods, or foods considered sour, sharp, hot and astringent—such as meat—are

meant to be avoided (Dolphijn, 2006, p. 55). Furthermore, consuming the flesh of animals also tends to be associated with certain "polluting" and base characteristics (Caplan, 2008, p. 118) as well as with practices among castes from lower-social standings (Sathyamala, 2018).

Reflecting these traditional practices wherein vegetarianism is at the top of the food hierarchy (Chigateri, 2008), many Indian participants mentioned they consumed mainly vegetarian foods at home when growing up [as also detailed in Chapter 3]. The main meals at home would comprise *"dal* (lentils), *chawal* (rice), *sabzi* (vegetable)" *or* "vegetable and a *chapati* (flat bread)"*. To this point, previous research on ancient Ayurvedic practices - which is a system of Indian medicine whose origins date back over 2000 years (Tabor, 1981)— stipulate that a vegetarian diet was considered balanced as it seen was to comprise all the necessary nutritional elements (Manohar & Kessler, 2016). This is also noted in the study as a participant mentioned how his father would express the following views in relation to meat consumption:

- With our current vegetarian diet, what's in there that's lacking that you have to go down the path and consume non-vegetarian food? (RS, Male, 23-30 years, India).

Many also stated that sitting down to home-cooked meals was the norm when growing up and that eating out was relatively less common. This was likely due to family meals being synonymous with meanings of togetherness (Mestdag, 2005) and cohesion (Beutler & Lai, 1996; Blum-Kulka, 1997). This is also reflected below:

- Growing up it was more or less home food. Especially when we lived in a joined family, it wasn't very prevalent for us to eat out. Kids ate at 6:30 in the evenings (TS, Female, 40-45 years, India).

As noted in previous work (Powell & Nguyen, 2013), meals cooked at home were considered more nourishing whereas foods prepared outside were associated with poor-diet quality. This is reflected in the following feedback from a participant who recalls how there was an emphasis on eating home-

cooked foods as well as cooking from scratch using traditional methods of preparation:

- He [my father] never got my mother a mixer, a cooker. He said, "food cooked like this in a normal way natural way, is much tastier"... *Bahar se nahin khaana hai, cooker ki daal nahin achi hoti ... aur agar masala pisana hota hai to woh ladki padi hai usse pisna* [don't eat from outside, *daal* prepared in a cooker isn't nice ... and if you want to grind the *masalas* [spices], there's a [grinding] stick over there, use that]" (SS, Female, 40-45 years, India).

Among meat-eating households, meat was eaten mainly on the weekends or reserved for special occasions. Some participants also mention that meat was often eaten outside the home and by mainly male members of the family. This is in view of customary norms which frowned upon women indulging in meat eating (Caplan, 2008) as well as consuming meat within the sanctity of one's home (Khara et al., 2020). Reflecting these past practices, this might explain why the term "non-veg" is still used in everyday language in India to describe meat as it conveys a certain "immorality and illegitimacy" traditionally associated with meat (Ahmad, 2014, p. 23).

7.2.2 Past eating practices in Australia

Unlike some Eastern philosophies, which viewed humans as being in a continuum with other forms of life (Bekoff, 2010), some facets of ancient Western culture assumed an anthropocentric worldview (Weitzenfeld & Joy, 2014). These teachings proclaimed humanity was closer to the divine and that animals were placed on earth to merely serve human beings (Kymlicka and Donaldson, 2014; Mullin, 2002). As part of this practice, vegetarians were also labelled as heretics during the Middle Ages (Preece, 2008) as animals were considered creatures "without rational souls, were therefore imperfect and could not be immortal; they might therefore be killed and eaten" (Spencer, 1993, p. 176). Similar sentiments are noted in this study in relation to meat-eating practices in Australia:

- It's completely arbitrary which animals that we eat. It's based on the society we live in ... It's like, well, we ate lambs [when growing up], we ate baby cows, we ate chickens ... the way I also justify it is well, we're omnivores (LL, Female, 40-45 years, Australia).

In addition, previous work highlights that meat consumption in Australia was synonymous with meanings of social status during the early colonial days (Crook, 2006). Other studies on meat consumption among Western samples reveal that meat tends to be associated power and masculinity (Rozin et al., 2012; Ruby & Heine, 2011) and deemed necessary for a balanced diet (Bogueva et al., 2017; Lea & Worsley, 2002, 2003). Some of this might explain why the traditional Australian meal has commonly contained red meat, such as beef and lamb, as its main material elements (Symons, 1984). This is also detailed in Chapter 5. This presents a fairly stark contrast to the Indian vegetarian practices noted in this study. However, participants across both cultures mentioned that getting together over meals at home was the norm when growing up and, in some instances, it was an expectation:

- We would sit around the table and we would stop whatever we were doing and we would come and get food and sit around the table and that was very important to our parents (MC, Male, 30-39 years, Australia).

In contrast to India where the food at home traditionally comprised vegetarian dishes and meat was only occasionally consumed, Australian participants recalled how vegetables were presented as side dishes— as also reflected in other literature (Lupton, 2000; Sheridan, 2000)—while meat was centre stage or the main meal which one looked forward to. Some also highlighted that strict plant-based eating was and still continues to be viewed as "unnatural" by their family members. This is also reflected in previous research in that plant-based practices can be considered to a form of deviance from Western mainstream practices (Monin, 2007; Potts and Parry, 2010).

7.3 Contemporary meat-eating practices

Having covered past meat-eating practices and traditional influences on these practices, this section focuses on how and why meat-eating is changing. Across both cultures, rising levels of urbanisation, changes to household structures, a rise in disposable incomes and exposure to new eating practices have brought about some changes to the incumbent eating practices. However, there are some differences in the way these factors have shaped these changes in each country. Similar to the previous section, this section begins by focusing on contemporary meat-eating in India followed then by a comparison with Australia. Figure 20 below summarises key findings in this section.

Materials	**Meanings**	**Competences**
India: Globalisation and increasing exposure and access to meat-based materials has helped encourage meat eating.	**India:** Meat eating is associated with social status, progress and health. In comparison, traditional vegetarian food is considered bland, boring and utilitarian.	**India:** Access to new meat-based materials and meanings have encouraged the desire to learn more about new modes of meat-based cooking.
Australia: New material information from the media and broader socio-cultural shifts has increased demand for kinder and more sustainable forms of meat.	**Australia:** A diet heavy in red meat has some negative associations as people embrace new foms of healthier and more ethical meats.	**Australia:** Access to new material information and meanings in relation to a meat-heavy diet have encouraged the desire to learn more about plant-based cooking.

Figure 20 - A summary of contemporary meat-eating practices across the two cultures

7.3.1 Contemporary meat-eating practices in India

Economic liberalisation, which began in the early 1990s, paved the way for globalisation (Fernandes, 2000) and international food brands entering the Indian market (Goyal & Singh, 2007; Vepa, 2004). This has encouraged the rise of a new and diversified urban food culture (Siegel, 2010), a shift from

plant-based eating and the adoption of meat-based foods (Pingali & Khwaja, 2004). This is elaborated upon in Chapters 3, 4 and 6.

Globalisation has helped encourage the liberalisation of the Indian media landscape (Derné, 2003).Exposure to new images, symbolisms and lifestyles has also influenced eating practices (Filippini & Srinivasan, 2019). Participants discussed how new eating practices, and meat-based eating specifically, have been encouraged by their exposure to foreign television programmes such as Masterchef as well as through other forms of new media. Many also highlighted that their eating practices are changing as access to new technology—such as smartphones and food delivery apps—has brought a new and diverse array of foods right to their doorstep.

Amidst this new urban culture, the upwardly-mobile social classes view status symbols, often associated with Western consumption practices, as material differentiators from India's lower socio-economic classes (Lakha, 2005). Meat is one such example given the emergence of new meat shops and imported meats served in upmarket restaurants which cater to India's high income groups (Ahmad, 2014). The findings of the present study uncovered how participants are experimenting with 'new' meats such as beef and pork, which are deemed taboo according to cultural and religious norms.

In addition, many participants describe meat as being synonymous with health, fitness, strength and nutrition. These contemporary meanings, which appear to be further encouraging meat-eating in India, share some parallels with Australian meat-eating norms (Bogueva & Phau, 2016). They sit in contrast with previous cultural practices where meat eaters in India were deemed as being "more violent", aggressive and lacking in self-restraint as compared to vegetarians (Donner, 2008, p. 149):

- They [gym instructors] also say, "To build a good body, you have to eat chicken, and mutton, and everything." (SA, Male, 23-29 years, India).

- I was on detox but I'll tell you one thing eating veg really made me come down with my energy. I couldn't do gyming ... I used to do

gyming every alternate days and … my doctor had me … you'll not
be able to do gyming because there'll be no energy in your body
because your proteins are stopped (FK, Female, 30-39 years,
India).

In light of these new meanings associated with meat, vegetarian
practices today not only seem to be associated with poor nutritional quality
but also with blandness, a lack of novelty and, in some instances, even low
social status. This also presents a stark contrast to previous associations of
vegetarianism with health and well-being (Manohar & Kessler, 2016) and an
elevated caste-based social status (Sathyamala, 2018):

- If you had to go out, it would be sacrilege to order something
  vegetarian … because it's like you're spending money, why only
  spend it only vegetarian food? (NB, Female, 30-39 years, India).

- Non-veg food is much more synonymous with proteins rather
  than veg food. So later on if I make a decision to have more
  proteins, non veg would be much more frequent than veg (AG,
  Male, 30-39 years, India).

7.3.2 Contemporary meat-eating practices in Australia

Similar to India, globalisation and exposure to new cultural practices have
encouraged a shift in eating practices in Australia (Pickering, 2001) which
previously comprised a diet heavy in red meat. This is detailed in Chapters 5
and 6. However, unlike in India where exposure to new global norms has
encouraged meat-eating, Australian meat-eating practices appear to be
heading in a slightly different direction. For one, the media has helped raise
public awareness of the problems associated with livestock farming. This, in
turn, appears to have encouraged a shift away from the meat-heavy diets of
the past. Furthermore, the rise of ethical consumerism (Grunert et al., 2014)
brought about by global campaigns such as "Meat-free Mondays" and
"Veganuary", which call for cutting back on meat consumption (Mceachern,
2018), appears to have further spurred meat reduction practices in Australia.
Changing gender narratives (The University of Melbourne, 2016) have also

resulted in the Australian vegetarian male being less likely to face social stigmatisation.

A key similarity noted across the two countries has been the important role of reference groups – such as doctors and nutrition consultants - in shaping meat-eating practices. However, while some in India report their groups as advocating for meat eating, Australian participants reported the opposite in that their groups call for cutting back on meat consumption:

- You go to a doctor, they say … Like my father, for instance. Whenever he goes to the doctor, they always say, "Oh, yeah, you should change your diet. Introduce more vegetables. Cut back on meat." (DC, Male, 23-29 years, Australia).

The change in Australian meat-eating practices has also been encouraged by access to new technology such as smartphones and food apps. While many in India are turning to food apps to try new cuisines, Australian participants claim to use new technology to help them make more informed choices. As seen in previous research (Bray & Ankeny, 2017), many in this study mention replacing meat with alternative meat-based foods deemed more humane. Others highlight substituting red meats with meats like fish and chicken for predominantly health-related reasons, as also reflected in other literature (Taylor & Butt, 2017; Wong et al., 2015). Some also discuss supporting locally grown foods in an effort to be more environmentally sustainable. This presents a stark contrast to India where many mentioned wanting to try "new", interesting and varied forms of meat-based foods.

7.4 The conflict between past and contemporary meat-eating practices

Despite changes in eating practices, the findings from my study noted that emerging and contemporary practices can conflict with incumbent and past practices across both cultures. To this point, Blue et al. (2016) highlight that connections between practices can be characterised as either being in harmony or conflict. Thus, when attempting to understand each country's

meat-eating practices, the tensions and dissonance are important to consider. In India, there are tensions in relation to meat eating in light of traditional vegetarianism. This is detailed in Chapters 3, 4 and 6. The opposite is noted in Australia. While some discuss wanting to further cut back on their meat intake and adopt new plant-based practices, they encounter several challenges which mean that some continue with traditional meat-eating norms. This is covered in Chapters 5 and 6. A summary of the findings is presented in Figure 21 below.

Materials	**Meanings**	**Competences**
India: Due to cultural taboos, meat is kept segregated from vegetarian elements	**India:** Meat-eating conflicts with religious and socio-cultural practices which advocate vegetarianism	**India:** Meat-based cooking and eating are sometimes kept a secret in light of prevailing cultural stigmas
Australia: Widespread access to meat-based materials has made access to plant-based foods a challenge	**Australia:** Plant-based eating is sometimes seen as nutritionally inadequate and not 'masculine' enough	**Australia:** There is inadequate knowledge and skills relating to the preparation of hearty plant-based foods

Figure 21 - A summary of the conflict between traditional and contemporary meat-eating practices across the two cultures

7.4.1 The conflict between past and contemporary meat-eating practices in India

Despite changes in eating practices brought on by globalisation, meat eating continues to garner some negative associations in India. This is captured in the participant feedback as well as in some observations which depict how meat-based materials continue to be segregated from vegetarian elements in restaurants, shops and markets in India. In addition, other work highlights that, among meat-eating households, chicken is a relatively popular meat given religious taboos associated with beef and pork (Devi et al., 2014). I provide some additional insight by detailing how participants experience less

emotional discomfort when consuming chicken, as opposed to other forms of meats, as chicken is less likely to remind them that they are consuming an animal:

- It's [chicken] generally the first kind of meat that a person who's a vegetarian has, because it doesn't have any particular taste in itself … it doesn't have a pungent taste which other kinds of meat have. Even the texture is not a very strong texture. It doesn't have a very meaty kind of texture. It's not the red kind of meat (AG, Male, 30-39 years, India).

- It's a very dark colour, the beef. Beef is very dark colour … I feel very creepy (TS, Female, 30-39 years, India).

In addition, certain Hinduised vegetarian practices, which include the beef ban enforced by religious groups (Alam, 2017b; Biswas, 2017) also exist amidst this backdrop of urban change. Beef-eating in particular is viewed as a threat to Hindu socio-cultural norms (Narayanan, 2018), and there are several incidents of violence reported towards beef-eating minorities (Lakshmi, 2015). These sentiments of anxiety and fear, as noted among the beef-eating population, is also reflected among participants in the study. Furthermore, women indulging in the culturally-taboo practice of meat eating is more likely to be frowned upon. These views reflect the broader practice of gender distinctions which continue to exist within Indian society (Fadnis, 2018; Mahasakthi & Vasantha, 2019).

On a broader level, this also highlights how Westernisation is viewed with some disdain in India (Das, 2013) as modern practices, which are often synonymous with Westernisation, are seen to be eroding the "good" in traditional Indian culture (Seth, 2013, p. 279). To this point, van Wessel (2004) states that when it comes to characterising a person as "good", people in India often use descriptions that qualify that individual as "non-modern". This might explain why new consumerism has not been adopted without some critique in India (Upadhya, 2009) and reinforcing traditional cultural

and religious practices are seen as ways to counter the dominance of colonialism and Westernisation (Banaji, 2018).

In view of the stigma attached to meat eating, some participants resort to eating meat in secret, away from the knowledge of their vegetarian family and community (Khara et al., 2020) as detailed in Chapter 4. This is because in collectivist cultures, individual deviations from socially sacred practices are less likely to be tolerated (Fershtman et al., 2011). Thus, despite the rise of meat eating in India, the dissonance, tensions and resistance that exist are important to consider as part of the overall practice.

7.4.2 The conflict between past and contemporary meat-eating practices in Australia

As highlighted previously, key changes to Australian meat-eating practices include moving away from a diet heavy in red meat and consuming meats deemed healthier, more ethical and environmentally friendly. For these reasons, meats such as chicken and fish are popular. At this point, it is worth pointing out that, as a comparison, chicken tends to be popular in India as other meats, such as beef and pork, are deemed culturally taboo.

The key challenge noted in Australia relates to the adoption of plant-based eating. Despite participants mentioning they would like to adopt more plant-based foods, they encounter several barriers in relation to material accessibility, meanings and competences. Many claim there is limited access to plant-based menus and recipes in the local shops and supermarkets. Others discuss the relatively higher costs of plant-based foods which also make these difficult to access. To this point, previous work highlights how the mass production of animal-based foods (Nierenberg, 2003, 2005) and the power of the meat lobby (Simon, 2013) have made meat a relatively inexpensive and widely accessible commodity within Australia. In addition, limited cooking competences when it comes to preparing appetising, nutritious and hearty plant-based foods is also mentioned as a challenge.

When it comes to meanings, a key finding is that many claim plant-based foods are not as filling as meat. This also reflects other literature in that

meat tends to be synonymous with feelings of fullness in many Western contexts (Lupton, 1996). This perceived lack of fulfilment also appears to create associations of plant-based foods being nutritionally inadequate and plant-based consumers being physically weak. This reflects some common associations between meat and masculinity, power and strength (Potts & Parry, 2010; Ruby & Heine, 2011) as also noted in my study.

7.5 Contributions of this study

To date, the majority of studies on meat consmption tend to be conducted predominantly among consumers from affluent industrialised countries. In comparison, there is relatively little insight into consumers from developing countries. Thus, my study aims to make a contribution to the current knowledge by exploring meat-eating practices in urban India and providing cross-cultural comparison with Australia.

The Indian findings of my study are in line with previous research which indicate that globalisation has helped change many traditional Indian practices (Aarya & Tripathi, 2015; Fernandes, 2000; Mathur, 2010, 2014; Stigler et al., 2010; Upadhya, 2009). Reflecting other literature (Filippini & Srinivasan, 2019), my findings highlight that India is witnessing a cultural revolution as new consumption practices are viewed as symbolic of integration into the wider global community. They reveal how the rise in conspicuous consumption has encouraged a shift away from ideals of simplicity and austerity (Sinha, 2011) towards materialism and hedonism (Fernandes, 2006, 2009; van Wessel, 2004). My findings also reflect how urban Indians are attempting to balance this new consumer culture with long-held traditional values (Mathur, 2010, 2014), which can sometimes cause dissonance. This is elaborated upon in *Chapter 3: "I am a pure non-vegetarian": The rise of and resistance towards meat eating in a globalised urban India* and in *Chapter 4: "We have to keep it a secret"—The dynamics of front and backstage behaviours surrounding meat consumption in India*.

My study contributes to new insight by exploring the socially contentious and underresearched topic of meat eating. Apart from work on

broad social trends, there is sparse literature on the motivations and dynamics of meat consumption in contemporary Indian society. Using social practice theory as the main framework, my study highlights some key factors influencing meat eating in urban India today. Some of these factors include globalisation, changes to traditional household structures and access to new materials, meanings and competences brought about through new media and technology. My findings detail how meat is viewed, positioned and interacted with in the new globalised urban Indian context. New meat-based materials have given rise to new meanings and competences which have, in turn, encouraged further demand for meat-based foods. Within the social practice framework, my findings cover the dynamic and integrated relationship among elements and how these influence one another as well as the practice of meat eating.

The new elevated status of meat in India is reflective of broader contemporary class-based practices (Staples, 2016). Associations between meat and novelty, status and modernity appears to be symbolic of the larger divide between conservative rural life and modern urban consumption (Fernandes, 2009). On the other hand, given the influence of socio-cultural traditions, there is also shame and dissonance experienced when it comes to meat eating. As a result, meat eating is carried out in secret by some.

My study uses Erving Goffman's theory of frontstage (public) and backstage (private) behaviours (Goffman, 2012) to explore the dynamics of meat-eating in India. This is detailed in *Chapter 4: "We have to keep it a secret"—The dynamics of front and backstage behaviours surrounding meat consumption in India*. By exploring how meat consumption occurs in different public and private contexts, my findings highlight how certain stereotypes such as the caste-revering vegetarian Brahmin (Caplan, 2008; Puskar-Pasewicz, 2010; Staples, 2016) as well as other religious and gender-based stereotypes may actually present rather differently. In addition, my study also uses cognitive dissonance theory to shed further light on how the meat paradox is experienced by different subcultures within India.

Compared to India, there is a greater amount of literature on meat consumption in Australia. My Australian study confirms previous findings on the associations between meat and meanings of masculinity (Bogueva et al., 2017), health and a balanced diet (Lea & Worsley, 2001, 2003; Neale et al., 2015). However, while many studies on this topic tend to be quantitative in nature, my study encompasses a qualitative exploration of meat-eating practices. By gathering rich and descriptive data on this practice (Charmaz, 1996) my findings provide an additional layer of insight into the dynamics of meat-eating in Australia. Like in India, my Australian study uses social practice theory to explore how meat eating is shaped by a broader array of shifting conventions and social infrastructures (Spurling et al., 2013).

While meat eating in India is encouraged by the desire for experimentation, status and novelty-seeking, many in Australia report moving away from a diet heavy in red meat and towards meat-based foods deemed healthier, more ethical and environmentally friendly. In this regard, my Australian findings reflect other data which also report a shift in Australian dietary practices from red meats towards meats such as poultry (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development 2019).

As noted in India, my findings in Australia similarly note that some emerging and contemporary meat-eating practices are in conflict with incumbent and past practices. While many Australians express an interest in wanting to further cut down on meat consumption and increase their intake of plant-based foods, the sparse material availability of certain plant-based foods and limited competences in relation to preparing hearty and appetising plant-based foods are key barriers. As also found in previous work (Bogueva et al., 2017), many consider plant-based diets to be nutritionally inadequate. Furthermore, as noted in other research (Bogueva et al., 2017; Lea & Worsley, 2002, 2003), there are some negative meanings associated with plant-based eating. In addition, ideologies such as carnism (Joy, 2010) and traditional notions of masculinity (Adams, 2015), both of which support the consumption of animals, are barriers when it comes to the adoption of plant-based foods in Australia.

When it comes to the meat paradox, Australian participants report using similar strategies to the Indian participants to reduce their dissonance. These include various forms of distancing (Bastian & Amiot, 2019; Rothgerber, 2014), justifying human superiority over animals (Dhont et al., 2019; Regan, 2004; Singer, 2009), carnism (Bastian & Loughnan, 2016; Joy, 2010), and the criticism of alternative dietary practices (Adams, 2001; Rothgerber, 2014). However, despite the similarities in dissonance reduction, the manner in which these unfold and manifest differs in each country. This reflects some of the socio-cultural and structural differences which exist across the two countries. This is detailed in *A cross-cultural meat paradox: A qualitative study of Australia and India* (Chapter 6).

Based upon my exploration and understanding of meat-eating practices, I identify and propose potential strategies to help reduce meat consumption across the two cultures. In India, this includes making plant-based eating relevant again amidst the contemporary urban culture which seems to favour new forms of meat-based eating. In Australia, this encompasses creating empathy for farm animals, promoting a culture of kindness and also making plant-based eating relevant from a sensory and practice perspective. This has been elaborated upon in *Section 7.7 Potential applications of the study*.

7.6 Limitations

When it comes to religious and cultural groups, 80% of Indians are Hindus and 13% are Muslims but there are also numerous and diverse sub-faiths that exist (The Registrar General & Census Commissioner of India 2011). Each group or sub-culture has its own peculiarities when it comes to food and cultural practices (Majumdar 2010; Sinha 2011). Furthermore, Indian cuisine itself comprises an amalgamation of different foods from all across the Indian subcontinent (Sen, 2004). Each state and union territory within the country has its own cuisine as the local ingredients and cooking methods reflect its unique cultural heritage (Sen, 2004).

Vegetarianism tends to be less common amongst minority groups like Sikhs, Muslims, Christians, Bahais, Parsis and Jews in India (Yadav & Kumar 2006). In addition to cultural differences, meat consumption also tends to vary by geography. Data from the National Sample Survey Office (2012) shows that meat consumption, in general, is relatively higher across India's southern and eastern regions (National Sample Survey Office 2012). In addition, poultry and egg consumption are relatively higher in India's southern states (National Sample Survey Office 2012). The consumption of goat meat – also commonly referred to as mutton - is higher in the northern states, and the consumption of fish is higher across the coastal states (National Sample Survey Office 2012). Therefore, the findings on meat-eating practices in India may represent a small subsegment of India's large and varied population.

Similarly in Australia, gaining deeper insight into the shift in meat-eating practices may require looking at differences across males and females given the latter are more likely to be semi-vegetarians (Derbyshire, 2017; Worsley & Lea, 2008). This would also involve looking into other subgroups such as younger Australians (Lea & Worsley, 2002, 2003) and people with higher levels of education (Lea et al., 2006), both of whom were found to be receptive to alternative dietary practices. Furthermore, differences across urban and rural Australia may also need to be considered given previous work has found that urban Australians report feeling more conflicted about meat consumption when compared to rural Australians (Bray et al., 2016).

Furthermore, when attempting to understand socially-contentious topics such as meat eating and some of the taboos associated with it, some self-reported data may be overly reliant on participants' (potentially-biased) assessments of their own psychological states (Schneider et al., 2015). Another challenge is that participants may underreport their levels of meat consumption in order to reduce some of their own dissonance (Dowsett et al., 2018; Rothgerber, 2013). Indeed, other literature confirms that some participants may emphasise certain behaviours that they think are appropriate while simultaneously downplaying perceived inappropriate

behaviours to create a positive impression on the interviewer (e.g., Donaldson & Grant-Vallone, 2002; Jones, 1983). In addition, the primary researcher of this study follows a plant-based diet for ethical reasons. Although this was not disclosed to the participants, it also raises the possibility of there being some subconscious bias on part of the researcher (Pillow, 2003; Probst, 2015) that may have coloured interpretations of participants' accounts of their eating practices.

On the other hand, Charmaz (2000) highlights that researcher subjectivity is an inevitable part of constructivist grounded theory. Therefore, one should not attempt to remove researcher subjectivity from the resulting theory, but rather, should aim to prioritise the data over any prior knowledge or views in relation to the topic (Charmaz, 2000). In addition, the analysis for this study was done was through gathering perspectives from multiple researchers (Gordon & Langmaid, 1998), some of whom have different dietary practices. Furthermore, triangulation—the use of secondary data sources as well as observations—helped with obtaining diverse viewpoints (Olsen, 2004) and validating and corroborating the data for this study (Ramalho, Adams, Huggard, & Hoare, 2015).

7.7 Potential applications of the study

The 2006 report by the United Nations' - 'Livestock's Long Shadow' – garnered significant public attention (Bittman, 2012; Goodland, 2013; Henning, 2011). The report sparked debate (Petherick, 2012) about the impacts of the meat and livestock sector upon planetary health. However, to date, there has still been relatively little action by policy makers to encourage significant reduction in public meat consumption (Bristow, 2011; Dagevos & Voordouw, 2013). One reason for this is because the meat and livestock sector is regarded as "an integral part of society and its culture" (Revell, 2015, pp. 592–593).

Neff et al. (2009) in an article titled 'Yesterday's dinner, tomorrow's weather, today's news?' claims that encouragement for dietary change may be limited because the evidence which links meat consumption and planetary

health is relatively recent. Similarly, Steinfeld et al. (2006) claim there may be insufficient understanding of the scope of the problem because, even among a majority of policy-makers, the impact of the meat and livestock sector on water resources, biodiversity and climate change might not be fully understood. At a broader level, there is also the challenge of our own limited perceptions in that our "immediately felt physical needs… economic necessities, or social obligations" often take precedence over issues which are not immediately or obviously discernible (Moser, 2010, p. 34). Nonetheless, given the grave impact upon planetary health (Horton et al., 2014), the FAO released a second major report in 2013 - 'Tackling Climate Change Through Livestock' - which focused much more on the relationship between animal agriculture and climate change (Gerber et al., 2013). It appears that the report aimed to make the role of the meat and livestock sector more prominent within climate change discourse (McGregor et al., 2021).

In this section, and as part of the broader aims of this study, I identify and discuss potential opportunities to reduce meat consumption across the two cultures. Changing consumption goes beyond just choosing different food products because a lot of what and how we eat encompasses an amalgamation of tastes, sociability, cultural conventions competency and routines (Spurling et al., 2013). As part of this discussion, I draw upon Spurling et al.'s (2013) forms of practice intervention to propose strategies to help reduce meat consumption. This includes re-crafting practices through changing the elements; substituting practices by replacing less sustainable practices with more sustainable alternatives; and changing how practices interlock by changing the interactions between practices (Spurling et al., 2013). While this section primarily focuses on consumption-based strategies, I also discuss the important role of organisations and structural institutions in bringing about sustainable change. This section comprises the following main subsections:

- Potential applications: India

- Potential applications: Australia

- Potential applications across the two cultures

7.7.1 Potential applications: India

Consistent with many developing countries (Steinfeld et al., 2006), meat eating is on the rise in India (OECD-FAO, 2017). In fact, India's growth rates for meats like chicken, mutton and fish are reported to be among the highest in the world (OECD, 2018; Robinson & Pozzi, 2011). There are significant health and food security concerns associated with India's growing meat consumption (Cao and Li, 2013; Steinfeld et al., 2006). The rise in animal agriculture also has the potential to drastically increase India's greenhouse gas emissions and water scarcity (Vetter et al., 2017). Given a growing number of interdisciplinary research teams are advocating for a global transition to more plant-based diets (e.g., Hertwich et al. 2010; Willett et al. 2019), future research needs to examine how plant-based eating can be made more relevant and appealing amidst the new globalised urban Indian context.

In this section, I propose how a resource-intensive eating practice, such as meat-eating, could potentially be substituted for more sustainable alternatives (Spurling et al., 2013). One alternative is encouraging veganism as a significant body of research highlights that it is one of the most optimal diets for environmental sustainability (Aleksandrowicz et al., 2016; Biesbroek et al., 2014; Chai et al., 2019; Hallström et al., 2015; Perignon et al., 2017; Rosi et al., 2017; van de Kamp et al., 2018). Findings from the current study reveal that Indian participants have low to moderate levels of awareness of veganism. Those who are aware of it tend to associate veganism with being "a fad" as reflected in the following feedback:

- A lot of vegan people … especially in a place like Bombay, everyone's on a diet, and everyone gets fanatic about that diet … like this is it! (SM, Female, 40-45 years, India).

- Most of the vegetarians tend to say that, you know: "I am vegan." So they don't understand the meaning of it, but they do say that. To look cool … it happened over a period of time, like how Keto

became a fad among everybody, everybody is losing weight (VK, Female, 23-30 years, India).

These views towards veganism are rather different to Western motivations for adopting plant-based diets including environmentalism (Gaard, 2002; Hoek et al., 2004; Lindeman & Sirelius, 2001), health (Barr & Chapman, 2002; Hoek et al., 2004; Jabs et al., 1998; Key et al., 2006; Wilson et al., 2004) and concerns for animal welfare (Beardsworth & Keil, 1992; N. Fox & Ward, 2008; Kalof et al., 1999; Kenyon & Barker, 1998; Ruby, 2012).

India appears to be using new representations of consumerism to recreate its sense of identity (Johnson, 2005). The country seems to be seeking to differentiate itself from past practices and symbolisms which depict "the traditional Hindu self-effacing woman … [and] the struggling Indian peasant and worker" (Chaudhuri, 2001, p. 374) and distance itself from traditional values of simple living and austerity (Mathur, 2010; Shashidhar, 2007). As the country increasingly embraces consumption, materialism and hedonism as markers of status and success (Sinha, 2011), this study's participants highlight that there's an unspoken "stigma" in being referred to as traditional.

Ironically, given the desire to embrace this new ethos of consumerism, plant-based foods appear to making a comeback within urban India. Recent news reports highlight that veganism is on the rise (Chittilapally, 2019; The Tribune, 2020). A key reason for this is due to the new culinary experiences it is seen to offer (Iyer, 2016) in a culture which participants describe as seeking to "experiment with different kinds of foods". The study's participants also mention that veganism is gaining popularity in India as it seen to be a Western trend: "In India, anything [in reference to the vegan trend in India] from the West is like, approved". Other literature similarly highlights that globalisation in India is associated with Western culture (Stigler et al., 2010) and Western practices tend to be seen as synonymous with meanings of social progress (Khara et al., 2020). In this regard, continuing to highlight meanings of novelty and trendiness associated with veganism could result in greater desire to embrace this practice. Thus, veganism could potentially

replace meat consumption as a sustainable new alternative. The following subsections elaborate on some of the strategies that could be utilised to further promote the appeal of plant-based foods in urban India. These include:

- Increasing the sensory appeal of plant-based foods,

- Making plant-based foods more appealing through the use of reference groups within collectivist Indian culture,

- Making plant-based foods more appealing by blending novelty with tradition.

7.7.1.1 Increasing the sensory and cultural appeal of plant-based foods

Many of India's spice-infused and flavour-rich cuisines are described as offering a multi-faceted sensory experience (Ferdman, 2015) that appeals to one's sense of sight, smell and taste (Rhind & Law, 2018). As India's urban landscape increasingly offers an array of diverse new cuisines—many of which are meat-based—the challenge would be to make plant-based foods appealing again from a sensory perspective. This was also noted among participants in this study who mention that plant-based foods, relative to meat, do not quite offer an appetising sensory experience:

- If you go to a standard restaurant menu … it's mostly a few *paneer* and this or that, and upon that they don't do much justice to the vegetable itself. It's the same *masala* which they mix in it, so everything tastes the same to me, so that's a big difference when you consider meats. If I eat chicken in different preparations it has a different taste, if I have fish, each has a different taste you know? So if I'm eating outside, it matters what taste brings justice to whatever has been cooked. So frankly I would have loved to have vegetables … but the standard fare is not something great (AG, Male, 30-39 years, India).

The sensory properties of foods encompass their taste, smell, colour, shape, texture and temperature (Rolls et al., 1982). Among these, a strong

factor influencing sensory appeal is the presence of an umami flavour in foods, described as savoury, "brothy" and sometimes "meaty" (Klosse et al., 2004). Umami increases the palatability of food (Kawasaki et al., 2015; Klosse et al., 2004). When it comes to vegan food, a participant in the study mentions how such food "doesn't have the kind of umami flavours that you want in a regular diet". This makes vegan food relatively unappealing relative to the new meat-based alternatives.

Other work on palatability has indicated that smell/aroma is another important contributor to the perceived attractiveness of food (Klosse et al., 2004). Foods with a more intense aroma profile can create an increased sensation of satiation and satisfaction compared to foods with less intense aroma profiles (Ramaekers et al., 2014; Ruijschop et al., 2008). Indian food often tends to be characterised by a strong aroma (Ferdman, 2015). Many in this study described tasty foods as   appealing to one's sense of smell. Hence, developing vegan flavour profiles to suit the Indian palette and increasing the material attractiveness of such foods could be areas of focus for future studies.

As part of the strategy to promote the appeal of plant-based foods, it is worth also considering India's consumption of dairy. India's per capita consumption of milk and milk products is among the highest in Asia (Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations, 2006). Dairy products have long had cultural significance within the Indian diet (Narayanan, 2018). Over the coming decades, the projected growth rate for fresh dairy in India is expected to be higher than te previous decade due to an increase in animal milking facilities similar to mass-scale factory farms (OECD-FAO, 2017). Thus, dairy consumption in India is an important issue to address given the ethical (Chatterjee, 2017b; Mullan et al., 2020; World Animal Protection, 2016) and environmental (Bava et al., 2014) implications of intensive dairy production. However, when it comes to consuming non-dairy foods, many participants in this study express concern about how this might sit in relation to traditional Indian practices:

- I think, without milk how will you have your tea? (FK, Female, 30-39 years, India).

As part of the discussion, other mention that plant-based milks are largely unappealing from a sensory perspective:

- It's too watery ... It's just a juice that's taken out. It's just like almond milk in a way. It's water that's been mixed with juice from a particular thing (PG, Female, 23-29 years, India)

- We used to pull pranks on each other where instead of milk we used to have the talcum powder mixed with water, and give it to someone as a prank ... that is almost exactly like what soy milk tastes like. So I still perceive that whenever I drink a powdery taste of the milk (TK, Male, 30-39 years, India).

On the other hand, some speak about non-dairy plant-based foods as being surprisingly delicious if prepared in the right manner. This signifies potential opportunity for vegan cuisines in India.Further research is required to further enhance the sensory and cultural appeal of non-dairy foods and practices:

- It's [vegan food] nice. If it's done well, it's actually delicious ... There's a restaurant in Bandra called Sequel. It's an entirely vegan menu and it is oh god so delicious! You wouldn't be able to tell that there is no butter or cheese or oil ... in any of their food! (KS, Male, 30-39 years, India).

7.7.1.2 Encouraging plant-based eating practices through reference groups within collectivist Indian culture

Findings from my study highlight that local celebrities adopting veganism has helped contribute to its rise in India:

- Vegan diet. That was the last news - where all the actors, you know, when they go vegan. That's when that comes in news...For me, it's all [about] style (SS, Female, 40-45 years, India).

This is likely because, particularly within India's high power distance culture (Ghosh, 2011; Hofstede Insights, n.d.-b) with unequal distribution of power across social classes (Hofstede, 1980), social status is an important value (Ghosh, 2011; Hofstede, 2001). Celebrities are often associated with high status due to their wide recognition in Indian society (Gupta, Aggarwal & Dang, 2009). Celebrities are considered effective endorsers of a product, service or practice as they tap into the individual's desire to be part of this aspirational reference group (Escalas & Bettman, 2009). Thus, using these reference groups to promote meanings of novelty and trendiness in relation to plant-based eating might be effective given there is greater social pressure in collectivist cultures to follow in-group norms (Paul et al., 2006; Triandis, 2004).

Other sources highlight that green consumer practices are also considered trendy globally (Thakur and Gupta, 2012; Thomas, 2008), with some proclaiming that "green is the new black" (Williams, 2007). This, to some degree, was noted in the Indian study where some traditional vegetarians tend to refer to themselves as vegan:

- vegan is the new vegetarian...most of the vegetarians tend to say that, you know: "I am vegan."....So they usually say that you know, "I am vegan," to sound really nice (VK, Female, 23-30 years, India).

Being green can also convey a certain sense of elitism through the adoption of practices deemed anti-mainstream (Winge, 2008). This was noted in this study in that some saw meat consumption as a way to differentiate themselves from their peers and practices. Thus, perhaps using non-mainstream meanings to promote new and interesting modes of plant-based eating might further appeal to a class-conscious urban India (Butalia, 2013). Food and consumption practices are often viewed as means through which different groups socially distinguish themselves from others (Miele, 1999).

7.7.1.3 Promoting plant-based eating by blending novelty with tradition

Despite a desire to embrace novel foods, food neophobia tends to be higher in India relative to other cultures (Bryant et al., 2019). The findings from my study indicate that, although globalisation has helped expose India to new meat-eating practices, glocalisation—or the adaptation of new foods to the local culture—has been instrumental in helping to lower the barriers of resistance towards meat eating. Other work similarly highlights that India today is a hybrid of traditional conservatism and a desire for novelty (Mathur, 2014). Many Indians are described as wanting "to nourish the practices of yesterday with the resources of today" (Sinha, 2011, p. 173). Thus, plant-based practices like veganism could be reintroduced as encapsulating a blend of modern newness and cultural familiarity. Some recent news reports state that this is already on the rise with examples of vegan dishes such as *tofu Amarnath* (named after the Hindu shrine located in North India), vegan *lassi* (an Indian beverage traditionally made from cow's milk but, in this case, it is replaced with coconut milk), traditional sweet dishes made without milk (Sawhney, 2019) and *tofu palak* (a variation on *palak paneer*, traditionally made with spinach and cottage cheese) (One Green Planet, 2019).

In addition, the push towards plant-based practices might also involve re-introducing traditional teachings which emphasise humankind's symbiotic relationship with nature (Bekoff, 2010) into contemporary urban culture. Some of this ethos already seems prevalent within some of India's modern day practices. For example, the country has allocated its street animals their own independent status as they are given the freedom to roam, live as they please and coexist alongside humans (Srinivasan, 2013). Other examples of India's regard for its animals includes the fact that it outranks Australia on the World Animal Protection Index in its support for universal animal welfare and provision of humane education (World Animal Protection, n.d.). News reports have highlighted that India, under pressure from its citizens, was the first Asian country to ban animal testing for cosmetic products (Mukherjee, 2014) and officially recognise dolphins as nonhuman persons which meant banning their capture and confinement (Coelho, 2013). This

sensitivity toward animal personhood, influenced in part by ancient teachings, was also noted in this study:

- I think because we identified as Hindus, it would be a pure blasphemy to go and eat something that we consider as a mother, because cow has a significance of a mother (SG, Female, 30-39 years, India).

- I'm having a lot of mutton, chicken - but still deep in your heart….you feel a little bit of guilt inside, deep inside your heart. Just for your enjoyment you have killed an animal (LS, Male, 23-29 years, India).

In this regard, bridging modern day practices with age-old philosophies of compassion might well be worth reexploring given some Indian cultural practices view material prosperity as coexisting with practices that encourage preservation, respect and regard for the natural world (Chapia, 2013; Patra, 2009; Sharma et al., 2014).

7.7.2 Potential applications: Australia

Today, wealthy industrialised nations generally consume far more animal products per capita than developing countries (Mcgregor 2021). Australia has one of the world's highest levels of meat consumption, with a yearly average of approximately 95 kilograms per capita (OECD, 2019b). As part of this section, I explore how to encourage sustainable consumption by considering how one practice interlocks with other practices (Spurling et al., 2013). To this point, previous work highlights that our perception, treatment and consumption of farm animals is largely based upon hierarchical and speciesist worldviews (Singer, 2009b) which are the result of learnt cultural practices (Sollund, 2011). Thus, encouraging empathy for farm animals would be important when it comes to changing and dismantling some of these cultural perspectives. In addition, promoting a more compassionate version of masculinity, different from hegemonic ideals – which encourage domination over animals (Gaard, 2002; Rogers, 2008) and meat-eating

(Adams, 2015)– is also key. Making plant-based eating appealing from a sensory and cultural perspective could also potentially bring about change. This is elaborated upon in this section on potential applications in Australia:

- Encouraging greater empathy for farm animals

- Changing masculine stereotypes and their links with meat eating

- Strategies to encourage plant-based eating

7.7.2.1 Encouraging greater empathy for farm animals

While stories about companion and wild animals are commonly featured in popular culture, narratives on farm animals are relatively sparse (Packwood Freeman, 2009). It seems that "the average viewer knows more about the lives of cheetahs and sharks than he or she does about the lives of chickens or veal calves" (Singer, 1995, p. 216). Given our attitudes towards farm animals are, in part, formed through popular culture (Baker, 2001), continuing to increase the visibility of farm animals in our everyday narratives might help shift this perspective (Morgan & Cole, 2011). This was also reflected in the participant feedback, as below:

- If you have a pet that you saw growing up, then you tend to think it's a pet, like maybe a piglet. But you're not gonna kill that pig because you've seen it growing up. But you would eat something that was from outside, and not your pet. It's how humans perceive (CL, 31-39 years).

The few examples where farm animals have been brought closer and featured in popular culture have been successful in creating change. One example is the movie *Babe*, which featured the story of a pig destined to be slaughtered and eaten. This movie helped turn some its viewers into vegetarians—a phenomenon also known as "The *Babe* Effect"—after they developed empathy for the pig (Nobis, 2009). To this point, a paper by Williams (2008, p. 377) on affected ignorance and animal suffering similarly states that messages in major films like Babe and Chicken Run, both of which

depict animal farming, tend to provoke "moral sensibilities about the realities of meat production."

This shift in attitudes appears arise due to several reasons. These films focus predominantly on the plight of an individual character which appears to trigger the "identifiable victim effect" (Jenni & Loewenstein, 1997). This involves people placing greater value on individual victims as compared to statistical lives which are seen as more distant and impersonal (Carlier & Treich, 2020). This might also explain why bonding with a pet during childhood can significantly shape one's meat-eating behaviours later in life (Rothgerber & Mican, 2014) as one is more likely to develop greater empathy for animals and view them as sentient beings (Heiss & Hormes, 2018; Rothgerber & Mican, 2014). This was noted in this study in relation to keeping farm animals as pets:

- I love animals. Yeah. I've got a pet rabbit, dog, we've had fish, we've had chickens, backyard chickens … Definitely not for consumption! … they were pets for eggs … people can have cows as companions like us. People love their cows and people have cows for milk and don't slaughter them. And people become attached (BP, Male, 30-39 years, Australia).

Furthermore, some omnivores also report greater dissonance about eating animals that look cute (Ruby & Heine, 2012; Sherman & Haidt, 2011). The cuteness effect—described as a response to neonatal or baby-animal characteristics "such as big round eyes, small size, and softness" (Buckley, 2016, p. 2)—tends to run across cultures (Röder et al., 2013). From an human evolutionary standpoint, such perceptions of cuteness in a subject tends to trigger feelings of increased empathy or caretaking towards the subject (Nittono et al., 2012; Preston, 2013). This is also noted by participants in this study:

- Cute animals are a lot easier to empathise with … So things like puppies and dolphins and things are a lot easier to empathise with and to protect (MC, Male, 30-39 years, Australia).

Moving forward it is important to continue to increase public awareness and sensitivity towards farm animal sentience by perhaps continuing to highlight examples like the following i.e., young cows demonstrating the ability to form social bonds within their herds (McLennan, 2013), fetal lambs possibly being aware of maternal vocalisations (Duncan, 2006) and sheep being able to recognise facial expressions (Constable, 2017). Another example is the book *The Inner World of Farm Animals* which details findings on the remarkable emotional and intellectual capabilities of farm animals (Hatkoff, 2009).

Humane education has beenfound to be effective in encouraging empathy towards animals (Ascione, 1992; Barker et al., 2000; Bekoff, 2012; Taylor & Signal, 2005). Humane education is a comprehensive field of study that draws connections across various form of social justice such as human oppression, animal exploitation and ecological degradation (Weil, 2004). As part of its curriculum, it often "includes ... teaching children kindness toward animals" (Ascione, 1997, p. 1). While many humane education programmes focus predominantly on human relationships with companion animals (Arbour et al., 2009; Daly & Suggs, 2010), there is the dire need to also include farm animals as part of these programmes (Ascione, 1992; Kaufmann, 1992). As part of this, suggested strategies include enabling direct human contact with farm animals (Kaufmann, 1992) which will help foster a greater sense of identification and empathy (Daly & Suggs, 2010; Faver, 2010).

7.7.2.2 Changing masculine stereotypes and their links to meat eating

Despite the interest in new food norms and plant-based diets, as noted in this study, studies still show that vegans remain a negatively stereotyped group (Potts, 2017; Potts & Parry, 2010). Spurling et al. (2013) highlight that different eating practices tend to engender different social meanings, and thus change and interventions would encompass crafting new tastes as well as social meanings. Meat consumption, particularly in Western societies, is linked with male identity and power (Rothgerber, 2013; Rozin et al., 2012). Some men apparently even believe that caring for animals is a sign of

weakness in that the "[d]enial of animal suffering is congruent with male norms of stoicism, toughness, and emotional restriction. Masculine men are not supposed to relate to the less fortunate, to display sensitivity or empathy" (Rothgerber, 2013, p. 366). In comparison, the vegetarian man is viewed as relatively less masculine (Ruby & Heine, 2011). Such views were noted in this study:

- They [people in general] see eating meat as the reward and as a measure of a man's strength, because they were able to kill that animal, to cut it apart, then cook it up and eat it, whereas something like vegetables, you can go to the ground, pick it up, and you don't even have to cook it, you can just eat it like that, which is why maybe people who form that view might see eating vegetables as an easy way out to someone who can't muster up the strength, or that kind of attitude or the courage to go kill an animal, to go eat it (DC, Male, 23-29 years, Australia).

In order to dismantle these gender-based stereotypes, one potential way forward would be for the plant-based industry to utilise communication strategies traditionally used by the meat industry. Some of this already seems to be on the rise given recent examples like the documentary *The Game Changers* which draws on a mixture of dramatic footage, scientific studies, and celebrity sportspeople to demonstrate the link between physical fitness and a plant-based diet (Psihoyos, 2019). Another example is Forest Green Rovers, described as the UK's first and 'completely vegan' professional football club with an environmental conscience (BBC, 2016, para. 1). In addition, Johnson (2011) highlights how books such as *Meat is for Pussies* are written to counteract gender-based stigmas associated with plant-based eating as these messages seek to reinforce traditional ideologies of masculinity through plant-based practices. This link between meat and masculinity was also noted in this study's findings:

- Like in Australia, the meat advertising is a bit of a problem. They have decided to move away from that...they kept getting complaints about it, so their current brand is 'we're for

everyone'. Not entirely sure how that works, 'cause they're very clearly not for people who are vegetarian for the religious reasons...I think there is an aspect of masculinity which can't really handle the pressures of modern life, and the way that people are sort of expected to be able to work together from different cultures and treating women as equals and that kind of thing....I personally, think it's ridiculous, because there's nothing about meat that is inherently masculine....My sense is that they'd [people who tend to associate meat and meat-eating with masculinity] be conservative. Anti-feminist, real toxic masculinity kind of stuff. They're subscribing to toxic use of masculinity (MC, Male, 31-39 years, Australia).

Thus, moving forward, it is important to link masculinity with meanings and values of kindness and compassion as an antidote to symbolisms of dominant power and hegemony (Greenebaum & Dexter, 2018). To this point, previous work has found that some vegan men have sought to challenge traditional notions of masculinity by embracing kindness and, in doing so, they have chosen to embody a hybrid form of masculinity (Greenebaum & Dexter, 2018). In this regard, there is the underlying message that "it requires courage, self-control and resolve to feel and express compassion and empathy for animals" (Greenebaum & Dexter, 2018, p. 345).

7.7.2.3: Strategies to encourage plant-based eating

Author Sherrie Inness (2006, p. 151) in her book 'Secret Ingredients: Race, Gender, and Class at the Dinner Table' highlights that "If people could not be lured to veganism by animals' rights and ethical issues, they could possibly be lured if vegan foods tasted better than anything else". This would be applicable to Australia given some of the sensory barriers noted in this study in relation to plant-based eating. Previous work highlights that 'distaste' – which is when one expects food to possess unpleasant sensory qualities such as having an unpleasant taste, texture or odour (Adise et al., 2015) – is a common reason for the rejection of plant-based foods (Glasson et al., 2011):

- I'm not a big fan. I make myself eat them. I go to Subway every
  now and then, get all the veggies...I don't like the taste of a lot of
  veggies like broccoli...Carrots here and there, if they're done
  nicely, bit of pumpkin here and there, yeah. But the rest, no (JE,
  Male 40-45 years, Australia).

On the other hand, despite these barriers, many in our study
expressed an interest in wanting to further cut back on meat-based foods and
increase their intake of plant-based foods for reasons relating to personal
health, animal and environmental welfare. A recent report by NGO Food
Frontiers & Life Health Foods (2019) as well as several news reports
(McGuire, 2021; Sakkal & Fowler, 2019) have also highlighted that these
factors are encouraging the growth of flexitarianism in Australia.

Reflecting this trend, mainstream food publications like Woolworths'
Fresh magazine (Woolworths, 2021), Taste.com.au (News Life Media, 2021b)
and Delicious (News Life Media, 2021a) are increasingly featuring diverse
plant-based recipes and dishes for their readers. Many of these include plant-
based variants of traditional meat-based dishes such as vegan buffalo wings,
vegan shepard's pie and the 'veganducken' described as "a vegan twist on the
traditional turducken" (News Life Media, 2021c, l. 1). This appears to be an
effective strategy given findings from previous research reveal that the
similarity of vegan substitutes to familiar meat-based foods is more likely to
reduce food neophobia, increase liking (Hoek et al., 2011) and willingness
(Adise et al., 2015) to try these foods.

Many of these food publications feature different plant-based dishes
from different cultures with examples such as "spicy Chinese eggplant with
tempeh...Thai-inspired broccoli in coconut-cilantro sauce... (a) multicultural
with a hint of Japan from the umboshi (sic) and miso and a Mediterranean
influence from the olive oil" (Inness, 2006, p. 162). Thus, as Parasecoli (2011,
p. 674) states, the hybridization of foodscapes can potentially open up new
worlds where "Ingredients, dishes, and practices can be interpreted as
carrying meaning...about their makers, their cultures, and their
environments. At the same time, they can be produced to carry meaning,

becoming effective tools of intentional communication". Thus, the blend of the familiar and novel may encourage further interest in plant-based eating among different sub-cultures in Australia.

The other point worth highlighting is that while many in this study recognised the health-related benefits of cutting back on meat consumption, they also felt limited in their competences when it came to preparing and eating plant-based meals that were appetising as well as nutritious. Thus, in addition to increasing the sensory appeal of plant-based foods, it is also important to address perceived concerns relating to the competences of preparing and eating "the right" plant-based foods. This is reflected in this participant's comment below:

- I would just really love some help to eat less meat...I don't necessarily want to become vegetarian but I do really want to reduce the amount of meat. And I think one of the drivers at this point is because my cholesterol is high...And you know those programs that have been so successful like I Quit Sugar, they help you with...how and what to eat and sometimes that's all what you need really (RH, Female 40-45 years, Australia).

The introduction of plant-based cooking and eating programmes, straddling both special occasions as well as simple everyday meals (Emerald Group Publishing Limited, 2009) and catering to diverse consumer groups (Norris & Messina, 2011), could potentially be a way forward. This is especially important given previous research highlights that consumers who agree that it is easy to prepare plant-based foods are more likely to have a low intake of animal products. The perceived ease of cooking plant-based foods becomes a facilitator towards adopting a plant-based diet (Reipurth et al., 2019).

In the paper titled 'Materially Constituting a Sustainable Food Transition: The Case of Vegan Eating Practice', Richard Twine (2018) further elaborates upon this by highlighting that the transition towards plant-based eating involves the interaction of competences as well as meanings and

materials. In terms of competences, Twine (2018) proposes building one's knowledge and skills in relation to plant-based ingredients, recipes, food sources and nutrition. In addition, he highlights that learning how to socially co-exist in a largely non plant-based world, where there are opposing view points and practices, is equally important (Twine, 2018). This is also reflected in the book titled ' Living Among Meat Eaters: The Vegetarian's Survival Handbook' by Carol Adams (2001). The book is essentially based on the following premise - "When we are meat-eaters living among meat-eaters, our world is reflected back to us, confirming our choices. When we become vegetarians, we stop being reflections; we may even be accused of breaking the mirror" (Adams, 2008, p. 3). Thus, this book is written as a practical self-help guide which provides tips, strategies and competences – such as how to eat out, cook at home for omnivore family members and entertain at home – to enable plant-based consumers navigate their way through the dominant omnivore culture (Adams, 2008).

7.7.3 Potential applications across the two cultures

Having covered some country-specific applications, this section covers strategies that could potentially apply to both cultures. It comprises the following subsections:

- Meat-reduction strategies across the two cultures

- Encouraging the consumption of more sustainable alternatives.

7.7.3.1 Meat reduction strategies across the two cultures

This section discusses potential meat reduction strategies. It starts by highlighting one possible approach to meat reduction, which is the implementation of a meat tax. It presents an overview of the benefits and challenges related to implementing a meat tax. It then discusses other potential meat reduction strategies where, rather than meat reduction being enforced, consumers are encouraged to voluntarily cut down on their meat consumption. In this section, I argue that the latter approach may be more effective.

A meat tax involves implementing a tax on foods like red meat which produce more greenhouse gases (Nordgren, 2012). Thus, it is considered a way of regulating production through the reduction of consumption (Singer, 2009; Wirsenius et al., 2010). A body of research on this topic has deemed the implementation of a meat tax to be an effective strategy to help mitigate climate change for the benefit of future generations (Caro et al., 2017; Lykkeskov & Gjerris, 2017; Nordgren, 2012; Säll & Gren, 2015; Wirsenius et al., 2010). A study by Säll and Gren (2015) revealed that introduction of a tax on certain livestock products in Sweden decreased levels of consumption and GHG emissions. Oreskes, in an editorial commentary, highlights that consumers might even view such a tax as comparable to taxes on alcohol and tobacco and once implemented, it could well become part of "the new normal" (Oreskes, 2010, p. 226).

On the other hand, previous work highlights how the mass production of animal-based foods (Nierenberg, 2003, 2005) and the power of the meat lobby (Simon, 2013) have made meat a relatively inexpensive and widely accessible commodity in many wealthy industrialised nations. Many policy makers may be reluctant to regulate individual consumption behaviours due to fears of a public backlash (Robins and Roberts, 2006, Lorenzoni et al., 2007 and Ockwell et al., 2009). To this point, Doyle, in the book titled 'Mediating Climate Change', claims that a campaign which calls for a reduction in meat consumption is at risk of "being accused of preaching, by questioning a person's 'individual right' to consume what they like" (Doyle, 2011, p. 143). Other perspectives similarly highlight that governments may need to consider the cultural taboos of a meat tax. It could be seen as interfering with consumption patterns and could be even less well received when food prices rise (Bähr, 2014). In addition, a one size fits all approach to a meat tax might not be effective as differences across living standards may also need to be taken into account (Nordgren, 2011). Furthermore, a consumption tax on certain livestock products – such as red meat - may stimulate the production of other meats perceived to be cheaper, such as pork

and poultry. This, in turn, can result in negative environmental consequences (Caro et al., 2017).

Garnett (2007) suggests that the most straightforward way to tackle the environmental problems associated with the meat and livestock sector would be to significantly reduce the number of animals farmed. This is because some of the technological and policy approaches may be either be too costly or challenging to scale up to a global level (Garnett, 2007). In a subsequent paper, Garnett (2011) highlights that an effective strategy would also encompass paying more attention to our dietary choices.

This brings us to the strategy of meat reduction through more voluntary means. Meat reduction can be achieved through one or more of the following ways: reducing the portion size of meat; replacing part of the meal with plant-based alternatives; replacing meat with another animal or plant-based protein; consuming meat substitutes; replacing meat with more ethical and/or environmentally-sustainable meat products (Dagevos, 2016). Meat-reduction can also encompass flexitarianism (Dagevos, 2016) and reducetarianism (Kateman, 2017). Flexitarianism is where people primarily eat plant-based foods but occasionally eat meat, eggs and dairy (Merriam-Webster, 2020b). Reducetarianism is described as mindfully reducing consumption of animal-based foods including meat, dairy and eggs (Reducetarian Foundation, 2020).

In Australia, news reports highlight that flexitarianism (Charlebois, 2019; Sakkal & Fowler, 2019) as well as reducetarianism (Elder, 2017; Goodyer, 2015) are gaining interest for reasons relating to health and animal welfare. In India, abstaining from meat on certain days of the week for religious reasons is already a fairly widespread practice (Times Food, 2018). Given this, perhaps these dietary practices which encompass cutting back on meat in certain meals or days of the week could continue to be promoted across the two cultures.

Promoting meat reduction strategies which have already been found to be effective could also be considered. For example, Meat Free Monday and Meat Free Week campaigns aim to demonstrate the feasibility of eating

plant-based meals without asking participants to give up meat entirely. These initiatives not only help to build new competences in preparing plant-based meals (Mullee et al., 2017) but also create communities with a shared commitment towards a larger goal which can initiate participants into new social practices (De Boer et al., 2014). Thus, ongoing access to diverse and interesting plant-based foods, as part of a shared larger cause in support of sustainability, may incentivise people across the two cultures to reduce their meat consumption. This is also discussed further in *Section 7.8 Future research directions.*

7.7.3.2 Encouraging the consumption of more sustainable alternatives

As awareness of the environmental and ethical problems associated with the livestock industry increases, there is growing consumer interest in animal-based foods which have been produced using more humane methods (Bray & Ankeny, 2017). This was noted among several participants in my Australian study. On the other hand, it is worth highlighting some of the ethical arguments which counter the concept of ethically or humanely produced animal-based foods.

Previous research on farming practices reveals that animals on free-range farms can often undergo the same cruel treatment as their factory farm counterparts (Stanescu, 2010; Stănescu & Stănescu, 2020) such as tail docking without the use of anaesthetics (Friend, 2009; Stanescu, 2013). An article in The Guardian similarly highlights that humane animal farming is largely a myth because, under the guise of ethical meat, "the devil....[is] in the details". Many free-range animals can suffer from serious health problems arising from neglect and abuse (Reese, 2018). Furthermore, animals raised on free range farms may also "face grisly and frightening deaths" (Gruzalski, 2004, p. 128). In Australia, disturbing media exposés of abattoirs not conforming to the humane standards of slaughter for free-range animals (Animals Australia, 2014, 2017; McGrath, 2017) further reveal the misnomer in relation to the concept of ethical meat. To this point, Pluhar (2010) in the article titled 'Meat and Morality: Alternatives to Factory Farming', claims that even if humane farms arguably involve less suffering than factory farms,

the pain and fear these animals undergo at the time of death should be subtracted from any relative comfort they may have experienced before their slaughter. Given this, I argue that another strategy to encouraging sustainable consumption would involve the introduction of alternative meat subsitutes. This encompasses plant-based meats (Ismail et al., 2020) designed to resemble the texture, flavour and appearance of meat derived from animals (Joshi & Kumar, 2015).

Recent news reports highlight that the consumption of plant-based meats are on the rise in Australia (Fulloon, 2020; Masige, 2019) for reasons relating to environmental sustainability (Cole & Augustin, 2019). Studies from India also show consumer receptiveness towards the concept of plant-based meats (Arora et al., 2020; Bryant et al., 2019). However, other work—also noted in this study—indicates that the sensory qualities of plant-based meats can be deemed to be inferior to meat (Kumar et al., 2017; Sadler, 2004). Thus, future work will need to focus on how to increase sensory appeal and social acceptance of such foods across both cultures.

Introducing other versions of meat—such as in-vitro meat (Bhat et al., 2017)—is another strategy to encourage more sustainable eating practices. Overcoming barriers such as food neophobia (Hocquette, 2016) may involve presenting newer foods in more familiar and recognisable food formats such as in the form of a burger (Caparros Megido et al., 2016). Furthermore, increasing consumer knowledge of the health benefits of these alternative protein sources (De Boer et al., 2014) may assist in overcoming potential barriers across the two cultures.

7.7.3.3. Beyond consumption and capitalism

As part of the discourse and overall aims to encourage sustainability, we must consider our current obsession with consumerism and the creation and construction of "'false' needs" (Shove, 2004, p. 114). In an article titled 'Changing human behaviour and lifestyle: A challenge for sustainable consumption?', Shove (2004) argues that commercial enterprises and advertisers today tend to encourage people to consume. Shove's reference to the consumerist obsession shares parallels with the phenomenon of

affluenza, the widespread prevalence of and an obsessive addiction to materialistic consumption (De Graaf et al., 2018). Affluenza also tends to be more common among modern day affluent societies (Hamilton & Denniss, 2005). To some degree, this was noted in my findings in India where some urban meat-eating participants, underpinned by their desire for novelty, hedonism and status-seeking, discussed wanting to try out new versions and variations of meat and animals deemed "exotic".

Jackon (2005) in the article titled 'Live Better by Consuming Less?: Is There a "Double Dividend" in Sustainable Consumption?' claims that an increase in overall consumption barely leads to improvements in one's quality of life in already wealthy societies. Thus, reigning in or even halting our growth in consumption would involve little sacrifice (Jackson, 2005). Other work similarly points to an increasing lack of fulfillment which arises from a lifestyle which overemphasises consumption (Chang, 2021). Given this, it might seem disturbing that there appears to be "no hint of restraint, no 'cutting back', and no questioning of contemporary conventions and ways of life" (Shove 2004, p. 116).

One strategy to encourage sustainable consumption could potentially involve encouraging voluntary simplicity. Voluntary simplicity is when an individual willingly opts for a lifestyle intended to reduce material consumption (Huneke, 2005). Other work on this topic indicates that voluntary simplicity can minimise waste generation (Mourad et al., 2019) and address the problems of environmental pollution and resource constraints (Elgin & Mitchell, 1977). In addition, it can address the growing social malaise and sense of purposelessness that occurs when individuals are distracted from achieving their higher human potential (Shaw & Newholm, 2002). To this point, previous research has shown that there is a statistically significant association between voluntary simplicity and one's sense of life satisfaction and positive well-being (Rich, Hanna, & Wright, 2017). Reisch (2001, p. 369) highlights that "necessary changes in deeply rooted values and lifestyles' will only occur when and if 'people become enlightened consumers

who learn to identify those goods whose consumption adds little or nothing to welfare".

Encouraging more sustainable modes of consumption should not be limited to just individual consumers but should also include organizations and structural systems which influence consumption (Spaargaren & Van Vliet, 2000). Christine Frank (2009, p. 31), in an article titled 'The bankruptcy of capitalist solutions to the climate crisis', claims "Let's face it, capitalism has had 250 years to prove that it can produce the necessities of life without harming the natural world and humanity, and it has failed the test miserably." Furthermore, Nibert (2012) states that the unequal distribution of resources and power in contemporary society has resulted in systemic domination and the legitimacy of oppressive practices. Despite this, many environmental policies do not seem to challenge the current capitalist status quo nor acknowledge the "perverse effect of legitimising ultimately unsustainable patterns of consumption" (Shove 2004, p. 118).

Looking ahead, Frank (2009, p. 43) argues that capitalism and their accompanying "traitors to the cause of Earth and humanity must be replaced with...a strong, powerful, and uncompromising environmental movement led by working people in alliance with other oppressed groups in society". Shove (2004, p. 116) similarly argues that contemporary capitalist society can and should be restructured around ecological goals with new technologies and organisations to deliver goods and services more sustainably. In this regard, we ought to consider "ecosocialist principles that go beyond the maintenance of capitalism and its suicidal and genocidal policies, and instead advance a...democratically planned socialist economy that puts planetary and human needs before profits" (Frank 2009, p. 43).

7.8 Future research directions

Future studies will need to consider a more segmented approach when it comes to encouraging sustainable practices like meat reduction. There is

currently limited insight into the motivations and characteristics of heavy, medium and light meat reducers (De Boer, Schösler & Aiking 2014; Dagevos 2016). As highlighted previously, future research into Australian consumption may need to consider differences in eating practices across different demographic groups (Derbyshire, 2017; Worsley & Lea, 2008). This may well include exploring the meat-eating practices of older consumers given that, in Western societies in particular, a large majority of older adults, aged 65+, consume meat (Grasso et al., 2021) and tend to be more resistant to adopting diets perceived as starkly different to their current diets (Grasso et al., 2019). Furthermore, given Australia has one of the most culturally diverse populations in the world (Gallegos et al., 2019), with more than a quarter (26%) of Australians born overseas (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2016), future research could further delve into the influence of different cultures on Australian eating practices and how these might potentially differ across Australian sub-cultures. Similarly, in India, differences across classes, cultures, religions and geographies will need to be considered to gauge how meat is perceived across diverse subgroups.

Although there is limited information available on meat consumption in India, previous studies on ethical consumption have found that females, younger people and those with higher levels of education are more receptive towards green practices (Jain & Kaur, 2006). This is similar to Australian consumers (Lea et al., 2006; Lea & Worsley, 2001). Another study highlights that collectivism is a significant predictor of green practices. Symbolisms of togetherness and collective welfare resonate strongly to promote green consumption (Kirmani & Khan, 2018). On the other hand, as younger people in India move away from collectivist values and embrace individualism (Adnan et al., 2017), they are increasingly looking for ways to assert their identity and uniqueness among their peers (Khare, 2015). Consequently , green consumer practices are being adopted as a social trend (Adnan et al., 2017) and I assert that this ought to be encouraged. A cross-cultural study on green consumerism across Western and Indian millennials also revealed that reference groups play a significant role in encouraging such practices

(Muralidharan et al., 2016). Thus, future research could look more deeply at younger groups across cultures to understand motivations when it comes to adopting sustainable consumption.

Given that collectivist tendencies encourage people to conform to social norms (Triandis, 2004), future research on culturally taboo topics such as meat-eating could also benefit from using alternative approaches. As part of front and backstage behaviours, some participants in India may not have disclosed the full extent of their backstage meat consumption. This may have arisen due to the need for social desirability in collectivistic societies (Johnson & de Vijver, 2003). Hence, some aspects of backstage behaviours need to be further explored. Observations of backstage behaviour may help provide deeper insight into the activities, rituals, meanings and relationships that occur during a practice (McKechnie, 2008).

As part of exploring cross-cultural consumption, it would also be important to consider how values (Allen et al., 2000; Lindeman & Sirelius, 2001; Monteiro et al., 2017) along with gender-based stereotypes (Adams, 2015; Rothgerber, 2013; Ruby & Heine, 2011)—both of which influence attitudes towards animals and meat eating—are changing. In this regard, quantitative surveys with larger sample sizes might be helpful. This could inform culture-specific product and communication strategies to encourage meat reduction.

7.9 Closing thoughts

Despite a large body of research advocating against industrial livestock farming and meat-intensive diets, global meat production is projected to rise from 315 million tonnes in 2017 and reach approximately 355 million tonnes by the year 2026 (OECD-FAO, 2017). The growth in meat production is due to growing consumer demand (Steinfeld et al., 2006) and this demand is the result of perceptions and beliefs which support the consumption of animals (Joy, 2010). Thus, I propose that future work needs to continue to focus on

shifting current images and meanings ascribed to farm animals as inanimate objects. This would involve widening our circle of care and fostering greater empathy for farm animals. To this point, previous research has indicated that empathy is effective in improving attitudes towards people from minority backgrounds (Batson et al., 1997; Finlay & Stephan, 2000; Stephan & Finlay, 1999), creating positive attitudes towards environmental causes (Schultz, 2000) and encouraging affinity towards nature (Kals et al., 1999). Thus, I consider it important to continue to promote empathy-led strategies to assist us to push past speciesist and hierarchical worldviews which result in the cruel treatment, killing and consumption of sentient beings. To this point, Homer Jack (2005, p. 73) in the book titled 'The Wit and Wisdom of Gandhi' mentions that the Mahatma claims, "progress does demand at some stage that we should cease to kill our fellow creatures for the satisfaction of our bodily wants". It is time that we become more conscious of our progress in this regard.

Appendices

- Appendix 1: Participant Information Sheet (Australia)

- Appendix 2: Participant Consent Form (Australia)

- Appendix 3: Modes of recruitment (Australia)

- Appendix 4: Interview Discussion Guide (Australia)

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- Appendix 10: PVQ survey used in Australia & India (male respondents)

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- Appendix 12: Author contributions

Appendix 1: Participant Information Sheet (Australia)

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET
***Exploring meat consumption practices with a view towards encouraging a more
compassionate approach to consumption - a cross country study***

WHO IS DOING THE RESEARCH?
My name is Tani Khara and I am a PhD student at UTS. My supervisor is Professor
Christopher Riedy.

WHAT IS THIS RESEARCH ABOUT?
This research is to find out about the food choices and consumption habits of urban
Australians aged 25-45 years.

FUNDING
Funding for this project has been received from The Institute for Sustainable Futures,
University of Technology Sydney

WHY HAVE I BEEN ASKED?
You have been invited to participate in this study because you are aged 25-45 years and
your consumption habits match the profile of the urban Australian consumer that this study is
interested in.

Your contact details were obtained from:

• An email which you voluntarily sent in order to be participate in this study, through (name
  and contact details of the channel through which the advertisement was initially posted)
  OR (name and contact details of individual who provided the referral)

IF I SAY YES, WHAT WILL IT INVOLVE?
If you decide to participate, I will invite you to:

• Participate in a 70-minute semi-structured interview that will be conducted in person and
  which will be audio recorded and transcribed
• The interview will also involve the completion of a short questionnaire, which will ask you
  about the most and least important values that guide your life
• In addition, the interview may also show you a brief clips/visuals on animal farming and will
  ask you for your feedback in relation to this*

ARE THERE ANY RISKS/INCONVENIENCE?
Yes, there are some risks/inconvenience. The visuals on animal farming contains images
that might be disturbing

DO I HAVE TO SAY YES?
Participation in this study is voluntary. It is completely up to you whether or not you decide to
take part.

If you participate, you will be presented with an incentive for your time which includes being
part of a lucky draw where $100 will be donated to the winner's charity of choice or the
winner may opt for a gift voucher that is worth this amount. Refreshments - such as coffee
and tea - will also be provided to you during the interview.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF I SAY NO?

If you decide not to participate, it will not affect your relationship with the researchers or the University of Technology Sydney. If you wish to withdraw from the study once it has started, you can do so at any time without having to give a reason, by contacting Tani Khara on tani.khara@student.uts.edu.au

If you withdraw from the study, no additional data relating to you will be gathered. However, it may not be possible to withdraw your data from the study results if these have already had your identifying details removed.

If you decide to leave the research project, we will not collect additional personal information from you, although personal information already collected will be retained to ensure that the results of the research

project can be measured properly and to comply with law. You should be aware that data collected up to the time you withdraw will form part of the research project results.

CONFIDENTIALITY

By signing the consent form you consent to the research team collecting and using personal information about you for the research project. All this information will be treated confidentially in the following manner: Apart from individual names and details being disclosed during the recruitment process, these details will be excluded from the transcripts, data analysis and in any subsequent publishing. Furthermore, the identification of individual names and details does not reflect the overall objectives of this study. In any unpublished or published work, individual participants will be referred to only by their general demographic and cultural characteristics.

Your information will only be used for the purpose of this research project and, it will only be disclosed with your permission, except as required by law.

We would like to store your information for future use in research projects that are an extension of this research project. In all instances your information will be treated confidentially.

Individual participant details will be kept on a single device - such as the University laptop - and will be handled separately from the transcripts. This will be password protected. The data may, later, be submitted to University of Technology Sydney as part of the data storage procedure.

We plan to publish the results on food choices and attitudes towards animals. In any publication, information will be provided in such a way that you cannot be identified.

WHAT IF I HAVE CONCERNS OR A COMPLAINT?

If you have concerns about the research that you think I, Tani Khara, or my supervisor can help you with, please feel free to contact us on:

Tani Khara
tani.khara@student.uts.edu
Institute for Sustainable Futures, University of Technology Sydney
Level 10,
235 Jones Street
Ultimo, New South Wales 2007
Australia
+61 2 9514 4950

Professor Christopher Riedy
christopher.Riedy@uts.edu.au
Institute for Sustainable Futures, University of Technology Sydney
Level 10,
235 Jones Street
Ultimo, New South Wales 2007
Australia
+61 2 9514 4950

You will be given a copy of this form to keep.

NOTE:
This study has been approved by the University of Technology Sydney Human Research Ethics Committee [UTS HREC]. If you have any concerns or complaints about any aspect of the conduct of this research, please contact the Ethics Secretariat on ph.: +61 2 9514 2478 or email: Research.Ethics@uts.edu.au], and quote the UTS HREC reference number. Any matter raised will be treated confidentially, investigated and you will be informed of the outcome.

*The first three Australian participants in the pilot study were shown brief clips encompassing what animals go through as part of the factory farming process. This was shown at the end of the pilot interview once the discussion was over. The participants were then asked what impact such information is likely to have on their meat-eating practices. While the participants expressed negative reactions towards the suffering that farm animals undergo, they also claimed that this is not likely to impact their meat-eating. In view of this, the researcher chose to not show subsequent participants these video clips.

Appendix 2: Participant Consent Form (Australia)

CONSENT FORM

Exploring meat consumption practices with a view towards encouraging a more compassionate approach to consumption - a cross country study

I _____ agree to participate in the research project "Exploring meat consumption practices with a view towards encouraging a more compassionate approach to consumption - a cross country study" being conducted by:

Tani Khara
tani.khara@student.uts.edu
Institute for Sustainable Futures, University of Technology Sydney
Level 10,
235 Jones Street
Ultimo, New South Wales 2007
Australia
+61 2 9514 4950

I understand that funding for this research has been provided by The Institute for Sustainable Futures, University of Technology Sydney

I have read the Participant Information Sheet or someone has read it to me in a language that I understand.

I understand the purposes, procedures and risks of the research as described in the Participant Information Sheet.

I have had an opportunity to ask questions and I am satisfied with the answers I have received.

I freely agree to participate in this research project as described and understand that I am free to withdraw at any time without affecting my relationship with the researchers or the University of Technology Sydney.

I understand that I will be given a signed copy of this document to keep.

I agree to be:
• Audio recorded

I agree that the research data gathered from this project may be published in a form that:
• Does not identify me in any way

I am aware that I can contact Tani Khara if I have any concerns about the research.

_____   ____/____/____
Name and Signature [participant]   Date

_____   ____/____/____
Name and Signature [researcher or delegate]   Date

Appendix 3: Modes of recruitment (Australia)

Facebook advertisement promoted via the page 'Love Meat' used to recruit Australian participants for the study

Research participant

Employer:	Ms Tani Khara
Position title:	Research participant
Added:	20 August 2018
Application close:	30 September 2018
Commences:	Immediate start
Contract Type	Temporary
Contract Hours	Casual
Remuneration/ Pay rate:	Lunch/refreshments plus $200 lucky draw
Location:	Ultimo

Details

Love meat? If so, we would like to interview you, over a lunch/coffee, as part of a PhD study.

The study is about meat consumption in Australia and will comprise a casual conversation which will run for about an hour, where you will have the opportunity to discuss your own food choices and dietary practices.

Lunch/refreshments of your own choice will be provided to you, plus you will also be entered into a $200 lucky draw.

Advertisement for potential participants as promoted on career websites at The University of Technology Sydney and University of New South Wales.

Appendix 4: Interview Discussion Guide (Australia)

Introduction:

Hi (name of participant), thanks for your time today. My name is Tani and I'm conducting this research with urban Australians aged 25-45 years as part of my PhD with The University of Technology Sydney. This discussion will be a casual chat about your food choices and consumption habits. Please note there are no right or wrong answers as the discussion is really about sharing your individual thoughts and perspectives. This should take about 70 minutes and it will be audio recorded so that I can refer back to anything I might have missed later. The results from these interviews will be analysed to look at overall trends and patterns, and individual names and identities will not be disclosed. Any questions before we begin? Ok let's start.

The Schwartz values

Here is a short questionnaire I'd like you to quickly fill out - it should take just a few minutes of your time

Current food habits

- In a typical week, what do your main meals comprise of?

- Where do you normally have your meals?

- Who do you have your meals with?

- Where do you buy/get your meals from?

- How are your meals prepared?

- What are your favourite foods?

- Describe a scenario(s) which represents a great meal occasion for you? - who were you with, where were you, what was the occasion, what were you having?

- How often do you normally have these various types of meats? - lamb, pork, chicken, beef

- Would you have these meats more/less often than you normally do and if so, why? - lamb, pork, chicken, beef

- What other types of meats, apart from these, do you have?

Influence of the family, peer group and communications

- When growing up, what did the regular family meal look like - what did you normally have, who was present, where did you have your meals?

- Do you think your family still has an influence on your food choices today? If so, how and why? If not what has changed and why?

- What do meals look like with your peers today - who are you normally with, where do you normally go, what do you and the group normally eat and how often does this happen?

- Have you seen, heard or read anything - such as ads or newspaper articles - relating to meat-based foods recently? Where have you seen this? How often? What do you think of them?

- What were some ads or newspaper articles you remember seeing about meat-based foods over the years or while growing up? What did they say? How often did you come across them? How did they make you feel?

- Have you seen, heard or read anything - such as ads or newspaper articles - relating to plant-based foods recently? Where have you seen this? How often have you seen this? What do you think of them?

- What were some ads or newspaper articles you remember seeing about plant-based foods over the years or while growing up? What did they say? How often did you come across them? How did they make you feel?

Attitudes towards plant-based foods

- What do you think of plant-based foods in general?

- Do you have any plant-based foods as part of your meals over the week? If so, what do they contain?

- Why do you have them?

- Who do you have them with?

- Where do you buy them from and how are they prepared?

- Are plant-based foods easily available in supermarkets and restaurants?

- What do you think of the plant-based foods in supermarkets and restaurants?

- What do you think about people who only have plant-based foods as part of their meals?

- Would you consider incorporating more plant-based foods into your diet? Why/why not?

Exploring common perceptions/ stereotypes

- What is the typical Australian meal - what does it contain & who are its typical consumers?

- Do the BBQ represent a typical Australian meal?

- Can a BBQ/typical Australian meal contain only plant-based foods? If so, why? If not, why not?

- Some say meat is a man's food and that plant-based foods are feminine - what do you think about this?

Appendix 5: Participant Information Sheet (India)

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET
Exploring meat consumption practices with a view towards encouraging a more compassionate approach to consumption - a cross country study

WHO IS DOING THE RESEARCH?
My name is Tani Khara and I am a PhD student at UTS. My supervisor is Professor Christopher Riedy.

WHAT IS THIS RESEARCH ABOUT?
This research is to find out about the food choices and consumption habits of urban Indians aged 25-45 years.

FUNDING
Funding for this project has been received from The Institute for Sustainable Futures, University of Technology Sydney

WHY HAVE I BEEN ASKED?
You have been invited to participate in this study because you are aged 25-45 years and your consumption habits match the profile of the urban Indian consumer that this study is interested in.

Your contact details were obtained by/from
The Research Services Bureau
Mukta Kalwani, Account Director
23-B, Building No. 6, Mittal Industrial Estate, Andheri Kurla Road, Andheri East, Mumbai, Maharashtra 400059, India
+91 98330 22102
mukta@rsbindia.com

IF I SAY YES, WHAT WILL IT INVOLVE?
If you decide to participate, I will invite you to:

• Participate in a 70 minute semi-structured interview that will be conducted in person and which will be audio recorded and transcribed
• The interview will also involve the completion of a short questionnaire, which will ask you about your views in relation to the use of animals in different contexts
• In addition, the interview may also show you a brief clips/visuals on animal farming and will ask you for your feedback in relation to this

ARE THERE ANY RISKS/INCONVENIENCE?
Yes, there are some risks/inconvenience. The visuals on animal farming contains images that might be disturbing

DO I HAVE TO SAY YES?
Participation in this study is voluntary. It is completely up to you whether or not you decide to take part.

If you participate, you will be presented with an incentive for your time which includes being part of a lucky draw where Rs 10,000 will be donated to the winner's charity of choice or the winner may opt for a gift voucher that is worth this amount. Refreshments - such as coffee and tea - will also be provided to you during the interview.

If you decide not to participate, it will not affect your relationship with the researchers or the University of Technology Sydney. If you wish to withdraw from the study once it has started, you can do so at any time without having to give a reason, by contacting Tani Khara on tani.khara@student.uts.edu.au

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We would like to store your information for future use in research projects that are an extension of this research project. In all instances your information will be treated confidentially.

Individual participant details will be kept on a single device - such as the University laptop - and will be handled separately from the transcripts. This will be password protected. The data may, later, be submitted to University of Technology Sydney as part of the data storage procedure.

We plan to publish the results on food choices and attitudes towards animals. In any publication, information will be provided in such a way that you cannot be identified.

WHAT IF I HAVE CONCERNS OR A COMPLAINT?

If you have concerns about the research that you think I, Tani Khara, or my supervisor can help you with, please feel free to contact us on:

Tani Khara
tani.khara@student.uts.edu
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Professor Christopher Riedy
christopher.Riedy@uts.edu.au
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Appendix 6: Participant Consent Form (India)

CONSENT FORM

Exploring meat consumption practices with a view towards encouraging a more compassionate approach to consumption - a cross country study

I _____ agree to participate in the research project "Exploring meat consumption practices with a view towards encouraging a more compassionate approach to consumption - a cross country study" being conducted by:

Tani Khara
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+61 2 9514 4950

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I have had an opportunity to ask questions and I am satisfied with the answers I have received.

I freely agree to participate in this research project as described and understand that I am free to withdraw at any time without affecting my relationship with the researchers or the University of Technology Sydney.

I understand that I will be given a signed copy of this document to keep.

I agree to be:
• Audio recorded

I agree that the research data gathered from this project may be published in a form that:
• Does not identify me in any way

I am aware that I can contact Tani Khara if I have any concerns about the research.

_____   ____/____/____
Name and Signature [participant]   Date

_____   ____/____/____
Name and Signature [researcher or delegate]   Date

Appendix 7: Modes of recruitment (India)

Facebook advertisement promoted via the page 'Urban India Eats' used to recruit Indian participants for the study

absolutely a foodie 😄

yes

What is it all about?

Hi ▮▮▮▮▮▮ – thank you for getting in touch with us. This is a PhD study being conducted at the University of Technology Sydney, and the purpose of the study is to explore food choices of urban Indians - more specifically meat consumption.

Just wondering is your diet a non-veg or a veg diet, or a mix of both?
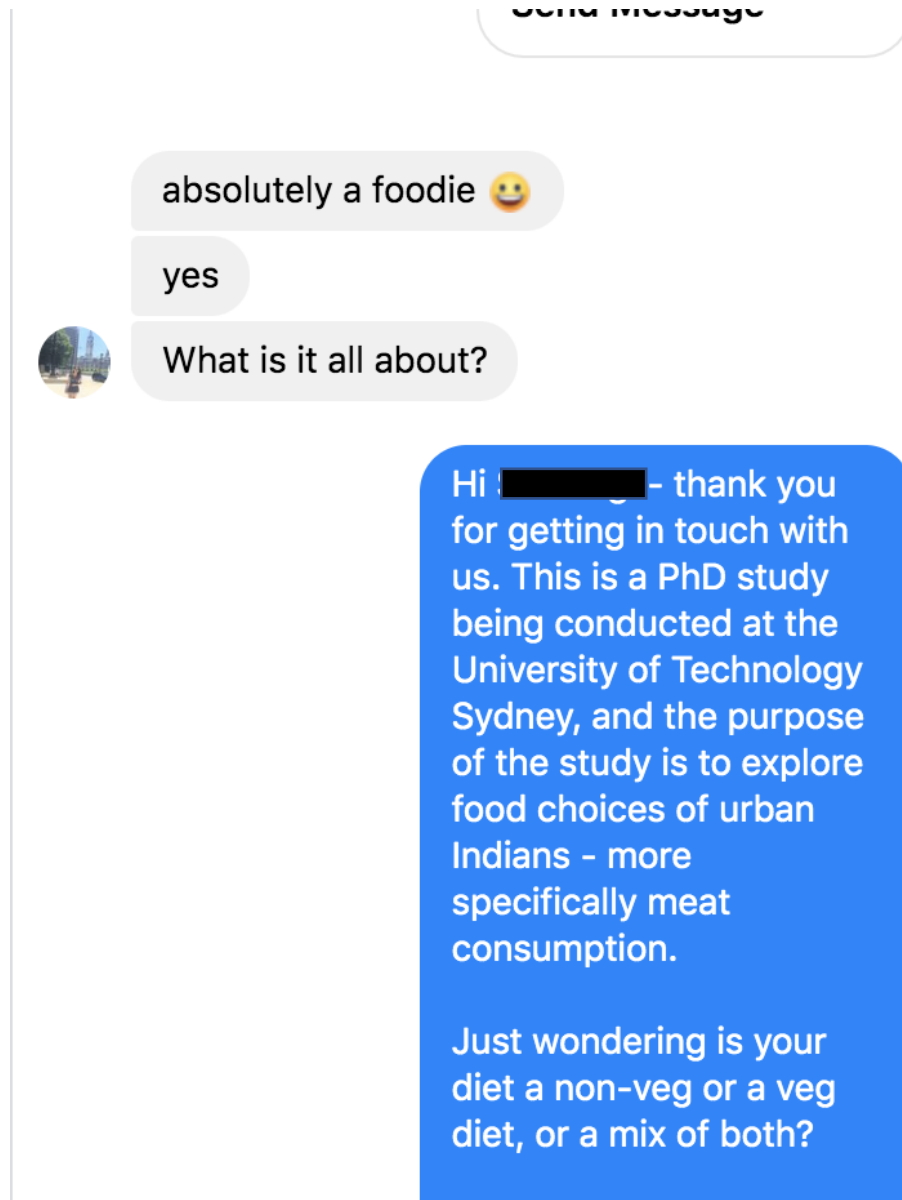
An example of a conversation via Facebook messenger with potential Indian participant to ensure the study included omnivores.

SCREENER - MUMBAI FACE TO FACE INTERVIEWS

Q1: How old are you?

1. **25-45 years (Include)**
2. Under 25 (terminate)
3. Over 45 (terminate)

Q2. How often do you eat meat in a typical week - by meat we mean chicken, pork, beef or other meats, rather than just fish?

1. **Once a week or more (Include)**
2. I don't eat meat/ I'm a vegetarian (Terminate)

Q3: What is your religion?

1. **Hindu (Include)**
2. **Muslim (Include)**
3. Other (terminate)

Q4A. Could you please tell me which of these items do you have at home? (It could be owned by you and/or your family or should be used by only just you and/or your family)

1. Electricity connection
2. Ceiling Fan
3. LPG stove
4. Two wheeler
5. Colour TV
6. Refrigerator
7. Washing Machine
8. Personal computer/laptop
9. Car/Jeep/Van
10. Air Conditioner
11. Agricultural land

Total number of items owned: ——————

Q4B. Could you please tell me your highest level of education currently? Please do not include any course you are pursuing, just the ones you have completed

1. Illiterate
2. Literate but no formal schooling/Been in school for 4 years
3. Been in school/had schooling for 5 to 9 years
4. SSC/HSC/CBSE – Passed class 10
5. Some college (including a diploma) not graduated
6. Finished college/ have a general graduate/post graduate degree
7. Finished college/have a professional graduate/post graduate degree

Table to identify respondents for ONLY Sec A1 & A2 highlighted in yellow (must own 9+ items)

2

# of items owned	Illiterate	Literate but no formal schooling/ Been in school for 4 years	Been in school/ had schooling for 5 to 9 years	SSC/HSC /CBSE – Passed class 10	Some college (including a diploma) not graduated	Finished college/ have a general graduate/ post graduate degree	Finished college/ have a professional graduate/ post graduate degree
None	E3	E2	E2	E2	E2	E1	D2
1	E2	E1	E1	E1	D2	D2	D2
2	E1	E1	D2	D2	D1	D1	D1
3	D2	D2	D1	D1	C2	C2	C2
4	D1	C2	C2	C1	C1	B2	B2
5	C2	C1	C1	B2	B1	B1	B1
6	C1	B2	B2	B1	A3	A3	A3
7	C1	B1	B1	A3	A3	A2	A2
8	B1	A3	A3	A3	A2	A2	A2
9+	B1	A3	A3	A2	A2	A1	A1

Q5. How well you do you speak and write English?

1. **Fluently (Include)**
2. Anything less than fluent (Terminate)

Appendix 8: Interview Discussion Guide (India)

Introduction:

Hi (name of participant), thanks for your time today. My name is Tani and I'm conducting this research with urban Indians aged aged 25-45 as part of my PhD with The University of Technology Sydney. This discussion will be a casual chat about your food choices and consumption habits. Please note there are no right or wrong answers as the discussion is really about sharing your individual thoughts and perspectives. This should take about 70 minutes and it will be audio recorded so that I can refer back to anything I might have missed later. The results from these interviews will be analysed to look at overall trends and patterns, and individual names and identities will not be disclosed. Any questions before we begin? Ok let's start.

The Schwartz values

Here is a short questionnaire I'd like you to quickly fill out - it should take just a few minutes of your time

Current food habits

- In a typical week, what do your main meals comprise of?

- Where do you normally have your meals?

- Who do you have your meals with?

- Where do you buy/get your meals from?

- How are your meals prepared?

- What are your favourite foods?

- Describe a scenario(s) which represents a great meal occasion for you? - who were you with, where were you, what was the occasion, what were you having?

- How often do you normally have these various types of meats? - lamb, pork, chicken, beef

- Would you have these meats more/less often than you normally do and if so, why? - lamb, pork, chicken, beef

- What other types of meats, apart from these, do you have?

Influence of the family, peer group and communications

- When growing up, what did the regular family meal look like - what did you normally have, who was present, where did you have your meals?

- Do you think your family still has an influence on your food choices today? If so, how and why? If not what has changed and why?

- What do meals look like with your peers today - who are you normally with, where do you normally go, what do you and the group normally eat and how often does this happen?

- Have you seen, heard or read anything - such as ads or newspaper articles - relating to meat-based foods recently? Where have you seen this? How often? What do you think of them?

- What were some ads or newspaper articles you remember seeing about meat-based foods over the years or while growing up? What did they say? How often did you come across them? How did they make you feel?

- Have you seen, heard or read anything - such as ads or newspaper articles - relating to plant-based foods recently? Where have you seen this? How often have you seen this? What do you think of them?

- What were some ads or newspaper articles you remember seeing about plant-based foods over the years or while growing up? What did they say? How often did you come across them? How did they make you feel?

Attitudes towards plant-based foods

- What do you think of plant-based foods in general?

- Do you have any plant-based foods as part of your meals over the week? If so, what do they contain?

- Why do you have them?

- Who do you have them with?

- Where do you buy them from and how are they prepared?

- Are plant-based foods easily available in the local shops, supermarkets and restaurants?

- What do you think of the plant-based foods in supermarkets and restaurants?

- What do you think about people who only have plant-based foods as part of their meals?

- Would you consider incorporating more plant-based foods into your diet? Why/why not?

Exploring common perceptions/ stereotypes

- (If it hasn't already been discussed earlier) - how important are milk and milk-based foods as part your main meals?

- What types of milk-based foods do you normally have & why?

- Have you heard of plant-based milks? If so, which ones have you heard of and what are your thoughts?

- Would you consider such foods if they were made from plant-based milks? Why/why not?

- Is meat eating considered to be a taboo in your family/community? If so, how & why?

- Statistics say that India is one of the world's fastest growing markets for processed meats, especially chicken - why do you think this is the case?

Appendix 9: PVQ survey used in Australia & India (female respondents)

PVQ-RR Female (10/2013)

Here we briefly describe different people. Please read each description and think about how much that person is or is not like you. Put an X in the box to the right that shows how much the person described is like you.

		HOW MUCH LIKE YOU IS THIS PERSON?					
		Not like me at all	Not like me	A little like me	Moder-ately like me	Like me	Very much like me
1.	It is important to her to form her views independently.	□	□	□	□	□	□
2.	It is important to her that her country is secure and stable.	□	□	□	□	□	□
3.	It is important to her to have a good time.	□	□	□	□	□	□
4.	It is important to her to avoid upsetting other people.	□	□	□	□	□	□
5.	It is important to her that the weak and vulnerable in society be protected.	□	□	□	□	□	□
6.	It is important to her that people do what she says they should.	□	□	□	□	□	□
7.	It is important to her never to think she deserves more than other people.	□	□	□	□	□	□
8.	It is important to her to care for nature.	□	□	□	□	□	□
9.	It is important to her that no one should ever shame her.	□	□	□	□	□	□
10.	It is important to her always to look for different things to do.	□	□	□	□	□	□
11.	It is important to her to take care of people she is close to.	□	□	□	□	□	□
12.	It is important to her to have the power that money can bring.	□	□	□	□	□	□
13.	It is very important to her to avoid disease and protect her health.	□	□	□	□	□	□
14.	It is important to her to be tolerant toward all kinds of people and groups.	□	□	□	□	□	□
15.	It is important to her never to violate rules or regulations.	□	□	□	□	□	□
16.	It is important to her to make her own decisions about her life.	□	□	□	□	□	□
17.	It is important to her to have ambitions in life.	□	□	□	□	□	□
18.	It is important to her to maintain traditional values and ways of thinking.	□	□	□	□	□	□
19.	It is important to her that people she knows have full confidence in her.	□	□	□	□	□	□
20.	It is important to her to be wealthy.	□	□	□	□	□	□
21.	It is important to her to take part in activities to defend nature.	□	□	□	□	□	□
22.	It is important to her never to annoy anyone.	□	□	□	□	□	□
23.	It is important to her to develop her own opinions.	□	□	□	□	□	□
24.	It is important to her to protect her public image.	□	□	□	□	□	□
25.	It is very important to her to help the people dear to her.	□	□	□	□	□	□
26.	It is important to her to be personally safe and secure.	□	□	□	□	□	□
27.	It is important to her to be a dependable and trustworthy friend.	□	□	□	□	□	□

	HOW MUCH LIKE YOU IS THIS PERSON?					
	Not like me at all	Not like me	A little like me	Moder- ately like me	Like me	Very much like me
28. It is important to her to take risks that make life exciting.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
29. It is important to her to have the power to make people do what she wants.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
30. It is important to her to plan her activities independently.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
31. It is important to her to follow rules even when no-one is watching.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
32. It is important to her to be very successful.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
33. It is important to her to follow her family's customs or the customs of a religion.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
34. It is important to her to listen to and understand people who are different from her.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
35. It is important to her to have a strong state that can defend its citizens.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
36. It is important to her to enjoy life's pleasures.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
37. It is important to her that every person in the world have equal opportunities in life.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
38. It is important to her to be humble.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
39. It is important to her to figure things out herself.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
40. It is important to her to honor the traditional practices of her culture.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
41. It is important to her to be the one who tells others what to do.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
42. It is important to her to obey all the laws.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
43. It is important to her to have all sorts of new experiences.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
44. It is important to her to own expensive things that show her wealth.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
45. It is important to her to protect the natural environment from destruction or pollution.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
46. It is important to her to take advantage of every opportunity to have fun.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
47. It is important to her to concern herself with every need of her dear ones.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
48. It is important to her that people recognize what she achieves.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
49. It is important to her never to be humiliated.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
50. It is important to her that her country protect itself against all threats.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
51. It is important to her never to make other people angry.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
52. It is important to her that everyone be treated justly, even people she doesn't know.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
53. It is important to her to avoid anything dangerous.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
54. It is important to her to be satisfied with what she has and not ask for more.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
55. It is important to her that all her friends and family can rely on her completely.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
56. It is important to her to be free to choose what she does by herself.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
57. It is important to her to accept people even when she disagrees with them.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Appendix 10: PVQ survey used in Australia & India (male respondents)

PVQ-RR Male (10/2013)

Here we briefly describe different people. Please read each description and think about how much that person is or is not like you. Put an X in the box to the right that shows how much the person described is like you.

HOW MUCH LIKE YOU IS THIS PERSON?

	Not like me at all	Not like me	A little like me	Moder-ately like me	Like me	Very much like me
1. It is important to him to form his views independently.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. It is important to him that his country is secure and stable.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. It is important to him to have a good time.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. It is important to him to avoid upsetting other people.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. It is important to him that the weak and vulnerable in society be protected.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6. It is important to him that people do what he says they should.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7. It is important to him never to think he deserves more than other people.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8. It is important to him to care for nature.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
9. It is important to him that no one should ever shame him.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10. It is important to him always to look for different things to do.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
11. It is important to him to take care of people he is close to.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
12. It is important to him to have the power that money can bring.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
13. It is very important to him to avoid disease and protect his health.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
14. It is important to him to be tolerant toward all kinds of people and groups.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
15. It is important to him never to violate rules or regulations.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
16. It is important to him to make his own decisions about his life.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
17. It is important to him to have ambitions in life.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
18. It is important to him to maintain traditional values and ways of thinking.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
19. It is important to him that people he knows have full confidence in him.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
20. It is important to him to be wealthy.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
21. It is important to him to take part in activities to defend nature.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
22. It is important to him never to annoy anyone.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
23. It is important to him to develop his own opinions.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
24. It is important to him to protect his public image.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
25. It is very important to him to help the people dear to him.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
26. It is important to him to be personally safe and secure.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
27. It is important to him to be a dependable and trustworthy friend.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

	HOW MUCH LIKE YOU IS THIS PERSON?					
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32. It is important to him to be very successful.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
33. It is important to him to follow his family's customs or the customs of a religion.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
34. It is important to him to listen to and understand people who are different from him.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
35. It is important to him to have a strong state that can defend its citizens.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
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41. It is important to him to be the one who tells others what to do.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
42. It is important to him to obey all the laws.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
43. It is important to him to have all sorts of new experiences.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
44. It is important to him to own expensive things that show his wealth	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
45. It is important to him to protect the natural environment from destruction or pollution.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
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47. It is important to him to concern himself with every need of his dear ones.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
48. It is important to him that people recognize what he achieves.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
49. It is important to him never to be humiliated.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
50. It is important to him that his country protect itself against all threats.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
51. It is important to him never to make other people angry.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
52. It is important to him that everyone be treated justly, even people he doesn't know.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
53. It is important to him to avoid anything dangerous.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
54. It is important to him to be satisfied with what he has and not ask for more.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
55. It is important to him that all his friends and family can rely on him completely.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
56. It is important to him to be free to choose what he does by himself.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
57. It is important to him to accept people even when he disagrees with them.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Appendix 11: Nvivo codes and coding frame

Menu bar: ate Data Analyze Query Explore Layout View Window Help

AA Masterfile Analysis

Ribbon tabs: Home Create Data Analyze Query Explore Layout View

Ribbon groups: Item | Clipboard | Format | Paragraph | Styles | Editing

Sidebar:
- DATA
  - Files
  - File Classifications
  - Externals
- CODES
  - Nodes
- CASES
- NOTES
- SEARCH
- MAPS

OPEN ITEMS

Name	Files	Referen...	Created On
Eating - family, cultural influence, religion	42	101	22/10/18, 4:01 pm
Eating - meals outside, eating out, busy life	33	62	22/1/19, 5:37 pm
Eating - Reducetarian	8	16	28/2/19, 10:55 am
Eating - seasons, local produce	6	13	15/2/19, 2:16 pm
Eating and dieting	7	15	26/2/19, 4:04 pm
Eating change experiment - food choices	38	122	24/10/18, 4:55 pm
Eating meat & meat heavy	41	153	22/10/18, 4:14 pm
Eating meat - alcohol	11	17	23/1/19, 2:39 pm
Eating meat - don't know what you're getting, im...	9	16	31/1/19, 12:20 pm
Eating meat - love, enjoyment, taste of meat	22	40	23/1/19, 11:30 am
Eating meat - secret	32	134	30/10/18, 3:16 pm
Eating meat - socially acceptable, it's ok	20	35	23/1/19, 12:16 pm
Eating meat - socially not ok, judgement, unacce...	28	112	23/1/19, 12:16 pm
Food - celebrities	8	8	31/1/19, 7:25 pm
Foods - eat less of	39	125	22/10/18, 3:56 pm
Foods - eat more of	33	84	22/10/18, 3:56 pm
Foods - favourites meat & veg	15	22	22/10/18, 3:26 pm
Foods - taboo, disliked, undesirable	12	18	23/1/19, 12:17 pm
Meat - Beef	34	88	30/10/18, 2:24 pm
Meat - Chicken	29	56	25/10/18, 3:07 pm
Meat - fake meat faux meat	5	13	30/10/18, 2:58 pm
Meat - Fish seafood	26	48	23/1/19, 12:10 pm
Meat - Goat mutton	9	11	23/1/19, 3:45 pm
Meat - lab grown	4	8	30/10/18, 2:58 pm
Meat - Lamb	16	23	23/1/19, 1:21 pm
Meat - lean meat	3	5	25/10/18, 2:58 pm
Meat - Pork	17	33	22/10/18, 4:11 pm
Meat - Raw or Rare Meat	2	2	22/10/18, 4:28 pm
Meat - veg subsitutes	8	16	31/1/19, 11:08 am
VEGETARIANS & VEGANS	53	612	22/10/18, 4:45 pm
Awareness - vegan diet low	3	3	30/1/19, 12:14 pm
Soy milk vs dairy	25	38	23/1/19, 12:32 pm
Veg & vegans - negative	48	262	1/2/19, 4:25 pm
Veg & vegans - positive	24	47	20/2/19, 3:39 pm
Veg - associated with religion	6	9	4/2/19, 7:54 pm
Vegan fad	13	25	23/1/19, 12:25 pm
What would stop me from being veg	48	228	22/10/18, 4:52 pm

Appendix 12: Author contributions

From: Chris Riedy <Christopher.Riedy@uts.edu.au>

Sent: Thursday, 26 November 2020 6:16 PM

To: Tani Khara <Tani.Khara@student.uts.edu.au>; Matthew Ruby <M.Ruby@latrobe.edu.au>

Subject: Re: Author contributions

Hi Tani,

I confirm that you have accurately represented my contribution to these four articles, which now form the chapters of your thesis.

Kind regards,

Chris

Prof. Chris Riedy
Professor of Sustainability Transformations
Responsible Academic Officer
Director, Graduate Research
ORCID profile
Check out my short story in Our Entangled Future

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M. +61 402 043 386

Zoom: https://utsmeet.zoom.us/my/criedy

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Blog: Planetcentric
isf.uts.edu.au

From: Matthew Ruby <M.Ruby@latrobe.edu.au>
Sent: Thursday, 26 November 2020 5:12 PM
To: Tani Khara <Tani.Khara@student.uts.edu.au>; Chris Riedy <Christopher.Riedy@uts.edu.au>
Subject: Re: Author contributions

Hi Tani,

I am happy to confirm that this aligns with my understanding of the author contributions to the below chapters.

Kind Regards,

Matt

Dr. Matthew Ruby
Lecturer in Psychology

School of Psychology and Public Health, La Trobe University

PO Box 821 | 133 McKoy Street | Wodonga | Victoria | 3690 | Australia

Consultation Hours: Wednesdays 2-3 pm & Thursdays 3-4 pm

T +61 2 6024 9605

From: Tani Khara <Tani.Khara@student.uts.edu.au>
Date: Thursday, 26 November 2020 at 4:44 pm
To: Chris Riedy <Christopher.Riedy@uts.edu.au>, Matthew Ruby
<M.Ruby@latrobe.edu.au>
Subject: Author contributions

Hi Chris & Matt,

Following from our conversation today, I just wanted to confirm the author contributions for the following chapters:

• *Chapter 3: "I am a pure non-vegetarian": The rise of and resistance towards meat eating in a globalised urban India*
• *Chapter 4: "We have to keep it a secret"—The dynamics of front and backstage behaviours surrounding meat consumption in India*
• *Chapter 5: The evolution of urban Australian meat-eating practices*
• *Chapter 6: A cross-cultural meat paradox: A qualitative study of Australia and India.*

The author contributions for Chapters 3, 4, 5 and 6 are as follows:
- Tani Khara = 80% contribution
- Professor Christopher Riedy = 10% contribution
- Dr. Matthew B. Ruby = 10% contribution

Please let me know if you are happy with this, and I will highlight this in the thesis Appendix.

Thank you for this
Best regards
Tani

Tani Khara

Doctoral Researcher

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