An exploration of disrupted food practices in the transitioning consumptionscape of India

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ABSTRACT

Drawing from the literature on the influence of globalisation and economic liberalisation in India, which is central to the rise of consumer culture, this thesis contextualises food consumption for an emerging middle-class consumer group that is disrupted and therefore fraught with paradoxes, conflicts, tensions and ideological struggles in maintaining food-related routines. While past literature has identified the economic growth-related surge in food avenues, food consumption and dietary changes, the ways in which human agents interfere with and negotiate the changes in their socio-material environments, as well as themselves, has so far been insufficiently explored (Spaargaren et al., 2016).

The study adopts a practice theory perspective in its aim of understanding food provisioning as part of dynamic social practices embedded in the complex context of everyday life and constituted via elements of meaning, material and competency in food provisioning. The thesis focuses on the social and temporal dynamics of food provisioning as an everyday life phenomenon. Empirically, it does this by a qualitative enquiry that asks, '*How do Indian middle-class consumers, in a transitioning consumptionscape, configure everyday food-provisioning practices and how do they manage any disruptions in their food provisioning to gain a sense of security?'* The study combines the use of projective techniques within semi-structured interviews conducted with participants, along with food-related observations of their beliefs, activities and household environments.

The findings of the study indicate the endurance of traditional food practices and illustrate the influence of shared cultural scripts in the stability and diffusion of routine food-provisioning practices. Conflicts in food provisioning are found to occur when embodied dispositions about the ways of cooking, serving, eating and caring in food provisioning are challenged by changing structures of living, in families with varying intergenerational food preferences, as well as the evolving identities and role perceptions of food provisioners. This thesis discovers that in meeting the various affective, instrumental and socio-cultural meanings of food provisioning, practices are reconfigured to balance, negotiate and neutralise tensions and conflicts emerging from the opposing ideologies of practising consumption in

line with tradition and modernity. Practice disruptions are met with consumers' reflexive and transformative agency in realigning their food-provisioning practices. The food provisioners' narratives of creatively resisting or accepting new forms of consumption in reconfiguring disrupted practices in ways that allow retention of the perceived meanings of engagement in the practice suggests the hegemony of meaning over materials and competency as practice-constituting elements.

This research uncovers the unique glocalised hybridities of food-provisioning practices that emerge from the juxtaposition of resisting/accepting new forms of consumption, contributing towards a theoretical conceptualisation of the distributed agency of practice-constituting elements. The study also contributes to an understanding of consumer agency in negotiating conflicts and tensions by maintaining the teleoaffectivity of food provisioning and food provisioners' ontological security. Thus, the study's findings contribute to a growing body of consumer research in social theory, consumption, disruption, identity and security. It also contributes to the demand for empirical applications of practice theory, as well as providing practical implications for consumers and marketers.

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ATTESTATION OF AUTHORSHIP

"I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person (except where explicitly defined in the acknowledgements), nor material which to a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning."

Meenal Rai

Signed……Date:

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ETHICS APPROVAL

Ethics approval from AUT University Ethics Committee (AUTEC) was granted on 25th October 2017, for a period of 3 years until 25th October 2020. The ethics application number is 17/329 (see Appendix A for Ethics Approval Letter).

Chapter 1: Introduction

Globalisation, with its surge in transnational flows of capital, goods, information, people and culture, has transformed the world. The structural changes that result from the economic, political, demographic and cultural integrations that occur during globalisation have a considerable effect on consumer culture and consumption behaviours via the process of 'homogenisation' (Magu, 2015; Ritzer, 2001; Wertheim-Heck, 2015). As one of the earliest theoretical perspectives of globalisation, homogenisation is a process of cultural and economic alignment, where globally available goods, media, ideas and institutions overrun and displace local cultures (Ritzer, 2001).

In many economies outside of Europe and North America, homogenisation is akin to Westernisation or Americanisation, since many of the visible cultural expressions of globalisation are American; for example, Coca-Cola and McDonald's (Magu, 2015; Sharifonnasabi, Bardhi, & Luedicke, 2019). However, the concept of homogenisation in Eastern and Asian economies is questioned, owing to fundamental differences between the East and West in the origin and development of consumer culture (Jackson, 2004). In the West, a consumption culture (i.e. the avid desire for goods and services valued for their novelty and indication of status) developed as part of the social historical development. Therefore, a gradual transition from traditional social structures to modern ones is characteristic of Western societies (Inglehart & Baker, 2000) and modernity has played a key role in the destruction of traditional[1] values and their replacement with consumerist values (Chandrasekara & Wijetunga, 2016). However, in the East, complexities emerge when such a culture is externally imposed (Ger & Belk, 1996; Slater, Sevenhuysen, Edginton, & O'neil, 2011). In the context of developing and emerging Asian economies such as India, consumerism is not merely an economic act of consumption but also involves the cultural dimensions of consumption (Ganguly-Scrase & Scrase, 2009; van Wessel, 2004; Vikas, Varman, & Belk, 2015). Thus, the externally induced consumer culture as a result of globalisation and its related

[1] As a concept associated with habits, tradition in this thesis is understood as an established practice that is transferred from one generation to the next (Amilien & Hegnes, 2013). It is a dynamic process constructed over time and carries a cultural meaning.

modernity[2] are experienced differently in emerging economies, where it is a relatively alien phenomenon (Guven, 2006).

Therefore, the notion of a globalised consumer culture, which in essence is the culture of the modern West, is contestable in growing Eastern societies (Fine, 2002; Mathur & Parameswaran, 2004). The resilience of local consumption cultures reduces the umbrella influence of globalisation (Ger & Belk, 1996; Jackson, 2004; Magu, 2015). Appadurai (1996) contradicted the homogenisation theory and suggested that cultures adapt and reinvent themselves through processes of 'glocalisation' in which the dynamics of globalisation are reinterpreted in specific local and cultural contexts (Ritzer, 2001).

In the following quotation, Jackson (2004) argued for an understanding of globalisation as a site of struggle, rather than as an established fact, emphasising the need for empirically grounded studies of the many resulting changes in different geographical contexts:

> *Thinking about a 'globalizing' rather than a fully 'globalized' world encourages us to examine the deeply contested nature of the concept and to explore the geographically uneven nature of recent economic, political and cultural transformations.* (p. 166)

Consumption is clearly a key issue in debates over the social and cultural influences of globalisation (Hubacek, Guan, & Barua, 2007). Comprehending the evolution of consumer culture and its interaction with globalisation is important for understanding the way transitioning societies in growing economies develop (Ger & Belk, 1996). The study of consumption needs to be decentred by examining consumer culture in non-Western contexts, to explore the ways globalisation and modernisation contradict/coincide/develop an interface with tradition and consumer culture in growing Asian economies such as India (Cayla & Eckhardt, 2008). Further, there is increased emphasis on examining consumer behaviour in a specific environment by understanding the local cultural categories that are significant to that culture (Eckhardt & Mahi, 2004; Sharifonnasabi et al., 2019; Venkatesh, 1994). The

[2] In the current study I draw parallel definitions for both modernisation and Westernisation as the over-whelming economic and political forces that drive cultural change. A core concept of modernisation theory is that it produces pervasive social and cultural consequences, from rising educational levels to changing gender roles (Inglehart & Baker, 2000). In the Indian consumers' context, modernisation is generally viewed as a Western process that non-Western societies can follow only if they abandon their traditional cultures (Mohan, 2011).

current study aimed to explore food-consumption culture in the globalising Indian context.

1.1 Context: India's changing structures and challenged food consumption

Market and trade liberalisation have been the cornerstones of the globalising process in India (Ganguly-Scrase & Scrase, 2009). Economic reforms since the 1990s, integrating the organisation of production, distribution and consumption within the commodities of the world economy, have shepherded India onto a path of high growth and established the Indian economy as one of the fastest-developing and internationally competitive economies in the world (Kirti, 2019). The opening of economic policies has resulted in altered market structures. Increasing privatisation and foreign direct investments have led to a huge growth in infrastructure, retail avenues and availability of foreign goods. The concomitant increase in employment opportunities, urbanisation, literacy rates and media representation has significantly altered the consumption scene. As individuals' income levels have continued to rise, India is now claimed to be the world's fifth-largest consumer economy (World Economic Forum, 2020).

A social consequence of this prolonged economic growth is the emergence of new lifestyles, particularly among the new[3] middle-class group of people in India (Fernandes, 2006, 2009). The general increases in income and income-generating opportunities have encouraged this population group to exercise individual choice and engage with the leisure and pleasure of consumption, increasing their sense of confidence (Brosius, 2012). The new middle class of India is central to India's consumption development narrative (Kaur, 2016; Mathur, 2013; Roy, 2018; Singh, 2015; van Wessel, 2004).

1.1.1 Conflicted consumption culture

As one of the fastest-growing Asian economies, India provides a fertile ground for the study of an emergent consumer culture. The consumption revolution is bringing a wide range of local and imported products into the market space and increased engagement in consumerism allows many people to establish their position

[3] As presented in greater detail in Chapter 2, the 'new' middle-class is a social group tied to the expansion of private capital and new economy jobs rather than the old (state-dependent) middle class, and is associated with the cultural and political outlook, choices and opportunities of economic liberalisation in India.

in society (Mathur, 2013). However, while slogans such as 'India Shining' and 'Modern India' boost the confidence of the people as well as the markets, consumers' aspirations (for a good life) are not always matched by material gain, leading to widespread consumer restlessness (Gilbertson, 2018).
Economic liberalisation is often expressed in terms of dichotomies of tradition/modernity, old/new. Brosius (2012) explained this as a tug-of-war with individual choice, leisure and the pleasure of consumption providing a sense of freedom at one end of the spectrum and simultaneously, loss of heritage at the other end. Thus, the paradoxical processes of globalisation and economic liberalisation have evoked much dissatisfaction among middle-class Indian consumers (Ganguly-Scrase & Scrase, 2009).

Consumers in societies that are strongly influenced by traditional cultural values experience tension when embodied values conflict with consumerist values (Chandrasekara & Wijetunga, 2016; Mathur, 2013). In contemporary India, frugality appears to carry virtue-for some, with 'simple living' that is detached from materialistic desires (Eckhardt & Mahi, 2012; Mawdsley, 2004; van Wessel, 2004). Some researchers have noted that a culture of consumption is morally problematic for some middle-class consumers (Anantharaman, 2017; Mathur, 2010; van Wessel, 2004). However, Fernandes (2009) argued that the middle class in India is a victim of a state-led project of development, with the policies of economic liberalisation deploying the celebratory language of middle-class consumption as a sign of success.

Globalisation therefore challenges traditional ways and structures of being. An important but under-researched issue is the recognition of this consumer tension arising from a conflict between the consumerist values (of the West) and traditional values (Donner, 2011; Eckhardt & Mahi, 2004, 2012; Ger & Belk, 1996; Gilbertson, 2018; Kaur, 2016). A deeper understanding of the social, economic and cultural structures implied in the growth of consumption in India is required (Bruckert, 2015; B. Ghosh, 2011)

1.1.2 Disrupted food consumption

The significant category of food consumption represents significant developmental challenges in the Indian context and is emblematic of the conflict between traditional and modern values because food is particularly tied into cultural

traditions (Khare, 1992). Expansion of retail markets, technological innovations (e.g. processed and packaged foods) and trade globalisation (e.g. varieties of international food products and cuisines) are associated with substantial changes in the quantity and quality of food supply (Etilé & Oberlander, 2019). Socio-cultural practices such as procuring food, cooking techniques and taste preferences exist as embodied dispositions among specific consumer classes and regions (Dash, 2014; Mangalassary, 2016; McCabe, Morgan, Curley, Begay, & Gohdes, 2005; Morgan, Stukenberg, & Tolliver, 2011; Yun & Pysarchik, 2010). Therefore, the area of food consumption can indicate how consumers in growing economies (such as in India) relate to changing markets and avenues for new food consumption.

A question that is repeatedly raised in academic literature about modernisation is whether traditional patterns and formats of food procuring, cooking and eating are being disrupted (Domański, Karpiński, Przybysz, & Straczuk, 2015; Holm et al., 2012; Plessz & Étilé, 2019). In India, there has been a rapid growth of organised food retail set-ups in the form of large supermarkets and e-commerce-based food apps (Taneja, 2018; World Economic Forum, 2019). This organisation of all types of fresh and packaged foods under one roof has eroded the standing of 'wet markets' and local 'kirana' (grocery) stores (Dittrich, 2009; India Brand Equity Foundation, 2017; Research & Markets, 2019). Although fruits and vegetables have traditionally been bought fresh on a daily basis, the upwardly mobile middle-class people, with their rapidly changing lifestyle and evolving food preferences and tastes, are enjoying this food 'retail revolution'(Dittrich, 2009, p. 272).

As in other cultures (Halkier, 2017a; Jackson & Viehoff, 2016), packaged foods are considered 'stale' in India and freshness of food is both a health and cultural imperative (Gupta, 2009; Yun & Pysarchik, 2010). However, recent trends report the increasing popularity of packaged convenience foods (Ali, Kapoor, & Moorthy, 2010; Osswald & Dittrich, 2012). A survey by the Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM-India, 2015) found that about 79% of households now preferred convenience food varieties, because of rising income levels, standards of living, confidence in packaged food and need for convenience, as well as the influence of the Western world.

As either 'ready-for-home-use' or 'food-away-from-home' foods, the major categories of packaged and convenience food commonly used in Indian households are classified as ready to cook, ready to heat and ready to eat (Manohar & Rehman,

2018). A large share of the food-away-from-home market involves both the unorganised (local, roadside) and organised (domestic and global) sellers of fried and processed 'fast food' (Deloitte, 2018; Tefft, Jonasova, Adjao, & Morgan, 2017). While sandwiches, pizza, deep-fried chicken and burgers, as distinctly Western foods, are considered unhealthy and impure, consumption of them is growing because of people's time constraints, changing tastes and desire to eat out for fun, have a change of scene and socialise (Aloia et al., 2013; Mohan, 2011). Studies have noted the increasing Westernisation of food in association with a steady decline of the traditional Indian diet (Kaur & Singh, 2017; Madhvapaty & Dasgupta, 2015; Pingali, Aiyar, Abraham, & Rahman, 2019; Sardana, Thatchenkery, & Anand, 2011). As they begin to understand the adverse effects and health threats posed by this lifestyle, Indian consumers have to grapple with conflicting values while they attempt to strike a balance between traditional and modern food practices (Ablett et al., 2007; Kulkarni, Chakraborty, & Ahuja, 2016; Misra et al., 2011; Sharma & Gupta, 2013).

Thus, as noted by Khare (1992), there are contradictions in the wider meaning and actions of the gastrosemantics ('a culture's distinct capacity to signify, experience, systematise, philosophise, and communicate with food' – (Khare, 1992, p. 44)) of Indian food culture. In India, the cosmological, ritual, social, economic and nutritional meanings of food are entangled (Bruckert, 2015). Scholars of Hindu ontology have pointed out that the dimensions of food, body and self are closely related and that owing to its link with other worldly aspects of life, food is integral to all models and meanings of the Hindu world[4] (Khare, 1992). Thus, food practices, marked by a person's socio-cosmological position in a caste-based stratification, are defined by rules of social and symbolic purity, as well as the medical dimension focusing on physical properties of the food material, which are believed to prevent, cure or cause diseases (Appadurai, 1988a; Bruckert, 2015). Traditional Indian meals and dietary guidelines are embedded within Ayurveda – the ancient Indian system of medicine and health (Sarkar, Lohith, Dhumal, Panigrahi, & Choudhary, 2015; Satow, Kumar, Burke, & Inciardi, 2008). The 'purity' of food relates to not only its

[4] Indian food habits, preferences, norms, and meanings not only vary regionally but also with religion and among castes and sub-castes (Appadurai, 1988a; Khare, 1986). While regional variations continue to exist, in the course of the nationalist movement, an 'authentic Indian' cuisine developed and has been popularised through shared conversations, cookbooks, vernacular media and restaurants, leading to patterns one can draw out of common practices, norms and beliefs.

freshness and health qualities but also the way it is cooked and how/when it is consumed; for example, food consumed outside the home is associated with the risk of impurity (Bruckert, 2015).

'Who cooks the food' in Indian households is another important issue (Daya, 2010). As in many other regions, the responsibility of feeding and care in India is specifically linked to the women/mothers in the household. The ideal is to eat home-cooked food, with the woman of the house spending hours cooking for the family (Maslak & Singhal, 2008). A significant social outcome of rising income level in India is an increase in female education, which has empowered Indian women to join the workforce and influenced the ways they perceive their role responsibilities and identity (Dhawan, 2005; Jackson, 2010; Mish, 2007). This 'can … fracture the boughs of traditional Indian cultural continuity' (Maslak & Singhal, 2008, p. 481). Thus, Indian women are caught between the traditional expectations of home and society and the new cultural milieu resulting from having employment outside the home (Jackson, 2010; McLachlin, 2013). This creates conflicts and complexities. Further, while the dietary preferences of the older generation tend to be relatively static over time and remain within an identifiable traditional boundary, the younger generation is interested in exploring the novelty of food offerings outside the home (Eckhardt & Mahi, 2012; Mathur, 2013). This means the management of food becomes even more disrupted in households that need to cater for intergenerational differences in taste, as well as perceptions of health, nutrition and risk.

In their systems-of-provision framework, Fine, Bayliss, and Robertson (2018) proposed that a study of (food) consumption should include an analysis of the influence of both the institutional and socio-cultural structures, factoring in the social and symbolic meanings of food. In India, global commodity consumption has become synonymous with being middle class. The aspirational status of global foods encourages consumers to try new culinary delights and to adapt to international dietary patterns, which indicate their cosmopolitanism (Brosius, 2012; Carrier & Kalb, 2015; Gilbertson, 2018). Therefore, a study of changing consumption should include an in-depth understanding of the lifestyles, habits, relations, processes and social aspirations that constitute consumption.

1.2 Statement of the problem

It is clear that contemporary food consumption in India has involved the disruption of culinary traditions, homogenisation of cuisines and altered dietary habits (Ganguly-Scrase & Scrase, 2009; Mohan, 2011; Pingali et al., 2019). While these disruptions have gained attention in terms of the need for policy and regulations aiming to improve public health outcomes (Pingali et al., 2019), a consumer-level analysis of the way food-consumption disruptions are managed is under-theorised, especially where disruptions are a result of social change as seen in the case of India.

The consumption of food is a taken-for-granted, everyday routine for consumers (Halkier, 2010; Twine, 2015). A gap in the theory exists about the mechanisms of coping with disrupted routines (Campbell et al., 2020; Phipps & Ozanne, 2017). Giddens (1984) conceptualisation of 'ontological states of security' notes the importance of consumers' everyday routines. Defined as the deep-seated trust people have about their world being secure and predictable, according to Giddens (1984), ontological security generates 'an autonomy of bodily control within predictable routines', whereby 'people feel at home with themselves' (p. 50) and in their world (Giddens, 1984, p. 50; Kinnvall, 2004; Phipps & Ozanne, 2017; Thompson, 2005). This means that when routines are disrupted, readjustments are made to reassert ontological security. In the current context of food consumption, while routines can be disrupted in relation to the morality of consumption as well as the traditional understandings of what, where and how, research is limited in forming explanatory linkages between consumption routines, their disruptions and consumers' ontological security (Thomas & Epp, 2019; Gouveia & Ayrosa, 2020).

Among the middle-class consumers of India, the dynamics in food consumption are situated in the changing structures of market, social life, socio-cultural moralities, normativities and dispositions of food. While this suggests a social disruption of food-consumption practices, there is a gap in the knowledge about the ways in which consumers respond to such disruptions and the adaptive mechanisms they employ in re-establishing their sense of security (Campbell et al., 2020). Theoretically, the ubiquitous and routine nature of food consumption can be linked with Pierre Bourdieu's (1990) 'habitus' as a concept that captures the embodied practical understandings (knowing about how to go on in a given

situation) that are learned over time and can be drawn upon instantly, with little deliberation, in reproducing food routines. To acknowledge the complexities of consumption in relation to normatively challenged consumption activities entails working with a theoretical approach that includes and balances the importance of 'reproduction and change' in consumption patterns (Halkier, 2010, p. 14).

As an approach to studying the mundane and ordinary nature of routine consumption, practice theory holds that practices are an important concept for ordering social life and consumption (Schatzki, 2002). Most practice theorists define practices as habitus-oriented human activities, mediated by material configurations and organised around shared practical understandings (Schatzki, 2002). Therefore, routine practices, such as those of food consumption, involve the enactment of practical understandings that enable consumers to feel comfortable in the seamless performance of their ordered lives. While such understandings may not be articulated, they may be widely shared conventions and norms within specific consumers groups and cultures (Campbell, Inman, Kirmani, & Price, 2020; Schatzki, 2002). Collective conventions are subtly and compellingly active in everyday life, enabling the construction of routines (Jack, 2012). People feel safe within the predictable flow of these shared routines that maintain social life (Croft, 2012).

1.2.1 Practice theory and consumption

Recent research in consumption has taken a turn towards practice theory (Halkier, 2009; Spaargaren, Weenink, & Lamers, 2016; Thompson, 2005; Twine, 2015, 2018; Warde, 2017a). Rather than seeing consumption as an autonomous activity or an end in itself, practice theories regard consumption as moments in every single practice (Warde, 2005a). The most commonly followed conceptualisation by Shove, Pantzar, and Watson (2012, p. 14) is that practices are constituted by the integration of three elements, as follows: 'meaning (refers to ideas, affect, aspirations, norms and symbolic meanings), materiality (refers to the broad array of objects, bodies and technologies that comprise a practice) and competence (refers to skills and know-how)'. The defining of practice-constituting elements as qualities of a practice, as opposed to those of individuals, is an ontological shift to a post-humanistic approach to the study of consumption – one that attends to ordinary, routine aspects of consumption and is removed from the earlier rational, individualistic theoretical approaches to consumption (Halkier, 2010; Warde, 2017).

The boundaries between markets and consumption are thus mediated through the nexus of practices in which consumers are involved. However, there are gaps and inconsistencies in a practice theory approach to consumption.

The current research is left under-theorised in two key aspects relating to food-consumption practices: the role of consumer agency in practice dynamics and the distributed agency of the elements constituting a practice. In several conceptualisations of practice theory, consumers are reframed as 'carriers' of practices, thereby suggesting a decentring of social actors when exploring the overall dynamics of practices (Reckwitz, 2002a; Shove et al., 2012). In their practice-based analysis of social change, Shove et al. (2012) bracketed off emotions, motivations, identities and beliefs, as well as any reflexive monitoring of individual action and instead, focused on the variations in the integrations of practice-constituting elements. However, Spaargaren et al. (2016) followed Schatzki (2002) in allocating a larger role to consumers' individual agency in practice constitution. Thus, the theorisation of consumer agency in practice theoretical conceptualisations, for a study of consumption, remain unclarified and debated.

1.2.1.1 Consumer agency in practice

In extending the theorisation for consumer agency when practices are disrupted, I have drawn on recent studies of disrupted consumption practices (Canniford & Shankar, 2013; Epp, Schau, & Price, 2014; Phipps & Ozanne, 2017; Stigzelius, Araujo, Mason, Murto, & Palo, 2018; Thomas & Epp, 2019). An issue with some of these studies is the exclusive market-centric focus on how material and technological innovations can enable mitigating consumption-related disruptions. For example, while Stigzelius et al. (2018) focused on the way marketing messages spur consumers' agency in realigning their food practices during resource scarcity, Epp et al. (2014) focused on brand survival and enhanced brand use for family practices that are disrupted by people being separated by physical distances. Canniford and Shankar (2013) in their examination of disruptions caused in surfing practices owing to nature/culture dualisms found that consumers overcame contradictions through purifying practices that were integrated through material technologies. In their study of new parents' practices, Thomas and Epp (2019), considered the way practice realignment capabilities could sometimes be misaligned and discussed the ways consumers enact and habituate new practices. Phipps and

Ozanne (2017) studied the way disruptions caused by water scarcity led to new gardening practice dynamics. While the consumers in their study had operated in a state of ontological security before the drought, practice readjustments allowed them to regain new states of security in drought conditions. In their discussion of the ways ontological states of insecurity were refigured differently within the disrupted routines, the authors mentioned the reflexivity of consumers but, and similar to other studies mentioned above, did not explicitly theorise the role of consumer agency in coping with the disruptions.

In this current study, I have explored changes in (food) consumption practices. As discussed earlier, disruption in the food-consumption practices of the new middle-class Indian consumers originated not only from constraints of time and effort but also from the threat of loss of heritage ensuing from changing social and economic structures that alter lifestyles and lure consumers with an abundance, rather than scarcity, of food-consumption opportunities. Thus, unlike the studies of Phipps and Ozanne (2017) and Stigzelius et al. (2018), the disruptions in consumers' food practices in this current study have not originated from appeals for voluntary restraint. Therefore, in the performance of food consumption, the activities of consumers and their agency in appropriating specific food materialities and processes, linked with the shared conventions of food-consumption practices, may be critical to understanding practice transitions and ways of realigning routines (Hand & Shove, 2004; Spaargaren et al., 2016).

In this approach, this study sought support from the theoretical discussions of scholars who have called for an agency-inclusive theorisation of practice. In claiming that, 'issues of agency and power are how people navigate a world of practices,' Spaagaren et al., (2016, p.61) argue that if individuals experience social life as more or less meaningful, coherent and interrelated practices, then the development of notions of agency, power and social change are imperative in enabling an understanding of what makes people move through, engage with and find their way in social life. Further, Caldwell (2012) noted:

> *Certainly, without some degree of reflexive insight, practices can appear as theory-neutral descriptions of what is: practice is the description of action rather than the potential theoretical mediation of agency through practice.* (p. 299)

In an attempt to contribute to the structure–agency[5] debate in consumption theory, this study has focused on explicating the role of agency in the dynamics of food-consumption practices because it could help to explain the undemocratised response to globalisation, as well as reveal the heterogeneity of consumption patterns in transitioning economies (Ger & Belk, 1996). This study approached agency through the study of situated human activity in food consumption by acknowledging the uncertainty and ambiguity around the extent of agency in practices and including the agent's practical consciousness and reflexivity, which does not require conscious deliberation (Giddens, 1984; Spaargaren et al., 2016; Stigzelius et al., 2018; Twine, 2015; Wertheim-Heck, 2015). This current study has shown how changing social structures force a change in consumers' identity and the ways their reflexive and transformative agencies reproduce, erode or change food-consumption practices (Twine, 2015). Further, deriving inspiration from the contention of Shove, Trentmann, and Wilk (2009) that consumers are not victims of disruptions but rather, they play an active role in absorbing and coordinating them, the current study has explored the realignment of disrupted food practices via the linking of consumer agency perspective with ontological security.

1.2.1.2 Distributed agency of practice elements

According to the central notion of practice arrangements being an integration of practice elements, some elements (and the links between them) in a given practice in food consumption, related to the shared conventions of the practice, are more relevant than others (Domaneschi, 2019) and they can be indispensable for the constitution of the practice. Therefore, it is not only relevant to isolate the constituting elements but also to ascertain the different forms of agency that bring the issue of power into the practice approach (Sahakian & Wilhite, 2014). This 'distributed agency approach' allows an understanding of the constitution of a practice without allocating deterministic power to practices over the agency of practitioners, or vice versa (Alkemeyer & Buschmann, 2016).

Domaneschi (2019) and Twine (2018) identified the greater role of materiality and Stigzelius et al. (2018) identified the role of external (market) agency in the structuring of food practices. With an emphasis on identifying the creative

[5] The 'structure versus agency' debate may be understood as an issue of socialisation against autonomy in determining whether an individual acts as a free agent or in a manner dictated by social structure. A detailed discussion is presented in Chapter 2.

ways in which consumers engage in alternative practices and the agentive aspects of a food-consumption practice, the current research put the theoretical focus on (1) habitus, as a form of bodily cognitive processes and physical dispositions of carrying out food activities; (2) the socio-materiality of food in terms of taste and appropriateness; and (3) social contexts as tacitly accepted social rules and values contributing to the reproduction and change in food-consumption practices (Sahakian & Wilhite, 2014). Becoming familiar with the levers influencing the stability or instability of food practices can be useful in identifying opportunities for markets or the orchestration of policy.

Finally, Shove et al. (2009), positioned disruptions as part of normality in which consumers engage in practices that had a built-in elasticity. According to Campbell et al. (2020), a consumer's experience of disruption of practice is relative and highly subjective, thereby influencing the elasticity of their response and the resilience of their practices. In his intervention study related to reducing water consumption, Jack (2012) found that routine practices of washing jeans could be disrupted only when the desired (realigned) practice was legitimised for consumers. In addition, the extent of disruption depends upon how far removed the realigned practice is from the original routine. Kinnvall (2004, p. 741) argued that people's primary response to ontological insecurity is to 'seek affirmation of one's self-identity by drawing closer to any collective that is perceived as being able to reduce insecurity'. Exploring the dynamics of practices in terms of their resilience, as well as the extent of elasticity in the realignment of disrupted practices, enabled an explication in this study of these concepts in the food-consumption practices of the middle-class collective of Indian consumers.

1.2.2 A practice conceptualisation of food provisioning

When adopting a practice theory approach, it is important to define the specific conceptualisation of consumption, to avoid confusion (Halkier, 2010). Integrative practices are activities (e.g. farming and cooking) that are regularly performed and are socially recognisable by practitioners and others through their socially collective doings and sayings (Reckwitz, 2002a; Schatzki, 2002). The 'constitutive rules' that socially anchor the practical and tacit (non-verbal) understandings about how to engage in a practice are deeply entrenched and enduring (Phipps & Ozanne, 2017).

Consumers' food behaviour is organised around a series of activities: acquisition, usage and disposal (Arnould, Price, & Zinkhan, 2004). The term 'food provisioning' is used to refer to the 'lifecycle of food'. This captures the range of processes of consumption such as planning and shopping for food products, preparing and cooking, serving, eating, reheating, storing and clearing out the leftovers (Cook, 2009; Goody, 1982). Further, provisioning refers to actions that conjoin purchasing with social and emotional aspects such as caring and providing for those with whom 'one has relationships of responsibility' (Neysmith & Reitsma-Street, 2005, p. 383). Of note is the common emphasis in defining provisioning based on the way women's efforts transform market-bought goods into meals. As discussed later in Chapter 2, the food culture in India is connected to many other social practices of health, religion and identity, making it fundamental and pervasive, with rules and norms about food ingredients as well as ways of cooking, serving, eating and storing it. Such constitutive rules in food provisioning are definitive and make the practice integrative and its performance socially recognisable. Thus, the current research identified food provisioning in India as an integrated practice.

The concepts of 'appropriation' (i.e. what people do with goods, services and experiences after they have acquired them), 'acquisition' (procuring) and 'appreciation' (meanings and values) in consumption have been argued to capture a holistic understanding of the consumption phenomenon (Warde, 2017). They invite a focus on the ways objects of commercial exchange can be given meaning and incorporated into people's everyday lives. Cook (2009, p.322) identified 'semantic provisioning' as the ways in which women/mothers, in addition to shopping and preparing, attend to, create, negotiate and act upon the social meaning of goods. In India, mothers encounter and deal with various commercial, functional and use-value-related meanings of goods. In the course of their food provisioning, such meanings need distinctions and negotiations in terms of what are 'good', 'bad', 'appropriate' and 'inappropriate' foods and ways of provisioning (Carrigan & Szmigin, 2006). Using Cook's (2009) 'semantic provisioning' concept facilitates an understanding of the ways Indian food provisioners (women/mothers) acquire (e.g. shop), appropriate (e.g. prepare, cook, serve and store) and appreciate (in terms of creating, negotiating and acting upon) the heterotelic (i.e. a practice that has 'end purpose or meaning outside itself', as defined in Warde, Welch and Paddock's

(2017, p.30) meaning of food provisioning. Simply put, food provisioning as a practice is emblematic of overall food consumption.

Studies have examined domestic food-consumption practices from angles such as eating (Warde, Cheng, Olsen, & Southerton, 2007), cooking (Plessz & Étilé, 2019), health (Delormier, Frohlich, & Potvin, 2009; Maher, Fraser, & Lindsay, 2010), family identity (Mills et al., 2017; Moisio, Arnould, & Price, 2004), the role of alternative food networks in sustainable consumption (Crivits & Paredis, 2013; Sahakian & Wilhite, 2014), food waste (Evans, McMeekin, & Southerton, 2012), conventions of materiality (Domaneschi, 2019; Hand & Shove, 2004; Truninger, 2011; Twine, 2018), media representations (Halkier, 2010), organic (Andersen, 2011) and convenience food-consumption patterns (Carrigan, Szmigin, & Leek, 2006; Halkier, 2017a; Jackson & Viehoff, 2016). However, there is gap in practice theory studies in terms of examining consumption changes through the performance of household food provisioning, in light of economic, structural and social changes; this current study aimed to fill that gap.

1.3 Research aim and research questions

Food globalisation and the related social dynamics of food consumption in emerging economies is a recent and ongoing sector of research that opens up several streams of examination. With regards to changes in food consumption, a practice theory perspective within domestic domains as a site of food practices is under-theorised (Domaneschi, 2019; Donner, 2011; Sahakian & Wilhite, 2014). Additionally, there is a gap in identifying the importance of middle-class consumption patterns located within households, which are also critical ideological and social sites for establishing relationships and identities in food consumption (Donner, 2011; Gilbertson, 2018). The changing consumption practices of the new middle classes have usually been analysed from a class-based political perspective (Brosius, 2010; Fernandes, 2006; Ganguly-Scrase & Scrase, 2009; Gilbertson, 2018) and the perspective of media and their representations (Liechty, 2003).

A perspective that is under-researched in the changing Indian consumption context is the social rootedness of everyday routines in food. The current research aimed to address this gap with two major points of departure. The first was to understand the way consumers who considered themselves middle class configured their everyday food-provisioning practices. The second aim was related to food

provisioning being the focal point for competing normative discourses about health, pleasure and self-restraint, as well as what it means to be a member of an ethnic or national culture, a good mother (responsible for provisioning the family) and a socially aware consumer. This study aimed to develop an understanding about the changes in, and reproduction of, food practices and the way normative conflicts experienced in food consumption are resolved, through the following questions:

Central research question*:*

How do Indian middle-class consumers, in a transitioning consumptionscape, configure their food-provisioning practices and how do they manage any disruptions in their food provisioning to regain a sense of security?

Sub-questions*:*

1. *How is everyday food provisioning carried out in Indian middle-class households?*
2. *What dominant and persistent practices are continually reproduced in everyday food provisioning?*
3. *What conflicts and concerns, if any, are disrupting the organisation of everyday food-provisioning practices?*
4. *How are normative contestations of everyday food provisioning negotiated?*

To address these questions, I engaged in an ethnographic study and conducted 31 qualitative semi-structured interviews in three cities in India; Mumbai, Ahmedabad and Indore. Projective-technique-based tasks were included within the interviews. The varying extent of globalisation of markets and lifestyles within these cities enabled the collection of rich data in terms of food provisioning. Participants in the study primarily included middle-class food provisioners. However, to maintain cultural sensitivity and, since the site of the interviews was in most cases the primary participant's residence, others in the household, such as elders and children, were welcome to participate in the conversation-styled interviews. Observations of non-verbal gestures, tone of voice and pictures (where possible) of the food served and the kitchen environment were gathered as well.

Food change is a complex socio-spatial process that is dependent on factors of region, culture and emotion, which are not readily captured by large-scale

statistical data (Fourat & Lepiller, 2017; Law et al., 2019; Nichols, 2017). With its focused qualitative approach in gathering regional data on the everyday food-provisioning practices of a specific consumer group, this current study diverged from other food-consumption research in India that has used quantitative statistics rendered at national and sub-national levels (Kaur & Singh, 2014; Natrajan & Jacob, 2018; Pingali et al., 2019). Additionally, by focusing tightly on food practices, the current study could maintain its primary focus on the processes of food consumption, differing from studies in which the consumption of food has been considered a proxy to understand markets, nutrition levels, identity, gender or positionings of social class and status (Devasahayam, 2005; Dittrich, 2009; Donner, 2015; Stoican, 2015).

When analysing the data collected, I explored the heterogeneous meanings in food provisioning by paying due attention to all social, material and symbolic perspectives and avoiding making simplistic pronouncements about food globalisation (Klein & Murcott, 2014). Thus, as I relied on social theories to understand the changes in food consumption, this thesis has contributed to a recent stream of research in consumption called 'social practice theory', which draws attention to the cultural understandings, practices, individual agency and the materiality of foods in the market. The conceptual link that has been found in this study explains the overlap between the changing social and economic structures in India and food practices situated in everyday routines. The orientation of this research, focusing on creativity, appropriation and the interplay between meanings by consumers as agents, allowed an exploration of the way food-consumption practices were being reproduced, negotiated, realigned and recovered within the consumers' contemporary social and cultural contexts.

1.4 Significance of the study

India is forecast to account for the largest share of global consumption growth in the 21st century (World Economic Forum, 2019). Therefore, this research in food consumption is timely in developing an understanding of Indian consumers' food-related practices and challenges. Exploring the dynamic and socially constructed nature of food consumption can inform our understanding of consumers' behaviour during times of economic and social structural change, especially with calls from scholars for more studies on the sociology of food consumption in the global perspective (Eckhardt & Mahi; 2004; Etilé & Oberlander, 2019, 2019; Fourat & Lepillar, 2017; Klein & Murcott, 2014). With a need for food-based change in

lifestyle felt not only by citizen consumers but also by government institutions, this study's timing has been crucial in answering this call and exploring contemporary challenges and conflicts in consumers' food practices (Misra et al., 2011; Pingali et al., 2019; World Economic Forum, 2019).

The current study aims to contribute to the social practice theory stream, specifically to the research area of consumption dynamics, with its analysis of food-consumption practices that nuance the ideas of routine consumption and consumerist culture. In particular, the study focuses on evaluating the way intrinsic structures of residual culture and ethos shape everyday household routines and food-consumption practices, and ways in which individuals resist, retain or change their traditional practices and values in their mediation of consumption practices as both Indians and global citizens. Such an exploration will help uncover the coping mechanisms of local consumption practices and extend our knowledge about homogenisation and glocalisation styled responses to globalisation.

By situating the study of food consumption in a practice theory domain, the current study has responded to the call for 'increased social-theoretical engagements in food studies' (Neuman, 2018, p. 79). This is fruitful, as the practice theory approach helps to overcome the dichotomy in food studies of emphasising either the cultural significance of food and eating in terms of social values, meanings and beliefs or the physical health-based understandings of dietary requirements and nutritional values, as well as enabling a holistic understanding of consumption (Domaneschi, 2019). Further, the focus on the practices of eating away from home and using pre-packaged food products, the normativities around food materials, the methods of food preparation and the re-ordering of dietary practices with regard to changing socio-economical structures attends to a gap in the academic discourse about the ways the new middle-class consumers in India are (re)configuring their consumption experiences (Halkier, 2010).

Further by adopting a practice theoretical lens in its conceptualisation as well as in its methodological approach, this study responds to Warde (2019) call for an'uncontaminated' approach in practice theory. Warde (2019) states that although, some studies use a blended approach in combining practice theory conceptualisations with other theories such as Assemblage theory (Canniford & Shankar, 2013), or Transitions theory (Crivits & Paredis, 2013), 'a normal approach to theorising is to identify the limitations of a given theory and to advance means for

dealing with its omissions or partialities in its own terms, rather than to blend one with another'(p.177). The current study identifies the mechanism of practice dynamics during social change as an under-theorised aspect of practice theory and aims to contribute by a deep exploration of the ways in which the distributed agency of practice elements is influential in integrating, and realigning disrupted food practices (Sahakian & Wilhite, 2014). As consumption behaviours change, along with rapidly changing economic and social structures, scholars need to keep up, update older theories and develop new ones based on the observable behaviours.

The current study also aims to contribute to the ongoing debate on consumer agency in practice theory. By looking at ways in which food provisioners perform routine practices and manage practice disruptions that occur owing to structural changes, the study aims to extend the theorisations about social change through establishing a practice theoretical relationship between agency and structures as well as exploring the role of consumers' habitual dispositions and reflexivity in practice. Further, the study aims to explore the linkages between consumer agency and ontological security in Giddens (1991) theory of human existence, in the consumption context. By uncovering ways in which disruptions in their food practices, cause insecurity and how practice realignments are linked with restoring and maintaining consumers' sense of ontological security the current study aims to bridge concepts that allow an exploration of normalcy-restoring mechanisms played out in reaction to disruptive change, such as that brought about by globalisation (Kinnvall, 2004).

This study is a response to the debates about the homogenisation and Westernisation of Indian diets, with calls from scholars for researchers to undertake a microlevel socio-cultural analysis of the influence of neoliberal globalisation, 'as it affects ordinary working people's everyday lives – how it shapes their opinions, structures their actions, and ultimately determines their nuanced class-based cultural and social reproduction' (Ganguly-Scrase & Scrase, 2009, p. 176). The study aims to explicate the way contemporary food provisioning in India is carried out in creative ways, with tradition and modernity being juxtaposed with each other. Food consumption has been found to be sensitive to both the local value systems and a nostalgia for traditional ways of consuming, as well as people's aspirations for a good and modern life (Mathur, 2013). The current study will therefore reveal the glocalised hybridities of contemporary food consumption resulting from this

juxtaposition and enable identifying the unique patterns in food consumption. (Klein & Murcott, 2014, p. 19). It is important to study consumption in developing markets, as consumer behaviour in such marekts is likely to differ significantly from their wealthier counterparts. This provides opportunities for new learning about the creative use of consumption products, resistance and rejection of market offerings and the need for products tailored to the socio-cultural specificities of the market (Enderwick, 2020; Izberk-Bilgin, 2010).

The ways in which human agents interfere with and negotiate the changes in their socio-material environments, as well as in themselves, is insufficiently explored at this stage (Spaargaren et al., 2016). Therefore, a study of these changes and consumers' perspectives in managing them is significant from the many angles of consumer behaviour and health, social change, policy design, environment and markets. From a practical perspective, the findings of this study will enable identifying food products and categories that are possible candidates for standardised marketing strategies (e.g. global cuisines), versus local strategies emphasising ethnic traditions (e.g. traditional foods), versus glocalisation strategies combining local and global elements (e.g. packaged foods).

The study's exploration about conflicts and challenges in the routine lives of people, disrupting food-provisioning practices and the ways in which food provisioners realign those food practices, can be used by marketing managers when articulating food product messages and health information. Further, the exploration of the material dimensions of food in the bodily practices of cooking, eating and serving, as well as the symbolic dimensions of cultural purity, will inform not only the theory but also food and related service markets. It is critical to understand the impact of globalisation on the cultural makeup and subsequent behaviours of consumers worldwide. To attract and serve their customers in an emerging economy such as India, marketers need to understand the way consumption practices are shaping and the contexts under which they are likely to erode, persist or even intensify.

1.5 Organisation of the thesis

This research is organised as follows. Chapter 1 offers an introduction to the study and includes the research context, the research aims, an argument linked to the

research context, the contributions of this study to theory and the structure of this dissertation.

Chapter 2 provides theoretical perspectives and conceptual foundations from consumer culture and marketing literature. It reviews the existing literature that has examined the sociology of Indian consumption, the development of the middle-class consumer group as a prime representative of the dynamics of food consumption in India and practice theory developments in the study of food consumption. Research around the theoretical concepts of security, agency and materiality are also integrated into this chapter.

Chapter 3 explains the philosophical perspective that has been taken in this study and the empirical context of collecting the data. This chapter also describes the combination of ethnographic and practice theoretic research methodology chosen to best suit the study of the complex yet unique food-provisioning practices in India. The final part of this chapter summarises a praxiography developed to assist data analysis.

Chapters 4 and 5 present the research findings. I present the three themes that emerged from the study's participants and their emic accounts alongside the relevant literature and trace the trajectory of contemporary food-provisioning practices in middle-class households.

Chapter 6 offers an overview of the findings and explores the theoretical implications for food practices, meanings, consumer agency, food provisioner's ontological security and the collective ontological security of the middle-class group of consumers. This chapter also presents the methodological and practical implications of the study for the field of consumer research. I conclude this thesis by discussing the limitations of the study and offer considerations for future research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Part I: Research context

2.1 Introduction

The research questions of this study were based on key aspects of the changing food consumptionscape of India and the way this change was influencing food-provisioning practices in middle-class households. This current chapter is divided into two major parts. The first part provides a background review of critical concepts related to the food-consumption context in India, such as the sociology of consumption and the growth of a middle class of consumers. The second part describes the theoretical approach to a study of food consumption through the application of practice theory and the theoretical focus of this current study on the concepts of distributed agency and ontological security of food provisioners in the context of food-provisioning practices. Figure 2.1 summarises the dimensions of this literature review chapter.

This first part of this chapter begins with a review of the food culture in India and contemporary changes in food consumption. The next section sketches a picture of the consequent disruptions and challenges inherent in the contemporary food-consumption scenario. The following sections take a historical perspective, reviewing the sociology of consumption in India, followed by the development and role of the 'new middle class' as a representative of the emerging consumer culture in India. The consumer society referred to in most Western literature is normally considered a society in the advanced stages of capitalism or that has completed the transition from industrialism to consumerism (Kaur, 2016). While the practices and processes of global consumerism are visible in liberalising and globalising economies such as India's, their ideologies and world views are not the same as those in the West – rather, they are innovatively created and unique (Brosius, 2012). Therefore, it is important to start with an understanding of the morally contested nature of consumption in a middle-class consumer society and the finer nuances of the growing consumer culture in that country.

The final section in this part of the chapter presents a review of the way the moral ambiguities and cultural normativities of consumption are dealt with by middle-class consumers in India. This helps to identify what constitutes change or

continuity and the way these are managed by the consumer community. As Klein and Murcott (2014) noted, 'the relevance of such historical changes to the people affected by them cannot be grasped without close, detailed ethnographic attention to people's food habits, which situate changing culinary practices within local cultures of consumption and social relations' (p. 8).

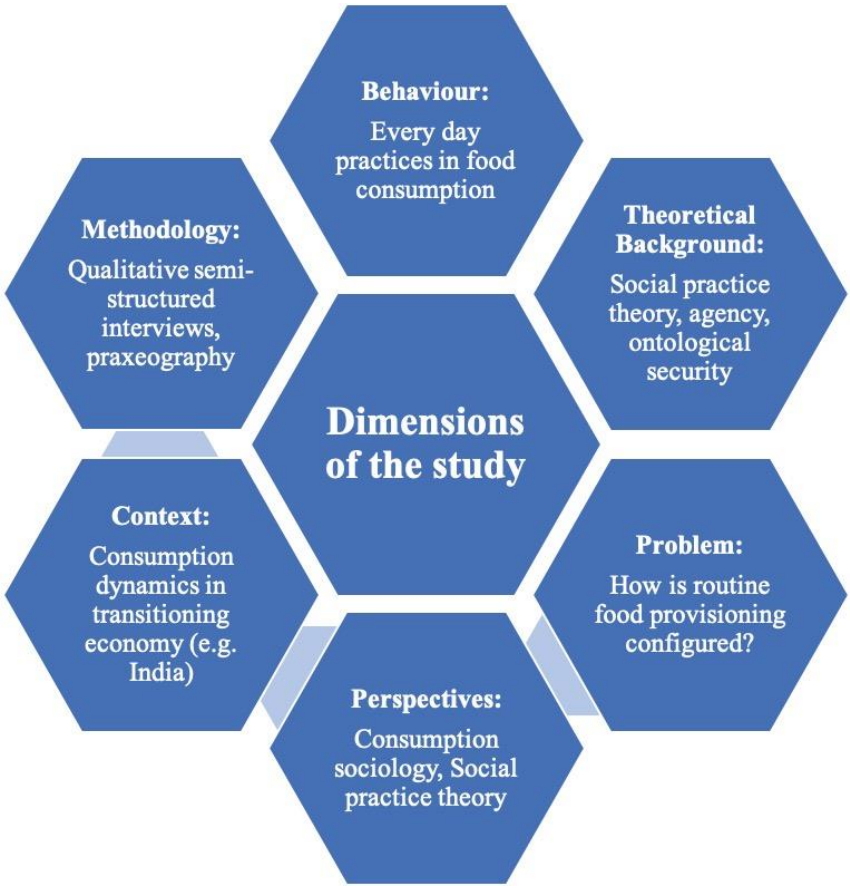

Figure 2.1: A summary flow chart of the dimensions of the study

2.2 The food culture in India

> *India provides us with virtually an inexhaustible repository of instances where food loads itself with mundane and profound meanings.* (Khare, 1992, p. 27)

As the above quotation notes, food systems in India are renowned for their complexity and diversity. Indian food habits, preferences, norms and meanings vary not only regionally but also with religion, caste and sub-caste (Appadurai, 1988a). While an individual's food culture is generally based on their family's place of origin, tastes and ways of cooking in India are so unique to each household that the

study of any general group is impossible. In addition, gender, age, lifestyle, social status and health condition create yet more diversity. Changes in food-consumption patterns according to festivals and seasons complicate matters even further (P. Chapman, 2009). Although such complexity makes it difficult to generalise about Indian food culture, some patterns can be drawn out of common practices, norms and beliefs. These norms and ideals related to food are critical to an understanding of food-provisioning behaviour, as they illustrate both the long-standing traditional practices and any recent changes that contribute to a sense of contemporary tension and conflict in food consumption (Mangalassary, 2016). Food practices are doubly governed by cultural rules of social and symbolic purity, as well as the health properties of food materials and ways of preparing meals that prevent, cure or cause disease (Appadurai, 1988a; Bruckert, 2015; Mangalassary, 2016; Mukherjea, Underwood, Stewart, Ivey, & Kanaya, 2013).

Traditional Indian meals and dietary guidelines are embedded within Ayurveda, which places a special emphasis on ‘ahara’ (diet) and ‘anna’ (food) as a means to good life, health and wellness (Guha, 2006; Sarkar, Lohith, et al., 2015). Ayurvedic prescriptions and proscriptions exert a strong influence on food ingredients, recipes, cooking and eating patterns (Dash, 2014; Mangalassary, 2016; Morgan et al., 2011). Food that is freshly cooked at home, primarily vegetarian and including herbs and spices that are thought to boost energy, improve digestion and facilitate overall health, are examples of factors contributing to the food culture of India (Ganguly, 2017; Gupta, 2009). A formal Indian meal is usually centred on either whole-wheat bread (roti, chapati) for the northern, central and western regions of the country or white rice (chawal) in the southern and eastern regions. The bread/rice is accompanied by varying combinations of sautéed vegetables (subzi) and lentils (daal) (Sen, 2004). While the menu might vary, all the dishes in a full meal are extremely labour intensive, with a strong emphasis on fresh ingredients and traditional spices (Ganguly, 2017). Further, seasonal variation in foods, based on what is health promoting/demoting in a specific season, is another unique aspect of cultural food practices in India (Sarkar, Lohith, et al., 2015). The way the food is cooked, who cooks it and how/when it is consumed is also important in maintaining the relative purity of the food (Bruckert, 2015). Most Indians regularly eat at home, with the women spending long hours cooking for the family (Sarkar, 2001). In short, as a bio-moral aggregate, the food practices unite morality and action and the

traditional cuisines and diets are all adapted towards preventing disease, maintaining purity and good health, self/identity and group status (Bruckert, 2015).

The traditional food culture, cooking techniques and associated therapeutic knowledge have been passed from one generation to another, as cultural scripts, that have become ingrained as taste preferences, socio-cultural practices and food-related habits among all classes and regions of the Indian population (Morgan et al., 2011; Sen, 2004; Yun & Pysarchik, 2010). Although achieving the (ideal) food ethos is often difficult, the established conventions pervade and underlie most of the attitudes pertaining to the ways food should be handled and consumed in India (Bruckert, 2015; McKinley et al., 2018). These conventions shape the importance of food and act as obstacles to changes in food consumption. Cultural and Ayurvedic codifications of purity and health lead to neophobia, meaning any food perceived as symbolically unacceptable or impure is considered potentially dangerous (Choo, Chung, & Pysarchik, 2004). However, recent economic growth, greater disposable income, changing lifestyles and taste preferences have disrupted traditional food routines (Dittrich, 2009; B. Ghosh, 2011; Pingali et al., 2019). As discussed previously in Chapter 1, new avenues of food retail have altered the food consumptionscape of India through the greater availability of convenient, packaged and processed foods, as well as foods being available away from home.

2.2.1 Changes and challenges of food consumption

While eating home-cooked food together with the family, in the home, has been the traditional culture, rapid urbanisation has led to a rise in the number of nuclear families, working mothers and a generally fast-paced metropolitan lifestyle. This is suggested to have led to a relative decline in traditional eating habits (Kaur & Singh, 2014). In addition, studies have identified lack of food preparation skills, as well as the longer shelf life of packaged products and their labour-saving attributes, as drivers for the consumption of convenient, packaged food (Kathuria & Gill, 2013; Kumar, 2015). The visibility of global trends through popular television, internet, movies, magazines and social media has fashioned and fuelled a preference for processed and convenient foods and drinks. In India, the overall per capita sales of packaged and processed foods nearly doubled between 2012 and 2018, rising from USD 31.3 to USD 57.7 (Euromonitor, 2019; Law et al., 2019). Global commodity consumption has become synonymous with being modern and a symbol of class

status (Varman & Belk, 2012). This aspirational status of global convenience foods encourages consumers to try new culinary delights and adapt to international dietary patterns since having such knowledge of global/Western cuisine indicates cosmopolitanism (Brosius, 2012; Gilbertson, 2018).

There are, however, many inherent challenges and contradictions linked with the changing food scenario. The increase in food commercialisation, leading to greater access to, and affordability of, energy-dense, processed and packaged convenience foods has interacted with a more sedentary lifestyle and created an increased health burden of obesity (Ahirwar & Mondal, 2019), diabetes (Hentschel et al., 2017) and related non-communicable diseases (Misra et al., 2011; Pingali et al., 2019; Singh et al., 2014). A segment of Indian consumers, mostly middle class, are beginning to recognise the adverse effects of urbanisation and the imminent health threats posed by their current lifestyles (Kulkarni et al., 2016; Misra et al., 2011; Sharma & Garg, 2013). Consumers in this category take greater personal responsibility and aspire to improve their health status by seeking information and health-based resources, as well as undertaking activities that improve health (Kulkarni et al., 2016; Neilsen, 2015). Faced with the pressures of time, changing lifestyle and family structure (nuclear or extended family, as opposed to joint), this group of consumers is seeking convenient yet healthy food-choice options and fuelling the demand for foods with greater values of health, convenience and quality (Kulkarni et al., 2016).

Unfamiliarity with the new food products in the market has had a significant effect on Indian consumers' attitudes, intentions to buy and purchasing behaviour (Sharma & Garg, 2013; Yun & Pysarchik, 2010). Coupled with confusing and contradictory mass media messages and subjective norms, this has resulted in conflicted food-related values (Ablett et al., 2007). Further, the tailoring of fast foods from global establishments to match the cultural requirements (no beef/meat) and palette (hot and spicy) of Indian people highlights the significant effects of collectivism on food-consumption trends in India (Kirti, 2019). Manohar and Rehman (2018) and Choo et al. (2004) identified the critical impact of subjective norms and perceived food safety (in terms of purity) on Indian consumers' purchasing behaviour regarding newly available processed food products.

Another reason for food neophobia among Indian people is the correlation of healthy food to the traditional 2,000-year-old Ayurvedic practices that are ingrained

in everyday Indian culinary practice. Indian spices and herbs are thought to boost energy and provide various immune-boosting and gut-health benefits (Sarkar et al., 2015). In addition, traditional Indian foods are perceived as functional foods because of the presence of body-healing chemicals, antioxidants, dietary fibre and probiotics. Health-conscious consumers who are interested in weight management, blood sugar balance and enhanced immunity place more trust in Ayurveda-based traditional health foods and dietary supplements (Sharma & Garg, 2013) than in Western medicine.

This lack of trust in Western medicine has resulted in an increased reliance on shared ambient knowledge about alternative remedies, such as in diabetes management (Hentschel et al., 2017). As well as the formal biomedical system for clinical treatment, the culture in India draws heavily on folklore and CAM-based (Complementary and Alternative Medicine) multiple systems of medicine, including Ayurveda, Siddha, Unani, homeopathy and naturopathy. Most of these systems emphasise the importance of food in disease prevention and management. As Indian consumers recognise the side effects of Western medicine, the mindset is shifting from a curative approach to a corrective approach[6] (D. Ghosh & Smarta, 2017). A global movement away from the use of chemical additives and preservatives, along with increasing consumer awareness about a healthy lifestyle, has accelerated the demand for natural, herbal, organic, Ayurvedic and traditional products (Arya, Thakur, Kumar & Kumar, 2012; Varman & Belk, 2009).

With the dietary shift associated with growing incomes and urbanisation, many ancient cereals and grains in India have been replaced by refined rice and wheat (Alae-Carew et al., 2019). However, in the current climate of health crisis and greater consumer awareness, there has been a rise in the desire for authenticity, leading to a growth in consumer demand for products that are perceived as authentic, owing to their national and traditional nature (Khalikova, 2017; Srinivas, 2006). The recent shift in Indian consumers' preferences towards ancient grains such as millets and other herbal and natural food products indicates the security that consumers gain

[6] India's Ministry of Ayurveda, Yoga & Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homoeopathy (AYUSH) promotes traditional healing therapies and lists various practices for boosting the immune system (Priya & Sujatha, 2020). In his address to the nation about the COVID-19 situation in the country, Prime Minister Modi advised the people to adhere to the instructions issued by AYUSH, such as consuming hot kadha, an Ayurvedic drink made with herbs, to boost the immune system and treat seasonal infections such as colds, coughs and flu (Thacker, 2020). Since the onset of the virus, herbal decoctions have become very popular (Pon, 2020).

from their perceived authenticity (Erler, Keck, & Dittrich, 2020; Khalikova, 2020; Nichols, 2017). The recent government promotion of products that are made in India has reinforced the Swadeshi[7] theme. Against the backdrop of self-sufficiency and patriotism in India, some food brands are offering both traditional and modern food products with a Swadeshi touch (Bruckert, 2015).

Clearly, the transitioning of the food-consumption culture in India has been complicated. The changes in the institutional and social structures of food in India have increased the number of avenues for food consumption and facilitated adjustment to new lifestyles, alongside the disruption to meaningful routines in food, social norms and health risks have been coupled with conflicts emerging from a plethora of market and media messages.

In their examination of the change in food demand in India over the last 20 years, Pingali and Khwaja (2004) identified two distinct stages of diet transition: (i) income-induced diet diversification, with economic prosperity enabling diets to diversify but retain their predominantly traditional features; and (ii) diet globalisation, with the consolidation of economic growth leading to the opening up of global dietary patterns and habits, along with the severing of the link with cultural habits and traditions. They believed the early stages of diet diversification were already evident in India.

A decade later, research by Misra et al. (2011) indicated that the changes in food consumption in India did not align with the predicted diet globalisation stage. Landy (2009) proposal regarding the 'cultural density' of India[8] attempted to explain the cause for such non-homogeneity. According to Landy, as well as Bruckert (2015), specific food-related characteristics, such as the influence of Ayurveda and vegetarianism, created an exception in India to the general global trends in food transition. As the food systems in that country had unique cultural features, structures, relations, processes and agencies of provision, distinctions should be made regarding not only the material properties of food but also their meaning to consumers. While this signalled the need for elaboration on other non-global patterns

[7] In Hindi, Swadeshi means native. The Swadeshi movement, led by Mahatma Gandhi, was the key to achieving political independence in India, releasing the nation from British power and improving the country's economy. Strategies of the Swadeshi movement involved boycotting British products and reviving domestic products and production processes (Bruckert, 2015).

[8] The 'cultural density' index involves indicators such as a population weight, economic growth, identity and international 'soft power'. Countries with a high cultural density score are more able to resist the effects of foreign influences (Landy, 2009).

of food transition, the urban food-related institutional and socio-cultural structures of food provisioning seemed to be uniquely complicating the food-consumption scene in India (Fine et al., 2018). Therefore, this current research responded to a call by Venkatesh (1995) for an 'ethnoconsumerist'[9] approach for studying (food) consumption behaviour in India (p. 324). While the above section presents an overall picture of how change in food consumption has come about through economic growth, an understanding of the consumption phenomenon cannot be developed without going into the history of its development in the Indian context.

2.3 The sociology of consumption in the Indian context

Although India is similar to many other emerging consumer economies in Eastern Europe, Asia and Latin America in certain aspects of liberalisation and globalisation-induced growth in markets and consumer power (e.g. investment by multinationals, growth in GDP), the specific content of these and patterns of development are very different (Ger & Belk, 1996). Therefore, the historical progression of the sociology of consumption in the West cannot be used as a model for studying consumption in India (Venkatesh 1995). The first point of difference is its delayed economic development, compared with many countries in the West and some in the East, such as Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand and Taiwan. Second, because of its unique history, social change in India does not follow any known models (Pick & Dayaram, 2006).

Before the twentieth century, the privileged class in India and its allies indulged in conspicuous consumption (Kaur, 2016). While the majority culture of the pre-independence (1947) period was largely characterised by the Gandhian philosophy of simple living, the post-independence period was marked by the ideology of community living and self-reliance (H. R. Chaudhuri & Majumdar, 2006). During this period, the Indian market suffered from monopolies and slow economic growth and apart from the wealthy few, consumption was a largely immoral and unacceptable social and cultural activity (Singh, 1993). Other than inherited wealth, owning money or material goods was considered illegitimate. Moreover, the value of wealth had to be underplayed and legitimacy could only be

[9] 'Ethnoconsumerism' is a conceptual framework for studying consumption from the viewpoint of the cultural order in question, using the unique cultural categories of behaviour and thought that are native to the culture. 'Ethnos' means nation or people and 'consumerism' is used here in the classical sense of consumption as a set of cultural practices (Venkatesh, 1995).

obtained when wealth was converted into prestige through donations and charity (Chaudhuri & Majumdar, 2006).

While sociological analyses of mass consumption in many Western nations (e.g. America and Europe) have already considered the economic and cultural phases of those areas, the Indian phase of mass consumption only began after 1991, with the integration of the Indian economy with the global economy (Jacob, 2012). The ensuing surge in income and availability of consumer goods led to the strengthening of social acceptance of consumption as a means of defining social status, starting the mass consumption phenomenon in India (Kaur, 2016). According to Ganguly-Scrase and Scrase (2009), economic liberalisation facilitated the shift from necessities-based consumption to a rise in conspicuous consumption and the concomitant emergence of a consumer culture.

However, recent scholarship has warned against 'conflating consumption with consumerism' (Gilbertson, 2018, p. 59). While contemporary consumption practices that construct and narrate India's neoliberal experiences of modernity are increasingly visible, the tenacity of the cultural themes that are continuing to find favour in popular consumption realms is testimony that imprints of the new consumption age can be traced back to the pre-liberalisation Indian culture (Fernandes, 2009; Ganguly-Scrase & Scrase, 2009). Because of the history of British colonial rule, Indian consumers are sensitive to Western influence and the perceived 'corrupting force' of Westernisation (Jacob, 2012; Mathur, 2013). The freedom movement led by Gandhi re-endorsed the cultural ideals of asceticism and frugality, counter-posing the 'spiritual East' against the 'material West' (Chaudhury & Majumdar, 2006). Thus, India's struggle for independence created a powerful nationalistic sentiment.

While in most societies, the process of urbanisation and modernisation, as well as the impact of new technologies, usually parallels the developments in Western industrialised societies, in India the advent of a modern consumer culture has been criticised because of its evaluation of individuals on the basis of their material possessions, rather than other 'higher' aspects of being (Mathur, 2013; van Wessel, 2004). For example, rather than using the terms 'modernisation' and 'Westernisation', 'progressiveness' has been preferred, as this does not involve the negative connotations of adopting an American lifestyle or giving up the indigenous culture (Varman & Belk, 2009; Venkatesh & Swamy, 1994). The elite Indian classes

have supported the developments of modernisation only as long as the traditional value system has not been negatively affected (Srinivas, 2006; Venkatesh, 1994). The clash between traditionalism and modernism (or the blending of the two) is a consistent theme in research on India (Venkatesh & Swamy, 1994). The ability of consumers to ignore, resist or adopt market messages and product offerings in a rapidly modernising market place is an important but under-researched topic (Eckhardt & Mahi, 2012).

In India, while the emerging culture of consumerism entices individuals to consume in order to shape and reshape their identities, the ideology of morality associated with 'Indian culture' or 'Indian values' simultaneously limits consumerism by the exercising of reserve and restraint (Brosius, 2010; van Wessel, 2004). Hindu ideals involve the regulation of the pleasure of living through considerations of morality and well-being (Mohan, 2011). In other words, when there is a conflict between dharma (principles and righteousness) and artha (material gain, advantage), the former should prevail. Further, the hedonistic aspiration for a good life is seen as a form of debased materialism, as a 'bhogi' (enjoyer or sensualist) seeking self-realisation or self-expression through the consumption of material goods instead of spiritual or social pursuits (Madan, 1996). In contrast, adherence to the cultural values of 'tyaga' (renunciation) is akin to being a 'yogi' (renouncer, wise person) (Madan, 1996). While this understanding can be shaped and altered via attempts to practise the ideals of sociality and concomitantly experiencing living an everyday life, an attempt to harmonise these virtues disciplines people and allows them to manage the strains and trials of household management, family life and social obligations (Mohan, 2011). Studies of consumer culture must recognise that such socio-cultural and national values are crucial to consumer behaviour in the Indian context (Khare, 2011).

Thus, the Indian consumption scene is full of contradictions and the juxtaposition of the opposing forces of tradition and modernity[10] (Venkatesh, 1994). The identities expressed in relation to the (outer) consumption realm and the (inner) spiritual space, with everyday living tied to a cultural identity, have led to a subculture of modernity that is not in conflict with tradition. Rather, it branches out

[10] For example, consumption patterns follow non-linear paths, such that some new technologies in India (e.g. mobile phones) are diffusing faster than old technologies (The Economist, 2008).

from tradition, enabling the retention of cultural aspects of morality and limiting consumerism (Ganguly, 2017; Mathur, 2013). This has implications for the nature and development of consumption patterns for middle-class Indian consumers, who are the group most significantly advantaged by the liberalisation of the economy and most affected by the dual burden of rising consumption and the morality of the culture (Mathur, 2010; Saavala, 2010). As Kaur (2016) noted, 'consumption is far from being a matter of mere consuming and entails far more ... that social classes are in part constituted through cultural practices, and serve to reinforce and reproduce social hierarchies' (p. 22).

2.4 The middle class and the consumption culture

The framework of the liberalisation of the Indian economy and its attendant consumerism and consumer culture is often within scholarly works noted as creating a middle-class category of consumers in India that will become the largest in the world by 2030 (Kaur, 2016). Consumer culture in India is governed by social, cultural and economic factors (Brosius, 2010). According to Venkatesh and Swamy (1984), India is a layered society, with politicians, bureaucrats and industrialists belonging to the privileged upper levels. The lower levels consist of the low-income groups and the middle layer is a diverse group of people such as salaried employees, professionals (e.g. lawyers, doctors, business managers), small entrepreneurs and educationalists. From the perspective of social change related to economic development, this is the most significant layer as it is affected most by the changing context in India (Fernandes, 2000, 2009).

Since the early 1990s, India's burgeoning middle class has been central to the consumption development narrative (Lobo & Shah, 2015; Singh, 2015). Estimates of the size, extent and effect of the middle class vary, depending on the definitions used and variability in markers such as discretionary income, education and social identity. The definition adapted for this current study pertains to the 'new middle class', as a new group that is distinct from the old middle class in placing significant emphasis on social position, public or political influence and Western-style education (Donner, 2011; Kaur, Malik, Sharma, & Mittal, 2016). Composed of people from all caste groups, this new middle class (henceforth referred to simply as the middle class) mostly consists of English-speaking salaried executives, teachers, lawyers, doctors and bureaucrats holding white-collar positions and sharing the

common experience of upward social mobility (Dittrich, 2009; Saavala, 2010). With an annual household income between USD 7700 and USD 15,400, these households have gained significant disposable income, experienced major lifestyle changes and are considered a 'consuming agency' (Mathur, 2010) of the post-liberalisation period (Keelery, 2019; Shukla, 2010).

In gaining an empirical understanding of the rapidly changing consumption patterns, the Indian middle class commands focus, as it represents a sizeable market opportunity. By 2025, this sector of the population is expected to number 583 million, representing almost half of the total Indian population (Roy, 2018). Their contribution to total consumption is expected to grow up to 59%, making them a new force in the Indian economy (Kaur et al., 2016). Thus, as a major consuming sector, the Indian middle class is shaping the overall consumption pattern of the country. Any study aiming to formalise the concept of changing consumption patterns in the Indian context should try to capture the cognitive and behavioural dynamics of the Indian middle class (Chaudhuri & Majumdar, 2006).

As a social category, the middle class has attracted much attention within scholarly discourses on consumption and sociology (Fernandes, 2000; Liechty, 2003; Mathur, 2010). Through increased consumption and aspirations for a privileged lifestyle, the Indian middle class strengthens its social and class identity through a public display of engagement in the culture of consumption that was unseen in the country earlier (Chaudhuri & Majumdar, 2006; Mathur, 2013; Venkatesh & Swamy, 1994). However, this group is unique in that their consumerist tendencies have little relationship with the concept of cultural capital that Bourdieu (1984) identified as a characteristic of middle-class people. Bourdieu's concept was that a person's birth in a certain class enabled the building of their cultural capital and determined their aspirations and consumption choices. However, Singh's (2015) case studies in India showed that while all the individuals in his study met the definitional criteria for belonging to the middle class, they failed to 'carry consumerism in the pure aesthetic sense which Bourdieu describes as middle-class characteristics' (p. 77). While this suggested that the markers of Indian middle-class consumption were ambiguous, it also indicated the disparity between consumption aspirations and cultural capital. Further, the works of Donner (2011), Dittrich (2009) and van Wessel (2004) illustrated that theoretical concepts cannot be applied fully to the empirical reality when trying to understand the concept of middle-class consumption in India.

While the Euro-American nations have led the way in defining and dictating the contents of a global consumer culture (Mohan, 2011), Indian middle-class consumer culture has been differentiated by their culturally embodied understanding of consumption in moralistic terms. As the country has undergone rapid economic development, disposable incomes and accessible branded goods have become a crucial basis for defining social status and relationships, while also retaining an attachment to the values of austerity, preservation and balance (Teck-Yong & Bogaert, 2010). Among many middle-class Indians an ontological tension exists signifying the fear of a possible loss of Indian cultural identity in moving away from their imagined notions of Indianness (Venkatesh & Swamy, 1994). Thus, while showing a preference for modern and Western products, they have been simultaneously conscious of 'Indianising' their experiences (Sharifonnasabi et al., 2019; Varman & Belk, 2009). This has often led to the adoption of Western ideas and products, but with a 'twist'.

Although the urban middle class in India has presented conspicuous consumption as being central to their social lives, they have denied it legitimacy and significance for the constitution of their individual selves (van Wessel, 2004). This has created a unique paradox, with modern consumption being accepted but the acceptance being traditionally contested. The seemingly antithetical categories of tradition and modernity simultaneously have resulted in consumers' dilemma and tensions (Eckhardt & Mahi, 2004; Ger & Belk, 1996; Mohan, 2011). Through her ethnographic research, Saavala (2010) identified that while the middle classes have created the development of new consumer societies, they have undergone daily struggles in preserving the moral values that a middle-class person should uphold: they have used the new consumerist culture as a 'referent of upward mobility in society', but they have simultaneously critiqued this culture of consumer hedonism (Mathur, 2010, p. 226). A running theme in the contemporary discussion of the Indian consumer culture has been that of being caught between these positions in a dialectic process (Grünhagen, Dant, & Lawrence, 2018). The urban middle-class consumer has been seen as attempting to balance 'austerity', a long-held traditional value influenced by ancient cultural beliefs that have prevailed for centuries, as well as the Gandhian philosophy of living simply (Chaudhury & Majumdar, 2006;

Venkatesh, 1994), and the 'extravagance' afforded by positive economic activity (Mathur 2010, p. 225). According to van Wessel (2004):

> *Modern consumption is accepted, but this acceptance is morally ambivalent. In their interpretations of their lives and society, people draw on collective ideological resources, but with the purpose of individually dissociating from society which is taken as immoral.* (p. 95)

2.5 Middle-class consumption: A balancing act

While the impact of globalisation in India has been much discussed, especially with regard to changes within socio-cultural environments (Fernandes, 2009; Jacob, 2012; Mohan, 2011) and attention to the transforming middle-class identity (Donner, 2011; Gilbertson, 2018; Kaur, 2016), the focus on consumption *per se* is very recent. In an economy that continues to grow, the simultaneous growth in consumption cannot be denied. While the concept of homogenised consumption has been hugely challenged, studies in India have considered issues such as whether, to what extent and in which sectors of consumption the homogenising effects of globalisation erode national, cultural and traditional values and affiliations (Dittrich, 2009; Mathur, 2013; Verman & Belk, 2009, 2012). The results of these studies so far have pointed to difficulty in classifying consumer culture practices in simple dichotomies of modern versus traditional. While terms such as hybridisation (Fernandes, 2000), glocalisation and creolisation (Ger & Belk, 1996) have all been used to describe the way local adaptations of consumption patterns depart from globalised homogenisation, middle-class consumers in India have been observed to be creatively consuming from around the globe while maintaining their traditional attitudes towards important cultural values (Gilbertson, 2018; Mathur & Parameswaran, 2004).

Trapped between the ambition of grasping the glittering world of affluence and the pulls of the familiar values of their cultural world, consumers in the middle classes face a paradox in their consumption (Mohan, 2011). The morality of engagement in modernised forms of consumption that are characteristic of the middle classes in India is an active field of reflexively selecting from the multiplicity of identities at the various social, cultural, religious, ethnic, national and global fronts (Fernandes, 2009). In middle-class Indian society, the resistance to change in

the inner domain has developed into an ideological struggle leading to unique patterns of consumption. Scholars such as Brosius (2010), Gilbertson (2018) and Verman and Belk (2012) have noted that middle-class consumers position themselves as cosmopolitan Indians whose image of modernity is not far removed from the traditional ways of consuming and leading one's life but is combined with strategic choices in consumption that allow them to maintain their class status. Thus, being modern implies a balancing of lifestyles and limiting ways of consuming through making strategic choices about consumption. In achieving this balance, the markers and motifs of tradition-specific practices can be picked up from cultural contexts and carried over into more relevant contemporary contexts (Mathur, 2013).

Thus, by selectively picking up meanings, messages and images from the global media and relating to them via their own cultural stereotypes, the middle class in India have created their own unique consumption equilibrium (Derné, 2008; Khare, 2011). By actively participating in shaping and transforming the meanings, usage and materiality of consumption, these middle-class consumers have achieved stability in their lifestyles and feel part of the global and modern community (Sharifonnasabi et al., 2019). According to Eckhardt and Mahi (2004, 2012), consumers' reactions to new and modern products of consumption are based on the ease of transformability of a good in local terms and the degree to which that good has local cultural compatibility (fitting in with local traditions and values). Empirical studies of Indian middle-class consumers' acceptance of modern consumption commodities have indicated a significant effect of the transformability of meaning, by which consumers transform and/or reject the novel offerings introduced in local markets (Grünhagen et al., 2018; Gupta, 2011). It seems that the Indian middle-class consumer has been attempting to adjust to the changing consumptionscape by using 'the power of tradition to conquer challenges of modernity' (Sinha, 2011, p. 18). Other researchers have suggested that Indian consumers 'claim a moral middle' (Gilbertson, 2018) or remain 'in between' (Kaur, 2016) to achieve a balance by limiting and/or extending their consuming to remain within the shared boundaries of what is understood as morally appropriate consumption.

Further, a trajectory of counterbalancing the influence of globalisation has emerged. Sectors of the population have become acutely conscious of the problems arising from economic reforms and the consequent invasion of the Western capitalist culture (Mohan, 2011). This has led to an accelerated growth of nationalist and

mythic cultural identities and the subsequent emergence of 'cultural emission'-styled revivalist movements to counterbalance the negative influence of capitalism (B. Ghosh, 2011; Verman & Belk, 2009). For example, the indigenous food boom via local eateries and pre-prepared local food items has not only been a challenge for multinational food companies such as McDonald's and KFC but has also influenced the overall consumption trends in the country (Kirti, 2019).

In analysing the sustainability of food-consumption practices, Ganguly (2017) found that the culture of middle-class consumers in Bangalore exhibited resilience in certain food-consumption patterns that endured even in the context of new modes of consumption. Culture refers to the beliefs, values, behaviour and material objects that together, form a people's way of life (Ritzer, 2001). Additionally, the notion of culture involves both collective meaning making and the transforming nature of such meaning. Thus, for an understanding of consumption practices it is important to investigate the underlying collective understandings and practices that define consumption in a society, class or country, which may or may not be different from universal trends and cultures of consumption (Ganguly, 2017). The culture, lifestyle, food-consumption habits and domestic arrangements of the (new) middle-class consumers in India remain largely under-scrutinised.

2.6 Summary

The globalisation of food raises concerns about not only the quality and quantity of food but also the symbolic meanings attached to regional and cultural variations in food consumption. This chapter has situated the contemporary food consumptionscape of India within the country's changing economic and social structures and cultural values and traditions, emphasising the morally contested nature of consumption in the middle-class consumer culture. Further, as a consumption category, food is particularly tied into cultural traditions and is emblematic of the co-existent traditional and modern discourses around consumption in India.

With the rapid expansion of the Indian economy and the subsequent growth in people's income, food expenditure has become the largest retail consumption category. While this is a compelling reason for studying the changes in patterns of food consumption in that country, it is also important to note the influence of a changing system of food provisioning on consumption in India. The change in

lifestyles and income has been accompanied by a surge in both unorganised and organised food markets in the form of food retail set-ups and access to a large variety of out-of-home food, hugely altering the food consumptionscape in India. Consumer behaviour towards new food choices is considered a mirror for the socio-cultural changes occurring in local societies (Klein & Murcott, 2014).

Little is known about the culturally and socially laden food behaviour of Indian consumers and there is a critical gap in understanding the way day-to-day food consumption is carried out in the evolving consumption culture in India (Sardana et al., 2011; Yun & Pysarchik, 2010). Understanding these changes from a consumer perspective is significant from the many angles of theory, consumer behaviour and health, social change, policy design, environment and markets.

The next part of this chapter presents the theoretical perspectives and conceptual foundations from the existing literature that has examined the study of consumption and change, particularly social practice theory, introducing concepts such as agency, identity and ontological security. It also presents the conceptual framework adopted for this study.

Part II: Theoretical foundations

This second part of the literature review presents the theoretical grounding for the everyday-practice approach taken in this thesis, providing an overview of the theoretical approaches to the sociological study of consumption and food consumption. While the sociology of consumption in the Indian context has been discussed in the first part of this chapter, this part focuses on the Western world context. This is significant as while an understanding of Indian consumption can only be gained by zooming in on the processes of how the Indian society and consumer culture within evolves, the Western sociological concepts form the basis of the consumption theorisations used in this study. Western sociological theorisations of consumption can be readily accepted in Indian contexts and parallels can be drawn between both contexts (Srivastava, Arif, & Abraham, 2018).

The evolution of practice theory is outlined, presenting it as an analytical approach to the study of everyday food consumption, particularly focusing on the concepts from practice theory that are relevant to this thesis: consumer agency, distributed agency of practice elements and ontological security. The notion of food provisioning as a practice site or junction in which most of the everyday routines related to food consumption materialise is suggested, viewing food provisioning as an integrated and performative practice and the food provisioner as a 'carrier' of the practice. Based on the understandings developed in the current and previous sections, the chapter closes with the presentation of a conceptual framework for approaching the research aim, research question and sub-questions about food-provisioning practices in the transitioning consumptionscape of India.

2.7 Consumption in sociology

The original meaning of 'consumption' comes from the Latin '*consumere'*, meaning to 'use up', 'eat' or 'waste'. This has come to mean using up food, energy or resources. At the turn of the 18th century, industrialisation in many parts of the Western world and the related economic growth led to the word consumption being understood as a counterpart of production and signalling the use of goods and services to fulfil needs (Warde, 2017b). The invention of mass production and the concomitant surge of affluence in the 20th century allowed the meaning of consumption to expand from the fulfilment of basic needs to hold symbolic meanings of expressing oneself socially, culturally and politically. This change

prompted a growing interest in a specialised new sub-discipline – the sociology of consumption (J. Gronow & Warde, 2001).

In general, a theory is a set of propositions that aim to explain why or how a situation has come to be the way it is, identifying the entities to be aware of and the relationships among those entities (Warde, 2005a). Thus, theories bracket off most of the parts of a complex reality to give a focused account of the way particular phenomena operate, with some disciplines requiring theories that are quite reductive (Warde, 2014). Within any discipline, theories differ in their emphases. Many disciplines have examined consumption from a range of theoretical viewpoints (Halkier, 2010; Klein & Murcott, 2014; Ritzer, 2001; Warde, 2005b). The next section outlines the way consumption became acknowledged within the discipline of (Western) sociology. This is followed by a critique of the various concepts and ideas from classical sociology that have been translated into approaches for studying the sociology of consumption.

2.8 Sociology of consumption

In its early phases, concerned about the changing social order brought about by the industrial revolution and extensive production, the discipline of sociology was wary about consumption (Ritzer, 2001). Consumption was mostly viewed as a threat and most social enquiry was in relation to the consequences of material abundance and the normative critique of its implications on individuals' personality, household management and political affiliations (Warde, 2017). This rather negative view of consumption, which dominated sociological reflections through most of the 20th century, could be seen as being similar to the morality-based opposition of consumption in pre-independence Indian sociology (Brosius, 2010; Gronow & Warde, 2001; Ritzer, 2001).

A more positive attitude to consumption was contained in Veblen (1991)'s account of conspicuous consumption as a symbol of social position and hierarchy. This conceptualisation, defining consumption goods as a demonstration of wealth and social status, laid the foundation for goods being viewed as meaningful objects and for recognising the social significance of consumption (Ritzer, 2001; Veblen 1991). Although sociological accounts of middle-class consumers in India have shown that conspicuous consumption has been morally contested, it has also been an indicator of their social aspirations, as noted in the first part of this chapter

(Chaudhuri & Majumdaar, 2006; Mathur, 2013). While Veblen's work was a source of inspiration for later thinking about consumption, sociology's overall treatment of consumption has been mainly economically founded, indirect and limited to the symbolic and reputational aspects of consumption, thereby diminished in its ability to explain the routine and all-pervasive nature of consumption as part of day-to-day living.

2.8.1 Social theories of food consumption

Social scientific interest in consumption intensified through the middle of the 20th century with the mass industrial production of consumer goods. From the late 1960s to the last decade, the social science of consumption has undergone two broad, partly overlapping phases of development (Featherstone, 1990; Halkier, 2010; Paterson, 2004; Sassatelli, 2007), each with a distinctive focus leading to the development of consumption theories and inviting empirical analysis. A summary of the conceptualisations of consumption in each of these phases, as well as their perspectives on consumers, theoretical advancements and empirical applications, is presented in Table 2.1, along with a brief critique of each phase. In short, there was a broad theoretical divide between the approaches, with one seeing consumption as either a 'conspiracy' to be resisted or a 'celebration' of freedom and the other seeing consumption as not only an act of buying but also a complex set of practices for constructing meanings and identities (Kaur, 2016; Miles, Anderson, Meethan, & 2002). This agency–structure divide is commonly debated in discussions of the sociology of consumption (Ritzer, 2001; Spaargaren, 2011; Warde, 2017b).

Table 2.1: Summary of the economic and cultural conceptualisations of consumption

Phase of consumption	Consumer perspective	Theoretical considerations	Empirical focus	Critique
Economic (acquisition)	• Rational actor conceptualisation, powerful, utility-maximising behaviour • Critical theory conceptualisation, disempowered, dependent, victim	• Rational choice based: Theory of Planned Behaviour and derivative cognitive models such as Protection Motivation Theory and Health Belief models • 'McDonaldisation' thesis of homogenisation (Ritzer, 2001)	Studies in this phase involve cognitive deliberation, with decisions made according to: • informed choice in food-consumption risk (Frewer, Scholderer, & Lambert, 2003) • willingness to pay for health foods (Siegrist, Stampfli, & Kastenholz, 2008) • gap between attitude and behavioural intentions in food choices (Cox, Koster, & Russell, 2004) • motivational and cognitive structures of acceptance of foods (Krystallis, Maglaras, & Mamalis, 2008).	• One-sided and dependent upon economic rationalities. • Neglects the role of social dynamics in consumption as a social phenomenon (Jackson, 2004). • Fails to acknowledge that consumers have cognitive limitations in decision making (Bargh & Chartrand, 1999). • Fails to accommodate the automatic, reactive, sequential and everyday habitual aspects of normal human conduct (Kahneman, 2011; Warde & Southerton, 2012).
Cultural (appreciation)	Collective social identities, reproducing cultural order, symbolic use of goods and services	• Social class and hierarchies (Bourdieu, 1984) • Symbolic value of goods (Douglas & Isherwood, 1980) • Consumer Culture Theory (Arnould & Thompson, 2005)	Studies in this phase allocate major cultural influence to consumers' consumption behaviour in terms of: • value determination (Sobal & Bisogni, 2009) • purchase decisions (Kacen & Lee, 2002) • perceptions and cognitions (Kastanakis & Voyer, 2014) • goals and well-being (Oishi & Diener, 2001).	• Over emphasis on culture and social structures (Gronow & Warde, 2001). • Disempowers consumers. • Diverts attention away from empirical phenomena. • Relevant to practical analysis of consumption (Reckwitz, 2002a). • Lacks focus on material representation in consumption (Reckwitz, 2002b; Warde, 2014).

Broadly, social theory is defined as the process of 'critical reflection or contemplation on the causes and consequences of human agency – both individual and collective – in the development of enduring socio-economic phenomena' (Colas, 2018, p. 4). Social theories encompass ideas about the way societies change and develop, methods of explaining social behaviour and structure, and other concepts and problems related to social life (Harrington, 2005). The term 'food consumption' has close connections with both the economic and cultural aspects of studies on consumption. However, placing exclusive emphasis on the powerful economic and market forces or symbolic values of food to express identity has been heavily and repeatedly critiqued (Klein & Murcott; Kaur, 2016; Warde, 2005b; Warde & Southerton, 2012). Neuman (2018) argued that the tendency in contemporary food studies to focus on only the communicative aspects of food and eating, such as identity, cultural symbolism and social movement action, could lead to an underestimation of the material functions of consuming food as an object.

In their attempts to predict consumer behaviour, food-choice theories and frameworks have amalgamated rationalistic consumer qualities with subjective cultural associations (Nielsen, Bech-Larsen, & Grunert, 1998). A food-choice model proposed by Furst, Connors, Bisogni, Sobal, and Falk (1996) took a biopsychosocial perspective, assuming that physiological, cognitive and socio-cultural influences and processes were all involved in making food choices. Thus, while theoretical attention has been paid to various aspects of food, such as why and how to study food, the historical development and future of food studies (Albala, 2012; Colas, 2018), the lack of synthesis and theoretical commitment in food studies has been criticised (Warde, 2016). However, the diversity in theoretical approaches is accepted, since food itself can be interpreted in many ways according to its function, production and consumption.

While each of the above approaches has offered at least a partial explanation for the phenomenological reality of consumption, few studies on food consumption have included convincing explanations of consumer behaviour in varying geographical, economic and cultural contexts (Firat, Kutucuoglu, Saltik, & Tuncel, 2013; Kaur, 2016). Additionally, most of the above conceptualisations cannot explain empirical phenomena that are relevant to analysing consumption, such as the practical and routine activities, the materiality of consumption objects and the procedures and mechanisms that consumers adopt for the transmission of culture into

action (J. Gronow & Warde, 2001; Reckwitz, 2002b). Klein & Murcott, (2014) drew inspiration from Goody and insisted that the study of food must always be seen as part of a wider 'process of providing and transforming food' (p. 6). The authors emphasised the importance of linking cooking and eating to this productive process and the need for situating changes and continuities in culinary practices within the wider economic patterns of changing modes of food production and distribution.

Triangulating the above concepts with the changing global perspectives of food consumption in India led the current study to argue for the relevance of theories of practice in studying food-consumption changes in India. In the sociological literature on consumption, theories of practice have become increasingly influential in recent years (Warde, Welch, & Paddock, 2017). By using practices as the unit of analysis, rather than individual intentions, structures or ideologies, practice theories offer a middle ground in the agency–structure debate in the study of food consumption. Further, since practices are shared and based on routine and habit, they enable an understanding about food issues and the way they are constituted in everyday performances, social conventions, sociomaterial relations and socially coordinated and embodied activities. According to (Appadurai, 1988 b), the consumer's desire for consumption is situated in their shared social context and cultural practices. Therefore, using the practice theory approach ensures a broader diversity, where the habitual, unnoticed, ordinary, unreflective and mundane aspects of food consumption are given as much attention as the conspicuous, special, reflexive, extraordinary and symbolically loaded aspects. Through a practice theoretical lens, the current study aimed to examine the integration of the temporal aspects of food routines, changes and disruptions, as well as consumer agency and security during changing food consumption.

2.8.2 The practice approach in contemporary consumption

By focusing on purchase decisions rather than practical contexts, individual choices rather than contextual conditionings, and conspicuous rather than mundane consumption, standard theoretical models of consumption have concentrated on developing theories of the *consumer* rather than theories of consumption (Warde, 2017). Therefore, most early disciplines in social sciences failed to capture the practical, collective, sequential, repetitive and automatic aspects of consumption (Gronow & Warde, 2001; Halkier, 2010; Warde & Southerton, 2012). As shown

earlier in Table 2.1, Warde (2017) articulated the economic phase of consumption to be concerned with 'acquisition' and the socio-cultural phase with 'appreciation'. With an argument that acquisition and appreciation delineate the two opposing poles of the sociological analysis of consumption, Warde (2017) deployed the concept of 'appropriation' as a way of bridging the space between thrift, prudence and rational calculation on one side and exuberant, personal de-control on the other.

Appropriation refers to what people do with goods, services and experiences after they have acquired them and invites a focus on the way objects of commercial exchange are given meaning or incorporated into people's everyday lives (Warde, 2017). Further, Warde noted that while the concept of appropriation, which emphasises the use of goods, endows goods with particular personal meanings to serve everyday practical purposes, it is insufficiently considered within theoretical models of consumption that have a narrow focus on the individual as the active agent of consumption. In the context of food consumption, appropriation has specific relevance owing to the ways of use, cultural interactions and contextual meanings of food objects that are critical in a comprehensive understanding of food consumption. In contemporary social theory, this concept of appropriation has emerged as a suitable response to the fundamental issues for consumption studies that have been outlined above (Halkier & Jensen, 2011; Jackson, 2004).

In addition to the theoretical developments outlined above, the recent literature on the sociology of consumption (Akaka & Schau, 2019; Plessz & Wahlen, 2020; Sahakian, Saloma, & Ganguly, 2018; Thurnell-Read, 2018; Warde et al., 2017) has identified a third and emerging approach, which Halkier gathered under the heading of 'consumption as everyday practices' (2010, p. 23). Supported by protagonists of the concept of appropriation in the study of 'ordinary consumption' (Gronow & Warde, 2001; Neuman, 2018; Warde, 2017), the everyday-practice approach described here refers to a broad family of approaches studying consumption from the point of view of everyday life. In Halkier's (2010) words:

> *This last approach includes studies that view consumption as complex practical and symbolic processes, embedded in social and institutionalised contexts. The consumers are understood as socially and practically conditioned active agents who in their consumption activities handle conditions routinely and conventionally on the basis of their experiences. Consumption is seen as the broader uses of goods*

> *and services, not just the buying, and the individual consumer is constructed as carrying out the mundane practices in dynamic interdependency with a variety of social relations.* (pp. 23–24)

The general, everyday-practice approach to consumption can embrace the multiplicities and ambivalences of the consumption process. Informed by the body of literature referred to as social practice theory, the everyday-practice approach attempts to redress the biases inherent in the rational and cultural analysis of consumption (Warde, 2005a). By providing an alternative framework to the models of rational individual choice and uncovering and exploring phenomena that are generally concealed in cultural analysis, social practice theories offer a double correction to the understanding of consumption. In contrast to the models of the cognitive, rational and sovereign consumer, practice theories emphasise routine over actions, flow and sequence over discrete acts, dispositions over decisions, and practical consciousness over deliberations. In reaction to the cultural model, the emphasis in social practice theories is placed on doing over thinking, the material over the symbolic, and the inherent practical competence over the expressed proficiency in the consumers' presentation of self (Halkier, 2010; Warde, 2017). In the everyday-practice approach, consumption is viewed as a complex, practical and symbolic process that is routinely embedded in social and institutionalised structural contexts. In addition to buying, consumption is seen as the broader use of goods and services.

Thus, the everyday-practice approach seeks a middle ground between deterministic and overly voluntarist views of consumers by allowing for consumer agency and reflexivity without losing sight of the social and institutional conditioning of consumption practices. Therefore, it is able to embrace the multiplicities and ambivalences of consumption, as well as its dynamic aspects, and addresses the reservations raised within the past decade against overemphasising the autonomy, individuality, reflexivity and pleasure-seeking creativity of consumers and consumption activities (Halkier, 2009; Spaargaren et al., 2016; Warde, 2017).

In recent years, social practice theories have received attention as a promising approach to the study of consumption. Contemporary studies in consumption within various areas of food, technology, energy, sustainability and globalisation have been hugely influenced by practice theory conceptualisations

(Gram-Hanssen, 2010; Hand & Shove, 2004; Magaudda, 2011; Maller, 2015; Sahakian & Wilhite, 2014; Spaargaren, Oosterveer, & Loeber, 2013; Twine, 2015). Although they involve some challenges (discussed in later sections of this thesis), practice theories provide the best fit for an analysis of food consumption in the transitioning socio-economic contexts of India as well as its collectivist cultural society. The next section introduces social practice theory and specifically, practice theory's approach to the study of food consumption. Later sections specify the way the everyday-practice approach can be used in a sociological analysis of food consumption.

2.9 Social practice theory

Theoretical elements from the analysis of human actions in terms of social hierarchy and power, individual reflexivity and the reciprocal role of culture and individuals in shaping each other have been gathered into a unified notion that assumes that all human action in society is performed via engaging in practices that are collectively learned and transferred (Bourdieu, 1984; Giddens, 1984). Thus, practice theory organises theoretical elements concerning social practices into a distinct analytical approach to social life (Reckwitz, 2002a; Schatzki, 2002).

2.9.1 Three generations of practice theory

Since their emergence, social practice theories have evolved through three major phases, aiming to reconcile the opposition between agency and structure, which has been widely contested as a suitable context for understanding consumption. The first phase constituted two branches of thought: Giddens' (1984) 'theory of structuration' and Bourdieu's (1984) notion of 'habitus'. The key concepts from these two contributions are summarised in Figure 2.2.

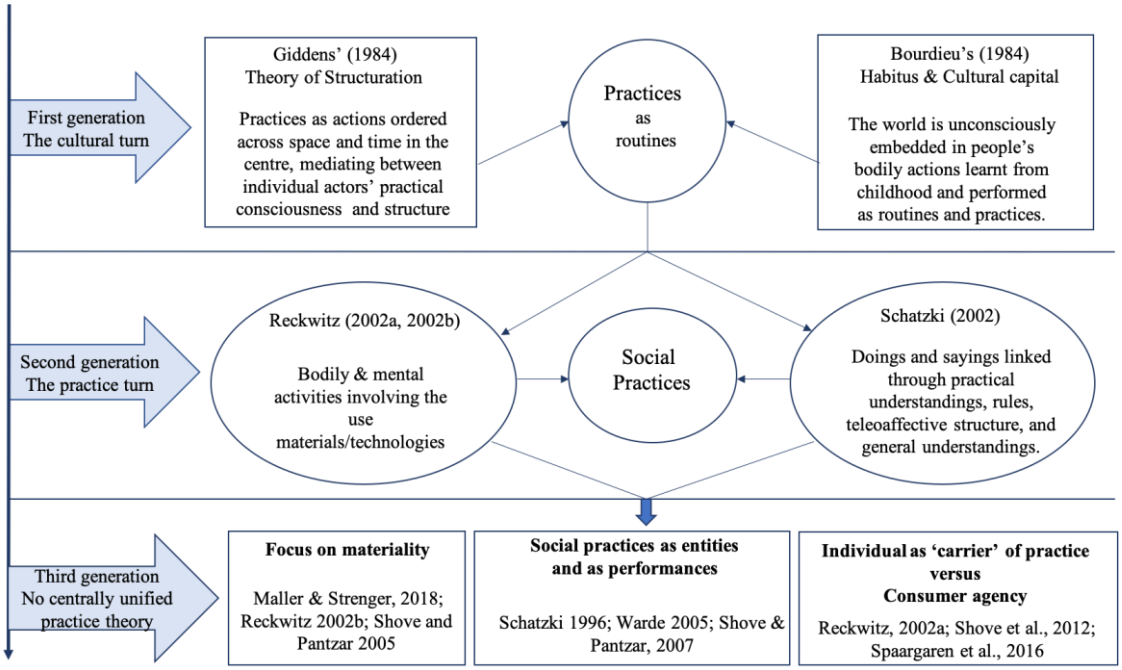

Figure 2.2: Three generations of practice theories

In Giddens's (1984) view, the individual agent is knowledgeable and competent and his or her acts are based on the notion of practical consciousness, which 'consists of all the things which actors know tacitly about how to "go on" in the contexts of social life without being able to give them direct discursive expression' (p. 23). Using practical consciousness, the agent consumer continues to carry out his/her daily tasks and, at the same time, reproduces the social structures of society. Giddens explains the repetition and recognition of routines as being a way to reduce ontological insecurity and create safety. However, the theory is criticised because its creates a mutually constitutive relationship between practices and wider social systems, thereby making it difficult to separate and analyse them independently (Frohlich, Corin, & Potvin, 2001).

Bourdieu's (1984) understanding of practices was closely related to his notion of habitus, which referred to the way people view and divide the world. A habitus is an intuition that forms during childhood and determines a person's habits, tastes, dreams and wishes. An important element of this theory is the way parents' cultural and economic capital are decisive in the constitution of habitus. Thus, class position is an important determinant of the way social structures are reshaped in the physical surroundings through the things that a person possesses (Bourdieu, 1984). However, as noted in the previous chapters, globalisation and economic

development, and the consequently changing Indian middle classes of consumers, have shown that Bourdieu's notion of a class society involves an overly static understanding of (Eastern and Western) societies and their mechanisms of distinction (Yannis & Lang, 1995). Nonetheless, the notion of habitus and its understanding of the way the world is unconsciously embedded in people's bodily actions from early childhood are an important contribution to the understanding of routines and practices.

In contemporary social theory, the second phase, 'Practice turn', has been mostly concerned with activities and performances. While both Schatzki (2002) and Reckwitz (2002a, 2002b) drew on the work of Giddens (1984) and Bourdieu (1990) to show that mind, knowledge, structure and agency are relevant to understanding routine practices, Reckwitz (2002a) assigned a particularly prominent role to the importance of body and things (materials/technologies) with the following definition of 'practice':

> *a 'practice' … is 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*. (p. 49)

However, Schatzki (2002) was more concerned with developing and fine-tuning the theoretical concepts, stating that practices are:

> *organized nexuses of actions. This means that the doings and sayings composing them hang together. More specifically, the doings and sayings that compose a given practice are linked through (1) Practical understandings, (2) rules, (3) a teleoaffective structure, and general understandings. Together, the understandings, rules and teleoaffective structure that link the doings and sayings of a practice form its organisation.* (p. 77)

Thus, practices consist of concrete activities in the form of doings and sayings. For example, cooking as a practice involves numerous concrete activities such as shopping, preparing, cooking and storing various material food objects. Schatzki's practical understandings of a practice were inspired by both Pierre Bourdieu (1990) concept of intuition and Gidden's (1984) concept of practical

consciousness. However, the general understandings focused on the organisation of specific practices where the rules were explicit principles, definitions, procedures and instructions on the way to do activities and teleoaffective structures were a kind of normative and emotional orientation to engage in an activity. Further, with the idea that practice forms a nexus, meaning that certain elements hold a practice together, Schatzki (2002) refined the conceptualisation of social practices in terms of differentiating one practice from another based on the elements organising the nexus.

Thus, social practices refer to the regularities of going to work, cooking and showering as meaningful everyday life activities for people. These regularities are patterns showing the way certain activities are typically and habitually performed in a considerable section of a society. A social practice constitutes an attractor for the behaviour of individuals from which single individuals do not (easily) deviate because (1) they have acquired certain skills and understandings; (2) alternative material artefacts are unavailable; (3) they face normative influences; or (4) they simply do not consider deviant behaviour. That is, the social practice constitutes a situation that captures individuals in a specific behaviour that adds to the reproduction of this practice. This leads to an understanding that practices have inertia and do not change easily.

The third and current generation of practice theories is an array of concepts derived from those of Reckwitz and Schatzki but devoid of a central unified theory. Two distinctive features define this third phase of practice theories. First, there is an emphasis on materiality whereby things, technologies and even infrastructures are seen as active elements of practices (Reckwitz, 2002b; Shove & Pantzar, 2005; Strengers & Maller, 2012). Second, although the two are inherently bound together, a clear distinction is drawn between social practices as entities and as performances (Schatzki, 1996; Shove & Pantzar, 2007; Warde, 2005a). A practice *as an entity* refers to the interrelated elements (meanings, material and competency),[11] or nexus, as a recognisable 'doing' that is relatively stable (Schatzki, 1996), while practice *as performance* describes the carrying out of a practice that 'actualizes and sustains practices in the sense of nexuses and ensures its regular reproduction' (p. 90). This is a useful distinction (especially from the second generation of practice theory) as it

[11] Details of the elemental constitution of practices are discussed under the 'Designing a praxiography' section of Chapter 3.

enables theorising about changes in practice, as practices evolve through performance (Warde, 2005a; Shove & Pantzar, 2007). Therefore, in the context of changing socio-economic structures in India, both the meaning and the materiality of food as practice-constituting elements are critical features for the performance of food provisioning (Methodological details about the way performances in food provisioning are best understood are presented in Chapter 3).

Practice theory has become a popular approach in the consumption domains of sociology. The absence of a definitive theoretical resolution has allowed the flexibility of empirical analyses in diverse fields and sectors, including a focus on environmental sustainability (Gram-Hanssen, 2010; Røpke, 2009; Spaargaren, 2011), behavioural change (Halkier, 2010; Hargreaves, 2011) and consumption (Crivits & Paredis, 2013; Gowricharn, 2019; Plessz, Dubuisson-Quellier, Gojard, & Barrey, 2016; Truninger, 2011). While the focus of most these studies has been less on developing theory and more on employing the existing constructs to describe, interpret and explain social processes and behaviour in their specific sectors, gaps emerging from the lack of a centrally unified practice theoretical conceptualisation have limited their empirical application in the understanding of social change (Nicolini, 2013, 2017). For example, the post-humanist extensions of the theory have conceptualised social practices as the entity of study rather than individuals or their choices. While such an approach broadens and enriches the understandings of why people do what they do, as well as offering alternative explanations of human 'action' other than behavioural understandings, the extent of the role of agency in practices is debated among scholars of practice theory.

2.9.2 Agency perspectives in consumption practices

As a third-generation practice theorist, Warde (2005) linked practice theories and the study of consumption by defining consumption not as a practice in itself but as part of every practice that requires the use of material goods and resources. In a practice theoretical sense, consumption occurs as objects and services are acquired and used within practices. Thus, consumption is governed by the conventions of these practices. 'That is, wants are created, not by individuals' desires, but by the activities and conventions of the practices' (Warde, 2005a, p. 137). This means the analytical focus in the study of consumption is not on the consumer – and his or her attitudes, motivations, values and choices – but on the conventions of practices and

the moments of consumption they entail (Halkier & Jensen, 2011). While scholars such as Shove (Shove, 2007; Shove & Pantzar, 2005; Shove et al., 2012; Shove et al., 2009), Southerton (Southerton, 2013; Southerton, Díaz-Méndez, & Warde, 2012) Warde (Warde, 2004, 2005a, 2005b; Warde & Southerton, 2012), took positions that allowed no agency at all, at the other end of the spectrum, some scholars attributed a role to individual agency e.g. Oosterveer (Oosterveer & Spaargaren, 2011; Schatzki, 1996, 2002; Schatzki, Cetina, & von Savigny, 2005) and Spaargaren (Spaargaren & Oosterveer, 2010; Spaargaren et al., 2013; Spaargaren et al., 2016). In taking an intermediary position, Reckwitz (2002a) allocated the individual's role as a 'carrier' of practices, as follows:

> *The single individual—as a bodily and mental agent—then acts as the 'carrier' (Trager) of a practice—and, in fact, of many different practices which need not be coordinated with one another. Thus, she or he is not only a carrier of patterns of bodily behaviour, but also of certain routinized ways of understanding, knowing how and desiring. These conventionalized 'mental' activities of understanding, knowing how and desiring are necessary elements and qualities of a practice in which the single individual participates, not qualities of the individual.* (pp. 249–250)

The theorisations of practices in the no-agency position (offered by Warde, Shove, Southerton and others) stressed the need to decentre the individual when exploring the overall dynamics of practices. They argued for this distance from cognitivist views of agency in which individuals pursue value-based lifestyles and consciously shape their actions and identities. In their practice-based analysis of social change, Shove et al. (2012) bracketed off emotions, motivations, identities and beliefs (as well as any reflexive monitoring of action or any practical understanding) as playing a secondary role. The social world was considered primarily constituted of diverse social practices that individuals carried out as competent 'carriers' by adopting and locally adapting the social meanings of practice in performing them.

This theorisation has been credited for its ability to capture the social dynamics into which consumption processes are embedded, which is lacking in the theoretical and methodological individualism observed in various consumer culture and phenomenological research studies, where consumption-related inferences are

made on the basis of individual behaviours and accounts (Halkier & Jensen, 2011). However, the individual as a 'carrier' concept of portraying social change has been critiqued for being deterministic and suggesting that individual agents simply do what others have done before them, more or less by default, embodying a shared history of know-how, understandings, motivations and affects (Spaargaren et al., 2016). Moreover, the reduction of individuals to being mere 'carriers' of a practice excludes any personal sense and emotions as being important aspects of human actions. This also excludes all the creativity, innovation and deviance involved in performing a practice differently, as if it was merely a recombining of practice elements.

According to Reckwitz (2002 a), the emotional moods experienced by people when engaging in practices are not the property of the individual but rather, are the property of the practices. However, Spaargaren et al. (2016) argued that human emotions resulting from engagement in practices involve neuro-endocrinological[12] processes that take place in individuals, suggesting they belong to individuals rather than practices. Schatzki (2010b) held that emotions are positive and negative valences that move people into thought and action by determining what it makes sense to do at a certain moment. Schatzki termed this ability of an individual to act according to the needs of a situation the 'practical intelligibility' (p. 114) arising from their experiences, beliefs and perceptions. In other words, human agency resides in emotions and links them with action (Collins, 2004; Spaargaren et al., 2016; Welch, 2017).

Although early founders of practice theory (e.g. Giddens, 1984), through their concept of practical consciousness, signalled the need for an agency-inclusive formulation of social interaction and reproduction, the way agency is related to social change (as in the case of food consumption in a liberalising and globalising India) has remained under-examined in contemporary practice theories (Spaargaren et al., 2016). A dichotomy of sorts can be observed, with the views of practice theorists such as Shove et al. (2012) maintaining that the role of individual human agency is reduced, while Spaargaren et al. (2016) have given more emphasis to the role of emotions and agency in human action. In other words, theories of practice

[12] This refers to the reciprocal communication between the brain and the body via hormonal and neural pathways that are responsible for behavioural and emotional responses (Worthman, 2009).

have not provided clear theoretical accounts to explain social change from the point of view of the individual agent.

In terms of agency, the current study aligned its approach with Eckhardt and Mahi's (2004) proposal of consumer agency. This current study has examined the way consumers in the transforming consumptionscape of India have exerted their agency and played a crucial role in the shaping and balancing of their consumption practices. Understanding the role of agency in consumption practices such as food provisioning is important, as it enables an explanation for the undemocratised response to globalisation, as well as uncovering the selective consumption patterns of consumers in transitioning economies such as India (Ger & Belk, 1996).

2.9.3 Distributed agency in consumption practices

Sahakian and Wilhite (2014) argued that the stability and reproduction of a practice depend on how deeply the habits are anchored in relation to the agentive aspects of practice other than the individual agent. When the focus was on understanding change, the authors argued for also identifying the agentive powers of materials (including objects, technology and infrastructure) as well as that of the social world (including norms, values and institutions). The role of habitus in building dispositions and the resulting biases and automaticity of human action have been identified as barriers to change in practices (Bourdieu, 1990; (Tversky & Kahneman, 1974).

While the sociology of consumption has been attentive to the symbolic role of materiality and material culture in contemporary society (Arnould & Wallendorf, 1994; Douglas & Isherwood, 1980; Miller, 1987), little attention has been paid in recent years to the consequences of the globalisation and technological innovation of food products and the relationship between materiality and symbolic values. The role of materiality in consumer studies is still to be explored and further developed (Watson, 2008). Sahakian and Wilhite (2014) noted that the sensual materiality of foods in conjunction with human activity has agency in the recruitment of practitioners. Contemporary practice theory conceptualisations have recommended a consideration of materialities as an important element of practices (Shove et al., 2012).

The current study approached the analysis of materiality from the perspectives of the integration of new food materials into pre-existing practices

(Hand & Shove, 2007; Truninger, 2011) and the agency of food materials in integrating practices (Domaneschi, 2019; Twine, 2018). From a practice theory stance, the increased access and availability of novel avenues in the Indian consumptionscape can be examined for their level of integration in the performance of pre-existing food-provisioning practices (Hand & Shove, 2007). The emphasis on the level of integration of new materialities in the performance of pre-existing practices helps to point out that the change of materiality inside a specific practice (e.g. ready-to-eat packaged food) is a contingent and unpredictable process, during which all elements constituting the practice constantly influence each other. Thus, the change in food product materiality can be analysed as a critical entity in the diffusion, transformation or decline of socially embedded practices.

From the distributed agency perspective, a focus on food needs to be mindful that food is incorporated intimately into the human body. Additionally, because of the strong relationship between food and personal identity, the materiality of food has varied and complex linkages with the symbolic and cultural meanings of food. By examining the selective appropriation of materials in practice, this current study aimed to advance the ongoing 'material turn' in the social sciences, influencing consumption studies in other domains, such as the consumption of digital technologies and sustainable consumption (Domaneschi, 2019; Magaudda, 2011; Twine, 2015;). While in most praxiographical approaches, the carriers of practices remain unquestionably human (Shove et al., 2012), there have been attempts to show how symbolic power could shift dynamically away from human agents and more to practice-constituting elements (Domaneschi, 2019). Investigating the dynamics of relationships within practice elements (i.e. meanings, materials and competency) permits challenging the traditional arrangements in theories of practice.

2.10 Practice theory and food consumption

According to Warde (2014), 'eating is a propitious area for investigation because it can incontrovertibly be characterised in terms of the material, the corporeal and the mundane, and by repetition, routine and convention' (p. 288). Rather than relying and focusing on cultural structures such as fixed lifestyle segments to label consumers, practice theory enables an understanding of food practices in terms of the way eating, cooking and acquiring food are dynamic practices within consumption that are practically, continuously and relationally done,

re-done and differently done in specified contexts (Neuman, 2018; Wolfson et al., 2017). Social practice theory has been applied to the analysis of food, including studies on time use in eating and cooking as a practice (Plessz & Étilé, 2019; Warde et al., 2007), adoption and use of food-related technology (Hand & Shove, 2007; Shove & Southerton, 2000; Truninger, 2011), changing taste preferences and sustainability of consumption (Sahakian et al., 2018), food-waste practices (Evans, 2012), environmentally challenged food and risks (Halkier, 2009), normative contestations of convenience food (Halkier, 2017a) and transitioning food consumptionscapes (Spaargaren et al., 2013). While the findings from these studies have informed the literature on food studies in many ways, a common limitation of them has been the segmented focus on specific aspects of food, which arguably is not the way food consumption works.

By focusing on food provisioning as a cumulative aspect of the acquisition, appropriation and appreciation of food, this current study aimed to gain a more holistic understanding of food consumption. Additionally, by not focusing narrowly on a particular aspect of food, such as the use of convenience foods (Halkier, 2017a) or the incorporation of kitchen appliances (Truninger, 2011) and instead, examining routine food provisioning, the current study could integrate all aspects of food, including ingredients, preparation, cooking and consuming, which are all significant parts of the household food-consumption scenario. Empirically, apart from a study on the sustainability of meat consumption in Bangalore (Sahakian et al., 2018), no practice-theory-oriented food-consumption studies have been conducted in India.[13] Further, while practice theories can be difficult to empirically employ in understanding change (Nicolini, 2017; Spaargaren et al., 2016), the current study's examination of the organising of routine food-provisioning practices in the contemporary context of the economic and global liberalisations in India has contributed towards extended applications of practice theory in studying social change in other emerging societies.

2.10.1 Food provisioning practice

As outlined by Goody (1982), the term food provisioning is used to refer to the 'lifecycle of food', which captures the range of processes from food acquisition through to usage and disposal. Figure 2.3 illustrates the way food provisioning

[13] This claim is made on the basis of the researchers' extensive research and best of knowledge.

combines several individual sub-practices of consumption, such as planning and shopping for food products, preparing and cooking, serving, reheating, storing and clearing out the leftovers. While all these actions are separate practices, they are often performed together, leading to them sharing a common label. This is critical, as changes in any one sub-practice can have a subsequent effect on other related sub-practices in the food-provisioning loop (Narasimhan, Roberts, Xenitidou, & Gilbert, 2017).

Therefore, in relation to food consumption as the subject of study in this thesis, it did not make sense to examine the aspects of food consumption separate from the food-provisioning practices involving the acquisition, appropriation and appreciation of the food (Warde, 2013). Although many studies have referred to the complexities in household provisioning arising from the interconnectedness of the sub-practices of food provisioning, as well as with other practices of living, there has been a gap in identifying food provisioning as a specific type of practice (Cook, 2009; DeVault, 1991).

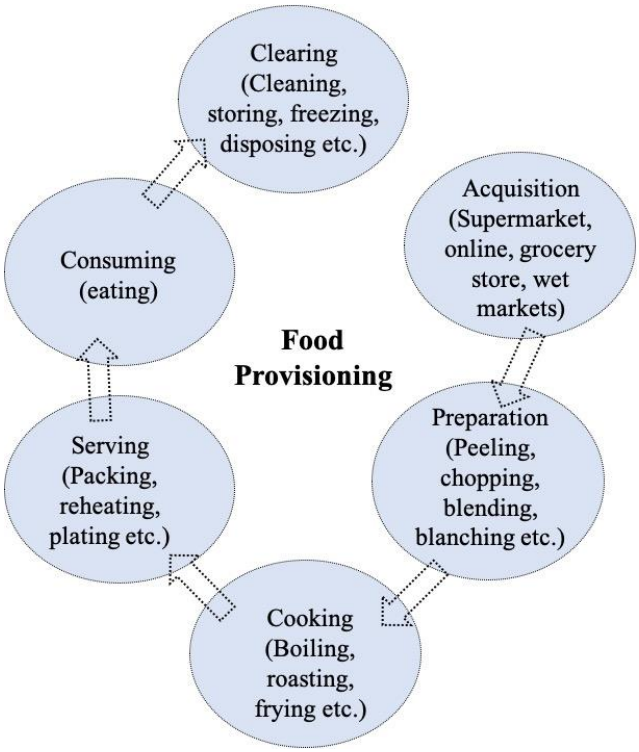

Figure 2.3: Sub-practices in food provisioning (Source: Adapted from Bava, Jaeger, & Park, 2008 and Narasimhan et al., 2017)

2.10.2 Food provisioning: A performance-based integrated practice of food consumption

Schatzki (1996) delineated the broad scope of practices by defining them as being either 'dispersed' or 'integrated'. While dispersed practices are about the understanding of 'knowing how to do' something, integrated practices (e.g. farming, motoring and cooking) are more complex, as they require a nexus of practical activity that becomes coordinated through doings and sayings. For eating-related activities, (Warde, 2013) introduced a new term, 'compound practices', to refer to various entities that draw upon several integrative practices, such as cooking, the supplying of food and judgements of taste and health. Although studies have applied practice theories in eating-related matters such as 'cooking from scratch' (Halkier, 2010), weight management (Jauho, Mäkelä, & Niva, 2016), the temporal routines of eating (Southerton et al., 2012) and food consumption and waste (Southerton & Yates, 2014), classification of the various aspects of eating into specific practices has remained vague. For example, nutrition has been seen as an integrative practice within the compound practice of eating; however, in the absence of specifically defined (nexus of integrating) practice elements of nutrition, the term has generally been used to indicate practices within 'healthy eating' (Jauho et al., 2016).

As discussed in the first chapter, the current study identified food provisioning among middle-class consumers in India as an integrated practice because socio-culturally shared rules and norms of food activities about what to eat and how to cook are deeply entrenched as constitutive rules that anchor practical understandings (knowing what to do). This made the 'doings and sayings' in food provisioning socially ordered and recognisable by practitioners, thereby allowing its conceptualisation as an integrated practice in a practice theory analysis of consumption (Arsel & Bean, 2012; Phipps & Ozanne, 2017).

While studies have examined domestic food-provisioning practices from angles such as health (Maher et al., 2010), family identity (Mills et al., 2017; Moisio et al., 2004), the role of alternative food networks in sustainable consumption (Crivits & Paredis, 2013), organic food consumption (Andersen, 2011) and convenience food-consumption patterns (Bava, Jaeger, & Park, 2008; Carrigan & Szmigin, 2006; Carrigan et al., 2006; Halkier, 2017a; Jackson & Viehoff, 2016), few

practice theory-oriented studies have examined changes in the performance of household food provisioning in light of economic, structural and social changes. Additionally while aspects of food provisioning, such as its temporality (Knight, O'Connell, & Brannen, 2014) and related use of convenience foods, have been studied through applications of Bourdieu's (1990) concept of habitus, apart from a few studies in the Western world (Slater et al., 2011), there has been a gap in knowledge regarding consumers' ways of managing the sub-practices in food provisioning for the household, especially in relation to the recent changes in lifestyle (Jabs et al., 2007).

2.11 Food provisioners and ontological security

Although the concept of ontological security is usually applied in the context of organisational studies and international relationships, I drew inspiration from the works of Phipps & Ozanne (2017) and (Gouveia & Ayrosa, 2020) and used it to understand the role of individuals in managing disruption and change in consumption. At a basic level, ontological security is the security of the self. An ontologically secure person has a sense of his/her presence in the world as a real, alive, whole and, in a temporal sense, continuous person. Without ontological security an individual can become overwhelmed by anxieties in relation to lacking a coherent sense of being in the world (Flockhart, 2016). The modern world and globalisation pose challenges for an individual's identity, cultural norms and values (Giddens, 1991; Kinnvall, 2004; Krüger, 2019). Anxiety can arise out of changing norms and routines, leading to insecurity in the individual. Contexts in which food-provisioning practices act as constitutive rules structuring food-consumption behaviour have implications for food provisioners. While these practices enable societal cohesion goals and bring ontological security (Giddens, 1991), when conventional routines are unsettled, it is important to examine the way provisioners realign their practical understandings of engaging in a practice to return to a state of security (Phipps & Ozanne, 2017). This was one goal of the current study.

Identity is created from the knowledge we gain about ourselves, others and the world around us in the various situations in which we find ourselves (Jenkins, 2014). Knowing who we are, as an individual and part of a community, makes actions intelligible, providing reasons for our actions (Schouten, 1991). Identity and the process of identification are located in what Giddens called 'practical

consciousness', which 'consists of all the things which actors know tacitly about how to "go on" in the contexts of social life without being able to give them direct discursive expression' (Giddens,1984, p. 23). This means that individuals do not have to reflect constantly, when their identities are mostly grounded, taken for granted and habitual. Routines stabilise identities and allow energy to be spent elsewhere (Phipps & Ozanne, 2017). Disrupted routines are anxiety provoking and invoke a response that seeks ontological security (Phipps & Ozanne, 2017). To adapt to disrupted routines and regain a sense of ontological security requires an examination of the role of agency (Berenskoetter, 2020; Greve, 2018). Additionally, since ontological security is not a binary concept (Greve, 2018), different routines can support different levels of ontological security; for example, food provisioners are likely to be attached to food-provisioning routines that provide them with greater ontological security.

As they are both domestic producers and domestic consumers, the relationship between women and food practices is emphasised in discourses about middle-class women's identities (M. Chaudhuri, 2019; Donner, 2008, 2011). Additionally, the definition of a home in India as being a place where middle-class meals are cooked from scratch every day identifies the domestic sphere as a 'consumption junction'[14] where the social relations that make such food possible are realised (Hand & Shove, 2004). That is, it is a space where women's work becomes part of the elaborate construction that marks Indian middle-class identities (Cook, 2009; Devault, 1991; Donner, 2011). Thus, changes in middle-class food consumption in India can be uniquely understood by bringing globalisation-mediated changes in food structures and everyday consumer lifestyles together with the much-neglected research on the conflicted role of women as food provisioners (Cronin, McCarthy, Newcombe, & McCarthy, 2014; Donner, 2008).

Epistemological and conceptual insights that are gained by attending to the broader concept of food provisioning enable recognising that individual consumption rarely applies and food provisioners who are charged with the care of their family are constrained from acting solely in reference to an individualistic frame (Davis, Marshall, Hogg, Schneider, & Petersen, 2016). In consumer studies, engaging in a

[14] The consumption junction refers to all sites or locales where the logics of structure run into the logics of routine consumption (Fine, 2002).

dialogue with food provisioners and observing them and listening to their accounts goes beyond simply studying mothers or families with children. Further, since the daily activities of humans are not explicitly reasoned but rather, carried out according to circumstances and intuition, this current research focused on the everyday practice of food provisioning as its unit of inquiry, instead of taking individual consumers' specific motives or choices as the objects of study. Thus, placing food provisioners' food practices at the crux of an analysis of consumer culture allowed different possibilities of approach and understanding to open up. As noted by (Cook, 2013), being able to reject assumptions about individuals' independent actions allows a researcher to grasp the interconnected nature (family and larger collectives) of consumption in social life. Further, an investigation of provisioning makes it possible to pay attention to the relations of identity, individual ontological security and collective ontological security within which all consumption resides (Cook, 2009; Greve, 2018; Kinnvall & Mitzen, 2018).

According to Warde (2017), practices have trajectories of development. This suggests that investigating food-provisioning practice and its performance at a specified time in its developmental trajectory can yield information about contemporary consumption and consumer behaviour. The contemporary Indian context, as an emerging economy with significant changes in its economic and social structures, the altered food consumptionscape and changing consumer lifestyles and identities are indicators of transitions. Therefore, studying the chain of food-provisioning events in such socio-economically altered situations and the interrelationships with changing markets, food choices and socio-cultural food norms can enable a diverse group of stakeholders to understand people's food habits, the changes in them and the resulting impacts of those changes (World Health Organization, 2003).

Changes in food consumption, whether promulgated by economic policies, globalised markets or altered lifestyles, have a significant influence on the everyday practices of consumers. Ultimately, routine consumption practices indicate whether and how consumers adopt the various food choices made available to them, or continue to persist in cultural and traditional food practices – or perhaps to adapt their food consumption through uniquely hybrid alternatives. As opposed to individualist-centred research, practice-based research offers insights into the actual performance of day-to-day routines wherein consumer behaviour is situationally

defined. Indian culture is a significant influencer of consumers' consumption behaviour (Rehman, 2017). Especially in relation to subjective cultural attributes through which human behaviour in India tends to become habitual, a practice-based approach has the potential to explain the patterns of change insightfully (Evans et al., 2012; Tomar, 2018). A specific praxiography developed for analysing food-provisioning practices is detailed in Chapter 3.

2.12 Conceptual framework

Based on review of literature and discussions presented in the above sections, the following section presents a conceptual framework adapted for the current research. Figure 2.4 illustrates the food provisioning practices at the overlapping consumption junction that exists between the agency of consumers' transforming lifestyles and the globalisation mediated changes in the structures of consumption.

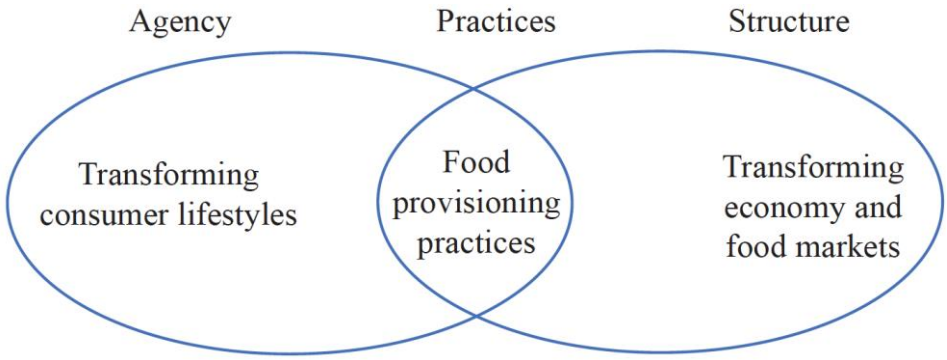

Figure 2.4: A conceptual framework of food-provisioning practices at the consumption junction (Source: Adapted from Spaargaren, 2003)

This thesis was concerned with the central research question regarding the way routine food-provisioning practices of India were configured in middle-class households and the way food provisioners negotiated the conflicts and complexities in managing day-to-day food provisioning. This research was inspired by Giddens' (1984) conceptualisation of social practices emerging between individual agency and structure and adapted Spaargaren (2003) social practices model in which every day social practices regarding a specific consumption domain are located at the centre of the research.

Although Spaargaren's work (2003, 2011) was mostly in the sustainability sector, his model offers a valuable methodological means of avoiding the dualism of

the structure–agency paradigm in the sociology of consumption. Further, his model allows an analysis of consumption via individual dispositions in conjunction with the structures of provision (Spaargaren, 2003). Thus, the relationships between consumers' altered lifestyle and economically altered structures and avenues of consumption are mediated and co-produced through practices at the 'consumption junction'.

Figure 2.4 shows situated food provisioning practices as the 'consumption junction' that was the focus of this research. The study aimed to examine the food-consumption domains within the everyday food-provisioning practices of middle-class consumers in three cities in India (Mumbai, Ahmedabad and Indore), particularly the various shopping, preparing, cooking, serving and storing practices of households. By mediating the dualism within the structure–agency proposition in the contemporary discourse on consumption, this framework acknowledges the role of both food-modernisation structures and the lifestyles of individual citizen consumers in the development of current food-provisioning practices. The following sub-sections present a brief review of the three significant parts of the framework: Practices, Agency and Structure.

2.12.1 A practice theory focus

Although practices are strongly rooted within daily life, they are embedded in and enabled by economic and institutional structures as well (Shove et al., 2012). Therefore, both structure and agency co-constitute consumption and are at work at the consumption junction (Cowan, 1987; Hand & Shove, 2004). It is within the situated practices of food provisioning in households that dynamics in food-market structures interact with dynamics in the culture, lifestyles and agency of consumers. An exploration of the middle ground leads first to an examination of the way economic, social, cultural and institutional structures influence current practices and second, whether and how new practices emerge, develop and recruit practitioners. Further, an understanding that practices are not performed in isolation and that each practice complements or competes with another practice in daily living (Shove et al., 2012) leads to an examination of the way the emergent new practices are shaping consumer lifestyles and identity. Considering this duality of structure (Giddens, 1984), in which both human activity and structure are evolving, this thesis incorporated an analysis of specific human action in light of structural perspectives.

Thus, theories of social practice are suitable for studying the Indian consumer, owing to a culture of consumption that is strongly influenced by subjective norms and collective traditional ideologies, providing a way to incorporate the influence of shared practices on consumption behaviour. A social practice theory approach allows the development of an understanding of the organising elements of the shared practice of food provisioning at the consumption junction and explain how such practices can emerge, diffuse and/or die.

2.12.2 The agency perspective

In studying everyday food-provisioning practices at the consumption junction, this study has acknowledged the agency of food provisioners in the reproduction and transformation of situated practices (Eckhardt & Mahi, 2012). It has acknowledged the uncertainty and ambiguity around the extent of agency in practices, in not being restricted to purposeful and voluntary action in conformance to the individualist paradigm but including the agent's practical consciousness and reflexivity, which does not require conscious reflection and deliberation (Giddens, 1984; Phipps & Ozanne, 2017; Stigzelius et al., 2018). Thus, this thesis has approached agency through the study of situated human activity. By acknowledging that everyday activity is situation driven, intuitive and improvised, this study has not taken individual food provisioners and their motives as objects of the study and instead, has focused on the everyday food-provisioning practices as units of enquiry.

2.12.3 The structural perspective

In studying everyday food-provisioning practices at the consumption junction, this study has acknowledged that consumption behaviour in India is enabled, constrained and contextualised by the changing economic and social structures. According to Shove et al. (2012), the establishment of rules and standards, institutional systems and socio-cultural structures within a society act as the principle elements of practices. In coping with modernisation, economies and markets influence the directions a society (or class of consumers) takes, leading to changes in their consumption patterns. Structures of liberalisation and globalisation therefore define the playing field of consumers as practitioners of food-provisioning practices (Sahakian & Wilhite, 2014). However, since social structure is also a consequence of collective consumer action, practices performed by consumers are pivotal in shaping and transforming social structure, making it dynamic rather than

static. In the current study, the structural perspective has been applied to incorporate the influence of changing economic and socio-cultural (infra-) structures on practices of food provisioning and food consumption. In addition, it has acknowledged that ways of food consumption cannot be addressed and understood in isolation from knowledge of the historical pathways of the development of practices of food provisioning and consumption.

2.13 Summary

With the aim of understanding everyday food consumption and consumers' ways of configuring it during times of socio-economic change, this part of the literature review chapter has analysed the research on the evolution of the sociology of consumption and its application in food-consumption studies. The literature suggested that compared with other conceptualisations, the theoretical approach of social practice theory could accommodate the appropriative functions of food consumption, in addition to explaining the ordinary and repetitive aspects of food consumption. A review of the three generations of practice theories in consumption identified a lack of a unified theory and gaps in the understanding of the role of agency in practice dynamics. The limited application of practice theory in studying social change, especially in food-consumption domains of emerging societies, has led to ambiguity and uncertainty in the understanding of the way practices are coordinated, disrupted and realigned.

A conceptual framework has been presented to situate the current study of food-provisioning practices at the consumption junction between overlapping influences of changing structures and agency. Chapter 3, Methods, presents my positioning as a researcher, the research methods and the development of a praxiography to enable analysis. It describes the qualitative study undertaken to answer the research aims and questions, to conceptualise the dynamics of food consumption in emerging consumer societies.

Chapter 3: Research Methods

As the focus of this study was food consumption as a complex combination of routines and challenges, the overall methodological aim needed to enable the analysis to reveal this complexity. To explore the dynamics of food consumption, this thesis applied an empirical context and used the empirical material generated in the discussion of routine food-provisioning practices. It was critical to keep an open mind regarding what routine food provisioning was all about and whether it involved reflexive and meaningful activity. By anchoring the focus on the conditioned, dynamic and evolving everyday food practices, the practice theory perspective and the everyday-practice empirical approach taken in this study facilitated this aim of thematic and analytic openness (Halkier, 2010). The ethnographic research design chosen for this study focused on food consumption as the practice of food provisioning and combined participant observation with qualitative interviews to elucidate it empirically.

This chapter presents the methodological decisions made during this study. It begins with an overview of my ontological and epistemological positions, followed by a discussion of the methodological approach, its challenges and the development of a specific praxiography as an analytical tool to enable in-depth understanding of food consumption as well as theory building. The details regarding the production, interpretation and analysis of the empirical material are presented next, drawing on a combination of thematic analysis and discourse analysis, based on the adopted praxiography. The final section of this chapter presents considerations made with regards the researcher's position in the study, reflexivity, authenticity and some ethical and practical considerations related to this study.

As this chapter is designed as per Neuman (2014) outline of the steps in qualitative research, it begins by introducing the way my interest in this topic of research came about.

3.1 Personal background to the research

Even before I gained an understanding of the various approaches for conducting social research, I was aware of the interpretivist, constructionist world view. As well as being a mother to my two children, my time, efforts and attention are shared among my other roles of wife, relative, friend and teacher. Although I am

happy and proud of my work as a teacher, this role often becomes very taxing. Seeing me irritated and frustrated at not being able to fulfil my roles as well as I wanted to, my family recommended that I should change my ways of provisioning routine meals. I understood that this suggestion was primarily because Indian cooking is time consuming and altering some of the tedious routines, such as by using store-bought rotis (Indian flat breads) rather than home-made ones, or serving a cold breakfast (e.g., cereal and toast) instead of a freshly made Indian breakfast, would make life easier for me. However, engaging in such changes was, and still is, difficult for me. It gives rise to a sense of dissatisfaction, even guilt; it is as if I am taking a short cut when the idea is to go around the park for a walk.

I was puzzled about this resistance to changing my ways of food provisioning when the logic of change made perfectly rational sense. Further, I discovered that many of my Indian friends were facing similar challenges. General conversations and reflection about this led me to the understanding that our roles, actions and behaviours are culturally and historically shaped and therefore, any change will be resisted, as that counters our notion of being. This understanding was later supplanted by the constructionist argument that our ways of seeing the world do not come from objective reality but from other people, both past and present (Burr, 2015). That is, we are born into a world where the conceptual frameworks and categories used by the people in our culture already exist and we acquire them. While this explanation helped to explain my resistance to changing my ways of food provisioning, it also triggered thoughts about the current nature of food consumption in Indian households, the effects on food consumption of the changing socio-economic structure of the country, and the way such changes were being received and dealt with by food consumers and provisioners such as myself – leading me to this current study.

3.2 Constructionist philosophical paradigm

As explained above, from its inception, this study was based in the relativist, socio-constructionist paradigm (see Figure 3.1 for a breakdown of the study's framework). As a dominant form of interpretive research, social constructionism seeks to understand how seemingly objective features of the living world are subjectively understood by individuals (Andrews, 2012). Conceptualised on the assumption that the 'terms by which the world is understood are social artifacts,

products of historically situated interchanges among people' (Gergen, 1985, p. 267), social constructionism argues that the ways we understand the world and the categories and concepts we use are culturally and historically specific. This means that ways of understanding are not only specific to particular cultures and periods of history but are also products of that culture and history, depending on the particular socio-economic arrangements prevailing in that culture at that time (Burr, 2015). Hence, the way Indian consumers in the current economic environment understand the concepts of food provisioning and consumption cannot be directly applied to consumers from other countries and cultures (Jackson, 2004). This socio-constructionist paradigm was compatible with the aims of this research, which sought to explore the way human understanding of consumption changes with changing socio-economic conditions in specific local cultures.

Constructionist ideas essentially constitute a vocabulary of practice (Gergen, 2018). According to Burr (2015), a social constructionist view states that versions of knowledge are fabricated through the daily interactions between people in the course of social life. This means that social interactions of all kinds, especially the language and activities of people during their daily lives, are ways through which shared versions of knowledge are constructed and can also be studied. For constructionist researchers, human action largely emerges from social negotiation; people fashion their patterns of acceptable activity based on an agreement of what is real, rational, worthwhile and moral. Therefore, the potential for change and its explanation lies simply in contemporary conversation (Gergen, 2018). Moreover, the social environment and interactions play an important part in the context of food-consumption practices, as they can determine, for example, what is appropriate to eat in each context, such as at lunch (Halkier, 2010).

Gergen (2010) argued that Western psychology's cultural imperialism keeps other constructions on the margins and advocated the inclusion of understandings offered by indigenous psychologies rooted in diverse cultures. While they were not explicitly adopted for this current study, discourses by Indian philosophers about knowledge and conduct are aligned with the constructionist approach; according to (Tiwari, 2015), the value of language lies in expressing knowledge and that of knowledge in causing an incentive to action, or 'dharma' (good conduct). In the context of food provisioning, the cultural and normative rules of food preparation, cooking and serving can explain the way social structures inform food provisioning.

The relational nature of social constructionism is also similar to the 'dependent origination' doctrine (to act is to inter-act and to be is to inter-be) of Buddhist philosophy (Laumakis, 2008). As a dominant form of interpretive research (Eriksson, 2016), social constructionism emphasises the social nature of meaning construction. Therefore, the focus in the current research was on the collective generation of meaning as shaped by conventions of language in the form of sayings, as well as other processes such as observation (Schwandt, 1994). This allowed an exploration of the meaning of food provisioning as generated and held by the middle-class community of Indian consumers.

According to Burr (2015) and Schwandt (1994), the essential difference between constructivism and social constructionism lies in the extent to which an individual is seen as an agent in control of the construction process and the extent to which the constructions are a product of social forces. However, the main issue with constructionism is the overemphasis on social discourses leading to the realm of the social tending to attract more than its due share in explaining individual actions such as consumption (Grownow, 2008; Archer, 2003). The current research therefore takes a moderate social constructionist view. On a continuum of ontological world views between naïve realism and relativism, moderate constructionism is positioned closer to relativism and this was the position adopted for this research (Järvensivu & Törnroos, 2010). This is because while moderate social constructionism is critical about the taken-for-granted positivist approaches to knowledge and truth, it defines truth to be community based and empirically derivable (Burr, 2015). Additionally, while social constructionism is interested in the role of social structures, a moderate social constructionist position sustains the individual's role in the social construction of reality. This approach accurately positioned the current research's enquiry amidst the structure–agency dualism as depicted in the conceptual framework of this study presented in the previous chapter.

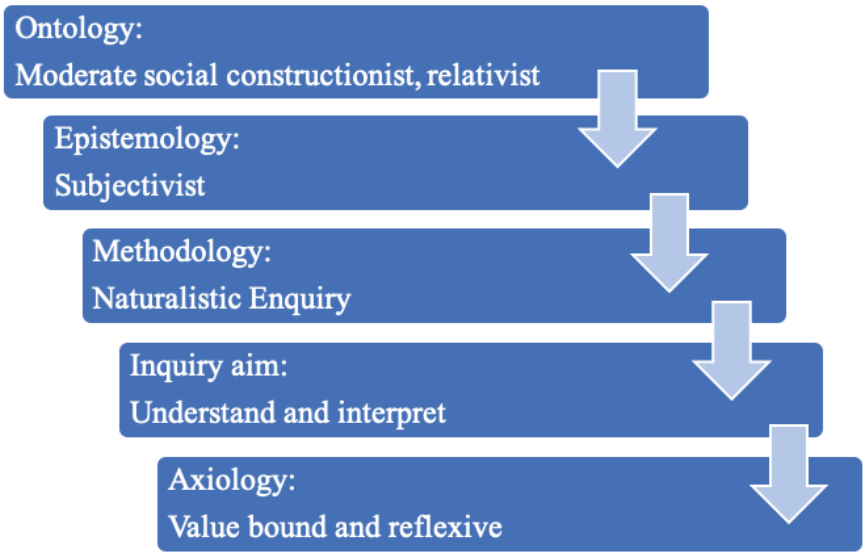

Figure 3.1: Social constructionist philosophical paradigm (Source: Adapted from Neuman, 2014)

3.3 Relativist ontology and subjectivist epistemology

A relativist ontology asks what is there that can be known (Guba & Lincoln, 1989, p. 79). Because reality is socially constructed and understood to be subjective and unique for each person, based on their experiences and perceptions in specified contexts (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008), this study sought to achieve its objectives by examining food provisioners' thoughts, feelings and behaviours in relation to everyday household food provisioning. The subjective ontology also meant that despite their shared social environment, the individual food provisioners would have their own subjective reality in which they carried out their provisioning practices. Thus, multiple accounts of socially constructed performances of the food-provisioning practices, both those observed by me as the researcher and those described by the provisioners, could exist (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). This posed a challenge for this research to be designed such that data generation and analysis result in co-constructed interpretations of the meanings expressed by the provisioners (Burr, 2015). Additionally, it needed to allow that a plausible chosen interpretation, among the many possible theoretical interpretations, would be based on a specific theoretical framework that was specific to the culture (Kvale, 1995). This challenge called for a robust research design and consideration of the researcher's position and ability in co-constructing the participants' meanings. Therefore, I chose to engage in a practice theory-oriented qualitative ethnographic

study that focused on routine food provisioning within middle-class households in India, to facilitate a broad and rich discussion of the changing nature of food consumption in that country.

A subjectivist epistemology poses the question, 'What is the relationship of the knower to the known?' (Guba & Lincoln, 1989, p. 83). According to (Manning, 1997), a relationship of trust and interconnectedness between the researcher and respondents enables the exploration of complex knowledge and meaning. In the current study, this relationship was established by conducting an ethnographic study. This included engaging in a dialogue through semi-structured interviews, analysis of symbols (e.g., words and texts of language and material objects) in observations, and textual analysis of the transcripts (Wolcott, 2008). While in constructionist research, an interpretation of such a dialogue enables the discovery and construction of meanings, the issue of authenticity requires the democratisation of the research relationship between the researcher and respondents such that the relationship holds equal voice, trust and interconnectedness (Bergman & Lindgren, 2018; Burr, 2015). In this current research, eliciting the food provisioners' multifaceted viewpoints regarding their food provisioning and doing so by maintaining the validity of the provisioners' own accounts was met by explicating the researcher's position to herself and in the workings of the research processes (See section 3.10).

3.4 Practice theory approach

With an aim of exploring how contemporary food provisioning occurs in middle-class households in India, the current research adopted practice theory not only as a theoretical perspective but also as a methodological tool to interpret empirically the embodied and discursive meanings of routine food consumption as engaged in by provisioners in their food-provisioning practices (Nicolini, 2017). As a methodological choice, practice theory was also a good fit with this study's ontological assumptions of social constructionism, as the focus within a constructionist enquiry is on the social practices engaged in by people and their interactions with each other (Burr, 2015). Additionally, the practice theory methodology facilitated the understanding of consumption not as a stand-alone phenomenon but rather, as being entangled within webs of multiple social practices and relationships in everyday life (Halkier & Jensen, 2011; Warde, 2015). Further,

the perspective of social practice theory offered a more robust account of the way social and behavioural change comes about than conventional approaches in the study of consumption (Welch, 2017).

3.4.1 Challenges in the empirical application of practice theory

Practice theory in consumer research conceives consumption as the interconnectedness of routine bodily and mental behaviour involving understanding and competency in using material things. Although it is highly recommended, a practice theory-oriented empirical approach is not without inherent complexities and challenges. According to Warde (2005), 'as general theories of practice they tend to be idealized, abstract, and insufficiently attentive to the social processes involved in the creation and reproduction of practices' (p. 135). Since scholarly discourse on practice theory is largely motivated by theoretical contemplations, there is a gap in the practical considerations of conducting empirical research by applying practice theory (Bueger, 2014); Halkier, 2011; Spaargaren et al., 2016).

A significant limiting factor of practice theory is that beyond its commitment to understanding social order and action primarily through the lens of social practice, it is difficult to specify the conceptualisations that theories of practice have in common (Welch & Paddock, 2017). Thus, in the absence of a unified approach (Schatzki, 2002), attention to practices has been filled in differently by different researchers and this creates a challenge in the application of practice theories in empirical research. For example, Frohlich et al. (2001) drew on both Giddens' (1984) and Bourdieu's (1984) understandings of social practices to articulate the concept of consumers' collective lifestyles; however, in the context of rising obesity rates, Delormier, Frohlich, and Potvin (2009), examined eating patterns as social phenomena by operationalising only Giddens' (1984) definition of social practices, understood as an interplay of 'agency' and 'social structure'.

Similarly, because of the lack of a structured and unified theory of practice, attempts at empirical applications have been made by selective and heterogeneous operationalisations of theoretical ideas, all of which have fallen into the social practice domain (Nicolini, 2017; Warde, Welch, & Paddock, 2017). For example, while many scholars (e.g. Warde, 2005a; Halkier, 2010) have referred to Reckwitz's (2002a) definition of practices (as detailed in Chapter 2), others have adopted Shove et al. (2012) more empirical definition of a practice being comprised of elements

such as meanings, materials and competencies (Spurling, McMeekin, Shove, Southerton, & Welch, 2013; Strengers & Maller, 2012). Recently, there has been a rise in practice theory applications in food studies, especially using second-generation practice theories (Halkier 2017a; Laakso, 2017; Leer & Povlsen, 2016; (Nelson, Beckie, & Krogman, 2017). However, as yet there has been little progress in developing a unified practice theory approach for a study of food consumption.

Some of the diversity has stemmed from adopting various combinations of conceptualisations of practice theory (e.g., Bourdieu, 1984; Giddens, 1984; Reckwitz, 2002a; Schatzki, 2002; Shove et al., 2012; Warde, 2005a). In a majority of studies, the difference has been owing to the varying treatments in terms of the constitution and elemental composition afforded to the concept of practice. While most practice theory-based research has treated practices, rather than individuals or institutions, as a primary unit of enquiry and has cited Reckwitz's (2002a) definition of a practice as consisting of several elements interconnected to one other, differences within the understanding of what constitutes a practice have emerged. Some scholars (e.g., Reckwitz, 2002a; Shove & Pantzar, 2005) have focused on the various components or elements that make up a practice; some (e.g. Schatzki, 2002; Warde, 2005a) have focused on the connections between such elements; and others (e.g. Spaargaren & Van Vliet, 2000) have focused on the position of practices as a bridge between individuals' lifestyles and broader socio-technical systems of provision. To mitigate the challenges in practice theory-inspired research, the following two issues are of empirical importance: First, is the methodological consideration of a practice not only as performance but also as an entity. Second the development of an analytical praxiography based strategy that is appropriate to the research context.

3.4.2 Practice as an entity and performance

The consideration of practice as a combination of performance and entity is critical to the empirical application of practice theory, as well as the design of a methodology that enables the researcher to cope with some of the above-mentioned problems. As depicted in Figure 3.2, practices as performances are the observable actions of individuals, such as cutting, chopping and cooking food on a stove (Spurling et al., 2013). An understanding of practices as entities reveals the socially shared notions of engaging with the practice, such as the use of fresh vegetables in

cooking, or not eating leftover food. Spurling et al. (2013) stated that observable behaviour in the performance of socially shared practices is just the tip of the iceberg and a comprehensive understanding of practices can only be achieved by uncovering the socially embedded underpinning of behaviour.

As detailed in the data-collection section (3.8), the current study was able to examine both the embodied and discursive elements of everyday food provisioning by adopting an ethnographic research design that included qualitative semi-structured interviews, observations and photographs. As discussed in Chapter 2, the sayings and/or observations, as well as the bodily doings related to one or many sub-practices of food provisioning, enabled understanding and theorising about the trajectory of the practice's persistence or change (Bueger, 2014; Halkier, 2011; Nicolini, 2017).

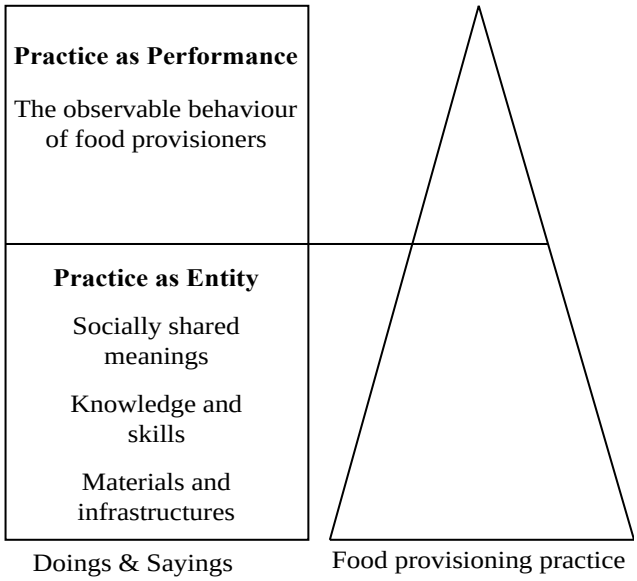

Figure 3.2: The socially embedded underpinning of observable behaviour in food provisioning (Source: Adapted from Spurling et al., 2013)

3.4.3 Developing a praxiography

The most significant aspect of the empirical application of practice theory research is the development of a 'praxiography' (Bueger, 2014(Bueger & Gadinger, 2018). A well-developed praxiography allows the challenges of applying practice theory in empirical research to be overcome (Schmidt, 2017). Defined as doing practice theory-driven research, praxiography is a distinct interpretive approach that entails mixing and blending strategies with each other in response to the

phenomenon and the practices at hand (Bueger, 2014; Nicolini, 2017). In his discussion of the 'methodological challenges of practicing praxiology', Schmidt (2017) argued that in seeking to reconstruct the practical and meaningful constructions of reality, praxiologising the designing (in this instance, access to, and the selection of, data) and writing about practices (such as how to unravel the embodied, tacit type of knowledge that underlies a practice) should be an integral part of a reflexive and explorative project adopting the practice theory approach. A praxiographic analytic design suitable for the current study was developed by synthesising methodological recommendations from practice theorists in the field of consumption (Bueger, 2014; ; Bueger & Gadinger, 2018; Schmidt, 2017; Domaneschi, 2019; Nicolini, 2013, 2017; Sahakian & Wilhite, 2014; Southerton, 2013; Spaargaren, Lamers & Weenink, 2016). The result was a focused practice theory analysis based on:

- focusing on food-provisioning practice as a central unit of analysis
- conceptualising the elemental composition of food-provisioning practices
- tracing the trajectories of food-provisioning practices
- focusing wider on the interconnectedness of food provisioning practices.

Each of these is discussed more fully below.

3.4.3.1 Focusing on food provisioning practice as a central unit of analysis

This criterion of the praxiography involved ascertaining that the focus of the study was 'zoomed in' on a particular situated practice and the position of the researcher vis-à-vis the practice being investigated. As discussed previously, this study identified the practice of food provisioning as a site or consumption junction where all information in relation to food consumption was being created, collected, assembled, simplified and negotiated. This was critical not only as a relevant place for data collection but also for data analysis. Thus, while consumption could be considered through a wide array of social practices, focusing on a specific practice such as food provisioning allowed for an original approach to identifying opportunities for change.

This zooming in positioned the researcher very close to the practice being investigated. According to Schmidt (2017), the participation of a researcher in the social practice they are investigating is essential. Only by participating in the practices under study and experiencing first-hand what it is like to be a participant in

the practice can the researcher acquire inside knowledge and skills in relation to the nature of the practices and their rules and teleo-affectivities. In this current study, the position of the researcher as a food provisioner, her personal motivation to engage in the research project and her familiarity with the cultural environment in which the food-provisioning practice was situated further strengthened the design of this praxiography and facilitated the production of a rich analysis of the life and trajectories of situated food-provisioning practices at the consumption junction.

3.4.3.2 Conceptualising the elemental composition of food-provisioning practices

As mentioned above, there are conceptual differences regarding the elemental composition of practices and the absence of a generally accepted or dominant list of the elements constituting a practice has posed a challenge in the empirical application of practice theories. For example, Warde (2005) recommended analytical translation of the concepts of practice from Reckwitz (2002a) and Schatzki (2002) into the empirical study of consumption via an exploration of the 'understandings', 'procedures' and 'engagements' within a practice. In contrast, although inspired by Schatzki (1996, 2002), Shove and colleagues renamed and reduced some of the elements he presented, while adding material things, products or items of consumption to the status of active elements that co-constitute practices (Shove & Pantzar, 2005; Shove et al., 2007; Shove et al., 2012). In their explanation of the practice of Nordic walking and later, to explain the changes in the everyday routine of car driving as well, Shove et al. (2012) simplified their definition of practices to just three elements: competences, meanings and materials.

Many studies (Halkier, Katz-Gerro, & Martens, 2011; Kendell et al., 2016; (Maller, 2015) Mylan, Holmes, & Paddock, 2016; Twine, 2015) found Shove et al.'s (2012) three-element model suitable for empirical application in practice-based consumption studies. However, in their study of routine household behaviour in standby-energy-consuming practices, Gram-Hanssen (2010) critiqued Shove and Pantzar's (2005) framework as being overly simplistic and unable to distinguish between practical (or non-verbal) knowledge and explicit, rule-based or theoretical knowledge. The author incorporated Schatzki's (1996) practical understanding, also described as 'know-how' or routines, along with explicit rules and the existence of teleoaffective structures as critical elements for holding a practice together. A teleoaffective structure is a compound of something that is goal-oriented (teleo) and

has a meaning in a substantive or ethical sense (affective) (Schatzki, 2002). In this sense, the concept that teleoaffective structures hold practices together suggests that practices are performed to meet an objective that has substantial meaning for someone.

An adaptation of Gram-Hanssen's (2010) comparison of the different practice conceptualisations by Schatzki (2002) and Reckwitz (2002a), along with interpretations of scholars such as Warde (2005b) and Shove et al. (2012), are presented in Table 3.1, which indicates that different authors have subscribed to slightly different descriptions of the elements that lend coherence to practices. While Shove et al.'s (2012) three-component model has been the most widely applied, the application of a mix of elements from different conceptualisations ((Leray, Sahakian, & Erkman, 2016) is common as well. Practice elements that were selected for the current study are also listed in Table 3.1 and a detail description follows.

Table 3.1: Different practice conceptualisations (Source: Adapted from Gram-Hanssen, 2010)

A comparison of different conceptualisations of practice-constituting elements				
Schatzki (2002, 2010a)	**Reckwitz (2002a)**	**Warde (2005)**	**Shove et al. (2012)**	**Current study**
Practical and general understandings	Body, mind, the agent/structure/ process	Understandings	Competencies	Competencies
Rules	Knowledge discourse/language	Procedures		Meanings
Teleoaffective structures		Engagements	Meaning	Teleoaffective structures and emotions
	Things	Items of consumption	Materials	Materials

Drawing from past food-consumption studies (Jackson, 2015; (Mylan, Holmes, & Paddock, 2016)Twine, 2015), the current study adopted Shove et al.'s (2012) model to understand food-provisioning practices as an assemblage of meanings (symbolic, affective, instrumental), materials (food stuffs, technology) and competencies (skills, procedures, know-how), to specify the characteristics of the food-provisioning practices and to compare and analyse the changes within them (Spaargaren et al., 2016). A wide array of meanings are associated with food provisioning: the affective meanings associated with the perceptions of roles and responsibilities of the food provisioner; symbolic meanings in relation to the socio-

cultural, temporal and tacit know-how associated with the performance of the practice; and the bodily and mental 'doings and sayings' (e.g. chopping, preparing, cooking, serving and storing) associated with the instrumental meaning of food provisioning. Materiality includes not only all raw, pre-processed, ready-to-cook, ready-to-eat, take-away and eat-out variations of food but also the associated technology (appliances) of cooking, storing and serving. The competences of food provisioning can be placed on a continuum that ranges from performance of cooking, eating and serving from scratch, to using household help or convenience food materials to reduce the amount of time and labour required, or outsourcing all food provisioning. This current study incorporated Schatzki's (2002, 2010b) concept of teleoaffective structures, reflecting on the 'heterotelic' orientation of food provisioning as a practice having an 'end purpose or meaning outside itself' (Warde, Welch & Paddock, 2017, p. 30) and to facilitate the analysis of how and why the Shovian elements combined, interconnected and aligned to meet the goals and directionality of food provisioning.

In his proposal to return to an emphasis on the cultural reading of consumption, Spaargaren (2013, 2014) suggested the addition of emotions as an element through which recruitment into a practice could be analysed. This approach is especially relevant in the case of food provisioning, as considering the affective and symbolic meanings of engagement in the practice allows a better understanding of the type of emotions experienced by practitioners (Collins, 2004). As this 'cocktailing' of practice elements in not only common in practice theory-inspired studies (Gram-Hanssen, 2010; Leray, Sahakian, & Erkman, 2016) but also recommended (Nicolini, 2013; Spaargaren et al., 2016), the current study used Shove et al.'s (2012) meaning, materials and competency as practice-constituting elements, as well as Schatzki's (2002) teleoaffective structures and Spaargaaren's (2014) emotions as elements integrating food-provisioning practices.

3.4.3.3 Tracing the trajectories of food-provisioning practices

Studying the dynamics of practices requires more than merely mapping the elements and discussing the ways they hold together. Spaargaren et al. (2016) believed that a critical step in praxiographical analyses was uncovering the trajectory of a practice by studying its historical development, its stability and its connection with other practices and changes therein. The temporality of food-provisioning

practice, with its periodicity (morning/afternoon/evening), is an important aspect of its stability. Southerton (2013) argued that practices that are often described as 'routines' or 'habits' simply reflect stable practices that are able to be reproduced through recurrent, non-reflexive and culturally shared actions. With its many practitioners and the repeated nature of its performance, food provisioning can be conceptualised as a temporal practice, with its stability resting on routinised and shared performances in everyday life. To analyse the stability of food-provisioning practices, this current research focused on the provisioners' dispositions as the tendency to perform practices according to culturally derived processes and orientations, as well as temporal procedures for food provisioning (Southerton, 2013; Twine, 2015). Additionally, the current study adopted Plessz and Wahlen's (2020) framework for exploring the sharedness and stability of food-provisioning practices, characterised by participation, commitment and concentration as indicators of the extent to which the practice was individually and culturally rooted in everyday life.

According to Warde (2005), a change in practice via making and breaking links within practice elements emerges from both outside the practice as well as inside it. The social organisation of a practice is conditional on characteristics of time, geographic space and socio-cultural context, such as household organisation and life-stage-related changes, or dominant modes of cultural traditions and socio-structural norms (Warde, 2013). Such external arrangements highlight the role of collective learning in the understanding of practices and social power in defining justifiable conduct in engagement with practices. Changing social and economic conditions, such as the liberalisation and globalisation occurring in India, can change the organisation of food-provisioning practices from the outside, owing to their relationship with other practices, such as health and workload management, and the greater availability of resources such as new food materials. Change in practices from the inside can emerge as practitioners improvise new 'doings' and 'sayings' in their new social situations.

Consumer agents do not participate in social practices in identical ways; rather, the performance of a practice by an agent or a group of agents in a society is internally differentiated (Warde, 2013). Considered simply, from the point of view of the individual food provisioner, the performance of cooking in provisioning depends on factors such as experience, knowledge of cooking, learning, opportunities and available resources. Engagement in a practice can also be

differentiated based on the provisioners' stage of life and capabilities, such as being a long-standing food provisioner or a beginner. Therefore, within a given practice, differentiations arise from the varying competencies, capabilities and potential contributions of individual agents to the reproduction of, and/or change in, the practice. This is linked with the concept of individual agency. While practice theory's conceptual focus is on decentring the 'individual', in the understanding of practice transitions, Sayer (2013) and Twine (2015) emphasised the role of individual agency in 'doings', 'performances' and working with the agency of other materialities.

As previously discussed in Chapter 2, the distributed agency of practice constituents can be influential in bringing about change (Sahakian & Wilhite, 2014). Thus, change in food-provisioning practices can come from the introduction of new food materials, from changing norms and meanings in provisioning, or by technological developments that mean a practice can be performed differently. Therefore, the aim in data collection and analysis is to avoid the pitfall of focusing on only one aspect of food-provisioning practices and instead, focus on how the competencies, materials and values of meanings, emotions and goals are each acquired and subsequently appropriated to the performance of practices.

It seems that the key components, meanings, materials and competence of the nexus identified by Shove et al. (2012) as constituting a practice can vary independently of one another between groups of participants. Further, while the elements constitute a linked nexus, the relationship between these components can vary with the corresponding agents' emotions, understandings and goals. While such changes increase the praxiological challenge for an accurate analysis of food-provisioning practices, they reinforce the practice theory approach in capturing the nuances of social change. Since the modes and contents of appropriation of goods and services are integral elements of a practice, the trajectories of practices influence consumption (Warde, 2013).

3.4.3.4 The interconnectedness of food provisioning

When researching social change, it is advisable to shift the praxiographical analytic lens in an alternately zoomed in and zoomed out position (Spaargaren et al., 2016). Social practices cluster in practice-arrangement bundles of varying sizes. In this current study, zooming out to inspect the interconnectedness of food

provisioning with wider practices, such as those engaged in to manage self-identity, the family's well-being or building a professional career outside the home, enabled an analysis of the practice elements that were actively contributing to dynamic patterning within the plenum of networked practices (Shove et al., 2012; Warde, 2013). In addition, Spaargaren et al. (2016) made a case for zooming out of the situated practice to explore its connections with factors other than the constituting elements. For example, collective groups of human agents with similar lifestyles or a corresponding habitus, as in the case of middle-class Indian consumers, are instrumental in connecting practices to form shared practice-arrangement bundles. Thus, an analysis of how these provisioners, as part of a collective group, reflected upon the status of their food-provisioning practices in relation to the way the shared nature of the practice-arrangement bundle influenced their enactment of, and emotions about, engaging in the practice enabled an exploration of social change in consumption via the emergence, persistence, disappearance and transition of practices.

3.4.4 Applying the praxiography

Further to the thematic analysis used to condense and code the data generated in this study (see details in Section 3.10), a social-psychological discourse analysis (Gergen, 1985) was used to apply the praxiographical criteria. Such an analysis suggests that social interaction is performative, persuasive and a negotiation of the way an individual relates to the world (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008). In tracing the trajectory of food provisioning and zooming out of the practice, this social-psychological discourse analysis enabled a focus on food provisioners' self-identities in relation to others, ideas and objects, and helped in explicating the way food provisioning was rendered meaningful through the provisioners' shared engagement within their middle-class consumer group.

Repeated reading of the interview transcripts helped to disentangle the food provisioners' 'interpretative repertoires'[15] in the form of patterns across different participants' narratives, metaphors and figures of speech (Potter & Wetherell, 1987). This helped to reveal the form and functions of the dominant discursive constructions in provisioning, as well as the spoken and tacit aspects of the

[15] Interpretative repertoires are coherent and systematic ways of talking about things. They are historically developed and make up an important part of the common sense of a culture (Potter & Wetherell, 1987).

performance of a practice (MacDonald, Murphy, & Elliott, 2018). For example, when the provisioners made sense of their food provisioning and negotiated their food behaviour, it was possible to identify a number of repertoires that discursively made sense of their positioning in the world and helped them to achieve their goals in food provisioning. Social-psychological discourse analysis has been used in other studies of food (MacDonald et al., 2018; (O'Key & Hugh-Jones, 2010) and in the current study, it was a useful analytical tool for identifying the inconsistencies and variability of the accounts of food provisioning.

3.5 Research location

Data production for the study was conducted in the summer of 2017 in the cities of Ahmedabad, Indore and Mumbai, which are situated in the central and western parts of India (see Figure 3.3). They were considered a suitable study environment for three major reasons. First, while some consumption behaviour research has been conducted in India, its focus has generally been on cities in the north, such as Delhi (Mathur & Parameswaran, 2004), Lucknow and Chandigarh (Aloia et al., 2013) or in the south, such as Trichi (Manohar & Rehman, 2018), Hyderabad (Dittrich, 2009; van Wessel, 2004) Chennai (Baskar & Sundaram, 2012; Bruckert, 2015) Bangalore (Ganguly, 2017). Very few studies have generated consumer insights from cities in central or western India (e.g., Gupta, 2013). The second reason for choosing these cities was their ranking based on their population and consumption patterns; Mumbai is ranked as a Tier 1 city while Ahmedabad and Indore are ranked as Tier 2 cities. Liberalisation- and globalisation-mediated change in the consumption patterns of consumers in India are largely observed in Tier 1 and 2 cities (Singh, 2019). Thus, consumer research from three different cities would not only reveal any potential variations in consumer behaviour based on the tier level of their city but also add to the overall body of consumption research in the western-Indian context. Lastly, the huge regional diversity in Indian languages and cultural variation stemming from people identifying themselves according to the region in which they live or belong, such as Gujaratis (belonging to the state of Gujarat) or Marathis (belonging to the state of Maharashtra), makes research difficult for academics who are unfamiliar with such regional variations (Bijapurkar, 2008); van Wessel, 2004). My familiarity with the language and regional culture of these three cities was key to including them in the study.

Figure 3.3: The map of India, showing the location of the cities – Ahmedabad, Indore and Mumbai – where the research was conducted (Source: Adapted from d-maps.com (n.d.)

3.6 Research participants: The food provisioners

As the focus of this study was on middle-class food provisioners' experiences and perspectives, rather than issues of statistical significance, the participant eligibility criteria included belonging to the middle-class consumer category and being the food provisioner for a household in one of these three cities, as well as having at least one school-going child and/or other adults, such as parents, living with them.[16] Most research studies rely on income level as a clear indicator of middle-class status (Ramaswamy & Namakumari, 2002). Based on Boston Consulting Group's (Singhi, Jain, & Sanghi, 2017) income-based classification of Indian consumers, middle-class status in this study was associated with an annual family earning in the range of USD 12,000 – 14,000. A significant eligibility

[16] The importance of family in this research stems from the fact that the food practice of Indians is significantly influenced by their collectivist culture (Choo et al., 2004; Ling, Choo, & Pysarchik, 2004). Therefore, household-based food consumption decisions are indicative of the contemporary realities in the Indian context.

criterion was defining the food-provisioner role. (Fine et al., 2018) and Spaargaren and Van Vliet (2000) discussed the notion of 'system of provision' as a key factor in studies of consumer behaviour based on social consumption practices. The system represents the network of actors and their social and physical infrastructures, which together make up the means through which food products and services reach the consumer within the context of a certain practice. In relation to the current study, the system of food provisioning corresponds to the concepts of 'access' and 'use' in relation to the way the food consumed is sourced and procured, and the way it is produced, processed and prepared. Comfort, cleanliness and convenience are other factors in the system of provision, integrating cultural aspects of domestic consumption practices. Therefore, in this study the role of food provisioner was defined as one engaging with:

1. *the infrastructures of food provisioning:* structures and routines regarding place of procurement (e.g., grocery stores, supermarkets), logistics and food preparation.
2. *the networks of food provisioning:* role of provisioners in decision making (e.g., the use of domestic help) and their structuring of provisioning processes.
3. *the conventions, motivations and skills required for food provisioning.*

Thus, the current study invited the participation of food provisioners who met the criteria of being the man/woman in a (middle-class) household who made the decisions regarding the family's food consumption, even if they were not directly involved in all the efforts of producing the food (e.g., they could instruct the household help to buy/cook food products). The study criteria did not specify the religion of the participants.

3.6.1 Sample size

In qualitative studies, data saturation is an important concept, as it addresses the likelihood of a study achieving an adequate sample for content validity (Guetterman, 2015). According to Francis et al. (2010), studies in which conceptual categories for analysis are pre-established by existing theory (in this case, practice theory), the principles for deciding saturation are based on specifying a minimum sample size for initial analysis, followed by more interviews until all categories are represented and new ideas stop emerging. Thus, while the current study planned to

follow Guest, Bunce, and Johnson (2006) recommendation of 12 to 15 interviews as an initial optimal sample, 31 participants were recruited. Table 3.2 provides details of the food provisioners selected.

Table 3.2: A Summary of participants' information

Name (pseudonyms)	Age/ gender	Members in household	Education/Occupation	City of residence
Anita	29/Female	3	Masters/housewife	Ahmedabad
Nirmal	36/Female	3	Bachelors/housewife	Ahmedabad
Unnati	38/Female	4	Bachelors/housewife	Ahmedabad
Rumi	40/Female	3	Masters/school teacher	Ahmedabad
Ruchi	39/Female	5	Masters/school teacher	Ahmedabad
Mariam	42/Female	6	Bachelors/housewife	Ahmedabad
Minu	39/Female	5	Masters/school teacher	Ahmedabad
Neeta	43/Female	4	Bachelors/entrepreneur	Indore
Mili	42/Female	5	Masters/entrepreneur	Indore
Manisha	47/Female	4	Masters/housewife	Indore
Vaishali	35/Female	5	Masters/school teacher	Indore
Prema	37/Female	4	PhD/lecturer	Indore
Manisha	42/Female	6	Masters/Housewife	Indore
Ashu	38/Female	5	Masters/school teacher	Indore
Vinisha	43/Female	4	Bachelors/Entrepreneur	Indore
Babita	36/Female	5	Masters/school teacher	Indore
Vijay	44/Male	4	Masters/corporate	Indore
Kritu	40/Female	6	Masters/lecturer	Mumbai
Ratan	40/Female	6	Bachelors/housewife	Mumbai
Archana	39/Female	3	Masters/lecturer	Mumbai
Purnia	48/Female	3	Masters/lecturer	Mumbai
Girija	42/Female	5	Bachelors/housewife	Mumbai
Rohini	40/Female	6	PhD/Professor	Mumbai
Rani	38/Female	6	Bachelors/Housewife	Mumbai
Chandan	34/Female	8	Bachelors/entrepreneur	Mumbai
Priya	41/Female	5	Masters/ entrepreneur	Mumbai
Preeto	47/Female	5	Bachelors/school teacher	Mumbai
Nitam	33/Female	3	Bachelors/housewife	Mumbai
Sona	54/Female	4	PhD/senior lecturer	Mumbai
Mona	47/Female	3	Masters/administrator	Mumbai
Sita	55/Female	5	Bachelors/housewife	Mumbai

3.6.2 Recruitment pathway

Following ethical approval from the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Board in October 2017, the participant recruitment strategy involved a social media (Facebook) invitation to everyone in my social network. People who were

interested in the research contacted me about participating in the study. This approach eliminated any ‘sense of obligation’ or ‘coercion’ that people in my social network might have felt about participation in the study, as they were free to ignore the invitation. In addition, this approach eliminated the issue of limiting the sample; all of the interested people who met the eligibility criteria were able to participate in the study. Based on the recommendations of the initial respondents, a snowball sampling approach was utilised to recruit further participants. None of the participants were in any way related to the researcher. However, since participant recruitment was through Facebook, friends (including friends of friends) and acquaintances were recruited. Once the potential participants had confirmed their interest in the research, the participant information sheets and consent forms were sent out by the researcher via email or telephone. The signed consent forms were collected at the time of the interviews and stored in a safe and secure manner. As a token of appreciation for their time, the participants were gifted with a grocery voucher to the value of INR 1000 (approximately NZ$ 25). Appendix A & B contain details of the approval from the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee, the social media invitation and the participant information and consent forms.

3.7 Data collection

Data collection was based on the three ethnographic pillars of experiencing, enquiring and examining, which allowed a discursive and behavioural documentation of food provisioning (Giddens, 1984; (Wolcott, 2008). Additionally, as previously noted regarding using a practice theory approach, a methodological recommendation is to study food provisioning in ways that enable an exploration of both its performative and entity-based underpinnings. Studies in the past have used a variety of qualitative methods to reveal the way people describe their daily performances; for example, Magaudda, (2011) conducted in-depth interviews, Truninger (2011) conducted participant observations, a filmed observation and interviews, and Halkier and Jensen, (2011) used individual, family and group in-depth interviews, autophotography and participant observation. To depict an interpretation of the way food provisioners make sense of their experiences of consumption within the food context, a practical orientation in the interpretive methodological axiom is to attempt to grasp meaning not simply by explaining

behaviour but by searching for ‘verstehen’ (understanding) through a recursive process of uncovering values, beliefs and assumptions (Schwandt, 1994). As the goal of this current study was to gain deep insight, comprehension and a balance between both the routinised performances and the embedded dispositions in food-consumption practices, it drew inspiration from other culturally oriented food-consumption studies, such as Halkier (2010), in employing semi-structured interviews and observations as methodological procedures for data collection (Atkinson & Coffey, 2003). The next section includes a detailed description of the way the data were collected and managed. Figure 3.4 illustrates the multiple data-gathering processes that were conducted over one-and-a-half months, followed by detailed information about the way the data was collected.

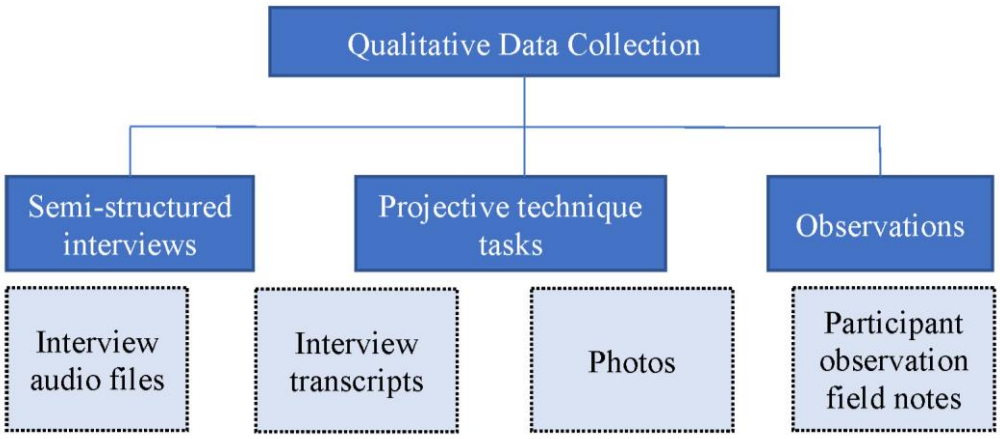

Figure 3.4: Qualitative data collection processes

3.7.1 Semi-structured interviews

After agreeing on a suitable date and time, semi-structured narrative interviews in which the questions were not fully scripted were conducted in the homes of the participating food provisioners (Bueger, 2014; Halkier & Jenssen, 2011). Notes were also recorded about the informal conversations made during shop-along times with the participants. Owing to unavailability of suitable time, I also met and interviewed three of the participants during their lunch break at their work-place. A researcher safety protocol approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee was followed (see Appendix C). Although the interviews were semi-structured, a basic question guide (see Appendix B) was created to ensure the

food provisioners were not limited to absolute concepts or specifically focused cultural structures, such as lifestyle segments, but rather, to focus on the broad 'everyday' living that would reveal the multiplicity of processes and variety of ways of food provisioning (Halkier & Jensen, 2011). The guide was developed with reference to food-related topics previously covered in sociological investigations of food, such as consumption and provisioning (Bava et al., 2008; Carrigan et al., 2006; Mills et al., 2017; Slater et al., 2011), and further modifications were made after conducting two pilot interviews.

Each interview began with a brief introduction describing the research project and a discussion about informed consent. This was followed by provisional questions (Arsel, 2017). Information about the interviewees' personal backgrounds and history were gathered over the course of the interviews, to give more context to their daily lives and circumstances, as well as the way they perceived them. While the formal part of the interviews lasted for about 40 to 50 minutes, I extended the conversation on related topics of interest for the provisioner. Since I met all except 3 participants at their homes, time spend with them averaged to 3 to 4 hours. This included our visit together for grocery shopping as well as some informal time sharing a tea and some snacks as I was considered an invited guest into their homes. This often led to rich insights about the provisioners' understandings and experiences related to food consumption/provisioning.

During the interviews, I attempted to elicit food-consumption/ provisioning stories that would elucidate the participants' household routines, their associations with food materials and kitchen appliances, and their experiences as food provisioners in the household. Questions such as, 'What types of things does feeding the family involve?' helped to reveal the performative character of social life in relation to food, allowing the researcher to see how eating, cooking and shopping for food were relationally accomplished in the most habitual ways of routine life. Most importantly, when asking the provisioners about details of their food-provisioning practices, I followed the 'interview to the double' procedure suggested by Nicolini (2017). This involved finding out about the participants' detailed everyday food actions with questions such as, 'Tell me about your general routine from the time you get up in the morning', followed by questions such as, 'Why do you think doing this (e.g., packing a lunch box) is important?', which revealed the underlying embodied meanings, dispositions and values for engagement in that particular food

practice. Other questions directing the flow of the interview asked about the way the provisioners performed specific sub-practices in food-provisioning activities (e.g., chopping/buying pre-cut vegetables, storing leftover food) that were part of a lunch or dinner practice.

With the aim of looking for access, rather than for abstractions, when appropriate I probed about cultural practices and rituals about food, emotions felt in response to changes in lifestyles and life-stages, and ways of managing food for different members of the family. I also circled back to earlier gaps and inconsistencies in the participants' narratives (Goyal, Maity, & Belk, 2013). In managing a pattern of flow in the interviews, which is critical to ensuring the conversation stays on track while also allowing for freedom of thought and expression, I would direct the conversation subtly (Neuman, 2014). For example, when one participant who was an entrepreneur started talking about the financial aspects of mass-produced noodles in response to my question, 'What do you think about noodles as a meal item?', I took the conversation back to a focus that was more relevant.

To enable the gathering of rich data, transcend any communication barriers and triangulate what the provisioners said, felt and did, I used projective techniques in the interviews as well (Vidal, Ares, & Giménez, 2013). These are based on the assumption that the innermost feelings, beliefs, attitudes and motivations of consumers can be uncovered by presenting interviewees with unstructured and ambiguous stimuli (Donoghue, 2000). For example, I used the choice ordering technique where participants were asked to number-order their choice among four types of a single food item for example, yoghurt that is made at home, bought loose from the local dairy, bought packaged from a supermarket, or bought as health food pack with added nutrients such as probiotic. Other techniques included sentence completion and word association where participants were asked to indicate the first thought or words that came to mind in response to a food related conversation or a food related action. Appendix D (a, b, c & d) presents the task sheets as shown to the participants.

In households with more than one individual acting as food provisioner, the additional member (usually mother or mother-in-law) were welcome to join the interview. Culturally, it is important to include elders in conversations, especially when they are held in the living area of the house (Pelzang & Hutchinson, 2017).

Additionally, it is customary in Indian households for everyone in the family to come and greet the invited guest (in this case the researcher), even if only for a little while, after which the main host (the participant) and guest continue their meeting. In some families, the husbands and/or young children joined the interviews and often participated keenly, especially when the mothers discussed their food provisioning in relation to the children's food preferences. While such unplanned participation of others (the family members of the food provisioners) could be interpreted as an interruption and distraction in the interview process, avoiding it would be considered rude behaviour. In fact, the participation of other family members provided insight into the critical interpersonal dynamics of food provisioning within the households ((Zartler, 2010) and rendered operations of normative provisioning and consumption analysable not only as reflections of the food provisioner but also as negotiations between household members.

As the researcher was conversant in both English and Hindi, the interviews were conducted in the language, or mixture of languages, that was comfortable for the participants. While most participants spoke in what is colloquially called 'Hinglish', switching languages, especially when elders joined the conversation, allowed for greater in-depth discussions (Pelzang & Hutchinson, 2017). Since the interviews were carried out as a dialogue, the researcher and the food provisioner engaged in conversations that provided data in the form of detailed first-hand descriptions of activities, utterances, bodily movements and handling of things, as well as the explicated or interpreted meanings co-constructed during the interviews. In many instances, the researcher accompanied the food provisioners into their kitchens as they prepared tea for the guest researcher, meaning that observations could be made alongside the interview process.

3.7.2 Observing while interviewing

Data collection also involved observations made in conjunction with the interview process (Halkier, 2017b). These observations included spending time with the participants in their food related environments, engaging in the participants' food related activities and paying close attention to the relevant values, materialities and practical procedures, such as bodily actions, expressions and gesticulations of the participants as they conversed with the researcher, what the family members said to the researcher and each other, their interactions, what type of food was served, the

kitchen and kitchen appliances, and the way the participant worked when the researcher accompanied the food provisioner into the kitchen (see Appendix B for the research observation guide).

The ability to accompany many (15) of my participants to their weekly grocery shopping and conversations as they bought different food products allowed grasping a deeper understanding of their food acquisition processes. The time spent with the participants also allowed me to build a rapport with them such that even after the formal interview was over, we continued to converse as I accompanied them into their kitchens. This happened in most houses that I visited, especially when the host (participant) stepped into the kitchen to prepare tea and snacks for me as the guest, or when they had to finish some pending work in the kitchen. In accordance with Indian cultural values of *Atithi devo bhava* (a guest is akin to God), the researcher was always treated and served like a guest while the provisioner and the family played host. To show my respect and indicate similarity of status (and as expected by the host), I accompanied the food provisioner and joined in with the kitchen activities at that time. While this mostly involved me doing a small chore (that the participant handed to me as a way of being politely inclusive, rather than handing out a large chore that would tire the guest), this part of the visit gave me a close insight about the doings and sayings in food.

The food that was prepared and served at my visit became a conversation topic that often led to elaborations about their food practices in context. Conversations had when having a meal or snack with the provisioner often circled around specific ways and styles of food preparations, and reasons for doing what they did. During many such interactions, the family would join in and the general conversation among family members, as well as with me about food, choices, likes and dislikes, what is healthy and what is not, provided a rich environment for me to immerse in, observe and take notes. Photographs of the food served and the kitchen were taken, with the participants' permission. To maintain research ethics and respect the participants' privacy, the photographs did not include identifiable features of the participants or their family members.

3.8 Data management

The interviews were audio recorded and notes were taken about the specific language used, tone of voice and inflection. I took a developmental approach by

reflecting after each interview and expanding on my field notes about the interview process. This enabled recollection of minor details about the information the participants had shared with me, revealed emergent theory and informed the process for conducting further interviews (Mariam & Julian, 2017). I recorded all my thoughts and feelings related to my sensory, social and communicative experiences, which helped me recreate the experience vividly (Belk et al., 2013). After each interview, I conducted open coding and wrote narrative ethnographic accounts of the field notes. Comparing these notes enriched my understanding and helped to refine the emerging interpretations. In all, 55 pages of field notes and 80 photographs recorded visual observations of the material environment in the house and kitchen, as well as the ways participants described their food-related activities and their interactions with others who participated in the interview. Since the audio files of the interviews involved translation into English wherever the participants used Hindi words, their transcription was outsourced to Flatworld Solutions, an ISO 9001-2008-accredited transcription service company in India (Appendix B(e)). This was done to ensure the authenticity and credibility of the data and objectivity in the resulting transcripts, as well as preventing any contamination with the researcher's own biases. Observation notes and photographs taken at the interview site were saved in digital formats. 630 pages of interview transcripts and 55 pages of researcher notes were printed into hard copies, as well as imported into the researcher's computer where they could be read repeatedly for data immersion.

3.9 Data analysis

Data analysis was an ongoing process, as the researcher immersed herself in listening and re-listening to the audio files as the interviews progressed. Both the interviews and observations enabled an understanding of the participants' narratives and views as their emic perspectives, which were reported using quotations. Greater familiarity with the data after this immersion enabled analysis and synthesis and I was able to filter the data through an etic perspective to reveal novel interpretations (Spiggle, 1994). As recommended by interpretive researchers, the aim was to provide a comprehensive description of the consumption phenomenon by a thematised analysis of emerging patterns (Wills, 2007). Intertextual analysis led to iterative processes of interpretation, comparison, refinement and affirmation of the emergent common themes.

The process of data analysis started early and extended from the making of early, tentative analytical notes during data collection, through the reading and processing of the data material, to the final stages of theoretical discussions. In staying true to the overall aim of keeping an open mind about what food provisioning entailed, the analysis involved a continuous interplay between the empirical findings and a plurality of theoretical considerations. The approach was to engage in reflexive interpretation by deliberately and reflexively using existing ideas as analytical resources to spark interpretive imagination, as opposed to forming unconscious pre-judgements (Alvesson, 2000). Following abductive reasoning allowed progress from the participants' everyday descriptions and meanings to theoretical categories and concepts that formed the basis for understanding and explaining the phenomena in question (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008; (Gummesson, 2005). The abductive logic adopted here allowed reinforcing, refuting or extending theorisation that emerged in the data-collection stage (Timmermans & Tavory, 2012). Throughout the theorisation process, I continued to review the literature on consumption and practice dynamics, social change, consumer identity and ontological security, while I iteratively grouped and regrouped the codes into more abstract themes until theoretical saturation was reached (Alvesson, 2000).

Since the current research adopted a practice theory perspective that focused on the performativity of social processes, the transcripts of the interviews were initially interpreted in light of the working research questions that focused on practice theory empirical concepts of the ways the processes of food provisioning were embarked upon, carried out, reproduced, changed, conflicted and negotiated (Halkier, 2010; Shove et al., 2012; Warde, 2005a). To analyse the data, a three-step systematic coding consisting of open, axial and selective coding was used (Gibbs, 2018). The final categories generated were classified into 3 themes that led to the identification of four different types of food provisioning practices. The preliminary work on the data used ordinary qualitative coding (Neuman, 2014). Inspired by phenomenologists in their concepts of bracketing and setting aside presuppositions about phenomena, open coding of transcripts was carried out by highlighting in different colours sections of text that indicated different doings and sayings in food provisioning (Gibbs, 2018). Highlighted text was also tagged with text notes in the form of codes indicating an analytical summary of what that text represented for the

researcher, such as ‘morning food routine’ or ‘positive/negative food perception (Corbin & Strauss, 2014).

As a second step, I engaged in comparisons and looked for similarities and variance in the data. This involved comparing between the codes of data not only from the transcripts but from the different sources. For example, data collected from interviews were compared with data collected from observations and researcher notes. This allowed detection of any discrepancies between the provisioners’ doings and sayings, which contributed to making practice-related interpretations and theorising (Atkinson & Coffey, 2003). In this process the codes developed were related to other codes so that categories of a higher order emerged, and different dimensions of each emergent category could be described. During the process of developing the dimensions of categories, practice theoretically relevant characteristics of every category were determined and explicated in the code descriptions.

Despite a large number of interviews, all coding and categorising were completed manually. I chose not to use popular programs such as Nvivo because I believed these systems did not take context into account and they were too rigid in the abstraction of the constructs (Ekiz, Khoo-Lattimore, & Memarzadeh, 2012). Additionally, manual data coding was consistent with the interpretive research paradigm, as it enabled working with the data in a language similar to that used by the food provisioners (Burr, 2015). For example, categories such as ‘once-in-a-while’ were constructed, using the participants’ own words.

Once all the text had been read through and codes were gathered together in categories, a large matrix was generated on Microsoft Excel. The participants’ codes (by participation number; P1, P2, P3, etc.) were inscribed horizontally on the matrix and the categories grouped by the researcher were inscribed vertically. Abbreviated versions of the participants’ quotations in relation to the data codes were added in the corresponding columns (See Appendix E (a)). This provided an anatomic framework of the data, permitting systematic (axial)linkages between the categories (Basit, 2003; Gibbs, 2018). At this stage, the transcripts were perused one more time to record any anomalies, sharp contrasts or information that had not been condensed into a textual code. Although it was a lengthy process, such an organisation of data became a key step in identifying the structural properties of the food-provisioning practices. This allowed the further grouping of categories on a meta level based on

the norms, rules, resources, and embodied perceptions influencing food-provisioning practices (Corbin & Strauss, 2014). The resulting linkages within categories were then grouped into sub-practice typologies such as ‘engaging in health-food routines’ and ‘mirroring role identity’.

Selective coding from here allowed the theoretical integration of different categories that have been developed and mutually related during axial coding into the practice theory framework thereby linking them to the theoretical paradigm of ‘meaning’, ‘material’ and ‘competencies’ as elements constituting food provisioning practice (Corbin & Strauss, 2014). A social-psychological discourse analysis was also carried out, in accordance with the praxiography designed for the current study (see Section 3.5.4). Based on the praxiographical conceptualisations of practice-constituting elements and the significant differences in the participants’ descriptions of the ways their practices were organised, typologies of the different kinds of sub-practices in food-provisioning practices were constructed by linking the core categories. This meant aligning the meanings within food provisioning that seemed to go with certain competencies, and the materials that were aligned with certain competencies. The individual repertoires of each provisioner were linked with those of the others, maintaining a sensitivity to not only the language (e.g., use of words and phrases) as in the transcripts but also to the broader socio-cultural patterns (e.g., food provisioners’ belief systems and concepts) identified through the observations and field notes. Appendix E(c) illustrates the working of coding steps taken during data analysis.

Three main themes of maintaining meaning, meeting meaning and extending meaning emerged from groupings of sub-practices. Analysis of these themes in relation to other research in food consumption allowed the researcher to interpret four trajectories of contemporary food provisioning in the middle-class households: traditional, recovered, realigned and novel food provisioning. This type of analysis as shown in Figure 3.5 allowed the exploration of the various critical aspects of food provisioning.

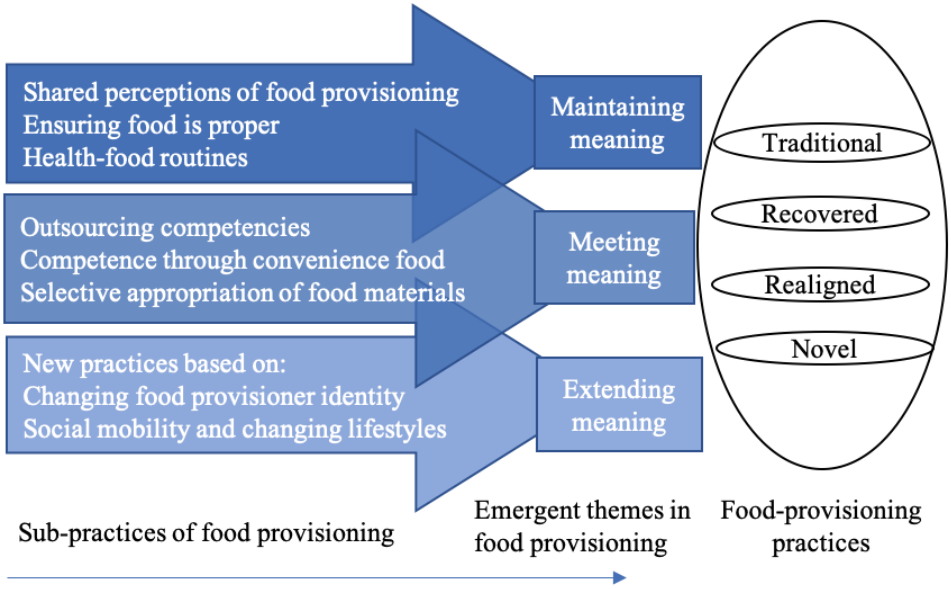

Figure 3.5: A thematic illustration of the data analysis

My analysis continued, identifying themes within the narratives of practices and the observations of food-provisioning activities to a conceptualisation of core concepts until theoretical saturation was reached. Throughout the iterative analytical process of conducting interviews and making comparisons with the literature, I found myself having epiphanies and seeking theoretical frameworks that led back into the loop of testing them. At times, I found myself comparing potential theories with each other, as I went back and forth between specific and abstract ideas, and between parts of the text and the whole research, in what is recommended as a hermeneutic helix fashion (Eriksson, 2016; Gumesson, 2005). Figure 3.6 illustrates the abductive, iterative and interpretive nature of the overall research process, from pre-understanding to findings. In this process, my supervisor encouraged me to find a balance between 'zooming in' to the context of food provisioning and 'zooming out' again (Nicolini, 2017). This resulted in the theoretical understanding of the role of meaning in practice integration and the role of agency in navigating food-provisioning practices.

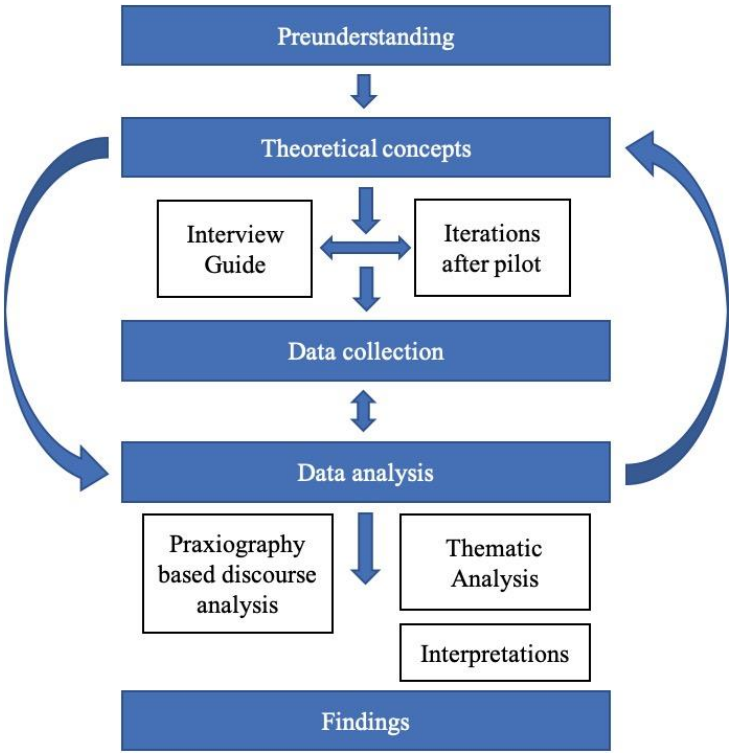

Figure 3.6: The abductive, iterative and interpretive research process
(Source: Adapted from Weckroth, 2018)

3.10 Researcher position, Reflexivity and Authenticity

As noted earlier, this research stemmed from my personal experiences and interests. Further, being a person of Indian origin and a food provisioner positioned me not only in the role of the 'insider' (Berger, 2015) but instead as Taylor's (2011) 'intimate insider' on the basis that the, "researcher is working, at the deepest level, within their own 'backyard'; that is, a contemporary cultural space within which the researcher's personal relationships are deeply embedded in the field; where one's quotidian interactions and performances of identity are made visible; where the researcher has been and remains a key social actor within the field and thus becomes engaged in a process of self-interpretation to some degree; and where the researcher is privy to undocumented historical knowledge of the people and cultural phenomenon being studied" (p.9). The advantages of conducting research from this position have been well documented for quite some time (Bennett, 2003; Berger, 2015, Taylor, 2011).

Apart from the deeper levels of understanding afforded by prior knowledge of the field and the phenomenon under investigation, my familiarity with the

language and culture of the participants enabled being ‘empirically literate (Roseneil, 1993). My own experiences as a food provisioner allowed greater insight into the nuanced reactions of the participants. Additionally, being an Indian female food provisioner myself facilitated the recruitment of participants; the women I asked to share their stories and experiences regarding food were very receptive and cooperative. Belonging to a similar culture facilitated the development of a researcher–respondent relationship that was characterised by trust, collaboration, shared knowledge, and mutuality of purpose, all of which are critical for a meaningful co-interpretation of the phenomenon (Burr, 2015; Manning, 1997).

Being in a position of shared experience equipped me with insights and the ability to understand implied content, sensitising me to certain dimensions of the data. My familiarity with the (cultural) language of food and awareness of potential sensitivities (in relation to certain food items, such as meat) not only helped with what to ask and how to ask it but also to understand the responses in a nuanced and multi-level way. I was able to hear the unsaid (e.g., in front of children and in-laws), decode expressions and gesticulations, probe more efficiently and discern hints that others might miss. This insider knowledge of food and cultural ways of conducting conversations with the participants helped significantly in generating thick, valid and reliable data (Pelzang & Hutchinson, 2017).

While the importance of uncovering tacit and embodied knowledge, words and gestures typical to a culture or group is stressed by many researchers (Halkier & Jensen, 2011), especially in conducting studies in domains of cultural significance, critical assessments have also been made of an ‘insider’ researcher positioning in relation to the objectivity, reflexivity and authenticity of a study (Dwyer & Buckle, 2009) Insiderness coupled with intimate knowledge of the phenomenon makes achieving objectivity difficult and leaves very little room for analytic distance (Taylor 2011). Additionally, since an intimate insider has a strong personal investment in the field, the intensely familiar ways of knowing poses interpretive challenges as well as the potential to insider blindness to the mundane, the everyday and the unobtrusive (Taylor, 2011). Furthermore, the researchers’ connectedness to their culture, and the phenomenon under study, may make them resistant to an unsympathetic critique of it (Taylor, 2011).

While Bennet, (2003) does not contest the usefulness of insider research, he raises questions regarding whether it is one’s cultural proximity alone that results in

the collection of more or perhaps less authoritative data. He also cautions against privileging this position, noting that as an insider one does not automatically escape the problem of knowledge distortion, as insider views will always be multiple and contestable, generating their own epistemological problems due to subject/object relationality (Bennett, 2003). Other scholars have also warned that as a researcher, and indeed as a cultural participant, one can never assume totality in their position as either an insider or as an outsider, given that the boundaries of such positions are always permeable (Naaeke et al., 2011).

During this research, a number of questions and concerns have troubled me. These have mostly been in relation to professional and personal ethical conduct, accountability, the potential for data distortion and my lack of objectivity and possible insider blindness. Right from the start, I knew I was in a relationship with the phenomenon I was investigating (Quinlan, Babin, Carr, Griffin, & Zikmund, 2011) and that my familiarity with the participant behaviour and food culture carried the risks of blurring boundaries, imposing my personal values, beliefs and perceptions, and projecting my biases.

In questioning my position in the research narrative and where I sit in relation to my participants, I came across Pike's (1954) seminal work where he argues for emic and etic as two complementary research perspectives for studying human behaviour society and culture. While the etic researcher with an aim to identify or examine specific or common cultural elements, explores human behaviour from an objective outsider position, the emic researcher is concerned with the particulars of human behaviour within a focussed socio-cultural context (Bergman & Lindgren, 2018). Pike argues that the two emic and etic perspectives complement each other and can assist the researcher in making sense of a deeper cultural story. Additionally, he cautions for achieving balance as too much of an etic perspective can distort a story or even overlook it completely and at the same time and exceedingly emic perspective can result in a biased story.

The notions of emic & etic and insider & outsider helped me articulate an 'in-between' position and be objective in my observation, analysis and interpretation of the food provisioners' accounts in the current study as otherwise 'going native' could impede or unduly influence the research data and analysis (Beals, Kidman, & Funaki, 2020 ; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). According to Taylor (2011), the narrative of the researched and the researcher become entwined when the researcher-self is a part

of the participants' narrative. The researcher should then look both outward and inward, be reflexive and self-conscious in terms of positioning as well as be both self-aware and researcher-self-aware to acknowledge the intertextuality that is a part of both the data gathering and writing processes (Bergman & Lindgren, 2018).

Kralik (2005), argues that reflexivity is a way of engaging in self-reflection about the research process, to enhance one's understanding of the researcher and the researched. It also aims to reflect on issues and experiences that emerge in the research journey to enable the researcher to lessen his or her biases and increase the trustworthiness of the research process (Glesne, 2011). Finlay (2002), states that the goal of reflexivity depends on the nature of the methodological aims and the exercise being carried out in the research process.

Thus, for me, reflexivity meant balancing my insider and outsider perspectives, to provide possible explanations that could justify my own concerns and issues, and to become aware of my 'blind spot' in interpreting the data, to enable me to capture the full 'stories' of the researched. Reflexivity became an integral part of my research journey for understanding my own researcher self and the insider-ness within the research process. In order to maintain a reflexive lens before, during and after the research process (Atkins, 2004; Berger, 2015; (Eriksson, 2016).), several techniques have been adopted especially through following the three types of reflection by Schön (1983).

1. **Reflection on action**:

   I remained cautious throughout the study and wherever possible downplayed my insider status while maintaining cultural sensitivity. For example, when visiting participants' homes for interviews, I dressed in Western semi-formal attire and carried my tools (pen, notepad, cell phone and audio recorder) in an office bag, to create a stark difference in persona from the participants'. I believe this helped to mitigate some of the adverse effects of being perceived as an insider.

   Unlearning the familiar was a process that took some practice but was not impossible. The most difficult part is identifying that which is taken for granted, and in the case of my research, only began to appear distinct and unique to me part way though interviewing myself. The processes and practices for my food provisioning were so 'natural' to me that they had almost become invisible. As part of engaging in self-critique and reflexivity

I formally interviewed myself and video recorded the whole process. Asking and answering the interview questions in a formal, thinking aloud manner allowed me to gain some distance from the familiar processes of food provisioning and learn the reasoning behind the seemingly natural ways of my own behaviour. It was a process of looking 'inward' to the self – self-objectification – that allowed me to see 'inside' the process and culture more clearly. Choosing to see myself, my social actions, interactions, and performances as part of the phenomena under investigation and not as someone distinct from it, grounded me in the field, which in turn magnified my interactions with my participants and made it possible to observe and critique the seemingly mundane, thus assisting to relieve any insider myopia. I also recorded myself conducting a pilot interview and analysed my actions, body language, tone and style of structuring interview questions. This allowed me to understand and work on my data collection technique. For example, in the pilot video I tended to strongly agree (both vocally and through body language) when the interviewee said something that matched my own understanding of food provisioning. On reflection, I learned how to control this behaviour and be more neutral in my interview engagements. In interviews I was constantly alert to, and rigorously reflected on, the way my presence was shaping the conversation, curbing my desire to share my own experiences with the participants, wanting to learn more about *their* experiences. I probed when an assumption of the researcher's familiarity led the participants to withhold information or not completely verbalise a thought, thinking those details would be obvious to me. After completing an interview, I recorded similarities and differences in my own and my participants' experiences. This allowed me to acknowledge and discern between varying food practices.

2. **Reflection in action**: According to Taylor (2011), when the self is so inextricably tied to one's informants and field of inquiry, the process of intimate insider research then involves a degree of, autoethnography. This was achieved through engaging in an autobiographic narrative during the study to record my personal influences and emotions in response to the study context and elucidate the processes that created meaning and knowledge in food provisioning. This introspective exercise enabled reflecting on my own

experiences and facilitated theorisation (Noble & McIlveen, 2012). Using an 'imaginary friend' whom I interacted with about several concerns during the research process, and more so during data collection. Much of these were relating to uncomfortable or confused feelings. There is an example of a reflection written after a participant interview.

"*Today I interviewed Rima. She seemed very confused with her role and responsibilities as a food provisioner. I am finding it hard to understand her practices. It was as though she was guilty of some of her actions and at the same time very content about being able to manage well her busy work and personal life schedules and feeding her daughter healthy food. She feels less than her own mother but also defends her own situation as different to her mother. I hope my questions didn't bring those feelings of inadequacy and confusion in her."*

Thus, maintaining trustworthiness in this research involved several factors of conscious caretaking. The auto ethnographical notes during the research journey and after each interview helped me polish my process and ensure a rapport was established between me and the food provisioner. Such an action facilitated interactive discussions and in-depth dialogues about the provisioners' experiences, concerns, and tensions in relation to food, without them feeling embarrassed or judged. To present my argument about the level of transferability of this study, I applied Lincoln and Guba's (1985) interpretive research criteria to assess the trustworthiness of my research by focusing on credibility in terms of the acceptable representations of my findings and dependability in terms of the consistency of the narratives in context.

Reflection through action: This related to deliberate and intentional thinking and actions that I needed to be aware of and undertake when I analysed and generated emergent findings from the data. This kind of reflection was undertaken to diminish the effects of researcher bias in the course of generating findings as well as to ensure data reliability and confirm the trustworthiness of this research. For example, an independent coder, not part of the research team, was requested to scrutinise three of the transcripts. The coder's different cultural orientation was an added advantage, as she

meticulously questioned each coded construct to ensure it had been interpreted accurately, with evidence found in the scripts. This continuous comparative method of analysis forced me to return to the data repeatedly, thereby adding rigour to the coding process (Ekiz et al., 2012; Corbin & Strauss, 2014).

Triangulation across methods was achieved by comparing different types of data for corroboration. Using multiple methods of data collection like audio files of interviews, transcripts, field notes and photographs, enabled a comparison of the data and added new insights. For example, I initially analysed the textual data pertaining to a specific participant and then scrutinised my auto-ethnographical and observation notes and photographs for a specific theme. Such purposeful comparisons allowed identifying consistencies or inconsistencies in the participants' notions and enabled new insights. Additionally, triangulation of qualitative coding-based analysis and the praxiographical analysis of data enabled the crystallisation of the role of meaning and agency in practice dynamics.

3. **Peer-dialogue**: During this research, I like Adam (2013), used the 'thinking aloud' approach with my doctoral colleagues, supervisors, as well as with my work colleagues. Thinking aloud is a way of sharing information like participants' practices and emergent findings with others, as well as with oneself as that enables to listen to one's own thoughts. I also learnt that using the 'think aloud' method with my supervisors often made me more aware of my inner thoughts about the inside-outsider 'divide'. Coghlan and Brannick (2005) acknowledged this to balance insider-outsider knowledge in doctoral candidates' research, in order to bring the two perspectives (insider-outsider) together in one dialogue.
4. **Bracketing**: In my 'in-between' status, I used 'bracketing', which means suspending any preconceived ideas of the world and the reality of food provisioning and know it from the participant's perspectives (Berger, 2015; Neuman, 2014). Being an insider to the research process, the familiarity with the phenomenon tends to render so many of one's observations banal, especially during data collection. Along with that is the related problem of retracting and unpacking what have become almost "second nature" understandings. To lessen one's myopia, Ohnuki-Tierney (1984) proposes

> that the researcher must find a way to create sufficient distance, including intellectual, physical, and emotional distance between themselves and their culture. Such distancing according to her is not only required to bring clarity to the research endeavour but also helps in refreshing one's perspective.
>
> In my own case, while all the kinds of distancing referred to above have not been possible, given that I could not disengage with being a food provisioner for my family. However, living in New Zealand for the last decade and engaging in food-provisioning practices at a distance from the Indian socio-cultural environment for a considerable number of years provided me with a 'halfie' status as an 'indigenous outsider' and some distance from the cultural environment and field of practice (Pelzang & Hutchinson, 2017, p. 4). This, I believe has helped to achieve clarity of vision that aligns with Bennett's (2003) perspective. In his review of the uses of insider knowledge, he proposes the necessary '"unlearning", or at least the objectification, of those "taken for granted" attitudes and values', a process that he suggests will 'play a role in effecting a distance between the researcher and the researched.

In conducting this research and writing this thesis, I achieved reflexivity in several other ways. For example, I reflected on the way the theoretical and empirical approach related to other approaches in consumption studies and to the overall socio-normative cultural context of the research and the topic of food provisioning. I reflected on the data-production processes adopted, to ensure I had an open-minded approach to the nature of food provisioning and food consumption. I stayed true to both the empirical material and the process of interpretation, aiming to present the analyses as plausibly as possible. At the end of the process, I reflected on the theoretical and empirical learnings drawn from the research (Manning, 1997).

A systematic strategy that I found to be useful in terms of dealing with concerns around informed consent, anonymity, confidentiality, exposure and insider blindness in the challenging and at times, rather confronting, ethical contexts of 'intimate insider' research has been to offer my participants the opportunity to review their transcripts, allowing them to add or to revoke anything that has been said in the interview context, and to view my written work in which they are cited and interpreted prior to submission. Two member checks were performed by sharing with two of the participants their transcripts, as well as a short summary of what I thought were critical factors in them. They both affirmed that the information was

representative of their experiences as food provisioners. In maintaining reflexivity, the focus was not on my insider or outsider status but on the ability to be open, authentic, honest, deeply interested in the experiences of the research participants and committed to adequately and credibly representing their experiences (Berger, 2015)

In researching a specific context of consumption for a defined consumer group, the goal of this study was not to be able to make generalisations strictly in relation to its findings. Despite the data in the current study being collected from individual food provisioners, the focus was to use the data only as a means of identifying the general features of the practice of everyday food provisioning. In accordance with the practice theory opposition to 'methodological individualism', the focus was not on categorising individual consumers based on their personal or social attributes but rather, on the way they engaged with the performance of the practices: in Halkier and Jensen's (2011) words, 'on the patterns in the enacted social processes, rather than the patterns of the individual person (or the patterns of determining structures for that matter)' (p. 113). Thus, the current study did not aim to make statistical generalisations based on its findings. Instead, it aimed to enable analytical generalisations based on theorised claims about practice categories and dynamics of material (Halkier, 2010; Halkier & Jensen, 2011). Further, the generalisations in this study have referred to the potential general applicability of a theoretical account for understanding related behaviour in other contexts (Belk & Sobh, 2019).Therefore, the theoretical contributions of this study may be useful in other studies of social change related to consumption or other domains of social life.

3.11 Ethical and practical considerations

A discussion of the ethics of this research is critical. As noted earlier, research and data gathered in relation to this study was approved by Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee. The participants' identities were protected by giving them pseudonyms. Informed consent for conducting the interviews and observations, and taking photographs as a researcher, was obtained via their signatures on the participant consent forms (see Appendix B (c)). My identity as a researcher was fully disclosed when I officially began participant recruitment by placing an invitation on Facebook.

For many of the participants, this was the first time they had been involved in a qualitative study and despite the detailed participant information sheet they had been given, they were not sure of the process the researcher was going to follow. This led to some hesitation when I asked for their consent to record the interviews. However, in all such cases, after a few minutes of general conversation, the respondents became comfortable and started enjoying talking about their food-provisioning practices. In later interviews, I routinely engaged in general conversation for the first half hour or so and then informed the participants that the interview would be an extension of the conversation, with the recorder switched on. They were very comfortable with this approach. I also found the projective-technique task of word association a good way to break the ice with my participants, as it enabled me to start a conversation and make them feel comfortable with me. At the end of the interviews, I told them how I would store the recordings, explaining that after the conclusion of the research, all recordings would be deleted. The confidentiality and privacy of interviewees were respected throughout the process and continues to be maintained after the conclusion of the thesis.

3.12 Summary

This chapter has discussed the methods undertaken for this research, beginning with a justification for the constructionist philosophical paradigm taken and then considering practice theory methodological issues in investigating routine food provisioning, as well as ways of ensuring the trustworthiness and credibility of the data interpretation. The chapter has explained the process for emergent theorising, which links to Chapters 4 and 5, where my findings and conceptual developments are presented with support from the participants' emic perspectives.

Chapter 4: Findings Theme 1

4.1 Introduction

In Chapters 1 and 2, I explained how the changing economic and social structures in India are disrupting food consumption. The ensuing conflicts and tensions, especially within a middle-class consumer culture call for further investigation through a practice theoretical focus on food provisioning. In Chapter 3, I reviewed the praxiography of this study. There are many levels and interrelationships involved in food provisioning that facilitate its performance. In light of the focal aim of exploring how Indian middle-class consumers, in a transitioning consumptionscape, configure their food-provisioning practices and how they manage disruptions, if any, in their food provisioning to regain a sense of security, the current study looked at exploring answers for the following sub-questions:

1. *How is everyday food provisioning carried out in Indian middle-class households?*
2. *What dominant and persistent practices are continually reproduced in everyday food provisioning?*
3. *What conflicts and concerns, if any, are disrupting the organisation of everyday food-provisioning practices?*
4. *How are normative contestations of everyday food provisioning negotiated?*

I studied food provisioning at the site of the chosen households, using ethnography based qualitative means to better understand food provisioners' 'sayings' and 'doings' in their food practices and the integration of practice-constituting elements; meanings, materials and competencies (Schatzki, 2002, p 240). The findings of this study are presented in the following two Chapters 4 and 5. Thematic analysis of data led to the identification of various sub-practices and three themes emerged which indicate that food provisioners' practices are aligned towards (1) Maintaining meaning, (2) Meeting meaning and (3) Extending meaning, as depicted in Figure 4.1. These themes are interconnected and together they suggest that contemporary food provisioning in middle-class households in India continues to be influenced by cultural scripts. Analysis of findings in this Chapter 4 examines how symbolic and

instrumental meanings in specific food-provisioning practices are maintained. However, in the next chapter, Chapter 5, I present findings that show how contemporary food provisioning is also wrought with tensions, conflicts and paradoxes. The analytical focus in Chapter 5 is therefore on the way normative contestations and disruptions are overcome through changes in the performance of food-provisioning practices.[17] I unravel how realignments of disrupted practices includes strategic altering of materials and competencies in practices to meet the meanings held in food provisioning. The next chapter also uncovers how socio-cultural changes influence food provisioners' self-identity and extends their understanding of as well as of food provisioning to include new practices and ways of food consumption. All of these practices of food provisioning represent the enactments of several participants and the provisioning practices vary according to the contexts and situations of their everyday lives. Quotations from the interview transcripts demonstrate the participants' engagement in food provisioning as both a practice of daily routine requiring little reflexivity and, in some contexts,, especially health, deliberately expressing agency or intention. Participants' sayings and doings in food provisioning, as well as the researchers' observations are interpreted and analysed in relation to the corresponding meanings, materials and competencies as practice-integrating elements. The analytical basis of each of these three themes in food provisioning is the configuration of the performance and entity aspects of food-provisioning practices. Taken together, they support the research aim of understanding contemporary food-provisioning practices in the selected group of middle-income Indian households. Both parts of this chapter are structured around the research questions identified for this study. Chapter 4 considers Research Questions 1, 2 and Chapter 5 considers Research Questions 3 and 4, as stated above in this chapter.

[17] Here, comparisons are drawn in relation to what is understood as ideal/traditional food provisioning, based on secondary sources of literature as well as the participants' accounts of changes observed since their own childhood.

The chapter begins with an overall analysis of the data indicating shared aspects of food provisioning in terms of meanings understood, food materials used, and actions and processes followed in the preparation, cooking, serving and storing of the food. This is followed by an analysis in terms of four typologies of sub-practices that are illustrative of the way the performance of a practice ensures that the held meaning is maintained.

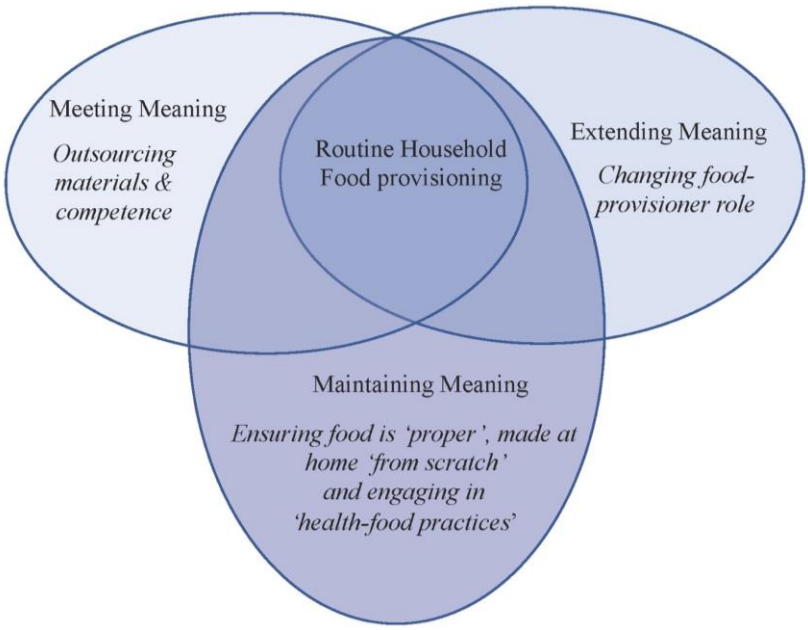

Figure 4.1: An illustration of the three themes in food-provisioning practices

4.2 Shared perceptions of food provisioning

Social practices provide scripts that define the set of materials, competences and meanings that constitute food provisioning (Shove & Pantzar, 2005; Schatzki, 1996). In my conversations with the food provisioners, there was widespread agreement about ideal or positive foods that contribute to health. Almost all participants agreed that food that was 'good' for their health included regular Indian foods such as wholemeal flour-based 'chapatis' or 'rotis' [flat breads],'chawal' [rice], 'daal' (lentil soup), 'subzi'[stir-fried/steamed vegetables], 'doodh'[milk], 'dahi' [yoghurt or curd], 'ghee' [clarified butter] and a whole host of spices, herbs and natural foods. There was general agreement about preparation methods that were seen as being bad for health, including deep frying and/or use of too much oil in food preparation, over-cooking foods, adding too many spices to meals and using food materials that were processed or contained preservatives. Respondents' descriptions

of their food-related behaviours were based on their unique cultural framework. Many of their sayings were based on beliefs preserved from food value systems commonly found in India. For example, Babita's description, *'Three types of foods are there. One gives positive energy – that is sattvic food – and tamasic food is there and there are neutral foods also'* aligned with Ayurvedic guidelines used to describe and evaluate foods and their effects on a person's mind, behaviour and health. Most participants mentioned that 'maida' [refined flour] was an unhealthy food ingredient, associated with non-Indian foods such as bread, pizza, pasta, noodles and 'junk' foods.

The interviews all began with a general, open-ended question, such as, 'Tell me about your daily routine'. Almost all the participants used a matter-of-fact tone and gestures in describing their routines, without needing to think about or rationalise their practices or sayings. The 'why' questions were responded to with varying degrees of reflexivity. However, a common observation was that the provisioners perceived their role and responsibility as taking care, especially through food, of the physical health of their family members. Additionally, both stay-at-home and working mothers as food provisioners were eager to cater to the food preferences of the children in the household; Rohini said, *'In my house, the complete food decision is by my children.'*

4.3 Theme 1: Maintaining meaning in food provisioning

While many studies have noted the recent changes in food-consumption trends in India (Bruckert, 2015; Dittrich, 2009; Donner, 2008, 2011; Eckhardt & Mahi, 2004, 2012), findings of the current study indicate that many of the routine household food-provisioning practices were reproduced in ways similar to how they have traditionally been. For example, households in the current study continued to follow the daily four-meal pattern, an old tradition in Indian households (Ananthanarayan, Dubey, Muley, & Singhal, 2019; Vepa, 2004). The participants' sayings and practices indicated the efforts they were taking to ensure food provisioning and consumption in their households was performed in ways consistent with tradition. Based on practice theory elements, the data identified the following four sub-practices that were performed in maintaining the meaning in food provisioning (as illustrated in Figure 4.2): (1) ensuring food is proper, (2) cooking from scratch, (3) engaging in health-based food practices and (4) revival of

traditional practices. The stability, reproduction and revival of these practices was analysed in terms of the way 'meaning', as an element of practice in food provisioning, was being maintained within the perceived ideal typology of Indian food-provisioning practice. The following sections detail these practices in relation to the findings from the current study.

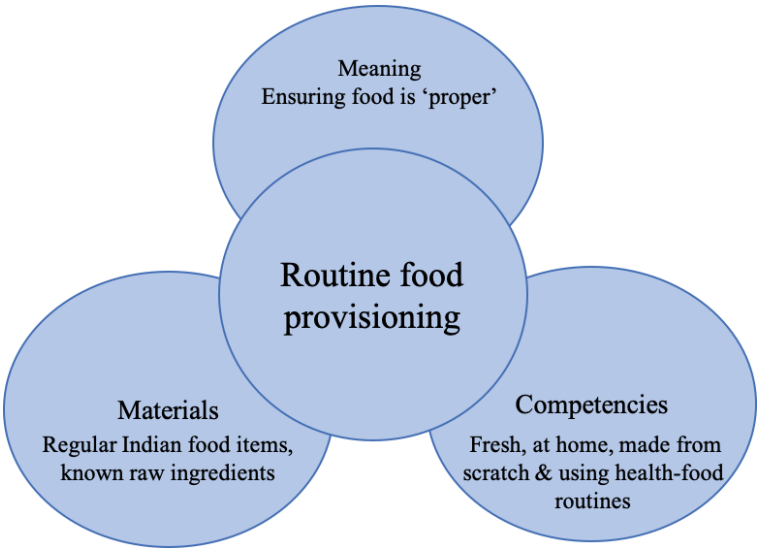

Figure 4.2: A thematic representation of meaning in food provisioning is maintained by embodied understandings of materials and competencies

4.3.1 Ensuring food is 'proper'

When referring to day-to-day meals, the participants used terms such as 'routine', 'normal', 'simple' and 'proper' to describe a meal consisting mainly of daal, subzi, and roti along with yoghurt and salads. Data from photographs as presented below in Figure 4.3 depict a routine Indian meal. This practice of having a routine meal,[18] especially at lunchtime, is unique to India (G. Chapman & Maclean, 1993; P. Chapman, 2009), contrasting with many Western countries where lunch is a quick meal, often comprising of café-bought food such as sandwiches (Halkier, 2010). As the following quotations show, the word 'proper' was a recurrent theme in the data:

> *(Vaishali): Actually, we like to have it …. We have been eating the same style of meal since we were kids. Actually, it can be said that it is our staple food.*

[18] Hereafter, all references to a 'regular meal' should be understood as meaning a meal composed of varying combinations of daal, subzi, roti, milk curds and salads.

Daal, roti, subzi. salad, sometimes there is curd also …. Lunch is always proper.

(Babita): In the afternoon, I have proper lunch. I have chapatti, daal and subzi.

(Sona): He [referring to her child] has a proper lunch. daal, subzi, roti, and rice. Whatever has been prepared at home.

(Rani): If I have bread, I cannot consider it as breakfast. So I don't have it. I like wheat chapatti, sabzi and some tea. … and it is the same for my father-in-law. He also likes a full proper meal.

Figure 4.3: Photographs of meals photographed during visits to participants' houses

The confident, assertive tone used by these participants, as well as their words, show that the type of food consumed at mealtimes, especially at lunch, is critical and by default, follows an 'ought-to-be-like-this' pattern. It portrays the imperative and normative nature of the meal and the participants used the word 'proper' to justify the food items prepared at lunchtime. Although there are regional variations in foods consumed on a day-to-day basis, the general belief that routinely consumed traditional and 'proper' food is healthy and best is common across the country (Bruckert, 2015; P. Chapman, 2009). In almost all the households in the current study, lunch consisted of variable combinations of roti, daal, subzi, rice, salad and yoghurt.

The significance of the term 'proper food' has been recorded and documented regularly in the literature (Carrigan & Szmigin, 2006; Marshall, 2005; Warde, 1997). Most of the participants in the current study explained, with great pride, the efforts they made to provide proper meals to their families, using an assertive tone and words with positive and moral connotations. For example, in the following quotation, Manisha used words such as 'full' and 'everything' to show she

did not take any short cuts in her food preparation and she made roti for her mother and children even though she did not eat it herself:

> *(Manisha): We have full meals. My mother takes roti, sabzi, rice, daal, everything. I eat only rice, curry and subzi. I give the same to the children when they come back from school.*

> *(Kritu): It is like my husband has a choice. He needs everything in place and he needs … daal, two subzi dishes, then some pickle and papad [poppadums] and everything he needs. So, that is his proper dinner. Since once in a day he eats at home, he needs it properly. Even my father-in-law needs a proper dinner.*

Similarly, in the quotation above, Kritu illustrated the affective need of a food provisioner to meet the choices and demands of their family members' food preferences. The current study agrees with the argument of Arsel and Bean (2012), that the reproduction or stability of a practice is not solely attributed to its dispositional aspects. Instead, as seen in the quotations above, performances in food-provisioning practices are integrated in ways that allow consumers to relate emotionally to their social world.

According to Shove et al. (2012), practices remain stable when they are performed by faithful cohorts of committed carriers. In the current study, participation in the practice of proper food provisioning was not just voluntary, but also expected and in fact, required of food provisioners. The following quotations from participants illustrate the way the schools and educational institutions prescribed the provision of traditional food items as good and healthy practices. Notably, although the participants spoke about the schools being very strict about the kind of food the children could carry in their lunch boxes, their tone indicated a degree of pride in their children attending schools that upheld the ideal meaning of good eating. As Anita and others said:

> *(Anita): At school it is compulsory to get roti and subzi. You cannot bring anything else. Even ketchup they will not allow.*

> *(Kritu): She [referring to her daughter] needs to take the tiffin and she has to carry chapatti and subzi … it is compulsory in school.*

(Nirmal): If [he is] not well and [I] give him bread-butter in the tiffin, they will immediately send you a notice. Even they prefer that you send healthy food for them.

According to Shove et al. (2012), recruitment to the practice follows as a matter of course in situations where performance of the practice is regulated by educational institutions through a specificity on food materials. The data indicated that it was common practice to carry a proper lunch to work as well. As can be seen from the coded section 'packed lunches' in Appendix E (b), as well as in photographs presented in Figure 4.4, most food provisioners in the current study spoke about packing a lunch box for their spouse and/or themselves that consisted of a meal made up of varying combinations of the aforementioned 'proper' food items. For example, Rohini said in her household:

We start the kitchen work quickly, as we have to make tiffin and prep for lunch. Monday to Thursday we have a strict routine. Roti-subzi, poori-subzi, paratha-subzi [different flat/fried bread and cooked vegetables]. Any of these three.

Figure 4.4: Photographs of lunch meals carried to work

The coming together of households, schools and workplaces as seen above forms 'communities of practice' where groups of people are informally bonded together by shared understandings and passion for proper food provisioning. Shove et al. (2012) explained that when certain practices are widespread within any one group or society, the chances of encountering them increase, thus making the practice widespread and easily diffused in the society. As mentioned previously in

Chapter 3, Spurling et al. (2013, p. 8) warn that practitioners'[19] discursive accounts of their performance of a practice is merely the, 'tip of the iceberg.' They said it was essential to focus on the submerged, tacit and embodied meaning which, although the practitioner was not able to formulate discursively, was being applied in the enactment of the practice. Practical understandings (a form of embodied tacit knowledge) are shared ways of knowing 'how to go on' and are accessible for study by both the practitioner as well as the knowledgeable observer (Schatzki, 2002). In this current study, the participants indicated their discursive and practical understandings with regard to the provisioning of 'proper' meals at home, school and work, describing them with words such as 'regular', 'routine' or 'simple'. In doing so, their emphasis was on traditionally Indian types of food (Sarkar, Kumar, Dhumal, Panigrahi, & Choudhary, 2015).

As a concept associated with habits, tradition can be described as an established practice that is transferred from one generation to the next. In their proposal of a four-dimensional system to define traditional food, (Amilien & Hegnes, 2013, p. 3458) emphasised the 'dimension of meaning' as a relevant cultural concept in understanding the dynamics of traditional food that is set within a meaningful historical context.[20] They noted that an understanding of traditional food is first, associated at an individual and practical level, based on local history, family identity and home environment, where traditional food acquires its meaning from the repeated interplay between individuals and food products. Second, meaning is formed at a collective level, where traditional food is directly related to romanticised national history associated with common myths, financial interests and political identity.

In the current study the participants' practical understandings in associating traditional foods with being proper foods seemed to be based not only on their individual and collective meanings but also on a scientific understanding:

> (*Babita): Indian thali [the combined serving of roti, daal, subzi, and so on, on a platter] is ... the most balanced [meal] in the whole world, because it has everything in it. If you actually notice, we have carbs, proteins, vitamins.*

[19] In this case, food provisioners.

[20] The purpose is to separate the historical meaning of 'traditional' from the embodied meaning. Thus, in this study, although some food items mentioned by participants were not historically traditional to the regions from which the participants came, the meaning as understood by the practitioners was embodied within their food practices.

We add curd, which is a probiotic that we were talking about. Pickles are also probiotic; people are not even aware that it's the best source of probiotic bacteria. There is also salad. So I think it is an absolute complete meal. Then on the top, we have papad [poppadum], which is an appetizer. So I think Indian thali, a traditional or a normal [meal], is the best thing in the whole world. Nothing compares to it.

While discursive understandings of food-provisioning practices included both the taken-for-granted nature as well as their health-benefitting and nutritional qualities, the casualness with which food practitioners describe their provisioning indicates that reproduction of the practice requires no reflexivity. Practitioner Vaishali's comment sums up this analysis well:

(Vaishali): As I said, it is a mindset that you have to eat this, so we do not think about the nutritional value, because you know that there is nutritional value in the staple food that we eat.

It is clear that for these participants, traditional Indian food was considered the best combination for the health benefits and nutritional quality of the food. The non-reflexive and relatively fixed inclusion of the various food materials can be termed 'obdurate materiality' integrating this practice (Phipps & Ozanne, 2017, p. 366; Shove et al., 2012, p. 47), which facilitates the stability of the provisioning practices. The above quotation indicates that the habits formed with regard to consuming the usual types of Indian meals[21] lead to good health by default and no further reflection about nutrition is required. This establishes the deep-seated belief in the traditional Indian food system, with the provisioners' knowledge and understanding of their routine meals 'preserving discourse' towards the maintenance of the recipes, ingredients and meal constituents within their food-provisioning practices (Amilien & Hegnes, 2013, p. 3461).

4.3.2 Cooking at home (fresh and from scratch)

While the previous section discussed the 'what' of food provisioning (its materiality), this section deals with the competency-related 'how' aspects of the practice. The data indicated that the understanding of a proper meal was inextricably connected to it being cooked at home, fresh and from scratch. Although an analysis

[21] As opposed to the elaborate dishes prepared during festivities and celebrations.

of how the performance of proper food provisioning is negotiated is presented later in the findings, this section focuses on the ways prescriptions related to cooking were linked with the stability of this food-provisioning practice.

Food provisioners in this study associated this practice of cooking at home with the provisioning of routine Indian meals without using semi-prepared food materials, leftovers or modern appliances for cooking, reheating and storing food. While many studies have reported constraints of time as being a barrier to this 'cooking from scratch' (Bugge & Almås, 2006; Carrigan et al., 2006; Halkier, 2009; Moisio et al., 2004), these participants presented it as a taken-for-granted activity, not worth any extra attention or questioning:

> *(Babita): Mostly whatever we are cooking is Indian food, and that we prepare anyhow from scratch. … Like we buy wheat, grind [it] into flour, and from that, roti is prepared on a daily basis. Everything is from scratch only.*

The emphasis on the freshness of food, as another aspect closely linked to cooking from scratch, was so ubiquitous that in all the 31 coded interviews, 'fresh' (fresh, freshness, freshly) was mentioned almost 140 times in various contexts. The participants used different ways to manage the freshness of food. For example, in the quotations below, Unnati and Priya explained that by not consuming leftovers, they were maintaining the consumption of fresh food in their households:

> *(Unnati): We don't keep anything left over for dinner …. And I make only limited wheat flatbread (roti). In case I fall short in quantity, I make rice rotis; it is quick to make. We don't keep leftover atta [dough]. I use it and finish it. No leftovers from the morning [are] used in the evening.*

> *(Priya): Everything is from scratch …. Every day we drink soup in the evening … . It is all cooked fresh. I don't eat in the evening something that is cooked in the morning; I don't touch it. Even if I have to throw it [away], I throw it [away], I don't care.*

Reheating was understood to cause fresh food to lose its quality, healthiness and taste:

> *(Unnati): A food which is freshly cooked and another food which has been reheated three or four times is different. Somewhere, it is not good with*

respect to hygiene or health. Sometimes it tastes stale, so your effort is also wasted; it is better to make less.

This style of food-provisioning practice is mainly based on the meanings held in the Hindu world view, as formulated through Ayurvedic principles of healthy eating (Payyappallimana & Venkatasubramanian, 2016). The unique cultural prescriptions of Ayurveda include guidelines about the appropriateness of food and its therapeutic quality according to the person's body and mental constitution, food safety, processing style, and time and place. Babita articulated this understanding of Ayurvedic principles as follows:

I would say cooking from scratch is always better because firstly, there wouldn't be any waste of food as we can limit the cooking. Then, freshly prepared food always has an impact on health because if you consume a cooked food after one to one-and-a-half hours, then it starts developing an inertia. Food itself has an inertia in it, and when you consume that kind of a food like even the frozen one, or maybe you are eating after a day – like today you cook and tomorrow you will eat – so that is not going to benefit your body. Some kind of inertia will be there in that food. So it is going to impact your body. It's not a visible impact, but it's a known fact.

Food-provisioning practices are strongly linked with cultural prescriptions around food consumption. Ayurvedic guidelines about cooking and eating state the importance of maintaining a strong agni (digestive fire) by consuming freshly cooked, warm foods. Cold foods, such as leftovers and frozen foods, are believed to erode this digestive fire (Guha, 2006). Reheating food is thought to make it lose its life force or nutrient value. Taboos placed on refrigeration and reheating are based on cultural texts prescribing the length of time for which food should be stored. In this research, conversations about the refrigeration and reheating of leftovers evoked considerable criticism. Many participants believed that refrigerators and freezers gave rise to negative health consequences in food. While nearly all of them had refrigerators with freezers, most of the freezers observed/photographed in the course of data collection were largely empty or used to keep peas, pulses and flours fresh in the hotter months, as presented in Figure 4.5. Vaishali and Unnati explicitly mentioned these issues:

(Vaishali): We do not need to use the freezer. We do not use frozen foods … except for stuff like peas for the year round, also which we cook (to preserve) at home.

(Unnati): Nowadays, some people deep freeze [cooked] food for eight days. I know many people who do it. When the maid comes, she tells me that she kneaded dough for a neighbour [that had been stored, frozen, for eight days]. I would wonder how they would use the same dough for eight days! My maid would say that the lady does not have the time during weekdays. I wonder what is the use of earning money this way?

Figure 4.5: Refrigerators and freezers photographed as part of data collection

Further, food bought in a package from the market was undesirable because it was believed to accumulate bad substances or cause inertia and imbalance [hormonal] in the body. Participants such as Babita articulated their disapproval of processed foods by combining their knowledge of traditional prescriptions with day-to-day common scientific knowledge:

Even packaged foods have been through some process. That's the reason for its longer shelf life. The processing is part cooking, not raw, and when you

eat it, imagine the inertia and how it affects your body, which you yourself are not aware of. So, I always prefer that I stick to our normal stuff. That's much better.

Cultural codifications associated with the purity of home-made food can entail a feeling of 'neophobia', whereby outside food, thought of as being 'impure', is symbolically unacceptable and perceived as a potential danger (Osella & Osella, 2008, p. 192). Some participants noted that making home-made food safeguarded them against the threats of health and hygiene, as well as ensuring taste, freshness and quality:

(Nirmal): Instead of wheat Cerelac [a branded baby food], I would make him gehu ka seera [sweet made with whole-wheat flour and clarified butter] or gehu ki raab [sweet wheat flour porridge]. And instead of rice Cerelac, I used to grind rice, boil it, add milk and give it to him. So I have given him home-made things and not pack[ag]ed food.

(Unnati): For example, garlic-ginger paste can be made at home too. In ready-made paste, they must be surely adding preservatives. It is not possible to store without using it. So, I prefer to make fresh at home. It does not take much time. … I feel I should cook at home whatever I can.

For choice ordering projective-technique tasks conducted in the interview about participants' preferences for yoghurt and snacks (see Appendix D (a & b)), almost unanimously all participants chose the home-made option as their first choice. Like Kritu's quotation below, many participants indicated that only in situations when they fell short of home-made yoghurt or needed it urgently for guests would they opt to buy from a local dairy. Notably the common reason cited for not purchasing branded, packaged or yoghurt/snack with added health value (such as probiotic) was the negative perception of additives in packaged foods. As Kritu said:

(Kritu): For me it [yoghurt] is home-made first, if not then the dairy, if not the dairy then we go for Gowardhan [a local brand]. Amul we don't prefer much.

(Interviewer): Why not probiotic?

(Kritu): Because I really feel that if it is already processed, then there is some kind of tampering done to it, it is not natural, then why go for it.

Since home-made food and cooking from scratch embrace many aspects of what is considered appropriate cooking conduct, it involves a multitude of prescriptions (Bugge & Almås, 2006; Plessz et al., 2016) related to the healthiness of food and the normative roles and responsibilities of being an 'ideal' food provisioner who is capable and in control of the household cooking and eating (Halkier, 2010; MacDonald et al., 2018). Manisha's use of the word 'should' in the quotation below is indicative of the role-related prescriptions around providing children with freshly cooked food, rather than packaged food:

I don't see the need to buy pack[ag]ed food, when we can get fresh vegetables at our doorstep daily. It is a healthier option to make soup from fresh vegetables rather than opting for pack[ag]ed. Until we are unable to do it, we should give [children] fresh food.

For these provisioners, there was pride associated with making food at home as it was not only an act of caring for others but also the competencies around preparing meals at home was an act of positioning oneself as the 'ideal' food provisioner. The ability to make a range of fresh food at home was an important part of the symbolic production of socially and culturally acceptable food-provisioner subject positions (Bugge & Almås, 2006). Both Unnati and Neeta showed pride in the following statements:

(Unnati)*:* In my house, eating outside is a rare event. There is hardly anything that I don't cook at home. I feel comfortable doing so … I make everything. If they want typical Marwadi [regional] food, I cook that too. For example, we make gulab jamun sabzi [perceived to be a difficult recipe] ... I make that too. Whatever they like to have, I make it.

(Neeta): I arrange kitties [a social gathering of women in the afternoon where the host provides food and entertainment]; we are 20 members. I make all of it at home myself. I don't buy anything from out. Also, I wake up early in the morning and finish cooking the food by 12; I don't make anything the day earlier.

Since food-provisioning practices can refer simultaneously to more than one prescription, the link that connects a particular practice and one or more prescriptions is socially constructed and proceeds based on the contributions of a variety of agents, such as normative guidelines, social and healthcare experts and the media. Plessz et al. (2016) noted that a mother's opinion about these practices remains more stable than other expert prescriptions. In explaining her ways of managing food, Nirmal mentioned the cooking ability that she learned from her mother:

> *(Nirmal): I hardly buy anything from outside. I make most of the things at home. I have learned the same thing from my mother's place, that healthier things are made at home …. I make anything like pizza, pav bhaji [a dish made of mix vegetable curry and soft bread] at home …. If I want to make something in the evening, then I skip the nap that I take in the afternoon so that I can prepare for it.*

During the interviews, many participants volunteered that their food-related practices were similar to those of their mother or mother-in-law, or what was practised in homes by earlier generations. While this is different from the findings of MacDonald et al., (2018), where parents attempted to disconnect with food practices of their past, the literature indicates that familial links are mentioned in an attempt to authenticate and legitimise current food practices. Laudan (2006) argued that culinary authenticity is framed in the terms espoused by the consumer. Thus, food is considered authentic if along with being artisanal, pre-industrial, prepared with indigenous ingredients and not consisting of processed foods, it is also 'historical', or what people used to eat: preferably, familial, rural, regional foods. In the context of mothers as food provisioners, the meaning of authenticity of food is deeply rooted in an ideological opposition between what is recognised as good motherhood and the corrupting influence of modern consumption (Srinivas, 2006). This explains why participants, as illustrated through their quotations below, continued to engage in food practices that were similar to what was practised when they were children, or the way their mothers and elders had cooked and prepared food:

> *(Unnati): I feel I should cook at home, whatever I can. Outside food always has a particular typical taste .... For me, the best food is what my mother cooked.*

(Nirmal): I make most of the things at home. I have learned the same thing from my mother's place, that healthier things are made at home.

When talking about the recent growth in the variety of foods available in Indian markets, Anita expressed her resistance by citing the example of elders in her family as evidence of a good way of eating and living:

Actually for me, at least our grandparents and parents – if you see their age, the kind of life that they have led – that is a proof for me that this is a better way to live.

She categorically refused to buy tomato ketchup or bread:

Why … develop a taste for a tomato ketchup, when you know so many preservatives are inside. And I am not saying this for the sake of saying; I practise it religiously. I will fight with my husband as to why to get[about] it. Actually, that comes from my upbringing; I am not a ketchup eater. My mom, my entire life, she served me with malai cheeni [milk cream and sugar] only.

When she reflected on the conversation further, she stated that her current food practices had been shaped by her upbringing and she thought it important to raise her child with similar practices:

See, I always believe these things, not only in cooking, in everything you are moulded [by] the way you are brought up …. So, my mom (or every mom from that age), they did not cook fancy food. So, we were brought up on subzi and roti [cooked vegetables and wheat flatbread] …. So, this is also a reason that the way you were brought up, you want to do the same thing for your kid.

This quotation explains the 'Mom effect', the matrilineal influence of mothers, aunts and grandmothers on a mother's food practices (Johnson, Sharkey, McIntosh, & Dean, 2010). In terms of practice elements such sayings and doings suggest that these food provisioners' meanings of food-related practices were aligned with those of their elders/mothers, explaining the continuity of 'proper' food-provisioning practices. Lizardo (2009) offered a bio-scientific explanation for the way practices continue from one generation to the next. He thought the capacity to understand and grasp the meaning or 'telos' of an action, at an implicit, bodily level, without recourse to an explicit consciousness, coupled with the capacity to

mirror the action of others, provides a neural perspective on the mode of socialisation within the culture of any given group. These actions serve to semantically recall not only the meaning of the actions but also reactivate the neural processes that allow the reproduction of those actions. In terms of this current research, the performance of actions or techniques leading a 'proper' lunch, or following specific food-provisioning practices, had all emerged from a long period of the individuals' exposure to stimulation (both visual and auditory) from other people's actions (in this case mothers, mothers-in-law and other members of the household, family or community).

Prescriptions are part of sayings that make up a practice and since practices are socially constructed, the link between a practice and prescription may be considered a social fact (Plessz et al., 2016). For the food provisioners in the current study, the links between nutritional prescriptions and food practices were articulated in the Ayurvedic guidelines. The continuity within the practice of competencies with regards cooking at home-fresh and from scratch, was then attributed to meanings that had developed from all: Ayurvedic guidelines, normative prescriptions of being a good food provisioner gained from social experts such as mothers. Additionally according to Vaikos and Kamble (2011), the historical acknowledgement of Ayurvedic food guidelines as being expert prescriptions makes it less likely that provisioners will alter their meanings and food-related practices. Further, middle-class food provisioners' networks of sociability are instrumental in integrating prescriptions into the meanings of engaging in the practices. According to Plessz et al. (2016), practices remain stable when the networks of sociability undergo fewer changes throughout the life course of the practitioners. However, this current study, as discussed in the next chapter, Chapter 5 of findings, has shown the way changes in socio-economic structures and consumers' lifestyles can constrain and disturb the stability of food-provisioning practices.

4.3.3 Engaging in health-food practices

The data gathered in this research included numerous instances of the participants speaking about their families' routine consumption of specific health-food preparations. Colloquially referred to as 'nani-dadi ke nuskhe'(grandma's remedies) or 'home remedies', these specific health-food routines are an important part of Indian food-consumption practices (Chera, 2020). Ayurveda recommends the

following three kinds of food-related routines for holistic well-being: dincharya (daytime), ritucharya (seasonal) and ratricharya (night-time) (Sarkar, Lohith, et al., 2015). The guiding principle of such routines must be preserved and possible ailments must be prevented from occurring. Knowledge of such home remedies is acquired informally through the family and the social environment. While some of the food provisioners in this research spoke about engaging in such health-food consumption as their daily routine, many stressed the importance of engaging in these practices as a morning routine, straight after getting up and before consuming any other food. Although these preparations varied from household to household, many (see Table 4.1) were simple combinations of warm water and items such as honey, turmeric and basil.

Table 4.1: Participants' quotations about morning health-food practices

Quotation	Participant
I drink hot water with lemon.	Kritu
The first thing I take in the morning is warm turmeric water.	Vaishali's mother-in-law
We [referring to self and husband] drink two glasses of warm limewater early morning, both of us. It is a fixed habit first thing in the morning after waking up.	Prema
We give him [referring to her son] turmeric in honey every day in the morning. When it gets very cold, I give him Sitopaladi … [a herbal powder]. Then, there is this tulsi [basil] juice.	Priya
I add five to six drops of tulsi juice in lukewarm water. I drink that.	Manisha's mother-in-law
As in … dates and nuts, almonds. We soak five to six almonds in water overnight; it is a regular feature in our house.	Minu

Some of them mentioned complex herbal concoctions. Rohini, a professor and mother of two, lived with her parents-in-law and went to significant effort in making these health concoctions. She insisted that all family members had to consume this concoction first thing in the morning:

> *I get up at 5:30 am and first thing I do is make a concoction from clarified butter (desi ghee). This has to be cooked for two or three minutes. First thing after I wake up, I do this because it takes few minutes. Actually, we add haldi [turmeric] and sonth [dry ginger powder] in equal parts …. Then it has saunf [fennel seeds], jeera [cumin], ajwain [carom seeds] and such other different things. Then everyone in the family will have one spoon of this concoction. Adults will have [it] with hot water and kids will have it in milk. So, this is our first morning ritual.*

Similarly, Anita made a smoothie with some herbs and vegetables and consumed this first in the morning:

> *To start my day, I also have a green juice. It is all greens: spinach, I have coriander, holy basil if possible, curry leaves a must, and cucumber, also bottle gourd if you have and ginger. And these days, turmeric if available and amla[gooseberry] if available. So, you crush all these and extract juice. Add black salt and lemon.*

Table 4.2: Participants' quotations about health-related herbal food consumption

Quotation	Participant
The concoction that we give to children …. This is an immunity booster. I have seen this. From when Amar was like 6 to 8 months, whole winter I have given him this and seen the effect. If it is some chronic disease, then better to take medicine. But otherwise it keeps in check. Even now I give him this.	Anita
We give him turmeric in honey every day in the morning. When it gets very cold, I give him Sitopaladi …. Then, there is this tulsi juice.	Priya
Take tulsi [holy basil], ginger, honey, and mix it together and give this to the kids in case of cold and cough.	Vaishali
During winter, we make something with ghee-anjeer [clarified butter and figs]. That is also healthy. In my house, it is made by the beginning of winter, so we eat that.	Minu
We believe in home remedies. If someone catches a cold, I give decoction of basil, ginger and misri [candied sugar] or gud [jaggery].	Ratan

While some participants did not clearly articulate their reasons for engaging in such health-based food practices, possibly because of the researcher's similar cultural background,[22] others stated their understanding of 'rasayana', an Ayurvedic concept that highlights the use of herbs and herbal mixtures for maintaining health and preventing disease (Guha, 2006). The literature on food and nostalgia notes that the romanticised invocation of foodways from the past is a powerful tool for negotiating unfamiliar environments (Geyzen, 2014; Mannur, 2007; Srinivas, 2011). Provisioners can connect such practices to their identification with maternal elders, who are considered sources of care. Practices in home remedies are institutionalised through public discussion (word of mouth) and popular media, including television shows, magazines and websites.

The temporality of the health-food routines engaged in by provisioners in this current study aligned not just with time of the day (mornings) but also with the concept of 'ritucharya' (seasonal routine). The children in the households were the

[22] Since knowledge of the benefits of such health-based consumption practices is culturally shared, the food provisioners may have assumed the researcher was familiar with these practices.

particular focus of these health-promoting routines, which were understood to safeguard health during vulnerable winter conditions as well as boost immunity. Many of the participants with younger children mentioned their engagement with some sort of herbal food routine (see Table 4.2).

4.3.4 Revival of traditional health practices

An interesting finding in this data was the revival of certain health-food practices as new carriers became recruited into their performance. Chandan's recent engagement in a health-food practice became evident when she said:

> *We are health conscious nowadays, so … we have jeera [cumin] water or cinnamon water or wheatgrass water. I boil it in water for 10 to 15 minutes, then the water is ready.*

A desire for health improvement was a common reason cited for the recent engagement in such practices. For example, Minu said that within five or six years of re-engaging with the practice of consuming a home-made gooseberry preparation, she had become energetic and healthy:

> *(Minu): We make gooseberry [amla] candy by grating amla. That is always placed on the dining table and I take it to my school, so I have some after lunch. I feel a great difference after eating it. I feel that my immune system has become strong. Earlier, I used to never take it.*
>
> *(Interviewer): Okay, so this is a recent addition?*
>
> *(Minu): Around five or six years. Before, I would never take and I would fall sick quite frequently. I was weak. I never feel … energetic. But after using amla, I felt a change.*

Analyses of such findings have shown that the recovery of traditional health-food practices can be attributable to contextual factors, such as life-course perspective, as well as social prescriptions that are instrumental in the revitalisation of such practices (Plessz et al., 2016). The following excerpts from the interview with Anita show how after the birth of her baby and following a sickness, she asked others in her social circle about health-food practices and then she engaged in them:

> *When Amar was a baby, we used a lot of home remedies. When Amar was only six months, he suffered for almost 15 days. I am the eldest of the family …, so I have not seen a baby here. This was the first baby in the generation.*

We were scared because baby's stomach was upset continuously without stopping. They told us to make him lick jaiphal [Nutmeg]. ... I got to learn so many home remedies.

Health-food practices are reproduced when new carriers in the social circle are going through similar life course changes, as Anita explained:

My sister-in law will ask for lot of healthy recipes from me. Her son was born about one to one-and-a-half years after my son. So, she and my mother-in-law saw me making so many things for Amar. So, they also want[ed] to get ideas as to what should be followed. … so, I ask[ed] my sister-in-law to give this concoction to my niece. Like ajwain ka sek [carom seeds heat pads], … I [saw] a lot of difference with this and I recommend[ed] it to them.

Ratan also mentioned she had recently started to engage in health-food practices after receiving information about the benefits from her social environment:

(Ratan): I wake and freshen up. Then I have warm water with lemon-honey.

(Interviewer): Why do prefer warm lemon-honey water?

(Ratan): I have heard that it is good for health.

(Interviewer): Taking it for a long time?

(Ratan): Yes, for about a year.

Some participants mentioned their engagement in health-food practices following a doctor's, nutritionist's or dietician's advice. For example, Babita stated that to manage her father's blood sugar levels:

the dietician suggested home remedies – snacks/munchies that can be home-made, like fenugreek seed powder, flaxseeds, etc.

Similarly, Mili quoted her doctor's advice:

[take] lukewarm *water with aloe vera juice and amla juice … the doctor said that it …. [it] is good for health, it will purify blood, and gooseberry has high vitamins in it, so they recommended its juice … my husband takes garlic and fenugreek seeds for BP.*

Shove et al. (2012) discussed the enhanced diffusion and penetration of a practice when it is adopted by a group of people through a variety of social influences. In the above cases, the provisioners' adoption of traditional health-food

practices was influenced not only by their social environment but also by the valorisation of traditional health remedies by the healthcare community (Plessz et al., 2016). It is important to note that the health-food practices described by these provisioners were not new but had only been adopted by them recently in the context of health management for themselves and/or their family members. Such a recovery of traditional health practices can be analysed via a realignment of practice elements, as summarised in Figure 4.6.

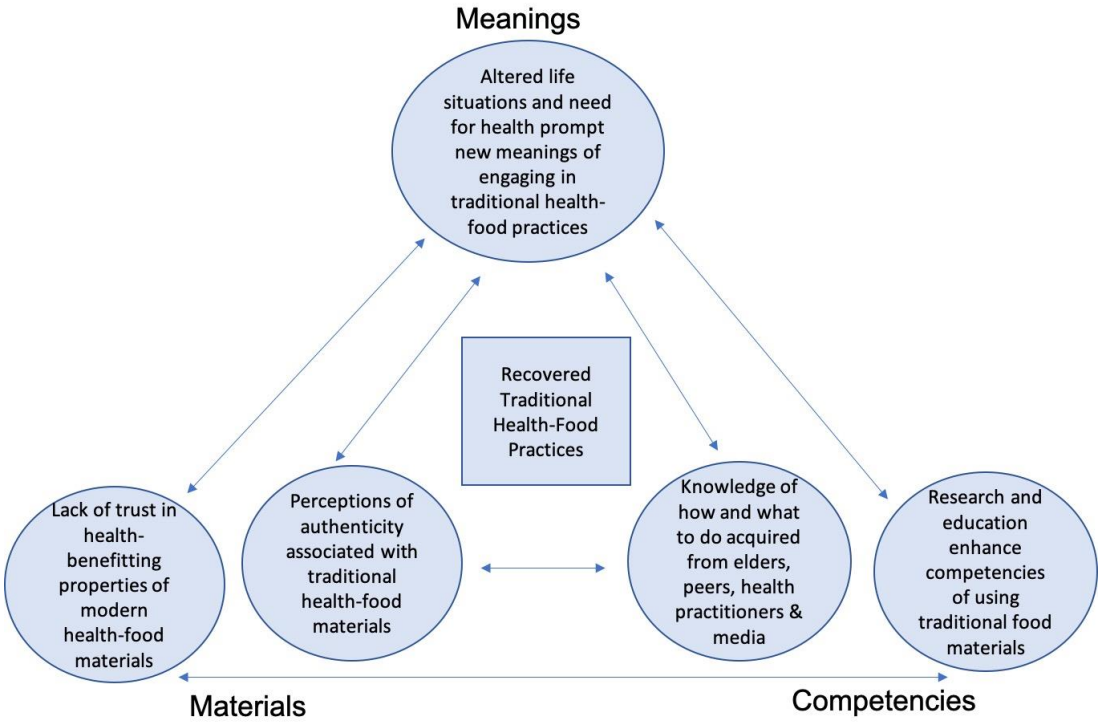

Figure 4.6: A schematic illustration of the realignment of practice elements in the recovery of traditional health-food practices

This thesis approaches the realignment of practice elements-based recovery of traditional practices inspired by Thurnell-Read (2018) and Magaudda (2011). Indian consumers have only recently been exposed to the plethora of modern (non-Indian) packaged and processed foods. Consequently, there is a low level of understanding and awareness of the nutritional values of these seemingly foreign food products (PWC, 2015). For example, in the current study, Unnati expressed her displeasure with new variants of olive oil appearing in the market:

> *I don't like it. What we have eaten all our lives cannot be wrong. I feel olive oil is an unnecessary and costly oil. Those who have a lot of money, they show off by purchasing it [laughs].*

Additionally, with a cultural outlook that perceives 'impurity' in foods sourced outside the home, coupled with recent cases of food- quality scares (e.g. the presence of lead in Maggie noodles), Indian consumers do not trust the quality and nutritional claims made for packaged food products (Neilsen, 2015). The food provisioners in the current study were vocal about their anxiety over the presence of preservatives in processed foods, as well as their lack of trust in food products such as milk additives and health supplements. Rohini said:

> *I avoid health supplements these days in the market, like Bournvita or similar things. I don't really find much value in them. I feel like these malts are like just waste and [a] big publicity gamut.*

Many provisioners expressed their disappointment with new health-food products available in the market and their confusion and lack of trust in new health foods. As Purnia said:

> *With regards [to] health foods available in the market, I don't believe it. It's psychological inclination that if I am opting for something pack[ag]ed, I am going to opt for something healthier [than what is being] claimed by [advertisements] … [over] time, I have learned [that] whatever [the] market is providing, we can get a natural option which is healthier than the healthiest that the market is providing …. Like there is Atta Maggie noodles [advertised as being healthier than normal Maggie noodles because of being made with whole-*wheat *flour]; that's not healthy because it's noodles again. Then there is Saffola Masala Oats, which is comparatively healthy but it has oil and spices and we don't know the amount of oats in it. Actually, [are] there any oats in it or is it something else? Then we go for these oat biscuits with a mentality that [they] might have oats …. I feel with growing awareness of health, people are switching towards natural healthy sources.*

New health foods being introduced into the Indian market can give rise to the production of food provisioners' negative subjective value-based meanings. Perceived lack of quality and trust in the health benefits of new food products can lead consumers to fall back on tried-and-tested traditional practices. According to Chera (2020), nostalgic food revitalisation is common in areas undergoing intense economic development and in contexts marked by rapid change in health status. Thus, lack of trust in foods that are not part of the larger traditional ethnomedicine

and ethno-dietetics systems prevents them from being adopted and creates negative associations with such food practices. Conversely, the perception of authenticity associated with traditional food products, ways and systems leads to the development of positive meanings associated with traditional health-food practices (Khalikova, 2017, 2020).

In situations requiring health management, accompanied by negative perceptions of new health foods, the deep-seated, culturally ingrained, positive meanings of traditional health foods and remedies are easily brought to the fore. The findings of this research showed that such newly acquired meanings are further strengthened by the collective social environment, as well as media representations through television, health magazines, books and blogs. In addition, this study observed realignment of health-food practices through competencies acquired through a greater understanding of the scientific benefits of certain health foods. This led to some provisioners engaging in health-food practices with even greater enthusiasm, once they understood the health rationale behind the food materials used within such practices. Unnati reflected that even though consuming jaggery was part of her childhood routine, she had not understood the logic of the practice at that time. Her current knowledge of the way the sugar keeps someone energised when they are away from home meant that she was now enforcing its use in the household:

> *When we leave … home, all have jaggery. [In the] olden days we were made to eat jaggery and drink water because jaggery would keep our stomachs filled for a while. And it is considered a good omen. The container of jaggery is always kept in the hall.*

Unnati's reflection on earlier practices and attempt to understand the reasons for them were interesting. The above quote illustrates a revival of traditional food practices through a scientific understanding of their material value and thereby, renewed meanings of them. Anita also mentioned discovering the scientific basis of traditional food-for-health remedies, indicating that her engagement in such practices was based on meanings derived from cultural practices and further strengthened by medical and nutritional sources of knowledge:

> *At my mother's place, we [had] something called chhaukewala [milk tempered with turmeric and spices]. … So both [my husband and son] had it and I had it. ... Next morning when I woke up, I really felt that my body and*

the muscles were not aching. And it's not a joke. I am a big, big brand ambassador of this. … I researched about it. How does turmeric help you? It helps you against flatulence formation and this kind of thing. So I did my research and I am doing this [for] more than a year.

Although Shove et al. (2012) explained how practices are socially shared and diffused, there is limited understanding about how and why consumers are recruited back into old practices (Price, 2020). As noted above, the findings of this current study showed that the return to a practice involved a change in (health) context and a negative value associated with new materials, leading to new meanings and goals of engagement in health management. Further, a realignment of practice elements, such as altered meanings and enhanced competencies in scientific knowledge of the food material, enabled the reproduction of old practices and the competencies for engaging in the revived practices were gained from both the social and institutional environments. Thus, connections between the acquired meanings, material factors and competencies were recast and the provisioners re-engaged in traditional health-food practices. Recently in India, during the COVID-19 pandemic, many traditional health-food practices were recovered, followed and recommended in the building of immunity against the virus (Priya & Sujatha, 2020; Thacker, 2020). As can be seen from the above analysis, the circulation and strengthening of meaning associated with context and materials is critical in re-establishing traditional health-food practices.

4.4 Summary analysis

The findings of the study as presented in this chapter answer the following research questions:

1. *How is everyday food provisioning carried out in Indian middle-class households?*
2. *What dominant and persistent practices are continually reproduced in everyday food provisioning?*

Data from the current study indicates the continued engagement of food provisioners in the performance of traditional food practices such as consumption of a ‘proper’ Indian meal, cooking fresh meals at home from scratch and engaging in health-food practices. Based on these findings the analysis supports the notion of stability in

routinised food-provisioning practices. Furthermore, the data also indicates that stable performance of routine food provisioning includes not just what is consumed on a day-to-day basis but also in relation to timing of the day (e.g. morning routines) and seasonality (e.g. health routines). While the habitual and thus difficult-to-change notion of practices is conceptually supported in theoretical discussions of practices (Warde, 2005a), the current study's findings are in contrast to some Indian studies that note the slow and steady decline of the traditional Indian diet (Harish, 2003); Madhvapaty & Dasgupta, 2015). Some studies also state that as a consequence of liberalisation and globalisation, Indian diets are increasingly westernised (Dittrich, 2009; Osswald & Dittrich, 2012; Pingali et al., 2019). A common cause for such Westernisation is attributed to the growing influence of global food giants leading to an increased consumption of out-of-home, processed and fast food products (Sardana, 2011; Kaur & Singh, 2014). In proposing the stability of traditional food provisioning, the current study does not in any way discount the huge growth in Indian food retail leading to many changes in food consumption. Rather, the emphasis here is on the finding that routine food provisioning in the studied middle-class Indian households is, as yet, deeply entrenched in traditional and cultural practices that are maintained via an integration of shared understandings about practice elements.

The findings presented in this chapter also show the food provisioners' engagement in traditional health-food practices. The recovery of health-food practices concomitant with changing life course indicates a realignment of practice elements and the critical role of meaning as a practice recovery element. Further, provisioners' engagement in provisioning routine food is a practice that involves integration of shared practical and discursive understandings of practice-constituting elements – meanings, materials and competencies. These shared understandings form the dominant characteristics of food provisioning. Findings show that when asked about the reasons for engagement in specific food actions, provisioners articulate not only their shared meanings with regard engagement in traditional food practices but also commonly shared perceptions about health-benefitting features of traditional food ingredients and materials as well as their shared know-how about the right ways of preparing, cooking, serving, in the performance of these practices. It therefore appears that shared understandings of food materials and competencies are 'congealed' in the hardware of such routine food-provisioning practices (Shove et

al., 2012, p. 10) such that the meaning of engaging in the practice is all-encompassing – the materials to be used and the processes (in terms of competencies) to be followed are all so well integrated and that routine food-provisioning practices is reproduced in the studied households without much reflection. However, these findings have shown that the taken-for-granted nature of such routine practices is rarely contemplated by food provisioners until these routines are disrupted. The next Chapter 5 outlines findings about constraints on routine food-provisioning practices and the way food provisioners manage disruptions by realigning their practices.

Chapter 5: Findings Themes 2 and 3

5.1 Introduction

Food routines involve taken-for-granted practices that form the rhythm of everyday life, making people feel ontologically secure (Giddens, 1984; Phipps & Ozanne, 2017). This rhythm was noted in the previous chapter, with participants engaging in routine food-provisioning practices by maintaining the symbolic and instrumental meanings of the practices. However, the research data also illustrated that lifestyle-based disruptions in food routines (e.g. lack of time and/or suitable skills) threatened this sense of security and brought into question the stability of those food-provisioning practices.

In the face of insecurity, food provisioners adapt their practices to re-establish security. In practice theoretical terms, it can be said that a disruption in routine can cause misalignment within the practice's constituting elements: meanings, materials and competency (Spaargaren et al., 2013). This current study found evidence that the food provisioners realigned their practices and thus, re-established security through two types of adaptations within the meanings held for their food-provisioning practices: meeting the meaning by altering the required materials and competencies, and extending the meaning underlying food-consumption and -provisioning practices. The following sections of this chapter present and analyse the findings from the data as regards these two adaptations.

5.2 Theme 2: Meeting meaning in food provisioning

In general, although the ideals around food-provisioning practices can vary, with specific cultural nuances, they usually involve providing meals that are home cooked from scratch (Halkier, 2010). Previous studies have alluded to several barriers to home meal preparation, such as employment (Devine, 2005; Jabs et al., 2007; Jastran, Bisogni, Sobal, Blake, & Devine, 2009), lack of time (Jabs et al., 2007) and lack of cooking skills (Lavelle et al., 2016). In addition, recent studies have identified 'effort' as a significant barrier to cooking from scratch (Lahne, Wolfson, & Trubek, 2017; Trubek, Carabello, Morgan, & Lahne, 2017; Wolfson et al., 2017). Similarly, the participants in the current study identified time, skills and

effort as significant factors constraining their engagement in proper food-provisioning practices.

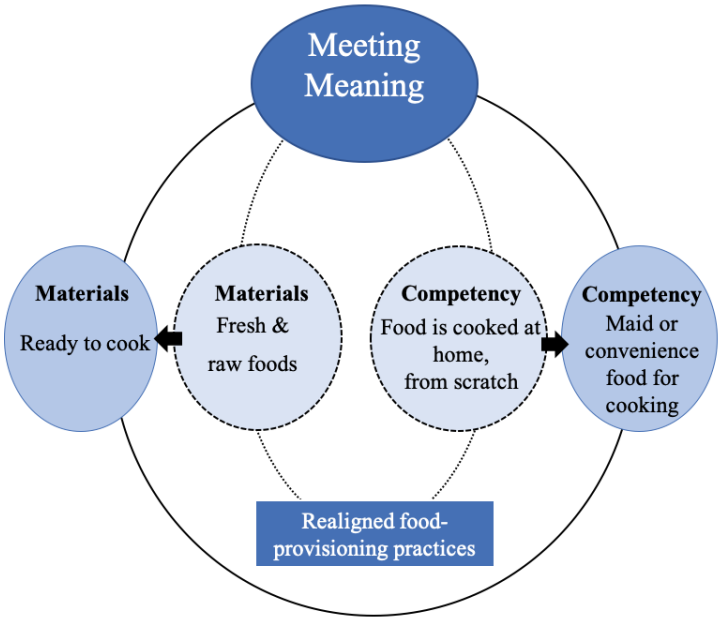

Figure 5.1: An illustration of changing practice elements in meeting the meaning of food provisioning

The current study evaluated the performance of constrained food-provisioning practices, considering the meanings, materials and competencies integrating the practice. As Figure 5.1 depicts, in performing food provisioning under situations of constraint, the participants were seen to adopt various strategies that included altering materials and competencies such as outsourcing the laborious kitchen tasks and using short cuts such as ready-to-use ingredients. The following sections present and analyse some of these strategies as performances in the management of constrained food provisioning.

5.2.1 Me and the maid: Outsourcing competencies

In the event of not being able to prepare food themselves, having a maid or a maharaj (male cook) to produce food in the proper manner is commonplace in upper-middle-class Indian households. The data from this research indicated that the level of participation of these aides in food provisioning differed from household to household. In most of the households, the maid was only there to assist the food

provisioner in the cutting, chopping and preliminary preparation of food, as noted by Vinisha and Preeto:

> *(Vinisha): I have a maid to help me, but basically, I cook it. She assists me in cutting, chopping, arranging. She also makes the chapatti.*
>
> *(Preeto): I have a maid who does all the chopping, cutting, making the dough or batter. Cooking is my job. My kids and my husband do not like cooking done by my maid or anyone else.*

Such findings are consistent for many middle-class Indian families, where women never leave the cooking entirely to their maids (Devasahayam, 2005). The partial delegation noted above is appreciated both by the food provisioners and their families, as it allows food provisioning to occur in ways that are congruent with both the ideal meaning of food provisioning and their current lifestyles.

Some participants mentioned employing a maharaj (cook) to prepare both lunch and dinner. Rumi, a high school teacher with a busy schedule and marking workload, employed a maharaj to ensure that she and her daughter could have proper home-cooked meals. They had even adjusted their meal times and practices based on the availability of the maharaj. Rumi said:

> *My cook comes around 9 p.m. So, roti and sabzi are prepared the night [before]. We eat them fresh then and [then] I pack it in the morning. I am saying the fact. I could have lied to you but I don't want to.*

Rumi's statement about not wanting to lie to me about packing a lunch that has been prepared the night before indicates her guilt about disconnecting with the meaning of food provisioning that underscores not only eating freshly cooked food but also being a good mother who provides fresh food for her child. However, she emphasised that by employing the maharaj, she still managed the provision of home-cooked meals. Similarly, Preeto justifies her role in provisioning by noting that although the maid did all the chopping, cutting and making the dough or batter, the cooking was still her job, in spite of her significant time constraints. She addressed the traditional belief that it is unhygienic to cut and store vegetables by using a 'good refrigerator', that enabled maintaining the freshness related meaning of food provisioning.

Many of the middle-class women studied, especially those who worked outside the home, agreed that without their maids, they would not achieve proper

food provisioning. For example, when I asked Rohini if she cooked lunch in the morning before going to work, she said:

> *No, the help Kishan makes it. Kishan can cook daal, rice, chapatti, subzi, salad, raita[yoghurt based side dish] …. We have honestly been able to stay with a lot of traditional method[s] of cooking only because of Kishan, and I know if he is not there, I would never be able to cook that traditionally.*

Similarly, Ruchi said that before she went to work:

> *All I have to do is to plan the dishes to be cooked as per everyone's taste. If our cook is on leave, those days are a nightmare.*

Earlier research has noted that the constraints of time, lack of cooking skills and inability to put in the required effort can lead food provisioners to seek help from an aide (Donner, 2011). Devasahayam (2005) observed that involving a maid or maharaj in the performance of food provisioning was not disruptive for food provisioners, as having help allowed them to fulfil their meanings of providing a proper, home-cooked, fresh meal while handing over to the maid the uncreative tasks, such as cutting, chopping and cleaning. Similarly, while the maharaj might perform the cooking, the role of the food provisioner as the meal-planner and controller of what would be cooked, for whom, when and how, was equally critical. The following quotations illustrate the way research participants Rohini and Ruchi fulfilled their responsibility in food provisioning by giving instructions and ensuring the meals were cooked in a hygienic and healthy way:

> *(Rohini): [The cook] cannot make the decision on his own; he needs to be given instructions in the morning about the menu. Also, the raw vegetables need to be taken out and kept aside for him. Or else, he will call me later for instructions of what vegetables need to be cooked.*

> *(Ruchi): All [the food dishes] the cook prepares, but it has to be planned and he should be instructed. He would never take [the] initiative and suggest that if there is no salad, should he make it? [This means] he can finish work faster. [My mother-in-law and I] ensure that everything is ready before he comes. For example, raw daal: if we have to soak it, I ensure that I wash and clean it twice and then finally I give it to the cook. He [might] not wash [it], so … I make [sure] that two or three rounds of washing have been done by me. When we give it to him, it is ensured that there are no pests or anything*

else …. We make it a point to keep [the] oil [he will require for the day's cooking] in a separate container. Otherwise he tends to get liberal. It is not possible to keep a watch on him the whole day. … So there has to be a lot of variety [in food] and that I have to plan. So, this is the first thing that is being looked at. No doubt, we have a cook, but definitely, we have to keep an eye on him in terms of controlling the oil or salt. My father-in-law has diabetes and blood pressure issues. So, it is important that every alternate day we give [the cook] a reminder to control the salt element.

By asserting the importance of managing food for the family, these participants made a clear demarcation between the 'preparing' and 'provisioning' aspects of food-provisioning practices. Priya noted in a very confident tone that she had the 'know-how' but not the time to cook, so outsourcing the labour allowed her to retain the meaning of provisioning a home-cooked healthy meal:

I know everything [with regard to the knowledge and skill of cooking], but then … time [is the problem]. Earlier, I would try and do everything, like any other woman, but finally, … I realised that there is no point spending your energy [on] mundane things, which can be outsourced. As long as I know what nutrient[s] are going [into the meal], I [can] control that.

These findings are representative of food-provisioning practices in the new Indian middle classes, where the women delegate the menial tasks of producing food and retain the larger role of procuring and planning what will be consumed and how it should be prepared (Donner, 2011). Thus, having a maid or a maharaj allows the food provisioner to meet the meanings of both providing proper, healthy, home-cooked, fresh meals as well that of being the family's nurturer and provider.

5.2.2 Competence through convenience

While the provisioners in this study indicated their disapproval of packaged and processed foods, they also spoke about overcoming the constraints of time in provisioning food from scratch by incorporating the use of packaged, ready-to-use and ready-to-cook types of food materials, as featured in photographs in Figure 5.2 For example, with reference to making a pizza for her family, Vaishali stated:

Earlier, I would make it [from scratch], for example with tomato puree, etc., but now because of my job [and] children, I buy ready pizza sauce.

Figure 5.2: Alternative (convenience) food materials used to realign food provisioning

Preeto, a school teacher, also mentioned using pre-prepared snack food, but only as a backup strategy:

> *In the worst situation, if I wake up late, I store khakhra [spicy, crispy, dried flatbread]. I purchase it. Earlier, I used to make it at home, but now with this hectic schedule, I do not find any spare time.*

Additionally, the data from the current study suggested that 'feeling lazy' and 'tired' were factors limiting these provisioners' competency in providing foods prepared from scratch. For example, Preeto said she stocked packaged soups for occasional use:

> *For example, [on] Saturday or Sunday, sometimes I feel too lazy to cook food [so] I use that, [also] when there is no time … at home …. Again, yesterday Keyur [husband] and I went out. I didn't get time to make anything for lunch. When he asked me what we would have for lunch, I said, '[We have] noodles; we shall make soup.'*

It is important here to note the infrequency of the use of such products, with participants using words such as 'rarely' and 'sometimes'. For example, Rani said:

> *Sometimes when the kids say that they want idli [fermented rice cakes] the next day and it is [too] late to prepare [them], then we purchase ready-made batter.*

For these provisioners, the occasional use of packaged and ready-to-use/cook food products was ‘like a support system’. Preeto said that as part of the preparation and serving (in this case, adding hot water) was done at home:

> *it will not affect [the children] health-wise … because it is hot. Anything hot is not going to affect [them]. Anything cold will help in putting on weight.*

Several participants said they bought the ingredients for a meal from the market and assembled the meal at home:

> *(Ruchi): We purchase the [pizza] base and also [the] sauce. We make the baking stuff. It is served hot.*

> *(Vaishali): If we make burger at home, we buy the bun from the market, but otherwise it is home-made. We know what ingredient[s] can be used for it, [so] it is totally up to us.*

Thus, these participants realigned their food provisioning to meet the meanings of home-cooked, freshly prepared meals by managing to avoid complete dependence upon market-bought food. Additionally, their understanding that convenience foods need substantiating to be acceptable, shows they needed to retain their sense of control. For example, Manisha noted that when making Chinese dishes, pizza or pasta:

> *I purchase all the required sauces, but I make [the dish] at home. [Or] I purchase the basic ingredients and cook [them] at home. They say that my food is tastier [laughs]. We maintain hygiene while cooking.*

Exposure and access to new food varieties have led to many new (non-Indian) food choices that are especially appealing to the younger generation (Goyal & Singh, 2007). When attempting to meet their children’s food preferences, many food provisioners in the current study bought specific ready-to-use food products such as mayonnaise, Schezwan chutney, red chilli sauce and other sauces for making Chinese dishes because they lacked the skills for preparing those foods. When preparing non-Indian dishes, the participants bought almost-ready ingredients such as pizza bases and sauces, pasta sauces and different types of spice mixes:

> *(Rani): I boil and mix ready-made sauce. I don’t have much knowledge on making pasta. My elder daughter is crazy about cooking. She tells me to try new stuff.*

(Ruchi): We purchase pasta sauces from the market. [The cook] does not prepare it at home. I boil the pasta and keep it ready.

Many of the participants noted their belief that such non-Indian foods were not healthy. For example, Minu said:

It is a rare case when I cook pasta or [burgers, pizza and noodles]. … It is healthy to eat less of these.

Similarly, Ratan and her 9-year-old daughter said*:*

(Daughter): [My brother and I] love Chinese or Italian food, but we are not permitted to eat [it] frequently.

(Ratan): Yes, because it is not healthy to have that all the time.

These quotations suggested a misalignment in the food provisioners' practices. Since non-Indian food materials, such as pizza, pasta and noodles, were not part of the participants' collectively coordinated understanding of food provisioning, their meanings and competencies of cooking were not linked to the dishes requested by the children. Thus, while Vaishali, Ratan, Preeto and others commented on their dislike of such non-Indian foods, they realigned their materials and competencies by using bought, ready-made ingredients as a way to strategically manage their dislike and/or lack of knowledge and skills and yet accomplish meeting their meanings of caring for their children (by indulging their food choices) and providing home-made food.

5.2.3 'Ready-to-cook' versus 'ready-to-eat'

The data from this research suggested that while using some ready-to-cook ingredients was acceptable in time- and skill-constrained situations of food provisioning, the same was not true for ready-to-eat packaged meals, even though these could greatly expedite the meal provisioning and eliminate many other menial chores associated with cooking from scratch, such as cleaning up. Even food provisioners who were in employment and/or living in nuclear families and hence, seeking greater convenience, refused to buy and use such ready-to-eat meals.

Many of the women in the current study noted their concern about the quality of food included in ready-to-eat products. Further, they were not happy with the removal of the element of control; this was a recurrent theme in the data. For

example, Ratan and her mother-in-law agreed on their disapproval of ready-to-eat daal:

> *(Ratan): You never know what is the quality of the lentil [daal] used in the ready-made packets …. At home, you are completely aware of the quality. I prefer that. … [With ready-made] we are not aware of the contents … and … we are unsure if it is hygienic.*
>
> *(Ratan's mother-in-law): [We don't know] how many days it has been stored for.*

As well as having concerns about the quality and hygiene of food materials that had been pre-cooked and stored, many participants were worried about the potential presence of preservatives. For example, Mariam and her mother-in-law clearly stated their disapproval of ready-to-eat food products:

> *(Mariam): We have never eaten it and neither do we like it.*
>
> *(Mariam's mother-in law): We don't have the habit of buying it.*
>
> *(Mariam): They add preservatives in the food to keep it good.*

Ruchi, a busy school teacher, noted the lack of control over the handling of such ready-to-eat food products:

> *Yes, everything is available. We never use it ... in case preservatives are added. Plus, a lot of effort would [be needed to check] the date of manufacturing and expiry. … If grocery shopping happens once … a week [and] then [we] stuff things in the refrigerator, to what extent can we keep an eye on that?*

In the projective-technique task of sentence completion most participants completed the sentence, "oh! Ok I think ready-to-eat food is," with phrases such as 'not tasty', 'not good for health', and 'not right for me, as I am at home and should prepare food.' An analysis of the research data suggested that ready-to-cook foods were valued more highly than ready-to-eat meals, as the former required some form of preparation; for example, the participants mentioned that they appreciated features of ready-to-cook foods such as 'hot', 'home-made' and 'quality'. Khare (1976) noted that a mass-produced food product could be converted into an emotionally charged object when it passed through the hands of the food provisioner. Having incorporated part of herself into the end-product, the provisioner derived pleasure

not only from preparing the dish but also from seeing her family happy with what she had produced (Srinivas, 2006).

In a conversation about the ease of using a ready-to-eat pack of idli (fermented rice cakes), Unnati and Nirmal said they found it unsatisfying to present the family with meals that were wholly processed or made with ready-made ingredients. This reflected their own value-laden meanings of motherhood that required exerting some level of effort on behalf of the family, as opposed to taking shortcuts (Dhawan, 2005):

> *(Unnati): Yes, it is easier, but I don't feel it is healthy for my children to eat [it]. As you know, if you add salt to a dish with your own hands instead of a spoon, the taste is always different/better; it's said that the taste of your touch is transferred to the dish. These are the small things that matter.*
>
> *(Nirmal): As the woman of the house, I feel very happy if I get something and cook it and I am appreciated. I feel like I have won a medal. If they constantly eat and [don't say] a word, it means the food is really good …. And no one will cook it with love like I do.*

Thus, it can be seen that the act of cooking has value but packaged food material that is ready to eat does not. Bourdieu (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 170) noted that 'habitus' is 'necessarily internalised and converted into a disposition that generates meaningful practices and meaning-giving perceptions'. In the context of food consumption, this would mean that food provisioning is rooted in values and meanings that are embodied through repeated observations. The value attached to engaging in cooking processes at home demonstrates the meaning for a food provisioner that is rooted in the historical and cultural habitus related to food provisioning in India. This explains why, in the current study, food provision using ready-to-*cook* food materials (even if just the assembling of the pizza base, sauce and cheese, or the mixing of pasta and sauce and serving it at home) still met the participants' meaning of food provisioning. In contrast, the inability to engage in the cooking processes with ready-to-*eat* foods were in conflict with the perceived meaning of food provisioning.

Shove et al. (Shove et al., 2012) propose that material arrangements in a practice configure each other, often based on individual's access to them. However, this current research found that when practices were misaligned owing to constraints

posed by the effort, time and/or skill required, more than access, the meaning of engaging in the food-provisioning practice dominated and determined the alternative materials and/or competencies that were applied; that is, the food provisioners in this study not only made material selections based on the product's ability to meet their meaning of food provisioning in the specified context but also aligned their competencies in meeting those meanings.

The significance of meeting meaning in food-provisioning practice can be evidenced by examining the specific elements that are integrated in spite of not being part of 'providing proper food'. As a 'heterotelic' practice, food provisioning has end goals or meanings that are outside itself (Warde et al., 2017). In this current study, in the context of maintaining health and/or preventing disease, the teleo-affectivity of the food-provisioning practices was related to the consumption of traditional health-food materials. When asked about the type of food products they used when engaging in such practices, the participants said they not only used home-made herbal remedies but also bought ready-to-consume products such as juices (gooseberry, aloe vera) and tulsi pills (holy basil extract), for convenience. For example, Mili said she bought the gooseberry juice from the market and Manisha's mother-in-law switched from using fresh basil leaves for her morning health-food routine to packaged basil extract:

> *I add four or six drops of tulsi [Indian basil] juice in lukewarm water. I drink that. … No particular brand. It is Ayurvedic. Earlier, I used to eat the leaves, but now [the juice] is available, so I use it.*

Other participants mentioned using herb extracts, capsules and powders that were available from the market in ready-made form:

> *(Sona): After we wake up, my husband takes warm water and I take my thyroid medicine and some herbal medicine for morning rituals, ISHA Foundation Neem and Tulsi capsules. They are good ones.*
>
> *(Manisha): I give Chawanprash [herbal paste available from market], cod liver capsules, for immunity. This generation [of] children have a low immunity [from] birth.*

Such acceptance of use of ready-to-eat food products for engaging in health-food routines is interesting in how the meaning of engagement within a practice can be a deciding factor in the choice of materials used to perform the practice.

Additionally, the availability of such products in the market facilitated their competency to perform the practice. Although this was in conflict with the food provisioners' disapproval of ready-to-eat (meal)products, these findings clearly illustrated that meaning in a practice governed which materials were suitably appropriated and when. Thus, when the meaning of engaging in the practice was to maintain health and/or prevent disease, the provisioners used ready-to-eat health-food products (materials) from the market. However, in terms of proper food-provisioning practices for the family, because the meaning included providing nutritional food, with greater involvement in the production and serving of that food, ready-to-eat products were rejected in the performance of those practices.

Appadurai (1988 b) explained that different meanings can be attached to material objects. Depending upon the 'arenas' or 'sites' of social-cultural context, materials are valued according to their transactions and meanings. For example, different values are attached to the same object when it is sold at an auction, worshipped in a temple or cherished in a home as a relic of the forefathers. Thus, while in this current study, ready-to-eat health-food products had high value attached to them, potentially owing to their ability to facilitate engaging in health-food practices, the same was not true for the value attached to ready-to-eat products in routine food provisioning.

5.3 Theme 3: Extending meanings in food provisioning

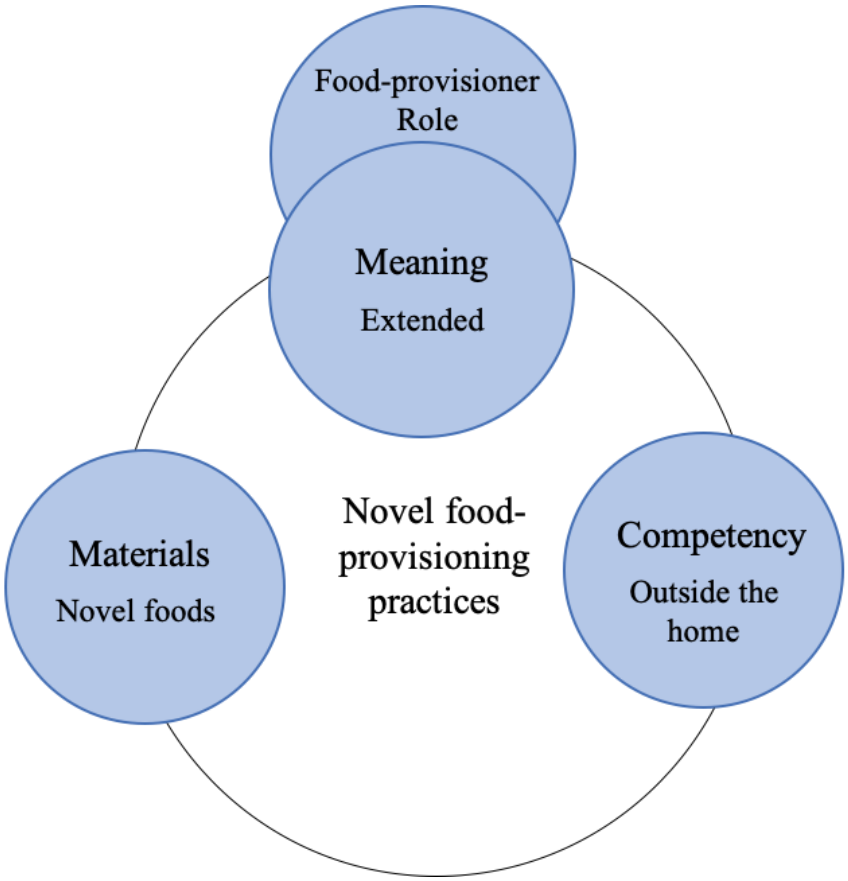

Figure 5.3: An illustration of extended meanings in the changing food-provisioning practice

According to Shove et al. (2012), elements of meaning come and go and forms of social significance for a specific practice can accumulate, one layer being added to the next, with the result that previous meanings are overlain. The data from this current study indicated that emerging new lifestyles, education and self-awareness in the new middle-class food provisioner had extended the meaning of what food provisioning entailed, in terms of both food consumption and provision, as depicted in Figure 5.3.

As noted earlier, many participants, especially those who were in the work force, mentioned having an aide to assist with their provisioning practices. The aides thus enabled competency in the preferred ways of performing the practice of food provisioning. Additionally, statements such as, ‘I should cook when I can’ and ‘I am at home, so I can do it. I have time, so I prefer home-made’, expressed the implicit assumption that women who stay at home must follow the culturally prescribed

processes and ways of food provisioning. In addition, these sayings pointed to competencies in the alignment of food-provisioning practices. However, Anita said that even as a woman who was not in the work force, she would not like to be in the kitchen all day:

> *I can say [food provision is based on] a combination of your own thought processes, today's needs and availability. I am not a working woman any more. Still, I cannot say that I am interested to be in the kitchen [the] whole day. … I [do not] feel like cooking all the time; for example, making peanut brittle. If I am in [the] mood, I will make anything for my son but, like my mom, I cannot be in the kitchen all day.*

Anita's comments revealed that her understanding of food provisioning differed from the commonly held social prescriptions. While she agreed with her mother's style of simple food provisioning (described in the previous chapter), she asserted her choice to engage in food provisioning based on her own understanding. Similarly, Rumi, while lauding her mother's dedication to food provisioning, asserted that her definition of food provisioning was based on an understanding of her own personality as well as her own concept of healthy food, which was different from her mother's understanding, which linked health with fresh food:

> *My mother's kitchen has been a place of worship for her …. That is the type of family I come from, but somehow, I have not imbibed it, because I am lazy. When I am alone, I may even have only khichdi [a one-pot meal with rice and lentils cooked together] daily [laughs].*
>
> *For me, to make food means health …. For my mother, preparing fresh roti was very important. [For me], it is no big deal. I [re]heat it; it becomes soft, [if] it is not rotten, then it is not a problem …. I store things in the freezer too. Fresh food is not my priority, but health should be kept in mind while eating daily food.*

While Indian women of earlier generations understood food provisioning as an activity that involved spending hours in the kitchen and ensuring that hot, freshly prepared and home-cooked meals were provided for the family, the women of today, as illustrated by Anita's and Rumi's quotations above, had a different understanding (meaning) of food provisioning. Further, since multiple prescriptions were involved in food provisioning, the prescriptions related to health and nutrition versus the

overall role of caring for the family could lead to the development of conflict and paradoxical situations that the provisioner had to reconcile somehow. For example, although Anita favoured the provision of simple Indian foods, she also believed that exposing her child to global cuisine was an important part of her responsibility as the food provisioner:

> *It is not possible in this day and age that you only roti and subzi for your son. When you go outside, there is so much … food served to you. I just [tell] him what he is eating, what is the name and how [to] pronounce it; for example, falafel. So, you want to give that exposure to your baby also.*

Here, Anita illustrated that her meaning of food provisioning incorporated not only the provision of healthy and nutritious food but also the provision of a rounded knowledge of different non-Indian cuisines. Not only the children but also the food provisioners needed to experience a variety of cuisines to carve out a cosmopolitan, modern identity for themselves. Chandan said:

> *We have South Indian and khaman dhokla [a steamed snack from fermented gram flour batter] – a Gujarati dish. In Italian [food], we make pasta, pizza. Many times, we make pizza for dinner or pasta and noodles in combination. [For] Chinese [food], we make Manchurian …. Also, we make Punjabi food like chole bhature [chickpea gravy with puffed flatbread].*

Data from the current study indicated that extended meanings of food provisioning became even more applicable when competencies in the form of 'know-how' or effort were lacking. Vinisha noted the difference between her understanding of food provisioning and that of her mother and mother-in-law:

> *See, I am absolutely fine, but when my mother-in-law … or … mother hear this, they don't like it. Their policy is children should be given home-made food, which is cooked by their mother. I believe if I am not interested in cooking, I don't [need to] overdo it.*
>
> *For me, food is not the priority as such. If we want to spend time together, we go out together. I am not like those mothers. For example, if my son wants to have noodles, I don't mind it; I would prefer taking him out and all of us enjoying noodles at a good restaurant.*

Vinisha had extended the conventional notion of a ‘mother’s responsibility’ of providing home-cooked food for the children to include spending quality time with them. She acknowledged her lack of competency in the kitchen and found that meeting her child’s food choices as well as spending time with him was more meaningful.

A further extension of meanings was observed in this research in terms of the materiality of what foods should be consumed and where was it appropriate to consume them. Historically, the Indian food system has been based largely on consuming fresh fruits and vegetables in a specified food culture, which has been to eat home-cooked food, together with the family, after exerting a good deal of energy in the purchasing and preparation of the food. Food has been closely tied with religious and social identities, as well as ideas of purity. Thus, while Indians have consumed certain food items at home, eating the same food away from home has been associated with lack of quality and health (van Wessel, 2004). Consuming foreign fast foods, such as burgers, pizza, noodles, pasta and packaged loaf bread, has been seen as posing a threat of pollution because of their ‘un-Indian-ness’ (Saavala, 2010, p. 144). Halkier (2010) used the term ‘normative contestations’ to describe the social anxiety associated with food provisioning in India. The novelty of having fast and foreign foods associated with globalisation has disrupted the existing food-provisioning practices.

Despite identifying that consuming outside food is ‘not good’ in terms of its ‘healthiness’ and ‘hygiene’, the participants in the current study were willing to engage in provisioning such outside foods because it fulfilled their role of keeping the family/children happy:

> *(Archana): See, to certain extent I feel junk food is not good. But at his age he is excited about it. So why should I stop him? And it’s not every day that he is eating this.*

Archana justified such food consumption by the irregularity of its occurrence. Many participants similarly defended their consumption of non-Indian foods, such as burgers and noodles, by calling it a ‘once-in-a-while’ non-routine practice:

> *(Babita): Being an Indian, I would say … [burgers, pizza and pasta] are all foreign foods … and [have] more … refined flour, and we don't consider*

[them] to be very healthy. So maybe we can categorise all these a bit as a junk, but it is okay. Once in a while, everything is okay.

While almost all the women disapproved of food products made out of white flour, especially loaf bread, many of them included it in their food provisioning:

(Ruchi): It is said that all-purpose [white] flour is not good for digestion.

(Vaishali): It depends on how much you consume. If you eat healthy home-made food most of the time, then eating one or two slices of bread once in a while does not matter.

In middle-class Indian households, eating food that is prepared outside the home is a normatively contested practice (Saavala, 2010). Many of the participants in this study mentioned the lack of healthiness, hygiene and freshness of food sourced from outside the home and shared sentiments that it should not be eaten on a daily basis. However, the once-in-a-while inclusion of such outside foods seems to originate from the food provisioners' understanding of their role in providing variety as well as catering to the taste pleasures of their family members. As Preeto stated:

We may eat pav bhaji [small bun served with mixed vegetable curry]. Now, as India has adapted a bit to Western culture, some days we have pizza, sometimes burger. So that is a variety in the menu. It is not healthy … but we eat it because of the taste, because we are not having that on [a] regular basis.

In the current study food provisioners' narratives display their health concerns with fast foods and their sporadic inclusion in food consumption. Studies have noted that while the Indian consumer has a passion for visiting fast food outlets for fun and change, they consider home food to be healthier (Baskar & Sundaram, 2012; Goyal & Singh, 2007). The data prominently indicates that the provisioners' acceptance of what they perceive as non-heathy foods is owing to their affective meanings in child care. As Ashu and others said:

(Ashu): Children don't like vegetables [sabzi] and fried flatbread [paratha] every day.

(Sona): They need some variety from the lentils-vegetables-rice routine.

(Ratan): There is a lot of variety available outside [the home]. There is a lot of stress at home to cope with home-made food. It is boring for the children.

(Unnati): They don't prefer eating wheat flatbread and vegetables [roti-sabzi]. And if you give them the food of their choice, they will happily have it.

In his study of meat consumption in Southern India, Bruckert (Bruckert, 2015) noted, 'vernacular notions about purity and health of food are not disappearing but are reconfigured by consumers into modern discourses about the need for change, variety and meeting children's preferences' (p. 470). The food provisioners in this current study were engaging occasionally in food practices that involved the consumption of non-Indian foods outside the home, illustrating the extension of affective and symbolic meanings as part of the dynamic processes of integration of practice elements such emotions, materials (new food varieties) and competencies (lack of know-how or initiative in preparing novel foods). Although the practice of 'eating outside the home' is rapidly becoming popular (Dittrich, 2009; Karanth, 2017; Nusra, 2018; Sooryamoorthy, 2012), the meaning in this practice is being extended by associating food consumption with the elements of change from monotonous tasks, social enjoyment, convenience and the need to experiment with new foods (Aloia et al., 2013). Preeto said:

Going out to eat is different. It is more of an outing. It is more about moving out of the house than about eating out.

5.4 Conflicted food-provisioning practices

The participants in this study made it clear that their children's happiness with the food provided and their satisfaction with a meal was critical. While this type of observation is commonly associated with the gendered role of a mother, Sooryamoorthy (2012) stated that the recent change in Indian family structure, from joint to nuclear or extended, meant that both parents, but especially the mothers, paid particular attention to meeting their children's food preferences. Karanth (2017) noted that middle-class parents' aspirations for their children to have social mobility were a compelling priority. Thus, a changing population of food provisioners as carriers of the practice can bring change in the practice itself (Twine, 2015). The participants in this current study emphasised the way food provisioning has changed recently in favour of the children in the household:

(Minu): Nowadays, food is prepared as per the children's likings.

(Ashu): Now, more varieties are made as per children's choices. Earlier, cooking was according to my mother-in-law and father-in-law's choice. Now,

children's preferences work. Now, children need more outings. They like to eat from a restaurant, moving out of the house.

This desire to provide the children's food choices could become a problem in households with extended families, especially if the elderly grandparents had different food choices and requirements. In Ruchi's household, the grandparents indulged their grandchild's food tastes but their own food preferences were important as well:

In our household, everything is planned around what [my son] Aarav will like. Even his grandparents will make sure that the cook prepares whatever Aarav likes to eat. My father-in-law does not [like] non-Indian food … he does not like pasta …; when we cook noodles, he prefers to have bajra rotla [pearl millet flatbread] or he enjoys doodh roti [milk and wheat flatbread] a lot. Considering his tastes, or the days when he is not in town, then we have everything he does not prefer to eat.

Thus, although engaging with food activities that meet the children's food preferences led to the provisioners feeling positive emotions (Schatzki, 2010a), meeting the food requirements of elderly parents in the household could cause tension and lead to doubling the effort made in food provision:

(Ashu): [My] mother-in-law does not eat bread; she eats Jain food [a religious practice that excludes all tubers and roots]; she does not eat ginger or garlic, so we make different [food] for her.

Further, some of the participants struggled to maintain their meaning of food provisioning while also extending it to meet their perceived parental roles. Food provisioners' accounts of misalignments depict the emotionality and stress that result when practice enactments depart from what they envisioned. The following quotes by Rani and Mariam illustrate that food provisioners compare and measure the success of their practice, informed by cultural ideals and prescriptions about what the practice should be and how it should work (Thomas & Epp., 2019):

(Rani): I prefer Indian, but [the] children don't like it. They want noodles, pasta, pizza.

(Mariam): My mom used to tell me not to give fast food like bread, pizza noodles to children. It's not good for health. This generation of kids is

different, so I have to provide them. But I always try to give them healthy food, like green vegetables, … salad, … home-cooked vegetables. Kids these days don't like all this. When my kids return [from school], I … tell my kids I have made this today, [but] they … say 'Why have you made mangodi ki sabzi [a traditional vegetable]?' They will not eat it. … If I tell them I have made paneer [cottage cheese] or noodles, they will be ready to eat it. That's why I make these things sometimes at home.

As a way of resolving the conflict between practices that held deeper meanings and their views of parenthood, the participants in this study engaged in occasionally providing fast and foreign food, as well as food outside the home. This approach allowed them to maintain positive emotions (Schatzki, 2010a; Spaargaren et al., 2013) as well as a good balance between the instrumental and affective meanings of food provisioning:

(Prema): Today's generation likes something different. They want something with cheeses, like burger, pizza. Ansh also likes it (he prefers it a lot!), but we don't permit [it] always. On Saturday or Sunday when go to a restaurant, we prefer to eat something healthy from there, but he insists on eating fast food …. Sometimes we go by his choice, sometimes he goes by our choice.

5.4 Summary of findings

The previous chapter, Chapter 4 presents the findings of this study in relation to the stability of routine food provisioning in ways similar to traditional practices. Additionally, the findings indicate how traditional health-food practices are being recovered in contemporary circumstances of health maintenance and concerns. The current chapter presents findings that answer the (sub)-research questions:

3. *What conflicts and concerns, if any, are disrupting the organisation of everyday food-provisioning practices?*
4. *How are normative contestations of everyday food provisioning negotiated?*

The data indicated that these food provisioners faced constraints of time, skill, and effort, that disrupt their food provisioning. Conflicts in food provisioning also arose from the changing perceptions of food provisioners' roles and from the intergenerational differences in food choices. Disrupted practices were being

realigned through adopting various strategies, including outsourcing the laborious kitchen jobs, using shortcuts and tradeoffs in meal preparation through ready-to-use food ingredients and occasionally engaging in novel practices of provisioning non-Indian foods and foods away from home. Based on the three themes, the two chapters present an understanding that contemporary food provisioning in the studied middle-class households comprised of four types of practices. As shown in Figure 5.4, the (1) traditional (2) recovered (3) realigned and (4) novel practices of food provisioning were integrated by socially shared practical and discursive understandings.

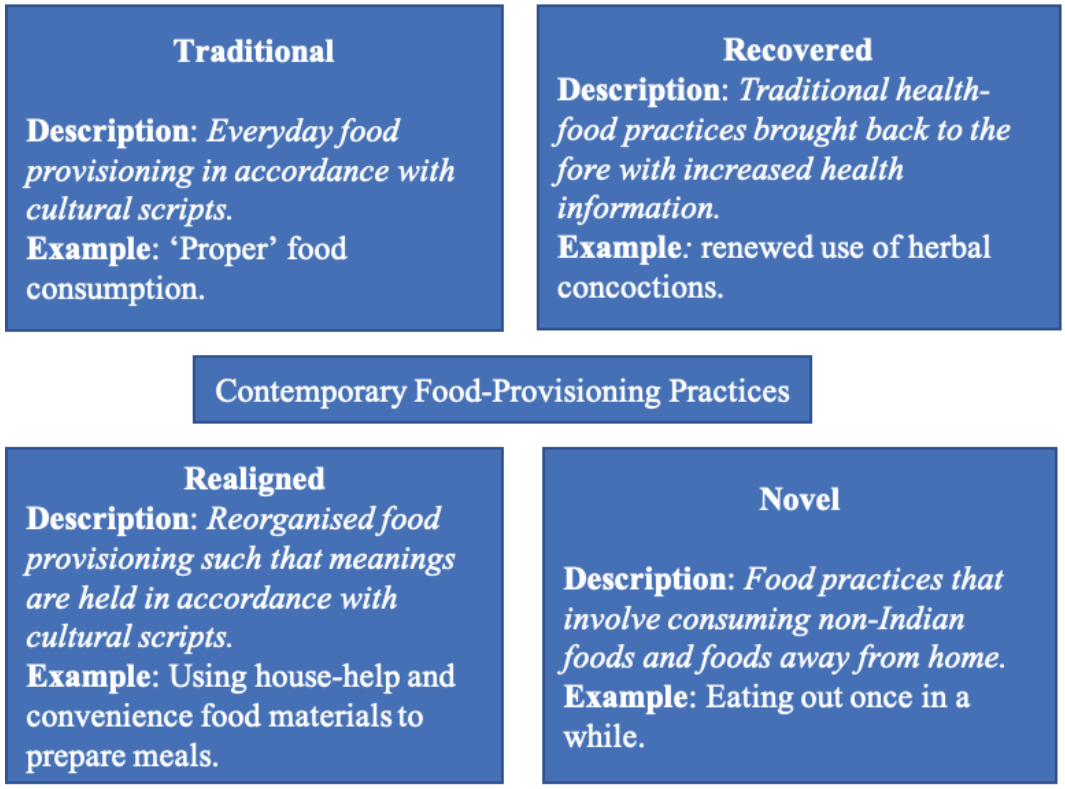

Figure 5.4: Four types of contemporary food-provisioning practices

A significant finding was that the realignment of disrupted food-provisioning practices was carried out in ways that resulted in changed practices which, however, retained the essence of old practices and were not fundamentally transformed. The findings of this study show how meanings in food provisioning were based out of cultural scripts that frame desirable experiences of food consumption (Cannifold & Shankar, 2013). While the subtle shifts in elements of practice can be explained owing to the strong dispositions of provisioners about how food provisioning should

be, the strategic approach used by food provisioners in managing disruptions by holding onto the shared meanings of food provisioning in integrating the practice via alternative materials and competencies, that are easily available in the emerging economic environment of India, is illustrative of their agency about how to go on in adverse conditions (Schatzki, 2010b). In tracing these trajectories of food-provisioning practices, this study identifies that while recent changes in consumers' lifestyles although disrupt routine food provisioning, food provisioners were observed as managing disruption by realigning practices in ways that allowed balancing their traditional and modern lifestyles. Theoretical implications of these findings are discussed in the next chapter, Chapter 6.

Chapter 6: Discussion

The primary purpose of this study was to explore the food-consumption practices of middle-class consumers in the transitioning consumptionscape of India. The study was based on the thought that recent economic liberalisation and globalisation in India have disrupted the traditional and cultural ways of food consumption among the middle class as an emerging consumer group. A secondary purpose of this study was to explore everyday food consumption through a social practice theory lens and specifically examine the role of consumer agency in practice dynamics. To achieve these two objectives and by conceptualising food provisioning as an integrated practice indicative of food consumption in its holistic context in middle-class Indian households, I developed the following central and sub-research questions:

> *How do Indian middle-class consumers, in a transitioning consumptionscape, configure their food-provisioning practices and how do they manage any disruptions in their food provisioning to regain a sense of security?*
>
> Sub-questions:
>
> 1. *How is everyday food provisioning carried out in Indian middle-class households?*
> 2. *What dominant and persistent practices are continually reproduced in everyday food provisioning?*
> 3. *What conflicts and concerns, if any, are disrupting the organisation of everyday food-provisioning practices?*
> 4. *How are normative contestations of everyday food provisioning negotiated?*

I analysed the data collected from the qualitative semi-structured interviews, projective-technique exercises and observations using a specially designed praxiographical approach focused on practice-constituting elements and the trajectory of food-provisioning practices. The subject of this chapter is to answer these research questions and provide insights and contributions that can inform practice theory, consumer culture and marketing research.

Figure 6.1 summarises the chapter's praxiographical approach and organisation in following Nicolini (2017) methodological recommendation of

zooming in and out of practice analysis. When zooming in, the discussion in this research investigated the way practice-constituting elements – meanings, materials and competencies – were being integrated and re-integrated into performance of food-provisioning practices. The discussion especially focused on the way meaning in a practice regulated its performance and (meaning-mediated) stability and any change in food-provisioning practices configured food consumption. In zooming out, the discussion focused on the role of agency in practice performance. With the lens zoomed out even further, the discussion then applied the construct of ontological security in explaining the way the plenum of practices in food provisioning was oriented for consumers belonging to the middle class in the changing economic and socio-cultural environment of India. This chapter draws from the findings presented in the earlier chapters and discusses the research results from the perspective of the ways practices were being performed, negotiated and re-constructed in these consumers' food-provisioning processes.

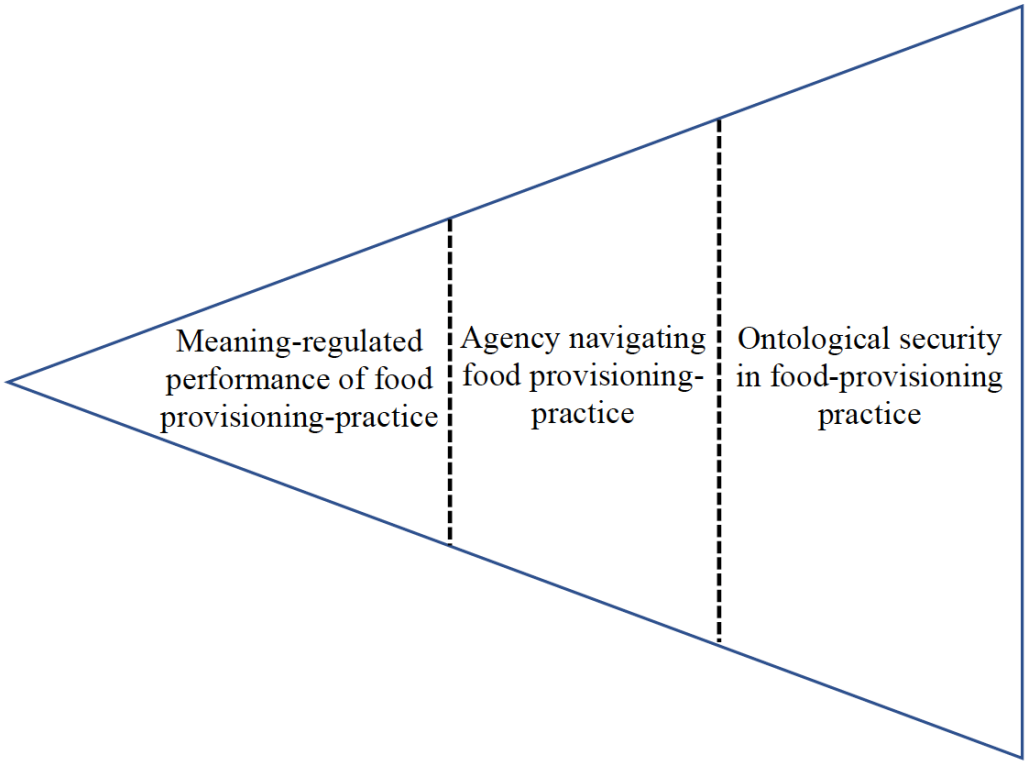

Figure 6.1: Schematic for the widening lens of the organisation of the discussion in this chapter

6.1 Summary of the findings of this research

A significant finding of this study in relation to Sub-question 1, 'How is everyday food provisioning carried out in Indian middle-class households?', was the continued engagement of food provisioners in the performance of traditional food practices such as the provision of 'proper' meals, freshly prepared at home from scratch. The finding that routine food provisioning in the studied middle-class Indian households continued to be deeply entrenched in traditional and cultural practices was significant, as it contradicted contemporary food studies conducted in Indian as well as other societies (e.g. Charlebois, Somogyi, and Kirk (2020). While this difference indicates variations in consumption behaviour owing to cultural specificities, the findings of the current study indicate that the stability of routine food provisioning is significantly influenced by shared cultural, practical and discursive understandings of the practice elements that integrate routine food provisioning.

Therefore, with regards to Sub-question 2, 'What dominant and persistent practices are continually reproduced in everyday food provisioning?', the shared cultural scripts about all meanings (e.g. eating, health and care; good, appropriate and health-benefitting food materials; and competencies in the traditional ways of handling food) were all dominant characteristics of routine food-provisioning practice that were found to enable its reproduction and diffusion. This analysis of the stability of routine food provisioning empirically extends the work of other researchers (Ganguly, 2017; Sahakian et al., 2018; Thomas & Epp, 2019) in relation to the power of cultural scripts in consumption. These findings contribute to explicating the claim that practices resist change (Hargreaves, 2011; Warde, 2005a). The adherence of these food provisioners to cultural scripts in defining the materials, competencies and meanings constituting food provisioning placed firm boundaries around the practice and enabled its reproduction. This is an important finding, as the stability and recovery of consumption practices has implications in the understanding of consumer behaviour and change (van Tienoven, Glorieux, & Minnen, 2017).

This current study revealed boundary conditions showing how, and under which circumstances, practices shift when routines are disrupted. The findings described in Chapter 5 traced the trajectory of food-provisioning practices as they were being performed under situations of constraint and answered Sub-question 3,

‘What conflicts and concerns, if any, are disrupting the organisation of everyday food-provisioning practices?’ Concerns and anxieties were shown as arising from disruptions caused by changing lifestyle, such as lack of time and ability to undertake efforts in routine food provisioning. Not being able to participate in food provisioning in accordance with social norms, ideals and shared practical and discursive scripts about what should be done and how should it be done was leading to these food provisioners facing conflicts and ontological insecurity (Thomas & Epp, 2019). Additionally, the preference of children in households for novel foods was clashing with these provisioners’ long-held beliefs and perceptions about impurity and unhealthiness and posed challenges in the management of intergenerational differences in food choices. Further, while cultural scripts continued to be followed in relation to food consumption, the changing perceptions regarding the food provisioners’ role and identity were creating ambiguity about the appropriateness of their food-provisioning practices. The many changes in economic and social structures in India, along with media influences and exposure to global consumer culture, were also disrupting routine food provisioning. These findings contribute to the growing literature on the emerging complexities in the daily lives and the consumption contexts of consumers, especially in developing and globalising economies, and they have implications regarding how markets could respond in mitigating the disruptions (Eckhardt & Mahi, 2012; Epp et al., 2014).

The findings of this study also uncovered the ways practices change and adapt to disruption, a much-needed understanding that contrasts with practice theories’ emphasis on habituation (Warde, 2005a). While previous studies have shown how new practices emerge (Arsel & Bean, 2012; Shove & Pantzar, 2005), literature tracing the evolution of practices from disruption to realignment is sparse (Epp et al., 2014). Analysing the performance of disrupted food provisioning by answering Sub-question 4, ‘How are normative contestations of everyday food provisioning negotiated?’, enabled mapping the various practices’ trajectory by showing how certain practice elements were being decoupled and reassembled in new ways. The specific combination of alternative food materials and competencies as practice components and the way they enabled meeting, to a large extent, culturally held meanings in food provisioning, revealed patterns in which the realigned practices could bring routinisation and restore these practitioners’ ontological security. The subtle elementary shifts in re-organising their food-

provisioning practices allowed the double benefit of being able to manage practice disruptions as well as adhere to cultural scripts and norms pertaining to provisioning freshly prepared food at home. In response to Gilbertson's (2018) and Kaur's (2016) notion of middle-class Indian consumers striking a balance between traditional values and novel opportunities of consumerism, the current study of the realignments of food provisioning contributes to the literature by providing empirical evidence into middle-class consumers' ways of negotiating and optimising consumption practices in accordance with their new lifestyles.

Through this exploration of the performance of food-provisioning practices that are being challenged in the changing consumptionscape of India, the current study's findings join and extend a growing body of consumer culture research during social change. Citing the limitations of practice theory in being able to explain change, previous practice theory-based studies have sought support – also referred to as contamination (Warde, 2019) – from other theoretical approaches in examining change: for example, assemblage theory (Canniford & Shankar, 2013; Epp et al., 2014), conventions theory (Stamer, 2018) and transitions theory (Crivits & Paredis, 2013). Through its microlevel research approach for examining the orchestration of routine and disrupted food provisioning, and by analysing the realignment of disrupted food-provisioning practices through foregrounding the significance of meaning as a practice-constituting element, the current study contributes to and extends practice theory's ability to explicate consumption-related change.

In the following sections of this chapter, I discuss three (interrelated) theoretical contributions to practice theory and consumption research and draw several conclusions. While some of these contributions can be readily placed within existing debates in the literature on consumer research and practice theory, others extend the existing literature by offering new concepts, perspectives and linkages to traditional theories. Following that, I discuss the methodological and practical implications of the findings of this research and I conclude this chapter with a summary of the limitations and future research opportunities that could extend this study.

6.2 Research Contributions to theories of practice

6.2.1 Meaning regulates food-provisioning practice

In examining everyday food consumption, the first contribution of this thesis is to extend the theoretical understanding of the way meanings in practice are implicated in the reproduction and realignment of food provisioning during social change. Previous studies have acknowledged the realignment of disrupted practices through the transmission of the three constituting elements – meanings, materials and competency (Cannifold & Shankar, 2013; Shove, Pantzar & Watson, 2012) – but they have fallen short in explaining first, the hegemony of specific practice elements in shaping and regulating the performance of realigned practices and second, that while the transmission of practice elements such as materials and competencies occurs in response to disruptive environments, meanings (in food provisioning) articulated from cultural scripts are slow to transition (Gowricharn, 2019; Khare, 2011). Meaning, as a practice-integrating element, represents the cognitive, emotional and motivational aspects of engagement in a practice; is culturally and conventionally derived; and is deeply anchored, such that it translates into heuristics (Sahakian et al., 2018; Shove et al., 2012). These characteristics have been found to allocate an agentive power to culturally scripted meanings, making them less malleable and slow to change (Sahakian & Wilhite, 2014).

With respect to analysing the role and status of practice elements in social practices, the existing literature has not emphasised the relative role of practice elements (meaning, material and competency) in the integration of a practice. Some differences exist, with Shove et al. (2012) locating materials on par with meanings and competencies, while recent studies (e.g. Domaneschi (2019); Maller (2015); Twine (2018) have indicated the importance of materials in bringing about change in practices. The current findings, however, indicate that in relation to (food) materials and competencies (of provisioning), meanings (affective, symbolic and instrumental) as culturally shared emotional and aspirational goals can orchestrate[23] the flow of food-provisioning practice performance (Hand & Shove, 2004). The current study

[23] Hand and Shove's (2004) concept of 'orchestration' is the process through which practice regimes are made and sustained. In their study, regime changes in the kitchen arose through a shift in the set of relations among meanings, material and competence. However, in this current study, meaning was found to orchestrate both the reproduction and the realignment of food provisioning.

extends the scope of practice theory conceptualisations by foregrounding the dominant role of meaning in practice integration.

The theme ‘maintaining meaning’ in Chapter 4 showed that these provisioners’ performance of routine practices based on culturally embodied meanings of food provisioning provided favourable conditions for aesthetic experiences of food consumption (Arsel & Bean, 2012). Although in day-to-day routines of food provisioning, meaning a significant practice entity was not actively reflected upon, these provisioners’ narratives in describing their practices indicated that meaning in food provisioning was being articulated via cultural scripts formulated on Ayurvedic guidelines, as well as their normative understandings of what constituted ‘good’ food (Srivastava et al., 2018). A shared understanding of meaning in food provisioning was being disseminated by a loosely linked social network of expert prescriptions and norms concerned with aesthetic sensibility of the way food provisioning ought to be ((Arsel & Bean, 2012; Mish, 2007; Srinivas, 2006, 2011). Thus, their food-provisioning practices, integrated via such shared meanings, shaped the everyday procurement of food materials and the related competencies (cooking, serving, storing). While studies in the past have made observations of practices being deeply ingrained in their social context and embedded in the flow of day-to-day life (Delormier et al., 2009; MacDonald et al., 2018), the current study’s meaning-mediated integration of practice provides a theoretical explanation of the way practices remain ingrained and are reproduced over time.

Retaining the meanings of food provisioning is vital to the realignment of disrupted food-provisioning practice. This current study showed the way realigned practices could preserve the culturally embodied and shared meanings of food provisioning by the integration of alternative materials and competencies as helpful elements for managing disruption. Thus, in its orchestrating role, meaning regulated the elements of materiality and competence in practice as it selectively facilitated or inhibited the appropriation of goods and ways of handling them (Hand & Shove, 2004; Magaudda, 2011). For example, Reena’s selective appropriation of ready-to-cook food material allowed meeting the meaning of meals prepared at home and served fresh under the care of the provisioner, as opposed to the ready-to-eat varieties that were associated with a loss of authenticity and meaningfulness in her food-provisioning experience. Similarly, the negative values associated with new

health foods and the positive perceptions of the health benefits associated with traditional health foods led to their selective appropriation in the retention and recovery of traditional health-food practices. In relation to competence, these participants were managing disruptions owing to lack of time, while continuing to retain the meanings of food provisioning, by limiting the role of household help to taking care of only the menial chores of food provisioning. Sahakian and Wilhite (2014) suggested that the agentive power of practice-constituting elements is relative. In this current research, this meant that changes in the performance of food provisioning were manifested through more malleable practice elements, such as (outsourced) competencies and (convenient) materials, while the meaning held agentive power and thereby greater relevance for the realignment of disrupted practices.

As in the studies of Domaneschi (2019) and Twine (2018), the current study also found the socio-materiality of food relevant; however, the food provisioners' socially shared notions of food materiality, as in what was good and appropriate food, were tightly linked with the instrumental and symbolic meanings of food provisioning. The provisioners' anxiety about the use of packaged and processed foods, their lack of trust in (foreign) novel foods and the (advertised) health-benefiting properties of food products such as milk additives, cereals and health supplements, were shown to create negative meanings, leading to selective non-acceptance of such materials in the reconstitution of their food provisioning. In contrast, their negative perceptions around the quality of modern food products, as well as their lack of knowledge and trust in their health benefits, were found to reinforce their beliefs about the benefits of traditional health-food materials, as well the health practices associated with them (D. Ghosh & Smarta, 2017). The findings of this current study indicated that the recovery of traditional health-food-provisioning practices was significantly influenced by this clash in values associated with food materials and the re-integration of meanings in relation to dietary health. This theorisation is critical in explaining the recovery of other lost practices (e.g. cycling) in which both instrumental and symbolic meanings may be activated in response to disruptions caused by material infrastructures and changing lifestyles (Price, 2020; Shove et al., 2012).

The findings of this study have shown how these provisioners realigned disrupted practices based on a switch in the emphasis on one or more (affective,

instrumental or symbolic) aspects of meanings in food provisioning. This meant that disruptions caused by lack of time and skills could be managed be realigning their practices in accordance with the instrumental meanings of food provisioning, such that meals continued to be home-made (e.g. using convenience foods and/or the services of a maid). However, the disruptions caused by children's food demands (e.g. provisioning non-traditional foods with the help of packaged sauces and spices, or eating away from home) were being met in relation to affective meanings of care in food provisioning. The 'extended' meaning theme also explained how placing greater emphasis on affective and symbolic meanings of food provisioning could lead to the (once-in-a-while) inclusion of novels foods and foods away from home in the provisioners' practices. While this explains the way multiple meanings travel within a practice (Shove et al., 2012), this current study also indicates the relative endurance of meanings in realigned practices, as opposed to significant transitions in materials and competencies as a result of disruptions. Table 6.1 summarises the practice elements that integrated food provisioning as a routine or realigned practice in this study, showing the way instrumental, affective and symbolic meanings in food provisioning were being met by altering materials and competencies.

Table 6.1: A comparison of the constitutive elements in routine and realigned food provisioning

Food-provisioning practice	Meanings			Materials	Competences
	Instrumental: *Providing proper, healthy, home-cooked and fresh meals*	Affective: *Taking care of food, health, happiness and social growth-related needs*	Symbolic: *Meeting social and cultural food norms and codifications*		
Routine	Provisioner engages with practice performance	Responsibility of care (provide 'proper' food for the family)	Provisioning according to existing self-identity and social identity	Traditional ingredients, spices and home preparation of health foods	Time, effort, skill, traditional know-how, food is freshly prepared at home and from scratch
Realigned	Provisioner manages practice performance	Responsibility of care (provided as per family's food choices)	Provisioning according to changes in self-identity and social identity	Ready-to-cook foods, novel foods, food away from home, and market-bought health foods	Household help, convenience through pre-prepared foods

Such a theorisation of the dynamics of relationships within practice elements (i.e. meanings, materials and competency) permits challenging the traditional arrangements in theories of practice (Domaneschi, 2019). The hegemonic role of meaning in the alignment and realignment of food-provisioning practices contributes to minimising gaps in practice theory conceptualisations and facilitates their application in studying social change (Nicolini, 2017; Spaargaren et al., 2016). Additionally, meaning-mediated selective appropriation of materials and competencies has implications for the ways food consumption changes in response to disruptions. For example, in this study, a shift in consumer preference towards (traditional) herbal and natural products (Arya, Thakur, Kumar, & Kumar, 2012; Satow et al., 2008; Sharma & Garg, 2013) could be explained via the recovery of meanings in traditional health practices. Further, the role of meaning in the selective adoption of food products addressed the issue of ontological tension between the traditional and the modern as a concerning debate in the globalisation of developing markets. In linking food-provisioning practices with socio-culturally produced scripts and shared understanding of meaning, this study responds to the call for attention to the cultural reading of consumption as being complementary to social practice theory (Eckhardt & Mahi, 2012;(Sahakian, 2015); Spaargaren et al., 2013).

6.2.2 Consumer agency in food provisioning

The discussion so far has established the critical role of meaning in organising and ordering the performance of food-provisioning practices. However, zooming out from practice constitutions invites a focus on the role of the provisioners' agency in engaging and negotiating with the various practices in food provisioning. In studying consumption behaviour change, the current study adopted practice theory as a construct sitting between competing individualist paradigms (rational, economics) and a structuralist (cultural, sociology) paradigm (Warde, 2005b). Despite the consensus on many empirical and methodological aspects of practice theory approaches, the role of consumer agency in routine practice and change is, as yet, a matter of considerable debate (Caldwell, 2012; Spaargaren & Oosterveer, 2010; Spaargaren et al., 2016; (Welch & Warde, 2015). Shove et al. (2012) provided a sense of the way social change occurs, with practices being reshaped through changes in their constituent elements and people being carriers of such change. However, it is important to note that human agents are actively

involved in reproducing and responding to the changing linkages between the constituent elements (Spaargaren et al., 2016). The current study contends that the controversial status of agency in practice theory involves two issues that deserve further theoretical elaboration: the reflexive nature of agency in practice; and the transformative capacity of agency in practice performances.

In most accounts of practices (Bourdieu, 1990; Giddens, 1984; Schatzki, 2002, 2010b), as well as in this current study, human agents distanced from individualistic and rational accounts of agency carry routine practices in a non-discursive, auto-pilot mode and in ways that they have been successfully enacted in the past. This is made possible through an understanding of practical intelligibility, which defines individuals as being knowledgeable and capable agents who intuitively know their way around the world and what to do next (at most times) (Schatzki, 2010b). However, an internal dialogue is bound to arise when we are unsure about ourselves in relation to our circumstances (Archer, 2003; A. Gronow, 2008). For example, disruptions in the food-provisioning environment have been shown to disable the automaticity of performance (e.g. no time to prepare food from scratch), thereby prompting the carrier of the practice towards reflexive deliberations that enable mediating the process between structure and agency, to continue carrying out the routines of food provisioning (Gronow, 2008). Caldwell (2012) and (Schmidt, 2017) supported this agency-based reflexive deliberation, finding it subordinate to habitual dispositions, yet prominent in situations of crisis.

In an attempt to establish a practice theory relationship between agency and structures, in this research I argued for a combined role of habitual dispositions and reflexivity in practice, seeking support from Lave and Wenger (2005) notion that a flow of reflexive agency is organised around practice trajectories of performance. This means that while these food provisioners continued to perform routine food provisioning in their habitual auto-pilot mode, their reflexive monitoring ability was evident only in the ways they kept in touch with the ongoing flow of events in their lives and were able to effortlessly shift between going with the flow (intuitively) and discursive and deliberate forms of practice performance as soon as the situation demanded it. For example, Preeto casually described swapping her made-from-scratch meals for packaged soups and noodles when she found herself short of time. Similarly, Rani made up for her lack of skills by preparing non-traditional foods with sauces and spices that were available from the market. While both these provisioners

acknowledged personal beliefs and social norms against the use of pre-packaged foods, their realignment of disrupted practices and managing the flow of provisioning was evidence of their reflexive agency in practice performance. In short, this study showed that when practice performance was de-routinised and disrupted in ways that made future engagement in the practice no longer predictable for the practitioners (e.g. availability of new food products, new ways of food provisioning), those instances of internal deliberation led to a switch to the discursive, reflexive or conflict-mediating agency of the doings and sayings in the practice. This proposal of reflexive agency in mediating ongoing disruptions in routine practices enables countering the risk of portraying social change in a deterministic way – that owing to shared history of bodily know-how, understandings, motivations and affects, human agents will do what others did before them (Nicolini, 2013; Reckwitz, 2002a).

Regarding agency in practice, another aspect of theorisation is the transformative capacity of individuals. Transformative agency refers to what individuals do in a specific practice given their access to the knowledge of the rules and resources relevant for the practice and the specific goals the individual aims to achieve (Schatzki, 2002; Spaargaren et al., 2016; Spaargaren & Osterveer, 2010). The food provisioners in the current study exhibited transformative agency through their strategic juggling of the instrumental, affective and symbolic meanings of food provisioning by adopting, re-adopting, adapting and negotiating them in performing food provisioning towards meeting their practice-related end goals of health, taste, social mobility and safety. For example, Anita exhibited transformative agency in switching from the instrumental meanings of proper food to symbolic notions of the importance of her son's knowledge of global cuisines. In contrast, Vinisha negotiated the culturally held meaning of a mother's responsibility for cooking and exerted her understanding of motherhood as managing the provisioning of meals (not necessarily at home) while prioritising spending quality time with her children. Although it can be argued that such a negotiation indicates a lack of cooking competencies, Vinisha's transformative agency was clearly articulated through her identity of being more than simply a cook in the kitchen. This ability of food provisioners to juggle with meanings, identities and emotions makes a case for consumer agency in food provisioning (Eckhardt & Mahi, 2004, 2012; Spaargaren et al., 2016). The transformative capacity of consumers and their ability to modify

everyday practices has resulted in consumption that challenges, reproduces and transforms social order, especially in emerging and globalising contexts (Izberk-Bilgin, 2010).

By theorising agency in practice theory as an ongoing flow of habitual, reflective and transformative moments of engagement in practice, the current study achieves a decentring of the individual (Shove et al., 2012) without succumbing to structural determination (Giddens,1984). While such an approach suggests participation in practices with an explicit focus on the individual, here it is only as members of their socio-cultural community. Such a focus, in turn, promotes a view of practices as being engaged in by specific people in specific circumstances, because practices do not exist in isolation; rather, they are part of the broader systems of shared relations in which they have meaning (Warde, 2005a). These systems of relations are developed and reproduced within social communities and individuals are defined by these relations. The findings described in Chapter 5 showed the ways practices were aligned such that the individuals' meanings of food provisioning, although resembling the core and shared meanings of food provisioning, were independently and differently articulated into their food practices. For example, Vinisha, contrary to the social order, realigned her food provisioning through meals outside the home, while Rani sourced ready-made sauce packs to use at home. This suggests that while practices survive because they are constantly performed, a change in practices results from individual's experimentation, resistance, creativity and emotions – that is, their agency (Collins, 2004; Neuman, 2018). In presenting an agency-based conceptualisation of food-provisioning practices, this current study draws support from studies in other domains, such as those of (Wolfson et al., 2017) with regard to the development of cooking skills and (Gram-Hanssen, 2010) in exploring sustainability within standby energy consumption. Thus, it contributes towards meeting the existing gaps in social practice theory as regards explanation of change in social, material and technological environments (Spaargaren et al., 2016)

6.3 Contribution to consumption research

By recognising that practice is not only a mechanical form of routinised performance but also constitutive of agency, the above discussion explicates the way agency is configured in undertaking change. However, practice theory does not fully

account for the motivational issue of why and how agents make strategic choices of seeking (or not) a change in the established practices that they value (Caldwell, 2012). Additionally, although not a focus of the current study, a comprehensive understanding of consumption cannot be delinked with individuals' identity (Arnould & Thompson, 2005; Thompson, 2014). This is particularly the case in this current research context, where food provisioners' identities as mothers were ongoing negotiations between the society, economy and culture and their practices were continually evolving with their sense of self, their role continually being re-invented (Neuman, 2018; Ritch & Brownlie, 2016). By linking the empirical aspects of food-provisioning practice and agency with theorisations of identity and ontological security, the current study contributes to consumption research (Warde, 1994), aiming to complete answering the central question of this research:

> *How do Indian middle-class consumers, in a transitioning consumptionscape, configure their food-provisioning practices and how do they manage any disruptions in their food provisioning to regain a sense of security?*

6.3.1 Food provisioning to maximise ontological security

With the analytical lens completely zoomed out, the most significant aspect of agency in food-provisioning practices involves a discussion of the food provisioners' fundamental need to maximise their ontological security (Warde, 1994). This part of the discussion begins by locating ontological security as essential for the self-constitutive identity of the agent–food provisioner and as a decisive factor when food provisioners decide how to put their agency to use in undertaking practice change (Östberg, 2003). According to (Berenskoetter, 2020), seeking ontological security drives choices and behaviour. For this study, I drew on the growing literature on ontological security to show that the search for ontological security is a primary motivator for provisioners to use their agency for change in food-consumption practice (Tess, 2019). In doing this, the current study was inspired by and followed (Flockhart, 2016) argument that, in addition to responding to changing structures, agents also act with purpose and intention – sometimes to bring about change but always seeking to maintain or re-establish ontological security. The discussion here complements Phipps and Ozzane (2017) but also offers a direct extension by showing that ontological insecurity results from not only material

constraints but also from disruptions resulting from constraints imposed by social structures and the transitioning roles and identities of food provisioners (Gronow, 2008).

6.3.1.1 Retaining ontological security

The idea of ontological security implies there is no agency without self-identity and by virtue of enacting it, our identity is always wrapped up in our actions (Berenskoetter, 2020; Croft, 2012; Neuman, 2018). Ontological security can be said to be present when an agent has a stable view of self; the absence or disruption of ontological security overwhelms the individual, leading to anxiety and fear (Giddens, 1991). To limit their anxiety, individual provisioners perform routine food practices as they seek a stable cognitive environment, bringing ontological security (Berenskoetter, 2020; Phipps & Ozanne, 2017). Thus, in the current study the theme of maintaining meanings indicated the food provisioners' agency in retaining ontological security through a reproduction of food-provisioning practices; linking routine food practices with ontological security signified the role of agency, albeit at a very basal, non-reflexive level, in managing everyday living (Flockhart, 2016).

6.3.1.2 Regaining ontological security

Day-to-day living necessitates undertaking non-routine action and the ability to cope with such changes is a sign of possessing ontological security (Giddens, 1991). Therefore, findings about practice realignment indicate that while ontologically secure individuals prefer a stable cognitive environment, they can also cope with induced change or disruption and continuously incorporate change into their practice, narratives and identity constructions (Croft, 2012; Gouveia & Ayrosa, 2020). A change in practice performance that is perceived as successful may strengthen ontological security by providing the individual with a sense of pride and positive self-esteem (Flockhart, 2016; Gouveia & Ayrosa, 2020; Phipps & Ozanne, 2017). For example, in the current study, the use of convenient, ready-to-cook food products was perceived as a successful action in saving time and effort for the provisioner. Conversely, their ontological security could be undermined if the change in practice was perceived as unsuccessful, such as the use of ready-to-eat food products being contradictory to the self-identity and narrative of the food provisioner. Thus, the sustainability of change is dependent upon the perceived success or failure of the new action.

According to Flockhart (2016), individuals develop a framework for maximising their ontological security through their 'being' in terms of identity and narrative (who I am) and their 'doing' in terms of their practice (what I do). It therefore appears that ontological security can significantly influence individuals to exercise their agency by undertaking change in their practice. In exercising a strategy of being, food provisioners aim to achieve coherence between a positive and status-enabling identity that enhances self-esteem and a convincing narrative that can incorporate any structural changes and provide biographical continuity (Gouveia & Ayrosa, 2020). Identities are constituted and maintained through membership in a social group (Croft, 2012; Gronow, 2008). This was observed in the cases of Vinisha, Ankita and Rumi, whose changing identities created incoherence within their membership in the social group of provisioners that included their mothers. To reduce their insecurities and anxieties and to re-establish their ontological security, these provisioners joined alternative social groups, such as modern food provisioners, who could provide alternative identity signifiers (such as nationalism or religion, as seen in (Kinnvall, 2004), enabling the formulation of narratives that emphasised alternative ways of achieving pride, honour and self-esteem.

According to Flockhart (2016), individuals seek to maximise their ontological security through a strategy of doing. However, since practice has an important influence on both narrative and identity (Schatzki, 2011), this process depends on whether the practice undertaken positively reinforces the individuals' identity (Botero, 2015). As routine practices have a reinforcing effect on the identity construction process, this further explains the stability of proper food-provisioning practices, as discussed above in Section 6.2. Therefore, practice change is usually resisted and is likely to manifest in two conditions. First, routine practices can become dysfunctional when they are unable to accommodate changing lifestyles that disrupt the performances of routine food provisioning (Flockhart, 2016). The inability of the food provisioners in this study to perform practices in accordance with their identity–narrative nexus as traditional food provisioners led to a loss of ontological security. They re-established this security via changes in practice (e.g. using a maid's help in cooking), allowing continuity in both their food provisioning and their self-identity. Second, routine practices may be unable to cope with a provisioner's changing self-identity as a modern food provisioner and their narrative of being cosmopolitan with their food, with this disconnect between practice and the

narrative–identity nexus having detrimental effects on their ontological security and leading to changes in practices to restore it. In this study, Ankita resolved this by exposing her child to non-traditional and global cuisines, while Vinisha exchanged her time in the kitchen with quality time with her children.

Flockhart (2016) noted that food provisioners shuttling between their traditional and modern narrative identities were less likely to engage with new practices. In this current study, although an esteem-enhancing identity was supported by Archana's and Preeto's practices of consuming non-Indian foods or eating away from home, their engagement with such practices was only occasional, as they preferred the status quo sustained through their routine practices. This 'once-in-a-while' approach of eating away from home was illustrative of the provisioners' occasional actions in shuttling between narrative identities of being both traditional and modern food provisioners. While Flockhart (2016) found that this paradox of agents preferring stability yet needing self-esteem was difficult to achieve, the food provisioners in this current study were seen to mitigate the disruption in their routines and changes in their identity through creatively realigning practices in ways that did not destabilise their status quo to a great extent. In addition, they enhanced their self-esteem by providing avenues for the development of a strong narrative in reaction to changing socio-structural forces.

The discussion above provides an overview of the food provisioners' identity and ontological security linkages with food-provisioning practices. The study found that the food provisioners' narratives around routines and their flexibility and creativity of change were toolkits for maintaining their sense of ontological security. Although ontological security concepts are mostly applied to studies of international relations and organisations (Flockhart, 2016; Greve, 2018; Kinnvall, 2004), by linking it to practice theory consumption research, this current study contributes to the recent call for empirical studies to apply practice theory and draw theoretical inspiration from social ontology (Welch & Yates, 2018).

6.4 Empirical implications

Food provisioning and collective identity of middle-class consumers

Developing theory for understanding social transformation is essential for consumption research, yet mainstream accounts of consumption focus on individual

aspects and neglect the role of collective action (Welch & Yates, 2018). Additionally, while theories of practice have proved generative for the study of ordinary consumption, they have struggled to accommodate the roles of collective agency and purposive collective projects in consumption during social change (Welch & Warde, 2015). The current study utilised practice theory conceptualisations to identify routine food provisioning as a shared activity and, by linking it to the collective ontological security, has made suggestions about how this type of activity may influence consumption activities for collectives such as the middle-class consumer group.

Shared practices matter sociologically because they yield power and through their characteristics, objectify cultural changes in everyday living for the group of consumers performing these practices (Shove et al., 2012). An empirical analysis of shared practices allows us to reflect on culture and power in theorising social practices of consumption (Plessz & Wahlen, 2020). Welch and Yates (2018) defined practices that are shared without being performed together as 'dispersed collective action'. The food provisioners' narratives and actions in this current study indicated that proper food-provisioning practices, as dispersed collective action, were shared beyond being socially recognised and mutually understandable forms of actions. This means that while practices may be shared to a different extent, or performed in different ways, their core integration remains. The stability of 'proper' food-provisioning practice was established via an exploration of participation, commitment and temporal concentration, as characteristics of shared practices (Plessz & Wahlen, 2020).

Participation as a characteristic of shared practice refers to the number of practitioners a practice has recruited (Shove et al., 2012; Truninger, 2011; Twine, 2015). In the current study, despite differences in their participation styles, all participants exhibited their responsibility for participation in food provisioning. Additionally, in India, despite regional differences, cultural guidelines and prescriptions about food make participation in food provisioning almost a default practice in almost all middle-class households (Bruckert, 2015; Ganguly, 2017; (Sathyamala, 2019). Further, as food provisioning is perceived as a significant aspect of the identity and role responsibility of women and mothers in middle-class households in India, participation in it is more or less obligatory (Dhawan, 2005; Jackson, 2010; Srinivas, 2011).

The second characteristic of shared practices is the practitioners' commitment to it in terms of resources and time. As in the case of Truninger's (2011) study, in the current study the degree of pride, time and effort invested by food provisioners into food provisioning captured the value and priority of the practice in their daily routines. Sociologically, this is of significance because a practice that succeeds in taking precedence, becoming part of the individual's social role and requiring large amounts of time, becomes part of the social identity of a category of people (Shove et al., 2012). As seen in identity studies of Indian middle-class females, food provisioning as a dominant project is part of the institutional role performed by women in most Indian households (Dhawan, 2005).

The third characteristic of shared practices, temporal concentration, is a key indicator of dispersed collective activity, in that the participants engage in the practice in similar ways even without coordinating explicitly around it. In accordance with Welch and Yates' (2018) empirically relevant indicators of concentration, this current study found a high degree of similarity among the participants in terms of coordination and regulation of the performances of food provisioning. In particular, there were similarities in their food-provisioning practices in relation to shared understandings of material factors (i.e. proper food, freshly prepared from scratch), spatial factors (i.e. freshly cooked at home) and temporal factors, such as what types of meals/foods should be provided at certain times (e.g. morning routines, seasonal health-food routines) and in certain locations (e.g. home, school, work).

While an understanding of shared practices such as routine food provisioning is significant in the consumption context for marketing research, this type of shared commitment conveys the power of a practice in capturing consumers' time and attention, as well as the organising of other practices around them (Schatzki et al., 2005). Such shared patterns of practices performed in similar ways contribute to the formation of collective identities (Shove et al., 2012; Plessz & Wahlen, 2020). The more a practice is shared (i.e. the higher the level of participation, commitment and temporal concentration in a given society or cultural group), the more it contributes to this group's identity. This means that if a large group of consumers retain their commitment to routine food provisioning, then the practice continues to hold power. In this sense, proper food provisioning strongly contributes to middle-class identities

because participation continues, with a high degree of commitment and in specific ways (Ganguly 2017; Sahakian et al., 2018).

The sharedness of proper food-provisioning practices contributes to making someone feel Indian or to the development of their middle-class identity (Croft, 2012; Plessz & Wahlen, 2020). This has implications in the sociology of consumption, as the linkage between shared practices and collective identity can elaborate on the nature of change in consumption. Identity aspects of the individual and community share the same narrative and these aspects are routinely intertwined with each other (Jenkins, 2008). Most sociologists adopt a collectivist viewpoint that tends to emphasise the narratives and practices that shape social groups and give them a sense of community (Jenkins, 2008). For individuals in their daily lives, the community is one of the main providers of ontological security as the same routines and systems are shared (Greve, 2018). As seen in the context of the middle class in India, the community, through its shared beliefs and actions, can build a national biographical narrative (Berenskoetter, 2020; Gilbertson, 2018; Kinnvall, 2004). Thus, maintaining a collective identity, such as being a middle-class consumer, can provide ontological security (Croft, 2012). As Chernobrov (2016) says, 'belonging to a group gives feelings of power and security, self-validation and recognition, and social interaction. It also provides meaning and confidence' (p. 584).

Further, if an individual's need for ontological security is rooted in the psychological desire to minimise sources of anxiety, a group's drive to preserve its agency is rooted in the taken-for-granted institutional structures and practices, such as those of consumption (Croft, 2012; Kinnvall, 2004). Disruptions and threats to established practices of collectivities such as the middle class in India disrupt the predictability of the context in which they operate and require a collective response in adaptation of routines (Greve, 2018). The much-discussed 'balancing act' (Brosius, 2010; Eckhardt & Mahi, 2012; Gilbertson, 2018; Mathur, 2013) in many consumption domains, as well as the strategic reproduction and realignment of food-provisioning practices in the current study, may be viewed as the Indian middle-class consumer group's response to the changes in their consumptionscape and attempts to secure their collective ontological security.

The discussion in this section has shown the way engaging in shared and routinised practices can create collective ontological security for a middle-class group of consumers. The maximising of ontological security through the

performance of routinised and shared practices is suggested to be a significant motivator for exercising agency in maintaining group membership, confidence and meaning. This creates the possibility of identifying dispersed collective activity and advancing the relevance of practice theories for broader sociological questions relating to changes in consumer lifestyles, consumption and collective identities (Plessz & Wahlen, 2020).

6.5 Methodological implications

Both consumption and food are complex topics of investigation, each having many interlinkages to the other, as well as with consumers and related environments (Neuman, 2018; Warde, 2017). Understanding the interdependent and interrelated linkages and connections, their emergence and their development in specific cultural contexts requires qualitative process-oriented methodologies (Halkier, 2010). Utilising a combination of semi-structured interviews, projective-technique tasks, observations, photographs and field notes, as well as being a food provisioner myself, facilitated the gathering of rich data and insights about food-provisioning practices in the selected middle-class households in India and enabled emergent theorising. Such an approach allows bringing together data in different forms, enabling reliability and trustworthiness in the emergent theory. Future researchers who wish to experience a deeper understanding of the temporal aspects of everyday consumption practices could consider implementing additional tools, such as time-use surveys, to enable gathering data from a larger cohort of the representing population. This would be significant for large and diverse consumer communities such as India (Hirway, 2000; Plessz & Wahlen, 2020). Food and eating fall in the social domains of consumers' activities, demanding insight into the various networks and linkages connected with food consumption, for example, varying food choices within a household. With regards the collectivist social environment in India, the focus of this study on household food provisioning as the consumption junction of food practices, and the food provisioner taking care of all acquisition, appropriation and appreciation related consumption functions, led to a deeper and realistic understanding of food consumption in middle-class households (Hand & Shove, 2004; Jabs et al., 2007).

The inability of both rational and cultural theories of consumption to effectively account for the temporal and routine aspects of food consumption poses a

challenge (Warde, 2017). Adopting a practice theory lens in the current study enabled me to engage with everyday doings and social conventions, collectively routinised activities, embodied competences, shared and practical understandings, procedures and sociomaterial relationships. However, practice theory-based considerations in a study have methodological implications (Bueger, 2014; Nicolini, 2017). First, maintaining analytical focus on the performance of food-provisioning practice allowed me to study empirically the way food consumption was carried out, with a focus on materiality and changes in performance that enabled theorising about practice change (Shove et al., 2012). Second, the design and use of a specific praxiography as an analytical tool facilitated connecting theoretical concepts with empirical phenomena and assisted me in critically examining the corpus of data, allowing for themes to emerge and be scrutinised in the discovery and theorising stages. By selecting a specific composition of practice-integrating elements, following the trajectory of stability and dynamism within food provisioning and zooming in and out of practice performance, I have been able to contribute to a deeper and holistic understanding of food consumption and changes within it. Triangulation across all data sources, coupled with member checks with participants as well as peer debriefings, allowed me to validate whether my interpretations were true to the consumption experiences of the study participants and whether I had been able to uncover information that extended and challenged my understanding and thoughts about food consumption.

Being a food provisioner with Indian heritage and having lived in India for many years helped me to respond to the challenge within interpretive research of developing a researcher–respondent relationship characterised by trust, collaboration, shared knowledge and mutuality of purpose. My familiarity with the context and my thorough understanding and appreciation of the food-related culture in the regions under study allowed a democratisation of the research relationship with the participants and a meaningful co-interpretation of the phenomenon (Burr, 2015; Manning, 1997). As a researcher, I was able to recognise and be responsive to the cultural and linguistic nuances of the research setting, which enhanced the richness of the data, as well as its validity and reliability, and enabled a deeper and more accurate insight and analysis of the data. Future researchers wishing to study in cross-cultural domains may consider the significant implications of cultural

familiarity and sensitivity in enhancing their study's rigour (Halkier & Jensen, 2011; Pelzang & Hutchinson, 2017).

With an aim of maintaining objectivity in my insider–outsider food-provisioner status and to better understand my experiences as a researcher in this study, I continuously engaged in reflexivity throughout the data collection and analysis process. During the writing stages, my reflexive introspection took an autobiographical form. While being from the same culture enabled me to capture the real sense of food provisioners' lived experiences and how it feels to be conflicted and constrained in one's food provisioning, disciplined bracketing and detailed reflection on the subjective research process, with a close awareness of my own personal biases and perspectives, helped me to maintain objective reflexivity. By being completely immersed in the context of food provisioning, I was able to reflect on the complexities of changes in food consumption. This led to my theorising of the hegemony of meaning as a practice-integrating element, as well as the concept of agency in navigating practices and reinstating ontological security. Along with other scholars before me (Dwyer & Buckle, 2009; Pelzang & Hutchinson, 2017). I recommend that researchers with an insider status should be reflexive, to conceptualise the self within the context and the way the self-influences those who are being researched. In this current study, this integration of research methodologies facilitated a holistic understanding of changes in the consumption phenomena in question and added to the veracity of the contributions of this study to practice theory and consumer culture.

6.6 Practical implications

This study informs consumers and strategic practices in marketing through its identification of a consumer community's multiplicity of cultural influences on consumption, which can cause conflicts and tensions; consumers' reflexivity and creativity in realigning disrupted food practices, which result in glocalised hybridities of consumption; and consumer agency motivations in securing identity through consumption practices. The findings of this study have important implications for consumers, especially food provisioners. With women increasingly taking up more responsibilities outside the home, the frequency of disruptions in food-provisioning routines is likely to become greater. Encouraging consumers to build capabilities and providing them with the resources to do so can help with

overcoming the conflicts and tensions associated with practice misalignments. For example, consumers may benefit from cultural templates that provide scripts for ways to respond to potential pitfalls and motivate them to build competencies that enable better practice management (Thomas & Epp, 2019).

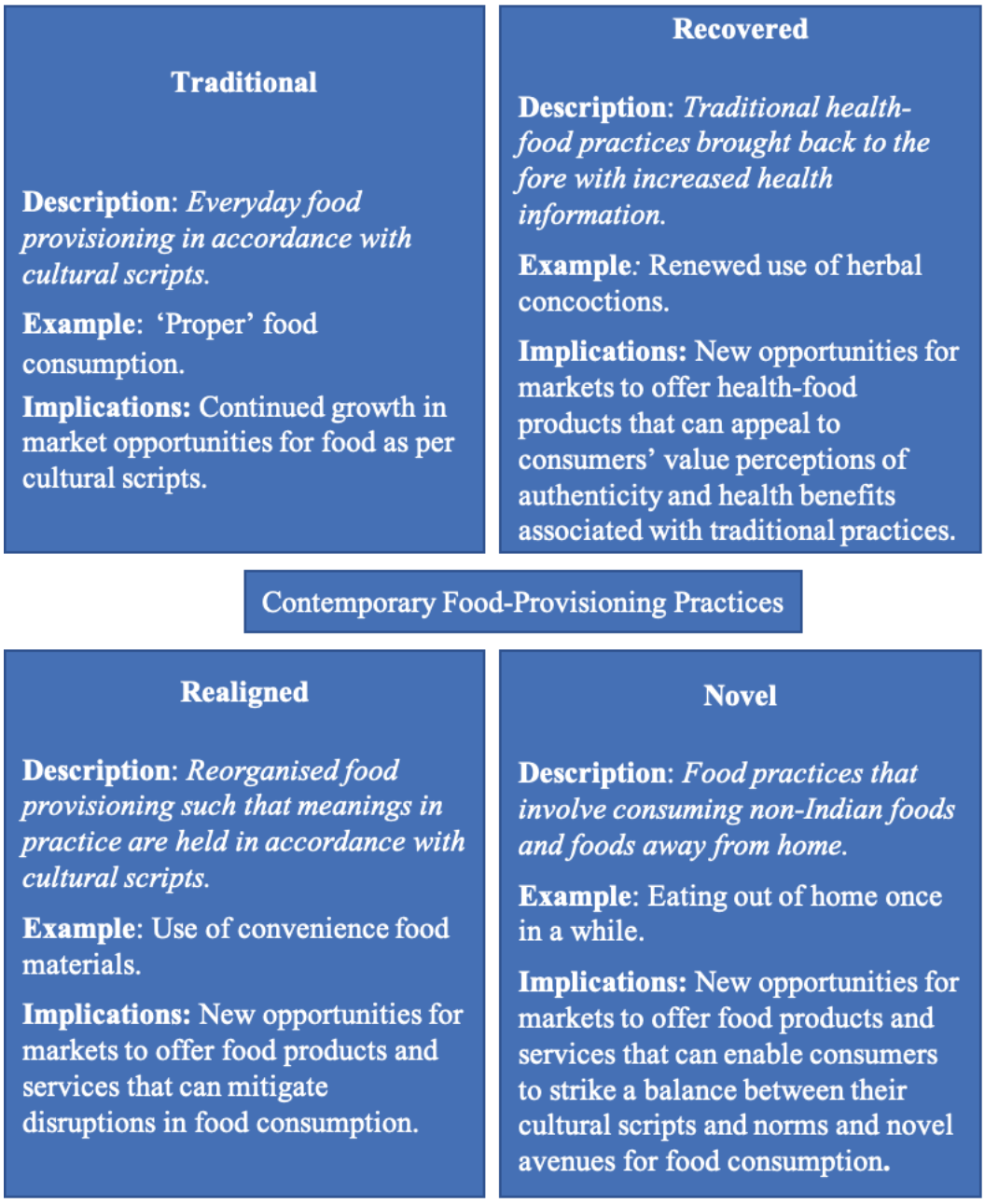

Figure 6.2: Four types of contemporary food-provisioning practice trajectories and their managerial implications

With consumers spending a high proportion of their incomes on food and groceries, this forms the largest consumption category in India. As the sixth-largest food market of the world, both local and global food players vie for space in the

Indian marketspace. This study has major implications for such food-related markets. Four major types of food-provisioning practice trajectories emerge from this study: traditional, recovered, realigned and novel. Further, the results of the study in terms of the meaning-regulated integration of food practices can clarify aspects that are of socio-cultural importance to consumers. These findings can be utilised by food marketers in offering niche food materials and food-related services that are aligned with the consumers' socio-cultural meanings of food consumption. The following discussion of the managerial implications (summarised in Figure 6.2) provides suggestions for new opportunities in food products and the food-service industry, as well as marketers' potential actions to enhance consumer acceptance and ensure their products and services can either cater to existing food practices or become integral to realigned or novel food practices.

The findings of this study offer insights into the way these participants selectively and creatively appropriated food materials to reproduce and realign meanings in food provisioning and the inherent complexities, confusions and tensions they experienced as they negotiated the challenges of everyday food provisioning. An exploratory approach in this study helped with uncovering the active participation of consumers in negotiating with the multiplicity of cultural influences operational during contemporary periods of social change. The understanding of these food provisioners as creative practitioners of everyday living helps to explicate the part that markets can play, first in furnishing products for the continued engagement of consumers in the traditional practices of everyday food provisioning and second, through new opportunities that enable the realignment of disrupted and dysfunctional practices. Opportunities to meet the requirements of a rapidly growing community of middle-class consumers in the traditional food space are growth promoting for both the local and international food industry. Past studies have identified the way novel and Western products launched in the Indian market have often failed to gain consumer acceptance (Choo et al., 2004; Gupta, 2013; Ling et al., 2004; Lysonski, Durvasula, & Madhavi, 2012; Shamal & Mohan, 2017). Further, the nature of consumer agency in emerging markets is a much-discussed topic in cultural anthropology, signalling the requirement for marketing practitioners to monitor consumer sentiments (Eckhardt & Mahi, 2004, 2012; Lysonski et al., 2012). Insights from this study in terms of the cultural prescriptions and the Ayurvedic guidelines being instrumental in building consumers' trust in specific

food materials and authentic ways of provisioning are, therefore, valuable in understanding the socio-cultural implications of food production and marketing-related activities. Similarly, advertising of new food products might benefit from reinterpretation to meet cultural meanings, consumers' trust and preferences. Further, the opportunity to resolve cultural tensions caused by contemporary consumerism and the power of brands in helping to resolve cultural contradictions can be fruitful for marketers in tailoring their offers (Holt, 2004).

The findings about these provisioners' continued and renewed engagement in traditional health-food-related practices revealed these middle-class consumers' deeply held perceptions of the authenticity and health benefits associated with them. Prompting consumers' reflexive agency by effective messaging that draws attention towards their health concerns has significant implications for health-food-related markets and other organisations, by encouraging consumption practices in accordance with the message conveyed (Stigzelius et al., 2018). Further, an understanding of the way meanings in traditional health practices are influencing consumer demand can yield important information for organisations involved in health and food system policies (Nichols, 2017). Finally, consumers' health concerns regarding processed foods, as revealed in earlier studies as well as the current study, have been instrumental in producing consumer movements and health policy measures(Alae-Carew et al., 2019; Law et al., 2019; Lysonski et al., 2012).

In addition, the results of this study contribute to studies and marketing practices to the extent that the market is a central element in the analysis of the relationship between individuals, their consumption and identity (Gouveia & Ayerosa, 2020). By analysing the link between agency, consumption practices and ontological security, and by discussing the way seeking ontological security can generate change in practices, as well as by ascertaining the role of collective ontological security in the consumption practices of a community of middle-class consumers, this study contributes to the understanding of consumer phenomena in society. These results are valuable for marketing practitioners in exploring the identity dimensions at both the individual and collective (middle-class group) level of consumers. This shows that changing identities of practitioners is crucial in the understanding of the making and breaking of consumption practices as well as waxing and waning of practice trajectories (Twine, 2015). Equipped with this information, brands can be positioned for delivering the socially validated

credentials appropriate for a modern yet traditional middle-class food provisioner identity (Brosius, 2010). Products and services that help resolve discrepancies in consumers' identity perceptions have been identified as marketing opportunities (Beverland, 2009; Champniss, Wilson, & Macdonald, 2015).

6.7 Limitations and future research opportunities

Although this study contributes to key findings on the stability of routine food provisioning, the regulatory influence of meaning and the role of agency in practice dynamics that embody the changes in middle-class food consumption, it has limitations. First, as the context of this interpretive study was household food provisioning, a site for honour, pride, identity, responsibility, culture, taste and economy, the narratives and practices represented notions that may not have accurately reflected the reality. Thus, these findings about the continuity and stability of routine food consumption may not be generalisable in another context of changing consumption. However, some of the findings from this study (e.g. the persistence of traditional consumption practices; the dominant role of meaning in integrating practices; and consumer's reflexive and transformative agency in balancing their consumption) could be further researched in other domains of challenged consumption. Some examples could include fashion and cosmetics (Kravets & Sandikci, 2014; Lukose, 2009; Pathak & Nichter, 2018), entertainment (Rao, 2010), technology and infrastructure (Mathur, 2010) and the transitioning consumptionscape of developing societies (Chandrasekara & Wijetunga, 2016; Gilbertson, 2018; Sandikci & Ger, 2002).

Second, the variations in the conflicts and tensions felt by the provisioners in this current study, even within the same social class, indicates the need to explore food-consumption dynamics using a sample incorporating greater breadth in, for example, age group and gender. Although the advertisement for participation in this study did not state any gender criteria, only one male participant was interviewed. One reason for this gender bias in the data collection is the common depiction and self-perceptions of the domesticity of middle-class women and their gendered role in relation to feeding and care (Daya, 2010; Dhawan, 2005; Maslak & Singhal, 2008; McLachlin, 2013; Srinivas, 2006). However, two husbands joined the conversation in their wives' respective interviews. A larger representation of males would have provided diversity in terms of responses around the conflicts and motivations related

to food. As Indian society continues to be patriarchal (Sooryamoorthy, 2012; Stoican, 2015) and the study participants said their food provisioning was subject to the preferences of their husbands and fathers-in-law, having greater participation from men might help us understand the gender hierarchy and any power struggles influencing food consumption. Future research focusing on household food consumption could interview both men and women, or families, to explore in greater depth not only the gender dynamics but also the intergenerational differences regarding food consumption.

While recent literature has referred to the influence of globalisation and economic liberalisation on consumer culture and behaviour in India (Brosius, 2010; Fernandes, 2006; Gilbertson, 2018), most empirical studies to date have focused on the influence on food of growing consumer access and affordability (Alae-Carew et al., 2019; Law et al., 2019; Sarin & Barrows, 2005). As this current study adopted a broad exploratory approach regarding contemporary food-consumption practices, it was unable to look deeply into specific aspects of food consumption. However, the findings of this study open up a number of avenues for further exploration. Examples of this could be cultural conflict and tensions in relation to the emerging consumer culture in other developing economies (Chandrasekara & Wijetunga, 2016; Sandikci, 2002), or the ways cultural scripts of meanings are extended in relation to food consumption, such as eating meat (Bruckert, 2015). This current study's findings about selective appropriation (or reappropriation) of products have value for greater exploration of globalised consumption through the lenses of theories of resistance (Izberk-Bilgin, 2010) and de-Westernisation (Glück, 2015; Lal, 2000) as well as in the understanding of consumption practice recovery in areas such as fashion (Wu, 2019)or yoga (Askegaard & Eckhardt, 2012). Additionally, the relevance of retaining and regaining ontological security through consumption practices, as seen in this study, imply that these two phenomena may have an impact on practices such as apparel consumption (Gouveia & Ayerosa, 2020) and migration-related consumption practices (Croft, 2012). Such explorations would inform and extend our knowledge of consumption culture and consumers' experiences and coping mechanisms.

6.8 Epilogue

In identifying the changing patterns of food consumption in the transitioning consumptionscape of India, an obligatory backdrop issue is that of globalisation (Pingali et al., 2019). Everyday routines in food consumption are determined not only by cultural and symbolic functions but also by (changing) economic and social structures that influence access, affordability, infrastructure and consumer lifestyles, thereby disrupting or obstructing food choices and practices (Zulauf, 2015). The emerging new middle class of consumers in India is increasingly mediating between the traditionally held meanings in food and a consumption culture influenced by globalised markets and exposure to international trends (Gilbertson, 2018). This yields to tensions, encountered at both the consumer and theoretical level, between food consumption driven by culture and consumerism. An analysis of the resulting dynamics in food consumption must therefore consider, along with the role of culture, both consumer practices of food consumption and the structural context that the consumer mediates with, which shapes and is shaped by these practices.

In this study I have demonstrated the resilience of the local food-consumption culture against some of the more inflated claims made in the name of globalisation (Jackson, 2004). In showing that cultural scripts continue to be of significance, particularly when mapping the contours of routine food consumption, this study has revealed unique features of a postmodernist consumer culture. However, while cultural specificities of food have continued to be shared within the community, increased economic ability and exposure to global forms of food consumption have led to alterations and, to some extent, modernised the food practices. Therefore, in the context of the current study, everyday food consumption in the emerging middle-class consumer culture in India has been found to be a paradoxical interplay between structural influences and cultural dispositions. In other words, food practices represent an interesting paradox, spurred by seemingly opposite cultural values and behaviours posited through changing economic and social structures. The study found that the ensuing paradoxical tension between traditional and modern was mediated through nuanced practices of food consumption that were not either/or but both/and. Thus, by not abandoning their cultural habits and guidelines in food and embracing cosmopolitanism, these middle-

class food provisioners could strike an appropriate balance by competently switching between multi-referential frames of food provisioning.

This study adds credence to the view of previous scholars that there are contextual nuances, which require the attention of researchers, in the consumption practices and consumptionscape of markets that differ from the Western context in socio-cultural, economic, ideological and political terms (Ganguly, 2017; Jackson, 2004; Jafari, Fırat, Süerdem, Askegaard, & Dalli, 2012). The current study addresses this call, to some extent, by providing a theoretical explanation for the way meanings in provisioning and consumers' agency interact with global and modern affordances of consumption, enabling balanced forms of niche novelties in food practices. Consumers' reflexive and transformative agency enables navigating between practices that allow ontological security. Shared notions of participation, commitment and temporal concentration in food practices explain the way a collective middle-class consumer identity is maintained and a balanced form of food consumption unique to this group of consumers persists, diffuses and evolves.

Recognising consumers' ways of reframing the paradox in food provisioning is an opportunity to acknowledge the 'artificiality of the dualisms' employed in analysis of social change (Gilbertson, 2018, p. 192). The ease and confidence with which these food provisioners moved between the different practices of provisioning, as per contextual appropriateness, can be likened to a yin/yang perspective. Analogising contemporary practices in food provisioning with yin/yang thinking helps to explain the way an optimal balance can be achieved, where seemingly opposite aspects of tradition and modernity complete each other (Pauluzzo, Guarda, De Pretto, & Fang, 2018). Thus, this study responded to the call for a move away from analysis in terms of binary choices of traditional versus modern and emphasised the ambivalent, partial and non-linear conception of social transformation (Fang, 2012; Khondker & Schuerkens, 2014). The food-consumption paradox and the mitigating of tensions through a yin/yang-styled balanced approach in food practices seem to be appropriate points of departure from which to examine consumer culture within collective groups and individuals. With both structures and cultures rapidly transitioning, especially in growing economies, the concept of paradox in consumption offers a broader perspective with which to understand the complexity of values and behaviours in consumption, as well as the validity of reframing such paradoxes in the duality of agency–structure frameworks.

Consumers' practices and ways of balancing their food consumption also highlights the need for multi-perspective approaches in social science and consumption research. The most important point emerging from this research is that social change manifests and consumers can grow and prosper through embracing a balance between opposing cultural values in a given context (even though the processes of globalisation and structural change may entail disruptions), allowing them to succeed eventually in balancing consumption-related paradoxes and managing cultural dilemmas effectively in a dynamic world.

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Appendix A : Ethics Approval

25 October 2017

Roger Marshall
Faculty of Business Economics and Law

Dear Roger

Re Ethics Application: **17/329 An exploration of functional food consumption practices followed by a select consumer group in India.**

Thank you for providing evidence as requested, which satisfies the points raised by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTEC).

Your ethics application has been approved for three years until 25 October 2020.

Standard Conditions of Approval

1. A progress report is due annually on the anniversary of the approval date, using form EA2, which is available online through http://www.aut.ac.nz/researchethics.
2. A final report is due at the expiration of the approval period, or, upon completion of project, using form EA3, which is available online through http://www.aut.ac.nz/researchethics.
3. Any amendments to the project must be approved by AUTEC prior to being implemented. Amendments can be requested using the EA2 form: http://www.aut.ac.nz/researchethics.
4. Any serious or unexpected adverse events must be reported to AUTEC Secretariat as a matter of priority.
5. Any unforeseen events that might affect continued ethical acceptability of the project should also be reported to the AUTEC Secretariat as a matter of priority.

Please quote the application number and title on all future correspondence related to this project.

AUTEC grants ethical approval only. If you require management approval for access for your research from another institution or organisation then you are responsible for obtaining it. If the research is undertaken outside New Zealand, you need to meet all locality legal and ethical obligations and requirements. You are reminded that it is your responsibility to ensure that the spelling and grammar of documents being provided to participants or external organisations is of a high standard.

For any enquiries, please contact ethics@aut.ac.nz

Yours sincerely,

Kate O'Connor

Executive Manager
Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee

Cc: Meenal Rai; Crystal Yap

Appendix B:

(a) Semi-structured Interview Guide and Researcher's observation guide

Interview Guide:

Starting Questions: Open and descriptive

- This interview is going to focus on food practices of the family, could you please tell me about your family that lives in this household? (Ages?). Please feel free to talk in the language of your choice.
- As the person primarily responsible for providing food to your family, could you please tell me about the tasks involved in this work?
- Could you describe for me how you go about your day as it relates to providing food for your family?
- Who else in the household assists in this tasks?
- What do you most enjoy in relation to food?

Understandings:

- Who prepares the meals in your household?
- How do you feel about cooking (enjoyable/nuisance)?
- How would you describe yourself as a cook (good, bad, boring, safe, adventurous, nervous, healthy, etc)?
- What factors make it easier for you to cook (time, facilities like maids, good kitchen, hobby)?
- What factors make it difficult for you to cook? (busy, facilities)
- According to you what are the important aspects of a meal?
- What according to you is special or important about preparing and serving food to the family?
    - What are your thoughts about feeding your family?
    - What do you think makes a family meal?
- What considerations do you have in mind when:
    - Preparing/cooking food,
    - Planning meals,
- Are food and health related? What according to you is a healthy diet?
    - What types are foods are healthy?
    - Please name some healthy food items.
    - Are these foods part of your family's routine diet?
- How similar or different are your food habits from your children?
    - How does this change things for you?
    - How does the family respond to your food choices?
    - What types of foods does your family enjoy?
    - Is there any disagreement? How do you change/or not change your cooking based on the family's choices?
- How would you describe your health and that of other members in the family?
    - Are there any health concerns for anyone in the household?
    - Do you worry about the health-related food choices of anyone in the family?

- What food items/ingredients do you usually include in your daily food preparation and serving that would help maintain good health?
- How do you know about these things?
- Which types of food items/ingredients do you avoid to manage health or prevent illness?
- How do you find out if a food item is healthy or not? (health symbols, labels, calorie, sugar, cholesterol, low fat, fibre)

Procedures:

- What does your family typically eat for breakfast? For lunch? For dinner?
- Has your food preparation or eating changed over time? Why? How?
- What do you do to make sure your family eats a good diet?
- How does the family respond to these actions you take? Children? Adults? Husband? Guests?
    - How do you decide what to do, when? Who influences these decisions of what will be eaten?
- What about foods that you pick-up to eat at home or elsewhere? (Foods that are purchased and ready to eat)
- Who does the grocery shopping?
    - Where do you usually shop from?
    - What do you consider when you are shopping for food items?
    - Do you make a list? Based on recipes? Weekly food plans? Children's choices
- If you could change anything about shopping and preparing food, what would it be?
- Do you take your child/children/family member with you shopping? How does this have an influence on your food shopping?

Engagements:

- Tell me about your regular or typical routine for eating and that of your family in any one day. Consider work and school schedules. What types of foods are prepared/bought?
    - What sort of meals do you have (favourites/last night?)
    - What is the general routine for breakfast, lunch and dinner at home?
- Let's use yesterday, explain your schedule from the time you woke up until the time you went to bed and include the times you cooked, served, shopped and ate and where.
    - Is this a typical day?
    - Are these foods part of your family's routine diet?
    - How do you think this routine is different, better or worse to when you were a kid?
- Describe the difference between a day there is an event in the family (like a party or festival) and a routine day.
- Describe the eating schedules on the week end. How do they differ from during the week?
    - Subsequent questions about what are the changes, if any, and how they are actioned, based on the participants' answer

- Considering you are so busy, how do you manage the shopping, cooking and serving of meals at home? (Prompt: help from family members, maids, cook extra when there's time, buy as some ready-to-use as possible).
    - How often do you have food deliveries/take-aways?
- If you could change anything about your household's eating style what would it be?
    - Are any of these concerns related to food and diet?
    - Which other food items would you like to include for better family health?
- In what ways do you think food now is better or worse than when you were a child?

Researcher's Observation Guide:

Participant name	
Interview date/time and city	
Physical environment (e.g., number of people in the household)	
Photos (with permission)	
Social environment (e.g., social dynamics, participants' interaction within the household setting, communication patterns, specific behavioural events, i.e., conflicts, decision-making,)	
Food provisioners & their role: meaning of what was observed from perspectives of participants	
Food Consumption artefacts present (e.g., food served, food products and packages stored in the kitchen/pantry/ refrigerators etc.): what food provisioners do with them	
Doings and sayings in food (e.g., gesture language, interactions with food and related objects & people): specific words, phrases, conversation summary, insider language	

Researcher subjectivity (e.g., reflexive ethnography: thoughts, ideas, questions, concerns; any impact I may have had on the situation observed)	

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TE WĀNANGA ARONUI O TĀMAKI MAKAU RAU

Appendix B: (b)

Participant Information Sheet

For use when interviews and observations are involved.

Date Information Sheet Produced: 12th September 2017

Project Title

An exploration of food consumption practices in select Indian households

An Invitation

My name is Meenal Rai and I am a PhD student in the Department of Marketing, Advertising, Retailing and Sales at AUT University in Auckland, New Zealand. I am conducting a research project on the food consumption practices of Indian consumers. I invite you to participate in this research. Participation in this research is voluntary and all information collected will be kept confidential. You may withdraw your participation any time before the completion of the research project without any effect to your rights.

What is the purpose of this research?

We consume different types food for reasons that include, among others, health, taste and price. Packaged foods are a non-traditional category of food products for Indians. The purpose of this study is to understand how Indians consume packaged food in terms of their choices for buying, cooking, and using these type of food products for various reasons. This is important because there is not much research about how culture and social habits influence the food consumption of Indians. I understand such research will help better inform the food industry/market about the wants and needs of Indian consumers. I am conducting this study for my PhD thesis requirement at AUT University in New Zealand as well as an opportunity to present the findings of this study at conferences and publish articles in academic journals.

Why am I being invited to participate in this research?

You have expressed an interest in this research via the social media advertorial posted by the researcher. The advertorial mentions the following criteria as required for participation in this research: (1) Annual household income (greater than Rs. 1,000,000), (2) Primary food provisioner (as someone taking most of the food related decisions in the household), (3) Living in either Mumbai, Ahmedabad, Indore or Varanasi, & (4) Fluent in English (reading, speaking and listening). Since you have expressed your interest in participating in the study, I understand that you meet all the above inclusion criteria for participation in this research. Based on this information, I request your voluntary consent to participate in the study.

How do I agree to participate in this research?

You can agree to participate in this research by emailing me your response at mrai@aut.ac.nz or signing the attached consent form and emailing it back to me at mrai@aut.ac.nz. I will also have copies of the Consent form available for you to sign prior to the actual interview. Your participation in this research is your choice and not participating will not disadvantage you in any way. If you choose to withdraw from the study at any given time, you will be offered the choice between having any data that is identifiable as belonging to you removed or allowing it to continue to be used. However, once the findings have been produced, removal of your data may not be possible.

What will happen in this research?

Following your acceptance to take part in this study, an interview date schedule will be mailed for you to choose a time of your convenience for the interview and for observations to take place at your home. The interview will be split into two stages. One longer (40-60 minutes) and one shorter (30-40) minutes. These will be audio recorded and I will also be writing notes. Questions will relate to how you store, cook, serve and shop for food products. Any personal information, for example age, gender and general information

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(i.e. marital status, occupation) which may be revealed in final reporting will not enable your identification. I will also make research observations in the form of notes and photographs. This will include taking pictures of your pantry and kitchen and any food that you cook/serve during my presence at your home. As part of the research study, I will also accompany you to a food shopping store of your choice and will make observations in the form of notes and photos of the food products that you shop for. The focus of the observations will, at all times, be you as the consenting participant and as the person making the most food related decisions in the family. No data will be collected about anyone else present in the household.

Your approval will be sought out for all the photos I take as part of the observations. Some of the photos taken may be used in final reporting but will not enable your identification (i.e. face, external landscape of the house). After transcription of the interview, you will receive a copy of the transcript for you to check (which should not take longer than 30 minutes to review) to ensure you are satisfied with the information provided as well as an opportunity for you to add further details if you wish to do so.

Online Focus group: As part of the second stage of data collection for this study, you are also requested to participate in an online focus group, also called 'online bulletin boards' or 'discussion boards'. This focus group-styled online discussion will happen approximately 6 months after the initial interview (between July & August 2018) and will involve other participants who have been interviewed as part of this research study. The online discussions will be conducted via the use of a software platform. Using a licensed copy of this software will provide a secure online service, meaning that nobody is able to see or access any part of the discussion unless they are part of the research. All participants will be given access to the bulletin boards via individual user IDs and passwords. To maintain privacy, all the participants in the online focus group will interact by way of choosing a false name.

The focus group will run over two days and will include similar questions as the interview and some other questions based on the preliminary data analysis. For two consecutive days, the boards will remain open from 8:00am to 8:00pm Indian Standard Time. This will allow you to log in at any time between this period and contribute to the discussion for as long as you wish to. I will post the initial questions in the morning and you can respond to the questions or to the answers/discussions posted by other members when you log in to the boards. When the boards are active, you may also log in and out of the boards as it suits you. The exact dates for the online discussions and your user ID and passwords will be mailed to you closer to time and once I have received your consent for participation.

What are the discomforts and risks?

There is a very minimal chance of any discomfort. For the interviews, I can assure you that the questions are non-invasive, as we are not seeking a level of detail that may identify you or create any discomfort.
The observation-based data collection process may seem discomforting, however I can assure you that the process of observation will follow all appropriate cultural safety protocols and will be conducted in a very sensitive as well as friendly manner.

How will these discomforts and risks be alleviated?

Participation is voluntary and if for any reason you feel uncomfortable, you are able to decline answering certain questions, or even withdraw from the research project at any time prior to the study's completion without any consequences. Additionally, you will have the opportunity of choosing a suitable time for participation to take place.

What are the benefits?

While being participants in the current research you are also consumers of different types of foods. Engagement in routine everyday food practices generally becomes a default action without much thought. Going through the process of interviews about your food practices may allow reflexive thought and action that may prove beneficial to you and your family. Further, post completion, the results of this study will be provided to the participants, which may further prompt thought and action in terms of engaging in food and health related practices. For the wider community, this study will provide both academics and practitioners

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with beneficial information regarding how food is consumed in modern Indian homes. This research will also allow me as the primary researcher, to fulfil the requirement for the award of PhD from AUT University in New Zealand.

How will my privacy be protected?

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your identity will remain confidential and will not be disclosed to anyone except to the primary researcher and project supervisors. To ensure privacy, your name will be changed to pseudonyms of your choice and contact information will not be disclosed in final reporting. Any data that the researcher extracts from the interview is for academic use only and all reports or published findings will not, under any circumstance, contain names or identifying characteristics. All data will be stored on a password protected memory stick and consent forms will be stored in a password protected cabinet with the project supervisor after the project is completed. Data and consent forms will be deleted after a period of six years. Contact details of the researcher and primary supervisor are provided in case of any concerns or complaints that need to be lodged.

What are the costs of participating in this research?

There are no costs to you other than your time to participate in the study. The interviews and observations will take 1-3 hours and a follow-up interview 6 months later which will take no longer than 60 minutes of your time over the two-day period.

What opportunity do I have to consider this invitation?

You can take your time to decide if you wish to participate in the research. However, it would be appreciated for you to respond within two weeks' time from the date the invitation is sent. You have the choice of selecting the most appropriate time from date options sent by the researcher for the interview to take place.

Will I receive feedback on the results of this research?

By completing a Consent Form or by responding to the invitation email, you may tick the box showing your interest in receiving feedback on the research's results. A result synopsis will be emailed to you once the study is complete.

What do I do if I have concerns about this research?

Any concerns regarding the nature of this project should be notified in the first instance to the Project Supervisor, Professor Roger Marshall, *roger.marshall@aut.ac.nz*, +64 9 921 9999 ext 5478.

Concerns regarding the conduct of the research should be notified to the Executive Secretary of AUTEC, Kate O'Connor, *ethics@aut.ac.nz*, +64 9 921 9999 ext 6038.

A small reward for you: As a token of appreciation for participating in this study you will receive a grocery gift voucher.

Whom do I contact for further information about this research?

Please keep this Information Sheet and a copy of the Consent Form for your future reference. You are also able to contact the research team as follows:

Researcher Contact Details:

Primary Researcher: Meenal Rai mrai@aut.ac.nz, +64 9 921 9999 ext 7563

Project Supervisor Contact Details:

Project Supervisor: Professor Roger Marshall roger.marshall@aut.ac.nz, +64 9 921 9999 ext 5478

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Observation Protocol

Project title: *An exploration of functional food consumption practices followed by a select consumer group in India.*

Project Supervisor: ***Roger Marshall***

Researcher: ***Meenal Rai***

As this research project is based on ethnography, it involves observation of participants engaging in food consumption practices as part of their everyday normal life. Observation may be intrusive on people's privacy, thus an observation protocol has been put in place to ensure that the observation is sufficiently focused so as to minimise this intrusion and to adequately provide the data required to achieve the research's aims. Observation will take place at the participants' home and at the food shopping instance.

How will people be recruited?

Initial contact with participants will be through a Facebook invite. The primary researcher will post a research participation invite with brief details of what the study is about. Once the interested participants get in touch with the researcher via email, the researcher would provide the eligibility for participation questionnaire. Following the validation of eligibility, further details of the research and data collection via observations and interview processes would be provided by sending the participant Information sheets.

How will people be informed about the observation?

The Participant Information Sheet (PIS) (a copy is attached) will have details of the observation process.

How will people consent to the observation?

Participation in this study is indicative of the participants' consent to take part in the observation. The participants will receive a consent form for them to sign before observation begins (copy attached). Participants can give their consent then. The researcher will seek participant consent once again before the start of the observation and assures the participants that the observations will not take place if the participants are uncomfortable. The researcher will also be carrying Participant Information Sheets which informs participants that acceptance of the researcher's study is indicative of their consent to participate in the investigation.

What will be observed, what data will be collected and how will the data be collected?

Based on the type of qualitative study being conducted, methodological sequences may develop, adapt and change throughout the progress of a study depending on the researcher's continuous iterative interaction and interpretation of the data (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Unstructured observation will be carried out, although an indicative observation guide is included in Table 1 which includes the data that will be observed and collected. Data observation should also answer the study's research questions of how consumers engage in food consumption practices of shopping, storing, cooking and serving. Data observed includes people (how they behave while engaging in food practices), their food related environment, and dialogue during the interviews. The researcher will collect the data by taking photos and handwritten field notes during events or shortly after to ensure details are not lost to memory and then transcribing them.

It is important here to note that despite the observations taking place in the participants' homes, the focus of the observation will at all times be the consenting participant as the primary food provisioner of the family. Whilst the researcher will observe the participant engaging in related food practices with others in the household, data will strictly be collected and analysed in accordance with the participant's engagement within the food practice related parameters as detailed in the guide. No data will be collected about anyone else present in the household. This would also be made known to the participants in the PIS. Additionally, all pictures taken as part of observational data will not identify the participant in any manner (i.e. participant's face, external pictures of the house, or the grocery/supermarket)

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How any deception involved will be managed?

There is no intention for this study to involve any deception. The researcher will do her best to avoid any form of deception by not coercing, deceiving or leading people to believing the researcher's intentions are not pure. The researcher will explain the purpose of the study at all stages of the recruitment and again at the specific time of data collection and will ask for the participants' informed consent, so no concealment or covert observations are necessary for this study.

The data collection instrument

Data collection instruments include a pen, a notebook, an audio recorder, and a mobile phone for taking pictures

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Reference

Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry* (Vol. 75). Sage.

Appendix B: (c)

Consent Form

For use when interviews and observations are involved.

Project title: An exploration of functional food consumption practices followed by a select consumer group in India.

Project Supervisor: Roger Marshall

Researcher: Meenal Rai

1. I have read and understood the information provided about this research project in the Information Sheet dated 12Th September 2017
2. I have had an opportunity to ask questions and to have them answered.
3. I understand that the researcher will conduct interviews in relation to my food consumption practices and will be taking notes during the interviews and that they will be audio-taped and transcribed.
4. I understand that the researcher will observe me and my surroundings and will take pictures and notes during the observations.
5. I understand that the researcher will accompany me to a food shopping trip to a food shop of my choice and that the researcher will observe me and my surroundings and will take pictures and notes during the observations.
6. I permit the researcher to use the photographs that are part of this project, either complete or in part, alone or in conjunction with any wordings solely and exclusively for (a) the researcher's thesis; and (b) articles, presentation material and examination purposes.
7. I understand that the photographs will not be published in any form other than those listed above without my written permission.
8. I understand that any copyright material created by the photographs is deemed to be owned by the primary researcher, Meenal Rai and that I do not own copyright of any of the photographs.
9. I understand that taking part in this study is voluntary (my choice) and that I may withdraw from the study at any time without being disadvantaged in any way.
10. I understand that for presenting the findings of this study, the researcher will offer me the choice between having any data that is identifiable as belonging to me allowed to be used as is or presented in a way that does not identify me.
11. I understand that if I withdraw from the study and/or online focus group then I will be offered the choice between having any data that is identifiable as belonging to me removed or allowing it to continue to be used. I also understand that if I withdraw at any point during the online focus group stage it may not be possible to destroy all records of the focus group discussion of which I was part. Additionally, once the findings have been produced, removal of my data may not be possible.
12. I wish to participate in the online focus groups (please tick one): Yes ☐ No ☐
13. If "Yes" for point 12, I understand that identity of my fellow participants and our discussions in the focus group is confidential to the group and I agree to keep this information confidential.
14. I agree to take part in this research.
15. I wish to receive a summary of the research findings (please tick one): Yes ☐ No ☐

Participant's signature: .....

Participant's name: .....

Participant's Contact Details:

Email : .....

Phone :.....

Address 1.....

Address 2.....

Date:

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Note: The Participant should retain a copy of this form.

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Consent Form

For use when personal photographs are involved.

Project title: An exploration of functional food consumption practices followed by a select consumer group in India.
Project Supervisor: Prof. Roger Marshall
Researcher: Meenal Rai

Dear,

I request the use of your photograph/s as a data collection instrument for my doctoral research. The photograph/s would only be used a projective technique tool to understand consumers' motivations, understandings and feelings about health food products. I assure you that confidentiality and privacy would be maintained at all times during and after the research process. Your name or any other detail would not be disclosed at any point during or after this research. If you agree with the use of your photograph/s as per the information below, please indicate your consent by signing this form.

- I agree to let the researcher use my photograph for her research.
- I permit the researcher to use my photographs that are part of this project, either complete or in part, alone or in conjunction with any wordings solely and exclusively for (a) the researcher's portfolio; and (b) educational exhibition and examination purposes and related design works.
- I understand that the photographs will be used for academic purposes only and will not be published in any form outside of this project without my written permission.
- I understand that any copyright material created by the photographs is deemed to be owned by the researcher (where the researcher has been commissioned to do the work, the name of the commissioning person or organisation needs to be used instead of 'the researcher') and that I do not own copyright of any of the photographs.

Individual's Signature: .....

Name: .....
Date:

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on type the date on which the final approval was granted AUTEC Reference number type the AUTEC reference number

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- I understand that the photographs will be used for academic purposes only and will not be published in any form outside of this project without my written permission.
- I understand that any copyright material created by the photographs is deemed to be owned by the researcher (where the researcher has been commissioned to do the work, the name of the commissioning person or organisation needs to be used instead of 'the researcher') and that I do not own copyright of any of the photographs.

Individual's Signature: M. C. Joshi

Name: Mikeshkumar C Joshi

Date: 23/08/2017

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Consent Form

For use when personal photographs are involved.

Project title: An exploration of functional food consumption practices followed by a select consumer group in India.
Project Supervisor: Prof. Roger Marshall
Researcher: Meenal Rai

Dear,

I request the use of your photograph/s as a data collection instrument for my doctoral research. The photograph/s would only be used a projective technique tool to understand consumers' motivations, understandings and feelings about health food products. I assure you that confidentiality and privacy would be maintained at all times during and after the research process. Your name or any other detail would not be disclosed at any point during or after this research. If you agree with the use of your photograph/s as per the information below, please indicate your consent by signing this form.

- I agree to let the researcher use my photograph for her research.
- I permit the researcher to use my photographs that are part of this project, either complete or in part, alone or in conjunction with any wordings solely and exclusively for (a) the researcher's portfolio; and (b) educational exhibition and examination purposes and related design works.
- I understand that the photographs will be used for academic purposes only and will not be published in any form outside of this project without my written permission.
- I understand that any copyright material created by the photographs is deemed to be owned by the researcher (where the researcher has been commissioned to do the work, the name of the commissioning person or organisation needs to be used instead of 'the researcher') and that I do not own copyright of any of the photographs.

Individual's Signature: .....

Name: Anjeli Lugo
Date: 22/8/17

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on type the date on which the final approval was granted AUTEC Reference number type the AUTEC reference number

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Consent Form

For use when personal photographs are involved.

Project title: An exploration of functional food consumption practices followed by a select consumer group in India.
Project Supervisor: Prof. Roger Marshall
Researcher: Meenal Rai

Dear,

I request the use of your photograph/s as a data collection instrument for my doctoral research. The photograph/s would only be used a projective technique tool to understand consumers' motivations, understandings and feelings about health food products. I assure you that confidentiality and privacy would be maintained at all times during and after the research process. Your name or any other detail would not be disclosed at any point during or after this research. If you agree with the use of your photograph/s as per the information below, please indicate your consent by signing this form.

- I agree to let the researcher use my photograph for her research.
- I permit the researcher to use my photographs that are part of this project, either complete or in part, alone or in conjunction with any wordings solely and exclusively for (a) the researcher's portfolio; and (b) educational exhibition and examination purposes and related design works.
- I understand that the photographs will be used for academic purposes only and will not be published in any form outside of this project without my written permission.
- I understand that any copyright material created by the photographs is deemed to be owned by the researcher (where the researcher has been commissioned to do the work, the name of the commissioning person or organisation needs to be used instead of 'the researcher') and that I do not own copyright of any of the photographs.

Individual's Signature: M. C. Joshi

Name: Nikeshkumar C Joshi

Date: 23/08/2017

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on type the date on which the final approval was granted AUTEC Reference number type the AUTEC reference number

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Consent Form

For use when personal photographs are involved.

Project title: An exploration of functional food consumption practices followed by a select consumer group in India.
Project Supervisor: Prof. Roger Marshall
Researcher: Meenal Rai

Dear,

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- I agree to let the researcher use my photograph for her research.
- I permit the researcher to use my photographs that are part of this project, either complete or in part, alone or in conjunction with any wordings solely and exclusively for (a) the researcher's portfolio; and (b) educational exhibition and examination purposes and related design works.
- I understand that the photographs will be used for academic purposes only and will not be published in any form outside of this project without my written permission.
- I understand that any copyright material created by the photographs is deemed to be owned by the researcher (where the researcher has been commissioned to do the work, the name of the commissioning person or organisation needs to be used instead of 'the researcher') and that I do not own copyright of any of the photographs.

Individual's Signature: .....

Name: Anjeli Lugo

Date: 22/8/17

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on type the date on which the final approval was granted AUTEC Reference number type the AUTEC reference number

Appendix B: (d) Social media invite for participant recruitment

A Study Exploring Food Practices of Indian Consumers

AUT

Hello

My name is **Meenal Rai**, & I am conducting a study for my **PhD thesis requirement at AUT University** in New Zealand. I am exploring the food consumption practices of Indian consumers in an attempt to better understand food related choices, motivations and conflicts.

If you live in Ahmedabad, Indore, Mumbai or Varanasi, are conversant in English, have an annual household income greater than Rs. 1,000,000 (INR Ten Lakhs) and if you make most of the food related decisions in your household, you are invited to participate in this research. Please share this information with anybody you think would be interested.

I am hoping that the study findings can also help you as food consumers. You will have access to the results of the research which you may use to add to your understanding of food consumption practices.

NOTE: This is an academic research project & there are no commercial interests involved. If you have any issues or concerns, please let me know.
No private information or names will be shared in my research outputs.
Your consent is voluntary.

For more information, or to express your interest in participation, please contact me at:

Meenal Rai, Auckland University of Technology
Marketing, Advertising, Retailing and Sales Department
Email: mrai@aut.ac.nz l Tel: +64-9-921 9999 ext. 7563

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 25th October, 2017, AUTEC Reference number *17/329*

STATEMENT OF WORK

CLIENT	FWS
Eathar Abdul-Ghani **Auckland University of Technology** **Professor Roger Marshall** 55 Wellesley Street East, Auckland Central. **Contact Info:** Telephone: +64 9 9219999 Email ID: meenal.rai@aut.ac.nz	**Flatworld Solutions, Inc. (FWS)** 116 Village Blvd, Suite 200 Princeton, NJ 08540, USA E-mail: billing@flatworldsolutions.com Work Order Number: 201804/OT/ROG/TRS-FWS-01 Date: 10 April 2018

Project Ref: Transcription Service

Sl. No	Project Description	Total value of the project in USD/~~Monthly Fee~~
1	Audio Transcription Service of (30 hours x $ 40)	$ 1200
Total: **US Dollars One Thousand Two Hundred**		**$ 1200**

Estimated project start date: 10th April 2018
Estimated project duration : 08th May 2018
Contact person (FWS) : Saleesh Samuel
Contact person (CLIENT) : Meenal Rai

Payment Terms:

1. The above fees and costs exclude any applicable transfer costs/banking charges or taxes.
2. All payments to be made within in 30 days from receipt of proforma/invoice
3. The fees and costs outlined above do not include any travel / training or other applicable fees, which may be additional.
4. Payments to be made in US Dollars via Paypal

Quality, Acceptance, and Problem Escalation/Resolution Procedures

CLIENT must notify the designated contact person at FWS (listed below) in writing of any quality issues within 7 days of delivery of work by FWS, otherwise the work will be deemed to be of acceptable quality.

Escalation levels at FWS for problem resolution:
1st Level : Business Head (email id: vijay.menon@flatworldsolutions.com)

General Terms and Conditions

1. Any changes to this Statement of Work ("SOW") may only be made by a written Change Request document executed by both parties. Any such changes may entail additional charges.
2. If either party fails to perform its obligations under this SOW (including timely payment of fees for services rendered) and such failure continues for a period of (30) days after written notice thereof, the other party shall have the right to terminate this SOW immediately.
3. "Confidential Information" shall mean any and all CLIENT information and ideas in whatever form, tangible or intangible, whether disclosed to or learned by FWS, which is specifically identified or labeled as "Confidential" by CLIENT. FWS hereby agrees to use Confidential Information solely to perform the services under this SOW, and will not disclose Confidential Information to a third party other than those of its employees/consultant/partners on a need to know basis. In performing its duties and obligations hereunder, both the parties agree to use at least the same degree of care as it does with respect to its own confidential information but, in any event, at least reasonable care. Confidential Information shall not mean or include information which: (a) is known to FWS at the time of disclosure to FWS by CLIENT as evidenced by written records of FWS, (b) has become publicly known and made generally available through no wrongful act of FWS, or (c) has been rightfully received by FWS from a third party who is authorized to make such disclosure.
4. During the term of this SOW and for a one (1) year period thereafter, CLIENT will not, without the prior written consent of FWS, solicit for hire or engagement, directly or indirectly (a) any employee of FWS or its affiliates, or (b) any consultant, vendor or service provider introduced by FWS to CLIENT.
5. IN NO EVENT SHALL EITHER PARTY BE LIABLE TO THE OTHER PARTY FOR ANY INCIDENTAL, CONSEQUENTIAL, PUNITIVE, STATUTORY, SPECIAL OR OTHER INDIRECT DAMAGES OF ANY KIND FOR ANY REASON WHATSOEVER. CLIENT further agrees to limit the liability of FWS and its officers, directors, partners, affiliates, employees and subcontractors, from the claim of damages under this SOW, to an amount not to exceed the fees actually paid by CLIENT to FWS during the six (6) months preceding the date of the related claim. The parties agree that amounts stated herein are fair under the circumstances and that the prices reflect the limitation of liability.
6. Each party shall comply with all applicable laws in the performance of this Agreement, including but not limited to any relevant data protection regulations. CLIENT warrants that if it instructs FWS to process of any information relating to an identified natural person ("Personal Data"), then (a) CLIENT shall be deemed to be the data controller; (b) FWS shall be deemed to be the processor; and (c) CLIENT shall instruct FWS to process Personal Data only in compliance with applicable law.
7. Publicity. CLIENT hereby permits FWS to identify CLIENT as a client of FWS and to use and display CLIENT's name, logo, and project description in FWS's promotional brochures, web sites, and project proposals.

ACCEPTED AND AGREED TO:

Auckland University of Technology

By: Eathar Abdul-Ghani
Title: Postgraduate Manager, Faculty of Business, Economics and Law

On behalf of **Roger Marshall**

Title: Head of Marketing Advertising Retailing Sales

Date: 11/4/2018

FLATWORLD SOLUTIONS INC.

By:
David Antony

Title: CEO

Date:

Auckland University of Technology
Private Bag 92006, Auckland 1142, NZ
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Appendix C

Researcher Safety Protocol

Project title: An exploration of functional food consumption practices in select Indian households

Project Supervisor: ***Roger Marshall***

Researcher: ***Meenal Rai***

As this research project involves interviewing participants overseas and in their homes, a safety protocol has been put into place for the safety of the researcher.

Proper funding arrangements have been made, to ensure the safety of the researcher, which include the costs particular to the project such as personal and travel insurance cover, taxis or hired cars and appropriate overnight accommodation. Effective timetabling of interviews and observations will also allow for a relaxed schedule which will allow the researcher to be alert to risks and handle effectively any unforeseen circumstance.

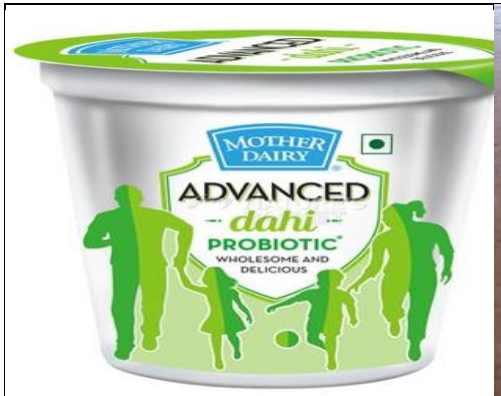
With regards to participant home interviews, the researcher will inform the research supervisors of the researcher's contact details. Also, a schedule of interviews will be shared with the supervisors once confirmed with participants. The researcher's brother will be aware of the researcher's whereabouts (schedule of all interviews, how many people are expected to be there, meeting point close to the location of each interview) prior to every interview. Once interviews are over, the researcher will immediately contact her brother to confirm its completion. Should the researcher not contact him within half an hour after the end of the scheduled interview, he will contact the researcher's mobile number. If the researcher still cannot be contacted, the brother will either go to the specified meeting point allocated for that scheduled interview to meet the researcher or contact the relevant authorities in the city and seek immediate help.

The researcher will also adopt risk minimisation processes like ensuring use of reliable and safe public transport and/or reputable taxi service along with appropriate overnight accommodation. Additionally, the researcher will ensure her personal safety by being aware of any local tensions such as cultural, religious or communal divisions and will alter schedules accordingly. Finally to get urgent help when in need the researcher will keep the emergency help number (100) on her phone on fast dial.

Contact details of the primary researcher's brother:
Mr. Madhur Naneria

Naneria@gmail.com ; 0091 9826018626

Appendix D: (a) Projective Technique choice ordering task

			
Mother Dairy Advanced Probiotic Dahi	**Home Made Dahi**	**Amul Masti Dahi**	**Local Dairy Dahi**
Choice rank number:	Choice rank number:	Choice rank number:	Choice rank number:
When:	When:	When:	When:
Why:	Why:	Why:	Why:

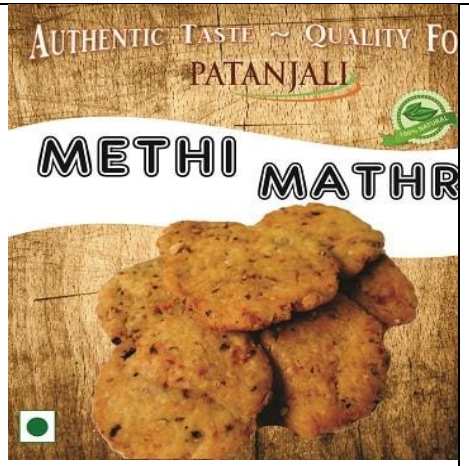
Any others

Remarks:

Participant Name:

Date:

Appendix D: (b) Projective Technique choice ordering task

 **Home Made Mathri**	 **Haldiram's Mathri**	 **Patanjali Methi Mathri**	 **Nutrichoice low salt lite biscuits**
Choice rank number: When: Why:	Choice rank number: When: Why:	Choice rank number: When: Why:	Choice rank number: When: Why:

Any others

Remarks:

Participant Name:

Date:

Appendix D:

(c) Projective Technique sentence completion task

Appendix D: (d) Projective Technique word association task

Thoughts that come to your mind when I say:					
Tea time snack	Prevent cold and cough in the family	Breakfast items	Food for guests	Quick dinner	Lunch box

Appendix E: (a) Snapshot of Qualitative Coding Process

	P1	P2	P3	P4
Morning routine/ritual	We get up in the morning, and we try to incorporate lemon water in our drinks or green tea. My husband really likes to have honey-lemon water for better health.(2)To start my day, I also have a green juice. It is all greens, spinach, I have coriander, holy basil if possible, curry leaves a must, and cucumber, also bottle gourd if you have, and ginger. And these days, turmeric if available, and gooseberry (amla) is available. So you crush all these and extract juice. Add black salt and add lemon. It is very tasty also			ISHA Fo
Health routines	My husband really likes to have honey-lemon water for better health			
Negative Healthy food perceptions	(1) I try to give him milk,...and avoid health supplements these days in the market like Bournvita or similar things. I don't really find much value in them. I feel like these malts are like just waste and big publicity gamut. (2) But why I try to give Anunay this **instead of 2-minute milk is b**ecause of health benefits. Because I realized that it is working on my body. (3) I do not give ketchup to my son, I do not give mayo to him... (4) I try to avoid all those bottled things religiously...I try to avoid all those bottled things religiously...Because preservatives are there. Because you don't know what is going inside and I don't want to make him a fussy eater growing up (5) Yes. But just 2 days back I read somewhere that these are processed foods too, so now I am thinking, rather than having muesli, now better to have fried flatbread (paratha). So I was just about to have a conversation with Jai about this, that I read this and I will stop buying muesli from now. I would rather have poha (beaten rice snack). (6) Looks like they made fool of us. I do take oats, etc. But now I will not	Do you classify pizza, pasta, noodles as junk? Interviewee: I don't consider them as junk. They might have some nutritional value because there are some vegetables in it, even cheese is a source of protein, and there are some carbs. So, not exactly junk as compared to cold drinks, chips, etc. But definitely it may have some nutritional value, but then you know, being an Indian I would say still these are all foreign foods and these are not our food and has more of refined flour, and we don't consider it to be very healthy. So maybe we can categorize all these a bit as a junk, but it is okay. Once in a while everything is okay. (2) No, absolutely not. Because Bournvita I talked about, there is an article found in internet itself, that it is banned in London, etc., because of its lead content. So I would really not appreciate giving it to my kid. Other protein powders I think are more or less same. They don't give added value whatever they mention. Again, I come to the same point. It is not required if you are having proper diet at home	Yes everything is just marketing, is there actually any difference happening? By just having 2-3 cups of green tea doesn't reduce your weight unless or until you control your diet or exercise. I have now put on weight due to hormonal imbalance, otherwise I have whole day work, but unless and until I don't control all my diet am I really going to reduce my weight! (2) I don't use Patanjali products. Actually, Patanjali from what I have heard only the labels have been changed, it is one and the same thing of market what it is but only the labels have been changed. Like organic, how do you know that it is organic? (3) They own a farm named Sneh Jeev across the bypass, they have their vegetable mart opened in ... Even theirs is not fully organic. People say it is organic, but that much quantity you can't get in organic. So it gets mixed and it is not labeled as organic, so who will tell you. What I am growing at my place I know it is organic. That too I am not getting in large quantity. Suppose, the vendor who is selling cucumber he would not get it in that quantity. (4) I take brown bread, but as far as I have these videos according to them all breads contain same ingredients, same amount of calories, so it hardly makes a difference what bread you are buying. But I take brown only, maybe I am used to it, because I used to think since it is brown bread it is good but it is not like that(5)For taste, with it there is not growth difference. It is just a flavor actually. Like in the ads they show so and so happens, nothing as such happens.	
Positive Healthy food perceptions	(1) I try to give him milk, sometimes try to give him turmeric milk.(2) It was winter season. As I said I tried to give my son healthy food, and in north we have something called chhaukewala (tempered with spices) milk. I am a big, big brand ambassador of this. It is now served these days in Cafe Coffee Day as Golden Latte. (2)with paratha ...I give milk cream (malai) with sugar to him because I find that's a healthier substitute and he likes it that way. Curd in summers, and if milk cream is available then I give him milk cream and sugar with fried flatbread.	Traditional and local, whatever is readily available for you. You don't have to labor much for it. All things seasonal.		And I pre
family food provisioning	My husband is a Gujrati, and he is a foodie, and he cannot have this plain thali like that only. He wants everything, *papad* (gram flour chips), chutney (spicy condiments), black chutney, Szechwan chutney, etc. fancy stuff. And then something crunchy or peanuts. He wants all these stuff. And his meal is incomplete without these. If I will not give him, he will get it on his own. I don't want this kind of habit to be passed onto my son, I really want him to be less fussy. (2) In relation to eating paratha,My husband is happy with ketchup only, as opposed to milkcream and sugar Gujarati people are seen having fried flatbread with ketchup only and that's an insult to the fried flatbread.		With regards any disagreements with what to cook/eat based on different food choices of family members. No never. Like the other day I made sarson ka saag (mustard greens gravy) and makki di roti (maize flatbreads), so I made paneer bhurji (stir fried cottage cheese) for Ahana, so that she can have...Otherwise she will not eat. Interviewee: Yes. Since I know very it very well. According, no one will have to ask me why something or other has not been prepared, because I know what she is not going to eat.	

A	S	T	U	V	W
				for them. They don't even allow chewda (savour snack). You have to send roti (wheat flatbread) and sabzi (cooked vegetable).	240
Traditional food preferences				Recently my grandmother had moved here from Pakistan. They used to make Sai Bhaji (spinach vegetable) and they used to make it in iron pot. So last week when she came to my mother's place I learnt the entire recipe. It takes a lot of time for it to cook like an hour but I made it. and its very healthy….So I like traditional food as such	A food which is freshly cooked and another food which has been reheated 3-4 times is different with respect to hygiene or health. Sometimes it tastes stale, so your effort is also wasted
Culture/tradition based routines	We have honestly been able to stay with lot of traditional method of cooking only because of Kishan, and I know if he is not there, I would never be able to cook that traditionally.	Trust me. I like the taste of a certain thing. How many of us go to the market, pick up a packet and check the ingredients, composition. I never do that. I have not seen many people being careful about the composition, what percentage it is. I liked it, I will buy it the next time. If I don't like it, I will not buy it the next time. In India, also in our house, we do not give weightage of more than 10-20% in our day-to-day lifestyle.		He doesn't like *ghee* (clarified butter). He doesn't like it at all. and I prefer that if you have joint pain, then you should eat *ghee* (clarified butter) right from childhood. so I add it on top of *dal* (lentils) and *chawal* (rice) or apply more *ghee* (clarified butter) on his chapati (wheat flatbread). I make variety with *ghee* (clarified butter)… (2) How do we get lubrication. I also remember when we were young, my grandmother used to massage us before we went to take bath. Now that culture is gone. We quickly go in, bathe and come out in 10 mins and leave. (4) Or from the elders of the family. Like	With reference to not doung everything form scratch and instead opting some ready made food p easier, but I don't feel it is healthy for my children to eat. As you know, if you add salt to a dish instead of a spoon, the taste is always different/better, it's said that the taste of your touch is tran are the small things that matter.
No Bread/ Maida	No Bread/ Maida Once in a week or once in two weeks. In-laws are totally against bread, so when they come here, we stop buying bread. Sometimes my children want to have bread, I buy it and quickly make sandwiches and finish it off fast. We would want to get wheat bread. One of my uncle has a bakery, in Allahabad. When I asked him, we add colour, there is nothing called wheat bread. Refined flour (maida) is also wheat; if we do not refine it, we cannot make bread. So we add brown color and sell it as wheat bread. And actual wheat bread is made, many less bakers make it, it is very thick and dry.....So we left the idea of wheat bread. (2) All of us think it is better not to eat bread, when we know it is not good, why should we. I also did a course on making sardo. I have made sardo, every one week it has to be fed, when we feed and remove the half, I would make something from it, cookies, sardo bread. I made for 2 weeks, then I was so bored, my project was over. Then I told a friend to give me some. Then I realized that we should eat less, it is not our style of cooking. So now I don't make it.	No Bread/ Maida Definitely we would avoid all-purpose refined flour (*maida*). Even in Frankie, I prefer wheat flour than refined flour. No doubt, everyone complains it feels like eating wheat flatbread (*roti*) and vegetable (*sabzi*) rather than Frankie, but it is okay, this is better. So we would alternatively use refined flour and wheat to prepare Frankie. That is how I balance it. (2) Once in a week it is fine, I give him white bread. He loves bread and jam, but I cannot give him everyday. I have to control his sweet tooth and also it contains all-purpose refined flour (maida). Once in a week it is fine.	No Bread/ Maida Yes, as we know biscuits are mostly made from refined flour (*maida*), then I prefer sometimes purchasing wheat or multigrain biscuit, but she does not like it. Ultimately I have to eat it. (2) We had purchased brown bread instead of white bread. After a couple of times… We brought it 2-3 times, but then forgot about it and again started purchasing white bread....We are not sure if it just colour or wheat that makes it brown. So I opt out of it.	No Bread/ Maida I always buy wheat base from Kabhi bhi...We use very less amount of Refined flour at my place. ...Since it is refined flour, it is difficult to digest….especially for Nikhil. The doctor has suggested me to not give it to children...Yeah. They get hyper also. Considering all this, I greatly reduced the use of refined flour....Like we make puri (fried flat bread) or mathri (savory flaky biscuit), I make it with wheat flour and I use a thicker flour. So its better. If I make chhole bhature, I use it 50-50, a little refined flour and a little of wheat flour. (2) with regards making bread based dishes: yes. Here I have to make it once or twice a week. I don't like it much.	No Bread/ Maida with regards having white/brown bread and consuming refined flour: Yes, many people feel tha kids, there were so many snacks made of refined flour (maida)….Then why there is a fuss not t We eat it.
Traditional health remedies		So boosting immunity, Chawanprash is something we go for. At the same time, no special efforts. But if at home one day I see Aarav visiting the washroom 3-4 times, I realize that definitely things have to be controlled, so as a preventive measure I stop milk, increase curd intake, and only rice ingredients is served to him. I don't know how much this helps, but one of my South Indian friend suggested – normally South Indians eat cumin (*jeera*) water, they say it			

Appendix E: (b)

Transcript codings illustrating packed school/work lunches comprised of varying combinations roti, subzi, dal & rice.

He (son) takes 2 wheat flatbreads and cooked vegetables. And I make wheat flatbread, cooked vegetables, and lentils for me… At times, I keep a salad. Depends on the availability. Husband likes papad (gram flour chips), but it depends on my mood. If I am not in a hurry, I will pack such stuff. Otherwise simple food is prepared. They take lunch box.	Anita
I prepare mine and Sachin's(husband) tiffin and my mother-in-law's food… By then my lentil (dal), rice (chawal) and vegetable (sabzi) is ready. My husband packs our tiffins when I prepare the wheat flatbread (roti). Packs my breakfast tiffin and they have their breakfast… Ansh(son) generally has matches on Sunday. He leaves by 7 in the morning. I have to prepare everything for him, both breakfast and lunch and pack his tiffin	Prema
I work as a teacher. I pack my tiffin. He (husband) has wheat flatbread (roti), vegetable (sabzi), fruit, curd as per his wish, I pack his tiffin. Children's food is prepared, lentil (dal), rice (chawal), vegetable (sabzi). They come home and eat it. My younger daughter, Soumya is in school during afternoon. So, she takes tiffin	Rani
…and then I make roti (wheat flatbread), sabzi (cooked vegetable), dal (lentils) and chawal (rice) at noon. So Nikhil (son)takes tiffin to school and Dhiren (husband) takes it to office.	Nirmal
They (Husband & Son) take their tiffin for which we have one vegetable, rice, dal (lentils) and parantha (fried wheat flatbread) or chapati (wheat flatbread)	Archana
I carry my tiffin. My tiffin is very simple, Indian wheat flatbread (chapatti) and cooked vegetables (sabzi).	Kritu
I carry tiffin. Tiffin is 2-3 wheat flatbread (roti), cooked vegetables (sabzi), cooked lentils (dal) and salad.	Mili
I have to prepare Ashu's tiffin, my mother-in-law and I together do it. Full meal. Lentil (dal), vegetable (sabzi), wheat flatbread (roti), rice (chawal).	Ashu
he takes both breakfast and lunch, mostly green vegetables plain roti (wheat flatbread) They also take fruits, dry fruits, snacks also in the tiffin.	Nitam
So wheat flatbread (roti) and vegetable (sabzi) are prepared the night earlier, I pack it in the morning	Rumi
Next thing we do is make tiffin. We start the kitchen work quickly as we have to make tiffin and prep for lunch. Monday to Thursday we have a strict routine. Roti-sabzi, poori-sabzi, paratha-sabzi (different flat/fried bread and cooked vegetables). Either of these three	Rohini
And for tiffin, if I give wheat flatbread with vegetable dish (sabzi-roti) or fried flatbread (paratha), then the vegetable dish should be in gravy form	Preeto
Lunch is send for Vishal (husband), so after Papa has lunch around 11 to 11:30, he takes Vishal's lunch. Lentils (dal), rice (chawal), wheat flatbread (roti), one green vegetable and a potato dish.	Vaishali

Practice theory concepts

Morning Routines
Meal Routines
Health Routines
Health Remedies
Proper food
No Bread / White flour
Raw milk / Packed milk
Food Quality
Unhealthy foods
Healthy foods
Back to basics

Food & health related household routines

meaning ↔ material

maintaining

Shared perceptions of food products

meaning ↔ material

maintaining | meeting

every day food consumption
Generational variations in food choice
Preference for traditional food

Varying food choices in household

meaning ↔ competency
↕ material

maintaining | meeting

make-at-home or buy
as per the kids' choice
social food norms
Food provisioning as per choice

food provisioning conflicts & complexities

meaning ↔ material
↕ competency

Meeting

Role responsibility
provisioner identity
once-in-a-while approach

moral conventions in food provisioning

meaning ↔ competency

Extending