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*A critical analysis of small business social responsibility in independent foodservice businesses*

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# **A critical analysis of small business social responsibility in independent foodservice businesses.**

Barbara Tomasella

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of  
Sheffield Hallam University  
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

August 2019

## Candidate Declaration

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2. None of the material contained in the thesis has been used in any other submission for an academic award.
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## **Abstract**

This thesis critically analyses how small independent foodservice businesses express and implement their social responsibility, considering the lack of research in the emergent small business social responsibility (SBSR) field, particularly within the foodservice sector. This gap in knowledge should be addressed, because the backbone of the industry are small businesses, which are often unaware of their collective impacts and the importance of implementing socially responsible practices.

In order to interpret the peculiarities of SBSR among small foodservice businesses, the research is qualitative and utilises an abductive research methodology, based on semi-structured interviews with owner-managers, as well as archival documents of the business. A key finding identifies that the business mission influences the perceptions of SBSR; in particular, the hospitableness of value-driven businesses and the social mission of social enterprises, makes the business more likely to get engaged in proactive SBSR actions. Another key result has been to highlight that the SBSR in these foodservice businesses is a holistic phenomenon, based on a complex mix of factors: personal values of the owner-manager influence the business mission and perceptions of SBSR, but also business motivations and external factors play a role in determining a sustained SBSR practice in the long term. A core contribution to knowledge to the SBSR literature is clarifying that the commitment to a business mission informed by prosocial values, distinguishes the more socially oriented businesses. The core contribution to knowledge to the hospitality literature is to show how the hospitableness influences the owner-managers' ethical perceptions of SBSR.

The findings cannot be generalised to the entire population of small foodservice businesses, as the qualitative research relied on a purposive sample, moreover ethical research can be affected by issues linked to social desirability bias and positionality of the researcher. Future research avenues should focus on narrative studies of small businesses able to prioritise their prosocial values while maintaining competitiveness, therefore highlighting practical avenues for small businesses to engage with SBSR.

Keywords:

Small business social responsibility; responsible business practices; foodservice sector; small businesses in tourism and hospitality; hospitableness; social enterprises.

## **Publications from the PhD**

### *Peer-reviewed Articles/Chapters*

Tomasella, B. (2020), Thematic analysis for qualitative research in small tourism and hospitality businesses (forthcoming), in Okumus F. et al, *Contemporary Research Methodology for Hospitality and Tourism*. Emerald Publishing Group.

Tomasella, B. and Ali A. (2019), The importance of personal values and hospitableness in small foodservice businesses' social responsibility, *Hospitality & Society*, 9(3): 307-329.

### *Academic Conference Papers*

Tomasella, B. and Ali A. (2018), Hospitableness: driving Social responsibility in small hospitality businesses. Buxton Conference in Tourism, May 2018.

Tomasella B. (2017), CSR, Strategy and Ethics in small foodservice businesses, Doctoral Conference, Sheffield Business School, May 2017).

Tomasella, B., Ali, A. (2016), A pluralistic framework for the analysis of corporate social responsibility and its application to small and medium businesses, British Academy of Management conference: Thriving in Turbulent times, Newcastle Business School, Newcastle (UK).

Tomasella, B., Ali, A. (2016), "Corporate Social Responsibility and digital communication in small independent restaurants", 5th International Conference on Social Responsibility, Ethics and Sustainable Business, Bocconi University, Milan (Italy).

Tomasella B. (2016), How to explore the social responsibility of small independent restaurants, Doctoral Conference, Sheffield Business School, Sheffield Hallam University (UK).

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## **Abbreviations**

CFP – Corporate Financial Performance

CSP – Corporate Social Performance

CSR – Corporate Social Responsibility

EPA – Environmental Protection Agency

EU – European Union

FSA – Food Safety Authority

HACCP – Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points

SBSR – Small Business Social Responsibility

WBCSD - World Business Council For Sustainable Development

UN – United Nations

## **Chapter 1**

### **Introduction**

## **1.1 Introduction and scope of the research**

This thesis critically analyses how small independent foodservice businesses express and implement their social responsibility, considering the lack of theory in respect the emergent research field of small business social responsibility (SBSR). The research deals specifically with small foodservice businesses which are independently managed by their owners; this sub-sector of the tourism and hospitality industry, was chosen because of their increased interest in recent years in topics related to sustainability and social responsibility, as yet not widely covered by the literature. This lack of coverage reflects the trends within the academic literature on the tourism and hospitality industry, which is focused on larger businesses, even though the industry is dominated by small and medium-sized businesses. This chapter starts (in section 1.2) by setting out the research context and introducing the main issue this PhD study concentrates on, thereby explaining the need for the present research study, in the context of current body of knowledge within business and society more generally. Section 1.3 offers useful definitions to help delimit the boundaries of the research context: SBSR (small business social responsibility), related concepts such as CSR (corporate social responsibility) and social responsibility, as well as a definition of small foodservice businesses. Based on the research gap identified, the main aim and objectives of the study are established (section 1.4) and expected contributions to knowledge highlighted in section 1.5. The chapter concludes with an outline of the PhD thesis (section 1.6).

## **1.2 Research problem**

Businesses are perceived to be pivotal stakeholders in society (Matten & Crane, 2005; Doh & Guay, 2006), both from an economic and socio-cultural perspective, since they can provide net positive contributions to society (Carroll, 1991; Windsor, 2001; Wheeler et al., 2003; Lockett et al., 2006). On the other hand, there is increased awareness of global issues generated by the current economic system and their potential to destabilise societies, such as ethical issues and corporate scandals (Smith, 2003; Newton, 2006; Admati, 2017), environmental issues and income inequality (Brown & Dacin, 1997; Sen & Bhattacharya, 2001; Holcomb et al., 2007; Wang, 2014; Kim, 2017). . The demand for businesses to behave ethically has therefore grown from

the public (Freeman & Moutchnik, 2013). There is an increased expectation that companies should be transparent and accountable to stakeholders (Carroll, 2000; Moir, 2001; Maignan & Ferrell, 2004) and should respond to socio-environmental issues through their products and practices (Becker-Olsen et al., 2006; Porter & Kramer, 2006; Green & Peloza, 2014). The corporate response to these pressures is reflected in the concept of corporate social responsibility (CSR) (Carroll, 1979; Wood, 1991; Margolis & Walsh, 2003; Frederick, 2016). CSR is a contested concept, adopted by a growing number of different members of society, with competing definitions (Garriga & Mele, 2004; Moon et al., 2005; Dahlsrud, 2008; Matten & Moon, 2008; Okoye, 2009; Wry, 2009; Carroll & Shabana, 2010; Carroll, 2016; Frederick, 2016; Shankar & Searcy, 2016). Authors propose it as a whole field of scholarship, rather than a simple concept (Lockett et al., 2006; Crane et al., 2013). Even though the CSR concept has been criticised for this breadth of scope (as will be seen in chapter 2), it remains a useful concept that operationalises the concern for ethical behaviour and for addressing a vast array of socio-environmental issues (Wheeler et al., 2003; Dahlsrud, 2008; Schwartz & Carroll, 2008; Okoye, 2009; Carroll & Shabana, 2010).

CSR and sustainability are now central considerations for governments and industries (WBCSD, 1999), as well as academics involved in management education (Porter & Kramer, 2006; Elkington, 2018). This is certainly valid in the tourism and hospitality industry, which is the context of this research. The broad definition of 'tourism and hospitality' is utilised at the inception of this thesis, in virtue of the fact that various definitions consider tourism as part of the hospitality industry, therefore, tourism businesses are considered as well in the literature review; this is despite the focus of the data collection is foodservice businesses only, a subsector of the hospitality industry. In the United Kingdom (UK), CSR has been endorsed by many tourism and hospitality businesses (Hawkins & Bohdanowicz, 2012; Jones, et al., 2014), tour operators (Sigala, 2014), as well as non-governmental organisations and key trade associations (Sustainable Restaurant Association, 2013; Jones et al., 2014; UK Hospitality, 2014; UK Hospitality, 2017). Key global organisations also advocate for the tourism and hospitality industry to be more ethical, sustainable and responsible as a path for future development (WTO, 1999; Hawkins & Bohdanowicz, 2012). CSR is now considered a key tool through which the tourism and hospitality industry can contribute to achieve the sustainable development goals (Coles et al., 2013; Melissen,

2013; Sloan et al., 2013; Jones et al., 2016; Bramwell et al., 2017). Despite the importance of the topic at industry level, the literature on CSR in the tourism and hospitality sector is limited (Lee et al., 2012; Coles et al., 2013; Farrington et al., 2017), focused on a narrow number of topics (Farrington et al., 2017), such as the impact that CSR has on higher financial results accrued to hotel (Graci & Dodds, 2008; Nicolau, 2008; Garay & Font, 2012; de Grosbois, 2012) and restaurant chains (Lee & Heo, 2009; Kang et al., 2010; Inoue & Lee, 2011), in line with the broad CSR literature (McWilliams & Siegel, 2000; Margolis & Walsh, 2003; McWilliams & Siegel, 2006; Orlitzky et al., 2011).

There is a particular lack of studies on socially responsible/sustainable practices in tourism and hospitality small businesses (Njite et al., 2011; Coles et al., 2013); this is valid for the overall CSR in SMEs literature, which emerged from CSR research to divert the focus from larger businesses (Aguinis & Glavas, 2012; Spence, 2016; Wickert et al., 2016). This absence of studies is particularly striking since small tourism and hospitality businesses represent the backbone of the industry (Thomas et al., 2011; Sharma et al., 2014). Such businesses ensure economic growth, innovation, job creation and social integration (Curran, 2000; Revell & Rutherford, 2003; Midttun et al., 2006) and have a significant overall impact on the environment (Hillary, 2004; Hawkins & Bohdanowicz, 2012). It is estimated that SMEs in the UK are responsible for as much as 60% of the industry's carbon dioxide emissions, 60% of its commercial waste, 70% of its pollution and eight out of ten pollution accidents (Hillary, 2004; Williamson et al., 2006; Revell & Blackburn, 2007; Revell et al., 2010). These small businesses are often unaware of their impacts and the importance of implementing socially responsible practices (Garay & Font, 2012; Sampaio et al., 2012; Tomasella, 2015). Small independent foodservice businesses have not engaged with environmental actions as much as hotel and restaurants chains, because of lack of cost efficiencies (Revell, 2002; Revell & Rutherford, 2003; Revell & Blackburn, 2007; Revell et al., 2010; Iaquinto, 2014; Higgins-Desbiolles et al., 2019). The small foodservice businesses are therefore particularly underexposed in the sustainability and CSR literature (Jones et al., 2006; Coles et al., 2013; DiPietro, 2017; Higgins-Desbiolles et al., 2019), despite representing 39.5% of employment and almost half of all the added value within the overall UK foodservice sector (Eurostat, 2015). The



present research aims to gain insights into owner-managers understanding of SBSR, to encourage more small foodservice businesses to engage with the practice.

Small foodservice businesses are therefore selected as the focus of this research in order to fill this empirical gap in the tourism and hospitality body of knowledge, as well as the emerging field of SBSR research (Lepoutre & Heene, 2006; Jamali et al., 2009; Baumann-Pauly et al., 2013; Spence, 2016; Wickert et al., 2016; Soundararajan et al., 2018). Empirical studies of a specific sector are welcome, as the type of sector can have a distinctive influence on the expression of SBSR (Spence, 2016). Small businesses within the foodservice industry were chosen as the environment within which to study the social responsibility of the tourism and hospitality sector, because of their uniqueness. In particular, the tourism and hospitality sectors are peculiarly characterised by the presence of lifestyle-oriented entrepreneurs, who focus more on improving their quality of life and being part of a community, promoting diversified development of a destination, rather than maximising profits (Ateljevic & Doorne, 2000; Bosworth & Willett, 2011; Thomas et al., 2011; Thomas, 2015; Tomassini, 2019). Nonetheless, the sector still presents many traditional growth-oriented businesses, with the goal to cultivate businesses that can compete, grow and create jobs (Getz & Petersen, 2005). Family businesses are also very significant in the tourism and hospitality sector (Getz et al., 2004). More recently the tourism and hospitality industry has seen a surge in number of businesses setting up as social enterprises, devoted to positive social change (Sloan et al., 2014; Altinay et al., 2016; Dickerson & Hassanien, 2018). The entrepreneurship literature highlights that the personal factors of the owner-managers influence the management of the business (Carlsen et al., 2008), therefore researching personal motivations is seen as important to any attempt to analyse the understanding and implementation of socially responsible actions among these businesses (Bredvold & Skålén, 2016; Campopiano et al., 2016). Nevertheless, small businesses and entrepreneurs are also constrained by economic and social factors distinctive within a certain destination (Fu et al., 2019); similarly, studies of CSR in SMEs highlight the importance of the local socio-economic environment in shaping practice (von Weltzien Høivik & Shankar, 2011; Sen & Cowley, 2013). As the companies most engaged with SBSR seem to be those that have adopted a balanced approach between entrepreneurship and ethical practice (Castka et al., 2004; Jenkins, 2006; Hammann et al., 2009), the influence of

instrumental and environmental factors on SBSR will also be explored, so as to provide a holistic view of the phenomenon.

The importance of filling this gap in the CSR and sustainability literature for small foodservice businesses is also linked to the major changes in the hospitality industry's attitude towards sustainability initiatives (Jones et al., 2016). There is growing business investment in sustainable sourcing, health and wellbeing, minimising waste and protecting the natural environment (UK Hospitality, 2018; Filimonau et al., 2019). Focusing on the UK, there have been initiatives promoted by the Department of Health, to encourage businesses to offer healthy food to combat obesity and high-blood pressure (Knai et al., 2015; UK Hospitality, 2018). On the environmental front, the other main current focus has been reducing food waste, in order to contribute towards the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals (UK Hospitality, 2018). The predicted shift towards a higher interest in honest, healthy and authentic food (Gilmore & Pine, 2007; Pratt, 2007; Sims, 2010) is now particularly visible in the growing demands of foodservice sector clients (Lo et al., 2017; Kwok et al., 2016; UK Hospitality, 2018). Customers are reported to increasingly demand information on the authenticity and sustainable sourcing of the food they eat (Filimonau & Krivcova, 2017), making transparency of information available to clients a must for foodservice operators (UK Hospitality, 2018). Wellness and sustainability are not linked to elite choices anymore, but inform purchasing decisions in all segments of the foodservice industry (Technomic, 2015; Filimonau & Krivcova, 2017; UK Hospitality, 2018; Ruben et al., 2019). These changes in consumer demands towards safer and healthier food practices are informing policy changes in the UK, which are likely to affect the overall foodservice industry (UK Hospitality, 2018).

Small independent foodservice businesses were selected as the focus of this research, precisely because it is predicted that these changes in food consumption will favour their continued economic significance (Technomic, 2015; Mintel, 2018a; UK Hospitality, 2018). Recent industry reports have recorded a strong increase in the growth of local foodservice operators in UK, together with reduced growth of branded concepts (UK Hospitality, 2018). Independently styled and destination restaurants, which are rooted in their communities, appeal to more than half (60%) of consumers, who agree that independent restaurants and takeaways offer something unique to a town or city (Mintel, 2019a). Changes in workplace habits and modern isolation are

other trends that have influenced the return of cafés, but now also casual restaurants, as centres for sociability (Tjora, 2013). Similar to the large chains, these small businesses are now under pressure to comply with government requirements for healthy eating, sustainability and ethical trading; the focus on voluntary uptake of such practices is important in order to allow the sector to continuously meet government's demands, without incurring more taxes and regulations (Crane et al., 2013; Mintel, 2019b). It is expected that a study showing how small businesses are responding to changes in the competitive environment, would benefit their long-term development, as well as offer insights about the role of small foodservice businesses in tackling the challenges facing modern societies. For this reason, a specific location for the research was selected within the United Kingdom (UK). The research is located within the foodservice sector of Sheffield, which is England's third largest district authority (Sheffield City Council 2016). The reason for focusing on a specific business context is linked to the pragmatic interpretivist approach of this research, which will be introduced in detail in chapter 5. Such paradigm aims to produce theoretical insights that are applicable to other research contexts, in the knowledge that the context bears an influence on the development of social practices (Berger & Luckmann, 1991). The next section will introduce the key definitions on which this work is based.

### **1.3 Definitions adopted in the study**

The issue with definitions has been raised by many authors in the overall CSR literature. As the term has been adopted by a growing number of different members of society (Garriga & Mele, 2004; Dahlsrud, 2008; Matten & Moon, 2008; Wry, 2009; Okoye, 2009), various definitions of the phenomenon have been recorded and debated (Carroll, 1999; Dahlsrud, 2008; Sarkar & Searcy 2016). The CSR literature on the tourism and hospitality industry, of which the foodservice sector forms a part, similarly highlights how there is not a single definition of CSR across the plethora of studies covering the topic (Farrington et al., 2017). Some studies avoid using a definition (Jones et al., 2006), while those studies exploring the link between CSR and financial performance tend to focus on a definition of CSR that is limited to voluntary activities towards society (Kang et al., 2010). This means that very different aspects, such as responsible business practices, or product quality, are labelled as CSR, while other beneficial activities to society, like social entrepreneurship, are not covered by

the hospitality CSR literature (Farrington et al., 2017). Such diversity poses challenges both in the choice of definition and, flowing from this, which aspect of the wide-ranging CSR literature should provide the core for this study. The literature review will reveal that a pluralistic definition of CSR should be favoured, as this is a broad, contested concept, adopted by a growing number of different members of society (Carroll, 1999; Dahlsrud, 2008; Matten & Moon, 2008; Okoye, 2009; Carroll & Shabana, 2010; Crane et al., 2013). Such a broad pluralistic definition should be adapted to various institutional environments, according to the actors' sets of values and ideologies, utilising qualitative methods of analysis (Aguinis & Glavas, 2012; Farrington et al., 2017), as in the example of this research which utilises a pragmatic interpretivist point of view. The broad analysis allowed the researcher to design a pluralistic definition of CSR, as well as a definition of SBSR, for applying the concept to the context of small businesses. Such definitions, as well as other definitions delimiting the sectorial context of the research, are included in this section.

### **Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)**

The study includes (in chapter 2) a broad analysis of the literature on CSR encompassing various bodies of work, as well as management theories. Management literature, particularly, considers CSR as philanthropic practice (Carroll, 1999), in line with the idea of CSR as an additional duty, on top of the 'business as usual' model. On the contrary, other theories that are more sociological in nature, consider both micro and macro aspects of the firm's dynamics (Wicks et al., 1994; Wheeler et al., 2003; Freeman et al., 2010), suggesting aspects of CSR that might be beneficial for the organisation and society at the same time. The proposed definition of CSR in this study is in line with these latest approaches to CSR, which advocate bridging the gap between the different literatures in business and society (Vallentin & Murillo, 2012; Frynas & Stephens, 2015; Sarkar & Searcy 2016; Vermeulen & Witjes, 2016):

Corporate Social Responsibility is achieved through actions that integrate social, environmental, ethical and human rights considerations of managers and consumers into the core business strategy; it includes respecting any relevant law; its objective is to minimise any negative impact and maximise positive influences on people, communities and the environment.

### **Small business social responsibility (SBSR)**

The term Small Business Social Responsibility (SBSR) will be adopted rather than CSR going forward when referring to the social responsibility of small businesses. This is done to reflect the idea that the term Corporate is not applicable to small businesses (Jenkins, 2004; Lepoutre & Heene, 2006). The SBSR literature highlights the informality of SBSR, as it is often found that small businesses do not report their practice, as actions are based on the informal decision making of the owner-manager (Lepoutre & Heene, 2006; Murillo & Lozano, 2009; Baumann-Pauly et al., 2013; Spence, 2016). This work utilises the following definition of SBSR, which will be introduced in detail in chapter 4:

*“SBSR is the responsibility of a small business for its impact on society, expressed by contributing to the wellbeing of stakeholders and the local community, while minimising the negative impacts on the environment”* (Tomasella & Ali, 2016).

### **Social responsibility (SR)**

In the context of this study it is important to identify what SR is, as this concept paved the way to the concept of CSR. The first contribution referring to SR is the one from Bowen, regarding the personal responsibilities of the business owner that drive actions desirable to society. Bowen meant by SR of the businessmen as:

*“the obligations of businessmen to pursue those policies, to make those decisions, or to follow those lines of action that are desirable in terms of the objectives and values of our society.”* (Bowen, 1953, p.6).

The ethical dimension of SR is strongly recognised, as it is an obligation, and therefore it carries a normative element. The willingness to consider this dimension as part of the study of SBSR in small foodservice businesses is particularly important because the reality of small businesses is still dominated by the personal values of the owner-manager.

### **Foodservice sector and small independent foodservice businesses**

This study recognises that foodservice is a specific sector within the tourism and hospitality industry, therefore its context needs to be specifically defined so as to identify the types of businesses that will be the focus of this research. It is also important to remember that tourism and hospitality are considered as one broad industry, therefore tourism businesses are also considered in the literature review. A foodservice business can be conceptualised as a business that provides food and drink, prepared in-house, for immediate consumption on the premises, which may be served to the table or self-service (Cousins et al., 2002). According to an EU definition:

*“The most important factor used to determine whether an enterprise should be classified under this heading (foodservice) is that meals that are produced are fit for immediate consumption, rather than any selection being made upon the basis of the kind of facility producing them”* (Eurostat, 2015, p.6).

Moreover:

*“food service activities include restaurants, cafeterias, fast-food restaurants, take-out eating places, ice cream van vendors, mobile food carts, food preparation in market stalls, restaurant and bar activities connected to transportation (for example, on boats or trains), when carried out separately from the provision of transport services”* (ibid, p.7).

This research utilises a definition of small businesses which is particularly in use in the UK literature, which corresponds to companies with no more than 50 employees; chapter 3 will provide the background of this choice. The focus of the research is particularly on independent businesses, which means that the business is locally owned and operated, not part of a group of restaurants, so it could also be a business with two or three locations which depend on the same manager (Britt et al., 2011). Always, as independent, the expectation is that the owner-manager is directly involved in the business, has executive decision-making power and control over menu and pricing (Estrade et al., 2014).

The next section introduces the research questions of this study in detail.

#### **1.4 Purpose of research**

The overall aim of this research is to explore the perceptions of owner-managers of small foodservice businesses, because when researching a contested concept such as

CSR, it is important to interpret the phenomenon according to the subjective understanding of individuals, and in relation to a specific institutional context. As a consequence, an interpretivist pragmatic methodology, inspired by the abductive research strategy, is utilised for this research, to allow for a descriptive and micro view of SBSR. In building an understanding of what influences SBSR, it is essential to explore the personal values that influenced the set-up of the business and the implementation of SBSR in the business, but also the business motivations and external factors that might drive SBSR implementation; finally, the research explores the actual practices that are an expression of the SBSR.

#### *1.4.1 Research aim*

The overall aim of the study is to critically analyse how small, independent foodservice businesses express and implement their small business social responsibility (SBSR).

#### *1.4.2 Research objectives*

- 1) To investigate the perceptions of SBSR of small foodservice businesses.
- 2) To critically analyse how personal values influence SBSR of small foodservice businesses.
- 3) To critically examine how business motivations influence SBSR of small foodservice businesses.
- 4) To examine how external factors influence SBSR of small foodservice businesses.
- 5) To critically analyse the implementation of SBSR practices of small foodservice businesses.

The next section introduces the expected contribution to knowledge of the present research.

### **1.5 Contributions to knowledge**

This research aims to achieve contributions to knowledge on a number of levels. The first major contribution to knowledge that is anticipated is a contribution to the

emerging field of SBSR theory, by gaining insights into the relative influence on SBSR of personal values/motivations, business values/motivations and external factors, through empirical research in the context of small foodservice businesses. Such insights are important in that there is still much debate within the SBSR literature as to the relative importance of the drivers of SBSR (Castka et al., 2004; Jenkins, 2006; Murrillo & Lozano, 2006; Perrini et al., 2007; Cambra-Fierro et al., 2008; Hammann et al., 2009; Lee et al., 2016). This contribution will be achieved by studying owner-managers' perceptions, in the specific context of the foodservice sector. It is expected that the conceptual framework derived from this research may encourage further research into the factors that influence SBSR in tourism and hospitality, through quantitative research. A further evolution to SBSR theory is highly advocated so as to enrich CSR theory (Spence, 2016), since the latter needs to be extended to encompass a better understanding of businesses that are inherently relational, as is the case with small businesses in tourism and hospitality. This work would improve the understanding of how best to support the promotion of socially responsible business practices among small businesses; policy makers have identified the need to improve the uptake of socially responsible practices among small businesses (EU Commission, 2011). Small businesses are not driven by the business case for CSR in the same way as larger businesses, therefore different narratives are required to study their approach to the green and social agendas (Baumann-Pauly et al., 2013).

The second specific contribution to knowledge expected in this research is about a fine-grained understanding of the implementation of SBSR in the foodservice sector. The current body of research into socially responsible practices of the tourism and hospitality industry is mainly focused on larger chain organisations (Coles et al., 2013). Moreover, similar research on small foodservice businesses is particularly scarce both in Europe (Parramon et al., 2014; Carrigan et al., 2017; Alonso et al., 2018) and globally (Berezan, 2010; Poulston & Yiu, 2011; Chou et al., 2012; Iaquinto, 2014; Raab et al., 2018). The contribution of this study would therefore allow for new context spotting, which is among the most common types of incremental contribution to knowledge in academia (Nicholson et al., 2018). Studies of the implementation of CSR/sustainability in small foodservice businesses are very limited (DiPietro, 2017; Higgins Desbiolles et al., 2017), usually focused on bigger organisations and their environmental practices; there is also a general lack of understanding of the



interconnectedness between the green and the social agendas (Higgins- Desbiolles et al., 2017). It is important to shift sustainability and CSR research in the foodservice sector away from the sole focus on the green agenda. This is a key point to be understood, since the tourism and hospitality industry will fail to engage in more sustainable practices unless the link between social and environmental agendas is more widely understood (Melissen, 2013; Cavagnaro, 2016; Higgins-Desbiolles et al., 2019). The next section briefly summarises the structure of the thesis.

## **1.6 Thesis outline**

The thesis is presented within the following structure:

Chapter Two reviews the literature on corporate social responsibility, with reference to the various historical theories of CSR, such as Carroll's pyramid and stakeholders' theory, as well as other business and society constructs that influence the understanding of CSR, such as sustainable development and corporate citizenship. This analysis highlights the importance of a pluralistic definition of CSR and the need to conduct qualitative studies to provide rich descriptions for better interpretation of CSR within specific contexts.

Chapter Three reviews in detail the growing SBSR literature, highlighting suitable approaches to study the topic in small businesses. It adds detail about the proposed definition of SBSR, and highlights the research streams in terms of normative, instrumental, descriptive discourses of SBSR. It also reviews the type of small businesses included in the research, particularly in the context of the hospitality industry, highlighting the importance of sociological debates in small business studies.

Chapter Four reviews CSR and SBSR in the foodservice sector, it also highlights the contextual factors that have an impact on the SBSR practice. Due to the paucity of studies of SBSR in the foodservice industry, the academic literature is integrated with grey literature and with studies of CSR in the hospitality industry more generally.

Chapter Five introduces the research paradigm, a suitable research strategy and the design of this study, including both the data collection method and the sample for the research. In addition, problems related to research data quality are highlighted.

Chapter Six presents the data collected through the semi-structured interviews, alongside the related documentary materials that supported the interpretation of the interview results.

Chapter Seven provides an analysis and discussion of the research findings in order to accomplish the aims and objectives of this thesis. A summative framework is presented that links business and personal values with SBSR practice and outcomes, and the significance of this discussed in terms of its links to the SBSR and tourism and hospitality literature.

Chapter Eight concludes the thesis by presenting an overview of this research, highlighting the contribution to academic knowledge in respect to the SBSR and hospitality literature; the contribution to theory in respect to CSR research, and the contribution to practice in promoting knowledge about SBSR and associated practices within the foodservice industry. The limitations of this research are also discussed in order to pave the way for future research.

## **1.7 Conclusion**

This study is focused on exploring how small businesses express and implement their SBSR; this is because there is a lack of similar studies focused on small businesses, particularly in the foodservice sector. The research deals specifically with the perceptions of the owner-managers of small foodservice businesses. This delimitation is important to define the key focus of the research, which is essentially concerned with individuals who both own a business while also managing it on a daily basis. In such a context, it is known that the personal values of the owner-manager influence the management of the business, therefore researching personal values is important to be able critically to analyse these businesses' understanding and implementation of socially responsible actions. At the same time, the entrepreneurship and small business literature, as well as the literature on CSR in SMEs, highlights the importance of contextual values in determining business outcomes. The research objectives are therefore focused on exploring how the personal values of owner-managers influence SBSR, how business values and benefits influence SBSR, how external factors influence SBSR, and how SBSR is implemented. The expected contribution to knowledge is particularly to the SBSR literature and to the tourism and hospitality

literatures; such knowledge is expected to encourage the implementation of more socially responsible actions among small, independent foodservice businesses.

## **Chapter 2**

### **Literature review of CSR and its definitions**

## **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter discusses the concept of CSR, since this has been well researched in the business studies field (Carroll & Shabana, 2010), to the point of dominating the field and aggregating a lot of other concepts around it. The chapter is therefore organised around exploring the core CSR construct, as well as closely linked concepts that can better clarify that core construct. The first section explores the origins of the CSR scholarship, which are believed to lie in the concept of the social responsibility of the businessman. The following sections look at key instrumental discourses of CSR, since the concept is particularly studied in literature from this perspective. The discussion is followed by another key section, which explores critical discourses of CSR, particularly influenced by alternative definitions of the CSR construct, which ultimately shape its significance. Finally, the last section reviews all the definitions introduced in the study, to then propose an alternative definition that underlines the importance of a pluralistic and contextual understanding of CSR.

## **2.2 The origins: social responsibility and CSR normative discourses**

Studying how to manage businesses in an ethical and responsible way has become a central consideration for all industries, because businesses play a central role within society (Matten & Crane, 2005; Doh & Guay, 2006), therefore stakeholders and markets take these actions into consideration (Doh et al., 2010). Governments and civil society consequently demand that businesses should provide net positive contributions to the other stakeholders in society (Windsor, 2001; Wheeler et al., 2003; Lockett et al., 2006; Freeman et al., 2010; Frederick, 2016). There is a broad body of academic literature studying the role of a business in society (Wheeler et al., 2003; Schwartz & Carroll, 2008). By the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the business and society research field comprised a vast array of alternative research streams (Carroll, 1999; Windsor, 2001; Windsor, 2006; Carroll & Shabana, 2010). There are many constructs in such literature that are closely related to each other: corporate social responsibility (CSR), corporate social performance, business ethics, stakeholder theory, sustainable development and corporate citizenship (Wheeler et al., 2003; Carroll & Shabana, 2010; Freeman et al., 2010; Frederick, 2016). The CSR construct is considered to be at the centre of the business and society field of scholarship, because it has dominated the business and

society management literature for the past 60 years (Windsor, 2001; Campbell, 2007; Maon et al., 2010; Secchi, 2007; Lee, 2008; Lindgreen & Swaen, 2010). Despite the overlap between CSR and related concepts and, sometimes the failure to distinguish clearly between them, they do not organise around any widely accepted core paradigm (Preston, 1975; Drucker, 1984; Wheeler et al., 2003; Garriga & Mele, 2004; Secchi, 2007; Dahlsrud, 2008; Lee, 2008; Wry, 2009; Sarkar & Searcy, 2016). This research therefore utilises the core concept of CSR as the best theoretical foundation for the research, because of its wide utilisation in the literature (Schwartz & Carroll, 2008; Carroll, 2016).

The origin of the CSR concept can be traced back to the formalised emergence of the concept of the “social responsibility of the businessman”, in the second part of the 20th century (Marinetto, 1999; Idowu, 2011; Husted, 2015; Frederick, 2016). Prior to that, various social practices, considered the antecedents of CSR, emerged to address some of the issues caused by the industrial revolution in the 18<sup>th</sup> century (Marinetto, 1999; Husted, 2015). There are various examples in the literature about enlightened businesspeople who decided to introduce unrequited social benefits for employees of their organisations; for example, ‘Sir Titus Salt’ providing social benefits for their workforce in Saltaire, West Yorkshire (Smith, 2003). Another example is Robert Owen, who reduced the working day to 12 hours at his Lanark Mill in Scotland, refused to hire children younger than 10 years old and provided schooling for his employees’ children (Husted, 2015). The first explicit utilisation of the definition “social responsibility (SR) of the businessman” (Bowen, 1952), came from Howard Bowen, an American economist inspired by the then nascent ideologies of welfare economics (Acquier et al., 2011; Husted, 2015); he challenged traditional economic paradigms, founded on the concept of profit maximisation (Marinetto, 1999; Husted, 2015), also causing many negative externalities to the environment and society (Jones, 1980). Starting from the 1960s and then through the 1970s, various social voices, spreading from USA to all over the world (Preston, 1975), were in fact advocating for more civil rights and a more active social role for the state and corporations in providing for citizens (Preston, 1975; Campbell, 2007; Lee, 2008; Mitchell et al., 2011; Bazillier & Vauday, 2014). Since then, CSR has embraced topics such as philanthropy, improved working conditions, stakeholder and stockholder relations (Heald, 1957). Bowen stated that a businessman has obligations:

*“to pursue those policies, to make those decisions, and to follow those lines of action which are desirable in terms of the objectives and values of our society”*  
(Bowen, 1952, p.6).

Social responsibility has been criticised for being a vague and ill-defined concept (Preston, 1975); for being a concept lacking a dominant paradigm (Jones, 1980), or susceptible to subjective and value-laden judgments, not accommodating other important operational topics relevant to the decision making of the businessman (Margolis & Walsh, 2003; Windsor, 2006).

CSR was later conceptualised as a natural development of this basic normative individual concept of SR, particularly for accommodating the contractual nature of corporations in the USA, therefore shifting from moralistic discourses, towards theories of the firm that put shareholders rights as central to the firm (Husted, 2015). The terminology of responsibility in the definition of CSR naturally refers to moral categories, in line with the origin of the concept based on the business ethics debates (Bowen, 1953; Goyder, 1961). Economists argued that the CSR concept is flawed since the notion of responsibility can only be applied to individuals, while businesses are social entities, therefore only individuals should have responsibilities and not corporations (Friedman, 1962). Friedman stated that seeking profits should be the sole focus of socially responsible actions for corporations (Friedman, 1970). Jones advocated that CSR was a “voluntarily adopted” obligation (Jones, 1980). Davis, with his “Iron Law of Responsibility”, referred to CSR as the firm's consideration of, and response to, issues beyond the narrow economic, technical legal requirement of the firm (Davis, 1973). This means that there is an element of calculation and responsiveness in this voluntary approach, rather than responsibility (Windsor, 2001). Such a shift from a moral to an ethical voluntary approach to CSR opened the door to pragmatic views of CSR, defined as enlightened self-interest discourses (Garriga & Mele, 2004; Windsor, 2006; Secchi, 2007). The enlightened self-interest approach to CSR posits that it is an ethical practice that can produce higher profits (Jensen & Meckling, 1976). The core interpretations of CSR therefore started to focus more and more on the voluntariness of the positive actions towards society, to co-exist with the arguments that clearly mandated the legal duty of managers to focus on profit maximisation on behalf of the owners (American Law Institute, 1994). The early CSR debate, stemming from the SR/business ethics discourses, therefore focused on

reframing the original moral nature of CSR into a voluntary management discourse (Windsor, 2006; Secchi, 2007; Lee, 2008; Husted, 2015).

### **2.3 CSR instrumental discourses: business case and strategic management**

Since the 1980s, the neoclassical economic view of the firm has dominated management discourse in academia (Margolis & Walsh, 2003; Garriga & Mele, 2004; Ghoshal, 2005; Sarkar & Searcy, 2016). It is particularly neoliberal economists who have rejected the concept of CSR as irrelevant or even dangerous for the management of the firm (Levitt, 1958; Friedman, 1970; Jones, 1980; Jensen, 2002). Levitt (1958) totally rejected the possibility that businesses needed to have ethical obligations towards society. Jensen (2002) advocated a case against the very existence of any moral obligations of the firm, on the basis that the welfare of society can only be obtained when companies maximise total firm value. Friedman stated that CSR is a dangerous concept undermining the foundation of the firm, because CSR is a misuse of corporate resources (McWilliams & Siegel, 2006). Jones (1980) stated the concept is confusing, as it is normative and does not take in consideration basic concepts of political economy. Nevertheless, even Friedman (1970) included in his reasoning a moral exhortation with reference to economic and legal responsibility:

*"There is one and only one social responsibility of business – to use its resources and engage in activities designed to increase its profits so long as it stays within the rules of the game, which is to say, engages in open and free competition without deception or fraud."* (Friedman, 1970, p.4).

Carroll's definition of CSR was the first that attempted to integrate these competing discourses, in order to avoid undermining any perspective. Both the normative and instrumental discourses of CSR were considered (Carroll, 2016). It added legal considerations, not previously considered in other CSR definitions, but generally accepted since then as part of CSR (Lee, 2008; Lindgreen & Swaen, 2010). Finally, it included voluntary elements, such as philanthropy, focusing on constituents beyond the mere shareholders of the firm:

*"The social responsibility of business encompasses the economic, legal and discretionary expectations that a society has of organizations at a given point in time"* (Carroll, 1979, p. 500).



This definition is regarded as a core reference in the CSR literature, for being comprehensive and for accommodating competing discourses of CSR (Wartick & Cochran, 1985; Wood, 1991; Swanson, 1999; Wood, 2010).

This shift of CSR from ethical to management discourses paved the way for the rapid growth in the 1980s of discourses trying to justify the economic benefits of engagement with CSR (Garriga & Mele, 2004; Windsor, 2006; Secchi, 2007; Lee, 2008; Lindgreen & Swaen 2010). The instrumental views of CSR culminated in the emergence of the concept of Corporate Social Performance (CSP) (Wartick & Cochran, 1985; Wood (1991) as a means to operationalise and measure the CSR construct (Windsor, 2006; Campbell, 2007). Wood (1991) introduced this concept in order to move beyond the consideration of principles, and consider actual activities and programmes:

*“CSP is a business organization’s configuration of principles of social responsibility, processes of social responsiveness, and policies, programs, and observable outcomes as they relate to the firm’s societal relationships”* (Wood, 1991, p.693).

Many of the studies that followed have focused on proving the link between CSP and corporate financial performance (CFP) (Porter & van der Linde, 1995; Waddock & Graves, 1997; McWilliams & Siegel, 2000; Margolis & Walsh, 2003; Carroll & Shabana, 2010; Orlitzky et al., 2011). This theorisation is derived from the resource-based view of the firm (RBV). According to this theory, when the company invests in certain resources with social outcomes, these can constitute a source of sustainable competitive advantage. The typical example is a company which introduces products with social features that are valued by customers and stakeholders (McWilliams & Siegel, 2006). Most studies conclude that CSR performers can eventually achieve better firm performance, all else being equal (McWilliams & Siegel, 2000; McWilliams et al., 2006; Orlitzky et al. 2011). Studies offering a meta-analysis of these frequent attempts to link CSP and CFP (Margolis & Walsh, 2003; Orlitzky et al., 2011) have stated that there seems to be a positive but weak relationship between the two constructs; this suggests that, even though there is a relationship, it is not strong enough to give an assurance of causality, rather it is simply correlation (Athanasopoulou, 2012; Lee, 2017).

The evidence of a business case for CSR has continued to be inconclusive at best (Wood, 2010; Rivoli & Waddock, 2011; Tang et al., 2012; Delmas et al., 2013; Crane et al., 2019), eliminating the possibility of theoretical generalisation with regards to the strategic value of corporate socially responsible behaviour (Perrini, 2006b). Authors argue that extrinsic instrumental theories of CSR are locked in such controversy because they subjugate or dishonour the intrinsic value of CSR (Wood, 1991; Margolis & Walsh, 2003; Vogel, 2005; Fitjar, 2011), forcing it into a discretionary activity that has no better appeal than any other company strategy, such as advertising, R&D or even downsizing or outsourcing (Windsor, 2001; Margolis & Walsh, 2003; Wry, 2009; Wood, 2010; Heikkurinen & Ketola, 2012; Carroll, 2016). This narrow focus of the instrumental approach to CSR is highly criticised by some authors, and the CSR literature has since moved beyond the narrow focus on debating the CSP-CFP link (Lee, 2008) by utilising strategic management theories which focus on *how to* manage CSR strategically (Swanson, 1999; Smith, 2003; Wheeler et al., 2003; Kurucz et al., 2008; Carroll & Shabana, 2010; Freeman et al., 2010). Many such strategic views of CSR have emerged since the 1990s: some conceptualised around the concept of shared value, for win-win outcomes or simply for creating a sustained competitive advantage (Porter & Van Der Lind 1995; Wheeler et al., 2003; Porter & Kramer, 2006; Heikkurinen & Ketola, 2012). Some approaches focus on the intangible benefits that CSR accrues to the firm (Lee, 2008); for example, a large body of marketing research has established that CSR enhances consumer evaluations of the company, leading to positive relational outcomes (Brown & Dacin, 1997; Sen & Bhattacharya, 2001), particularly in terms of customer loyalty (Du et al., 2007; Dutta et al., 2008; Mandhachitara & Poolthong, 2011; Chomvilailuk & Butcher, 2014). Learning and innovating is another distinctive approach to CSR that has been widely adopted in recent years by many corporations (Zadek, 2007). This is related to the concept of strategic CSR but is an approach that is more internal to the firm, as it is related to operational management (Heikkurinen & Ketola, 2012).

The stakeholder approach, influenced by the then nascent theorisation around the concepts of stakeholder theory (Freeman, 1999; Donaldson, 1999; Freeman et al., 2010), became central to the operationalisation of the CSR construct from a strategic management perspective (Garria & Mele, 2004; Freeman et al., 2010; Perrini et al., 2007). The stakeholder approach to CSR provided a move beyond the contrasting

discourses of obligation versus instrumental justifications of CSR (Lee, 2008; Sarkar & Searcy, 2016), by operationalising which group the corporation should be responsible to. The stakeholder approach to CSR asserts that businesses have responsibilities for groups and individuals which can either influence or be influenced by business operations (Garriga & Mele, 2004; Lee, 2008; Strand et al., 2015). Freeman argued that, despite the main management purpose for most corporations being, by law, the maximisation of shareholders' returns, the business would not be able to create meaningful corporate objectives unless it understood the needs of stakeholders (Clarkson, 1995; Donaldson & Preston, 1995; Freeman et al., 2010). It is therefore logical to affirm that the firm's survival depends on considering and being responsible towards a wider range of stakeholders, beyond shareholders (Wicks et al., 1994; Donaldson & Preston, 1995; Jones & Wicks, 1999). The stakeholder approach to CSR helped to operationalise the role of business in society pragmatically within the CSR literature, by identifying the groups towards whom the business should be responsible, as well as evaluating the value provided to these stakeholders (Carroll, 1999; Clarkson, 1995; Donaldson & Preston, 1995; Wheeler et al., 2003; Munilla & Miles, 2005; Freeman et al., 2010). Donaldson and Preston (1995), as well as Mitchell et al. (1997), argued that businesses should not be responsible towards society as a whole, but only towards those who directly or indirectly affect, or are affected by, the firm's activities (Donaldson & Preston, 1995; Mitchell et al., 1997).

Such operationalisations related to stakeholders of the firm added a societal perspective to the CSR concept, which until then was looked at from either an ethical or economic perspective (Crane et al., 2008; Schwartz & Carroll, 2008; Freeman et al., 2010; Sarkar & Searcy, 2016). A very useful application of such a framework is offered by Crane et al. (2013): this approach operationalises CSR in four key focus areas: CSR in the marketplace, CSR in the workplace, CSR in the community and CSR in the ecological environment (Crane et al., 2013). CSR in the marketplace primarily considers consumers and suppliers and how the business interacts with these key strategic groups; this area obviously overlaps with conceptualisations related to shared-value and gaining a sustained competitive advantage, particularly through products with socio-environmental credentials (Porter & Kramer, 2011). CSR in the workplace looks at actions towards employees, exploring concepts such as respect for human rights, working environments in line with respect for international labour

standards (ILO), ranging from topics such as safety and wellbeing, to respect for regulations regarding the use of child labour (Crane et al., 2013). CSR in the community is the area considering the impacts of a business on the local community and broader society, ranging from topics such as donations to good causes, to involvement in local development initiatives (Crane et al., 2013); all these topics are susceptible to the context in which the business operates, which determines the specific issues that shape the debates in that community (Matten & Moon, 2008). Finally, the area of CSR in the ecological environment, inherits many of the emerging debates particularly arising within the sustainability and green management literature (Crane et al., 2013). The next section explains in detail why the CSR literature has been influenced by the sustainability one to include considerations regarding the natural environment.

This shift towards the management of CSR was aimed to counterbalance the purely economic interpretations of CSR, inspired by the neo-classical economic paradigms, which permeated management literatures and company law at the time (Marens, 2010; Kinderman, 2013), towards more nuanced interpretations of the CSR concept that included contextual elements influencing CSR. These theorisations also came in tandem with the increased divergence in the economic output across countries during the 1990s, therefore further critical streams of CSR started to emerge, highlighting the different meaning of CSR across different global contexts (Crane et al., 2008; Okoye, 2009). The next section highlights how the global changes in the economy at the beginning of the new millennium, influenced the shift towards more context-specific views of CSR.

#### **2.4 CSR in a globalised world: critical CSR discourses**

New CSR discourses emerged at the turn of the millennium as a critique to the CSR literature's narrow view on instrumental discourses (Windsor, 2006; Campbell, 2007; Lee, 2008; Wry, 2009). This critique emerged in line with a growing attention towards macro discourses of CSR, in conjunction with major societal shifts produced by the globalisation and technological revolutions (Schwartz & Carroll, 2008; Freeman et al., 2010; Rifkin, 2012). This led to CSR being analysed through the lens of new institutional theory (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Scott, 1987). Institutions are

conceived as "*social structures that have attained a high degree of resilience, are composed of cultural-cognitive, normative and regulative elements that, together with associated activities and resources, provide stability and meaning to social life*" (Scott 1987, p. 33). This theory helps to highlight how the boundaries of CSR are defined by those institutions within which corporate agency exists and operates (Campbell, 2007; Brammer et al., 2012b). The focus of CSR implementation shifted towards considering the actual benefits provided to society (Matten & Crane, 2005; Crane et al., 2019). Since different stakeholders' perceptions of benefits project different needs onto the firm (Aguilera et al., 2007; Martin, 2010; Aguinis & Glavas, 2012; Athanasopoulos, 2012; Amaeshi et al., 2016), CSR implementation is recognised to be highly influenced by the social and cultural context (Vogel, 2005; Porter & Kramer, 2006; Sen et al., 2006; Aguilera et al., 2007; Carroll & Shabana, 2010; Athanasopoulou, 2012). These competing perceptions influence the way that companies give meaning to CSR (Beschoner & Hajduk, 2017), endorse them as part of their organisational culture, as well as strategically adopt them (Lee, 2008; Freeman et al., 2010; Lindgreen et al., 2009).

In line with these studies, the concept of corporate citizenship emerged, defined as "*the role of the corporation in administering citizenship rights for individuals*" (Matten & Crane, 2005, p.173). This concept reflects the inherent societal role that corporations have, in virtue of their specific power at national or global level (Carroll, 1999; Matten & Crane, 2005; Matten & Moon 2008; Sison, 2009), which might even exceed that of governments in some cases (Windsor, 2001; Matten & Crane, 2005); such role is shaped by the institutions surrounding the corporation. According to these contextual views, CSR has explicit form if there is a lack of regulations and requirements from the institutional system, like in the UK and US governance systems, giving the company more space to act voluntarily (Campbell, 2007; Matten & Moon, 2008; Brammer et al., 2012b). CSR assumes a more implicit form, however, where there are more regulations, because of more government-oriented forms of governance, or in specific industries; the typical examples are the institutionalisation of social protection and labour rights for workers in the UK and mainland Europe after the Second World War (Albareda et al., 2006). In such environments, companies understand that they are acting responsibly when complying with the law (Barth & Wolff, 2005; Matten & Moon, 2008). Matten and Moon (2008), therefore, interpreted

CSR in relation to the concept of business responsibility, whereby the business not only acts voluntarily for the benefit of society but also complies responsibly with the rules of the institutional environment:

*“CSR (and its synonyms) empirically consists of clearly articulated and communicated policies and practices of corporations that reflect business responsibility for some of the wider societal good” (Matten & Moon, 2008, p.405).*

This change in perspective, is also reflected in the change in the EU’s definition of CSR. While the 2002 EU definition of CSR was solely focused on firms and their voluntary actions, the latest EU definition clearly states that companies need to respect applicable legislation and relevant stakeholders (European Commission, 2011):

*“CSR as the responsibility of enterprises for their impacts on society. Respect for applicable legislation, and for collective agreements between social partners, is a prerequisite for meeting that responsibility. To fully meet their corporate social responsibility, enterprises should have in place a process to integrate social, environmental, ethical, human rights and consumer concerns into their business operations and core strategy in close collaboration with their stakeholders” (EU Commission, 2011, p.1).*

Such an institutional perspective is also important in order to understand the role of industry associations and charities in complementing government’s role in driving positive social change (Doh & Guay, 2006).

As the world became more globalised and connected, this inevitably also led to a focus on sustainable development as an aspect of CSR (Wheeler et al., 2003; Strand & Freeman, 2015). The most quoted definition of sustainable development is contained in the Brundtland Report and refers to:

*“Development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (WECD, 1987, Chapter 3).*

Even though this concept initially emerged with the aim of protecting the natural environment, over time it was adapted to consider also societal impacts, with reference to its concern for future generations; hence the two concepts of CSR and sustainable development are overlapping (Schwartz & Carroll, 2008). Many governments and

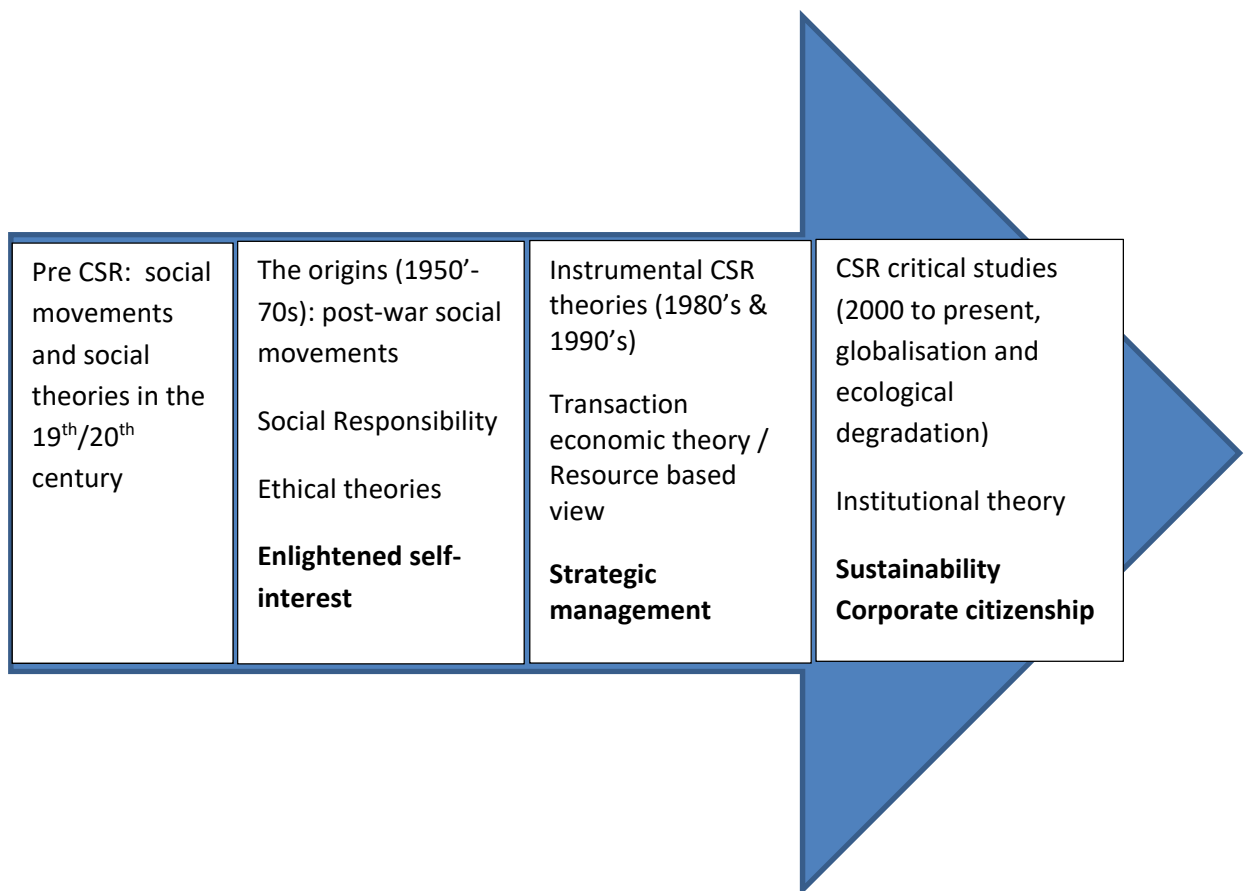
institutional organisations have stressed the view that businesses have a very important role to play in achieving sustainability (WBCSD, 1999, p. 3; van Marrewijk & Werre, 2003; Wheeler et al., 2003; EU Commission, 2011). The CSR and sustainable development discourses, especially within the business environment, are now utilised ever more interchangeably, and thus inevitably now mutually influence each other (Wheeler et al., 2003; Gatti & Seele, 2014; Bazillier & Vauday, 2014; Strand et al., 2015). Many definitions of CSR have been introduced since the turn of the century by such governmental bodies attempting to promote the uptake of CSR among corporations; all of them (see section 2.5) make clear references to the natural environment, demonstrating the shifting influence that the concept of sustainable development has had on the conceptualisation of CSR. Some authors argue that the future development of the concept of CSR at the global level will be reflected on its concern both towards society and the environment (Livesey, 2002; Basu & Palazzo, 2008; Bazillier & Vauday, 2014; Strand et al., 2015).

All these critical CSR discourses are pragmatic approaches to understanding the actual practice related to CSR. From a company voluntary tool, CSR can move towards being a socio-political tool (Scherer & Palazzo, 2007; Scherer & Palazzo, 2011; Maak et al., 2016). Under such a corporate citizenship light, CSR achieves better societal outcomes, such as better governance and sustainable development, particularly because the uptake of these actions is driven by many concurrent actors, including government and public institutions (Campbell, 2007; Wry, 2009). Taking all the above competing discourses in perspective, the concept of corporate citizenship has helped to reveal that corporations should have responsibilities, like individuals, with political significance (Windsor 2001; Secchi, 2007; Scherer & Palazzo, 2007; Scherer et al., 2016). At the same time, the institutionalisation of CSR among organisations is not a guarantee of good standards (Delmas & Burbano, 2011), since organisations are often unable to serve the ambitions of CSR and only superficially adopt such practices (Morsing & Spence, 2015). CSR is considered a soft approach unable to support the changes necessary to obtain sustainable development in the world (Young & Tilley, 2006; Banerjee, 2014). Harsher critics consider it is a tool to legitimise the excessive neoliberalism of modern economies (Roberts, 2003; Fleming, 2012; Cederström & Marinetto, 2013). While being aware that CSR is widely criticised, this study nevertheless embraces this business concept for its ability to be a business tool that

facilitates conversations around socially responsible actions, business ethics and competing societal concepts which shape the expectations of society towards businesses (Roberts, 2003). Under this light, CSR is therefore a pragmatic tool for societal action, influenced by the context in which the business operates. In the next section, a definition of CSR appropriate for this study will be advanced, with reference to all the CSR discourses which have emerged so far.

### 2.5 Definition of CSR selected for this study

The next figure briefly summarises the CSR discourses that have emerged in the literature over the past 70 years, as reviewed in the previous sections. The current section will review the various definitions introduced, showcasing how these discourses overlap with each other to the present day in order to contribute to the current understanding of CSR.



**Figure 1: Historical evolution of CSR discourses**

Source: Author



These competing and overlapping discourses of CSR highlight the lack of a core paradigm for CSR (Dahlsrud, 2008; Crane, et al., 2013; Srakar & Searcy, 2016) and its inherently contested and context-specific nature (Votaw, 1972; Matten & Moon, 2008; Okoye, 2009; Amaeshi et al., 2016). Table 1 summarises the definitions of CSR reviewed in the previous sections, identifying the discourses that each definition refers to. It becomes evident that in the most recent CSR definitions such discourses overlap. This means that recent definitions take into consideration not just the tension between ethical/normative views of CSR on the one hand, and economic/strategic voluntary discourses on the other, but also the societal role of the organisation shaped by other institutions, therefore including stakeholders and sustainability considerations. This lack of a core paradigm for CSR has led many authors to advocate for a pluralistic approach to CSR that bridges the gap between the overlapping discourses (Mostovicz & Kakabadse, 2011; Vallentin & Murillo, 2012; Frynas & Stephens, 2015; Sarkar & Searcy, 2016). Frynas and Stephens (2015) advocate the conceptualisation of CSR as an umbrella term and the need for a pluralist research agenda for CSR. Vallentin and Murillo (2012) argue that the traditional normative and instrumental approaches to CSR need to be integrated with sociological interpretations, specifically to understand CSR in SMEs. Sarkar & Searcy (2016) conducted a quantitative systematic review of the CSR literature; they highlight that definitions of CSR, despite not being organised around a core paradigm, develop along six core dimensions, namely economic, social, ethical, stakeholders, sustainability and voluntary practices (Sarkar & Searcy, 2016). Sarkar & Searcy (2016) state that, considering the lack of a universally accepted definition of CSR, CSR research is likely to remain fragmented in terms of theoretical foundation.

**Table 1: A summary of definitions of CSR**

Author	Definition	CSR discourses			Year
		Normative	Instrumental	Institutional	
Bowen	Businessmen have an obligation to pursue those policies, to make those decisions, and to follow those lines of action which are desirable in terms of the objectives and values of our society.	x			1953
Friedman	Seeking profit is the sole focus of socially responsible actions for corporations		x		1962
Davis	The firm's consideration of, and response to, issues beyond the narrow economic technical and legal requirement of the firm.	x			1973
Carroll	The social responsibility of business encompasses the economic, legal, ethical and discretionary expectations that a society has of organizations at a given point in time.	x	x		1979
Freeman	Businesses have responsibilities for groups and individuals which can either be influenced by or influence business operations	x			1984
Wood	CSP: a business organization's configuration of principles of social responsibility, processes of social responsiveness, and policies, programs, and observable outcomes as they relate to the firm's societal relationships.	x	x		1991
UN Global Compact/SA 8000	Principles in the areas of human rights, labour and the environment.	x		x	2000
European Commission	A concept by which companies integrate social and environmental concerns in their operations and in their interaction with stakeholders on a voluntary basis	x		x	2001
WSCBD	Commitment of business to contribute to sustainable economic development, working with employees, their families, the local community and society at large to improve their quality of life	x	x		2000

Matten & Moon	CSR reflects social imperatives and the social consequences of business success and consists of clearly articulated and communicated policies and practices of corporations that reflect business responsibility of some of the wider societal good	x		x	2008
Dahlsrud	CSR includes environmental social economic concern with stakeholder and voluntariness	x	x	x	2008
EU	CSR as the responsibility of enterprises for their impacts on society. Respect for applicable legislation, and for collective agreements between social partners, is a prerequisite for meeting that responsibility. To fully meet their corporate social responsibility, enterprises should have in place a process to integrate social, environmental, ethical, human rights and consumer concerns into their business operations and core strategy in close collaboration with their stakeholders.	x	x	x	2011
Searkar & Searcy	CSR implies that firms must foremost assume their core economic responsibility and voluntarily go beyond legal minimums so that they are ethical in all of their activities and that they take into account the impact of their actions on stakeholders in society, while simultaneously contributing to global sustainability.	x	x	x	2016

Source: Author

The above analysis highlights the need for a definition of CSR that reflects the plurality of discourses in contemporary understanding of CSR. The author introduced the following CSR working definition for this research, inspired by this pluralistic approach:

Corporate Social Responsibility is achieved through actions that integrate social, environmental, ethical and human rights considerations of managers and consumers into the core business strategy; it includes respecting any relevant law; its objective is to minimise any negative impact and maximise positive influences on people, communities and the environment.

The definition advanced here maintains as central the normative CSR discourse (Margolis & Walsh 2003; Garriga & Mele, 2004; Secchi, 2007; Wood 2010); it mentions how stakeholders' considerations can add value to the business (Wheeler et al., 2003; Porter & Kramer, 2011); it recognises the role of applicable legislation (Crane et al., 2019), as well as concerns for human rights and the environment (van Marrewijk & Werre, 2003; Wheeler et al., 2003; Bazillier & Vauday, 2014). The author does not consider this definition improved from others, but simply considers it important to provide a pluralistic working definition that underpins the pragmatic interpretivist understanding of CSR, particularly useful in terms of applying this theory to other contexts (Aguinis & Glavas, 2007). The clear mention of various stakeholders is necessary to simplify and specify the actual application of these concepts to a specific area (Crane et al., 2013); this will be further explained in chapter 4, which covers the actual implementation of socio-environmental practices among small foodservice businesses.

## **2.6 Conclusion**

This chapter has indicated that a pluralistic definition of CSR should be favoured, since this is a broad, contested concept, adopted by a growing number of different members of society. The CSR definition devised for this study is an integrative definition of CSR that takes into consideration seemingly contrasting views of CSR. The benefit of such a definition is to offer a conceptualisation of CSR more likely to be adopted by different members of society. This broad analysis is important to explain how the traditional studies of CSR are born in a context that is inapplicable to small businesses, therefore it justifies why it is important to look at the context of small businesses from a different perspective, as it is done in the following chapters.

## **Chapter 3**

### **Small business social responsibility (SBSR)**

### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter critically reviews the literature on CSR in SMEs according to the pluralistic definition of CSR introduced earlier, identifying concepts that will be used for the critical analysis of SBSR in foodservice businesses undertaken in chapter 4. The importance of studying these topics arises from the evidence that SMEs have been overlooked for a long time in the CSR literature (Spence, 1999; Jenkins, 2006; Hsu & Cheng, 2012; Vázquez-Carrasco & López-Pérez, 2013). This is changing, however, and more contributions are being added to the literature, developing from the overall CSR in SMEs research, but particularly focused on the small business and entrepreneurship literature (Stoian et al., 2016; Runyan & Covin, 2019). This PhD aims to contribute to such studies. The previous chapter indicated that a pluralistic definition of CSR should be favoured. In particular, interpretations should be arrived at according to the actors' sets of values and ideologies, utilising qualitative methods of analysis (Aguinis & Glavas, 2012; Farrington et al., 2017). A related issue is the lack of a consistent definition of CSR in SMEs (Tomasella & Ali, 2016), particularly due to the lack of a consistent definition of small business/SMEs utilised across studies (Spence et al., 2018). This chapter, therefore, starts by defining small business, then it provides a working definition of SBSR and compares this with the other definitions in the literature; finally, it analyses the various discourses of SBSR according to the historical analysis of CSR evidenced in chapter 2. This analysis will lead to the introduction in chapter 4 of SBSR in small foodservice businesses.

### **3.2 Defining the small business**

Since there is no single definition of what a small business is (Curran & Blackburn, 2000; Goffee & Scase, 2015), this section aims to analyse the small business literature critically, in order to advance the definition of small business selected for this study. Most of definitions proposed in the literature vary by size; for example, in the UK, the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, like the Department of Trade and Industry before it, defines a small business as having fewer than 50 employees (Bridge & O'Neill, 2012). Similarly, the Companies Act 2006, qualifies as small those companies that have two or more of the following requirements: a turnover of not more than £5.6 million, a total balance sheet of no more than £2.8 million, and a

number of employees of no more than 50 (UK Companies Act, 2006). The European Union similarly provides a small business definition based on turnover and employees: turnover of up to 10 million Euros, with a maximum number of employees corresponding to 50 (European Commission, 2011). These parameters are arbitrary and not likely to be adopted uniformly across geographies or across sectors (Curran & Blackburn, 2000); parameters are more and more problematic in the current post-2008 recession economic climate, characterised by economic uncertainty; for example many employees in small businesses are actually registered as independent entrepreneurs (Blackburn et al., 2017). Another aspect of the dynamic of small businesses, which clearly differentiates them from bigger businesses, is that they are usually managed by their owners (Quinn et al., 1997; Fauchart & Gruber, 2011). Small business owners tend to be described as those who want to be their own boss or occupy their own place, therefore those that cite autonomy and independence as an important value for being in business, even ahead of economic growth (Jenkins & Johnson, 1997; Chell, 2000; Getz & Petersen, 2005; Carland et al., 2007). Some authors criticise this black and white definition, as the focus on this “lone entrepreneur” has changed over time (Scott & Rosa 1996; Cooney, 2005; Danes, 2013). Owner-managers who run a business with a business partner, or who run a second business are now more common (Curran & Blackburn, 2000). In the case of a family business, there is substantial family presence in ownership, governance, management, succession, and/or employment (Winter et al., 1998; Chua et al., 1999).

These traditional views, based on the dichotomy of small business against entrepreneurship, depict small businesses as those focused on survival rather than growth (Gray, 2002; Headd & Kirchhoff, 2009). On the contrary, entrepreneurs are often depicted as maximisers of financial returns and risk takers (Bolton, 1971; Beck & Demirguc-Kunt, 2006; Carland et al., 2007). Such a pro-growth aptitude, usually linked to strategic planning and innovation, as well as a disregard for ethical considerations (Longenecker et al., 1988; Hannafey, 2003), is not considered a common trait in small businesses (Curran et al., 2000; Beaver, 2003; Ebben & Johnson, 2005). Qualitative studies, however, have considered the alternative phenomenon of lifestyle entrepreneurs, who seek a work-life balance, as well as profits to sustain such a lifestyle (Morrison & Thomas, 1999; Ateljevic & Doorne, 2000; Schine, 2003; Hollick & Braun, 2005; Kuratko, 2007; Kuratko & Audretsch, 2009), through

engaging with niche market consumers (Ateljevic & Doorne, 2000; Hall & Williams, 2008; Andersson Cederholm & Hultman, 2010). Such studies reject the assumption that a small business that is autonomy-oriented is necessarily not entrepreneurial (Runyan et al., 2008) and that such an attitude of prioritising lifestyle goals necessarily leads to higher rates of business failure (Curran & Blackburn, 2000; Morrison et al., 2008). Another type of small businesses that is usually assumed to be focused on security and risk-avoidance, rather than profit, are family businesses (Donckels & Frohlich, 1991; Song, 1997; Stewart, 2003; Getz & Petersen, 2005; Carland et al., 2007). More recent studies also consider entrepreneurs who work to increase personal benefits in economic terms, but who also contribute to society (Getz & Petersen, 2005; Morrison, 2006; Chell, 2007; Zahra et al., 2009). Categories here include social enterprises, sustainable enterprises or eco-enterprises, for their particular focus, in virtue of their mission, on social and environmental outcomes (Anderson, 1998; Cornelius et al., 2007; Wilson & Post, 2013; Chell et al., 2016), or ethical outcomes (Perrini, 2006a; Parrish, 2007; Parrish & Foxon, 2009; Parrish, 2010; Markman et al., 2016).

The phenomenon of small businesses and entrepreneurship is particularly relevant to the hospitality and tourism industry, which is the focus of this research. The hospitality and tourism industries can be regarded as archetypal entrepreneurial industries: the vast majority of these are small independent owner-managed businesses, with outlets which opened having taken advantage of low barriers to entry (Ball, 2005; Thomas et al., 2011). The multiplicity of motivations and goals previously highlighted among small businesses also affect the hospitality and tourism sector (Morrison & Thomas, 1999; Dewhurst & Thomas, 2003; Chen & Elston, 2013). Tourism and hospitality small businesses often have a desire to pursue a business venture which facilitates the ability to live a particular lifestyle, one which mirrors the interests of the entrepreneur (Morrison & Thomas, 1999; Ateljevic & Doorne, 2000; Hollick & Braun, 2005; Morrison, 2006; Mottiar, 2007; Carlsen et al., 2008; Morrison et al., 2008; Andersson Cederholm & Hultman, 2010; Lashley & Rowson, 2010; Morrison et al., 2010; Bosworth & Farrell, 2011; Skokic & Morrison, 2011; Thomas et al., 2011; Williams & Shaw, 2013). Williams and Shaw highlight that these businesses are focused more on the consumption of a certain 'lifestyle', rather than production (Williams & Shaw, 2013). Similarly the phenomenon of family businesses and ethnic enterprise is often



found also in the tourism and hospitality industry, which offer a very attractive environment for people that want entrepreneurial and independent opportunities, while also caring for their family (Lynch, 1998; Morrison & Thomas, 1999; Thomas et al., 2011; Getz & Carlsen, 2000; Carlsen et al., 2004; Lee-Ross & Lashley, 2010). Often, these small tourism and hospitality businesses are characterised by non-economic goals (Getz et al., 2004; Agarwala & Dahm, 2015), such as localised, artistic, social, spiritual or political/community concerns (Getz et al., 2004; Keen, 2013). This does not mean that such small businesses are not entrepreneurial, but simply that they seek alternative and innovative paradigms, not solely focused on growth but also on smallness (Ateljevic & Doorne, 2000; Shaw & Williams, 2004; Schumacher, 2011; Tomassini, 2019).

The range of small hospitality and tourism businesses included in this research particularly encompasses social enterprises. In the hospitality and tourism sector, in recent years, the phenomenon of social and sustainable enterprises has dramatically increased (Thompson, 2008; Sigala, 2014; Sloan et al., 2014; Alegre & Berbegal-Mirabent, 2016; Altinay et al, 2016; Sigala, 2016; Dickerson & Hassanien, 2017; Higgins-Desbiolles et al., 2019). A charity, as defined by the UK Government, is an organisation that is set up for charitable purposes (The Charity Commission of England and Wales, 2013. p2), such as education or relief from poverty. Social enterprise, on the other hand, is a recent concept, but a phenomenon gathering momentum in the UK because of changes in Company Law in 2006 that facilitated the setup of this type of organisations (Mason & Doherty, 2016). The objective of addressing social problems is at the heart of these organisations. The blurring of the boundaries between profit and non-profit types of company underpins the theorisation of social enterprises. The phenomenon of social entrepreneurship is linked with the concept of social responsibility studied in this research. *“In many ways, both the CSR and social entrepreneurship literature can be viewed as starting to redefine common assumptions about the market-based system and its uses”* (Wilson & Post, 2013, p.92). Social enterprises usually share more than one goal in their business, which are economic goals, social goals that are the core of their mission, but also socio-political objectives related to the advancement of their mission (Perrini, 2006a). It is beyond the scope of this research to examine the differences between the terms of social enterprise, social entrepreneur, social entrepreneurship and charity. This is because a

fine-grained understanding of social enterprises is not the objective of this research; rather they are included to provide a broad view on how businesses can achieve societal outcomes. A good general working definition that can be applied to frame these interrelated concepts in the context of this work is the one offered by Young and Kim (2015), according to which:

*“Depending to a degree on national context, the forms of social enterprise range from traditional nonprofit organizations, to commercial projects under nonprofit auspices, to business-nonprofit partnerships, to corporate social responsibility projects in large corporations, to social cooperatives, to small businesses whose owners dedicate themselves to a social mission, to new legal forms of enterprise such as community interest companies (CICs), B corporations, benefit corporations, flexible benefit corporations, L3Cs and other variations of social purpose business”* (Young & Kim, 2015, p.237).

After the analysis of the types of businesses that this research will consider, the present work advances a concise and clear definition of what is meant by the term *small business* in this study. This is for the benefit of clearly interpreting the results of this SBSR study, taking into consideration also the variety of definitions of small businesses utilised by different SBSR literature reviews. Table 2, adapted from Curran & Blackburn (2000), offers a definition of small business according to three key parameters: size, turnover, key business orientation related to motivations of the owners (Curran & Blackburn, 2000). Based on this analysis, for this study, small businesses are defined as those businesses with *fewer than 50 employees, with a turnover of less than 10 million Euros, owner-managed and independent, with either a profit, lifestyle, family or social orientation*. This definition was already adopted by official bodies in UK, as well as the small business literature, as well as early SBSR studies (e.g. Van Auken & Ireland, 1982; Spence 1999). It differs from later SBSR studies, which broaden the scope of the definition of “small business” to include all businesses with less than 250 employees (ex.: Wickert et al., 2016; Soundararajan et al., 2018); the present study avoided aligning with such definitions as it is feared this could create confusion with studies into CSR in SMEs. Moreover, a recent study by Spence et al. (2018) highlighted the importance of choosing a definition that suits the local environment, which is the case here as the parameters chosen are similar to those

of both the UK government and the EU (UK Companies Act, 2006; European Commission, 2011).

In conclusion, this section has clarified the definition of small business adopted in this study, as well as introducing a definition of social enterprise, since this is a new phenomenon of business that the reader might not be familiar with. The next section proposes the definition of small business social responsibility (SBSR) adopted for this work.

**Table 2: Summary of criteria for the definition of a small business**

Criteria	Authors
Number of employees	< 50 employees (DIT, 2015; EU, 2011; USAID, 2017, Spence, 1999).
Turnover	< 10 Million Euros (EU, 2014; EC, 2003).
Cultural frameworks	Entrepreneurs (profit/risk maximisers) (Schumpeter, 2000); lifestyle entrepreneurs (ex. Ateljevic & Doorne, 2000); social/sustainable entrepreneurs (Cornelius et al., 2007); family businesses (Carlsen et al., 2004).

Source: Author (adapted from Curran & Blackburn, 2000).

### 3.3 Defining SBSR

The phenomenon of CSR in small businesses is recognised as a concept, particularly in the US context (VanAuken & Ireland, 1982; Smith & Oakley, 1994), despite its absence from traditional CSR analysis, which privileges discourses for larger firms (Lepoutre & Heene, 2006; Jamali et al., 2009). These sparse contributions have emerged in recent years within the CSR in SMEs literature (Spence & Rutherford, 2001; Southwell, 2004; Spence, 2007; Spence & Perrini, 2009; Spence, 2016; Soundararajan et al., 2018), as well as the entrepreneurial ethics literature (e.g. Quinn, 1997; Vyakarnam et al., 1997; Spence, 1999; Treviño et al., 1999; Buchholz & Rosenthal, 2005; Miller & Collier, 2010). The need for a separate body of knowledge, contextualised to values and ideologies of small businesses, was already highlighted

in chapter 2. The SBSR literature, which focuses solely on small businesses, is now an organised and independent field of study (Lepoutre and Heene, 2006; Spence, 2007; Spence & Painter-Morland, 2010; Örtenblad, 2016; Spence, 2016; Soundararajan et al., 2018; Spence et al., 2018), within which the definition that will emerge at the end of the chapter is situated. The necessity to use a specific term for the concept, different from CSR, emerged from the realisation that most small business owners, do not know or do not use the term CSR (Jenkins 2004; Jenkins, 2006; Fassin et al., 2015). Those that know the term, feel no affinity with it or see it as one imposed by regulators, despite its voluntary nature (Jenkins, 2004; Lepoutre & Heene, 2006; Jamali et al., 2009; Baden & Harwood, 2013).

The term that small businesses better relate to is that of small business social responsibility, to reflect that the term ‘Corporate’ is not applicable to small businesses (vanAuken & Ireland, 1982; Roberts, 2003; Jenkins, 2004; Castka et al., 2004; Murillo & Lozano, 2006; Spence, 2007; Jamali et al., 2009; Aragón et al., 2015; Spence et al., 2018). Social responsibility also better reflects the fact that, in small businesses, usually, the practice is unreported and not institutionalised (Baumann-Pauly et al., 2013; Wickert et al., 2016).

Nonetheless, just as only a few studies of CSR in SMEs focus on small businesses (Tomasella & Ali, 2016), even more, recent studies utilising the term SBSR (e.g. Corazza, 2019) still focus their data collection on SMEs. This confusion is inherited from the lack of consistent definition of small business (Curran & Blackburn, 2000), as highlighted in the previous section. Only a few recent studies clearly define the emerging concept of SBSR to utilise a term that is more sensitive to the small-business context and idiosyncrasies (Jamali et al., 2009; Tomasella & Ali, 2016; Soundararajan et al., 2018; Spence et al., 2018), as well as attempt to consider and describe the implementation of a sustained business practice. Lepoutre & Heene (2006) utilised the definition of a responsible entrepreneur offered by the European Union, which considers business ethics, stakeholder issues regarding welfare, as well as environmental issues (Lepoutre & Heene, 2006). This definition focuses on areas of activity but does not highlight who the stakeholders are. The first systematic review of SBSR to appear in the literature defined SBSR as “*activities of smaller organisations that result in positive social change*” (Soundararajan et al., 2018, p. 2). This definition, however, is focused solely on expected outcomes, not on beneficiaries

or areas of activity. The working definition introduced for this PhD in chapter 1 (Tomasella & Ali, 2016), was adopted for its ability to clarify the focus on stakeholders' impacts and areas of actions:

*“SBSR is the social responsibility of a small business for its impact on society, expressed by contributing to the wellbeing of stakeholders and the local community, while minimising the negative impacts on the environment”* (Tomasella & Ali, 2016, p.5).

In light of the emergence of this literature, and the knowledge highlighted in chapter 2 of the pluralism affecting these definitions of CSR and SBSR, a key research objective will be to analyse the understanding of SBSR among small businesses, in particular highlighting the differences between CSR and SBSR. The following sections cover a literature review of the CSR in SME and SBSR studies, guided by the framework of CSR discourses that emerged in the previous chapter, as well as the definitions introduced so far.

### **3.4 Normative motivations of SBSR**

The owner-managers are autonomous and independent, less influenced by institutional pressures, therefore personal values and ethical attitudes can have a strong influence on their ethical decision making (Valentine & Fleishman, 2008) as well as on the socially responsible practices of the whole organisation (Spence, 1999; Spence & Schmidpeter, 2003; Jenkins, 2004; Lepoutre & Heene, 2006; Murrillo & Lozano, 2006; Spence, 2007; Fuller & Tian, 2009; Hamman et al., 2009; Thornton & Bird, 2013; Williams & Schaefer, 2013; Schaefer et al., 2018). Small businesses tend to be more personal and tend to reflect the personal values of the owner, therefore internal motivations of SBSR are more critical in small businesses than in large organisations (Graafland & Van de Ven, 2006; Fuller & Tian, 2006; Tzschentke et al., 2008; Lähdesmäki, 2012; Williams & Schaefer, 2013; Schaefer et al., 2018). SMEs engage positively with environmental issues when prompted to do so by the personal values of their owners and senior managers (Brammer et al., 2012a; Cruz et al., 2014). Lähdesmäki (2012), in her research about owner-managers' identity, found that CSR in SMEs emerges from the process of reconciling economic values with the ethical aspects of business life. Williams and Schaefer (2013) and Schaefer et al. (2018) found

that personal values are key drivers in the implementation of environmental practices among small businesses. Graafland et al., (2006) observe that intrinsic motivators make the implementation of socio-environmentally conscious actions more effective; they found that stronger CSR performance is linked to intrinsic/altruistic motives. Personal religious beliefs are also found to be key internal duties for the owner-manager and therefore constitute an internal driver of SBSR (Quinn, 1997; Spence et al., 2003; Graafland et al., 2006; Worthington et al., 2006a; Worthington et al., 2006b; Brammer et al., 2007).

Other authors highlighted that normative elements at firm level can also have an influence on SBSR, such as vision and mission (Murrillo and Lozano 2006; Campin et al., 2013). Similarly, the actual nature of the business, when informed by non-economic / personal values, is also considered important in the context of SBSR, as mentioned in previous sections. Family involvement means that the management is consistent with the personal family values (Kotlar & De Massis, 2013; Bergamaschi & Randerson, 2016; Laguir et al., 2016); as a consequence, these businesses are not only guided by institutional and economic factors, but also by moral, emotional and social factors (Stewart, 2003; Katila, 2010). There is much debate as to whether the socio-emotional wealth, which characterises these firms, influences their engagement in socially responsible practices or not (Cruz et al., 2014; Zientara, 2017). The familism showcased by these businesses could negatively affect those employees who are not part of the family, as has been found in ethnic entrepreneurship. On the other hand, other contributions highlight that these family businesses pursue non-economic goals that can make them more socially responsible (Gallo, 2004; Dyer & Whetten, 2006; Chrisman et al., 2012; Cruz et al., 2014; Peake et al., 2015; Kallmuenzer & Peters, 2017). What seems to be agreed, however, is that it is family involvement and commitment, through the values the family commits to within the business, which determines the family firm's engagement with SBSR (Mitchell et al., 2011; Chrisman et al., 2012; Marques et al., 2014; Zientara, 2017). Social entrepreneurs share the same values of autonomy and control as entrepreneurs, but in this emerging literature, researchers particularly focus on the psychological traits of SE founders, usually characterised as heroic individuals (Mair & Noboa, 2006).

The entrepreneurship literature also deals with the area of ethical decision making, which overlaps with SBSR. Queen (1997) and Treviño et al. (2006) each state that

personal ethics are the strongest motivator of ethical behaviour, and that organisational elements, such as assumptions of responsibility and role taking, are moderators between these elements and the ethical behaviour. Moral motivation is also very important and has been described as a person's "*degree of commitment to taking the moral course of action, valuing moral values over other values, and taking personal responsibility for moral outcomes*" (Rest, 1999, p.101). All these frames, inspired by cognitive psychology, are criticised for their lack of insight into the gap between intention and actual moral behaviour within the firm (Treviño et al., 2006; Sayer, 2011). Recent developments in the area of positive psychology recognise other elements to be important, since humans are meaning-making individuals affected by care and concern (Sayer, 2011). Kreps and Monin (2011) consider the intuitions which bring people to act on moral awareness; elsewhere these intuitions are called moral sentiments or moral emotions (Sayer, 2011), since these emotions inform the individual that there is a moral situation to deal with. Moral sentiments or emotions have not often been looked in SBSR research, since most studies are framed according to rational ethical frameworks (von Weltzien Hoivik & Mele, 2009), even though much current SBSR research recognises the importance of emotional needs through concepts such as ethics of care (Wicks et al., 1994; Held, 2006; Spence, 2016). In summary, this section has highlighted the complexity of these contributions, which focus on values, ethics and the religious affiliations of owner-managers. At the same time, as was particularly highlighted in the more mature research on business ethics and family firms, more research is needed on the complexity of how personal values lead to socially responsible business practices. This is therefore a key area for this research, and the second research objective will focus particularly on the critical analysis of how the personal values and motivations of owner-managers influence the understanding and implementation of SBSR.

### **3.5 Instrumental motivations of SBSR**

Many authors suggest that the internal values or ethical nature of the owner-manager are key to influencing their commitment to SBSR. Nevertheless the same authors also highlight that there are also a variety of business motivations, both internal and external to the owner-manager, that are influential in motivating SBSR (Jenkins, 2006; Murrillo & Lozano, 2006; Perrini et al., 2007; Cambra-Fierro et al., 2008; Preuss &

Perschke, 2010). Most small entrepreneurs exhibit a range of motives, reflecting the fact that their businesses pursue a variety of ethical as well as financial goals (Spence & Schmidpeter, 2003; Hammann et al., 2009; Iturrioz et al., 2009; Fenwick, 2010; Russo & Perrini, 2010; Sen & Cowley, 2013; Reyes-Rodríguez et al., 2014). The companies most engaged with SBSR seem to be those that have adopted a balanced approach between entrepreneurship and ethical practice (Castka et al., 2004; Jenkins, 2006; Hammann et al., 2009). For example, according to Jenkins (2006), the most active companies are the altruistic ones that communicate their societal engagement actively; the ones less engaged, driven only by motivations related to legitimacy or risk management, communicate less and reap fewer rewards. This is often due to the fact that small businesses do not frame issues related to SBSR from a marketing or public relations perspective on account of lack of strategic skills (Spence, 2007). Both push and pull factors are recorded as motivations for engagement with SBSR, but pull factors were more important for the most engaged companies (Masurel & Rens, 2015); often it is lack of communication that turns SBSR actions into profit sacrificing activities (Lee et al., 2016).

Most instrumental studies of SBSR identify strategic or instrumental reasons as predictors of SBSR engagement rather than outcomes, as in the traditional CSR literature, because, usually, “*organisational features constrain small businesses from engaging in SBSR activities*” (Soundararajan et al., 2018, p.9). The business objectives are often identified according to the business owner’s perceptions of what constitutes business benefits, and different types of actions are pursued as a consequence of these perceptions (Uhlener et al., 2012; Panwar et al., 2017; Nybakk & Panwar, 2015). The SBSR literature focuses on intangible benefits in recognition that organisational success or effectiveness is framed as having an intangible or ethical matrix, wherein values play a crucial role in defining the organisational effectiveness of a firm (Drucker, 2012). Various studies highlight the intangible benefits of engaging in SBSR, such as increasing reputation and legitimacy for the organisation, and these are portrayed as being the main instrumental drivers of SBSR actions (Fuller & Tian, 2006; Perrini, 2006b; Hammann et al., 2009; Jenkins, 2009; Russo & Perrini, 2010; Fassin et al., 2011; Høivik & Shankar, 2011; Sen & Cowley, 2013). One such intangible benefit is social capital, which can be accrued by small businesses when undertaking SBSR (Spence et al., 2003; Sen & Cowley, 2013; Vázquez-Carrasco &



López-Pérez, 2013). Social capital has various dimensions, such as the structural connections between stakeholders, a relational dimension emerging from sharing similar codes with partners, and a cognitive dimension based on trust and common goals (Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998). The accumulated social capital is the intangible benefit accrued by small businesses when undertaking SBSR (Spence & Schmidpeter, 2003; Fuller & Tian, 2006; Perrini, 2006b; Preuss & Perschke, 2010; Ayios et al., 2014). This is reflected in trends from various industries; for example, the interest displayed by consumers towards fair trade or localism, raises trust among consumers towards those businesses that can provide such products (Moore et al., 2009; Mintel, 2019b). The created trust, leading to loyalty or repeat purchase, is a form of social capital for businesses.

These examples might suggest that certain types of actions are driven by values, while others are implemented only when there is a perceived business case (Cassell & Lewis, 2011). The more pragmatic companies need to know about the advantages brought by SBSR before getting involved (Spence & Lozano, 2000; Castka et al., 2004; Murrillo & Lozano, 2006; Fenwick, 2010). Other instrumental reasons for businesses to get involved might include increasing efficiency (Williamson et al., 2006; Argandoña & von Weltzien Hoivik) and risk reduction (van Weltzien Høivik & Shankar, 2011). Responsible competitiveness can also be achieved through embedding SBSR action at the start up level (Lefebvre & Lefebvre, 2012), encouraging innovative action and increasing the chances of finding growth opportunities, for example by incorporating social and/or environmental benefits in the value of the product (Jenkins, 2006; Murrillo & Lozano 2006; van Weltzien Høivik & Shankar, 2011; Brammer et al., 2012a). There is also evidence that specific CSR practices have an impact on opening up new markets, as well as drive innovation and productivity (Department of Business, Innovation and Skills, 2014; Moneva-Abadía et al., 2018). Some case studies found that certain lifestyle business owners are closely related to new forms of tourism consumption and niche markets, which they can access through innovative products with environmental value (Ateljevic & Doorne, 2000; Bosworth & Willett, 2011).

Other contributions, but in less frequent numbers, focus on the actual outcomes that the small business can accrue from specific SBSR activities, with customer loyalty and higher profits often highlighted as possible outcomes (Castka et al., 2004; Iturrioz, et al. 2009; Alniacik et al., 2011; Nybakk & Panwar, 2015). Iturrioz et al. (2009)

highlight that when SBSR is a business strategy, tapping into the competitiveness of the firm, it can accrue business value and higher profits. Alniacik et al. (2011) found that positive socio-environmental performance in small businesses can lead to consumers being more likely to purchase. Instrumental motivations for SBSR in small firms are diverse, depending on the stakeholders (Lepoutre & Heene, 2006). A firm may engage in social responsibility activities to enhance customer appeal, to manage its relationships with a diverse range of stakeholders, or to mitigate risks (Nybakk & Panwar, 2015). Beneficial actions within the network or community of influence of an SME, can indirectly give outcomes or rewards to the firm, in virtue of the relationship with these stakeholders (Jenkins, 2006). Hamman et al. (2009), as well as Reyes-Rodriguez et al. (2014), meanwhile, identified cost savings as an outcome of socially responsible business practices (Hamman et al., 2009; Reyes-Rodriguez et al., 2014). This section has highlighted how the expression of SBSR can be influenced by specific instrumental motivations, usually aligned according to the values of the owner or the stakeholders involved; therefore the third objective of the research will be to critically analyse how business motivations influence SBSR.

In the next section, those studies that have utilised a more institutional view of CSR in SMEs are highlighted, since the macro and contextual view of the environment might be more descriptive of the indirect outcomes accrued to the firm than the micro-level view.

### **3.6 Institutional factors influencing SBSR**

Type of industry, industry culture and competitors, or the strength of certain industry associations in supporting CSR, can determine the level of stakeholders' pressure and influence on SBSR (Brown & King, 1982; Vyakarnam et al., 1997; Lepoutre & Heene, 2006; Kornilaki & Font, 2019). The external environment effect is certainly less influential for smaller businesses than larger businesses, since the former tend to have a more direct relationship with the local environment, and therefore experience less institutional pressures (Lepoutre & Heene, 2006). Small businesses tend to lack the element of public relations as they have a smaller audience which is locally based, therefore the influence of external stakeholders impinge on their culture, rather than on their strategic decisions (Jenkins, 2006; Spence, 2007; Spence, 2016). In such

contexts, beyond the entrepreneur's values and orientation, or the immediate intangible benefits, it is the company embeddedness in the local socio-economic environment which is mostly influential in motivating CSR engagement of SMEs (Fuller & Tian, 2006; von Weltzien Høivik & Shankar, 2011; Sen & Cowley, 2013; Lähdesmäki et al., 2019). Such dynamics is particularly influential where a territorial or business networks, support the diffusion of such territorial social responsibility (Zucchella, 2007; Murillo & Lozano, 2009; Del Baldo, 2010).

In the literature on ethical decision making, the institutional elements play a role when it comes to issue recognition or creating moral awareness, which means raising awareness of a moral topic (Sayer, 2011). A key phase in ethical decision making is the use of mental frames to gauge the moral intensity (Kreps & Monin, 2011): the consequent moral awareness, leads to ethical behaviour. Jones (1991) proposed three key reasons for moral intensity, namely probable magnitude of consequences, proximity and social consensus. Lepoutre and Heene (2006) stress the importance of proximity in justifying the importance of internal SBSR, since, usually, small businesses cannot perceive the magnitude of consequences towards, for example, the environment. The relationships at community level are often framed in terms of proximity, since this element heightens the responsiveness of the firm (Courrent & Gundolf, 2009; von Weltzien Høivik & Shankar, 2011; Sen & Cowley, 2013). Other authors similarly link moral awareness to context and social consensus (Butterfield et al., 2000; Treviño et al., 2006). Social consensus bears a strong influence on small businesses to act responsibly so as to achieve legitimacy with immediate stakeholders; this is because the relationship with employees, customers, suppliers and their local community is at stake in a far more direct and personal way than it is with major corporations (Fuller & Tian, 2006; Jenkins, 2006; Ciliberti, et al., et al., 2008; Lee, et al., et al., 2016). Small businesses are very responsive, rather than strategic, therefore authors highlight that they still act in response to stakeholders' needs in consideration of their very relational nature (Jenkins, 2006; Perrini et al, 2007; Lee et al., 2016). Collaboration with charity organisation can also influence uptake of SBSR (Spence et al., 2003).

Of all the elements mentioned above, the one that particularly recurs in the SBSR literature as an important motivation for responsible social behaviour of SMEs is the involvement and proximity with the local community ( Jenkins, 2004; Besser et al.,

2006; Niehm et al., 2008; Fitzgerald et al., 2010; Besser, 2012; Sen & Cowley, 2013). The interaction with local community is often translated into topics such as use of local resources, hiring employee from the locality and investment in activities within the local community (Russo & Perrini, 2010; Niehm et al., 2008; Campin et al., 2013). The concept of embeddedness, derived from the literature on entrepreneurship, highlights the interconnection between a business and its stakeholders at community level on account of belonging to the same socio-economic environment (Granovetter, 2005; Peredo & Chrisman, 2006). Along these lines, some studies have also explored the influence of the specific country context (Perrini, 2006b), or of specific socio-economic conditions, on the socially responsible behaviour of family firms (Fitzgerald et al., 2010), or the influence of certain sociocultural contexts on the socially responsible behaviour of migrant entrepreneurs in UK (Worthington et al., 2006). The table below summarises all the discourses identified so far. In summary, the last three sections have highlighted how the CSR discourses and underpinning theories can be valuable for exploring SBSR; it was noted that studies used to focus on environmental practices only, while lately, thanks for the focus on SBSR scholarship, a more integrated approach is utilised. The fourth research objective is particularly aligned with this last section, in critically analysing how external factors influence SBSR. The next section covers the implementation of SBSR; a more in depth analysis is included in chapter 4, as that chapter introduces the specific sector of this research, therefore providing more contextual factors to substantiate the analysis.

**Table 3: Motivations and outcomes related to SBSR**

<b>Normative discourses of SBSR</b>	Spence, 1999; Spence et al., 2003, Spence & Rutherford 2003; Jenkins, 2004; Southwell, 2004; Spence, 2007; Jenkins, 2006; Lepoutre & Heene, 2006; Murrillo & Lozano, 2006; Fuller & Tian, 2009; Hammann et al., 2009; van Weltzien Hoivik & Mele, 2009; Lähdesmäki, 2012; Power et al., 2017.	Personal motivations: Values of owner, personality traits, personal ethics
	Spence & Schmidpeter, 2003; Worthington et al., 2005; Worthington et al., 2006; Graafland et al., 2006; Brammer, et al., 2007; Spence, 2016.	Religion, culture and ethnicity
	Vision and mission: Murrillo & Lozano 2006; Campin et al., 2013. Ownership structure: Gallo, 2004; Fitzgerald et al., 2010; Chrisman et al., 2012; Uhlaner et al., 2012; Peake et al., 2015; Bergamaschi & Randerson, 2016.	Normative motivations at firm level
<b>Instrumental discourses of SBSR</b>	Williamson et al., 2006; van Weltzien Høivik & Shankar, 2011.	Operational performance; risk reduction
	Fuller & Tian, 2006; Perrini, 2006b; Hammann et al., 2009; Jenkins, 2009; Russo & Perrini, 2010; van Weltzien Høivik & Shankar, 2011; Fassin et al., 2011; Sen & Cowley, 2013; Reyes-Rodríguez et al., 2014; Castka et al., 2004	Reputation, legitimacy
	Jenkins, 2006; Murrillo & Lozano, 2006; Williamson et al. 2006; Castka et al., 2009; van Weltzien Hoivik & Shankar 2009; Brammer et al., 2012a; Lefebvre & Lefebvre, 2012; Uhlaner et al., 2012; Nybakk & Panwar, 2015; Panwar et al, 2016; Moneva-Abadía et al., 2018.	Niche markets; Competitiveness; Innovation possibilities; Differentiation
	Spence et al., 2003; Sen & Cowley, 2013; Vázquez-Carrasco & López-Pérez, 2013.	Social capital and stability
	Hamman et al., 2009; Reyes-Rodríguez et al., 2014.	Outcomes: cost savings
	Iturrioz, et al. 2009; Alniacik et al., 2011; Nybakk & Panwar, 2015.	Outcomes: higher profits, customer loyalty
<b>Institutional discourses of SBSR</b>	Brown & King, 1982; Vyakarnam et al., 1997; Lepoutre & Heene, 2006; Kornilaki & Font, 2019	Industry norms
	Fuller & Tian, 2006; Zucchella, 2007; Murrillo & Lozano, 2009; von Weltzien Høivik & Shankar, 2011; Del Baldo, 2012; Sen & Cowley, 2013; Lähdesmäki et al., 2019	Territorial or business networks
	Butterfield et al., 2000; Treviño et al., 2006; Courrent & Gundolf, 2009; von Weltzien Høivik & Shankar, 2011; Sen & Cowley, 2013.	Proximity, social consensus
	Non-profit organisations: Spence et al., 2003.	Stakeholders pressure
	Jenkins, 2004; Besser et al., 2006; Russo & Perrini, 2010; Besser, 2012; Sen & Cowley, 2013.	Embeddedness in the local community

	Perrini 2006b; Worthington et al. 2006; Fitzgerald et al. 2010.	Country, socio-economic & socio cultural context
	Employee relations Fuller & Tian, 2006; Ciliberti et al., 2008). Responsiveness to clients (Jenkins, 2006; Perrini et al., 2007; Lee et al., 2016).	Responsiveness to employees and clients

Source: Author

### 3.7 Implementation of SBSR

In terms of actual implementation, SMEs prioritise the creation of value primarily for closer stakeholders like employees and clients (Spence, 1999; Jenkins, 2004; Jenkins, 2006; Hamman et al., 2009). Employee endorsement is key for driving forward the CSR agenda in small businesses, for example through volunteer work (Hamman et al., 2009). Spence (2016) reports that it is workplace issues and the health of the employees which constitute the main ethical concern of small businesses. Vives (2006) underlines areas such as work–family issues, equity, health, well-being and worker participation. Finally, small firms do not particularly show a focus on sustainability management since they lack a strategic view regarding the environment (Moore & Manring, 2009; Del Baldo, 2012; Reyes-Rodríguez et al., 2014; De Chiara, 2015; Fassin et al., 2015; Hörisch et al., 2015; Johnson & Schaltegger, 2016). De Chiara (2015) states that the common identity is more likely to shape into a local system of social responsibility when a certain societal issue within a locality is addressed in a systematic way to achieve higher sustainability. Sustainability innovation is a concept better implemented at a local level through networking and sharing resources (Del Baldo, 2012). This consideration will not be particularly valid for the tourism and hospitality sector, however, where, instead, most CSR studies are focused on sustainability actions covering the green agenda (Jones et al., 2014; Jacobs & Klosse, 2016; Higgins-Desbiolles et al., 2019). Importantly, there are no clear distinctions between green practices and CSR in the tourism and hospitality literature (Font & Lynes, 2018). This section has only briefly touched on the implementation of SBSR, because the contextual factors related to the sector greatly influence the nature of SBSR implementation; this means most of the analysis will be carried out in chapter 4 with a focus on the foodservice sector.

### **3.8 Conclusion**

The pluralistic framework of CSR introduced in chapter 2 has been useful in highlighting that SBSR relies on a multitude of factors, such as the owner-managers' normative motivations (Spence, 1999; Jenkins, 2006; Lepoutre & Heene, 2006; Murrillo & Lozano, 2006; Spence, 2007), instrumental motivations (Jenkins, 2006; Hamman et al., 2009; Hoivik & Shankar, 2009) and external factors such as involvement and proximity with the local community (Jenkins, 2004; Besser et al., 2006; Niehm et al., 2008; Fitzgerald et al., 2010; Besser, 2012; Sen & Cowley, 2013). Beyond instrumental motivations, the literature review has highlighted the possibility of actual outcomes, such as higher profits and customer loyalty (Spence & Lozano, 2000; Murrillo & Lozano, 2006; Iturrioz, et al. 2009). This means that the theoretical framework which will guide the empirical analysis will take these three areas in consideration: from one side consideration is focused at the micro-level on the values and ethical motivations of the owner-manager, with an expected contribution being uncovering the underlying managerial commitment to SBSR; the analysis will also explore the instrumental motivations at business level, as well as explore the external factors, as perceived by the business owners. The next section therefore applies these insights to exploring the SBSR literature in the context of the foodservice sector, looking not only at motivations and outcomes of SBSR, but also at its implementation.

## **Chapter 4**

### **Understanding and implementation of SBSR in the foodservice sector**



## 4.1 Introduction

The analysis in chapter 2 of the business and society literature showed how the concept of CSR is an umbrella term that includes concepts such as sustainability and corporate citizenship. Chapter 3 highlighted the peculiarity of small businesses and the need to engage particularly with normative discourses of SBSR, which are crucial to frame the commitment of small businesses to their positive role in society. The present chapter will start from a broad overview of the foodservice sector within the hospitality industry, which will be the focus of the empirical data collection. The second section of this chapter explores ethical, instrumental and institutional factors influencing SBSR in small hospitality businesses, since there is in general a lack of studies focused on SBSR in the foodservice sector. The last section of the chapter is a broad overview of existing studies exploring implementation of CSR and SBSR practices in the UK foodservice sector; broader studies of CSR in restaurant chains are also covered in order to identify differences between the CSR and SBSR approaches, thereby highlighting the key differences between larger and smaller foodservice businesses.

## 4.2 Small foodservice businesses: definitions and typologies

The first challenge for this chapter is to define the terms of reference for this research, namely that the object of study for this research is small independent foodservice businesses within the tourism and hospitality industry. The remaining part of the work will particularly focus on the hospitality industry, as the foodservice sector, in a UK context, is considered a subsector of the hospitality industry. Usually, the term hospitality defines a group of service firms that are related to the provision of food, drink and accommodation (Ottenbacher et al., 2009). Similarly, industry organisations like UK Hospitality state that “*the hospitality industry includes enterprises that provide accommodation, meals and drinks in venues outside of the home*” (UK Hospitality, 2017). The hospitality sector is very important within the British economy, as well as globally: the sector creates £130bn in economic activity and generates £38bn of tax for the UK economy, therefore it represents 10% of UK employment, 6% of businesses and 5% of GDP (UK Hospitality, 2018). Other statistics limit the value to £125bn (Statista, 2019). Hospitality is the third largest private sector employer in the UK; double the size of financial services and bigger than automotive, pharmaceuticals

and aerospace combined. Foodservice is seen traditionally as part of the hospitality industry; this assumption was reasonable up until the mid 20th century, as back then the main establishments serving meals were hotels and inns (Brotherton, 2012). After WWII nevertheless, this has changed with the development of subsectors such as institutional catering, the growth in commercial restaurant establishments, and the boom in the fast food sector (Brotherton, 2012; Wood, 2018). The foodservice industry has developed to the point that there are now multinational companies serving customers globally, alongside smaller independent operators, but also not-for-profit businesses (Wood & Brotherton, 2008). For this reason, the thesis foodservice, as the provision of food and drink, is appraised in its own right (Brotherton, 2012).

A foodservice business can be conceptualised as a place where people are provided with food and drink, prepared in-house, for immediate consumption on the premises, which may be served to the table or through self-service (Walker, 2008; Ottenbacher et al., 2009). According to the European Commission:

*“The most important factor used to determine whether an enterprise should be classified under this heading (foodservice) is that meals that are produced are fit for immediate consumption, rather than any selection being made upon the basis of the kind of facility producing them” (Eurostat, 2015, p. 7).*

Moreover:

*“food service activities include restaurants, cafeterias, fast-food restaurants, food delivery services (such as pizza), take-out eating places, ice cream van vendors, mobile food carts, food preparation in market stalls, restaurant and bar activities connected to transportation (for example, on boats or trains), when carried out separately from the provision of transport services” (ibid, p.7).*

There are more recent trends that need to be added to the above list such as food trucks and pop-up restaurants (Di Pietro, 2017). There is also a segment of the industry called on-site, which services larger entities, usually public structures such as hospitals or universities (Wood & Brotherton, 2008). These businesses will not be the focus of this work, since the focus here is only on small independent businesses.

The foodservice sub-sector of the hospitality industry represents a distinctive slice of the latter’s £130 billion of revenue; estimates of the UK food service market size

nevertheless vary between £34 billion per year (Mintel, 2018a) when alcoholic drinks are not included, to £61.49 billion per year to include sale of alcoholic drinks (DEFRA, 2018). Given that the UK's GDP was £1.9 trillion in 2015 (Office for National Statistics, 2016), food service accounts for around 2% of the UK's economy. The UK catering workforce has been estimated at 1.42 million employees (Statista, 2017) and 1.66 million by DEFRA (2016), approximately 5% of the UK workforce (Office for National Statistics, 2016). The focus on small independents is due to their significance: small businesses, when taken in numbers, dominate the tourism and hospitality industry (Getz & Carlsen, 2005; Lashley & Rowson, 2010; Morrison et al., 2010). Small businesses are usually not covered by the broad literature on foodservice, despite their significance: 82% of UK food service enterprises have fewer than 10 employees, while 16% have between 11 and 49 employees, making small businesses account for 98% of the foodservice sector (Office for National Statistics, 2013). This is in line with broad statistics across all sectors: of all businesses, 98% are micro businesses that have between one to nine employees and another 1% are small businesses with between 10 to 50 employees (European Commission. Directorate-General for Employment, 2001; Eurostat, 2015). In the UK, small foodservice businesses account for 33% of employment and 19% of turnover, medium businesses account for 12% of employment and 13% of turnover, finally large businesses account for 40% of employment and 53% of turnover (Eurostat, 2015).

In the UK, the economic difficulties following the post-2008 recession as well as changing eating habits, resulted in a drop in the proportion of consumers eating in restaurants: the percentage dropped from 91% to 88% between May 2017 and June 2018 (Mintel, 2018a). Budget conscious consumers are more likely to go out for fewer meals and are open to trying out cheaper alternative venues (Mintel, 2018a); this is another reason for broadening the focus of this research from only considering restaurants, in order to include cafés, pubs and emerging type of fast-food alternatives that better depict the innovativeness of the sector (Di Pietro, 2017). Despite concerns over cost pressures and economic uncertainties, total market sales of ethnic restaurants and takeaways in the UK continues to increase, although growth has moderated from 14.4% in 2014 to 6.5% in 2018 as the market matures (Mintel, 2018b); the market is expected to grow to reach £10.2 billion in 2023. Independent restaurants or local takeaways are usually key players to this market segment but are slower to adapt to

the home delivery market, which will boost 10% of the expected overall growth in this market. The British consumer sticks with familiar settings and habits such as visiting pubs and coffee shops. Pubs are winning with families; 65% of pub diners typically eat at pubs with their family, preferring day visits; this market segment is expected to maintain its trajectory and show small growth in coming years (Mintel, 2018b). The proportion of consumers who visited a café/coffee shop for food instead rose by 2 percentage points between May 2017 and June 2018 to reach 55%, particularly among the under-45s; the sub-sector is forecasted to grow further by 40% in value over the next five years to reach £5.2 billion by 2023. (Mintel, 2018a). Independent coffee shops/café represent a strong 26% against branded chains.

The focus of this research is particularly on *small independent foodservice businesses*, which can be broadly defined, in the context of this study, as small or micro businesses, not part of a group. Usually, it is fast-food restaurants that comprise the bulk of the large chain businesses, while independents comprise mainly full-service restaurants, pubs and kiosks (Wood & Brotherton, 2008). Independent is meant as locally owned and operated, so it could also be a business with two or three locations which depend on the same manager and chef (Britt et al., 2011). Small businesses are characterised by their autonomy and independence (Walker & Brown, 2004; Runyan et al., 2008). In the foodservice business, this means that the owner-manager is directly involved in managing the business, has executive decision-making power and has control over menu and pricing (Estrade et al., 2014). The economic performance of small independent foodservice businesses is often influenced by decision making based on highly personalised criteria, such as chosen lifestyles, work–life balance and attachment to property and/or place (Jogaratnam, 2002). The location of the restaurant is one of its most distinctive traits, in that it needs to be close to its receiving markets to guarantee success (Parsa et al., 2015; Parsa et al., 2011; Parsa et al., 2005; Camillo et al., 2008); this in turn fundamentally limits the possibilities of economies of scale (Morrison & Thomas, 1999; Lee-Ross & Lashley, 2010; Skokic & Morrison, 2011). This is partly linked to restaurant practice being inspired by domestic and food experiences related to the life and culture of each individual, as well as human creativity (Telfer, 2000; O'Mahony, 2003; Wellton et al., 2017). These characteristics, together with the low barriers to entry of the sector in terms of investment and innovation (Parsa et al., 2005), make hospitality and foodservice an appealing sector

for many small entrepreneurs (Morrison & Thomas, 1999; Lee-Ross & Lashley, 2010; Skokic et al., 2016).

The limited size of small independent foodservice businesses, plus the fact that the hospitality and service industries are generally considered as non-polluting, means that these organisations perceive that their impact on the environment to be negligible (Revell, 2002; Revell & Blackburn, 2007; Revell et al., 2010; Iaquinto, 2014). On the contrary, when considered collectively, these companies do have an impact on the environment (Hawkins & Bohdanowicz, 2012; Hall & Gössling, 2013; Legrand et al., 2010). Small restaurants are extremely energy intensive, using about five to seven times more energy per square foot than other commercial buildings, such as office buildings and retail stores; they generally use the most electricity for refrigeration, followed by lighting, then cooling; this has an impact on energy consumption (EPA, 2014). Waste is another key issue for restaurants. The UK pubs and restaurants produce respectively 915,400 tonnes and 890,000 tonnes of waste each year in the UK, including approximately 400,000 tonnes of food waste (DEFRA, 2013). Food waste in particular represents a cost to the Restaurant Sector alone of £682 million each year, including food procurement, labour, utilities and waste management costs, or £3,500 per tonne (WRAP, 2013). In comparison, the quickservice sector, dominated by large chains, have a much smaller impact, with approx.. 100,000 tonnes of food waste (DEFRA, 2013). A key reason for this is that much of the food is supplied in ready-to-cook format; food preparation is undertaken prior to delivery to the food service outlets (DEFRA, 2013). Water consumption conversely receives much less attention; the it was estimated as 156.3 million m<sup>3</sup> per year across UK (DEFRA, 2013).

These businesses also have social impacts, in terms of creating local jobs and contributing to the local distinctiveness of a destination (Ateljevic & Doorne, 2000; Carlsen et al., 2001; Sims, 2009; Sims, 2010; Thomas et al., 2011). The topic of green practices in restaurants is reasonably covered by the literature but with focus on chains (Choi & Parsa, 2006; Choua et al., 2012; DiPietro et al., 2013). Conversely, in the small foodservice sector, CSR and sustainability are considered emergent topics (DiPietro, 2017; Higgins-Desbiolles et al., 2019). This is not surprising, since in the overall hospitality and service literature, the topics of ethics and social responsibility are generally ancillary, covering only 2% of all publications (Kandampully et al., 2014). Despite this, the topic of ethics is considered very important within the

hospitality industry, because of its implications for determining a positive climate within the business (Knani et al., 2014; Myung, 2018). In line with the review of SBSR in the previous chapter, the current chapter focuses on the SBSR individual and business motivations for small hospitality businesses, as well as institutional drivers. It is important to note that a broader array of hospitality businesses, not just foodservice ones, is added to this review; this is due to lack of studies looking at motivations to engage in the SBSR of foodservice businesses. In exceptional cases, small tourism businesses are also considered in order to fill the knowledge gap. Finally, there is a specific section about implementation of SBSR in the foodservice sector, since this is one of the main gaps in the literature that this work is seeking to address.

### **4.3 Motivations for SBSR in hospitality and foodservice businesses**

In the small business hospitality literature, the topic of SBSR is usually analysed from an ethical perspective, in line with the overall SBSR literature. This is valid, especially in hospitality small businesses, where the role of the owner-managers and their personal values are crucial: profit-making is not usually the main *raison d'être* for these small hospitality businesses, therefore the informal style means the business is heavily influenced by the values of the owner (Morrison & Thomas, 1999; Getz & Petersen, 2005; Lee-Ross & Lashley, 2010). The hospitality industry is dominated by these small and medium-sized family firms geared more towards non-financial rewards (Ateljevic & Doorne, 2000), seeking autonomy and pursuing lifestyle (Bosworth & Willett, 2011; Thomas et al., 2011) or family values (Agarwal & Dahm, 2015). For example, the traditional model of the ethnic independent restaurant is often one of familial entrepreneurship, such as an operation in which the spouse and other family members are heavily involved in the day-to-day operation of the business (Ram et al., 2001; Basu, 2004; Agarwal & Dahm, 2015). Purely financially driven restaurants are harder to find, and these are seemingly those aligned to higher levels of dining (Poulston & Yiu, 2011; DiPietro et al., 2013).

What is relevant in small hospitality firms, is therefore their distinctive approach to business (Getz & Petersen, 2005; Harrington, 2006). As a consequence, the implementation of environmental practices is commonly influenced by the alternative personal values of the business owner (Tzschentke et al., 2008; Sampaio et al., 2012).

These non-economic values, personal or family driven, can determine the approach and philosophy in respect to SBSR; in fact, most hospitality studies include normative discourses (Tzschentke et al., 2008; Njite et al., 2011; Garay & Font, 2012; Coles et al., 2013). Personal values, alongside attitudes, are found to be a motivation for green practices in restaurants (Carrigan et al., 2017; Poulston & Yiu, 2011; Choua et al., 2012; Higgins-Desbiolles et al., 2014), but less so in up-scale restaurant businesses (Poulston et al., 2011). Most studies of small tourism businesses have offered evidence of a link between personal attitudes and values and environmentally sustainable business practices (Carlsen et al., 2001; Vernon et al., 2003; Dewhurst & Thomas, 2003; Carasuk et al., 2016), such as love or passion for an area (Shane et al., 2000). Knowledge about environmental imperatives is also important in motivating entrepreneurs to take action (Dewhurst & Thomas, 2003; Choua et al., 2012; Alonso-Almeida et al., 2018).

This idealised view of small hospitality businesses is nevertheless being contextualised by more recent studies that stress how a balance between elements is important: social values are not just valuable per se, but because of the financial sustainability achieved (Morrison & Thomas, 1999). Some case studies have found that certain lifestyles of business owners are closely related to new forms of consumption and niche markets, both for tourism businesses (Ateljevic & Doorne, 2000; Bosworth & Willett, 2011) and restaurants (Poulston et al., 2011; Carrigan et al., 2017). Poulston and Yiu (2011) found that mid-scale organic restaurants integrated their societal and environmental beliefs with their business goals by taking advantage of the environmental and health food niche to attract customers, and therefore improve profitability. More recently, Carrigan et al. (2017) found that small restaurant businesses with authentic lifestyles, are being influenced both by extrinsic and intrinsic motives when implementing social change; therefore, while pursuing business goals that support their own agenda, they often prioritise the collective interests of the community through their actions for personal reasons. Similarly, while among small tourism businesses, altruism and other non-economic reasons are a key influence, nevertheless business reasons related to profitability and cost saving are also mentioned as SBSR motivations (Tzschentke, et. al., 2008; Garay & Font, 2012; Carasuk et al., 2016). The industry seems more cautious in evaluating the ethical consumer trends and the growing attention towards ethical practices: 71% of

consumers agree that restaurants should demonstrate good ethical practices (UK Hospitality, 2018; Mintel 2019b), but they would not want menus with recycled food (Mintel, 2019b).

It is important to consider that external factors are very relevant for the independent foodservice businesses in terms of influence SBSR actions. Small independents face a very competitive environment against bigger chain restaurants (Parsa et al., 2015), therefore the relationship with loyal clients is of paramount importance for business sustainability, through the creation of trust and mutual relationships (Baloglu, 2002; Parsa et al., 2005; Camillo 2008; Hall & Williams, 2008; Agarwal & Dahm, 2015). Employees are crucial because they provide service performance and experience which is central to the restaurant product and value proposition (Parsa et al., 2005; Zhang & Mattila, 2015); relationship quality and CSR can aid recovery in service failures (Choi & La, 2013). In terms of the green agenda, small businesses perceived a lack of other external drivers to act ethically, particularly a lack of government support (Revell, 2002; Revell & Blackburn, 2007; O'Neill & Alonso, 2009; Ismail et al., 2010; Kasim & Ismail, 2011; Cabras & Bosworth, 2014; Iaquinto, 2014). When it comes to purchasing green food, the presence of a developed local supply chain, with sufficient marketing resources and capacity, remains a critical factor for implementation (O'Neill & Alonso, 2009; Alonso & O'Neill, 2010, Chou et al., 2012; Sharma et al., 2012; Hall & Gössling, 2013; Sharma et al., 2014; Duram & Cawley, 2015).

This overview confirms that, even though ethics and relationships are key to SBSR engagement in small hospitality and foodservice businesses, business motivations and external factors also play a contributing role. There are business motivations for establishments becoming committed to socio-environmental actions, but these actions are not key choices for a client to choose a foodservice business, therefore there are other personal and external motivations influencing SBSR among these businesses. This section confirms that the research objectives raised so far are relevant for the foodservice sector as well; and thus the research aims to analyse how small businesses understand SBSR, how personal values, business motivations and external factors influence SBSR, and, finally, how SBSR is implemented among small independent businesses. The next section offers a literature review of this last point, the implementation of SBSR practices across the foodservice industry.



#### **4.4 Implementation: CSR and SBSR in the foodservice sector**

This section focuses on the overview of the implementation of CSR practices across both chain restaurants and small foodservice businesses, summarised in Table 4. The choice to include larger businesses corresponds to the same logic as to why this study started with a literature review of CSR: the paucity of SBSR studies involving small foodservice businesses (Jones et al., 2006; Coles et al., 2013; DiPietro, 2017; Higgins-Desbiolles et al., 2019); and the fact that smaller businesses tend to emulate the best practices of bigger organisations, therefore some CSR practices could become relevant for smaller businesses as well. The literature was reviewed utilising the stakeholders' framework introduced in earlier chapters. This framework interprets the CSR activities of a business utilising a stakeholders' approach, therefore subdividing the areas of CSR activities in four key areas: CSR in the marketplace (4.4.1), in the workplace (4.4.2), in the community (4.4.3) and in the ecological environment (4.4.4). Because it is inspired by a stakeholders' approach, and in so far as it scans the business operations to identify areas where the business is adding value to stakeholders, the framework offers great descriptive power in relation to the implementation of socially responsible actions (Harrison & Wicks 2013). The stakeholder approach has been used successfully in CSR and sustainability studies of the foodservice sector (Jones et al., 2006; Inoue & Lee, 2011; Alonso-Almeida et al., 2018), particularly since its explanatory power can detect a wide range of implementation actions, therefore grasping not only actions that can be aligned to instrumental motivations, but also actions aligned to normative motivations.

Another commonly utilised framework for CSR practices in the foodservice literature is offered by Choi and Parsa (2006), which classifies the actions in three areas: food and nutritional concerns, which refer to customer value; environmental concerns, which refer to environmental management; and finally social concerns, with all aspects of community and employee relations (Choi & Parsa, 2006). This framework's focus on food and environment, however, undermines the focus on the social area, therefore the stakeholders' approach is preferred in this research. Further subcategories in this framework are identified integrating two other perspectives: the sustainability framework proposed by the Sustainable Restaurant Association (Sustainable Restaurant Association, 2013), since this is a well-recognised standard

for restaurants in UK; the other perspective is Lang's (2010) definition of ethical food, to add depth and variety to the ethical considerations about food.

**Table 4: Implementation of CSR/SBSR practices in the foodservice sector**

	<b>Details of the practice</b>	<b>Authors</b>
Market	Healthy food, (e.g. salt pledge, more vegetables, no-pre-cooked food, low fat). Traceability, food safety and food allergens information and training.	Schröder & McEachern, 2005; Choi & Parsa, 2006; York et al., 2009; Pulos & Leng, 2010; Britt & Frandsen, 2011; British Hospitality, 2011; BHA, 2014; Food Standards, 2013; Wang et al., 2013; Arendt et al., 2014; Bailey et al., 2014; Love, 2014; Jochim et al., 2015; Sporre et al., 2015; Wansink & Lee & Sozen, 2016.
	Responsible marketing (i.e. traceability, labelling, product information responsible drinking).	Jones et al., 2006; Sustainable Restaurant Association, 2013; Shokri et al., 2014; Kim & Ham, 2016.
	Locally produced / seasonal / high quality / authenticity / fresh / organic	Strohbehn & Gregoire, 2003; Inwood et al., 2009; Alonso & O'Neill, 2010; Bildtgård, 2010; Broadway, 2012; Sharma et al., 2012; Hall & Gössling, 2013; Wang et al., 2013; Sharma et al., 2014; Duram & Cawley, 2015; Sporre et al., 2015.
Workplace	Treating people fairly / ethics employee relations (ex. minimum wage); staff training; diversity and inclusiveness	Ram et al., 2000; Jones et al., 2006; Royle, 2010; Inoue & Lee, 2011; Hawkins & Bohdanowicz, 2012; Woods et al., 2013; O'Sullivan & Royle, 2014; Shokri et al., 2014; Xu, 2014; Ram et al., 2016.
Communit	Food & Environmental Education for employees, guests, community	Alonso & O'Neill, 2010; Flego et al., 2013; Higgins-Desbiolles et al., 2014; Moskwa et al., 2015.

	Community relations/engagement; local employment; Philanthropy	Jones et al., 2006; Moizer & Tracey, 2010; Bagnoli & Megali, 2011; Herranz et al., 2011; Inoue & Lee, 2011; Higgins-Desbiolles et al., 2014; Dincer & Dincer, 2013; Kim et al., 2013; Fu et al., 2014; Frash Jr. et al., 2015.
	Ethical food: Animal rights; affordable food; fair trade; inclusiveness	Schröder & McEachern, 2004; Adams, 2008; Bildtgård, 2010; Fennell, 2012; .
Environment	Food miles reduction; organic; food sustainability & sustainable supply issues (ex: water, soil, land use, farming & fishing)	Cavagnaro & Gehrels, 2009; Legrand et al., 2010; Poulston & Yiu, 2011; Post & Mikkola; 2012; Wang, 2012; Hall & Gössling, 2013; Pinard et al., 2014; Beer, 2015; Cavagnaro, 2015; Sporre et al., 2015; Chou et al., 2016; Jacobs & Klosse, 2016; Filimonau & Grant, 2017.
	Energy efficiency, Water saving	Choi & Parsa, 2006; Berezan 2010; Kasim & Ismail, 2011; Hu et al., 2010; Hu et al., 2013; Wang et al., 2013; Lang et al., 2014.
	Food waste management	Jones et al., 2006; Wang et al., 2013; BHA, 2014; Garrone et al., 2014; Chou et al., 2016; Derqui et al., 2016; Papargyropoulou et al., 2016; Pirani & Arafat, 2016; Filimonau et al., 2019.
	Workplace resources: ex. Recycling materials; buying in bulk; green design	Baldwin et al., 2009; Kasim & Ismail, 2011; DeMicco et al., 2014; Shokri et al., 2014; UK Hospitality, 2015.

Source: Author

#### 4.4.1 Market

The main topics of interest for restaurant consumers in the UK are related to healthy eating choices (Sustainable Restaurant Association, 2013; UK Hospitality, 2019) and more ethical green practices related to the supply chain (Intel, 2019b). Recent literature on chain restaurants has been focusing on these food-related topics, particularly in documenting consumers' growing awareness about health,

sustainability and social issues (Wang, 2012; Kim, 2017; Mintel, 2019b). Healthy food is particularly a growing topic, on account of its potential to increase people's well-being and consumer value (Schröder & McEachern, 2005; Lee et al., 2014). Practices related to consumer health and nutrition are linked to higher margins for large chain restaurants (Schröder & McEachern, 2005; Fabinyi & Liu, 2014; Lee et al., 2014; Wansink & Love, 2014; Wang, 2014). The aspect of nutrition and healthy food has gathered particular attention at government level because of the obesity epidemic in the UK (DiPietro, 2017; Mintel, 2019a; UK Hospitality, 2019). Providing information about calories is deemed important to enabling behavioural change in the public (Britt et al., 2011; Lee et al., 2014; Jochim et al., 2015), as noted in the US after the introduction of legislation making calories-count compulsory among foodservice businesses (Wu & Sturm, 2013). The UK government has recently introduced a sugar tax to decrease consumption of sugar, while Public Health England published guidelines to cut the calorie content of processed foods by 20% as part of the government's long-term childhood and adult obesity preventive strategy (UK Hospitality, 2018; Mintel, 2019a). This is a positive trend for all foodservice businesses, as those that present a healthier proposition, for example with plant-based ingredients, are perceived to be ethical (Mintel, 2019b). The ethical mind-set in fact objects to the practices underlying the production of meat, including animal welfare and environmental impacts of animal production (Schröder & McEachern, 2004; Mintel, 2019b).

Small independent businesses are focusing heavily on the area of local food sourcing, particularly in relation to consumer's growing interest in locally sourced food and drink (Gracia et al., 2012; Sustainable Restaurant Association, 2013; Lang et al., 2014; Mintel 2019b). Traditional studies focus on EU or US definitions of local food based on miles (Jones, 2004; Sims, 2009; Sims, 2010), while more recent contributions indicate that there also seem to be localised definitions of local food (O'Neill, 2014). Definitions can better express the place and its culture when they are established by local players (McCaffrey & Kurland, 2014; McCaffrey & Kurland, 2015; Higgins-Desbiolles et al., 2019). All food-related aspects also have political relevance: in the UK, there are various examples of initiatives and government regulations supporting healthy or local food practices, such as the Responsible Food Pledge, launched by the UK government in 2011 (British Hospitality, 2011), or the adoption of sustainable

procurement policies supporting the use of local food ingredients in public restaurants (UK Hospitality, 2015).

Food safety is also a well-established issue: particularly in the UK it has significant consumer but also government relevance (Choi & Parsa, 2006; York et al., 2009; Pulos & Leng, 2010; Arendt et al., 2014). Indeed, in the UK, the main food regulations affecting these small independent foodservice businesses, are those under the remit of the Food Safety Authority (FSA); this body offers a simplified version of the EU legislation on food safety applicable to larger businesses (Taylor, 2005). Legislation has also recently been introduced regarding food allergens; both these areas are very complex for small foodservice businesses and pose training challenges (Bailey et al., 2014; Lee & Sozen, 2016). The topic of providing information and transparency is very important to gain the trust of clients (Sustainable Restaurant Association, 2013; Mintel, 2019b), across all sectors; examples in the foodservice sector include providing information about responsible drinking in pubs (Jones et al., 2006), or traceability and transparency in the ingredients utilised (Shokri et al., 2014).

#### *4.4.2 Workplace*

The area of employee-related actions has been less widely addressed in the foodservice literature (Alonso-Almeida et al., 2018), despite the industry being well-known for its young staff, unsocial hours and low paid monotonous work (Poulston, 2008a; Royle, 2010; O'Sullivan & Royle, 2014). More recently, there have been reports of chronic fatigue affecting staff in the industry (UK Hospitality, 2019). Problems of labour abuse in the foodservice industry are underreported, with practices including bullying, rounding out the time-clocks so that they always favour the management, or sexual harassment (Jones et al., 2006; Kuslivan et al., 2010, Royle, 2010; Inoue & Lee, 2011; Hawkins & Bohdanowicz, 2012; Woods et al., 2013; Shokri et al., 2014). Inoue and Lee (2011) focused on the concept of respect for diversity and equality; and this has lately also become a focus for the UK industry, with the percentage of female staff in leadership roles steadily growing (UK Hospitality, 2018). In recent years, big employers like Sodexo have also focused more on employing staff with disabilities (UK Hospitality, 2018). The latest CSR contributions among large chain restaurants show awareness about the importance of regular staff training and good treatment of

staff (Jones et al., 2006; Shokri et al., 2014). Nevertheless, the hospitality industry is often focused on day-to-day operational concerns without considering the socio-environmental system within which it is located (Bohdanowicz & Zientara, 2009). *“Together with a [high] physical and emotional workload, hospitality employees face perceptions of low social status and prestige, along with poor employment conditions and unsocial and irregular working hours”* (Kusluvan et al., 2010, p. 196). Some authors particularly underline the issue of sexual harassment in the hospitality industry, which goes largely unreported due to the unbalanced relationship between guests and hosts (Poulston, 2008b; Ram et al., 2016); such imbalance particularly affects the lower skilled employees with less training (Ram et al., 2016) such as migrant employees (Ram et al., 2000).

The clash between these deep issues in the industry and the lack of solutions or attention from academia is linked to inherent characteristics of the industry, such as seasonal demand, lack of professionalisation, high costs and small profit margins (Kusluvan et al., 2010). Generally, there has been more awareness in recent years about the ethical treatment of employees, as part of the heightened focus on the social element of supply chains (Walters & James, 2011), and pushed by the enforcement of EU health and safety regulations in the workplace (EU-OSHA, 2012). Closely related to the issue of ethics in employment is the concept of modern slavery; this issue has been under the spotlight due to a heightened focus from the UK government on the wave of refugee immigration (Walmsley et al, 2019). Recent legislation introduced in the UK requires businesses to make sure that no employee is involved in forced labour, servitude, slavery, debt bondage and human trafficking.

The UK government is also pushing the hospitality industry in terms of fair payments, since in recent years the minimum wage has been pushed upwards (UK Hospitality, 2018). The latest focus of the government in raising the minimum wage in April 2016 is seen as attempt to counterbalance the negative effects of the widespread practice of the zero hours’ contracts and precarious employment (Edgar et al., 2017; Walmsley et al., 2019). In summary, the topics related to socially responsible practices towards employees, despite being relevant to an industry that is known for poor employment conditions, have not been comprehensively addressed in the literature. Recent contributions are advocating the need of integrating the literature covering these

employment relations topics and the CSR / business ethics literature in hospitality (Lashley, 2016; Farrington et al., 2017).

#### *4.4.3 Community and society*

Various case studies report on the role of the restaurant industry in helping to educate the public to a broader appreciation of local foods within communities (Inwood et al., 2009). Other studies go further in suggesting the role that foodservice businesses can have in improving awareness among customers about food sustainability and healthy nutrition (Flego et al., 2013; Higgins-Desbiolles et al., 2014; Moskwa et al., 2015; Sporre et al., 2015; Iomaire, 2016). The presence of social movements such as fair trade and slow food have influenced a new wave of restaurateurs that are also evangelising people to eat food that is considered ethical in respect to animals and communities (Bildtgård, 2010; Fennel et al., 2015; Moskwa et al., 2015; Sporre et al., 2015). The other social topic that has been found to be relevant in foodservice businesses is supporting the local community through local food (Frash Jr. et al., 2015), although most of the contributions in this area also highlight the environmental aspects (Sharma et al., 2014). An ethical topic much discussed at present in restaurants is supporting inclusiveness and diversity in the hospitality workplace (UK Hospitality, 2018), such as jobs or education for people with disabilities, or disadvantaged backgrounds (Jones et al., 2006; Hawkins & Bohdanowicz, 2012; Xu & Gursoy, 2015; Sigala, 2019). Key to the exhibition of such actions is the belief that businesses have a responsibility to support the communities in which they operate, not only directly through their products, but also indirectly through policies and practices that extend beyond those operations, such as through hiring local employees (Gewurtz et al., 2016). Various studies, particularly those of restaurant chains, also consider the traditional practice of philanthropy as part of their contribution to society at large, which is a typical social action implemented by chain restaurants in support of charitable activities (Jones et al., 2006; Inoue & Lee, 2011; Hanks et al., 2016). In summary, while bigger organisations are involved in traditional philanthropic activities, smaller businesses tend to express their commitment to society through their engagement with the local community.

#### *4.4.4 Environment*

The foodservice sector has many impacts on the environment, primarily in terms of waste disposal and food waste (Baldwin et al., 2009; Choua et al., 2012). Associations play a key role in advancing the green agenda, such as supporting the industry to increase the focus on these topics: in the UK the Sustainable Restaurant Association and in the US the Green Restaurant Association, aim to increase sustainability and ethical practices among restaurant businesses (Fennell & Markwell, 2015). Particularly developed is the topic of recycling, thanks primarily to government support in this area (Huang et al., 2011; Kasim & Ismail, 2011; Iaquinto et al., 2014). In recent years, thanks to the attention on the topic and awareness raised by government and charity sectors, the other main environmental focus has been on reducing food waste (Intel, 2019b). This is partially driven by recent laws in France and Italy that requires the above sectors to donate unsold food, which might soon force similar regulatory changes in the UK (Mansuy, 2016). In the UK the attention has been particularly incentivised by the work of charity organisations such as WRAP: the charity launched the Hospitality and Food Service Agreement (WRAP, 2012) to reduce food and packaging waste and increase the proportion recycled, composted or anaerobically digested, including food approaching or past its 'use by' date (Garrone et al., 2014; Filimonau et al., 2019). The attention on food waste management within the hospitality industry has rapidly increased in recent years (Wang et al., 2013; Garrone et al., 2014; Shokri et al., 2014; British Hospitality, 2015; Chou et al., 2016; Papargyropoulou et al., 2016; Pirani & Arafat, 2016; Filimonau et al., 2019). Bigger organisations like quick service chain restaurants are not reporting this topic (Jochim et al., 2015), partly because the issue of food waste is minimal in quickservice restaurants (WRAP, 2013).

Only a handful of studies cover the topic of traditional reduction of energy and water in restaurants, although this is a subject that is more advanced in hotels (Choi & Parsa, 2006; Berezan 2010; Kasim & Ismail, 2011; Hu et al., 2013; Wang et al., 2013; Lang et al., 2014). The literature is only recently catching up with the contribution that the foodservice industry can have on the topic of food sustainability (Legrand et al., 2010; Wang, 2012; Post & Mikkola, 2012; Hall & Gössling, 2013; Beer, 2015; Cavagnaro, 2015; Sporre et al., 2015; Jacobs & Klosse, 2016; ). Many cover the topic of local food in terms of reducing food miles, but the concept is very much debated as inconsistent



and not considering the economies of scale that shipping food in bulk provides to the industry (Rimington et al., 2006; Hall & Gössling, 2013; Beer 2015). In terms of small restaurants, there is growing interest in the topics of organic food or vegetarian food (Cavagnaro & Gehrels, 2009; Poulston & Yiu, 2011; Post & Mikkola, 2012; Sporre et al., 2015; Chou et al., 2016; Filimonau & Grant, 2017). Conversely, big chains are more proactive in the food sustainability topics related to complex issues such as supporting sustainable land use, for example in coffee-growing areas across the globe (Ethical corporation, 2016). Other food sustainability initiatives involve support to farmers' markets, community supported agriculture and small farms, although these are very much at the early adoption stage (Pinard et al., 2014). This type of actions are driven by demands from consumers, who require more and more information about the provenance and traceability of products (BHA, 2014; UK Hospitality, 2018). The public is also demanding plant-based diets not just for health reasons, but also with ethical and environmental motivations; 46% of consumers who say they do not eat red meat or poultry, agree that eating less meat is good for the environment as well as for issues related to animal cruelty (Mintel, 2018a).

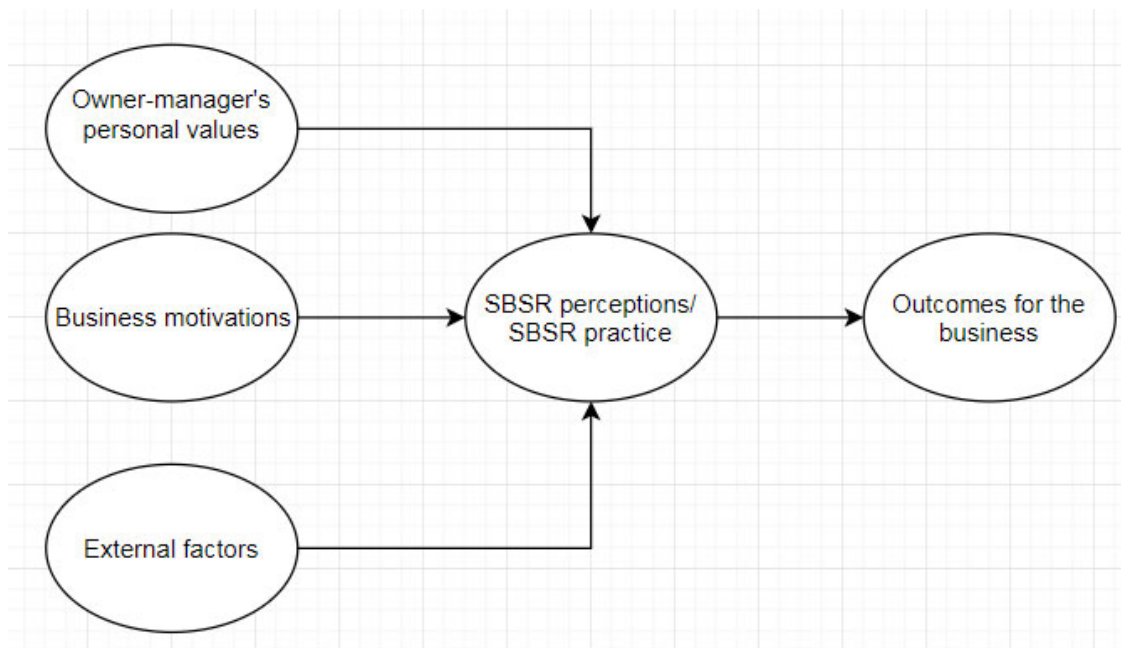
This brief analysis has highlighted how there are differences in the approach to socially responsible practices between foodservice businesses. Larger chain organisations mainly focus on green measures; smaller businesses, focus on those practices that bring most benefits to clients such as local food and topics related to food waste. The next section brings the whole literature review to a conclusion, by way of introducing the research framework which will guide the data collection phase.

#### **4.5 Discussion of the research framework**

This section summarises the literature analysed in chapter 4, highlighting the derived framework which will guide the creation of the schedule of semi-structured interviews and ultimately the data collection, as will be seen in detail in chapter 5. The first research objective will be to investigate the nature of SBSR of small foodservice businesses. As highlighted in chapter 3, the phenomenon of SBSR is distinctive in small businesses, and, for this reason, it is important to highlight how small businesses interpret this terminology; the expected variable that will be captured through this question is "SBSR perceptions", highlighted in Figure 2. The literature analysis of

chapter 4 has highlighted the normative motivations that can lead to SBSR in small foodservice businesses, with one crucial aspect being the personal values of the owner-managers; therefore the second research objective is to analyse critically how personal values motivate the SBSR of small foodservice businesses. The concept “personal values” is highlighted in Figure 2, where the arrow represents the potential link that exists between this variable and SBSR practice. The literature review further highlighted how business motivations, such as cost savings, are often mentioned alongside ethical motivations in justifying the implementation of SBSR; for this reason, the third research objective is to examine critically how business motivations influence the SBSR of small foodservice businesses. The concept “business motivations” is highlighted in Figure 2, where the arrow represents the potential link that exist between this variable and SBSR practice. In chapter 3, the literature on instrumental discourses of SBSR also highlighted studies that explored the outcome of SBSR, therefore this concept will also be explored. The literature on institutional influences of SBSR is less developed, although it is known that one of the sectorial characteristics is the importance of creating loyal relationships with clients. To enrich this area of the literature, the fourth objective of the research is to examine how external factors influence the SBSR of small foodservice businesses. The concept “external factors” is accordingly highlighted in Figure 2, where the arrow represents the potential link that exists between this variable and SBSR practice. A micro analysis of owner-managers will be chosen for the data collection in order to be able to highlight both personal and business level motivations.

Finally, the literature analysis of the implementation of SBSR and CSR across the foodservice industry highlighted the lack of studies in the foodservice sector in general, but particularly among small independent foodservice businesses (Coles et al., 2013; DiPietro, 2017; Higgins-Desbiolles et al., 2019). For this reason, the fifth research objective of this study is to investigate empirically the implementation of SBSR practices among small foodservice businesses; this concept is captured with “SBSR practice”. As highlighted in the literature analysis in chapter 4, this area is researched utilising a stakeholders’ approach, therefore discussing elements related to the marketplace, employees, community and the environment. Finally, the research will also explore potential outcomes of SBSR for the business, given that this area is particularly underexposed in the literature.



**Figure 2: Research framework**

Source: Author

#### 4.6 Conclusion

The broad analysis of SBSR motivations within the hospitality and foodservice industry has highlighted the importance of both ethics and relationships in terms of economic advantage, as well as external factors, in influencing the SBSR practice. How values and attitudes, and business advantages, alongside external factors, interact to influence SBSR practice among small foodservice businesses is a source of debate in the emergent SBSR literature. The key research questions of this study are therefore about understanding how personal and instrumental motivations influence the small foodservice businesses in implementing SBSR actions. To answer these questions, a micro analysis of owner-managers is preferred, in order to be able to highlight both personal and business level motivations. The analysis of implementation across the foodservice industry highlighted the lack of studies in the foodservice sector in general, but particularly small independent foodservice businesses (Coles et al., 2013; DiPietro, 2017; Higgins-Desbiolles et al., 2019). Another major research objective of this study, therefore, is to investigate empirically the implementation of SBSR practices among

small foodservice businesses. The next chapter highlights the research methodology utilised to collect the data.

**Chapter 5**  
**Methodology**

## 5.1 Introduction

This chapter explains and justifies the research methodology that was selected for this research project. It identifies the research paradigms and the assumptions underlying the adopted methodology, including the approach to and suitability of the research strategy. In relation to the research methodology adopted, there is a detailed presentation of the research design, including sampling, data collection methods and procedures, ethical and axiological considerations, data analysis procedures and data quality tools embedded in the research design, to guarantee its quality.

## 5.2 Research philosophy

A research methodology is influenced by the epistemology and theoretical perspective of the researcher; therefore, it is important to clarify the philosophical assumptions underpinning the research (Crotty, 1998; Johnson & Duberley, 2000). This is because the commitment to a specific research philosophy is “*a key feature of our pre-understandings which influence how the researcher makes things intelligible*” (Johnson & Duberley, 2000, p. 125). A research philosophy will therefore also influence the choices of research methodology and the type of answer to a research question (Easterby-Smith et al., 2012). Researchers are more likely to make a conscious choice of research approach, and critically justify the relevant research methodology for any management research, when they can recognise the ontological and epistemological presuppositions about what constitutes reality, and the related theoretical assumptions underpinning the research process (Crotty, 1998). Ontology is the study of the nature of existence, and embodies understanding “*what is*” (Gray, 2013, p. 16). Epistemology, meanwhile, is concerned with the philosophical background that informs the kind of knowledge perceived as legitimate or adequate to understand reality; for this reason it informs the theoretical perspective of the research, hence it is reflected in the research methodology (Crotty, 1998; Bryman et al., 2018). The combination of these elements gives an insight about the research philosophy adopted by the author.

### 5.2.1 *Ontology and epistemology*

This research is inspired by a pluralistic understanding of corporate social responsibility (CSR) and small business social responsibility (SBSR), as discussed in the literature analysis section. CSR is seen as an umbrella concept that includes other nearby concepts, such as business ethics, stakeholder management, corporate citizenship and sustainable development. The definition of CSR is adopted by a growing number of different members of society but interpreted and adapted to various institutional environments, according to their own sets of values and ideologies (Aguinis & Glavas, 2012). Such an approach does not mean that every empirical research on CSR should necessarily use pluralism as a research framework; it is possible in fact to utilise a functionalist paradigm, versus an interpretive paradigm, within a specific empirical research, depending on the necessity at the time of the research (Darwin, 2004), and the relevance of the research question to further knowledge (Ritchie et al., 2013). This specific research is focused on a critical analysis of SBSR among small independent foodservice businesses. It is expected that the independent nature of small business owners, often driven by personal values in managing the business, would influence their understanding and expression of SBSR. An interpretivist paradigm was the adopted choice for this research.

The research is underpinned by a pragmatic ontology of subtle realism (Seale, 1999; Blaikie & Priest, 2019), which recognises the existence of reality alongside the effect that objects have on reality. It recognises that reality can only be accessible through the plurality of individual experiences and perceptions and representations (Seale, 1999; Blaikie & Priest, 2019). It is actors' perceptions of objects and reality which influences actors' understanding of reality and implemented actions. Subtle realism, considered a variance of realism that is influenced by idealism, "*involves maintaining a view of language as both constructing new worlds and as referring to a reality outside the text, a means of communicating past experience as well as imagining new experiences*" (Seale, 1999, p. 470). This suggests that an external reality exists independent of our beliefs and understanding, which it is only knowable through the human mind and socially constructed meanings (Ritchie et al., 2013; O'Reilly & Kiyimba, 2015; Blaikie & Priest, 2019). This means that subtle realism is aligned with a constructivist epistemology (Crotty, 1998; Easterby-Smith et al., 2012; Gray, 2013).

Subtle realism suits this research very well since it avoids falling into the trap of relativism that plagues some ontologies (Johnson et al., 2006), while taking human interpretation as the medium through which knowledge about the social world is achieved (Crotty, 1998; Seale, 1999; Blaikie & Priest, 2019). The epistemology of this research is subjective, since it is based on human perceptions and interpretations (Crotty, 1998, p. 87), while the ontology is objective, since the researcher believes that reality exists independent of human inquiry (Almeder, 2007; Shepherd & Sutcliffe, 2011). This epistemology of constructionism, anchored to an objective ontology, is the original version of the concept introduced by Berger and Luckmann, according to which social institutions are “*symbol systems*” (Crotty, 1998, p. 60). These authors insist that social institutions are much more than subjective human constructs: they have a reality of their own, a reality that confronts the individual as an external and coercive fact (Berger & Luckmann, 1991). According to this philosophy, businesses and owner-managers are seen as subjectively and inter-subjectively understood human beings, and they exist through the interpretations made by individuals and/or groups in different cultures and societies (Berger & Luckmann, 1991). At the same time, it is considered that the small business field of activity is embedded within a certain societal system (Granovetter, 2005), therefore conditioned by a vast number of societal factors (Giddens, 1991). This philosophy recognises that “*although we always perceive the world from a particular viewpoint, the world acts back on us to constrain the points of view that are possible*” (Seale, 1999, p.470). Another central point of this pragmatic philosophy of science is the conception that truth should be seen as a contextualised account of explanations about reality as it is perceived by the researcher, rather than an absolute (Almeder, 2007).

This philosophy suits the context of SBSR research, as this research area is characterised by the ethical stances and values of individuals, as well as the culture and institutional environment within which the business owner is embedded (Spence, 2016; Soundararajan et al., 2018). The outlined research objectives explore SBSR according to the many personal and business variables that influence the SBSR actions in order to glean a broader understanding of the SBSR practice. This broad understanding of SBSR is informed by the latest institutional theories of CSR, which represent a significant shift away from more traditional, economic and positivistic approaches of CSR (Jones, 1999; Margolis & Walsh, 2003; Orlitzky et al., 2003; Doh



& Guay, 2006; Aguilera et al., 2007; Campbell, 2007; Matten & Moon, 2008). Such sociological and interpretive approaches towards CSR have the benefit of highlighting the value of business relationships from a social, not just an economic, perspective. More specifically, this type of sociological research considers the social context as an exogenous factor forming the perceptions of the business owners, rather than as an endogenous factor (DiMaggio & Powell, 2000; Granovetter, 2005). These new insights into CSR theory brought about the emergence of the SBSR literature as an independent body of enquiry from CSR (Soundararajan et al., 2018). Therefore, SBSR was chosen as a correct framework to research the ethical and relational nature of SBSR in the foodservice sector. The next section introduces the strategic approach to research, stemming from this ontology and epistemology.

### 5.2.2 Theoretical perspective

The theoretical perspective, also termed research paradigm, answers the questions of how the researcher can find out what she believes can be known (Lincoln et al., 2005). There are several theoretical perspectives (e.g. positivism, interpretivism, symbolic interactionism, phenomenology, feminism and critical sociology) that provide the theoretical foundations for most of the research methodologies commonly employed in the study of social phenomena (Crotty, 1998; Silverman, 2015; Bryman et al., 2018). Two main methodological paradigms have influenced the structure and development of research in the social sciences, namely positivism and interpretivism. Positivism is aligned with both an objective ontology and epistemology, while interpretivism is aligned with an objective ontology and the subjective constructionist epistemology (Crotty, 1998; Gray, 2013). Positivism adjudges the central relationship between theory and research to be that of theory testing through deductive processes and subsequently emphasises quantification in the collection and analysis of data (Bryman et al., 2018). Interpretivism, on the other hand, traditionally utilises qualitative methods of research to unveil *verstehen*, which is the understanding of people regarding a certain phenomenon (Cassell & Symon, 2004). Interpretivism is the theoretical perspective which aligns with a subjective epistemology and objective ontology like subtle realism (Crotty, 1998; Easterby-Smith et al., 2012; Gray, 2013). With interpretivism, the research emerges from the empirical data collected through the perceptions of the subject being researched, so it would fit the data better than an

*a priori* approach, based on hypotheses founded in the literature (Cassell & Symon, 2004); this is certainly valid for a constructed social process like SBSR, which is based on the values of the business owners, hence influenced by their perceptions of reality.

### **5.3 Abductive methodology and research strategy**

The choice of methodology and research strategy should be guided by the epistemology and theoretical perspective of the research. As seen so far, the pragmatic interpretivist type of research attempts to unveil the broad interrelated influences of values and structures on the behaviour of small businesses, while acknowledging that reality can be accessed only through the accounts of actions and experiences of actors involved. Inductive approaches to research are typical of interpretivism; induction usually aims to find a grounded theory systematically generated from data (Charmaz & Belgrave, 2007). More recently, various authors have questioned the possibility of conducting research without any preconditions (Charmaz & Belgrave, 2007; Shepherd & Suddaby, 2017), particularly for a qualitative researcher who argues that reality is socially constructed and thus where the researcher interacts with the reality in the research process (Suddaby, 2006). This is particularly valid for a well-developed field of academic research such as CSR, from which SBSR derives. As a consequence, it was inevitable to start the research from a pre-existing framework, hence the choice of induction was not considered valuable for this PhD research.

Scholars have proposed that theorising in these cases is enhanced by combining inductive with deductive approaches, or vice versa (Weick, 1999), which is the opportunity that the abductive research inquiry offers (Blaikie & Priest, 2019). Abduction emerged in the 20th century as part of the more central role that pragmatism had come to play within the interpretivist theoretical perspective (Crotty, 1998; Timmermans & Tavory, 2012; Blaikie & Priest, 2019). In particular, pragmatic interpretivism is based on the idea of viewing and interpreting reality from the standpoint of its practical bearing on life; the related abductive logic starts from old theoretical insights to produce new ones on the basis of surprising empirical research evidence, where abduction is the "*process of forming an explanatory hypothesis*" (Peirce, 1934, p. 171; cited in Timmermans & Tavory, 2012). The objective of the theories that emerge is not to represent reality, but to describe how to cope with it

(Dewey, cited in Watson, 2013). Timmermans and Tavory (2012), in particular, highlight how this inductive strategy has a commitment to let theories emerge from the data inductively, and therefore does not allow for the adoption of an analytical framework prior to data collection. Abduction instead allows the researcher to start from an initial theoretical understanding of the context, which is especially valid for contexts in which there is a certain amount of already existing research, to develop further theory based on empirical data collection (Ong, 2012). The importance of empirical reflection is that anomalies which cannot be explained by existing theories can trigger abductive inquiry which will lead to new discoveries (Shepherd & Suddaby, 2017). The aim of the research is to discover new things, other variables and other relationships, but not in terms of theory generation as in grounded theory and induction, rather in terms of theory development (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007). The concept of theory development is more akin to refinement of existing theories rather than inventing new ones, thus aligning it to the idea of an incremental improvement to theory (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007; Corley & Gioia, 2011; Shepherd & Suddaby, 2017; Nicholson et al., 2018).

This seems particularly important in this research field of SBSR, which emerges as contextualisation of CSR in small businesses. The major difference from both deductive and inductive studies is the role of the framework (Shepherd & Sutcliffe, 2011; Shepherd & Suddaby, 2017). In studies relying on abduction, the original framework is successively modified, partly because of unanticipated and unexpected empirical findings, but also because of theoretical insights gained during the process, particularly in relation to the specific context of the research (Dubois & Gadde, 2002; Shepherd & Sutcliffe, 2011). The new insights resulting from the confrontation of established theoretical models with new concepts, derived from reality, is what leads to the extension of theory (Ong, 2012; Timmermans & Tavory, 2012) through a conceptual representation (Shepherd & Sutcliffe, 2011). This conceptualisation resonates with the idea of a constructionist epistemology and the pragmatic interpretivist philosophy, where the social reality can be accessed and constructed through the accounts of actors, hence the known world is perceived and interpreted by the researcher as human construction based on their own values and beliefs; the reflection on these values, both individual and related to the context, is what can lead to new insights (Timmermans & Tavory, 2012; Blaikie & Priest, 2019).

### 5.3.1 Justification of research strategy

This section justifies the chosen research methodology by reflecting on the shortcomings of alternative methodologies that were discarded for lack of fit with the aim of this research. The other candidates considered for this research were case study methodology, grounded theory, phenomenology and ethnography. The section is structured by introducing the alternative methodologies and the main reasons for lack of fit. In conclusion, the section wraps up by highlighting the key benefits that the abductive methodology presented to this research.

The case study strategy of qualitative empirical research would allow for an inductive empirical approach to investigation in order to highlight the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events (Fitzgerald & Dopson, 2009); it obtains richness of data by utilising various sources of data collection (Yin R. , 2017). This strategy was avoided, since it requires from the outset the selection of specific cases for analysis; on the contrary, in the case of an emergent agenda of SBSR, it was important to continue to interview until data saturation was achieved (Glaser, 2001). Grounded theory was in fact the alternative research methodology best suited to researching the social processes concerned with human beings interacting with each other (Parry, 2005). Grounded theory offers a “*structured approach to social, symbolic and context specific behaviours*” (Buchanan & Bryman, 2009, p. 381). The weakness of utilising grounded theory in research contexts such as SBSR, where there is a richness of already pre-existing CSR theories, has been underlined by many authors (Corley & Gioia, 2011; Timmermans & Tavory, 2012; Shepherd & Suddaby, 2017). In particular, this weakness lies in expecting to obtain new insights and middle range theories when relying on a theoretical sensitivity without committing to pre-existing theories (Glaser, 2001). It was therefore felt important to avoid grounded theory (Shepherd & Suddaby, 2017).

Phenomenology was also not considered to be a suitable research strategy for a research abiding to a pragmatic philosophy. Phenomenology attempts to “*describe the common meaning for several individuals of their lived experiences of a concept or a phenomenon*” (Creswell & Poth, 2017, p. 76). The researcher collects data from persons in a group who have experienced the phenomenon, and then develops a

composite description of the universal essence of the lived phenomenon across all the components of that group (Moustakas, 1994). The hermeneutic phenomenology tradition is particularly suited to an interpretivist study, with a commitment to research based on *verstehen* and a view that social actions are meaningful to the subjects involved and thus should be interpreted from their perspective (Goulding, 2009). Reflexivity is in fact a key feature of this methodology: the role of the researcher is fundamental in the interpretation, to shift from a subjective description of facts into a shared understanding of the experience. The downside of this methodology was the fact that, by focusing on lived experiences, the objective of achieving a pragmatic understanding of reality with linked theorisation would be jeopardised (Timmermans & Tavory, 2012).

Finally, ethnography requires that the researcher takes an active part in the context researched so as to learn about a culture from the inside out; hence from this perspective it could be a good candidate for this study focused on social practices, which are the expression of the values of owner-managers (Fine et al., 2009). This research strategy is criticised for the lack of control that the researcher ends up having in the study; in fact, contrary to experimental or survey research, it does not have clear protocols to guide the design, which remains flexible and emergent; hence it does not suit a research where the subtle realist ontology requires a certain set of strict protocols to justify results (Creswell & Poth, 2017). Moreover, it is not a type of research methodology suggested for small entrepreneurship research, where access to data collection is limited by the business priorities of the researched (Headd, 2003; Halinen & Törnroos, 2005).

As a conclusion to this section, a further comment needs to be highlighted; about the importance of allowing pre-existing research to inform the present study. The point being made by Timmermans & Tavory (2012) is very important; in all the above interpretive philosophies (e.g., Creswell & Poth, 2017), indulging too long on the background of the researcher heightens the risk of creating a false persona. The reality is that the researcher is shaped as a result of the theories that are brought to the research, therefore thinking that these can be left “at the back of our head” for the benefit of the induction process is quite naïve. As the current research community recognises the importance of disclosing positionality as part of the interpretive process, even more so there is a recognition of the role of pre-existing theories in shaping the identity and

positionality of the researcher (Timmermans & Tavory, 2012). This point underpins the importance of building on existing knowledge through an abductive approach. This indeed also reflects the consideration that a PhD journey starts with a research proposal and a literature review. So, in the choice of abduction, the following factors are taken in consideration: it allows previous research to inform the study, contrary to grounded theory; furthermore, to better suit the study of SBSR as a practice in small businesses, a subtle realist ontology was preferred, hence phenomenology was abandoned, as well as ethnography, for their lack of protocols and commitment to achieve a practical and pragmatic middle theory; i.e. a theory that could give actionable insights to the researched.

#### **5.4 Data collection procedures**

This section explains which research methods were utilised to collate and analyse relevant data. Research methods refer to specific techniques and tools that are deployed during research within the framework of a chosen methodology in order to collect and analyse relevant data to solve a research problem (Creswell & Miller, 2000). This section provides a list of the methods which were utilised for this research; in this preamble it is explained why, among all the qualitative methods available, interviews and documents were specifically chosen for this data collection. The use of more than one qualitative method ensures thicker and richer descriptions of SBSR, as well as offering different perspectives on the phenomenon and better opportunities to understand its complexities through reflexivity (Silverman, 2016), as will be seen in section 5.5. Using more than one method also strengthens the reliability of the research process through the opportunity to triangulate data sources and methods, which also complements the weaknesses and strengths of each method employed in the study (Silverman, 2015; Bryman et al., 2018); this will be seen in detail in section 5.6.

A type of qualitative research that was discarded after initial consideration was participant observations. Sometimes, this method of research is required in order to add robustness to the research process, especially to limit the social desirability bias inherent in interpretivist research focused on ethics (Crane, 1999). Ultimately, this strategy was not selected, however, since during overt participant observation sessions there could still be a tendency to demonstrate behaviour that respondents consider to

match with the expectations of the researcher (Cohen et al., 2002); moreover, the actual implementation of SBSR practice was not the only core objective of the research. Focus groups were initially considered, since this method has been used previously to gather consensus about socially desirable topics within a community of practice (Shove et al., 2012). Nevertheless, the critique this method receives is that it does not allow for the necessary level of intimacy and reflective space on researching values and ethical choices in business management; moreover it is almost solely used in business ethics research as part of the development of a research instrument. Focus groups were not selected as a methodology for this study, therefore (Cowton & Downs, 2015). The following table, adapted from Yin (2017), briefly summarises the types of data sources that were utilised for data collection, followed by an explanation of the strengths and weakness of these methods and their suitability for this research study.

**Table 5: Data collection methods**

Type of sources	Detail of method
<b>Documents</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Website pages (About us, Menu, Suppliers)</li> <li>• Social Media (Facebook or Twitter page)</li> </ul>
<b>Semi-structured interviews</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Owner-managers</li> <li>• Chefs</li> <li>• Middle management for multi-outlets</li> <li>• Chief executive officer for social enterprises (if different from café manager)</li> </ul>

Source: Author (adapted from Yin, 2017)

#### *5.4.1 Semi-structured interviews*

Interviews serve as an exploratory instrument for primary data collection: they allow the researcher to access the respondents' perspectives and experiences about a phenomenon or social process being studied; hence they are of crucial importance for

a pragmatic interpretivist philosophy (Kvale, 1994; Rubin & Rubin, 2011). The pragmatic interpretivist approach to research relies particularly on qualitative and multiple methods of data collection, but primarily interviews, to tease out an understanding of the phenomenon researched (Saunders, 2016). The preference towards interviews is that their flexibility better allows an exploration of the opinions of individuals involved (Cassell & Symon, 2004). A qualitative interview is a social and verbal interaction where an interviewer or researcher attempts to extract information from another person by asking questions (Kvale, 1994). Interviewing is especially necessary when the researcher is interested in past events or when the researcher cannot directly observe behaviours or feelings (Kvale, 1994; Cassell, 2015), such as attitudes and perceptions of foodservice business owners in relation to SBSR. Thus, interviewing was considered the most important method of collecting data for this research. One-to-one personal interviews are specifically appropriate for this research, since the understanding or perception of SBSR, and implementation of related practices, should be linked to the values and beliefs of the owner-manager, as emerged in the literature, as well as serving to explain their dynamics within the social context (Kvale, 1996; Cassell, 2015). A face-to-face interview method is particularly appropriate for theory-building research involving ethical decision making as they allow to explore the interplay between the organisational culture and individual values (Liedtka, 1992). Moreover, the intimacy of the method allows to probe on the complexity of ethical decision making, helping respondents to become aware of how decisions were made (Liedtka, 1992).

There are different types of interviews. Structured standardised interviews are characterised by tight control where the sequence is that of a questionnaire, with the objective of creating little interaction with respondents (Saunders et al., 2016). Usually, this type of interviews is coupled with a more positivist paradigm and associated with quantification of the data generated (Cassell, 2015). Consequently, the use of a structured interview format was not advisable for this research which is aligned with a subjective epistemology. Both semi-structured and in-depth unstructured interviews tend to be aligned to a more qualitative paradigm; here the emphasis is placed on the interviewee's thoughts and perceptions in relation to a certain phenomenon, in recognition that the interviewee takes an active role in constructing the interview (Cassell & Symon, 2004). For example, the prompts in the semi-structured process are



very important since they permit the interviewer to clarify certain points, to ask the interviewee to build on concepts and give more explanatory power (Rowley, 2012; Bryman et al., 2018). Marshall and Rossman (2006, p. 108) state that “*a degree of systemization in questioning may be necessary when many participants are interviewed*”. Given that this research entailed conducting interviews with a high volume of owners-managers, a semi-structured interview style seemed justified for this research. Furthermore, in-depth interviews would put more focus on the lived experiences of the business owners, rather than on the researched business processes (Timmermans & Tavory, 2012). Similar approaches to studying corporate social responsibility in small and medium businesses were utilised by Jenkins (2004; 2006), Perrini and Minoja (2008), and, most recently by Eger et al. (2019).

The data collection through interviews started with a pilot; this included professionals in the foodservice and charities industries with an in-depth understanding about the concepts of social responsibility and sustainable development. These first interviews were quite broad and tested a more in-depth approach to research, later excluded for the issues mentioned above. The interview tool was further modified after the first pilot to avoid asking too early questions about definitions of small business social responsibility, thus allowing a more interpretive process of data collection founded on the process of reflection generated through the course of the interview (Cassell, 2015). The main changes, therefore, as can be seen in Appendix 4, consisted in leaving the summary questions about understanding of SBSR at the end of the full interview script. All the interviews, including the pilot ones, were conducted at the premises of the foodservice business. The main reason was because it is easier to reach busy managers and gate keepers if one decides to facilitate the interview at their premises, allowing the researcher to work around managers’ busy working schedules; considering the time that respondents can feasibly give to the research is very important (Rowley, 2012). Moreover, the on-site interview process allowed further cues to be gleaned as to the restaurant’s environment, which aided the process of creating memos and allowing for reflexivity in relation to the context (Rowley, 2012; Cassell, 2015). It also allowed the collection of documents which complemented the responses, especially when it comes to implementation of actions; for example, in some instances, a copy of a document that the interviewee made reference to, was collected by taking a quick photo (Cassell, 2015).

As mentioned in chapter 4, the interview was aligned with the SBSR discourses that emerged from the literature review and were later analysed in chapter 4. The following table, therefore, summarises the questions that were asked in the semi-structured interview; also highlighted are the areas which were particularly open to further probing.

**Table 6: Research framework**

Construct / theory	Semi-structured questions
Personal motivations / normative SBSR discourses; ethical theories (e.g. Graafland & Van de Ven, 2006; Tzschentke et al., 2008)	Can you tell me bit about you, your background, and your previous roles? What brought you to this role / business? Tell me about your current business How would you categorise your business (prompts: lifestyle, profit, Social enterprise) What motivates you personally to engage in these activities?
Business motivations; instrumental SBSR discourses; resource-based view of the firm (e.g. Jenkins, 2006)	What motivates this business to engage in these activities? What are the advantages for your business by being socially responsible and/or being environmentally friendly? What are the disadvantages for your business when implementing SBSR practices?
Institutional influences; neo-institutional theory (e.g. Lepoutre & Heene, 2006; Soundararajan et al., 2018)	Have any external factors influenced the implementation of SBSR in your business? Probing on: Institutions, industry associations, competitors? How do you communicate these practices to your stakeholders?
SBSR / SBSR Actions (Crane et al., 2013)	What do you consider to be the role of your businesses in society? What do you think your business should be socially responsible for? Why do you think these are the business's responsibilities?

	What actions have you taken that you consider being socially responsible? (prompts: beneficial to society or community; staff; environment; clients)
CSR/SBSR contested concepts (e.g. Jenkins, 2004; Jenkins, 2006; Jenkins, 2009)	What do you understand by the term CSR? What do you understand by the term small business social responsibility?

Source: Author

#### 5.4.2 Documents

Secondary data are also very important, as they make it possible to enrich the data collected from the primary research sources, strengthening the rich contextual description and allowing for a better interpretation through reflexivity (Gill & Johnson, 2010). Documents containing CSR information are considered very important and are often utilised to research CSR or environmental responsibility in bigger organisations (Campopiano & DeMassis, 2015; Ettinger et al., 2018), also in the hospitality sector (Kasim, 2007; Holcomb et al., 2011). Social media are utilised as well because of the social and public nature of the CSR/SBSR practices (Lee et al., 2013). Small businesses in tourism and hospitality make use of social media tools to communicate with stakeholders (Chan & Guillet, 2011; Hvass & Munar, 2012; Leung & Bai, 2013) or to engage the public with CSR content (Lee et al., 2013; Ettinger et al., 2018). This frequency in use of social media is confirmed also for small foodservice businesses (Kang et al., 2015; Clarke et al., 2016), as well as for the use of social media in communicating such practices (DiPietro et al., 2013). Such availability of information offers the opportunity to utilise this channel as an additional source of information to complement the findings from the interviews.

The data collection from documents included any publicly available form or outlet of communication between the company and its stakeholders, such as the website and social media of each foodservice business; the collection and analysis were limited to those pages or posts communicating SBSR practices and personal values. Among the websites, the following pages were chosen, on the basis that they offered narrative descriptions about the organisation and its stakeholders: the “About Us” section which usually referred to values; the page with information about suppliers, if available. If a

blog was available, that was also included, as this is another preferred form of CSR communication by bigger enterprises (Fieseler et al., 2010; Morsing & Spence, 2015). The sample businesses were utilising either Twitter or Facebook for the most part, although in a few cases restaurants used Instagram as well. It appeared that no other social media channel was utilised by these restaurants, apart from their own blog, confirming the importance of Facebook and Twitter as the main social media tools for foodservice businesses (DiPietro et al., 2012; Clarke et al., 2016). Eventually, data was only collected from the most actively used channel, as this is a usual practice in internet research methods (Clarke et al., 2016). The level of influence was determined by the date of the latest material posted on the site or, if both media profiles were actively maintained, the stream with the higher number of users was chosen, as this is a common metric for the level of influence (Kwak et al., 2010).

The importance of using these documents was initially foreseen just in terms of triangulating and enriching the description of the SBSR actions implemented; but in practice these documents were also useful for the reflexive process: interviewees were posed questions about some of these collected documents. This tactic of probing the interviewees with questions based on documents incited a lively exchange during the interview sessions, with most respondents actively participating and sharing their experiences and perceptions.

#### *5.4.3 Sample population*

The focus of the research is studying small, independent foodservice businesses, where the business owner oversees all the decision making within the organisation. Regarding the sample population from which to choose the purposeful sample, often with small businesses the issue is the lack of time to engage in business research (Thompson & Smith 1991; Curran et al., 2000; Headd, 2003; Denscombe, 2014). Curran, Rutherford and Smith (2000) observe that small business owners are usually too busy and sceptical about the value of academic research, and this usually leads to surveys with very low response rates that invalidate the results of quantitative methods. Denscombe (2014) notices how low involvement might affect response rates. For this reason, accessibility in entrepreneurship and small business research is a big issue that needs to be taken into consideration and addressed (Headd, 2003); it

cannot be the same as, for example, in educational research, where large samples of students are available and easier to access for conducting research (Wellington, 2015).

To overcome these issues, the initial starting point for the choice of establishment was a database of small independent foodservice businesses provided by the Eat Sheffield network, a network of foodservice businesses facilitated by Sheffield Hallam University (Eat Sheffield, 2012). This involvement of the researcher's own university in the network was beneficial, as the time and access for fieldwork are almost always limited, so it is important to pick cases that are easy to get to and hospitable to the enquiry (Stake, 1995; Bryman et al., 2018). The researcher gained access to the Eat Sheffield historical data and contact details, and the database was a starting point for identification of small restaurants in Sheffield; a few other restaurants, some of which only recently launched, were added to the list and considered as part of the population. Finally, Eat Sheffield "*promotes independent foodservice establishments that focus on offering something extra to their clients, on the way of fantastic customer service, locally sourced food where appropriate and the practice of good food ethics*" (Eat Sheffield, 2012). These characteristics resonate with some elements of the SBSR definition, therefore there was an expectation that the businesses in this population would provide interesting observations for the research. Consequently, it was perceived that Eat Sheffield would be an ideal sample population from which to extract a sample of extreme cases suitable for answering to the research questions (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

Finally, the UK forms an ideal location for the sample population of this study, for it is characterised by a strong support for the CSR agenda, both for big and small businesses; thereby representing a useful terrain in which to redress the general lack of studies of SR in small businesses across Europe (Coles et al., 2013). Moreover, Sheffield was deemed a good location for a UK based research: with a population of 575,400 in mid-2016, the City of Sheffield is England's third largest district authority (Sheffield City Council 2016) hence in between the country's capital and smaller locations in terms of socio-economic variables. It is characterised by the presence of both independent businesses and chain restaurants (Rimington & Spencer, 2008). Sheffield also has an historical association with social activity; hence it was perceived there would be enough awareness about the concepts related to the business and society field (Seyd, 1990). As a testament to this, Sheffield has recently joined a

government alliance aimed at orchestrating activities for improving food sustainability across the UK, due to issues of food poverty affecting the city since the 2008 recession; hence there was an expectation of heightened sensitivity in the city of social and environmental issues related to food (Sheffield City Council, 2014). Having a consistent environment of analysis, with a guarantee of allowing for the phenomenon researched to be observed, is very important for qualitative research (Stake, 1995). When the sample population is pre-determined, as in this case, results are not generalisable statistically; rather the analytical generalisability is determined by the strength of the description of the context (Eisenhardt, 1989). The resulting theoretical insights have value to be applicable to other research contexts (Waligo et al., 2013).

#### *5.4.4 Sample selection and sample size*

This section covers all the considerations regarding the chosen sample of analysis. Usually, samples for qualitative research are purposive and not random, and they tend to be more context specific hence delimited; also, the social processes that one aims to study would be uninterpretable through random sampling (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Since the number of foodservice businesses concerned with social responsibility issues is limited (Hawkins & Bohdanowicz, 2012), the researcher should select so-called extreme or critical cases, where the phenomenon of interest is more likely to occur (Flyvbjerg, 2006). This means the logic behind sampling for qualitative research should not be random, derived from statistical probability theory, but purposeful (Patton, 2014). The bias towards providing rich information inherent in purposeful sampling would be a downside in positivist statistically generalisable research, but becomes a strength for qualitative research since the extreme cases allow room to find enough insights about the target of the research (Patton, 2014). Rubin and Rubin (2011) suggest three guidelines for selecting interviewees: they should be experienced about the topic being studied, they should be willing to talk, and they should represent a range of points of views. In this way, the selected sample allows completeness in describing the process, as well as saturation which is the “*confidence that you are learning little that is new from subsequent interviews*” (Rubin & Rubin, 2011, p. 67). This corresponds to the concept of heterogeneous sampling (Patton, 2014; Bryman et al., 2018), since it offers heterogeneity of points of view, allowing

the researcher to see “*important shared patterns that cut across cases and derive their significance from having emerged out of heterogeneity*” (Patton, 2014, p. 235).

Another important criterion for creating the sample was to include different types of small businesses with obviously different personal and business values, since it was highlighted in the literature review that personal and business values influence the implementation of SBSR within small businesses (see Chapter 3). The sampling therefore included: very small businesses that could be assumed to be lifestyle businesses, such as pubs and cafés or family owned businesses (Lashley & Rowson, 2010); bigger foodservice operations such as independent multi-outlets, which are likely to have a more pronounced profit-orientation (Berger & Bronson, 1981); businesses established many years before, since longevity is an indicator of success and quality performance in foodservice businesses (Ram et al., 2001; Agarwal & Dahm, 2015); finally social enterprises, including both social entrepreneurs and charities, which are known to be driven by their social mission (Sigala, 2019). The task of generating such a heterogeneous purposive sample of owner-managers was addressed by conducting a preliminary content analysis of available online documents of small independent foodservice businesses in Sheffield, starting from those that are part of the Eat Sheffield business network. Later, after a first pilot and twelve initial interviews, the sample was enlarged through convenience sampling, within the identified sample population of Sheffield-based independent small foodservice businesses. In summary, as can be seen in Appendix 1: the initial sample population identified is exactly the totality of businesses signed up to the Eat Sheffield project website at the beginning of the data collection in September 2015, which amounted to 156 restaurants. This list was later integrated with an extra 13 businesses, either multi-outlet restaurants, long-established restaurants, or social enterprises with a foodservice outlet. These businesses were identified through snowball sampling (Miles & Huberman, 1994), utilising the help of informants within the professional network of the researcher, or faculty members at Sheffield Hallam University; an additional two restaurants, three small chains and all the social enterprises were identified in this way.

**Table 7: Type of businesses contacted and interviewed**

Type	Eat Sheffield	Via informants	Social enterprises	Total
Contacted	39	14	12	65
Interviewed (Appendix 2)	20	10	8	38
Not interested (Appendix 3)	19	4	4	27

Source: Author

As Table 7 summarises, the totality of businesses reached was 65. The companies that did not reply, or initially replied but eventually did not allow for an interview, were 27. The main reason such businesses stated for not wanting to participate to the research was lack of time (Headd, 2003). The final research sample included a total number of 38 companies interviewed (details in Appendix 2). Interviews were conducted mainly with the owner-managers, alongside middle management for multi-site businesses. Two interviews were held with head chefs, based on the suggestion of the owner-managers, as they were responsible for managing food purchases. For social enterprises, both the chief executive officer and café manager were interviewed. This was deemed particularly important to guarantee a more rounded understanding of the decision making involving SBSR in the overall organisation. Eventually, the number of total interviews was 44 since, for multi-site outlets, middle management was also interviewed, while for social enterprise cafés adjunct to a charity, the charity CEO was interviewed alongside the café manager (see Table 8). Where needed, a follow-up interview or call was organised (in the cases of I19, I30 and I35), to complete the whole set of questions.



#### *5.4.5 Fieldwork*

The initial phase of research involved collecting documents. This phase was carried out between January and June 2016. Since small businesses are relatively informal in terms of their communication methods, the content analysis of website pages was integrated with the inclusion of their social media streams, as previously mentioned. Other internal documents related to SBSR actions were collected during the interviews, where the owner-managers mentioned them as being relevant, such as documents recording training relevant to SBSR. The qualitative content analysis was very useful for preparing the interview meetings. These meetings were arranged around the same time that the qualitative content analysis was carried out. It became evident quite early in the process, that these foodservice owner-managers were not very responsive; the researcher therefore proceed to an informal visit to the premises of the business, to follow up the email sent to the business, in order to solicit a response. During these initial meetings, the researcher had lunch/dinner at the establishment wherever possible, spoke informally with the staff, reviewed the menus, took notice of anything relevant to social responsibility that might be discussed in the actual interview. The documents, alongside the observations during the informal initial meetings, were utilised to prepare the interviews.

After the document collection, a pilot was run with the first twelve companies that granted early interest in participating to the research, between May and July 2016. These pilot interviews allowed clarification of the questions to be asked, the reordering of the questions and the most appropriate interview approach to be selected for these small businesses (Sampson, 2004). For example, the issue of type and length of the interview emerged, as well as the order in which the questions were asked. It became very evident early in the process that 40-45 minutes was the ideal time for an interview, after which the small business owner would start to be interrupted and his attention would generally falter; many of the owners stated at the beginning of the interview that they could not attend to the interview for more than an hour. The interview script was simplified to avoid unnecessary questions, such as their definition of sustainability. The remaining 26 interviews were carried out between August and November 2016. Data were recorded for later transcription; the interviews lasted approximately 20-25 minutes with middle management, while owner-managers and CEO interviews lasted

from 45 minutes to a maximum of 2 hours. In total the recording accounted to approximately 32 hours of interviews.

**Table 8: Detailed number of interviews**

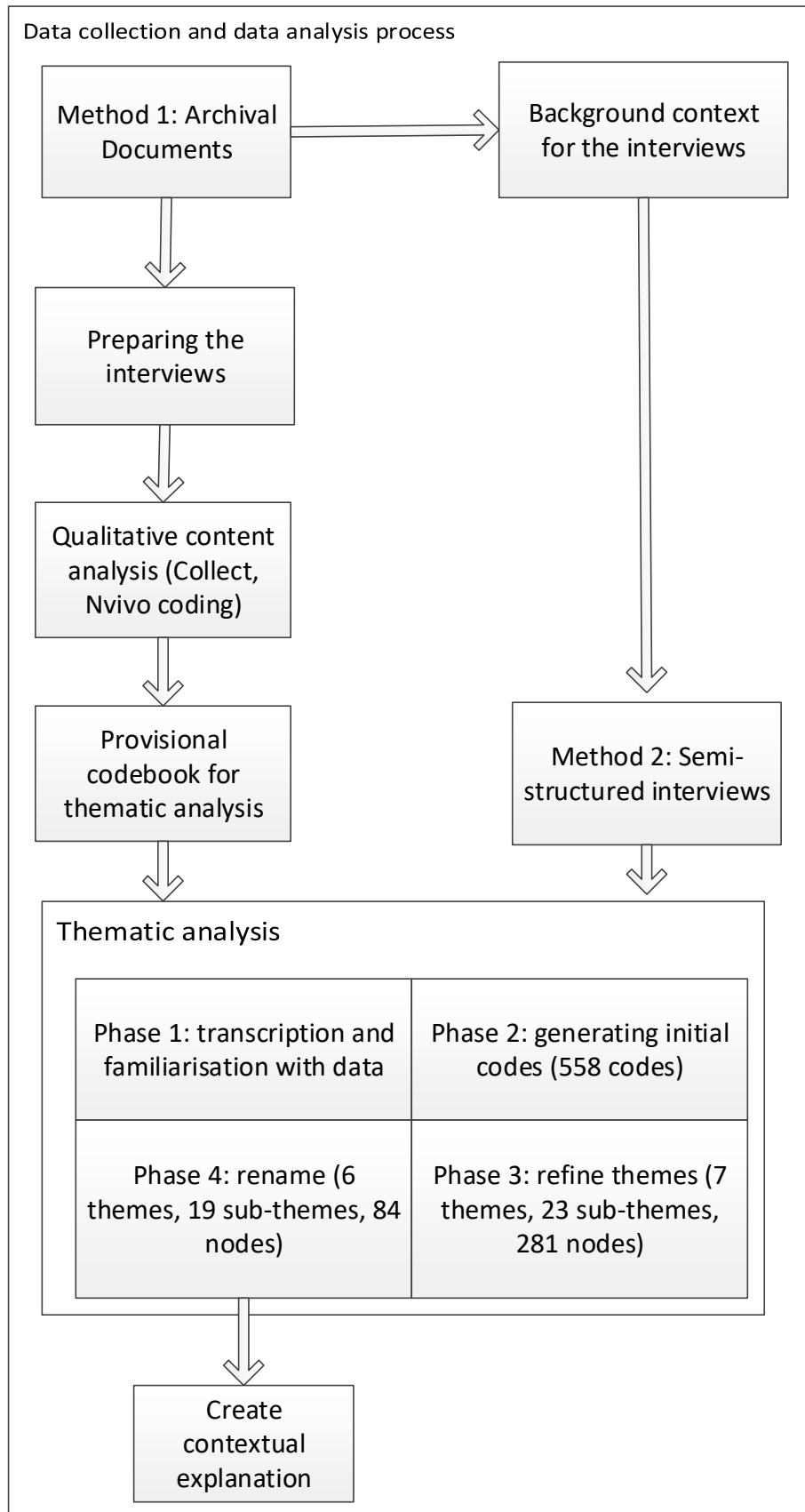
Business	Type of interview	Total: 44 interviews
I6, I23 (lifestyle / family)	Main interview with owner-manager; second interview to head chef	4
I21, I27 (profit/family)	Main interview with owner-manager; second interview with restaurant manager	4
I14; I32 (social enterprises):	Main interview with CEO; second interview with café manager	4
All other 32 businesses	1 interview with owner-manager	32

Source: Author

The transcribing was completed straight after each interview or within a few days, to make sure that the researcher could recollect as many impressions and reflections as possible in her research diary. The research diary was kept as a source of memos that later aided interpretation within data analysis (Glaser, 2001; Miles & Huberman, 1994). Strict research ethics protocols were always followed in order to guarantee data quality and to gain the trust of the participants (Gray, 2013). Research ethics will be addressed in full later in this chapter, as part of section 5.6.1. The initial analysis run on the demographic data for these businesses allowed the researcher to categorise all the interviewed businesses as appropriate candidates for this research. It was found that all businesses had fewer than 50 employees and turnover below 2 million; in all businesses the owner were involved daily in some aspects of the operations of the business. This meant that all interviewed businesses could be added to the sample for data analysis. The next section focusses on describing the steps followed for analysing the data.

## **5.5 Data analysis**

This research is aligned with an abductive approach which allows for theory extension or theory development; hence the knowledge claim of this research will be theoretical statements about SBSR practices, rather than data generalisation (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007). Another aspect of the analysis is that different techniques for data analysis were used, namely qualitative content analysis and thematic analysis; this bricolage approach is suggested as offering the best interpretation of data through qualitative analysis (Denzin, 2016; Creswell & Poth, 2017). This is a typical feature of the pragmatic interpretivist approach (Ritchie et al., 2013), which is more interested in situated pragmatic outcomes and descriptive theories, rather than generalisable theories. A scrupulous analysis of data was considered essential because it was expected that it would enable a rich and dense description of the context that would lead to a well-developed theory. The first screening analysis was run through Excel in order to check the demographics and socio-economic details provided by the businesses. This made it possible, for example, to confirm that all the businesses corresponded to the small business definition provided (i.e. less than 50 employees). To avoid overlooking any detail, the core interview data and the documentary data were analysed using NVivo software (Bazeley & Jackson, 2013). NVivo was utilised because it allowed for an easy to use and quick form of data coding. It assisted in shifting concepts around, retrieving memos, notes, summary notes and in providing easy access to what had already been done; NVivo has great potential for deriving and visualising data (Sotiriadou et al., 2014). In terms of documents, it allowed words to be qualitatively searched and scanned across the big cloud of the document, which helped to support the qualitative content analysis phases. This made it possible to move from the cases to the interpretation, by making it easy to read all the information contained in a specific code together at the same time. It also allowed, by creating nodes for each case, comparison of groups of respondents against certain demographic or business characteristics. The next sections describe all the phases included in the data analysis, as illustrated in Figure 3.



**Figure 3: Data collection and data analysis process**

Source: Author.

In particular, the figure 3 highlights how the qualitative content analysis supported the thematic analysis. Initially, documents were collected, and a qualitative content analysis was utilised to get a sense of the businesses and to prepare for the interviews. The codebook was later utilised also as a starting point for the thematic analysis.

### 5.5.1 *Qualitative content analysis*

Reviewing the documents was essential in guiding the data collection phase; the review of the documents was carried out through a qualitative content analysis. Most types of content analysis generate quantitative indicators. Even if, in many cases, quantification is considered a characterising aspect of content analysis, it is not essential, however (Breuning, 2011). Qualitative content analysis examines significant aspects of texts that cannot be easily grasped through quantitative techniques; it aims to clarify perceptions of the social world (Zhang & Wildemuth, 2009). Quantitative content analysis is usually deductive and produces numbers as output; on the contrary, qualitative content analysis is inductive and produces descriptions, typologies, expressions reflecting the perception of the social world (Zhang & Wildemuth, 2009). The author used as a guideline the methodologies proposed by Mayring (Kohlbacher, 2006). This methodology is composed of two main phases: collect information and code; highlight new themes.

The main themes derive from a set of *a priori* codes, which are later enriched if relevant further themes emerge through the coding. The initial set of themes were derived from the literature analysis, particularly regarding implementation of socially responsible practices. The analysis was performed utilising the codebook regarding SBSR practices in Table 9. These codes were later enriched looking for codes not only related to implementation, but also regarding the values of the business owner; since, to the author's knowledge, there is no specific research in the literature that looks at small business owners' values in the context of the SBSR practices of foodservice businesses, there were no *a priori* codes for this part. Table 10 contains the additional codes that emerged after the qualitative content analysis. The resulting codebook was utilised to guide the researcher in the data collection phase; first of all, it helped in creating the purposeful sampling frame, since the codes that emerged could give an early indication of SBSR implementation. The codebook later aided the process of

creating the interview schedule. For example, in the last section of the interviews, the key question was about SBSR implementation:

*“What actions have you taken that you consider being socially responsible?”*

Four prompts were also devised: beneficial to society or community; staff; environment; market.

The codebook was also utilised as an initial feed for the thematic analysis phase.

**Table 9: Qualitative content analysis initial codebook**

<b>Market</b>	<b>Environment</b>	<b>Society</b>	<b>Employees</b>
ethical meat free range eggs, ethical supply chain fair trade	Energy efficiency	Community relations/engagement.	Minimum wage,
Free from food / Information on food allergens	Food waste	Supporting small farmers; producers	Fair treatment of employees
Local food, traceability	Sustainable supply chain; Food miles reduction: sustainable food sourcing	Supporting local schools.	Training employees
Nutrition & calories count disclosure information	Workplace resources: e.g. Recycling materials;	Responsible marketing (transparency)	
Organic food	Green activism; Environmental Education for employees and guests;	Employing from disadvantaged groups, e.g. ex-offenders, people with disabilities	
Seasonal food	Buying in bulk	Philanthropy	
Healthy food	Green design		
Fresh food not pre-cooked	Water saving,		

Food safety	sustainable fish / sustainable farming		
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Source: Author

**Table 10: Qualitative content analysis additional codes.**

<b>Market</b>	<b>Environment</b>	<b>Society</b>	<b>Employees</b>	<b>Personal Values</b>
accessibility	Foraging	social value of food	volunteer staff	Proud
meat free food	Locally sourced ingredients	socialising spaces		Care
vegan food	Grow your own food	community café		Fair, Honest
	Composting	affordable food		Friendly
	farm to plate	honest price		Helpful, Kind
		support local suppliers		Positive, creative
				Passion for food

Source: Author

The documents were also used as support for the thematic data analysis, to guide the reflexivity that supported that data analysis, for example in creating latent codes. A key example is to reflect about the connection between perceived benefits from SBSR and the type of communication utilised by the business, either through social media or face-to-face. None of the businesses, for example, was showcasing regulations about health and safety in public areas. Food safety compliance was seldom showcased outside the premises. These were used as input for the thematic analysis, and ultimately helped with the reflexivity process (see details in section 5.6). One example of questions for the interview schedule is the following:

*What actions have you implemented that you consider being socially responsible?*

The above qualitative analysis helped in creating, for example, the following prompt:

*Is there any action that you implemented in relation to accessibility?*

The next section highlights the detailed procedures of the thematic analysis.

### *5.5.2 Thematic analysis (four steps)*

The data collected through the interviews were analysed through thematic analysis; a series of existing codes derived from the initial qualitative content analysis was utilised as a starting point. Thematic analysis is a “*method for identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data. It minimally organizes and describes your data set in (rich) detail*” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 79). One of the main benefits of this analysis is that it is very flexible and intuitive, and very adaptable to any philosophical epistemology, including the interpretivist one (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The methodology is very detailed and clear, allowing for clarity in creating a research trail, which gives the findings more credibility. The methods also facilitated the abductive interpretive process, by pushing the researcher to reflect on the “*story you are telling about the data*” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 93), as a means to move from the more descriptive codes to the more latent ones, which allows an abductive theory to be constructed. This method was adapted from Braun & Clarke (2006) and Guest et al. (2011), as the basic procedure of Braun and Clarke needed to take into consideration the pre-existing conceptual framework from the qualitative content analysis, which offered a set of codes to start the analysis from. Moreover, while Braun and Clarke’s phases are meant for manual coding, the use of NVivo software in this research simplified some of the middle steps of Braun and Clarke method. In particular, the step of searching for themes was simplified, since the NVivo coding allows for clearer visualisation of overlapping codes, for merging of similar sub-themes.

#### *5.5.2.1: Transcription and familiarisation*

Interviews were transcribed straight after each interview in order to maintain a fresh stream of reflections. The transcripts were not analysed in between interviews, however, so previous interviews did not inform the following ones. After the data collection was completed, all the interviews were reviewed once again against the



actual recording, to “*check the transcripts back against the original audio recordings for accuracy*” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 88). Recording non-verbal and emotional elements of the interview was important, especially when the interviews involved the values and identity of respondents (Bazeley & Jackson, 2013). So, the thorough transcribing and multiple iterations of listening to the audio made the researcher ready for the following phase of the data analysis. Such transcripts with initial annotations added at the time of transcription, were later utilised to enhanced reflexivity during data analysis; this will be better explained in section 5.6, covering data quality.

#### *5.5.2.2: Integrating initial codes and merging into sub-themes and themes*

This second section of the analysis is about the coding phase, which is related to the careful identification of codes across the various interview transcripts. This phase generated a list of 558 codes (see examples of coding in Appendix 5). A code is a section of data identified, in its semantic or latent form, because it appears interesting to the analyst, and refers to “*the most basic segment, or element, of the raw data or information that can be assessed in a meaningful way regarding the phenomenon*” (Boyatzis, 1998, p. 63). Meanwhile, sub-themes and themes are the units of analysis; they are broader than codes, agglomerating various codes together. The text was separated into short paragraphs, with a line break between them, whenever the topic or subtopic appeared to have changed (Saldaña, 2015). The wording of the questions, which derived from the conceptual framework identified through the literature, acted as structural coding that guided the initial allocation of the codes into certain sub-themes / themes (Guest et al., 2011, p. 50); while some of these codes were derived from the qualitative content analysis. All other codes coming from the data were emergent, identified according to some of the following coding techniques.

The main types of codes identified in this second phase were semantic codes, where some of the actual wording of the respondents was borrowed to identify a code; if all the wording was borrowed for a code, it was called *in vivo* coding (Glaser, 2001). Another specific type of coding utilised was value coding, for those parts of the texts where the business owners were talking about their own motivations, both in relation to setting up the business in general and to the ethical and responsible practices (Saldaña, 2015). As the analysis continued, new or latent, more interpretive sub-themes and themes were identified beyond the semantic wording; they were found by

organising existing codes and themes into mind maps, a process which allows one to "start thinking about the relationship between codes, between themes, and between different levels of themes" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 88). The concept of salience of a theme or sub-theme, as an indication of its importance, was also taken into consideration. The salience is judged by the author in relation to the value added to the story by the theme; for example, the themes related to social enterprises, despite not having many codes, added an important dimension to the story. The following table summarises all the types of codes that were included in the analysis.

**Table 11: Examples of coding**

<i>Type coding</i>	<i>Example of code</i>	<i>Supporting quote</i>
<i>Semantic</i>	<i>Humans do not operate individually</i>	<i>I don't think we operate individually (I34)</i>
<i>In vivo</i>	<i>sustainable food: selectively sourced, locally loyal</i>	
<i>Value</i>	<i>Passion for food</i>	<i>If you are chef you are passionate about food (I6, head chef).</i>
<i>Latent</i>	<i>Ethical Food</i>	<i>High welfare Sausages (I20)</i>

Source: Author

Another factor considered in the analysis and creation of emergent/latent themes was dependencies between concepts. As a rule, when questions and topics overlapped into each other, concepts were coded against two different codes; for example, it happened that when questioned about their personal motivations, respondents often answered providing business motivations at the same time, so it was felt that was an overlap that had to be highlighted. If some idiosyncrasies emerged, or so called deviant cases, those were particularly taken in consideration because they could reveal something specific and different, either confirming the themes, or explaining some unnoticed relationship with other themes (Guest et al., 2011, p. 113). For example, the terminology and the category "caring actions" was created because some respondents objected to the notion of having any responsibility towards society.

### *5.5.2.3: Refining the themes*

This phase moved deeply into the interpretation stage: the objective being to move decisively towards the final story being told. For this objective, all the codes and sub-themes and themes that had emerged up to this point had to be reviewed in the context of the final story. More concepts emerged as the various themes had to be put into context, thereby clarifying their relationships; for this reason, new latent (interpretive) codes emerged in the re-reading of the materials (Saldaña, 2015) or some themes were dropped since they overlapped with others. The main indicator of the validity of a theme in fact is that the data within it are coherent and fit together meaningfully, while themes should be different enough to be able to identify differences between them clearly (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Also, it was a time to let go of certain codes in order to achieve the objective of having themes that did not overlap with each other. In particular, codes with little references were deleted by merging them with a broader code, or making them sub-categories of an existing code. Material comprising the same codes and themes were re-read without reference to the interviews they came from, unless the author was unsure about the exact meaning, as suggested in grounded theory (Glaser, 2001). The electronic software permitted to view all the text within the same code simultaneously, so the large amount of data was more easily handled (Bazeley & Jackson, 2013). Re-reading all the materials was important for the author to code any data that had not been coded previously, since the software indicated very clearly when a piece of information had not been coded against a certain topic. This makes sense since this is an all-encompassing organic process, and the author developed a clearer interpretation of the text as the analysis advanced. As an example, the codes and categories related to outcomes were dropped, as they completely overlapped with business motivations; this indicated that SBSR practice is informal, not involving measurements.

Data were further validated through the opinions of the supervisory team, which reviewed the whole code set and the initial theme map, suggesting areas which might be overlapping. After this phase, the author validated the data through member checking. In other words, the interim results were shared with the respondents in the form of a brief report which summarised the codes, categories and themes identified so far. Roughly 10% of respondents replied and all of these indicated that they found the results useful and summative, without highlighting any specific doubt about the

script (Guest et al., 2011). In the logic of abduction, this is very important since it shows that the language utilised in the final theorisation is as close as possible to that of the respondents.

#### 5.5.2.4 Finalising, renaming the themes, writing up

Finally, to move on towards the writing phase, the validity of an individual theme in the revised thematic map should be meaningful as part of the overall data set. By focusing on each specific theme, the author prepared a clear statement of the story told by each theme in relation to the overall research question and the objectives to be achieved. The memos written during the coding process assisted in this phase since sometimes, in the previous phase of coding and refining one could lose a view of the overall picture. The memo helped on reflecting about the possible dependencies between themes. Now it was the time to rein back the mass of data and start focusing again on the story being told (Braun & Clarke, 2006). In line with the abductive strategy, each theme was renamed to obtain a contextualised rich account of the story, for reporting purposes and for transferability of the results (Johnson et al., 2006).

**Table 12: Refining the themes**

Theme Name	Description
1 - Perceptions of SBSR	Owner-managers' perceptions regarding SBSR.
2 - Business mission	Formal/informal sets of (societal) long term objectives of the business
3 - SBSR (small business social responsibility)	Socially Responsible practices implemented in the long term by the small business
4 - Personal values	Personal values of the owner-managers influencing SBSR
5 - Perceived business benefits	Perceived business benefits influencing SBSR
6 - External factors	External factors influencing SBSR

Source: Author

## **5.6 Data quality procedures**

There are many types of qualitative interpretivist research, which therefore means there is no consensus as to what determines quality research in this area (Johnson & Duberley, 2000; Easterby-Smith et al., 2012). This is the opposite to the situation with positivist research, where the research procedures are usually defined *a priori* depending on the specific quantitative method utilised (Saunders et al., 2016; Bryman et al., 2018). The actual procedures undertaken to guarantee data quality in all the research phases were underpinned by axiological considerations, since the researcher is aware that her own values affected the underpinning philosophy chosen for this research, as well as her positionality in the research (Denzin & Lincoln, 2002). This approach to research is informed by reflexivity, which is the notion that in order to understand the work of producing management research, the researcher needs to reflect about her own process of thinking (Weick, 1999). The role of the researcher is to be a facilitator, thus aiming to redefine knowledge through consensus (Johnson & Duberley, 2003). This last section, therefore, presents the specific data quality procedures adopted in this research: overall research ethics, particularly focusing on steps taken to guarantee ethical procedures in data collection and data quality of interviews; followed by axiological considerations about the positionality of the researcher. Finally, the last sub-section covers qualitative criteria guiding the data analysis.

### *5.6.1 Research ethics*

Research ethics guarantee that the processes involved with recruiting participants, securing their participation, dealing with data collection and analysis, are undertaken following correct research norms, cognisant of the rights and wrongs of dealing with human participants (Patton, 2014). The researcher scrutinised all aspects of research ethics regarding the rights and obligations of both the researcher and the interviewees, following the specific guidelines offered by the relevant Research Ethics Policy, as well as seeking formal approval for the faculties' bodies for proceeding to the data collection phase. As this specific research put the researcher in active interaction with respondents through the interviewing process, as well as through data manipulation of

document information, there was a clear need to implement actions to address the ethical issues which might affect this research. These procedures are instrumental to guaranteeing the credibility of the research, since the researcher should not exert any personal power over the researched, rather facilitating the creation of trust (Yin, 2014; Bryman et al., 2018).

The main element concerning the ethics of the data collection process is gaining access to participants and conducting the interviews according to ethical guidelines (Cassell, 2015). The researcher attempted to gain trust by focusing the introductory email on the reciprocity of the relationship, by actively showing the benefits that the respondent could get from the interview (Ritchie et al., 2013); see Appendix 4 for detail about the invitation email, as part of the data collection documents. In total, each business was contacted on average three times before gaining access (either by follow-up mail, phone, or face-to-face visit). The researcher informed interviewees about the research and its ethical procedures, by reviewing and signing the ethics form document at the time of the interview. The right to withdraw from the study at any time during the data collection phase was particularly underlined, both to gain rapport and to minimise desirability bias (see further on this in 5.6.3). There are different approaches to interviews, with the interviewing researcher deciding to assume either the position of outsider or insider. An outsider position is usually more aligned to an objectivist epistemology like neo-empiricism, where the researcher strives for a neutral type of language (Gill & Johnson, 2010). An insider position is usually associated with an opportunity to create a rapport with the group interviewed and come across as more authentic (Cassell, 2015). To avoid the issue of perceived familiarity which can arise from insider type interviews, the researcher settled for semi-structured style interviews (Patton, 2014), for reasons already mentioned in 5.4.1.

Another set of ethical considerations is related to online research, utilised to collect documents. Ethical issues related to the use of online materials are of growing concern, due to the amount of these types of studies and also the ethical issues linked to confidentiality, raised by previous Internet research (Zimmer, 2010; Markham & Buchanan, 2012). The issue was addressed by use of pseudonyms in the writing of the report, for both individual and organisational participants, in any written reports of the research and other forms of dissemination (Bryman et al., 2018). Similarly, efforts were made to ensure that the data generated by the research (e.g. transcripts of research

interviews, field reports and research diaries), was kept in a safe and secure location and used purely for the purposes of the research project (including dissemination of findings), in line with data management ethical guidelines (Corti et al., 2014).

### *5.6.2 Axiology and positionality of the researcher*

As mentioned above, reflexivity is an important aspect of qualitative management research, which allows the researcher to reflect on her own power over the research, due to background, values and positionality (Johnson & Duberley, 2003). As the objective of the research is to express the reality of the other, this positionality should be declared as one of the possible realities, while highlighting the reality of the other in the research (Denzin & Lincoln, 2002; Denzin, 2016; Bryman et al., 2018). While the familiarity of the researcher with the research could be seen as having a negative effect on knowledge creation, according to a positivist paradigm (Saunders et al., 2016), for abductive qualitative research it is this very richness of knowledge and experience which grants specific insights to the researcher, thus contributing to the resulting interpretation and theorisation (Eisenhardt, 1989; Weick, 1999; Dubois & Gadde, 2002; Corley & Gioia, 2011; Shepherd & Sutcliffe, 2011). The interpretivist researcher understands that research is “*an interactive process shaped by his or her personal history, biography, gender, social class, race, and ethnicity, and those of the people in the setting. The bricoleur knows that science is power, for all research findings have political implications*” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2002, p. 6). Hence, in understanding that the research process is a political process and an iterative one, one recognises its role in the research. Furthermore, the act of declaring the position of the research process allows the reader of the research to understand the results better, knowing that they are an expression of a certain positionality (Denzin & Lincoln, 2002).

Since the reflexivity process was central to the sensitivity and qualitative interpretation of the findings, to fully include this sensitivity in the research process, I realised that it was important to tell my own story in the first person; therefore in the rest of this section I will present and reflect on my own positionality utilising the first person. It is my own background in sustainability consultancy for small tourism businesses that led me to this PhD. I wanted to explore how small hospitality businesses can create positive social impacts. This industry is dominated by small businesses that are often

unaware about the importance of getting engaged with the sustainable development agenda (Garay & Font, 2012; Sampaio et al., 2012; Coles et al., 2013; Jones et al., 2018). It is the collective importance that small businesses represent for the overall sector, which makes it imperative to get these small businesses engaged in socially responsible practices (Garay & Font, 2012; Tomasella, 2015; Alonso-Almeida et al., 2018). Initially this research was going to consider the lens of the sustainable development agenda, in line with my interest to look at all aspects of sustainability, including social and cultural ones. In particular, the social dimension of sustainability is missing from the sustainable development literature (Boyer et al., 2016), while being a crucial element for the service industries (van Rheede & Blomme, 2012; Hawkins & Bohdanowicz, 2012). In contrast, the CSR literature is ripe with contributions in the social area because of its historical origin in socialist movements (Husted, 2015). I therefore chose to focus on social responsibility, rather than sustainability, in an effort to bridge the gap between competing bodies of literature, also in light of the convergence of the two topics of CSR and sustainable development at a practical level in the industry (Wheeler et al., 2003; Schwartz & Carroll, 2008; Strand et al., 2015; Bansal & Song, 2017).

The interview process proved hard at the beginning. As an outsider in this research, being foreign to the cultural environment of small foodservice businesses in Yorkshire, I felt a certain level of distance with my respondents, particularly during the first interviews of the pilot. I learnt to gain further trust from respondents by disclosing my own identity and business background early in the interview process, stressing the previous sustainability consultancy work with small tourism businesses; this allowed me to build the rapport and gain the trust of respondents, since knowing my background allowed them to understand my vested interest in the research (Cassell, 2015). This process helped me understand that to achieve an authentic and rich account in qualitative research requires one's own recognition of personal values (Johnson & Duberley, 2003). One key example is the fact that, when I started the research, I was not sufficiently clear about the value that food and hospitality had for me as an individual. I understand the social value of food and hospitality and its capacity to bring communities together, which is an intrinsic and traditional value in Italian culture, as can be expressed through the slow food movement (Pietrykowski, 2004). This acknowledgement and how I was unconsciously interpreting any action related



to healthy food or local food as socially responsible behaviour, only became clearer through the data collection and reflexivity process.

Minimising my own voice came next, as part of the writing up process, to be able instead to give voice to the attitudes and values of the people interviewed, as part of the pragmatic interpretivist epistemology (Shepherd & Suddaby, 2017). I understand that my cultural background and experience has been instrumental in choosing the lens of analysis; I come from a country and from a professional background that strongly value the role of small businesses, as well as food and hospitality, therefore this natural bias had to be highlighted. While some respondents recognised the inherent social value of food, this was not the case for others; hence the sub-theme of human values, different than moral values, was an emergent code for the research. Another example was my natural tendency towards considering social change as inherently positive. Having committed myself to an interpretive philosophy, rather than a critical one, it was important to acknowledge my voice, in order to improve the data analysis. By giving voice to the various respondents and simplifying the concepts emerged, I concluded that not all businesses shared this viewpoint. This was a critical point in allowing me to develop the contribution to knowledge of my research.

### *5.6.3 Quality of the data analysis procedures*

A very valuable suggestion is, as a starting point, to consider reflexively the philosophical commitment of the research, in order to anticipate the qualitative criteria that the researcher expects to utilise (Johnson et al., 2006). In this case of abductive research with a commitment to a subjective epistemology, characterised by a contextualisation to a specific sample population, the researcher considered a broad variety of qualitative criteria, in particular: authenticity and trustworthiness, credibility, dependability and transferability (Johnson et al., 2006); these qualitative criteria are more relevant than the validity and reliability criteria, typical of positivist types of research (Yin, 2014), particularly those relying on quantitative methods of data analysis. This is because a study with a subjective epistemology wants to present an authentic and rich understanding of people's experiences (Stake, 1995; Johnson et al., 2006), rather than to generate broad theories that can be extended to larger populations.

Authenticity, in particular, is a criterion introduced for constructivist research, where the claim to truth is not correspondence but rather a consensus or pragmatic theory of truth; it is achieved if the researcher is able to present a range of different realities, in terms of fairness of the account (Seale, 1999). In order to achieve authenticity and trustworthiness, ethics protocols ensure that the researcher makes the respondents feel comfortable and engaged with the research, and that respondents are made aware of the confidentiality of the process and the possibility to leave the research at any time. These are each important for a better research outcome and particularly to minimise social desirability bias (Randall & Fernandes, 1991). It was also important, as mentioned previously, to build rapport, therefore for example to make sure that in all interviews information about the objective of the study were provided, so that respondents felt comfortable about how their information would be managed; assurances about anonymity in disseminating data were also important and underlined a couple of times during the interviews (Crow et al., 2006). Closely linked to authenticity is the trustworthiness of the research (Johnson et al., 2006). This was achieved by maintaining an audit trail at all times. The related details were provided in the previous section, recounting the steps undertaken to achieve the findings, with details of how one proceeded from the different codes to the final scheme of themes. An extract of the audit trail of the coding, for two themes as an example, is contained in Appendix 6.

In order to validate the results, the findings also needed to guarantee credibility. In abductive research, in the process by which respondents' accounts are carefully constructed, certain steps, such as 'retaining the integrity of the phenomenon' are employed to ensure that the researchers' accounts do not stray too far away from the respondents' accounts (Johnson et al., 2006). Interpretivist research does not aim to achieve validity since that is not the point of the qualitative research (Seele, 1999). First of all, the researcher kept in touch with the respondents at various points, in particular by sending to all of them their own interview's script, as well as the overall research outcomes (Seele, 1999). Some of the respondents suggested comments, therefore corrections were made. The interviewees agreed with the findings made and the way they were formulated. As a result, the credibility was enhanced (Shenton, 2004). This member checking procedure is utilised in abductive analysis, which, by

starting from a theoretical framework, insists on retaining the authors' world in the interpretation and creation of typologies (Timmermans & Tavory, 2012).

Confirmability was affirmed through the demonstration that research outcomes emerged from the data and not the researcher's predispositions. On this point, the reflexivity was very important in order to minimise the bias related to the researchers' own positionality. Positionality, as explained in 5.6.2, represents a space in which objectivism and subjectivism meet. As Freire suggests, the two exist in a "dialectic relationship" (Freire, 2000, p. 50). Authors can never divorce themselves from their own subjectivity in the attempt to "objectively" give voice to the reality of the researched, since, after all, the researcher forms part of the research instrument (Seele, 1999). Lincoln, Denzin and Lincoln (2005) maintain that, "*Reflexivity is the process of reflecting critically on the self as researcher, the human as instrument*" (Lincoln et al., 2005). The aim, instead, should be, through reflexivity, to minimise the weight of one's own subjectivity on the research. This was done through a reflective diary to aid the reflexivity process (Lincoln et al., 2005).

Transferability is the criteria that replaces the notion of generalisability of research. Interpretivist research only tries to reach situated accounts, with the opportunity to apply the insights to different environments. Such aim was achieved by designing the data collection in order to take into consideration a specific context of research and to richly describe it, not from sampling but from rich description of the research context that now might enable other researchers to make such a transfer and comparisons possible (Seale 1999). In terms of the transferability of the findings, this is about the extent in which the researcher identifies how the findings can illuminate knowledge in other settings, which will be discussed in more detail in the final conclusion of the research, where the findings are discussed and the limits and new research areas suggested. Abduction is also useful in this respect, since the theorising aim is aligned to achieving a pragmatic and shared outcome. Denzin and Lincoln claim that researchers should aim to bring respondents to achieve change; since this is outside of the scope of this research, however, the author can only report that most of respondents declared at the end of the interview that they were pleased to have been able to reflect on their own activity, which is an indicator of perceived awareness (Denzin & Lincoln, 2002).

## **5.7 Conclusion**

This chapter presented the selection and justification of the abductive research methodology that was used to organise the empirical data collection for this research, bearing in mind the issues with qualitative research raised in previous chapters. The chapter also included descriptions of the overall research design, the sampling procedure and the data analysis strategy. Finally, it included steps to ensure the quality criteria of research for this study, particularly a reflection on the ethics and positionality of the researcher. The following chapter analyses the collected data and finally identifies the research findings.

## **Chapter 6**

### **Findings**

## **6.1 Introduction**

The preceding chapters examined the need for a critical investigation of social responsibility in small foodservice businesses. This enquiry was completed during two periods of field work, as detailed in the research strategy in chapter 5: the data collection through documents, followed by the data collection through semi-structured interviews. This chapter presents the findings by themes that emerged through the data analysis of the interviews; documents were used to corroborate the findings. Section 6.2 examines the types of businesses, their business values and their SBSR perceptions. The section 6.3 covers in detail what are the personal values that influence SBSR. The section 6.4 covers the theme of how perceived business benefits further influence SBSR. Section 6.5 covers how external factors influence SBSR. Finally, the section 6.6 covers the theme of SBSR implementation. The discussion and interpretation of these results will be presented in Chapter seven.

## **6.2 Business mission influences SBSR perceptions**

This section presents the findings related to the first research objective, which is to investigate how SBSR is understood by the interviewed owner-managers. The first key finding is the link between business mission and SBSR perceptions: such link helped to subdivide these businesses into three homogeneous groups. The 38 sampled businesses were in fact divided in 3 different groups: the growth group (abbreviated G) including 6 businesses which the owner-managers identified as profit businesses, all characterised by a growth mission. The second group, defined as value-driven group (abbreviated V), includes 24 businesses, which the owner-managers either identified as lifestyle, or family, or value-driven businesses; these businesses were grouped together, because they have a business mission informed by personal values, as will be seen in detail in 6.2.3. Finally, the group of social enterprises (abbreviated SE), includes 8 small businesses which were either a not-for-profit or a social enterprise, characterised by a formalised social mission. The following section (6.2.1) introduces descriptive statistics about these groups, while the following three sections (6.2.2, 6.2.3, 6.2.4) describe in detail the business mission and the linked SBSR perceptions.

### *6.2.1 Descriptive statistics of the businesses: growth, value-driven, social enterprises*

Table 13 summarises the information about how many businesses are included in each group (G, V, SE), alongside key demographic characteristics describing the businesses and the owner-managers. Almost half of the interviewed businesses are cafés (47.4%); the second most represented type are restaurants (34.2%), while there are a few fast food outlets (13%) and pubs (5%). With regards to the number of employees, the majority of businesses (42%) employ between 10 and 20 employees; most profit businesses fall in this category. Almost 40% of the businesses (39.5%) are micro enterprises; these are solely value-driven businesses or social enterprises. The remaining are the eight businesses with between 20 and 40 employees (8%); the last group, with between 41 and 50 employees (10%), are value-driven businesses with more than one outlet. The only profit business exceeding the 40 employees is a chain of 3 casual restaurants. In terms of longevity, there is quite a spread of ages of businesses, but most businesses (35%) are over 10 years old; approximately 20% are start-up businesses; finally, almost 30% of the businesses have between 2 and 5 years of age. In terms of the longevity of the business, the majority (46% approximately) are over 10 years old; 17% of the businesses are start-ups in their first year of operation, while almost 21% are in between their second and fifth year of operation. Finally, in terms of turnover, most businesses had a turnover below 1 million £; only two businesses, one profit and one lifestyle business, had a turnover between one and two million pounds. All the interviewed businesses therefore confirmed to be small businesses.

Among the 38 owner-managers interviewed, approximately 66% were over 40 years old, 27% were between 30 and 40 years old, while only 8% were below 30 years old. In terms of gender, there is a certain gender imbalance towards male, which represent 65% of respondents; looking at the value-driven businesses only, there is more balance between male and female owner-managers, with almost 46% female owner-managers of the value-driven businesses. Another important characteristic of these owner-managers is their previous hospitality experience, as well as their level of education. In terms of level of education, most respondents had a higher degree from a University (63.2%); 21% of respondents reached A levels, while only 13% reached GCSE's level. All the owner-managers of growth businesses had previous hospitality experience, either themselves or another owner-managing family member. The non-experienced

in hospitality are solely the lifestyle businesses or social enterprises. In the following sections, the owner-manager quotes are related to the code assigned to the specific business, according to Appendix 2; the role is indicated only for interviews with chefs.

**Table 13: Socio-demographic variables of businesses & owner-managers**

<i>Type of foodservice business by group</i>	<i>G</i>	<i>V</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>%</i>
<b>Type</b>				
Fast food	2	3		13.2%
Café		10	8	47.4%
Pub		2		5.2%
Restaurant	4	9		34.2%
<i>Age of owner-manager by group</i>	<i>G</i>	<i>V</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>TOTAL</i>
<b>Years</b>				
Under 30	0	2	1	7.9%
31-40	2	6	2	26.3%
41-50	3	8	4	39.5%
Over 50	1	8	1	26.3%
<i>Level of education</i>	<i>G</i>	<i>V</i>	<i>SE</i>	
<b>Highest educational achievement</b>				
GCSEs	1	4	0	13.2%
A Levels or equivalent	1	4	3	21.1%
University	4	15	5	63.2%
PhD	0	1	0	2.6%
<i>Hospitality experience of owner-manager</i>	<i>G</i>	<i>V</i>	<i>SE</i>	
No	0	13	4	44.7%
Yes	6	11	4	55.3%
<i>Number of employees/Business Type</i>	<i>G</i>	<i>V</i>	<i>SE</i>	
<b>Number</b>				
0-5	0	4	6	26.3%
6-10	0	4	1	13.2%
10-20	5	10	1	42.1%
20-40	0	3	0	7.9%
40-50	1	3	0	10.5%
<i>Age of operations</i>	<i>G</i>	<i>V</i>	<i>SE</i>	
<b>Years</b>				
1 or less	1	4	3	21.1%
2-5	3	5	3	28.9%
6-9	2	4	0	15.8%
10 and over	0	11	2	34.2%

Source: Author



### 6.2.2 Growth mission and economic responsibility

The growth group is composed of six businesses, which all shared the characteristics of being part of a group of independent businesses (I17, I18, I21, I26, I38), except for one fine dining restaurant (I31). These owner-managers identified their business as being a profit one with a specific growth mission (I17, I18, I21, I26, I31, I38):

*Well it's a growth business, we plan to open more bars in other cities (I21)*

*It's a profit business. (I31)*

*It's a profit business; we are aiming to open more sites (I26).*

Linked to the growth mission is also an understanding of their role in society as an economic one, based on their core commercial hospitality activity:

*We offer an opportunity of casual dining in a relaxed restaurant environment (I26).*

*We offer food and drinks (I17).*

The perception of SBSR of these growth businesses is framed in economic terms like their mission, because lack of profits could jeopardise the economic success of the business:

*SR is the responsibility of the business, responsibility to ensure that the business is successful and makes a profit, because if those businesses don't go well, then you haven't got a business (I17).*

*The business has a key economic role at centre of society so you have to contribute to it economically by making the profit (I18).*

For these businesses focused on economic responsibility, there is not a great difference between SBSR and CSR:

*Well I don't see it as being too different than the term social responsibility...I suppose being bigger you can have a bigger impact on the local economy...but really it should be about doing as much as you can (I21).*

In summary, it emerged that for growth businesses, focused on a growth mission, the related SBSR is framed as economic responsibility. This means that their perception of SBSR, focused on economic responsibility, is closely linked to the core business

mission of maximising growth.

### 6.2.3 *Hospitableness and ethical responsibility*

The value-driven group was created as all these businesses are driven by personal values and not necessarily growth; they also share a common informal mission which is the hospitableness of the business, moreover they have a similar understanding of SBSR as ethical responsibility. This group is composed of 24 businesses; 15 businesses in this sub-group defined themselves as lifestyle businesses (I2, I7, I8, I9, I10, I12, I13, I16, I19, I20, I23, I24, I33, I34, I36):

*I have always had an idea at the back of my head of having a food business and be independent one day. I have been talking about this for so long (I19).*

*Well this is a lifestyle business (I16).*

These businesses further explained that the business was set up by the owner-manager primarily to pursue their personal values; for examples cultural values (I13, I19, I23, I24, I33, I34):

*I am interested in food politics, food is a great 'medium' for people to have interactions with each other and develop their culture (I34).*

In some other cases the respondents mentioned green values (I7, I8, I27):

*It was something I always wanted to do, I was interested in cooking, always a passionate vegetarian, so I thought of combining the two (I8).*

Passion for cooking and hosting is another core value for these businesses (I2, I7, I24, I25, I27, I34):

*We are driven by quality of food, it would not be possible to make it a chain, maximum two or three, without risking too much or changing its nature completely (I13).*

Two of the businesses clearly defined themselves as value-driven businesses (I3, I11):

*We both run the business based on our values (I3).*

*We categorise our business as value driven (I11).*

In particular, 7 businesses defined themselves as family businesses, whereby the owner-managers were either a couple (I6, I25, I27, I29), father and son (I28, I30) or

siblings (I22); they are driven by the family values, therefore the profit is not aimed at growth, rather it facilitates the family life:

*Well it's a family business, we work on all things together at the same time. It doesn't really make you super rich (I22).*

*Family business doing things well and being proud about it, growth is not the objective, it's more about helping other staff to grow (I28).*

These businesses were labelled value-driven and grouped together, as they share an informal mission of personalised hospitality, or hospitableness in the literature (see discussion chapter 7). Hospitableness is about providing for clients' wellbeing on a personal basis (I2, I3, I6, I10, I13, I22, I27, I29, I30, I33, I34, I36):

*I wanted to create a place where people feel welcomed as part of the family (I16).*

*It's not about the money, it's about people feeling welcome to come on a personal basis (I23).*

*Well it's a broad function, the aim is that you provide a service, but also a community place (I24).*

*I want to create a place that personifies hospitality and creativity (I30).*

The hospitableness, is also about creating a hospitality space in the community, which is welcoming and inclusive (I7, I16, I22, I23, I24, I25, I27, I28), this was particularly found for the cafés and pubs:

*It is part of having a community place, you help things immediate to you (I28).*

*Because we have a public space in the community. You cannot exist in a vacuum, if you have retail premises you are automatically part of the community and to be part of it you should help it in some way (I24).*

This perception of SBSR as ethical responsibility, is aligned to the informal and personalised business mission of hospitableness, as it involves being caring and supporting the people that the business deals with:

*It means having a place in the community, having a responsibility towards that local community, working with other businesses and supporting other local*

*businesses, it means how we look after our staff, it means how we can contribute to that business community (I3).*

*It's being good for our customers but also for our suppliers, and also for the environment and the community we live in (I7).*

This perceived responsibility is ethical in nature, as it overlaps with the personal responsibility of the owner-manager, as the business is independent and driven by the personal values of the owner-manager:

*For me it's really about my personal responsibility of doing things in a certain way (I25).*

*It is about making money in a way that matches our values in which we want to live our lives (I3).*

*Social responsibility is still personal decisions in many cases... (I28).*

These businesses highlight the difference between the ethical and personal approach of SBSR, contrary to CSR which is usually a program led by the government; in stating this they reveal how they consider SBSR to be a voluntary activity:

*So CSR is an afterthought...I could not be polite about it. It's better than nothing, it's a pacification of the masses (I19).*

*CSR is more generic, the SR is more personal...CSR is more what government would have for the masses, trying to facilitate it...the other is more about me and the people I engage with (I36).*

*(CSR) is about good PR....it is impression management often...department that brings back in the ethical part of the business.....It's kind of like corrective measures (I29).*

In summary, for these businesses driven by personal values (either lifestyle, family or ecological values), the informal mission of providing a personalised form of hospitality, influences the perception of SBSR as ethical personal responsibility.

#### *6.2.4 Social mission and social ethos*

The last sub-group includes 8 social enterprises with a social mission: two are

standalone social enterprises affiliated to a social enterprise network (I5, I15), while six were cafés, part of a bigger non-profit business (I1, I4, I14, I32, I35, I37):

*I became independent from (NAME OF THE PARTNER CHARITY), a year and a half ago now, although I am not registered as a social enterprise; the profit goes into funding apprenticeships for local people (I1).*

*We are a social enterprise with social goals, but we are also a charity (I37).*

*We are part of the (NAME CHARITY) network (I5).*

For social enterprises, their core purpose is to contribute directly to the social mission of the main charity, such as tackling socio-economic inequalities through offering services for disadvantaged communities (I1, I5, I14, I15, I32, I35, I37) and achieving environmental sustainability (I4, I5, I15, I32).

*(BUSINESS NAME) was set up to provide affordable co-working spaces that can offer an antidote to the isolation entrepreneurs can feel when they go it alone. (...) Cafés are the most common context for the way in which we interact as human beings; there is a huge lack of spaces which reflect our culture, that's why we have the pop-up cafés within our premises (I35).*

*(BUSINESS NAME) is a social enterprise that delivers services to tackle local inequality including health and wellbeing (I37)*

*How do you break that bad cycle of obesity? That's part of the whole purpose of this whole organisation, the café is part of that (I32).*

The social mission influences their SBSR. These social enterprises perceive their SBSR as the ethos that underpins their social mission:

*This is about working towards making our society less unequal and ensuring that we do not exploit the resources around us (I37).*

*Well it's about positively contributing to society by focusing on sustainability (I15).*

*Social responsibility is at the heart of what we do (I5).*

*It's everything we do...is the social motive...I could make a critique on how environmentally destructive we are...but comparing to others we are better (I32).*

Being socially responsible is the moral compass of the social enterprises, which helps to avoid mission drift; for example, one respondent explained how focusing too much on being financially sustainable, could distract from their core objective of delivering life changing experiences for their users:

*We are currently reviewing our strategy, and actually the mission of 30 years ago, seems more relevant than the one 10 years ago which was about educating children about food provenance. Kids today are more environmentally aware that it's important to look after the environment. Some of the groups they have a lovely time, it enriches their learning, but I am not sure how much it reaches them; it's the life changing stuff that we should focus on, which should be our main effort, otherwise we can lose our focus (I14).*

The social enterprises are very critical of CSR they consider it as a very cynical and bolt on activity, added afterwards to mitigate very irresponsible mainstream business models:

*(CSR) is a stunt on their PR, and it doesn't interest shareholders (I5).*

*Well CSR can be done well...I would be generally cynical of how can you mitigate your irresponsibility with some responsible behaviour (I37).*

*CSR is just a ticking the box, while the actual company's activities destroy the community and the environment; so I am very cynical about that (I32).*

In summary, their perception of SBSR, is ethical, like in the value-driven businesses, it is the ethos advocated by their social mission; the quality of the hospitality they offer is characterised by inclusiveness, as these businesses particularly focus on tackling inequality.

#### *6.2.5 Business mission in documents*

Reference to the business mission was highlighted particularly on the About Us pages of the websites of these businesses, here are some examples:

*We want to be as green and environmentally friendly as we can. We're a team of imperfect humans doing our best to create a better world (W30).*

*Our mission is to make healthy eating the tastiest choice (W34).*

*A community restaurant that welcomes everybody (W16).*

*Fine dining restaurant focused on heritage, supporting local producers and investing in the local community. We wanted to create a place that personifies the best of Yorkshire food, hospitality and creativity, with a warm and relaxed atmosphere where diners feel like one of the family (W33).*

Overall, this section explained how the core mission of the business, namely an ethical (value-driven) one versus a growth one, can influence the perception of SBSR, to be ethical rather than economical. This also influences the understanding of CSR compared to SBSR: CSR is usually a set of programs and initiatives that give financial outcomes; it is therefore very different from the ethical SBSR approach. The next section, in turns, explores how owner-managers' personal values influence SBSR, particularly through the effect they have on the business mission.

### **6.3 Personal values influence business mission and SBSR**

This second section presents the findings related to the second research objective, which is to critically analyse how personal values influence the SBSR of the interviewed businesses. The second key finding revealed that personal values influence SBSR practice, particularly through the effect they have on the business mission.

#### *6.3.1 Conformity values and norms*

All the owner-managers invariably mentioned conformity values, such as integrity, decency, fairness, politeness (I16, I17, I18, I19, I29, I30, I31, I32, I34), as influencers of their SBSR; these are values that are focused on morals, on restraining the behaviour from causing harm to others:

*We want our people to work with integrity (I3).*

*Treating people right to be treated right (I17).*

*I think it's a decent right thing to do...it's about the integrity (I29).*

These conformity values are perceived as a restrictive sense of duty, which generates from the culture that the individual identifies with, as they focus on what is right:

*I was brought up like this, and this is how we do things in the business (I31).*

*Probably it's the way I have been brought up; I feel it's my duty to do the right thing (I18).*

*I suppose if you are being socially responsible or trying to be, you doing it because you think that's how your business should be, it's a personal duty, not because you think that's how your business should be seen to be (I28).*

All the business owners perceived that both the government (I9, I28, I35, I17) or media (I1, I2, I7, I29, I23, I36) have a role in shaping the social norms that define their perceptions of what is socially responsible or not:

*Now the law is changing and businesses will be soon forced to display the food safety rating ... so it forces other businesses to comply (I17).*

*It seems to me the only way to go forward, there is so much talking about it in the media, food waste seems the socially responsible thing to do (I23).*

*Landfill tax for example made us feel all more responsible (I28).*

Another important form of social pressure is the example of bigger businesses, whose practices create an expectation in the public which consequently pushes the small business to follow suit (I1, I3, I11, I26, I28, I31):

*I think what the big businesses are doing does affect the smaller ones like us to follow the trails (I26).*

*Other businesses will start doing compostable cups, and it will soon become unacceptable not to do it... (I29).*

*Seeing how businesses can go wrong when they are not behaving in the right way (I31).*

One respondent argued that such norms, despite pushing forward compliance through the sense of responsibility they engender, can also have the effect to turn people away from more caring/voluntary practices:



*So I think generally society is coerced into some forms of caring, and cares slightly less as a generality, so they believe they have done their part (I28).*

It is important to acknowledge that norms and values are similar concepts, the terminology norm is preferred when the moral guideline refers to what can or cannot be done in public (Stacey, 2007). In this sense, norms are moral codes that come from outside the individual, while values in one's individual set of ethics (Schwartz, 2012); this will be further seen in section 6.5. It is particularly the growth businesses that are solely characterised by norms and conformity values. The value-driven businesses and social enterprises partly mentioned conformity values, but particularly focused on prosocial values, covered in the next section.

### *6.3.2 Prosocial values*

This section turns the attention to personal values, beyond the conformity ones, related to values of care for the welfare of others, also termed prosocial values in the literature (Schwartz & Bilsky, 1987). These values were found to particularly motivate proactive SBSR actions of the value-driven businesses and the social enterprises (more details on the actions will be provided in 6.6). One of the personal values mostly mentioned is altruism, expressed as the positive emotion to be helpful and cooperative (I5, I15, I20, I25, I31, I33, I35, I37, I32, I34, I22, I27, I28):

*It's a personality thing, we just like to help people, educate them about food or simply just be able to sit down and relax ... especially if you can't afford it (I22).*

*Well I like to help other people, being in business we are privileged, so helping is the bare minimum that we can do (I19)*

*People come in help each other ... I want to help her (cfr. AN EMPLOYEE) making their own business a success. I think it's great (I28).*

Another important value is friendliness, linked to being sociable and being happy when entertaining others (I2, I8, I9, I3, I13, I33):

*I personally like to make people happy... in this business, people come here to have a good time, to be happy (I13).*

*Well people love to be treated with care and respect...I love to be surrounded by happy people (I18).*

*The best thing in this business is meeting people...you become friend with your clients...And it makes you feel good inside; it's like when you go to church, when you go out you feel better (I28).*

Equally important is the value of being welcoming and kind in dealing with people (I9, I16, I23, I25, I27, I28, I30, I33, I34):

*A lot of people like to bring their mum to have a cup of tea. I don't mind even if they stay long hours...it's not about the money, it's about making people feel welcome to come on a personal basis (I23).*

*I suppose you do consciously go out to try and attract certain people to come here and make it feel like their home, and then create the welcoming atmosphere that other people enjoy (I28).*

*What I love about dealing with the suppliers, is dealing with small farms, people that were shooting pheasants, deer ...people that are doing something like a lost arts...these people are welcome in my business and I like sharing their stories with people (I33).*

The SBSR proactive actions of the social entrepreneurs, are mainly influenced by the value of social justice, which is a prosocial value particularly inspiring the social ethos (I5, I14, I15, I32, I35, I37):

*What motivates me personally is a sense of social justice (I37).*

*I don't like to see injustice. Well I could choose any, world is rich of injustice, there is no hierarchy of oppression (I35).*

The pro-environmental values were particularly mentioned by the social enterprises, but also by some of the value-driven businesses (I5, I7, I8, I11, I14, I15, I25, I27, I32), these are also considered prosocial values:

*We actively care for the environment (I11)*

*I do care about the environment (I25).*

*We want to leave a better world for our children and grandchildren (I27).*

It is important to notice that the personal values influencing the more proactive SBSR actions, are the very same values underpinning the business mission of hospitableness, as well as the social mission for social enterprises. These prosocial values were not

found in the growth businesses.

### 6.3.3 Individualistic values

This section highlights how the voluntary SBSR actions are not necessarily only driven by prosocial and conformity values of the previous sections. There are also individualistic values (Schwartz & Bilsky, 1987), which motivate the voluntary SBSR. These are particularly the values that motivated the start-up of the business. A very typical value, particularly found in the lifestyle businesses, is the passion about food or culture, which influence the caring SBSR actions that are food related (I5, I8, I12, I19, I23, I25, I27, I32, I36):

*Well going back to bread, we let it ferment naturally, to avoid additives...In catering, if you are chef you are passionate about food, you make food that you would want to eat yourself and share it, if it makes sense... (I6, head baker).*

*My product is organic, made naturally... the idea came from this, I always enjoyed the element of food of providing for others, the element of “come and enjoy”(I19).*

*I love cooking, I like to work up here, it's different than other places I worked, the environment is different, is slightly more relaxed and welcoming to everybody (I32, restaurant manager).*

Some respondents also highlighted the value of being proud, or belonging, when acting for the benefit of others; these values are called achievement or power or security:

*Well my husband and I are proud of the fact that we provide employment to other people in the community (I24).*

*It gives me a sense of pride, growing your own food (I23, chef)*

*I like to do something good and be remembered by people (I16).*

*I didn't know that being a business owner would give you that feeling of roots and that sense of belonging. I want to choose local things and choose to support local businesses, it gives me a real sense of place (I3).*

The social enterprises distinguish themselves because they also want, from a personal

level, to create positive social change in society, expressed as a willingness to make a change and be proud about it (I5, I14, I36):

*I want to make a change in people's lives (I5).*

*We helped changing a life there, we should be proud (I15).*

*We are not here forever, so it's good to leave something behind, because if you just think of yourself, it doesn't matter too much (I15).*

#### 6.3.4 Knowledge and awareness

What further directs the personal values towards voluntary SBSR actions, is knowledge and awareness about certain socio-environmental issues, linked to actual human needs. Knowledge and awareness are particularly mentioned in relation to caring/ethical SBSR. Owner-managers mentioned how awareness about social issues is shaped by direct personal experiences, such as growing up in poor neighbourhoods (I1, I16, I18, I19, I20, I22), experiencing the great economic recession of 2008 (I8, I25, I35), or health issues affecting the family (I5, I16, I34):

*There are lots of people in Sheffield wanting to be self-employed but not knowing how to do it; that is what influenced me in setting up this shared working space to provide an office sharing and employment service (I35).*

*Also, our son is really badly affected by processed food, food impacts your abilities to do things, to learn, it affects your mood...that's why we focus on healthy food (I3).*

*Well I had members of my family going to this hospital so I know why it is so important to do as much as one can really to raise funds for these organisations (I23).*

Many respondents mentioned how local experiences while growing up shaped their environmental awareness, such as growing up in farms (I7, I10, I14, I15), or experiences in nature which foster appreciation for the finite resources of the planet (I15, I25, I8, I36),

*(NAME) founded the farm in (YEAR), he was an evacuee in the WWII, he took the lease from council on the farm, and tried to encourage environmental education for kids, which is the ethos that drives all that we do (I14, CEO).*

*I grew up in a farm, I'm a vegetarian, that was always something that has been part of me being a vegetarian, when you look at ways animal are reared, you realise quite a lot of earth resources are wasted on that, on producing protein to feed animals that then are transformed in protein that humans eat, that might solve starvation issues around the world (I8).*

Others mentioned how the involvement or personal collaboration with local or national charities, or local community groups promoting socio-environmental causes, increased their knowledge and awareness regarding a certain topic at local level (I1, I2, I3, I4, I7, I8, I9, I10, I11, I14, I19, I20, I21, I23, I24, I27, I28, I29, I33):

*A lot of this is due to our collaboration with (NAME OF CHARITY) (I7).*

*By focusing on local elements one can be more responsive to actual needs, we chose (NAME OF CHARITY) to work on this (I23).*

*Well the food waste was the initial thought really...then other things came along.... Well that was just the way it made sense to do it, we save food that would otherwise be thrown away, it only makes sense...I cannot believe why it wasn't done before (I5).*

Socio-environmental knowledge appears to be also linked to higher education, as some respondents mentioned they were influenced by their studies in food politics or economics (I11, I18, I28, I34):

*I am quite interested in the politics of food...I think the likes of a cheese salad sandwich has as much value as some of the other trendy food...ordinary working class food, and that should have value. It's very hard to communicate what I try to do (I34).*

### 6.3.5 Personal values in documents

Reference to personal values was highlighted particularly on the About Us pages of the websites of these businesses, here are some examples:

*We're passionate about instigating positive social change in our communities (W5)*

*We love cooking the locally sourced and grown food from suppliers who share our passion for authenticity (W33).*

In this section 6.3, it was found that there is a mix of personal values, which influence the SBSR actions; for value-driven businesses and the social enterprises, these are particularly the prosocial values that influence the business mission. Growth business owners only mentioned conformity values and norms; these reactive values particularly influence the responsible business practices. Both social enterprises and value-driven businesses also mention knowledge and awareness, as an influence on SBSR practice, particularly related to local experiences. The common element here is that, when the prosocial values influence the mission of the business, the business commit to more voluntary SBSR actions; when the business is driven by a growth mission, it was found that the owner is mainly led by conformity values and norms. All the findings so far are summarised in Table 14.

**Table 14: A breakdown of finding 1 and finding 2**

Personal values	Business mission	SBSR perceptions
Conformity values, social norms, industrial norms (all businesses)	Growth mission; hospitality as food & service exchange	SBSR as economic responsibility
Individualistic values (V + SE only)	Value-driven mission of hospitableness	SBSR as ethical / personal responsibility
Prosocial values (V + SE only)	Social mission	SBSR as social ethos
Knowledge and awareness (V+SE only)		

Source: Author

## 6.4 Perceived business benefits influence SBSR

This third section presents the findings related to the third research objective, which is about examining critically how business motivations influence the SBSR practice of the interviewed businesses. The third key finding emerged is that the *perceived business benefits* of SBSR are another key motivation for SBSR implementation, moreover they are aligned with the business mission.

### 6.4.1 Achieving better operations and cost savings

This section explains how small businesses, already influenced by norms towards compliance, are further motivated by the perception of achieving better operations through these responsible business practices. For example, if the business is involved in an accident and caught not complying with safety regulations, it would have to pay higher liability costs for the lack of compliance (I9, I17, I26, I27, I29):

*They are guidelines, but if you ended up having a fire, then actually you could be liable for that. So, it's not just about customer care but also safety. Think for example if people come in and sell drugs, you have got to be aware of all of that...so you have to understand what customers are all about (I17).*

*If you try to do the processes in the right way, then the business runs better (I18).*

Where compliance is matched, instead of a possible future penalty, with an automatic tax related to the non-virtuous behaviour (i.e. recycling and landfill tax), the cost saving is immediate (I8, I10, I11, I25, I26, I28, I27, I29):

*Purely because of landfill cost it's cheaper than putting everything in one bin...it is not for green thing that people recycle, it's because of the landfill tax saving....and it's increasing (I26).*

Another perceived business benefit is higher productivity, linked to actions in relation to staff. A typical example is rewarding staff with bonuses or gifts. Such actions are implemented particularly by the growth businesses (I26, I17, I21, I27), as high level of service contribute to operations management and ultimately can increase customer satisfaction:

*Staff rewards increase productivity (I26).*

As evidenced, the business motivations highlighted by these growth businesses, are all expressed in revenue terms, they are about cost savings, operational performance, productivity; it can be concluded they are informed by the growth mission.

#### *6.4.2 Increasing staff engagement/commitment*

The value-driven businesses implement caring SBSR actions aimed at engaging staff with the hospitable values of the business and passion for food. Sharing these values is key:

*Hopefully you employ people that have got the same values are you, and then you can give them opportunities to do things that they really care about (I28).*

*Our core is...and I think in terms of our being, one of the most important things, is that ... I don't think we can live without sharing experiences with other people fully. Especially values become alive when shared with somebody else... so that extrapolating from that ... is relationships around you...here in the business I care about my employees (I34).*

This is certainly less applicable to growth businesses, as clearly expressed by those value-driven businesses that decided to avoid growing beyond the one or two establishments; they stated that size would need more management layers, therefore there would be less informal exchanges and personal values would be more diluted amidst processes and regulations:

*The manager has his own responsibility to me, at some point you get too big to talk with everybody and get that sense of family.....yes maybe...ethos can get lost on its way down (I28).*

Friendliness, familiarity and flexibility are important positive actions to keep the staff motivated and engaged:

*Not just a safe one, a kind environment, where you have fun, it's a family environment, you want the workplace to be a place where you enjoy coming, and this also benefits the company (I27).*

*If staff knows what we are about, it's easier for them to work for us as well*



(I14).

*If people want time off to do something, we let them do it, the flexibility is more than repaid by their loyalty (I11).*

Moreover, a positive and hospitable working environment engages particularly frontline staff to work better, therefore they can become brand ambassadors and be better engaged with delivering the genuine hospitality:

*By doing that (i.e. creating a family environment) we get a loyal fun staff... they don't leave, we keep them a long time and they want to stay here (I1).*

*Well I always thought that, if you treat people badly and shout and scream, they cannot make your customers feel important. So, if you show you care, they show they care (I23).*

*To feel they then can then share our values and that becomes a natural, very natural instinctive part of what their reason is to come to work (I30).*

Positive SBSR actions rewarding the staff are also key for sharing the passion for the food with the staff, which is key for cooking quality food (I3, I10, I22, I23, I32):

*We reward them and they can enjoy their work and are valued for that; then you are able to taste the difference; people that love their food make good food (I3).*

*If you had miserable staff ...you would not have a good aura, and it's hard to work in this environment, the oven is temperamental, the dough is temperamental, lots of things that make it a non-standard procedure (I10).*

*Well I have a brilliant team doing, we get along well, we feel we learn from each other and that influences the way we cook the food as well (I32, manager).*

In conclusions, focusing on staff well-being is motivated by maintaining in the business the positive atmosphere that underpins the hospitableness.

#### *6.4.3 Building stronger reputation and branding*

It is especially value-driven businesses that implement various voluntary caring SBSR actions towards clients, business partners and the local community; these are

particularly aimed at increasing branding and reputation. It is important to notice that for value-driven businesses, the influence of a sustained practice is obtained only in the long term as they are intangible and trust-based, therefore the business benefits are perceived and subjective, rather than being measured outcomes (I2, I3, I7, I11, I22, I29, I30, I34):

*We always put back in, we don't want to take money and run, we are in it for the long term (I22).*

*That's where the passion comes in, you have to put hours...it's like any work you do is like a plant, more you look after it, the more you pick up from it....you get the reward for it, don't matter what you do, but it's a long term commitment (I34).*

Creating better business relationships and a stronger brand, is founded on sharing personal values with stakeholders through caring informal actions. This was evidenced by the fact that the type of communication preferred by these foodservice businesses is face to face or through social media, as the informality is key to create trust with these stakeholders:

*Well we use social media and then we talk about it, we chat to people all the time, you need to keep people interested, to keep you in mind if you want to see them coming (I23).*

*Trying to educate people on good food choices...that healthy food is good...we talk about it with our clients. Social media or blogs are also suited to talk about healthy food, because they are informal, they don't create an impression to brag about things (I36).*

More details on the perceived benefits of value-driven businesses are in the following two sections, one for clients and the other for community, including business partners.

#### *6.4.3.1 Caring for clients increases their trust in the brand*

Some of these small foodservice businesses serve great quality food that improves clients' well-being and health, or food that carries environmental or ethical attributes. The business motivation here is creating trust in clients, as the added value is perceived by experiencing these ethical choices of the business:

*It's an added benefit, if they know they can also support the local community when they buy with us, then that's a bonus (I6).*

*What I want to achieve is a group of loyal customer who buy coffee from me rather than (NAME OF COMPETITOR), and one of the reason is that I do care more about the local environment rather than (NAME OF COMPETITOR), and I think people have the capacity to care about that ... that's how people come back (I29).*

*We believe it increases people confidence on us to know that we don't waste and we do everything fresh (I22).*

These ethical or sustainable intangible attributes of food remain a secondary reason for clients when purchasing food; the local produce option is usually dropped, if a qualitatively better produce can come from somewhere else, therefore businesses end up choosing few locally produced ingredients, as part of their overall food sourcing:

*In catering, quite often the balance is between price point and quality for that price point. Unfortunately, the mass markets are mainly price driven, that's the issue. It would be nice to try to keep making the point that we need to be paying more for food (I11).*

*Well I know products are the freshest in the market, but it's not the same for all products...our chickpeas for example come from Canada, as we need a more consistent and better product... (I21).*

Focusing on building trust with clients and added value attributes is a branding marketing strategy; it is seen these actions are limited to a sub-set of the overall food on offer. The company tries to innovate and remain competitive with the existing set of clients, by adding value to its offering.

#### *6.4.3.2 Caring for the community increases reputation*

SBSR actions aimed at the local community, particularly philanthropy, are further influenced by the business motive of increasing goodwill and reputation for the business:

*You also make your name. The customers that come for the charity events, are all regular customers...it's not like you attract new customers on the street by a charity...people know what I am doing (I25).*

*People would think it's friendly, hopefully quite generous, it's about the reputation...I give vouchers for local charities (I24).*

Such SBSR actions emerge in relation to the business premises, which can facilitate local relationships that improve the business reputation and identity:

*Well it's important to keep in good relationship with neighbours...they are our clients also (I16).*

*We are seen as a centre of like mindedness because of the work we do in the community, it's part of its heart and soul, so being rooted in your community whatever way you do it, it gives the pub its identity, so without it you are just another pub (I28).*

Having a good reputation for a local hospitality business, as the business is naturally part of the community:

*The big companies like McDonald do community charity to look good...instead here we are already part of the community (I6, Chef).*

Some companies instead mentioned the importance of suppliers' engagement at a more strategic level, because it can lead to better business opportunities (I3, I6, I8, I28):

*Well we are responsible to our suppliers...because we have a very small menu and we buy mostly from one supplier only, now that we grow we can also support their growth, we can all do better (I3).*

*We support local Sheffield businesses, that's for me it's really important. You might not get the same price that you would get from another supplier, the importance of the product, outweighs the higher price, now people are demanding a better product, more local, street food markets, lots of stalls (I6).*

*We liked the previous supplier for their glass bottle...it was not massively ethical...we thought of moving to the local supplier...seems it fitted nicely with our ethos. They said they are supplying in containers that come from recycled*

*plastic, that have less environmental impact than the sterilised glass of the other supplier, and then we would be able to recycle it again (I8).*

In conclusion, the last two sections 6.4.2 and 6.4.3, highlighted how SBSR implementation in these value-driven businesses, is further motivated by improving the relationship with core stakeholders, as this can drive increased level of service, reputation, branding or even innovation. The benefits that motivate the SBSR practice, are more intangible and informed by the relational nature of these value-driven businesses.

#### *6.4.4 Contributing to the social mission*

This section explains how social enterprises are further motivated to implement SBSR practices to support the mission, either financially or by showing their commitment to the underlying social ethos:

*Our community café is part of our aims of supporting the development of the businesses renting this space. It's also a service for the people working here and coming here, it is part of the community engagement (I35).*

Most of these social businesses mentioned their financial struggle to offer affordable healthy food or space for socialising, but nevertheless did it as part of their ethos of social justice, which translates into an inclusive hospitality experience to all:

*Despite our financial struggle to keep the café open in winter, we do that to guarantee employment, also we want to control the type of food we offer therefore avoid to franchise it, to keep the ethos of the café (I32).*

*Well we need to provide a service and cater for all customers, for example our children menu now features healthier products, we are aware that we need to embrace our educational ethos on all aspects of the business (I14).*

Committing to the ethos and to positive social change, is motivated because these actions contribute to achieving the social mission itself:

*It is a social enterprise, the dynamic of a business and the dynamic of being socially responsible the two are having a trade-off...and most likely being SR*

*come second to being a business (I35).*

*What motivates the business is our desire to make a difference to people's lives, especially those on low incomes, those who are socially isolated and are experiencing disadvantage (I37)*

In some cases, the hospitality activities are mainly focused on fundraising; in particular, one of the interviewed cafés is focused on the commercial side of fundraising for the overall charity (I14):

*There is a premium there for clients in the zero miles' food market, higher end of the hierarchy, I will be frank it's a charity but I don't work for nothing, so we charge a price for these products, we need to turnover commercially to support the trust (I14).*

The phenomenon seems widespread as other two respondents reported on the issue, they highlighted that the focus on commercial fundraising actions might cause the business to compromise on the social ethos:

*Well at the moment we mainly rely on volunteers; this is a busy commercial café so it's hard to maintain consistency if you have volunteers; so in many other companies the balance is tipping towards the commercial side, in order to have a paid manager and professional chef, but then lunch costs 7/8\$ while our cost remains 1.50£....which means it is less inclusive as a consequence (I15).*

*The other option for running a café is franchising it out but then you lose the control on the business, for example those cafés sell bacon sandwiches and chips (I32).*

Having a social ethos means there is less room for compromise on SBSR actions, but it is from such commitment that the social mission can be achieved.

In summary, section 6.4 showed that a sustained SBSR practice, is further influenced by the perceived business benefits that the owner-managers expect to achieve from such practice in the long term; the perceived benefits are clearly aligned with the business mission, as the key nature of the mission determines the type of expectations that the business owner has, which ultimately influence the type of SBSR practice

implemented. Growth businesses tend to focus on improving their business processes and performance through responsible business practices; these actions will be explored in depth in 6.6.1. Value-driven businesses expect to increase their branding and reputation through SBSR influenced by their hospitableness; such actions are explored in depth in 6.6.2. Finally, social enterprises expect to support their social mission, through actions that reflect the social ethos driving the organisation; the actions are explored in 6.6.3. The next section covers in detail the external factors that bear further influence on the SBSR of these businesses.

## **6.5 External factors influence SBSR**

This section presents the findings related to the fourth research objective, which is about examining how external factors influence the SBSR practice of the interviewed businesses. The main key factor mentioned by the value-driven businesses is the increased awareness from clients about socio-environmental issues:

*Customers did impress some changes on the business, the healthy side of the business definitely (I3)*

*People are more receptive to the things that we do, so it is easier to implement these actions (I7).*

*People are willing to spend a bit more money on food that is worth it ..... as people have less and less time in their life, they appreciate more the time that others put into cooking food (I10).*

As highlighted in section 6.3, external institutions can indirectly contribute in shaping the norms that guide the action of these businesses. The role of government is recognised in introducing regulations, which create social norms for the businesses:

*I think the government had a role in taxation, bringing in the minimum wage (I28)*

*Well I mentioned the duty of care, part of the legislation (I9)*

The example of other businesses was also mentioned, particularly in terms of competitors and best practices, these have an influence on creating industrial norms:

*The example of other healthy café (I32)*

*Well our locations in the (NAME) is great, it allows us to be part of a great community of other independent businesses, we support each other (I21)*

A distinctive barrier mentioned instead is the lack of margins in the sector and its high competitiveness, which makes it hard to focus on certain SBSR actions:

*It's a contradiction having to make the margin works, employee is 33% of your cost, so employees affect your profits; so there is a tension, getting that balance right is difficult (I20).*

This section highlighted that there is limited perceived external pressure for small businesses, influencing them towards implementation of SBSR actions; all the businesses mentioned the government and media, with their indirect role on influencing norms of the owner-managers. The value-driven businesses and social enterprises mentioned primarily the example of other businesses and the positive support from clients, in relation to implementation of proactive SBSR actions.

## **6.6 SBSR practice**

This last section presents the findings related to the last research objective, which is the critical analysis of the SBSR practice of the interviewed businesses.

### *6.6.1 Responsible business practices*

The responsible business practices of the growth businesses are motivated by achieving improved processes, as covered in 6.4.1. All these growth businesses focus on safety of both clients and staff while at the premises. Staff safety is a crucial aspect to avoid accidents, as the level of risk is high because employees are involved in food production (I31, I26, I17, I38):

*There are certain laws we have to adhere by, employment laws, regarding the well-being of staff and the public ... Chef deals with knives, fire (I27).*

With regards to clients, there is a focus on physical safety of clients while on the premises through guaranteeing accessibility (I6, I17, I23, I24, I26, I27, I29, I34); moreover, businesses serving alcohol have a duty of care to clients (I16, I17, I9, I27, I28, I26, I38):



*You also have duty of care to the customers (I9).*

*And from the public side, we need to ensure there is a limit for alcohol... as we need to ensure customers' safety (I26).*

*Then customers and the people who are here... we are a licenced business, safety and comfort of people is important (I29).*

Regarding clients there is also a focus on food safety and transparency, particularly concentrated in these foodservice businesses on guaranteeing quality of the food served (I16, I17, I21, I26, I31):

*In terms of objectives, food safety, we have to be working towards that, to avoid things like food poisoning, it should be applicable from sandwich shop to the big restaurants like us (I26, Restaurant manager).*

*Food safety is key to consistency, which brings success. We check the temperatures, if you neglect the food, then that causes a problem (I21).*

*With all these legislations such as the one on allergies ... businesses nowadays they are more cautious of what they do (I26).*

Most of the growth businesses mentioned the importance of paying taxes and salaries and suppliers on time, which is expression of economic responsibility (I17, I26, I27, I31):

*Socially responsible for training, for looking after the environment, paying our taxes... (I27)*

*We need to ensure the salaries are paid (I26).*

*Social responsibility in here? I play all suppliers on the 10th, that way the look after me, I look after them (I31).*

The main environmental actions mentioned equally by the growth foodservice businesses but also value-driven businesses, is the recycling, particularly as it is matched by a tax which created an incentive to comply (I3, I7, I8, I9, I10, I12, I13, I22, I24, I25, I28, I29, I31, I34, I36).

*Purely because of landfill cost it's cheaper than putting everything in one bin...it is not for green thing that people recycle, it's because of the landfill tax saving....and it's increasing (I26).*

Falling under this safety area is the idea of minimising any negative impacts on the environment regarding elements such as noise and odours, which are usually controlled by health and safety regulations, particularly mentioned by growth businesses located in residential areas (I16, I18, I29, I31).

*I have a social responsibility to be a good neighbour, people lock up quietly at night, make sure that our shop front looks as good as it can (I31).*

## 6.6.2 Caring actions towards stakeholders

### 6.6.2.1 Employees: family environment, work-life balance, development, rewards

The small value-driven businesses usually do not have big budgets for rewarding employees financially like the bigger businesses do, therefore they focus on creating wellbeing for employees by offering a nice working environment, such as treating staff with care and kindness typical of a family business environment (I3, I6, I9, I16, I18, I23, I24, I27):

*Often people say "your staff is full of energy, they are passionate about their work", so our employee want to be in an environment where they can enjoy their work and are valued for that (I3).*

*Well I think it's our responsibility to give them a nice working environment, they are very important to us, we treat them as part of the family (I27).*

Kindness is also valuing people and paying them above minimum wage, despite the low margins typical of the hospitality industry (I3, I8, I9, I11, I23, I27, I28):

*Our margins aren't great, so we try to pay a bit above minimum wage (I8).*

*Staff needs to be valued, for example we do pay them in time, we pay them above the minimum wage (I23).*

*We pay them all above the minimum wage...I think the work we do is quite full on, we are not just behind the counter (I11).*

Just a few respondents mentioned the idea of living wage, which is voluntary exceeding the minimum expectation of law compliance (I19, I11, I30, I34):

*I pay people a living wage (I19).*

*So all my staff gets the minimum wage, while the living wage is the more experienced staff and the ones which are full time (I34).*

Some restaurants mentioned advance payments to staff, for supporting them in achieving personal objectives such as buying a house (I3, I16, I29, I30), or simply making sure that all tips are paid out to the staff and not retained by the business (I13, I28):

*They get paid on time, paid right, if there is a mistake we correct it, if there is anything we can help out with we do, for example one employee had an expensive month buying their own house, so we anticipated the money for these expenses (I30).*

*Everybody gets tips, everybody should get it, and there is no animosity, your work for a team, it's good to work for a combined reward (I13).*

*People can get around staff, they will fly tips, we don't do that because we care (I28)*

It is important to recognise the value of people also by offering them a good work-life balance, particularly because working in catering is a very stressful job with long hours:

*Nobody in the kitchen works more than 40 hours, 3 days for themselves... because of the heat of the kitchen you need 3 days away from it to switch off, so it's important to give people that extra day (I13).*

*We focus on work-life balance, which makes us a very good employer, our staff is loyal...our motto is "wear a smile even in the face of adversity" ...being a caterer, they get all their weekends off which is unusual for a hospitality business (I11).*

Another practical example of using kindness is leading by example, with the owner working alongside the staff (I11, I12, I20, I24, I25, I29):

*As managers we always need to make sure that colleagues are OK and offering / giving help when required. We work alongside our staff, so we are not very authoritarian, not very good at imposing...which is sometimes difficult ... they all seem to enjoy working here, and they create their own social group (I24).*

*You have to blend yourself in as well (...). So, it's not like I put a tie on, dress as a chef cook, do my job and leave...it's far more, I work with them, we work as a team. I got 7-8 staff, I don't make them feel inferior to me because I'm the boss, I go and wash pots, plates, it's not a problem (I25).*

Some foodservice businesses focus on supporting staff volunteering actions, as this also adds back to developing staff from a personal/managerial perspective (I3, I4, I28, I33):

*For example, getting some money aside and all the staff does a 5k or a 10k together, the money from that goes to a charity, we usually support local ones so that we support people in the local area (I4).*

*Our chef went to a charity competition, it's something he is interested in and he is passionate about, what you are passionate about is what excites people, and it supports another great company (I28).*

Only few businesses mentioned the controversial aspect of bullying, particularly stressing how protecting staff from abusive customers, should be part of their social responsibility towards employees:

*We need to be socially responsible for staff, to make sure they are not bullied, abused.... and that customers treat them with respect (I27).*

*I don't feel any responsibility for irresponsible clients, clearly obnoxious persons; the staff member was so upset she stormed off crying, a client shouted at her for not being served in time, so I asked him to leave (I34).*

Finally, the only proactive SBSR actions which are implemented equally by growth businesses as well, as it has great influence on customer service and productivity, is offering training and rewards to staff:

*We award people for doing a good job, giving them free staff food, drinks during shifts (I27).*

*Obviously for staff we also go out every month, go bowling...once a month everybody deserves to receive a thank you (I21, manager).*

*We give them a full supplement guide, vitamin D omega 3 a digestive enzyme, what we swear by, we try to give them a yoga retreat massage or sports massage therapy every now and again, we pay for their gym membership (I22).*

Personal development and training are important in giving to staff a tool to better develop their own life, by giving them more opportunities to strengthen their own careers (I3, I11, I13, I23, I27, I31):

*Companies need to lead the way in terms of social responsibility, in terms of how you develop people (I11).*

*Staff managers they have time out to have that (cfr. management training), so they feel they have time out learning their skills (I3)*

*We take employee rights very seriously; we do training with them and personal development activities (I23).*

#### 6.6.2.2 Customers: healthy/ethical/sustainable food, product quality, transparency

Value-driven businesses focus on caring actions, beyond the materiality of food, which are interpreted as SBSR actions. One example is choosing to offer only healthy food, which is a very central theme mentioned by many business owners (I2, I9, I10, I11, I23, I36, I37). There are niche healthy businesses, such as vegetarian cafés or restaurants (I8, I32, I19), or casual foodservice or take-away restaurants with minimal service areas, which define themselves as healthy fast foods (I3, I18, I22).

*The menu slightly evolved over the years, from pies and casseroles, now we do burgers as the area is changing, but still keep the same ethos, where we have the real ale, the traditional food and the local suppliers...We even have vegan beer, where we avoid using the fining that makes the beer clearer, as this comes from fish (I9).*

*Our values is leave well, sleep well, eat well, so we are on the leaner, cleaner way of cooking, we do lots of salads, things that are allergen friendly, many vegetarians dishes, but is for the general public that want to have less carbs, ex we don't give out the big bread basket. We promote the healthy eating concept (I23).*

Another concept utilised to express the focus on healthy food is clean eating, which refers to guaranteeing that the food is made solely from natural ingredients free of additives (I2, I3, I10, I11):

*Realbread is about a clean eating campaign, most breads nowadays use the Chorleywood process, the bread becomes an unhealthy product with loads of extra stuff, we use yeast sourdough culture, its' a thousand years old process, wanting to make things properly (I2).*

*Well I have always been interested in healthy eating, it dovetails into our ethos of seasonally inspired, made from scratch, we don't buy produced stuff with lots of different ingredients, we are about clean eating, we are very confident and strong on that (I11).*

The concept of clean eating overlaps with quality traditional food made with fresh ingredients, which was highlighted by the more traditional full-service restaurants:

*We want to make sure customer comes in and will be treated nicely, we believe in everything fresh (I16).*

*The majority of food we make is fresh, we cut back the amount of preparation ahead, to make sure all food is freshly prepared (I13).*

For this reason of guaranteeing freshness as a straightforward mean to achieve quality control, some of these foodservice businesses are moving into producing some of the basic produce in house to guarantee the quality and integrity of food, like for example bread or cakes for cafés (I2, I6, I30), or growing own food, though this is often limited to herbs (I1, I6, I7, I8, I11, I23, I32):

*We created a bakery, because it's better to have control on our products, we know what's in our products, we employ more people, and we can adjust products to our needs too (I6).*

*Now it's about growing all our garnish and herbs, also in time of glut we can make our own jams. (I7).*

*Earlier in the year we started growing some Stevia plants - Stevia is allegedly 100 times sweeter than sugar and we felt that being able to contribute to our*

*sugar demands locally was another step to sustainability, and it's a health food! (I11).*

Organic produce is ideally a sub-product of clean eating in terms of lack of additives, specifically for bread making but was introduced only by few businesses (I5, I6, I19):

*We bake for all our cafés, and do wholesales. Flour is free from additives, it is organic (I6).*

*Well my place is vegetarian, we only use organic flour for the bagels (I19).*

Being grown in geographical vicinity, was the most important attribute for defining food as ethical or sustainable (I2, I3, I6, I8, I9, I11, I22, I23, I27, I31, I33):

*Yes...Specifically sustainable food, sustainable resources, that's why we fly the flag for local, seasonal (I11).*

*Well I think it's important to have a sustainable produce...also very local...also I started to look at Rosettes entry and some of its guidelines is about using local producers as much as possible really (I23).*

*Well, all our produce that we buy is from Derbyshire, from local farmers and villages, which keep them in profit (I27).*

#### *6.6.2.3 Community: local employment, local food, local partnerships*

Many value-driven small foodservice outlets, stated that among their primary responsibility is to create local employment (I14, I21, I23, I25, I27, I28, I33, I34):

*Obviously by employing people from the city, there are 12-13 people employed here, putting back money in the local economy, supporting local economy, those I think are important things (I33).*

Another important area is creating local business opportunities, by supporting other local businesses through using their products (I3, I6, I7, I9, I11, I12, I17, I19, I20, I21, I22, I25, I27, I28, I31, I33, I34, I36, I38):

*So we don't really compete... it's good also if there are more food outlets apart from us, is good, it adds to the street if it's known as a food street (I11).*

*We care a lot about buying staff as much as possible from other small businesses around us in the market (I21).*

*Our coffee and tea come from a company in Sheffield...yes it comes from another country but it is blended by a local company...(I33).*

These local food actions are not related to local produce and environmental responsibility, as already anticipated in the previous section; these actions are framed in terms of supporting the local community, in fact they involve local suppliers of food produce that is not necessarily produced locally:

*In terms of fruit and veg we buy from a local supplier, daily, to have it fresh I don't know exactly where they source their products; I know they buy their stuff every morning at the fruit and veg market... (I10).*

The concept of local partnerships was also mentioned by various restaurants that have a specific supplier of local produce, it is the bigger size that makes them feel responsible, as well as the long term relationship:

*Well we are responsible to our suppliers...because we have a very small menu and we buy mostly from one supplier only, now that we grow we can also support their growth (I3).*

*Using a local supplier is a two-way process, the benefit of working with local supplier is the partnership and the relationship, is meeting them and doing things together (I11).*

*For me it's building a sustainable business, it's also about the wider social responsibility of using better products, recycle, etc. You could spend ages going around to find the cheaper supplier, the main supplier and we engage with them. But if we have technical issue, he would come and fix it. So it is better for us to have partnerships with people rather than having the Beck cheaper, but then not having people that help you out (I28).*

Other local partnerships are with local charities, with whom these value driven businesses collaborate in carrying out certain in-kind SBSR actions. It is particularly pubs and cafés who create local partnerships with local community groups, by



providing in kind support such as free space for meetings (I6, I7, I8, I20, I23, I24, I28, I29, I32, I35):

*We support other projects like charities that we work with; they created canvas bags, we sell them with our logo and fundraise for them (I2).*

*Yes I do things with various charities, I used to do events in the park, I really enjoyed doing that, but it is stressful and doing much extra work, so that affects your ability to do more things; these days I always support people who want to come in and do some sort of positive event (I20).*

*I think the pub can be at the heart of the community, so it's nice to be able to facilitate people meeting up, even just using our space, or using our social media presence (I28).*

Full service restaurants seems to be more traditional and can probably afford to offer cash beyond space, therefore run charitable philanthropic fundraising activities (I16, I23, I24, I25, I27, I33, I38), particularly focused on supporting local charities that endorse local needs:

*That's ongoing really, we did a local charity event on Monday, for NAME OF CAUSE, I do 3/4 charity nights per year (I33).*

*We do it with a sense...we want to return something to community, like giving vouchers to local charities (I38).*

All these community actions are particularly useful to increase the branding of the small business and its reputation, as was discussed in section 6.5.

#### 6.6.2.4 Minimise harm on the environment

The value-driven businesses focus on the action of limiting negative impacts of minimising food waste (I2, I4, I7, I8, I10, I12, I15, I16, I19, I20, I23, I28) especially as now it is an action that they carry out supported by many NGOs local projects:

*We hardly have any food waste, we can remix the dough in with the new one the next day, I would hate to be throwing food away...we actually take home salads and eat them if there are leftovers (I10).*

*Very little food is thrown away....(NAME OF CHEF) orders in something like a ham, uses the bone to make stock..., even down to trimming our mushrooms,*

*and make mushroom stock tries to utilise everything...he is passionate about food, food doesn't get wasted (I12).*

*We donate food to homeless people at end of day we don't have any left (I22)*

Regarding carbon emissions, a variety of small actions minimising emissions were implemented by a few actors (I3, I4, I7, I9, I10, I11, I23, I28, I30), such as utilising electricity from renewable energy or using electric vehicles, energy efficient measures such as energy saving bulbs or simply switching lights off when not in use:

*Lowering the environmental impact of the business with our electric van (I11).*

*Well we took sustainability into consideration with the design of the hotel, it was all done with the best specifications and environmental standards (I23).*

*We achieved our (LOCAL NAME) Environmental Quality Mark award from 2009, it includes efficient use of energy and water, minimisation of waste by reducing, reusing and recycling (I27).*

Only one business owner mentioned investing money in energy efficient vehicle and appliances for its business (I11), most businesses mentioned barriers such as lack of knowledge or costs:

*You also need a bit of capital to do this change, at the moment we have got a lot of individual fridges, as part of the refurbishment we will invest in one bigger fridge room, so the carbon footprint will be lower (I11).*

*Well money constraints, we feel we are still growing so we need a more stable ground before investing in efficient appliances...also the knowledge, I don't know if some equipment could be more efficient (I3).*

Sustainable packaging has become another common action, aimed at minimising waste, also linked to branding (I3, I22, I29, I34, I36):

*All our packaging biodegradable, all compostable from plant starch not the plastic cheap stuff, it would save us money, or for example suppliers we ask them to do specific packaging to make sure it's all environmentally friendly. We do have separate bins, food bin, packaging, tin and cans (I22).*

*We thought all our packaging had to be sustainable. Coffee cups are a new thing for us, it's fully compostable and lid is compostable (I29).*

All these environmental actions, apart from minimising food waste usually motivated by passion for food, lack a real drive in environmental values which are not particularly present in these type of businesses; rather the main drive of these actions is the business promise of the cost savings, as was seen in detail in section 6.4.

### *6.6.3 Inclusive hospitality and environmental sustainability*

The social enterprises usually aim to achieve a social mission through their foodservice activities, benefitting people from disadvantaged communities. Social enterprises offer training on the job or apprenticeships for specific groups of individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds, who might have intellectual disabilities or might be from disadvantaged communities, hence not having access to formal education:

*We didn't set out to employ a homeless person. We employed (NAME OF EMPLOYEE) because he is the right person for our business (I22).*

*All my staff, they have disability, or a criminal record (I1).*

The community café social enterprises (I4, I5, I15, I32, I37) are particularly located in deprived areas of Sheffield, therefore also focus on providing affordable food and opportunities for socialising, linked with the ongoing social issue in Sheffield of lack of public spaces:

*We provide a space where people can come and meet other people; (...).....people might be vulnerable, homeless....so the social side is beyond the food ... we want everybody to feel welcome particularly those that can't afford going out (I5).*

*It is part of the farm's ethos to include everybody...we don't want anybody to not come because they feel we are too expensive...we want everyone to come and enjoy the entire farm as well; in the café we are trying to fit all budgets as well, from café to a big meal, we just welcome everybody (I32).*

*We provide a place for people from all walks of life and from different cultural*

*backgrounds to meet, socialise and get affordable, healthy food (I37).*

Another important point here is to guarantee physical accessibility for achieving inclusiveness:

*Our community café is breastfeeding friendly and has disabled / pushchair access (I32).*

*There is no nice stylish place for people which is welcoming to everybody, you tend to go to places that are good only to certain group of people, divided by accessibility of the place (I23).*

Offering affordable food and space, in an accessible environment, means that the foodservice business offers a real welcome and inclusiveness.

Only the social enterprises (I4, I5, I14, I15, I32, I37) and a restaurant located within the local national park (I27), recognise care for the environment as their responsibility:

*We are socially responsible for looking after the environment (I27)*

*The world is fighting over water and eating bugs because land is too expensive to raise cattle; that is why we are doing what we are doing here (i.e. offer sustainable and ethical food in café), to do something...and perhaps on the way we are convincing other people that it is right to do it (I4).*

The social enterprises are the only ones that recognise the link between environment and social justice, in virtue of understanding that future human beings depend on the environment therefore only sustainability can underpin real social justice:

*Ensuring that we do not exploit the resources around us to such an extent that future generations are unable to lead successful and healthy lives (I37).*

Innovative social enterprises (I5, I15) are able to focus on environmental sustainability alongside social justice, by cooking with reclaimed food and utilising a pay-as-you-feel business model, which is a method of paying voluntarily:

*Whatever you do, you should be thinking about sustainability. But there is also a lot of responsibility, in terms of educating customers coming in café, or wider public supporters and get them to reduce their own food waste (I15).*

They are the only businesses which promote the understanding of the link between social justice and the environmental agenda, as they prioritised cooking with food

waste for people from unprivileged backgrounds, or schoolchildren; this connection should help educate people about the real value of food:

*Well we are now starting a new school project; we agree to take certain amount of food there, in school playgrounds, parents or teachers pay as you feel...in September we will provide food for the breakfast club (I15).*

#### *6.6.4 SBSR practices in documents*

The following sections highlights the documents extracted from the qualitative content analysis. Such documents were important to prepare the interviews, corroborate the findings, and guide the reflexivity process. Note that the quotes were slightly changed and names deleted, to guarantee anonymity.

##### *6.6.4.1 Responsible business practices in documents*

All the responsible business practices are not publicly communicated, as they are mainly internal, therefore do not appear on documents. No business was showcasing regulations about health and safety in public areas; in particular, it was only few value-driven businesses which showcased their food safety compliance outside their premises (I3, I16, I24, I32, I33), with one in particular carrying this information in the menu (I16). Many of those with highest level of achievement corresponding with 5 stars did not exhibit such information, with most profit businesses falling in this category (I9, I13, I17, I19, I21, I22, I23, I24, I25, I26, I29, I31, I34). When enquires about this topic, one profit business commented that such actions are linked to better processes:

*Some of the bigger players, like (NAME OF CHAIN COMPETITOR), they show 5 start food safety certificate, or other environmental credentials...end of the day information is there for people to research, if they really want to they can look for it. People should expect that things are done anyway properly...so we should not have to communicate it (I26, manager).*

#### 6.6.4.2 Caring actions towards stakeholders in documents

It is particularly the value-driven businesses which use social media to highlight their SBSR actions, therefore it was possible to triangulate information with evidence from these public documents. Actions towards employees are seldom covered, only profit businesses mentioned the perks of the job such as personal development and rewards in their social media or web recruitment pages:

*Come and join us and let us contribute to you reaching your potential (W26)*

*It's so good to be able to offer our staff a development space to work on their NVQ's, outside of the hustle and bustle of the restaurant! (T31)*

All the SBSR actions related to food that increase clients' wellbeing, in terms of health or product quality particularly, are frequently covered on social media. The concepts of healthy and ethical food are the ones mostly reported in documents, suggesting this aspect is more distinctive of the branding and core values of the product:

*Our restaurant is based on nutritionally healthy food options (W23)*

*Passionate about providing a healthy fast food alternative to the people of Sheffield (W3).*

*We give you the very best advice on your health and wellbeing (W22)*

The concept of clean eating is highlighted with terms such as real food:

*Dark rye. #sourdough #realbread #Sheffield #independentsheffield (F2)*

The ethical local sourcing of ingredients, or foraging and seasonality, are particularly mentioned in social media channels:

*Honest food, Seasonal ingredients, Locally sourced. Suppers. Gatherings. (T11)*

*We are incredibly proud to be working alongside some brilliant local suppliers which mean that not only can we bring you the very freshest ingredients but we are supporting the local economy and minimising food miles at the same time (W7).*

*Food is made fresh and locally sourced #goodfood (T6)*

*We bring a true field to plate experience, right here in the heart of #Sheffield. #youryorkshire #ethicalfood (F33).*

Most of these businesses also get involved in charity events or collaborations with local business partners and suppliers:

*Back to (NAME OF CHARITY) our local charity supporting youth homelessness this December" (F23).*

*We are looking to raise money as well as awareness for what is such a great charity (NAME OF CHARITY), doing a lot of good here in Sheffield (F22).*

*During 2016 we are asking our guests to make a voluntary contribution of £5 (or any amount they choose) when paying their bill. This contribution will be transferred immediately and in full to '(NAME OF CHARITY)' (W27).*

There are even special sections of the website dedicated to suppliers with whom some of these businesses collaborate for the benefit of the local economy (I7, I11, I12, I22, I33):

*All our suppliers are Yorkshire based so every time you eat at (NAME OF BUSINESS) you're investing in the local economy. The meat is hand reared from local farms (W33).*

*We're proud to work with local companies, and stock (NAME OF SUPPLIERS) (W32).*

*We are incredibly proud to be working alongside some brilliant local suppliers which means that not only can we bring you the very freshest ingredients but we are supporting the local economy and minimising food miles at the same time (I7).*

#### *6.6.4.3 Inclusive hospitality and environmental protection in documents*

Social enterprises or community café said that they do not use the social media tool very effectively, therefore very little was highlighted through their public channels; usually their website reported about the social mission, this already covered in 6.2.2. Therefore the focus is more on the social mission, rather than on the individual actions implemented. It was noted that particularly the social enterprises (I5, I15) were active

in online communication. Clients are particularly educated about their social mission, through the website and social media:

*About reducing levels of food waste and social isolation in Sheffield (W5)*

*We look to increase awareness amongst individuals and businesses to prevent food from being wasted in the first place (B15)*

*Pay-As-You-Feel is integral to our aim, which is to abolish avoidable food waste. This model ensures that everyone is a part of the project, creating an inclusive community space where delicious food is accessible to all (W15).*

Finally, only the few environmentally committed were openly mentioning the environment particularly in their website or providing recycling bins within their premises (I1, I3, I5, I15, I22, I32), for encouraging people to recycle or simply informing about the social impact:

*We compost all our organic kitchen waste and recycle cardboard and glass (B11).*

*Thanks @NAMEPARTNER for the surplus flour donation! We're happy to use this to feed #belliesnotbins in #sheffield #reducewaste #sheffieldsuper #sheffieldfoodie #food #flour #zerowaste (I15)*

*The white hot food containers we use are made from Bagasse which is the waste material left over from when sugar cane is harvested for its sugar syrup. These are 100% compostable and biodegradable and sugar cane actually regrows. Our salad boxes and tub posts are all biodegradable too (B22).*

In conclusion of this section 6.5, the following diagram summarises all SBSR actions

The following Table 15 summarises all the SBSR practices by type of foodservice business, aligning the information also by relevant stakeholders. The table makes it easier for the reader to appreciate the difference in implementation across the various types of interviewed businesses. This table will be discussed in section 7.5.



**Table 15: Summary of SBSR actions implemented**

Type business	STAFF	MARKETPLACE	ENVIRONMENT	SOCIETY
Social enterprises	Living wage for staff; Volunteering opportunities	Affordable food; ethical fair trade coffee; vegetarian food; local produce; healthy food; organic suppliers; own farm produce; fair trade coffee; reclaimed food	Environmental education, zero food waste; own food production; environmental stewardship; recycling; Energy saving measure	Disability employment; support pop-up cafés; charity support; educational activities for disabled people and people in marginalised communities; free space for local artists
Value-driven	Volunteering activities; Family environment; training, training on sustainability; Flexible work environment; Rewards; minimum or living wage; shared tips	Real food - no chemicals; healthy food; Ethical sourcing (ex. Coffee); home produced food, particularly bread; local food suppliers; grow own herbs; quality craft beer; vegetarian food; seasonally inspired local produce; food safety; sustainable farmed fish; organic food	Recycling, sustainable packaging, minimise food waste, green energy, Sustainable packaging zero miles (own food), environmental certification; electric car; low energy appliances; green design; energy saving measure; recycled furniture; buying in bulk	Support national or local charities; support free community or local charity events; educational activities with local schools; food to homeless people; inclusiveness and accessibility
Growth	Staff rewards; staff training; health & safety compliance	Food safety Duty of care	Recycling	Charity

Source: Author

## 6.7 Conclusion

The following Table 16 contains the details of all the findings advanced in this chapter by research questions, as well as the links between the key themes which represented the key findings. The first and second findings are that personal values particularly influence the business mission and SBSR practice (findings 2 in 6.3); the business

mission influence perceptions of SBSR (finding 1, in 6.2). Personal values are a necessary but not sufficient factor influencing the SBSR implementation: the perceptions of business benefits to be achieved through SBSR practice, are another necessary factor influencing the SBSR practice (finding 3, in 6.4); external factors influence indirectly SBSR, particularly through the effect they have on norms, as well as through the effect of customers' awareness (finding 4, in 6.5); finally, a sustained SBSR practice is implemented in the long term (finding 5, in 6.6), only when all those motivations are concurrently present. Chapter seven will present the discussion of these results, while chapter eight will draw a conclusion for the research, highlighting the contribution to knowledge.



**Table 16: Summary of the findings**

External factors	Personal Values	Business Mission & SBSR Perceptions	Perceived business benefits	SBSR practice
Customers  Government Media	Social norms  & Industrial norms	Growth mission, focus on commercial hospitality & Economic responsibility	Improved operational performance and cost savings	Responsible business practices: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimum wage; staff health and safety</li> <li>• Food safety, duty of care; Health and safety</li> <li>• Pay taxes</li> <li>• Recycling</li> </ul>
Industry	Conformity values  Individualistic values  Prosocial values	Hospitableness & Ethical responsibility	Reputation and branding	Supporting wellbeing of employees, clients, local community: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Caring and meaningful work environment, work-life balance, personal development, staff rewards.</li> <li>• Healthy/ethical/sustainable food, transparency</li> <li>• Recycling, reduce consumption (food, energy)</li> <li>• Local food, community events &amp; philanthropy.</li> </ul>
	Knowledge and awareness	Social mission & Social ethos	Supporting the activities underpinning the social mission	Inclusive hospitality & environmental sustainability: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employment for disadvantaged citizens</li> <li>• Affordable food &amp; inclusive space</li> <li>• Environmental stewardship</li> </ul>

Source: Author

## **Chapter 7**

### **Discussion**

## 7.1 Introduction

The previous chapter provided the findings that emerged from the data collection. The purpose of this chapter is to make sense of these findings. It therefore offers a discussion of these results and shows the relationship to the background literature discussed in earlier chapters. The discussion is aligned to the objectives of the study, so as to provide a concise and coherent account of the interpretation. In particular, the chapter consists of four sections, aligned with the four objectives of the research and the themes that emerged in chapter 6. All this information is summarised in Table 17, which further adds the sub-themes presented in the findings chapter; each sub-theme corresponds to a chapter section (see section numbers highlighted in brackets), according to which the discussion is organised.

**Table 17: Overview of objectives, themes and sub-themes**

<p><b>Objective 1</b></p> <p>To investigate the perceptions of SBSR in independent foodservice businesses.</p> <p><b>Theme: Business mission influences SBSR perceptions</b></p> <p><b>Sub-themes:</b> Growth mission influences the economic responsibility (6.2.2); hospitableness influences the ethical responsibility (6.2.3); the social mission influences the social ethos (6.2.4).</p>
<p><b>Objective 2</b></p> <p>To critically analyse how personal values influence SBSR in independent foodservice businesses.</p> <p><b>Theme: Personal values influence business mission and SBSR</b></p> <p><b>Sub-themes:</b> Conformity values and norms (6.3.1); prosocial values (6.3.2); individualistic values (6.3.3); knowledge and awareness (6.3.4).</p>

**Objective 3**

To critically examine how business motivations influence SBSR in independent foodservice businesses.

**Theme: Perceived business benefits influence SBSR**

**Sub-themes:** Achieve better operations and cost savings (6.4.1); increasing staff engagement/commitment (6.4.2); build stronger reputation and branding (6.4.3); contributing to the social mission (6.4.4).

**Objective 4**

To examine how external factors influence SBSR in independent foodservice businesses.

**Theme: External factors influence SBSR**

**Sub themes:** Customers; Government & media; Industry

**Objective 5**

To analyse critically the implementation of SBSR practices in independent foodservice businesses.

**Theme: SBSR practice (6.6)**

Responsible business practices (6.6.1); Caring actions and environmental protection (6.6.2); inclusiveness and environmental sustainability (6.6.3).

Source: Compiled by author.

**7.2 Business mission influences SBSR perceptions**

This first section discusses the finding related to the first objective of the research, which was to “investigate the perceptions of SBSR in independent foodservice businesses”. Three sub-themes emerged in relation to the first finding, which is the link between perceptions of SBSR and the core business mission: SBSR as an

economic and legal responsibility, linked to the growth mission in growth businesses; SBSR as an ethical/personal responsibility, linked to the hospitable mission in value-driven businesses; SBSR as a social ethos, linked to the social mission in social enterprises. The first group of growth businesses are driven by the profit and loss logic as their core mission is to achieve “*growth*”. These six owner-managers could be better defined as entrepreneurs in the traditional understanding of the term (Schumpeter, 2000), because their principal purpose is profit and growth, rather than furthering personal goals (Carland et al., 1984; Stewart, 2003). The growth objective is a fundamental component of having an entrepreneurial orientation (Miller, 2011). This growth mission was found to be linked to the framing of their hospitality in purely economic terms such as “*offer food and drinks*”; this overlaps with the concept of commercial hospitality (Brotherton, 1999; Slattery, 2002; Jones, 2004; Hemmington, 2007). The focus on growth mission and commercial hospitality informs their perception of SBSR, which has a purely economic scope: it is about guaranteeing the company’s continued survival, through “*safe*” and lawful business practices. The perception of SBSR among growth businesses is, in fact, focused only on achieving profit and respecting the rules of the economic game. This interpretation corresponds to the early instrumental interpretations of CSR according to which companies were required primarily to showcase the economic responsibility of “being as profitable as possible” (Carroll, 1991, p.40).

More current interpretations consider the basic economic and legal responsibilities, if not accompanied by further ethical and philanthropic actions, as a form of amoral management (Carroll, 1991) or passive and incomplete CSR (Carroll, 2016). In line with this normative thinking, the value-driven businesses (25 in total), showcased an ethical perception of SBSR. This perception is linked to the fact that their business is driven by personal values, such as lifestyle, ecological or family values, as well as an informal mission focused on hospitableness. These small foodservice business owners pursue personal objectives through their business, such as a “*lifestyle*” choice, or being proud about “*the family business*”, or to “*run the business based on our values*”. The entrepreneurial autonomy of “*being my own boss*”, which allows them to dictate how to do things, is a common trait among all these value-driven businesses, found in the small business literature (Walker & Brown, 2004; Runyan et al., 2008), as well as in the hospitality literature (Getz & Petersen, 2005; Thomas et al., 2011). These



businesses do not focus on growth, rather on organic growth or “*survival*”, as they pursue alternative values to growth, reflecting personal lifestyle choices (Ateljevic & Doorne, 2000; Thomas et al., 2011; Tomassini, 2019). This focus is linked to keeping a small size and focusing on product quality. Such lifestyle or family hospitality is particularly characterised by the focus on their own quality of life (Carlsen et al., 2008; Lashley & Rowson, 2010; Bosworth & Ferrell, 2011), passion for food and conviviality (Lashley, 2008) or family life and wellbeing (Ram et al., 2001; Agarwal & Dahm, 2015). When personal values are prioritised in business, it was found that this translates into an informal mission of personalised hospitality: the owner-manager explained how they perceive that their business has a societal role, such as “*people feeling welcome to come on a personal basis*”; “*provide a service, but also a community place*”.

In the hospitality literature, this type of hospitality is seen as a social practice because it is focused on fulfilling the social needs of the other on a personal basis (Lashley, 2007; Lashley et al., 2007; Lynch et al., 2011). It is defined as hospitableness, which is the willingness to add to the wellbeing of the other (Wood & Brotherton, 2008; Lugosi, 2008; Lugosi et al., 2009; Lynch et al., 2011; Lugosi, 2014; Telfer, 2016). Such a focus on making people feel welcomed on a personal basis is what differentiates hospitableness from commercial hospitality (O’Gorman, 2007; Lashley, 2008; Lynch et al., 2011; Lashley, 2015; Telfer, 2016). The perception of SBSR in these value-driven businesses is in line with this informal mission of hospitableness driving the business, therefore it is expressed in ethical terms: it is about “*being good for our customers, for our suppliers, for the environment and the community we live in*” or “*contributing to a thriving local community*”. Such ethical SBSR is linked to hospitableness (Tomasella & Ali, 2019), since hospitableness is a culturally-embedded social role for the business in terms of welcoming people (Lee-Ross & Lashley, 2010; Lashley, 2016) and creating spaces in which people can socialise and care for each other (Lashley, 2008; Lynch et al., 2011; Lashley, 2015). SBSR as ethics of care is typical in small businesses, which prioritise actions of care for those with whom there is a relationship (Von Weltzien Høivik & Melé, 2009; Spence, 2016). The owner-managers particularly stressed how they “*try to help things immediate to you*”; the hospitableness particularly arises from being part of the local community, interpreted as the community that physically dwells in the hospitable space, since the

community is what creates the meaning and value within such space (Hall & Gössling, 2013; Tjora, 2013; Bosworth, 2014; Lang et al., 2014).

Finally, the third group of eight social enterprises implement foodservice operations to service their users, as well as engage and educate them about their overall social mission. In fact, most of these businesses are linked to a larger charity, or are part of a network of social entrepreneurs. Their SBSR overlaps with the social ethos, and is thus coherent with the social justice that underpins their social mission. The social mission in these cases is usually aimed at tackling big environmental or social issues, such as “*making our society less unequal*”. Perceiving SBSR as a social ethos, translates into a foodservice environment that pursues inclusiveness or ideal hospitality (Derrida, 2000; Lashley, 2015): through their foodservice provision, they try to “*break the bad cycle of obesity*”; “*eliminate food waste*”; they also provide socialising spaces for those people that cannot usually afford it. For these social enterprises, the ideal hospitality serves the purpose of reflecting the ethos that drives their social mission: such inclusiveness means guaranteeing hospitality as a universal right, or hospitality for all, including for socio-economically disadvantaged communities (Higgins-Desbiolles et al., 2014; Alegre & Berbegal-Mirabent, 2016; Higgins-Desbiolles et al., 2019). When comparing the ideal hospitality with traditional hospitableness, the second one is more about hospitality for one’s circle of friends or the local community (Telfer, 2000; Telfer, 2012; Telfer, 2016). The hospitality between host and guest can include cultural domination of the host against the guest (Derrida, 2000; Lugosi, 2014), which is what the inclusiveness of the ideal hospitality tries to overcome. This form of ideal hospitality, therefore, extends into politics, since through their actions these business owners make political statements about questions of human rights and environmental protection (Derrida, 2000; O’Gorman, 2006; Lynch, 2017).

It was found that the respondents perceived the two concepts of CSR and SBSR to be different, therefore further justifying this research. Growth businesses perceive that CSR and SBSR are separated mainly by the size of the business; therefore their expectation is that larger corporations should have more responsibilities, while smaller businesses should just focus on responsible business practices. Their interpretation of both concepts is nevertheless in line with instrumental discourses of CSR (e.g.

Friedman, 1970). The other two groups, in contrast, found great differences between the two concepts. The value-driven businesses felt that CSR is particularly a government-led activity (Jenkins, 2004; Lepoutre & Heene, 2006; Jamali et al., 2009; Baden & Harwood, 2013), whereas SBSR is about the business owner's personal and ethical responsibility being reflected in business through actions beneficial to stakeholders (Crane et al., 2013). The social enterprises expressed the most critical voices, mentioning how they saw CSR as purely a marketing activity. These last two groups agreed in considering SBSR an ethical responsibility, therefore keeping in line with the normative understanding of the term (Spence, 2016). These findings proved empirically how different CSR and SBSR are: CSR is activity based, without much reference to norms, on the contrary SBSR is personal, it is about an ethical understanding of issues, according to the values of owner-managers (Spence, 2016; Wickert et al., 2016; Soundararajan et al., 2018). This finding adds empirically to the SBSR literature, in confirming that SBSR is a term better suited to the personalised and informal type management of small businesses, as well as better suited to be understood and endorsed by small businesses, rather than CSR (Jenkins 2004; Jenkins, 2006; Fassin et al., 2015).

The findings discussed above add to theory in two ways. The first major contribution is to emerging SBSR theory (Spence, 2016; Soundararajan et al., 2018), by explaining why owner-managers show different levels of SBSR engagement. The construct brought to attention is that of business mission; the mission influences the perception of SBSR and ultimately the implementation of SBSR. It was already advanced in the SBSR and ethics literature that, beyond their size, the nature of the business is important in the context of socially responsible practices: micro businesses which exhibit greater risk seeking, therefore an entrepreneurial orientation, show lower social responsibility for their local community and the environment (Burton & Goldsby, 2009; Nybakk & Panwar, 2015). Other previous contributions also held that the presence of non-economic/personal values in the business model, such as degree of family influence or lifestyle motivations, increased the commitment to environmental practices (Chrisman et al., 2012; Uhlaner et al., 2012; Cruz et al., 2014). Lifestyle entrepreneurs in tourism, despite not having a formalised mission, seek alternative business models which guarantee freedom and independence, while creating social capital essential to the sustainability especially of small and rural communities

(Sampaio et al., 2012; Font et al., 2016; Wang et al., 2019). In the small business literature, it is advanced that small businesses with a small business orientation showcase more business integrity and civic mindedness (Runyan & Covin, 2019). Here it was confirmed empirically that the business mission can have an influence on SBSR (Murrillo & Lozano, 2006). In fact, when the business mission is influenced by personal values (such as hospitableness or a social mission), it leads to the perception of SBSR as an ethical approach to doing business; care for the needs of others is the focus of the hospitableness (Lashley, 2015), or commitment to a social justice, which aligns to Soundararajan et al.'s (2017) definition of SBSR as “actions that achieve positive social change”. The growth-oriented businesses, conversely, because of their growth mission, focus on a perception of SBSR more in line with traditional interpretations of CSR. This finding confirms that core CSR theory can still be applicable for understanding SBSR (Spence, 2016).

This work also adds an unexpected contribution to the hospitality theory, with empirical evidence that SBSR is linked to hospitableness (Tomasella & Ali, 2019). The hospitableness was observed in the value-driven businesses; such hospitality is a personalised, genuine hospitality, expressed in social terms, not limited to the commercial exchange of food and drink, but aiming to enhance the wellbeing of others (Wood & Brotherton, 2008; Lugosi, 2008; Lugosi, 2009; Lugosi et al., 2009; Lynch et al., 2011; Telfer, 2016). The implications of these findings contribute to hospitality theory by giving empirical evidence that an ethics of care approach to business can emerge from a personalised and sociological view of hospitality (Lashley, 2015); such a view should therefore provide the basis for attaining initial steps towards sustainability in hospitality, at least in terms of more fairness and reciprocity in the industry (Lashley, 2016). More radical steps are needed to attain stronger sustainability, such as social development in cases of deprivation (Lashley, 2016), as seen in social entrepreneurship. The growth businesses, which focus on an economic mission underpinned by commercial hospitality (Slattery, 2000), are aiming at SBSR actions that are useful and legal, but not moral (Carroll, 2016). In summary, this first finding adds to SBSR theory, reflecting that proactive and ethical SBSR actions, are linked to having a business mission (formal or informal), driven particularly by prosocial values. Ultimately, the mission of the business influences the perceptions of SBSR; therefore this construct should be considered as an added influence on SBSR.

A more unexpected empirical contribution is made in respect to the hospitality literature, in terms of noticing the connection between the hospitableness and an ethics of care interpretation of SBSR. The next section explores in detail how personal values influence the business mission and the SBSR practice.

### **7.3 Personal values influence business mission and SBSR**

This second section discusses the finding related to the second objective of the research, which was to “*critically analyse how personal values influence SBSR in independent foodservice businesses*”. It was already found in the previous section that perceptions of SBSR are linked to the business mission; consequently, particularly the value-driven businesses and social enterprises, demonstrate a more proactive SBSR. This section highlights which personal values of the business owner specifically influence the business mission and SBSR. The discussion section is organised according to the categories that emerged from the empirical analysis: these are norms, values, knowledge and awareness. These themes are not aligned by type of business: all the businesses showed commitment to conformity values and norms, therefore the first paragraph below (corresponding to finding 6.3.1) is applicable to all businesses; on the contrary, when it comes to prosocial values and individualistic values, as well as knowledge and awareness about socio-environmental issues, only the owner-managers of value-driven businesses and social enterprises showcased these concepts, as part of a more complex moral reasoning within their organisation.

The growth businesses only mentioned norms and conformity values as an influence on their reactive SBSR practice. The conformity values mentioned here are “*sense of duty*”, “*politeness*”, “*integrity*” (Schwartz, 1992). These values are usually part of the culture of origin of the individual (Hall et al., 1997). Such key moral norms are typical of an ethical business owner, and therefore are precursor to responsible business practices (Quinn, 1997; Fuller & Tian, 2006; Moore & Spence, 2006). In fact, these values promote harmonious social relations by helping to avoid conflict and violations of group norms (Schwartz, 2012). Conformity values, such as a sense of duty, are related to the importance that managers attach to regulatory compliance (Schaefer et al., 2018). All businesses also perceive the influence of social and industrial norms: these constraining rules are not related to the personal upbringing: social norms are

influenced by government or media (Stacey, 2007), while industrial norms are related to actions and expectations of other industry partners (Kornilaki & Font, 2019). Such social norms and industrial norms are found as common drivers in environmental and sustainable practices of small tourism firms (Papagiannakis & Lioukas, 2012; Kornilaki & Font, 2019) and small restaurants (Raab et al., 2018). It is common that growth-oriented owner-managers are dominated in business by these norms, together with conformity values, since such businesses are characterised by more risk-taking and higher perceived uncertainty (Van Gelderen et al., 2005; Lee-Ross & Lashley, 2010). The downside, as some of these respondents highlighted, is that when society is forced to caring, it “*cares slightly less as a generality*”. Norms alone can stifle innovation and self-organisation of the individual (Stacey, 2007). Owner-managers that only rely on conformity and social norms, are found to be less proactive in implementing socially responsible actions (Lepoutre & Heene, 2006; Kornilaki & Font, 2019).

The additional findings in fact show how the value-driven businesses and social enterprises are more innovative in their SBSR (Soundararajan et al., 2018), driven by non-conformity values in their proactive SBSR actions (Kornilaki & Font, 2019). The value-driven businesses are further motivated to implement proactive SBSR actions, by the prosocial values underpinning the hospitableness, such as “*friendliness*” “*helpfulness*”, and “*kindness*”; these are called benevolent values (Schwartz, 2012). Benevolence is most critical in relations within the family and other primary groups, and emphasise benevolent concern for others’ welfare (Schwartz, 2012). The positive values of friendliness, sociability and helpfulness are frequently found among small lifestyle hospitality businesses (Lashley & Rowson, 2008; Lee-Ross & Lashley, 2010) and family hospitality businesses characterised by socio-emotional wealth (Berrone et al., 2012; Dawson & Mussolino, 2014), or warmth and empathy (Payne et al., 2011). Friendliness, sociability, happiness when entertaining, helpfulness, are all essential traits for hospitableness (Telfer, 1995; O’Gorman, 2007; Poulston, 2012; Telfer, 2012; Blain & Lashley, 2014; Poulston, 2015; Tasci & Samrad, 2016; Telfer, 2016), since they go beyond the interest of the self and enhance the empathy about the welfare of the other person (Archer, 2000; Lynch et al., 2011; Telfer, 2012). Benevolence suggests an emphasis on relationships and an ethic of care (Upchurch, 1998). In driving the SBSR actions, however, these benevolent values are nevertheless

entangled with other individualistic held values, such as “*passion for food*”, “*passion for culture*”, as well as being proud and sense of belonging. The concept of passion for food is particularly important to understanding the values underpinning hospitableness: Telfer explains how hospitableness is an optional virtue characterised by altruism, whereby the “*dominant consideration is the guest’s pleasure*” (Telfer, 2012, p. 88), but admits that, in a commercial environment, a reasonable motive for being hospitable is that the host derives a good deal of that pleasure from hosting others (Telfer, 2012).

This means that, in a commercial environment, the focus on one’s own pleasure is equally important for achieving hospitableness, since it is argued that hospitality is perceived as a form of self-expression, particularly in a commercial environment (Poulston, 2012; Telfer, 2012; Poulston, 2015). It is confirmed that individualistic values, such as passion for food (Poulston, 2015, Lashley, 2010), being proud and autonomous, a sense of belonging to the community, can co-exist alongside the more prosocial values in influencing the SBSR practice. This is despite traditional views that individualistic values are not usually activated concurrently with prosocial values (Schwartz & Bilsky, 1987). This focus on personal values, such as lifestyle authenticity and independence, as influencing socially responsible practices, is a recurrent theme in tourism studies (Ateljevic & Doorne, 2000; Font et al., 2016; Carrigan et al., 2017). Among the social enterprises, there is similarly a mix of prosocial and individualistic values driving proactive SBSR actions. Social justice is the typical prosocial value motivating social enterprises, a “*sense of justice*”; for more environmental actions, they mention “*care for the environment*”. Indeed, in the literature, social businesses are typically linked to these universal values of social justice and environmentalism (Alegre & Berbegal-Mirabent, 2016; Altinay et al., 2016; Dickerson et al., 2018; Sigala, 2019). At the same time, there is also an element of self-achievement motivating these social entrepreneurs, expressed as “*make a change in people’s lives*”. This is a confirmation that social entrepreneurs are not necessarily heroes, but also have individual values motivating them when starting a social business, such as self-support, or following a career path that they are passionate about, or the desire to support family members (Vasi, 2009; Alegre & Berbegal-Mirabent, 2016; André & Pache, 2016).

Finally, awareness and knowledge are also important in the implementation of

proactive SBSR: when the owner-manager gets to “*know why it is important*” to focus on certain social causes, as this understanding lead, for example, to philanthropic actions. Awareness, gained particularly through life experiences, is broadly recognised in the CSR literature as an essential element to influence the response to the CSR action of consumers, but the specifics are often lacking in CSR research, which tends not to be focused at a micro-level (Aguinis & Glavas, 2012). Moral awareness is known to lead to positive attitudes towards certain socio-environmental topics, both in ethical leaders (Demirtas et al., 2017) and in small businesses (Spence & Perrini, 2009). Attitude in fact predicts future behaviour in individuals (Hines et al., 1987; Ajzen, 2001). Being aware about socio-environmental issues is therefore found to be a requirement for proactive environmental actions in small tourism businesses (Revell, 2002; Dewhurst & Thomas, 2003; Sampaio et al., 2012; Arendt, 2014; Thomas, 2015). In these small restaurants, awareness is particularly shaped through life experiences such as growing up “*in a farm*”, or direct work experiences such as partnerships with local charities or suppliers (Hall & Brown, 2006; Sampaio et al., 2012; Thomas, 2015; Garay et al., 2017). More generally, in small businesses, knowledge and awareness are less likely to derive from formalised sources of information (Garay et al., 2017). Rather than using formal networks, small business owners prefer to learn more directly, since the learning is embedded in their everyday experiences with carefully chosen relevant groups at local level (Jenkins, 2006; Fenwick, 2010). A smaller number of respondents indicated formalised knowledge acquired through higher education, which was mentioned as another personal influence towards SBSR action, in relation to the more innovative environmental practices (Fryxell & Lo, 2003).

Firstly, the findings contribute to knowledge by adding to the emerging SBSR theory (Spence 2016; Soundararajan et al., 2018) in giving a more fine-grained explanation of how personal values influence SBSR engagement. Various ethical and small business studies have highlighted the role of benevolent or universal values in influencing ethical behaviour (Power et al., 2017; Runyan & Covin, 2019). This work highlights that when prosocial values (both universal and benevolent) inform the business mission, they influence an ethical perception of SBSR and proactive SBSR actions. The work further challenges the traditional view, hypothesised by Schwartz and Bilsky (1987), that individualistic values cannot be activated together with prosocial values; this work found that such values can coexist in influencing proactive



SBSR actions (Schaefer et al., 2018), as long as the prosocial values are present and inform the business mission. Secondly, this work makes the point that implementing proactive SBSR actions depends on a complex moral reasoning (Morrison et al., 2010; Kreps & Monin, 2011; Bredvold & Skålén, 2016). What makes a difference for the proactive SBSR practice is not only a business mission informed by prosocial values, but also a sufficient level of awareness and knowledge acquired by the owner-manager through local experiences, therefore confirming how local embeddedness is crucial in SBSR (Fuller & Tian, 2006; von Weltzien Høivik & Shankar, 2011; Sen & Cowley, 2013). These findings also add to hospitality management theory. This work confirmed that individualistic values also can contribute to influence proactive SBSR. It is known that pleasure in doing one's job is part of the self-expression underpinning the hospitableness in a commercial environment (Telfer, 2012; Poulston, 2015). It is therefore also plausible to consider passion for food as a key element that can underpin the hospitableness, particularly in a foodservice business, since this includes a sharing element that contributes to the ethics of care (Tomasella & Ali, 2019).

In summary the second finding discussed in this second section contributes to SBSR theory by providing a more fine-grained view about how personal values influence the SBSR engagement. Complex moral reasoning is needed for voluntary SBSR actions in these foodservice businesses: there is a mix of prosocial and individualistic values influencing SBSR; personal and local experiences further provide the necessary awareness about which SBSR actions to implement. The unintended contribution to hospitality management theory lies in highlighting that the distinctive value of passion for food, which strongly characterises the small foodservice businesses, should be considered a dimension of hospitableness, beyond the prosocial subset (Blain & Lashley, 2014), since this contributes to the ethics of care of the business (Tomasella & Ali, 2019).

#### **7.4 Perceived business benefits influence SBSR**

This section discusses the finding related to the third objective of the research, which was to “*critically examine how business motivations influence SBSR in independent foodservice businesses*”. The discussion is organised around the categories that emerged from the empirical analysis of the third theme: delivering better operations

for growth profit businesses; building stronger stakeholder relationships for value-driven businesses; supporting the social mission for social enterprises. Growth businesses, which perceive SBSR solely as an economic responsibility, are further encouraged to implement responsible business practices by the knowledge that the “*business runs better*” if they implement processes “*in the right way*”. Better operational performance and compliance in the restaurant also mean “*cost savings*”, and in the literature it has already been found that environmental practices in small restaurants are linked to operational performance (Llach et al., 2013; Arendt et al., 2014; Parramon et al., 2014). The same findings were seen in small hotels where compliance in operations linked to cost savings (Bonilla-Priego et al., 2011; Pereira-Moliner et al., 2015). Responsible business practices towards employees, such as safety in the workplace, help to improve organisational effectiveness in large businesses (Maak, 2007; Drucker, 2012). The growth businesses also focus on employee rewards since these actions “*increase productivity*”. This confirms the CSR hospitality literature, because happier and engaged staff lead to better customer service (Cheng et al., 2013; Bohdanowicz & Zientara, 2009) and therefore higher productivity in the restaurant (Andrews & Turner, 2017; Kim et al., 2017). Recycling is also often mentioned, mostly this action is motivated by environmental regulations and taxation for offenders, therefore becoming a cost savings tool (Williamson et al., 2006; Maon et al., 2010).

In value-driven businesses, however, the focus on voluntary actions of care towards stakeholders is further motivated by the willingness to improve relationships with stakeholders. SBSR actions towards employees are critical for creating wellbeing, which motivates the staff to be better engaged and deliver better service and better hospitality. Positive atmosphere, well-being, shared values are all contributing to SBSR, in a service environment like the foodservice business. Such actions are crucial for the staff to be engaged in delivering great service and great hospitality which leads them to supporting SBSR. It is only when employees are engaged and have trust in the business and the owner-managers, that they are likely to support further SBSR actions such as food safety (Arendt et al., 2014; Harris et al., 2017; Lee & Sozen, 2016) or be empowered towards further ethical action (Carter & Baghurst, 2014). Burnt-out employees are less likely to display organisational citizenship behaviour (Johanson & Wood, 2008; Wang et al., 2011; Liang, 2012; Poulston, 2015).

These small businesses also implement ethical SBSR actions that add to the wellbeing of clients and the community. The product SBSR actions are particularly about increasing consumers' trust in the business, as it "*increases people confidence*" to know about quality of products and environmental action related to minimising food waste. Such a process of building trust through product quality, or other intangible attributes, is a typical branding strategy of niche hospitality and tourism businesses (Ateljevic & Doorne, 2000; Ebben & Johnson, 2005; Hall & Williams, 2008; Garay & Font, 2012), as well as small restaurants (Sharma, 2000; Alonso-Almeida et al., 2018). The finding that such a niche strategy is aimed at trust rather than higher profits corresponds to emerging CSR literature, which states that trust and commitment of consumers moderate the effect of CSR on their loyalty towards the restaurant (Jalilvand et al., 2017; Kim & Kim, 2017). Organic growth is in line with the value driven business mission informed by personal values (Ateljevic & Doorne, 2000).

Similarly, community SBSR actions are sought for their potential to create social capital and reputation (Miller & Besser, 2005; Besser et al., 2006; Lähdesmäki & Suutari, 2012; Valentin & Murillo, 2012). Supporting the community gives distinctiveness to the small business, in virtue of adding benefits to the locality itself and representing its cultural values (Bosworth & Willett, 2011; Giles et al., 2011; Cabras & Bosworth, 2014; Velvin et al., 2016). Reputation then follows as a natural outcome in the long term (Siltaoja, 2006). Another important area, particularly for restaurants, is the collaboration with suppliers. The CSR behaviour of a bigger partner in the supply chain has a major impact on the small business behaviour (Spence, 2016). The key motivation for buying local food is immediate, as it is about "*quality of product*", but also "*support to other independent businesses like us*". Availability of local suppliers for quality local food was very important; lack of such availability is a key barrier for use of local food in small restaurants (Sharma et al., 2014). The benefit from collaborating with suppliers is about belonging to a community of reference, which allows all to "*do better*". In this regard, it was highlighted that collaborations with local suppliers allow the small restaurant to introduce more SBSR innovative practices (Chou et al., 2012; Chou et al., 2016). This was found particularly in restaurants with a simple menu, which tend to buy most produce from one supplier. For small businesses these actions are about sharing values with employees or with the community, creating trust in a more informal way; the beneficial effect on the

organisation of such community commitment is a differentiation strategy rather than profit maximisation (Panwar et al., 2016).

Social enterprises are instead found to be using foodservice activities to “*provide a service*” but also to engage communities to support their social mission, a way to “*embrace our (...) ethos on all aspects of the business*” and engage the public with it, for example through creating cultural space for people to socialise in. This study adds evidence to suggest that these social businesses offer hospitality partly to encourage pro-social behavioural change (Madill & Zeigler, 2012). Food creates a connection between human beings and the environment, therefore valuing the food, protecting it and “*educate people on good food*”, is key to increasing the awareness of the need to achieve environmental protection, inclusiveness and conviviality (Beer, 2015; Mellissen et al., 2016; Higgins-Desbiolles & Wijesinghe, 2018). The focus on the social ethos is important since it can help the business to remain close to its social mission and social value created, therefore avoiding mission drift (Ruskin et al., 2016). This aspect of the findings clarified how the dynamics of social enterprises are different from those of small businesses; prioritising the social mission, means implementing actions even when they are not profitable, in order to avoid unethically (Chell et al., 2016). Conversely, the other businesses made clear that, in the long term, only the actions that are beneficial or convenient to the business are maintained (Alonso & O’Neill, 2010).

The third finding confirmed that perceived business benefits are as necessary as personal values for motivating the implementation of a sustained SBSR practice. This finding adds knowledge to the emerging SBSR theory (Spence 2016; Soundararajan et al., 2018), in clarifying that both ethical and instrumental motivations are necessary for a sustained SBSR practice in the long term (Murillo & Lozano, 2006; Jamali et al., 2009; Garay & Font, 2012; Carasuk et al., 2016; Carrigan et al., 2017). Perceived business benefits are considered to be a motivation for, rather than outcome of SBSR, because of their informality and lack of evaluation, being primarily linked to the key business mission. In fact, it was seen that businesses either try to nurture interpersonal relationships and building communities of users, or just focus internally on improving performance (Jenkins, 2004; Lepoutre & Heene, 2006; Spence, 2007; Spence, 2016). Personal values are related to the business owner’s ethical motivation to a specific form of SBSR, particularly through the influence they have on the business mission;

the perceived benefits instead represent the capacity for SBSR implementation (Chrisman et al., 2012; Panwar et al., 2016) since they delimit the amount of commitment and resources that the business will put into the SBSR practice in the long term. The SBSR practice can support the competitiveness of value-driven small businesses: it allows the small business to co-create meanings with relevant stakeholders, as long as they are authentic reflections of values shared across the business, overlapping with the business mission. This finding extends previous contributions on lifestyle or value-based firms, in terms of creating loyal relationships with stakeholders through the commitment to enduring values (Bredvold & Skålen 2016; Tomassini, 2019). Since the main outcome of such actions is to build good relationships, or introduce innovative collaborations, they can provide a competitive advantage in terms of branding or reputation (Porter & Kramer, 2011). Such benefits can only materialise in the long term, however, because the outcomes are intangible resources (Memili et al., 2017).

The strategic SBSR practice described above has focused on genuinely expressing deep-seated human values and civic commitment to the community. This resonates with contemporary paradigms of marketing, which is now value-based, revolves around personal fulfilment, and speaks to the human spirit (Kotler et al., 2010). This helps to clarify why the small value-driven firms focus externally on community actions, beyond compliance and employee actions, as these are more conducive to a good reputation (Panwar et al., 2017). Social enterprises similarly commit to engage more users, by sticking to a certain social ethos and ethical actions of care, despite there being a risk that scaling-up might compromise this commitment (André & Pache, 2016). In summary, the third finding contributes to SBSR theory by confirming that the perceived business benefits influence the SBSR practice concurrently with personal values (Garay & Font, 2012; Carasuk et al., 2016; Carrigan et al., 2017); the most active firms are those that obtain more benefits from such practice in the long term (Jenkins, 2004). The next section explores the influence of external factors on the SBSR practice.

## **7.5 External factors influence SBSR**

This section discusses the findings related to the fourth research question, which is to “*examine how external factors influence SBSR in independent foodservice businesses*”. The finding that emerged is that there are also external factors which contribute to influence the SBSR practice, even though their influence is indirect. The key factor mentioned by the majority of businesses, both the value-driven businesses and the social enterprises, is the increased awareness of socio-environmental issues among clients. It is reported in the SBSR literature that some external pressure is usually applied to the small business from business customers that are part of the supply chain, but this is focussed mainly on environmental rather than social credentials (Jenkins, 2006). Consumers can have an indirect effect in promoting the CSR activities of an organisation through word-of-mouth effects (Bujisic et al., 2014; Jalilvand, et al., 2017). Restaurant studies usually consider the effect that CSR has on patronage and willingness to pay (Dutta et al., 2008; DiPietro & Gregory, 2012; DiPietro et al., 2013), but generally consumers are not willing to pay more (DiPietro, 2017). This study confirms that view, since some of the respondents clearly stated that only under specific circumstances consumers would pay more for certain socio-environmental actions. This result corroborates the observation in the previous section that SBSR actions have an effect in terms of image, rather than on actual sales and profits. This confirms that the influence of consumers is indirect, and that it is about creating a culture of common awareness which then leads the owner-managers to implement specific SBSR actions. More studies are needed on consumers’ perceptions of SBSR, which are lacking from the literature because most studies involve clients of chain restaurants.

The other major role is played by government in creating legislation, with media helping to increase awareness. This was particularly mentioned by profit-oriented owner-managers who limit their commitment to compliance. The role of government was mentioned in relation to regulations and the role of media for awareness raising; no mention was made of structural government support, such as a recycling programme (e.g. Iaquinto, 2014). This lack of interest in such practices is perhaps because the respondents were mainly focused on the social practices, rather than green practices. The social enterprises finally mentioned the policy of government to provide non-rented spaces to charities for temporary use, which has benefitted one respondent; this policy is hailed as an urban medium for social change (Madanipour, 2018), but

the support is again indirect, with a lack of programmes directly supporting social enterprises. The literature generally does not mention the role of government in influencing SBSR, except for a few contributions from outside UK since, usually, CSR/SBSR should focus on voluntary actions (e.g. Murrillo & Lozano, 2006; Park & Ghauri, 2015). In this work, it was clarified that these respondents also perceive legal responsibility to be part of SBSR. Similarly, the example of competitors creates best practices in the sector, as the example of competitors creates industrial norms that are found as common drivers in environmental and sustainable practices (Papagiannakis & Lioukas, 2012; Raab et al., 2018; Kornilakis & Font, 2019).

This fourth finding has highlighted that the external factors have an indirect influence on the decision making of the independent business owner; such external pressure, particularly from government, media and industry competitors, operates by influencing the norms guiding the business owners (Stacey, 2007). The other external factor, mainly reported by value-driven businesses and social enterprises, is the increased awareness from customers, which is reflected in the perceived benefits expected from the implementation of SBSR actions in terms of reputation and branding. It can be concluded that the external pressures on small businesses are quite limited, they operate primarily through a change in culture and awareness of the owner-managers. The final section explains what specific SBSR practice is implemented by these foodservice businesses.

## **7.6 SBSR practice: implementation of SBSR actions in the long term**

This section discusses the findings related to the last research objective, which was “*to critically analyse the implementation of SBSR practices in independent foodservice businesses*”. The discussion is therefore divided into three parts, corresponding to the three themes that emerged through this last part of the research:

- Focus on responsible business practices (particularly in growth businesses).
- Focus on care and community actions (particularly in value-driven businesses).
- Focus on inclusiveness and environmental stewardship (solely in social enterprises).
  
- Focus on responsible business practices (particularly in growth businesses).

The most often mentioned SBSR action for the growth businesses is compliance with rules and regulations regarding their staff. SBSR actions towards employees include guarantee staff safety, according to the many health and safety regulations; also treating staff fairly by paying at least the “*minimum wage*”. In particular, the profit-oriented business owners consider training and development programmes to be part of their SBSR towards employees, since these training programmes help to improve employee retention and “*productivity*”; this is common for the hotel industry, which usually has larger margins to invest in such programmes (Cheng et al., 2013), or restaurant chains (Inoue & Lee, 2011); it was also found in pub chains (Jones et al., 2006). The second most important area for compliance is actions towards clients, or in the marketplace. These businesses mention compliance actions in terms of food safety practices (York et al., 2009) and safety of clients, as well as “*duty of care to customers*” regarding alcohol consumption (Jones et al., 2006). Food safety compliance is also a critical activity and best practice for the foodservice industry (Choi & Parsa, 2007; Arendt et al., 2014; Parsa et al., 2015), in order to improve the level of quality and competitiveness among foodservice businesses (UK Hospitality, 2017).

Food safety is of crucial importance not only for operational management, but also for growing restaurant reputation, as there is increasing attention among consumers on the quality of food (Choi et al., 2011; UK Hospitality, 2017). This area is becoming a focus for small foodservice businesses, as it was found to be the only area where formal training is organised by the government or specific expertise from big businesses is sought (York et al., 2009). Compliance is also expressed towards the wider society, by guaranteeing “*paying our taxes*”, or generally timely payments towards suppliers. Finally, under environmental compliance there is recycling, which is the most commonly implemented green action across all the businesses interviewed, and consistently across various UK industries and geographies (Cassell & Lewis, 2011), including the restaurant industry (Huang et al., 2011). Government schemes and policies, such as the “*landfill tax*” were mentioned as motives for compliance; policies accompanied by a tax for discouraging the non-virtuous behaviour generated the social norm that encouraged recycling of suitable waste materials among SMEs in the UK (Blundel et al., 2013). Implementation of socially-responsible actions limited to compliance is a widespread phenomenon among small and larger businesses (Zadek,



2007; Maon et al., 2010; Baumann-Pauly et al., 2013; Kornilaki & Font, 2019). For example, focusing on employees' minimum legal industry standards, is typical in small businesses at the entry stage of their SBSR journey (Baumann-Pauly et al., 2013). For these businesses, being responsible is not the entry step towards more voluntary actions, it is part of the individual growth orientation, of operating in the market with respect to all laws, while still providing services competitively to customers (Brickson, 2007). Since recycling is the only environmental practice consistently implemented among the growth-oriented small foodservice businesses, this finding confirms that the majority of restaurant owner-managers are resistant to adopting green measures voluntarily (Rutherford et al., 2000; Revell & Blackburn, 2010; Chou et al., 2012; Alonso-Almeida et al., 2018). In terms of other SBSR practices, providing great customer service is essential in the restaurant environment, therefore actions beneficial to employees, such as training and rewards, are generally implemented by all these businesses (Alonso-Almeida & Bremser, 2013; Alonso-Almeida et al., 2018). This, however, goes against Alonso-Almeida et al. (2018) since it suggests that environmental practices do not encourage the uptake of more social practices. Accordingly, more studies on the concurrent implementation of practices should be undertaken to clarify this point.

- Focus on care and community actions (particularly in value-driven businesses).

Proactive SBSR actions of care for the well-being of stakeholders were especially found among the value-driven businesses. These businesses focus on creating a friendly or family environment characterised by hospitableness; actions include treating staff "*as family*", for example offering them (financial and moral) support and flexibility when going through difficult periods of their lives, such as sickness, buying a house, or settling in a new country for migrant employees. Such care actions are crucial to share the hospitable values with the staff: if you treat staff badly, "*they cannot make your customers feel important*". These SBSR actions of care are good for motivating staff to work in a job that is very demanding emotionally and physically (Lee & Ok, 2012; Poulston, 2015); they are nevertheless very informal and ad-hoc, based on informal conversations with stakeholders (Baumann-Pauly et al., 2013; Wickert et al., 2016). Another way to engage the staff was by supporting them to do things they "*care about*"; volunteering or charities initiatives were common among respondents. Allowing staff to express themselves at work is key to their engagement

and further supports CSR activities (Glavas, 2016; Shen & Benson, 2016). These actions towards staff are not commonly mentioned on social media, but are communicated informally or through training (Brunton et al., 2017). All these proactive SBSR actions of care can act as intrinsic motivators for employees. In respect to influencing restaurant staff productivity and getting their support for further SBSR actions, intrinsic motivators are just as powerful as extrinsic ones, such as the rewards seen in profit businesses (Harris et al., 2017), and smaller restaurants see such actions as an alternative to rewards that they cannot afford, and more in line with their hospitable mission.

The next topic, contributing to the wellbeing of clients, is the area related to food: “*healthy food*”, which is safe, nutritious and freshly made, was often mentioned. The establishments focusing on this theme were particularly the healthy fast-food types, seeking a niche for themselves in response to fast food being perceived as unhealthy (Jochim et al., 2015) amid increased consumer interest in healthier food options (Schröder & McEachern, 2005; Lee et al., 2014; Shin et al., 2018). Their focus was particularly on avoiding additives, therefore only using “*fresh*” and “*seasonal*” ingredients. This is a trend seen in the latest reports from sustainability oriented restaurants (Higgins-Desbiolles & Wijesinghe, 2018). Other terms were used, such as “*local*”, “*ethical*”, “*sustainable*” food: when the food is completely produced locally, people define it as ethical or sustainable to refer to the fact that it is sustainably produced in terms of reducing food miles (Lang, 2010). Also the concept of “*traceability*” was utilised, particularly for key ingredients such as coffee or meat (Shokri et al., 2014). These terms were used differently than the more generic term local food, which was utilised only to refer to food distributed by local business partners but not necessarily produced locally (Beer, 2015). Sustainable or ethical food remains an ideal, however, since only few businesses have a complete menu with local, ethical or sustainable food; for the most, respondents feature local food in just a few menu items (Alonso & O’Neill, 2010). Respondents justified these choices on the basis that the ethical value has to be continuously traded off against other factors such as price, availability, the quality of the product and an actual positive effect on sustainability (Coley et al., 2011; Sharma et al., 2014; Shokri et al., 2014; Duram & Cawley, 2015).

The most traditional and widely mentioned way of caring for the wellbeing of the local community is through philanthropy, or other in-kind support to local charity organisations. Charity is a form of traditional gift, part of the hospitality traditions in any society and intimately related to the concept of hospitableness (Burgess cited in Wood, 2016; Lashley, 2016); it is evident that such practice is an expression of the hospitableness of the business. Charity is also a typical behaviour of family firms (Le Breton-Miller & Miller, 2016), also noted in the hospitality sector (Njite et al., 2011) and restaurant chains (Hanks et al., 2016). The more proactive in implementing innovative SBSR actions are particularly the cafés, which identify with the locality and the local community, and thus typically offer free space for meetings or facilitating community events (Symons, 2013; Higgins-Desbiolles et al., 2014; Higgins-Desbiolles et al., 2019). Such a space, alongside the food produced and consumed, symbolises a certain cultural heritage; the symbolic value usually refers to something lacking, namely cultural places, in a world dominated by placeless venues and cultures (Ritzer, 2015; Bell, 2016; Wood, 2016). The existence of these third spaces facilitated by hospitality businesses is therefore very crucial to develop community awareness (Tjora, 2013). These acts of philanthropy are particularly in kind, rather than through fundraising activities typical of larger chain restaurants; it is the act of linking the physical space of hospitality with the community or sharing activities, which gives a distinctive concept and philosophy to these foodservice businesses and created shared values (Parsa et al., 2005; Parsa, et. al, 2015; Higgins-Desbiolles et al., 2019). This is also linked to the importance of creating long term partnerships with charities or with certain local suppliers, particularly when offering local food (Sharma et al., 2014).

Finally, there are different types of environmental actions implemented by the value-driven businesses. Apart from the already-mentioned focus on recycling, mainly driven by compliance, the next most implemented action is minimising food waste, particularly in the small-sized and flexible businesses such as the cafés (Papargyropoulou et al., 2016; Filomenou et al., 2019). Collaborations with partners like charities help with recycling food waste organically (Radwan et al., 2012; Papargyropoulou et al., 2014; Christ & Burritt, 2017). Creating a dish of the day helps to minimise food waste (Eriksson et al., 2017), or proactively offering doggy bags to customer in case of leftover food (Principato et al., 2018). Owner-managers avoid ordering larger than required quantities of food by relying on local suppliers and

frequent deliveries; this action has the further environmental benefit of reducing packaging (Sharma et al., 2012; Sharma et al., 2014). Sustainable packaging is particularly implemented by healthy fast foods, to address the negative polluting image that take-away facilities might have (Wang, 2014; Gallego-Schmid et al., 2019). The few owner-managers who mentioned energy or water saving measures were introducing them at start up stage, through “*green building design*” (Hu et al., 2010; DiPietro et al., 2013; DeMicco et al., 2014). These actions were not popular, with barriers such as lack of funds and lack of knowledge being mentioned (Bansal & Roth, 2006; Lepoutre & Heene, 2006), or rented premises where it was not possible to retrofit appliances. These findings confirm that small businesses have insufficient scale to be able to afford the investment costs of environmental actions, compared with corporate chains where the economies of scale justify eco-investments (Choi & Parsa, 2006; Berezan, 2010; Choua et al., 2012; Sloan et al., 2013; Alonso & Krajsic, 2014; Perramon et al., 2014). The focus on the innovative practices of food waste, possibly the most distinctive aspect among the environmental actions, is driven by collaborations with the third sector (Radwan et al., 2012; Papargyropoulou et al., 2014; Christ & Burritt, 2017).

- Focus on inclusiveness and environmental stewardship (solely in social enterprises).

The last part of this section covers the proactive SBSR actions implemented by the non-profit or social enterprises across the areas of employment, food, community and the environment. As their SBSR is about creating a positive social change to support their social mission, these businesses implement innovative practice, particularly focused on disadvantaged communities: these businesses prioritise social value creation (Davies et al., 2018). They particularly work with disabled individuals or individuals from disadvantaged communities or backgrounds, such as ex-offenders, or asylum seekers, to guarantee them “*life changing*” opportunities (Alegre & Berbegal-Mirabent, 2016). The role of food is generally seen as crucial for bringing people together and promoting awareness about the social mission and sustainability (Higgins-Desbiolles et al., 2014; Higgins-Desbiolles et al., 2019), but also to promote conviviality (Wood, 2016) and social justice (Dyen & Sirieix, 2016). In some examples, the production of social meals from waste food for disadvantaged communities offers a concept of social food, so far found only in few examples of

trailblazing social enterprise restaurants (Moizer & Tracey, 2010; Sigala, 2016; Dickerson & Hassanien, 2018; Higgins-Desbiolles et al., 2019). This is the maximum expression of social responsibility, since allowing disabled people to become host, is the highest form of personal expression therefore a symbol of true inclusiveness (Cavagnaro, 2016). These examples of affordable food and spaces for socialising were particularly seen in deprived communities within the city; organisations established their activities in these communities where issues of social inequality are more urgent (Cavagnaro, 2016; Dickerson & Hassanien, 2018). Through their commitment to a code of ethics informed by social justice, these social enterprises protect some individuals from exclusion, which can be a downside in the commercial café (Warner et al., 2013). Other inclusive spaces were strategically located in areas at the conjunction of different communities, particularly where very affluent communities collided with deprived communities or communities hosting refugees; such inclusiveness should foster integration of non-affluent citizens or refugees within the local community, for a real expression of conviviality, at a time when there is “*lack of public spaces*” to represent alternative forms of culture in the UK (Bell, 2016; Lynch, 2017).

Only the social enterprises in the sample were champions of further environmental actions beyond recycling and minimising food waste; for example they utilise the untapped resource of food waste to feed people, by cooking only with food discarded by the industrial food system, as well as fighting for social justice through a pay-as-you-feel model (Higgins-Desbiolles et al., 2019). This example resonates with the slow food lifestyle, which advocates a type of creative cooking that does not waste resources or damage the environment (Melissen et al., 2018). They aim to raise awareness about the issue of food waste, being linked with the topic of social justice. Only these social businesses, therefore, implement a form of SBSR aimed at positive social change, able to contribute directly to the overall sustainability of the hospitality industry (Cavagnaro, 2016; Lashley, 2016; Melissen et al., 2016; Farrington et al., 2017). The sustainability literature identifies the need for positive social actions, not just minimising damage to the environment, in order to regenerate the environment (Sanford, 2012); dynamic system theories highlight there is a lack of understanding about the barriers to change towards sustainability, usually embedded in inequality and power struggles within society (Pirgmaier & Steinberger, 2019). These social

enterprises, it is argued here, show an understanding of the complementarity of social and environmental issues, which seems to be lacking among traditional businesses (André & Pache, 2016). Until the green and social connection is understood, the hospitality industry will fail to engage in more sustainable hospitality practices (Melissen, 2013; Cavagnaro, 2016; Lashley, 2016; Higgins-Desbiolles et al., 2019; Cavagnaro et al., 2018). Highlighting the importance of the social agenda for achieving environmental sustainability is also needed to shift sustainability and CSR research in the foodservice sector away from the sole focus on the green agenda (Higgins-Desbiolles et al., 2019).

The contribution to knowledge of this last section is manifold. Primarily, it clarifies the actual implementation of socially responsible actions among small foodservice businesses, generally lacking in the hospitality CSR literature (Coles et al., 2013; Farrington et al., 2017). The majority of small businesses are responsive to those stakeholders that they are closer to, from a business perspective; all businesses particularly focus on SBSR actions towards employees, since these are essential for creating excellent service and a hospitable environment. This is an important contribution to theory because of the importance of improving employee engagement with proactive SBSR actions; such knowledge is otherwise missing from the restaurant literature (Melissen, 2013; Higgins-Desbiolles et al., 2019) which overwhelmingly focuses on green dining and generally disregards social practices (Alonso-Almeida et al., 2018). In particular, the actions implemented are informal and ad-hoc, based on an ethics of care that is an extension of the hospitableness of the business owners and is founded on their benevolent values. The other area is related to sustainable food, with a particular focus on healthy food (Schröder & McEachern, 2005), showing how SBSR actions are very responsive and influenced by external pressures from consumers (Jenkins, 2006). The cafés are particularly strong in implementing actions related to community support, since this is part of their distinctiveness (Tjora, 2013). Small foodservice businesses lack behind in implementing the green actions, the only area that they seem to tackle is food waste (Filimonau et al., 2019). The most sustainability oriented SBSR practice was found in the social enterprises; these social businesses demonstrated the desire to tap into the societal needs of the marginalised, as well as being stewards of the environment, with many actions related to food waste; this

heightened awareness of the urgency of this agenda, linked also to the cost savings that such actions can accrue to businesses, encouraged many value-driven businesses to experiment more with minimising food waste (Filimonau et al., 2019). Otherwise, businesses have a tendency for only partial engagement with the sustainability agenda (Clarke & Chen, 2007; Legrand et al., 2010). Such understanding of the complementarity of the two agendas showcased by social enterprises, is important for the advancement of the sustainability agenda in hospitality (Cavagnaro, 2016; Farrington et al., 2017; Higgins-Desbiolles et al., 2019).

## **7.7 Conclusion**

This chapter has discussed the research findings. The literature reviewed for this study, together with a set of seminal texts and theorisations, both about CSR in SMEs and SBSR (e.g. Lashley et al., 2007; Soundararajan et al., 2018), helped to identify the first contribution to knowledge, which is identifying that the business mission influences the perceptions of SBSR. The next important finding discussed is that the more proactive SBSR practices, in value-driven and social enterprises, are motivated by those prosocial values underpinning the business mission. It is only owner-managers of value-driven businesses and social enterprises who run their businesses according to prosocial personal values, who are willing to get engaged in more proactive SBSR actions. Conversely, if the business is solely pursuing economic benefits, there is only a limited set of conformity values and norms guiding behaviour, therefore SBSR implementation is limited to compliance and internal actions beneficial to employees.

The third key finding confirms the SBSR theory, whereby instrumental motivations of SBSR are necessary for a sustained SBSR practice in the long term, since they influence the capacity of the SBSR implementation; such motivation is actually also shaped by the business mission, since the value-driven businesses showcase a distinctive need to grow their business relationships through the SBSR practice, while growth businesses focus on short-term gains such as performance and cost savings. The fourth finding adds to institutional theories by highlighting how external factors generally have an indirect effect on the SBSR culture of the small business owner; pressure from clients is also important and drives the most innovative practices related

to food and the community. Finally, the actual SBSR actions implemented include safety, wellbeing and inclusiveness, illustrating a greater focus on the social practices, rather than environmental actions, in line with the sociological interpretation of hospitality as care for the welfare of others (Lashley, 2016; Wood, 2016). Only the social enterprises showcased a full understanding of the complementarity between the social and environmental elements of the sustainability agenda, to foster a more rigorous agenda for contributions to social sustainability and social justice.



## **Chapter 8**

### **Conclusions**

## **8.1 Introduction**

The purpose of this chapter is to provide an overview of the research and bring it to a conclusion. Having discussed the findings of this research in the previous chapter, this final chapter concludes by briefly identifying key dimensions of the literature reviewed, underlying the significance of the data collection methods, and highlighting the key contributions to knowledge emerged from the discussion. Finally, it reflects on the theoretical and practical implications of the research findings, which supports recommendations for future research.

## **8.2 Overview of the study**

The literature review started with a broad study of the CSR literature and CSR in SMEs, because the SBSR field, which is the focus of this research, emerged and inherited concepts from these two bodies of literature. The CSR review included an historical review of the development of the CSR construct. The initial review revealed that most research on CSR is focused on bigger organisations and makes use of traditional business economic theory, such as transaction economic theory and the resource based theory of the firm (Margolis & Walsh, 2003; Garriga and Mele, 2004; Secchi 2007; Crane et al., 2013). These studies focus on clarifying the mechanism linking CSR with financial performance (McWilliams & Siegel, 2000; Margolis & Walsh, 2003; Carroll & Shabana, 2010; Wood, 2010; Orlitzky et al., 2011). The review also revealed that other concepts have been advanced over the last 40 years, interrelated to CSR and equally contested, such as business ethics, corporate citizenship and sustainability, adopted interchangeably to CSR by a growing number of different members of society (Carroll, 1999; Moon, 2007; Dahlsrud, 2008; Okoye, 2009; Wheeler et al., 2003; Carroll & Shabana, 2010; Crane et al., 2019). The literature review also explored these alternative conceptualisations, since they can enrich the CSR research field with more contemporary interpretations. It was recognised that CSR, being a social practice, should be interpreted and adapted to specific institutional environments, in order to grasp the actors' sets of values and ideologies, but also to recognise the role of the business environment and civic society in influencing these values (Aguinis & Glavas, 2012; Farrington et al., 2017). The author relied on a pluralistic theoretical framework of analysis of business and society concepts, adapted to the context of small businesses

(Tomasella & Ali, 2006). In so doing, the research aimed to place its findings within this emerging and growing field of SBSR research, which is more sensitive to the small-business context and idiosyncrasies (Jamali et al., 2009; Spence, 2016; Wickert et al., 2016; Soundararajan et al., 2018).

The choice of small foodservice businesses as a research environment is instrumental to the opportunity to contribute knowledge to the emerging study field of SBSR, recently developed from the broader literature on CSR in SMEs. The terminology utilised throughout the study is that of small business social responsibility (SBSR), rather than CSR itself, to reflect that SBSR practices are primarily informal and in line with the personal values and decision-making processes of the owner-managers (Jenkins, 2004; Lepoutre & Heene, 2006; Perrini, 2006; Iturrioz et al., 2009; Spence 2016). The researcher specifically chose a population of small foodservice businesses, which is a subsector of the hospitality industry particularly under researched within the CSR literature (Njite et al., 2011; Coles et al., 2013; DiPietro, 2017). Small foodservice businesses were selected as the focus of this research because of their predicted continued growth in economic significance (Intel, 2019b): this is due to changes in food consumption towards a greater interest in healthier and authentic food (Gilmore & Pine, 2007; Pratt, 2007; Sims, 2010; Intel, 2019a), as well as consumers' need for more transparency on food quality (Kwok et al., 2016; Filimonau & Krivcova, 2017; Lo et al., 2017; UK Hospitality, 2018). The chosen research context was businesses located in the city of Sheffield, United Kingdom (UK). Sheffield was deemed a good location for a UK based research, being the fifth most populated city in the UK, halfway between the country's capital and smaller locations in terms of socio-economic variables, with the presence of both independent businesses and chain establishments (Rimington & Spencer, 2008).

This study wanted to investigate small foodservice businesses within the hospitality industry, and how their values and business objectives, alongside external factors, influence their understanding and implementation of SBSR. The study of small foodservice business owners, therefore, proved to be an ideal context of research, since the sector is dominated by small and micro businesses, where the owner-manager is often directly involved in the management and operations of the business (Estrade et al., 2014). In such businesses, personal values can have a more direct influence on the overall direction of the business (Spence, 2016). Small businesses within the

hospitality industry were chosen in particular as a unique environment to study the ethics and social responsibility of the sector, because of their propensity to live alternative forms of life and doing business (Ateljevic & Doorne, 2000; Thomas et al., 2011; Bosworth & Willett, 2011; Thomas, 2015; Tomassini, 2019). The forms of business that were reviewed in the literature and later formed part of the analysis were: traditional family businesses, lifestyle businesses, social enterprises. Ateljevic and Doorne (2000), Di Domenico (2005) and Bell (2016) all argue that lifestyle hospitality business owners, open to alternative forms of life, are more open to sociability and conviviality. Family businesses are also very significant in the hospitality sector (Getz, 2004), with evidence of better environmental and social performance in comparison to other firms (Berrone et al., 2010). More recently, the hospitality industry has seen a surge in the number of hospitality businesses setting up as social enterprises and devoted to positive social change (Sloan et al., 2014; Altinay et al., 2016; Cavagnaro, 2016; Dickerson & Hassanien, 2018; Sigala, 2019). These businesses were included in the sample since they are inherently socially responsible because of their social mission (Sigala, 2019).

An abductive research strategy was deemed necessary since the starting point of the research was an SBSR theoretical framework, nevertheless informed by existing CSR and business and society literatures (Crotty, 1998; Blaikie & Priest, 2019; Timmermans & Tavory, 2012). A qualitative abductive research methodology was suitable because of its flexibility in allowing the opportunity to explore personal values and business values concurrently in order to understand the phenomenon of SR in small businesses better (Lindgreen & Swaen, 2010; Aguinis & Glavas, 2012; Spence, 2016; Soundararajan et al., 2018). In studies relying on abduction, the original framework is successively modified, particularly in relation to the specific context of the research (Dubois & Gadde, 2002; Shepherd & Sutcliffe, 2011). The new insights, resulting from the combination of established theoretical models and new concepts derived from the confrontation with reality, lead to the extension of theory (Ong, 2012; Timmermans & Tavory, 2012) through a conceptual representation (Shepherd & Sutcliffe, 2011). The chosen pragmatic interpretivist approach to abductive research, primarily utilised semi-structured interviews to collect data on the phenomenon researched (Saunders et al., 2016). Archival documents, primarily sourced online, were utilised to complement the research and interpret the findings, as often done in

CSR research, (Kasim, 2007; Holcomb et al., 2010; Campopiano & DeMassis, 2015). The subjective opinions of respondents interact to define the accessible knowledge, hence qualitative methods of data collection were chosen to explore the opinions of individuals involved (Kvale, 1996; Cassell & Symon, 2004; Cassell, 2015). The sample included thirty-eight small independent foodservice businesses, all operating within the same locality in the United Kingdom.

The five key findings of the research, linked to the five research questions, are briefly summarised in the rest of this section. The first finding is related to the first research objective, which was to “*investigate the perceptions of SBSR in independent foodservice businesses*”. The first key finding highlighted that there is a link between the business mission and perceptions of SBSR. This link helped to subdivide the interviewed businesses into three homogeneous groups: the growth group, which interpreted SBSR as an economic and legal responsibility because of their growth mission; the value-driven group, which interpreted SBSR as an ethical responsibility, because the business is focused on the informal mission of hospitableness; finally the social enterprise group, which interpreted SBSR as a commitment to the social ethos underpinning the social mission. The research, therefore, disclosed how the perceptions of SBSR are influenced by the business mission. Few contributions to the literature, such as Murillo & Lozano (2006) consider business mission as influential in determining SBSR actions; therefore, this element should be integrated into the SBSR literature.

The second finding is related to the second objective of the research, which was to “*critically analyse how personal values influence SBSR in independent foodservice businesses*”. The objective was to acquire a fine-grained understanding of the internal mechanisms through which the personal values of the owner-managers influence SBSR. The findings highlighted that all the owner-managers showed commitment to conformity values, but also social and industrial norms (Cialdini & Goldstein, 2004; Lepoutre & Heene, 2006; Kornilaki & Font, 2019). On the contrary, only the owner-managers of value-driven businesses and social enterprises, which are businesses driven by prosocial values, allow for a certain level of moral awareness that leads them to proactive SBSR actions. Primarily, these are the prosocial values underpinning the hospitableness and the social mission; also mentioned are individualistic values, particularly those that led the business owner to start an independent business, such as

passion for food. Such openness to change and independence, also leads them to develop an awareness at the local level of the socio-environmental issues to be tackled in their business (Spence & Perrini, 2009; Sampaio et al., 2012; Thomas, 2015; Demirtas et al., 2017). In summary, a complex moral reasoning is needed for voluntary SBSR actions in these foodservice businesses: such moralisation is more likely in businesses whose mission is driven by prosocial values.

The third finding is related to the third objective of the research, which was “*to critically examine how business motivations influence SBSR in independent foodservice businesses*”. There is a lack of studies exploring the combined influence of personal values and business motivations on the overall SBSR implementation. The findings of this research highlighted that perceived business benefits of SBSR are a necessary motivation for a sustained SBSR implementation in the long term. They represent the capacity for SBSR implementation (Chrisman et al., 2012; Panwar et al., 2016), but are also shaped according to the business mission. The perceived business benefits are typically intangible for value-driven businesses, such as reputation or branding; for social enterprises, it is about creating a community of likeminded individuals supporting their cause; this attitude is reflecting the informal and relational type of management which characterises these small businesses (Jenkins, 2004; Perrini, 2006; Fassin et al., 2011). The growth-oriented multi-outlet businesses usually focus on compliance and responsible business practices, since these can guarantee operational performance and cost savings, in line with the growth mission.

The fourth finding is related to the fourth research objective, which was “*to examine how external factors influence SBSR in independent foodservice businesses*”. What emerged is that external factors, such as government, media and industry competitors, primarily have an indirect influence on the decision making of the independent business owner; such external pressure operates mainly through influencing the norms guiding the owner-manager (Stacey, 2007). The other most influential external factor, reported particularly by value-driven businesses, is the increased awareness from customers, which is reflected in the perceived benefits expected from the implementation of SBSR actions in terms of reputation and branding.

The fifth and final finding is related to the fifth research objective, which was “*to critically analyse the implementation of SBSR in independent foodservice businesses*”. This study took a broad look at all practices that can be ascribed to SBSR, with the

added advantage of highlighting the clear difference in implementation across different types of businesses. What emerged is a clear distinction in the level of implementation across different types of businesses. Growth businesses tend to be more conservative and only implement responsible business practices linked to compliance. Value-driven businesses are more proactive, implementing small voluntary caring actions that are quite informal, focused on employees and the local community, rather than on the environment. It is ultimately only the social enterprises that go the extra mile, focusing on both social and environmental practices at the same time, since they understand the interconnectedness between creating social inclusiveness and environmental sustainability. A common theme highlighted across all businesses, is actions for supporting employees, because they are essential for creating a hospitable environment.

### **8.3 Contributions to knowledge**

This section extrapolates from the findings the key contributions to knowledge that this work adds to various bodies of literature, in line with the concepts already discussed in chapter 7.

#### *8.3.1 Contribution to SBSR literature*

The core contribution of this work to the emerging SBSR theory (Spence 2016; Soundararajan et al., 2018), is to clarify the complexity through which personal values influence SBSR. On a practical level, it is the commitment to a business mission informed by prosocial values, which distinguishes the more socially oriented businesses. Such innovativeness and openness to alternative business values, not necessarily focused on growth, is what influences the ethical SBSR and leads to positive social change (Soundararajan et al., 2018). The proactive ethical SBSR practice depends on the benevolent or universal values (Runyan & Covin, 2019) that the owner-manager shares across the business (Lawrence et al., 2006; Uhlaner et al., 2012; Schaefer et al., 2018; Runyan & Covin, 2019) through the business mission. In the values-driven businesses, the informal mission is hospitableness; the social mission instead characterises the social enterprises. Those business owners focused on the hospitableness are characterised by an ethics of care view of SBSR (Tomasella &

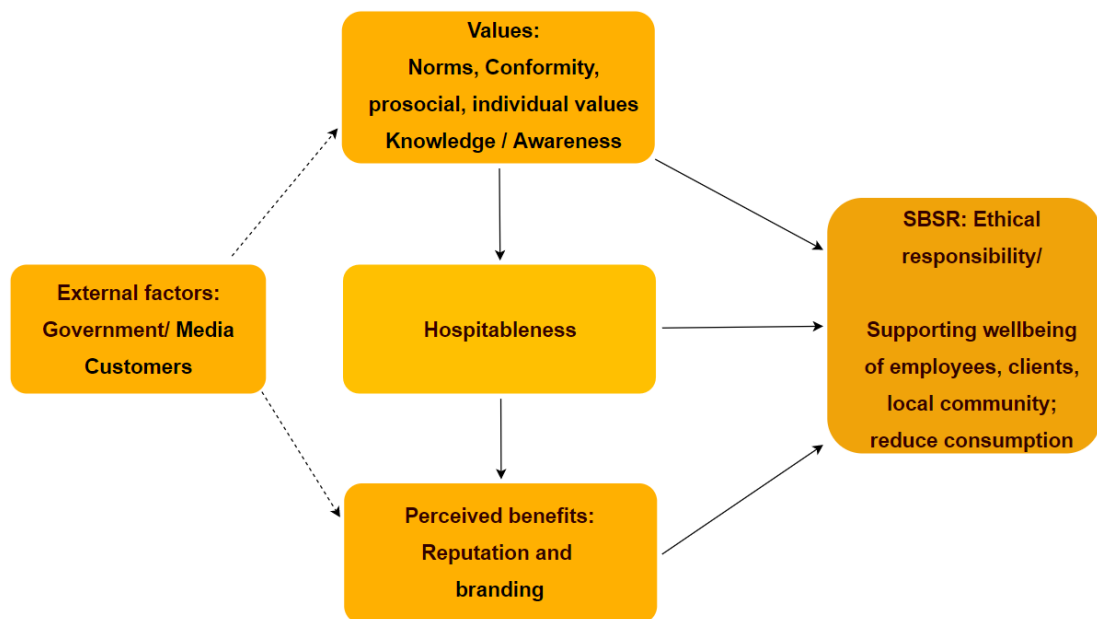
Ali, 2019). This enhances SBSR literature by explaining how the inherent traditional philosophy of the hospitality sector, when acknowledged by the business owner, can influence the perception of SBSR (Tomasella & Ali, 2019). This confirms that sectorial studies would be beneficial to advance the SBSR literature (Spence, 2016). The second most important contribution to SBSR theory, is the empirical confirmation that perceived business benefits are as necessary as personal values for a long-term SBSR implementation, particularly when external factors work at the same time to enhance these benefits: a business that is relationship-based, open to commit to personal values in business, as well as oriented to the long-term (Memili et al., 2017), will implement voluntary SBSR actions and therefore will reap intangible benefits from such practice. This is particularly valid when there is enhanced awareness from clients about the importance of implementing socio-environmental actions (UK Hospitality, 2018; Mintel, 2019b). A business that is growth orientated, will primarily focus on responsible business practices. Such businesses usually just focus on excellent operations and fair treatment of employees, with the government playing a key role in driving such commitment.

These contributions to knowledge highlighted how profit objectives can clash with personal objectives, therefore prioritising personal values in business, particularly the prosocial values, is key for the implementation of proactive SBSR. Such an organisational identity perspective helps to develop SBSR theory further. Even in small businesses it is quite important for owner-managers to understand how their own values influence the business mission, as an emergent strategy of the business. This comment echoes Spence and Rutherford (2001), suggesting that owner-managers should explore their own frames of reference in understanding the business–society relationship, by looking at their own individual values. Reflecting on personal values, can allow an owner-manager to create a specific socio-environmental business mission; this can drive SBSR more easily than just choosing generic “win-win” messages, which might otherwise limit the scope of the commitment. Committing to core business values helps in achieving higher commitment and support for SBSR actions. The implementation of sustainability and CSR is not just about technical innovation, but cultural change within an organisation.

The key contributions to knowledge are detailed graphs in the following Figures 4, 5 and 6. Figure 4 is the framework that emerged for value-driven businesses. This



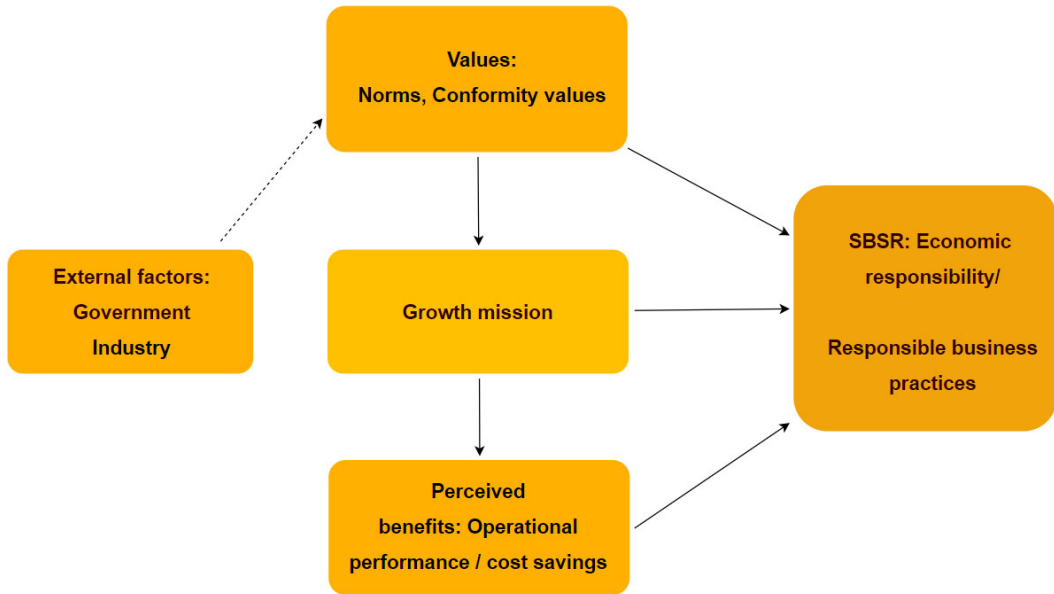
contribution to knowledge is about providing details of the elements that holistically influence the SBSR of value-driven businesses. The existence of prosocial values is very important since they directly influence the hospitableness, which is an informal mission for the business. This has a direct influence on the ethical interpretation of SBSR, as well as on the perceived intangible business benefits such as reputation and branding; this means that motivations related to marketing also play a role on SBSR implementation.



**Figure 4: Updated conceptual framework for value-driven businesses**

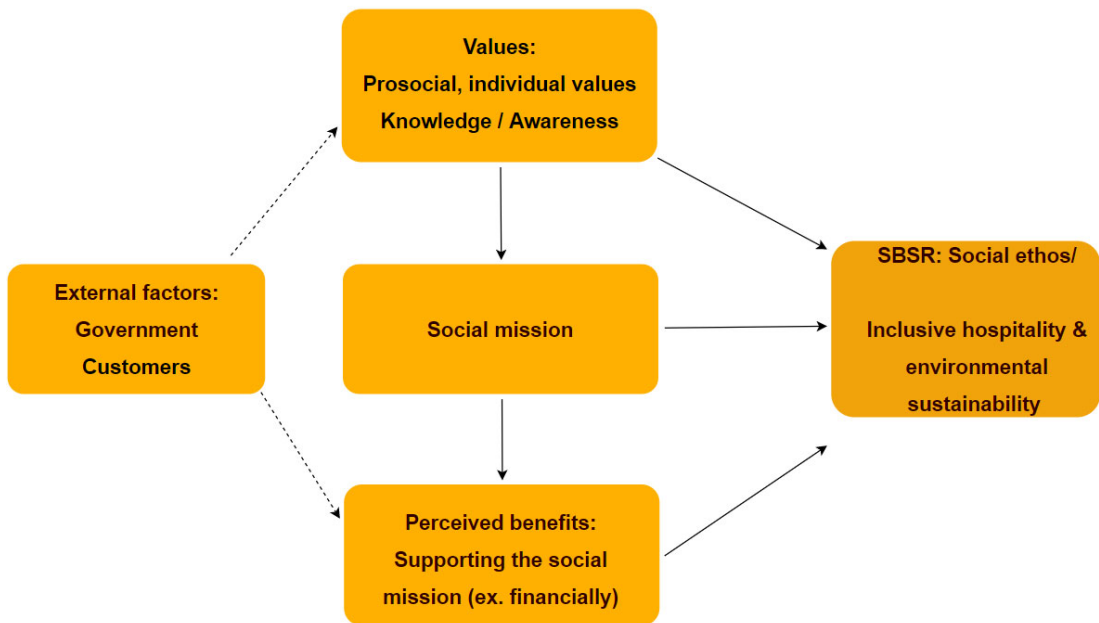
Source: Compiled by author

The second framework, in Figure 5, describes the contribution to knowledge for growth businesses. There is a key difference from the previous one, in that external factors are mainly government and industry, in influencing the norms of growth businesses. Norms and conformity values mean that these businesses mainly focus on a growth mission and economic responsibility; the perceived benefit from SBSR implementation is operational performance, therefore their implementation is limited to responsible business practices.



**Figure 5: Updated conceptual framework for growth businesses**

Source: Compiled by author

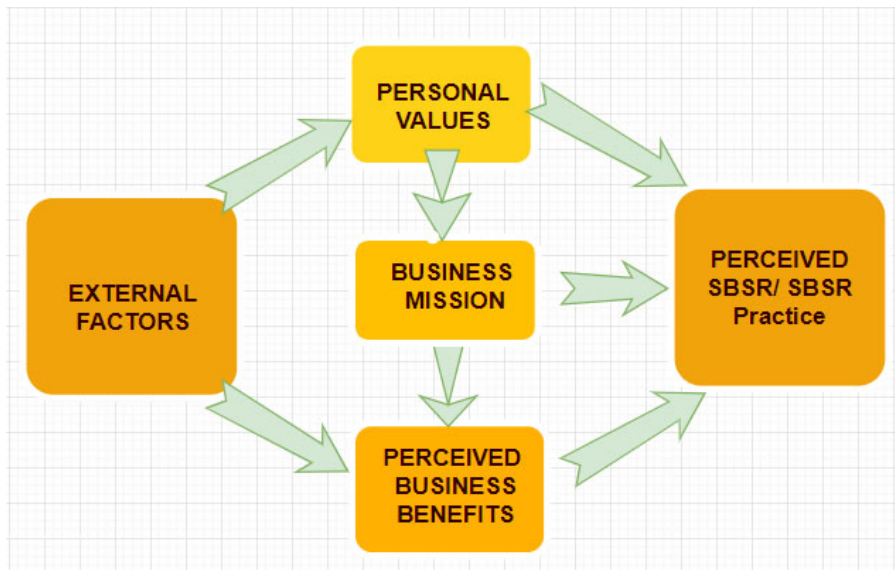


**Figure 6: Updated conceptual framework for social enterprises**

Source: Compiled by author

The third framework is in Figure 6 for social enterprises. The key difference here is the role of the social mission, influenced by universal prosocial values, which means both the SBSR perceptions and perceived business benefits are heavily informed by the social ethos and revolve around guaranteeing it. The SBSR implementation dovetails with the activities underpinning the achievement of this formal social mission. It is only social entrepreneurs who showcased a full understanding of the complementarity of the social and environmental practices. This example of achieving green and social objectives concurrently is an important contribution to the literature on CSR and the sustainability of the hospitality industry, since it is an example of how businesses should operate if they are truly to embrace the hospitality sustainability agenda (Melissen et al., 2016; Cavagnaro, 2016; Lashley, 2016; Farrington et al., 2017). Overall, what emerged is that small businesses, despite their lack of funds, are able to innovate in order to achieve objectives otherwise not tackled by the industry: in particular the areas of food waste and employment for people with disabilities are two topics that are emerging from smaller businesses that are likely to affect the overall approaches of the industry (UK Hospitality, 2018).

The last figure (7) clearly depicts the complexity of SBSR and how it is influenced by a multiplicity of factors; few studies have looked holistically at the phenomenon from all these points of views, as well as across different types of businesses. This last figure is a summary diagram of the previous frameworks, it highlights the broad themes that emerged from table 16 in chapter 6.



**Figure 7: Summary framework**

Source: Compiled by author

### 8.3.2 Contribution to hospitality literature

These findings make three important contributions to the hospitality literature as well. The first one is unexpected, in terms of empirically noticing the connection between hospitableness and the ethical perceptions of SBSR (Tomasella & Ali, 2019). Other studies have explored SBSR and ethics, or hospitableness and customer service, but none of the studies in the literature have advanced a link between SBSR and hospitableness. This work contributes to the literature by showing that hospitableness influences the SBSR perceptions of the business owners. The informal mission of hospitableness influences SBSR, since hospitableness can be achieved through SBSR actions. By expressing its hospitableness through SBSR actions, the small business can thrive through offering a mix of commercial, personalised and social hospitality (Gehrels et al., 2017; Lashley & Chibili, 2018). This work further contributes to hospitality knowledge by highlighting certain individualistic values that are part of the hospitable behaviour, beyond the sub-ethical subset (Blain & Lashley, 2014): passion for food or culture in particular can contribute to achieving hospitableness (Poulston, 2015; Telfer, 2016), alongside the more prosocial values, such as altruism, friendliness and kindness. These traits can influence the ability of people to be happy in their hospitality jobs and, furthermore, their ability to care for others; therefore owner-managers should look for these individualistic personality traits, beyond the altruism

or friendliness usually considered as indicators of hospitableness in their employees (Blain & Lashley, 2014; Lashley & Chibili, 2018), as these are further precursors to enhance ethical behaviour in the sector.

The third key contribution to knowledge is the critical analysis of the implementation of socially responsible actions among small foodservice businesses, usually lacking in the hospitality CSR literature (Njite et al., 2011; Hawkins & Bohdanowicz, 2012; Coles et al., 2013). This empirical study of small independent foodservice businesses highlighted how proactive foodservice SBSR practice depends on the traditional values of hospitality, originating in the personal values of the owner-managers, as well as embeddedness in the local community. The majority of small businesses are responsive to those stakeholders that they are closer to from a business perspective; the value-driven businesses particularly focus on SBSR actions towards employees, since these stakeholders are essential for creating a hospitable environment. Smaller establishments (such as lifestyle cafés and pubs) and social enterprises also focus on the community and broader society. It was already known that smaller businesses do not implement many green actions, beyond food waste and recycling (Choi & Parsa, 2006; Berezan, 2010; Choua et al., 2012; Alonso & Krajsic, 2014; Perramon et al., 2014; Sloan et al., 2013). What is clarified is that, particularly in a small service environment, it is employees who are the key stakeholders, because of their role in delivering the hospitableness; such focus is important in a sector affected by low pay and lack of employee retention; and this clarifies why such a people industry does not focus on the sustainability agenda (Revell & Blackburn, 2007; Iaquinto, 2014; Higgins-Desbiolles et al., 2019). This knowledge is otherwise missing from the SBSR and hospitality literature, which traditionally focuses on larger businesses and their green agenda (Melissen, 2013; Higgins-Desbiolles et al., 2019).

This work also has an important implication for public management of initiatives aimed at engaging small foodservice businesses towards SBSR activities. This study confirms that business case approaches are not useful for small businesses (Thomas, 2015; Spence, 2016). Preference should be given to initiatives, which highlight the role of small businesses within the community; a typical successful initiative in this sense was the “Small Business Saturdays” organised by various city councils in the UK, which promote public awareness of the importance of buying local and supporting one’s community. Such initiatives can simultaneously encourage small businesses to

see themselves as inherently embedded within that community, being more hospitable and ultimately responsible towards that community, through the effect that such initiative can have on social norms. Moreover, policymakers could benefit by acknowledging the peculiarities, potentialities and constraints of small foodservice businesses. This was certainly reflected in the successful initiative of the Food Safety Authority, which designed a simplified version of HACCP food safety regulations for small businesses (Taylor, 2005). Similar initiatives should be promoted to encourage, for example, action linked to the food waste issues, or support for social enterprises.

#### **8.4 Limitations**

As with any research, this one encountered some limitations and therefore the findings must be interpreted in this context. The study faced some limitations linked both to the nature of the topic and to the research conditions. Concerning the first point, the subject of the study has been ignored and under-theorised in the scholarship. The available literature only offered a limited body of knowledge about the research topic and the available information was therefore partial or non-existent; this meant that a qualitative type of research had to be chosen for developing theoretical insights. The nature of the qualitative research added potential limitations to the generalisability of the findings: one related to the type of data collection method, the other related to the sampling. Data collection through qualitative semi-structured face-to-face interviews was chosen as an appropriate method for investigating the values and motivations of respondents, but some may have not answered all questions fully and openly. Respondents might be trying to depict themselves in a better light, for example some respondents might be highlighting the more proactive actions rather than the passive actions, because of their lack of compliance or irresponsibility. Such bias was minimised through the use of online documents, particularly social media, as a complementary method of data collection; moreover, the research followed rigorous research ethics procedures, offering to respondents guarantees of anonymity at every stage of the data collection.

Another limitation to the generalisability of the findings is the sample size. Purposive sampling (Chapter 5.3.3) allowed a reasonable number of participants to be selected for the methodological approach used; nevertheless, the sample size might not be

considered representative of all small foodservice firms. Another limitation is due to the limited amount of time that was available for data collection during this research project. The examined companies were selected because they are likely to provide rich empirical data and also serve as best in-class examples; it was nevertheless found that some of the businesses ceased trading before the end of the research project in 2019. It should be noted, though, that the goal was what Yin calls the ‘theoretical generalisability’ of the research findings (Yin, 2009). The last potential issue affecting the findings of this research, is the researcher’s positionality, which had an influence in contacting participants, collecting data and analysing them. The researcher projected a strong interest in the social and environmental agenda of the respondents, since this was her past professional background; such experience was utilised to justify the research and build rapport with the respondents. Moreover, the personal empathy between the researcher and participants helped to establish an open and reliable conversation, but could have had an impact on the way the researcher collected the data and reflected on them. This point was already addressed in the chapter regarding data quality and how the reflexivity helped the researcher to minimise her bias during the data analysis phase.

### **8.5 Future areas of research**

The value-driven approach seen among the businesses in this research might offer a better uptake of voluntary SBSR practices, which also guarantees competitiveness in the hospitality sector, in light of the growing interest among the public in responsible business practices (Gehrels et al., 2017). The benefit of the findings of this work was to show how smaller businesses can bring innovativeness and advance the perceptions of what is the expected norm in the commitment to society and the environment (Soundararajan et al., 2018). For this reason, it is important to continue exploring alternative business models, better suited to fast-track the path to achieving more commitment to SBSR/CSR and sustainability in the hospitality industry, in relation to how small businesses or social enterprises operate and how they achieve social objectives by prioritising their ethical values. The example of the social enterprises included in this research raised interesting questions about what a more socially-oriented or even a socially-just foodservice sector should look like, for example by focusing on the training of disadvantaged people (Higgins-Desbiolles et al., 2019).

Future research should further explore the social innovativeness of social enterprises and value-driven businesses; there are promising narrative studies that can disclose the narration of their driving values, and how the organisation manages to prioritise these values while still achieving organisational effectiveness and successful management processes. Such narrative studies of social entrepreneurship and value-driven businesses can provide the inspiration currently sought by businesses of all dimensions that endeavour to become more responsible to society.

Moving to the hospitality literature, future studies should explore in more depth the values and mind-sets of other key stakeholders involved in delivering SBSR in hospitality, particularly employees, as they are key in the delivery of the voluntary SBSR actions. Further studies should look at how hospitality employees can feel that their own job allows them to be more committed to SBSR; this is crucial as it is employees that have to carry out the SBSR actions of the hospitality business, they are the brand ambassadors for the values of the organisation. One strand of such research should consider the personality traits that are more likely to make employees feel empowered to support the SBSR process, particularly the individualistic values such as passion for food, or creativity, or pleasure in entertaining, so far not considered in the theorisation of hospitableness, but highlighted here as important motivations for owner-managers to be engaged in SBSR. This seems a promising area of research, bearing in mind how studies of CSR in larger organisations are already going in the direction of showing that empowerment works more than rewards and benefits to make employees feel engaged at work and further support CSR activities (Carter, 2014; Glavas, 2016).

Regarding clients, an interesting area would be discovering how clients enjoy the hospitality experiences of social enterprises, to reflect how these businesses can deliver their social values while still offering a suitable hospitality experience (Sigala, 2019). Some existing studies are shifting the traditional concept of consumer sovereignty towards more empowerment and engagement of the customers in respect to the values of the organisation. Ritzer suggests that the concept of prosumer (2015) should be applicable to the hospitality industry to indicate the process through which the consumer gets involved in the 'production' of the hospitality experience to gain more value from it. This shift was identified also as a very important transition needed for further engaging consumers with the sustainability agenda (Cavagnaro et al., 2018).



There should be a shift from host as servant, to host as shepherd (Van Rheede & Dekker, 2016) in heralding consumers to a wider understanding about the importance of endorsing commitment to social and environmental issues, since lack of consumer support is a key barrier to the implementation of SBSR in the less engaged businesses.

The shift from the undiscussed norm of ‘customer as king’ to a more balanced approach to the relationship between hosts and guests would also benefit the study of the important and heavily under researched area of unethical social practices in hospitality; there is growing awareness in human resource management studies that addressing issues related to bullying and sexual harassment should be prioritised within this industry (Ram et al., 2016); often issues such as the work conditions and hierarchical structure in the sector can lead to sexual harassment going undetected (Lashley, 2000; Poulston, 2008b). The opportunity here would be to align the SBSR literature with these important topics in the knowledge that smaller businesses cannot usually afford the economy of scale to have a human resources team in charge of these issues.

## **8.6 Final thoughts**

The research started from the realisation that modern society is requiring all businesses a commitment to socio-environmental issues; this phenomenon is particularly seen in the foodservice sector due to the great implications that this sector has for the sustainability and health of modern society. Conversely, the academic literature usually downplays the phenomenon of CSR in small businesses. This research adopted a terminology more conducive to the peculiarities of small businesses, which allowed research into their commitment to actions beneficial for society and the environment. The result has been to highlight that the commitment of small businesses to SBSR is very informal, but tailored to their challenges in terms of lack of time and resources. These businesses tend to focus on actions driven by their personal prosocial values, as well as actions at a local level, driven also by the interests of their clients, and, in these kinds of actions, small businesses have a competitive advantage compared to bigger ones, revealed in actions such as care towards employees, or towards disadvantaged communities in the case of social enterprises, as well as a focus on reducing food waste. Despite the informality of these actions, such virtuous behaviour can introduce

innovativeness to the foodservice sector in terms of commitment to positive social change (Soundararajan et al., 2018): small actions of change can transform the culture of the sector, building on the mix of internal and external factors at play within a specific local environment.

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## Appendices



## Appendix 1: Preliminary sample population

Type award	N.	Description of the category
<b>Asian</b>	26	Covering all restaurants from casual to fine dining: the restaurants you vote for must offer a consistency of quality across both food and service to match that of their customer expectations. There should be an emphasis on using fresh, seasonal foods, with sourcing of local produce where appropriate. The menu should offer well prepared and originally presented dishes with corresponding prices and may also include ‘specials’ that further reflect the creative flair of the kitchen team. The customer service provided should be attentive and friendly, displaying a good level of product knowledge in both the menu and beverages on offer and reflecting a professional image. Above all the establishment must maintain a consistency of quality across both the food and service offered
<b>Med</b>	13	
<b>Rest of the World</b>	10	
<b>Modern British</b>	14	
<b>Café</b>	35	Primarily a daytime venue offering the best in quick counter service, freshly prepared food pre-dominantly made on site, eat in or to take-away. The food may aspire to that of restaurant standard including daily changing specials or be of a more traditional café style but should always be appropriately priced reflecting value for money. The décor should reflect the food offer and may be of contemporary style or, again, reflect a more traditional style however must always be welcoming, clean and well-kept with friendly and knowledgeable staff. Overall the venues should reflect customer needs regarding convenience and above all maintain a consistency of quality across both the food and service offered.
<b>Traditional Pub</b>	19	This award aims to recognise and showcase the quality and variety of the region’s pubs, in particular those that are supporting independent craft ale producers and microbreweries by offering a variety of local ales alongside national and international craft beers and show a considerable knowledge in this area and further compliment the beverages offer with traditional, home cooked pub food reflecting menu seasonality and support for the local food industry.
<b>Gastro Pub / Pub Restaurant</b>	8	As the local food scene continues to evolve and grow we have re-introduced a gastro pub / pub restaurant category to recognise both the contribution that this style of establishment brings to our dynamic food scene and also to differentiate it from the more classic style of restaurant. Further criteria remains similar to that of our restaurant category: consistency of quality across both food and service to match that of their customer expectations; an emphasis on using fresh, seasonal foods, with sourcing of local produce

		where appropriate. The menu should offer well prepared and originally presented dishes with corresponding prices and may also include ‘specials’ that further reflect the creative flair of the kitchen team. Customer service provided should be attentive and friendly, displaying a good level of product knowledge in both the menu and beverages on offer and reflecting a professional image. Above all the establishment must maintain a consistency of quality across both the food and service offered.
<b>Licensed Cafés &amp; Bars</b>	16	This category seeks to recognise and include the growing culture of casual dining in a more relaxed and informal style; a licensed premise that may be visited for food and drink or either respectively and including ‘gastro-cafés’ that offer more than a traditional café would be expected too by the provision of a drinks menu that includes alcoholic beverages and who offer a service that regularly extends into the evening. There must be a consistency of quality across both food and service to match that of their customer expectations, the menu should offer well prepared and originally presented dishes with corresponding prices reflecting the casual emphasis of the venue. The customer service provided should be attentive and friendly, displaying a good level of product knowledge in both the menu and beverages on offer and reflecting a professional image. Above all the establishment must maintain a consistency of quality across both the food and service offered.
<b>Streetfood &amp; Takeaway</b>	9	For our independent ‘food-to-go’ businesses and to reflect the strong emergence of streetfood traders and the eclectic contribution they provide to our vibrant, ever-growing local food culture. Please vote for those you feel provide on a regular basis quality and freshness at affordable prices. Food that is easy to grab and go, quick, convenient and above all super tasty.
<b>Retailer Multi</b>	6	The same criteria as for retailer single applied to our growing group of independent grocers, delis, farm shops and retailers offering café hospitality alongside their core business.
<b>TOTAL</b>	156	

\* Note the analysis was done primarily on the web pages of the Eat Sheffield website, not the individual websites of the establishments

## Appendix 2: Research sample

I.	Level of Ed.	Years	Revenue	FT	Type
1	Secondary	4	did not provide	4	SE
2	Catering	4	360K	11	V
3	University	6	875K	42	V
4	Secondary	3	did not provide	1	SE
5	University	1	did not provide	0	SE
6	Secondary	10	find	45	V
7	University	1	did not provide	2	V
8	University	24	300K	13	V
9	Secondary	35	did not provide	8	V
10	University	1	100K	6	V
11	University	10	800K	15	V
12	Secondary	3	did not provide	11	V
13	Secondary	16	1.3	30	V
14	Secondary	37	300K	15	SE
15	University	1	did not provide	1	SE
16	University	18	200K	7	V
17	Secondary	6	630K	9	G
18	University	3	did not provide	12	G
19	University	1	did not provide	1	V
20	Secondary	15	did not provide	18	V
21	University	1	did not provide	5	G
22	Secondary	3	did not provide	8	V
23	University	2	800K	39	V
24	University	16	350K	12	V
25	Primary	25	490K	6	V
26	University	3	2M	33	G
27	University	28	did not provide	20	V
28	University	7	did not provide	12	V
29	University	6	did not provide	6	V
30	University	8	did not provide	15	V
31	Secondary	3	478K	13	G
32	University	35	did not provide	5	SE
33	University	11	did not provide	11	V
34	University	4	120/150K	4	V
35	University	12	did not provide	1	SE
36	University	1	did not provide	1	V
37	University	12	did not provide	1	SE
38	University	7	did not provide	26	G

Source: Author

### Appendix 3: Companied not interested

REASON FOR INVOLVEMENT	NUMBER OF CONTACTS	sampling method
local food; vegetarian	mail + visit sent 20/10	snowball
charity evenings	email sent 28/9; he returns end October, call back 2 NOV	Eat Sheffield
community space	visit 24/6, mail sent 28/6; called 04/07 - he is sick, call again 11/07 - NEED TO CALL BACK SEPTEMBER	Eat Sheffield
Local food	sent mail to general task id; follow up through James; not interested	Eat Sheffield
charity support to Friend of porter valley	sent mail; not interested	snowball
sustainability; supports the charity Freeman College	manager Chris Mondays/Tuesdays ; sent mail 01/07; called 04/07; visit 06/07; call back September; visited sent mail 20/10; sent reminder	social enterprise
community space	mail sent 01/07; call Monday 10/07	snowball
community space	mail sent 29/6; revisit 06/07; call back September NEED TO CALL BACK SEPTEMBER (already sent 3/4 reminders)	Eat Sheffield
fiercely independent, craft beer	sent mail 14/10; no reply; to be visited Thursday 20/10	snowball
Glynis is café manager	mail sent; follow up with Glynis by phone	social enterprise
(chinese authentic cuisine, gluten free menu etc)	email sent 28/9 visit 20/10	Eat Sheffield
local food, ethical sourcing	mail sent 18/10; visit 20/10...didnt like; she is interested anyway so will interview ... eventually never replied	Eat Sheffield
Eat Sheffield Sustainable Restaurant award 2011; new low-impact restaurant	sent email to Matt several times, also visited, he never replied	Eat Sheffield

low environmental impact, grow your own food	asked malvin CALL BACK mid OCTOBER; sent another email reminder 18/10 eventually never replied	Eat Sheffield
Local food, low environmental impact	sent email to Trudi and Justine; sent reminder eventually never replied	Eat Sheffield
Vegetarian, organic food	mail sent 28/6; visited 04/07, very busy, pls call back mid August	Eat Sheffield
long established award winning Asian restaurant	message via facebook; called back 10th October; visit 18th October at 4.30pm call back and apologise, visit Thursday 20/10	Eat Sheffield
community space	sent twitter message, awaiting contact; mail 05/07 call again 11/07	social enterprise
local food, vegetarian chef	contacted chef John Tite via twitter	Eat Sheffield
local food, ethical sourcing	sent a mail, they acknowledged it but never they replied	Eat Sheffield
Organic food	mail sent 08/07 left voicemail 18/10, called various ties, met in person...	Eat Sheffield
new outlet of (NAME PUB)	recall 26/10; basically Edward the owner is not really involved, he is very young. The head brewer seems to be in charge of strategic directions	Eat Sheffield
social enterprise café chain	social enterprise café chain	social enterprise
big into values; place in the community; also employee well being	email sent 28/9 (leave as back up they are not located Sheffield)	Eat Sheffield
sustainable sourcing	Emailed several times; no reply	Eat Sheffield
Local & healthy food	Emailed several times; no reply	Eat Sheffield
used to be a cooperative; new management now not interested	visit 24/6, mail sent 28/6; called and emailed again 04/07	Eat Sheffield

## Appendix 4: Data collection documents

### Project information sheet

#### *Researchers*

The main project researcher is Barbara Tomasella, from Sheffield Hallam University. The supervisors, supporting the research process, are Dr. Alisha Ali and Dave Egan, both faculty members at Sheffield Hallam University.

#### *Project information*

The purpose of this project is to critically analyse how independent restaurants express and implement their Small Business Social Responsibility (SBSR). The first part of the research will be an interview with yourself as owner-manager of the company. You will be asked to share any other public online material. The results of the analysis should lead to defining a typology of social responsibility practices of the independent restaurant sector.

#### *Your role: Ethics and data management procedures*

The main researcher will conduct the interviews. Participation in the interview is entirely voluntary and you may withdraw from the research at any time. You will be assigned a pseudonym and the data will be stored anonymously in digital and paper form. Personal information non-relevant for the research will be deleted and other information, associated with the background or relevant places that might lead to your identity, will be coded as well. One digital and one paper file linking your real name with the pseudonym will also be kept separate from the files containing the interview information, for the whole duration of the study; this file will only be accessible to the main researcher and supervisors.


I do not foresee any potential risks or discomfort to you as a result of participating. It is anticipated that the project will feed into one or more journal or conference articles; extracts from the responses will be made anonymous if utilised as verbatim. This project has been approved by the Research Ethics Committee of Sheffield Hallam University with reference number **SBS-78**. If you have any ethical concerns about the project or questions about your rights as a participant please contact the researcher of the project, Tel: +44 7510 832802; Email: [barbara.tomasella@shu.ac.uk](mailto:barbara.tomasella@shu.ac.uk).

In summary:

1. You have the right to review all of your data at any time.

2. Your identity, any personal information, and the identities of people mentioned in any interview or email communication will be confidential (this is a default practice and need not be requested).
3. You may choose an alias, or we will assign one for you, so that your name is not directly associated with particular pieces of data. One digital and one paper file linking your real name with the pseudonym will also be kept for the duration of the study.
4. Any personal information non-relevant for the research will be deleted and other information, associated with your background or relevant places that might lead to your identity, will be coded as well.
5. You always have the right to withdraw at any time without any penalty or prejudice, and there are no consequences for refusal to participate in this project or any part of it.
6. You may request copies of any reports or publications relating to the study or of transcriptions of interviews you participated in.
7. At the end of the project the data will be stored and kept secure for a minimum period of three years after publication of the research.
8. Where data collected from this project are of interest to other researchers, these may be shared with them but only in an anonymised form and only with the authorisation of the main researcher.
9. All signed informed consent forms will be kept in a locked cupboard.

Signature:



Date:

5 April 2016

## Consent form

**Main researcher:** Barbara Tomasella

**Purpose of the study:** the overall aim of the study is to critically analyse how independent restaurants express and implement their Small Business Social Responsibility (SBSR).

*Please tick the appropriate boxes*

*Yes*

I have read and understood the project information sheet.

I understand that my taking part is voluntary; I can withdraw from the study at any time and I do not have to give any reasons for why I no longer want to take part.

I understand that this project has been reviewed by, and received ethics clearance through the Research Ethics Committee of Sheffield Hallam University.

I understand that the transcribed material from this research will be used for the final dissertation documenting the research, plus academic or conference papers.

I understand my personal details such as phone number and address will not be revealed to people outside the project and will be kept secured at all times.

I understand that taking part in the project includes being interviewed, being audio recorded, and allowing researcher to take visual records of further documents that I might agree to share.

I agree that the data I provide can be archived in a suitable specialist data centre, data archive or data bank.

I understand who will have access to my data, how the data will be stored and what will happen to the data at the end of the project.

I agree to take part in the project.

I understand that if I have a concern about any aspect of this project, I can contact Barbara Tomasella ([barbara.tomasella@shu.ac.uk](mailto:barbara.tomasella@shu.ac.uk)) who will do her best to answer my query. If the answer is not satisfactory, I can contact the researcher's Director of Study, Dr.Alisha Ali ([alisha.ali@shu.ac.uk](mailto:alisha.ali@shu.ac.uk)).



Name of Participant

Signature

Date

(please insert here)

Researcher

Signature

Date

Barbara Tomasella

14/04/2016



**Background information**

A: Personal information

Age:

Education:

B: About the business

Numbers of year in existence

Yearly Revenue

Full time / part time employees:

## **Interview schedule with restaurant managers updated**

### **Section A – Interview preamble.**

My name is Barbara Tomasella and I am a researcher at Sheffield Hallam University, exploring the expression and implementation of social responsibility among small independent restaurants. I will ask you some in depth questions about your own opinions on what SR is and how it is implemented in your own restaurant.

There are no right or wrong answers. I am just interested in your own understanding of the term Small Business Social Responsibility. I will never use your name in any document deriving from this research; any quote will be anonymous as well. I would also like to record the interview and transcribe it later; nobody else apart from me will listen to these recordings. Is this ok with you?

#### Further points:

Clarify about the informality of the process / open questions

### **Section B – Semi-structured questions on SBSR**

#### **Introduction**

Can you tell me bit about you, your background, and your previous roles?

What brought you to this role / business?

Tell me about your current business (prompt from form, ex. number of employees)

How would you categorise your business (prompts: *lifestyle, profit, Social enterprise*)

#### **SBSR expression (RQ 1) and Ethical Motivations (RQ2 and RQ3)**

What do you consider to be the role of your businesses in society?

What do you think your business should be socially responsible for?

Why do you think these are the business's responsibilities?

What actions have you taken that you consider being socially responsible?

*Probing into the areas related to initial framework if not covered above*

*What motivates this business to engage in these activities?*

*What motivates you to engage in these activities?*

Have you implemented actions beneficial to the society or community?

*What motivates this business to engage in these activities?*

*What motivates you to engage in these activities?*

Have you implemented actions beneficial to staff?

*What motivates this business to engage in these activities?*

*What motivates you to engage in these activities?*

Have you implemented actions beneficial to the environment?

*What motivates this business to engage in these activities?*

*What motivates you to engage in these activities?*

Have you implemented actions beneficial to clients?

*What motivates this business to engage in these activities?*

*What motivates you to engage in these activities?*

- *Further probes: on actions emerged from secondary data analysis (ex. philanthropy/ local schools, small farmers, disabilities? ex. wages, work-life balance...? ex food waste/energy-water efficiency/recycling/education/ sustainable supply chain, food sustainability? ex. free-from food, healthy/organic/green food, food safety, customer service).*

**(Instrumental) motivations (RQ 3 & 4)**

What are the advantages for your business by being socially responsible and/or being environmentally friendly?

What are the disadvantages for your business when implementing SBSR practices?

**Institutional influences (RQ3 & 4)**

Have any external factors influenced the implementation of SBSR in your business? *Probing on: Institutions, industry associations, competitors?*

How do you communicate these practices to your stakeholders, especially clients?

What do you understand by the term CSR?

What do you understand by the term small business social responsibility?

Do you think there is a difference between these two terms?

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME

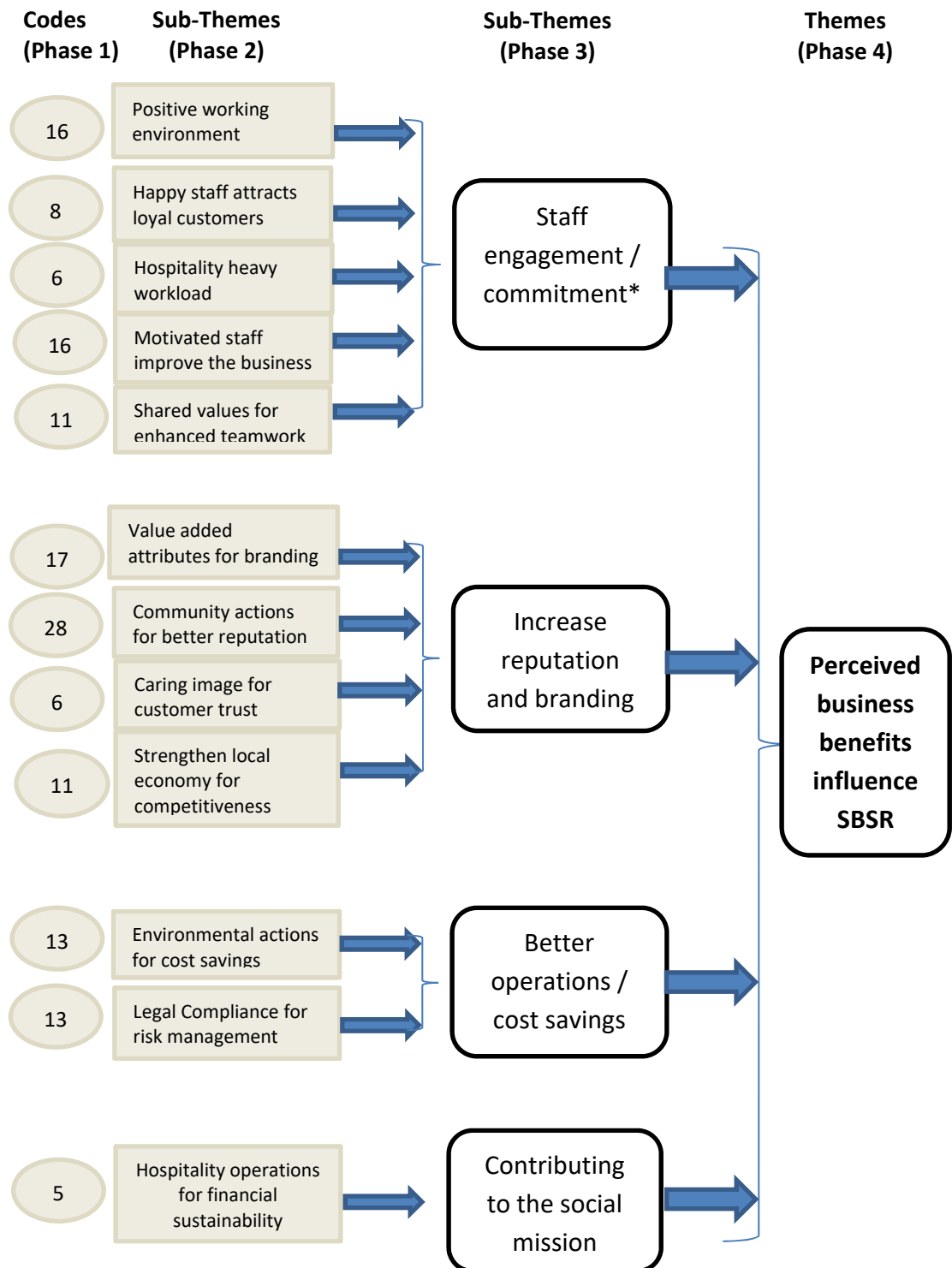
**Section C – Concluding information**

Thank you for participating in this interview, I hope you have found it interesting and / or useful. Transcript will be sent for confirmation. Please sign approval if there was no email exchange (*receipt by interviewee of research participant letter, check signature, and complete the brief demographic questionnaire*).

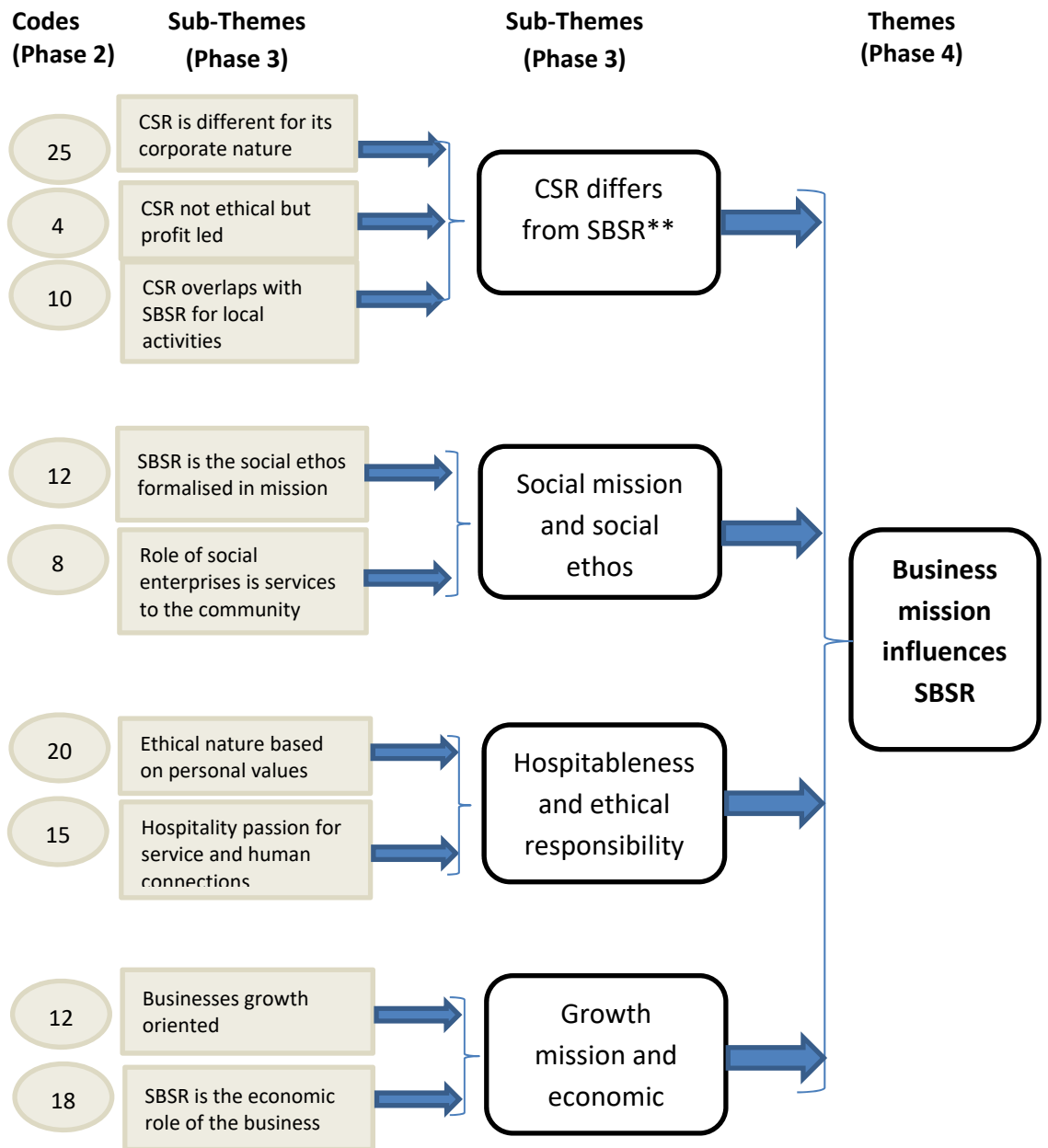
## Appendix 5: Thematic Analysis example of coding

This appendix contains an extract of the coding, for two of the final themes.

Example 1: Theme “Perceived Business Benefits influence SBSR”



Example 2: Theme “Business mission influences SBSR”



\*\* Note this sub-theme is covered in the findings section covering each sub-group of businesses, namely 6.2.2, 6.2.3, 6.2.4.