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'I'D NEVER COOK IT NOW': AN EXPLORATION OF INTERGENERATIONAL TRANSFERENCE AND ITS ROLE IN FACILITATING FAMILY FOOD SUSTAINABILITY

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'I'D NEVER COOK IT NOW': AN EXPLORATION OF INTERGENERATIONAL TRANSFERENCE AND ITS ROLE IN FACILITATING FAMILY FOOD SUSTAINABILITY

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Structured Abstract

Purpose: To develop a deeper understanding of what (un)sustainable food behaviours and values are transmitted across generations, to what extent this transference happens and the sustainability challenges resulting from this for individuals and households.
Design/methodology/approach: 25 semi-structured in-depth interviews are analysed regarding the value of inherited food, family food rituals, habits and traditions, aspects of food production and understanding of sustainability.
Findings: Intergenerational transferences are significant in shaping (un)sustainable consumption throughout life, and those passed-on behaviours and values offer opportunities for lifelong sustainable change and food consumption reappraisal in daily life, beyond early years parenting, and across diverse households.
Originality: Our findings provide greater understanding about the mechanisms responsible for the sustainable transformation of consumption habits suggesting intergenerational transferences are significant in shaping (un)sustainable food consumption throughout life. The study shows secondary socialisation can play a critical role in the modification of early behaviour patterns of food socialisation. We found individuals replicate food behaviours and values from childhood, but through a process of lifelong learning can break formative habits, particularly with reverse socialisation influences that prioritise sustainable behaviours.
Limitations and Future Research
Participants were limited to British families, although the sample drew on multiple ethnic heritages. Future research could study collectivist versus more individualistic cultural influence; explore intergenerational transference of other diverse households such as multigeneration or in rural and urban locations, or whether sustainable crossover derived from familial socialization continues into behaviours and values beyond food.
Key words: intergenerational transference, sustainability, food, continuity, discontinuity
Paper type: Research paper

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Introduction

There is significant interest and growing concern about the sustainability of how we produce and consume food. Marketers have long demonstrated an interest in understanding food consumption (Wilkie and Moore, 2003), and sourcing, cooking, and eating food is our most fundamental consumer behaviour (Voola et al., 2018). The energy in growing, processing, packaging, and transporting food accounts for approximately one quarter of global greenhouse emissions (Millward-Hopkins et al., 2020). What we should or should not eat has become one of the contemporary world's most controversial and contradictory issues (Warde and Yates, 2017; Barilla, 2021). Families are critical sites of food consumption (Kharuhayothin and Kerrane, 2018), but we are yet to fully understand the role of food socialisation across generations (Hartmann et al., 2014). This paper develops a deeper understanding of what (un)sustainable food behaviours and values are transmitted across generations, to what extent this transference happens and the sustainability challenges resulting from this for individuals and households.

Food matters to everyone as it is central to our lives and the sustainability of what we eat is shaped by our global and local food systems (Kemper and Ballantine, 2017). Consumer decisions about what to eat involve many factors, including taste and health (Coulthard et al., 2021), early years socialization (Kharuhayothin and Kerrane, 2018) and contextual cues (Stawartz et al., 2020) which guide what we consider 'eating well.' The sustainable food agenda stretches across areas that include improved 'field to fork' quality, low carbon and plant-based diets (Kemper and Ballantine, 2017), seasonality and local sourcing, Fairtrade, and animal welfare (Alonso, et al., 2020). Debates about food labelling (Brown et al., 2020), food justice and food poverty (Fleetwood, 2020), alternative food networks (Kessari et al., 2020), food tourism (Carrigan et al., 2017), slow food (Chaudhury and Albinsson, 2015) and food waste (Evans, 2014), increasingly inform policy and practice on the sustainability of food consumption. Alongside this, household food behaviours – how we 'do' food - are gaining scholarly attention from a sustainability perspective examining activities such as frugality (Stancu and Lähteenmäki, 2022), Soderman and Carter, 2008), thrift (Holmes, 2018), use of food leftovers (Talwar et al., 2021; Cappellini and Parsons, 2013), 'grow your own' (Wong, 2020) and food waste (Principato et al., 2021; Koivupuro et al., 2012; Evans, 2014).

Across the range of scholarly work, food socialisation has been primarily investigated in the context of early years (under 12's) socialisation and children (Kharuhayothin and Kerrane,

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2018; Judd et al., 2014). Yet consumer socialisation is a dynamic process that continues throughout life (Ekström, 2006), noted in studies examining secondary or reverse socialisation linked to embracing pro-environmental behaviour (Singh et al., 2020; O'Neill and Buckley, 2019), technology such as smartphone usage (Marchant and O'Donohoe, 2014) or health awareness around breast cancer (Vel et al., 2016), but less extensively explored in the context of lifelong food socialisation (Hartmann et al., 2014). The capacity for intergenerational transference of (un)sustainable food choices is also less well studied (Evans, 2019), both in the context of primary (mainly in childhood) and secondary (mainly in adulthood) socialisation (Watne et al., 2011).

This study draws together three areas of research: intergenerational transference and consumer socialisation; familial food behaviours and values and (un)sustainable consumer behaviours and values. Examining sustainability through the lens of intergenerational transference and influence in the context of familial food behaviours, our paper responds to calls to advance the theorisation of sustainable consumption in consumer behaviour (Singh et al., 2022; Luchs and Kumar, 2017). The paper contributes to marketing scholarship that seeks to play a greater role in addressing the "grand challenge of our time: sustainability" (Davies et al., 2020, p.2929). The study contributes to a deeper understanding of intergenerational transference and influence, going beyond early years food socialisation to investigate lifelong food socialisation. Drawing conclusions regarding aspects of intergenerational transferences that are significant for (un)sustainable consumption allows for a critical evaluation of whether the passing on or letting go of behaviours and values offer opportunities for lifelong sustainable change and food consumption reappraisal in daily life. Greater scholarly understanding of (un)sustainable family food behaviours also has the potential to "promote better dietary habits and patterns of consumption" (Davis et al. 2018, p. 2270), supporting future policy and practitioner initiatives around sustainability and wellbeing.

The paper is organised as follows. First, the literature on intergenerational transference, consumer socialisation, family food and (un)sustainable food behaviours is reviewed, followed by the methodology. The findings are presented, next, the discussion, and finally limitations and opportunities for further research.

Literature Review

Intergenerational Transference and Family Food

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Researchers have signalled the role and importance of household food in shaping families and individual identity and agency (Carrigan, 2018; Kharuhayothin and Kerrane, 2018; Valentine, 1999). Scholars have long discussed the nature of consumer transference across generations and within families, describing the family as the critical consumer-socialisation agent, particularly in early years (Caruana and Vassallo, 2003; Ward, 1974). Researchers differentiate the socialisation process between primary socialisation and secondary socialisation (Watne et al., 2011). Much consumer socialisation research explores how children learn to be consumers in the marketplace (see Lueg and Finney's, 2007 study of offline/online shopping channels or Chan's, 2006 study of textbook learning), yet consumer socialisation is acknowledged to be a lifelong process (Moschis, 2019; Ekström, 2006). Later life learning is considered to differ from primary socialisation that relates to initial patterns of behaviour: secondary socialisation is associated with adjustment of early behaviour patterns (Berger and Luckmann, 1967).

Family socialization may be intentional, when the family teaches norms, values, and culture, such as dietary health (Hughner and Maher, 2006), or unintentional, when socialisation occurs due to unstructured actions and interactions, such as eating together (Cappellini, and Parsons, 2012). Significant attention has been given to the transference of familial food traditions (i.e., routines or conventions) and behaviours and the preservation of traditions and identities. These behaviours may include preparing homemade food, sharing recipes, loved cookery books or food secrets and skills. The transference of these traditions marks intergenerational caregiving, such as the food sacrifices made by women for other household members (Cappellini and Parsons, 2012), with the potential of parents' food socialisation lessons to shape children's lifelong food consumption, both positively and negatively (Kharuhayothin and Kerrane, 2018). In a broader sense, some familial behaviours and values remain unchanged as they are passed on, providing a sense of continuity, thus acting as a tangible connection with the past and a linking thread to future generations (Scabini and Marta, 2006). In other cases, tried and tested formulas are adapted and tweaked to lesser or greater extents demonstrating discontinuity, often due to broader socioeconomic pressures or evolving values over time (Carrigan et al., 2006).

Early work sought to unpack mechanisms for intergenerational transference (Goodnow, 1997). More recent work has observed that parental habits cue certain consumption patterns such as addiction, where the transference of drinking styles from parent to offspring may be explained by observation of parental drinking habits (Campbell and Oei, 2010). Children tend to form

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their financial habits by observing how parents discuss and make financial decisions, including disordered behaviours such as gambling and debt (Britt, 2016). More recently Gong et al., (2021) applied ecological socialization theory to demonstrate how Chinese parents' green consumption values shape similar values in their children, while the environmental reverse socialization of parents has been shown to be positively affected by the environmental concerns of their teenagers (Singh et al., 2020). The transference of food behaviours and values specifically within families is widely acknowledged (Davis et al., 2018). Kharuhayothin and Kerrane's (2018) study of parental food socialisation explored thirty primary food preparers of children aged under 12, a stage where parents exert greatest influence (Ward, 1974). Investigating whether parents draw upon what they learned as children from their parents regarding food socialisation, they uncovered intergenerational reflexivity played a crucial role in shaping children's food socialisation processes but did not specifically explore how transference takes place. As with other forms of intergenerational transference, food behaviours and values can inform family identity (DeVault, 1994); while food gatekeepers in the home strongly influence children's healthy food choices (Wijayaratne et al., 2018), family food conflicts can impact eating disorders (Fernández-Aranda et al., 2007). Familial food behaviours are far more dynamic and transformative than previously regarded (O'Connell and Brannen, 2016). Meals and mealtimes are central to constructing family meanings and caring (Carrigan et al., 2006). Biological and behavioural processes during childhood, and memories of food production, sharing and consumption, can mould food practices later in life (Kharuhayothin and Kerrane, 2018) and create legacies around food such as power hegemony between men and women (Voola et al., 2018). For example, Kharuhayothin and Kerrane (2018) found 'revisionists' radically departed from previous family food behaviours, while 'traditionalists' mimicked their parents' food. More recently Makhal et al. (2020) found that parents' food choices and behaviours facilitate the acceptance of repurposing food waste in children aged 5-11 years.

Consumer socialization within households may stem from maternal influences, or others such as fathers, husbands (Davis et al., 2018b; Kharuhayothin and Kerrane, 2018; Valentine, 1999) and grandparents (Jingxiong et al., 2007). Children are recognised changemakers within families during reverse socialisation (Ekström, 2007), with siblings also acting as agents of consumer socialisation in the dynamics of the family network (Kerrane et al., 2015). Children within the home have been shown to reverse socialize parents to adopt more sustainable lifestyles in areas such as food waste (Lazell, 2016) and energy and water conservation (O'Neill

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and Buckley, 2019; Grønhøj and Thøgersen, 2011). Children's participation in food decisions extends to the manipulation of familial tastes for Fairtrade and organic food (Ritch and Brownlie, 2016), and raises tensions when the children's desires conflict with their parents under constrained circumstances (Hamilton and Catterall, 2010).

Family, whether immediate or extended, plays a central role in understanding how a society inherits tangible and intangible legacies of the past, considers the present, and moves into the future (Scabini and Marta, 2006). While some early generational theorists predict that culture will evolve with each subsequent generation as they assert their own identity and emphasise difference (Mannheim, 1952), others suggest that there remains shared and valued culture between generations (Bengston and Kuypers, 1971). Scabini and Marta (2006) also note that while generation theory predicts cultural transformation, there is less emphasis on explaining that process of continuity and change within society. Transference is dynamic with behaviours and traditions mutating as they pass through generations (Southerton et al., 2011) and though family members may "reproduce, imagine and memorialise" family ties through time (Holmes, 2018, p. 1), those bonds may also loosen. Voola et al., (2018, p.2424) note how families have been critical sites through history and "conduits of food consumption values and practices" including "family-centred consumer socialisation processes" (Lindridge and Hogg, 2006). They further note that changes to family and food consumption in contemporary settings have accelerated, increasingly globalised and marketized and call for research to develop new understanding of this topic. While many previous intergenerational food consumption studies focus upon family eating and parental influences during primary food socialisation within the home, less attention has been paid to secondary or lifelong socialisation (Warde, 1974; Ekström 2006). This paper seeks to address those scholarly gaps in the context of familial food transference.

Further, family contexts such as households with older children, empty nests or families without children and single householders feature less in extant research. Thus, our study contributes to better understanding of intergenerational transference among families from a greater diversity of household units. Extant work on intergenerational transference arguably focuses on what is transmitted, while often neglecting how and why values and traditions are transmitted (Scabini and Marta, 2006). By studying the modalities of transference in family food behaviour as well as the contents of transference, our study contributes to a better

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understanding of continuity and change in intergenerational food transference, providing valuable insight for marketers.

(Un)Sustainable Food Behaviours

Evidence shows that how consumers choose to shop and eat has put significant stress on climate change and exacerbated ecological devastation across the world, leading consumer researchers to escalate the study of sustainability (Davies et al., 2020). The negative environmental impact of contemporary food behaviours and values has led to wide ranging work on sustainable food production and consumption. Verain et al. (2015) refer to two broad behavior strategies: the first concerns opting for organic, free range or Fairtrade products, or alternative proteins and locally produced foods (Ritch and Brownlie, 2016). The second involves sustainable dietary patterns such as consumption curtailment within product categories, choices that are predicated on the sustainability of choosing or avoiding certain foods or prioritising specific food behaviours over others, for example pursuing veganism or reducing the consumption of red meat (Malek et al., 2019). Food waste has also gained attention whether through the transformation of food leftovers or waste management strategies (Graham-Rowe et al., 2019; Evans, 2014; Cappellini and Parsons, 2012;). Additionally, the 'slow food movement' highlights sustainability by advocating good food, gastronomic pleasure, and a slow pace of life (Slow Food, 2018).

Within sustainable consumer research, food studies have long identified the inconsistencies of everyday consumption by intentionally sustainable consumers as they navigate their individual concerns and competencies (Carrigan, 2018; Szmigin et al., 2009). For example, Torma et al., (2016) note how consumers make 'coping' choices to simplify and combine their options to manage the numerous conflicts faced in sustainable food shopping. Sometimes these coping strategies mean consumers behave less environmentally consciously than they desire. Often neither intentional or unintentional, behaviours merely evidence the ambivalence felt when faced with the complex balance of personal values and everyday life, underlining the "plurality and diversity" of consumer circumstances, however much they might seek to exhibit a sustainable persona (Szmigin et al., 2009, p. 229). Newholm (2005) suggested that consumers are often entrenched in complex, conflicting, and sometimes morally irresolvable circumstances, and this constrains what it is possible to attain. Sustainable food behaviours have been linked to the development of a responsible consumer identity (Cho and Krasser, 2011; Hansen et al., 2018) and, as noted earlier, food choices and behaviours are linked to

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family identities (Epp and Price, 2008; 2018). We expect, like other intergenerational transference, that just as (un)sustainable food behaviours will be transferred, they may also be discarded and adapted to reflect the identity development of younger generations, potentially influenced by developments within a complex and challenging political and sustainable food landscape (Paddock, 2017).

This paper examines the convergence of three areas of research: 1- intergenerational transference; 2- family food behaviours and values, and 3- (un)sustainable behaviours and values. This builds on the lack of research in transference of familial (un)sustainable food behaviours, leading us to ask *what (un)sustainable food behaviours and values are shared or discarded across generations (and why)?* In response to calls to study transference modalities (how it is transmitted/transformed) as well as content of transference (what is transmitted) (Scabini and Marta, 2006) we ask *to what extent (un)sustainable food behaviours and values are transformed?* Additionally, we explore the transference of familial sustainable food behaviours from production to disposal probing *what sustainability challenges do contemporary generations face in everyday household food behaviours?* In doing so, this paper represents a holistic examination of household food behaviors and values, and its global sustainability impact.

Method

We recruited participants who varied in age from 26 to 74 years. Participants also ranged in nationality, ethnic background, social class, life stage, and family circumstances (some with children/no children/empty-nest/impending parenthood; some living alone/living with partner) to allow us to understand a wide range of perspectives on the issue of intergenerational transference. Aligned to the aims of the study we adopted an interpretivist perspective to allow for the exploration of subjective meanings and understandings (Patton, 2015), on the transference of familial (un)sustainable behaviours. An exploratory approach was employed during the data collection which consisted of semi-structured depth interviews, a method previously recognised as helpful when discussing 'passing on' behaviours (Holmes, 2018), and that enables participants to convey meaning in their own terms (Belk et al., 1991). A flexible interview guide encouraged participants to talk about things that had been passed on to them (see Table I), tangible and intangible, precious and mundane, and their thoughts about sustainability. The wider study was focused on any element of intergenerational transference but early in the interviewing process it emerged that participants in their stories often linked

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inheritance with family food decisions and influences, drawing on inherited food items, values, and traditions (often mundane items like cook books and kitchen utensils). To fully explore the topic in further interviews, the interview guide was tweaked to ensure we probed those things more deeply if mentioned (Strauss and Corbin, 1990), and to explore the context and the 'how' of the passing on that took place.

[Insert Table I: Semi-structured interview guide]

To help recruit the required range of participants, a mixed and emergent sampling strategy was used, incorporating both purposive and snowball approaches. Initial calls for participants were posted using easily accessible community and workplace Whatsapp groups in rural and urban areas within England (North East; North West; Midlands) where the authors were situated and had networks. The invitation sought participants that were willing to take part in a study and might have some interesting stories to tell about things that have been passed to them, and/or might wish to pass to others. Initial participants were then asked to recommend further people to contact. This snowballing approach generated a diverse, but non-probability sample for the study. The authors regularly updated each other with the participant profiles to ensure that a range of participants were recruited (see Table II) and a range of viewpoints were being heard. Twenty-five interviews were conducted over twelve months, and the researchers jointly shared data collection and analysis.

Table two shows the participant profiles. To maintain research confidentiality and anonymity, pseudonyms were used. Full ethical approval was granted, and informed consent to participate and record data established. Each participant was offered a £10 "Love to Shop" online voucher in recognition of their contribution.

[Insert Table II. Participant Profiles]

The interviews lasted between 45 minutes to 90 minutes, and took place in the participants' homes, workplaces or other mutually agreed locations or online via Skype. The interview data was supplemented by approximately twenty-pages of researcher notes and memos. By the twenty first interview we established little new data or themes were emerging, and by interview twenty-five we concluded that theoretical saturation had been reached.

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Transcripts were professionally transcribed verbatim, and the original interviewer checked each transcript against the recording to ensure accuracy. The scripts were stored on a shared, password protected Google Drive. Throughout the data collection and analysis, the researchers regularly met via Skype and in person to compare and discuss progress.

The first data analysis stage involved identifying overarching themes relating to intergenerational behaviour and consumption for each participant (Braun and Clarke, 2013), before moving to the next transcript. As the analysis progressed, and the authors tacked back and forth between the data and literature (Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Cross and Gilly, 2014), more detailed codes emerged and were organised around the relationship between the overarching themes, and conscious and unconscious behaviours. During this stage we sought to analyse the 'how' of (un)sustainability during intergenerational transference. This analysis stage involved a comparative analysis (Fischer and Otnes, 2006), where the interview transcripts were constantly compared to identify emerging themes. Table III demonstrates the overarching themes and the sub-themes that emerged from the interview data (see Table III).

[Insert Table III: Themes]

To reiterate, the research questions guiding the study were:

- What (un)sustainable food behaviours and values are shared or discarded across generations (and why)?
- To what extent are (un)sustainable food behaviours and values transformed?
- What sustainability challenges do contemporary generations face in everyday household food behaviours?

Findings

Scabini and Marta (2006) note that while similarities and differences between intergenerational transference are helpful to understand generational gaps, they say little about what generations exchange and how those exchanges build identity. Further, Goodnow (1997) notes that even when generations agree about the importance they attribute to a particular value, that does not mean they will expend the same commitment in defending, supporting, or carrying out the actions it implies. In our analysis we sought to understand what (un)sustainable behaviours and to what extent sustainability was shared through intergenerational transference, and how

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committed different generations were to those sustainable actions. We begin by examining what is transmitted in terms of (un)sustainable behaviours and values, then examine how these transferences are continued or discontinued and examine ambivalence in sustainability transference.

What is transferred?

To better understand how the intergenerational transference of familial sustainable food behaviours occurs we first explored what, if any, (un)sustainable behaviours and values were passed on across generations. This was revealed to be sometimes reciprocal and bi-directional (Scabini and Marta, 2006). For example, different food buying behaviours and values were noted such as the purchase of free-range products (Vivien, Molly and Neha), or the importance of buying locally (Brian and Emma) or 'growing your own' food (Anthony and Janice) as part of 'proper', 'slow' or carbon reduction food values. Food planning, preferences and dislikes, use of family recipes, attitudes towards food waste, frugality and repurposing meal leftovers were frequently discussed.

How is it transferred?

Continuity: Sacred and Mundane

The analysis highlights some (un)sustainable behaviours and values are transferred and shared between generations unchanged. Sometimes those behaviours are deliberate and committed, whereas others appear habitual or intuitive; the findings below point to both mindful and routine continuity.

Many participants deliberately retained food behaviours and values intertwined with nostalgia, with a few recalling experiences of close proximity to food production in childhood, such as Janice recalling how women in her family passed on their love of baking and growing, engendering a commitment to sustainability, values that she seeks to pass to her daughter, Ida and her peers:

> I would say from my mum…the thing I've inherited from her is baking because it was childhood memories of baking cakes with her that's led me to….Growing food that's been, I remember my aunt used to grow vegetables when I was very small and I always remember going to pick vegetables in the garden and be amazed bringing food out the garden, since I've had a garden myself I've been trying to you know grow bits of food and it's really rewarding. And I would like Ida to know where food comes from and to

understand you know the importance of growing food…so I've talked about that recently actually with a few of my friends who have got gardens…. And maybe it's the way I've ended up you know I've always known about geography and sustainability and the importance of not damaging the planet and actually growing our own food is actually one of the most significant things you could do, but also just it's really rewarding.

These familial bonds and shared values about understanding and respecting food shape Janice, and as Scabini and Marta (2006) note, the interface between these actors, both inside and outside the family, determine the continuation and transference of sustainable food behaviours.

Conscious continuity takes place due to an active appreciation of the behaviours and the generative process which facilitates the development of identity and enhances family and social histories. Like Janice, other participants fondly reminisced when discussing food behaviours and values. For example, while discussing creative consumption (Kelsey et al., 2018), and avoidance of food waste and frugality (Principato et al., 2021), Mandy acknowledged connections between her father's bargain hunting behaviour and food thriftiness. Her own satisfaction in prudent cooking habits was passed down between generations:

> My dad would do the food shopping and always buy in the short date stuff. He was a proper bargain hunter, yellow sticker hunter. We never had any money, so that frugal mindset has been in me since childhood. It was very much like buy the cheaper things but cook them well. If you don't have much money, buy a big bag of lentils, and you just live on dahl like for months. I always take pride in this frugal way of cooking.

Neha too explained her mother's passed on thrift underpinned her attitude to 'sell by' dates and food waste:

> No, God no, I think my husband will throw away something that's gone off by one day and I'm like let's smell it and let's see if it's okay. We are not going to die!

Both Mandy and Neha are relatively affluent but inherited respect for the value of food remains embedded in the replication of their family's robust attitudes to food waste and prudence.

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Recent work has acknowledged the mental health and sustainability benefits of shared food (Warde 2016). Shared eating featured frequently in participant narratives, such as Kiran who spoke of how eating together buoys her mood:

> Even to this day, when I go home, we have dinner together at the dinner table. Growing up we didn't have a lot, but there would be 25 of us all having dinner together. My mum and Bibi [paternal grandmother] would cook. All of it was on a budget, they'd use the leftovers, and make this big meal for us all. We've always eaten together, it's still our thing. It was one of the most important parts of my day. As soon as I'd sit at the dinner table, eat good food and share ideas, debate maybe argue, it'd lift my mood if I had an absolutely rubbish day.

Communal eating has prevailed down the generations in Kiran's family, embedded in the cultural norms of her extended family. Returning home, she still looks forward to the pleasures of 'good food' and relaxing built around family sharing, which brings wellbeing for the individuals, but also rests on sustainable habits of intergenerational thriftiness and avoiding food waste (Lazell, 2016). This links Kiran, like Mandy, Molly, and Neha, in a shared understanding with older generations about what constitutes eating well (Goodman et al., 2017) and provides a continuity with the past resulting in conscious reproduction and retention of family behaviours and values (Scabini and Marta, 2006).

Continuity can also embrace change and the evolving nature of food behaviours. For example, sustainable food knowledge such as family recipes are passed down, and valued, but pressures of contemporary life may lead to their reimagining using convenience foods or modern appliances because of busy lifestyles (Carrigan and Szmigin, 2006; Wheeler, 2018). Neha demonstrates progressive continuity using passed on techniques for recipe shortcuts that enable her to avoid food waste, use her freezer to short-circuit the time-consuming preparation, and fashion leftovers into creative but traditional meals:

> Mum's cooking was always quick she could cook a curry in no time. She's shown me little cheats around preparing curry with what we have in and not wasting food; like freeze this, defrost it. I've naturally become like her…When we get fed up of the curry, then mum taught me to knead the leftovers into chapati flour, it makes really tasty chapatis! It's win-win; healthy, cheap, and tasty and no leftovers!

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Neha's uses her mother's passed on 'cheats' to allow the preparation of 'proper' curry, traditionally important but also laborious, and prevent food waste. Leveraging technology and passed down life hacks enabled intergenerational continuity for traditional foods in her modern lifestyle, while eating healthily and sustainably. For Janice, the replication of her mum's and grandmother's home baking boosts her wellbeing while managing a pressured job, enabled by gadgetry:

> …when I got my permanent contract in this job I got the Kitchen Aid...I can afford one now… I really did get into baking a lot as a stress [relief] activity. Over the years it's become something I do to calm down and I really do like it I do enjoy it…

For some participants, the reproduction of past behaviours equates to 'muscle memory' and were not immediately apparent until explored in the interviews. For Mandy, her actions in stretching meals or shopping bargains are a conscious source of pride as she follows in her father's thrifty footsteps. Others more instinctively repeat family habits, such as Molly who highlights the quality of her Celtic gran's food and the pleasure of cooking with her:

> My gran didn't have a lot of money and learnt to be really frugal, but she cooked really good food and she always let me cook with her. She let me make as much mess as I liked. It was always proper food, like soup and stews. One approach to food that has gone right the way through my family is the lack of waste, that's because with soups, you can use any old vegetables

Molly still replicates these patterns of using up 'leftovers' that are rooted in nostalgia and the necessity of her family's past hardship despite her own contemporary affluence. Eating well underpins her replication, rather than being frugal, but these thrifty habits represent good practice in contemporary life, reducing food waste and driving household sustainability (Principato et al., 2021; Koivupuro et al., 2012). Neha considers her food sustainability unremarkable:

> …you make a curry - tomatoes, onions - I've got the spices and then add the chicken or lentils and there you go there is your curry, it's thrifty but it's just that's our diet …

Social or shared eating within families is well documented as stretching beyond food's bodily sustenance to contribute to feelings of solidarity and bonding (Belk, 2010), highlighted by Kiran above. With wellbeing at the forefront of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (specifically SDG 3), the relationship between food and wellbeing is well documented (Ares

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et al, 2014; Warde 2016), and the experiential pleasure of food is influenced by, for example, the socio-cultural, economic, ideological, and symbolic, as is its contribution to family health, food, and drink education, and individual or societal sustainability and wellbeing. More recently commensality is recognised as behaviour that favours sustainability (Medina, 2021), and is being harnessed, within social eating initiatives replicating family meals in communities, as a solution to social isolation and retail food waste (Smith and Harvey, 2021). In the study Emma told how her "*family life has always been centred around the kitchen"* throughout the generations and continues to be in her own and daughters' homes. The passing on and replication of kitchen food socialising is reflexive and spontaneous, borne out of a passed-on love of commensality in the kitchen. Commensality is often thought as in decline, particularly the family meal, yet it has deep social and cultural significance through time (Jönsson, et al., 2021), unveiling different dimensions of social relations across generations. Like Emma, Derek spoke about the imperative for shared eating emerging from a "mixture of osmosis and taught behaviour" that have culminated in his love of eating around the table:

> … the main thing that has probably been passed down has been probably around attitudes to food, attitudes to eating and enjoyment of certain things…Just enjoyment of sitting round and eating together ….it was always something that we would sit all down together, and it would be a home cooked meal and we would enjoy eating it … Because I take time and enjoy cooking enjoy sitting down and taking the time and care to do it both prepare and to eat…

Emma, and Derek's instinctive routine of shared eating forms an unconscious bridge between their present and past selves, much like Kiran's overt recognition of its role in her life, linking the generations, creating connections between the self across different life stages, and generating a sense of clarity, wellbeing, and assurance in their identity.

Ambivalence

Scabini and Marta (2006) describe ambivalence in intergenerational transference occurring where there is a co-existence between harmony and conflict, which sometimes manifests in opposing degrees of affinity between individuals across generations. Different coping strategies deal with these convergences and divergencies, illustrating the complexity of those relations between generations. Scabini and Marta (2006) suggest individuals have a certain amount of freedom to deal with the values of past generations; either accept, reject, or transform that legacy. However, our study reveals that the reality is more ambiguous, with inconsistencies

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frequently arising as the participants battle inner conflict, wishing to maintain the rituals of the past but wrestling the reality of incompatible modern lifestyles (Szmigin et al., 2009). Simi revealed how, as a child of immigrants, she has changed the way she prepares food, aligned to her contemporary lifestyle but diverging from her Indian upbringing:

> Being from India, Mum only ever knew how to cook Indian food, so it was quite limited. Now living more of a western life and that I'm always on the go, it's all about convenience. It isn't always eco-friendly because of the packaging and my kids waste a lot of food. I know it's bad. By cooking Indian and English food, it does make it varied for us. I try my best to cook Indian from scratch, but I don't always have time and I haven't always got all of the ingredients in. Then, they'll just waste it, and I hate that when I've put effort in to cook. At least with ready-made meals, you just put it in the oven and eat it on the day. I know there also lots of food packaging and I'll try to throw it in the recycling bin, if I remember.

Simi displays both acculturation (Jamal, 1998) and assimilation, a preference for adopting the host culture's values and traditions over time, while gradually drifting away from maintaining one's heritage culture (Kizgin et al., 2018). She acknowledges her guilt and internal conflict as she sometimes emancipates herself from her mother's Indian cooking style and its sustainability, instead making pragmatic western fast-food choices that increase packaging waste. However, residual intergenerational influences remain in her aspiration to cook more sustainably 'from scratch' when life allows her.

Negotiation between the past and present with elements of harmony and conflict is characteristic of ambivalence, which may also facilitate social change. Anthony spoke about his long family history of gardening, highlighting conflicts with the nostalgic sustainable values he would like to uphold (growing fruit and vegetables and reducing food miles) and the financial conundrum he faces in the local superstore:

> We come from a family of market gardeners who used to grow fruit and vegetables for a living. My grandpa was a very keen gardener, my mum and dad were slower to embrace that, but now they are enthusiastic gardeners. I must admit I have just had my garden redone, slightly ashamedly I haven't had it done as a vegetable garden. I don't have enough time; I like the idea of it…but compared to the price of the veg, I mean we got a huge, horrible Asda nearby,

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> and you walk in and get carrots for 35p a bag. The effort required to grow your own carrots, when it costs 35p to go sort it out instantly in Asda, doesn't quite seem worth the candle

Anthony neutralises his 'torn self' (Jafari and Goulding, 2008), where he is conflicted between two contradictory ideologies, by citing the convenience and economy of his unsustainable preferences. Ambivalence also permeated Derek's reflections on how food skills ebbed and flowed through the generations, the importance of retaining them, and the impact of a new generation with food intolerances that, in his eyes, threatens the generative commensality of their family food sharing:

> … All three of them are good cooks...I think the generation above me…mum and my dad and my aunties and uncles were the generation that started the food thing…. I think they would have been disappointed if I didn't enjoy food. …. I've got a niece who has intolerances or is allergic to nuts and stuff and therefore her, although she's only relatively young, her [sighs] exposure to food is fairly limited and she doesn't really enjoy food in the same way and I think that frustrates everybody really because we can't go and sit round and enjoy food because there is always an underlying Eloise can't eat X Y and Z…..

Anthony's discomfort and Derek's frustration echo Scabini and Marta's (2006) ideas around coping mechanisms of conflictive separation, or atomisation with the family, as the resolution to their dilemmas disrupts the continuation of previous generations' sustainable food behaviours.

Discontinuity: Sacred and Profane

As Anthony, Simi, and Derek show, not all (un)sustainable behaviours discussed by participants were continued and upheld across generations; transference is not absolute but can be prone to continual negotiation and redefinition (Goodnow, 1997). Discontinuity, whether intentional or drifting, was apparent in the participants' recollections.

For some participants, ritual familial food behaviours and values are entirely violated, particularly where individuals seek to create their own identity and detach themselves from negative childhood memories. Emma explains:

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> Mum used to cook corned beef hash, that processed meat. I used to come in from school and it was a massive pan that could feed 5000, but there were only four of us. The onions, the potatoes and the carrots were leftovers, which is fine, it wasn't a good healthy dinner, but we had to finish our plates, and I hated it. I'd never cook it now, especially that processed crap. I always buy organic now.

Emma's unhappy memories of processed food and the misguided eating rules regarding clean plates (linked to the moral significance of food in post WW2 homes) have led her to choose healthier and more sustainable options, detaching her family from her own unpleasant food experiences. As Kharuhayothin and Kerrane (2018) reported, the response to being forced to eat food one dislikes, can lead to a visceral rejection of early food encounters. Emma making organic rather than processed food choices for her family also shows how societal changes can influence secondary socialisation and disrupt behaviours across generations. Likewise, Vivien shows irreverence for her mother's processed food choices and opting instead for local, organic alternatives, rather than recreate unpleasant family food memories:

> My mum would buy everything processed if she got her way, so when I buy locally produced foods and organic vegetables, I think it's slightly rebelling against her and my childhood.

Emma and Vivien turned their negative emotions around family meals into more sustainable food choices, deliberately rejecting past generations' misplaced values. Vivien has undergone secondary socialisation through her partner, who mainly cooks, and prioritises sustainability in local sourcing and 'proper' cooking (Valentine, 1999)

> I always, my husband especially, always tries to buy local food… our butchers is all local meat as well so it costs a bit more but actually it's nice to know that the lamb you are eating is from down the road… Well we wouldn't…buy burgers for example we would make them… always make it from scratch and we would never buy a fish pie… that certainly hasn't come down through my family.

Discontinuity can arise less intentionally, where change results from drifting life transitions or contextual cues rather than overt generational rejection. Values such as food skills may continue through generations, but strategies to enact these may evolve and transform the behaviour. Meal planning and better food storage are common strategies to avoid food waste (https://www.lovefoodhatewaste.com). Andrew's mother's food planning involved

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overstocking the fridge to 'be prepared', leading to significant waste. Andrew's ability to cook 'whatever's there' avoids this, and is ultimately more sustainable, although not something he deliberately practiced in response to his mother's excess:

> I wasn't really aware of food surplus and waste particularly much before I met Marie …I have always I think done quite well in just buying just what we need and using it up. I'm not afraid to let the supplies run quite low as long as I know that I can make at least one or two meals out of what we have got left; that's distinct and really different from my parents…where it seems to be an article of faith that you must always have a completely full stocked fridge and a completely full vegetable basket. I have heard my dad complain several times at the amount of vegetables they've thrown away, but that's because mum insists on having all vegetables in at any one time …

Andrew shows himself to be more of an impromptu cook than his mother and adopts more moderate food storage that mitigates food surplus and waste. Although the influence of his partner has heightened his awareness of excess and waste, his improvised meal-making is not a direct rebuttal of his parents' excessive habits. Nonetheless, the outcome represents intergenerational discontinuity, as Andrew shapes his own more sustainable lifestyle through self-learning and secondary socialization.

For some participants the generational ruptures evolved as they moved away from cultural influences, such as Nicoletta. Growing up in the Romanian countryside, her parents and grandparents had passed on "the respect to nature and animals," and while at home the family farmed:

> "cows and pigs and all sorts of animals…while growing up I was surrounded by them…you know care a lot for those animals...you always put their like wellbeing first…they have to be fed they have to you know be cleaned and everything before anything else."

Nicoletta's care for animals endures, but over time she has slowly shifted from the family's carnivorous farm food culture to practice vegetarianism, partly through changing context, lifestyle, and social trends. Kiran spoke of dropping her family's strict adherence to vegetarianism and eating meat, a transition that appears bound up in her selective relationship

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with aspects of the family's Hindu culture, a birth identity she doesn't observe in everyday food:

> I'm a Hindu more so because I was born a Hindu… I only pick and choose what I like from Hinduism…people confuse a lot of like culture and tradition with religion…. it's supposed to evolve with the times to fit the times… I eat, like my husband drinks and I eat meat…We all drink and eat meat in our house…drink and eat meat out. And technically the belief is that God's all around you…

Kiran is comfortable with the seemingly contradictory choices she makes, such as eating meat, while also locally sourcing food or conserving energy. The intergenerational flux of habits can both positively and negatively drive sustainable outcomes, highlighting the complexity of sustainable transference.

Reverse Discontinuity

Reverse socialisation (Kerrane et al., 2015) featured as part of the lifelong learning about food for those participants with children, an intentional reverse discontinuity enacted by participants. Jake told how leaving home changed his behaviours, a life transition that commonly triggers new consumption behaviours, in this instance a move towards more responsible food consumption. Jake socialized with new peer groups, and explained how he teaches his parents better ways with food (Moore, 2018):

> We had a roast dinner and I'd make it my job to not throw things away but make sure they kind of were put into boxes to use up later. I remember in University I used to go back to my parent's house, and I used to just get all the stuff out the bottom of the fridge because it was all going off. I would take it back with me because they [my parents] wouldn't use it. I know now my dad wastes less and through talking to my mum, she's sort of changing.

Jake passes back new behaviours, reverse socialisation grounded in his evolving sustainable identity. Jake's adoption of his wife's and peers' sustainable lifestyles is a reassessment of his own and his parents' previous overconsumption and throwaway food habits, while consciously disrupting and recalibrating his parents' actions.

Emma also spoke of increasingly following her daughters' lead to adjust her food habits, that still displayed vestiges of her parents' now devalued household food routines:

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> Corned beef…tinned tuna always used to go down… tuna fish in a cheese sauce…We've still got the pantry under the stairs and it wasn't long ago that Jen [her daughter] came in, we had just done a food shop and Jen looked in the pantry, and said you have already got so much stuff in there…you don't eat tinned stuff anymore. And I really thought well that's ridiculous, just ridiculous.

When asked what she would prefer she said:

> I suppose if it could be how the girls live how Jen and Lisa live.…I think they have just got everything right, they just have a healthier life… I think all our fruit and veg are most of it is just from the supermarket but I want it to be home grown stuff. I don't want stuff from South Africa or whatever, and Jess and Lucy are like that as well…I think our age group are a very different generation, very different to what our parents are and have been.

Watching her daughters develop their own identity, values and lifestyles has made Emma question her own, aspiring to greater sustainably, avoiding food miles or reflecting on the need to resist the desire to stockpile tinned food that she doesn't even like or use, a food socialisation hangover from her mother. Emma's and Jake's parents' transition is still a work in progress, but illustrates the potential for lifelong socialisation, and the ebb and flow of intergenerational transference over time.

Discussion

This study sought to develop a deeper understanding of what (un)sustainable food behaviours and values are passed across generations, to what extent this transference takes place and what everyday sustainability challenges emerge for individuals and households. The study makes a range of contributions to our understanding of how intergenerational transferences shape (un)sustainable consumption throughout life and offer opportunities for lifelong sustainable change and food consumption reappraisal in daily life, beyond early years parenting, and across diverse households. The theoretical and practical implications are discussed next.

Theoretical implications

Firstly, our findings provide greater understanding about the mechanisms responsible for the sustainable transformation of our consumption habits through intergenerational transference, and the critical role of secondary socialisation outside early years family influence (Sheth,

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2020; O'Neill and Buckley, 2019; Kharuhayothin and Kerrane, 2018; Judd et al., 2014). The findings suggest that intergenerational transferences are significant in shaping (un)sustainable food consumption throughout life. Passed-on behaviours and values within families offer opportunities for lifelong sustainable change and food consumption reappraisal in daily life, beyond early years parenting, and across diverse households. Secondly, the findings contribute to the theorisation of sustainable consumption using the lens of intergenerational transference, demonstrating that secondary socialisation can play a critical role in the modification of early behaviour patterns of food socialisation (Berger and Luckmann, 1967); habits can be changed. Thirdly, the findings also extend our understanding of sustainable intergenerational transference in more diverse household contexts, building our knowledge of the dynamics of family food socialisation (Moore et al., 2017), with a greater emphasis on the everyday and mundane (Hall and Holmes, 2020) and focusing on the modalities of transference as well as the contents (Scabini and Marta, 2006).

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We found that individuals replicate food behaviours and values from childhood, but these are malleable, and may be disrupted or reinvented in a process of lifelong learning and adjustment (Moschis, 2019; Ekström, 2006). Kharuhayothin and Kerrane (2018) found that positive emotional reflexivity associated with childhood food creates an enduring legacy around certain food behaviours and parenting. Our findings show that such intergenerational transference can still endure even when food memories are negative, such as stockpiling unwanted food. However, these formative habits can be broken, particularly with reverse socialisation influences from older children who seek their own identity and introduce parents to new ways, for example prioritising local sourcing and healthier diets. The findings reveal that life transitions such as leaving home (Burningham and Venn, 2017) may weaken intergenerational transference, and cultural bonds may lose their resonance, or be reinterpreted for new situations. Discarding meat for vegetarianism or loosening religious food boundaries by younger generations suggest that childhood socialisation may not always endure when contexts shift (Stawartz et al., 2020).

The findings expose the complexity and contradictions faced by families and individuals as they strive to live and support more sustainable lifestyles (Porpino et al., 2015). New generations may choose to only inherit only what they value (Scabini and Marta, 2006) or can conveniently integrate from the family's culture or past lifestyle. The discarding of sustainable habits to simplify pressured lives can sometimes trigger inner conflict and guilt (Torma et al.,

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2016). Convenience food is a staple for busy contemporary families (Carrigan and Szmigin, 2006) but increases food and packaging waste, and cheap supermarket food deals present a tempting alternative to the time commitment and labour of growing your own. More research that explores how contextual cues and social trends disrupt and reframe early food socialisation would further our understanding of (un)sustainable consumption in later life and inform marketing and policy strategies to promote sustainable food retailing and consumption.

A growing research topic (Jönsson et al., 2021), commensality, warrants further investigation, particularly the potential role that family commensality and retail food strategies can play in public health, reducing food waste and isolation at a time when eating together is said to be on the decline (Jarosz, 2017). The focus on shared eating in participants' stories suggests this is a critical site of food socialisation, replete with intergenerational influences. It is culturally significant, boundary spans generations, class and ethnicity, and is a source of nostalgic attachment that is deliberately and habitually imitated by new generations. Family commensality is mirrored in social eating movements, combating community isolation with the support of surplus food from retailers tackling food waste (Smith and Harvey, 2021). The findings reveal the wellbeing and sustainable benefits the participants gained from shared eating (Warde, 2016), linked to the different aspects of intergenerational social relations and the interactions between the individuals and the food itself. The findings show how central the act of preparing and sharing food across and between generations was to social communion, family identity, and mental wellbeing, a rich context for future theoretical development.

The findings also contribute to growing research interest around life course transitions as potential turning points for sustainable consumer behaviour, meaningful periods in participants' lives (Verplanken et al., 2018; Burningham and Venn, 2017) – leaving home; empty nests - that represent moments of change to embark on new food behaviours, and the findings reflect reverse socialisation borne out of household reconfiguration, as adult children develop their independent sustainable food identities and (re)socialise their parents (O'Neill and Buckley, 2019; Lazell, 2016).

Practical Implications

This paper provides insight for marketers and policy makers planning sustainable food strategy, most notably demonstrating the importance of families and intergenerational transference to the embedding of sustainable consumption behaviours and traditions (Davies et al., 2020). In

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her recent review of the sociocultural impacts of food marketing and policy, Cairns (2019) emphasised that anticipating and meeting shifting consumer food requirements should be a strategic priority for marketers (Cairns, 2019), not least in supporting greater future food sustainability (Davis et al., 2018). The participants' stories told the importance of mundane family life as a critical source of sustainable learning, one that is gaining traction (Hall and Holmes, 2020) as marketers recognise insufficient attention has been paid to the context and relationships that drive sustainable consumer choices (Carrigan, 2018). Passed on food skills were often the result of 'osmosis' not teaching, and the role of extended family, not just parents, was fundamental to that inadvertent development. Many participants thrifty formative food socialisation was retained in more affluent circumstances. Meanwhile life 'hacks' such as cooking shortcuts, meal stretching, and vegetable growing were borne out life lessons from parents and extended family. Redolent of the oppositional potential of legacy Kharuhayothin and Kerrane (2018) found within their study, negative memories of childhood meals dominated by unpleasant processed foods led to the construction of sustainable food identities linked to pleasure, organic and authentic provisioning (Hedegaard and Hémar-Nicolas, 2020). By exploring how sustainability is transferred across generations, the findings show that there are opportunities for intentional and unintentional sustainable learning throughout life, and that marketers and policy makers can both disrupt unsustainable and encourage sustainable behaviours with appropriate interventions, such as messages that harness generational, nostalgic or wellbeing signals.

The findings from this study indicate important implications for practice and policy interventions targeted at sustainability and food. Our participants demonstrated considerable awareness of the need to improve the sustainability of how we source and use food, what constitutes eating responsibly, and understood the role of individual and family food choices in contributing to those goals. Harnessing and embedding the sustainable food behaviours and breaking the cycle of unsustainable familial food habits will be important future policy imperatives. However, the paper sheds light on flexible sustainable identities, with participants demonstrating how ambivalence or accelerated lives could deflect how policy messages are received, preventing sustainable choices. Both marketers and policy makers can draw on the findings – lessons on why and how we retain or let go of food behaviours - to encourage the continuity of generational values of thrift and frugality while emphasising the importance of good food and commensality to wellbeing and sustainability. As austerity looms in global society, messages that emphasise good value, sustainability and family wellbeing will be

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critical for marketers and consumers. Thrifty food habits, waste avoidance, growing your own, and retaining sustainable lessons from the past can support individuals and families in their aspirations to be more sustainable while balancing limited budgets.

Finally, this study offers insights for food policy makers in a contemporary landscape where policy driven reports regarding climate change and food behaviours increasingly feature but have yet to fully understand the role of intergenerational transference across households as a model for sustainable change. For instance, the 2019 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report recommends a few steps households can take to make a difference to food sustainability, but there is more that can be encouraged. Despite the value of the findings, further effective food policies that leverage household and community pro-sustainability behaviours and values are needed, including those that capitalize on intergenerational food socialization, particularly beyond early years. This includes policies surrounding food waste as well as disrupting unsustainable habits and encouraging retail and shopping behaviours around more locally sourced seasonal foods, low carbon diets, food planning and food sharing. Such policies and accessible communication of the IPCC will be integral to minimising the impact of food behaviours on the climate.

Limitations and Future Research

This paper's limitations can be addressed in future research. Methodologically, most of the participants were British, although the sample drew on multiple ethnic heritages. Future research could extend the geographical and socio-demographic scope of families to understand and draw comparisons across cultures on the transference of sustainable familial food behaviours and values. For example, Mediterranean diet and shared eating have been shown to promote good health and sustainability (Medina, 2021), food habits that could be prioritized in policy and practice messages, with an emphasis on changing appropriate sourcing, cooking, and eating behaviours. By only interviewing one member from each household, we limit the opportunity to draw on the experiences and understandings of different family members, which could be addressed in the future by taking a more networked/systems approach as advocated by Epp and Price (2008). However, many of the family members discussed by the participants had either died, lived abroad, were no longer in the household or unwilling to participate, which constrained our opportunities to talk to them. Further research exploring intergenerational transference of households with multigeneration, extended families (Brombach, 2017);

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comparing households in rural and urban locations with short and long food supply chains (Vittersø et al., 2019); households facing food insecurity (Ullevig et al., 2021), or studying households with and without spaces for growing food (Shaw et al., 2016) would be fruitful avenues to widen the scope of this study. One interesting avenue is the exploration of collectivist versus more individualistic cultural influences. This would extend the body of research conducted on specific cultures such as Finnish household food waste (Koivupuro et al., 2012), Brazilian consumers food disposal (Porpino et al., 2015) Italian families sustainable food consumption (Vassallo et al., 2016), Dutch adults (Verain et al., 2015) as well as multicultural societies (Reddy and van Dam, 2020).

This paper found that sustainable food behaviour transformation was partially a response to current trends in sustainable, local, healthy eating. Thus, further research might seek to explore different generational responses to media and influencer trends emerging around food such as veganism (Phua et al., 2020) or pandemic-led consumer responses towards processed food hoarding, food insecurities and scarcities (Dickins and Schalz, 2020). Future research needs to examine how likely family members are to integrate sustainable food behaviours such as avoiding waste or low carbon diets in response to media and policy messaging, particularly when facing contextual challenges or financial penalties to do so. How these media and contextual issues affect the behaviour of individuals in different generations or the flow between them, given our findings, demonstrate how sustainable behaviours can pass back and between generations. Future research could also investigate the possible strategies employed to encourage sustainable behaviour and values via an intergenerational approach.

Finally, future research can extend the theoretical developments presented in this paper. For example, to examine the potential for sustainable intergenerational transference within other consumption spaces such as fast fashion or fast homeware, both sectors with increasingly unsustainable impacts (O'Sullivan, 2021). This paper found significant crossover between different sustainable food behaviours and food cultures, suggesting evidence of trickle-down, trickle-up and trickle-across diffusions reminiscent of other sectors (Atik and First, 2013). Thus, it would be useful in future research to continue to investigate whether this crossover derived from familial socialization continues into other sustainable behaviour and values beyond food.

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Table I. Semi-Structured Interview Guide

Objectives	**Questions**
Introduction	Nature of research and how it will be used
'Warm up'	Now tell me a little bit about yourself, e.g.: • Age (or age range); • Your occupation; • Do you have children? • Do you care for any elderly relatives? • Relationship status • Where and who you live with • Any religious or spiritual beliefs

General attitudes and experiences linked to given or bequeathed items and family traditions	So, let's talk about things that have been passed on to you;
	• Can I ask you firstly to think about something that has been passed to you, or you have inherited that holds any special significance or importance for you?
	  o (*Prompts can include food, furniture, clothing etc)*
	  o Who gave it to you; how long have you had it; do you like it; why is it important to keep it; would you hand it on to anyone else or keep it?
	• Does your family own any cherished possessions? Tell me about them? *(Use follow up questions to probe)*
	
	• Are there any items that you own, or have been passed to you that within your culture that are considered particularly special or cherished? Can you tell me about that?
	  o *Prompt:* (*e.g. Scottish culture might be a family tartan)*
	• Tell me about some of the other items or family things that you have or are important to you/ you particularly like/ are fond of? What makes it special? (*might be tangible/intangible - clothing; family recipes; cooking items; books; music; furniture; tools; gardening items or traditions*)
	  o Is this/are these something you would like to hand on to anyone?
	• Can you tell me about any specific inherited item – one that stands out to you? Tell me about that, e.g. (*Prompts*)
	  o Who gave it you?
	  o What is it?
	  o When was it given?

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	○ Will you be keeping it? ○ Will you pass it down to the next generation? ○ Do you store or display it? ○ What is the motive to pass on the item? *(Probe here)* • Does your family have any traditions? *(Could be rituals, things we like to replicate on special occasions; could be anything from Sunday dinner; camping in the summer; birthday celebrations etc.)* ○ What are they? ○ How important are they to you? ○ Will you look to pass these traditions down to the next generation? ○ Why does it matter for you to pass on these traditions? • Do you possess any particular skills or knowledge *(Prompt e.g. cooking skills; how to knit or sew; maintaining a car)* • Did anyone in your family or friends teach you any skills or expertise that are important to you? ○ How did you learn those skills? ○ Would you wish to pass them on to future generations? *(Prompt: might be to workplace, friends or other family, not just children)* ○ What is the motive to pass on these ideas or knowledge? *(Probe here)* • *[If not yet mentioned]:* Do you have any special food or food traditions in your family? ○ What are they? ○ How important are they to you? ○ Will you look to pass these traditions down to the next generation? ○ Why does it matter for you to pass on these traditions?
General sustainability and social responsibility attitudes	So, let's talk about your broader views on sustainability/social responsibility… • Do you think about the sustainability of a product when you are shopping? ○ What (if any) socially responsible/sustainable rules and issues do you use to guide your choices, behaviours and purchases? ▪ *Prompt:* (*e.g. recycled; environmentally safe; fairtrade; local; food choices*) ○ are these different for different products?

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	▪ *Prompt:* (*e.g. do you apply them when buying food, cars, clothes, furniture etc*? • What has led you to think about these things when buying or using products; did anything trigger your interest in *sustainability/local/fairtrade* that you remember? • Do your social/cultural/religious groups i.e. colleagues, workmates, family, church, social groups – have any influence upon your sustainable choices generally? o *Probe here* • What kind of (if any) sustainable/responsible products have you bought in the past? o Tell me about some of those you buy regularly? o What is behind your decision to buy those in particular? • Have you ever bought second hand products or products that you know are recycled? o What made you interested in buying second hand?
Links between inheritance and sustainability	Let's talk a bit more about things that have been passed on and sustainability • Passing on items, or inheriting them is a way of stopping them from being destroyed or keeping them in circulation longer. o Do you have any thoughts about that – do you think it is something we should encourage? ▪ *Probe here depending on answer* o What are your thoughts about recycling/reusing/ or keep using old things more generally? o Do you see any good points or perhaps challenges? o *Probe here* • Things we inherit can be relevant or useful, but not always. o Can you give me an example of something useful and relevant you have had passed to you? o Can you give me an example of something that is not useful and relevant? ▪ *Probe here* • Can you tell us about any actions that you are taking that may impact on younger or future generations? E.g. *how you dispose of things or pass them on yourself* o Do you have anything that you can imagine yourself one day passing onto the next generation? Tell us about it ▪ Is it something that you use or do currently? o Have you thought about not buying or passing on something because of the damage it might cause in the future?

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	○ What about any ideas or knowledge that you may wish to pass on relating to sustainability and social issues?
Any other relevant aspects not discussed	The discussion is coming to an end now, so: Is there anything we haven't talked about that you would like to discuss or say anything else about?

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Table II. Participant Profiles

Pseudonym	Nationality	Home Residence England	Age	Family Set
Audrey	British	Urban; Midlands	74	Living alone, widow, no children.
Brian	British	Urban; Midlands	60	Living with wife, empty nester, two children (aged 24 and 21)
Leah	British	Rural; North East	37	Living with husband
Derek	British	Rural; North East	39	Living with wife, no children.
Simi	British Asian	Urban; Midlands	32	Living with husband and three children (aged 10, 6, 3)
Neha	British Asian	Urban; Midlands	29	Living with husband and daughter.
Kiran	British Asian	Urban; South East	28	Living with friends, single, no children
Vivien	British	Urban; North East	41	Living with husband, no children
Carla	German	Urban; North West	32	Living alone, single, no children
Emma	British	Urban; Midlands	53	Living with husband, empty nester, two children (aged 24 and 21)
Janice	British	Urban; Midlands	33	Living with husband, one child
Molly	British	Urban; Midlands	57	Living with husband and one child (aged 17)
Daniel	British and Irish	Urban; North West	65	Living with wife, empty nester, two children (aged 27 and 30)
Rajan	British Asian	Urban; Midlands	27	Living with girlfriend, no children
Deepak	British Asian	Urban; South East	31	Living with wife, expecting first child
Patricia	British	Urban; North West	67	Living alone, divorced, three children (aged 47, 43, and 39) and four grandchildren
Nicoletta	Romanian	Urban; Midlands	34	Living with husband, no children
Mandy	British		45	Living with one child (aged 15), single
Nina	British Asian	Urban; South East	29	Living with husband and two children (aged 1 and 4)

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Jake	British	Urban; Midlands	26	Living with wife, no children
Amira	Belgian and Moroccan	Urban; North East	39	Living alone, divorced and single, no children
Anthony	British	Urban; North West	41	Living with girlfriend, one children from previous relationship
Megan	British	Urban; North West	40	Living with wife and one child (aged 5)
Marian	British Asian	Urban; Midlands	45	Living with husband and two children (aged 13 and 15)
Andrew	British	Urban; Midlands	55	Living with two children (aged 17 and 20), divorced.

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Table III. Themes and Coding at Three Levels

Descriptive codes	Interpretive codes	Overarching theme
Behaviours, values and rituals passed down, embedded in religion, culture, practices Interconnecting generations acting as bridges between older and younger generations; keep values and rituals going Obligation of relationships, respect, affection and shared, inherited practices	Conscious continuity Actively retained behaviours and practices Sacred rituals	Continuity
Habitual purchasing and replication of generational behaviours Inherited behaviour simulating past generations struggles or constraints Customary thrift practices Informal learning; learning by doing Social eating, eating together; shared meals	Routine, mundane continuity More habitual, passive than active	
Conflict over familial sustainable food practices Elements of past behaviours or new traditions (re)created and shared with next generation. Inherited expectations as a responsibility and burden; Disruptions to traditions; generational discord; flexible interpretations	Ambivalence in Transference Co-existence between harmony and conflict; Coping mechanisms; inconsistencies and conflictive separation Discarding with discomfort	Ambivalence
Breaking the chain; disruption Disregarding practices around frugality Rejection: processed foods, finishing your plate habits and tensions Tensions in household between wasteful and frugal	Deliberate, intentional discontinuity Behaviours and values are rejected entirely; irreverence	Discontinuity
Dwindling importance of feast day rituals and family get togethers, loosening of ties Convenient modernising of recipes around changing lifestyles Flexible or diminishing cultural or religious standards Change and continuity in recipes and food rituals; adaption and development	Contextual discontinuity; lifestyle changes and life transitions; interpretive or drifting discontinuity	

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Changes with life transitions, passing back new behaviours to others in the family; Following the lead or being influenced by new knowledge in the family	Reverse socialisation, intentional reverse discontinuity	Reverse Discontinuity

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