



**LOCAVORISM AND ITS IMPACT ON CONSUMERS'  
BEHAVIORAL INTENTIONS TOWARDS FOOD  
PRODUCTS**

Julia Dejakum

Dissertation written under the supervision of professor Cláudia Patrícia Candeias Simão.

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## **ABSTRACT**

To better understand consumers' behavioral intentions related to local food products, the underlying research aims at investigating the impact of locavorism on consumers' purchase intentions and willingness to pay. The study's purpose is to identify the antecedents of locavorism in addition to its predictive effects on consumers' intended behavior.

Following a thorough review of extant literature presenting the concepts in question and their relationships, an online survey was conducted to (1) assess how consumers' environmental attitudes, health consciousness and community attachment predict locavorism, (2) to analyze how locavorist mindsets predict consumers' purchase intentions and willingness to pay for unlabelled and local-labelled food products, respectively, and (3) to uncover the mediating role of locavorism in the relationship between antecedents and consumers' behavioural intentions. Results present two significant relationships among the variables, namely environmental attitudes positively predicting locavorism as well as locavorism positively predicting purchase intention for local food items. Thus, yielding the conclusion that consumers with strongly developed environmental attitudes are more likely to develop locavorist traits which, in turn, lead to a higher purchase intention for local food products.

Whilst the findings support existing research on an academic level, additional managerial insights may also be deduced in the realm of adding to the understanding of the origin of consumers' locavorist attitudes and their implications for intended purchase behaviours.

**Keywords:** *Locavorism, local food products, environmental attitudes, health consciousness, community attachment, purchase intention, willingness to pay*

**Title:** Locavorism and its impact on consumers' behavioral intentions towards food products

**Author:** Julia Dejakum

## SUMÁRIO

Para melhor compreensão das intenções comportamentais dos consumidores relacionadas com os produtos alimentares locais, a investigação subjacente visa investigar o impacto do locavorismo nas intenções de compra dos consumidores e na sua disposição para pagar. O objetivo do estudo é identificar os antecedentes do locavorismo, para além dos seus efeitos preditivos sobre o comportamento pretendido dos consumidores.

Após uma revisão da literatura existente que apresenta os conceitos em questão e as suas relações, foi realizado um inquérito online para (1) avaliar como as atitudes ambientais dos consumidores, a consciência de saúde e a ligação à comunidade prevêm o locavorismo, (2) analisar como as mentalidades locavoristas prevêm as intenções de compra dos consumidores e a vontade de pagar por produtos alimentares não rotulados e rotulados localmente, respetivamente, e (3) descobrir o papel mediador do locavorismo na relação entre os antecedentes e as intenções comportamentais dos consumidores. Os resultados apresentam duas relações significativas entre as variáveis, nomeadamente as atitudes ambientais que prevêm positivamente o locavorismo, bem como o locavorismo que prevê positivamente a intenção de compra de produtos alimentares locais. Assim, conclui-se que os consumidores com atitudes ambientais fortemente desenvolvidas são mais propensos a desenvolver características locavoristas que, por sua vez, levam a uma maior intenção de compra de produtos alimentares locais.

Embora as conclusões apoiem a investigação existente a nível académico, podem também deduzir-se resultados de gestão adicionais no domínio do aumento da compreensão da origem das atitudes locavoristas dos consumidores e as suas implicações para os comportamentos de compra pretendidos.

**Palavras-chave:** *Locavorismo, produtos alimentares locais, atitudes ambientais, consciência de saúde, apego à comunidade, intenção de compra, disposição para pagar*

**Título:** Locavorismo e o seu impacto nas intenções comportamentais dos consumidores em relação aos produtos alimentares

**Autor:** Julia Dejakum

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

During the course of the past decade, an increasing consumer demand for local food products has led to the rise of local food systems across the globe (Ditlevsen et al., 2020) . Therefore, the aim of the underlying dissertation is to assess the motivations and attitudes behind consumers' ubiquitous love for local food products as well as the impact on behavioral intentions.

In Chapter 1, recent development and trends in this field are illustrated and the concept of locavorism is presented and defined. Moreover, the research questions, objectives and relevance of the study are offered to the reader, ahead of providing a brief overview of the research approach.

Chapter 2 summarizes findings from extant literature in order to define the concepts in question, that are local food, locavorism and its antecedents, and consumers' behavioral intentions, i.e., purchase intention and willingness to pay. Generally, locavorism relates to the preference of consuming food from local origin, whereas the interpretation of the latter is mostly left to consumers (Hempel & Hamm, 2016a). In the current literature, the antecedents of locavorism are found to be environmental attitudes, health consciousness and community attachment (Choi et al., 2021). It is often hypothesized that locavorism and its antecedents positively predict purchase intention and willingness to pay for local food products (Choi et al., 2021; Costanigro et al., 2014; Kim & Huang, 2021).

To continue, Chapter 3 introduces the methodology of applied study by explaining the quantitative data collection method chosen. An online questionnaire was sent to European consumers using convenience sampling. The survey design is presented in detail, indicating which questions participants were required to answer alongside scale choice. More specifically, consumers were asked to answer a set of questions pertaining to their environmental attitudes, health consciousness, community attachment and locavorist traits, followed by the presentation of fourteen products, seven of which were labelled "local", with corresponding questions about their purchase intention and willingness to pay for these products.

Consequently, Chapter 4 focuses on the process of data analysis, ranging from data preparation to presentation of results in five sections. Following the description of the sample, an overview of correlations between the three independent, one mediator and two dependent variables is provided. Further, the relationships between each type of variable as well as the mediation models are portrayed.

Accordingly, the links between findings from literature in Chapter 2 and data analysis in Chapter 4 are drawn in Chapter 5. Two statistically significant relationships were discovered.

Firstly, environmental attitudes are found to positively predict locavorism and, secondly, locavorism to positively predict purchase intentions for local food products. Furthermore, the contributions to academic knowledge and managerial implications of said relationships are discussed. More specifically, this dissertation demonstrates that environmental attitudes predict locavorism, whilst also pointing out the lack of an exhaustive catalogue of antecedents of locavorism on a theoretical level. At the same time, practitioners can benefit from the knowledge that stronger environmental attitudes predict locavorism which, in turn, positively predicts purchase intentions and may apply this knowledge in the concept of marketing local food products. Finally, research limitations are identified, areas for future research highlighted and conclusions drawn.

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Lots of love,  
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#### **IV. LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

CI	Confidence Interval
CVM	Contingent Valuation Method
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
i.e.	Id est
NEP	New Environmental Paradigm
NSM	New Social Movement Theory
PI	Purchase Intention
RQ	Research Question
SD	Standard Deviation
SE	Standard Error
UN	United Nations
WTP	Willingness to Pay

# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background and problem statement

For the longest of time, homo sapiens has always consumed local food products. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the switch to a global food system was then made with all the advantages and downsides it inherently implies. To date, industrialized countries are dominated by globalized, main-stream food systems with local food systems only playing a minor role.

However, these global food networks are unsustainable due to a number of environmental, economic and social-related reasons. For instance, the agro-food sector accounts for 22% of greenhouse gas emissions and 30% of all energy consumed globally. Out of this share of energy, 79% is sourced from fossil fuel (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 2011; Monforti-Ferrario et al., 2015). Further, the UN estimates that currently around one third of all food produced is disposed of (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 2021). Therefore, food consumption is recognized as a major sustainability issue by the UN's Sustainable Development Goals, in particular goal 12 that is "Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns" (Annunziata et al., 2019; de Boer et al., 2007; Thøgersen, 2017; United Nations, 2021).

Concurrently, over the course of the past years, consumer demand for sustainable food products as well as interest by research and politics in said has augmented notably (Ditlevsen et al., 2020; Sundbo, 2013). According to the FAO, a sustainable food system is one that delivers food security and nutrition for all in such a way that the economic, social and environmental bases to generate food security and nutrition for future generation is not compromised (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 2011).

In this realm, the topic of locavorism is increasingly being discussed. It refers to the preference of consuming food of local origin, although scholars still disagree on a universally valid definition of "local". Some refer to it as food originating from a certain radius, such as a 100-mile-radius; others determine local as grown within a certain region or state (Shin et al., 2016). Local food features numerous benefits such as better quality, taste, freshness, and social and environmental impact (Hempel & Hamm, 2016b). As such, locally sourced food items can improve the sustainability of food systems by fostering the protection of local economies and jobs, improving the preservation of rural landscapes and environment as well as contributing to the reduction of negative impacts connected to food transportation around the globe such as greenhouse gas emissions, amongst others (Sabina del Castillo et al., 2021). According to a recently published article, Choi et al. (2021) identified at least three antecedents of locavorism: environmental attitudes, community attachment and health consciousness. These scholars

proposed that stated antecedents are positively related to locavorism, as more and more consumers are considering adverse effects on the environment resulting from their own behavior, as their personal goals of health and wellbeing are met, and as consumers seek to attend to their neighborhoods. The positive associations with local food products combined with these consumer attitudes are suggested to influence their purchase intention and willingness to pay more for local food products (Choi et al., 2021; Jekanowski et al., 2000). Extant studies indicate that consumer attitudes, perceptions, preferences and behaviors towards local food products may be influenced and mediated by a number of factors, including consumer identities (de Boer et al., 2007; Ditlevsen et al., 2020; Hempel & Hamm, 2016b). Although extensive research has been conducted with regards to the topics of consumer identities and local foods, respectively, insights on consumer identities' impact on their relation towards locally grown food products are scarce (Bianchi & Mortimer, 2015). Further, whilst studies have been focusing on understanding which demographic factors influence consumer preferences and behavior towards local food products, brands are mostly left in the dark about the impact of personal and social identity traits, such as locavorism (Feldmann & Hamm, 2015). The underlying dissertation thus aims at analyzing how locavorism predicts consumer behavior, i.e. purchase intention and willingness to pay, towards locally grown food products. By doing so, companies and marketers are provided with knowledge in support of decisions in the field of development, advertising, positioning, communication, amongst others.

## **1.2 Aim and scope**

The aim of this dissertation is to understand how locavorism contributes to consumers' behavioral intentions towards local food. Subsequently, actionable marketing insights for brands are discussed. In other words, the underlying dissertation aspires to examine the relationship between the three psychosocial factors environmental attitudes, health consciousness and community attachment, the mediator variable locavorism and consumers' behavioral intentions towards food products.

Therefore, to tackle this encompassing problem, the following research questions are addressed:

RQ1: How do environmental attitudes, health consciousness and community attachment predict locavorism?

RQ2: How does locavorism predict consumers' purchase intention and willingness to pay regarding local food products?

RQ3: Does locavorism mediate the relationship between environmental attitudes, health consciousness and community attachment and purchase intention and willingness to pay?

### **1.3 Research approach and methods**

For the pursuit of answering the above-stated questions, a deductive research approach has been selected. This methodology allows to analyze the underlying phenomena explaining consumer preferences and behavior (Saunders et al., 2016). The sequential gathering of secondary data through a literature review, followed by quantitative data through an online survey permits the collection of all information necessary in rejoining the stated research questions.

Firstly, extant literature is reviewed so as to establish a base of definitions of the concepts in question, namely “local food” and “locavorism”. Further, the antecedents of locavorism are outlined. Moreover, the constructs “purchase intention” and “willingness to pay” are explored in relation with local food, meaning that relevant insights from already conducted studies are summarized. Based on the literature review, the hypotheses are constructed in order to test how locavorism and its antecedents predicts consumer behavioral intentions, i.e. purchase intent and willingness to pay. The data gathered through a self-administered online survey is then analyzed and discussed, outlining theoretical as well as managerial implications. Finally, limitations are delineated and conclusions drawn.

### **1.4 Relevance**

The objective of this research is to gather knowledge and insights into how locavorism shapes consumers’ behavioral intentions towards local grocery items. These findings are relevant for marketers working on the development, positioning, pricing, placement, advertising, and communication related to locally grown foods. On the other side, whilst the insights can directly contribute to the marketing strategy of local foods, also marketers in other areas may derive interesting comprehensions for their own tactics. Additionally, it is interesting to gain a deeper understanding of one’s local food product choices and behavior from a consumer and environmental perspective. Finally, insights from this dissertation may be used to promote local food and beverage items towards locavorist or non-locavorist consumers.

### **1.5 Dissertation outline**

Chapter 1, as above, provided a concise introduction including background information, the problem statement, research questions, methods and relevance. Chapter 2 presents an extensive literature review around the independent variables (environmental attitudes, health consciousness, community attachment), the mediator variable (locavorism) and the dependent variables (purchase intention and willingness to pay). Based on the literature, hypotheses will

be obtained. Subsequently, in Chapter 3 the research methodology applied is outlined together with a depiction of the questionnaire used to gather primary data. Its results are presented and discussed in Chapter 4. Finally, in Chapters 5 and 6, results are discussed to support conclusions, implications, and limitations to its scope and validity and suggestions for further research.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

This chapter aims at providing the reader with a structured overview of extant literature on the concept of local food, locavorism, environmental attitudes, health consciousness, community attachment and purchase intention and willingness to pay in relation to local food products.

### **2.1 Local food**

The topic of local food has attracted growing attention by researchers in the past years. Despite the high number of scholars addressing the topic, there is no uniform definition nor governmental regulation for the concept of “local” (Feldmann & Hamm, 2015; Palau-Saumell et al., 2021). Whilst roughly, it denotes food that has only travelled a short distance, definitions range from “distances (i.e. miles or kilometres), political boundaries, and specialty criteria, to more holistic approaches that also included emotional and/or ethical dimensions such as personal relations with or within the region” (Feldmann & Hamm, 2015, p. 156). Some researchers introduced the number of driving hours of food as a criterion, while adding marketing distribution channels, regional specialities and a sense of community and ownership to the notion of “local” (Palau-Saumell et al., 2021). The most frequently used characterization of local food involves a distance between 10 and 100 miles or a delineation in time travelled, such as less than three hours (Adams & Adams, 2011; Chambers et al., 2007; Hodges & Stevens, 2013).

Some scholars tend to accept the term “regional” as a substitute for “local” when it comes to food products, but the opinion is not unisono (Feldmann & Hamm, 2015). Other researchers do not only consider “where”, but also “how” and “by whom” when talking about local food, thus pairing production, distribution and location characteristics (Hand & Martinez, 2010).

For the purpose of this dissertation, the conception of “local” is adapted from Conner et al. (2009) and valid for items that meet the defined criteria in three areas: location, quality and relationship. The first dimension refers to “geographic boundaries (grown in a given state, region and county), or miles traveled (distance from farm to market), or supporting the state’s or county’s taxpayers” (Conner et al., 2009, p. 252). Quality is reflected in freshness, regional specialities, or rare characteristics of items due to limited demand or difficult transport options. Relationship, according to Conner et al. (2009), refers to some type of familiarity, be it a personal contact, conversation or simply a relation to the story of producers.

Nevertheless, extant research has not yet reached consensus about a uniform definition because consumers’ different perceptions highly depend on spatial and social context (Carroll & Fahy, 2015). This lack inherently implies that no standardized labels for local food products exist,

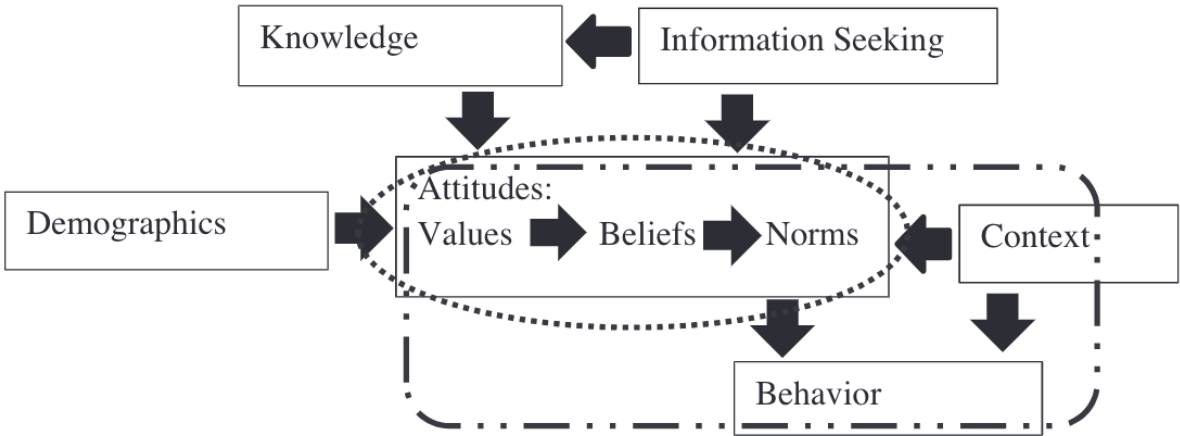
which renders their identification difficult for consumers, classification hard for producers and a match between the product and consumers' expectations harder to obtain (Brooker et al., 1987; Brown, 2003; D. Conner et al., 2010; Conoly et al., 2021; Eičaitė & Dabkienė, 2015; Feldmann & Hamm, 2015; Wilkins, 2002; Wilkins et al., 2000; Zepeda & Leviten-Reid, 2004). The benefits of local food products are manifold and consumer motivations for local food choice multi-faceted, but they can be categorized into four types: social, health, environmental and economic (A. Kumar & Smith, 2018). From a social point of view, Feagan (2007) theorizes that local food systems may foster reattachment to certain places and help people to strengthen identities. Pretty (2001) adds improved connections and enhanced trust between providers and consumers as benefits of local food systems. This idea is expanded even further by Pearson et al. (2011) who claim that better relationships concerning these two parties hold the power to foster understanding between rural and urban residents. In fact, research by Memery et al. (2015) illustrates that consumers opt for local alternatives more often to support local businesses than for the intrinsic benefits of these alternatives themselves, even though they are another favourable factor.

Reported health benefits of local food diets are higher nutritive values, an increased likelihood of healthier food choices, obesity prevention and a reduced risk of diet-related chronic disease, based on Martinez et al. (2010) stating that local food is fresher, more nutritious and less processed. Indeed, food safety and quality were reported health benefits in many studies about locally sourced grocery items (Jefferson-Moore et al., 2014; Wilkins et al., 2000). In addition, consumer concerns about the reliability and safety of global foods are on the rise, a development that accelerated since the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic (Béné, 2020; Palau-Saumell et al., 2021).

From an environmental point of view, local food systems are found to be more sustainable than mainstream food systems (Bianchi & Mortimer, 2015; Conner et al., 2010). The main arguments in favor of this claim pertain to the reduction of food miles, thus less transportation needed than for global foods, which leads to a reduction of fossil fuel consumption, greenhouse gas emissions, air pollution and infrastructure usage (Coley et al., 2009; Naglis-Liepa et al., 2021; Schnell, 2013). Additionally, Brain (2012) claims that eating locally supports the preservation of cultivar genetic diversity as well as small-scale farmland, speaking for his home state Utah. Moreover, farmers who directly market their produce to consumers are more prone to apply environmentally friendly production practices (Martinez et al., 2010). According to previous evidence, the production phase accounts for 83% of greenhouse gas emissions of food products, whereas transportation only constitutes 11% (Weber & Matthews, 2008).

Finally, economically speaking, the production and consumption of local foods revitalizes local service, diversifies rural economies, fosters horticultural customs, improves local food supply chains and leads to money remaining in local communities for a longer period of time which, in turn, boosts economic growth (Pearson et al., 2011). Additionally, local food systems promote economic independence, increase employment and improve the area’s image (Naglis-Liepa et al., 2021). Last, but not least, the recent Covid-19 pandemic has led to a rise of trust in local supply chains, simultaneously to a decrease in dependence of global systems (Palau-Saumell et al., 2021).

Extant research mainly aimed at identifying and analysing “preferences and underlying food values” related to local foods, as Feldmann and Hamm’s (2015) thorough literature review showed. They found multiple elements, partly interacting with each other, to be determinants of consumers’ purchase behaviors. The components and their interactions and relations are illustrated in Figure 1. As can be seen, demographic factors, knowledge, information seeking and context lead to consumer attitudes and values, beliefs and norms which, in turn, cause behavior.



**Figure 1:** *Conceptual framework of Alphabet Theory*  
*Adapted from Zepeda and Deal (2009)*

Some of Feldmann and Hamm’s (2015) most interesting findings are that local food is perceived to be tastier and of higher quality. Taste is the most significant driver for food purchase, where its association with the feature “local” constitutes a first-class guarantee for consumers (Feldmann & Hamm, 2015). Marketers especially need to consider altruistic and egoistic beliefs of consumers, such as their trust in the food supply chain (Adams & Adams, 2011). In addition, context, habits and attitudes, such as place of residence, enjoyment of cooking, value of time

spent with family, the type of product or the respective season ought to be taken into account (Adams & Salois, 2010; Onozaka & McFadden, 2011).

## **2.2 Locavorism, a new consumer ideology**

Locavorism is a relatively recent expression, having emerged in the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The term “locavore” was originally coined by Prentice (2006) in her book *Full Moon Feast* and refers to a “movement in which people strive to eat locally sourced foods” (Fitzgerald, 2016, p. 2). Next to publishing the book, Prentice and some of her colleagues organized a community event in the San Francisco Bay Area around people only eating food sourced from a 100-mile-radius around the town during one month. However, the conception of eating local food products dates back to the origins of humankind, where no other dietary options were available. It gained popularity again in the late twentieth century not only with the growing concern for sustainability, but also as a counter-trend against globalization and “agribusiness, cultural homogenization, chain restaurants and big-box stores” (Fitzgerald, 2016, p. 2).

Whilst locavorism is often reduced to eating food from a certain radius, it actually refers to the adoption of a “mindset about shared commitments to various forms of environmental sustainability, community revitalization, human health, and animal welfare” (Rudy, 2012, p. 28). According to Fitzgerald (2016, p. 5), locavorism contributes to more liveable homes and communities, environmental and agricultural sustainability and “human agency in the face of significant structural obstacles”. Moreover, many scholars contend that whilst the local food movement may be the most prominent amongst all locavore engagements, also local energy sources, living economies and local knowledge ought to be taken into consideration (Choi et al., 2021).

Locavorism is seen by Fitzgerald (2016) as a humanist form of activism as it encourages people to engage in conscious food consumption. Locavores aim at changing consumer culture and ideology and can thus be regarded as a new consumer ideology due to its shared set of beliefs (Choi et al., 2021; Kim & Huang, 2021; Reich et al., 2018). In addition, the fact that only when consumers subscribe to a belief, they take meaningful actions, such as food product choices and purchases are, as well as the seldom return to nonlocal food after the locavore idea has been established in consumers’ minds, point to locavorism being a strong consumer ideology (Reich et al., 2018).

Based on this assumption, Reich et al. (2018) developed a tripartite framework to foster a better understanding of locavorism. They identified three core components of locavorism, which are

lionization, opposition and communalization. Lionization is inspired by the lion's characteristics superiority and credibility and refers to locavores believing that local food is of superior quality, taste and nutrition than nonlocal food (Jekanowski et al., 2000). Opposition pertains to the underlying critic of mainstream food systems and all nonlocal corporations (Zepeda & Deal, 2009). Some scholars even argue that locavorism is elicited by consumers' dislike for conventional foods rather than their love for local products (Costanigro et al., 2014). Others, on the contrary, maintain that locavorism is free of hometown bias and locavores will seek local products independently of their location (Nalley et al., 2006; Reich et al., 2018). The third dimension, communalization, relates to the support of local communities (Reich et al., 2018). It is based on the assumption that local food consumption creates economic benefits and strengthens social bonds which, in turn, leads to stronger communities. These three core elements of locavorism are reciprocal (Reich et al., 2018). The framework suggests that, opposed to prior research which sees the ideology as a reason for food preferences, the preference for local food itself is an ideology (Reich et al., 2018).

### **2.3 Locavorism's limits and criticism**

Despite its numerous benefits, scholars have identified several critical points of locavorism. Their most prominent arguments are presented and discussed in this chapter (Desrochers & Hiroko, 2012; Fitzgerald, 2016; Gray, 2013; Patel, 2012; Rudy, 2012).

One of the most cited books in this realm is *In Praise of the 10'000-mile diet* by Desrochers and Hiroko (2012). The authors argue that environmental damage would actually be bigger if everyone embraced the local food system than if we maintained a globalized food system due to the fact that food production may result in a greater carbon footprint than transportation of food. According to the authors, this may be caused by greenhouse gas emissions produced during heating and cooling processes. Studies found that the majority of emissions can be allotted to the production phase, thus not inculcating transport (Weber & Matthews, 2008). However, this argument does not take into consideration the notion that locavorists also seek to consume seasonal harvest and products native to their region, thus not aiming at replicating the plethora of food choice now available through global systems (Fitzgerald, 2016).

In light of this, scholars often delimit that locavorism would limit food choice available (Dieterle, 2015; Fitzgerald, 2016). Conversely, when looking at historic developments, the industrialized food chains led to a much more drastic reduction of food diversity (Patel, 2012). For instance, the number of types of apples available declined from around 7'500 varieties to around a dozen, which can be treated with pesticides and travel well over long distances. In

fact, a local food system often revives old variants and thus helps to return to a richer flora and fauna (Enthoven & van den Broeck, 2021).

Another prominent argument against locavorism is the fact that islands, such as Japan, and remote places around the world are incapable of food sustainability (Desrochers & Hiroko, 2012). These spots on the planet will still rely on global food systems. Again, it needs to be emphasized that whilst locavorism encourages local food consumption, it does not advocate for the complete abolishment of food transport. It simply incites an increased intake of locally sourced items, wherever possible, to decrease dependence on a mainstream food system (Fitzgerald, 2016).

Furthermore, locavorism is often labelled an elitist movement. It is true that locally sourced items have a tendency to cost around ten percent more than their nonlocal counterparts (Rudy, 2012) and are harder to access because of their limited availability in mostly farmers markets, high-end stores and other agricultural sales points. This renders local products less accessible for people and households with low incomes.

Farm labor is yet another legitimate point of criticism (Gray, 2013; Patel, 2012). It refers to many farms all over the world being staffed by immigrant workers that labour under hard circumstances. Of course, this argument cannot be generalized and applied to all countries, regions or farms without further consideration. Another point of criticism refers to meat production on local farms. Whilst the animals may be raised following ethically acceptable standards, they are nevertheless slaughtered in industrial factories with questionable practices, according to Jones (2021). However, a structured system change is required in order to tackle the challenge of rendering farm work ethical in all aspects, that include topics such as labour and law as well as ethics encompassing the chain from farm to table (Gray, 2013).

A frequent argument added to the list is a rising concern about “local washing” (Fitzgerald, 2016, p. 13). The term is similar to green washing, which means that “marketing is used deceptively to promote the perception that a company and its products or services are environmentally safe or ‘friendly’” (Mustiko Aji & Sutikno, 2015, p. 433). Local washing refers to companies, especially multinational corporations, that deceive consumers through marketing messages emphasizing the local aspect. Hereby, they aim at being perceived as more sustainable without actually engaging in more sustainable practices. In order to antagonize this, it is crucial to understand that locavorism is not merely about the location, but also about regaining “a balanced relationship with nature through our food choices” (Rudy, 2012, p. 28). Thus, in order for local food to be beneficial, local agriculture must conserve the biodiversity of the agro-ecosystem (Coelho et al., 2018).

Locavorism and its stance towards organic food, vegetarianism and veganism, respectively, are further increasingly discussed topics. Whilst in general, locavores do not object the consumption of non-organic items and/or animal products, critics challenge that it must be the case to the pursuit of environmental sustainability and high ethical standards. For example, studies suggest that 25 times more energy is consumed during the production of one calorie of beef than for the production of one calorie of corn (Ladner, 2011). However, due to the paramount complexity of this topic, it is not enlarged upon further in the underlying dissertation. Finally, a commonly mentioned argument is that one's action will not make much of a difference in the big picture. Nevertheless, as a study by Ladner (2011) demonstrates, sourcing 58 food items locally or regionally rather than globally could reduce greenhouse gas emissions by about 50'000 tons annually, the equivalent of removing almost 17'000 vehicles from the road.

Despite the controversy, and the aforementioned concerns and arguments, locavorism is enjoying growing popularity (Campbell & DiPietro, 2014). Therefore, it is crucial to understand its antecedents and related behaviors of consumers' adoration of local food, which will be explored next in more detail.

## **2.4 Antecedents of locavorism**

At the outset, the reasons for local food product choice are manifold. Scholars propose they may range from demographic factors, information seeking and knowledge, context, attitudes to behavior, as a thorough literature review by Feldmann and Hamm (2015) suggests. This is supported by several studies that identified environmental attitudes, health consciousness and community attachment as the three main psychosocial factors positively predicting locavorism (Choi et al., 2021; A. Kumar & Smith, 2018).

### **Environmental attitudes**

As global concerns pertaining to topics such as global warming, ozone layer depletion, air and water pollution, amongst others, are rising (Leonidou et al., 2010), environmental attitudes continue to play a role of paramount importance. The concept of a consumer's environmental attitudes is defined by Fransson and Gørling (1999, p. 370) as the "evaluation of consequences attributable to the environment". Environmental attitudes can be classified into inward attitudes, i.e., manners connected with environmental abuse by individual consumers, and outward attitudes, i.e., topics related to the need for social, political and legal changes to protect the environment (Leonidou et al., 2010). These attitudes are influenced by consumers'

environmental knowledge, perceived seriousness of environmental problems, interpersonal influence, collectivism and long-term orientation (Malik & Singhal, 2017).

From an environmental perspective, it can be stated that local food production requires less energy than industrial agriculture (McKibben, 2010). Shorter transport distances due to the physical proximity of production and point of sales or consumption not only reduce greenhouse gas emissions (Martinez et al., 2010), but may also require lower transport barriers, such as packaging, to stay fresh. In addition, local food can benefit from a shorter time from harvest to consumption, which reduces the risk of perishment. Extant research observes that stronger forms of environmental attitudes may lead to a shift in consumer intention and behavior towards more sustainable alternatives (Dunlap & van Liere, 1978; Fransson & Gørling, 1999; Leonidou et al., 2010). Zepeda and Nie (2012), for instance, observe that consumers with high environmental concerns are more likely to purchase local foods. Leonidou et al. (2010) find that the adoption of an inward environmental attitudes does not only lead to an increase in likelihood of purchasing green products, but also to a higher product satisfaction. This insight is supported by multiple studies conducted in this field, focusing on different situations and geographies (Cheung & To, 2019; Maichum et al., 2017; Shin, Moon, et al., 2017; Trivedi et al., 2018). Therefore, the first hypothesis can be formulated as follows:

*H1a: Environmental attitudes positively predict locavorism.*

### **Health consciousness**

Health consciousness is a “concept that assesses the extent to which an individual understands changes in health status and is willing to adopt healthful actions” (Hsu et al., 2016, p. 202). Due to the inclusion of potentially harmful substances in food products and a rise in food safety incidents (Hsu et al., 2016), consumers have become very aware of health issues. Healthiness is a major factor for assessing the quality of food, but also to decision-making (Magnusson et al., 2001). Local food is perceived as healthier than nonlocal food due to its improved nutritional value, as contributing to a well-balanced diet, less processing and manufacturing than food produced by large corporations (Hamzaoui Essoussi & Zahaf, 2009). Thus, it can be hypothesized the following:

*H1b: Health consciousness positively predicts locavorism.*

### **Community attachment**

Defined by Arnberger and Eder (2012, p. 41), community attachment denotes a “sense of belonging and psychological connections that individuals have to their community”.

Considering the economic benefits of local food production and consumption, it is clear that consumer spendings remain in the local economy and support local farmers and producers rather than multinational corporations (Fitzgerald, 2016). Secondly, looking at the social point of view, local production supports the preservation of local knowledge related to food. It is destined to “save and resuscitates individual gastronomic legacies” and “urges people to recover the memory of regional gastronomic practices” (Petrini, 2001, p. 17). Schnell (2013) argues that local food consumption implies engaging with a place, creating a sense of belonging and responsibility. Studies suggest that people with a strong sense of community tend to prefer local foods (Memery et al., 2015).

On a more holistic scale, locavorism as a progressive movement may also fuel the sense of membership in the community and help solving societal problems, such as voting in the interest of community instead of individual interests, or promote actions to fight climate change, racism, and other similar attitudes that benefit the healthy grow of communities (Aertsens et al., 2011; Fitzgerald, 2016; A. Kumar & Smith, 2018). Therefore, the third hypothesis to be tested is:

*H1c: Community attachment positively predicts locavorism.*

Although the factors are defined separately, they are normally highly interrelated. This means these are elements that reinforce each other (Reich et al., 2018). A US study aimed at identifying the relative importance of reasons for local food choice and established quality as the most essential factor, followed by support of local economy, sustenance for small businesses and lower environmental impact (Durham & Roheim, 2009).

Like consumers environmental, health-related and community attitudes influence their degree of locavorism, the latter is theorized to have an impact on consumer’s behaviors. Thus, in the following, the consumer behavior concepts of *purchase intention* and *willingness to pay* are introduced and explored in relation to locavorism.

## **2.5 Locavorism and purchase intention**

Purchase intention as a concept “represents the possibility that consumers will plan or be willing to purchase a certain product or service in the future” (Wu et al., 2011, p. 32). According to Feldmann and Hamm, purchase intentions are “close antecedents of purchase behavior” (2015, p. 8) and are therefore deemed as suitable research indicators for consumer behavior.

The seminal work from Ajzen (1991), “The Theory of Planned Behavior”, outlines that consumers’ attitudes towards a certain behavior, together with subjective norms and perceived behavioral control, predict behavioral intention with high accuracy. This intention, in turn, is a

reliable indicator of actual behavior. Ajzen's theory seeks to provide a framework to explain the factors leading to a specific behavior, instead of relying on overall product utility. The intention leading to said behavior, in this case purchase intention predicting purchase behavior, is determined by three factors. Behavioral beliefs are the first consideration. They refer "to the perceived positive or negative consequences of performing the behavior and the subjective values or evaluations of these consequences" (Ajzen, 2015, p. 125). The second factor, normative beliefs, relates to what consumers think the expectations and behaviors of important reference people would be. In addition, consumers' motivations to comply with these expectations and behaviors come into play for normative beliefs. Thirdly, control beliefs influence behavioral intention. They relate to the "perceived presence of factors that can influence a person's ability to perform the behavior" (Ajzen, 2015, p. 125). In general, the higher each consideration, the more likely a consumer is to build a certain behavioral intention. The model has proven successful to predict purchase intention for food items (Fishbein & Ajzen, 2010).

Having assessed the notion of purchase intention, the question after the link between purchase intention and purchase behavior arises. Ajzen (2015) shows that the two concepts are highly correlated, though moderated by perceived control of behavior. Again, this relation has been proven in studies related to food choice and proven the theory of planned behavior to be a robust model in order to assess purchase intention of food items (Kaid Al-Swidi et al., 2014; Papies et al., 2008; Scalco et al., 2017).

For the scope of the research at hand, the relation between locavorism and intention to buy is examined. Extant studies examine the link between the two concepts and find a positive relation, such as Choi et al. (2021) and Kim et al. (2021) for food consumption in restaurants. In order to relate to the underlying research question, the following hypothesis is stated and tested:

*H2a: Locavorism positively predicts purchase intention for local food products.*

## **2.6 Locavorism and willingness to pay**

Closely related to purchase intention, willingness to pay denotes the value associated to a product by the consumer, expressed as the maximum amount of money consumers would pay for a certain product or product attribute (Haab & McConnell, 2002). Different methods have been employed by researchers to determine willingness to pay. Amongst these methods, the contingent valuation method (CV) is widely used to seek willingness to pay values for products in hypothetical markets (Romano et al., 2016).

A considerable number of researchers found that consumers are willing to pay a price premium for local food products than for their global counterparts (Adams & Adams, 2011; Alfnes & Sharma, 2010; Bernabéu et al., 2010; Bond et al., 2008; Costanigro et al., 2011, 2014; Feldmann & Hamm, 2015; Gracia et al., 2014; Menapace & Raffaelli, 2013; Roosen et al., 2012; Yue & Tong, 2009). Nevertheless, research on how a consumer's degree of locavorism influences the amount of money they are willing to spend on food products is rare. Therefore, the following hypothesis is derived and tested:

*H2b: Locavorism positively predicts willingness to pay for local food products.*

## **2.7 Locavorism as a mediator of purchase intention and willingness to pay**

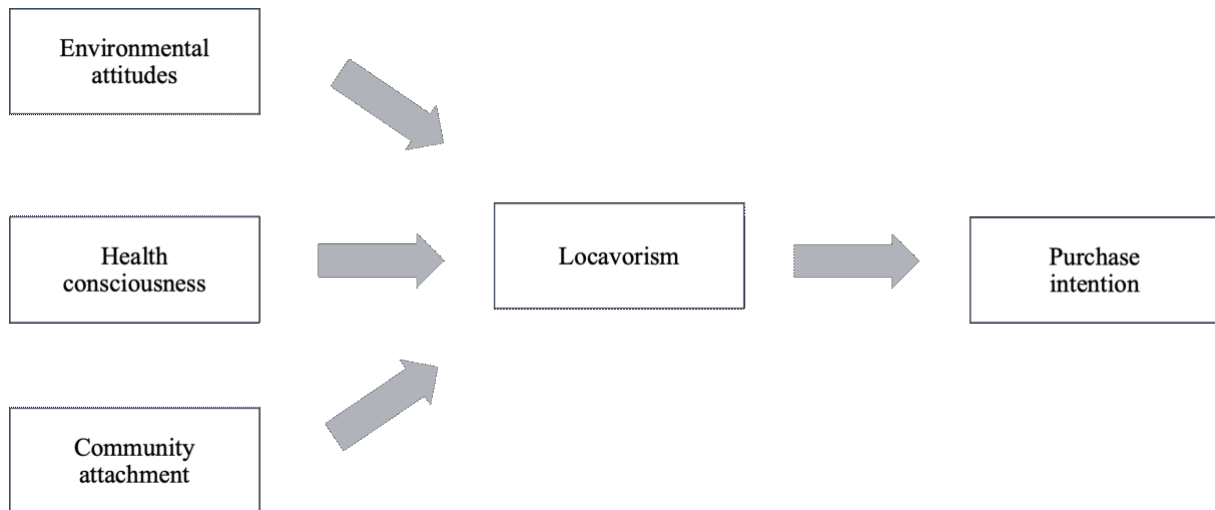
Drawing on the new social movement theory (NSM) as theoretical foundation, this research also seeks to assess locavorism's mediating role between its antecedents environmental attitudes, health consciousness and community attachment and intended behaviors, i.e., purchase intention and willingness-to-pay. Buechler (1995) describes NSMs as movements starting in certain classes, often characterized by a high education level and good access to resources and information. Adding to this, ordinary citizens lead NSMs to render the world a better place by "the unauthorized, unofficial, anti-institutional, collective action" (Reed, 2005, p. 12). As locavorism fulfils the criteria of being an NSM, it can be seen as a movement mediating the relationship between consumer attitudes and intended behaviors (Choi et al., 2021). Thus, the following hypotheses are stated:

*H3a: Consumers' environmental attitudes, health consciousness and community attachment positively predict locavorism, which, in turn, predicts purchase intention.*

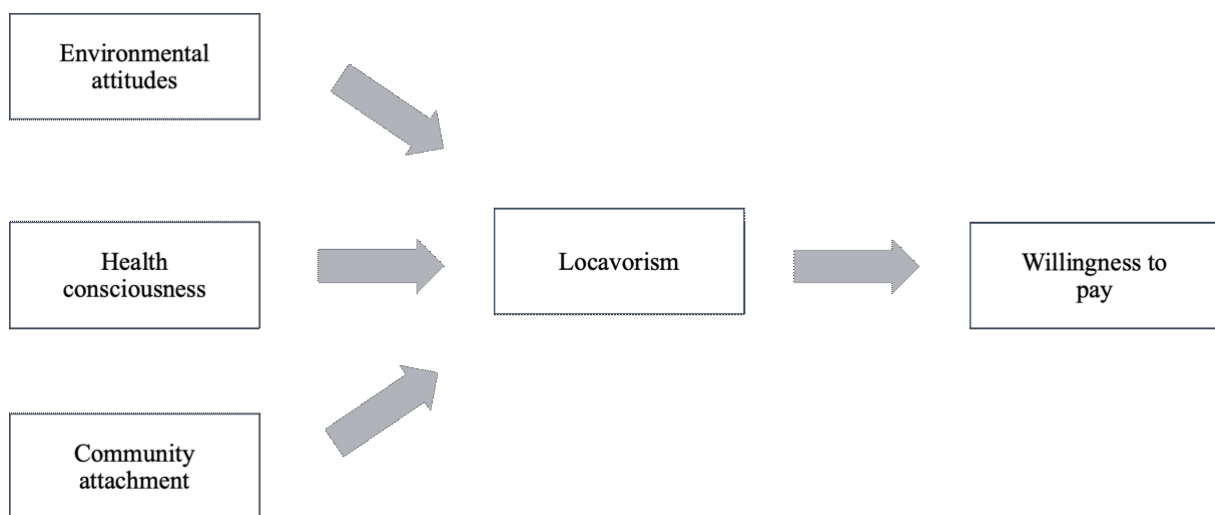
*H3b: Consumers' environmental attitudes, health consciousness and community attachment positively predict locavorism, which, in turn, predicts willingness to pay.*

## **2.8 Research model**

Given the hypotheses developed above, two research models are proposed and tested. The first model depicts the relationship between the environmental attitudes, health consciousness and community attachment, respectively, and locavorism; as well as the link between locavorism and purchase intention (cf. Figure 2). The latter model exchanges purchase intention with willingness to pay (cf. Figure 3).



**Figure 2:** *Conceptual model where environmental attitudes, health consciousness and community attachment are considered positive predictors of locavorism, and locavorism is considered a positive predictor of purchase intention*



**Figure 3:** *Conceptual model where environmental attitudes, health consciousness and community attachment are considered positive predictors of locavorism, and locavorism is considered a positive predictor of willingness to pay*

Two distinct conceptual models are propositioned since the underlying research is not aiming at assessing the bilateral relationship between purchase intent and willingness to pay. In addition, it is worthy to note that the factors environmental attitudes, health consciousness and community attachment are considered individually, meaning that their interrelation is not part of the research conducted.

To sum up, the relationships subject to prediction are manifold. Firstly, the relationships between environmental attitudes, health consciousness and community attachment,

respectively, and locvorism are assessed. Secondly, the relationships between locavorism and purchase intention and willingness to pay for local food items, respectively, are evaluated. Thirdly, the relationships between each antecedent, i.e., environmental attitudes, health consciousness and community attachment, and purchase intention as well as willingness to pay for local food products are examined.

### **3. METHODOLOGY**

So as to assess how the predictor variables influence consumer behavioral intentions with local food products and in comply with deductive research, the hypotheses established on the base of literature were thenceforth tested using a quantitative approach.

A self-administered online survey amongst representative consumers was conducted in order to reject or fail to reject the hypotheses. First, the questionnaire was pre-tested by sending it to a selected number of people, of which eight gave constructive feedback. Based on it, minor improvements with regards to question formulation, product choice and technical modifications were made to finetune the survey.

Alongside a concomitant message, the link to the survey was then spread in social media platforms (LinkedIn, WhatsApp, Instagram, Facebook) as well as per email in order to reach a large number of potential participants in November 2021. A reminder to participate was sent via email and posted on the respective social media platforms around a week after the first invitation to contribute.

The data gathered was then analyzed using regression methods. Furthermore, the results are presented, all findings discussed and formulated as insights for marketers of locally grown food products to act upon with theoretical and practical implications. Lastly, limitations and recommendations for further research are outlined.

#### **3.1 Sample**

A sample size of 150 participants was set as a minimum standard at the beginning. In addition, participant anonymity was ensured to allow for more honest and accurate responses (Malhotra et al., 2017). Out of 184 participants in total, 160 respondents submitted fully usable data over a duration of 20 days. Incomplete answers were removed from the dataset. In addition, participants were required to be residing in Europe and to be at least 18 years old. Respondents who did not fulfil this requirement were detached from the final data set.

Out of 160 respondents, 76% (122) were female, 23% (36) male and 1% (2) preferred not to answer. In terms of age, participants ranged between 18 and 58 years of age with a mean of 27 years (SD = 7.5). Respondents were living in the following countries: Italy (31.3%), Portugal (22.5%), France (15%), Germany (15%), Austria (5%), Switzerland (5%), Netherlands (3.8%), Ireland (1.3%), Norway (1.3%). A majority of respondents stated they were living in that country for more than 7 years (66%), followed by a length of between one and three years (15%). A percentage of 88% of participants have a college, professional degree or higher. 21.3% (34) respondents reported having a monthly net income of less than 1'000€, 56.3% (90)

of a range between 1'000€ and 3'000€ and the remaining 14% (22) of more than 3'000€. A graphical representation regarding demographic data is depicted in Appendix 2.

### **3.2 Survey design procedure and measures**

Participants were exposed to pictures of seven different food and non-food products (Food: apple, yoghurt pot, chocolate bar, bottle of wine; Non-Food: mug, cleaning detergent and t-shirt) in a within-subjects design with the objective to identify consumers purchase intention and willingness to pay. Products (local labeled vs. unlabeled) were shown twice in random order. The non-food products were added to the survey in order to disguise the true purpose of these stimuli, and were therefore not considered in the final analyses.

This survey was compiled in Qualtrics and took approximately eight minutes from start to finish. The entire set of questions may be found in Appendix 1.

An introductory note thanked the participants in advance and asked them to provide honest answers. This is especially pertinent in the field of sustainability so as to prevent scripted answers or such influenced by social desirability bias. Moreover, participants were assured anonymity and data security in order to elicit truthful answers and to harbour a greater sense of trust, next to informing them that their participation would lead to the answers being analyzed for the purpose of the dissertation in question.

The online survey consisted of four sections presented in the following order: the scale measuring consumer's environmental attitudes, the scale of health consciousness and the scale of community attachment. Next, participants filled out a scale about consumer's locavorism and were forwarded to the seven products, presented randomly. Together with each product, the dependent variables were measured: purchase intention and willingness to pay. Last, participants filled out their demographic information, were thanked and dismissed.

#### **Independent variables**

In the first section, respondents were asked to indicate to what extent they agreed with statements pertaining to their environmental attitudes, health consciousness and community attachment. These three variables are defined as antecedents of locavorism. For all the scales, the order of the items was randomized to control for primacy effects. All variables were measured using a Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree) due its easiness to understand (Sweeney & Soutar, 2001).

**Environmental attitudes** are based on a short version (six items) of a scale introduced by Dunlap and van Liere (1978), namely the new environmental paradigm (NEP) scale. Examples

include “*Humans must live in harmony with nature in order to survive*” and “*The balance of nature is very delicate and easily upset*”. Three out of the six statements were reverse-coded so that higher scores indicate stronger environmental attitudes. The mean reported on this scale is 4.40 (SD = 0.54), with a Cronbach’s value indicating questionable reliability ( $\alpha = .65$ ).

**Health consciousness** was assessed through a five-item scale developed by Dutta-Bergman (2004), slightly adapted for the purpose of this study. Items are, for instance, “*Living life in the best possible health is very important to me*” and “*My health depends on how well I take care of myself*”. Higher scores indicate a stronger health consciousness. Respondents reported their health consciousness score with a mean of 5.66 (SD = 0.84), and the Cronbach alpha indicates a good reliability ( $\alpha = .81$ ).

**Community attachment** was measured using a four item-scale based on Theodori (2004), including affirmations such as “*I feel like I belong in my community*” and “*I feel loyal to the people in my community*”. Higher scores indicate a greater attachment to the community. Regarding community attachment, the mean reported is 4.59 (SD = 1.16) with a Cronbach value indicating good reliability ( $\alpha = .86$ ).

### **Mediator variable**

**Locavorism** was measured with 11 statements about the importance attributed to local food, to which participants could state their agreement on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). The order of the items was randomized.

All items with regards to locavorism were modified based on Reich et al. (2018) and Choi et al. (2021). Examples include “*Buying local foods helps build a more prosperous community*”, “*I like to support local farmers whenever possible*” and “*Locally produced foods are more nutritious than foods that have been shipped from somewhere else*”. Again, three statements were reverse-coded so that higher scores indicate higher importance to local food products.

The scores of the eleven statements were then averaged, with a mean of 3.96 (SD = 0.57). The Cronbach’s alpha showed an acceptable reliability ( $\alpha = .75$ ).

### **Dependent variables**

**Purchase intention** was measured on a marginally revised form of Hernández et al. (2010) three-point scale. The items consist in “*It is likely that I will buy this product in the future*”, “*I am likely to purchase this product (in the near future)*” and “*I intend to buy this product in the near future*”. Again, the scores of the three statements were averaged for each food product

(Local food products:  $M = 5.24$ ,  $SD = 1.07$ ,  $\alpha = .82$ ; Unlabelled food products:  $M = 4.94$ ,  $SD = 0.98$ ,  $\alpha = .76$ ), indicating good and acceptable reliability, respectively.

**Willingness to pay** was elicited from consumers applying the contingent valuation method (CVM). This method is used for goods without directly revealed priced in the market (Tisdell, 1991) and involves directly asking consumers how much they would be willing to pay for a specific item. The advantages of CVM are its applicability to many products, its low cost and easiness of implementation in online surveys (Bateman et al., 1995; Chen et al., 2013). Nonetheless, the method carries numerous disadvantages such as the difficulty for respondents to reveal their real willingness to pay as well as the method's validity and reliability issues (Carson et al., 1995). For the scope of the research at hand, participants were presented a slider ranging from 0 to 10 € (Grunert et al., 2009) and asked to drag it to the point denoting the amount of money they would be willing to pay for each product. The maximum amount of 10 € was elevated to 50 € for the mug, t-shirt and bottle. On average, participants were willing to pay € 5.35 ( $SD = 2.70$ ) for local food products as opposed to € 4.65 ( $SD = 2.81$ ) for unlabelled food products.

### **Demographics**

Participants were asked to provide demographic information before they were thanked and dismissed with a dedicated message. The demographics were age, gender, country of residence, length of residence in the community, education level and monthly net income. Whilst gender and country of residence were measured on a nominal scale, other demographic variables were assessed using ordinal scales by giving answer options with intervals. Only age was assessed using a scale measure.

## 4. ANALYSIS

### 4.1 Data preparation

All data gathered through the questionnaire was analyzed using IBM SPSS statistics software, applying a 95% confidence level and an accepted standard margin error of 5%. After transferring the survey data from Qualtrics to SPSS, data cleansing was performed in furtherance of an immaculate data set. This portends editing, coding, transcribing and statistically adjusting the data (Malhotra et al., 2017).

Six reverse-coded variables from section 1 and 2 of the questionnaire were inverted so as to be able to deduce meaningful results. Moreover, data pertaining to the three non-grocery items (cleaning detergent, coffee mug, t-shirt) was merely gathered to reduce response bias and thus not considered in the final data set.

### 4.2 Data analysis

In order to explore the data gathered to test the hypotheses that were previously founded, data analysis was conducted using descriptive statistics and regression methods.

#### 4.2.1 Descriptives

First of all, frequency distribution tables were generated to display demographic information of the sample, as described in Chapter 3, Section 2 and displayed in the charts of Appendix 2.

Consequently, the mean values of the variables in question were computed. An overview of both mean and standard deviation of the predictors and dependent variables in question is depicted in Table 1.

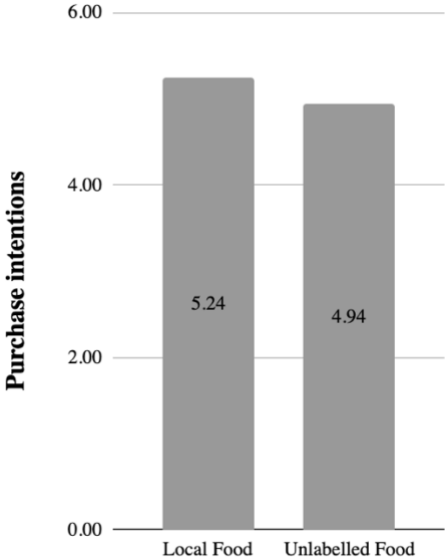
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Environment	160	3.33	5.83	4.41	0.54
Health	160	2	7	5.66	0.84
Community	160	1.75	6.75	4.59	1.16
Locavorism	160	2.18	5.55	3.96	0.57
Local Food PI*	160	2.5	7	5.24	1.07
Food PI*	160	2.58	7	4.94	0.98
Local Food WTP**	160	1.63	15.28	5.35	2.70
Food WTP**	160	0.98	15.95	4.65	2.81

**Table 1:** Comparison of means of all variables of interest

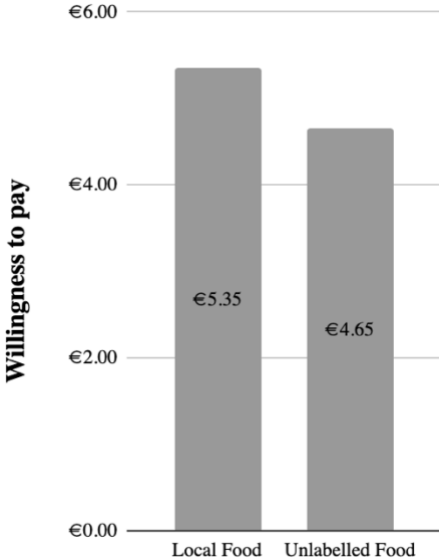
\*Purchase intention

\*\*Willingness to pay

It can be seen that for food products, the means of purchase intention and willingness to pay are higher for local items than for unlabelled items. The comparison is graphically presented in Figures 4 and 5.



**Figure 4:** Mean difference of purchase intention for local foods vs. unlabelled foods



**Figure 5:** Mean difference of willingness to pay for local foods vs. unlabelled foods

#### 4.2.2 Correlations between independent, mediator and dependent variables

The correlations between all independent, mediator and dependent variables are assessed. As Table 2 shows in the cells marked, there are a number of statistically significant correlations.

For locavorism, environmental attitudes are the only statistically significant positive predictor ( $r = .17, p = .03$ ). Both health consciousness and community attachment display positive correlation coefficients with locavorism, but are statistically not significant.

In terms of purchase intention for local food products, both community attachment ( $r = .24, p = .002$ ) and locavorism ( $r = .35, p < .001$ ) positively predict the variable in a significant manner, whereas environmental attitudes and health consciousness are positive, yet insignificant predictors. For unlabelled grocery items, none of the predictors are statistically significant, even though their Pearson coefficients are all positive.

With regards to willingness to pay for local food products, community attachment negatively and significantly predicts willingness to pay ( $r = -.17, p = .031$ ). Whilst environmental attitudes and health consciousness display a negative correlation, locavorism shows positive predicting behavior, yet all three variables are not statistically significant. Finally, willingness to pay for unlabelled food items is, statistically significantly, negatively predicted by health consciousness ( $r = -.19, p = .02$ ) and community attachment ( $r = -.23, p = .004$ ). Environmental attitudes and locavorism are also negatively correlated, though not statistically significant.

		Environment	Health	Community	Locavorism
Environment	Pearson Correlation	---	---	---	---
	Sig. (2-tailed)	---	---	---	---
Health	Pearson Correlation	.271	---	---	---
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	---	---	---
Community	Pearson Correlation	-0.052	.227	---	---
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.51	0.004	---	---
Locavorism	Pearson Correlation	.168	0.143	0.07	---
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.034	0.072	0.377	---
Local Food PI	Pearson Correlation	0.023	0.042	.241	.350
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.768	0.597	0.002	<.001
Food PI	Pearson Correlation	0.012	0.001	0.15	0.135
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.879	0.989	0.058	0.089
Local Food WTP	Pearson Correlation	-0.033	-0.14	-.171	0.004
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.682	0.077	0.031	0.961
Food WTP	Pearson Correlation	-0.105	-.189	-.228	-0.1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.185	0.017	0.004	0.208

**Table 2:** Correlations between antecedent, mediator and independent variables whereas independent variables are split into local food and unlabelled food products

**4.2.3 Predictors of locavorism**

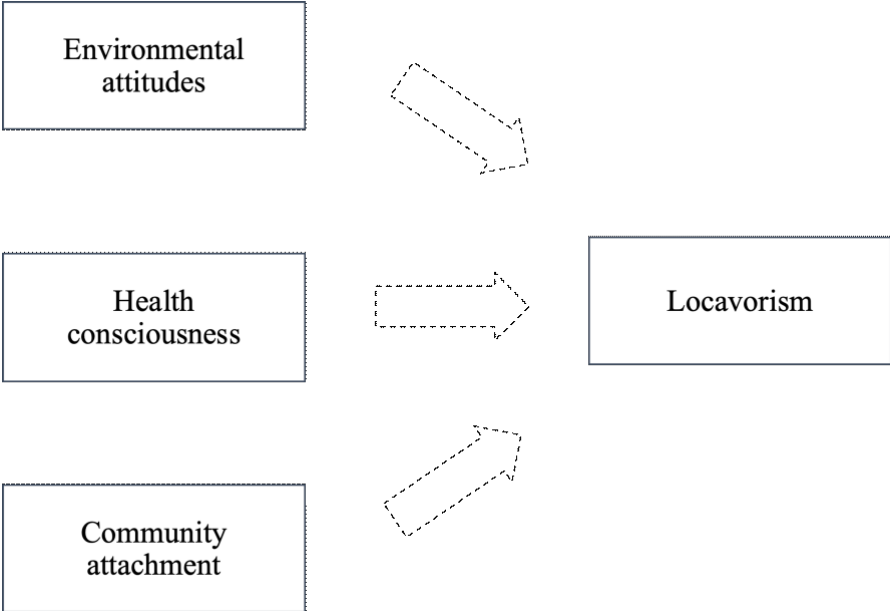
In order to test hypotheses *H1a, b, c*, a multiple linear regression analysis is run, setting environmental attitudes, health consciousness and community attachment as independent variables and locavorism as the dependent variable. The hypotheses in question are:

*H1a: Environmental attitudes positively predict locavorism.*

*H1b: Health consciousness positively predicts locavorism.*

*H1c: Community attachment positively predicts locavorism.*

Evaluating the  $R^2$  of the analysis output, it can be stated that 4.2% of the variance in consumers’ locavorist attitudes can be explained by the independent variables inserted, expressing a low explanatory power of the model. In addition, with values of  $F(3, 156) = 2.25, p = .08$ , the  $p$ -value is above the .05-threshold, thus the model is statistically insignificant. Furthermore, all three  $p$ -values of the independent variables are above the acceptable level. Standardized predictors are positive, with  $\beta = .15, p = .08$  for environmental attitudes,  $\beta = .09, p = .29$  for health consciousness and  $\beta = .05, p = .48$  for community attachment. Yet, the relationship, as depicted in Figure 6, suggests that whilst individual variables may have a statistical impact on locavorism, this is not true when looking at the set of variables. The arrows pointing from the antecedent variables to the mediator variable are dotted, indicating a statistically not significant relationship, and hypotheses *H1a, b, c* cannot be confirmed.

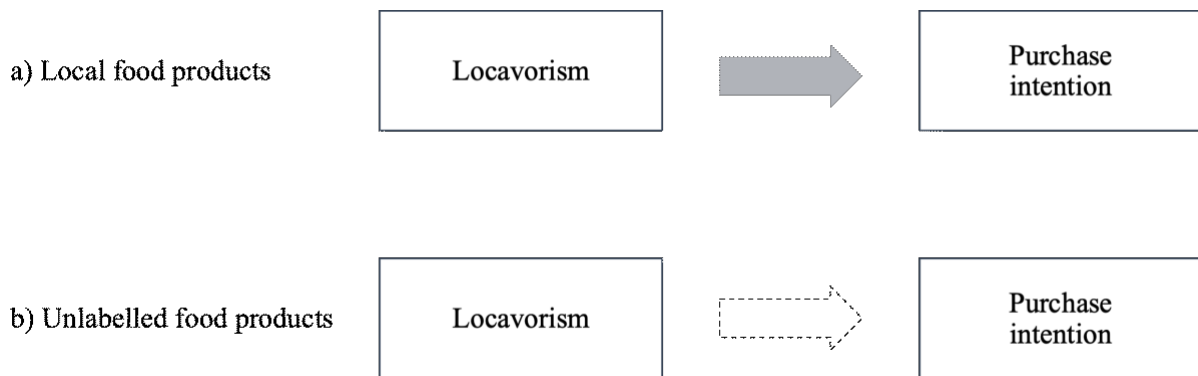


**Figure 6:** *The relationship between the set of antecedent variables and the mediator variable are statistically non-significant*

#### 4.2.4 Predictors of purchase intention

Consequently, a simple linear regression is run to test  $H2a$ , examining whether locavorism positively predicts purchase intention for local food products. The model is characterized by an  $R^2$  value of 12.3%, indicating that around 12% of the variance in purchase intention can be justified by locavorism. With  $F(1, 158) = 22.11, p < .001$ , the model is statistically significant and the standardized coefficient ( $\beta = .35, p < .001$ ) confirms the positive predictive relation between locavorism and purchase intention for local food items, thus proving  $H2a$ .

At the same time, the equivalent regression is run examining purchase intention for unlabelled food products, leading to statistically insignificant results,  $F(1, 158) = 2.92, p = .89$ . The model is presented in Figure 7. Nevertheless, the model only displays a low  $R^2$ , explaining 2% of the variance in purchase intention, hinting at low explanatory power.

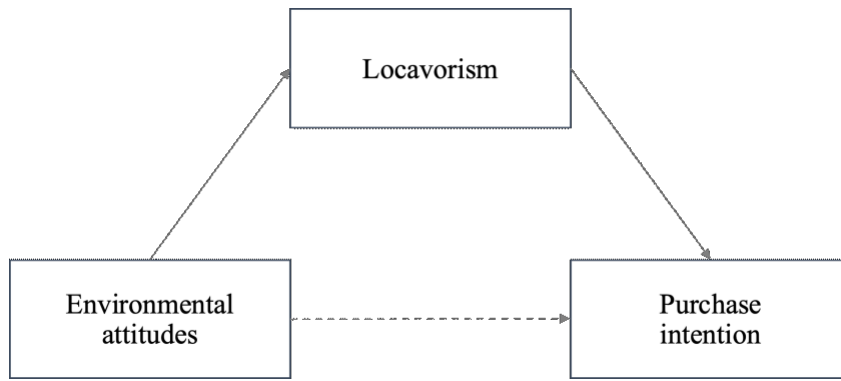


**Figure 7:** *Locavorism predicting purchase intention for different food categories*

*In a) it can be seen that for local food products, locavorism predicts purchase intention in a statistically significant and positive way. In b) it is shown that for unlabelled food products, locavorism has no statistically significant prediction on purchase intention.*

To complement, a mediation analysis is conducted to test purchase intention for both local-labelled and unlabelled grocery items. Because environmental attitudes had been theoretically defined as an antecedent of locavorism, and it was the only variable that showed to be significantly correlated to locavorism, we set it as the independent variable, locavorism as the mediator and purchase intention for each category, respectively, as dependent variable.

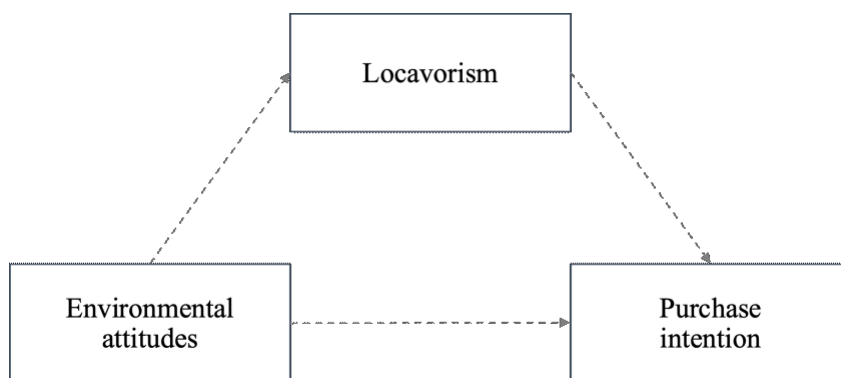
For the local items, the mediation effect is statistically significant, with a value of the indirect effect = .12, Boot SE = 0.06, 95% CI [0.02; 0.25]. The model expresses that environmental attitudes are positive predictors of purchase intention, an effect mediated by locavorism. In parts, this proves  $H3a$  right, confirming that environmental attitudes positively predict locavorism, which leads to a higher purchase intention, as presented in Figure 8.



**Figure 8:** *Locavorism mediating the relationship between environmental attitudes and purchase intention for local food products*

*In this figure about local food products, it can be seen that whilst the direct relationships between environmental attitude and locavorism as well as locavorism and purchase intention are statistically significant and positive, the direct link between environmental attitude and purchase intention is not significant.*

As shown in Figure 9, the mediation model is statistically not significant when run with purchase intention for unlabelled food products as the dependent variable, with values of the indirect effect = 0.04, Boot SE = 0.03, 95% CI [-0.01; 0.11]. At the same time, the mediation model only shows non-significant relations between the variables for unlabelled food. Therefore, no mediation effect is existent for nonlocal food.



**Figure 9:** *Locavorism mediating the relationship between environmental attitudes and purchase intention for unlabelled food products*

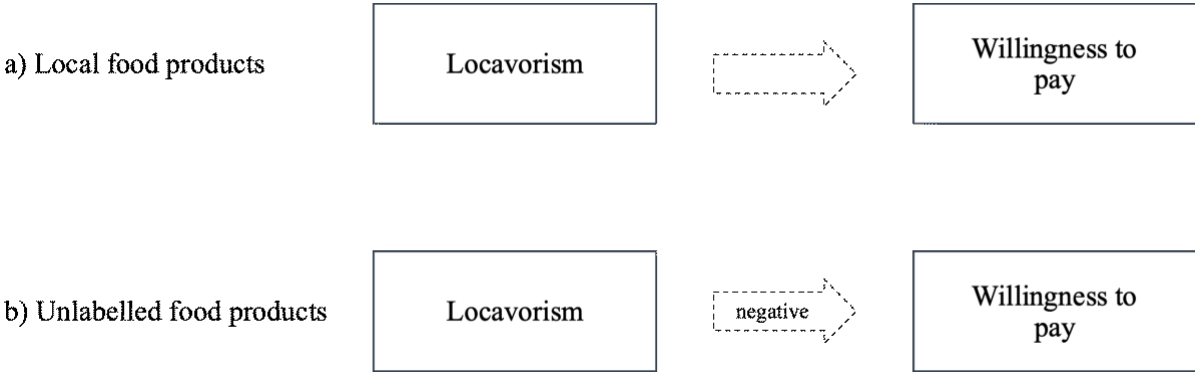
*All relationships depicted in the figure, relating to unlabelled food products, are statistically non-significant.*

To wrap up, it can be said that whilst *H2a* (*Locavorism positively predicts purchase intention for local food products*) is proven with the data at hand, *H3a* (*Consumers' environmental*

*attitudes, health consciousness and community attachment positively predict locavorism, which, in turn, predicts purchase intention) may only partly be confirmed.*

**4.2.5 Predictors of willingness to pay**

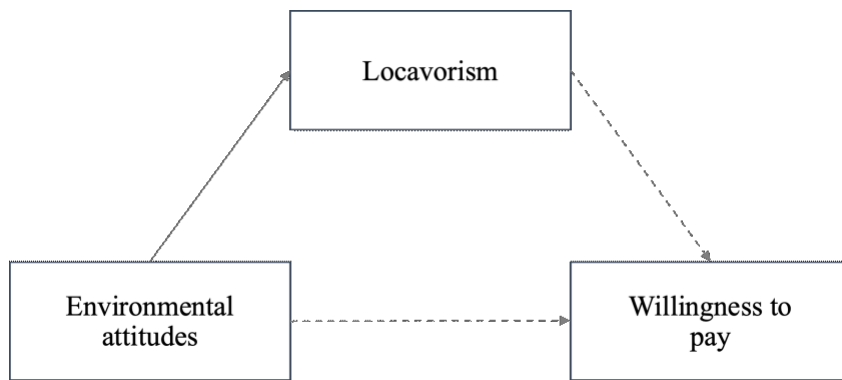
In the realm of willingness to pay, none of the linear regression models conducted reported statistically significant results. Firstly, the relation between locavorism and willingness to pay was assessed. For local food products, the model is unable to explain any of the variance observed, with  $F(1, 158) = 0.002$  and a  $p$ -value of .96. Analogously, only 1% of the variance in willingness to pay may be explained with the equivalent regression for unlabelled food items ( $F(1, 158) = 1.60, p = .21$ ). Therefore, hypothesis  $H2b$ , stating that locavorism positively predicts willingness to pay for local food products, may not be confirmed. The model is depicted in Figure 10 for a better visual understanding.



**Figure 10:** *Locavorism predicting willingness to pay for food categories*

*Whilst for both local and unlabelled food products, the results are statistically non-significant and thus represented by dotted arrows, the data suggests a negative relationship between locavorism and willingness to pay for unlabelled food products.*

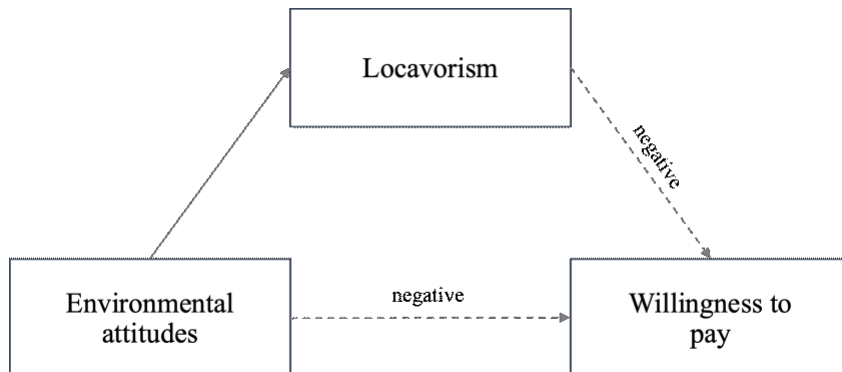
Secondly, the mediation analysis is conducted with environmental attitudes as the independent variable, locavorism as the mediation variable and willingness to pay as the dependent variable. For local food products, the model is statistically not significant with an indirect effect = 0.01, Boot SE = 0.08, 95% CI [-0.16; 0.19], as depicted in Figure 11. Hence, hypothesis  $H3b$ , stating that environmental attitudes, health consciousness and community attachment positively predict locavorism, which in turn positively predicts willingness to pay, cannot be confirmed.



**Figure 11:** *Locavorism mediating the relationship between environmental attitudes and willingness to pay for local food products*

*The figure shows that the mediation model is statistically non significant.*

Similarly, the mediation model shows a statistically non significant relationship for unlabelled food products. With an indirect effect = -0.08, Boot SE = 0.08, 95% CI [-0.26; 0.06], as depicted in Figure 12, no statistically relevant relationships are identified, even though it can be noted that the effects between locavorism and willingness to pay as well as between environmental attitudes and willingness to pay are taking a negative form.



**Figure 12:** *Locavorism mediating the relationship between environmental attitudes and willingness to pay for unlabelled food products*

*Similar to its counterpart for local food products (Figure 11), no statistically significant relationships could be found.*

To sum up, neither *H2b* (*Locavorism positively predicts willingness to pay for local food products*) nor *H3b* (*Consumers' environmental attitudes, health consciousness and community attachment positively predict locavorism, which, in turn, predicts willingness to pay*) can be confirmed. After thoroughly having analyzed the present data, inferences are drawn in the next chapter.

## **5. DISCUSSION OF RESULTS**

### **5.1 Theoretical implications**

The research at hand sought at substantiating the antecedents of locavorism (RQ1), finding out how locavorism influences consumers' purchase intention and willingness to pay for local food products (RQ2) and, eventually, how locavorism mediates the relation between its antecedents and consumers' behavioral intentions (RQ3). Statistically significant findings indicate that locavorism positively predicts purchase intention for local food products, whilst the link between consumers' environmental attitudes and purchase intention for local food items is also mediated by locavorism. No other statistically relevant assumptions could be deducted from the data gathered. The underlying section discusses these results drawn from the data analysis and relates them to streams in literature.

Previous studies suggest that the antecedents of locavorism are environmental attitudes, health consciousness and community attachment (Choi et al., 2021; A. Kumar & Smith, 2018). Through the analysis of data conducted, support of the relationship as suggested could only be found with regards to environmental attitudes. This can be translated into the assumption that whilst the three variables in question may partly impact locavorism, the phenomenon is influenced by more variables not analyzed through the model at hand. In a recent study, for instance, Zhang et al. (2022) found that higher degrees of local identity lead to a higher rate of consumer locavorism. Therefore, consumer identity may be a predictor to add to the model in order to increase its explanatory power. This belief is backed by findings that suggest that altruistic motivations, e.g., engagement with the environment or the community, influence behaviour less than egoistic motivations, such as health consciousness (Birch et al., 2018). A potential explanation may be found in the origin of the concept of community, suggesting a behavior of sharing and exchanging rather than buying and selling (Bryła, 2019; Fernández-Ferrín et al., 2018; Mannarini & Fedi, 2009). With regards to health consciousness, it could be hypothesized that consumers characterized by a high degree of attention towards their health pay more attention to food attributes such as organic, seasonal or free of genetical modifications than to their local origin (Hempel & Hamm, 2016a, 2016b; Jensen et al., 2019; Wallnoefer et al., 2021). Other scholars underline how health consciousness and community attachment, in particular, predict, yet not fully explain, willingness to pay (Shin et al., 2018). Hence, further information about consumers needs to be gathered in order to be able to deduct more meaningful insights in this realm. In light of the results, altruistic motivations may also be overpresented in the model at hand and thus lead to a lower explanatory power of the conceptual

model. Yet another aspect to consider is the complexity of factors leading to locavorism (Zhang et al., 2022). In this realm, Onozaka et al. (2011) also discovered that consumer motivations may be dependent on buying locations: Whilst shoppers in farmer markets were more concerned about the local economy and small businesses, clients of natural food stores were very aware of health topics and environmental impact, such as pesticides (Onozaka & McFadden, 2011). Next to buying locations, other factors have been found to predict the trend towards local product choice, such as the concept of groundedness, i.e., “when products connect consumers to their physical (place), social (people), and historic (past) environment” (Eichinger et al., 2021, p. 1). Kumar et al. (2021) also introduce self-identity as a factor impacting local food consumption. Altogether, it can be recognized that consumers’ environmental attitudes, health consciousness and community attachment are part of a larger base of factors predicting locavorism, adding to extant research (Thomas & McIntosh, 2013; Witzling & Shaw, 2019).

The comprehensive review of extant research in chapter 2 then suggested that a higher degree of locavorism in consumers’ attitudes would lead to a higher purchase intention. The data collected in fact demonstrate that locavorism significantly predicted consumers’ purchase intention towards local food products. A higher degree in locavorism leads to a higher purchase intention of local grocery items, which is consistent with previous findings in literature (Bianchi & Mortimer, 2015; Feldmann & Hamm, 2015; Shin Legendre et al., 2018; Skallerud & Wien, 2019; Zhang et al., 2020). Hereby, this dissertation adds to research in the context of local food choice that is not limited to a specific setting, such as restaurants, that most of previous research focuses on (Choi et al., 2021; Jun & Arendt, 2016; Lang & Lemmerer, 2019; Severt et al., 2020). Yet, the absence of statistically significant results for unlabelled food products points at the need for further research in order to identify additional predictors of purchase intention, next to locavorism. For instance, Arvola et al. (2008) identified moral attitudes as predictors for intentions, whilst Palau-Saumell et al. (2021) found subjective norms and attitudes to be strong forecasters. In their research, the authors demarcate norms as “individual’s perceptions regarding the opinions and behavior of people in their social groups, such as family, friends and peers, and in the community“ and attitudes as “beliefs that exert a direct influence on the general intentions to change, and are crucial to foster individuals’ positive or negative intentions“ (Palau-Saumell et al., 2021, p. 283), which both cannot be decoupled from purchase intentions. For instance, Zepeda and Li (2006) also found attitudes towards cooking and costs to be with significant influencers of purchase intention of local food. Other aspects predicting purchase intentions stem from consumer lifestyles, such as food related lifestyles, classifying consumers

into categories depending on how, where and what they purchase (Cembalo et al., 2015). Availability of purchase locations with local food offerings was another factor heightening purchase intention (Zepeda & Nie, 2012), whereas there may be differences between countries, regions or even smaller geographical units (Bianchi & Mortimer, 2015).

Looking at the predictors of willingness to pay for local food products, no statistically significant results could be reported. A potential justification may consist of the complexity of the construct of willingness to pay, as such being influenced and moderated by many different variables leading to a low explanatory power of the research model at hand (Hasselbach & Roosen, 2015; le Gall-Ely, 2009). Previous studies, for instance, also found willingness to pay to be independent from values associated with products' freshness and farm size (Darby et al., 2008), which might be a possible explanation for the non-significant results. Extant research found consumers to be willing to pay premiums for local products (Adams & Adams, 2011; Alfnes & Sharma, 2010; Bernabéu et al., 2010; Bond et al., 2008; Costanigro et al., 2011, 2014; Feldmann & Hamm, 2015; Gracia et al., 2014; Menapace & Raffaelli, 2013; Roosen et al., 2012; Yue & Tong, 2009). However, Printezis et al. (2019) claim that different methodological approaches in identifying willingness to pay and differences in the countries analyzed along publication selection bias may lead to influenced results.

When relating locavorism's antecedents with purchase intention and willingness to pay, respectively, and inserting locavorism as a mediator variable to the model, no statistically significant results are obtained. Thus, it is advisable to assess these variables in further detail, but also aim at identifying other predictors, which is helpful for both academic literature and practitioners. This principle is sustained by more research, indicating that perceived consumer effectiveness, perceived consumer control as well as social norms, in addition to attitudes, influence consumers behavior intent (Wenzig & Gruchmann, 2018).

## **5.2 Managerial implications**

Several conclusions for local food producers, distributors and retailers may be drawn from the research. With the underlying study being the first analysis of how locavorism predicts consumers' purchase intent and willingness to pay, it is crucial to know that locavorist consumer attitudes predict purchase intention for local food products. Therefore, value ought to be placed on leveraging the benefit of locally sourced food products through communication strategies. Brand touchpoints should be designed in a way to convey the products' local origin and stressing its advantages, whilst beware of any greenwashing practices, which consumers

may respond extremely negatively to (Birch et al., 2018). Furthermore, retailers and service staff should be equipped to talk about the product and its origin in order to inform consumers well. In this realm, it is important to not only consider factors intrinsic to the product, such as where it is grown, but also include extrinsic factors such as the economic impact of local food systems (Shideler & Watson, 2019). Furthermore, the concept can be applied to different channels, such as retail, direct sales, hospitality and others (Alfnes & Sharma, 2010; Campbell & DiPietro, 2014; Choi et al., 2021; Severt et al., 2020; Shin et al., 2018; Shin, Im, et al., 2017). Additionally, a significant lever for brands is broadening their knowledge about current and potential consumers and in particular about consumers' relation to locavorism in order to profit most. By doing so, communication strategies can be adapted to consumers' underlying beliefs and attitudes instead of generic targeting. This could be obtained through use of the SHIFT-framework, developed by White et al. (2019) and aimed at providing a tool to move consumption to more sustainable manners.

Next to being insightful for local food product marketers, the findings are also relevant for decision makers at a political level. Knowing that locavore consumers are more likely to buy local food products and having the support of local economies in mind, it is recommendable to follow political strategies that promote locavolist behaviour and support local businesses. Suggested measures could be initiatives to foster digitalization, such as online marketplaces, and aid for establishment of logistic systems allowing same- or next-day deliveries for local produce (Palau-Saumell et al., 2021).

To conclude, the key findings of the present research are suggesting that locavolist consumers are more likely to buy local food products. Even though this behavioral intentions may rely upon differing beliefs, attitudes and norms for individual consumers, it is a decisive insight for local food producers and marketers.

### **5.3 Limitations and future research**

In light of the results discussed in the previous chapter, a number of limitations regarding the research undertaken need to be considered as well as areas for future research outlined.

To begin with, the research design chosen inherits several restraints. For the scope of this study, only a limited amount of food and non-food products could be included in the survey. Therefore, to draw more solid conclusions, it would be crucial to replicate these results with many more products or product categories. In this realm, a split between food and beverage

products may be useful, as well as a categorization of food into pre-labelled classes. More data per product or product category will allow marketers to deduce reliable and actionable results. Secondly, the research is limited through the type of sampling chosen. Due to convenience sampling, respondents stem from different countries across Europe without being representative for the entire population. As such, gender spread in the sample is biased with 76% of respondents being female, whereas European population in 2021 displayed a 52% female share (Statista, 2021). In addition, 88% of the sample are highly educated as opposed to 40% of European population (Statista, 2020). Again, for more expressive insights, it is advisable to conduct country-specific research with statistically representative sample groups. Further, more countries should be examined since “the sociocultural background and other national contexts (e.g., economic background, cultural differences) could have different influences on attitudes and behaviours” (Zhang et al., 2020, p. 2). Once done, it would be interesting to compare country-specific insights and relate the findings.

In addition, use of the term “local” constitutes a constraint in the sense that despite its ubiquitous use, scholars disagree about an univocal definition (Feldmann & Hamm, 2015). For the purpose of the questionnaire sent out to participants, interpretation was left to the mind of the reader, which may induce different notions of “local”. For instance, humans tend to overestimate the meaningfulness of human-made borders and are more prone to opt for food from within one’s state/region even if more proximally sourced food from another state/region is available, a phenomenon also referred to as *border bias* (Mishra & Mishra, 2010). Even the field of locavorism is, seen from an academic perspective, a relatively young topic and requires further investigation, especially regarding its causes and consequences (Reich et al., 2018).

Another noteworthy limitation is the simulated situation respondents found themselves to be in when responding to the questionnaire. For all questions regarding purchase intention and willingness to pay, participants were fully aware of their theoretical nature and thus biased. One type of bias is called the *social desirability bias*, introduced by Fisher (1993). It denotes the tendency to overstate one’s behavioral intentions when the behavior expected is conform with socially desirable behavior. Under this aspect, willingness to pay values are often overstated (Feldmann & Hamm, 2015).

Message framing in questionnaires also directly influences results. In the survey conducted for the sake of this dissertation, communication about the product’s origin was kept very basic. However, a qualitative and catchy message design, adapted to local specificities and purchase situations, may lead to even more explicit results, whilst having a success rate highly dependent on the type of consumer. Therefore, it is key to conduct further research in this area so as to

“create messages that enhance consumers’ knowledge of local food (e.g., facts indicating how local food is important for the community) that could increase customers’ involvement in local food consumption” (Kim & Huang, 2021, p. 8). For specific products and regions, researchers have investigated consumer preferences in this realm. For instance, Todd, Kelley and Hopfer (2021) found that US wine consumers prefer wine labels with county text over state descriptions. Meyerding et al. (2019) examined consumer preferences of different labels for tomatoes in Germany and discovered generic labels to have the most positive impact on product choice. Other research by Lim and Hu (2016) uncovered no significant difference between the labels of “local” and “local: from within 160 km”. However, caution against broad interpretation of results and application for other food items and geography is recommended. Today, the majority of food products offered also feature more than one labeling, supposed to complement each other. A study by Onozaka and McFadden (2011) shows that local labels are valued most, especially in combination with organic labels. This finding is supported by numerous studies (Hasselbach & Roosen, 2015). Yet, effects differ per type of food product. Adams and Salois (2010) dedicated a study to assess the relations between “local” and “organic” labeling and found a strong shift in consumer preferences towards local food products, findings that were replicated in a study by Jefferson-Moore et al. (2014). Again, researching different types of sustainable behavior such as the consumption of seasonal, organic or GMO-free food as well as the division of food products into different categories would add to research and the deduction of more insights.

Recently, several scholars also approached the topic of buying local, mainly pertaining to food items, from an ethical perspective (Ferguson & Thompson, 2021; Jones, 2021; Young, 2022). They question the morality of consistently preferring local products over alternatives and argue that the ethical causes for buying local, such as protecting the environment, supporting small businesses, the community and one’s local economy, do not justify that this practice is of strong ethical value (Young, 2022). More specifically, Ferguson and Thompson (2021) present arguments in favor of consuming global products as opposed to local alternatives, when coupled with offsetting options. These scholars argue that “consuming only locally produced food does not guarantee the ecological sustainability of our agricultural systems” (Coelho et al., 2018, p. 88), amongst other opinions. Only if that factor is taken into account, for example through fostering biodiversity, local food items are truly beneficial (Coelho et al., 2018). Nevertheless, these studies are also subject to limitations, yet require attention and further research.

Finally, additional research ought to be undertaken in the field of consumer profiles. The plethora of factors leading to locavorism remains largely unassessed to date (Reich et al., 2018), whilst it would constitute a valuable addition to research.

To sum up, many fertile areas for future research could be identified. Whilst consumers are asked to sharpen their definition of local produce, marketers are well-advised to inquire (potential) customers further in perseverance of acquiring useful knowledge about their underlying motivations, attitudes and beliefs with regards to food products.


## **6. CONCLUSION**

This dissertation sheds light on the construction of the phenomenon of locavorism and its consequences on consumers' purchase intentions and willingness to pay for local food products. The reported findings highlight positive relationships between environmental attitudes and locavorism as well as between locavorism and purchase intention for local food items. In practical terms, the findings can be translated into the assumption that consumers with strongly developed environmental attitudes are more likely to support local consumption and that is translated into a higher likelihood of having a higher purchase intention for local food items. Despite being subject to a number of limitations, the underlying dissertation hereby supports findings of extant research and adds to academic knowledge and practitioner's know-how in the field of local food produce.

## V. APPENDICES

### Appendix 1: *Questionnaire*

#### *Introduction to the survey*




Dear participant,

The following survey is conducted as part of my dissertation for my MSc in Management with a Specialization in Strategic Marketing at Católica Lisbon School of Business & Economics.

All answers are anonymous and used for the mere purpose of the dissertation. The duration of this survey is estimated to be 8 minutes.

Thank you very much in advance for your time and help!

Julia Dejakum



*Questions about the respondent's environmental attitude*

To what extent do you agree with the following statements on a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree)?

	1 (strongly disagree)	2	3	4	5	6	7 (strongly agree)
The balance of nature is very delicate and easily upset.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Humankind was created to rule over the rest of nature.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
When humans interfere with nature, it often produces disastrous consequences.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Humans have the right to modify the natural environment.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Plants and animals exist primarily to be used by humans.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Humans must live in harmony with nature in order to survive.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

*Questions about the respondent's health consciousness*

To what extent do you agree with the following statements on a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree)?

	1 (strongly disagree)	2	3	4	5	6	7 (strongly agree)
I do everything I can to stay healthy.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Living life in the best possible health is very important to me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My health depends on how well I take care of myself.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Eating right, exercising, and taking preventive measures will keep me healthy for life.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I actively try to prevent disease and illness.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

*Questions about the respondent's community attachment*

To what extent do you agree with the following statements on a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree)?

	1 (strongly disagree)	2	3	4	5	6	7 (strongly agree)
I feel like I belong in my community.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I like to think of myself as similar to the people who live in my community.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Overall, I am very attached to my community.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel loyal to the people in my community.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

*Questions about the respondent's locavorist attitudes*

To what extent do you agree with the following statements on a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree)?

	1 (strongly disagree)	2	3	4	5	6	7 (strongly agree)
I like to support local farmers whenever possible.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
All else equal, there is no taste difference between a locally produced food and one that was shipped from somewhere else.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I would do everything to avoid buying food from a large retail grocery chain.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Locally produced foods are more nutritious than foods that have been shipped from somewhere else.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Supporting the local food economy is not important to me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I don't trust foods that have been produced by large, multinational corporations.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Large, global food systems are destined to fail.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel uneasy eating something unless I know exactly where it was produced.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Buying locally produced foods supports sustainable farming practices.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Locally produced foods just taste worse.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Buying local foods helps build a more prosperous community.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

### Introduction to next section

In the following section, you will be shown pictures of different items and asked to answer questions regarding each. Some products may appear twice, which is normal. Please remember to respond honestly.



### PI and WTP for local apple

Local product



Consider the product shown above and answer to what extent you agree with the statements.

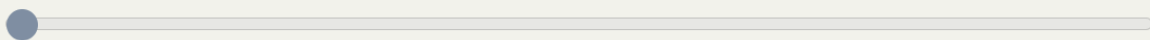
	1 (strongly disagree)	2	3	4	5	6	7 (strongly agree)
I am likely to purchase this product (in the near future).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It is likely that I will buy this product in the future.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I intend to buy this product in the near future.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How much (in €) would you be willing to pay for above shown product?

0

10

Apple

A horizontal slider bar with a blue circular knob at the far left end, indicating a value of 0.

*PI and WTP for apple*



Consider the product shown above and answer to what extent you agree with the statements.

	1 (strongly disagree)	2	3	4	5	6	7 (strongly agree)
I am likely to purchase this product (in the near future).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It is likely that I will buy this product in the future.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I intend to buy this product in the near future.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How much (in €) would you be willing to pay for above shown product?

0

10

Apple

*PI and WTP for local cleaning detergent*

Local product



Consider the product shown above (cleaning detergent) and notice that it is of local origin.  
Please answer to what extent you agree with the statements.

	1 (strongly disagree)	2	3	4	5	6	7 (strongly agree)
I am likely to purchase this product (in the near future).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It is likely that I will buy this product in the future.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I intend to buy this product in the near future.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How much (in €) would you be willing to pay for above shown product?

0

10

Cleaning detergent

*PI and WTP for cleaning detergent*



Consider the product shown above (cleaning detergent) and answer to what extent you agree with the statements.

	1 (strongly disagree)	2	3	4	5	6	7 (strongly agree)
I am likely to purchase this product (in the near future).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It is likely that I will buy this product in the future.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I intend to buy this product in the near future.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How much (in €) would you be willing to pay for above shown product?

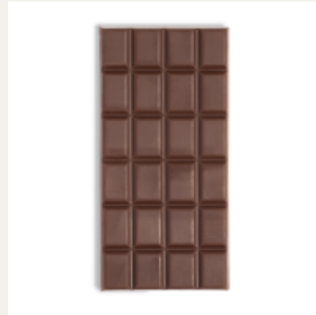
0

10

Cleaning detergent

*PI and WTP for local chocolate bar*

Local product



Consider the product shown above and answer to what extent you agree with the statements.

	1 (strongly disagree)	2	3	4	5	6	7 (strongly agree)
I am likely to purchase this product (in the near future).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It is likely that I will buy this product in the future.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I intend to buy this product in the near future.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How much (in €) would you be willing to pay for above shown product?

0

10

Chocolate bar



*PI and WTP for chocolate bar*



Consider the product shown above and answer to what extent you agree with the statements.

	1 (strongly disagree)	2	3	4	5	6	7 (strongly agree)
I am likely to purchase this product (in the near future).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It is likely that I will buy this product in the future.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I intend to buy this product in the near future.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How much (in €) would you be willing to pay for above shown product?

0

10

Chocolate bar

*PI and WTP for local mug*

Local product



Consider the product shown above and answer to what extent you agree with the statements.

	1 (strongly disagree)	2	3	4	5	6	7 (strongly agree)
I am likely to purchase this product (in the near future).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It is likely that I will buy this product in the future.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I intend to buy this product in the near future.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How much (in €) would you be willing to pay for above shown product?

0

50

Mug

*PI and WTP for mug*



Consider the product shown above and answer to what extent you agree with the statements.

	1 (strongly disagree)	2	3	4	5	6	7 (strongly agree)
I am likely to purchase this product (in the near future).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It is likely that I will buy this product in the future.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I intend to buy this product in the near future.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How much (in €) would you be willing to pay for above shown product?

0

50

Mug

A horizontal slider bar with a blue circular marker at the far left end, indicating a value of 0.

*PI and WTP for local yoghurt*

Local product



Consider the product shown above and answer to what extent you agree with the statements.

	1 (strongly disagree)	2	3	4	5	6	7 (strongly agree)
I am likely to purchase this product (in the near future).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It is likely that I will buy this product in the future.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I intend to buy this product in the near future.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How much (in €) would you be willing to pay for above shown product?

0

10

Yoghurt

*PI and WTP for yoghurt*



Consider the product shown above and answer to what extent you agree with the statements.

	1 (strongly disagree)	2	3	4	5	6	7 (strongly agree)
I am likely to purchase this product (in the near future).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It is likely that I will buy this product in the future.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I intend to buy this product in the near future.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How much (in €) would you be willing to pay for above shown product?

0

10

Yoghurt

*PI and WTP for local t-shirt*

Local product



Consider the product shown above and answer to what extent you agree with the statements.

	1 (strongly disagree)	2	3	4	5	6	7 (strongly agree)
I am likely to purchase this product (in the near future).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It is likely that I will buy this product in the future.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I intend to buy this product in the near future.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How much (in €) would you be willing to pay for above shown product?

0

50

T-shirt

*PI and WTP for t-shirt*



Consider the product shown above and answer to what extent you agree with the statements.

	1 (strongly disagree)	2	3	4	5	6	7 (strongly agree)
I am likely to purchase this product (in the near future).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It is likely that I will buy this product in the future.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I intend to buy this product in the near future.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How much (in €) would you be willing to pay for above shown product?

0

50

T-shirt

*PI and WTP for local bottle of wine*

Local product



Consider the product shown above and answer to what extent you agree with the statements.

	1 (strongly disagree)	2	3	4	5	6	7 (strongly agree)
I am likely to purchase this product (in the near future).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It is likely that I will buy this product in the future.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I intend to buy this product in the near future.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How much (in €) would you be willing to pay for above shown product?

0

50

Bottle of wine

*PI and WTP for bottle of wine*



Consider the product shown above and answer to what extent you agree with the statements.

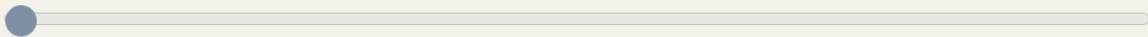
	1 (strongly disagree)	2	3	4	5	6	7 (strongly agree)
I am likely to purchase this product (in the near future).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It is likely that I will buy this product in the future.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I intend to buy this product in the near future.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How much (in €) would you be willing to pay for above shown product?

0

50

Bottle of wine



## Demographic questions

How old are you?

Which gender do you identify as?

Male

Female

Other

Prefer not to say

In which country do you currently reside?

For how long have you been living in that country?

Less than 1 year

1 - 3 years

3 - 5 years

5 - 7 years

More than 7 years

What is your education level?

Less than High School

High school graduate

Some college

Professional degree

Doctorate

Prefer not to say

What is your monthly net income?

Less than €1000

€1000 - €3000

€3001 - €5000

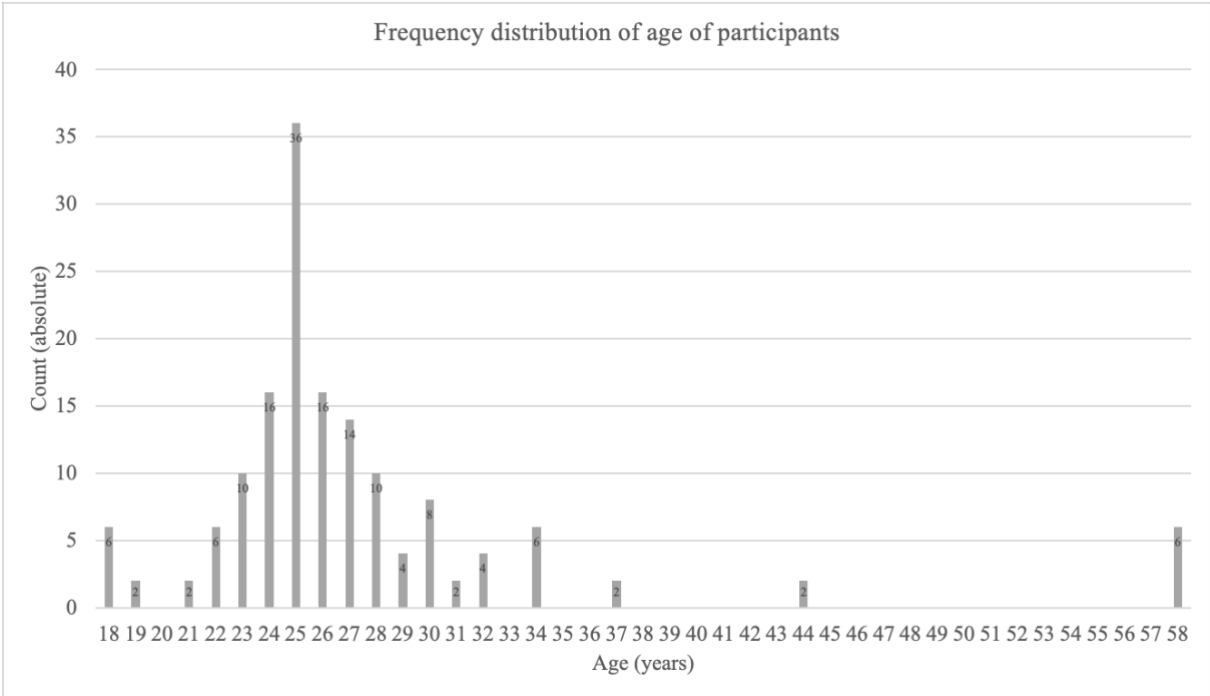
€5001 - €10'000

Over €10'000

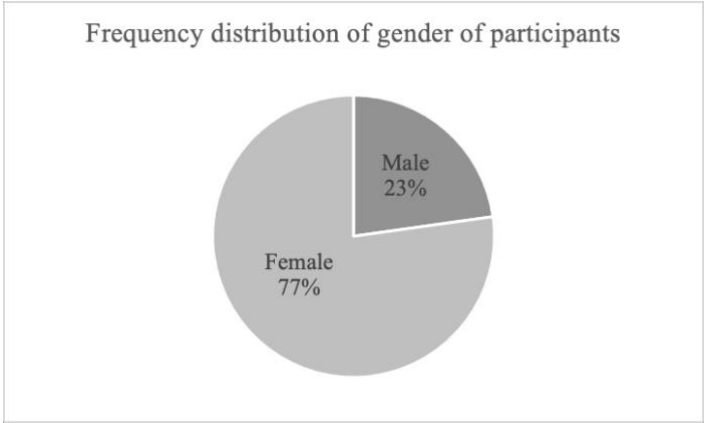
Prefer not to say

**Appendix 2: Demographic data in charts**

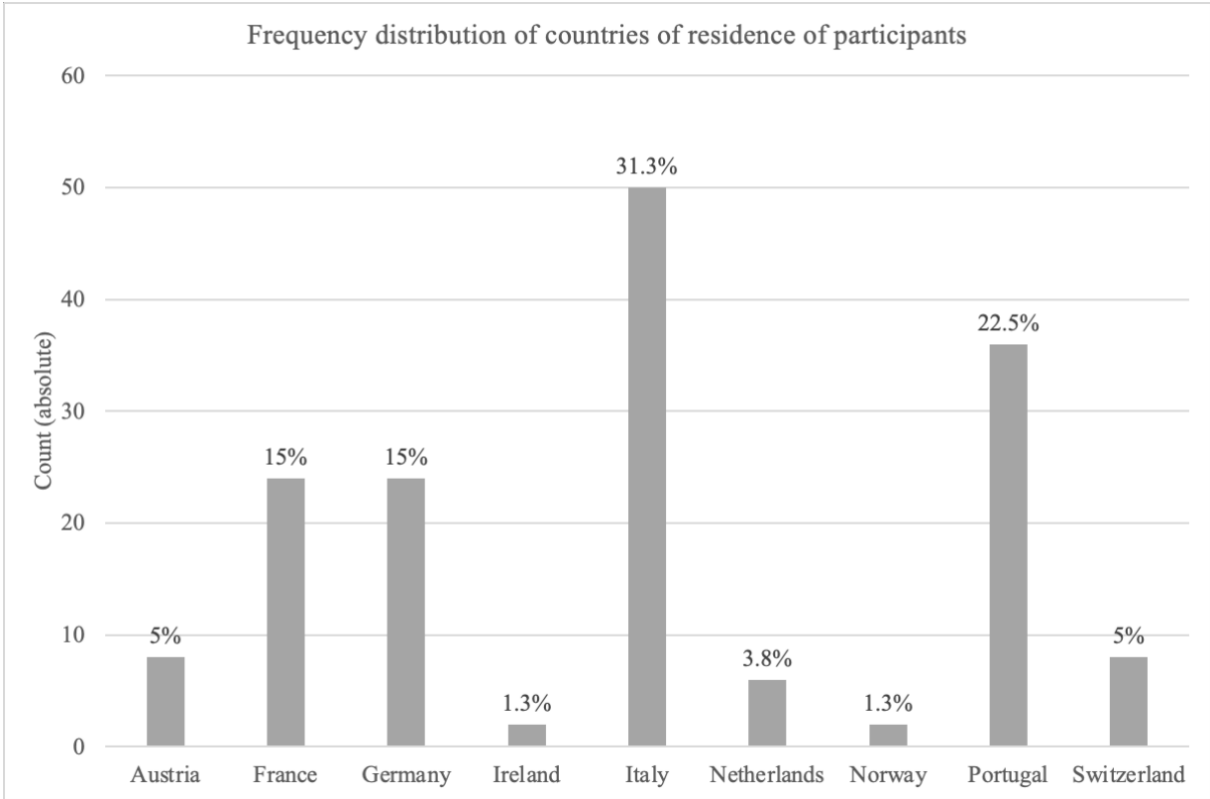
**Frequency distribution of age of participants**



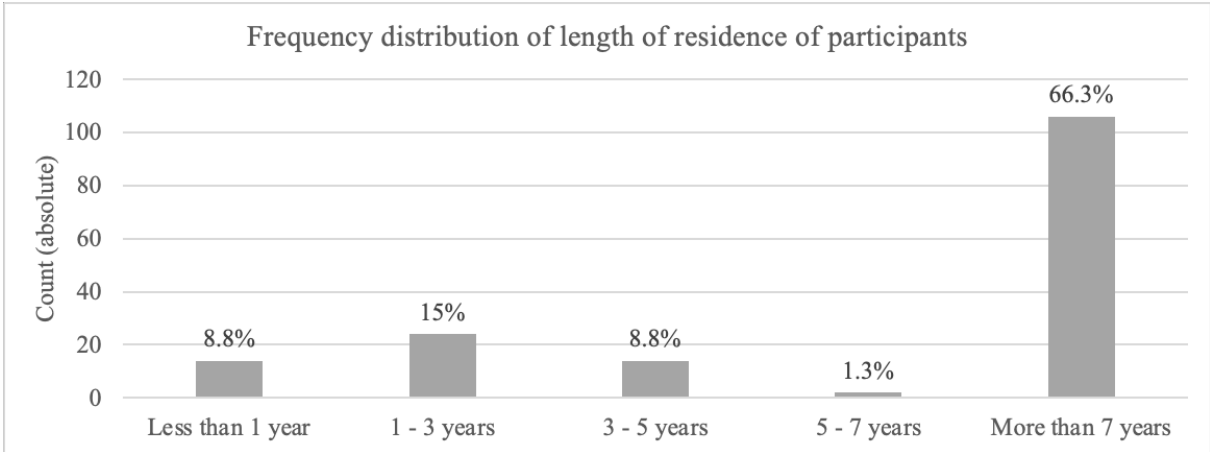
**Frequency distribution of gender of participants**



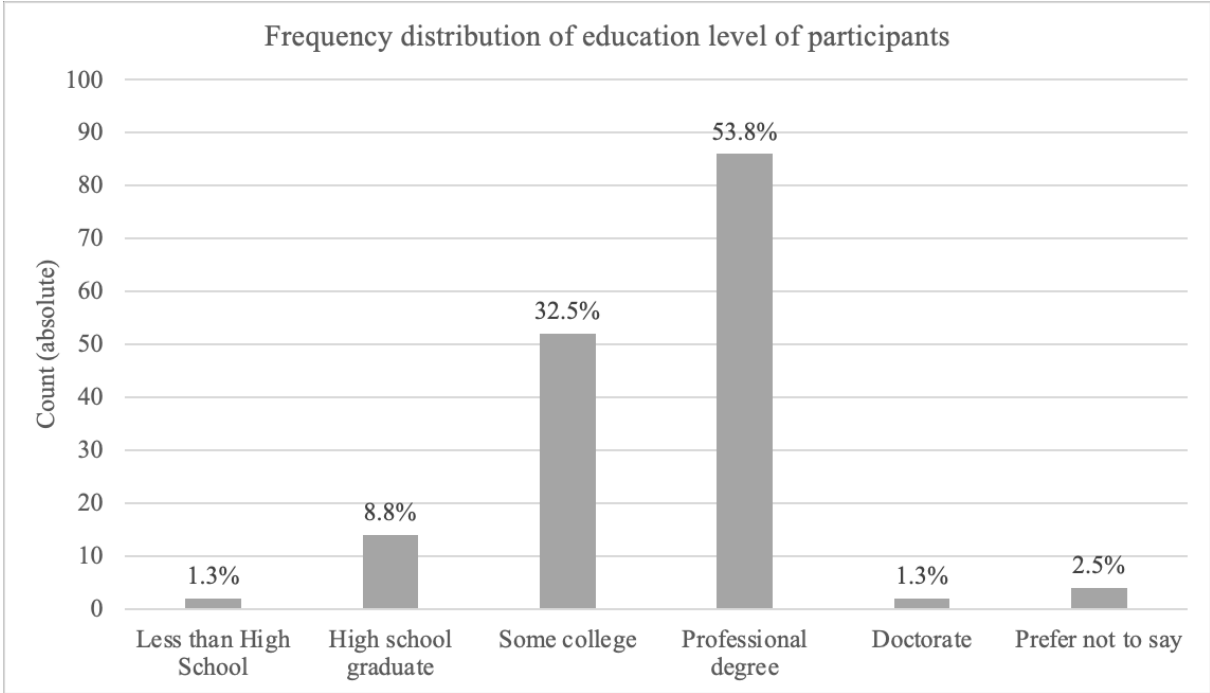
Frequency distribution of countries of residence of participants



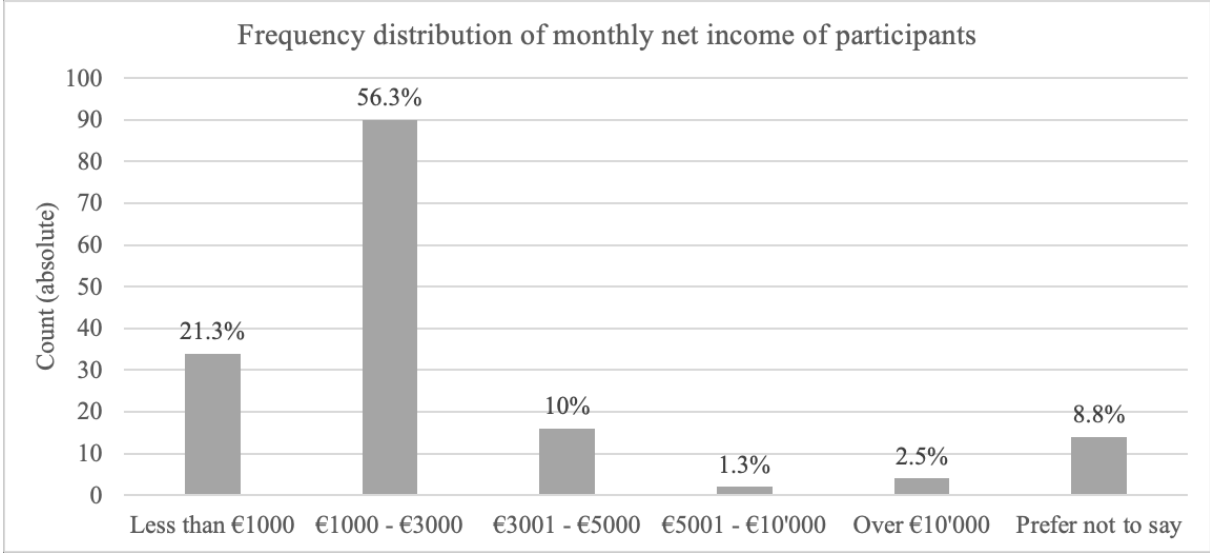
Frequency distribution of length of residence of participants



Frequency distribution of education level of participants



Frequency distribution of monthly net income of participants



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