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Holistic sustainability in the restaurant industry; implications of focusing on the social dimension

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Preface

The motivation to study the topic of sustainability in the food service industry comes from my interest in learning about ways to change our current practices and activities to more sustainable ones, because I believe the way we are living at this time is disappointing and irresponsible. I have learned ways to be an agent of change through my master's course in agroecology, and I want to combine this knowledge and my passion to create good solutions.

I have worked in the food service industry for around seven years; I have been so lucky to work at places that cherish the quality and production method of the ingredients they use and value the people behind them, and I am very blessed and spoiled in this way when it comes to food quality. I have worked in the industry not just because it was convenient or because it was where I could get a job, but because I have always loved food – eating it, cooking it and serving it to others. Growing up, I also acquired an interest in food production, the importance of production methods for the quality of food – not to mention for our eco-systems and environment. I have been exposed to a lot concerning these topics and have therefore gained broad experiential knowledge about the industry. This interest led me to study agroecology at a master's level, after finishing my bachelor's degree in civil engineering, to learn more about my interests from an academic perspective.

From my years in the restaurant industry I naturally have a broad network of people that I have worked with or gotten to know through colleagues. I am fortunate to have good relationships with my employers and colleagues, making them both important and valuable to me and providing me with easier access to other prominent actors in the restaurant industry.

I had the topic of my thesis in mind for a long time, as we were motivated to think about it from the very start of the 2-year agroecology program. Halfway through my second semester I started a full-time position as a front of house member at the three Michelin starred restaurant Maaemo in Oslo. I took a break to fully focus on this and extended my master's degree with one semester after finishing the spring semester of 2017. While working I still spent a lot of time exploring how to define the topic of my thesis, already knowing that I wanted to do research in the context of restaurants and food service. In other words, I kind of started my 'data collection' through participatory observation long before the official start of my thesis work. It was more focused during my time at Maaemo due to my new knowledge from the agroecology course and my motivation to be an agent of change, but I have always been very

observant in my other job positions and could draw on this experience for reference; at least for better understanding the people I encountered and their situations throughout my research.

It has been very challenging to be so deeply involved in the area of my research on both a personal and professional level. I had to work hard on my objectivity and to avoid pre-judgements, as I believe I have quite strong views concerning what I think is good and bad practice. During the past two years spent thinking about, planning and executing my research I have also been right in the middle of my research topic and area. This has made it challenging to clearly distinguish "known facts" from new knowledge and collected data, as I have been immersed in the subject from all angles. What did I know from before? What do I perceive as common knowledge just because I've heard if through so many channels, but still little is widely known, and what are the truly new findings? It has been easy to think that "everyone" knows what I now know, or that everyone understands the implications of this knowledge and the importance of it moving forward.

Acknowledgements

Table of contents

Abbreviations, tables and illustrations

Abbreviations & acronyms

PAR – Participatory Action Research

SRA – The Sustainable Restaurant Association

UN – The United Nations

IPCC – Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, part of the United Nations

FAO – Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

TED – Technology, Entertainment and Design. "*Ideas worth spreading*".

NMBU – The Norwegian University of Life Sciences

Tables

Table 1: Focus group workshop participants

Table 2: Participant and interview information

Table 3: Content analysis of interview text

Table 4: Content analysis of text based on observation

Table 5: First-step themes and sub-themes from mind mapping exercise

Table 6: Excerpt from App.7; Themes, sub-themes, categories and codes from the content analysis

Table a: Interview question matrix (Appendix 2)

Table b: Focus group outcomes (Appendix 3)

Table c: Themes, sub-themes, categories and codes from the content analysis (Appendix 7)

Graphics & illustrations

Figure 1: A positive business loop as presented by Nico Alary

List of Appendices

Abstract

The purpose of the study is to understand the food service industry better when it comes to sustainability, contributing to the body of literature engaged with the development of sustainable practices in the restaurant industry with focus on better guidance for the actors involved. This is done by exploring the open question 'How can holistic sustainability in the restaurant industry be achieved by focusing on social sustainability and good work culture, and what are the implications of working towards sustainability with this focus?'. The study touches on all three dimensions of sustainability but has a special focus on the relationship between the social and the environmental dimensions. To understand the restaurant industry and its challenges with sustainability one must understand the organizational culture within the industry. Not only is there a need to make different choices to reach a more sustainable state, there is also a need to **do** things radically different, to change the patterns in which we act and the nature of those actions. These are areas of exploration in my study.

A qualitative research approach was taken using the methodology *participatory action research* (PAR). It is a methodology focusing on social change and the collaboration between the participants and the researcher. The methods I used in this study were foremost interviews and participatory observation, in addition to one focus group workshop. 12 interviews were conducted with interviewees of leadership positions in the food service industry. Supporting these main modes of data collection, I had informal conversations with several employees in the food service industry. Through these conversations I was able to acquire nuanced information and better contextual understanding.

The major findings from the data analysis were the three overarching themes 'focus on caring for people', 'the importance of leadership', and 'economy being both a challenge and a tool'. This study found that in order to make positive development, the habits and attitudes of people must change, and the work culture of the restaurant industry must support well-being, inclusion and social longevity – pioneered by leaders with strong and transparent values of sustainability and a great focus on communication with their employees. This study has shown, as implicated in previous studies, that focusing on human factors can contribute to economic sustainability. There is also a clear link between the environmental and economic dimensions of sustainability, where economics is used as a tool in the restaurant industry to support environmental changemakers.

How can a focus on good work culture and social sustainability also affect environmental sustainability – the dimension most often thought of when discussing sustainability and 'better practice'? If a culture of trust, transparency, care and acknowledgement of every person's strengths and abilities is in place, it is inevitably easier to implement changes and get the whole team and company on board with executing them well. Not to mention, employees will most probably care about changing their practices because they are included every step of the way by their leaders. They get the opportunity to understand the reason for why they are to do things differently and how it coheres with the values and vision of the company. When this foundation is made, companies can contribute greatly to positive environmental impact, without sacrificing their economic stability.

This study also showed that sustainability can be – and is – so much more than what most people think of it to be, especially in relation to food and restaurants. Sustainability is about attitudes, habits, relationships, values and cooperation. It is about respect, coming together, valuing the invaluable and accepting the true cost of things.

Keywords: Restaurant industry, sustainability, social sustainability, work culture, participatory action research, leadership, investing in people, employee engagement.

1. Introduction

The restaurant industry is continuously increasing (in terms of establishments) and is a regular element in more and more people's lives, especially as urban areas keep growing (UN, 2018). The food service industry is a huge and resource intensive part of the complex, global food system. Food production has a large environmental impact and the global mass of livestock alone accounts for 14,5% of all anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions (FAO, 2018). To achieve the UN Sustainable Development Goals (General Assembly, 2015), and the maximum temperature increase of 1,5 degrees instead of 2 degrees as presented in the recent IPCC report (2018), the restaurant industry has an important role to play. There is need for innovation with holistic sustainability as a core principle (Post, 2011; Shannon-DiPietro, 2018).

The process of achieving the desired state of sustainability is what is popularly called sustainable development (Brundtland, 1987). For this term to be applicable, three aspects have to join together – the economic, the social and the environmental. When joining the economic and environmental aspects together, that is a basis for "green growth", but not automatically for holistic sustainable development (McNeill, 2018). The social aspect plays an important role, relating to the notion that practices are inherently social (Hansen, 2018). A crucial necessity for sustainability to be achieved is to get people on board, and that they are willing to shift mindsets, practices, and patterns of consumption (Post, 2011).

The food service industry has been acknowledging that they have deep-rooted problems that do not correspond with the evolving sustainability demands of the 21st century. The MAD symposium of 2018 ('mad' means 'food' in Danish) in Copenhagen, aimed at transforming our food system and gathered 600 professionals from the restaurant industry. The symposium is an initiative pioneered by acclaimed chef and restaurateur René Redzepi, and this year the topic was "mind the gap". The 'gap' was presented by MAD's executive director Melina Shannon-DiPietro, who explained the complexity of the situation: "The gap can be the different opportunities between races and genders. The gap between the lives we want to provide to our co-workers and the ones we can currently provide. The gap between our priorities, our goals and how we act, and the gaps in our knowledge and empathy" (Shannon-DiPietro, 2018). A focus on changing the leadership model of the restaurant industry was also presented, with a desire to move away from the reigning tough, hierarchical, militaristic

leadership model. "We are at an inflection point: many chefs and managers recognize that old norms must be abandoned, and a culture of care and respect must be cultivated" (Shannon-DiPietro, 2018). There is motivation and engagement to change the world of food service, but how to do it best, with a specific aim of care and respect has not been scientifically explored to any greater degree. Neither has the connection between the implications of this social change and holistic sustainability been discussed any further.

There are several studies that have approached the field of prosperous business criteria in the past years, providing findings that indicate employee investment is a key success factor for restaurants (Batt et al., 2014; Karatepe & Karadas, 2015; Kong et al., 2018; Luthans & Youssef, 2004; Masurel, 2007; Paek et al., 2015; Slåtten & Mehmetoglu, 2011; Ton, 2014). The success these authors have discussed is related to economic prosperity through competitive advantage, developing resources for innovation and living up to increasing employee and customer standards. I will however argue that this success can be viewed more broadly, as it helps ensure social prosperity through providing safety, acknowledgement, happiness and well-being for employees through sustainable social relations and a supportive workplace.

A starting point for understanding the current situation in the restaurant industry is to analyze the workforce. A substantial number of workers are young people, so-called Millennials born between 1980 and 2000 (Nørve, 2018). A report by Gallup (2016) on how Millennials want to work and live found that only 29% of young workers were engaged – emotionally and behaviorally – at work. The report argued that this is partly a consequence of organizations not engaging them in the first place by not meeting their needs and calls this a "big miss" concerning the future of these organizations. Employee engagement has been emphasized as a key factor for performance and profit (Harter & Mann, 2018; Karatepe & Karadas, 2015; Slåtten & Mehmetoglu, 2011). Factors supporting employee engagement, and thus performance, are regular meetings with managers and consistent feedback (Gallup, 2016). Harter & Mann show that the more managers talk with their employees, the more engaged their employees become. They also found that employees increasingly report that they regularly receive recognition; that someone cares about their development and cares for them as a person. Millennials seem to need these factors in their professional lives more than generations before them have, much due to the fortunate and self-validating society many have grown up in (Nørve, 2018). Even though feedback and recognition have no cost and are available for managers to use at all times, compared to perks and monetary rewards, these

factors have not been given sufficient attention and are often ignored as enhancers (Luthans & Youssef, 2004). The Gallup report found that only 21% of Millennials met with their manager weekly and 56% as infrequently as less than monthly (Gallup, 2016).

In our global society where the workforce is crossing borders constantly, organizations with both diverse and inclusive teams are actively creating their competitive advantage (Harter & Mann, 2018). Diversity relates to the background of the people you hire. Inclusion, however, relates to how valued, respected, accepted and encouraged employees are in the organization. Diversity does not implicitly mean inclusion. Actively approaching inclusivity enhances productivity, profit and performance by focusing on each employee's individual strengths. Three factors that must be present for realizing an inclusive culture are treating employees with respect, valuing them for their strengths, and having leaders doing the right thing. This all comes together in a higher unity to ensure both belongingness for individuals in a group and for individuals to preserve their sense of uniqueness. Social psychologists find that both these needs must be met to leverage the positive outcomes of diversity in organizations (Harter & Mann, 2018). This is more important than ever concerning the high demands put on employers from the emerging Millennial workforce concerning their value and the acknowledgement of them as individuals (Nørve, 2018).

The National Environmental Education Foundation in the US states that an engaged employee that is proud of where they work is likely to be a more productive worker and to stay with a company longer (NEEF, 2017). The foundation also states that "sustainability engagement positively impacts nearly all of the dimensions of traditional employee engagement", in the report *Winning in the Marketplace and the Workplace* where they explore the relationship between sustainability engagement and employee engagement (NEEF, 2017, p.3). The report stresses the fact that companies can improve business outcomes, create positive societal impact, and help accomplish corporate sustainability goals by strengthening employees' commitment to the company. What showed to strengthen this commitment the most, was "offering skill-based engagement programs with an emphasis on personal and professional development" (NEEF, 2017, p.23). Masurel found in his study of why small and medium enterprises invest in environmental measures, that "apparently, serving the employees and taking care of the environment go hand in hand" (Masurel, 2007, p.199). The ninth annual Gallup meta-analysis on the relationship between engagement and business profitability, productivity, employee retention and customer perception shows that engaged employees produce better business outcomes than other employees do (Harter & Mann, 2018). This is

indicated across the board, independent of industry, company size, nationality, or the state of the economy. Engagement as a business strategy shows clear, positive results. There is hence reason to state that focusing on strengthening the relationship between the social and environmental aspects can earn businesses back their efforts with considerable margins.

In support of the evidence relating employee engagement to positive business development, Slåtten & Mehmetoglu (2011) presents action points for achieving this engagement. In their study of engaged frontline employees in the hospitality industry, three aspects of time that managers should consider is presented. First, time should be spent on involving frontline employees in the development of the organization's strategy, to secure team inclusion and diversity in the strategy. Second, time should be spent on making all employees understand the strategy and their individual role in its fulfillment. This contributes to the feeling of ownership at the workplace and of self-worth. Third, adequate time should be spent on training employees on how to contribute to the organization's strategy. Simply said, it is of great importance that leaders include their employees every step of the way and let them take part in the bigger picture of the organization to equip them with the information, skills and engagement needed to contribute profoundly to it.

In the last decades several theories about employee engagement and sustainable business development have developed; Psychological Capital theory (see Appendix 8), broaden-and-build theory and positive emotion theory. These three easily intertwine and very much touches on similar topics and research results, as it is found that highly engaged organizations share central practices and mentalities (Harter & Mann, 2018). They acknowledge that culture is created at the top and their leaders prioritize engagement as a competitive strategy. One way they do so is by being transparent; communicating openly and consistently throughout the organization. They also focus strongly on the hiring process and the development of their managers. Training and further education is seen as a critical high-performance work practice to foster personal resources which enhances employees abilities to excel with their company (Karatepe & Karadas, 2015). The highly engaged organizations give fundamental consideration to their people strategy, not just treating it as something that must be included as statistics in the annual report.

Positive emotions seem to be what makes job resources affect self-belief profoundly (Xanthopolou et al., 2012). Employees feeling happy at work are extremely valuable for organizations as they handle managerial jobs better, are more helpful to others, are more engaged and less likely to burn out, and show superior performance and productivity, as

stated in the meta-analysis by Lyubomirsky et al. from 2015 that Xanthopolou et al. refer to in their study. They further draw on the broaden-and-build theory by Fredrickson (2011) and say it is based on positive emotions "broadening" the mind to new learning opportunities by prompting momentary exploratory behaviors. These learning opportunities "build" individuals' strengths of managing challenges through experience of the demands in their environment. This acquired knowledge is translated into personal resources. Simply put, employees are more open to new information and possibilities if they frequently experience positive emotions and are more autonomous in collecting relevant information for fulfilling their tasks (Xanthopolou et al., 2012). The research results from Slåtten & Mehmetoglu support the broaden-and-build theory in that "a positive state of mind broadens a person's thought-action repertory" (Slåtten & Mehmetoglu, 2011, p.100). Their study also shows that freedom and independence in frontline jobs drive employee's engagement at the workplace.

A national study on human resources and turnover in the restaurant industry done in the US by Batt et al. (2014) determined several occurring problems in the restaurant industry and their economic implications. They found the factors that affected employee turnover and retention the most and concluded with saying that human capital investment pays off in the restaurant industry. These are valuable findings as they pinpoint the focus areas that are most important when it comes to employee retention. However, they did not present specific practices that can support the industry in meeting the challenges. **How** to secure better hourly wages and provide discretion for employees – some of the factors the study by Batt et al. present as most important for employee retention – is not addressed. This study contributes to the body of literature engaged with the development of sustainable practices in the restaurant industry – in which some have highlighted the need for more research in the field and the development of better guidance and tools for implementing sustainable practices for the actors involved (Batt et al., 2014; Post, 2011; Shannon-DiPietro, 2018). Others indicate that there is a need to establish a closer linkage between social and environmental sustainability (Murphy, 2012). Current research themes are often related to barriers and challenges, which are keeping the food service industry from being more sustainable in a broad sense. Main points are the challenge of getting people on board with change, related to the theme of people lacking ownership and responsibility (Cuthill, 2010; Post, 2011). Further barriers are poor training, slim economic margins and a high turnover of staff (Jensen, 2018). Not only is there a need to make different choices, there is also a need to do things radically different, to change the patterns in which we act and the nature of those actions. These are areas of exploration in my

study, as part of understanding the restaurant industry better in terms of sustainability and learning from those who do things differently to make a positive impact.

I have two preliminary assumptions as an informed researcher:

Assumption 1: Focusing on good work culture and social sustainability, including mental and physical health, can foster both economical sustainability and the implementation of environmentally beneficial practices.

Assumption 2: Social sustainability must start with the top management and leaders must be exemplary to make good work culture in the restaurant industry a reality.

> "You often hear chefs praising produce and other raw materials as the main ingredient in great gastronomy. But they are not; it is the people. Without the fast-moving hands prepping the food, the strong shoulders bringing out the trash, and the patient minds dealing with all my ideas and opinions, we would not be anywhere today".
>
> (Puglisi, 2014, p.29).

Based on current literature and my assumptions, the research question explored in this thesis is: **How can holistic sustainability in the restaurant industry be achieved by focusing on social sustainability and good work culture, and what are the implications of working towards sustainability with this focus?**

Additional sub-questions to explore are: (1) What characterizes good work culture? (2) What leadership style is most beneficial? (3) How can social sustainability affect environmental sustainability (4) How can social sustainability affect economic sustainability?

An important part of understanding the restaurant industry and its challenges with sustainability is that of understanding organizational culture within the industry. Organizational culture is defined as "a shared set of values, beliefs, and expectations that people carry in their heads" (Cumberland & Herd, 2011, p.10) and is manifested through leader style, the organization's definition of success, the relationship between employees and the present symbols and routines. The Five Windows Framework developed by Ira M. Levin (2000) proposes a detailed way to understanding organization culture by exploring how five factors affect the culture. These factors are Leadership, Norms & Practices, Stories & Legends, Traditions & Rituals, and Organizational Symbols. Cumberland & Herd (2011) studied one small restaurant over several months to assess its organizational culture, using the Five Windows Framework. My study is concerned with understanding a slightly broader

aspect of the current restaurant industry by approaching several restaurants, and exploring their challenges, victories and best practices that have led to sustainable change. What is similar between these two studies is the methodological approach; participant observation, interviews and informal conversations. The method for analysis is in both cases content analysis, aiming to understand the underlying meaning of what has been gathered of data through interviews and observations.

The thesis continues with presenting the methodology of the study and the methods used for collecting data and for analyzing it, followed by the analysis itself. Next, the results from the data analysis are presented in its own chapter, with a following discussion connecting this study's findings to existing knowledge as presented in the introduction. The thesis ends with a conclusion of the major findings and its implications. For additional information noteworthy documents are included in the Appendices for those interested.

2. Methodology

I carried out the research for this thesis using the qualitative methodology participatory action research (PAR). It is a methodology which focuses on social change and is undertaken through a collaboration between the researcher and the study participants. PAR is said to be empowering as it promotes learning and capacity development in all who participate, and is a way to address problems through action (MacDonald, 2012).

The methods I used in this study were foremost interviews and participatory observation, in addition to one focus group workshop. Supporting these main modes of data collection, I had informal conversations with several employees in the food service industry. Through these conversations I was able to acquire nuanced information and better contextual understanding.

2.1 Focus group workshop

The first data was collected through a focus group workshop with managers and head chefs in the restaurant group Lava Oslo AS. The workshop was conducted on May 7th, 2018 at the Oslo food court Mathallen and included 14 participants from the various establishments within Lava Oslo AS. Table 1 presents the participants and their role at the time.

Table 1: Focus group workshop participants

Participant	Professional title	Participant	Professional title
Anders Braathen	Lava Oslo owner	Paula Lundberg	Sentralen general manager
Stian Floer	Lava Oslo owner	Sandra Olsen	Hitchhiker general manager
Tom Victor Gausdal	Lava Oslo owner	Sandra Lindberg	Hitchhiker restaurant manager
Even Ramsvik	Lava Oslo owner	Madelene Wiklund	Strand general manager
Lars Kosmo Grimelid	Lava operations manager	Christina H. Grønning	Sentralen Restaurant head chef
Andrea Marambio	Handwerk general manager	Christer A. Vik	Handwerk Vulkan manager
Agnete Størseth	Sentralen Kafé general manager	Erlend Soltvedt	The Golden Chimp chef

The theme of the workshop was 'work culture and social sustainability', framed by the foundational functions of food to connect us as humans both to our environment and planet, and to each other – very much depicting the environmental and social dimension of the sustainability term. The two questions they were challenged on were;

1. What does the foundational functions of food mean to you in your work?
2. How can you improve your business on these areas through work culture?

The first question had first and foremost the function of getting the participants thinking and talking about a topic they were very familiar with, but with a broader understanding than they might attain to in their day to day work. The second question focused on more specific factors to get the participants active and motivated for being agents of change.

The participants were welcomed with a short introduction to the meeting and the theme of the day and was then divided into groups of 3-4 people for further interactive work. The groups were presented with the two questions (one at a time) to reflect on individually, discuss in their groups and finally share with the whole forum where their thoughts were compiled by me as the facilitator. After working with the two questions the remaining time was spent on a spontaneous discussion about action points for them to work on at their workplaces.

2.2 Interviews

The 12 participants were chosen because they are prominent actors in the movement of sustainable restaurants and have communicated that they focus on food and/or people with a holistic approach. They represent the front-runners who could be role models for the rest of the industry moving forward. The age of the interviewees range between late 20's to early 40's, they are all of northern European descent, and 10 out of 12 are male. In the focus group workshop the diversity of the participants was broader concerning age and gender, and thus better represents the restaurant industry. The focus group participants are also actors who do not necessarily communicate a strong focus on sustainability.

I e-mailed my interviewees to get in contact with them and inquire about an interview. I tried to schedule the interviews to be done in person, but this was not possible with all of them and resulted in several phone interviews to secure them as participants in the study.

Every interview was recorded with an audio recorder and manually transcribed by me. Prior to starting the data gathering, I developed an interview guide to make sure all my interviewees were asked the same questions and that I would get answers that explored the topics that could help me answer my initial research questions. The interview guide and a matrix I developed to ensure that the interview questions touched on the topics related to the research questions are included in Appendix 2. In order to make the interview situation as natural and comfortable as possible and for the interviewees to be able to express themselves fully and tell their story I tried to keep the interviews conversational and bridge topics well with connected questions and probes. This worked well because I was very familiar with my interview guide and could easily jump between topics as the conversation developed.

Table 2 presents all participants and the details of the interview circumstances.

Table 2: Participant and interview information

Participant	Professional title	Date and time	Place	Type/duration of interview
Christian Puglisi, Copenhagen (DK)	Owner of Relæ/Manfreds/Bæst/Mirabelle/the Farm of Ideas	28.06.2018 18:26	Manfreds, Jægersborggade 40, 2200 København N	In-depth interview, 49 minutes
Christopher Haatuft, Bergen (NO)	Owner and head chef of Lysverket	04.07.2018 10:31	Phone call between Oslo and Bergen	In-depth phone interview, 59 minutes
Nico Alary, Paris (FR)	Owner and general manager of Holybelly	06.07.2018 09:31	Phone call between Oslo and Paris	In-depth phone interview 31 minutes
Douglas McMaster, Brighton, (UK)	Owner and head chef of SILO	18.07.2018 10:39	Phone call between Oslo and London	In-depth phone interview 33 minutes
Heidi Bjerkan, Trondheim (NO)	Owner and head chef of Credo	14:08.2018 14:58	Vippa, Akershusstranda 25, 0150 Oslo	In-depth interview 52 minutes
Tim Wendelboe, Oslo (NO)	Owner of TW roastery and coffee bar	14.09.2018 08:30	Tim Wendelboe roastery, Tøyengata 29C, 0578 Oslo	In-depth interview, 45 minutes
Mads André Hansen, Oslo (NO)	Head chef of Sentralen Mat	18.09.2018 10:09	Sentralen, Øvre Slottsgate 3, 0157 Oslo	In-depth interview, 46 minutes
Tom Hunt, owner of Bristol (UK)	Owner of restaurant Paco	18.09.2018 18:30	Phone call between Oslo and London	In-depth interview, 44 minutes
Bjørn Myhrer Vestvik, Oslo (NO)	Head chef of Hitchhiker	19.09.2018 12:11	Hitchhiker, Mathallen, Vulkan 5, 0178 Oslo	In-depth interview, 32 minutes
Astrid Roppen, Oslo (NO)	Owner and general manager of Dugurd Kantiner	02.10.2018 14:00	Dugurd office, Grensen 5-7, 0159 Oslo	In-depth interview. 52 minutes
Jørgen Ravneberg, Oslo (NO)	Head chef at Kolonihagen Frogner	26.09.2018 11:11	Kolonihagen, Frognerveien 33, 0263 Oslo	In-depth interview, 1 hour 4 minutes
Thorleif Linhave Bamle, Oslo (NO)	Former HR manager at Lava Oslo AS	02.10.2018 09:06	Tøyengata 26a, 0578 Oslo	In-depth interview, 1 hour 23 minutes

2.3 Participatory observation

The challenge of participatory observation was both to document the findings well and to filter the important and relevant data without an agenda, thus not leaving things out because they did not support my assumptions. It was a demanding task because of the need to have all senses alert and keep a broad mindset.

In June 2018 I did an internship at the organic farm *the Farm of Ideas* owned by Christian F. Puglisi, one of the interviewees. This is a farm established to supply Puglisi's group of restaurants in Copenhagen with organic, local, and seasonal produce and to bridge learning

between chefs and farmers. As an intern I participated in daily field tasks including seeding, transplanting, weeding, preparing and covering fields, nursing crops and harvesting, as well as working with animals. Through my internship I experienced the amount of work that is needed in small-scale food production, as well as approaches to how small-scale organic production can be done. I also participated twice in selling produce from the farm from a booth in Copenhagen city center. Here I interacted with both private people coming by to shop and with several employees of Puglisi as the booth was located right outside two of his restaurants.

During my month in Abbetved where the farm was located, I informed many of the people that I interacted with about my research work and had informal conversations with them that shed light on the topic of my research. I got first-hand insight into the many challenges that are present when working with creating awareness and a more holistic food system. One of the full-time employed farmers is a former chef and we talked a lot about life in restaurants and his experiences from Copenhagen, and more specifically the relationship between the farm and the restaurants. I also discussed these topics with the chef who is in charge of orders from the restaurants and harvesting at the farm, in addition to discussing her and others' situation concerning work load and well-being at the workplace. These conversations revealed many challenges and problems and showed that the innovative initiative of a company farm was not seamless. Being a peer at the farm and in the restaurant industry gave me accepted entry into these people's thoughts and lives, and they opened up to me very naturally.

The informal conversations and observations were documented in a diary quickly after the events when I felt they had value and significance to my study, see excerpts in Appendix 4. Other relevant observations were also documented in writing to secure the immediate interpretations and the learning that I gained from them.

2.4 Evaluating the research questions

One effect of gathering data through qualitative interviews where the interviewees were free to speak their mind and very much steer the direction of the conversation, was that I found it necessary to evaluate the initial research questions. The interviewees tended to give answers to other questions in our conversations, showing that what I had initially set out to explore was not of the greatest importance to them and their current situation. Having the freedom to

evaluate the ongoing work and adjust it as needed for ensuring that the research meets the needs of the field it explores is something I find as a great strength of PAR.

I started out with the aim of answering these four questions:

1. What exactly are the practices of the leaders, chefs and restaurateurs in the Nordics in relation to sustainability?
2. How have they changed their practices over time?
3. How does the restaurant industry define success criteria for sustainability?
4. How are they doing on these success criteria?

When being confronted with these questions, interviewees found them difficult to answer, especially when asked how they defined success criteria for sustainability. It was a formulation they understood in different ways and with various importance. One interviewee deemed it irrelevant and wanted to explore what he claimed to be questions with a more long-term approach. In order to highlight the data as it naturally unfolded and stay true to it, I changed the focus of my thesis to social sustainability and work culture in relation to holistic sustainability and how to affect these factors positively.

Changing the main research focus of the study after completing the data gathering can raise questions of accountability, but I have done thorough work to show all steps from the raw data and the translation of this into meaning in the discussion as transparently as possible to counter any doubts of accountability.

2.5 Data analysis method – content analysis

The chosen method of analysis for my qualitative interviews is *content analysis*. Content analysis can be described as one form of thematic analysis of qualitative research. In this study an inductive approach was applied, meaning that the data gets to speak for itself in the process of coding and creation of themes; these are not tried to fit into pre-existing frames from previous literature in the field.

The analysis was done with both a semantic and a latent approach. The semantic – the meaning of the language – was represented through codes and categories while the latent – the hidden meaning – was presented through themes as the development of these involved interpretative work, not merely a description. Through the latent analysis approach I aimed to

identify the features that gave the field of inquiry its form and meaning, and I "sought to theorize the sociocultural contexts, and structural conditions, that enabled the individual accounts that are provided" as Braun & Clarke puts it (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p.14).

As presented by Graneheim & Lundman (2004) the process of content analysis depends on the type of data. The data in this study was first and foremost interviews, and transcripts of these were the main units of analysis. I started by getting to know my data well by reading through the transcripts several times, and further worked systematically with one at a time. The content analysis was conducted through a serious of steps to distill meaning as much as possible without losing the core findings. The transcripts were broken down to meaning units in the form of sentences or paragraphs with relatable content. These were further condensed; shortened while preserving the core of the meaning units. To get a better overview of what the content was about in a broader sense, the condensed meaning units were given codes which again were compiled into categories to show 'red threads' throughout the codes.

I followed an advice from *A hands-on guide to doing content analysis* by Erlingsson & Brysiewicz (2017) about using codes found in a single interview as a starting point for working with the remaining units of analysis. Many of the codes were applicable to several of the interviews, which enabled me to understand my data in the context of a bigger picture.

The coding work was open in the sense that I coded for as many potential themes as possible and often attained meaning units with several codes as they can fit into many different themes. This was an action done to enable openness towards the meaning of the data. After working extensively with the data and the dynamic analysis process, the final themes were clear and well identifiable with the data. It is important not to attain themes too much complexity or make them "do too much", but rather refine them and attain them complexity through sub-themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p.22).

2.5.1 Qualitative content analysis of interview text

The main units of analysis in this study was as said transcribed interview text, which was processed through several steps to find meaning from the entire data set. For examples on the how the data was distilled and developed through the different steps, extractions of the content analysis are provided in Table 3.

Table 3: Content analysis of interview text

Meaning unit	Condensed meaning unit	Code
So many sustainable restaurants have failed because it's all about the concepts and not about the products.	Failure because all about concept not product.	Product before concept
And I don't just mean nice-cooked food, I mean service, nice atmosphere, the whole experience for the consumer needs to be better than a normal restaurant because people have to wrestle with the concept	Good food, service, atmosphere important. people must wrestle with concept.	Holistic experience Concepts must outshine conventional
Well, for us company culture is big. We realized early on that if you take care of your people, meaning good work hours, don't over-work them and pay them right within the reach of what you can afford.	Company culture is big for us. Taking care of your people is important.	Work culture Investing in people
The result of that is that you spend a little bit more than other restaurants on wages, a little bit more on having a really nice changing room with a shower – we try to invest in our employees in that sense, so it's a bit of an investment to make, but the pay-off from that is huge	Higher wages, spend money on nice changing rooms. Try to invest in employees. Huge pay-off.	Long-term planning Investing in people Holistic sustainability
So I think being really transparent and talk to your staff a lot and explain the decisions you make is really the way to go, because then they know why you make a decision.	Be transparent, talk to staff a lot, explain decisions.	Transparency Communication Mutual respect

To show examples of the steps of the content analysis and my trail of thought going through the process, two meaning units and the content analysis of them are looked at in-depth in Appendix 5. It is my opinion that the content analysis in this case could not have been done with sufficient quality by anyone other than myself, because I have the context of the interviewees' situations and the entire transcript database in mind. This makes me able to derive meaning from what the interviewees said in relation to the field of research, and to connect similarities and notice differences in what they told me.

2.5.2 Qualitative content analysis of a text based on observation

Text based on observational notes and reflective dialogues also served as units of analysis. These units were analyzed with similar steps as the transcribed interviews, as is exemplified in Table 4 with quotes from a live interview with English chef Jamie Oliver are the meaning units. As the interviews were the main modes of data collection in this study the observational notes acted more as context builders and support for understanding what was revealed through the interviews. Nevertheless, observations gave me important insights.

Table 4: Content analysis of text based on observation

Meaning unit	Condensed meaning unit	Latent meaning unit	Sub-theme	Theme
To be successful as a leader and getting people on board with what you believe in, building trust and safety through not lying is the absolute key.	Not lying is key to success as leader and team builder.	Trust and safety are key for people to make changes.	Trust and safety Transparency	Strong values and transparency create space for inclusion, trust and ownership in the workplace.
Be truthful and be someone to be trusted to speak their mind and share their knowledge	Be truthful when speaking and sharing knowledge.	Build character by being trustworthy.	Transparency Building character Trust	Creating a foundation for change through knowledge, with passion for both teaching and learning.
An advice from Jamie to start caring, and to get your team to care with you, is to find and establish a 'guiding star' for your team.	Establish a 'guiding star' to start caring.	Contributing to a greater cause enhances caring.	Motivation, care. Guiding star, greater cause.	Strong values and transparency create space for inclusion, trust and ownership in the workplace.
If the ideas you are questioning do not contribute to the cause, then it's not worth spending time and energy on.	Prioritize things that contributes to the cause.	Look to the 'guiding star' for what to prioritize.	Priorities Goals Guiding star	Long-term thinking and collaboration to innovate and establish new systems are key to development and holistic sustainability.

2.5.3 Codes and categories

After coding all interviews and observational data, the codes were divided into the groups *practices, people, challenges, development* and *other* for the sake of creating an overview of the large amount of codes. These groups are not to be seen as 'categories' in the sense of the content analysis, but as tools in the process to help me see my data more clearly. The number of times each code was applied in the total data set of the 12 interviews was counted. This was done to measure which topics were talked about more often and given more attention by the interviewees. The codes that were present five or more times were extracted and served as the basis for creating categories and first-step themes, to express the latent meaning of the data. See Appendix 5 for details. I went through this process with the total data set in mind and was conscious to not let this exercise discard important findings that were maybe not represented in the code outtake as they were only coded for less than five times.

2.5.4 Themes

From the categories, a set of themes were developed from grouping together categories with clear connections as I saw it from the participative researcher perspective. Details of which categories gave rise to each theme can be found in Appendix 5. After reflecting on these first-step themes, I realized that I did not feel they were saying what I understood the data to be saying. They were also more like discussion statements than analytical themes. It was important to me as the researcher and the primary research tool to communicate the essence of the study as well as possible. The analysis process in qualitative research is not linear but rather a recursive one and must continually be evaluated. I continued to sketch out a mind-map (see Appendix 6) based on the categories presented in Appendix 5, and my mental system of connections from working so much with the data. Visualizing the core of my findings and connecting them on paper was a valuable part of my analysis process. The themes and sub-themes I reached from the mind-mapping exercise are presented in Table 5.

Table 5: Themes and sub-themes from mind-mapping exercise

Theme	Sub-theme
Investing in people	Teaching/learning Communication Foundation for ownership Wellbeing
The importance of leadership and management	Prosperous work culture Foundation for ownership Communication
Strong value foundation	Identity Priorities Transparency Honesty
Economy: both a challenge and a tool	Long-term thinking Margins Consumers and culture
Ingredients' quality and taste a natural priority for restaurants	Sourcing Supporting collaborators Relationships New systems
Talk and action must cohere	Trust

The themes in Table 5 included several sub-themes to assure that the complexity of the data was broken down and correctly presented, not trying to make the themes 'do too much'. After working with these, I again realized that several of the themes intertwine and that it made

sense to distill them even more. The need for a strong value foundation and 'acting in accordance with what is communicated' can be discussed within the leadership theme. Ingredients, the elaboration of supporting producers and establishing new systems fits within both 'investing in people' and 'economy'. The six themes were thus distilled into the three main themes **'focus on caring for people', 'the importance of leadership',** and the notion of **'economy being both a challenge and a tool'.** Again, this is an example of the recursive analysis process of qualitative research, working back and forth with the data until clear outcomes are reached. The full overview of the connections between the codes, categories, sub-themes and themes resulting from the content analysis can be seen in Appendix 7.

3. Results and Discussion

When I asked the initial research question "How does the restaurant industry define success criteria for sustainability?" I wanted to hear from the interviewed front-runners what they have had, and now have, as their guidelines and goals for achieving sustainability. What are things that need to be in place for being a sustainable restaurant? I imagined that this abstract question could provoke some interesting trails of thoughts and interesting insights into exactly how to get there. French restaurant owner Nico Alary described success within business sustainability as the point when you are able to take a step back and see that the business keeps running like it should without you as the owner and creator having to be there at all times. This is very much a depiction of the definition of sustainability, but also a springboard into a broader understanding of what that takes.

What happened when asking the question of success criteria, was that the interviewees more often answered with formal definitions of the term, said that restaurants never can be fully sustainable because of the shear nature of what they are, or said that the question is not very interesting. They more often answered other questions that were not directly asked in our open conversations, making way for the new research question of how a focus on the social dimension impacts holistic sustainability.

In the focus group workshop, training was the point that was mentioned by all four discussion groups to be a way of improving themselves on implementing and executing the foundational functions of food; connecting us to each other and to our environment. Training was discussed in combination with better information from the very start at a workplace, with being clear and consistent, and with passing knowledge on to increase the competence of the entire team. The participants emphasized the importance of being thorough when hiring. Points made here were to know the core values of the business and the existing team well, to better be able to find people who fit the dynamic of the establishment and who have the traits and competences needed. Combined with training, the participants stated that "repetition is important". This concerns repetition for new employees to better learn the culture and norms of the business, and for the longer-staying employees to keep them from establishing bad habits. Lastly, gathering all employees and the business around common goals and values was pointed out as necessary, in combination with having the desire to become better.

The three main themes of having a **'focus on caring for people', 'the importance of leadership',** and the notion of **'economy being both a challenge and a tool'** and their implications for holistic sustainability in the restaurant industry is discussed in the remainder of this chapter.

3.1 Caring for people

The theme "caring for people" can be understood broadly, but the essence is interpersonal relations and caretaking of people's well-being, their inclusion in a greater entity, and their personal development. This can be achieved through communication, sharing of knowledge through teaching and an interest to learn, and by creating a foundation for ownership through setting high demands and delegating responsibilities. Supporting producers and those thinking and acting by shared values is also a way the industry invests in people.

Several of the participants talked passionately about the production and sourcing of ingredients and how much it mattered to both their trade and the environment, something I will get back to below. What surprised me was how the conversations around this topic flowed naturally from the focus on ingredients to the importance of people; their staff, their collaborators and their guests.

I had an initial assumption when going into the fieldwork that the possibility of successfully implementing environmentally sustainable changes is greater when social sustainability is part of the equation. Cuthill emphasized the notion that people are the executers of practice and stated that "you manage the people who impact on the natural environment, you do not per se manage nature itself" (Cuthill, 2010, p.368). This was an assumption, but the analysis showed that there are many cases that support a positive correlation between the two factors. It did however not seem that this relationship was something that leaders in the industry have directly approached as a means to better implement environmentally conscious practices; perhaps it is not a relationship that has even been considered to be important or valuable?

Changes, sustainable or not, do not simply implement themselves no matter how strong the wish for it to happen is. To make change happen, to be able and willing to make that effort, people must care about making the change and they must be able both mentally and physically to do so. The mental factor is much about feeling safe, included, and confident of the job requirements and one's own abilities. It also includes overcoming habits, which was communicated to be a critical hindering factor for change. It is important to acknowledge the fact that humans are habitual and most comfortable with what is familiar and known. Vallance

et al. provided food for thought in their search to clarify concepts of social sustainability; "Advocates of sustainability – who sometimes assume the facts about environmental crises will 'speak for themselves' – would do well to consider why people resist change, even when there are very good reasons for making those changes" (Vallance et al., 2011, p.344). Christian Puglisi talked about the notorious power of habits on several occasions during our conversation, focusing on the negative impact habits have when you are trying to change practices and that breaking habits is key to be able to innovate and move forward with sustainability and new systems approaches.

Focusing on social sustainability can provide holistic prosperity by benefitting both the business and the individuals who are employed there. At the street food market Vippa in Oslo, the entrepreneurs had this at the core of their business model and have employed refugees and disadvantaged youth from the very start. Talking with the owner of Vippa and Credo, Heidi Bjerkan, she said that being in the restaurant industry is great for inclusion and building of confidence and self-worth as it is fairly easy to master. "There are many struggling out there. People are what's good, one has to see that". In his introductory article on theorizing and practicing social sustainability, Boström (2012) referred to work as being a basis for human dignity, recognition and social integration – not simply a source of income.

3.1.1 Foundation for ownership

Head chef Mads Hansen said he is passionate about teaching and emphasized that it is something they do every single day at Sentralen in Oslo, where they have up to ten apprentices. He said that the challenge is to get people on board, to engage them – something the author Post also states as a key barrier for a more sustainable restaurant industry (Post, 2011). Hansen said, "you have to invest in apprentices and get them to care; try to get people with you", as a solution to the serious lack of good chefs. Sharing of knowledge, teaching and learning must have a positive connotation for it to be effective and contribute to building ownership and a stronger work culture – relating to positive emotion theory and the possibility this has to broaden and build employees' psychological resources (Xanthopolou et al., 2012). In an industry with a high turnover, which is hard to avoid, it is important to enjoy the hiring and training process as there will always be people leaving and coming. Alary said you always need to take pleasure in the process not to be miserable. "It's so much more rewarding than doing everything yourself", he said about watching his staff learn as he delegated tasks to them instead of trying to do it all himself. There is a portfolio of research on how to build employee self-confidence and engagement (Karatepe & Karadas, 2015;

Luthans & Youssef, 2004; Masurel, 2007; Slåtten & Mehmetoglu, 2011); a lack of theory is not the issue, but rather the lack of knowledge and implementation of this theory in the restaurant industry. In their study of human resources connected to organizational competitive advantage, Luthans & Youssef pointed out 'allowing employees to experience success' as the most effective approach to developing their confidence and thus their engagement and productivity in the organization (Luthans & Youssef, 2004).

3.1.2 Teaching and learning

Seeing and understanding individuals to a much greater extent is another point Hansen talked about, calling himself an "unskilled hobby psychologist" having learned a lot from managing a diverse kitchen team. Though having learned a lot he reflected on the fact that there is no official continuing education in the restaurant industry when it comes to leading and teaching others. Head chefs are indeed responsible for many people but get no training in doing so.

Nico Alary put it very simply; he said that working for people who actually care about you "is great" and makes you want to give them so much more back. Running a business that puts work culture and re-investing in their staff at the forefront, Alary is rewarded with staff that contributes with more than just their workforce. He talked about a Canadian employee who had initiated action on the environmental front; "they have a whole different approach to environmentally friendly business in Canada. She runs that for us at Holybelly and really cracked the web of how to do that and improved what we were doing". He further elaborated on the value of having an open company culture that promotes knowledge sharing; "There is so much knowledge within your employees, and as an owner it's such a waste not to try and get that knowledge from them. They might actually know more about your business than you do." Aside from acknowledging employees' abilities and knowledge, investing in them also entails building on that knowledge and having a policy of continuous education. Heidi Bjerkan saw knowledge as the most important thing when it comes to sustainability, adding that there is a serious lack of knowledge in both industry workers and in control bodies like the food safety authority. Knowledge is power and sharing and providing knowledge creates a foundation for ownership in the workplace and the confidence to take actions. Tim Wendelboe, coffee business owner, said that everyone should have a salary they can live off, but that salary alone is not motivation for people to go to work. "I've worked with coffee for 20 years with a horrible salary for the first 10. Still, it was incredibly fun to go to work because I learned so much. That's what's motivating". The fact that he gives his employees the opportunity to continuously develop within their trade and gives them the trust to embark

on tasks new to them returns him with happy staff who are more than willing to meet the company's high demands and who stays for a long time, like the study from NEEF shows to be the most important way to improve work commitment (NEEF, 2017).

3.1.3 Positive implications of caring for people

Nico Alary has several times mentioned a 'positive loop of events' that secures both financial and social sustainability, on the Instagram account of his business (see Figure 1). He subscribes to full transparency and openly shares valuable lessons he has learned during the 5 years of running his business. The number one lesson, Alary said, is that "you will never regret and should never hesitate to invest in your staff and their well-being. This principle you can adapt to your own budget*" (2018). He provoked reflection and a thorough look in the mirror for other leaders when saying that "the profits made by your company is not your money, it's the company's money. You need to understand that*". As a restaurateur working to raise the bar of the industry, Alary encouraged others to follow suit; *"Don't be afraid to be generous and caring, it doesn't make you a weak leader, just a good one, and that's what quality staff are looking for the most these days" (Alary, 2018). This attitude was shared by Christian Puglisi, who said that "all the things that makes people feel better, are important to me".
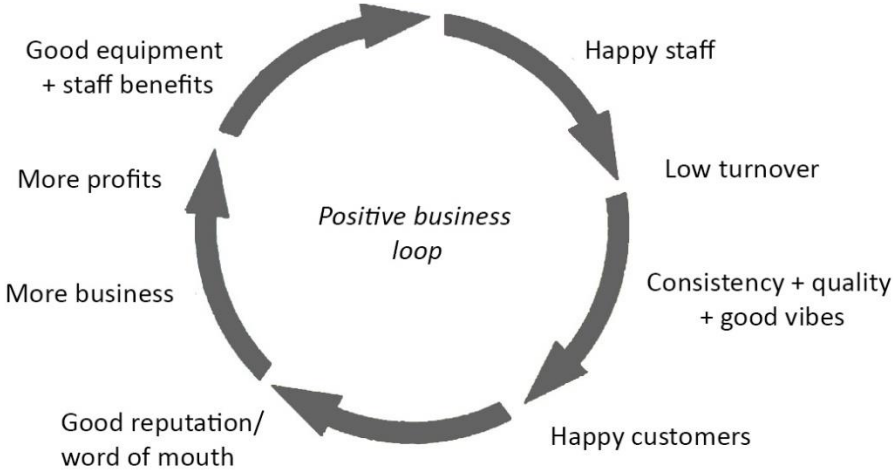
Figure 1: A positive business loop as presented by Nico Alary (Alary, 2018)

How can this knowledge be practically implemented? The immediate challenge is to understand the root of the problems and find the changes of practices that adheres to solving

them, knowing what to implement and how to implement it. We can build further on the factors that Batt et al. (2014) found as most important to decrease turnover and increase retention; "hourly wages and job security are the most important factors that influence employee turnover and tenure, along with the number of work hours and discretion that employees have at work, and promotion from within policies" (Batt et al., 2014, p.19). Job security is not necessarily that difficult to adhere to considering how the situation in the restaurant industry is today. The case is more often than not that businesses lack good employees rather than having to let people go. A challenging situation are those of seasonality; some restaurants have very different guest numbers in summer versus winter. This is something that must be communicated transparently to employees if being the case. Job security might not be possible through the whole year. Balancing the number of work hours can be an exercise going in two directions. Either employees are unhappy with getting too few hours and consequently a low monthly pay – maybe not enough to sustain themselves. The other case is working too much and thus feeling both physically and mentally exhausted, and on the road to burning out. Working intensely is possible – and can be fun and thrilling – for a while, but it does without a doubt have negative consequences if sustained for any longer period of time. Balancing work hours for everyone to be happy is about communicating openly from both parts; employer to employees and the other way around. Everyone must know what the wishes, demands and expectations are so that the best solutions and compromises can be made.

3.2 The importance of leadership and management

Leaders and their style of management appeared to be crucial for ensuring people's ownership of their workplace and establishing and retaining a prosperous work culture. This was also closely connected to the themes of caring for people and economy being both a challenge and a tool, as ownership and work culture showed to be key factors for positive and sustainable business development. For leadership to have this affect, the people on top must act in accordance with their communicated value foundation and prescribe to transparency and honesty (Harter & Mann, 2018).

The leader style that my interviewees repeatedly described themselves to practice was a tough, but fair one. Alary explained it this way: "We really know what we want, there's not a lot of wiggle room, we're really pushing for consistency and quality. So, in that sense I guess we are a bit tough as managers and leaders. And those details accumulate into really healthy

company culture, because people know it's a tight business and there are rules to be obeyed". This was expressed in very similar ways by Heidi Bjerkan, Christian Haatuft and Tim Wendelboe.

When it came to creating employee ownership as a leader, Christian Puglisi said it is important to qualify people from the very start and prepare them for what is expected of them. He was of the opinion that you should set higher demands rather than lower and do it with mutual respect and good values as the foundation. This was supported by Tim Wendelboe, who was clear in his message to all his employees that their goal is to be the World's best coffee roastery and coffee bar, which is a very high demand to relate to. However, he backed this by giving them a lot of responsibility – even though they are young – so they can develop and grow in their profession and feel that they truly are an important part of that goal. "I think the most important thing is to have a set course that everyone understands and that they can follow", Wendelboe said. Having this overarching goal that gathers the whole team and the business as one entity for achievement was also an advice from Jamie Oliver for getting both yourself and your team with you to start caring. "This will help you in every little decision you have to make. If the idea you are questioning do not contribute to the cause it's not worth spending time and energy on" (Oliver, 2018). Having a 'guiding star' makes it easier and sensible to for example standardize work tasks that are routine, because they are not something that should be questioned every time or should have any uncertainty connected to them. These tasks are important for the consistency and thus quality of the work and should have a standard. Professor of operations management at MIT, Zeynep Ton, found that standardizing routine tasks freed surplus mental capacity and energy that employees could spend on more interpersonal tasks and interaction, instead of standardization contributing to even more automated, heartless work as one could assume (Ton, 2014). This is an important point when it comes to the restaurant industry. By standardizing routine tasks, people have the ability to spend that mental capacity to learn more, and be friendly, helpful and heartfelt in their work with customers, instead of feeling like they do not have the time because they are stressed or insecure (Ton, 2014). This is a double positive situation as customers get a better experience and staff feel more importance and pride in their job. "Humans want to be helpful, it's in our nature", Ton said. From a business perspective, this should be something to reflect on as it can increase profits and thus support economic sustainability.

As mentioned in the introduction, the restaurant industry – and especially kitchens – has for decades been run almost militaristic. Today, this is a discussion rising on the agenda because

the outcomes have been catastrophic in terms of a serious imbalance of supply and demand of skilled workers, argued Thorleif Linhave Bamle. Several of my interviewees said that they had reflected thoroughly on their own behavior and taken an active choice to change the way they react and lead, and how they want to change the work culture at their restaurant. Christopher Haatuft said he, like many others, legitimized his aggressiveness with the fact that it is challenging to open a new place, that the industry is tough and that it is just how it is. He had realized this was a very old-fashioned and backwards way of operating. It is easy to look at the situation from the outside and judge, but we have to look at the historic context before drawing conclusions. How should young chefs or restaurateurs know how to be good, fair and supporting leaders when what they know by experience is far from that? "Defending psychological terror with passion is a way of explaining away inadequacies", Haatuft continued. He said people will not admit that they are not good enough, but that there are the few chefs that build up everyone around them instead of pushing the few ones that are willing to take the beating. Again then, how will they get from the first scenario to the latter? Food economist Anna Post (2011) stated in her thesis that more support and tools are needed for increased sustainability and called for more research on specific factors that promote restaurants in developing themselves. What my data indicate was that these tools strongly need to be in support of leadership training for increased sustainability to be possible.

Good leaders are honest and transparent, enabling their employees to feel secure on what their leaders' values are and that they will act in accordance with them. This creates a safe work culture where people feel comfortable to try and fail, teach and learn, and have fun. A basic starting point is communication and for leaders to be very vocal with their employees – talking with them a lot. From his experience, Nico Alary said that being transparent by talking with your staff and explaining all the decisions you make is the way to go, "because then they know why you make a decision. Imposing a decision without explaining it leaves too much room for interpretation". Making sure people do not feel deceived should be important to leaders, as head chef Jørgen Ravneberg said it was to him. He pointed out that their principles and ways of operating at Kolonihagen Frogner might not fit everyone, but that it is crucial to make everyone who is interested to join the team aware of what is expected from them, and what they can expect in return. Sharp values and communication are strongly tied to having a 'guiding star' for everyone to understand and follow. These are key points for sustainability; for long-term success the culture has to be rooted in the company and commonly shared, not dependent on single individuals.

"It's very important to always go back to where you come from and your core values. It's cool we have the motto "it's good because we care", because it's a constant reminder of what we're about"

(*Nico Alary, July 2018*).

3.3 Economy: both a challenge and a tool

Economy was mentioned by all participants in an array of contexts. It was communicated as a challenge by limiting the possibility the restaurant industry has to make more sustainable choices due to extremely tight margins, high prices on "better" alternatives, and the culture of consumers. Several participants also highlighted the possibility and power of using economy as a tool, both by investing long-term in their company mainly through taking care of staff, and by supporting producers and establishing new systems of collaboration.

"Indeed, business executives believe that they must decide between social and environmental benefits to sustainability and the costs of implementing such schemes. Few hotel owners and managers recognize the financial benefits associated with the implementation of environmental initiatives. The notion that sustainability is expensive is deeply anchored in society and has become a widespread fallacy"

(Legrand et al., 2013, p.326).

3.3.1 The culture of consumers

Norwegians have very low willingness to pay and generally little understanding of the background of food costs. This was a repeated statement by several interview subjects. Thorleif Linhave Bamle said we live in a country where it is not appreciated that things cost money, especially the fact that the ingredients on your plate is but a small cost in the bigger picture. "Someone is paying rent for you to sit down, it's salary for the employees, electricity, ingredient, infrastructure – and the list goes on", he elaborated. A prominent category from my content analysis was exactly 'lack of knowledge', which could be commented on in several contexts within my study, but the lack of knowledge among people outside the restaurant industry is conspicuous and at the same time affects the industry immensely. It is a service industry after all, completely dependent on its customers. In a field with so much passion and enjoyment on both sides of the table, it is conflicting that there seems to be a lot of arrogance in the Norwegian culture. In the process of going from an extremely poor nation to being one of the World's wealthiest we have developed a culture of looking down on certain professions.

"There are so many factors; the contempt for vocational professions, "the customer is always right" mentality, we don't want to spend money on

33

consumption, and a "cheapness" that is combines in a higher entity of culture and attitudes – which will take a long time to change"

(Thorleif Linhave Bamle, October 2018).

That said, the restaurant industry has part of the responsibility to make the public aware of the fact that they pay for more than the mere things they are served.

Douglas McMaster stressed that the ultimate rule when opening a restaurant with sustainability at the core is 'product first', meaning that the product must come before the concept. He said that the whole experience has to be better than at a commercial restaurant because guests have to wrestle with the concept. "Commerciality is familiarity", he repeated, "culturally familiar foods sell". For the restaurant industry to be able to radically change their ways, their guests have to be very open to embracing that change and be willing to challenge their habits and what they find familiar.

3.3.2 Slim margins

"Everyone who is doing something within sustainability wants to be holistically sustainable", Haatuft said. Where the motivation is not the issue, the economy often is. Haatuft referred to having to make choices out of necessity because the company could not afford anything else. A simple example was choosing environmentally friendly cleaning supplies above industrial chemicals, but the price difference brought this to a low priority. The economic pillar must also be safeguarded; if the company does not make money it is not sustainable. In the context of capitalism this is a final truth (McNeill, 2018). Specific things that make it more expensive to be a conscious restaurant is the price of produce – for example organic or local – and resources for workforce as sustainable practices often requires more work.

Implementing better practices can also be very difficult due to the economic dimension. Things like recycling all waste can be expensive because you need to pay for it to be handled correctly, which might mean having several different companies coming to pick up waste for disposal, said Myhrer Vestvik in our conversation. Reflecting on this, it is not difficult to understand that small businesses do not do it. In Norway, this is especially a case for the government to meet with new policies and support as waste management largely is municipal matters. Wendelboe specifically requested stricter governmental efforts to make recycling a duty for businesses, not simply a possibility.

During the interview at Kolonihagen Frogner, a clear viewpoint concerning margins was presented; "the thing is that in the short-term it is of course expensive, but in the long-term it

is not cheap with continuous replacement of employees because you offer bad circumstances". Ravneberg said you do yourself a disservice by always balancing on the margin because people will get burned out and stop believing in the concept. At Kolonihagen Frogner they work hard to build strong relationships within their small team and host several social get-togethers to enhance this, and to build ownership to their workplace at the same time. One example is spending a day off making Christmas decorations together for the restaurant, accompanied with holiday foods, beverages and music.

A challenge for organizations in today's economy is that every investment needs to be measured, developed and leveraged for a return on profit (Luthans & Youssef, 2004). Going back to managers operating with frequent feedback and recognition as an example; this is something that is company time spent on work-oriented actions. Organizations must be able to show that also human investments is a source of competitive advantage gaining their bottom line in the long run (Luthans & Youssef, 2004). There is probably not sufficient metrics and methods of documentation to validate this use of time in organizations so far and offers a case for further investigation and development.

The reason for the extremely tight margins in the restaurant industry showed to be complex but can be summed up as a result of extreme economical imbalance between supply and demand, meaning that the cost of supply – the food service and the system it's part of – is much greater than the demand consumers have for affordable – cheap – food service.

3.3.3 Economy as a tool

Tourism is the biggest business connected to Norwegian economy – it has become greater than the national income from oil – and is a leverage point that should be pushed forward by the service industry, Bjerkan strongly argumented. "We have to be smart and think about what can be pushed, that it is of economical profit for the entire nation. There is a lot to gain there, by making it more attractive", she continued. Heidi Bjerkan got substantial funding from Enova, a Norwegian governmental organization which invests in solutions for a sustainable Norwegian future, because they implemented solutions for energy efficiency in the new Credo restaurant – which itself is situated in an old building for re-use of existing building mass.

Though Christopher Haatuft had challenges with implementing practices and being holistically sustainable, he was strict when talking about restaurants using their economy as a tool to make the whole industry more sustainable. Haatuft here very much connected the

economic and social pillars when saying that he has a goal of sometime in the future never paying anyone he does not care for. "It's like making sure that all the money that goes into Lysverket goes back out to people who operate like we do", he said. In a bigger perspective he talked about restaurants coming together and using their purchasing power to get people going and support those who operate with sustainability as core values. Restaurants have already gone together to push market prices down; using the same mechanism to bring good producers forward could make a huge difference, he said. Instead of focusing primarily on profit, Haatuft said that "what would be really fun was if everyone suddenly thought a whole lot more about where they pay their money".

3.3.4 Establishing new systems

Enabling a foundation for a sustainable restaurant industry is very complex, and all the necessary factors must be seen in connection to each other. Using economy as a tool was directly linked to establishing new systems, mostly mentioned in relation to systems of provision and waste management. Something that reoccurred in the cases I got a look into through my interviewees, is that they had made a huge effort to find and connect with producers that they had common values and interests with. I foremost talked to chefs and the main reason behind the efforts of ingredient sourcing were because of taste and flavor. However, there was broad agreement that the people who make the best food are the ones who care. These two factors are inextricably linked, and thus 'caring for people' is also linked to 'using economy as a tool'. Supporting farmers and producers was one of the most mentioned and elaborated themes from my interviews and is clearly a key factor to build further on as this was a top priority for the front-runners in the field. It means that restaurateurs must take responsibility of sharing the risk with producers, who often struggle a lot to make the ends meet, as Bjerkan and Haatuft put it. Puglisi has his own organic farm in his company, providing a huge variety of vegetables, milk, eggs, and some meat to his four restaurants. Still, he was open about the fact that they also import products from Italy, from where he has part of his heritage.

> "What appeals to me mostly when talking about ingredients is directly connected to who produces them, and getting outside the big, globalized market. It doesn't mean that we aren't going to trade with Italy, but that we trade with people we have a connection to in Italy."

> *(Christian F. Puglisi, June 2018).*

Having first-hand experience with building up a different system of provisions through his farm "the Farm of Ideas", Puglisi is an advocate of learning by doing and said that "you have

to establish your own sustainable systems to understand that you have the possibility to affect things yourself". Finding or developing new ways that disrupt the current patterns is a possible success criterion according to Haatuft. Again, knowledge is power and there is a need to explore things and build up the knowledge to make good and informed decisions. When it comes to choosing ingredients, this is an important and sensitive matter that people do not come to agreement about. There is for example a big discussion around how good or how much better organic produce is compared to other alternatives. Some are strictly sticking to organic, while others focus more on small-scale, local producers working closely with nature. As there is no "one right answer" or consensus as of now, the prevailing opinion is that every single case should be researched to form an opinion of its level of sustainability. The discussion of production methods and sourcing is subject for an entire thesis alone.

3.4 Recommendations & action points

A different education system and training of chefs and service professionals is needed. This should in addition to learning about sustainable food practices include how to think critically and how to be an autonomous learner, skill building within management and social relations, and learning about how economics can be used for positive development as a bigger part of the food system. These are things that enable people to be agents of change because they get a proper foundation to have that voice in society. Research on how this can be successfully developed and executed to serve a large audience is needed, as well as investigation of possible sources of investment in measures like these for making them possible.

Our complex, modern challenges have caused a rising global conversation in the academic sphere on the importance of interdisciplinary collaboration for developing sustainable solutions. This has also initiated new coalitions and initiatives to look to and contribute to the development of. One is the MAD Foundation and their motivation to spread knowledge and education on pressing issues for professionals in the restaurant industry – many of which are linked to sustainability in a broad sense. Since the establishment of the foundation, the most influential chefs and restaurateurs in the world have been brought together six times in Copenhagen for 2-day symposiums for discussions and to spark action. This has also spread to an initiative called *MAD Mondays*, which brings the symposium discussions to smaller forums around the globe. The foundation also did a pilot project with Yale University in 2016 to equip the restaurant community with knowledge to meet the world's mounting environmental, agricultural, and social challenges (MAD, 2016). A handful of engaged top chefs were included in the pilot project, but the potential is there to develop this to meet a

larger audience. MAD has raised the awareness of many of the topics discussed in this thesis, but they must seek to draw the connections between people, planet and prosperity to enlighten the industry on the fact that sustainability is three-fold and not easily simplified.

Another initiative, with a strong academic focus, is the EAT Foundation and its annual *EAT Forum*. The foundation aims to find solutions to feed the growing global population healthy food in a sustainable way and to do so by bridging the knowledge of experts from an extensive selection of professions to secure diversity and interdisciplinarity; engineers, biologists, physicists, chefs, medical doctors, anthropologists, marine biologists, and more are summoned to contribute to this massive goal. The restaurant industry's part in the solution must be approached with a people-focus as the starting point for radical change, as my findings support. Fixing the food system demands that food service is part of the solution as the industry is a major catalyst for both food production, food waste and human health.

An area of needed further study is turnover in the restaurant industry. What is the true situation of turnover in the different segments of the restaurant industry (company size, service style, type of food)? Why is the turnover rate as found (both if high and low)? What implications does the turnover rates have on sustainability, concerning all three dimensions? Frontline employees should be the main subjects of research as they are the only ones who can truly provide answers and reasoning behind their behavior and intentions, with first-hand experience from the day-to-day life of working in restaurants and meeting customers.

3.5 Discussion of data collection approach and the analysis

When starting out with my four preliminary research questions I was imagining doing interviews mostly focused on the interviewees' more carved-out practices such as waste management, energy-efficiency, produce sourcing, work hours and turnover rates. I started with this approach, but the conversations turned out more complex and ended up discussing less measurable factors. These factors could be quantified to a certain extent, but that was not of interest in this study which rather sought to understand the current situation and learn from visionary front-runners. The results must be understood within the context of the data being a result of what the interviewees were most concerned with discussing, and they largely concern interpersonal factors, values, culture, and business in the restaurant industry. Over the course of the study, the research developed into a special exploration of the significance of work culture and leadership for sustainability.

The goal was to explore 'best practice' and I chose to approach business leaders. I talked mostly to chefs, as they were often both owners and head chefs of the restaurants I inquired the leaders of. A natural explanation of the sample characteristics of most subjects being men, is the fact that there are more men in top level positions in the restaurant industry than there are women, according to a recent report by McKinsey & Company (2017). There were several subjects on my list for potential interviewees, but they were not all available or did not respond to the inquiry of participation. My research did not look for 'the one right answer' but sought to explore what has been done and what has worked best until now. More interviewees would only have expanded on that aim, probably giving even stronger foundation to my findings as they are shared by several of the interviewees in this study.

I noticed that it was very natural for leaders who are also chefs to focus on ingredients and produce. Owners with positions as general managers instead, might have had other areas of focus. One example is the very different conversation I had with Nico Alary at Holybelly compared to many of the other interviewees. Both him and his wife are owners of Holybelly, he is the general manager while she is the head chef. Had I talked to her, the interview might have had a very different focus. This is the nature of qualitative research, as the subjects of enquiry shape the content and results of the study.

The main points derived from the focus group workshop represented the beginning of the data collection and was very much an exercise for me as the researcher to get a feeling of the current situation in the field of inquiry in this study. The outcomes of the focus group workshop were not coded and analyzed to the same extent as the in-depth interviews but served as a preliminary foundation for understanding a general perception of the restaurant industry in Oslo concerning work culture and the connection between food and people. The workshop did not have the same focus and aim as the rest of the research as it was conducted quite early in the process when the concrete field of study was yet to be pinned down.

4. Conclusion

The main objective of this study is to understand how a good work culture may impact the restaurant industry's sustainability agenda and its inter-related components. What characterizes good work culture? What leadership style is most beneficial? How can social sustainability affect environmental sustainability? And how can social sustainability affect economic sustainability? The results of this study further reinforce what we all know, but all too often forget in our day-to-day lives of getting the work done: people matter. As sustainability will continue to take a front seat in restaurants' operations in the future due to increasing resource limitation, taking the long-term approach and investing in people, planet and prosperity will drive the industry forward.

Both my preliminary assumptions are validated: A focus on good work culture and social sustainability can foster both economical sustainability and the implementation of environmentally beneficial practices. Organizations who focus on work culture and prioritize social sustainability at the workplace by putting 'people' at the center of their efforts increasingly experience greater economic gains and higher levels of employee engagement, where members actively contribute to the organization's environmental efforts (when this is a communicated goal).

What then is good work culture, specifically, in the restaurant industry? This study has shown that it is a culture founded on clear goals and values that are transparently communicated – starting with the leaders. Leaders practicing a tough but fair leadership style, where every decision is thoroughly explained to all employees, engenders a sense of ownership in their workplace and identification with it on a deeper level. In addition, employees must feel acknowledged and appreciated. This is most effectively achieved through giving them responsibilities and autonomy in their work, which again translates into trust; an out-most important factor for establishing and keeping a good work culture. Trust enables people to express themselves and to grow because they are given the safe space to do so. Trust is also the foundation for strong social relations which again makes people care about and for each other. Hence, good work culture can enable social sustainability in the sense that people have a prosperous and fulfilling life both mentally, physically and socially.

How can a focus on good work culture and social sustainability affect environmental sustainability – the dimension most often thought of when discussing sustainability and

'better practice'? If a culture of trust, transparency, care and acknowledgement of every person's strengths and abilities is in place, people are often more open and accepting to try new things. When this foundation is made, companies can contribute greatly to positive environmental impact. In the restaurant industry this could be choosing different ingredients, cleaning products, table wear, take-out containers and so on. Or it could be active support and acknowledgement of the people who take real measures to improve practices directly linked to the environment. It could be simply a demonstration of how to think differently about provision and waste streams and finding solutions to close those loops as much as possible and use all resources efficiently. Or it could be to find and support suppliers who use non-fossil fueled forms of transportation, and who pack their goods in an environmentally responsible and efficient manner.

In the restaurant industry, slim margins and economic challenges seems to be some of the most important barriers for sustainability. It challenges the ability to pay fair salaries, to invest in the well-being and training of staff, and to make better, longer-term beneficial choices that may be more expensive up front but are more cost-effective over the long run. Several of the interviewees in this study are big believers of creating new systems of production, provision and handling in order to be sustainable. By operating outside the globalized, industrial systems they are able to make more informed decisions that align with their values and are able to spend their money supporting their visions of sustainability. The notion of using economics as a tool to achieve sustainability through supporting likeminded people and building coalitions – communities – was a prominent finding in this study.

This study corroborates earlier work that has shown that a people-centric focus on social sustainability can contribute to economic sustainability. Happy, engaged employees with adequate training who feel secure to execute their jobs with autonomy offers the company pay-back through improved performance, reduced sick-leave, and greater income potential from satisfied and returning guests. All of this increases business performance. Additionally, good work culture can decrease employee turnover and thus the expenses connected with hiring and training. It will also attract people who want to work in the company because of the culture and leadership style, contributing to building excellent teams of skilled people who identify with the company's values.

A critical commentary related to the economic hardships for the restaurant industry stems from the contemporary culture. In general, there is a lack of appreciation for vocational

professions such as chefs and waiters and their craft, along with an unwillingness to pay the true price for food and to change habits. Yet, it is both the responsibility of the restaurant industry and of connected interest organizations to work for lifting the industry by educating the public on the truth of the situation and the real cost of things – the work and life situation of restaurant industry employees, the line of costs that must be paid for in a restaurant, and the impact the industry and eating out has on "people, planet, and prosperity".

The outcomes of my research interviews highlighted that many people have the same thoughts and motivations regarding sustainability. Understanding that radical change is possible is often enabled by the recognition of a significant group of like-minded people with significant agency for thinking in the same paths, and the creation of community within these endeavors. This study also showed that sustainability can be – and is – so much more than what most people think of it to be, especially in relation to food and restaurants. Sustainability is about both culture and practice – attitudes, habits, relationships, values and valuing the invaluable and accepting the true cost of things. All of these require a sense of shared responsibility, where cooperation flourishes in an industry culture focused on prosperity, the planet, and people.

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Appendix

Request for participation in the research project

"Success criteria for sustainable restaurants"

Background and purpose
What measures/changes can make the food service industry environmentally, socially, and economically sustainable? What does the industry itself see as problematic – what do they want to change and why is it challenging to realize these changes? What successful solutions are already in place and can be further developed?

The purpose of this master thesis is to understand the current situation regarding sustainability in the food service industry in Norway and the Nordic region. This is fundamental to find solutions to the present challenges, and for these solutions to make real change. The goal is to present a practical guide that can be used by both the professional industry and public agencies to shift to sustainable practices. The master's program is Agroecology at the Norwegian University of Life Sciences (NMBU).

You are requested to participate because you have a central position in the food service industry or in public agencies determining policies and implementation of new measures in the industry.

What does participation in the study mean?
The methodology for the study is Participatory Action Research (PAR) with the use of interviews, workshops, and case studies. For you as a participant this means being active through interviews and eventual tours and descriptions of your work(place). It also includes the possibility of more in-depth participation through action research methods to map out and understand challenges in the field. Collected information will be personal (name, profession, workplace, position, background etc., that can be kept confidential is wanted), include your thoughts and values around sustainability in the food service industry today and in the future, and your experiences regarding this. Data will be registered in the form of notes, photographs and voice recordings if you give your consent.

What happens to the information about you?
All personal information will be treated confidentially. It is purely the project group that will have access to the information in the data collection period. Participants can be recognized in the publication of the thesis if consent is given. This is wanted, as your position in the industry can give more strength and credibility to the field of research, as well as greater impact for the future.
The project is scheduled to end 15.12.2018. Personal information will be saved until this, but will not be made accessible to others than the project group if consent to publish in the final report is not given.

Voluntary participation
It is voluntary to participate in the study, and you can withdraw your consent at any point in time without giving any reason. If you withdraw, all personal information about you will be anonymized. If you wish to participate or have questions regarding the study, contact project manager Edona Emilie Arnesen by phone +47 913 87 389 or mail edona_emilie@hotmail.com. You can also contact the supervisor of the project, Geir Hofgaard Lieblein by phone +47 932 36 048 or mail geir.lieblein@nmbu.no. The study is reported to the Protection Offices for research, NSD – Norwegian Center for Research Data AS.

Consent to participation in the study

I have received information about the study, and am willing to participate

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(Signed by project participant, date)

- I agree to participate in interviews
- I agree to participate in photographs
- I agree to participate in voice recordings
- I agree that personal information can be published/saved after the project commences

47

Interview guide

Introduction: My thesis is about understanding the path to sustainability in the restaurant industry – how have the front runners gone about it, what has worked, what has been challenging? What are the really good solutions and practices that make a difference and that is worth bringing forward? By participating you also get the knowledge of the other participants and a broader insight into the development of the field, possibly also a powerful network to be a stronger part of as well. My main research questions are:

Research Questions – *the overarching Q's to answer*

1. How does the restaurant industry define success criteria for sustainability?
   a. How are they doing on these?
   b. How have they changed over time?
2. What exactly are their practices?

Introduction Q's

I'll just start off asking you some general questions about the topic:

1. How would you describe your restaurant?
2. Why has sustainability become so important to you?
3. What do you mean when using the term about your own business?

Key Q's

How do you define success criteria?

1. How did you start working with sustainability in your business?
   a. What were the first steps you took?
   b. Why did you start here?
   c. Did you have a plan or did things evolve along the way?
2. How has your work and your practices evolved from then to now?
   a. What do you see as the biggest differences in how you work now as opposed to in the beginning?
   b. Why have you done these changes?
3. What are things that have worked very well?
4. What would you define as success criteria for sustainability in the restaurant industry?
5. What is lacking in the industry for sustainable development to be the norm?

How are you doing on your defined criteria?

Now I would like to ask you to rate some of your practices on a scale from 1 to 5, 5 being the best and 1 being the worst…

1. In comparison to your peers, how are you doing on local ingredient sourcing? (on an industry standard)
   a. Ingredient sourcing has for a long time been the main focus when talking about restaurant sustainability, why do you think that is?
   b. What do you think about it?
2. How are you doing on energy efficiency/use?
   a. Do you have actual numbers from the years of "X"?
   b. What challenges are there to implement energy efficiency?
      i. Policy/industry challenges, or challenges of your specific restaurant vision?
3. Is water use an issue you're concerned about? Why/why not?

<ol start="4">
How does the water supply chain work here? What do you pay for? How big is the supply?

<ol start="4">
How are you doing on waste?
   <ol type="a">
   What are your practices in this area?
   Do you recycle? What?
   Do you measure your waste amounts?
   What type of waste do you have the most of?
   Can this be decreased by any easy measures in the food system?

What is the situation of your working hours?
   <ol type="a">
   Do you feel you're doing well on this?
   How does your working hours/time affect your efforts to make sustainable choices?

Do you have time for a break during the day?
   <ol type="a">
   How is this time spent in your restaurant?
   Does the FOH & BOH interact during the break?

How are you doing on social gatherings with staff outside of work? Why/why not?
   <ol type="a">
   Do people interact outside the workplace?

How are you doing on staff turnover?
   <ol type="a">
   How long do people usually stay?
   Are there differences between FOH/BOH?
   Why do you think this is?

How are you doing on communicating your efforts to the public?
   <ol type="a">
   What do you do?
   Do your guests have an interest in this part of your business?
   What impact do you believe your communication has?

What exactly are their practices?

How would you describe the work culture at the restaurant?
   <ol type="a">
   Have you had a goal of how you want it to be?
   How have you established it?
   Where others involved in shaping the culture?
   How do you maintain it?

Do you think about sustainable work culture as part of your sustainability agenda?
Are there certain characteristics/personalities that you look for in an employee?
   <ol type="a">
   How about in guests? What type of guests do you wish to attract?

Do you have clear and measurable goals regarding your sustainability criteria?
   <ol type="a">
   How exactly do you measure the current situation and progress?

Where do you have the biggest potential for improvement?
Do your economic margins dictate your decisions? How?

Closing Q's

What current laws and policies are supporting sustainable practices in the restaurant industry?
How are policies hindering sustainable development of the industry?
Where does the incentives to do the 'right thing' lie?
   <ol type="a">
   What are these, or what is needed?

Are there measures that are simple and effective, but maybe not that apparent?
What are some of the important lessons you have learned that Norway should take notice of?
Now I want to ask you this question again, as this is a big focus of my research: What would you define as success criteria for sustainability in the restaurant industry? Do you have a different answer now, after our conversation?

The interview guide was developed through an analysis of a set of questions and their transferability to the main research questions, in an attempt to foresee what was needed to ask the interview subjects to best retain relevant answers. Table a shows which research questions each interview question relates to.

Table a: Interview question matrix

Interview Questions	Research Questions			
	How does the restaurant industry define success criteria for sustainability?	What exactly are their practices?	How are they doing on the success criteria?	How have they changed over time?
How would you describe your restaurant?				
Why has sustainability become so important to you?				
What values do you build your business on?				
What do you mean when using the term about your own business?	*			
Ingredient sourcing has for a long time been the main focus when talking about restaurant sustainability, what do you think about this?	*			
Have you actively decided to establish a specific work culture?		*		
What was the first step you took to start implementing sustainable practices?		*		
Are there measures that are simple and effective, but maybe not that apparent?		*		
Can you describe some of the barriers you have encountered along the way?				*
How did you overcome them?		*		
What about ideas you initially thought were good but didn't give the results you wanted?				*
What are the most important things you have done to incorporate sustainability into the everyday life of (restaurant X)?		*		
How did you get your staff on board with the changes?		*		
How has your staff taken part in this?		*		
How do you perceive your team's attitudes toward this?				
Do you feel that you have had to actively seek team members with the same values as yourself, or have they reached out to you because they identify?				

How do you see yourself as a leader?				
How has this been important to reach your goals, and for further development?	51			*
what are your experiences with the relationship between environmental and economic sustainability?				
Is there better economy in being environmentally sustainable in the restaurant industry?	*		*	
How has your economic margins dictated your decisions along the way?		*		
How is policy affecting sustainable development in your environment?				
What would you define as success criteria for sustainability in the restaurant industry?	*			
How would you rank yourself on these criteria today? (be honest)			*	*
Where do you see that you have the biggest improvement potential?			*	
What is lacking in the industry for sustainabile development to be the norm?				*
What are some of the important lessons you have learned that Norway should take notice of?	*	*		
What is the next step you want to take on this path?		*		

Outcomes of focus group workshop

The compiled lists of answers from the leader forum with Lava AS were as follows:

Table b: Focus group outcomes

What does the foundational functions of food mean to you in your work?	How can you improve your business on these areas through work culture?

- Creating awareness
- Pride, brings meaning to our work, inspires
- Food producers
- Cooperation, closeness
- Happiness, passion
- Gathers people, networks
- Culture, history, tradition
- Foundational needs
- A social meeting place
- The small things spread
- Influence
- Food that conveys itself
	Core values
	  - Training, follow-up, repetition (both because of turnover and to break habits)
	Knowledge, inspiration
	Walk the talk
	Inclusion
	  - Team
	  - Everyone has a voice – and should have the possibility to be heard
	  - Information flow from day 1
	The hiring process
	  - Ambassadors
	  - Give a correct picture of the business (both to (possible) employees and outward
	  - Right and proficiently competence for the positions
	Professionality
	See the employees
	  - Give them responsibility – makes you able to demand more from your employees, lightens your own work, shows that you trust them
	Be clear about who we are
	  - Routines
	Positivity
	  - Awareness, communication
	Pride
	Social activities outside the workplace
	  - Apprentices, feeling as part of the team
	Erase boundaries between FOH/BOH
	There are no <u>bad</u> work tasks (leaders must show that they also do the 'dirty work')

Excerpts from my diary at the Farm of Ideas

June 17th, 2018.

On Sunday I went back to the farm in the afternoon, arriving around 17:00 and finding Vittorio cooking in the kitchen. He took his time and enjoyed prepping all the beautiful things he had harvested that afternoon while I did some egg work. I had plans of running, but ended up eating, drinking and talking with Vittorio for the rest of the evening – at least four hours. We talked about many different things, but I tried to challenge him on the things that I explore in my thesis. He has previously been the head chef of a three-story Italian restaurant in South Africa, with roughly 50 people under him. He told me that they always came happy to work and that everyone seemed to like it. I asked him what he did to run a kitchen where the people seemed to be happy and never were home sick etc., and he told me that it's all about caring about the ones around you. He says he is a person that doesn't care about what others think about him, but that he will spend all his energy to help someone if they need it or ask him for it. You need to care about others and make that a priority. As a leader you have to be the one sacrificing yourself for others, coming early and going late, to show everyone that you care and that you are a good role model. Yet another time I hear from people in the industry that this is key.

June 19th, 2018.

After lunch today, Lasse asked me to come with him, Misiu and Estelle for a walk around the farm, saying it might be interesting for me (and that I didn't have to do weeding all the time). We walked around all the fields to see what was left, the development of the different crops, and hearing Estelle talk about how much they harvest each week and the feedback from the restaurants. This was very interesting, as FOI is a farm established to serve the Puglisi restaurants. They are the only customers (which will soon change, selling bags to private persons and staff), and they are very much in on the planning for next season. A challenge is to get everything sold, as it seems like the restaurants have changed their mind about how much of the different crops they want. An example is that they said they would want 150 romaine salads every week, but that is far from what they order at the time being. This leads to the lettuce going to bloom, and the farm having a lot of waste because the products are no longer good enough before the market (restaurants) wants it. Lasse seems to be very good at planning and for making systems, and it's such a shame to see his work go to waste because the restaurants can't keep up with the booming season and the huge diversity of crops that the farm offer. I learned a lot about the different plants and their usage on our little walk, and I felt appreciated. It seems important to Lasse and Sara to pass on knowledge about their work.

The day after, while weeding out the back of the big greenhouse, we (Stephen, Misiu and I) were talking about the staff card deal in the company and how it works. Misiu says it works very well and that it makes employees happy. The deal is that everyone gets a 25% discount on everything everywhere, and that they in addition get 1500 DKK given to them on their

card every 3 months. That way, they to a great extent erase the "giving stuff for free" to staff and so on, because everyone now has a choice to either spend their gift card or not. "Everyone gets free coffee when they're at work anyway, you know", was also a comment by Misiu, and I do agree.

June 27th, 2018.

On Monday I fell and slit my knee open, resulting in a trip to Roskilde with Sara, a tetanus shot and 5 stitches – beautiful. In the car, Sara told me about all the different jobs she's had in the past, and it was really interesting to hear how she had truly tried to make a difference when working in the government. She explained about the immense hardships of actually doing something good and changing practices, and how uninterested the upper guys had been in doing things differently. We got to talking about how the deal with the farm and the restaurants actually work, and to be honest there are a lot of challenges. She pointed out that this is all Christian's big dream and vision, and that it might not be the head chef's heart case to use local vegetables from their own farm, and to participate in the whole operation. This had led to people changing their minds about what and how much they want, making the farm suffer under having too much of many things and not being able to sell them (hence why they've started with veggie bags for staff and the stand on Fridays). However, I would argue that Christian probably takes these values and wishes hard into consideration when hiring top positions in his company, as they seem to be so important to him. But I know nothing yet – but will after Thursday as I finally was able to score a meeting with him in the city. While scheduling that, I asked him a little bit about if they have an HR department or not, and he said that they are slowly in the work of getting it now, as he is so busy with numerous staff needing to talk to him about everything from orders to being stressed. He said that the main focus he wants to have with this in the beginning, is training. He "can't have a journalist sitting in one of the restaurants knowing everything about him and his life and his visions, being served by a waiter that doesn't know half" – especially with the prominent values that they communicate outwards. So, he wants to be better at communicating his vision and opinions both inwards and outwards. How much this relates to HR will be interesting to follow if possible. It might show to increase the well-being of staff immensely, or it might help to weed out the people that shouldn't be there in the first place.

Content Analysis steps & results

Content Analysis of interviews

Examples of the analytical process

Quote 1: "The result of that is that you spend a little bit more than other restaurants on wages, a little bit more on having a really nice changing room with a shower – we try to invest in our employees in that sense, so it's a bit of an investment to make, but the pay-off from that is huge."

> Here, the interviewee talks about some results of the decisions to put people/employees at the center of the business model and backing up that decision by physically investing in them with money and work attributes. The interviewee makes the claim that investing in people by providing them with better material alternatives yields the business profits back with an exponential measure.
>
> *Condensed meaning units*: Higher wages, Spend money on nice changing rooms, Try to invest in employees, Huge pay-off.
>
> The key points that were presented in the quote when binding words and adjectives are stripped away are the condensed meaning units which represents the core of the quote. In this quote, the focus is on the relation between employee investments and economic balance explained through spending more money on certain things and the implication of these efforts as positive return on the bottom line.
>
> *Codes*: Long-term planning, Investing in people, Holistic sustainability.
>
> As I found the condensed meaning units to be condensed enough to provide the core of what each meaning unit was talking about, I decided the codes to represent the immediate latent meaning as I understood it with my deep knowledge of the data and its contexts. In this quote, 'higher wages' and 'spend money on nice changing rooms' are specific choices of monetary investment done by the business that I understood to relate to long-term planning – which often is the objective for investments. This was also a code that was relevant to many meaning units in this and other interview transcripts. 'Try to invest in employees' was is in this case very directly translated to the code 'investing in people' as it was a meaning that was highly recurring in that interview and was a core focus of the interviewee. 'Huge pay-off' was seen in relation to the rest of the quote and was translated into 'holistic sustainability' as the chain of

meaning units describe efforts of sustainability in both the social and economic dimension. Arguably, the environmental dimension is not represented and 'holistic sustainability' can here be a faulty term, but it correlates well with my understanding of the interviewee's objectives.

Quote 2: "So I think being really transparent and talk to your staff a lot and explain the decisions you make is really the way to go, because then they know why you make a decision."

How to act with employees as a leader and how to create a good work culture is the context of this quote, represented by choices of communication.

Condensed meaning units: Be transparent, talk to staff a lot, explain decisions.

The core of the quote is being transparent as a leader by talking continuously with staff and explaining decisions that are taken at a higher level in order to ensure trust and ownership. Presenting communication as a means to establish trust and ownership is made on the basis that I had read many peer-reviewed research articles on the topics of employee engagement, leadership and work culture where this connection was shown.

Codes: Transparency, Communication, Mutual respect.

For this quote several codes could fit, ranging from leadership and communication to work culture and trust. 'Transparency' and 'communication' were very directly translated from the meaning units because I understood this to be the most important knowledge to draw out. 'Mutual respect' is what I read as a consequence of explaining decisions made by leaders to employees, as it shows openness and respect towards the employee's role and importance in the business and its operations.

Codes from the content analysis of all 12 interviews
The numbers behind each code shows how many times the respective code was applied.

Codes

Practices

Holistic sustainability 31

Sharp values 24

Priorities 24

Identity 6

Long-term planning/thinking 23

Planning is key 6

Delegation 6

56

Strict routines 8

Support collaborators 21

Collaborate with like-minded 6

Transparency 20

Openness 8

Walk the talk 6

Awareness 7

Take things straight away 5

Be critical/Critical thinking 4

Recycle 16

Food waste 13

Whole foods (cheaper) 10

Plant-heavy/Less meat 10

Local food 7

Flexibility 9

Tough + fair leader style 9

(Person dependent culture 9)

Environmental sustainability 7

Interest in learning 6

Passion/pleasure for teaching 5

Fun 6

People

Work culture 31

Communication 28

Turnover 27

Invest in people 16

Training 15

Motivation, Motivate staff 14

Inspire/Inspiration 12

Including staff 14

Knowledge is power 17

Ownership 14

Continued education 12

Skilled staff 10

Young, interested staff 9

Staff requirements 9

Set high demands 7

Staff handbook 5

Small team 9

Team as family 9

Staff community 6

Diversity 9

ONE team 7

Team 5

Togetherness 6

Relationships 6

Staff meetings 9

Team building 5

People are everything 5

Build on staff knowledge 4

HR 9

Staff wellbeing 8

Over-worked staff/Burned out 8

Supportive workplace 5

Good work schedule 6

Long-staying staff 4

Salary 5

Trust 9

Caretaking 6

Mutuality 6

Respect 6

Staff food 17

Apprentices 11

Clear values attract people 5

People don't care 5

Challenges

Challenges 23

Establish own systems 12

Lack of knowledge 22	Think differently 16
Lack of competence 7	Economy as a tool for change 13
Lack of interest 9	Learning by doing 12
Lack of time 8	(Restaurants have) Impact/influence 12
Economic challenges 22	Sharing knowledge/experience 6
Economical sustainability 17	Personal change 10
Adapt to the economy 11	Educating guests 7
Margins 9	Interested guests 6
Little support for small businesses 10	Innovation 7
Habits 16	Produce first 7
Norwegian culture 9	Leadership demands 6
Hard/Tough work 10	Leadership 6
Staffing challenges, Staffing crisis 7	Responsibilities 6
FOH in decline 6	Structure 6
Give to get 6	Goals 6
Empty promises 9	Everyone contributes 5
Compromises 5	Cooperation 5
Sustainability as marketing/Trendy 10	Potential for improvement 5
Politics 8	Step-by-step 5
Incentives 5	Process 5
Authorities barrier 6	Statistics 5
Pressure from administration 6	Measure costs of turnover/sick leave 3
Not sharing information 5	**Other**
Plastic overload 5	Common sense 10
Strong market forces 5	Alcohol/drinking 6
'big house' challenges 5	Cheap food in Norway 6
Defend inadequacy with passion 3	Norwegian labor market 5
Development	Niche 5
Develop business 23	Approachable 5

Codes describing different aspects, similarities or differences grouped together to form categories:

Holistic sustainability 31	Responsibilities 6
Long-term planning/thinking 23	Planning is key 6

58

Priorities 24

Compromises 5

Long-term mentality and planning

Sharp values 24

Identity 6

Clear values attract people 5

Values and identity

Support collaborators 21

Establish own systems 12

Collaborate with like-minded 6

Cooperation 5

Sharing knowledge/experience 6

Everyone contributes 5

Relationships 6

Not sharing information 5

Give to get 6

Collaboration and new systems

Transparency 20

Openness 8

Walk the talk 6

Trust 9

Transparency and authenticity

Sustainability as marketing/Trendy 10

Empty promises 9

Strong market forces 5

Defend inadequacy with passion 3

Sustainability marketing

Tough + fair leader style 9

Leadership demands 6

Leadership 6

Staff requirements 9

Set high demands 7

Motivation, Motivate staff 14

Inspire/Inspiration 12

Leadership and high demands

Including staff 14

Delegation 6

Ownership 14

Training 15

Turnover 27

Invest in people 16

Continued education 12

Ownership by investment and inclusion

Strict routines 8

Take things straight away 5

Staff handbook 5

Consistent business

Plant-heavy/Less meat 10

Whole foods (cheaper) 10

Local food 7

Environmental sustainability 7

Produce first 7

Flexibility 9

Sustainable food and menus

Economic challenges 22

Economical sustainability 17

Adapt to the economy 11

Margins 9

Little support for small businesses 10

Cheap food in Norway 6

Approachable 5

Measure costs of turnover/sick leave 3

Economic challenges

Knowledge is power 17

Economy as a tool for change 13

Personal change 10

Change through knowledge

Interest in learning 6

Passion/pleasure for teaching 5

Lack of knowledge 22

Lack of competence 7

Build on staff knowledge 4

Learning by doing 12

Educating guests 7

Be critical/Critical thinking 4

Teaching and learning

Work culture 31

Team as family 9

Small team 9

Diversity 9

Staff community 6

ONE team 7

Team 5

Togetherness 6

Supportive workplace 5

Caretaking 6

Mutuality 6

Respect 6

Fun 6

Long-staying staff 4

Alcohol/drinking 6

Holistic work culture

HR 9

People are everything 5

Staff wellbeing 8

Staff food 17

Over-worked staff/Burned out 8

Good work schedule 6

Salary 5

Taking care of staff, HR

Hard/Tough work 10

Apprentices 11

Staffing challenges, Staffing crisis 7

FOH in decline 6

Norwegian labor market 5

Unattractive industry

Recycle 16

Plastic overload 5

Food waste 13

Skilled staff 10

Young, interested staff 9

Habits 16

Habits and better practice

Develop business 23

Think differently 16

Innovation 7

Potential for improvement 5

Structure 6

Goals 6

Step-by-step 5

Process 5

Development through new thinking

Statistics 5

Measure costs of turnover/sick leave 3

Knowing the numbers

Communication 28

Staff meetings 9

Team building 5

Communication

(Restaurants have) Impact/influence 12

Common sense 10

Norwegian culture 9

Awareness 7

Interested guests 6

Niche 5

Influence/impact of the industry

Challenges 23

Lack of interest 9

Lack of time 8

People don't care 5

Industry challenges and carelessness

Politics 8

Incentives 5

Authorities barrier 6

Pressure from administration 6

Macro-economic problems

Categories

Long-term mentality and planning	Teaching and learning
Values and identity	Holistic work culture
Collaboration and new systems	Taking care of staff, HR
Transparency and authenticity	Unattractive industry
Sustainability marketing	Habits and better practice
Leadership and high demands	Development through new thinking
Ownership by investment and inclusion	Knowing the numbers
Consistent business	Communication
Sustainable food and menus	Influence/impact of the industry
Economic challenges	Industry challenges and carelessness
Change through knowledge	Macro-economic problems

Categories that can be grouped together under one theme are hereby presented:

Holistic work culture

Taking care of staff, HR

Communication   → Creating prosperous work culture by investing in people and focusing on communication.

Change through knowledge

Teaching and learning

Sustainable food and menus   → Creating a foundation for change through knowledge, with passion for both teaching and learning.

Economic challenges

Unattractive industry

Industry challenges and carelessness   → Need for lifting up the industry to ensure economical sustainability and longevity of the trade.

Values and identity

Transparency and authenticity

Ownership by investment and inclusion   → Strong values and transparency creates space for inclusion, trust and ownership in the workplace.

Long-term mentality and planning

Collaboration and new systems

Development through new thinking   → Long-term thinking and collaboration to innovate and develop new systems are key to development and holistic sustainability.

Macro-economic problems

Influence/impact of the industry   → Societal/Micro-economic problems are higher level causes of the challenges, but the restaurant industry can have big influence.

Leadership and high demands

Consistent business   → Prosperous work culture and success is anchored in good leaders having high demands of their employees and pushing for consistency in their business operations.

Habits and better practice   → Habits are the greatest threat to better practice. Humans like being comfortable and are frightened of change.

Knowing the numbers   → Knowledge is power, and knowing the facts provides benchmarking and measurable development.

Sustainability marketing   → Sustainability is to a great extent used as a marketing scheme for profit due to trend.

Teaching & Learning

Communication

Invest in people → Habits

Economy: a big challenge but also a tool

consumer + knowledge + culture

Restaurants' main operation is to serve food; so quality and taste of ingredients are naturally a top priority

slim margins

Ownership → high demands + delegation of responsibility

Long-term thinking + planning

continuous education
knowledge + collaboration

Knowing the numbers

Transparency
Truth/Honesty → identity
↓
Knowing who you are & what you want

Strong values
foundation gives clear + advantages impact

which are key points to develop further

+ consistency ← Communication

Themes / Main points ⇒ Results

Habits

Leadership & management is crucial in establishing good work culture and creating ownership

Walking the talk

Finding the best by collaborating closely with producers and establishing personal relationships — getting to know each other

sustainability
talk for modelling value
= opportunity to fit the business

Creating new personal systems to fit the particular business

Creating routines/standardizing tasks frees mental capacity for human interaction

Theme	Sub-theme	Category	Code
Focus on caring for people	Investing in people Teaching/learning Communication Foundation for ownership Wellbeing Supporting collaborators Relationships New systems	Taking care of staff, HR	HR People are everything Staff wellbeing Staff food Over-worked staff/burn-out Good work schedule Salary
		Communication	Communication Staff meetings Team building
		Ownership by investment and inclusion	Including staff Delegation Ownership Training Turnover Invest in people Continued education
		Holistic work culture	Work culture Team as family Small team Diversity Staff community ONE team Team Togetherness Supportive workplace Caretaking Mutuality Respect Fun Long-staying staff Alcohol/drinking
		Teaching and learning	Interest in learning Passion for/take pleasure in teaching Lack of knowledge Lack of competence Build on staff knowledge Learning by doing Educating guests Be critical/critical thinking
		Change through knowledge	Knowledge is power Economy as a tool for change Personal change
		Unattractive industry	Hard/tough work Apprentices Staffing challenges/crisis

			FOH in decline Norwegian labor market
The importance of leadership and management	Prosperous work culture Foundation for ownership Communication Strong value foundation Identity Priorities Transparency Honesty Acting according to what is communicated	Leadership and high demands	Tough & fair leader style
			Leadership demands
			Leadership
			Staff requirements
			Set high demands
			Motivation
			Motivate staff
			Inspire & Inspiration
		Transparency and authenticity	Transparency
			Openness
			Walk the talk
			Trust
		Values and identity	Sharp values
			Identity
			Clear values attract people
		Long-term mentality and planning	Holistic sustainability Long-term planning/thinking
			Responsibilities
			Planning is key
			Priorities
			Compromises
		Development through new thinking	Develop business
			Think differently
			Innovation Potential for improvement
			Structure
			Goals
			Step-by-step
			Process
		Habits and better practice	Recycle
			plastic overload
			Food waste
			Skilled staff
			Young, interested staff
			Habits
		Consistent operations framework	Strict routines Tackle tumults straight away
			Staff handbook
		Industry challenges and carelessness	Challenges
			Lack of interest
			Lack of time

			People don't care
Economy: both a challenge and a tool	Long-term thinking Margins Consumers and culture New systems	Economic challenges	Economic challenges Economic sustainability Adapt to the economy Margins Little support for small businesses Cheap food in Norway Approachable
		Knowing the numbers	Measure costs of turnover & sick-leave Statistics
		Collaboration and new systems	Support collaborators Establish own systems Colaborate with like-minded Cooperation Sharing knowledge/experience Everyone contributes Relationships Not sharing information Give to get
		Influence/impact of the industry	Restaurants have impact & influence Common sense Norwegian culture Awareness Interested guests Niche
		Macro-economic problems	Politics Incentives Authorities barrier Pressure from administration
		Sustainable food and menus	Plant-heavy/Less meat Whole foods (cheaper) Local food Environmental sustainability Produce first Flexibility
		Sustainability marketing	Sustainability as trend Empty promises Strong market forces Defend inadequacy with passion

Table c: Themes, sub-themes, categories and codes from the content analysis

Psychological Capital Theory

Psychological Capital is concerned with what and how psychological resources develops, mainly the four factors confidence, hope, optimism and resilience. Luthans & Youssef (2004) claim that these can be enhanced in managers and employees through comprehensive efforts. It is argued that these can in turn be objectively measured for their impact on competitive advantage. I will present the implication of each factor. Self-confident employees choose challenging tasks and persevere through obstacles to accomplish their goals. Luthans & Youssef find that allowing employees to experience success is the most effective approach to developing their confidence. In turn, confidence has more power when coupled with hope, as it provides the sense of being capable of developing alternative pathways to accomplishing goals. Hope enables them to not give up when times are tough. Breaking down complex tasks into smaller steps is found to enhance hope in employees. Having a high hope score is especially important for leaders as the research of Luthans & Youssef show: this "has a significant positive impact on financial performance, employees' job satisfaction and retention" (2004, p.155). The factor of optimism is an important part of Psychological Capital theory as it enables individuals to be less affected by negative events. This is due to the fact that optimism makes them attribute positive events to internal causes and negative ones to external causes. Lastly, Luthans & Youssef states that resilience makes it possible for individuals to bounce back from both negative and positive but overwhelming events and keep working towards their goals.

> "Frontline employees high in Psychological Capital and work engagement can contribute to the organization for a positive work environment and serve as role models to their colleagues. Such employees are emotion conductors and generate a demonstration effect among newly hired employees."

(Karatepe & Karadas, 2015, p.1272)

What then does the literature say about how to enhance psychological capital? An important first step is to initially select employees based on their talents and placing them where they get to do what they do best every day, according to Harter & Mann and the "strengths-based" approach they present from Gallup (Harter & Mann, 2018). Cross-training employees has however also shown to gain them significant psychological resources, especially confidence (Ton, 2014). When working with people there is never one right answer, and how to balance the extent to which employees are specialized and how much they should be cross-trained and put in different work situations is always a question of context.

Definition of central terms

The food service industry

The general and applicable definition of the food service industry is that it "encompasses all of the activities, services, and business functions involved in preparing and serving food to people eating away from home" (Moore, 2016). Food service away from home can be served by everything from fine dining restaurants to fast food shops, institutions like schools and hospitals, small vendors and catering businesses.

This study focuses on private restaurants and does not include research on public institutions.

Food system

The food service industry is part of the food system. It is too simplistic to say there is "one" food system, but it is sufficient when describing what it means. The Committee on World Food Security in the FAO says that a food system encompasses everything related to food, in short. It is all the actors, activities and processes involved in feeding the world through production, handling, manufacturing, transforming, marketing, consuming and disposing of food (2016).

Social sustainability in the context of this study

Social sustainability seems to be the pillar with the most uncertainty and discussion around it when setting out to reach a definition of the term. Environmental and economic sustainability is simpler to reach consensus on what entails.

Vallance et al. (2011) did work on clarifying the myriad of concepts around what social sustainability is. They ended up dividing the term into three components with the justification that it is such a complex concept that trying to develop one all-encompassing definition contradicts the pure nature of it – it needs to be viewed from several angles. In addition, the authors are clear that the three components might not even be reconcilable because they at times involve "fundamentally incompatible goals".

The three components are

1. The 'development' aspect; meeting basic needs, inter- and intra-generational equity, justice and so on.
2. 'Bridge sustainability'; changing behavior to meet bio-physical environmental goals.
3. 'Maintenance sustainability'; referring to what can be sustained in social terms.

I have chosen to work with a 'local' definition of social sustainability, meaning that this thesis is concerned with microeconomics rather than macroeconomics. Referring to the three components of Vallance et al. (2011), this study has focused mostly on 'maintenance sustainability' with some concern of 'bridge sustainability'.

Environmental management

Environmental management encompasses managing everything considering the environment, both the immediate and local, and the bigger environment. This means managing the social environment – thinking about the atmosphere and state of the restaurant and the customer experience connected to this. At the immediate level, it also encompasses the restaurant practices concerning energy, water, resource efficiency and other environmental issues. This

is connected to the larger picture of environmental management, making the world more sustainable.

Kassinis & Soteriou have identified that "the presence of the customer in the system and the resulting simultaneity of service production and consumption is likely to have a major impact on environmental management efforts" (Kassinis & Soteriou, 2003, p.388).

Zero waste

According to the Zero Waste International Alliance (2015), "zero waste" means "designing and managing products and processes to systematically avoid and eliminate the volume and toxicity of waste and materials, conserve and recover all resources, and not burn or bury them." In short, eliminating the human impact on the planet through radically changing consumption and waste practices compared to what is normal in our capitalist society.