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Practices of food and diet in an urban context

By Sophie Rebecca Spencer

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Declaration

Except where explicitly stated, this study is the original work of the author. This thesis has not been submitted in any form to any other university.

All views expressed here are the authors own and are not endorsed by any other organisation

Sophie Spencer

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Abstract

Obesity is one of the biggest challenges facing the health of the British population, and this is reflected here in the city of Aberdeen. In order to be able to holistically assess the elements which interplay in the causes of obesity, an approach which encompasses sociology, biology and body shape could be considered. It was thought that aspects of modern urban life would affect these elements and ergo by examining these issues using a multi-disciplinary method it would be possible to discover how urban living affects the way individuals experience food and diet choices. This thesis focuses on the sociological aspects of this larger multi-disciplinary project and so, rather than examining obesity, focuses on the possible pre-conditions within an urban context which may lead to obesity.

Relevant literature was reviewed and a phenomenological methodology and qualitative research method was utilised in this research in order to access the lived experiences of the participants and how living in different urban environments in the city of Aberdeen affected the way they experienced food. Sixteen participants were interviewed employing the semi-structured method wBopuho were resident of different areas of the city as measured by the Scottish Neighbourhood Index.

The study found that three main themes emerged from analysis of the data:

1. Form versus function
2. The fine graining of poverty
3. The open and closed city

This study has contributed to sociology by providing a new way of examining the fine divisions and subtleties of poverty and also the way in which a city can become closed to those who live within deprived areas, both metaphorically and physically.

Keywords: food, urban, obesity, health, poverty, city, deprivation, form, function, Bourdieu

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In loving memory of my granddad Professor John Spencer

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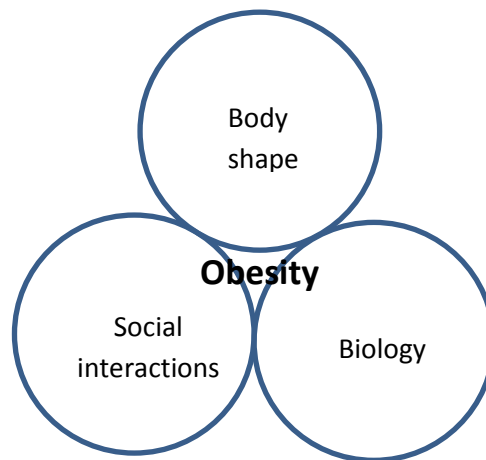
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Chapter 1: Introduction

Obesity is considered one of the main issues facing the nation's health. With around 22 percent of men and 26 percent of women classified as overweight or obese in Aberdeen (and 21 percent of the population of the United Kingdom) (Wilkie and Hughes 2009) it is important that on-going research be undertaken so as to explore potential causes and solutions to the obesity epidemic, and further illnesses for the population such as diabetes, heart problems and cancers.

The project was devised in order to provide a more holistic view of obesity, and it was thought that obesity could be related to modern urban life. The hypothesis of this study is that modern, urban life promotes obesity and one of the aims for a wider project, of which this study is a part, was to examine how social characteristics of urban living influence biological aspects of obesity. These aspects were to be explored threefold by interviewing participants; as well as using a 3D body scanner to obtain measurements of body size in order that the presence of visceral fat around the abdomen and organs could be indicative of risk of obesity related disease. Lastly blood samples were to be collected to assess biomarkers and indicators of health relating to obesity. This multi-disciplinary method allows for a more innovative way to examine the totality of the three elements of body shape, biology and social interactions; and how they are embedded in the wider issue of obesity. It is expected that the interplay of the three elements can be examined alongside the complexities of modern urban life such as cultural relationships with food.

Figure 1.1. Interplay of different elements of obesity



This particular study focuses specifically on how the social aspects of urban life can affect the way people eat. The wider social processes for people's relationship with food are examined here, and, rather than focusing on obesity, this study explores the pre-conditions of obesity, and how living in different areas of a city can influence individuals' diet and food choices. This one year study presents the social aspects pertinent to the wider study of biological, body shape, social and psychological aspects of obesity. The precise focus of the study relates to how urban living affects the way we eat and how living in different areas of the city can influence this. The rationale for the study is to examine the social aspects of urban living in relation to food and this relates to the wider study as it brings out the important social element in the interplay of the elements of obesity/ pre-conditions of obesity. Sixteen participants were gained for the study which, for a qualitative study, is an acceptable number of interviews however limitations were imposed in this way as more participants from a wider range of areas within the city could be beneficial for the research.

Much of the existing literature is concerned with psychology, genetics and clinical territory, as noted by Crossley (2004), and with regards to health, this project seeks to move away from the medical model of health and rather focus on the sociological model of health whereby people's meanings and interpretations attached to food, how people live their lives and the role of place in an urban context are analysed through semi structured interviews. Inequalities can be examined in this way too, and overall this study plays a part in the larger project

which will combine data in order to provide a scoping analysis of how urban living affects the way we eat in relation to the interplay of the biological and the social aspects.

The aim of this study is to investigate the relationships between urban living and food and diet, and the research questions are as follows:

1. Do modern urban lifestyles overall create a negative relationship with food?
2. How does urban inequality and deprivation affect the way those facing these issues source food and how does this affect their food choices?
3. How do other modern issues relating to deprivation affect diet and their meanings and interpretations of food e.g. being in receipt of benefits or having to use food banks as a source of food?
4. What are the differences between the more and less advantaged areas of the city when considering urban living and food?

Proceeding further it is important to understand how we conceptualise health with the resources available and so, when considering how health and behaviour can be affected by the person's environment, the concept of salutogenesis is a useful one to highlight. Aaron Antonovsky researched the origin of health which he termed salutogenesis. Antonovsky stated that disease and stress were natural problems for everyone and so this is why he sought how health was created rather than how disease was (Antonovsky 1979). He found that individuals have a better chance of dealing with the challenges of life if they possessed general resistance resources, which are biological, material and psychological factors that make it easier for people to perceive their lives as consistent, structured, and understandable (Lindstrom and Eriksson 2005). Health is a state of complete mental, physical and social wellbeing and not just the absence of disease (Burns 2007). It is more important to focus on people's resources and how they are able to create health rather than the classic focuses of risks, ill health and disease (Lindstrom and Eriksson 2006). In this way, the lived experiences of the participants of the study will be researched rather than using data about their potential ill health and body shape statistics.

This introductory chapter also provides an overview of the thesis as follows:

Chapter 2. Literature Review

In this chapter pertinent bodies of work are discussed relating to the research problem of how urban living affects the way we eat. First of all the theoretical base of the content of the study shall be overviewed. The work of Bourdieu will be highlighted; in particular his concepts of habitus, cultural capital and form versus function. The work of Wills will also be discussed in this section. The theory of Elias and the civilisation of society in addition to Mennell's civilisation of appetite and Ritzers McDonaldization of society will also be discussed. Literature which examines the theories of urban living and how cities can be experienced differently depending on the areas within which one is living shall be explained; as well as a discussion of literature relating to the location of shops and food outlets in urban environments. Finally, literature relating to the issue of shift work shall be discussed.

Chapter 3. Methodology and method

This chapter discusses Weber's methodology and how it is the most appropriate for this study as it focuses on the lived experience of an individual. The philosophy behind this methodology and how the world can be viewed through it shall also be highlighted and discussed. The method part of this section, following on from the methodology, provides a discussion of qualitative research methods, in particular semi-structured interviews and these are defended as the method of choice for this study. The recruitment strategy is detailed as well as the issues faced and the changes that had to be made following these; and finally the data analysis method and processes are described and discussed.

Chapter 4. Findings and Discussion

In this chapter, findings, which emerged from data analysis, are laid out under the categories of the overarching themes and within these the topics which arose. Excerpts from transcripts and observations are included in this section. The main themes, which arose from the data, are laid out and related to the literature. A

number of original findings and how these can be applied to public policy are detailed.

Chapter 6. Conclusion

In this chapter, suggestions for further research and policy are offered in addition to a summary of the thesis and reflections on the research in hindsight. The research is concluded and the research problem and aims answered.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1. Introduction to chapter

Following on from the introduction of the research problem, questions and aims; this section focuses on a review of the pertinent existing literature. This literature review chapter is divided into three sections:

The first part of the literature review focuses on Bourdieu's theories of habitus and cultural capital, and how this can be applied to the rationale for the research as well as applying his work to the issues of food and diet in an urban environment. The work of Wills et al (2011) that uses Bourdieu's theoretical concepts as a basis for her literature shall be discussed within this section. The next section discusses the work of Elias and Mennell on the civilising process and the civilising of appetite; and these theories shall also be applied to the research undertaken. The work of Ritzer shall also be described in relation to that of Mennell. These sections form the sociological base to the theories of eating and how eating habits themselves have developed through time and cultures, and come to signify how social class can be acted through the way we eat and what we consume.

Next literature relating to urban sociology shall be discussed including that of Lefebvre and the right to the city. Following this, work relating to the location of food outlets in urban areas shall be added to the section. Lastly, a section on shift work shall show how our jobs can affect diet and health, as well as how a fast paced world has affected the way in which people consume food in urban environments and how this relates to the study and this thesis.

2.2. Bourdieu – Habitus and Cultural Capital

Bourdieu's theory of habitus is useful when considering diet and class, as well as taste and how it can be reproduced through socialisation. Bourdieu believed that all aspects of social life must be examined in terms of the power relations they

embody, and that, at times, power relations occur without people being able to realise they are happening. He saw power as culturally and symbolically created, and constantly reproduced through individuals and society through habitus which can also be described as socialised norms or tendencies that influence and guide behaviour and thinking. Habitus is *‘the way society becomes deposited in persons in the form of lasting dispositions, or trained capacities and structured propensities to think, feel and act in determinant ways, which then guide them’* (Wacquant 2005 p315). The habitus internalizes necessity and converts this into a disposition which produces *“meaningful practices and meaning-giving perceptions”* (Bourdieu 1984 p 170). Bourdieu saw habitus as a *“structuring structure which organises practices and the perception of practices, but also a structured structure: the principle of division into logical classes which organises the perception of the social world itself”* (Bourdieu 1984 p 170).

The concept of habitus is a characteristic way of thinking, feeling, acting and experiencing shared by all members of a certain social group of people. For Bourdieu the primary social group in modern societies are social classes and so the habitus of the individual will be reflective of the habitus of the wider social class (Bourdieu 1984). Habitus is the reproduction of social classes by individuals classifying themselves and distinguishing this with their behaviours. In this way, eating can be seen as a way to reproduce habitus through eating habits and taste. In *Distinction*, Bourdieu classifies different tastes of food alongside classes of people: for example, heavy fatty foods eaten by the working classes versus light healthy options eaten by the middle classes (Bourdieu 1984). The results of his research on working class (e.g.

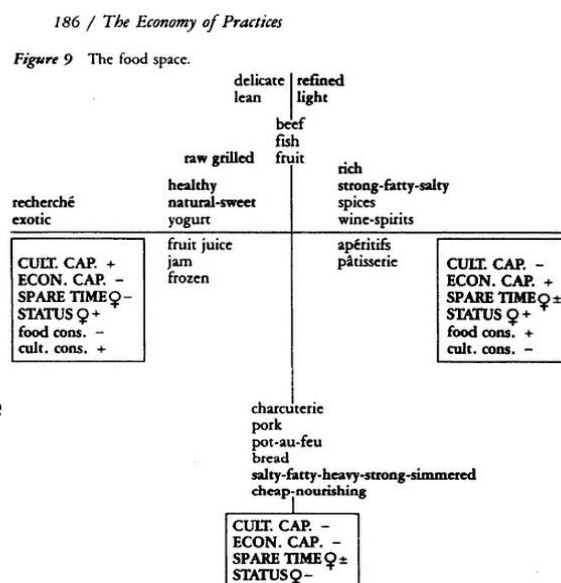


Figure 2.1. Bourdieu’s “The food space”

(Bourdieu 1984 p. 186)

Manufacturers) versus middle class (e.g. academics) households eating between 1963 and 1968 are presented in *Distinction*. Tastes were divided within groups such as professionals/senior executives, manual workers, teachers and industrial employers. Bourdieu measured taste in relation to cultural capital and economic capital. It was found that:

“The disappearance of economic constraints is accompanied by a strengthening of the social censorships which forbid coarseness and fatness, in favour of slimness and distinction” (Bourdieu 1984 p. 185).

Overall the working class households ate much cheaper, heavy and greasy foods such as cereals and canned meats compared to the lighter, more refined food items preferred by middle classes such as cheeses, vegetables, fruits and fish.

“In the face of the new ethic of sobriety for the sake of slimness, which is most recognized at the highest levels of the social hierarchy, peasants and especially industrial workers maintain an ethic of convivial indulgence”
Bourdieu (1984) p 179.

This extract shows how Bourdieu recognized that the most affluent within society’s ideals are the most influential within society despite perhaps not being the most nutritiously viable when considering an overall balanced diet.

These findings can also be used to describe Bourdieu’s additional concept of “form over function” which is a term used to identify the difference between the eating habits of middle/upper classes and working class such as eating food in an aesthetically pleasing manner focusing on presentation and style; as opposed to eating as a necessity in order to fuel the body.

“Even the field of primary tastes is organized according to the primary opposition, with the antithesis between quantity and quality, belly and palate, matter and manners, substance and form” (Bourdieu 1984, pp. 175-176).

Here Bourdieu reflects on the differences between matters of importance between classes in relation to consumption of food. The aestheticization of daily life is seen as the ultimate form of class distinction by Bourdieu and so when relating this to

food and diet he found in *Distinction* that middle and upper class subjects preferred their meals to be “*original, exotic and delicate*” whereas those of a working class background attached importance to “*simple and well presented*” meals (Bourdieu 1984). This concept of form over function is further developed in a later section when discussing the work of Wills et al (2011) who used it as a theoretical basis for her study on working and middle class family eating habits.

Bourdieu also developed the core concept of field, which describes the setting within which an agent (individual) and their social position (habitus) are located. It is a system of social positions and it is structured in terms of its internal power relations. One’s position in the field can be defined by one’s access to the most relevant type of “goods”, in this case being cultural capital (knowledge), economic capital, social capital (valuable relations with others) and symbolic capital (prestige). In addition to this, the field can be the location for the appropriation of these different forms of capital (Bourdieu 1993), as discussed below. The field is the social arena whereby this struggle for appropriation of capital can take place. The habitus of those within the field can be analysed in relation to the opportunities and challenges posed by the structure of the field (Jenkins 2002).

Through the theorisation of the concept of habitus, Bourdieu developed the theory of cultural capital and how this can be used to affect what we eat. Cultural capital can be described as a way for the upper classes within society to distinguish themselves from the lower by engaging in activities such as going to the theatre, visiting art galleries (Bourdieu 1984); and when considering diet and health, adopting a healthy lifestyle. The lower social classes may engage in more unhealthy diets in order to gain some freedom from convention (Pampel et al 2010). Cultural capital can be defined as a resource for taste which is immaterial and which builds through the life of the individual. Taste can be related to economic capital, however it is mainly related to cultural capital, for example individuals can change career and income but it is unlikely that their tastes would differ through their life course. This reflects ones values and norms culturally (Blasius and Friedrichs 2008).

Cultural capital can be divided into three categories - incorporated (e.g. dispositions and embodiment of culture), objectified (e.g. possessions such as books, musical instruments or dictionaries) and institutionalised (such as

educational qualifications) (Bourdieu 1986, Abel 2008). Ergo, it is not possible to obtain incorporated cultural compared to economic capital or objective cultural capital because it is internalized during the socialisation process (Lareau and Weininger 2003).

When considering health inequalities it is, therefore, important to consider incorporated cultural capital in relation to health behaviours (Abel 2007, Abel 2008) as it has been found that the lower socio-economic groups in society are more likely to engage in more unhealthy food choices (Darmon and Drewnowski 2008, Droomers et al 2004, Giskes et al 2006, Giskes et al 2006, Kamphuis et al 2008, Turrell and Kavanagh 2006). Given this, it is thought that material deprivation may not be the sole cause of these choices due to the fact that, through a social gradient, those who are slightly higher each time are also healthier at each level of the social gradient (Lynch et al 2004).

However, it can be argued that Bourdieu's theory is not truly structurationist - a social theory relating to the creation and reproduction of social systems which is based on an analysis of structure in conjunction with agents (Giddens 1984) but instead a version of Marxism - who looks at social structures and ideologies, and how they force individuals of lower classes to reproduce their activities through the dominating social structures (Inglis and Thorpe 2012). Bourdieu has addressed this critique before by using the concept of habitus to argue that his position mediated between objectivism and subjectivism (Bourdieu 1984).

Archer (2012) argues that each individual has the ability to consider where they are placed in a social structure and are able to be reflexive about their choices and regularly evaluate their existence. She argues that Bourdieu is outdated and the world has changed since he wrote *Distinction*, the book within which the main concepts highlighted in this body of work were formed. By contrast, it has been argued that Archer has not focused enough on how a person becomes who they are and maintains this in their day to day manner. It can be argued that Bourdieu's concept of habitus is deeply engrained by "multiple, layered, intersecting and at times conflicting social processes" (Akram and Hogan, 2015, p.5).

Sweetman (2003) theorised that in modern life ones habitus can be reflexive. This mirrors Bourdieu's own description of the habitus and how it can be possible to

move across “fields” (another concept from Bourdieu’s *Distinction* describing social classes as fields and theorising that it is possible to be reflexive and aware of ones place in these fields; ones habitus) (Bourdieu 1984). However, Bourdieu did argue that movement across fields could lead to social crisis or change. It can be debated that modern society allows for more reflexivity in the habitus because of more frequent movement between fields (Sweetman 2003). Bourdieu did incorporate the interplay between environment and the agent into his concept of habitus and how this is dialectical. He proposed that the habitus is also shaped by representations of the social world (Setton 2002). Ergo, habitus can be understood as a concept for how society is arranged (social classes) and how this predisposes an individual to act a certain way but this is in accordance with the arrangement of society (Bourdieu 1984).

It is useful to consider Bourdieu in relation to how urban living affects the way we eat, as his theories continue to be the source of many related bodies of work in this modern era which consider how people eat and how society shapes this. The concept of habitus can provide insight into how an individual is shaped into behaving a certain way and cultural capital reinforces the habitus of the agent by shaping their dietary choices. Those individuals structurally located in a higher socio-economic background will have developed tastes for different foods than the one of a lower socio-economic background and these tastes may continue through their life course even if their financial situation changes. For Bourdieu, food choices of individuals are not to do with nutritional value but rather distinctions between social groups and so his work is pertinent in this thesis as he can assist with the understanding of the underlying social processes of the individual’s diet and health choices. It is also useful to consider further literature based upon Bourdieu’s concepts and so the work of Wills et al (2011) and its relevance for this study is discussed below.

2.2.1. Wills et al – The framing of social class distinctions through family food and eating practices

This research identified that middle class families chose a wider range of food types which reflected the concept of cultural distinction as they displayed their social position by choosing foods advertised for the middle class market. There seemed to be a clearer expectation of what foods should be eaten, a large concern for health and a no-tolerance policy when it came to fussiness in their children. There appeared to be a wish to control children's diets for longer and to cultivate good tastes from a young age by learning to eat a wide variety of foods as well as a diverse range of food and meals reflecting cultural distinction (Wills et al 2011).

By contrast, working class parents reported that on the whole their children's tastes were their own concern and that, as they matured it was important that they exerted control over their own diets. Autonomy as a teenager was seen as a success in working class families as opposed to the middle class ones who wished to control their children's autonomy until a much later age.

The cultural capital dynamics were also found to be different as the middle class families were more likely to eat in restaurants or at dinner parties whereas the working class families placed importance on eating at home. Working class families were more likely to fit in with their social group and were succeeding in increasing social, economic and cultural worth whereas middle class families could never quite reach their goal of a healthy balanced diet and were more upset by consuming unhealthy foodstuffs (Wills et al 2011).

A main point to take away from this body of work was that of the Bourdeusian theory of form versus function (Bourdieu 1983). This is useful as some of Bourdieu's data is difficult to relate to as it was exploring the diets of French families in the 1960s even though his original theories on social dispositions are still relevant (Archer 2007). It was found that where the working class families were more likely to prioritise the family getting fed and so food preparation was mainly a matter of looking for the quickest, easiest and cheapest way to feed everyone. This was achieved in a variety of ways including frozen dinners and eating food from the bakers which was already prepared. This was a functional way of viewing food and mealtimes. By contrast, the middle class families viewed mealtimes as something to be aesthetically pleasing and displaying a variety of foods. Meals were also seen

as a way to promote health and nutrition and so therefore seen by the form of the food (Wills et al 2011).

2.3. Elias - The Civilising Process

A brief summarisation of the work of Elias is presented here as it relates to the above discussion of Bourdieu's work. Elias considered how eating habits of society had changed over time and why. In relation to Bourdieu's work, this serves as a background explanation as to how the behaviours of the upper classes came to be seen as the most desired way to behave and therefore their eating habits too.

When considering diet and food, it is important to review the literature that explains how these practices have changed over time. The civilising process, as theorized by Norbert Elias (1968), analyses how our behaviour has grown through the ages to be what we now consider civilised; however Elias refers to the concept of civilisation in a distinct way - the self-consciousness of the West and how it sees itself compared to other societies, whether more primitive or past (Elias 1968). Elias' work is central to the concept of the research within this study as it anticipates change in cultures eating habits. He concluded that people who worked in the royal courts behaved in a manner that everybody else in society in the 16th and 17th centuries began to emulate - a trickle-down effect through the upper classes to the lower classes. Ways of eating through the ages have directly been related to the different forms of relationships people shared with one another and our emotional lives which had a different structure and character in the past. For example, now there is a social distance between individuals wherein we are embarrassed at the sight of other's bodily functions and would be repelled by food that other people have touched. This change occurred because society was in transition between the old nobility of feudal knights to representatives of bourgeois intellectual class rising in social status; so this meant that the ideal way to behave was focused on a stronger embodied rationality. The reasons for this process were not hygiene, as previously thought, but more closely related to a change in social formation, thus indicating the importance of the social in shaping approaches to food and diet (Elias 1968).

Elias' work is important when considering urban living and food as he theorised how behaviours we take for granted now came to be ordinary and thus how class systems - habitus - came to be embedded and reproduced by behaviours - cultural capital. Next to be briefly discussed is Mennell's body of work, the *Civilising of Appetite*, which relates Elias' work further to eating practices and food choices within society.

2.4. Mennell - The Civilising of Appetite

This section covers Mennell's theory of the civilising of appetite and touches on how urban environments have affected the way we eat. Developing Elias's civilising process, Mennell wrote about the civilising of appetite and how this has occurred through time from the types of feasts enjoyed in medieval times to the fashionable smaller haute cuisine that is sought after today. In the same way, changes to the structure of society brought this change in eating patterns - modern eating patterns involve a capacity for self-control which has developed over time. In the middle ages, it was normal for all classes to experience periods of frugality and feasting and thus there was general insecurity where food was concerned and a need to eat as much as possible when one could.

However, as the industrial revolution unfolded during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, this oscillation between feast and famine declined noticeably. This improvement meant that a small minority was able to distinguish themselves from everyone else by how much and how often they ate - improvement continued and better off groups came to copy the elite and so social emulation was promoted. A sense of delicacy came to be seen as courtly along with small and costly dishes and knowledgeability of foodstuffs and degree of restraint with acceptance and rejection of certain foods. In this way moderation became linked to questions of health as well as good taste. A slim body image became the ideal and dieting to maintain a slim figure was especially prominent after the Second World War and beyond (Mennell 1987).

Following this, further industrialization and modern life meant longer time spent at work so mealtimes had to be more patterned (Mennell 1987). More people live in cities compared to the country which affects the way of being in that one is

working or socialising constantly with tight schedules and sometimes different shift patterns. As a consequence, a faster paced urban lifestyle also affects diet and approaches to food may differ by socio - economic status.

2.5. Ritzer - The McDonaldization of Society

When considering the effect of the modern world on the way we eat, as discussed by Mennell, an important body of work is that of George Ritzer (2008) and the McDonaldization of society. This effect is measured by four primary components: efficiency, calculability, predictability and control. The process of McDonaldization has given way to a certain type of universal lifestyle particularly when considering how we eat and our diet choices. The positive effects are that this type of fast food culture supports a fast paced urban lifestyle as food preparation and consumption is quick and easy; on the go and efficient. Increasing affluence supports this new fast food lifestyle as well as providing affordable deals for people who have less disposable income. In addition to this, it allows less wealthy people the opportunity of eating out. However, all of these benefits come at the cost of the health of the population; and also serve to individualise the eating experience and allow more opportunities for unhealthy food to be consumed as these types of restaurants are increasingly open for extended hours (Ritzer 2008).

Mennell's work is pertinent to this thesis as he adds to Elias' theories and therefore Bourdieu's, and relates them to food and eating specifically; and he highlights how more people moved to the cities and worked longer hours which gave society a different way of being in a faster paced lifestyle, a dialectical process where fast food and urban environments allow one another to operate. Ritzer's work can be developed further from this to explain how urbanisation affects the way we see food. This has led to changes in diet which we seek to explore in this research, as well as the difference in socio-economic status between the two areas and effects of inequality, which have been explored within the review of Bourdieu's concepts of cultural capital, habitus and field.

2.6. Urban sociology

Following from the discussion of theories of inequality and eating habits, in this section, theories of urban sociologists shall be discussed, namely that of Lefebvre and his focus on the 'right to the city' and how this theory can be used to illustrate how life can be experienced differently for those living within different areas of an urban environment. The concept of 'food deserts' from literature in the 1990s shall be discussed after which literature by Sally Macintyre relating to the geography of shops and food neighbourhoods shall be reviewed in relation to the effects of urban living on diet and food choices (MacIntyre 2005)

Much urban sociological literature focuses on how people interpret the space in their urban environment such as Jane Jacobs and her vision of a successful urban community with interactions on the streets enabled by vibrant street level businesses within residential areas allowing for sidewalk bustle. She argues against the alienation caused by the rise of modern living (people driving rather than walking through the streets and populations relocating to suburbs and high rise residential areas away from the cafes and shops (Jacobs 1961). In addition to Jacobs, research by Zukin (1989) conceptualises urban village/cultural quarters and how these are reliant on populations moving into the area and giving these areas identities through cultural and economic value of the area. It has also been noted that for an area to gain this sort of status, it is necessary for it to emerge organically by evolving over time and being geared towards creativity and fulfilling forms of labour rather than in an engineered fashion created by councils or for a specific purpose as theorised by Shorthose (2004). This is reinforced by Yuill (2012) where the features of Brighton's North Laines are discussed and how these allow for this urban space to be emerging organically. This sort of literature is important to consider in relation to this thesis as it shows that cities are divided and individuals living in the same area understand their environment in different ways and can have utterly differing notions of what the city is and what it represents for them.

2.6.1. Lefebvre – The Right to the City

Lefebvre spent most of his life researching urban life and theorised that urban spaces are shaped by capitalism and corporations and that certain areas reflect upon the class relations which interplay within them, e.g. affluent areas being reflected in their built environment, with a variety of shops and luxurious housing whereas areas which are outside the city reflect the alienation of those living there with run down accommodation and lack of amenities for their residents (Savage and Ward 1993).

Lefebvre believed that decisions relating to how social spaces are built and what takes place within certain environments should be made by ordinary workers as opposed to the bourgeoisie. He theorised that major social issues such as crime, depression, homelessness and poverty could only be improved and addressed if the “right to the city” was allowed to all citizens (Lefebvre 1968). In this way, citizens could be encouraged to be creative and explore their artistic needs and in this way the streets will remind everyone equally that they are alive (Tonkiss 2005).

2.6.2. ‘Food deserts’

Some reports and papers published from the Health and Lifestyles survey in and around the late 1990s highlighted many issues faced by individuals on low income and living in less advantaged areas which are still relevant to this day. Authors discussed the rise of the ‘food desert’ which is a term used to describe areas within which less advantaged people are living and accessibility to food is difficult (Piachhaud and Webb 1996, Raven and Lang 1995, Lang 1997). They also focused on the rise of the individualised nature of shopping and food consumption coinciding with the rise of out of town shopping centres and the closure of local shops. This phenomenon is also related to the increased use of cars. The least advantaged people in society did not have access to this mode of transportation and were, therefore, unable to utilise the large superstores which were increasingly becoming farther from their homes.

The Low Income Project Team report (1996) recommended the New Labour government of this time to consider promoting affordable local shopping and local street markets and improving transport links to the new out of town shopping

centres. The reports also spoke of how low income families tended to think in terms of meals instead of nutritional value as they cannot afford to have the choice to consider health benefits of foods (Leather 1996).

Although multiple reports were published, no developments were made: the problems highlighted continued to progress over time. In particular the situation regarding access to food for individuals on low income did not improve as a consequence to the political attitudes in the late 1980s and early 1990s which favoured strategies more focused on the individual rather than the evidence suggesting inequality in access to food (Leather 1996). As well as this, the data in the Low Income Project Team report was solely quantitative, meaning that the lived experiences of the participants were not considered as they were not interviewed at all and merely would have filled in a survey. This would lead to useful statistical data, however not particularly in depth when considering the issues which were raised given that no qualitative methods were utilised.

Overall, there is a distinct lack of research when it comes to the direct issue of inequality and diet. There are many bodies of work looking at families, food and class differences in this respect, however they mainly focus on issues faced within the family unit and less on wider societal issues. Though the bodies of work based on the Health and Lifestyles survey did touch upon many important issues that are still relevant today, the work did not have much lasting effect as the inequality still persists today. Therefore, there is a gap in the literature and this is one of the factors to support the need for the type of research undertaken in this study and the wider project.

2.6.3. Food availability in urban environments

McIntyre (2005) has developed on the idea of food deserts and published multiple pieces of literature focusing on areas within the city of Glasgow carrying out systematic quantitative research in order to discover if food deserts existed in deprived areas. It was found that food stores and supermarkets were relatively evenly distributed in Glasgow, however areas on the edge of the city were not provided with as many options. Single outlet shops were more likely to be located in these areas which could be due to the rise in discount supermarkets being

located in deprived neighbourhoods in order to bring cost benefits to the residents (Cummins and Macintyre 1999). It was found however that out of home food outlets (including cafes restaurants, fast food outlets and takeaways) were less likely to be found in deprived areas. This finding called into question literature suggesting that there were dense presences of fast food outlets in deprived areas contributing to the poor diets of the residents living nearby. However, it was noted that the data did not include mobile fast food outlets (Macintyre et al 2005). It has also been found in a review of the literature related to fast food outlets that they were more likely to be located within deprived areas (Fraser et al 2010) though the studies examined were mostly carried out in USA and therefore may not be relevant to the situation in Britain. Additionally it was found that foods which are cheaper within shops in deprived areas had a high fat and high sugar content and also of higher availability. A smaller amount of items recommended for a healthy diet such as wholemeal goods and vegetables were not as widely available in these areas (Cummins and Macintyre 2002).

2.7. Shift Work, nutrition and obesity

Other factors that may have some bearing on obesity are workplace arrangements and working conditions. It has been indicated in a number of previous bodies of work that shift working can lead to poor nutrition habits and obesity (Amani and Gill 2013). Longer working hours, shift work and job stress are all factors which are associated with a greater BMI and obesity levels (Anderson et al 2009) (Schulte 2006). Shift workers represent more than 20 percent of the overall working population (Di Lorenzo et al 2003) (Gordon et al 1986). This is due to the fact that more and more businesses are opening 24 hours a day. Shift working can mean that regular eating and exercising habits are difficult to maintain and, as well as this, it has been found that late night shift workers have a higher intake of food than day workers. However they eat fewer meals despite a greater weight gain. The last meal in the day is eaten later by them and it was shown that these workers ate more food whilst on shift (Geliebter 2000).

Shift working disturbs the circadian rhythm - the body clock - which is a set of distinct physiological fluctuations throughout the 24 hour day, linked to sunlight and temperature (Lowden et al 2010). Circadian disruption affects metabolism, decreases basal energy use and increases blood sugar levels as they will not respond adequately after a meal (Buxton et al 2012). Reasons for shift workers not eating well could include the fact that dining facilities are of poor quality, the disruption of regular meal routines, having to eat alone or the fact that eating is not prioritised in many late shift jobs (Atkinson et al 2008).

Perhaps this can also be explained by the fact that late night workers were less likely to eat breakfast (Sudo and Ohtsuka 2001). Skipping breakfast and eating more after a certain time at night can contribute to obesity because of the disruption of the body's biological clock. Feeding rhythm and sleeping rhythm for humans are meant to occur at certain times of the day and disturbing this can be unhealthy for us and lead to obesity (Antunes et al 2010). It has been shown that there is a link between direct weight gain and food being only available in the evenings for humans (Romon et al 1993). As well as this, sleep deprivation caused by irregular eating patterns may lead to metabolic disturbances which in turn can lead to weight gain (Crispim et al 2007).

As well as skipping breakfast being a factor in levels of obesity, it was found that eating breakfast or dinner away from home means a higher chance of weight gain. Subjects who ate late in the evening and also those who ate more food in restaurants were also found to be more likely to be obese (Yunsheng et al 2003). However in this body of work it was typically white collar workers in a higher socio-economic status who were subjects for research so some of these factors may not be as relevant when considering obesity in lower socio-economic workers; although if one applies this theory to cheap fast food outlets then this could also apply to low-paid workers.

It has also been found that there is an emerging class of the Precariat, rapidly increasing numbers of people who are employed in casual work and who may work

unsociable patterns of work face great insecurity as they move in and out of work and that this may lead to instabilities within society (Standing 2011).

Overall it was shown that the increase in urban living has meant more shift work which leads to unhealthy living due to unsociable hours and eating more. Disruption in circadian rhythm leads to eating at the wrong time for the body and so ergo shift workers are more likely to eat poorly and become obese. This work is useful to the study as one must understand the factors which lead to poor health when relating it to the hours which an individual may work.

2.8. Summary

This chapter has reviewed the literature which is pertinent to the research problem of urban living and how diet relates to this. The sociological theories of Bourdieu, Elias and Mennell have been discussed as well as the gap in the literature when it comes to recent bodies of work relating to inequality and diet. Issues relating to urban living, obesity, nutrition and different types of work have also been reviewed and discussed. Urban sociological theories of Lefebvre, Jacobs, Zukin and Shorthose and literature relating to the location of shops and food outlets as well as the concept of food deserts have also been discussed. As well as this, literature relating to the issues of shift work has been highlighted and discussed. These bodies of work and theories were applied to the aforementioned research problem.

Overall, there is a distinct lack of research when it comes to the direct issue of inequality and diet. There are many bodies of work looking at families, food and class differences in this respect, however they mainly focus on issues faced within the family unit and less of those wider societal issues. Though the bodies of work based on the Health and Lifestyles survey did touch upon many important issues that are still relevant today, the work did not have much lasting effect as the inequality still persists today. Therefore, there is a gap in the literature and this is one of the factors to support the need for the type of research undertaken in this study and the wider project.

Chapter 3. Methodology and Method

3.1. Introduction

This study focuses on the research problem of how urban living affects the way we eat and so it was crucial that the philosophical underpinning of this research problem reflected how individuals see the world. How people understand their world; how they think about their day-to-day lives; how they relate to food, and how the research problem relates to these issues and wider society were all issues considered when analysing philosophical methodological underpinnings. In this way, this thought process led to much consideration of different philosophical underpinnings and it was concluded that the most appropriate methodology to be used to help explore this research problem was that of Weber.

After considering Weber's philosophical underpinning in the methodology section, this chapter also takes the reader through the process of how the study was undertaken and carried out and how a Weberian methodology can be put into practice by method. Initially, this research study was intended to be a multi method one using 3D body scanning and blood analyses in addition to semi structured interviews to provide an all-round multi-disciplinary study of urban living, food, biology and body shape. However, as the time allocated to this project was limited to one year, it was decided to first focus on the qualitative semi structured interview aspect of the research and to reserve the other aspects for a bigger study requiring additional funding.

The first section discusses why a qualitative research method was chosen and, following from this, the reasons applying a qualitative methodology. This method is compared and contrasted with other qualitative methods in order to validate why it was the most relevant and closely connected method to the study. As highlighted in the literature review section, there is a gap in the literature when considering the lived experience of individuals and how urban living affects their diet and food choices. This was an important factor when deciding to use a qualitative semi structured interview method for the data collection.

The second section of this chapter goes through the recruitment strategy of the study, focusing on the problems faced through the process of recruiting participants and how these issues were overcome. The third section of the chapter provides an overview of how the data was analysed and discusses the reasoning behind choosing the verbatim transcribing method and defending the use of coding manually instead of using computer programmes such as Nvivo. Finally, the fourth section describes the ethical issues faced and actions taken to ensure that the study followed ethical guidelines as set by the British Sociological Association.

3.2. Methodology

3.2.1. Overview of Weber's *Verstehen* methodology

Weber defined sociology as *"that science which aims at the interpretative understanding (Verstehen) of social behavior in order to gain an explanation of its causes, its course, and its effects"* (Weber 1964 p.29).

Weber argued for an interpretive sociology using concepts to understand the meanings one attaches to their actions. The concept of *Verstehen* was a response to positivist social science. This anti-positivism first was recognized in the 19th century by scientists Wilhelm Dilthey and Heinrich Rickert who questioned sociological positivism as a relevant technique for researching society as they argued that the natural world is different from the social world in that human society has aspects such as meanings, symbols, rules, norms and values - and that these can be defined as culture. Weber developed this view and introduced the term anti-positivism, and according to him sociological research must focus on humans and their cultural values (Burger 1977).

"We are," Weber said, *"cultural beings"* (1968, p. 180). In this way, it is vital that researchers recognize that, as cultural beings, humans are able to attach to the world meaning and significance and that, in this way, a part of the world becomes their own culture. Weber believed that it is values which allow for this to happen. He spoke of value neutrality, which in the case of this study was very important as it focuses on the researcher having the ability to identify and acknowledge their

personal values and overcome their own biases whilst undertaking research projects.

His main concept, *verstehen*, identifies ways in which individuals attach meaning to their behaviours and those of others; and in this way human action can be understood from the perspective of the actor. It can be seen as walking in the shoes of another, and it requires the researcher to treat the individual as a subject rather than an object. This, Weber argues, is because doing research on individuals without taking into account their meanings attributed to their actions is the equivalent of treating them like objects, and so *verstehen* also includes using empathy in the social understanding of human behaviours. It also reflects on how individuals are able to create their world by organizing their comprehension and attaching meanings to it as well as grasping meanings expressed by others. Weber has used this term as referring to a researcher attempting to understand both the intention and context of human action (Weber 1964).

This philosophical worldview is relevant for this study as the study very much focused on the meaning of living in two different urban environments and how these affected the participants lived experience of food consumption and diet. This philosophical underpinning places importance on the fact that one must have their own knowledge and experience of the world in order to understand the topic in question.

By contrast, Husserlian phenomenological methodology, another methodology considered for the study, states that in order to carry out research effectively, bracketing must occur, which is where presuppositions and considerations must be put aside in order to study the phenomenon (Wimpenny and Gass 2000). This branch of phenomenology was considered not to be appropriate to the research as the researcher's involvement with and judgment of the participants is valuable in research (Weber 1964).

In this way, Weber's theories are more in line with the research being carried out as it focuses on how the participants shape their diet and lifestyle choices based on their place in the world. In addition, this study places great importance on the cultural and social aspects of diet and lifestyle within the two communities considered.

3.2.2. Synopsis

Overall, this section has provided an overview of phenomenology itself and why it is the most relevant for the study which was undertaken. The research has been carried out with Weber's methodology as the philosophical underpinning, and this chapter has provided an overview of his philosophy and the world view with which the researcher shares.

3.3. Method

3.3.1. Qualitative methods

Following from the chosen philosophical underpinning, it was important to choose the correct method in keeping with this outlook of life and the world. As this research project aimed to discover the lived experience of individuals living in different areas of the city and how living in these areas affected the way they ate, a qualitative semi-structured interview method was necessary to consider cultural dynamics and interpretations of and associations with these. Weber's methodology understands the world through the lived experiences of the individual and so this study was concerned with how people live their lives and how they construct their reality on a day to day basis. A qualitative research method is most appropriate to address the research question in an effective way, in order to discover how urban living affects the way people eat and the choices they make when it comes to diet and food.

In a qualitative study, the sample sizes do not need to be large (Fossey et al 2002) due to the aim of the study being not to generate representative data from a large population or to generalise the results (Ryan, Coughlan and Cronin 2008); but rather seeking to discover more detail about the lived experiences of each individual participant, and so with the sample size of the participants being under 20 overall, this study was well suited to being carried out qualitatively. In this case, 16 participants were recruited.

The criteria for recruitment were initially to be childless males and females between the ages of 25 and 40. The reason for choosing participants without

children was to avoid gathering data related to children's eating habits as similar studies had been previously done. The age limit of 25 was chosen to exclude student-like eating habits which would not be representative as their eating habits would not reflect those of the general population in the area as a student population is a transient one which may not be affected by what is available within the area which they are living; whereas the reasoning behind the cut-off of 40 was to avoid age related illnesses to interfere with the data collected.

Marshall (1996) and Guest, Brunce and Johnson (2006) consider data saturation, which is the point where all useful information has been gathered and no new data is being discovered, occurs after a relatively small number of participants. Guest, Brunce and Johnson (2006) have set a threshold for data saturation at somewhere between 12-15 participants.

The qualitative semi-structured type of interview was chosen as the most relevant for several reasons. A qualitative interviewing approach was chosen as it provides an in-depth understanding of the data and the researcher is able to understand different dynamics as well as being able to see through the eyes of the interviewees (Bryman 2012). Qualitative data is associated with words as opposed to numbers, and the data generated can be described as of a high volume and rich (Denzin and Lincoln 2011). The aims of qualitative research involve providing a detailed understanding of the area targeted for study and the participants within that area by focusing on discovering their experiences, perspectives and histories. Qualitative data is also sensitive to the social context of a study and so it can be adapted for each participant to allow exploration of issues which may become emergent (Ritchie et al 2014). Therefore using a qualitative approach was the better option when considering this type of research because the main aim of the study was to explore the cultural interpretations and symbolic meanings attached to food, and a quantitative approach would have not been useful in obtaining the type of responses required.

However, qualitative research poses some problems too. It can be quite easy to lose sight of the aims and what is being studied (Silverman 1998) (Bryman 2012), as this method of research allows the interviewer and the interviewee to deviate from the original interview schedule quite easily. It can also be argued that by being closely involved with the lives of those studied, whether by simply interviewing

them or in an ethnographical sense, the researcher loses their objective world view and may only be able to see the issues raised through the eyes of the people studied (Bryman 2012) (Blackstone 2012). Further critiques of qualitative methods include not being representative of whole populations (Hammersley 2008); inconsistencies can be found between observation of a situation and the opinion of those interviewed from it (Bowling 2009) and that the study may end up being written based on the researchers impressions (Mays and Pope 1996).

3.3.2. Semi- structured interviews

Semi-structured interviews were used in this study due to their flexibility - they are more readily accommodated than, for example, ethnographies. In addition, interviewers can ask new questions and can vary the order and wording of the questions thus leading to the collection of rich detailed data from using open ended questions. Following on from this, these types of interview are much more focused on the participant's point of view and digressing is actually often encouraged as it allows the researcher to have insight into the interviewee and what they see as important (Bryman 2012). Another advantage of qualitative interviewing as a method is that it makes it possible to interpret body language and given that it is face to face rather than, for example, over the phone it allows for a natural rapport to build between the researcher and the participant (Novik 2008).

However, interviewers need to possess appropriate skills so that interaction remains natural while staying on topic (Fielding and Thomas 2008). This form of research allows for more small talk, politeness, joking and nonverbal communication therefore leading to people expressing more humanity in their responses (Shuy 2003) as well as motivation and inter-personal chemistry (Gilham 2005). In this way, questions can be articulated more clearly by using body language and accompanying gestures (Opdenakker 2006) (Stephens 2007) (Holt 2010). Interviewers must also remember to express interest with small utterances which play a larger and more encouraging role than one may think (Sweet 2002) and to be able to interpret signs of confusion, reticence or discomfort (Rubin and Rubin 2005).

A semi-structured interview is one which involves key questions which help to

highlight the main themes explored but at the same time allows the interviewer and interviewee to stray from the main questions in order to explore further themes which may have emerged (Gill et al 2008). Probes may be included in the interview schedule in order to ensure that the necessary topics are covered, and the interview is carried out in a more conversational style (Harrell and Bradley 2009). These sorts of interviews allow for rich, detailed answers which is necessary for the study undertaken (Gaskell 2000). The researcher must strive to listen and be attentive to what the interviewees are saying and although they should not be too intrusive, it is important to stay active within the conversation too. In addition to this, one must ensure that ethical sensitivity is being considered in that the researcher should not place pressure on a participant if they sense they may be uncomfortable in any way (Allmark et al 2009)(Bryman 2012). In order for the data to be transcribed, it is useful to record the interview as this assists with correcting natural memory limitations and also allows for a more thorough investigation of the material. Before recording the interview, participants must be informed and give their consent (Salmons 2012), and, when transcribing the written text must reproduce exactly what the interviewee has said including body language (Bryman 2012). However, the presence of recording equipment and the knowledge that they are being recorded can be off putting for participants so the researcher must create a relaxed environment for the interview to take place (Allmark et al 2009).

3.3.3. Defence of method chosen

Semi-structured interviews were also chosen as the study considers the individual lived experiences of people on the whole and interviews make it possible to gather data about the individual. Focus groups could have been used as a method for this study; however it was thought that due to the personal nature of some of the questions that participants may be reticent to disclose some answers such as perception of body image and eating habits. Individuals perhaps may not feel comfortable discussing in a group setting. In addition to this, participants may exaggerate certain aspects of their life possibly relating to health and wellbeing, for example, because they may not wish to disclose the truth about unhealthy eating in front of other individuals, leading to inaccurate data being gathered.

Focus groups could be challenging if different personalities are present in one group, meaning that some participants would have contributed a lot to the overall

discussion and not allowing others to express their opinion. Participants may have been defensive and not representative of themselves. Although carrying out separate one to one semi structured interviews was more time consuming than a focus group, it did ensure that every participant had the chance to answer every question and have their say on issues pertinent to their everyday lives and lived experience. This fully supports the Weberian methodology previously discussed and so the method of semi structured interview was highly appropriate when considering this philosophical worldview.

Another method which could have been appropriate for tackling the research problem was ethnography. As a method, it is well known for immersing the researcher in the everyday experience of the participants. However, it is also exceedingly time consuming and this study had only one year within which to be carried out and thesis written. In addition to this, although ethnography may be useful for observing day to day lives, it may not capture how people think, feel or construct their reality due to the fact that the method itself is often observational. If a participant got used to the researcher being around day to day, they may also miss out on having an in depth discussion regarding these topics and issues. A semi-structured interview can almost serve as a way of unloading for a participant which they could not do if the researcher was present in their day to day lives.

Finally, the semi-structured style of interviewing was chosen above a more structured type as it allowed for conversation to flow and interesting topics of discussion to arise. It was chosen rather than a less structured one so as in order to keep the researcher relevant to the research problem at hand.

3.3.4. Interview guide, demographics and interview style

The semi-structured interviews were carried out in order to generate the data for the study and involved a list of fairly specific questions as an interview guide, however these were open ended questions which allowed the participant to interpret them in their own manner; and gave them leeway with their answers. They covered topics (see Appendix 2) such as with whom the participants eat; how they source their food; their patterns of work and how they feel this may affect their diet and their own perceptions of the way they eat and their diet. There was also a questionnaire (see Appendix 1) completed prior to the interview which was

used in order to find out basic demographics of the participant such as education, income, age, marital status and area lived in. This was necessary as it was important to correlate this information with some of the answers during the interview and in order to create a table in the findings section so the quotes could be easily traced to the participant to which they belonged. The demographic questions were based on those found within the census in order to provide rigour for the questions. Some notes and observations were also taken alongside the interviews on occasion where it was necessary.

The style of interviewing was casual and conversational, and it was not strictly necessary for the questions to exactly follow the interview guide, and it was found that in many cases the desired topics were covered, without having to be probed for, once the conversation had begun to flow. This was a very positive outcome as it was important not to lead interviewees too much, and meant that different and relevant themes emerged as well as the predicted ones.

3.4. The recruitment strategy

3.4.1. Recruitment strategy

Recruitment was carried out firstly via a press release in the local newspapers, the university newsletters and weekly email publications advertising for participants aged between 25 and 40, who were childless and living in two specific areas of the city which were located within a mile from the university.

This strategy gained the interest of five participants, who matched the first two criteria, but did not live in the areas of interest. Despite this, the individuals were enrolled in the study and data collected. In an attempt to recruit from the two areas identified, the study was advertised by distributing leaflets within community centres, shops and public services within the areas, as well as contacting different members of the community who were involved with local initiatives. Unfortunately it was found that people were not connecting with the research as the desired demographic was difficult to find in these areas. It became apparent, after talking with employees and volunteers at community centres and similar services to the

public, that not many individuals without children lived in these areas -in addition to this, it was also found that the prominent users of these services were the young, the elderly and those with children - not the desired demographic for the study.

After distributing around 200 leaflets which garnered no response, it was decided that it would be beneficial to increase the recruitment to citywide and to make contact with a community social worker - who worked in a different area of the city. After looking over the leaflets and information regarding the study, the team were advised that it may be very difficult to recruit childless participants within the age bracket set from some of the more disadvantaged areas of the city as women tended to have their children at a young age in these areas and so it was decided to remove the childless specification from the criteria but to focus the interviews on the individual themselves so as not to reproduce work mentioned previously.

The team were also advised that it would also be difficult to capture the interest of the participants residing in the less advantaged areas without an incentive. After detailed discussion of how best to engage the communities, it was decided that a £15 supermarket voucher would best capture the interest of potential participants. Furthermore, via the community contact, the team gained access to two gatekeepers in the city to advertise the study. The researcher was put in contact with the manager of a scheme designed to assist unemployed individuals to get back to work as well as the manager of one of the large food banks in the city centre. After meeting with both gatekeepers, the research was approved and advertised in their premises, and the researcher was able to use their premises as a site within which to carry out interviews with participants.

3.4.2. The participants and areas

Through the gatekeepers, ten participants were recruited by employees who worked with them in both the employment company and food bank. This meant that there were fifteen participants and with the addition of a contact of the researcher who worked in the oil industry, the study had sixteen participants overall. The range of participants went from individuals who used the food bank and on low benefits to ones who were in full time employment. A full cross section

and further detail on the participants can be found within the next chapter.

Areas within the city were chosen using the Scottish Neighbourhood Index to ensure that there was enough contrast between the areas the participants lived in.

3.5. The data analysis

3.5.1. Transcribing

The next step after the interviews was to transcribe them from the digital recorder upon which they were stored. Subsequent to the interview, the digital copy was transferred from the recorder on to a secure password protected memory stick. The researcher attempted to transcribe the interviews after each one so as to keep the observations and feel of the interview fresh in her mind.

The interviews were transcribed verbatim as it was felt that this was the most appropriate method when considering the methodology of the research. In order to fully appreciate and understand the lived experiences of the participants, it was considered pertinent that the recordings were transcribed solely by the researcher and not by computer programmes. This meant that the researcher was able to reflect upon the data once more after the interviews during the transcribing period and the experiences of each participant were considered while transcribing.

It was also important to the researcher that the interviews were transcribed verbatim due to the fact that it is central to the reliability of the data (MacLean et al., 2004; Seale & Silverman, 1997; Wengraf, 2001). Closeness between the researcher and the data is critical when undertaking research with a Weberian philosophical underpinning (Halcomb and Andrew 2006). It is also considered important for researchers to transcribe their own data as they benefit from having shared the verbal and nonverbal exchanges with the participant previously and first-hand knowledge from their involvement in the interview itself (Poland 1995).

3.5.2. Coding

In addition to this it was in order to remain close to the data to consider the main themes of importance and frequently recurring codes. This enabled the subsequent coding process to have begun in some ways rather than approaching the data without having been closely connected to the transcripts before in any way; thus allowing for almost a period of digesting and reflecting on the data which Clarke (2005) recommends prior to beginning the coding process. NVivo or any similar computer programme was not used for coding as it was felt by the researcher that this would detract from the philosophical underpinning of understanding the lived experience of the participants. If a computer programme was used to do the coding, the researcher would have been alienated from her embodied experience narrowing down the codes to the overarching themes and this may have affected the overall findings negatively.

Following on from the transcribing process, the interviews were coded using a grounded theory approach involving open coding, axial coding and selective coding (Pandit 1996). Initially the open coding (or initial coding) (Charmaz 2006) method was applied to the transcripts. This is useful when breaking down the data and closely examining it for differences and similarities (Strauss and Corbin 1998). One must stay open to any possible directions that the data can take (Charmaz 2006). It is a great way for the researcher to reflect deeply on the contents of the data and begin to feel that the data is their own (Saldina 2013). Open coding was also used as it is a relevant method particularly for beginner researchers who have not previously coded data, which was the status of the researcher in this case. In addition to this, open coding can be used in the transcribing of many forms of data but in particular interview transcripts (Saldina 2013).

After the open coding was completed, the transcripts were regularly revisited in order to ensure that any codes which may have been missed were picked up. It is important to consider that the coding is an iterative process whereupon the data should be revisited even after being coded and not simply a linear process but rather a process involving more than a cycle (Saldina 2013., Silverman 2013). Regular meetings were also held with the supervisory team during this process to discuss the code findings. Potential themes began to arise from these discussions, as well as the fact that by this point the data was very well known to the

researcher who already had a good idea of what these themes may be after the transcribing process.

In addition to these meetings, further examining of the codes was carried out by using the Trello computer programme which allowed for the codes to be listed in a visual way online as opposed to using sticky notes. In this way, the data were easier to manage and it was simpler to group the individual codes into topics and thereafter into the main themes which emerged from the data.

An axial coding process was utilised at this time as it extends the initial analytic work from the open coding. The goal was to reassemble the data from where it had been left after the first coding process (Strauss and Corbin 1998). In this way, it is possible to ascertain which codes are dominant and which are less important (Boeije 2010). After this, the data set was narrowed down to the salient points and themes which have emerged from the data set.

Finally, a selective coding process was used in order to integrate the codes into the overarching themes and theories of the data (Stamp 1999). At this stage, the researcher can create relationships between the codes and categories as well as filling in gaps which may require refinement and development (Strauss and Corbin 1998). At this stage, the theories and, in this case, overarching themes leading to policy suggestions, can be covered as a wide array of concepts and a story can be framed for the final themes to be discussed (Brown, Stevenson, Troiano & Schneider, 2002).

In addition to this, the whole team had several meetings in order to present the findings and discuss the overarching themes which had emerged from the data sets during the different coding processes in order to agree and finalise on these. Follow up meetings were also arranged with the two gatekeepers in order to cement relations for further research but also these meetings were helpful in discussing the themes with those who worked within the areas of the city, agreeing on what had emerged from the research and if these themes were applicable to the day to day lives of the participants and their peers.

3.6. Ethics

The ethics panel of Robert Gordon University provided ethical approval for this study. An information sheet and a consent form were used to provide information about the study to the participants and collect their consent (see Appendices 3 and 4).

After the recruitment strategy was updated to include the offer of a £15 supermarket voucher, additional ethical approval was required. The British Sociological Association's ethical guidance was used as the main source of ethical guidance in addition to the Economic and Social Research Council's ethical framework.

It was emphasised in the ethics forms that to ensure the anonymity of the participants the names, areas of the city, names of the services they used or their workplaces names would be changed.

The research was funded by the MacRobert Trust; however they did not have any control over the research but provided the funds necessary to carry out the study over the year.

3.7. Synopsis

In this chapter, an in depth discussion of qualitative methods, in particular the semi structured interview was provided and the reasons why this was the method of choice when undertaking the research were defended. In addition to this, how this method links with the philosophical underpinning of the research as well as the gap in the literature and the research problem was discussed.

It has also described the recruitment process and highlighted the issues faced when attempting to recruit participants as well as how the criteria of the study was changed after encountering these problems. This chapter has walked the reader through the process of gaining community contacts and gatekeepers and how they assisted with enrolling participants to the study. It provided a brief description of

the participants themselves.

Furthermore, this chapter has discussed the data analysis methods and defended the stance for verbatim transcribing and coding without using computer programmes, as well as describing the process carried out through the data analysis process. In the next chapter the findings from this process shall be presented.

Chapter 4: Findings and Discussion

4.1. Introduction

Following from the description and discussion of the methodology and method section, as well as analysis of the semi structured interview method and a detailed overview of the process of recruitment and data analysis provided, this chapter sets out the main themes and topics which emerged from the data analysis and method process. As well as a presentation of the data being provided, the findings and how they relate to previous results of other studies are discussed in this chapter, specifically the findings which the researcher believes to deviate from previous studies and which could form the basis for further research and perhaps new policy. Moreover, the research question of how living in urban areas affects diet and food choices shall be addressed using the themes which emerged from analysis of the findings: this falls into three sections. These themes are discussed in relation to previous work if applicable and also original observations emerging from the data analysis.

A table is provided of the demographics of the sixteen participants involved in the study and includes a key describing the areas these participants lived in. Secondly, a mind map provides a visual aid as to how the overarching themes linked in with the topics within these themes.

Following from these initial displays of the participants and the coding process mind map; the findings and discussion section will continue using the three overarching themes as main headings for organising the chapter, and within these, the main topics and issues will be broken down as sub-headings for the themes. The overarching themes which emerged from the data were the fine graining of poverty, form versus function and the open versus closed city. Each section will introduce what each theme means and conclude the main points covered; and quotes from the participants of the study will be used throughout to add to and demonstrate the key points and issues which arose among the themes. The sections will also include discussion of these themes and relevant sub-topics in addition to the small amount of previous work focusing on these issues; and how the findings

from this study differ from it and can perhaps be more useful in order to understand and define these issues in a more subtle and slightly more realistic manner.

4.2. Participants demographic information and key used for areas

In total, sixteen participants took part in the research. Table 4.1 below shows demographic details including age group, employment status; area of city lived in, marital status, and housing information. The names of the participants are anonymised, as are the areas in which they reside in order to further protect the participants. The areas are broken down into codes which are explained in table 4.2 where they are expanded on and described. In order to assist anyone reading this body of work, brackets containing the area in which a participant lives in will be added after any quotes used within this chapter.

Table 4.1: Participants demographic information

Participant	Sex	Residence	Age	Marital Status	Employment	Home
Elena	Female	A1	25-30	Married	Employed	Rented privately
Susan	Female	A4	41-45	Single	Employed	Rented privately
Cath	Female	A2	36-40	Married	Employed	Homeowner
Marta	Female	A1	25-30	Married	Employed	Homeowner
Zsofia	Female	A5	31-35	Married	Mature Student	Rented privately
Harry	Male	D1	45-50	Married	Unemployed	Rent from council
Tom	Male	D2	41-45	Single	Unemployed	Temporary Accommodation
Rafal	Male	D3	36-	Single	Unemployed	Homeless

			40			
John	Male	D3	31-35	Single	Unemployed	Rent from council
Brendan	Male	D2	25-30	Single	Unemployed	Living with parents
Liz	Female	D1	36-40	Divorced	Part time hospitality	Rent from housing association
Gemma	Female	D4	36-40	Single	Unemployed	Rent from council
Laura	Female	D4	36-40	Single	Unemployed	Rent from council
Mark	Male	D4	36-40	Divorced	Unemployed	Rent from council
Elizabeth	Female	A1	36-40	Single	Part time carer	Homeowner
Robert	Male	A3	25-30	Single	Employed	Rented privately

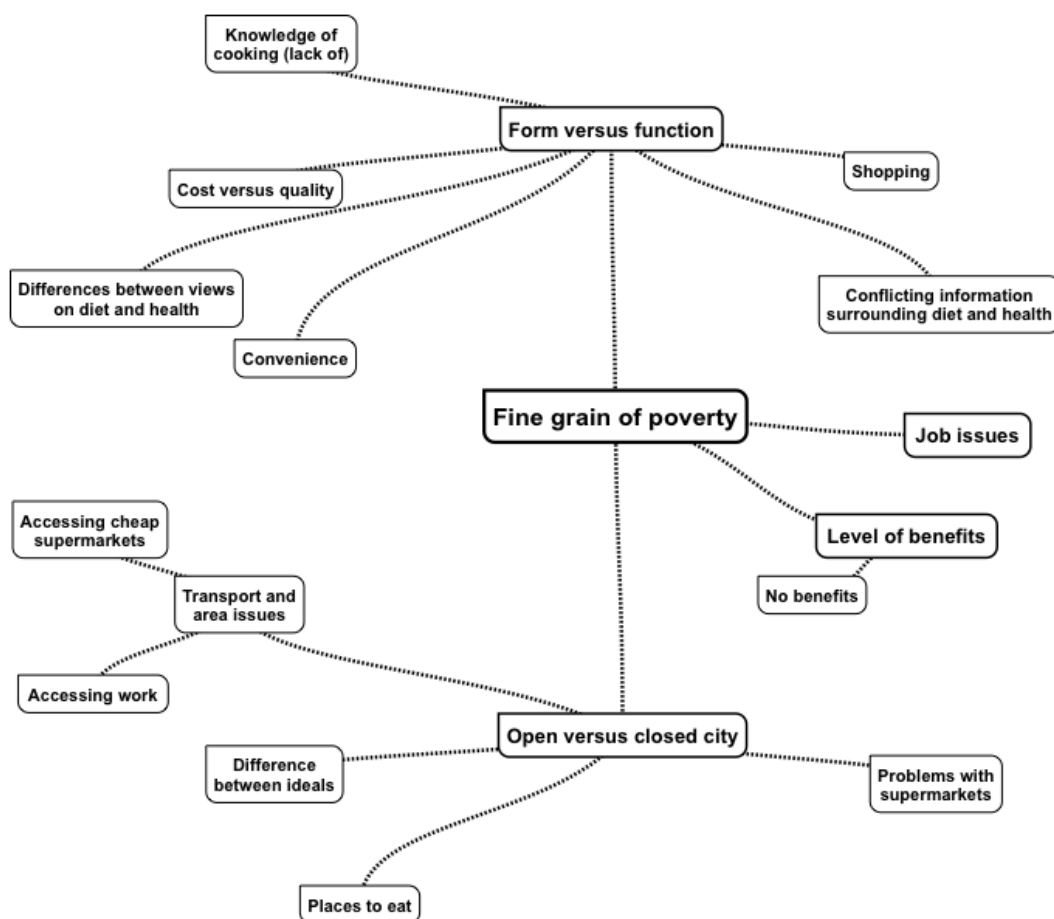
Table 4.2 Key of area codes based on Scottish Neighbourhood Index where 0 is most deprived

A1 – 20 – 100%	D1 – 0 - 5 %
A2 – 20 - 100%	D2 – 0 - 5%
A3 – 20 - 100%	D3 – 5 – 10%
A4 – 20 - 100%	D4 – 0 – 5%
A5 – 20 - 100%	

4.3. Mind map summary of topics generated from codes

In figure 4.1, the topics which were generated from codes are displayed after they were typed and summarised after using the online program Trello to present the data in board format so it was easier to view all at once after the problems encountered doing this using a manual sticky note method. Following from this, the main topics discovered are displayed here in mind map format in order to see how they link with the overarching themes before these are all expanded later in this section.

Figure 4.1: Mind map of codes



4.4. The fine graining of poverty

This theme appears first as it relates to issues which relate to material deprivation, which was an expected finding. Initially, when the study was considered, it was expected to have two groups which would arise from the data - those who were advantaged and those who were disadvantaged. After analysis of the transcripts and while interviewing the participants, it was found that there were differences between all the individuals when considering those who were living in areas labelled “D”. Some participants, who were living in the deprived area, were experiencing life very differently because of small differences in things such as amount of benefits received or perhaps the way they had been raised to view food when it came to cooking. Broadly speaking, there were not two homogenous groups but instead fine divisions and subtleties within the D group.

There were differences suggested between those who had something, i.e. enough money either in benefits or from employment, to feed themselves and their children, and those who had next to nothing, were receiving little help from the state and were forced to use food banks in order to survive. There appeared to be cut-off points between these participants, which may have been as little as £20 difference per week in their benefits. It was interesting to see how those who resided in areas “A” compared to those in “D” areas in the sections discussed below. These participants too faced issues to do with food and diet within the topics but they differed widely from the participants living in “D” areas of the city.

The main themes presented in this section are related to employment issues (past and present and with job hunting); housing issues (including points surrounding the physicality of eating at a table); problems faced by those on benefits and problems faced by those who were unemployed. This theme encompasses how poverty is not merely a black and white situation but more of a grey area. There were many issues faced by all participants and these issues were pertinent to them all in different ways. There were many categories which arose which showed that poverty and affluence should be viewed not as one state of being but as many different factors and how these can mean different things for different individuals.

The topics discussed in this chapter shall be those of the issue of precarious living and benefits issues, and the novel outcomes from this research shall be highlighted as well as how these themes related back to some of the literature reviewed.

4.4.1. Precarious Living

It was found that in the interviews those in both groups who were in employment perceived that their jobs affected the way they ate in negative ways. Those who worked in a 9-5 office environment noted that work breaks impacted on the quality of the experience of meals as well as the actual work increasing stress levels in individuals meaning they felt more fatigued and therefore less inclined to spend time preparing meals at home. Some participants did not benefit from a work canteen providing food and had, therefore, to sacrifice spare time preparing their own “healthier” options for lunch break. Others who were able to access food either within the workplace or in various outlets situated near their employers conceded that the options available to them made it easy to eat unhealthily.

In this way, the 9-5 work environment may be seen as the most advantageous for healthy eating however for some this could definitely be improved with the introduction of healthier options in some places of work.

Some participants employed in a university commented that the options for meals at work were “*terrible*” and noted that in order to eat well one must be prepared to spend time preparing their own food to consume during work hours. Zsofia (A5) noted that

“It's just so difficult to find stuff that you can snack in between, like if you're in uni you can buy crisps or chocolate and I don't even know what a healthy snack would be”

Liz (D1), who worked in a bar/restaurant during the day highlighted the fact that, in the hospitality industry, employees can only stop to eat when the business is quiet and there are no customers to attend to, meaning that one could go from 10am until 3pm, for example, without eating. This meant that it was very difficult to ensure a regular eating routine. This was also observed by Susan (A4) whose job involved lots of meetings at different times each day whereas the participants who

worked a general 9-5 working day were all in agreement that their employment allowed for regular eating patterns. In this way, those who work in jobs which do not allow for regular breaks will suffer more as their diets are less routine and more likely to be based on whatever food is quickest to access whilst on the go during work. When considering work, Mennell noted that urban living can affect diet negatively due to the fast paced living which broadly results from industrialisation and the fact that this change has over time given way to an unhealthy way of viewing food based on urban and fast food culture (Rizter 2008). With regards to shift work, three participants had these types of jobs previously and it was found that this led to weight fluctuation and unhealthy eating due to unsociable hours and lack of a regular sleeping pattern. John (D3) explains how his diet was affected working nightshifts in a supermarket:

“Oh like my diet, what I was eating? Then em yeah, because the the café, the cafeteria upstairs at night wasn’t open so you had to buy stuff from the shop so you... had to microwave.... But no I ended up eating not rubbish but I did, I was eating like rustler burgers and pizzas and you know like the micro pizzas”

Rafal (D3) talks of how there was no provision of food at a fish factory he had previously worked at despite working 12 hour shifts:

“No I didn’t like.... [eat at work] um maybe just in middle break a coffee and tea and chocolate bar and that’s it”.

These findings were similar to the work of Amani and Gill (2013), Anderson et al (2009), Antunes et al (2010), Atkinson et al (2008), Buxton et al (2012), Crispim et al (2007), Geliebter (2000), Lowden et al (2010), Romon et al (1993), Schulte (2006) and Yunsheng et al (2003). These issues are highly relevant to modern urban society and will continue to be so in light of the recent expansion of flexible working hours and casual contracts as found by Standing (2011) in his Precariat thesis. In this way it can be seen that working different shift patterns does not allow for regular eating and sleeping patterns and so therefore leads to weight fluctuation/gain and less healthy eating habits due to lack of access to nutritious

foods because of the lack of provision of the job itself or because of a lack of shops open at the time needed for the individual; issues with getting paid correctly with the lack of secure hours and working conditions in general.

This provides more insight into Standing's work who mentions food only briefly in his body of work *The Precariat*. He did highlight the precariousness of life and the choices these precarious workers had to make and how this lived experience and balancing of resources compared to those of individuals who worked more regular hours (Standing 2011). These findings are not dissimilar to those of Marx (1976) who highlighted in his theory of the reproduction of labour power in *Capital* that the working classes suffered from the limiting conditions of the working day which could be different depending on economic status and could mean that he has little time to focus on other aspects of life:

“Within the 24 hours of the natural day a man can only expend a certain quality of his vital force...During part of the day the vital force must rest, sleep: during another part the man has to satisfy other physical needs, to feed wash and clothe himself” (Marx 1976 p341).

These example served to highlight the fine graining of poverty as subtle differences can also be seen among the more advantaged section of participants, in addition to those participants who were in lower paid jobs dealing with the issues faced relating to food within their employment or as a result of searching for better paid work. This issue of the stress of trying to seek a different career also emerged within the data. Elizabeth's (A1) time (who was currently employed in a low paid caring job) was consumed with trying to find work leading to a career and so noted that

“Home cooking, I used to do more of it when my situation wasn't, when I was working in the oil industry and I had a job you know that you can just get up and, you just get up and go to your job all day and then when you come home at night-time its yours but night-time isn't mine because of spending all my time looking for jobs”.

The above individual's accounts of their daily struggles with balancing their diet and her job showed that not only work; but the search for work affected the participant's eating habits. It was also noted on a few occasions that work was the main priority of the person concerned and that their diet was secondary to their employment, meaning that once at home they would rather relax and devote time to this rather than spending time preparing and cooking home-made food. The stress of some participants' work dominated their lives at times and did not allow for focus on the needs of their bodies and health. Elizabeth was an interesting one because she fell somewhere in between the two groups as she had lost employment within the oil industry and was beginning to experience the precarious lifestyle of some of the other participants by spending a lot of her time trying to secure work, a central theme in Standing's (2011) Precariat thesis.

Many of the participants who resided in areas within the bracket "A" noted that their employers had a vested interest in the maintenance of healthy lifestyles for their workers by providing free fruit and vegetables and offering company gym memberships, social exercise classes and events focusing on health and fitness showing that there are differences and subtleties between those "A" participants as well as the "D" ones. The differences between those within precarious employment and those within stable employment can be seen here where the above examples show how some "A" participants benefit from a focus on health and wellbeing within the workplace.

However, it was noted by some individuals who had previously worked in the oil industry that the food provided by the employers made it easier to eat unhealthily due to the sheer amount of subsidised and/or free food on offer; as Gemma (D4) noted:

"You know you're eating sort of a supper at lunchtime which you should eat a little bit lighter so you do tend to eat more"

Additional examples of this were highlighted by Elizabeth (A1) also commented on the overindulgence of workers who are provided with free or subsidised meals:

"Used to see all these people piling up their trays, I used to mark them, people, there was loads of people sitting at long tables and I used to give them scores out"

of 10 depending on how much food they'd taken and how much food they actually ate cause you'd be surprised how people are so greedy, they take a bit of everything, the plate is piled high with food and they'll eat half of their starter, put it to the side, half their main course, throw it to the side, half of their sweet, throw it to the side and I used to score them out of 10 for the amount of food they'd taken and the amount of food they'd eaten...because it's free it's just everything piled on and they waste half of it”

The above account regarding the oil industry and its provision of meals for its employees was very paradoxical to think that those who are the most privileged with the highest paid jobs in the city were also those who received free food. Here, too, the differences between the Precariat and those in stable employment can be seen. This is a fairly localised process to consider for Aberdeen given that the oil industry has been the main and most lucrative one for the past thirty years and it could be argued it has been typical of the industry to encourage overindulgence in this way with free food onsite, company lunches and gifts of food and alcohol for staff. However in the past year or so the drop in the oil price has led to the loss of thousands of jobs and less emphasis on overindulgence (Oil and Gas people 2016).

Despite this, there are still a few companies who provide food for staff in this way and this was a compelling thought as we were carrying out the interview within the food bank where Elizabeth volunteered, where those individuals at the other end of the spectrum were forced to collect food parcels in order to feed themselves and their families. This shows how it is easier to be healthy if you have the class position advantages and access to a wide variety of food. These members of society are already privileged and, at the same time, are gaining more. However, it could be argued that this culture encourages overeating and this could be unhealthy. The experiences of those who were in employment from group A and D were different in this way. In many respects, this was an expected observation about some members of the affluent group in that they benefitted from greater resources however; the differentiation within the deprived group was not something which was expected.

4.4.2. Housing issues

One of the issues facing many of the participants in regards to the embodied practice of eating and dining was their housing situation. Almost all of the participants remarked that they would ideally want a better dining area as their current one was non-existent or not large enough. In this way, the same cultural capital spanned both groups in their views of eating around a table but not all had the economic capital to be able to act on this shared cultural capital, as some participants were in a field created by poverty which did not allow them to benefit from this.

One of the codes which frequently reoccurred was that eating a meal around the table with other people was the ideal for eating; and in contrast to this barely any individuals actually ate this way. Those who were living in council or temporary accommodation did not have a table provided or did not have room for a table in their living space. The four single male participants without children did not seem to place too much importance on eating around a table but all of the other participants did. Those participants who were privately renting also commented on the problems faced by them with the space available for what they could afford in the rental market in Aberdeen; and out of the two who were homeowners, one was planning to extend her property to include a proper dining area and one was moving to a home with a larger dining area, of which she was very enthusiastic about.

Zsofia (A5) spoke of how eating a meal at the table was viewed when she grew up:

“I think its...food was very important in my family, my parents, and it was always if they had a celebration or something the sitting around the table was very, was almost sacred you know where you would have a meal around the table and my mum would cook, em we would always have home-made food”

The way in which she regarded eating around the table showed how the cultural capital attached to this way of eating was transferred through the generations and seen as the gold standard of dining. Further examples of this included Liz (D1), who lived in a flat rented from a housing association, explained how she tried to ensure the family ate together despite issues to do with size and space of her

accommodation, which also showed how she strove to make the meal as social an experience as possible within her family. :

“We’re all in the living room with lap trays ‘cause our flat is absolutely tiny but we all, we usually we all eat together when we can”

This narrative of trying to keep the family together during mealtimes despite structural or equipment issues was voiced too by Tom (D2) who wished for his family to eat their meals together despite housing issues:

“I put the kids at the table...we only have three chairs at the moment ‘cause one of them is broken so three of them sit at the table and me and one of the other kids sit at the settee”

Other issues which emerged from the data were associated with kitchen equipment, or the lack of it, as well as space; especially in council accommodation the ovens provided were, on some occasions, not big enough to cook meals in. In addition to this, some participants commented on the fact that they couldn't afford to have proper cooking equipment. One individual who lived in A1 commented that, in order to have the ideal situation for cooking in, she enjoys purchasing “nice” things for her kitchen to prepare and display the food in. Others residing within the areas within the category of “A” remarked that as eating was seen as an experience it was important to have a dining area set out nicely as an ideal.

More serious issues which participants residing within areas bracketed under category “D” were dealing with, and were affecting their lives and consequently their eating habits, included being faced with eviction, being homeless and living in temporary accommodation. Tom (D2) talks of the struggle of housing insecurity through being placed in temporary accommodation. These comparisons between “A” and “D” participants also highlight the different lived experience between those who fit into the Precariat group, as termed by Standing 2011, and those who do not.

“I’ve got somebody coming up from the council last week saying that my housing benefits...saying I was £1900 in arrears but I think it was just from me moving from one temporary place to another but I think they’ve forwarded the housing, like,

benefits so I'll find out that tomorrow."

Laura (D4) describes the stress and threat of eviction from her home due to never having British citizenship arranged when she was moved to the country as a child.

"Well I've got court on the 10th of July which is my mothers birthday and em I'm due like 3000 of housing, em housing rent and eh council tax so I have no idea how they are going to manage to chuck me out of this house after I've been in this house for near 10 year..... I've had 5 houses since I've lived in this country and all of a sudden they're just like no, you need, we need, you need papers, you need to show us papers and all of a sudden I'm like mum fars my British citizen, well you haven't got one. I was like what, I thought there's gotta be somebody in this country that can, I'm like textbook, that's what my MP says, you know [name of new MP] cause I was down at [name of old MP] that I had before and she lost her seat so I'm now with this person, [name of new MP] and I've got to keep on them, I've got to keep on them because they do not phone, they don't do nothing and I keep saying to them, it's getting closer to the 10th, what am I going to do?"

Participants who were in these situations were trying to resolve them and consequently were trying to do the best for themselves and their families. These participants were struggling to get by on a day to day level financially and this meant that eating well came much further down in their priorities compared to those with a stable home and income.

4.4.4. Benefits

The organising aspect of fine graining of poverty was the relationship with benefits and how the different types meant that, instead of one homogenous group of "poor" people living on benefits, there were rather many different complex layers of poverty within this. This can be seen when considering the experiences of the different participants who received benefits. Instead of sharing experiences, each participant faced different issues when regarding the topic of benefits. For some, the cuts or low amount received meant they were forced to use food banks to feed themselves and their families, and for others the issues faced may revolve around the irregularity of the payments of benefits received. The specific cuts that had affected many of the participants were related to the £12 billion cut in the welfare

budget in 2015. The Employment Support Allowance and Jobseekers Allowance saw payments reduced as well as the benefit cap being reduced to £20 000 (BBC 2015).

Those participants who were currently on benefits reported widely that it was difficult to live on the money they were receiving. There were problems with benefits being cut which meant that one individual who had a child had to live on £70 a week including all bills as well as providing food and other living costs. This individual was also in rent arrears to the council and was not able to find employment due to a lack of references and issues with British citizenship despite having resided in the area from the age of nine (see quote above). In this way, this participant was suffering a much greater level of deprivation when compared to other participants who were on benefits and using the food bank, illustrating the overarching theme of the fine gradient of poverty.

In addition to this, it was found that those on job seekers allowance had issues with constantly changing rules related to the amount of money allocated and difference between age of children was confusing and meant that there was a lack of consistency; so that it was difficult to plan shopping due to the potential change in amount of money received. This issue was illustrated by John (D3) who was only able to shop when he received job centre payments which were not paid consistently:

“They keep changing....I had to go along to this course thing and then...after that they tell you to come in every week and then depending on if they think you’re looking or not they’d ask you to come in every day, because I have been looking now they’ve put me back onto fortnightly, it’s just, they just keep chopping and changing”.

The above quote indicates that some of the benefit services provided can be seen as complicated and difficult to follow and consequently participants may miss out on money they should be entitled to simply because they are not able to follow unnecessary complexities of the system. It was also noted that trying to receive extra benefits one might be entitled to was difficult due to the complex forms to be completed, as highlighted by Mark (D4):

“The right ones and the right things to say because eh, I think they make them

difficult on purpose. So you dinnae do it, ken....one wrong answer and... [You wouldn't receive benefits]"

The experience Mark described was one reason for some people trying to live (and feed themselves) off less money than they should be entitled to. Luckily, there are staff at the food bank which he uses who are trained to assist those who need help in filling in forms, however not all participants were aware of the services which were available to them such as this, and in any case may not be living in a location where accessing these services was convenient.

In this way, it can be seen that different individuals experienced the receipt of benefits in some cases drastically differently despite perhaps a difference of less than £10- £20 received per week depending on whether any cuts or different issues affected them. This small amount could make the difference between being able to have the choice of utilising a variety of shops and produce and being confined to a limited amount of food types and shops as well as having to rely on food banks in order to feed themselves and families. These cut off points could mean that one family could afford transport to cheaper shops or healthier ingredients from different shops where without this extra money they may be resigned to having to purchase cheaper and less healthy alternatives within a limited local selection of shops, for example.

Overall, the issues faced by individuals in receipt of benefits clearly demonstrate the fine graining of poverty within the participants interviewed in this study, and could provide a new perspective of viewing poverty and deprivation and their effects on populations; as well as how best to suggest that the situation be improved (see next chapter).

4.4.5. Unemployment

One finding which arose from the research was how unemployment affected the eating of food for those who were currently seeking employment and/or on benefits. In one case, it was noted that a job allowed for more regular healthy eating patterns and less time for snacking. Brendan (D2) who still lived at home with his parents, explained that when he was in employment in an office position

he found it easier to eat well due to keeping busy at work and not suffering from the boredom and snacking that his current state of unemployment was causing:

“Eh I think I was eating a bit healthier when I was here [a work placement] , when I was just sitting in my house I was bored all the time, just eating food... yeah definitely, it took my mind off it [hunger]”

In the case of Rafal (D3), unemployment allowed for a more healthy diet due to the fact that the participant prior to his unemployment had worked 12 hour shifts in a fish factory which did not allow for him to eat properly during the time he was working. However, other participants suffered from not being able to eat enough, namely those with children who reported going without food in order to be able to feed their children (and in one case pets!).

For individuals (although not all) who were residing within the areas coded “D”, cooking and shopping was seen as “something to pass the time” and though these participants said they enjoyed cooking, they also conceded that it was difficult to be able to create meals they would want to as recipes were seen as expensive and something they could not afford to do. This was due to the fact that many recipes call for a variety of different ingredients. | These participants could not afford to go to the shops to pick up different foodstuffs anytime they wanted to cook something different, and therefore it seemed easier and cheaper to them to make food such as cheese on toast or cheap frozen foods. Again, this supports the point that these participants possessed the cultural capital in relation to the desire to be able to cook from scratch but again faced barriers in being able to cook.

In addition to this, a lack of economic capital due to unemployment meant that participants could not access cheaper supermarkets as they could not afford the bus fare or did not have their own personal or company provided car anymore. This meant that they rarely left the area they lived within and these areas mostly had a lack of amenities for affordable and healthy food shopping (see later in the chapter)

4.4.6. Synopsis

In this section, the more material aspects of deprivation were highlighted comparing these with the form aspects of food for the participants in the “A” areas. It was seen that although employment affected diet so did unemployment in varying ways, as well as the issues faced due to unemployment and housing when it came to how people ate. These sub sections mainly showed how those who were categorised within areas “D” may be combined as “disadvantaged” but in fact, there was a fine gradient of poverty within this categorisation which is important to see and understand. This shows that it would be useful to focus on this fine graining of poverty and the subtle gradient whereupon some are managing better than others to deal with these issues; and where some are facing bigger problems relating to urban living, diet and food choices than others. In the next chapter, recommendations for further research and perhaps suggestions for policy shall be advised.

4.5. Form versus function

The form versus function theme considers the way in which an individual relates to food and what sort of role it plays in one’s life, as highlighted the work of Bourdieu (1984) and consequently Wills (2011) It is important to note that not only were those in group “A” in possession of economic capital but also cultural capital which acted as a form of distinction for these participants. There are different forms of cultural capital and this can be seen clearly when it comes to the form of the food discussed in the interviews. This section also illustrates what can be done with different levels of economic capital. The results garnered here serve to support these previous bodies of work as was anticipated as discussed below. The topics used to discuss the slight deviations from past research and highlight these observations in detail will be cost versus quality, differences between views on health and knowledge of cooking.

For those participants who were living in “A” areas the form of the food was more important and for the meal to be seen as more of an experience. Juxtaposed to this, the participants who lived in areas “D” were more likely to view food as fuel

to keep them going. Meals were less likely to be viewed as an occasion and little time was spent on cooking, whereas those living in areas “A” paid considerable attention to the dining experience as a whole and how the food and dining area could be displayed nicely: many of the participants believed contributed positively to a meal. These findings correlate with Bourdieu’s (1984) in *Distinction* and also the findings of Wills (2011) in her study. Additionally, it was found that the types of cuisine which the different participants consumed differed between the areas they lived in, although again this was not typical of all participants and there were some anomalies. Those from areas “A” were more likely to eat a variety of foods and ate out in restaurants as opposed to those from “D” who ate a less wide range of cuisines and were less likely to eat outside of their homes.

Shopping trips were seen as a functional experience on the whole for those from area “D” and the main concern was cost rather than quality, compared to those residing in area “A” whose priority lay mainly in the quality of the food. In addition to this, participants who were more interested with the form of the food were more likely to take an interest in new recipes and diets. They saw food as a way to a healthier self as opposed to those participants who saw meals as a way to survive rather than something to look forward.

Within this theme, the topics which emerged were shopping issues; cost versus quality; differences in opinions on convenience foods, on knowledge of cooking (or lack of it), and ; differences in views on diet and health and on conflicting information surrounding food. These topics are all expanded below.

4.5.1. Shopping

When considering shopping habits, there were a broad range of different types within the participants interviewed. Broadly, this can be broken down into those who viewed it as a chore in group “D” and those who viewed it as an enjoyable activity in group “A”; however there are more detailed gradations within these categories and two participants in group “D” expressed an enjoyment in food shopping and vice versa, in group “A” one participant did not enjoy it. However, one of the participants in group “D” who expressed an enjoyment of shopping added that she did not enjoy it in her current financial situation as she did not

have enough money to allow herself pleasure from the activity, but that in other times in her life she had routines and meal plans and had enjoyed her weekly shop immensely.

“Oh aye, oh I loved it, oh aye, I used to love food shopping, oh aye. I used to love it, I would go every Monday, it was me every Monday, I would go food shopping and eh I could stay in there for ages [laughs] because I like to see what’s eh, what they’ve got going, em bargains and stuff like that” (Laura D4).

There were some participants who remarked on the fact that their shopping choices would differ if they were merely shopping for themselves. Among the more privileged female individuals who were married it was noted that, on the whole, the males influenced their spouse’s choices by choosing more red meat and less healthy and/or more convenient options. There were only four participants who were married and in all but one of these cases shopping was seen as a shared chore; although one participant had the sole responsibility of shopping and cooking duties on the whole.

Here, Cath (A2), who lived just outside the city, reflects on how she feels her husband and step children affect the way she shops.

“If it wasn’t for my husband I would eat less meat, em, but yeah I probably cook to accommodate a lot of his likes rather than my own at times....”

“It used to be enjoyable when I was cooking for myself because I was choosing what I wanted to eat so this week I’ve been on my own and I’ve made my own food, what I’ve wanted to eat. Em it doesn’t have to, to have taken a long time but when you are cooking for other people....I’m having to decide for everybody and nobody will make a decision about food, nobody says what they want to eat, I’m the one who’s deciding, I’m the one who does the supermarket so therefore I know what’s in the house and....it’s a chore”

Elena (A1), who is a recent graduate and young professional working in the oil industry and living in the west end of the city, also found that there were gender differences when it came to shopping choices and responsibilities.

“It’s always slightly different to what my husband wants, he wants more meat....I like the lighter versions of that...sometimes he is a bit of a lazy person so he wouldn’t like to cook all the time”

On the whole those who were more advantaged financially talked more about the enjoyment of shopping and being able to browse the shops whereas those who were of the more disadvantaged group talked of shopping being seen as a chore and something that had to be done. Those who were living on less money remarked upon the experience of shopping as being “not real” compared to how it had been previously for them when they had been in a more positive financial situation.

Susan (A4), who lived in the more affluent west end of the city and who worked in education talked about her shopping experience.

“I don’t really think about money. I mean that’s a nice privileged position...”

For many other participants in area “D” money was the only thing on their minds when browsing in the shops, and certainly their choices were limited by the type of shops they could afford to shop in. Some individuals in both groups but mainly those in group “D” were used to buying familiar items and eating the same ready meals every day compared to those who enjoyed the experience of looking around the shops for fresh ingredients to use in recipes. Some participants expressed a desire to try online shopping although a few were sceptical about the quality of the food and accuracy of the orders. Those who were living in areas “A” felt, on the whole, that improvements could be made to supermarkets: stocking more fruits, vegetables and fresh foods and using more locally sourced produce. On the contrary less advantaged participants felt that the ideals would be simply to have better access to supermarkets with more affordable prices.

4.5.2. Cost versus quality

Findings from the research outlined a large difference between participants from area “A” and “D” of the study in relation to the decisions surrounding cost and quality. On the whole, the individuals from areas “A” conceded that while cost

was a concern of theirs while shopping; it was not the priority. Rather, quality of the food was seen as the top decision which influenced these consumers along with freshness of the products.

Those who belonged to this group were more likely to enjoy the experience of shopping and looking around for new foods or introductory offers. These consumers considered food to only be enjoyable if it was of a certain level of quality. Some argued that the quality of the goods in supermarkets was not high enough for them. These individuals also viewed convenience food as of poor quality and would only consider buying the higher end items such as the “finest” ranges of the supermarkets. Also, these participants were more likely to be able to choose which shops they wished to frequent due to the fact that most of them had a car and had access to any part of the city for a higher quality shopping experience. As well as this, these individuals were more likely to view shopping as a trip to be enjoyed and so wanted to take their time in a nicer environment picking out the produce that they wanted. These findings relate to those of Bourdieu’s in *Distinction* given that it could be argued these participants were displaying their cultural capital around food as a claim to distinction by viewing shopping as an aesthetic and sensory experience. Susan (A4) talks here about how she enjoys food shopping:

“So yeah, yeah I think I do quite enjoy it I like picking out fruit and veg, I like that experience. I don’t think, I’ve never done internet shopping and I don’t think I would enjoy it. I just, I think also the thought of sitting up, sitting for an hour and typing in things that you want and then it remember it for next time but even then doing just that... I like to choose the fruit and vegetables, I like to handle them”

Here and in the excerpts below, form as theorised by Bourdieu, can be identified in the enjoyment of the experience of shopping and the choice of shops of the participants. Elena (A1) speaks about how the quality of the food is the top priority for her:

“I want more quality and vitamin enriched food....good quality food is of course incomparablequality olive oil is always good...that makes everything better“

Marta (A1), who is also a recent graduate and young professional living in the

western more affluent part of the city centre, talks of the importance of good quality shops and food, for her:

“Marks and Spencer and Sainsburys....I like the variety and the quality of food that they offer compared to other supermarkets like Asda and Morrisons. Compared to Asda for example Sainsburys have more fresh food and fruit and healthy sort of food.... yeah and Marks and Spencer I think they have quite good quality and again their mangos are quite good”

As well as this, in the “A” group of participants, one deviation, Robert (A3) did not have access to a car and was living in an area which did not allow him easy access to such high quality shops. In addition to this, he was dealing with stress at work which meant that the food he ate was not often a high priority for him. He did not view shopping as an enjoyable experience and was more concerned with convenience than any other factor as he worked long hours and lived alone. However he conceded that he would not buy value brands of convenience foods and would probably view food differently were he not living alone as he explains here.

“I think so, used to be in a relationship where I would come home and food would basically be ready which was really nice and a lot of that was you know food from scratch so that was nice but now it’s when I get home at 5 or 6 the last thing I’m wanting to do is... it’s not really work but things which aren’t relaxing, I just want to put something in the oven, set an alarm on my phone for half an hour, watch an episode of something on TV and by that time my food will be ready and that’s what I want to do, that’s what I choose to do”

In contrast to this, as Wills (2011) found, in general those who were living in the “D” areas of the city viewed cost as their top priority when shopping for food. These participants often had to count their items as they went round the shops to ensure they had enough money to pay for the shopping; and Gemma (D4) noted £20 was the most she would spend at a time on a bigger shop.

In addition to this, these participants more often used the supermarkets which were closer to the areas in which they lived; and more often than not these shops

focused on the cheaper frozen products rather than better quality fresh foods. However, it was found that there were differences between all the participants and that these findings were not a complete contrast between the two types of areas lived in but rather a gradient. Some participants who were receiving benefits were doing better than others when it came to choosing quality foods and shopping in the more expensive supermarkets occasionally; compared to those who were living off the cheapest possible brands and visits to food banks.

Tom (D2), who is unemployed and lives in temporary accommodation with his four children in one of the less affluent estates to the north of the city, talks about his main concern while shopping;

“Aw, I dinnae go for all the expensive stuff in shops, ken I go for the smart price stuff at Asda and it’s the similar to that in all supermarkets but I just try and go for the cheaper stuff, ken I seem to buy more if I buy cheaper stuff”

For this participant, quantity was what was most important for him as he had all four of his children to feed, so buying all of the cheaper branded food items meant he could try and provide more varied meals for all of his children. The functional aspect of food can be seen in these actions. John (D3), who is also unemployed but living in a flat rented from the council with his young daughter, tried to find a balance between cost and quality with the money he had:

“Like the meats and the croissants and the bagels and things like that I prefer to go to the supermarket....the farmfoods you’ll get it cheaper but I prefer to pick it up from the supermarket.... I like things like pastrami and stuff”

This was an interesting participant, as even though he was on benefits and still often struggled to afford some of the foods he wanted, he was able to strike a balance between cost and quality within his budget; however this was not by using the shops available to him in his local area. Relating back to the theme of the gradient of poverty, John is a key example of a participant who had more than others in the “D” category despite the fact that he was also living on benefits. For Gemma (D4), who is unemployed and living in a council flat, cost was the top priority when shopping, again displaying the functionality of the diets of participants in the “D” group:

“No if it looks nice and if its cost effective or whatever you know and you’re getting a good bargain then I’ll buy it but I don’t tend to look at how healthy it is for me”

4.5.3. Convenience

Convenience food was a notable issue in many of the interviews, and there were different views between the participants regarding using ready meals and other convenience types of foods. This was one main aspect of function dominating diets. Some of the individuals of group “A” reported that if they were forced to use these types of food then it would be only foods which were of a higher quality and only if they had not had the time to cook anything from scratch. It was also admitted with almost an air of embarrassment if convenience food has been used. Some “A” participants used convenience food because they were too busy with other aspects of life such as work or study. Here economic capital can be seen to be driving cultural capital. However, these participants said they ideally would prefer to cook from raw ingredients but that the time constraints and stress made this inconvenient for them at this time in their lives. It was also found that those who saw food as less important in their lives and who saw it as more of a way to survive were more likely to use ready meals. Susan (A4) usually tried to cook from scratch but occasionally would use convenience food, however making sure it was of a certain level of quality, displaying cultural capital as a level of distinction:

“Very occasionally we’ll buy pizzas to have at home, you know Tesco if you get their sort of Finest range then generally they’re OK”

It was interesting to note that more than one of the more advantaged participants when admitting to using fast food would be quick to point out that these were the top quality convenience foods which were healthier and contained better ingredients. Zsofia (A5), a mature student living with her husband who worked full time, admitted to using ready meals more often due to the amount of study she had to do; however she appeared to regret having to do so:

“I buy a lot more readymade food than I used to because it’s just more available and much cheaper.... I kinda miss that I don’t really engage as much with making the meal”

Participants who were more likely to use convenience food were those in “D” areas. One of the reasons for this was it was most readily available to them in their locality in addition to a lack of knowledge of cooking (see next section). At the shops which were local to some of the areas, frozen food was the cheapest option as well as being the most easily sourced. There were some exceptions from this with those participants who had been taught to cook and had perhaps been advised against using ready meals as they were growing up. Gemma (D4), although cost was the top priority for her when considering shopping habits, did not ever buy convenience foods:

“I’ve never bought a ready meal in my life....couldn’t, my mum would kill me”

John (D3) too disapproved of the use of ready meals:

“I don’t like micro meals and like processed cheese ... I try and make my own food instead of microing it basically”.

4.5.4. Knowledge of cooking

One issue which arose through the analysis of the data was that of the lack of knowledge of cooking from which some participants suffered from. Some participants living in areas “D” had never been taught how to cook basic meals from scratch and wished that they could be. This links to the concept of cultural capital and how different meanings are attached to food and diet because of how individuals have been socialised in their field as highlighted in the work of Bourdieu (1984) and Wills (2011). They possessed cultural capital which provided them with a desire to cook, however because of their field they had not learned or did not possess the means to do so.

Lack of knowledge was causing these individuals to choose convenience and tinned foods for them and their families. One participant remarked that many people living in her area did not have basic cooking skills and that this could be one of the reasons for those who were more disadvantaged for eating less healthily. It was suggested that cooking classes would be beneficial by more than one participant.

“If I went to like cooking classes and that I would probably start cooking from

scratch and that” (Tom D2)

In contrast, those from areas “A” generally had a good knowledge of how to cook, in keeping with Bourdieu’s concept of form which Wills (2011) had found to be relevant to her research. However, there were some anomalies in this in that some of the participants who were residing in less advantaged areas did have the knowledge and skills for cooking. In a few cases they used these skills for themselves and/or families but some who possessed this knowledge did not always use it as they either did not have the money for ingredients or had to rely on very basic food items from food banks and “smart price” basic brands. This was an interesting finding as much literature has suggested that it is cheaper to cook food from scratch using recipes. However if one does not have the means to purchase every ingredient necessary for most recipes then purchasing cheap frozen meals may work out as cheaper. As well as this, shops accessible to individuals living in certain areas may not stock all ingredients necessary and it may be difficult to access shops which do (see open and closed city section). Gemma (D4) remarked how it can be difficult to afford to cook recipes, and her cultural capital surrounding food can be seen here:

“Recipes can be quite expensive by the time you go and get cause you need a pinch of this and a pinch of that...that’s why I end up having cheese on toast”

Laura (D4), who had been living off severely reduced benefits and was facing eviction from her home of over ten years due to rent arrears, also spoke of her difficulties in relation to afford to cook even simple recipes for her daughter:

“She knows she’ll have to wait if....she wants something....we’ll save up our pennies and stuff like that and take...cause she absolutely loves macaroni and cheese but you need lots of cheese and cheese is a wee bit dear”

This extract shows how even a key ingredient for many recipes - cheese- is seen as a luxury for some individuals. In this way, many recipes which may be viewed as easy or affordable have to immediately be discounted due to this one main (and some might see as basic) ingredient. As well as this, some individuals from “A” areas who did not know how to cook, did not wish to as their employment or study was their current main priority. They wished to relax once they got home rather

than having to spend time over cooking for themselves as they suffered from stress generated by work and wished to relax to relieve this stress, although it was conceded that their ideal was still a home cooked meal but that their current work situation took priority over this ideal. Zsofia (A5), a mature student, felt that she had to view her university work as her top priority:

“I have so many things on my mind with uni that I would have the time to cook... but I always feel guilty to take the time away from studying”

Whereas Robert (A3) just wanted to return home and relax after the stressful job in which he worked:

“When I get home at 5 or 6 the last thing I’m wanting to do is.. it’s not really work but things that aren’t relaxing, I just want to put something in the oven, set an alarm on my phone for half an hour, watch an episode of something on TV”

Robert also commented after this that as he was a single man this was perhaps one of the reasons for the way in which he viewed food and that his situation may be different was he not living alone.

4.5.5. Differences between views on diet and health

A major consideration within this section of form versus function was the differences between the groups when considering their perceptions of health. This goes hand in hand with Bourdieu’s concepts of cultural capital and habitus. Those who were part of group “A” on the whole shared the perceptions related to their habitus, this being that high energy foods were to be frowned upon and organic good quality foods were the ideal. In addition to this, many of these participants shared the perception that vegetarian or vegan diets were the healthiest way to be. These participants expressed their distinction through researching these types of diets, lifestyles and recipes and were highly knowledgeable on what they and others within this habitus perceived the health benefits to be. When questioned on body image and health, these participants shared the view that it was important to exercise and attend the gym as well as to attempt to follow these sorts of diet plans.

These participants viewed their diet and lifestyle as a project, and this reflected their habitus as their choices were linked to their identity. These choices can be viewed as a boundary marker and a form of distinction. These choices were not necessarily healthy but allowed the individual to occupy a habitus and an identity project. This can be linked to the work of Foucault (1980) and his concept of technologies of the self. For Foucault, the identity of an individual is not within them but rather is communicated through interactions with others and so it is fluid and a temporary construction of the actor. Technologies of the self can be defined as a series of techniques such as regulating bodies, thoughts and conduct within society, allowing an individual to work on themselves and how one will project outwardly to society and inwardly to themselves. In addition to this, he theorised that one does not implicitly have power but that it is a technique which one can engage in and so power is exercised as opposed to being possessed (Foucault 1980). So in this way, some participants were exercising their identity and their power through the way they regulated their bodies and through the way they presented themselves to society in regards to their dietary and lifestyle choices.

Much work and rehearsal could be put into the production and reproduction of food as a form of distinction which can be seen in the example of Marta (A1) as she describes the time she spends utilising social media for recipe inspiration and being part of an online meat and dairy free community as seen in the quote below. Cath (A2) here refers to the time she allocates to research articles online related to diet:

“I’ve done a lot of internet sort of reading, myself, emm, so.... I suppose I had more time on my hands when I was offshore so a lot of my time was spent, you know if you start sort of searching the internet one place leads to another so a lot of internet searches. I’ve bought a lot of health magazines and things in the past, em I’ll tend to read the health sections of newspapers so I have got an interest”

Elena (A1) often uses health blogs online for recipes and Susan (A4) who spends money on a personal trainer to advise her on exercise and food choices. This does not mean that these participants were better educated but rather used their distinction and habitus to differentiate themselves from those who have less

cultural capital than them. These activities can be seen as an example of Foucault's technologies of the self as the participants are engaging in regulating their diet in order to regulate their bodies.

Here, Marta (A1) explains how she can learn new recipes and gain inspiration from social media:

“She supports meat and dairy free diet. And we all discuss it and what we can find to substitute it and how we feel about it and the recipes, she has lots, so there are a few groups that I follow, yeah including that one on facebook, instagram”

This extract shows how she takes an active interest in improving her diet and lifestyle constantly and learning what might be new healthier alternatives to foods which she feels are not good for her body and what she perceives may be better for her after carrying out research and following different individuals online who may support this type of diet. Generally those in areas “A” were able to change their diet easily because they could afford to and had access to shops and gyms where they could meet with people who shared similar perceptions of health to them such as support for a meat and dairy free diet - the concepts of technologies of the self, form and cultural capital can be seen in these behaviours and activities.

If an individual of area “D” wished to make changes such as these, it may be difficult as they could not afford the alternatives or to see personal trainers or attend gyms. However Liz (D1) was the only vegetarian of the participants so variations do exist. Participants of area “D” generally took a less active interest in this sort of debate about healthy food, and were more likely to view themselves as healthy as long as they ate what they viewed as a balanced diet including many of the foods that were seen to be avoided if one was to be eating healthily by those participants who were of a more advantaged lifestyle. This concurs with Bourdieu's concept of the functional body which is there to be fuelled (Bourdieu 1983). Healthy food was seen as a simple balanced diet that was able to give energy in order to be able to carry out every day duties. One contrast was the view by Liz (D4) that a ham salad was a healthy option whereas other participants who did not share this particular habitus or cultural capital level would view this as unhealthy and favoured vegan options as the ideal diet.

Gemma (D4) talks here about what she considers to be a healthy body shape:

“You don't have to be tiny to be healthy, you know you do get people who are bigger and still healthy but em I think just sort of keeping yourself a little bit more healthier does impact your life but easier said than done”

The diagram below has been developed from Bourdieu's “The food space” as shown in Figure 2.1 and has been used to combine the responses of participants eating habits and how different food outlets are viewed by each group. Here, we can see that for those participants who were resident in the D areas restaurants such as Weatherspoon's pubs and takeaways were seen as a treat; whereas for those in the A areas, these types of outlets did not register on their radar and a treat for those in these groups would be high quality restaurants which could perhaps be influenced by travel or social groups. The differences between the economic and cultural capital of the participants are clearly displayed in the diagram. Here Gemma (D4) talks about eating out as an experience for her.

“Yeah, occasionally, but its places like Archibald Simpson you know like your Weatherspoons, your cheaper places obviously....yeah a treat yeah. Definitely a treat”

Cath (A2) talks here about the variety of places she eats in :

“Yeah, we'll maybe go out with friends, you know, we vary where we go so could be Pizza Express, could be a French restaurant, could be maybe Italian...”

For these participants, eating in restaurants was a regular social occasion and so those outlets that may be chosen as a regular location for these participants may be seen as a one off for other participants in group D who may have a higher cultural capital and slightly higher economic capital and therefore access to these food outlets. This clearly illustrates the habitus in action in the fields which are inhabited by different participants and so one can see Bourdieu's' various concepts in action following the data analysis. This diagram can also be used to illustrate the theme of the open and closed city, which is to be discussed in the following section of this chapter. Earlier in the chapter, the interplay of economic and cultural capital was discussed and this is supported here in these findings.

Key:	Both "A" and "D" groups	<i>"A" Group</i>	<i>"D" group</i>
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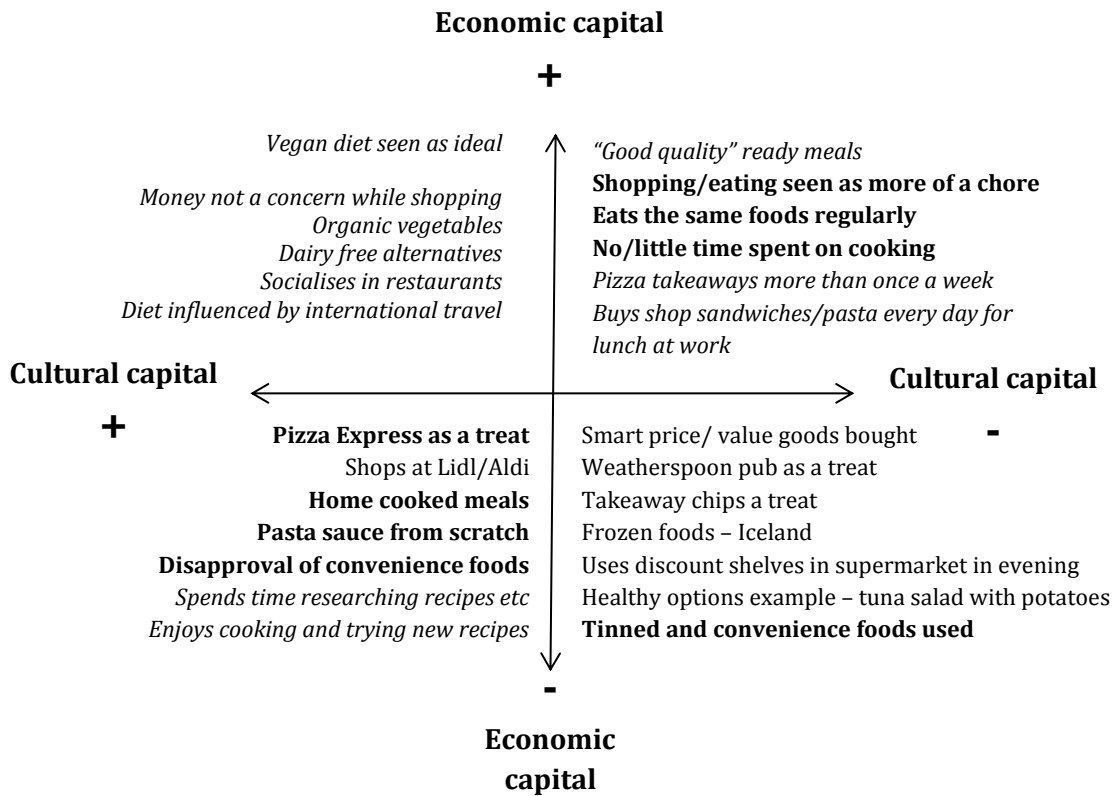


Figure 5.1. Diagram for study influenced by Bourdieu’s “food space”

Overall, the differences seen between the two groups when considering this topic were almost opposing and this observation not only fits with the form versus function aspect of Bourdieu’s work but also that of cultural capital and habitus and how these can affect our perceptions of ideals, in this case ideal diet and health. His concept of distinction can clearly be seen in this data particularly when focusing on particular diet types which were pursued by participants in group A.

4.5.6. Conflicting information surrounding health and diet

By analysing all the interviews, it was felt that there was too much conflicting information surrounding diet and health. Information provided by the media seemed to an issue as they provided contradictory articles on foods which are good and bad for you. Robert (A3), who is a young professional employed in the oil industry spoke of his views on the information available about foodstuffs and diet:

“There’s too much scaremongering with it, oh it’s like this will give you cancer and it’s like oh well it might not either em so I think people are scare mongered too much into it”

Marta (A1) also spoke of how she tries to keep the information she reads relevant to her own health and body needs:

“There is always something new...that will contradict your existing knowledge so I think there is lots of it but it is just a matter of trying to sieve through you know and get the information that’s relevant to you”

4.5.7. Synopsis

It was found that the form versus function theme of the research did not differ too wildly from what was expected in that the results mainly correlated with those of the work of Wills et al (2011) and Bourdieu in that participants in area “A” were more concerned with the form and quality of the food they ate whereas those in “D” focused on the function of the food and tried to survive on the cheapest food they could, although there were gradients and differences within this generalisation too. It was seen that perceptions of health and diet are viewed differently between the two groups also, and that views of convenience and knowledge of cooking varied widely between participants.

However the three main topics of cost versus quality, difference between views on health and knowledge of cooking were the ones which stood out and provided a slightly different perspective on the concept of form versus function from previous bodies of work. These perspectives may help to better understand issues faced by less privileged individuals when considering urban living, diet and food choices.

4.6 Open versus closed city

This theme deals with the issues found within the transcripts about accessibility of shops in parts of the city. The theme of the open and closed city was one which emerged from the data and followed on from previous work relating to 'food deserts'. The term refers to the concept that, for some individuals, a city is accessible to them physically and metaphorically due to the area in which they live having amenities such as shops, cafes and restaurants but also having good transport links/car access. The city is an open place for these individuals - a place where one can access food, places to eat such as restaurants and even further afield locations are accessible to them. The city is a place whereby cultural and economic capital can be displayed. By contrast, those who experience the city as closed experience symbolic and metaphorical barriers and live in areas which have amenities but are limited by the price of the food in them and also the limitations of selection of food types. They are also limited by the transport links in their area and by their financial situation. This section raises deeper issues of social class such as the right to the city (Lefebvre 1968) being denied to certain groups and the symbolic violence (Bourdieu 1984) of being denied access to power of representation to would allow their life to be lived. Additionally, issues to do with spatiality are covered here and how forces outside of these individuals control cause spatial injustice.

All of the participants who were living in "D" areas agreed that it was difficult for them to access cheap healthy options as the types of shops in their areas were mostly small expensive corner shops or shops such as Iceland and Farmfoods who stocked large quantities of affordable but not very health promoting foodstuffs. Often the only link to affordable supermarkets were buses which were provided once a week in some cases but which were often inconvenient for most of the population as they were mainly for the elderly in the community. Local bus services routes did not serve these areas well, and the cost to use them meant that even if they did, it would be difficult to be able to afford to use them. This issue also applied for work routes, meaning that often the buses on offer did not allow for individuals in areas "D" to access workplaces with ease as well as being able to visit relatives easily.

As well as the physical difficulty of accessing areas of the city, there was the issue

of the metaphorical closed city for those living in areas “D”, in that places such as certain shops and restaurants and bars were closed to them due to the money one would have to spend in order to frequent them. This prevented access to many areas for people and meant that these individuals were trapped metaphorically and physically in areas of the city with a lack of varied shops and bars/restaurants.

In addition to this, it was found that there were problems with the shops in the city for all participants in the study if not for accessibility from their homes but also the kind of shops that were in demand but not able to be accessed because they either did not exist or were inconvenient.

In the work published following from a quantitative Health and Lifestyles survey carried out in the mid-1990s, the term ‘food deserts’ was used to describe within urban areas where it is near impossible to access food from shops (Piachaud and Webb 1996) (Raven and Lang 1995) (Lang 1997). Bodies of work suggested that this was an issue due to the rise of out of town shopping centres and the closure of local shops and markets. There was a rise in the population using cars as transportation; however those living in these areas of food deserts could not afford transport such as a car to the new shops. These factors overall were seen as leading to inequality when considering food choices (Leather 1996).

After reviewing this literature and carrying out the research, it was felt in this study that the concept of the food desert was inaccurate as it was an overplayed negative feature which overemphasised the issues raised, however relevant they were and still are. This leads us to the point that although this research raised the issue of a lack of shops for those living in disadvantaged areas, the phenomena of out of city superstores and the demise of local markets and shops only increased and no policies were developed from these bodies of work to slow down this process. These bodies of work did not concentrate on any of the subtleties of the gradient of poverty or of the issues faced for the people in these areas as the data gathered was quantitative and so had no way of showing the lived experiences of the participants as this study has done.

Macintyre (2005) suggests that instead of there being food deserts in deprived areas in Glasgow, there area variety of food outlets including fast food chains,

cafes and takeaway outlets distributed throughout these areas. In this study, it was also found that 'food deserts' were not an aspect of deprived areas, however food outlets were certainly not distributed evenly through the areas of the city. Perhaps the differences between data types are related to the way in which this city is laid out compared to others or because the data Macintyre collected was mostly from the 1990s and so some of these types of retail outlets may have closed down or been relocated in this time. It was noted that in the deprived areas this study focused on, many more food outlets used to be located within these areas, which had now closed down or relocated.

By contrast the more advantaged participants had a car as transportation or enough money to travel by bus as lived in areas with better bus routes: this meant that the city was open to them for any shopping desires. In addition to this, the city was more open to them in terms of eating in restaurants and socialising. In some ways the world was open to these participants as they spoke of experience eating abroad and how this influenced their eating habits and preferences on a day to day basis in a way which would be impossible for those who experienced the city on a closed basis due mostly to the urban environment within which they lived.

The concept of the open and closed city can be linked to Lefebvre's (1968) theory of the right to the city. In his work he discusses how cities are divided and unequal. Those who live in the cities understand and interpret them in different ways and the same city can be utterly different from one social group to another. In the same way it was seen here that some participants were able to experience the city in many different ways - by utilising the variety of shops available citywide due to access to transport or already being located in areas which these amenities were located in. However, many others were unable to access these same shops or social spaces due to their lack of finances but also because of lack of transport links and local shops, cafes etc. These participants experienced a totally different city and field to the others who were more affluent.

The sections covered within this theme are problems with supermarkets experienced by those living in areas "A" and "D"; transport and area issues and differences between the ideals of those in "A" and those in "D" areas.

4.6.1. Problems with supermarkets

When participants were questioned about the ideal shopping situation, differences between the participants in “A” and “D” were present. Those who lived in a more advantaged area had many ideas about how their shopping experience could be improved. These included a desire for smaller shops with more organic and local produce which again is an aesthetic display of cultural capital. It was thought by some individuals that the food available in supermarkets was not fresh enough, particularly fruit and vegetables, and that these products were mostly imported from other countries.

The ideal shopping experience for some participants was more of a community experience in almost a market setting with vendors who would be familiar and knowledgeable stocking local produce. Participants mentioned that although there currently were some smaller local businesses, they were not open at convenient times for those who were working day time office type hours.

Susan (A4), when questioned on her ideal shopping situation remarked that:

“It’s a shame there are no specialist shops. There’s no fruit and veg shop for example in the centre of town so if I want to buy... I find it difficult if I want to buy something like for example ginger or lemongrass... lemongrass might not be in some of the smaller supermarkets in town, you have to go to the bigger ones so if I’m going there to pick up lemongrass I may as well do the whole shop, I’d like to go to smaller shops, I’d like to support local businesses”

“I think in these big supermarkets it’s not as fresh as it could be because it’s gone through a whole distribution chain”

Marta (A1) commented on the few small shops which do exist in the city:

“I do like the idea of smaller shops and you know little local supply and local community and all that stuff however I don’t think they are as competitive as the bigger supermarkets”

Those who lived in areas “D” ideals for shopping were a lot less detailed in what might be an ideal shopping situation for them. They wished to have more

supermarkets closer to where they lived, as well as more affordable prices in the shops which were currently within their locality. Many of these smaller shops charged much more expensive prices for the day to day necessities such as milk, and this made it very difficult for those who couldn't afford to leave the area to get to the cheaper shops. In this way, Lefebvre's concept of the right to the city was denied to these participants. These areas were not food deserts as defined in previous work, but areas where there is only minimal produce available at expensive prices and goods which are not what people need. When Gemma (D4) was asked about how she believed shopping could be improved in her area she responded with:

“Just sorta more choice and better prices, because the prices in the Mccalls and in the Spar or you're little independent is just, I just refuse point blank, sometimes I'll go without milk for two days because I refuse to pay £1.90 for a pint when you can get two for £1.50 at Farmfoods or 85p down at Lidl”

4.6.2. Transport and area issues

It emerged from the data from this research that one of the main problems facing those who live in disadvantaged areas of this city is access to shops - shop routes. The bus services provided are expensive and, in addition to this, the routes from the outlying underprivileged areas have not been thought out carefully so as to provide travel to supermarkets for those with no other means of transportation. In this way, the private bus companies define these routes and the individuals who suffer as a result and are denied the right to the city do not have a say in the situation. This again can be seen as spatial injustice and leaves these individuals with a very small geographical areas in which to shop and carry out chores. This may not be entirely a negative situation if not for the lack of affordable, healthy options available to these populations within these areas.

The areas marked “D” in the study are not ‘food deserts’, as suggested by research carried out previously. Food options are available in these areas, but it is only the unhealthy frozen options which are affordable to those residing in these areas. In these local shops there are possibly some healthier options which; however, are around three times more expensive than in a supermarket. When the option of

online shopping was suggested to participants, it was found that these too were not an option as many of the supermarket prices were too expensive but also that there was often a charge or a minimum spend point which participants could not afford and was higher than what they could afford to spend on a weekly shop. In addition to this, some participants did not have internet access or were not computer literate. In this way, the city is closed and the right to the city denied to the disadvantaged individuals because of the lack of affordable supermarkets in the area, the lack of affordable or actual bus routes to other supermarkets and the closed nature of online shopping to them.

Even if there were practical bus routes between these areas and supermarkets, the fares charged for public transport were too expensive for most participants to be able to afford on a weekly basis, as Laura (D4) remarked:

“If they had something next to the Spar because the Spars expensive, really expensive, if they had something or even farther back in [D4] where I stay because if they had something like a baker at that end, a butchers or something like that I think it would be so much better, it would ken, if, because I hardly leave [D4] [laughs], I'm hardly ever out of [D4] because I have nae money to go out to anywhere, ken”

Harry, (D1) also spoke of the difficulties of accessing shops:

“[Tesco is] aye... mare of a walk to get to. Even that, eh... cause I don't know if you know [D1]? You know where the...pub is? The cul de sac, I live just there, and it's still quite a walk oer to the one they've built...so if you dae, kinda, it's a struggle to walk back with the bags, cannae get a bus back”

John (D3) remarked on the lack of bus routes affecting how often he could see his family:

“Yeah I can't just chuck her [daughter] on my back and cycle up the road so yeah I just walk and bus, I can't get a bus direct from here to my mums so I have to walk basically through the back, through up here then up past the drive then up the other part of the drive to murdos so yeah it's a bit of a walk, it's OK on a sunny day but she gets tired legs and I pick her up but em like winters and that it's no

good. I do wish for her to see them a bit more cause she loves her nana”

4.6.3. Difference between ideals

The transcripts once analysed showed that the two groups of people in areas “A” and “D” interviewed had some differences, and also some similarities, in their ideals when it came to eating and shopping. Those who lived in more advantaged areas of the city were more likely to wish for more specific ideals relating to presentation of food and the experience of eating a meal when it came to the eating of food. In general, it was found that when questioned about the ideal situation for the eating of food most of the participants would want to be sat around a dining table eating with people. Although the majority of the participants did not regularly eat this way often because they did not have the physicality of a space for a dining area or table, most expressed that it would be more pleasant to eat this way. Some were planning on being able to eat this way in the future, whereas others were not able to change their living circumstances to accommodate this but often tried their best to eat together with their families as Cath (A2) remarked:

“We are planning to extend and when we extend we’ll have a table. I intend that’s where we will eat”

Susan (A1), spoke of her ideals and how they were previously met in her last home:

“I had a massive kitchen with a table and what I really liked was having friends over and they would just be talking to me when I’m preparing and again it’s very chilled”

Harry (D1) also commented on the desire to be able to eat at a table and what that meant to him:

“Aye I would prefer it that way if I had the space, aye... aye its more sociable...so but aye cause I like that cause it’s... it’s.. I dunno, it’s warmer, it’s like I say it’s more sociable and more chance to catch up you know what I mean? Mare likely to speak and that”

Whereas the majority of participants expressed desire to eat socially like this, those who lived in areas “A” would ideally be eating even higher quality food more often focusing on animal welfare and organically produced products such as Cath (A2) who said

“I normally go for organic stuff...especially for veg”

And Zsofia (A5):

“If I buy chicken I will buy free range or for the eggs I will go for the free range”

Those who were living in more disadvantaged situations in area “D” on the whole were more likely to have ideals such as being able to afford enough food to survive or for the price of food to be cheaper; as well as the kind of shops they would ideally have in their locality. Other ideals were focused on specific food types that they would wish to be able to afford.

4.6.4. Synopsis

This section has discussed the reports written in the mid-1990s based on data gathered from a Health and Lifestyles survey and how, although the data is pertinent then and to this day, was perhaps over emphasising the ‘food deserts’ concept. In this research it was found that these issues still persist into modern day and that there is food available in these areas, just not the correct sort. The issue of the open and closed city was discussed using the transport and area issues as a guide to show how for some living in certain areas means that the city as a whole is closed to them and their choices limited. The work of Lefebvre has also been linked with the concept of the open and closed city.

This section also presented findings on the differences in lifestyles between those living in area “A” and those in “D” and how the city in which all participants were living in was open to some and closed to others, whether this be through the transport links which did not exist for participants in D areas to access shops, work and social life; the differences in problems which different individuals faced when shopping in what was available to them, and more widely the differences between how they wished their lives to be and what improvements they would like to see when it came to their diet. It can be seen here that these participants were not ignorant when it came to their diets but rather possessed cultural capital

surrounding food choices but were systematically denied the right to live their lives meaningfully and in this way, their ability to utilise their right to the city was denied to them.

Chapter 5: Conclusion and remarks for policy and future research

This final chapter will serve to reflect upon the themes from the discussion section and therefore recommend possible further research and give some policy suggestions. It will be split into three sections: future research, policy suggestions and conclusion, including reflections on research and a summarization of the chapters and their purposes.

5.1. Future research

Future research could be carried out on the themes of the fine graining of poverty and the open and closed city. These two themes are the ones that have emerged from the data with the least bodies of work related to them in the past and in this section. Within the fine graining of poverty this includes research expanding the aspect of cut off points and stratifying benefits; and within the open versus closed city research surrounding defining areas as open or closed and identifying pertinent issues which could lead to an area being closed.

5.1.1. The fine graining of poverty

It would be useful for future work to be done on this fine gradient to perhaps establish knowledge of cut-off points and what the exact differences are between the types of benefits and how these affect people, as well as perhaps looking at those on low income and the differences between wage cut off points e.g. minimum wage versus a wage which is slightly above this and how individuals lives differ compared to one another based on this gap in wages. This would allow for further work to be done looking at the possibility of stratifying benefits in order to allow for less inequality between those receiving them.

In addition to this, it may be useful to suggest that research be carried out related to the sociological aspects of shift work and working unsociable hours as it was hoped that more participants could be gained who fit into this category for this study; however most participants from disadvantaged areas were not currently in work and so this aspect of urban living could not be explored.

Finally, research could be undertaken surrounding the material aspects of deprivation and how these can correlate with the fine graining of poverty itself.

5.1.2. Open versus closed city

Further research could be carried out with respect to the metaphor of the open and closed city by focusing a study solely on the experiences of those living in areas which could be defined as “closed”. Furthermore, preceding this research, it would be useful to be able to develop an official framework within which areas could be defined as “open” or “closed based on their transport links and where they are situated within a city, although it is pertinent to note that the concept of the closed city is also one which stems from a lack of being able to afford transport to access different shops/areas.

The metaphor of the open versus closed city could be used to define other aspects of urban sociology and deprivation and there could be further research done to define how the metaphor could relate to these aspects.

5.1.3. Synopsis

Overall, there could be a substantial further amount of research which could be undertaken using the above overarching themes. Different strands of urban issues could be considered and undertaken relating to the themes which emerged from the findings of this body of work, and further understanding of how urban living affects society could be gained on a micro level and by using the phenomenological

worldview discussed in the methodology section to explore the lived experiences of a wider amount of individuals in perhaps different cities and even countries.

5.2. Policy suggestions

This section shall also be divided into the two sections on the fine graining of poverty and the open versus closed city in order to recommend possible ideas for policy.

5.2.1. The fine graining of poverty

Following on from the research suggestions, the stratification of benefits could be recommended as a way to provide suitable welfare for those who need it by lessening the inequality between those who receive benefits. Individual's needs could be assessed in a more humane way by considering their lived experiences. In addition to this, if further research were carried out as suggested above, then this could provide data to assist the campaign for the living wage.

5.2.2. Open versus closed city

It can be seen that individuals were denied their right to the city through spatial injustice to do with access. From this theme, policy recommendations can emerge within the city itself which could then lead to other cities in the country perhaps following suit after research into the issue. It was thought that the transport links within the city could be improved vastly to create food and work links for those living in the areas which could now be described as closed. In addition to this, the bus fares could be reduced so that individuals living in these areas could afford to use the new bus routes for shopping and potential access to the workplace.

Furthermore, the areas considered in this study could all benefit from improved local shops by providing lowered prices and a better variety of affordable healthy

foods. There are currently schemes providing fruit and veg but perhaps they could be better advertised. As well as this, community kitchen initiatives could help solve the problem of some individual's lack of knowledge when it comes to cooking and using leftovers. This new kitchen scheme is already coming to fruition at the food bank which is a positive step, and if this proves successful it would be useful to consider implementing them within the communities which could be described as closed.

5.2.3. Synopsis

The research undertaken has highlighted many issues faced when considering urban living and food and this section has provided policy suggestions which may help to combat these issues such as steps to assist with the inequalities faced by those on benefits, improved transport links and prices, better local shops and new community kitchen initiatives to promote healthy and affordable eating.

5.3. Conclusion

Following from the discussion of the findings, this section of the chapter will answer the research question set out in the introduction and also review the previous chapters. The research will be reflected upon following this.

5.3.1. Research question

As set out in the introduction, the research question was how does urban living affect the way we eat and how does living in different areas change the experience of those in them?

It has been answered by first of all considering the main bodies of work, first theoretically with Bourdieu's concepts of habitus, cultural capital and form versus function and how these can attribute the way individuals behave within society, as well as the different foods eaten by different classes within society. Next Elias and

subsequently Mennell and Ritzer were used to link this to appetite and how urban living has come around to affect the way life and ergo how diet and food can be viewed differently due to this fast pace of life. Following this, bodies of work relating to inequality and diet were searched for and it was found that there was a clear gap in the literature which this body of work seeks to begin to fill. Lastly, literature on urban sociological theory relating to Lefebvre's right to the city and urban spaces were reviewed in addition to discussing literature relating to location of food outlets and shops in urban areas.

Next, the philosophical underpinnings of how the researcher viewed the world most relevant to the piece of research at hand were discussed. This methodological stance was phenomenology and it was chosen due to the fact that this methodology considers the lived experiences of individuals. In order to find out the true effects of urban living on food and diet, this was seen as the most appropriate philosophical methodology and so an overview and discussion were provided.

Following on from the methodology, the method of qualitative semi structured interviewing was defended and discussed as to why it was the best fit for this piece of research. Then how the research was carried out was described and discussed, including issues faced and how they were resolved as well as the data analysis process and defence of this way of analysis.

After the method chapter, the findings were provided including quotes from participants within the overarching themes and subsequent topics within these; and then the discussion section linked these back to the literature and brought out the interesting findings which were then brought forward to use to suggest future research and perhaps influence policy suggestions.

Overall, this research has shown that urban living affects the way we eat depending on the areas within which we live. Some areas allow for the city to be open to their residents and others mean it is closed due to lack of transport links and poor availability of shops. In addition to this, one's job affects the way one eats depending on hours and flexibility within that job as well as what food is available there. The fine graining of poverty means that even with a small

difference in finances, some are able to cope with issues relating to food much better than others.

5.3.2. Reflections on research

Overall, this body of work serves to provide a platform for the larger piece of multi-disciplinary work which was planned and described earlier in the thesis. It also in itself can serve to perhaps influence further research and policy. There were issues within this research to do with recruitment and perhaps in further work a comparison between just two areas can be provided as originally planned. In addition to this, research can be carried out to compare rural and urban areas, and this research is already starting to be planned. Within the further research planned, there will be a multi-disciplinary method and this will provide a holistic and rounded piece of work which will enable the issues to be viewed from different perspectives.

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Appendix One: Questionnaire for participant demographics

Food and the City Checklist

Anonymous Code: _____

Thank you for agreeing to participate in our research. This is a checklist to help you and us with what we have to do today. Please keep it with you and hand it in just before you leave. Please hand this form to the researcher as you go round the various tables. They will tick off what you helped us with.

If you could fill in the information overleaf that would be useful. It is basic information similar to what you may provide for a census form.

Blood sample	
Body scan	
Interview	
Other side of this form	

A few general points:

- You do not have to do anything you do not want to do.
- You do not have to answer any questions you do not want to answer.
- You are free to leave at any point.

1. Sex

Male Female

2. Residence

In which part of Aberdeen do you live?

Garthdee

Cults

3. Age

To which age group do you belong?

25-30	<input type="checkbox"/>
31-35	<input type="checkbox"/>
36-40	<input type="checkbox"/>
41-45	<input type="checkbox"/>
45-50	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. Marital or same-sex Civil Partnership Status

single, that is, never married and never registered in a same-sex civil partnership	<input type="checkbox"/>
married	<input type="checkbox"/>
separated, but still legally married	<input type="checkbox"/>
divorced	<input type="checkbox"/>
widowed	<input type="checkbox"/>
in a registered same-sex civil partnership	<input type="checkbox"/>
separated, but still legally in a same-sex civil partnership	<input type="checkbox"/>
formerly in a same-sex civil partnership which is now legally dissolved	<input type="checkbox"/>
surviving partner from a same-sex civil partnership	<input type="checkbox"/>

5. Employment

Which of the following best describe you?

Full-time employed	
Part-time employed	
Unemployed	
Full-time student	
Part-time student	
Full-time carer	
Full-time sick or disabled	

Other _____

What is your job title?

Briefly describe what you do in your main job or jobs:

6. Health

How is your health in general?

Very good	
Good	
Fair	
Bad	
Very bad	

Do you have a long-term illness to do with your physical or mental health or a disability?

Yes	
No	

7. Ethnicity

Please select ONE of the following:

A White

Scottish	
English	
Welsh	
Northern Irish	
British	
Irish	
Gypsy/ Traveller	
Polish	

Other, please write in

B Mixed or multiple ethnic groups

Any mixed or multiple groups, please write in

C Asian, Asian Scottish or Asian British

Pakistani, Pakistani Scottish or Pakistani British	
Indian, Indian Scottish or Indian British	
Bangladeshi, Bangladeshi Scottish or Bangladeshi British	
Chinese, Chinese Scottish or Chinese British	

Other, please write in

D African, Caribbean or Black

African, African Scottish or African British	
Caribbean, Caribbean Scottish or Caribbean British	
Black, Black Scottish or Black British	

Other, please write in

8. Education

Which of the qualifications do you have? Please tick all that apply.

O Grade, Standard Grade, Access 3 Cluster, Intermediate 1 or 2, GCSE, CSE, Senior Certificate or equivalent	
GSVQ Foundation or Intermediate, SVQ level 1 or 2, SCOTVEC Module, City and Guilds Craft or equivalent	
GSVQ Advanced, SVQ level 3, ONC, OND, SCOTVEC National Diploma, City and Guilds Advanced Craft or equivalent	
HNC, HND, SVQ level 4 or equivalent	
Degree, Postgraduate qualifications, Masters, PhD,	
SVQ level 5 or equivalent	
Professional qualifications (for example, teaching, nursing, accountancy)	
Other school qualifications not already mentioned (including foreign qualifications)	
Other post-school but pre-Higher Education qualifications not already mentioned (including foreign qualifications)	
Other Higher Education qualifications not already mentioned (including foreign qualifications)	
No qualifications	

9. Your house

Please tick which of the following best describes where you live.

Homeowner (either paying mortgage or own outright)	
Rent from private landlord	
Rent from council	
Rent from housing association	
Rent from other	

How many vans or cars are owned or are available to members of your household?

one	
two	
three	
four	
five	

Does your household have central heating in some or all rooms?

Yes

No

Appendix Two: Interview guide

Food and the City

Topic Guide

Introduction

Aim: to introduce the research and set the context for the proceeding discussion.

- Introduce self and RGU
- Introduce the study.
- Information sheet, consent form
- Talk through key points:
 - Purpose of the interview
 - Length of the interview (30 – 45 minutes)
 - Can stop at any time if you need a break
 - Can come back another day to finish
 - Voluntary nature of participation
 - No questionnaire, more like a conversation
 - Recording of the interview
- Confidentiality and how findings will be reported
- No right or wrong answers, just say what you think
- Any Questions

The aims of each section are to guide the interviewer only and should *not* be read out to the interviewee. The questions below are indicative of topics to be explored. The actual phrasing and order of the questions may vary in relation to the responses given by the interviewee. Follow up questions and ‘mining’ questions to further explore an interviewee’s responses may also be used, but again depend on the answers of the interviewee.

Food purchasing experiences

Aim: the purpose of this bank of questions is to elicit the decisions, experiences and emotions surrounding the purchase of food.

1. Location

First of all, just outline to me where you do most of your food shopping?

Why do you shop in that place or those places?

How do you get there? (on foot, bus, car, lift from others?)

Do you go shopping with anyone else (e.g. partner, children, other relatives, friends?)

When do you go shopping – e.g. evening when there are reduced prices, early mornings?

How often do you go shopping for food?

Do you do a 'big shop' every so often?

2. Experience

Could you describe what a typical (food?) shopping experience is like for you? (prompts could be is it fun/ not fun, enjoyable/not enjoyable that sort of thing)

Do you meet friends or neighbours when you are shopping?

When you are buying food what sort of things/ decisions influence what you buy? (possible prompts: cost, quality, part of a recipe, something you've seen Jamie or a celeb chef cooking? etc)

What is your main concern when you are shopping for food ? (cost, freshness, variety, nutrition, balance, convenience?)

When shopping with others (e.g. children, partner) how does that impact on the choices you make (if at all).

When shopping are you influenced by the nutritional information on the food packaging.

3. Take-away food

How often do you purchase take-away food?

Kind of take away?

What are your reasons for doing so? Convenience? Time? Treat?

How often do you eat out? (With family, friends, with partner?) Where?

4. Ideal contrastive

What would your ideal shopping for food experience be like?

What would be in your ideal shopping basket?

The eating of food

Aim: to explore the role that food plays in the respondent's life in terms of culture, relationships with others, time and other social aspects of food and nutrition.

Describe for me how you prepare a main meal. (prompts: how much time do you take, is it fun/ not fun, on your own or with others, ingredients)

What would be your ideal food preparation experience be like?

Outline how food is eaten in your household? (Are you sat round a table, or in front of the telly or with others or on your own?)

When is food eaten?

How do you feel about that way of eating?

How often do you eat with family or with friends?

Again, what would an ideal situation be like?

General Questions

Aim: to explore some of the wider cultural and identity issues relating to food. These questions are to tease out of social location influences understandings and perceptions of food.

How would you describe your diet?

What do you think a healthy diet consists of?

If you were trying to eat healthily what kinds of foods would you be eating? Not eating?

What information exists about food and diet? Is it useful or not useful?

Where do you get most of your information from?

Do you think you eat a healthy diet?

How important is food in your life?

Perceptions

Aim: to find out how the participants perceive their health and body image to be and how they feel their food choices and diet may influence this

What do you think is a healthy body shape?

How do you feel about your body image?

How important is diet to you in regards to body image?

Patterns of work

Aim: to discover how jobs and shift patterns worked by individuals influence diet choices; how the participants feel their eating routines are shaped by their employment and what foods are more readily available to them during their working hours.

What hours do you work?

What kind of job do you have?

Do you feel your job influences the way you eat in any way?

What choices are available to you in your workplace?

Is healthy food accessed easily in your workplace?

How do you interpret time outside of your working hours – how much importance do you attach to spending time eating healthily/living well?

Do your work shifts allow for regular sleeping/eating patterns and routines?

Appendix 3: Consent form

CONSENT FORM

Study Name: Food and the City

Name of Researcher: Mr Chris Yuill (The Robert Gordon University, Aberdeen).

Please initial box.

1.	I confirm that I have read and understand the Information Sheet dated....., for the above study. I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily.	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.	I agree to take part in the above study.	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.	I agree to the interview being recorded on Dictaphone.	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.	I agree that anything I may say during the course of the interview may be used as anonymous quotes in any presentation of the research [verbal presentation or paper publication].	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.	I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason.	<input type="checkbox"/>

Name of Respondent

Signature

Date:

Researcher

Signature

Date:

1 to remain with Participant

1 for Researcher

This study is part funded by the MacRobert Trust.

Appendix 4: Information sheet



Information about the research

Food and the City

An invitation to participate

We would like to invite you to participate in this research project. Before you decide whether you would like to take part, please read the information about the project and feel free to ask questions about anything that you are not sure about.

Why are we doing this research?

We believe that living in a city creates a certain relationship with our food: influencing how think about food, what and when we eat, who we eat with, and how we go about buying our food. We want to know more about those relationships and how those relationships influence our biology and affect our health and bodies.

Who is doing the research?

The research is being carried out by academic researchers from the Robert Gordon University in Aberdeen. All are experienced researchers who have

looked at a wide range of social and health issues. The research is being funded partly by the MacRobert Trust and partly by Robert Gordon University.

Who can take part in this research?

We are looking for particular people to help us with our research, as follows:

- Aged between 25-40
- Do not have any children
- Live in either the Garthdee or Cults areas of Aberdeen.
- Are not aware of having any issues or problems with eating (for example eating disorders such as anorexia)
- Live in either the Garthdee or Cults areas of Aberdeen.

What does the research involve?

There are two ways in which we will ask you to help us.

The first way is to try to get some basic health information about yourself and your body. You will be asked for a blood sample so we can establish some indicators of health and then invite you to participate in a body scan in order to assess body size.

The second way is to be interviewed for a maximum of forty minutes and asked questions about food in your life; for example: where and when you eat, why you choose certain foods, where you purchase your food and what food means to you.

Any information gathered will be strictly confidential and your identity will be kept anonymous. You are not required to answer any questions you do not want and you are free to leave the research at any point.

By helping us with the above we can gather a rounded rich set of information that encapsulates a wide range of information helping us to understand food and the city in as wide and as deep a context as possible.

What will we do with the research?

The main finding will be published in a report that will be available for anyone to inspect and will also be sent to local and national health authorities. The research may also be published in academic journals to help further wider research in this area.

Who has reviewed this research?

The research has been reviewed by the Robert Gordon University Ethics Committee and they have given permission for the research to proceed.

What if I am unhappy about any aspect of taking part in this study?

Everything will be done to make sure that you are not inconvenienced and that we have protected your rights but, if you are concerned or unhappy about any aspects of the study, please contact **Chris Yuill** ☎01224 263379 or 📧c.yuill@rgu.ac.uk, who is the principal investigator for this research.