

MSc Thesis

The Difficulties of Participating in
an AFN: The Gap Between Value
and Action

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Date: April 2019
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ABSTRACT

Consumers can find local and unique food in alternative food networks (AFNs). These consumers however must often compromise in convenience, price or limited choice. Some consumers can make these compromises while other consumers stop participating in an AFN or do not start to participate. The goal of this research is to find out what makes some consumers participate in an AFN while other do not start or stop to participate in an AFN.

The theoretical framework that is used for this research is the value action gap. This theory tries to find the reason why the action of people not always correlates with the values of that person. An important article about the value action gap by Blake (1999) has been used in particularly for this research. This article introduces a model which helps to categories different types of barriers (Individuality, Responsibility and Practicality) and origins of these barriers (Individual or Social/Institutional. For this research a case study is chosen on Rechtstreex (an AFN from Rotterdam, The Netherlands). Surveys and interviews have been used to collect data from the consumers of Rechtstreex.

The most important type of barriers that consumers at Rechtstreex experience are practical barriers. These barriers occur because of the limited and fixed hours to collect the groceries at a pickup point of Rechtstreex. The consumers find it hard to plan these fixed time frames in their busy weekly agenda. The barrier is not experienced evenly difficult by every single consumer. This has to do with external constrains that influence the barrier. These external constrains could be the distance that somebody lives from a pickup point. Other reasons could be fluctuating work hours or a busy family life. The constrains could be classified as institutional because Rechtstreex as an institution has little pickup points with limited opening hours. But the constraints could also be classified as social constrains due to the social circumstances of an individual. On the same time the results of this research show that the level of motivation is determining as well on how consumers experience the barriers of an AFN. Stronger motivations lead to a different attitude towards the barriers. The consumers that show these stronger motivations seem to be more willing to invest time and effort to shop at the AFN.

Consumers that express to value food from an AFN do not always perform the action of participating in an AFN. Different (practical) barriers stand in between the consumer and the action. External constrains and the level of motivation play an important role for a consumer to overcome the barriers that lead to the action of participating in an AFN.

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1 Introduction

1.1 Problem statement

Food became increasingly commodified over the last 50 years (Gomez, 2013). Food is being produced and sold all around the world where before food was produced on a smaller and a more local scale (Gomez, 2013). An important reason for this change is the green revolution which took place between 1950 and the late 1960s (Paddock, 1970). Many new techniques and farming practices got implemented in this time which allowed rapid growth in production. Another important reason is the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) which was signed in 1948. The GATT allowed global trade between 23 countries, this allowed to import and export food commodities more freely across the borders in the GATT region (European Commission, 1996). This global trade of food required more stakeholders in between the farmer and the consumer. The so-called food value chain (FVC) became increasingly longer. The FVC exists of: *'All the stakeholders who participate in the coordinated production and value-adding activities that are needed to make food products'* (FAO, 2014).

Having more stakeholders in between the farmer and the consumer led to a certain loss of autonomy that farmers had in the past (Narotzky, 2016). The types of crops grown by the farmers became heavily influenced by the market demand of mighty stakeholders in the form of large food manufacturers. Certain local products were no longer relevant to the market demand and farmers stopped producing them. This caused a loss of knowledge of certain local products and production methods, resulting in a loss of local culture (Coolsaet, 2016). A longer FVC also has impact on the side of the consumer, the longer FVC made it harder for consumers to trace how and where their food was being produced (Haratifar, 2015). The disconnection between farmers and consumers due to the longer FVC made it necessary for consumers to trust manufactures and retailers to provide them with safe and healthy food. Scandals in the food system, like misleading labelling and outbreak of diseases like E. coli, BSE and dioxins challenged the trust of consumers resulting in an increased demand for more traceability (Bromley, 2001; Boritb, 2013). Dimara & Skuras (2005) argue that not only healthy and safe food is the driver for traceability, but also the nostalgic feeling of eating real and authentic food adds value to the traceability of food.

For some consumers, the FVC between farmer and consumer and the types of products that come out of that FVC are reasons to look for alternatives of food provision (Michaela, 2016). These alternatives are called 'alternative food networks' (AFNs). Some examples are: farmers markets, box schemes and community supported agriculture (CSA). There are different AFN concepts and there is therefore not one definition that captures all characteristics. However, Tregear (2011) argues that there are four common characteristics that can be found in each concept.

1. The food that is sold is produced, processed and retailed in a certain area. Resulting in short, transparent chains between producer and consumer. Also, the local produced products represent in a way the local culture of the area of production.
2. Most of the price paid for food ends up at the producer, making it more economically viable for a farmer to produce.
3. There is an aim to produce food in an environmentally friendly way by low input farming practices and reduced food miles.
4. There is contact between the producer and the consumer creating mutual understanding between them.

In addition to these factors, Forssell and Lankoski (2015) argue that food quality is also a common characteristic we see in AFNs.

AFNs are perceived to have the potential of being a sustainable alternative to the global food system because of the social, economic and environmental benefits when connecting farmers directly to consumers (Brunori and Bartolini, 2013 in Del Giudice, 2015). The direct relation between producer and consumers reduces the food miles (Galli and Brunori, 2013) but also increases the mutual understanding between producer and consumer (Migliore et al., 2014). The relation between consumer and producer increases the social embeddedness of both the producer and consumers which strengthens the community where the AFN is located (Migliore et al., 2014).

Within the research on AFNs we see numerous motivations for a consumer to participate. The observed consumer motivations do not always correlate to the common AFN characteristics mentioned by Tregear (2011) (page 3). For example, the research by Le Trobe (2001) focused on farmers markets in the UK showed that 'better price' is the main motivation to participate both for consumers and for sellers. Only 3% of the consumers came to the farmers market to support local farmers. Another research from Brown (2009) about box schemes showed motivations which relate more to the earlier mentioned AFN characteristics listed by Tregear (2011). The research by Brown (2009) showed that consumers in the UK have local products as number one motivation to participate in a box scheme. The environmentally friendly way of producing scores high as well with its participants. Brown (2009) did the same study in France and found quality to be the main motivation for the French consumers while this was one of the least mentioned motivation for the consumers in the UK. The motivations to join an AFN therefore seem to differ within different countries, but also within AFN concepts different motivations are observed.

AFN consumers experience certain barriers as well when participating in an AFN. Research from McEachern et al. (2010) showed that consumers at farmers markets are willing to let go their principles of shopping for local products in exchange for the price and time advantage they get when shopping in the supermarket. The work of Brown (2009) also showed that price is one of the most important barriers for box schemes consumers in the UK and in France. The same research of Brown (2009) shows that the inconvenience of the limited choice of products in a box scheme comes forward as an important barrier to participate. Compromises in convenience are difficult to make for a consumer as convenience plays an important role in food choices (Falk et al., 1996). Compromising in convenience is found as one of the limiting factors for AFNs to increase its share in the food market (Crabtree et al., 2012). At the same time, it is shown that only few consumers take ethical factors in account while shopping (Carrigan and Attalla, 2001). This makes it hard for AFNs to become more integrated in the foodscape. In the US for example there has been a growing interest among consumers for locally produced food. Despite this growing interest, 97% of the food in the US is still being sold through the global FVC (Woods et al., 2013).

The lagging action of more food consumption through AFNs could be partly explained to the barriers like convenience, price and limited choice that have been found in current research. Still there are consumers that do commit themselves to an AFN and participate in one. It is not clear why some consumers do perform the action that is expected from a certain motivation while the motivations of some consumers do not lead to that action.

1.2 Research Goal

Consumers can find local and unique food in an AFN. These consumers however must compromise in for example convenience, price or limited choice. Previous research found many reasons for consumers to participate in an AFN (Le Trobe, 2001; Brown, 2009; Tregear, 2011). These motivations do however not always lead to the action of shopping in an AFN. The goal of this research is to find out what makes some consumers participate in an AFN while other do not start or stop to participate in an AFN. It is important to see what the barriers are while participating in an AFN and why the barriers are hard to overcome for some, and easier for others. Besides the barriers, an overview of what motivates consumers is made as well. The combination of knowledge on the motivations for AFN consumers and knowledge on the barriers will give a comprehensive impression of what drives AFN consumers and what hinders AFN consumers from participating in AFNs. This information can be useful for new AFN concepts to find existence in the current food production and retail market but also for policy makers that wish to influence consumers to seek for AFNs.

The **main research question** for this thesis is:

- *'What motivations and difficulties do AFN consumers experience while shopping in an AFN and how does this influence shopping behaviour in the AFN?'*

To answer this main question there are several sub questions that needs to be answered:

1. *What kind of consumers shop at AFNs?*

A quick inventory is made about AFN consumers in general as it will help to understand who the AFN consumers are in general. Important here are details like: age, income, gender and household size.

2. *What motivates consumers to participate in an AFN and where does this motivation come from?*

The research on AFNs already showed that motivations to shop at AFNs differ per concept and differ per country (Brown, 2009). With this sub question it is important to not just identify what motivates a consumer, but also where the motivation comes from. This way a motivation gets more meaning. Brown (2009) found for example that in France the quality of food was the main motivation to shop at a selected AFN. It could for example be due to the food culture in France that the French consumers find this the main motivation.

3. *What barriers do AFN consumers while participating in an AFN and why is this for some consumers more negative than for others?*

Previous research did show that convenience and price are often named as a limiting factor within AFN participation (Brown, 2009; McEachern et al., 2010). Still some consumers are willing to invest extra time and money in the purchasing of food through an AFN. Do these people have more time and money than other consumers? Or are there other reasons for this? This sub question will help to understand this.

4. *Are there differences observed in the motivations and barriers experienced by active consumers and AFN consumers that used to be active?*

This final sub research question will use the finding from sub research questions 2 and 3 to see if these findings differ among the more active and the less active AFN consumers. This information helps to see what impact motivations and barriers have on the actual participation in an AFN.

2 Theoretical Framework

2.1 Value Action Gap

During this research, the value action gap will be used to gain an answer to the research questions. The value action gap has been defined by the Sustainable Development Commission (2006, pp. 63) as *'the observed disparity between people's reported concerns about key environmental, social, economic or ethical concerns and the lifestyle or purchasing decisions that they make in practice'*. Simply said by Blake (1999, pp. 275): *'I use the phrase 'value-action gap' to signify in general terms the differences between what people say and what people do'*. The value action gap is for example widely used in the domain of environmental behaviour (Blake, 1999). In this domain, a large part of the population agrees on the problem of climate change, however a far smaller proportion of the population is taking the action that is in their power (Park et al., 2002; Stradling et al., 2008). Outside the field of environmental behaviour, it is also seen that values of an individual are not a guarantee for action (Gregory et al., 1995). This contradiction of valuing something, but not acting towards it, is the value action gap.

Looking deeper into the value action gap it is important to deconstruct the term 'value'. Sagiv and Roccas (2017, pp. 3) state the following definition: *'Values are cognitive representations of basic motivations. They are abstract, desirable goals, relatively stable over time and across situations'*. Some examples of values related to food could be: safety, nutrition, fairness or taste (Lusk & Briggeman, 2009). The importance of a value varies per person. The more important a value is to someone, the more likely that he or she will act in ways that encourages that value (Schwartz 1992). Values do therefore predict behaviour in a certain way, but it is not a given that individuals always act according to their values. This will be explained in the next paragraph. The stronger an individual values something will however increase the chance that an individual act towards this value. The research by Lusk & Briggeman (2009) shows for example a correlation between consumers that value naturalness, fairness and the environment versus the likeliness that these consumers buys organic products. The same consumers also show more willingness to pay for organic food.

Research argues that besides values, also external constraints play an important role in the action of an individual (Gregory et al., 1995). These external constraints can be different social, economic, demographic, and political contexts (Gregory et al., 1995). An individual does not have direct control over these external constraints. The external factors determine that somebody will act differently depending on the surrounding or situation he or she is in. Some people for example let go their principles of not eating meat when they are out with friends, while they would not choose to eat meat when they are by themselves. This way the external factor of not being at home or surrounded by certain people makes an individual not act towards its values. Certain 'actions' can also be hard as well to perform by some individuals because they do not fit into their daily routines (Barr and Gilg, 2006). Being used to do things a certain way makes it hard to change them, even if they would make more sense with the values of an individual.

In the field of environmental behaviour, we see much research done with the value action gap (Blake, 1999). Participating in an AFN has certain overlap with environmental behaviour. It can therefore be useful to investigate the current research done on the value action gap in environmental behaviour. In both cases of environmental behaviour and AFN participations, consumers often must compromise by paying a higher price, investing more time or compromise in convenience to reach the valued goal. There is a consideration between the value of somebody and the compromise that the person needs to

make. There are of course situations that the most environmentally conscious behaviour is also the most convenience, time- or moneysaving option. Think for example about public transport options over traveling by car in certain busy city centres. In general however, we see that without valuing an environmental goal or being triggered in another way, an individual would not be likely to perform environmentally conscious behaviour (Blake, 1999). Individuals are on the other hand not likely to perform environmental behaviour if constraints like price or convenience are overly dominant (Young et al., 2010). The same applies for understanding shopping behaviour in AFNs during this research. When shopping in an AFN there also is a trigger from the consumer that makes them search for an AFN while they must compromise in for example price or convenience (limited opening hours or limited amount of choice). Environmental behaviour is still not completely the same as participation in an AFN. It can be argued that environmental behaviour is done for altruistic reasons like preventing climate change. This altruistic goal does not help an individual directly but severs more a global goal of preventing climate change. Joining an AFN could be purely for somebodies' egoistic reasons like personal health or better tasting food. Having said this, AFNs do also attract individuals because of the environmental impact due to low intensive farming methods or reduced food miles (Del Giudice, 2016). The research of Brown (2009) also showed that the most mentioned motivations to join an AFN were for altruistic reasons.

One interesting concept from the field of environmental behaviour is the work by Blake (1999). He asked respondents to identify things that prevented them from environmental action. He labelled the answers and found three categories of barriers that captured the answers of the respondents: Individuality, responsibility, and practicality. He visualized the answers in figure 1.

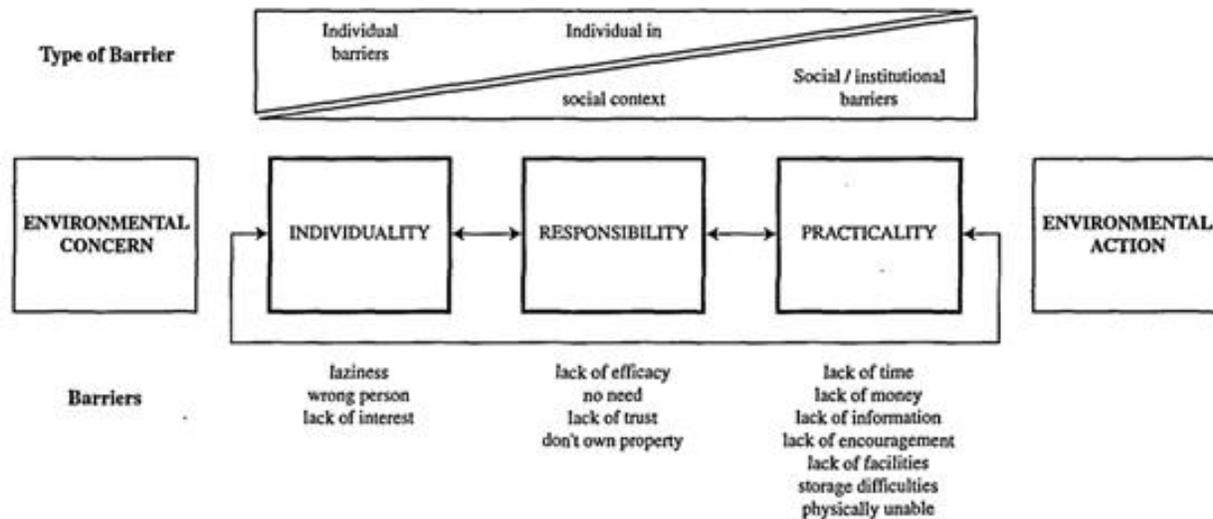


Figure 1 Barriers for Environmental Action – (Blake 1999)

Individuality relates to the barriers linked to the personal attitudes and skills of a person. Lacking any skills or having the wrong attitude will result in barriers to action. The responsibility barriers refer to the extent that an individual feels responsible for a certain action. This relates more to the larger things that do not have direct effect on an individual. In the case of food production, it could for example relate to fair wages for farmers. An individual could not feel responsible for this as this should be addressed by labour laws from governments. And practical barriers relate to a lack of time, facilities or money. The barrier can also be by physical problems. The figure makes it possible to organize different barriers related to an action. Blake used this model to categorize barriers related to environmental action, but in

this research the model will be used to categorize the barriers that are mentioned by AFN participation. The different types of barriers (individuality, responsibility and practicality) will help to identify whether the barriers to AFN participation origin more from the side of the individual, or origin more from the social/institutional side. This difference in individual or social/institutional is visualized on the top of figure 1.

The figure from Blake (1999) will help to identify the barriers that prevent action of participating in an AFN. At the same time the values from the AFN participants will be measured to see if stronger values lead to more active participation in AFNs. This as Schwartz (1992) found that more important values are likely to lead to action. Knowing the two elements of barriers and values towards AFN participation can help to answer the main research question: *'What motivations and difficulties do AFN consumers experience while shopping in an AFN and how does this influence shopping behaviour in the AFN?'*

3 Methods

3.1 Case Study

This research makes use of a case study in order to find an answer to the main research question and the sub research questions. This method of a case study is chosen because a case study can provide in-depth insights about an appearance in its natural setting (Cresswell et al., 2011). The selected case study for this research is Rechtstreex, an AFN based in Rotterdam. The case study offers access to a large and diverse group of participants. There are differences in age, education level, income and household composition. Also, there are participants who have been with Rechtstreex for a couple of years, making them very experienced AFN consumers. Besides the experienced consumers we also find many consumers who did participate but have stopped using the AFN. It is therefore interesting to have access to two different groups of consumers, making it able to compare the two groups.

In 2015 Rechtstreex expanded its business to Utrecht and Eindhoven but after one year they were forced to stop. The main reason was a lack of orders coming in which made the platform not financially feasible. They are now only based in Rotterdam and aim to expand slowly in Rotterdam and its surroundings. Rechtstreex already has a lot of data was available from their side about their consumers. This data was made available for this research and will be elaborated on in the next paragraphs.

During the case study multiple research methods is used. Each method and motivation for the method will be further explained but first an introduction to the case study is given.

3.2 Rechtstreex

3.2.1 Introduction

The selected case is Rechtstreex. Rechtstreex is an AFN based in Rotterdam, The Netherlands. The concept started in 2013 with a mission to create a local food system. They do this by only working with suppliers that are in a 50 km radius from Rotterdam. This way Rechtstreex offers fresh and seasonal products from Rotterdam and surrounding areas. The offer of Rechtstreex consists of everyday groceries like fresh vegetables, fruits, bread, meat and dairy products. They also have some more exclusive products in the assortment like local jams, honey and drinks (Retrieved from <https://www.rechtstreex.nl/> 11-10-2018)).



Figure 2: Picture from the website of Rechtstreex with their logo and some of the products

Rechtstreex works as transparent as possible. Consumers can see who produced the products, in what way (organic, biodynamic or conventional) and where this producer is located. Often a link to a website or other contact details from the producer are provided so that the consumers learn more about the food producer that they are buying from. The communication about prices is created in a way that remains as transparent as possible. A clear breakdown of the pricing is communicated on the website.

From each euro spent a share of 57ct will end up at the producer, 37ct to Rechtstreex and the remaining 6ct is VAT.

3.2.2. The method of ordering

The consumers of Rechtstreex can only order the products online. They go to the website of Rechtstreex and choose the items which they like to order. The selection of products changes on a weekly basis depending on the season and the availability of the products. Once a consumer finished the order, he or she will select a pickup point where the groceries can be collected from. The pickup points vary in location and in ordering- and opening hours. The hours to order are fixed in two time slots, each pick up point will offer one of the two time slots or both time slots:

Table 1 Time slots that consumers can order at Rechtstreex

Moments to order		
Slot 1	Start: Monday 14:00	End: Wednesday 10:00
Slot 2	Start: Friday 16:00	End: Monday 10:30

At this moment there are about 25 different pickup points in and around Rotterdam. Rechtstreex collects the order from the producers and will bring it to the pickup point once the order deadline has passed. Consumers pick up the groceries between limited opening hours. The opening hours differ per pickup point. Some points offer opening hours of only two and half hours, while other pickup points offer opening hours in two time slots spread over two days. Some of the pickup points only offer hours during the day while others offer hours in the evening. Again, some pickup points offer both options. The location and offered time frame of collection plays an important role in the convenience for the consumers.

The groceries arrive in bulk at each pickup point. Here the consumer must weight out his or her order from the bulk, although at some pickup points this is done by the manager of the pickup point. Also, it differs per pickup point how a consumer pays for his or her order. There are two options: the consumer pays by card at the pickup point or the consumer receives an invoice by email.

3.2.3. Pickup points

The pickup points are outsourced to local entrepreneurs which are called ‘wijkchefs’ (which can be translated as ‘neighbourhood manager’). The wijkchefs can be already existing businesses like a shop or restaurant offering it as an extra service on the side. However, the pickup point can also be run by an individual from home or from a communal space like a school. The wijkchefs are the first, and often only, people of Rechtstreex that a consumer sees after they placed an order online. The wijkchefs therefore have an important role as well to represent Rechtstreex and to make the consumer feel welcomed by Rechtstreex.

3.3 Surveys

Rechtstreex has collected data from its consumers through different surveys to learn more about their consumers and how these consumers experience shopping at Rechtstreex. The data from these surveys have been made available for this research. Some of the studied survey questions are asking why the consumers start to order at Rechtstreex and what is found positive about Rechtstreex. These questions and answers helped to find the motivation for AFN participation. The survey also asked customers about

what they do not like about their experience with Rechtstreex. These answers helped to identify barriers that Rechtstreex consumers experience. The outcome of the survey is also used to select candidates and the direction for the second research method: interviews (see section 3.4). The interviews will be elaborated on later, first the set-up of the surveys and the way that the surveys are used will be explained.

There are different smaller surveys sent to different groups of consumers and one larger survey sent to all consumers of Rechtstreex. This larger survey has been used to get information of the whole population of consumers within Rechtstreex. The survey was not designed especially for this research, however it still holds useful data on the consumers like: age, income and household size. But, also information on how consumers do their grocery shopping outside of Rechtstreex and how they experience their grocery shopping in and outside of Rechtstreex. All the answers for this survey were multiple choice. The outcome of the survey has been shared for this research and not the data set. This way it was for example not possible to see what one age group of consumers answered to a question on motivations. In total 250 respondents replied to the survey. This number of respondents allows to provide quantitative data on the Rechtstreex consumers. In the rest of the thesis this survey will be referred as: **general survey**.

The smaller surveys have been sent to the following five groups of consumers on different moments during their time as customer of Rechtstreex. The whole datasets of the smaller surveys have been provided for this research. This made it possible to see what answers each individual consumer gave to each question.

Table 2 Groups of consumers survey Rechtstreex

Group Name	Type of Group	Number of respondents
A	Consumers who made their twelfth order	101
B	Consumers who used to order, but have not ordered for the last 60 days	558
C	Consumers who are registered to the newsletter of Rechtstreex but have never ordered	61
D	Consumers who made their first order	135
E	Consumers who made their second order	445

The five surveys differ from each other. However, the surveys sent to group A and group B have similar questions on topics such as: how they got to know Rechtstreex, shopping behaviour, motivations and barriers that they experienced while shopping at Rechtstreex. Group A consists of consumers which have a relatively long history with Rechtstreex as they have placed at least twelve orders. This group is seen as the group that is more experienced than the consumers of group B. Group B consists of consumers that used to order at Rechtstreex but did not continue. The two groups are in contrast between each other as the consumers in group A continued to shop at Rechtstreex while the consumers in group B probably had a reason to stop ordering. This makes it possible to see whether there are differences in the motivations of group A and B and to see how consumers experience the barriers between the two groups. Most of the questions have multiple choice answers. This makes it possible to quantify the answers and to make comparisons between the groups of consumers. Consumers could fill in one or more answers for the multiple-choice questions. There are also questions that allow a written motivation by the respondents to get better understanding of the reasoning of the answers. Where possible, open answers have been quantified as well in order to make the answers comparable with

each other. In the rest of this thesis, the survey that is sent to group A will be referred to as: **Survey A** and the survey sent to group B will be referred to as: **Survey B**.

Group C consists of consumers that have not yet participated in Rechtstreex. This way they do not have experience with participating in the AFN. Their answers to the survey have therefore not been looked at during this research. Besides that, survey B provided enough respondents to get insights in the experienced barriers within the participation at Rechtstreex. The surveys sent to group D and E have also not been looked at. These groups of consumers will sooner or later become either consumers of Group A when they keep ordering from Rechtstreex or become part of Group B once stopping to order for 60 days. Besides that, the consumers of Group D and Group E are relatively unexperienced with Rechtstreex after only placing one or two orders. So, in this research the general survey provides data that represents the whole population of consumers of Rechtstreex and the Survey A and Survey B provide the of two groups within the whole population of consumers of Rechtstreex.

The surveys have been analysed prior to the next research method: interviews (explained in 3.4). Analysing the surveys prior to the interviews allowed to go into the interviews with knowledge about the consumers of Rechtstreex. This way the interviews could be used to gain data that was missing from the surveys and to get deeper knowledge from the answers of the surveys. The analysis of the surveys has also been used to select candidates for the interviews. The questions and answers that were found useful from the general survey, survey A and survey B have been selected at first during the analyzation phase. The answers to each question were grouped and created into figures and graphs to visualize the survey outcomes. This gave insights who the consumers of Rechtstreex are. Additionally, this also gave the opportunity to draw the first conclusions on what the motivations and the barriers are for the consumers of Rechtstreex to participate. These first findings helped to make the first steps to see why the value action gap excites among the AFN participants.

3.4 Interviews

3.4.1 Semi-structured-interviews

Semi-structured interviews have been used as the second method to gather information from the Rechtstreex consumers. This method is chosen to gather in depth qualitative information which goes further than the answers given by the consumers in the surveys. Reason for this is to better understand the motivations of consumers to participate as well as the barriers to not participate. It also helps to give the answers from the survey more meaning by hearing the story behind the indicated answers during the surveys. The method of semi-structured interviews allows freedom in the interviews for these stories.

3.4.2 Interview structure

The outcome of the survey was used to guide the structure of the interviews. All the interviews done had a similar main structure. The interviews started by a small introduction to the research. Within the introduction the theoretical framework was not specifically explained as it could influence the way the interviewees formulated their answers. This was sometimes explained in more detail after the interview if the interviewee showed interest in the more scientific reasoning behind the interviews. It was also specified in the introduction that each interviewee remained anonymous and that the interview was recorded. After this introduction the interviews started with general questions on for example the age, household number, if the interviewee was working and how many hours a week. This data was not visible from survey A and survey B and helped to form a first image of who was interviewed.

The interview continued with a theme that focused on the shopping experience at Rechtstreex. In this part the interviewees were asked to motivate their answers from the survey to get better understanding why they filled in their answers. This because it was not always clear from the results of the survey why somebody filled in a certain answer. The answers that the interviewed consumer filled in during the survey were taken to each interview to ask for the motivations. These underlying motivations to the survey answers gave more depth to the results of the survey. The consumers were asked to motivate the positive sides experienced during shopping at Rechtstreex as well as the negative sides experienced at Rechtstreex. This way it became clear why consumers had certain motivations and barriers to shop at Rechtstreex.

The next part of the interview continued with questions about eating behaviour. Were the motivations expressed in the previous theme also expressed in other eating behaviour? Also questions were asked on how consumers plan their groceries of the week. The concept of Rechtstreex requires a certain amount of planning which is not easy for everyone. More insight in how the consumers plan their groceries could help to see if this fits in the concept of Rechtstreex. This could help to explain why some consumers struggle more with the planning aspect of shopping at Rechtstreex.

The final theme was about the values of the consumers. This part of the interview had the goal to identify the values of the interviewee. The questions mainly focussed on values around food like: natural, healthy or taste. But also more general values of that person were asked like sustainability and equality. The aim for this is to measure the values of the interviewees. Did somebody who joined Rechtstreex for natural and sustainable products also show other sustainable behaviour like for example recycling? This would give more strength to the value that this person has about sustainability. The stronger somebody values something, the more likely it is that somebody will act towards this value (Schwartz 1992). So, if the consumers already show behaviour in line with the same value expressed in the previous part of the interview, it could be argued that this value is strong within this individual and is an important indicator for the showed participation within Rechtstreex.

3.5.3 Interview candidates

The candidates selected for the interviews arise from the surveys sent to Group A and Group B. In total ten interviewees have been selected: five from Group A and five from Group B. The data from survey A and survey B did not show demographic information like age, income or education level. This made it not possible to select a diverse group of candidates based on age, income or education level. The interviewees from Group A were therefore selected randomly. There was a selection in Group B as some consumers of Group B did not order anymore because they moved to the other side of the Netherlands or even abroad. For them it was obvious why they did not order anymore and therefore their answers are of less interest. These consumers were not invited for an interview.

The interviewees are both men and women with ages varying between 33 and 82. The household compositions vary and include households with and without partners and households with and without children. All the interviewees have a higher education and work or have worked in the field which they have studied (some of them have retired). They are all currently living in Rotterdam or with a radius from Rotterdam as this is the area in which Rechtstreex is active.

Table 3 below gives an overview of the ten interviewees. The names of the interviewees have been held anonymous.

Table 3 Overview interviewees

INTERVIEWEE	GROUP	AGE	GENDER
1.1	A	45	Female
1.2	A	35	Female
1.3	A	48	Male
1.4	A	56	Male
1.5	A	68	Female
2.1	B	40	Male
2.2	B	82	Female
2.3	B	41	Female
2.4	B	33	Female
2.5	B	55	Male

The interviews were done face to face, recorded and transcribed. Two of the interviews however were done over the phone due to preferences by the interviewee or due to other circumstances.

3.5.4 Interview analyses

The transcribed interviews were first read again to get familiar with what has been said during the interviews. After this process each interview was read again and all valuable answers were marked and labelled in the main categories: values, barriers from the model of Blake (individuality, responsibility and practicality), shopping behaviour and the weekly planning (work, sports and other activities). All the answers from the same category were listed together in separate documents. These documents formed the data set for each theme presented in the next chapter. The interviews have been done in Dutch, the presented data was therefore be translated in English. The presentation of the data is done in the following chapter.

4. Results

The results of both the surveys and the interviews are presented in this chapter. The data from the surveys and the interviews are presented simultaneously but the data is divided in several different themes. The themes are structured in a way to create an overview and to answer the sub research questions one by one. At the end of each theme the sub research question is answered. After answering the sub research questions, it is possible to answer the main research question. This is done in chapter 5. The main research questions and the sub research questions were introduced in paragraph 1.2 but are presented again below as a reminder.

Sub research questions:

1. *What kind of consumers shop at AFNs?*
2. *What motivates consumers to participate in an AFN and where does this motivation come from?*
3. *What do AFN consumers find negative about participating in an AFN and why is this for some consumers more negative than for others?*
4. *Are there differences observed in the motivations and barriers experienced by active consumers and AFN consumers that used to be active?*

Main research question:

- *What motivations and difficulties do AFN consumers experience while shopping in an AFN and how does this influence shopping behaviour in the AFN?*

The results from this thesis will be presented in the following four themes:

1. General information on the Rechtstreex consumers
2. Motivations on Rechtstreex participation
3. Barriers to Rechtstreex participation
4. Overview differences consumers of group A and group B

4.1 General information on the Rechtstreex consumers

This theme will mainly focus on the general information from the Rechtstreex consumers like: age, income and family size. Furthermore, this theme will also discuss the grocery shopping behaviour. The data in this theme is taken from the general survey that was filled in by 250 consumers of Rechtstreex.

The first results on age, household size and gender are presented in the three pie charts below. Almost 75% of the households shopping at Rechtstreex are consisting of one- or two-person households. This makes it likely that most consumers of Rechtstreex do not have children or do not have children living at home anymore. Looking at the numbers on household compositions in Rotterdam and province of Zuid-Holland we see similar numbers on the household compositions of one- and two-person households between the consumers of Rechtstreex and the whole population of Rotterdam and Zuid-Holland (CBS, 2018). Furthermore only 4% of the Rechtstreex consumers is 25 years or younger. The other age groups are divided almost equally. A larger share of the population of Rechtstreex population is female.

Household composition

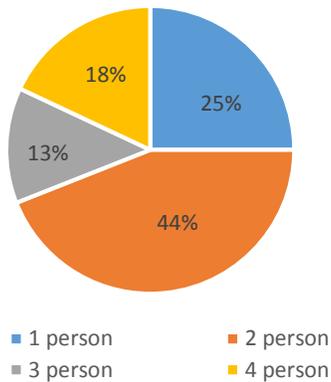


Figure 3 Household composition (general survey)

Age

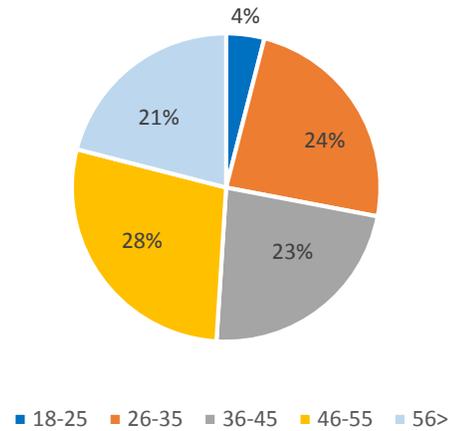


Figure 4 Age (general survey)

Gender

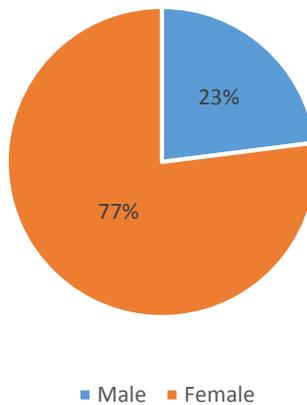


Figure 5 Gender (general survey)

The following two figures represent the income and education level of the Rechtstreex consumers. In total 83% of the consumers have a HBO or WO education. This number is far higher than the average population of the Netherlands as the national percentage is 28, and for Rotterdam this average is 27% (CBS, 2017). Other research on AFN participation shows as well that AFN participants are in general higher educated than the average population (Carzedda et al., 2018). The higher education level of the Rechtstreex consumers also translates in a higher average gross income than the average per household in the whole of Rotterdam which is around €2500 (CBS, 2016).

Education level

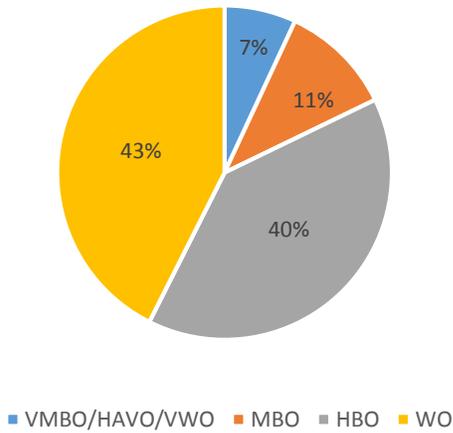


Figure 6 Education level (general survey)

Montly collective gross income

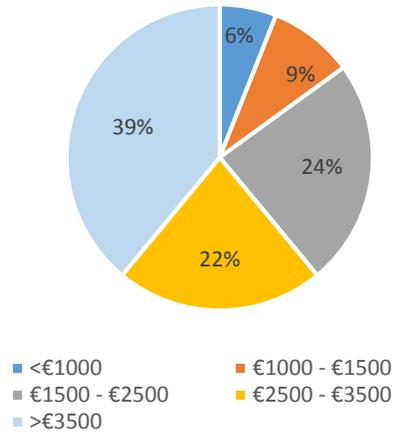


Figure 7 Monthly gross collective income (general survey)

The next data will tell more about the grocery shopping behaviour of the Rechtstreex consumers. The answers do not only relate to grocery shopping at Rechtstreex but also outside of Rechtstreex. Some of the questions in the general survey allowed multiple answers. The questions that allow multiple answers are indicated in the title of the figure that presents that outcome of that particular question.

How often do you do you buy groceries?

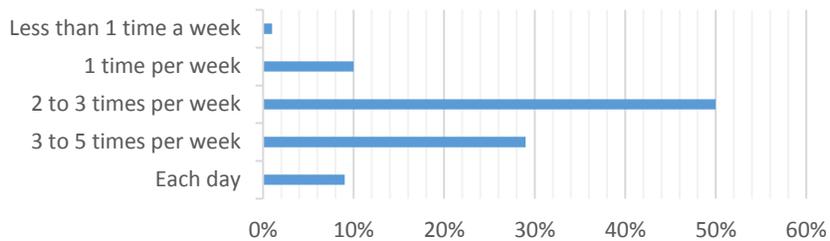


Figure 8 How often do you buy groceries? (general survey)

Where do you mostly buy your groceries? (Multiple answers possible)

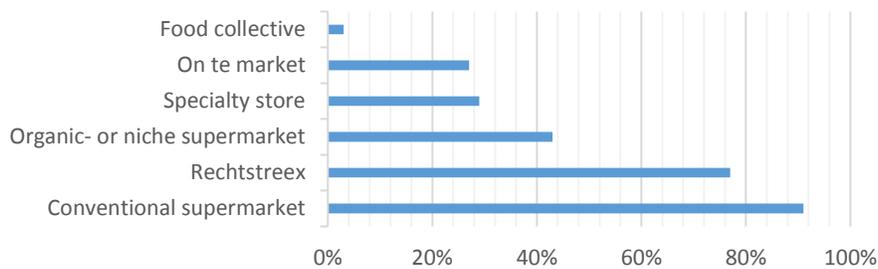


Figure 9 Where do you buy your groceries? (general survey)

From figure 8 and figure 9 it is visible that most of the consumers of Rechtstreex shop for groceries multiple times a week. The consumers also shop at more shops outside of Rechtstreex of which the conventional supermarket is the most popular destination. This could be due the fact that Rechtstreex offers the possibility to buy groceries only once or twice a week. It is however more likely that consumers shop multiple times a week at several shops because one shop does not offer all the products they need or that they do not want to plan all their groceries ahead for one week to remain flexbel. Some interviewees for example said:

“The days I eat at home vary a lot each week, but on average I do not eat at home two or three times a week” and “I find Rechtstreex the nicest supplier to get my groceries, I would shop there more if I could buy all the things I need” (interviewee 1.1)

&

“Because the products are mostly seasonal (at Rechtstreex) I will start to miss certain things. Then I will go to the Morrocan vegetable shop around the corner to get certain vegetables” (interwiewee 1.4)

For these consumers it is not possible to shop for all their needs at Rechtstreex, they therefore look for other places to find the things they look for. For interviewee 1.1 the varying times that she eats at home makes it hard to shop only at Rechtstreex as well. A last-minute change of plan will require the option to buy groceries right away, ordering food and picking it up two to three days later will not work out for this person at that time.

Looking at figure 9 it is easy to conclude that the conventional supermarket is the most common place to shop for groceries. This is because 91% of the questioned consumers shop at the conventinal supermarket. The organic and niche supermarkets are also popular among the consumers of Rechtstreex as 43% shops at organic or niche supermarkets. This 43% is relative high compared to the rest of the Netherlands as on average 9% of the population of the Dutch consumers shops at organic and niche grocerystores (Deloitte Accountantcy & Advies BV, 2015).

The next figure (10) shows some of the interest that the consumers have as it comes to shopping for groceries. Production method, origin and quality are three aspects that are important for the consumers of Rechtstreex. These characteristics are also the things where organic and niche stores have a focus on. This could explain why the organic and niche stores are popular among the consumers of Rechtstreex.

Where do you pay attention to when it comes to shopping for groceries? (multiple answers possible)

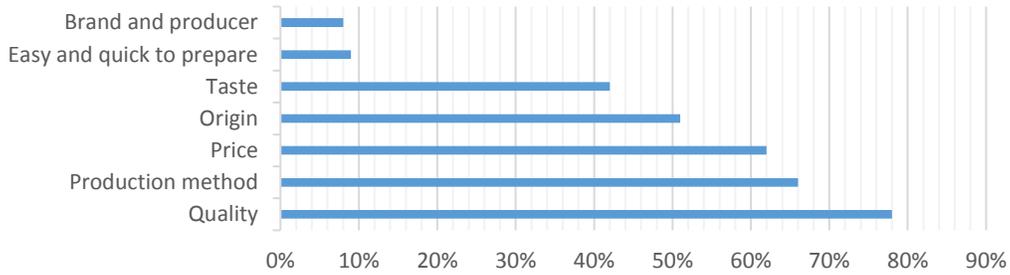


Figure 10 Where do you pay attention to when it comes to shopping for groceries? (general survey)

Furthermore, price is named as an important aspect as it comes to grocery shopping. The consumers of Rechtstreex seem to have little attention for certain product brands or groceries that require little time and effort to prepare. The interviews had a question whether the consumers enjoyed cooking or not. All the consumers expressed in the interviews that they enjoy cooking and have a skill for cooking. This explains why there is little attention for products that require little effort to prepare. The other aspects like quality, production method and price seem to be dominant over the effort to prepare or the brand that a product has.

The final figures of this theme (11 & 12) tell more about how often and what products the consumers of Rechtstreex buy. The figures show that most consumers shop for fruits and vegetables and order multiple times per month. Shopping every week at Rechtstreex can be difficult for some consumers as it requires time to be able to collect the groceries each week. Also, some consumers in the interviews indicated that they would forget to order during the time frame. This way the consumers had to wait another week again before they could place a new order.

How often do you order from Rechtstreex?

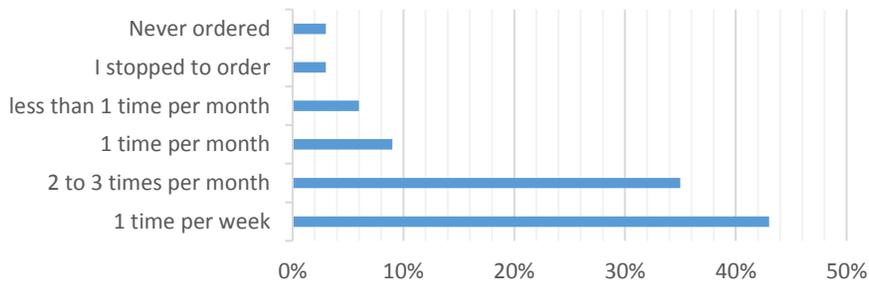


Figure 11 How often do you order from Rechtstreex? (general survey)

What products do you mainly order at Rechtstreex? (multiple answers possible)

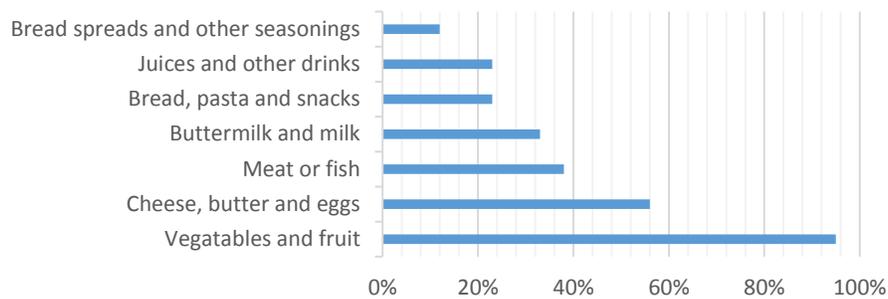


Figure 12 What products do you mainly order at Rechtstreex? (general survey)

Looking back at the sub research question: “*What kind of consumers shop at AFNs?*” It is possible to say that in the case of Rechtstreex a consumer on average is higher educated person that does not have children or his or her children do not live at home anymore. The average consumer values the quality, origin and production method of its food but, will also pay attention to the price. Brands or easy to prepare foods are not in their interest. The average consumer orders fruit and vegetables multiple times a month from Rechtstreex.

4.2 Motivations on Rechtstreex participation

4.2.1 Introduction

This theme goes deeper in why the consumers of Rechtstreex chose to join the AFN. The general survey helped to get a first impression of the motivations to join the AFN and the interviews explained more on the reasons behind these motivations. The goal from this theme is to relate the motivations of the Rechtstreex consumers to the theory of the value action gap and to answer the question: “*What motivates consumers to participate in an AFN and where does this motivation come from?*”. It is possible to link motivations to values as: “*values are cognitive representations of basic motivations. They are abstract, desirable goals, relatively stable over time and across situations*” (Sagiv and Roccas 2017, pp. 3). The motivations expressed by the consumers have been linked to the underlying value. The idea exists that the stronger an individual values something, the more likely it is that this individual acts towards this value (Schwartz, 1999). This idea is supported by research of Lusk & Briggeman (2009) who showed that consumers who have a strong value for naturalness, fairness and the environment are more likely to purchase organic food than individuals who shows less value for naturalness, fairness and the environment. The same can be argued for consumers that shop in an AFN. It is likely that AFN consumers show values like fairness, transparency and the environment because AFNs in general support these values. Chapter 4.2.2 will first give a first impression of the motivations that the consumers of Rechtstreex have. The first impressions are followed by an elaboration of the most important motivations.

4.2.2 First impression motivations

It was already visible in chapter 4.1 that the consumers of Rechtstreex find quality the main criteria for grocery shopping. This translates in the main motivation to shop at Rechtstreex (see figure 13). The

majority of the customers also seem to value the fact that Rechtstreex provides local products that generate a fair price for the producer.

For what reason do you order at Rechtstreex (multiple answers possible)

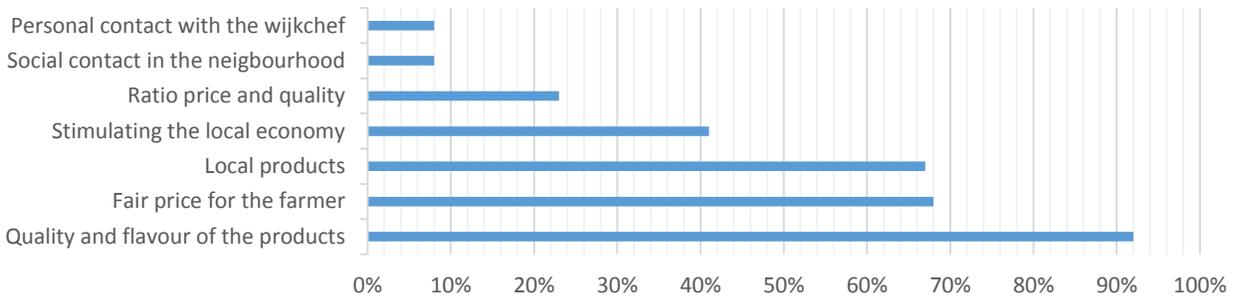


Figure 13 For what reason do you order at Rechtstreex? (general survey)

The social aspect of Rechtstreex that tries to create a stronger community within Rotterdam does not seem to be an important motivation for the consumers as less than 10% of the consumers orders from Rechtstreex for personal contact with their neighbourhood or wijkchef. On the other hand, we see that consumers give their wijkchefs on average a grade of 8.5 out of 10.

4.2.3 Quality and flavour of the products

The quality and flavour of the products of Rechtstreex are important motivations for the consumers to order at Rechtstreex. Quality has been an important motivation that is seen in more research on AFN participation (Brown, 2009). It is therefore not a surprise that this motivation scores high in this research as well. The interviews showed a general dislike against non-organic fruits and vegetables products that they find in the conventional supermarkets. Therefore, they look for alternatives in the form of Rechtstreex. Some interviewees mentioned:

“I like it a lot better to cook with an organic tomato instead of such a regular water bomb from the supermarket. For me it makes a big difference and it adds a lot more pleasure in cooking.” (Interviewee 1.2)

&

“Well... I find the vegetables in the supermarket so bad and that is because of all the in steps in between producer and the supermarket. It takes a long time before the vegetables reach the supermarket and I have to also pay for all these steps in between while the vegetables are rotten after just two days that I have them at home.” (Interviewee 1.4)

These consumers seem to find quality and taste an important value in the food they eat. They get more joy from eating foods of high quality and are very aware of the difference in quality between products. This value for quality in their food is not supported by the products they find in the conventional supermarket, making them go to Rechtstreex.

4.2.4 Local products

Why the consumers find local products important is not completely clear as local products could be consumed for different reasons. From the interviews it became clearer what those reasons to shop for local products are. Interviewee 1.3 motivated for example his choice for local products as follows:

“On the first place I find local products the most important. So, from the region. Fewer food miles, so less CO² emissions. In my life I often make decisions based on the environment. The environment plays an important role for me” (interviewee 1.3)

For him local products are associated to less food miles and therefore lower environmental impact. His value for the environment motivated him to look for local products. Environmental reasons have been named by most other interviewed consumers as well as a motivation to shop at Rechtstreex.

Another interviewee chooses local products for other reasons. She found products important that present the local culture of the region. She also appreciated local products as this way her diet followed the seasons of the year. The interviewee said in the interview:

“We (her and her husband) have been member of the Slow Food movement (international organisation that promotes local products that represent the culture of the region) We have put a lot of work into this organisation, because if you cook according to the seasons, this is also part of it” (Interviewee 1.5)

Interviewee 1.5 expressed in the interview as well that she joined the Slow Food movement to help local products in her region to get more attention. The same interviewee also likes to cook according to the season. By shopping at local farmers, she achieves this automatically because local farmers can only produce vegetables and fruits that are in the season. Only producers that use greenhouses could produce crops that are not in the season. Interviewee 1.5 looks for the cultural value that is represents in the food she eats.

Interviewee 2.3 found it particularly important to know where her products come from. The local products from Rechtstreex help to support this value of traceability. She mentioned:

“Origin is really important to me. When I am in the supermarket, I really read all the labels to see where the products come from. I won’t just buy any product.” (interviewee 2.3)

Overall there are different reasons for the consumers of Rechtstreex to shop for local products. The most important reason is not completely clear. Some consumers chose for local products because it is transparent where and how local food is produced, while others argue that local products are more environmentally friendly.

4.2.5 Fair price for the farmer

An important part of the Rechtstreex concept is generating a fair price for the farmer. Rechtstreex allocates 57% of their turnover to the producers they buy from. This seems to be not always known by all of the consumers of Rechtstreex, however the consumers overall do feel like Rechtstreex pays a fair price to their producers. Interviewee 1.4 answered to the question: “Do you feel that your participation at Rechtstreex adds to a fair price for the farmers?”

“I think so, but I cannot check it as I do not know about their prices. I do not know their prices are and what they pay to the producers. I do have the feeling that Rechtstreex provides a fair price.” (Interviewee 1.4)

&

“I do have the idea that I do so, but I am not sure if this is an illusion or not. I do have the feeling it adds to a better existence of the farmers.” (Interviewee 1.2)

Other interviewees did also express that they assumed the price for the farmers are fair but did not understand how much of price they paid goes to the farmers: *“...no idea how their price system works...” (Interviewee 2.1)* and *“I do get that feeling that Rechtstreex is doing a fair job for their farmers but I do not know exactly how they work” (Interviewee 2.5)*. Rechtstreex does have the goal to provide a transparent way of working and writes this on its website as well. It is however not always read by the interviewed consumers of Rechtstreex. The interviewed consumers still have a vague trust that Rechtstreex is doing the right thing.

There seem to be different reasons among the interviewed consumers on why the products they buy at Rechtstreex generated a better price for the farmers. Some found it a comforting idea that products come straight from the producer to the consumer. This way direct selling would automatically end in more profit for the farmers as fewer stations in between farmers and consumer.

“I think that the farmers will automatically have more profit because only Rechtstreex is in between them and me. For me this makes more sense because I want to pay for the food I buy and not for unnecessary transport between different stakeholders like packaging that I do not need” (Interviewee 2.5)

Other interviewed consumers had certain ideas about the positions of farmers in general. They enjoyed the fact that the farmers who supply Rechtstreex have a better negotiation position with Rechtstreex than with for example the supermarket. This was for the case for interviewee 1.4 as he said:

“In any case their farmers (the farmers of Rechtstreex) are not under the pressure of the supermarkets. That is what makes a difference for the farmers.” (interviewee 1.4)

So even though the interviewed consumers do not know exactly know the way that the turnover of Rechtstreex is distributed among its producers, the interviewed consumers still trust in Rechtstreex in providing an honest and fair job in paying their producers.

4.2.6 Overview values to participate in Rechtstreex

It is now possible to answer the sub research question: *“What motivates consumers to participate in an AFN and where does this motivation come from?”*. The results gave multiple reasons for consumers to participate in an AFN. Each paragraph summarizes one of these reasons. The final paragraph goes deeper into the second part of the sub research questions by showing origin of the motivations.

It became clear from the general survey that the quality and flavour of the products are the most important motivations for the consumers to shop at Rechtstreex. The consumers notice the difference in

quality and flavour between the food of Rechtstreex and the food in the conventional supermarket. Food seems to be an important part of the life of the Rechtstreex consumers. Good quality food therefore adds to more joy in cooking and eating.

Another important outcome from the survey is the fact that Rechtstreex provides local products. The consumers have different reasons why to shop for local products. Most of the interviewed consumers value the environment and see local food as the best way of eating environmentally friendly. Some other motivations have only been expressed by single interviewees. One consumer for example bought local food because she values a seasonal diet. The same consumer also buys local food as it represents the culture of her region. She feels closer connected to her local culture by eating the local food that Rechtstreex provides. For her the cultural value of food makes her consume local products. Finally, another interviewed consumer sees local food as a transparent way of consuming food. The local food makes the producer of her food tangible. She could for example drive past her food producer to see for herself how her food grows. The consumer values the transparency of food she consumes, making her look for local food products.

The last important motivation for the consumers to shop at Rechtstreex is to generate a fair price for farmers. The consumers value the fairness that the products of Rechtstreex bring to their farmers. Even though that most of the interviewed consumers expressed to not exactly know how Rechtstreex operated, still a trust existed among the consumers that Rechtstreex provided a fair price to its producers.

The motivations found in the general survey and the interviews can be linked to the current literature. This link can help to explain where the motivations from the consumers come from. Research on AFNs by Michaela (2016) shows that increased awareness of ecological, social and ethical problems associated around the conventional food system causes some consumers to look for AFNs. The consumers of Rechtstreex also show a certain awareness on problems associated with the conventional food system. A lack of quality of the conventional food system for example. Other research shows a link between values of individuals versus the likeliness of behaviour that supports these values. Lusk & Briggeman (2009) shown a correlation between consumers that value naturalness, fairness and the environment versus the likeliness that these consumers would buy organic products as organic products support these values. The same is seen in the consumers of Rechtstreex as they express certain values like the environment or food quality versus their behaviour of shopping at Rechtstreex.

Overall there are multiple motivations that lead to the action of shopping at Rechtstreex. The quality and taste of the food seems to be the most important one. The motivations to shop at Rechtstreex arises from a certain awareness that the Rechtstreex consumers have around the food they buy and eat. Also the values they express make them look for alternatives to the conventional food system.

4.3 Barriers to Rechtstreex participation

4.3.1 Introduction

This theme about barriers will go deeper in what consumers of Rechtstreex find negative about participating at Rechtstreex. The theme is structured similar as the chapter on the motivations. Foremost a first impression based on the general survey is given. In addition, also survey B has been used to get more knowledge on the barriers experienced by the consumers. The model of Blake (1999), that is discussed in chapter 2, is used to link each barrier to: individuality, responsibility or practicality.

The model also identified if the barriers are: individual, individual in social context or social/institutional. Using the model helped to understand what the barriers are and why the barriers experienced by the consumers. Finally, the results helped to answer the sub research question: “*What do AFN consumers find negative about participating in an AFN and why is this for some consumers more negative than for others?*”

4.3.2 First impression barriers

The general survey is used to get a first impression of the barriers that the consumers of RechtstreeX experience. Figure 14 presents the following outcome:

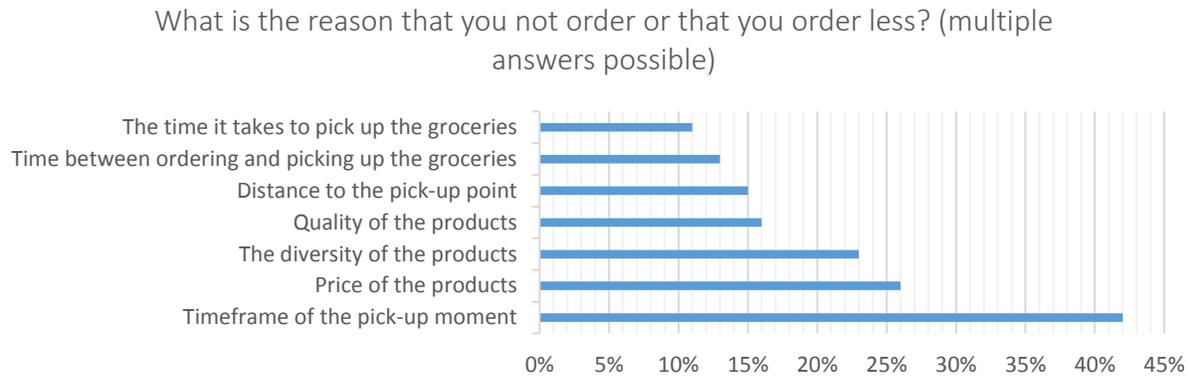


Figure 14 What is the reason that you not order or that you order less? (general survey)

The time frame for picking up the groceries is the biggest barrier for the consumers of RechtstreeX that answered the general survey. In the case of RechtstreeX this refers to the time that consumers have to collect the groceries they ordered two or three working days earlier. This timeframe differs per pickup point, for more details it is possible to read 3.2.3 of the methods chapter. The two most named answers that follow related to the price and the diversity of the products offered by RechtstreeX. The work of Brown (2009) on AFN participation showed the same answers. His work showed that the extra price and time it takes to participate in an AFN are the most limiting factors of participating in an AFN. The limited choice on products was also one of the most named answers in a research on box schemes by Brown (2009).

Interesting to see is that quality is named by 16% of the consumers in the general survey as a negative aspect of RechtstreeX. This is interesting because the consumers of RechtstreeX mention quality (and flavour) as the most important reason to order at RechtstreeX. The quality of the products is therefore both experienced negative as well as positive by the consumers of RechtstreeX. This chapter will go deeper into the reason behind the both negative and positive reasons behind the quality of the products.

Survey B has also been used for this section of the results chapter because it holds the questions: “*What is the reason that you do not order anymore?*”. The consumers had different answers to choose from than from the general survey. The answers are presented below in figure 15.

What is the reason you do not order anymore? (multiple answers possible)

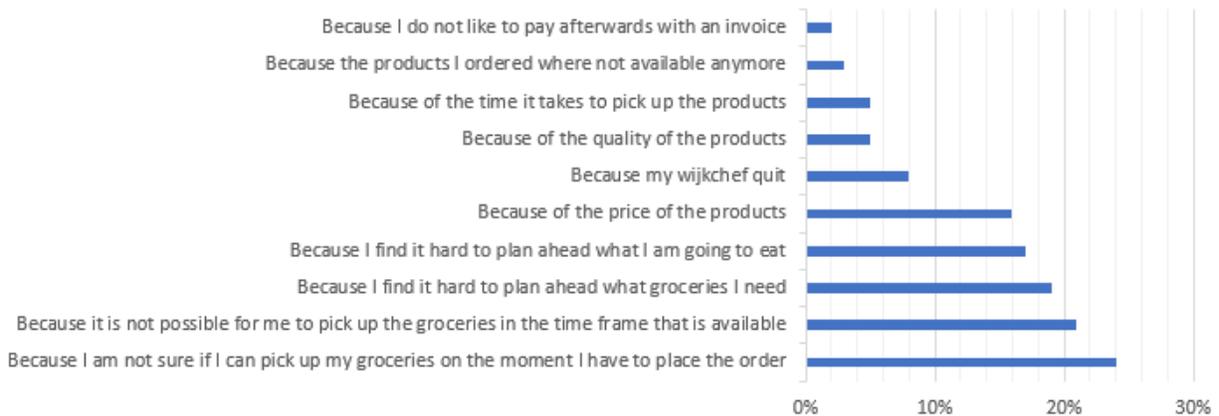


Figure 15 What is the reason that you do not order anymore? (Survey B)

Barriers related to picking up the groceries and planning the moment to pick up the groceries are like in the general survey the most indicated barriers. A second answer that was not used in the general survey is about the actual planning on what groceries a consumer wants to order in advance. This seems to be a great barrier for the consumers as it takes the third and fourth place as 17% of the consumers find it hard to plan what they will eat and 18% of the consumers find it hard to plan what groceries they will need. These consumers even expressed to stop ordering at Rechtstreex for this reason. Like in figure 14 it is possible to see that the price and quality also create a barrier for the consumers.

4.3.3 Picking up the groceries

The general survey and survey B showed that picking up the groceries causes issues for the consumers of Rechtstreex. There are several aspects that make collecting the groceries a barrier for the consumers. This barrier is linked to the distance from where the consumers live from the pickup point (travel time). But also, the actual moment that a consumer arrives at the pickup point, collects the groceries and leaves again (collection time). The greatest problem for the consumers is however the limited time frame that the pickup points are open. Interviewee 2.5 found this a problem because it was not always clear for him what his work times are per week. Holding on to a limited- and fixed time frame was therefore difficult for him. He motivated how he experienced the barrier as follows:

“For me my job is more important than picking up my groceries. At the time I order the groceries I might already have a meeting planned at the end of the day. These meetings are planned till 18:00 but it could happen that it takes longer than planned. I do want to be able to stay in the meeting rather than have to hurry things and make it before 19:00 at my Rechtstreex pickup point.” (interviewee 2.5)

The barrier of planning the collection moment is not a problem for all the consumers. Interviewee 1.1 replied to how she experienced the planning of the pickup moment: *“You can just put it in your agenda, right?”*. Interviewee 1.1 shows a different willingness as it comes to collecting groceries from Rechtstreex. She finds Rechtstreex important and is willing to make space in her agenda for it and other things have to wait. Picking up the groceries therefor did not complicate her weekly planning. The travel time from and to her pickup point was on the other hand only seven minutes by bike locate on the route to her work. She motivated this in the interviews as well:

“Picking up the groceries is no problem for me. It would be more of a problem if the pickup point would be further away, in this case I would really need to plan how to pick up the groceries. But because it is such a short distance it is not a problem for me.” (interviewee 1.1)

Another interviewee switched between two pickup points to fit the pickup moment to her planning that week. She motivated her answer as follows:

“I actually do have two pickup points because the one offers to order in the weekend and picking up on Wednesday. The other offers to order during the week and picking up on Friday or Saturday. So, I order at the pickup point that suits me the best that week which I really like.” (interviewee 1.2)

This switching between the pickup points allowed interviewee 1.2 to pick up her groceries in a way that costs her the least amount of time, making the pickup moment as efficient as possible. For this interviewee the time it takes to collect the groceries from Rechtstreex is however still a negative aspect. She mentioned:

“Sometimes I come from my work and I went to the gym afterwards and I feel very hungry. I want to collect my groceries quickly, but I must wait half an hour because the three customers in front of me are chatting still. That I find hard because I appreciate the atmosphere a lot, but it can be very frustrating” (interviewee 1.2)

Another interviewee motivated his difficulties to collect the groceries due to a busy weekly planning caused by having his own business and having young children who cannot stay home by themselves. He mentioned in the interview:

“I do not pass a pickup point when I travel home from work because I work from my home. Besides that, I have a family as well that keeps me busy. So, going ‘just’ going past the pickup point is not easy for me.” (interviewee 2.1)

Overall the barrier to pick up the groceries is not experienced evenly negative by all consumers. It depends on the one side on the time that the consumers have available. For some it simply takes fewer time to collect groceries because they live close to the pickup point or they pass a pickup point during their weekly routes. For others it is harder to plan the pickup moment because their weekly agenda differs due to unexpected work events or due to family life. This makes it harder to create a fixed moment in their agenda to collect their groceries. There is also a difference in willingness between the consumers of Rechtstreex. For some it seems that importance of work has a higher priority than collecting groceries of Rechtstreex.

The outcomes around the barriers of grocery collection can be linked to the value action gap. The barriers related to the pickup moments can be related to the lack of time that the consumers have. This is according to the model of Blake (1999) a social/institutional barrier related to practicality. On the one side the barrier is an institutional barrier. This is because Rechtstreex as an institution offers limited locations and opening hours to collect the groceries they sell. On the other hand, the barrier is linked to the social circumstances that the consumers are in. The job of the consumers and their family life have impact on the time that consumers have available for collecting groceries. The barrier of limited time to pick up the groceries therefore has more reasons. Where a consumer lives and what their work- and family situation is influences the extent to which barrier is experienced negative by a consumer. The barrier which is linked to the willingness of the consumers has more connection with the individuality

barrier when looking at the model of Blake (1999). Here a consumer might have less interest in Rechtstreex than the others making it more effort to make time to collect the groceries and other activities like work become more dominant.

4.3.4 Price and quality of the products

Price and quality are described together in this paragraph. This is done because the quality and price of the products relate to each other. Food of higher quality is worth a higher price than the same type of food with lower quality. The price of the products is named by 26% of the consumers in the general survey as a reason to not order, or to order less from Rechtstreex. The price of the products is also seen as a positive thing as 23% of the consumers in the general survey name the price/quality ratio as a reason to order at Rechtstreex. The price is therefore experienced both positive as well as negative. The general survey shows as well that the quality of the products is seen both positive and negative. The general survey showed that the consumers of Rechtstreex find quality and flavour of the products the most important reason to order at Rechtstreex. The same group of surveyed consumers also indicated that 16% of them experience the quality of the products as a reason to order less or to not order anymore. Like the price of the products, the quality is seen both positive and negative by the consumers of Rechtstreex that filled in the general survey. From the general survey it is not possible to see if some consumers filled in to be both positive and negative about the price or quality as the dataset of answers is not provided. Survey A however did allow the consumers to express if they find the quality and price of the products both positive and/or negative. This made it able to see from the dataset of survey A that 7% of the consumers found quality both positive and negative and 3% of the consumers filled in to find the price both positive and negative. The motivations for these contradicting opinions about price and quality have been asked in the interviews because it is not clear from the surveys why these opinions are so contradicting to each other.

it was clear for some of the interviewed consumers that the price/quality ratio was not always as they expected. Interviewee 1.2 shops at Rechtstreex for its good quality, however the quality is not always what she expects. She said for example:

“I am willing to pay more for the products; however, the quality has to be good. Now I have the feeling sometimes that I must pay more, while the quality is not good and that I really don’t like. That is the advantage from going to the regular supermarket. There I would only pick the items that look good”

&

*“I find that Rechtstreex sometimes delivers a product that should not have been delivered. It is flabby or brown. I don’t think that a lot of people would buy this in the supermarket when it would lay over there”
(interviewee 1.2)*

The fluctuating quality of the products was also experienced by other interviewed customers. Interviewee 2.1 mentioned:

“Rechtstreex sells his products for a high price so to say. I do not understand how if I hear that farmers in general only get a few cents per kilo of onions, but they lay in the supermarket for €1 per kilo. Rechtstreex sells those same onions for about €1,50 or €2,00 per kilo. I think then: “that is a big difference!” That is fine for me but then the quality is just bad, and I heard that more people had the same experience with Rechtstreex. Sometimes the experience is good, but sometimes it is not. And it

happened a few times that the quality was not good. It makes me think: “why do I pay for when I order at Rechtstreex?”” (interviewee 2.1)

The fluctuating quality of the products is found negative by these consumers. They have experienced good quality products from Rechtstreex as well and are willing to pay for this quality. They do find it disappointing though when they pay the higher price but do not get the quality they pay for.

Other interviewed consumers did not experience the fluctuating quality of the products. They replied:

“I have little or no experience with the fact that the quality changes in a negative way” (Interviewee 1.5)

Another interviewee said:

“I could happen sometimes that I thought: “This could be fresher” But it did not happen that much and because everything is unsprayed it happens naturally that things do not look perfect. The quality was for me good enough.” (interviewee 1.8)

The quality is not experienced in a negative way for all the interviewed consumers. The answer of interviewee 1.8 shows that this also has to do with a different expectation of the local products. She sees it as a natural way that the products do not look as pretty as some consumers are used to. This is also shown the general survey, as only 16% of the consumers in the general survey said that they not order or order less because of the quality.

The price of the products is seen as the second most negative point by the surveyed consumers that filled in the general survey shown in figure 14. The interviewed consumers explained that the changing quality is one of the reasons for this. For some other interviewees, the barrier of price simply has to do with the higher price of some products in comparison to other food channels. Some interviewees named that they not order meat or processed products at Rechtstreex because of the high price compared to other products like the fresh fruits and vegetables. Interviewee 2.2 for example mentioned:

“I find the meat and fish too expensive, maybe it is not too expensive but for it is. I would never buy it. I am retired and the position of the retired people got worse by 13% last year. I do have to watch how expensive my groceries are.” (Interviewee 2.2)

Another interviewee mentioned:

“There is for example a producer who is also based in Rotterdam who makes paté and that sort of things. They are in the Fenix Food Factory (trendy location in Rotterdam). They ask really high prices and I have the feeling that you pay more for the location that they are at and that is something I do not feel like supporting” (Interviewee 1.5)

The items outside the fresh vegetables and fruits are found too expensive by some of the interviewed consumers. It is also demonstrated in figure 12 that showed that 95% of the consumers shop for fruits and vegetables and far lower numbers for the other items that are sold at Rechtstreex.

To conclude the price and quality of the products are both barriers for some of the consumers at Rechtstreex. For some of the interviewed consumers the price barrier is linked to a changing quality of the products they buy from Rechtstreex. Sometimes the quality is too low for the price they pay. The

changing quality could be scaled as an institutional barrier related to practicality when looking at the model of Blake (1999). The quality could be lower sometimes because for example some fresh products are being harvested too early or stored in a wrong way. Once the products reach the consumers it is not as fresh as they expected.

The barrier of the price also relates to the high price of some of the products outside of the fresh fruits and vegetables. This type of barrier relates more to the 'individual in social context'. The consumers feel not responsible to buy the products as they are too expensive for them. Even though the products of Rechtstreex represent the values of the consumers like a fair price for the producer and locally produced food, it is not in the direct interest of the consumer to pay the high price for some of the items. They chose to buy the items that are in the right price for them and with this still buy food that supports their own values.

4.3.5 Diversity of the products

In total 23% of the consumers mention not to order or order less from Rechtstreex due to the diversity of products. AFNs provide in general a small offer of products when compared to the average supermarket. It is therefore more often seen in other research that the selective diversity in products forms a barrier for AFN participants (Falk et al., 1996). Rechtstreex works with local and seasonal products which make their offer differ on a weekly basis. Some products that are familiar to consumers like bananas or mangos cannot be grown in the area where Rechtstreex sources its products from. They will therefore not be found in the assortment. The missing of certain familiar products makes some consumers look for other sources of food. Interviewee 1.5 motivated her reasons for this as:

"Rechtstreex for example does not have mandarins they do not grow here. They do not have kiwis because they do not grow here. They do have New Zealand spinach because they can farm it over here as well. So, I would buy everything that could be grown locally. But I do not eat as local as I did in my youth, then I would eat the whole winter cabbage, cabbage, cabbage and some Brussel sprouts... I am not more Catholic than the Pope these days. So, if I think: "today I feel like..." then I will buy it" (Interviewee 1.5)

The interviewee will shop less at Rechtstreex because the diversity of the offer is limited, and she cannot find all the fruits and vegetables that she likes to eat. Another interviewee motivated to shop fewer at Rechtstreex due to the limited offer in the winter season. This because a wider variety of crops can be harvested in the summer than in the winter. She mentioned:

"I have to admit that I am a less loyal customer in the winter months, than in the summer months. I do not order so regularly in the winter as I do in the summer. In the summer I order weekly." (interviewee 1.2)

The limited offer that is available at Rechtstreex makes it hard for consumers to shop at Rechtstreex for all their groceries. It will mean that certain (exotic) food products that consumers are used to eat cannot be consumed anymore if the consumers did limit their shopping just to Rechtstreex. For most consumers this seems to be undesired as they want to consume a wider variety of products, even if this means that this way of consuming does not support their value for local food. The consumers argue that they desire certain products making them go to food suppliers outside of Rechtstreex. This is a barrier linked to the individuality of the consumers and this is an individual barrier (Blake, 1999). Consuming local food is not as important for some consumers as consuming non-local food they feel like at certain times. The possibility for Rechtstreex to provide limited offer of products is also simply a practical

barrier. It is not possible to grow certain crops all year around since the climate limits the possibility to grow certain crops in the surrounding of Rotterdam.

4.3.6 Overview barriers experienced at Rechtstreex

This theme gives an overview of the negative sides that the consumers of Rechtstreex experience while shopping in the AFN. By knowing the negative sides, it is possible to answer the third sub research question: *“What do AFN consumers find negative about participating in an AFN and why is this for some consumers more negative than for others?”*

The greatest barrier that is mentioned is the time frame to collect the groceries. The time and planning it takes to collect the groceries, makes it hard for the consumers to shop at Rechtstreex. Other research on AFN participation showed that the extra time it takes to participate in an AFN forms a barrier for the consumers (Brown 2009, McEachern et al., 2010). The interviews showed that the barrier to collect the groceries is not experienced evenly negative by all consumers. Some consumers live further away from a pickup point than others, this makes the travel time more time consuming. Some consumers find it harder to plan the pickup moment than other consumers. Different work and family situations make it more challenging for some consumers to create extra time in their agendas. Making compromises in convenience is not easy for consumers, because convenience plays a big role in the food choice of consumers in general (Falk et al., 1996). Still some consumers express the willingness to collect the groceries nevertheless the extra time or effort it takes. This willingness differs within the consumers of Rechtstreex and has impact on the actual action of shopping at Rechtstreex or not.

The second assessed barrier was about the price and quality of the products. Both price and quality are mentioned to be experienced positive, as well as negative by the interviewed and surveyed consumers. Some of the interviewed consumers mention to experience a change in the quality of the product they order, sometimes the quality of the products is good, but sometimes the quality is not good. Other interviewed consumers do not seem to experience this change in quality or to an extent that was not bothersome. Some interviewed consumers shown to have different expectations on what quality to expect from Rechtstreex. Higher expectations could lead to greater disappointment among some consumers. It could for other consumers simply have to do with bad luck as they received products of a lesser quality than other consumers. The available funds of an individual consumer also seem to impact the extend that the price/quality ratio of the products is a barrier for somebody.

The final assessed barrier focused on the limited diversity of products available at Rechtstreex. Rechtstreex only provides local products like most AFNs. Local diets limit the possibility to eat certain products that can not be grown or produced in the region of Rotterdam. For this reason, their offer is more limited than a supermarket as they source products from all over the world. Research by Falk et al. (1996) did show already that the limited product range in AFNS creates a barrier for consumers. Another research done by Byker et al. (2010) challenged nineteen participants to eat just local food for two weeks. The most mentioned challenge was the limited variety of products available. This resulted in eating the same food repeatedly which was not found pleasantly by the participants. Same difficulties have been expressed by the consumers of Rechtstreex as well. The consumers do not buy all their groceries at Rechtstreex because they do not want to limit their diet to the local offer of Rechtstreex and have a wider variety of products in their diet. The barrier around the diversity of products seem to be experienced equally by all the consumers. The consumers not want to limit their whole diet to just local products and want to eat products outside their local area.

4.4 Difference in consumers group A and group B

This final theme explored the possible differences between the consumers in group A (consumers that ordered twelve times or more) and the consumers of group B (used to order, but not order anymore). Assumed is that the consumers of group A will differ from group B as they are still active at Rechtstreex, while the consumers of group B have stopped to order. If there is a difference and why is described in this theme.

The first comparison made is taken from survey A and survey B. Both surveys hold the same question on why the consumers started to order at Rechtstreex. Both surveys allowed only the same answers, this made it possible to present the results together in figure 16.

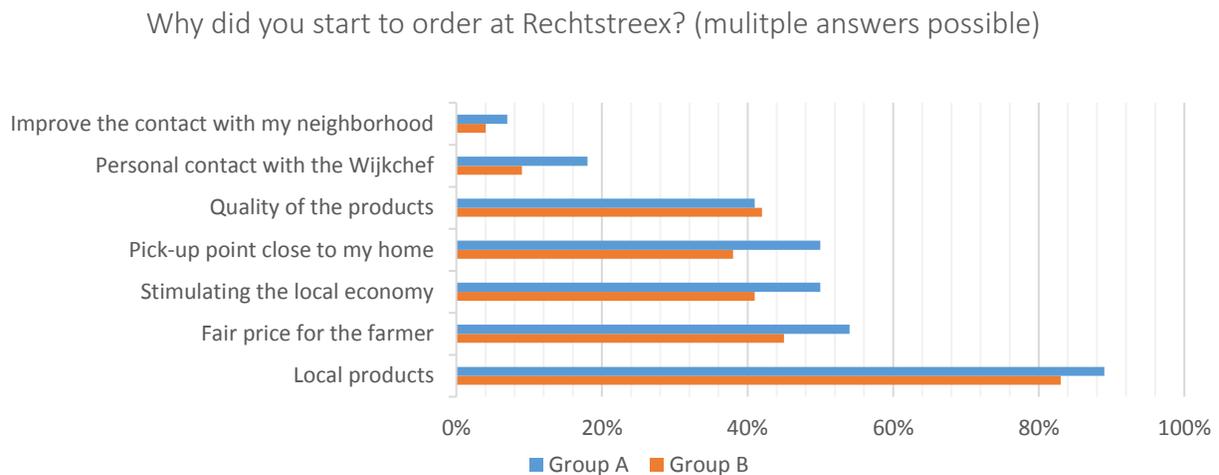


Figure 16 Why did you started to order at Rechtstreex? (Survey A and Survey B)

What is interesting is that local products score higher in survey A and survey B than in the general survey that was presented in figure 13. It is not clear why this outcome differs from the general survey. Overall the consumers of group A ticked more motivations during the survey. This could mean that group A shows more motivation for shopping at Rechtstreex. The only answer which Group A did not score higher than group B was the question about the quality of the products.

It became clear during the interviews that the Rechtstreex consumers of group A motivated their reasons to shop for food differently than the consumers of group B. The interviewed consumers of group A expressed stronger motivations for what food they buy. It is really important for the interviewed consumers of group A what food they consume. Interviewee 1.1 for example expressed a strong value for animal welfare. This resulted in her choices for what food to consume. She motivated:

“Concerning animal welfare, everything I buy is always organic”

&

“I find animal welfare really important” (Interviewee 1.1).

Another interviewee valued the quality and authenticity of the food he consumed. In his opinion supermarkets do not support his values for quality and authenticity. Therefore, this interviewee looked for alternatives in the form of Rechtstreex. The interviewee saw supermarkets as:

“An outlet of a factory” & “Supermarkets have a monopoly. Farmers must produce with higher efficiency and fewer costs. It is a system that ruins the quality” (Interviewee 1.4)

Some of the interviewed consumers of group B in general did appreciate what Rechtstreex tried to do with providing local and quality food but did not see these things as necessary as it came to the food they consume. The aspect of having a local product was more a bonus for them rather than an important criterion. To the question: *“Do you sometimes leave a food item when you see it is produced far away?”* the answer according to interviewee 2.2 was: *“No I will just take it”* (interviewee 2.2). Interviewee 2.4 saw Rechtstreex as a *“Fun idea”* and did not realize the impact of food consumption that the interviewees of group A often did mention. The consumers of group A had a strong feeling that they could make a change in the food system by the way of their own consumption. This phenomenon of creating a statement through the market is called political consumerism (Stolle and Micheletti, 2013). This difference in the way that the interviewed consumers of group A see food consumption is an important variance between the two groups of interviewed consumers. The interviewed consumers of group A showed a greater sense of responsibility for their consumption than the interviewed consumers of group B. This sense of responsibility resulted for two interviewed consumers of group A to participate in food initiatives outside Rechtstreex that support local food and minimize food waste. Interviewee 1.2 expressed to feel that she could change something by her way of consuming. This awareness created a sense of responsibility that motivated her to shop for food through Rechtstreex, as Rechtstreex was in her eyes a good way for food production, distribution and consumption. She motivated her way of consuming as:

“I am that drop in the ocean who thinks if we do not all start to do this, nothing will happen”.
(interviewee 1.2)

Interviewee 1.4 had a comparable view on responsibility. He mentioned:

“People should do it more often; taking the life in your own hands and realizing that you have an influence with your own way of spending your money” (Interviewee 1.4)

This difference in sense of responsibility between the two consumer groups effects as well how the consumers experience the barriers for shopping at Rechtstreex. It requires extra effort for an individual to shop at Rechtstreex. It takes for example more time and planning to order and collect the groceries than going to a supermarket. Therefore, it must reward an individual in a way to take the extra effort to shop at Rechtstreex.

Interviewee 1.3 summarized his personal motivation as:

“So actually, I do extra effort by ordering from Rechtstreex through ordering my food at certain fixed days and picking it up at certain fixed times. I do however take this extra effort for granted in exchange for the advantages. The advantage that the food is local, the food is cheaper than the organic supermarket and fewer food is being wasted. In principle I personally do not have advantages with this way of consuming, except the cheaper product, but the CO₂ reduction and reducing of food waste is not in my direct interest. I take my own disadvantages for granted to serve a general goal” (Interviewee 1.3).

Interviewee 1.3 certainly experienced negative sides when participating in Rechtstreex. Still his strong value for the environment motivates him to overcome the barriers that he experiences while shopping

at Rechtstreex. In the case of interviewee 1.3 the price for the products is also an important motivation for him. In contrast to interviewee 1.3 from group A, interviewee 2.3 from group B mentioned for example:

“As long as it is profitable for my own wallet, I will put more attention to the environment, but I will not do extra effort for it. I will not walk extra to the bin for green waste because this is better for the environment. If I can do it differently, I will do so” (interviewee 2.3)

From looking at survey A and survey B it is not clearly visible that the one group experiences the barriers to shop at Rechtstreex worse than the other. Both surveys did not have the same question inside with the same possible answers. The consumers of group A received a question on what they liked less about their order experience at Rechtstreex and the consumers of group B received a question why they stopped to order at Rechtstreex. Both groups of consumers could select different reasons from multiple choice answers. Like in the outcome of general survey, the outcome of survey A and survey B showed that the time frame of picking up the groceries, the quality and the price of the products are experienced negatively by both groups of consumers. It was not clear from survey A and survey B if the one group experienced the barriers more than the other group. It is therefore not possible to tell from survey A and survey B what are the difference on the barrier experience between the two groups.

It is not possible to answer the sub research question: *“Are there differences observed in the motivations and barriers experienced by active consumers and AFN consumers that used to be active?”* The main observed difference between the two interviewed groups is the stronger motivation that is seen in group A. The consumers of group A have a feeling of responsibility for the impact they create with their consumption behaviour. This results in their active participation at Rechtstreex. The consumers of group A want to create change with their way of consuming food. This change can for example be a reduction in environmental impact or a better price for farmers. From the available data it is not possible to conclude if the barriers to order from Rechtstreex are experienced differently by both consumer groups. Both from the surveys as well as from the interviews it was noticed that the consumers of both groups experienced some inconvenience with participating at Rechtstreex.

5 Conclusion

The main research question from this thesis was to find out *what motivations and difficulties do AFN consumers experience while shopping in an AFN and how does this influence shopping behaviour in the AFN?* This research question has been broken down into four sub research questions which have been answered one by one in the results chapter:

1. *What kind of consumers shop at AFNs?*
2. *What motivates consumers to participate in an AFN and where does this motivation come from?*
3. *What do AFN consumers find negative about participating in an AFN and why is this for some consumers more negative than for others?*
4. *Are there differences observed in the motivations and barriers experienced by active consumers and AFN consumers that used to be active?*

The theoretical framework used to answer the main- and sub research questions is the value action gap. The value action gap has been defined in by the Sustainable Development Commission (2006, pp. 63) as: *'The observed disparity between people's reported concerns about key environmental, social, economic or ethical concerns and the lifestyle or purchasing decisions that they make in practice'*. Blake (1999) tried to find an explanation for the value action gap in environmental behaviour. He describes three main categories of barriers that prevent individuals from acting towards their environmental concerns: Individuality, Responsibility and Practicality. He divided these barriers into two main causes: individual causes (individual barriers) or external causes (social/institutional barriers). The model is visualized in figure 1 on page 10.

Current research on AFNs shows different motivations for consumers to participate in an AFN. The motivations depend on the type of AFN and the country in which the research is conducted. Motivations to shop at AFNs are price, quality and environmentally friendly products (Le Trobe, 2001; Brown, 2009). Current research also shows that consumers who participate in AFNs experience barriers. The price of products is often found negative in AFNs which contrasts with earlier mentioned motivations around price (Brown 2009; McEachern et al. 2010). Furthermore, convenience and limited product choice are perceived negative by AFN consumers (Falk et al., 1996; Brown 2009; McEachern et al., 2010). The same outcomes on motivations and barriers were found during this research in which a case study is used on Rechtstreex, an AFN based in Rotterdam (the Netherlands).

The motivations and barriers that were expressed by the consumers of Rechtstreex influence their shopping behaviour within the AFN. In the case of barriers, it is possible to say that some consumers of Rechtstreex do not experience the barriers of participating an AFN or overcome these barriers. This while other consumers do not start to participate or stop participating at Rechtstreex due to the same barriers. This different ways in which the barriers are influencing the shopping behaviour at Rechtstreex can partly be explained with the model of Blake (1999). It is possible to categorize most of the expressed barriers as practical barriers when looking at the model. Mainly the action of collecting of groceries in a limited time frame seems to be the biggest practical barrier. This barrier is not experienced the same way by all consumers. This has to do with the external factors that influence how easy or hard it is to deal with the barrier. Some consumers live further away from a pickup point which makes collecting groceries more time consuming. The extra time it takes due to travel time is a practical barrier coming from the institutional side of the model. This is because Rechtstreex as an institution offers limited

pickup locations. Other external factors that influence the practical barrier also have to do with the social situation of the consumers. Some consumers express for example to have more time-consuming jobs or family situations. This makes it harder to find time to order and collect the groceries from Rechtstreex. The extent in which barriers are experienced by the consumers determines the following action. It results in less or no action when a barrier becomes too high for a consumer. Even when this consumer values the products that are being supplied through Rechtstreex. An example could be for instance when a local pickup point disappears from a consumer and he or she must travel further than before. This consumer might find the barrier of the extra time too much for his or her agenda and stops the action of shopping at Rechtstreex. This struggle to overcome the barriers partly explains a gap between the value of a consumer and expected action from this value.

Another important factor that mostly influences the shopping behaviour at Rechtstreex is the motivation that is found within its consumers. At first sight most consumers express the same kind of motivations to shop at Rechtstreex like the quality of the products and a fair price for the farmer. It is however possible to see different levels of motivations within the consumers of Rechtstreex. Some consumers show stronger motivations to shop at Rechtstreex than other consumers do. These motivations are characterised by a collective ideal like saving the planet or providing a better income for farmers. These consumers truly believe that their way of consuming has impact on the society and want to take responsibility for their own consumption behaviour. This phenomenon is also called political consumerism (Stolle and Micheletti, 2013). Having this strong sense of responsibility creates reasoning for the consumers to spend extra time and effort in doing their groceries in a way that supports their values. With this reasoning it is easier for those consumers to overcome the typical barriers that are found in AFN consumption. The level of motivation is therefore an important influencer in the actual action of shopping in AFNs.

AFNs have certain disadvantages towards global food value chain. Characteristics of an AFN like the limited offer of products and a distribution system that in general requires more effort from consumers creates certain barriers for consumers to participate. The convenience barriers around AFNs are a problem as compromises in convenience are hard to make for consumers (Falk et al., 1996). At the same time, it is shown that that only few consumers take ethical factors in account while shopping (Carrigan and Attalla, 2001). During this research it is shown that even consumers that value sustainable and ethical food can have troubles with performing the action of shopping in an AFN. The external factors that influence the barriers of shopping in an AFN are in their cases dominant over the action of shopping in the AFN. Also, the level of motivation is determining for the action of shopping in an AFN. Higher motivation makes it easier to overcome the gap between value and action. AFNs have to opportunity to minimize the practical barriers located on the institutional side of the model of Blake (1999) by creating a distribution system that is as convenient as possible and by providing a greater variety of local products. The motivation of a consumer is however not as easy to influence for an AFN. It will require a change in the values of the society on what food needs to represent. Is the price and availability for food more important or the social and environmental impact that food has?

As recommendation for future studies it could be interesting to look deeper into the political consumerism within AFN participants and for example compare them with non-AFN participants. From the conclusion of this research it seems that consumers describing themselves as political consumers are more likely to become AFN participants. A scaling questionnaire with questions that relate to political consumerism could function as a method to measure the extent to which consumers describe themselves as political consumers. Assumed is that AFN consumers are more likely to be political consumers.

6 Discussion

The main outcome of this research shows that barriers to shop in an AFN are not experienced in the same way by each consumer. External factors and the level of motivation to shop at an AFN influence to what extent a consumer experiences the barriers to participate in an AFN. This explains in great lines why the value action gap within AFN participation occurs. When looking at other behaviour studies surrounding the topic it is possible to see the more important a value is to someone, the more likely that he or she will act in ways that encourages that value (Schwartz 1992). This is seen within participation of Rechtstreex as well. The more active consumers showed strong values for certain aspects of Rechtstreex and are willing to take extra effort in participating at Rechtstreex. Study of Brown (2009) shows that the most mentioned motivations to join an AFN were for altruistic reasons. Same has been found in this study as well. Other studies show that external constraints play a great role in the actual action of an individual (Gregory et al., 1995). Same has been found as it comes to level in which consumers experience the barriers to shop at Rechtstreex.

Differences in this study towards other studies can also be found. For example, the study of Vermeir and Verbeke (2005) shows that social pressure from peers will influence the intention to buy sustainable food products. This has not been found during the interviews of this study but could also have played a role in the outcome. The same study of Vermeir and Verbeke (2005) also shows that 'perceived consumer effectiveness' has a strong effect on the positive on the attitude towards buying sustainable food products. Again, this has not been found during the case study on Rechtstreex and it could have been an important factor that would have influenced the conclusion.

Other outcomes from the research are in great lines the same of other studies on AFNs. For example, the outcome on the motivations to shop at Rechtstreex have been found in other studies as well (Brown, 2009). The same can be argued about the found barriers expressed by the consumers of Rechtstreex. Barriers related to the time, costs and other factors that influence the convenience of the consumers form barriers for their actions (McEachern et al., 2010; Falk et al., 1999) The importance of each motivation and barrier does change per study, this has largely to do with the socio-economic conditions of the country of research as seen in the same study of Brown (2009). The outcomes of the surveys on motivations are therefore not completely new for the field of AFN research. It does add to the literature what Dutch AFN consumers motivate to join an AFN so the Dutch consumers can be compared with consumers from other countries.

The model created by Blake (1999) served as a good tool to arrange the barriers that stand between the concerns of the AFN consumers and the actions that are resulting from these concerns. The three of the model categories (individuality, responsibility and practicality) helped to point out what the most important barriers are. The model also helped to reveal if the barriers are caused more by an AFN as an institution or are more caused by the consumer as an individual. This was useful to find out why a barrier was experienced by a consumer and how it was caused. The model did have its limitations as well as it did not include the value side of the value action gap. It could therefore not be used to get better understanding from the motivations or values that lead to the action of consumers to move to an AFN. Especially as the research turned out that the motivations for AFN consumers are important factors to predict the final action.

During this research both surveys and interviews have been used. The used surveys were already existing and designed by Rechtstreex itself for its own usage. The questions were therefore not always found useful for this research. Also, some topics were not included in the questionnaires which limited the availability of some quantitative data that could have made the research better. For example, more detailed data on motivations or barriers to participate Rechtstreex could help to understand the consumers of Rechtstreex better. The survey could for example add for a question on how far consumers live from a pickup point, which could help to understand better why collecting groceries is harder for some consumers, than for others. Other improvements on the methodology could have been the number of used interviews used for this research. Especially looking at the important findings coming from the interviews. More interviewees could made it possible to compare the outcomes from the interviews to a larger extend, the small number of interviewees made arguments made of lower value.

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