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RESEARCH ARTICLE

Sense of belonging and commitment to a community-supported fishery. The case of Yeu Island, France

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Abstract

Community-supported agriculture/fisheries (CSA/CSF) create both market and non-market values, including environmental and social benefits. When shared by a community of users, these values generate identity and sense of belonging for the members who are prone to accept conditions they would not bear in conventional markets (e.g., higher prices, inconvenient delivery time and location, lack of choice, and supply risk). We argue that longevity of CSA/CSF depends on their capacity to create such a sense of belonging. For this reason and because of some CSF peculiarities compared to CSA, analyzing the sense of belonging to a CSF becomes an interesting challenge to understand the nature and extent of the community and its underlying social characteristics and motives. A qualitative-quantitative mixed methodology was used. Data come from an original online survey of 556 French seafood consumers belonging to the Yeu Island CSF, and from individual, semi-directive interviews. An ordered probit model with endogenous treatment effects for commitment experience was developed, and the evidence of results was related with a content analysis from qualitative materials. The sense of belonging to CSF is positively influenced by the relational dimension and negatively by the demand for high-quality goods, but not by the credence attributes (support of fishers and the local economy, origin of products, environmental outcomes…). Moreover, commitment as volunteer member tends to have a positive influence on belongingness. Interviews with members highlight the social and cultural entanglement of their relationship. They show notably the importance of the sociability built around fish – leading to an increase of knowledge around species, ways of cooking, and to the strengthening of a food identity – on the sense of belonging. The long-term sustainability of CSF may highly depend on these relational dimensions, acting as cohesive factors in the community.

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Introduction

Individualism of modern capitalist societies creates fragmentation to which consumers respond by re-establishing communal embeddedness or "tribalism" (Kozinets 2002). Consumption supports the need for social links which may become sometimes more important than the good itself (Cova and Cova 2002). This has been perfectly understood by digital platforms of the sharing economy valuing this dimension of consumption by scoring the intensity of social links, for example, car-sharing status (Kozinets 2002; Sundararajan 2016). In that respect, the sense of belonging, defined as an experience of personal involvement, may stem from this quest for social links and generate a common and valuable identity for members sharing the same values (Hagerty et al. 1992; Bromberg 1996; Cook et al. 1999; Lambert et al. 2013).

Community-supported agriculture (CSA) and community-supported fishery (CSF) provide such identity and sense of belonging for farmers and fishers, who cannot be merely reduced to rent seekers (Galt 2015), and also to eaters whose motivations go far beyond the need for organic local food by including political, social, and ethical values (Brinson et al. 2011; Stoll et al. 2015; Bolton et al. 2016; Salladarré et al. 2018). By creating a direct relationship between producers and eaters through regular, pre-arranged deliveries of products, these institutions produce multiple market and non-market benefits (Brinson et al. 2011; Bolton et al. 2016). For instance, fishers receive higher payment for fish, are guaranteed a stable income, and can activate political support through direct interaction with consumers and the induced increase of social capital (Stoll et al. 2015).

CSAs/CSFs address economic, environmental,[1] and social issues echoing among alternative consumers. Becoming a member of CSAs/CSFs can rely on three distinct types of relationship with CSAs/CSFs: a basic subscription (*involvement*), the sharing of values with other members (*engagement*), and a volunteer support through the time spent for the organization (*commitment*). However, while members' motivations for *involvement in* these organizations (through contract subscription for a basket of products) are well-documented in the case of CSAs (Bougherara et al. 2009; Peterson et al. 2015) and CSFs (Salladarré et al. 2018), little is known about the values shared by members of CSFs fueling the *engagement with* all members related to the sense of belonging to a community. We do consider that involvement and common identity have to be distinguished since the latter might better explain the loyalty of individuals to an institution and increase, in the present case, the sustainability of CSA/CSF. It is reasonable to assume that the sense of belonging could in turn be influenced by the "strength" of ties (Granovetter 1973) established through specific behaviors within the CSA/CSF, like voluntary members showing *commitment to* the organization (which implies assistance to delivery, money transfer, mediation between contracting

[1] The positive impact of CSFs on fish resources and marine ecosystems is often claimed by organizers (implementation of sustainable fishing practices to limit resource overexploitation, respect of marine habitat, reduction of energy consumption, and food miles, etc.) (McClenachan et al. 2014).

parties, participation to meetings, duty periods…). Therefore, the sense of belonging to a community can be enhanced if all stakeholders involved in CSA/CSF – consumers and producers – are united by a set of common values making sense for their collective engagement and going beyond a tacit agreement around the quality of food in the basket (Paranthoën 2013; Montrieux 2017). Recent research in economic sociology showed that involvement through subscriptions to fresh produce baskets is one of the dimensions of the specific trade relationship set up in CSA, but not always sufficient to build a community, especially when CSA/CSF are getting bigger or offer a "close-to-market" nature, through a choice of products, type of contract, convenient delivery time, etc. (Rippol 2013; Samak 2012).

Understanding the factors influencing the sense of belonging represents a key issue for the organization of local food networks because their sustainability may be closely related to this subjective dimension. Maintaining a strong sense of belonging could be a powerful cohesive factor for members having initially different motivations to join a CSA/CSF (Bougherara et al. 2009). For consumers who switch from traditional purchasing channels toward CSA/CSF, the sense of belonging can attract consumers looking for tighter linkages with producers in food supply chains (Dufeu and Ferrandi 2013). In addition, having a strong sense of belonging may help members to accept several important constraints which are difficult to understand within the neoclassical consumption theory framework (Campbell et al. 2014; Bloemmen et al. 2015). Eaters are prepared to pay higher prices for goods that they sometimes need to pick up at inconvenient times and locations, bear the supply risk with producers by not even choosing the content of the basket, share costs by spending time, efforts and money for the collective market organization, etc. (Peterson et al. 2015; Salladarré et al. 2018). The nonmarket benefits, including the sense of belonging and ethical values defended by CSA/CSF systems, must offset these negative aspects since there is no strict distinction between the so-called conventional and local food networks, resulting in possible mobility, multiple uses, and trade-offs between channels (Le Velly and Dufeu 2016). CSFs remain infrequent in France, but the ongoing success of the first one implemented in 2010 on the Atlantic coast, inspiring other initiatives,[2] is an opportunity to better understand the extent to which the CSF members are forming a community or "marketing tribe" (Cova and Cova 2002) and which social characteristics and motives this community responds to. The case of CSFs is all the more interesting as the burden imposed to consumers/members for fish delivery is higher than for CSA (need of chilled containers, persisting smells or melting ice spilled in the car, fish preparation through gutting, scaling or filleting, etc.)

With a mixed method based on an original online survey of 556 French seafood eaters belonging to the Yeu Island CSF and on additional, individual, and in-depth interviews, this research aims at analyzing the factors underlying the sense of belonging to the CSF for its members. First, a literature review will focus on the concept of sense of belonging, how it resonates with common identity and it can flourish at the very heart of attachment, and/or volunteer commitment. Arguments will then support its relevance and interest in a marketing approach for this CSF, where social and cultural values around seafood are worth being taken into account when it comes to community matters. In a second part, the methodology and description of data are presented. The

[2] For instance, another CSF was recently created in Sanary (Mediterranean coast, France).

relationship between the sociodemographical variables and attitudes of respondents toward CSF characteristics and their sense of belonging are analyzed. A factor analysis carried out in a previous study had revealed, among a large range of motivations to join a CSF, the existence of two principal components: credence attributes (environmentally friendly and local production) and relational aspects (meet people), along with other influential individual variables such as basket characteristics (quality and quantity) (Salladarré et al. 2018). In the present study, we show through an ordered probit model with endogenous treatment effects for commitment experience that the reported sense of belonging to CSF is positively influenced by the relational dimension and negatively by the demand for quality, but not significantly by the credence factor. In other words, the feeling of belonging to a CSF community would not be related to environmental or local considerations for members, but rather to the objective of weaving relational ties with other members sharing the same values. Finally, commitment experience is positively linked to the reported sense of belonging to CSF.

Literature review

Group cohesiveness factors have been earlier studied by psychologists (McMillan and Chavis 1986), notably through neighborhood attachment, and later by researchers interested in understanding the dynamics of community. The result has been a conceptualization of the sense of community, which resonates with the sense of belonging explored in the development theory used in psychiatric nursing (Hagerty et al. 1992) and with the concept of closeness widely studied in economic sociology (Dufeu and Ferrandi 2013; Hérault-Fournier 2013). By bridging both approaches, we analyze how the experience of belongingness can be produced and sustained over time in the case of CSA/CSF.

Sense of belonging and sense of community: definitions and prediction

In the field of psychiatry, the sense of belonging – or belongingness – may be defined as the experience of personal involvement in a system or environment so that persons feel themselves to be an integral part of that system or environment (Hagerty et al. 1992). In social psychology, the sense of belonging is defined more generally as one's feeling of membership and acceptance in a specific group (Good et al. 2012). Membership and acceptance – by opposition to rejection – are the two main and necessary components of belongingness. It may also entail a sense of being valued and accepted by other members.

Community is complex and has various definitions, coming from several disciplines and applied in many different areas. Therefore, each discipline has built and adapted an appropriate definition and conceptualization to suit to the specific characteristics of its research area. For example, in medicine and public policy research, community is investigated to explain some pathologies such as children's troubles when they experience the feeling of rejection or exclusion, i.e., the impression of not being accepted and valued in a specific community (Hagerty et al. 1992). In sociology and psychology, belongingness frequently serves to explain behavioral differences between genders in terms of power or intelligence representations (Good et al. 2012). Within an economic

and marketing perspective, community has been massively investigated in the last 30 years in the relationship with brand (Muniz and O'Guinn 2001; Cova and Cova 2002). The basic framework hypothesizes that the more a person – a consumer – believes to belong to a brand community, the more he/she will be loyal to this particular brand which consequently should increase positive word-of-mouth and purchases of the branded products, while reducing his/her sensitiveness to price increase. Many articles have explored consumer behaviors with brands as popular as Harley-Davidson, Apple, or Nutella. However, brand communities or brand tribes (Arnould et al. 2002) are defined around the central role of the brand that needs to be agreed by all members of the community (Muniz and O'Guinn 2001). While in conventional markets the brand marketing is a powerful tool to create such communities, the community explored in the current research might respond to different key drivers, related to the values associated to those alternative organizations and food symbolism.

Indeed, community refers to people identity and the conscious and active feeling of being part of a group (Bromberg 1996). For Kozinets (2002), the community is constituted insofar as symbolism, meanings, and consumption patterns are involved and shared. As for the sense of belonging, the participation in a group (e.g., a classroom, a brotherhood) is a necessary but not sufficient condition when referring to a community. Indeed, the sense of fitting in or being fully accepted (Lambert et al. 2013) is also a requirement. In this perspective, the sense of belonging to a community characterizes more a belief than a reality in a specific environment (e.g., literally being physically in or out of a group). McMillan and Chavis (1986) analyzed this subjective *experience* in a dynamic description of its development and maintenance. They defined the sense of community through four elements: (i) membership as sharing a sense of personal relatedness, (ii) bidirectional influence between the group and members, (iii) fulfillment of needs through the membership to the group, and lastly (iv) sharing of emotional connection through social experiences.

We therefore conceptualize the sense of belonging by following Good et al. (2012) as one's personal belief that one is an accepted member of a community whose presence and contributions are valued. However, the definition of McMillan and Chavis (1986) invites us to explore the predictors of belongingness, or even the factors which may strengthen it. Conditions allowing higher interrelations, emotional connections, and development of common values between members are of high interest in the case of CSA/CSF.

Dynamic of belongingness to a CSA/CSF: role of perceived closeness and of volunteer commitment

As explained in the introduction, maintaining the sense of belonging could help to retain members in the CSA/CSF and then to expand the duration of membership. The sense of belonging could be logically correlated with the number of years spent in a CSA/CSF because members would not leave an institution they are attached to. Previous research has shown that a long-standing membership in any organization is closely related to the perceived closeness of members in a dual causality. Recent members (less than 1 year) feel a lesser relational closeness than long-lasting members (staying more than 2 years) and the latter show greater volunteer commitment to the organization (participation to different tasks required for the management of the CSA/

CSF) (Dufeu and Ferrandi 2013). In comparison with members who intend to stay for a longer period, those who will "probably" leave the organization next season show lower perceived closeness as a whole, i.e., relational, identity, and process closeness, the three dimensions of closeness identified by Bergadaà and Del Bucchia (2009). That is worth being noticed because identity and relational closeness are usually higher in CSA/CSF (Hérault-Fournier et al. 2014). Initial motivations justifying the involvement in the CSA/CSF appear to be linked to the perceived closeness: The initial desire to develop relationship leads to higher perceived closeness, while the initial pursuit of economic incentives (price, quality) leads to lower perceived closeness. Lastly, relational motivations contribute to higher perceived closeness at the individual level, but the maintenance over time of the group cohesiveness (McMillan and Chavis 1986) could depend on the degree to which the values underpinning common identity are effectively shared.

The sense of belonging could also result from specific behaviors within the CSA/CSF, like voluntary members showing *commitment to* the organization, by participating to the food delivery, communicating to members, attempting to expand the membership, etc. The typology of members, as defined by Mundler (2007), opposing "hedonic" members in search of quality and healthy products and "activist" members enrolling new members into the social innovation, suggests an irreducible heterogeneity within the CSA/CSF members. The issue of identity for those "activists" and volunteers could be more acute. Following Vermeersch (2004), committed members to a political or charitable association build their self-identity and adjust it permanently through the affiliation process within the collective group. The reasons for commitment are not only a moral duty or contribution to the collective well-being but also a desire of re-affiliation to a new community, in response to the weakening of traditional institutions (family, religion, work, state, etc.) (Vermeersch 2004). Consequently, the sense of belonging could be more intense for committed members, because of higher attention paid to the underpinning values of the common identity.

Beyond the diversity of initial motivations: forces for a common identity

CSAs/CSFs are specific organizations where consumers and farmers/fishers collectively decide to contract together to buy/sell food products. Consumers freely decide to join the community and to spend resources (e.g., time, effort, money) to obtain a food basket, demonstrating the desire to be a member. These groups have given birth to a specific kind of trade where producers and consumers play a more active role than in major modern trade systems (e.g., supermarkets, hypermarkets, and other retail shops). Because of their peculiar market position, such organizations may be seen as "enclaves" out and playing against the conventional market, with a low internal hierarchy according to the grid-group theory of Douglas and Wildavsky (1982), as analyzed by Robert-Demontrond et al. (2017). However, different views of the organization can be conflicting between the community-based project, the framing process through a legal status allowing subscriptions and volunteering participation, and lastly, the regulation through contracts between producers and members (Robert-Demontrond et al. 2017). Such conflicts can produce, in turn, some form of internal hierarchy between members and mitigate cohesiveness of the group and then the sense of community. Moreover, as people

join the CSA/CSF for distinct motivations, the issue of belongingness might take different senses for members (Kates 2002; Canniford 2011).

Three major kinds of motivations are outlined and related to several sets of values. Regarding CSAs/CSFs, members frequently share many common values, a deep involvement for better food practices (e.g., sustainable production, organic products), the wish to provide fair wages to producers, and a kind of animosity or hostility against capitalism (Bloemmen et al. 2015; Galt 2015). These strong ethical values may be considered a collective meaning, driving specific consumption patterns and behaviors, and outlining the basics of a community or even a subculture (Goulding et al. 2002).

The second set of reasons for joining a CSF/CSA is utilitarian and product-oriented. Consumers join to have access to distinctive products. Actually, most CSF/CSA serve local organic food with a higher level of quality, making this specific channel of distribution more attractive for consumers who want to eat local and healthy products (Brinson et al. 2011; Bolton et al. 2016). As those expectations are more focused on convenience, economic utility, there is low evidence that they can produce and develop a common identity.

A third group of reasons is socially and culturally oriented insofar as consumers may join a CSF/CSA to discover and share information related to food production, meet people, and make friends. Conviviality, cooperation, and participation are essential features of local food networks to become proactive members and form a community (Bloemmen et al. 2015). In this perspective, developing and sharing food knowledge may become a common objective for some members and a pathway to develop common food identity. Indeed, determinants of food habits are influenced by objective factors (price, convenience, food availability) but also by subjective factors related to food culture, familial practices, and social groups or peers (Rozin et al. 2006). While eaters are perfectly aware of the impact produced by objective factors, it is not so much the case for subjective factors, as they are linked to a set of values, norms, and rules influencing nonconscious food representations, choices, and behaviors (Poulain 2002; Cook et al. 1999; Fischler and Masson 2008). Sharing values and norms can strengthen a collective food identity and consequently the building of food communities. In the context of migrations, numerous research works have focused during the past decades on food communities, driven by religious and cultural habits, and their role in maintaining identity (Sussman 2000; Crenn et al. 2010). Lastly, the belongingness to a food community helps eaters to choose food in a nonconscious manner. Having a strong sense of community could contribute to reduce the cognitive burden of food choices (Fischler and Masson 2008). Lazuech and Debucquet (2017) showed that this issue is particularly sensitive in the case of CSFs because of a lowest degree of familiarity with the "sea world" and seafood products. Increasing one's knowledge about fish through CSA/CSF and trusting producers for the content of the basket can be a way of enhancing the sense of belonging for a food community. Like wine or craft beer amateurs or Starbuck coffee fans, fish eaters may build communities to share a common culture (Kozinets 2002). "Food connoisseurship" becomes a relevant reason to join a CSF and develop a specific relationship with people who care about it.

In conclusion, fueling the sense of belonging is essential to improve group cohesiveness in CSAs/CSFs, but it depends strongly on the willingness of every member to share a set of common values, to build and maintain closer ties with others, to be a volunteer member, or not. Alternative ways of supplying food, because of economic

incentives, relational motivations or environmental convictions, are gaining popularity and offer new sets of criteria when choosing food. How can these criteria contribute to the emergence of new communities? To what extent the alternative local food networks are contributing to define the broad outlines of these communities and to increase the sense of belonging? By focusing on the specific case of a CSF, we aim to fill the gap with CSAs where abundant research have been carried out and to provide a deeper understanding of the cohesive factors required to ensure the continuation of CSFs, still rare in France.

Collection and description of the data

Methodological design

The data was collected in 2016 by the University of Nantes and Audencia Business School in partnership with the volunteer leaders of the CSF.[3] As a first task of the research and in order to understand the strong motivations underlying the commitment of Yeu Island CSF members and the factors involved in the sense of belonging, in-depth and individual interviews were carried out among members of the CSF. The sample was chosen in order to gather a diversity of profiles regarding the population and its relationship to the CSF (in overall, 16 persons of various ages, professional occupations, male and female, and length of involvement in the CSF), including some volunteer leaders (5) in charge of the management of the CSF. The questionnaire was structured around three topics, reasons of involvement, relation to fish and importance of fish in food habits, and lastly, sense of their belonging to the community. A thematic analysis (Miles and Huberman 1994), aiming at identifying recurrent ideas in the qualitative materials, resulted in the formulation of some hypotheses about the subjective factors that possibly contribute to increase the sense of belonging.[4] Some observations at the pickup points of fish baskets (talking time and exchange between fishermen and members, between members, etc.) have confirmed the relevance of the issue of sense of belonging in the specific case of CSF.

At the same time, an extensive online survey was carried out. The purpose of this survey was to investigate CSF seafood consumers' perceptions, motivations, and attitudes regarding their consumption of fresh seafood products and assessment of the CSF. The survey consisted of around 50 questions dealing with seafood consumption habits of members, their CSF perceptions, and how do they buy and consume fish. Thus, the purpose of the survey has gone far beyond the issue of sense of belonging. The database includes 556 questionnaires completed online[5] and representing

[3] More specifically, the survey covers the three "Departments" (or countries) of the "Pays de La Loire region." This study is broadly derived from the MSc essay of Marianne Girard, a sociologist of the University of Nantes. Authors acknowledge her for her support.

[4] As the individual interviews were not exclusively focused on the issue of sense of belonging but embraced a large number of topics, making a quantitative-qualitative lexical analysis, with an appropriate software, was not relevant here. Hence, we conducted a qualitative analysis of the materials.

[5] As volunteer members in charge of the organization interact with other members through Internet and e-mails to collect fees and disseminate location and time information about deliveries, we decided to use Internet to dispatch the questionnaire.

approximately one fourth of the CSF membership. Our analysis focuses on answers to the following question: "As a CSF member, do you feel member of a community?"[6] Three alternative answers were possible: "not at all" (8.3% of respondents), "not really" (53.6%), and "fully" (38.1%). In this article, we hypothesize that the reported sense of belonging to a community is linked with other issues connected with the socioeconomic features, attitudes or preferences toward CSF characteristics, like member's motivations to join the CSF, and lastly, commitment to the organization.

Quantitative results were mirrored with the qualitative findings by moving back and forth between primary materials and statistical data to uncover a deeper understanding of the CSF community. Few articles in agricultural economics used a methodology that integrates qualitative and quantitative approaches (Akimowicz et al. 2018), but this mixed method process (Starr 2014; Gibson 2017) allows to enhance value by achieving triangulation and therefore by exploring, affirming, and even refuting our considerations. In particular, the results of the qualitative analysis can provide detailed information that can help to clarify the causal relationships observed in the quantitative analysis.

Sample description

Respondents' descriptive statistics are given in Table 1 which exhibits several potential relationships between variables. Concerning the selection of variables, we suppose that some sociodemographic characteristics like age, gender, education level, living place, and member of an association can have some influence, as well as the commitment to the CSF. Several studies showed the presence of relation between these variables and the sense of belonging. For instance, age is assumed to be positively linked to sense of belonging (Good et al. 2012). When it comes to fish, a peculiar food product for eaters, we suppose that some attitudes or preferences toward CSF characteristics like the membership's reasons, the delivery frequency, and the fact that CSF increases fish knowledge can represent good predictors. As the result, the respondents are 48-year-old on average, and older members seem to be overrepresented in the full belongingness category. Women are overrepresented (around 74%) in the sample, but they seem to have a relatively lower sense of belonging in a community than men. Respondents are highly educated on average (nearly 55% of CSF consumers have completed at least a Bachelor or Master degree) and live rather in urban areas (60%). High education level and living in a city seem to be positively related to the sense of belonging because people with a primary or secondary degree are overrepresented in the "not at all" answer compared to higher degrees of education. More than three quarters of respondents belong to a voluntary association, and one fifth are committed in

[6] As indicated above, the survey was long and embraced a large number of topics. Only one question on sense of belonging was asked to respondents but the moderate level of "fully" tend to show that the question was well understood. Moreover, as the issue of sense of belonging is highly embedded in social and cultural contexts, the purpose of individual and semi-structured interviews was to provide additional and deep understanding of how it makes sense to CSF members. Furthermore, the French wording for CSA is "Association pour le Maintien de l'Agriculture Paysanne" which literally is association for the preservation of peasant agriculture (without the idea of community) and the original question was "En tant qu'Amapien, vous sentez-vous membre d'une communauté?"

the CSF.[7] This latter variable exhibits a potential positive relationship with the reported sense of belonging. Members report a high positive opinion related to the delivery frequency,[8] as well as to the fact that CSF increases their fish knowledge.[9] This latter variable appears to be overrepresented in the full belongingness category.

Among other variables which can have some influence on the reported sense of belonging, the members' motives to join a CSF were examined by using ten questions based on a 5-point Likert scale: "How much do you agree with the following motives to explain your participation (five responses are possible for each proposal: strongly disagree, disagree, do not agree nor disagree, agree, strongly agree)[10]?" To test the reliability of the answers, a correlation matrix was computed across all membership's reasons, and several motives exhibited strong correlations. Two factors were discovered through a factor analysis. The first factor captured five variables (known origin, support fishers, local fish, support local economy, and environment) having to do with the political support of local economy and environmental awareness, hence the name of "credence factor". The second factor embodied three variables (meet new persons, consumption experience, and meet fishers) which all relate to relational motives.[11] However, the other CSF motives had to be treated separately, in particular economic incentives (quality and quantity or "Eat more fish") since they cannot be pooled into any statistically significant and relevant factor.

Econometric model

The reported sense of belonging of members was retained as the dependent variable. From the literature surveyed in previous sections, we assume that this feeling can be explained by several variables. Because our variable reflecting the sense of belonging is ordered, this issue is analyzed through an ordered probit model. Ordered probability model can be drawn from a latent variable model. Let us assume that latent variable Y_i^* is determined by:

$$Y_i^* = X_i\beta + W_i\delta + \varepsilon_i \quad (1)$$

where β and δ are vectors of unknown parameters, X_i and W_i are vectors of sociodemographic and attitudes toward CSF characteristics, respectively, and ε_i is the

[7] The exact question is "Do you personally contribute to the CSF organization?" which implies various tasks, among which assistance to delivery, payment collection, fish transport, duty periods, communication, management of the membership list, etc.

[8] The exact question is "what is your opinion about the frequency of deliveries?" "I prefer to receive my package every 2 weeks" (5%), "as it is made currently, i.e., every month" (87%) "I'd prefer every 2 months" (8%).

[9] The exact question is "Has the CSF increased your knowledge of fish?", "No" (11%), "Yes, just a bit" (57%), "Yes, profoundly" (32%).

[10] The items are the following ones: "I wanted to encourage environment friendly fishing techniques to eat fish which I know the origin of, to support small-scale fishers, to buy local fish, to eat fish of higher quality, to support the local island economy, to eat more fish, to live a new consumption experience, to meet fishers, and to meet new persons."

[11] For a detailed approach, see Salladarré et al. (2018).

Table 1 Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	SD*	Min	Max	Sense of belonging		
					Not at all	Not really	Fully
Sociodemographic characteristics							
Age (years)	48.36	11.24	25	77	45.74	47.58	50.02
Gender (women)	0.74		0	1	0.80	0.73	0.73
Education							
Secondary or primary	0.29		0	1	0.41	0.29	0.26
Short-cycle tertiary	0.16		0	1	0.11	0.16	0.17
Long tertiary	0.55		0	1	0.48	0.55	0.56
Living place							
Near the sea	0.06		0	1	0.07	0.08	0.03
Rural area	0.34		0	1	0.28	0.37	0.32
City	0.60		0	1	0.65	0.55	0.65
Member of other associations	0.76		0	1	0.61	0.77	0.76
Commitment	0.19		0	1	0.09	0.13	0.29
Attitudes toward CSF characteristics							
Membership's reasons							
Environment	4.71	0.57	1	5	4.43	4.70	4.78
Known origin	4.70	0.55	1	5	4.65	4.68	4.73
Support fishers	4.62	0.60	1	5	4.56	4.57	4.70
Local fish	4.61	0.59	1	5	4.46	4.58	4.69
Quality	4.39	0.74	1	5	4.35	4.43	4.35
Support local economy	3.97	0.83	1	5	3.87	3.87	4.13
Quantity	3.66	1.11	1	5	3.72	3.62	3.71
Consumption experience	3.57	1.03	1	5	3.09	3.54	3.73
Meet fishers	3.54	0.86	1	5	3.07	3.44	3.79
Meet new persons	2.98	0.88	1	5	2.43	2.89	3.21
Delivery frequency acceptability	0.87		0	1	0.85	0.87	0.87
CSF increases fish knowledge	0.89		0	1	0.72	0.86	0.96
Total	*556*				*46*	*298*	*212*

*SD Standard deviation. *Source*: University of Nantes

error term assumed normally distributed. The observed ordinal variable reflecting the sense of belonging to CSF takes values 0, 1, or 2 according to:

$$Y_i = j \Leftrightarrow \alpha_{j-1} < Y_i^* \leq \alpha_j \tag{2}$$

where $j = 1, 2, 3$ is the number of possible outcomes and $\alpha_0 = -\infty$ and $\alpha_3 = +\infty$.

In our model, we assume that a commitment experience may influence the sense of belonging: respondents who are volunteers in the CSF may reveal a higher sense of

belonging than those who are not. However, a higher sense of belonging may also drive commitment, reversing the causality, especially if an unobservable variable jointly determines both sense of belonging and commitment. We suppose the presence of a non-random selection of those committed in the CSF. Then, we estimate the average treatment effect of commitment on the probability of belongingness.[12] We consider that our specification (Eq. 1) accounts for the commitment experience being an endogenous treatment T_i depending on sociodemographic characteristics X_i as the expected level of belongingness may not be identical before commitment. Therefore, we instrument commitment using Eq. 3:

$$T_i = 1 \;\; if \;\; T_i^* = X_i\theta + \vartheta_i > 0 \;\; ; T_i = 0 \;\; otherwise \tag{3}$$

where θ is a vector of unknown parameters, and ϑ_i is an error term.

Results and discussion

The quantitative results are presented and discussed, by mirroring them with the qualitative analysis, to make sense and clarify the causal relationships observed. Table 3 refers more particularly to the subjective factors increasing the sense of belonging as identified in the quantitative models and their positive effect and provides extensive quotations for illustration.

Looking at the role of sociodemographic variables, there is no influence of age or gender on the probability of belonging to a community (Table 2).[13] However, the higher education level of respondents is linked to their sense of belonging probably because education induces a more intense search for new norms and expectations (Enticott 2003; Moore 2014). Our results do not show any effect of the living place or the fact of being a member of another association onto the reported sense of belonging to a CSF community.

Commitment is positively related to the reported sense of belonging because, beyond their involvement in the CSF, volunteers look for more engagement with the community. This factor has a positive effect that can be analyzed in term of co-construction of self-identity with common identity: “I am not doing this as a charity action. That is not my rationale,” said one of the respondents, thus confirming research of Vermeersch (2004); “because it’s interesting to share common things with others” (Table 3). Some volunteer members are very active in organizing special meetings, to “retain members over a longer period of time” around discussions about “for instance, the life and the tough job of fishers.” It looks like a “strategy” to weave social ties. At the end, volunteers get some benefit as “they feel [increasingly] at ease in this community,” like in a new family.

[12] For further details, see for instance Greene and Hensher (2010) or Gregory (2015).

[13] Two models are presented in Table 2, model (2) contains the same variables as in model (1) and two other ones: “CSF increases fish knowledge” and “Delivery frequency acceptability”. Finally, model (2) is preferred to model (1) because the AIC and BIC criterion are lower in this second specification.

Table 2 Estimated results

	Sense of belonging	
	Model (1)	Model (2)
Sociodemographic characteristics		
Age	0.003	0.007
	(0.005)	(0.005)
Gender (ref men)	− 0.010	− 0.023
	(0.109)	(0.111)
Education (ref primary/secondary level)		
Short-cycle tertiary level	0.249	0.249
	(0.161)	(0.162)
Long-cycle tertiary level	0.267**	0.273**
	(0.131)	(0.130)
Living place (ref. city)		
Living in a rural area	0.011	0.011
	(0.103)	(0.105)
Living near the coast	− 0.007	− 0.067
	(0.205)	(0.210)
Member of other associations	0.040	0.022
	(0.112)	(0.113)
Commitment	*1.918***	*1.818***
	(0.167)	*(0.218)*
Attitudes toward CSF characteristics		
Membership's motives		
Credence factor	0.086	0.100
	(0.087)	(0.092)
Relational factor	0.336***	0.331***
	(0.096)	(0.085)
Quality	− 0.333**	− 0.390***
	(0.135)	(0.141)
Quantity	− 0.061	− 0.118
	(0.080)	(0.086)
CSF increases fish knowledge		0.344***
		(0.083)
Delivery frequency acceptable		− 0.106
		(0.123)
Observations	556	556
Log likelihood	− 723.47	− 710.43

Note: Standard errors in parentheses, *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$. The equation for commitment contains all sociodemographic characteristics used in the model, and only the age variable is positively and significantly linked to commitment experience. The correlation between error terms is significantly different from zero in the two models meaning and captures the commitment experience endogeneity. *Source*: University of Nantes

Among the members' motives, the relational factor is positively linked to the sense of belonging, whereas the credence factor has no significant effect. To find sustainable and local fish can represent one motivation for joining a community-supported scheme, but consumers are actually offered several solutions to buy sustainable products (e.g., direct sales from producers, street and local markets, labeled products in supermarkets, organic food shops, etc.). CSF represents only one way of meeting these characteristics (Salladarré et al. 2018). Conversely, the relational factor is specific to CSF, explaining the positive link with the common identity of fish eaters. Meeting new persons and fishers and having a new consumption experience with seafood products are likely to increase the sense of belonging to a food community (Enticott 2003; Moore 2014). The analysis of verbatims reveals that the relationship between members is widely driven by informal discussion around fish as food rather than fish as natural resources (Le Velly and Dufeu 2016; Lazuech and Debucquet 2017). When members stay long after the delivery time to talk with fishers, they are more interested in learning advices and recipes for preparing and cooking fish than discovering fishing techniques or addressing environmental issues: "We mainly talk about fish, what type of fish it is, whether it needs scaling, gutting, what are the recipes, sometimes they even tell us that it can be put on the barbecue"[14] (Table 3). Other forms of conviviality and reciprocity were cited by members, like informal meetings with "fish eaters" to "create a tight bond between us", interpersonal arrangements "to swap products that some do not like with others", organized groups to collect "the packages for others" leading to "a car sharing for fish." If credence and political attributes remain the most frequently cited motives to join a CSF, far ahead of relational reasons on average (Le Velly and Dufeu 2016), the relational dimension may act differently and less "consciously" on members' motivations. Indeed, the relational incentives are powerful to explain the communal identity and the exclusive use of CSF as supply source of fish which can sustain such a market institution in the long run (Canniford 2011; Stoll et al. 2015; Bloemmen et al. 2015; Salladarré et al. 2018).

Interestingly, if the quantity variable is not deemed linked to the community feeling, the quality variable is found very significantly and negatively associated to the likelihood of belonging to a community. In other words, while individuals have joined the CSF for the utilitarian motive of finding higher quality products, they will hardly believe forming a community. For this latter category of respondents, the CSF membership may be only instrumental. To the other extreme of the spectrum, those members believing in a collective identity pay less attention to the content of the basket in terms

[14] It is worth noting that the presence of fishers is not possible for each basket delivery because of the distance between Yeu Island and the numerous points of delivery (greater than 100 kms), but when they are present members stay longer. When they are not present, some intermediaries are usually able to discuss about fish preparation and cooking and contribute to maintain the relationship, here again more about food than about fishery issues. Lastly, the CSF organizes every year some events in Yeu Island, called "Open harbor event" ("*Opération Port ouvert*"), that members are kindly invited to attend to discuss and share social moments with fishers.

Table 3 Subjective factors increasing the sense of belonging

Factors identified	Positive effect	Quotations
Commitment	Co-construction of self-identity with common identity	• "The first time I've joined the CSF, I was only a consumer. I came first for the quality of fish, but the more I was involved, the more I found the project very interesting. I am not doing this as a charity volunteer action, this is not my rationale. I feel more like meeting people, sharing things in common with them" (Woman, age 64, volunteer member) • "In the CSF, some members stay for talking meanwhile others are more consumers than anything else. We share a tea, we talk and so on and so forth, but these relations are brief… except now that we have created gatherings and evenings with fish eaters, hence a better knowledge with them. I tell them stories about fishers. With other coordinators, such events create a small core of 20 people." (Woman, age 55, volunteer member) • "This is true to say that I feel comfortable in this community, with no overbuying, nor overproduction. I'd say that this is very important for us. Being in a CSF is a commitment, it is also a subscription, but not that of a newspaper-subscription type. "(Man, age 62, volunteer member)
Interpersonal relationships	Conviviality with other members	• "In the Yeu Island CSF, when there is a delivery, there are some that stop and chat and others that just leave with their fish; they are more consumers that anything else. I have set up evening sessions with people who eat fish, and meet with 4 people each time and we really get to know each other, I tell them about life as a fisherman. That creates a tight bond between us." (Woman, age 55, member for 6 years) • "Yeah, those of us in CSF recognize each other in the street, I talk with about ten people and that gives a nice side to this, in other words on that day we are all drawn by the same thing, by fish, I see that we have some common ground and that is positive." (Man, age 60, member for 3 years)
	Reciprocity and mutual aid around fish	• "I do not think about doing it because it is a good thing to do, I do not think like that. It's more because it is pleasant to meet people, it's nice to give a hand, we only live once...we try to swap products that we do not like with other; we do not leave them in the baskets." (Woman, age 64, member for 8 years) • "We have organized groups for the delivery with other CSF members in my village, one person collects the packages for the other eight. We take it in turns and with this small group people get to know each other better. We have a car share for fish!" (Woman, age 66, member for 8 years)
	Dialog with fishermen	• "Yes, I get to talk with them when there are not too many people around. Then they take their time, they explain how to filet a fish, suddenly that creates an opportunity to talk about their fishing, the fish we are going to eat, because it is more difficult than with vegetables or fruit

Table 3 (continued)

Factors identified	Positive effect	Quotations
		from the other CSAs." (Man, age 37, member for 5 years) • "The delivery is quite fast, ...and then there are a lot of people all the same and everyone is out for a while in the evening, but we mainly talk about fish, what type of fish it is, whether it needs scaling, gutting, what are the recipes, sometimes they even tell us that it can be put on the barbecue." (Woman, age 56, member for 4 years)
Increase of fish knowledge	Knowledge about fish species and seasonality	• "I know how potatoes grow, but with fish, I have no idea how it was caught, so the relationship at the start is different and we went from discovery to discovery." (Woman, age 64, member for 8 years) • "I had never asked myself if there was a season, I know that there is a season for tomatoes, but for fish I just did not know." (Woman, age 55, member for 6 years)
	Knowledge about recipes and how cooking fish	• "With Yeu Island CSF, you also get to discover new fish...red mullet, things that I have never bought, or skate wings. I know them, I ate them as a little child, but I have never bought them. And now I am discovering interesting recipes." (Woman, age 66, member for 8 years)
	Reduction of food anomy	• "We have to relearn how to feed ourselves, how to cook, because the passing on of cookery skills from mother to daughter has become less common since society has found frozen foods, and ways of always taking on tasks. […]. What is interesting about this CSF, are the suggestions on how to cook the fish, because it is not always obvious how to do it." (Woman, age 42, member for 3 years). • "I think that with certain CSF members we have the same objectives, a wish to consume in a different way. There are a lot of couples today with young children, and they really want to change the way they consume, they want to pass something on to their children, and fish is a good example." (Woman, age 56, member for 4 years).
	Reconnection with animality	• « At the beginning there were few purists, there were the consumers who wanted their fish in filets, but 1 day we had boxes of filets and no-one wanted them anymore! They asked us to get back to whole fish. They look a lot better and are more interesting." (Woman, age 64, member for 8 years) • "I knew practically nothing so everything was new except for pollock, hake, whiting and salmon, but there were not any ...And then there was one that I took a photo of. Just the color, it had a certain beauty and the brilliance of the scales!" (Woman, age 64, member for 8 years) • "You have to be really interested in fish, fish as a food, fish as an animal...and the way to cook it ...if not it is easier just to buy filets." ((Woman, age 38, member for 5 years)

of quality.[15] Of greater interest for them is conviviality, meeting other persons, sharing recipes, and increasing their knowledge about fish products.

Among the attitudes or preferences toward CSF characteristics, on interesting positive factor was revealed: the belief that CSF increases fish knowledge is positively linked to the sense of belonging. The likelihood of fully belonging to a community for respondents answering positively to this question, given the rest of the variables at their mean value, is around 40%, whereas this probability is equal to 14% for a "no" answer. The discussion and exchange of information can increase the feeling of belonging to a community. Indeed, distance between French eaters and fishery products is larger than for land farmed products (Geistdoerfer 1998). Knowledge about species remains widely unknown by members ("I knew practically nothing [about fish species] so everything was new except for pollack, hake, whiting and salmon, but there weren't any."), like seasonality ("I know that there is a season for tomatoes, but for fish I just did not know"). Yeu Island CSF contributes as well to help members to reconnect with animality ("There was one that I took a photo of. Just the color, it had a certain beauty and the brilliance of the scales!"), to consider "fish as an animal" and not only as a food product. Informal discussion between members and with fishers contributes to reduce food anomy (Fischler 1979), that is the weakening of social norms in modern society resulting from increasing individualization of food choices and from cacophony generated by some contradicting messages issued from nutritionists, ecologists, vegans, vegetarians, etc. The positive effect of the belief around CSF to contribute to higher fish knowledge is clearly explained by a member: "We have to re-learn how to feed ourselves, how to cook, because the passing on of cookery skills from mother to daughter has become less common since society has discovered frozen foods, and ways of always taking on tasks. […]. What is interesting about this CSF, lies in the suggestions on how to cook fish, because it is not always obvious for everyone." Thus, the exchange of information around fish contributes to provide members, more or less consciously, with some food norms influencing food habits and choices, and social representations for this kind of food (Lazuech and Debucquet 2017). In turn, this contributes to increase the feeling of belonging to a community, more precisely a community of "fish eaters."

Conclusion

In this article, we have been searching for factors supporting the sense of belonging which is likely to determine how sustainable a fragile market institution such as a CSF can be in the long run. The strength of ties in a local market network forming a community is a subtle combination of time spent, emotional intensity, intimacy resulting in mutual trust, and reciprocal services between members (Granovetter 1973). For part of the membership (but not all of it), a CSF responds fairly well to these characteristics because the most committed members (volunteers in the

[15] It is worth noting that members of this CSF rarely discuss about the key drivers of the « quality » of fish with fishers. Everything happens as if an implicit agreement about freshness, fishing techniques, choice of fishing areas, etc. was admitted and shared by the community. This specificity in comparison with CSA may be explained by a lack of knowledge required to engage in a balanced dialog with professionals, and secondly by the difficulty to observe what is actually happening onboard of fishing boats.

organization) are willing to accept an amount of endeavors and sacrifices which does not fit with the pure neoclassical theory of consumers. Because the modern forms of food markets (such as hypermarkets) are deemed impersonal and sometimes not environmental friendly or socially ethical, commitment and sense of belonging thus represent interesting pathways to re-affiliate consumers and create a social identity for members (Vermeersch 2004).

Based on a mixed method approach with an original survey of 556 CSF members belonging to the Yeu Island CSF, and additional individual interviews, we used an ordered probit analysis to explain the likelihood of CSF identity and sense of belonging by sociodemographic characteristics and through the various motives to join such a local food network. Our results clearly show that the common identity is mainly influenced by the relational dimension of CSF, and not at all by the credence attributes related to environmental concerns and support of the local fishers. The demand for personal contacts with producers and other consumers tend to increase the sense of CSF belonging. Product-oriented incentives such as the search for higher quality products, lower prices, or larger quantity of fish is at best not related, or even negatively related (e.g., quality motives) with this belief of belongingness, as if "belongers" valued more conviviality and communal embeddedness than the core market purpose of CSFs (trading fish more directly between producers and consumers). However, these results do not mean that motives to join CSF are strictly relational, because the most frequently cited motives to join a CSF system remains rather linked to the credence attributes or economic incentives to find higher quality fish at lower prices (Brinson et al. 2011; Bolton et al. 2016; Le Velly and Dufeu 2016; Salladarré et al. 2018).

These results only raise the importance of relational consideration and volunteer commitment on the sense of belonging to a CSF community and presumably on the long-term sustainability of CSF if the sense of belonging is linked to members' loyalty and long-standing involvement. The proportion of declared "committed" members is up to 19%, but the percentage of members who feel to belong fully to the CSF is twofold (38%). In other words, volunteer commitment helps to develop a sense of belonging but does not exhaust all the motivations required to create such a feeling. When members stay for a while after being supplied to talk with fishers, they declare to be more interested in learning advices for preparing and cooking fish than discovering fishing techniques or addressing environmental issues. Among the attitudes or preferences toward CSF characteristics, the feeling that CSF increases fish knowledge is positively linked to the sense of CSF belonging. Informal discussion between members and with fishers tend to contribute to reduce food anomy, in other words to partly offset the erosion of social regulations of food choices in modern society.

From the sociological perspective, the factors increasing the sense of belonging to a community are mainly driven by the relation that members of CSF have with fish – as a specific food of marine origin – and contacts with fishers. Our results show the positive role of sociality and conviviality around CSF deliveries (notably, self-organization between members to gather fish baskets collection), ways of preparing and cooking fish, as well as the opportunities to increase knowledge about seafood. More generally speaking, Yeu Island CSF offers an opportunity for a "convivial reconstruction" (Illich 1973), through the implementation of a shorter channel bridging fishers and eaters, by reinforcing links within a community of "fish eaters" (Geistdoerfer 1998). These results should inspire future CSF managers to invest time and efforts in organizing social

meetings and events to sustain strong ties in the community, even though such events may not be attended by all members. CSA or CSF remain hybrid institutions melting heterogeneous consumers and incentives (Le Velly and Dufeu 2016), but they do need to create a common identity and sense of belonging to stand durably as a local market institution.

From a methodological perspective, further research could elaborate a more specific multidimensional scale, inspired by the ones used in psychology to measure the overall psychological sense of community (PSOC) (McMillan and Chavis 1986; Obst and White 2005) and to capture other predictors of belongingness for CSA/CSF.

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