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البريطانية في  
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The  
British University  
*in Dubai*

## **Exploring the Influence of Expatriation on Individual Identities and Shopping Behaviours in the UAE**

استكشاف تأثير الإغتراب على الهويات الفردية وسلوكيات  
التسوق في الإمارات العربية المتحدة

by

**SERAP EMIK**

**A thesis submitted in fulfilment**

**of the requirements for the degree of**

**DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN BUSINESS MANAGEMENT**

**at**

**The British University in Dubai**

**January 2020**



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**Thesis Supervisor:  
Prof Stephen Wilkins**

**Approved for award:**

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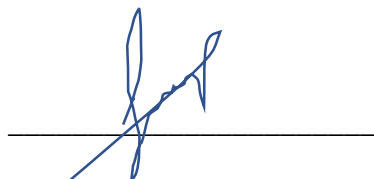
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## Abstract

With the arrival of globalization, the amount of expatriation is constantly increasing. While adjustment of expatriates to a new environment has gained great attention in literature, few studies are available on expatriate shopping behaviour. Particularly in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), where the expatriate population is much higher than the local population, studies on expatriation remain limited and tend to be descriptive in nature. Furthermore, a basic tenet of existing literature state that expatriates go through certain changes in identity when moving to a new social environment. Identity is recognized as a highly important factor in an expatriate's psychosocial adjustment and health. The thesis's questions include how expatriation influences individual identities and shopping behaviours to change, and why individuals go through changes in their identities and shopping behaviours when moving abroad and living an expatriate life? To answer these questions, this research explores the shopping behaviour of expatriate consumers, influenced by various factors in association with their shift in identity towards a new shopping behaviour. Hence, the output of this research developed a conceptual framework which identifies the factors that cause expatriate identity and shopping behaviour changes. This research explored the aims and questions through semi-structured interviews, gathering stories and experiences of 40 expatriate workers from various nationalities, between 21 to 65 years of age, that have been residing in the UAE up to five years. While the present research was conducted in the UAE, its applications may extend to all expatriates around the world. Findings of this research aim to help businesses further understand possible changes in expatriate shopping behaviour. Based on the type of products, findings of this research can be linked to marketing communications, advertising communications, product development, and relationship management.

The main form of data collection was through interviewing participants. Overall, ten themes emerged from the gathered data describing expatriates' general shopping habits, specifically from the aspect of their identities after moving abroad. The findings of this research shed light upon the fact that expatriation has a multi-dimensional impact on individuals' shopping behaviour and identity. These impacts include, *Social Environment and Peer Pressure, Social Media Usage, Changing Identity, Hedonic Shopping Factors, The Retail Therapy- Feelings of Loneliness, Stress and Boredom, Variety Festivals and Sales, First Impressions, Use of Luxury Products, Brands and Brand Engagement, Shopping as a Means of Socialization*. Thus, this research explores and conceptualizes the influences of expatriation in change of individual identity and purchasing behaviour.

## قرصتخم ؤذبذ

تزايد عدد المغتربين مع وصول العولمة. وفي حين أن تكيف المغتربين مع بيئة جديدة قد حظي باهتمام كبير بين الأكاديميين، فإن الدراسات المتاحة عن سلوك التسوق للمغتربين قليلة. ولا سيما في دولة الإمارات العربية المتحدة، حيث أن عدد السكان المغتربين أعلى بكثير من الإماراتيين. ولا تزال الدراسات المتعلقة بالاغتراب محدودة وتميل إلى أن تكون وصفية في طبيعتها. وعلاوة على ذلك، فإن أحد المبادئ الأساسية للمؤلفات الأكاديمية تنص على أن المغتربين يمرون بتغيرات معينة في الهوية عند الانتقال إلى بيئة اجتماعية جديدة. ومن المسلم به أن الهوية عامل بالغ الأهمية في التكيف النفسي والاجتماعي للمغترب وصحته. تتضمن أسئلة الأطروحة كيف يؤثر الاغتراب على الهويات الفردية وسلوكيات التسوق لتغييرها، ولماذا يمر الأفراد بتغييرات في هوياتهم وسلوكيات التسوق عند الانتقال إلى الخارج والعيش في حياة المغتربين؟ للإجابة على هذه الأسئلة، يستكشف هذا البحث سلوك التسوق للمستهلكين المغتربين، متأثرين بعوامل مختلفة بالاغتراب مع تحولهم في الهوية نحو سلوك تسوق جديد. ومن ثم، فإن نتائج هذا البحث وضعت إطاراً مفاهيمياً يحدد العوامل التي تسبب هوية المغتربين وتغييرات سلوك التسوق. استكشف هذا البحث الأهداف والأسئلة من خلال مقابلات شبه منظمة، وجمع قصص وتجارب لـ 40 عاملاً أجنبياً من جنسيات مختلفة، تتراوح أعمارهم بين 21 و 65 عاماً، وقيمون في دولة الإمارات العربية المتحدة منذ خمس سنوات. في حين أن هذا البحث قد أجري في دولة الإمارات العربية المتحدة، فإن تطبيقاته قد تمتد إلى جميع المغتربين في جميع أنحاء العالم. تهدف نتائج هذا البحث إلى مساعدة الشركات على فهم التغيرات المحتملة في سلوك التسوق لدى المغتربين. استناداً إلى نوع المنتجات التي تم شراؤها، يمكن ربط نتائج هذا البحث بالاتصالات التسويقية، والاتصالات الإعلانية، وتطوير المنتجات، وإدارة العلاقات .

وكان الشكل الرئيسي لجمع البيانات من خلال إجراء مقابلات مع المشاركين. وعموماً، برزت عشرة مواضيع من البيانات التي تم جمعها تصف عادات التسوق العامة للمغتربين، وتحديداً من جانب هوياتهم بعد انتقالهم إلى الخارج. تلقي نتائج هذا البحث الضوء على حقيقة أن الاغتراب وتأثيراته المتعددة الأبعاد على سلوك التسوق للأفراد وهويتهم. وتشمل هذه الآثار:

البيئة الاجتماعية وضغط الأقران، واستخدام وسائل الإعلام الاجتماعية، وتغيير الهوية، وعوامل التسوق الهيدونية، والعلاج النفسي المرتبط بالتسوق (Retail Therapy)- مشاعر الوحدة، والإجهاد والملل، والمهرجانات المتنوعة والمبيعات، الانطباعات الأولى، واستخدام منتجات الترف والعلامات التجارية والمشاركة في العلامة التجارية، والتسوق كوسيلة للتنشئة الاجتماعية. وهكذا، يستكشف هذا البحث ويتصور تأثيرات الاغتراب في تغيير الهوية الفردية والسلوك الشرائي

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Finally, I would like to dedicate this thesis to my two angels. My adorable daughters Diane & Sara that always motivated and supported me during my PhD journey. I also would like to dedicate this thesis to my beloved grandmother that now is in heaven. I remember promising her that I was going to be a doctor when I grew up.

Thank you very much.

Serap Emik

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## Glossary

<b>Acculturation</b>	Acculturation is defined as a process that includes psychological and social changes in people's behaviours interacting for a long time with other cultures (Sam & Barry 2006).
<b>Adjustment</b>	Adjustment is defined as a person's stress free and comfortable experience while shifting to a different cultural environment (Olsen & Martins 2009).
<b>Brand</b>	American Marketing Association defines (1960) brand as "A name, term, design, symbol, or a combination of them, intended to identify the goods or services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from competitors" (Kumar & Maurya 2012).
<b>Cosmopolitan expatriate identity</b>	Cosmopolitanism and cosmopolitan identity are stated to be linked with international experience: 'the disintegration of traditional national boundaries due to the individual finding some form of connectedness and belonging between their home and humankind' (Vieten 2006).
<b>Culture</b>	Culture refers to the norms, values and believes of a certain group of people and it involves the actions and attitudes of that society (Adams & van de Vijver 2015).
<b>Cultural distance</b>	Cultural distance was defined buy Hofstede (1998) as the level of difference between new environment and the country of origin both culturally (with values, beliefs, traditions, norms) Hofstede (1980) and constitutional, political and financial aspects (Adler 1998).

<b>Cultural intelligence</b>	The cultural experience and ability to handle efficiently with situations of cultural differences is coined as cultural intelligence (Grelecka 2016).
<b>Emotional intelligence</b>	Emotional intelligence is to be able to perceive precisely, evaluate and express emotion, and able to grasp and comprehend emotion and emotional knowledge. (Crowne 2013).
<b>Expatriate</b>	An expatriate is defined as an individual that is able face work challenges in organisations based in different countries than their own (Janssens, Cappellen & Zanoni 2006).
<b>Expatriation</b>	Expatriation is ‘the use of force or law to remove someone from their own country, or an instance of this happening (Dictionary 2018).
<b>Hedonism - Gratification</b>	Hedonism or gratification is a reasoning recognizing delight in the substance and importance of life. Gratification is a moral hypothesis crediting something giving delight from "great" and something giving agony as "awful" (Hopkinson & Pujari 1999; Babacan 2001).
<b>Identity</b>	Identity is defined as a phenomenon that points on a person’s similarities and differences from others (Adams 2014).
<b>Loneliness</b>	Loneliness has been defined by Ernst and Cacioppo (1999), a phenomenon that is ‘associated with a variety of individual differences including depression, hostility, pessimism, social withdrawal, alienation, shyness and low positive affect.’
<b>Personal identity</b>	This type of identity reflects the individual’s social and interpersonal series of actions that is important for the person within a certain role (Sluss & Ashforth 2007).

<b>Pragmatic expatriate identity</b>	This type of expatriate identity will be developed more in cases like where expatriates (a) have difficulty to work with different type of people from different cultures; (b) experience a culture shock due to the fact that they find hard to adjust to the host country (c) experience challenges with the host country language (Kim 2008; Lineberry 2012); and/or very little international experience.
<b>Shopping behaviour</b>	Shopping behaviour is a form of consumer behaviour reflecting the steps of the purchasing cycle. It is a method choosing and buying products and services to answer one's needs (de Mooij 2017).

## List of Abbreviations

	<b>Abbreviations</b>
<b>BBC</b>	British Broadcasting Corporation
<b>ESPN</b>	Entertainment and Sports Programming Network
<b>GDP</b>	Gross domestic product
<b>GCC</b>	Gulf Cooperation Council
<b>HRM</b>	Human resource management
<b>HSBC</b>	Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corporation
<b>IHRM</b>	International Human Resource Management
<b>UAE</b>	United Arab Emirates
<b>UK</b>	United Kingdom
<b>USD</b>	United States Dollar



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# **Chapter One**

## **Introduction**

### **1.1. Introduction**

This chapter defines the context and background information of this research. Additionally, in this chapter the problem statement, research approach and the rationale of the study has been articulated. The chapter is followed by the objectives and the research questions.

### **1.2. Research Context and Background Information**

The uncertainty of political and economic aspects of many countries around the world is continuously reported in the news, however, many people grasp tightly on these times. These individuals do not speak the same language, share the same demographics or location, nor have similarities in their backgrounds. Nevertheless, many of them have one common identifier: they are expatriates.

An expatriate is defined as a person that moves out of his/her country-of-origin and takes a work or study assignment in a foreign location either independently or sent by an organisation (Adams & van de Vijver 2015). Expatriation is a phenomenon that continuously increases and expatriates have a momentous impact on worldwide economy, particularly in global business strategies and in international information transmission (Grinstein & Wathieu 2012).

As global technology is continuously developing, multinational companies send large number of employees overseas to enhance global know-how and leadership (Lee & Kartika 2014). Expatriates enlarge their prospects, chase new opportunities, confront different challenges and try to reach their targets with dedication. The financial hubs of cities like

Singapore, Hong Kong, Dubai and London support organisations and entrepreneurs with amazing foundations. They offer great opportunities for businesses, higher incomes, and greater work-life balance for expatriates (Expateplorer.hsbc.com 2018). Therefore, in the source countries, being an expatriate often means becoming financially stronger and having a superior lifestyle. However, expatriates may face various challenges like their adjustment to the new social environment and the culture of the host country. General adjustment refers to the expatriates' extent of adaptation into the new life styles and conditions of the host country (Selmer et al. 2015). The expatriates' skills in adapting to their new environment, comprehend the culture, and develop a global mind-set, is the benchmark of success for international organisations (Scullion & Collings 2006). Adjustment of expatriates has great impact on both the expatriates and the firms (Lee & Kartika 2014). Changes in knowledge, skills and attitudes during the expatriation period may heavily impact expatriates' identities (Halsbeger & Brewster 2009). As defined by Adams in 2014, identity is a phenomenon that points on a person's similarities and differences from others. Identity is said to be constructed by three aspects named as personal identity, relational identity, and social identity. Personal identity stemmed from the Ericson-Marcian model of identity development that was defined by Schwartz et al. (2010) as a phenomenon reflecting the intrapersonal factors of individuals defining their values, beliefs and objectives. According to Schwarz et al. this aspect of expatriate identity includes skills, characteristics, choices and talents (2010) which links to goals and beliefs. The authors mention that these intrapersonal aspects of self then allow the expatriates to feel and define themselves as unique individuals within an ambiance. They finally state that the concept of expatriate experience will impact the individual's choices and habits.

The second type is named the relational identity and encompasses the social roles of an individual that is linked to the personal identity. This type of identity reflects the individual's

social and interpersonal series of actions that is important for the person within a certain role (Sluss & Ashforth 2007). The relational identity refers to both public and private social roles (Adams & van de Vijver 2015). When expatriates arrive to a new society and environment they also face new roles, for example, working as a manager, and in their new social status as a part of an expatriate group (Adams & van de Vijver 2015).

The third dimension of identity is called the social identity and is constructed by the belonging of an individual to a certain type of group. In this dimension, individuals reflect an identity through their associations with particular social groups. Social Identity Theory (SIT; Tajfel & Turner 1986) and Self-Categorization Theory (SCT; Turner 1999), reflects how being a member of a group impacts behaviour towards out-group members, and expatriation generates an individual's sense of being a part of a group when entering a new environment (Adams & van de Vijver 2015). All three dimensions of identity are important to keep a consistent sense of self. As an ongoing process of self-identification, the effects of entering, living and working within a new society may force individuals to reconsider their positions on relevant identity dimensions. According to Adams and van de Vijver (2015) this reconsideration may lead to a switch in values and beliefs (shift in personal identity), a change in social roles and relationships (shift in relational identity), and an individual's wish of belonging to a group (shift in social identity).

According to Mao and Shen (2015) identities are not developed in emptiness, but are constantly being reconstructed, endorsed and assessed in social connections. Identities reflect one's idea of constructing a relationship, and any diversity within the network complex can possibly lead to a re-interpretation in identity (Butcher 2009). Hence, relational structures of an expatriate within their social networks impact on their shift in identity (Mao & Shen 2015).

Moreover, as marketing experts continuously develop ways of reaching higher sales by marketing their products, likewise consumers wish to buy the most suitable products and

services for themselves, choosing certain brands and ignoring some others. Consumers no longer purchase items because they are in need of the product's functional satisfaction but prefer to buy items that are meaningful for them and use the brands as a symbol to build and reflect their identities. Identity and self-concept are generally used as transposable words but the term self-concept can be defined as a phenomenon of who one was, is, and can be, coherent through various personal and social identities (Oyserman 2001). For instance, Escalas and Bettmann (2005) argue that consumers use brands to create an identity according to the link between the brand user and their image. Similarly, Belk (1988) maintained that the products purchased by consumers enables these individuals to satisfy their psychological needs, differentiate themselves from others, and create a self-concept and image. This fact leads firms and marketers to reposition their products from functional features towards how the products will fit into the consumer's life styles.

Furthermore, the emergence of social networking paved the way for expatriates to develop new connections even before arriving to their new assignments abroad. Most expatriates start using social media sites upon their arrival to connect either to the hosting nationals or other expatriates from the same home country. Reviews of meticulous literature mention that social media communication tools like Facebook or Twitter in the 21st century lead people to knowledge transfer, collaboration, and association, that will help them adjust to their new environment easier (Tosun 2012). Similarly, numerous studies indicate that social networking also has great impact on expatriate shopping behaviour. Expatriate consumers entering a new environment also adjust themselves to new lifestyles, brands and services. And social media is coined as a very strong factor in the expatriate adjustment phenomenon.

Furthermore, 'Social Learning Theory' by Bandura recommends that individuals learn by watching others' behaviours and the results of them (1977). The author meant to say that learning is a cognitive procedure inside a social setting where individuals gain from each

other's associations just by watching, mimicking and demonstrating a similar outcome of the same behaviour. Bandura (1977) additionally pointed to the attitudes and the results of these attitudes. According to the author, individuals take in the act of others and expect similar results of these acts. So, expatriate consumers are likely to mirror other consumers' shopping behaviours and expect similar results to their own. Moreover, according to 'Social Exchange Theory' by Blau (1964) consumers exchange positive attitudes towards an object (i.e. a brand) when returned by a profit from the brand relationship (Hollebeek 2011). Consequently, expatriate consumers may be influenced by specific individuals or groups and take after their purchasing preferences which may change their identities and shopping behaviours.

Additionally, changes in the structure of a dynamic market and intense rivalry impact purchasing and behaviour of shoppers. Consumers understand their purchasing behaviour and their inclinations in view of their ways of life. Consumers, understanding their purchasing behaviour in view of hedonic inclinations, experience both mental involvements with the utilization of the product and pleasure and euphoria by having the product; those understanding their buying behaviour in view of utilitarian grounds are more cantered on the utilitarian and target traits of the item. Buyers acting with hedonic buying reasons understand the act not as a fulfilment of a need, but rather to appreciate and take delight by doing it without evaluation, planning or contemplation. In terms of expatriates, the impact of feeling lonely abroad may create an inclination towards hedonic based shopping. Expatriates may compensate for their loneliness by purchasing goods and services during their assignments overseas.

Furthermore, Finaccord (2018) reports that the worldwide expatriate population increased to 66.2 million in 2017 and that this number will reach 87.5 million by 2021 (Finaccord.com 2018). This number consists of various types expatriates that take up completely different parts within the host countries. In Kuwait, for instance, 70% of the

population consists of expatriates. In Singapore, this number is reportedly 40% of the total population (Focus 2019). The number of expatriates in Europe consists of 33 million people that moved either to live or to work in the European Union from elsewhere. Luxembourg leads the list by hosting 43% of expatriates among the European Union countries. Cyprus takes the second place with 20%, and Spain has opened its doors to 5.7 million (12%) expatriates, which equals to 12% of the country's population (iExpats 2019). The high percentages of expatriates can clearly be a significant consumer segment to target for marketers. By identifying the influences of changes in identities and shopping behaviours, the findings of this study will serve as a guide for firms in concentrating on a large volume of the consumer segment that consists of expatriates worldwide. Using the findings of this research as a step, firms will understand the various needs of expatriates' shopping behaviour and various ways in business strategies and product and services can be developed.

To date, however, the number of publications analysing the aspects of expatriate shopping behaviours are limited. For instance, a study by Wijnen, Kemperman and Janssen (2010), called 'Shopping behaviour and attribute evaluation of expatriates - a cross-cultural study'. The research is primarily about cultural influences on expatriates, but the focus is on the influence of shopping centre attributes. Moreover, this journal article has broad statements including: "Expatriates are usually highly educated and receive an above average income-including various (tax) benefits and remunerations". However, this statement is inaccurate, e.g. in the Gulf States (UAE, Qatar, Bahrain etc.), as the majority of expatriates in raw numbers are actually unskilled or semi-skilled manual labourers or technicians. Furthermore, a recent online survey conducted in the UAE found that 39% of the population are either South or East Asians (Expatexplorer.hsbc.com 2018). The current thesis, however, considers broader influences of expatriation that impact shopping behaviours and individual identities.

Furthermore, an article, by Bundy (2017), named as: ‘Expatriates go shopping: food and shopping acculturation’ is another example for expatriate shopping behaviour. The study merely focuses on food consumption. It is about understanding how the food acculturation of British expatriates in Toulouse ultimately translates into their shopping behaviours. As provided in these two samples, scholarly articles published so far, focus on topics such as acculturation, F&B consumption, adaptation period, adjustment, job performance, cultural differences, culture shock in new environments, religious or ethnic differences and the effects on shopping behaviour, shopping centre attributes or only on expatriates of one nationality. Hence, current studies provide limited information on shopping behaviour and identity changes of expatriates. However, the current research is not limited with general topics. With a broader scope, this study aimed to observe expatriates worldwide and from any nationality by focusing on changes in their identities and shopping behaviours towards any product or service they choose during their expatriation period. In contrast to the previously provided studies, this research focuses on identity and shopping behaviour changes. Hence, this research focuses on developing findings regarding expatriate shopping behaviours and implementing them into business practices. Therefore, the proposed study answers to two main questions: How does expatriation influence individual identities and shopping behaviours to change? And why individuals go through changes in their identities and shopping behaviours when moving abroad and living an expatriate life?

### **1.3. Rationale of the study**

It is commonly believed that becoming an expatriate means becoming financially stronger and having a superior lifestyle. The general perception in source countries is that international life offers the expatriates a financial uplift. Many magazines, TV shows, social network sites etc. talk about the sparkling lifestyles that expatriates experience. Organisations



always choose the best employees to send abroad for important assignments with handsome pay packages. It is clearly not easy to have access to the international life that offers great opportunities, unless individuals are successful and have proven themselves worthy of becoming an expatriate.

Moreover, around the world, the gross earnings of expatriates annually are on average just below USD 100,000 (USD 99,903) and their income increases around 25% after moving abroad. In fact, more than one in ten expatriates mention that their income has doubled after they moved out of their home countries. Nearly three quarters state that they were able pay off their debts or lifted up their savings after their move. A third of expatriates worldwide invest in real estate, nearly half take more vacations, one in five make donations to charity or consume more for their kids (22%). Across the globe financial boost means expatriates are safe, assured and optimistic about their financial matters (Expatexplorer.hsbc.com 2018). In terms of expatriate compensation for instance, a regular pay could vary considering several aspects (Sims & Schraeder 2005). Expatriate packages could range from \$300,000 to \$1 million annually (Wentland 2003). Multinational corporations, consider an international transfer as requirement for developing and enhancing one's career (Sims & Schraeder 2005). Hence, most firms have altered or completely refurbished expatriate compensation. Additionally, according to Sims and Schrader firms rapidly realized that compensation is among the most significant aspects that a potential expatriate considers when accepting an international task (2005). Moreover, the authors claim that skilled expatriates are more valued than before as firms continue to spread their global markets. The authors conclude that this point is highly important as the international corporations need to ensure the assigned expatriate will lead the charge for their firms to have worldwide clients and generate new revenue lines.

Similarly, Kawai and Strange (2014) argue that perceived organizational support is the key for expatriate performance. Their quantitative study, conducted by interviewing 118 expatriates employed at the German subsidiaries of Japanese multinational companies, illustrates that organizational support in career, finance and adjustment has a direct positive influence on work adjustment and affective commitment (Kawai & Strange 2014). The organizational support in finance to expatriates after starting their international assignment includes home leaves (Takeuchi et al. 2009), all types of costs of living allowances (Kraimer & Wayne 2004), and housing (Wu & Ang 2011).

Furthermore, financial incentives embraced the chance to earn and to save a large amount of money as well as future savings such as; for marriage and/or after having children (Selmer et al. 2015). 52% of expatriate population worldwide mention that they are able to save more compared to home, and 57% say they have more disposable income after moving abroad (ibid.). Confirming these Figures, a 56 years old Australian expatriate living in Malaysia said: “We moved to develop our financial circumstances.” In Saudi Arabia for instance, the increase in income enables 79% of expatriates to save more compared to how much they could save in their own country. Additionally, they are able to benefit from 73% additional disposable income. Likewise, 72% of expatriates in Switzerland benefitted from higher disposable income after their move. For many, the expatriate life is known to be a very positive one that opens doors for new opportunities. For instance, a 42 years old Indian expatriate living in the UK said: “I moved so that I could grow my business globally.” (Expatexplorer.hsbc.com 2018).

Similarly, Sims and Schraeder (2005) argue that one major aspect influencing expatriate compensation is the firm’s consideration of local markets where the assignment will be pursued. Scholarly articles argue that the most important factor on expatriate compensation is probably the cost of living in the host country (Frazee 1998b; Overman 2000). Therefore,

organizations in general, adopt a “no loss” method when structuring expatriate compensation packages (Sims & Schraeder 2005). The implementation of this framework, enables the expatriate compensation to be regulated upward for more expensive budgets of living, but is not structured downward, in case the cost of living abroad is less than the country of origin (Frazee 1998b; Overman 2000). In general, organizations consider several other factors when calculating the compensation for expatriates such as; housing, children’s education, and healthcare costs (Sims & Schraeder 2005). Generally, potential expatriates expect that organizations will be considering local markets and the cost of general life expenses in the host country when constructing expatriate packages (Wentland 2003).

Furthermore, a study of British self-initiated expatriates, the authors state that are five sorts of motives for the interviewed self-initiated expatriates academics to work abroad (Richardson & McKenna 2002, 2003; Richardson & Mallon 2005). These are classified as: adventure/travel, life change/escape, family, financial incentives and career. Studies show that while lifting up their life standards and/ or savings were the most important factors in choosing expatriate life for almost a quarter of expatriates, 38% mentioned that for them the most fascinating reason was advancement in their career (Selmer et al. 2015). Desire to enhance career prospects, a purpose to work abroad to promoted and a belief that expatriation could support the career advancement. For instance in Switzerland, which has the highest average salaries worldwide, 63% of expatriates happily mentioned that their work-life balance has been better than in their home countries (ibid.). Just on the Northern side, Germany is mentioned by expatriates to be better in work culture compared to their own countries. But interestingly some territories even offer a multi beneficial environment for the expatriates both in financial prosperity and in standards at work. A general rule accepted by expatriates is ‘the harder the working environment, the better the reward in terms of salary’ (Expatexplorer.hsbc.com 2018). For instance, in Vietnam, with the average USD 90,000 earnings, very few expatriates worry

about financial matters compared to expatriates worldwide, as the cost of living is very reasonable. Around 40% of expatriates living in Vietnam mentioned that the work life is less stressful compared to their home country and yet nearly half mentioned being satisfied working in Vietnam. The main part of the expatriate community in Vietnam consists of colleagues at work and having good relations with colleagues' means being fulfilled in many other areas of life. 35% of expatriates mention that they are able to socialize at the work environment better compared to their mother country. Overall, 92% of expatriates in Vietnam mention that they are as happy as or even happier than working back home. Additionally, due to the busy number of expatriates in some areas, nearby restaurants, hospitals, and shops often adjust their services according to foreign clients. International schools are also normally situated in nearby proximity to the places where expatriates prefer to live. (Peltokorpi & Jintae Froese 2009)

Interestingly, many expatriates seem to carry abroad their cultural habits to property ownership and its significance as an investment. There is high interest among expatriates to invest on property while abroad. 62% of expatriates are known to own properties in another country, with 9% holding a property both in their source country and abroad. In UK culture, owning a property is known to be highly important. Based on this native attitude perhaps, 75% of British expatriates own properties somewhere around the world. For instance, a 44 years old British expatriate and property owner in France says: "We have a large property here, with lots of space and a swimming pool." The British are placed in the third row in property ownership ratings, right after the Sri Lankan and Egyptian expatriates and followed by the 74% of Indian expatriates (Expateplorer.hsbc.com 2018).

However, incomes may vary between the expatriates who move to a particular country and who move out from a country to elsewhere as an expatriate. Japanese expatriates overseas have an average of USD 166, 000 incomes, while expatriates living in Japan have an average income of USD 127, 000. Interestingly, expatriates who moved to China earn around USD 171,

000 but the ones that left the country as expatriates are reported to have an average income of USD79,000 (Expatexplorer.hsbc.com 2018).

On the other hand, it seems that developing a global perspective offers rewards. While some expatriates relocate due to an uplift in financial prospect, others have completely different targets of becoming an expatriate. “Endlessly challenging and endlessly stimulating; wholly worth it” says an expatriate in Singapore, creating curiosity in others’ minds about the life that he is living there (ibid.). For those expatriates that are not looking for financial prospects there are various other factors that they choose the expatriate life for. For these types of expatriates, to choose an expatriate life for the uplift in their income level is only a small proportion of their decision. According to Selmer et al. (2015) adventure or travel was mentioned to be as one the most important factors by expatriates. According to the authors this factor consists of major three aspects: craving to explore the world, hunt for new experience and longing for an adventure and challenge. For instance, “I moved to learn something new about the world” says a 50 years old German expat living in China aiming to discover the life out of the one he has known so far (Expatexplorer.hsbc.com 2018). These sincere comments of expatriates show that they are under the influence of various factors after their move to their new living environments. They try to adjust and develop a new way of living that their family and friends can observe when back home. There are many that consider the host country even as their homes. Changing lifestyles or escaping from the home country undesirable working circumstances is another factor for an individual to work as an expatriate abroad. It also shows expatriation as an escape from the existing monotony in the country of origin as well as being a possibility for change (Semer & Lauring 2011). For instance, an expatriate wife living with her family in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) says: “My husband has always been an expatriate, and after 20 years in the Middle East, this is home” (Expatexplorer.hsbc.com 2018).

The UAE is known to offer great rewards to working expatriates, which includes superior levels of pay, a high standard of living, and fast-track career opportunities.

This research will be conducted in the UAE. However, the reason for conducting the research is not because it has not been done before in the UAE. The rationale behind this study is that the literature review has led the author to believe that the expatriation process changes identity and shopping behaviour. Hence, the author of this research intends to explore how expatriation impacts individual identities and shopping behaviours.

Overall, the Expat Explorer survey (2018) results show the 52% of expatriates have a higher quality of life in general and 53% a greater work/ life balance than their source country. These results reflect back to the general perception on expatriates having superior financial income and better life styles than in their home countries. But how does the uplift in their finances impact on their initial identities? What are the changes they go through that makes others think they have a superior life? After moving to a new environment and having access to a higher income, financial safety, increased disposable income etc. naturally may lead to shift in expatriates' identities, which consequently impact on their shopping behaviours. This research investigates the extent to which expatriation changes the identity and the shopping behaviours (expenditure level, product choice etc.) of expatriates when living in a different country. The findings of this study therefore support businesses to further understand the changes in expatriate shopping behaviour. Multinational firms might be interacting with particular consumers, not taking to account that globally expatriates have 25% financial uplift and 57% more disposable income when moving abroad. Knowing the shopping preferences of expatriates, firms can look into upgrading their products and services. As an output of this research, findings on expatriate shopping behaviours can be implemented to business practices. Firms may not appreciate that the lifestyles of expatriates changes as dramatically as it does. Therefore, the research recommends firms various steps to further satisfy this particular

consumer segment. It identifies different opportunities to sell new products and/or to upgrade products or develop new sales strategies.

Additionally, this research can support researchers in areas of marketing literature that will fall under applied psychology and consumer behaviour. Researchers can use this study as a base to do further research.

#### **1.4. Problem statement**

In 2017, the worldwide expatriate population was: 66.2 million. By 2021 this number will increase to 87.5 (Finaccord.com 2018). These Figures reflect the fact that expatriate community becomes a market segment. And this segment has its own needs and wants which firms could target. Considering the UAE, a country that welcomes people from all around the world and interestingly has more expatriates than nationals. The UAE, with 70% expatriates, takes the third place globally in terms the ratio of expatriates to nationals (Emirates24/7 2018). The number of expatriates and immigrants in the UAE is estimated as 88.52% and the remaining 11.48% is mentioned to be the nationals (Official GMI Blog 2018). With the finding of the oil thirty-one years ago, and the boost in the number of jobs in all fields resulted to a flow of employees at all positions and nationalities. Within a decade, the number of the country's population reached to 5 million. The reason for this boom in the population was mainly due to the continuously increasing amount of expatriate and immigrant to the country (Doing business in the UAE 2019). Expatriates arriving in UAE find themselves surrounded by a luxurious environment. While a remarkable 60% stay due to the financial benefits, 40% mention that they stay for the quality of life itself (Expatexplorer.hsbc.com 2018).

However, to the extent of the author's knowledge, factors influencing expatriate shopping behaviour are limited, in the UAE or elsewhere. Therefore, shopping behaviour of

expatriates needs great attention and analysis. Despite the fact that expatriates are expanding in numbers and have certain needs in the shopping preferences, to date, there is a major gap in marketing literature. Therefore, the present research hopes to assist businesses in changing their practices. It aims to help businesses to further understand the changes in expatriate shopping behaviour. Multinational firms may be interacting with particular consumers, while overlooking the fact that expatriates have 25% more disposable income. Knowing the shopping preferences of expatriates, firms can look into upgrading their products and services.

Therefore, the output of this research aims reflect the findings on expatriate shopping behaviours that can be implemented to business practices which will point on opportunities to sell new products or to upgrade products or develop new sales strategies. If people are more interested in their image and their reputation, and projecting a particular identity, then the firms can use that in their advertising as well as their products.

## **1.5. Research Aim and Objectives of the Study**

### **1.5.1. The Aim of the research:**

The aim of this study is to analyze, extract and articulate the extent to which expatriates' identities and shopping behaviours change when they live in a different country, namely in this study 'in the UAE'. The outcome of this study will provide an understanding of the expatriation phenomenon and how it impacts on individuals' identity and shopping behaviour changes in the UAE.

### **1.5.2. Objectives of the study:**

It is commonly believed that being an expatriate results in becoming financially stronger. Therefore, the purpose of this research is to investigate: The extent of change that expatriation has on the shopping behaviours of expatriates when living in the UAE.



### **1.5.3. Theoretical objectives of the study:**

- Create a conceptual model that identifies the factors that may influence changes in expatriate consumer identities and expatriate shopping behaviours.
- To review the existing literature in expatriate shopping behaviour and identity changes.
- To identify implications of expatriate identities and that may inform strategies.

### **1.5.4. Contributions:**

The findings of this study inform readers how and why expatriates are influenced and how these influences cause changes in their identities and shopping behaviours. Identification of these influences contribute in both theoretical and practical aspects. Studying expatriates has clearly developed our understanding of the role of consumer identity in individual shopping behaviour and on luxury/hedonistic shopping.

- Research on expatriates in the context of identity and shopping behaviour changes is very limited. This research is broadly focusing on the expatriate identity and shopping behaviour changes. Hence, findings of this study reveals obvious contribution to the academic marketing community. Future researchers will be able to build up on this research and can further investigate the phenomenon. The expatriate consumer segment has its own needs. These needs themselves should be the new target of firms for development and production of future product and services. Hence, in light of the findings of this thesis, firms can develop new strategies for providing the expatriate consumer segment with further product and services.
- This research will provide the firms with the knowledge of: Opportunities to sell new products services, upgrade their consisting products, develop new sales strategies and

increase their profit margins. Hence, this thesis provides guidance to future researchers and contributes to the expatriate consumer population globally and in the UAE.

- This study provides findings that indicate to the firms to be aware of these brands, look at different nationalities residing here countries and try to find ways to provide these brands in the UAE.
- Social media serves as a great tool for expatriates to study the job market of the country they would be residing in. They can use it to study that country's latest fashion and trends and understand the shopping behaviour of the consumers living there. Marketers can take advantage of this by working with social media experts and create specific applications that are targeted at expatriates and from there, provide useful information for all the things expatriates will want to know before moving abroad to that country. The application can include a list of countries that expatriates are considering moving to, and each country would have shopping categories that reflect the style and preferences of consumers living there. Moreover, the application can also have a separate form that allows the expatriates to communicate with other expatriates already residing in that country, and share and exchange useful information on shopping consumption decisions.
- The output is that researchers can use this study as a base to do further research. For a quantitative paper the findings of this research could be independent variables. For instance, the author of this research will make a follow up study by using the findings of this research and creating a questionnaire for a quantitative research that will help further analyse the expatriate identity and shopping behaviour changes.
- Finally, a meticulous framework has been developed as an output of this study that informs readers about the influences of expatriation on individual identities and shopping behaviours.

## **1.6. Research Approach**

The Expat Explorer survey conducted online in 2018 shows that the UAE has far more expatriates than the worldwide average (87% of the nation's population). This amount consists of 39% of South and East Asians, 37% Europeans and 7% of African expatriates. 46% of expatriates moved to UAE for career development, 38% for better quality life standards and 55% for an uplift of their income and eventually in their financial prospects (Expatexplorer.hsbc.com 2018). Financial rewards in UAE can be extraordinarily important for a new way of life. Working expatriates in UAE mention an uplift of 40% in their earnings compared to 25% of expatriates worldwide. While over a fifth of expatriates in UAE mention their salary has doubled, 39% say their income has increased incredibly. Even though life in the UAE is costly, more than half of expatriates mention that they have more disposable money than they had back home, and that they are able to focus on the future investments like property, safety during old age, and their children's education. Nearly two thirds of expatriates have resided in the UAE for over five years. Overall, 71% of expatriates recommend the UAE for individuals interested to start a new life out of their home country (ibid).

Moreover, in comparison to the GCC and the Western world, the UAE consumers display the highest rates in purchasing on luxury products compared to any other consumers around the ("Global Powers of Luxury Goods 2018" 2018). In general, consumers of UAE, due to the advantage of high incomes and purchasing abilities, also are able to follow advertisements closely when compared to the European or American buyers (Don 2002). However, considering the amount of differences in incomes, this study will be focusing only on the white and gold collar professionals rather than the "blue-collar workers". Blue-collar workers mostly work on hourly basis (or salaried), belong to the working class that depending on previous experience, are considered as the unskilled labour class and earns between 500 to 1500 AED on average monthly (FAQs 2018). The aim of coming to work in the UAE of this

group lower level employees is to earn money to send back to their homes and families to support them rather than living a high standard life style that the country offers.

On the other hand, depending on their experience, nationality, background the “white-collar employees” refer to professionals that have an income minimum of AED 5,000 to 25,000 monthly and typically are employed as office workers and junior managers (FAQs 2018). “Gold-collar employees” refer to highly skilled professionals like engineers, doctors, lawyers etc. that has a range in monthly income of AED 10,000 to 50,000 (FAQs 2018). Therefore, participants of this research consist of expatriate consumers that work in UAE within the white or gold collar employee levels. This group of expatriates consist mostly of managers, administrators, and professional technical workers, due to the fact that they actually would change their lifestyles while they are working in UAE.

Moreover, this research was conducted as an inductive study that draws upon the files of marketing, HR, applied psychology and organisational behaviour. Based on the facts provided previously, this qualitative research involves 40 working expatriates residing in the UAE.

## **1.7. Research Questions**

This study aims to answer the following questions in order to identify the influences of expatriation in shopping behaviours and shift in identity of expatriates living abroad.

- How does expatriation influence individual identities and shopping behaviours to change?
- Why individuals go through changes in their identities and shopping behaviours when moving abroad and living an expatriate life?

## **1.8. Research Overview and Structure of the Thesis**

Figure 1.1 demonstrates a complete overview of the structure of this thesis and their links with the research chapters and the objectives. It briefly defines the contents of each chapter.

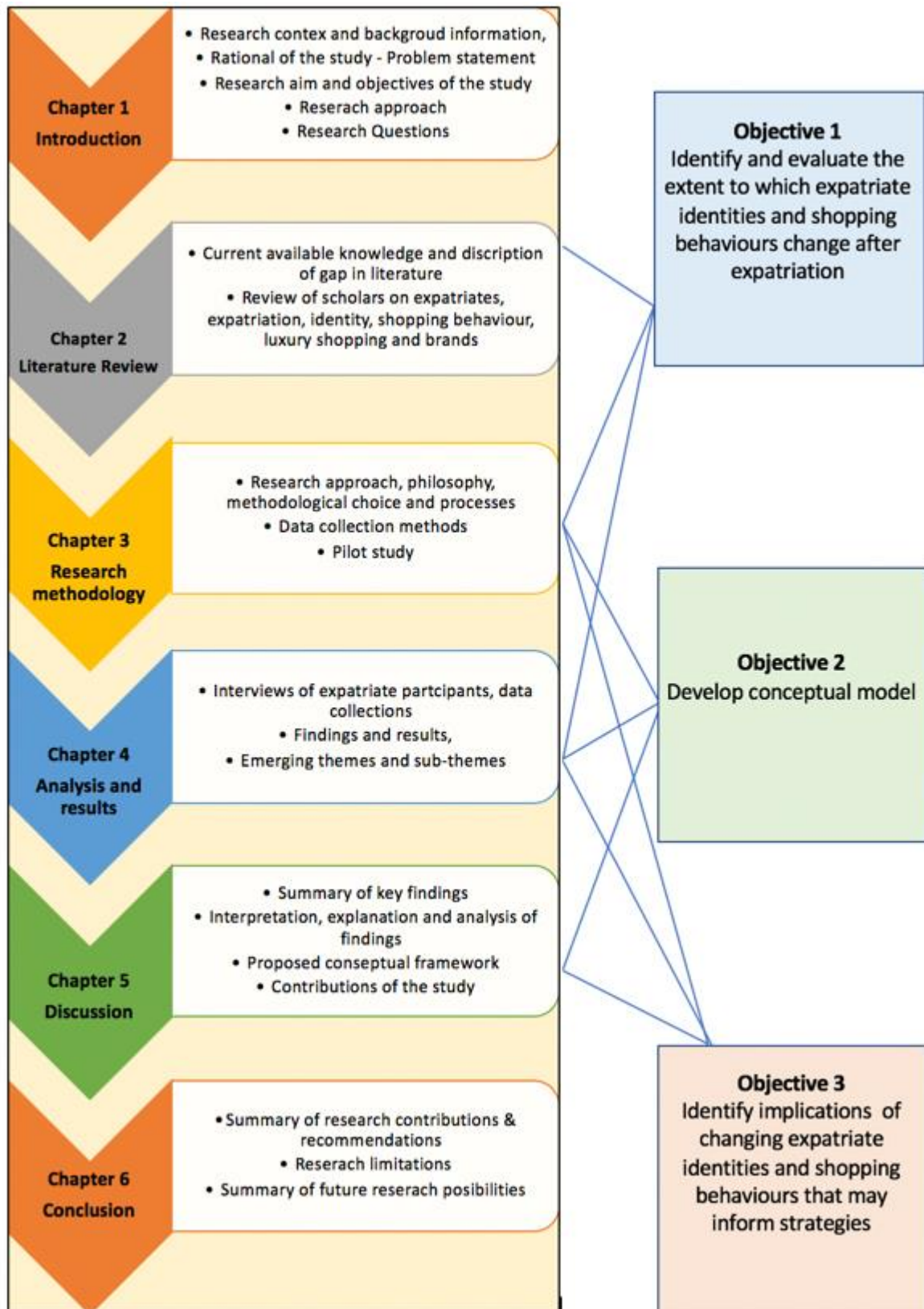


Figure 1.1 Overview of research

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1. Introduction**

This chapter focuses on the meaning of expatriation, reasons, advantages and disadvantages worldwide. Expatriates acculturation and various influences of expatriation on expatriate identities and shopping behaviours are explained.

#### **2.2. Expatriates and Expatriation**

In the international human resource management (IHRM) literature the term ‘expatriate’ has been defined in several different ways. For instance, an ‘expatriate’ was named by Collings et al. (2007) as an ‘internationally mobile manager’, by Andresen and Biemann (2013) as a ‘global manager’, by Suutari and Taka (2004) as ‘expatriate assignee’ and by Toh and Denisi (2007) as a ‘corporate expatriate’. The term expatriate is also commonly used as ‘expat’ its abbreviated form. It is described as an individual temporarily shifting for a certain period time to a different geographical area, cross borders of one territory to another, change location of residence and work activities (Andersen et al. 2014). Ren et al. (2013) briefly define expatriate a person that shifts overseas on lengthened work assignments within a certain time period. An expatriate is defined as an individual that is able face work challenges in organisations based in different countries than their own (Janssens, Cappellen, & Zanoni 2006). Based on their background futures, in the literature generally expatriates are given under three major types: the traditional type followed by the non-traditional expatriates and finally the self-initiated expatriates (Adams & van de Vijver 2015). The traditional expatriates in general are indicated as Western senior level male individuals between 40 to 50 years of age that are

assigned by their international organisations to work abroad along with their families (Cerdin & Brewster 2014). The traditional expatriates are followed by individuals that consist mostly of: senior female professionals, career-oriented individuals aged between 30 to 60 years, single executives or couples without children send abroad by international companies (McNulty 2013). Finally, the author defined self-initiated type of expatriates as individuals that are expert within their fields of work and are highly skilled executives continuously searching for international opportunities worldwide.

The notion of expatriate currently emerged to involve various types of ‘—patriates’ (McPhail et al. 2012). These different types of ‘—patriates’ commonly are characterized by the duration of the assignment named as ‘flexpatriates’ Shaffer et al. (2013), according to their origin as ‘inpatriates’ Reiche (2011), or once they complete their assigned duties abroad and return back home as ‘repatriates’ (Shaffer et al. 2013). In addition, this group may consist of highly proficient and experienced executives called as ‘propatriates’ McPhail et al. (2012), or knowledge workers that are subject matter experts in their fields (Riusala & Suutari 2004). Sometimes at the end of assignments some patriates that have shown great value to their organisations may be given a new opportunity either within their organisation (or in their own country) as an extension of their assignment or another international called as ‘glopatriates’ (McPhail et al. 2012). In this research, the term expatriate will be used generically for both traditional, non-traditional and self-initiated types of expatriates. The focus group will include individuals appointed by international organisations, pursuing an assignment out of their home country, staying abroad for a certain time period.

Moreover, the term business expatriate is defined by McNulty and Brewster (2016) as people that are legally assigned to work for a certain period of time, in a different country which they are not the citizens of, to reach their career-oriented objectives, either sent by an



organisation, on their own or employed by the host country itself. This definition separates the business expatriates from non-business expatriates (like the labours or immigrants). The main focus of this study will be on the ‘business expatriates’ as the group of analyses is intentional. The business expatriates are the focus group of this study because they are individuals who are assigned to an international assignment, are employed with a minimum of administrative level (like managers, senior positions, directors, administration officers etc.) and have a monthly income that is minimum of AED 10,000 and above (approximately USD 2,700). According to Finaccord (2018) the population of the UAE consists of 87.8% of expatriates. The author of this research is an expatriate herself and currently residing the UAE. Therefore, this study will use the UAE as a case study. This research will focus particularly on expatriates with minimum of AED 10,000 income, due to the fact that they may prefer to have a better life style and are actually able to afford it. They earn disposable income and are able to spend money on luxury (and/ or general) products and services. They are able to benefit from goods and services like being pampered in a spa, going on expensive holidays, driving expensive cars or joining golf clubs that are highly expensive. However, the lower level (blue collar) labourers earning monthly between AED 500 to 1500 on average FAQs (2018), will not be considered as participants of this study. This category of employment that in general consists of drivers, construction workers, office boys, cleaners etc. For these type of employees, staff accommodation and meals are provided by their employers and prefer to send all their earning back home to their families. These types of employees will not be involved in changing their life styles into a better one. Therefore, they cannot afford to live a high standard life style that the host country offers and will not be a part of this study.

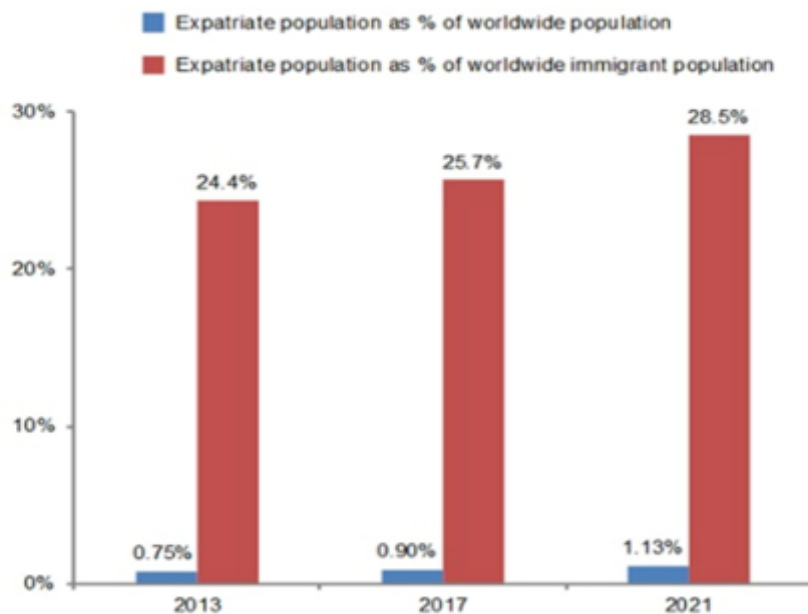
Furthermore, according to Cambridge dictionary, expatriation is ‘the use of force or law to remove someone from their own country, or an instance of this happening (Dictionary 2018). The phenomenon expatriation forms from the word *expatrier*, which means “banish” in

French, from *ex-*, “out of” and *patria* meaning “native land” from Latin (Vocabulary.com 2018). The expatriate phenomenon stemmed in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, with the move of Americans to European countries, especially to main cities like Paris or Munich where they could study art. Yet the actual international movement began following the end of 2<sup>nd</sup> World War. People from the United States started travelling in the 1970’s to countries like South Africa or Japan for work. During 1990’s there was an increase on the need of mobility, mostly in Asia. Far Eastern countries like Singapore, Thailand, Taiwan, and Vietnam were aiming to enhance their economies (Grelecka 2016). Hence, many people from America and Europe were sent to those countries to help them develop. In the 1990’s individuals travelling and working overseas were granted with enormous expatriate benefits with assignment duration that could last between two to five years. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century subject matter experts were sent to organisations’ overseas branches by their employers. By the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the advent of globalization, a new market for experts was created worldwide (Scullion & Collins 2006) and international companies started continuously increasing the number of expatriate employees (Adams & van de Vijver 2015). Consequently, the opportunities rose for employers that could not find the right individuals for the right jobs in local markets and easily applied on the global recruitment channels. As a matter of fact, globalization increased the possibilities of expatriates that were not offered great packages. This occurred mainly due to the incredible advancements in technology (internet increasing worldwide communication), development and lowered costs in air transport and the increase in the number of individuals willing to undertake international assignments (Collins et al. 2007).

Today, expatriation is worldwide, as short- or long-term assignments in all religion, nationality and in all fields of business. This amount consists of various types expatriates that take completely different parts within the host countries. Investigation among 30 different countries conducted resulted that Saudi Arabia accommodated the largest number of

expatriates conducted followed by the UAE and Germany. Finaccord's research shows that the ratio of expatriates to global population increased from approximately 0.75% in 2013 to 0.90% in 2017, and is forecast to rise to 1.13% by 2021(Finaccord.com 2018).

*‘Global mobility has increased significantly over the past decade and expatriates constitute a large and diverse market’* summarizes the importance of expatriation, David Bowles. As a consultant at Finaccord, Bowles mentioned that to understand and describe this market in detail Finaccord conducted an investigation (Finaccord.com 2018). The analysis reported that the majority of expatriates in 2017 consisted of 71.1% individual workers, 8.5% of students, 5.2% retired individuals, 1.0% corporate and other transferees, and 14.1% the remaining of non-employed family members like the children and spouses 14.1% (ibid).



*Figure 2.1 Expatriate population as % of worldwide population and % of immigrant population, source: Finaccord ExpatriateBASE, UN Statistic Division*

Considering the incredible number of expatriates worldwide, it is vital to understand why people leave their native countries and decide to live abroad as expatriate. In general, when asked to an expatriate why they chose to work and live abroad, the response will be general and practical-minded. For instance, “I found a better job abroad,” or “My spouse was transferred to an overseas branch office,” or “I joined an international Ph.D. program and then just stayed” (Internations.org 2018). However, there may be many other factors that make people want to live abroad. For instance, *‘Expats do not leave their native homes and jobs, friends and families just for money. The decision is as much about pursuing new challenges, greater knowledge, new skills and wider life experiences’* said head of HSBC expat John Goddard confirming the global report of HSBC in-depth study 2018, conducted with 22,318 expatriates worldwide.

The Expat Explorer survey of HSBC showed that while some choose to move abroad for financial prospects, for many other expatriates it actually is not the main reason. There are many other reasons why they choose to live away from their home countries. The financial aspect forms only a small part of their decision to live as an expatriate. Even though 22% of expatriates that took part of the Expat Explorer survey 2018 mentioned they moved abroad to boost their income levels, over a quarter (about 26%) chose to be abroad for career prospect, a far larger scale had personal objectives and targets to leave. Nearly 38% left their native lands for a new challenge and nearly over a third of them (about 34%) shifted overseas to enhance the quality and standards of life style (Expatexplorer.hsbc.com 2018).

One reason why people choose to live abroad is just to be happy. According to the World Happiness Report conducted in 2017, almost 80% expatriates mentioned they were ‘pretty happy’. When compared with the population that remain in the home countries, expatriates are, on average, happier (Internations.org 2018). Furthermore, according to a study by INSEAD Business School conducted among MBA students it is stated that learning about

and adapting to new cultures could enhance one's problem-solving skills. This is not the only skills that expatriates mention they improved. Every fourth InterNations expatriate member that participated in the survey, mentioned that they met their life partner after their move abroad. Similarly, Rona Hart, a senior lecturer in psychology at the University of East London mentioned that while expatriates start to settle in to the new environment, they develop more open-mind approach and adjust themselves to cultural differences. She also mentioned that individuals living abroad gradually reduce judging others and become more positive towards others' opinions or actions that they would have normally disregarded (ibid).

In summary, there are many among 2.9 million InterNations expatriate members that mention how their temporary assignment abroad turned into a long-term project. Nearly four in ten expatriates think that they will not return to their home country. Meghan Drisholl left the USA to work and live in Kazakhstan but currently she said has settled in Germany and added: *"I have a really hard time seeing myself in one place forever. I actually feel more like a global citizen now"* (ibid).

On the other hand, already living abroad or considering it, deciding where to move can be an overwhelming experience. There are many conflicting factors like the possibilities of getting jobs, the financial prospects, the style and quality of life offered in the host country, general safety of the environment, and child care (Jacobs 2018). These changes in social life, work life and financial prospects may all impact on the individual. When moving to a new geographical environment, the expatriate may determine their experience and their overall new style of life abroad.

For a country to be coined as one of the best for expatriates, it has to offer great benefits. The HSBC Expat Survey 2018, reported worldwide the top twenty countries for expatriates based on:

1. Economics, underpinned by

- Personal finance (disposable income, wage growth, savings),
- Local economics (economic confidence, entrepreneurship, politics)
- Careers (career progression, work/life balance, job security)

2. Experience,

- Lifestyle (quality of life, culture, health)
- People (making friends, integration, safety)
- Setting up (finance, healthcare, property) and

3. Family,

- Raising children (integration, health, quality of life)
  - Education and Childcare (overall cost of children, childcare quality, school quality)
  - Relationships (closeness with partner, social partner, tolerance)
- (Expateplorer.hsbc.com 2018).

According to the 2018 HSBC Expat Explorer survey, Singapore was chosen as the top destination by over 22,000 expatriates that participated in this survey (Jacobs 2018). For the fourth year in a row, Singapore leads the list of top destinations worldwide in many aspects (Expateplorer.hsbc.com 2018). Singapore is a worldwide financial hub with a powerful and secure economy. Nearly (45%) of expatriates choose to live in Singapore for career development. Over a quarter were looking for a new challenge but a greater amount of 38% preferred to stay there to have an uplift in their earnings. The individuals aiming for financial boosts are able to reach their goal as the average income of an expatriates is calculated as USD 162,000 which is USD 56,000 more than worldwide average (Expateplorer.hsbc.com 2018).

Yet, Singapore is not only a financial hub. Even though over a quarter of expatriates (27%) might have moved into Singapore through their organisation assignments, nearly half (47%) decided to stay in this multicultural, well-organized and safe city on their own. With a tropical climate, luxurious and dynamic atmosphere offers the expatriates and their families a great quality life (Expatexplorer.hsbc.com 2018). Singapore can be a great place for children too; not only this country is considered to be the best in education, in fact 60% of expatriate parents mention there are happier and very healthy compared to their home countries.

New Zealand, with its stunning nature and breath-taking scenery, is among 162 countries that was rated by the 2017 Global Peace Index as the second safest country worldwide (Newzealandnow.govt.nz 2018). According to the 2018 Expat Explorer survey, New Zealand takes the first place in overall overseas experience. 60% of expatriates have shifted to New Zealand to boost their quality of lifestyle. The main factors include great work/life balance, being physically healthier, friendship and being able to easily mingle with the local community (Expatexplorer.hsbc.com 2018).

Switzerland on the other hand leads the first place in economics according to the 2018 HSBC Expat Explorer survey. The average income of an expatriate in Switzerland equals to USD 203,000 yearly which is nearly double of the global average. 58% of expatriates mention that the same job they have in the host country pays more than back home, yet half mention there are less tax charges. Only 1% percent expatriates are worried about the economy of the host country and only 9% mention they are concerned of the financial future. These Figures show why 89% of expatriates living in Switzerland have been living in the country minimum of five years or more equals to USD 203,000 yearly which is nearly double of the global average (Expatexplorer.hsbc.com 2018).

Another major reason for Switzerland being one of the best destinations for expatriates is due to the fantastic scenery and the endless activities that one can do during summer and

winter season (Jacobs 2018). An expatriate blogger, Rachel Southern summarizes her experience in Switzerland as: *"There is plenty to do in Switzerland: mountains for winter sports and lakes for summer sports. The healthcare is amazing, as is the public transport."* (Jacobs 2018). The accessibility for travel adds another plus for this destination. Switzerland is located in the heart of Europe which enables expatriates reach easily to other hot destinations like France, Germany or Italy (Jacobs 2018).

Despite the fact that globally only 31% of expatriates have children, for the ones that are living abroad with their offspring there are many factors that impact their choices in destination. A consistent and strong local economic and political foundation is a must for those who choose to leave abroad with children. Families from all around the world prefer to live in Sweden due to its efforts on continuously improving children's quality of life, health and wellbeing. Although life in Sweden is expensive but 68% expatriates living in Sweden mention that the average cost of their children expenses are cheaper than back in their home countries. To ensure the children's wellbeing there are 480 days of parental leave along with 120 days yearly to take care of kids when they are not well. There are childcare cost caps and free transport in various places available for all nationalities. Yet, Sweden is not only great for raising children. When children are well it also reflects on the parents as well. Expatriate parents here are facing less stress, better life style with more activities, better physical health and greater work/life balance. Interestingly, most expatriates in Sweden mention that they are closer to their life partners and half of them say that they found their life partner here (Expatexplorer.hsbc.com 2018).

However, in all the glamor that is shown about expatriation, there may be a down side of this superior lifestyle as well. The following paragraph will identify the possible negative sides while living overseas as an expatriate.





Figure 2.2 The top expatriate destinations 2018, source: (Internations.org 2018)

### 2.2.1. Advantages and Disadvantages of Expatriation

Andersen et al. (2014) defines the term ‘assigned expatriates’ as the employees that are transferred overseas by their employers to undertake an assignment. Assigned expatriates similar to business expatriates as defined by McNulty and Brewster (2016) are sent to other branches of their organisations overseas for certain tasks and benefit from handsome expatriation packages due to their move. Upon completion of their assignment, expatriates must return back (repatriate) and continue working within the same organisation. The international assignments are in general considered as an important step in the career development of the executive (Silajnen & Lamsa 2009). The international assignment normally is proposed as a job offer to the employee and can be accepted or refused (Andresen et al. 2014). In general, these types of offers are accepted by the executives because refusing an offer

might cause a barrier in their future career development. The author stated that the professionals sent to international assignments are expected to reach the organisation's goals by undertaking the given tasks.

Organisations send executives on international assignments to fill the necessary positions with experts that are technically (highly) skilled and have exceptional managerial knowledge, especially in places where host country market is not able to support the organisation with qualified workforce. This type of assignments enable managers gain international experience and supports them enhance their skills further that will aid them in future assignments overseas or in their home countries. Additionally, the communication between the internationally assigned expatriate and the local managers and their information network development creates links among the head quarter and the branches of the organisation (Andresen et al. 2014). Organisations benefit greatly from assigning their qualified employees overseas with exchanging of best practices, tacit knowledge, better and advanced management and control on their overseas branches and the assurance of availability on the required skills and experiences needed (Selmer 2006). The level of success in the expatriate's adjustment in the new territory is highly important and enables the organisation to consider expanding to new environments (Takeuchi 2010).

On the other hand, expatriate professionals by undertaking international assignments, benefit from different and new professional knowledge, increase their career prospects or/and get rewarded with great packages offered by their organisation (Andresen et al. 2014). However, expatriation may also introduce the organisation or the expatriates with several disadvantages. For instance, considering the host country, the transfer to overseas and the packages offered may be very costly for the organisation. The challenge of adjusting to the host country may be overwhelming for the expatriate and may result with failure both for the executive and the organisation (Takeuchi 2010). The organisation may face the risk of high

costs of an interrupted international assignment linked to the repatriation of the executive. The hiring and replacement costs of the new executive, travel, salary and accommodation fees are some of the intangible expenses that companies have to consider in each international assignment (Harrison & Shaffer 2005). As for the expatriate an interrupted assignment means family problems, lowered or loss of self-esteem and morale (Bozionelos 2009). Although there is high demand on the international assignments for managers, expatriate assignments are still a challenge. Mainly the greatest challenges for the expatriate managers point on cultural and family issues. Families have great impact on the international executive to succeed overseas (Gibson et al. 2015).

To avoid such losses and minimize the risks and disadvantages for both the expatriate and the organisation there are vital points to consider and understand prior to any international assignment. The following section will explain the factors impacting expatriates while pursuing their new assignments within their new environments.

### **2.2.2. Acculturation, Adjustment and Expatriation**

Acculturation is defined as a process that includes psychological and social changes in people's behaviours interacting for a long time with other cultures (Sam & Barry 2006). Culture refers to the norms, values and beliefs of a certain group of people and it involves the actions and attitudes of that society (Adams & van de Vijver 2015). Norms, characterize how individuals think (shared reality) and behave and they dominate individual's behaviours (Shteynberg et al. 2009); hence, norms are theoretically linked to cultural activities (Frese 2015). On the other hand, values are abstract and they refer to behaviours that are considered morally good or not, they are not linked directly to behaviour. Values depend on the individual (I practice my values), whereas norms and cultural activities are outside the individual (I agree and accept the norms).

Moreover, the series of actions in acculturation process leads to adjustment that may both be seen in psychological or sociocultural aspects (Hippler et al. 2014). In types of acculturation, adjustment is defined as a person's stress free and comfortable experience while shifting to a different cultural environment (Olsen & Martins 2009). According to Halsberger et al. (2013) adjustment has various aspects and the individual –environment match occurs at behavioural and cognitive dimensions. The acculturation consists of series actions that involves acceptance the norms, and values of the host culture and alteration of attitudes related the previous culture as requested by the new one (Adams & van de Vijver 2015). Four types of acculturation dimensions Sam and Berry (2010) will stem from people's endorsement to the two measures of acculturation: cultural maintenance and cross-cultural engagement (Arends-Tóth & Van de Vijver 2007). These acculturation measures are named as assimilation, integration, marginalization, and separation. Assimilation refers to the behaviour of completely accepting the host country's culture. Integration is being linked to some aspects of the host country culture. Marginalization is defined as completely rejecting both the host and the individuals' own culture. Separation refers to just keeping the country of origin culture and dismiss the host country's culture (Sam & Berry 2006). There are many reports on integration and its positive outcomes of psychological accomplishments (Arends-Tóth & Van de Vijver 2007; Ward 2013).

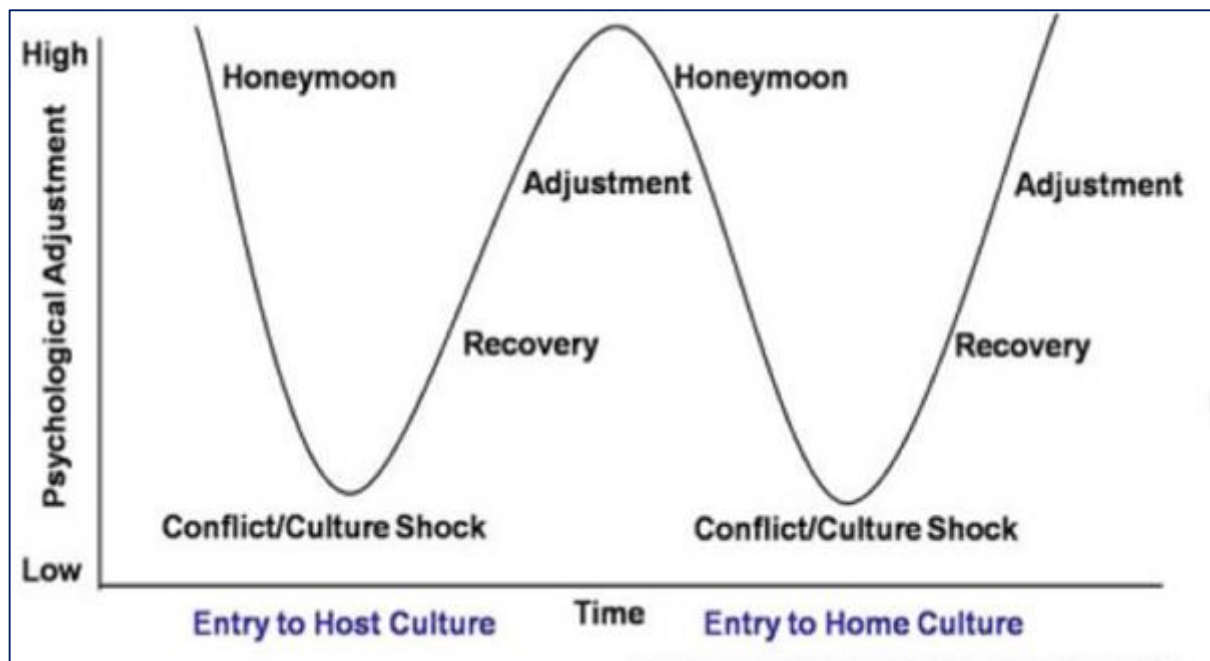
Furthermore, adjustment of expatriate's associates to the degree of psychological wellbeing linked to the new work environment (Harari et al. 2018). When moving into a new cultural environment, in general the adjustment takes within the years after the impacts diminish (Kashima & Abu Rayya 2014). Especially for expatriates the adaptation period does not occur right after arriving to the host culture. The arrangements considered for international assignments in the new cultural context mostly focus mostly on issues like language and do's and don'ts. These will support the expatriates gain knowledge about the new culture before

and upon their arrival to the new context. Expatriates develop and collect enough knowledge about the new culture that they can use like a mind map of the host environment, and creating a data of 'how things are done' in the host country. Even expatriates that adjust very little to the host culture must learn how to interact positively with their colleagues in their new work environment to be able survive the new cultural context. Therefore, the adjustment may remain rather superficial to the new culture if the new context supports with necessary links to the old culture as in support in networks or co-workers from the previous culture (Adams & van de Vijver 2015).

Furthermore, a basic criterion for international organisations' success stems from the expatriate's ability to adapt, to comprehend new cultures and to develop a global mind-set (Scullion & Collings 2006). Organisations must consider the fact that during the expatriation period the differences in attitudes, knowledge, and behaviours might have long term effects on expatriate's identities (Haslberger & Brewster 2009). Hence, expatriate adjustment has significant importance for both the expatriate and the organisation (Lee & Kartika 2014).

### **2.2.3. Stages of Adaptation**

There are several models developed on expatriates and the stages upon arrival and during the adjustment period in their new environment. One common model that describes expatriate stages in adaptation is the Oberg stages of adaptation model (1960) that consists of four major steps listed as; honeymoon, culture shock, recovery and adjustment.



*Figure 2.3 Oberg's stages of adaptation, source: (Oberg 1960)*

### **2.2.3.1. Honeymoon**

The initial step of the adaptation process is named as honeymoon stage (Oberg 1960). Lasting between several days to few weeks, expatriates are more positive towards the host country culture and they are more like tourists than individuals assigned for a job (Pedersen 1995). The assignees willing to learn about all the similarities and differences between their own culture and the new one (Pedersen 1995).

### **2.2.3.2. Culture Shock**

Culture shock generally happens after the few days to few weeks of 'honeymoon' stage. Now the expatriates will start finding all the positive experiences of the new environment rather irritating that leads to 'culture shock' (Oberg 1960). Oberg (1960) explains this situation as the 'occupational disease' due to the ongoing with the foreign surrounding: "Culture shock is precipitated by the anxiety that results from losing all our familiar signs and symbols of social

intercourse. These signs or cues include the thousand and one ways in which we orient ourselves to the situations of daily life: when to shake hands and what to say when we meet people, when and how to give tips, how to give orders to servants, how to make purchases, when to accept and when to refuse invitations, when to take statements seriously and when not. Now these cues which may be words, gestures, facial expressions, customs, or norms are acquired by all of us in the course of growing up and are as much a part of our culture as the language we speak or the beliefs we accept. All of us depend for our peace of mind and our efficiency on hundreds of these cues, most of which we do not carry on the level of conscious awareness” (Oberg 1960, p.77).

Any expatriate can be impacted by culture shock. However, the significance of the degree of impact depends on the host culture and the cultural characteristics the personal factors of the assignee and their job performances, the interaction between the host country nationals and the expatriate, and the assignment itself (Marx 1999; Oberg 1960). The degree of culture shock may lead with anxiety, stress, frustration, lower performances in their assignment and isolation.

According to Marx (1999) and Oberg (1960), the issues that an expatriate may face due to culture shock are:

1. *Stress*, individuals must have the ability to adapt to their surroundings both at work and socially;
2. *Sense of loss*, being in a new geographical territory the sojourners may feel lonely and lost without family and friends;
3. *Sense of becoming an outcast*, the assignees will be inclined to reject the host country nationals, therefore ostracized by them;
4. *Confusion*, individuals may be confused of their identity, emotions and norms;

5. *Feelings of surprise and anxiety*, individuals develop an awareness of their new surroundings and the differences;
6. *Sense of powerlessness*, expatriates will not be capable of handling the differences in the new surroundings.

#### **2.2.3.3. Recovery**

During this stage, expatriates start developing a rather positive behaviour towards their new surroundings by controlling their emotions. (Oberg 1960). One of the elements that help expatriates recover from culture shock is mentioned to learning the host country language as this will support the expatriate communicate easier with the host country nationals and colleagues. Also, learning the language particularly in countries where the locals do not speak English, the expatriates can start asking for help by explaining their challenges. (Oberg 1960).

#### **2.2.3.4. Adjustment**

The last phase of the adaptation model is adjustment. This is the phase where all the signs of culture shock will diminish and expatriates will enhance their work performances (Marx 1999). This is because the expatriates now will start accepting and enjoying the differences of the new environment. Everything that was “foreign” before will now be more delightful. After this stage expatriates are tended to be missing this new culture when they complete their assignments and return back to their home countries. (Oberg 1960).

#### **2.2.4. Cultural Distance and Cross-cultural Motivation**

Cultural distance was defined by Hofstede (1998) as the level of difference between new environment and the country of origin both culturally (with values, beliefs, traditions, norms), and constitutional, political and financial aspects Adler (1998). Every culture obtains



its own sets of values and processes Hofstede (1980) and these differences characterize and separate one culture from another. These differences make cultures unique and get people's attention to explore them, but they also may create miscommunication and social issues among people and lead to separations (Lau & Murnighan 1998). In some cases, expatriates face great challenges due to the significant differences in norms, values and beliefs that they encounter in the host country compared to their own (Lii & Wong 2008). When confronting unfamiliar situations in a foreign environment that has cultural distance, the expatriate may not be able to act as required by the host country due to differences in social norms globally (Haslberger et al. 2013). The aspect of cultural distance can be particularly difficult in terms of work environment, due to the fact that differences in individuals' values mean differences in aims and preferences, procedures and styles of work and in the understanding of their environments.

Additionally, individuals from culturally distant geographies generally have different beliefs and opinions that might confront with the expatriate's own. This opposition may lead to social categorization in terms of in and out groups. The social identity theory by Tajfel (1972) suggests that individuals tend to show positive attitudes towards familiar individuals and objects, hence facilitating their own in-groups. Within the expatriate context, the expatriate would prefer to be in an environment that is culturally familiar to their home country. For an expatriate moving to country that is culturally familiar to one's own is tend to be more appealing than to than a completely different one (Wagner & Westaby 2009). Similarity-attraction theory by Byrne (1997) indicates that individuals are attracted to similarity, hence the socialization and communication in a host country that shows similarity to one's home country would be smoother than to a dissimilar country.

Similarly, according to theory on cultural toughness by Mendenhall and Oddou (1985) individuals would face challenges in adjustment to cultures that dissimilar to their own, so expatriates are prone to move to countries with familiar cultures. Hence, the greater the amount

in distant culture, the harder the adjustment for the expatriate (Selmer 2006). The level of cultural similarity enables expatriates to enhance required intercultural skills. Consequently, expatriates that move to countries similar to their own, will be able to better adjustment and their confidence will boost in terms of work, socialization and in network.

#### **2.2.5. Emotional Intelligence, Cultural Intelligence and Expatriate Adjustment**

According to Tucker, Bonial, and Lahti (2004) personal factors are highly important as they have great impact on expatriates when dealing with a new cultural environment. Expatriates that are capable of adjusting smoothly to different cultures and new environments tend to be more flexible, open to changes, socially adaptable and are interested to know new people (Tucker, Bonial & Lahti 2004).

Moreover, according to Lii and Wong (2008) expatriates with higher emotional intelligence are able comprehend their own emotions and display a more successful performance while adjusting and in commitment when abroad. Emotional intelligence is to be able to perceive precisely, evaluate and express emotion, and able to grasp and comprehend emotion and emotional knowledge. Therefore, individuals with higher emotional intelligence tend to display a better performance than others both in their home country and in their new work environment abroad (Crowne 2013). Additionally, individuals with higher emotional intelligence are able to understand and sense their emotions better, hence their ability to adjust in foreign surroundings is smoother than others (Wong, Law & Wong 2004).

Furthermore, cultural intelligence is another important factor that impacts the adjustment of expatriates besides emotional intelligence (Crowne 2013). The cultural experience and ability to handle efficiently with situations of cultural differences is coined as cultural intelligence (Grelecka 2016). Cultural intelligence plays an important role on the adjustment of the expatriate due to the fact that it encompasses the ability to adapt, comprehend,

and to interact with different cultures correctly (Lee & Kartika 2014). There are three main aspects of cultural intelligence: cognition, motivation and behaviour (Şahin & Gürbüz 2014; Ng & Earley 2006). The cognitive feature of cultural intelligence indicates the knowledge/data processing factor of intelligence and is formed by self-concept theory (Earley 2003). The motivational element of cultural intelligence refers to self-concept and motivates the expatriate in adapting to different environments. The behavioural feature of cultural intelligence states that adapting is not only being motivated, knowing what to do and how to act in a foreign surrounding but it is also to have the ability to adapt. Expatriates with higher cultural intelligence are considered to be flexible and more sensitive towards cultural differences which enable them of adapting to foreign surroundings and different cultural environments that lead to improved cross-cultural adjustment (Lubinski 2004).

Moreover, expatriates that have previous overseas assignment experiences tend to be more open to new cultures and adaptable to the required behaviour in different environments because of having the possibility to learn about various business processes and different life styles in new surroundings (Haslberger & Brewster 2009). Expatriates tend to apply the required skills in adapting to new work environments according to the degree of their previous overseas experience. In other words, the higher the previous international experience, the higher the expatriate will apply appropriate skills and knowledge their career (Okbara & Kabongo 2011). According ‘Social Learning Theory’, Bandura (1977) recommends that individuals learn by watching others’ behaviours and the results of them. The author meant to say that learning is a cognitive procedure inside a social setting where individuals gain from each other's associations just by watching, mimicking and demonstrating a similar outcome of the same behaviour. Bandura additionally pointed on the attitudes and the results of these attitudes. For Bandura, individuals take in the act of others and expect similar results of these acts. Hence, expatriates exposed to foreign surroundings and interact with others are more

likely to have the chance to understand the life style of their new environment (Caligiuri 2000). Similarly, the work related or non-work experiences abroad may enhance the skills, knowledge and attitudes of expatriates (Takeuchi et al. 2005). Likewise, cultural experiences gained overseas may also impact positively on expatriate adjustment in new surroundings (Lee & Sukoco 2007).

#### **2.2.6. Loneliness and Expatriate Adjustment**

Loneliness has been defined by Ernst & Cacioppo (1999), a phenomenon that is ‘associated with a variety of individual differences including depression, hostility, pessimism, social withdrawal, alienation, shyness and low positive affect.’ Additionally, the authors stated that it is ‘a concomitant of more severe disorders such as clinical depression, borderline personality disorder, and schizophrenia’ (E. It is important to consider that loneliness derives first from, failure in an individual’s social life. Second, it is a subjective experience to the person, not an objective aspect in one’s social life. Third, it is basically an unpleasant, frightening, stressful and dreadful experience (Chan & Qui 2011).

The multidimensional nature of loneliness is explained in two separate parts; the emotional isolation/loneliness and social isolation/loneliness. Emotional loneliness being deprived of emotional relationships. Social loneliness is the not being able to access a social network and have social relationships (Chan & Qui 2011). The authors agree that social relations consist of interactions with friends and relationships at workplace. Not having social relationships will lead to social loneliness. According to Peplau and Perlman (1982) individuals that are lonely suffer from depression or its symptoms and are not content compared to others. In general people that suffer from loneliness are perceived as socially anxious, less trusting and not fulfilled in relationships (Ernst & Cacioppo 1999). In summary, lonely individuals were characterized as more socially anxious, less trusting, and less satisfied with their relationships.

In general, loneliness is defined as negative impact of cross-cultural transition (Ward & Rana-Deuba 2000). For instance, a study of Stone Feinstein and Ward (1990), showed that for American expatriates in Singapore, loneliness and social isolation was the most compelling sign of psychological distress. Similarly, loneliness was shown as a significant predictor of mood disorder in sojourners (ibid).

Moreover, the interaction with the host country individuals and other expatriates in their new environment has great impact on the psychological adjustment of the expatriates. However, the actual effect on their adjustment depends on the degree and quality of interaction to both other expatriate and host national groups (ibid). In fact, research by Furnham and Alibhai (1985) shows evidence that the support of social interaction and communication with host country individuals, colleagues and other expatriates impacts expatriate's well-being and increases job performances. This may relate to the fact that social interactions from all parties can eliminate the emotions of loneliness and social isolation (Ward & Rana-Deuba 2000).

The psychological distress caused by loneliness may lead expatriates to luxurious consumption of products both online and/or through physical environments like spa, fitness centres or malls. They may consider this type of purchasing as a tool to overcome their loneliness or as a compensation for their sufferings due to loneliness.

#### **2.2.7. Social Capital and Expatriate Adjustment**

Nahapiet and Ghoshal (1998) social capital is interpreted as the “sum of actual and potential resources embedded within, available through and derived from the network of relationships possessed by an individual or social unit”. A major feature of social capital is the ability to have a relationship and cross-cultural comprehension and an empathy towards both to nationals of the new geographical area and the expatriates. The first aspect of social capital is the structural social capital that consists of the usage of network. The information exchange

and the ability of benefiting from sub-units depend on the number and the effectiveness of social links and the capability of making use of these resources (McPhail & Fisher 2015). According to McPhail et al. (2014) expatriates benefit from their structural social capital in various ways: to understand if the new environment is social socially good for them; to be able have search or get a job; to request help from different networks before arrival and after moving in; to understand the organisation policy or benefits and to reach Employee Resource Groups. The second feature of social capital is named as the relational capital which indicates the trust and interaction (Coleman 1988) of friendships both among individuals and groups. The third dimension of social capital is cognitive capital; it is based on the sense of belonging somewhere (Nahapiet & Ghoshal 1998) by same goals, norms and values, same vision and culture and a referral which will lead communal morality and strong connections (Lengnick-Hall & Lengnick-Hall 2012). Hence, the main aspects of social capital can be listed as; social resources, norms, contact possibilities associations, network (acquaintances, friends, co-workers, group members etc.) (Lee & Kartika 2014). Expatriate as an individual that embedded on social and capital network elements tend to have powerful impact on expatriates' successful adjustment and performance (Liu & Shaffer 2005; Malek, Jaguli & Palil 2012). Additionally, social capital indicates the communication among expatriates. So, the strength of ties and relationship among expatriates is vital social capital. Expatriate obtaining good social capital will facilitate others to adjust easier in the host country (Lee & Kartika 2014). Prior to or upon arrival expatriates need to learn the new environment (schools, doctors, grocery, restaurants etc. and this information is provided through the expatriates with better social capital.

Furthermore, two theories were highlighted by Osman-gani and RockstuhI (2008) to define social capital. First is the social capital theory by Adler and Kwon (2002), which refers to the expatriate's interactions with their network links for the flow alternative information reinforcement and support. Second, is the social learning theory by Bandura (1997), which

suggests that ambiguity may be reduced if expatriates interacted more with the host country nationals. Host country nationals are important elements for expatriates to construct social connections. Research by Caligiuri (2000) mentioned that the stronger the relationship between expatriates and host country nationals, the higher job performances and lesser intention to terminate the assignment prematurely. Host country nationals, knowing the culture and social norms as well as the experience in the countries are able to guide and support expatriates with their knowledge. Hence, this information exchange will help expatriates in getting to know the norms and customs and the required behaviour. Hence, this type of facilitation will help expatriates in their adjustment period and have a more pleasant experience during their stay in the host country (Simpson 2014).

Furthermore, for the highly dynamic worldwide expatriates in today's contemporary market, social media is considered to be the main mode of link to networking and communication (McPhail & Fisher 2015). The following section will address the impacts of social media on expatriate adjustment.

#### **2.2.8. Social Media and Social Networking Sites**

In general, social media is known as a communication tool using computer related technology. Basically, it is an Internet-based platform which is continuously updated by the end users (Kaplan & Haenlein 2010). Social networking sites like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram are online platforms where people and firms can link to each other by developing their profiles and connecting with each other. The aim of these social network sites is to develop social relationships with similar or same interests and backgrounds.

Employers use Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn many ways, for example as a communication tool with employees (He et al. 2013). Additionally, social media is used by people to link with other people, continue their existing relationships, exchange information

from networks and be social (ibid). Madera (2012) confirms the vitality of using social media for being able to construct a social network and its importance on acculturation. LinkedIn and Facebook are being used by to access information about firms and expatriates use these sites to search for suitable destinations and while adjusting to the host country. Expatriates use social media as a tool to link to the social capital and understand the acculturation requirements (McPhail & Fisher 2015).

### **2.2.9. Expatriates and the Use of Social Network Sites**

Expatriates may experience stress, and ambiguity during their adjustment and integration period of time (Stroppa & Spieb 2010). Sanchez, Spector and Cooper (2000) stated that "learning to manage in and cope with a foreign environment involves such a profound personal transformation that it has an analogue in the process of human development throughout the life-span". Additionally, the authors mention that for the expatriate successfully complete an adjustment process, she/he must also go through a profound individual transformation that includes the construction of a new multicultural identity. This will enable the expatriate deal with any type of stressful situations related to their assignment. On the contrary, if the expatriate is not able to adjust to the new surroundings, a risk of being overstressed may occur which will reflect on the job performance and effectiveness and may end with a termination of the assignment earlier (Stroppa & Spieb 2010).

The use of social network sites to communicate and socialize with other expatriates and Nationals of the new geographical territory may impact on the expatriate adjustment. According to Feldman and Bolino, 1999; Caligiuri and Lazarova (2002) to socialize continuously with host country individuals and other expatriates supports expatriates with an invaluable data that includes the norms, required behaviour of the new cultural environment declines the ambiguity on work and non-work-related matters. Furthermore, Caligiuri and Lazarova (2002) stated that the social help provided by social networks (from family,



colleagues, and other expatriates) helps to manage psychological aspects and "serves to provide feelings of reinforcement, recognition and affirmation that can greatly enhance expatriate' cross-cultural adjustment".

The adoption of social support via social network sites became a necessity in people's daily lives, and is particularly significant in terms of expatriate adjustment. Two different aspects were identified by Stroppa and Spieb (2010): First, social support fundamental necessity, in which individuals have a phylogenetic necessity to interact within a social group. A deficiency in social impacts on individuals' weakening in health. Second, positive comments from the social groups directly impacts on individuals' self-confidence and therefore, various other aspects of mental health. The construction of social networks and receiving social support are linked one to another. Hence, it is highly important for expatriates to meet and socialize through social network sites and develop a social network with other expatriates, colleagues, and host country nationals.

#### **2.2.10. Social Network Sites and Acculturation**

Acculturation and expatriate adjustment are linked to each other and can be defined as "those phenomena which result when groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous first-hand contact with subsequent changes in the original culture patterns of either or both groups" (Redfield, Linton & Herskovits 1936).

Learning about the host country culture and cross-culturally adjusting may impact overall ability of adjusting of an expatriate positively. Nine main competencies were defined by Yamazaki and Kayes (2004) that are crucial for a healthy adjustment of expatriates. These competencies listed as: developing relationships; showing initiative behaviour; being observant; understanding complicated information; being adaptable and open minded; respecting individuals from other cultures; being able to cope with uncertainty; handling others;

and handling stress. According to the authors, constructing relationships is explained as the intentional interaction and relation with others in the host country. Expatriates should be able to understand and efficiently handle miscommunication have the will to maintain contact with others in all cases. This aspect is linked to the second competency of showing initiative, which means that the expatriate will show the initiative to start a communication and with other expatriates and host country nationals. Kim (1978) stated that social expatriates that communicate with other expatriates and host country nationals, adjust better, both psychologically and physically.

Moreover, constructing social relationships supports expatriates with learning new languages, cultural norms, and attitudes of the host country, thus helping the acculturation (Toh & DeNisi 2007). The competency to be observant involves learning about the host culture (Yamazaki & Kayes 2004). From the perspective of social networking sites and expatriate acculturation, expatriates may use internet platforms to learn about the norms and culture of their new environment. For instance, in Denmark 68% of expatriates mentioned that they had to social network site to be able to learn about the culture and activities within the area they live (Expatriate Survey 2012). Additionally, social network can remove ambiguity by supporting expatriates with a better understanding of the host culture's values, norms, and traditions (Chen 2010; Yang et al. 2004).

Finally, the competency to understand complex information: involves the learning the host country's language and being able to explain thoughts into that country's language (Yamazaki & Kayes 2004). Lu et al. (2011) stated that learning and communicating through the host country language is a key element reflects individuals' ability to appropriately acculturate and adjust to the new environment.

Moreover, Ota (2011) mentioned that social network sites, such as Facebook and MySpace, have been supported people worldwide to teach and learn another language. For

instance, in Japan there are social network sites that support expatriates with the possibility to learn and practice the Japanese language.

Additionally, Ota states that in along with fulfilling the language learning requirements of group members, platforms like these are also acquired for the satisfaction of social needs (2001). Involvement in platforms like these, can facilitate the acculturation process. Engaging in such communities may further assist in the acculturation process. For instance, the InterNations organisation through its social media, facilitates expatriates in knowledge exchange, and in face to face interactions. The organisation guides expatriates in many aspects like: visa processes, introduction to the country, transport and driving, social security and taxation, health and insurance, family, children and education, economy and finance, housing and accommodation, jobs and business, safety and security, culture, shopping and recreation. New expatriates can link trough this social platform with other expatriates that are already in the community, and are informed about the events and expatriate life in the country (Internations.org 2018).

#### **2.2.11. Social Media and Identity**

Stryker and Burke (2000) suggest that identity theory should also consider “how social structures affect the self and how self affects social behaviours” (p. 45). Today social structures are constructed from online platforms (Like Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn etc.). Hence, it is inevitable that the use of social network sites will impact on the creation of the self. The structure here than will be the online social network sites and therefore, the created identity will be an online identity.

Moreover, Deetz (1990) states that “Images of the self and other are formed in all interactions” (p. 226). The author means that interactions are vital in both constructing the identity and the social identity. In the means of the identity creation in social media/network

sites, particularly for expatriates it is a common way of communicating. Individuals while communicating through social media sites, display “images of self” in every post or message (Deetz 1990, p. 226). Stryker and Burke (2000) define the link of one’s personal identity and one’s social identity by stating that “parts of a self [are] composed of the meanings that persons attach to the multiple roles they typically play in highly differentiated contemporary societies” (p.45) Within the society of social media, people display their roles and meanings online, and the behaviours online construct an identity for the individual who is displaying the online roles.

Furthermore, there is a fundamental matter concerning information acquisition in social network sites which is the creation of fake identities or posting false data (Krombholz, Merkl & Weippl 2012). The authors mentioned that Facebook users share partly fake information and some cases the created profiles do not even actually exist in real life. Individuals tend to express themselves on social network sites in different ways than they actually are in reality. People do not want to portray their sadness by posting their negative experiences. In terms of expatriates, when they are assigned internationally they leave many things behind. Once they leave their homes, they lose friends, family and colleagues. Therefore, they over compensate on the pleasure and the pluses. Due to their loneliness, expatriates treat themselves more. According to Arnold and Reynos (2003) there are several factors that motivate people for purchasing. One main factor is named as gratification shopping, which is the state of threatening oneself, a shopping style just to feel better. After their pleasure shopping and spending they use social network sites to share them with their friends and family. According to Katz and Aspden (1997) greater use of social network sites enables people increased contact with friends, family and other communities online.

In summary, by posting data on luxury shopping and spending in social network sites they start reflecting a new identity.

## 2.3. Identity

‘One’s identity is defined as the totality of one’s self-construal, in which how one construes oneself in the present expresses the continuity between how one construes oneself as one was in the past and how one construes oneself as one aspires to be in the future.’ (Weinreich 1986, p. 500).

The identity phenomenon has many dimensions, and much research has been done both in philosophy and psychology.

Philosophy research has focused particularly on the continuity of something, as describable, noticeable specifically in the matters embedding individual identity. The philosophy of identity phenomenon encompasses a broad field; however, the key questions arise if ‘identity is persistent over time’, the degree of importance in ‘individual continuity’, the link between *numerical identity* (remaining the same individual over time) and *qualitative identity* (representing similarity to a past or future self), the relation of one’s mind and body, and if there is actually an existence of the *self* (Bostrom, Douglas & Sandberg 2016, p. 350). According to the authors, within the field of psychology, individual identity is related to one’s experience of being someone (the “core self”) and the sense of one being a specific individual with a past, future and different characteristics (a “narrative self”). The narrative identity is constructed gradually over time and it is vital in mingling to the social environment and experience a purposeful life.

Moreover, self-identity has been defined as: “What one is” “An integrated image of himself or herself as a unique person, which often includes ethnic identity” asking the question “Who am I?” (Bailey 2003). The author of this thesis will be focusing on the changes of identities of individuals rather than the self-image that pictures an individual’s physical appearances. Self-image has been defined as the ‘total subjective perception of oneself, including the body image individual competency etc.’ (Coon 1994). Another definition of self-

image has been done as ‘one’s mental picture of self, physical appearance, (Bailey 2003). In an individual’s mental picture, one can see measurable valuables like genetic attributes by birth (i.e. brown eyes), genetic attributes that can change (i.e. body weight), preferred material (i.e. jewellery). However, genetic attributes are not within the scope of this research. The author of this study will be focusing on the changes of individuals’ self-identity that is a result of a series of steps over a period of time (ibid).

### **2.3.1 Social Identity and Self-Discrepancy Theory**

Psychological identity links to *social identity*. Social identity includes various features of *personas* (social roles) individuals take in different circumstances, how individuals describe themselves with *group identities* (like gender, age and cultural identities) and how these are applied in different types of expression and affiliation. Individuals maintain various types of social identities and mostly separate them from each other. All types of identities that the individual uses, has its own characteristics, norms and roles with the social circumstances (Bostrom & Sandberg 2011). According to Tajfel (1972, p. 307) social identity is: “the individual's knowledge that he belongs to certain social groups together with some emotional and value significance to him of this group membership”. One distinctive social identity type is the *legal identity*, the notion of a (natural) individual surrounded by the established rules of society. An expanding number of individuals obtain various identities due to the fact of living and working abroad (Bostrom & Sandberg 2011). Individuals determine their self-concept (identity) mainly from the social associations they are involved with. Hence, social identity is obtained within the people (Bonache, Langinier & Zárraga-Oberty 2016).

The social psychological investigation of group practices, intergroup affiliations and self-perception is coined as the social identity perspective (Hogg & Reid 2006). The main principle of it is that individuals acquire a part of their self-concept from the associations and

classes they are linked to- their social identity. The social identity initially was defined as “the individual’s knowledge that he belongs to certain social groups together with some emotional and value significance to him of this group membership” (Tajfel 1972, p. 307).

The social identity perspective encircles several related sub-theories. The most important sub-theories among them are the social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner 1979), more specifically called as “the social identity theory of intergroup behavior” (Willer et al. 1989, p. 645), and self-categorization theory, exactly called as “the social identity theory of the group” (Willer et al. 1989, p. 645). Social identity theory points on bias, discrimination, and situations that lead to various kinds of intergroup action like, clash, association, social shift, and social status.

Moreover, the self-categorization theory points on essential social cognitive practices mainly social categorization that leads individuals to classify with groups, define themselves and others with the group and demonstrate group attitudes (Hogg & Reid 2006). According to the authors, this has been key in improvement of various other elements of social identity approach like those linked to leadership, social impact, social attractiveness, group polarization and uniting of groups.

However, for an individual’s independent self, to be able to go enter and exit social groups easily, it is vital for the person to keep their individual characteristics and avoid him/herself from over influence of others (Brewer 2003). In fact, as it is vital for an individual to be member of a bigger group, it is equally important to have a unique identity differentiating one from others. Hence, distinctiveness is an element that encompasses the choices of social groups to be able to harmonize the resemblance to other people and distinctiveness and personality. Meaning that an individual’s goal is to obtain an “optimal distinctiveness” to ensure the equalized self-concept in which personal attributes exist together with being a part of specific social groups (Brewer 2003, p. 475). In case of a challenge towards one’s optimum

identity, the person will try to build up accordance or persistency with his self-concept and the group partnership, either by linking self-concept to the group or by changing the existent group to group that fits better with the *self* (ibid).

The concluding idea is mirrored in psychological ‘self-discrepancy theory’ (Higgins 1987). It states that an individual obtains various *domains* of the self, coined as ‘the *actual-self*, the *ideal-self* and the *ought-self*’. These aspects represent the characteristics of an individual that he already possesses, would and must possess. These can be observed by the *standpoint* of the individual himself or by others. A conflict of inconsistency among these self-concepts (e.g., between the actual self and the ideal self) will lead to emotional irritation difficulties. In this case, the individual will try to avoid these discrepancies differentiating the standpoint of interpretation, the aspect of the self or will try to reconstruct consistency between the self-concepts.

Similarly, various self-conceptions (self-images) act as *regulatory references* in terms of one trying to remove discrepancies and gaps by shifting the existing condition to a new and desired one Wright, Carver and Scheier (2000) or by distancing the existing state to a preferred state from an unwanted state of self-concept as far as possible. This indicates that individuals have comprehensive knowledge of themselves and wishes and that they actually have the option and aim to change over time (Cantor et al. 1986).

It is believed that individuals perform on particular life-tasks depending on their knowledge, skills, attitudes, capabilities, recognition of social roles and other individual traits. Yet, these life-tasks are subject to differ over time along with aims, goals and achievements. While handling these various life-tasks, individuals construct various concepts of themselves in the future. People think of their possible self-image in the future. These are cognitive illustrations providing an individual perception of their general goals. Hence, these self-images



include the potential for change of the individual and refer to who they wish to be or who they could be (ibid).

An individual with an interdependent understanding of self-concept is more inclined towards being a member in a bigger social group and so is more linked to the group and less distinct from others. An individual's fundamental inspiration is to fit in with other people and to accomplish social responsibilities (Markus & Kitayama 1991). The authors mentioned that people's social roles, designations, rank and their linked responsibilities establish their self-understanding but not their personal traits or self-concepts. In fact, it was stated that individuals that obtain an interdependent self-conception do not have the urge to be persistent or congruence as noted earlier. For instance, this can be noticed once the social requirements do not match by the person's preferences or behaviours. The authors confirmed that this is due to fact that the interdependent self does not give too much importance to personal aspects and traits, meaning during those situations, personal feelings are in general monitored to fit with the necessity of the situation. For the interdependent self, social information (what other people say, do, prefer) is more important, but for the independent self, it is individual information (what the individual himself did, preferred) that matters more (ibid).

### **2.3.2 Personal Identity and Social Interaction Model**

Psychology proposes that personal identity is not linked to social description only. In fact, to be a part of a specific group and to be related/named with a particular social identity does not inhibit individual's choosing on how much value to attribute to the various features of these social groups (Sen 1999, 2006). And this attributed value will be associated with various levels of interaction between an individual's background and existing traits, desired self-conceptions or self-images and the preferred of social groups, that will add to an individual's *personal identity*. According to Perry (2008), personal identity involves the

features of people that describe their personality. Personal identity refers to how individual interact or interrelate with others (e.g., polite, outgoing, etc.).

As noted above two challenging views of identity stemmed, coined as numerical identity (to remain always the same) and the qualitative identity (being qualitatively the same of something different) (Sen 1999, 2006). The qualitative identity was considered as the precondition for the numerical identity for many years. Could it be assumed that an individual is the same because of some features of the individual that stays the same over time? What could be considered in the criterion? As the body evolves, new memories take over from the old ones. Individuals do change in time during their lifetimes and it is wrong to define identity in strict sense as “all or nothing”, but identity is rather a matter of degrees. In fact, Sen (1999, 2006) states, the matter is not about what identity is, instead it is, the degree of change that can be accepted to be able to say an individual (X) during time (T1) and an individual (Y) during time (T2) are actually the same individual.

An individual's identity changes over time are linked and changes are not very radical from one specific time frame to another. However, this type of *continuity* shows only *who* the individual is if we do not just consider the option that the individual changes (due to age, memory, experiences, etc.), but if that the individual also wants (*chooses*) to change (Helsley & Zenou 2014). To some point, individuals are able to choose *who* they like to be and, in the meantime, keep a certain degree of link between the various periods of life to be able keep his/her continuity over time. Therefore, personal identity is not a phenomenon that is given nor stable, rather it is a process – to some degree self-chosen – that reflects change and link of a specific individual over time.

The fundamental idea of the social interaction model is that people have stochastic (specific) choices through the construction of their individual states, which are distinguished by personal traits, self-image and group (or type) membership (Helsley & Zenou 2014).

Personal traits and group participations can be seen as explaining the *actual self* of the person, but the self-image includes various traits that the person would like to obtain, hence be acknowledged as an *ideal self* of the person. Yet, these various selves are all elements of the same individual and can differ over time. In fact, the person can for instance choose to be member of a specific group, which will support him achieving certain features that take him nearer to his self-image. The point is that is that person is aware of the changes that he will face by being a member in certain groups. For instance, a person can be a member in a golf club because he knows he will learn how to play golf after taking some courses and will develop skills that he did not have before but that he would prefer to have these skills in the ideal image of himself.

## **2.4. Consumer Identity Research**

Consumers depend on their belongings to build their identities (Ahuvia 2005; Belk 1988; Ferraro, Escalas, & Bettman 2011; Kleine & Baker 2004). Belongings that reflect identities of consumers are pointed to be crucial in consumer behaviours, such as enhancing brand loyalty, (Lam et al. 2010) and wish to buy again (Gao, Wheeler, & Shiv 2009), improve top-of-mind perception (Paul 2015) and protect the favoured brand from losing its quality (Johnson, Matear, & Thomson 2011; Lin & Sung 2014). Much scholarship has focused on how buyers infuse status belongings with meaning, enhancing their inclination to engage with luxury and prestigious consumption (Kastanakis & Balabanis 2012; Paul 2018; Silverstein & Fiske 2003). Research on antiques point that one source of a possession's identity relevance is the connection to an individual's family through using the possession in valuable family events or ceremonies (Curasi, Price, & Arnould 2004; Epp & Price 2008, 2010).

Moreover, belongings linked to identities can self-communicate meanings. There are mainly three themes of self-communication: who the consumer knows, what they have done,

and who they are (Hawkins & Rome 2019). The authors mention that possessions can reflect a connection to the individuals that the consumer knows. According to the authors self-communication also reveals itself when belongings remind consumers of their actions, of what they did (ibid). These reminders consist of previous achievements as well as memorable and transformational experiences. Memorable experiences occur when the usage of a belonging was significant for the buyer or when the consumer felt connected to the possession. Transformational experiences will reveal if the buyer somehow reflects a difference on the experience in a form of illustrating themselves (Schouten, McAlexander & Koenig 2007). Achievement experiences will reveal when the buyer demonstrates himself as efficient, capable and talented and is acknowledged by others (Carnevale, Yucel-Aybat & Block 2014). The third self-communication theme supports the buyers of who they are or who they want to be (Hawkins & Rome 2019). Purchasers continuously try to find a sense of who they are and who they wish to become by using their belongings that reflect their past, present and future selves (Kleine et al. 1995).

#### **2.4.1. Religious Identity**

Furthermore, there is a significant amount of research done on various identities with regards to consumer behaviour, including religion, family, gender, and ethnic identities. First, research has demonstrated that choices in consumption may assist in conveying and identifying one's religious identity. When one has chosen a religious identity, this is generally followed by a need to express the identity through various means. Consumption norms arise from various religions, and are usually followed by other individuals that identify with the religion in question (Cosgel & Minkler 2004). For instance, a Muslim woman may wear a headscarf to portray this identity, while Christians may wear jewellery with a cross and Jewish men, wear yarmulke to illustrate their religious identities. These demonstrations of identity may further

be modified to represent the individual's choices. For instance, a headscarf are often chosen to fit a certain style and colour preferred by the individual Muslim woman (ibid). As it is shown by Buddhist and Christian monks or nuns, other religious identities express their commitment by refraining from expressive consumption. Moreover, these norms have both formal and informal rules that limit the options for individuals expressing a certain religious identity. According to the authors, further examples of objects used to reflect religious identities vary such as accessories, clothes, candles, household items or ornaments used in ceremonies or holidays. Individuals illustrate their identities using various products that are accepted as symbols of their religions. Hence, consuming these products they identify themselves as a member of a certain religion (ibid).

Similarly, according to several scholars, social identities inspire individuals in cultural purchasing and consumption (Zukin & Maguire 2004). Demographic identities such as gender (being female), age (being young), a northerner or to be an African American impact on purchasing decisions by emphasizing symbolic barriers that define who one is and is not (Park & Baker 2007). According to Western and Anderson (1992), young African-Americans practice rap music to demonstrate cultural difference in public areas. Hence, use of certain products become crucial to these identities and also makes them reliant on the consumption of certain products to be able to maintain authenticity (Park & Baker 2007).

Obviously, musical choices are not the only way of cultural purchasing where identity differences reveal. There are various other determinants that purchases of religious products may be linked to. These products may be subject to social involvements constructed around race, area, age and gender within other aspects. For instance, Sherkat & Cunningham (1998) stated that African Americans in the south used more religious television and radio than the rest of the African Americans. So, race was accounted as another identity type upon which purchasing differences could be related to.

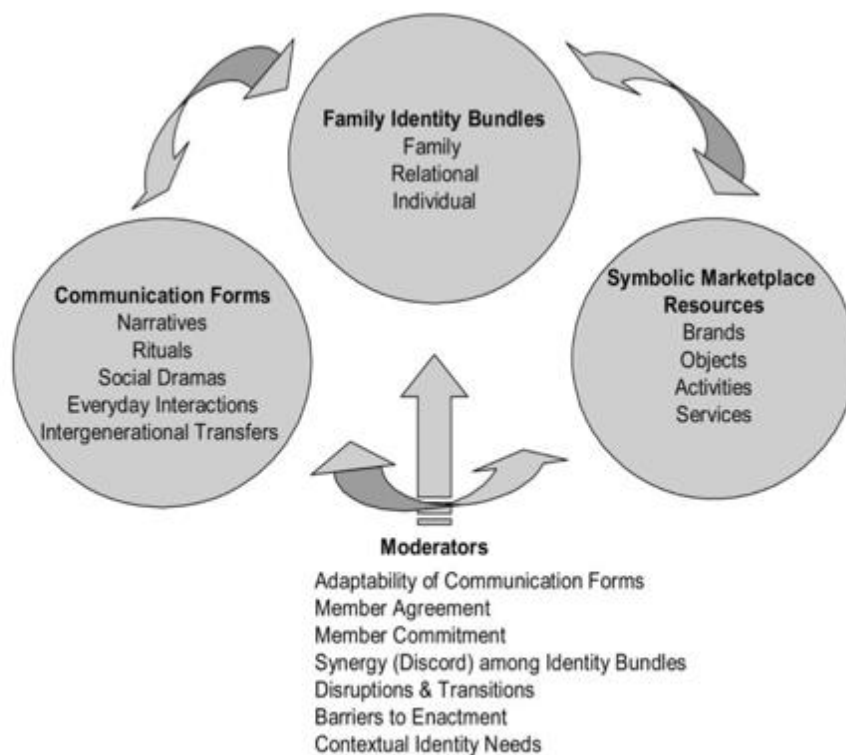
Moreover, Park & (2007) mentioned that gender is an important factor due to the link of cultural and religious identity. Women are shown as to spend more than men in terms of cultural purchases. According to Kaufman (2004), the miracles at Lourdes in the 1850's developed a special and empowering spirituality for women. Additionally, it was argued that female consumers are greater investors in religion terms of religious activities and attendance (Miller & Stark 2002). The religious identity continues to be a vital symbolic boundary that aspires practice and beliefs (Smith 2003).

#### **2.4.2. Family Identity**

Research similarly demonstrates that family identity may be demonstrated through various consumption choices. In every family there are different types of identity batches including the family's collective identity, smaller groups (like couples, mother-father & child, brothers & sisters) relational identities and the identities of each individual within the family. And the concept of 'we' may illustrate their own social activities, experiences, ceremonies, daily interactions, and intergenerational transformations. They may also be disputed and differed when interacting with various other identity bundles (Epp & Price 2008). Research on family identities state that 'being a family' composite operation that is related to many purchasing types and is surrounded with challenges in present-day society (Gerstel, Clawson, & Zussman 2002; Stone 2001). As families develop identity, they go through various interests and needs, expanding selective and fluid social interactions, and integrated family patterns that withdraw from general ideals.

In their framework, Epp and Price (2008) point that family identity is depends on interactions between relational identity batches within the family that link in both current and competing purchasing exercises. This view reshapes the main factors of consumer examination away from individual measures to point on communicative activities such as symbolic

purchasing practices, as basic of collective identity (Baxter 2004; Curasi, Price, & Arnould 2004). Family identity is not reflected as a construct that stays in people's minds but as co-constructed in activity (Epp & Price 2008). Hence, an identity of a family may differ from the personal and relational identities of the remaining associates within the family because the 'we' concept and its actions that establish these identities may be distinct.



*Figure 2.4 Framework of identity interplay in consumption practices, source: Epp and Price (2008).*

Furthermore, Epp and Price introduce seven factors that regulate how families may create and manage their identities. These include, for example, the forms and symbols of communication, the extent to which a family has a sense of shared collective identity, commitment to identity practices, if shared identities are compatible with the person and relational identities of family members, disruptions to identity practices, barriers to identity enactment and identity needs of

the family (ibid). According to the authors, the styles of communication and usage of symbols being free for re-interpretation, families accommodate them according to their requirements over time. The authors, argue that the level of adaptation among families vary, illustrating various levels connections to identity-constituting activities like ceremonies or narratives. For example, families may be strict or flexible in their approach toward customs. But for the customs to continue, families must adapt practices to support the identity requirement of the family while keeping the symbolic message of the customs (ibid). For instance, a flexible family might change the member responsible of the food, the venue to gather the family, whom to invite, or even when Thanksgiving is celebrated to demonstrate the differentiating interests of family members. Nonetheless, main arrangements and symbols that differentiate and characterize the family's activities of Thanksgiving could remain permanent. Despite the fact that family practices form each members' articulations about the collectiveness, family representatives may vary in their definitions of what creates the family's corporate identity and whether and how that corporate identity is associated to purchasing symbols and practices. According to the authors, the level of understanding among family representatives will impact on family identity enactment (Epp & Price 2008).

### **2.4.3. Ethnic Identity**

Forney (1981) defined ethnic identity as the shared identity of a combination of individuals that share the same historical background, heritage, family predecessors, the knowledge of emblematic factors such as citizenship (ethnic group), religious connection and language. The power of the ethnic identification of a person reflects the person's level of association with the ethnic group (Diaconu & Gaines 2019). Various scholars that studied the effects of ethnic identity on consumer behaviour have phrased ethnic identity as a person's power of ethnic identification (Hirschman 1981; Kim & Arthur 2003; Xu et al. 2004). On the



other hand, a study by Ashdown et al. (2011) state that ethnic identification and group membership play important and sometimes unfortunate roles in the everyday lives of Guatemalans, both Indigenous persons and Ladinos, as well as strongly influence biased ethnic attitudes and discrimination.

Moreover, studies made among various ethnic groups demonstrated that the strength of ethnic identity relates to purchases of products such as: ethnic or ethnic related items Diaconu and Gaines (2019), traditional foods, ethnic soft drinks and ethnic entertainment elements like music and films etc. (Xu et al., 2004). Researches have shown that the high percentage of ethnic identification impacts on the purchasing and consumption of ethnic products (Diaconu & Gaines 2019).

Furthermore, research has shown differences in consumer behaviour based on ethnic identities. Ethnic marketing coincides with marketing actions that exist to recognize the supply and demand needs of various subcultures. Identifying differences in purchasing decisions for various consumers is significant while adapting marketing strategies for a certain identity, and ethnic identities are no exception (Velioglu, Karsu, & Umut 2013).

#### **2.4.3.1. Ethnic Identity and Consumption of Cultural Apparel**

The concept of ethnic dress was described in 1995 by Eicher and Sumberg as: “ensembles and modifications of the body that capture the past of the members of group, the items of tradition that are worn and displayed to signify cultural heritage” (Eicher & Sumberg 1995, p. 299). Ethnic dress shapes a tool of distinction between groups and individuals belonging to certain groups use it to visually differentiate themselves from individuals of other groups (Diaconu & Gaines 2019). Additionally, the authors mentioned that the ethnic dress is

a way of transmit the ethnic identity of a person or group, specifically between other groups, by visibly indicating the ethnicity of the individual carrying the outfit.

#### **2.4.3.2. Ethnic Identity and Self-perceptions Linked to Cultural Apparel Consumption**

Using qualitative natured methods, O'Neal (1999) studied African American working women's inspirations for the use of ethnic dress as office outfits while working in their workplaces. The data collected from semi-structured interviews of this study illustrated the following themes:

- The cultural/traditional outfit was a way of expression and description of the self,
- The cultural outfit supported in educating other people about the African culture and
- That the cultural outfit facilitates women and connects them to their heritage and traditions (Diaconu & Gaines 2019).

Similarly, the Asian American consumer behaviours within the concept of using the ethnic dresses, were examined by Kim and Arthur (2003). The authors studied if the Asian American buyers used the cultural dress as a sign of pride in their heritage, and also if they would like to carry these outfits on various occasions. As a result, the authors mentioned that the individuals that are strongly identified with their ethnic identities are more open to use cultural clothes (Diaconu & Gaines 2019).

#### **2.4.4. Global Identity**

Research has also been conducted on the relationship between global identity and the decisions to purchase luxury products. One study suggests that in a sample taken from the United States, global identity has a positive relationship with intentions to purchase luxury products, and is affected by the perception of the product's functional, social, and individual value (Yang et al. 2018). In the sample taken from China, results were different, as the USA

consumers are generally more indulgent and individualistic, whereas in China there is more of a collective and cautious identity. Global identity is important to “consumers’ self-positioning strategy” as they try to enhance related attitudes and behaviours to reassert the identity. This process is known as self-verification and is an important factor in relation to global identities and consumption patterns (ibid). Furthermore the authors mentioned that the buyers may attribute increased level of quality to items or brands which are known worldwide because quality is equalized to global perception and acceptance. Additionally, the impacts of worldwide media and advertising enable the worldwide known products to be linked with worldwide famous celebrities and events (ibid). Hence, the transfer of knowledge can link to the prestige related to those events and famous people to their promoting worldwide products and afterwards buyers themselves (McCracken 1986).

#### **2.4.5. Gender Identity**

Gender identity is defined as the person’s sense of being a woman, a man, and/or a non-binary gender (Ho & Mussap 2019). The gender is recognized as a substantial aspect of an individual’s identity which is dependent on the gender the individual is born with that in general is linked to the genital appearing (Tate, Ledbetter, & Youssef 2013).

Research similarly suggests that gender and expressions of gender identity may be a factor in consumer and purchasing decisions, specifically how the identification with masculine and feminine traits affects this process. Masculine traits and feminine traits constitute a two-dimensional model which in whole represent gender identity. Relationships between gender identity and various consumer activities have been shown such as with leisure activities, shopping behaviour, and sex-role portrayals (Palan 2001). According to the author, while many studies were unable to find significant relationships, those that were able to carefully

conceptualize gender identity do demonstrate significant insights in individuals' consumer behaviour.

#### **2.4.6. Gender Schema Theory**

Gender Scheme theory proposes that people obtain and possess attitudes, traits and behaviours that are aligned with their respective gender identities (Bem 1981). Additionally, gender identity is used as guiding principle where people gather information about themselves and the world around them. However, it is important to point out that the capability of gender identity to have a profound effect depends on whether a person is sex-typed (gender schematic). Therefore, a gender schematic male or female is more prone to be impacted by his or her gender identity than non-sex-typed men and women (gender schematic). More importantly, many researchers believe that feminine and masculine personality characteristics possess a much narrower analytical competence than what Bem suggested, and if used to signify larger concepts can produce insignificant data.

#### **2.4.7. Multifactorial Gender Identity Theory**

Another gender-identity theory is called the multifactorial gender identity theory, which contradicts with the Gender Scheme theory of Bem in 1981. This theory suggests that all issues related to gender are multifactorial in nature (Hall & Taylor 1982; Feather 1984; Spence 1984, 1991). Additionally, femininity and masculinity theoretically differ from gender behaviours, attitudes, roles, preferences, and the usage of the PAQ and BSRI (which measure feminine and masculine traits), need to be limited to researches measuring factors relevant to expressiveness and instrumentality. The fundamental statement of multifactorial gender identity theory lies in the fact that gender identity is an amalgamation of gender-related circumstance, related in changeable degrees with one another such as role behaviours, gender-related attitudes and

personality traits, and interests. Not only is gender identity considered multifactorial, but each factor in gender-differentials includes a different progressive history that differs among people because the factors are influenced by multiple variables that are not essentially related to gender (Spence, 1993). Thus, specific gender-congruent qualities that people possess can differ for the two sexes, however, both males and female develop gender identities and a need of belonging to their respective sexes that they maintain throughout their whole lives (Green 1974).

Overall, the main difference between the theory of multifactorial gender identity and the theory of gender schema is that in multifactorial gender identity, the measure of gender identity entails measuring various different factors such as gender role behaviours and attitudes, personality traits, etc. In this case, if one factor only is measured (such as the gendered traits), then the applicability of that one factor becomes limited to instances where only that factor is relevant. On the other hand, the theory of gender schema claims that it is the measurement of only one aspect of feminine or masculine personality characteristics, which is required to identify multiple gender-rated phenomenon. Today, many behaviours on consumer behaviour have adopted the scheme theory, while others have recognized the necessity to limit the usage of gender identity measures in circumstances where femininity and masculinity traits are relevant and consistent with the theory of multifactorial gender identity.

## **2.5. Ethical Identity**

With much prior identity-possession research investigating the meanings consumers embed into possessions (Epp & Price 2008; Kleine et al. 1995) or the type of relationships consumers have with the possession's brand (Ahuvia 2005; Fournier 1998), less is known about the roles consumers expect those identity relevant resources to play in their identity projects.

### **2.5.1. Consumer's Role and Reaction to a Company's Moral Business Practices**

The ethical issues in business and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) that lie within a business practice are relatively new areas in empirical research (Papaoikonomou, Ryan & Valverde 2011).

In comparison with the corporate perspective, consumer perspective has received significantly less attention and is usually known as being under-researched, thus, making modern contribution towards consumer behavior quite rare. (Sen & Bhattacharya 2001; Mohr et al. 2001; Newholm & Shaw 2007).

### **2.5.2. The Attitude and Importance of Corporate Ethical Behaviour**

Ross and Creyer (1997) approach the consumer perspective by coming up with four distinctive measures with the goal of capturing consumer's beliefs on corporate ethical behavior, the importance of ethical behavior and whether consumers themselves are ethical, the willingness to reward and compensate ethical behavior, and finally, punishing unethical and immoral behavior. Moreover, Bhattacharya and Sen (2001) studied consumers' individual support for CSR issues. Additionally, Kamins and Folkes (1999) examined how the characteristics of a product's quality and certain ethical and unethical issues of a corporation respond to and impact consumer behaviour.

### **2.5.3. Analysing Mutually-Shared Identities**

Cherrier (2006) and Shaw et al. (2007) claim that consumers who act ethically often portray themselves as being a part of a bigger collective group that is directed by the same common goals. Additional comprehension would be beneficial in regards to exploring the degree in which ethical consumers express their identities in terms of social groups. This paper suggests investigating how consumers create their individual identities by correlating with

ethical expatriate consumers and by disconnecting themselves from non-ethical expatriate consumers. Additionally, social structures, stereotypes, thoughts, beliefs, and feelings of expatriate consumers need to also be investigated in greater depth.

#### **2.5.4. The process of being an Ethical Consumer Behaviour**

Szmigin, Carrigan and McEachern (2009) claim that although the process towards undergoing an ethical lifestyle for consumers has not been investigated thoroughly, research has shown that ethical consumers undergo a slow process towards adapting to a newly ethical lifestyle. More studies should examine the changes that occur during this process for expatriate consumers, how progressively this process occurs, and lastly, the repercussions and influence it has on those expatriate consumers (Szmigin, Carrigan & McEachern 2009).

### **2.6. Identity and Expatriation**

Adams (2014) sums identity as an individual being similar to or different from other people. Theoretically, people describe themselves repeatedly (both deliberately and not) through individual, social, interpersonal and circumstantial features. The identity phenomenon is considered in three dimensions: personal identity, relational identity and social identity (Adams & van de Vijver 2015). The Eriksonian-Marcian model of identity development is stream line of personal identity (Erikson 1968; Marcia 1983). People during their adolescence period encounter a stage of identity crisis, in which they try different identities, and they stick with these various identities types while they search for define meaningful sense of who they are. Personal identity involves intrapersonal features of the individual, like the values, goals, and believes that are necessary to reflect a person as different and specific for himself (Schwartz et al. 2010). This aspect of expatriate identity involves choices, habits, capabilities, skills, and characteristics. According to the authors, these individual features reflect individual

values, goals, and goals, and support expatriates to describe themselves as different people within a circumstance. Expatriation will impact on different personal features, like choices and habits (e.g. the type of food they eat or music they listen) (Adams & van de Vijver 2015).

Furthermore, relational identity refers to social roles individual possess that are linked to personal identity and is associated with individual, social and interpersonal actions valuable for the person with a particular role (Sluss & Ashforth 2007). Brewer and Gardner (1996) stated that a person's social role is legitimized due to particular roles they encompass (e.g., father, doctor) and must be acknowledged by others. This aspect of expatriate identity possesses both the work and no-work social roles of expatriates. Once penetrating to a different society or firm entering, expatriates must to navigate the features of new roles, like their designation at work role (e.g., as a director) and their social status (e.g., as member of a group of golf players).

Lastly, social identity is encircled by the person's group partnership. People identify themselves with their link to particular social groups. This to be a member of a social group generally supports the basis of reflection in- group – out-group actions (Adams & van de Vijver 2015). The Social Identity Theory (SIT; Tajfel & Turner 1986) and Self-Categorization Theory (SCT; Turner 1999), emphasizes how group partnerships and group associations impact on attitudes towards out-group members, and in mostly intergroup interactions. According to the authors, expatriation generates individual's sense of group membership when encountering a new social surrounding. Expatriates start acknowledging their social group associations through their relations with other cultures.

All three aspects of identity are vital to be able to keep an understandable sense of self. As an ongoing process of defining one's self, the effect of being transferred for a new assignment in a new society with different cultures may need people to reconsider their roles on relevant identity aspects. This may lead to a change in beliefs, aims, and values (personal



identity), interactions and social roles (relational identity), and individual's feeling of belonging and association with specific groups (social identity) (Adams & van de Vijver 2015).

### **2.6.1. Perspectives on Expatriate Identities**

According to Kohonen (2008) the expatriation period causes identity shift in expatriates and this impacts on the expatriates upon their return to their home countries. In her study the main findings reflect the consequences linked to international assignment experience. Kohonen identified three main identity outcomes: identity shifters (expatriates that adjust fast and smoothly to the different social and cultural context) identity balancers (expatriates that illustrated bicultural identities quickly), and identity non-shifters (expatriates that could not manage to make or did little change to their identities). As Kohonen's (2008) focusing on expatriate repatriation, she found that compared to the identity shifters, the identity balancers and non-shifters had an easier repatriation process. Identity shifters on the other hand changed the way they considered their development and career paths.

Moreover, Näsholm (2011) in his narrative study for analysing the subjective identity of Swedish expatriates with multiple worldwide assignment experiences. He concluded that identity is developed in various types depending on time frame of the assignment, career level, designation in the firm, and the culture of the host country and their country. The author in his research of the identity development of global careerists, concluded combinations in the construction of a consistent sense of self. Mainly, identity is established either autonomously or relationally. Additionally, identity illustrates similarity, which can be either consistent over time or similar to others. Together with similarity, identity reflects uniqueness too. Here, the self is assumed to be different from other individuals and/or groups. Finally, Näsholm states that: 'people make sense of who they are by managing fragmented aspects of their identities into coherent and unified sense of self'.

Furthermore, Scurry et al. (2013, p.12) focusing on expatriate identity problems pursued a study on expatriates in the Middle East. The authors concluded that identity development is closely linked with “structural constraints and adaptation patterns” as there is “interplay between identity, careers, and self-initiated expatriation”. The authors explained that ‘narratives of mobility’ and ‘narratives of opportunity’ are equally important for identity. In ‘narratives of mobility’, mobility illustrating instability, is linked with the short-term international assignments. In short term assignments, expatriate individuals generally do not feel that they actually belong to their own or host countries. In ‘narratives of opportunity’, opportunity refers to new experiences and surroundings. In this scenario, expatriates look at it as a positive opportunity for higher quality of life standards, personal development, and career progression.

As mentioned above identity is a complex phenomenon that is subject to change depending on factors like interactions with others and different cultural surroundings of the individuals. The following paragraphs will refer to the types expatriates in terms of types of identities they possess.

### **2.6.2. The Cosmopolitan Expatriate Identity**

Expatriate identity is generally known as cosmopolitanism or cosmopolitan identity (Grinstein & Wathieu 2012). Cosmopolitanism focuses on the existence of and connection with different cultures, whereas a cosmopolitan identity encircles an “openness and adaptability” in towards of a “global lifestyle that persists across environments” (Grinstein & Wathieu 2012, p. 337). Cosmopolitanism and cosmopolitan identity are stated to be linked with international experience: “the disintegration of traditional national boundaries due to the individual finding some form of connectedness and belonging between their home and humankind” (Vieten 2006,

p. 259). This type of identity is similar to Kohonen's (2008) identity changer as it is a more of normal result of exposure to various cultural surroundings.

In cosmopolitan identity, the feeling of agreement and persistence individual identity allows expatriates to become somehow culturally disconnected. This links to the position when the acculturating individual does not feel connected to any culture, yet is capable of coping with various types of individuals and cultures. Within the literature of acculturation, this has been named as individualism (Bourhis et al. 1997). The feeling of not belonging to any culture is not a negative outcome here, in the contrary it provides the individual a particular set of skills which in general are worldwide appropriate. The ability to handle many individuals and cultures is a highly valuable asset to the person because expatriates do not leave their sense of self behind, rather depend on their interpersonal capabilities and talents to control a large cultural plethora. This needs cosmopolitan expatriates to be capable of negotiating their social roles (linked to relational identity), because they have to communicate and connect with various people and cultures in any context clearly. Due to the fact that social roles need the acknowledgement of other people to legalize them, cosmopolitan expatriates have constructed the required interpersonal abilities necessary to deal with interpersonal interactions in various categories, over multiple cultures and circumstances (Adams & van de Vijver 2015).

Additionally, while expatriate try to adjust to the new surrounding and culture to reach their aims, at the same time they try to be connected with their own culture to be able to keep a link with their prior lifestyle back in their home countries (linked with social identity). Hence there is a need for some kind mix of cultures. This type of biculturalism may be in different kinds, like interchange between cultures (i.e., like an Eastern husband with wife at home or a worldwide manager in the organisation) (Benet-Martinez 2012). Expatriates that achieved their targets and are successful, have developed a type of identity that supports them in many aspects of life. Being global and cosmopolitan can be seen in individuals that worked abroad in

different surroundings and fields in various types of designations. These types of people, created themselves a worldwide perspective that they can implement to various contexts and individuals.

All three aspects of identity are vital to be able to keep an understandable sense of self. As an ongoing process of defining one's self, the effect of being transferred for a new assignment in a new society with different cultures may need people to reconsider their roles on relevant identity aspects. This may lead to a change in beliefs, aims, and values (personal identity), interactions and social roles (relational identity), and individual's feeling of belonging and association with specific groups (social identity) (Adams & van de Vijver 2015).

### **2.6.3. The Pragmatic Expatriate Identity**

On the other hand, an expatriate identity can be constructed rather pragmatically. Expatriates with pragmatic identities only develop minor changes to be able to continue their social life in their new cultural environments. They prefer to keep and continue with their own personal (i.e., values and aims), relational (i.e., role in their organisation), and social (i.e. norms) identities in the maximum level they, similar to Kohonen's (2008) identity non-shifter type of expatriates. This type of expatriate identity will be developed more in cases like where expatriates (a) have difficulty to work with different type of people from different cultures; (b) experience a culture shock due to the fact that they find hard to adjust to the host country (c) experience challenges with the host country language (Kim 2008; Lineberry 2012) and/or very little international experience. The pragmatic orientation develops with minimal shifts in identity. Personal identity supports international assignees with a feeling of consistency and persistency (Kohonen 2008; Näsholm 2011), and somehow the pragmatic expatriates may see the host cultural differences a threat to themselves. Hence, they would clearly reflect their aim

of their international assignment. This purpose for expatriation may be linked with prospects like better quality of life and/or progress in individual career (Scurry et al. 2013).

Since they have their objective clearly defined the impact of the new culture can be threatening to “the way they have always done things” back in country of their origin. When abroad, these types of expatriates try to keep the communication with the host country nationals and colleagues in the minimum level. Their interaction is more towards formal or technical settings related to their assignments. They only interact when it is necessary. Culturally, these types of expatriates clearly define the limits of interactions, fearing of losing their own traditional sense of group membership like ethnic or national associations. Basically, their point of view is that they believe the differences that exist between their own culture and the host culture might impact them and/or the company negatively (Stephan et al. 2000, p. 240).

Neither the cosmopolitan identity, nor the pragmatic identity are good or not good, or healthy or unhealthy for the expatriate or the organisation. With short assignments abroad, very little effort is required for the adjustment and no challenges on the quality of the work and performance. These expatriates rarely face re-adjustment issues when their international assignment is over, they easily revert back to their own culture (Kohonen 2008). But, an assignment that is long-term to an identity as such may lead to with sectarianism, stereotypes, and ethnocentrism, and low performances at work.

In summary, as mentioned earlier social identity is: “the individual's knowledge that he belongs to certain social groups together with some emotional and value significance to him of this group membership” (Tajfel 1972, p. 307). Individuals in one way or another have the natural urge of belonging to a group and link themselves to particular social groups to be a part of it and hence reflect an identity. The following section will explain several factors that reflects how and why individuals have the need of belonging to a particular social group, construct their identity accordingly and how this impact on their shopping behaviour.

## **2.7. Shopping Behaviour**

Research reveals that at levels of marketing theory and practice the consumer is central to all activities. It is critical for marketers to have an extensive knowledge of the various factors influencing consumers' shopping behaviours in ensuring the successful delivery of products and the retention of customers in a marketplace (Hollywood, Armstrong & Durkin 2007). Shopping behaviour is a form of consumer behaviour reflecting the steps of the purchasing cycle. It is a method choosing and buying products and services to answer one's needs (de Mooij 2017). It is crucial for marketers to have intensive expertise of the different factors affecting a consumer's purchasing choices in order to guarantee a triumphant delivery of products and also retain customers in the market (Armstrong et al. 2007). Armstrong and Kotler (2008) define purchasing behavior as consumers' buying behavior, and the purchase they make is good and services that serves their personal needs (Yulita, Simanjuntak & Sartono 2019).

Additionally, Siswanto (2009) states that purchasing behavior is usually impacted by consumers' thoughts, beliefs, and feelings towards products. According to Jagtap and Deshmukh (2018) consumer behaviour is classified by five questions what, when, why, how and where; these are perpetually connected to any type of buying activity. The behaviour of consumers are impacted from the elements such as time, money, attempt in buying and user associated aspects factors (Jagtap & Deshmukh 2018). The consumer's method of decision includes two dimensions. The authors mentioned that the first aspects cannot be observed and consists of composite variables in the purchaser's minds, where the next aspect is the result to the invisible thinking that can be observed in the activity performed as a result of the output.

Moreover, Kannuk and Schiffman (2007) define consumer behaviour as a kind of behaviour that customers depict during their search for products, evaluating products, purchasing and disposing their products. According to the authors Farisa, Megawati and

Bagus (2019) buying behaviour is inspired by means of inside and outside elements. The authors stated that inside elements include belief, motivation, getting to know a product, attitudes, consumers' personalities and their self-concept, their life-style and demographics. The outside elements consist of things such as consumers' cultural background and how their upbringing shapes their social belief (Farisa, Megawati & Bagus 2019).

### **2.7.1. The Consumer Decision-making Process**

With consumers' product taste and buying preferences are constantly changing in today's fast-paced society, marketers need to have an extensive knowledge of consumers' decision-making in not only their purchases but their complete purchasing process (Schiffman & Kannuk 2007). There are many versions pronounced in the literature at different stages in decision-making process that consumers go through in their shopping purchasing-decision system. A comprehensive review of the literature regarding the system of consumers' decision-making system is supplied which will enable comparisons in attempts of finding common grounds. The model provided in below Figure 2.5, has three central factors: input, followed by the process and then the output. This model is designed to convey collectively several ideas on customer' decision-making in purchases and consumption preferences in the market.

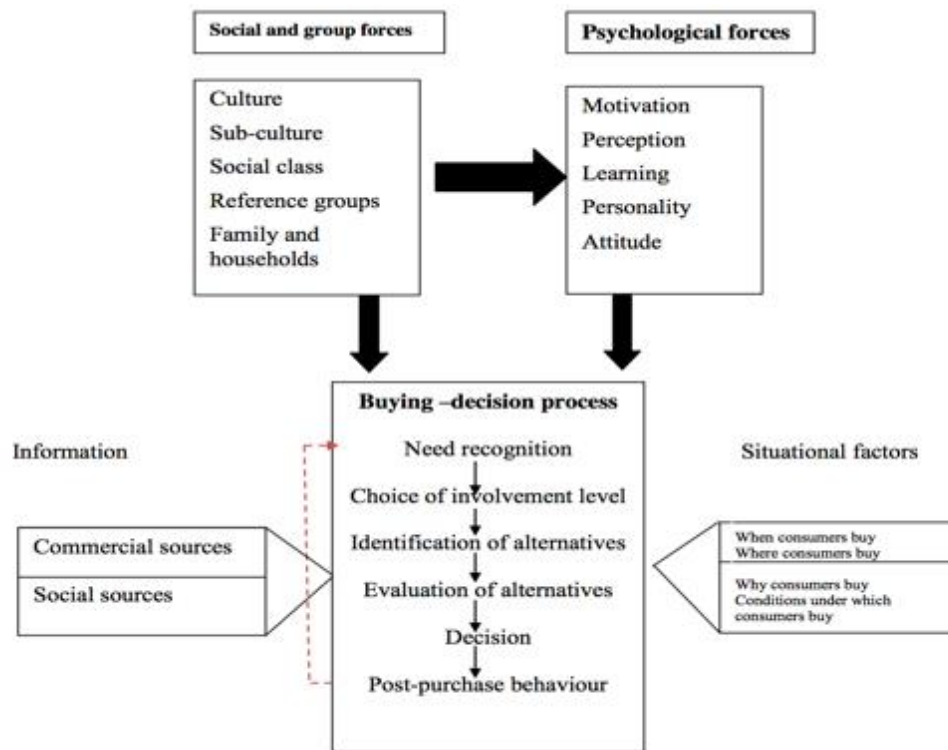


Figure 2.5 Buying decision process, source: (Stanton et al. 1997)

The general decision-making process of consumers listed above enhances one's understanding of the different steps consumers go through when making a decision.

Blythe (2006) discusses those six stages briefly:

1. **Need recognition** – this first stage is where consumers identify their need for a good or service,
2. **Search for information** – here, consumers start researching for all the information they can about the product they want to purchase,
3. **Pre-purchase evaluation of alternatives** – consumers have a list of different products to consider that would best satisfy their needs,
4. **Purchase** – this stage is where consumers can act and pay for the product they decided to purchase,



5. **Consumption** – consumers start consuming or using the products to satisfy their needs
6. **Post-consumption behaviour** – consumers start to consider whether the product they purchased does satisfy their need or not and whether problems arose from using the product.

Cant et al. (2006) explains the 7-step process in a consumer's decision-making:

1. **Problem recognition:** consumers identify various differences between what they observe on a product and what they actually want,
2. **Search for information:** consumers are now in the learning process where they start becoming aware of different product alternatives,
3. **Evaluation of alternatives:** consumers start evaluating different product alternatives in terms of their traits, characteristics and features,
4. **Buying:** consumers weigh in all the different alternatives and ultimately select the one most desirable for them and purchase the product,
5. **Post-buying evaluation:** after consuming the product, consumers will either view the product experience positively or negatively,
6. **Post-buying satisfaction:** if the product experience was positive, consumers will experience happiness and satisfaction,
7. **Post-buying dissatisfaction:** if the product experience was negative, consumer will experience unhappiness and dissatisfaction.

Kanuk and Schiffman (2007) view a consumer's consumption process in decision-making in five steps:

1. **Need recognition:** consumers learn which of their needs have not been met yet,
2. **Pre-purchase search:** consumers view the needs that will satisfy them upon the consumption of a product,

3. **Evaluation of alternative:** consumers usually use 2 kinds of information; the first one is a list of all the different product brands that plan to purchase; the second one is a standard of what they will use in order to assess each brand model,
4. **Purchase behaviour:** consumers have up to three kinds of buying: trial purchases and then the repeat purchases and finally, the purchases they maintain in the long-term which becomes a commitment for them,
5. **Post-purchase evaluation:** consumers apply the products that they bought or purchased in a trial purchase process and assess its performance using their experience with it.

Kotler and Armstrong (2008) state that one should be aware that even before a consumer's purchase, takes place, his or her purchasing process initiates and tends to continue even more so after the actual product was purchases. The above steps highlighted the five-step process of consumers' decision-making process that shift from consumers' recognition to an unsatisfied need to the assessment of the product after purchasing the product (Kotler et al. 2013). Those steps are recognized as firstly the need of recognition, searching for information, evaluation of product alternatives, decision regarding a purchase and finally the behaviour arising from post-purchase.

There are many other factors that impact a consumers' decision-making process and some of those factors will be explained in detail in the following sections.

### **2.7.2. Factors Impacting Consumer Decision-making**

Research reveals that at levels of marketing theory and practice the consumer is central to all activities. It is critical for apparel marketers to have an extensive knowledge of the various factors influencing consumers' decisions in ensuring the successful delivery of products and the retention of customers in a marketplace (Hollywood, Armstrong & Durkin

2007). It is crucial for marketers to have intensive expertise of the different factors affecting a consumer's purchasing choices in order to guarantee a triumphant delivery of products and also retain customers in the market (Armstrong et al. 2007).

Kannuk and Schiffman (2007) define consumer behaviour as a kind of behaviour that customers depict during their search for products, evaluating products, purchasing and disposing their products. Consumer behaviour is all crucial element to indicate the decision-making system in shopping.

### **2.7.3. Perception as a Factor that Influences Consumer Buying Decisions**

Researchers in the past have sought after important things that purchasers realize usually whilst witnessing a stimulus, such as changes in process, design and advertising. Yang (2010) stated how customers' notion is critical and serves as a heritage for the understanding of customers and an essential approach to find customers from lots of different cultures. It has been a general notion that a consumer's perception is thought of a process where a consumer selects, organizes and then interprets a stimulus into something meaningful, a response that evokes a clear sense of feeling and ultimately (Stanton et al. 1993). Previous research views this in a different way. Armstrong and Kotler (2008), for instance, put the three levels of perception into categories: exposure, attention and a comprehensive stage, all that impact the way a consumer views a production the market. Customers gain knowledge and insight about information pertaining to products via their five senses: their sight, sense of smell, taste, hearing and lastly touch; each customer, however, obtains, organizes and interprets such kinds of sensory information in different was (Can't, Brink & Brijball 2006). Other researchers have different opinions; for instance, Hathcote and Gagliano (1994) discovered that a shop's overall ambience such as its visuals, its workers and its features affect customers greatly because all those things leave a first impression on the type of brands that

the shop represents. Therefore, maintaining an excellent standard of a shop's appearance is crucial and companies need to ensure that customers have a first great impression on their shops. Generally, these discoveries agree with Birtwistle and Shearer's research (2001) who proposed that a retail's visual appearance and its strategic location signifies a first impression for customers and that if executed properly lead to customers' loyalty which thus leads to the shop's overall success and achievement. Moreover, Imram (1999) claims how the visual appearance of a store is impacted by things such as the scent of the store, the images and colours in the store, the attitudes of employees and the prestige of the brands. In fact, Clarke et al. agrees with the latter point and claims that product quality is the most fundamental attribute for any store's success. Those findings insinuate that a store's visual appearance plays a crucial role in determining a consumer's attitude and helps shape his or her stimuli in the market. In terms of perception, it can be inferred that a consumer's perception is very important, particularly in settings where products are sold mainly through their visual appearances rather than their packaging (Imram 1999).

#### **2.7.4. Motivational Factors Influencing Consumer Buying Decisions**

Today, changes in the structure of a dynamic market and intense rivalry impact purchasing and behaviour of shoppers. Consumers understand their purchasing behaviour and their inclinations in view of their ways of life. Consumers, understanding their purchasing behaviour in view of hedonic inclinations, get both mental involvements with the utilization of the product and pleasure and euphoria by having the product; those understanding their buying behaviour in view of utilitarian grounds are more cantered on the utilitarian and target traits of the item. Buyers acting with hedonic buying reasons understand the act not as a fulfilment of a need, rather to appreciate and take delight by doing it without evaluation, planning or contemplation.

Moreover, motivation is characterized as the main thrust inside consumers that affect them energetically (Hawkins et al. 2007). Mallalieu (2000) explains motivation as the stimulation of inner wants, needs and concerns which empowers conduct and behaviour and enables a person to act out on this stimulation in order to get satisfied. Various researches stated distinctive perspectives about motivation. Hollywood et al. (2007) for instance, contended that regarding purchasing a product purely out of motivation guides a consumer towards purchasing a specific product that benefits him or her and allows him or her to fulfil his or her needs. Moreover, it can help buyers in creating criteria for assessing products that can influence consumers' determinants of their perception and behaviour regarding a product. Hollywood et al. (2007) stated that for a consumers' motivation to exist there must be a relating need. Maslow proposed that motivated can be communicated in a various levelled organisation with physiological necessities framing the base of the progressive system (Blood 2007). As indicated by Maslow's hierarchy of needs, for a person to be really happy in life, every single one of the requirements of that pyramid ought to be met. He stated that a person's human needs to encompass the following: physiology, love and security, self-esteem and finally, self-realization when all those needs are met. Maslow's main key claims in his theory of hierarchy of needs is that needs of human are arranged in levels of importance (Blood 2007). What this means is that in order for a higher level of a human need to be met, the basic essential needs need to be met first. Maslow's hierarchy of needs is depicted in below Figure 2.6.



*Figure 2.6 Maslow's Hierarchy of needs, source: Kanuk and Schiffman (2008)*

Jankus (2016) noticed that buyers settle on choices in view of their own needs as far as the thought processes behind a purchase. A shopper in look for apparel may concentrate on how durable a product is, while for other customers, the cost of the item might be their main concern. At the end of the day, items are purchased based on physical criteria, for example, product characteristics, its quality, function, durability and usefulness. This main motivation is created by a condition of an unfulfilled need. Buyers settle on choices in view of their own needs as far as the thought processes behind a purchase (ibid).

Moreover, different researchers propose that motivation can be classified in terms of a type of shopping. From two shopping motivation types including customers' practical and non-practical needs (Hawkins et al. 2007). Six measurements of hedonic shopping motivation: idea shopping, social shopping, role shopping, adventure shopping, gratification shopping and lastly value were propositioned. Jamal et al. (2006) recognized various shopping intentions with the preface that buyers are roused essentially by two kinds of mental needs: individual and social.

The individual thought processes incorporate the requirements for diversion, physical activity, role-playing, sensory stimulation and self-gratification. Diversion is basically a shop's capability to offer different opportunities to consumers in order to get away from the mundane routines of daily life. Physical activity sheds light on how consumers exert effort and exercise by walking around the store. Role-playing are simply activities that customers learned from past experiences. Sensory stimulation is basically how a customer responds to the visuals of the store along with music and scent. Lastly, self-gratification highlights a consumer's way of dealing with depression by purchasing products to help change their moods (ibid).

#### **2.7.5. Learning as a Factor Influencing Consumer Buying Decisions**

Van der Walt et al. (1998) characterizes learning as the aftermath of a blend of motivation, a consumer's attention and experience, and repetition. Kinnear, Bernardt and Kotler (1995) state that learning influences esteem, mentalities, identities and tastes. Different examinations communicated the introduce that learning can impact buyers to buy design fashion brands from multiple points of view. Behavioural learning and psychological learning are the two fundamental kinds of learning (Jankus 2016). Customers learn by reacting to an incident that happens to them. In the second case, psychological learning happens when shoppers learn by considering an issue and trying to reach a conclusion. Reinforcement strengthens the connection between the signal and the reaction, and it might prompt a comparative reaction whenever a drive behind a motivation occurs. A repeated reinforcement prompts the improvement of a propensity of consumers and drives their decision-making process.

##### **2.7.5.1. The Learning Process**

According to Schiffman and Kannuk (2007) a pressure is decided by wishes and

desires. A power acts as a spur to learning. For example, women and men who need to use a bicycle for health and activity are inspired to examine all they are able to about bike riding. These individuals may try to find information concerning the costs, nice traits of bicycles and analyse which bicycles are the quality for the form of riding that they do. The authors are of the opinion that cues function as stimuli; for example, an advertisement for an individual journey that includes motorbike driving might also function as a cue for motorbike riders, who may also understand that they want a holiday.

Moreover, the specific reaction selected relies upon at the cues and the consumer's past experience. Kotler and Armstrong (1996) are of the view that reinforcement is an enjoyment that a patron acquires after consuming a product. Reinforcement can be both effective and ineffective. If one sees a dealer promoting frozen yogurt (stimulus), one may purchase it (reaction), and discover the yogurt to be quite fresh (praise). In this way, the behaviour (motion) has been positively reinforced. Alternatively, if one buys a brand-new flavour of yogurt and don't like its taste (negative reinforcement), one will not then buy that flavour of yogurt in the future.

From the above dialogue, it could be deduced that mastering through remark may also occur before a purchaser could utilize the product and it'll maintain until the consumer has finally decided to purchase a product. However, the client's destiny to buy will depend on the performance of the product (Jankus 2016).

#### **2.7.6. Social network sites, shopping behaviour and expatriates**

From the consumer point of view, social connections have a dynamic nature in the context of fashion (Hackley 2005). Consumers put forth social expressions through their dressing styles; particularly in the way of who they want to be and who not to be (Moynagh & Worsley 2002; Banister & Hogg 2007). Consumers utilize clothing as a method for conveying



membership or even division from social gatherings (Auty & Elliott 1998). Some might wear brands for the sake of standing out and being unique, while others only wear brands in order to fit in within a group. Consumers develop and reflect identities through their purchasing preferences. Thus, as proposed in this study it is highly important to shed light on the symbolic importance of fashion brands in the construction of consumers' identity and ultimately, to focus on the impact of their social identities as a result.

Moreover, consumers who shop online are not interested in the diversity of products that are being offered, but also need to be able to guarantee the product's usability after its purchase. Bhattacharya and Koyuncu (2004) state that those consumers who often receive products that do not match their expectation or offer the same value that was promised of them, tend to distrust online shopping. This especially occurs in China and purchases made on Chinese products, since China tends to have a great deal of counterfeit products which often deceive consumers (Saraji, Faghih & Mirghafoori 2019).

Similarly, numerous studies indicate that social networking also has great impact on expatriate shopping behaviour. Expatriate consumers entering a new environment also adjust themselves to new lifestyles, brands and services. Social media is coined as a very strong factor in the expatriate adjustment phenomenon. When communicating and developing new social relationships, expatriates refer to the brands and products of other expatriates within the same network. For instance, Ewing (2012) discovered that 71% of consumers make purchasing decisions based on the social media feedback and referrals. Similarly, a study by Alsubagh (2015) uncovered that 33% of Twitter users actually exchange their opinions on brands, products and services over this social media channel at least once a week. Additionally, Alawan argues that perhaps one of the largest benefits that social media offers in comparison with older media such as TV, radio, and billboards, is that consumers are able to interact with the brand

and company directly, and consequently, get all the latest information about the company's product (Alalwan 2019). They do this through social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and YouTube. Thus, Qualman (2013) states that brand information is available to consumers more rapidly than older traditional media, and information is more readily available and easily accessible to a greater audience (Alalwan 2019).

Additionally, Olenski (2012) mentioned that in the US, 81% of respondents claimed that their friends' opinions posted on social media channels are highly important when deciding to purchase a product. In the UAE, 70% of consumers seek reviews online while 80% of these customers refer to the brand's website before the actually going to the shops or purchasing the desired product ("Results: 2019 Social Media Influencers' Survey - BPG Group" 2019). Moreover, in the UAE, 41% of consumers use Facebook, Instagram or other social media sites to follow their preferred brands ("Results: 2019 Social Media Influencers' Survey - BPG Group" 2019). In comparison to the GCC and Western world, the UAE consumers display the highest rates of purchasing luxury products compared to any other consumers around the world ("Global Powers of Luxury Goods 2018" 2018).

Moreover, social media with its power to reach mass communities, has a supporting impact on consumers shopping preferences. While it can make thousands of consumers buy the same, in the contrary it will cause many consumers avoid certain products. For instance, 'Herding behaviour' which was first conceptualized in 1994 by Thorstein Veblen who was the first economist that studied Herding behaviour and mass consumption intensively highlighted the reasons of 'why individuals prefer to purchase what others do' as cited in (Frey & Cueni 2013). Herding is a type of convergent (coming closer together specially in ideas) social behaviour that can be defined as the alignment of the opinions or behaviours of people in a group (herd) without centralized coordination (Raafat, Chater & Frith 2009, p. 1-6).

Moreover, the cognitive ability being limited by biases, consumers also rely on stereotypes while deciding (Wu Yang 2010). Stereotypes are types of data providing individuals with information of how to interact with various social groups (Wu Yang 2010). For instance, in choosing or refusing the purchase of a product or service. In her study, aggressive marketing and stereotyping of social media in 2014, Sramova stated that within the social media world, stereotyping facilitates the buyers to receive the targeted messages faster and easier to understand. To author stated that stereotypes hold a great amount of importance as the factor of the social construction of reality. The author continued by mentioning that stereotypes aid individuals in orientation, judgement, approach and classification of the environment. “Stereotypes occur as a part of discourse. [...] So stereotypes will be employed as a device for maintaining an ideological position in an argument rather than a result of some cognitive process of categorization” (Sramova 2014, p.255). Besides, stereotyping or stereotyped figures in advertising frequently often lead to falsification, simplification and devaluation of the actual social and cultural issues (Šramová 2014). Interestingly, Bhowman and Gordon (2005) state how there are certain factors that can affect a consumer’s purchasing decisions in online shopping. Such factors comprise of culture, environment, retailer, psychological, social, purchasing motivation and personal factors (Bawa, Sinha & Kant 2019). Moreover, Monsuwe et al. (2004) claim how there are five main external aspects that deliver an insight towards comprehending consumers’ purchasing intentions in online shopping. According to the authors those factors include: situational factors, prior e-shopping experiences, consumers’ personality, a product’s traits, and finally, consumers’ trust in e-shopping.

Finally, social media impacts on consumers by continuously displaying all possible shopping advantages like discounts, sales, festivals etc. to everyone in the world. In general, consumers of UAE due to the advantage of high incomes and purchasing abilities also are able

to follow advertisements closely when compared to the European or American buyers (Don 2002). Expatriates landing in the UAE immediately find themselves surrounded within a luxurious world. They are able to consume not only for themselves but for friend and family as well. Shopping upgrades to luxury rather than a need. The following section will emphasize on hedonic shopping behaviour to explain further details of shopping motivators of expatriates.

#### **2.7.7. Hedonistic Consumption, Consumption of Luxury Products, Brands and Expatriates**

Hedonic utilization denotes the delight and joy the customer anticipates from shopping. As the desire from shopping is distinctive for every shopper, so is the inclination experienced amid shopping. A portion of the shoppers are influenced by different motivational perspectives to get happiness and joy from shopping. These motivational angles can be depicted as socializing, getting an idea, seeking pleasure and exchanging different values (Arnolds & Reynolds 2003). Previous studies have been focusing on the emotional aspects and shopping has been viewed as a nice experience full of joy for the consumers. The hedonic factor of purchasing has been analysed and stated as fun, joy, escape, adventure etc. (e.g., Babin et al. 1994). Hedonic shopping, therefore, depends on hedonism. Bhutto, Bhutto and Samo claim that hedonic motivations are basically emotions and feelings that are associated to and driven from a consumer's impulsive shopping habits (Bhutto, Bhutto & Samo 2019). The authors argue that a consumer's impulsive shopping habits are quite applicable to a consumer's hedonic motivations. Asnawati and Wahvuni state that hedonic motivation has been a rising phenomenon in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and a motivation behind consumers' erratic and impulsive shopping habits because it is an enjoyable activity that does not consciously alert the consumer about the benefits of a product, and thus, the consumer would purchase said product without paying attention to the benefits and value it brings (Asnawati & Wahvuni 2018). Additionally, it is argued that that although shopping malls and outlets motivate consumers to foster hedonic

values through cinemas, restaurants, and eye-catching interiors and designs, they contribute towards the utilitarian value of convincing consumers to actually shop (Yilmaz & Kocoglu 2018).

Moreover, Kim et al. (2003, p. 135) claim that the motivations behind shopping has been recognized as being the “drivers of behavior that bring consumers to the marketplace to satisfy their internal needs.” Moreover, Tauber (1972) states that consumers do not only shop to satisfy their needs, but they also do so for hedonic purposes, such as the need for attention, the need for socializing with friends and peers, the need to exercise, and lastly the desire to meet other people sharing their interests. Thus, hedonic shopping motivations are argued to be significantly related to compulsive buying (Horváth & Adıgüzel 2018).

Moreover, Ahtola and Batra (1991) claim that utilitarian shopping value has to do with a shopping experience’s practical benefits and functionality, which Spangenberg (1997) defines as “dominated by the cognitive element”. Moreover, Jones et al. (2006) states: “since utilitarian value is thought to focus on the weighing of inputs and outputs of the particular shopping experience”, utilitarian value impacts a consumer’s perceived value, which is basically the difference between a consumer’s selection and evaluation of the costs versus benefits of a particular product (Choi 2017).

Furthermore, as reviewed earlier, loneliness is defined as negative impact of cross-cultural transition (Ward & Rana-Deuba 2000). For instance, a study of Stone Feinstein and Ward (1990), showed that for American expatriates in Singapore, loneliness and social isolation was the most compelling sign of psychological distress. Similarly, the authors agreed that loneliness was shown as a significant predictor of mood disorder in sojourners. The interaction with the host country individuals and other expatriates in their new environment has great impact on the psychological adjustment of the expatriates. However, the actual effect

on their adjustment depends on the degree and quality of interaction to both other expatriate and host national groups (ibid). In fact, research by Furnham and Alibhai (1985) shows evidence that the support of social interaction and communication with host country individuals, colleagues and other expatriates impacts expatriate's well-being and increases job performances. This may relate to the fact that social interactions from all parties can eliminate the emotions of loneliness and social isolation (Ward & Rana-Deuba 2000). Expatriates due to their loneliness may be inclined towards purchasing items due to their loneliness and feel happy to do so. Perhaps back in their home country they would buy a box of chocolates to treat themselves, whereas overseas it may be a kind of a compensation for their loneliness to have a massage in a seven-star luxurious hotel spa.

Moreover, the advertising industry is using the entertainment of consumption as a tool strongly in increase of their sales (Arnold & Reynolds 2003). By utilizing both qualitative and quantitative methods the authors conducted a study on hedonic reasons, namely to understand why individuals go for shopping and as a result they identified six factors that motivate the purchasing:

1. adventure shopping that reflects excitement, incitement, thrill and stimulation of senses,
2. social shopping that reflects the socializing part with the loved ones –friend, family etc.,
3. gratification shopping is the state of threatening oneself, a shopping style just to feel better,
4. idea purchasing is to know about the new products in the market, the latest fashion and styles,
5. role purchasing is basically the indulgence of buying a gift for others and making them happy,
6. value purchasing is the satisfaction and pleasure of bargaining, finding the cheapest of the same products and the best sales.

Buyers take pleasure in purchasing for different type of reasons.

Moreover, hedonism or gratification is a reasoning recognizing delight in the substance and importance of life. Gratification is a moral hypothesis crediting something giving delight from 'great' and something giving agony as 'awful' (Hopkinson & Pujari 1999; Babacan 2001). In spite of the fact that debauchery is identified with abundance, impromptu and joy, it is vital for organisations to know which factors spur shoppers towards hedonic conduct. Monitoring these components (fulfilment of faculties, assurance, tuning in, comfort, having a decent time, being effective, interest and increasing new encounters, convenience, long haul utilize, simple support, productivity, strength, enjoying, eminence, popularity, differences, bliss of others, acquiring new data and social improvement) will give favourable position to organisations in the long keep running since it will be conceivable to comprehend numerous parts of buyer conduct (Holbrook & Hirschman 1982). Every one of these variables bear both hedonic and utilitarian emotions and considerations. Hedonic shopping impacts an incredible number of customers, and is for the most part on expatriates. Particularly the garments segment is spearheading in the issue. In spite of the fact that attire addresses the issue of covering and in this manner, makes a utilitarian prerequisite, it additionally satisfies hedonic requests (Jankus 2016).

Moreover, buyers settle on choices in view of their own needs as far as the thought processes behind a purchase (ibid). A shopper in look for apparel may concentrate on how durable a product is, while for other customers, the cost of the item might be their main concern. At the end of the day, items are purchased based on physical criteria, for example, product characteristics, its quality, function, durability and usefulness. This main motivation is created by a condition of an unfulfilled need. Buyers settle on choices in view of their own needs as far as the thought processes behind a purchase. A shopper in look for apparel may concentrate on how durable a product is, while for other customers, the cost of the item might be their main concern (ibid). Different researchers propose that motivation can be classified in terms of a

type of shopping. Jamal et al. (2006) analysed two shopping motivation including customers' practical and non-practical needs. Six measurements of hedonic shopping motivation: idea shopping, social shopping, role shopping, adventure shopping, gratification shopping and lastly value were propositioned. The author recognized two classes of shopping introductions: hedonic and utilitarian introductions. He stated various shopping intentions with the preface that buyers are roused essentially by two kinds of mental needs: individual and social. The individual thought processes incorporate the requirements for diversion, physical activity, role-playing, sensory stimulation and self-gratification. Diversion is basically a shop's capability to offer different opportunities to consumers in order to get away from the mundane routines of daily life. Physical activity sheds light on how consumers exert effort and exercise by walking around the store. Role-playing are simply activities that customers learned from past experiences. Sensory stimulation is basically how a customer responds to the visuals of the store along with music and scent. Lastly, self-gratification highlights a consumer's way of dealing with depression by purchasing products to help change their moods (Jamal et al. 2006).

#### **2.7.8. Culture Specific Purchasing Abroad**

Previous literature has indicated that several culture-related elements impact on culture-specific shopping behaviour (Balabanis, Diamantopoulos, Mueller & Melewar 2001; Cleveland et al. 2009). Some of these elements are listed as: acculturation, ethnic identity, ethnocentrism, nationalism, patriotism, and country-of-origin (also called culture- of-origin).

Culture has been identified as a fundamental element that has great impact on consumer behaviours (Cleveland et al. 2009). To understand expatriate consumer behaviour, it is vital to consider the impacts of culture, due to the very fact that the expatriate purchasing patterns are linked to cultural values, norms and identities (Berry 1992). These cultural elements are more prevalent specifically when individuals are abroad (Ha, Yong Choi & Ha 2018). Due to various



values and norms, purchasing varieties are evident among ethnic groups and these varieties are mirrored in product and service consumptions. The authors meant that a consumer's choice of product and service features and components differ depending on the buyer's cultural or ethnic background. They coined this as the culture-specific shopping behaviour, referring that individuals consume products and services mirroring features and components of their culture-of-origin. Basic tenet of literature exists on culture- specific shopping behaviours mostly focusing on two main factors - ethnic identity and acculturation. For instance, Pons et al. (2001) stated that expatriates within a host culture can adapt to their new surroundings "by maintaining traits of their own culture" (Pons et al. 2001, p. 231). In terms of sports for example, to choose a specific sport reflects a strong cultural meaning for the person, because it enables him to identify himself with a particular culture. Hence, "a specific sport can be identified as being ethnically specific" (Pons et al. 2001, p. 231), and this consequently will result with purchasing goods of that sport.

The following section will further explain consumer identities associated with consumption of brands and luxury products.

## **2.8. Brands and Self-Expression**

Consumer researchers have added brands to the possession findings. For example, researchers argue that consumers develop their self-identity and present themselves through the brands they choose to consume according to the brand user groups and self-image association (Escalas & Bettman 2005). Consumers do not purchase products only for what they function as but also for what they mean; hence, brands can turn into images that consumers use to define their self-concept (Mihalcea 2008).

The model of meaning transfer by Mihalcea, argues that meaning of a product is embedded in the culturally created environment (2008) and is transferred into products through

fashion, referrals of groups, media, celebrities and subcultural groups. For example, brands gain meaning through advertisements because advertisements refer the images of general culture that provide meaning to consumers. Similarly, the authors argues that referral groups using certain brands provide meaning through associations buyers obtain towards those groups. Then meaning moves from products to consumers, as consumers assemble themselves through their chosen brands based on the congruency the image of the preferred brand and their self-images. Therefore, the meaning of a brand is not only the expression of self but also the support to construct a self-identity to the consumer (ibid).

Moreover, brands are regularly characterized as promotional tools made to differentiate an organisation's offerings from its competitors and ultimately creating value for the intended customers (Keller 2007). Brands create incentives or value for its end users in two ways: by serving to indicate the nature of the products and making important affiliations that include an incentive or value that goes past the intrinsic characteristics of the product (Albert, Merunka & Valette-Florence 2013). The expanded level of item commoditisation in the previous two decades, originating from the standardisation of innovative design and manufacturing processes, has created brand relationship, specifically, affiliations identified with one's self-character or self-identity which customers often use as a mean of self-expression, and this is a crucial source for the value of an organisation's brand. On the other hand, Zaichkowsky and Lai (1999) view counterfeit product as illegally manufactured products that although resemble the original brand's look, is usually of lower quality in relation to its durability, performance and reliability (Peng et al. 2012). Counterfeit products lower a corporation's profits, since those manufactured products take away consumers from the original company's brand. In a way, they are stealing customers away from them and harming their financial levels negatively (Sondhi 2019).

Moreover, a focal principle of a study of Aaker et al. (1997) is that purchasers utilize brands in order to express and authenticate their character or identity. This recommendation originates from the broader idea that one's behaviour is driven by the need to reaffirm one's self-image in society (Dunning 2005). In this specific circumstance, earlier research has demonstrated that brands are frequently esteemed to the degree that they reaffirm individuals' convictions and beliefs (Albert, Merunka & Valette-Florence 2013).

The self-expressive capacity of brands can be identified with the idea of noticeable consumption, a term used to portray the procurement of products primarily to attain or keep up one's social status in society (ibid). Usually, noticeable consumption includes luxurious spending on brands with the end goal of self-expression by showing off one's riches to society. The idea that consumers noticeable consume brands that show their insight into culture, style and taste, is getting further rapport from current research on consumer behaviour (Amaldoss & Jain 2005; Kammen 2002). Brands can likewise be utilized to communicate association in specific social or professional gatherings, through both the utilization of brands that indicate associations in suitable groups and gatherings, and the shirking of brands that indicate participation in unwanted groups and gatherings (Escalas & Bettman 2005). Additionally, brands have been appeared to pass on generally concealed parts of a shopper's self-image since consumers regularly pick brand that they consider suitable for the image or look that they have about themselves (ibid).

Apart from serving as an external signal, brands can serve to set up and affirm a purchaser's self-idea and character without unequivocally expecting to accomplish social status, acknowledgment, or even acceptance (Albert, Merunka & Valette-Florence 2013). The authors mentioned that for this situation, individuals' drive to express their internal state of mind is directed by the want and desire to indicate and signal their self-personality and self-identity to not to just others but also to themselves. This self-indicating means to reaffirm other

people's view of the kind of person they are. They confirmed that the notion of self-indicating as a motivation of individuals' choices is reliable with the thought that by uncovering their inclinations, customers get self-indicative value from making their own decision, enabling them to find or characterize their own tastes and inclinations. According to the authors, in this specific situation, it has been demonstrated that consumers have a tendency to lean toward brands that are more like their optimal self-idea with regards to prominent consumption, yet incline toward brands that more like their real self-idea when the consumption is subtle and low-key.

Brands end up connected to the self when a brand can enable buyers to accomplish objectives that are motivated by the self (Brakus et al. 2009). For instance, brands can be utilized to meet the needs of self-expression, either publicly or privately; can fill in as apparatuses for social gatherings or to associate and connect consumers to the past; and may go about as symbols of individual achievement, grant confidence, enable one to separate oneself and express independence and individuality, and ultimately help individuals through life changes (Albert, Merunka & Valette-Florence 2013). Research on social cognition on one's self has built up an assortment of hypothetical constructs to clarify the perplexing idea of self-learning and self-related behaviour. According to the authors, the self is conceptualized as comprising of different aspects, including social parts and identity attributes such as personality traits, the most vital of which are schematic self-perspectives, and conceivable selves, which is simply people's thoughts of what they may progress toward becoming, where and what they might want to wind up, and what they fear of becoming.

The fundamental preface is that consumers appropriate the significance of brands as they build their self-personalities, especially brand meanings that emerge from reference groups' consumption and non-consumption of brands. Nonetheless, a few brands are greater in communicating a brand message towards the intended target audience. For instance, earlier

research on consumer behaviour suggests that openly consumed (versus secretly consumed) and luxurious (versus necessary products) items are better ready to pass on symbolic significance about an individual (ibid). Furthermore, a brand that is extremely popular and utilized by various sorts of individuals (e.g., a Honda Accord vehicle) may not impart particular relationship about the individual who utilizes it.

### **2.8.1. Brands and Consumer Divergence through Identities**

Earlier research exhibits that consumers have a drive to separate themselves from others (Ariely & Levav 2000), and these individual-drive speculations have concentrated for the most part on stable individual contrasts in requirements for uniqueness (Tian et al. 2001) or the results of impermanent circumstances that lead people to feel undifferentiated. They propose that people with higher requirements for uniqueness lean more towards certain brands (ibid), or that when situational weights influence people to feel excessively comparative, individuals look for methods for accomplishing a feeling of distinction (Swaminathan, Page & Gürhan-Canli 2007). In any case, transverse over people and free of impermanent situational burdens, individuals have a tendency to wander more in certain item areas than others. Earlier work on singular drives for separation reveals to us a ton about who will probably lean toward one of a kind items or when individuals may probably favour them. Be that as it may, these methodologies have less to say in regards to where individuals veer, or why crosswise over people individuals wander more in specific areas.

Researchers across multiple aspects of social science have contended that individuals have a drive or motivation to appear as something else, to be different and stand out from everyone else (Brewer & Gardner 1996). This particular phenomenon is also referred as a consumer's need for uniqueness, which is defined as "the trait of pursuing differentness relative to others through the acquisition, utilization, and disposition of consumer goods for the purpose

of developing and enhancing one's self-image and social image" (Tian et al. 2001, p. 171). The most very much referred to drive approach in consumer behaviour and social psychology, the uniqueness writing, fights that people encounter an adverse enthusiastic response when they feel excessively like others. Uniqueness examine has concentrated on impermanent situational weights and stable individual contrasts. At the point when individuals are incidentally made to feel excessively like others, they act in ways that enable them to feel unique (e.g., being inventive, or misremembering levels of likeness). Individuals with higher stable requirements for uniqueness likewise lean toward more noteworthy separation from others on a steadier premise Tian et al. (2001) and people think more about being extraordinary in spaces they find by and by vital. The way that disparity happens all the more regularly in specific areas—crosswise over people—proposes that something past simply inward drives might cause uniqueness.

Brands are a collection of practical yet expressive values that offer one-of-a-kind and unique experience for consumers (de Chernatony et al. 2006). Vital to the achievement of any brand is the continuing connections a brand makes with its loyal shoppers. Loyalty towards a brand is a profoundly deep sense of duty regarding rebuying goods and services continually, causing repetitive purchases, in spite of situational impacts and marketing tactics having the capacity to change consumers' behaviour (Dalziel et al. 2011). Loyalty towards a brand can be viewed as a biased consumer behaviour conveyed by making frequent purchases as a result of purchasing decision driven by psychological thoughts. Therefore, brand loyalty or dedication needs to be seen through a behavioural and psychological perspective. Moreover, brand dedication is an organisation's most continuing resource and an essential objective of relationship advertising. By making and maintaining brand loyalty, a brand grows for the long haul, commonly valuable associations with buyers (ibid). A brand relationship is a bond that brings the brand supplier and brand purchases together (Schultz & Schultz 2004). This bond

gives advantages to the purchaser and the companies selling brands. For instance, while devotion and loyalty is significant for fashion brands, all the while, fashion brands allow their consumers to expressive themselves and create an identify for themselves. Similarly, in the exploratory study called the brand likeability scale, it is argued that within the framework of service experience consumptions, a greater likeability in brands indicates: a higher number of positive relationships, a higher communication, increased quality, and lastly, a boost in brand satisfaction (Nguyen et al. 2015).

Moreover, the development of the Internet empowers self-articulation as it enables customers to get to for all intents and purposes anything, paying little attention to their location (Dalziel et al. 2011). Customers can acquire one-of-a-kind brands not easily offline, enabling them to impart their coveted mental self-image. According to Al-Alawi (2019) Education has a great influence on consumers' e-shopping, or online buying. Lacey et al. (2007) stresses the importance of businesses customizing their products over social media platforms in order to reach out to a wider target audience and consequently, improves consumers' overall loyalty and commitment to that particular business. Furthermore, marketers who use a customized social media strategy for their online stores that offer personalized products to consumers, benefit much more than those who use a general social media strategy to a broader audience (Liu, Shin & Burns 2019).

Moreover, investigating purchasers' online relationships in fashion brands is essential as connections influence, and are influenced by, the settings in which they are implanted (Fournier 1998). Because of the intuitive capability of this online medium, which gives an office to purchasers and brands to discuss straightforwardly with each other while paying little heed to separation or time, many benefits of online shopping arise (Dalziel et al. 2011). In this way, it is critical to comprehend the connections buyers create with brands over the Internet. Customary retailers without an online presence are at a huge disadvantage in today's global

technological market (ibid). Be that as it may, offline shopping in retail situations does have its own benefits as well (Seock & Norton 2007). Offline, purchasers have up close and personal communication with sales representatives and may pay for their products with money (Akhter 2012). On the other hand, this association is not conceivable on the Internet and purchasers are required to give private data and points of interest before the exchange can be finished. Customers create worries about protection, dreading how their data will be utilized and the likelihood of credit card extortion. Additionally, hazards incorporate a failure to touch before acquiring and issues returning items that neglect to meet desires (ibid). In any case, the Internet is additionally an effective device that displays a few advantages.

According to Duffy (2003), consumer loyalties towards particular brands include various benefits, some of which include:

- **Saving on costs and time:** Consumers already know the brand and are familiar with it and thus will not seek other brands which not only take up time, but cost as well.
- **Referrals:** Because they enjoy using a particular brand, consumers will mention, recommend and encourage their friends and families to also use the same brand.
- **Rectify a brand's defect rather than discontinuing its usage:** Because consumers are loyal to the brand, they come up with different excuses or reasons towards a brand's defects and will not automatically discontinue it if they found it be defective. Thus, the continuity of the brand lasts even longer because consumers are willing to give it a second chance, and that is something really important in today's competitive global market.
- **Channel migration:** Customers who are loyal to a particular brand are more prone to purchase it via other channels such as social media platforms, the Internet, etc.



- **Unassisted awareness:** Loyal consumers regard particular brands at the top of their minds and subconsciously purchase it. Thus, this points out how psychology, to an extent, is impacted by behavioural dedication and loyalty.

The adjustments in utilization consumption can best be comprehended by adopting a demographic strategy based on particular consumer groups.

## 2.9. Upgrading Shopping Behaviour

Consumer behaviour cannot be understood before understanding how and why consumers attach themselves to their possessions. Consciously or unconsciously, intentionally or unintentionally individuals tend to view their possessions as part of themselves (Belk 1988). “Our fragile sense needs support, and this we get by having and possessing things because, to a large degree we are what we have and possess” states (Downs & Tuan 1978, p. 375). To believe that we are what we possess, is probably the most fundamental and paramount reality of consumer behaviour (Belk 1988). There is a constant need to understand who we are, what we believe in and what we do. Hence, it is unquestionable that consumers prefer products, brands and purchasing behaviours that are linked to category labels that they feel associated with (Reed et al. 2003). For instance, a study by Ekinci, ae-Hwan Yoon and Oppewal in 2005, suggests that the scale for brand relationship from the European purchasers opinion is multidimensional. Their study suggests four aspects for the brand relationship: the quality of the associate, the affection the self- concept relation, intimacy and the nostalgic link to it.

Interestingly, the concept of green luxury products has also become an area of growing interest to many scholars (Janssen et. al 2014). Purchasing green luxury products is desirable not just for the environment, but also because of political and social pressures as well (Aliyev, Wagner & Seuring 2019). In fact, it has lately been getting a lot of attention lately Amatulli et

al. (2017) and a lot of people are becoming interested in purchasing luxurious green products (Lerma et al. 2018).

Moreover, according to Ramya (2016) there are many factors that impact on the consumer's decision-making process, purchasing habits, choice of brands or the environments he purchases from. The author argues that a person's income is the key factor of his/her purchasing behaviour. The income consists of two dimensions; disposable income, which is the actual earnings and discretionary income; which is the remaining earnings after the basic needs are supplied. Any boost in discretionary income will result in an upgrade of shopping behaviour (e.g. buying luxury products and expensive brand products) and change (upgrade) in the individual's life style.

Ramya (2016) points to culture as another important element impacting on consumer shopping. Culture consists of a series of beliefs and values within particular groups, and culture impacts the style of purchasing and the decision-making of consumers. Most cultures and religious beliefs request to avoid unnecessary expenditure and propose a humble life style instead. However, it is interesting to observe the enormous amount of luxury spending in many countries and cultures. For instance, in Islam wasteful behaviour is not appropriate. Two words; *israf* (excessive) and *tabdzir* (wasteful) as in extravagance behaviour are used to explain to avoid the unnecessary spending. Spending money wastefully; (even if it does not have a significant value) is considered as *haram* (sin) in any type of situation or at any time (Adnan 2011). In the UAE for instance, no matter what the local culture or religion refers to, people purchase the unlimited number of luxurious products available in the market. Therefore, it seems like it does not have any importance of what background people come from. The shopping behaviour of people upgrades once their financial situation starts inflating.

Based on the literature provided above, expatriates have a boost in income when they pursue their international assignments. Hence, their shopping behaviour might be subject to

change and they may reflect a new identity through the brands, goods and services they choose to purchase.

### **2.9.1. Consumer Identities and Consumption of Luxury Products and Brands**

Consumers use their possessions for various reasons. One reason is to satisfy their psychological needs like creating a self-identity, expressing their uniqueness or difference of others or constructing a self-concept through their possessions (Mihalcea 2008). For example, if a consumer perceives himself as ‘an athlete’ this consumer likely to act in a way that is compatible with the meaning of ‘being’ an athlete. This will lead to various ‘identity driven effects’, like more focus on identity related stimuli (these consumers will likely more attention to athletic items), an inclination towards identity-linked brands (choice towards athlete-oriented Gatorade over brand like Vitamin-water which have no distinct connection with athletes), more inclination and positivity towards people who acquire the desired identity (previous athletes are more in favour than award-winning actors), the choice of media will be favouring the identity (ESPN over BBC), development of a behaviour catering the desired identity (using goods like distance-running watch to illustrate the interest in running or such activities), identity-consistent memories (remembering, knowing all past athletic events or triumphs) (Reed et al. 2003).

Oyserman (2001) argues that identities can be classified outside of conscious awareness, that they are sensitive to circumstantial elements and, most importantly, that identities lead to many decisions. Identity is defined by Reed et al. (2003) as any category label that a consumer relates himself to and of what the individual in that category is presented like, how he thinks, feels and acts. The consumer identity phenomenon is referred to as the inner versus outer group where people tend to associate themselves with groups they feel they belong; groups that usually share the similar traits and characteristics, and in the fashion market, similar tastes in brands and clothing (Genc 2019).

Additionally, more research has been in motion in regards to what part fashionable brands have on the development of one's character and identity, particularly on brand consumption such as gaining, utilizing and taking ownership of those fashionable brands. In order to understand what consumers, think about fashion brands, this research will explain the formation of identities within the perspective of brand symbolism. Moreover, the research also focuses on an individual's self-identity and the progression of his or her personality upon being subjected to an interaction with their peers.

Little research has been made on the impact of a social environment and social identity of consumers in brand consumption (Grier & Desphande 2001; Maldonado et al. 2003; Hackley et al. 2005). According to the authors, researching the notion of the personality and one's self-idea, nevertheless, one's consumption of social identity allows for more research and still has a long way to go. They stated that the personality of self and the self-idea have been brought to attention to modern researchers. However utilization as a social character reflection calls for additionally examine, despite the fact that showcasing research has recognized the impact of social personalities on customer conduct (Reed & Forehand 2003). In this way, there is a great deal of interest for research to recognize how membership groups define the personality of the self (Maldonado et al. 2003; Grier & Deshpande 2001). The authors concluded that advertisers can appropriately target customers simply by anticipating what consumers are self-categorizing themselves into a specific social group.

Additionally, little is thought about how the consumption symbolism emerges by the interaction of peers amongst themselves (Roedder 1999). Thus, it only makes sense to study the symbolic importance of fashion brands in the construction of consumers' identity and ultimately, to focus on the impact of their social identities as a result.

According to Azevedo et al. (2009) in spite of the fact that consumers express their character through clothes and dressing styles, little research consideration has been given to

fashion brands as most research is centered on the luxury of fashion brands. The authors mentioned that brand consumption can be viewed as a tool in understanding consumers' wants, needs and desires towards obtaining luxury brands. Since consumers' wants, needs and tastes are constantly changing in the 21<sup>st</sup> century of the global market, a more profound comprehension of consumers is required. According to the authors, the social identity concept adds further knowledge in understanding the behaviour of consumers. The authors concluded that by starting to understand this area, a more noteworthy understanding into fashion and the consumption of luxury brands can clearly be seen.

Preceding research has exhibited the connection between brands and consumer identities as way of life as highly crucial (Chaplin & John 2005). Nonetheless, research in this field is still moderately rare and in spite of the rich collection of literature in brand retail management, what fashion brands mean to consumers still remains unclear (Souiden & M'saad 2011). It is vital to comprehend what consumers think and do with brands and to understand how such brands add meaning to their lives (Cova & Pace 2006). As fashion brands have diverse implications to different consumers O'Cass (2004) it is of significance for researchers and marketers alike to see how fashion brands are constructed, preserved and induced in consumers' minds. Auty and Elliott (1998) express that by knowing how different social groups react to specific things can enable advertisers and markets to have more prominent control over the brand image, which is imperative for the survival of any organisation in competition with other global brands. Thus, examining the symbolic importance of brand consumption from a social personality point of view helps in seeing how consumers shape and uphold brand connections and relationships. For example, the industry of fashion clothing influences consumers toward specific sorts of identity projects a territory of interest for researchers studying consumer culture (Mihalcea 2008). According to the author, fashion brands go about as noticeable signs that not just mirror the consumer's character, way of life, and interests, yet

strengthen the consumer's social life and social esteems, and as a result produce positive emotional responses.

The notion that consumers utilize brands in order to express their personalities or identities has driven numerous organisations to shift their brand items from concentrating on practical qualities to concentrating on how they fit into a buyer's personal lifestyle. Marketers welcome this repositioning and believe that by doing this, they are presenting their brands and products as a means by which consumers may self-express him or herself and form his or her own identity. This may offer a company a competitive edge over its competitors. Various researchers claim that when companies personify their brands, they are inducing a greater need for multiple consumer identities, which can create a lot of competition among brands (Mihalcea 2008). This parallel irony is exactly why brand consumption nowadays has evolved into a fierce market and draws loyal consumers through different marketing and psychological techniques. It is important to note that brand expression allows for a consumer to present himself or herself in a way that he or she wants to be seen at in the eyes society. One of the noteworthy promoting changes in the previous decade includes the emotional increment in the assortment of manners by which shoppers can express their personalities and identities. A key driver of this change has been the growth of one-to-one marketing and mass customization, which has not just extended the availability to customary methods for self-articulation (such as one's interests and wearing famous brands), but also presented a diversity of ground-breaking and innovative self-expressions that are continuously evolving in today's 21<sup>st</sup> century.

## **2.10. Review of Studies**

For the purpose of surveying the literature of the impact of expatriation of individual's identity shopping behaviour changes, this section displays the key studies on shopping behaviour, identity, hedonistic shopping, and consumer behaviour. Table 2.1 below, illustrates

a review of the researches in order to contribute to the theoretical construction of expatriates shopping behaviour and identity changes. Please see below the review of identity, shopping behaviour, consumer behaviour, hedonistic shopping and brands and luxury shopping studies.

Reference	Method & Sample	Theoretical underpinning	Key Findings	Originality/Contribution
<b>Identity</b>				
<b>Identity relevant possessions</b> Hawkins, M. & Rome, A. (2019). Identity relevant possessions. <i>Journal of Strategic Marketing</i> , pp.1-21.	Qualitative autobiographical interviews	Identity	Themes identified five main roles possessions play when integrated into identity projects: internal management, impression management, activity facilitation, personal preference satisfaction, and self-communication	This study expands current identity-possession research by tapping into disparate streams of research demonstrating that possessions become identity relevant for a myriad of reasons. While re-affirming the notion that consumers rely on possessions to represent desired values
<b>The Gender Identity Scale: Adapting the Gender Unicorn to Measure Gender Identity</b> Ho, F. & Mussap, A. (2019). The Gender Identity Scale: Adapting the Gender Unicorn to measure gender identity. <i>Psychology of Sexual Orientation and Gender Diversity</i> , 6(2), pp.217-231.	Quantitative	Gender identity	The results of our study highlight the potential of the GIS as a measure of gender identity that allows researchers to collect gender identity information from participants in a manner that is not reliant on labels and that does not mis-gender them.	The authors adapt the Gender Unicorn to create a measure of gender—the Gender Identity Scale (GIS)—in which participants are asked to report their level of identification with each of three genders: female/woman/girl, male/man/boy, and other gender. Researchers can present the diversity and range of gender identities of participants without needing to summarize lists of self-designated labels.
<b>Ethnic identity, consumption of cultural apparel, and self-perceptions of ethnic consumers</b> Diaconu, A. & Gaines, S. (2019). The Ethnic Adornment Survey (EAS): Measuring Individuals' Use of Clothing to Express Ethnic Identity. <i>Identity</i> , 19(3), pp.204-211.	Quantitative Internet survey with a convenience sample of 106 research participants from four ethnic subcultures in the USA	Ethnic identity	Regression analyses revealed that strength of ethnic identification was a significant predictor of cultural apparel consumption and attribution of emotions and meanings to the consumption. Further, consumption of cultural apparel perfectly mediated the influence of strength of ethnic identification on consumers' attributions of emotions, and partially mediated this influence on consumers' attributions of meanings	Prior research on ethnic consumers' motivations in consuming cultural products is limited. This study fills this gap in the literature at a time when large retailers are seeking to attract ethnic consumers through culturally targeted apparel products and brands
<b>Global identity, perceptions of luxury value and consumer purchase intention: a cross-cultural examination</b> Diaconu, A. & Gaines, S. (2019). The Ethnic Adornment Survey (EAS): Measuring Individuals' Use of Clothing to Express Ethnic Identity. <i>Identity</i> , 19(3), pp.204-211.	Quantitative	Global Identity – luxury consumption	The findings add new insights to the changing nature of the luxury market and consumption patterns.	A conceptual model is proposed which demonstrates that, beyond what can be explained by the perceived values of luxury in prior studies, consumers' global identity can affect their intention to purchase luxury products.



Reference	Method & Sample	Theoretical underpinning	Key Findings	Originality/Contribution
<b>The many faces of expatriate identity</b> Adams, B. & van de Vijver, F. (2015). <i>The many faces of expatriate identity. International Journal of Intercultural Relations</i> , 49, pp.322-331.	Qualitative Study	Expatriate Identity	This study sums identity as an individual being similar to or different from other people. It explores the association of acculturation and identity among expatriates and conceptualizes expatriate identity. The study argues that, unlike other immigrant workers, expatriates have more freedom in their adjustment to the subsidiary and host society.	This study suggest that expatriate identity, which is important for psychosocial adjustment and well-being, can take on two forms: a more cosmopolitan perspective, which expatriates develop after much experience in various cultures and a more pragmatic perspective in which expatriates .The study states that organizations should be aware of the degree to which individuals are able to and choose to engage with other cultures as this may provide insight into the impact the length of an international assignment may have on expatriates, which the organization could manage.
<b>Purchasing behaviors of the consumers based on ethnic identities in Turkey</b> Velioglu, M., Karsu, S. & Umut, M. (2013). <i>Purchasing behaviors of the consumers based on ethnic identities in Turkey. Journal of Management and Marketing Research</i> .	Qualitative- Data of this study is collected through two forms: in depth interviews with 11 ethnic groups' male participants and focus group interviews with	Ethnic identity	The results indicated that the economic equality among these ethnic groups was the driving force to live in peace for centuries and that the buying behaviors of these ethnic groups varied. Food and beverage type products were found to be a mean for recognizing other cultures	This research would be helpful for the food sector-oriented development in ethnic marketing practices. In addition, this research may help to identify the required ethnic tourism marketing practices depending on the ethnic groups' cultural values and longing through ancestral lands.
<b>Mapping Ethical Consumer Behavior: Integrating the Empirical Research and Identifying Future Directions</b> Papaoikonomou, E., Ryan, G. & Valverde, M. (2011). <i>Mapping Ethical Consumer Behavior: Integrating the Empirical Research and Identifying Future Directions. Ethics &amp; Behavior</i> , 21(3), pp.197-221.	Empirical research, on ethical consumer behaviour. Review of 80 studies.	Ethical consumer behaviour	These studies provide models that aim to predict ethical consumer behaviors and describe the influencing factors. The review showed that ethical consumer behavior is a highly complex phenomenon characterized by a wide diversity of ethical concerns and actions	The main contributions of the article include the identification of the main trends in the ethical consumer literature and the conceptualization of ethical consumer behavior. By analyzing the empirical research on ethical consumer behavior, this article provides researchers with a map to guide future research
<b>The influence of social and individual variables on ethnic attitudes in Guatemala</b> Ashdown, B., Gibbons, J., Hackathorn, J. & Harvey, R. (2011) <i>Ashdown, B., Gibbons, J., Hackathorn, J. &amp; Harvey, R. (2011). The Influence of Social and Individual Variables on Ethnic Attitudes in Guatemala. Psychology</i> , vol. 02 (02), pp. 78-84.	Quantitative	Ethnic identity	Results of this study imply that many factors affect attitudes toward ethnic groups, such as SDO, gender role attitudes and social desirability. The results of this study have implications for theories of inter-group relations and also for potential interventions to improve ethnic relations in Guatemala.	Ethnic identification significantly predicted ethnic attitudes, as suggested by Social Identity Theory (Tajfel, 1981). Ladinos and people claiming a mixed heritage had fewer positive views toward Indigenous persons, and Indigenous individuals had fewer positive attitudes toward Ladinos.

Reference	Method & Sample	Theoretical underpinning	Key Findings	Originality/Contribution
<b>The impact of international assignments on expatriates' identity and career aspirations: Reflections upon re-entry.</b> <b>Kohonen, E. (2008).</b> <b>Scandinavian Journal of Management, 24, 320–329.</b> <a href="http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.scaman.2008.08.004">http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.scaman.2008.08.004</a>	Qualitative- narrative interviews	Identity and career aspirations	This study proposes three main identity outcomes: identity shifters (expatriates that adjust fast and smoothly to the different social and cultural context) identity balancers (expatriates that illustrated bicultural identities quickly), and identity non-shifters (expatriates that that could not manage to make or did little change to their identities).	The study presents the identity construction of Finnish expatriate managers during their international assignments, and the impact of this on career aspirations and re-entry experiences. It suggests that home companies could be more alert to the identity changes and career aspirations of repatriates.
<b>Family Identity: A Framework of Identity Interplay in Consumption Practices (Epp &amp; Price, 2008)</b> <b>Epp, A. &amp; Price, L. (2008).</b> <b>Family Identity: A Framework of Identity Interplay in Consumption Practices.</b> <b>Journal of Consumer Research, 35(1), pp.50-70.</b>	Not specified	Family identity	This article introduces a framework of family identity enactment that highlights identity interplay.	This article defines enactments as communicative performances, that is, rituals, narratives, everyday practices, and other forms in which families constitute and manage identity. The article proposes numerous research questions and offer applications in the areas of family decision making, consumer socialization, and person-object relations.H14
<b>Relational identity and identification: Defining ourselves through work relationships</b> <b>Sluss, D. &amp; Ashforth, B. (2007).</b> <b>Relational Identity and Identification: Defining Ourselves Through Work Relationships.</b> <b>Academy of Management Review, vol. 32 (1), pp. 9-32.</b>	Qualitative Study	Relational identity and identification	In summary, this study states that relational identification occurs if the valence of the partner's role- and person-based identities is positive, relational dis-identification occurs if the valence is negative, and ambivalent relational identification occurs if the valence is mixed.	The study proposes that a person's social role is legitimized due to particular roles they encompass and must be acknowledged by others. This aspect of expatriate identity possesses both the work and no-work social roles of expatriates.
<b>Social Identity, Self-Categorization, and the Communication of Group Norms</b> <b>Hogg, M. &amp; Reid, S. (2006).</b> <b>Social Identity, Self-Categorization, and the Communication of Group Norms.</b> <b>Communication Theory, 16(1), pp.7-30.</b>	Not specified	Social Identity	This article articulates the role of norms within the social identity perspective as a basis for theorizing a number of manifestly communicative phenomena. It describes how group norms are cognitively represented as context-dependent prototypes that capture the distinctive properties of groups.	This study suggests that social identity approach represents a truly integrative force for the communication discipline.
<b>Ethnic Identity, Socialization Factors, and Culture-Specific Consumption Behavior</b> <b>Xu, J., Shim, S., Lots, S. &amp; Almeida, D. (2004),</b> <b>"Ethnic identity socialization factors, and culture-specific consumption behavior",</b> <b>Psychology &amp; Marketing, Vol. 21 No. 2, pp. 93-112.</b>	A focus-group interview and questionnaire	Ethical identity	The ethnic-friendship orientation was found not only to influence ethnic identity but also to influence directly the group's culture-specific consumption behavior.	Findings indicated that perceived parental cultural identification tended to strengthen the ethnic identity, which in turn influenced Asian American young adults' culture-specific consumption behaviors.

Reference	Method & Sample	Theoretical underpinning	Key Findings	Originality/Contribution
<b>Religious Identity and Consumption</b> (Coşgel & Minkler, 2004) Coşgel, M. & Minkler, L. (2004). <b>Religious Identity and Consumption. Review of Social Economy</b> , 62(3), pp.339-350.	Not specified	Religious Identity	The findings of this study reveal that for an intelligible consumption decision, an individual need to consider not only his own preferences for goods but also the relevant religious norms and the beliefs and perceptions of other individuals.	This study highlights that consumption norms are not the only means for religious expression, and they do more than the expression of religious identity. It suggests that these norms, a variety of other verbal and nonverbal phenomena exist to facilitate expression. To express identity, these norms also assist in such things as commitment, group cohesion and member recruitment.
<b>What Would Jesus Buy: American Consumption of Religious and Spiritual Material Goods</b> PARK, J. & BAKER, J. (2007). <b>Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion</b> , 46(4), pp.501-517.	Quantitative	Religious identity	This article examines part of the sociological study of religion: consumption of religious materials. Findings of this study supports perspectives, which suggests that religious consumption is not a subset of cultural consumption nor of religious practice but is some combination of both.	Drawing on cultural consumption and religious capital research this article explores class, demographic, and religious influences on consumption patterns.
<b>Shopping Behaviour</b>				
<b>SHOPPING BEHAVIOR OF INDONESIAN CUSTOMER IN MODERN RETAIL.</b> Farisa, H., Megawati, S. & Bagus, S. (2019). <b>SHOPPING BEHAVIOR OF INDONESIAN CUSTOMER IN MODERN RETAIL.</b> Russian Journal of Agricultural and Socio-Economic Sciences, 88(4), pp.95-101.	Quantitative, cross-sectional design, questionnaire	Shopping behaviour	The relationship between Internet use/social media tools and shopping behavior was a strong positive relationship, with females spending a larger portion of their income than males on luxury retail shopping.	This study contributes towards understanding the reason behind females' desire for luxury retail shopping and why they overtake males in this aspect.
<b>Investigating the Impact of Social Media on Customer Shopping Behavior</b> (2019). <b>International Journal of Economics and Management</b> , 37(12), pp.26-36.	Quantitative, survey	Shopping behaviour	The findings of this study revealed that social media has both direct and indirect impact on consumers' purchasing behavior via equity branding, and trendiness was shown to the most influential aspect in social media.	This study paves the way for market researchers to understand how trendiness can be an influential factor in targeting consumers, especially millennials, and cater to their needs with optimized marketing strategies.
<b>The Effect of Demographic Factors of Consumers' Online Shopping Behavior in a GCC University.</b> (2019). <b>International Journal of Consumer Behavior</b> , 63(42), pp.20-47. Methora, Elias & Al-Alawi, 2019	Quantitative, survey	Consumers' Online Shopping Behavior	Education has a great influence on consumers' e-shopping, or online buying. While gender was not a great factor in this equation, income certainly was, and those with a higher income tended to devote a larger part of their spending on online shopping.	This research makes a great contribution to the market researchers in Bahrain when it comes to online shopping. Researchers have the necessary data to implement creative marketing strategies in order capture customer value and improve their current offerings in the market.

Reference	Method & Sample	Theoretical underpinning	Key Findings	Originality/Contribution
Emerging Mall Culture and Shopping Behavior of Young Consumers Bawa, R., Sinha, A. & Kant, R. (2019). Emerging Mall Culture and Shopping Behavior of Young Consumers. <i>Advances in Anthropology</i> , 09(03), pp.125-150.	Quantitative, survey	Mall Culture and Shopping Behavior of Young Consumers	This study showed how consumers generally had a positive impression on shopping in retail outlets and malls, especially within the aspects of brand awareness, hedonic factors, variety of products, and lastly aesthetics factors.	This research gives marketers the essential tools in aiding mall retail managers in capitalizing consumers via meeting their wants and needs.
FACTORS AFFECTING ONLINE SHOPPING BEHAVIOR OF INTERNATIONAL COLLEGE STUDENTS IN CHINA. (2018). <i>International Journal of Recent Trends in Engineering and Research</i> , 4(12), pp.18-29.	Quantitative, survey	Shopping behaviour	The results of this research showed that the most significant aspect that affects university students' e-shopping behavior, is variety in product, price, and convenience.	This research suggests that market researchers need implement a more thorough and personalized products online in order to target a wide range of consumers from different ethnic backgrounds, age, gender, and culture.
Consumer Behavior Research: A Literature Review Jagtap, M. & Deshmukh, A. (2018). Consumer Behavior Research: A Literature Review. <i>International Journal of Management Studies</i> , V (4(9), p.147.	The paper is a descriptive study in which secondary data and analysis	Consumer behaviour	The researcher identified the reasons behind the changes noticed in the pattern of buying behavior of consumer	The paper studies the concept of Consumer Behavior and also identified the factors influencing the buying decision of the consumer in two-wheeler industry.
Expatriates go shopping: food and shopping acculturation. Bundy, L. (2017). Expatriates go shopping: food and shopping acculturation. <i>International Journal of Retail and Distribution Management</i> , 45(10), pp.1079-1094.	Qualitative- 70 semi-directive interviews of British expatriates in Toulouse	Food and shopping Acculturation	The marketing channels and store formats respondents' privilege in their food provisioning show discrepancies with French buyers', and the retailers' mix variables they particularly react to are identified, leading to managerial implications.	This study focuses on food consumption and focuses on British expatriates in Toulouse ultimately translates into their shopping behaviours. Overall, both acculturated consumption and shopping practices display fluid behaviours.
Comparing dimensions of national culture for secondary analysis of consumer behaviour data of different countries de Mooij, M. (2017). Comparing dimensions of national culture for secondary analysis of consumer behaviour data of different countries. <i>International Marketing Review</i> , 34(3), pp.444-456.	Online Survey questionnaire - Quantitative	Consumer behaviour	The study highlights the importance of lifestyle and ethnicity and how it impacts on shopping behaviour.	This study suggest that shopping behaviour is a form of consumer behaviour reflecting the steps of the purchasing cycle. It is a method choosing and buying products and services to answer one's needs. Implications are towards retailers, shopping mall developers and operators.
Shopping behaviour and attribute evaluation of expatriates - a cross-cultural study Wijnen, G., Kemperman, A. & Janssen, I. (2010). Shopping behaviour and attribute evaluation of expatriates - a cross-cultural study. <i>Journal of Business Strategies</i> , 29(2).	Online survey- Quantitative	Culture related shopping behaviour	The results, point out how shopping center attributes can be adapted to shopping behaviour related to cultural values. Important attributes are location and accessibility, retail mix, opening hours of stores, atmosphere and covered shopping. incorporating both lifestyle and ethnicity	A cross-cultural study' which primarily is about cultural influences and the focus is on the influence of shopping centre attributes in the Netherlands. The study results reflect a universal lifestyle among expats, while they also emphasize cultural differences. Adjustment of a shopping centre can take place on the level of the shopping centre, store and product assortment and

				demands a marketing strategy
<b>Reference</b>	<b>Method &amp; Sample</b>	<b>Theoretical underpinning</b>	<b>Key Findings</b>	<b>Originality/Contribution</b>
<b>The importance of packaging design for own-label food brands</b> Armstrong et al., 2007 <b>International Journal of Retail &amp; Distribution Management</b> Wells, L., Farley, H. & Armstrong, G. (2007). The importance of packaging design for own-label food brands. <b>International Journal of Retail &amp; Distribution Management</b> , vol. 35 (9), pp. 677-690.	Participant observational study- Qualitative 73 % interview	Food segmentation	Overall, analysis of findings would clearly indicate that there is a strong association regarding the influence of packaging on the purchase decision.	This study proposes that the utilization of consumer purchase motivation and decision-making models can help identify specific customer clusters and that firms must have intensive expertise of the different factors affecting a consumer's purchasing choices.
<b>Hedonistic Shopping Behavior</b>				
<b>Impact of Hedonic Motivation on Consumer Satisfaction Towards Online Shopping: Evidence from Malaysia</b> Anand, Ramachandran, Sambasivan & Batra (2019). <b>Impact of Hedonic Motivation on Consumer Satisfaction Towards Online Shopping: Evidence from Malaysia. E-Service Journal</b> , 11(1), p.56.	Quantitative, survey	Hedonic shopping behaviour	The findings of this research indicate that hedonic motivation is a primary factor that drives consumer satisfaction as well as through the interceding parts of perception and attitude. Thus, this suggests that Malaysian shoppers view online shopping as a fun activity.	The implications of this research contribute to transformational economical strategies and government policies, and through a theoretical perspective, contributes towards a better comprehension of TAM and TPB.
<b>Revealing Youngsters' Impulsive Buying Behavior through Hedonic Shopping Motivations.</b> Bhutto, M., Bhutto, T. & Samo, F. (2019). <b>Revealing Youngsters' Impulsive Buying Behavior through Hedonic Shopping Motivations. European Journal of Business and Management.</b>	Quantitative, questionnaire	Hedonic shopping behaviour	Idea shopping, gratification and adventure seeking have a positive impact on impulsive buying, while role shopping has a negative impact. Moreover, both value shopping and social shopping were found to be insignificant when it comes to impulsive shopping.	This research makes a contribution to impulsive buying by examining the hedonistic shopping behaviour of young Chinese buyers, which up to today, has been missing from modern literature.

<p><b>Hedonic and Utilitarian Aspect of Traditional Retail Shopping</b> Atahan Yilmaz, M. &amp; Koçoğlu, D. (2018). Hedonic and Utilitarian Aspect of Traditional Retail Shopping, European Scientific Journal.</p>	Quantitative, survey	Hedonic shopping	<p>The results of this research revealed that there was no major difference between male and female consumers in traditional retail shopping when it comes to a utilitarian aspect, however, there was a significant difference in the hedonism aspect. Female shoppers are more hedonic than male shoppers.</p>	<p>In order to come up with effective marketing strategies, marketing professionals should examine the products which consumers display utilitarian or hedonic behaviour and take into consideration demographic factors.</p>
<b>Reference</b>	<b>Method &amp; Sample</b>	<b>Theoretical underpinning</b>	<b>Key Findings</b>	<b>Originality/Contribution</b>
<p><b>THE INFLUENCE OF HEDONIC SHOPPING MOTIVATION TO THE IMPULSE BUYING OF ONLINE-SHOPPING CONSUMER ON INSTAGRAM.</b> Asnawati &amp; Wahyuni, S. (2018). THE INFLUENCE OF HEDONIC SHOPPING MOTIVATION TO THE IMPULSE BUYING OF ONLINE-SHOPPING CONSUMER ON INSTAGRAM. Russian Journal of Agricultural and Socio-Economic Sciences, 74(2), pp.99-107.</p>	Quantitative, explanatory research	Hedonic shopping behaviour	<p>Relaxation, Value, Adventure, Idea, and Social Shopping all impacted impulse buying on Instagram shopping for Indonesian consumers significantly, with Idea shopping being the dominant variable.</p>	<p>This research contributes towards a thorough understanding of Indonesian consumers' shopping behaviour on Instagram.</p>
<p><b>Hedonic shopping motivations and compulsive buying in developed and emerging markets.</b> Horváth, C. &amp; Adıgüzel, F. (2018). Shopping enjoyment to the extreme: Hedonic shopping motivations and compulsive buying in developed and emerging markets. Journal of Business Research, 86, pp.300-310.</p>	Quantitative, questionnaire	Hedonic shopping	<p>The results of this study suggest that the motivations behind hedonic shopping are greatly correlated to compulsive purchasing.</p>	<p>Results of this study indicate that hedonic shopping motivations are significantly related to compulsive buying. It suggests that different hedonic motivations appear to contribute to the development of compulsive buying in emerging and developed countries. In developed markets gratification seeking, idea shopping, and role play were found to be the key hedonic motivations contributing to compulsive buying.</p>

<b>Shopping Tourist Satisfaction: An Application of Hedonic and Utilitarian Values. Choi, M. (2017). Shopping Tourist Satisfaction: An Application of Hedonic and Utilitarian Values. Journal of Tourism &amp; Hospitality, 06(05).</b>	Quantitative, survey	Hedonic shopping behaviour	The findings of this research state how hedonic and utilitarian shopping behavior depict positive impacts on customer satisfaction, search for information, and perceived benefits.	The contribution of this study is that it grants researchers the ability to examine the relationship of a product type and its consequent shopping value.
<b>Hedonic shopping motivations Arnold, M. J. &amp; Reynolds, K. E. (2003). Hedonic shopping motivations. Journal of Retailing, 79, 77-95.</b>	Empirical Study	Hedonistic Shopping Motivators	The study points on the perceived factors affecting customer satisfaction to re-purchase intention in e-stores. The satisfaction toward the online stores channel environment depends on the customer's perception and also online consumer experiences of the active online shopping stores.	The study suggests motivational angles can be depicted as socializing, getting an idea, seeking pleasure and exchanging different values. The findings of this study supports e-store's managers/ owners to understand customer's perceptions in online shopping stores and their satisfaction.
<b>Reference</b>	<b>Method &amp; Sample</b>	<b>Theoretical underpinning</b>	<b>Key Findings</b>	<b>Originality/Contribution</b>
<b>Consumption of luxury products and brands</b>				
<b>Luxury Shopping as a New Opportunity for Tourism Market Genç, R. (2019). Luxury Shopping as a New Opportunity for Tourism Market Development. Journal of Tourism and Hospitality Education, 9, pp.1-8.</b>	Qualitative	Luxury Shopping	The motivations of consumers for luxury product consumption are bounded to numerous, interrelated factors	The study concludes that the development of luxury shopping tourism in a particular destination can be facilitated through the contributions of governmental bodies to lure international brands to the region with arrangements such as tax reductions, as well as local stakeholders to improve the conditions for luxury shopping tourism infrastructure including accommodation facilities, means of transportation, shopping malls, as well as development of new high quality
<b>Personal value vs. luxury value: What are Chinese luxury consumers shopping for when buying luxury fashion goods? Zhang, L. and Zhao, H. (2019). Personal value vs. luxury value: What are Chinese luxury consumers shopping for when buying luxury fashion goods? Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services, 51, pp.62-71.</b>	Quantitative, survey	Luxury shopping	The results of this research claim that three aspects of luxury value (functional, experiential, and symbolic) have a huge impact on Chinese consumers' purchasing intentions, however, different groups of such consumers tend to shop for different aspects of luxury value.	Marketers are better able to understand the Chinese market and what consumers look for when purchasing luxury products.

Perceived values, price fairness, and behavioral intentions toward luxury fashion brands- A comparison of luxury, luxury-bargain, and non-luxury consumers. Lim, C. (2019). Perceived values, price fairness, and behavioral intentions toward luxury fashion brands- A comparison of luxury, luxury-bargain, and non-luxury consumers -. The Research Journal of the Costume Culture, 27(1), pp.20-32.	Quantitative, surveys	Luxury consumption	The findings of this study suggest that consumers who bargain with luxury products are quite distinctive from those who do not. Luxury-based consumers showed higher brand values and loyalty and were quite satisfied purchasing brands at their full price, whereas non-luxury consumers or luxury-bargain consumers, had the opposite reaction since price was a huge factor for them.	It is important to understand the different types of consumers (social class, rich, poor, etc.) in order to better understand their behavior and purchasing intentions, and thus, be able to propose a better marketing strategy catered to different groups or levels of consumers.
Mapping the luxury purchase intentions of the counterfeit luxury buyers. Sondhi, N. (2019). Mapping the luxury purchase intentions of the counterfeit luxury buyers. International Journal of Management Practice, 12(4), p.476.	Quantitative, exploratory factor analysis	Luxury consumption	The results of this study displayed that consumers who are impulsive counterfeiters and those who were affective had a greater proportion of income than those who were not.	It is important for companies to understand what attributes constitute a luxury brand or product, and what aspects are easy to replicate as counterfeit products in order to prevent illegal copies of their brands which can affect their sales and profit.
<b>Reference</b>	<b>Method &amp; Sample</b>	<b>Theoretical underpinning</b>	<b>Key Findings</b>	<b>Originality/Contribution</b>
Examining the impact of luxury brand's social media marketing on customer engagement: Using big data analytics and natural language processing. Liu, X., Shin, H. & Burns, A. (2019). Examining the impact of luxury brand's social media marketing on customer engagement: Using big data analytics and natural language processing. Journal of Business Research.	Quantitative, Likert Scale	Luxury brand- social media marketing	Findings of this research showed that focusing on interaction, trendiness, and entertainment greatly increased customer engagement, whereas focusing on customized aspects did not. The results indicate that the findings have important implications for the design, delivery, and management of social media marketing for luxury brands to engage customers with social media content.	The results of this research has important implications for the design, management, and delivery of luxury products through social media, and what are the ways brand owners can implement in order to interact with their customers online.
Common and Contradictory Motivations in Buying Intentions for Green and Luxury Automobiles. Aliyev, F., Wagner, R. & Seuring, S. (2019). Common and Contradictory Motivations in Buying Intentions for Green and Luxury Automobiles. Sustainability, 11(12), p.3268.	Quantitative, survey	Luxury shopping	The findings of this study showed that conspicuousness had no great impact on consumers' green auto purchase intentions, and that the value of price has little impact than purchasing luxury automobiles. Moreover, hedonism was seen as having a less effect on consumers' auto green purchase intentions in regard to purchasing luxury automobiles.	This study raises awareness of the environment and sustainability, and how important it is to design a green automobile that is not only environmentally friendly, but also luxurious, but will attract consumers who favor luxury brands as well.



<b>Luxury product to service brand extension and brand equity transfer. Ahn, J., Park, J. &amp; Hyun H. (2018). Luxury product to service brand extension and brand equity transfer. Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services, 42, pp.22-28.</b>	Quantitative, survey	Brands	There are several things that impact extended brands and their respective parent brands negatively. Moreover, this research examined the responsibility of equity branding in today's market, and how luxury brands were used to help enrich this process. Furthermore, a comparison was made between purchasing intentions among various groups of consumers.	Marketers can use this research to their advantage and find out how luxury branding is impacting consumers' purchasing decisions and which types of groups respond the best to such products, and thus, be able to offer sound marketing strategies catered specifically to them.
<b>Toward a 'masstige' theory and strategy for marketing. Paul, J. (2018). Toward a 'masstige' theory and strategy for marketing. European Journal of International Management, 12(5/6), 722-745.</b>	The study is based on the survey data of owners of Japanese and American car brands	Marketing	This study states that brands can create higher mass prestige value in a foreign country if they follow masstige marketing strategy. The study shows how MMI may facilitate masstige score estimates, allowing comparisons and aiding brands in devising strategies.	This study contributes towards the development of the masstige marketing theory to explain the brand management phenomenon of high value/premium/moderately highly priced brands with a new theoretical model
<b>Reference</b>	<b>Method &amp; Sample</b>	<b>Theoretical underpinning</b>	<b>Key Findings</b>	<b>Originality/Contribution</b>
<b>The brand likeability scale- An exploratory study of likeability in firm-level brands. Bang Nguyen, Yuksel Ekinci, Lyndon Simkin, T.C. Melewar (2015)</b>	In-depth interviews, a literature review of likeability, and survey tests.	Brands	This study presents theoretical implications and future research directions on the holistic brand likeability concept.	This study highlights the requirement for organizations to act more likeably in an interaction-dominated economy. This study provides brand managers with a metric so that likeability can be managed strategically. It supports likeable brand personality traits.

*Table 2.1, Review of identity, shopping behaviour, consumer behaviour, hedonistic shopping and brands and luxury shopping studies.*

As illustrated above in Table 2.1, despite a reasonable number of studies that were conducted in the area of consumer behavior, luxury shopping, brands, acculturation, various types of identities, hedonistic shopping behaviour, studies conducted so far have been very limited and lack focus on the shopping behaviour of expatriates in the identity perspective.

These studies shed light on a variety of identity and shopping behaviour themes such as: luxury consumption, hedonistic shopping and several aspects of consumer behaviour. Yet much less is known about the changes of expatriate identity and shopping behaviour changes. Studies of Hawkins and Rome (2019) expands current identity-possession research by tapping into disparate streams of research demonstrating that possessions become identity relevant for a myriad of reasons. The study of Diaconu and Gaines (2019) fills the gap in the literature at a time when large retailers are seeking to attract ethnic consumers through culturally targeted apparel products and brands. While re-affirming the notion that consumers rely on possessions to represent desired values Aaker et al. (1997), Cova and Pace (2006), Azevedo et al. (2009), Albert, Merunka and Valette-Florence (2013) and Jankus (2016), focus on consumption of brands and luxury products and brands of individuals. Furthermore, studies by Babin et al. (1994), Hopkinson and Pujari (1999), Babacan (2001), Arnolds and Reynolds (2003), focus on Hedonistic Shopping Behavior. Researchers conducted by Kannuk and Schiffman (2007), Armstrong et al. (2007), Wijnen, Kemperman and Janssen (2010), de Mooij 2017, Bundy (2017) relate their work to general shopping behaviour, acculturation, food segmentation and consumer behaviour. Moreover, studies of Cantor et al. (1986), Brewer (2003), Bailey (2003), Harvey and Novicevic (2006), Sluss and Ashforth (2007), Kohonen (2008), Näsholm (2011), Bostrom and Sandberg (2011), (2014), Adams and van de Vijver (2015) present the various dimensions of individual identity. However, currently existing studies, reviewed so far indicate the information required to identify the influences of expatriation on individual identities and shopping behaviour is very limited. As a rapidly expanding consumer segment, the expatriate community globally need further focus and analysis in their consumption need in both products and services provide. Hence, this study further explores, investigates and presents the factors impacting on individuals' identities and shopping behaviours abroad.

## 2.11. Summary

According to the Finaccord reports, the worldwide expatriate population has stretched to 66.2 million in 2017. Finaccord forecasts that this number will increase to 87.5 million by 2021 (Finaccord.com 2018). Research shows that while some expatriates move abroad to boost their income levels, some others target for career prospect, some crave to explore the world, others hunt for new experience and long for an adventure and challenge (Selmer et al. 2015). Globally, the annual gross earnings of expatriates are on average just below USD 100,000 and their income increases around 25% after moving abroad (Expatexplorer.hsbc.com 2018). In fact, more than one in ten expatriates mention that their income has doubled after they moved out of their home countries. Across the globe financial boost means expatriates are safe, assured and optimistic about their financial matters (Selmer et al. 2015).

The Expat Explorer survey conducted online in 2018, shows that the UAE has far more expatriates than the worldwide average (87% of the nation's population). Financial rewards in UAE can be extraordinarily important for a new way of life. Working expatriates in UAE mention an uplift of 40% in their earnings compared to 25% of expatriates worldwide. While over a fifth of expatriates in UAE mention their salary has doubled, 39% say their income has increased incredibly. Even though life in the UAE is costly, more than half of expatriates mention that they have more disposable money than they had back home, they are able to focus on the future investments like property, safety during old age and their children's education. Nearly two thirds of expatriates have resided in the UAE for over five years.

Moreover, in comparison to the GCC and the Western world, the UAE consumers display the highest rates in purchasing on luxury products compared to any other consumers around the world ("Global Powers of Luxury Goods 2018" 2018). In general, consumers of UAE due to the advantage of high incomes and purchasing abilities also are able to follow advertisements closely when compared to the European or American buyers (Don 2002).

Confirming that the number of expatriates and immigrants in the UAE has been estimated as 88.52% and the remaining 11.48% is mentioned to be the nationals (Official GMI Blog 2018). Surprisingly, actual marketing studies examining shopping behaviour of expatriates in the UAE are very limited. To date, studies on expatriates have analysed several aspects of expatriates in the UAE. However, in terms of identity and shopping behaviour changes it still needs great attention. Al Alriss (2014) studied expatriation in the Arab Gulf and raised the experiences of local managers that work with expatriate managers. Bealer and Bhanugopan (2014) compared the leadership behaviour of expatriate and local managers. Another study conducted in 2016 by Mazrouei and Pech, examined the cultural adoption of expatriate leaders. For the author's knowledge, researches conducted investigating the shopping behaviour of expatriates in the UAE, are noticeably narrow. Therefore, shopping behaviour of expatriates in the UAE needs great attention and detailed analysis.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

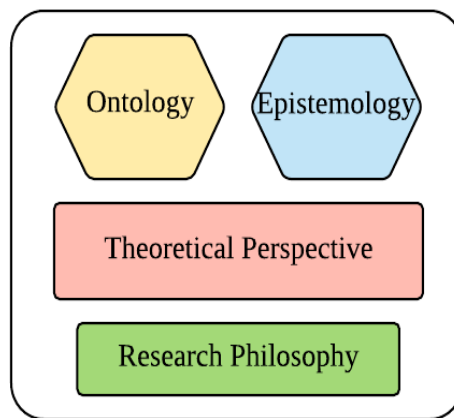
#### **3.1. Introduction**

This chapter presents the selected research approaches and methodology implemented to this research on the influences of expatriation on expatriate shopping behaviour. It includes the research philosophy, research logic, methodology, strategies and approaches. Following various approaches, an overall study flow is presented, that aims to guide the reader through the processes implemented in this thesis. The chapter also highlights the methods used during the various parts of the interview procedures in detail. Finally, the evaluation criteria along with the ethical considerations of this research are addressed in the last sections of this chapter.

The methodology of a research is crucial, as it structures the study and guides the author throughout the whole process. This chapter will further point on the methods and procedures followed in this research. The data collection, data organization, analysis and synthesizing procedures are discussed and demonstrated in detail.

#### **3.2. Research Philosophy**

The philosophy is an underpinning of the entire project design and all other steps, it reflects the author's view in general (Amaratunga et al. 2002). Below Figure 3.1 demonstrates that the research philosophy exists of the theoretical perspective, which is linked to the ontology and epistemology (Crotty 1998).



*Figure 3.1 Content of research philosophy, source: (Crotty 1998)*

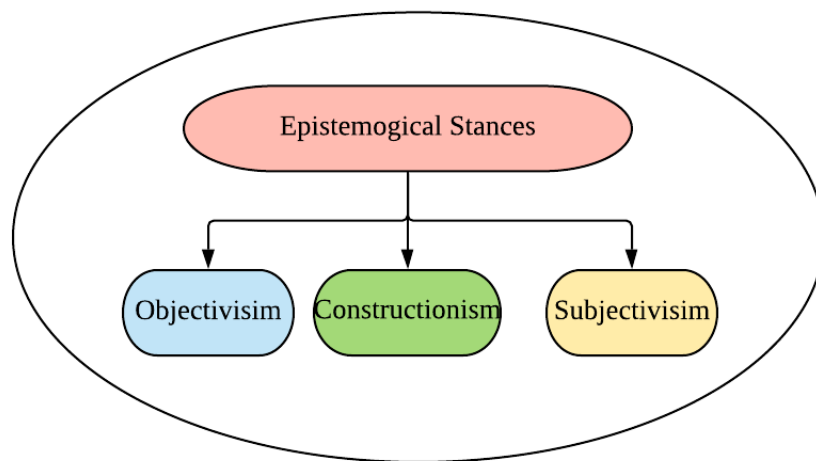
### **3.2.1. Ontology**

Ontology as stated by Krauss (2005, p. 758 ) reflects the ‘philosophy of reality’ where “...claims and assumptions that are made about the nature of social reality, claims about what exists, what it looks like, what units make it up and how these units interact with each other”. Thus, ontological assumptions are concerned with what we believe constitutes social reality (Blaikie 2000). According to Sanders et al. (2012) point on the aspects of *objectivism* and *subjectivism* and state that both can be implemented in business and management studies.

### **3.2.2. Epistemology**

Epistemology is defined by Blaikie (2000) as the possible ways of gaining knowledge of social reality, whatever it is understood to be. In short, claims about how what is assumed to exist can be known. Hence, epistemology can be defined as the comprehension of how we know what we know, whereas ontology refers to the way we define things and the interaction that consists between those things.

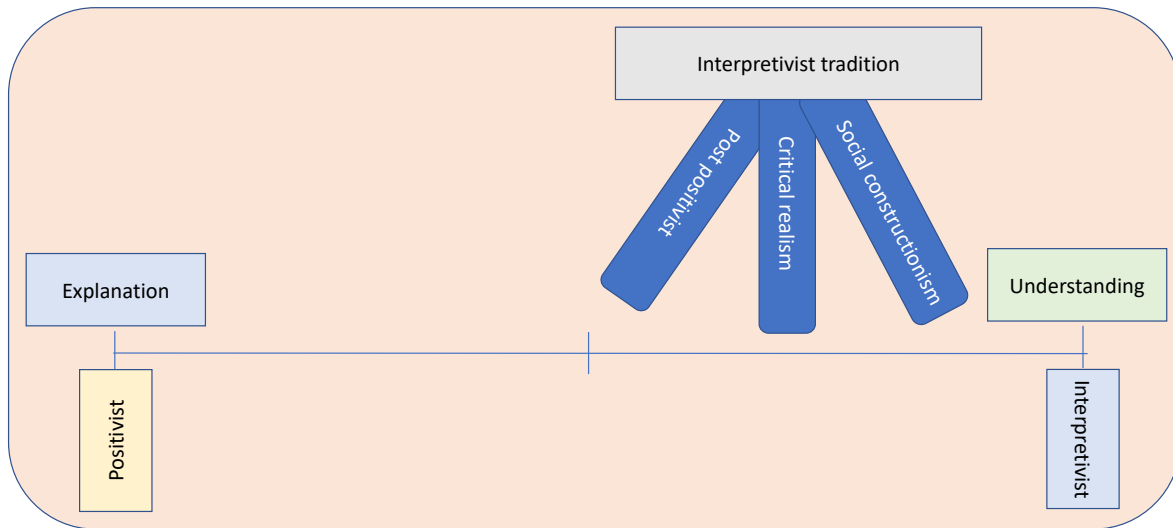
The epistemological assumption within a qualitative approach, allows the researcher to get as close her participants as possible. Hence, data and subjective evidence is gathered though the actual views of the participants. The more the researcher will get to know the participants the more they ‘know what they know’ and therefore get the initial and direct information (Creswell & Poth 2018). Two conflicting dimensions of epistemology are known as objectivism and constructionism (Crotty 1998).



*Figure 3.2 Epistemological stances, source: (Crotty 1998)*

### 3.3. Theoretical Perspectives

Theoretical perspectives are presumptions overlooking the study approach. Therefore, these presumptions are crucial to the methods of the study (Crotty 1998). Easterby-Smith et al. (2012) focus on two opposing theoretical perspectives: **Positivism**, which states that the social world is external and should be measured using objective methods and **social constructivism** which implies that the social world depends on the individuals and should not be measured as objective and externally. In qualitative analysis, theoretical perspectives can be summed under the interpretivist approach (Schwant 2001). Please see below Figure 3.3.



*Figure 3.3 The continuum of theoretical perspectives, source: Grix (2010) and Schwandt (2001)*

In **interpretivism** people search for the comprehension of the environment that they are involved in. Individuals construct subjective meanings of their various experiences, which allows the author analyse the complication of the various opinions rather than disclosing the meaning into a narrow circle of categories (Creswell & Poth 2018). Therefore, this research depended on the expatriates' (participants') views about their shopping behaviours before (in their home country) and after moving abroad. Rather than being based on a specific theory (as pursued in positivism) the author constructed and inductively developed a theory an assembly of meanings. Interpretivism proposes that there may be various facts of phenomena, and that they may change between time and environment. The interpretivist approach initially focuses on understanding the context that will afterwards be followed by an interpretation, which is framed by experience (Gellatly 2012). Hence, this thesis followed a constructionist – interpretivist approach which enabled the researcher comprehend the subjective reality of the



participants. This supported the author make sense of and understand the expatriates' possible changes of their identity and shopping behaviour during expatriation in a purposeful way.

Furthermore, **social constructionism** points on how the meaning is developed (Crotty 1998). It is a theory of knowledge and can be described as an aspect that points on the human life that exists through social and interpersonal effects (Galbin 2014). Constructionism aims to focus on analysing the social effects on collective and individual life. According to the author two main aspects of social constructionism relate to refusal of assumptions about the nature of mind, and point on the complicatedness and irrelevance of the various aspects of individuals within their social environments. Social constructionism is not only about analysis of 'personality' or 'attitudes' rather it focuses on understanding of all aspects of social and psychological life (ibid).

Moreover, **realism** that has two dimensions named has **direct realism** and **critical realism** is another theoretical perspective (Saunders et al. 2010). Critical realism according to Saunders et al. specifically states social conditions could be understood by collecting data and (2010). **Postmodernism**, as another theoretical perspective that points on the contradiction of any objective view provided by positivism (Denzin & Lincoln 2003). Please see below Figure 3.4 for the demonstration for the combination of philosophical assumptions.

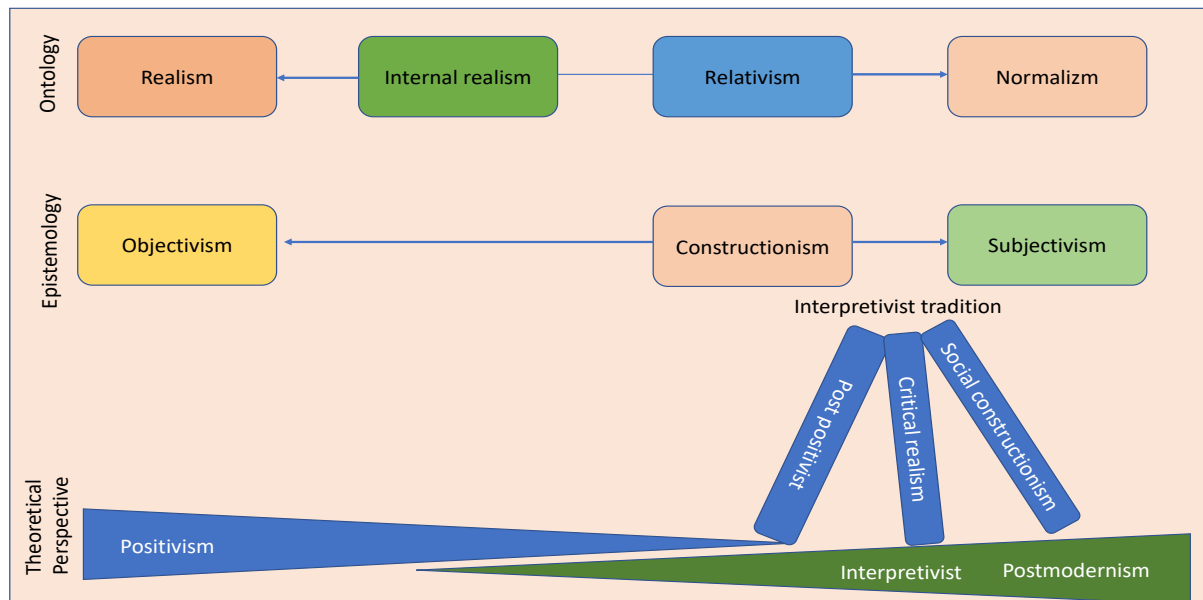


Figure 3.4 Combined philosophical assumptions, source: Easterby-Smith et al. (2012), Grix (2010) and Johnson and Duberley (2003)

Furthermore, the constructivist or interpretivist approach assumes that ‘features of the social environment are constructed as interpretations by individuals and that these interpretations tend to be transitory and situational’ (Gall et al. 1999). Below Table 3.1 and Table 3.2 inspired by Saunders et al. (2015) illustrates a comparison of the key aspects between positivism and constructivism (also called as social constructivism, phenomenology or interpretivism).

	Positivism	Social Constructivism
The observer	Has to be independent – autonomous	Linked to the observation carried out
Human interests	Has to be insignificant	Key aspects of science
Explanations	Has to illustrate causality	Should target to enhance overall understanding of the situation
Research progress through	Hypothesis and deductions	Collection of large data from that involves ideas
Concepts	Definition required to ensure measurement	Must include stakeholder aspects
Units of analysis	Simplified terms required	Complexity of ‘whole’ situations may be involved
Generalization	Via statistical probability	Theoretical abstraction
Sampling	Large numbers are required and should be selected randomly	Less number of situations applied for particular reasons

*Table 3.1 Contrasting implications of positivism and social constructivism, source: (Easterby-Smith et al. 2012)*

Positivism	Interpretivism (phenomenology)
Large samples are implemented	Small samples are implemented
An artificial venue is involved	A natural venue is involved
Is considers testing the hypothesis	Considers generating theories
Data is accurately and objectively developed-quantitative	Data is ‘rich’ subjective -qualitative
Results provided show high reliability - low validity	Results demonstrate low reliability - high validity
Findings can be generalised from the sample to the population	Results can be be generalised from one environment to another (similar) environment

*Table 3.2 Key aspects of positivism and interpretivism, source: (Saunders et al. 2015)*

After reviewing various aspects of theoretical perspectives and considering the research aims and objectives, the researcher decided to follow the constructivist and interpretivist views.

However, it is not possible to consider only one single philosophical position to be able to reach the optimum outcome of this research. Hence, this research is positioned with the *interpretivist* view and combined with the epistemological stance of *constructionism* and ontological school of *relativism*. Deciding on the theoretical aspects supports the research approach. As a result, this study is placed under the umbrella of *social constructionism* and *critical realism*. Please see below Figure 3.5.

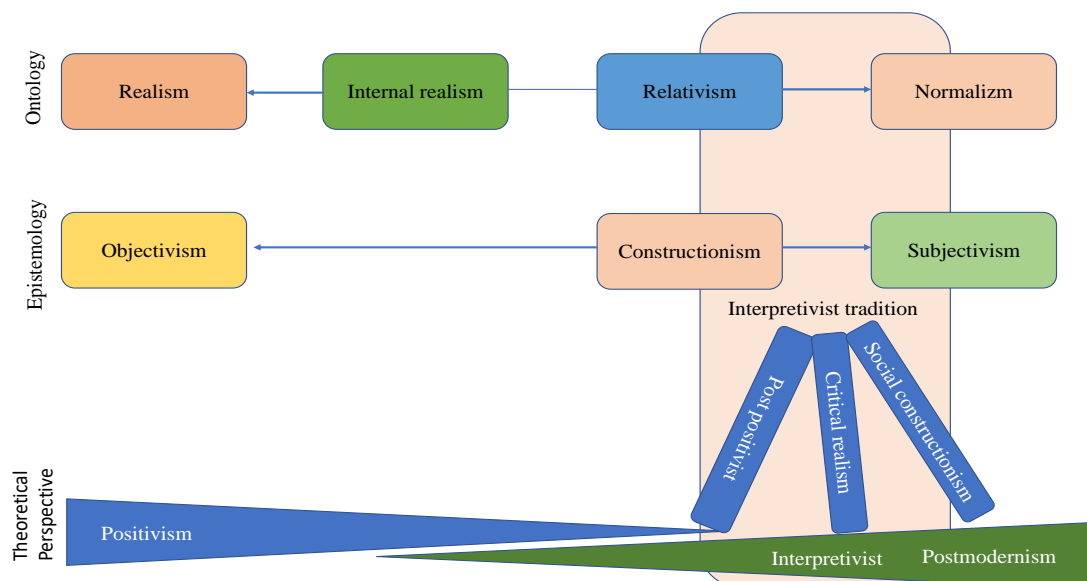


Figure 3.5 The philosophy of this research

The author took the role to understand the subjective reality of the selected participants to be able to comprehend their purposes, goals and actions in a meaningful way. The constructivist approach enabled the author understand the participants' social interactions within their environment and within themselves. This approach helped her to identify the impacts, that expatriation may have on individuals' identity and shopping behaviour changes. To get the most accurate data and to know the participants better, the researcher of this study tried to develop an individual relationship with all participants. The questions of this research

were developed broadly and were general to allow the expatriates develop the meaning of their environment that took place by their discussions or interaction with others. Open-ended questions were developed and implemented to the interviews. These questions helped the author to genuinely understand the stories and experiences of the participants' expatriation period, shared during the interviews. Finally, the author of this thesis was optimally careful not to have any influence on this research subject.

### **3.3.1. Axiology**

As defined by Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2015) axiology is an aspect of philosophy that focuses on judgements about value. An author's beliefs or feelings show his/her values. Social scientists should be freed of their values while conducting a research (Bryman 2012). A research should be completely out of personal biases of the authors. Otherwise it would not be considered as scientific due to the fact that it would be reflecting the opinions of the researchers. While researching bias and the interference of values may reveal at any time (Bryman & Bell 2015). The authors state that it is usual, for qualitative researchers during interviewing, to mingle with the participants to the level that they can't easily disconnect their stance as researchers from their participants' opinion.

Hence, the author of this thesis was optimally careful not to have any influence on this research subject. She was dedicated to analyse the changes of identities and shopping behaviours of expatriates. The author has decided to investigate the expatriate shopping behaviour after various observations among colleagues and friends. The observations were reflecting changes in identities and consequently in shopping behaviours of expatriate individuals. This gave the inspiration to the author to investigate and analyse further to understand if this phenomenon can be generalized. The researcher of this thesis kept herself as neutral as possible, was freed of assumptions and surely avoided leaching the participants during interviews.

### **3.4. Research Approaches**

The approach of a research is crucial as the selected approach and implemented approach will define the entire research process illustrate it in a professional picture (Creswell 2013). The research approach leads the study, which makes it crucial to choose an approach that supports the researcher to answer the research question completely and reach the study objectives (Saunders 2007). The following presents various approaches that are frequently used.

#### **3.4.1. Phenomenology**

This approach, describes and understands the meaning of human experience as shared by the study participants (Amaratunga et al. 2002, Creswell 2009). Phenomenology refers to social phenomena as socially developed, and is particularly linked with generating meanings and understandings into those phenomena (Saunders et al. 2007). In general, this approach is implemented in qualitative studies (Amaratunga et al. 2002, Creswell 2013). Phenomenology targets to define, completely understand and explain a common or common experience of various participants related to a phenomenon (Easterby-Smith et al. 1991, Creswell 2013). This approach is appropriate for researches that aim to develop practices, policies and detailed understanding of a phenomenon gathering experiences individuals participating in the study (Creswell 2013).

#### **3.4.2. Qualitative research method**

Qualitative research refers to ‘all forms of social inquiry’ which rely on qualitative-nonnumeric data and in general it focuses to understand the *meaning* of human *action* (Schwandt 2001). According to Schwandt (1999) the aim of qualitative analysis is to comprehend what others do and say. Qualitative analysis targets on examining and

understanding the meaning of humans, as a group or individually according to the phenomenon being studied (Creswell 2009). Hence, qualitative methods support researchers with new discoveries and understanding.

Furthermore, concentrating on individuals in their social environments and develop and understanding of the phenomenon studied within this world makes qualitative research a naturalistic inquiry (Snape & Spencer 2003, Saunders et al. 2012). Therefore, qualitative researchers are interested in the socially developed nature of reality, the intimate interaction between the researcher and what is studied, and the situational constraints that structure the research (Denzin & Lincoln 1998).

Snape and Spencer (2003) demonstrate various characteristics of qualitative research that clearly differentiate it from quantitative research:

- Aims which are directed at providing an in-depth and interpreted understanding of the social world of research participants by learning about their social and material circumstances, their experiences, perspectives and histories;
- samples that are small in scale and purposively selected on the basis of salient criteria;
- data collection methods which usually involve close contact between the researcher and the research participants, which are interactive and developmental and allow for emergent issues to be explored;
- data which are very detailed, information rich and extensive;
- analysis which is open to emergent concepts and ideas and which may produce detailed description and classification, identify patterns of association, or develop typologies and explanations; and
- outputs which tend to focus on the interpretation of social meaning through mapping and re-presenting the social world of research participants.

In general, qualitative research is linked to the inductive approach through developing a strong theoretical definition of the meaning of (gathered and analyzed) data, hence, starting from the specific and moving to the whole (Creswell 2009, Saunders et al. 2012).

Finally, qualitative analysis of data was listed by Creswell in five key steps: (1) storing and organizing the data, (2) running a pre-read-through and memoing, (3) classifying and defining data into codes and themes, (4) analyzing the data (5) illustrating the data in (2013).

According to Silverman 2010 qualitative approach has also disadvantages. This method may ignore the contextual details, and rather go in details of the meanings and experiences (Silverman 2010). Qualitative research is not statistically representative. Compared to quantitative methods data in qualitative approach is harder to analyse and illustrate. The gathered data in general consists of few individuals or cases. Hence, conclusions will not be applied to greater populations. However, qualitative research approach focuses on the participants' feelings, opinions, and experiences in a deeper level; and analyses the meanings of their behaviour (Mohajan 2018).

The researcher of this thesis followed the qualitative methods that establish the stories of participants with their life experiences, cultures and their historical contexts as stated by (Creswell & Poth 2018). The relationship between the participant and the researcher was considered as one of the crucial factors in this research. The researcher developed a friendly and warm environment for the participant to actually share their experiences truthfully and comfortably. Also, the participants were ensured that all information shared will be kept confidential. In qualitative methods one main factor has been the relationship between the researcher and the individual being interviewed where mutually the participant and the researcher will learn (Creswell & Poth 2018). In the contrary based on its nature, using quantitative methods would not allow the researcher develop a relationship with the



participants and would not be able to discuss points that might be critical for the study. Therefore, quantitative methods were not relevant for this study and were not preferred.

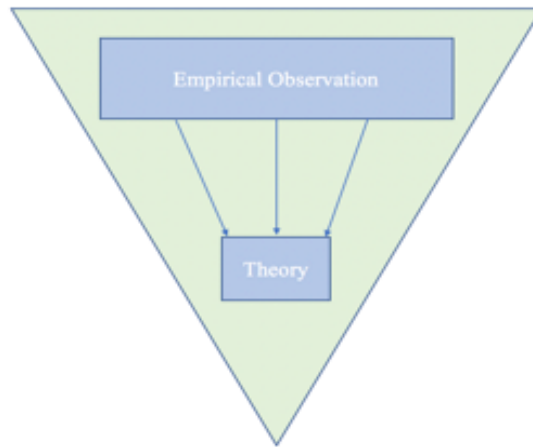
Furthermore, as stated by Creswell (2000) during the data collection procedure both sides will be discussing the stories, confirming the examination (Creswell & Poth 2018). Therefore, the researcher of this study developed and maintained a relationship with each participant that enabled her to analyse the gathered data. Finally, the spoken and/or written given information of the events action or series of events and actions by the selected participants were chronologically connected and recorded.

Following a qualitative approach helped the researcher to collect and interpret data in a personalised dimension. The researcher was able to gain understanding of the participants' opinions, attitudes, and feelings. It gave the researcher the flexibility to collect unexpected data during research and analyse effectively (Mohajan 2018). Topics were analysed in depth and in detail which is why this method was applicable perfectly for this thesis. The researcher focused on a new topic and had the opportunity to explore the feelings and behavioural patterns of expatriates within the shopping aspect.

A quantitative method was not chosen for this study as it would not have allowed the researcher to have a rapport with the participants and get further details that may only appear during a conversation held in a warm and friendly environment.

### **3.4.3. Induction**

Inductive logic, in contrast with deductive, initiates with the empirical observation (the data) and leads to a theory, as demonstrated in Figure 3.6. Inductive analysis begins with the data collection and follows by analysing the gathered data to highlight the emerging themes or challenges that will be focused on (Strauss & Corbin 2008). Deductive research is 'top down' and inductive research is structured as 'bottom-up' (Creswell & Plano Clark 2011).



*Figure 3.6 Inductive Approach - The logic of this research*

As reviewed in the literature Chapter (2) of this research, currently existing scholars on impacts of expatriation on individual identity and shopping behaviour changes are limited. This study did not follow a deductive approach due to the fact that it is based on a strict methodology which would not allow the researcher various options in explaining what is actually happening. With its scientific nature, in deductive approach the construction of a theory therefore is based on an accurate test. Neither the deductive nor the abductive approach would be suitable for this study. The phenomenon in this research, does not start with a certain theory. Hence, it was not suitable to follow a deductive approach. The abductive approach on the other hand, depends on the literature in various topics. It generalises from the moving back and forth between the particular to the whole. As the phenomenon studied was a new topic, the author of this research decided that the best fitting approach to follow, was the inductive approach. Hence, this research followed an inductive logic, because it allows the researcher to generalise from particular to the whole.

Following an inductive approach helped to understand expatriates' experiences during expatriation and how this influenced their shopping behaviour. Data of this study was collected through semi-structured interviews by allowing the participants sharing their stories with their

own wordings. Inductive approach was followed to get a feeling of the happenings and gain a deeply understand the nature of the issue/events. In other words, the researcher tried to understand why and how changes are happening in the expatriates' shopping behaviour rather than constructing a description of what is happening.

### **3.5. Overall Research Approach**

As highlighted in the literature review chapter, there is a gap on the changes in identity and shopping behaviour changes of individuals during expatriation. Therefore, following a deductive logic will not be relevant for this research. In the contrary, an inductive logic will be more beneficial to follow as it supports research topics which are very limited or completely new in the literature (Saunders et al. 2012). Hence, to follow a phenomenology approach most suitable as qualitative exploratory approach with an inductive logic to enable the researcher deeply understand the changes of individual identities and shopping behaviour and develop a framework for influences of expatriation.

This research aims to explore and understand the impacts of expatriation on individual's identity and shopping behaviour changes through the shared experiences of participants. Hence, participants will be attaching a meaning the phenomenon studied; and qualitative research is exactly supporting this type of studies (Snape & Spencer 2003, Saunders et al. 2012). Considering the main objective of this study, it is crucial to develop an in-depth understanding of the impacts of expatriation on individual identity and shopping behaviour changes which is supported by the qualitative analysis.

Framework of this research:

- Ontology: Relativistic
- Epistemology: Constructionism
- Theoretical perspective: Social constructionism and critical realism

- Research logic: Inductive
- Research method: Qualitative

### **3.6. Research Design**

The Figure 3.7 below, demonstrates an overview of the research design which pinpoints the selected and adopted methods of this research. The following sections will provide further details on the how these preferred methods have been implemented. The implementations of methods also include the justifications of using these methods.

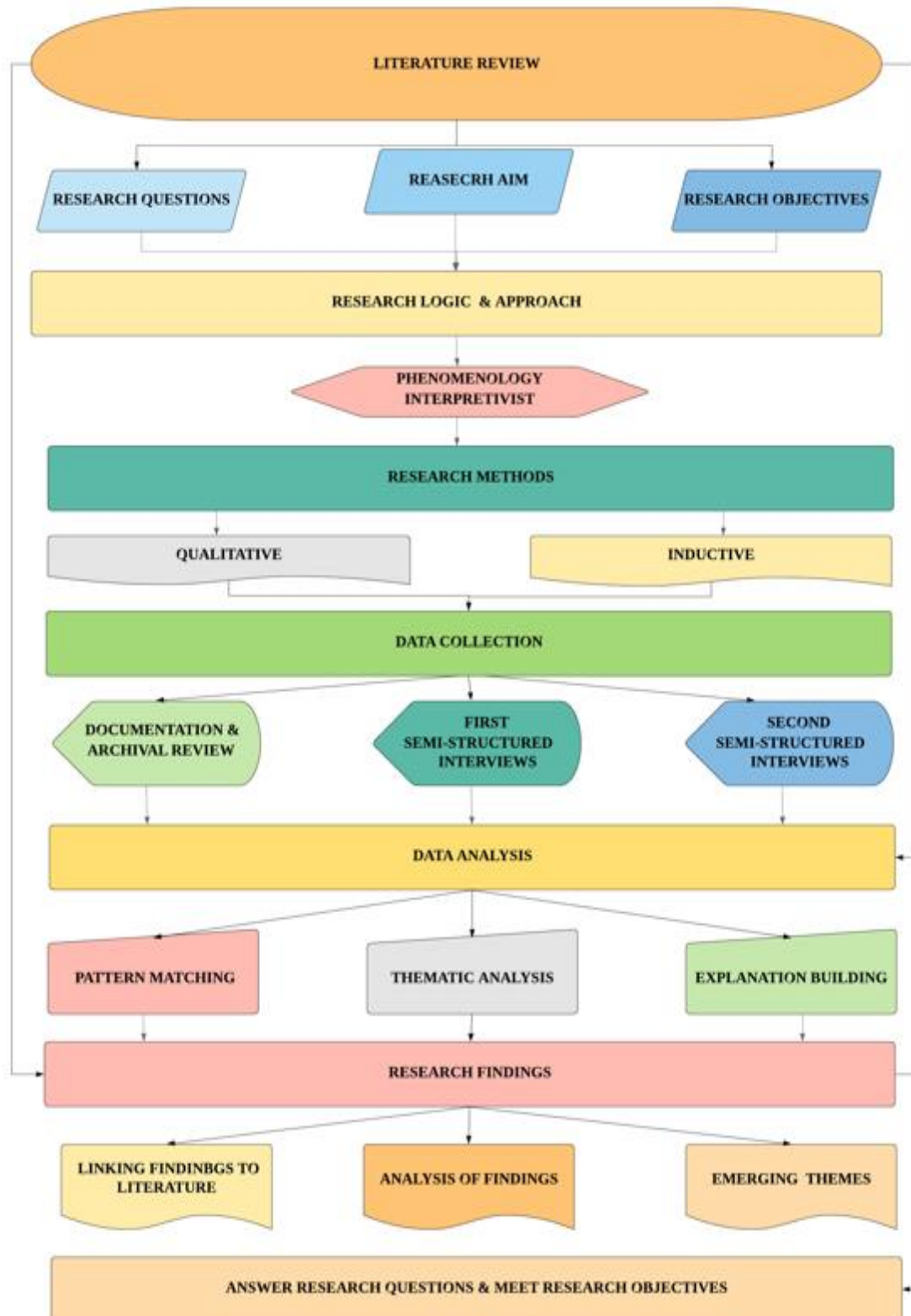


Figure 3.7 The design of research

### **3.6.1. Exploratory**

The examination of this research was conducted without any pre-conceived opinions or ideas for the researcher to be able understand what the collected data would provide about the influences of expatriation on expatriate shopping behaviour. Therefore, this thesis aimed to analyse this topic to identify preliminary awareness into the main points to support and frame future researches. The following questions were included in this research: Where do expatriates shop items from? How do they feel shopping from certain brands? Why do they prefer to purchase these items? Is the shopping behaviour a way of fitting in or dealing with the pressure of certain social groups? If so, what are the differences of their shopping habits compared to the one they had in their home country and their new environment? Please refer to Appendix 1, for interview questions.

The most accurate approach to answers these questions was through gathering information from the participants directly, which in this thesis is defined as the expatriates. The selected participants supported the author to choose the appropriate language to ‘get at’ the depth of their experiences. The researcher adopted an exploratory approach in order to analyse the relationships between the data collected from the participants.

The aim of using exploratory approach in this study was to analyse the influences of expatriation on expatriate shopping behaviour. This method helped the researcher identify similar experiences, quotes or comments of participants that would enable her to explain the relationship between the collected data. According to Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2015) research that develops random connections among variables can be named as explanatory research. The aim is on analysing a situation or an issue in order to reflect the connection between variables.

The aim of having two separate interviews after a month time with the same participants was to make sure the participants would not remember their initial answers (that they gave in the first interviews). This method helped the researcher gathering unbiased responses during the second interviews from her participants.

During the second interviews the researcher talked about all the same points as in the initial interview but this time after moving abroad. This information than was cross checked with the information of the previous interviews. At this point the researcher was able to point the differences to the participants. For instance, ‘Oh! You changed your small car to a Range Rover?’, ‘Now you are buying your wife more expensive jewellery?’ etc.

The final part of the interview was trying to find out reasons for that shift. This time the questions were similar to:

‘Are you concerned about how people in your country think of your life style?’

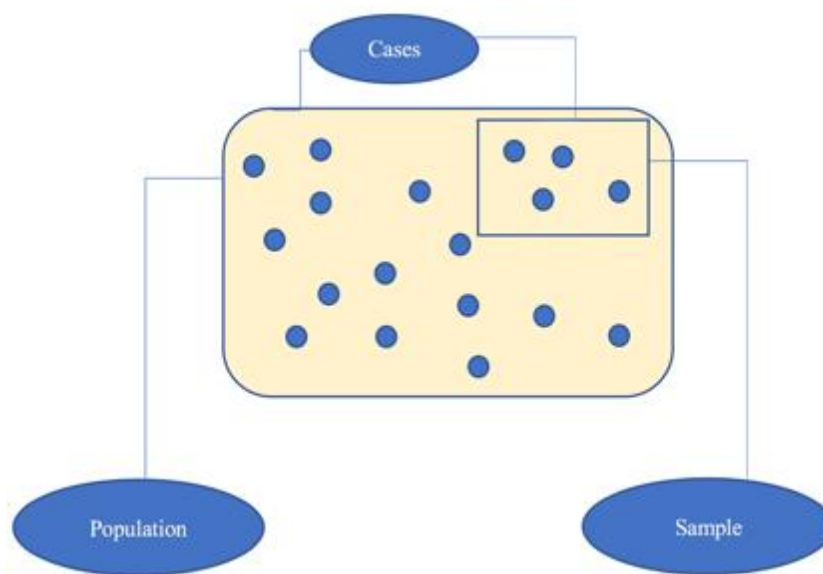
‘Do you think people in your country are interested in your life abroad?’

‘Do you like to post pictures of your apartment that would show your image/life style abroad?’

In brief, first the researcher tried to establish the previous shopping patterns, then the current patterns, then she tried to find out why it changed. Hence, there were two main aspects of this thesis; to have the identity back home and the current one abroad where participants keep up with their colleagues and neighbours etc. (their new social environment). Consciously or subconsciously individuals may want to drive the same car, go to the same sports clubs, and buy the same watch etc. as their neighbours or colleagues. And people might say that were not aware of this. As predicted, the reasons came out as peer pressure, herding behaviour and other factors that the author of this research aimed to find out. *Details of findings are displayed in Chapter 4 Analysis and Results.*

### 3.7. Sampling

Qualitative, quantitative or mixed method research, in all studies conducted, it is compulsory to decide on a sampling technique (Ritchie et al. 2003). But, usually samples are omnipresent, for example in a newspaper it will developed through conducting interviews to a group of people (Saunders et al. 2007). Hence, sampling refers to a means of gathering a reduced amount of data from a chosen sub-group, instead of gathering data from the whole population. Please see below Figure 3.11.



*Figure 3.8 Demonstration of sample, population and cases*

All researches are obliged to decide for their own sample size (Saunders et al. 2007). Usually, for qualitative research the sample is usually small due to the fact that the data is very detailed (Ritchie et al. 2003). Several suggestions are provided for the sample size for various research approaches. For instance, for phenomenological approaches focusing on one phenomenon, a small sample of 3 to 10 participants (Dukes 1984).

To assemble the best fitting participants and reach the aims of f this research, a sampling strategy was developed. A purposive sample as criterion sample from was followed.



### **3.7.1. The Population**

The target population of this thesis were expatriates who have moved from their home countries within 5 years. The UAE in this research was used as a case study as the author is currently residing in the UAE herself. The reason for selecting participants residing abroad for 5 years is due to the fact that they may not remember their previous shopping habits after 5 years of time. Home country in this thesis is defined as the expatriates' country of origins or the countries they have been living for a long time before moving abroad. This is due to the fact that some individuals may carry more than one passport and consider themselves from different countries due to their birth place or have been living most of their lives in another country than their country of origins. E.g. a Lebanese national living in Canada for over thirty years.

### **3.7.2. Sample Frame**

As mentioned earlier in the literature review the population of the UAE consists of 87.8% of expatriates. Therefore, this study used the UAE as a case study (Finaccord 2018). This research focused particularly on business expatriates in the UAE, due to the fact that they may prefer to have a better life style and are actually able to afford it. They earn disposable income and are able to spend money on luxury products. They are able to benefit from goods and services like being pampered in a spa, going on expensive holidays, driving expensive cars or joining golf clubs that are highly expensive.

The author of this research attempted to have a representative sample as far as possible in terms of nationality, age, gender however this was difficult with a sample of 40 participants. This couldn't be accurate as these group of individuals did not fit all of the criteria. The author was aware of the main nationalities, considered gender bias, aimed to have self-employed or employed participants etc.

An attempt was made to collect a sample as representative as possible. However, this could not be accurate because the author could not account for every combination of demographic variable with a number of 40 participants. Overall, the characteristics of sampling for the participants of the research is provided below in Table 3.10 below.

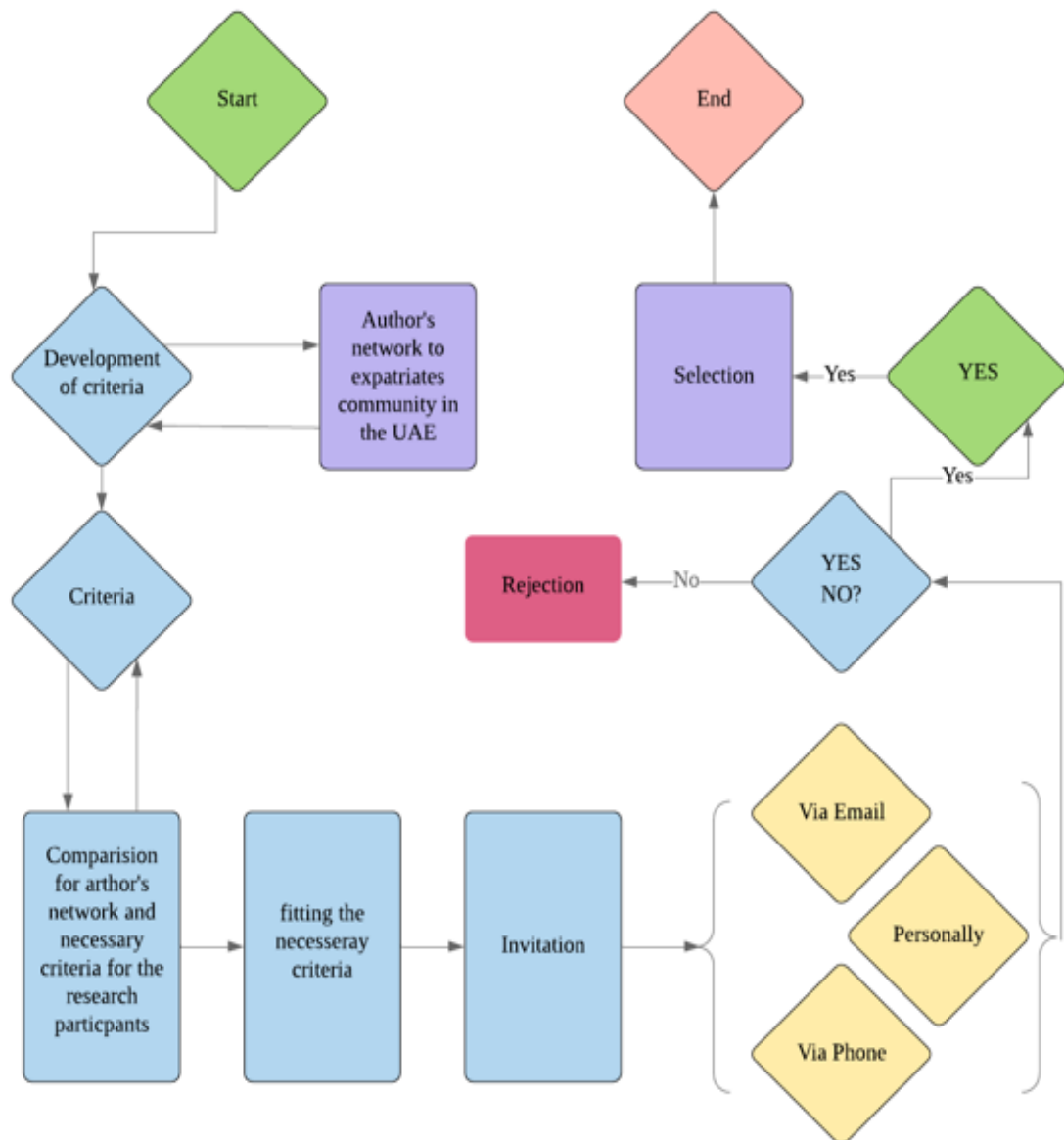
	Characteristics of Participants
Compulsory	White or gold collar expatriate workers residing in the UAE for the last 5 years,
	Positions are a minimum of administrative level and above, with minimum amount of 10,000 AED monthly income,
	Various nationalities in the UAE among expatriate workers,
	Both male and female participants,
	Range of adults of 21 to 65 years of age
Omitted	Lower level (blue collar) labourers earning monthly between AED 500 to 1500 on average

*Table 3.3 Characteristics of Participants*

### **3.7.3. Sample Technique**

To gather the correct and suitable number of participants, this thesis followed a non-probability, convenience type, self-volunteering, chain referral/snowballing type of sampling technique. The chain referral/ snowballing method highlights the individuals' interests from individuals that know other individuals who know the cases that are rich in information. However, using the chain referral/ snowballing technique might have led to an issue while selecting participants representing this thesis. Hence, the researcher avoided to face a risk of gathering a larger group of certain nationalities compared to the others or against the estimated number necessary for this research. (For instance, while following the chain

referral/snowballing method, a Filipino candidate may possibly refer another Filipino candidate). Therefore, the researcher pre-briefed the participants accurately that she needed a diversity in gender and nationality. The researcher guided the participants (that supported her by finding other participants) with the criteria she was searching for.



*Figure 3.9 Sampling strategy designed for individual interviews*

### 3.7.4. Sample Selection

To gather the required data and develop a well-structured theory, the researcher of this thesis selected and included participants that fit into the criteria necessary for this study. The target population of this study were the representatives of the following criteria:

- A total number of 40 representatives of expatriates (in the UAE). All participants are white and gold collar expatriate workers residing in the UAE for the last 5 years.
- Their positions/designations are a minimum of administrative level and above, with a minimum amount of 10,000 AED monthly income. Please see below Figure 3.10, for the details of participant's positions and number of years in the UAE.

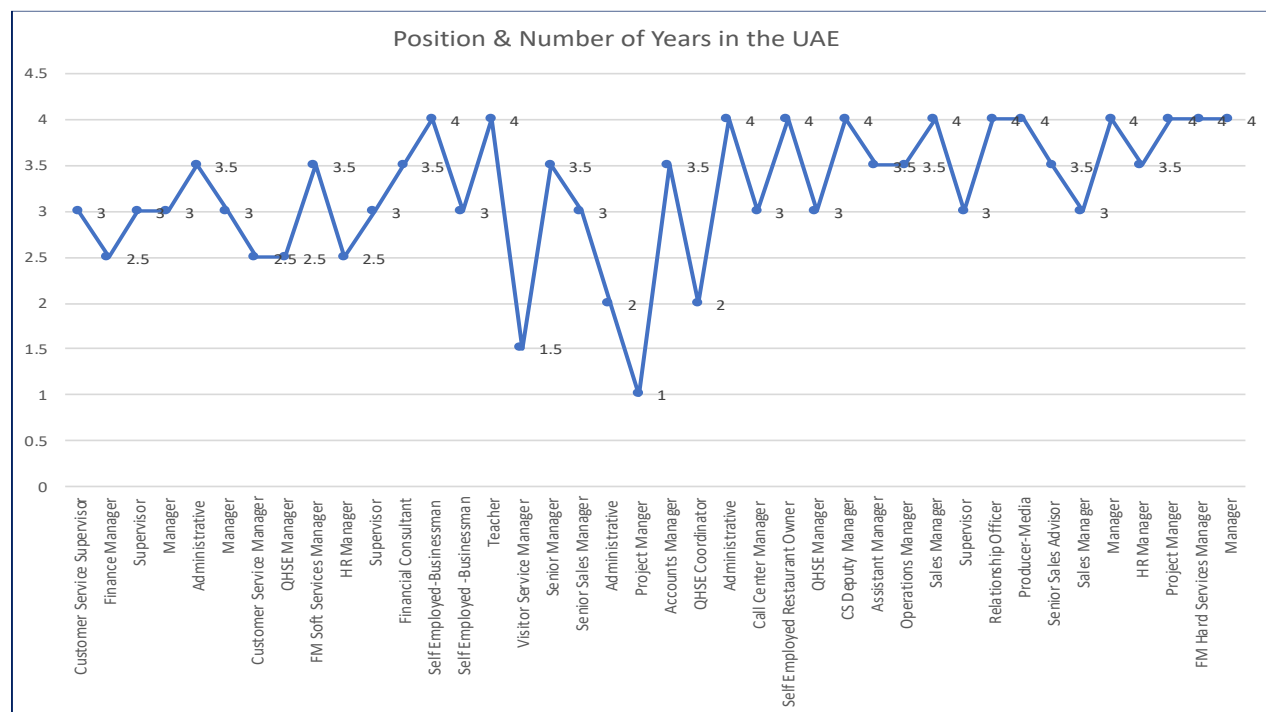
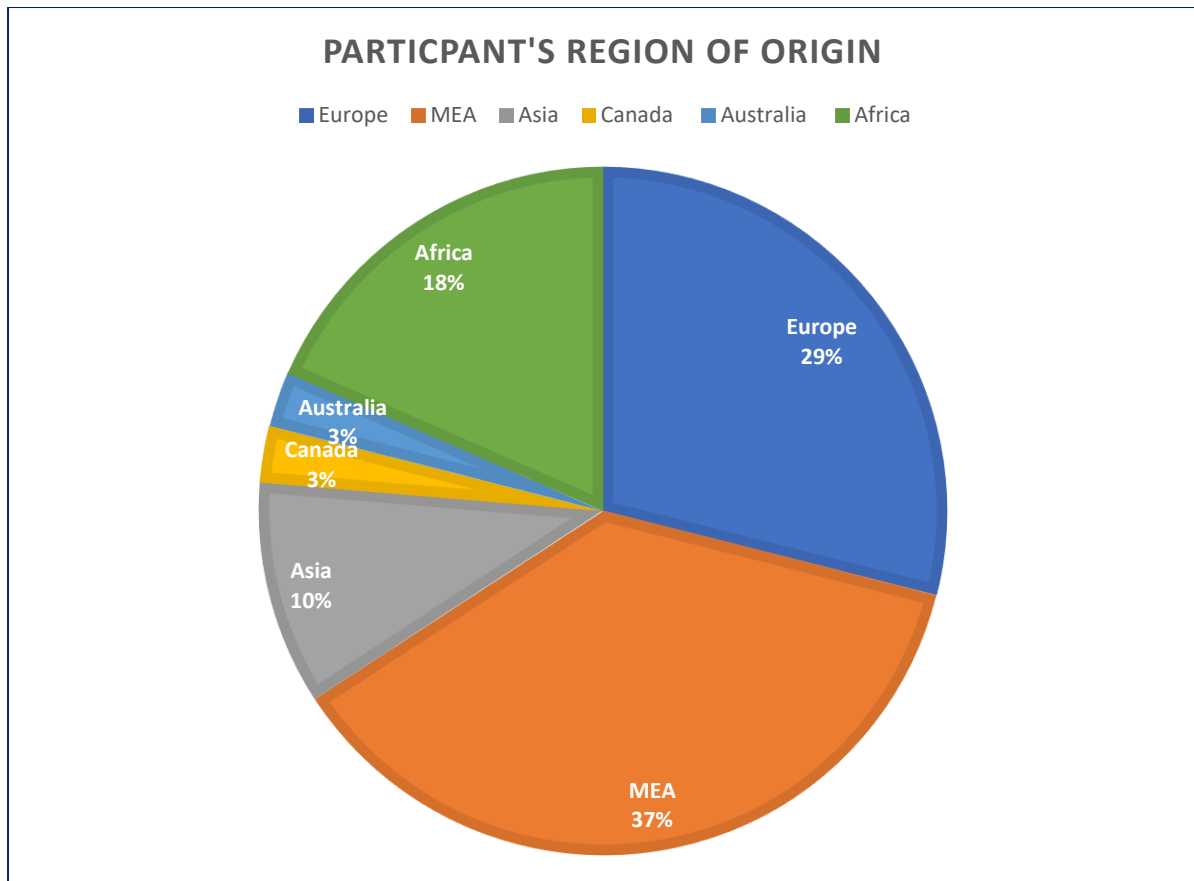


Figure 3.10 Participant's Positions and number of years in the UAE

- Target population of this research was selected from various nationalities in the UAE among expatriate workers. As of 2015, the official estimations were provided as: Emiratis

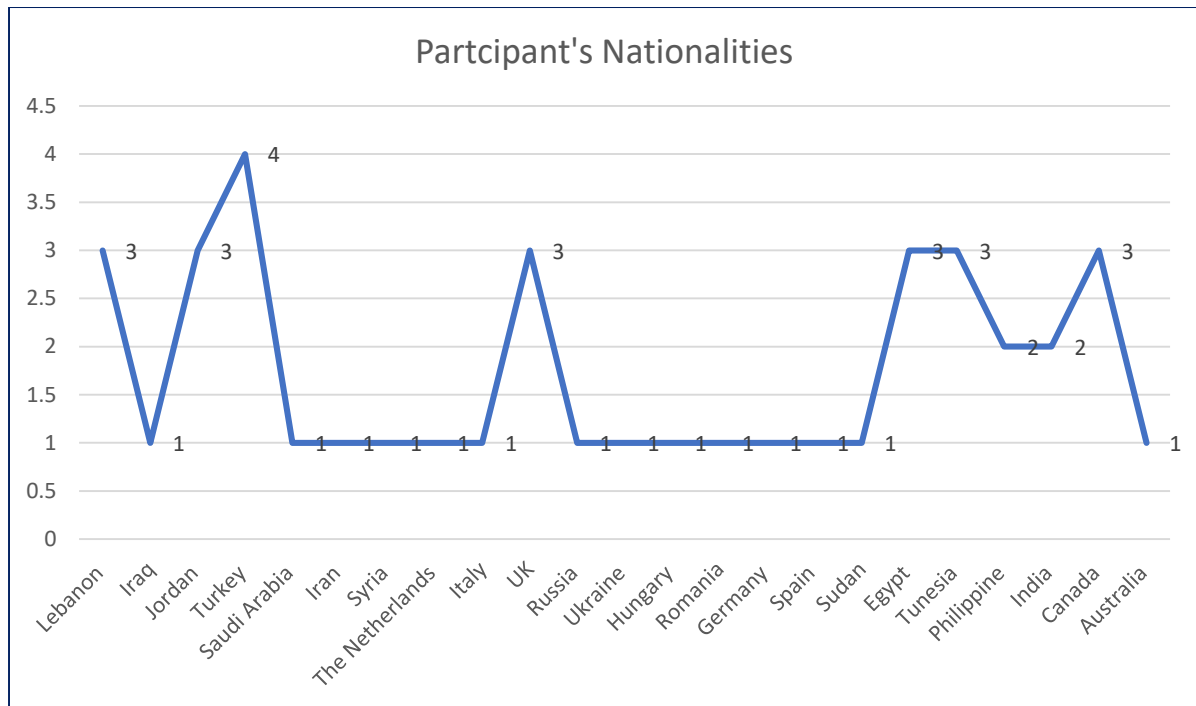
approximately 11.6%, South Asian 59.4% (which includes Indian 38.2%, Bangladeshi 9.5%, Pakistani 9.4%, other 2.3%), Egyptian 10.2%, Philippine 6.1%, and other backgrounds at 12.8% (Worldpopulationreview.com 2019). In most recent studies the UAE expatriate regions of origin consists of 35% Europe, 5% MEA, 8% Eastern Asia, 35% South Central Asia, 9% African nationalities (Expatexplorer.hsbc.com 2018). However, these are mostly employed as blue-collar workers. They are mostly employed as drivers or similar occupancies, which earn less than an admin level (white collar) worker. Hence, the lower level (blue collar) labourers earning monthly between AED 500 to 1500 on average FAQs (2018), were not considered as participants of this study. As their aim is to earn and support their families back home. Their accommodation, transportation and general life expenses (e.g. food, insurance) are provided through their employers.

- An attempt was made to select a sample that reflects the demographic pattern of the UAE in terms of nationality. The author aimed to select a sample that reflects the country's demographic profile and reflect a similar profile which consists of Europeans, Middle Eastern, Africans and Asians. Please refer to below Figure 3.11, for the participants' region of origin for this study.



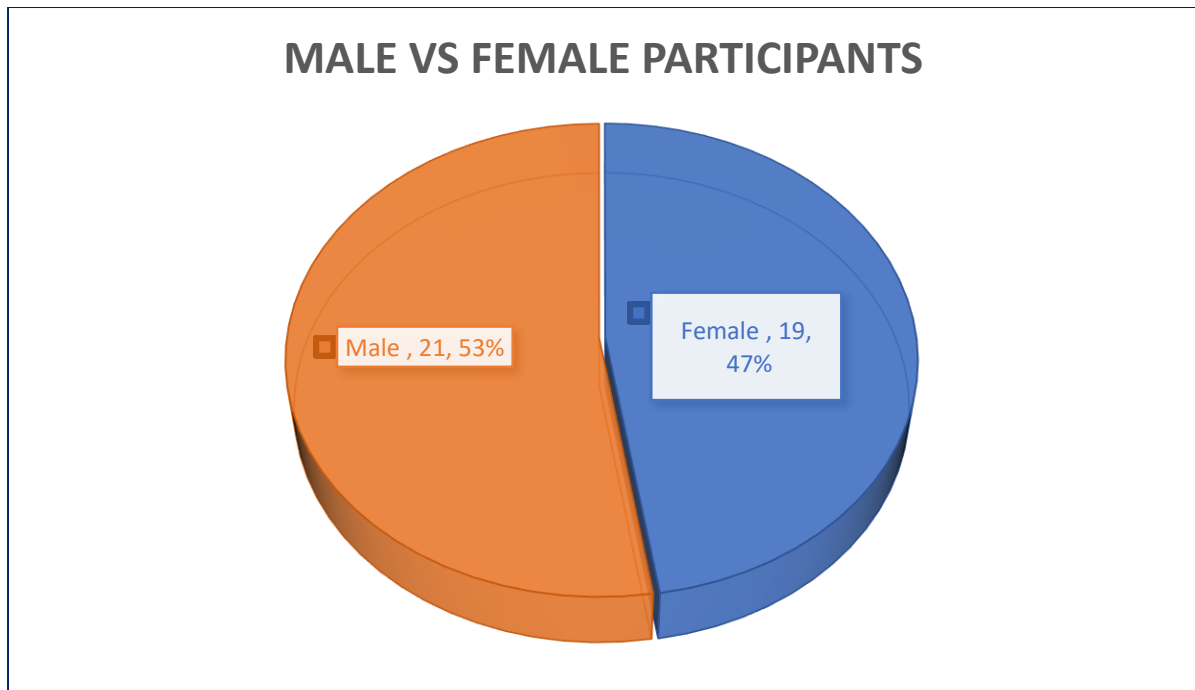
*Figure 3.11 Participant's regions of origin*

- The sample was created as somewhat representative of the UAE expatriate population with regard to the target groups. Thus, to reach a rich diverse group of the target population the researcher changed the nationality mix. According to Allmark (2004) elements like ethnicity, gender and financial levels represent the significant cultural differences among participants and may have great effect for the social phenomena in qualitative research. As these types of groups (diversity) not included to a qualitative research may be removed of its benefits. Please see below Figure 3.12 for the participant's nationalities of this study.



*Figure 3.12 Participant's nationalities*

- To be able introduce a gender analysis, the representatives of this thesis consists of a number of 21 males and 19 female expatriates. Please refer to below Figure 3.13 for the ratio of female and male participants of this study.



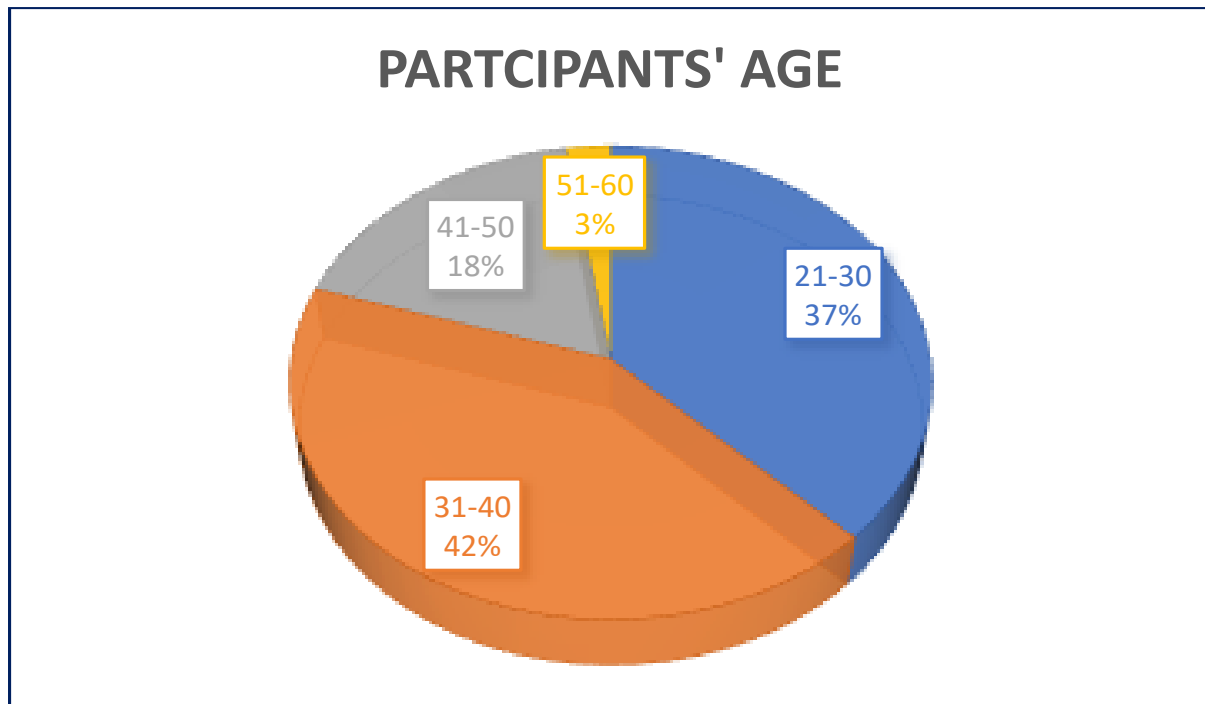
*Figure 3.13 Number of Male vs. Female participants*

- The author interviewed a range of adults of 21 to 65 years of age, as people in mature life may have different aspirations and needs and wants than younger people. The age is limited in 65 as for all employees working in private sector entities registered under the Federal laws of the UAE, the retirement age is 65 years (The National 2019). Please refer to below Table 3.4 and Figure 3.14, for the variation of age for the participants of this study.

Participants'Age range	21-30	31-40	41-50	51-60
Total	15	17	7	1
Percentage	37%	42%	18%	3%

*Table 3.4 Participant's Age range*





*Figure 3.14 Participants' Age range*

The size in a qualitative oriented study does not only focus in the venue or participants but also to gather large number of details of each one of them. In a qualitative research the focus is the shed light on the exact and the distinguishing (Creswell 2009). Charmaz (2014) recommended to involve 20 to 30 participants to enable the researcher develop a well-constructed theory but also that the number could be increased accordingly (Creswell 2009). Moreover, Cresswell (2007) stated that a heterogeneous population needs a number of 25 to 30 interviews, semi-structured/in-depth interviews would need a minimum sample size of 5 to 25 interviews Cresswell (1998). For all qualitative research, Bertaux (1981) stated that 15 is the smallest acceptable sample. Green and Thorogood (2009) state that “the experience of most qualitative researchers is that in interview studies, little that is 'new' comes out of transcripts after you have interviewed 20 or so people”.

Additionally, an overall *Demographic Table of Participants* has been developed – ensuring their names was masked with given names by the researcher. Please see Chapter 4, Table 4.1.

### **3.8 Data Collection Instrument**

To gather data that is honest and accurate, the researcher ensured the following points:

- All interview questions were constructed through the literature review of this thesis. All questions were developed in a way that supported the researcher gather the answers required for this research. None of the questions were developed independently by the researcher herself. All questions reflect the literature review and are based on real life observations of the author.
- To avoid participants being confused all questions have a natural flow and are linked one to another.
- The researcher established rapport with the participants to gather a fruitful and accurate data.
- The style of language used during the interview was clear and understandable. The language was relevant to the interviewee. Jargons were completely avoided and omitted during interviews.
- All questions were deprived from any type of biases and did not lead the participants into a certain direction preferred by the researcher.
- To be able to contextualize participants' responses, a demographic Table of participants was used as provided in the results section.
- The researcher ensured not having disturbances in the venue chosen for the interview. The place chosen for the interview was quiet and out of distractions. To choose a quiet place supported the participants fully focus on the questions and not get distracted.

- There were opening questions that helped breaking the ice between the researcher and the participants. These ice-breaker questions also helped participants feel more comfortable and created a friendlier environment.
- The researcher ensured to have a good quality recording device ready and was familiar with the device and its use before the interview.
- The researcher was an active listener at all times and tried to clarify comments of participants (by paraphrasing) that were not clear for her.
- At the end of the interview, the researcher asked if the participants may have any more questions or to add any other comments.
- The researcher asked the participants if they were interested to see final comments etc.
- Kindly refer to see the questions in Appendix number 1.
- Prior to the interviews all suitable candidates were invited to the interviews through an invitation letter. Please see Appendix 2 for the *Request for participation letter*.

### **3.8.1. Data Collection**

As a method of collecting data, this study conducted semi-structured, one-on-one / face to face, interviews with mainly open-ended questions. The 40 interviews to collect the required data were conducted through the chain referral/ snowballing method. The possible candidates for the thesis were contacted through sending emails, phone calls, social media sites (e.g. Facebook, Instagram etc.) and direct introductions through other participants. Web-based interviews through e-mails, online videoconferencing, messaging over the phone or online chatting are commonly used online information gathering methods are advantageous if cost and time is considered, and it gives the participants more time to think and freedom in responding the requested information, as well as helps individuals highlighting sensitive issues (Creswell & Poth 2018). Expatriate professionals are known to be highly skilled in using

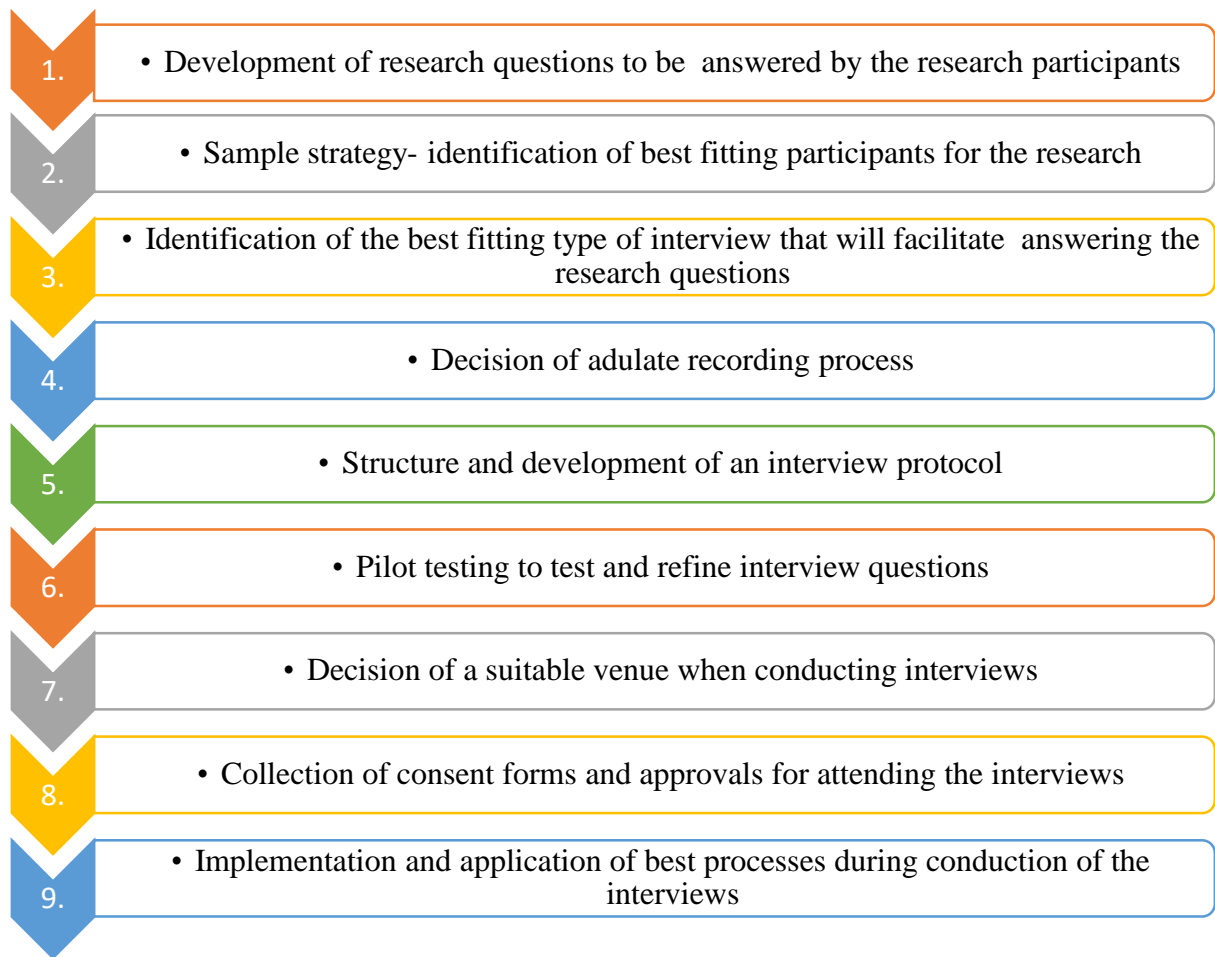
computers and mostly involved in social media which made them participants easily to be reached through many internet options such as e-mail/ Facebook/ twitter/ snapchat etc. which made them perfectly suitable for this kind of data collection methods.

### **3.8.2. Conducting individual interviews**

Qualitative researches in general is carried out by face-to-face interviews with the sample participants (Fontana & Frey 1994, Creswell 2009) but they are not limited with face-to-face interviews (Sweet 2002). Studies of (Sweet 2002; Sturges & Hanrahan 2004; Novick 2008; Creswell 2009) agree that qualitative interviews may also be managed through phone calls as well, which also helps the research with a rich amount of data collection. A vital aspect of semi-structured interviews is the rapport build between the participants and the researcher, which includes the questions asked, as well as the reaction of researcher for the answers received (Kvale 2007). Additionally, an interview guide is crucial for the researcher to cover all themes during the interview (Baiden & Price 2011). Interview questions normally are based on: experiences, opinions, feelings, knowledge, and background information of participants (Patton 1987).

### **3.8.3 Designing and conducting interviews**

Creswell (2013) provides us with several steps that can be followed when designing and delivering interviews, the author points on data collection method through qualitative interviews involved in in a study. The following Figure 3.15 below, presents nine steps in designing and conducting an interview suggested by Creswell:



*Figure 3.15 Qualitative interview steps, source (Creswell 2013)*

The process illustrated above by the author, initiates with the questions that will be asked to the interviewees. It is highly important that these questions must be related and focusing on the phenomenon of the study.

The first step is followed by the sampling process that will than continue with deciding on the suitable interview type. The following forth step is the usage of voice recorders that will be used during the interviews.

One of the most critical steps is for sure the guide lines to be followed. According to Kvale (2007) these consist of 5 to 7 open ended questions asked briefly and reserves a space between each question for the author to take notes.

The pilot testing of the questions follows the interview guidelines as the sixth step where the questions will be tested. The pilot study as Sampson (2004) suggests that it supports the author detect and problems as well as ethical issues that may arise. Furthermore, Creswell (2013) suggests that a quiet venue omitted of distractions would be suitable for an audio recording. Hence, the seventh step is suggested on deciding for a suitable interview venue.

The eighth step is about the ethical issues which includes collection of the consent forms, introduction to the study and the use of the audio recording equipment Kvale (2007), the estimated time of interview, and the follow up after the results (Creswell, 2013).

The ninth and last step is the rapport that will be developed between the author and the participant being interviewed.

The procedures consist of: completing the interviews within the estimated time frame and to keep a respectful approach while interacting with the interviewees. Finally, it is highly important to be a good listener rather than being an interviewer that speaks continuously. The author suggest taking notes in addition to the recordings in case of an equipment failure. Additionally, the number of interviews conducted is also important. In general, qualitative studies are conducted with a number of interviews ranging from 5 to 25 (Kvale 2007).

Hence, the data collection process in this study was conducted through semi-structured interviews following the steps mentioned by Creswell (2013):

- Firstly, the **research questions** that participants answered were highlighted. To gather the maximum amount of data from the participants the questions were structured as open-ended, general and highlighting the main phenomenon of the research. **Sub-questions** were added to facilitate the participants in understanding the main idea and support the researcher with detailed data.
- Based on the chain referral/ snowballing method mentioned earlier the **best fitting participants** were identified by the researcher.

- The most suitable *type of interview* for this research was identified by the researcher as *one-on-one* (face to face) interview. Some interviews were conducted over the phone. Also, Skype or BOTIM applications were used because it has a visual option. Focus group interviews were not considered as the interaction among the participants.
- Appropriate *recording processes* was followed to ensure all information was kept and can be used afterwards. As writing may cause missing some valuable data, audio taping method was used to store all data and focus on the participant rather than the notes to be taken.
- An *interview protocol* was designed and used that includes the date, time, venue, name of interviewee, name of interviewer, gender, age, job, nationality and the questions and sub-questions with enough space between them to write the answers of the participants. A *venue* was agreed on considering the convenience of the participant to conduct the interviews. A venue that is quiet and away from distractions where the participant felt comfortable and safe that his/her information will be kept confidential. The venue was a place convenient to do audio recordings and away from crowd to avoid possible interference from outside.
- The interviews were carried out considering the *ethical considerations* of the study which includes the values and cultural sensitivity of the environment and most importantly the confidentiality of the participants. The interviewee was friendly, polite, courteous and respectful at all times towards the participants. To avoid boredom or lack of interest the interviews were completed within the promised time agreed with the participants. Additionally, the data gathered was recorded into the interview protocol prepared beforehand, in case there were any problems faced with the audio-recording. Most importantly the interviewer was a good listener rather than a person leading the conversation on her own and speaking rapidly that might confuse the participant.

- The *interview questions* were revised many times and memorized before the interviews to minimize losing eye-contact and time loss. The verbal transitions were smoothly done to avoid confusion skipping from one question to another.
- At the end of the interview the closing comments were noted and the participant was thanked once again for participating. The participant was asked to for *follow-up information* if necessary.

The above interview procedures have been developed following Creswell and Poth (2018) according to the nature and needs of this research.

#### **3.8.4. Quality of interviews**

To ensure high quality interview results the researcher must use high quality equipment when recording the interviews Britten (1995) as quality derives from the continuous interaction and relation with the researcher and the participants (Kvale 2007). According to Kvale there are three main aspects in ensuring quality of interviews: (1) rich results gathered responses (2) the length established of the responses (3) the clarity of the responses provided (2007).

Moreover, to ensure quality of interviews, the transcripts can be translated from an oral language to a written language (Kvale 1996, Kvale 2007). According to the author, there is no specific standard or style for transcripts, rather it (style) depends on the aim. Therefore, according to the author a transcript that is going to be used for a sociolinguistic or psychological purpose, it is compulsory to develop it in verbatim (word-to-word) kind.

#### **3.8.5. Recording, Transcribing and Storing Data**

This thesis is based on qualitative methods with a narrative approach that includes transcribing the shared stories of participants. Transcriptions are usually created using Gail Jefferson's (2004) system which involves ways of delivery linked to the interviewees in a form



of reflecting them. The procedure of recording and transcribing was developed and followed as demonstrated in below Figure 3.16.

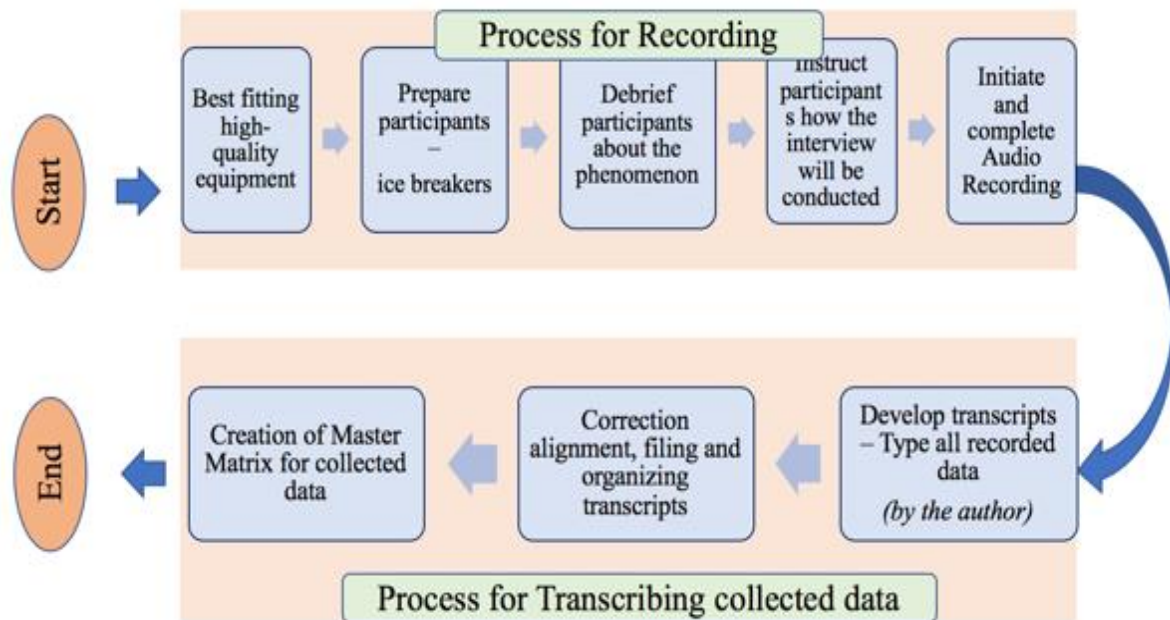


Figure 3.16 Recording and Transcribing face to face –individual interviews

Plummer (1983) suggests that a researcher must create a filing method for the “wad of hand-written notes or a tape” when it comes to writing a story (Creswell & Poth 2018).

Procedure to be used in storing collected data in this research was as provided below:

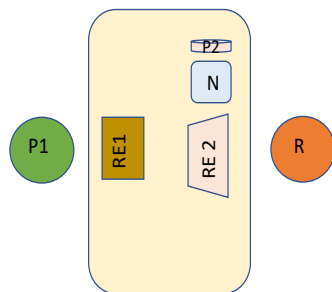
- Additional copies were produced out of the files in the computers,
- Good quality tapes for audio recordings were used - considering the size of the tapes as well,
- A matrix of Master list of documents created from the data collected,
- The confidentiality of interviewees were considered and protected by masking their actual names while storing data,
- A matrix of all data to use it in identifying information was created following (Creswell & Poth 2018).

- All participants were provided with an *Informed Consent Form* to ensure participants' confidentiality rights. Please refer to the *Transcriptionist Confidentiality Statement* provided in Appendix 4.

### **3.8.6. The Sitting Layout**

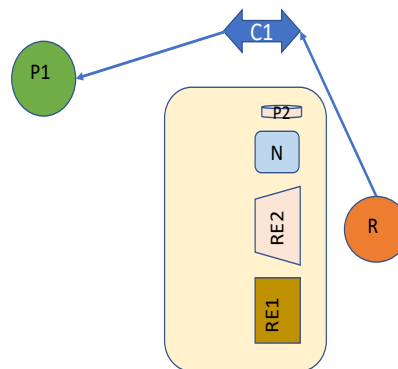
The next point of the procedure was the sitting layout designed and carried out during the interviews. Kruger (1993) suggested 'quality data requires quality equipment'. Following this suggestion, the two separate high-quality recording equipment were used to record the interviews. Two types of equipment were used to ensure two separate recordings. For instance, in case of losing and/or failure of one recording on the phone, there would be one more saved in the computer. Hence, recordings were made on both the Mac computer and the iPhone. To get clear record, the equipment (voice recorder) was positioned towards the interviewee. The interviewee, was seated across the table facing the researcher. The second type of recording was over the phone, as some participants would not be able to meet in person. Please see below Figure 3.20 for details of sitting layout during the interviews.

*Sitting layout of Face to face Interviews*



- P1: Participant
- P2: Pen
- RE1: Recording equipment 1
- R: Researcher
- RE2: Recording equipment2
- N: Notebook

*Sitting layout of interviews over the phone*



- P1: Participant
- P2: Pen
- RE1: Recording equipment 1
- R: Researcher
- RE2: Recording equipment 2
- C1: Phone line
- N: Notebook

*Figure 3.17 Sitting layout of semi structured interviews*

### 3.8.7. Organizing the Data

The data organizing was done by using computer filing system along with the conversion of files into correct text formats. The data of this study was transformed into transcripts and stored in folders created according to their types. All data collected, including raw material, notes, audio, progress reports, transcripts were organized and stored digitally using Microsoft Word and Excel applications. Saunders et al. (2012) suggests that to be able to access without interruption and confusion, the collected data has to be to be securely stored, and labelled accurately. Additionally, the Dropbox application and a hard drive tool was used to store and secure data for back up. These type of storing methods were suggested by various scholars like Creswell (2013).

Next, this gathered data such as the interview notes, transcription, and audio recording, was noted down and processed. After the data was processed through coding, classification, and sorting, it was adequate for a more thorough qualitative analysis.

Consequently, the author applied a meticulous review for a second time, to scrutinize and recognize the central emerging themes throughout the dimensions, in order to synthesize and interconnect those emerging themes. Finally, those essential observations were interpreted in order to assist in the analysis of discussing the findings and results. The Figure 3.18 below displays the general process for collecting data that starts with raw data collected from semi-structured face-to-face interviews.



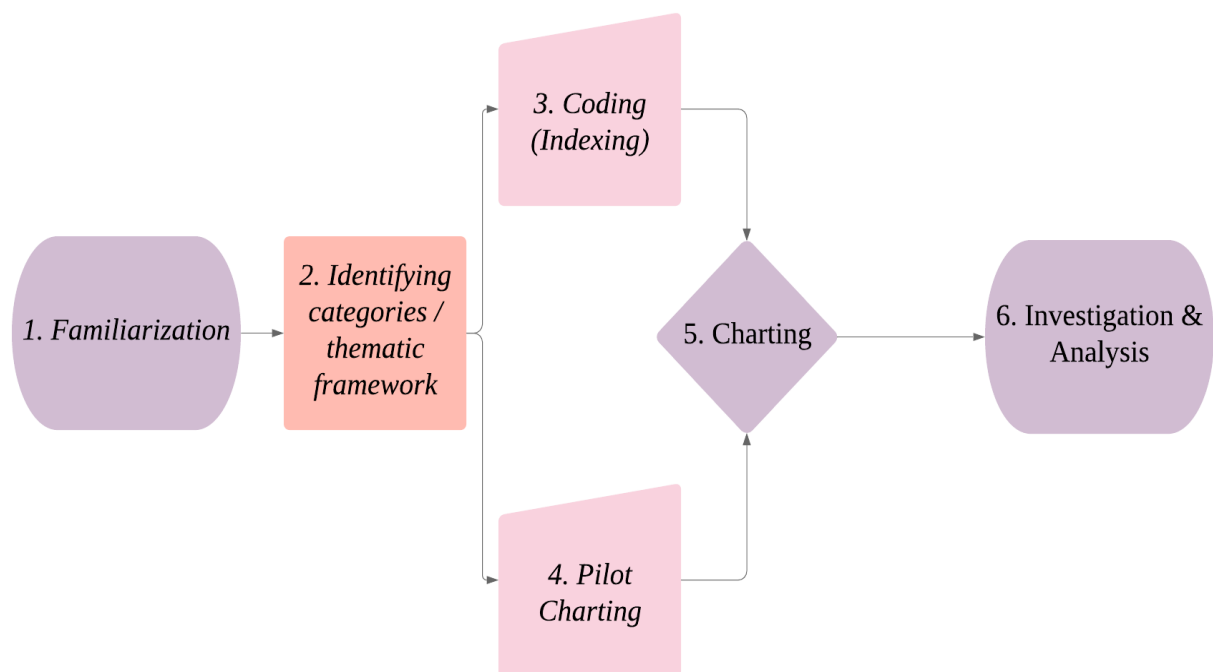
Figure 3.18 Overview of data collection process and analysis, permission to reproduce this Figure has been granted by: (Khairieuum 2019)

### 3.8.8. Data Analysis individual interviews

During an interview in a qualitative research, other than asking questions the researcher must also asked questions about its actions. As Silverman (2010) mentioned that everyone has the urge to talk about the past. People develop social identities, positioning themselves within their families and in the society with their choices they make and the way they reflect

themselves in their stories (Burke & Stryker 2000). To pursue a qualitative analysis, the researcher needs to identify participants that are accessible, volunteering to share data, specific in a field or topic and can highlight points on the chosen problem to be analysed (Creswell & Poth 2018). According to the authors stories ‘come to existence’ as an aspect of connection that is linked as a component of culture that reflects in social roles they demonstrate such as gender and age. Thus, in a phenomenology approach, the consideration should not only be on the correct questions to be asked. Rather the researcher should consider the stories that will emerge. The authors conclude that the researcher must acknowledge that all individuals have stories to tell and that in qualitative research the analysis of gathered data involves arranging and constructing.

Furthermore, a very well-known and commonly implemented method is the thematic coding analysis approach of qualitative data and which is coined as ‘thematic analysis’, generally referred to the Framework Method®, developed in the 1980s by the biggest non-profit research organization in the UK – the National Centre for Social Research (NatCen) (QSRInternational 2012). The main advantages of this systematic analysis procedure such as the Framework Method® are: the more accurate reworking and reconsidering of forthcoming ideas in the interpretation process (Ritchie & Spencer 2002), the contraction of data through compiling and combining, and the maintaining of the links to the initial data (QSRInternational 2011). Considering the advantages as well as the relevance of it the author decided implement this method to examine the individual interviews and reflect the influences impacting expatriates shopping behaviour in the UAE along with the changes in their identities. The following process as demonstrated in below Figure 3.22, was followed during the data analysis process of this study.



*Figure: 3.19 Steps of Framework Method©, adapted from (What is the Framework method? / NVivo FAQ 2019)*

According to Ritchie and Spencer (2002) as the first step the author has to develop a familiarity with the range and variety of the collected data. Also, during the first step, it is necessary to develop the thematic framework (that will be organizing the data afterwards) through identifying and note-taking of developing themes and sub-themes (What is the Framework method? | NVivo FAQ 2019).

The identified thematic framework must be tested to ensure managing data. Once this thematic framework is identified, it has to be tested to ascertain whether it is appropriate and able to manage the gathered data.

There are two ways for testing the framework; by coding the data (indexing) or a pilot charting (chart a number of the data to the framework matrix) and if required reviewing the

framework (What is the Framework method? | NVivo FAQ 2019). After the confirmation of the framework, the process continues with charting, which is used to summarize the main aspects of the data and implement it into the correct part of the framework matrix (Ritchie et al. 2003). In general, for each theme there is corresponding sub-theme or several sub-themes (Ritchie & Spencer 2002, Ritchie et al. 2003). The charts are used for the final step which is called the ‘investigation and interpretation’. This step involves analyzing the complete data to define concepts, investigate the nature of phenomena, create typologies, find links and illustrate details of the findings, the link between the themes and the meaning of them (Ritchie & Spencer 2002).

### **3.8.9. Reading and Memoing**

The get the sense of the data collected the researcher red through the of the complete data base various times. Researchers should “read the transcripts in their entirety several times. Immerse yourself in the details, trying to get a sense of the interview as a whole before breaking it into parts” (Creswell & Poth 2018). Notes and short phrases were written during the initial data analysis that helped the researcher with the key concepts. In this initial phase, the major ideas of the collected data were identified and highlighted with the short notes taken aside.

### **3.8.10. Describing, Classifying and Interpreting data into Codes and Themes**

This section includes description, classification and the interpretation of the data where codes and categories were developed. According to Creswell and Poth (2018) in this part a *detailed description* of the data will be developed by the researchers that will include themes and understandings. The author of this study described the data according to her own understanding and interpretation.

The researcher of this study used NVivo-7 software in order to accurately analyse manage large amounts of data gathered from the interviews in a systematic way. This also



supported the validity and enhance the rigour of the thesis. Moreover, it supported the researcher with saving time, effort and skills. The transcriptions of the interviews were saved as Microsoft Word documents and Excel sheets. These documents were after stored to be analysed using the software for qualitative data (NVivo-7).

Along with the NVivo analysis all transcripts were analysed individually by the author. A sample of manual analysis completed by the author is provided for further details in the process of analysis of transcripts. Please see Appendix 7 and 8, (for 2 different types of samples) of transcript analysis.

### **3.8.11. Coding**

According to Creswell and Poth (2018), coding is a process of accumulation the data (text or visual) into smaller groups of data, different from the ones in the research itself and afterwards naming them.

Data interpretation of this research was initiated with *open coding*, in which the collected data was coded according to its main categories which led to axial coding. Following the axial coding the author identified one open coding group which enabled the researcher reach the core phenomenon. Going back to the data the author then developed further groups that linked to the main phenomenon.

Using open coding the author shaped categories of data about expatriates shopping behaviour and identity changes were investigated through segmenting collected data. Each category has various properties and/or subcategories and the author created a dimension of continuous data.

In axial coding the researcher will present a visual model which is called a *coding paradigm* or *logic diagram* where she will identify a *central phenomenon*, investigate categories of situations that effect the phenomenon –*casual conditions*, point on the actions

that will stem from the phenomenon, identify situations influencing the actions or interactions and will define the consequences for the phenomenon. Finally, the investigator will write a ‘story line’ which will then connect all categories. Following this process of data collection and interpretation will result with a *substantive-level theory* written by the author relating to an issue or group of people (Creswell 2013). The theory will help through the memoing method in which the author will be taking notes on the ideas of the emerging theory throughout the whole process of open, axial and selective coding.

### **3.8.12. Themes**

Themes are large volume of data that are developed by integration of various codes that obtain the familiar information and in qualitative research methods, a widely-used form of classification is building between five to seven themes (Creswell & Poth 2018). From the main themes, several sub-themes can be identified. In this study; themes and sub-themes were developed, data was reduced to manageable themes to be able write a final version of the narrative.

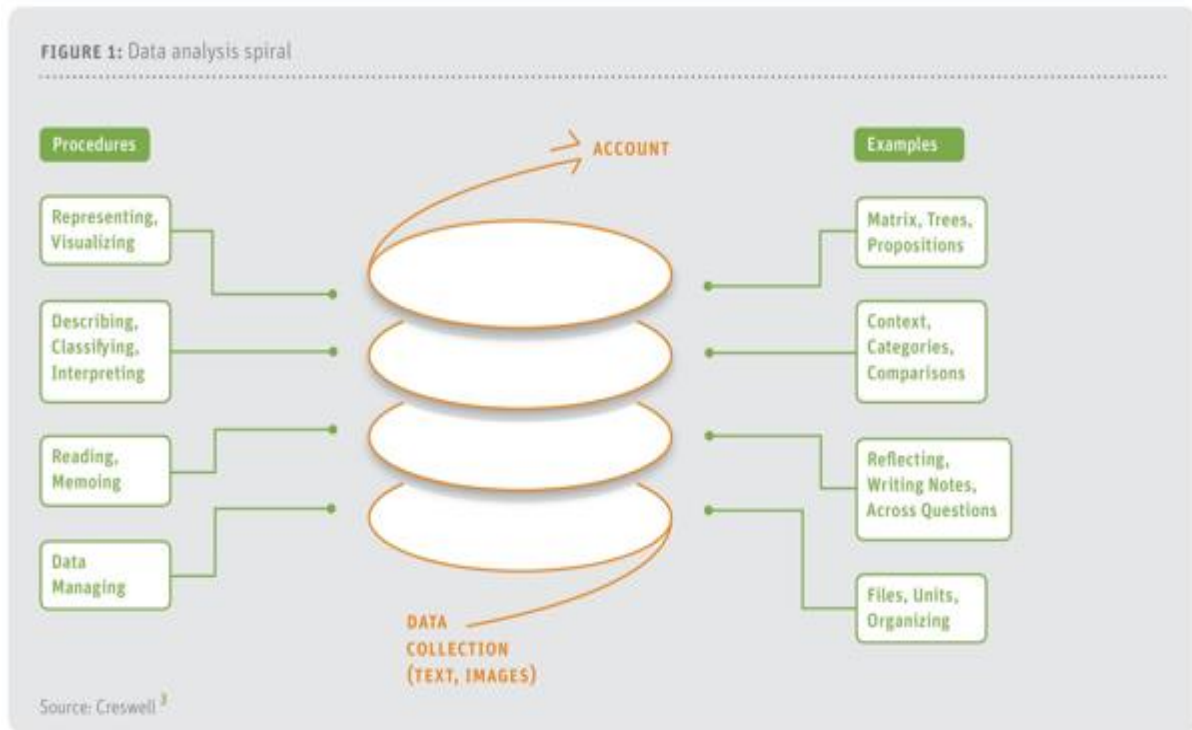


Figure 3.20 Data analysis spiral Creswell (2013) (Google.ae 2018)

### 3.8.13. Interpreting Data

In qualitative research researcher will be interpreting data which includes making sense of it, “lessons learned” (Creswell & Poth 2018). *Interpretation* going beyond the codes and themes and leading to greater meanings of the collected data.

Finally, the researcher combined and integrated all the above methods mentioned earlier and developed a deep and meaningful and fruitful narrative for this study. After the completion of interviewing and analysing of data the participants received a debrief letter and that thanked the participants once again. Please refer to Appendix 5 for the sample of *debrief letter*.

## 3.9. Reliability and Validity

Qualitative researchers have been blamed of neglecting the significance of various

types of validity in their studies (Tsanis 2013). Various benchmarks and techniques and have been proposed for the evaluation of social analysis. The below section highlights the various types of tests to be used for this study.

### **3.9.1. Validity**

Validity reflects the findings of a research being actually accurate or not (Bryman and Bell 2015). Validity refers to being unbiased and relating to the context being measured. The author of this thesis therefore was dedicated to remain unbiased and relate to the construct being measured at all times.

One of the main types of validity is called as the measurement validity (also called as construct validity). Measurement validity points on whether a result that is concluded of a concept in fact does refer on the concept that it was aimed for. Hence, in this thesis the questions developed to be used during the conduction of the semi-structured interviews were tested and changed if necessary.

Moreover, internal validity reflects the work of the author developing relationships and reflecting them in the research analysis, which will eventually lead to the development of clear and understandable results of the research (Tsanis 2013). Data analysis involved various patterns matching and comparisons, via hand written notes and schemas developed by the author of the study, which after was stored in the database (ibid). The researcher of this study regularly took notes during interviews with her participants and kept a diary to keep control of all developments during the whole process of developing the thesis. Finally, external validity refers to whether or not the results of a research can be generalized further (other than the given circumstances). Please refer to below paragraphs for details on validity of this thesis.

### 3.9.2. Reliability – Inter-rater reliability

Reliability refers to the question whether or not results of a research can be repeated (Bryman & Bell 2015). There are two aspects of reliability. First it is called as the **external reliability** and it is the degree to which a research can be repeated. On the other hand, **internal reliability** refers to more than one observer in a research (ibid).

Furthermore, assessing **inter-rater reliability** is when data is independently coded and the coding was compared for agreements, it is a recognized method in quantitative analysis (Armstrong et al. 1997). This research is based on face-to-face interviews where participants were encouraged share their real-life experiences. Therefore, data was collected independently. However, it is highly important to illustrate the reliability of the study and accurately define all steps of the study. Hence, all codings were compared and agreed as suggested by the inter-rater reliability method. The author ensured to have the transcripts analysed by a second person (that is another PhD student). All 40 transcripts gathered from the participants were analysed by both, the author herself and the person assigned for the second analysis. The initial analysis that were conducted by the author herself, were afterwards compared with the results of the second analysis that was conducted by the second person. Any differences, similarities or further comments that were observed between the first and the second analysis of the transcripts, were revisited and discussed further. Finally 40 transcript analysis of the author and 40 transcript analysis of the second person were reviewed and discussed. Hence, the final versions of analysis were completely agreed by both parties. Please see below an example of analysis done by the author and the second person assigned.

The following question was asked to participant no 14, during his second interview:

‘Now in the UAE, how would you describe your general shopping habits, for example in terms of being price conscious, favoring luxury brands or expecting a certain level of product

quality?’

As all other answers of all participants, the answer to this question too, was initially audio recorded and transcribed afterwards. The transcripts were then shared with the second person to be analyzed. As demonstrated below, the analysis of transcripts were reflected by both parties after each sentence within a parenthesis.

### **Analysis 1 conducted by the author:**

‘I’m driving a Porsche (Preference of Luxury products- brands -favoring luxury products) right now. Due to my business requirements (Reason for purchases- general shopping habits) I choose to go to fine dining restaurants (Shopping preferences-in F&B). In UAE there are many good places for fine dining (variety of F&B in the UAE-goods -things- products). I can say everywhere. (Variety of choices for products and services) The life standards here are very high.’ (Life style-standards-luxury life)

Even though it’s a small place people live in luxury. Luxurious life style It’s not in a choice, (New environment -new life style) the social life here has its own needs, it requires you to live in a higher life standard. (Impact of social environment in lifestyle) The dynamics are different. If u like it or not you change’. (Acceptance and confirmation of change)

‘My social life changed completely (Confirmation of change in social life-luxury life) I don’t have a private life. It’s more like I try to comply with my social environment. (Need to fit in) There are so many foreigners all coming from different cultures. Their traditions, religion everything is different and you try to get used to them and understand them to be able to mingle within their circle’. (Trying to fit in by developing a new identity that can interact with different cultures and their differences and shopping habits)

## **Analysis 2 conducted by the second person assigned:**

‘I’m driving a Porsche (Preference of Luxury products- brands) right now. Due to my business requirements (Reason for purchases) I choose to go to fine dining restaurants (Shopping preferences-in F&B). In UAE there are many good places for fine dining (Variety of F&B in the UAE-goods -things- products). I can say everywhere. (Variety of choices for products and services) The life standards here are very high.’ (Life style-standards)

‘Even though it’s a small place people live in luxury (Higher Income levels). Luxurious life style It’s not in a choice, (New environment -new life style) the social life here has its own needs, it requires you to live in a higher life standard. (Impact of social environment in lifestyle) The dynamics are different. If u like it or not you change’. (Acceptance and confirmation of change-Impact of social environment in lifestyle)

‘My social life changed completely (Confirmation of change in social life-luxury life) I don’t have a private life (Privacy) It’s more like I try to comply with my social environment. (Need to fit in) There are so many foreigners all coming from different cultures. Their traditions, religion everything is different and you try to get used to them and understand them to be able to mingle within their circle’. (Trying to fit in by developing a new identity that can interact with different cultures and their differences and shopping habits)

After the analysis were conducted and completed by both parties, the analysis were than compared.

- ‘I’m driving a Porsche (Preference of Luxury products- brands -*favoring luxury products*) right now.

Compared to analysis 2, analysis 1 has illustrated an additional comment: *favoring luxury products*.

- Due to my business requirements (Reason for purchases- *general shopping habits*) I choose to go to fine dining restaurants (Shopping preferences-in F&B).

Compared to analysis 2, analysis 1 has given an additional comment: *general shopping habits*.

- I can say everywhere... (Variety of choices for products and services) The life standards here are very high.' (Life style-standards- *luxury life*).

Compared to analysis 2, analysis 1 has reflected an additional comment: *luxury life*.

- Even though it's a small place people live in luxury (*Higher Income levels*)

Compared to analysis 1, analysis 2 has an additional comment: *Higher Income levels*.

- The dynamics are different. If u like it or not you change'. (Acceptance and confirmation of change- *Impact of social environment in lifestyle*)

Compared to analysis 1, analysis 2 has provided an additional comment: *Impact of social environment in lifestyle*.

- My social life changed completely (Confirmation of change in social life-luxury life)  
I don't have a private life (*Privacy*)

Compared to analysis 1, analysis 2 has an additional comment: *Privacy*.

When compared with each other, (as observed in the above provided examples) analysis 1 (conducted by the author) and analysis 2 (conducted by the second person), did not reflect differences in the concept. Minor differences were observed rather in the way of wording the comments. As a result, both analysis revealed the same results, with minor differences only in the way of putting them into words. Even though differences were minor and only observed in the way of wording, whenever needed, the audio recordings of the transcripts were listened



again both by the author and the second person assigned. This procedure was followed for all transcript analysis to confirm and ensure that both sides have reached and provided the most accurate analysis of transcripts. Which were then assembled in one solid document as the end result agreed by both parties. Please refer to Appendix 7 and Appendix 8 for samples of transcript analysis.

### **3.9.3. Content (Face) Validity, External Audits and Confirmability**

Other than computer software (NVivo-7), the author this research followed several validation strategies to have an accurate outcome of its findings. One method was by asking people, (subject matter experts of the concerned field), asking to take the role of a judge to decide whether or not the measure seems to reflect the concept involved. Hence, content (face) validity for this thesis might be a critically intuitive process. Furthermore, external audits (in this thesis the two supervisor professors) examined the process. Additionally, the supervisor professors assessed whether or not the findings of the thesis support the data.

Moreover, the term confirmability refers to the researcher being unbiased, neutral and objective. As bias is a continuous concern in qualitative analysis, the author of this research was dedicated to remain unbiased and objective at all times. This includes both during face to face interviews and while interpreting gathered data. To further encourage confirmability during this study, the author ensured consistency with the findings and finally conclusions.

### **3.9.4. Construct validity (Measurement Validity)**

To ensure the construct validity of this thesis, the questions developed to be used during the conduction of the semi-structured interviews were tested and changed if necessary. The questions were communicated with experienced researchers that are familiar with qualitative data collection methods. The data collection method started with the examination of the interview data along with the identification of the strengths and limitations of the chosen data

collection technique. Furthermore, memos and notes were taken, stored and kept safely, to ensure gather the concepts and their development. The gathered data, memo and notes were correlated with the current theoretical propositions and how they associate with them (Miles & Huberman 1994).

#### **3.9.4. Generalisability (External Validity)**

The term generalisability, also called as external validity, refers to the extent to which the thesis findings are generalizable (Bryman & Bell 2015). In other words, whether or not the findings can be applied to other research settings.

This thesis focused on participants that were white and gold collar expatriate professionals in UAE. As mentioned in the literature review expatriates in UAE mention an uplift of 40% in their earnings compared to 25% of expatriates worldwide (Expatexplorer.hsbc.com 2018). The findings of this thesis can be generalized with similar level professionals in high wealth countries like Singapore, Hong Kong or Switzerland that welcomes many expatriates. For instance, as addressed earlier 89% of expatriates living in Switzerland have earn USD 203,000 yearly which is nearly double of the global average (Expatexplorer.hsbc.com 2018). Likewise, nearly (45%) of expatriates choose to live in Singapore for career development. Over a quarter were looking for a new challenge but a greater amount of 38% preferred to stay there to have an uplift in their earnings. Expatriates having a boost in their incomes may change their life styles in these types of countries where there are many possibilities in upgrading their shopping behaviours. However, in countries like Saudi Arabia, Iran or Nigeria generalizability may not be applicable as high earnings may not be supporting the expatriates in living a superior life style. For instance, driving an expensive car in Zimbabwe may lead to being robbed.

Be that as it may, expatriates earning high amount of salaries in countries that do not offer superior life styles, still may have the opportunity to travel abroad and enjoy. For instance, an average number of 50,000 vehicles cross the first bridge between Saudi Arabia and Bahrain which is named after Saudi Arabia's late king Fahd bin Abdelaziz, opened in November 1986. This number during national and religious holidays such as Ramadan and Hajj is reported to be much higher by *Asharq al-Awsat*. Monthly tis Figure points on 1.5 million vehicles. Hence a new bridge has been decided to be constructed to connect Northern Bahrain with Eastern Saudi Arabia (Middle East Eye 2019).

### **3.9.5. Ethical Considerations**

Most expatriates use social media to interact with friends and their families back home which makes it easier for the researcher to reach most participants. However, there might be great amount risk in the penetrating to the privacy of the participants which may create great ethical concerns. The UAE being a Muslim country and deeply involved with values and believes, collecting data through online resources (specifically from female candidates) was most definitely rejected by the participants and increase ethical concern such as jeopardizing participant' privacy. Therefore, the researcher of this study ensured beforehand to explain all details of the methods that are to be used to collect data to all participants.

Additionally, the participants were ensured that an audio recording was conducted only following their solid permission. A consent form was prepared, reviewed, and signed by the participants prior to the semi-structured interviews, that provided participants appreciable amount of domination through the interview process. As a proof of acknowledgment of the ethical considerations and confidentiality of the participants, please refer to Appendix 3, for the *Informed Consent Form* followed by the *Transcriptionist Confidentiality Statement* in Appendix 4. Please refer to below Table 3.5 for the ethical consideration and applications.

Ethical Consideration and Applications	First Individual interview	Second individual interviews
Written consent was obtained for all participants	✓	✓
Participants were provided an information paper about the nature and purpose of the study prior to the interviews.	✓	✓
Contact details of the researcher was shared to the research participants prior to the interviews	✓	✓
Participants were briefed and ensured that all information they share by participating in this study will be completely confidential and anonymized	✓	✓

*Table 3.5 Ethical Consideration and Applications*

### 3.10. Pilot Study

#### 3.10.1. Introduction

Pilot study was defined by Lindsey (1999) as a smaller version of the complete study. A pilot study supports the author in planning of the research (Prescott & Soeken 1989) as well pre-analysing tools and methods that will be used in the research (Baker 1994). The pilot study, in other word the smaller version of the complete study, provides the author with feedback for the full study. This feedback is useful on refining the methodology of the research prior to initiate the actual study. Conducting a pilot study creates advantages such as testing rigour and adequacy of the research instruments, deciding on the most applicable method to be used as well as minimize the number of unanticipated issues in the application of specific methods.

Moreover, pilot studies are crucial when it comes to designing a study in a good way

(van Teijlingen & Hundley 2001) as well as in ensuring methodological accuracy (Lancaster et al. 2004).

### **3.10.2. Aims of the pilot study**

This section presents the author's reflections on the phases, process and results of the pilot that was used in this study investigating the impacts of expatriation on individual's changes in identity and shopping behaviour. This study is phylogenetically qualitative and tools used to collect the necessary data, exists of semi-structured interviews.

The aim of conducting a pilot study prior to the full study in this thesis was to identify any methodological issues that may derive in putting methodology into practice. Teijlingen et al. (2002) mention that various scholar's statements reflect that they learned what changes they implemented after practicing a pilot study, but they do not offer the readers the details of what they learned. Hence, the author of this thesis fully addressed the lessons learned from the pilot study and her reflections have been explained in detail.

Main Aims of the pilot study of this thesis were:

- To test the appropriateness of all methods and tools used to explore the impact of expatriation on individual identities and shopping behaviours,
- To identify any methodological issues that may derive in putting methodology into practice,
- To try all questions that will be used during the semi-structured interviews 1 and 2,
- If necessary to change, add or remove the initial questions prepared for the semi-structured interviews.

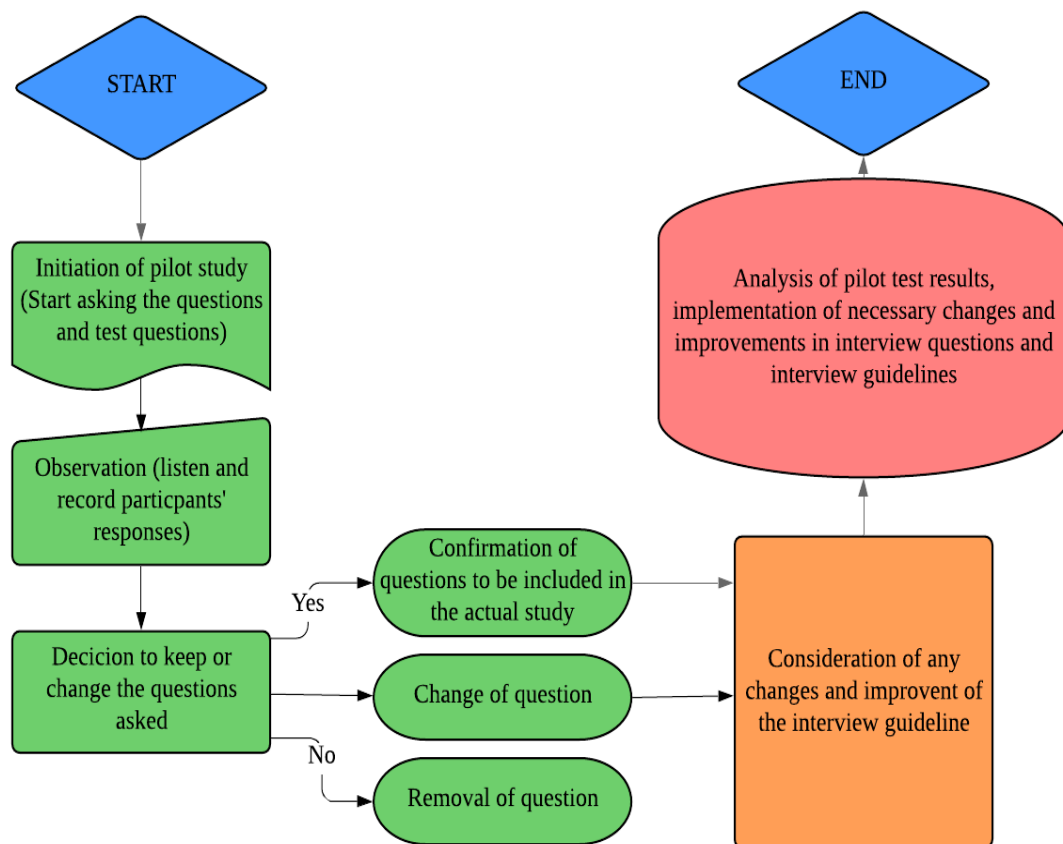
### **3.10.3. Selection Criteria for pilot study**

The participants for the pilot study were carefully selected considering their representativeness to the UAE expatriate population. Therefore, two participants from different nationalities were chosen to conduct the pilot study.

- First participant: Male, Arab nationality,
- Second participant: Female, Asian nationality,
- Both participants were identified and selected from expatriates that have been residing not more than 5 years in the UAE,
- Both participants white collar employees with minimum salary of AED 10.000.

### **3.10.4. Initial Plan and Process for Piloting**

A plan on how to conduct the pilot testing was developed prior to the invitation of the participants. The author structured a pilot testing that consist of eight questions chosen from both first and second interviews. A number of three questions were taken from the first interview and five questions were chosen for the pilot study from the second interviews. Please see below Figure 3.21 for details of the pilot test process for the individual interviews.



*Figure 3.21 Pilot test process for the individual interviews guidelines*

### **3.10.5. Arrangements for initial meetings and interviews**

Following a phone call and an arrangement for a meeting, an initial visit was paid to the participants of the pilot study of this thesis. The main aim of this non-official visit was the introduction of the author, the topic and the aim of the research. During this meeting, the process of how the interviews will be held, that there will be two separate interviews were explained as well as the topic of the research.

Also, date and time for both interviews were agreed to avoid confusion or disturbance of their daily activities or working hours. Another important purpose of these initial visits to the participants was to get to know the participants better and create a warm and friendly environment to break the ice and make them feel comfortable during the interviews.

The interviews were conducted in mutually decided venues where the participants felt comfortable and relaxed. These were, both participant's interviews were held in a restaurant/café shop, both after office hours.

### **3.10.6. The interviews**

The pilot study of this thesis was completed in four weeks. It was conducted through face to face semi-structures interviews. The author conducted two separate interviews with a three-week time difference in between. Two participants selected were interviewed twice. The first one-to-one interviews were completed in 30 to 45 minutes. Both participants were interviewed in different days. A three-week break was given to each participant and met again for their second face to face interviews lasted 45 minutes to 60 minutes.

Both first and second interviews of two participants were audio recorded. Both recordings were transcribed. Prior to the interviews, both participants were briefed clearly on the points of confidentiality and informed consent forms that point on issues such as confidentiality and their rights to withdraw were collected. The initial feedback and discussion was reflected and used in the following second and third interviews.

There were also challenges faced by the author during interviews. As the participants are required to be expatriates (reflecting the demographics of UAE expatriate population), both participants were from different countries. They both spoke English but in different levels. There were times when the author had to paraphrase the questions to ensure clear understanding of the questions.

Moreover, the author was very careful not to be offensive while collecting data for the first interviews that are based on collecting data on the participants' experiences in their home countries. Considering, that people may be sensitive when it comes to nationalistic feelings or



disclosing their preferences in life styles or shopping behaviours, all questions were revised many times before asking to the participants.

### **3.10.7. Feedback and Discussion**

After the completion of the formal interviews there was a discussion of 15 to 30 minutes on the interview questions and how the participants felt during the interviews. In general, all comments were very positive. Both participants were laughing during the interviews and seemed happy to share their experiences. They were keen on hearing the upcoming question and asking if they must answer briefly or they could speak freely.

The author ensured the participants on confidentiality several times and after the interview to avoid any offence. But at the end both of them mentioned that it is fine to mention who they were and what they said.

One of the comments for the topic of this thesis was that: 'This really is an interesting topic. These are things that happen every day but we I did not think about it until I was asked about it'. Both participants mentioned that they would like to be informed of the results of this research once it was completed.

Also, both participants asked why they had to meet twice to do two separate interviews and why they could not do it all in the same day. The author explained that it was due to the nature of this study in a polite manner and that she will be the one to visit them not to cause any inconvenience.

### **3.10.8. Audio Recording and NVivo analysis**

All first and second interviews of two participants were audio recorded. Both recordings were transcribed. However, there was some kind of hesitation when the audio recording was initially mentioned. The author repeatedly assured the participants of the

confidentiality to make them feel more comfortable and speak freely. Interestingly after the recording was stopped the participants seemed more relaxed and wanted to discuss and give further examples of experiences.

The collected data from the pilot study interviews was not used in NVivo software to for data analysis. NVivo was not attempted due to the fact that the collected data was insufficient of identifying any pattern from it. However, transcriptions made it easier for the author to determine that she was obtaining the quantity and quality of data she was aiming to achieve.

### **3.10.9. Changes implemented to the initial interview questions**

Several changes have been made to the initial interview questions after trying during the pilot study and listening to the feedback of the three pilot study participants.

#### **Question 1 and 5 of the first interview were merged.**

Question 1 and question 5 were merged as they refer to the same answer and easier to be answered at the same time.

Q1. How would you describe your general shopping habits when you were back in your home country, for example in terms of being price conscious, favouring luxury brands or expecting a certain level of product quality? (Please consider food, clothes, accessories, household items, your car, eating out, spending for leisure and vacations)

Q5. What car were you driving back home? How old was it? Why did you choose this make and model?

**New version of question 1 of the first interview:**

How would you describe your general shopping habits when you were back in your home country, for example in terms of being price conscious, favouring luxury brands or expecting a certain level of product quality? (Please consider food, clothes, accessories, household items, your car, eating out, spending for leisure and vacations). E.g. what car were you driving back home? How old was it? Why did you choose this make and model?

**Question 1 and 2 of the second interview were merged.**

Question 1 and question 3 were merged as they refer to the same.

Q1. Now in the UAE, how would you describe your general shopping habits, for example in terms of being price conscious, favouring luxury brands or expecting a certain level of product quality? (Please consider food, clothes, accessories, household items, your car, eating out, spending for leisure and vacations)

Q3. What car do you drive in UAE? Why did you choose this make and model?

**New version of question 1 of the second interview:**

Now in the UAE, how would you describe your general shopping habits, for example in terms of being price conscious, favouring luxury brands or expecting a certain level of product quality? (Please consider food, clothes, accessories, household items, your car, eating out, spending for leisure and vacations). E.g. What car do you drive in UAE? Why did you choose this make and model?

**Question 12 of the second interview was changed**

Q12. Do you think people will perceive you differently with your new shopping preferences? Do you think you present a different identity in their minds?

This question was changed due to a feedback received by one of the pilot study participants. The participant mentioned that: This question may imply that I have new shopping preferences, but maybe I did not change my shopping preferences. Hence, to avoid confusion and leading the participants to a specific answer, it has been changed to: ‘if your shopping preferences have changed, how do you think people back home perceive you with your new shopping preferences?’

#### **Question 27 of the second interview was changed**

Q27. Consider a product (or a product of a well-known brand) that is very popular and has a high number of sales but you don’t really like the style of the product; would you still consider buying this product? Please explain your answer?

The ‘but you don’t really like the style of the product’ part of the question has been removed as it led the participants not to think over the question and respond negatively in spontaneous manner.

#### **Question 27 of the second interview was changed (second time)**

Q27. Consider a product (or a product of a well-known brand) that is very popular and has a high number of sales but you don’t really like the style of the product; would you still consider buying this product? Please explain your answer?

This question was changed due a comment of one of the participants in the pilot interview. The participant mentioned that: The part ‘has a high number of sales’ sounded like the product has ‘sales’ very often. And asked if he should answer according to the fact it goes on sales very often or according to the number of sold items? To avoid confusion, the part ‘has a high number of sales’ has been changed to: ‘has sold / is selling a lot’

### **Question 29 of the second interview was removed**

Q29. What do you think of finding the cheapest of the same products and the best sales in the UAE?

This question does not reflect to the representativeness of the participants. Participants of this research are decided to be identified and chosen from white and gold colour expatriates that will have a minimum amount of 10.000 AED monthly income. Hence, participants fitting in this category may not be happy with this question asked to them.

### **Question 29 of the second interview was changed**

Q29. What do you think of the phrases: ‘The more expensive a product, the higher the quality’, ‘the price is the indicator of the quality of a product’ ‘If you pay peanuts, you will get monkeys?’

This question has been divided into two parts and asked separately as they refer to opposite answers and may confuse the participants. Additionally, the part: ‘The price is the indicator of the quality of a product’ has been removed as it has the same meaning of the first phrase.

After the first interview with the first participant, this question was divided into two parts and asked as separate questions. It has been observed by the author that the second and last participants of the pilot study responded easily and more confidently compared to the first participant of the first interview that received this question as a whole.

### **New Questions added:**

Two new questions were added to gather further data from the participants on changes in identity and shopping behaviour.

**First additional question - Q30 second interview:**

What would you say about the phrase: ‘You are what you wear?’

**Second additional question - Q31 second interview:** Do you think you as an expatriate you have (or developed) a different identity or are there any changes that you recognize in your identity since moving abroad? If so, how would you describe this new identity?

Please refer to below Table 3.6 for the first interviews and Table 3.7 for the second interviews that include responses of two different participants:

First Interview Questions	Responses of Participant 1	Responses of Participant 2
How would you describe your general shopping habits when you were back in your home country in terms of being price conscious, favouring luxury brands or expecting a certain level of product quality? E.g. Were you driving a car?	<p>“Back home we didn’t really understand the concept of luxury brands, the area I grew up in didn’t have shopping malls or high-end stores, most of the clothing were locally made, and people in our town were almost on the same level, we used to consider Nike or Adidas to be a luxury item. I am passionate about electronic and technology, but I was born in 1984 and many things were introduced to our country when I was in the mid 20’s. Access to internet was limited so we were not exposed to many things before”.</p> <p>“I didn’t own a car back home as the petrol prices are very expensive and there is a 100% tax on cars.”</p>	<p>“I didn’t usually shop a lot. But if I would shop, I wouldn’t usually buy products because of its brand or price, I would buy what I really need and what I feel like buying.</p> <p>Normally, I used to buy stuff that I knew was durable meaning with good quality and of course affordable price...</p> <p>same thing goes with going out to eat. I don’t mind paying money for good food. Because I grew up believing that in terms of food you shouldn’t be deprived of something that you wanted to eat. Simply because food is food. You eat it, it’s not a waste of money”.</p> <p>“As for the car... No, I wasn’t driving a car. At least not my own. If I needed a car, I would borrow my dad’s car.”</p>

First Interview Questions	Responses of Participant 1	Responses of Participant 2
In general, how do you think people that can afford a luxurious life style are regarded / perceived in your home country?	“I hope this information will stay confidential, so I will speak honestly, we used to perceive them as corrupt people. Import taxes are really high here, there are loopholes which everyone can use when buying certain products but our view was that you can’t live such a luxury style life unless you are taking bribes at work.”	“I guess there are people who admire them like an inspiration to do better in life but also a lot of people envy them like giving bad comments because they feel bad for themselves since they can’t have what they have and they are not doing anything about it just nagging.”
To what extent did you try to buy products at the cheapest times (e.g. in sales) or at the cheapest places (e.g. by looking around to find the cheapest shop/supplier).	“Always. Buying something used to take me a full weekend, I used to go from shop to shop and bargain for the cheapest price.”	“Oh me? I love sale times! It’s like I can buy much more things and things that I like in a discounted price. Who would not want that? There are things you like and can get for cheaper. It is great!”

*Table 3.6 Samples of first interview questions and responses of the pilot study*



Second Interview Questions	Responses of Participant 1	Responses of Participant 2
What are some of your shopping preferences? e.g. online shopping, shopping malls, opinion leaders etc.	<p>“I had many bad experiences shopping online in the UAE so the only time I would consider buying online is through outside website such as Amazon.com or buying directly from the retailer like apple.com.”</p> <p>“Other than that, I would go to the closest mall in buy what I need.”</p>	<p>“I do like walking in the malls. Because there you won’t only shop, you can dine, have a coffee, watch cinema and even play bowling. The weather here is very hot so the best thing is to go to the malls. And there are so many things available for literally everyone. Kids can play, teenagers can chill, families can eat, and everyone can buy anything. So yeah for me the best choice is to go to malls.”</p>

Second Interview Questions	Responses of Participant 1	Responses of Participant 2
<p>What would say about the phrase: ‘The things I own say a lot about how well I’m doing in life’.</p>	<p>“I disagree with that, I have met people who drive luxury cars and travel but stress about their kids’ school tuition fees... If you look from an outsider perspective then yes you might think: ‘Oh I wish I was them’, but when you see how much debt they are in you wouldn’t want that at all. So, it can be pretty deceiving. A lot of people tend to pretend that they are well off but they live on credits cards and loans as the UAE offers many options for the people to live a good life. Basically, you have ways to spend more.”</p>	<p>“I guess I would say, yes. Because people judge first with their eyes. They have a look at what you have: like your car, clothes, bag you carry, shoes you wear, ask where you live, even ask how many bedrooms you have in your apartment than go on with the rent amount. I guess they sum it up and there you go. This is how well you are doing in life.”</p>

Second Interview Questions	Responses of Participant 1	Responses of Participant 2
Do you believe your decisions in purchasing, products you choose to buy, make a difference in your life style? If so in what way and how?	<p>“Yes, it does. And let me tell you a funny story, I am relatively new here but I can already tell you, driving on the UAE highway is hell. I drive a new Nissan Altima and I drive on the maximum speed allowed yet people always tailgate you or drive slower ahead of you. I was once with a friend who borrowed his friend’s new Toyota Land Cruiser and he was cruising on the far-left lane at the speed of 100km/h on a 140km/h and people gave way to him and none tailgated him.</p> <p>People treat you differently here on how much you show off and this will change you to want to own more. Plus, you have many options to buy more.</p>	<p>“I believe so. Yes. In a way that now I purchase products knowing it is much cheaper, compared to the ones back home. So, it’s always a good deal for me.</p> <p>Specially, the ones that are with known brands that are expensive back home. And the things I have, like my car, makes my life more comfortable. People tend to be more respectful to you when they see you with nice clothes or nice nails, hair. If You look good, they treat you good.”</p>

Second Interview Questions	Responses of Participant 1	Responses of Participant 2
Do others' opinions matter to you before making a purchasing decision? Would you buy a product because someone else has bought it?	<p>"In a way yes it does, but it only matters if I actually like the product, I wouldn't buy something I don't like because someone recommended it."</p>	<p>"Sometimes yes. But most of the time I buy what I want to buy. But again, if I'm having a bit of a dilemma I usually ask my friends. It is always good to have a second opinion. I guess it's more than sometimes." Laughs.</p>
Consider a product (or product of a well-known brand) that is very popular and sells a lot, would you consider buying this product? Please explain your answer?	<p>"If I want to spend money on good brand, I would prefer exclusivity, I wouldn't buy something that everyone wears. I would rather spend more money on a very well less owned brand than having something that's everyone can afford.</p> <p>And honestly, I know it's stupid so I can't say any reason to justify it but this is what I would want to do."</p>	<p>"If I like it yes like when the popularity of Stan Smith shoes was on its peak. I actually bought it because it feels cool but I bought the rare one because it's still good to be a bit different than others."</p>

*Table 3.7 Samples of second interview questions and responses of the pilot study*

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **ANALYSIS & RESULTS**

#### **4.1. Introduction**

This chapter illustrates the collected data and its analysis. The chapter displays the analysis of the qualitative data that was collected through semi-structured, open ended interviews from 40 expatriate participants, and its validation through implementing NVivo -12 software. Words with key importance and displaying high frequencies mentioned by the participants in the interviews, were illustrated through the Tree and Word clouds that was accessed through the software. This supported the author to identify and deduct the major factors impacting on expatriate changes in identity and shopping behaviour and linked her to the results which reflected to the questions and objectives of this research.

Along with the NVivo analysis, all transcripts were analysed individually by the author. A sample of manual analysis completed by the author is provided for further details in the process of analysis of transcripts. Please see Appendix 7 and 8, for two types of samples of transcript analysis.

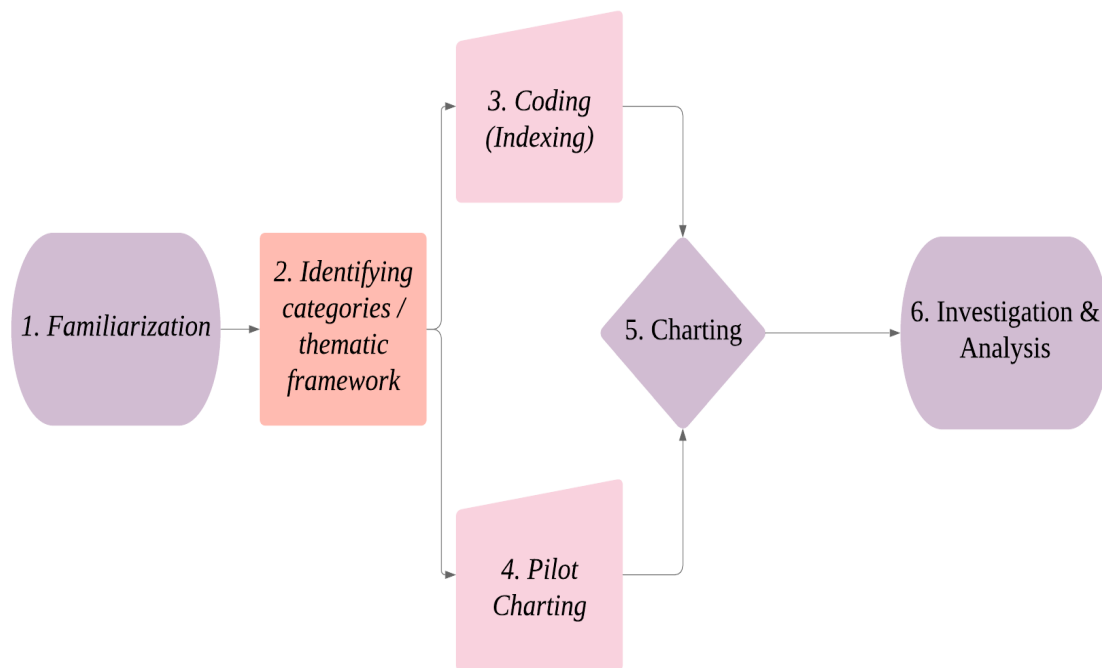
#### **4.2. Findings, Themes**

The themes of this study were developed through the experiences and stories shared by the 40 expatriates living in the UAE. All stories were transcribed and linked in main stream lines. Within the same topic, some stories shared by the participants provided very similar experiences, where other stories displayed contrasting opinions.

The initial interviews of this research, took place approximately 30 to 45 minutes while the second interviews lasted about 45 to 60 minutes in total. All participants answered 10 questions in the first interview and 31 questions in the second interview. All interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed afterwards.

Overall, for the author all stories were unique and exciting to listen. Interviews were very vivid, and mostly full of laughter due to the incredible experiences shared by the participants. There were times where the participants delivered messages of their challenges in their shopping preferences, and other times when they were happy to share their success stories, and their changed identities as expatriates away from home, family, and friends. Most importantly, they supported the author in clearly identifying the factors that consequently changed their identity and shopping habits as an expatriate. Their stories answered the two main questions of this research; how and why they have been through changes in identity and shopping behaviour as an expatriate.

Furthermore, as discussed in the methodology chapter, the key steps of the Framework Method© were followed. The gathered data was analyzed by following the steps provided below in Figure 4.1.



*Figure 4.1 Process flow -framework method© of individual interviews*

#### **4.2.1. Individual interviews: Demographics of Participants**

Data for this research was gathered from interviews of 40 expatriates residing in the UAE up to 5 years, between the ages of 21 to 65, from various origins in nationality, gender, education and work experience. Keeping in mind the ethical considerations, gathering participants from various backgrounds supported the author in remaining unbiased at all times. Please see section 3.8.3, on page 149, Sampling Technique/strategy for further details of participants. Before the analysis were commenced a Table of *overall demographics of all participants* was developed. Please see overall participants demographics, displayed in below Table 4.1.

Participant Number	Age (From-to)	Gender	Country of Origin	Education	Position	Salary (Avarage)	Estimated Number of years in the UAE
1	21-30	Female	Iraq	Bachelor's Degree	Customer Service Supervisor	AED 10.000-20.000	3
2	21-30	Male	Jordan-Turkey	Master's Degree	Finance Manager	AED 21.000-30.000	2.5
3	31-40	Male	Jordan	Bachelor's Degree	Supervisor	AED 10.000-20.000	3
4	21-30	Female	The Netherlands	Master's Degree	Manager	AED 21.000-30.000	3
5	21-30	Male	Lebanon	Bachelor's Degree	Administrative	AED 10.000-20.000	3.5
6	21-30	Female	United Kingdom	Master's Degree	Manager	AED 21.000-30.000	3
7	31-40	Female	Russia	Master's Degree	Customer Service Manager	AED 21.000-30.000	2.5
8	21-30	Male	Syria	Bachelor's Degree	QHSE Manager	AED 21.000-30.000	2.5
9	41-50	Male	Turkey	Bachelor's Degree	FM Soft Services Manager	AED 21.000-30.000	3.5
10	31-40	Female	Australia-Lebanon	Master's Degree	HR Manager	AED 21.000-30.000	2.5
11	31-40	Female	Phillipine	Bachelor's Degree	Supervisor	AED 10.000-20.000	3
12	31-40	Female	Turkey	Master's Degree	Financial Consultant	AED 21.000-30.000	3.5
13	21-30	Male	Canada-Lebanon	Bachelor's Degree	Self Employed-Businessman	AED 61.000-Above	4
14	41-50	Male	Turkey	Bachelor's Degree	Self Employed -Businessman	AED 61.000-Above	3
15	21-30	Female	Lebanon	Bachelor's Degree	Teacher	AED 10.000-20.000	4
16	41-50	Male	United Kingdom	Bachelor's Degree	Visitor Service Manager	AED 21.000-30.000	1.5
17	51-60	Male	United Kingdom	Master's Degree	Senior Manager	Aed 41.000-50.000	3.5
18	31-40	Female	Italy	Bachelor's Degree	Senior Sales Manager	AED 10.000-20.000	3
19	21-30	Female	Sudan	Bachelor's Degree	Administrative	AED 10.000-20.000	2
20	41-50	Male	Australia	Master's Degree	Project Manger	AED 31.000-40.000	1
21	21-30	Male	Saudi Arabi	Master's Degree	Accounts Manager	AED 21.000-30.000	3.5
22	31-40	Female	Philippine	Bachelor's Degree	QHSE Coordinator	AED 10.000-20.000	2
23	41-50	Female	Tunisia	Bachelor's Degree	Administrative	AED 10.000-20.000	4
24	21-30	Male	Tunisia	Bachelor's Degree	Call Center Manager	AED 10.000-20.000	3
25	31-40	Female	Turkey	Bachelor's Degree	Self Employed Restaurant Owner	AED 61.000-Above	4
26	31-40	Male	India	Bachelor's Degree	QHSE Manager	AED 21.000-30.000	3
27	31-40	Female	India	Master's Degree	CS Deputy Manager	AED 10.000-20.000	4
28	21-30	Male	Canada	Bachelor's Degree	Assistant Manager	AED 10.000-20.000	3.5
29	21-30	Male	Tunisia	Bachelor's Degree	Operations Manager	AED 21.000-30.000	3.5
30	41-50	Female	Hungary	High School	Sales Manager	AED 21.000-30.000	4
31	31-40	Female	Ukraine	Bachelor's Degree	Supervisor	AED 10.000-20.000	3
32	21-30	Male	Egypt	Bachelor's Degree	Relationship Officer	AED 10.000-20.000	4
33	31-40	Male	Egypt	Bachelor's Degree	Producer-Media	AED 10.000-20.000	4
34	21-30	Male	Egypt	Bachelor's Degree	Senior Sales Advisor	AED 21.000-30.000	3.5
35	31-40	Male	Canada	Bachelor's Degree	Sales Manager	AED 21.000-30.000	3
36	31-40	Female	Romania	Master's Degree	Manager	AED 21.000-30.000	4
37	31-40	Female	Iran	Master's Degree	HR Manager	AED 21.000-30.000	3.5
38	31-40	Male	Germany	Bachelor's Degree	Project Manger	AED 31.000-40.000	4
39	31-40	Male	Jordan	Bachelor's Degree	FM Hard Services Manager	AED 21.000-30.000	4
40	41-50	Female	Spain	Bachelor's Degree	Manager	AED 21.000-30.000	4

Table 4.1 Demographic Table of all participants



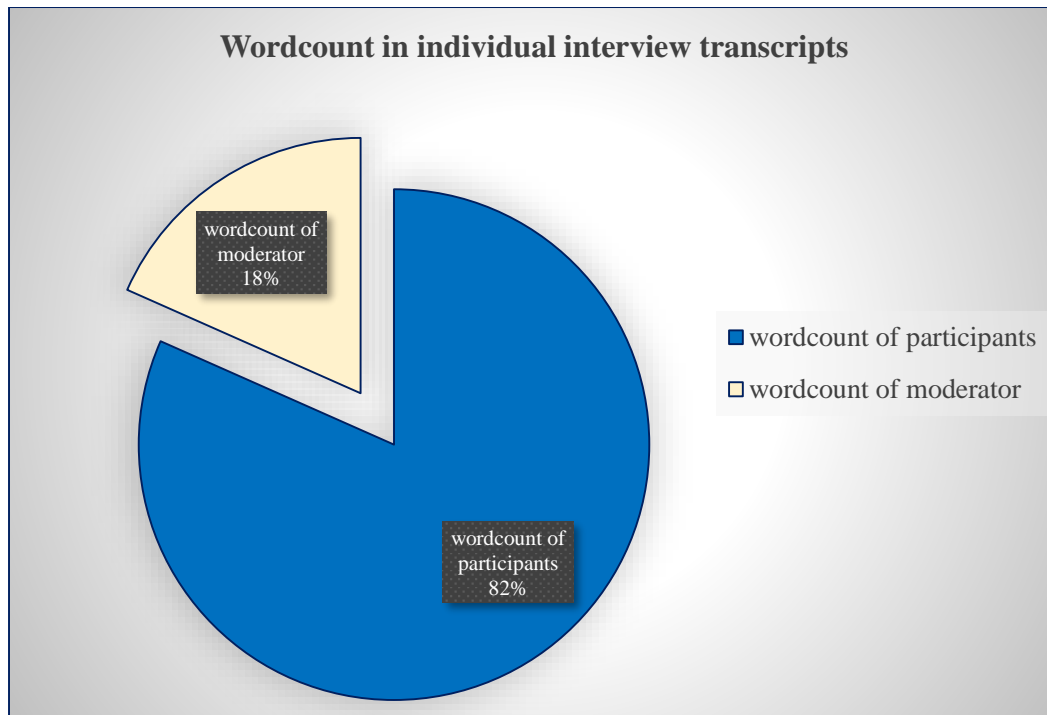
To facilitate the reader to understand the findings and an uninterrupted reading, all quotes were labelled. Key details of interviewees such as the nationality, gender and positions of participants were mentioned in brackets after each quote.

Furthermore, saturation of this research was perceived roughly around the 15<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>st</sup> interviews. However, the interviews were carried on to reach a broader mix of nationalities as well. Additionally, several interviews were not satisfactory due to the fact of language barrier and not understanding the questions accurately. Hence, some interviews were conducted and completed with short or irrelevant responses to the nature of the topic.

#### **4.2.2. First Step: Familiarization**

The familiarization process included reading all transcripts of 40 interviews several times and listening to the audio recordings for a further understanding. (Please see Appendix 7, Sample of transcript analysis -1 and Appendix 8, Sample of transcript analysis -2). The sample transcript illustrated in Appendix 7, was developed by coding in parenthesis next to the responses of the participant within the text. The codes are linked to the themes identified via NVivo. The sample transcript in Appendix 8, is developed by adding comments (codes) on the side of the transcription. Hence, reading the transcripts and listening to the audio recordings, enabled the author to be meticulously familiarized with the data gathered.

Furthermore, the below Figure 4.2 was developed using all transcripts developed by the data gathered, in the individual interviews. The Figure illustrates the ratio of the word count between the participants and the author, within the verbatim transcripts. The ratios demonstrate that, 82% of contribution to transcripts was by the participants, and only 18% by the author herself.



*Figure 4.2 Ratio of word count for the author and the participants in individual interview transcripts*

### 4.2.3. Second Step: Identification of descriptive categories

After being familiarized with the data collected from the interviews of 40 participants, the author was able to identify manually (by taking notes) the initial emerging themes and subthemes. Hence, an initial list of themes and sub-themes were gathered within a framework. Please see below Table 4.2 for the initial conceptual thematic framework developed.

Initially Identified Themes and Sub-themes
<b>Theme 1:</b> Social environment & Peer Pressure
<b>Theme 2:</b> Social media usage <b>Sub-theme 1:</b> Reflecting lifestyle and identity through social media
<b>Theme 3:</b> Changing identity <b>Sub-theme 1:</b> The need to fit in
<b>Theme 4:</b> Hedonistic Shopping factors <b>Theme 5:</b> The Retail Therapy, Feelings of Loneliness, stress, boredom <b>Theme 6:</b> Variety, Festivals & Sales

<b>Theme 7:</b> First impressions
<b>Theme 8:</b> Use of Luxury Products
<b>Theme 9:</b> Brands & Brand engagement
<b>Theme 10:</b> Shopping as a mean of socialization

*Table 4.2 Initial Conceptual thematic framework: Individual interviews*

#### **4.2.4. Third Step: Coding (Indexing)**

The large amount of data collected was categorized using indexing, as Ritchie et al. (2003) suggested. As discussed earlier, coding was carried out both manually and using NVivo software. Please see Appendix 8 for an example of transcript with coding. After the application of data to NVivo, the initially developed themes and sub-themes were refined and linked further to concepts and collected under main dimensions. Additionally, to review the steps in creating the Transcripts mind maps and Definition of codes applying NVivo software please refer to Appendix 15.

Overall 10 major themes and 6 sub-themes were developed that were consequently linked to 5 dimensions. Please see finalized thematic framework individual interviews (1<sup>st</sup> order concepts, 2<sup>nd</sup> order Themes and sub-themes, Aggregate dimensions) on Table: 4.3

The 5 aggregate dimensions that were deducted were listed as:

1. *Influence by others,*
2. Social Media,
3. Identity,
4. Financial Factors and
5. Social Life.

All sub-themes that reflected similarity in data, collected from the participants about identity and shopping behaviour changes as an expatriate, were listed under the relevant main themes. A total number of **2770 of passages** were identified, and referenced from the transcripts of all 40 participants. Please see Figure 4.3 on page 178 for the total number of passages established and number of contributions identified, and Figure 4.4 on page 178 for the number of passages, contributors and participants' total number, verses themes and sub-themes. Overall, 10 major themes and 6 sub-themes were identified, demonstrated in the thematic framework and labelled as the following:

1. *Social Environment and Peer Pressure (Sub-theme: Herding Behaviour),*
2. *Social Media Usage (Sub-theme 1: reflecting lifestyle and Identity through social media, Sub-theme 2: Social media purchasing factors),*
3. *Changing Identity (Sub-theme 1: The need to Fit in and Belong, sub-theme 2: Reflecting Identity Through Possessions, Sub-theme 3: Perception of Identity by Others Through Possessions),*
4. *Hedonic Shopping Factors,*
5. *The Retail Therapy- Feelings of Loneliness, Stress and Boredom*
6. *Variety Festivals and Sales*
7. *First Impressions*
8. *Use of Luxury Products*
9. *Brands and Brand Engagement*
10. *Shopping as a Means of Socialization.*

Please see below Table 4.3 for the 1<sup>st</sup> order concepts, 2<sup>nd</sup> order Themes and sub-themes, Aggregate dimensions developed.

1st order CONCEPTS	2nd order THEMES and Sub-themes	AGGREGATE DIMENTIONS
Being influenced by work colleagues/friends/neighbours in shopping preferences	Theme 1: Social environment & peer Prssure	Influence by others
Considering Others’ opinions before making a purchasing decision		
Prefer to buy products and brands that others admire		
Purchasing a product with high number of sales	Sub-theme 1.1: Herding behavior	
Use social media in the UAE for information and/or advice	Theme 2: Social media usage	Social Media
Love or to avoid to post pictures on social media of daily life	Sub-theme 2.1: Reflecting lifestyle and identity through social media	
Feelings about presenting any purchases to friends, colleagues, family and friends back home	Sub-theme 2.2: Social media purchasing factors	
Being influenced by opinion leaders in social media	Theme 3: Changing Identity	Identity
Changing identity	Theme 3.1: The need to fit in	
Buying things to fit in a group		
Purchasing the same products and brands that others purchase	Sub-theme 3.2: Reflecting identity through possessions	
Developing new identity as an expatriate		
Buying products that reflect certain identity through ownings/clothes		
Perception of others according to the things you own		
Purchasing products to look in a certain way than others	Sub-theme 3.4: Perception of identity by others through possessions	
Expressing one’s identity through prefered brands and products purchases		
Being Percived differently when buying expensive presents to others		
Being perceived differently by people back home	Theme 4: Hedonistic Shopping factors	Finacial Factors
Having debates in mind prior to buying a product		
Manage feelings when in doubt with purchasing decisions		
Feelings of excitement, thrill, happiness or relaxation while buying a prefered product		
Considering to buy a gift just to make others happy		
Buying products even when not really in need of them		
Enjoy spending money on things that aren't practical		
Buying things for pleasure-retail therapy		
Enjoy shopping (or shop online) when bored, tired, stressed or feel lonely		
Purchases of gifts for others or treats for one's self		
Buying online-easy -lower prices	Theme 5: The Retail Therapy, Feelings of Loneliness, stress, boredom	
Seeing touching the product before buying- preferences malls		
Considering limits of income before purcahasing ,being price conscious	Theme 6: Variety, Festivals & Sales	
Feelings when purchasing a prefered product or brand	Theme 7: First Impressions	
Considering the value, general appearances or expensiveness of product		
Impacts of First impressions for a product	Theme 8: Use of Luxury Products	
Factors/reasons in purchasing a product when newly announced in the market		
Expecting a certain level of product quality		
Expecting quality according to price		
Buying products to make life easier and more comfortable,choices of products that make life easier	Theme 9: Brands & Brand engagement	
People's interest to know one's lifestyle and it's influence on shopping and spending decisions		
Feelings when buying prefered products		
Regularly follow and purchase from certain brands/products	Theme 10: Shopping as a mean of socialization	Social Life
Favouring luxury brands		
To own things that can impress others		
Shopping for a better social life		
Impacts of social environment in shopping preferences		
Purchases to increase business and contacts		
Interacting with different cultures cultures, becoming a multicultural person		
Choice of product and impacts on lifestyle		
Shopping to socialize with friends and familv		

Table 4.3 Finalized thematic framework: Individual interviews

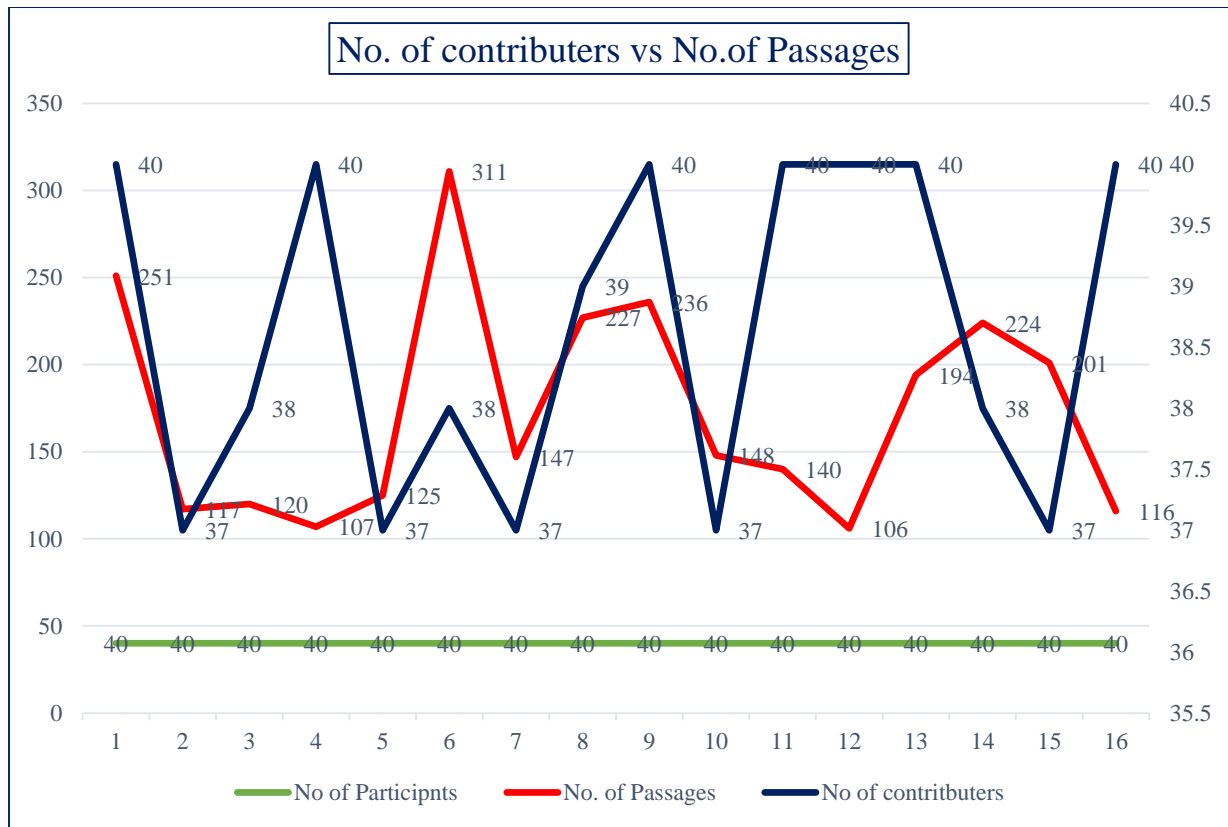


Figure 4.3 Total number of passages established and number of contributions identified

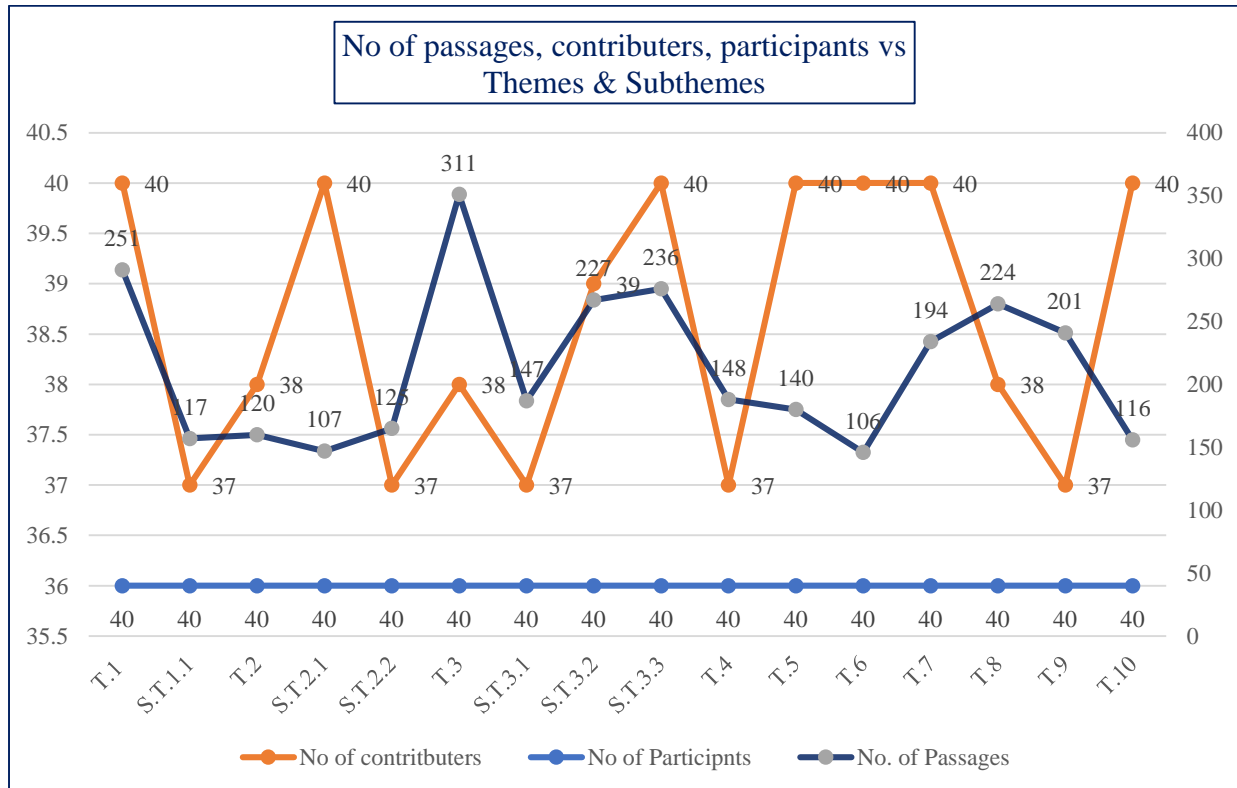


Figure 4.4 No of passages, contributors, participants' total vs themes and sub-themes

#### 4.2.5. Fourth Step: Pilot Charting

The Pilot charting was not applied as the coding (indexing) was carried out.

#### 4.2.6. Fifth Step: Charting

This process was carried out both manually and using NVivo software system. The data was charted as a short summary for each theme and sub-theme. For each theme there were thematic matrixes created. Please see Appendix 14 NVivo Software Applications, for the methods applied developing word count query, thematical framework matrix for all transcripts, Spreadsheet, Questions, Labelling of participants, Identification of columns, Steps of Generation of thematical framework Matrix.

#### 4.2.7. Sixth Step: Investigation and Interpretation

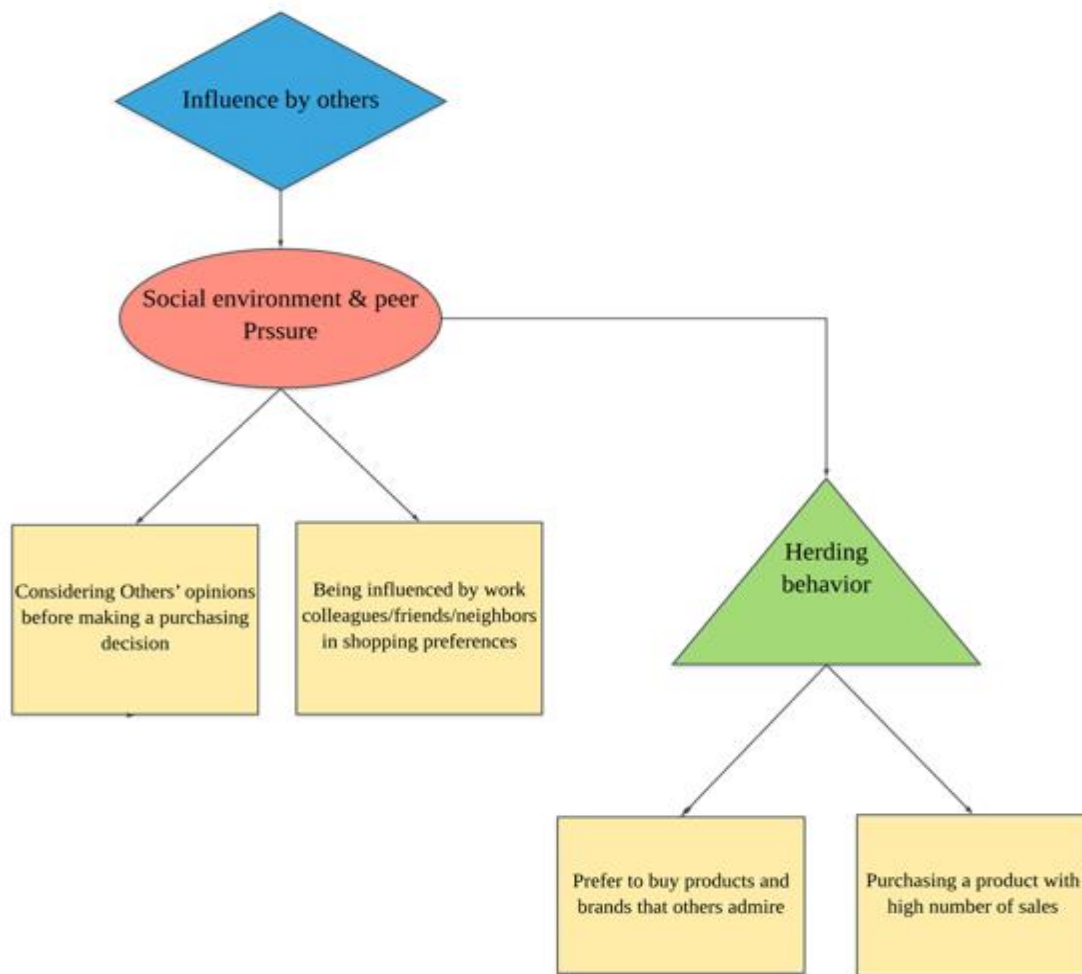
Please refer to below section, for the emerged 5 Aggregate dimensions, 10 Themes and related 6 sub-themes:

### 4.8. Aggregate Dimension 1: Influence by others

The first dimension was labelled as *Influence by others*. The data collected under this dimension reveals how ‘influence of others’ has an impact on expatriate’s changes in identity and shopping behaviour. The frequency of words like: friends, opinions, influenced, decision, popular etc. (as displayed in both the word cloud<sup>1</sup> and tree map<sup>1</sup> of dimension 1 *Influence by others* supports the first theme, *Social environment and peer pressure*, and its sub-theme, *Herding behaviour*.







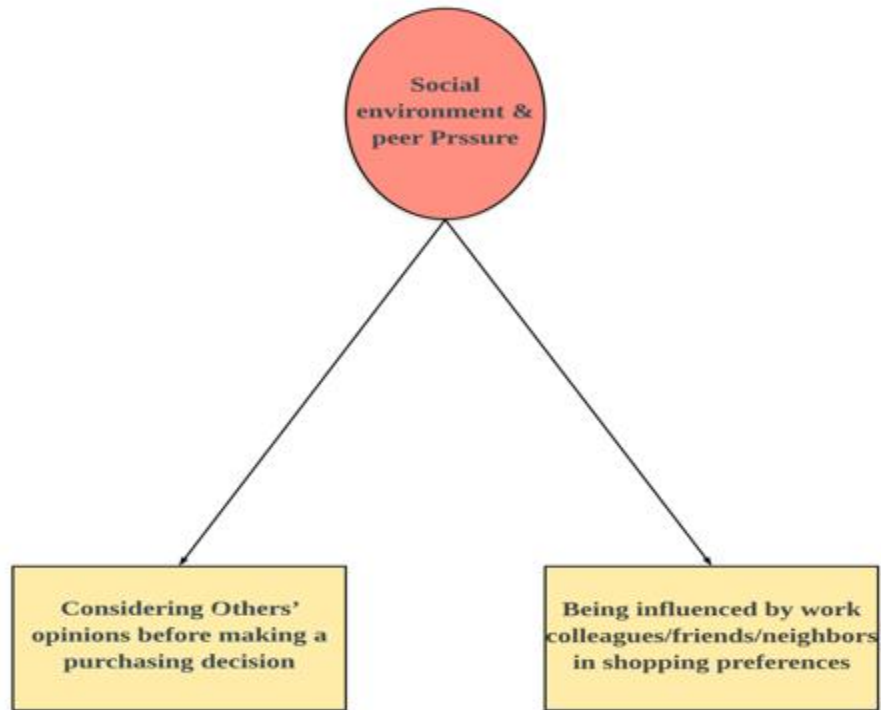
*Figure 4.7 Thematic model of Dimension 1, Influence by others*

#### 4.8.1. Theme: 1. Social Environment and Peer Pressure

1st Order CONCEPTS	2nd Order THEMES	AGGREGATE DIMENTIONS
Being influenced by work colleagues/friends/neighbours in shopping preferences	Theme 1: Social environment & peer Pressure  Sub-theme 1: Herding behavior	Influence by others
Considering Others' opinions before making a purchasing decision		
Prefer to buy products and brands that others admire		
Purchasing a product with high number of sales		

*Table 4.4 Thematic Table for Theme 1, Social environment and peer pressure*

As interviews were being transcribed, the first major theme was developed and named as ***Social environment and peer pressure***. This theme further was developed with a sub-theme named as the ***Herding behaviour*** and four 1<sup>st</sup> order concepts as demonstrated in the thematic model Figure 4.8 below.



*Figure 4.8 Thematic model of Theme 1, Social environment and peer pressure*

From all 40 participants' transcripts, the below responses were selected and illustrated for theme 1 in the following sections. Please see below Table 4.5, for details of participants identified as indicating peer pressure.

Participant's Demographic Information							
Participant Number	Age (From-to)	Gender	Country of Origin	Education	Position	Salary (Average)	Estimated Number of years in the UAE
9	41-50	Male	Turkey	Bachelor's Degree	FM Soft Services Manager	AED 21.000-30.000	3.5
16	41-50	Male	United Kingdom	Bachelor's Degree	Visitor Service Manager	AED 21.000-30.000	1.5
8	21-30	Male	Syria	Bachelor's Degree	QHSE Manager	AED 21.000-30.000	2.5
14	41-50	Male	Turkey	Bachelor's Degree	Self Employed - Businessman	AED 61.000-Above	3

*Table 4.5 Demographic Table of participants Theme 1, Social environment and peer pressure*

Majority of the participants shared stories of the fact of how they have been greatly influenced from their social environments in their purchasing decisions and in the change of their identities. Almost all expatriates stated the existence of an influence.

According to expatriates, influence stemmed from the social media groups, daily social interactions with friends, neighbours, and work colleagues or by the multi-cultural environment that expatriates are surrounded with.

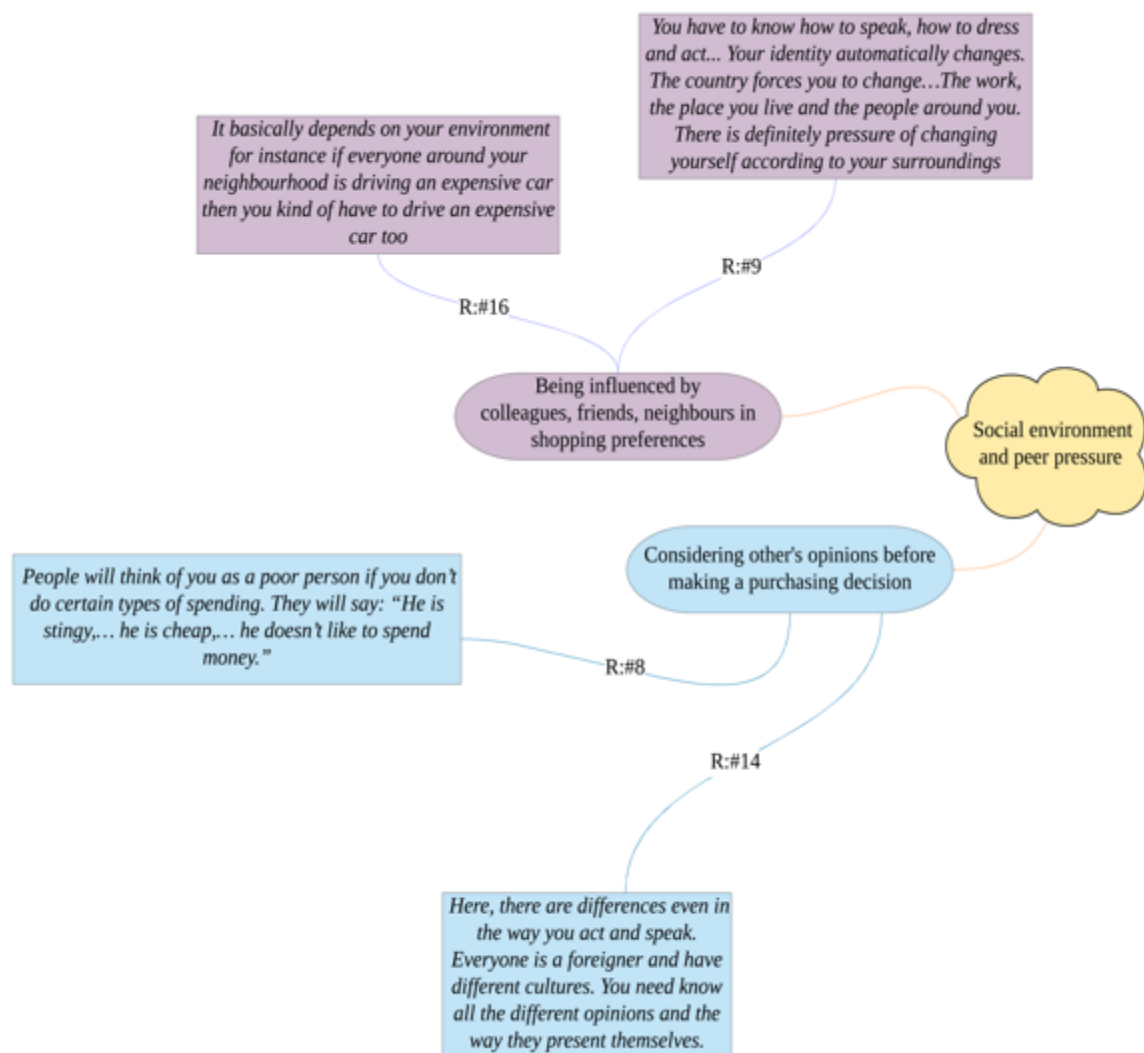


Figure 4.9 Key Responses, Theme 1- Social environment and peer pressure

An example story of a total change in life style, shopping habits and in identity due to the influence of the social and work environment after moving abroad was openly shared by a 46 years old FM Soft Services Manager from Turkey:

*'Well, my life is totally different now. The first 6 months was the adaptation period. My habits in my country were simply like living with what I have. And here it's totally different. I started working in the UAE with the royal family. They gave me a VIP apartment, luxurious car and all... I was in a shock and didn't know how to adapt. After a year I started adapting with the people around me ... I didn't know any of the brands for example. But now, I'm very selective with what I wear. Like; Hugo Boss, Calvin Klein etc. these kinds of brands that I never tried on. I did hear the name but never had anything of this sort. Laughs... But when I started working here with all these VIP people and their surroundings... You have to know how to speak, how to dress and act... Your identity automatically changes. The country forces you to change...The work, the place you live and the people around you. There is definitely pressure of changing yourself according to your surroundings'.*

Similarly, Visitor Services manager from the UK, points on the influence of the social circle on an expatriate. As an expatriate residing for 18 months in the UAE, he shares his opinion on how and why an expatriate would possibly choose to buy an expensive car, just because the neighbours would buy certain types of cars:

*'I think they will perceive you differently if you are in a bigger circle. Your social environment is very important here. For example, if in your environment your friends are from the bigger circle, like everyone drives an expensive car, if everyone is in that category, then you have to buy an expensive car it's some kind of peer pressure. So, it basically depends on your environment for instance if everyone around your neighbourhood is driving an expensive car then you kind of have to drive an expensive car too'.*

Even though peer pressure was not anticipated during the literature review as an impact on expatriates shopping behaviour or identity changes, this sub-theme emerged and was deducted from the majority of interview transcriptions. Responses of participants revealed that *(Peer) pressure* does not demonstrate itself within a certain age limit, gender or nationality. Peer pressure rather occurs on various cases within the expatriate community, while interacting with each other. The pressure expatriates mentioned, is directly linked to their shopping preferences and reflection of their identities.

As in the following example provided below, whether satisfying or not, the purchasing decisions given by the expatriates depend on their environments and the people involved in it. Similar to various other stories collected supporting this argument, an interesting story was shared by 26 years old, Syrian QHSE manager. He mentioned ‘how and why’ he decides on where to go when socializing with his friends:

*‘People will think of you as a poor person if you don’t do certain types of spending. They will say: “He is stingy, he is cheap, and he doesn’t like to spend money.” There is pressure! For example, when my friends want to go somewhere like to a café shop... As soon as you say something like: “That place is too expensive”, they will start thinking differently about you. They will think that you are cheap. You should never mention money. You should always be like: “Yeah of course let’s go!” Laughs... If I’m going with my family, we would get cheap but good quality stuff. But if I’m going out with friends or colleagues, that have been living here for a long time, they would say: “Why are you going here? It’s not good. You should go to a better place, that’s where you find the good stuff.”*

Furthermore, 47 years old, businessman from Turkey, who has been living in the UAE for over three years, reflects the pressure that he argues he was feeling from a different point of view. He mentioned why and how he would choose to dine in certain types of restaurants, and how purchasing decisions in F&B were actually linked with his business relations.

*'I feel the pressure here more than in my country. He says. The pressure comes more from the business environment. For example, I can speak in my country with a very nice accent and also the body language counts. Here, there are differences even in the way you act and speak. Everyone is a foreigner and have different cultures. You need know all the different opinions and the way they present themselves. So, even the food you eat... If I go to a fine dining Turkish restaurant with Far Eastern people, I cannot please them. And I will not be happy with Far Eastern food in a business meeting. So, you are pressured to get to know these new tastes and get used to them if you like it or not. Because these things affect your business'.*

Similar to the provided examples above, several other stories of participants indicated the importance of the social environment and the pressure that comes with it. Expatriates in general were saying, if they choose to or not they are somewhat obliged to purchase certain products or services that were actually preferred by the people that they were surrounded with. Hence, the influence of the social environment and the pressure that comes with it is one major impact on expatriates' shopping preferences.

In these two factors, expatriates were mentioning that they were under a certain type of pressure. But another type of influence was formed during the analysis, that did not seem to include too much of pressure. A type of influence that changes the identity or shopping behaviour of the expatriates rather willingly. The following sub-theme purchase by following the herd.

#### **4.8.1.1. Theme 1, Sub-theme 1: Herding Behaviour**

Another form of expatriate shopping behaviour revealed itself through ***Herding behaviour***. This sub-theme developed further from the initial theme named as the Social environment and peer pressure. Please see below Figure 4.10, for the illustration of the thematic model of herding behaviour that was divided into two concepts.

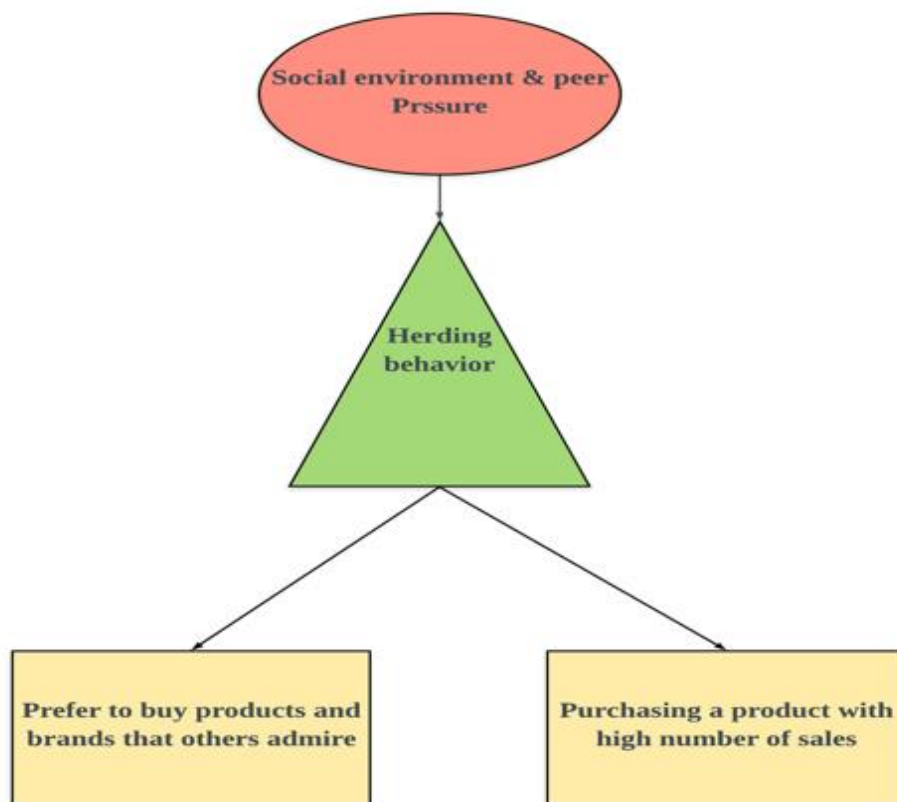


Figure 4.10 Thematic model, Theme 1, Sub-theme 1, Herding behaviour

Participant's Demographic Information							
Participant Number	Age (From-to)	Gender	Country of Origin	Education	Position	Salary (Average)	Estimated Number of years in the UAE
10	31-40	Female	Australia-Lebanon	Master's Degree	HR Manager	AED 21.000-30.000	2.5
2	21-30	Male	Jordan-Turkey	Master's Degree	Finance Manager	AED 21.000-30.000	2.5
3	31-40	Male	Jordan	Bachelor's Degree	Supervisor	AED 10.000-20.000	3
36	31-40	Female	Romania	Master's Degree	Manager	AED 21.000-30.000	4

Table 4.6 Demographic Table of participants Theme 1-Sub-theme 1, Herding behaviour



Herding behaviour, as reviewed earlier in the literature, relates to the question of ‘why individuals prefer to purchase what others do’. In this research, the author focused on why expatriates follow the shopping preferences of others. Although they were opposing opinions towards buying the same things that others buy (namely to feel different than others) many responses of participants were supporting the sub-theme identified as the *herding behaviour*.

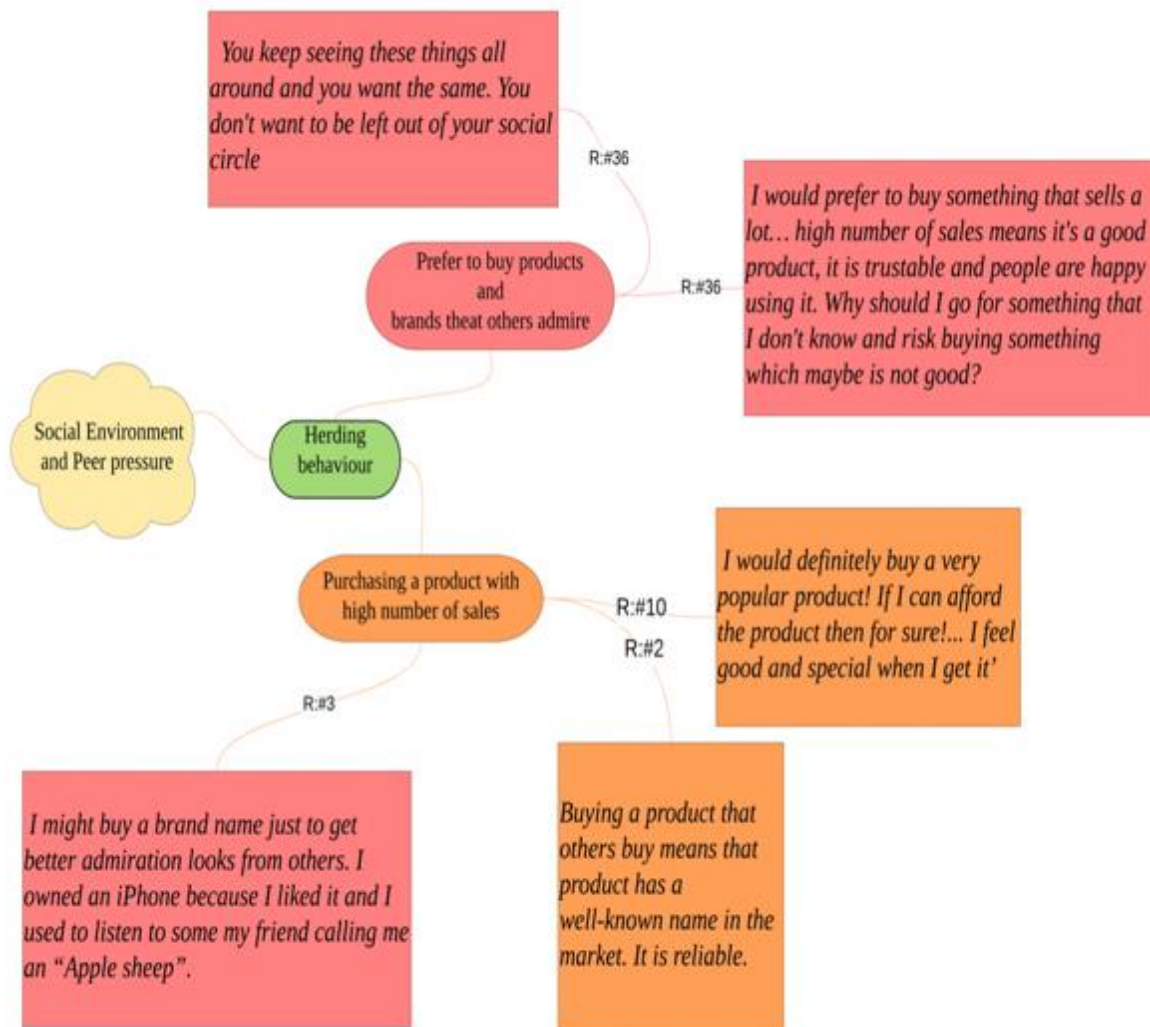


Figure 4.11 Key Responses, Theme 1, Sub-theme 1, Herding behaviour

An example, of such was told by a Romanian lady, which has been living in the UAE for four years. She openly shared her experiences in spending on products and services as an expatriate in the UAE. Her examples were similar to the majority of the participants. In her

opinion, due to the convenient spending facilities supported by the banks, living a luxurious life is something very normal in the UAE. However, for her too, the main factor seems to be the influence of the social environment. In her example it revealed more towards following the herd:

*'Well, in the UAE it is something very normal to drive and nice car. To be able to have memberships in sports clubs, to travel to different destinations, going out for dining, having spa treatments with your friends, going to brunch in the weekends, beach parties, and so much more. These things are very normal and if you don't do it with your friends then they consider you either as stingy or anti-social. Or they will think that you are just not living your life you should be. I can tell...To see people buying nice cars, going out with the nice clothes, enjoying brunch in the weekends, meeting up in ladies' nights... It makes you somehow want to do the same thing. Because you keep seeing these things all around and you want the same. Plus, you have the right income to do all this. You don't want to be left out of your social circle.... so, you do it and enjoy. Also, in the UAE it is very easy to get a car, to do the shopping, to spend money. As long as you have a salary, meaning a regular income, the banks will run after you to give you a personal loan, car loan, credit cards and so many other options to go and spend money'.*

Interestingly, 34 years old Australian-Lebanese HR manager, says that if the product/brand is popular, she would pre-order it from the internet to be able to get it even before anyone else buys it.

*'Yes! I would definitely buy a very popular product! Yes, if I can afford the product then for sure! I feel good and special when I get it'.* Later in the interview she added to her words: *'When the product is new in the market, just like ...Umm... For example, the I-Phone. Before it was out in the market, I ordered it pre-online. So, I got it before it got into the market'.* *Laughs...*

Similarly, 38 years old, Romanian customer service manager, has an interesting point on buying the same product like others:

*'When I came here, you know ... I didn't know anything and I was asking my colleagues where to go for shopping. Especially at the beginning for the house furniture etc. And... Yes, I would prefer to buy something that sells a lot... Because, high number of sales means it's a good product, it is trustable and people are happy using it. Why should I go for something that I don't know and risk buying something which maybe is not good?*

Justifying her opinion. She also added that she feels safe to buy what others already bought: *'I feel good and safe when I things that others buy. I share the good part of it and also, I can share failure of it. If anyone makes a mistake, then it is not only my mistake. And if everyone makes a good choice then I'm one of the good choice makers'* Laughs... (38 years old Romanian, Customer Service Manager, 4 years in the UAE).

Similarly, *'Of course!'* says 26 years old, Jordanian -Turkish Finance manager, holding a master's degree: *'When you are new you don't know what to do... You would read of the internet some information but at the end you prefer to talk to someone face to face. For social life, for shopping for eating. I would say: Yes. Definitely, I was influenced by my colleagues and friends... Which places to shop from, what product to buy from which shop, and where to spend time out of work. Plus, a product that sells a lot...For example, cars... definitely. It means that the car is reliable, good in quality, durable and affordable probably. I'm also in finance... So, I always think about the aftermath. And buying a product that others buy means that product has a well-known name in the market. It is reliable. For the clothes I don't prefer because I don't like to wear the same things with others. But in cars and technology definitely it means it's trustable to buy it'.*

Interestingly, 36 years old Jordanian supervisor, in his third year in the UAE explains in an amusing manner why and why not he would buy things that were highly in demand by so many others:

*I wouldn't say I'm being influenced but rather listen to people's recommendations. For example, if a colleague recommends a new restaurant I would try it. When it comes to clothes we have a saying in our country: "Eat what you like and dress how others like". So, I might buy a brand name just to get better admiration looks from others. I owned an iPhone because I liked it and I used to listen to some my friend calling me an "Apple sheep". I don't own any other Apple products but people still think that once you own one product you fall under the herd mentality. I changed it later to Samsung as I needed android for a few exclusive apps and people would still call me as the "Samsung sheep". Laughs...*

Furthermore, there are several other themes that emerged as important as the influence of others on the expatriate shopping behaviour changes. One aggregate dimension created was a well-known phenomenon of the 21st century: the social media. The following section displays the impacts of social media in changes of expatriate identity and shopping behaviour linked through one major main theme and followed by its two sub-themes.

## **4.9. Aggregate Dimension 2: Social Media**

Social media was developed as the second dimension of this thesis. Using NVivo software, the frequency of words such as: social media, buy, friends, like, want, pictures, products etc. as displayed in both the Word cloud 2 and the Tree map 2, confirms the validity of the analysis and the findings of one major theme that was developed and named as Social media usage. This theme was linked with two relevant sub-themes: Reflecting Lifestyle and Identity through Social media and Social Media Purchasing Factors.



Figure 4.12 Word Cloud Aggregate Dimension 2, Social media

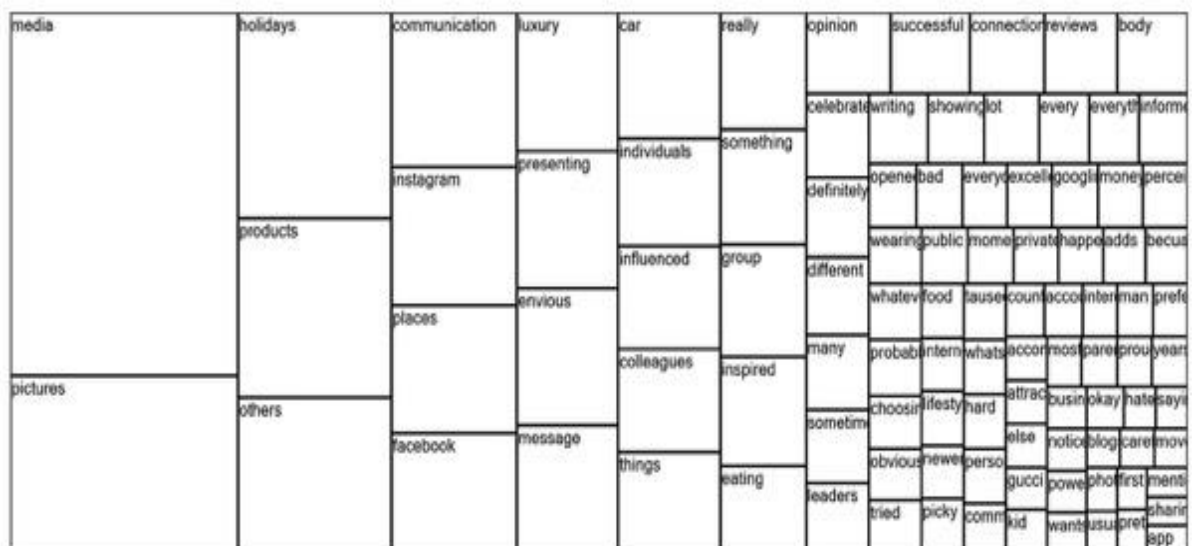
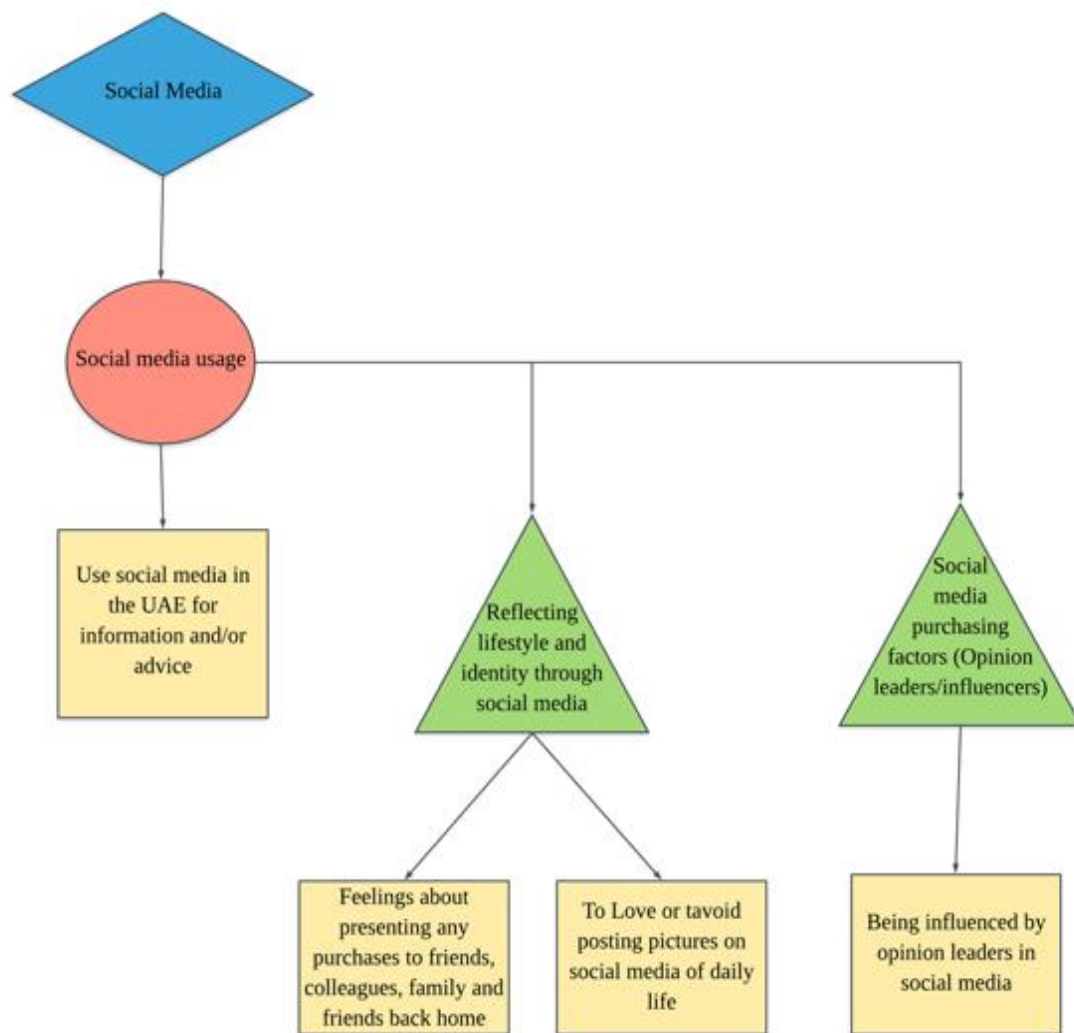


Figure 4.13 Tree Map Aggregate Dimension 2, Social media



*Figure 4.14 Thematic model Dimension 2, Social media*

#### 4.9.1. Theme: 2. Social Media Usage

1st Order CONCEPTS	2nd Order THEMES	AGGREGATE DIMENTIONS
Use social media in the UAE for information and/or advice	Theme 2: Social media usage	Social Media
Being influenced by opinion leaders in social media	Sub-theme 1: Reflecting lifestyle and identity through social media	
Love or to avoid to post pictures on social media of daily life	Sub-theme 2: Social media purchasing factors (Opinion leaders/influencers)	
Feelings about presenting any purchases to friends, colleagues, family and friends back home		

Table 4.7 Thematic Table Theme 2, Social media usage

The findings of the second major theme named as: ***Social media usage*** and was linked further into two sub-themes: ***Reflecting lifestyle and identity through social media*** and ***Social media purchasing factors***. The major theme and its sub-themes answer the two questions of this thesis: How does expatriation influence individual identities and shopping behaviours to change? Why individuals go through changes in their identities and shopping behaviours when moving abroad and living an expatriate life? Please see below Figure 4.15

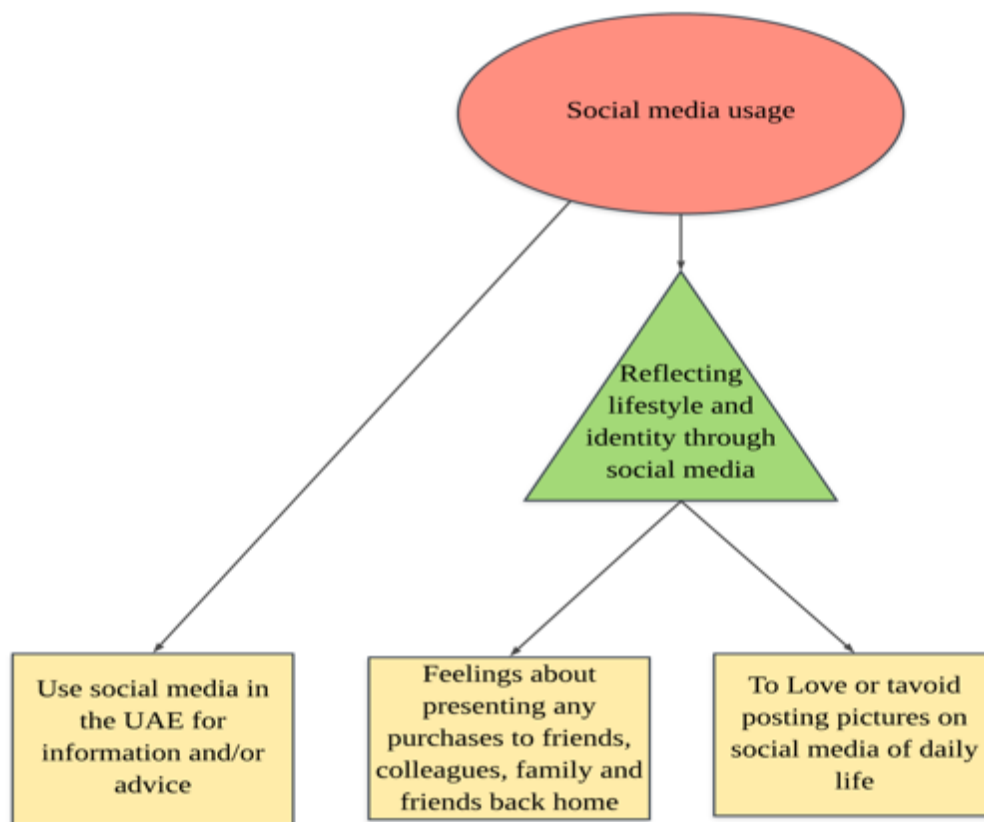


Figure 4.15 Thematic model Theme 2, Social Media Usage

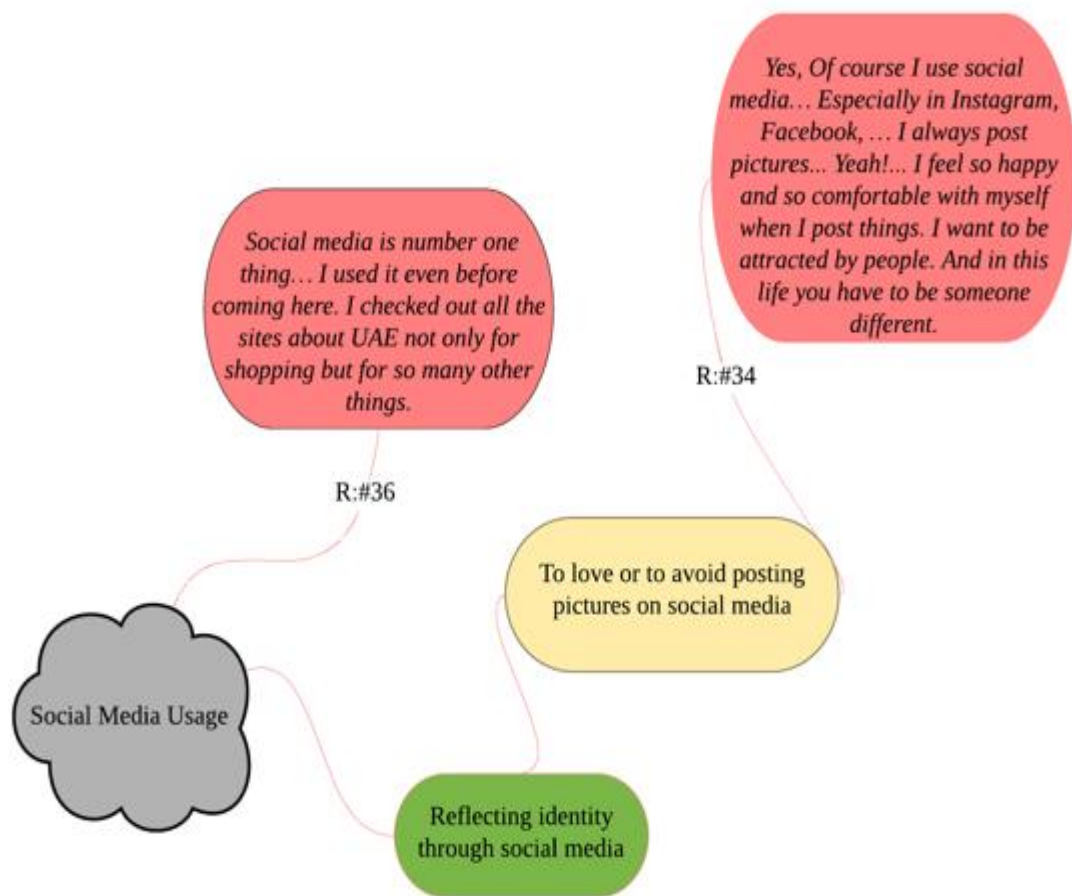
Participant's Demographic Information							
Participant Number	Age (From-to)	Gender	Country of Origin	Education	Position	Salary (Average)	Estimated Number of years in the UAE
21	21-30	Male	Saudi Arabi	Master's Degree	Accounts Manager	AED 21.000-30.000	3.5
19	21-30	Female	Sudan	Bachelor's Degree	Administrative	AED 10.000-20.000	2
36	31-40	Female	Romania	Master's Degree	Manager	AED 21.000-30.000	4

Table 4.8 Demographic Table of participants Theme 2, Social Media Usage



Social media resulted as one of the strongest mediums for expatriates on how they prefer to do their purchases. It also serves as a platform, where they like to present their identities that they claim to have developed after moving abroad.

Social media was developed as one of the major themes through the transcriptions of the 40 semi-structured interviews conducted. Starting with Myspace during 2003, followed by Facebook, Twitter, Tumbler, Snapchat, WhatsApp and more, social media also serves as a major medium of communication within the expatriate community. Mostly, Facebook, Instagram and WhatsApp was mentioned by the expatriated during the interviews. They all had their various reasons of using social media. Social media was underpinned by the expatriates in various aspects such as: In reflecting of one's identity, in generating and increasing business interactions, following product reviews and advertisings, connecting with families and friends back home, as a tool to get to know the places for shopping and socializing, even for advice of others before travelling.



*Figure 4.16 Key Responses, Theme 2, Social media usage & Sub-theme 1, Reflecting Lifestyle and identity through social media*

For expatriates, social media seems like the safe and easy tool when it comes to choosing and purchasing online. Most expatriates mentioned that for shopping they either like to go to the malls or simply order online. While claiming shops in the malls allowed them to touch and feel what they are purchasing, ordering online they argued gave them the option of reading the reviews of so many others that have tried the product already. They said they did not have to go out (especially when they are tired) and that they preferred to order while chilling at home. And finally, they mentioned the endless product options, discounts and vouchers etc.

available online. Like many other participants of this research, one example was given by a Romanian expatriate:

*'Yes, of course I use social media' says Ms. S.E. Social media is number one thing... I used it even before coming here. I checked out all the sites about UAE not only for shopping but for so many other things. And, Yeah... I listen to the opinions in the social media. People buy things and use things and then they make comments. So, again you don't have to risk buying something which is not good and not tried by others'* (38 years old, Romanian, Customer Service Manager).

Similarly, *Yes, of course*, says participant #19, *I'm always following social media, like umm... which are the new shops that opened in the mall, what to buy... I will just follow on social media.* (28 years old, Sudanese, Administrative position, 2 years in the UAE).

The examples of using social media for shopping reviews were briefly mentioned many times during the interviews by majority of the participants. Like Participant # 21 from Saudi Arabia briefly summarized his opinion about shopping online by saying:

*'I do use social media in the UAE for many things. I love on line shopping. I like to look to the reviews all the time'.* (35 years old from Saudi Arabia, Account Manager, 3.5 years in the UAE)

A very interesting point also became clear in the aspect of reflecting expatriates newly developed identity in their new surroundings. Along with following shopping review and orders online, almost all expatriates mentioned the way they reflected their new identity that stemmed from their life styles. The following sub-theme presents examples of expatriates reflecting their lifestyles and identity through social media.

#### 4.9.1.1. Theme 2, Sub-theme 1: Reflecting Lifestyle and Identity through Social media

The first sub-them developed further from the second theme Social media usage, shaped itself as: *Reflecting Lifestyle and Identity through Social media*. Please see below Figure 4.17

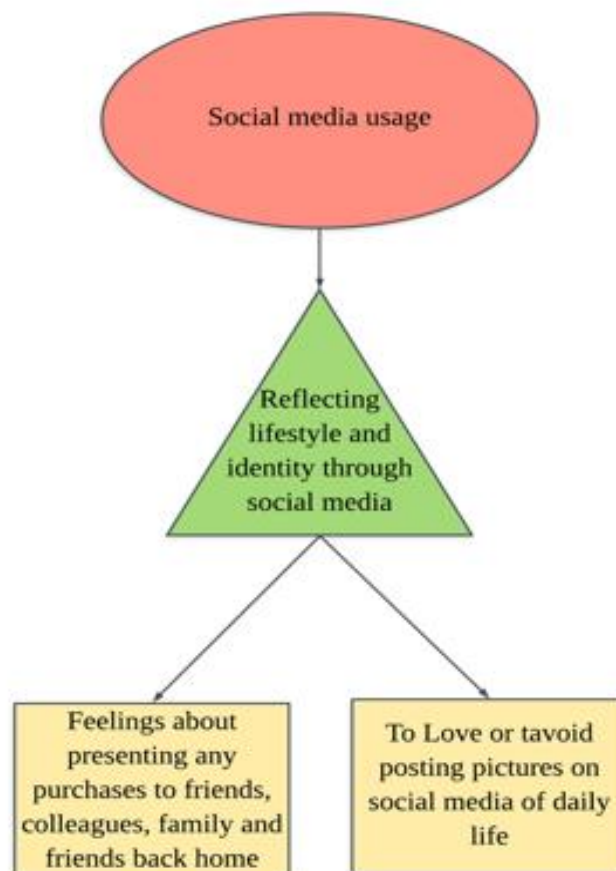


Figure 4.17 Thematic model, Theme 2, Sub-theme 1, Reflecting lifestyle and identity through social media

Participant's Demographic Information							
Participant Number	Age (From-to)	Gender	Country of Origin	Education	Position	Salary (Average)	Estimated Number of years in the UAE
14	41-50	Male	Turkey	Bachelor's Degree	Self Employed - Businessman	AED 61.000- Above	3
10	31-40	Female	Australia-Lebanon	Master's Degree	HR Manager	AED 21.000-30.000	2.5
24	21-30	Male	Tunisia	Bachelor's Degree	Call Center Manager	AED 10.000-20.000	3
1	21-30	Female	Iraq	Bachelor's Degree	Customer Service Supervisor	AED 10.000-20.000	3
11	31-40	Female	Phillipine	Bachelor's Degree	Supervisor	AED 10.000-20.000	3
13	21-30	Male	Canada-Lebanon	Bachelor's Degree	Self Employed-Businessman	AED 61.000- Above	4

*Table 4.9 Demographic Table of participants Theme 2, Sub-theme 1*

Data analysis concluded that most expatriates enjoy to reflect their lifestyles by posting pictures on line using social media. While some mentioned that people look at it as showing off, some others mentioned that it was good to share things, so the friends and families back home knew that they were doing well away from home. However, it was interesting to see that all posted pictures of expatriates seemed to consist of their ‘good moments’ only. These good moments are shared among the group of people in the social media group which creates an understanding of ‘the trendy things to do or buy’. They inform each other about the favourite places for holidays, the bags to carry, the cars to drive, the restaurants to dine in, or the clothes to wear. And all these details, once shared from one to another, start to reflect the identities they prefer to carry to fit the style of life within that circle. Similarly, the products they prefer to buy change according to the posts shared in the social media.

Participant # 14, was more towards sharing the happy moments through his posts in social media: *'I aim to keep a certain social circle in my social media accounts. Like my parents. I want them to see my pictures and feel good and happy that I'm in good places and living nicely. I share my happy moments and achievements and this makes the people that care for me happy too. And I feel happy too'* (47 years old Turkish businessman).

Like majority of the participants, Participant # 10, 34 years old, Australian-Lebanese HR Manager is also one of the constant social media users. Like most of the female participants she also openly shared her opinion about posting her good moments and belongings. She says that she even feels happy when people feel a bit of a jealousy:

*'Umm... Usually. Actually, I'm posting pictures a lot since I moved here. Specially, when I'm traveling and when I go out, I post my pictures. Maybe to show off... But it makes me feel unique'*. Laughs.

Similarly, *'Yes, of course I use social media...'* says participant # 24, *especially in Instagram, Facebook, I always post pictures... Yeah! I feel so happy and so comfortable with myself when I post things. As I told you before, I want to be attracted by people. And in this life, you have to be someone different. So, the first thing that I need to do is to be different than others. You cannot be wearing the same things or talk about the same thing you need to be different. And this is what I'm trying to do through social media, attracting people and being different than people'* confirming that he is sending a message about his difference than others to the social media groups as well as family and friends back home (34 years old, Tunisian, Call Centre manager).

Moreover, a rather amusing aspect was mentioned. Few expatriates actually said that they enjoyed the fact that people would see their great lives and feel jealous from that. Controversially, several expatriates stated that they were afraid of being affected from jealousy negatively.

One of the most colourful personalities within the participants was most probably the 27 years old Iraqi Customer service supervisor participant # 1. Even though she says it's not as frequent as in her year of arrival to the UAE, she is still a busy character online:

*'Yes, I do like to post things that I buy in Instagram and Facebook she says, but before I used to post much more than now. Now, not that much.'* Showing on her phone examples of her posts that she posted just that day. She goes on: *'When I get likes on my posts I feel very happy. Like by my friends. But if someone is jealous because of what I post. It's so nice I feel also happy. Maybe even happier'*. Laughs.

However, a contrary opinion also arose. Despite the common and frequent usage of the social media medium by many expatriates, a noticeable number of expatriates mentioned that they intentionally avoided using social media. The reason for avoiding social media usage was rather interesting. Expatriates mentioned that they specifically try to avoid posting pictures of their purchases or daily life activities (e.g. dining, clubbing etc.) because they did not want the friends and family back home to think they were earning a lot of money. They commonly agreed on the fact that if their families and friends would see those postings they would ask them to buy more gifts for them. Some expatriates even mentioned that if they did bring back gifts to their friends or family back home, they would ask for more expensive things than they already received. For instance, participant 11, a 36 years old supervisor from Philippines, agrees that social media is a tool for her to find things online when she needs to buy something:

*'Social media is very powerful right now' she says, 'And you can find everything that you want. 2-3 years ago, when I just came to the UAE, I would search for everything I need simply in social media. I think this is one of the platforms. Actually the biggest platform that you can find'*. However, she continues her words with the point that she would try not to present an image that would be perceived as rich: *'I don't want people to know that I'm doing well. Just trying to be careful it's better. Because some people will think: "Ah she's earning so much.'*

*Now we can ask for this.” For me it’s better to have a post just once in a blue moon. I don’t want people to ask me for things’.*

Another aspect of using social media was mentioned as a means of improvement in business relations and contacts. Expatriate businessmen or workers of many sorts mentioned that they use social media as a tool to connect with other businessmen. Participant # 13, for instance, a Canadian-Lebanese young businessman, is running part of his family business in the UAE. He has an interesting point of view on people’s perceptions about him:

*‘Honestly, I don’t want people looking and saying things about me. Like not to give the impression of a show off. But of course, when I travel different destinations or places in the UAE etc. Obviously, this is not showing off. I post pictures or videos etc. When I post my belongings in social media, sure some people will envy me, some will admire me. Such people that admire me they are the close friends and family. They all know how I built myself and how I can now do whatever I want to do. The envious people are the ones that always hated me because of my success. How I went abroad and I built my business and all’.*

However, he clearly points out the fact that social media itself was actually one major tool for him in improving business contacts and relations when he arrived to the UAE:

*‘Once I established my company and started doing contracts with different sub-contractors etc. As you know we are working in the airport. People started getting in touch with me through LinkedIn for further business opportunities and they wanted to see how I do it and all. A lot of connections appeared in my account, people started asking me for recruitment, for jobs. Or people were asking if would be interested in a joint venture. Obviously, it increased the connection on my LinkedIn account’.* (25 years old Canadian Lebanese businessman bachelor’s degree, single, 4 years in the UAE).

Hence, either by displaying an identity they developed after moving abroad or by reflecting the style of life they have, expatriates impact each other’s shopping behaviours and



the reflection of their identities. And this impact is directly related to the social media that is a very strong communication tool and part of the daily life of expatriates.

#### 4.9.1.2. Theme 2, Sub-theme 2: Social Media Purchasing Factors (Influencers and Opinion Leaders)

Furthermore, the impact of social media on the expatriate shopping habits were also mentioned through following social media influencers. This sub-theme was deducted from the examples that the expatriates shared on how and why they would prefer shopping using influencers in social media. This sub-theme is called *Social media purchasing factors* and is further linked to one more concept. Please see below Figure 4.18 for the thematic model of Social media purchasing factors and the concept linked to it.

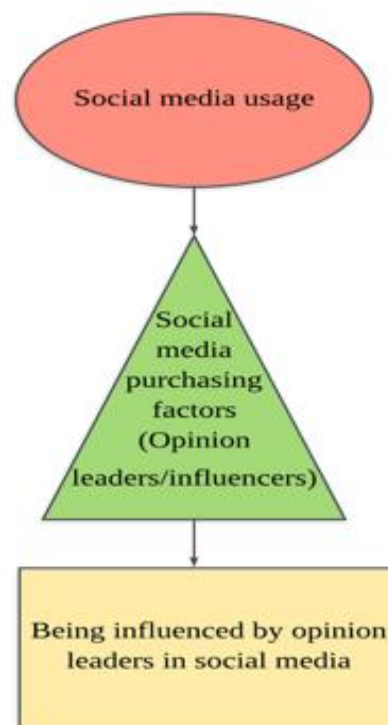


Figure 4.18 Thematic model, Theme 2, Sub-theme 2, Social media purchasing factors

Participant's Demographic Information							
Participant Number	Age (From-to)	Gender	Country of Origin	Education	Position	Salary (Average)	Estimated Number of years in the UAE
37	31-40	Female	Iran	Master's Degree	HR Manager	AED 21.000-30.000	2.5
34	21-30	Male	Egypt	Bachelor's Degree	Senior Sales Advisor	AED 21.000-30.000	3.5
2	21-30	Male	Jordan-Turkey	Master's Degree	Finance Manager	AED 21.000-30.000	2.5
13	21-30	Male	Canada-Lebanon	Bachelor's Degree	Self Employed-Businessman	AED 61.000-Above	4
14	41-50	Male	Turkey	Bachelor's Degree	Self Employed - Businessman	AED 61.000-Above	3
16	41-50	Male	United Kingdom	Bachelor's Degree	Visitor Service Manager	AED 21.000-30.000	1.5

*Table 4.10 Demographic Table of participants Theme 2, Sub-theme 2*

They mentioned that it is very common to find people available in social media that have tried certain products and talk about the futures of these products. In social media network, these individuals are called ‘influencers’. For instance, an influencer would try a make-up product of a certain brand and make a video or post comments about it in detail. So, for an expatriate living in a different country, not knowing the new products or services available, influencers seem to be important to follow through social media.

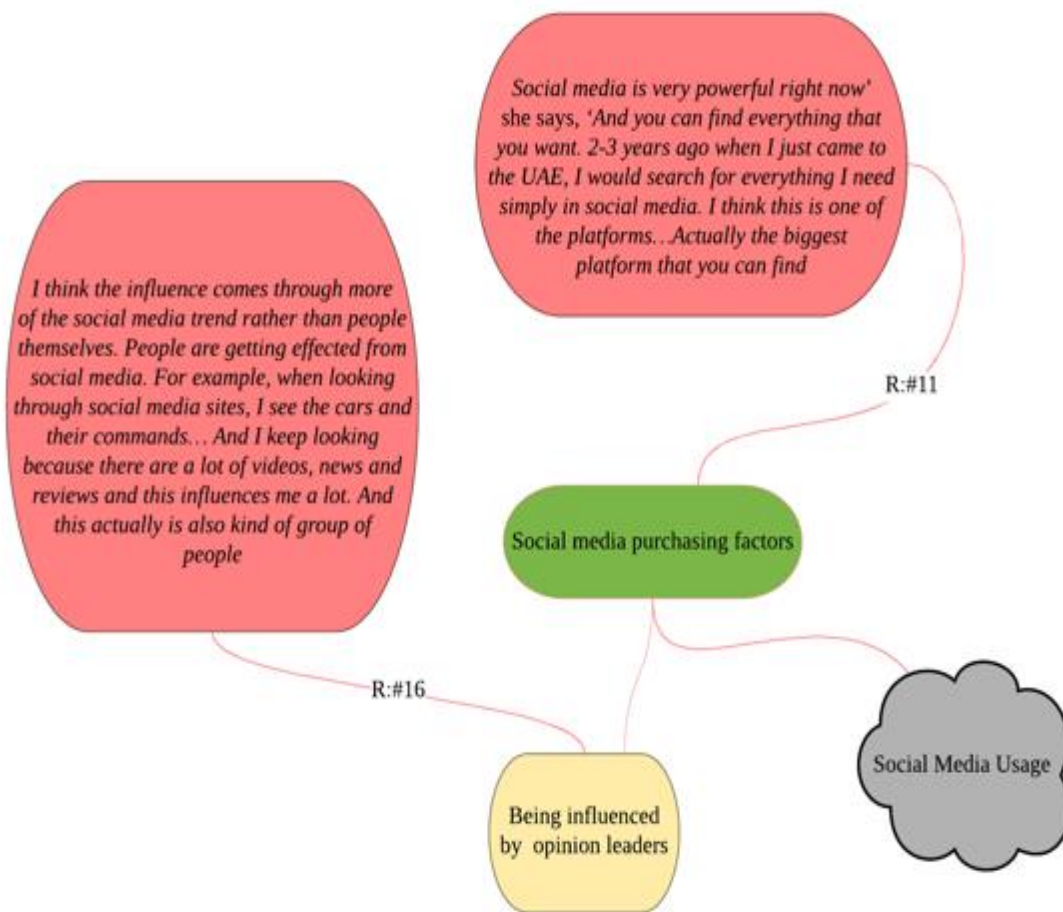


Figure 4.19 Key Responses, Theme 2, Sub-theme 2, Social media purchasing factors

Many expatriate participants pointed on the fact that even if they would know the existence of a certain product or service, they still would like to have a pre-opinion about these items which they intend to buy. However, considerable amount of the participants of this research mentioned that they don't really like to depend on these influencers before purchasing a product, as they may be biased in their opinions due to the fact they could be paid by the firms to do so. An example of such was shared by participant # 14:

*'Yes, I use social media' he said. 'You don't have to search for any advertising because everywhere you look there are advertisements. You open any link in social media sites and so many pop-up advertisings etc. come out. Confirming that for him social media is a convenient*

tool for shopping. However, he added: *'I don't really trust the opinion leaders or the bloggers in social media...Because I believe they make money out of these advertisings they put'* highlighting the issues of trusting in the influencers in social media (47 years old Turkish businessman, 3 years in the UAE).

Similarly, participant # 16, confirmed that expatriates are influenced by social media in their purchasing decisions:

*'I think the influence comes through more of the social media trend rather than people themselves. People are getting effected from social media. For example, when looking through social media sites, I see the cars and their commands. And I keep looking because there are a lot of videos, news and reviews and this influences me a lot. And this actually is also kind of group of people'* (46 years old, Visitor Services manager from the UK).

Participant # 34, 39 years old senior sales advisor from Egypt, says he does his complaints of the products that he is not satisfied with through social media to inform others that follow these sites to buy products online:

*'Of course, I'm using social media... I'm searching like for the brands; what brands are here. But also, I use a social media if I'm complaining about something, when I'm not happy with it'. Laughs.*

Participant # 37, an HR manager, mentioned her feelings of uniqueness by posting her purchasing through social media:

*'Yes of course! Usually, I follow the influencers and bloggers. I follow that and for online shopping I follow Instagram, following pages. They advertise online shopping'.*

It is important to notice that not only the bloggers, influencers or opinion leaders on social media are the Figures that influence others in buying decisions. Expatriates that are using social media, also affect each other within the circle of people that they call the 'social media group'. This groups includes the people that they are connected with in the UAE, the people in

their home countries and in other countries. Simply, everyone that is linked to their social media accounts. They like to share their new identities, success stories and the upgrade in their purchasing habits. They get inspired by others in choices of travelling, choices in cars, accessories etc. And by sharing their own information they like to be an inspiration to others. For instance, participant # 16, says:

*Definitely. I do post things. He says. The reason is not to show off with what I can buy and do. Just, I think you have to celebrate your life. I believe in that. You know whatever you're doing. If you're doing average, if you're doing good or excellent. You have to share it with your people. I share with my family and friends. I have a circle in social media it is not open to public. It's my own circle but they can open, filter. And everyone in their circle can watch it also. And I'm very picky on who I'm choosing in my connections. But yes, you have to celebrate what you have and how good you are doing what you drive, what you are wearing, where you are eating etc. I'm showing them that I'm doing good and showing them if you want to be like this you have to work for it. This is an encouragement to other people. I'm sending a message to them if you want to enjoy the way I do, you have to do the same. I'm inspired by others as well, some people in my circle are going to better holidays than me. Or they explore newer places before me. So, I get inspired...and ask how I can do that. I get inspired. So, I want to inspire others, let them admire me, get inspired by me. I do like that. Why not? (46 years old from the UK, Visitor Services Manager).*

Similarly, participant # 2, a 26 years old Jordanian-Turkish, single finance manager says he is proud to post his information about his daily life as an expatriate and set an example to others with his posts: *'Yes, I like to post pictures on social media, like Facebook and Instagram'* he says. *'It makes me feel proud for being able to reach where I always dreamed of. Maybe, I would inspire others to reach what I reached. And I also like to show my people back home that it is possible when you want to do that you can do it'.*

One major point that repeated itself during the analysis was the fact of trying to ‘fit in’. Simply, expatriates want to be able to keep themselves in the social circle they are surrounded with or they want to be included in. and this circle has its own style of shopping and identity. As an example, the story below shows clearly the demands of the circle and how this is presented through social media:

*‘Well, as you know nowadays everything is on social media, snapchat, Instagram, Facebook. People nowadays they usually like to post things on snapchat or other sites, what they like, what they do. For example, I have a friend he just bought a wallet from a French brand called Goyard. I asked him where he got it from. He said he got it from France. We just had a chat about it over social media after I saw his post. I just went online and I bought it. Some people see posting things on social media is showing off but it’s not showing off. Let’s say people post pictures saying: “Hey look! I’m in Maldives” or “I’m chilling in a resort in Abu Dhabi”. So, at times I ask them where that place is. So, I can do the same and I don’t feel left out. Because people ask also oh you live here but you didn’t visit this place yet? So, it’s kind of you have to keep up with things to be involved in things. And social media plays major role in this’. (25 years old Canadian Lebanese businessman, 4 years in the UAE).*

The following section will explain the aspects in changes of identity when living abroad as an expatriate.

#### **4.10. Aggregate Dimension 3: Identity**

The third dimension of this thesis was identified as: **Identity**. The word frequency for this dimension includes key words that display changes of identity like different, identity, products, people, like, others etc. as presented in the word cloud 3 a tree map 3 below. This dimension is constructed with one main theme named as: **Changing identity**, and three sub-



others	changes	country	remember	preferences	luxury	definitely	poor	success	informa	scratched	national	makes	pressure
				positive	minds	shows	happene	business	everyone	initially	believe	reflect	price
		acting	identity			feels	looking	decisions	family	clubs	totally	taste	life
	brand			rich	period			sports	thought	strengt	everyth	someti	organiz
products		communication	diverse			foreigner	thinking						specific
				activities	friends			lost	expatria	unique	messag	necessa	normal
	something	group	perceive			money	wearing						bought
				conditions	world			cultures	interacti	basica	treated	noticed	mark
different						according	location					image	dressed
	personal	expensive	knowledge					following	cars	seeing	time		dream
				cost	class	value	points					color	impress
								watch	destinat	necessa	city		round
												consider	view
													inaudib

Figure 4.21 Tree Map, Aggregate Dimension 3, Identity



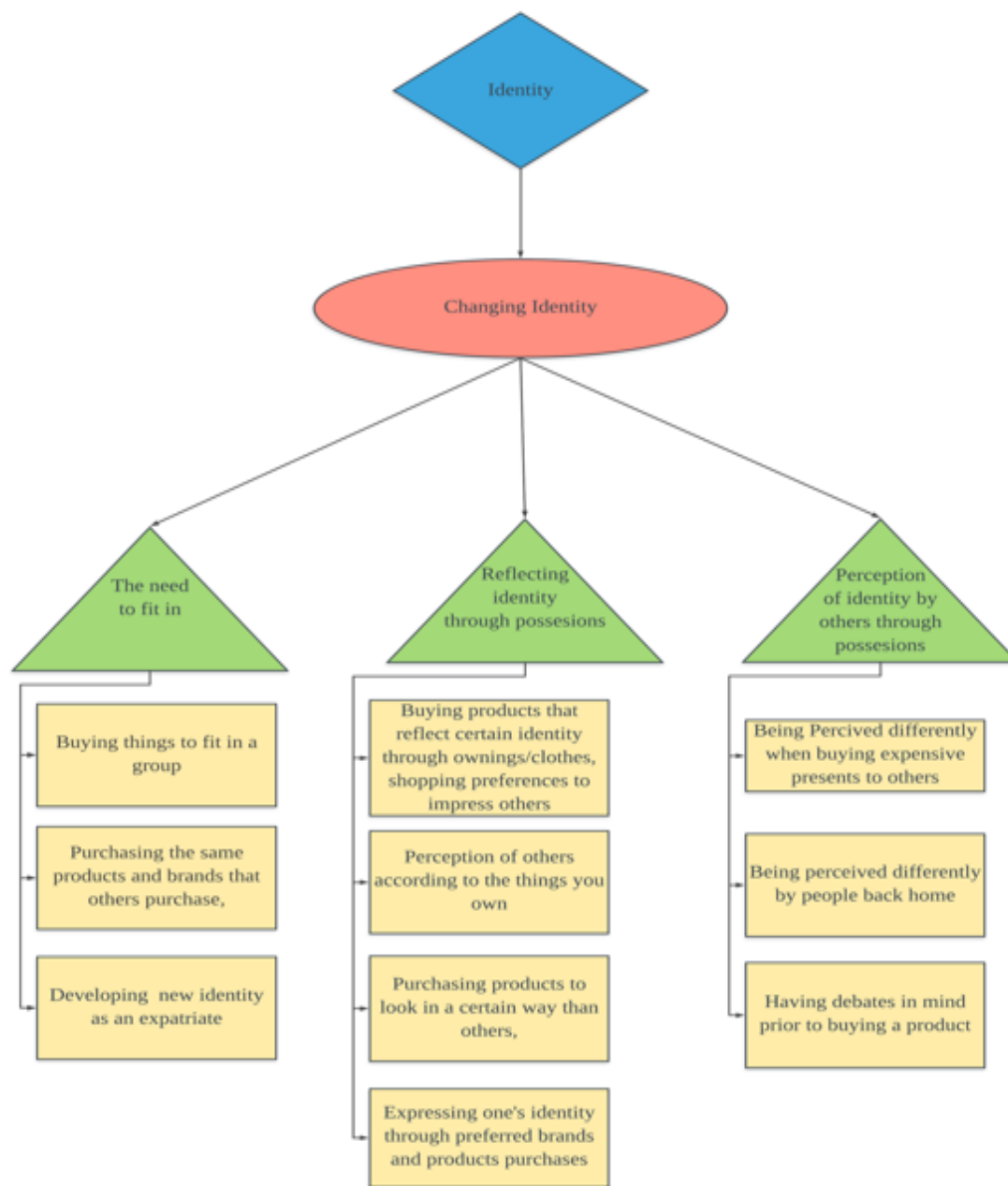


Figure 4.22 Thematic model of Dimension 3, Identity

#### 4.10.1. Theme: 3. Changing Identity

1st Order CONCEPTS	2nd Order THEMES	AGGREGATE DIMENSIONS
Buying things to fit in a group	<p>Theme 3: Changing identity</p> <p>Sub-theme 1: The need to fit in</p> <p>Sub-theme 2: Reflecting identity through possessions</p> <p>Sub-theme 3: Perception of identity by other through possessions</p>	Identity
Buying products that reflect certain identity through ownings/clothes, shopping preferences to impress others		
Being Perceived differently when buying expensive presents to others		
Perception of others according to the things you own		
Purchasing products to look in a certain way than others,		
Purchasing the same products and brands that others purchase,		
Being perceived differently by people back home		
Expressing one's identity through preferred brands and products purchases		
Developing new identity as an expatriate		
Having debates in mind prior to buying a product		

Table 4.11 Thematic Table, Theme 3

Another major theme that developed vividly during the transcripts was identified as ***changing identity***. This theme developed from the main dimension *Identity* and further broken down to three sub-themes and is linked to ten concepts. Please see below Figure 4.23 for the thematic model of theme *Changing identity*.

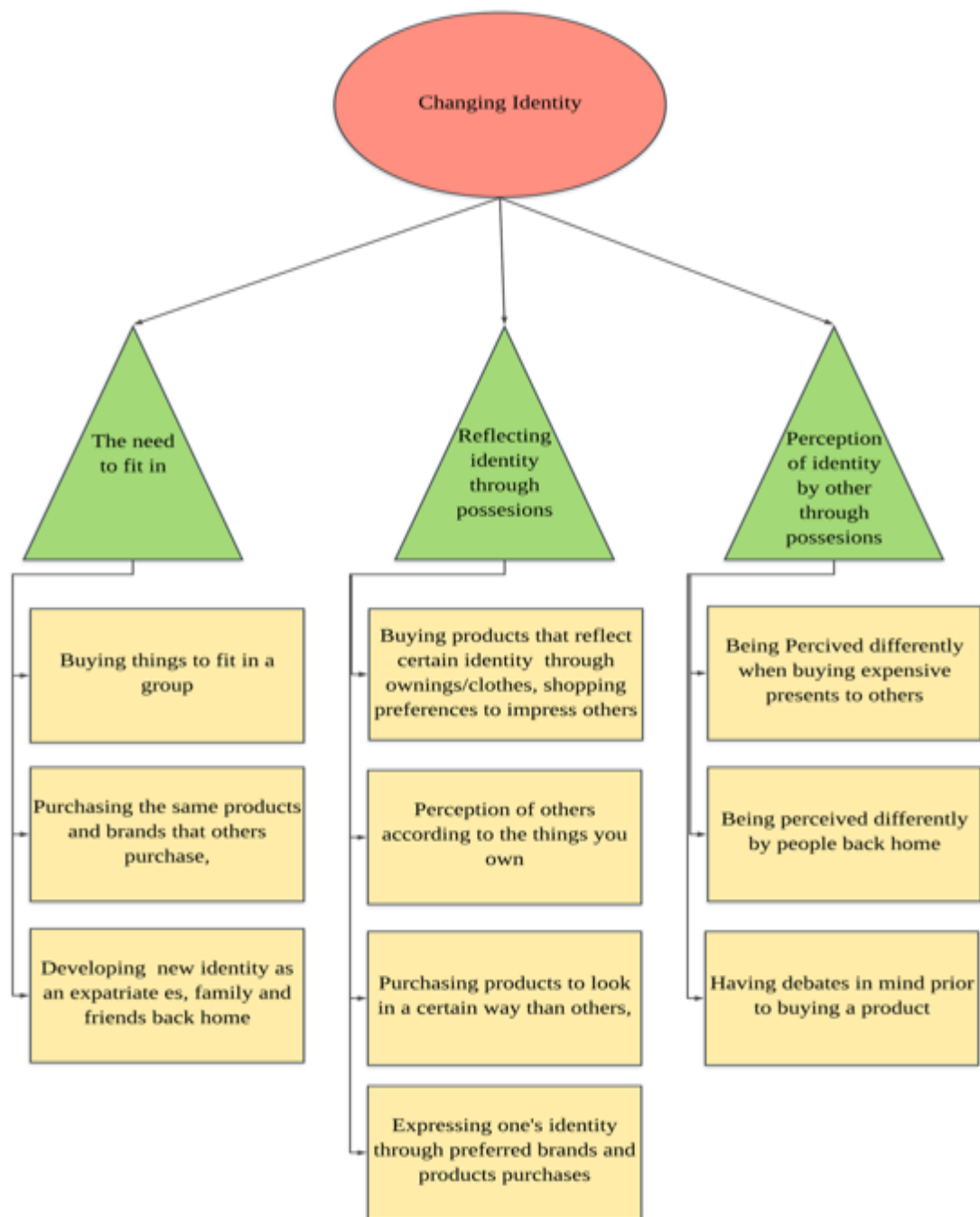


Figure 4.23 Thematic model of Theme 3, Changing Identity

Participant's Demographic Information							
Participant Number	Age (From-to)	Gender	Country of Origin	Education	Position	Salary (Average)	Estimated Number of years in the UAE
12	31-40	Female	Turkey	Master's Degree	Financial Consultant	AED 21.000-30.000	3.5
9	41-50	Male	Turkey	Bachelor's Degree	FM Soft Services Manager	AED 21.000-30.000	3.5
24	21-30	Male	Tunisia	Bachelor's Degree	Call Center Manager	AED 10.000-20.000	3
37	31-40	Female	Iran	Master's Degree	HR Manager	AED 21.000-30.000	3.5
14	41-50	Male	Turkey	Bachelor's Degree	Self Employed - Businessman	AED 61.000-Above	3

*Table 4.12 Demographic Table of participants, Theme 3*

A majority of participants mentioned that they experienced changes in their identities but these changes were rather in a good way. A main reason that they think they had changes in their identities was mentioned to be due to the multi-cultural environment that they started living in. As discussed in the literature review chapter, the UAE consists of 88.52% expatriates (Official GMI Blog, 2018). Hence, expatriates find themselves in an environment surrounded with many different nationalities. Once they start living in the UAE, they observe all types of cultural differences and behaviours in shopping preferences. Hence, observing and trying to adapt to the differences in cultures, clothes, food, travel or any other daily life activities greatly impact expatriates' changes in identity, and consequently in their shopping habits.

An example of such was given by participant # 12 She argues that she became a more of an open-minded person, by referring towards the different nationalities she has encountered and interacted with.

*'I feel that I'm more open minded' she says, I know more nationalities, I know more about how different nationalities work together, I'm flexible. I know how to treat an Egyptian and on the other hand I know how to treat an Emirati or a European. It's a positive change!'* (38 years old Turkish Financial consultant, 3.5 years in the UAE, married and Master's degree).

Another interesting comment was shared by participant # 14. His change is beyond the identity, rather towards changes in personality due to the requirements of his business relations, several times during his interview, he mentioned how his shopping preferences were linked to the multi-cultural-environment:

*'Yes. I think I did change after moving abroad. Most importantly, I learned how to be patient. Again, the many different nationalities and their various cultures that you are interacting with teach you to understand and accept them the way they are and be patient for differences. The changes are in a positive way. I became like an international person'.* (47 years old Turkish businessman, Bachelor's degree).

*Absolutely yes, I have changed my perception about how I treat people from different nationalities within time and I am more confident for example being in a more international environment than I was back home. I would say I'm more open to finding friends compared to when I was back home... I'm more sociable and I'm less shy. And I learned how to protect my own belongings or my own needs and what I need. Because back home you're basically surrounded by family and always have someone to look after you.* (39 years old, Iranian, HR manager, Master's degree, 3.5 years in the UAE)

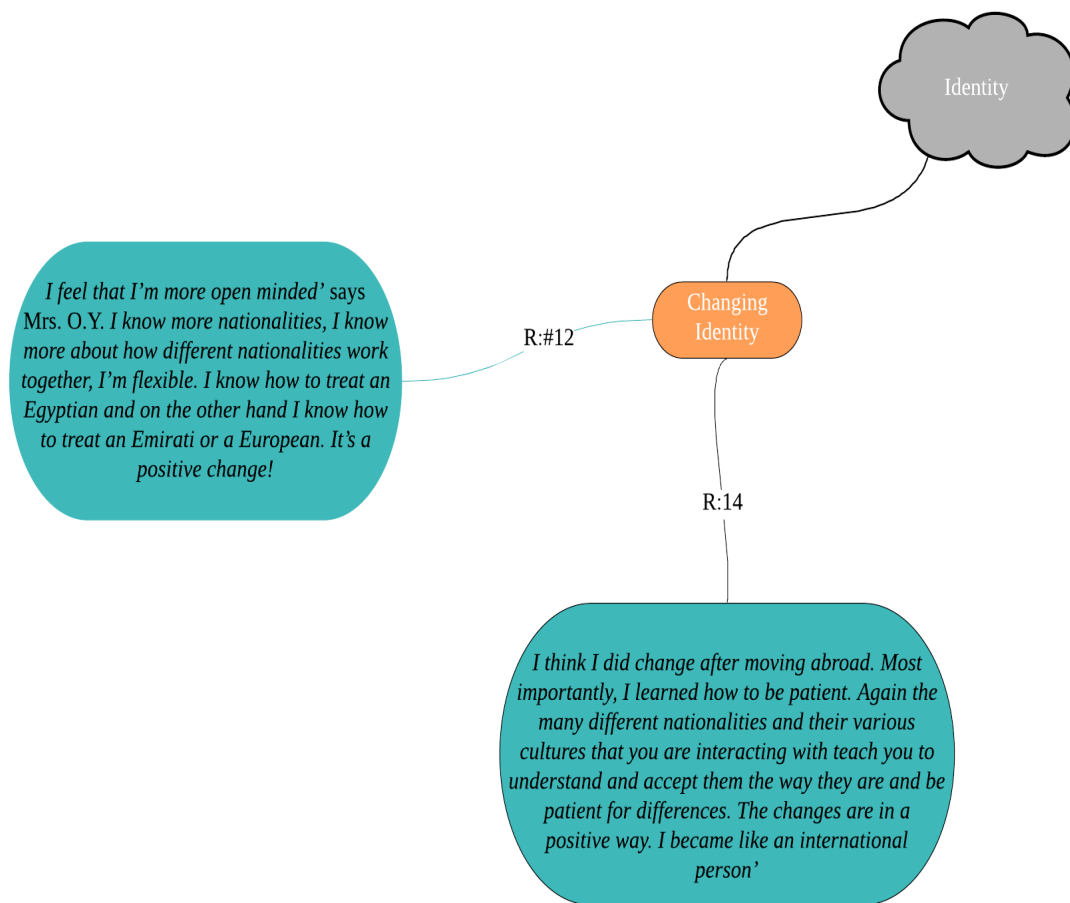


Figure 4.24 Key Responses, Theme 3, Changing identity

Moreover, it was mentioned several times that families and friends back home also have changed their perception towards expatriates and that repatriation would also be a challenge when going back home. Participant # 9 for instance, mentioned that he cannot be back to his previous lifestyle. But most importantly, he argued that he feels a complete change in his identity after moving abroad, and also that he feels the existence of a pressure towards buying better things:

*'Back home they think you are selfish and you forget where you come from. Unfortunately, I cannot adapt myself to the way I lived before. And they think this is wrong. They think I'm a show off. Where I am now. Yes. There is a pressure to get better things.*

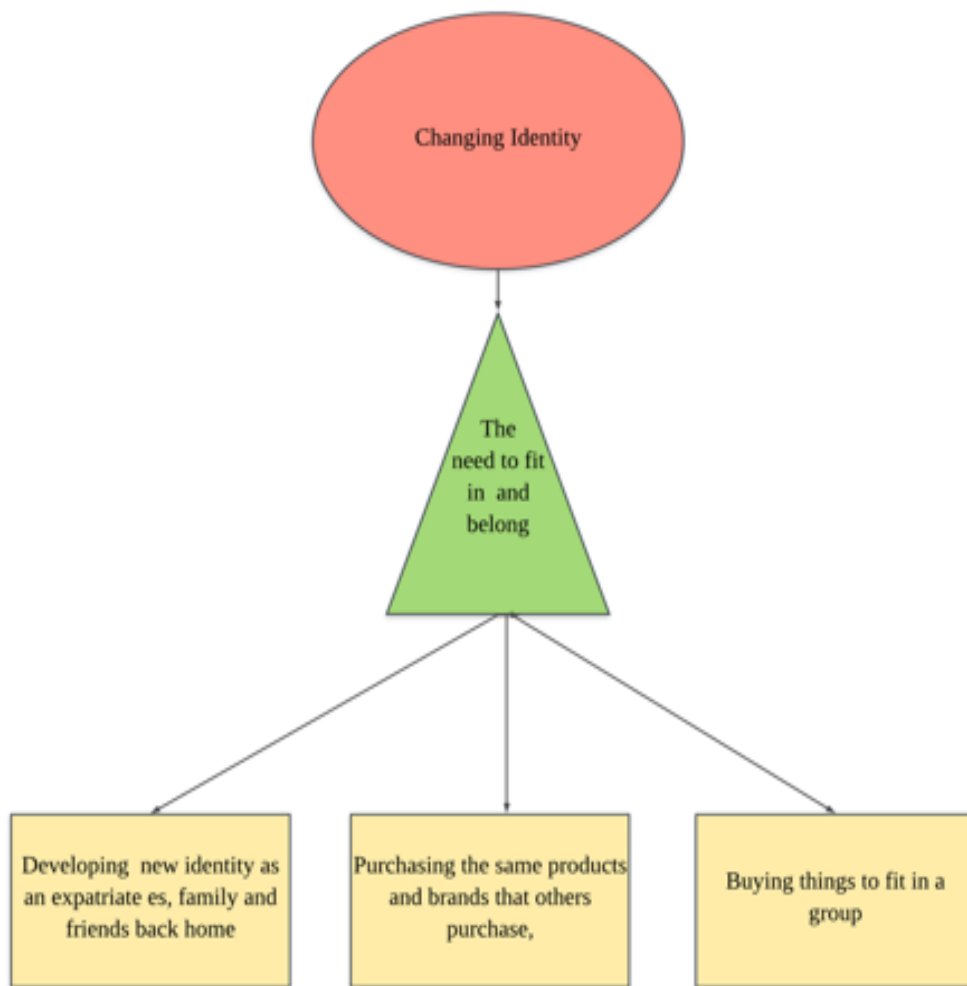
*Changes in identity? Totally! The person before that was known as E.K. and the person now, are totally different two people. I know where I come from but I can't be that person anymore. I don't know if the change is in a good or bad way. But I know it's totally different. But I feel good about it'. (46 years old Turkish FM Soft Services manager, 3.5 years in the UAE, Bachelor's degree).*

Similarly, participant # 24, like majority of the participants, thinks that he has changed after moving abroad: *'My people back home... They think I'm a different person... I agree. I'm not the same person that I was before definitely. I'm not talking like before, I don't think like before and I don't see the world like before. My way of communication has changed, my view of mind, my mentally has changed, towards life and towards the people'. (34 years old, Tunisian, Call Centre manager, 3 years in the UAE).*

His argument like many other participants' statements, confirm the fact that individuals (expatriates) change their identity and shopping preferences after moving abroad.

#### **4.10.1.1. Theme 3, Sub-theme 1, The Need to Fit in and Belong**

One of the most significant sub-themes that was mentioned by almost all participants, was probably the sub-theme that emerged as: ***The need to fit in and belong***. During the write up of the transcripts, this phenomenon revealed itself in many aspects. This sub-theme was linked further to 3 concepts. Please see below Figure 4.25 for the thematic model of sub-theme *the need to fit in and belong*.



*Figure 4.25 Thematic model of Theme 3, Sub-theme 1, The need to fit in and belong*



Participant's Demographic Information							
Participant Number	Age (From-to)	Gender	Country of Origin	Education	Position	Salary (Average)	Estimated Number of years in the UAE
10	31-40	Female	Australia-Lebanon	Master's Degree	HR Manager	AED 21.000-30.000	2.5
25	31-40	Female	Turkey	Bachelor's Degree	Self Employed Restaurant Owner	AED 61.000-Above	4
28	21-30	Male	Canada	Bachelor's Degree	Assistant Manager	AED 10.000-20.000	3.5
13	21-30	Male	Canada-Lebanon	Bachelor's Degree	Self Employed-Businessman	AED 61.000-Above	4
14	41-50	Male	Turkey	Bachelor's Degree	Self Employed - Businessman	AED 61.000-Above	3
40	41-50	Female	Spain	Bachelor's Degree	Manager	AED 21.000-30.000	4

*Table 4.13 Demographic Table of participants Theme 3, Sub-theme 1*

Either in social media, social interactions or work environment expatriates have the urge to fit in to their social circles. Interestingly, the way to fit in mostly was mentioned to happen through shopping preferences and a certain type of identity that would be reflected through these preferences. Again, the gender, age or nationality does not really seem to matter when it comes to the point of fitting in. The general concept that was highlighted was the fact of not being left out. And to ensure that, expatriates mentioned it was necessary to accept the differences that come with their new environment and act accordingly. This was mentioned to be necessary not only in daily interactions with friend or colleagues but also highly important in the business world. For example, participant # 14 says that for him there was no private life. He mentioned he mostly tries to keep his social life active, so that he can keep up with the many nationalities. He points to the fact that he has to mingle with all of these different

nationalities. And highlights the importance of understanding their product preferences for his business:

*'My social life changed completely. I don't have a private life. It's more like I try to comply with my social environment. There are so many foreigners all coming from different cultures. Their traditions, religion everything is different and you try to get used to them and understand them to be able to mingle within their circle'.* (47 years old Turkish businessman, 3 years in the UAE).

Another confirmation on how businesses can be impacted negatively was provided by participant # 13. He clearly says that if you do not choose to buy certain type of products and reflect a certain type of identity, you will fit into the circle required. And this will consequently result with losses in business:

*'Since I am a watch collector myself, like Rolex or Omega watch for example. I like watches so I go for specific brands like Rolex. Once you wear it and you see others are wearing it too, you will see, that you guys will fit together in the same community. Because if you wear a different watch, than your colleagues will be like; 'you have all this money and you wear this? You can't afford a Rolex like an expensive watch?' Technically, its peer pressure. I definitely feel pressured towards what I buy. If you are not in certain circle, people will look down at you. They will think they are able to effort things but you can't. It effects the business too. Like, if you are meeting the clients and you are not wearing nice, branded clothes they will think twice, they might think I don't make enough and the company is in bad shape etc. You have to always fit in'.* (25 years old, Canadian-Lebanese businessman, Bachelor's degree, 4 years in the UAE).

Another rather sad point was mentioned by participant # 28. He says he realized that his shopping preferences changed in the way that he actually started having friends according

to the things he was choosing to purchase. When he realized that he had friends according to his belongings, he decided to reconsider his shopping preferences again:

*'I feel like... Initially, I used to buy things according to the group of friends that I am hanging with and that's when I realized who I am. I tried my best to fit in. You do buy things because you want to meet as many people as you can. But later on, once I found my core group of people I kind of stepped back. Because I realized I actually have friends who like me based on what I hav'e. (28 years old, Canadian Assistant manager, 3.5 years in the UAE).*

Similarly, the interaction among the expatriates according to participant # 40 depends on the product and services they purchase. She claims, if one doesn't consume the same products and services like the others in the circle, she or he will not be able to communicate with them. Because they will not have things in common to share and talk about. Therefore, she or he will be left out.

*'I didn't think about it before but in some ways. Yes, there is some pressure. Because here it is very common to have a certain level of lifestyle. For instance: going to spas and brunches, spending some weekends in a very nice five-star hotel, driving a luxurious car, having an extraordinary holiday, trying different restaurants, etc. If you don't do the same activities, you won't talk about the same subject that all the people around. Therefore, people will leave you out'. (41 years old, Spanish, Bachelor's degree, 4 years in the UAE).*

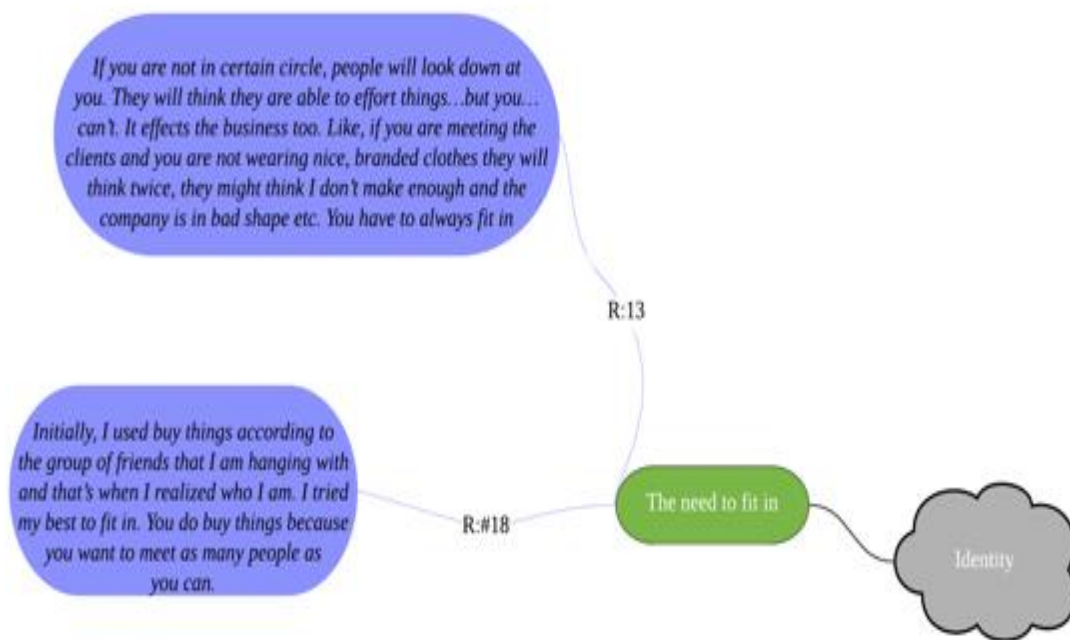


Figure 4.26 Key Responses, Theme 3, Sub-theme 1, The need to fit in (and belong)

On the other hand, noticeable number of participants said they like to feel unique. But interestingly, they would buy from the same brand but different design of it. Eventually it again leads to fitting the group but having a difference within the group. Participant 25 for instance,

*‘Actually I like to be unique’.* She says. *‘Let’s say umm, LV. I like LV. But from LV I will choose something that is very special instead of carrying the thing that everybody is carrying’.* (39 years old, Turkish, Businesswoman, 4 years in the UAE).

Moreover, credit cards, in other word facilities of banks, seem to support the shopping preferences of expatriates. Participant # 25 believes there is always a way to buy things even if you cannot afford it as it is highly important to present yourself right within the group:

*‘Yes. Of course! Just like not to feel left out you might buy things. If you’re wearing a normal watch and everyone is wearing a luxurious one you’re not fitting in the group. Going clubbing to White for example. To a really expensive place. Once the conversation about it*

*starts if you can't afford it you feel like you can't fit into the group. You can use credit cards and find a way'. (34 years old, Australian-Lebanese HR manager).*

Hence, a very important factor of shopping for expatriates is demonstrated as the fact of trying to fit in the social circle. Expatriates, clearly mentioned the importance of fitting in and how necessary it was for them to purchase things according to their social circles. Clearly there is the fact of presenting the necessary identity through the right purchases to fit in this circle.

The below section displays how expatriates try to reflect their preferred identities through the purchasing decisions they make.

#### **4.10.1.2. Theme 3, Sub-theme 2, Reflecting Identity through Possessions**

The second subtheme of the 3<sup>rd</sup> theme *changing identity* developed as ***reflecting identity through possessions***. This sub-theme was broken further into four concepts. Please see below Figure 4.27 for the thematic model of sub-theme *reflecting identity through possession*.

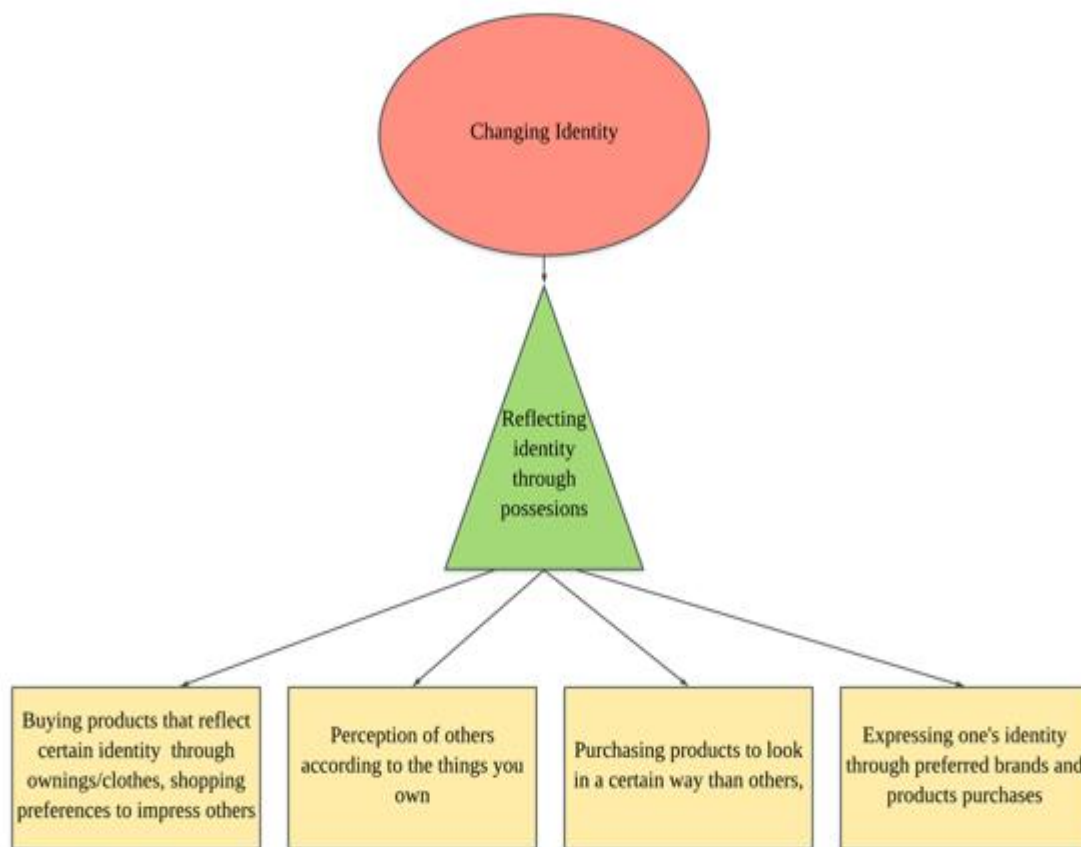


Figure 4.27 The thematic model of Theme 3, Sub-theme 2, Reflecting identity through possessions

Participant's Demographic Information							
Participant Number	Age (From-to)	Gender	Country of Origin	Education	Position	Salary (Average)	Estimated Number of years in the UAE
2	21-30	Male	Jordan-Turkey	Master's Degree	Finance Manager	AED 21.000-30.000	2.5
14	41-50	Male	Turkey	Bachelor's Degree	Self Employed - Businessman	AED 61.000-Above	3
16	41-50	Male	United Kingdom	Bachelor's Degree	Visitor Service Manager	AED 21.000-30.000	1.5

Table 4.14 Demographic Table of participants, Theme 3, Sub-theme 2

The reflection of their identity revealed itself as an important factor on expatriates shopping preferences. For majority of expatriates of this thesis, the products they choose to purchase was mentioned to be the way of reflecting their identities to the society. Hence, the answer of the question why and how they change their shopping behaviour depends on buying the products that will present their identities. Either going to a supermarket or when attending a business meeting, the belongings they said they have purchased, are the things that reflect their identities.

One of the most interesting Figures of this thesis was definitely participant # 16. For him things he owns, shows his identity. Like many others, he believes that he can persuade others according to his belongings which again links to his purchasing preferences:

*'The things you own shows or sheds light on your identity. For example, the watch that I'm wearing it is a decent one, so you chose somehow your identity. So, people when they approach you they have this perception that this is nice or smart looking guy. It helps you in the way you present yourself and presents an identity of being professional are in a certain social group. Even coming to work I believe you should be well presented to give a strong perception. It's a way of persuading or pushing people. You have your own perception and you give a first impression that you are strong and capable. So, this depends on what you are wearing ... your clothes, watch etc. and how you're carrying yourself with all the things you have'.* (Visitor Services manager from the UK, 1.5 years in the UAE).

Similarly, participant # 14 supports the opinion that the thing you choose to buy for yourself would show your identity. For him, it is crucial to reflect an identity that is powerful, for the business to be successful. Hence, he makes his shopping preferences according to the image he says that is beneficial for his business:

*'We have a saying in Turkey which implies that no matter how bad the situation is you are in; you must show a good image to the outside. You should not show it to your social circle. Because if you show them you are not in good shape financially, your social and business circle starts withdrawing themselves from you. So, either you need to create something new, that shows a strong image or you need to keep the existing and add on it. So yes, I do agree with this phrase. Things you own have a lot of meanings... unfortunately this is the fact'.*

(Turkish businessman, Bachelor's degree, 3 years in the UAE).

Participant # 2 says, his shopping habits changed after moving in as an expatriate because everyone is always dressed up well and good looking, so he needs to be the same. He says people back home would not understand the reason for this change:

*'Yeah. It actually pushes me to get to every time I step out the door is dress to impress because when you go out anywhere in Dubai even grocery shopping or walking in the mall or under your house. You always see people well-dressed or smelling good. Because of that you are kind of pushed into wearing your best clothes... Yeah, definitely... people back home perceive you differently with your new shopping preferences. Like here I would love to maybe buy a suit every month. Different colour different combination. But my old habits. People wouldn't care... They wouldn't understand it. But you need to look fresh here, be presentable. I try my best to wear a different colour every day of the week to look fresh for peopl'e.* (26 year old Jordanian -Turkish Finance manager, Master's degree).

The interesting point is that expatriates try to display a certain identity with the products they choose buy. However, the way they are being perceived by others is also a major reason in their choices of purchases. They believe that they are perceived differently with the items they choose to purchase. Therefore, they are inclined towards buying certain items that



eventually would create a certain identity in others' minds. The below section provides amazing examples of how and why expatriates change their shopping habits and their identities according to the perceptions of others.

#### 4.10.1.3. Theme 3, Sub-theme 3, Perception of Identity by others through Possessions

The final subtheme of the 3<sup>rd</sup> theme *changing identity* developed as ***Perception of identity by others through possessions***. This sub-theme was broken further into three concepts. Please see below Figure 4.28 for the thematic model of sub-theme3, *Perception of identity by others through possessions*.

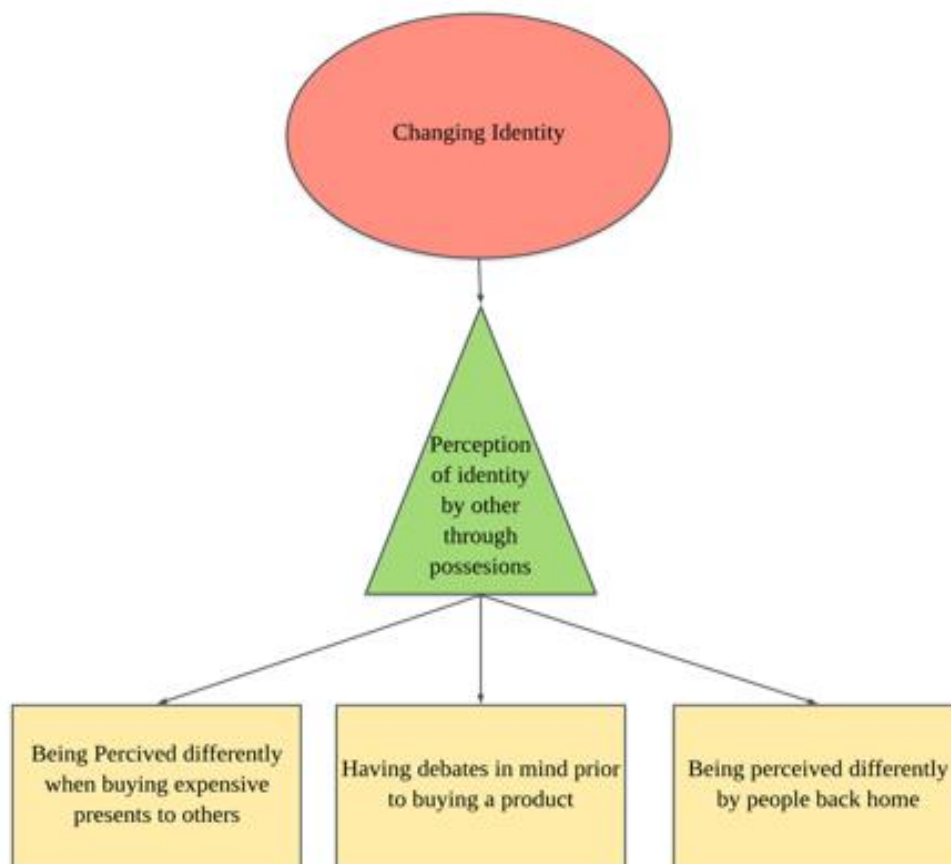


Figure 4.28 Thematic model of Theme 3, Sub-theme 3, *Perception of identity by others through possession*

Participant's Demographic Information							
Participant Number	Age (From-to)	Gender	Country of Origin	Education	Position	Salary (Average)	Estimated Number of years in the UAE
12	31-40	Female	Turkey	Master's Degree	Financial Consultant	AED 21.000-30.000	3.5
8	21-30	Male	Syria	Bachelor's Degree	QHSE Manager	AED 21.000-30.000	2.5
9	41-50	Male	Turkey	Bachelor's Degree	FM Soft Services Manager	AED 21.000-30.000	3.5
38	31-40	Male	Germany	Bachelor's Degree	Project Manger	AED 31.000-40.000	4
14	41-50	Male	Turkey	Bachelor's Degree	Self Employed - Businessman	AED 61.000-Above	3

*Table 4.15 Demographic Table of participants, Theme 3, Sub-theme 3*

Interview transcripts of this thesis shed light on facts that are somehow hidden and never mentioned. These are stories of expatriates and their daily interactions that directly impact on their shopping behaviour and changes in their identities. One main point was that they were being perceived by their environments according to their belongings, which consequently impacts their shopping preferences. This sub-theme was supported in several different examples that led to the same result. Even though several participants mentioned that they did not pay attention of what others said, majority of expatriates mentioned that they are perceived by others by the products they choose to buy.

*‘Yes, I have a great example for this one!’* says participant # 12 getting excited to share her experience on the highway in Dubai: *‘I’m driving a Mini Cooper and I took my car to the service. The service instead gave me a car I think a Nissan or something. I drove it until my*

*car was ready. Like a week. So, on the roads... Nobody on the road gave me a way... None of the nice cars were giving me way. This seriously happened on Sheik Zayed road in Dubai. I was struggling. Laughs... For example, here I wouldn't buy Hyundai or Nissan anymore because I know that even the people on the road that do not know me just judge me with my car I'm driving and they don't give the way. For car wise there is a pressure to buy a good one'. (38 years old Turkish Financial consultant, 3.5 years in the UAE, Master's degree).*

A very similar example that involved cars was shared by participant # 14. He argues that perception through your belongings impacts on your complete life style. And he clearly states that people's perceptions change according to your shopping preferences:

*'Yes. Of course things you choose to buy, make a complete difference in your life style. For example, there is a restaurant that I really like very much. The valet parking staff there really were attending to me very nicely due to my car. They would always greet me, ask me how I'm doing, and put my car in the VIP area even though I do not ask for it. When I finish my dinner they immediately would run to bring my car as soon as possible so I don't wait. A few times I went there by taxi, when I went down from the taxi the same staff did not even recognize me. They know my plate number of my car, they know the car but they do not recognize my face. So, your accessories you use like your car, watch clothes etc. remains in people's minds in a strong way and they judge you accordingly and remember you with the things you own'. (47 years old Turkish businessman, Bachelor's degree 3 years in the UAE)*

Another very interesting point shared by many participants was that products that are more expensive were considered to be better in quality. An example of water consumption was given:

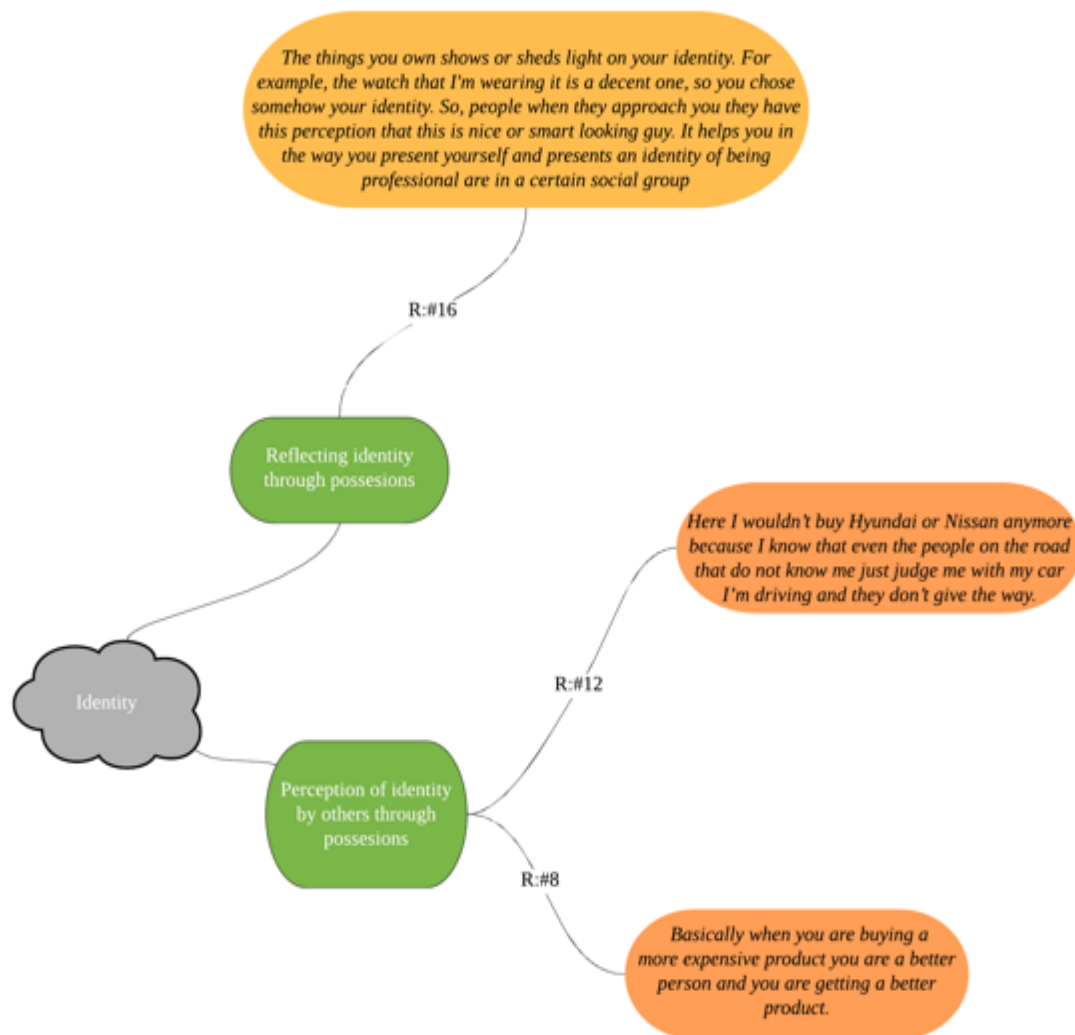
*'I noticed people here literally think that If they spend more money, they feel they do things right. For example, a bottle of water... Why would I buy it? It is only 1 AED. So, it's not good. I should buy the one that costs 10 AED because it's the right thing to do. This is the way*

*think. So, basically when you are buying a more expensive product you are a better person and you are getting a better product. Which is not right'. (27 years old, Syrian, QHSE manager, 2.5. years in the UAE, Bachelor's degree).*

Water is not a luxurious product like a car. But as many other expatriates, participant # 8's point was that no matter what the product is, the general perception was that: 'the more expensive the product is, the better the quality will be!' which at the end will lead expatriates to purchase same products but more expensive version of it. Hence, this will directly impact on their shopping behaviour changes in their new environment.

Another interesting point was mentioned by participant # 38. His point was more towards not being able to dress the way he preferred to. In a way that he had to make choices in clothes according to the surrounding that he is in. He claimed that he had to reflect a certain image by wearing different clothes. This, he said, was because of being perceived in a different way due to his choices of clothes:

*'Umm, I'm a surfer. If I wear outfits I don't really need to wear the expensive clothes to be perceived as a rich businessman. It's necessary in our times that people always perceive you as who you are with what you wear in their first impression, even though it's totally wrong. For example, when I'm going through the airport, I have to dress up very fancy not to be stopped by the customs. When I come in let's say my surfer clothes through the airport, they always check my luggage, even to the point they strip search me. They are trying to find drugs on me. When come in let's say in a nice Polo shirt, nice jeans and nice shoes. It's a breeze. No body stops me; no body looks at me. Open hair verses closed hair, of course clothes, everything'. (39 years old, German, Project manager, 4 years in the UAE).*



*Figure 4.29 Key Responses, Theme 3, Sub-theme 2 & 3, Reflecting identity through possessions and Perception of identity through possessions*

The provided samples of stories gathered from the expatriates demonstrated that they somehow choose to buy and use items according to how others would perceive them. Once again, their social environment and the perceptions as well as requirements of that environment is directly impacting their shopping preferences. Expatriates begin shopping differently and present themselves with a different identity. Hence, these new shopping preferences

consequently lead to the reflection of their changed identities, by using and presenting these items.

#### 4.11. Aggregate Dimension 4: Financial Factors

The fourth dimension of this theses is named as: *Financial factors*.

The word cloud 4 and tree map 4 confirms the accuracy of themes by displaying the list of the words frequently repeated by the participants during the interviews.



Figure 4.30 Aggregate Dimension 4, Financial factors, Word Cloud



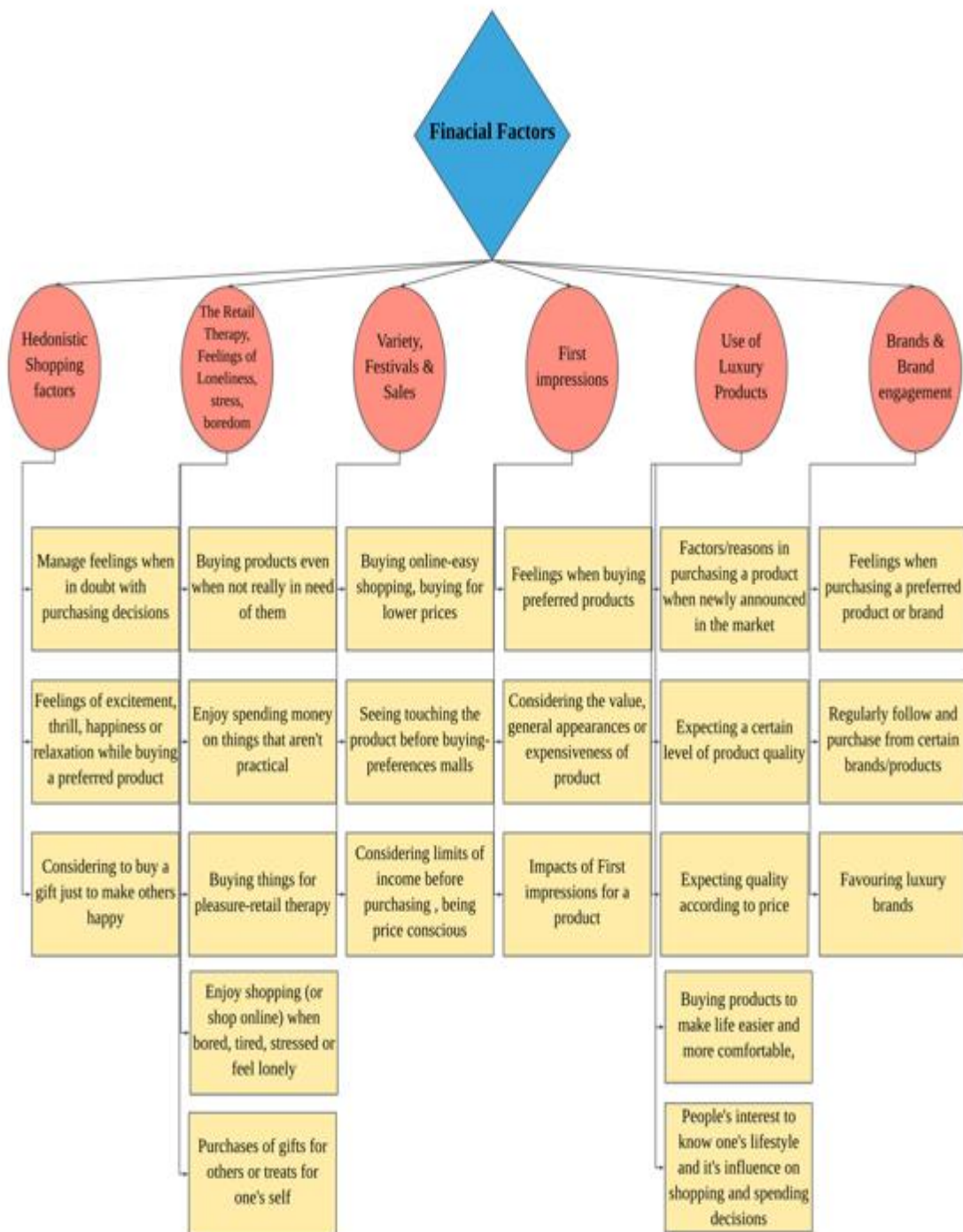


Figure 4.32 Thematic model of the Dimension 4, Financial factors

As reviewed in the literature, the boost in expatriates' incomes supports expatriates with the freedom and the luxury of spending. Expatriates told their stories on how they were inclined to



spend more than before, and why they chose to do so. The financial boost in their incomes was there to support them in their new shopping habits.

The following themes that reflect factors of purchasing are identified and presented according to the responses gathered by the participants. One of the most important aspects of financial factors revealed as the hedonic factors of shopping.

#### 4.11.1. Theme 4. Hedonistic Shopping Factors

1st Order CONCEPTS	2nd Order THEMES	AGGREGATE DIMENTIONS
Manage feelings when in doubt with purchasing decisions	Theme 4: Hedonistic Shopping factors	Financial Factors
Feelings of excitement, thrill, happiness or relaxation while buying a preferred product		
Feelings when purchasing a preferred product or brand		
Considering to buy a gift just to make others happy		

*Table 4.16 Thematic Table Theme 4, Hedonistic shopping factors*

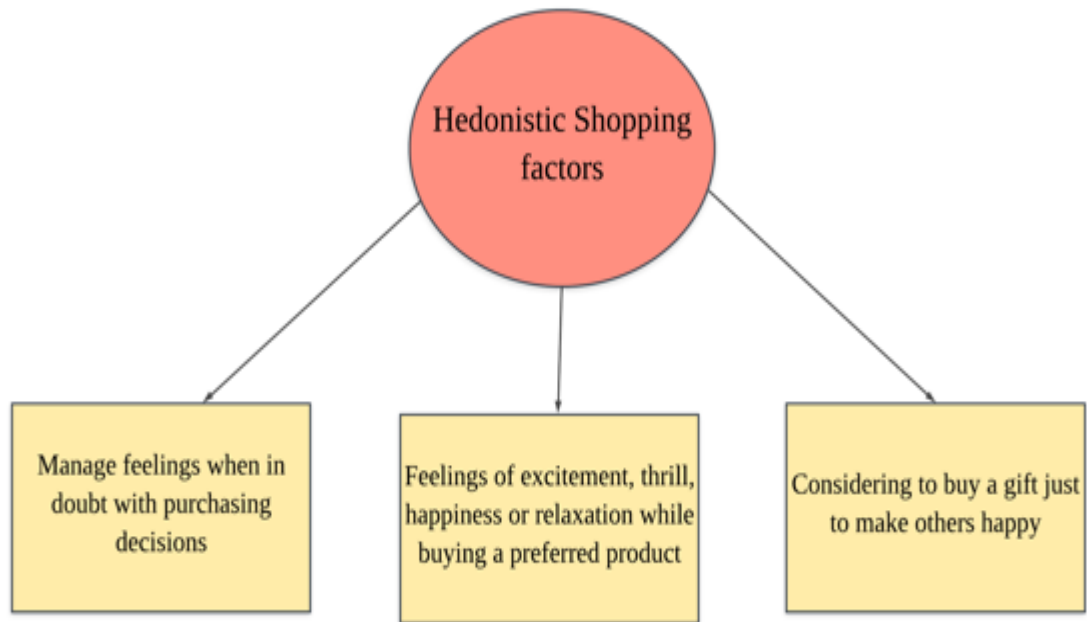


Figure 4.33 Thematic model of Theme, Hedonic shopping factors

Participant's Demographic Information							
Participant Number	Age (From-to)	Gender	Country of Origin	Education	Position	Salary (Average)	Estimated Number of years in the UAE
40	41-50	Female	Spain	Bachelor's Degree	Manager	AED 21.000-30.000	4
36	31-40	Female	Romania	Master's Degree	Manager	AED 21.000-30.000	4
34	21-30	Male	Egypt	Bachelor's Degree	Senior Sales Advisor	AED 21.000-30.000	3.5
38	31-40	Male	Germany	Bachelor's Degree	Project Manger	AED 31.000-40.000	4
1	21-30	Female	Iraq	Bachelor's Degree	Customer Service Supervisor	AED 10.000-20.000	3

Table 4.17 Demographic Table of participants, Theme 4

During the transcriptions, multiple themes emerged reflecting the financial factors and their influences on identity and shopping behaviour changes of expatriates. As it was clearly identified during the literature review, it is a fact that expatriates have an increase in their financial aspects after moving abroad and commencing their international assignments. However, it was not only the fact of having a boost in the income levels, but several other key factors were identified by the expatriates that were linked to their identity and shopping behaviour changes.

The expatriate participants of this study seemed to display an understanding of their purchasing behaviour as a part of their ways of new life style. They somehow linked themselves to their new environment and tried to adapt both their identities and their shopping habits according to the needs and offerings of their new environments. While some were mentioning the enormous variety and facilities of their environments and how that withdraws their attention to buy more, some others were mentioning that they buy things which they do not need. They were happy to purchase products or services just to enjoy or to treat themselves.

Many participants mentioned during the interviews that they were buying things just for the sake of buying. They mentioned even if sometimes they would regret it afterwards, they enjoyed buying things that they did not need at all. Also purchases on various services were mentioned. Again, it was just for the pleasure of having that service done as a treat rather than any need of it. The results revealed that expatriates are inclined towards hedonic purchases. These purchases normally were mentioned to be occurring spontaneously. For example, while having a walk in the malls to meet up with friends or just while chilling at home, or over online shopping applications available in their phones.

During the interviews, to listen to the stories of expatriates and the way shared their excitement, thrill, happiness or relaxation while buying (luxury) products that they liked was

great pleasure for the author. Most expatriates added to the pleasure of buying, the fact that they felt very successful and proud of themselves. Because, they were able to buy whatever they wanted to even if they did not need. The pleasure of buying was illustrated in many joyful ways. For example,

*‘Yes. I do enjoy buying things!’* says the Iraqi expatriate happily. *‘Even when I don’t need them. Sometimes I even cannot sleep’.* Laughs. *‘I feel very happy! I cannot sleep because I keep thinking. Tomorrow when I wear it. How I will look like?’* (27 years old, Iraqi, Customer Service Supervisor, bachelor’s degree, 3 years in the UAE, divorced).

Similarly, participant # 36 pointed out the fact that there are many things she would purchase that she does not need and are not practical but still she would buy them and feel happy with them:

*‘When I go just for a walk in the mall I end up seeing things that I wasn’t planning to buy and I simply buy them because I think maybe I need them later. In many things in my house again as a decoration and I don’t think they are practical as well but they are nice and make me happy’.* (Romanian, 38 years old, Customer Service Manager, 4 years in the UAE).

Even buying the same product over and over again seemed to give happiness. For this comment one would presume a lady buying many shoes but the following story was shared by a gentleman that cannot help buying the same product multiple times, just under a different model:

*‘Yes, of course buying things give me pleasure! And I feel good with myself’* says participant # 38, *‘I’m very practical but... The question is: Do you need a motor-bike? Do you need a second motor-bike? Ok it’s a different model... So, I still need it. So, yes! No. But yes’.* Laughs... (39 years old, German, Project manager, 4 years in the UAE)

Interestingly, for more than half of participants, buying things that they like was so important that they could always find a way to buy what they like. Consequences of payment

issues would always somehow be solved. Participant # 34 was very excited, sharing his opinion about buying something that he likes and when the price higher than his income:

*'I will buy it! I will buy it!'* He confirmed twice loudly. *'You're not going to believe me I'm not having credit cards. I don't want to be stuck in this so... Okay but really if I do have I don't care about my salary. I'm this kind of people who if I see something I like I will buy it. I will suffer till the end of the month but I will buy it'*. Laughs. (39 years old Senior Sales advisor from Egypt, 3.5 years in the UAE)

Another pleasure of buying things was hidden behind the idea of buying gift to others just to make them happy. Almost all expatriates mentioned they love to buy gifts to others just to make them happy. Expatriates developed a habit of buying gifts to their friends and families back home. Mostly they mentioned they would buy during the times of sales and keep them until they go back home for holidays.

However, a completely contradictory point was mentioned by almost all participants. They all claimed that their friends and families back home expected gifts from them each time they go back home. And in some cases, it was mentioned that the required so called 'gifts' were asked to be expensive ones. One interesting example came from participant # 36:

*'Yes, friends and family back home are definitely interested to know what I'm doing hear, how I'm doing here, what is my life like? When I go back home they will expect me to bring a lot of gifts to everyone. And also, they expect them to be very expensive gifts. Which I don't like. And when you don't bring something they think you're stingy. Which is not nice at all'*. (Romanian, 38 years old, Customer Service Manager, 4 years in the UAE).

Another rather amusing example about buying gifts came from participant # 34:

*'Of course. Of course, nowadays you cannot go to your home country without buying your family, your friends. Yeah... They will start with what do you want from me? "Nothing Habibi (dear). Just come safe." And just before you are coming. Like in few hours you will*

*start getting text messages in WhatsApp. “Please bring me this and that” And they will send photos and pictures of the things they want. “Please, please, please!” And you have to get it. And so, I’m advising you. You have to make it surprise every time’.* Laughs. (39 years old, Egyptian, Senior Sales advisor, 3.5 years in the UAE).

One more interesting point that seemed to impact the expatriates shopping was towards buying things to treat themselves. These purchases were the gifts for themselves. Most expatriates agreed that they felt happy when they purchased something just for themselves. Whether buying new clothes, dining with friends, or spending a day in a spa, expatriates like to treat themselves. One example like many others was shared by participant # 40:

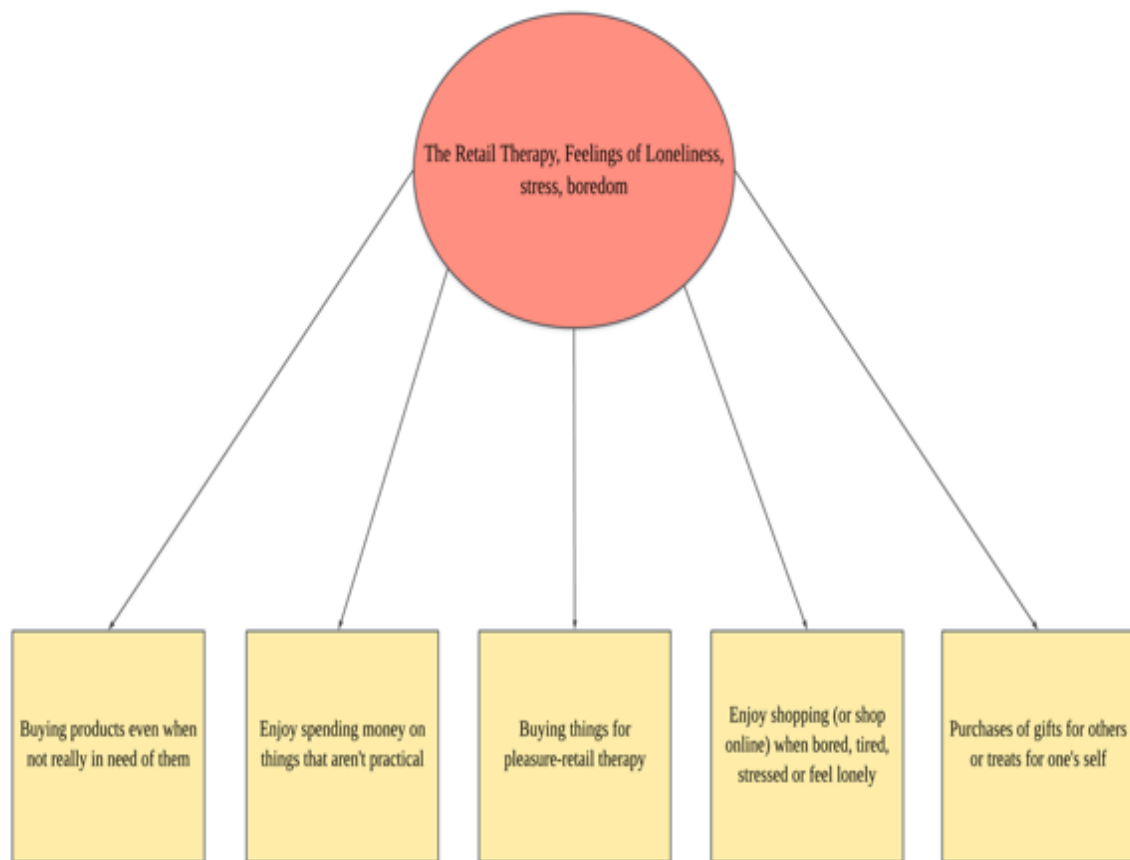
*‘In the UAE is very easy to spend money and acquire debts. Here I go shopping more often, not only looking for the products I need, but also because it is a stress reliever. I pamper myself more often. Sometimes I go to run some errands or to meet some friends in a mall, but if I see something that I like and it is in a reasonable price, so I will buy it. Regarding food, here there are a huge variety of cuisines and places to try. Going to a luxury restaurant is affordable and going to brunches is a hobby. Ordering food online is a normal activity that I practice very often. There are plenty of options when talking about restaurants. Regarding my car, here I am driving a BMW which I bought few months after I arrived in the UAE. It was a brand-new car (like I never even dreamt about) and I am so happy to have it’.* (41 years old, Spanish, 4 years in the UAE).

#### 4.11.2 Theme 5. The Retail Therapy (Feelings of boredom, loneliness & stress)

1st Order CONCEPTS	2nd Order THEMES	AGGREGATE DIMENSIONS
Buying products even when not really in need of them	Theme 5: The Retail Therapy, Feelings of Loneliness, stress, boredom	Financial Factors
Enjoy spending money on things that aren't practical		
Buying things for pleasure-retail therapy		
Enjoy shopping (or shop online) when bored, tired, stressed or feel lonely		
Purchases of gifts for others or treats for one's self		

*Table 4.18 Thematic Table of Theme, The Retail therapy, Feelings of loneliness, stress and boredom*

This theme was named as the ***Retail therapy*** because many participants referred to this term, while talking about their shopping choices and reasons when they felt bored, stressed or lonely in this way.



*Figure 4.34 Thematic model Theme, The Retail Therapy, Feelings of loneliness, stress and boredom*



Participant's Demographic Information							
Participant Number	Age (From-to)	Gender	Country of Origin	Education	Position	Salary (Average)	Estimated Number of years in the UAE
10	31-40	Female	Australia-Lebanon	Master's Degree	HR Manager	AED 21.000-30.000	2.5
36	31-40	Female	Romania	Master's Degree	Manager	AED 21.000-30.000	4
25	31-40	Female	Turkey	Bachelor's Degree	Self Employed Restaurant Owner	AED 61.000-Above	4
20	41-50	Male	Australia	Master's Degree	Project Manger	AED 31.000-40.000	1
1	21-30	Female	Iraq	Bachelor's Degree	Customer Service Supervisor	AED 10.000-20.000	3

Table 4.19 Demographic Table of participants, Theme 5

One major impact on expatriates' shopping behaviour changes emerged by the very fact of their feelings of loneliness, the feeling of being bored and the stress they seemed to encounter from the pressure of work or other responsibilities they had to face in general. They mentioned most of the things they buy when they feel lonely, stressed or bored are things that do not need. The fact of living a better lifestyle and earning more seemed to be having its additional costs. But the main point is that almost all expatriates mentioned that they like to purchase items that they need when they feel bored, stressed or lonely.

*'I buy things, maybe when I feel lonely and stressed.'* Says participant # 1 *'When I feel lonely, I will go shopping and buy something expensive to feel like I'm not alone. Like there is a bag with me or something'*. Laughs. *'When I feel stressed I will go the spa do my nails, or Moroccan bath etc.'* (27 years old, Iraqi, Customer Service Supervisor, 3 years in the UAE).

A female participant naming her shopping preferences as the retail therapy, when she felt lonely or stressed:

*'When I feel lonely I like to go out for shopping to the mall or dining with my friends... or I go to the spa when I'm bored and also when I stressed from work. It is called the Retail therapy. I feel very happy whenever I buy something I want. And when I'm tired, I like to stay home and order food online and watch Netflix'.* (Romanian, 38 years old, Customer Service Manager, master's degree, divorced, 4 years in the UAE).

Similarly, participant # 20 also is a participant that prefers to do shopping when stressed:

*'I usually go shopping when I am stressed just to explode and when I just want to get out of this working environment'.* She says. *'It's for myself. For example, I go shopping and to salons to get a facial or mani-pedi to feel better'.* (34 years old, an Australian-Lebanese HR manager, Master's degree, 2.5 years in the UAE).

It was mentioned various times that the items purchased during bad moods like stress, boredom or loneliness work on the spot by making them happy. But are in general they are things that are not needed:

*'Especially when I'm stressed. She says she likes to do shopping. 'It helps me feel better and release stress. It gives me pleasure and makes me happy. I do buy things that I don't need. It normally depends on my mood. If I'm in a bad mood, I will buy things and because I buy them in a bad mood I never use them'.* Laughs. (39 years old, Turkish, Businesswoman, 4 years in the UAE).

Interestingly, almost all expatriates mention that they buy things when they feel lonely or stressed to make themselves feel better. However, at some point they admit that it can reach to very high amount of unnecessary purchases. Several expatriates mentioned that the shopping they did when they were stressed or bored was so costly that they eventually

had to teach themselves to avoid doing it. For instance, participant # 20, claims to do shopping when under boredom as a risk:

*‘For me the biggest risk is when you are bored you go around in the shops and you buy things. I buy things for myself or gifts to others. So, it’s a combination of both. Sometimes you would just buy a book. When you go to the mall you would just you would have lunch so you would spend money on F&B. And it goes on’.* (47 years old, Australian, Project manager, 1 year in the UAE).

#### 4.11.3. Theme 6. Variety, Festivals and Sales

1st Order CONCEPTS	2nd Order THEMES	AGGREGATE DIMENTIONS
Buying online-easy shopping & buying lower prices	Theme 6: Variety, Festivals & Sales	Financial Factors
Seeing touching the product before buying- preference to shop in the malls		
Considering limits of income before purchasing ,being price conscious		

*Table 4.20 Thematic Table of Theme 6, Variety, Festivals and Sales*

The sixth theme emerged as: ***Variety, festivals and sales*** and has developed as one of the most important factors motivating expatriates to go shopping. As the sixth theme under the umbrella of the dimension *financial factors* it was further broken into three concepts. Please see Figure: 4.35 for the thematic model of the theme Variety, Festivals and Sales.

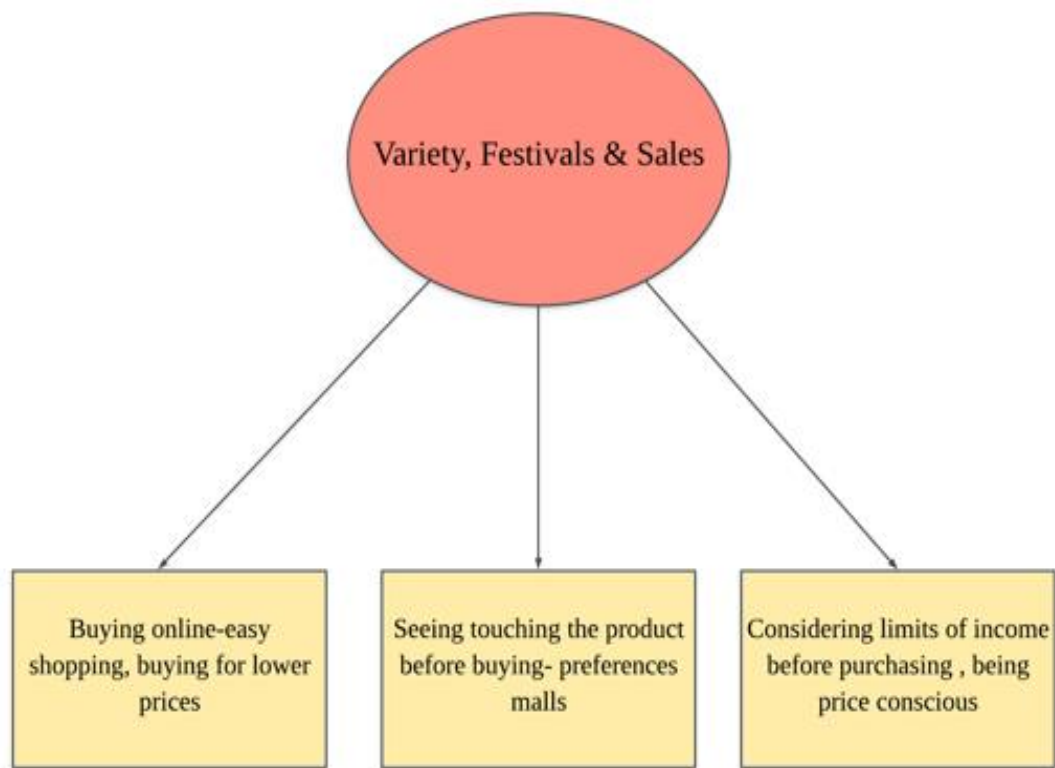


Figure: 4.35 Thematic model Theme 6, Variety, festivals and sales

Participant's Demographic Information							
Participant Number	Age (From-to)	Gender	Country of Origin	Education	Position	Salary (Average)	Estimated Number of years in the UAE
10	31-40	Female	Australia-Lebanon	Master's Degree	HR Manager	AED 21.000-30.000	2.5
36	31-40	Female	Romania	Master's Degree	Manager	AED 21.000-30.000	4
40	41-50	Female	Spain	Bachelor's Degree	Manager	AED 21.000-30.000	4
20	41-50	Male	Australia	Master's Degree	Project Manger	AED 31.000-40.000	1

Table 4.21 Demographic Table of participants, Theme 6

Almost all expatriates mentioned either the availability of an endless variety of products available, shopping festivals that repeat after each other, and a continuity of sales in all the shops. Moreover, the payment facilities offered by the banks to the expatriates were highlighted various times during most of the interviews.

*'First of all, as I said the variety, the ability to buy, not much to do, all the stuff to do is for spending money, brunch, dinner or spa. Well, this kind of stuff. And also, your family is not here so you do other things. And one of the best things is to go out I spent time with your friends or with yourself. And while doing that you spend money'.* (Romanian, 38 years old, Customer Service manager, Master's degree, 4 years in the UAE).

*'My shopping habits have changed because I have now a better income that allows me to afford certain product that I couldn't do in my home country (this is without mentioning the credit cards that the banks will always offer you). Moreover, here in UAE there are plenty of events and places that invite the people to spend their money, sales are always there and outlet malls are a permanent option. All the activities here are related to spending money. Like there so many brunches, beautiful spas, theme parks, attractions. In Spain there are many options where you will spend much less money than here like we do camping, visit museums, visit our friends and family'* (41 years old, Spanish, 4 years in the UAE).

Additionally, many times the UAE climate was mentioned as another factor that leads expatriates to do more shopping. The fact that the climate in the UAE is continuously in high degrees, people are forced to do indoor activities. These activities are mostly in the malls, and malls are full of shops that offer thousands of products and sales. Participant # 20 for instance, states that individuals do not go shopping because they actually need something:

*'I think it's more complex than just needing something to buy it. I think it's a form of entertainment especially during the warmer months. You end up going to a mall and start*

*spending. So, the warmer setting of environment and there is also the variety. If you are walking around long enough, you end up buying something'. (47 years old, Australian, Project manager, 1 year in the UAE).*

Pointing to the fact of the shopping facilities, another amusing comment was shared by participant # 10. She highlighted the fact that when salaries are not sufficient for the endless things available in the malls, the credit cards support you for further shopping:

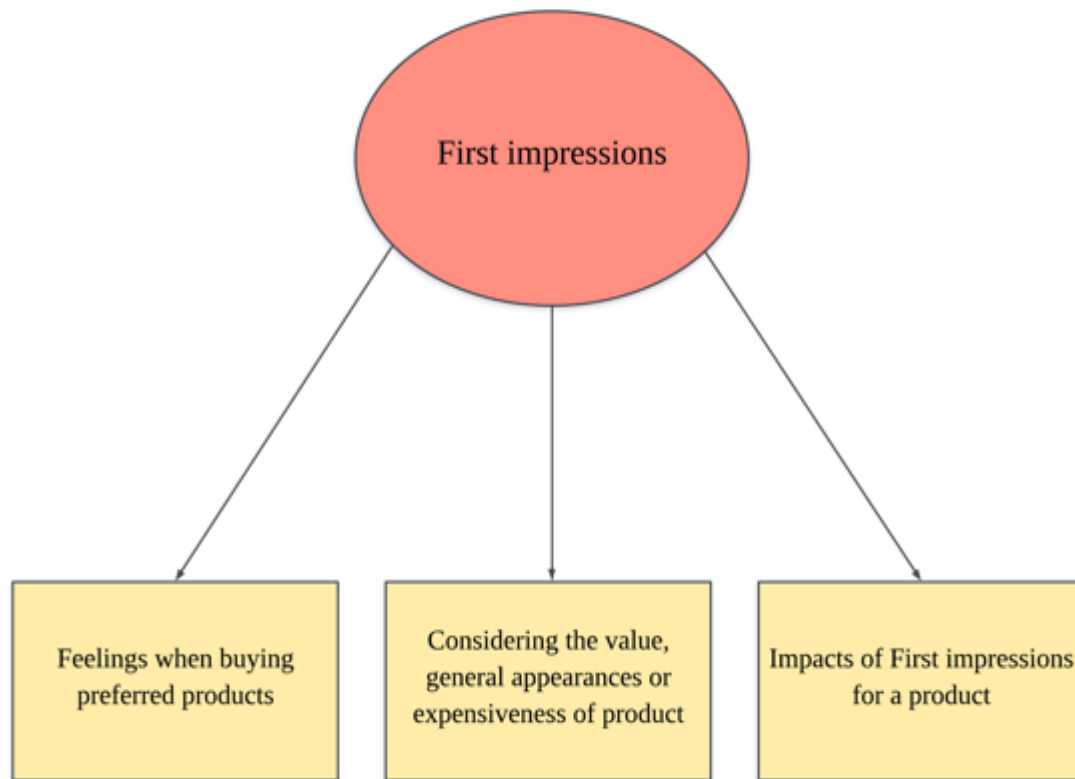
*'My shopping behaviour has changed completely. Every weekend! Laughs... I go shopping for something I don't need when I'm at the mall. I'm going to the beauty salons every weekend and I don't know why. Like, most of my salary is going for shopping... for stuff I really don't need. Especially like, when you're at the mall and there are so many options. So, you just keep buying and buying and buying and using your credit card'. (34 years old, an Australian-Lebanese HR manager Master's degree, 2.5 years in the UAE, single.*

#### **4.11.4. Theme 7. First Impressions**

1st Order CONCEPTS	2nd Order THEMES	AGGREGATE DIMENTIONS
Feelings when buying preferred products	Theme 7: First Impressions	Financial Factors
Considering the value, general appearances or expensiveness of product		
Impacts of First impressions for a product		

*Table 4.22 Thematic Table of Theme, First impressions*

The seventh theme emerged as: *First impressions* further integrated with three concepts. Please see Figure 4.36 for the thematic model the theme first impression.



*Figure 4.36 Thematic model Theme 7, First impressions*

Participant's Demographic Information							
Participant Number	Age (From-to)	Gender	Country of Origin	Education	Position	Salary (Average)	Estimated Number of years in the UAE
34	21-30	Male	Egypt	Bachelor's Degree	Senior Sales Advisor	AED 21.000-30.000	3.5
14	41-50	Male	Turkey	Bachelor's Degree	Self Employed - Businessman	AED 61.000-Above	3
40	41-50	Female	Spain	Bachelor's Degree	Manager	AED 21.000-30.000	4
4	21-30	Female	The Netherlands	Master's Degree	Manager	AED 21.000-30.000	3

Table 4.23 Demographic Table of participants, Theme 7

Majority of expatriates repeatedly mentioned that people are influenced if they were being impressed from the first time of a product they would definitely purchase it. Whether it is choosing a restaurant to dine in or buying a T-Shirt, expatriates consider their initial feelings on why or why not they should purchase a product. Transcripts of interviews revealed that for expatriates, every single detail at the first sight seemed to count when it comes to purchasing any product or services:

*'Yes, for sure. First impressions last. If I want to eat somewhere I even check if the chairs are clean, if this staff is smiling, everything matters for me. If I'm not impressed for the first time from anything, that includes clothes, restaurants, hair salons anything. I will not buy anything from a place. First impression is very important to me. If the shop is very organizing and the staff is friendly for example, I will feel more attracted to buy in this place. When joining others in dining gatherings for the first time, I do consider all the factors mentioned by you. If*



*I am not happy with them, maybe I will stay the first time but I will never go back again'. (41 years old, Spanish, Managerial position, Bachelor's degree, 4 years in the UAE).*

Moreover, first impressions seem to be very important in the business environment of expatriates as well. Expatriate business owners claim that they choose only certain type of cars, restaurant or hotels when they wish to impress their clients. And the reason simply is that the clients also consider the first impression of the person's clothes, car, the place they dine and all the products and services they are being offered. A rather interesting example was given by one of the businessmen living in the UAE for the last 3 years:

*'Yes, of course! First impressions are very important! When you meet someone and you don't really know the person. So, you consider the environment you meet the person in. I was invited for a dinner once. But the thing is, I went there directly out of the construction site without changing into some nice clothes. The approach to me at the dinner was not really very positive. It was very superficial. When the dinner was over, I told them: "Let me take you for a coffee. I want to invite you to where I live... We will not speak of business. Just chat and have a nice break from work. Just for us to get to know each other better."' When we went out, the valet brought my car immediately. When they saw my car (a Porsche) they were very surprised. I told them to follow me. And we went to Zabeel Saray hotel (where I live). The way they perceived me at the dinner and, the way they perceived me afterwards was so different. So much warmer. Like, the body language changed. They were tapping my shoulder while talking to me, they started calling me "brother". The conversation became much friendlier. So, this shows how important first impressions really are'. (47 years old Turkish businessman, bachelor's degree 3 years).*

Furthermore, the endless variety of products available somehow seem to have created an opinion in the expatriates' minds that there are always better products or services and therefore, products should be very impressive from the first time.

*'When visiting shops or dining with friends etc. for the first time. Of course. First impressions matter. In the UAE there's a million shops and restaurants. Why would you go to one that doesn't even look good at first glance?'* (27 years old, from Netherlands, Master's degree, 3 years in the UAE).

On the contrary, few participants mentioned that first impressions actually can be very deceiving and are unreliable. Either on outfits or in products can lead to a negative end.

*'Yeah, I will tell you one example story of a friend of mine that works as a real estate agent. He was working an exhibition and a lot of people were looking at this booth. And he saw a guy that was not looking good at all, he was wearing a poor suit, and his hair was a mess. The shirt was going out from his pants. He looked like a security guard. My friend thought that this guy come to ask about the washroom, but he asked him about the project. As it's his job, my friend had to answer but he ignores him. So, the guy went to the other real estate agent. The other guy answered him. Apparently, he was asking about the project to buy himself properties. And he bought 3 villas. My friend was crying because the other guy he got around 40 or 50.000 AED commission from that guy. So, do not ever judge people by their image. Never!'* (39 years old senior sales advisor from Egypt bachelor's degree, 3.5 years in the UAE).

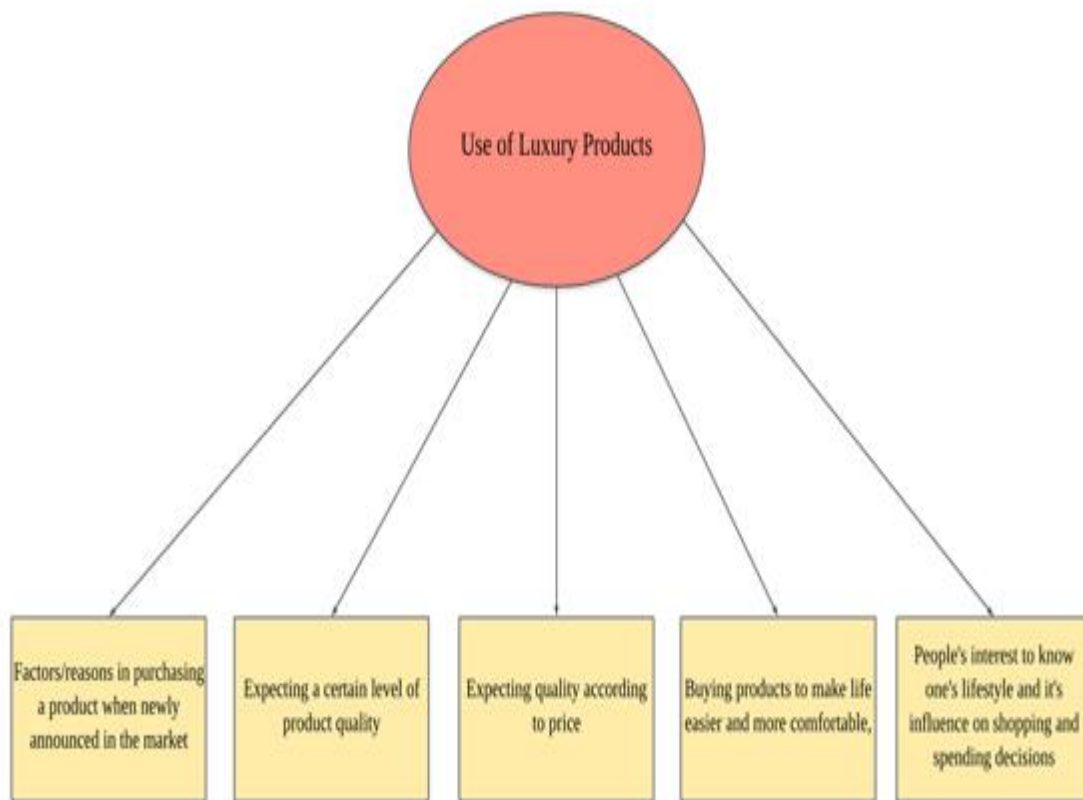
However, in general, most expatriates agreed on the fact that they like to be impressed by the product they want to purchase from the moment they see it.

#### 4.11.5. Theme 8. Use of Luxury Products

1st Order CONCEPTS	2nd Order THEMES	AGGREGATE DIMENSIONS
Factors/reasons in purchasing a product when newly announced in the market	Theme 8: Use of Luxury Products	Financial Factors
Expecting a certain level of product quality		
Expecting quality according to price		
Buying products to make life easier and more comfortable		
People's interest to know one's lifestyle and it's influence on shopping and spending decisions		

*Table 4.24 Thematic Table of Theme 8, Use of Luxury Products*

This theme developed as one of the richest in terms of concepts as it was predominantly mentioned by the participants in various aspects. The theme *Use of luxury products* emerged as one the most important themes under the financial factor dimension and was broken into five further concepts. Please see Figure 4.46 for the thematic model of theme *Use of luxury products*.



*Figure: 4.37 Thematic model of Theme 8, Use of luxury products*

Participant's Demographic Information							
Participant Number	Age (From-to)	Gender	Country of Origin	Education	Position	Salary (Average)	Estimated Number of years in the UAE
12	31-40	Female	Turkey	Master's Degree	Financial Consultant	AED 21.000-30.000	3.5
7	31-40	Female	Russia	Master's Degree	Customer Service Manager	AED 21.000-30.000	2.5
1	21-30	Female	Iraq	Bachelor's Degree	Customer Service Supervisor	AED 10.000-20.000	3
24	21-30	Male	Tunisia	Bachelor's Degree	Call Center Manager	AED 10.000-20.000	3
23	41-50	Female	Tunisia	Bachelor's Degree	Administrative	AED 10.000-20.000	4
38	31-40	Male	Germany	Bachelor's Degree	Project Manager	AED 31.000-40.000	4
40	41-50	Female	Spain	Bachelor's Degree	Manager	AED 21.000-30.000	4

*Table 4.25 Demographic Table of participants, Theme 8*

Interestingly, the consumption of luxury items was mentioned by many participants somehow as a necessity or as a part of expatriate life. Whether or not they had high incomes, most participants mentioned that it was a necessity to have luxury products. They all mentioned that any item that is known to be very expensive would either reflect a better and more respectable image or it would make their lives easier and more comfortable in many ways.

Expatriates claimed that to own luxurious items would make one look successful, and they would be respected by everyone in anyplace they go. Therefore, they claim that they would like to purchase at least one item that counts as luxurious. For example, a very nice car that is considered as luxurious.

Many expatriates argued that owning luxurious products will totally change their life styles. A very interesting example of experience was shared by participant #23 arguing that one must own at least one item considered as luxurious to be able to get things done and get better results:

*‘Yes, for sure!’ she claims. ‘Products you choose to buy, make a difference in your life style. For example, in an interview, if you go with Gucci shoes or Chanel bag etc. they will consider your salary accordingly. Like they would think if she is carrying a bag like this. How much she will expect from me as a salary? It happened to me! Once they told me: “How much salary I must pay you if you are able to wear a bag that costs 3000 AED?” (47 years old, Tunisian, Administrative position, 4 years in the UAE).*

Sharing the same opinion about owning luxury products with her:

*‘In the UAE culture, says participant # 38 ‘When it comes to bags, cars, watches of course you are being perceived as successful, self-made man, successful business owner. In my friends’ circle, if I come with fancy clothes or fancy shoes they would think I’m crazy’. Laughs. (39 years old, German, Project manager, 4 years in the UAE).*

Statements about the necessity in consuming luxury products were towards the fact that everywhere, people would treat you much more favourably when you could present a luxurious life style with your looks.

*‘Definitely!’ Says participant # 24. ‘Luxury products you buy can change your whole life! When you go out for example. And you are dressed up well, people treat you differently. For example, if you go to the bank or even to the bus, to anywhere. They will smell your nice perfume; they will look at your nice clothes that you are wearing. They will be: “Hi sir... How are you sir? How can I help you sir?” So, this is a different way of treating people. It’s not something like a treatment to a poor person who smelling very bad, wearing bad clothes. In*

*terms of respect, they will highly respect you for the way you look in those expensive clothes’.*  
(34 years old, Tunisian, Call Centre manager, 3 years in the UAE).

For some expatriates it is even more than being respected. Buying expensive gifts for instance is a sign to love and to be loved more:

*‘People will like me more if I give something nice to them. Because this is how I feel too. Laughs. If they bring me something expensive, I will love them more. Laughs. And they will change their opinion and how they interact with me. They will treat me with more respect. For example, if it is my birthday, they will think a million times before they get me a gift’.* (27 years old, Iraqi, Customer Service Supervisor, 3 years in the UAE).

For some expatriates, owning luxurious products are a way of living more comfortably. However, they also admit the differences of treatment they perceive from others when using luxurious products. For instance, participant # 40 shares her disappointment that comes from the perception of people due to the luxury products:

*‘Unfortunately, it is true...’ she says. ‘People are judged according to what they have. People think that the more material power you have, the better you do in life. And definitely, using luxury products will make a difference in one’s life style. For instance, if I decide to buy a car instead of a motorcycle, it will make my life easier. Now, if I decide to buy a luxurious car instead of a cheap car, it will also make a difference. Because, I will have more comfort and for sure people will perceive me in a different way. It happened to me that people asked with a surprised tone: “You own a BMW? Oh! It’s a very nice car!” And then they start treating me in a better way’.* (41 years old, Spanish, Managerial position, 4 years in the UAE).

Another interesting point was that, although they considered luxury life as a dream kind of life in their home countries, for many expatriates living a luxury life in the UAE, was mentioned to be a very normal thing. The point was that no matter how much they try to live a luxurious life, due to the fact that the UAE is full of luxurious products, it would really not get

too much of attention, or be seen as luxury to have a couple of luxurious items like a car. For instance, for participant # 6 wearing a luxury watch in the UAE means nothing:

*‘Wearing an expensive watch? Mm... They might think I’m doing well for myself. They might think I’m a little prissy back home. In the UAE though, I think it’s so normal that no one really bats an eye. I mean you see 50 Ferraris pass you on your way to work. What is one watch?’* (27 years old, from Netherlands, Master’s degree, 3 years in the UAE).

Luxurious cars, accessories and clothes, seems to be very important for the working expatriates to present a higher level of employment among others. To present themselves with luxurious items they claim they receive better attention and most importantly more respect:

*‘For going to my meetings with the clients, I usually wear more expensive shoes. And like more good quality suits.’* Says participant #12 *‘When I’m going to the meetings, I usually prefer more expensive stuff than with my usual work days. I feel that I’m more respected, they don’t think you are from a lower level. For the higher-level clients, I go with better and more expensive clothes. Because they judge you with your salary, if they feel that you are getting more salary than they get, or they feel that they have similar salaries they will treat you the same way they treat their own colleges. But if they think that you have a low income they will try to pressure you more, they will try to overcome you more’.* (38 years old, Turkish Financial consultant, 3.5 years in the UAE, Master’s degree).

Either they are used to consume luxurious product or not in their home countries, expatriates are inclined towards living a luxurious live style and are somehow trying to adapt to it. This sometimes is only by buying a car or showing a watch but the interest in luxury products increases without noticing when they start living abroad and pursuing their new assignments.



#### 4.11.6. Theme 9. Brands and Brand Engagement

1st Order CONCEPTS	2nd Order THEMES	AGGREGATE DIMENTIONS
Feelings when purchasing a preferred product or brand	Theme 9: Brands & Brand engagement	Financial Factors
Regularly follow and purchase from certain brands/products		
Favoring luxury brands		

*Table 4.26 Thematic Table of Theme 9, Brands and Brand engagement*

The theme ***Brands and brand engagement*** emerged by the continuously mentioned brand names and the meaning of these brands for the expatriates that follow those brands. This theme is connected to three further concepts. Please see below Figure 4.38 for the thematic model of theme *Brands and brand engagement*

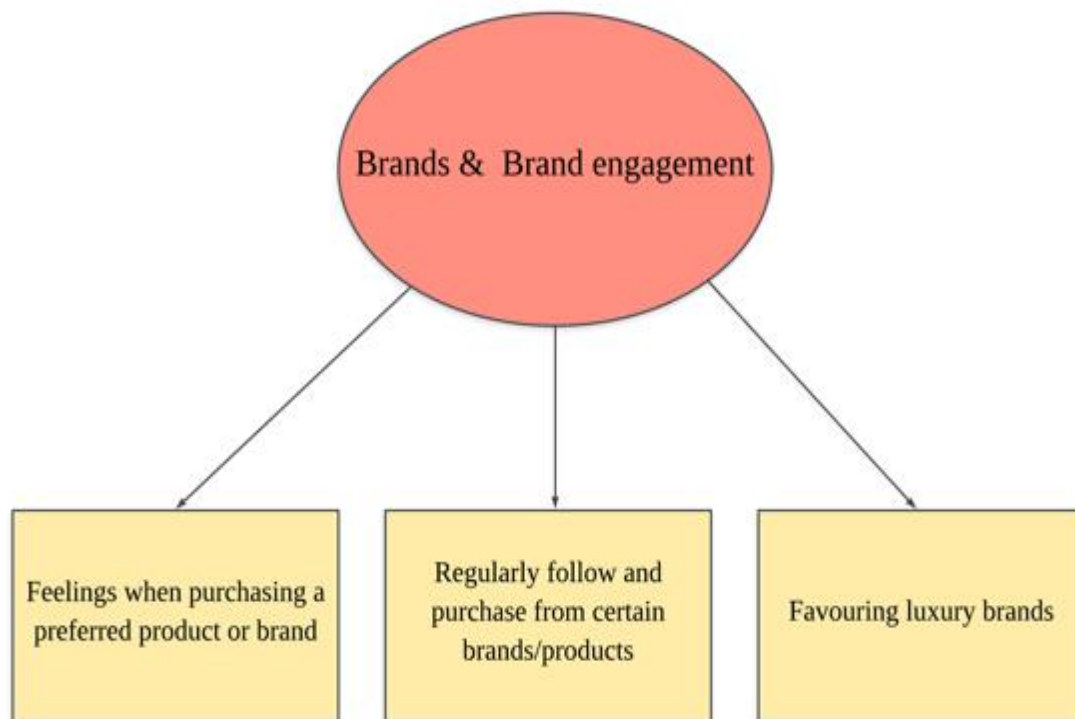


Figure 4.38 Thematic model of Theme 9, Brands and brand engagement

Participant's Demographic Information							
Participant Number	Age (From-to)	Gender	Country of Origin	Education	Position	Salary (Average)	Estimated Number of years in the UAE
10	31-40	Female	Australia-Lebanon	Master's Degree	HR Manager	AED 21.000-30.000	2.5
14	41-50	Male	Turkey	Bachelor's Degree	Self Employed - Businessman	AED 61.000-Above	3
8	21-30	Male	Syria	Bachelor's Degree	QHSE Manager	AED 21.000-30.000	2.5
1	21-30	Female	Iraq	Bachelor's Degree	Customer Service Supervisor	AED 10.000-20.000	3

Table 4.27 Demographic Table of participants, Theme 9

Similar to buying luxurious products, expatriates like to follow certain brands. While some said they still like to follow the brands they used to know back home, some others mentioned that they encountered so many brands they never knew before. There are also the ones that are not able to find the brands that they had back home. At the bottom of following brands and the admiration for them, there are the considerations of looking for good quality, durability of the product and again presenting an identity that is respectable and accepted by the society. One major reason for expatriates choosing to buy certain branded items, is the identity they like to present using these well-known brand names. For instance, participant # 1 first mentioned the happiness of buying certain brands and added the fact that people will respect her and admire her because she was using those brands:

*'Yes. Using branded products will make me happier and proud of myself. And feel so comfortable and happy that everyone will see me and say: "She is so beautiful and she wearing this brand." They will look at me highly and as successful'. (27 years old, Iraqi, Customer Service Supervisor, bachelor's degree, 3 years in the UAE).*

Similarly, participant #10 says she cannot save money because of spending on the branded items she prefers to buy. And the main reason is the perception of others that she will encounter. However, even the purchases for certain brands are higher than the incomes of some expatriates, the feeling of being able to own a product with a certain brand name, seems like presenting their identity through these brands:

*'Especially in UAE people judge with what brand you're wearing, the car you're driving, what brand bag you're holding. Of course, career wise it shows success... that you're having a good income. And of course, for sure they perceive me differently back home... Whenever I go back home and they see my brand bag. They ask about my car. Automatically they think I'm more successful. My whole lifestyle has changed. That's why I can't save money*

*it's all going to shopping. If it is higher than my income. I can use credit cards, with instalment plans, like 5 – 6000 AED. This is what I recently did for my sunglasses'.*

The following question to her was: How do you feel when you buy one of these banded products? *'I feel amazing when I buy them'!* Laughing out loud. (34 years old, Australian-Lebanese HR manager, Master's degree, 2.5 years in the UAE)

Another commonly agreed opinion was towards the perception in social status. Whatever was displayed in version of luxury brand as expatriates mentioned various times would be perceived in a certain level of position at work or in the society. Brands, they claim, are tools to reflect social status. And people around would consider these items that you present before they consider anything else. A very convincing example about this aspect was shared by participant #14:

*'In general, luxury brand products show your social status. It's a big difference to go to a very important meeting with a watch from a cheap place or with a good quality watch. After all an accessory for a man is a watch. Or the shoes are very important for a man. Once, I had a very important meeting with British petroleum. Like 2-3 hours meeting for an agreement of 500 million USD business agreement. At the end of the meeting when we were shaking hands, the head of the other team opened his wrist and showed me his watch (a ROLEX). Than he asked: "Have you noticed that we are using the same watch?" For the whole meeting like for 3 hours I didn't see his watch. Instead of saying congratulations he was telling me that we are wearing the same watch. He is actually trying to give a message with that. A positive message actually. The watch actually kind of linked us together, like he was saying that we are from the same level of people. Dubai by itself is a brand. For example, if I'm living in Sharjah or Al Ain and I tell to my friends in Turkey that I live in Al Ain. They will ask me where this place is. If you say it's in UAE, they will ask isn't that Dubai? So, the minute I say I live in Dubai, again in Turkey it will be perceived with prestige, the city is a brand by itself.*

*Everyone knows Dubai and in a very high level'. (47 years old Turkish businessman, bachelor's degree 3 years)*

Furthermore, other than choosing brands willingly, once again the unknown pressure was mentioned towards the use of certain brands. In some cases, the choice does not relate to the buyer himself, rather is more towards convincing others. Whether it is a restaurant or a T-shirt, expatriates choose to purchase from brands that they are advised to from their social circles. Participant # 8 shares his experience on why he chooses to buy from certain brands:

*'In general, I feel like here in the UAE, you are forced to buy expensive stuff because you need to live up to a certain class or level. I can't go and buy any T-shirt from any place... I need to buy it from a good brand. For example, my phone is a high-class phone. It's not an old one because people judge you basically with what you have. And also, my car is a Mercedes E class. So, like when I show up with this car, people will say: "Oh this guy must be rich!" But if you with an old car people will be like, this guy is poor. Sometimes we push ourselves, even be in debt just to buy expensive stuff to be able to show off'. (27 years old, Syrian, QHSE manager, 2.5 years in the UAE).*

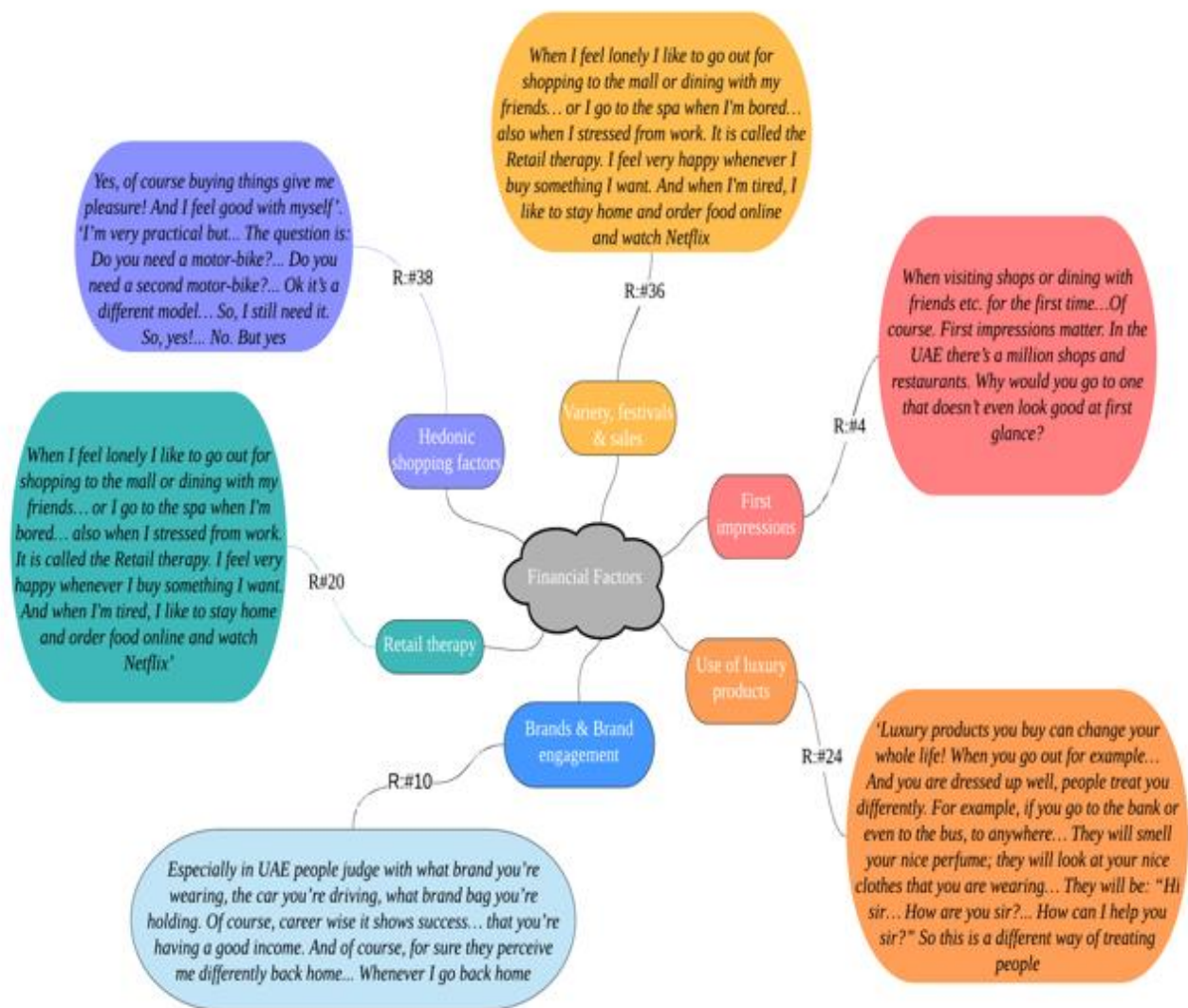


Figure 4.39 Key Responses, Financial factors Themes 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9

#### 4.12. Aggregate Dimension 5: Social Life

The final dimension developed from ten themes and six sub-themes was called as: *Social Life*. The main theme developed under this dimension was called as: *Shopping as a means of socialization*. This theme as all the other themes also answers the questions of how and why expatriates chose to purchase certain products and services when socializing in their new environments pursuing their international assignments away from home.



Figure 4.40 Word Cloud Aggregate Dimension 5, Social life

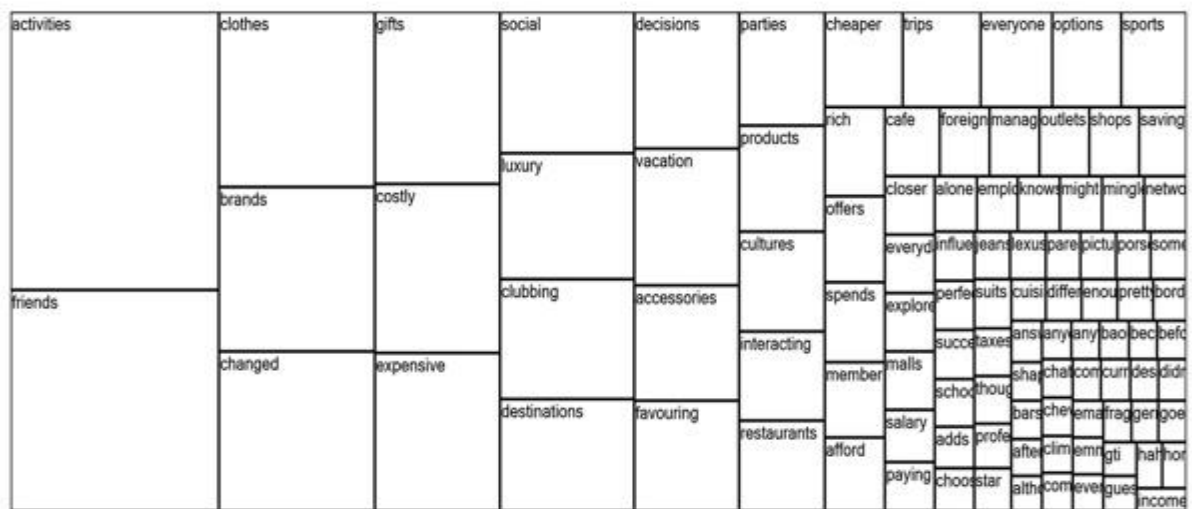


Figure: 4.41 Tree Map Aggregate dimension 5, Social life

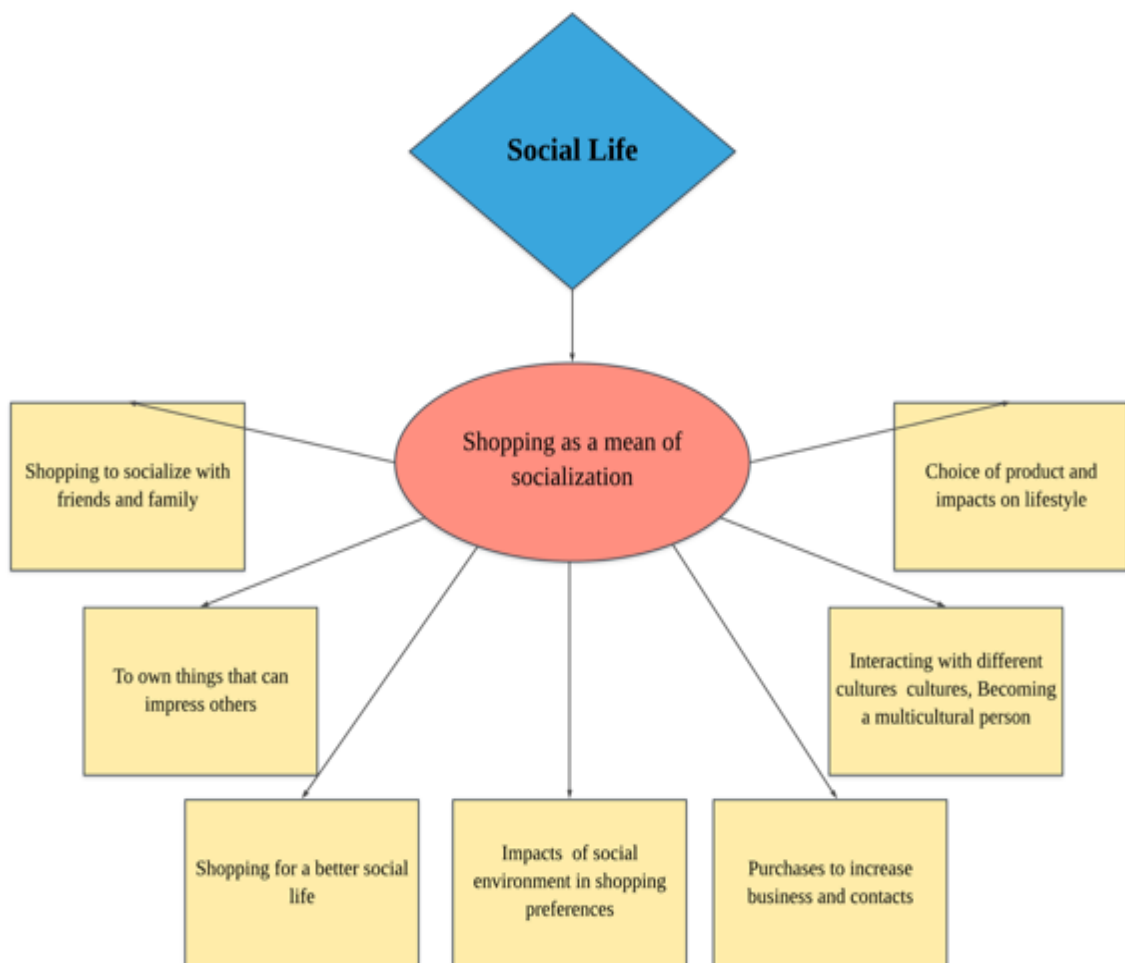


Figure: 4.42 Thematic model Dimension 5, Social life



#### 4.12.1. Theme 10. Shopping as a means of socialization

1st Order CONCEPTS	2nd Order THEMES	AGGREGATE DIMENSIONS
Shopping to socialize with friends and family	Theme 10: Shopping as a mean of socialization	Social Life
To own things that can impress others		
Shopping for a better social life		
Impacts of social environment in shopping preferences		
Purchases to increase business and contacts		
Interacting with different cultures, becoming a multicultural person		
Choice of product and impacts on lifestyle		

Table 4.28 Thematic Table Theme 10, Shopping as a means of socialization

The tenth theme revealed as: ***Shopping as a means of socialization***. It emerged from the transcripts that revealed why and how expatriate consumers do spend on socializing with friends or colleagues. This theme was linked further to seven concepts. Please see below Figure 4.43 for the thematic model for theme 10 *Shopping as a means of socialization*.

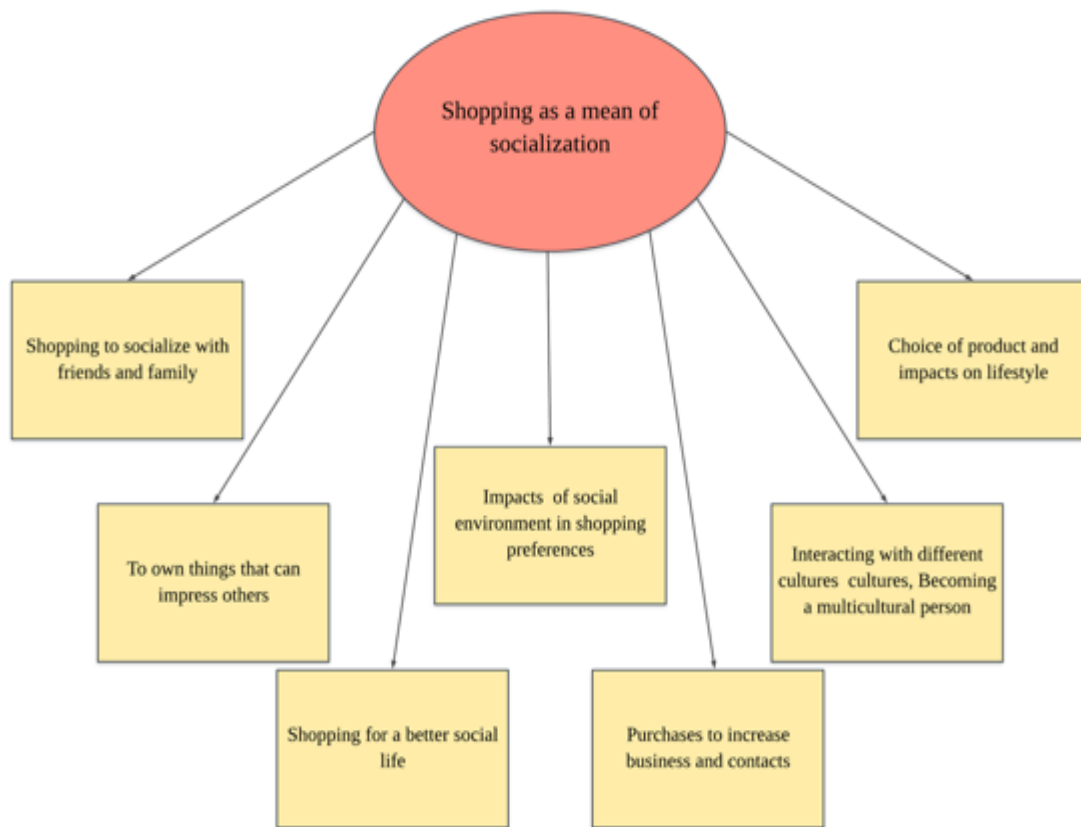


Figure 4.43 Thematic model Theme 10, Shopping as a mean of socialization

Participant's Demographic Information							
Participant Number	Age (From-to)	Gender	Country of Origin	Education	Position	Salary (Average)	Estimated Number of years in the UAE
12	31-40	Female	Turkey	Master's Degree	Financial Consultant	AED 21.000-30.000	3.5
14	41-50	Male	Turkey	Bachelor's Degree	Self Employed - Businessman	AED 61.000-Above	3
4	21-30	Female	The Netherlands	Master's Degree	Manager	AED 21.000-30.000	3
36	31-40	Female	Romania	Master's Degree	Manager	AED 21.000-30.000	4

Table 4.29 Demographic Table of participants, Theme 10

Almost all expatriates of this thesis mentioned that they have either increased spending or developed a new purchasing factor after their move abroad. For expatriates, the reason for this additional or new shopping need was simply due to the fact of being away from home and not having the options of social activities available in their new surroundings. While some mentioned back home they would simply have a dinner in their parents' home in the weekend, some others said they would just they bike around the city with friends. The examples of socializing in the UAE was mentioned to be completely different than their countries.

For expatriates, a major way in socializing was mentioned to be through dining with friends in restaurants. For the female participants it was more like spending time with friends in spas. However, the reason that was frequently mentioned in the change of shopping behaviour was the fancy and high level of life style that was offered in the UAE. And the fact that they had to reflect a certain type of spending that had to pursue when socializing. Hence, one major reason for the change and increase in shopping revealed itself as the purchases like clothes, accessories, cars and all types of spending that was necessary for socializing. Most expatriates mentioned the requirement of looking in a certain way when socializing. For instance, participant # 14 argues that one will be judged according how much he spends when socializing:

*'Definitely. He says. People will look at you according the way you spend your money, in business dinners for example they look at you from the way you are spending'.*

Similarly, like most other participants participant # 12 mentioned the necessary dressing up according to the place they do: *'My social life does affect my shopping style. Yes, it is. I like to go to pubs I wear very basic like jeans. If I go to a luxurious place with a friend to dine than I dress totally different'.*

Moreover, participant # 4 is one of the majorities that agrees to the fact of dining with friends and going to the spa are major socializing styles in the UAE for expatriates:

*Sure, luxury shopping is a way of socialization with friends. Dining out is a big thing in the UAE. And going to get your nails done with your friends is a common outing. So, it's fun, I guess. You get to chill with your friends and feel a big pampered in the meantime'. (27 years old, from Netherlands, Master's degree, 3 years in the UAE)*

Furthermore, participant # 14 was one of the participants that said that his social life completely changed due to the very fact of life standards being very high:

*'Due to my business requirements I choose to go to fine dining restaurants. In the UAE there are many good places for fine dining. I can say everywhere. The life standards here are very high. For example, there is no street food, like we have back home. I never had any. Here you always interact with foreigners and everyone has a good income. Even though it's a small place people live in luxury. It's not in a choice. The social life here has its own needs; it requires you to live in a higher life standard. The dynamics are different. If u like it or not, you change. My social life changed completely'.*

He also added the fact that the requirements in living with many nationalities was another factor of having different types of spending while socializing. His example also pointed on the fact that dining was a major way of socializing for the expatriates:

*'As I said there are so many kinds of people and they come with their difference and you have to mingle with them in their own ways like dining with them in their cultures' restaurants. For me food is a way of mingling system. Like If I'm inviting them I prefer my countries food but again and fine dining environment where I can impress my guests'. (47 years old Turkish businessman, bachelor's degree 3 years in the UAE)*

Similarly, too many other participants, for participant # 36 too, one has to do certain purchases to have a social good life and also impress others:

*'Well shopping does affect social life. Because whatever you're doing, you're doing it by spending money. You want to out with your friends, you have to spend money in a normal*

*coffee shop ordering a restaurant or in a brunch, in a spa or when you want to go what a business dinner, again you have to impress people and that doesn't happen without paying money. If you want to do something nice for your family, travel for example, again you need to spend money. So yes, in every aspect shopping does effect everyone's social life. Even when you have children, you need to consider the schools, their expenses, like their birthday parties, so many things with the school'. (Romanian, 38 years old, Customer Service Manager, Master's degree, 4 years in the UAE).*

Moving and living abroad has brought provided expatriates a completely different lifestyle. This new lifestyle and their new surroundings, eventually led them to certain changes. These changes were sometimes adapted by pressure of their social environments and sometimes it was their own choice to change. Overall all themes identified in this thesis, anchored the factors that caused changes in expatriates shopping behaviours and identities. The following chapter displays the summary of key findings and the analysis of this research.

## CHAPTER 5

### DISCUSSION

#### 5.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the key findings of this research by returning back to this thesis's original aim and the central questions motivating it as outlined in Chapter 1. Additionally, interpretation, explanation and analysis of findings, the proposed conceptual model of expatriate identity and shopping behaviour change is presented in this chapter.

#### 5.2. Summary of Key Findings

The thesis anchored itself of the importance of its purpose and main questions, to reveal the factors impacting on expatriates' changes in identity and shopping behaviours, in an unbiased approach. The thesis aimed to analyse, extract and articulate the extent to which expatriates shopping behaviours change when they live in a different country. The objective of the study has been to investigate the extent of change that expatriation has on the shopping behaviours of expatriates when living in a different country. This thesis concluded with a total number of 10 major themes and 6 sub-themes. All themes and sub-themes were deducted from the open-ended interview transcripts and labelled as the following:

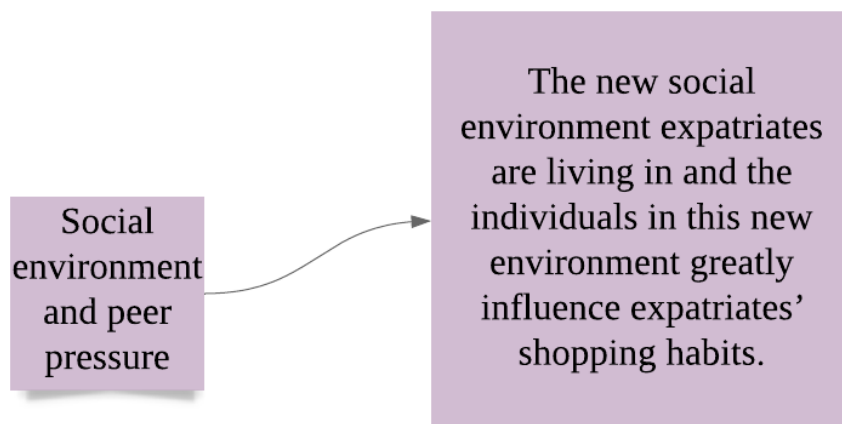
- 1. *Social Environment and Peer Pressure (Sub-theme: Herding Behaviour),*
- 2. *Social Media Usage (Sub-theme (1):Reflecting lifestyle and Identity through social media, Sub-theme (2): Social media purchasing factors),*
- 3. *Changing Identity (Sub-theme (1): The need to Fit in and Belong, Sub-theme (2):Reflecting Identity through Possessions, Sub-theme (3):Perception of Identity by Others through Possessions),*

- 4. *Hedonic Shopping Factors,*
- 5. *The Retail Therapy- Feelings of loneliness, Stress and Boredom*
- 6. *Variety Festivals and Sales*
- 7. *First Impressions*
- 8. *Use of Luxury Products*
- 9. *Brands and Brand Engagement*
- 10. *Shopping as a Means of Socialization.*

All themes that have been deducted from the collected data, responded to the two key questions of this research in various aspects. The findings of this study, supported the author to identify multiple factors relating to the changes of identity and shopping behaviours of expatriates.

#### **5.2.1. Social Environment and Peer Pressure**

The aim of this research has been to deduct and interpret the extent to which expatriates shopping behaviours change when moving abroad. The central questions of this thesis were answered by the initial theme that emerged during the analysis of the data gathered from the transcripts. The initial theme deducted from the transcripts was called as: *Social environment and peer pressure.*



*Figure 5.1 Significant findings, Theme 1*

This theme revealed the impacts of the social environment of the expatriates once moving abroad. The findings of this thesis indicated that their new social environments have a great impact both in their identities and their shopping behaviours as expatriates. In their social environments expatriates are surrounded with their friends, colleagues from work and their neighbours. Expatriates in the UAE have a new social environment that consist of many other nationalities that are also expatriates. These individuals and their opinions resulted as having great impact on expatriates shopping decisions. The experiences shared by the participants indicate that expatriates are greatly influenced by their social surroundings when it comes to purchasing preferences and decisions and their identities. The pressure they claim to feel comes from their social environments. The new social environment they are living in and the individuals in this new environment greatly influence expatriates' shopping habits.

Moreover, remarkable number of expatriates that participated in this study mentioned they were following the people around (or their groups within the social media) while choosing or buying a product. The reason was mentioned as being assured of the quality of a product. The idea of being in the group that does the right choice in shopping was another reason to follow the choices of the majority of people. Hence, herding behaviour revealed itself as a sub-



theme that shows another type of influence factor on expatriates. Findings of herding behaviour as well supported the author in answering the questions of how and why expatriates change their shopping behaviours and identities.

Participant #	Important Statements Theme 1: Social environment and peer pressure & Sub-theme: Herding behaviour
9	<i>Here it's totally different. I started working in the UAE with the royal family. They gave me a VIP apartment, luxurious car and all... I was in a shock and didn't know how to adapt. After a year I started adapting with the people around me ... I didn't know any of the brands for example. But now, I'm very selective with what I wear. Like; Hugo Boss, Calvin Klein etc. these kind of brands that I never tried on. I did hear the name but never had anything of this sort. But when I started working here with all these VIP people and their surroundings... You have to know how to speak, how to dress and act... Your identity automatically changes. The country forces you to change...The work, the place you live and the people around you. There is definitely pressure of changing yourself according to your surroundings'.</i>
16	<i>If in your environment your friends are from the bigger circle, like everyone drives an expensive car, if everyone is in that category, then you have to buy an expensive car it's some kind of peer pressure. So, it basically depends on your environment for instance if everyone around your neighbourhood is driving an expensive car then you kind of have to drive an expensive car too'.</i>
8	<i>People will think of you as a poor person if you don't do certain types of spending. They will say: "He is stingy;... he is cheap,... he doesn't like to spend money." There is pressure! For example, when my friends want to go somewhere like to a café shop... As soon as you say something like: "That place is too expensive", they will start thinking differently about you. They will think that you are cheap. You should never mention money</i>
14	<i>I feel the pressure here more than in my country. He says. The pressure comes more from the business environment. For example, I can speak in my country with a very nice accent and also the body language counts. Here, there are differences even in the way you act and speak. Everyone is a foreigner and have different cultures. You need know all the different opinions and the way they present themselves. So, even the food you eat...</i>
36	<i>To see people buying nice cars, going out with the nice clothes, enjoying brunch in the weekends, meeting up in ladies' nights... It makes you somehow want to do the same thing. Because you keep seeing these things all around and you want the same. Plus, you have the right income to do all this. You don't want to be left out of your social circle.... So you do it and enjoy...I would prefer to buy something that sells a lot... Because, high number of sales means it's a good product, it is trustable and people are happy using it...I feel good and safe when I things that others buy. I share the good part of it and also I can share failure of it. If anyone makes a mistake, then it is not only my mistake. And if everyone makes a good choice then I'm one of the good choice makers</i>
10	<i>I would definitely buy a very popular product! Yes, if I can afford the product then for sure!... I feel good and special when I get it</i>
2	<i>Definitely, I was influenced by my colleagues and friends... Which places to shop from, what product to buy from which shop, and where to spend time out of work. Plus, a product that sells a lot...For example, cars... definitely. It means that the car is reliable, good in quality, durable and affordable probably.</i>
3	<i>I wouldn't say I'm being influenced but rather listen to people's recommendations. For example, if a colleague recommends a new restaurant I would try it. When it comes to clothes we have a saying in our country: "Eat what you like and dress how others like". So, I might buy a brand name just to get better admiration looks from others. I owned an iPhone because I liked it and I used to listen to some my friend calling me an "Apple sheep".</i>

Table 5.1 Important statements, Theme 1

### 5.2.2. Social Media Usage

One major theme that clearly responded the questions of how and why expatriates are changing their shopping behaviours and identities was identified as the *Social media usage*.

This main theme along with its supporting 2 sub-themes:

*1: Reflecting lifestyle and Identity through social media and*

*2: Social media purchasing factors. This theme served as one of the most important findings, which lead back to aims and objectives of this study.*

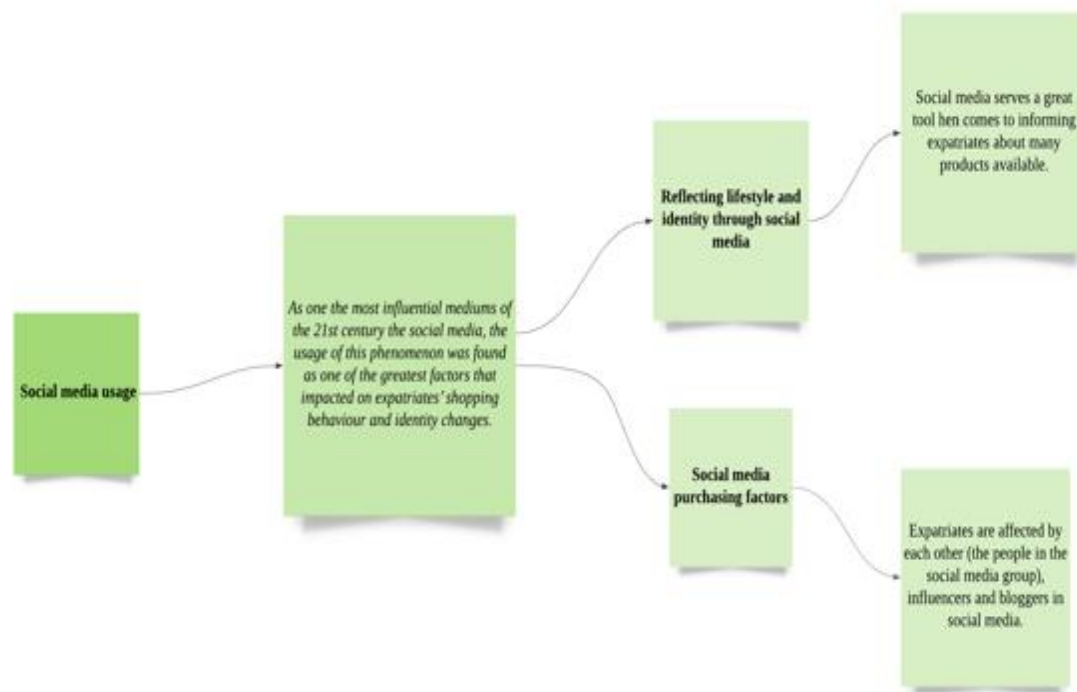


Figure 5.2 Significant findings, Theme 2

As one the most influential mediums of the 21<sup>st</sup> century is the social media, the usage of this phenomenon was found as one of the greatest factors that impacted expatriates' shopping behaviour and identity changes. Expatriates mentioned that even before their arrival to their new environments, they used social media for information about shops, product and

places for socialization etc. However, social media as indicated by the findings of the study was not only used for information about places and shops to buy from. This medium, as powerful as it is, has another great function among expatriates. Findings revealed that social media was used as a platform where expatriates present their new identities that they wore as expatriates. (This aspect of social media was presented as the first sub-theme: *Reflecting lifestyle and Identity through social media*). The posts expatriates share through many different ways in social media (What's App, Facebook, Snap Chat etc.) display their new identities and lifestyles to their friends and family back home as well as the people they encounter in their new social environments. Social media is used as a perfect platform to present products they purchase, the lifestyle they have and the identities that they developed as an expatriate.

Moreover, expatriates are affected by the each other (the people in the social media group), influencers and bloggers in social media. (This aspect was presented as the second sub-theme: *Social media purchasing factors*). Expatriates like to see adds, comments and videos about products they like to buy. And social media again serves a great tool then comes to informing expatriates about many products available. However, a contradictory comment by several expatriates was provided about this aspect. The comment was towards the fact that some of the social media bloggers or influencers were being paid to make comments on certain products and they may not always be reliable. Be that as it may, majority of expatriates mentioned that the *online shopping* was their priority. As they could see all products that were available while resting at home. Further, the expatriates mentioned that advertisings on social media are available at all times, even when they are at work. And they could compare prices and quality through the comments they see in social media. In that pursuit, findings point two main streamlines of products purchased online by the expatriates, 1. *Food and Beverage* and 2. *Clothes*.

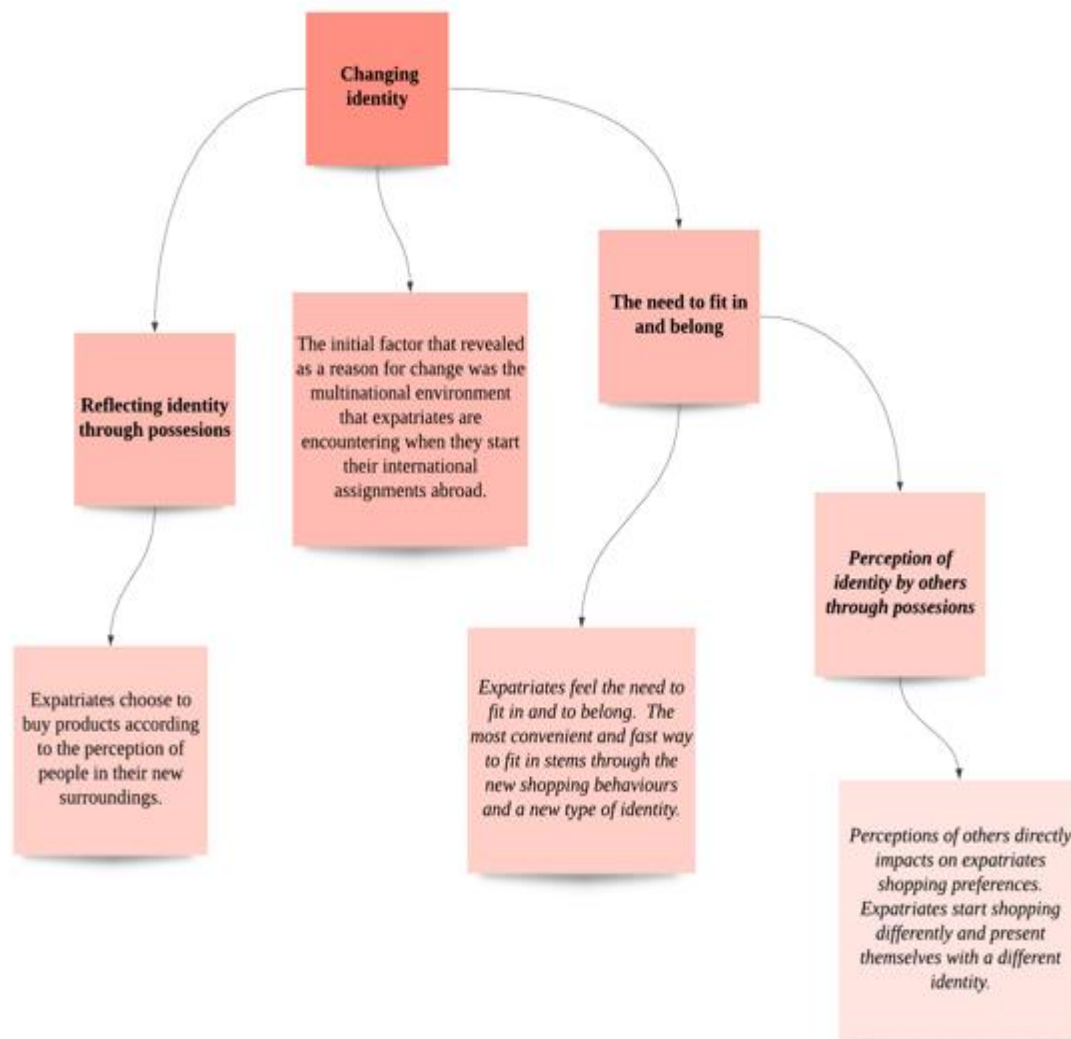
Participant #	Important Statements Theme 2 Social media usage. & Sub-theme Reflecting Lifestyle & Identity through Social media and Social Media Purchasing Factors
36	<i>I listen to the opinions in the social media. People buy things and use things and then they make comments. So, again you don't have to risk buying something which is not good and not tried by others</i>
19	<i>I'm always following social media, like umm... which are the new shops that opened in the mall, ... What to buy, ... I will just follow on social media</i>
21	<i>I do use social media in the UAE for many things. I love on line shopping. I like to look to the reviews all the time</i>
14	<i>I aim to keep a certain social circle in my social media accounts. Like my parents. I want them to see my pictures and feel good and happy that I'm in good places and living nicely. I share my happy moments and achievements and this makes the people that care for me happy too. And I feel happy too'</i>
10	<i>Actually, I'm posting pictures a lot since I moved here. Specially, when I'm traveling and when I go out, I post my pictures. Maybe to show off... But it makes me feel unique</i>
34	<i>Of course I use social media... Especially in Instagram, Facebook, ... I always post pictures... Yeah!... I feel so happy and so comfortable with myself when I post things. As I told you before, I want to be attracted by people. And in this life you have to be someone different. So the first thing that I need to do is to be different than others. You cannot be wearing the same things or talk about the same thing you need to be different. And this is what I'm trying to do through social media, attracting people and being different than people.</i>
1	<i>I do like to post things that I buy in Instagram and Facebook she says, but before I used to post much more than now ... Now, that much... When I get likes on my posts I feel very happy. Like by my friends. But if someone is jealous because of want I post ...It's so nice I feel also happy ...Maybe even happier!...</i>
11	<i>I don't want people to know that I'm doing well. Just trying to be careful it's better... Because some people will think: "Ah she's earning so much... Now we can ask for this." For me it's better to have a post just once in a blue moon. I don't want people to ask me for things</i>
13	<i>I post pictures or videos etc. When I post my belongings in social media, sure some people will envy me, some will admire me. Such people that admire me they are the close friends and family. They all know how I built myself and how I can now do whatever I want to do. The envious people are the ones that always hated me because of my success. How I went abroad and I built my business and all...Once I established my company and started doing contracts with different sub-contractors etc. As you know we are working in the airport... People started getting in touch with me through LinkedIn for further business opportunities and they wanted to see how I do it and all. A lot of connections appeared in my account, people started asking me for recruitment, for jobs. Or people were asking if would be interested in a joint venture. Obviously, it increased the connection on my LinkedIn account</i>

Table 5.2 Important statements, Theme 2

### 5.2.3. Changing Identity

The theme **Changing Identity**, deducted as one of the largest in detail, was supported with three sub-themes:

- 1: *The Need to Fit in and Belong,*
- 2: *Reflecting Identity through possessions,*
- 3: *Perception of identity by others through possessions.*



*Figure 5.3 Significant findings, Theme 3*

This theme, along with its three sub-themes, responded comprehensively to the key questions of this thesis on how and why expatriates change in their identities. The changes in expatriates' identity and shopping behaviours in this discourse was critically examined and aims of analysing the factors and the extent of the changes were identified.

The initial factor that became clear as a reason for change was the multinational environment that expatriates are encountering when they start their international assignments abroad. The fact that the UAE consists of 88.52% expatriates Official GMI Blog (2018),

expatriates even after their adaptation period mentioned that they felt the change in their identities due to this mixture of cultures in their social environments. As a starting point of this change, almost all of expatriates mentioned that it was rather a positive change. The changes relate to their observations of the differences in cultures: in the choices of food, clothes, style of entertainment etc. Expatriates claim that learning these differences make them more open minded and international individuals that accept and adapt to differences. They see, learn and start purchasing different types of clothes, eat in different types of restaurants, travel to new destinations, and spend their leisure time in new ways. This indicates the changes in their shopping preferences and their positively changed identities as they state.

A sub-theme that was deducted through the stories by almost all participants, revealed as: *The need to fit in and belong*. Expatriates feel the need to fit in and to belong. Interestingly, the most convenient and fast way to fit in was stemmed through the new shopping behaviours and a new type of identity. Findings revealed that the new identity of expatriates is being reflected by their new shopping behaviours. All gender, nationality or age groups seem to go through the same or similar changes when it comes to the point of fitting in and belonging to a social circle. Expatriates do not want be left out of their social circles. Thus, they are willing to face the changes required to be accepted in a social group. Majority of expatriates mentioned that they choose to buy products that would express their new identities as expatriates. This is the new identity that they choose to carry and present in their new environments and back home to their friend and families.

Nonetheless, many participants also mentioned that they need to belong to a social circle but they like to be unique by buying something different than others within the group. They stated it makes them feel good to stand out within the group with their own choice in with certain products. They would buy the same brand but they would choose a different design of this product.

Another finding was that expatriates choose to buy products according to the perception of people in their new surroundings. With the foundation of the belief that are being perceived according to their possessions, they are inclined to purchase products that they would be perceived in certain ways. Hence, buying certain items according to others perceptions lead to create a certain identity. Results of this thesis revealed that expatriates are perceived by their environments according to their belongings, which consequently impacts their shopping preferences.

An interesting point that resulted according to expatriates' comments was that products that are more expensive were considered to be better in quality. And expatriates were impacted towards purchasing the same product, but an expensive version of it, to be able to fit in the group or present an identity that is not stingy and knows how to choose the better product.

Their social environment and perceptions of others directly impacts expatriates' shopping preferences. Expatriates start shopping differently and present themselves with a different identity. Hence, these new shopping preferences consequently lead to the reflection of their changed identities, by using and presenting these items.

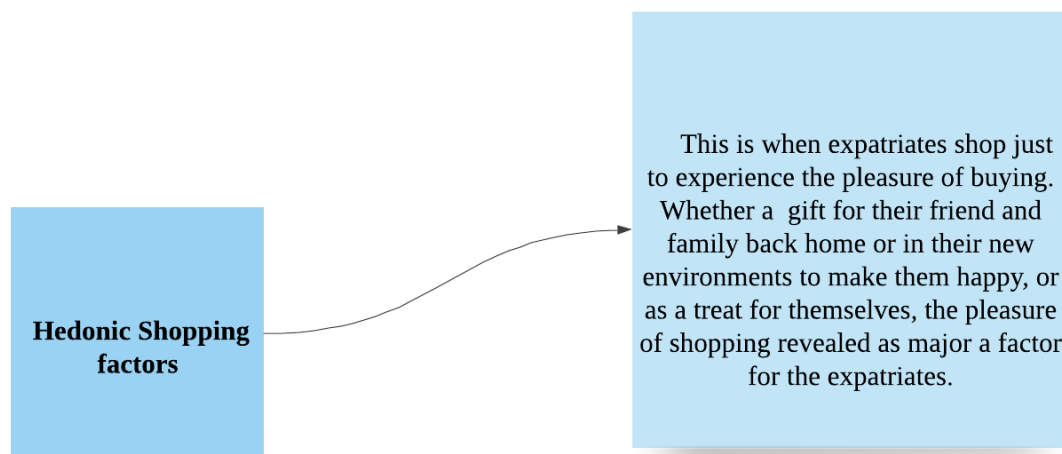
Participant #	Important Statements Theme 3 Changing identity & Sub-themes: The Need to Fit in and Belong, Reflecting Identity Through Possessions & Perception of Identity by others through Possessions
12	<i>I feel that I'm more open minded' says Mrs. O.Y. I know more nationalities, I know more about how different nationalities work together, I'm flexible. I know how to treat an Egyptian and on the other hand I know how to treat an Emirati or a European. It's a positive change!</i>
24	<i>My people back home... They think I'm a different person... I agree. I'm not the same person that I was before definitely. I'm not talking like before, I don't think like before and I don't see the world like before. My way of communication has changed, my view of mind, my mentally has changed, towards life and towards the people.</i>
9	<i>Back home they think you are selfish and you forget where you come from. Unfortunately, I cannot adapt myself to the way I lived before. And they think this is wrong. They think I'm a show off. Where I am now... Yes. There is a pressure to get better things. The person before that was known as ... and the person now, are totally different two people. I know where I come from but I can't be that person anymore. I don't know if the change is in a good or bad way... But I know it's totally different. But I feel good about it.</i>
37	<i>I have changed my perception about how I treat people from different nationalities within time and I am more confident for example being in a more international environment than I was back home. I would say I'm more open to finding friends compared to when I was back home... I'm more sociable and I'm less shy... And I learned how to protect my own belongings or my own needs and what I need.</i>
14	<i>I think I did change after moving abroad. Most importantly, I learned how to be patient. Again the many different nationalities and their various cultures that you are interacting with teach you to understand and accept them the way they are and be patient for differences. The changes are in a positive way. I became like an international person</i>
40	<i>Yes, there is some pressure. Because here it is very common to have a certain level of lifestyle. For instance: going to spas and brunches, spending some weekends in a very nice five-star hotel, driving a luxurious car, having an extraordinary holiday, trying different restaurants, etc. If you don't do the same activities, you won't talk about the same subject that all the people around. Therefore, people will leave you out.</i>
28	<i>Initially, I used buy things according to the group of friends that I am hanging with and that's when I realized who I am. I tried my best to fit in. You do buy things because you want to meet as many people as you can. But later on, once I found my core group of people I kind of stepped back. Because I realized I actually have friends who like me based on what I have.</i>
13	<i>Once you wear it and you see others are wearing it too, you will see, that you guys will fit together in the same community. Because if you wear a different watch, than your colleagues will be like; 'you have all this money and you wear this? You can't afford a Rolex like an expensive watch?' Technically, its peer pressure. I definitely feel pressured towards what I buy. If you are not in certain circle, people will look down at you. They will think they are able to effort things ...but you... can't. It effects the business too. Like, if you are meeting the clients and you are not wearing nice, branded clothes they will think twice, they might think I don't make enough and the company is in bad shape etc. You have to always fit in.</i>
10	<i>If you're wearing a normal watch and everyone is wearing a luxurious one you're not fitting in the group. Going clubbing to White for example. To a really expensive place. Once the conversation about it starts if you can't afford it you feel like you can't fit into the group. You can use credit cards and find a way!</i>
38	<i>It's necessary in our times that people always perceive you as who you are with what you wear in their first impression, even though it's totally wrong. For example, when I'm going through the airport, I have to dress up very fancy not to be stopped by the customs. When I come in let's say my surfer clothes through the airport, they always check my luggage, even to the point they strip search me. They are trying to find drugs on me... When come in let's say in a nice Polo shirt, nice jeans and nice shoes...It's a breeze ... No body stops me; no body looks at me. Open hair verses closed hair; of course clothes .... everything'.</i>
14	<i>Yes of course things you choose to buy, make a complete difference in your life style. for example, there is a restaurant that I really like very much. The valet parking staff there really were attending to me very nicely due to my car. They would always greet me, ask me how I'm doing, put my car in the VIP area even though I do not ask for it. When I finish my dinner they immediately would run to bring my car as soon as possible so I don't wait. A few times I went there by taxi, when I went down from the taxi the same staff did not even recognize me. they know my plate number of my car; they know the car but they do not recognize my face. so your accessories you use like your car, watch clothes etc. remains in people's minds in a strong way and they judge you accordingly and remember you with the things you own</i>

Table 5.3 Important statements, Theme 3



#### 5.2.4. Hedonic Shopping Factors

Another significant behaviour of shopping for expatriates emerged as the hedonic factor. Expatriates counted various reasons for shopping and the preferences of products and services. However, one specific reason was just the reason of having the pleasure of buying. Whether a gift for their friend and family back home or in their new environments to make them happy, or as a treat for themselves, the pleasure of shopping revealed as major factor for the expatriates.



*Figure 5.4 Significant findings, Theme 4*

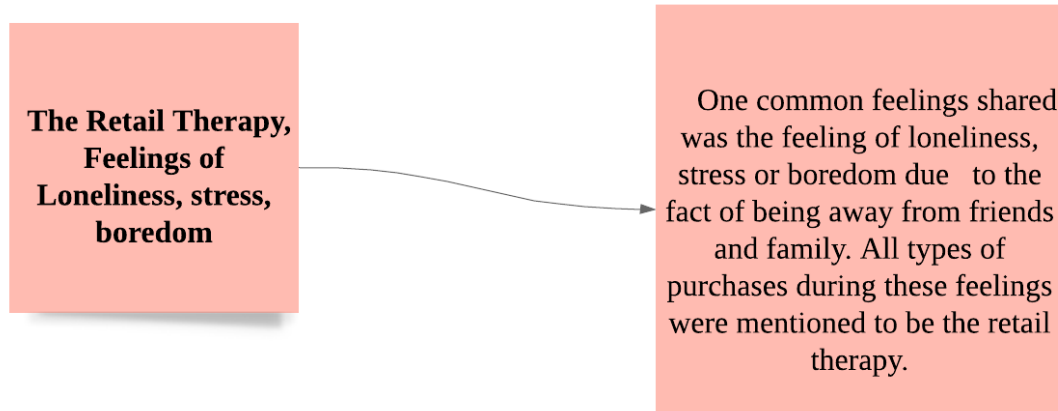
Participants mentioned most products they buy were actually not needed at all. However, they mentioned they felt good, happy, and successful, by being able to buy things they need or they do not need at any time they wanted. The types of shopping participants mentioned that they do for pleasure mostly was not planned and just happened when they took a walk around a mall or just while scrolling down the social media advertisings. Most importantly, these purchases they mentioned they would do for fun and feel happy about it.

Participant #	Important Statements Theme 4 Hedonic Shopping Factors
1	<i>Yes ... I do enjoy buying things! ... ' says Ms. Z.R. happily. 'Even when I don't need them ... Sometimes I even cannot sleep ... 'Laughs... 'I feel very happy! I cannot sleep because I keep thinking... Tomorrow when I wear it, ... How I will look?</i>
36	<i>When I go just for a walk in the mall I end up seeing things that I wasn't planning to buy and I simply buy them because I think maybe I need them later... In many things in my house again as a decoration and I don't think they are practical as well but they are nice and make me happy.</i>
34	<i>You're not going to believe me I'm not having credit cards. I don't want to be stuck in this so... Okay but really if I do have I don't care about my salary... I'm this kind of people who if I see something I like I will buy it. I will suffer till the end of the month but I will buy it .</i>
40	<i>Going to a luxury restaurant is affordable and going to brunches is a hobby. Ordering food online is a normal activity that I practice very often. There are plenty of options when talking about restaurants. Regarding my car, here I am driving a BMW which I bought few months after I arrived in the UAE. It was a brand new car (like I never even dreamt about) and I am so happy to have it'</i>
38	<i>Yes, of course buying things give me pleasure! And I feel good with myself'. I'm very practical but... The question is: Do you need a motor-bike?... Do you need a second motor-bike?... Ok it's a different model ... So, I still need it. So, yes!... No. But yes!.</i>

*Table 5.4 Important statements, Theme 4*

#### **5.2.5. The Retail Therapy- Feelings of loneliness, Stress and Boredom**

The theme *retail therapy*, as named after the expatriates' expressions, reflected the feelings of expatriates that they mostly felt after becoming expatriates. One common feeling shared was the feeling of loneliness, due to the fact of being away from friends and family. Several others mentioned not being able to integrate completely into the environment that they are in made them feel lonely.



*Figure 5.5 Significant findings, Theme 5*

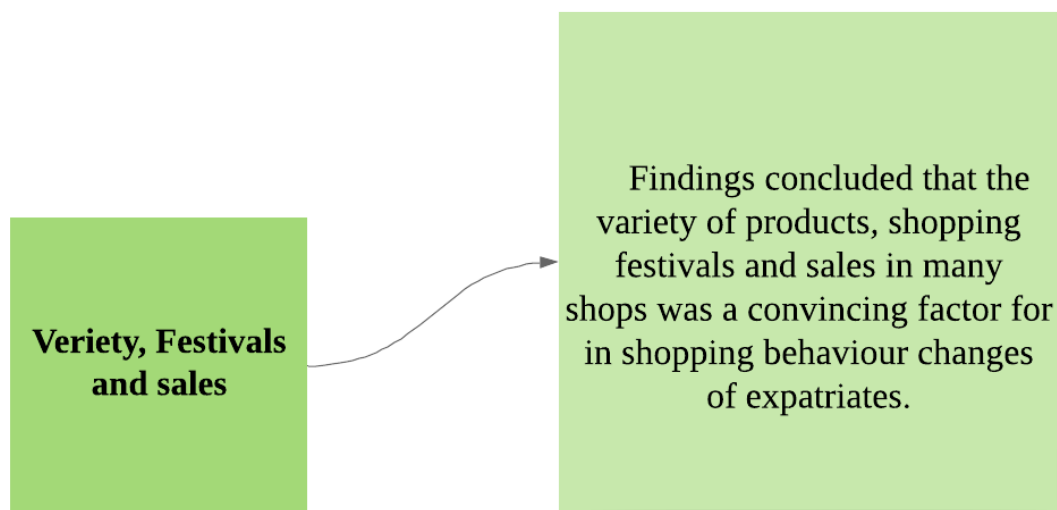
Expatriates mentioned that they walk around the malls because of boredom or loneliness and find themselves buying things that they actually would not buy if they were back home. Many other expatriates mentioned the stress that they encounter because of the heavy work load etc. They mentioned that when they are stressed they like to pamper themselves. This they mentioned could be a spa treatment or simply going out for dining with friends. All these types of purchases by most expatriates were mentioned under retail therapy, because these purchases were made simply to make them feel better. Hence, another finding that impacts on the expatriates shopping behaviour changes are the feelings of stress, loneliness and boredom. Expatriates consume product or services to make themselves feel better when they are lonely, stressed or bored.

Participant #	Important Statements Theme 5 The Retail Therapy (Feelings of boredom, loneliness and stress)
1	<i>I buy things ... maybe when I feel lonely and stressed... ' Says Ms. Z.R. 'When I feel lonely, I will go shopping and buy something expensive to feel like I'm not alone... Like there is a bag with me or something...' Laughs ... 'When I feel stressed I will go the spa do my nails, or Moroccan bath etc.</i>
36	<i>When I feel lonely I like to go out for shopping to the mall or dining with my friends... or I go to the spa when I'm bored... also when I stressed from work. It is called the Retail therapy. I feel very happy whenever I buy something I want. And when I'm tired, I like to stay home and order food online and watch Netflix.</i>
10	<i>I usually go shopping when I am stressed just to explode and when I just want to get out of this working environment. She says... It's for myself. For example, I go shopping and to salons to get a facial or mani-pedi to feel better.</i>
25	<i>Specially... when I'm stressed ... she says she likes to do shopping... 'It helps me feel better and release stress. It gives me pleasure and makes me happy. I do buy things that I don't need. It normally depends on my mood. If I'm in a bad mood, I will buy things and because I buy them in a bad mood I never use them...</i>
20	<i>For me the biggest risk is when you are bored you go around in the shops and you buy things. I buy things for myself or gifts to others. So it's a combination of both. Sometimes you would just buy a book. When you go to the mall you would just you would have lunch so you would spend money on F&amp;B. And it goes on</i>

*Table 5.5 Important statements, Theme 5*

#### **5.2.6. Variety, Festivals and Sales**

Findings concluded that the variety of products, shopping festivals and sales in many shops was a convincing factor for in shopping behaviour changes of expatriates. The theme *variety, festivals and sales*, was developed from the repeated responses of participants. The UAE was mentioned as to be offering many shopping festivals, a variety of products, and frequent sales in many shops.



*Figure 5.6 Significant findings, Theme 6*

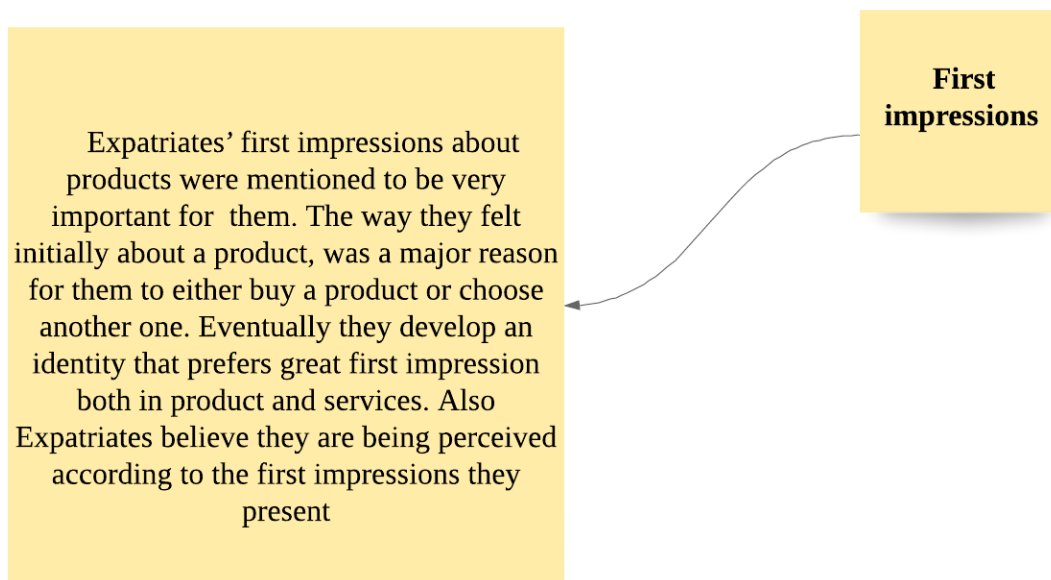
Additionally, expatriates mentioned that due to the climate being warm in the UAE, facilities are made indoors and they are kind of obliged towards shopping in the malls or indoor activities. The factor of warmer climates combined with festivals and events towards shopping, unexpectedly resulted as one major reason of the increases in purchasing. That eventually leads to a change in shopping behaviour in general.

Participant #	Important Statements Theme 6 Variety, Festivals and Sales
40	<i>My shopping habits have changed because I have now a better income that allows me to afford certain product that I couldn't do in my home country (this is without mentioning the credit cards that the banks will always offer you). Moreover, here in UAE there are plenty of events and places that invite the people to spend their money, sales are always there and outlet malls are a permanent option. All the activities here are related to spending money. Like there so many brunches, beautiful spas, theme parks, attractions</i>
10	<i>My shopping behaviour has changed completely. Every weekend! Laughs... I go shopping for something I don't need when I'm at the mall. I'm going to the beauty salons every weekend and I don't know why. Like... most of my salary is going for shopping... for stuff I really don't need. Especially like... when you're at the mall and there are so many options... So you just keep buying and buying and buying and using your credit card.</i>
20	<i>I think it's more complex than just needing something to buy it. I think it's a form of entertainment specially during the warmer months. You end up going to a mall and start spending. So the warmer setting of environment and there is also the variety. If you are walking around long enough, you end up buying something'</i>
36	<i>First of all, as I said the variety, the ability to buy, not much to do, all the stuff to do is for spending money, brunch, dinner, spa... Well... this kind of stuff. And also your family is not here so you do other things. and one of the best things is to go out I spent time with your friends or with yourself. And while doing that you spend money.</i>

*Table 5.6 Important statements, Theme 6*

### **5.2.7. First Impressions**

Another theme emerged as the *first impressions* that expatriates had towards products. Several of the expatriates explained that their first impressions about products were very important for them. The way they felt initially about a product was a major influence in whether they would buy a certain product or choose another one. Again, this was linked with the variety available in the country.



*Figure 5.7 Significant findings, Theme 7*

‘First impression last’ most participants said. If they would be impressed of the way a restaurant looked like they would enter there to dine. Why? Because there are so many others available. And if they don’t care about the way they present their restaurant how would they be preparing the food itself. Hence, expatriates relate the first impression the quality of the product and/ or services they will be purchasing.

Moreover, the working expatriates link success in business relations to first impressions. The initial way, they say, is to leave a great first impression on the clients, which will enable you to start a good business relation that will last.

Almost all participants agreed that first impressions are very important and they confirmed that they like to own things that will impress others.

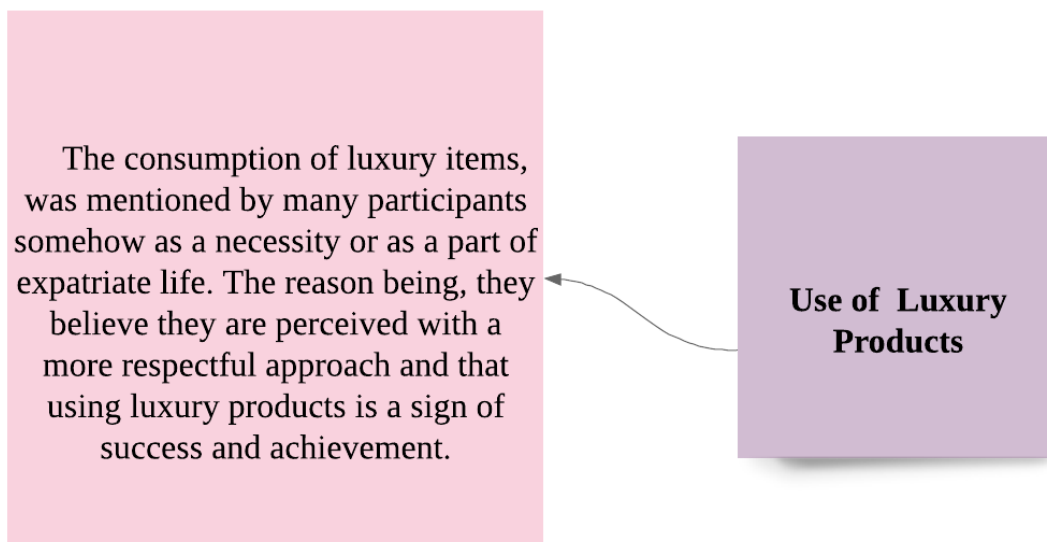
Participant #	Important Statements Theme 7 First Impressions
40	<i>Yes for sure. First impressions last. If I want to eat somewhere I even check if the chairs are clean, if this staff is smiling, everything matters for me. If I'm not impressed for the first time from anything, that includes clothes, restaurants, hair salons anything... I will not buy anything from a place. First impression is very important to me. If the shop is very organizing and the staff is friendly for example, I will feel more attracted to buy in this place. When joining others in dining gatherings for the first time, I do consider all the factors mentioned by you. If I am not happy with them, maybe I will stay the first time but I will never go back again.</i>
14	<i>Yes, of course! First impressions are very important! When you meet someone and you don't really know the person. So you consider the environment you meet the person in.</i>
4	<i>'When visiting shops or dining with friends etc. for the first time...Of course. First impressions matter. In the UAE there's a million shops and restaurants. Why would you go to one that doesn't even look good at first glance?</i>
34	<i>Do not ever judge people by their image. Never!</i>

*Table 5.7 Important statements, Theme 7*

### **5.2.8. Use of Luxury Products**

The theme *Use of luxury Products*, emerged as one of the main themes as it reflects to the main questions of this thesis. To answer the questions why and how expatriates change their shopping habits, it is important to consider the impact of luxury products on expatriates. The use of luxury products results as greatly impacting expatriates' shopping preferences.





*Figure 5.8 Significant findings, Theme 8*

The consumption of luxury items was mentioned by many participants somehow as a necessity or as a part of expatriate life. The reason being, they believe they are perceived with a more respectful approach and that using luxury products is a sign of success and achievement. For expatriates, regardless of their incomes, it was a necessary to use luxurious products, because using them would provide more comfort in many ways and completely change their life styles.

Even though for some expatriates, to live a luxury life in the UAE was considered a very normal thing. Still, the most important aspect of using such products was said to be the better way of treatment they perceive from others. Findings revealed that for expatriates it is very important to own at least one luxurious product. As the perception of others on the individual would elevate accordingly. Like driving a luxurious car means they will be served and treated better any place they go to. And to be able to support luxury products, most expatriates depend on bank facilities that are offered in the country. For many, to have loans to

pay is not considered as an issue but it is highly important to reflect a powerful image in their social circle with a luxurious car or other luxury products.

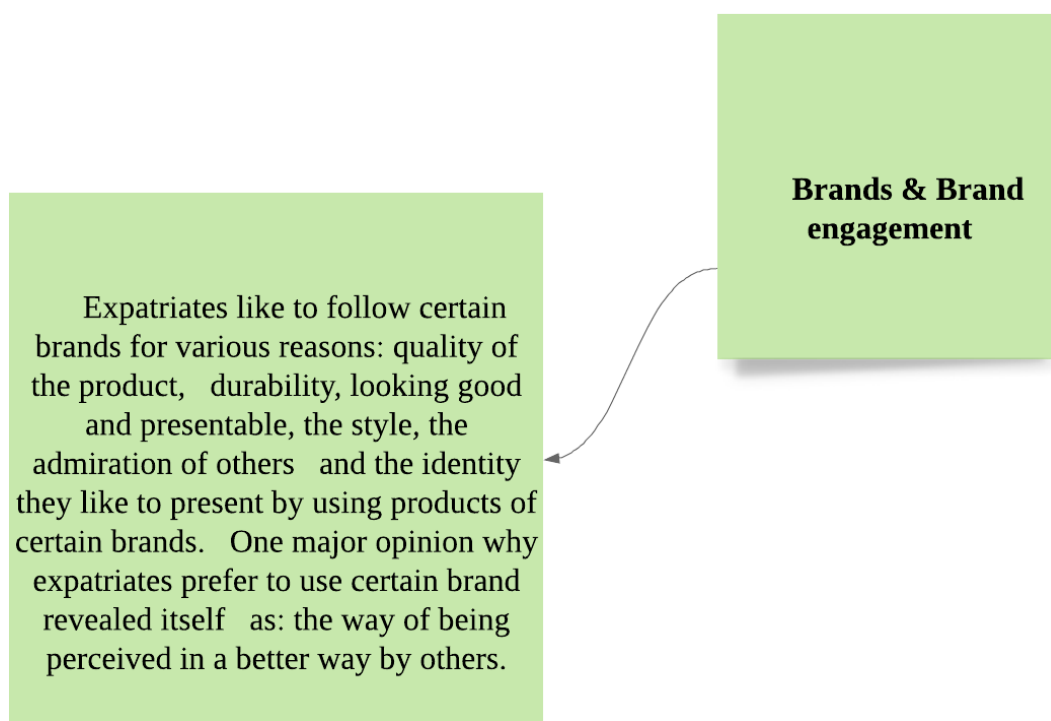
Participant #	Important Statements Theme 8 Use of Luxury Products
23	<i>Products you choose to buy, make a difference in your life style. For example, in an interview, if you go with Gucci shoes or Chanel bag etc. they will consider your salary accordingly. Like they would think if she is carrying a bag like this ... How much she will expect from me as a salary? It happened to me!... Once they told me: "How much salary I must pay you if you are able to wear a bag that costs 3000 AED?"</i>
38	<i>In the UAE culture, says Mr. F.D., 'When it comes to bags, cars, watches of course you are being perceived as successful, self-made man, successful business owner. In my friends' circle, if I come with fancy clothes or fancy shoes they would think I'm crazy'...</i>
24	<i>Luxury products you buy can change your whole life! When you go out for example... And you are dressed up well, people treat you differently. For example, if you go to the bank or even to the bus, to anywhere... They will smell your nice perfume; they will look at your nice clothes that you are wearing... They will be: "Hi sir... How are you sir?... How can I help you sir?" So this is a different way of treating people. It's not like a treatment to a poor person who smelling very bad, wearing bad clothes... In terms of respect, they will highly respect you for the way you look in those expensive clothes.</i>
1	<i>People will like me more if I give something nice to them. Because this is how I feel too. Laughs... If they bring me something expensive, I will love them more... Laughs... And they will change their opinion and how they interact with me. They will treat me with more respect. For example, if it is my birthday, they will think a million times before they get me a gift.</i>
40	<i>People are judged according to what they have. People think that the more material power you have, the better you do in life. And definitely, using luxury products will make a difference in one's life style.</i>
7	<i>Wearing an expensive watch? ...Hmm... They might think I'm doing well for myself. They might think I'm a little prissy back home. In the UAE though, I think it's so normal that no one really bats an eye. I mean you see 50 Ferraris pass you on your way to work... What is one watch?</i>
12	<i>When I'm going to the meetings, I usually prefer more expensive stuff than with my usual work days. I feel that I'm more respected, they don't think you are from a lower level. For the higher level clients, I go with better and more expensive clothes. Because they judge you with your salary, if they feel that you are getting more salary than they get, or they feel that they have similar salaries they will treat you the same way they treat their own colleges. But if they think that you have a low income they will try to pressure you more, they will try to overcome you more.</i>

Table 5.8 Important statements, Theme 8

### 5.2.9. Brands and Brand Engagement

Similar to using luxurious products, the theme *Brands and Brand engagement* emerged by the repeatedly mentioned brand names that was used by the expatriates. These were brands that they knew and followed regularly back home or new ones that they came to know after

moving abroad. Expatriates like to follow certain brands for various reasons: quality of the product, durability, looking good and presentable, the style, the admiration of others and the identity they like to present by using products of certain brands. One major opinion why expatriates prefer to use certain brand revealed itself as: the way of being perceived in a better way by others.



*Figure 5.9 Significant findings, Theme 9*

Expatriates repeatedly mentioned that using certain brands would make them look better. They claimed that using luxurious brands are signs of success, achievement and show who you are, how you are and where you are in life. Briefly, the idea they commonly agreed on was summed in one phrase: you are what you wear. Expatriates choose a certain brand for certain gatherings. For instance, going out for dinner with people that are considered to be of an upper level means to have products of more expensive brands. On the other hand, going to

a place or gathering that is considered as less important would mean that they could appear with cheaper and unknown brands.

Findings revealed that expatriates also like to present their belongings of certain brands over the internet, namely social media. They like to post pictures of whatever they are purchasing, sharing their opinions to others in the group also following the brands over the advertisings on social media. Findings pointed out that there is an influence of social media towards the preferred products and their brands. Expatriates in the same social media group influence each other in choosing certain brands. And another way of reflecting their identity through brands is by using the social media. This finding also directly responds to the main questions of this thesis; why and how expatriates are changing their identities and shopping behaviour is displayed.

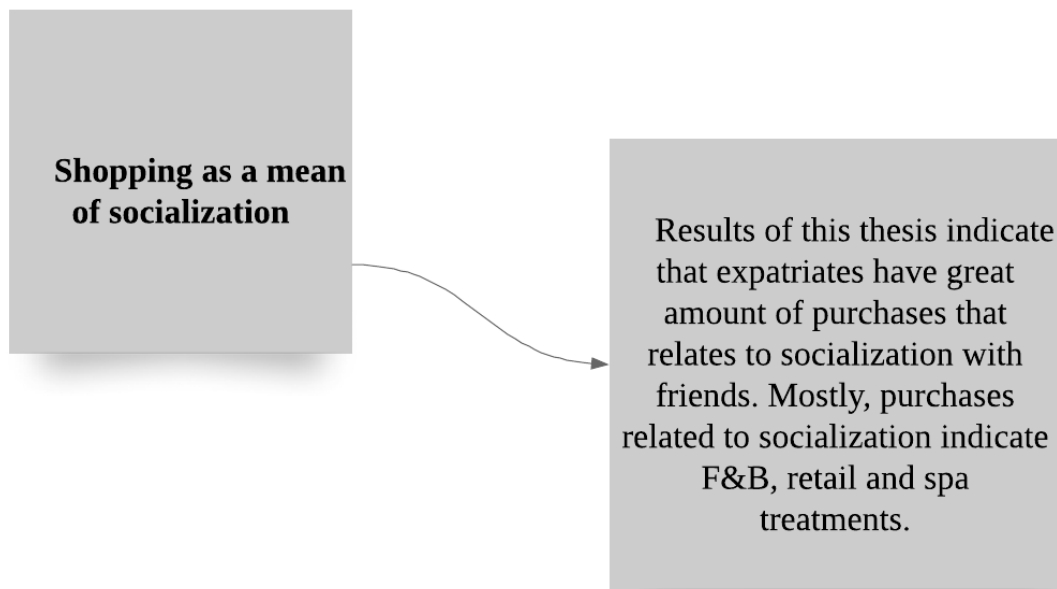
Furthermore, several expatriates mentioned that looks can be deceiving and some people show a face identity with their belongings of certain brands. They also added that many expatriates actually are under depths due the frequency of credit cards and bank loans. However, also participants that do not believe in displaying one's identity through brands, agreed that in general the society looks at the brands they use and judge them accordingly. Thus, a common belief among expatriates is that using these brands would make them be perceived as successful and in an upper level class in the society.

Participant #	Important Statements Theme 9 Brands and Brand Engagement
10	<i>Using branded products will make me happier and proud of myself... And feel so comfortable and happy that everyone will see me and say: "She is so beautiful and she wearing this brand." They will look at me highly and as successful.</i>
14	<i>In general, luxury brand products show your social status. It's a big difference to go to a very important meeting with a watch from a cheap place or with a good quality watch. After all an accessory for a man is a watch.</i>
8	<i>In general, I feel like here in the UAE, you are forced to buy expensive stuff because you need to live up to a certain class or level. I can't go and buy any T-shirt from any place... I need to buy it from a good brand.</i>
1	<i>Especially in UAE people judge with what brand you're wearing, the car you're driving, what brand bag you're holding. Of course, career wise it shows success... that you're having a good income. And of course, for sure they perceive me differently back home... Whenever I go back home and they see my brand bag ... They ask about my car... Automatically they think I'm more successful. My whole lifestyle has changed... That's why I can't save money it's all going to shopping. If it is higher than my income...I can use credit cards.</i>

*Table 5.9 Important statements, Theme 9*

#### **5.2.10. Shopping as a Means of Socialization**

Findings revealed that shopping is considered to be a major tool of socialization. Results of this thesis indicate that expatriates have great amount of purchases that relate to socialization with friends. Mostly, purchases related to socialization indicate F&B. These types of purchases are pursued in the form of dining, weekend brunches, café shops or ordering online when chilling at home with friends. Furthermore, many expatriates gave examples of going to get spa treatments with friends, including massages, nail care, skin care, hair treatments etc. The third way of socialization was mentioned to be in the form of shopping for clothes. For some expatriates, buying products is a conversation starter. Having common types of spending habits actually link them together.



*Figure 5.10 Significant findings, Theme 10*

Expatriates mentioned they would buy certain types of products for certain types of activities, done with friends or colleagues. They would consider the type of car they drive, clothes they wear, restaurants they choose to dine in, and according to the social circles that eventually shapes their social lives.

Another important point mentioned in socialization as an expatriate, was the fact of being surrounded by so many different nationalities (other expatriates) and the need to learn how to interact and socialize with them. Expatriates repeatedly highlighted that it was key to understand their differences in food, clothes, styles of entertainment etc. to be able to mingle with various nationalities in their new surroundings.

Participant #	Important Statements Theme 10 Shopping as a means of socialization
12	<i>My social life does affect my shopping style. Yes, it is. I like to go to pubs I wear very basic like jeans. If I go to a luxurious place with a friend to dine than I dress totally different.</i>
4	<i>Luxury shopping is a way of socialization with friends... Dining out is a big thing in the UAE. And going to get your nails done with your friends is a common outing. So, it's fun, I guess. You get to chill with your friends and feel a big pampered in the meantime</i>
14	<i>Due to my business requirements I choose to go to fine dining restaurants. In the UAE there are many good places for fine dining. I can say everywhere. The life standards here are very high. For example, there is no street food, like we have back home. I never had any. Here you always interact with foreigners and everyone has a good income. Even though it's a small place people live in luxury. It's not in a choice...The social life here has its own needs; it requires you to live in a higher life standard. The dynamics are different. If u like it or not, you change. My social life changed completely.</i>
34	<i>Well shopping does affect social life...Because whatever you're doing, you're doing it by spending money. You want to out with your friends, you have to spend money in a normal coffee shop ordering a restaurant or in a brunch, in a spa or when you want to go what a business dinner, again you have to impress people and that doesn't happen without paying money... If you want to do something nice for your family, travel for example, again you need to spend money... So yes in every aspect shopping effects everyone's social life. Even when you have children, you need to consider the schools, their expenses, like their birthday parties, so many things with the school.</i>

Table 5.10 Important statements, Theme 10

### 5.3. Discussion

Analysis of stories collected from 40 expatriates demonstrate that expatriates are directly affected by their social environments. As mentioned earlier in the literature chapter, from the consumer point of view, social connections have a dynamic nature in the context of fashion (Hackley 2005). Results of this study indicate that expatriates also choose to reflect their identities through their purchases. This confirms the existing literature provided before: Consumers put forth social expressions through their dressing styles; particularly in the way of who they want to be and who not to be (Moynagh & Worsley 2002; Banister & Hogg 2007). The results of this study indicated and current literature supported that expatriate consumers

wear brands to stand out and being unique or to fit in within a group. They develop and reflect identities through their purchasing preferences.

Furthermore, the impacts of the social environment in their shopping behaviour changes can be linked to the adjustment period of the expatriates. As previously mentioned in the literature, adjustment is defined as a person's stress free and comfortable experience while shifting to a different cultural environment (Olsen & Martins 2009). Adjustment of expatriate's associates to the degree of psychological wellbeing linked to the new work environment (Harari et al. 2018). When moving into a new cultural environment, in general the adjustment takes place within the years after the impacts diminish (Kashima & Abu Rayya 2014). The existence of many nationalities and the differences of cultures they present, was mentioned repeatedly by the participants. Many participants argued that it was a necessity to learn these differences to be able to mingle with them. Interestingly, all these different nationalities come together and collectively create a new cultural environment. Hence, this new culture somehow creates a certain shopping behaviour that exists with the requirements of this new environment. Going to weekend brunches, dining, or buying certain products from specific shops, became a part of this new shopping culture. Expatriates develop and collect enough knowledge about the new culture and create a data of 'how things are done' in the host country. All expatriates must learn the host culture so they interact positively with their colleagues in their new work environment to be able survive the new cultural context. This new culture that exists of many other expatriates, has its own impact on the expatriates, specifically in the change of their shopping habits and reflection of identities. As mentioned in the literature, many individuals obtain various identities due to the fact of living and working abroad (Bostrom & Sandberg 2011). Individuals determine their identity mainly from the social associations they are involved with. One distinctive social identity type is the *legal identity*, the notion of a (natural) individual surrounded by the established rules of society. And the rules of the society



expatriates are in require specific type of purchasing that mostly shows reveals itself as an influence from their peers.

Interestingly, even though it was not reviewed in the literature chapter, the peer pressure was developed as a main way of influencing expatriates in their shopping preferences. The peer pressure according to the findings, stems from the people around the expatriates which are also expatriates that have they own shopping styles. And to be able to adapt smoother and faster, expatriates do choose to develop a shopping behaviour as influenced by their peers. Moreover, as mentioned in the literature, herding behaviour is a type of convergent (coming closer together specially in ideas) social behaviour that can be defined as the alignment of the opinions or behaviours of people in a group (herd) without centralized coordination (Raafat, Chater & Frith 2009). Supporting the literature, findings revealed that expatriates choose or refuse to buy products that many others do because of the confirmation of quality of the products. The same impact on shopping behaviour and identity reflection was identified under the topic of social media too (which is explained in the following social media section in detail). Social media was reviewed in the literature chapter, as reaching mass communities with its power, and as having a supporting impact on consumers shopping preferences. It was stated that, while it can make thousands of consumers buy the same, in the contrary it would cause many consumers avoid certain products.

Similarly, findings of this study indicated social media as a very strong factor in the expatriate shopping behaviour and reflection of identity. Firstly, it was identified to be a very effective communication tool. Second, analysis of transcripts revealed social media as a tool in developing new social relationships. Also, social media has resulted as a platform where expatriates refer to the brands and products of other expatriates within their same network. Expatriates depend highly on influencers, bloggers, opinions of their social media friends or

groups, and to the advertisements in social media platforms in terms of purchasing decisions. Similarly, as it was provided in the literature, Olenski (2012) mentioned that in the US, 81% of respondents claimed that their friends' opinions posted on social media channels are highly important when deciding to purchase a product.

Furthermore, the literature provided in this thesis predicted that individuals while communicating through social media sites, display "images of self" in every post or message (Deetz 1990). Findings of this study also show that expatriates like to reflect their lifestyles and their identities on social media. Stryker & Burke (2000) suggest that the identity theory should also consider "how social structures affect the self and how self affects social behaviours". Results of this thesis indicated that in general, expatriates like to be an inspiration to others and are also inspired by others within their social media groups. The use of social network sites impact the creation and reflection of a new identity of expatriates. As the structure is an online social network site, the reflected identity is an online identity. However, findings indicate that the expatriates are happy and proud to reflect their identity in a certain way to others in the group, because it shows success, better lives, and achievements.

Furthermore, as suggested in the literature review by Adams and van de Vijver (2015), expatriation will impact on different personal features, like choices and habits (e.g. the type of food they eat or music they listen). This statement fully supports one of the strongest findings of this research. Analysis of transcripts prove that expatriates try to learn the differences in food, clothes and other habits of the various other nationalities to be able to mingle with them. For instance, an Indian expatriate tries to eat Shushi to mingle with the Japanese expatriate. Additionally, one of the key findings of this thesis revealed that expatriates actually felt that they became like international individuals. Most participants confirmed that after moving abroad and living as an expatriate, they started to communicate and interact with other

nationalities much easier and much better. This links us to cosmopolitanism and cosmopolitan identity as reviewed in the literature. Cosmopolitanism focuses on the existence and connection with different cultures, whereas a cosmopolitan identity encircles an “openness and adaptability” towards a “global lifestyle that persists across environments” (Grinstein & Wathieu 2012).

Moreover, expatriates try to mingle with their social circles. They have the definite clear urge to belong to a group, and do not want to be left out. One major finding of this study is that expatriates’ shopping habits and their identities, change according to the social groups they are in. Which takes us back to the existing literature provided previously: Social identity is encircled by the person’s group partnership. People identify themselves with their link to particular social groups. This to be a member of a social group generally supports the basis of reflection in- group – out-group actions (Adams & van de Vijver 2015). The Social Identity Theory (SIT; Tajfel & Turner 1986) and Self-Categorization Theory (SCT; Turner 1999), emphasizes how group partnerships and group associations impact on attitudes towards out-group members, and in mostly intergroup interactions. According to the authors expatriation generates an individual’s sense of group membership when encountering a new social surrounding. Expatriates start acknowledging their social group associations through their relations with other cultures.

However, according to the “self-discrepancy theory” by Higgins (1987) as provided in the literature: In fact, as it is vital for an individual to be member of a bigger group, it is equally important to have a unique identity differentiating one from others. Similarly, literature shows that individuals have a drive or motivation to appear as something else, to be different and stand out from everyone else (Brewer 1991). This theory supports another finding of this research. Interestingly, analysis show that expatriates wish to be included in a certain social group by purchasing certain products. However, they still want to have a difference within the

group and be unique with the products they choose to buy. They would purchase from a certain brand (e.g. Apple) that is approved by the group, but the item they choose in that brand would have a certain difference (e.g. iPhone 11 pro) that would reflect the individual's uniqueness.

Moreover, based on the literature reviewed in Chapter 2, expatriates have a boost in income when they pursue their international assignments. As predicted, findings revealed that expatriates shopping behaviour do change and they do reflect a new identity through the brands, goods and services they choose to purchase.

Moreover, as provided in the literature, identity is defined by Reed et al. (2003) as any category label that a consumer relates himself to and of what the individual in that category is presented like, how he thinks, feels and acts. Consumers put forth social expressions through their dressing styles; particularly in the way of who they want to be and who not to be (Moynagh & Worsley 2002; Banister & Hogg 2007). Findings of this thesis fully align with the provided theory. Findings demonstrate that expatriates choose to buy products that reflect a certain identity that will be accepted in a certain group. Expatriates believe that they are being perceived differently according to the products or services they purchase. Thus, the perception of others is very important for them and they choose to buy products that suits the preferences of others in their social circles.

Furthermore, one of the most important findings was the hedonic shopping factors as it responded to the questions of this thesis in many aspects. Factors for expatriates' identity and shopping behaviour changes vary in very interesting ways. As it is a solid finding that they buy products to present their preferred identities. It is also very straightforward to understand they choose to make purchases for the sake of the pleasure of buying a product or a service. Expatriate that participated in this study, pictured the joy of purchasing in several ways. The first way of shopping for pleasure, was simply to treating themselves. As literature provided: the hedonic factor of purchasing has been analysed and stated as fun, joy, escape, adventure

etc. (e.g., Allard et al. 2009). And findings of this thesis are fully supported with this theory by reflecting the changes expatriates display in their shopping behaviour after moving abroad. The initial finding was that expatriates do a lot of shopping which is named as gratification shopping. Gratification was described in the literature as the state of treating oneself, a shopping style just to feel better.

A common shopping behaviour that developed after becoming an expatriate, was solidly the purchases that they treat themselves with. This factor points on the fact that when expatriates are feeling lonely, stressed, or sometimes bored, they like to treat themselves. These treats are either in a spa, through various dining options, or through purchases of new clothes, household items etc. During the interviews most expatriates mentioned the loneliness, stress and boredom many times. They pointed on the fact that shopping is a way of being freed from stress, boredom and loneliness. Hence, these elements were deducted as further three factors of shopping for expatriates. Literature by Furnham and Bochner (1986) as reviewed in Chapter 2, state that the support of social interaction and communication with host country individuals, colleagues and other expatriates impacts expatriate's well-being and increases job performances. This may relate to the fact that social interactions from all parties can eliminate the emotions of loneliness and social isolation (Ward & Rana-Deuba 2000). Hence, it was predicted that expatriates, due to their loneliness, may be inclined towards purchasing items due to their loneliness and feel happy to do so.

Furthermore, findings clarified that even if expatriates have friends and do have an active social life, they still like to do shopping for the very reason of pleasing themselves. This point leads us to the adventure shopping that was provided as a part of hedonic shopping in the literature and reflects excitement, incitement, thrill and stimulation of senses. According to the majority of participants' comments, findings illustrate the feelings of excitement and thrill of

expatriates when purchasing items, they like. Results of this study indicated that expatriates not only they felt excitement and thrill when buying things, they like, but they also felt very proud and successful to know that they could afford whatever they wish to buy.

Furthermore, one main factor that reflects the socializing of expatriates was their loved ones –friends, family etc. This point revealed in two aspects: Expatriates coming with their families prefer to socialize with their families, but others that come alone for an assignment, choose to socialize friend and colleagues. Hence, the expatriates that moved with their families abroad and the expatriates that moved on their own, have different spending patterns and purchase accordingly. As was previously indicated in many cases, expatriates prefer to do purchases according to their social environments and the people involved in this environment. In this pursuit, socializing has been deducted as a means of socialization for the expatriates. Hence, expatriates' preferences in restaurants, cars, clothes or other products and services, and most importantly the products they purchase to present an identities, relate to their social circles. Expatriates highly consider the perception of the people within their social circles. This supports the social interaction theory, as proposed on the literature review of this thesis. The attributed value of an individual will be associated with various levels of interaction between an individual's background and existing traits, desired self-conceptions or self-images and the preferred social groups, that will add to an individual's *personal identity*. According to Perry (2008), personal identity involves the features of people that describe their personality.

Furthermore, findings show that expatriates like to follow certain products and brands either by walking around the malls, checking on social media through influencers or by asking friends and colleagues for products and services. This supports literature of hedonic shopping factor mentioned as: *idea purchasing* is to know about the new products in the market, the latest fashion and styles. Again, the main idea is proven to be fitting in to the chosen groups in the society. This finding also is linked with a further finding that points on the fact of having a

lot of variety available in the malls or online, the shopping festivals that are held around the year, as well as the sales in the shops are main factors for expatriates go shopping.

Moreover, literature provided suggested that hedonic shopping impacts an incredible number of customers, and is for the most part on expatriates. Particularly the garments segment is spearheading in the issue. In spite of the fact that attire addresses the issue of covering and in this manner makes a utilitarian prerequisite, it additionally satisfies hedonic requests (Jankus 2016). Supporting this very statement: findings proved that expatriates do like to shop for others in the means of buying gifts for others to make them feel happy. In the provided literature this point was defined as the *role purchasing* which basically means the indulgence of buying a gift for others and making them happy. Almost all expatriates mentioned that they love to buy gifts to others to make them happy, which resulted as a main hedonic shopping factor.

However, the point of *value purchasing* which described in the literature as the satisfaction and pleasure of bargaining, finding the cheapest of the same products, and the best sales, was not supported by the findings in this study. The bargaining or finding the cheapest products points were more related as habits they had in their home countries. And this is another point that provides evidence that expatriates do change their shopping habits after moving abroad. What factors may be of importance when making shopping decisions in their home country may change to a large extent depending on their new surroundings.

Furthermore, literature provided previously stated that consumers develop their self-identity and present themselves through the brands they choose to consume according to the brand user groups and self-image association (Escalas & Bettman 2005). Similarly, according to Aaker et al. (1997) it was mentioned that purchasers utilize brands in order to express and authenticate their character or identity. The theme *brands and brand engagement* fully aligns with the literature provided. This theme responds to the main question of this thesis by defining why and how expatriates change their identity and shopping behaviours. Supporting the

literature, results pointed out the fact that expatriates choose to purchase certain brand to reflect their identities. And this identity is the one they developed after moving abroad and starting to live the expatriate life within their new social environments. As mentioned in the literature by Dunning (2005), one's behaviour is driven by the need to reaffirm one's self-image in society and consumers purchase products primarily to attain or keep up one's social status in society (Albert, Merunka & Valette-Florence 2013). Supporting this theory, results of this study state that expatriates choose to display an identity that shows their social status and keeps them in a certain social class by using certain brands.

Moreover, literature presented shows that brands can likewise be utilized to communicate association in specific social or professional gatherings, through both the utilization of brands that indicate associations in suitable groups and gatherings and the shirking of brands that indicate participation in unwanted groups and gatherings (Escalas & Bettman, 2005). Similarly, results indicate that expatriates choose to purchase and use certain products of particular brands according to the importance of the gathering they intend to attend. For instance, a gathering with upper level society type of people means to carry a bag of an expensive/luxurious brand, while a brand that is cheap and unknown is sufficient when going to meet with people from the middle-class environment.

Furthermore, previous literature stated that brands can serve to set up and affirm a purchaser's self-idea and character without unequivocally expecting to accomplish social status, acknowledgment, or even acceptance (Albert, Merunka & Valette-Florence 2013). Supporting this theory, results indicate that expatriates choose certain brands that will create and present the image of a successful, smart, professional and/or rich individual in their social environment. The brands they present in their work environments, social gatherings or in their daily lives shows their identity. And this identity they present through these certain brands would make them be accepted in certain social circles.



Additionally, literature states that the Internet empowers self-articulation as it enables customers to get to for all intents and purposes anything (Dalziel et al. 2011). Because of the online medium, which gives an office to purchasers and brands to discuss straightforwardly with each other, many benefits of online shopping arise (Dalziel et al. 2011). This theory supports the finding of social media and its effects on expatriates' shopping behaviours and identity changes in terms of the usage of brands and influencing each other over social media. Findings also demonstrate that influencers and bloggers in social media are another factor influencing expatriates' choices of purchasing products of certain brands. As expatriates not only post pictures of their belongings within the social media groups, but also see comments and videos etc. of the influencers commenting on the products of certain brands.

Another finding related to expatriate and their choices of brands revealed itself as being continuous buyers of products from certain brands. Findings show that expatriates like to buy from brands that they think is good in quality, durable and impressive in style. Once again, choosing to buy from the same line of brands not only reflects loyalty or engagement towards the brand, but also is another way of presenting their preferred identities. This finding aligns with the previously provided literature on loyalty towards brands: Loyalty towards a brand is a profoundly deep sense of duty regarding rebuying goods and services continually, causing repetitive purchases, in spite of situational impacts and marketing tactics having the capacity to change consumers' behaviour (Dalziel et al. 2011). Moreover, brand dedication is an organisation's most continuing resource and an essential objective of relationship advertising (Dalziel et al. 2011).

As was previously alluded to in many cases, expatriates prefer to illustrate a certain identity that points on achievement, success, professionalism and a member of upper classes in the society. Hence, supporting the use of brands, one major finding of this research revealed as *the use of luxury products*. The changes in identity and shopping behaviour of expatriates in

this discourse was critically examined, beginning with an exploration of the stories of expatriates about their shopping preferences and identities as a single homogenous category. In that pursuit, it is important to list the reasons that led expatriates to buy luxurious products. Majority of expatriates comments resulted in one major sentence phrase: ‘You are what you wear’ they said. This phrase is almost identical in meaning to the phrase that was provided in the literature chapter of this thesis: “Our fragile sense needs support, and this we get by having and possessing things because, to a large degree we are what we have and possess” (Tuan, 1980).

Literature by Reed et al. (2003) as mentioned earlier, claims that consumers prefer products, brands and purchasing behaviours that are linked to category labels that they feel associated with. Findings of this research fully support this theory. Results show that expatriates seem to consider the possession of luxury products as a necessity in their new social environments to be able to reflect the desired identity to the people in that social environment. The main factor of consuming luxury and services is due to the social environment that they are surrounded with in their new lives as expatriates. Responding back to the main thesis questions: Expatriates’ social environment is one major factor in changing their identity and shopping behaviour. They develop an identity that is portrayed as successful, rich, and respectable to the new social environment by using luxury products that they can afford to buy after becoming an expatriate. They are perceived differently by their friends and family back home and perceived according to their luxurious belonging within their new social environments.

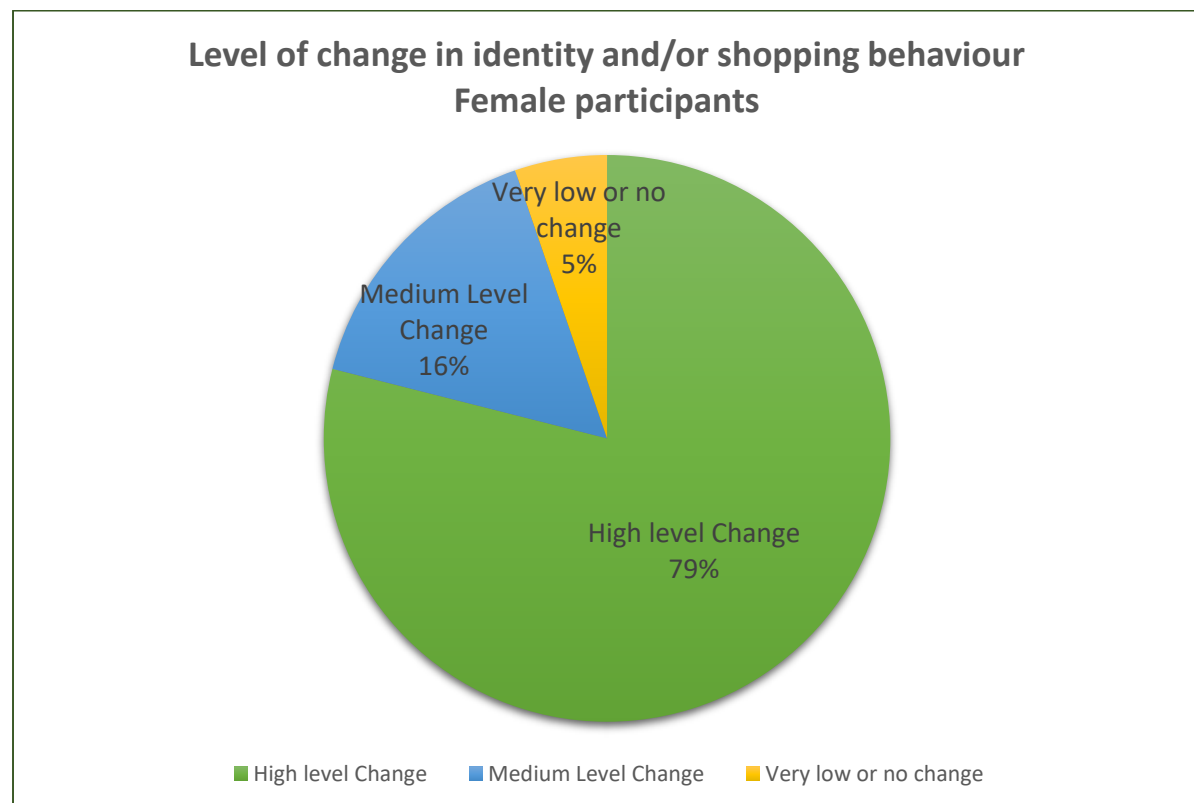
Furthermore, defined as the objectives of this thesis, the extent of change of expatriates’ shopping behaviour and identity can be clarified in how and why expatriates use their belongings. One reason is to create and present an identity of a successful individual that is respected by the society. Another one is to show to the people in their circle that they are

different or maybe better than them. They reflect their uniqueness within their social group through the luxury products they buy. This finding is supported by the literature of Mihalcea (2008): Consumers satisfy their psychological needs like creating a self-identity, expressing their uniqueness or difference from others, or constructing a self-concept through their possessions. Findings of this research has identified that expatriates during the expatriation period go through changes in both their identities and their shopping behaviours. Overall, the researcher estimated the level of changes seen in the participants of this study which is presented in below:

Figures 5.11 for the level of change indicated for female participants,

Figure 5.12 level of change indicated for male participants and

Figure 5.13 for the level of change indicated for all participants.



*Figure 5.11 Level of change in identity and/or shopping behaviour for female participants*

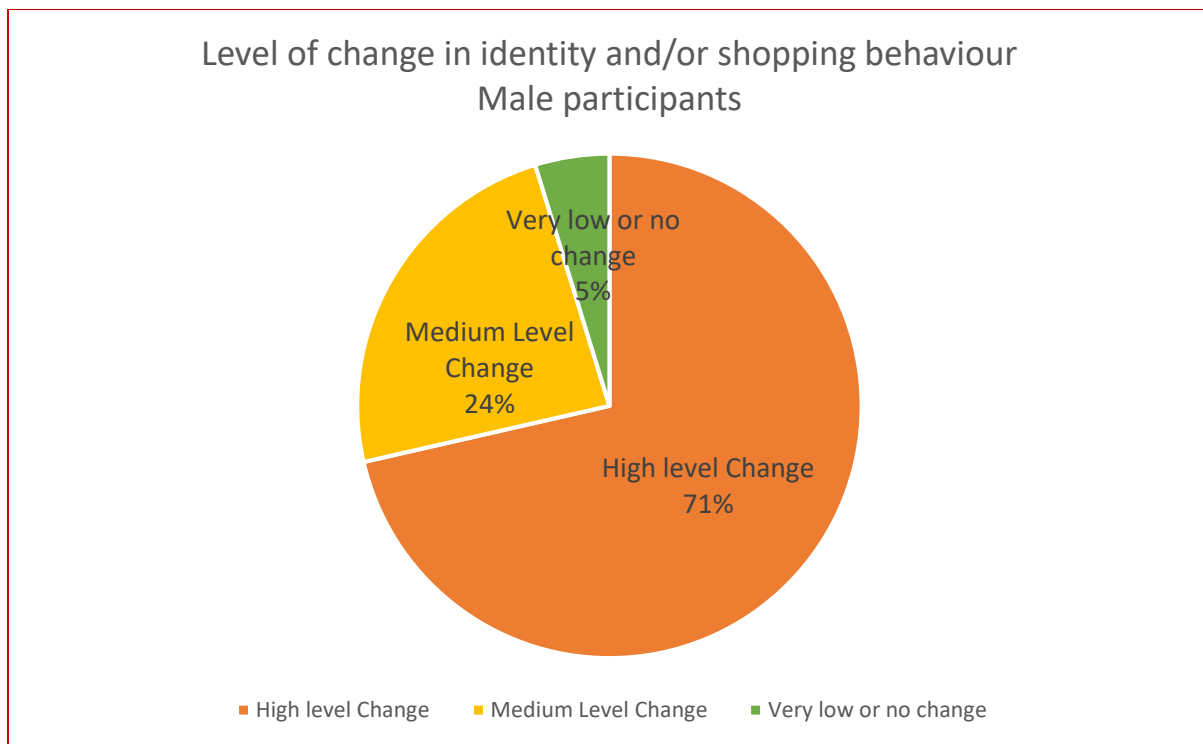


Figure 5.12 Level of change in identity and/or shopping behaviour for male participants

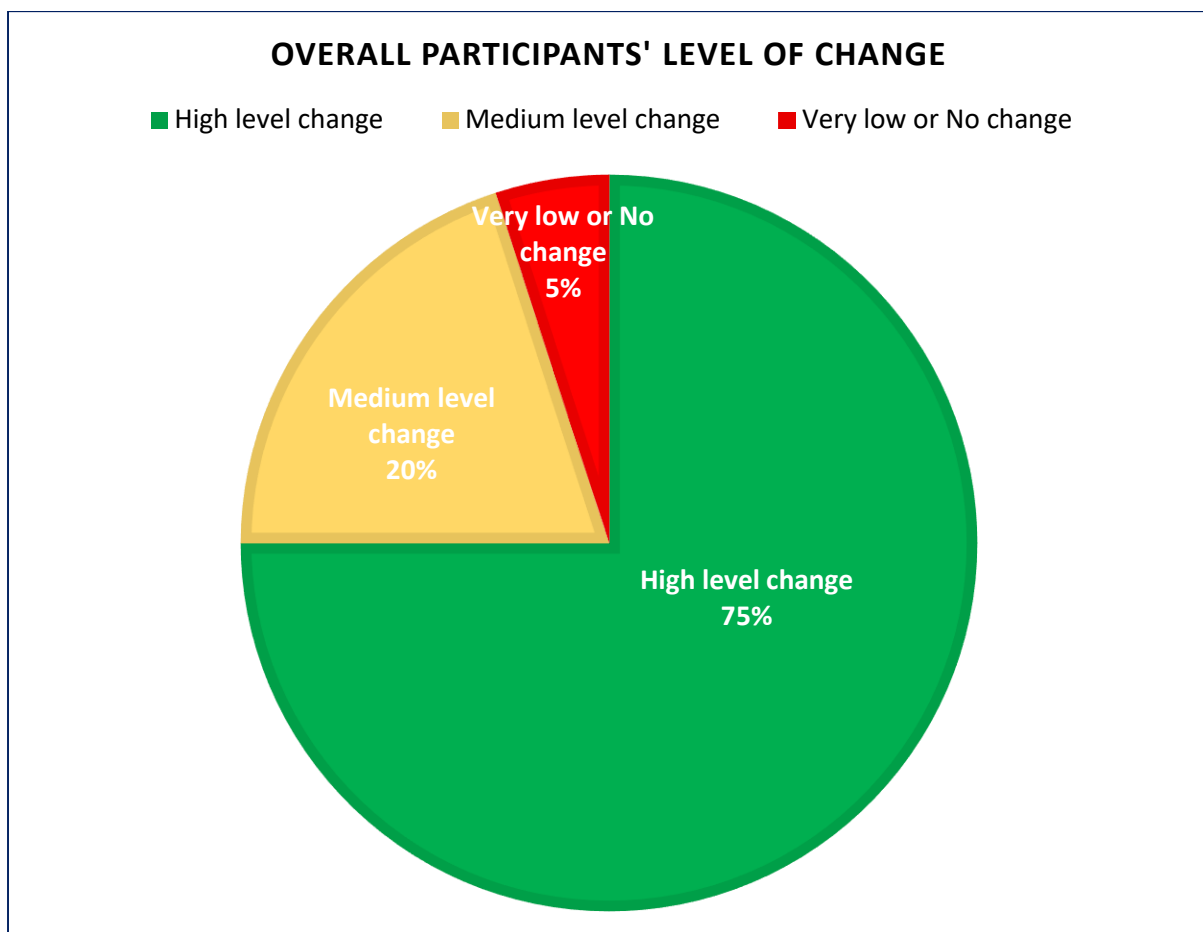


Figure 5.13 Level of change in identity and/or shopping behaviour for all participants

Moreover, a finding that was not previously predicted and suggested was *First Impressions*. Based on the results, one major factor for expatriates' shopping behaviour and identity changes is related to the first impressions that they have on products, services, and individuals. Expatriates repeatedly mentioned that their first impressions are the main reasons to purchase a product or not. Being able to choose from countless products and services leads them to be more selective at the first glance. For instance, having many options of restaurants to dine from, they will choose to dine in a restaurant that is more appealing to their eyes at the first sight.

However, first impressions are not only limited towards products and services. In terms of first impressions, expatriates' stories confirm that individuals are also judged on how they are perceived, at the very first moments. So, once again expatriates chose to buy products that will impress others at their first interactions. Similarly, when meeting with people, they prefer to choose places (fine dining restaurants, 5-star hotels etc.) that will leave a great first impression about them. They choose to wear branded expensive clothes (e.g. Gucci, Chanel), drive luxurious cars (Porsche, Aston martin etc.) and carry accessories (Rolex watch, LV bag etc.) which will impress others from the first moment they interact with each other. The bottom line is that even if it is through credit cards or bank loans: Expatriates choose to purchase products that will impress others.

#### **5.4. Proposed Conceptual Model**

This research aimed to identify the impacts of expatriation on an individual's identity and shopping behaviours changes. Based on the findings of this research, Figure 5.14, demonstrates a meticulous framework, that includes all influences of expatriation resulted from the research findings identifying the influences of expatriation.

Please see below illustration of the conceptual framework of *expatriates identity and shopping behaviour changes*.



Figure 5.14 Conceptual model of expatriates identity and shopping behaviour changes

The proposed conceptual model above reflects the outputs of this research. The output of this research is presented as conceptual framework, which identifies the factors that causes expatriate identity and shopping behaviour changes. Hence, the above conceptual model identifies the factors that influence changes in *expatriate consumer identities* and the factors that influence changes in *expatriate shopping behaviours*.

The conceptual framework displays that the new *social environment* expatriates are living in, and the individuals in this new environment, greatly influence expatriates' shopping habits. Two further factors are displayed as: *herding behaviour* which indicates that expatriates follow the people around (or their groups within the social media) while choosing or buying a product and *peer pressure* that again stems from the environment that expatriates.

The *social media*, the usage of this phenomenon was found as one of the greatest factors that impacted on expatriates' shopping behaviour and identity changes. *Reflecting lifestyle and identity through social media* reflects that social media serves a great tool when comes to informing expatriates about many products available. *Social media purchasing factors* show that expatriates are affected by each other (the people in the social media group), influencers and bloggers in social media.

The initial factor that revealed as a reason for change was the multinational environment that expatriates are encountering when they start their international assignments abroad. *The need to fit in and belong* reflects that expatriates feel the need to fit in and to belong. The most convenient and fast way to fit in stems through the new shopping behaviours and a new type of identity. Additionally, *reflecting identity through possessions* revealed the fact that expatriates choose to buy products according to the perception of people in their new surroundings. And *perception of identity by others through possessions* was found to be highly effective as perceptions of others revealed as directly impacting on expatriates shopping

preferences. Expatriates start shopping differently and present themselves with a different identity.

Moreover, a great importance in shopping behaviour is displayed through hedonic shopping factors. It is clearly identified in this thesis that expatriates shop just to experience the pleasure of buying. Whether a gift for their friend and family back home or in their new environments to make them happy, or as a treat for themselves, the pleasure of shopping revealed as major a factor for the expatriates. Furthermore, another common factor of shopping was reflected as the *feelings of loneliness, stress or boredom* due to the fact of being away from friends and family or the new social environment and/or work. All types of purchases during these feelings were mentioned to be *the retail therapy*.

Moreover, as displayed in the conceptual framework, findings of this study concluded that the *variety of products, shopping festivals and sales* in many shops was a convincing factor for in shopping behaviour changes of expatriates.

Also, it is very important to consider that expatriates' *first impressions* about products were mentioned to be very important for them. The way they felt initially about a product, was a major reason for them to either buy a product or choose another one. Eventually they develop an identity that prefers great first impression both in product and services. Also, Expatriates believe they are being perceived according to the first impressions they present.

The *consumption of luxury items*, was mentioned by many participants somehow as a necessity or as a part of expatriate life. The reason being, they believe they are perceived with a more respectful approach and that using luxury products is a sign of success and achievement.

Similarly, expatriates like to follow certain *brands* for various reasons: quality of the product, durability, looking good and presentable, the style, the admiration of others and the identity they like to present by using products of certain brands. One major opinion why



expatriates prefer to use certain brand revealed itself as: the way of being perceived in a better way by others.

Finally, results of this thesis indicate that expatriates have great amount of purchases that relates to *socialization* with friends. Mostly, purchases related to socialization indicate F&B, retail and spa treatment

Thus, the provided conceptual framework will greatly support researchers in considering the findings as a base and further develop studies accordingly.

Finally, as previously mentioned in the Chapter 1, in 2017, the worldwide expatriate population was: 66.2 million. By 2021 this number will increase to 87.5 (Finaccord.com 2018). These Figures reflect the fact that expatriate community becomes a market segment. And this segment has its own needs and wants which firms could target. Therefore, this research will provide the firms with the knowledge of:

- Opportunities to sell new products services,
- Upgrade their consisting products,
- Develop new sales strategies and increase their profit margins.

Based on the type of products, findings of this research can be linked to marketing communications, advertising communications, product development and relationship management.

## **CHAPTER 6**

### **CONCLUSION**

#### **6.1. Introduction**

This final chapter summarizes the research endeavour with its main findings, implications, limitations and recommendations for further studies. The following section presents an overview of the research, followed by conclusions of the study and how it accomplished its aim and objectives, the demonstration of the original contribution to knowledge and the research limitations as well as recommendations for further studies.

#### **6.2. Overall summary of the research**

This research was divided into six major chapters. Chapter one presented the introduction to the study, research context and background information, the research problem statement as well as the research questions, aims and objectives. The first chapter illustrated an overview of the entire research and how the objectives are associated to the chapters. Chapter two demonstrated a complete understanding of the present-day ‘state of knowledge’ as the key outcome of a critical literature review focusing on the impacts of expatriation that leads to shopping behaviours and identity changes of individuals when moving abroad. The chapter rationalizes the necessity for this study and constructs a solid theoretical background as the underpinning for it. This incorporated acquiring from earlier research practices, both positive and negative in kind. Ultimately, the knowledge that was gained guided the structuring of the framework for assessing expatriates shopping behaviour and identity changes.

Consequently, the following (third) chapter illustrated the research philosophy, logic and methodology implemented as well as the justification behind using those methods were

clarified in detail. The third chapter also displays the pilot study that was conducted to test the interview questions to be used effectively in the actual interviews. Chapter four presented the analysis and findings of the data collected from a total number of 40 expatriates (participants). The fifth chapter demonstrated the summary of findings and their analysis, interpretations and explanations. This chapter proposed the final conceptual framework of the research followed by the practical and theoretical contributions.

### **6.3. The research aim, objectives and research question**

The aim of this study was to analyze, extract and articulate the extent to which expatriates shopping behaviours change when they live in a different country. To reach this aim, supportive objectives were developed and tackled throughout the research endeavour. Supporting the aim of the research, the theoretical objective was to create a conceptual model that identifies the factors that may influence changes in expatriate consumer identities and expatriate shopping behaviours. A conceptual model which enables firms to measure the gap between where they currently are positioned and where they want to reach, in terms of their products and services that they could offer to the expatriate consumer segment.

This thesis has investigated, extracted and articulated the extent to which expatriates' shopping behaviours change when they live in a different country. The common belief of expatriates being financially stronger encouraged the author to conduct this research. Hence, the author of this thesis investigated the extent of change that expatriation has on the shopping behaviours of expatriates when moving abroad. The following sections displays a summary of the findings relative to the study objectives, which form an articulated completion of the research aim, problem and question demonstrated in the initial chapter of this study.

### 6.3.1. Achieving research objectives

#	Research Objective	Approach of Achievement	Chapters linked
1.	To review current literature, identify and evaluate the extent to which expatriate identities and shopping behaviours change after expatriation	Review of literature and collection of qualitative data through semi-structured individual interviews	Chapter 2 & Chapter 4
2.	To create a conceptual model that identifies the factors that may influence changes in expatriate consumer identities and expatriate shopping behaviours.	Review of literature and collection of qualitative data through semi-structured individual interviews	Chapter 2, Chapter 3 & Chapter 5
3.	To identify implications of expatriate identities and shopping behaviours that may inform strategies	Collection of qualitative data through semi-structured individual interviews, development of framework	Chapter 2, Chapter 4 & Chapter 5

*Table 6.1 Accomplishing objectives of the research*

**6.3.1.1. Objective #1:** To review the existing literature in expatriate shopping behaviour and identity changes.

The initial objective of this research was to investigate the extent of change that expatriation has on the shopping behaviours of expatriates. Previous studies, as displayed in Chapter 2, Table 1, focused on various aspects of identity, consumer shopping behaviour, brands consumption, luxury shopping and various other aspects of consumer behaviour. However, the current study presented the influences of expatriation on individual identity changes as well as shopping behaviour changes for the very first time in literature. Hence, the current study contributes to the academic world for the development of future studies underpinning expatriate shopping behaviours. And it contributes to firms in developing new products and services according to the need of expatriates along with further improving their existing products and services. This study is unique in its findings due to the fact that it

examined, deducted and articulated the impacts of expatriation on individual identity and shopping behaviour changes.

**6.3.1.2. Objective #2:** To create a conceptual model that identifies the factors that may influence changes in expatriate consumer identities and expatriate shopping behaviours.

Objective number 2 was accomplished through the development of a framework named and displayed as: *Conceptual model of expatriates identity and shopping behaviour change*.

This is primarily illustrated in Chapter 5 but inputs towards the structuring can also be seen in Chapters 2 and 4. Please refer to Table 6.1. *Accomplishing objectives of the research* above. The proposed framework was built through a mixture of the outcomes by gathering the other objectives of this thesis. The development is founded on the incorporation of literature review data which was linked to the findings of the data investigation of all interviews.

Overall, the proposed framework, offers firms with a systemic and holistic overview of the current state impacts in shopping preferences, and facilitates them to design and develop new strategies in their renovation or alteration towards greater products and services for the expatriate consumer segment.

As an output of this research, a conceptual model that identifies the factors that may influence changes in expatriate consumer identities and expatriate shopping behaviours was created and presented. Please refer to Figure 5.14 *Conceptual model of expatriates identity and shopping behaviour changes*. The extent to which expatriate identities and shopping behaviours change after expatriation was identified and evaluated. And an understanding of the implications of changing expatriate consumer identities and their shopping behaviours, which may inform the strategies was identified and developed.

**6.3.1.3. Objective #3:** To identify implications of expatriate identities and that may inform strategies.

The third research objective was also achieved through the qualitative data collection and interpretation displayed in Chapter 4. The data was gathered by conducting the semi-structured interviews to 40 expatriate workers, living in the UAE about 5 years. These were individuals with minimum of 10,000 AED monthly income and aged from 21 to 65. All interviews lead to five main dimensions. As a primary data existing literature was reviewed in Chapter 2. The implications of expatriate identities and shopping behaviours that may inform strategies were displayed and explained in detail in Chapter 4 and 5

Finally, all findings answer the key research questions and support the aims of objectives of this research. Table 6.2 *Conceptual Model with additional information and analysis*. The presented table reflects the conceptual model that includes brief information on findings and analysis of this research.

Influences of Changing Expatriates' Identity and Shopping Behaviours	
THEMES	Sub-themes & Descriptions
Social environment & Peer Pressure	<p>The new social environment expatriates are living in and the individuals in this new environment greatly influence expatriates' shopping habits.</p> <p><b>Herding Behaviour:</b> Expatriates that participated in this study mentioned they were following the people around (or their groups within the social media) while choosing or buying a product.</p>
Social media usage	<p>As one the most influential mediums of the 21<sup>st</sup> century the social media, the usage of this phenomenon was found as one of the greatest factors that impacted on expatriates' shopping behaviour and identity changes.</p> <p><b>Reflecting lifestyle and identity through social media:</b> Social media serves a great tool when comes to informing expatriates about many products available.</p> <p><b>Social media purchasing factors:</b> Expatriates are affected by each other (the people in the social media group), influencers and bloggers in social media.</p>
Changing identity	<p>The initial factor that revealed as a reason for change was the multinational environment that expatriates are encountering when they start their international assignments abroad.</p> <p><b>The need to fit in and belong:</b> Expatriates feel the need to fit in and to belong. The most convenient and fast way to fit in stems through the new shopping behaviours and a new type of identity.</p> <p><b>Reflecting identity through possessions:</b> Expatriates choose to buy products according to the perception of people in their new surroundings.</p> <p><b>Perception of identity by others through possessions:</b> Perceptions of others directly impacts on expatriates shopping preferences. Expatriates start shopping differently and present themselves with a different identity.</p>
Hedonistic Shopping factors	<p>This is when expatriates shop just to experience the pleasure of buying. Whether a gift for their friend and family back home or in their new environments to make them happy, or as a treat for themselves, the pleasure of shopping revealed as major a factor for the expatriates.</p>
The Retail Therapy, Feelings of Loneliness, stress, boredom	<p>One common feelings shared was the feeling of loneliness, stress or boredom due to the fact of being away from friends and family. All types of purchases during these feelings were mentioned to be the retail therapy.</p>
Variety, Festivals & Sales	<p>Findings concluded that the variety of products, shopping festivals and sales in many shops was a convincing factor for in shopping behaviour changes of expatriates.</p>
First impressions	<p>Expatriates' first impressions about products were mentioned to be very important for them. The way they felt initially about a product, was a major reason for them to either buy a product or choose another one. Eventually they develop an identity that prefers great first impression both in product and services. Also, Expatriates believe they are being perceived according to the first impressions they present</p>

Table 6.2 Conceptual Model with additional information and analysis.

## **6.4. Contributions of Study**

The contribution of this thesis is multi-fold. To begin with, exploring the experiences of expatriates, supported the author of this research to identify the factors impacting expatriates' identity and shopping behaviour changes. This study analysed, extracted, and articulated the extent to which expatriates shopping behaviours change when they live in a different country. Hence, the findings of this study inform readers how and why expatriates are influenced and how these influences cause changes in their identities and shopping behaviours. Identification of these influences contribute in both theoretical and practical aspects. Studying expatriates has clearly developed our understanding of the role of consumer identity in individual shopping behaviour and on luxury/hedonistic shopping.

### **6.4.1. Theoretical Contributions**

Theoretically, this research supports researchers in areas of marketing literature that will fall under applied psychology and consumer behaviour as it covers consumer behaviour as well as underpinning psychological aspects of marketing. As indicated earlier, the exploration of expatriates in the context of identity and shopping behaviour changes is very limited. Hence, this research has solid contributions to the academic world. Taking this thesis as a basis, researchers will be able to further examine the expatriate shopping behaviour and identity phenomenon.

Furthermore, the findings revealed in this research can be considered as the variables of a new quantitative study. Thus, this study can be used as a starting point of future studies related to expatriates' identity a shopping behaviour movements.

Moreover, having identified and evaluated the extent to which expatriate identities and shopping behaviours change after expatriation in this thesis, an initial follow up study will be conducted by the author herself. Using the findings of this study, the author of this research



will develop a detailed questionnaire that will further investigate the expatriate consumer segment shopping behaviour and identity changes.

Using this study as a base, case studies or quantitative studies to investigate further shopping needs of expatriates in detail will help develop understanding in the percentage of needs according to job positions, age, nationality, and gender.

Another point mentioned in the study was that expatriates like to socialize through dining facilities and spas. Hence, further studies can use these points and develop detailed questionnaires and support the F&B, hospitality and health industries by understanding the preferences of expatriates in terms of F&B, self-care, social activities and leisure.

Furthermore, this study identified that expatriates strongly inclined towards hedonic shopping behaviour. Hence, further studies can use this factor as a starting point and develop an understanding to related firms on how to support expatriates towards purchases related to pleasure and happiness.

Additionally, as social media was one of the strongest factors displayed in expatriates, based on the findings of this study, researchers will have the starting point on developing further questions related to the impact of social media on identity and shopping behaviour changes. Which will support the firms that try to develop products sales over the social media.

#### **6.4.2. Practical Contributions**

This study identified and developed an understanding of the implications of changing expatriate consumer identities and their shopping behaviours, which informs the strategies. Hence, based on the type of products, findings of this research can be linked to many aspects of firms' strategies related to marketing, advertising communications, customer services, product management and relationship management.

As reviewed earlier in the literature, in 2017, the worldwide expatriate population was 66.2 million. By 2021 this number will increase to 87.5 (Finaccord.com, 2018). Provided by these solid Figures, it is inevitable that expatriates as a community are to develop an immense market segment. As identified, analysed, and presented in this thesis, the expatriate consumer segment has its own needs. These needs themselves should be the new target of firms for development and production of future product and services. Hence, in light of the findings of this thesis, firms can develop new strategies for providing the expatriate consumer segment with further product and services. For instance, presenting new products and services in certain ways, as described in this thesis, will enable expatriate consumers to smoothly decide to purchase their desired products. Therefore, this research will provide the firms with the knowledge of: Opportunities to sell new products services, upgrade their consisting products, develop new sales strategies and increase their profit margins. Hence, this thesis provides guidance to future researchers and contributes to the expatriate consumer population globally and in the UAE.

For instance, numerous comments of expatriates mentioned that they could not find certain brands in the UAE. Using brands and being loyal to them or being engaged with the brands was listed as one of the findings. Expatriate consumers mentioned they would wait until they go back home and buy from them. Hence, this study provides findings that indicate to the firms to be aware of these brands, look at different nationalities residing here countries and try to find ways to provide these brands in the UAE.

One of the major purchasing factors for expatriates was mentioned toward the style of socialization. Due to being away from home they mostly mentioned that they like to socialize. And the way of socialization was mentioned to be mostly through food and beverage products and services with friends and/or family if with them in the country. Additionally, the first impression was pointed as a major impact in the product and service choices. Hence, the study

contributes to the firms by highlighting that first impressions in choosing products and services for expatriates is a major point to consider. Additionally, dining was mentioned to be the key mingling tool with the social circle. And mingling with other nationalities was mentioned to be through knowing and adapting to their eating styles. So, firms need to consider the options they provide when it comes to F&B services. Instead of offering separate cuisines in separate locations/restaurants they can try combining the cuisines and offering them. But that should not only be through brunches and buffet's but in many different ways available. Additionally, the clothes and accessories were mentioned to be very important to be in the social circle. Hence firms involved in the retail industry should reconsider what type of products they provide and what further they can implement to the shops available in the market. For instance, they can provide more brands of local brands from other countries. Additionally, it was mentioned that there is no fashion line here, and that everyone wears according to their business requirements or social circle requirements. Therefore, perhaps firms can consider to implement the sense of fashion, rather than just providing any type of product.

Furthermore, after moving abroad all expatriates mentioned that they are travelling more often than when they were back in their home countries. First reason for travelling more often is the fact they want to go back home and visit their friends and family. Secondly, the fact that they are now geographically based in a country that allows them to travel to different parts of the world. The UAE being in the closer Far East, Europe, Africa and MEA, it motivates expatriates towards travelling to new countries close by. Hence, firms in the tourism industry, and hospitality industry should reconsider holiday, packages, and all related expenses that expatriates need. Thus, develop further products and services.

The results and findings of this research paper make countless contributions to modern literature today. The deduced themes taken from the collected data in addition to the findings of this study supported the author in identifying numerous factors that relate to changes in

expatriates' identity and their consequent shopping behaviours. The UAE has always supported ethnic diversity, and is known for being home to many nationalities. As a result, expatriates residing in the UAE have been exposed to a new social environment that consists of multiple other expatriates from different countries and regions. Although this study has been done in the UAE, the outcomes of this research applies to expatriates all over the world. Expatriates generally tend to hold on to their values and beliefs from their original birthplace, but when it comes to product purchasing, those have been altered because of their conglomeration with other expatriates which has impacted their shopping decisions and preferences to a large extent. They are impacted not just by local cultures in their respective countries, but with the cultures of other expatriates as well, thus, forming a new expatriate consumer segment division. If marketers study the job market of their target customers in their respective countries, and understand the complexity of expatriates' behaviour in shopping decisions, they would be able to deliver customized products and services that would appeal to that particular division and cater to their unique needs.

Additionally, psychologists can also study expatriates' behaviour through the theory of conformity and differentiate between this herding behaviour and expatriates' need for uniqueness. Doing this would help psychologists identify the crux of expatriates' behavioural difference and be able to comprehend the complexity behind their shopping consumption decisions.

Another emerging theme that this thesis uncovered which ties back to the purpose of this study is social media usage. This theme consists of two other sub-themes: factors in social media purchasing and reflecting identity and lifestyle via social media. Social media serves as a great tool for expatriates to study the job market of the country they would be residing in. They can use it to study that country's latest fashion and trends and understand the shopping behaviour of the consumers living there. Marketers can take advantage of this by working with

social media experts and create specific applications that are targeted at expatriates and from there, provide useful information for all the things expatriates will want to know before moving abroad to that country. The application can include a list of countries that expatriates are considering moving to, and each country would have shopping categories that reflect the style and preferences of consumers living there. Moreover, the application can also have a separate form that allows the expatriates to communicate with other expatriates already residing in that country, and share and exchange useful information on shopping consumption decisions.

A third emerging theme deduced from the thesis is identity change, which can be classified into three distinct subgroups: the need to fit in and belong, reflecting identity through possessions, and the perception of identity by others through possessions. It is a natural thing for any expatriate moving to a new country to want to connect with people sharing their beliefs and attitudes, and more importantly, have a desire to belong and be accepted by their peers. This sense of belongingness ties back to the psychological theory of conformity, where individuals tend to conform and associate themselves in groups that share the same ideals and value system. The findings of this research suggest that one of the best ways for expatriates to establish a sense of belongingness and incorporate themselves into the new society is through shopping behaviours. Whether it was a certain nationality, age group, or even gender, this phenomenon is common for everyone. Through shopping behaviour, expatriates develop new identities which they start ascribing to, and through common groups, they are able to create a new sense of belongingness which they initially aspired to do so. This phenomenon also draws on the psychological theory of herding behaviour where individuals are willing to do all the necessary changes in their lifestyles in order to fit within a particular group. A further investigation of this matter revealed that some expatriates, however, like to stand out within their shared social circle, creating a need for uniqueness where they are able to serve as role models for their mutual friends and peers. This makes them feel good and positive about

themselves, and at the same time, helps them integrate into their new society faster. They would for instance purchase the same line of products or brands that everyone in their social circle purchase from, however, they would select a different design that would make them stand out from the rest. Marketers can thus offer several designs for the same line of products of the more popular brands, keeping in mind that there are various expatriate consumer segments who would likely be purchasing those other designs.

Another discovery that this research made in expatriates' shopping behaviour, was hedonic factors. There are certain expatriate consumer segments that would purchase products without worrying about their value or price simply for the thrill of it; it makes them feel happy and good about themselves. But more than that, it empowers them and makes them believe that they are successful and that they have made it from where they used to be. It means that they have accomplished integrating into the new society and believe that the ability to purchase whatever they want gives them the satisfaction of knowing that they have succeeded in their life. Another emerging theme of this thesis, is owning luxury products. Expatriates believe that owning luxury products reflects positively on themselves, as it gives them power and status. They believe that in owning such luxurious products, they are proving to their families and friends back home, as well as their new friends and peers in the country that they are residing in, that they have taken a successful step in moving abroad to another country. Since luxury products reflect wealth, marketers can use this opportunity to target expatriates individually and come up with various marketing strategies that would help them accomplish this.

A final emerging theme of this thesis, is the psychological theory of socialization. Simply put, expatriates often tend to feel homesick, so shopping offers a great way for them to socialize with their friends and peers. Marketers need to understand that having common spending habits and behaviours tends to link expatriates together, and can consequently offer

new and unique marketing strategies such as product and service bundles that cater specifically to more than one person to benefit from.

## **6.5. Recommendations**

One major recommendation for the firms would be to provide brands that expatriates like to buy from but are not available in their new surroundings. Many of the participants of this research mentioned that they still like to buy from the brands that they knew from their home countries. One of the findings supports that expatriates are somehow engaged with certain brands and they like to continue buying from them. So, the brands they know and like from their home countries they mentioned were not available in the UAE. Thus, they mentioned that they would wait until they go back home and purchase their desired products from their desired brands back home. In terms of the UAE for instance, there are many varieties in brands. However, these brands are either very luxurious or are internationally well-known brands. Hence, considering the number of different nationalities in the UAE, many expatriates cannot find the local brands of their home countries. Moreover, these nationalities also come with their different traditions and religions. Firms can relate to these facts and consider the important holidays of various cultures and implement services accordingly.

Furthermore, as social media and online shopping is a great factor in expatriates' shopping behaviours, firms should encourage unbiased opinions in their sponsorships over the social media and their official websites. Firms should also allow customers to comment freely on their official websites. Firms should verify that reviewers have indeed purchased the product.

Additionally, brands can sponsor social media influencers and deliver products to them to display to their audiences. They should encourage the influencers to give an honest review

of these products. In that way, expatriate consumers will gain trust in the brand because the paid influencers are encouraged to give unbiased reviews.

For future researchers, the author of this thesis would recommend that in addition to the qualitative manner (in which expatriate identity and shopping behaviour changes was studied in this thesis studied,) there should be quantitative studies further exploring this phenomenon using the provided findings.

## **6.6. Research Limitations**

Despite the very fact that the development and completion of this research has been a great pleasure and an enormous experience for the author, during the entire conduction of this study, there have been numerous times when the author came across with various aspects that can be listed as limitations.

To begin with, based on the nature of this study, the conduction of the semi structured, open ended interviews were decided to be conducted in two separate times. Conducting interviews through this method meant to invite the participants twice for the interviews. As mentioned in the methodology section, first for the questions about their shopping behaviours back home and second for gathering data about their experiences as expatriates in their new environments. However, to invite participants twice for the interviews created confusion for the participants. They all asked why they should have two interviews in two different times and why they could not just answer all questions in the initial meeting. Hence, to explain the requirements of the research methodology to the participants and convince them to come for another meeting without confusing them was rather a challenge for the author.

Furthermore, being an expatriate in the UAE herself, during the interviews it was crucial for the author to remain unbiased. Listening to the stories and experiences of the participants without interfering or sharing her own opinion was also not very easy. Because the



expatriates that participated in this thesis, when introduced to each other at the beginning with the author, learned the fact that the author was an expatriate herself. Knowing they are talking with an expatriate, they naturally were asking about her own ways of shopping habits and other experiences. So, the author during the entire interviews tried to politely respond to the participants that she could not share her opinion as it might cause biases in the results.

Moreover, another limitation of this study was due to the fact that majority of the participants spoke English, as their second or third language. Hence, other than the native English-speaking participants, the language barrier was a challenging factor, during several interviews. Consequently, in some cases, the participants were not able to understand and would answer the interview questions rather differently. To ensure a clear understanding of the questions, the author tried to explain the questions further to the participants. The questions were paraphrased and explained repeatedly, which took this took more time of the participants and some were showing signs of lack of interest. In these instances, the author tried to give additional effort to keep the participants focused and avoid boredom.

Finally, to collect accurate data during the interviews, the author paid great attention to the responses of all participants. At times, the author felt that participants' answers were somehow contradicting each other. Hence, to avoid misunderstanding or misinterpretation, the author tried to ask the questions in other ways, or sometimes by provided examples that will clearly explain the question.

## **6.7. Future Research Possibilities**

As it's rational, this research has examined, analysed, deducted and articulated the level of change that expatriates display in their shopping behaviours and identity changes. The author interpreted the impacts of expatriation on the shopping behaviours and identities of individuals when assigned for an international post and start living in a new social environment. Hence, a

conceptual model was created that identifies various factors influencing expatriate consumer identities and shopping behaviours. The conceptual model created illustrates the findings of this research. These findings reflect the impacts of expatriation on individuals' shopping behaviour and identity changes.

By its structure and development, this research is related to various aspects of marketing that is linked to psychology. This very fact will open doors for future researchers that choose to further explore the expatriate phenomenon from an identity perspective. As this research applies to marketing, communications, applied psychology and consumer behaviour. Researchers can use the findings of this research, which was provided for the first time in literature, and develop further with various other studies. These studies may be in the version of quantitative, case studies in other environments or mix method studies. For instance, a great aspect to consider and study for future researchers would be the repatriation phenomenon. As the expatriation phenomenon is found to be very delicate, and having great impact on individuals' identity and shopping behaviour changes, the contrary effects should also be studied. For instance, if expatriation changes identities and shopping behaviours of individuals, what would happen when they return back to their home countries? How will be the repatriation phenomenon impact on individual identities and shopping behaviours? Will expatriates be able to switch back to their previous identities and shopping behaviours? Will they remain the same? If they remain the same, what will happen back in their home countries, which they stated to be completely different than their current environments?

Further studies could be related to their experiences here and how they feel about it in reality. For example, how do they feel about the changes that they went through? Are they really happy with their new shopping behaviours and identities? Would they like to carry these identities and shopping behaviour back to their homes? The success, the identity, the social class that they currently reflect through their belongings of luxury product and brands, are these

really factors of success in their lives? Is a Porsche car or a Gucci hand bag a sign of success as they claim it to be?

Furthermore, further research in marketing will help develop new products and services. Based on the findings of this study, marketing researchers can identify what further products should be provided to best serve the needs of the expatriate consumer community. Researches of different industries and their products and services can be investigated and then offered to firms. Hence, firms can develop new product or further develop the existing ones and provide more and better products and services for this new and rapidly growing consumer segment. For instance, findings show that expatriates shop due to loneliness, boredom and stress. And mostly when they have these feelings they like to treat themselves and go out dining or to spa. So, research on facilities can be conducted and results provided to firms. Hence, firms will know how to develop new facilities towards entertaining them. Once new facilities are developed or existing ones are improved, expatriate consumers will have more options than going to spa or dining when they are stressed, bored or feel lonely.

Another study using the findings of this study can be developed and conducted on the amount / degree of shopping of certain products and services. Like a multi-dimensional quantitative study that will identify what products and services do expatriates consume most: What gender prefers which type of product and services? What age prefers what type of product? Which nationality prefers what service or product? Identifying the percentage of purchasing preferences will also support firms to know what products and services can be added, removed or increased in the market.

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## **7. Appendices**

### **Appendix 1: Interview Questions**

The individual interviews of this study were conducted using the below listed open ended, semi-structured interview questions to examine the impact of expatriation on expatriate shift in identity and shopping behaviours in the UAE. This study followed a longitudinal approach. Therefore, the researcher conducted two separate interviews.

The first interviews are lasted about 30-45. Questions of the first interview were designed to aid the researcher find out how the participants were as shoppers in their home countries. The responses the first interview questions helped the author gather the experiences of participants in their home countries before living as expatriates. Kindly refer to below questions for the initial interviews:

#### **First Interview Questions**

1. How would you describe your general shopping habits when you were back in your home country, for example in terms of being price conscious, favouring luxury brands or expecting a certain level of product quality? (Please consider food, clothes, accessories, household items, your car, eating out, spending for leisure and vacations).  
E.g.: What car were you driving back home? How old was it? Why did you choose this make and model?
2. What did 'luxury product' mean to you back in your home country?
3. When you were in your home country how did you feel before buying a luxury product that you really liked or admired others having? Were there any debates in your mind prior to buying the product that you can share? For instance, did you sometimes feel

that a product was too expensive for what it was? Did you consider the limits of your income before your purchase?

4. If you had vacations when you lived in your home country, what sort of destinations did you visit? What factors did you consider when choosing where to go? How often did you go abroad and how long did you stay abroad each time?
5. In your home country, did you buy certain branded or expensive clothes? How did you choose which clothes shops to visit and which brands to buy?
6. In your home country, were there any non-food brands that you favoured? Why did you like to purchase these brands? How did you feel when you bought one of these brands?
7. In general, how do you think people that can afford a luxurious life style are regarded / perceived in your home country? (e.g. admired/envious/disliked)
8. How did you manage your feelings when you were in doubt with your purchasing decisions back home? E.g. if the price was too high/ higher than your income.
9. To what extent did you try to buy products at the cheapest times (for example, in sales) or at the cheapest places (for example, by looking around to find the cheapest shop/supplier).
10. What hobbies did you have in your home country? How did you spend your leisure time? What factors did you consider when deciding how to spend your leisure time?

The following questions were designed for the second interviews. The second (final) interviews lasted as 45-60 minutes. During the second interview the researcher informed the participants of the aims of the research (as in the initial interview) but this time in the UAE as an expatriate worker. This information then was compared with the information of the previous interviews. The aim of the second interview helped the author to identify the extent to which the individual's shopping behaviours changed during the time they were expatriates. When

changes in shopping behaviours were identified, the researcher further asked a range of follow-up questions to find out the reasons for the changes, or the factors that influenced such changes. Specifically, the researcher focused on discovering the extent to which each individual perceives that their identity changed, and the reasons behind such identity changes. For example, if an individual agreed that she/he consciously tried to portray a new image or identity – to work colleagues/friends/neighbours in the UAE and/or to friends and family in their home country – the researcher tried to find out why the individual wanted a new image/identity and how they attempted to achieve it. Please see below questions designed and implemented in the second interviews.

### **Second (final) Interview Questions**

1. Now in the UAE, how would you describe your general shopping habits, for example in terms of being price conscious, favouring luxury brands or expecting a certain level of product quality? (Please consider food, clothes, accessories, household items, your car, eating out, spending for leisure and vacations). E.g. What car do you drive in UAE? Why did you choose this make and model?
2. Do you travel/ go on holidays? If yes, how often do you travel/ have holidays? If yes, what type of holidays did you prefer? What destinations did you choose to go for holidays?
3. Do you prefer to buy certain branded or expensive clothes? Why do you buy these products?
4. Are there brands that you admired or aspired to buy in your home country, and which you did *not* buy when you were in your home country, but which you *do now buy*? How do you explain your change in shopping habits?

5. Do you believe that the products you choose to buy make a difference to your life style?  
If so in what ways and how?
6. Did you use social media in the UAE for information and/or advice on where to shop, what products to buy, and how/where to spend your leisure time? Are you influenced by opinion leaders?
7. Have you been influenced by work colleagues/friends/neighbours in the UAE in choosing where to shop, what products to buy, and how/where to spend your leisure time? How and why were you influenced?
8. Do you think that your friends and family back home are interested to know your lifestyle in the UAE? If yes, how does this interest influence your shopping and spending decisions?
9. Do you put information/pictures on social media, like Facebook and Instagram? If so, why do you do this and how does it make you feel?
10. Do you like to use social media to share your pictures of your apartment, car, clothes, holidays etc. with your friends and family back home?
11. How do you feel about presenting any luxury products you buy to your friends, colleagues, family and friends back home? (E.g. do you want others to admire you or be envious?)
12. If your shopping preferences have changed, how do you think people back home perceive you with your new shopping preferences?' Do you think you present a different identity in their minds?
13. How do you think you will be perceived by others buying a luxury car, luxury brand hand bag, luxury brand shoes or world class watch?

14. Do you think people will perceive you differently in the UAE if you don't consume luxury products (e.g. car, membership in sports clubs, spa, luxurious holiday destinations etc.) according to your shopping preferences?
15. What products do you purchase that reflect a part of your identity?
16. Do others' opinions matter to you before making a purchasing decision? Would you buy a product because someone else (colleague, neighbour, friend, celebrity etc.) has bought it? Do you listen to others' opinions when deciding on buying a product?
17. How do you manage your feelings when you are in doubt with your purchasing decisions in UAE? E.g. if the price is too high/ higher than your income.
18. Are there certain brands in the UAE that you follow regularly and you only like to purchase from? Why do you favour these brands?
19. Do you enjoy buying products in the UAE even when you do not really need them? What drives you to buy them?
20. How do you feel when you buy a product that others buy?
21. Do you like to go shopping (or shop online) when you are bored, tired or feel lonely? What are the types of products or services you would buy when feeling bored, tired or lonely? Are these purchases gifts for others or treats for yourself?
22. Do you feel any excitement, thrill, happiness or relaxation while buying luxury product you like? How do feel (with yourself) when purchasing luxury brand products?
23. How does luxury shopping affect your social life? (Can you consider luxury shopping as a mean of socialization with your friends / family etc.?)
24. Do you consider buying a gift just to make others happy? Do you like to purchase gifts for friend and family back home?
25. Will buying expensive presents to others make them perceive you differently? If so, how?

26. What are some of the most important factors/reasons for you in purchasing a luxury product when newly announced in the market?
27. Consider a product (or of a well-known brand) that is very popular and is selling a lot, would you still consider buying this product? Please explain your answer?
28. Do first impressions you have for a product matter to you when you make when you make decisions on purchasing a product? When visiting shops or joining others in dining gatherings etc. for the first time, do you consider the value, general appearances or expensiveness of the environment?
29. What do think of the phrases: ‘the more expensive a product, the higher the quality’, ‘the price is the indicator of the quality of a product’, ‘if you pay peanuts, you will get monkeys’?
30. What would you say about the phrase: ‘You are what you wear?’
31. Do you think you as an expatriate you have (or developed) a different identity or are there any changes that you recognize in your identity since moving abroad? If so, how would you describe this new identity?

## **Appendix 2: Request for Participation Letter**

Dear Sir or Madam,

You are kindly invited to take part in this study, which is looking at what products and services foreign workers in the UAE buy, and how they spend their leisure time.

You will be asked to share your experiences of living as an expatriate in the UAE, specifically to discuss whether and how your shopping habits changed since moving to the UAE.

Kindly be assured that all information you provide will be kept confidential. The findings of this research will be used for academic purposes only. To respect your anonymity, your real name will not be used when things you said are used/quoted in the final reports.

Please keep in mind that this is a completely voluntarily participation. You may withdraw your participation at any time without providing a reason.

For further clarification or interview details please feel free to contact me (Serap Emik) on:

[Serapemik14@gmail.com](mailto:Serapemik14@gmail.com)

GSM: +971 528575754



## Appendix 3: Informed Consent Form



Dear Participant,

You are invited to participate in a research that aims to identify and analyse the influences of expatriation on the changes in identity and shopping behaviours of expatriates in the UAE. Please refer to the information below for a clear understanding of the process of your participation:

**Project Topic:** Exploration of expatriation on the changes in shopping behaviours of expatriates in the UAE. The aim is to analyse changes in the shopping behaviours of expatriates in the UAE.

**Process- Method:** At a mutually agreed time, two separate interviews that are estimated to take 30-45 minutes (for the 1<sup>st</sup> interview) and 45-60 minutes (for the 2<sup>nd</sup> interview). Your valuable time will be required to share your experiences about the above-mentioned topic. If you agree the interview will be audio-recorded and notes will be taken to enable the researcher narrate and analyse your experiences.

**Risks and/or Discomforts:** It is not expected that you will experience any risks or discomfort during the interviews or as a result of this research.

**Benefits:** You will be contributing by sharing your experiences in identifying the impacts of expatriation on changes to you and your shopping behaviours of expatriates in the UAE.

**Confidentiality:** your name will be changed and any audio tapings will be kept for six months and then destroyed. There will be no records of transcripts that will include your personal details.

**Questions:** You are free to ask any question that may arise before and during this research.

You will be provided with a copy of this paper. For further questions please contact:

[serapemik14@gmail.com](mailto:serapemik14@gmail.com) or GSM +971 528575754

If you read the information above and agree to participate please sign the space provided for the participant.

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Signature of Participant

Date

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Signature of Researcher

Date

## **Appendix 4: Transcriptionist Confidentiality Statement**

I, Serap Emik agree to hold all audio taped information (if any) in interviews received from \_\_\_\_\_ within the study of ‘Exploration of expatriation on the changes in shopping behaviours of expatriates-as a case study in the UAE’ confidential.

I understand overriding the points of this agreement will result in serious unethical infringement on the participant’s privacy

Signature of Transcriptionist \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## **Appendix 5: Debrief**

Dear Participant,

Thank you for sharing your experiences in this study on \_\_\_\_\_ (date).

This study aimed to point on highlighting the influences of expatriation on the changes in shopping behaviours of expatriates in the UAE.

Your kind inputs helped the researcher to reveal findings that will help identifying the changes of identities and shopping behaviours of expatriates in the UAE (and worldwide).

The revealed that: ...

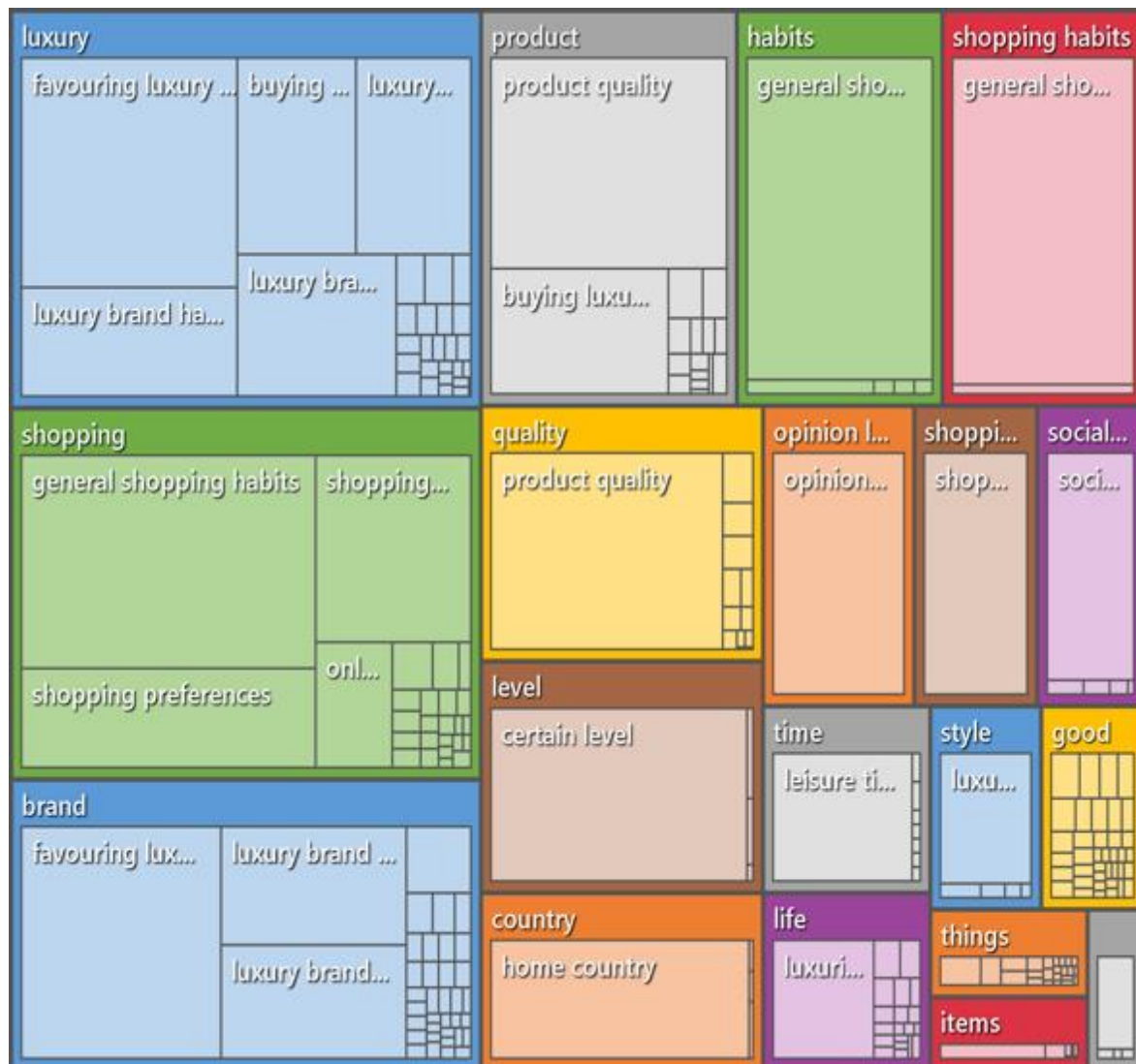
Your participation is greatly appreciated.

Once again, many thanks for your valuable time, input and consideration on participating in this study.

Kindest regards,

Serap Emik

## Appendix 6: Identification of Themes – Auto Code Themes



## Appendix 7: Sample of transcript analysis -1

<b>NAME:</b> Mr. T.K.
<b>COUNTRY OF ORIGIN:</b> Turkey
<b>GENDER:</b> Male
<b>AGE:</b> 41-50
<b>MARITAL STATUS:</b> Divorced
<b>DESIGNATION/POSITION:</b> SELF EMPLOYED-MANAGING DIRECTOR
<b>LEVEL OF EDUCATION:</b> University
<b>NUMBER OF YEARS ABROAD (IN THE UAE):</b> 3 +
<b>SALARY SCALEAED:</b> 61,000-ABOVE

### FIRST INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. How would you describe your general shopping habits when you were back in your home country in terms of being price conscious, favouring luxury brands or expecting a certain level of product quality? (E.g. food/clothes and accessories/household items/car/eating out etc.)
E.g. What car were you driving back home? How old was it? Why did you choose this make and model?

‘I was working as an architect for the Turkish military and I had a Honda civic. My income was much lower than now of course. (Comparison of income back home and after moving abroad) but for my country my life was mid-higher level if life style’. (Comparison of income within the country).

2. What did luxury product mean to you back in your home country?

‘Luxury meant prestige. (Perception of the society back home in terms of using luxury products) In turkey people like to be into brands (Choosing Brands). And the social circle I was in was definitely (Impact of social circle in using brands) very much into it. Specially the university that I was in. (Impact of social environment) people care to much for the brands’. (Perception of others when using) brands) etc.

3. When you were in your home country how did you feel before buying a luxury product that you really liked or admired others having? Were there any debates in your mind prior to buying that product? E.g. did you sometimes feel that the product is too expensive for what it was? Did you consider the limits of your income before you purchase?

‘When you are newly graduated you don’t look to the expensiveness of the product (Choosing more affordable products --(general shopping habits) you look if you have and how much you have in your pocket. Considering income in purchasing decisions – (general shopping habits) you just buy than you suffer-face the consequences’.

4. If you had vacations when you lived in your home country, what sort of destinations did you visit? What factors did you consider when choosing where to go? How often did you go abroad and how long did you stay abroad each time?

‘My family was living abroad. But I didn’t really go outside the country (Choices in travelling purchases- general shopping habits). It was more of business trips arranged by the company I was working for. I more preferred trips within the country. – (general shopping habits). The cost was same like in buying clothes. If you have money you go to your vacation’. (General shopping habits).

5. Back in your home country, were you buying certain branded (expensive) clothes? How did you choose which clothes shops to visit and which brands to buy?

‘Yes, I was buying Brand (loyalty -brand engagement) back home. I was young and running a business (Social identity – upper class). So, the clothes I’m wearing were important to give a good impression as a businessman. (Choosing possessions to reflect a better identity). It affects your social life too (Possessions and impacts in social life back home). When you meet with friends, you discuss with where to buy things from and the latest fashion etc. People care so much to brands and you want to remain in that social circle’. (Choosing certain brands to fit in).

So, you keep buying and taking care of what you wearing or how you are presenting yourself’. (Reflecting identity through luxury possessions or brands).

6. Why did you like to purchase / use these products? How did you feel when you bought one of these products?



‘As I just explained. Good impression and keep up with your social circle’. (Need to fit in through possessions – impact of social environment- social life).

7. In general, how do you think people that can afford a luxurious life style are regarded / perceived in your home country? (e.g. admired/envious/disliked)

‘Now, in our country the life standards are vary a lot... There is lower class, lower-mid class, middle-high, and higher class. (Differences in Social classes back home -certain level). And there is are lot of differences between all of them. Umm... For example, there is a social group that is called the middle class. Where people work mostly as clerks, teachers, admin etc. they are living based on the salary they get. The social circle that I was in was more towards the higher class so for my social circle to be a person in luxury was a good thing (Perception through others using luxury products- favoring luxury).

For me because I was doing my own business, people would thing I was doing very well. So, the people around me would think that I’m successful in my life and doing very good, they would respect me. (Perception through others using luxury products- favoring luxury) In my country people look at your car, your watch and your clothes and according to these they will tell you if you are successful or not (Perception through others using luxury products- favoring luxury).

Or the level of your life will be estimated according to these things. Nobody will ask how much you have in your bank account. It all depends on how it looks like from outside (Importance of belongings in terms of perception by society). If you are eating good food, dressing nice, driving a nice car it also means you are doing well. But if you are not driving a good car, you don’t dress up nicely etc. no matter how much you have in your account or how

good your business is, (Importance of possessions on perceptions - home country- favoring luxury) people will look at you differently Negative perception -opinion of others due to belongings -in home country).

You will be considered in lower classes in social groups'. (Perception of society back home through belongings).

8. How did you manage your feelings when you were in doubt with your purchasing decisions back home? E.g. if the price was too high/ higher than your income.

'That time buying things like these (luxury products) seemed like a success (Perception through luxury products home country) even though now I think it's very wrong because at the end you buy things by using credit cards or by instalments Choosing different payment facilities to be able to own certain products (general shopping habits), with money that doesn't belong to you. But the idea of being able to buy was the important think. No matter how you buy it'. (Importance of belongings in terms of perception by society).

9. To what extent did you try to buy products at the cheapest times (e.g. in sales) or at the cheapest places (e.g. by looking around to find the cheapest shop/supplier).

'I would not really go to sales... (General shopping habits-preferences) Because they have the left overs and the seasons would change. Like you get the summer stuff before the winter'.

10. What hobbies did you have in your home country? How did you spend your leisure time? What factors did you consider when deciding how to spend your leisure time?

‘In general, in my social circle have more expensive hobbies (Reflecting shopping behaviour according to social circle). I would go for sports activities like basketball, football and I would go for shootings to polygons (Preferred activities back home-leisure time). I also did collect pens for calligraphy’. (Preferred activities back home-leisure time).

## **SECOND INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**

1. Now in the UAE, how would you describe your general shopping habits, for example in terms of being price conscious, favoring luxury brands or expecting a certain level of product quality? (Please consider food, clothes, accessories, household items, your car, eating out, spending for leisure and vacations).
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E.g. What car do you drive in UAE? Why did you choose this make and model?
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‘I’m driving a Porsche (Preference of Luxury products- brands -favoring luxury products) right now. Due to my business requirements (Reason for purchases- general shopping habits) I choose to go to fine dining restaurants (Shopping preferences-in F&B). In UAE there are many good places for fine dining (variety of F&B in the UAE-goods -things- products). I can say everywhere. (Variety of choices for products and services) The life standards here are very high’. (Life style-standards-luxury life).

‘For example, there is no street food, (Possible requirement for additional food type similar to -home country) like we have back home (Comparison with home country). I never (Need for the type of F&B product that he is used to-things items -goods) had any. Here you

always interact with foreigners (Different types of nationalities in the UAE-social environment) and everyone has a good income. (Income levels-higher).

Even though it's a small place people live in luxury. Luxurious life style It's not in a choice, (New environment -new life style) the social life here has its own needs, it requires you to live in a higher life standard. (Impact of social environment in lifestyle) The dynamics are different. If u like it or not you change'. (Acceptance and confirmation of change).

'My social life changed completely (Confirmation of change in social life-luxury life) I don't have a private life. It's more like I try to comply with my social environment. (Need to fit in) There are so many foreigners all coming from different cultures. Their traditions, religion everything is different and you try to get used to them and understand them to be able to mingle within their circle'. (Trying to fit in by developing a new identity that can interact with different cultures and their differences and shopping habits).

2. What are some of your shopping preferences e.g. online shopping, shopping malls, opinion leaders etc.
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'I don't do online shopping. Personally, I don't trust them. (Lack of trust towards online purchasing style. shopping habits.) I prefer to go to the malls Shopping preferences and see and touch the product I buy (Considering of quality of products). Whenever there is a need for something (The factor of need for purchasing a product shopping habits) I already I know what I want. (Product preference).

So, I just go and quickly get it'. (Style of shopping -shopping habits).

3. Do you travel/ go on holidays? If yes, how often do you travel/ have holidays? If yes, what type of holidays do you prefer? What destinations do you choose to go for holidays?
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‘Honestly, after stating my business life I don’t really do holidays (Requirements of business life-time). I am not an employee I’m an employer (Signs of Stress due to responsibility -life style) So, I have many trips (Signs of Stress due to responsibility-life style). I have many trips for 2-3 days minimum and 2 days it’s like off anyways... So, I do not close my phones and emails to travel like employees do. (Signs of stress) But again, when it comes to choosing the hotels and dining options I have to think of the prestige of the places I choose because of my business image’. (Reflecting identity through luxurious Purchasing decisions -favoring luxury products)

‘I also go to known hotels because of security reasons (Requirement of -security -life style) as I travel to different places Reasons for fatigue and stress -life style) where security is an issue (Signs of stress) and I need to consider this point as much as the name of it’.

4. What would say about the phrase: ‘The things I own say a lot about how well I’m doing in life’.
--

‘Oh! We have saying about this in Turkey. It implies that no matter how bad the situation is you are in, you must show a good image to the outside Reflecting identity trough shopping preferences- favoring luxury products. Laugh. You should not show it to your social circle. Because if you show them you are not in good shape financially, you’re social and business circle starts withdrawing themselves from you’. (Reflecting financial power through belongings- favoring luxury products).

‘So, either you need to create something new, that shows a strong image or you need to keep the existing and add on it. (Reflecting identity through belongings-luxury life) Laughs ... So. Yes! I do agree (Agreeing of the better perception through possessions favoring luxury

product) with this phrase. Things you own have a lot of meanings. (Importance of belongings). Unfortunately, this is the fact'. (Not being happy but accepting things that happen in reality)

5. Do you believe your decisions in purchasing, products you choose to buy, make a difference in your life style? If so in what way and how?

‘Yes! Of course, things you choose to buy, make a complete difference in your life style (Confirmation of the impact of purchasing preferences -general shopping habits) ... For example, there is a restaurant that I really like very much (Preference in F&B purchasing general shopping habits). The valet parking staff there really were attending to me very nicely due to my car. (Perception of others through belongings -favoring luxury products) They would always greet me, ask me how I’m doing and put my car in the VIP area. Even though I do not ask for it. (Perception of others through belongings -favoring luxury products). When I finish my dinner they immediately would run to bring my car as soon as possible so I don’t wait’. (Nicer and respectful treatment due to the perception that is reflected through luxury possessions).

‘A few times I went there by taxi, when I went down from the taxi the same staff did not even recognize me. (Change of treatment (not nice) due to reflecting a less powerful/rich identity) they know my plate number of my car, they know the car but they do not recognize my face. (Better treatment and perception of others due to luxurious belongings) so your accessories you use like your car, watch clothes etc. remains in people’s minds in a strong way and they judge you accordingly and remember you with the things you own’. (Better treatment, upper level grouping in society, respectful approach of others due to luxurious belongings luxury life style and belongings).

6. Do you think people back home will perceive you differently with your new shopping preferences?

‘Let say this: not only me, (Generalization) specifically in people that live in this area, in the UAE people will be perceived differently. (Confirmation of differences of perception due to luxurious belongings)

Dubai by itself is a brand. (Reflecting the city as a brand due to its reflection of luxurious life style) For example, if I’m living in Sharjah or Al Ain and I tell to my friend in Turkey that I live in Al Ain they will ask me where this place is. If you say it’s in UAE, they will ask isn’t that Dubai?

So, the minute I say I live in Dubai, again in Turkey it will be perceived with prestige, the city is a brand by itself. Everyone knows Dubai and in a very high level’. (Better perception by others, respectful, as higher-level person in the society and rich due to reflection of luxurious life style)

7. Do you think people will perceive you differently in the UAE if you don’t consume luxury products according to your shopping preferences?

‘I feel the pressure here more than in my country. The pressure comes more from the business environment. (Pressure- influence of social environment) for example I can speak in my country with a very nice accent and also the body language counts. There are differences even in the way you act and speak’. (Change in behaviour -identity- influence of social environment)

‘Everyone is a foreigner and have different cultures. (Differences in nationalities- social environment) You need know all the different opinions and the way they present themselves. (Trying to fit in by learning differences- influence of social environment) So even to the food you eat, (Change in F&B purchases-shopping habits) if I go to a Fine Dining Turkish restaurant with far eastern people you cannot please them. (Trying to impress others (social environment) by purchasing specific products) and I will not be happy with far eastern food (product preferences in F&B) in a business meeting’.

‘So, you are pressured to get to know these new tastes and get used to them if you like it or not (influence - pressure of the social environment - the need to fit in) because these things effect your business’. (Impact of product choice and usage on business (social) life.’ (The need to fit in).

8. Do you think products you purchase and brands you choose will express your identity?  
What products do you purchase that reflect a part of your identity? E.g. your car, your clothes

‘In my country for example, to drive a Mercedes (brands -use of luxurious products) - is a very highly prestigious (brands -use of luxurious products-) thing. It’s just deeply settled in people’s minds. To drive a Mercedes in Dubai is something not so much different. (Comparison of meaning of luxury product with home country- the regularity -normality of using luxury product in Dubai- perception differences) Especially within Mercedes is very popular. (Use of brands – luxury product-herding behaviour). I drive Porsche (preference and usage of luxury products -luxury brands) because it’s my dream (upgrade in shopping behaviour -shopping habits)-changes car. And yes, it reflects my identity. (Reflection of identity through luxury products) It’s a very fast car. And I’m a very quick thinker and decision



maker and intelligent person'. (Reflection of identity through luxury products-use of luxury products.

9. What would you say about the phrase: 'You are what you wear?'

'It shows others how you are, how successful (reflection of identity through luxury products) You are, from inside it is different of course'.

10. Do you think you as an expatriate you have (or developed) a different identity? Or are there any changes that you recognize in your identity since moving abroad? If so, how would you describe this new identity?

'Yes. I think I did change (confirmation and acceptance of change in identity after moving abroad-shopping habits) after moving abroad. Most importantly I learned (changes-trying to adapt to the new social environment by changing and learning things) how to be patient. (Change in behaviour- reflection of new identity). Again, the many different nationalities (impact of other nationalities- social environment and their various cultures) that you are that you are interacting (interaction with different nationalities – new social environment) with teaches you to understand and accept them'. (adapt to changes by learning differences- changes in identity -social environment).

'The way they are and be patient (change – in identity) for differences. The changes are in a positive (change – in identity) way. I became like an international person'. (Changes in identity – cosmopolitan identity- social environment).

11. Have you been influenced by work colleagues/friends/neighbours in the UAE in choosing where to shop, what products to buy, and how/where to spend your leisure time? How and why were you influenced?

‘Yes, I was influenced (influence of others social environment). But not with the clothes. Influence of others because everyone is dressing up differently as they are from various backgrounds. (Product preferences -retail)- shopping habits) I kept my style in clothes but with the social activities like where to dine, clubs, outings etc. for sure. (Changes in shopping behaviour- shopping habits). Because there are so many places to go for these kinds of things in Dubai. You can actually get lost in a small city (variety of products and services -goods-product). So, I ask my friends (influence of others- social environment) like; ‘I feel like having seafood tonight, is there a place you can recommend?’ (Influence of others -considering others’ opinions- social environment).

12. Do others’ opinions matter to you before making a purchasing decision? Would you buy a product because someone else (colleague, neighbor, friend, celebrity bought it? Do you listen to others’ opinions when deciding on buying a product?

‘No. I like to choose my own (product preferences-shopping habits). In my previous time yes, (change) for sure but now after years of experiences I now know what I like rather than others’.

13. Do you prefer to buy products and brands that others admire?

14. Consider a product (bag, shoes, watch, car etc.) of a well-known brand and that is very popular and has a high number of sales would you consider buying this product? Please explain your answer?

‘If the sale is high, one: the product is very cheap and good in value or two: very good quality and long lasting (considering product quality) durable. Like iPhone, mac, apple, they have high sales and expensive. (Expensive means good quality-opinion) So yes, if the product is durable yes I would buy it’. (Herding behaviour-shopping habits).

15. How do you feel when you buy a product that others buy?

‘I’m driving a certain brand of a car (choosing certain brands in products) for a long time but never joined the clubs or weekend gathering that these car owners do. I buy things to satisfy myself’. (Hedonistic shopping factors – buying for self-satisfaction-shopping habits).

16. When you became an expatriate Did you use social media in the UAE for information and/or advice on where to shop, what products to buy, and how/where to spend your leisure time?

‘Yes. I use social media. (Usage of social media) You don’t have to search for any advertising because everywhere you look there are ads. You open any link in social media sites and so many pop up ads (impacts social media advertising-shopping habits) etc. come out’.

Now are you influenced by opinion leaders in social media?

‘I don’t really trust the opinion leaders in social media because I believe they make money out of these ads (opinion -not trusting influencers in social media-shopping habits) they put’.

17. Do you like to use social media to share your pictures of your apartment, car, clothes, holidays etc. with your friends and family back home? Do you put information/pictures on social media, like Facebook and Instagram? If so, why do you do this and how does it make you feel?

‘Yes. I do use social media for everything (use of social media-habits) it’s also good for business’. (social media and impacts on social interactions – business-social circle).

18. Using social media How do you feel about presenting any luxury products you buy to your friends, colleagues, family and friends back home? (E.g. do you want others to admire you, see you are successful or be envious?)

‘I keep certain social circle in my social media accounts. (Group- circle in social media) Like my parent. I want them to see my pictures and feel good and happy seeing me in good places and happy. (Reflecting life style through social media)- And if you noticed no body shows pictures that are miserable or while crying etc. They show things differently. I share my happy moments and achievement (reflecting identity -life style through social media) and this makes the people that care for me happy too. And I feel happy too’. (Feeling happy by posting pictures etc. on social media- reflecting identity -life style through social media).

19. How do you think you will be perceived by others buying a luxury car, luxury brand hand bag, luxury brand shoes or world class watch?

‘In general, luxury brand items shows your social status (perception of others through luxury products- reflection of identity through luxury products to social environment). It’s a big difference (impact of using luxury items) to go to a very important meeting with some watch that I bought from a very cheap place or with nice good quality watch. After all an accessory for a man is a watch. Or the shoes are very important for a man (perception of others through use of luxury products). Once I had a very important meeting with British petroleum. Like 2-3 hours meeting for an agreement of 500 million USD business agreement. At the end of meeting when we were shaking hands, the head of the other team opened his wrist and showed me his watch (a ROLEX). (Reflecting identity though luxury brands -use of luxury products).

Than he asked, have you noticed that we are using the same watch? (Fitting in the social circle by using luxury products) For the whole meeting like for 3 hours I didn’t see his watch. Instead of saying congratulations he was telling me that we are wearing the same watch. (Impact of social environment in purchasing decisions) He is actually trying to give a message with that. A positive message actually. (Better (higher level) perception of identity due to luxury product usage) The watch actually kind of linked us together, (being accepted to the social circle -upper class) like he was saying that we are from the same level of people’. (Being accepted to the social circle -upper class).

20. Do you think buying expensive presents to others make them perceive you differently?  
If so, how?

‘To be generous will show people that you are very successful in business and even in personal lives’. (Reflection of identity through luxury products).

21. When purchasing the same products and brands that others purchase, do you feel like belonging to that group?

‘No. I don’t think that’.

22. Do you think the luxury products you purchase would make you look in a certain way than others? How? (e.g. unique, different)

‘All these are taste differences. There are things you spend so much but no one will know the value. You need to spend in the right time in the right place. A watch for instance in the UAE, for men is always if you have noticed, very big but not tasteful. (Impact of style of shopping decisions) The aim there is to show off rather than liking it or looking good with it’. (Reflecting identity through luxury products).

23. Are there certain brands/products in the UAE that you follow regularly and you only like to purchase from? Why do you buy these products/brands? How do you feel when you buy one of these products?

‘Yes, there are. Because, umm, I probably have tried them out, was happy with them (knowing the product of a certain brands, feelings, loyalty towards brands and therefore using them). They are good in quality (reason to choose certain brands) and the (variety. variety of product style of product -factors for shopping -shopping habits) Like the jeans. Not all jeans

brands really fit me nicely, but here there are so many brands that fit perfectly and I don't want to change it'. (Reason for choosing a brand, brand loyalty).

24. Are there certain brands back home that you followed regularly and you only preferred to purchase from? Do you still prefer to buy from the same or you changed the brand you liked before to another one?

'I feel very happy (hedonistic shopping-luxury life style) – buying the things I dreamed of. I wish I could do the same in my country too. Some of them yes, (brand loyalty for brands back home) most of them I changed because there is so much variety (purchases of new brands -due to variety -shopping habits -products) in the UAE'.

25. Are there brands that you admired or aspired to buy in your home country, and which you did not buy when you were in your home country, but which you do now buy? How do you explain your change in shopping habits?

'Yes, my car (luxury product). Simply because of the financial situation (ability to purchase- boost in financial aspect-level). Like buying the same car in my country meant that I have to pay as much taxes. So, like buying two of the same car. I can buy here the car I want to buy in Turkey, 3 times cheaper'. (Product value, easier pay, better price – factors/ motivators of purchasing decisions) Laughs.

26. How do you manage your feelings (what do you do) when you are in doubt with your purchasing decisions in UAE? E.g. if the price is too high/ higher than your income.

‘I don’t wait for the sales. I might not find my size. And there are so many products (shopping preferences – not preferring sales) you can always find what you want. But for me. For example, because always travel for a long time a stayed in 5-star hotels. (Luxurious choice in product and services) I could choose a 3-star hotel and save money but that doesn’t help the business. (Preferring luxury products over others to reflect a certain identity and impress others) it is very important to reflect prestigious image (reason for choosing luxury products) in the business world. (Being perceived with a certain (higher level) identity by social environment) So I don’t have doubt in my purchasing decisions (choosing only luxury product). I buy what I think is good to buy for my image. (Reflection of image- identity through luxury products). And of course, the quality is very important also’. (Considering quality of product).

27. Do you feel any excitement, thrill, happiness or relaxation while buying luxury product you like? How do you feel (with yourself) when purchasing luxury brand products?
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‘Yes. Sure, I feel very happy’. (Hedonistic shopping behaviour)

28. Do you enjoy buying products in the UAE even when you do not really need them? What makes you buy them?
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E.g. Does buying things give you pleasure?
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‘I for sure feel happy. Anything. Even for a collection not for a need’. (Hedonistic shopping factors)

‘There are arrangements for socializing. For example, umm... Of course, you need to spend in a good place (hedonistic shopping factors). Good restaurants, nice night- clubs, even



where you sit, the Table you reserve in a club matters (product choice to impress social circle)  
I would choose a VIP Table (luxurious product and service choice) always for my guests’.

29. Do you enjoy spending money on things that aren't practical?

‘As I said, I had a hedonistic shopping. This is not a need just a hobby. (Hedonistic shopping behavior).

30. Do you consider buying a gift just to make others happy? Do you like to purchase gifts for friend and family back home?

‘Yes. I love to get gifts to people. Very much’. (Hedonistic shopping factors).

31. What are some drives that you can think of that motivates you to go shopping in the UAE?

‘Dubai as a city forces you towards spending (purchasing factors) Like JBR, it is an open shopping mall but in the summer you always go indoors to malls etc. (factors for shopping in the UAE-life style) so, you don’t really have an option. The city is built in a way to spend. (Factors impacting on shopping behaviour- life style). So, you spend’.

32. Do you like to go shopping (or shop online) when you are bored, tired, stressed or feel lonely? What are the types of products or services you would buy when having these types of feelings? Are these purchases gifts for others or treats for yourself?

‘I don’t do online shopping (shopping preferences) ... But I do shop when I’m bored lonely or even stressed. (Purchasing -choices when feeling bored, stressed or lonely). I buy things more as gifts. I also go out with friend for a drink or dinner (purchases when feeling bored or stressed-socialization F&B) when I’m very bored or stressed’.

33. Do first impressions you have for a product matter to you when you make decisions on purchasing a product? When visiting shops or joining others in dining gatherings etc. for the first time, do you consider the value, general appearances or expensiveness of the environment?

‘Yes! Of course, first impressions are very important. (Confirming the impact of first impressions on other related to choices in product choices) You don’t really know the person you meet the person you met but you consider the environment you meet the person in’. (Importance of the chosen environment- luxurious or not).

‘I went to dinner to where I was invited to. The thing is I went there directly out of the site, without changing into some nice clothes. (Pointing on impacts of first impressions – need to change to nicer (branded) clothes to reflect a better first impression-opinion) Anyway the approach to me there was not really very positive. (Negative perceptions by the social environment due to product choice and (lower level) first impression) It was very superficial. (Negative perceptions by the social environment due to product choice and (lower level) first impression-opinion) But when the dinner was over. I told them: “Let me take you for a coffee. I want to invite you to where I live”. I told them: “We will not speak of business but just chat and have a nice break from work. Just for us to get to know each other better.” When we went out, the valet brought my car immediately (perception of respect by other due to use of luxury products). When they saw my car. They were just looking very surprised. (Change of

perception -impression of one's identity due to product preferences and use of luxury product)

I told them to follow me. And we went to Zabeel Saray, the hotel (luxury hotel in Dubai -Palm) where I live. The way they perceived me at the dinner and, the way they perceived me afterwards was so different (confirming the impacts of first impression due to the choices of luxurious spending -products). So much warmer, like the body language changed. (Change of perception by the social environment due to spending preferences) Like... they were tapping my shoulder while talking to me. They stated calling me "brother" (change of perception by the social environment due to spending preference) the conversation became much friendlier. So, this shows how important first impressions really are'. (Confirming the impact of first impressions of product choices -opinion).

34. What are some of the most important factors/reasons for you in purchasing a luxury product when newly announced in the market?

'I prefer to wait'. (Considering on others' opinions in new products).

35. What do think of the phrase: 'The more expensive a product, the higher the quality',

'For some products, I do agree. But for some, I don't they just sell the names. (Impact of brands) For instance, did you ever hear that Porsche is being manufactured in China? (Brands and favoring brands) Did you hear that Adidas is being manufactured in China? (Brands and perception through brands) So quality makes a big difference'. (Specifying-reflecting product quality through brands).

36. What do think of the phrase: 'If you pay peanuts, you will get monkeys'.

‘I can’t agree 100 %. In Dubai it will be correct. But in my country not really. (Comparison of home and new social environment) There are products that are produced locally but they are not known so they are sold for very low prices. (Product value) They can’t use a name to price their products higher’.

37. Do you think that your friends and family back home are interested to know your lifestyle in the UAE? If yes, how does this interest influence your shopping and spending decisions?

‘Yes, I think they do they want to know what I’m doing here. (Perceptions of new identity in home country) My shopping behaviour depends more to my environment here.’ (Influence of social environment in purchasing products).

38. How does luxury shopping affect your social life? (Can you consider luxury shopping as a mean of socialization with your friends / family etc.?) E.g. dining, golf clubbing, spa

‘Yes, Of course it does affect (confirmation of impact of luxury products on social life). As I said, there are so many kinds of people (differences in nationalities- new social environment) and they come with their differences. And you have to mingle (trying to fit in- social circle) with them in their own ways. Like dining with them (fit in through F&B choice- purchasing preferences) in their cultures restaurants’. (Differences in cultures and social environment) For me, food is a way of mingling system (Socializing through F&B purchases- shopping habits). Like, if I’m inviting them I prefer my country’s food (longing for familiar product in F&B- shopping habits) but again in a fine dining environment where I can impress my guests’. (Reflecting identity -impressing others through luxury product choices).

39. Do you like to own things that can impress others?

‘Who doesn’t like this? Laughs. Yes! Of course. I like to own things that can impress others’. (Impressing by using luxury-products reflecting a certain identity that will be perceived better by others/ social environment).

## Appendix 8: Sample of transcript analysis -2

NAME: Mr. T.K.
COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: Turkey
GENDER: Male
AGE: 41-50
MARITAL STATUS: Divorced
DESIGNATION/POSITION: SELF EMPLOYED-MANAGING DIRECTOR
LEVEL OF EDUCATION: University
NUMBER OF YEARS ABROAD (IN THE UAE) : 3 +
SALARY SCALE AED: 61,000-ABOVE

### FIRST INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. How would you describe your general shopping habits when you were back in your home country in terms of being price conscious, favouring luxury brands or expecting a certain level of product quality? (E.g. food/clothes and accessories/household items/car/eating out etc.)

e.g. What car were you driving back home? How old was it? Why did you choose this make and model?

'I was working as an architect—engineer for the Turkish military and I had a Honda civic ... My income was much lower than now of course, but for my country my life was mid-higher level if life style

Commented [R1]: Comparison of income back home and after moving abroad

Commented [R2]: Comparison of income within the country

2. What did luxury product mean to you back in your home country?

'Luxury meant prestige. In turkey people like to be into brands and the social circle I was in was definitely into it very much. Specially the university that I was in, people care to much for the brands etc.

Commented [NR.3]: Perception of the society back home in terms of using luxury products  
Commented [NR.4]: Choosing Brands  
Commented [NR.5]: Impact of social circle in using brands  
Commented [NR.6]: Impact of social environment  
Commented [NR.7]: Perception of others when using brands

3. When you were in your home country how did you feel before buying a luxury product that you really liked or admired others having? Were there any debates in your mind prior to buying that product? E.g. did you sometimes feel that the product is too expensive for what it was ? Did you consider the limits of your income before you purchase?

'When you are newly graduated you don't look to the expensiveness of the product you look if you have and how much you have in your pocket. You just buy than you suffer-face the consequences.

Commented [NR.8]: Choosing more affordable products  
Commented [NR.9]: Considering income in purchasing decisions

4. If you had vacations when you lived in your home country, what sort of destinations did you visit? What factors did you consider when choosing where to go? How often did you go abroad and how long did you stay abroad each time?

'My family was living abroad. But I didn't really go outside the country. It was more of business trips arranged by the company I was working for. I more preferred trips within the country. The cost was same like in buying clothes. If you have money you go to your vacation.

Commented [NR.10]: Choices in travelling purchases  
Commented [NR.11]: Choices in travelling purchases  
Commented [NR.12]: Considering income in purchasing decisions  
Commented [NR.13]: Considering income in purchasing decisions

5. Back in your home country, were you buying certain branded (expensive) clothes? How did you choose which clothes shops to visit and which brands to buy?

"Yes, I was buying. I was young and running a business. So the clothes I'm wearing were important to give a good impression as a businessman. It affects your social life too. When you meet with friends, you discuss with where to buy things from and the latest fashion etc. People care so much to brands and you want to remain in that social circle...so you keep buying and taking care of what you wearing or how you are presenting yourself."

Commented [SE14]: Brand loyalty-brand engagement back home

Commented [SE15]: Social identity - upper class

Commented [SE16]: Choosing possessions to reflect a better identity

Commented [SE17]: Possessions and impacts in social life back home

Commented [SE18]: Choosing certain brands to fit in

Commented [SE19]: Reflecting identity through possessions

6. Why did you like to purchase / use these products? How did you feel when you bought one of these products?

"As I just explained. Good impression and keep up with your social circle."

Commented [SE20]: Need to fit in - impact of social environment

7. In general, how do you think people that can afford a luxurious life style are regarded / perceived in your home country? (e.g. admired/envious/disliked)

"Now... In our country the life standards are vary a lot... There is lower class, lower-mid class, middle-high, and higher class. And there is are lot of differences between all of them... Umm... For example... E.g. there is a social group that is called the middle class. Where people work mostly as clerks, teachers, admin etc. they are living based on the salary they get. The social circle that I was in was more towards the higher class so for my social circle to be a person in luxury was a good thing. For me because I was doing my own business, people would think I was doing very well. So, the people around me would think that I'm successful in my life and doing very good, they would respect me. In my country people look at

Commented [SE21]: Differences in Social classes back home

Commented [SE22]: Perception through others using luxury products

Commented [SE23]: Perception by others



your car, your watch and your clothes and according to these they will tell you if you are successful or not. Or the level of your life will be estimated according to these things. Nobody will ask how much you have in your bank account. It all depends on how it looks like from outside. If you are eating good food, dressing nice, driving a nice car it also means you are doing well. But if you are not driving a good car, you don't dress up nicely etc. no matter how much you have in your account or how good your business is, people will look at you differently. You will be considered in lower classes in social groups

Commented [NR24]: Perception through possessions back home

Commented [NR25]: Importance of belongings in terms of perception by society

Commented [NR26]: Importance of possessions on perceptions back home

Commented [NR27]: Negative perception of others due to belongings

Commented [NR28]: Perception of society back home through belongings.

8. How did you manage your feelings when you were in doubt with your purchasing decisions back home? E.g. if the price was too high/ higher than your income.

'That time buying things like these seemed like a success even though now I think it's very wrong because at the end you buy things by using credit cards or by instalments, with money that doesn't belong to you. But the idea of being able to buy was the important think ... No matter how you buy it.

Commented [NR29]: luxury products

Commented [NR30]: Perception through luxury products

Commented [NR31]: Choosing different payment facilities to be able to own certain products

Commented [NR32]: To purchase things - To fit in the social circle

9. To what extent did you try to buy products at the cheapest times (e.g. in sales) or at the cheapest places (e.g. by looking around to find the cheapest shop/supplier).

'I would not really go to sales... Because they have the left overs and the seasons would change .. Like you get the summer stuff before the winter'.

Commented [NR33]: Purchasing preferences

10. What hobbies did you have in your home country? How did you spend your leisure time? What factors did you consider when deciding how to spend your leisure time?

In general, in my social circle have more expensive hobbies. I would go for sports activities like basketball, football and I would go for shootings to polygons. I also did collect pens for calligraphy

## SECOND INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Now in the UAE, how would you describe your general shopping habits, for example in terms of being price conscious, favoring luxury brands or expecting a certain level of product quality? (Please consider food, clothes, accessories, household items, your car, eating out, spending for leisure and vacations)

e.g. What car do you drive in UAE? Why did you choose this make and model?

'I'm driving a Porsche right now... Due to my business requirements I choose to go to fine dining restaurants. In UAE there are many good places for fine dining. I can say everywhere... The life standards here are very high.'

Commented [NE.34]: Preference of luxury products/brands  
Commented [NE.35]: Reason for purchases  
Commented [NE.36]: Shopping preferences in F&B  
Commented [NE.37]: Variety of F&B in the UAE  
Commented [NE.38]: Variety of choices for products & services  
Commented [NE.39]: Life style standards

'For example... there is no street food, like we have back home. I never had any. Here you always interact with foreigners and everyone has a good income... Even though it's a small place people live in luxury. It's not in a choice, the social life here has its own needs, it requires you to live in a higher life standard. The dynamics are different. If u like it or not you change'.

Commented [NE.40]: Possible requirement for additional food type similar to home country  
Commented [NE.41]: Comparison with home country  
Commented [NE.42]: Need for the type of F&B product that he is used to  
Commented [NE.43]: Different types of nationalities in the UAE  
Commented [NE.44]: Income levels higher  
Commented [NE.45]: Luxurious life style  
Commented [NE.46]: New environment - new life style  
Commented [NE.47]: Impact of social environment in lifestyle  
Commented [NE.48]: Acceptance and confirmation of change

'My social life changed completely... I don't have a private life ... it's more like I try to comply to my social environment. There are so many foreigners all coming from different cultures. Their traditions, religion everything is different and you try to get used to them and understand them to be able to mingle within their circle'.

Commented [NE41]: Confirmation of change in social life  
Commented [NE39]: Privacy  
Commented [NE51]: Need to fit in

Commented [NE52]: Trying to fit in by developing a new identity that can interact with different cultures and their differences

2. What are some of your shopping preferences e.g. online shopping, shopping malls, opinion leaders etc.

'I don't do online shopping. personally I don't trust them.... I prefer to go to the malls and see and touch the product I buy...Whenever there is a need for something I already I know what I want so I just go and quickly get it'.

Commented [NE53]: Lack of trust towards online purchasing style  
Commented [NE54]: Shopping preferences  
Commented [NE55]: Consideration of quality of products  
Commented [NE56]: The factor of need for purchasing a product  
Commented [NE57]: Product preference  
Commented [NE58]: Style of shopping

3. Do you travel/ go on holidays? If yes, how often do you travel/ have holidays? If yes, what type of holidays do you prefer? What destinations do you choose to go for holidays?

'Honestly,... after stating my business life I don't really do holidays. I am not an employee I'm an employer... So, I have many trips. I have many trips for 2-3 days minimum and 2 days it's like off anyways... So, I do not close my phones and emails to travel like employees do'...

Commented [NE59]: Requirements of business life  
Commented [NE60]: Signs of stress due to responsibility

Commented [NE61]: Signs of stress

Commented [NE62]: Signs of stress

... But again when it comes to choosing the hotels and dining options I have to think of the prestige of the places I choose because of my business image. I also go to known hotels because of security reasons as I travel to different places where security is an issue and I need to consider this point as much as the name of it.

Commented [NE63]: Reflecting identity through luxurious Purchasing decisions  
Commented [NE64]: Requirement of security  
Commented [NE65]: Reasons for fatigue and stress  
Commented [NE66]: Signs of stress

4. What would say about the phrase: 'The things I own say a lot about how well I'm doing in life'.

'Oh! We have saying about this in Turkey.... It implies that no matter how bad the situation is you are in, you must show a good image to the outside.... Laughs ... You should not show it to your social circle. Because if you show them you are not in good shape financially, your social and business circle starts withdrawing themselves from you'.

So, either you need to create something new, that shows a strong image or you need to keep the existing and add on it.

Laughs ... So. Yes! I do agree with this phrase. Things you own have a lot of meanings... Unfortunately this is the fact'.

Commented [S87]: Reflecting identity through shopping preferences

Commented [S88]: The importance of financial power through belongings

Commented [S89]: Reflecting identity through belongings

Commented [S870]: Agreeing of the better perception through possessions

Commented [S871]: Importance of belongings

Commented [S872]: Not being happy with it

Commented [S873]: Not being happy but accepting things that happen in reality

5. Do you believe your decisions in purchasing, products you choose to buy, make a difference in your life style? If so in what way and how?

'Yes!... Of course things you choose to buy, make a complete difference in your life style... For example, there is a restaurant that I really like very much... The valet parking staff there really were attending to me very nicely due to my car. They would always greet me , ask me how I'm doing, put my car in the VIP area even though I do not ask for it. When I finish my dinner they immediately would run to bring my car as soon as possible so I don't wait... A few times I went there by taxi, when I went down from the taxi the same staff did not even recognize me , they know my plate number of my car , they know the car but they do not recognize my face , so your accessories you use like your car, watch clothes etc. remains in people's minds in a strong way and they judge you accordingly and remember you with the things you own.

Commented [S874]: Confirmation of the impact of purchasing preferences

Commented [S875]: Preference in F&B purchasing

Commented [S876]: Perception of others through belongings

Commented [S877]: Nicer and respectful treatment due to the perception that is reflected through luxury possessions

Commented [S878]: Nicer and respectful treatment due to the perception that is reflected through luxury possessions

Commented [S879]: Change of treatment (not nice) due to reflecting a less powerful/rich identity

Commented [S880]: Better treatment and perception of others due to luxurious belongings

Commented [S881]: Better treatment, upper level grouping in society, respectful approach of others due to luxurious belongings

6. Do you think people back home will perceive you differently with your new shopping preferences?

"Let say this... not only me, specifically in people that live in this area, in the UAE people will be perceived differently."

Dubai by itself is a brand. For example, If I'm living in Sharjah or Al Ain and I tell to my friend in Turkey that I live in Al Ain they will ask me where this place is? If you say it's in UAE, they will ask isn't that Dubai?

So, the minute I say I live in Dubai, again in Turkey it will be perceived with prestige, the city is a brand by itself. Everyone knows Dubai and in a very high level.

Commented [N282]: Generalization

Commented [N283]: Confirmation of differences of perception due to luxurious belongings.

Commented [N284]: Reflecting the city as a brand due to its reflection of luxurious life style

Commented [N285]: Perception of others

Commented [N286]: Better perception by others, (respectful, as higher level person in the society, rich) due to reflection of luxurious life style

7. Do you think people will perceive you differently in the UAE if you don't consume luxury products according to your shopping preferences?

I feel the pressure here more than in my country. The pressure comes more from the business environment. for example I can speak in my country with a very nice accent and also the body language counts .. there are differences even in the way you act and speak.

Commented [N287]: Pressure- influence

Commented [N288]: Influence- pressure of social environment

Commented [N289]: Change

Commented [N290]: Change in behaviour-identity

Everyone is a foreigner and have different cultures You need know all the different opinions and the way they present themselves. So even to the food you eat, if I go to a Fine Dining Turkish restaurant with far eastern people you cannot please them. and I will not be happy with far eastern food in a business meeting. So you are pressured to get to know these new tastes and get used to them if you like it or not because these things effect your business.

Commented [SR91]: Differences in nationalities

Commented [SR92]: Trying to fit in by learning differences

Commented [SR93]: Change in F&B purchases

Commented [SR94]: Trying to impress others (social environment) by purchasing specific products

Commented [SR95]: product preferences in F&B

Commented [SR96]: influence - pressure of the social environment - the need to fit in

Commented [SR97]: impact of product choice on usage on business (social) life. The need to fit in

8. Do you think products you purchase and brands you choose will express your identity? What products do you purchase that reflect a part of your identity? E.g. your car, your clothes

'In my country for example,... to drive a Mercedes is a very highly prestigious thing. It's just deeply settled in people's minds. To drive a Mercedes in Dubai is something not so much different. Specially within Mercedes is very popular, I drive Porsche because it's my dream car. And yes it reflects my identity. It's a very fast car. And I'm a very quick thinker and decision maker and intelligent person.

Commented [SR98]: brands - use of luxurious products-

Commented [SR99]: perception of others - in home country when using luxury product

Commented [SR100]: comparison of meaning of luxury product with home country - the regularity - normality of using luxury product in Dubai - perception differences

Commented [SR101]: use of brands - luxury product

Commented [SR102]: herding behaviour

Commented [SR103]: preference and usage of luxury products - luxury brands

Commented [SR104]: upgrade in shopping behaviour - changes

Commented [SR105]: reflection of identity through luxury products

Commented [SR106]: identifying identity with luxury product

Commented [SR107]: identifying identity with luxury product preference

9. What would you say about the phrase: 'You are what you wear?'

It shows others how you are , how successful you are, from inside it is different of course.

Commented [SR108]: importance of others' perceptions

Commented [SR109]: reflection of identity through luxury products

Commented [SR110]: perception of success through luxury product usage

Commented [SR111]: reflecting actual opinion about the phenomenon



10. Do you think you as an expatriate you have (or developed) a different identity? Or are there any changes that you recognize in your identity since moving abroad? If so, how would you describe this new identity?

"Yes ... I think I did change after moving abroad. Most importantly I learned how to be patient. Again the many different nationalities and their various cultures that you are that you are interacting with teaches you to understand and accept them the way they are and be patient for differences. The changes are in a positive way. I became like an international person

11. Have you been influenced by work colleagues/friends/neighbours in the UAE in choosing where to shop, what products to buy, and how/where to spend your leisure time? How and why were you influenced?

"Yes, I was influenced. But not with the clothes. Because everyone is dressing up differently as they are from various backgrounds. I kept my style in clothes but with the social activities like where to dine, clubs, outings etc. for sure. Because there are so many places to go for these kinds of things in Dubai. You can actually get lost in a small city. So, I ask my friends like; 'I feel like having seafood tonight, is there a place you can recommend?'

12. Do others' opinions matter to you before making a purchasing decision? Would you buy a product because a someone else (colleague, neighbor, friend, celebrity bought it? Do you listen to others' opinions when deciding on buying a product?

Commented [SE112]: confirmation and acceptance of change in identity after moving abroad  
Commented [SE113]: changes: trying to adjust to the new environment by changing and learning things  
Commented [SE114]: change in behaviour: reflection of new identity  
Commented [SE115]: impact of other nationalities  
Commented [SE116]: differences of cultures  
Commented [SE117]: interaction with different nationalities - new social environment  
Commented [SE118]: changes  
Commented [SE119]: adapt to changes by learning differences: changes in identity  
Commented [SE120]: change - in identity  
Commented [SE121]: positive changes in identity  
Commented [SE122]: identity change  
Commented [SE123]: changes in identity - cosmopolitan identity

Commented [SE124]: influence of others  
Commented [SE125]: product preferences - retail  
Commented [SE126]: new social environment - different nationalities  
Commented [SE127]: changes in shopping behaviour  
Commented [SE128]: variety of products & services  
Commented [SE129]: variety of products & services  
Commented [SE130]: influence of others  
Commented [SE131]: influence of others - considering others' opinions

'No... I like to choose my own. In my previous time yes, for sure but now after years of experiences I now know what I like rather than others'.

Commented [SE132]: product preferences  
Commented [SE133]: change

Commented [SE134]: refusing others' opinions

13. Do you prefer to buy products and brands that others admire?

14. Consider a product (bag, shoes, watch, car etc.) of a well-known brand and that is very popular and has a high number of sales would you consider buying this product? Please explain your answer?

'If the sale is high... one: the product is very cheap and good in value.... or....two: very good quality and long lasting... durable. Like iPhone, mac, apple, they have high sales and expensive. So yes, if the product is durable yes I would buy it'.

Commented [SE135]: considering price  
Commented [SE136]: considering different aspects  
Commented [SE137]: considering product quality  
Commented [SE138]: considering durability of product  
Commented [SE139]: expensive means good quality  
Commented [SE140]: considering durability of product  
Commented [SE141]: herding behaviour

15. How do you feel when you buy a product that others buy?

'I'm driving a certain brand of a car for a long time but never joined the clubs or weekend gathering that these car owners do. I buy things to satisfy myself'.

Commented [SE142]: choosing certain brands in products

Commented [SE143]: hedonistic shopping factors—buying for self-satisfaction

16. When you became an expatriate Did you use social media in the UAE for information and/or advice on where to shop, what products to buy, and how/where to spend your leisure time?

'Yes... I use social media. You don't have to search for any advertising because everywhere you look there are adds. You open any link in social media sites and so many pop up adds etc. come out...'

Commented [SE144]: usage of social media  
Commented [SE145]: impacts social media advertising  
Commented [SE146]: impacts social media advertising  
Commented [SE147]: impacts social media advertising  
Commented [SE148]: impacts social media advertising



Now are you influenced by opinion leaders in social media?

'I don't really trust the opinion leaders in social media because I believe they make money out of these add they put'.

Commented [SR149]: lack of trust

Commented [SR150]: not trusting influencers in social media

Commented [SR151]: not trusting influencers - possible bias

17. Do you like to use social media to share your pictures of your apartment, car, clothes, holidays etc. with your friends and family back home? Do you put information/pictures on social media, like Facebook and Instagram? If so, why do you do this and how does it make you feel?

'Yes... I do use social media for everything it's also good for business'.

Commented [SR152]: use of social media

Commented [SR153]: social media and impacts on social interactions - business

18. Using social media How do you feel about presenting any luxury products you buy to your friends, colleagues, family and friends back home? (e.g. do you want others to admire you, see you are successful or be envious?)

'I keep certain social circle in my social media accounts... Like my parents... I want them to see my pictures and feel good

Commented [SR154]: group- circle in social media

Commented [SR155]: social media usage

Commented [SR156]: longing for home

and happy seeing me in good places and happy. And if you noticed no body shows pictures that are miserable or while

Commented [SR157]: reflecting life style through social media

crying etc. They show things differently. I share my happy moments and achievement and this makes the people that care

Commented [SR158]: confirmation of reflecting false images in social media

Commented [SR159]: reflecting identity through social media

for me happy too. And I feel happy too'.

Commented [SR160]: reflecting identity through social media

Commented [SR161]: feeling happy by posting pictures etc. on social media

19. How do you think you will be perceived by others buying a luxury car, luxury brand hand bag, luxury brand shoes or world class watch?

'In general... luxury brand items shows your social status. It's a big difference to go to a very important meeting with some watch that I bought from a very cheap place or with nice good quality watch. After all an accessory for a man is a watch. ...Or the shoes are very important for a man. Once I had a very important meeting with British petroleum. Like 2-3 hours meeting for an agreement of 500 million USD business agreement. At the end of meeting when we were shaking hands, the head of the other team opened his wrist and showed me his watch (a ROLEX). Then he asked; have you noticed that we are using the same watch. For the whole meeting like for 3 hours I didn't see his watch. Instead of saying congratulations he was telling me that we are wearing the same watch. He is actually trying to give a message with that... A positive message actually. The watch actually kind of linked us together, like he was saying that we are from the same level of people.

- Commented (SE362): perception of others through luxury products- reflection of identity through luxury products to social environment
- Commented (SE363): impact of using luxury items
- Commented (SE364): accessories
- Commented (SE365): value of product
- Commented (SE366): luxury item
- Commented (SE367): perception of others through use of luxury products
- Commented (SE368): perception of others through use of luxury products
- Commented (SE369): reflecting identity through luxury brands
- Commented (SE370): fitting in the social circle by using luxury products
- Commented (SE371): impact of social environment in purchasing decisions
- Commented (SE372): perception of others
- Commented (SE373): better (higher level) perception of identity due to luxury product usage
- Commented (SE374): being accepted to the social circle - upper class
- Commented (SE375): being accepted to the social circle - upper class

20. Do you think buying expensive presents to others make them perceive you differently? If so, how?

'To be generous will show people that you are very successful in business and even in personal lives.

21. When purchasing the same products and brands that others purchase, do you feel like belonging to that group?

- Commented (SE376): reflection of identity through product choice
- Commented (SE377): reflection of identity through expensive products
- Commented (SE378): reflection of identity through expensive products

'No. I don't think that '.

22. Do you think the luxury products you purchase would make you look in a certain way than others? How? (e.g. unique, different)

'All these are taste differences. There are things you spend so much but no one will know the value. You need to spend in the right time in the right place. A watch for instance in the UAE, for men is always if you have noticed, very big but not tasteful. The aim there is to show off rather than liking it or looking good with it.

Commented [NE179]: choice of product  
Commented [NE180]: product value

Commented [NE181]: luxury item

Commented [NE182]: impact of style of shopping decisions  
Commented [NE183]: reflecting identity through luxury products  
Commented [NE184]: to choose purchasing products for style- looks

23. Are there certain brands/products in the UAE that you follow regularly and you only like to purchase from? Why do you favour/buy these products/brands? How do you feel when you buy one of these products?

'Yes, there are... Because...Umm... I probably have tried them out, was happy with them and therefore using them. They are good in quality and the variety. Like the jeans. Not all jeans brands really fit me nicely, but here there are so many brands that fit perfectly and I don't want to change it...

Commented [NE185]: knowing the product of a certain brands  
Commented [NE186]: feelings, loyalty towards brands  
Commented [NE187]: reason to choose certain brands  
Commented [NE188]: variety of product  
Commented [NE189]: style of product- factors for shopping  
Commented [NE190]: reason for choosing a brand  
Commented [NE191]: brand loyalty

24. Are there certain brands back home that you followed regularly and you only preferred to purchase from? Do you still prefer to buy from the same or you changed the brand you liked before to another one?

...I feel very happy buying the things I dreamed of, I wish I could do the same in my country too  
Some of them yes, most of them I changed because there is so much variety in the UAE.

Commented [NE192]: hedonistic shopping -  
Commented [NE193]: motivation  
Commented [NE194]: comparison with home  
Commented [NE195]: brand loyalty for brands back home  
Commented [NE196]: purchases of new brands- due to variety

25. Are there brands that you admired or aspired to buy in your home country, and which you did not buy when you were in your home country, but which you do now buy? How do you explain your change in shopping habits?

"Yes, my car... Simply because of the financial situation. Like buying the same car in my country meant that I have to pay as much taxes, so like buying two of the same car. I can buy here the car I want to buy in Turkey... 3 times cheaper"... Laughs...

Commented [NE197]: luxury product  
Commented [NE198]: boost in financial aspect

Commented [NE199]: comparing the facilities of payment styles  
Commented [NE200]: ability to purchase  
Commented [NE201]: product value, easier pay, better price - factors/ motivators of purchasing decisions

26. How do you manage your feelings (what do you do) when you are in doubt with your purchasing decisions in UAE?

E.g. if the price is to high/ higher than your income.

"I don't wait for the sales... I might not find my size. And there are so many products you can always find what you want.

But for me... For example, because always travel for a long time a stayed in 5 star hotels. I could choose a 3-star hotel and

save money but that doesn't help the business. it is very important to reflect prestigious image in the business world. So I

don't have doubt in my purchasing decisions. I buy what I think is good to buy for my image. And of course the quality is

very important also

Commented [NE202]: shopping preferences - not preferring sales  
Commented [NE203]: shopping factors  
Commented [NE204]: variety of products  
Commented [NE205]: luxurious choice in product and services

Commented [NE206]: preferring luxury products over others to reflect a certain identity and impress others  
Commented [NE207]: reason for choosing luxury products  
Commented [NE208]: perception of social circle  
Commented [NE209]: being perceived with a certain (higher level) identity by social environment  
Commented [NE210]: choosing only luxury product  
Commented [NE211]: believe  
Commented [NE212]: reflection of image- identity through luxury products  
Commented [NE213]: considering quality of product

27. Do you feel any excitement, thrill, happiness or relaxation while buying luxury product you like? How do you feel

(with yourself) when purchasing luxury brand products?

"Yes. sure I feel very happy"

Commented [NE214]: hedonistic shopping behaviour

28. Do you enjoy buying products in the UAE even when you do not really need them? What makes you buy them?

e.g. Does buying things give you pleasure?

'I for sure feel happy. Anything. Even for a collection not for a need...

Commented [SE225]: hedonistic shopping factors

Commented [SE226]: hedonistic shopping factors

'There are arrangements for socializing... For example,...umm... Of course you need to spend in a good place. Good

Commented [SE227]: choice of product and services to impress others - reflect a certain identity to the social circle

restaurants, nice night- clubs, even where you sit, the table you reserve in a club matters, I would choose a VIP table

Commented [SE228]: product choice to impress social circle

Commented [SE229]: luxurious product and service choice

always for my guests.

29. Do you enjoy spending money on things that aren't practical?

'As I said... I had a pen collection. This is not a need just a hobby.

Commented [SE230]: hedonistic shopping

Commented [SE231]: hedonistic shopping behaviour

30. Do you consider buying a gift just to make others happy? Do you like to purchase gifts for friend and family back home?

'Yes. I love to get gifts to people. Very much'.

Commented [SE232]: feelings

Commented [SE233]: hedonistic shopping factors

31. What are some drives that you can think of that motivates you to go shopping in the UAE?

'Dubai as a city forces you towards spending... Like JBR... it is an open shopping mall... but in the summer you always go

Commented [SE234]: purchasing factors

indoors to malls etc. So, you don't really have an option... The city is built in a way to spend. So, you spend

Commented [SE235]: factors for shopping in the UAE

Commented [SE236]: factors impacting on shopping behaviour

32. Do you like to go shopping (or shop online) when you are bored, tired, stressed or feel lonely? What are the types of products or services you would buy when having these types of feelings? Are these purchases gifts for others or treats for yourself?

'I don't do online shopping... But I do shop when I'm bored lonely or even stressed... I buy things more as gifts, I also go out with friend for a drink or dinner when I'm very bored or stressed'.

33. Do first impressions you have for a product matter to you when you make decisions on purchasing a product? When visiting shops or joining others in dining gatherings etc. for the first time, do you consider the value, general appearances or expensiveness of the environment?

'Yes!... Of course first impressions are very important. You don't really know the person you meet the person you met but you consider the environment you meet the person in ...'

'I went to dinner to where I was invited to.... But the thing is I went there directly out of the site, without changing into some nice clothes.... Anyway .... The approach to me there was not really very positive... It was very superficial. But when the dinner was over.... I told them: "Let me take you for a coffee.... I want to invite you to where I live". I told them: "We will not speak of business... but just chat and have a nice break from work.... Just for us to get to know each other better,"

...When we went out,... the valet brought my car immediately... When they saw my car... they were just looking very surprised... I told them to follow me.... And we went to Zabeel Saray, the hotel where I live...The way they perceived me at

Commented [SR227]: shopping preferences  
Commented [SR228]: retail therapy: purchases due to boredom  
Commented [SR229]: purchases due to loneliness-retail therapy  
Commented [SR230]: purchases due to stress - retail therapy  
Commented [SR231]: purchasing choices when feeling bored, stressed or lonely  
Commented [SR232]: social purchases when feeling bored or stressed  
Commented [SR233]: choices of purchases in F&B when feeling bored, tired or stressed

Commented [SR234]: confirming the impact of first impressions on other related to choices in product choices  
Commented [SR235]: importance of the chosen environment: luxurious or not

Commented [SR236]: pointing on impacts of first impressions - need to change to more (branded) clothes to reflect a better first impression  
Commented [SR237]: negative perceptions by the social environment due to product choice and (lower level) first impression  
Commented [SR238]: negative perceptions by the social environment due to product choice and (lower level) first impression

Commented [SR239]: perception of respect by other due to use of luxury products

Commented [SR240]: immediate change of perception - impression of one's identity due to product preferences, and use of luxury product  
Commented [SR241]: luxury hotel in Dubai -Palm



the dinner and, the way they perceived me afterwards was so different.... So much warmer, like... the body language

changed. Like... they were tapping my shoulder while talking to me... They stated calling me "brother"...The conversation

became much friendlier. So, this shows how important first impressions really are'.

Commented [N1:243]: confirming the impacts of first impression due to the choices of luxurious spending - products

Commented [N1:243]: change of perception by the social environment due to spending preferences

Commented [N1:244]: showing acceptance

Commented [N1:245]: change of perception by the environment due to spending preferences

Commented [N1:246]: confirming the impact of first impressions of product choices

34. What are some of the most important factors/reasons for you in purchasing a luxury product when newly announced in the market?

I prefer to wait.

Commented [N1:247]: considering on others' opinions in new products

35. What do think of the phrase: 'The more expensive a product, the higher the quality',

'For some products,... I do agree. But for some... I don't they just sell the names. For instance, did you ever hear that

Porsche is being manufactured in China? ... Did you hear that Adidas is being manufactured in China? So quality makes a big difference.

Commented [N1:248]: impact of brands

Commented [N1:249]: brands and favoring brands

Commented [N1:250]: brands and perception through brands

Commented [N1:251]: specifying-reflecting product quality through brands

36. What do think of the phrase: 'If you pay peanuts, you will get monkeys'.

'I can't agree 100 %. In Dubai it will be correct. But in my country not really. There are products that are produced locally

but they are not known so they are sold for very low prices. They can't use a name to price their products higher'.

Commented [N1:252]: comparison of home and new environment

Commented [N1:253]: product value

37. Do you think that your friends and family back home are interested to know your lifestyle in the UAE? If yes, how does this interest influence your shopping and spending decisions?

'Yes, I think they do they want to know what I'm doing here. My shopping behaviour depends more to my environment here'.

Commented [N8 254]: perceptions of new identity bak home

Commented [N8 255]: influence of social environment in purchasing products

38. How does luxury shopping affect your social life? (can you consider luxury shopping as a mean of socialization with your friends / family etc.?) E.g. dining, golf clubbing, spa

'Yes, Of course it does affect... As I said, there are so many kinds of people and they come with their differences. And you have to mingle with them in their own ways... Like dining with them in their cultures' restaurants. For me,... Food is a way of mingling system.... Like... If I'm inviting them I prefer my country's food... But again ....in a fine dining environment where I can impress my guests.

Commented [N8 256]: confirmation of impact of luxury products on social life

Commented [N8 257]: differences in nationalities- new social environment

Commented [N8 258]: trying to fit in

Commented [N8 259]: fit in through F&B choices

Commented [N8 260]: differences in cultures

Commented [N8 261]: trying to fit in through F&B

Commented [N8 262]: fitting in- socializing

Commented [N8 263]: Socializing through F&B purchases

Commented [N8 264]: longing for familiar product in F&B

Commented [N8 265]: choice of product - luxurious

Commented [N8 266]: choosing the environment to impress

Commented [N8 267]: reflecting identity- impressing others through product choices

39. Do you like to own things that can impress others?

'Who doesn't like this? Laughs...Yes!...Of course. I like to own things that can impress others'.

Commented [N8 268]: confirmation of feeling

Commented [N8 269]: perception of others

Commented [N8 270]: being perceived in a certain (better) way by others

Commented [N8 271]: impressing- reflecting a certain identity that will be perceived better by others/ environment



## Appendix 9: Sample Mind map Participant #8



# Appendix 10: Overall transcripts Thematic Framework Matrix

## (Sample from Q.1 to Q.7)

	Q.1	Q.2	Q.3	Q.4	Q.6	Q.7
	1. How would you describe your general shopping habits when you were back in your home country in terms of being price conscious, favouring luxury brands or expecting a certain level of product quality?	What did luxury product mean to you back in your home country?	1. When you were in your home country how did you feel before buying a luxury product that you really liked or admired others having? Were there any debates in your mind prior to buying that product?	If you had vacations when you lived in your home country, what sort of destinations did you visit? What factors did you consider when choosing where to go? How often did you go abroad and how long did you stay abroad each time?	6.Back in your home country, were you buying certain branded (expensive) clothes? How did you choose which clothes shops to visit and which brands to buy?	7.Why did you like to purchase / use these products? How did you feel when you bought one of these products?
PR 1	I'm from Iraq, I wasn't driving in Iraq, When I want to buy something, only beautiful and good quality but not very expensive. Anyway, they don't know about brands there so I didn't really care	In my country, its only for the high-class people. For the people that work outside the country or for the ones that work for the government	I would find a way to buy it.	I was travelling inside the country, they don't have holiday packages	From the malls in different cities like Erbil or Bagdad,	7. Why did you like to purchase / use these products? How did you feel when you bought one of these products?  I feel so happy and proud of myself. ....Laughs
PR 2	Actually when I was living back in Turkey it was a big luxury to own a car there... so I used to use the metros and buses back in turkey. I got my first car here in the UAE. Regarding my clothes habits it was more of comfortable clothes I just never used to look at the tag of things just you know if I was comfortable in it I used to buy it. So I used to not look at brands or names... I'd just get what I needed and what I was comfortable in.	Back there it was my neighbors rich uncle maybe you could say ... it's a traditional saying in turkey. You have the rich neighbour always. As a child we always dreamt of having a super luxury car but it was never a reality. It was just a dream. And maybe most of the clothes and watch brands that I'm wearing these days I never heard of them in turkey. Maybe only Gucci and Louis Vuitton. But like the big brands. The specific brands, even perfumes, I used to wear the really traditional names.	I remember myself standing in front of a Rolex shop, looking at a specific watch and always dreamt of having it. Always in my mind had a debate of pushing my limits. But it was more like maybe I could take a loan and bought the watch but I wasn't in the right status to buy that watch. When you have a rolex you reveal a certain status to people and people have certain expectations of you. The way you talk and your financial status and the way you look at the world	It was mostly if I can find the cheapest full all inclusive packages. I just wanted to go out there and make the most of the money I was going to pay. Mostly internal, I just went abroad once to the neighbour country which I visited with a bus. It was actually Georgia. The first thing we looked at with a couple of friends was the prices of everything. When we saw it was affordable we drove down there.	I didn't know much about the brands I just looked if I was comfortable in the clothes. Back home we have a traditional thing called the bazaar. Which is once a week in the neighbourhood and you have old fashion people who come and sell things, unique items or factory pieces that you can get for a good deal. It was mostly what you felt comfortable in.	It gave me like ... it's like I was a different person. I felt it gave me pride and a status just wearing something, a shirt, that I got as a gift actually. It was one of the brands and every time I wore it only on special occasions and even when I would wear it and walked around it felt like I was special and I had a status and I was in the spot of everyone's eyes.
PR 3	Back home we didn't really understand the concept of luxury brands, the area I grew up in didn't have shopping malls or high end stores, most of the clothing were locally made, and people in our town were almost on the same level, we used to consider Nike or Adidas to be a luxury item. I am passionate about electronic and technology, but I was born in 1984 and many things were introduced to our country when I was in the mid 20's. Access to internet was limited so we were not exposed to many things before. I didn't own a car back home as the petrol prices are very expensive and there is a 100% tax on cars.	We didn't really think much about luxury product as it was not something you see or care about. We owned our home like most people did. Our work used to cover daily expensive and savings were mostly for either emergencies or marriage.	As I mentioned above I am passionate about technology. I remember buying an old Nokia Communicator in the early 2000. I couldn't afford to buy it new so I bought it used for an amount equals to around AED 1700, which was a huge amount back home. It took me over a month of debate before buying it, and a month of buyer remorse after.	I don't really like to travel much, back home we used to go to different cities but the first time I travelled was when I came to UAE.	Not really, most of our clothes were locally made, you can find brand names in big cities like Amman but we never really cared much for it.	for me I used to spend most of my money on either electronics or video games, mind you most of the videogames we played back then were pirated so we didn't pay much for it, around 1 to 2 Jordanian Dinars. Yet if the game was not good I used to feel bad about spending that kind of money on it.
PR 4	e.g. What car were you driving back home? How old was it? Why did you choose this make and model? (Q.5 moved to Q11) I was working as an architect—engineer for the Turkish military and I had a Honda civic ... my income was much lower than now of course, but for my country my life was mid-higher level if life style	Luxury meant prestige, In turkey people like to be into brands and the social circle I was in was definitely into it very much ... specially the uni that I was in. people care to much for the brands etc.	When you are newly graduated you don't look to the expensive of the product you look if you have and how much you have in your pocket. You just buy then you suffer-face the consequences.	How often did you go abroad and how long did you stay abroad each time? My family was living abroad, but I didn't really go outside the country. It was more of business trips arranged by the company I was working for. I more preferred trips within the country. The cost was same like in buying clothes. If you have money you go to your vacation.	Yes, I was buying. I was young and running a business. So the clothes I'm wearing were important to give a good impression as a businessman. It effects your social life too. When you meet with friends, you discuss with where to buy things from and the latest fashion etc. people care so much to brands and you want to remain in that social circle ...so you keep buying and taking care of what you wearing or how you are presenting yourself	As I just explained. good impression and keep up with your social circle
PR 5	I was driving a Toyota corolla 2015-16. Not really into bags. More of shoes. Clothes. Definitely clothes, accessories. In terms of luxury brands it depends, not a lot.	? Something you have to have. Whenever you see someone in movies or famous celebrities, someone whose famous wearing something you have to have it. And I did that. I wanted to graduate wearing Lubotons.	I did consider and think it was too much but then I thought I wanted to have it and I was very stubborn and has it in my mind that I want to buy it. I saw the thing I wanted basically. I tried a few on, different sizes. And the one I wanted although expensive I bought it.	How often did you go abroad and how long did you stay abroad each time? Inside the country within the country basically and between Lebanon and Dubai mostly because my family was here, Vacations were within the country like up the mountains.	I was very influenced by TV, not as much by social media.	When I bought them my wallet hurt a bit but after buying them it felt good having them like something I earned finally.

# Appendix 11: Overall transcripts Thematic Framework Matrix

## (Sample from Q.9 to Q.12)

	Q.9	Q.10	Q.11	Q.12
	9.In general, how do you think people that can afford a luxurious life style are regarded / perceived in your home country? (e.g. admired/ envious/disliked)	10.How did you manage your feelings when you were in doubt with your purchasing decisions back home? E.g. if the price was too high/ higher than your income.	To what extent did you try to buy products at the cheapest times (e.g. in sales) or at the cheapest places (e.g. by looking around to find the cheapest shop/supplier).	What hobbies did you have in your home country? How did you spend your leisure time? What factors did you consider when deciding how to spend your leisure time?
PR 1	They think that They are bad they are stealing money . Laughs ..		In my country, I didn't like sale ...	We don't have any clubs or spas ... I would go to visit my family or go to a café shop... like this ...
PR 2	It's mostly admired I could say but of course you have people who would always hate because they don't have the same things but mostly admiration. People admire it. From personal experience regarding my neighbor's rich uncle we always looked up if someone wore something really nice, brands and everything, we always admired that person... they must be so educated, fancy... everyone respected them, so yeah.		It was me looking at a product first of all I enter I like it. First thing without even looking at the fabric I'd look at the price, the tag, and if it was a bit over my budget I wouldn't even keep looking at it.	IT was mostly having a walk around the city, visiting historical areas, which I still love doing. And playing football with friends and basketball in the community centers of the neighbourhood. Mostly it was low cost. I don't think I've been to a golf course before being here actually. Or you know did something really luxurious because it was out of my price range so it was out of my life.
PR 3	I hope this information will stay confidential, so I will speak honestly, we used to perceive them as corrupt people. Import taxes are really high here, there are loopholes which everyone can use when buying certain products but our view was that you can't live such a luxury style unless you are taking bribes or work.	I rarely bought anything that is higher than my income as I don't have the luxury of doing so since I didn't own a credit card. So whatever I buy I had to pay for on the spot that made buying things difficult as I had to save to buy what I wanted. As to managing my feelings it was always the same, trying to justify the purchase as a need, rather than want. For example I would tell myself I need a new phone, and I start finding faults on my current one to convince myself to make a new purchase.	Always, buying something used to take me a full weekend, I used to go from shop to shop and bargain for the cheapest price.	Videogames, Movies, and spending times with friends in restaurants, coffee shops ,etc We used to consider the cost of the place we are going to, we didn't go for the cheapest options but we used to balance between the price and the quality of the place.
PR 4	Now, in our country the life standards are vary a lot, There is lower class, lower-mid class, middle-high , and higher class. And there is are lot of differences between all of them. E.g. there is a social group that is called the middle class. Where people work mostly as clerks, teachers, admin etc, they are living based on the salary they get. The social circle that I was in was more towards the higher class so for my social circle to be a person in luxury was a good thing. For me because I was doing my own business, people would think I was doing very well. So the people around me would think that I'm successful in my life and doing very good ,they would respect me. In my country people look at your car, your watch and your clothes and according to these they will tell you if you are successful or not. Or the level of your life will be estimated according to these things. No body will as how much you have in your bank account, It all depends on how it looks like from outside. If you are eating good food, dressing nice, driving a nice car it also means you are doing well. But if you are not driving a good car, you don't dress up nicely etc. no matter how much you have in your account or how good your business is , people will look at you differently. You will be considered in lower classes in social groups	That time buying thing like these seemed like a success even though now I think is very wrong because at the end you buy things by using credit cards or by instalments , with money that doesn't belong to you. But the idea of being able to buy was the important think ... no matter how you buy it.	I would not really go to sales because they have the left overs and the seasons would change .. like you get the summer stuff before the winter	? In general, in my social circle have more expensive hobbies..I would go for sports activities like basketball, football and I would go for shootings to polygons, I also did collect pens for calligraphy
PR 5	) I think it's a mixture of all of them combined like if you see someone wearing branded clothes or branded items you would say why don't I have that. A lot of people have that mentality. You can say envy with a bit of admiration.	It would hurt honestly but then like I would basically like save up to purchase it later on.	. It was common actually but if I see something I like I purchase it. If it happens to be on sale that's even better.	Basically go to the beach, hang out with friends. Spas not that much and sports clubs no. We basically went to the beach.
PR 6	I think this is a very difficult and interesting question actually. Because how people perceive you people's perceptions are very difficult to catch, I think it depends on person to person. if somebody notices... Some people will not even notice... Some other people would say wow yes ... She is or he is wearing a very expensive branded watch... I think to be noticed is always a nice feeling when you are dressed properly and nicely and people appreciate you... Yes, I believe on the impact that you attract people's attention in a positive way when you're dressed up nicely but then how much people will notice it depends on them. People might be jealous or people might appreciate you. Having a nice car, nice clothes, having a nice watch could be a status symbol because some people are more prone to that. And trying to have a nice car, and nice clothes and everything so they can show it to the others and give the impression of their greater status in UK this will be a show-off.	I would wait I would wait for a while until the prices go down for instance for sale. Also, I could be saving a little bit more until I have the money enough to get it. And then I would go invite not directly when it is out of the market. Author: so you would waiting to another model would come out and this this product will become cheaper? Tauseef: No, I would still go for the latest model but I would wait for the offer.	Tauseef: I think the answer is sales. At some places have sales all year round. As I mentioned before some seasons in UK especially in January there are many good deals.	Tauseef: I always play squash and tennis. Author: is it expensive to have this opportunity? Tauseef: Its yes and no. It depends. If I have a membership in the club it could be expensive then you have the leisure centres where you pay as you enter. Depending on my working hours I did kind of both. For my budget it was affordable but this doesn't apply to everyone.

## Appendix 12: Transcripts Thematic Framework Matrix for Dimension 02

### Social media

(Sample from Q.16to Q.18)

	Q.16	Q.17	Q.18
	16. When you became an expatriate Did you use social media in the UAE for information and/or advice on where to shop, your apartment, car, clothes, holidays etc. with your friends what products to buy, and how/where to spend your leisure and family back home? Do you put information/pictures on time? Now, are you influenced by opinion leaders in social social media, like Facebook and Instagram? If so, why do you do this and how does it make you feel?	17. Do you like to use social media to share your pictures of the food they're eating. Not like this but if I got some good gift from close person I'm gonna maybe post a photo. Of course I will feel like thankful for this person, and I have good people in my life to show to everyone.	18. <u>Using</u> social media How do you feel about presenting any luxury products you buy to your friends, colleagues, family and friends back home? (e.g. do you want others to admire you, see you are successful or be envious?)
PR 32	Of course I'm googling like for the brands, what brands are here. I use a social media only if I'm complaining about something it's... hah.	Yes. Not like this, no these on Instagram they're gonna take pictures of the food they're eating. Not like this but if I got some good gift from close person I'm gonna maybe post a photo. Of course I will feel like thankful for this person, and I have good people in my life to show to everyone.	Yeah of course. I'll do this but not because I'm waiting for (inaudible) and also that doesn't mean like I'm showing off. but I'd like to share, I'd like to share my experience with my friends. I'd like to show them like you do have to look forwards for better. You don't have to waste your time on something which is not moving. Maybe some people are working like for many years in the same position with the same salary no promotion. You have to change.
PR 34	no, no	yeah i d.o not only here but for years even before i come i liked it ill be honest with you, im not a very heavy user in social media but.. im using one app for now. for me it's more like ... so for me facebook is something connecting me with my family and friends in egypt. instagram for me is like a photo app... just to share it with my followers...	Q:do you want to send a message to the people who see it like success story. i did it you can do it too? A: sometimes yeah
PR 35	Definitely of course I mean when you're new in a place and you don't have that many connections or people that you know then you turn to the internet to see what people say about that place, that shop or that restaurant.. I like independent reviews more so if I see individuals saying or writing their reviews about experiences of a certain place then I would definitely like to hear those first.	I know this might sound different but not at all. I don't like to share every moment or every dinner or every outing. No. No.	
PR 36	Yes of course I did. Social media is number one thing I used it even before coming hear.I checked out all the sites about UAE not only for shopping but in so many things. yeah I listen to the opinions in the social media. People buy things and use things and people make comments. So again you don't have to risk buying something which is not good and not tried by others.	Yes I do. It makes me feel very good. And I like to share my happiness with the people I love. And hope that they are happy with me... It also makes me feel proud of all the stuff that I have achieved. And sharing it is some kind of a message from me to others to show that anyone who wants it can do it. I feel like I'm setting a good example for my people in my country	I don't want them to be envious. But I want them to see that it is possible to be successful. I also want my family to be proud of me.
PR 38	I checked out all the sites about UAE not only for shopping but in so many things. yeah I listen to the opinions in the social media. People buy things and use things and people make comments. So again you don't have to risk buying something which is not good and not tried by others.	Yes like pictures , videos.Laughes ... because im desperate to do better and better pictures and videos . it depends how hard you want to become famous in social media you have to become obsessed with it. You have to live your life through the camera. Which I personally find very difficult. In a good moment I rather put my moment aside . while other people in social media start picking up their phones when the moment starts getting good. I don't really like that .	Well if it comes over as a show off its for sure not indented. If I purchased a product that I have done my investigation on it. Like if not the best but the better which my money can buy, I would show it to them and say go for this one an lets say not with the Chinese one etc.
PR 40	Of course, social media has been my number one advisor not only in UAE, but also when I travel to other countries.Opinion leaders in social media give me an idea, a guide. I don't trust only one opinion, I check at least 3 different opinions before taking a decision of where to buy or spend my leisure time.	I don't like to post many thinks in the social media about my lifestyle. I prefer to keep it in private and share it with my family and closer friends through WhatsApp. I don't like people to be informed about everything I do and every movement I make.I don't like also to be perceived as a material girl.	I don't want people to feel bad or envious. I prefer to share my success only with my family and not using the social media. I prefer to be discreet.

# Appendix 13: Transcripts Thematic Framework Matrix for Dimension 03

## Identity

### (Sample from Q.4 to Q.9)

	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9
	4. What would say about the phrase: 'The things I own say a lot about how well I'm doing in life'?	5. Do you believe your decisions in purchasing, products you choose to buy, make a difference in your life style? If so in what way and how?	6. Do you think people back home will perceive you differently with your new shopping preferences? Do you think you present a different identity in their minds?	7. Do you think people will perceive you differently in the UAE if you don't consume luxury products (e.g. car, membership in sports clubs, spa, luxurious holiday destinations etc.) according to your shopping preferences? Do you feel embarrassed?	8. Do you think products you purchase and brands you choose will express your identity? What products do you purchase that reflect a part of your identity? E.g. your car, your clothes	9. What would you say about the phrase: 'You are what you wear'?
PR 20	I'm not a very materialistic person. So, I don't attach a huge amount of value to stuff. But it is nice to have nice things. The perception is that things you own come with success.	I don't necessarily believe I do	I think so. They think you went abroad and you make a lot of money	I'm there so a little pressure. But the nice thing is that you can find like minded people. But I'm sure some people look at you as if you were in a lower bracket than them	I'm sure people in general do think	In business world it's really true. I think if you are wearing a sleek suit and you look really smart people perceive you as more professional and more knowledgeable.
PR 21	The perception is that things you own come with success.	Not in my lifestyle but in the eyes of the public yes. I feel like I belong... about in the UAE... everyone always is dressed up. Even going to a mall to meet with friends	No not really	Unfortunately, yes, specially when it comes to friends. Sometimes I just get something for the sake of getting it	Ummmm... I love video games, I always get the new consoles... I can they release the VR system like a helmet, a virtual reality... to very easy to afford... being able to afford it makes me feel good about myself	Ahhh... sure you are what you eat, you are what you wear
PR 23	Yes for sure. Is not the same thing when you drive a BMW and have a Gucci bag like other regular ones	Yes for sure. For example in an interview, if you go with Gucci shoes, Chanel bag etc. they will consider your salary. Like they would think it's the carrying bag like this how much she will expect from me as a salary? It happened to me. Once they told me how much I must pay you salary if you are able to wear a bag that costs 3000AED?	Yes, staying abroad changes so many things. First of all your mentality changes. You interact with so many people... from many places... and the possibilities that we have here are so many	Sometimes they look down at you. Most people talk about brands... they pressure you	You just like the product. And you go out and they see you differently when you wear Chanel bag the French brand, or Gucci they look at you differently. With the French brand you are perceived open and you can tell everything you want... and for the other brands differently... they note you according to the country of the product	Before the answer would be no. Now it is yes. In French they say, that what you wear does not reflect your personality, meaning if you are poor you are not poor in your mind. But now, if someone is poor in his mind but he is wearing good... I don't, he is perceived as good.
PR 24	Yes of course I do believe in this. You need to work very hard for this. Due to the education, my degree I was able to get what I want I reach my dreams. When I travelled out side... when started my new job, I was able to do whatever I want and buy whatever I want. Like my fango rover. I'm able to have a very good salary that enables me to travel anywhere I like. Actually the way you looking good presents you as a good... respectable person in front of the people	Definitely. When you go out for example and you are dressed up well, people treat you differently... for example if you go to the bank or even to the bus, to any where. They will treat you nice, perform, they will look at your nice clothes you are wearing... they will be... 'Hi sir, how are you?', how can I help you sir?' so this is a different way of treating people. It's not like a treatment... to a poor person who smelling very bad, wearing bad clothes... in terms of in they respect they will highly respect you for the way you look.	They think I'm a different person... in not the same person I was before definitely. In not talking like before... I don't think like before and I don't use the world like before. My way of communication has changed, my view of mind. My mentality has changed, towards life and towards the people	Definitely. Of course. Now my life has changed and when I go out somewhere I have wear things accordingly. So, I have all types of clothes ready for everything. Whenever I need to go to bank, to a serious meeting... actually I need to change my clothing according the place I'm going to.	Of course it does. For example I always buy from Zara, Gucci... which makes me feel very comfortable and confident. And people perceive me as successful.	Yes, I do believe in this
PR 25	I agree that the things you own are the result of success for sure. And there are no limits for that	It won't change my view of life but I do use the luxury things when I need. For example a massage.	Laughs... this is a classical Turkish thinking... unfortunately yes do think differently... it's in a negative way... you judge you without knowing things.	They would be perceived like more regular person. There is an unseen pressure because of the unlimited luxury things... so naturally you get affected.	Yes, everything I use reflects my identity. For example definitely... my clothes reflect my identity... definitely... reflects my mood too.	I totally agree. The person himself is the brand and the cover is just the clothes
PR 26	Uh not necessary because the people are spending lot of money using the credit cards and all to show the other people that they have something but after one or two years they will be in trouble.	Absolutely. It's some of the products which we are wearing for example you will get acceptance with the people like when you're driving a big car or wearing a branded watch for example... so then you will get good acceptance among the society with the friends and colleagues with who you are interacting.	There is always a feeling to the people back home that when somebody is gone abroad they are rich. Too money. And some live in a bad life style. So people have thought it that way but I'm personally not in that line. But I do in my lifestyle same... I live in abroad I spend the money how I need.	I don't think so. For example, nowadays if it's become using an iPhone is a status symbol but I don't necessarily matter because if you're in a business office with the colleagues you present yourself then the material which you are buying doesn't matter. If you perform well whatever the mobile phone you are having nobody cares. If they don't know you? This is of course matters but not necessary to be a branded item. You have to be clean and well dressed and a presentable way. Not necessary a branded one.	Uh the product or the material which I am buying it will be worth for a value and that will be using on a regular basis. I don't buy stuff to keep in the showcase when I'm not using it to show the people. So whenever I am using in my regular life which I don't have then I will purchase.	It is not basically what you wear it's basically what you present. For example you're wearing a branded suit and shoe but shoe is not polished it's gone. But if you're using a medium rate shoe but it's well polished and shining to a meeting it's different. It's not because of what you wear the brand of the material you are wearing. You are what you present what you wear yes.
PR 27	I'd say yes. To a large extent yes.	Yeah you can say yes. Like going to hotels once in a while and staying over in a different city. Like we go to Dubai in a short break. It makes us happy and we are more young.	Maybe yes.	Yes again yes. I think there is a group of people who will do that. I think it's a bad thing. It's not a good thing, yeah.	Only to a certain extent. A house for example, where you're living to someone else. Because houses like personal space so where you're living will reflect what you are. But I don't believe wearing a very expensive watch will reflect who I am because I'm not a flashy person.	It's not about how expensive what expensive things you are wearing but for me this phrase says you should always be neatly and smartly dressed so people get a good reflection when they see you. But wouldn't dress up as a brand just to make an impression to people.
PR 28	Um so I feel like that's heavily based on... that's not necessarily true. I feel like it's heavily based on societal pressures and standards. Otherwise, people assume if you're wearing something expensive and driving nice cars you're doing great in life. People generally believe in this.	Um the thing that's changed significantly since I've moved here, back home I'd break down whether I need or want something. A lot of my spending habits here are spontaneous and a lot of my purchases here are on the spot. Do I need it? Do I want it? Or I bought it.	Something I've realized is back home when you tell people I live in Dubai they immediately assume you have money. A lot of people back home are more humble but there definitely will be a difference in how people treat you. So I might be perceived differently based on my spending habits.	There's definitely a pressure. For example me I would always kind of be self conscious about the car I drive. It's second hand and not in the best condition. I needed something quick since I moved here. I kind of always felt pressure like before I picked up a friend from work. Like I don't want to be judged for the condition of my car. But they didn't really care. But that's how a lot of people think here. I feel that pressure every time.	I don't necessarily believe so. I feel like I have pretty strong core values about who I am, I know who I am as a person. So whether I have a bunch of luxury brands, it's not going to change who I am as a person. So that's just kind of how I am personally.	Um no. I don't think that's true.
PR 29	Yes. Either you are you're describing your personality. Yes because if the owns you have are nothing to you, relates to your personality, to your choice. And that's your opinion and how it reflects your behavior even.	Yes sometimes because somehow you find like having a car it's a came from your dream you say you're having the car of your dream which is now it's not possible for all the people to have it. And to go to all the destination you want and to buy everything you want because now you are achieving what you are, your ambitions, what you are thinking about before, and now you are achieving that	Of course because I am from the middle of my country and this region not many of them are living outside the country so the time when someone he is outside the country and living a luxury life and when he come back to that place of course they will look at him in a different way. At some extent it's good and some extent it's bad because many people they will be like jealous from you.	Uh I yeah for example you're doing something usually like you're doing shopping from one place and then... like last time I was doing shopping from Zara and after that I was just coming around inside the mall and I passed by there. There were thinking that I will go inside to buy it. They were expecting me to come inside they were looking at me and I was just running around there. That's why.	Because I'm not that kind of man who is buying only his needs. Sometimes I am buying the extra things just because I have the money.	Yes because your appearance reflects your personality.
PR 30	I do not agree because people can achieve certain things but it doesn't necessarily mean it shows how they are. Some earn a lot but does not have a nice life style, prefer not to spend... depends on the individuals.	For sure it does. It gives more comfort and easy life	Yes, for sure it does. The way they act towards me is different. For example. They know you are coming from a different culture, country and they ask me things, they want to learn from me things... its in a positive way.	I don't think so... I don't think people care so much to each other. They all live their own lives.	Yes, for sure it reflects... the colours, style, looks all reflects a part of me.	Yes, I agree that people actually reflect their personalities or identities with their clothes and things they choose to buy... you can tell
PR 31	Um I do agree. To some extent. But I would not use it as a generalization. Definitely the things I own they say a lot and yeah.	Definitely I mean when I had a small car it had many problems with it. Now I have a Nissan I can't live my family. More comfortable driving around. More secure even with the anti-lag and stuff.	Yeah probably have definitely I mean people have a lot of expectations or ideas about this. If you live in UAE you're probably the wife of a Sheikh. Having a breakfast at the top of Burj Khalifa, I mean working in the UAE and coming as a tourist are two different things. But definitely people look at UAE and me look at me with a different look lets say and they ask a lot of questions and sometimes I have to admit that no give everything is a piece of sugar. 5 star and seven star everywhere.	I probably not feel any pressure on that. As for other people with different lifestyles as my friends the relationships I have never give any pressure on that.	Yeah definitely. For example if I buy clothes I buy it because it looks good. It is made of natural materials, and it will be looking good with a certain period of time it is a good quality. It is not going to look completely different after I wash it. Food for example I will never buy something with artificial ingredients.	Yeah like accessories and cars that you have and all kind of things they do talk about your taste. About your financial possibilities. What you can afford.
PR 32	Yeah of course. Of course everyone will be looking to upgrade his life not to downgrade his life. So before taking any decision in life you'll be thinking twice, this step will make you better or it will take you backwards or something. Before you think about leaving your home country, whatever if you have a good position in your home country or bad position. But you have to look forward for better. Before moving here I was not in, like normal position in Egypt, but now I upgraded my life and looking to upgrade it more. So if of course it's better like after moving here I feel better. I got my dream car, I have my own house so it's good.	Of course it will make a difference in my lifestyle but also as I told you you're not in your home country so you'll have to be careful before purchasing because they do have a lot of responsibility here. So maybe you can purchase what you want at the end of the month.	They think like I'm this guy who lives in Dubai and they get a lot of money and I'll tell you one good really one good example. One of my friend like I was in my home country last time and he saw my underwear in the room and it was hidden so he came to me, 'bro what you buy for hidden, when you're in Egypt you were used to buying underwear local underwear'. I was funny like like when he found this because this brand is not in our country.	Depend on the people you're living with, depend on the people you're dealing with. For example I'm a banker, I'm staying with a lot of high valued customer and media valued customer so of course I'm gonna go wearing something like not branded or something like which is not looking good for them. So they have to trust that I'm the banker and the image for the banking. Because of course it's Dubai you're living in Dubai so you have to be aware about your image before anything else.	No I don't think so. Yeah of course. I have been reflecting. For phones I used to use Samsung in my home country and when I moved here I used to use Samsung for the first few months and then I shifted to iPhone and now I will not be able to shift again to Samsung. This phone has some advantages, this phone has some advantages, but iPhone I think it's more special like it's more luxurious, I think maybe smart people are using iPhone more than the Samsung.	Yeah. Sometimes yeah as I told you depends on the people you're living with and dealing with. You are what you wear for those people. Like I do understand for the guys, girls are looking for the watches and shoes. And for the girls, guys are looking for the smell and the nails. Yeah I'm just giving you some information. Of course yeah you can decide of the people like. But it's not usually because I used to meet a lot of people - in a banker I'm dealing so I told you and I know whose the person in front of me because I know how much his salary how much he have and assets in Dubai. So I meet a lot of people like when you see them you'll never imagine that he having this salary. You think like you want to give him money from your pocket. Really. Like not too much people even here in Dubai are having. They have a lot of money but they don't look like they have any money. I meet those people I'm dealing with God customers high salary but they're not looking like this much like, I don't know what they're doing with their money, but they don't show off and I meet some people really salary about 100 but they can see what they are. You can see what they gift. You can see the money in them. In Dubai you cannot confirm in the person by wearing. Really.

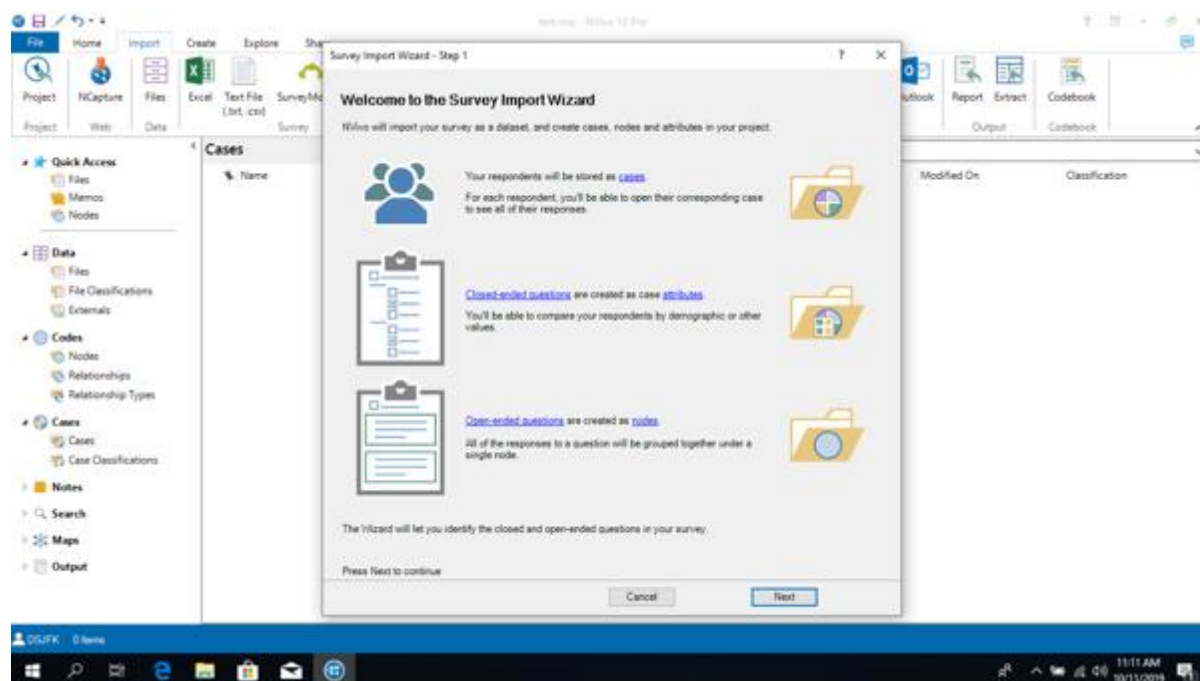
## Appendix 14: NVivo Software Applications

### Generating thematic framework Matrix

Thematic coding is defined as a type of qualitative research method which includes recording or identifying passages of text or images, linked by a main theme or opinion, allowing the researcher to index (code) the transcripts into categories, and hence develop a “framework of thematic ideas about it” (Gibbs 2007).

Steps followed to generate the thematic framework Matrix:

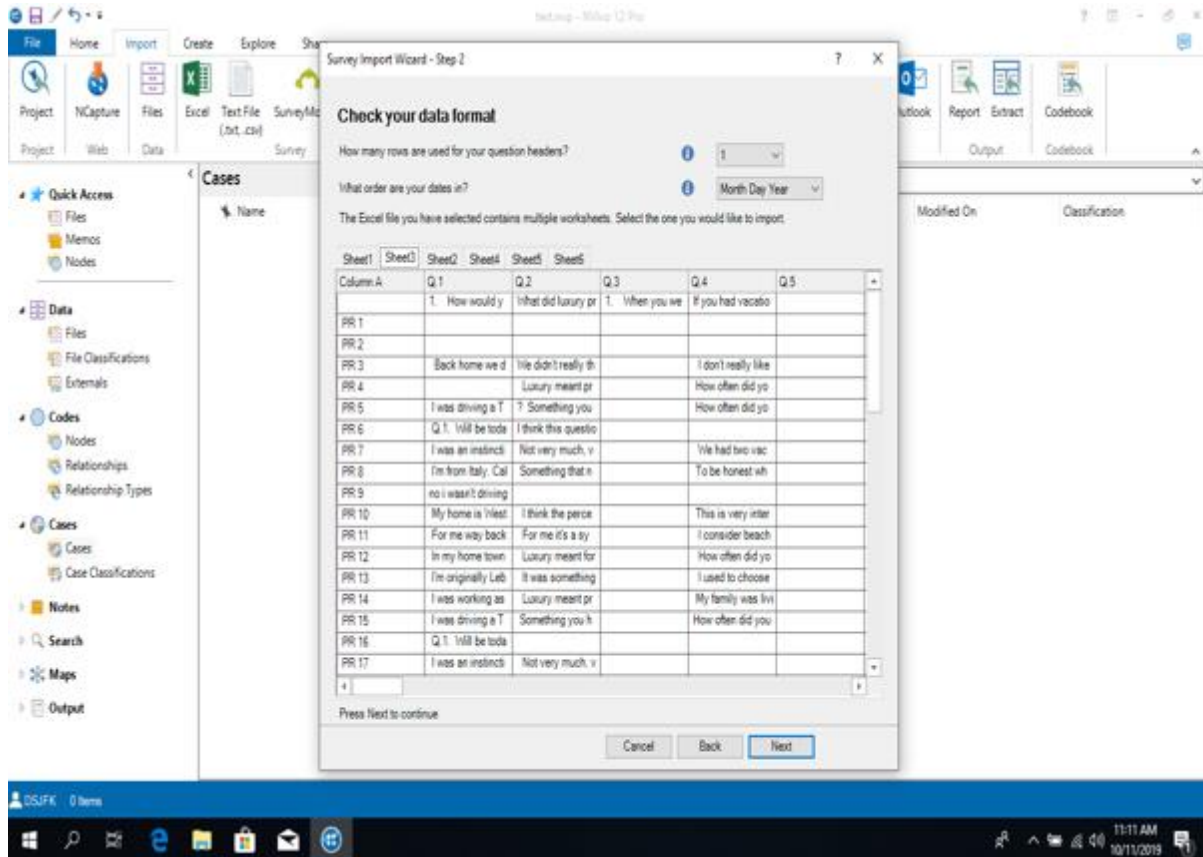
- From the import portal, the survey was navigated and Excel icon was selected that helped to import the data from the spread sheet.
- After the survey import wizard appeared, cases (answers of participants), attributes and nodes were automatically defined, based on the certain structure followed by the author to produce the spreadsheet. Please see below Figure



*Steps -Generating thematic framework Matrix*

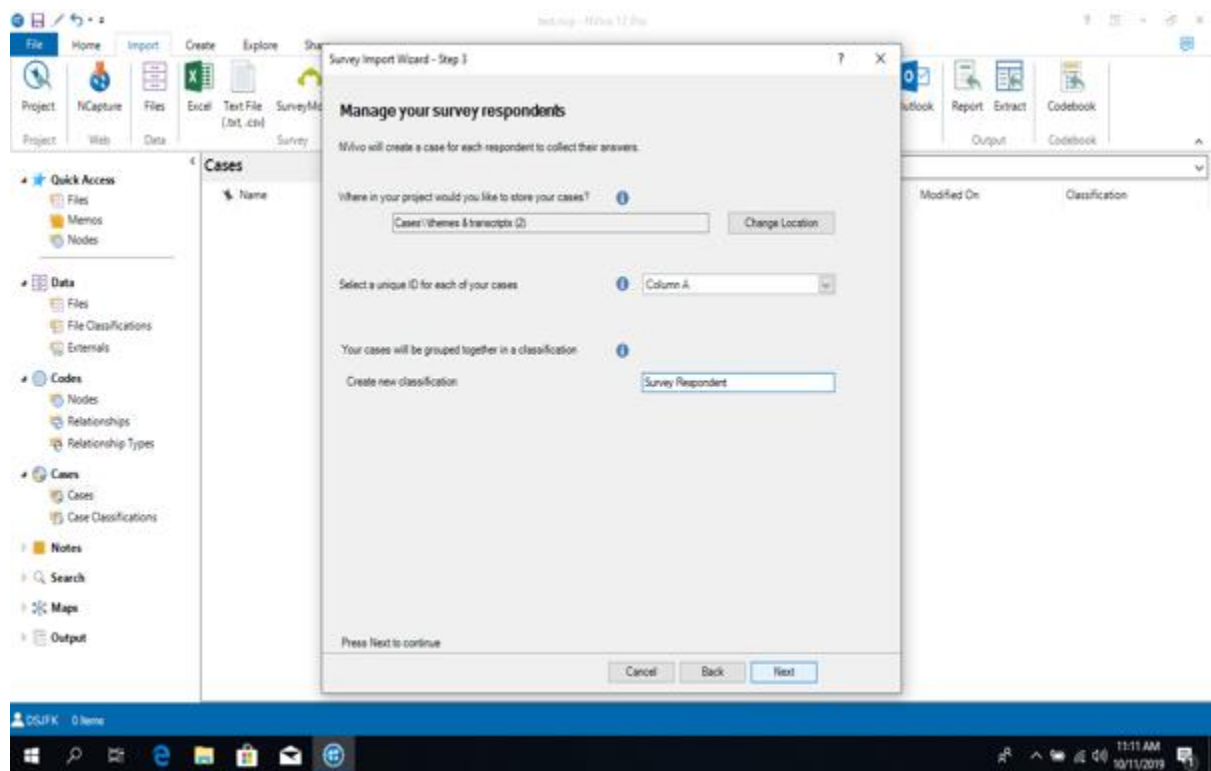


- As illustrated in Figure below, the Survey Import Wizard identified the columns as the questions, and the rows as the participants. As supported from the previous structure developed by the author.



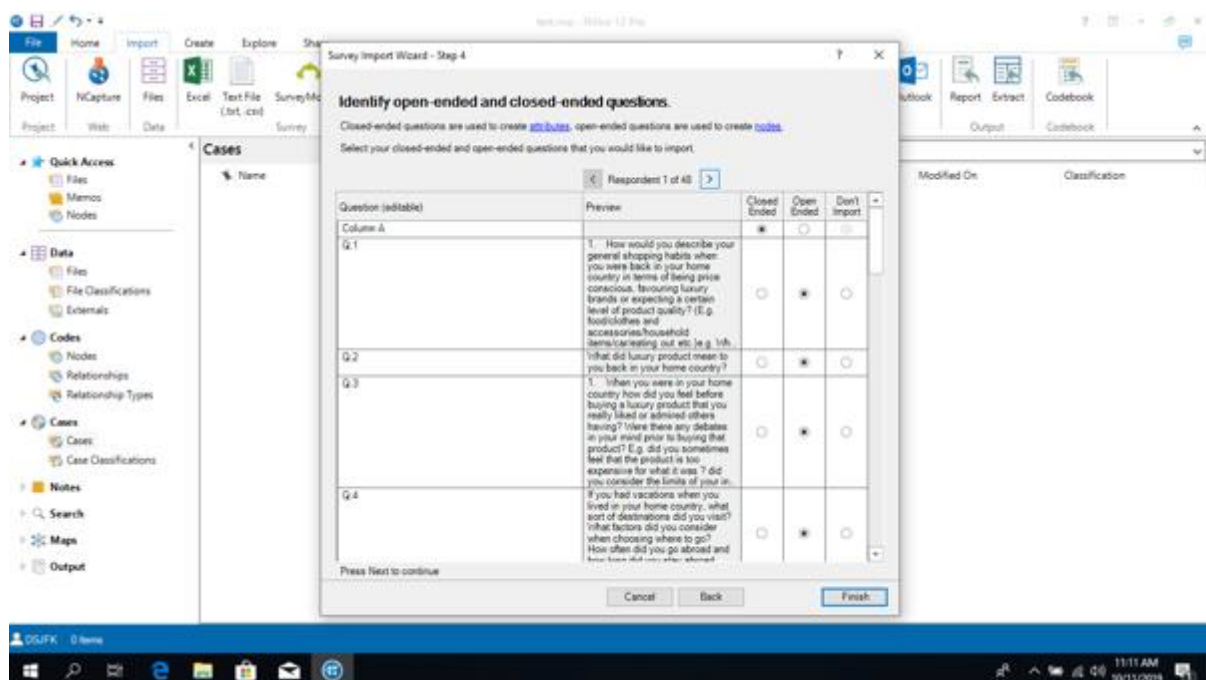
### Identification of columns

- Following that, all participants' were labelled with a number, to be able to organize the responses and refer to the correct participant when needed. E.g.: "PR1" for participant number 01. Please see below Figure



### Labelling of participants

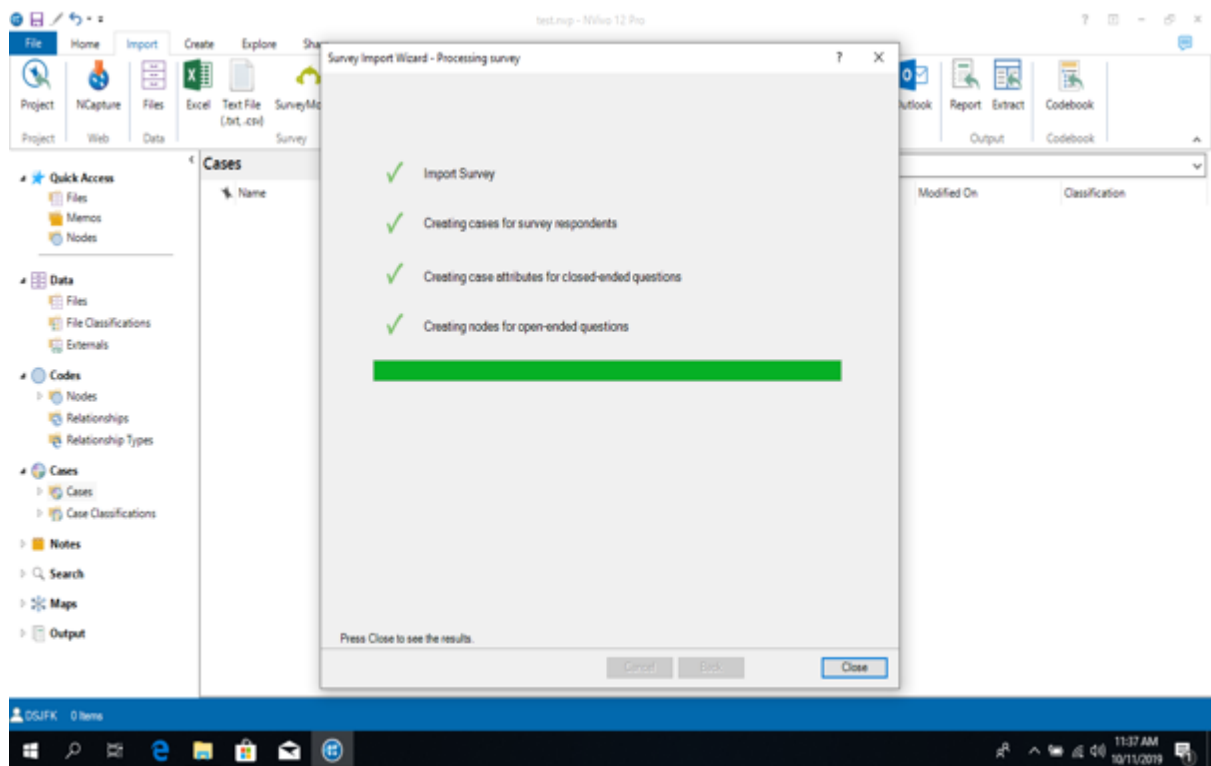
- The nature of the research being qualitative, all questions were selected as open ended, which dictated the software that these questions require further thought and multiple answers. Please see below Figure



### Questions

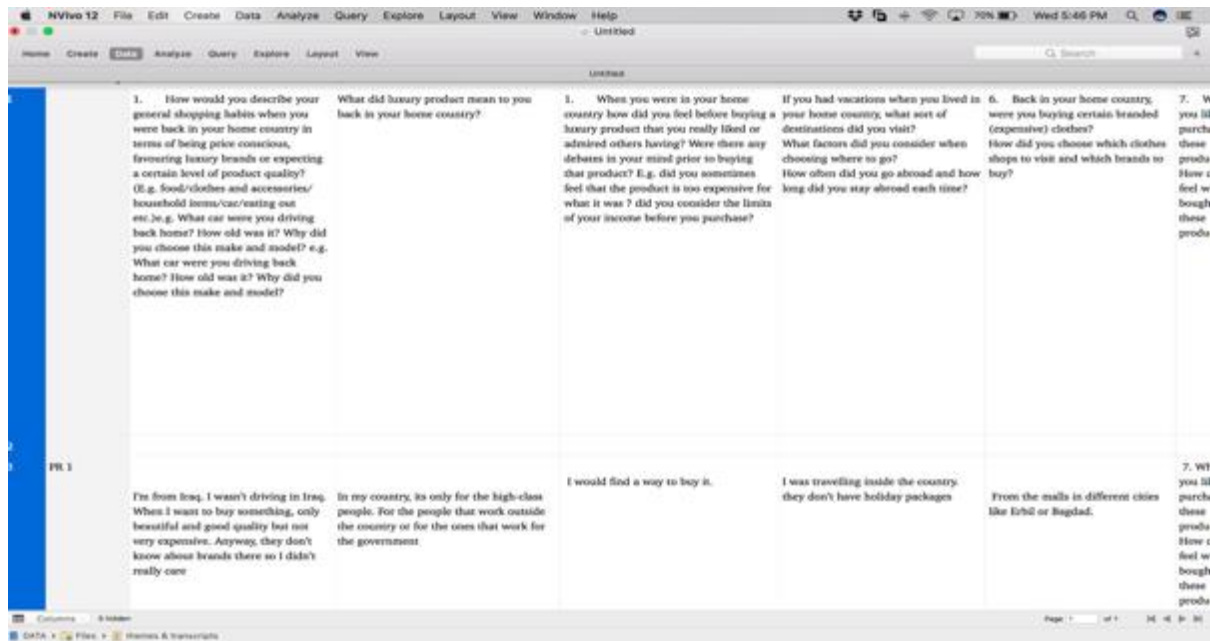


- Please see below Figure for the final step in analysis of NVivo of the spreadsheet.



### *Spreadsheet*

Please see below Figure for the final thematic framework matrix for all transcripts. The framework matrixes developed for each theme, were finally exported from NVivo software to a spreadsheet in Microsoft Excel. Please refer to Appendix 10, 11, 12 and 13 for the demonstration of final thematic framework matrix.

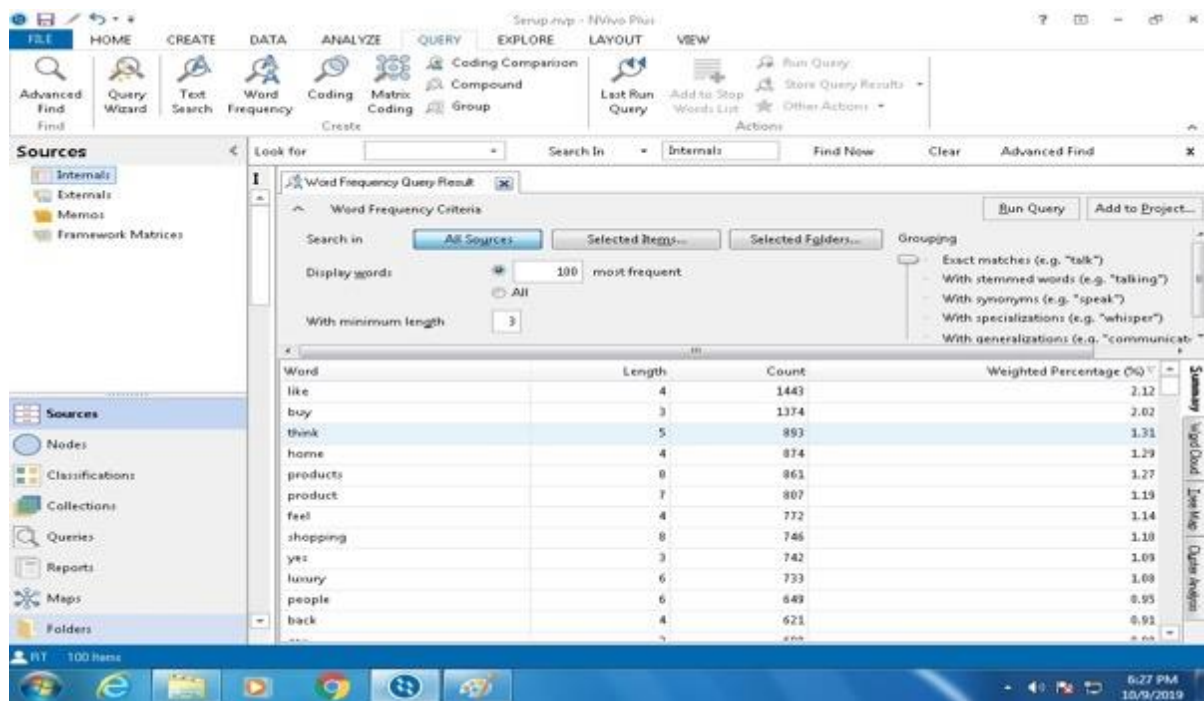


*Final thematic framework matrix for all transcript*

## Word frequent query

The following section presents each theme and sub-themes separately for a clear understanding and smooth flow of reading. Each dimension is presented before each major theme, displaying similarity and quality of data collected from the participants.

The five dimensions are displayed in the forms of word cloud and tree maps to verify the validity of the data and the analysis pursued by the author. Five separate Tree Maps were created by the author to display up to 100 words as a series of rectangles for each dimension deducted from the emerging major themes. The frequently occurring words like: product, shopping, brand and luxury etc. reflecting each dimension were displayed by the software in larger rectangles. Using the word cloud tab, five separate word clouds were created and presented in the results chapter to display the first 100 most frequently used words in varying font sizes, where frequently occurring words are in larger fonts. Finally, all gathered data were uploaded and auto code mode was selected to be able to identify the themes of the research. Please see below Figure for a sample of word count query process.

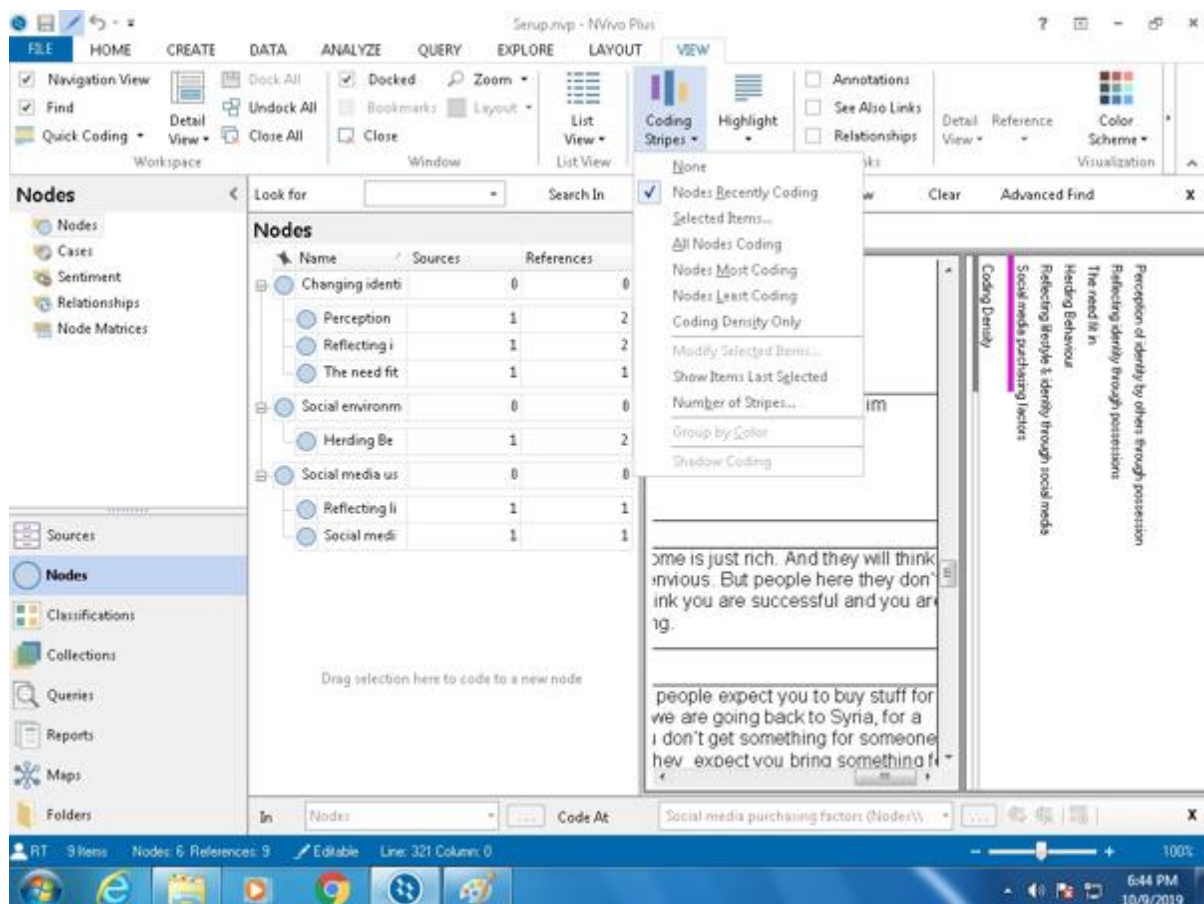


*Sample of word count query*

## Appendix 15: Defining Codes using NVivo

NVivo helps to identify codes and matches them with themes in order to build the conceptual thematical framework. The following steps were followed after identifying the passages and codes finally linking them with themes:

- From the codes menu, data resources were imported and defined as nodes, which helped the author to build the main resource of information,
- To categorize the codes, the main themes were identified from the case classification menu,
- The most significant phrases were identified, highlighted and categorized with the relevant themes and sub-themes, via drag and drop method. Please see below Figure



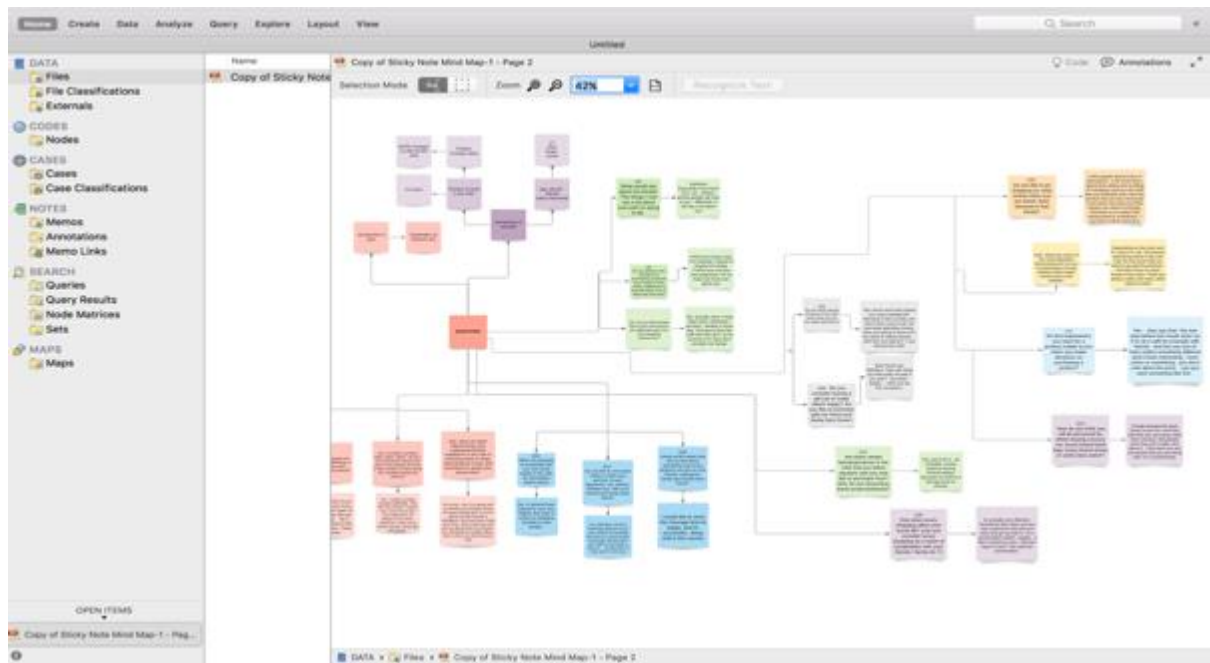
Definition of codes-NVivo

## **Transcripts mind mapping**

Mind map is an excellent tool to increase creativity and productivity where it help to generate ideas and identify relationships among codes. Mind maps were developed for all transcripts which helped to visualize the most significant statements. Mind mapping is an efficient tool in communicating the data by triggering colourful images and shapes in the reader's memory. Hence, the researcher used Mind mapping as a tool to demonstrate further the themes and sub-themes of this study. The NVivo software is limited in the Mind map structuring and development, as it has only 3 options named as; the floating idea, child idea and sibling idea. The software is limited to be further creative in constructing an informative creative mind map. Therefore, the author decided to use a supportive software called Lucidchart, and developed a more creative Mind map.

The following method was followed in developing and displaying the mind maps of the transcripts:

- From the NVivo import tap, files were selected and the Mind map file that was created in Lucidchart, was imported to NVivo.
- All codes that are linked to each other, they were matched to the respected themes and/or sub-themes. Please see below Figure for the Mind map of transcripts. Kindly refer to Appendix 9, for a sample of Mind map created for participant #8 by using Lucidchart.



*Mind-map*