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Seeing beyond the price. An empirical study evaluating
experiential marketing factors in UK value-based fashion
retailers.

Doctor of Philosophy

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Abstract

Purpose – Understanding why within the declining UK high street two value-based fashion retailers (Retailer 1 and Retailer 2) have been successful at sales and store growth since the 2008-2009 financial crisis. Online retail sales significantly impacted traditional retailers and even some price orientated business models used by retailers, went into administration which suggests that price is not the only factor which motivates consumers to shop at these retailer's stores. The coronavirus impacts have accelerated the decline of the UK high street with some big retailers going into administration during 2020. This thesis aims to build upon the literature within Experiential Marketing with particular focus upon Perceived Customer Value literature linked to the most closely associated area of Retail Customer Experience. To apply a visual research method developed in the 1990s to establish what other perceived experiential values consumers have beyond low-prices and develop a framework for retailers from the factors which are most important to shoppers.

Literature Review – The Literature Review focuses on four topic areas identified as being linked to the main research question: Consumer Behaviour, Experiential Marketing, Perceived Customer Value and Retail Customer Experience. The extent of the literature indicated that previous studies within this arena have mainly underpinned their approaches from some of the pioneering authors and have generally applied a quantitative methodology with the purpose of identifying correlations between the hypotheses being tested. The researcher proposes that there are three unique gaps in current knowledge from these subject areas; 1) Further insights into why customers are choosing to shop at value-based fashion retailers in the UK, beyond low-prices. 2) Qualitative research responses, utilising metaphor elicitation techniques, with the purpose of identifying perceived experiential values. 3) Conveying perceived values and metaphorical value descriptions into an experiential marketing framework.

Design/Methodology/Approach – The focus for the study was inductive with 24 qualitative depth interviews utilising the Zaltman Metaphor Elicitation Technique (ZMET) approach to explore the shopping experiences that participants were having at the two case study retailers and what they valued about these experiences. A week to two weeks prior to the interview, each participant was asked to collect 6 to 10 images which represented the aspects they valued about their shopping experiences at the retailer. During the interview participants explained what each of the images collected represented to them and the images were collated into a montage. All interviews were transcribed and reviewed through thematic analysis and through NVivo.

Findings – The results of the research highlighted that whilst price is still the lead motivator for shoppers visiting these retailers, other areas of the shopping experience are very powerful motivators,

in-particular the process and achievement of the core value of discovery through finding an item which they had not planned to purchase and was felt to be something particularly special. Participants may typically spend more than an hour to two hours within these stores and were willing at times to put in the significant effort required in order to have the discovery experience. From a negative perspective, overcrowding, lack of space, too much merchandise and untidy displays left by other customers were significant demotivators. Metaphors used by participants to describe the shopping experience highlight the areas for change/improvement in the store environment plus how value-based fashion retailers could consider enhancing their marketing communications using metaphors.

Originality/Value – The thesis established through the images selected by the participants that shoppers develop and make sense of their shopping experiences mainly through the connections they have with store, the amount of control they feel they have and aspects of the shopping journey. The applied ZMET based methodology is the first time it has been used for UK value-based fashion retailers focused upon understanding perceived experiential values. The core value of discovery has been used to adapt the original Typology of Customer Value developed by Holbrook (1996). The study also develops and presents a Perceived Retail Experiential Value (PREV) Framework which highlights to retailers what the significant areas of focus are within the Pre-Store Arrival, In-Store Experience and Post-Store Experience stages of the shopping experience.

Limitations/Further Research – The study is limited by the two selected case study companies and therefore some of the perceived values and types of experience may not be applicable to other similar large fashion retailers or smaller stores. A similar ZMET based study using other traditional retailers may highlight why they have seen declining sales or potentially a broader study into the overall high street may indicate what the future of town and city centres could look like.

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Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Context for the Study

This Doctorial study has been commenced to explore questions regarding the deeper values customers place upon their shopping experiences, focused within two value-based fashion retailers in the United Kingdom (UK).

At the beginning of this PhD study in 2016 the researcher first identified that UK consumers had changed their shopping behaviour as result of the 2008-2009 global financial crisis. This led to low price (value-based) retailers in the UK achieving good growth in both sales and market share. However, the change in consumer behaviour did not appear to be solely because of the low-prices offered by these retailers. This study tried to identify the experiential shopping values that consumers perceive when visiting two selected value-based fashion retailers through the application of depth interviews and metaphor elicitation techniques.

1.1.2 Overview of the UK Retail Sector

In 2008-2009 the global financial crisis caused the UK economy to slip into a double dip recession with slow (flat) growth through to the end of 2019. As a result, Petermans et al (2014) suggested that the changing economic conditions since 2007 were having an impact upon the behaviour of consumers. Accordingly, the broader UK Retail Sector had seen consumers changing their shopping behaviour by choosing to purchase more products from everyday price orientated retailers. Mintel (2015) stated that pressures on households at that time to manage their spending and save money since 2008 had increased, and shoppers were becoming more aware of the significant savings that can be made by shopping around and searching for the best price. Marketline (2015) also highlighted that traditional retailers were still trying to appeal to the post-recession consumer but that consumers were increasingly choosing to shop at value-based retailers.

This change in consumer behaviour resulted in value-based retailers thriving since 2008, whilst the more well-established retailers who were used to dominating the crowded middle of the market saw their market share eroding.

However, the researcher questioned early on whether this trend of customers moving away from

traditional retailers towards the value-based retailers. Was this just because customers were concerned about low-prices, or was there perhaps something deeper that they value about their shopping experiences?

1.1.3 UK Clothing Retail Market

Consistent with the overall UK retail market, clothing retail in the UK saw very challenging market conditions since the global financial crisis of 2008-2009. In their annual Clothing Retailer Report, Mintel (2016) highlighted that consumers had significantly reduced their spending on clothing as a percentage of total spend, with spend on clothes and accessories estimated to have fallen to only 3.9% of total consumer spend in 2016, down from 4.6% in 2015. Figure 1.1 showed the decrease in consumer spending from 2011 up to 2016.



Figure 1.1 Spending on clothing and accessories as percentage of all consumer spending, 2011-

16

Source: ONS/Mintel

The future forecast outlook for the clothing retail market appeared to be very mixed with differing perspectives over predicted growth. Marketline (2016 p.7) took a more positive perspective for the sector and noted that *'UK apparel retail industry had seen moderate growth in recent years and this was forecast to continue at an accelerated pace'* whereas Mintel (2016 p.1) appeared to be less optimistic and argued that *'that consumer spending on clothing rose only 1.8% in 2016 to £54.8 billion as consumers spent less of their disposable income on buying new clothes'*. Future forecasts for the market also differed between Marketline and Mintel with Marketline indicating buoyant growth figures with a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 4.7% for the period 2015- 2020 shown in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1 Apparel Retail UK Forecast. Source: Marketline (2016).

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Mintel’s more cautionary forecast for the market was due to the potential increase in import costs being passed onto customer as a result of Brexit (Mintel 2016), however the Brexit negotiations and transition period lasted until the end of 2020. Mintel’s (2016) forecast for the period 2015 – 2021 is shown in Table 1.2.

Consumer spending on clothing and accessories (incl. VAT) at current prices, 2011-21

Table 1.2 Mintel Forecast (2016). Source: ONS/Mintel.

<p>Content removed due to Copyright Restrictions</p>

Despite the mixed forecasts within the UK Clothing Retail Sector, the researcher chose to focus on this sector and more specifically the area of value-based clothing retailers for this study, as so far, they had seen buoyant growth since 2008 (Marketline 2016). The term ‘value-based’ has been used instead of low-price.

1.1.4 Growing Online Market and Declining High Street

In addition to an increasing value-based high street, it is noteworthy to acknowledge the growth in online transactions continuing to increase each year. McCormick et al (2014) highlighted the impact of the internet being the biggest change to the fashion retail landscape. Allen and Liu (2017) indicated at the time of their publication that with shopping increasingly moving online, retailers could not afford to ignore the internet and as a result retail space was now being rationalized.

Mintel (2015) noted that the online sales of clothing and accessories were growing quickly and by the end of 2015 would account for around 20% of total market spending. Furthermore, the introduction of solely web-based 'pure play' retailers had potentially encouraged some consumers away from visiting the high street altogether and instead lured them into buying their clothing exclusively from websites. These websites offer the latest styles with convenient delivery systems which allow customers to order goods and receive them the next day. This online trend highlighted that there are now many different and convenient ways for the consumers to find, select and purchase their clothing instead of visiting the traditional high street.

Nevertheless, some of the traditional retailers fought back by concentrating on their in-store experience for customers. Sachdeva and Goel (2015) argue that because of the competition coming from web retailing, traders were lifting the standard of the in-store experience into something more entertaining, exciting and educational to bring shoppers back through their doors.

1.1.5 UK Retail Sector Update and the Impact of the Global Pandemic

The UK retail sector continued to experience challenging market conditions post 2017 with further retailers disappearing from the high street which suggested that discount retailers needed to provide more than just low-prices to compete on the high street.

However, none of the retailers were prepared for the impact of the global pandemic which forced non-essential retailers to temporarily close their stores during the lockdown measures. When these retailers could reopen, strict social distancing requirements and government safety measures were put in place. The global pandemic accelerated the closure of some further retail stores by an estimated 5 to 10 years, and as a result, some major high street retailers closed their stores and went into administration (Guardian 2021).

Mintel (2020) published their latest figures for the UK Clothing Retail Sector in October 2020 which begin to show what the true impact of the global pandemic had on Clothing Retailer's sales from March 2020 shown in Figure 1.2 and Table 1.3.

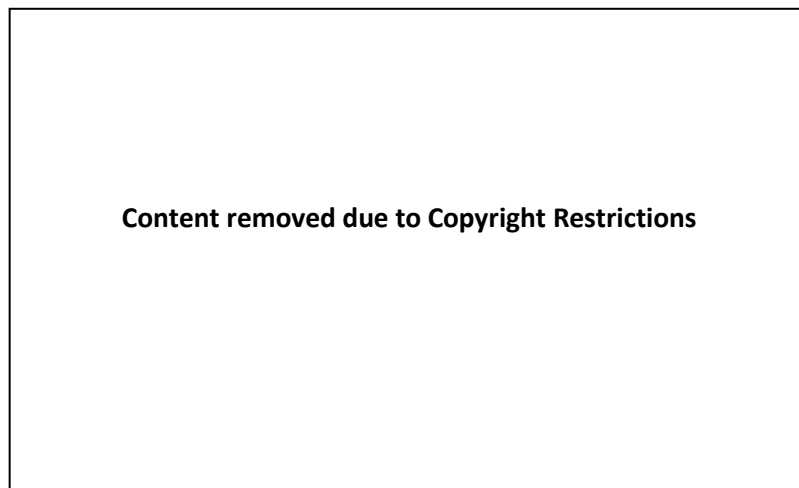


* Market size includes men's, women's and children's clothing, underwear and fashion accessories

Figure 1.2 Consumer spending on clothing and accessories, 2015-25 Source: ONS/Mintel (2020)

Table 1.3 Consumer spending on clothing and accessories, at current prices, 2015-25

Source: ONS/Mintel (2020)



The data indicates that the Clothing Retail Sector performed better than expected between 2016 and 2019 with a large decrease in 2020. However, Mintel's estimate in 2021 indicates a sharp snap recovery to the clothing retail sector and buoyant growth heading towards 2025.

1.1.6 Changing Consumer Behaviour in Clothing Retail

The changes to the landscape of clothing retail in the UK already highlighted in this section are important to retailers as they need try to understand what is motivating their customers to visit their stores, websites and other access channels. Marketline (2015) highlighted that the consumer perspective was being much more carefully considered by retailers and that they are very interested in understanding what consumers want and what motivates them to spend money. Research completed by Mintel (2016) focused on reasons for buying clothes, (shown in Figure 1.3), includes a mix of ‘hedonic’ and ‘utilitarian’ responses (Babin et al 1994), categorised by the researcher. However, these may suggest that Mintel’s research questions are pre-selected which does not allow participants to freely respond with deeper and personal reasons for buying clothes, plus none of the responses mention experiential aspects of shopping for clothes.

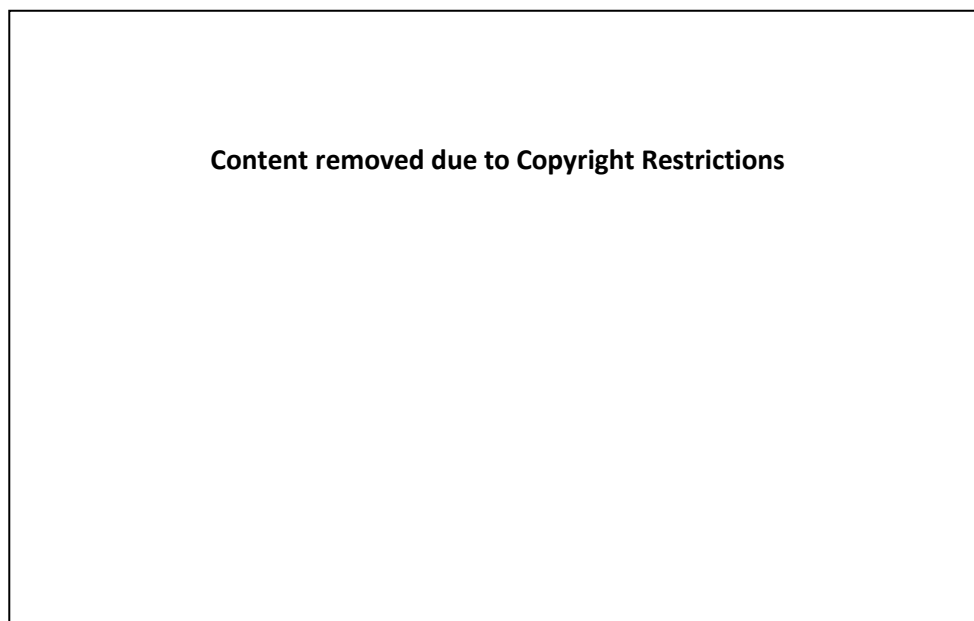


Figure 1.3 *“For which, if any, of the following reasons have you bought new clothes for yourself in the last 12 months?”*

Base: 1,846 internet users aged 16+ who have bought clothes for themselves in-store or online in the last 12 months

Source: Lightspeed/Mintel (2016).

However, despite Mintel’s research in Figure 1.3 potentially omitting any experiential responses, Mintel (2016) do acknowledge in another publication that retailers are over-emphasising price which has led to consumers craving experience more than ever, which indicated that retailers needed to

explore how they can transform clothes shopping and the retail environment into something more experiential (Mintel 2016). Mintel (2016) also claimed that many clothing retailers had been focusing too much on using price and discounting to attract shoppers. This indicated that customers are valuing more than just price when they shop at value-based fashion retailers.

1.1.7 Focus on Value-Based Physical Clothing Retailers

In a portion of the clothing sector, Retailer 1 and Retailer 2 (selected for this study) are value-based clothing retailers that have continued to grow despite the tough UK retail trading conditions which were forecasted for 2017 at just 1.3% growth for the clothing retail sector and approximately around 1.0% growth forecast each year until 2021 (Mintel 2016).

As both of these retailers had previously and continue to place more reliance upon their bricks and mortar offering, this study will be focused on the physical store experience they deliver and not the experiences of any of the alternative retail channels they offer.

1.1.8 Clothing Retailers Selected for this Research Study

Two value-based retailers were selected as case study companies for this research because the companies are classed as ‘Clothing Specialists’ by Mintel.

Retailer 1 and Retailer 2 were the chosen companies as they are generally both considered to be utilising a value-based approach towards the clothing sector and each retailer has a similar percentage sales mix of women’s and men’s products (shown in Figure 1.4). However, it must be noted that each retailer offers differences in products and service to their customers (highlighted in Table 1.4).



Figure 1.4 Sales Mix of Broad Range Clothing Retailers. Source: Mintel (2016) Adapted by Author.

From Figure 1.4 the two chosen retailers can be seen to be similar in their mix of clothing range with approximately 55% womenswear, 33 % menswear and just over 10% childrenswear. Within this chart some other companies which are also seen to be in the value-based area of the market, carrying a clothing range were not selected for this study as they are predominately categorised selling food, drink and other homeware products which are not linked to the clothing retail sector. The remaining companies in Figure 1.4 are not competing in the value-based area of the market.

A further summary of the two case study companies is shown below in Table 1.4 to outline the size and scope of these organisations and initially emphasise their similarities and differences.

Table 1.4 Comparison of the two case study companies for this research. Source: Mintel (2016), updated by Author (2021).

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From the details in Table 1.4, the two selected companies have some significant similarities and differences, but essentially the researcher has selected them for this study because they both reside in the category of value-based clothing retail as their core offering.

1.1.9 Summary of Retail

The impact of the financial crisis in 2008 and subsequent UK recessions, plus the acceleration of online transactions and improved home delivery options, changed the behaviours of consumers. Despite those challenging conditions, value-based retailers generally appeared to thrive in contrast to other companies until the global pandemic in 2020 where all non-essential retailers were forced to close their stores during the lockdown measures.

This study sets out to explore and identify what is beyond the low-prices and discover the deeper reasons why consumers choose to shop at the two case study companies. Supporting this viewpoint, Willems et al (2016) suggested that the academic understanding of the phenomenon of discounters was still rather limited.

This study hopes to gain important insights into a deeper understanding of what perceptions customers have of their shopping experience at the two selected retailers and discover insights into what customers value from a shopping experience.

Therefore, the theoretical background, underpinning research, theories and perspectives that relate this study are initially considered with regards to their context to the study in the following sections.

1.2 Further Context of the Study

1.2.1 Consumer Behaviour

The origins and extent of Consumer Behaviour theories dates to before Roman times (Szmigin and Piacentini 2015). These authors also cite specifically Adam Smith's 1776 book '*Wealth of Nations*' as being central to the notion of the consumer ever since. Given that Solomon (2013) argues that the arena of consumer behaviour covers a wide continuum, the subject parameters of this study have been narrowed to include these consumer behaviour areas: Human and Shopping Motivation, Human Values, Sensory Perceptions, Metaphors and Feelings.

These particular areas were selected as the researcher wanted to understand what was motivating the shoppers at the two selected retailers to visit their stores, what perceptions the shoppers had of their shopping experiences, what customers ultimately value about the shopping experience and the types of feelings being experienced whilst shopping. The area of metaphors was selected as the researcher planned to use a metaphor elicitation technique for the study.

Human Motivation research presented by Dichter (1947) (which was based upon the work of psychoanalytic theories of Freud 1923) is seen as '*instrumental in advancing the view that consumer choice may be driven by noncognitive and unconscious motives*' (Sheth et al 1991 p.161). The widely cited Theory of Motivation by Maslow (1954) has interesting links between the hierarchy of needs model and the value-based clothing sector, as both the low level basic human needs for clothing appear to be met by value-based retailers, but also the higher-level self-esteem needs in Maslow's model could also be achieved by these retailers. Maslow's (1954) theory is found to be linked to the subsequent development of Human Value theories.

Human Values are difficult to understand and define as they are developed at a cultural and individual level which in-turn influence each other. However, since the late 1960s several pioneering social science authors have endeavoured to understand what values mean through developed theories which define, categorise and in some way measure human values. One author in particular, (Rokeach 1973) through a robust number of surveys of American men and women, developed 18 Instrumental and Terminal human values. These values along with a mixture of the work of Feather (1975) and Maslow (1954) are recognised as the basis of the subsequent theory called the List of Values (LOV) which is mainly credited to Kahle (1983). Other values theories such as VALS (Mitchel 1983) and Schwartz's Values (1992) have been found to be instrumental in the development of consumer value theories which followed and are reviewed later by the researcher in the area of Perceived Customer Value (see section 2.4).

The study needs to capture what customers perceive about their shopping experiences, so the subject area of sensory perceptions is explored and highlights that perception is highly subjective, with the situation, past experience and preferences affecting how people perceive things (Szmigin and Piacentini 2015). Perception according to Solomon (2013) is the process by which people organise and interpret sensations from their environment through three stages of exposure, attention and interpretation. The interpretation part of the process becomes most important to this study as a person will begin to put meaning to their experiences to interpret the images they see (Szmigin and Piacentini 2015). Gestalt psychology indicates that people try to add 'something' to complete their perception of the picture and give it meaning, which includes the development of metaphors. Petermans et al (2014) argue that consumers perceive and are influenced by Gestalt thinking where the retail environment is considered in its totality.

Feelings expressed by the participants in the study with regards to the shopping experience are of interest to the researcher as these may be a wide mixture of positive and negative sentiment depending on the perceived success of the shopping visit. Authors such as Berry et al (2002a) have highlighted the need for businesses to focus on the total customer experience and in order to do this they need to manage the feeling areas of the experience.

Seen as one of the most powerful ways in which human's perceive the world is through Metaphors. Tynan (2008 p.10) states that *'metaphors shape and structure our thoughts and thus govern our accepted view of the world'* and that *'metaphors are instrumental in that they lead to enhanced understanding and improved communication, especially in portraying difficult and abstract concepts'* (p.14).

The research method of Zaltman Metaphor Elicitation Technique (ZMET) developed by Gerald Zaltman in the early 1990s discovers deeper insights into consumer perceptions of products, services and brands. Zaltman (2003) contends that understanding metaphors is very significant for marketing managers as metaphors enable managers to imagine consumers' needs outside of conventional consumer experience research tools which are more literally orientated.

1.2.2 Development of Experiential Marketing

Experiential Marketing has grown in interest since the early 1980s and covers a wide scope of sectors. Leisure and Hospitality sectors are avid implementers of Experiential Marketing as their customers typically seek an experience whilst using their services, however Experiential Marketing has also extended its influence and popularity into the customer service and retail sectors. Pioneering work in this subject area is widely acknowledged to be from the 1982 paper by Holbrook and Hirschman who contended that the experiential perspective of consumer behaviour was emerging.

However, even earlier authors are identified including Kotler who in 1973 implied that shopping was becoming more of a pleasure-seeking activity. Further widely cited works from Pine and Gilmore (1998) and Schmitt (1999a) in Experiential Marketing, pave the way for subsequent research which tried to test, measure and further understand experiential aspects of consumerism. Significant links between Experiential Marketing and Value/Retail become clearer with studies such as Mathwick et al (2001) who suggested that retailers need to manage the relationship with the customer through experience-based value.

1.2.3 Focus on Perceived Customer Value

A subsidiary of Experiential Marketing; Perceived Customer Value is a subject that researchers have tried to understand, evaluate and measure. Carpenter et al (2005) argue that it is essential that industry practitioners understand the factors that consumer's value when shopping and Parasuramen (1997) notes that the concept of perceived value was one of the most important ways in which to gain competitive advantage.

Nevertheless, Perceived Customer Value along with Human Values can be difficult to define and measure due to being very personal and idiosyncratic (Zeithaml 1988). But despite this difficulty authors have tried to define it and measure it in the context of consumers. Most notably are Babin et al (1994) who claimed that there needed to be more scales for measuring consumer perceptions of utilitarian and hedonic value. These distinguishing categories of utilitarian and hedonic value have become a popular underpinning theory for other studies which followed and can be linked back to the hierarchical levels of Maslow's (1954) theory with utilitarian values at the lower levels and hedonic values nearer the higher levels.

Research studies in Perceived Customer Value which have followed these key early studies appear to utilise quantitative approaches, typically with a survey questionnaire approach (Becker 2018). Fewer studies appear to utilise a qualitative approach.

1.2.4 Retail Customer Experience

Research identified to be closest to this study is in the area of Retail Customer Experience which has established links back to Perceived Customer Value, Experiential Marketing and the overarching subject of Consumer Behaviour. Heavily cited early studies linked to Retail Customer Experience date back to Kotler (1973) and Mehrabian and Russell (1974) where environmental factors were initially acknowledged as having an effect on consumers.

Research into atmospherics appears to be a thoroughly explored sub-section of Retail Customer Experience with Ismail (2011 p.171) stating that '*Atmospherics or servicescape is the area that receives the most research attention*'. In post 2000 literature, both quantitative and qualitative research studies are applied with the quantitative studies mainly utilising survey questionnaire approaches (Becker 2018) whilst in post 2000 qualitative studies, in-depth interviews are commonplace. Some research presents participant's metaphorical descriptions of their store experience, however the significance of these is not acknowledged.

1.3 Research Aim, Objectives and Questions

The Aim of this study is: *‘To identify and evaluate key factors beyond low-prices which motivate consumers to shop at value-based fashion retailers, with the purpose of developing a perceived retail experiential values framework’.*

The objectives are to:

- 1.) To identify what motivates customers of value-based fashion retailers to shop at their stores.
- 2.) To examine how important the price factor is to shoppers.
- 3.) To examine how customers express their feelings about value-based fashion retailers using images and metaphors.
- 4.) To examine what customers value about their shopping experience.
- 5.) To map findings to create a new framework for perceived retail experience values.
- 6.) To translate into practical actions for retailers.

The researcher has identified seven specific research questions for this study which could enhance the deeper understanding of what consumers value about their shopping experiences and how retailers in the value-based sector of the retail fashion industry could improve their experiences for shoppers.

- 1.) Are customers who shop at value-based fashion retailers solely motivated by price?
- 2.) What motivates customers to visit the stores of value-based fashion retailers?
- 3.) What do these customers value about their shopping experience when visiting the stores of value-based fashion retailers?
- 4.) Does a depth interview process identify deeper values through metaphor elicitation techniques which supports other previous research and contributes new knowledge regarding experiential values?

- 5.) Could deeper values suggest what retailers need to improve in their shopping experience for customers?
- 6.) Can these deeper values be captured and presented in a new framework which could potentially assist retail managers?

1.4 Organisation of Thesis

Chapter 2 presents the Literature Review which examines existing research in four main subject category areas: Consumer Behaviour, Experiential Marketing, Perceived Customer Value and Retail Customer Experience. It critically reviews the extant knowledge and approaches towards understanding the consumer and their values within shopping experiences to identify gaps in the literature which the study aims to contribute.

Chapter 3 presents the Research Methodology which outlines the researcher's selected approach towards this study to justify why the philosophical stance, design, strategy and methods have been chosen and are seen as most suitable for achieving the research aim and answering the research questions. The advantages and limitations of the selected research approach are considered and acknowledged. The sample for the study is outlined with the number of participants and demographics.

Chapter 4 presents the findings from each of the participants interviews from the transcripts, first using manual codes. Each interview is presented based upon the order of each image discussed and with regards to their meaning and context to the shopping experience at either Retailer 1 or Retailer 2. Codes have been categorised under the main laddering areas used within the interviews of Sensory Perceptions, Retail Experience Factors, Motivations, Perceived Customer Values, Human Values and Feelings. Each retailer is reviewed separately.

Chapter 5 contains the further analysis of the montages created by the participants and separate analysis of the metaphors expressed by the participants applied to the ZMET Seven Giants. The interview transcripts are reviewed a second time through the NVivo software platform and the frequency of the codes from the interviews is presented. Themes that have emerged from the most frequent codes across the two retailers are then summarised and presented.

Chapter 6 contains the discussion of the findings and analysis, focusing on the price value first and how this is expressed for each of the two retailers. Other perceived experiential values from the

participants shopping experiences are explained in further detail and the various stages of the shopping visit are established. The proposed experiential framework of the study is explained and presented. Practical application of the framework for retail managers is outlined.

Chapter 7 presents the study conclusions, recommendations and the contributions of the thesis. The research objectives of the study are reviewed and how the study has met these is explained. Answers to the seven research questions are presented. The theoretical, empirical and methodological contributions are submitted. Limitations to the study and potential areas for future research are acknowledged.

The overview of the study chapters is shown in Figure 1.5.

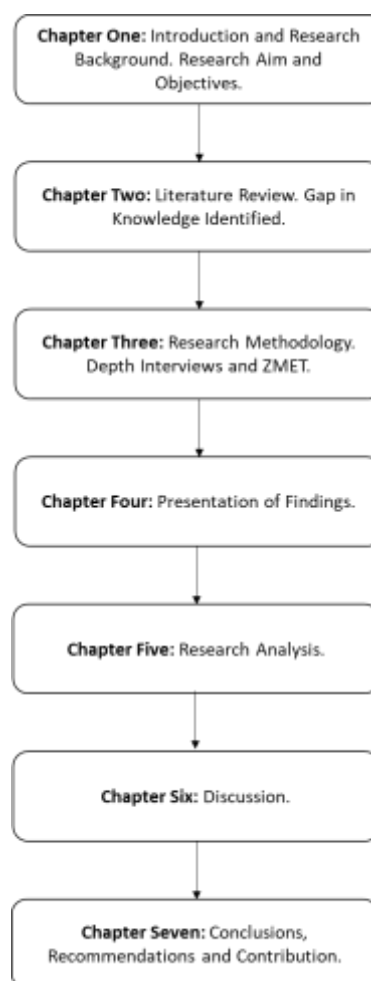


Figure 1.5 Thesis Outline.

Chapter 2 Literature Review

2.1 Introduction and Overview

The researcher poses the question as to whether it is just price that matters to customers when visiting value-based fashion retailers, if these retailers really understand what customers value from a shopping experience and how this has previously been explored using qualitative research techniques.

In order to begin to answer this question an understanding of academic research literature in the areas of Consumer Behaviour, Experiential Marketing, Perceived Customer Value and Retail Customer Experience is explored to establish the current knowledge into what researchers appear to already know about customer values from the shopping experience. These areas have been selected for review as they will form the basis of the areas within the interview laddering.

The literature review begins with examining the overarching subject of consumer behaviour which has become an important research area within marketing. The review begins with acknowledging the overview of this field but then sets out the parameters of this study due to sheer size and scope of the subject area. Five subject parameters of consumer behaviour within this study are established as 1) Human and Shopping Motivation, 2) Human and Consumption Values, 3) Sensory Perceptions 4) Feelings and 5.) Metaphors.

The second section of the review moves closer towards more specific subjects linked to this study, which have subsequently developed from the arena of Consumer Behaviour. Experiential Marketing has grown in interest since the early 1980s and has a wide scope of sectors in which it is used. Leisure and Hospitality sectors are avid implementers of Experiential Marketing as their customers typically seek an experience whilst using their services, however, Experiential Marketing has extended its influence and popularity into other service and retail sectors.

The third section identifies a subsidiary of Experiential Marketing called Perceived Customer Value which has significant links back to the earlier section on Human and Consumption Values but has also been identified as linking significantly with the retail sector.

Finally, the fourth section reviews research identified to be closest to this study in the area of Retail Customer Experience which has been established to have links back to the previous areas of Perceived Customer Value, Experiential Marketing and the overarching subject of Consumer Behaviour.

Marshall and Rossman (2011) highlight the importance of using a metaphorical funnel approach towards the research topic area with an initial broader and more general conceptual view of the subject which is narrowed into a more focused area. The literature review will funnel down through

this study’s subject areas following on from the general market macro factors already considered in the Introduction chapter which are influencing the value-based retail sector.

Metaphors and values will be of particular focus through the literature review as these feature within the aim of the study.

The research funnel developed for this study is shown in figure 2.1.

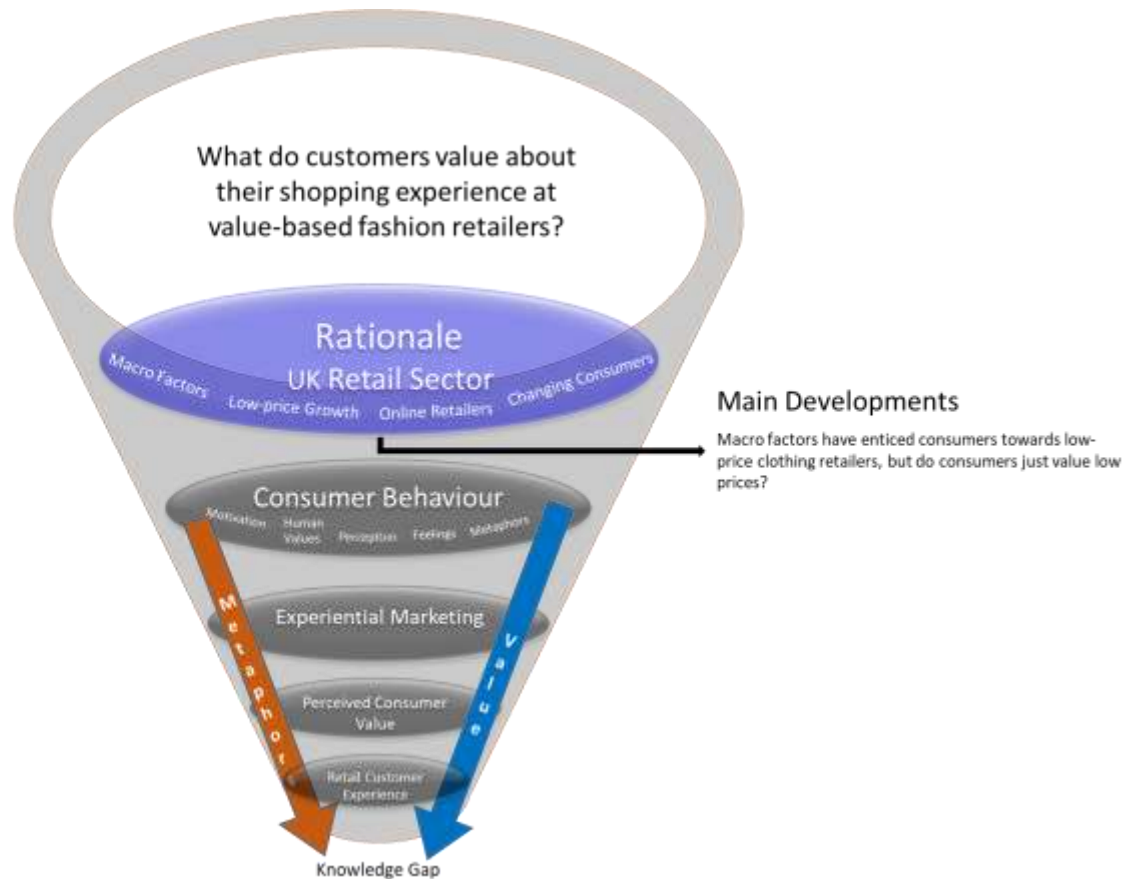


Figure 2.1 Knowledge Gap ‘Funnel’ for further research into UK value-based fashion retailers.

In the early stages of the construction of the literature review the researcher utilised the journal databases of Emerald, EBSCO, Science Direct (Elsevier), SAGE Journals, Taylor and Francis and Wiley Online Journals using different key words (See Table 2.1) to search for publications in each topic area. A snowballing method was used to identify key publications and then find the papers cited within these journals. To ensure the literature review had considered a comprehensive range of publications in each of the sections a keyword searches were completed in the SCOPUS database (sorted by relevance and by most cited) during the later stages of the literature review in 2021 and 2022 to identify very recent new publications before submission and any other additional papers that may have been missed or were relevant to this study.

Table 2.1 Literature Review Keyword Search for this study.

Subject Area	Keywords used
Consumer Behaviour	Affective, Behaviour, Cognitive, Consumer, Consumption, Dichter, Feeling, Emotion, Kahle, List Of Values, Human, Motivation, Maslow, Metaphor, Perception, Rokeach, Sensory, Shopping, Value, Wheel, Willcox, ZMET, Zaltman
Experiential Marketing	Experiential, Experience, Framework, Marketing, Critical, Review, Holbrook, Hirschman, Four Realms, Pine, Gilmore, Schmitt, Stimulus Organism Response
Perceived Customer Value	Consumer, Customer, Means-End, Holbrook, Category, Typology Perceived, Value, Retail, Scale, Shopping, Critical, Review, Zeithaml
Retail Customer Experience	Atmospherics, Bitner, Consumer, Customer, Environment, Experience, Index, Kotler, Measurement, Physical, Servicescape, Shopping, Retail, Retailing, Critical, Review, Fashion, ZMET

The literature review is summarised, and conclusions are drawn which highlight the gap in knowledge which this study hopes to address and the future scope of potential research.

A visual map of the literature review has been developed by the researcher to show how the sections flow and follow each other with main themes noted within each section (see Figure 2.2).

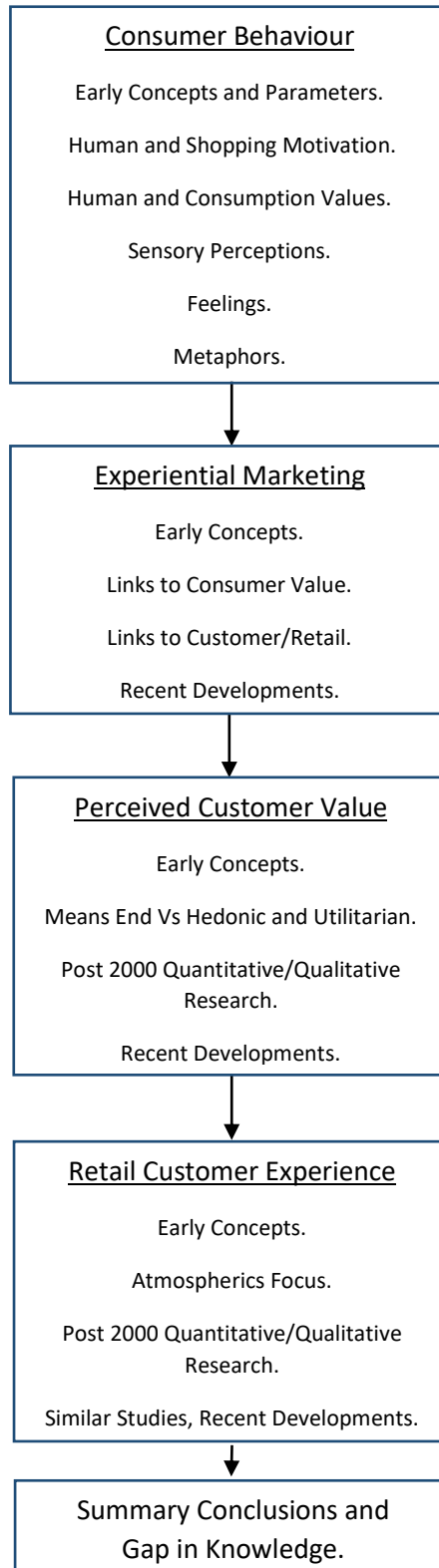


Figure 2.2 Literature Review Process for this study.

2.2 Consumer Behaviour

This section endeavours to understand more of the overarching academic subject area of Consumer Behaviour because it encompasses a broad range of topic areas within its sphere of activity (Solomon 2013).

2.2.1 Overview, Early Concepts and Parameters for this Study

The term 'Consumer Behaviour' is defined by Blackwell et al (2001) as the activities people embark on when obtaining, consuming and disposing of products and services. Whereas Arnould et al (2002) go further to state that it is individuals or groups acquiring, using and disposing of products, services, ideas or experiences. The addition of the word experiences by Arnould et al (2002) is quite significant for this study as the focus on experiences and experiential marketing has grown since it was first suggested by Holbrook and Hirschman (1982) and is explored in more detail later in this chapter.

As this study's purpose is to perceive what customers value when shopping at value-based fashion retailers, beyond price motivators, it is therefore essential that the following five key areas of consumer behaviour are evaluated because of their close associations to the study; Human and Shopping Motivation, Human and Consumption Values, Sensory Perceptions, Feelings and Metaphors.

2.2.2 Human and Shopping Motivation

Within this section, the context of studies and research investigating why people have certain motivations towards fulfilling their needs, satisfying wants and achieving goals is explored. The relationship between human motivation and the development into shopping motivation will also be acknowledged.

Since the around the 1950s motivation research became very popular and developed from the work of Ernest Dichter (Szmigin and Piacentini 2015). Dichter became known as having the title of '*the father of motivation research*' (Henry 1986 p.216) as he advanced further the psychoanalytic theories of Freud (1923). Dichter's (1947) research was seen as '*instrumental in advancing the view that consumer choice may be driven by noncognitive and unconscious motives*' (Sheth et al 1991 p.161) and that it focused on the emotional aspects of products and the fantasies that products could stimulate or achieve (Hirschman and Holbrook 1982).

Collins and Montgomery (1969) tried to understand the origins of motivational research and argued that two of the most prolific practitioners in motivational research were Ernest Dichter and Louis Cheskin. Dichter's approach towards conducting his research often using in-depth interviews to

discover the participant's real motives for choosing certain products or brands (Szmigin and Piacentini 2015). Collins and Montgomery (1969 p.110) discussed how Dichter's '*principle of depth*' warned against simply accepting initial statements which may give a wrong impression. According to the Economist (2011) Dichter said, it was necessary to get participants to talk at length about their everyday habits. Instead of subjecting many people to quick questionnaires, he preferred a deep, psychoanalytical approach with fewer participants: "*If you let somebody talk long enough, you can read between the lines to find out what he really means*". Dichter (1985) also noted the power of the image, stating that it was a most powerful influence in the way in which people perceive things and that every product had an image or even a 'soul' and is purchased for the values that it embodies (Economist 2011). Dichter's approach to research and the significance of image is similar to the research methodology for this study which will be utilising a ZMET inspired approach to the qualitative research collected.

However, it also needs to be noted that critics of clinical psychology studies conducted by motivation researchers, including Dichter's work, questioned the morality of it and the potential it had to manipulate consumers or its rigor and validity (Packard 1957; Kassarian 1971; Wells and Beard 1973). Other early critics of individuals in motivational research included Henry (1986 p.222) who called into question some of the clinical psychologists who had moved into the field of motivational research of assuming '*super human powers and to deny the necessity of for proving anything*'. As a result, it was felt that the long-term contribution of those studies has been limited (Hirschman and Holbrook 1982, Szmigin and Piacentini 2015).

Contrasting to Ernest Dichter's approach towards motivational research, Louis Cheskin objected to the usual techniques of qualitative research as the results of these processes could not be measured (Collins and Montgomery 1969). However, these more structured and controlled approaches, were seen by Collins and Montgomery (1969) as echoing the work of Harry Henry and they argued that motivational researchers (Cheskin and Henry) were determined to prevent uncontrolled verbalisations due to the challenges of interpreting the material.

Dichter's (1947) motivation research and Maslow's (1954) theory of motivation have since both been linked to the development of human values theories (Rokeach 1963; Kahle et al 1986; Yilmaz et al 2016) which in turn have been developed into consumption values theories and frameworks (Yilmaz et al 2016).

Early development of shopping motivation theories point to a seminal piece developed by Tauber (1972) who made a hypothesis that shopping visits were not always just for the purchase of products but instead that other personal and social motivations were behind the shopper's behaviours (Buttle 2006). Sebald and Jacob (2018) suggest that since the influential study by Tauber, shopping motivation has become a generally investigated theory in marketing-oriented consumer research.

Westbrook and Black (1985) proposed that shopping motivation has three components: 1) the wish to purchase a product, 2) the aspiration to gratify other needs that are separate to the product, 3) the want to achieve other ends which are separate from the actual acquisition. Whereas Buttle (2006) suggested that shopping motives are contextualised by consumers by being structured around the realities of lived experiences rather than personal abstract opportunities.

Wagner (2007 p.570) chose to review shopping motivations through a means-end chain perspective and argued that *'the predominant perspective on shopping motivation commonly simplifies different motives in that they are not classified as belonging to specific degrees of abstraction, or hierarchical levels of specificity'*. This appears to have suggested that there was need to form some sort of categorisation of shopping motivation as the previous studies were too broad and vague. Wagner (2007) advocated that there was need to look further into a hierarchical structure of shopping motivation. However, their approach appears to have continued with the stretching of the shopping motivations into other areas as they acknowledged that motivations were considered as being in four layers; 1) attributes of the store environment such as offers and staff, 2) functional consequences such as a quick and easy shopping visit, 3) psychosocial consequences such as the social outcomes of the shopping visit and 4) values which are centrally held cognitive aspects which *'trigger motivation for behaviour'* (Wagner 2007 p.571).

The researcher would argue that these layers are not focusing on the internal motivations of the shoppers and instead investigate areas which should be explored under the broader categories of Retail Experience Factors (1. attributes), Perceived Customer Values (2. functional consequences) and Human Values (3. psychosocial consequences and 4. Values).

Rajamma et al (2007) in a study into services purchased at bricks and mortar stores versus online stores labelled shopper motivations in six areas; 1) merchandise, 2) assurance, 3) hassle reduction, 4) enjoyment, 5) pragmatic and 6) responsiveness. They argued that these shopper motivations were multidimensional but at the same time recognised that a *'limitation could be that we may have missed some shopping motivation dimensions'* (p.208). As with other studies already mentioned, the researcher would argue that these labels are not internal motivations for shopping and instead represent other attributes of the shopping experience such as Retail Experience Factors (1. Merchandise, 3. hassle reduction, 6. responsiveness), Human Values (4. enjoyment) and Perceived Customer Value (2. assurance, 5. Pragmatic) as these labels represent different external attributes or internal consequences which form just some of the elements of the shopping experience.

Guiot and Roux (2010) in the development of a measurement scale of the motivations for shoppers at second-hand stores was linked to the purchase of used products and the channels they are available from. They proposed 14 motivation dimensions shown in Table 2.2.

Table 2.2 Motivation themes and dimensions for second-hand shoppers. Source: Guiot and Roux (2010).

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Within the 14 dimensions developed by Guiot and Roux (2010) numbers 1, 8, 10, 12 and 13 appear to be the only dimensions which are focused upon motives for shoppers in the store during the shopping visit, whereas the others appear to be broader values.

At the same time, Wagner and Rudolph (2010 p.415) developed a hierarchical model of shopping motivation as they contended that it was '*one of the key concepts in research on consumer shopping behavior and continues to be vividly discussed*'. The model they developed attempted to address the absence in the literature by scholars to agree and explain what shopping motivation is. Using meta-analysis, a review of 25 studies identified that shoppers have motivations which vary from abstract to material to quite distinct examples. Wagner and Rudolph (2010) proposed a conceptual model shown in Figure 2.3. which has three levels of shopping motivation: Purpose-Specific, Activity-Specific and Demand-Specific.

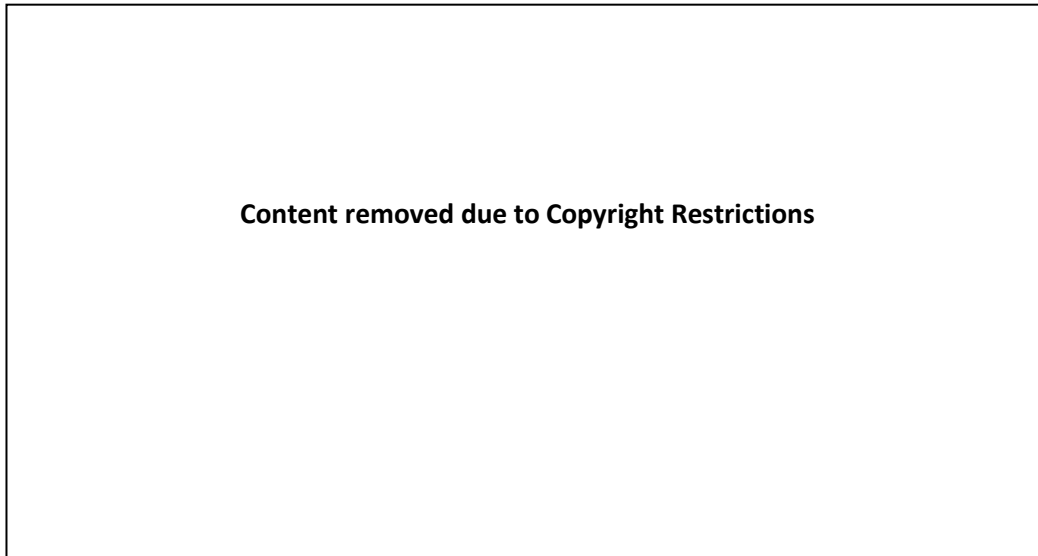


Figure 2.3 Shopping Motivation Conceptual Model. Source: Wagner and Rudolph (2010).

At the Purpose-Specific level the authors suggested that this level was the primary motivation for the customer shopping visit where the completion of a task or to enjoy the shopping visit are the objective of the overall visit and these appear to be in an abstract orientation. Whereas the Activity-Specific level has motivations which could be classed as being more tangible and are objectives or preferred events which customers expect to be able to achieve to accomplish the overall aim of the shopping visit. The Demand-Specific level is seen as the most tangible area of the hierarchy and these represent operational specific areas that customers would expect from the retailer which may influence the customer's decision to choose a particular store.

Testing the conceptual framework in a research study, Wagner and Rudolph (2010) surveyed over 500 shoppers in food and non-food settings and found that in food shopping settings the customers are motivated by a task-driven purpose and are looking for efficiency and service convenience.

Contrastingly, non-food shopping leans more towards recreational purposes with motivations towards inspiration, stimulation, gift shopping, socialising and a demand for more innovative and unique products to choose from.

Sebald and Jacob (2018 p.190) argued that shopping motivation research is '*essential for a full understanding of consumer shopping activities*'. They suggest that the most widely utilised classification for shopping motivations is hedonic and utilitarian reasons and that utilitarian shoppers value aspects such as efficiency and task-related outcomes, while hedonic shoppers are motivated by entertainment and an enjoyable shopping experience. However, Sebald and Jacob (2018) also recognise that these two classifications of motivation can be happening at the same time when shopping.

In a recent study into fashion shopping, Sebald and Jacob (2020 p.321) contend that *'literature generally classifies shopping motivations very differently, ranging from experiential and product, to extrinsic and intrinsic, to utilitarian and hedonic motivation'*. They also suggested that in previous research into shopping motivations of customers at traditional bricks and mortar stores, there was a greater emphasis by the shopper to have sensory experiences, immediate ownership of the product, social interaction and stimulation from the store environment.

Another recent study by Kumar and Yadav (2021) suggests that motivations in the clothing retail sector are now significantly influenced by shoppers who are looking for sustainable options through the promotion of 'green' clothing products. Kumar and Yadav's (2021 p.1) findings from their research indicated that *'a significant impact of information availability and customized offerings on utilitarian motivation, along with a significant impact of adventure, authority, and status on hedonic motivation'* are those consumers are trying to identify for when making a sustainable purchase at clothing retailers.

Therefore, the researcher would suggest that the different approaches towards trying to understand shopping motivations provides a diverse range of ways to research this subject area. However, many of the studies appear to be mixing the initial shopping motivations within the store, for example approach, avoid, find, stay (Arnold and Reynolds 2012) with other proposed motivations which appear to be bigger than or continue beyond the actual shopping experience, for example; gift shopping, gratification, convenience and price (Wagner and Rudolph 2010), aspirations to achieve other goals (Westbrook and Black 1985), social interactions (Sebald and Jacob 2020), frictionless shopping, value for money and quality (Wagner 2007) and nowadays for making more sustainable purchase decisions (Kumar and Yadav 2021).

The researcher would argue that these motivations go beyond the actual 'shopping' part of the experience and are more within the realm of human and perceived customer values when shopping. For the purpose of this study the focus of shopping motivation will be on the motivational drivers customers have during the actual shopping experience as it is occurring, for example; browse, find, select, go to, avoid, wait, purchase.

2.2.3 Human and Consumption Values

The definition of "value" and "values" is a complex and subjective task. Boksberger and Melsen (2011) highlight the ambiguity of the concepts and difference between the terms 'value' and 'values' and argue that these must be distinguished. They suggest 'value' to be singular and more of a preferential judgement of a single transaction, for example 'I give versus what I get' which is widely attributed to Zeithaml (1988) whereas 'values' are *'the determinants of any social behaviour including attitude, ideology, beliefs and justifications'* (Boksberger and Melsen 2011 p.230).

Values can be viewed as social-cultural or individual. Lai (1995) describes values from the cultural level as being widely known but perhaps not always widely accepted in society but are still generic beliefs which are usually desirable and beneficial. Lai (1995) also acknowledges that individual values are more self-centred and linked to a person's needs. However, Lai (1995) also asserts that values are developed through social and cultural learning, so consequently will have different meanings depending on the socio-cultural influences.

Nevertheless, despite the difficulty in defining values and ambiguity of what they embrace, since the late 1960s a number of pioneering social science authors have endeavoured to understand what values mean to human beings through developed theories which define, categorise and in some way measure human values (Rokeach 1968, 1973; Feather 1975; Clawson and Vinson 1978; Mitchel 1983; Kahle 1983; Schwartz 1994). These theories according to Krystallis et al (2012 p.1438) have been an attempt to '*shed light on the attitudes and behaviours of individuals*'.

Rokeach (1973) developed the first of these theories and managed to define two distinct types of value; 1) Instrumental values which are the preferred ways in which to behave in order to achieve the 2) terminal values. Terminal values therefore are the desirable goals or end-states that a person would want to achieve in their lifetime.

Through a robust number of surveys of American men and women, Rokeach developed the 18 Instrumental and Terminal values. Table 2.3 shows the values developed by Rokeach (1973).

Table 2.3 Rokeach's Values (1973). Adapted by Author.

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Interestingly, Rokeach did not develop these values with the intention of converting them into anything linked to consumerism or marketing, but he did acknowledge that through one of the values surveys he completed that he was able to link certain preferred brands of car and detergent to certain values in the theory (1973).

The second of these pioneering values theories is the List of Values (LOV) which is mainly credited to Kahle (1983) but comes from a mixture of works related to values from Rokeach (1973), Feather (1975) and Maslow (1954). The LOV shares obvious similarities to Rokeach's Values (1973) but only contains a total of eight values and is shown in Table 2.4.

Table 2.4 The List of Values (LOV). Adapted by Author from Kahle (1983).

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As with Rokeach's values these have been attributed to being very adaptable and applicable to consumer behaviour and marketing (Yilmaz et al 2016). However, they have received some criticism for being difficult to apply across cultures (Watkins and Gnoth 2005).

The third pioneering theory noted was developed almost a decade later after the LOV theory by Kahle (1983). This theory by Schwartz (1992) according to Lages and Fernandes (2005) built further upon the work of Rokeach (1973). Schwartz contended that his values were founded on needs derived from three perspectives: 1) Individuals' requirements as biological organisms, 2) Society's requirement for coordinated social interaction, and 3) Groups' requirement for survival and support (Schwartz 1992). The model developed by Schwartz (1992) is shown in figure 2.4.

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Figure 2.4 Schwarz Values. Source: Schwarz (1992).

As with Rokeach (1973) and Kahle (1983) the values that Schwartz (1992) developed were not intended to be linked to consumer behaviour. However, Durgee (1996) suggested that one of the most powerful ways to understand and reach consumers is to understand their values and values systems. Research studies into personal values and shopping behaviour, such as the works of Cai and Shannon (2012a, 2012b), chose to utilise Schwartz's values as the underpinning theory to their approach.

Similarities across the values systems of Rokeach (1973), Kahle (1983) and Schwartz (1992) in relation to this study are evident as they have been shown to have links to shopping behaviour

activities (Sarabia-Sanchez et al 2012) and seen as being significant “values” systems (Boksberger and Melsen 2011). All appear to indicate that a person’s values are internally and externally influenced, and as a result, they include a degree of pleasure-seeking goals or desirable states to attain, serving as guiding principles in human’s lives (Rokeach 1973; Schwartz 1992).

Therefore, these systems appear to have found their way into the arena of consumer behaviour research (Lages and Fernandes 2005, Cai and Shannon 2012) and, in particular, perceived customer value. Supporting this point is Lai (1995) who reviewed human values from a consumption behaviour perspective and presented a comprehensive model of customer value which proposed that consumption values were derived from cultural and individual values in a linear fashion (see Figure 2.5).



Figure 2.5 Section of the ‘Framework of Product Valuation for Consumers’ from Lai (1995). Adapted by Author.

Support for the elements of the model developed by Lai (1995) comes from authors (Rokeach 1973, Boksberger and Melsen 2011) who too suggested that a person’s values are influenced by the socio-cultural values that they are exposed to and these then shape their individual values. Lai (1995) further suggests that individual values ultimately lead their consumption values.

From the works of these authors reviewed it therefore becomes clearer that the cultural and individual values that people have are significant and how people perceive these values supports the understanding we have of consumers and therefore requires further investigation. Supporting this is Prebensen and Rosengren (2016 p.115) who state that *‘the perceived value construct is used in research to understand consumer behaviour’*. Perceived Customer Value is reviewed in Section 2.4.

2.2.4 Sensory Perceptions

Perception is acknowledged as a fundamental area within Consumer Behaviour (Evans et al 2009, Solomon and Rabolt 2009, Hoyer and Macinnis 2010, Blythe 2013, Solomon 2013, Szmigin and Piacentini 2015). Perception occurs when stimuli activates a person’s sensory receptors of sight,

sound, touch, taste and smell (Hoyer and Macinnis 2010). Perception, according to Blake and Sekular (2006 p.1), *'puts us in contact with the world we live in; it shapes our knowledge of that world, and knowledge is power'*. Perception is also recognised as the way in which people make sense of the world by filtering, grouping together and mapping out information to allow them to understand how the world works (Blythe 2013).

Solomon (2013) states that perception is the process by which people organise and interpret sensations from their environment through three stages of exposure, attention and interpretation. The model proposed by Solomon (2013) shown in figure 2.6 highlights very basically how an individual processes sensory stimuli.

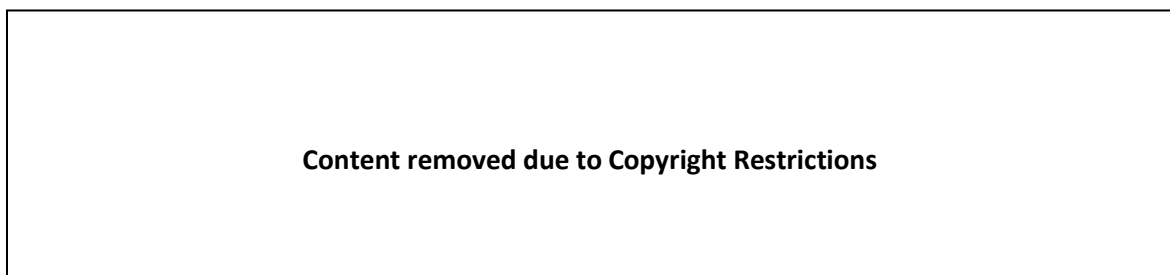


Figure 2.6 An overview of the Perceptual Process. Source: Solomon (2013).

From the five key stimuli of sights, sounds, smells, tastes and textures, Zaltman (2003) notes that around two-thirds of all stimuli reach the brain through the visual system. Therefore, the interpretation element of the process is particularly important to this study because a person creates some meaning to interpret the images and other stimuli they encounter (Szmigin and Piacentini 2015). This interpretation and meaning placed upon images are significant as Zaltman (2003) argues that a person's thought is based upon images and not words.

Moreover, the researcher has also discovered that perception is not just based on thoughts from images collected from visual stimuli and is instead highly subjective, with the situation, past experience and preferences also having an effect on how people perceive things (Szmigin and Piacentini 2015). Hoyer and Macinnis (2010) also highlight that individuals try to organise perceptions so that they form a unified and meaningful whole usefully through the form of 'closure' where individuals may add in visual images in order to complete the picture or 'grouping' to create a unified picture. Gestalt ('whole') psychology (Szmigin and Piacentini 2015) similarly indicates that people try to add 'something' to complete their perception of the picture and give it meaning. Common examples of images used to show this organisation and adding of something to a picture is shown in Figure 2.7, which contains two incomplete triangles in which individual's automatically complete by filling in the missing elements. This is done to achieve some sort of understanding and closure (Szmigin and Piacentini 2015).

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Figure 2.7 The Principle of Closure. Source: Szmigin and Piacentini (2015). Adapted by Author.

Petermans et al (2014) suggest that within retail settings, consumers are influenced by the entire in-store environment and that researchers have tried to explain how consumers perceive these spaces as more than the sum of parts. These insights become particularly significant considerations to this study, as participants will be asked to collect images which represent their perceptions of the shopping experience.

In addition to the suggestion that images are a way in which humans perceive the world, Metaphors have also been cited and acknowledged as one of the most powerful ways in which human's perceive the world. Muklaik (1995) highlights that metaphors are grounded in the embodied schemas of direct perception and likewise Tynan (2008 p.10) states that *'metaphors shape and structure our thoughts and thus govern our accepted view of the world'* and *'metaphors are instrumental in that they lead to enhanced understanding and improved communication, especially in portraying difficult and abstract concepts'* (p.14). Zaltman (2003) also concurs stating that we so often think in metaphors as they help us to interpret what we perceive in the world and often assist us in expressing the way we feel about particular aspects of our lives. Metaphors are reviewed in Section 2.2.6.

Perception has therefore become very important to marketing and marketers as companies and their brands try to ensure that they are perceived by customers in the most positive way possible (Blythe 2013). How the customer perceives the shopping experience is vital to this study as according to Carbone and Haeckel (1994 p.1) it is the *'take-away impression formed by people's encounters with products, services and businesses – a perception produced when humans consolidate sensory information'*.

2.2.5 Feelings

Feelings become particularly prevalent in the context of the study as they are part of the experience the customers have while shopping. Berry et al (2002a) contend that companies must understand and therefore control the feeling component of the experience.

A feelings wheel developed by Willcox (1982) contains 96 different feeling words divided into six main sections stemming from a primary feeling (Smith 1989). Figure 2.8 shows the Feelings Wheel and is used to indicate the wide range of potential feelings the participants may express in their discussions of the shopping experience and this particular area of interest represents the deepest level of questions used within the laddering technique in the study's interviews.



Figure 2.8 The Feelings Wheel. Source: Willcox (1982).

There is some debate in the area of psychology that concerns the link between emotions and feeling or for that matter which comes first, and which impacts upon the other. Damasio (2012 p.109) argues that *'that the essence of emotion and the essence of feeling are different'*. He also describes emotion and feeling as *'part of a tightly bound circle and distinguishable processes'*. Damasio (2012 p.110) also highlights that *'the general distinction between emotion and feeling, then, is reasonably clear. While emotions are actions accompanied by ideas and certain modes of thinking, emotional feelings are mostly perceptions of our state of mind during the emoting, along with perceptions of our state of mind during that same period of time'*.

Reber (2016) however states that feelings are both access conscious where the feeling is in the foreground and is the focus of the person's attention and phenomenally conscious where a person experiences them but potentially cannot reflect upon them or verbalise them. He also states that feelings are subjective experiences of mental or bodily states which includes evaluation. Reber (2016) suggests that emotions are usually short-lived state which are directed towards an object which has various components including: physiological, experiential and cognitive. He also highlights '*that feelings serve as information about our interaction with the environment*' (p.59) and relying on our feelings in many occasions results in an accurate judgement.

David (2016) in an article focusing on three ways to better understand our emotions, suggested that there was a fairly broad list of emotions and feelings. However, they did not distinguish between any differences in emotions and feelings and discussed them both concomitantly. The table of emotions and feelings presented by David (2016) is shown in Table 2.5.

Table 2.5 A List of Emotions. Source: David (2016). Adapted by Author.

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Within this study, participants are asked to describe what sort of feeling each of the images selected represents in the shopping experience before moving onto the next image.

2.2.6 Metaphors

Weiner (1992 p.12), observing the theory of human motivation, contends that *'metaphor restructures perceptions or creates a perceptual shift so that an object is framed differently, producing new mental construction'*. Weiner (1992) also argues that metaphor provides a new way of seeing the world.

The researcher has identified that consensus appears to state that metaphors are the way in which humans relate one object in terms of its similarity to something else. Peterson et al (2017 p.65) state *'in a general sense, metaphor is a device whereby one entity or concept is understood in terms of another'*. Similarly, Tynan (2008 p.13) explains that *'the essence of metaphor is experiencing and contemplating one thing in terms of another'*. Zaltman (2003) also notes that metaphors are the representation of one thing in terms of another and a way in which we express our feelings and views of our lives.

However, these very simple definitions of metaphor only form a tiny part of very complex research, literature, opinions and perspectives relating to metaphors and the wide-ranging forms and connecting concepts surrounding the subject. These works include categorising metaphors as orientational, ontological, structural, conceptual (Lakoff and Johnson 2003), mappings, systems, language (Kovecses 2002) and machines (Weiner 1992).

Mulaik (1995) in-particular highlights the significance of human experiences and notes that we resort to metaphor, integrating new experiences into schemas already available as they help us to comprehend and communicate them. Van den Bulte (1994 p.408) notes that we use metaphors to give structure to *'less concrete and inherently vague concepts'*. Johnson (1987) also agrees contending that a metaphor is a process of human understanding by which we achieve meaningful experience that we can make sense of and therefore from an experiential context, it is a process by which we understand and structure one field of experience in terms of another. Lakoff and Johnson (2003) also suggest that a metaphor can serve as a vehicle for understanding a concept only by virtue of its experiential basis.

In the arena of consumerism, metaphors are very powerful. Chen (2010 p.279) states *'metaphors are the paths leading to the revelation of consumers' feelings and thoughts and provide the relationship among constructs'*. Metaphors are also inescapable and widely utilised. Peterson et al (2017 p.65) agree stating that *'metaphor is ubiquitous in advertising, and metaphors are often expressed entirely through imagery'*. Ortiz et al (2017) also suggests that metaphors are pervasive in everyday messages and regularly used in marketing to draw attention and persuade consumers to buy. However, despite their power and influence, Zaltman (2003) argues that metaphors are so elementary to our thinking that marketers and their consumers are often equally oblivious of them.

Nevertheless, Zaltman (2003) contends that understanding metaphors is very significant for marketing managers as metaphors enable them to imagine consumers' needs outside of conventional consumer

experience research tools which are literally orientated. Correspondingly, Ingram (1994) asserted that researchers in consumerism were finding that that using metaphors was an effective way of helping people bring unconscious experiences into awareness and then be able to communicate these experiences.

2.2.7 Summary

The overarching subject area of consumer behaviour has been acknowledged within this Literature Review because the succeeding subject areas have been found to have their origins clearly rooted within the broad spectrum of consumer behaviour literature and its associations to psychology and human behaviour research.

The review of Human and Shopping motivation indicates consumers have developed drive and desires towards fulfilling their needs, wants and values in life. Early works from the 1950s onwards in clinical psychology studies suggested that people have internal and external motivations. Research in this area helped to develop some of the first lists of human values and initial hypothesis from the 1970s onwards which suggested that shoppers were motivated by a range of hedonic and utilitarian factors such as competing a task to gratification.

Human and Consumption values have been become a mix of ideals which consumers would like to achieve, developed from personal and cultural perceptions. Literature in this area appears to suggest that these human values are developed from cultural norms and given the strength of the cultural setting they inevitably influence the way in which members of the culture consume goods and services.

Sensory Perceptions is the way in which humans understand their world and organise and interpret the sensations, activated by different stimuli which is mainly visual. How humans interpret the world is largely through creating mental images and describing objects and experiences in metaphors.

Feelings are a very broad area of research linked more towards consumption in the context of consumer's reactions towards environmental experiences and their assessment of experiential values. Asking participants about the feelings they can describe for the shopping experience will form part of the laddering technique used within the interviews to try and understand what kinds of sentiments are coming into play during the shopping experience.

Metaphors have helped to shape and structure human thoughts by enhancing, simplifying and improving understanding and communication of complex and intangible ideas and experiences.

Participants were potentially using these metaphorical expressions to make sense of the shopping experience they have had and to explain them within the interviews.

It appears therefore that areas of human behaviour have fundamentally influenced the development of consumer behaviour theories and how then these have continued to expand out into more specific research areas and concepts, including: Experiential Marketing.

2.3 Experiential Marketing

Experiential Marketing (EM) emerged from the studies of several key authors since the early 1980s (Holbrook and Hirschman 1982, Schmitt 1999, Pine and Gilmore 1998, Arnould et al 2002).

However, a critical review of EM by Schmitt and Zarantonello (2013 p.26) proposed that *'experience, as a concept is not well-established as other constructs in the areas of consumer behaviour and marketing, therefore, research in experience is still relatively underdeveloped'*.

EM in the context of this study moves closer towards the focal area of Retail Customer Experience but is broader in its scope and scale than just retail sectors as it includes events, leisure, entertainment, tourism and hospitality (Dobni 2007, Leighton 2007, Manthiou et al 2017). As a theory, Schmitt and Zarantonello (2013) claim that EM comprises of the consumer, product and service, off-line and online, consumption and brand experiences.

2.3.1 Overview, Founding authors and initial concepts

The early development of EM has been widely accredited to Holbrook and Hirschman (1982) who wrote a very influential paper; *'The Experiential Aspects of Consumption: Consumer Fantasies Feelings and Fun'*. This paper is cited extensively in subsequent research and publications including Fiore and Kim (2007), Schmitt and Zarantonello (2013), Szmigin and Piacentini (2015), Merrilees et al (2016).

Schmitt and Zarantonello (2013) and Sachdeva and Goel (2015) contend that Holbrook and Hirschman were the first to develop an experiential viewpoint in marketing and consumer behaviour, which launched the entire research stream that followed in this area.

Holbrook and Hirschman (1982) asserted that the experiential perspective of consumer behaviour necessitates investigating a multisensory psychophysical relationship and it included cognitive processes which were subconscious involving pictorial imagery, fantasies and daydreams. They also proposed that these fantasies and symbolic meanings were lying just below the threshold of consciousness. Holbrook and Hirschman's theories in EM were developed and based on other earlier pioneering works including Gardner and Levy (1955), Levy (1959), Maslow (1968), Hilgard (1970) and Swanson (1978). Holbrook and Hirschman (1982) ultimately concluded that hedonic consumption was going beyond buying products for functional benefits and into to an area of hedonic fantasies, multi-sensory images and emotional arousal.

However, despite the accolades Holbrook and Hirschman have received for their work in 1982, other earlier work from authors including Kotler (1973) had already identified that shopping was becoming more of a pleasure-seeking activity, that shoppers were looking for more than just utilitarian shopping experiences, and therefore marketers needed to consider seriously the power of store ‘atmospherics’ (Schmitt and Zarantonello 2013). Atmospherics (see Section 2.5.2) have been reviewed in further depth as part of the Retail Customer Experience section.

In a more general context, covering more environments than just retail shopping, Mehrabian and Russell (1974) are also extensively cited as developing the one of the most significant models used to understand the shopping experience (Schmitt and Zarantonello 2013). The Stimulus-Organism-Response (SOR) framework developed by Mehrabian and Russell (1974) contended that *‘physical or social stimuli in the environment directly affect the emotional state of a person, thereby influencing his (sic) behaviours in it’* (p.8). Boardman and McCormick (2019 p.366) state that the SOR *‘paradigm advocates that the environment affects the emotional state of the individual, which, in turn, has an impact on their behaviour’*. The conceptual framework is shown in figure 2.9.



Figure 2.9 Environmental Psychology Framework. Source: Mehrabian and Russell (1974).

The Environment aspect of this framework shows similarities to the concept of atmospherics (Kotler 1973) and Mehrabian and Russell’s (1974) pioneering framework, appears to form the basis of many subsequent research in the arena of EM, Perceived Customer Value and Retail Customer Experience (Yoon 2013, Holbrook 1996, Willems et al 2016).

However, even with these clear linkages between Kotler (1973) and Mehrabian and Russell (1974) with many successive EM inspired studies, Holbrook and Hirschman (1982) still appeared to be the

authors who re-energised the concept of EM and then paved the way for subsequent papers and further research.

Continuing to advance the research and development of EM, Pine and Gilmore's 1998 Harvard Business Review paper and subsequent book *'The Experience Economy'* is credited as being what popularised the notion of 'consumer experience' (Kim et al 2011). Pine and Gilmore (1998) argued that experiences are essentially personal, present only in the mind of a person who has been engaged on an emotional, physical, intellectual, or even spiritual level. Pine and Gilmore (1998) developed the 4E's model for Experiential Marketing shown in figure 2.10 which indicates how customers could potentially be immersed in or absorb an experience through active or passive participation. They asserted that this was a new source of value for companies, and they provided experiential examples for each of the 4Es:

- 1) Entertainment (television, concerts, theatre),
- 2) Education (cookery classes, skiing lessons),
- 3) Escapist (white water rafting, abseiling) and
- 4) Esthetic (viewing the Grand Canyon, visiting an art gallery).

This began to indicate the scope and scale of their model in that experiences could be found everywhere and be provided by any organisation.

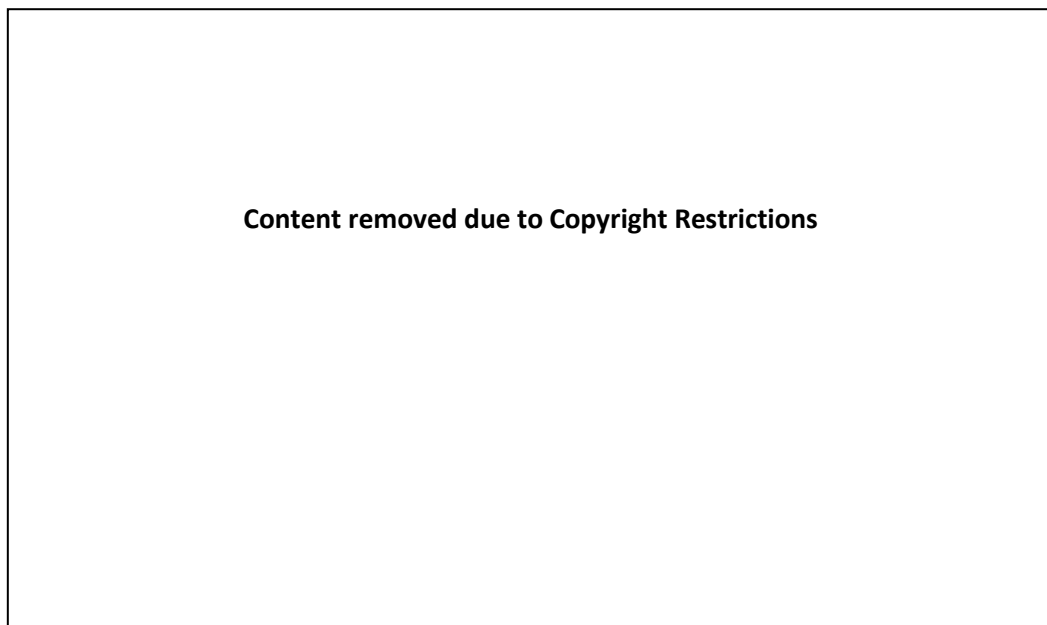


Figure 2.10 The Four Realms of an Experience (Pine and Gilmore 1998). Source: hbr.org,

Schmitt (1999a), who also published a journal and subsequent book *'Experiential Marketing'* similarly suggested the notion that EM was everywhere and he challenged the old approach towards marketing by presenting his version of what Traditional Marketing was, calling it: engineer-driven, rational, analytical and an assumption based view of customers, products and the competition. Schmitt (1999a) then proposed that customers were now taking features and benefits, quality and brand image as prerequisite and what they really wanted was experiences that dazzle their senses, connected with their hearts and engaged their minds. He also argued that companies who could deliver a desirable customer experience would be the ones being successful in the new millennium.

The EM model developed by Schmitt (1999a) with its different characteristics is shown in figure 2.11.



Figure 2.11 Characteristics of Traditional Marketing and Experiential Marketing. Source: Schmitt (1999a).

Schmitt's model appears to acknowledge more about the role of customer within EM than Pine and Gilmore (1998) in the context of Schmitt recognising the rational and emotional (utilitarian and hedonic) aspects of customers in EM.

Schmitt (1999a) advanced further his theory exploring factors to engage the consumer, contending that marketers could and should get customers to Sense, Feel, Think, Act and Relate to the company and the brand. He argued that EM was becoming commonplace in retail environments and the challenge for marketers at that time was ensuring each store followed the EM approach.

However, despite the added value created by EM that both Pine and Gilmore (1998) and Schmitt (1999a) appeared to endorse, both of the studies under acknowledged the significance of the values aspects within their theories and instead focused more upon the antecedents required to create EM. Both models proposed by these authors do not draw attention to the potential outputs of value(s) they

can create for the consumer despite Pine and Gilmore (2011) arguing that people greatly desire experiences because the value lies within them, where it remains long afterward and also suggesting that companies that establish a distinctive experience increase the value for customers. Similarly, Schmitt (1999a) also argued that his approach towards EM would provide unique value to customers.

2.3.2 Early links from Experiential Marketing to Perceived Customer Value and Retail Customer Experience

Linkages between EM and the perceived customer value (see Section 2.4) that customers receive and later interpret, appears to have developed concurrently with the frameworks being developed by Pine and Gilmore (1999) and Schwartz (1999). Woodruff (1997) argued that customer satisfaction management had not been supported with deeper learning about what customers value through their experiences and that this could be achieved through understanding customer value hierarchy levels. Similarly, Lanning (1998) proposed around the same time that the value that matters was the value in the customer's experience, not the value in the product. He also maintained that the customer's resulting experience was the essence of an organisation's value proposition.

EM therefore is closely linked to what customer's value in their purchase experience and some significant studies began to develop a way to measure the relationship between experiential aspects and customer values. These included Mathwick et al (2001) who identified the need for an Experiential Value Scale (EVS) as they argued that retailers needed to manage the relationship with the customer through experience-based value. Their study contended that traditional value had been defined as a trade-off between quality and price and it now needed to go well beyond this to include perceptions of playfulness, aesthetics, customer return on investment and service excellence. Mathwick et al (2001) extensively cited the earlier works Holbrook and Hirschman (1982), Holbrook (1994), Babin et al (1994) and Woodruff (1997) and through an adaptation of Holbrook's (1994) theory they developed the EVS. Their research concluded that consumers were transitioning from being passive observers to active participants in the consumption experience and the EVS provided a broader review of the consumption experience than had been addressed by earlier customer value research. This supported a multidimensional hierarchy of customer value earlier proposed by Woodruff (1997) who argued that this approach provided a much deeper and richer picture of how customers think about value. These studies suggested that EM had evolved further from more value-added research perspectives into more specific focal research sectors such as Retail Customer Experience (see Section 2.5).

Khalifa (2004) reviewed the progress of the development of customer value literature and suggested that products and services should be part of a more comprehensive and totally meaningful customer experience, as a way in which to enhance consumer value. Chou (2009) continued and highlighted the interconnection between EM, customer value, relationship marketing and the cause-and-effect associations between them. Chou's (2009) methodology was derived from the earlier development of measurement scales which had been largely used in the retail sector (Schmitt 1999; Berry 1995 and Holbrook 1999). They concluded through a quantitative research study that EM had its biggest effect on customer value through emotional, sensory, and intellectual experience.

2.3.3 Further Research and Recent developments

Further noteworthy research in this area is the work of Yoon (2013) who contended that department store shoppers may prefer hedonic shopping attributes (or affective experiences) whereas discount shoppers may prefer utilitarian attributes (or rational experiences) when shopping. Yoon (2013) used a survey questionnaire of graduate students with 302 results. However, the key limitation of Yoon's survey is that he used very surface level questions and words which may have been difficult for participants to define for themselves. Examples of these questions included:

'I prefer sensory shopping at discount stores' (p.702).

This particular question was one of a number which used the word 'sensory' which could perhaps be interpreted wrongly or very differently by each of the participants completing their survey. In addition, the survey did not actually ask the respondents what they particularly valued from a shopping experience in any sort of qualitative way.

Challenging the conclusions of Yoon (2013) and the work of Gilovich et al (2015) who contended that research participants somehow understood a clear distinction between material and experiential purchases, Schmitt et al (2015) argued that material goods such as clothing could still be a trigger for experiences and therefore consumer experiences have both materialistic and experiential components, even if they are just material goods. However, Schmitt et al (2015) did acknowledge that luxury goods may contain more experiential aspects than mass-market products.

Merrilees et al (2016) examined the mall brand meaning through experiential perspectives and again suggested that previous research literature in EM had certain focus towards atmospherics and values. They claimed that the understanding of customer experience had previously been more from a managerial perspective than a consumer perspective. Therefore, there was still much for researchers to do to gain and understand a more customer-orientated perspective of EM in a retailing context.

In a historical review of the development of consumption experience Chaney et al (2018) searched for the levels of growing interest by academics since the publication of the pioneering works of Holbrook and Hirschman (1982). Utilising Google Scholar and references to ‘consumer experience’ or ‘consumption experience’ in literature since 1982 they found the growth in interest in this subject to be considerable, particularly post 2000. Chaney et al (2018 p.404) suggested that *‘a real step was made when Holbrook and Hirschman (1982) proposed an alternative model to understand consumer behavior through an experiential lens – namely, the thought–emotion–activity–value model’*. They also argue that this encouraged the next evolution of literature which considered the utilitarian vs hedonic aspects of consumption such as Babin et al (1994) and then successively authors such as Holbrook (1996) who developed a Typology of Customer Value (see Section 2.4.3).

Continuing from these models Chaney et al (2018) proposed that the next major development in this arena was the understanding that the consumer is pro-actively involved in the creation of the experience, citing the works of Cova and Cova (2009) and widely known theory of Service Dominant Logic by Vargo and Lusch (2009). However, in a critical review of consumption experience literature, Chaney et al (2018) go on to suggest that there are two main areas of clarity required in this field, namely 1.) that some authors define experience as an affective state whereas others a cognitive state and some as both. 2.) the term ‘experience’ means so many different concepts by different authors that it makes it very confusing. However, Chaney (2018 p.414) concluded for consumer experience that their research *‘demonstrates that the concept remains just as powerful and relevant (if not more so) as it was when first introduced more than 35 years ago’*.

2.3.4 Summary

Despite the term Experiential Marketing being conceptualised since the early 1980s, there still appears to be still some way to go to understanding the concept. Supporting this is Sachdeva and Goel (2015) who contend that traditional consumer research has ignored experiential facets of consumption which has led to a limited understanding of consumer behaviour. Merrilees et al (2016 p.263) also argue that *‘experiential marketing as a distinct academic endeavour has since made only limited headway’*.

However, it appears instead that EM has developed further by branching out into more specific areas of consumer behaviour, which have focused into topics including store experiences, atmospherics (see Section 2.5) and perceived customer value.

2.4 Perceived Customer Value

A preliminary review of research within this area identifies that the subject area of Perceived Customer Value (PCV) has been studied in broader contexts and areas beyond retail, though some of these studies appear to contain research findings and proposed theories which may influence the course of this study.

Kahle and Kennedy (1988) suggested that the function of marketing is to help consumers fulfil their values and the term 'Perceived Customer Value' (PCV) is defined by Mathwick et al (2002 p.53) as:

'A perceived, relativistic preference for product attributes or service performances arising from interaction within a consumption setting that facilitates or blocks achievement of customer goals or purpose'.

Therefore, a review of the works of the researchers in this field of study will be conducted as part of the literature review as it may influence the approach towards identifying the customer values provided from the participants engaging in this study.

2.4.1 Overview, Early Research and Key Concepts

Through the review of recent publications in the area of PCV, the researcher has identified a group of noteworthy authors who have been extensively cited through later publications and appear to have all tried to capture, understand and develop solutions to improving the perceived value of the customer's experience since the late 1980s (Zeithaml 1988; Kahle and Kennedy 1988; Sheth et al 1991; Babin et al 1994; Lai 1995; Holbrook 1996; Raval and Gronroos 1996; Shim and Eastlick 1996; Parasuramen 1997; Sweeney and Souter 2001; Mathwick et al 2002, Petrick 2002; Holbrook 2006; Diep and Sweeney 2007; Carpenter 2008; Carpenter and Moore 2009; Davis and Hodges 2012; Willems et al 2012).

Within the context of this study, PCV acts as a metaphorical 'bridge' between the previous EM review and the subsequent review of the more closely linked area to this study of Retail Customer Experience. Understanding the concept of PCV is vital for this study as one of the main outputs intended is an understanding of deeper customer values when shopping at value-based fashion retailers.

Focusing on the importance of PCV, Parasuramen (1997) contended that in marketing, the concept was one of the most important ways in which to gain competitive advantage and similarly Carpenter et al (2005) stated that it is essential that industry practitioners understand the factors that consumers

value when shopping. Further support for this understanding of value comes from other authors who have highlighted the importance of PCV (Rintamaki et al 2006; Diep and Sweeney 2008; Sarabia-Sanchez et al 2012; Krystallis et al 2012; Leroi-Werelds et al 2014; and Gallarza et al 2016).

Gallarza et al (2016) states that the study of value has evolved from an early period of conceptual development during the 1980s to a subsequent phase of methodological development and measurement post 2000. From the consensus of studies discovered by the researcher it appears there are two significant approaches towards understanding PCV: 1) A Means-End Approach and 2) A Category/Typology Approach.

2.4.2 The Means-End Approaches to PCV

A pioneering author who was first to try to define PCV is Zeithaml (1988) with her development of a model to access the concept of perceived value as part of an adapted model first proposed by Dodds and Monroe (1985), which included more emphasis on a Price-Quality relationship.

Zeithaml (1988 p.14) defined value as *'the overall assessment of the utility of a product based on the perceptions of what is received and what is given'*. This widely cited definition is argued by Gallarza and Suara (2006 p.439) to be *'the most universally accepted definition of perceived value'*. Zeithaml (1988) is also widely recognised as being correct in her argument that value was difficult to define and measure because it appeared to be very personal and idiosyncratic.

Zeithaml (1988) concluded that the major difficulty of researching value was the variety of meanings of value that consumers have. This early work indicated that the subject area of perceived value is challenging to understand as customers individually experience, perceive, absorb, and then interpret different aspects of a shopping trip and ultimately what matters to them (value) may differ slightly or significantly from one consumer to the next (Babin et al 1994, Khalifa 2004).

Nevertheless, despite the challenges of trying to research and understand perceived value, according to Monroe (1991) other studies followed the work of Zeithaml (1988) by developing further concepts of perceived customer value calculated as a ratio. Khalifa (2004) also cited and reviewed the works of Zeithaml (1988), Leszinski and Marn (1997), Woodruff and Gardial (1996) and Parolini (1999) who all developed a Means-End (benefit/cost ratio) model or approach to PCV. These studies suggest that value is a comparison which requires an amount of positive attributes vs the negative attributes and therefore a subsequent output is the perceived value by the customer. Monroe (1991) defined it as:

$$\text{Customer-perceived value} = \frac{\text{Perceived benefits}}{\text{Perceived sacrifice}}$$

However, this view appears to suggest that the customer-perceived value is not benefits minus the sacrifices but instead as the benefits divided by the sacrifices which is unclear. Additionally, the equation approach towards understanding perceived value does not indicate what metrics and numerical values are involved in the equation. Moreover, Ravald and Gronroos (1996) contended that this subject area needed to achieve a deeper understanding and deeper meaning which would impact upon a supplier being able to deliver value adding strategies and longer-term relationships with the customer.

Whilst a Means-End approach could be one way in which customers interpret if they received value from the supplier, Oliver (1999) argues that means-end approaches do not give consideration to satisfaction aspects in the value process, and he also acknowledges that value has so many interpretations that it is a surprise that consumers and marketers agree that such an arrangement exists. Supporting this Khalifa (2004) also notes, value is subjective and ambiguous which creates significant difficulties in understanding it. Therefore, the researcher questions whether customers actually go through a process based upon an equation which weighs up the positives and negatives of the experience, products and service received, and then somehow create a quantifiable interpretation as a way of deciding if they received value.

Moreover, considering the views of Oliver (1999) and Khalifa (2004) it appears, that as an alternative, customers evaluate their experiences in a much deeper, non-linear, and subjective nature which is almost unquantifiable or unqualifiable due to its very personal attributes, which is why this has been explored further in Category/Typology approaches towards PCV. Supporting this Varshneya et al's (2017) review of experiential value shows that this widely acknowledged approach to value by Zeithaml (1988) was known as a unidimensional view to value and that it had begun to be criticised by other authors who postulated that a multidimensional view for value was required. Similarly, Sweeney and Soutar (2001), El-Aldy and Eid (2015) and Sadachar and Fiore (2018) argue that to describe the benefits that perceived experiential value brings, it should be viewed as a multi-dimensional concept, rather than a single dimension.

2.4.3 Category/Typology Approaches to PCV

Babin et al (1994) is a key research paper in this field and is cited extensively because they arguably simplified the concept of value into two distinctive categories: Utilitarian and Hedonic value. Babin et al (1994) argued that there needed to be more scales for measuring consumer perceptions of utilitarian and hedonic value and they utilised both qualitative and quantitative research to measure hedonic and utilitarian shopping value. Babin et al (1994) built upon the perspectives of other authors and agreed with Holbrook (1986) in the context that consumers were not just seeking products and services, but

in addition there were intangible elements and emotions at play too. They also concurred with Ziethaml (1988) in identifying that perceived value was difficult to conceptualise, so therefore they proposed that two types of value dimensions needed to be measured: Hedonic and Utilitarian.

With links to this study, Babin et al (1994) discovered deeper insights from consumers through their qualitative study and, as a result, metaphors began to emerge in their transcripts. From the published participant quotes in their paper, the metaphors that were noted included:

Utilitarian perspectives

'shopping is like a mission' (p.646), *'I'm satisfied – mission accomplished!'* (p.646).

Hedonic perspectives

'a kid in a candy store' (p.646), *'that wasn't a run of the mill kind of store'* (p.646), *'shopping... is an adventure'* (p.646), *'I like to hunt'* (p.647), *'it makes me feel like I'm stealing something'* (p.647), *'it's a high'* (p.647), *'it's a thrill'* (p.647) and *'a pick me up'* (p.647).

These deeper insights were further tested in a subsequent quantitative study by Babin et al (1994) and their results concluded with 15 items best representing distinct hedonic and utilitarian shopping value dimensions which were then developed into the Personal Shopping Value (PSV) scale shown in Table 2.6.

Table 2.6 Fundamental Aspects of Personal Shopping Value (PSV). Adapted from Babin et al (1994).

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The two key dimensions of hedonic and utilitarian value appear to capture some of the important aspects of shopping and seem to be more focused upon the perceived experience of shopping from an enjoyment viewpoint (hedonic) and accomplishment viewpoint (utilitarian).

Eroglu et al (2005) contend that Babin et al (1994) introduced the notion of shopping value, however the PSV scale does not appear to acknowledge enough of the potential areas of the shopping trip that

the consumer might value, for example, none of the questions include dimensions asking participants to evaluate the atmospherics (Kotler 1973) of the shopping trip.

Babin et al (1994) called for further research in this area and acknowledged their scale would require more development and further testing in other consumption contexts. What is most important and noteworthy here is that hedonic and utilitarian appear to have become the most popular definitions for customer value and are the foundation or ‘backbone’ of the subsequent values dimensions that have been developed under these main two headings (Carpenter et al 2005).

Vieira et al (2018) in a review of hedonic and utilitarian shopping values contend that despite the number of works in the field of hedonic and utilitarian value, the literature is fragmented across many academic fields.

Already briefly noted in Section 2.3.2 but continuing to have a major voice in this area of research, Holbrook (1996) further developed the concept of customer value, as he argued that customer value provided the foundation for all marketing activity. Holbrook (1996) identified the initial links between value and EM in his 1999 book entitled ‘*Consumer Value: A framework for analysis and research*’. This book invited many widely cited authors in this arena, including Bernd H. Schmitt, Richard, L. Oliver and Michael, R. Solomon to review and critique Holbrook’s (1996) Typology of Customer Value. These authors all provided differing and concurring perspectives on what ‘value’ and more specifically ‘consumer value’ really is.

Holbrook (1996) concluded his collated work of authors by contending that, amongst many other things, the experience that consumers have generally includes most or all these eight values which became the Typology of Customer Value:

1. Efficiency – (Inputs/Outputs, Time, Convenience)
2. Play – (Fun, Leisure).
3. Excellence – (Quality, Satisfaction)
4. Aesthetics – (Beauty, Fashion, Design)
5. Status - (Success, Impression)
6. Ethics – (Fairness, Morality)
7. Esteem – (Recognition, Possessions)
8. Spirituality – (Ecstasy, Flow, Delight)

Holbrook’s (1996) Typology of Customer Values appears to capture many of the key aspects that matter to customers, but the Typology was not tested as part of its development so potentially missed the insight of the participants involvement. Holbrook (1999) modestly supported the notion of his 1996 theory, though he did acknowledge some of its limitations and the views of those that critiqued it.

Further studies have since been published which utilise Holbrook's Typology in differing contexts (Mathwick et al 2001, Gallarza and Saura 2006, Mishra et al 2014, Gallarza et al 2016, Willems et al 2016). However, some of these studies have highlighted the need for the adaptation or removal of some of the eight values within the Typology, which suggests any conclusive definition of customer value is still open to interpretation. Despite this, it appears Holbrook's typology is still a go to theoretical framework for academics with Ruiz-Molina et al (2018) describing the typology as complex and broader than any other alternative with some researchers (Leroi-Werelds et al 2014; Willems et al 2016) using the eight-value typology as the foundation for finding empirical support in retailing.

2.4.4 Post 2000 research

Post 2000, the researcher noticed that studies in PCV appear to be primarily based upon the earlier works of Zeithaml (1988), Babin et al (1995), Holbrook (1996). One of the most notable arguments that seems to have consensus among most of these authors is that perceived value is very ambiguous, complex, subjective and therefore challenging to define and measure. This is due to the very personal nature of value to every single customer who may perceive the world differently and therefore value things differently (Sweeney and Souter 2001, Lin et al 2005, Rintamaki et al 2006, Gallarza and Saura 2006, Ruiz-Molina and Gil-Saura 2008, Gallarza et al 2016). According to Ruiz-Molina et al (2018 p.851) '*clearly identifying a unique and widely acknowledged dimensionality of value remains difficult*'.

However, despite the discussions of value being subjective and multi-faceted, several of these authors have offered a perspective to define perceived customer value through their review of other works and the results of their research.

Connecting PCV particularly towards the clothing retail sector, Carpenter et al (2005) also tried to explain, understand, and measure perceived customer value from shopping at three different clothing retailers in the USA. They suggested that previous academic research had considered issues connected to customer shopping experience ranging from sources of customer value (Holbrook and Hirschman 1982, Babin et al 1994, Mathwick et al 2001) through to features of the store atmosphere (Kotler 1973, Grossbart et al 1975). However, they argued that up until that point no study in clothing retail had encompassed the context of the entire shopping experience. Carpenter et al's (2005) study developed 11 hedonic shopping values and 4 utilitarian shopping values shown in Table 2.7.

Table 2.7 Perceived shopping value scales. Source: Carpenter et al (2005). Adapted by Author.

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The perceived shopping value scales have similarities to those proposed by Babin et al (1994) shown in Table 2.6, however, the researcher would suggest that the perceived shopping value scales developed by Carpenter et al (2005) are unclear as to why these were developed to be tested and why there were so few utilitarian values presented. Factors such as store atmospherics and other basic staples including product quality, customer service and queues were not included, which may have been of importance to their participants. Additionally, the hedonic values appeared unbalanced with only one negative statement, plus they appeared to quite repetitive statements about the enjoyment had from the shopping trip.

Looking back from a broader context at this sub-section of the chapter, there appears to be many more quantitative studies rather than qualitative studies in PCV which have been found by the author of this study. Similarly, Varshneya et al (2017) in a review of experiential value studies stated that in their

research into papers in this area, 69 per cent of these were quantitative in approach. Yet, given the personal nature of PCV and that it is very subjective and difficult to understand, researchers have largely chosen not to use more qualitative methods which would potentially allow participants to discuss these values in more vivid ways. Varshneya et al (2017 p.346) go on, suggesting *'qualitative efforts in terms of theoretical knowledge and frameworks still need attention from scholars'*.

Similarly, Chaney et al (2018 p.410) highlight that when *'examining the combination of experience and value, in which the two concepts are sometimes so closely intertwined that they are indistinguishable from each other'*. They also state that *'from a research perspective, the time seems ripe for a more systematic distinction of the two concepts'*.

Continuing to build upon previous research, Ruiz-Molina et al (2018) reviewed the works of some of the most widely cited theories in value (Ziethaml 1988, Holbrook 1994; 1999, Sheth et al 1991, Sweeney and Souter 2001, Babin et al 1994, and Mathwick et al 2001). They suggested that the shopping experience in retailing consisted of an amalgamation of synergised and complete perceptions of goods and services resulting from an interaction with displayed products from a visual appreciation of goods while shopping. They tested elements of these theories in a segmentation approach to understanding value from loyal customers of grocery and home furnishing retailers. What was particularly interesting about their review of the value drivers was the extant of the literature they collated on perceived value across retailing studies over a thirty-six-year time frame. They developed a set of nine independent variables (value dimensions) shown in Table 2.8 from hand-picked elements of the main previous works they reviewed. The rationale behind why these particular value dimensions were selected was that the authors wanted a rich and wide scope of value dimensions which had previously widely applied scales containing value for money dimensions with both service and product quality being measured. Additionally, as the study took place in Spain, Ruiz-Molina et al (2018) argued that perceptions of fair pricing and environmentally friendly actions in retailing were appropriate for a study post-recession.

Table 2.8 Independent Variables: value dimensions. Source: Ruiz-Molina et al (2018). Adapted by Author.



As part of the development of their nine value dimensions, Ruiz-Molina et al (2018) argued that in the area of retailing in particular, further studies were needed to understand value dimensions to avoid customer scepticism and encourage loyalty. They suggested that their conceptual framework could be enhanced with a further review of value in retailing, for future research.

2.4.5 Summary

The concept of PCV appears to be acknowledged as very subjective, personal, and difficult to fully define because customers have different sets of personal values and perceive their experiences differently when shopping. Nevertheless, previous researchers identified the significance of understanding perceived value as a way of gaining competitive advantage, and as a result, studies have tried to capture what PCV is through means-end or category/typology approaches. The researcher considers from the extant literature that a means-end approach towards PCV is not appropriate for this particular study as the participants will not be asked to calculate whether they feel the experience of shopping at one of the value-based retailers was good value overall. Instead, participants will be asked what they value from their experience, so a category/typology approach will be more suitable for this study as it should allow the participants to elaborate further about the values that matter to them when shopping.

The researcher has therefore recognised that a further focused literature review is required in the area of retail customer experience literature.

2.5 Retail Customer Experience

Closely linked to this study is the research area of Retail Customer Experience which also connects to previous areas of Consumer Behaviour, Experiential Marketing and Perceived Customer Value.

Bagdare (2016 p.56) defines this area of the study and proposes that *'Retail customer experience is created as a result of shoppers' interaction with the retail environmental clues at every stage in the shopping process'*.

This final key subject area of the Literature Review chapter evaluates the previous research published, the corresponding author's approaches towards the research and particular findings which link to this study.

2.5.1 Early research and concepts

Several authors have been recognised by the researcher as being the first to identify that the retail in-store environment, the merchandise available to purchase, the service provided by the employees and the general look and feel of the store have a very significant impact upon the experience and value perceived by the customer (Martineau 1958, Kotler 1973, Mehrabian and Russell 1974, Oxenfeldt 1974).

Martineau (1958) first brought to the attention of the retailers that what made the difference between customers choosing to shop at one store over another was essentially the 'personality' of the store. Martineau (1958 p.47) stated that *'store personality or image was the way in which the store is defined in the shopper's mind'*. In addition, he highlighted that the personality or image consisted partly of *'functional qualities'* but also *'an aura of psychological attributes'*. Martineau (1958) concluded from his research that shoppers he interviewed did not mention low-prices, bargains, or savings as being the reason why they choose a particular store. He also made early references to the term 'store atmosphere'.

Kotler's (1973) conceptual paper brought about the significance of 'Atmospherics' in the retailing environment. Kotler (1973 p.48) maintained that the products being bought by customers were just a minor part of the *'total consumption package'*. Kotler (1973) also contended that atmospheres were the *'silent language'* for the retailer to communicate with their customers and were a highly significant marketing instrument for retailers. Interestingly, however Kotler (1973) also argued that bargain basement retailers at this point in time were not creating pleasurable atmospheres and

customers shopping there were just chasing a bargain. However, he did also acknowledge that these shoppers were drawn into the store like a magnet.

Other early research by Oxenfeldt (1974) argued that retailers needed to create a price – quality ‘image’ which would be in the customer’s mind and would be made up from a mixture of facts and emotions. He also highlighted that customers ‘feel’ certain ways towards stores and defined three key traits of a store’s image which are:

- 1) Tangible qualities including styling, range, and quality.
- 2) Intangible qualities which include staff friendliness, trust and cleanliness.
- 3) Fantasies which included the other people who shop there and the reputation of the store.

These three key traits appeared to begin to suggest the store experience was multidimensional and that the store experience was a mixture of the thoughts and feelings the customers were having towards the store.

This early work certainly appears to have set the tone for the subsequent research into why customers go shopping and more importantly what they value when they go shopping. However, some of the earlier discussions must be underlined as being quite stereotypical of the era they were written in, and their work now needs to be challenged, particularly the key distinction made between utilitarian and hedonic shoppers.

2.5.2 Research focusing on Retail Atmospherics

A significant area of Retail Customer Experience studies is those focusing on the concept of atmospherics in the retail environment, how atmospherics impact upon the customer’s experience when shopping and which particular types of atmospherics customers value. Ismail (2011 p.171) states that *‘atmospherics or Servicescape is the area that receives the most research attention’*. Concurring is Vashneya et al (2017) who argue that the most noticeable forerunner of experiential value in the earlier studies is atmospherics. Therefore, this study acknowledges the significance of atmospherics as a factor in the field of Experiential Marketing but more specifically within the area of Retail Customer Experience.

The early work of Kotler (1973) has already been acknowledged in this section as one of the first to use the term atmospherics. Following Kotler’s work was research completed by Donovan and Rossiter (1982) who tested the Mehrabian and Russell (1974) model of environmental psychology (Pleasure, Arousal, Dominance PAD) which was reviewed in Section 2.3.1. Donovan and Rossiter’s (1982) research identified that the Mehrabian and Russell (1974) model was promising, and the

results of their study noted five factors of significance in store atmospherics: Novelty, Variety, Irregularity, Density and Size.

Another widely cited paper in this area is the review research by Bitner (1992) who used the term 'Servicescapes' in a study of the physical environment in different consumer service settings. She defined the dimensions of the Servicescape as Ambient Conditions (temperature and noise levels), Spatial Layout and Functionality, Signs, Symbols and Artefacts, Service Typology and Environmental Dimensions. Bitner (1992 p.67) stated that the '*Servicescape provides a visual metaphor for an organisation's total offering*' and that it was a differentiator for the target segment and positioning of the organisation. Whilst this paper was more focused towards the services sector, it still has a significance to this study, as the retail experience is very much reliant on the service aspects the customer receives (Hoffman and Turley 2002). Some of the dimensions defined by Bitner (1992) are linked in many ways to a retail environment particularly the Spatial Layout, Signs and Ambient Conditions.

Further research into Atmospherics which link particularly to Hedonic and Utilitarian Value are the works of Babin and Attaway (2000) and Stoel et al (2004). Babin and Attaway (2000) in particular, contested that if the physical surroundings created a positive affect for consumers then they will perceive better value from the experience, and this would result in the customer coming back again.

Baker et al (2002) also conducted research with links to value but focused more on utilising the works of Ziethaml's (1998) value perceptions combined with cognitive and environmental psychology theories. Baker et al's (2002) study tested 23 hypotheses which assessed factors including the customers' perceptions of design, employees, music, merchandise quality, cost, service quality and value which were then linked to other factors or customer intentions. Their results across many different facets of the store experience indicated that atmospheric design cues evoke more vivid mental images for customers. Particularly related to this study, is that Baker et al (2002) indicated that there was a need for more post purchase studies and that further qualitative research methodologies would generate additional insights in this area.

Ballantine et al (2010) and a further study by Ballantine et al (2015) used a qualitative approach of protocol analysis which involves placing a research participant in a specified situation and asking them to articulate their thoughts as they advance through the situation, plus follow-up semi-structured interviews towards understanding atmospheric cues in retail environments (most recently in fashion retailing). Both studies indicated that factors such as lighting, temperature, music, colour, layout, crowding, employees, merchandise, and signage were the important aspects to customers in their shopping experience.

Ballantine et al (2010) emphasised that there were significant differences between what mattered to utilitarian type shoppers and the hedonic type shoppers that participated. This potentially indicates for

this study that an initial understanding of the type of shoppers participating in the study may be beneficial as their answers could be linked to their overall motivations for shopping in the first place. Ballantine et al (2015) did not acknowledge this same point in their findings but did indicate the importance of female shoppers' comfort in-store within the fashion sector and links to hedonic shopping motivations.

Ong et al (2018) contended that customers consider atmospherics to be an important factor when deciding where to go shopping and that retailers that can create appealing environments may induce feelings within customers which then generate actions by customers, such as, increased time spent in store, spending more money, increased repurchase plans and positive word-of-mouth. Their research suggested that there were gaps in the literature within the three areas of music, colour and store layout linked to their impact upon the affective state of the customer. They concluded that music was a positive impact on in-store behaviour whereas colour and store layout were mediated by the affective state of the customer.

Broadening the scope of the impacts of atmospherics, studies exploring multi-sensory cues with the retail atmosphere include Helmfalk (2019) researching into aligning the store environment with sight, sound, smell, and multi-sensory cues within a furnishing retail store setting. He identified that multi-sensory cues in store atmospherics positively influence browsing behaviour which in turn influences purchasing behaviour. He suggested that customers are 3.5 times more likely to buy in these multi-sensory atmospheres than in a traditional atmosphere. However, he did note that the study took place using a lighting department within the store and could not be applicable to all sectors and product categories.

Atmospherics therefore appear to play a significant focal role in the retail customer experience and are something customers clearly value. However, atmospherics are just part of the overall experience which appears to be broader and more complicated in its scope and design (Verhoef et al 2009).

2.5.3 Post 2000 Research

Berry et al (2002a) argued that retailing is about creating and managing the total customer experience and the way to achieve this was to recognise the clues it was sending to customers. They asserted that these clues were everywhere and were produced by the merchandise, store environment and the employees. Moreover, to try to tweak isolated areas of the experience design or use a quick gimmick would not produce the results they were looking for.

In other post 2000 research it was identified that as with research in PCV, previous studies within Retail Customer Experience appear largely to utilise quantitative methods, typically with survey

questionnaires used to collect viewpoints from consumers regarding the atmospheric traits of the retail environment such as lighting, colours, music, space, and service (Andreu et al 2006, Burns and Neisner 2006).

Cox et al (2005) also utilised a quantitative approach to their study into understanding the pleasures of store shopping. They suggested from their review of the extant literature that there were six sources of shopping pleasure:

- 1.) Mingling with other shoppers
- 2.) Bargain hunting
- 3.) Browsing
- 4.) Sensory stimulation
- 5.) Being pampered
- 6.) Kinaesthetic experience.

Cox et al's (2005) research surveyed over 1300 women shoppers and concluded that the number one shopping pleasure was bargain hunting with browsing being the second most popular. The lowest of the six sources of shopping pleasure was mingling with other shoppers with only one in eight respondents indicating that they enjoyed interacting with others. This suggests that the value-based retailers would be seeing increased interest in their style of store, as more shoppers were enjoying the activity of looking for items at a good price.

Carpenter and Fairhurst (2005) researched three areas of shopping: consumer shopping value, satisfaction, and loyalty in the fashion sector from a sample of 276 students. Their survey indicated that consumers would expect to have excitement, entertainment, escapism, fantasy and fun in the purchase experience and that retailers should be providing this throughout. In the limitations of their research, they acknowledged that an in-depth qualitative research approach using interviews would provide a better understanding of the benefits sought from customers.

The collection of research studies identified appear to provide a very solid numerical and analytical standpoint of what customers think about their retail experiences but does not appear to question customers about why they feel that way about their answers. Burt et al (2007) contend that retail image research is mainly deductive in its approach with respondents answering questionnaires with fixed answer alternatives, and that a better way to fully explore a consumer's viewpoint is to start with the consumer's criteria and perceptions.

In contrast to the quantitative research, within the qualitative works of authors identified, the researcher has recognised some particularly significant insights from several authors:

Arnold et al (2005) conducted a study into customer delight through in-depth interviews regarding the shopping experiences of 100 participants. They argued that customer delight was linked to the bottom

line, and it was imperative that retailers were aware of what the origins were of these experiences. They found through the method of Critical Incident Technique (CIT) that implications for retailers were that having the right training for staff and ensuring products were not out-of-stock created positive customer aspects and by potentially reducing any overcrowding and having good atmospherics, the negative aspects could be managed better. Most interestingly their study published plentiful amounts of the participant's examples of incidents in the stores and within these the researcher has noted that there were many metaphors used to explain the experiences they were having, for example,

'really has their act together' (p.1137), *'It was kind of like I was caught in a trap for a while'* (p.1138), *'they were like vultures'* (p.1138), *'you had to run back through the maze'* (p.1139)

However, Arnold et al (2005) did not acknowledge these metaphorical descriptions or the potential significance of them, which is what this study aims to discover and evaluate.

Clarke et al (2012) used photo-elicitation and follow-up interviews to examine the sensory experiences of shoppers in a small fashion boutique. They found that lighting, sound, smell, and touch were factors which were important to the participants as well as the presence of the owner-manager. In addition, warmth and the sight of new products on display became an important aspect for those that took part in the research. Within the quotes published in the paper, only the beginnings of some metaphors began to emerge in the participant's conversations, for example,

'the boutique reminds me of summer' (p.503), *'wood is a lot warmer... metal is just clinical'* (p.505)

As with the study by Arnold et al (2005), these metaphors were not acknowledged although they were not as deep as the other studies, and this could be a result of the interview technique used in the study.

Cottet et al (2006) completed qualitative and quantitative research into shopping value. They argued that consumers' values, both utilitarian and hedonic, have an influence on their satisfaction with the retailer. They acknowledged that hedonic value was more subjective than utilitarian value because hedonic values are more personal to each customer. Cottet et al (2006) noted that atmospherics played a major role in the hedonic value of customers, however, they also recognised that their study had its limitations which included the need to take into account more value dimensions, and more importantly they concede that they did not consider the individual characteristics (values) that can have an impact upon a customer's perceptions. This study's focus looks to address this particular area in that it is looking for what each individual participant values about their shopping experience and is not setting any pre-existing value criteria for the participants to follow.

Jain and Bagdare (2009) attempted to identify the determinants of customer experience in retail stores in India. They surveyed 126 men and 92 women customers of then new format retail stores using 27 variables of the customer experience which included lighting, colour scheme/theme, knowledgeable

staff and variety of products. They concluded that the design and ambience of the store atmospherics, customer service, the 'visualscape' of displays, customer delight through exciting, engaging and amusing elements, merchandise and convenience were the variables that were most important to customers. They argued that the way to bring out a pleasurable experience for customers was through the environmental clues which included people, product, processes and technology. Grewal et al (2009) reviewed the management of the customer experience in retailing and consequently developed a framework. Grewal et al (2009) argued that businesses must understand their customers by focusing on the shopping experience, as it is the key to retail success. They also suggested that understanding the customer experience was a critical area for academic research. As with other similar studies they too noted the importance of atmospherics, merchandise, promotions, location and the role of other customers in the customer experience. Particularly most linked to this study, was that they argue that survival in the retail environment would require more than just low-prices and new products.

At around the same time as Jain and Bagdare (2009) an important model developed by Verhoef et al (2009) links particularly well to this study as it ties in many different studies, viewpoints, and research into a customer experience model which they argue has a holistic perspective. Through the development of their model Verhoef et al (2009) argued that academic marketing literature in the area of customer experience was limited. According to the Scopus database, the paper written by Verhoef et al (2009) is highest cited 'Retail Customer Experience' journal paper, being cited by over 1200 publications. Their conceptual model shown in Figure 2.12 brings together a lot of the previous studies and factors that had been reviewed and tested by other authors. As with other similar studies, atmospherics, service, merchandise, price, brand, previous experience, and some of the moderating factors of the situation, such as, the customer's own personal attributes, all play a role in the overall customer experience. This model offers one of the most comprehensive outlooks at what the customer experience might be, however it was not tested in their study and needed further research to identify if it really was holistic.

From the model shown in Figure 2.12 two key areas are of particular interest: retail atmospherics and customer experience. Interestingly within this model are the other factors such as social reference groups, service personnel, product assortment and price. The researcher acknowledges that these may also be factors which the participants of this study will articulate as values, however it does not appear that Verhoef et al (2009) developed these from customer insights.

Critique of the works by Grewal et al (2009) and Verhoef et al (2009) from Merrilees et al's (2016) research indicates that these two particular articles examine customer experience from a '*managerial rather than consumer perspective*' and additionally that in understanding customer experiences '*our need is to gain a more customer-orientated perspective in a retailing context*' (p.264). This is

particularly important to this study as the focus is on understanding the customer's retail experience, solely from their perspective.



Figure 2.12 Conceptual Model of Customer Experience Creation (Verhoef et al 2009).

Continuing with a qualitative perspective of the research and developments in this subject area, Palmer (2010) offered a critical review of customer experience management and argued that customer experience favoured qualitative measurement approaches. Palmer (2010 p.203) stated that *'given the difficulty of measuring customer experience in a non-linear manner and in a way that takes account of contextual differences, many researchers have argued that qualitative techniques are the only way to really understand experience from the perspective of the consumer'*. He also went on to note that the standard questionnaire approach is probably inadequate to effectively measure customer experience.

Research by Petermans et al (2014), utilised photo-elicitation to read retail interiors through the consumers' eyes in clothing retailing and proposed that photo-elicitation studies were able to extend the knowledge of the way in which consumers apply meaning to the world of the retail environment. They argued that this research approach was a way of opening up the perceptions of the store participants in the study by allowing them to reflect and remember richer insights than through

observations, standard in-depth interviews or traditional positivist techniques. This being because these other methods have communication challenges which are lessened by the empowerment of the participant to talk freely about their own viewpoints and experiences through the photographs.

Sachdeva and Goel (2015) who investigated the retail store environment and customer experience contended that retail is less about the goods that companies sell and more about the ways in which retailers sell them. They argued that an experiential paradigm shift was developing which was critical for retailer success and that a variety of terms were being used to describe the retail experience. However, they contended that consumer research had not paid enough attention to experiential factors which had led to a lack of understanding of the importance of hedonic aspects in shopping.

Sachdeva and Goel (2015 p.293) suggested that academic literature lacked conceptualisation on the retail experience from a holistic perspective which understood both rationale and emotional triggers including *'touch, feel, smell, taste, inspect, test and try on'*. As with other atmospherics studies, Sachdeva and Goel (2015) noted the value that lighting, colour, smells and social community brought about by the atmosphere in a store could deliver to customers. These all culminated into their general argument that the retail customer experience is multidimensional and that shoppers are now focusing on the total shopping experience which connects with their emotions. However, what was missing from their study was a clear definition of what holistic retail experience would look like and how academics could capture this knowledge from customers.

Bagdare (2016) reviewed the Retail Customer Experience literature and established what the determinants of the retail customer experience include. As a result of their review, Bagdare (2016) suggested there were five propositions in the retail customer experience shown in table 2.9.

Table 2.9 Five Propositions in Retail Customer Experience. Bagdare (2016).

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These five propositions suggested by Bagdare (2016) brought together some of the widely cited author's research perspectives on retail customer experience and then collate these positions into broader statements. However, there are many more research perspectives to consider and they too acknowledged that further research is required as there are many additional dimensions of retail experience which need to be explored and added to these prepositions.

2.5.4 Recent Studies (2017 onwards)

In the context of trying to measure the customer's retail experience, Bustamante and Rubio (2017) contend that customer experience is subjective and created by retailers using external stimuli to influence the customer's internal perspective. They argued that there was a requirement for a scale to measure a broad range of in-store customer experience going beyond shopper's cognitive and affective responses which was previously proposed by Verhoef (2009). They also cited the research priorities of the Marketing Science Institute 2014 through to 2018 call for more in-depth research in the area of understanding the customer experience in shopping environments. Bustamante and Rubio (2017) used a qualitative approach which had a total of 32 volunteer participants who were asked to visit one of 14 retail establishments and then on the same day write a diary to recount the details by

focusing on their thoughts, feelings and sensations experienced. They cited a particular participant who had written about their visit to Ikea; *'You feel like you are in the perfect home, everything is really striking, novel, but sometimes you get a little overwhelmed'*. These deeper insights were then used to develop a questionnaire study to try to measure the retail experience. However, even though they cited a few more of the descriptions from other participants, the richness and metaphorical descriptions were not acknowledged further in the paper.

Nonetheless, Bustamante and Rubio (2017) concluded from their research that retailers need to be mindful of managing their in-store stimuli and ensuring that customers feel involved in the act of shopping and generate mental responses. They also argued that shoppers want to fully enjoy their shopping experience and therefore the retailers needed to create pleasant store environments which arouse positive emotions. From a social perspective they suggested that retailers should facilitate social interaction between customers where they feel part of a community and share opinions and ideas. In addition, the store environment should be somewhere that promotes a physiological response of wellbeing with comfortable lighting and temperatures.

Continuing to develop the understanding of store attributes in the customer experience Mohd-Ramly and Omar (2017) built upon the works of prior studies including Grewal (2009) and Verhoef (2009). They maintained that while there were studies in retail settings regarding customer experience, more was needed in the area of what influences various store attributes have on customer experience. Their study hypothesized that merchandise, post-transaction service, store communication, interpersonal communication, store atmosphere and loyalty programmes all positively influenced customer experience. In a quantitative research approach using department stores in Malaysia with 484 respondents, they identified that the store atmosphere and merchandise were two of the most influential aspects of the customer experience. Interestingly, the post-transaction service and two types of communication were not significant influences on the customer experience.

Backstrom and Johansson (2017 p.244) suggested that *'while the multidimensional nature of in-store experiences and the various store aspects that form such experiences are increasingly more researched and better understood, there is still a want of empirical investigations'*. Backstrom and Johansson (2017 p.242) argued that *'there is a lack of research that places consumers' subjective experiences at the center of attention'* and they felt that retailers needed to relate better to consumers' in-store experiences. The authors research concluded that retailers needed to focus on the service provided within store by developing the competence of their store employees. Backstrom and Johansson (2017 p.256) recommended for future research *'to continue the exploration of multidimensional aspects of in-store experiences from a consumer viewpoint'*.

Triantafillidou et al (2017) used their previously developed seven factor structure to review through quantitative interviews the experiential elements of leisure shopping experience gained within bricks-

and-mortar fashion stores from shoppers when exiting the store. These seven factors include: hedonic, flow, escapism, challenge, learning, socialising, and communitas. They argued that in-particular the characteristic of flow was an integral part of the shopping experience and could be defined as where the shopper is completely immersed in the shopping experience and that to some extent they may lose track of time. Triantafillidou et al (2017 p.1038) argued that with regards to flow that *'there are very few studies that incorporate flow as a distinct factor. Herein, flow is regarded as a retail shopping experience dimension that captures shoppers' feelings of immersion, absorption, total focus, and attention when they interact with a store's environment'*. Their study hypothesized that *'Shoppers' evaluations of a store's (a) music, (b) lighting, (c) aroma, (d) layout, (e) décor, (f) employee politeness, (g) product quality, and (h) product range, significantly influence the flow aspect of experiences'* (p.1040). Research findings suggested that the shopping experiences in the fashion stores that were used for their study produced moderate feelings of flow which could be attributed to the type of shoppers taking part in the study, who may have been more concerned with a goal-orientated shopping experience and less interested in the emotional elements. However, when considering the particular characteristics that have the most positive influence on flow, these were found to be music, store layout, ambient scent and product quality which they argued could all enhance the flow of the shopping experience.

In a historical review of the development of consumption experience, Chaney et al (2018) suggested that retailers have widely utilised the experiential tactic to offer an extraordinary experience for customers, which has created complex shopping environments. As a result, they suggested that consumers will use experiences as the benchmark by which they choose the stores they want to visit.

In a study of 460 surveyed shoppers across grocery and home furnishing settings, Ruiz-Molina et al (2018) identified through the testing of value dimensions from studies by Holbrook (1994; 1999), Sweeney and Souter (2001) and Mathwick et al (2001) that in grocery stores the main value influencing customer's loyalty was efficiency followed by service quality and then product quality. Values such as social value and escapism were much less of an influence. Within the home furnishing stores there was a difference with emotional value being the most influential followed by efficiency. However, this is unsurprising as the types of retailers fit more of a Utilitarian type of shopping visit (grocery) and Hedonic (home furnishing). Ruiz-Molina et al (2018) argued that more studies were needed in retailing to understand value dimensions.

Dalmero et al (2019) conducted a study into the objective and subjective elements in physical retail purchases at a home apparel store in Brazil. Thirty participants filmed their shopping experiences with cameras built into glasses and then they were interviewed individually one week later about their experiences using the auto-driving photo-elicitation technique adapted from Heisley and Levy (1991). This uses photographs of the participant taken in a research context as a stimulus. They argue that

retailers need to be more aware of the ‘ordinary experiences’ they are providing for customers and that retailers do not need to provide extraordinary experiences in order to provide pleasurable experiences. Their research established that there were two core elements resulting from the environmental triggers and the subjective response experience 1.) comfort and 2.) product evaluation. Dalmoro et al (2019 p.2069) proposed that *‘comfort is not an in-store trigger but a key experiential dimension produced by in-store triggers when combined with the consumers’ subjectivities’*. They also suggested that with regards to product evaluation that products have a special part to play in the environment perception and construction of the experience. This is because of the way they are presented, the contact the customer may have with them through touch, the materials and colours that the products have and ultimately the subjective responses generated by the customers because of their physical features. However, the authors acknowledged that they could not observe aspects such as store crowding in their research because the store had been opened solely for the participants, plus that given the location of the study, aspects such as security and therefore comfort were prevalent in the narratives which was probably due to the level of concern over crime and feeling safe.

Grewal and Roggeveen (2020) tried to enhance the knowledge in understanding Customer Journey Management (CJM) through retail experiences. They suggest that the typical customer journey has three clear stages of Pre-purchase, Purchase and Post-purchase but that recent discussions now indicate that these are non-linear and that there is the potential for customers to be ‘looping’ within these stages.

Grewal and Roggeveen (2020) also cite Moreau (2020) who suggests that there are a variety of retail cues including for example atmospherics, social, numerical information, merchandise and packaging that stimulate a wide range of perceptive, emotive and behavioural reactions at various points in the decisions made by the customer from the start of their search all the way through to when they reflect and analyse their purchases. Grewal and Roggeveen (2020) suggested that retail research has focused more on cognitive and behavioural reactions from consumers in terms of purchase satisfaction, loyalty and repurchase and they suggested that retailers needed to consider more of the customers’ feelings, and to try to increase feelings of pride and excitement. They proposed a retail experience and customer journey management model which includes themes which they feel are a significant influence on the customer journey and purchase behaviour in this modern era of politics, culture and automated technology. The model proposed by Grewal and Roggeveen (2020) is interesting and appears to bring the concept of retail experience into the modern frame of the omni-channel, online to offline linkages of retail. However, it does appear to serve as more of a macro view of the customer journey and does not delve into the retail experience itself where more of the interplay between a whole range of cues and influences are creating, enhancing and sometimes hindering the customer journey through their retail experience. The model also acknowledges the purchase in three stages of Pre-Purchase, Purchase and Post-Purchase.

Childs et al (2020) suggest that understanding experiential marketing in particular provides insights into the marvel of a new style of retailing (pop-up stores, fashion trucks and fashion subscription services). They also argue that experiential marketing assists retailers in addressing both the utilitarian and hedonic needs of customers. Childs et al (2020) also suggested that the retail landscape was changing significantly and that consumers wanted unique retail experiences which was possible through retailers utilising experiential shopping. Their research developed a conceptual model shown in figure 2.13 which was tested with an online research panel of 237 participants utilising a survey questionnaire to gauge the participant's experiences in the five Store Factors and four Consumer Factors.



Figure 2.13 Conceptual Model. Source: Childs et al (2020).

Childs et al's (2020) survey results indicated that the strongest factor for consumers is the in-store quality personal experience suggesting that customers still like to have staff on-hand to help and to serve them. Other noteworthy factors were the in-store ambiance and layout plus having space in store to be able to manoeuvre with ease. Additionally, their results showed that there was an interest in non-traditional stores for unique items and experiences.

However, whilst the number of questions in the survey represented quite a wide range of experiential factors the importance and context of the 'shopping enjoyment' part of the model was not clearly defined and was only recognised as being something that mediated relationships between store factors and consumer factors. In addition, the researcher suggests that the tangible and intangible nature of a consumer's 'enjoyment' needed further definition. The purpose of testing for re-patronage intentions of the consumers is important and had been utilised by other studies (Bellenger et al 1977; Baker et al 2002; Babin et al 2003, Nasiri 2012; Badrinarayanan and Becerra 2019) but this appeared to be

somewhat contradictory to the non-traditional type of retailer which Childs et al (2020) tested, as by their own description these are pop-up stores and potentially only available for a single visit from a customer anyway. This may have been more suited to the traditional retailer of bricks and mortar. Furthermore, the researchers could have perhaps considered other outputs to measure from the ‘shopping enjoyment’ such as word of mouth (WOM) and brand loyalty, which they partly acknowledged.

Paik and Lee (2021) suggest that the retail store design has to create a store that customers perceive is worth their time visiting and that these spaces should be considered as social places called ‘third places’ (home – ‘first place’, workplace – ‘second place’). Within fashion retailing in particular, they indicate that experimentation in store design is now projecting an imaginative design which allows retailers to have unique and multifunctional hybrid space that have evolved from what the store has and does towards what you feel and who you are (Petermans and Kent 2017).

Egan-Wyer et al (2021) argue that retailing in general is transforming its structure significantly and the physical retail store’s function and role is changing within the customer journey. Egan-Wyer et al (2021 p.1029) suggest that ‘*the customer journey contains multiple activities (i.e. product search, evaluation, purchase and after-sale behaviour) across channels and is, hence, shaped by a myriad of touchpoints*’. They assert that the retail store format is an important touchpoint and management need to understand if the customer experience they believe is being generated is actually experienced and perceived in the same ways by their customers. Egan-Wyer et al (2021) tested the question proposed by Gauri et al (2020) which suggest store designs should focus on making the customer journey easier or more exciting? However, the researcher would argue that given the current challenging competitive retail conditions, why retailers should not try to achieve both.

2.5.5 Summary

From the research identified by the researcher, quantitative approaches appear to be the preferred approaches towards trying to capture, analyse and understand what customers value about the retail experience. It appears that main themes emerging indicate atmospherics play an important role in the experience customers have when shopping in-store. In addition, factors such as choice, new products, employees, and other customers can also have both positive and negative outcomes for the customer’s perspective of the shopping experience.

Within the qualitative literature studies which have used depth interviews or photo-elicitation approaches, metaphorical descriptions have occurred from participants indicating potentially much deeper insights, although the significance of these was not acknowledged.

Frameworks that try to capture the whole customer experience appear to acknowledge a lot of the main research areas explored by other authors, but these models appear to be largely untested or do not take a fully customer-orientated perspective which potentially indicates there are many more facets of the customer experience still to understand.

2.6 Conclusions and Gap in Knowledge Identified

The Literature Review focused on four topic areas that the researcher identified as being linked to the main research question. Within Consumer Behaviour the subject area is seen as exceptionally broad in scope and depth of research. In the context of human and shopping motivation, it was noted that basic needs for survival are the initial human motivators which then develop towards more superficial self-fulfilling wants as humans prosper. These motivators are connected to social and individual values. Human and Consumption values have similar needs and wants attached to them which have since been developed by pioneering authors into mainly utilitarian and hedonic values which evolved towards consumer research.

Sensory Perceptions indicated that humans receive around two thirds of the stimuli through visual senses and that they construct their own pictures of the information received in order to interpret the world around them.

Feelings highlighted a couple of authors (Willcox 1982; David 2016) who have developed some form of categories or lists of feelings/emotions and their work indicates that there are a broad range of positive and negative feelings which may be part of the shopping experiences expressed by the participants in the interviews. Metaphors are seen as powerful way in which people make sense of one thing by linking in terms of its similarity to something else.

Experiential marketing emphasised a general consensus of the pioneering authors in this field of marketing with confirming links to earlier consumer behaviour and psychological theories in broader contexts. A lack of research in this area became clearer, however it appeared that Experiential Marketing had branched out into more specific sectors with links to consumer value and retail.

Perceived Customer Value branched out from Experiential Marketing and is broader in scope and sectors than just a theory linked to Retail. Researchers in this field appear to indicate the difficulty in defining and measuring perceived value due to its subjective and personal nature. However, two main approaches towards understanding value have emerged; 1.) means-end and 2.) category/typology approaches. The researcher has concluded that the means-end approach is not suitable for this study with the category/typology approach being more appropriate. Most of the research found by the researcher appears to favour a quantitative method to data collection with far fewer qualitative studies and is confirmed by Petermans et al (2014) and Varshneya et al (2017).

Retail Customer Experience has links back to Perceived Customer Value, Experiential Marketing and Consumer Behaviour with some of the pioneering authors, such as Kotler's (1973) Atmospherics, being instrumental in the development of further research and concepts subsequently proposed. The researcher again found quite clear leanings towards quantitative studies with analytical data outcomes.

Marshall and Rossman (2011) express the importance of using a metaphorical funnel approach towards the research topic area with an initial broader and more general conceptual view of the subject which is narrowed into a more focused area. Similarly, Arshed and Danson (2014 p.35) suggest that *'you will funnel down from a broad area and start to focus in on a more specific area'*. The literature review has funnelled down this study's subject areas from the general market macro factors which are influencing the value-based retail sector, moving on towards theoretical contexts beginning with consumer behaviour which overarches the subject area. The broader theme of Experiential Marketing branches out towards successive discussion areas of Perceived Customer Value which is wider in sector scope than the focal area of Retail Customer Experience which is where this study resides. Metaphors and values have been 'filtering' through the literature review as emphasis on both human values and consumer values have been emphasised and additionally any significant references to metaphorical representations being noted.

The research funnel developed for this study is shown in figure 2.14. The general research question starts at the 'mouth' of the funnel, with the five main 'filter' sections showing how the question has been reviewed through these broader to narrower topic areas, with value and metaphors considered through the review. Key themes discovered at each level have been noted, leading towards the gap in knowledge.

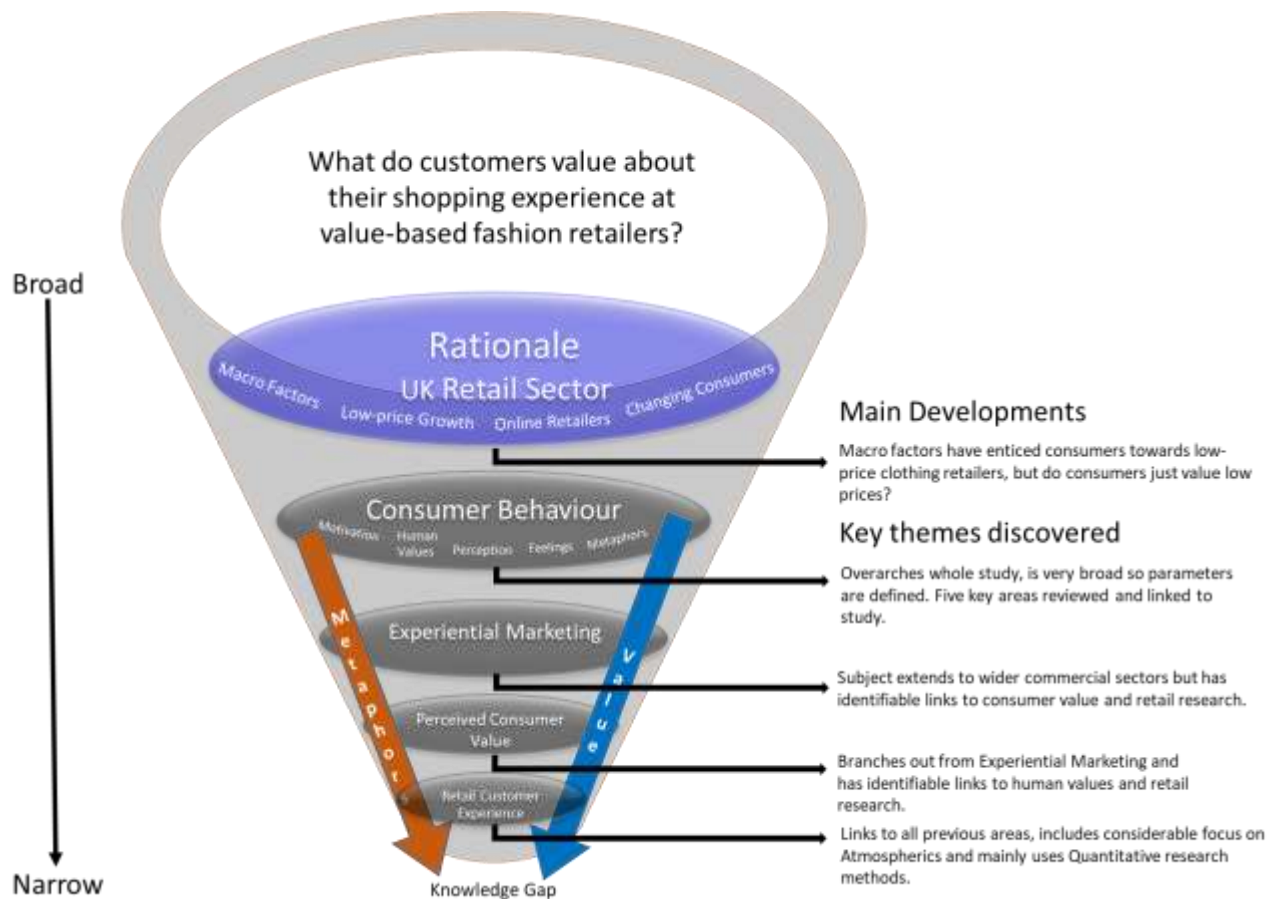


Figure 2.14 Knowledge Gap ‘Funnel’ for further research into UK value-based fashion retailers.

2.6.1 Research Gap

Previous studies have mainly underpinned their approaches from some of the pioneering authors and have generally applied a quantitative methodology with the purpose of identifying credible correlations between the hypotheses being tested. Despite these studies appearing to produce solid data, the researcher contends that they only provide surface level insights and do not really know what customer deeply value. Where researchers have used a qualitative approach some of the published responses show deeper insights and the emergence of metaphorical descriptions which suggests participants will use these to make sense of and communicate their perceptions. However, none of the studies identified by the researcher appear to acknowledge the significance of these metaphorical descriptions.

The UK value-based clothing retail sector offers an interesting platform for research as it has clearly grown in both popularity and size since 2008. Shoppers visiting these stores is increasing and

therefore discovering what they value about their experience, beyond the obvious incentive of low-prices.

The researcher therefore proposes that there are three unique gaps in current knowledge for these subject areas:

- 1) Further insights into why customers are choosing to shop at value-based fashion retailers in the UK beyond their prices.
- 2) Qualitative research responses, utilising a metaphor elicitation technique, with the purpose of discovering perceived experiential values.
- 3) Conveying metaphorical and value descriptions of shopping experiences into a retail experiential value framework.

The researcher suggests that Retail Customer Experience as an area of research can still be explored further with more qualitative studies which try to discover and understand deeper insights into motivations, values, and perspectives that customers have about their shopping experience, focusing on the retail sector. Concurring is Varshneya et al (2017 p.352) who propose that '*very limited attempts have been undertaken to study experiential value in fashion retailing sector*' and Bascur and Rusu (2020) in a systematic review of customer experience in retail argue that a gap is evident in the method used to evaluate the retail customer experience in a comprehensive way.

Previous qualitative studies appear to have missed the significance of the deeper insights the participants have articulated when metaphors have emerged and these studies.

Therefore, this study will address the gaps in knowledge and provide new and exciting insights regarding what consumers really value about their experience when they go shopping in a relatively new and fast-growing retail sector through the application of a deeper research method.

The researcher therefore proposes further primary research into the value-based retail sector to try and identify the deeper values customers appreciate.

Chapter 3 Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction and Overview

The research methodology chapter begins with a review of the potential research structure and briefly acknowledges and considers the main research options, noting which of these appears to be most appropriate to the study.

Secondly the research strategy chosen for this study is then explored in further depth with the research philosophy presented. The selected qualitative approach for this study is then evaluated from a broader theoretical perspective.

The chapter then considers and presents the depth interview approach and evaluates some of the widely cited techniques for completing these. This then leads to the Zaltman Metaphor Elicitation Technique (ZMET) which is the inspiration for this study's interview approach. Coupling with the ZMET approach, the researcher will also evaluate the Deep Value Mining theory developed by Hancock and Longbottom (2015) and identify how this links to the study.

The sample of participants required for the study is discussed and then the proposed approach towards analysing the qualitative data is outlined. Reliability, Validity, Limitations and Ethical considerations are presented.

The research methodology chapter is summarised, and conclusions re-iterate the proposed approaches the researcher has chosen for the study.

Similar to the literature review chapter, a visual map (shown in figure 3.1) has been developed by the researcher to show how the research methodology chapter flows.

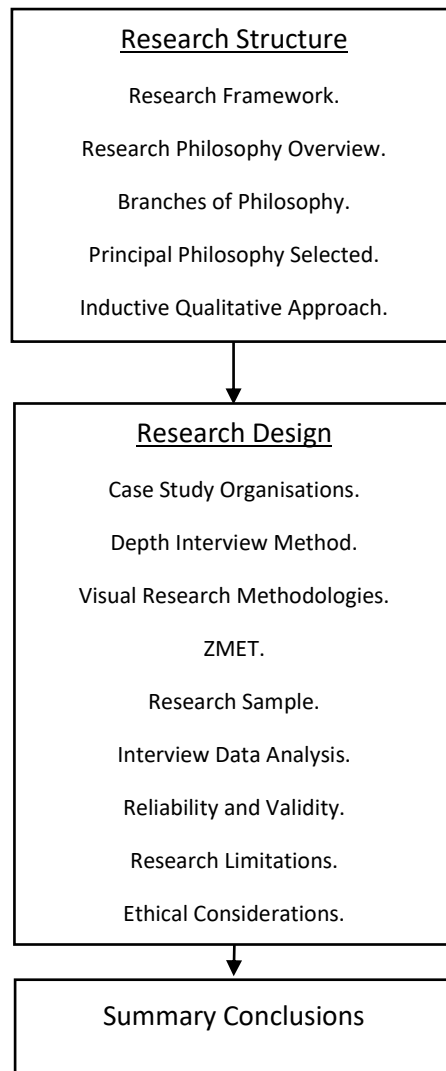


Figure 3.1 Research Methodology Process for this study.

3.2 Research Structure

This section initially outlines and considers the research options potentially available for this study and then underlines the selected philosophical approach whilst acknowledging some of the limitations for completing this research.

The preferred qualitative approach towards the research in this study is explored from a broader theoretical perspective and the advantages and disadvantages recognised.

3.2.1 Research Framework

To begin to understand the plethora of options a researcher has with regards to the approach they can take towards their study, an overview of the research techniques available is valuable to appreciate

what the contrasts are between the recognised approaches. The research onion developed by Saunders et al (2012) provides the researcher with a guide for the research approaches this study could choose. However, the researcher contends that despite the Research Onion being a useful aid to choosing and mapping out the research approach, the layers appear to miss some of the major factors the researcher needs to consider. For example, the onion does not indicate where the choice of qualitative or quantitative approaches is decided and other methods such as depth interviews are not highlighted as an option. Additionally, when the researcher has the data collected and ready for analysis, there are numerous different ways in which they can analyse the results, but this part of the process is merely clustered into one definition, with no options highlighted. Therefore, the researcher recognises that other viewpoints and suggested research approaches need to be considered to guide and support the preferred research philosophy and design.

3.2.2 Research Philosophy Overview

Johnson and Clark (2006) argue that our choice of philosophical approach to research needs to be a way in which a researcher can reflect upon that choice and defend it in relation to the alternative options that could have been used. Therefore, the researcher will recognise and consider the various branches of philosophy and philosophical options, before presenting the desired approach.

Bryman and Bell (2011) note that there are three philosophical considerations for researchers: Ontology, Epistemology and Axiology.

Lee and Lings (2008) state that ontology is the first of the ‘ologies’ as it looks at the nature of our reality. Epistemology then follows as it constitutes acceptable knowledge in the particular subject area and Lee and Lings (2008) contend that Axiology also resides with Epistemology as it concerns the why behind the researcher’s study and what they value. These three concepts will now be reviewed and explained further.

3.2.2.1 Ontology

According to Saunders et al (2012) ontology is the nature of reality in the context of how the world works and a preference to particular views. Lee and Lings (2008 p.11) agree stating ‘*ontology is the study of the nature of reality*’. Bryman and Bell (2011) view ontology a bit differently as they argue it is the nature of social beings. These perspectives of reality and social actors and entities within them can then be overlaid with the researcher’s philosophy.

Lee and Lings (2008) argue that if traditional scientific ontology is seen as reality being a single objective world that can be measured, then it does not align with interpretive philosophies towards research. However, they continue to discuss that alternative ontologies such as social constructionist

which appear to fit with interpretive approaches as reality is now placed within the minds of the individuals and groups and is not a separate being.

Within the context of ontology and recognised within Epistemology, (Eriksson and Kovalainen 2016) offer two further aspects which are observed: Objectivism and Subjectivism. Objectivism asserts that social objects exist in reality, independently of the social actors (Saunders et al 2012) and these '*are beyond our reach or influence*' (Bryman and Bell 2011 p.21). Relating this to the context of this study, the reality of the social phenomena and the social actors being separated does not appear to be aligned with the aim and objectives. Therefore, the social phenomena and the actors are an emergent reality in a continuous state of construction and reconstruction within the minds of the participants. This subjective view aligns more with the alternative position of Subjectivism.

Subjectivism according to Saunders et al (2012 p.132) '*asserts that social phenomena are created from the perceptions and consequent actions of social actors*'. This position has been acknowledged as 'Constructionism' (Bryman and Bell 2011) or 'Social Constructionist' (Lee and Lings 2008). In the context of consumer behaviour, Saunders et al (2012) indicate that customers may perceive situations in different ways as a result of their view of the world and that customers look to make sense of their environment through their interpretation of experiences and the meaning they conclude from them.

Therefore, within this study, the researcher notes that what appears to be the most appropriate perspective of ontology from the review, is that the study will be conducted from a subjectivist position as the participants are constructing their own realities from their perceptions and interpretations of their experiences.

3.2.2.2 Epistemology

Lee and Lings (2008) state that Epistemology should follow ontology and they describe it as the study of what we know reality to be. Saunders et al (2012) take a slightly different opinion noting Epistemology is the accepted knowledge in a particular subject field, whereas Bryman and Bell (2011 p.15) concur proposing that it is what is '*regarded as acceptable knowledge in a particular discipline*'.

Eriksson and Kovalainen (2016) express the importance of reflexivity in research and how it assists in thinking about epistemological commitments. They also maintain that the understanding of what is accepted as known makes it easier for researchers to comprehend that knowledge that is created in research is rarely just from one scientific approach. This viewpoint relates back to the literature review chapter and the research that was identified. The researcher found examples in the current

bank of knowledge with a wide range of both qualitative and quantitative approaches towards the subject areas explored.

3.2.2.3 Axiology

Axiology is the third of the ‘ologies’ and receives less attention than the others (Lee and Lings 2008), though it is no less important.

Descriptions of axiology vary again between authors with Saunders et al (2012) referring to it as a branch of the philosophy which incorporates the researcher’s values. They also emphasise that in the context of an interpretive study approach similar to this study, these values may cloud or influence the researcher’s judgement of the results and they note that at all stages of the process the researcher will be articulating their values. To some extent the values link to the ethical considerations of the research study which are noted in section 3.3.9.

Interestingly, Lee and Lings (2008) see axiology differently, and link it more towards the aim of the research and ultimately the overriding goal the researcher is trying to achieve.

3.2.3 Philosophical Approaches

3.2.3.1 Positivism

At one end of the philosophical spectrum is the positivism approach to research, which according to Saunders et al (2012), involves the gathering of factual data by using a highly structured approach with emphasis on quantifiable observations and subsequent statistical analysis or hypothesis testing. Bryman and Bell (2011) agree noting that positivism has the purpose of generating hypothesis and that knowledge is obtained through the collection of facts that provide the basis of law-like overviews. Similarly, Lee and Lings (2008) suggest that the logical positivism approach argues that ideas and concepts are only meaningful if they are directly observable, verifiable and can be empirically tested.

Churm (2017) argues that positivistic approaches have been the method most preferred by managers as they come from scientific traditions and have been seen to be the safe option due to the reliance on charts and statistics, which ultimately managers prefer to base corporate decisions upon.

However, positivism has been criticised in that it only considers things to exist if they are directly observable (Lee and Lings 2008). This has been challenged and ultimately questioned as studies into human sciences have shown that many facets of psychology theory are unobservable and also unquantifiable, so therefore, the positivist view of rational observable reality does not appear to be the

only 'standard view' of western philosophy (Lee and Lings 2008). Churm (2017) also argues that the positivism approach might be good at capturing and organising words and data, but this method does not capture the deeper and subjective meanings behind the words.

In the context of consumer research, Szmigin and Piacentini (2015) note that the positivist approach sees the customer as rational when making decisions and that methods used are typically quantitative, such as questionnaires. Solomon (2013 p.57) also describes how positivism sees '*that human reason is supreme and that there is a single, objective truth that science can discover*'. Within the realms of retail spaces, Petermans et al (2014 p.2244) argue that positivistic research approaches in this field '*have made a substantial contribution towards behavioural studies in store environments*'. However, these perspectives begin to emphasise that the positivism approach does not appear to be the most suitable philosophy for this study as it would not meet the research objectives and answer the research questions.

3.2.3.2 Realism

With some similarities to positivism, the philosophical position of realism also adopts a scientific approach to the development of knowledge (Saunders et al 2012). Lee and Lings (2008) suggest that realist philosophies share some of the positivist views that reality is an objective world which can be observed and measured, but also that there are some things which exist which are beyond direct confirmation and occur independently. Miles and Huberman (1994 p.4) argue that researchers need to aim to provide a reliable account of how they interpret the shape of the social world and that realism has developed to include '*social phenomena*' which exists both in the mind as invisible constructs, but also objectively with regular physical structures that link the social phenomena together. This suggests that the realist approach emphasises that physical and structured elements of our world such as language, institutions, laws and hierarchies also exist as meanings in our mind, which are invisible to the eye.

Saunders et al (2012 p.136) highlight the differences between two types of realism: Direct Realism and Critical Realism. Direct realism '*says that what you see is what you get: what we perceive through our senses portrays the world accurately*'. However, Critical Realism challenges direct realism in that Saunders et al (2012 p.136) argue that '*what we experience are sensations, the images of the things in the real world, not the things directly*'. This perspective maintains that actually our senses trick us and this then affects our interpretation of these images. This appears to be more concurrent with Miles and Huberman's (1994 p.4) '*social phenomena*' and with the context of this study given that the descriptions of the experiences from participants might be largely based upon the sensations of these images and their interpretations of them.

However, within the context of understanding consumers, Miles and Huberman (1994) contend that human and social research has its idiosyncrasies which can make a realist approach challenging and intricate but is not impossible. The researcher acknowledges that a realism approach towards this study could be possible, however the study's main focus is to gather the subjective thoughts and descriptions of the participants. Additionally, the study is not looking to consider any statistical outputs or hypothesis confirming facets of the data, so therefore a realism approach is not the most suitable for the study.

3.2.3.3 Pragmatism

Saunders et al (2012) describe pragmatism as a philosophic approach which recognises that multiple methods of research exist with many different ways of interpreting the world. This is because no single perspective can provide the entire picture, as there are multiple realities. Pragmatism is seen by Lee and Lings (2008) as an anti-realist philosophy which views meaning and truth as only being seen with regard to a theory depending on how useful it proves to be in use.

However, Lee and Lings (2008 p.33) point out that the pragmatism view has some misconceptions in which it is seen as an '*anything goes*' philosophy and this is not the case. Pragmatism does not always need to use multiple methods and still uses wider theories and philosophies, but the main pragmatist view is that if a research question does not unambiguously state that specific philosophy be used, then this supports the notion that research can be conducted from different perspectives, whichever are most suitable (Saunders et al 2012).

Within the context of this study, the pragmatism philosophy is viewed as being slightly too ambiguous for the researcher's approach towards the primary research because previous philosophies considered have indicated that the most congruent to the aim and objectives of a marketing study like this is an interpretive approach (Saunders et al 2012).

3.2.3.4 Interpretivism

At the other end of the philosophical spectrum, interpretivism respects the differences between people and the objects of natural science and requires the researcher to grasp the subjectiveness of the social world (Bryman and Bell 2011). Longbottom and Lawson (2017) draw attention to the contrast of this philosophy in relation to positivism in that it relies upon the subjective interpretations of words and meaning in social situations.

The interpretive approach is seen by Solomon (2013) as a newer paradigm which questions the ordered rational view of the world and instead notes the significance of the symbolic and subjective experience constructed in the mind of the individual. Similarly, Lee and Lings (2008 p.47) state that

'the power of interpretive understanding is in coming to terms with the ways in which the subjects themselves construct their own understanding and being in the world'. However, critique of the Interpretive philosophy underlines some particular challenges. Hogg and Maclaran (2008 p.130) argue that *'Interpretivist researchers have encountered difficulties in convincing mainstream audiences that their findings are as much a contribution to knowledge as those of their colleagues working within more positivist-oriented disciplines'*. They also note that interpretivist researchers need to persuade their audience of the reliability of their insights (see section 3.3.7).

Within the context of consumer research, the interpretive approach appears to be more appropriate to this study because the interpretivist view of the world we live in is a mixture of images and consumption is viewed as offering a set of assorted experiences (Solomon et al 2013). Table 3.1 developed by Hudson and Ozanne (1988) compares some of the key differences between the contrasting positivist and interpretivist approaches.

Table 3.1 Positivist versus Interpretivist Approaches to Consumer Behaviour.

Source: Solomon et al (2012) Adapted from Hudson and Ozanne (1988).

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Similarly, Longbottom (2017) compares the two opposing philosophies in the context of ontology and Epistemology shown in table 3.2.and table 3.3.

Table 3.2 Comparing research philosophies: positivist and interpretive (ontology). Source Longbottom (2017).

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Table 3.3 Comparing research philosophies: positivist and interpretive (ontology). Source Longbottom (2017).

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From the range of perspectives considered, the researcher has chosen the interpretivist approach. These positions appear to be more congruent with the context of this study in that the aim is to discover deep metaphors and values of shopping experiences through interactive discussion between the researcher and the participant, with the objectives of understanding these deeper insights.

3.2.4 Principal Philosophy Selected

In view of the Research Onion Framework presented by Saunders et al (2012) and from an initial critical review of the potential philosophical options considered by the researcher, the Epistemological orientation (Bryman and Bell 2015) chosen for this study will be interpretive (Longbottom 2017) with a phenomenological position which concerns the understanding of experience (Venkatesh 2010). The study also seeks to find rich insights into a complex world, which is highly appropriate in marketing research (Saunders et al 2012). Lee and Lings (2008 p.65) further concur stating that *'interpretive approaches are most concerned with understanding social reality as a construction of the individual participants'*. In addition, Petermans et al (2014 p.2244) state that *'interpretive approaches and visual*

research methodologies in particular, are appropriate when the research aim is to understand consumer experiences in the context of designed spaces’.

The Ontological orientation of the study will be socially constructive (Bryman and Bell 2015) as the study considers the viewpoints of the participant’s experiences which may be influenced by the social actors which are constantly changing.

The researcher will be trying to understand the social world of the participants from their point of view (Saunders et al 2012), which is supported by O’Shaughnessy (2010) as claiming that interpretive methods are more suitable for social science studies as the context and interpretation cannot be separated. Petermans et al (2014) suggest that interpretive research which is participant-led are opportunities for researchers to gain deconstructive insights into consumer experiences of retail spaces and they suggest that there is an increasing interest in conducting more holistic research in retail settings using interpretivist approaches. Petermans et al (2014 p.2244) also call for the need to use interpretive research for retail settings because they argue that they should be approached as *‘holistic totalities’* where a range of aspects interact and determine how consumers perceive these spaces. Moreover, Becker (2018) argues that interpretive approaches gain more consumer–centric perspective. Therefore, the study will focus upon the subjectivist views and personal perspectives of the participants through the elicitation of metaphors and values placed upon the participant’s shopping experiences.

3.2.5 Inductive or Deductive Qualitative Research Approach

Moving on to the second layer of Saunders et al’s (2012) research onion, the researcher acknowledges two opposite options: Inductive or Deductive.

According to Zikmund et al (2010) inductive reasoning creates a general proposal of the facts based upon observations of particular aspects. Longbottom and Lawson (2017) correspondingly note that the inductive approach focuses on the nature and understanding of the results and consequently a new theory may emerge. This approach appears in tune with the researcher’s objectives.

The alternative approach deductive, turns the methodology around, with the researcher considering what is already known about a subject area and proposing a hypothesis which must then be tested and scrutinised with conclusions drawn (Bryman 2012). From this position, this approach does not appear to be suitable for this study as the researcher is seeking to discover new insights and potentially generate a new theoretical framework.

Therefore, the principal orientation for this study is inductive (Bryman and Bell 2015) as it seeks to generate a new theory (Saunders et al 2012) from the results which show the values consumers place upon their experiences in the retail environment. More specifically the researcher hopes to develop a

framework which may assist retailers in innovating and communicating their shopping experience. This approach has been chosen as it is used to '*develop a richer theoretical perspective than already exists in the literature*' (Saunders et al 2012 p.163) which supports the researcher's findings in the previous literature review.

3.2.5.1 Qualitative Research

From a broad theoretical perspective, the overall approach to the study will be qualitative and mono method using a case study format which is represented by the two selected value-based fashion retailers.

This study's emphasis is on the collection of words rather than quantification in the collection and analysis of data (Bryman and Bell 2015). Qualitative research approaches allow the researcher to interpret and make sense of the subjective and socially constructed meanings expressed by the participants being studied (Saunders et al 2012) and these expressions of events are viewed through the eyes of the people involved in the study (Bryman and Bell 2015).

Wagner (2007) agrees with the potential of using a qualitative technique for understanding shopping behaviour and motivations. However, Hogg and Maclaran (2008) contend that qualitative researchers have met obstacles to the acceptance of qualitative techniques due to opposition in many consumer-facing industry sectors, such as retail. This is because it lacks the "hard numbers" when compared with quantitatively based results. Contrastingly, Nowell et al (2017) argue that qualitative research is becoming more valued and acknowledged as a respected model of inquiry, gaining meaningful and useful results. Longbottom and Lawson (2017) also propose that for research to find depth and meaning, using traditional mainstream research techniques such as questionnaires, focus groups and surface interviews will not achieve this. On the other hand, Becker (2018 p.471) contends that '*it is important not to assume that a qualitative approach will always meet the requirements for studying consumer experience as more broadly defined*'.

Furthermore, the researcher acknowledges that experiential values emerging from the study, could be further tested and potentially confirmed by completing a quantitative study subsequent to the completion of this research, similar to the works of Arnould and Price (1993), Cottet et al (2006), Seo and Lee (2008) and Diep and Sweeney (2008).

3.3 Research Design

This section of the Research Methodology Chapter discusses and critiques the researcher's approach towards the research design of this study.

It initially focuses on the choice of a case study format which is linked with depth interviewing as a broader theoretical approach towards gathering primary data from participants. Some of the various techniques for conducting depth interviews are recognised and evaluated.

The ZMET inspired approach to this study is then presented and this technique developed by Gerald Zaltman is explored and critiqued in further detail.

The research sample is detailed for this study and options for analysing the data are explored. The reliability, validity and limitations of the research methodology are presented, and ethical considerations are also noted.

3.3.1 Case Study Organisations

Bryman (2012) states that case studies are commonly associated with an organisation and qualitative research. Silverman (2014) agrees suggesting that in business studies research, qualitative research can be known more as case study research and as a result case studies are usually identified as organisations not individuals.

Within the context of choosing case studies for this research, Mason (1996) argues for theoretically guided case study choices based upon their relevance to the research questions, position and explanation the researcher is developing, which represents the wider theoretically defined universe. This approach builds characteristics which assist in constructing the researcher's theory and explanation. Examples of these case studies could include organisations, and as previously stated for this research, the two case study organisations selected are Retailer 1 and Retailer 2 which have been reviewed in Chapter 1.

The two case study companies will therefore be utilised as the discussion point for each of the participants, with one company being selected per participant which will most likely be based upon the pre-interview and the participant indicating their preferred retailer to collect images for.

3.3.2 Depth Interview Method

The research design using depth interviews has been chosen by the researcher and will include applying Narrative Inquiry in order to discover the personal accounts ('stories') of the participants, allowing the researcher to analyse the meanings that participants place on experiential events (Saunders et al 2012). Gabriel and Griffiths (2004) also propose that using Narrative Inquiry approach may allow researchers to gain access to deeper realities closely linked to the person's experiences.

These personal accounts of participant's experiences will be collected through the depth interview approach, taking note of a Silverman's (2013) 'Emotionalist' orientation towards the questions to

reveal the perceptions, viewpoints and emotions which are seen as a pathway to the participant's authentic experiences (Eriksson and Kovalainen 2016).

Lee and Lings (2008) advocate this qualitative approach utilising interviews, as they argue that for a researcher to access inner subjective experiential information from participants and they need to get the participant to articulate it. They also recognise this involves particular interest in the participant's use of metaphor.

Lee and Lings (2008) also see in depth interviews as a place where researchers pursue interesting angles and look for rich answers which delve into the participant experiences. Similarly, Carson et al (2001 p.73) suggest that in-depth interviews are a way to *'find out things like feelings, memories and interpretations that we cannot observe or discover in other ways'*. Similarly, Hancock and Foster (2019) argue that traditional interview approaches do not go deep enough to probe the sub-conscious opinions of consumers and they go on to cite the term from Mulvey and Kavalam (2010 p.373) known as the *'depth deficit'*.

Additionally, Marshall and Rossman (2011) describe the depth interview as something qualitative researchers rely upon extensively. They also cite Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) who developed metaphors based upon the depth interview in which the interviewer is seen as a *'miner'* who *'digs out'* nuggets of knowledge from the participant's experiences or as a *'traveller'* who is on a *'journey'* partnering with the participant to co-construct knowledge through *'unknown terrain or with maps'* (pp.47-50).

In the more specific context of studying consumer experience more recent research, Chaney et al (2018 p.406) suggest that *'the understanding of experiential, sociological and cultural aspects of consumption usually requires the use of depth interviews'*. Whereas Becker (2018) suggests that in order to explore broader aspects of consumer experience it should fulfil three requirements:

- 1.) provide a first-hand description of the experience:

This allows consumers to describe the experience in their own words because they will *'foreground events, activities and interactions'* (p.469) which from their point of view are most important.

- 2.) provide a description of multiple relevant actors and institutions in the consumer's ecosystem:

The researcher should identify the actors (people), resources and mechanisms which influence the consumer's experience. Therefore, the ecosystem will be described from the perspective of the consumer.

3.) capture the processual nature of the consumer experience.

The consumer's experience should be interpreted as a process and seen as '*a sequence of events over time*' (p.470).

This study fulfils these requirements as the participants' experiences are in the words and images selected by them, where the store (institution) ecosystem includes the multiple relevant actors and the processes (events) occurring through the duration of the experience.

From the extent of the research methods considered for this study, the researcher proposes that the interview method most appropriate would be in-depth, semi-structured interviews, as it is necessary to understand the reasons for the decisions, attitudes and opinions of participants (Saunders et al 2012).

Within the context of this study the interview process shown in Appendix 1 with the participant briefed in the early stages regarding the process of the participation and how the depth interview is led.

With regards to the interview structure, the researcher considered the 'Constructionist' approach developed as part of a typology of interview studies by Sliverman (2013) which allows for a study's interviews to be generally passive in structure, although the researcher has a set of pre-designed questions to initiate the conversation. Additionally, this approach allows for flexibility and flow in the conversation, depending on the interaction with the participant. However, the researcher acknowledges that a participant-led subjectivist approach towards the interviews potentially creates a less structured environment, and possible inconsistencies may occur in the interview process between participants, for example, variation in overall timing of interviews and very diverse enlightenments from the participants.

3.3.3 Visual Research Methodologies

Rose (2016) suggests that within the social sciences there has been a proliferation of studies that have used visual methodologies. Dodds et al (2018) agree and argue that the use of visual methods is both well-established in anthropology and sociology but also growing in other social sciences. Brace-Govan (2007 p.735) contends that visual methodologies give researchers the opportunity to collect '*appealing and pertinent data*' that in other settings would be challenging to obtain.

Photo-elicitation methods according to Rose (2016) is a widely used visual research method across a range of social sciences which asks research participants to take photographs or to find an image(s) elsewhere which are discussed at interview with the researcher.

Rose (2016) argues that the photo-elicitation method has four main strengths; 1) an image being discussed with an interviewee can prompt more discussion about different things that research

methods relying on oral or written data cannot provide. 2) it is suggested that photo-elicitation encourages more emotional discussion from the interviewee. 3) participant-generated images are useful for discussing everyday things in the participant's life. 4) the participant-generated images are argued to empower the research participant and makes them the expert in the interview as they explain the meaning of the images. Dodds et al (2018 p.438) similarly expresses that '*visual methods, such as visual elicitation techniques, where the researcher or the participant bring images and/or photographs to an interview, can enhance the conversational/ interview process*'.

Dodds et al (2018 p.439) also noted that '*another significant visual marketing research technique which has been used commercially and in academic research is the Zaltman Metaphor Elicitation Technique (ZMET)*'. In their research discussion the authors maintained that visual methods like ZMET were valuable for gaining consumer insights and that the techniques provided an enhanced interviewing process that highlighted consumer value themes.

3.3.4 Zaltman Metaphor Elicitation Technique (ZMET)

The ZMET was developed by Gerald Zaltman in the early 1990s with the purpose of discovering deeper insights into consumer perceptions of products, services and brands. According to Catchings-Castello (2000) Zaltman was travelling in Nepal and whilst he was there, he asked local people to use some cameras to photograph their lives. Upon developing the camera films Zaltman noticed several traits in the photos and asked the local people to explain these. This was where Zaltman discovered hidden meanings in pictures, which ultimately directed his theory on a new approach to marketing.

Zaltman (1996) suggested that ZMET was a new technique using multidisciplinary ideas that would improve qualitative research: ZMET.

ZMET was developed from a diverse range of research in cognitive neuroscience, neurobiology, art critique, literary criticism, visual anthropology, visual sociology, semiotics, mind philosophy, art therapy and psycholinguistics (Zaltman 1996).

Pivotal to the Zaltman's theory was the power of the metaphor with humans as a way of making sense of one thing in terms of another (Tynan 2008). Zaltman (2003 p.77) states that '*like much research on metaphors, this book treats them broadly to include similes, analogies, allegories, proverbs, and the like*'. This collation is also recognised by Brown and Wijland (2018 p.329) who emphasise that there is a '*widespread assumption that metaphors, similes, metonymies, synecdoches and suchlike can be amalgamated for analytical convenience*'. Zaltman and Zaltman (2008) later identified that these metaphors were situated within three distinct levels with 'surface metaphors' at the first layer as these are part of everyday language, such as 'we are on the same wavelength'. The second layer houses 'metaphor themes' which begin to help the person using them to make sense of what they mean, such

as, 'co-operation and compatibility with someone needs synergy'. The third layer is where the deep metaphors reside and the deeper root metaphor which the person using them is ultimately relating to, such as, 'connection'.

The deeper metaphors ultimately became categorised as being the seven giants of Balance, Transformation, Journey, Container, Connection, Resource and Control (Zaltman and Zaltman 2008). Figure 3.2 shows the three levels of metaphors.



Figure 3.2 Metaphor Levels. Source: Zaltman and Zaltman (2008). Adapted by Author.

The figure above has been adapted by the researcher in highlighting values within the arrow on the right. This is to signify that the researcher will be trying to identify experiential values throughout the metaphor elicitation process and more specifically from the participant's descriptions, conversations and stories. These may occur in surface metaphors but could have deeper meanings.

Zaltman (1996) argued that companies needed to help customers express deep thoughts and feelings and he maintained that '*most social communication is non-verbal*' (p.13), '*thoughts occur as images*' (p.13), '*metaphors are central to cognition*', (p.14), '*cognition is grounded in embodied experience*' (p.14) and '*deep structures of thought can be accessed*' (p.14).

The ZMET process further developed the Kelly Repertory Grid and Laddering Technique in an effort to '*surface the variables that participants use to make sense of a consumption related experience*' (Catchings-Castello 2000 p.9). One of the most significant aspects of the ZMET approach towards a depth interview is that the ZMET interview is participant-led as they explain the context and meaning of each image they have selected. This approach according to Hendijani and Boo (2020 p.934) means that '*with ZMET the participant provides the stimuli, not the researcher*'. The use of a ZMET inspired approach to the interview process allows for the participants to be the drivers of the discussions

(Heisley and Levy 1991) and where this is used it is argued that *'Auto-driving is based on the premise that photographs elicit information, evoke feelings and jog memories that words alone cannot'* (Dodds et al 2018 p.439). The selection of the images within depth interviews creates a catalyst for the discussion as the image has a range of meanings and feelings behind them (Rose 2016; Dodds et al 2018).

Within the ZMET process, Zaltman (2003) explains that effective probing questions should be used to elicit the deep metaphors. The basis of the effective probing questions is to allow the participant to describe the images collected and following this a further probing question is to be used. This approach allows the laddering style of questioning to achieve a deeper level with the participant and the images helping to reveal the deeper thoughts and feelings. Karatzas et al (2019) suggest that participants feel more comfortable expressing themselves with images but also questions are not constrained by words, or the use of structured questions found in conventional in-depth interviews (Lee et al 2003). Typically, around five to six probing questions are used until sufficient depth has been reached (Zaltman 2003). Zaltman (1996) suggested that there were originally ten core steps in the ZMET interview process (shown in Table 3.4).

Table 3.4 Ten Core Steps Tested. Source: Zaltman (1996). Adapted by Author.

Step 1	Storytelling	Customer describes the content of each picture
Step 2	Missed Images	Customer describes the pictures he/she was unable to obtain and explains their relevance
Step 3	Sorting Task	Participant sorts his/her pictures into meaningful piles
Step 4	Construct Elicitation	A modified version of the Kelly Repertory Grid technique and the laddering technique are used to elicit basic constructs and their relationships. Participants' pictures serve as stimuli.
Step 5	Most Representative Picture	Participant indicates the picture that is most appropriate
Step 6	Opposite Images	Participant describes pictures that represent the opposite of the task, for example, "what is <i>not</i> <u>Brand Name</u> ."
Step 7	Sensory Images	Descriptions are elicited of what does and does not describe the taste, touch, smell, sound, colour, and emotion of the concept being explored.
Step 8	The Mental Map	Participant creates a map or casual model using the constructs that have been elicited.
Step 9	The Summary Image	Participant, with assistance from a technician, creates a summary image using digital imaging technique.
Step 10	Consensus Map	Researcher creates a map or casual model involving the most

		important constructs.
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Coulter and Zaltman (1994) suggested an approach of recruiting around 24 participants for a credible study. Research Sample details are discussed in Section 3.3.5.

3.3.4.1 Academic Studies and Critique of ZMET

Venkatesh et al (2010) state that ZMET has been widely used by consumer researchers because it brings together cultural frameworks of narrative understanding with cognitive principles.

Additionally, Hancock and Foster (2019) contend that using ZMET in services marketing offers a novel alternative method for obtaining consumer insights and viewpoints.

Following the development of ZMET and initial testing by Gerald Zaltman, the researcher has identified key academic papers which have since further reviewed and/or applied the ZMET to their research after the theory was suggested in the early 1990s (shown in Table 3.5)

Table 3.5 Key ZMET academic studies. Developed by Author.

Author(s)	Date	Study Details	Sector
Coulter and Zaltman	(1994)	Understanding brand images	Branding
Coulter et al	(2001)	Consumers' perceptions of advertising	Advertising
Lee et al	(2003)	Barriers to using 3G mobile banking	Communications
Sugai	(2005)	Mobile phone usage across borders	Communications
Burt et al	(2007)	International retail image through consumers' photographs of stores	Retail
Kim and Kim	(2007)	Scale development of hotel brand equity	Hospitality
Kent and Kirby	(2009)	The design of the store environment and implications on retail image	Retail
Chen	(2010)	Differences between males and female sports events tourists	Tourism

Venkatesh et al	(2010)	Luxury fashion, body and identity formation	Fashion
Chang and Pan	(2011)	Factors influencing mobile users' intention to adopt multimedia messaging	Communications
Joy et al	(2012)	Fast fashion sustainability	Sustainability
Stuhlfaut and Vanden Bergh	(2014)	Metaphoric model of creative thought process.	Marketing Communications
Chen	(2016)	Transformation of native visitor experiences	Tourism
Dodds et al	(2018)	Visual methods in longitudinal transformative service research	Healthcare Services
Hancock and Foster	(2019)	University student experience	Higher Education
Karatzas et al	(2019)	Perceptions on ethical luxury	Luxury Brands
Hendijani and Boo	(2020)	Profiling gastronomes through food experience journey	Hospitality

From Table 3.5, the researcher has identified several key commercial studies which have utilised ZMET to understand different deeper descriptions from customers. However, the researcher has not identified any studies which look at the shopping experiences of value-based fashion retailers utilising a ZMET approach.

One study of particular interest to the researcher in Table 3.5 is by Kent and Kirby (2009) investigating the store environment in a food superstore. Through a modified ZMET approach they interviewed participants about their perceptions of the physical environment. One of their outputs was a hierarchical map (see figure 3.3) developed from the analysis of participant's responses and ultimately the values they placed on this experience. However, the researcher of this study notices that quite a lot of the words noted in this map are utilitarian in nature (service, signage, availability, convenience, helpful, easy to shop, satisfaction) which may reflect the less hedonic aspects of food shopping compared with the shopping for clothes.

Content removed due to Copyright Restrictions

Figure 3.3 Hierarchical Map. Source: Kent and Kirby (2009).

Acknowledging the advantages and limitations of ZMET, further critique of the technique includes Kim and Kim (2007) who note that it is a labour-intensive method from which it is impossible to generalise the research outcomes given the limited target population. Stuhlfaut and Vanden Bergh (2014) agree noting that the depth analysis of this approach cannot generalise results to a wider scope of individuals and situations. Hancock and Foster (2019 p.48) contend that *'ZMET has had only limited use in service research'*. However, Chang and Pan (2011) argue that ZMET is a good choice when a researcher wants to examine consumer behaviour but has little prior research as reference. The researcher of this study concurs as they were not able to find many studies published which had used the ZMET approach. Additionally, Venkatesh et al (2010 p.461) emphasise that ZMET *'interviews are long but productive'*.

Another challenge of using the ZMET approach was the number of steps in the process. Dodds et al (2018) expressed that in their research utilising ZMET that the third step in ZMET of sorting the images was not implemented due to the number of images selected by the participants. They also argued that the slightly shorted version of ZMET was a simple and efficient visual technique to use.

The researcher will utilise the various steps of the ZMET technique at the stages in the interviews when they are most appropriate but will be flexible in the use of them and only apply certain steps when they will be effective in understanding deeper insights into what the context of certain image is. This approach is supported by the original authors who stated that with regards to the ten steps; *'only a subset of which are included in any particular project and the manner in which they are implemented are based on the nature of the problem and the intended use of the data'* (Zaltman and Coulter, 1995, p. 40). Therefore, the researcher will focus more on seven of the ten steps in the ZMET technique, as shown in Table 3.6.

Table 3.6 Seven interview stages inspired from Zaltman and Coulter (1995) and Hancock (2015). Adapted by Author.

Stage 1 - Storytelling	The participant begins by telling a story to describe the content of each picture. (Coulter and Zaltman 1994).
Stage 2 - Missed Images	The participant is asked to describe the pictures that they were not able to find and why they were relevant to the study and their experience. (Catchings-Castello 2000; Coulter and Zaltman 1994).
Stage 3 - Construct Elicitation	The researcher uses a modified version of the Kelly Repertory Grid and the laddering technique to elicit basic constructs and their relationships. Participant's images serve as stimuli. (Catchings-Castello 2000; Coulter and Zaltman 1994). Once the participant has finished, an effective probe is used "Could you tell me a little more about the ..." and then followed up by an alternative probe...this goes on until for a further 6 or 7 probes until sufficient depth has been reached (Hancock 2015).
Stage 4 – Most Representative Picture	Participant indicates the picture that is most appropriate.
Stage 5 - Sensory Images	The participant is asked to express images as colour, smell, emotions, touch, taste and sound. Participants may be asked to describe what sounds they might hear in an image. (Catchings-Castello 2000; Coulter and Zaltman 1994).
Stage 6 - The Digital Image	The participant creates with the help of the researcher a summary image or montage of the images collected to capture the topic area visually. (Catchings-Castello 2000; Zaltman 1996).
Step 7 – Consensus Map	Researcher creates a map or casual model involving the most important constructs.

The three stages omitted from the interviews are summarised in Table 3.7.

Table 3.7 ZMET stages omitted from the interview process by the researcher.

Sorting Task: Stage 3	Identified by the researcher as something that could impact upon reliability of the interviews because it could not be introduced consistently at every interview. Participants collected their images in different ways, for example, on USB memory stick, cut outs from magazines, printed onto A4 sheets or saved onto their mobile phone. Dodds et al (2018) expressed that in their research utilising ZMET that the third step in ZMET of sorting the images was not implemented due to the number of images selected by the participants.
Opposite Images: Stage 6	Participants were describing the pictures they had selected and not asked to think of additional images as this detracted from the discussion of their shopping experience.
The Mental Map: Stage 8	This stage was felt by the researcher to be too many tasks for the participant to be asked to do within the interview as the focus of the interview was for the participants to feel they could speak freely about their shopping experiences. Any linkages between images and areas of the discussion were highlighted by the participants (if applicable). The researcher found particular constructs (post-interview) by listening back to the recordings and transcript analysis.

A particular slight concern for the researcher was that participants may not know what images to select for their interview or might not know where to find these images. Chang and Pan (2011) in their ZMET study also highlighted that most of their participants had difficulty in collecting images themselves and therefore they pre-prepared pictures for the participants. However, the researcher for this study did not use this preselection approach. To limit this potential challenge, the researcher used the pre-interview briefing meeting with each participant to clearly explain that the images could be almost anything and they were advised to choose their own images from any source they felt most comfortable, for example, search engines, magazines and photographs.

3.3.4.2 Research Application of ZMET and DVM

A study into the experience of 24 students in higher education completed by Hancock (2015) utilised a ZMET style approach to elicit the deeper emotions and values that students placed upon their relationship with the University (Hancock and Longbottom 2017).

As a discovery and eventual output of the study, Hancock and Longbottom (2015) developed a new concept called Deep Value Mining (DVM) and the Depth Gauge (see Figure 3.4). Linking into the value study and the ZMET technique is the evaluation of the Deep Value Mining theory which was developed by Hancock and Longbottom (2015). This technique complements the ZMET approach and allows the study to focus on ‘extracting’ values from the participants from a deep level.

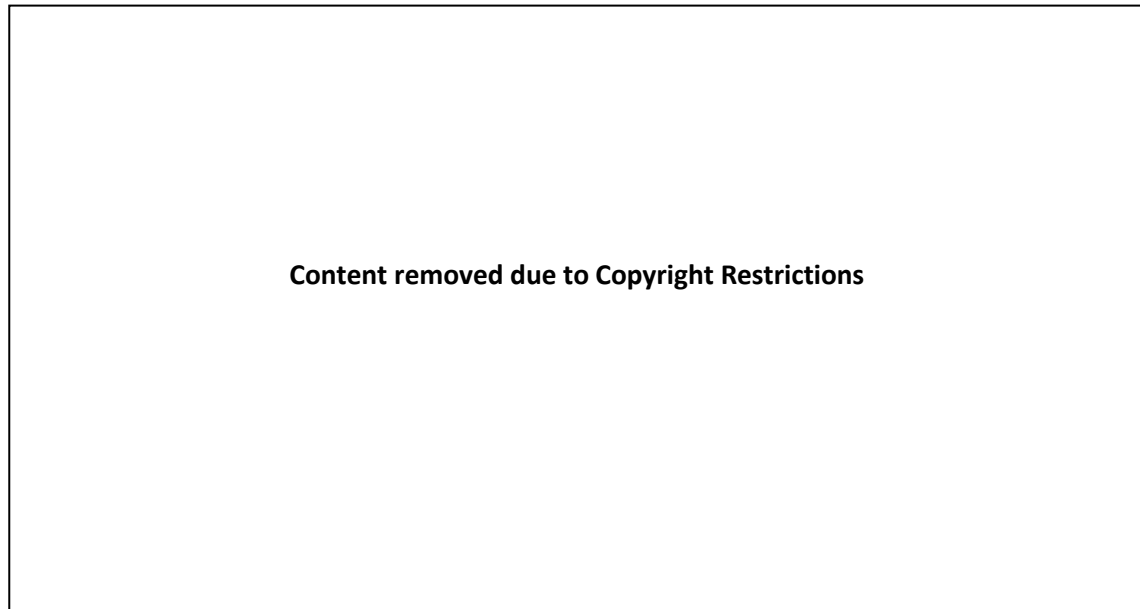


Figure 3.4 Deep Value Mining Depth Gauge (Hancock and Longbottom 2015). Source: Hancock (2015).

Hancock and Longbottom (2017) state that at the first two layers surface and shallow grade data from participants is usually obtained from pre-worded questionnaires or brief interviews and focus groups. Deeper and more quality grade data is obtained from depth interviews and potentially gemstones may emerge within these depth interviews.

Depth level three is seen as difficult because the participant may feel their responses are personal so may choose not to reveal them or instead provide answers which they think are more acceptable. Level four answers are the most difficult to elicit and are potentially answers which are below the level of the conscious mind. Hancock and Longbottom (2017) outline that through the course of a depth interview a researcher can move through the four layers using varying questioning strategies, such as, means-end chain, storytelling and silence. These approaches concur with some of the main stages in the ZMET process.

However, given the infancy of the DVM concept the researcher acknowledges that it has not been tested extensively in different situations and over a longer period of time. However, the author of the

DVM concept (Hancock 2015) has indicated that the ZMET process is still the main catalyst for the research approach and the DVM concept extends the ZMET by focusing the interviews and participants on visualising and articulating the things that matter to them (values) from their experiences. Hancock and Foster (2019) point out that ZMET can be adopted freely in academic research as there is a misconception that psychology training is required to use it.

In view of the study's aim of discovering deeper values from shoppers at value-based retailers, the DVM concept appears suitable for this research as one of the objectives is to develop a value improvement framework from the results. Despite the ZMET focusing more upon the metaphors that participants articulate, this study will be focusing more upon the values that are articulated and described whilst at the same time identifying metaphors that may be used as a vehicle to allow participants to interpret and make sense of their experiences. Based upon the ZMET and DVM approaches the main steps in the overall research process are outlined in the following section.

3.3.4.3 The Overall Research Phases

For each participant there are five phases:

1) Participant Briefing and Pre-Interview Questionnaire. Saunders et al (2012) note that the credibility of the study and the researcher can be endorsed through the supply of information to participants before the interview, allowing them to suitably prepare for the interview. Stage 1 of this study's interview process includes a participant briefing session of approximately 20 minutes, pre-interview questionnaire to record some initial demographic details for comparison to the proposed sample of the study and a copy of the research process provided as a briefing guide (shown in Appendix 1).

2) Image collection by the participant. Participants have around one to two weeks following the briefing meeting to collect between 6-10 images from internet sources such as search engines, magazines, newspapers or alternatively these could be hand drawn. Participants were advised to collect images that they felt represented their shopping experience and ideally to choose images which do not directly relate to or represent the selected case study company. Dodds et al (2018) argue that where participants bring the images to an interview it can enhance the conversation or interview process.

On average most participants collected 6 images to represent their shopping experience. Two participants collected as many as 9 images. This part of the interview process was quite challenging as occasionally participants were quite daunted by the task of choosing their images because they were unsure if they were collecting the 'right ones'. The task of collecting images itself was quite time consuming and so it was understandable if the participant had not given huge amounts of thought to

this during the one to two weeks between the initial briefing and the interview, as they would have had other priorities. Pain (2012) also notes this same challenge in using a visual elicitation technique.

3) Depth Interview and Montage Creation - Stage 3 of the process which involves recorded depth interviews lasting for approximately one (Karatzas et al 2019) to one and half hours (Hendijani and Boo 2020) and are used for the researcher to ask questions about the significance of the six to ten images that have been collected by the participant through applying ZMET inspired approaches.

The study's interview locations were flexible to the needs of the participants as a significant amount of time was needed from participants to discuss all of the images they selected, and the researcher wanted to ensure that they were comfortable with the agreed location. All interview locations were private and comfortable for the participant to be able to speak freely about their shopping experiences.

4) Debriefing of the Participant. The participants are debriefed thoroughly to reassure them that all data and information gathered was confidential and that they will remain anonymous throughout the study.

5) Data Analysis. The researcher transcribes the recordings of the interviews shortly after they occur. The transcripts are analysed using a thematic approach.

3.3.4.4 Elicitation of Metaphors

An interesting approach the researcher has considered towards conducting the interview process with regards to metaphors is the use of a technique which Lawley and Tompkins (2000) discuss called 'Clean Language' developed by David Grove. Using the clean language technique tries to ensure that the participant's perspective of their metaphor landscape is not influenced by or contaminated by the facilitator's language or metaphors. This supports the viewpoints conveyed by Carson et al (2001) with regards to being mindful not to impose one's own perspectives onto the participants.

A key word used in the interviewing technique which is prospective in metaphor elicitation is the word 'Like'. Lawley and Tompkins (2000 p.69) state that the use of the word like is the '*essential ingredient*' which enables '*the inexpressible, abstract or voluminous to be expressed as a tangible, vivid and compact metaphor*'.

3.3.4.5 Questioning Techniques

Questioning within the depth interviews will be through a mixture of open questions to allow the participants to describe their experiences and provide an extensive and developmental answer, plus probing questions will be used to explore responses of significance or seek further explanation of the meaning (Saunders et al 2012).

Zaltman (2003 p.108) discusses the significance of using probing questions and states that *'in probing, the interviewer encourages participants to open up, to look through more windows on their thinking and share what they see'*. Hennink et al (2011) concur suggesting two types of probes (topical and motivational) noted. Topical probes are developed in advance of the interview and include particular issues to raise if they are not covered by a participant in an answer to a question. Hennink et al (2011) maintain these are essential for in-depth interviews with an open style of questions allowing for participants to tell their story or experience. Motivational probes can be questions which expand the first answer such as 'tell me more' or they can be simple encouraging sounds such as 'mmhm', 'ah-ha', 'OK' (p.129) or even the interviewer just using silence.

Marshall and Rossman (2011) suggest that the richness of the depth interview is largely reliant upon the effectiveness of probing questions, but they do also acknowledge that these need to be gentle as the participants are being asked to go into greater and sometimes more personal detail, which may make some people feel uncomfortable.

With regards to this study, probing questions are an essential part of the depth interview process and an area which is explored in further detail as part of the adaptation of ZMET and DVM for this study (see Section 3.3.4.6).

Another widely cited and applied questioning technique that the researcher has considered utilising is laddering developed by Reynolds and Gutman (1988). Lawson (2017) describes laddering as asking an initial question then following up the first question with more questions until the deeper responses are reached. Zikmund et al (2010) also note the significance of laddering and they describe three levels of laddering distinction, 1) attribute-level 2) benefit-level 3) value or motivation level. For the purpose of this study the third level is most important as this is where the potential experiential values reside.

Juttner et al's (2013) perspective of laddering concurs, suggesting that laddering is used to elicit sequences of features which represent all levels of thought, including personal values. They also contend that personal values can be found by the interviewer using probing questions and that laddering is utilised to interpret the cognitive and emotional responses participants have towards

experiential stimuli. In relation to metaphors, Elliot and Cavazos (2021 p.4) suggest that *'laddering probes are an important aspect of ZMET for obtaining deep metaphors'*.

However, laddering does have critics and some disadvantages. Woodruff (1997 p.144) argues that *'these techniques are limited because only a relatively few such linkages (or ladders) are uncovered in each customer interview'*. Lawson (2017) also notes that the participant's story could become fragmented and as the researcher is guiding the story with additional questions, the participant might not articulate other areas of the story which may enhance the overall discussion.

Nonetheless, the laddering approach is fitting for the depth interview method as the researcher is looking to elicit the deeper descriptions, stories, metaphors and values from participants. Laddering also forms part of the ZMET discussed in further detail in section 3.3.4.6 and will be used in conjunction with the ZMET steps through the course of the interviews.

The foundation of the laddering technique for this study will be based upon the participant images as the starting point of the conversations. The participant images allow them to drive the discussion and expand upon the context of the image they have selected. The second step in the laddering will be the retail experiential factors which is taken from the earlier literature review and covers what the store has in the way of its environment. These could include aspects such as merchandise, displays, staff, service, customers, atmospherics, departments, layout and lighting. The situation of these retail experiential factors will be tested in the type of motivation(s) they create for the participant. The next step that will follow in the laddering process is to establish what the participant actually values in the setting of the shopping experience which is categorised as perceived customer value. These particular values are related to the store environment and the items for sale. The next step in the laddering process is to try and understand from a more personal and broader perspective what the store values mean to them in the context of their own human values. The top step on the ladder is envisioned to ultimately establish what feelings the image and the shopping experience are evoking.

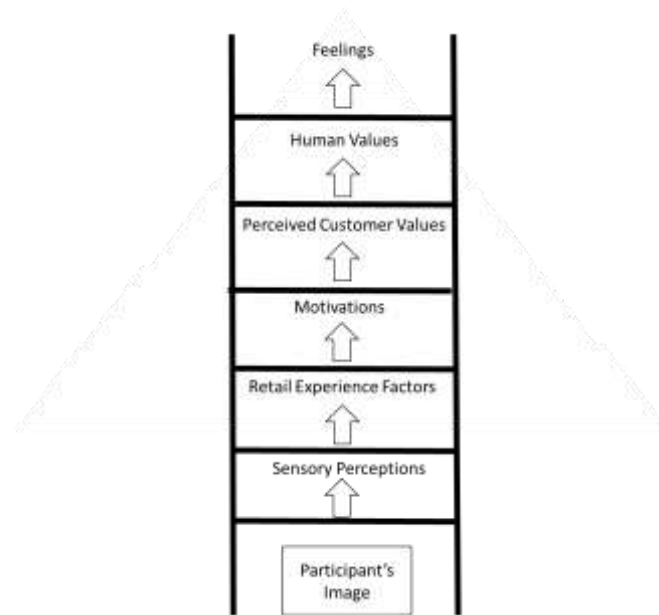


Figure 3.5 Laddering Technique used by the Researcher.

The approach to the discussion of each image was to understand what the image represented (Zaltman 2003), how they were perceiving the experience through their senses, what particular retail experience factors were involved at each point in the experience, how it motivated or demotivated the participant within the store, why these areas and features discussed were important to them with regards to the shopping experience (perceived customer values), why from a broader perspective this was important or mattered to the participant (human values) and then to complete the discussion for each image the participant was asked if there were any particular feeling(s) associated with the shopping experience that the image and the discussion regarding it represented.

A similar laddering approach was utilised in a study into a deeper understanding of positive customer feedback by Nasr et al (2018), who used an integrated methodological approach combining laddering techniques and ZMET. These researchers used both laddering down with the participants receiving the service to uncover the values and attributes of positive customer feedback and laddering up with the providers of the service to uncover the consequences and values associated with receiving positive customer feedback.

3.3.4.6 Adaptation of ZMET and DVM for this study

Chang and Pan (2011 p.661) state that *'there is no standard procedure for ZMET, and the specific steps involved in implementing ZMET vary according to the project focus'*. Dodds et al (2018) concur and emphasise that other studies have used parts of the ZMET process and not necessarily all ten steps. They also argued that for their research study that the ten steps were too arduous for the participants. However, the interview process for this study is still very much inspired by the approach

from Zaltman (1996) but also some enhancements have been incorporated which were made by Hancock (2015) and focus on understanding personal values. These have been combined in Figure 3.6.

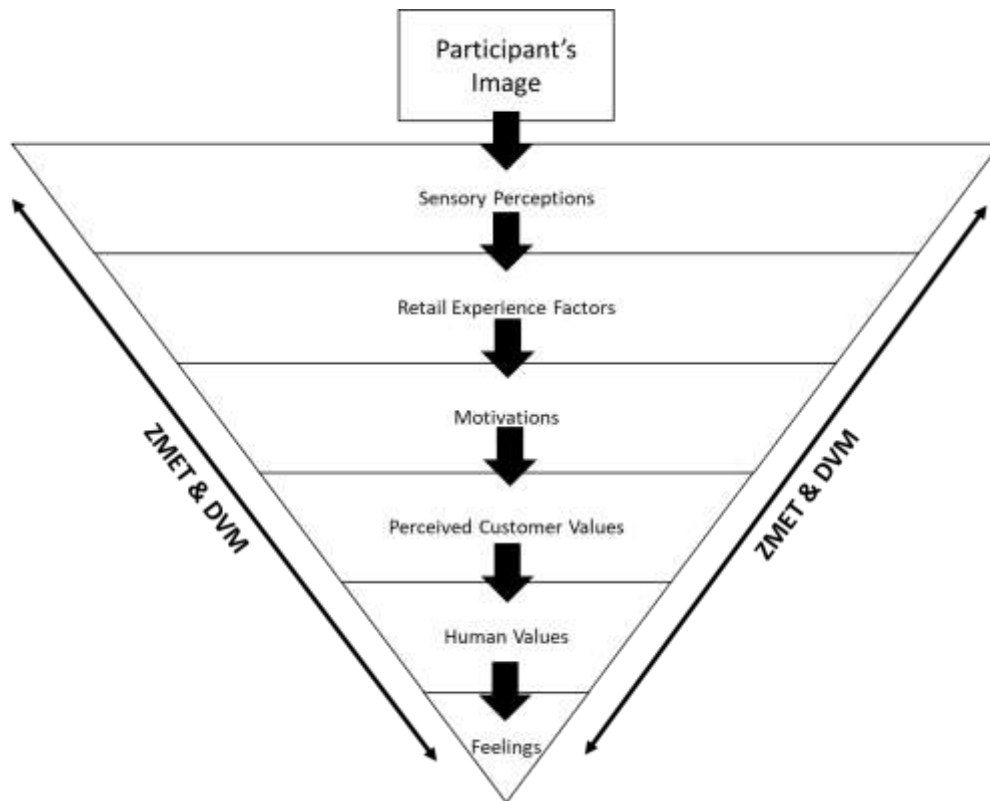


Figure 3.6 Adapted Laddering Technique used by the Researcher incorporating ZMET and DVM.

Main question for the Interview

At the recorded interview the participant was asked the main question to begin describing their experiences of shopping at the chosen retailer:

‘Could you describe what your chosen images represent in terms of your thoughts and feelings regarding what you value about the experience of shopping at (chosen retailer)’?

As the participant described these experiences the ZMET interview process and laddering technique was used to develop these descriptions and to establish the significance and context of what the image represented regarding the store experience. Each Interview began by the participant selecting which of their images they wanted to talk about first and then they moved onto the second image they wanted to discuss and so on. There were also some occasions where images might have been related to another and the participants may have chosen to talk about two images almost simultaneously or in the same context.

With each image discussed by the participant the researcher gauged where the details had perhaps been fully explained and then asked if there were any further aspects of the image they wanted to discuss. The researcher then prompted the participant to choose the next image until all were explored. An example of laddering technique linked to a particular image selected by participant X is shown in Figure 3.7.

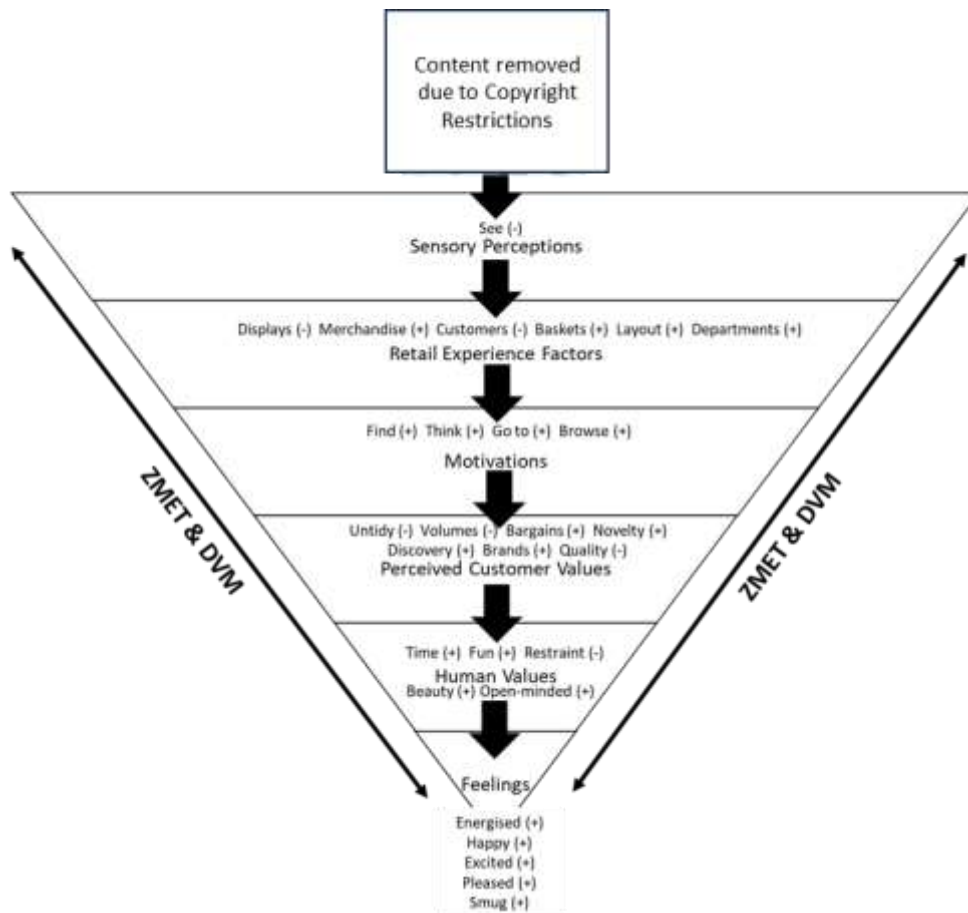


Figure 3.7 Laddering technique used for ZMET Interviews (Participant X).

3.3.5 Research Sample

In line with the recommendation by Coulter and Zaltman (1994) of 24 participants for a credible study when applying the ZMET approach, this study recruited the recommended number of 24.

Belk et al (2013) argues that before depth interviews take place the researcher should decide who they would like to interview. Selection of participants was based upon three pre-section criteria These were:

- 1) Participant is 18 years or above
- 2) Participant has shopped at one of the retailers used for the study

3) Participant can select 6 to 10 images which represent their shopping experience and can provide the time required to complete the interview process.

The study has no exclusion criteria.

The ratio of female to male participants in this study was divided following the retail customer research details presented by Mintel (2015) suggesting that the strong performance by Retailer 1 indicated that value-based fashionable clothing continued to be a must among young females who are the main clothes shoppers. Similarly, research studies in clothing retail, such as, Willems et al (2012) contended that female participants dominated in their studies because their interest in fashion is representative, and they regularly also purchase clothing for their (male) partners. Correspondingly, Sebald and Jacob (2020) also suggest that an uneven gender distribution is not unusual for shopping studies.

75% Female (18 Female Participants)

25% Male (6 Male Participants)

The researcher's ideal age profiles for the study participants (see Table 3.8) were a similar ratio to Mintel's (2016) retail customer profile average age groups (see Figure 3.8) for the two retailers selected for the study (Retailer 1 and Retailer 2):

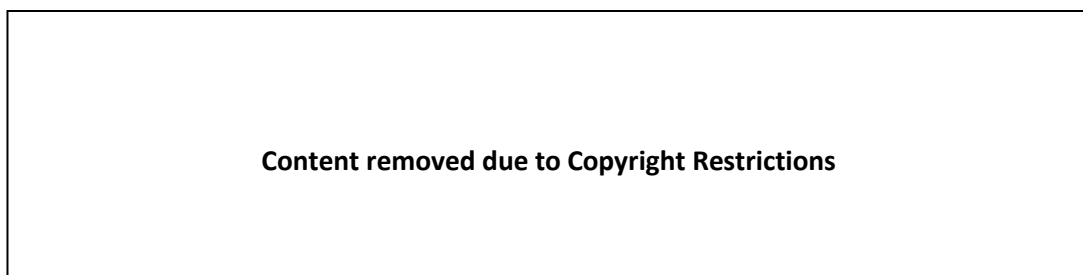


Figure 3.8 Mintel retail customer profiles. Source: Lightspeed/Mintel (2016)

Participants were recruited through a convenience sample from the researcher's network of contacts. This included colleagues, friends and acquaintances who were willing to participate in the study. Braun and Clarke (2013 p.87) maintain this approach is perfectly acceptable citing the term from Garton and Copland (2010) known as '*acquaintance interviews*' but additionally they draw attention to the ethical considerations, such as confidentiality being managed correctly. Subsequent from the convenience sampling a mixture of snowballing sampling (similar to that used by Venkatesh et al 2010), volunteer sampling and opportunity sampling was also used to achieve the number of participants required.

The researcher planned to have fairly balanced number of participants across the age ranges but recruited only two participants in the 55+ age range and an additional three participants in the 45 to 54 age range (shown in Table 3.8).

Table 3.8 Study Participants (Planned and Actual).

Age Range	Planned Number of Participants	Percentage	Actual Number of Participants	Percentage
18 - 24 years old	5 Participants	21%	4 Participants	16%
25 – 34 years old	5 Participants	21%	5 Participants	21%
35 – 44 years old	5 Participants	21%	5 Participants	21%
45 – 54 years old	5 Participants	19%	8 Participants	33%
55 + years old	4 Participants	18%	2 Participants	8%

The interviews were conducted over the course of 2018 through to early 2020.

3.3.6 Thematic Analysis

Interviews were transcribed by the researcher and the transcripts were read several times (Petermans et al 2013) to establish the codes with comments added into the margins within Microsoft Word. This was followed by identifying the more common themes emerging, which is similar to the suggested approach by Miles and Huberman (1994).

Hogg and Maclaran (2008 p.137-138) state that *‘qualitative researchers cannot necessarily account for every piece of data, but they can endeavour to capture some sense of the issues they have encountered; demonstrating that they searched systematically and conscientiously through their data and did not ignore inconvenient emergent themes or findings’*. In the tenth stage of the ZMET methodology the researcher reviews the constructs and develops consensus maps of the most important constructs into themes. Zaltman and Coulter (1995) suggest *‘that as a frequency level for each individual construct so that at least one-third of the participants mention any given construct’* (Hancock and Foster 2019 p.55).

The researcher used thematic analysis to identify repetitions, indigenous typologies, metaphors, linguistic connectors, similarities and differences (Bryman and Bell 2011). However, the researcher acknowledges that this interpretive approach to data analysis can receive criticism on the validity.

Bryman (2012) states that thematic analysis is one of the most widely used approaches to qualitative research, although it is not an approach with notable heritage. Therefore, the researcher was mindful of the need to be rigorous in the analysis and so in addition to manual coding in Microsoft Word the NVivo software program was used to further analyse the transcripts, quantify the number of times the coding references have occurred and further support the review of the data and subsequent findings. Bryman (2012) conveys the advantages of using NVivo software alongside thematic analysis of semi-structured interviews in saving some of the time analysing data and encouraging researchers to think analytically about the data using coding. However, Bryman (2012) also notes that the researcher could become detached from the findings somewhat and miss some of the themes emerging.

According to Ong et al (2018) shopping affective states can be categorised into two distinct types: positive affective state and negative affective state which links to similar studies such as Mohan et al (2013), Baker et al (1994), Darden and Babin (1994), Donovan and Rossiter (1982), Hui and Bateson (1991). Coding of the transcripts in this study included sentiment from each participant in their descriptions of the shopping experience and were presented as either a (+ve) or (-ve) symbol alongside the summarised codes. For example, if a participant described how the departments within the store were something they would see, enjoy approaching and browsing through, then codes of See (+) Approach (+), Go to (+) and Departments (+) were listed for a particular image. Conversely, further examples a participant might describe such as other customers within the store at very busy times were mainly viewed as a negative aspect of the shopping experience and these might be allocated with codes of See (-), Avoid (-), Customers (-) and Crowded (-).

Themes identified from the transcripts were collated into the most common shopping values emerging from the participants. Subsequently, the researcher converted these themes into a management framework with particular areas that retailers would need to monitor and develop with the aim of satisfying the experiential values that customers cherish.

3.3.7 Reliability and Validity

Longbottom (2017) notes that researchers using qualitative approaches must be aware of the Validity (the integrity of the data and the method in which it is collected), Reliability (whether the data is repeatable and consistent) and Bias (the extent to which the researcher may try to influence the collection of data, analysis and the results).

To practise the ZMET interview process before conducting the study's interviews, the researcher was trained in the use of the adapted ZMET/DVM interview approaches by demonstrating how to conduct the interviews and the interview process. In addition, the researcher was interviewed by an experienced ZMET researcher in the role of a participant where they were required to collect six to

ten images which represented their thoughts and feelings regarding going on holiday. This practice interview was conducted a week to 10 days after the instruction to collect images and therefore the researcher was able to experience and see the entire interview process as a participant. The experienced researcher also kindly provided guidance and advice to the researcher throughout the interview process, acting as a critical friend.

Every participant interview was recorded using the same equipment (a Dictaphone) and every interview had the same approach towards the process of questioning. All interviews began by thanking the participant for taking part, for collecting their images and the interview then proceeded to the first image they wanted to discuss. Participants then led the discussion about each of their images and what they represented in the shopping experience. The researcher used flexibility in the interview to explore further probing questions if the participant expressed anything of particular interest, or if further detail and clarification was required (Rubin and Rubin 2012).

All interview recordings were listened to several times (Agar 1980) to understand the depth of the discussions and the meaning of the images. Spencer (1989, cited in Saunders et al 2012) states, that important data from the participant's intonations and hesitations need to be available to the researcher as they can help to recapture the actual data which is identified as being the researcher's experience of the interview in its context. Hancock and Longbottom (2017 p.79) agree noting that *'reading and listening over and over again to transcripts is an important aspect of interpretation and rigour'*.

From a further validity perspective, Hogg and Maclaran (2008) maintain that there are three dimensions (cited as developed from Golden-Biddle and Locke 2007), which researchers need to address in order to convince their audience of the validity of their study: Authenticity, Plausibility and Criticality.

Within the context of Authenticity, researchers must immerse themselves suitably in the field, be genuine to the experience and live the data (Moser and Korstjens 2018). Hogg and Maclaran (2008) also express that all the interpretive points made must be linked back to some form of evidence within the data as this helps to convey authenticity. Denscombe (2007) propose that validity could be reviewed to ascertain if the data is accurate in four ways:

1. Check the data with other sources
2. Checking the transcript with the informant
3. Check the plausibility of the data
4. Look for themes in transcripts

In terms of checking the data with other sources, the researcher checked a complete transcript with their supervisor to see if they were identifying the same or similar codes in the analysis. Checking the transcript with the participants was not possible for two reasons 1.) There was a time constraint for the

participants, and it was felt that each had already provided several hours of their time collecting the images and attending the interview. 2.) The montage created through the direction of the participant at the later stages of the interview was a confirmation of the visual representation of the shopping experience. This is echoed by Hancock and Foster (2019) who state that the creation of the montage should be directed by the participant who will indicate the size, position and relationship of the image to the others on the montage. Dodds et al (2018) point out that this is a step in the ZMET process which gives the participant the opportunity to reflect on their overall experience by creating a visual narrative. Hancock and Foster (2019 p.54) also emphasise the importance of this stage in the interview *'because it captures all the thoughts together ending the interview'*. The montages were named or titled as the completion part of the interview. Hancock and Foster (2019 p.54) convey the importance of the title for the montage *'to capture the essence of their overall feelings of the subject'*. Some of the participants found it very easy to choose a name for their montage whereas others found this difficult to think about what to call it. Some participants said:

'erm, crikey I don't know because it's representing two such contrasting feelings erm, I don't know how you would get all that into one description' (Retailer 1 Participant B)

'That's difficult, erm so difficult maybe' (Retailer 1 Participant L)

'Oh, Would I have to have a sentence or a word?' (Retailer 2 Participant O)

Erm, I don't know it's a hard question' (Retailer 2 Participant P)

With regards to Plausibility, the researcher needs to make the study makes sense to the reader and show how it has something unique to offer. Finally, in reference to Criticality, the researcher should encourage readers to reflect on the study, recognise differences in opinion, challenge and consider other possibilities. The researcher has addressed this part of the study within chapters 4, 5, 6 and 7.

To validate the number of participants taking part in the study and the planned number within each of the age brackets, the researcher asked the participants to complete a pre-interview questionnaire which included questions regarding age and gender. For further validation the participants were asked if they could indicate the frequency of their shopping visits at the selected case study retailer and the approximate time since their last visit to the retailer.

Table 3.9 shows that participants visiting Retailer 1 were visiting more frequently than participants visiting Retailer 2, with a good proportion of Retailer 1 participants visiting stores a few times a month. Similarly, the time since the last visit to the store was less with Retailer 1 with the majority of participants recently visiting a Retailer 1 store in the past few weeks.

Table 3.9 Participant Demographics and Shopping Frequency Behaviour

Participant	Age Range	Gender	Store	Shopping Frequency	Time Since Last Visit	Number of Images
A	55+	F	Retailer 1	2-3 Per Month	Within 4 Wks	9
B	35-44	F	Retailer 1	2-3 Per Month	Last Week	6
C	35-44	F	Retailer 1	Every Few Mth	Within 6 Mths	7
D	45-54	F	Retailer 1	2-3 Per Month	Within 4 Wks	6
E	25-34	F	Retailer 1	Every Few Mth	Within 6 Mths	6
F	18-24	F	Retailer 1	2-3 Per Month	Last Week	7
G	45-54	M	Retailer 1	2-3 Per Month	Within 4 Wks	8
H	35-44	F	Retailer 1	2-3 Per Month	Last Week	8
I	18-24	M	Retailer 1	Every Few Mth	Within 4 Wks	7
J	25-34	F	Retailer 1	2-3 Per Month	Within 4 Wks	6
K	18-24	F	Retailer 1	Every Few Mth	Within 4 Wks	6
L	45-54	F	Retailer 1	Every Few Mth	Within 4 Wks	6
M	18-24	F	Retailer 2	Every Few Mth	Within 4 Wks	7
N	45-54	F	Retailer 2	Every Few Mth	Within 6 Mths	6
O	35-44	F	Retailer 2	Every Few Mth	Within 6 Mths	8
P	25-34	F	Retailer 2	2-3 Per Month	Last Week	6
Q	45-54	M	Retailer 2	Every Few Mth	Within 4 Wks	9
R	45-54	M	Retailer 2	Once/ Twice Yr	Within 4 Wks	7
S	55+	F	Retailer 2	Every Few Mth	Within 6 Mths	7
T	45-54	M	Retailer 2	Once/ Twice Yr	Within 6 Mths	6
U	25-34	M	Retailer 2	Once/ Twice Yr	Over 1 Year	6
V	25-34	F	Retailer 2	Once/ Twice Yr	Within 6 Mths	6
W	45-54	F	Retailer 2	Every Few Mth	Within 6 Mths	7
X	35-44	F	Retailer 2	Every Few Mth	Within 4 Wks	6

3.3.8 Research Limitations

Whilst some of the limitations of the various philosophical approaches have already been considered in section 3.2.3 the researcher further identifies that with regards to selecting an interpretive approach, it will involve a high degree of subjectivity, reflection and multiple meanings within the potential data collected from the participants (Saunders et al 2012). To guard against these the researcher listened to the interview recordings several times and all off the transcripts were written by the researcher. The transcripts were analysed twice through manual coding in Microsoft Word and through the NVivo software platform to interpret the descriptions made by the participants on multiple occasions, ensuring the meanings were consistently checked. A transcript was also given to the researcher's supervisor to check if they agreed with the coding.

The researcher also acknowledges the limitations and the criticism of qualitative research approaches, such as authors who have seen qualitative research as being too impressionistic and subjective, relying too much on the researcher's unsystematic views about what is important (Bryman and Bell 2015). To address this the participants were asked to articulate what they felt was important both in their narratives and their selected images.

The limitations of case studies are conveyed by Bryman (2012) who indicates that if a researcher is just using one case study, then they cannot make conclusions that the results would be representative across other examples of the same type. The researcher suggests that the two case study organisations selected only serve as a vehicle to represent part of the clothing retail market and a catalyst for participants to use to describe their experiences. Therefore, the study is not focusing in too much on the companies themselves, although any similarities and differences between them is noted.

The depth interview method like all research techniques has its limitations. Hennink et al (2011) maintain that they require skills to build rapport, flexibility to change topic order and follow participant stories, a lot of transcription is needed, and they take a lot of time to complete. Carson et al (2001) emphasise that researchers should be mindful not to impose their own perspectives onto the participant, whilst Marshall and Rossman (2011) suggest that depth interviews require trust and building rapport, with participants perhaps being unwilling to share all the interviewer hopes to discover. The researcher took three steps to minimise these limitations by firstly letting the participants lead the interview as they discussed what each image selected represented in the context of their shopping experience. Secondly, the researcher used laddering follow-up questions (shown in section 3.3.4.5) based upon the main literature categories, and thirdly, added questions regarding the frequency of the experiences the participants were describing to understand how often these experiences would typically occur. The rapport within the interviews would typically build within the first 20 minutes as the participant would settle into discussing the initial images and what they represented.

3.3.9 Ethical Considerations

Dupernex (2017) maintains that within the research process the researcher needs to recognise the potential ethical issues and then decide what action needs to be taken. These potential ethical considerations should be managed in the planning stages and throughout the research process.

The study complied with the University of Derby ethics procedure and GDPR (2018) requirements. All participants were anonymous and their consent form, pre-interview questionnaire and recording were kept confidential and secure.

3.3.10 Conclusion

As a result of the review of research philosophies, structure and design, the researcher has concluded that an interpretive approach to the study with a phenomenological position which focuses on the understanding of experience (Venkatesh et al 2010) was adopted, as this appears to be most appropriate for understanding the deeper metaphorical articulation of experiences from the participants. The research is inductive as the general representations and commonalities of the participants shopping experiences are identified and collated with the objective of establishing a theoretical framework. Research in the general context is qualitative in the form of a mono method approach with a case study format using two retailers.

Depth Interviews incorporated several critiqued techniques including probing questions to explore answers more deeply and laddering to allow participants to open up their stories and potentially delve deeper into the distinctive value levels of description. The primary interview technique of ZMET is the inspiration for discovering deeper metaphors and experiential values. The DVM approach assists the researcher in focusing on the values elicited within the interviews with the purpose of identifying and categorising these in further detail during the analysis stage.

The sampling approach was initially convenience with the intention of snowballing, volunteer and opportunity sampling. Ethical issues have been considered and limitations to the research approach acknowledged and addressed.

Results of the interviews were analysed using a thematic approach trying to identify metaphors, repetitions, similarities, connectors and other theory-linked material. NVivo software was also utilised to further analyse the transcripts and identify the frequency of the codes to develop the main themes.

In summary the research is designed as presented in Figure 3.9.

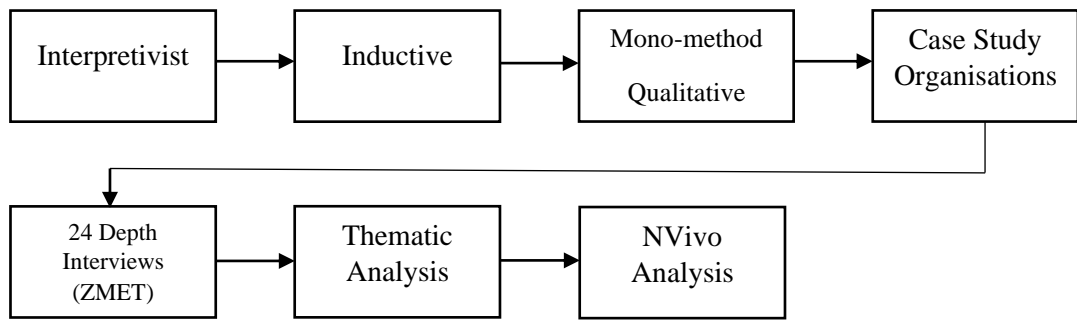


Figure 3.9 Research design for the study.

Chapter 4 Presentation of Findings

4.1 Introduction and Overview

The presentation of findings chapter reviews each of the participant interviews and looks at what each image selected represents with regards to the laddering layers. The images are then brought together as a montage which was designed by the participant with the location of each image on the montage chosen and placed by them. The codes emerging from each of the images is collated in a table and the laddering areas are collectively reviewed for each retailer.

The interviews have been sectioned into the two retailers and are presented as twelve Retailer 1 interviews and twelve Retailer 2 interviews. The interview codes have been categorised in the same format as the interviews in the context of starting with the Sensory Perceptions of the participant and what the image represents in terms of their senses. The image is then explored in terms of what it represents in the shopping experience linked to Retail Experiential Factors. The type of Motivations the participants had during the shopping experience and how this relates to the image were noted. Next is to establish why these aspects discussed were of Perceived Customer Value which is more specific to the store shopping experience. Following this, participants answers were reviewed for broader Human Values. To complete the discussion for each image the participants shopping experiences were reviewed as a Feeling.

Figure 4.1 shows the visual map for the chapter.

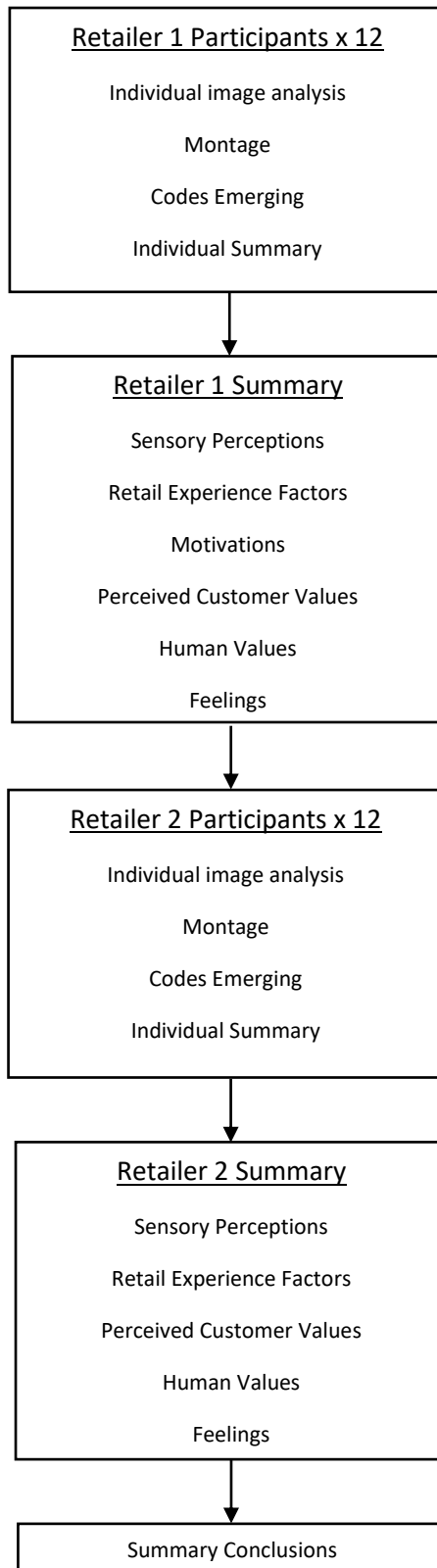


Figure 4.1 Outline of Chapter 4.

12 Participants shopping at Retailer 1

Findings and analysis of the images*, interviews and montages* for each participant shopping at Retailer 1 stores

***Images and montages removed due to copyright.**

4.2.1 Participant A – Images and Findings

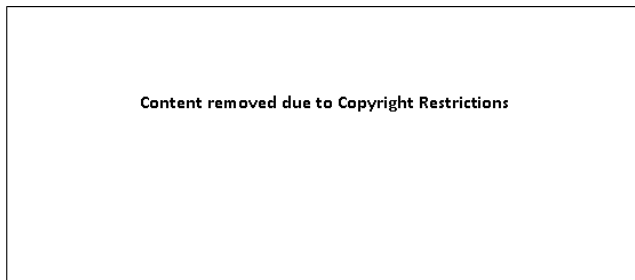
Image 4.2.1.1 – Rainbow: *‘colours that sort of hit you’*



*‘there’s a range of colours all in one place...
and it sort of hits you when you go in’*

*‘You know you wonder, well where should I
start?’*

Image 4.2.1.2 – Meringues: *‘pretty things’*



*‘that’s how their clothes appear to me...
pretty things’*

*‘it reminds you of sweets or cakes... pretty
pretty things’*

*‘this is like orderly... the colours go together
because they are slightly muted’*

Image 4.2.1.3 – Sparkle: *‘oh look at that!’*



*‘quite a few of their clothes... for the grown-
ups as well... they do have maybe a bit more
sparkle than perhaps the other stores’*

*‘you just go from one thing and thinking oh
look at that’*

*‘I always go and have a look at them...
because they really know how to do it’*

Image 4.2.1.4 – Cosy: ‘safe’

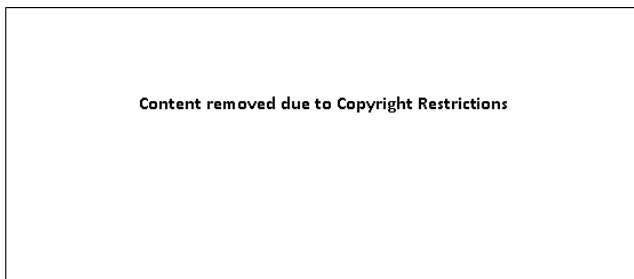


‘Retailer I has some lovely... throws and things’

‘they’re very nice... as good as lot of these things which seem to be sold in more expensive shops’

‘if you are nice and cosy... you’re safe’

Image 4.2.1.5 – Sweet Shop: ‘where shall I start?’

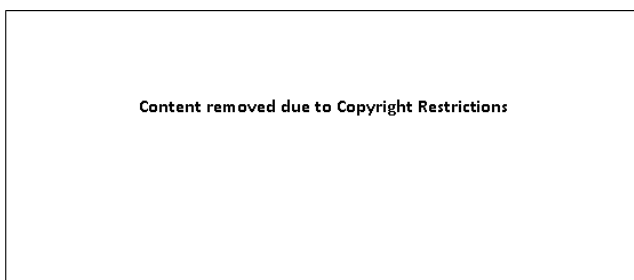


‘their things aren’t expensive at all and so when you go in... the whole place is your oyster’

‘I mean when you first walk in there it is like suddenly being in a sweet shop like, that’s over there, that’s over there, you know - where shall I start?’

‘you go round and pick em up like sweets, bags of sweets’

Image 4.2.1.6 – Person Relaxing: ‘time and space’



‘it’s a fairly relaxed sort of shopping there’

‘the clothes and racks and rails are spaced out, you never seem to be on top of everybody’

‘you don’t queue to go to the fitting rooms because they have got enough... so it all adds to the pleasure... of choosing and trying something on’

Image 4.2.1.7 – Fluffy: ‘little bit of fun’



‘there’s a range of things they sell... and they are well, fluffy’

‘they’ve often got... some little something that just makes them stand out’

‘it’s a little bit of fun there I think... makes you... smile inside’

‘I think we all like to have a smile don’t we... to ourselves’

Image 4.2.1.8 – Stylish: ‘going with the flow’



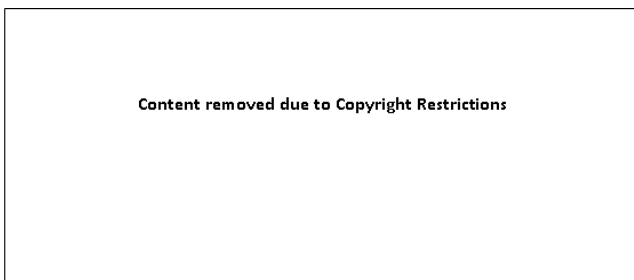
‘they have dresses and tops and jackets... that are stylish and up to date’

‘some of them are the latest fashion... and they’re smart... and quite well made too’

‘well if you’re... going with the flow... you’re going to feel good aren’t you.’

‘you would think that you looked good... choosing the right things that somebody else might admire’

Image 4.2.1.9 – Freedom: ‘buying without too much thought’



‘if I go into Retailer 1... I could buy what I wanted, so I have that freedom’

‘when I walk in the shop and sort of in anticipation of seeing something... that I’ll like... and will fit me, will suit me... I don’t have to worry’

‘being able to buy it... without too much thought is freedom, isn’t it’

Image 4.1.1.10 – Participant A Montage: *'The thrill of it all!'*



Table 4.1 Participant A codes emerging for each image

Image Theme									
Sensory Perception	See (+)	See(+) Touch(+)	See(+)	See(+) Touch(+)	See(+) Hear(+)	See(+) Touch(+)	Touch(+) See(+)	See(+)	See(+)
Retail Experience Factors	Display(+) Merchandise(+) Colours(+) Layout(+) Space(+)	Merchandise(+) Departments(+) Colours(+) Customers (-) Display(-)	Merchandise (+) Departments (+)	Merchandise (+)	Colours(+) Merchandise(+) Customers (+) Staff(+)	Layout(+) Space(+) Customers(+) Queues (-) Queues (+) Fitting Room(+)	Merchandise(+)	Merchandise (+)	Merchandise (+)
Motivation	Go to(+) Walk in(+) Browse(+) Think(+) Find(+) Try on(+) Purchase(+)	Browse(+) Pick up(+) Drawn to(+) Exit store (-) Think(-) Avoid(-)	Browse(+) Think(+)	Pick up(+) Purchase(+)	Go to(+) Walk in(+) Pick up(+) Try on(+)	Browse(+) Pick up(+) Try on(+) Purchase(+) Go to(+)	Pick up(+) Browse(+)	Find(+) Purchase(+)	Go to(+) Walk in(+) Purchase(+)
Perceived Customer Values	Variety(+) Discovery(+) Fashionable(+) Expectations(+) New(+)	Novelty(+) Untidy(-) Flow(-)	Novelty(+) Discovery(+)	Quality(+) Variety(+)	Price(+) Variety(+) Fashionable(+)	Flow(+)	Novelty(+) Variety(+)	Fashionable(+) Variety(+)	Price(+) Expectations (+) Affordability (+) Discovery(+)
Human Values	Beauty(+) Achievement(+)	Beauty(+) Order(+) Ease(+) Pleasure(+)	Beauty(+) Fun(+)	Secure(+) Treat(+)	Beauty(+) Fun(+) Community(+)	Time(+) Ease(+) Politeness(+)	Fun(+)	Recognition(+)	Ease(+) Liberty(+) Community(+)
Feelings	Hopeful(+) Good(+) Anticipation(+)	Comfortable(+) Annoyed(-)	Good(+)	Warm(+) Safe(+)	Excitement (+) Buzz(+)	Relaxed(+)	Happy(+)	Good(+) Chuffed(+)	Anticipation(+) Good(+)

Summary of Participant A

Participant A (PA) talked overwhelmingly in positive terms regarding their shopping experience at Retailer 1 and primarily focused on the merchandise that was sold in the store. Whilst the participant realised that not all the fashionable items in the store were suitable for them she felt that even these items brought a positive aspect to the overall experience as she could appreciate that certain items would probably look nice on the person who would be wearing them.

PA explained that they chose their image 4.2.1.1 because when they walk into a Retailer 1 store they see and experience almost a rainbow of colour which is typically at the front of the store and has the impact of immediately making them want to go around and look at the displays. This was of particular value to the participant because they thought that the aesthetics of the colours represented what fashion was in at that particular time. By having these bright and pretty products near the front door it gave them a feeling of hope and anticipation in that they had only just arrived at the shop and already they might have discovered something they like.

With their second image (4.2.1.2) PA explained that the clothes within the store were very pretty to them and feminine. This made them want to interact with the clothes by picking them up, touching the clothes and feeling the material as they thought there was a pleasure in touching the clothes and that the colour and the pattern were something they could not resist. The second element of this image was the order in which the colours were arranged, and this represented the orderly presentation of the store and the participant's preference for the clothes to be in an orderly way. PA expressed that if clothes had been put back in a disorderly way, then they would pick them up and put them back properly. If they thought the store was in too much disorder with things in the wrong place, then she would leave the store as it would make her feel uncomfortable.

The third image (4.2.1.3) PA explained that the store had many clothes for children and for grown-ups that had sparkle attached to them and they liked this because the clothes appeared very pretty which made her feel good. Despite this however they noted that they would not buy these types of clothes for herself as that would draw attention to her.

PA noticed with image 4.2.1.4 that the store stocked cosy things like onesies, blankets and throws which they explained that is what she wanted to be when it is cold with nice things around them which makes her feel safe.

PA again initially linked the image of the sweet shop (4.2.1.5) to the colours of the store but expanded her explanation of the image in the context that being in the store was like being in a sweet shop because she could have two ounces of one type of sweet and another two ounces of another type of sweet. This generated a feeling of excitement because they were going to go and try on lots of things, and she knew they were not going to be very expensive or out of her reach.

With image 4.2.1.6, PA explained that space within the store was important to her because she did not want to be bumping into other shoppers and she wanted to have the time to look at things, pick them up and feel the materials which the store layout and design allowed for. PA noted that the store was lively with quite a long queue when she went to pay. PA did emphasise that at times when the store was very busy, for example during the sales, then they would not go into the store because it would not be relaxing for her.

PA explained that she liked to go in and look at the accessories with the image selected for 4.2.1.7 because this section had got a fun element to it. She would not perhaps buy them for herself, but she said these things in the store made her smile and it was nice to see people dressed in them.

PA felt that that in the store you would find clothes that look really smart and would match (image 4.2.1.8). These were she said the latest fashions and by wearing these you would think that you look good and that others would think that you looked good too. They valued this particularly because it made her feel good to think somebody might come up to them and say that she looked nice.

Image 4.2.1.9 was described as the person in the image jumping for joy as the sun was coming up and it is going to be a lovely day. PA linked this to the store as it has clothing which is affordable and not expensive, and this allowed them to buy things without too much thought. When she walks into the store, they felt a sense of anticipation that she would be able to find something that they liked and it would suit them whilst being able to buy it. This she said was freedom.

4.2.2 Participant B – Images and Findings

Image 4.2.2.1 – Birthday: *'in there makes it feel like your birthday'*

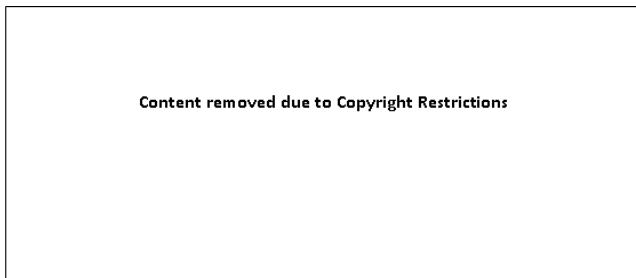


'you're just basically spoilt and you get loads of presents'

'you feel like it's your birthday and you can just pick and choose anything you want'

'that sort of feeling is the strongest when I'm out when I'm in the shop just like picking things off the shelf and finding things'

Image 4.2.2.2 – Seagulls: *'it reminds me of when you like on a pier and got some chips and all the seagulls just'*



'that is just exactly how it feels, people behave like seagulls in there'

'if you go on a Saturday afternoon that is often what it is like'

'usually it would make me hurry up get what I need and leave'

Image 4.2.2.3 – Panning for Gold: *‘finding that killer item that you know everyone will love that will look great on you’*



‘they’re my gold items you know and I think you can find them’

‘when you do find the stuff that is and does look expensive it’s feels like gold’

‘I don’t find the gold every time but definitely go through the process of looking for it’

‘I don’t feel like I’ve found it every time, but that makes it more special when you do find it’

‘the jewellery and the handbags the birthday things yeah the gold is above that’

Image 4.2.2.4 – Supermarket Sweep: *‘you used to literally have to go and get as many items and aim for as much value as they could and then there would literally be just mayhem’*



‘sometimes when I go in Retailer 1 I’ve, either, I’m working to a time limitation because perhaps I’m on a lunch break or my parking’s about to run out’

‘I’m like literally running around like a headless chicken thinking like ok I want that I want that’

‘the panic of not missing something that might be that gold item’

Image 4.2.2.5 – Mary Poppins’ Bag: *‘it always reminds me of that Mary Poppins all the stuff she pulls out of the bag that’s like the shop assistant taking everything out of the basket’*

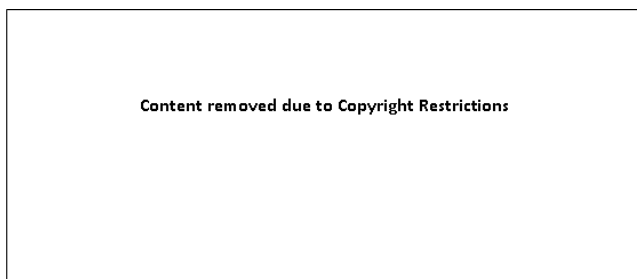


‘I think sometimes that sort of hysteria can take over you a little bit when you’re shopping and you just lose track of how much stuff you’ve put in the basket’

‘even when it has cost more than you think you can justify it by looking at how much stuff you’ve got’

‘that’s easily done in a shop like Retailer 1 a lot is, you just don’t realise how much you’re spending’

Image 4.2.2.6 – Card Declined: *‘it’s come to way more than you thought and you kind of have that panic’*



‘you literally have been so sort of careless in how much stuff you have put in the basket and not thought about what it will come to’

‘there’s always that sense of panic and guilt A) have I got enough money? and B) even if I have should I really be spending it on clothes and stuff I don’t really need?’

‘when I get home even if I’ve like spent the whole car journey home feeling guilty or annoyed at myself I get home take it out and I think actually look how much stuff I’ve got and look how nice some of it is’

Image 4.2.2.7 – Participant B Montage: *‘Therapy or Stress’*

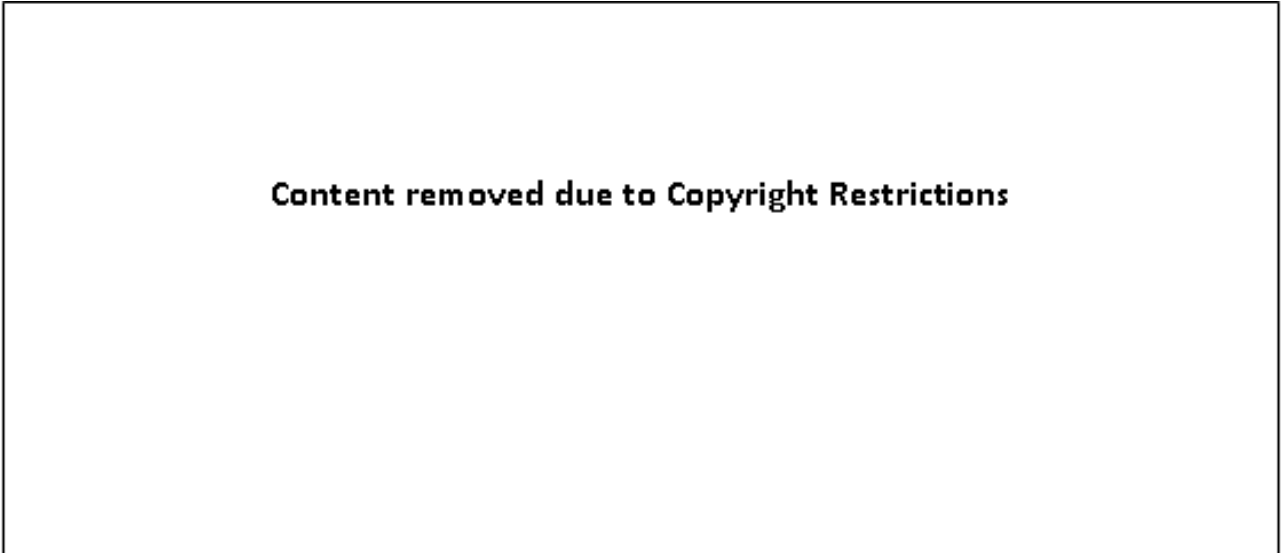


Table 4.2 Participant B codes emerging for each image

Image Theme						
Sensory Perception	See(+) Touch(+)	See (-) Touch(+) Hear (-)	See(+) Touch(+)	See (-)	See(+)	See(-)
Retail Experience Factors	Merchandise(+) Departments(+)	Customers (-) Merchandise(+) Space(-)	Merchandise(+) Departments(+)	Customers (-) Layout (-) Space(-) Checkouts(-) Queues (-)	Baskets(+) Checkouts(+) Merchandise(+) Staff(+) Service(+)	Checkouts(-) Staff(+) Service(+)
Motivation	Go To(+) Pick up(+) Purchase(+) Tempted(+) Browse(+)	Avoid(-) Pick up(+) Browse(-) Think(-)	Find(+) Pick up(+) Go to(+) Exit store(+)	Select(+) Go in(-) Browse(-) Find(-) Try on(-) Urgency(-)	Browse(+) Select(+) Purchase(+) Go in(+) Think (-) Exit store(+)	Purchase (-) Think(-) Exit store(-) Review(+)
Perceived Customer Values	Affordability(+) Discovery(+) Price(+) Volumes(+) Variety(+)	Affordability(-) Price(-) Busyness (-) Bargain(-)	Discovery(+) Quality(-) Durability(+)	Organised (-) Discovery (-)	Price(+) Volumes(+)	Price(-) Volumes (-)
Human Values	Recognition(+) Fun(+) Treat(+) Belonging(+) Friends(+) Ease(+)	Politeness (-) Belonging (-) Time(-) Ease (-) Order (-) Quietness(+)	Recognition(+) Time(+) Fun(+) Achievement(+) Individuality(+) Patience(+)	Consideration(-) Politeness (-) Time (-) Ease (-) Order(-)	Treat(+) Restraint(-) Achievement(+)	Restraint(-)
Feelings	Excitement(+) Guilt(-) Good(+) Smug(+)	Stressed(-) Humiliation(-)	Elation(+) Disappointed(-) Happy(+)	Stressed(-) Panic(-) Frustrated(-) Irritated(-)	Hysteria(-) Panic(-) Justified(+) Better(+) Guilt(-)	Panic(-) Guilt(-) Annoyed(-) Justified(+)

Summary of Participant B

Participant B (PB) had mixed perspectives of their shopping experience at Retailer 1 in that she felt she could find some really nice items of clothing if she had the time and motivation to find the items considered to be 'gold'. These items would be something that looked great and would probably be something others would acknowledge too. The feeling of a birthday was largely created by the volume of items she could choose from when she went shopping.

On the positive side, PB explained with image 4.2.2.1 that because of the sheer volume of products they can buy from Retailer 1 makes it feel like it is your birthday, where you can have anything you want and by definition you feel quite spoiled because of it. PB said this birthday feeling of excitement was at its strongest when she was in the store finding items and putting them into her basket. The price factor was very much part of the reasons behind getting this feeling because PB said that she could not really get this feeling in any other retailers because she would only really be window shopping in these stores. Some of the items that PB was finding in the store were quite seducing and they acknowledged that at times they were not keeping track of how many items she was selecting. As a result of the birthday feeling, PB highlighted that quite a lot of the items she finds in Retailer 1 receive compliments from other people on the items that they had bought which made them feel quite smug about their purchases and this recognition from others confirmed they had made the right choice.

PB described that in contrast to the birthday feeling was the negative feeling that she can get when they are in the store during very busy times. The seagulls image 4.2.2.2 represented a metaphor for the chaos and mayhem that can be the store atmosphere where some of the other shoppers in the store would be rifling through the merchandise and potentially descending upon other shoppers in a seagull manner, in order to secure a bargain. This type of shopping scenario would usually result in the participant choosing to look at other things in the store where fewer shoppers were currently located, and not spending as long in the store as they might have wanted to.

Coming back to a more positive aspect of the shopping experience, with image 4.2.2.3 PB explained that because of the sheer volume of merchandise in the store she felt that there was a need to put some degree of effort into searching through in order to find that very special item which they would consider to be 'gold'. She knew this item would be something that would look great on her and others would likely compliment on. Finding 'gold' items would not be something that they would experience every occasion she shopped at the store which would therefore make the times when she did more special. If she did find 'gold' items whilst shopping, this would make her feel elation and in contrast, there would be an amount of disappointment if she did not find 'gold'. However, there would usually be enough of the other items that she purchased to still feel like it was a positive experience. PB felt it

would usually take time to find these 'gold' items and therefore she would be less likely in a seagulls shopping scenario to find them as she would not allow herself the time to find 'gold'.

In contrast again to the positive aspects of their experience, image 4.2.2.4 showed that at times the store could appear chaotic and as if other shoppers had little regard for those around them. However, this image was also a self-reflection on the way they might be in the store shopping particularly when they were in rush or had not allocated enough time to look around the whole store at their leisure.

There was a link between image 4.2.2.5 and image 4.2.2.6 in the context of volume when they shop at Retailer 1. Image 4.2.2.5 reminded her of a classic movie where a character pulls out large items from their magic bag which would be representative of when they get to the checkout and the shop assistant takes out the items from the basket. PB's partner would sometimes look in amazement at how many items she had put into the basket. The linkages to image 4.2.2.6 were that at that point in the shopping experience the participant might begin to consider that they have not been thinking about the number of items they had picked up around the store and would begin to panic, thinking she had purchased too much. This negative feeling might be felt while she was driving home but would soon fade after she got home and looked at the volume of merchandise she had managed to buy for the amount of money spent.

4.2.3 Participant C – Images and Findings

Image 4.2.3.1 – What if?: ‘there’s too many decisions’



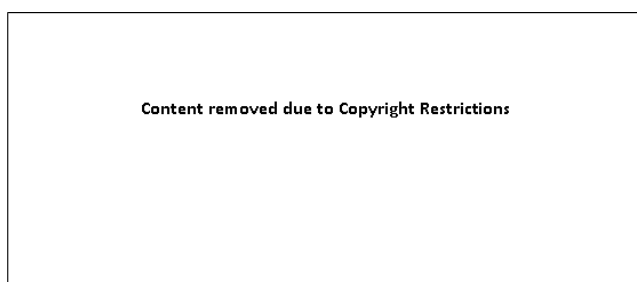
‘but am I going to wear it?’
‘does it really fit?’
‘is it the right quality?’
‘is there anything here that’s going to suit me?’
‘it’s a lot of questions for me to answer’

Image 4.2.3.2 – Red arrows: ‘I don’t know which way to go’



‘is there anything jumping out at me?’
‘I’m feeling more adventurous if I’m going in and seeing something that I like, even if it’s the colours of a theme’
‘there will be a couple of gems that I find and feel good in’

Image 4.2.3.3 – Fashion: ‘I kind of feel like I want to do the right thing’



‘I want to buy quality and it last’
‘I want to get as much use out of it as possible’.

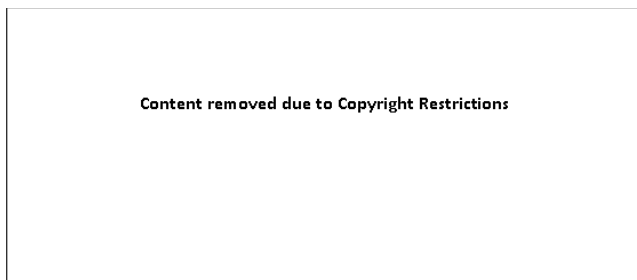
Image 4.2.3.4 – Landfill: ‘we’ve got to start somewhere and if I start with myself then that’s better’



‘I’ll try this and if I don’t like it then what am I going to do with it?’

‘I’ll do a lot more research on the internet in terms of the things that I like before I’m faced with the shopping experience’

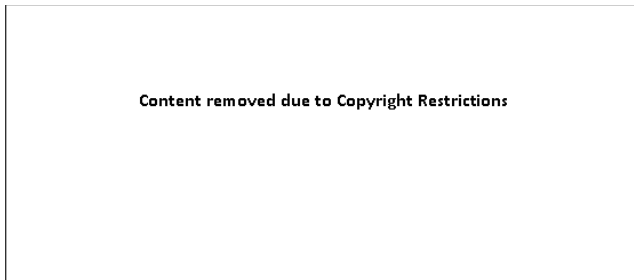
Image 4.2.3.5 – Planet: ‘we’ve got to do more’



‘why are we doing this?’

‘it is really...becoming more important to me’

Image 4.2.3.6 – Shelves: *‘there’s too much choice for me’*



‘I just feel overwhelmed’

‘I feel like if maybe they offered a personal shopper experience’

‘they do...put certain things together...that kind of thing helps’

Image 4.2.3.7 – Ducks: *‘do I belong here?’*



‘odd one out’

‘everybody else seems to be able to embrace the different styles of fashion’

‘it’s that feeling of do I belong here?’

‘is there something for me?’

Image 4.1.3.8 – Participant C Montage: *‘Salvador Dali’*



Table 4.3 Participant C codes emerging for each image

Image Theme							
Sensory Perception	See (-) Touch(+)	See (-) Touch(-)	See (-)	See (-)	See (-)	See (-) Hear (-) Touch(-)	See (-)
Retail Experience Factors	Display (-) Merchandise(-) Sizing (-) Fitting Room(+)	Layout (-) Merchandise(-) Colours(+) Departments(+)	Merchandise(-)	Merchandise(-)	Merchandise(-)	Merchandise (-) Display (-) Layout (-) Staff(+) Customers (-)	Customers(-) Merchandise(-)
Motivation	Think (-) Walk in(+) Go to(+) Pick up(+) Try on(+) Hesitate(-) Decide(-) Try(-)	Walk in(-) Stand(-) Pick up(-) Try on(-) Avoid(-) Think(-) Find(-) Go in(-)	Purchase(-) Go to(-) Think (-) Try(-) Avoid(-)	Avoid(-) Try(+)	Avoid(-)	Think(-) Decide(-) Avoid(-)	Think(-)
Perceived Customer Values	Price(+) Convenience(+) Staples(+) Busyness(-)	Fashionable(+) Quality(-) Discovery(+)	Quality(-) Durability(-) Fashionable(-) Price(-)	Variety(+) Price(-)	Convenience(-) Cheap(-)	Variety (-) Organised(-) Quality(-) Variety(-)	Variety(-) Quality(-)
Human Values	Familiarity(+) Recognition(+) Achievement(+) Choice(-) Quietness(+)	Achievement(+) Friends(+) Time(+)	Ethics(-) Sustainability(-) Community(+) Virtuous(+) Save(+)	Sustainability(-) Community(+)	Sustainability(-) Community(+) Save(+)	Ease(-) Support(+) Achievement(-) Order(-) Guidance(+)	Belonging(-) Recognition(+)
Feelings	Anxious(-) Open(+) Hopeful(+) Secure(-)	Adventurous(+) Hopeful(+) Good(+) Not good(-)	Comfortable(+) Pressured(-) Better(+)	Not good(-) Comfortable(+)	Responsible(+)	Overwhelmed(-) Disempowered(-) Disenchanted(-)	Confused(-) Isolated(-)

Summary of Participant C

Participant C (PC) appeared to be more at conflict than some of the other participants with the whole shopping experience and the thoughts about impacts on the environment were making the experience increasingly negative. The participant went to the retailer for their staple clothes and was sometimes feeling confident enough to take a risk and try something different. Fashions, styles and ranges were beginning to become less familiar to her and as a result she was feeling quite lost and somewhat isolated which left them wondering where to do their shopping now.

In image 4.2.3.1 PC explained that the shopping experience created a lot of questions for her particularly with regards to if she was going to find the right sort of designs, quality and fit in the clothing items on her shopping experience. PC would also consider how adventurous she perhaps felt at the time towards buying items that they have not usually worn before. This wide scope of questions created some stress and this linked to image 4.2.3.2 where PC highlighted that she did not know where to go within the store first although they were feeling hopeful that there were a couple of gems that she could buy.

The next three images PC talked through (4.2.3.3, 4.2.3.4, 4.2.3.5) were linked in the context of ethics and sustainability. PC was concerned about doing the right thing when it came to buying clothes (4.2.3.3). PC wanted items that would be good quality and last for a long time. PC did not want to buy something and then find soon after she did not like it anymore and would then be contributing to items going into landfill (4.2.3.4). PC also saw the issue of landfill as a wider environmental issue and that we all needed to be doing more (4.2.3.5).

Image 4.2.3.6 had similar links to the first two images where the participant felt there was too much choice and an overwhelming feeling of where to look first in the store. However, PC did note that Retailer 1 put things together well which helped in terms of ideas of what might be something she could wear. Image 4.2.3.7 also linked slightly to this aspect as she was finding the difficulty of shopping in the store and finding items to suit them as something that made her feel like the odd one out as she could see other shoppers appearing to be more comfortable with selecting items.

PC valued simplicity and ease when shopping and wanted to be able to accomplish something whilst not feeling like she is having a negative impact on the environment from purchasing at value-based fashion retailers. The displays in the store were at times overwhelming and the participant felt that there needed to be more order to the stores.

4.2.4 Participant D – Images and Findings

Image 4.2.4.1 – Aladdin’s Cave: *‘there’s always going to be something that you might not find, that’s where the Aladdin’s cave comes into it’*



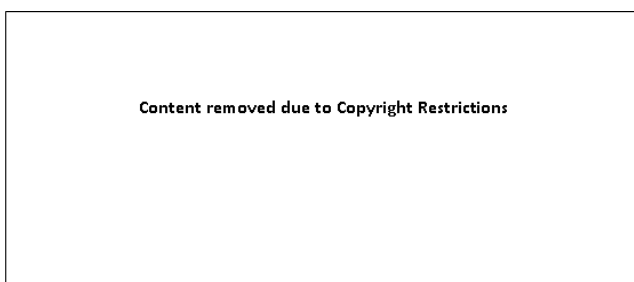
‘it’s that feeling of knowing that there could be all different unexpected things to find’

‘it’s just that overwhelming feeling of ‘oh where do I look?’

‘there’s that much around me where do I start?’

‘I think it’s intriguing, thinking oh what can I find?’

Image 4.2.4.2 – Anticipation: *‘I think that’s again relating back to Aladdin’s cave, not knowing what you are going to find’*



‘that person is jumping up to say ‘yes I’ve got what I want’

‘I have found in anticipation what I was looking for’

‘if you are in somewhere where it’s a bit drab you don’t really want to stay, you feel ‘oh no’, but no I think if it’s nice and bright and airy it’s a better feeling’

Image 4.2.4.3 – Excitement: *‘for me it’s that build up with the anticipation, being in the Aladdin’s cave then it brings on excitement’*



‘sometimes I feel like that like when I’ve got a real good buy’

‘found it and it’s at the right price, so if it was a bargain as well then that’s even more for the next excitement feeling’

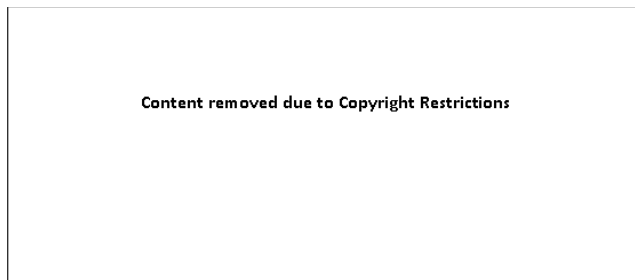
Image 4.2.4.4 – A thrill: *‘obviously this lady’s happy she’s got a bargain, she’s excited, it’s the thrill of it all’*



‘it’s having the right products at the right time plus good merchandising’

‘if it’s put together well then people get excited about it, ‘oh yeah, I want to try that on it looks good’

Image 4.2.4.5 – Bargain Lover: ‘everybody loves a bargain, they do, yeah’

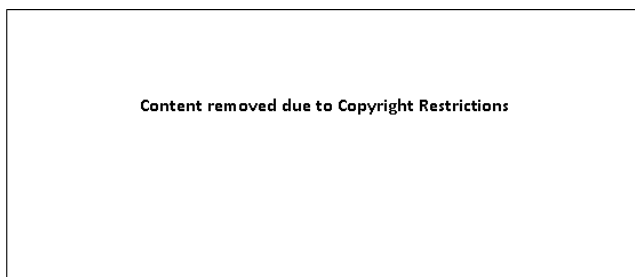


‘when I think you’ve got a good buy for the day and it’s been a real thrill and it’s an exciting day out, then yeah that’s when it all comes into play’

‘it’s only certain days when I have these feelings when ‘oh it’s a bargain’

‘I think it says it all for me, bargain lover which I am, I do love to be a sassy buyer and like to check out my bargains’

Image 4.2.4.6 – Happiness: ‘you start off shopping and having a good day and ‘ooh this is going to be a good thing’ and then when you get to the end of day and you’ve got all these bargains you think ‘yeah that’s been a happy day’



‘I think that’s more of a personal thing than a shopping thing’

‘if you are having a good shopping day then it’s a happy day and that’s how I relate to it’

‘I think sound is a key thing when you are shopping definitely’

‘I think it depends on when you go in as well, it can have an effect on the times that you go in’

‘I always try to go in when it’s not as busy, to me that’s not a good shopping experience when it’s too busy’

Image 4.2.4.7 – Participant D Montage: *‘A mixed emotion day out’*



Table 4.4 Participant D codes emerging for each image

Image Theme						
Sensory Perception	See(+)	See(+)	See(+)	See(+)	See(+)	Hear(+) See(+) Touch(+)
Retail Experience Factors	Merchandise(+)	Merchandise(+) Lighting(+) Display(+)	Merchandise(+)	Merchandise(+) Display(+)	Merchandise(+)	Merchandise(+) Display(+) Music(+) Customers(-) Crowded(-)
Motivation	Think(+) Find(+)	Find(+) Think(+) Drawn to(+) Stay(+)	Find(+) Purchase(+)	Think(+) Try on(+) Tempted(+) Drawn to(+)	Think(+) Purchase(+)	Go in(+) Stay(+) Mood(+) Rushing(-)
Perceived Customer Values	Variety(+) Discovery(+) Convenience(+)	Discovery(+)	Price(+) Deals(+) Bargain(+) Discovery(+)	Bargain(+)	Bargain(+) Price(+)	Bargain(+) Busyness(-)
Human Values	Choice(+) Achievement(+)	Achievement(+)	Achievement(+)	Achievement(+) Community(+)	Community(+) Individuality(+) Achievement(+)	Quietness(+) Ease(+)
Feelings	Knowing(+) Overwhelmed(+)	Anticipation(+) Better(+)	Excitement(+) Anticipation(+)	Excitement(+)	Excitement(+) Pleased(+)	Happy(+)

Summary of Participant D

Participant D (PD) talked mainly about the items in the store and the feelings of anticipation and excitement that came from thinking about finding both planned items and discovering new ones in the shopping experience.

PD viewed shopping in a positive way particularly focusing on the store merchandise in the context of it being a place similar to Aladdin's Cave in image 4.2.4.1, where many different items were all in one place and she would wonder where to start looking first. This created a feeling of anticipation of finding something when she started to look around the store. Image 4.2.4.2 shows that the anticipation feeling was for both products in the store that she had already planned to buy but also those products that she would discover as part of the shopping experience. This image also had another meaning in the sunlight in that this represented the brightness in the store and the participant wanted to visit stores that were bright and airy.

Continuing with positive feelings experienced in their shopping, image 4.2.4.3 was to show how finding the right product at the right price which would create more excitement for the next items she would potentially discover.

The design of the store and the way in which Retailer 1 present merchandise in the store was part of the participant's discussion for image 4.2.4.4. If the store had put together a good display of merchandise, then she would feel encouraged to try these items on.

PD felt she is a bit of savvy shopper and image 4.2.4.5 signified one of the biggest aspects of shopping at Retailer 1 in that she felt she could get a bargain, but that this was not at every shopping visit. PD saw herself as a bargain lover and Retailer 1 was somewhere she could find something which they would consider to be a bargain, but not on every shopping experience.

From a broader context, image 4.2.4.6 shows that PD wanted to ultimately feel happiness from the whole shopping day which could be influenced by the time of the day when she went shopping, whether she found any bargains and returning home after the shopping experience feeling happy. The store appearance was important to PD and having good lighting and an airy feel to the store made shopping more of a pleasure. Overall, PD was looking for a feeling of happiness which would continue on after she had returned home from the shopping experience.

4.2.5 Participant E – Images and Findings

Image 4.2.5.1 – Flag: ‘when I think of Retailer 1 straight away comes to mind is England’



‘we would always have loads of bags and loads of stuff’

‘I could go and afford it’

‘the stuff there was available in all colours available in all sizes’

‘everything would be in one store’

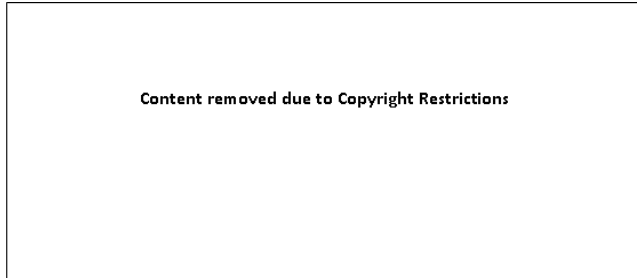
Image 4.2.5.2 – Pound Coin: ‘where I can literally have a pound and find something for a pound’



‘yeah I can actually get a lot of stuff’

‘so for me I see a different value’

Image 4.2.5.3 – Person sitting with bags: *‘I seen this and it was kind of making me laugh because it such an English image’*



‘I promise myself I’m just going for a pair of socks, or I don’t know pair of duvet or pillow and then ending up with oh those shoes are actually pretty nice and cheap so I may buy them as well’

‘I think that’s kind of like the mind-set that you go for one thing and then you end up with ten bags like this woman in the picture’

Image 4.2.5.4 – Busy store entrance: *‘there’s so many people no matter what time you go’*



‘people always like pick up stuff and throw them around and I really don’t like that’

‘it’s usually just like very tense atmosphere, everybody running around trying to get their stuff’

Image 4.2.5.5 – Queue: ‘no matter if you buy one shirt or one pair of socks you're just standing in this long queue’

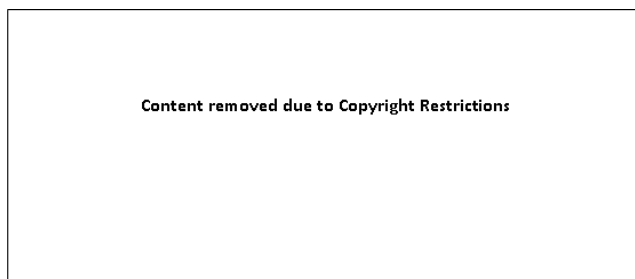


‘it usually goes quick and I can give them the credit there's usually a lot of people and like it goes quickly’

‘I feel like it's part of Retailer 1 so if you say queue right away it's Retailer 1 it's kind of like associated with the store’

‘in Retailer 1 I kind of assume I need at least two hours if I want to like get stuff done, it can't be just quick trip it's never a quick trip’

Image 4.2.5.6 – Clothing rack: ‘it doesn’t even look presentable and then you see the big price reduced five pounds’



‘yes like it really puts me off when I go to the, go in sometimes in the sales somewhere whenever there is and everything is thrown even though its five pounds’

Image 4.2.5.7 – Participant K Montage: *‘Experience shopping at Retailer 1’*



Table 4.5 Participant E codes emerging for each image

Image Theme						
Sensory Perception	Hear(+) See(+)	See(+)	See(+)	See (-)	See (-)	See (-)
Retail Experience Factors	Customers(+) Bags(+) Merchandise(+) Colours(+)	Merchandise(+)	Bags(+) Merchandise(+) Departments(+) Layout(+) Checkout(+)	Crowded(-) Customers (-) Fitting Room(-) Queues(-) Display(-) Atmosphere (-) Space (-)	Queues(-) Customers(-) Staff(+) Service(+) Crowded(-) Baskets(+)	Display (-) Departments (-) Merchandise (-)
Motivation	Think(+) Go to(+) Wear(+)	Go to(+) Purchase(+)	Go in(+) Browse(+) Stay(+) Go to(+) Purchase(+)	Browse(-) Avoid(-) Exit store(-) Try on(-)	Avoid(-) Stay(+) Purchase(-)	Avoid(-) Try(-) Find(-) Pick up(+) Go to(+) Drawn to(+)
Perceived Customer Values	Price(+) Volumes(+) Affordability(+) Convenience(+) Fashionable(+) Quality(+)	Price(+) Volumes(+) Convenience(+) Affordability(+) Durability(+) Quality(+)	Volumes(+) Price(+)	Busyness (-) Untidy(-)	Price(+) Deal(+)	Untidy(-) Quality(+) Price (-)
Human Values	Community(+) Family(+) Giving(+)	Community(+) Belonging(+) Leisure(+) Family(+) Recognition(+)	Choice(+) Familiarity(+)	Choice(+) Time(-)	Patience(-) Time(-) Family(+)	Order(-) Uniqueness(+)
Feelings	Happy(+)	Cautious(+) Overwhelmed(-) Happy(+) Relief(+)	Curious(+) Excitement(+) Surprised(+)	Angry(-) Disappointed(-) Anxious(-)	Annoyed(-)	Annoyed(-) Nice(+) Positive(+) Encouraged(+)

Summary of Participant E

Participant E (PE) viewed Retailer 1 as a very English store which had been a place they had shopped at for several years. Her view of the store although had changed as she became older and where she once saw Retailer 1 as a place where everyone shopped because of all the items they sell.

Image 4.2.5.1 was the first thing PE would think about when she thought of Retailer 1 and as a younger shopper, they remember that it was a place where you could get bags and bags of affordable clothes in many different colours and sizes. PE thought at that time that everyone was shopping there.

Image 4.2.5.2 was more reflective for PE in that she now saw it as somewhere that sells cheaper items and that as a more experienced shopper, she is now looking for a different value from the store.

PE saw the image of Retailer 1 bags (4.2.5.3) as a significant aspect of the shopping experience in both the number of bags she and other shoppers would be carrying from the store. She also recognised that if she happened to buy more items than planned, because PE was tempted by other things, then the bags somehow helped to justify the amount of money she had spent above what she had planned.

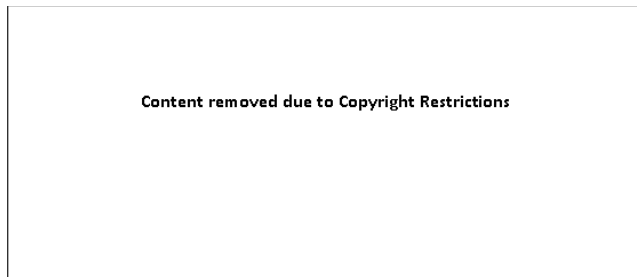
The shopping experience for PE at any time of the day would always appear to be very busy with many shoppers in the store and quite a tense atmosphere where other people are fixated on the items they want to get. Image 4.2.5.4 was a negative aspect of their shopping experience, particularly if PE found that other customers had picked up items and thrown them around.

The queue to pay for items in Retailer 1 was something that PE felt was associated with a store shown in image 4.2.5.5 and it would not matter if she had just gone in the store for a pair of socks, the queue would still be very long. However, PE did give the store credit for how quickly they serve customers and that the queue would not be for a particularly long time.

As PE's view of the shopping experience was changing from when she was younger, she felt that image 4.2.5.6 projects the untidiness of certain parts of the store, particularly areas where sale items would be. PE preferred other areas in the store where items appeared to be displayed more thoughtfully and had more of a premium look.

4.2.6 Participant F – Images and Findings

Image 4.2.6.1 – People around clothes: ‘people just like looking at them and putting them back in like just a pile or not really put them back neatly’

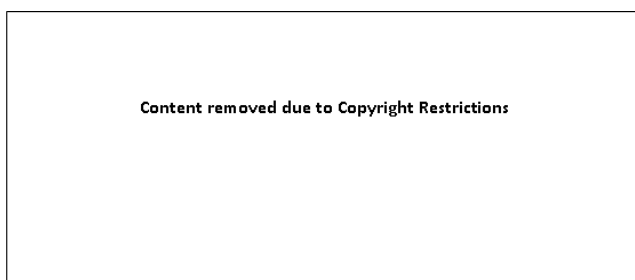


‘it’s the first thing I think about when I do want to go because I think oh I’ve actually got to spend time looking through the stuff’

‘I also feel sorry for the workers that work there because you can see like they are on the one next to you and they’re folding them up’

‘they are trying to keep on top of it but then they can’t because A) how many people there are and B) just because it’s quite time consuming to do that’

Image 4.2.6.2 – Sizing: ‘you could buy one size eight but then your other size eights are completely different sizing and then they have the same label’



‘that’s why I also dedicate more time because I know it’s going to be a time consuming thing because I will go to the changing rooms and try multiple of lots of things’

‘he’s thinking ‘that’s not going to fit me’ kind of thing and that’s what I think sometimes’

‘you would expect by looking at something if it said like a ten for example that it would be that size’

Images 4.2.6.3 – Security: *‘I just feel like you’re being watched’*



‘you’d think with it being a low-price shop you wouldn’t think they would be that high on something like that’

‘the first thing that came to my head was negative but then they are doing it for a positive reason’

‘like as soon as you walk in they are the first people you see and you kind of not behave differently but the way you look at things you think oh they are looking at me’

Image 4.2.6.4 – Designer Dress: *‘you always find dupes or knock-off versions of better branded clothing or sometimes you can but that’s the main reason why some people would shop there’*



‘the reason I go is because it’s more affordable and the clothes are nice’

‘I will have definitely tried on stuff before I’ll feel confident that I can wear it out and I’ve not just bought it for the sake of it’

‘if you wear that piece of clothing out and someone says ‘oh where did you get that?’ because you know that it’s kind of looks like something else and you go ‘oh it’s from Retailer 1’ and they are like ‘really’! feels though it’s like a nice it’s like a feel good feeling’

Image 4.2.6.5 – Bags: ‘I really do like it because like the environmentally friendly and everything like’



‘it is positive because they are doing the right thing by not having plastic bags because that’s quite important to me like being eco-friendly’

‘so many people shop there like every time you go through town you can see people with Retailer 1 bags’

‘I know fast fashion and stuff isn’t good for the environment anyway, but knowing that the paper bags are lower than plastic bags’

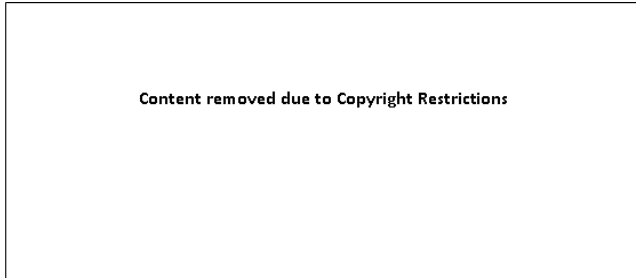
Image 4.2.6.6 – Chaos: ‘I go at peak times so there’s always so many people around’



‘you are so close to everybody that you feel like you haven’t really got your own personal space and because the shop does fit in quite a lot of stuff’

‘if I was to walk in and it was like that I’d be like oh get me out, I’m not that bothered, I’ll come another time’

Image 4.2.6.7 – Shopping Mall: *‘kind of like is like its own shopping centre, to me anyway because it’s got everything’*



‘you kind of do a loop of the bottom floor, go up a loop to the second floor and up and up, so you kind of are not forced to but if you wanted to there are routes round everything and it’s made easy so that you do look at things more’

‘I do quite like doing that because you do find some good things in there sometimes’

‘I always think that the higher up you go the hotter it is’

Image 4.2.6.8 – Participant F Montage: ‘A challenge’

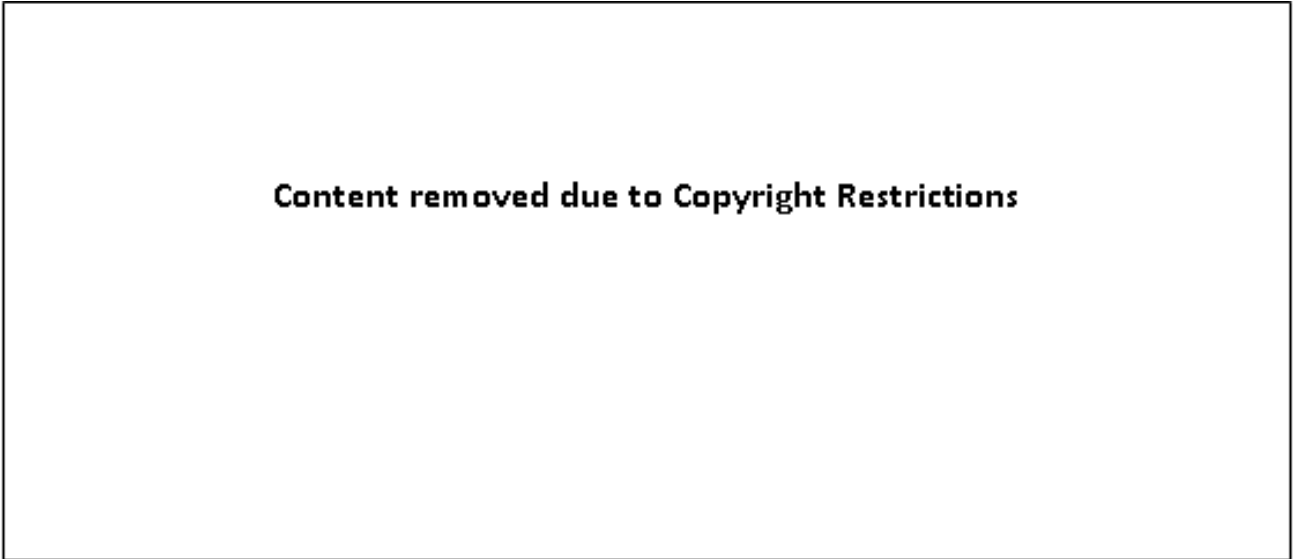


Table 4.6 Participant F codes emerging from each image

Image Theme							
Sensory Perception	See (-) Touch (-)	See (-) Touch (+)	See(+)	See(+)	See(-) Touch(-)	See (-)	See(+)
Retail Experience Factors	Customers (-) Display (-) Merchandise (-) Staff(+)	Sizing (-) Merchandise(-) Fitting Room (-)	Security(+) Customers(-)	Merchandise(+) Display(+) Departments(+) Sizing(-)	Bags(+) Bags(-) Coat Hangers(-) Merchandise(+) Location(+)	Crowded(-) Customers (-) Space(-) Departments(-) Sizing(-)	Layout(+) Departments(+) Display(+) Space(+) Merchandise(+) Temperature (-)
Motivation	Go in(-) Think(-) Pick up(-) Sort (-) Put back (-)	Pick up(-) Try on(-) Check(-) Think(-)	Go in(+) Browse(-)	Go in(+) Come back(+) Browse(+) Find(+) Plan(+)	Pick up(+) Exit store(+) Go to(+)	Walk in(-) Come back(-) Avoid(-)	Go in(+) Browse(+) Come back(+) Stay(+)
Perceived Customer Values	Price Untidy(-) Cheap(-) Expectations(-)	Expectations(-) Accuracy(-)	Secure(+)	Quality(+) Expectations(+) Fashionable(+) Discovery(+) Price(+) Tidy(+)	Practicality(-) Convenience(-) Fashionable(+)	Busyness(-) Variety(+)	Discovery(+) Variety(+) Convenience(+)
Human Values	Time(-) Order(-) Thoughtfulness(-) Patience(+)	Time(-) Consistency(-)	Safe(+)	Recognition(+) Community(+) Fun(+) Order(+) Time(+)	Sustainability(+)	Consideration (-) Politeness(-)	Enjoyment(+) Choice(+) Time(+)
Feelings	Annoyed(-) Sorry(-) Guilty(-)	Annoyed(-)	Watched(-) Unease(-) Uncomfortable(-)	Confident(+) Good(+) Excitement(+) Nice(+) Happy(+)	Frustrated(-) Annoyed(-) Guilty(-) Panic(-)	Frustrated(-) Claustrophobic (-) Rushed(-) Overwhelmed(-) Anxious(-)	Restless(-) Irritated(-) Enjoyable(+)

Summary of Participant F

Participant F (PF) found the shopping experience a challenge mainly because of the other shoppers and the sizing of the clothes. PF had a first image which centred around the number of customers who would be browsing and looking at clothes. Image 4.2.6.1 was selected to show that some customers do not put back clothes correctly and leave them in untidy piles around the display stands or on the floor. This was a negative aspect of the shopping experience as PF wanted to help the store assistants with tidying up the clothes that had been left messy. When selecting clothes to try on or buy, PF felt that they needed to have several different sizes of the same item in order to get the right size to fit them. Image 4.2.6.2 portrays how when PF is shopping the sizing of the clothes is inconsistent and she finds that sizes she would think would be suitable for her are the incorrect size.

Very early in the shopping experience, PF noticed the security guards at the front of the store, and she noted that this made her feel she was being watched while she was shopping so would perhaps behave differently. The security guard and camera in images 4.2.6.3 was how PF viewed their presence in the store, but this was not seen completely as a negative aspect as she acknowledged that the security is there for a positive reason.

With image 4.2.6.4 PF wanted to show how she felt Retailer 1 were very good at producing dresses and outfits which were very similar to designer outfits, perhaps worn by celebrities. PF particularly liked it when she had bought and worn some clothing which received a complement from someone, as she would usually let the person know it was from Retailer 1.

The Retailer 1 bags are something that PF felt was part of the shopping experience although she has found that the bags are not particularly robust and if the bags get wet, they tend to split. Even though image 4.2.6.5 shows plastics bags the positive aspect of the bags was that they are made from paper and PF thought this was better for the environment, which is important to her.

The number of customers in the store at certain times was an aspect of the shopping experience that she noticed. Image 4.2.6.6 portrays how at times the store can have customers in large numbers and PF felt that at those times there was little space around the displays and on some occasions she would choose to come back another time when it would be quieter. PF viewed Retailer 1 as its own shopping mall as she said it sells everything. PF liked the way the store was laid out and she said that image 4.2.6.7 showed how the different floors and escalators portrayed the way the Retailer 1 store has different merchandise on each floor which encouraged PF to look around more and visit the other floors.

4.2.7 Participant G – Images and Findings

Image 4.2.7.1 – Cheap as chips: *'the clothes that they sell, predominantly clothes but obviously different pieces as well'*



'people have kind of like picked things up they've not folded them back up again when they didn't want them they fling them back down onto the kind of display tables'

'you know it's a bit like a jumble sale just trying to find the right the right size or the right colour'

Image 4.2.7.2 – Couch with clothes and boots: *'it's just everywhere it's all just erm scattered so that I think is the first thing'*



'you don't know if you are going to find what it is that you are looking for because you you're going to have to go digging'

'you dig through something and kind of get a sense of achievement or a sense of 'oh that's good' you know it's a positive feeling'

'you when you go in there you know that you are going to have erm a reasonable choice'

Image 4.2.7.3 – Untidy room: ‘I think that those primary really kind of bold colours they are normally not things that I like’



‘it actually detracts from the experience because you know you just want to put sunglasses on there’s so much colour that you think you know this is a little bit too much’

‘Yeah equally if I see this type of mess not necessarily with the bright colours just you know that type of mess I will avoid the area’

Image 4.2.7.4 – Rails: ‘you kind of get to the point where you if the price is so low you think what’s the quality of the shirt going to be like?’



‘Well, there is the trade-off, trade-off between price and quality much the same way there’s a trade-off between price and hassle factor of finding it’

‘if you actually go and feel the material you know you look at the colour a bit more deeply’

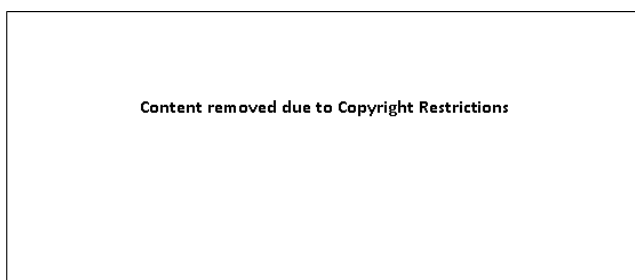
Image 4.2.7.5 – Clothing: ‘I know something about the background of how they are actually made’



‘just whenever I see the low-prices that I kind of saw in the previous picture because of my knowledge’

‘I just think it was important’

Image 4.2.7.6 – Lots of people shopping: ‘the narrowness of the aisles and the fact that it’s very difficult to erm to stand back you know you look at a jumper or a shirt or a jacket’



‘because the aisles are quite narrow, all of the display units are packed in quite closely’

‘you’ve got to kind of fight your way between the clothes even if there’s no nobody coming the other way’

‘you know you get very hot in the store you get erm you know you’re always kind of crashing into people or walking into people or walking by people’

Image 4.2.7.7 – Jumpers: ‘because it’s got logos it’s got lots of decoration on the front’



‘I think that Retailer 1 are quite good in terms of keeping abreast of current trends’

‘I just think this was good erm cross section of the like different type of things that they can do’

‘From the garish stuff it puts me off it’s a barrier, things like this where they tie in to what’s happening in the world I actually think is quite clever’

Image 4.2.7.8 – People with bags: ‘one of the things I always find synonymous with Retailer 1’



‘it’s all recyclable so from that perspective I think they have been quite clever again’

‘when you get home and you kind of like you know you empty your bags out and you kind of rooting around and you say oh right so what did I buy today?’

Image 4.2.7.9 – Participant G Montage: *'The Cheap as Chips Issue'*



Table 4.7 Participant G codes emerging from each image

Image Theme								
Sensory Perception	See (-)	See (-) Touch(-)	See (-)	See (-) Touch(-)	See (-)	See (-)	See(-)	See(+) Hear(+)
Retail Experience Factors	Display (-) Merchandise(-) Customers (-) Staff(+)	Merchandise (-) Display (-) Staff(+) Colours (-) Customers(-)	Merchandise (-) Display (-) Staff(+) Colours (-) Departments(-) Space(-) Customers (-) Lighting(-)	Merchandise (-) Display (-) Colours(-) Coat hangers(+)	Merchandise (-) Colours(-) Display(-)	Customers (-) Layout (-) Display (-) Space (-) Temperature(-) Customers (-) Crowded(-)	Merchandise (-) Colours(-)	Bags(+) Space(+) Merchandise(+)
Motivation	Think(-) Go to(-) Find(-)	Go in(-) Find(+) Pick up (-)	Go in(-) Avoid(-) Find(-) Come back(-) Go to(-) Think (-)	Think(-) Find(-)	Think (-) Go in(-)	Navigate (-) Avoid(-) Come back(-)	Think(-) Avoid(-)	Think(+) Purchase(+) Review(+) Exit store(+)
Perceived Customer Values	Price(+) Quality(+) Untidy(-) Deal(+)	Untidy(-) Discovery(+) Flow (-) Convenience(-) Variety(+) Price(+) Fashionable(+)	Untidy(-) Flow (-)	Price(+) Quality(-) Cheap (-)	Price(-) Quality(+)	Convenience(-) Flow (-)	Fashionable(+)	Flow(+) Price(+)
Human Values	Family(+) Order(-) Ethics(-) Effort(-)	Achievement(+) Time (-) Order(-) Choice(+) Ease(-)	Order(-) Ease(-)	Order(-) Balance(-)	Ethics(-) Community(+)	Order(-) Ease(-) Politeness(-) Thoughtfulness (-)	Choice(+) Fun(+)	Sustainability(+) Fun(+) Achievement(+)
Feelings	Hassled(-)	Happy(+) Positive(+)	Harsh(-) Claustrophobic (-)	Tacky(-)	Emotional(+) Goodwill(+)	Overpowered(-) Claustrophobic (-)	Negative(-)	Happy(+)

Summary of Participant G

Participant G (PG) valued the quality of the items in Retailer 1 and felt that the price of items was important to him. The untidiness of the store at the times when he visited was shown in more than one of their images, however PG recognised this was reflective of the busy day and time of the week when they usually visit the store.

PG initially wanted to highlight that the items they sell are very cheap to buy. The image 4.2.7.1 of a plate of food represents the way the store can look when he is usually shopping there. PG would tend to shop later in the day on a weekend when he thought the store had been very busy and many shoppers had looked at the clothes. PG remarked on the untidiness of the clothes that had not been put back in the same way they were presented to other customers.

PG's second image (4.2.7.2) was indicating that items he was looking to buy required a certain amount of digging through other clothes to find what he wanted. PG would have preferred not to have to dig through other clothes, but he found it quite rewarding when he found what he wanted and enjoyable to discover new items he was not initially looking for.

The amount of colour in the store was something that the PG felt was too much. Image 4.2.7.3 shows that the bold colours in the store was something PG saw as a negative aspect of the shopping experience. He noted that the lighting in the store was very bright which amplified the bold colours even more. The untidiness of the room in the image also again represented the untidiness of the store when he goes there.

PG valued the quality of the items he was buying but described how there was a trade-off between the price to pay for items and the quality of these. Image 4.2.7.4 shows how the rails of clothing are and where he would need to go and search for the items he wanted. Overall, he felt the quality of the items he was buying was quite good.

Image 4.2.7.5 depicts a visual that PG would be considering as he walks around the store looking at the merchandise available for a low-price.

PG had already remarked upon the busy time that he usually visits the store and image 4.2.7.6 was selected to highlight that the store tends to be very narrow around the aisles and that he would typically be bumping into other customers and displays.

PG had noticed that Retailer 1 were very good at producing items that followed the trends and at times had some clothing which was linked very well to current trends but image 4.2.7.7 also portrays the other items with too much decoration or which had a theme which he thought was silly.

The bags are something he noticed when shopping at the store and when he returns home. Image 4.2.7.8 was how he saw other shoppers with lots of bags and them looking inside at what they had

bought. The bags were noticed as part of the shopping experience at the checkouts in the way the store assistants would open them up by putting air into them and the noise this would make. Returning home with the bags and having a look at all the merchandise he had bought also added to the whole shopping experience.

4.2.8 Participant H – Images and Findings

Image 4.2.8.1 – Jumble Sale: *‘I remember when sort of Retailer 1 there was literally a jumble sale and I didn’t really know what it was’*



‘that kind of came to my mind when I thought of the store as a whole because I can remember when it was like that I think people still kind of hold that that sort of image maybe’

‘I think they really have sort of tried hard to er make it more sort of like their competitors it’s like a fashion store now’

‘whereas now it has transformed into a like a modern like competitive like brand whereas I think it used to be like completely the opposite’

Image 4.2.8.2 – Family: *‘Retailer 1 for me is kind of somewhere I can go for everyone’*



‘if someone needed something it would probably be my first port of call, in just that but I know that they sell pretty much everything’

‘obviously I don’t have a lot of time all the time so obviously that saves me trekking all around town for the kids and stuff’

‘I went in last week and there was so much summer stuff and it made me want to go on holiday’

Image 4.2.8.3 – Value: ‘I do find things last I kind of wash the kid’s stuff loads and most things will wash and wash and wash’



‘I think it’s just that blatant like it says you know you are going to get the best value you probably out of the high street erm but also more choice which is valuable in terms of time’

‘like I say value to your time because you are going to have loads of choice, it’s easy and there’s plenty of people to ask if you can’t find something’

‘you know it can have quite quirky products sometimes and you think ‘oh I don’t need that but I want it’

Image 4.2.8.4 – Beauty: ‘they are amazing at doing dupes of like designer brands’



‘they are really sort of kind of leading the way in terms of sort of low cost copies of designer sort of make-up and stuff’

‘I love that part of the store it’s probably the first place I go to’

‘I don’t tend to sort of buy new things unless I’ve see someone else say it’s oh really good’

Image 4.2.8.5 – New Store: *‘I would definitely enjoy doing that as an experience rather than just oh I need this*



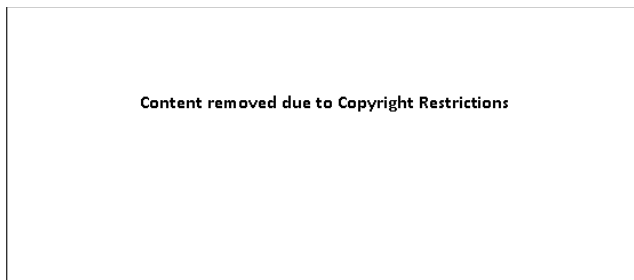
‘obviously we want to go and it just to me it visualises like how far Retailer 1’s come’
‘there’s like everything you can think of’

Image 4.2.8.6 – Ethics: *‘it’s something for me I do sort of care about’*



‘I think they have put an ethical charter together or something’
‘obviously they’ve noticed that’s important to customers’

Image 4.2.8.7 – Main Store: *‘it’s just bigger than everything else they often have’*



‘just talking about make-up there, they’re make-up section is like phenomenal’

‘they will have so many people on the counter that even if the queue’s like humongous you get served in like two minutes it’s like really quick’

‘I think it’s just bigger and I think their staff are just a bit friendlier’

Image 4.2.8.8 – Accessories: *‘accessories for me is like quite a big thing’*



‘they have quite quirky things as well and stocking things that I like’

‘they will often put like it’s all in order of colour and stuff which I like and I think it is a nice experience’

Image 4.2.8.9 – Participant H Montage: *‘Stress free shopping’*



Table 4.8 Participant H codes emerging from each image

Image Theme								
Sensory Perception	See(-)	See(+)	See(+) Touch(+)	See(+) Touch(+)	See(+) Taste(+)	See (-) Hear (-)	See(+) Hear(+)	See(+) Touch(+)
Retail Experience Factors	Display(-) Merchandise(+) Customers (-) Sizing(+) Space(-)	Merchandise(+) Departments(+)	Merchandise(+) Staff(+)	Merchandise(+) Departments(+) Colours(+)	Stores(+) Merchandise(+) Display(+) Layout(+) Departments(+) Restaurants(+)	Merchandise(-)	Merchandise(+) Departments(+) Sizes(+) Layout(+) Staff(+) Queues(+) Service(+) Crowded(-) Customers(+)	Merchandise(+) Layout(+) Departments(+) Display(+) Signage(+)
Motivation	Think(+) Think(-) Avoid(-)	Go in(+) Browse(+) Purchase(+)	Pick up(+) Select(+) Ask(+) Find(+)	Go to(+) Browse(+) Select(+) Purchase(+)	Go to(+) Walk in(+) Browse(+) Research(+) Stay(+) Purchase(+)	Think (-) Research(-)	Go in(+) Browse(+) Stay(+) Purchase(+)	Go to(+) Drawn to(+) Browse(+) Purchase(+)
Perceived Customer Values	Untidy(-) Fashionable(+)	Convenience(+) One stop(+) Price(+) Volumes(+) Variety(+)	Flow(+) Price(+) Quality(+) Convenience(+) Novelty(+)	Price(+) Variety(+) Fashionable(+) Discovery(+)	Variety(+) Novelty(+) Tidy(+)	Price(-) Convenience(+)	Variety(+) Novelty(+) Convenience(+) Flow(+)	Price(+) Fashionable(+) Convenience(+)
Human Values	Order(+) Ease(+) Balance(+) Community(+)	Time(+) Achievement(+) Ease(+) Choice(+) Family(+)	Time(+) Treat(+)	Recognition(+) Popularity(+) Community(+)	Community(+) Fun(+)	Fairness(-) Ethics(-) Equality(-)	Community(+) Fun(+)	Treat(+) Giving(+)
Feelings	Stressed(-) Calm(+) Peaceful(+)	Calm(+)	Frivolous(+)	Love(+)	Calm(+)	Uneasy(-)	Welcome(+)	Pleased(+)

Summary of Participant H

Participant H (PH) was quite an advocate of Retailer 1 and had seen the company evolve their stores over the years. PH had been shopping at Retailer 1 for many years and discussed how they had seen the store evolve into a more modern shopping environment. In image 4.2.8.1 PH wanted to illustrate that in her mind Retailer 1 used to be seen as a jumble sale and that the store was not like that at the moment as she felt that Retailer 1 had worked hard to change the environment into a fashion store.

In image 4.2.8.2 PH wanted to explain that Retailer 1 was a place where she could find something for everyone because she felt they sell everything. If PH is going to go shopping then Retailer 1 will be their first shop to visit and she preferred to stay in there and get all the items they wanted, instead of going to several different shops. PH wanted to highlight in image 4.2.8.3 that the clothes she would buy in Retailer 1 would last a long time and there was value in the amount of choice the store had which saved her time.

The beauty products in the store were a particular favourite area for PH and they enjoyed looking at the versions that Retailer 1 had made of designer versions of cosmetics. Image 4.2.8.4 was selected to highlight that the beauty tutorials that Retailer 1 have on social media were really interesting to her and she enjoyed seeing the new products they have. Recommendations for the latest beauty cosmetics was something she valued as she liked others to try them first before she would buy them. This particular section in the store was her favourite area.

Retailer 1's store is a location that PH wanted to visit. Image 4.2.8.5 is of this new store and PH had been following the blogs about the store and what it has to offer. PH felt that this was another example of how Retailer 1 had evolved from the jumble sale environment that she thought of it years ago.

Ethical considerations in image 4.2.8.6 were raised by PH as they wanted to know that the company had a policy for this in place and conversations with friends and family would influence her thoughts about ethics when she was shopping.

PH had visited a store and she described how image 4.2.8.7 showed the outside of the store. PH liked the busyness of the outside of the store, the range of cosmetics at this location and how friendly the staff were. Another favourite section in the store for PH is the Accessories highlighted in image 4.2.8.8. PH explained that despite the quality of some of these items not being very high, the range of items and the way they are displayed in different colours is something she values in the shopping experience.

4.2.9 Participant I – Images and Findings

Image 4.2.9.1 – Lightbulb: *‘they offer that much choice in Retailer 1 you sort of get a lightbulb moment and think I know Retailer 1 will have it’*

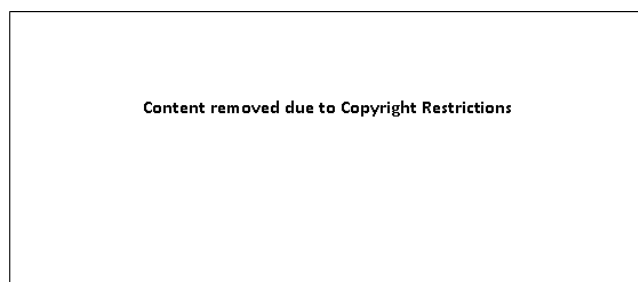


‘someone might say is ‘oh I need something I’ll Google it’ but I think Retailer 1 have created this sort of image where you sort of think ‘oh Retailer 1 will have it’

‘I would see that as something as part of that they’d maybe use in store maybe not sell that but just have like this oh lightbulb moment above something in sort of neon colours’

‘they offer sort of something for everyone they offer things with lots of sort of designs or patterns and sometimes like what I feel like their main point is it’s more sort of plainer things’

Image 4.2.9.2 – Ice cream: *‘if you want something plain and you know you are going to get I feel like Retailer 1 offer that’*



‘I prefer to buy something plain that will last me longer and I know that they will definitely have that there’

‘I’d say mostly positive but it’s there to sort of fill a gap in the wardrobe’

Image 4.2.9.3 – Spoons with spices: ‘when you walk in and all you see is different coloured clothes sort of everywhere you do see lots of different patterns’



‘I feel like if it was, if Retailer 1 was a sort of market it would be like an Indian spice market sort of thing if it had a certain smell it would just be this magnitude of sort of flavours and scents’

‘I think it’s if I was sort of closing my eyes and imagining myself walking into Retailer 1’s door I would sort of imagine it being like a bit like a spice market because you see colours absolutely everywhere, different neons’

Image 4.2.9.4 – Sale: ‘you have to sort of go through it all to find what you are after but once you do find that one thing that you are after you feel sort of good about yourself’



‘I think they present the sort of layout quite good so that you can find things fairly easily’

‘I don’t think they move things around that often, so I do think it’s quite easy to find what you are after’

‘I think Retailer 1’s always fairly busy there’s always quite often children screaming or just people just wandering around depending on what time of day you go’

Image 4.2.9.5 – The Road: *‘there will always be this road that will sort of take you to Retailer 1, because there’s one pretty much everywhere you go’*



‘Retailer 1 it will be a bit hustle and bustle and I can get to my place where I want to be in the store to get what I want’

‘then I can see myself driving on this road sort of relaxing again after being in the sort of busy Retailer 1’

‘they are sort of saying we support the high street we’ll be all over the place’

Image 4.2.9.6 – Shopping Centre: *‘in Retailer 1 you can find lots of things but like being in a shopping centre because there’s everything in there that you could really need’*



‘I sort of perceive Retailer 1 to be like in my home town Retailer 1 it’s three floors and there’s three floors in this image here’

‘Yeah I do see Retailer 1 as this busy shop but I do, it wouldn’t put me off going there it’s just I’d quite like to be in the quieter area of the shop’

‘I could imagine an escalator being there because there was in the Retailer 1 I go in that again you don’t have to do much walking to get around you can just stand on the escalator and take you up’

Image 4.2.9.7 – Revolving Door: *‘I sort of see Retailer 1 as this revolving door where I want to sort of get in, go to the place I want to be to and get out sort of thing er again like a revolving door of people just always coming in and out’*



‘it’s glass, modern erm sort of not similar to an escalator but it’s got the sort of continuous movement, like an automatic watch’

‘that’s sort of sums my process with Retailer 1, I have to sort of have a difficulty to sort of get to where I want to be but then as soon as that’s you’ve sort of finished with that process you’re just out fairly easily’

Image 4.2.9.8 – Participant I Montage: ‘*Topsy Turvy Journey*’

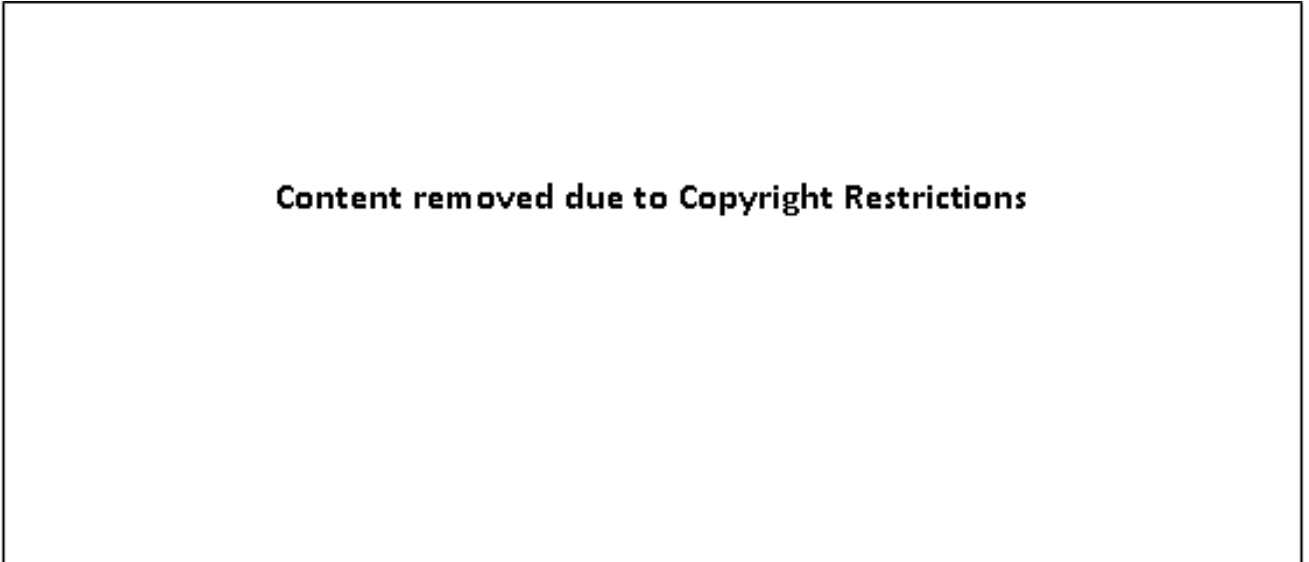


Table 4.9 Participant I codes emerging from each image

Image Theme							
Sensory Perception	See(+)	See(+)	See(+)	See (-) Hear (-)	See(+)	See(+)	See(+)
Retail Experience Factors	Merchandise(+) Signage(+) Brands(+)	Merchandise(+) Colours(+)	Colours(+) Merchandise(+)	Departments(+) Merchandise(-) Layout(+) Crowded(-) Customers(-) Colours(+)	Stores(+) Location(+) Crowded(-) Departments(+) Merchandise(+) Brands(+)	Crowded(-) Departments(+) Merchandise(+) Modern(+) Brands(+) Layout(+) Temperature(-)	Layout(+) Modern(+) Crowded(-) Customers(-) Location(+)
Motivation	Think(+) Go to(+) Go in(+) Rush(-) Exit store(+)	Go in(+) Find(+) Purchase(+)	Walk in(+) Think(+) Go in(+) Find(+)	Find(-) Go to(+) Drawn to(+)	Think(+) Purchase(+) Exit store(+)	Go to(+) Think(+) Browse(+)	Think(+) Go in(+) Go to(+) Exit store(+)
Perceived Customer Values	Variety(+) Convenience(+) Flow(+)	Variety(+) Quality(+) Price(+)	Variety(+) Fashionable(+) Quality(+) Discovery(+) Price(+)	Convenience(+) Flow(+)	Busyness(-) Convenience(+) Price(+) Deal(+) Variety(+) Flow(+) Flow (-)	Variety(+) Deal(+) Flow(+)	Flow(+)
Human Values	Choice(+) Achievement(+)	Trust(+) Need(+)	Uniqueness(+)	Achievement(+) Quietness(+)	Achievement(+) Community(+)	Giving(+) Uniqueness(+) Individuality(+) Choice(+) Quietness(+)	Ease(+)
Feelings	Awakened(+)	Confident(+)	Inspired(+) Pleased(+)	Good(+) Rewarded(+) Stressed(-) Positive(+)	Relaxed(+)	Calm(+) Positive(+)	Interested(+)

Summary of Participant I

Participant I (PI) had a generally positive experience when they were shopping at Retailer 1 but did prefer the quieter areas of the store where they could find items of clothing which were more muted and plain. They would usually make an effort to find these quieter areas of the store if it was particularly busy.

PI began by describing that when they think about something they want to buy they have the thought that Retailer 1 will probably have it. Image 4.2.9.1 depicts how they would have a 'lightbulb moment' when they think of something they needed because they think that Retailer 1 offer so much choice.

In the store, the participant felt that there were lots of different clothing designs, but he would prefer to look for and buy plainer clothes. Image 4.2.9.2 was selected to show this as they felt that Retailer 1 were able to provide those sorts of items. In addition, the plainer items which may have only been needed for a couple of weeks on a holiday were used again for many years, so they felt that was another positive aspect in terms of value.

As the participant arrives at a Retailer 1 store they noticed the array of colours, styles and materials. Image 4.2.9.3 was a way for the participant to portray what arriving at the store was like for them. The colourful clothes were not something that they were looking for, but they felt this was something very noticeable.

Image 4.2.9.4 was used to show how the store has a busy environment with many customers. In addition, because of the wide range of merchandise there can be a lot of items that he needs to look through in order to find what he is looking to buy, though when he found what he wanted he felt good about it. This was a positive image for the participant as it also highlighted that they felt the layout of the store was clear and that Retailer 1 did not change things around very often.

PI wanted to highlight that he thought a Retailer 1 is in every town and city and so image 4.2.9.5 shows how there is always a road leading to a Retailer 1. They liked that Retailer 1 appeared to be supporting the high street by opening stores in areas where other retailers have not got a store. The busyness of the store also resonated in this image and they felt that once they had completed their shopping then they could see themselves relaxing afterwards.

PI felt that Retailer 1 stores were like being in a shopping mall with many floors and lots of different items to buy. Image 4.2.9.6 was how he sees the inside of a Retailer 1 store where there are several floors and an escalator to get to each area. He again highlighted the busyness of a store and that personally they would prefer to be in a quieter part of the store.

In the context of their shopping process, image 4.2.9.7 was selected to show how he ideally wants to go into the store and get to the area he wants to be quite quickly and then make his purchases quite quickly. PI explained that the way Retailer 1 is set out that this is something they can achieve when they go shopping.

4.2.10 Participant J – Images and Findings

Image 4.2.10.1 – Emoji: *‘for day-to-day clothes and kids clothes it’s the perfect place to go price wise’*



‘to me I think Retailer 1’s a lot more casual, like casual clothes compared to going out clothes’

‘I know it’s been more highly priced in the last six months is still my go to shop’

‘I just think ‘oh well that’s cheap I know I’m going to use it, I might as well have it’ ‘I know I’m going to wear it so I might as well go and get that’

‘It’s a bit of a sense of achievement yeah that you’ve got so much for so little yeah’

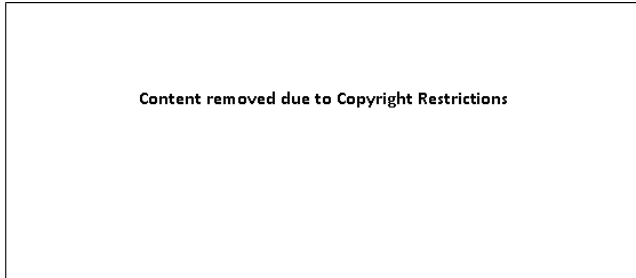
Image 4.2.10.2 – Emoji: *‘especially when you go in the changing room a distinct smell or if you are in the queue’*



‘I don’t think it would stop me but it’s just something I notice’

‘I think because it’s the nicest way of going about what I’m trying to say, without sounding rude or big headed or anything like that so just basically that sometimes the smells aren’t as nice as they should be’

Image 4.2.10.3 – Person with a lot of bags: *‘to be fair I do think ‘yeah why not get three of four bags worth rather than just one item whilst I’m there’*



‘Retailer 1 I will always come out with two or more easily so I know I’m always going to come out with a lot of things’

‘but if I know I’m going to Retailer 1, Retailer 1 will always be my last shop because I know I’m going to come out with a lot of stuff so I don’t want to then go walking round all other shops’

Image 4.2.10.4 – Paper Bags: *‘you get a free bag and to me it’s a comfortable bag to hold which sounds really weird’*



‘when you walking and your bags are really heavy and they are cutting in your hands Retailer 1’s bags have never done that to me, but I do think they don’t over pack them whereas other shops probably do so they will give you multiple bags for you to hold’

‘they are comfortable and they do hold a lot, and they are free so that’s what I do like about them’

‘it also helps in the fact of rather than carrying one bag and you being and your arm being pulled down if you’ve got two you are kind of evening yourself out so it is more of a comfortable way to shop I think’

‘my regime when I get home is to get all the clothes out of the bag cut all the labels off, get all the stickers off, put them in the bag then crumple the bag up and put it in the recycling bin’

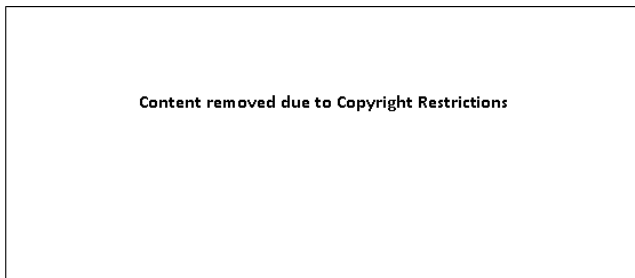
Image 4.2.10.5 – Queue: *‘even though there’s a massive queue every time you go into Retailer 1 it goes down really quickly, there are always loads of cashiers’*



‘they know the amount of customers they have and they know they’re always going to have a queue it’s very well organised’

‘it’s when you stand still that’s when you start getting agitated but the fact that you’re always slowly moving and you can see people going in and out all the time it doesn’t bother me’

Image 4.2.10.6 – Busy: *‘people then tend to congregate when they see someone they know, then there’s a pram there then there’s three other people there and you think well I’m trying to look at clothes here or I’m trying to get past and so sometimes it can be frustrating’*



‘say people were stood in the way of and I wanted a shirt I just instantly think ‘right forget it I’m not bothering, it’s too much hassle I’m going to go and have a look for trousers that are on my list’. So I’d probably just think ‘right forget it we’ll move on’

‘I’d probably say ‘excuse me’ or try and like Nussle in to the point where they do decide to move but if it’s one of them things that’s on my list where I’m not particularly bothered whether I’m going to get it or not I just decide that it’s too much stress that I don’t need so I move to the next thing’

Image 4.2.10.7 – Participant J Montage: *‘The good outweighs the bad’*

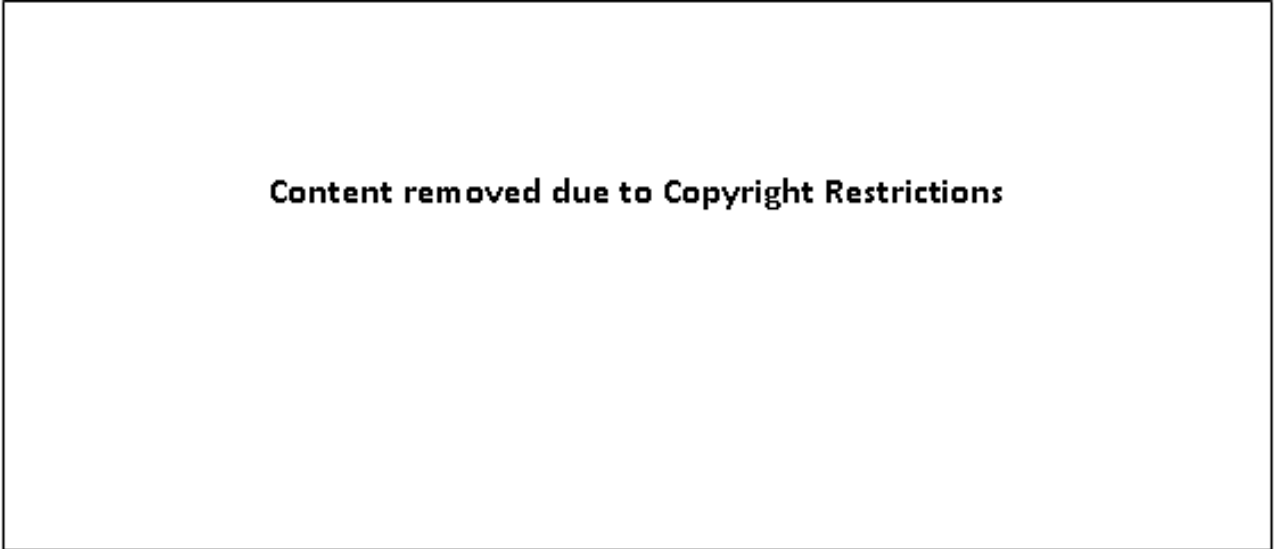


Table 4.10 Participant J codes emerging from each image

Image Theme						
Sensory Perception	See(+)	Smell (-)	See(+)	Touch(+) See(+)	See(-)	See(-)
Retail Experience Factors	Merchandise(+) Merchandise (-)	Departments(-) Fitting Room(-) Customers (-) Crowded(-)	Bags(+) Merchandise(+)	Bags(+) Service(+) Coat Hangers(+)	Queues(-) Crowded(-) Customers(-) Service(+) Staff(+) Merchandise(+) Space(-)	Crowded(-) Customers(-) Space (-) Layout(-) Signage(-)
Motivation	Go to(+) Purchase(+) Pick up(+) Think(+)	Avoid(-) Try on (-)	Exit store(+) Plan (-) Purchase(+)	Hold(+) Think(+) Regime(+) Exit store(+)	Think(-) Wait(-) Pick up(+) Purchase(+)	Avoid(-) Come back(-) Purchase(-) Go in(-)
Perceived Customer Values	Price(+) Quality(+) Staples(+) Variety(+) Volumes(+)	Untidy(-)	Volumes(+) Deals(+)	Convenience(+) Free(+)	Organised(+) Flow(+) Order(+)	Order(-) Flow(-)
Human Values	Achievement(+) Family(+) Restraint(-)	Community(-) Politeness(-)	Family(+) Achievement(+) Time(-)	Comfort(+) Balance(+) Sustainability(+) Ownership(+)	Ease(+) Patience(+) Community(+) Thoughtfulness(+)	Community(-) Thoughtfulness(-) Familiarity(-)
Feelings	Anxious(-) Happy(+)	Worry(-)	Happy(+)	Comfortable(+)	Calm(+) Happy(+)	Frustrated(-) Stressed(-)

Summary of Participant J

Participant J (PJ) liked the value of the store in terms of the number of items she was able to purchase. She felt that prices had gone up quite recently, but the store was still their go to place for lots of clothing.

PJ described how Retailer 1 was their go to shop for day-to-day clothes and clothing for other members of their family, though not really clothes for going for a night out. Image 4.2.10.1 highlighted that she felt the store offered good value for money for the items she would buy and that when she found the items they wanted to buy it was a sense of achievement.

PJ wanted to politely highlight that in the store in certain areas there were at times some unpleasant smells. Image 4.2.10.2 illustrates that they had noticed that some areas in the store, such as changing rooms, could be refreshed more often by the store assistants so they did not smell.

The number of bags she would typically have after completing their shopping visit was something that the participant noticed from their experience. Image 4.2.10.3 portrays how she would usually exit the store with three or four bags of items. This had become part of their shopping routine in that she would always shop at Retailer 1 last because she knew she would be carrying several bags.

Continuing with the Retailer 1 bags, PJ selected an image (4.2.10.4) of a plain bag to show that the type of bag that she is given is one she likes, as it is usually more than one bag to even out the items they have to carry, and the bag handles are comfortable to hold. The bag also formed part of the broader experience as she would return home and view all the clothes, remove the tags and stickers and then put the bag in the recycling.

PJ put together two images which were of a line of people and a smiley emoji into one image (4.2.10.5) to portray how they see the queues in the store. She acknowledged that even though there are always long queues when they go into Retailer 1 the queue is constantly moving as the store is well organised. Items displayed around the queuing area were seen as useful as she may have forgotten to pick something up around the store and these were also available near the checkouts.

One of the negative aspects of their shopping experience was the busyness of the store at certain times. Image 4.2.10.6 highlights that they found the number of customers in the store stressful and on some occasions, this would mean she moved to quieter parts of the store until they could view the items she wanted to buy properly. For some items she may have even chosen not to bother trying to view or purchase them.

4.2.11 Participant K – Images and Findings

Image 4.2.11.1 – Clothes: *'nothing's quite where it's meant to be, everything's fallen off the hanger, you try and pick something up and there's five items attached to it and it's just never very organised'*

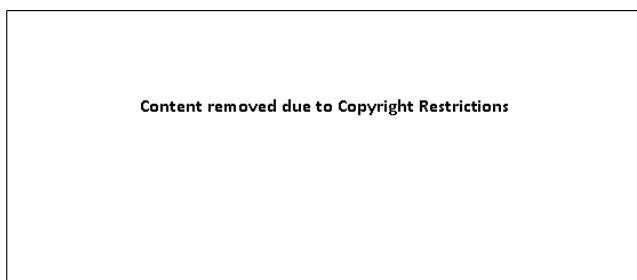


'there are Retailer Is that are better erm some of the more bigger city definitely are more organised than say like the smaller cities'

'when I was younger I didn't really care I would just trawl through it all whereas now I just think I don't know I'm just tired now, I'm just like no, so I think that does definitely put me off but erm yeah I would like everything really organised'

'they do try and section it sometimes but then sometimes on one rail there's just things from everywhere so there is a lot of miss mash and colours and stuff'

Image 4.2.11.2 – Broken Zip: *'you do find 'oh wow I've just got this piece and it's really nice' and then you wear it out'*



'I bought a bag and that looked really nice and everyone's commenting on how nice it looks but whenever I want to open up my bag I can't open the clasp very easily so it takes five attempts'

'you probably don't get as much cost per wear because you don't actually get to wear it as much so sometimes it is initially cheaper but you only get a few wears out of

Image 4.2.11.3 – Sizing: ‘you can have stuff from there in a size eight but you can also have stuff in a size twenty and neither of those are my size’



‘it does mean that you have to spend more time in your shopping because you’ve got to allow for time to erm try it on and everything before buying’

‘sometimes you have to take more with you because you have to get three versions of the same thing just to see if which one will fit best’

‘you do feel like definitely when you get your thing you feel rewarded by it because you think ‘ah yeah I’ve got all this stuff’ you can get home and it’s rewarding because you look at everything and you’ve got a lot’

Image 4.2.11.4 – Hidden Gem: ‘you do sometimes get a thing that’s like amazing or really nice and sometimes you get a thing that is really nice’



‘Yeah it’s like you feel successful, so a successful trip’

‘once you have found something you want and you buy it I think it’s like a sense of accomplishment almost’

‘I think when you find those that’s what makes you go look every time’

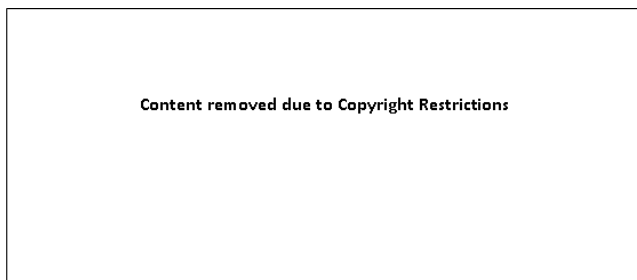
Image 4.2.11.5 – Girl with the bags: ‘sometimes do end up buying loads of stuff and you walk out with a lot of bags, it’s like a nice feeling because you’ve got loads of stuff’



‘I think it’s like you come back and it feels like a nice feeling when you’ve got lots of things’

‘I think it is exciting when you buy loads of new things and you come home and whoever’s not been on the shopping trip, like you come home and you show them everything you’ve bought and erm yeah I think it is like an exciting experience when you’ve got lots of new stuff’

Image 4.2.11.6 – Busy Crowd: ‘one consistent thing is it can be really really busy and crowded’



‘if I’m on my own or with someone that also wants to go I probably would just continue my shop erm if I was maybe with my dad or my boyfriend who really didn’t want to be there anyway I might be like ‘ah come on we’ll just go’ so I think it is dependent on who you are with’

‘if you are one of those people who have got a wheelchair or a pushchair anything like that erm you probably and then it’s busy as well you probably are going to struggle to look around’

‘there will be lots of things in the middle and stuff so it does mean that everything’s quite squashed in when you’re walking around’

Image 4.2.11.7 – Participant K Montage: ‘*Chaotic treasure hunt*’

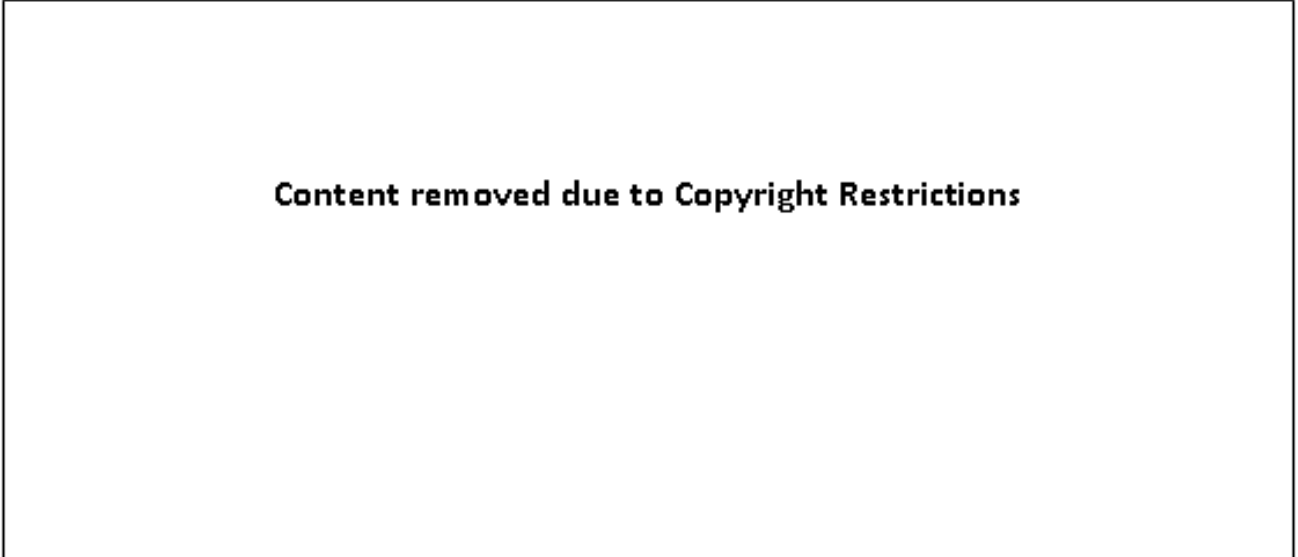


Table 4.11 Participant K codes emerging from each image

Image Theme						
Sensory Perception	See(-)	See (-) Touch (-)	See (-) Touch (-)	See(+)	See(+) Touch(+)	See(-) Hear(-)
Retail Experience Factors	Merchandise (-) Display(-) Stores(-) Departments(-) Queues(-) Colours(-)	Merchandise (-)	Merchandise(-) Sizing(-) Fitting Room(-) Queues(+) Baskets(+) Display(+)	Merchandise(+) Stores(+)	Bags(+) Merchandise(+)	Crowded(-) Customers(-) Space(-) Queues(-) Escalators(-) Lifts(-) Temperature(-) Layout(-)
Motivation	Think(-) Avoid(-) Mood(-) Find(-) Go to(-)	Go in(+) Find(+) Wear(+)	Try on(-) Purchase(+) Think (-) Exit store(-) Drawn to(+)	Find(+) Stay(+) Go back(+)	Purchase(+) Exit store(+) Review(+)	Exit store(-) Browse(-) Avoid(-)
Perceived Customer Values	Untidy(-) Staples(+) Organised(-)	Quality(-) Fashionable(+) Convenience(-) Price(+) Flow(+)	Accuracy (-) Flow(-) Convenience(-) Volumes(+) Variety(-) Fashionable(+) Organised(-)	Discovery(+) Quality(+) Price(+)	Volumes(+) Price(+) Variety(+)	Flow(-) Untidy(-) Convenience(-)
Human Values	Order(-) Ease(-) Time(-)	Recognition(+) Sustainability(+)	Time(-) Consistency(-) Community(-) Leisure(+) Achievement(+) Treat(+) Order(+)	Achievement(+) Time(+) Ownership(+)	Sharing(+) Family(+) Achievement(+)	Time(-) Family(+) Perseverance(+)
Feelings	Disappointed(-)	Frustrated(-)	Annoyed(-) Rewarded(+)	Successful(+)	Successful(+) Excitement(+) Frisolous(+)	Flustered(-)

Summary of Participant K

Participant K (PK) had changed their view of a Retailer 1 shopping experience as she had become a bit older and now felt that they did not have as positive experiences as she did when she was younger. She now felt the stores were too busy and where the participant would have not thought too much about the display of clothing and busyness of the store when they were younger, she now prefers to be able to shop with too many other customers being around them and she wanted more organisation to the store.

PK initially highlighted that one of the main images that comes to mind when shopping is the clothes being messy and disorganised. Image 4.2.11.1 illustrates that when they have been in an untidy store she has noticed clothing falling off hangers and areas where they would need to rummage through to find things. When she was younger this was not something they really minded doing but as she has gotten a bit older she finds she has less enthusiasm towards the effort required to look through the clothes.

PK selected image 4.2.11.2 to highlight that the quality of some the items they had bought from could be better. She liked that she might buy something and when they wear it someone would complement them on the item and that they would tell them they got it from Retailer 1. The negative aspects were that some items would perhaps break soon after they were purchased or that items could only be worn and washed a few times before needing new ones.

A negative aspect of the shopping experience for the participant was the sizing of the clothes as she felt she always needed to try on items first to check the sizing and that she would need to take three different sizes of each item into the changing rooms to get the correct fit. PK found that it could be disappointing if what size she thought was correct was different when she tried it on. Image 4.2.11.3 portrays how they might feel when trying items on. However, if she did find her size, she felt rewarded and would enjoy returning home and looking at all of the items she had bought.

A big positive aspect of the shopping experience for the participant is when they find a really nice item in the store. Image 4.2.11.4 shows how these items might be hidden and require the participant to look through the store to discover it. If she found an item like this on a shopping visit, then she would feel a sense of accomplishment and it would encourage them to make the effort to look again next time.

PK noticed that it was a positive feeling when she saw lots of bags at the checkout. She liked that they provided a paper bag and that when she returned home, she could look though all of the many items they purchased with someone else at home. Image 4.2.11.5 illustrates the feeling she gets when they

complete their shopping visit. PK also noted that at the point of paying for the items she may feel she has spent too much money but then shortly afterwards she looks at how many items they have and feels she has got a lot for the money spent.

A negative aspect for PK was the busyness and crowds in the store at particular times. Depending on who they were shopping with would determine whether they would continue to try to browse or not bother to look. Image 4.2.11.6 highlights the busy crowds and the number of pushchairs and stock items in the aisles.

4.2.12 Participant L – Images and Findings

Image 4.2.12.1 – Armfuls of shopping: *‘I always end up and I could afford lots of little purchases, I can afford to treat my family, I can afford to treat myself, there’s lots of little interesting bits and bobs and I do always end up with armfuls or a bag full of stuff and that feels good’*



‘I can go in and I can come out with a whole bag of things and I feel like I’ve had a lovely a lovely time, lovely experience’

‘I love I love having a bag full of stuff, I love getting home with the bag of stuff’

‘I do always get an armful of stuff because I’m often catching up on all the basic bits and then there’s extra bits too’

‘I can afford lots of things as well erm so yeah I do always end up with a bag full of stuff and it probably only costs about twenty thirty pounds but all this stuff but you get a big armful of stuff’

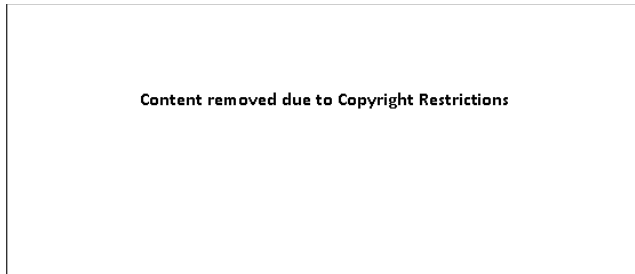
Image 4.2.12.2 – Everyday Basic: *‘what draws you in to that shop as well it’s getting my basics so it’s basics for my family as well as myself’*



‘the pleasure of even buying the basics just to get that little bag full of things feels nice’

‘that would be the sort of thing I would be going in there for it’s what how, the quality, they’re still going to be ok quality’

Image 4.2.12.3 – Film and TV programmes: *‘they are huge stores, you see it feels like you’ve had an afternoon out sometimes erm we can go we share all the passions of the TV programmes’*



*‘you go in there and it’s amazing
the way they’ve presented it’*

*‘it’s lovely and how it’s colour
blocked’*

Image 4.2.12.4 – Crowd: *‘sometimes it can be very crowded and pushy shovey and there are elements of stress to it’*



*‘the crowded element of it the having to you
know fight you way through sometimes’*

*‘there are some favourites that it’s worth
making the effort for, erm but that is an
element of that sort of shop sometimes’*

*‘they do scatter some little treats all over the
place so you have to go searching’*

Image 4.2.12.5 – Mother and Daughter Time: *‘shopping is sort of a vehicle really for us having mother daughter time’*



‘I feel like I’ve had a really mummy daughter day you know quality time and Retailer 1 has become a big part of that really’

‘it’s a vehicle for us two, do you like this? not really, what about this one?’

‘there’s an element of that in my little head that I’ve have had an idyllic little day’

Image 4.2.12.6 – Posh Woman: *‘just that negative element of me really that sometimes you really can go, oh I don’t, do I really want to shop here, do I really belong here?’*



‘people have rummaged through clothes and left it rummaged erm whereas in the bigger stores they just seem to have more people tidying up it’s a nicer environment’

‘the more cramped stores you are then noticing the untidiness’

Image 4.2.12.7 – Participant L Montage: ‘*A day out bargain shopping*’



Table 4.12 Participant L codes emerging from each image

Image Theme						
Sensory Perception	See(+)	See(+)	See(+)	See (-)	See(+)	See(-)
Retail Experience Factors	Merchandise(+) Bags(+)	Merchandise(+)	Merchandise(+) Colours(+) Stores(+) Space(+) Display(+) Departments(+)	Crowded(-) Customers(-) Stores(+) Space(-) Queues(-) Display(+) Layout(+) Bags(+)	Merchandise(+)	Customers(-) Display(-) Stores(-)
Motivation	Go in(+) Browse(+) Purchase(+)	Pick up(+) Purchase(+)	Browse(+) Go in (+) Purchase(+) Find(+)	Avoid(-) Find(+) Stay(+) Browse(+) Exit store(+) Wear(+)	Browse(+) Purchase(+) Stay(+)	Avoid(-) Think(-)
Perceived Customer Values	Volumes(+) Affordability(+) Variety(+) Staples(+) Price(+)	Staples(+) Quality(+) Price(+)	Variety(+) Volumes(+) Price(+) Fashionable(+) Quality(+) Cheap(-) Discovery(+)	Variety(+) Fashionable(+) Discovery(+) Cheap (-) Quality (+)	Affordability(+) Variety(+)	Cheap(-) Untidy(-)
Human Values	Treat(+) Giving(+) Family(+) Time(+) Achievement(+)	Achievement(+)	Fun(+) Treat (+) Family(+) Recognition(+) Giving(+) Consideration(+)	Time (-) Time (+) Fun(+) Community(+) Giving(+) Recognition(+) Sharing(+)	Time (+) Family(+) Treat(+) Sharing(+)	Belonging(-)
Feelings	Good(+) Lovely(+) Happy(+)	Proud(+)	Relief(+) Happy(+) Elated(+) Fabulous(+)	Stressed(-) Cramped(-)	Relaxed(+) Happy(+)	Uncomfortable(-)

Summary of Participant L

Participant L (PL) generally enjoyed the shopping experience at Retailer 1 and liked the fact that she could go and buy quite a lot of items even if these were just staple items for other members of their family.

PL started by highlighting that one of the positive aspects of the shopping experience at Retailer 1 is the volume of items she can buy. Image 4.2.12.1 illustrated how she really liked to buy lots of little things and exit the store with a bag full of items. The items would be a mix of the basics that she needed to get plus some other treats for themselves and other family members.

Linking slightly to the participant's first image she highlighted that image 4.2.12.2 portrayed the basics that Retailer 1 sell in terms of everyday clothing items. These items were also quite a positive thing to buy as she felt that even though they were just basic items the quality of these was fine.

One of the positive aspects of their shopping experience was the novelty items which were designed from major TV shows or films, highlighted by image 4.2.12.3.

A negative aspect of the shopping experience for PK was the crowded times in the store where other customers would be quite pushy as they were trying to look at items. Image 4.2.12.4 presented how at times she felt quite squashed by the number of people in the store and that this was disappointing because she wanted to go and search for the treats scattered around the store.

Shopping at Retailer 1 was seen as an opportunity for PK to spend time with her daughter and have a lovely day out. Image 4.2.12.5 portrays how they feel their mother and daughter time would seem after a day of shopping. She enjoyed taking the items home and having a look at all the items she had bought with family members.

Another negative element of the shopping experience was when the store was untidy and customers had left items on the floor. Image 4.2.12.6 depicts someone who would be looking down on other shoppers and this was how the participant could sometimes be confused as to whether this busy and untidy environment was a place where she felt comfortable shopping.

4.3 Summary and Collation of Codes for Retailer 1

The codes for both retailers have been categorised in the context of beginning with the Sensory Perceptions of the participant and what each image represents in terms of their senses. The image is then explored in terms of what it represents in the shopping experience linked to Retail Experiential Factors. Next, the type of Motivations the participants had during the shopping experience and how this relates to the image were stated. Following this, was to establish why these aspects being described about the shopping experience were of value to them in the context of the shopping experience and these were observed as Perceived Customer Values which were more specific to the store shopping experience. After that, participants were asked why these aspects were of value to them personally and were seen as broader Human Values. To complete the discussion for each image, the participants were asked how the shopping experience represented by the image could be described as a Feeling.

4.3.1 Sensory Perceptions

What the participants see is by far the main sense being engaged in the shopping experience. The number of positive experiences highlighted by participants was higher than the number of negative experiences which generally indicates that participants visually like what they see when they are shopping at Retailer 1 but there are occasions and visible aspects of the shopping experience that they do not like.

The other senses were not as prominent in the participant discussions. Touch was something emphasised by some participants, and this was usually described as a positive aspect when they would be picking up items and feeling the fabrics. Very few participants spoke of what they hear in the store although four of the participants expressed the noise in the store created by other customers.

4.3.2 Retail Experiential Factors

Participants talked consistently about the volume of merchandise that they were able to purchase in a shopping visit. The sheer volume of items that they would potentially buy was surprising particularly when they arrived at the checkouts and the member of staff took the items out of the basket, Participant B felt it was just like 'Mary Poppins' bag. Several participants noted at this point that they felt a sense of panic in that they hadn't realised that they had picked up so many items as they were

going around the store. All the little amounts of money for each item had mounted up and at the point of purchase they would be surprised that they had been quite frivolous and spent a lot more money than they had planned to.

The most frequent negative retail experiential factors were the other customers in the store and the untidy displays. Furthermore, other customers browsing could motivate participants to navigate around busy areas and potentially go to other quieter areas in the store for a while and then return to the busy areas later. Alternative options to avoid or manage their way around the crowds were to browse in these busy areas and ask other customers to let them through. However, customer attitudes and behaviour towards other shoppers was seen as another negative aspect because they showed little consideration to one another. Six of the participants selected images of crowds of people to represent the busyness of the store. (see Figure 4.2). Linked to the customers and crowded store, was both the layout of the store and space available. Space within the store had mixed opinions with some participants noting that stores they had visited had enough space to move around, whilst others thought they were too cramped.



Figure 4.2 Images selected to represent overcrowding in stores.

Another considerable negative shopping aspect were the clothes that have been left on the floor or in pile on the floor which emphasised that the displays were something that participants did not like about their shopping experience. Participants talked of leaving the store because the mess generated by other customers was too overwhelming. The untidy displays were selected as images (see Figure 4.3) and were referred to as a 'jumble sale' by some of the participants, seen mainly at busy weekends. However, participants would explain that even though this was an aspect of the shopping

experience that they did not like, they saw it as a trade-off for the low-prices and large range of items available to purchase.



Figure 4.3 Images selected to represent displays left by other customers.

On the other hand, participants also discussed positive aspects of the displays, particularly when they were attractive and coupled with the range of colours used. These were seen as a powerful visual element of the shopping experience. Of the participants that highlighted the colours at Retailer 1, they did so because they saw them as a positive uplifting aspect. However, some participants felt there was too much colour on display in certain departments and would have preferred it to be more subtle (see Figure 4.4).

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Figure 4.4 Images to represent the array of colours in Retailer 1.

A retail experiential factor was the brown paper bags provided to take shopping items home. Paper bags were represented in images presented by seven participants. Contributors liked that the bags were provided free of charge and because they were made of paper, they would be better for the environment and more sustainable. Participants thought the store provided enough of the bags to make sure the number of items were spread across more than one bag, and this also made them feel they had got a lot of items for their money. Participants talked about how having many bags to take home would make it feel as if they had bought a lot of items which would be excused as a successful shopping trip. The paper bags were also discussed as part of the returning home experience where all the items bought would be reviewed and sometimes presented to others in their household. The home experience appeared to extend the whole Retailer 1 shopping to more of a day out. (see Figure 4.5).

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Figure 4.5 Images to represent the free paper bags provided and the number of bags returning home with them.

An important factor to assist in the shopping experience was the flow of the store and how easy it was for them to get around to view the displays, visit all the relevant departments and complete their shopping at the checkouts. Moreover, there was an amount of effort required to complete the shopping experience and some participants talked of how they would have a journey around the store to find the items they wanted as it would require a certain amount of effort on their part to achieve this. An area that appears to be continuously busy is the checkout queues where participants would emphasise having to wait to purchase the items they had selected. However, this area was seen both negatively and positively because the wait was not particularly long due to there always being enough staff serving on the checkouts. Images selected to portray the flow of the shopping journey are shown in Figure 4.6.

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Figure 4.6 Images representing the flow of the journey in the store visit at Retailer 1.

4.3.3 Motivations

Several motivators were quite frequently noted in participant discussions and quite a few could be involved with an image. Participants were frequently talking about going to or going into the store and when they were there it made them motivated to think about the merchandise, the departments or the busyness of the place. Quite a powerful motivator for the participants was to not only find what they were looking for, but to go looking for other items they had not planned on finding when they arrived.

To purchase the items appeared to be quite a positive motivator although some participants mentioned the panic when they got to the checkouts and saw how many items they had picked up. This panic was usually quelled by them weighing up the fact they had spent more than they had planned to but felt justified in the sheer volume of items they had got.

On the negative side, a strong motivator was to avoid areas of the store which were too busy or were messy and, in some instances, participants would be more motivated to go away from the store than to continue with their shopping.

4.3.4 Perceived Customer Values

The most frequent perceived customer value mentioned by the participants was the price of the items. However, this was not always a positive aspect as the participants may think that an item at such a low-price was not good value or made particularly well. The low-price of the items was also considered as a bit of trade off for the sometimes very busy stores and messy displays which were seen as bit of challenge to overcome on their shopping visit.

The convenience of the store having many departments and newer developing areas of homeware were positive aspects of the shopping experience.

One of the most exciting aspects of the shopping experience mentioned by many of the participants was the discovery of items they were not particularly looking for. These items would usually be something quite special or unique and might be something they have kept for several years or had received compliments form others about. Some participants talked of how they would be thinking about the possibility of finding something before they arrived at the store. Items of discovery were what a lot of the participants talked about as being the reason they would keep going back to the store to see if any new ‘gems’ or ‘gold’ items had arrived. This motivation to return to the store regularly to discover new items became such an important part of the shopping experience to the point that if participants went shopping and did not find these items then they would be quite disappointed. Images selected to portray the discovery of items are shown in Figure 4.7.



Figure 4.7 Images selected to represent items considered to be a discovery.

The volume of items participants can purchase is quite a noteworthy positive of the shopping experience and was one of the first images that participants talked about. They really liked that they could go shopping there and buy almost as much as they wanted to without having to worry about how much they had spent. Participants described this feeling like being a birthday when they could spoil themselves and other family members or it was similar to going food shopping or being in sweet shop. Some of the participants did however highlight that there was some sense of panic when they arrived at the checkouts and saw the number of items they had picked up. Images selected to portray the volume of items that could be purchased are shown in Figure 4.8.



Figure 4.8 Images selected to represent the number of items purchased

4.3.5 Human Values

Human values that were expressed through the participant's conversations were the need for order in the store and how this was generally seen as a positive aspect of the shopping experience despite the occasions where the store displays were untidy. Participants felt that a shopping visit to Retailer 1 required a reasonable or ideally significant amount of time in order to be able to go around the store and look at everything they wanted to. Some participants expressed that Retailer 1 was not particularly a store you could just pop into on a lunch break because of the number of floors and departments you would need to visit. If a participant did not have enough time to go around the store it could cause them to be quite frustrated and stressed because they would think they had missed some discovery items on the other floors. In addition, the ability to get around the store without being

hindered by other customers or pushchairs was indicated by the value of ease and on the whole the participants were positive about this aspect in the store.

Another frequent human value expressed in the participant's interviews and images was the sense of achievement that they got from finding the items they had wanted to purchase and the items they potentially discovered. In addition, the completion of a successful shopping trip gave them this similar sense of achievement. In contrast a shopping experience hindered by other customers and not finding certain items or items considered to be 'gems' or 'gold' would potentially produce a sense of not achieving what they had set out on that particular shopping visit.

After the items were purchased, several participants said that they really valued the recognition that some of the items they had purchased got from other friends and colleagues. This would usually encourage them to say that the item was from Retailer 1 and this was usually something of a surprise to those that had made the compliment. Receiving this sort of recognition for an item they had purchased gave the participant a sense of confidence in that they had made the right purchase.

From a negative perspective, three of the participants expressed the aspect of not belonging whilst in the store and how they questioned whether they should still be shopping there, (shown in Figure 4.9). The images all have slightly different representations in that the seagulls are the behaviour of other customers in the store who are pushing and shoving to get to the displays whilst the white duck represents the participant not knowing if the clothes are still suitable for them to buy. The lady with the sunglasses represents a feeling of being looked down upon for shopping there.



Figure 4.9 Images selected to represent negative aspects of the shopping experience.

4.3.6 Feelings

The most frequently expressed feeling from the participants when describing the shopping experience was that of feeling good and happy from the successes of the shopping visit. Several participants spoke of the excitement that finding items around the store would bring.

From a negative perspective the participants expressed feelings of stress and annoyance from the shopping experience which was usually from the crowded store and other customers leaving display areas in an untidy manner. Several participants highlighted the anxiety that they felt and the panic that occurred at the checkouts. Other negative feelings came from participants who suggested that whilst shopping they felt a sense of guilt in that they were looking at the prices of some of the items.

4.3.7 Conclusion

Overall, the shopping experience had mixed shopping experiences by the participants, some of whom quite enjoyed it and others who found it to be generally chaotic, overcrowded and challenging. However, any negative aspects were generally traded-off because of the offering of both staple items such as socks, underwear, t-shirts and vests but also stocking items sometimes considered as being fashionable, good quality and a great price.

Participants shopping at Retailer 2

Findings and analysis of the images*, interviews and montages* for each participant shopping at Retailer 2 stores.

***Images and montages removed due to copyright.**

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4.4.1 Participant M – Images and Findings

Image 4.4.1.1 – Discounts: *‘because that’s the thing that makes it exciting’*

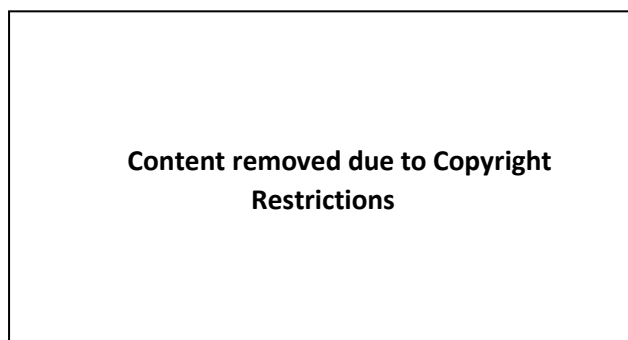


‘it’s just like I want to dig out what’s exciting there’

‘very random so you don’t know like what will be there but that’s the fun part’

‘This is sort of thing you usually see in the store of like a percentage discount yeah so that just reflects the experience of what I see in the store’

Image 4.4.1.2 – Brands: *‘there will be like some like Versace or like those top brands with like so many cross over discounted price’*



‘for me it’s like I’d prefer the like very discounted like good stuff rather than just like going for cheap stuff’

‘it’s like very fun experience it’s like a hedonic thing’

‘I always have full basket of selections but I probably just put them in the basket first because of the excitement when I see that item’

Image 4.4.1.3 – Bottles of Cosmetics: *‘because actually I don’t know most of the brands from here but normally I would still consider buying it’*



‘because I have the trust on the clothing brands I know most of them so sometimes the trust with just transfer to this area’

‘when I’m in the store and the excitement when I see those big bottles’

Image 4.4.1.4 – Box: *‘this is just er like the centre of the shop experience at Retailer 2 is about I don’t know what I will get so it’s about the surprise factor of going to the stores’*



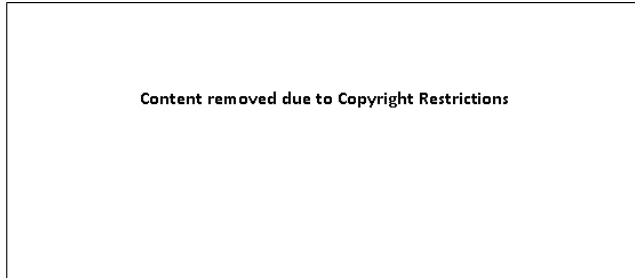
‘Yeah it’s like before I even go just let’s see what’s out there’

‘I think the surprise factor is like is like er like medium level with most stores but it’s a lot higher in Retailer 2’

‘I think that’s it’s the point of going shopping it just like that excitement you get that kind of joy so that’s why I would go in the store rather than go to online’

‘It’s like a gift to me somehow yeah I’m like treating myself’

Image 4.4.1.5 – Shopping joy: ‘that’s quite similar to me when I walk out of the shop like several bags’



‘Yeah that’s the best part it’s mine’

‘like it’s just me myself and everything is blurred out I’m just me in the centre of my joy yeah after doing my shopping’

‘I’m not like shopping alone person I need somebody to be company and just like share my joy’

‘we bought a lot of stuff and that’s the joy because we like we valued the things each other choose that, we also think it’s very good so the joy doubles up because both of us are happy’

Image 4.4.1.6 – Store: ‘that’s somewhere I would normally go and for the Retailer 2 stores I would choose the bigger one than the smaller one’

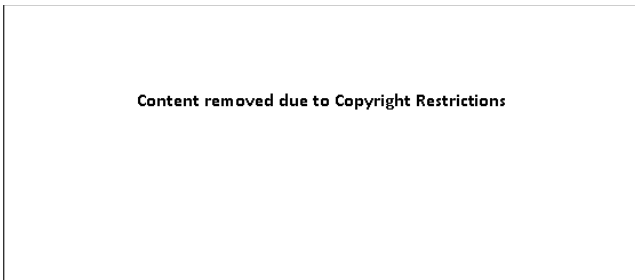


‘I would probably just go there for the afternoon, so that’s the time interval I left for the activity so I would prefer like a bigger store so I can spend more time inside’

‘I think for me as I mentioned about convenience side of so here is like I just go in to the one store’

‘it’s about trying things browsing around comparing and very important lastly deciding which one to buy yeah it all takes time’

Image 4.4.1.7 – Selection: *‘that’s like normally how you what you see when you go into a store’*



‘So this kind of environment makes me feel very comfortable’

‘yeah and another good thing is about the bags area and no it’s not simply the area but the sectioning and so there’s like size wise yeah’

‘I just feel comfortable walking around in the bag area because of the colour order and then just go to some other area just for fun’

Image 4.4.1.8 – Participant M Montage: ‘*Surprise box*’

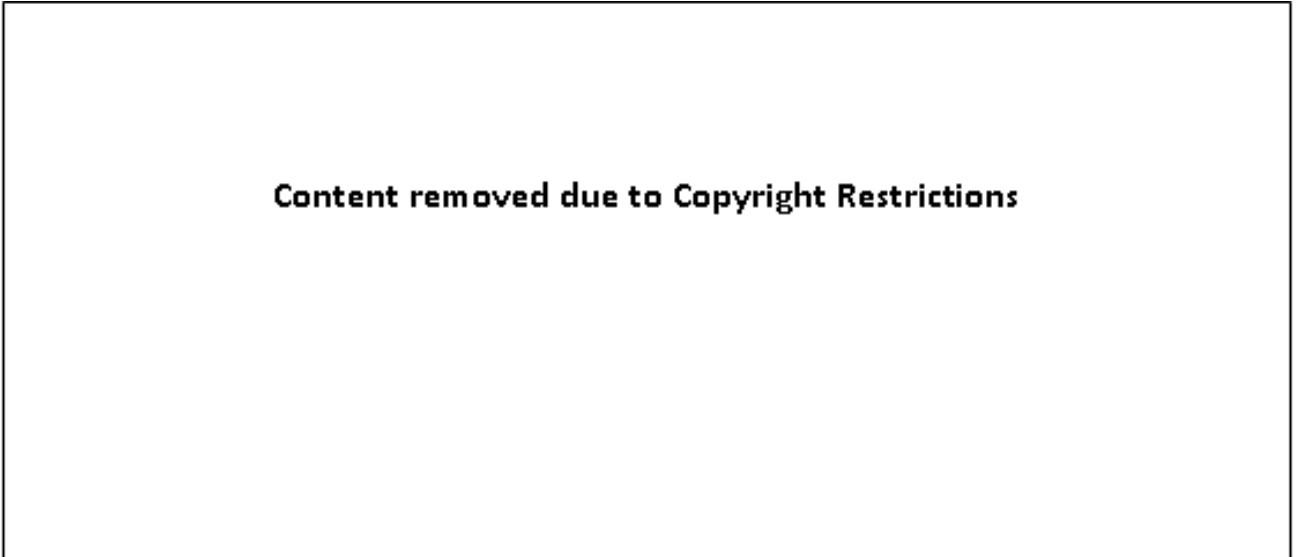


Table 4.13 Participant M codes emerging from each image

Image Theme							
Sensory Perception	See(+)	See(+)	See(+)	See(+) Touch(+)	See(+)	See(+)	See(+) Smell(+)
Retail Experience Factors	Merchandise(+) Departments(+) Brands(+)	Merchandise(+) Baskets(+) Bags(+) Brands(+)	Departments(+) Merchandise(+) Display(+) Brands(+)	Merchandise(+) Stores(+)	Bags(+) Merchandise(+)	Stores(+) Departments(+)	Layout(+) Display(+) Departments(-) Bright(+) Quiet(+) Colours(+) Merchandise(+) Brands(+)
Motivation	Go to(+) Find(+)	Find(+) Purchase(+) Go to(+)	Try(+) Walk in(+) Pick up(+)	Go to(+) Think(+) Select(+)	Purchase(+) Exit store(+)	Go to(+) Stay(+) Browse(+) Try on(+) Purchase(+) Mood(+)	Walk in(+) Go to(+) Find(+) Browse (-)
Perceived Customer Values	Discounts(+) Price(+) Variety(+) Discovery(+)	Deals(+) Quality(+) Price(+) Discovery(+) Convenience(+)	Quality(+) Discovery(+) Size(+) Variety(+)	Variety(+) Discovery(+) Price(+) Random(+)	Activity(+)	Discounts(+) Convenience(+) Discovery(+)	Tidy(+) One stop(+) Convenience(+) Flow(+)
Human Values	Fun(+)	Fun(+) Spontaneous(+) Rational(+) Restraint(-) Enjoyment(+)	Treat(+) Trust(+)	Spontaneous(+) Treat(+)	Share(+) Commonality(+) Restraint(-)	Achievement(+) Family(+)	Order(+) Fun(+) Ease(+)
Feelings	Happy(+)	Excited(+) Happy(+)	Excited(+)	Excited(+)	Happy(+)	Happy(+)	Comfortable(+) Calm(+)

Summary of Participant M

Participant M (PM) really enjoyed a shopping visit to Retailer 2 and the main aspect of that was the savings they could get on items, particularly designer brands. She also liked that there were brands at Retailer 2 which were unusual and unique which she felt was something to try and would be good quality.

PM talked through the first image (4.4.1.1) as one of the first things they think about. Big discounts are one of the main reasons that she likes to go shopping there. The image also highlighted that PM enjoyed the random items in the store and looking through them to find things she liked.

PM selected image 4.4.1.2 to portray how the designer brands were what they liked to buy. She did not just want to buy cheap items and liked how some brands would have discounts of around 60%. PM felt the shopping experience was very hedonic and they got quite excited putting items into their basket.

A particular area of the store that she liked was the cosmetics and they enjoyed buying the items from there even though she had not heard of some of the brand names before. Image 4.4.1.3 highlights that she liked the way the bottles were displayed in this area, and she highlighted that they felt they could trust the brands because she knew that they sell designer brands in clothing so this would transfer to the cosmetics.

One of the central factors of the shopping experience for her was the surprise factor of they have in their stores. Image 4.4.1.4 portrays the idea that she thinks about them at times and wonders what items they might have in their store. This is a major part of what makes them different from other stores and why she likes looking around for interesting items.

PM felt that image 4.4.1.5 showed how she felt after she had completed their shopping experience, and they then knew the items she had found was hers. When shopping she preferred to go with someone else as it doubled the shopping joy she would have.

Image 4.4.1.6 was a way of showing how she thought she needed time to go and browse in a store which could be a whole afternoon. She preferred a large store to smaller ones and liked the convenience of being able to go to just one store to get everything she wanted.

PM described how the environment made them feel comfortable and she liked the way items were sectioned. Image 4.4.1.7 highlights how they see a store and she mentioned that the handbags section was one where she liked the way it was displayed in colours.

4.4.2 Participant N – Images and Findings

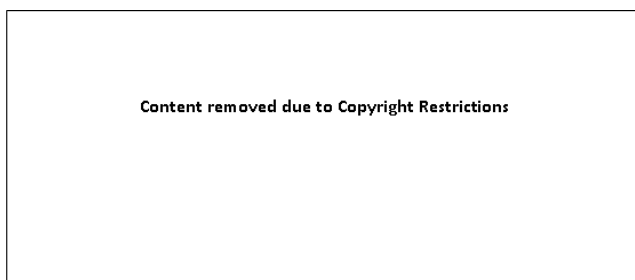
Image 4.4.2.1 – Shopping with my son: *‘one of the only shops that I can take my son shopping’*



‘I do enjoy that for like I’ve bought sunglasses from there and you know shoes from there, I don’t mind buying those things’

‘for me it’s not actually about the price is about the, with this part of Retailer 2 how I feel about it in this way is more about the convenience erm more than the price’

Image 4.4.2.2 – Labyrinth: *‘I do think that it’s a bit like a labyrinth when you go in this image makes me think of a labyrinth when you are walking in, and you know you kind of can get a bit lost’*



‘for me personally I find it quite a difficult shopping experience if I was to try to buy myself something there, I feel like like I’m entering into a maze’

‘it’s something that like when you’re going to somewhere you go in Retailer 2 you know it’s it is a bit of a tunnel’

Image 4.4.2.3 – Items: *‘it’s a bit of a jumble, this image is about it being a bit of a jumble sale in like lots of things just all over the place’*



‘they do categorise it and they do it is quite easy actually to find shirts if you looking for shirts and to find gym stuff if you are looking for gym stuff it is quite well organised but perhaps it’s because it’s not in sections’

‘I like to just buy what is quite easy to see’

Image 4.4.2.4 – Beekeeper: *‘you can end up thinking like it’s somewhere to get a bargain but actually you know some of the things aren’t that cheap so it can be you know you can end up spending more than you anticipated’*



‘That much money how much would it cost if I, how much would it cost if I bought it in a store?’

‘I’d like to be able to put my protective armour on and sometimes I forget to do that when I go in’

Image 4.4.2.5 – Tower Blocks: *'it's about this erm this tower blocks and erm not particularly nice environment,'*

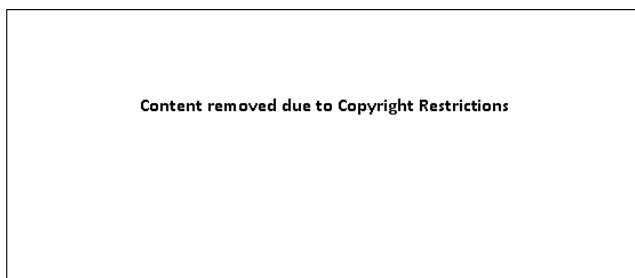


'it's just about it being a bit messy and it not particularly appealing'

'I think that they do that so that you think it's because it's stripped back no frills'

'I think they think it would detract from the shopping experience'

Image 4.4.2.6 – Woman looking through her fringe: *'like not wanting to engage possibly with the experience that much'*



'I'm not shy of saying I shop there and I get bargains there and that I don't mind shopping there it's convenient'

'I know that the prices I know the prices are going to be reasonable even if I'm not sure that they really are a bargain that they say they are going to be I know they are going to be affordable to me to shop there so I do get pleasure from it'

Image 4.4.2.7 – Participant N Montage: *‘Love amongst the debris’*



Table 4.14 Participant N codes emerging from each image

Image Theme						
Sensory Perception	See(+)	See(-)	See(-) Touch(-)	See(-)	See(-)	See (-)
Retail Experience Factors	Stores(+) Merchandise(+) Display(+) Space(+) Designers(+) Brands(+)	Departments(-) Signage(-) Merchandise(-) Brands(-) Designers(-)	Display(-) Merchandise(-) Signage(-) Sizing(-) Departments(-)	Merchandise (-)	Atmosphere (-) Lighting (-) Display (-)	Merchandise (-)
Motivation	Go to (+) Browse(+) Purchase(+) Go in(+) Find(+)	Browse(-) Navigate(-) Purchase(-)	Find (-) Try on (-) Browse (-)	Purchase (-) Browse (-) Think (-)	Go in (-) Purchase (-) Find(-) Navigate (-) Think (-)	Go in (-)
Perceived Customer Values	Convenience(+) Flow(+) Variety(+)	Flow(-) Discovery(-) Quality(-) Cheap(-)	Untidy (-) Flow (-) Quality (-)	Price (-) Deals (+) Quality (-)	Untidy (-) Cheap (-)	Convenience(+) Bargains(-) Affordability(-) Discovery(-) Price(-) Flow (-)
Human Values	Family(+) Sharing(+) Time(+) Ease(+) Caring(+)	Achievement(+) Family(+) Caring(+) Ease(-) Individuality(+)	Order (-) Ease (-)	Recognition(+) Trust (-) Restraint(-) Belonging (-)	Trust (-) Community(-) Belonging (-) Family	Family(+) Connection(+) Order (-) Leisure(+) Ease(-)
Feelings	Love(-) Overwhelmed(-) Happiness(+) Calm(+)	Confused(-) Happy(+) Conflicted(-) Flat(-) Overwhelmed(-) Tired(-)	Overwhelmed(-) Anxious(-)	Conflicted(-) Anxious(-)	Threatened(-) Anxious(-) Guarded(-) Warm(+) Happy(+) Love(+)	Unsure(-) Weary(-) Conflicted(-) Guarded(-)

Summary of Participant N

Participant N (PN) liked the shopping experience at Retailer 2 but mainly just for their other family members as she wanted them to find the items they liked, and she was not too bothered about finding items for herself.

PN began by explaining that image 4.4.2.1 showed that when she shops there the convenience of the store is something that helps with taking her son shopping. PN enjoyed the time spent with her son in the store and while they were there, items such as sunglasses would be something she would look through to find items she liked. The clothes in the store were not what she particularly went in for as these were seen as overwhelming.

When entering the store and walking around PN selected image 4.4.2.2 to portray a maze and tunnel which she felt was what the store display appeared to be. This was one of the reasons why she preferred shopping in there for their family members instead of for herself. The store layout was seen quite negatively as a maze or labyrinth which made them feel quite conflicted in that she might discover some items which made her feel a sense of achievement but at the same time it could be overwhelming.

Continuing with the displays in the store, PN selected image 4.4.2.3 to highlight that even though items are typically in some form of size order this did not make them well-organised. She felt that the store was a bit of jumble sale which meant items were all over the store.

When choosing items in the store, PN felt that they needed some form of protective armour to try and make sure they did not get carried away by the items which appeared to be a bargain. Image 4.4.2.4 portrays how she needs to be aware of what she is picking up and buying when shopping in there, because without this she can spend a lot more money than she had planned to spend.

PN selected image 4.4.2.5 to show how the store environment could be nicer in the context of the displays and merchandise. She felt this was something that they were doing to make the items appear to be a bargain, because the displays were presented in a no-frills way.

In a similar context to the Beekeeper image, PN chose image (4.6.2.6) to represent how they like the reasonable prices but at the same time she was not sure if she is actually getting a bargain.

4.4.3 Participant O – Images and Findings

Image 4.4.3.1 – Order: *'it's not like a jumble sale though it's quite ordered in the way it's set out'*

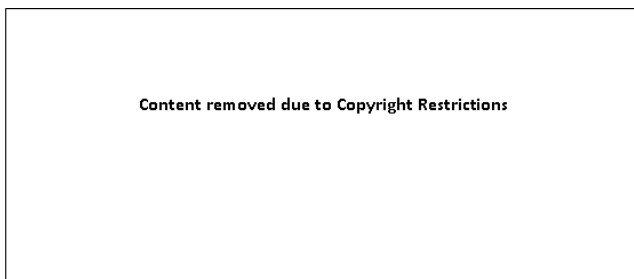


'there's nothing high blocking my view I can see across the whole store'

'I like to be able to know where I'm going next, I feel I guess I find it quite reassuring'

'I just feel comfortable that I'm walking around it on my own terms'

Image 4.4.3.2 – Lost in Time: *'you can also get lost in time and you can spend hours and hours in there'*



'you are like 'ahh what's this, what's this' and then all of a sudden it's like an hour later'

'I just walk round and I just feel quite relaxed, I'm lost in my own world I'm not bothered by anyone I just wonder round quite happily picking things up'

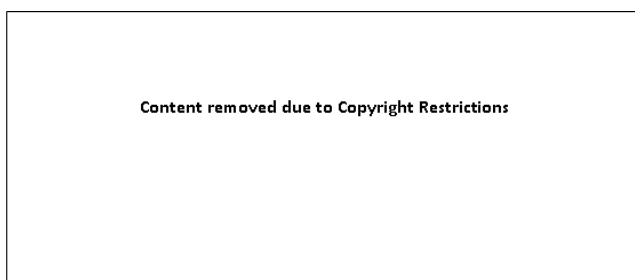
Image 4.4.3.3 – Happy Emoji: ‘when I think of Retailer 2 I always kind of smile because I just think of the funny times’



‘I am just happy when you know to be in Retailer 2 sometimes, I’m just happy there so it’s not just that, it’s like oh yeah I’ll happily go to Retailer 2 for a bit yeah’

‘this image is generally just the thought of going with my friend and just having of just being quite happy I find’

Image 4.4.3.4 – Person Relaxing: ‘I guess this is the image that’s representing me feeling comfortable at ease and just relaxed because I am generally relaxed when I’m in there I’m not stressed’



‘obviously I don’t go to sleep in a chair in Retailer 2 but er it does feel and it’s a bit quirky like the chair is not a normal chair it’s a quirky chair and Retailer 2 tends to sell quirky things’

‘it’s quite fun because you go I wonder what I will find today I wonder if I will find something really exciting today’

Image 4.4.3.5 – Hamper: *‘I think of Retailer 2 at Christmas because as I say you’ve got your treasures that you can find for different people and the gifts that you can find as you walk round’*



‘they’ve got such a range of goods and it’s something you wouldn’t know you wanted or you needed until you saw it’

‘you like it you do feel that accomplishment because you had to work for it a little bit it hasn’t just been oh I like that I’m going to go and buy it’

‘I think if somebody says ‘that’s nice’ it gives you confidence’

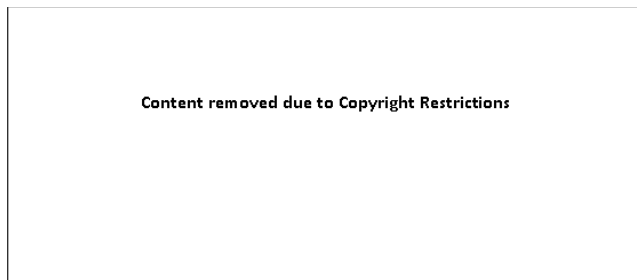
Image 4.4.3.6 – Gift: *‘you can get some really nice gifts for people where you don’t have to spend loads and loads of money’*



‘you know it still a gift it’s still giving, what you are trying to do, it doesn’t need to be a birthday or anything’

‘in some respects some of the gifting also a little bit to yourself so you go in and you might treat yourself’

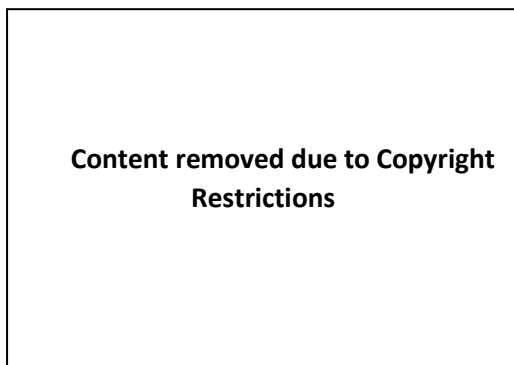
Image 4.4.3.7 – Cut Price: *‘you know you are going there for a bargain’*



‘for me if I can still get that nice piece of clothing but I can get it at a reduced price then that’s what I want to achieve’

‘I guess I’m pleased and I’m happy because I haven’t spent a huge amount of money’

Image 4.4.3.8 – Miss Helpful: *‘the shop assistants tend to be really helpful, always tend to be polite and don’t sort of get in your way and upset you’*



‘they’re kind of just there and around and you can go and speak to them’

‘if not then you don’t need any, they just leave you to it’

‘they’ve got quite a lot of cash desks’

‘that’s why it’s quite important that they’re friendly and stuff’

Image 4.4.3.9 – Participant O Montage: *‘A relaxing, calm and happy shopping experience’*

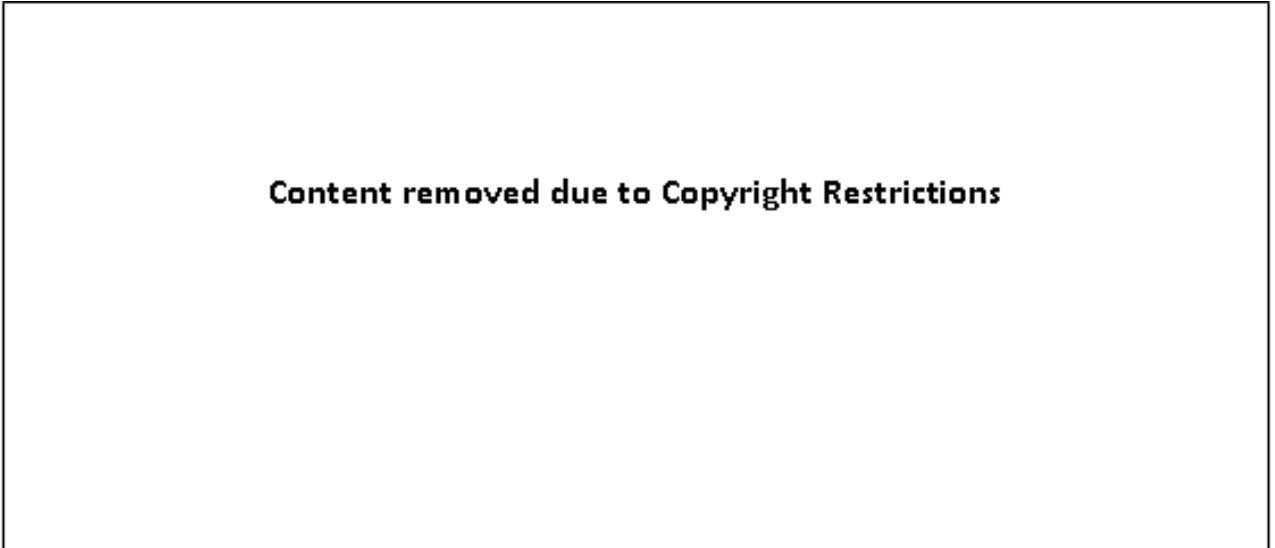


Table 4.15 Participant O codes emerging from each image

Image Theme								
Sensory Perception	See(+)	See(+)	See(+)	See(+)	See(+)	See(+)	See(+)	See(+)
Retail Experience Factors	Display(+) Merchandise(+) Sizing(+) Departments(+)	Car Park(+) Merchandise(+) Staff(+) Service(+) Customers(+) Checkout(+)	Stores(+) Merchandise(+)	Stores(+) Layout(+) Lighting(+) Merchandise(+)	Merchandise(+) Departments(+)	Merchandise(+) Display(+)	Merchandise(+)	Staff(+) Service(+) Checkout(+) Fitting room(+)
Motivation	Think(+) Go to(+) Walk in(+) Find(+) Browse(+)	Go to(+) Walk in(+) Browse(+) Try on(+) Find(+) Think(+)	Think(+) Go to(+) Purchase(+) Browse(+)	Go to(+) Find(+) Go in(+) Think(+)	Think(+) Find(+)	Find(+) Purchase(+)	Find(+) Think(+)	Think(+) Ask(+) Go to(+)
Perceived Customer Values	Flow(+) Convenience(+)	Variety(+) Discovery(+) Price(+) Flow(+)	Variety(+) Discovery(+)	Tidy(+) Flow(+) Discovery(+) Deals(+) Price(+)	Seasonal(+) Price(+) Variety(+) Discovery(+)	Variety(+) Price(+)	Price(+) Deals(+) Cheap(+) Novelty(+)	Flow(+)
Human Values	Order(+) Openness(+) Ease(+)	Friends(+) Fun(+) Ease(+) Order(+) Recognition(+) Time(+)	Friends(+) Giving(+) Fun(+)	Cleanliness(+) Uniqueness(+) Openness(+) Ease(+) Fun(+) Recognition(+) Achievement(+)	Giving(+) Self-affirmation(+) Recognition(+) Achievement(+) Effort(+) Hard-work(+)	Giving(+) Treat(+) Thoughtfulness(+)	Save(+) Family(+)	Friendly(+) Ease(+)
Feelings	Reassured(+) Comfortable(+)	Relaxed(+) Peaceful(+) Pleased(+) Comfortable(+) Content(+)	Happy(+) Content(+) Comfortable(+)	Relaxed(+) Pleased(+) Happy(+) Cheerful(+) Excited(+) Proud(+)	Proud(+) Confident(+) Comfortable(+) Pleased(+) Self-satisfied(+)	Meaningful(+)	Happy(+) Pleased(+) Justified(+) Relaxed(+) Calm(+)	Relaxed(+) Happy(+)

Summary of Participant O

Participant O (PO) found the shopping experience at Retailer 2 a place to go and escape for a few hours on some occasions.

PO found the store environment to be a place that was quite ordered and easy to navigate around. Image 4.4.3.1 highlights that the rails in the store are set out in a way that she feels allows her to plan where she will be browsing, and she thought this was quite reassuring. This was particularly important to PO because she wanted to make sure when they are browsing the store that she enjoys the shopping experience at her own pace.

Continuing with the shopping experience being at their own pace, PO highlighted with image 4.4.3.2 that as she enjoys browsing and picking up items around the store, she finds that time goes very quickly and that they may suddenly realise that she has been in the store for over an hour. This image was a positive for PO because she enjoyed taking time to go around the store.

PO has enjoyed shopping there and had a lot of fun with their friends. Image 4.4.3.3 was selected to portray that when she thinks of Retailer 2 it usually makes her smile both because she enjoys shopping in the store on her own but also because she has had a lot of fun shopping with friends.

The store experience for PO was something she found very relaxing. Image 4.4.3.4 shows how she feels relaxed in the store and that some of the items that they sell are quite quirky. The brightness in the image was to highlight how they feel the store environment is quite light and airy which is what she prefers. PO also explained how she sometimes wonders what items they might find when she visits the store which makes the shopping experience exciting.

Retailer 2 is a store where PO will shop for gifts when buying for friends and family. Image 4.4.3.5 portrays an item she had previously bought for her family but also that when she does find items in the store which are either for herself or for others, she feels a sense of accomplishment because the items are not always easy to find and require some searching.

Similarly to the previous image, the participant explained that image 4.4.3.6 shows that when she is in the store, she finds gifts for others and these are not just for birthdays and special occasions. PO might be browsing around the store and see something that she thought would be great for someone she knows, and she would buy just as a random gift. PO also used the image to highlight that she was giving herself a gift when she buys something from there as a treat.

A very strong factor of why PO chooses to shop there is the prices. Image 4.4.3.7 shows how she really enjoys buying some clothes or other items in the store and she knows they haven't spent a lot of money.

PO also wanted to highlight with image 4.4.3.8 that the store appeared to have friendly, helpful store assistants and that they had plenty of checkouts when she went to pay for her items.

4.4.4 Participant P – Images and Findings

Image 4.4.4.1 – Maze: *'I do kind of feel like there are different kind of like areas in the store to go in kind of feel like you are going into a little bit of a maze'*



'so I very much see the central point of the maze as me kind like finding that item that I want'

'with Retailer 2 you kind of have to find, it's all about like finding what you want'

'so I can kind of like erm like standing myself apart a little bit er but also kind of knowing that I've kind of seen it first so it's a little bit of that competition'

Image 4.4.4.2 – Rainbow: *'you see the rainbow and the pot of gold at the end which could be that item'*



'so for example erm the yellow could be kind of like a dress that I'm looking at the purple could be kind of like the shirt that I'm looking at for my dad, it's kind of like representing all the like the different things I could buy within the store for probably like different family members and friends birthdays'

'so yeah like the pot of gold if you see treasure you kind of like want it you're drawn to it'

Image 4.4.4.3 – Umbrella: ‘like looking through womenswear and actually finding like one of a kind piece or like one of kind dress’



‘so this the yellow kind of represents how I would feel if I was like wearing it so I would feel like I’m standing out erm I would feel kind of like different but like in a positive way’

‘you could be walking in the street and you could notice people wearing wearing things from different high street erm but obviously because that’s mass whereas I think with Retailer 2 you wouldn’t necessary kind of like know it’s from Retailer 2 so it’s a bit of like yeah kind of mystery but yeah uniqueness’

Image 4.4.4.4 – Little Minion: ‘it’s just like pure joy that you’ve found something it’s just it kind of like why I picked the minion’



‘so I think when I’ve found it it’s more like adrenalin so it’s like I just like excitement adrenalin kind of thing erm when I’ve bought it I’m like yes like this is great’

‘it will prompt me to at least go and get a basket yeah definitely erm and then I’m like I’m going to be here for a little bit longer’

‘I’m not actually paying full price for it, do that kind of like adds towards erm towards the happiness’

Image 4.4.4.5 – Outside the Store: *‘this is more kind of like the kind of like feeling how I feel or how I think I look when walk out of the store’*



‘its more the happiness of having bought something kind of like got the shopping bag and that in my hand erm because I’m like yeah I got like a one of kind and kind of like piece’

‘because I’ve got something and it’s different and not everyone else will have’

‘it’s just sort of going home and I’m just like putting my bags like at home looking at what I’ve bought and like trying it on’

Image 4.4.4.6 – Bubbles: *‘so this is kind of she’s made a decision to buy it she’s going to the till point she’s buying it’*



‘those bubbles are really the ‘should I, should I not buy it’ is it too short is it too long, is it the wrong colour?’

‘so whilst everything’s pretty much positive at that point yeah negative emotions could come into that more kind of the realist side of me’

‘yeah I suppose it’s kind of like walking towards the till point’

Image 4.4.4.7 – Participant P Montage: ‘*A maze of uniqueness*’

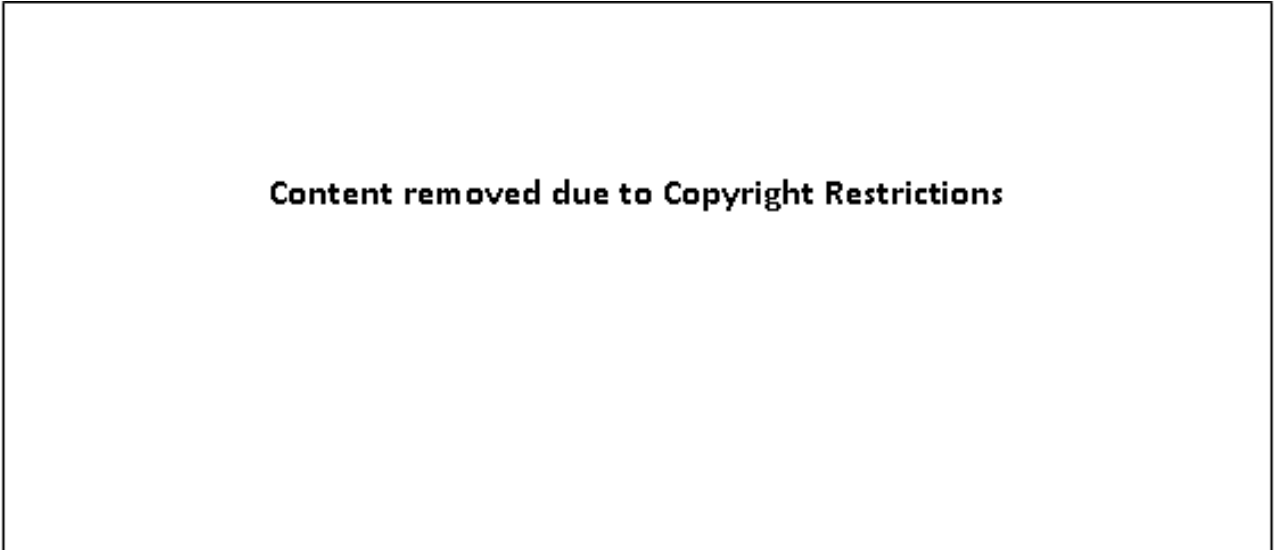


Table 4.16 Participant P codes emerging from each image

Image Theme						
Sensory Perception	See(+)	See(+)	See(+)	See(+)	See(+) Touch(+)	See(+)
Retail Experience Factors	Departments(+) Layout(+) Merchandise(+) Queues(+) Checkout(+) Staff(+) Brands(+) Signage(+)	Merchandise(+) Colours(+)	Merchandise(+)	Merchandise(+) Baskets(+) Departments(+)	Merchandise(+) Stores(+) Bags(+)	Checkout(+)
Motivation	Walk in(+) Find(+) Navigate(+) Go to(+) Try on(+) Pick up(+)	Find(+) Drawn to(+) Browse(+)	Go in(+) Find(+) Purchase(+) Wear(+)	Find(+) Purchase(+) Browse(+)	Think(+) Exit store(+) Purchase(+) Try on(+) Reward(+)	Find(+) Purchase(-) Decide(+)
Perceived Customer Values	Discovery(+) Novelty(+) Deals(+) Flow(+) One stop(+) Convenience(+) Tidy(+)	Discovery(+) One stop(+)	Discovery(+) Novelty(+)	Discovery(+) Price(+)	Novelty(+) Price(+) Volumes(+) Brands(+)	Discovery(+) Deals(+)
Human Values	Uniqueness(+) Time(+) Ease(+) Individuality(+) Giving(+) Family(+) Beauty(+)	Uniqueness(+) Family(+) Achievement(+) Giving(+) Fun(+)	Uniqueness(+) Individuality(+)	Achievement(+) Time(+) Fun(+)	Beauty(+) Recognition(+) Uniqueness(+) Achievement(+) Giving(+) Family(+) Friends(+) Effort(+)	Restraint(-) Treat(+)
Feelings	Excited(+) Happy(+)	Excited(+) Relief(+) Stressed(-)	Excited(+) Self-righteous(+)	Excited(+) Happy(+) Positive(+)	Good(+) Happy(+)	Happy(+) Warm(+) Excited(+)

Summary of Participant P

Participant P (PP) was a very positive about her experiences at Retailer 2 and really enjoyed going to search for items and to discover something which would make her feel that they had got a really great item at a discounted price.

PP began to explain her shopping experience with image 4.4.4.1 which depicts the store as a bit of maze and that there are different areas that she has to search through to find the items she wants. She discussed how it is a store where you really have to go and find things but that she enjoyed this type of business model.

Continuing the theme of finding items in the store, PP selected image 4.4.4.2 to emphasise how they see an item that they have found in store being like a pot of gold. The colours of the rainbow portrayed the different types of items merchandise they sell and she liked the convenience of the store because she could go there instead having to go to three different stores to get the items she wanted.

One of the important aspects of shopping there for PP was the uniqueness of the merchandise they sell and that these were not mass-produced like at some other clothing stores. Image 4.4.4.3 shows how she feels amongst others when she is wearing something she got from them. PP felt this was a positive aspect of buying items from the store.

When both finding and buying items at the store, PP felt a sense of excitement and a bit of an adrenaline rush that came from the thought that this item was great. Image 4.4.4.4 was selected to represent that feeling of excitement she gets from finding and buying items. This would potentially prompt her to stay in the store for longer and continue looking for more items.

Outside the store and when the participant returns home was part of the shopping experience for them. Image 4.4.4.5 underlines the feeling they have when she has bought the items and feels she has something which is one of kind.

PP explained that a slightly negative aspect of her shopping experience was that when she goes to purchase some items, she can feel that the item might be the wrong size or colour and whether she should purchase it. Image 4.4.4.6 shows how these are decisions and thoughts she has when she goes to purchase the item.

4.4.5 Participant Q – Images and Findings

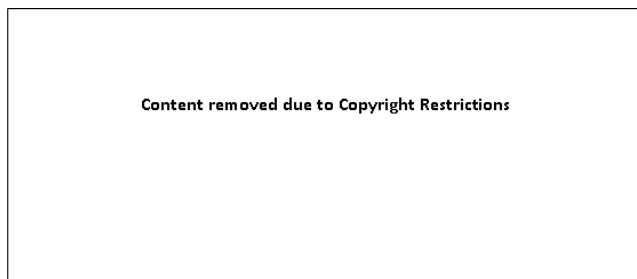
Image 4.4.5.1 – Two @ signs: ‘it’s a very very random website and I really struggle to use it and I think they could make it a lot more user friendly’



‘I get frustrated because I know that what I want is actually probably on there somewhere but it’s finding it’

‘I mean you go on other companies’ websites or other retail outlets, I just find them a lot easier’

Image 4.4.5.2 – Jacket: ‘it sort of it brings up everything I think about Retailer 2 and in a positive way’



‘Retailer 2 were selling them like for sixteen pounds, obviously I had to wait a while for it to come into stock but when they did it was really good value’

‘It was really a find because I had sort of been looking for a long time’

‘yeah I’ll spend the money with them because it’s what I wanted and it’s a good price’

Image 4.4.5.3 – Shoes: ‘tend to stock a lot of sort of Vans or that type of stuff, very random hidden in loads of boots and things and stuff like that’



‘I find this is er, it’s not a downside it’s it’s very random, things are where they are, it doesn’t seem some logic to it sometimes’

‘Part and parcel of it yeah it doesn’t really bother me so yeah it’s not a negative, it’s not a positive so it’s just neutral fact that’s just the way their model is’

Image 4.4.5.4 – Random Stuff: ‘obviously it to me that sort of says Retailer 2 just everything in there and you can find pretty much everything you want to within reason’



‘it’s very random, the business model to me is a shop it’s random everything sort of is but that’s not a bad thing because you sometimes go in for one thing and you’ll see something else and you think that’s oh that’s really good’

‘There’s always decent value for money and some of the stuff we have picked up for house bar just looking for clothes is a bonus as well, yeah definitely a bonus’

Image 4.4.5.5 – Low Price: *‘if you, wait six months or a year or whatever you will probably get it for a quarter of the price which is what you want’*



‘I could find something that I wanted then that’s fine, I’ll pay the money, but it tends to be lower anyway’

‘That’s what stood that one out to, it sort of hits the price and its colours’

Image 4.4.5.6 – Store: *‘there’s stuff everywhere er, you’ve really got to search for stuff find stuff’*

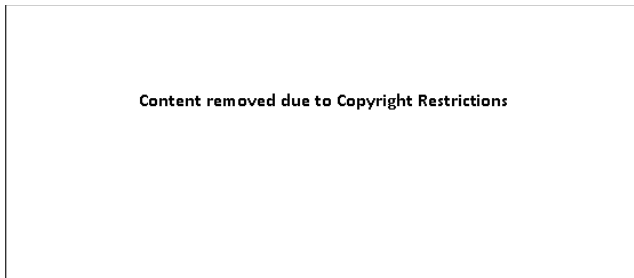


it’s not really a problem I’ll just sort through something’

‘It’s actually quite amusing, I know it sounds positive or negative but I find it quite amusing it makes me laugh and it’s like er an all year round new year’s day sale, that’s what it reminds me of’

‘It’s a little bit more ‘I’ve found that, yeah yeah it’s took me a while but I’ve found that’ a bit more pleasurable’

Image 4.4.5.7 – Clothes: ‘but when all said and done that’s the sort of stuff that Retailer 2 sell’



‘Yeah shirts, jumpers and jeans that sort of thing yeah, anything really in Retailer 2 just like I say it is a bit different than a normal shop’

‘it’s sort of a bit of a random shopping experience all round I find but that’s not a bad thing I don’t mind that’

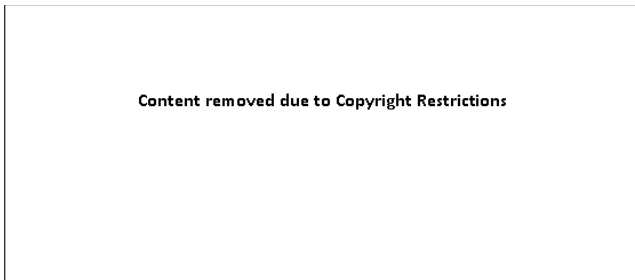
Image 4.4.5.8 – Chrome Clothes Rail: ‘it doesn’t matter where I see it or even if I see it in somebody’s house or anything it always reminds me’



‘sometimes you go there’s very little there and sometimes they are all rammed full, you don’t really know what’s going to be on there, if it’s empty that’s what you see’

‘There’s always stuff there’

Image 4.4.5.9 – Red Square: *‘if I see a bright red I always link it to the front of the store’.*



‘I mean if I see that somewhere and I know there’s one close by I think ‘oh yeah I can always go and have a look there’

Image 4.4.5.10 – Participant Q Montage: *‘Shopping heaven and hell’*



Table 4.17 Participant Q codes emerging from each image

Image Theme									
Sensory Perception	See (-)	See(+)	See(+)	See (-) Touch(-)	See(+)	See (-)	See(+)	See(+)	See(+)
Retail Experience Factors	Website (-)	Merchandise(+)	Merchandise(+) Display(+)	Stores(-) Merchandise(-) Baskets (-) Display(-)	Merchandise(+) Designers(+) Display(+)	Merchandise (-) Display (-) Stores(+) Customers (-)	Merchandise(+)	Display(+)	Brands(+) Stores(+)
Motivation	Find (-) Navigate (-)	Find(+) Purchase(+) Go to(+)	Purchase(+) Go to(+) Find(+)	Find(-) Go in(-) Browse(-) Plan (-)	Find(+)	Find(-) Sort(-) Go to(-) Stay(+) Walk in(+) Plan (-)	Find(+)	Think(+) Go to(+)	Think(+) Go to(+) Find(+)
Perceived Customer Values	Process(+) Flow (-)	Discovery(+) Price(+) Deals(+)	Price(+) Random(+)	Untidy(-) Random(-) Variety(+) Discovery(+)	Price(+) Brand(+)	Random (-) Untidy(-) Discovery(+) Price(+)	Quality(+) Variety(+) Random(+)	Random(+) Variety(+)	Price(+) Discovery(+)
Human Values	Ease (-)	Patience(+) Recognition(+)	Spontaneous(+)	Choice(+)	Patience(+) Save(+)	Time(+) Restraint(+) Community(+)	Choice(+)	Remind(+) Choice(+)	Remind(+)
Feelings	Frustrated(-)	Happy(+)	Happy(+)	Positive(+)	Pleased(+)	Amused(+) Pleased(+) Happy(+)	Positive(+)	Positive(+)	Positive(+)

Summary of Participant Q

Participant Q (PQ) visited Retailer 2 on a regular basis as he would find their location quite convenient to get to and he liked the fact that some of the items he had found there were significantly more money to purchase when they had previously been sold in other stores.

PQ emphasised firstly that before he goes to a store, he would regularly check their website to see what merchandise they had available. Image 4.4.5.1 was depicting that the website could be much better to navigate and buy items from. PQ felt that lots of other websites were much easier to use and that theirs should be as easy as these.

In image 4.4.5.2 PQ explained that this particular item of clothing was one that he thought signified the positive aspects of the store. The item was one he had wanted to buy for some time and when it became available, he was very happy with the price he got the item for.

PQ felt that image 4.4.5.3 showed the type of items they buy and that these are usually within other items such boots and shoes. They said this quite random and that they did not mind that they needed to look through to find these items and that they might not be the latest designs.

Continuing with the random aspect of the store experience PQ selected image 4.4.5.4 to emphasise that shopping is very random and there are usually other items he discovers in the store which he thinks are good. PQ did not go there for a particular item as such and usually just goes to see what they have. He felt that they pretty much stock everything.

An important aspect of the shopping experience for PQ was image 4.4.5.5 which he thought looked like them in the colours and design but underlined the items he was looking for in the store and would usually be at a lower price.

The need to search for items was something that PQ was happy to do. Image 4.4.5.6 represents how he sees the store sometimes where items have just been left in an untidy way by shoppers and how he does not really mind this as he sees it as quite amusing.

PQ wanted to emphasise that the sorts of items he thinks they tend to sell are designer items which might be a different colour from other stores and that the experience is usually random.

The rails in the store were a prominent feature of the store experience. Image 4.6.5.8 was selected to emphasise that the rails in the store were something he would think about even if he saw some rails at someone else's house. The rails were very much something that reminds him and he felt that there was always plenty of merchandise at the store every time he goes there.

The colour red is something PQ felt would remind him of the front of the store. Image 4.6.5.9 shows that if he sees the colour red, this could prompt him to go and visit a store nearby.

4.4.6 Participant R – Images and Findings

Image 4.4.6.1 – Brands: *‘I’m not brand led erm but there are some particular brands who I will associate with garments that are well-made and good value, and that’s what I look for’*



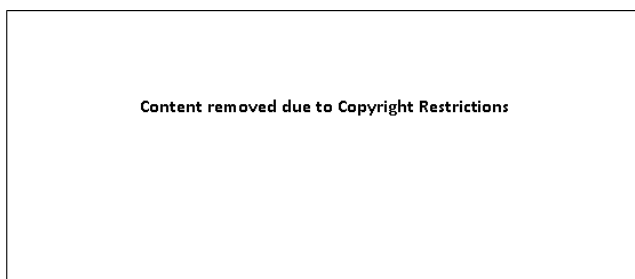
‘I know sometimes I can buy things that are buying samples so they’re unique’

‘they had a whole load of buying samples that they just stuck in erm that they would just be one offs’

‘when I go into a shop I know what I’m buying erm so I can sort of sort through the wheat from the chaff’

‘I feel disappointed that erm that I haven’t er found anything but er that won’t then stop me from going back in you know a couple of months time or something and having another look’

Image 4.4.6.2 – One Stop: *‘it was erm demonstrating to me it’s like a one stop shop for me’*



‘I’m a confident shopper I know what I like erm and I don’t fap about I just go to that area and I’ll look through and say if I find something that’s good quality that fits my purpose then I, and it’s a good price I’ll buy it’

‘I don’t want to spend loads of time shopping erm and I can’t warrant a lot of time so I’d rather go to one place where I think I can get everything I need and then go’

Image 4.4.6.3 – Gentleman in a suit: *‘I know that I can go in there and find things that are well made and good quality’*



‘I still like nice clothes. I like them to be feel nice and er to look nice and feel that I’m getting good quality and erm so that’s something that is important to me’

‘I suppose a part of me is going for that I like to think that I’m buying something erm that other people might pay a lot more money for’

‘I’ll feel pleased with myself basically erm because you think ‘hey I’ve come

Image 4.4.6.4 – Self-Serve Lemonade Stand: *‘it’s the self-service aspect for me erm I don’t want to be sold something, I don’t want someone erm telling me oh this is the latest thing’*

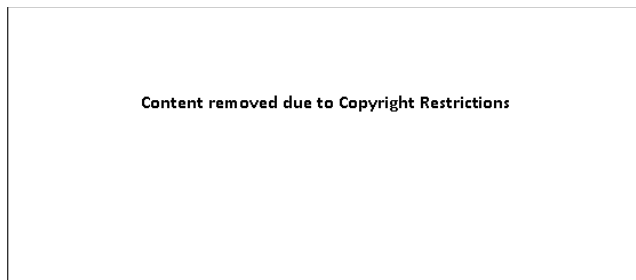


‘I’ve worked in retail so I’m confident I know what I like’

‘I just want to go in and decide what I want erm I know what size I would be and I know the kind of styles that suit me so I just buy it’

‘that’s also my circumstance that I’m a confident buyer and I know what I want’

Image 4.4.6.5 – Wine Tasting: *'I don't like pretentious erm clothing shops'*



'I often talk about it you know the sort of pretentiousness of wine tasting either you like it or you don't, is as far as I'm concerned'

'It well it makes me feel more at ease, I'll be more inclined, I am more inclined to stay there and then shop'

Image 4.4.6.6 – Unique: *'I will find stuff in there, or items clothes in there that I will not find elsewhere erm which I find that appealing'*

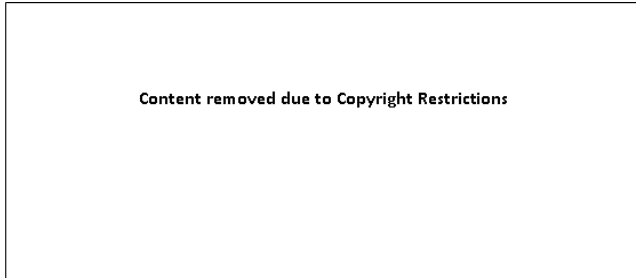


'so you can find unique stuff like that erm and I like that element of it'

'I will sometimes go in there if I'm passing by and I don't actually really need anything I'll go in there and just think if I do happen to find something that I think is really unusual is a good price and is good quality then I might just buy it'

'it probably is an element of 'ah ha' you know 'yeah I've found this and you haven't' kind of thing'

Image 4.4.6.7 – Saving Money: *‘because they’re the two main reasons why I go there is the fact that I can buy something erm that I think I’m getting good value for money for’*



‘if I didn’t think I could go there and buy something that was good quality then I wouldn’t care if I was saving money’

‘so that it disciplines me so that I just tend to stick to one shop because I don’t tend to buy outside of Retailer 2 as a rule’

‘so yeah I think that the sort of simplicity of it of the shopping experience for me’

Image 4.4.6.8 – Participant R Montage: *‘Why do I shop?’*

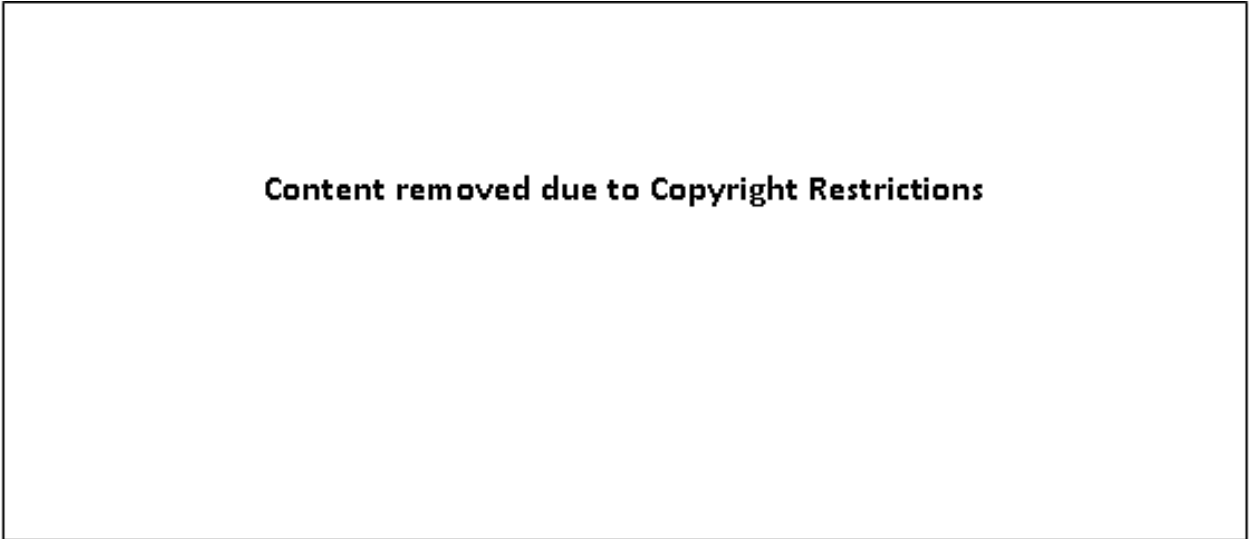


Table 4.18 Participant R codes emerging from each image

Image Theme							
Sensory Perception	See(+)	See(+)	See(+) Touch(+)	See(+)	See(-)	See(+)	See(+)
Retail Experience Factors	Brands(+) Brands(-) Merchandise(+) Layout(+) Designers(+) Merchandise (-)	Stores(+) Merchandise(+) Car Park(+) Departments(+) Staff(+) Service (-)	Merchandise(+)	Service(+) Staff(+)	Brands (-) Designers(-)	Merchandise(+) Brands(+)	Merchandise(+) Departments(+)
Motivation	Find(+) Try on(+) Purchase(+) Go to(+) Browse(+) Tempted(+)	Think(+) Find(+) Go to(+) Go in(+)	Drawn to(+) Go to(+) Find(+)	Browse(+) Go in(+)	Find(+) Stay(+)	Go in(+) Find(+) Think(+) Purchase(+)	Go to(+) Purchase(+)
Perceived Customer Values	Quality(+) Price(+) Quality (-) Discovery(+) Fashionable (-) One stop(+)	One stop(+) Quality(+) Price(+) Organised(+)	Quality(+) Price(+) Deals(+)	Organised(+)	Price(+) Variety(+) Flow(+)	Variety(+) Quality(+) Price(+) Deals(+)	Quality(+)
Human Values	Uniqueness(+) Achievement(+) Restraint(+) Sustainability(+) Convenience(+)	Convenience(+) Leisure(+) Restraint(+) Time(+) Achievement(+) Order(+)	Well-made(+) Community(+) Wisdom(+) Priorities(+)	Priorities(+) Trust(+)	Unpretentious(+) Uniqueness(+) Free(+) Ease(+)	Uniqueness(+) Achievement(+) Community(+)	Simplicity(+) Restraint(+) Save(+)
Feelings	Disappointed(-) Done well(+)	Confident(+) Pleased(+) Positive(+)	Pleased(+)	Confident(+)	Pleased(+)	Self-satisfied(+) Clever(+)	Positive(+)

Summary of Participant R

Participant R (PR) felt that Retailer 2 was very much about the range of brands that it had to offer although he felt that not all of them were good quality even if they were well-known designer brands. However, he had also found several items which were excellent quality and very unique.

PR began by discussing the brands that they sell, in particular the brands that are quite unique or less well-known. Image 4.4.6.1 was selected to show that there are many brands in the store, but his is not brand led. He explained that they do not really like mainstream brands and prefer ones which produce items of very good quality. Finding these unique sample items was something he enjoyed and would feel quite disappointed if he did not find any of these items on a shopping visit, but it would not put him off going into the store again.

A very important factor of shopping for PR is convenience and he selected image 4.4.6.2 to describe how it is a one stop shop for him where he can easily drive up to it and go in for the items in one store. He felt this would save him time as he did not want to use up a lot of time shopping.

PR explained that image 4.4.6.3 portrayed the aspect that he liked which was that he could go into the store and buy good quality items at a reasonable price. If he bought any of these items, he felt quite pleased with himself in that he had got an item that someone else might pay quite a lot more for.

As a confident shopper PR liked that the store does not have any sales assistants trying to sell any items to customers. Image 4.4.6.4 underlines that he would prefer a self-service store environment because he can confidently go and find the right size items and buy them.

Another aspect PR liked about the shopping experience was that he felt that the store was not pretentious as some clothing stores could be. Image 4.4.6.5 represented how wine tasting could be seen as being quite a pretentious activity and he felt that this image takes a humorous look at this.

An element of what PR thinks about is that there could be unique items to find in the store. He really like this as the thought of passing by the store and just going in to look if there is something unique that other shoppers might not have bought. Image 4.4.6.6 emphasises the unique items amongst others which are similar.

A very important point of shopping is saving money when he buys items. Image 4.4.6.7 depicts saving money which he says is just as important as getting good quality. PR does not tend to shop outside of Retailer 2 because of the simplicity of the experience.

4.4.7 Participant S – Images and Findings

Image 4.4.7.1 – Heart: *‘I don’t go there very often but when I do it’s a bit of an adrenalin rush’*



‘I have at the back of my mind that if I pick up anything there it’s going to be a designer label that I’m going to get for a fraction of the price so I love shopping there’

‘I wouldn’t go there with the expectation that I would get anything. It’s a real speculative shop for me’

Image 4.4.7.2 – Lady drinking coffee: *‘I will only go there when I’ve got time and I’ve got time to hunt’*



‘because it’s not the sort of shop that you can walk round and know where everything is going to be it’s not that type of store’

‘So it’s an expedition’

‘it’s the sort of thing that you might go with the girlfriend but it’s the sort of thing where I will go and buy something speculatively’

Image 4.4.7.3 – Catwalk: *‘the thrill if you like of going there is actually finding the gem and finding that gem as I say at a fraction of the price’*



‘so I like to either shop in places where I can get individual look and I can reduce the chances of turning up and sitting next to somebody in the same thing’

‘I love going in there because it’s a leisure activity for me’

‘again it’s that fizz it’s the fun part of it yeah yeah and I guess because it’s almost like the hunt as well you feel you’ve earned it in a way’

Image 4.4.7.4 – Rolling Dice: *‘that you only go speculatively, nothing’s guaranteed, so it’s a bit like gambling,’*



‘sometimes you go and there will be nothing er sometimes you will go and find the absolute treasure that you’re the winner’

‘I think it is the fact that it it’s left very much to you to be the creative and to find the pieces that will go together’

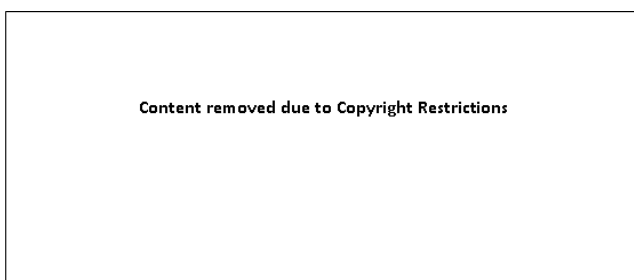
‘so I feel like a winner, I’m delighted with the piece that I’ve got and I’m more and I will probably talk about it’

Image 4.4.7.5 – Jumble Sale: *‘we all want something for a good price but it’s still has to be presented well’*



‘I would expect something to be pressed, steamed, I don’t want to buy something that looks like it’s just come out of the container, I expect it to be presented’

Image 4.4.7.6 – One off pieces: *‘that is the possibility that you will find something that is very unique, very different and you wouldn’t be able to get it anywhere else’*



‘but you will actually find something that had literally fallen off somebody’s sort of drawing pad, it’s been made as a sample and it’s there and that is for me one of the things that is lovely and special about finding something’

‘I love the fact that people say ‘where did you get that’? or ‘oh I couldn’t wear that’ even nicer’

‘something that’s unique and different because I think our high streets have got so samey’

Image 4.4.7.7 – Shopping Centre: *‘it looks clean it looks modern it looks bright erm it’s it’s got all the sort of things that would attract me to going into that because it looks a vibrant place that I would want to spend time, time’s everything’*



‘because I would think that I was going to get a better experience and selection and I would think I’ll get a better selection there’

‘Bright clean just the opposite of the jumble sale’

‘I would have earmarked this as a ‘day out’ so we would be very relaxed about how much time we spent there’

Image 4.4.7.8 – Participant S Montage: ‘*My unique shopping experience*’



Table 4.19 Participant S codes emerging from each image

Image Theme							
Sensory Perception	See(+)	See(+)	See(+)	See(+)	See (-)	See(+)	See(+)
Retail Experience Factors	Designers(+) Merchandise(+)	Departments(+) Layout(+) Merchandise(+) Designers(+)	Designers(+) Merchandise(+) Stores(+) Display (-)	Display(+) Stores(+)	Display (-) Merchandise (-)	Merchandise(+)	Stores(+) Display(+) Bright(+)
Motivation	Think(+) Purchase(+) Go to(+) Plan (-)	Go to(+) Browse(+) Purchase(+) Walk in(+) Find(+)	Go to(+) Find(+) Walk in(+) Think(+) Browse(+) Drawn to(+) Plan (-)	Find(+) Go in(+) Purchase(+)	Exit store (-)	Find(+)	Go to(+)
Perceived Customer Values	Fashionable(+) Price(+) Variety(+)	Discovery(+) Fashionable(+) Price(+)	Discovery(+) Price(+) Untidy(+) Variety(+) Process(+)	Fashionable(+)	Untidy(-) Price(-) Organised (-)	Discovery(+) Variety(+)	Tidy(+) Organised(+) Modern(+) Variety(+)
Human Values	Uniqueness(+) Fun(+)	Time(+) Leisure(+)	Uniqueness(+) Individualism(+) Leisure(+) Time(+) Fun(+) Friends(+) Recognition(+) Achievement(+) Simplicity(+)	Uniqueness(+) Belonging(+) Individualism(+) Winning(+) Friends(+) Time(+)	Restraint(+) Beauty(-) Cleanliness (-)	Uniqueness(+) Beauty(+) Individualism(+) Recognition(+)	Cleanliness(+) Choice(+) Friends(+)
Feelings	Adrenalin(+) Rush(+) Excited(+)	Relaxed(+)	Adrenalin(+) Rush(+) Exciting(+) Happy(+)	Delighted(+) Elated(+)	Negative(+)	Good(+)	Exciting(+) Frivolous(+)

Summary of Participant S

Participant S (PS) felt that the Retailer 2 store experience was a bit of an adrenalin rush and would enjoy finding items that were quite unique and may appear to be samples from certain brands.

PS selected her first image (4.4.7.1) to show how she feels about shopping as it can give her an adrenaline rush. She explained that she does not go there very often but when they do she enjoys it. PS would not have a plan or particular items she wanted to get from there and instead saw the shopping experience as something to just go and see what they have.

The shopping experience was seen by PS as something she would need to allocate a reasonable amount of time for. Image 4.4.7.2 suggests how she would need to make a bit of a day of going there and perhaps might go with a friend. She saw the shopping experience as something of an expedition.

Another aspect that PS liked about the shopping experience was finding items in the store that were different and more individual. Image 4.4.7.3 emphasises that if she were to find an item that was something others might not have, then this was a real fun element of the experience and because it would require some effort to get that item, she would feel like she had earned it.

With image 4.4.7.4 PS wanted to show how shopping was a bit of a game and that she might go sometimes and not find anything she wanted. On occasions when she went to the store and found something really nice it felt like she had won the game.

A negative aspect of their shopping experience was shown in image 4.4.7.5 as she does not like the store to be untidy with items of clothing perhaps looking like a jumble sale. PS would still expect items to be presented correctly even if they are at a reduced price.

PS really valued that she could potentially have some one-off items that were potentially from design samples or other rare pieces of clothing. Image 4.4.7.6 represents a unique and potentially quirky style of clothing and PS enjoyed it if someone would comment on the item of clothing she had bought.

An important part of the shopping experience for PS is the look and design of the store. Image 4.4.7.7 depicts a modern, well-designed and glossy shopping centre which she would enjoy spending time in. PS wanted them to try to provide this more contemporary and vibrant sort of environment.

4.4.8 Participant T – Images and Findings

Image 4.4.8.1 – Maze: *‘when I walked in that’s the first kind of thing, I thought about that it’s wow it’s like a maze’*



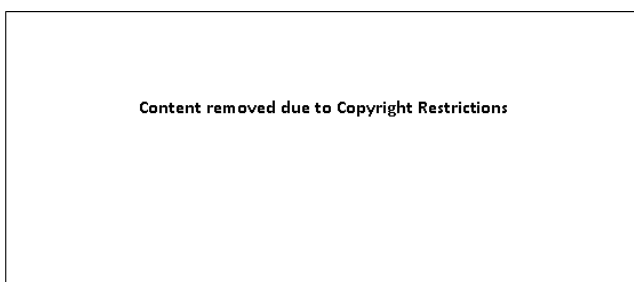
‘it’s like ‘whoa look at the amount of stuff here’ and you’ve got all these different brands and stuff like that’

‘I thought I need longer here to just kind of get a feel of like whether this is a bargain or is this kind of out of kind of stock items’

‘it would be a lot of effort that you have to put in because it’s almost like too much choice’

‘you think yeah just take your time don’t rush here so the feeling is don’t get over excited’

Image 4.4.8.2 – Discovering: *‘it’s like an adventure, yeah it was like an adventure’*



‘there’s so many isles yeah you can walk through you spend hours and hours discovering stuff’

‘they sell some good quality stuff if you’re prepared to search and spend time and be patient’

‘this is the other thing nobody would know that you had bought it at a bargain, you could still pass it off as like wow that’s like must of paid a lot of money for that’

Image 4.4.8.3 – Child on parent’s shoulders: *‘it’s like what’s that saying ‘like a kid in a candy shop’ kind of thing’*



‘just like everything, everything might seem a bargain, yeah it’s like everything might seem like that’s a really good sweet kind of thing’

‘I don’t see what kind of the bargain hunter who’s an older maturer shopper in this case can see, they can spot a bargain because they are mature they are older in this sense’

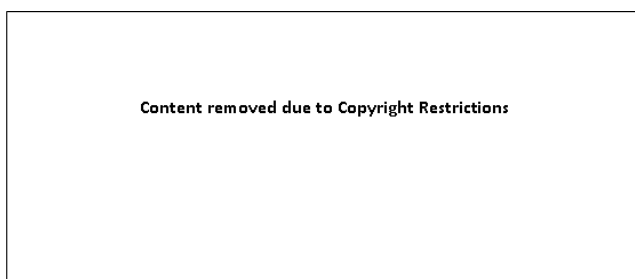
Image 4.4.8.4 – Bails of plastic waste: *‘Yeah just looking at it, just looking at it I thought who’s going to buy that?’*



‘you’ve got this kind of bizarre kind of situation where you’ve got like tonnes and tonnes of stock being thrown at you’

‘sometimes just don’t buy things for the sake of it’

Image 4.4.8.5 – Pound Notes: *‘you think how much money would I have saved by now if I’d just shopped here?’*



‘whilst here I would have spent a thousand quid and I got like a lifetime of stuff’

‘so it’s just calculations going on in my head’

‘so on one hand I’m thinking wasteful on the other hand I’m thinking saving, so it’s like a contradiction’

Image 4.4.8.6 – Market: *'kind of clothes thrown and stuff like that so chaotic don't know what's going on, it seems like a market'*



*'If I took a bird's eye view, if I was a bird
yeah if I was stood at a floor at the top
that's how I would see it'*

*'there's charm in chaos as well but I think
like I said I think it if it was interesting chaos
yeah it's like if you go to Borough Market in
London for example'*

Image 4.4.8.7 – Participant L Montage: *‘Illusion’*



Table 4.20 Participant T codes emerging from each image

Image Theme						
Sensory Perception	See(-)	See (-)	See(+) Touch(+)	See (-)	See(-)	See (-) Hear(-)
Retail Experience Factors	Display(+) Layout(+) Departments(+) Merchandise(+) Brands(+) Customers(-)	Merchandise(+) Departments(+) Layout (-) Display(-) Staff(+) Signage (-) Lighting (-)	Merchandise(+) Departments(+) Layout(+)	Merchandise (-) Departments(-) Layout(-)	Merchandise(-)	Merchandise(-) Customers(-) Display(-) Signage (-) Service(-) Crowded(-)
Motivation	Walk in(+) Find (-) Browse(+) Tempted(+) Come back(+) Compare(-) Purchase(-) Think(+) Navigate(+)	Browse(+) Find (-) Think(+) Try(+) Navigate (-)	Pick up(+) Browse(+) Plan (-) Find(+) Urgency(-) Stay(+) Exit store(-)	Browse(-) Think (-)	Think(-) Calculate (-)	Browse(-) Think(-) Observe(-)
Perceived Customer Values	Fashionable(+) Discovery(+) Novelty(+) Deals (-) Quality(+) Price(+) Variety (-)	Expectations (-) Discovery(+) Quality(+) Price(+) Fashionable(+) Bargains (-)	Flow(+) Bargains(-)	Cheap (-) Price (-) Volumes (-)	Price(+) Bargains(+) Fashionable(+) Exclusivity(+)	Untidy(-) Deals(+) Novelty(+) Busyness (-)
Human Values	Open minded(+) Restraint(+) Time(+) Effort (+) Choice (-) Community(+)	Time(+) Patience(+) Recognition(+) Restraint(+) Trust (-) Curiosity(+)	Restraint(+) Curiosity(+) Ease(+)	Sustainability(-) Restraint(+) Community(+) Ethics(-) Trust (-) Save(+) Sharing(+)	Save(+)	Community(+)
Feelings	Enjoyable(+) Excited(+)	Unease(-) Negative Exciting (-)	Pleased(+) Exciting	Overwhelmed(-)	Regret(-)	Buzz(+)

Summary of Participant T

Participant T (PT) was a fairly new customer of Retailer 2 and had recently visited a store in Europe where they were surprised by the amount of merchandise to choose from. Image 4.4.8.1 represents how he sees the store as a maze where he could get lost in the amount of items that are available. He felt he would need a lot of time in the store to look through the items and that you could get over excited with the different items they have. He felt as a customer you should slow down and really think if the items are a real bargain.

An important aspect of the shopping experience for PT was the discovery of items as he went around the store, and he felt he needed to dedicate more time in order to do this. Image 4.4.8.2 underlines how he saw the experience as an adventure where they were searching for items around the store. He felt that he needed to be signposted more by the store layout and store assistants.

The number of bargains in the store was something PT noticed, and he felt that they were not as mature or perhaps as savvy as some of the other shoppers who could spot a bargain. Image 4.4.8.3 was to represent that they cannot see the bargains in the store as well as the more mature shoppers who have been there many times. He felt this could potentially put off a shopper if they weren't able to spot a bargain within the first ten minutes of being in the store.

A negative perception that PT highlighted is portrayed in image 4.4.8.4 as he began to consider where all the items in the store had been produced and why there was so much merchandise on display. This made him consider if ultimately a lot of the items would be put into landfill, and he questioned whether he really needed something, or it was just being purchased for the sake of it.

As PT saw more bargains around the store, he began to use mental arithmetic to estimate how much money he thinks he could have saved if he had just shopped there instead of getting his clothes from other retailers. Image 4.4.8.5 was selected to emphasise the saving they could be making if he shopped there, but he also felt that the store needed to create a bit of an air of exclusivity to it as well. This feeling was a contrast to the previous image of wastefulness.

PT likened the shopping experience to a busy market, and he had positive and negative views about this. Image 4.4.8.6 represents a bird's eye view of a busy chaotic market which he said can be quite interesting. On the other hand, he felt that he did not like to see other customers looking through items and just leaving them in an untidy manner.

4.4.9 Participant U – Images and Findings

Image 4.4.9.1 – Rails of clothes: *‘but ‘oh my goodness I have to go through all of these and find my size’*



‘I used to spend a lot of time going through all these erm different sizes’

‘I think their strategy is giving their potentially consumers to do something’

‘I think it was, it was kind of giving your consumers a bit of liberty’

‘you may find something which is really good’

Image 4.4.9.2 – Clearance: *‘I have bought really top brands from them’*

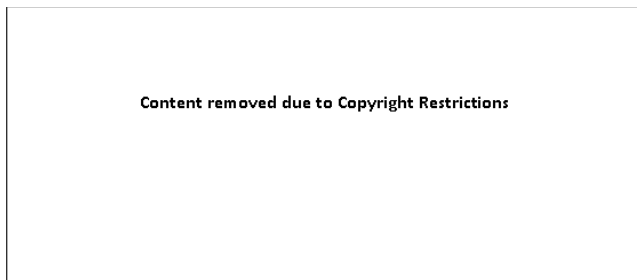


‘I think sales that was the huge influential factor for me particularly and that’s why I bought a lot of stuff’

‘I always believed that this is a good strategy which influenced me for repeated purchase’

‘pricing usually comes like last, in my case particularly, so I don’t look into price first’

Image 4.4.9.3 – Charity Shop: *‘even though the price are quite high and they are branded’*



‘there is too much display going on, everything is just displayed, I think I don’t know that helps me particularly as a consumer’

‘I think you expect a little bit more, if you spend twenty pounds twenty five pounds’

Image 4.4.9.4 – Shop Aisle: *‘if I knew that ok I can go to this section and get these kind of things, I can easily find what I would like’*



‘they usually do not have customer service erm walking around you have to go to the till and ask for things erm which is a little bit frustrating’

‘a number of times when buying undergarments and that is usually has so like most of them are open’

Image 4.4.9.5 – Colourful Baskets: *‘Yes it’s about loads of stuff er I used to buy a lot of stuff for everybody for my family, yes and my friends and I think it was er the experience yes’*

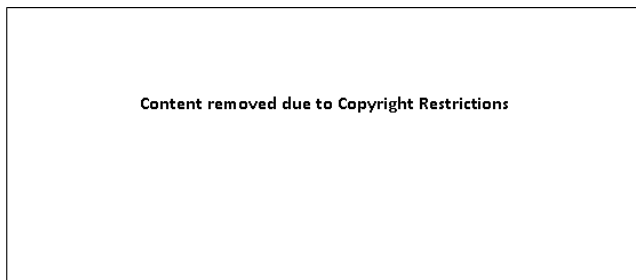


‘they may have very niche market for people like me particularly now that they don’t have time or a lot of time in hand so you can visit only one store and pick stuff for everybody rather than wasting time different stores’

‘this picture is different because here I’m talking about buying stuff for others and I think that is easy for me’

‘it would be a sense of relief that well I’ve got everything erm and sense of satisfaction’

Image 4.4.9.6 – Time to buy: *‘I don’t have time and during the weekend you just need to do other things all of the domestic stuff and cooking and rest and all that kind of thing’*



‘I might just visit if I have time but considering time, anxiety, social elements erm peer pressure I would say erm I would rather buy online’

Image 4.4.9.7 – Participant U Montage: *‘My experience from buying at Retailer 2’.*



Table 4.21 Participant U codes emerging from each image

Image Theme						
Sensory Perception	See (-)	See (-)	See (-) Touch (-)	See (-)	See(+)	See (-)
Retail Experience Factors	Display (-) Merchandise (-) Sizes (-) Customers(+)	Brands(-) Merchandise (-) Sizes(-) Tags (-) Colours(-)	Brands(+) Merchandise (-) Packaging (-) Display (-) Crowded(-) Customers (-)	Staff(-) Checkout(-) Service(-) Merchandise(-) Packaging (-) Customers(-) Tags (-)	Merchandise(+)	Merchandise(-)
Motivation	Find (-) Think (-) Purchase(-)	Find (-) Purchase(-)	Avoid(-) Find (-)	Find(-) Avoid(-)	Find(+) Purchase(+)	Purchase (-)
Perceived Customer Values	Process (-) Discovery(+) Flow (-) Deals(+) Volumes (-)	Cheap (-) Price(+) Communicate (-) Bargains(+) Affordability (-)	Quality(-) Busyness (-)	Deals (-)	Variety(+) Random(+) One stop(+) Convenience(+)	Price (-)
Human Values	Time (-) Effort (-) Friends(+) Liberty(+) Ease (-) Belonging(+) Leisure(+) Enjoyment(+) Restraint(+)	Fairness (-) Time(-) Effort (-)	Cleanliness (-) Time (-)	Responsible(+) Time(-)	Giving(+) Family(+) Time(+) Thoughtfulness(+)	Fairness(-) Time (-)
Feelings	Anxious(-) Overwhelmed(-)	Confused(-) Disappointed(-)	Anxious(-) Uncomfortable(-) Pressured(-)	Frustrated(-)	Pressured(-) Relief(+) Satisfaction(+)	Anxious(-)

Summary of Participant U

Participant U (PU) first described that when he looks at the store and the rails of clothes are one of the things he thinks about. Image 4.4.9.1 underlines that the amount of clothes to look through is now more of a negative aspect of their shopping experience as he feels it is something customers have to do. Previously he found looking through clothes as quite liberating but as he has become a more experienced shopper, he finds this activity a negative aspect.

The shopping experience was something PU highlighted in image 4.4.9.2 as he felt that when he was finding bargains this kept him returning to the store quite regularly. PU now felt that the brands in the store were not really cheap and previously he had just thought because it is a clearance item it must be a bargain.

The display of products in the store was an important factor for PU as he felt that in there can be too many products on display. Image 4.4.9.3 emphasises that at times the products on display can be untidy, not pressed or completely clean. PU felt that items in the store were not that cheap and therefore should be displayed properly.

The layout and departments of the store were also important for PU as he wants to go to the section he wants easily. Image 4.4.9.4 was also selected to show that if he cannot find items, he would have to look for store assistants to help him, which they find frustrating.

One of the positive aspects of the shopping experience for PU was buying items for other people, particularly gifts for special occasions. Image 4.4.9.5 was selected to represent that they had items available which were for quite a niche market, and he felt it was convenient that they could just go to that one shop to get all the items he wanted for his family and friends.

An aspect mentioned throughout the discussion with PU was the importance of time. Image 4.4.9.6 emphasises that he now feels that he needs more time to be able to go and shop there. Previously he would see shopping there as a leisure activity to enjoy with friends, whereas, now he would more likely shop on his own or look to buy items online.

4.4.10 Participant V – Images and Findings

Image 4.4.10.1 – Landfill: *‘very hard to root out and find what it is you are looking for’.*



‘I also relate it to my shopping experience a little bit erm everyone you know is very individualistic because I think they cater to such a wide audience they just have everything and anything’

‘I have to really mentally prepare myself to go there and particularly if they are having like a sale on or something I have to really be in the mood to go there and be in the mood to rummage’

Image 4.4.10.2 – Rummage Sale: *‘so rummage, it’s consistent with the previous image, my incentive of going because of the great deals in relation to departments’.*



‘one of the main reasons I go there is because I can buy things and you can contribute to charity so it’s a worthy cause’

‘looking for you know products that support for me the environment, and getting a good deal you still have to rummage because they don’t separate each by brand’

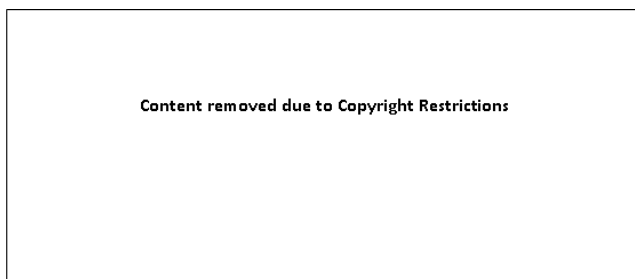
Image 4.4.10.3 – Mindless Shopping: *‘this image and it reflects my behaviour and I from what I have observed of other people is mindless shopping’.*



‘sometimes you go in and you think you are after something erm but because of everything that’s there and everything you forget what it is that you want and you end up buying everything else apart from the things that you want’

‘I’ll get influenced by what other people look for, ‘oh no look here, look here’ and then I forget why I’m there’

Image 4.4.10.4 – Detective: *‘when you rummage you’ve got to look properly and when you find a product you have to really inspect it’*



‘I think you have to be a little bit investigative in your approach to what you want and how you look for things’

‘products don’t look like they have been handled with great care sometimes’

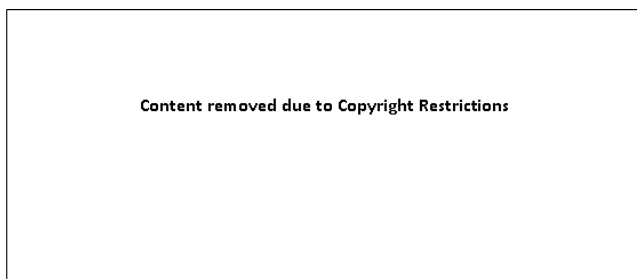
Image 4.4.10.5 – Face in a book: *‘if you do find people, they’ve always got their face in a book, I’m sure it’s not a book it’s a stock list or whatever they are doing’*



‘they are always busy doing something or looking at something, reading something’

‘I will go home and I will think about it because I feel sorry for somebody, I don’t know why but it’s like that’

Image 4.4.10.6 – Wait all day: *‘when you find somebody, and you ask a question they will be like ok I’m just going to find out for you erm so you are stood there for a very long time’*



the other one is you’re waiting such a long time to be served at the till’

‘I don’t mind waiting all day but if you are waiting a while when it comes to like past fifteen minutes I think like I’m getting a bit frustrated now’

Image 4.4.10.7 – Participant V Montage: ‘A hot mess’



Table 4.22 Participant V codes emerging from each image

Image Theme						
Sensory Perception	See (-) Hear (-)	See(+)	See (-)	See (-) Touch(+)	See (-) Hear (-)	See (-)
Retail Experience Factors	Display (-) Merchandise(+) Crowded(-) Departments(+) Customers(+) Staff (-) Baskets(-) Stores(+) Merchandise (-)	Merchandise(+) Departments(+) Brands(+) Customers (-) Display (-)	Customers (-) Merchandise(-) Departments(-) Colours (-) Display (-)	Merchandise(-) Queues (-) Display (-) Layout(-)	Staff (-) Service (-) Checkout(-)	Staff (-) Service (-) Checkout (-)
Motivation	Find (-) Think(-) Go to(+) Browse(+) Walk in (-)	Go to (+) Pick up(+) Use(+) Find(+)	Go in(+) Pick up(+) Plan (-) Browse (-)	Find(+) Check (-) Pick up(+)	Ask(-) Wait (-) Think (-)	Ask(-) Wait (-)
Perceived Customer Values	Untidy(-) Variety(+) Busyness (-) Price(+) Quality(+) Fashionable (-) Discovery(+)	Deals(+) Price(+) Communicate(-) Variety(+) Cheap (-)	Variety(+) Deals(+)	Quality(-) Discovery(+) Variety (-)	Communicate(-) Expectations(-) Quality(-)	Expectations (-)
Human Values	Individualism(+) Restraint (-) Community(+) Time(+) Culture(+) Recognition(+) Order(-) Family(+)	Giving(+) Community(+) Charity(+) Sustainability(+) Ethics(+) Family(+)	Time(-) Patience(-) Restraint (-) Rapport (-) Politeness (-) Drive (-) Focus (-) Regard (-)	Cleanliness (-) Politeness (-)	Knowledge (-) Time(-) Empathy(+) Loyalty(+) Community(+) Respect (-)	Regard (-) Patience (-) Time (-)
Feelings	Claustrophobic(-) Happy(+) Comfortable(+) Regret(-) Excited(+)	Content(+) Surprised(+) Confused(-)	Disheartened(-) Empty(-) Frustrated(-) Happy(+) Angry(-)	Angry(-)	Frustrated(-) Sad(-) Ashamed(-) Sorry(-) Angry(-)	Frustrated(-) Helpless(-) Lost(-)

	Disappointed(-)		Sad(-)			
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Summary of Participant V

Participant V (PV) had a couple of aspects linked to image 4.4.10.1 where she explained that when she thinks of Retailer 2, they need to be in the right mood for the amount of rummaging she would need to do as the store sells anything and everything. She highlighted that the store environment isn't really somewhere to just browse and enjoy looking at the items.

Continuing with the theme of rummaging, PV said that image 4.4.10.2 shows that there were great deals there if you rummaged through the items as they were not displayed in brand order. The image was also a way for her to explain that she felt they had some form of CSR initiatives which she liked but did not know much about.

A slightly negative aspect of the shopping experience for PV was that in the store she felt that both her and other customers were seen to be mindlessly walking around buying items that they perhaps had not gone into the store for and had been influenced by all the other items and deals. Image 4.4.10.3 depicts that in some ways the customers in the store are not thinking very much about whether they really need the items they are buying.

PV felt that items needed to be checked thoroughly to make sure they were not damaged as she said sometimes items had not been put back on the shelves properly. Image 4.4.10.4 represents how they would probably take items out of boxes to make sure the quality was ok and that she thought items in the store were usually dusty.

PV noted that another negative aspect of the shopping experience was the store assistants. Image 4.4.10.5 was selected to depict how the store assistants were difficult to find and if you asked them to look for an item in the stock room they would leave her waiting for a long time. One store assistant in particular was seen to be speaking negatively about another store assistant and the PV felt sorry for them.

Continuing with the customer service in the store, PV described image 4.4.10.6 to further highlight that if you do ask for assistance you would typically be waiting for a long time for the store assistant to return.

4.4.11 Participant W – Images and Findings

Image 4.4.11.1 – Person Stressed: *‘there’s like thousands of things on one rail thousands of things that have fell on the floor it stresses me’*



‘I have got to look through all of that if I want to find something’

‘that’s what it looks like and I don’t like that image of it all bunched together’

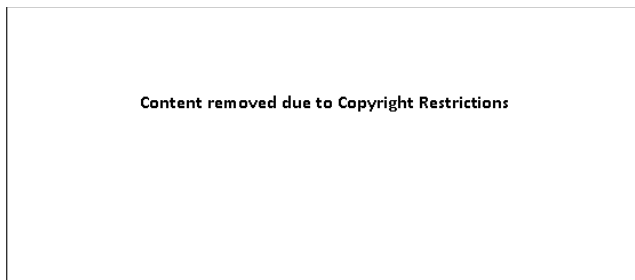
Image 4.4.11.2 – Rails full: *‘Yeah cluttered yeah which I understand because it’s a discount store’*



‘I’d probably wander over to where the handbags are which is a bit tidier’

‘because you can see then more, because they don’t have ten of one like they would do with the other stuff with the clothing, you wouldn’t get that with the handbags’

Image 4.4.11.3 – Friends: *‘Because it’s always better if you go shopping with a friend’*



‘Well I’d sooner go shopping with somebody else not on my own because you’ve got more feedback haven’t you’

‘it’s more of a day out if you go with somebody else’

‘I suppose when you are with somebody else the cluttering starts to disappear a bit’

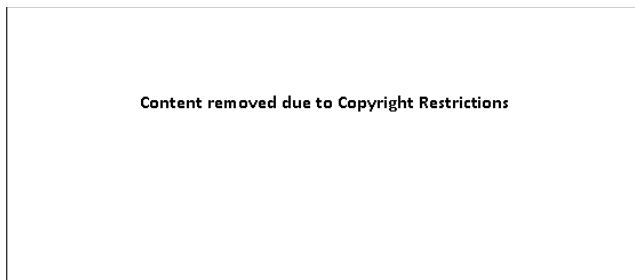
Image 4.4.11.4 –Emoji Feel Good: *‘It would depend how I did feel I suppose whether I’d go down another rail of something that I wasn’t looking for’*



‘That means if I find what I want I haven’t got to go out again, I haven’t got to go in again, I haven’t got to go anywhere else’

‘I get a bit bored just browsing on the internet looking at clothing, it’s a bit boring after a bit but erm because I do like to see the item I like to you know touch it feel it before I buy it’

Image 4.4.11.5 – Labels: *‘Yeah when you think of Retailer 2 you think of that’*



‘It’s only down the road from where I live so I’m quite happy to just to trickle down ten minutes down the road not even ten minutes really’

Image 4.4.11.6 – Brands: *‘half of the brands in there I haven’t even heard of, and I can’t think what they are’*



‘so I know that things should be, how they should be made, fabrics, stitching, everything else and I know what is a good product for the price’

‘I have bought things from there and I’ve no idea what the brand is and I’ve bought tops or whatever and never heard of them but there’s lots of designers isn’t there that you never hear of’

Image 4.4.11.7 – Participant W Montage: ‘*Stress Diluted*’.



Table 4.23 Participant W codes emerging from each image

Image Theme						
Sensory Perception	See (-)	See (-)	See(+)	See(+) Touch(+)	See(+)	See(-) Touch(-)
Retail Experience Factors	Stores(-) Merchandise (-) Display(-)	Display (-) Merchandise (-) Departments(-)	Merchandise(+) Customers(-) Crowded(-) Departments(-)	Merchandise(+) Departments(+) Display(+) Car park(+) Service(+)	Designers(+) Merchandise(+) Brands(+) Stores(+)	Brands(-) Merchandise (-) Designers(+)
Motivation	Think (-) Go to(-) Find (-)	Go to (-) Exit store(+) Browse (-) Find (-) Try on (+)	Find(+) Walk in(+) Exit store(+) Go in(+) Avoid(-) Stay(+)	Find(+) Go to (+) Browse(+) Try On(+) Pick up(+)	Think(+)	Find(-) Check (-) Purchase(+)
Perceived Customer Values	Tidy(+)	Untidy(-) Discounts (-) Price (-)	Tidy(+) Variety(+) Busyness (-)	Bargains(+) One stop(+) Convenience(+)	Price (-)	Quality(-) Price(+) Variety(+) Bargains(+) Discovery(+)
Human Values	Order (-)	Order (-) Friends(+)	Friends(+) Leisure(+) Time(+)	Friends(+) Treat(+)	Familiarity(+)	Familiarity(+) Individuality(+)
Feelings	Stressed(-)	Irritated(-) Stressed(-) Happy(+)	Overwhelmed(-) Calm(+) Good(+)	Bored(-) Panic(-) Stressed(-) Happy(+)	Happy(+)	Happy(+)

Summary of Participant W

Participant W (PW) began by explaining that when she typically goes to Retailer 2 one of the first images that will come to mind is that of the amount of merchandise there is to look through on the rails. Her first image (4.4.11.1) portrays that all the items that were bunched together and items that had been picked up by customers and just put on the floor was something she did not like about the shopping experience, and it would make her feel quite stressed.

Continuing with the aspect of the rails, PW selected image 4.4.11.2 to represent how they did not understand why the rails were so full of items. She acknowledged that it was a discount store which would be trying to sell all the items they have as quickly as possible, but this made the shopping experience something that could be irritating. PW also noted with this image that if she found the rails a bit too much then she would go over to the handbags section which she preferred as she liked the way it was arranged differently to the clothes.

A positive aspect of shopping for PW was going in with a friend as she would be making more of a day of the shopping experience. Image 4.4.11.3 represents that being in the store with a friend would let them have more feedback on the items she considered buying and she noticed that the amount of clutter in the store would disappear a bit when she was shopping with someone else.

PW combined two pictures for image 4.4.11.4, which was to show that when she finds the items, she went in there for it makes her feel good. If she finds what she went in for this might then prompt her to browse a bit longer for other bargains in the store. She liked the convenience that she could potentially go there and get the item or items from one store and not need to go to other stores.

Image 4.4.11.5 signifies how she thinks about Retailer 2 as a store although she stated that she thought their prices were not actually very cheap.

PW selected image 4.4.11.6 to represent two aspects of their shopping experience which were that the store stocks lots of brands that were well known but also lots of brands they had never heard of. She also felt that some of the mainstream brands were sometimes low quality items as she knew when an item of clothing was good quality.

4.4.12 Participant X – Images and Findings

Image 4.4.12.1 – Pile of Clothes: *‘dive in’*



‘I feel like when I’m in because I think you could spend so much time in there looking through everything to try to find that one little gem’

‘I feel sometimes like I’m getting buried in it because there’s that much to look through that I end up with a big basket and I think I can’t have all that’

‘I’m digging deep for that one thing that is worthwhile me buying and it’s great and I love it and look great in it’

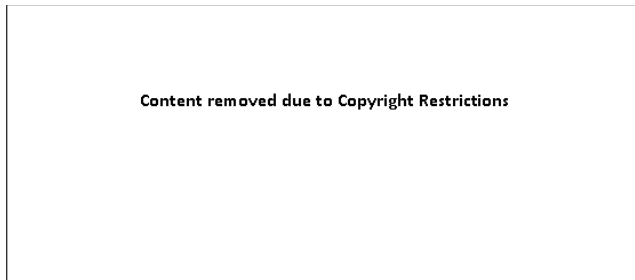
Image 4.4.12.2 – That Wow: *‘if you spot like one item straight away you’re automatically like excited and you’re running in because you want to get it’*



‘It doesn’t happen all the time but when it does it’s that ‘wow’ ‘

‘When you get that initial wow they’ve got something that I really like the look of then I think I spend more time and attention walking round the rest of store’

Image 4.4.12.3 – % off: *‘It’s a thrill, the thrill of the hunt’*



‘I think if you are going in there then you want a bargain’

‘I’ll go and tell everybody’

‘for me it’s a thrill, the thrill of the hunt of finding something’

Image 4.4.12.4 – Lady in a lovely dress: *‘it makes me feel like a million dollars’*

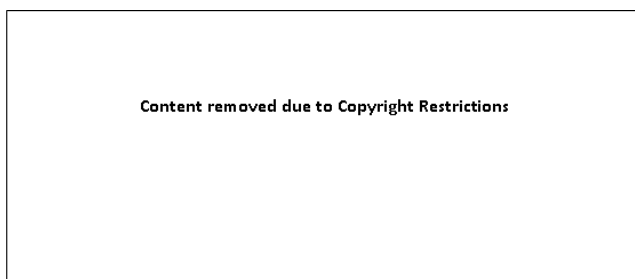


‘this sums up how that I’m a little bit smug and I feel that I look good’

‘it’s like a happiness inside that you get’

‘I did find something good’

Image 4.4.12.5 – Rails: *‘Where do I start?’*

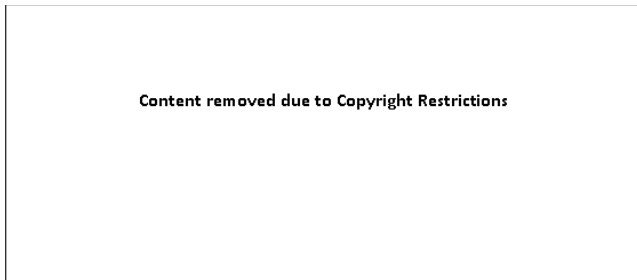


‘that sort of looking into the distance thinking wow I’ve got all this to go through’

‘where do I start? Do I go left do I go right?’

‘I think it is that initial my first feeling as I walk in which sets the scene’

Image 4.4.12.6 – Sad one: *‘well it’s a jumble sale, I might as well not bother’*



‘if you don’t see something within the first few minutes of being in there your interest plummets’

‘it’s not actually that I come out with a bag it’s that’s augh there was nothing in there that I could have bought’

Image 4.4.12.7 – Participant X Montage: *‘Lost in Clothes’*

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Table 4.24 Participant X codes emerging from each image

Image Theme						
Sensory Perception	See(-)	See(+)	See(+)	See(+)	See (-)	See (-)
Retail Experience Factors	Display(-) Merchandise(+) Customers(-) Baskets(+) Layout(+) Departments(+)	Merchandise(+) Customers(-) Display (-) Baskets(+)	Designers(+) Merchandise(+)	Merchandise(+)	Display (-) Merchandise(-) Colours(-)	Merchandise (-)
Motivation	Find(+) Think(+) Go to(+) Browse(+)	Walk in(+) Browse(+) Find(+) Stay(+) Exit store(-) Go to(+) Purchase(+)	Go in(+) Find(+) Purchase(+) Reward(+)	Wear(+)	Walk in(-) Find (-) Go in(-)	Walk in() Find (-) Exit store (-) Avoid(-) Think (-)
Perceived Customer Values	Untidy(-) Volumes (-) Bargains(+) Novelty(+) Discovery(+) Brands (+) Quality (-)	Rarity(+) Expectations(+) Bargains(+) Quality(+) Price(+) Untidy(-)	Deals(+) Bargains(+) Price(+) Discovery(+)	Price(+) Discovery(+)	Bargains(-) Volumes (-) Discovery(+) Novelty(+) Inconsistent(-) Variety(+)	Bargains (-) Expectations (-)
Human Values	Time(+) Fun(+) Restraint(-) Beauty(+) Open-minded(+)	Achievement(+) Effort(+) Time(+)	Achievement(+) Sharing(+) Recognition(+)	Beauty(+) Recognition(+) Proud(+)	Achievement(+) Effort(+) Familiarity(+) Time(-)	Anticipation (-) Time(-) Achievement (-) Choice(-)
Feelings	Energised(+) Happy(+) Excited(+) Pleased(+) Smug(+)	Excited(+) Disappointed(-)	Thrilled(+) Excited(+)	Smug(+) Good(+) Self-satisfied(+) Happy(+)	Daunted(-) Overwhelmed(-)	Disappointed(-) Disheartened(-) Sad(-) Apprehension(-)

Summary of Participant X

Participant X (PX) presented their first image 4.4.12.1 to portray how there are so many items of clothing merchandise to look through in the store that she feels she has to dig through everything to find that one gem of an item which she will love and look good in. PX explained that because there is so much to look through and she might buy all of the items she thinks are good she would get a basket and start putting all the items in. PX explained that as they go to pay for the items, she has to review what she has put in the basket because sometimes there is too much.

As PX enters a store she really wanted to get a wow factor from an item very early on in the shopping experience. If she found an item quite quickly that she thought was great she would go to it straight away as there might be some competition with other customers. Image 4.4.12.2 represents the feeling that PX wants when she walks into the store. This feeling was something that she did not always get from a visit, but she highlighted that if she did get that wow from an item, it would then make them spend more time in the store looking for more items.

One of the most important aspects of the shopping experience for PX is getting a bargain. Image 4.4.12.3 shows that getting a bargain was a thrill and she would then tell her friends, family and colleagues that she had got this bargain, as she wanted those other people to be pleased that she had made that purchase.

A central point of the shopping experience for PX is how discovering an item that she really liked could make them feel. Image 4.4.12.4 represents how she wants to feel from wearing the items she has bought and that these can make her feel happy.

PX selected image 4.4.12.5 to emphasise how she sees the store with rails of clothing to look through. This was something that she found daunting at times as she was not sure where she should start looking. This would set the scene for the shopping experience as she would know she would be looking through the items but noted it was not always a consistent experience.

A negative aspect of the shopping experience for PX was if she went in there and did not discover or buy anything she wanted. Image 4.4.12.6 represents the occasions where she may have felt that there was not an item to buy, and she would then think it was just like a jumble sale. PX might not visit the store for a while after a shopping experience like this, although she explained that on most shopping visits, these were good experiences.

4.5 Summary and Collation of Codes for Retailer 2

The codes for Retailer 2 have been categorised in same format to Retailer 1 with codes being allocated based on the context of whether the description was something positive from the participant's shopping experience or if it was a negative experience.

4.5.1 Sensory Perceptions

The frequency for the visual sense for Retailer 2 was like that of Retailer 1 with expressions regarding what participants see. The number of positive experiences shown in the images were again higher in the positives to the number of negative experiences. This confirms that generally participants quite like what they see when they are shopping at Retailer 2 from the images selected and discussed but there are, in a similar way to Retailer 1, quite a lot of occasions and aspects of the shopping experience that they do not like. The rails in the store are a very early visual element that participants would see upon entering the store and it really depended on their mood and energy as to whether they felt motivated to look through all the rails to find what they were looking for. If there were lots of items to look through it could vary between been seen as exciting as to what they might discover to feeling overwhelmed by the number of items on display.

Similarly, to Retailer 1, other senses were not as prominent in the participant's discussions. Touch was something expressed by some participants, and this was usually described as a positive aspect when they would be picking up items, looking at the quality and feeling the fabrics. Very few participants talked of what they hear in the store and only one noted that the scents of some of the cosmetic items were something they enjoyed.

4.5.2 Retail Experiential Factors

With similar frequency to Retailer 1, the participants talked consistently about the merchandise at the store to buy but in a slightly different context to Retailer 1 in that it was not as much to do with the number of items they bought. Some participants were also surprised at the point of purchase that they had selected so many items and put them into their basket. However, given the total cost of selecting a number of items, this could be totalling into several hundred pounds and so participants make take out some of the items in their basket before they arrived at the checkout, whereas in Retailer 1 they probably would leave them the items in their basket. Slightly more negative sentiment regarding the

merchandise was noted as some of the participants were disappointed by the amount of items that were on display that required rifling through to find what the participant wanted. Several participants indicated the quality of some items, particularly clothing, as not being well-made as they would expect.

More noticeable on the negative side of the retail experience factors, the displays were seen as untidy, unappealing and something participants did not like about their shopping experience. The way in which clothing was displayed in sizes was a positive aspect of the displays but the sheer number of rails on display required the participants to have the time and energy to look through them.

Several participants presented images to represent the vast array of rails in the store and how they would usually find them packed full of clothes to search through (shown in Figure 4.10). This had a mixed response in terms of the motivation of the participant in that some will think there are lots of items for them to discover if they go and look thoroughly around the store. However, other participants found the vast amounts of clothes to be untidy and overwhelming.



Figure 4.10 Images representing rails of clothing

Suggested quite significantly by participants were the number and range of departments the store has and the wide range of items they sell. Several participants described Retailer 2 as selling ‘everything’ and ‘anything’. The store layout was seen by a few participants as a maze which they found quite confusing to navigate around (shown in Figure 4.11). The various departments that are in the store could contain significant amounts of stock to browse around and this was seen as a maze type environment which required time to figure out where items were located and how best to browse around the store.

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Figure 4.11 Images representing a maze

A notable difference in the retail experience factors was the crowded and busyness of Retailer 1 which was not as much of a negative aspect in Retailer 2 as the number of customers in the store would usually be less. Two clear positive differences were the number of participants that discussed the designers at the store and how they liked to get these unique designs at discounted prices.

The range of brands at Retailer 2 was a positive element of the shopping experience and some of the participants expressed this with an image (shown in Figure 4.12). The more unknown brands that were available at the store were also welcomed by participants as they had noticed the quality of these items appeared to be very good and so were confident in purchasing an item with a brand name they had not heard of before.

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Figure 4.12 Images representing brands

Another retail experiential factor that was not mentioned by the Retailer 2 participants was the bags provided by the store to take their shopping home.

The different stores that Retailer 2 has was mentioned quite regularly by participants and some felt that the larger bigger city stores were better for the range of items available and the frequency in which they were restocked with new items.

4.5.3 Motivations

A very significant motivator in Retailer 2 for the participants was to find items in the store that they had wanted to purchase but also items they had not planned to purchase. The find motivator frequency was twice that of those mentioned by the Retailer 1 participants as some participants indicated that a visit to Retailer 2 was an activity not to plan for and that customers should go there speculatively to just see what they have in store this time. On the negative side, the find motivator required time, effort and the right mind-set to browse and potentially find the ‘gold’ or ‘gems’. In addition, if the participant had made the effort to go to Retailer 2 and did not find anything they wanted to purchase they would talk of the disappointment of not having discovered something and that this might delay the next time they visited the store.

Quite similar to Retailer 1, the Retailer 2 participants were frequently talking about going to the store or going to items within different departments which was motivating them to think about the merchandise or the store departments.

With a similar frequency to Retailer 1, purchasing the items appeared to be quite a positive motivator although some participants would return some of the items they had picked up before going to the checkouts. Interestingly, reviewing the items bought was not as big a motivator compared to Retailer 1 as the Retailer 2 participants did not talk of the experience of looking at the items they had bought when they took them out of the bag(s).

With some negative sentiment, the ability to navigate around the departments and having enough time to look around at everything was something that had some participants thinking negatively about the shopping experience.

4.5.4 Perceived Customer Values

With similar frequency to Retailer 1, the perceived customer value of price was the most important but in contrast to Retailer 1 this was not always a positive aspect as some participants felt the prices at Retailer 2 were not always value for money. As with Retailer 1, the discounted prices of the items are an important aspect of the shopping experience but were also considered as a bit of trade off for the occasional untidy displays and the need to spend time and effort looking through the stock.

When making comparisons to images selected to convey price, Retailer 1 appeared to have more colourful images selected and these were more metaphorical in nature, whereas the images selected to convey the prices at Retailer 2 were similar to the brand colour of the company and were more clearly associated with prices (shown in Figure 4.13).

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Figure 4.13 Participant images representing price value at Retailer 2 compared to Retailer 1

As with Retailer 1, a review of the images selected showed some interesting commonality. At Retailer 2, three common types of images selected were those representing the discovery of something special, rails of clothes and price discounts. Also selected by several participants were images of a maze, brand logos, uniqueness, random items and gifts.

Similar in frequency to price and significantly higher than Retailer 1's participants, were the discovery of items in Retailer 2 which was a very important part of the shopping experience. However, it appeared that given the randomness of the items that might be in stock at any one-time, regular shoppers at Retailer 2 spoke of how they might be disappointed when not discovering something. Therefore, participants talked of not having many expectations before going to Retailer 2 because of the randomness of the items. The speed at which they discovered items was quite important too as some participants would lose interest in the motivation to find things if they had been in the store for several minutes and not discovered anything yet. Contrastingly, if they were able to discover items quite quickly, this would sometime spur some participants on to keep looking for more. In addition, a successful shopping visit with items discovered would encourage participants to come back to the store again sooner. Images selected to portray the experience value of discovery are shown in Figure 4.14.

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Figure 4.14 Images representing discovery of something special

The unique items that could be discovered in the store was a major positive for the experience and some participants felt that this was a main motivator for shopping at Retailer 2 (shown in Figure 4.15). Two participants selected the same image to represent uniqueness (shown with the umbrellas). The context of a unique item was slightly different between participants, but some did like the idea of having something that very few other customers may have bought. Moreover, a unique item would be special and perhaps something participants would signpost to others as a great item that they had put the effort in to discover and that they may receive some recognition for their purchase.

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Figure 4.15 Images representing uniqueness

The sheer variety and randomness of items available in Retailer 2 was another frequent positive aspect of the shopping experience. This variety linked to some participants by them suggesting the convenience of the store was a ‘one stop shop’ location that they can drive to and park. This allowed them to avoid the city centre and having to visit several shops to achieve the same sort of purchases.

The randomness of the store and the different items on display was also expressed by some participants and two selected similar images to convey this (shown in Figure 4.16). The items floating in the air in some ways reflected the way in which some items could be displayed in the various departments which requires the customers to rummage through and find what they are looking for.



Figure 4.16 Images representing randomness

Similar to Retailer 1’s participants, the flow of the store, the ability to select the items they wanted and then pay at the checkout quickly was important to the Retailer 2 participants. Linking to the time and effort required to browse around a Retailer 2 store, some participants showed this with images to express that they would need to allocate sufficient time resources in order to be able to look around the store thoroughly. (shown in Figure 4.17). Frustration and disappointment was expressed by some participants if they had been to a Retailer 2 and dedicated time to look through the store but had not found anything.

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Figure 4.17 Images representing time, effort and flow

4.5.5 Human Values

The ability to get around the store and complete their shopping experience plus the amount of ease the participants found they had was the most frequently expressed value as participants did not want to struggle to find the items they were searching for.

Some participants talked affectionately about how a shopping visit to Retailer 2 was something that linked to their family and friends either through the shopping experience itself going around the various departments or in finding gifts for others (shown in Figure 4.18).

The items in store were seen by some participants as gift opportunities to themselves but also for friends and family members. These gifts were sometimes spontaneous finds in the store or were planned purchases because of the convenience of the store in stocking many different items.

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Figure 4.18 Images representing gifts and buying for others

Interestingly and similar to Retailer 1 participants, a frequent human value expressed by the Retailer 2 participants was that of having enough time to look around and discover items amongst the variety of departments. Some participants talked of going to Retailer 2 for a few hours and enjoying taking the time to go around the departments and look thoroughly at what the store had stocked on that occasion. Contrastingly, not being able to allocate as much time as some of the participants wanted to made time the most frequent negative human value expressed.

The sense of accomplishment that participants got from finding the items they had wanted to purchase and the additional items they potentially discovered gave them the value of achievement.

Given the randomness of the Retailer 2 stock the participants indicated that there was plenty of choice and within these items there was the potential uniqueness of certain items. This value was important because they felt that an item bought at Retailer 2 was only one of a few examples and that they would be owning something that might be recognised by others as a great item of clothing or something special for their home.

With the price of items, participants also expressed their restraint as something they felt was important because they could have bought many items which potentially would have totalled several hundred pounds. Therefore, they felt it was important to exercise restraint in Retailer 2 so they did not buy too much.

4.5.6 Feelings

The most frequently expressed feeling of happiness from the successes of the shopping visit was similar to that of the participants at Retailer 1. Some participants spoke of the excitement and adrenalin rush that browsing the store and discovering items around the store would typically bring.

From a negative perspective the participants mainly expressed the feeling of disappointment and frustration from either not finding what they wanted or having enough time to look through the store. Other frequent negative feelings included feeling anxious and overwhelmed particularly early in the shopping experience when they would be looking at the size and scope of the different departments to look through. Interestingly, participants did not express feelings of guilt when buying the items which may have linked to the other value of restraint noted earlier.

4.5.7 Conclusion

In a quite similar context to the Retailer 1 shopping experience, Retailer 2 participants also had a mixed review of their shopping experience in which some quite enjoyed it and others had found it to be quite overwhelming, chaotic and challenging. However, there was a trade-off for negative sentiment in that if the participants put in the time and effort they could discover items seen as 'treasures', 'gems' or 'gold' which were usually items hidden amongst all of the other merchandise.

Chapter 5 Analysis

5.1 Introduction and Overview

The chapter begins with the interview montages collated and analysed with regards to what images participants chose to bring to their interviews and how the two retailers compare. Following this, metaphors expressed by the participants are mapped against the ZMET Seven Giants.

To complete the analysis of each participant's interview the transcripts have been analysed using NVivo software to check and confirm the narratives for a second time and to identify the frequency of the codes.

To complete the analysis the themes emerging from the interviews are presented.

Figure 5.1 shows the overview of the chapter

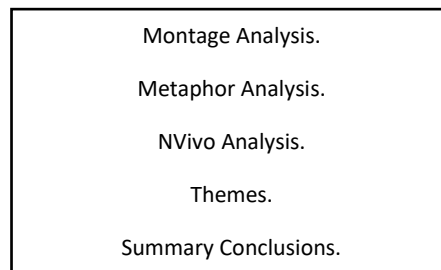


Figure 5.1 Overview of Chapter 5.

5.2 Montage Analysis

The images in the study have played an important and significant role in understanding the deeper insights of the participants and served as a catalyst for the discussions in the interviews. The number of images collected by the 24 participants totalled 163 with the average number selected being 6.

The images provided a window to the participant's visualisation of the shopping experience and an opportunity for the participant to offer greater depth into what they value from the retailer's store environment. Some images sparked a very extensive discussion from the participants with the conversation lasting over thirty minutes focusing on one image and the context of what it means. However, some images were not as significant and required less time to explore their meaning.

Images were also reviewed with regards to their choice by the participant, their significance to the shopping experience, but also in relation to the other images selected. With each image the researcher gauged where the details had perhaps been fully explained and then prompted the participant to choose the next image they wanted to talk about until all were explored. Once all images had been discussed individually then the montage was created. The images were placed onto one canvas with the guidance and instruction of the participant as to which image was to be used for the background and where each image would be placed onto this background.

The development of the montages in the interviews represented a significant point within the discussion about the images and the shopping experience. Zaltman (2008) proposes that the montage represents a visual executive summary of the interview. From the positive perspective nine of the participants selected a positive image to have as the background as overall they felt the shopping experience was a positive one. The Retailer 1 montages generally appear to be more colourful by way of the images selected with a wider range of colours presented than the images used for the Retailer 2 montages. This may reflect the way Retailer 1 display their clothing using traditional store layout and merchandising, whereas Retailer 2 use a different approach to display clothing. The collation of the montages illustrates the similarities and differences between the participants image selections (shown in figure 5.2 and 5.3) and provide a 'window' into the way in which 24 customers across the two retailers visualise and make sense of their shopping experience. Hancock and Foster (2019) suggest that analysing the montages collectively establishes if there are commonalities in the way in which the pictures are placed, the size and nature of the images and any similar stories among the participants.

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Figure 5.2 Retailer 1 Montages

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Figure 5.3 Retailer 2 Montages

5.3 Metaphor Analysis

The metaphorical expressions from the participants were an important feature of the interviews and provide insights into how they mentally process and explain their own experiences. All participants used some form of metaphorical descriptions in their interviews to describe aspects of their shopping experience or to try to explain what their selected images represented. The metaphors expressed were identified in the transcripts and coded.

These expressions have now been mapped to the ZMET Seven Giants to understand the type of metaphors and frequencies. Mapping was based upon the context of what participants were explaining in the interview and the most applicable of the Seven Giants to link them to.

The metaphorical descriptions used by the participants of Retailer 2 were more frequent than with the descriptions of Retailer 1. Table 5.1 shows the summary of the metaphors expressed by all the participants and the number of occurrences mapped to the ZMET Seven Giants.

Table 5.1 Summary of Metaphorical Expressions used by Participants.

ZMET Seven Giant	Retailer 1 occurrences	Retailer 2 occurrences	Total
Connection	51	61	112
Control	34	35	69
Resource	37	32	69
Journey	13	33	46
Container	17	2	19
Transformation	1	2	3
Balance	1	0	1

Connection

The most frequently expressed metaphors were in the context of the 'Connection' participants have with aspects of the shopping experience and how this could be both positive and negative. Zaltman and Zaltman (2008 p.121) state this metaphor is *'how the need to relate to oneself and others affects consumer thinking'*. Badrinarayanan and Becerra (2019) suggest that retailers need to create a store-

self connection where they create imagery and experiences increase the bond between the store and customer. They argue that stronger cognitive and emotional connections develop where positive store images occur in the mind of the customers and are accessed more effortlessly in the customer's mind.

The metaphorical expressions of connection were spread across a range of different codes. Retailer 1 connection metaphors were mainly in the context of a connection with parts of the environment of the store, for example, the colours of the displays were expressed as quite striking which echoes the views of Singh (2006) who proposed that creative displays with extravagant colours engage customers. In a negative context, the feeling of not belonging in the store was expressed by a few participants who did not connect with the behaviours of other customers or with the style of clothing on display. Retailer 2 connection metaphors were mainly getting a thrill by finding unique items and very special items whereas the negative context of connection was that the stores have a lot of random items which can be overwhelming for some participants. In addition, the experiences where some participants did not find anything to purchase created quite a strong sense of disappointment.

Negative metaphors with similarities between Retailer 1 and Retailer 2 were in metaphors to describe that the stores displays looked untidy and unkempt. Another negative perspective in both stores was the number of items to look through, particularly in Retailer 2 which was sometimes seen as a chore. This supported by the research from Jang et al (2018 p.211) who considered the management of the visual environment in a fashion store and suggested '*in a store environment, a plethora of factors influence visual complexity; these include not only the interior décor of the store but also the merchandise itself. Therefore, planning and designing a store that achieves optimum complexity is a challenging task*'.

Participants expressed the context of discovering items in Retailer 2 more frequently than Retailer 1 which reflects the randomness of the items in the store and how the frequency of visits to Retailer 2 were fewer than Retailer 1.

Table 5.2 presents examples of the metaphors expressed by participants linked to the ZMET giant of Connection.

Table 5.2 Examples of Connection metaphors expressed by Participants.

Metaphor and Participant	Codes (Sentiment)	Category
<i>'Like a rainbow' (PA)</i>	Colours (+)	SP/REF
<i>'sort of hits you when you go in' (PA)</i>	Display (+)	SP/REF
<i>'In some ways it takes the shine off' (PB)</i>	Customers (-)	REF
<i>'I'm hoping in the sort of sea of rubbish there will be like a couple of gems' (PC)</i>	Discovery (+)	SP/PCV
<i>'that sums it up, the bargain lover' (PD)</i>	Bargains (+)	PCV
<i>'tonnes of people' (PE)</i>	Customers (-)	SP/REF
<i>'I'm kind of in two minds about staying and stuff' (PF)</i>	Crowded (-)	REF
<i>'you just want to put sunglasses on there's so much colour' (PG)</i>	Colours (-)	SP/REF
<i>'it's a right jumble sale' (PH)</i>	Tidiness (-)	SP/REF
<i>'if Retailer 1 was sort of a market it would be like an Indian spice market' (PI)</i>	Colours (+)	REF
<i>'I would just trawl through it' (PK)</i>	Displays (-)	REF
<i>'I'm on cloud nine' (PL)</i>	Discovery (+)	PCV
<i>'it's like it's Aladdin's Cave isn't it but on a huge scale' (PL)</i>	Stores (+)	REF
<i>'it's about the surprise factor of going to the stores it's just like open the box and you don't know what you will get' (PM)</i>	Discovery (+)	PCV
<i>'you go into Retailer 2 you know it's a bit of a tunnel' (PN)</i>	Layout (-)	SP/REF
<i>'like a vacuum where you get lost in time in there' (PO)</i>	Time (+)	HV
<i>'I like to find little treasures' (PO)</i>	Discovery (+)	PCV
<i>'like the pot of gold if you see treasure you kind of like want it you're drawn to it' (PP)</i>	Discovery (+) Uniqueness (+)	PCV HV
<i>'so to me it goes hand in hand' (PQ)</i>	Price (+)	PCV
<i>'very very well made and almost bomb proof' (PR)</i>	Quality (+)	PCV
<i>'sometimes you can walk in and it will look like a jumble sale' (PS)</i>	Displays (-)	SP/REF
<i>'Yeah it's like what's that saying 'like a kid in a candy shop' kind of thing' (PT)</i>	Merchandise (+)	REF
<i>'they are in like a tip yard, it is reflective of some of the stuff that they offer they have everything and anything' (PV)</i>	Merchandise (-)	SP/REF
<i>'but for me it's a thrill, like the thrill of the hunt of finding something' (PX)</i>	Discovery (+)	PCV

Control

The ZMET giant of Control which is *'how the sense of mastery, vulnerability and well-being affects consumer thinking'* (Zaltman and Zaltman 2008 p.163) had the similar frequency for both retailers.

The context of the metaphors expressed were mainly to convey that the participants wanted feel in control of their shopping experience (Ong et al 2018) and wherever they did not feel in control the metaphorical sentiment was a negative one.

For both retailers, participants expressed that the store environment was 'like a jumble sale' where they did not really know where to find the items that they wanted because merchandise had been 'thrown everywhere'.

Within Retailer 1 in particular the shopping experience was described as 'a fight' when trying to browse around the store. For Retailer 2 it was slightly different in that there was not as much emphasis on the number of other customers as these did not appear as much. However, it was expressed as more of a 'gamble' trying to find something that was of perceived value in Retailer 2, which was seen as a task to be completed. These views on the task were mixed in that some participants saw the number of items to look through as something quite positive whilst others found this rather daunting.

Participants also expressed frustration, stress and annoyance linked to control for both retailers if they had not allocated enough time to the shopping visit. Given the size and scope of both Retailer 1 and Retailer 2 stores, having enough time to be able to browse as much of the store as participants wanted to would require approximately an hour to two hours within the store to achieve this.

Self-control with regards to participants staying alert to their own spending appeared to be more challenging when shopping due to the volume of items they were picking up. Orth et al (2016) propose that in visually complex environments consumers use more self-control which requires additional effort leading to resource depletion and lower satisfaction in the shopping experience. Some participants expressed feelings of guilt and panic when realising at the checkout how many items they had selected to purchase. Contrastingly, some of the Retailer 1 participants felt that they were free to be frivolous and pick up as many items as they wanted because the price of the items was low. In Retailer 2 the control expressions were a little different in that having their own restraint was more prevalent because participants needed to ensure that they did not purchase too much or be tempted by many different items. However, Baumeiser (2002) suggests that consumers ability for self-regulation is limited with them yielding to temptation and Orth et al (2016) argue that self-regulation is an effortful process which draws upon limited inner resources.

Retailer 2 participants expressed that if you try and go to with a very specific plan of what to purchase then it might be disappointing because the stock they have will probably be different from one

shopping visit to the next. Contrastingly at Retailer 1, because a lot of the stocked items were considered to be ‘staples’ you could plan what you want to purchase plus you may discover something else too.

Table 5.3 Examples of Control metaphors expressed by Participants.

Metaphor and Participant	Codes (Sentiment)	Category
<i>‘The whole place is your oyster’</i>	Affordability (+)	PCV
<i>‘I’m literally running around like a headless chicken’ (PB)</i>	Time (-)	HV
<i>‘it’s kind of fighting a losing battle’ (PF)</i>	Customers (-)	REF
<i>‘someone has literally just been there and trashed everything’ (PH)</i>	Customers (-) Tidiness (-)	REF SP/REF
<i>‘oh we can have all of’ it is you know let loose in a candy shop type thing yeah’ (PL)</i>	Price (+) Affordability (+)	PCV PCV
<i>‘no when I’m at my digger mode nobody stop me’ (PM)</i>	Discovery (+)	PCV
<i>‘I’d like to be able to put my protective armour on and sometimes I forget to do that when I go to Retailer 2’ (PN)</i>	Merchandise (-) Bargains (-)	REF PCV
<i>‘I like to be able to see everything, the whole surveillance of the room’ (PO)</i>	Layout (+)	SP/REF
<i>‘I can sort of sort through the wheat from the chaff’ (PR)</i>	Merchandise (+)	REF
<i>‘it’s gambling, it’s gambling with going in there and seeing whether there’s anything that you want’ (PS)</i>	Merchandise (+) Discovery (+)	REF PCV
<i>‘you don’t have any idea of like what’s my budget kind of thing you could easily kind of lose your head’ (PT)</i>	Merchandise (-)	REF
<i>‘it’s like a casino’ (PT)</i>	Merchandise (-)	REF
<i>‘you’ve got to hunt around. I don’t go in Retailer 2 for something specific, I go for a look’ (PX)</i>	Merchandise (+)	SP/REF

Resource

For the Resource giant, participants were mainly conveying the way in which their resources (mostly monetary) were being saved by the low-prices or discounts they were receiving from the retailers.

Resource according to Zaltman and Zaltman (2008 p.141) is *‘how acquisitions and their consequences affect consumer thinking’*.

Participants expressed the amount of money they were spending as an important resource, but it was seen in different contexts for Retailer 1 to Retailer 2. Where there were similarities was in the resource of time where in both stores participants felt that you needed an adequate amount of time

available to be able to browse thoroughly around the store and be quite certain that a bargain or item of discovery had found. This was suggested more so for Retailer 2 where it appeared to be more challenging to know where items were located, and even more time was required to rummage through the displays.

Additionally, from a slightly negative perspective, participants did not want to feel like they had bought something that was considered to be rubbish as they felt that purchases needed to be good ones and they wanted to be able to trust they had bought something of value with savings that were genuine.

Table 5.4 Examples of Resource metaphors expressed by Participants.

Metaphor and Participant	Codes (Sentiment)	Category
<i>'It's like being in a sweet shop' (PA)</i>	Price (+)	PCV
<i>'Pick them up like sweets' (PA)</i>	Merchandise (+)	REF
<i>'they're my gold items' (PB)</i>	Discovery (+)	PCV
<i>'You feel like it's your birthday' (PB)</i>	Price (+)	PCV/Feeling
<i>'the gold in Retailer 2 is real gold but is a lot harder to find' (PC)</i>	Discovery (+)	PCV
<i>'I have to spend more time there because I know I'm going to have to like rummage through stuff and sort' (PF)</i>	Find (-) Time (-)	Motivation HV
<i>'they are cheap as chips' (PG)</i>	Merchandise (-)	REF
<i>'but in the grand scheme of things I've come out with four bags, then sixty pound's nothing' (PJ)</i>	Price (+)	PCV
<i>'I can literally go in the shop go in with one bag but actually come out with a million' (PJ)</i>	Volumes (+)	PCV
<i>'it hasn't cost an arm and a leg' (PL)</i>	Price (+)	PCV
<i>'there's definitely an element of joy in getting it, the booty home' (PL)</i>	Exit store (+)	Motivation
<i>'I want to dig out'</i>	Find (+)	Motivation
<i>'dig out good brands and good stuff' (PM)</i>	Time (+)	HV
<i>'I don't want to be taken for a ride' (PN)</i>	Price (-)	PCV
<i>'I will only go there when I've got time and I've got time to hunt' (PS)</i>	Find (+) Time (+)	Motivation HV
<i>'I had time and I was in a different frame of mind' (PT)</i>	Browse (+) Time (+)	Motivation HV
<i>'I had a lot of time in my hands and I just looked into different things' (PU)</i>	Browse (+)	Motivation

	Find (+) Time (+)	Motivation HV
<i>'But because of this big value saving I'm prepared to go in and hunt' (PX)</i>	Price (+) Find (+) Time (+)	PCV Motivation HV

Journey

The ZMET giant of journey is *'how the meeting of past, present and future affects consumer thinking'* (Zaltman and Zaltman 2008 p.81) and relates to the journey of shopping with metaphors expressed regarding arrival, navigation and returning home.

A few participants for Retailer 1 and Retailer 2 described how going to their stores was a sort of journey and how they would interpret this which appears to be linked the range and layout of departments.

Table 5.5 Examples of Journey metaphors expressed by Participants.

Metaphor and Participant	Codes (Sentiment)	Category
<i>'you're going to have to go digging' (PG)</i>	Find (-)	Motivation
<i>'like you've sort of completed some sort of quest or something yeah' (PI)</i> <i>'you might have to have this quite difficult climb to get there and sort of get through all this sea of people and as soon as you, well I find the place I want to be at it sort of all down from there you just sort of down the mountain it's a lot easier route' (PI)</i>	Discovery (+) Purchase (+) Achievement (+)	PCV Motivation HV
<i>'Retailer 1 is a lot easier to navigate around and realise where everything is' (PJ)</i>	Find (+) Layout (+)	Motivation REF
<i>'when you go to Retailer 1 it is like a trip and a trek' (PK)</i>	Sizing (-) Fitting Room (-)	REF REF
<i>'yeah definitely the thrill of the chase of finding it is there definitely' (PL)</i>	Discovery	PCV
<i>'I feel like I'm entering into a maze' (PN)</i> <i>'I do think it's a bit like a labyrinth' (PN)</i>	Layout (-) Layout (-)	SP/REF SP/REF
<i>'it's like in a car park' (PO)</i>	Layout (+)	SP/REF

'you don't feel you are going to have to battle with anyone really'	Customers (+)	REF
	Layout (+)	REF
'there are different kind of like areas in the store to go in kind of feel like you are going into a little bit of a maze' (PP)	Layout (+)	SP/REF
'part and parcel of it' (PQ)	Stores (+)	REF
	Merchandise (+)	REF
'It's not that type of store, so it's an expedition' (PS)	Layout (-)	REF
'it's a sort of store where it is a question of finding those buried treasures and all of sudden something will leap out at you and say take me home'	Discovery (+)	PCV
'when I walked in that's the first kind of thing I thought about that it's wow it's like a maze' (PT) 'it's like an adventure, yeah it was like an adventure' (PT)	Layout (+)	SP/REF
	Departments (+)	REF
'which means that amongst all the clutter and noise you have to rummage and you have to rummage hard' (PV)	Find (-)	Motivation
'there's too much and they can't see the wood for the trees' (PX) 'you've got to dig for what you're finding so, yeah it's energised, excitement' (PX)	Find (-)	Motivation
	Find (+)	Motivation

Container

Interestingly, the ZMET giant of Container which is *'how inclusion, exclusion and other boundaries affect consumer thinking'* (Zaltman and Zaltman 2008 p.99) was significantly more frequent at Retailer 1 than at Retailer 2 and is reflective of the descriptions of overcrowding in the store and participants wanting to keep their container (themselves) away from other customers. This somewhat lack of control over the store environment was quite a significant negative aspect for some of the participants as they did not like other customers being too close to them or even the clothes being tightly displayed together.

Interestingly two other types of containers were expressed positively in the metaphors. The store baskets and paper bags that are provided for shoppers were fairly obvious containers with the baskets being useful for carrying around a lot of items that customers would like to purchase. The paper bags were seen as a significant positive aspect of the shopping experience both in the store where they were provided free of charge and when returning home.

Table 5.6 Examples of Container metaphors expressed by Participants.

Metaphor and Participant	Codes/Sentiment	Category
<i>'it always reminds me of Mary Poppins' bag' (PB)</i>	Baskets (+)	SP/REF
<i>'it just seems to go on forever' (PB)</i>	Baskets (+)	REF
<i>'it's the wear and tear of it' (PF)</i>	Paper Bags (-)	REF
<i>'on Home Alone when he's walking with the bags and then they rip' (PF)</i>	Paper Bags (-)	REF
<i>'when people just walk into you because you are invisible to them and that's one of my biggest pet hates' (PV)</i>	Customers (-)	REF
<i>'I'm the sort of person who likes to go in and if I'm on my own go in look and come out not being battling through a field of people' (PW)</i>	Customers (-) Crowded (-)	REF REF

Transformation

The ZMET giant of Transformation is *'how changes in substance and circumstances affect consumer thinking'* (Zaltman and Zaltman 2008 p.63) and was linked more to when a participant would be wearing the clothing they have purchased another day in the future.

Transformation was mainly expressed in metaphor by two participants who described how the clothes at Retailer 1 and Retailer 2 could make them feel good, particularly if they were acknowledged by others.

Table 5.7 Examples of Transformation metaphors expressed by Participants.

Metaphor and Participant	Codes/Sentiment	Category
<i>'Looked the part' (PA)</i>	Recognition (+)	HV
<i>'like a few years ago or like when Retailer 2 was in its infancy it's more like jumble sale but like now there's less a jumble sale' (PH)</i>	Stores (+)	SP/REF
<i>'I've found the bargain that I've just been talking about it makes me feel a million dollars to have something that's expensive that I can wear or carry whatever it is with pride' (PX)</i>	Happy (+)	Feelings

Balance

The giant of Balance is 'how justice, equilibrium and the interplay of elements affect consumer thinking' (Zaltman and Zaltman 2008 p.47).

Balance was only expressed by one participant in the context of the low prices which requires customers to put in the effort to find the items they want.

Table 5.8 Examples of Balance metaphors expressed by Participants.

Metaphor and Participant	Codes/Sentiment	Category
'it's a trade-off but yeah quid pro quo' (PG)	Find (-)	Motivation
	Bargains (+)	PCV

The metaphors expressed by the participants mapped to the ZMET seven giants draws attention to the way in which customers at these value-based fashion retailers make sense of their shopping experience. These were mainly linked to the areas of connection with the store environment, the amount of control they have with the store and their management of resources, such as time and money. From the Metaphor analysis and the number of occurrences linked to the ZMET Seven Giants, Figure 5.4 highlights the frequencies of the of the seven giants.

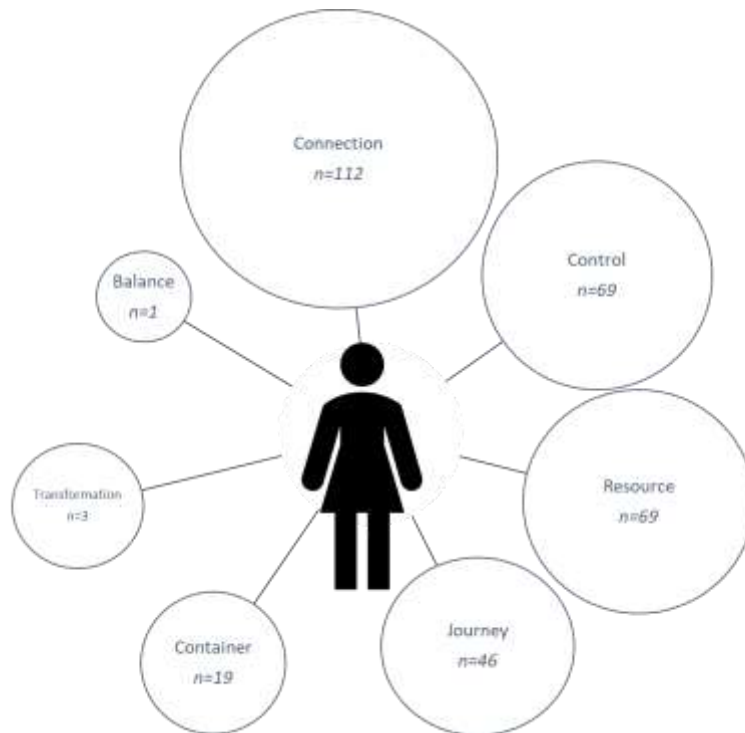


Figure 5.4 Frequency of the ZMET Seven Giants

5.3.1 Metaphor Data related to Fashion Retail Research

The metaphorical expressions are an important feature of the participant interviews and provide insights into how customers mentally process and then describe their own experiences. Brown and Wijland (2018 p.330) recognise this metaphorical reasoning citing the ground-breaking authors Lakoff and Johnson (1980) who they say: '*contended that humankind's understanding of the world is metaphor mediated*'. Von Walpack and Kreuzer (2013) agree and identify this sense making by suggesting metaphors support consumers with structuring and interpreting experiences.

Store Improvements

The potential significance of these metaphors to value-based fashion retailers is that they could begin to learn from these expressions whilst considering what opportunities they present for improving/changing their stores, so that the frequency of customers thinking about negative metaphorical terminologies are reduced, and positives are enhanced/increased. Landau et al (2018) support this view and suggest several positive metaphorical based elements that could be applied within retail settings, such as: lighting being linked with hopefulness, elevating or lowering products on podiums and shelves to convey more or less power and making sure stores are the right temperature to communicate a '*warm reception*' (p.60). Another concept with metaphorical undertones which these retailers could potentially consider is from the idea of their stores having a 'fashion store personality' proposed by Willems et al (2011), Willems and Brengman (2019) and, how they could change the negative perceptions of the store's personality into positive perceptions. However, the researcher notes that there appears to be a limited amount of current literature regarding metaphors linked to retail environments and experiences, which suggests a need for further research in this area.

Using Metaphors Marketing Communications

In addition to store improvements, the way in which value-based retailers develop and use their marketing communications may well take into consideration what potential impacts these metaphorical terminologies have. Fillis and Rentschler (2008) highlight the importance of metaphor marketing and how the message receiver's understanding of the metaphor being communicated can be achieved automatically in phases of *initial comprehension, through to recognition, interpretation and appreciation* (p.499). Similarly, Brown and Wijland (2018) point to the work of Kitchen (2008) with regards to emphasising the importance of metaphor marketing and they underline that integrated marketing communications are part of the crucial underpinnings to understanding it.

However, transferring some of the customer's positive metaphorical expressions into marketing communications could be a challenge for retailers to create and articulate clearly, as not all customers may understand the context and deeper meaning of the metaphors being communicated. Supporting this, de Chernatony (2009) argues that one of the main challenges is identifying the right metaphor to use to guarantee there is universal understanding. Furthermore, communicating metaphors excessively is considered to diminish their effectiveness as they could be seen to be everywhere and used in too many marketing messages (Brown and Wijland 2018, Fillis and Rentschler 2008).

Still, used correctly, metaphors could resonate well with customers and bring some more perhaps light-hearted marketing into the retailer's communications, for example, within the stores there could be signage saying: *'let's get hunting for bargains'*, *'find the gems'* and *'what treasures will you discover today?'* These messages potentially stimulate customers to think more creatively (Fillis and Rentschler 2008) about the shopping experience as something like an adventure, with potential rewards to be found.

5.4 NVivo Analysis

In addition to the manual coding of the transcripts the researcher used the NVivo software to review the transcripts again. This approach was used to check that the codes identified in the manual coding were interpreted the same way a second time and to identify the frequency of the codes in the narratives. Feng and Behar-Horenstein (2019) assert that analysing the word frequency using Computer-aided Qualitative Data Analysis Software (CAQDAS) such as NVivo improves analytic rigor and reduces bias.

The two retailers have been combined with the coding references in the transcripts to build a broader picture of what the participants expressed in their interviews. With regards to Sensory Perceptions, the NVivo analysis clearly indicated that the participants are engaging their visual senses much more than other senses through the shopping experience and this was expressed many times in the narrative and images selected. Both positive and negative sentiment towards what the participants were seeing in store represented the two highest coding references but clearly the participants were more positive about the different things they were seeing from displays, merchandise, departments, colours, layout through to the checkouts near the completion of the shopping visit. This supports the views of Zaltman (1996) who suggested that individuals see the world visually and that our thoughts are 85 per cent image based. It also echos the previously reviewed and widely cited paper by Bitner (1992 p.67) who stated that the *'Servicescape provides a visual metaphor for an organisation's total offering'* and this included specific elements such as spatial layout, signs and ambient conditions which were acknowledged by some of the participants. Similarly, Jain and Bagdare (2009) suggested that

the visualscape of displays amongst other variables were the most important to customers and Ruiz-Molina et al (2018) also argued that that the shopping experience in retailing consisted of an amalgamation of synergised and complete perceptions of goods and services resulting from an interaction with displayed products from a visual appreciation of goods while shopping.

Interestingly the other senses are much lower in their occurrences which begins to suggest that the retailers are not engaging these enough for the participants to want to discuss how these are part of the shopping experience. Fashion retailers like Retailer 1 and Retailer 2 would expect customers to be using touch senses when picking up and trying on items but these were not a particularly frequent discussion point in the interviews. Perhaps more interesting is the very low occurrences of the smell sense which is something the retailers could engage within their shoppers through the use of scent technologies within the store (Grewal et al 2020).

5.5 Themes

The emerging themes have been derived from the participant descriptions of their experiences, the images the participants presented at their interviews and what these images represented. The two retailer’s NVivo codes have been combined into the total frequency of each code and the number of participants who expressed them.

From the manual coding and NVivo analysis the main themes of the interviews have emerged from the occurrences in the participant’s discussions. As previous acknowledged in Section 3.3.6 Zaltman and Coulter (1995) suggest *‘that as a frequency level for each individual construct so that at least one-third of the participants mention any given construct’* (Hancock and Foster 2019 p.55). Thus, where 8 or more participants have a code then these have been summarised into the main themes of the study shown in Tables 5.9, 5.10, 5.11, 5.12 and 5.13.

Table 5.9 Retail Experience Factor Codes and Study Themes

Code	General Sentiment	Total No of Frequency (NVivo)	Total No of Participants	Themes
Departments	(+ve)	112	20	Departments
Departments	(-ve)	15	9	
Merchandise	(+ve)	340	24	Merchandise
Merchandise	(-ve)	71	15	
Sizing	(+ve)	14	10	
Colours	(+ve)	41	9	

Customers	(-ve)	83	17	Customers/Crowding
Crowded	(-ve)	22	8	
Display	(+ve)	81	21	Displays
Display	(-ve)	95	16	
Brands	(+ve)	55	11	Brands
Layout	(+ve)	49	18	Layout/Space
Layout	(-ve)	27	11	
Space	(-ve)	29	11	
Service	(+ve)	19	8	Delivery
Fitting Room	(+ve)	14	8	
Baskets	(+ve)	15	8	
Paper Bags	(+ve)	37	11	
Stores	(+ve)	69	16	Convenience
Stores	(-ve)	22	8	
Staff	(+ve)	32	12	Staff/Service
Queues	(-ve)	21	8	
Checkouts	(+ve)	15	9	

The Retail Experience Factors indicate the most frequent of aspects discussed through the participant interviews. The departments within the stores had mainly positive sentiments which indicates that the retailers are able to make their different departments distinctive and places where the participants are drawn towards and browse. Given the square footage size of both retailers and the number of items displayed, the merchandise is clearly an important feature for participants as this was the value expressed most frequently. The brands available in Retailer 2, the colours in Retailer 1 and the layout and overall stores at both retailers were seen to positives of the shopping experience. These suggest that, on the whole, participants like what they see in the store and that the retailers really need to ensure that they make the merchandise as appealing as possible.

Negative sentiment was described slightly differently between the two stores where Retailer 1 sentiment was because of the way in which other customers were not putting items back properly after looking at them and being too crowded. Within Retailer 2 the sentiment was more geared towards the way in which the retailer displays their items and with limited order due to only a few of them being available.

Table 5.10 Motivation Codes and Study Themes

Code	General Sentiment	Total No of Frequency (NVivo)	Total No of Participants	Themes	
Think	(+ve) and (-ve)	344	24	Think	
Find	(+ve)	287	23	Find	
Browse	(+ve)	180	24	Browse	
Stay	(+ve)	23	11		
Purchase	(+ve)	217	23	Purchase	
Purchase	(-ve)	48	13		
Go in	(+ve)	94	23	Approach	
Go to	(+ve)	114	22		
Walk in	(+ve)	33	12		
Drawn to	(+ve)	21	12		
Tempted	(+ve)	22	11		
Pick up	(+ve)	31	18		
Try on	(+ve)	28	15		
Avoid	(-ve)	47	15		Avoid
Browse	(-ve)	50	16		
Exit store	(-ve)	18	11		
Wear	(+ve)	27	14	Post-Store	
Exit store	(+ve)	42	13		

Motivations within the stores indicated that participants were very willing to go and search for items they had planned to find, but also to potentially find items they did not know they wanted yet. In Retailer 2 it was widely articulated by the participants that the effort in finding items was ‘par for the course’ and what they would need to do in order to find something special for themselves or someone they know.

At both retailers the participants were very keen to purchase something while they were there so that they did not exit the store feeling disappointed by the shopping experience. However, at Retailer 1 there was less disappointment because if they did not purchase an item they considered special, there would still be ‘staple’ items that could be purchased instead. At Retailer 2 there was a possibility that a participant might not find anything they wanted to purchase, particularly if they were visiting the

store regularly, as they would notice new items were not always different from the last visit to the store.

Thinking about the stores and the shopping experience had high frequency with positive thoughts which were usually where participants would think they had a good shopping visit because they got the items they wanted. Negative thoughts would usually be from the untidy and crowded stores or not finding something they wanted to purchase.

Participants also spoke frequently about the motivation to go to the stores, go in and begin their shopping experience. For Retailer 1 participants in particular the post-store motivation after completing the shopping visit was an extension of the whole retail experience as they enjoyed reviewing all the items they had purchased.

Table 5.11 Perceived Customer Value Codes and Study Themes

Code	General Sentiment	Total No of Frequency (NVivo)	Total No of Participants	Themes
Discovery	(+ve)	110	21	Discovery
Fashionable	(+ve)	35	13	
Volume	(+ve)	47	9	
Novelty	(+ve)	31	10	
Price	(+ve)	167	22	Price
Price	(-ve)	36	14	
Bargains	(+ve)	49	12	
Deals	(+ve)	18	10	
Quality	(+ve)	65	17	Quality
Quality	(-ve)	46	12	
Cheap	(-ve)	27	10	
Busyness	(-ve)	53	16	Flow
Untidy	(-ve)	62	17	
Convenience	(+ve)	48	11	
Flow	(+ve)	12	35	
Flow	(-ve)	23	11	
Variety	(-ve)	63	22	Variety

The perceived value of price was expected to be the highest factor that participants valued from these retailers, as it formed the bases of the rationale for the study and featured significantly within the literature review.

The value of discovery was an important part of the shopping experience that was not found within the literature review and was an interesting insight from the depth interviews. Within both retailers the value of discovery was particularly powerful as it made the store experience more fun and exciting. In Retailer 1, discovery did not appear to have to happen every single time participants visited a store, as the other items available could still make the visit worthwhile. By returning home with a large volume of items in a lot of bags made participants feel like they had gotten real value for money. However, in Retailer 2 the value of discovery had even more meaning as the store’s merchandise made the discovery element almost the point of going to the store in the first place to see what they have got in stock this time.

More specific to Retailer 2 was the convenience of the store’s location and because they sold such a wide range of different items they were considered as being a ‘one stop shop’.

Table 5.12 Human Value Codes and Study Themes

Code	General Sentiment	Total No of Frequency (NVivo)	Total No of Participants	Themes
Time	(+ve)	84	17	Time
Time	(-ve)	28	14	
Effort	(+ve)	15	8	Effort
Achievement	(+ve)	56	17	
Ease	(+ve)	76	13	Flow
Ease	(-ve)	28	10	
Order	(+ve)	41	12	Tidiness
Order	(-ve)	30	14	
Choice	(+ve)	50	20	Variety
Treat	(+ve)	16	8	Fun
Fun	(+ve)	26	11	
Save	(+ve)	17	10	Restraint
Restraint	(-ve)	34	11	
Sustainability	(+ve)	26	9	Sustainability

Community	(+ve)	15	11	Community
Giving	(+ve)	40	9	Giving
Friends	(+ve)	47	10	
Family	(+ve)	63	12	
Recognition	(+ve)	47	16	Recognition

Human values were checked within the laddering questions at the interviews to try and understand why the various aspects of shopping experiences that were being discussed really mattered to participants on a more personal level. This was because perceived customer values were specific to the shopping experience and the study was trying to identify more of the personal values of the individual. For example, if a participant expressed that they found the untidy displays in the stores inconvenient to them as they would have to tidy the items up before they could begin browsing, then when linked to a personal human value they would potentially express how they generally like things to be ordered and easy to do.

Time was the highest value expressed by the participants and was relevant to both retailers. Having enough time within both stores was important because of the sheer size of the stores and the range of merchandise to search through. Where participants had not allocated plenty of time for browsing and searching, if they had to exit the store before they felt they had looked at everywhere in the store that they wanted to, then they may have felt disappointed and frustrated.

Buying items for other family and friends was quite a frequent value stated, particularly for Retailer 2 participants where they could find very special items to give as gifts. Recognition from others mainly in the form of a complement about the items they have purchased was quite important as it would typically spark a further discussion about where they had purchased it from ('oh it's only from') and how they got it for a great price ('it was only £x').

Human values identified such as time, ease, achievement, order and choice relate directly to the shopping experience. Therefore, the way in which the stores are designed, organised and presented directly impact upon these human values. However, other non-directly impacting human values were just as important and are potentially values which the retailers should be aware that customers are considering through their whole experience. Human values of family, friends, giving and recognition were on the participants minds while shopping.

Noteworthy within the values was also the number of occasions where the participants talked about aspects of ethics and sustainability which was usually linked to a negative sentiment towards merchandise and participants considering how items could be sold for such low prices. This created a

conflict in their own minds regarding whether it was morally right to be purchasing so many items which was not going to be environmentally friendly.

Table 5.13 Feeling Codes and Study Themes

Code	General Sentiment	Total No of Frequency (NVivo)	Total No of Participants	Themes
Happy	(+ve)	59	17	Positive
Good	(+ve)	21	12	
Pleased	(+ve)	10	6	
Positive	(+ve)	16	10	
Calm	(+ve)	23	11	
Disappointed	(-ve)	11	8	Negative
Frustrated	(-ve)	16	8	

Positive and negative feelings expressed by the participants through approach and avoidance narratives link to some of the very earliest of theories in the literature review such as the behavioural responses in the Mehrabian and Russell's (1974 p.8) framework of environmental psychology which stated that *'physical or social stimuli in the environment directly affect the emotional state of a person, thereby influencing his (sic) behaviours in it'*. This suggests that understanding that shopping environments will likely affect the shopper's feelings and their behaviour is by no means a new area of research but is something retailers need to be aware of and addressing.

Negative feelings of being overwhelmed were typically because of the size of the store and/or the amount of merchandise the customer would need to browse through to find what they were looking for. Stores designed in a way which allowed participants 'time out' to rest and refuel whilst reflecting on their shopping visit potentially reduces the feeling of being overwhelmed.

As participants became more comfortable in the interview conversation more feelings were expressed about the experience. The highest frequency feelings were generally positive with participants feeling happy about finding items and taking home their purchases, whilst feeling quite excited within the store that they might find something special through discovery. Where the negative feelings were expressed, these were mainly associated with stores having too much merchandise to look through and being annoyed with other customers getting in their way. If not enough time had been allocated to search through the store, then stress and frustration may have been felt because participants wanted to

feel like they had achieved something and they may have felt relief that they had got the items they had gone shopping for.

5.6 Conclusion

The analysis of the twenty four interviews in groups of twelve per retailer has indicated that there are many factors of the shopping experience that customers are motivated or demotivated by and these form the collective experiential values of the store experience. The collation of the codes, themes, metaphors, images and montages has shown that there are some main areas of the shopping experience which are commonplace amongst almost all participants and others which were more individualistic.

For both Retailer 1 and Retailer 2, the participants had a major motivator that would draw them towards visiting the stores and spending their time and money there, which was the prices. The ‘trade-off’ for the low and discounted prices are the requirements for participants to put forth their own time and effort to find items in the store and to potentially put up with the other customers in the store. However, the participants spoke about their positive view of discovering items in their shopping experiences which appears to encourage them to want to return to the stores on a more regular basis to see if anything new has arrived.

Participants clearly liked the volume of items they were able to take home for the money spent and despite on some occasions feeling quite anxious and/or guilty at the checkout when realising they had bought more items than they had planned to. Retailer 1 was described as a very busy but was relied upon for ‘staple items’. As a bonus, items considered to be ‘gold’ or ‘gems’ were things that the participants had discovered in amongst the other items they were looking for and these items were things they felt were great to wear and usually lasted because the quality was good. Paper bags were seen as a nice addition to the experience and as sustainable. Taking the bags home and looking at the volume of items they had bought extended the shopping experience beyond the store.

Retailer 2 was seen as a random store where the stock could change considerably from visit to visit and there could be occasions where there was nothing particularly appealing to buy, which would be quite disappointing. However, when the participants did discover items, it was usually a very exciting and positive shopping experience which would encourage them to stay longer and try to find more items.

The various areas and theories used to analyse the participant interviews including the ZMET Seven Giants and the six laddering areas have been mapped to the eighteen retail experiential themes identified and the three main in-store experience core values (shown in Figure 5.5). This diagram

highlights where most of the metaphorical expressions were in the areas of Connection and Control. The diagram also presents the main links between Retail Experience Factors which are extrinsic and more controllable by the retailer plus the linkages with the Perceived Customer Values and Human Values which are more intrinsic to customers and less controllable by the retailer. These are then linked to the main experiential themes which have been identified as the 3D's of Departments (sections within the store where merchandise, displays and other customers will be found), Discovery which is the achievement by the customer in finding something that is recognised by them as special and Delivery which is the way in which the retailer delivers the in-store experience through convenience, communication and resources.

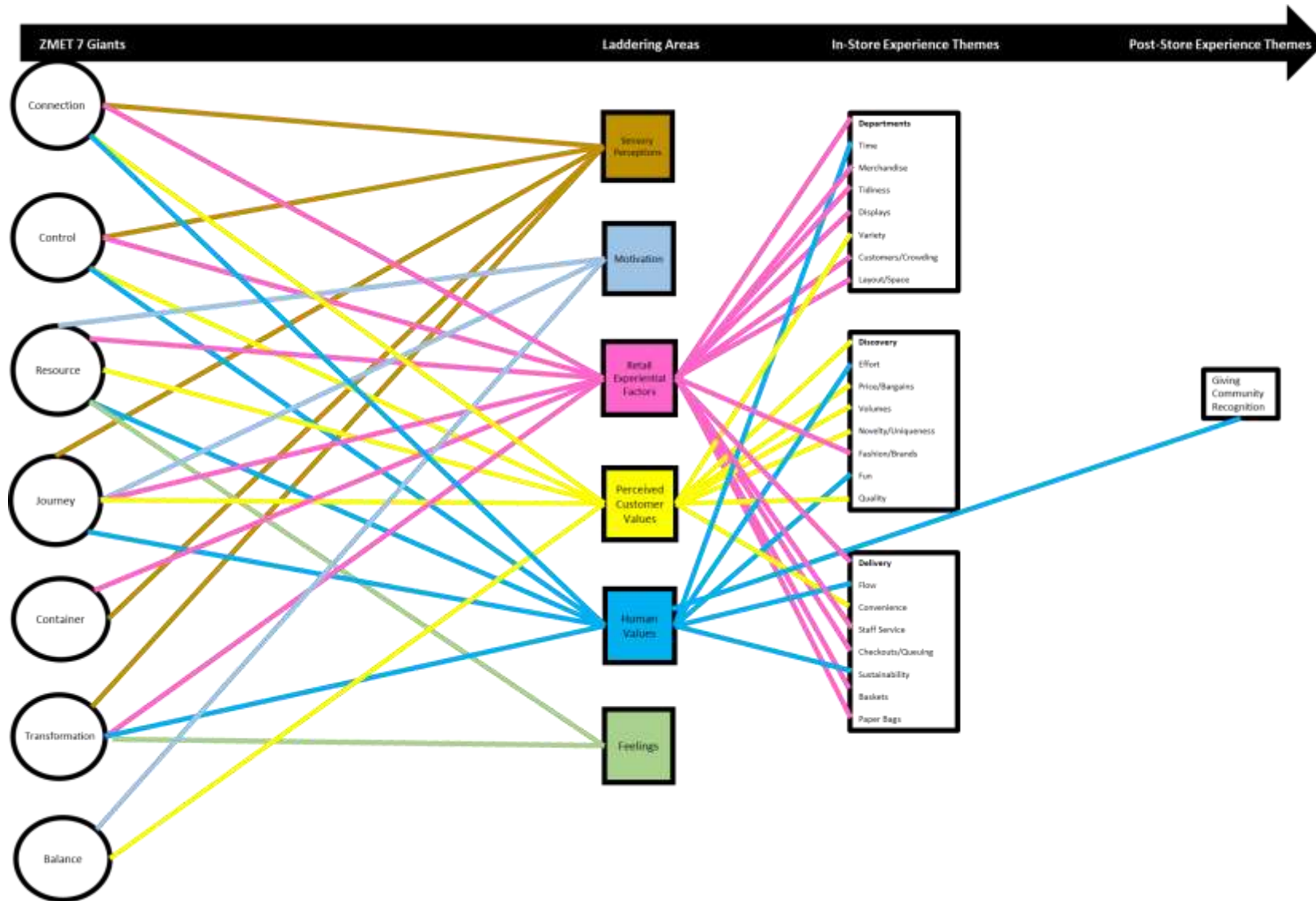


Figure 5.5 Mapping the main areas of the study.

Chapter 6 Discussion

6.1 Introduction and Overview

The discussion chapter illustrates how the main findings of this study link to the past literature and suggests which areas of the study add to the extant literature. The chapter focuses on these five areas:

1. Key values participants expressed regarding shopping experiences and how these relate to the previous literature and relevant theories.
2. Extending the shopping experience beyond the store
3. Visualising the shopping experience from the perspective of the Customer and recognising the different stages in the shopping experience being both linear and non-linear.
4. Development of a conceptual framework for understanding the customer experience.
5. Practical management application of the conceptual framework developed.

Figure 6.1 shows the overview of the chapter

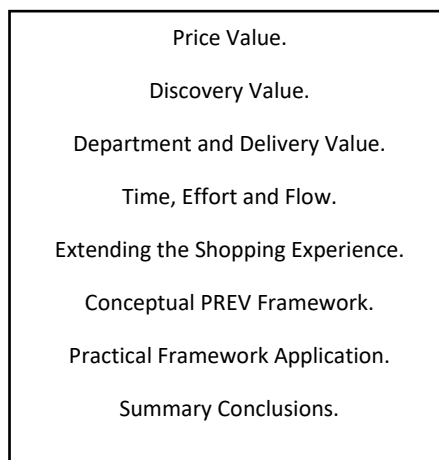


Figure 6.1 Outline of the Chapter.

The literature review revealed a gap in the knowledge for Experiential Marketing, particularly in the context of customers' perceived values within the UK value-based retail sector, which has grown since 2008.

Previous studies into Retail Customer Experience have appeared to favour a quantitative approach towards defining, understanding and measuring the experience with qualitative studies appearing to be fewer in number (Petermans et al 2014; Varshneya et al 2017). The researcher chose to complete a study which used an image-based metaphor elicitation technique (ZMET) as a way of discovering

what customers of value-based fashion retailers care about their shopping experiences at a deeper level.

6.2 Price value is expressed differently for each retailer

Participants clearly articulated that they are motivated by the prices at both Retailer 1 and Retailer 2, but this was not the only factor which motivated them to visit these stores. This echoes the work of Willems et al (2016) who stated that prices are not the only concern for customers. Prices appear to continue to be a significant driver of customer footfall at Retailer 1 and Retailer 2 but that does not necessarily mean a value-based store can avoid focusing on other elements of the shopping experience.

Price acts as a main motivator but is seen as a ‘trade-off’ for both retailers because generally they do not create store environments which enhance the customer experience, with participants saying that Retailer 1 is generally too busy and untidy and Retailer 2 is quite disorganised and random. This links in part to the unidimensional value theory first proposed by Zeithaml (1988) in the context of what the customers give compared to what they receive. As previously discussed in the literature review the studies that followed the work of Zeithaml (1988) suggested that value is a comparison which requires a number of positive attributes versus the negative attributes and therefore a subsequent output is the perceived value by the customer. Monroe (1991) defined it as:

$$\text{Customer-perceived value} = \frac{\text{Perceived benefits}}{\text{Perceived sacrifice}}$$

The way in which price is a motivator at each of the two retailers is different because of the price points they use. One can be seen as an ‘every-day low-price’ retailer with products under their own brand labels and most items in-store at affordable prices. The images selected for Retailer 1 were very much about the volumes of items you could buy in a shopping visit because of the low prices. Despite sometimes spending a lot more than they had planned to do and feeling quite anxious and/or guilty about this, the participants were generally very pleased with themselves and justified the number of pounds they spent by how many items they returned home with them.

Retailer 2 are different in that they have items which may have been quite expensive when they were first available to purchase and are now discounted, although the discounted price might not be affordable to everyone. Images very much represented discounts on prices and this was either in pounds or percentages. Price tags were very prevalent images as this was where each item’s level of

discount would be understood, and it was mainly at that point where the participants would feel they had found a bargain or good deal.

6.3 Discovery value is an important part of the experience

The researcher contends that the perceived customer value of Discovery in the context of finding new items is a significant aspect linked to retail experience factors and needs to be acknowledged further within the extant literature and theories in this arena. 21 of the 24 participants spoke of the importance of discovering items within the store as something they valued as a part of the shopping experience.

Discovery is an intangible value in the context of what actually a 'discovery' is and what one customer might think is something 'very special' could be different to someone else. However, the researcher suggests that a discovery item might be something which meets one or multiple criteria in the mind-set of the individual customers. The criteria developed from the participant narratives in this study recognises something as a discovery if it meets one or more of these suggested criteria:

Price/Bargain The sensation of finding items which considered a great price and/or bargain played significantly into the value of discovery. Items which were considered bargains were mainly found at Retailer 2 as the item purchased would have potentially had a significant percentage reduction on the original price, which would suggest that the item found was a bargain. Participants had mixed views as to whether they felt they could find these bargains each time they visited.

Price tags on some of the items appeared to be confusing for some participants and the discounts were sometimes questioned as to whether the discount was as much as stated. However, on occasions it appeared that some participants found something they considered very special to them and quite valuable, for a very low-price. With these items, participants really felt they had a sense of accomplishment from their visit which supports Jin and Sternquist's (2004) suggestion that bargain hunting can be a source of pride and accomplishment, creating shopping motivation.

Contrastingly, participants also saw price/bargains more in terms of items in the that were available at a low-price, so the sense of discovery value came more from being able to afford any of the items on sale and that there were none which were out of reach for anyone in terms of cost. This echoes the work of Gabrielli et al (2013) who proposed that the pleasure of finding bargains, searching for bargains and bargain hunting were some of the major strong parts of fast fashion retail experiences.

Quality of the items on display was an important value which meant that the products were considered by participants to be well made and/or would stay in good condition for a considerable amount of time. This further suggests that price factors are important but certainly not the

quintessential element of motivations to shop. Newman and Patel (2004) emphasise that the customer's perceived quality of merchandise on offer from fashion retailers can be impacted by the brand name. Beneke et al (2013) also support this notion and suggest that positive correlation exists between the perceived quality customers have of a product and their perceived value of the product, thus increasing the customer's willingness to buy, particularly when comparing private label brands to manufacturer brands.

Merchandise items that were found through the process of discovery which were perceived to be good quality in terms of the materials, beauty and design were sometimes considered as being 'gold' or 'gems' which were discovered as a result of their efforts to look through all the other merchandise.

Fashions/Brands would be considered trendy or aesthetically pleasing by the customer who discovered it and would potentially gain some form of supporting praise and/or recognition from someone they know. Having a good range of merchandise is essential for attracting customers to the store and encouraging them to purchase. Newman and Patel (2004 p.772) focus in on the importance of branding and clothing fashion in the fashion retail sector and suggest that *'clothing styles and the selections of merchandise are critical to success, in terms of sales performance'*.

Both retailers in this study have appeared to have achieved this with ever broadening ranges of merchandise. In the main, they need to keep designing new clothing styles but at the same time to be mindful of the 'fast fashion' badge which is becoming an area which younger customers are less interested in (Mintel 2019). However, they need to keep replenishing their stores with new items as any merchandise which stays on their shelves for several weeks appears to be noticeable and unappealing to customers.

Novelty/Uniqueness to an item being purchased was important particularly with items which were usually in limited supply. Items which appeared to be quite novel, one of kind or a limited edition created the value of discovery as participants would feel that this item would not be purchased or worn by many other customers so they could feel quite confident in having purchased something that others have not found. This supports the work by Wagner and Reynolds (2010) in shopping motivation research which suggested that in non-food settings there was a distinct demand for unique products. Roggeveen et al (2021) agree with the importance of unique and original merchandise as part of a creative offering which conveys exclusivity and scarcity as it is inspiring to customers and drives more traffic to their stores. This was reflected in some of the participant narratives who would potentially return to the store sooner if they found items which they felt were unique.

However, familiarity with the store could have a moderating factor on the amount of perceived uniqueness that the merchandise has as according to Ligas and Chaudhuri (2012 p.252) who suggest that *'more experienced shoppers who have more information on quality and price in a particular store may be less likely than less experienced shoppers to equate greater Perceived Merchandise*

Value with uniqueness due to their greater familiarity with the store'. This indicates that regular shoppers at these stores may find the value of discovery harder to achieve each time they visit.

The researcher has also identified papers which have highlighted novelty, uniqueness and curiosity in the products offered by retailers as an important part of the retail experience, for example, Tynan and McKechnie (2009) argued that customers had expectations for novelty in the shopping experience. Similarly, Clarke et al (2012) suggested that the sight of new products on display became an important aspect from those that took part in their research. Likewise, Dalmoro et al (2019 p.2064) briefly noted that in their study *'some of the participants mentioned the enjoyment of seeing new products in the store'* and that *'new products might attract consumer attention and change their experience and behavior in the store due to the arousal of curiosity'*. However, the researcher would argue that these are not focusing on the specific activity of finding something special.

Volume of items purchased in a shopping visit, was an important value expressed within the context of discovery items. Low prices appear to allow customers to 'fill their boots' when they visit the store and participants talked of being quite frivolous in their shopping behaviour by finding themselves picking up items 'like sweets' (PA). For some, this frivolous approach to their shopping would be noticed at the point at which they reached the checkout and realised they were spending a lot more money than they had planned to but felt quite justified given the number of items they had. This rationalisation was confirmed by the number of bags they had to take home with them plus when participants returned home, they could review all the items they had bought. This hedonistic value confirms the early works of Babin et al (1994) and Scarpi (2006) who argued that a critical success factor for shoppers comes from the number of items purchased. For Retailer 2 participants, additional items they may have picked up would be put into their basket just in case another shopper picked them up, but these might be returned to the displays at the point when participants were ready to go to the checkouts. This action was usually because participants had realised that they had selected too many items for the amount of money they were happy to spend on that particular visit.

Fun in finding items was expressed by participants who found the shopping experience a positive one and this linkage between fun and finding items considered to be bargains has been confirmed by other studies including Griffin et al (2000) and Scarpi et al (2014). This aspect of the shopping experience goes right back to the original widely cited pioneering paper in Experiential Marketing by Holbrook and Hirschman (1982) and earlier papers in this area such as Babin et al (1994) and Holbrook (1996).

Roggeveen et al (2021) spotlight the increase in retailers wanting to make their stores more entertaining and fun. Participants taking some time and effort to find discovery items suggested this also added to the value of the item because it was not just sitting waiting for them. Instead, they felt a bigger sense of accomplishment from putting in the work to look for it. Where this process included a sense of fun through searching and sorting through the merchandise added even more value to the

experience. Roggeveen et al (2021) agree with this notion and suggest that this co-creation of the experience adds value as it makes it a fun holistic journey. However, the challenge for retailers is figuring out how to make the shopping experience fun for customers given the subjective manner of this human value

Linking Discovery Value to existing theory – Holbrook’s Typology of Customer Value

This new discovery value proposed by the researcher forms part of an overall shopping experience with other factors and variables in play, therefore it needs to be aligned with other values the customer will be experiencing through their shopping visit. The Discovery value can be linked with other values posited within the extant literature in the arena of Experiential Marketing and Perceived Customer Value. The researcher has identified from the earlier literature review a theory which appears to be suitable for this is, namely Holbrook’s Typology of Customer Value (1996).

The researcher suggests that Holbrook’s relatively early theory in the arena of Perceived Customer Value has eight types of value that compare very similarly to the values expressed by the participants in this study. Table 6.1 presents examples of the participant’s values which reflect Holbrook’s eight customer values.

Table 6.1 Holbrook's Typology Values linked to participant descriptions. Adapted from Holbrook (1996)

Holbrook Typology Value	Examples from Participant Interviews
1. Efficiency – (Inputs/Outputs, Time, Convenience)	<i>'sometimes when I go in Retailer 1 I've, either, I'm working to a time limitation because perhaps I'm on a lunch break or my parking's about to run out'</i> (Participant B) <i>'I don't want to spend loads of time shopping erm and I can't warrant a lot of time so I'd rather go to one place where I think I can get everything I need and then go'</i> (Participant R)
2. Play – (Fun, Leisure)	<i>'it's a little bit of fun there I think... makes you... smile inside'</i> (Participant A) <i>'if I'm going to Retailer 2 it's a leisure activity, it's a fun activity'</i> (Participant S)
3. Excellence – (Quality, Satisfaction)	<i>'because I do like the clothes in Retailer 1 and the quality is really good sometimes'</i> (Participant F) <i>'I knew for me I would probably more likely have more success in Retailer 2 finding the kind of quality I was looking for'</i> (Participant R)
4. Aesthetics – (Beauty, Fashion, Design)	<i>'I think they really have sort of tried hard to er make it more sort of like their competitors it's like a fashion store now'</i> (Participant H) <i>'just so many products, not aesthetically pleasing er very hard to root out and find what it is you are looking for'</i> (Participant V)
5. Status - (Success, Impression)	<i>'you would think that you looked good... choosing the right things that somebody else might admire'</i> (Participant A) <i>'like when I've bought it which is more like strutting your stuff like we've touched on it a little, like I feel great'</i> (Participant P)
6. Ethics – (Fairness, Morality)	<i>'I know fast fashion and stuff isn't good for the environment anyway, but knowing that the paper bags are lower than plastic bags do you know what I'm trying to'</i> (Participant F) <i>'Yeah do we need all this like people don't have clothes in some parts of the world and then you've got this kind of bizarre kind of situation where you've got like tonnes and tonnes of stock being thrown at you'</i> (Participant T)
7. Esteem – (Recognition, Possessions)	<i>'I love the fact that people say 'where did you get that'?'</i> (Participant S) <i>'sometimes do end up buying loads of stuff and you walk out with a lot of bags, it's like a nice feeling because you've got loads of stuff'</i> (Participant K)
8. Spirituality – (Ecstasy, Flow, Delight)	<i>'they know the amount of customers they have and they know they're always going to have a queue it's very well organised'</i> (Participant J) <i>'that's what I want when I walk in, I want that 'Wow'</i> (Participant X)

Utilising the theory proposed by Holbrook (1996) the Discovery value also includes elements that meet Holbrook's Extrinsic and Intrinsic dimension in the context that the item the customer finds is a means to an end where it serves as a reward for the time and effort required to find it and allows the customer to achieve some other purpose (Extrinsic). Additionally, the Discovery value is an appreciation of the consumption experience activity itself and the beauty of the item discovered (Intrinsic). This suggests there is some overlap between the value of Discovery and other elements in the framework.

Efficiency - Considering the value of efficiency in the Typology, the item being discovered by the participants is something they want to find without too much inconvenience (although some did acknowledge that a discovery item was worth the time and effort required to find it because of the feeling of accomplishment). Dalmoro et al (2019) support this notion suggesting that in the search task pleasure can be part of it. Holbrook (1996) described this value in the context of efficient use of time. Therefore, in order for the participants to discover items they would need the displays and the layout of the store to be organised and maintained to allow for efficiency in the discovery process.

Play - The item itself or the process of finding it can be seen as quite fun by the customer (play), perhaps if that experience is shared by going shopping with friends. Holbrook (1996 p.140) describe this self-orientated experience as something that is '*actively pursued and enjoyed for its own sake*'. Similarly, Babin et al (1994 p.646) described intrinsic value as subjective and personal which results from the '*fun and playfulness (of an experience), rather than task completion*'. The discovery process was articulated by some participants as something of an 'adventure' and as a positive activity where they need to go 'digging'.

Excellence - With regards to the value of excellence, the discovery item must have an amount of excellence and quality to it. Holbrook (1996) notes this excellence value as quality and satisfaction. Items of discovery are usually seen by participants as something that is not only fashionable, novel, unique and appealing but they are items which are good quality and have been worn or used by them for a significant amount of relative time (excellence).

Aesthetics - Holbrook (1996) argues that aesthetics as a value is something admired for its beauty and could include elements such as fashion and design. The aesthetics value could be seen as both the products customers buy but also the store environment. Baker et al (2002) suggest that environmental elements of colours and scents are aspects which can affect the response of the customer. The discovery items that were described by some participants had something about them that they admired in terms of aesthetics which included perhaps the style, uniqueness and design. From the store environment perspective, some stores were seen as being almost like a big shopping mall with attractive design. Contrastingly, older, tired and more cramped stores were seen as not aesthetically pleasing.

The researcher proposes that a ninth value of Discovery should be added to the eight proposed by Holbrook (1996). It is posited that the ninth value is located in between the four Self-Orientated values of Efficiency, Play, Excellence and Aesthetics. The Discovery value is ideally placed as the third value in the Typology between the Self-Orientated values proposed by Holbrook (1996) (see Figure 6.2) because the value of discovery is a subjective phenomenon relatable to the individual (Self-Orientated) customer's perspective.

It is acknowledged by the researcher that the subjectivity in the context of the customer creating the discovery for themselves by finding an item is something of a question of personal perspective in that what one customer may think is treasure another may think is junk. However, the researcher would argue that this component is so important to the positive experience customers could be having in the store that the retailers must try and realise how to create this for their customers. Moreover, the researcher argues that the context of discovery as a value is not just the item itself that the customer finds but also the activity of searching and the accomplishment of finding it.

1. Efficiency – (Inputs/Outputs, Time, Convenience)
2. Play – (Fun, Leisure).
-  **3. Discovery – (Exploration, Adventure, Finding)**
4. Excellence – (Quality, Satisfaction)
5. Aesthetics – (Beauty, Fashion, Design)
6. Status - (Success, Impression)
7. Ethics – (Fairness, Morality)
8. Esteem – (Recognition, Possessions)
9. Spirituality – (Ecstasy, Flow, Delight)

Figure 6.2 Holbrook's Typology Values. Adapted from Holbrook (1996)

The author also suggests that the new Discovery value also has both active and reactive elements within it too, with the customer being active in the finding process of looking for items around the store which Holbrook (1996 p.139) described as '*things done by an individual*'. It is also reactive in the way in which the customers respond to the item's level of quality, design, practicality, beauty and robustness which Holbrook (1996 p.139) explains as '*appreciating or otherwise responding to some object*'. Therefore, the author proposes the adapted Holbrook (1996) framework in Figure 6.3.

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Figure 6.3 Holbrook (1996) ‘A Typology of Customer Value’. Adapted by Author.

Adaptation of Holbrook’s Typology is not new and has been considered before. However, the adaptations have mainly been to combine or split some of the eight values instead of adding to them. Mathwick et al (2001) developed an Experiential Value Scale (EVS) in their research which drew upon the four quadrants of Intrinsic/Extrinsic and Active/Reactive from Holbrook’s framework. They labelled the four dimensions as consumer return on investment, service excellence, playfulness and aesthetic appeal. Gallarza and Saura (2006) suggested that Holbrook’s typology did not include negative aspects of value and they too adapted the Self-Orientated dimensions of the framework by adding ‘Social Value’ for their study into tourism experience. Willems et al (2016) also modified Holbrook’s typology by combining the ‘Status’ and ‘Esteem’ values into a ‘Social Value’ as they felt that they were too similar, plus they combined the ‘Ethics’ and ‘Spirituality’ into ‘Altruistic Value’. Willems et al (2016) also split the ‘Excellence’ value into ‘Product Excellence’ and ‘Service Excellence’.

The researcher also asserts that this additional ‘Discovery’ value in Holbrook’s typology potentially makes a wider contribution than just within the area of Retail Customer Experience because some of the literature cited shows the Typology has been used in a tourism setting (Gallarza and Saura 2006). Holbrook’s model was not just designed for retail as Holbrook (1996 p.138) stated that ‘*Customer Value provides the foundation for all marketing activity*’ and therefore it was placed within the broader category of Perceived Customer Value reviewed within the literature. Furthermore, the researcher suggests the additional Discovery value could be applied across other sectors such as tourism and hospitality where customers can discover something such as a new place to go for dinner or a new dish on the menu.

6.4 Department Value and Delivery Value represent core components of the shopping experience.

Value-based stores arguably still need to have good basics in place for their customers to make effective use of their time within the store through well displayed items, good flow to the store layout and minimised queues. Jang et al (2018) agree and suggest from their research that fashion store retailers should focus on environment order and particularly in the area of merchandise with products presented in a structured way. Ong et al (2018) argue that retailers need to create appealing store environments which encourage desirable actions from their shoppers such as spending more time and money. The researcher agrees and suggests these value-based retailers could achieve these requirements through two broader management focus areas which were frequently expressed from the participants. 1. Department Values (sections within the store) and 2. Delivery Values (service elements which improve the experience).

1. Department Values

The different departments or ‘sections’ of the store was an important value for the participants of the study as these main zones of the store were where the orientation points of the store could be found and within the different departments six additional values would be activated: Merchandise, Variety, Displays, Tidiness, Customers/Crowding, Layout/Space.

Merchandise available at both stores appeared to be a good motivator for participants in that they usually found the items being presented to be interesting and a motivation to visit the stores. The regular rotation of items through the changing trends at Retailer 1, plus the staple items available were important to customers, whereas at Retailer 2 the sheer randomness of items from visit to visit was also a motivator for participants. Ligas and Chaudhuri (2012) suggest the term called ‘Perceived Merchandise Value’ (PMV) and that consumers can gain pleasure from merchandise value in value-based stores because they do not have other hedonic distractions in the store environment, for example, store ambience. This links particularly with stores which have a more utilitarian style to the store design where the focus is more on the variety of merchandise on display.

The merchandise stocked by both retailers appeared to be immersive for participants in that there were so many items to look at, pick up and potential select for purchase. This supports the work of Baker et al (2002), Mohd-Ramly and Omar (2017), Moreau (2020) and Zhou et al (2021) who all advocate the importance of merchandise within the shopping experience.

Variety of merchandise at both retailers appears to at a good level in that their stores are very big and offer a wide range of products in different categories. Supporting this notion is Jain and Bagdare (2009 p.42) who argue that *'availability of a wide assortment of required products of preferred brands with latest style and designs is essential for fulfilling primary motives of shopping'*.

Triantafillidou et al (2017) considered the effect of retail characteristics on in-store shopping experiences in fashion retail stores which included the amount of variety of merchandise available. They suggested that retailers should pay particular attention to their merchandise variety to increase positive shopping experiences. Triantafillidou et al (2017) contended that browsing and seeking to find items through the variety of merchandise can create excitement and positive sentiment towards the shopping experience, particularly with adventure seeking shoppers (Rintamäki et al 2006).

However, just increasing variety is not necessarily the answer to improving the shopping experience and retailers also need to be aware that the huge variety of items can be overwhelming for the customers. Having too much merchandise on display is a negative factor (Jang et al 2018). Within this study, participants particularly spoke of being overwhelmed at times by the amount of merchandise to look through and that if they were going to Retailer 2 then they ideally needed to be in the right kind of mood to go looking. This concurs with McCormick et al (2014) who argued that retailers sell too much merchandise for customers to be able to be clear about the offer due to over-stimulation. Similarly, the research conducted by Triantafillidou et al (2017) who identified that too much variety can cause customers to be overloaded with the number of items available to purchase in the time available which can lead to negative experiences. As a result, they called for retailers to pay attention to the variety strategy selected. This issue is also cited by Childs et al (2020) who suggest that retailers can focus too much on having an abundance of merchandise in the store and instead they should be creating engaging experiences for the customers which give them novel things to do.

Displays for both retailers were an important aspect of the shopping experience particularly where these had been put together in a way in which the displays created a positive impact upon the participant when they saw it. Positive impactful displays were a value described more clearly for Retailer 1 and was expressed by several participants in the context of the colours. Colours have been researched by academics since before Kotler (1973) first proposed the significance of this aspect of the store. Babin et al (2003) investigated colour and shopping intentions and found that for fashion-oriented stores, blue interiors are associated with more favourable evaluations, marginally greater excitement and, in turn, produced higher store patronage intentions as well as higher purchase intentions compared to orange interiors. Deb (2012) and Kesari and Atulkar (2016) identified that customers are more motivated to make purchases in stores with attractive colours which make them feel positive and comfortable. Jang et al (2018) suggest that within fashion retail stores the colours can be used to manipulate the visual complexity of the store environment. Dalmoro (2019) propose that colours are part of the physical and sensory environmental triggers within the store environment

and Dang et al (2021) also argue that store designers and managers need to innovate store merchandise display using colours.

From another positive perspective, customers may be quite excited about the beginning of the shopping visit if stores can get their entrance displays right as customers arrive to the store as this may make customers think about what they might be able to find around the store (Han et al 2021). Participant A spoke of the colours in Retailer 1 that *'hit you when you go in'* and Participant X explained how they were always looking *'for that wow'* as they arrived at Retailer 2. In contrast, the negative aspects of displays for both retailers were when participants arrived and were overwhelmed by the amount of stock on display and the realisation that there was so much to look through. Similarly, if the store was crowded or untidy with displays piled-up with clothes or in a heap on the floor, this could set the tone for the customer that that the shopping experience was going to potentially be chaotic, noisy, stressful and would not flow particularly well.

Tidiness is an important value as many of the participants talked of seeing untidy, overwhelming, overcrowded stores which were characterised as *'jumble sales'*. Maggioni (2016) in a study into grocery retail found that tidiness and organisation as the most important functional store attributes to customers. Similarly, Backstrom and Johansson (2017) suggested that the customer's impression of tidiness within the store as one of the most important components of the experience.

Research by Jang et al (2018 p.221) found that within fashion stores there is a *'positive linear relationship between visual complexity and approach behaviours among them, but only when the environment was highly ordered'*. Whilst the stores do appear to be connecting with the visual sense of their customers, the narratives included a lot of negative dialogue with regards to what they were seeing. This clearly suggests that some of the customers are not viewing the store experience in a positive way when they are seeing areas which are not ordered. Retailers need to be mindful of these negative connotations and put into place mediators which can perhaps reduce the impact of the negative visual elements.

Customers/Crowding also appears to impact upon the time that participants have for shopping, particularly in Retailer 1 which was emphasised in several images. Machleit (1994) proposed that perceived retail crowding was two-dimensional (human and spatial) which was later supported by Eroglu et al (2005) who also suggested the same two dimensions. These two dimensions appeared in the narratives of some of the participants who indicated this as a negative aspect to their shopping experience. Typically, the very busy times in the store would amplify the tight spaces between the displays as expressed by Participant J who said: *'I'd probably say excuse me or try and like Nussle in'*.

Stores described in this study were too crowded at times during the week and every weekend which perhaps needs to be managed better by having even bigger stores, changes to store layout and displays or

some form of outside queuing system. Moharana and Pradhan (2020 p.147) agree and suggest that *'Store Managers should better manage the level of crowding during peak hours as optimum crowding enhances positive shopping outcomes'*. Therefore, from the images selected and narratives by some of participants, overcrowded stores are not a popular aspect of the shopping experience and can create the feeling of avoidance to certain areas of the store that they want to visit or may even motivate them to go from the store and return another time. The solution to this for Retailer 1 and for that matter Retailer 2 who also experience very busy times in their stores is interesting because a busy store is essential for the value-based business model they have both implemented.

Layout/Space between the displays and departments is an antecedent for the way in which customers will be able to navigate around the layout of the store and in busy crowded times a lack of space to move and browse created negative overwhelming feelings for participants. Previous studies such as Newman and Patel (2004 p.775) have also suggested that layout has a significant influence on the shopping experience as they aid the ease of shopping, and they state that *'layouts help create the store atmosphere that is crucial for success and a key determinant of patronage'*. Similarly, Orth et al (2016 p.204) propose *'visually complex environments can be detrimental to the experience because of the increased load they place on customers'* and this perspective is echoed by Mintel (2019) who suggest that customers are feeling overwhelmed by there being too many clothes on display. Childs et al (2020) also indicate customers still want ample space within a store and that retailers could be having a negative impact upon their shopping experiences. The amount of space allocated between displays also has the potential to aid or negatively impact upon the flow of the shopping visit, particularly during very busy times when some participants expressed their frustration of not being able to get where they wanted to due to other shoppers.

Layout of the store is very important according to Ong et al (2018) and similarly with this study some participants described the store environment as a 'maze'. Ong et al (2018) also discuss that the layout of the store can positively or negatively affect the feelings of the customers and they cite several studies (Backstrom and Johansson 2006; Turley and Milliman 2000; Bitner 1992) who have argued that the correct layout of the store allows customers to orientate themselves and promotes a feeling of control. Dalmoro et al (2019) also suggest this as an issue citing Ainsworth and Foster (2017) who suggested that literature in the area of shopping experience posits that comfort in the store is related with the layout and physical attributes of the facilities. Park and Zhang (2019 p.305) also contended that *'as the core of spatial organization, circulation layout has a bearing on customer experience'* whilst Dang et al (2021) also propose that store layout development is essential through correct selection of store layouts creating a free flow.

2. Delivery Values

The way in which the retailers deliver the shopping experience is seen as an overriding factor of the customer's perceptions of whether this has positive or negative values. Linked to the core value of Delivery of the shopping experience are six values: Convenience, Baskets, Staff/Service, Sustainability, Checkouts/Queuing and Paper Bags.

Convenience is a value where retailers need to make the stores, the departments and the service provided to customers not only accessible but also convenient to use during the shopping experience. Berry et al (2002b) contended that service convenience is essential for the service provider in developing service delivery to consumers and that it was linked to the consumer's perception to the time and effort required to use the service. Reimers and Clulow (2009) argued that convenience had been largely overlooked by academics despite being something they felt was a fundamental part of the retail format. These authors suggested that having stores which served as a one stop shop were more favourable to customers as it offered them more convenience. This view echoes the narratives of participants in this study who appreciated that within both retailers there was a degree of convenience from the number of items they could get in one store without the need to go and browse the rest of the high street.

Reimers and Clulow (2009) proposed that there are three main areas linked to the importance of achieving convenience through having a one stop shop: extended shopping hours, an enclosed servicescape and the proximity of the store to the customers. These three areas all fit within the requirements of the two retailers with both stores offering extended opening times. Both retailers have enclosed stores however, McCormick et al (2014) note that Retailer 1 stores are not always in prime locations whereas Retailer 2 was recognised by participants as being convenient for having out-of-town stores.

Baskets for both retailers at the front of the store were emphasised by some participants as being a part of the experience. Within Retailer 1, the baskets were described as '*Mary Poppins' bag*' (PB) as they were very deep allowing for a lot of items to be carried around as they shop. Within Retailer 2, the baskets were perceived differently and were described as somewhere to store or hide items found because they knew the item would be selected by another customer if they did not keep it with them (PX). Not all items that were put in the basket at Retailer 2 were necessarily purchased at the checkouts as participants may acknowledge they had selected too many items for their planned budget. In the arrival at Retailer 1 and Retailer 2 the baskets at the front of the store had a particular significance.

However, there appears to be very little research focusing on baskets within the retail setting. From the researcher's efforts checking through the various journal search engines, other publications which have suggested that having adequate baskets to enhance the shopping experience, particularly in fashion stores have not been found. Additional research in this area could be explored further.

Staff/Service included aspects such as the level of knowledge that some staff had about the items they stock, the level of staff enthusiasm towards answering an enquiry and staff members speaking negatively about each other within earshot of the customers (PV). These opinions support the research by Petermans et al (2013) who highlighted the importance of the level of attention and the behaviour of store personnel. Similarly, Backstrom and Johansson (2017) argued that a crucial resource for retailers is the competence and behaviour of the store staff.

Support for finding items around the store was not really a particular common aspect of the shopping experience for both retailers which suggests customers may be quite happy to use their own initiative around the store. However, there were some contrasting views regarding Retailer 2 which were shown in the images presented by Participant O who selected 'Miss Helpful' as an image to represent the staff at Retailer 2 who she felt were helpful and did not get in the way of their shopping experience. Contrastingly, Participant V selected an image of one with their head in a book always looking at a stock list. Training for staff is still important for good customer service and this was echoed by the study completed by Arnold et al (2005).

Staffing levels at both retailers did not really feature in the interviews and it appeared for Retailer 1 that despite there being a constant queue at the checkouts it always appeared to be moving and there was lots of cashiers available. This is an important aspect of customer service as Childs et al (2020) point out that staffing levels are important for creating high-quality personal experiences.

Sustainability and Ethics issues are values raised by participants in slightly different contexts for the two retailers regarding how products on display had been manufactured and the impact on the environment of the sheer number of items on display. However, it appeared that if the participants were better informed about what ethics and sustainability initiatives the company was doing this would have alleviated their concerns and feelings of guilt when browsing and purchasing items. Implementing marketing communications within the two stores which lets customers know what steps the company has taken and how they are trying to address their impacts upon the environment could have a positive impact upon the shopping experience. Lehner (2015 p.389) supports this approach and suggests *that 'the store, as point-of-interaction between retailers and consumers fulfils an important role in the process of achieving sustainable consumption, not only as a place of physical exchange, but also as a place for exchange of information, ideas and understanding of what it means to consume sustainably'*.

Similarly, Fuentes and Fredriksson (2016) highlight that in the sector of sustainability service in retail, there was a lack of studies which focus on the role that in-store service delivery has in the promotion of sustainability. Saber and Weber (2019) in a study into supermarkets and discounts argue that in-store communications regarding sustainability and having sustainable products on display or providing recyclable bags has a direct impact upon customers' perceptions of the company's ethics and their consumption decisions, plus a positive effect on consumers' attitudes towards the brand and visiting the store.

Roggeveen et al (2021) also draw attention to this topic and argue that retailers need to go beyond being sustainable and express those initiatives effectively to the consumer, however, the authors do not suggest any particular strategies for achieving this. Whereas Kumar and Yadav (2021) go even further and suggest marketers in the clothing retail sector need to ensure that information about sustainable green clothing is easily accessible and that a suitable digital marketing strategy would be a place to begin. In addition, having staff who are adequately trained with the knowledge about green products could improve positive sentiment from customers towards green clothing purchases. Therefore, as part of the delivery of the shopping experience it is proposed that retailers make information regarding their sustainability and ethics initiatives easily available to customers to reduce or remove any negative sentiment when purchasing items from the store.

Checkouts/Queuing are important part of the shopping experience and for both stores the checkouts were a feature of the experience for some of the participants, particularly more prevalent in Retailer 1.

Moharana and Pradhan (2020) argue that Retail Managers should be flexible with the checkouts to minimise queuing and to change timings of sales promotions to move crowds from busy to non-busy periods. However, this suggestion is not necessarily suitable for Retailer 1 as they appear from the narratives of the participants to have an effective checkout section and do not have daily 'sales promotions' as such. The checkout area within the two stores appears to follow a similar system of having one queue which calls the customers to next available cashier. However, in Retailer 1 particularly their stores have checkout areas which appear to add some additional value to the shopping experience with the items that are placed which encourage an impulse purchase. The checkout areas were not really mentioned by Retailer 2 participants which suggests they did not experience long queues on a regular basis.

Paper Bags provided by Retailer 1 were a regular talking point from some the participants in their interviews as they allowed the participants to consider how much they bought from the shopping visit and the paper bags form part of the extended experience when returning home. The paper bags appeared to be welcomed by participants in that they felt they were more sustainable and could be put into the recycling. Retailers have been charging for plastic bags for several years since the introduction of the plastic carrier bag charge in 2015, whereas these paper bags are provided free and

have a symbolic significance to the shopping experience in that participants were usually provided with several bags for all of their items. However, very little appears to be researched about the significance of paper bags linked to the shopping experience as the researcher was only able to find publications focusing on issues with plastic bags. Therefore, this is an area for potential future research.

Paper bags are clearly an aspect that participants noticed about their shopping experience and these thoughts were generally positive towards the number of bags provided by the store assistants to carry everything home, their availability without any cost, the feel of the bags to carry, their sustainability credentials and easy recycling.

6.5 Time, Effort and Flow all affect the experience

Three human values of Time, Effort and Flow were notable from the narratives of the participants as they appeared to be values which were potentially impacted either positively or negatively by the shopping experience. However, although any areas of the shopping experience potentially affect each of these three values, they appeared to be slightly more linked to specific core values in the shopping experience than others.

Time (linked to Departments)

Time was a factor for both retailers where many of the participants expressed the need to allocate a significant amount of their time to be able to browse around each of the relevant departments given the large size of the stores and scope of the merchandise on display. Reimers and Clulow (2009) argue that time convenience within retail formats is the most important factor for customers when deciding on where to choose to shop. Whereas Anteblian et al (2013 p.11) suggested within their shopping experience framework that there is a '*relation to time*' dimension which concerns the amount of control the customer exercises over the duration of the experience. Petermans et al (2013 p.4) propose that '*customer experiences are spread over a period of time (including search, purchase, consumption and after-sale phases of the experiences)*'. They also note that a customer's time is a subjective characteristic of the shopping experience which is outside of the control of the retailer or store designer.

Participants that were not having or allocating enough time to complete their shopping experience whilst expending a lot of effort trying to navigate the store, potentially resulted in them leaving the store frustrated by the experience. Helmeffalk (2019 p.255) argues that having enough time to browse within the store is important and '*that the time consumers spend browsing, searching and touching products can increase the chances of making a purchase*'.

From a different perspective, the works of Arnold et al (2005) and Dalmoro et al (2019) suggest that an over-crowded store can create a perception for customers that they are ‘losing time’ because they calculate that they would not be able to look at everything they want to, the dressing rooms will be busy, and they will have to wait in a queue at the checkouts. This was also echoed by some of the participants in this study who expressed frustration for not having enough time to see everything they wanted to in the store because there were so many items on display within each of the different departments or because the store was overcrowded and untidy. Whilst for any retailer the challenge of trying to understand how much time and effort each customer is using when shopping is almost impossible the importance of making the shopping experience as easy as it possible is essential.

Providing customers with the opportunity to have some ‘time out’ in the store for a coffee or lunch appears to allow them to revitalise for a while and then get back to the areas of the store that they perhaps have not seen yet or that were previously overcrowded. However, bigger stores required more time to browse and to visit every section so potentially a feeling of frustration may occur due to the customer not allocating enough time to view all of the departments they want to.

Effort (linked to Discovery)

Participants at both retailers discussed the need to put in some level of effort as they went around the store, and the context of this, would vary between the participants and the stores. Some expressed being occasionally overwhelmed by the amount of effort required to go around the whole store and both retailers were not seen as stores where participants would be able to just quickly ‘pop in’ for something. Previous research in the arena of value has also suggested that time and effort are a significant factor for consumers. Gallarza and Saura (2006) also argue that time and effort may supersede the traditional monetary concerns that consumers have. Similarly, Resnick et al (2014) highlight time and effort as sacrifices customers make in the high street retail experience.

In Retailer 1, the effort required would either be to look through the displays which could be quite untidy, particularly during very busy times of the week. Other customers in the store standing in the way or congregating in certain areas would also require some participants to change their route through the store or make them need to come back to a display later on, or ask another customer to move. Within Retailer 2, most of the effort required was needed for looking through the store displays. The busyness of the store was not particularly a factor, but the untidiness of the store was a similar negative aspect in the shopping experience although this was mainly due to the way in which the merchandise had been put out by the store assistants. This amount of searching effort at Retailer 2 may have required some participants to take a bit of a ‘time out’ from browsing at certain points and to do this they may have moved to another section such as the handbags as they found this area’s colours calming. However, any effort put in by the participants appears to have been rewarded by the discovery of items that have been found through browsing and searching. If an item discovered

required a level of effort to find, then this reward was seen as something of an accomplishment as it had not been found easily or immediately and therefore the participant had in some ways - earned the discovery.

Furthermore, another factor which needs to be acknowledged with regards to effort is the customer's mood upon arrival as some participants expressed that on some occasions, they would feel excited about the shopping visit and energised to begin browsing and on other occasions they did not have the same level of motivation for the visit. This echoes the work shown in previous research by Nasiri (2012) that mood is a potential moderator for several aspects of the shopping experience including: the perception of the store environment and other customers, the level of effort the customer is willing to give to the shopping experience, the amount of time they will stay in the store (Wakefield and Baker 1998), willingness to make a purchase (Baker et al 1992) and their repatronage intentions (Nasiri 2012). It is also important to acknowledge that either a positive, negative or neutral mood upon arrival could be changed once the customer is within the store and shopping experience is underway. This was articulated directly and indirectly by several participants who felt that they needed to either '*be in the mood*' (PV) to begin with when shopping in Retailer 2 or that the Retailer 2 store environment could change their mood: '*if you don't see something within the first few minutes of being in there your interest plummets*' (PX).

Gillison and Reynolds (2018) suggest the term 'search effort' where the shopper is required to find items they are looking for which may be negatively impacted when they are required to put in more effort than they initially expected to have to do. They argued that if a customer expects to be able to easily navigate and find a product they are looking for, then putting in a lot of effort while they are shopping might be viewed with negative sentiment and regret. Therefore, retailers need to be aware of the levels of effort that customers are putting into their shopping visit and try to make the process of finding the items they are looking for as easy as possible. Gillison and Reynolds (2018 p.705) agree and suggest that '*retailers would be wise to determine the maximum level of search effort that shoppers will tolerate before search disconfirmation is increased and retail outcomes are negatively impacted*'. They also suggest that '*retailers should determine the tipping point whereby search effort is no longer tolerable (or enjoyable) to shoppers because it exceeds the shopper's expectations*'. However, whilst these suggestions could potentially improve the shopping experience, trying to understand what each customer would consider to be a level of search effort may be impossible to gauge. Gillison and Reynolds (2018) propose that simple solutions such as avoiding out-of-stock items and better signage in-store could reduce the search effort and search regret.

Flow (linked to Delivery)

Flow of the shopping experience was ultimately related to the time and effort required in both retailers and was generally impacted by the way in which the store was organised, the ability of participants to

get to the stores in first place, to move around the different departments, the level of signposting, staff support, queuing at the checkouts, and as previous noted, the amount of space available between the different displays (Ong et al 2018).

Ong et al (2018) suggest that stores that are perceived as confusing, without a logical flow to the layout or are overly crowded will develop a negative affective state in customers. Positive and negative feeling expressed by the participants in approach and avoidance narratives link to some of the very earliest of theories in the literature review such as the behavioural responses in the Mehrabian and Russell's (1974 p.8) framework of environmental psychology which stated that *'physical or social stimuli in the environment directly affect the emotional state of a person, thereby influencing his (sic) behaviours in it'*.

At the very busy times flow became more of a negative aspect as some participants would find trying to push past other people quite stressful and may motivate them to avoid certain areas of the store, move to other departments or even choose to come back another time. The randomness of some of the departments made it feel like a bit of maze and this confusion was a bigger impact for customers who did not shop at the store regularly.

The flow of the shopping experience can be linked to the way in which the retailer delivers the shopping experience and begins at the point of which the customer arrives at the store. As previously discussed in section 6.4, the convenience of the store links to its accessibility and the first impressions the customers have when they arrive. Flow of the shopping experience can be impacted upon by their ability to navigate around the store, find, select and carry the items they want to purchase, the ease with which they can pay for the items at the checkouts and then exit the store. Nguyen et al (2012 p.268) concur and propose that *'flow is the optimal experience that the consumer is after'*.

6.6 Extending the shopping experience beyond the store

Gabrielli et al (2013 p.221) argue that *'the positive effects of fast fashion cannot be resolved either by the in-store experience or the act of making a purchase. Rather, the positive effects reside in the post-purchase phase, soothing consumers' doubts and remorse'*. Similar to this, the participant interviews in this study highlighted that for some the shopping experience continues beyond the store environment and the items purchased became something shared with others. This continuation of the experience was particularly prevalent with Retailer 1 where the post-store experience would potentially be soon after the visit to the Retailer 1 store because they would not want to walk around the town or city for much longer carrying so many bags. Participant J said: *'but if I know I'm going to*

Retailer 1, Retailer 1 will always be my last shop because I know I'm going to come out with a lot of stuff so I don't want to then go walking round all other shops'.

The post-store experience also played a significant part of the overall experience for some Retailer 1 participants in that they would enjoy opening all their bags and reviewing the volume of items they had purchased, plus the range of different items they had found that day. Participant G said: *'when you get home and you kind of like you know you empty your bags out and you kind of routing around and you say, 'oh right so what did I buy today'?* This reviewing of the merchandise purchased experience may have been shared with another family member. Participant L explained that: *'I definitely like getting everything out and seeing what I've, and remembering what I have bought because you know there's lots of items in it and showing people what I've bought'.*

With Retailer 2, the extended experience was slightly different in that fewer items may have been purchased but these items could be considered quite special, unique or a great bargain and the shopping visit would be something less frequent than Retailer 1, so would be seen as more of 'day out'. Participant S said: *'that I would have earmarked this as a 'day out' so we would be very relaxed about how much time we spent there'.* The items purchased at Retailer 2 were shared with others in a different way in that participants may tell their friends over the phone, through social media or when they next went to the office about them. Participant S explained that: *'I would actually ring my friends about it and say 'guess what' or you know people say 'oh that's nice' and I say 'I can't possibly tell you where it came from'.* Retailer 2 items purchased were also discussed more in the context of being bought as gifts for family and friends, so the act of giving these items to others was part of the post-store experience.

Another aspect of the post-store experience stage for both retailers was the possibility of gaining some form of recognition for the items that had been purchased. This could be recognition gained in different ways from immediate recognition from other family members at home to a later recognition when the item was worn by the participant coming from a work colleague or friend. Depending on the circumstances of a later recognition for the item, the participant may or may not have told the person complementing them where they had purchased it from or if it was a particular bargain that they discovered.

The post-store aspect of the shopping experience is potentially very interesting as it adds another dimension to the way the customers perceive their shopping experience and extends the values of accomplishment and the positive feelings of excitement and happiness.

6.7 Visualising the Customer Experience: Conceptual Framework

Backstrom and Johansson (2017 p.244) called for a new theoretical framework to understand the consumers' experiences in physical retail stores by arguing that existing frameworks were '*no longer sufficient, neither to describe what different store aspects that contribute in forming consumers' experiences, nor to account for how consumers experience and interact with such settings*'.

Before creating the conceptual framework from the perspective of how managers could plan their approach towards designing and delivering an improved experience for customers, the researcher would like to visualise the customer experience from the narratives of the participants of this study (shown in Figure 6.4). Following this visualisation of the shopping stages these could be developed to inform a conceptual framework.

Tynan and McKechnie (2009) proposed there are three stages in the customer's holistic experience (pre-experience, experience, post-experience). However, the interviews in this study highlighted that whilst the participant still needs to travel to the store and arrive at the main entrance, the process of thinking about the shopping experience could begin away from the store, perhaps even days before going there, in the context of thinking about the retailer for a specific item or the feeling of anticipation for going to see what new items were available. The researcher proposes that there are three distinctive stages to the shopping experience at the physical store which have a mixture of linear and non-linear aspects:

1. **Pre-Store Arrival (non-linear)** - similar to Antecedents (Anteblian et al 2013) and Pre-Purchase (Lemon and Verhoef 2016; Grewal and Roggeveen 2020).
2. **In-Store Experience (linear and non-linear)** – similar to Experience (Anteblian et al (2013) and Purchase (Lemon and Verhoef 2016; Grewal and Roggeveen 2020).
3. **Post-Store Experience (linear)** – similar to Results of Experience (Anteblian et al (2013) and Post-Purchase (Lemon and Verhoef 2016; Grewal and Roggeveen 2020).

Lemon and Verhoef (2016) argue that discussion has now suggested that these three main stages are non-linear, and customers may be looping within the stages. Similarly, Grewal and Roggeveen (2020) also suggest that there may be looping elements and jumping between the stages.

The visualisation of the customer experience from the perspective of the study's participants (shown in Figure 6.4) emphasises the three shopping experience stages through the visualisation images and values expressed in participant interviews.

The Pre-Store Arrival stage shows how the customer may visualise their shopping experiences and values through a montage taken from the interview with Participant N.

Within the In-Store Experience stage the circles are developed from the narratives of the participants in the context of the key themes within the areas of Retail Experience Factors (REF), Perceived Customer Values (PCV) and Human Values (HV). These circles within Figure 6.4 are the REF's, PCV's or HV's which are potentially happening individually or simultaneously at various points during the shopping experience. Orbiting around the three main clusters of circles are the factors of Time, Effort and Flow which as previously acknowledged affect the shopping experience. The customer could be thinking about the experience and using their main senses of see, touch and hear.

The Post-Store Experience stage highlights that the customer might be extending the shopping experience through their thoughts and discussions regarding the items they have purchased. However, this figure does not indicate what the practical aspects are for the retailers in the three stages and therefore the researcher proposes that a further conceptual framework is developed from this.

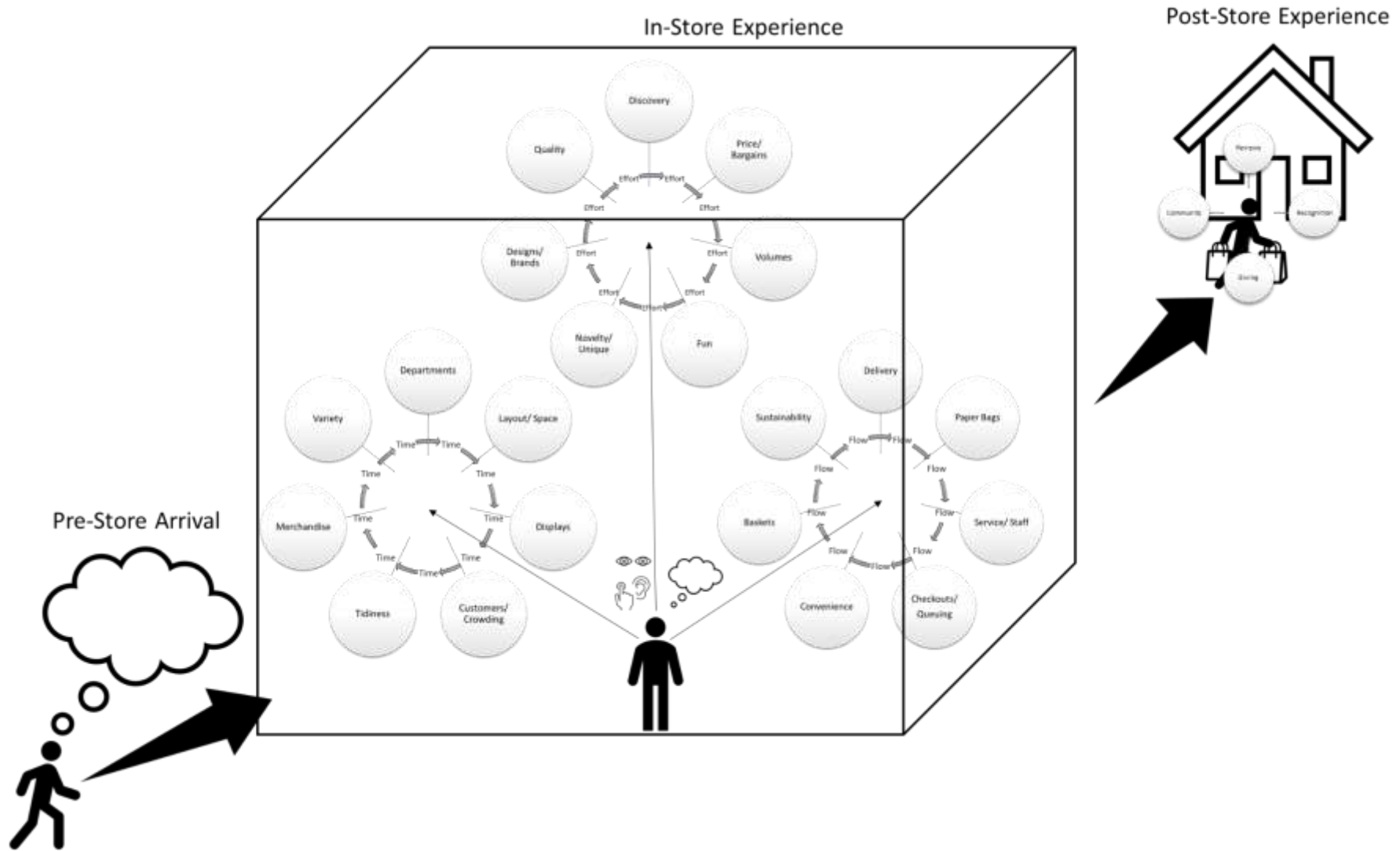


Figure 6.4 'Customer shopping stages visualisation'.

Conceptual Framework: Pre-Store Arrival Stage

Pre-Store Arrival is a non-linear stage in the shopping experience in the context that it occurs at any time before the customer arrives at the store and is essentially their thoughts and feelings about aspects of the store experience.



Figure 6.5 Pre-Store Arrival stage of the shopping experience conceptual framework.

The Pre-Store Arrival stage was added as the researcher noticed how some participants expressed thinking about the Retailer 1 or Retailer 2 store they would usually visit. These thoughts could be triggered when they realised they needed to purchase something, for example, a new coat. For example, Participant I described the ‘lightbulb moment’ where they would think about Retailer 1 and how they would probably have what they wanted, or it could be that they were simply wondering what that store might have in stock this week. Participants Q and X also talked of thinking at times about what Retailer 2 might have in store this week.

Supporting this idea of customers thinking about the experience is Tynan and McKechnie (2009 p.509) who proposed in their three-stage model that there were activities in the pre-experience stage that customers would be doing in that ‘*customers anticipate and prepare for consumption by searching for information, imagining how the experience might be*’. Dixon et al (2017) also suggest that the anticipation of the customer before a consumption experience taking place in the mind of the customer can involve imagining what is in store before an event can enhance the overall experience as it evokes something called ‘savoring’. Dang et al (2021 p.786) concur and suggest that ‘*advertising and other marketing communication programs should emphasize an enjoyable shopping trip and different hedonic aspects of retail stores’ atmosphere*’.

The Pre-Store Arrival stage of the framework shown in Figure 6.5 initially highlights that retailers would need to consider the types of communication used towards the customer during the time between store visits. Understanding of the ways in which customers construct a visual representation of the stores, which is has been shown in the images collected and the montages created by this study,

suggests retailers could develop their marketing communications to connect with customers at a deeper metaphorical level.

Within the conceptual framework it is acknowledged that prior to arrival the customers could be receiving some form of communication which reminds them to return to store and keeps the retailer at the front of their mind. Badrinarayanan and Becerra (2019) concur and argue that retailers need to generate strategies which bring a store to the top of the mind more effortlessly. As previously considered in section 5.3.1 the metaphorical representations expressed by customers could be the foundation of some of the marketing communications used in the pre-arrival stage to build positive expectations. Dixon et al (2017) agree and argue that service designers need to create anticipation and influence the customer’s expectations before the experience through communication.

However, The Pre-Store Arrival stage is a very complex and intangible part of the shopping experience but is fascinating in the possibility of understanding more about it. Chaney et al (2018 p.411) supports this highlighting that little attention has been given to the pre-phase of shopping and that *‘future research could provide considerable value by analyzing the anticipation of the experience and, more specifically, the pre-experiential value derived from the fantasy and imagination of the experience’*.

Conceptual Framework: In-Store Experience Stage

In-Store Experience stage is both a linear and a non-linear ‘multidimensional’ stage in the shopping experience where the experiential components, are potentially ‘in play’ at any point in time. These components are activated as the customer makes their way around the store browsing and selecting items of merchandise, navigating the various departments in the store, avoiding busy crowded areas, deciding at which point they have got what they wanted and making their way to the checkouts and exit.

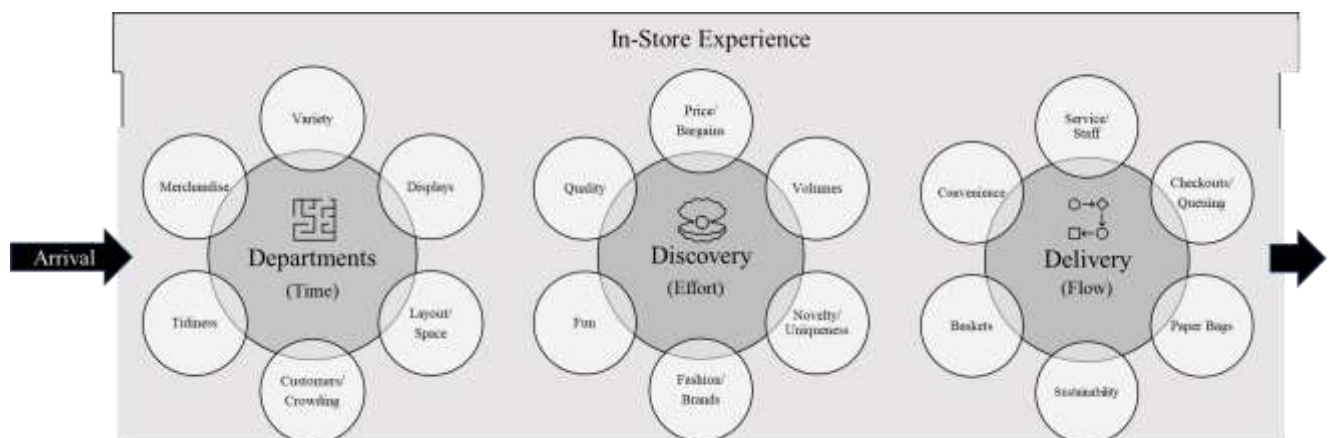


Figure 6.6 In-Store Experience stage of the shopping experience framework.

Backstrom and Johansson (2017) argue that consumers' in-store experiences as being multidimensional in character. Therefore, the actual in-store experience has a looping aspect (Grewal and Roggeveen 2020) where customers are experiencing aspects at different times through the visit. Customers may have planned or listed things they want to purchase but because of the distractions and crowding they may have to go to another section in the store and come back. Customers could find themselves going into other departments and therefore experiencing different merchandise, textures, temperatures and noise levels. Yoon (2013) also concurs and argues that the experiential aspects are non-linear and interdependent upon each another.

The findings of this study also suggest that the in-store experience became almost non-linear as participants would be moving from section to section, being distracted by other items and customers, choosing sometimes to have a break at the less overcrowded departments or coffee shops. Participants talked about a wide range of activities they would be doing including going to a department then moving to another, browsing, picking up, avoiding areas, finding, checking, trying on, carrying, queuing, waiting and paying. The researcher noticed these stories were not linear in their description as the participant might be distracted by new items, may have to avoid an area they wanted to visit because it was too busy and might become overwhelmed at various points requiring the need to take a moment to re-energise.

This in-store experience stage within the conceptual framework of the shopping experience includes some similar elements from the model presented by Verhoef (2009) (previously shown in figure 2.9). However, despite Verhoef's model indicating the links to the retail setting the model misses several important elements found within this research study. Areas which are similar to this study are the Price, Assortment, Service Interface and aspects of the Retail Atmosphere. In-particular, Verhoef's model has the customer experience as part of the linear model which appears to suggest that it is part of a management strategy (Verhoef 2009).

Within this study's conceptual framework shown in Figure 6.6 there are three core in-store experience values (the 3D's) which consists of Departments (Time), Discovery (Effort) and Delivery (Flow). These have been selected as the basis of the three main values of the model as the other six values connected to each of core values are part of the broader values in the experience.

Departments (Time)

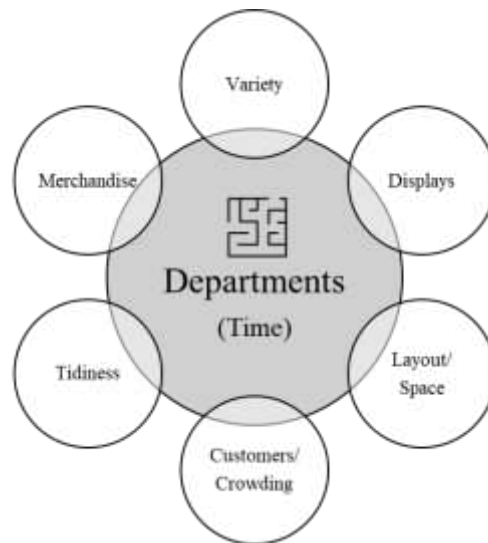


Figure 6.7 Core Value: Departments.

At the point of arrival, the framework shows first the core value of Departments of the store as this is arguably the first major aspect the customers will see when they arrive, and this major aspect of the framework continues throughout the shopping experience as customers move around the store and visit different departments. Within this area of the in-store experience stage the researcher proposes that there are six connected elements; Merchandise, Displays, Tidiness, Variety, Customers/Crowding, Layout/Space which are the experiential factors which customers value and need to be monitored/addressed by retail managers.

Within the core aspect of the Departments is the important context of Time and was seen as either a positive or negative experience factor particularly if participants were not able to allocate enough time for their shopping visit. Clement et al (2013 p.236) propose that '*a consumer shopping under time pressure may shorten the search process paying attention to fewer products*'. A lack of time may have meant a participant left the store feeling frustrated or stressed by not having the purchased the items they wanted to get or that they were thinking there may have been items within the store that were 'undiscovered' from the experience. Clement et al (2013) also suggest that when consumers are shopping under their own time pressure and use a lot of time in a section within the store, they can feel that they are wasting time.

Although the customer will at some point need to go to the checkouts to pay for the items they have selected, this Departments value of the shopping experience is non-linear in that the customer is drawn towards different departments and items based upon the attraction of the displays, the level of motivation they have to browse, the amount of time they have allocated for the shopping visit, distractions such as new items and departments and avoidance of busy areas.

The department values are those that need to be met by the retailer as a minimum. With each shopping encounter, they should ensure that the variety of merchandise on display is regularly updated, displays are attractive and kept tidy throughout the whole trading day, customers and the level of crowding is managed, and the store has a suitable layout and enough space for customers to be able to get to the areas they want to visit and browse. The Department's six experiential values are mainly more utilitarian than the second core value of Discovery.

Discovery (Effort)



Figure 6.8 Core Value: Discovery.

The second stage is the core value of Discovery as this appeared to be a point at which the shopping experience became an exciting achievement and an important point which was not something the participants experienced every time. The factor of Effort was added to the core value of Discovery as this was articulated by participants and linked to the value of finding items, they felt were special. The amount of effort the participant was having to use to get around the store, browse and select the items they wanted and the flow of the experience which was typically impacted by the number of customers in the store and the layout/space available around the displays.

Where participants felt that they were using a lot of effort without getting the items they wanted, they would express this as frustration which may demotivate them to consider coming back another time. This was similar to the research conducted by Gillison and Reynolds (2018) previously noted.

The experiential values linked to the core value of Discovery are the price/bargains as items considered to be a 'good deal' or 'great price' were very much part of the discovery value that participants expressed. This is because finding an item that was fashionable or a particular brand was only part of the discovery and to make it even more special obtaining that item at a great price was

what made it even better. Items that were discovered needed to have a level of quality that was seen as acceptable depending on the type of item and its price. Items which were perhaps only a few pounds but were the latest design or fashions might not be expected to wear as long as items which had been discounted, but were still a reasonable amount to purchase. In stores where prices are generally low across all departments such as Retailer 1 the volume of purchased items the customers take with them can form part of the discovery value as it may make them feel like they have achieved a lot of from the shopping visit. Where items could be considered as particularly rare or unique customers may feel that the item discovered is more of a ‘one-off’ and less likely to be worn by others. If the process of finding the discovery items could be made fun, then this value added to the positive feeling linked to the effort put in searching for it.

However, as previously noted in section 6.5 the customer’s mood during the experience is an important variable to include into the overall shopping experience. This was highlighted in the interviews as participants would need to be in the right mood to go and discover items.

Delivery (Flow)

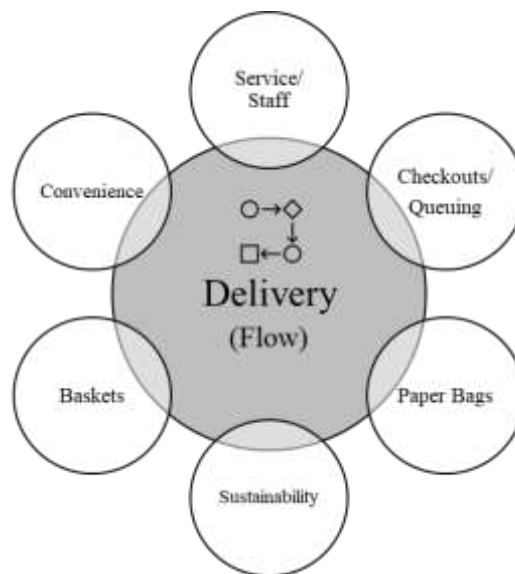


Figure 6.9 Core Value: Delivery.

The third core value of Delivery has the added factor of flow as the flow of the In-Store Experience stage. This is important because customers do not want to feel like there are any barriers to their shopping visit, as they can cause frustration and even make them choose to come back another time. What is also important in this section of the framework is that the ‘energy of the visit’ needs to be positive (Ong et al 2018, Moharana and Pradhan 2020). This is partly achieved by ensuring good flow so that time and effort put in by the customer are used effectively.

According to the core value of Delivery within the conceptual framework, retailers need to begin by making the stores convenient to visit either through the locations, the opening hours and the facilities available within the store. The customer's ability to browse, find, carry and purchase items could be enhanced through suitable baskets and/or trolleys available from different areas within the store as customers may choose not to use a basket to begin with but then find later that they have selected more items than they expected to carry. Staff should be visible and available to assist customers with enquiries when required, with the right knowledge about the products on sale and a good attitude. To try and reduce or remove any negative feelings regarding sustainability and ethics when buying items, retailers could be providing more information in-store regarding their sustainability and other CSR activities.

At the point of purchase, retailers should be ensuring that the flow of customers through the checkouts is moving at a suitable pace by managing queues and making checkout areas appealing. To assist the customers with their post-store experience, retailers should provide paper bags to carry home their items which are easily recyclable and include details which encourage customers to engage with the community linked to the retailer, as part of the post-store experience.

Absence of a multichannel experience in-store

Boardman and McCormick (2018 p.271) emphasise that *'multi-channel retailing is complex with technology continuously evolving and consumers demanding faster and superior devices to stay connected'*. Patten et al (2020 p.2) define the multichannel retail experience as *'different physical and electronic components that are delivered through two or more channels'* and they argue that customers have three distinctive expectations of the multichannel service experience: physical, electronic and the integration of these. Going a stage further with this electronic technology enhanced strategy is the omni-channel experience which focuses more upon the entire customer purchases across a unified and interconnected cross-channel retail experience, as defined by Boardman and McCormick (2018).

The author recognises the absence of a multichannel experience within the In-Store Experience Stage of the conceptual framework which is reflective of the two value-based clothing retailers used in the study.

Within the conceptual framework's In-Store Experience Stage, there is no mention of an electronic expectation for customers where they could go online and browse for products from the retailer whilst inside the store and potentially order these for click-and-collection in a few minutes or home delivery. The absence of this potential multichannel experience is as a result of the participants in the study only expressing their thoughts and feelings regarding the physical shopping experience.

However, whilst a multichannel element presents a significant potential area for further development for both retailers (and within this study's proposed conceptual framework), the implementation of it has a range of complexities as already emphasised by Boardman and McCormick (2018) but it also has challenges with areas including: *'assortment, pricing and promotions, fulfilment, and web and store design'* all requiring the optimum amount of integration (Patten et al 2020 p.8).

Furthermore, Patten et al (2020) also acknowledge the mix of retail elements can sometimes be exclusively through one channel or there may be a switch by the customer between channels during the purchase process if they realise a benefit of using more than one channel in order to achieve their goals. Concurring with this viewpoint is Jebarajakirthy et al (2021) who suggest that a recognition of channel switching by consumers results in a challenge for multichannel fashion retailers in designing these channels effectively for purchases.

A potential example scenario of this within the conceptual framework would be a customer going into the store and starting to browse through items, but to avoid the level of crowding around the departments and queues at the checkouts they switch to their mobile phone channel to find and purchase the items they have seen and selected, for delivery to their door. Boardman and McCormick (2018 p.271) recognise this similar potential type of scenario where footfall in retail stores is in decline and they argue that fashion retailing needs a strategy *'that integrates channels, such as providing more product information via apps to inspire consumers to look for additional items in-store and investing in in-store technologies like shopping channel preference self-service information kiosks to connect the offline-online environments'*. However, research by Alexander and Kent (2022 p.5) identified that whilst an omnichannel service such as *'order in store deliver to home'* was becoming more expected by customers, it was limited in availability.

Whilst it has been acknowledged that multichannel retailing is not currently offered or not very advanced in its development from the case study retailers, this matter has been recognised in other fashion retail research as Alexander and Kent (2022) demonstrated through the development of their model for technology-enabled customer shopping journeys in-store. They highlight that fashion retailers are generally slow to implement the use of in-store technologies which facilitate the customer shopping stages in a physical store.

Still, the argument for exploring and investing in the integration of multiple channels is convincing as Boardman and McCormick (p.271) suggest that *'multi-channel retailing leads to empowered customers, who seek channel advantages throughout their shopping journey'*, whilst Patten et al (2020) also contend that integrated multichannel retailing acts as a catalyst for the customer to make optimal choices when making fashion purchases which in-turn gives them competitive advantages over single-channel retailers.

Post-Store Experience Stage

In the Post-Store Experience stage, the visualisation of the experience is strongly linked more towards the participants who talked about the further excitement of getting the items they purchased home, reviewing what they had bought, giving items to others and sometimes receiving some sort of recognition from other people for the items they had purchased.



Figure 6.10 Post-Store Experience stage of the shopping experience framework.

The shopping experience for customers appears to be extended into the rest of the day where the customer returns home and spends time looking at all the items they have bought. This was a part of the experience where it might be shared with another family member who perhaps had not been with them at the store. Petermans et al (2013) emphasised in their research that customers who shared their experiences would feel motivated to return to the store again in the future.

Another area of the Post-Store Experience stage is for retailers to encourage the customer to engage with their communities via their social media pages where customers could take photos of all the items they felt were great finds in this particular shopping visit. Gabrielli et al (2013) agree and suggest that fast fashion creates a community of shoppers who share and exchange information, discuss matter and experiences.

This part of the experience has similar challenges to the Pre-Store Arrival stage in that it takes place away from the store and therefore it becomes difficult for researchers and practitioners to understand. However, this is a potential area for further research as a positive extension of the shopping experience which is prolonged for several hours after the In-Store Experience stage is of huge potential value to both the customer and the retailer. Supporting this is Chaney et al (2018) who

suggest that research into the articulation of the post-experience evaluation could be fruitful. In similar view Grewal and Roggeveen (2020) concluded that customer journeys contained nonlinearities which formed important future development of customer journey management research.

The Perceived Retail Experience Values (PREV) conceptual framework

The researcher suggests that Perceived Retail Experiential Values (PREV) conceptual framework offers a distinct difference to previous research frameworks such as those previously recognised in the literature review from Verhoef (2009) and Childs et al (2020). The emphasis on the value of ‘Discovery’ which sits at the centre of the In-Store Experience stage of the framework is a distinct difference to previous conceptual frameworks.

The PREV conceptual framework takes participant expressions of shopping values and presents them in a format which indicates to retailers, store designers, managers and store assistants what aspects are of particular importance to customers for providing a positive shopping experience in the In-Store Experience stage and considers what retailers should be aware of in the Pre-Store Arrival and Post-Store Experience stages.

The main In-Store Experience stage contains three core values of the Departments, Discovery and Delivery (the 3D’s). These three core areas are each linked to six experiential values which total as eighteen which could be ‘in play’ at any point of the shopping experience. The entire three-stage PREV framework is shown in figure 6.11.

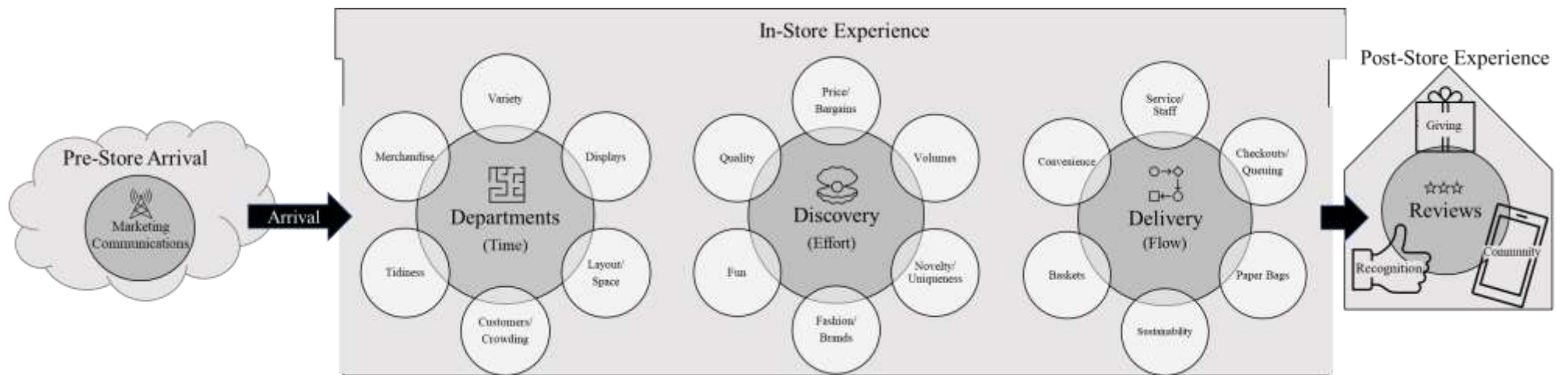


Figure 6.11 Perceived Retail Experiential Values (PREV) Conceptual Framework.

6.8 Practical management application of the PREV

Framework

The PREV Framework outlines what the customers of value-based fashion retailers consider to be important through their shopping experiences and suggests to managers within these retail environments what to be focusing their attention on. Therefore, to serve as a practical framework that retail managers could potentially use to enhance their shopping experience for customers, the values of the In-Store Experience of the PREV Framework have been developed into a management checklist which could be utilised to review the customer's in-store experience throughout the store trading hours.

Foster and McLelland (2015 p.196) suggest with regards to traditional retail atmospherics that some *'retail managers seemingly take a traditional checklist-style approach, where they look at each atmospheric element (lighting, layout, music, etc.) individually and determine what is standard for their customers, merchandise mix, and format'*. The checklist-style they propose appears to be more suited to stores which are not using a themed approach to their shopping environment. Retailer 1 and Retailer 2 do not have a theme for their stores when compared with other fashion retailers which use this characterised approach which is where they would typically just stock their own heavily branded products. Foster and McLelland (2015 p.196) highlight as an example a clothing retailer who they imply *'designs their stores around a beach house theme'*.

The focus of the checklist is just on the In-Store Experience stage from the framework because, as already highlighted in Section 6.7, the Pre-Store Arrival and Post-Store Experience stages necessitate further research to understand the appropriate marketing approaches required to maximise their potential opportunities. The in-store management checklist is shown in Table 6.2.

Table 6.2 Retail Manager Checklist for the store shopping experience

Perceived Retail Experiential Value	Management Checklist	Yes	No
In-Store Experience - Departments			
Merchandise	Are items in stock appealing to customers? Are attractive colour ranges being used? How long have stock items been on display? When was the last update and rotation of the stock? Is the merchandise using accurate sizing?		

Tidiness	<p>Are areas of the store kept tidy by store assistants at regular intervals?</p> <p>Have displays been rifled through and left with items in the wrong order or on the floor?</p> <p>Are store checks increased during busy periods of the week?</p>		
Variety	<p>Is there a wide choice of items in stock which appeal and give choice to customers?</p> <p>Is there a good range of sizes available for each of the products on display?</p> <p>Are any products or sizes out-of-stock?</p>		
Customers/Crowding	<p>Are you currently aware of the level of busyness in the store and how many customers are currently in the store?</p> <p>Is the store too crowded?</p> <p>Are measures being put into place to limit and control the number of customers coming into the store?</p>		
Displays	<p>Are displays tidy and appealing?</p> <p>Are recent checks of the displays being made by store staff to ensure they are not untidy?</p>		
Layout /Space	<p>Is the layout of the store easy to understand?</p> <p>Do customers have to think about how to navigate their way around to the different departments?</p> <p>Are departments clearly distinctive from one another?</p> <p>Are there any areas where there could be bottle necks caused by customers congregating?</p> <p>Is adequate space available for customers between the store displays and departments?</p> <p>Does some of the display need to be moved or removed to allow for additional space during very busy times?</p>		
In-Store Experience - Discovery			
Quality	<p>Are items on display of an acceptable quality?</p> <p>Have any damaged or soiled items been removed and taken off display?</p>		
Fashion/Brands	<p>Are there items on display which have only recently been introduced to the range and are the latest fashions?</p> <p>Are non-store brands exciting and how many have been recently introduced to the inventory?</p>		
Price/Bargains	<p>Are prices set at a level in which customers would view these favourably?</p> <p>Where items have been discounted, does the discount</p>		

	appear to be appealing and fair?		
Fun	Are items on display which are quirky and potentially fun to find and purchase? Is the process of finding items something which could be made more fun?		
Novelty/Uniqueness	Are there items on display which would be considered unique and rarer than other merchandise available? Is there limited stock of these items and does it appear to shoppers that these items are exclusive?		
Volumes	Are shoppers able to easily purchase more than just one item during the shopping visit should they choose to do so? Are there enough items on display which are at prices which would be accessible to most customers?		
In-Store Experience – Delivery			
Convenience	Is the store location easily accessible and where applicable is free parking available? Does the store conform to the required accessibility standards and have additional accessibility needs been considered?		
Baskets	Are baskets of a suitable size and type available for customers at the point of entry and in other suitable areas of the store where shoppers may realise they want to purchase more items than they can easily carry? Are shoppers encouraged to use a basket?		
Sustainability	Does the company's approach towards ethics and sustainability feature in some of the POS material around the store?		
Service/Staff	Are enough staff available to help shoppers with any questions and how to find items around the store? Are staff focused on the current condition of the store tidiness, stock levels and busyness of the store?		
Checkouts/Queuing	Are enough checkouts being utilised for the level of business in the store? Where applicable, do shoppers have a choice of checkouts to use? Where shoppers are queuing are there appealing items available for them to add to their shopping baskets? Are queues being addressed and are they moving at an acceptable pace for the level of business in the store?		
Paper Bags	Are shoppers offered a free paper bag to put their items into? Where a number of items have been purchased are these		

	being distributed across a suitable quantity of paper bags?		
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The author recognises the checklist linked to the PREV Framework would need to be adapted to suit the type of store, size and the range of products on display to customers. The framework is not suitable to all fashion retailers, for example, luxury fashion boutiques.

However, the author would suggest that having in mind the customer’s retail experience as part of the day-to-day store routine activities could improve customers perceptions of their shopping experience which may increase time spent in the store and money spent at the till. Dang et al (2021) concur and argue that customers who experience a good store environment, an enjoyable shopping trip and have a positive view of the brand value will purchase more items from physical retailer’s stores. They suggest that this is a result of store managers planning and implementing a marketing strategy which enhances the consumers’ perception of the shopping experience.

6.9 Conclusion

The discussion chapter has outlined the main experiential values which were of importance to the participants of the study, expressed in the ZMET inspired interviews, images, montages and metaphors. These values have been incorporated within a new conceptual three-stage PREV Framework.

The Pre-Store Arrival and Post-Store Experience stages in the model require further research and development by marketing researchers to understand ways in which to communicate and engage with the customer during those times to keep the retailer front of mind. Whereas, the In-Store Experience stage could be applied by fashion retail managers in a live in-store setting. Assisting managers with the application of the these within the store setting is a practical checklist of questions which could be used throughout the trading day to check these areas of importance to customers.

Chapter 7 Study Conclusions, Recommendations and Contribution

7.1 Introduction and Overview

The chapter draws together the research into conclusions.

The research yields exciting and innovative insights into experiential values which will contribute new knowledge and create future value improvement research and frameworks.

Figure 7.1 shows the overview of the chapter



Figure 7.1 Outline of the Chapter.

7.2 Conclusions linked to the Research Objectives and Questions.

The study's Research Objectives (RO) and Questions (RQ) were set out in Section 1.3, and this chapter proposes how they were met in this study.

7.2.1 Price is still a significant motivator, but customers are also motivated by other experiential values, especially Discovery.

Participants were clearly motivated by the prices at both Retailers, but it is certainly not the only factor which motivates them to visit these stores. This echoes the work of Willems et al (2016) who stated that prices are not the only concern for customers.

Participants spoke of the different motivations they have when thinking about a store in their pre-store arrival stage and what they are thinking about during the shopping experience. Stores where the participants had a good shopping experience appeared to be tidy, not overcrowded, easy to navigate around and stocked merchandise that was considered to be trendy, appealing, novel or unique. In these stores participants were motivated to approach displays and browse the store departments for longer. In Retailer 1 the participants were also motivated by the volume of items they were able to purchase for the money they had spent, even despite on some occasions feeling quite anxious and guilty at the checkout.

One of the most powerful shopping values identified in the study was participants thinking about and the achievement of discovery. This involved enjoying the feeling and process of finding items through the effort to look through various departments and displays. Discovery was particularly prevalent at Retailer 2 which had more of a random nature to the range of merchandise available. This shopping value was expressed by nearly all the participants and included a range of criteria which would identify an item found amongst the merchandise as being something of a discovery. These criteria included items they had not planned to buy, something new and fashionable, items which appeared to be rare or unique, or purchasing a significant volume of items that were selected without giving too much thought for the overall price of the shopping visit.

Participants were demotivated by a range of experiential factors too, particularly overcrowding and untidiness. However, since 2020 when temporary pandemic restrictions were put in place at times to reduce the number of customers that could be in a store at one time, the issue of overcrowding could be something that does not occur as often in future as some customers now avoid going into overcrowded areas despite the various restrictions being lifted in 2021 and 2022.

In stores where the shopping experience was a negative one, the customers were more likely to express motivations of avoiding areas, changing their plan to visit a particular area/department because it was untidy or too crowded, and they were likely to spend less time in the store or perhaps leave and return another time. Therefore, the trade-off for both retailers was that the positive aspects

of value-based prices and the merchandise were motivating factors, but time and effort was required by the participant to rummage through merchandise, avoid other customers, find items and, at times, queue to pay for the items purchased.

This conclusion meets and answers:

RO1: To identify what motivates customers of value-based fashion retailers to shop at their stores.

RO2: To examine how important the price factor is to shoppers.

RQ1: Are customers who shop at value-based retailers solely motivated by price?

RQ2: What motivates customers to visit the stores of value-based fashion retailers?

7.2.2 Images and metaphors are facilitators to express representations of what customers value regarding their shopping experience.

The ZMET depth interview process facilitated the emergence of deeper customer values, and the analysis has shown that there are some areas of the shopping experience which are commonplace amongst all participants, whereas others are more individualistic.

The images provided a window into the participant's visualisation of the shopping experience and presented an opportunity for the participant to offer greater depth into what they value from the retailer's store environment. Some of the images selected sparked a very extensive discussion from the participants with the conversation lasting over thirty minutes for just one of their images. Whereas some images were not as significant and required less time to explore their meaning.

The main themes that the research highlighted are that the visual sense is the most active in the shopping experience as it builds a picture of what customers see and think about during their shopping experience. In almost all of images selected they represented a part of the shopping experience that was visual, and the narratives included a lot of positive and negative dialogue with regards to what the participants were 'seeing'. Authors have called for multisensory experiences as far back as the early pioneering works of Holbrook and Hirschman (1982) who proposed the experiential approach required a multisensory relationship, Schmitt (1999a) who talked of experiences which dazzle the senses and Bagdare (2016) who advocated that retailing needed to engage and involve the shopper through all five senses because shoppers should be using their senses at every stage in the buying process. Thus, there appears to be an opportunity for these retailers to engage more of their customer's other senses during the shopping experience.

All participants also valued the basic experiential elements which included a good range of merchandise, well displayed items, good flow to the store layout, perceived levels of crowding, tidiness and minimal queues. Value-based fashion retailers also need to be mindful of the significance of the customer's time and that their customers may feel frustrated if they do not have the time to look around all the various departments that they want to visit.

Images selected by participants were quite mixed between positive and negative sentiment towards different aspects of the shopping experience. Images which represented positive sentiment included people looking happy, smiling emojis, gemstones and gold. Negative sentiment images focused on crowds, piles of clothes and feeling frustrated. Therefore, value-based fashion retailers should be mindful of these negative connotations and put into place where possible mediators which can reduce the impact of the negative visual elements.

This conclusion meets and answers:

RO3: To examine how customers express their feelings about value-based fashion retailers using images and metaphors.

RO4: To examine what customers value about their shopping experience.

RQ3: What do these customers value about their shopping experience when visiting the stores of value-based fashion retailers?

RQ4: Does a depth interview process identify deeper values through metaphor elicitation techniques which supports other previous research and contributes new knowledge regarding experiential values?

7.2.3 Values expressed can be developed into a Perceived Retail Experiential Values (PREV) Framework for managers.

A wide range of experiential values have been established from the study and whilst acknowledging the similarities in other relevant theories and frameworks such as Verhoef (2009), Ruiz-Molina et al (2018) and Childs et al (2020). The PREV Framework highlights that the shopping experience has a range of elements that customers value which differ slightly in their level of importance. The PREV framework has three stages of experience: Pre-Store Arrival, In-Store Experience and Post-Store Experience. Within the main In-Store Experience stage, the framework has three core areas of Departments, Discovery and Delivery which link together with eighteen key experiential values.

In the Pre-Store Arrival stage, it signposts to retailers that maintaining marketing communications is important in this stage to keep customers thinking about the retailer regularly and when they might return to the store again. The expressed value of discovery indicated that finding something new when shoppers go to stores is important and potentially keeps customers wondering what the retailer might have in store next time they visit.

For the In-Store Experience stages, at the point of arrival by the customer at the store is usually where it sets the tone for the rest of the shopping experience. Having adequate baskets/trolleys for customers to use and a first display of merchandise which creates an initial wow can enthuse the customers to get browsing and visiting different areas of the store. In-Store Experience stages are a mix of retail experience factors, perceived consumer and human values which are important to the customers. The In-Store Experience stages recognise the influences of time, effort and flow on the shopping experience.

Turning the shopping experience into something more interesting is something all retailers could focus on developing. Larger and more affluent retailers could try to understand what sort of shopping experience their customers are having, what they value and how they process the shopping experience in their minds. These values should be the focus areas for store designers, retail managers and store assistants.

Retail managers could be monitoring customer's experiential values throughout the trading day to check if any action needs to be taken to enhance the shopping experience and reduce the impact of negative factors. To offer retail managers practical application of the PREV Framework components, the researcher has developed these into a management checklist which could be used to monitor the store environment. The checklist shown in Table 6.2 contains potential questions which could be used by store managers to help identify where their attention and efforts need to be focused in-store. Answers to the questions do not necessarily need to be a 'Yes' for every area, but managers can at least be aware any parts of the store which could be enhancing the shopping experience and those

which could be negatively impacting upon it. Practical application in a real store setting would allow for the checklist to develop and adapt to the different types of store size and setting.

The study identified that for some customers the shopping experience continues beyond the store environment with reviewing the items purchased, sharing items discovered, giving gifts and receiving recognition from others. This extended aspect of the overall experience is potentially very interesting as it adds another dimension to the way the customers perceive their shopping experience and extends the value of accomplishment in the items purchased and the positive feelings of excitement and happiness

The continuation of the shopping experience beyond the store could be difficult for retailers to influence. However, retailers could consider ways in which the customer could be encouraged to engage with the retailer and other social platforms as part of a post-store experience, although this is an area for further research to understand more about how this might be implemented and managed.

This conclusion meets and answers:

RO5: To map findings to create a new framework for perceived retail experience values.

RO6: To translate into practical actions for retailers.

RQ5: Could deeper values suggest what retailers need to improve in their shopping experience for customers?

RQ6: Can these deeper values be captured and presented in a new framework which could potentially assist retail managers?

7.3 Theoretical Contribution

This thesis offers a theoretical contribution in three areas, Firstly:

- The thesis identifies a significant core value in the shopping experience presented as Discovery, which extends the value typology framework developed by Holbrook (1996)

The value of discovery has been suggested by the researcher as a significant positive aspect of the shopping experience. This value appears to engage customers visiting the store in a 'hunt' for the item(s) which they consider to be special. This value also seems to be something that can 'make' the shopping experience but does not necessarily happen every time shoppers visit. Retailers would need to understand what sort of items their stores could stock that would be a discovery for the customers and consider where they place these items for customers to find them.

The value of discovery can be linked to Holbrook's Typology of Customer Value (1996). The present study linked participant's expressions to the original values in Holbrook's typology. It was then proposed by the researcher that a ninth value (discovery) should be added to the eight intended by Holbrook (1996) as the researcher would argue that this component is so important to the positive shopping experience customers should be having.

The typology diagram (see p.345) has been adapted to overlay the new ninth value of discovery with the other self-orientated values in Holbrook's theory of Efficiency, Play, Excellence and Aesthetics which reflect the active and reactive elements of the process of discovery as expressed by the participants.

Secondly this study makes a theoretical contribution by:

- Mapping the metaphorical expressions to the ZMET seven giants in order to highlight the way customers interpret value-based fashion experiences. This increases knowledge from other existing studies that have called for further understanding and usage of metaphors.

The study identified that the way in which the participants expressed their shopping experiences at times was through the medium of metaphors. These expressions were then mapped to the seven giants developed and proposed by Gerald Zaltman. The main metaphors expressed in the narratives from the participants were in the categories of Connection, Control and Resource which emphasised that the connection the participants have with the store environment is important. Positive connections resulted in more approach shopping behaviours and staying longer whereas negative connections could cause avoidance behaviours and less time in the store. In the area of Control metaphors, the participants wanted to feel they were in control of their shopping visit and wanted to keep control of their spending. However, control could be impacted by other shoppers during busy times. Resource

metaphors were linked to store prices but also the resource of time required to browse around the store.

The thesis adds to other existing studies that have called for further understanding and usage of metaphors in marketing. The potential significance of this study's metaphors is that value-based fashion retailers could begin to learn more about these expressions whilst considering the opportunities they present for improving/changing their stores.

In addition to store improvements, the way in which these retailers develop and use their marketing communications could take into consideration what potential impacts these metaphorical terminologies have. However, it was recognised that transferring customers' positive metaphorical expressions into universally understandable marketing communications could be a challenge.

Thirdly, the study contributes to theory in that:

- The thesis offers an account of the development and diversity of Experiential Marketing and aligns this with the more specific areas of Perceived Customer Value and Retail Customer Experience.

This study makes this contribution through a review of the literature from the pioneering works of Holbrook and Hirschman (1982), plus acknowledgement of earlier works by Merhabrian and Russell (1974) and Kotler (1973) which had similarities in this field of literature. The literature highlights the ways in which the broader experiential marketing theories have been used more extensively in sectors such as hospitality and tourism, but how sectors such as retail have also embraced experiential marketing theories.

As part of the development of experiential marketing research, the author identified that understanding the customer experience requires identifying what customers value. Morris Holbrook understood this and developed his Typology of eight consumer values in 1996. This study bridges links between experiential marketing and perceived customer value but also highlights that these are still broader than understanding more specific aspects of the customer experience within the retail setting.

Identifying the experiential values customers place upon their shopping experiences at value-based fashion retailers echoes some of the previous research in this arena and builds upon these studies. The experiential values identified in this study reflect some of the areas in earlier works of Bitner (1992), Babin et al (1994), Baker et al (2002), Berry et al (2002a), Cox et al (2005), Carpenter and Fairhurst (2005), Arnold et al (2005), Palmer (2010), Clarke et al (2012), Ong et al (2018) and Helme Falk (2019).

Publications in the more specific area of retail customer experience emphasise that it has been studied from the 1950s with most of the early emphasis being on the term ‘Atmospherics’ and trying to make the shopping environment a more enjoyable and multi-sensory experience. Further development of academic perspectives in this area appears to gather pace post 2000 and more recent publications begin to outline a list of aspects within frameworks for focusing on the retail experience. However, most studies appear to be using quantitative methods to develop these ideas and very few studies present deeper customer perspectives. This study builds upon these other studies and adds particularly to the richness of the smaller number of qualitative approaches used.

This study has underlined that retail customer experience continues to be an important element of the motivation customers have which encourages them visit physical fashion retail stores. This has become even more significant for the remaining retailers on the UK high street following the impacts of the 2008-09 financial crisis and 2020 pandemic.

7.4 Empirical Contribution

This study offers empirical contributions in three areas centred around the development of a deeper understanding of what customers articulate as important to them when shopping in a value-based fashion retail store.

Firstly, the study highlights that:

- Price is a major factor for high street retailers which highlights the challenges for fashion retailers that choose to position themselves using a mid-market pricing model.

The study highlighted that price is not the only motivator and these value-based retailers still need to have good quality merchandise to offer to customers even though some customers are willing to make some concessions and trade-offs in crowded stores with untidy displays.

Switching to a value-based business model is not the choice of some more traditional retailers but the trend is becoming clear that consumers are looking for value and ways to save money. As a result, retailers that do not have a value-based model are some of the companies who have been steadily closing their stores since 2008 which was accelerated in 2020 due to the pandemic.

However, as the research by Willems et al (2016) highlighted, customer perceptions of value-based organisations vary across retail formats with hard discounters typically being outperformed on the retail customer experience by traditional retailers and soft discounters. This suggests that hard discounters might be outperformed by their more traditional competitors when comparing shopping

experiences. Therefore, to some extent, these two value-based fashion retailers would need to consider how they still offer value-based prices whilst developing enhanced store experiences.

Secondly, the study presented:

- Visualisation of what customers value about their shopping experience through images that offer richer insights into how they sense and interpret the retailer's store environments.

For retailers, opinions articulated by participants about their shopping experiences are valuable in understanding how they can continually improve their whole store experience and hopefully increase repatronage (Chang et al 2015, Atulkar and Kesari 2017) and loyalty.

However, having the images in addition to the participant's opinions shows how the customer visually constructs and makes sense of the shopping experience. Therefore, the collection of between 6 to 10 images by the 24 participants allowed for a deeper discussion within the interviews as each image discussed acted as a catalyst for the conversations about what the images represented related to their shopping experience values.

Adding to studies using the ZMET approach within retail such as: Burt et al (2007) and Kent and Kirby (2009), this study further developed the understanding of how using participants pre-selected images as the basis for semi-structured interviews can produce deeper insightful tangible discussions that portray what participants use and relate to contextualise their shopping experiences.

The montages created through the instruction of the participants could be viewed as pieces of personal artwork which represent a window into the individual's visualisation of the value-based fashion retail world and the types of things that come to mind when asked to articulate these within an interview. The process of the placement and sizing of the images by the participants in the montages is an area of further fascination in understanding why particular images were selected and placed in a certain way to create the montage.

Thirdly, the study proposes:

- Areas in the PREV Framework that retailers could focus on to improve and enhance their shopping experiences for customers within their physical stores, and also highlights the significance of the pre-arrival and post-store experience.

The conclusions of the study indicated that even though the focus of the research was on two specific retailers, the experiential improvements identified could be implemented by other retailers to enhance their shopping experiences.

The main area of the PREV Framework is the In-Store Experience stage where the three core values of Departments, Discovery and Delivery hold the eighteen store experience values identified from this

study. These values could potentially be in play for the customers at various times during the store visit.

The PREV Framework indicates that the shopping experience can begin before the customer has even arrived at the store as they may be thinking about the retailer at various times and what new items the retailer might now have in-store. These thoughts were usually developed from a successful previous visit and the positive experience the customer had from discovering special items.

The PREV Framework also specifies that it is potentially possible to extend the shopping experience into a third Post-Store Experience stage of the shopping journey and this links particularly well to the business model where customers might be buying a considerable volume of items on a single shopping visit. The review of these items in the Post-Store Experience stage was generally to both justify the amount spent but also to admire the volume of items they have bought.

7.5 Methodological Contribution

This thesis offers a methodological contribution in:

- The ZMET approach used within this study further extends the usage of a visual research method as a technique to understand the way in which customers think and feel about the shopping process.

The study contributes to the usage of visual research methods which are utilised to a lesser extent in the arena of retail associated studies (Petermans et al 2014). The ZMET visual method applied to the study provides a more tangible insight into how customers think and feel about their shopping experiences, the way this is contextualised through the images they selected, and the montages constructed in the interviews.

The usage of the ZMET approach extends the number and range of academic studies that have applied this technique, and the results show how this methodology produces deeper insights into the topic area being explored. This further enhances previous academic research which has advocated and critiqued the ZMET approach.

As a result of using the methodology, the study highlights how retailers can gain a rich understanding of how their customers visualise and make sense of their store experiences and offers the potential for operationalising their store offer in an improved way, plus developing innovative marketing communications which could reflect the imagery and metaphorical expressions.

7.6 Implications of Research

The researcher recognises that there are three main implications highlighted from the study.

Firstly, the study argues that:

- The retail sector, and in particular the value-based fashion high street, needs to implement changes to the shopping experience to encourage customers back into stores instead of buying online.

The shopping experiences highlighted by the participants have indicated that even with a major motivator of low/discounted prices for items on sale in stores, these are not enough to make the shopping experience a wholly favourable one. Shoppers will potentially avoid these stores if they feel that they are overcrowded, untidy and overwhelming. For traditional retailers with mid-market price points, the need for something extraordinary in the shopping experience is even more important, as the prime motivator of having lower prices is not their business model. Therefore, having something unique and enticing in terms of the shopping experience is potentially a way to encourage customers back into their stores.

High streets have been a focal point for the UK economy since 2007 (Parker et al 2020) with declining footfall and some major retailers closing stores and going into administration. Therefore, the motivation to visit retail stores cannot just be something retailers such as Retailer 1 and Retailer 2 could solve as it will require a concerted effort from the retail sector, national and local government, city planners, service and commerce organisations plus local residents. A collective effort from these stakeholders could develop the new high streets of the future as multi-use spaces designed to attract visitors for a wide mix of different purposes. The ideal high street of the future is still to be determined and may well be something that needs to be localised and tailored in the design.

Secondly, the study suggests that:

- Knowledge that retailers have about their customers' views regarding their shopping experiences could be richer through visual research methodologies and may present opportunities for retailers to enhance their shopping experiences and communicate with customers at a deeper metaphorical level.

The insights from the participants in this study highlighted that the ways in which customers construct contextual meaning of their shopping experiences is a potential way for retailers to gain deeper insights into serving customers better and providing more positive and memorable experiences.

The study supports the previous works highlighted in the review of the extant literature in trying to understand the richer more vivid explanations of the participants in their answers.

Thirdly, the study draws attention to:

- Implementation of more experiential elements within a retail store may require additional space and resources.

Retailers which have developed great Servicescape environments will have invested in their store environments.

For some smaller retailers, creating a similar experience to this is too expensive or unrealistic given the amount of shop floor space they have available. However, some of the experiential values highlighted in the PREV Framework are within the reach of smaller retailers with less resources, such as the way in which items are displayed, the number of customers per square metre at busy times, the tidiness of the store, having items which are considered to be special, the range of merchandise available, the level of service provided by the store assistants and a switch to paper bags from plastic.

7.7 Research Limitations

There are limitations to the research study that the author acknowledges:

- The purposive sample of the participants allowed for a range of different demographics in the sample, however cultural differences were not recognised in the participant pre-interview questionnaires and analysis.

The 24 participants were a diverse group of adults with differing backgrounds and cultures which helped to develop a richer view of the shopping experience from different perspectives. However, the more specific cultural aspects of the different participants were not acknowledged in the demographic and behavioural questionnaires completed by each participant nor in the individual analysis of each image and transcripts. These cultural differences and influences could have potentially added additional insights which would further enrich the understanding of how participants construct visual context to their shopping experience. Supporting this notion is Grewal and Roggeveen (2020 p.5) who argue that *'shopping behavior is influenced by cultural factors too'* and therefore *'it is important to define the central role of culture and how it might directly or indirectly influence the shopping process'*.

- The study considered two fashion retailers of which both are growing in popularity and therefore other traditional retailers which have seen sales declining could be used as a comparative study.

The two retailers within the study have seen growth which goes against the declining trend of the high street. To enrich the answer to the study's second research question: 'What motivates customers to visit the stores of value-based fashion retailers?' by having a comparative study of some traditional retailers the answer to this research question could potentially be more comprehensive as it may reveal additional insights into what the customers of traditional retailers value about their shopping experience.

- The long-term effects of the pandemic are not known for retailers and the broader high-street.

The pandemic impacts in the shorter-term were clearer with some of the already struggling retailers closing stores and shoppers moving even further towards online retailers. However, the long-term effects could change what customers will want now and, in the future, when visiting physical stores. Even though stores are now operating almost in the same way as they did prior to the beginning of the pandemic, it may take longer for customers to return and shop in similar ways to how they used to, with some avoiding busier times, socially distancing from others, mask wearing and hand sanitising. Whilst these changes in customer behaviour do not stop them from visiting a retail store, browsing and purchasing items, the look and feel of the shopping experience has changed somewhat and more needs to be known about what impact this is having.

7.8 Future Research

A follow-up quantitative study of the values within the PREV Framework could be implemented to further test them and their significance within the shopping experience.

A similar ZMET format study into more traditional retailers may provide some confirming and contrasting insights into the experiential values that their customers place upon their shopping experiences and may be useful for retailers that have seen declining sales on the high street.

A broader research approach towards the whole declining high street could also utilise the ZMET methodology to try to understand what the visitors to the future high street visualise for its future and what experiences they want to have there going forward.

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9. Appendices

9.1 Appendix 1 Research Participant Briefing Guide

Overview of this Research Study

PhD Title:

Seeing beyond the low-price. An empirical study evaluating experiential consumer values in the low-price clothing retail sector.

Dear sir/madam

Thank you for interest in this PhD research study which aims to understand what customer's really value from their experience of shopping at low-price clothing retailers.

The study involves a four stage process for you to be part of which is designed to discover what you really value about your shopping experiences at a selected low-price clothing retailer.

Your involvement in this research study

The first and second stages are at this initial briefing today, where you will be asked to complete a research consent form and a very quick pre-interview questionnaire.

The third stage is then completed following this initial meeting over the course of around a week or so and it involves you collecting six to ten images that signify what you value about your shopping experience.

The fourth stage is a recorded depth interview which usually lasts around an hour and a half where I will be asking you about the images you have collected and what these signify. As part of this interview, I will be trying to identify any metaphor-based descriptions of the values you have chosen. I will also create a montage of the images you have collected, based on your guidance as to each image's importance and relevance.

After the interview process

Following the interview process, I will be transcribing your recorded interview and any metaphors and the values will be identified and analysed for the purpose of creating a potential experiential marketing improvement framework.

The results of this research study will be published in a PhD Thesis and academic journal articles.

This briefing guide includes further details regarding each stage of the process. If you have any questions regarding this guide, or the research study, please email me at l.miller@derby.ac.uk

Yours Faithfully

Lee Miller

PhD Researcher at: The University of Derby

This study's research process

This study has four key stages which you will be part of as a participant. Each stage has an approximate timespan and these are explained in further detail below.

Stage 1 – Briefing (Approximately 20 minutes)



The initial briefing outlines the overall process of the research study and the various stages involved. You will be asked to complete and sign a consent letter and you will be given a copy of this letter and also a Participant Withdrawal Letter should you choose to withdraw from the study.

The briefing also explains the interview techniques that the researcher will be using.

The meeting is opportunity for the participant to ask any questions and clarify any areas of the study.

The researcher will agree with the participant a suitable date and time for the interview to take place which will usually be around 1 to 2 weeks later.

Stage 2 – Pre-interview Questionnaire (5 minutes)



During the initial briefing, the researcher will ask the participant to complete a brief pre-interview questionnaire consisting of five questions.

This pre-interview questionnaire is solely designed to collect demographic information about the participants involved in the study with the purpose of understanding any similarities and differences between the answers provided in the interviews.

This questionnaire does not require the participant to provide any personal details or identifiable information and if you feel uncomfortable with any of the questions being asked, you may decline to answer any questions or select the option of 'I prefer not to say'.

Stage 3 – Image Collection (completed between the briefing and interview over approximately 1 – 2 weeks)



This research study involves the participant collecting **around six to ten images** which the participant feels would signify what they value about their shopping experience at a chosen low-price clothing retailer.

Images collected should **ideally not be directly about or from the chosen retailer or their website**, but instead be images about anything that shows what the participant values about their experience when they are shopping at the chosen retailer’s store(s).

Images can be from the internet e.g. from a search engine, photographs or drawings.

The participant will need to bring these images to the interview or

Stage 4 – Interview and Montage (Approximately 1 and a ½ hours)



The recorded depth interview usually takes place around 1 to 2 weeks after the initial briefing and should last for approximately 1 and half hours.

The purpose of this interview is for the researcher to ask questions about the significance of the six to ten images that have been collected by the participant.

The researcher will be trying in particular to identify any metaphor based descriptions of the values the participant has chosen through two research techniques called the Zaltman Metaphor Elicitation Technique (ZMET®).

As part of this interview the researcher will create a montage of the images the participant collected, based on their guidance as to the importance and relevance of each image.

The researcher will send an electronic copy of the completed montage to you after the interview requesting an overall title for it.

Following the fourth stage of the interview process, the researcher will be analysing the information provided by the participant.

Stage 5 – Analysis (completed by the researcher)

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The researcher will analyse the recorded interview and transcribe the content in order to identify metaphors, value descriptions and other common and unique themes discussed in the interview through thematic analysis.

The researcher is looking to use these data to create a potential experiential marketing improvement framework.

The research collected from these interviews will be presented in a PhD Thesis and academic journal articles.

Participant Briefing and Consent Letter

Dear Sir/Madam

PHD - Seeing beyond the low-price. An empirical study evaluating experiential consumer values in the low-price clothing retail sector.

My name is Lee Miller and I am collecting data that will be used in my theses as part of my PhD in Marketing at the University of Derby.

The aim of the dissertation research is to discover deep values that customer's place upon their shopping experience at low-price clothing retailer's stores. This research uses a different qualitative approach that should discover elements that have not previously been found through shallower research techniques such as surveys and questionnaires.

The data you provide will be kept anonymous, will only be used for the dissertation, and will not be disclosed to any third party, except as part of the dissertation findings, or as part of the supervisory or assessment processes of the University of Derby.

The data you provide will be kept until six months after the completion of the PhD study, so that it is available for scrutiny by the University of Derby as part of the assessment process.

If you feel uncomfortable with any of the questions being asked, you may decline to answer any questions. You may also withdraw at any point from the study completely, and your answers will not be used.

If you later decide that you wish to withdraw from the study, please write to me at

l.miller@derby.ac.uk within two weeks of the interview and I will be able to remove your response from my analysis and findings, and destroy your response.

I have read and understood the contents of this consent and briefing form, and freely and voluntarily agree to participate in this research.

Signed:

Please print your name: Date:

Participant Withdrawal Letter

Dear Lee

PHD - Seeing beyond the low-price. An empirical study evaluating experiential consumer values in the low-price clothing retail sector.

Withdrawal from study.

Apologies but I wish to withdraw from your PhD study. Please can you remove all my data and information from the study.

Kind regards

Print Name :

Date:

Pre-interview Questionnaire

Dear Participant

PHD - Seeing beyond the low-price. An empirical study evaluating experiential consumer values in the low-price clothing retail sector.

Thank you for agreeing to take part in my research which *aims to understand more about the shopping experience customers have at low-price clothing retailers and what they really value about that experience.*

This pre-interview questionnaire is solely designed to collect general demographic and purchase behaviour information from participants involved in the study, with the purpose of understanding any similarities and differences between the answers provided in the interviews.

This questionnaire does not require you to provide any personal details or identifiable information and if you feel uncomfortable with any of the questions being asked, you may decline to answer any questions or select the option of I prefer not to say.

If you have any queries whilst completing the questionnaire please let me know.

Question 1.

Please select your gender?

Male

Female

Gender-Neutral

I prefer not to say

Question 2.

Please select your age group?

- 18-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-65
- 65+
- I prefer not to say

Question 3.

How often do you shop at low-price clothing retailers?

- Every Week
- 2-3 Times a Month
- Every few months
- Only Once or Twice a year
- Hardly ever
- I prefer not to say

Question 4.

Which of these low-price clothing retailers do you shop at? (please tick all that apply)

- Retailer 1
- Matalan
- Retailer 2
- I prefer not to say

Question 5.

Which of the low-price clothing retailers above is your favourite to shop at? (please write the name of the retailer below)

.....

I prefer not to say

Question 6.

Approximately, how long ago did you last shop at the low-price clothing retailer?

Last Week

Within the past 4 weeks

Within the past 6 months

6-12 months ago

Over a year ago

I prefer not to say

Thank you for your answers

Lee Miller