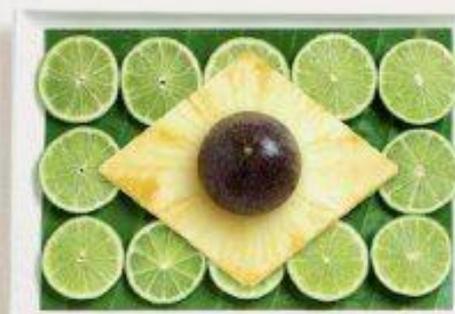


# Food and Culture

A study on how food culture influences buying behavior



## ABSTRACT

**Background:** Denmark is one of the countries with the highest living standards in the World, which makes it attractive to foreigners of all ages and cultural backgrounds. The fast-growing economy and the aging population demand an increase in foreign workforce, which means that even more foreigners will move to Denmark in the following years. This situation raises a series of concerns, among others the question of cultural differences when discussing food. Because food is such an important part in our lives, it is important to address how one's own food culture is influenced when moving to a new country and the impact it has over our behavior and choices.

**Objective:** This research is meant to address the issue of food culture among the selected internationals from Copenhagen and assess how important their own food culture is when shopping for food. Because supermarkets are the largest food retailers in Denmark, the research will investigate how they can improve the shopping experience of their international consumers.

**Method:** The methods used during this project are conditioned by the researcher's familiarity to the topic and impossibility to detach herself from it. Therefore, the project is written as an autoethnography, including aspects of participant observations during the three Customer Journey Maps. Three semi-structured interviews have followed the customer journeys and provided a foundation of knowledge for a focus group. The data collected had been thematically analyzed, and the relevant aspects have been presented through the framework of the Business Canvas Model. These findings have served as the recommendations that supermarkets could use to improve the buying experiences of the international consumers in Copenhagen.

**Results:** The research revealed that food culture is an important part of buying decisions, together with other individual and environmental variables. The participants had their own personal preferences when it came to familiar foods as opposed to trying new foods, ecology, taste, convenience, etc., but they expressed how important the environment of a shop, the choices available and the service level of the employees are in their buying behavior.

**Key words:** *food culture, expat, buying behavior, supermarkets, food retail, buying experience*

## Special thanks

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# Introduction

# 1. Introduction

Every now and again the same news hits the media: “Denmark is the happiest country in the world” (Huffington Post 2013) or “Denmark is the best country to live in” (Daily Mail 2017) or “Denmark has the highest living standards in the world” (Social Progress Index 2017). When Denmark is not the first country to lead the ratings, it doesn’t fall much behind, usually taking a well-deserved second or third place (World Happiness Report 2017).

The high standards of living are partially supported by the economic growth Denmark has been going through and which is predicted to continue in the next years as well. As Euromonitor International (2017) claims, Denmark’s economy will further strengthen as the Real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is presuming growing, it being higher with 1.5% in 2017 than the year before. More so, the spending and final consumption in private households rose with 2.1% in the same year, compared with only 1.3% the year before (Euromonitor International 2017). This translates into a higher buying power and people spending more money on products and services they need every day, such as rent, food and transportation.

The same publication mentioned that several labor reforms have been initiated to support the labor demand and counteract the aging population of Denmark. As of August 2017, there are over 200.000 registered foreign workers having full-time jobs in Denmark, the equivalent of over 9% of the total Danish workforce (Danmark Statistik). This is, besides other reasons, caused by the continuous and consistent efforts the Danish authorities make to recruit and attract foreign workforce.

In the same time, the demand for foreign working professionals is rising even more as a way to support the financial and industrial growth Denmark is going through. Last year alone, every third Danish company has experienced problems in recruiting the necessary workforce and the number of new vacant positions is expected to rise with 25.000 in 2018 (Dansk Industri).

All in all, Denmark’s growth is conditioned by its increase in workforce and number of workers, and because internal displacement of workforce can go so far, Dansk Industri stresses on keeping the foreign employment legislation as flexible as possible. This means that, in order to cover the necessary workforce, companies will rely more on foreigners to do the work.

Political and economic measures have been taken by Denmark’s government to attract and retain a large foreign workforce. First, there is the free education offered in English to all members of the European Union that has been heavily promoted internationally and has managed to attract over 23.945 international students in 2013 alone (Danmark Statistik).

The educational offer is even more attractive than before, with different institutions being among Europe's best universities by combining traditional lectures with open discussions and project work. Students are being able to choose between 700-degree programs and 1.300 courses taught in English while having the freedom to choose between full degrees or added credits in a broad range of fields: science, engineering, technology, medicine, business, architecture, design, etc. (Study in Denmark). Besides the free education, equal rights to SU have been given to international students since 2013, which means that by working part time jobs, students can to receiving the SU grant of 6.090 DKK per month (Statens Uddannelsesstøtte).

Secondly, the strong cooperation between the public and the private sectors to attract international workforce make it very easy for expats to choose Denmark. One example is the collaboration between Copenhagen Capacity and Talent Attraction Denmark that has come with a set of free tools and campaign materials that can be used by companies to promote the Danish lifestyle to potential employees. This toolbox contains over 100 videos, brochures, articles and presentations in English on diverse topics, from professional opportunities, to social and cultural aspects of living in Denmark, to family life, spare time activities, nature and so on (Talent Attraction Denmark).

Without doubt Denmark is one of the best countries to live in and the number of foreign workers moving here is growing. But together with this growth comes the need to provide basic living condition, which include housing, healthcare and food. While the healthcare system is well set in place and clearly the housing situation is what brings Copenhagen down in all the ratings (OECD Better Life Index), little emphasis is put, in my opinion, on food availability and food choices for immigrants.

A large part of the food advertising seems connected to various aspects of food: the healthy foods, the ecological sources of food or the locally produced foods, but how do these concepts reach the immigrants and how important are they after all?

Food is a basic need we all have, and there are multiple aspects and dimensions to food. These all make food a lot more complex than just something to feed our bodies with.

Therefore, this project aspires to determine whether one's food culture is important when moving to a foreign country and how food culture influences the buying behavior of foreigners in Denmark when confronted with the Danish food retail sector exemplified by the supermarkets.

## Motivation behind the research

I have moved to Denmark in September 2008, right after finishing my high-school education in a rather small city from Romania. Upon arrival I thought I knew the basics: Denmark is a welcoming Scandinavian country where it rains a lot and where the summer days are long, and the winter nights are even longer. But I was excited and prepared to face whatever challenges the expat life threw at me. Little did I know back then that I will learn to love the long winter nights and embrace the “*hygge*”.

I still remember one of the first days in Danish school when a professor told us that in Denmark there is no bad weather, only bad clothes, a saying that I still relate to. So, I prepared myself with waterproof and warm clothing, but nothing could prepare me for my real struggle: the FOOD

Food scarcity is not a problem in the Western World, but we often find ourselves craving familiar or ethnic foods and due to diverse reasons are not able to procure them. But in the same time, we are open towards the Danish foods and willing to become familiar with it because after all, this is our host country and no matter what reason we came here for, we are here now.

Having lived in Denmark for the last 9+ years and volunteering with immigrants for at least 6 years, I have experienced a wide range of situations that had an impact on the way I live my life and I advise others to live theirs. And while the Danish weather is always the conversation starter between immigrants, the most important and recurring topic of discussion in my experience is food.

After studying a bachelor's in Nutrition and Health I learned how important food is for someone, especially when food offers much more than just nutrition. And because during my volunteering as a buddy for new international students I was always asked about foods and supermarkets, or where to find a certain product, or even what the difference is between two types of eggs, I became aware that this is not something I struggle with alone.

And while we enjoy roast pork with parsley sauce or rye bread with meatballs and remoulade, we are also subject to the extensive advertising coming from the food sector. Which leaves me wondering: How much of that information reaches us? and Is that really what we need?

So, my interest in how foreigners perceive the Danish food retail sector grew and took the form of this Master Project, which I hope will bring some light into this topic.

I also hope that we will stop being seen as a group that needs a separate spice rack in the supermarkets because we are more than that. And upon coming here we bring with us wonderful and diverse foods and a food culture we would love to share with Denmark.

## **Problem statement**

*How important is food culture in the buying behavior of international consumers and how can the Danish food retail sector, exemplified by supermarkets in the Big Copenhagen Area enhance the buying experience of their international customers*

## **Research questions:**

What characterizes **food culture**?

What characterizes **buying behavior**?

What characterizes the Danish **food retail sector**?

What characterizes the **buying experience** of the international customers?

## **Aim of the thesis**

Based on the above-mentioned problem statement and the research questions, the aim of this master thesis is to develop a “set of recommendations” that can be used by the Danish supermarkets to improve the buying experience of their international customers

## **Delimitations**

This research is limited in terms of content, and will not cover the following:

- The financial aspects of the research topic, neither on the supermarkets side, nor the consumers.
- The political implications of having international workforce in Denmark and how the authorities manage this topic.
- The social implications of living as a foreigner in Denmark.
- The differences in ethnicity of the people participating in this study, nor the ones living in Denmark.
- There are more internationals living in Copenhagen than in any other Danish city and therefore it was chosen as the location of this research.

# Background

## 2. Background

This section presents the background knowledge this master thesis is written upon, starting from the context of food culture. Afterwards, a presentation will be made of the Danish food retail sector, having as central players the supermarkets. A brief conclusion will end this section, where the main points will be presented

### Food culture

*“For what is food? It is not only a collection of products that can be used for statistical or nutritional studies. It is also, and at the same time, a system of communication. a body of images, a protocol of usages, situations and behaviors.” (Roland Barthes 2008)*

From the very first moments of our lives to the very last ones, food is something we constantly need and desire. Food can represent everything from the first sip of colostrum to the last supper offered to inmates on death row, from the Friday evening candy we had as children to that special wedding cake we hope everyone will remember. And food is more than just something we feed our bodies with, it has personal, familial and cultural facets and it creates the connection between ourselves and the world. Therefore, it is important to understand how we relate to food and in the same time, how our food choices make us different.

As Roland Barthes (2008) explores in his paper called “Toward a Psychosociology of Contemporary Food Consumption”, food has a more complex meaning than just the product we feed our bodies with. He states that in order to comprehend the plenitude of the concept of food, one must document everything that is known of food in a societal context, such as products, habits and techniques and analyze whether changing from one concept to another produces a change in the signification. Here he offers the example of bread not being just bread as it can change meaning from something to be eaten every day to *pain de mie*, which is used during parties in France.

Besides that, he argues that food changes meaning through the situation it is associated with as nowadays every activity performed revolves around food, as opposed to in the past, when organized food encounters were exclusively for festive events.

Barthes also points out that food is more than its nutritional content as it can represent a way of communicating a situation, a protocol for usage, situations and even behaviors and information

about food must be gathered either directly or indirectly. More so, he states that the entire social environment is built around food and that advertising can be used as a tool to differentiate between three main themes within food consumption: food as a commemorative link to a historical time, food as an anthropological tool and food as a health concept.

The commemorative aspect of food enables the individual to become part of his past, the example given by Roland Barthes (2008) being of the French cuisine. In this way, French food creates a connection with the historical quality given by the French preparation and conservation techniques, allowing the French *to experience a certain national continuity*.

As an anthropological tool, how people perceived certain foods has been linked to them either being consuming or restraining from. For example, foods can be perceived as feminine or masculine and food advertising is used to transform the way we acknowledge it.

The concept of food as health is vast and incorporates multiple themes: food as a source of energy, food for maintaining alertness, food for relaxation, etc.

In an attempt to differentiate between the regional cultural food preferences within Europe alone, a study made by Søren Askegaard and Tage Koed Madsen provided a “*Map of European food cultures*”

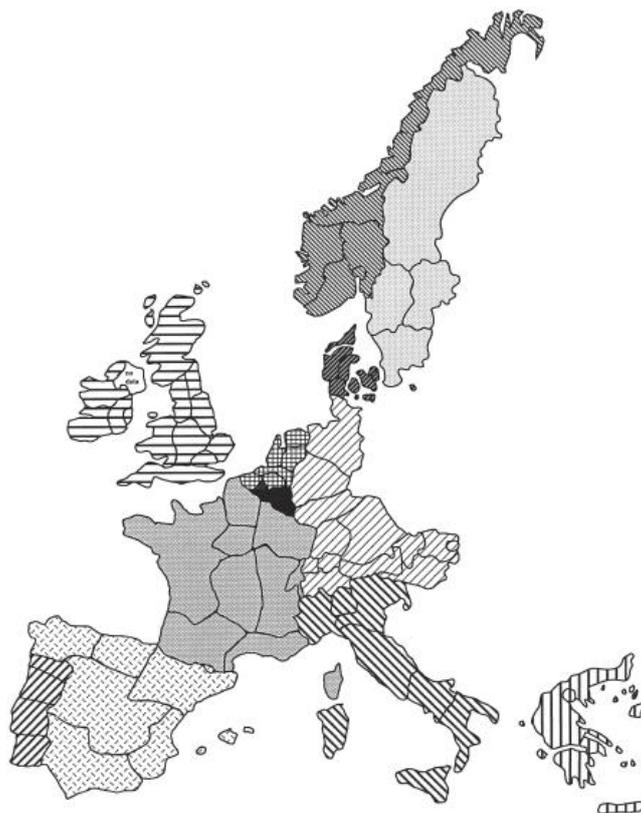


Figure 1. *Map of European food cultures*

Source: Søren Askegaard and Tage Koed (1998)

When looking at food choices and eating patterns in a European context, the national and regional food cultures have been influenced by a lot of factors, such as development in the technological processes and transportation conditions, immigration, tourism and international communication. The study made on 15 European countries has identified 79 cultural food regions divided by the national boundaries and the language spoken in that region. Therefore, Europe cannot be considered homogenous as to food culture and although highly influenced by globalization, the regional cultural patterns are deeply grounded. Denmark is seen as the most homogeneous country in this study, which can be due to its small size and it being surrounded by water.

Food is also being used as a way to communicate cultural aspects of territories, and the connection between food culture and tradition has led to food being branded as “*regional*” or “*local*”.

This aspect of regional foods is used in the developed world for its economic implications, it bringing profit and helping regional growth. A study made by the Orebro University in Sweden has shown the connection between the provenience of a product and the way a consumer perceives its quality and marketing information. Therefore, when attributes of regional or local foods are perceived positively they are more likely to be used in marketing, while attributes such as *low consumer ranked ethnicity or high calorie content* will not (Tellstrom R. et al. 2006).

## **The Danish supermarket**

The food retail sector in Denmark grows almost exponentially with the number of inhabitants the country has. In 2016, the food retail sales reached a value of 53.3 billion DKK, almost 7% more than in 2014 and it is expected to grow a further 13.2% by 2021 (Euromonitor International). The largest outlet for food products in Denmark are the supermarkets, as it shows by the percentage of foods being sold through this channel -87%. Discount supermarkets have a market share of over 37% which is both determined by the high-quality products they offer and by the widespread distribution of the shops, especially in the Copenhagen Area (Euromonitor International 2017). Therefore, it is safe to say that the majority of food consumed in the country is being sold through the supermarkets and they are important actors and responsible for food distribution within the society.

The competition between the Danish supermarket chains is strong and the largest market share in 2016 was covered by COOP with a 37% share as compared to Dansk Supermarked with only 32.4% (Statista 2016). Next, a short description of the supermarkets will be made, differentiating between the various chains based on information provided through their own communication channels:

**Dansk Supermarked A/S (Salling Group as of 1<sup>st</sup> of June 2018)** is the largest retail group in Denmark, with over 51.000 employees and 1.517 shops distributed both all across the country but also in Poland, Sweden and Germany. Dansk Supermarked covers also 8 web shops and 2 franchise restaurants and claims to reach over 9 million consumers every week (Salling Group 2018). It consists of:

**Netto Denmark** operates since 1981 as the largest retail chain in the country and its discount supermarkets provide consumers with high quality products at competitive prices (Salling Group 2018). There are over 455 Netto supermarkets in Denmark and they are known for their discount prices and extended opening hours, some of them being open 24/7.

**Føtex** offers its customers both food, but also non-food items such as textiles and electronics in over 90 locations across Denmark. In the Copenhagen area especially, Føtex Food shops function under the convenience shop format offering a limited number of food items and extended opening hours (Salling Group 2018).

**Bilka** is the only hypermarket chain in Denmark with 18 shops selling almost everything from food to textile, furniture, electronics and so on. Besides the shopping aspect, Bilka often include dining spaces and playgrounds and is known for organizing activities targeted towards families with children (Salling Group 2018).

**Coop** is the second largest food retailer in Denmark having over 35.000 employees and 12.000 shops and it is being cooperatively owned by 1.7 million members. Coop's approach to business is based on accountability, which is shown by their emphasis on sustainability and ecology (COOP 2018). Under the Coop brand there are the following supermarket chains:

**Kvickly** was the first supermarket in Denmark to sell both food and non-food items and it continues to do so in their 76 shops across the country. This chain identifies itself with taking responsibility towards their consumers but also to the environment through ecology and by selling ecological products at conventional prices.

**Super Brugsen** chain has over 230 shops across Denmark and has as main strategy the promotion of high quality products such as fruits and vegetables, meat, premade food and wine.

**Irma** was the first supermarket launched in Denmark in 1886 and nowadays had approximately 80 shops distributed across Sjælland and especially the Grand Copenhagen area. Irma identifies itself with a high-end supermarket offering specialties, high quality products and culinary experiences.

**Fakta** is Coop's discount chain with over 420 shops actor the country and a lot more in prospect. This chain promises the same high-quality products at discount prices and is consistent with Coop's prioritization on ecology and responsible consumption.

**Dagrofa Group** is a Danish wholesaler and retailer of food items selling through two different channels:

**Meny** supermarkets are focused on selling a large diversity of food products in over 118 stores, including 14 Meny Gourmet. The chain focuses on specialty food items and takes pride in providing fresh meats and fish, cheese, wine and delicacies.

**Let- Køb, SPAR and Min Købmand** are Dagrofa's smaller retailers, are meant to serve small cities and provide communities with basic food items. Min Købmand is a franchise with private ownership, while Let-Køb focuses on providing their customers with an assortment targeted towards their needs (Dagrofa 2018).

**Rema 1000** is a Norwegian supermarket chain belonging to the Reitan Group and has over 300 stores across Denmark. Rema 1000 is also a discount supermarket that differentiates itself through a series of campaigns and initiatives meant to lower food waste. Therefore, Rema 1000 became the first supermarket in Denmark to eliminate price promotions based on buying multiple items and has downsized the packaging of basic food items (bread, milk, cheese, meat).

**Lidl** is one of Europe's largest retailers, with over 10.000 supermarkets in almost 30 countries (Lidl 2018). The first Danish supermarket was opened in 2005 and today there are over 100 stores selling both food, but also household items and even small appliances (Lidl 2018). Lidl has a strong strategy of promoting their products and is known for having more than 3 campaigns running simultaneously. One of these campaign focuses on bringing international foods to consumers by promoting a different country or culture every week. Some examples are: the Greek week, with everything from olives and olive oil to halva, Greek pastries or seafood or the Italian week, focused on very specific Italian foods such as prosciutto crudo or provolone cheese.

**Aldi** Denmark functions under the umbrella of Aldi Nord and has over 222 locations across the country (Aldi 2018). Aldi opened its first store in Denmark in 1977 and since then operates as a discount supermarket chain offering high quality products at low prices. A lot of the products sold in Aldi are of German provenance.

**Literature review**

### 3. Literature review

For the purpose of this project, a literature search has been made in order to find significant literature on the topic of buying behavior. The literature found from either ProQuest, Scopus or Google Scholar was accessed through Aalborg University 's library. Afterwards, the results were filtered and only literature in English from the last 20 years was considered. A screening of the abstract and conclusion was made in order to find the relevant literature, which was later read and used in the following section.

The second research sub-question of the project is meant to investigate the concept of buying behavior with regard to the literature existent on this subject. Therefore, for answering the research question "*What characterizes buying behavior?*" this chapter will present a literature review meant to address the three aspects of buying behavior as shown by the literature:

- The ethnic consumer
- Influencing buying behavior
- Ethnicity and buying behavior

#### The ethnic consumer

The discussion on ethnicity and buying behavior starts by defining the concept of ethnicity. Although ethnicity has multiple definitions depending on the sociological, psychological or cultural perspectives it is looked from, a common ground defines the *ethnic group* as a collective of people that share one or more aspects of race, culture, origin, language or religion (Vocabulary 2018).

Once moving to a new country or culture, the individual goes through *acculturation*, also known as the process or changes that occur once a cultural group comes in contact with another (Laroche et. al. 1998). Acculturation also entails that the cultural background of the individual changes by acquiring aspects of the host culture and a high degree of acculturation determines him to become assimilated to the host culture.

*"Culture provides people with a sense of identity and an understanding of acceptable attitudes and behaviours within the society" (Engel, Blackwell and Miniard, 1989)*

Although the study of buying behavior within ethnic groups might seem nowadays interconnected with other marketing and sales practices, the historic information shows us that getting here was a long process. According to Cui Cheng (2001), the first encounter with ethnic consumers was made in 1932 when Paul K. Edwards publishes his research called "*The Southern Urban Negro as a Consumer*", which was followed by a second literature published only in 1963. The 31 years' time difference and the sudden increase in interest in the 1960's was caused by the civil rights movement and equal employment opportunities in the United States and in the World. By providing ethnic minorities with equal rights and possibility to acquire higher paid jobs, they were able to access goods previously unavailable and become subject to advertising (Cui G. 2001).

Again, the United States recorded another high interest in advertisements towards ethnic groups in the 1980's, when the Hispanic population rose both by number of immigrants but also by the prevalence of middle-class families within the group (Cui G. 2001).

The research paper "*Marketing to Ethnic Minority Consumers: A historical Journey (1932-199)*" by Cui Cheng (2001) provides a historical view over the marketing studies of ethnic groups in the United States and defines three historical transitions: the thematic stage, the problematic stage and the practical stage.

- research within the initial **thematic stage** focuses on how ethnic groups were *underrepresented* (no actors with ethnic background played in advertising) and *underserved* (ethnic groups were still seen as not profitable enough) in advertising and how the minority consumers was *approached in relation to the majority* (advertising was either directed exclusively towards minorities or they were hopefully reached by mass advertising; no inclusive advertising was used)
- research within the second **problematic stage** shifted towards *identifying problematic practices in marketing towards minorities* and their causes: social and cultural factors affecting ethnic consumer's behavior were not considered; the need for separate advertising was overseen; there was no interest in examining media usage patterns and the response to promotion of the different ethnic consumer groups.
- research within the third **practical stage** focused on finding practical solutions to the existing problems by either *segmenting the ethnic markets based on acculturation, media usage and psychographic variables*, studying the decision-making process of ethnic groups or investigating the differences between the minority and the majority. During this period, an increased attention is given to controversial marketing efforts for cigarettes or alcoholic beverages to ethnic groups, which was considered unethical.

Studies show that ethnic groups moving to a new country engage sooner or later in ethnic economic activities, either by supplying specific products or services to people with similar background (food or clothing retailers, hairdressers and barber shops, etc.) or by demanding them (Wei L. 1998). Ethnic economic activities, together with socio-economic circumstances and the rise in immigration and workforce migration determine the formation of *ethnic settlement patterns*, where people of a certain ethnic background form the majority of inhabitants (ghettos, ethnic enclaves and ethnoburbs) (Wei L. 1998). The city of New York is probably the best example for illustrating how diverse ethnic settlements can transform the appearance of a city. Figure 2 illustrates the different ethnic neighborhoods in New York.

*“Ethnoburbs are suburban ethnic clusters of residential areas and business districts in large metropolitan areas. Ethnoburbs coexist along with traditional ethnic ghettos/enclaves in inner cities in contemporary Western societies”. (Wei L. 1998)*

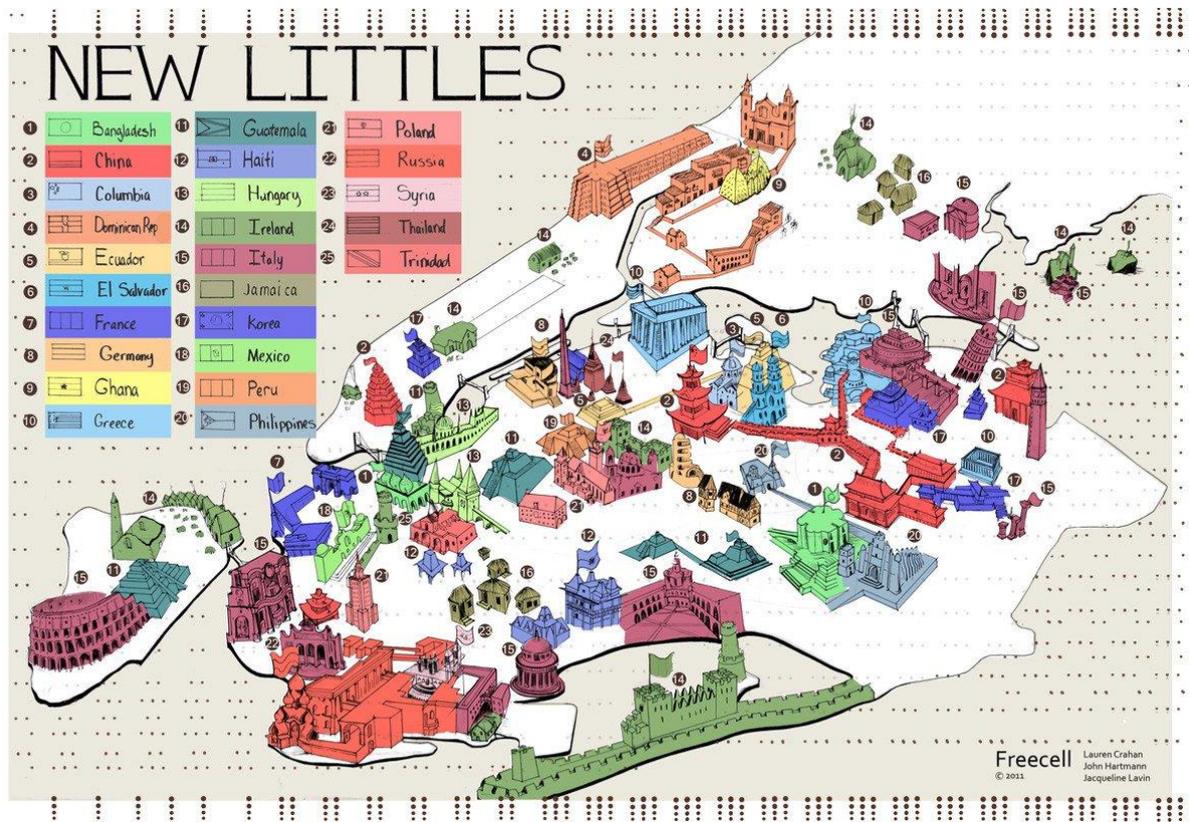


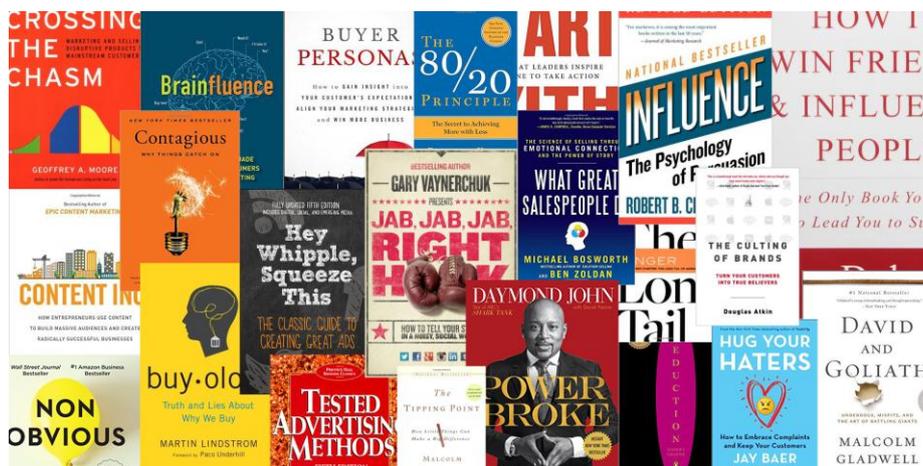
Figure 2 Map of New York City- Ethnoburbs

Source: [www.reddit.com/MapPorn](http://www.reddit.com/MapPorn)

By having access to both ethnic and local goods, the ethnic consumer has a choice to make, which is heavily influenced by the retail environment but also by his own motives and beliefs.

## Influencing buying behavior

One could argue that the entire discipline of marketing is built on the study of consumers, either individuals or groups, and how they can be persuaded to buy or consume more of what a company is selling. Therefore, extensive research has been made on the consumer behavior and how to influence it and hundreds of books and articles have been written of this specific topic.



Picture 1. Examples of marketing books

Source: [www.workzone.com](http://www.workzone.com)

One way of narrowing down this extensive literature to the topic of this project is to look into the retail environment (the supermarket) and in what ways it can be used to influence consumer behavior.

According to Chang H., Eckman M. and Yan R. (2011), the retail environment is characterized by three variables: *the ambient*, *the design* and *the social*, which all influence the consumers in a positive or negative way. The study goes one step further in claiming that the *positive emotional responses* of the consumer regarding the retail environment facilitates impulse purchases. In other words, the study found a connection between the positive perception of the environmental stimuli in a shop (lighting, music, smell, cleanliness) and the willingness to make unplanned purchases. On the other hand, the social variable (interaction with sales

personnel or other customers) did not have a direct impact on purchase decisions. As a conclusion, the research recommends a careful planning of the environment of a shop.

One of the most recent theories in influencing buying behavior is **nudging**, also known for its application in public health interventions. Although used even before, the concept of nudging became popular through Richard Thaler and Cass Sunstein's book *Nudge: Improving Decisions About Health, Wealth, and Happiness* in 2008 and has ever since been used extensively in health policies and health interventions as a way to persuade individuals to make better health decisions without limiting their freedom of choice (Shaghay Y. J 2013).

**Nudge theory** is based on the assumption that behaviours can be changed or shaped under the influence of behavioral insights and therefore the individuals can be persuaded in making better decisions. This theory has welcoming applications in governmental interventions, where it can be used to lower costs and increase efficiency (Kosters M. and Van der Heijden J. 2015). The examples of nudging provided by Richard Thaler and Cass Sustein (2008) show how different actors can make use of this theory to achieve a broad range of results. For example, the authorities can nudge to improve the health status of communities, businesses can nudge to improve the situation of the people they are directly involved with or individuals can nudge themselves or others. Nudging can also change behavior through financial stimulus, by providing relevant information or by restricting inappropriate choices (Kosters M. and Van der Heijden J. 2015). Although nudging has been extensively criticized for *violating the principles of individual freedom*, it has also been used with success in multiple interventions, as Kosters M. and Van der Heijden J. (2015) exemplify in their article "*From mechanism to virtue: Evaluating Nudge theory*".

Multiple studies were made on the nudging approach in supermarkets, most of them meant towards addressing the topic of healthy food choices. One example of a study from Denmark is "*Discounts on fruit and vegetables combined with a space management intervention increased sales in supermarkets*" published in 2017. The study was meant to examine whether space management and a 20% price reduction on fruits and vegetables would have an effect on the sales of fruits and vegetables, but also on unhealthy alternatives. Two large supermarkets from the island of Bornholm have been selected for this study: one of them being subject to space management changes, while the other to both space management but also a 20% price reduction in fruits and vegetables. The study concluded that the price reduction has significantly increased the sales of fruits and vegetables (22.2% increase) in the selected supermarkets, while having no effect on the sales of the unhealthy alternatives.

## Ethnicity and buying behavior

Optimal political circumstances and the advancements in technology has made it easier than ever to travel across the borders of one's country and live outside of it. The last 30 years have been marked by the development of multiculturalism and ethnic diversity, which has also brought forward an increase from marketers towards cultural oriented marketing. Multiple studies of consumer behavior based on ethnic considerations have been made since the development of this discipline. Nil Özçağlar-Toulouse et. al. (2009) in the paper "*Ethnicity in the study of the consumer: an overview*" has made an overview of the studies on ethnicity in consumer research in order to determine future research perspectives. The article presents two different approaches to studying consumer behavior reflected by different epistemological and methodological orientations.

First of all, there are the studies that view ethnicity as a constant feature of the individual and research within this category are targeted at defining consumption patterns based on it. Three main themes can be identified under this type of research:

- **from the 1970's to the 1980's** ethnicity was viewed as a feature of the individual, same as gender or age identifying a *homogenous subcultural phenomenon among consumers*. Albert O. Hirschman (1981) was one of the first American researchers to identify 6 main subcultures based on ethnicity (Irish, English, Greek, Italian, Chinese and Jewish) and his work was focused on consumer motivations and decision-making mechanisms based on ethnicity (ğlar-Toulouse N. et al 2009).
- **in the 1980's and the 1990's** the focus was on *acculturation* and understanding what effects multiculturalism had over consumption. John W. Berry (1990) is known for his important contribution in acculturation studies, his work revolving around two dimensions of consumer behavior in another culture: the individual in relation to his original culture and the individual in relation to his host culture.
- **after the 1990's**, the studies done on this topic shifting focus towards the individual and the subjective nature of ethnicity, with three main concepts being studied: *ethnic identity* (the individual feeling that he belongs to a ethnic group), *intensity of ethnic affiliation* (how strong the individual feels he belongs to an ethnic group) and *situational ethnicity* (how the feeling of belonging to an ethnic group changes according to the situation he is in) (ğlar-Toulouse N. et al 2009).

Secondly, there are the most recent studies that consider ethnicity as a result of social interactions and norms and use cultural approaches to study consumption, one example being the Consumer Culture Theory by Arnould and Thompson (2005). Multiple approaches have been taken in studying cultural consumption:

- *analyzing consumption through ethnicity*- studies focused on studying consumption patterns of ethnic within a specific host country
- *ethnicity as a consumer identity project*- studying the structures influencing ethnic consumer identity

The study concludes by emphasizing the importance of further research within the field of ethnic consumerism, especially within the European Union, which since the Second World War has been *working on promoting the idea of a homogenous cultural mosaic* (glar-Toulouse N. et al 2009).

### **Sub conclusion**

Studies of consumer behavior revealed that decision making processes can be influenced and the environment of retail establishments can be used to nudge individuals into taking a desired decision.

Ethnic identity has a strong influence over the consumer behavior of immigrants and cultural oriented marketing is an approach heavily used in today's society.

Socio-economic factors, ethnic identity, geographical distances and product availability influence whether the ethnic consumer chooses ethnic business in favor of the mainstream ones.

# **Theoretical framework**

## 4. Theoretical framework

This following chapter presents the two theoretical frameworks used in writing this master thesis. Firstly, the behavioral theories behind customer decisions will be presented, having as focus a Cognitive Approach. Further, the Consumer Decision Model is outlined as a framework meant to facilitate the analysis of the stimuli and the variables engaged in the decision process. Secondly, the concept of Experience Economy will be explained and what implication it has over this research topic, by pinpointing towards experiences in the retail sector and especially in Denmark. Lastly, the section will focus on the Business Canvas Model and its importance in determining value creating areas for businesses.

### Consumer decision making and consumer behavior

The study of consumer behaviors is over 300 years old and it started when economists such as Nicholas Bernoulli (1687-1759), John von Neumann (1903- 1957) and Oskar Morgenstern (1902-1977) began studying the foundation of consumer decision making (Bray J. 2008). The early approaches to this topic were exclusively from an economic viewpoint and were studying only the purchase activity as such. The most encountered framework from that time is the "Utility Theory", which states that consumers' choices are based on the expected outcome of their choice (Bray J. 2008).

Developments in this field of study present the consumer choice as the consequence of an association of factors, and a large series of consumption activities are associated to it. For example, *the need recognition, information search, evaluation of alternatives, the building of purchase intention, the act of purchasing, consumption and finally disposal* are all activities interconnected with the buying behavior.

According to Jeff Bray (2008) there are five different approaches used in studying the decision-making behavior, based on different psychological traditions, and each having particular variables in focus:

**Economic Man-** This approach specifies that in order to make a rational economic decision, the individual must be aware of all the buying possibilities available, analyze and rate each one of the and select the most convenient to him in that moment of time (Schiffman and Kanuk 2007). This approach is considered outdated as one cannot be, in this in this day and age, completely aware of all the options available in order to take a "*perfect decision*".

**Psychodynamic Approach-** This approach with deep roots in Sigmund Freud's psychological tradition claims that behaviours are strongly influenced by biological "*intrinsic forces*" or "*drives*" more than by external factors.

**Behaviourist Approach-** Behaviourism are a series of philosophical studies claiming that behaviours are influenced only by external stimuli. Representative for the Behaviorism approach are *Ivan Pavlov (1849-1936) who investigated classical conditioning, John Watson (1878-1958) who rejected introspective methods and Burrhus Skinner (1904-1990) who developed operant conditioning* (Bray J. 2008). Behavioral research is still used in documenting the human behaviour, but nowadays is supplemented by "Cognitive Behaviorism".

**Cognitive Approach-** The cognitive approach associates behavioural approaches to intrapersonal understanding where the customer is considered an "*information processor*" (Ribeaux and Poppleton 1978). Newer behavioural theories, such as nudging, present the decision-making process as one to be influenced under the right architecture (Thaler R. and Sunstein C. 2008). Nudging is especially known to be used in health-related initiatives, where customers can be nudged to make better life choices.

**Humanistic Approach-** In this ultimate attempt to understand consumer behaviours, the humanistic approach seeks to go into individual considerations by analyzing the consumer as a singular entity rather than looking at collectives and groups of individuals. Two main models attributed to the humanistic approach are: The Theory of Trying (Bagozzi and Warshaw 1990)- which addresses what norms and attitudes are involved in the act of *trying* and has relevance mostly in health-related decisions and The Model of Goal Directed Behaviour- which derives from the Theory of Planned Behaviour and has a *greater predictive ability* although *requiring more sophisticated data gathering techniques* (Perugini et al. 2001).

When analyzing the buying behaviour of the selected international consumers, it is important to look into the intrapersonal considerations influencing their decision-making process. In the same time, it is also important to be aware of the informational inputs, classified as environmental and social stimuli (Steward J. 1994).

This project targets the international community as a group instead of individuals and while it would be interesting to investigate how culture affects the food choices of each and one of us, this is not the desired approach. Therefore, the Cognitive Approach will be used as it provides a way of approaching this topic from a collective perspective having as focus both internal processes and individual and environmental variables. This theory, together with the corresponding models will be presented next:

## The Cognitive Approach

*“The Cognitive approach is derived in a large part from Cognitive Psychology which can trace its roots back to early philosophers such as Socrates who was interested in the origins of knowledge (Plato 360 B.C.), Aristotle who proposed the first theory of memory (Aristotle 350 B.C.) and Descartes who explored how knowledge is represented mentally in his Meditations (Descartes 1640)” (Bray J.) 2008)*

A milestone in the development of the cognitive psychology is represented by Donald O. Hebb's (1904–1985) Stimulus-Organism-Response Model (SOR) (Figure 3) which is considered to have made the progression from Behaviourism to Cognitivism by its claim that the brain processes “could account for cognitive processes such as thought, motivation, and attention” (Cziko G. 2000)

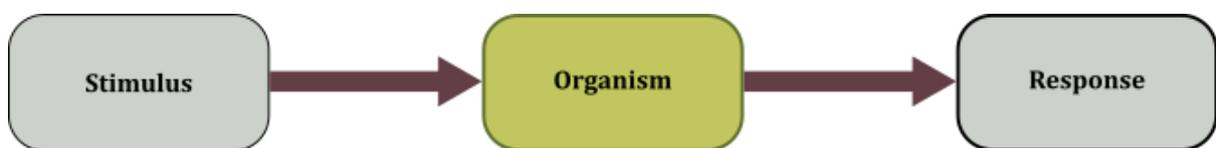


Figure 3. Stimulus-Organism-Response Model of Decision Making

Source: Cziko (2000)

The **Stimulus-Organism-Response model** offers a linear dependence between the stimuli acting over an organism and the reaction it has afterwards. This model was later dismissed when researchers acknowledged that the organism is operating based also on past experiences which influence how it receives, processes and selects specific information (Bray J. 2008).

According to Gordon R. Foxall (1990), constructivism provides four main strengths in clarifying consumer behaviour:

- it is an accessible way of analyzing purchase and consumption behaviours due to its *common-sense explanations of everyday discourse*
- it gives the consumers the possibility to explain their *attitudes, wants, needs and motives* is a way that coincides with reality
- it provides a *measure of unity and consensus* to the field of study

- using the same *theoretical consumer research* and *methodological inputs* in social sciences and human disciplines had made possible the *conceptual development* of this line of consumer research

The cognitive models used in analyzing consumer behaviour are divided into two main categories as shown by Figure 4: *analytical* models- which produce a framework that contain a series of elements meant to explain consumer behaviours, for example The Theory of Buyer Behavior and The Consumer Decision Model; and *prescriptive* models- which on the other hand provide a framework of how consumer behaviours are organized, such as the Theory of Reasoned Action and the Theory of Planned Behavior (Bray J. 2008).

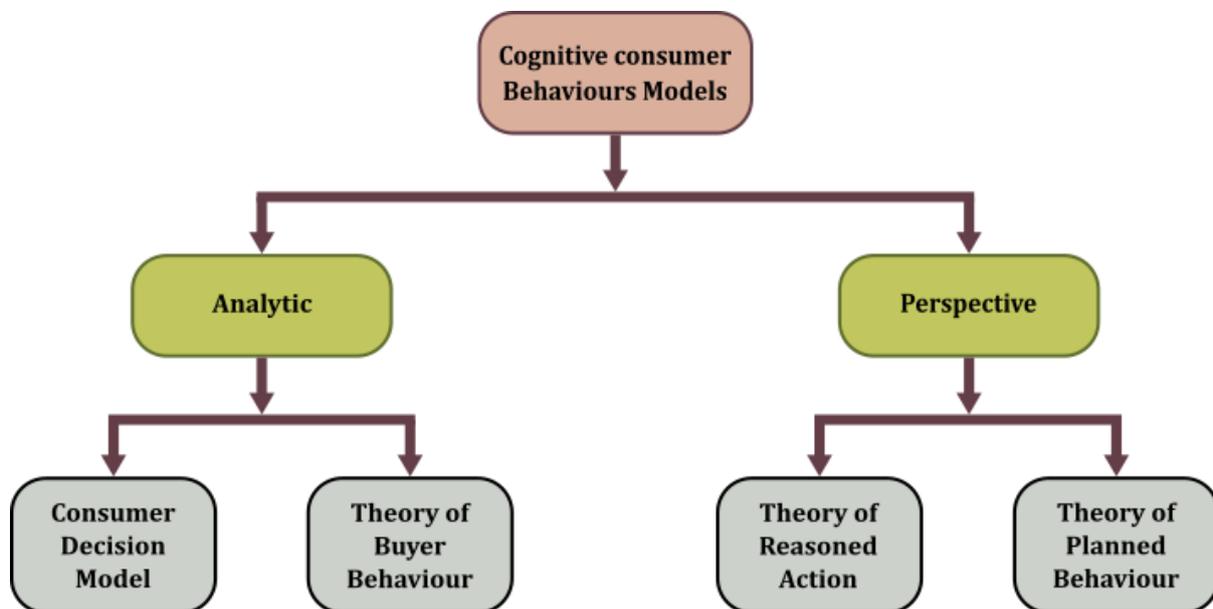


Figure 4. Cognitive Consumer Behavior Models

Source: Adapted from (Fawcett and Downs 1992, Moital 2007)

## Consumer Decision Model

Also known as the Engel-Blackwell-Miniard Model, the Consumer Decision Model was developed since 1968 and is illustrated under its most current form in Figure 5.

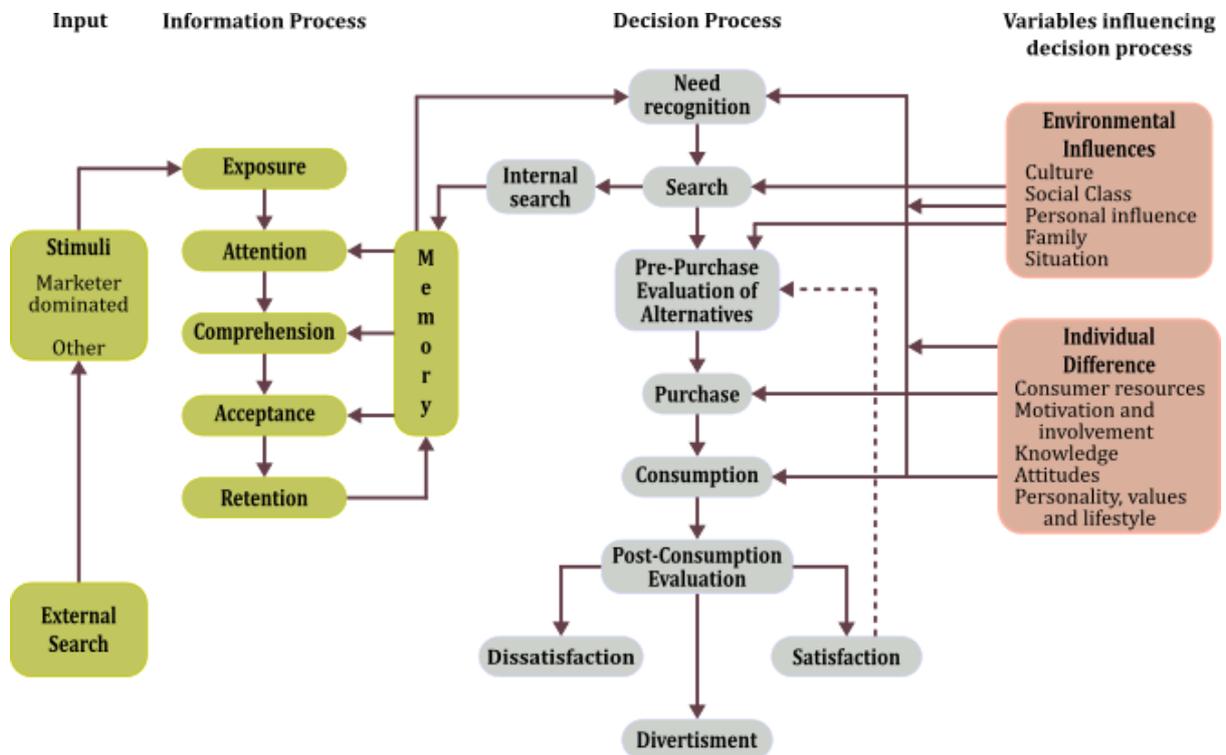


Figure 5. Consumer Decision Model

Source: Blackwell,Miniard et al. 2001

The model is built on a seven-step decision process (need recognition- search of information- evaluation of alternatives- purchase-consumption- post purchase reflection- divestment) which is determined by two main factors.

On one side, there is the *stimuli* representing the input that is being analyzed based on previous experiences stored in the memory. On the other side there are the two types of *variables* engaged in the decision process: *environmental influences* (culture, social status, personal influences, family and situation) and *individual differences* (consumer resources, motivation and involvement, knowledge, attitudes, personality, values and lifestyle) (Blackwell, Miniard et al. 2001).

The *decision process* starts when the individual recognizes a need to change his present situation and it is steered by the combined effort of both the stimuli inputs and environmental and individual variables. Depending on the complexity of the problem to be solved, the individual makes use of previous experiences stored in the memory, but also of external information. Therefore, more complex problems require a higher degree of external information, while ordinary problems can be solved based on information he already has from previous behaviors. In the same time, new information goes through the five step *Information Process* in order to be stored in the memory (Bray J. 2008) .

During the Pre-purchase phase, all the possible consumer choices are analyzed based on the beliefs, attitudes and purchase intentions. Again, the environmental and individual variables play a role in the buying decision, which is then followed by the consumption of what was purchased. Following the consumption is the post-consumption evaluation, which can be either satisfactory or dissatisfactory or even both. The last step in the decision process is the divestment or dispossession of the purchase after consumption (Bray J. 2008).

As mentioned earlier, stimuli are an important part of the decision-making process of an individual. A variety of actors, factors and conditions can be classified as external stimuli if they intervene into the buying behavior. Companies and retailers spend extensive amounts of time and money on marketing efforts meant to stimulate their consumers and bring them one step closer to buying their products or services.

But nowadays, the focus shifted from the product itself and the services offered became dispensable. In a time when alternatives are plentiful, the retailer must look beyond all that, and focus on what the consumers don't know they need yet. Therefore, the following section will look further into Experience economy as the "key trend" in global marketing and as a source of competitive advantages for the businesses.

## Experience economy

*“Goods and services are no longer enough. There is a fundamental shift going on in the very fabric of all developed economies. That shift is not to an information economy, much less to a knowledge economy. The new economy emerging is now based on an age-old but newly identified economic offering: experiences.” (Pine J. and Gilmore J. 2002)*

Joseph Pine and James Gilmore (1998) use the metaphor of a birthday cake to demonstrate the development and emerging importance of Experience Economy in the modern economic environment. Once the birthday cake represented a symbol of an economy based on agriculture and was made inside the home with ingredients available to anyone and at very low costs. The economy evolved in such a way towards valuing experiences that nowadays the birthday cake became an “add-on” item cast in the shadow by other more exciting experiences available at a birthday party, and even the party itself is being outsourced to companies or places that end up being more cost demanding (Pine J. and Gilmore J. 1998).

Pine and Gilmore (1999) regard experiences as a value-adding service that comes as a continuation of the previous economic efforts as shown by the different intervals in the Progression of Economic Value- Figure 6.

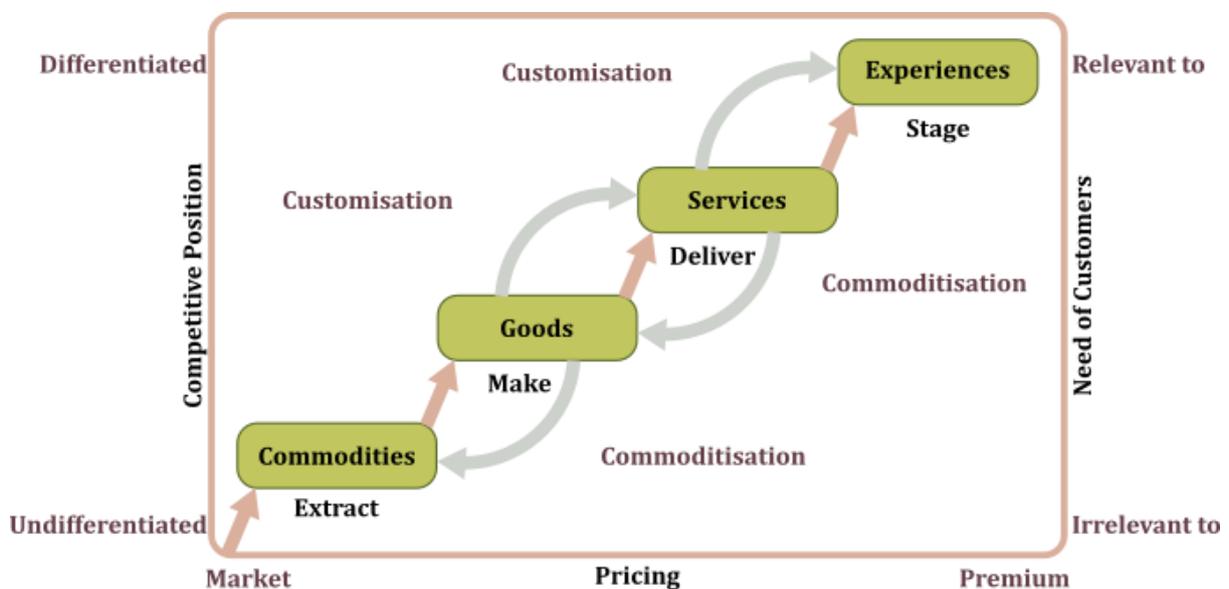


Figure 6. Progression of Economic Value

Source: Pine and Gilmore (1999)

Experiences are not ambiguous constructs, they have according to Pine and Gilmore (1999) a real value, similar to any product, service or commodity. In order to benefit from experiences, companies must first of all invest in creating them by using their own services as a stage and their products as props to engage customers in memorable events (Pine and Gilmore 1999).

Experiences are, as characterized by Pine and Gilmore (1998) build according to two parameters:

- **customer participation**- representing the degree of involvement the customers have in a specific experience. It can vary from *passive participation* when he isn't involved in the experience at all, as it is for example in the case of a theatre play to *active participation*, when he is actively involved and becomes part of the experience.
- **connection**- representing the relationship customers have to a certain experience. On one end of the spectrum there is *absorption*, for example when the consumer watches a movie at home, as opposed to *immersion*, which happens when he visits a cinema and watches the movie together with others by enjoying the large screen, sound system and the rest of the audience

The two dimensions are used by Pine and Gilmore to divide experiences into four main categories as seen in the Four Realms of an Experience Model (1998) -Figure 7.

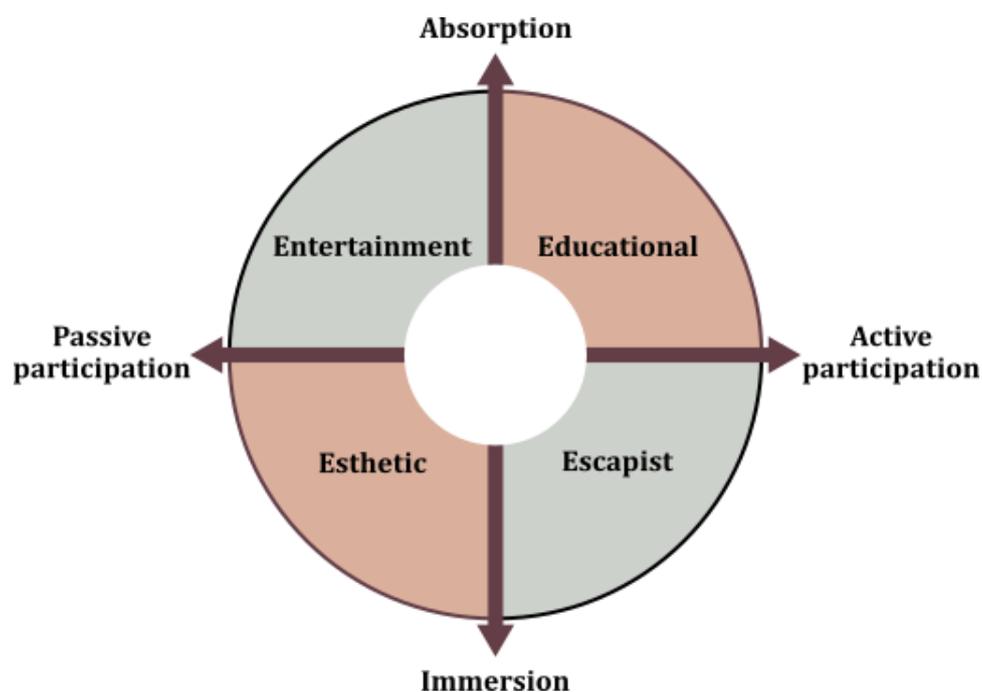


Figure 7. Four Realms of an Experience Model

Source: Pine J. and Gilmore J. 1998

The figure can be used as a framework to analyze experiences, but also as a guideline for creating memorable experiences. The examples from the four realms presented by Pine and Gilmore (1998) are:

**Entertainment-** Experiences that require less participation from the consumer and where he is less likely to connect with the experience, for example watching television or attending a concert.

**Educational-** Experiences that involve a more active participation from the consumer while still being on the outside of the event and not immerse into it, for example attending a class or taking a ski lesson.

**Escapist-** Experiences that are both entertaining and educational in the same time, but where the consumer is immersed in the activities, for example acting in a play or playing in an orchestra.

**Esthetic (Environment)-** Experiences where the participants are immersed into the certain activities while having a passive participation, as a visitor in an art gallery.

Experiences can take place in either one of the four realms or in more than one realm, therefore it is important for companies to decide what kind of experiences they want to offer their consumers based on extensive research and development efforts. Experiences should have a *specific theme*, so that consumers know what to expect and have something to remember the experience by. Even more, experiences should provide *harmonized impressions with positive cues* and eliminate *negative cues* so that the impression left in the customer's mind is a positive one. Lastly, experiences should *involve all 5 senses* by stimulating them through sounds, taste, smells, etc. according to the specific theme and help *mix in memorabilia* in order to make it unforgettable.

## **Experience economy in retail**

Experience economy can be found anywhere in the business world, especially in retail, resulting from a need to provide customers with more than just products and services. In order to provide meaningful experiences to their consumers, retailers rely on a multitude of

communication channels, such as shopping centers, retail parks, high-end outlets, in store events or online platforms and social media outlets.

Having as departure Pine and Gilmore’s Experience Economy Model, the Retail Experience Economy Model (Retail Economics 2017) (Figure 8) builds upon the four realms of experiences by describing what aspects of memorabilia are targeted through experiences in retail and how the desired customer loyalty can be achieved.

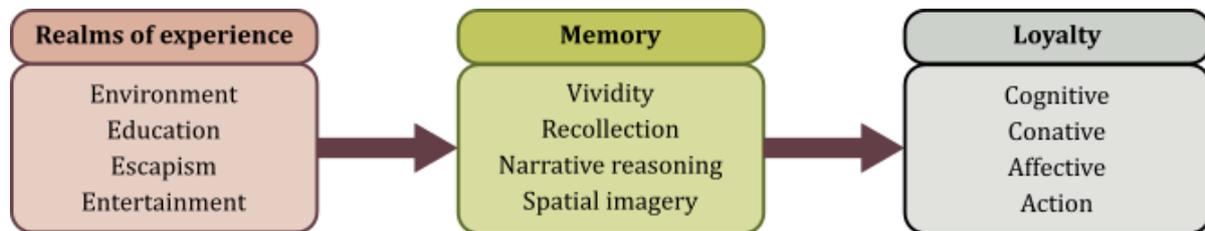


Figure 8. Retail Experience Economy Model

Source: Retail Economics 2017

A study made in the United Kingdom by Retail Economics in 2017 with the participation of over 2000 representatives highlights the importance of customer data and personalized content in retail. The results show that age and gender are important for how consumers experience the retail world and how the type of experiences desired vary according to the type of product sold, the price point, the complexity of product and so on. The results also show that the *Environment* is considered to be the most important of the four realms, followed by *Escapism*, *Entertainment* and lastly *Education* (Retail Economics 2017).

Having the *Environment* as the most important realm in retail shows that customers are still more interested in physical retail as opposed to online and that stores still have the upper hand and are able to create close connections with them. Even more, physical stores can design environments where the consumers are inspired to have a certain feeling, which will then have an impact on their purchase and their loyalty towards the business (Retail Economics 2017).

### Experience economy in the Nordic countries

According to Trine Bille, Associate Professor at Copenhagen Business School in Copenhagen experience economy in Scandinavia, as to everywhere else in the world, plays an important role in the retail sector. Within the Nordic countries, experience economy is being used prominently

by the public authorities as a mean in *developing policies for local government authorities and regions* (Bille T. 2012).

In Denmark, experience economy is described as a “*mega-trend*” (Lund et al., 2005) linked preponderantly to cultural activities and it is attributed to three different approaches and theories. As mentioned by Trine Bille (2010) in the paper “The Nordic approach to the Experience Economy – does it make sense?”, each of the three approaches are connected to creative work and *market value creation*.

- First of all, experiences are a *source of value creation for the companies*
- Secondly, experiences are relevant for the *creative industries* in terms of economic size, growth rate and profit generating potential.
- Lastly, experience economy is important in the context of the *creative class* and its importance in economic development by referring to how relevant creativity and cultural diversity are for generating and sustaining businesses.

Bille and Lorenzen (2008) present a more in-depth image of what determines Danish economic growth and development when it comes to experience economy. The three trends identified connect experience economy with an *increase in wages and welfare*, the *advancement of technologies* and the *development of globalization and internationalization*. Bille T. (2012) goes further to saying that although some aspects of experience economy are more developed than others (f. ex. local political initiatives) there is a lot of potential for value creation through experiences in the retail and consumer markets.

Nowadays customers have become familiar with experiencing new and exciting events in their retail spaces of choice, either under the form of music, taste, smells or games. Some shops organize special and exclusive events for their loyal customers where they can access novelty items such as clothing, make-up or electronics, etc. Larger supermarkets or retailers such as Ikea and Bilka focus on providing their customers with a “child-free” shopping experience by entertaining the children through activities and games in a specially organized environment.

Therefore, it is important for retailers and other businesses to analyze their own business models, identify strengths and weaknesses and explore what opportunities they have. In order to do all that, they must be aware of the business as a whole, but also of the parts that contribute to its functioning. Therefore, for a better understanding of the business model, a useful tool used is the Business Model Canvas, which will be presented next:

## Business Model Canvas

The Business Model Canvas (BMC) was designed as a framework for understanding businesses that also provides a simple and comprehensive overview of all its segments while not oversimplifying its functions (Osterwalder A. and Pigneur Y. 2010). BMC is also a tool developed to picture concepts or ideas, this time based on an organization’s core values and business direction. More so, due to its directness, the BMC can be printed out and used as a tool to be filled in with post-it’s in brainstorming sessions facilitating discussions and creativity.

Because it covers nine different aspects of a business, the BMC can be used as a “single reference model” across businesses and sectors and can be adapted to specific scenarios (Osterwalder A. and Pigneur Y. 2010). In the same time, it can be used as a “blueprint” to be used all throughout an organization’s structures, processes and systems.

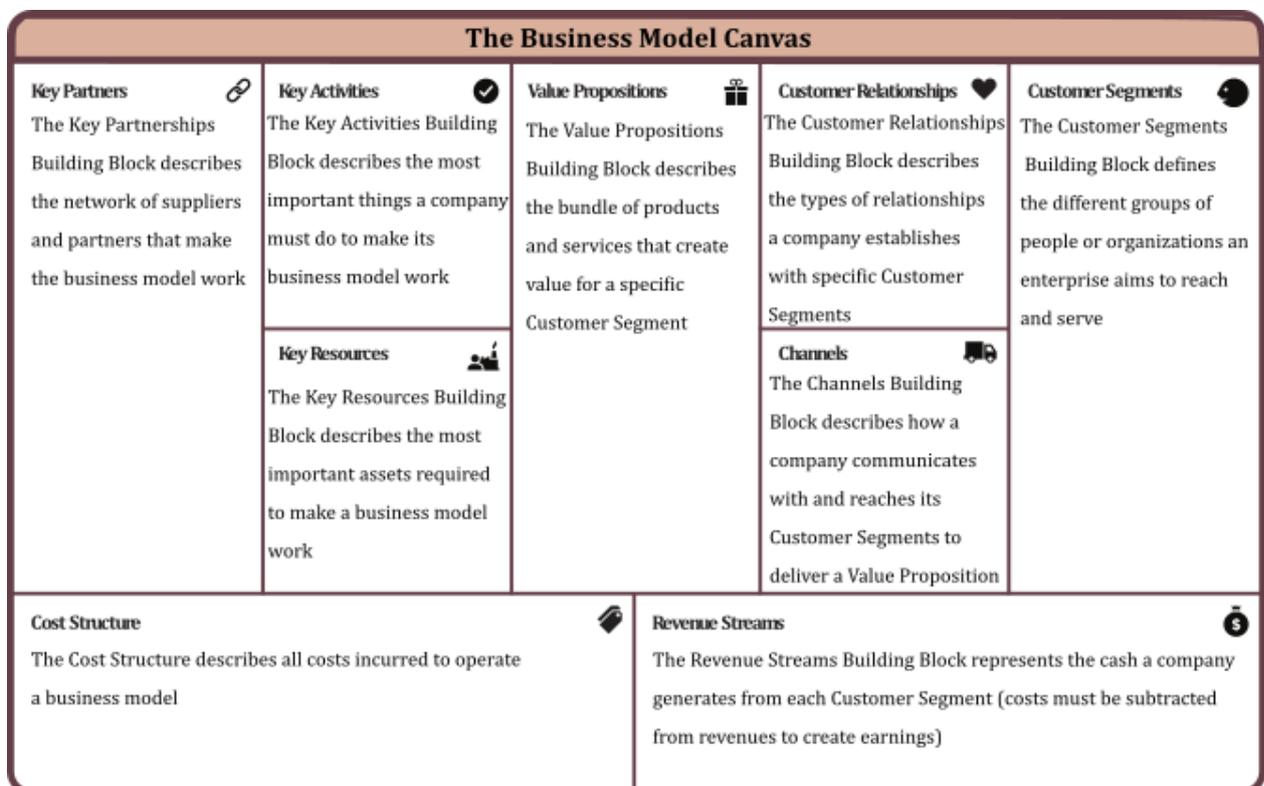


Figure 9. Business Model Canvas template

Source: www.Strategyzer.com

The model, illustrated in Figure 9 is composed of 9 building blocks: Customer segments, Value proposition, Channels, Customer relationships, Revenue streams, Key resources, Key activities, Key partners and Cost structure.

Therefore, the Business Model Canvas can be used in converting design solutions into a business model easy to understand and apply to new business initiatives (Osterwalder A. and Pigneur Y. 2010). In this project, the Business Canvas Model has been used to structure the second part of the analysis, more specifically the areas of interest for the Danish food retail sector.

# **Methodological framework**

## 5. Methodological framework

The following section is meant to structure and present the different methods used throughout this assignment. First, the section focuses on deduction, the scientific reasoning used and on ethnography as a qualitative research design meant to address cultural aspects of interest within a certain population group. Due to the author's implication in the research process, the concept of autoethnography will also be presented and its connection to the field of design. Later, the section will cover the methods used for data collection and analysis, together with the design tools used.

### Deduction

Deduction is a scientific reasoning method based on the idea that social theories can be tested through data. Starting from an existing theory, a hypothesis is developed meant to assess a specific phenomenon observed by the researcher and then tested. Therefore, the deductive method implies a "top-down" approach, from the general information to a specific theory and it uses predominantly qualitative research methods. This study was initiated after a long-time observation of the phenomena of food challenges among expats and it aims to assess whether this hypothesis is true or not. Unlike inductive reasoning, this study doesn't claim to formulate a theory that can be further used. Instead, it is meant to evaluate whether the hypothesis that food culture influences buying behavior is true and what consequences that has.

### Ethnography

Ethnography is often used in the field of social sciences as a research design meant to address socio-cultural aspects through participant observations. The ethnographer or anthropologist will actively engage in the everyday life of a certain group of people, observe their behaviours and interactions while recording every piece of information he comes across. Later on, he will also document these encounters in detail, together with his personal and theoretical reflections (Marcus and Fischer, 1986). The classical focus of ethnography has been to study groups of people different than one's own in order to present them as different and "non-traditional".



*Picture 2. Picture of Bronislaw Malinowski with natives on Trobriand Islands*

Source: London School of Economics Library Collections

Historically ethnographers have been known to focus on remote and “primitive” populations or “tribes” located far away from their own, both by distance but also by technological and social development (Bryman A. 2001: x).

The development of this method has brought researchers back to their own culture and a lot more focus has been put into researching particular subcultures, contra-cultures and organizational cultures in their own societies (Bryman A. 2001: x).

Ethnographies are different than other types of research because they give the researcher the chance to become involved in the subject studied, interact with the subjects of his study, participate in activities and form relationships which altogether help him see the culture as it is, not as he wants it to be. More so, by being directly involved and not relying on literature or second-hand data, the researcher obtains information that people might not be comfortable or open to share. Therefore, while other data collection methods such as questionnaires, interviews or focus groups show what people claim they do, by use of observations ethnographies show what people actually do.

When researching a topic that demands an in-depth qualitative analysis, such as the one of this project, it is important to address each participant individually. One example for this argument is the case of language as one of the main inhibitors in decision making among international customers. Although language itself emerged as one of the main themes during this research, in Shuhan’s case the lack of Danish skills makes him buy only products with transparent packaging that he can recognize. This has as consequence the fact that he never purchased any canned foods since being in Denmark. Therefore, impersonalized research methods that consider the needs of the group might overlook the needs on the individuals.

**Participant observation** is most commonly encountered in ethnographic research, and the researcher can also make use of interviews, conversational and discourse analysis, video recording, photography and life histories while adopting an active role in the context he investigates (Jupp V. 2006).

While being in the field, the researcher must adopt a “convincing role” that helps him blend into the group and participate to everyday activities without raising awareness of his presence. A successful participation relies both on social interaction that ensures an information flow but also remaining distant, so he can observe without becoming influenced (Gold R. 1958).

*“Success in both role-taking and roleplaying requires success in blending the demands of self-expression and self-integrity with the demands of the role.” R. Gold (1958)*

As Raymond L. Gold mentions in “*Roles in sociological field observations*” (1958) (Figure 10), the researched can assume four different main roles while doing field observations, according to the degree of implication he has and how developed his relationship becomes with the group he is observing:



Figure 10. Roles in sociological field observations

Source: Adaption after Raymond L. Gold (1958)

### **Complete participant**

The researcher is a complete participant when his role is not known to the group he observes and therefore he can interact with them without raising awareness. In this way, a certain fictive role is assumed by the researcher and has to follow through with the role in all aspects of his life during the research. Therefore, he cannot behave, react and talk as himself, but as the role he adopted. It is very important that the researcher in this role reminds himself of his true purpose- being an observer.

### **Participant as observer**

Although very similar to the complete participation, the participant as observer has the responsibility to inform of his role within the group and therefore he shouldn't adopt a fictive

role. The observer also develops relationships with his informants in time, and he should avoid the trap of “going native” which would compromise his objectivity towards the topic of research.

### *Observer as participant*

This role is assumed by researchers doing “one-visit interviews” because it requires a more formal observation and little to no participation. The observer as participant researcher tends to face more misunderstandings and communication barriers with his informants because he doesn’t have the time to create a connection with them.

### *Complete observer*

As a complete observer, the researcher is taken away from his field of research and he has no direct interaction with his subjects. The researcher also risks “ethnocentrism”, which is the opposite of “going native”, and it means that he risks not being able to perceive his informant’s views on the topic of research.

Once the researcher adopts a certain role within the context of his research, his role can be either covert or overt. By adopting a covert role, and becoming completely adopted, the researcher gains access to possibilities that would otherwise be unreachable. This approach is heavily criticized on ethical grounds and one controversial example is the study on male sexuality of L. Humpreys (1970) where he takes the role of “Watch Queen” in a public toilet (Jupp V. 2006).

The second sub-question of the problem statement- “*What characterizes buying behavior*” is meant to look both into the theories on buying behaviour but also into the buying behaviours of the participants to this study. Therefore, it is important for the researcher to become integrated into their buying experience by participating, observing and asking questions when necessary (participant as observer). Otherwise, by being a complete observer and not asking for clarification, the researcher might miss valuable cues to the participant’s behaviour. As mentioned before, observer as participant is attributed to “one-visit” interviews, which is not the case of this study.

## Autoethnography

*"Autoethnography. What is autoethnography? you might ask. My brief answer: research, writing, story, and method that connect the autobiographical and personal to the cultural, social and political. Autoethnographic forms feature concrete action, emotion, embodiment, self-consciousness, and introspection portrayed in dialogue, scenes, characterization and plot. Thus, autoethnography claims the convenience of literary writing."* (Carolyn Ellis 2004: xix)

Autoethnography is an approach to social research derived from ethnography, where the researcher's personal experiences are used in analyzing social and cultural contexts. While ethnography provides the research design for socio-cultural studies, autoethnography makes a point is acknowledging biases within the research. This method resulted from the researchers need to recognize how their own personal experiences and bias affect the research process. According to Carolyn Ellis (2004) autoethnography is both the process of doing and writing but also the end product.

The process of doing autoethnography combines both aspects of autobiography and ethnography where the researcher makes use of his study to remember events that he experienced in the past and that had no connection to the study beforehand. When writing an autobiography, he presents *epiphanies*- memories that have strongly impacted his existence and that have influenced the way he relates to social contexts since (Bochner and Ellis 1992). When combined with ethnographic research, the *epiphanies* serve as a confirmation that the researcher possesses a certain cultural identity or cultural understanding. Even more, the researcher can be inspired by his epiphanies to discover if and how others have similar cultural exposure.

The product of an autoethnography contains aspects of ethnographic writing, where a culture is described in an easy to understand way by making use of stories, field notes, interviews, pictures or video recordings (Carolyn Ellis 2004). But in the same time, it also contains autobiographic characteristics: *aesthetic* and *evocative techniques* which are designed to bring "readers into the scene"—particularly into thoughts, emotions, and actions (Carolyn Ellis, 2004: 142)—in order to "experience an experience".

Therefore, when writing an autoethnography, the researcher first identifies patterns in cultural contexts and afterwards makes personal and cultural experiences available to others in an easy to understand way by using storytelling.

According to Carolyn Ellis and Arthur P. Bochner (2000), autoethnographies are built upon 3 pillars and they differ according to where the emphasis is- either *“the research process (graphy), the cultural aspect (ethno) or the self (auto)”*. Therefore *“different examples of autoethnography fall at different places along the continuum of each of these axes”* (Ellis and Bochner 2000). The triadic model is illustrated in Picture 3.



Picture 3. Autoethnography

Source: Adaption after Carolyn Ellis (2000)

There are different types of autoethnography, depending on who the subject of the research is, how the analysis has been made and what the power relationships are between the researcher and his study participants, as shown in Figure 11.

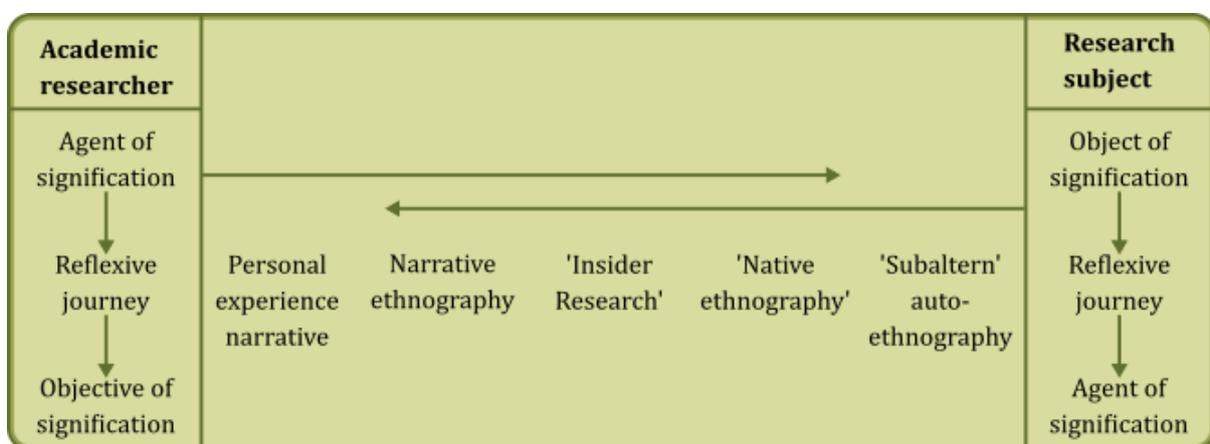


Figure 11. A continuum of autoethnographic practice

Source: Carolyn Ellis and Arthur P. Bochner (2000)

In the *personal experience narrative*, the researcher- which is usually from the academia, uses his personal cultural background to understand larger social experiences while making use of narrative techniques to include emotion into his analysis (Butz and Besio 2009). For example, a researcher that has previous experience from working and studying in a foreign country could make use of his multicultural understanding to relate to this topic of study, but he could not completely understand what his participants go through.

Moving further into the continuum, in reflexive or *narrative ethnographies* the researcher includes himself as an important part of the study and moves from being an agent of signification to be the object of signification. This change from agent to object becomes possible because as opposed to personal experience narrative, in reflexive ethnographies the researcher is not the primary subject of his study. (Butz and Besio 2009).

On the opposite side of the continuum there is the *subaltern autoethnography* or autoethnography from below (Butz and Besio 2009) which is not an “*academic representational practice*” anymore. Here, the objects of the study produce “*self-representations*” which become a source of understanding available to researchers to use for future research interactions. Using the same context, an example of subaltern ethnography would be if one of the participant would write his experiences as international customer in Denmark and make himself available to any research on this subject.

*Indigenous or native ethnographers* are the objects of signification that through training have become researchers within their own group. Therefore, they are considered to be more representative and have a deeper understanding of the study subject and in consequence provide a more authentic representation. There are multiple blogs, Facebook groups and other social media outlets where internationals can find extensive information about living in Denmark. Everything from tax calculation, to wages, accommodation, language courses and overall Danish living is being discussed on a daily basis. One example is the Facebook group “Expats in Copenhagen” that has over 32.000 members and where more than 40 posts and questions are posted every day (Facebook: Expats in Copenhagen, 2018). Food availability and where to find certain foods is also a topic rather frequently covered between expats. Due to this interest into the matter, other internationals might be open towards studying the same subject and become themselves researchers, but they also have to go through training to do so.

Lastly, the *insider or complete member* research autoethnographies are done by academic researchers who study a group they belong to and where they use their advantage. The majority of autoethnographic studies have been done by insider or complete members that have used “*their insiderness as a methodological and interpretative tool*” (Butz and Besio 2009). This is also the case in this study, where I take advantage of my experience as an expat living in Copenhagen

to research what others like me experience. This approach wouldn't have been possible if I haven't gone through these experiences myself or if my exposure was not extensive enough. Therefore, by having lived in Denmark for almost 10 years I have gained the knowledge and mindset to help me understand the complexity of this subject.

## Ethnography in the field of Design

Ethnography and ethnographic methods are used in various other fields as means to unravel the truth behind why a group of people act as they do. Companies use marketing research tools such as customer surveys, customer demographics and purchase patterns to gain an overview of who their customers are, but unfortunately these methods don't always provide an in-depth image of the situation (Wasson 2000). Identifying who their consumers are, why they buy a certain product, how they use it and what their opinions are, helps companies to gain a competitive advantage that could help them differentiate themselves on the market.

In line with the above, Christina Wasson (2000) draws attention to the fact that anthropology and ethnography can be used for commercial purposes, but also in the design field as a tool for designers to create better products, services and experiences. This aspect associates the ethnographic methods of researching international consumers to ways in how the Danish food retail sector can design a better buying experience.

Studies have shown that the physical environment of a retail space is the most important aspect for the consumers (Retail Economics 2017), which gives designers an important responsibility. By using ethnographic methods of research, for example observing the flow of consumers, what areas in a shop are most accessed, which ones aren't, and the duration people spend there can provide designers with valuable information. They can further use this data in designing a retail space that serves their customers by being functional, appealing, easy to navigate and therefore change their buying behavior to benefit the business.

When discussing design, ethnography stands as a set of data gathering methods and tools providing a lower theoretical outcome as in academic projects. The results are analyzed and presented according to the needs of the industry and therefore different than in the academia.

According to Christina Wasson (2000) data collection in design ethnography is similar to anthropologic research and done through *participant observations*, use of *photo and video recordings, interviews and photo narratives*. Another tool used in the design world and in retail is the *Customer Journey Map*, which combines both visual representations and

information on how the consumer perceives the specific place (Tvedebrink T. 2017). An in-depth description of the Customer Journey Map will be presented next:

## Customer Journey Map

Customer Journey Maps (CJMs) are the result of “*an analytical process performed in between the data collection and the design phases of a project*” (Tvedebrink T. 2017). As Christina Wasson (2000) mentions, participant observations make use of methods such as notes, video and audio recordings, photo narratives and interviews to collect consumer data, which will later be analyzed through the Customer Journey Map frame.

Furthermore, CJMs are *a visual tool* used to illustrate the process through which consumers go in an easy to understand way by dividing the data into: *activities, environments, interactions, objects and users*.

The journey customers take follows a *timeline of actions and emotions* and looks into what objects and actors are involved both in the front stage but also the backstage (Spraragen and Chan, 2008). The *front stage* represents what consumers see during their journey, for example the physical space of the supermarket, how it is arranged, what products they offer, the personnel and other participants. On the other hand, the *backstage* represents everything that cannot be seen in their journey, such as the entire logistical system put in place to deliver a continuous flow of products into the supermarkets.

This project contains 3 Customer Journey Maps made with 3 different participants chosen from the personal and professional network. The CJMs expose *positive and negative touchpoints* based on the reactions of the participants in the shop. The touchpoints result from either interaction with other participants, reactions to products or to the shopping environment. The CJMs also contain an *emotion meter* corresponding to the touchpoints on the timeline. Each Customer Journey was followed by a semi-structured interview meant to unfold more information regarding the buying behaviour of the particular participant.

## Analyzing of qualitative data- Thematic analysis

After collecting the qualitative data, the researcher proceeds by analyzing his findings in order to arrive at an understanding of “a particular phenomenon from the perspective of those experiencing it” (Vaismoradi et. al. 2013). Two of the most common methods used in analyzing qualitative data are *qualitative content analysis* and *thematic analysis*. The two methods, although different in their outcome of quantifying the qualitative data, they overlap in terms of methods, procedures and techniques (Vaismoradi et. al. 2013). The differences between the two methods are illustrated in Figure 12.

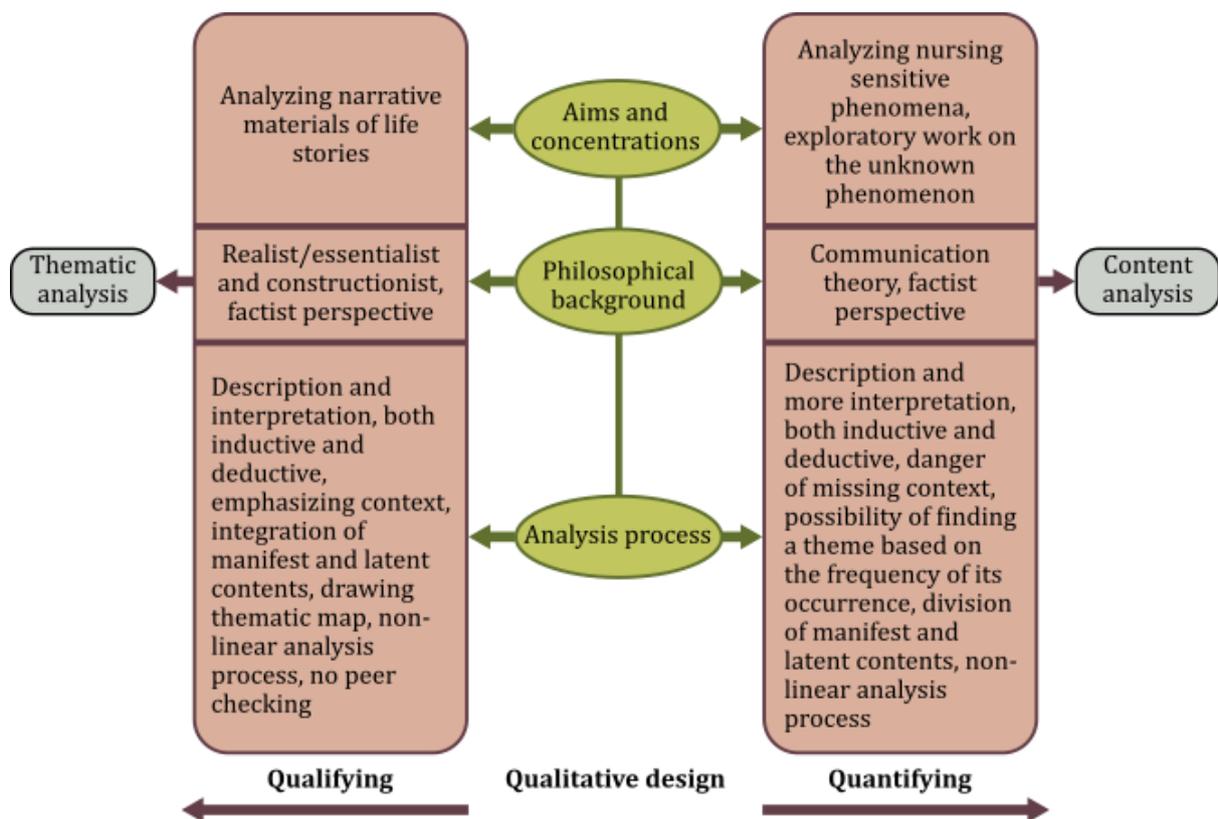


Figure 12. Main characteristics of thematic analysis and qualitative content analysis in the continuum of the qualitative methodology.

Source: Vaismoradi et. al. 2013

*Content analysis* stands for a number of methods used to analyze texts through a systematic coding and categorizing approach. Large texts and textual information are brushed through to determine trends and patterns of words used in order to identify their *frequency, relationships*

and the structures and discourses of communication. Therefore, content analysis can be used to quantify data.

On the other hand, **thematic analysis** is a method for “*identifying, analyzing and reporting patterns (themes)*” in a purely qualitative and detailed manner (Braun V. and Clarke V. 2006). Thematic analysis implies the analysis of text to find specific themes that are relevant in regard to answering the research question. These themes are either present in the data or are “*hidden*” and must be understood. Furthermore, depending on how important or big the theme is, there can be multiple sub-themes corresponding to a specific theme.

According to Braun V. and Clarke V. (2006), the process of doing thematic analysis is built on 6 phases as seen in Figure 13.

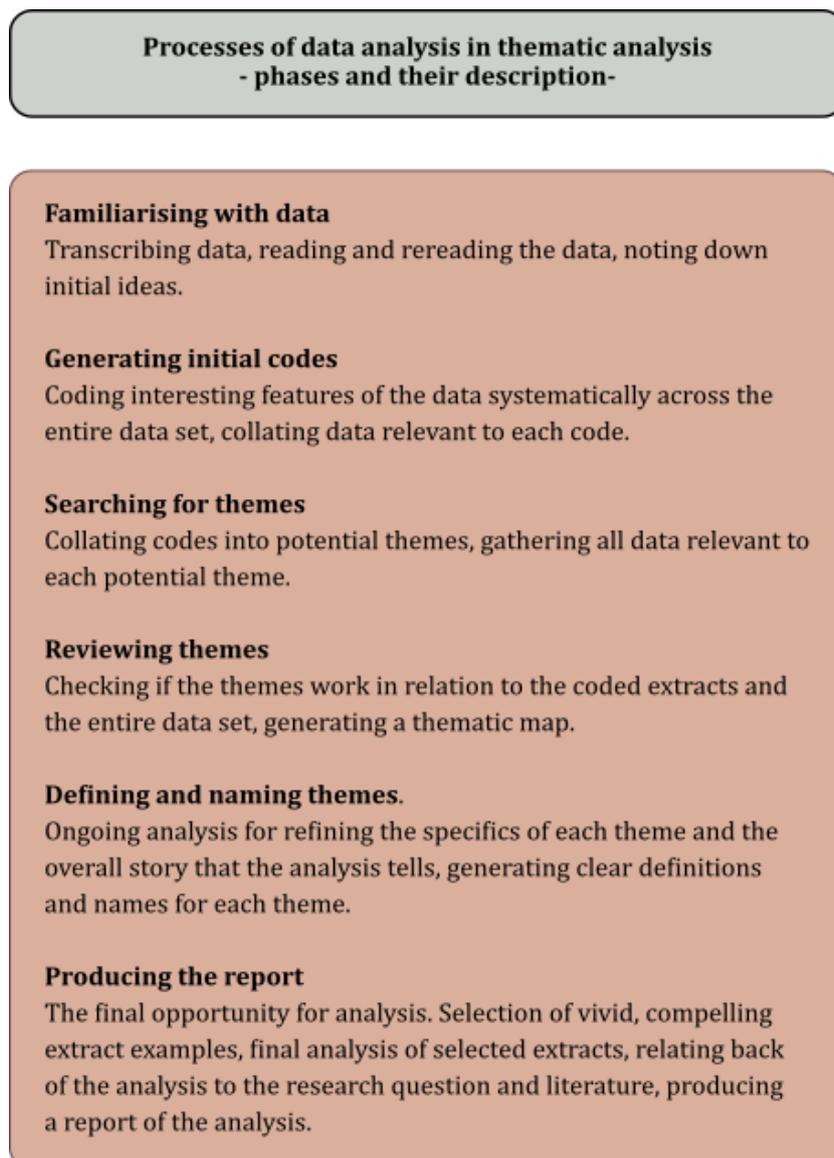


Figure 13. Processes of data analysis in thematic analysis and qualitative content analysis

Source: Braun & Clarke, 2006: 87

The data gathered during this research process will be analyzed in two phases according to the principles of thematic analysis. First, the information found in the Literature review section and the Background section will be compared against to the findings from the 3 Customer Journeys and the 3 semi-structured interviews. Afterwards, the resulting themes will be brought to discussion during the focus groups, and the data obtained will be analyzed for a second time into themes and sub-themes.

## Research Design

As stated in section 1- Problem statement, this project is meant to answer one overall research question: *“How important is food culture in the buying behavior of international consumers and how can the Danish food retail sector, exemplified by supermarkets in the Big Copenhagen Area enhance the buying experience of their international customers?”*. In order to answer this question, a number of 4 sub-questions have been formulated as well, and the following section will clarify how each one will be approached:

*What characterizes food culture?* In order to answer this question, literature on food culture will be reviewed. Aspects such as: themes within food consumption, food choices, eating patterns, traditional foods will be used to define the concept of food culture.

*What characterizes buying behavior?* For answering this question, the research will take two different steps in studying the concept of buying behavior. First, it will investigate the theories based on consumer decision making and consumer behavior in the Theoretical framework section and secondly it will investigate what studies on buying behavior have been made so far.

*What characterizes the Danish food retail sector?* This question will be answered by looking into the Danish food retail, who the major retailers are and what they stand for in the Background information section.

*What characterizes the buying experience of the international customers?* This question will be answered in the Analysis section based on the data resulted from the interviews, the Customer Journey Maps and the focus group.

The last component of the research question: *“how can Danish food retailers, exemplified by supermarkets in the Big Copenhagen Area enhance the buying experience of their international consumers?”* will be answered separately in the Analysis section. In order to

answer it, a separate section of questions will be asked during the focus group. The answers will then be compared with the previous interviews and presented using the Business Model Canvas as a framework.

## Storyboard

A storyboard is a tool used for conveying complex ideas through a sequence of images or drawings similar to how sketches or mind maps do. According to Tim Brown, the president and CEO of the American design office IDEO, these tools are the materialization of the brainstorming process and an effective way to capture and communicate creative ideas (Brown T. 2002).

Tim Brown (2002) also mentioned how important the use of post-it notes is in filtering the ideas resulted during a brainstorm session and utilize them for building storyboards.

Storyboards have been used during the initial phases of this project as a brainstorming and visualization tool. In order to frame and communicate the initial ideas and approach, a storyboard answering 9 questions was made to which the 10th question was added in the process- Fig 14.



Figure 14. Storyboard template

Source: Fisker(2015)

## Interviews

Another method of qualitative data collection was through semi-structured interviews. An interview usually represents a meeting or a dialogue between the researcher and the interviewee and it can take different forms depending on the nature of the research: informal or formal, structured or unstructured, in depth or not, etc. (Jupp V. 2006). Interviews are especially relevant in qualitative research because they provide a view on the situation as it is seen by the people directly involved in it and that might be overseen by the researcher. Semi-structured interviews follow an interview guide but in the same time allow the researcher to be spontaneous and take alternative directions according to where the interviewee takes him (Bryman A. 2012). By having pre-established interview guide, the researcher can always come back and ask unanswered questions, avoiding omitting them altogether.

Therefore, even if two semi-structured interviews follow the same interview guide they can vary depending on the follow-up questions asked. After completing the interview, they must be transcribed and possibly translated and later coded based on the type of thematic analysis desired by the researcher (Braun and Clarke 2006).

The 3 semi-structured interviews conducted during this research project have followed the same interview guide attached to Appendix 1. As mentioned before, the interviews were heavily influenced by what products the participants decided to buy and therefore the follow-up questions are very different from one to the other.

The interviews also took place in the same day as the Customer Journey, which was desired in order for the participants to have a fresh memory of their shopping experience.

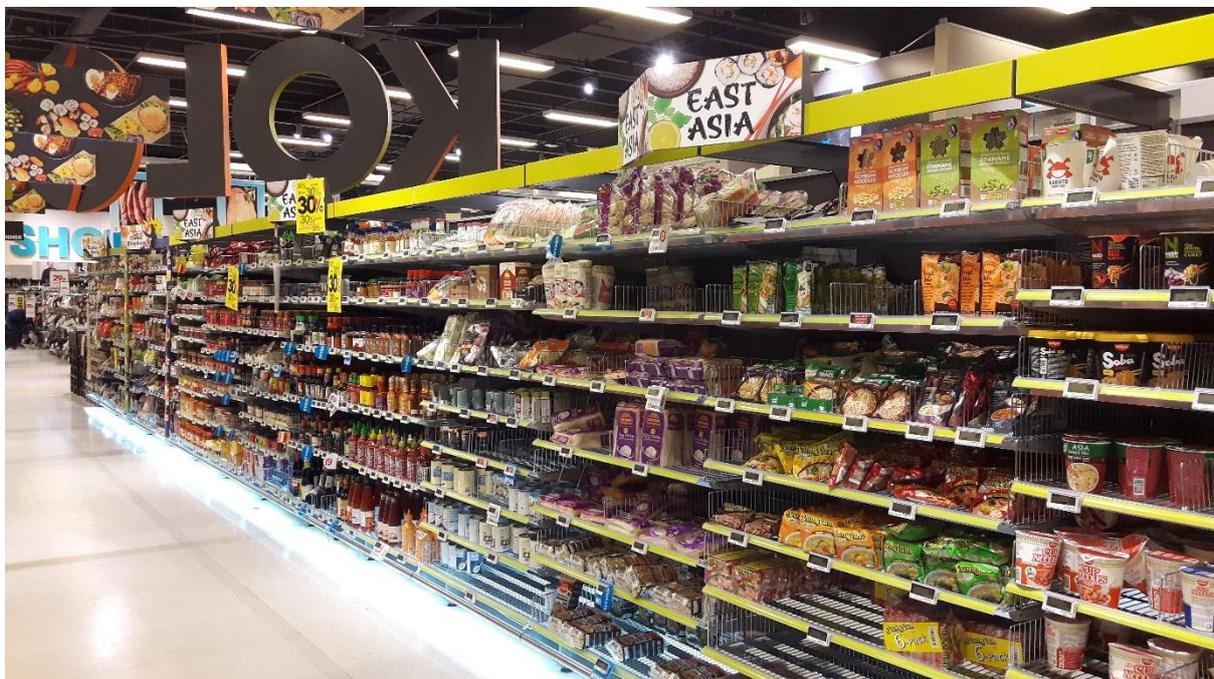
## Focus group

A focus group is a group interview conducted by a moderator with six to eight participants and is meant to investigate a specific topic of interest (Jupp V. 2006). Focus groups rely on the interaction between participants to fuel the conversation and the flow of information. A successful focus group is the one where the participants have an interest in the topic discussed so they can engage in the conversation. Further, in successful focus groups the participants not only express what they think of a certain topic, but how they reached that opinion (Jupp V. 2006).

Focus groups should have a clear purpose, reflected in the questions asked by the moderator and in the characteristics of the participants. The participants can either be a homogenous group, and therefore to data obtained will provide an in-depth view of the subject, or it can be heterogeneous, and the data obtained be more varied (Krueger and Casey 2015).

More so, the participants should feel comfortable in the group in order to share their opinions and ideas. When he considers necessary, the moderator can intervene by encouraging some participants to engage in the discussion or to change focus from a participant that overruns the conversation (Krueger and Casey 2015).

In this project, the focus group is meant to help answering the research question by providing an overview of the buying behaviour of international consumers in Copenhagen. Besides that, the discussion between the participants of the focus group will contribute with valuable information in analyzing what aspects of the buying experience the Danish supermarkets can improve based on the Business Canvas Model.



*Picture 4. Asian isle Bilka Fields*

# Findings

## 6. Findings

After the three individual interviews, the three Customer Journey maps and the focus group have been finalized and transcribed, the following step in the process is to present the findings. In order to simplify this process, each individual interview has been paired with the corresponding CJM and presented individually. The interviews have also been reviewed and main themes have been identified. Therefore, each CJM's interpretation is followed by the main findings divided into themes. The focus group findings will also be presented in the last part of this section.

### Findings part 1: Interviews and Customer Journey Maps

A semi-structured interview guide (Appendix 1) was made based on the findings from the literature and the theoretical framework on buying behavior. All 3 interviews have followed the same structure of the questions, the only difference being the middle section where personal preferences have been reviewed. This section is meant to address their personal preferences and the questions are based on what products they purchased.

The questions were formulated around the influencing factors of buying behavior revealed by the literature and the theories, including: the **retail environment** (ambient, design and social) presented by Chang H., Eckman M. and Yan R. (2011) and the **environmental stimuli** (culture, social status, personal influences, family and situation) and **individual differences** (resources, motivation, knowledge, attitudes, values and lifestyle) described by Blackwell, Miniard et al. (2001). The environmental stimuli were used in formulating questions such as: *Is that something characteristic to your culture? Did you use to consume this food in your home country? What does it remind you of?* while the individual differences are exemplified through questions such as: *Do you eat out? What do you usually cook? What shops do you prefer and why? How did you decide to purchase it?*

The interviews were then transcribed and coded according to the **Thematic analysis process** exemplified by Braun, V. and Clarke, V. (2006) and illustrated in the Methodology section. Initially, the data was read through and relevant codes have been identified and then divided into potential themes. Afterwards, the themes, including sub-themes have been defined, and data relevant to each theme was gathered and compelling examples have been extracted. The

main findings of the interviews are presented individually with arguments to why the specific themes are important for each participant.

The three participants have been found directly through the researcher's network. They have been selected because they fulfilled the following criteria: have been living in Denmark for over 6 months, are the main purchaser of their household and are full-time professionals working in the Copenhagen area. Written agreements have been also made (sample Appendix 3), where the participants agreed to be followed and video-recorded and they also agreed to their pictures being used in this report. The three participants are:

Linda, 24 from Latvia

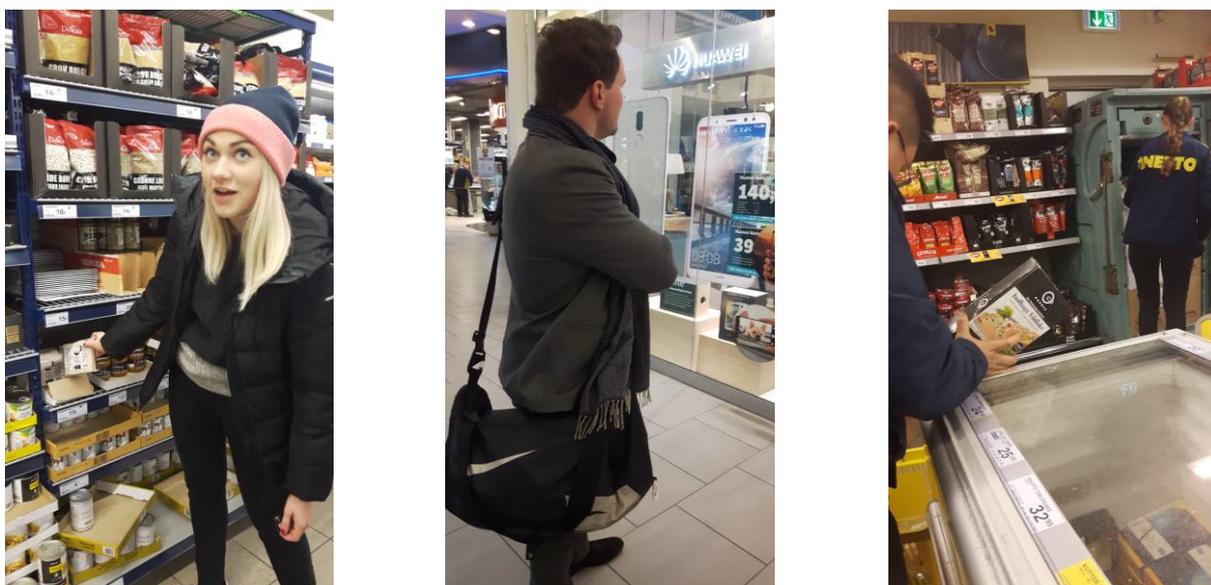
Andrei, 26 from Romania

Shuhan, 22 from China



*Picture 5. Introducing the participants*

Preceding the interviews are the three Customer Journey Maps based on individual supermarket visits. After being contacted and agreed to participate, the 3 participants have been followed in one of their weekly supermarket visits. I video-recorded the experience and frames from the recording have been used to exemplify touch-points, as seen in Picture 5. The following section presents each participant individually:



*Picture 6. Touchpoints during the customer journeys*



**Linda**, 24 from Latvia makes health-oriented food choices, especially since she became a vegetarian over a year ago. Because she works for a food start-up in Copenhagen, she is interested in food trends and likes to experiment with foreign foods and dishes. She is also very concerned with sustainability and chooses to buy local, but also ecological and organic products, preferably with environmental friendly packaging. Linda is also open towards paying a higher price for sustainable produce, especially soy and animal derived products. Convenience is very important for her as she goes shopping to the closest supermarkets to home and prefers to cook easy and fast dishes. Although Linda experiments with dinner dishes, for breakfast she prefers familiar foods like her mother used to cook at home.

Linda's responses from the interview have also been analyzed through the use of thematic analysis. The main themes and sub-themes revealed during Linda's interview are:

Theme	Sub-theme	Arguments
Personal preference	familiarity	familiar breakfast foods, like her mom used to cook misses spices, cheeses and sweet and savory snacks from home
	curiosity	experiments with dinner: foreign foods and dishes
	food culture	associates parmesan with Italy and considers Denmark very conservative when it comes to food availability
Product	health	always considering nutrition when buying and cooking food
	price	some supermarkets are overpriced, but would pay more for quality and locally sourced ecological products
	convenience	prefers easy to cook dishes, but nutrition is very important
	ecology	very important, especially with animal products and soy
	local sources	very important, but understands if it isn't seasonally possible
Supermarket	packaging	Preferably no plastic and smaller sizes, vegetables without packaging at all, especially if ecological
	preference	Mostly convenience, very seldom goes to a specific shop
	promotions	Never checks advertising or promotions



Andrei, 26 from Romania prefers the convenience given by ready-made meals and supermarkets with long opening hours. He tends to eat foods that remind him of home and associates food items with a specific place or period in his life. Andrei is also very sportive and concerned with what he eats, but due to a chaotic schedule he doesn't always have the time to cook nutritious foods. Although he believes fruits and vegetables taste differently in Denmark, he forces himself to consume them for nutritional reasons. Prices and advertising is irrelevant for Andrei as he doesn't meal plan and buys very compulsively.

Andrei's interview revealed the following themes and sub-themes:

Theme	Sub-theme	Arguments
Personal preference	familiarity	tends to eat foods that remind him of home (mashed potatoes, rotisserie chicken, pork and meats in general) fruits and vegetables don't taste as good as at home
	curiosity	tries different products, but from the same range experiments with soft drinks and has preferences
	food culture	associates bacon with Denmark associates Barilla pasta with home cooking and his church is reticent towards some Danish foods (hot dogs) and believes there are too many kebab and "fake Italian pizza" shops
Product	health	is aware of nutritious foods and what he should eat for optimal nutrition (careful about carbohydrate intake) doesn't buy products that are too close to expiration date forces himself to buy vegetables because they are healthy
	convenience	convenience is most important because he works long hours food products should be fast to cook and consume
Supermarket	preference	mostly convenience, prefers shops with ready-made warm meals and bakery products and also long opening hours
	promotions	never checks advertising or promotions and doesn't meal plan



Shuhan, 22 from China buys the least food products from supermarkets due to his job offering both breakfast and lunch and his preference for Chinese shops. But when he does, he prefers convenience and supermarkets where he finds not just food, but also household items. Shuhan is both curious to try new foods but also consistent in cooking ethnic Chinese dishes and he has a strong association of specific foods to the Western culture. Although sustainable packaging is important for him, he doesn't believe that mass-production of ecological products is possible. Price and advertising are not important for Shuhan as he doesn't speak the language and cannot understand it.

The main themes and sub-themes revealed during Shuhan's interview are:

Theme	Sub-theme	Arguments
Personal preference	Familiarity	usually cooks familiar foods for dinner (cooked cucumber) buys only familiar fruits
	Curiosity	is curious to try new things (avocado, bacon)
	food culture	associates bacon and avocados with the western culture as he didn't have them at home as a child
Product	Availability	buys very often from the Chinese shops (ethnic vegetables and spices, noodles, sweets, etc)
	Ecology	believes that ecological vegetables are hard to grow and doesn't believe in ecological mass production of foods
	Packaging	packaging is important as he works in the field- prefers recycled materials instead of plastic
Supermarket	Preference	convenience, buys from shops close to home and where he can buy other items besides food (toilet paper, detergent)
	Promotions	doesn't speak Danish, so he is not interested

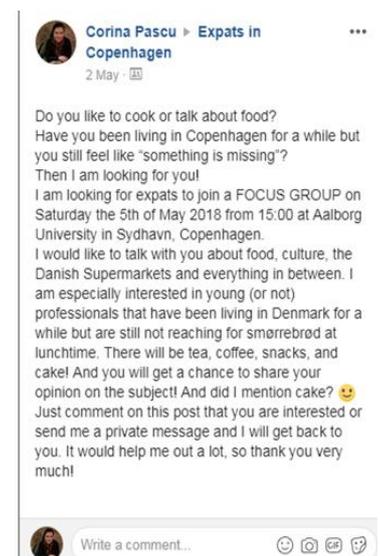
## Sub-conclusion

By comparing the three individual assessments, some common themes and sub-themes have arisen, the most encountered being personal preferences based on food familiarity, curiosity and food culture, together with supermarket preference and food availability. All 3 participants have a nostalgia around food and like to cook dishes they grew up with but complain about certain ethnic products missing from the supermarkets. Besides that, they all have preferences when it comes to where they buy their groceries from, all valuing convenience above price.

## Findings part 2: Focus group

The above-mentioned findings have been used in formulating the focus group questions. The focus group took place on Saturday, the 5th of May 2018 at Aalborg University in Copenhagen.

The participants were recruited from a Facebook group meant for expatriates in Copenhagen through the following post:



Picture 7. Facebook post sample

A total of 9 respondents were interested in participating, but only 5 ended up being available for the specific date and time and agreed to participate. All five participants fulfilled the criteria of having lived in Denmark for over 6 months and are involved in the grocery shopping activities

in their households. As incentives, the participants were offered sweet and savory snacks, tea and coffee during the focus group.

The researcher played also the role of the moderator and by following the “*Designing and Conducting Focus Group Interviews*” guidelines by Richard A. Krueger (2002), a series of actions took place before and during the focus group:

***Handling the logistics:*** The researcher was responsible with providing snacks and drinks, booking the location and making sure every participant was informed of the right date and time and instructions to the address.

***A short introduction:*** The focus group started with a short introduction by welcoming the participants, introducing them to the topic and the ground rules.

***Asking questions:*** The moderator was also responsible to ask the questions, follow-up on answers and had control over the group by making sure every participant was involved in the conversation

***Recording the discussion:*** The focus group was recorded both audio and video to facilitate the transcription.

***Concluding the discussion:*** After all questions were answered, the moderator summarized the discussion, reviewed important points and after asking if anything has been missed she then thanked everyone for participating.

After transcribing the focus group conversation attached to Appendix 7, the following step is to code the transcription and identify possible themes.

The opening questions was meant to start up the conversation by asking everyone to present themselves to the moderator and to the others. Barbara and Nelson are married and both coming from Venezuela but having lived in Italy for the last 3 years Jarrel was born and raised in New York City from Caribbean parents, Risha is original from India and Ann is from the Netherlands. All participants have been living in the Copenhagen area for longer than 6 months and 2 of them did not have full-time jobs at the moment of the focus group.

The first question was about the Danish food system and what knowledge the participants had about it. Four participants were familiar with national Danish foods and local production as opposed to imported foods and expressed their astonishment towards the multitude of imported goods found in the Danish supermarkets. Two other participants talked about how they observe many different types of meat and how limited the choice is when it comes to vegetables. The topic of ecology and ecologic foods was also discussed, together with local foods and their impact on the environment.

The second question meant to address their satisfaction with the Danish supermarkets in Copenhagen and the answers were diverse as well. Three participants were satisfied with how convenient shopping in Copenhagen is due to the multitude of shops and long opening hours, while Three complained of the cleanliness and lack of structure. All participants agreed that the product offer is generic and that they have it hard to find certain things due to the language barrier.

The third question addressed the difference between supermarket chains and how participants came across this information. The answers were unanimous, everyone agreeing that the appearance of discount supermarkets is very different from the high end, and that is something they could easily perceive without any previous knowledge. Supermarkets as Netto and Fakta are seen as disorganized and dirty while everyone considers Irma as the supermarket offering the best shopping experience.

The following question addressed the price and possible extra costs and if the participants would be willing to pay it for a better service in the supermarket. Almost all the answers were positive, as the participants were willing to pay more for a better service, clean spaces and products that are nicely showcased.

When asked if they are aware of promotion, "*reklamer*" and other advertising channels the supermarkets use for promotions, all participants agreed that language is a barrier. Besides two participants, everyone else agreed that, especially in such as international city as Copenhagen, more information should be written in English, including materials send out by the supermarkets. The other two participants presented their experience from Italy and how more international oriented Copenhagen is compared to Rome and other large Italian cities.

The next question asked was about product diversity and product availability, and although it has been answered beforehand, two main aspects were revealed. First, the variety of vegetables found in the supermarkets is very limited, especially considering that they are such an important food group. Secondly, the participants complained about stock consistency and product rotation and how they cannot find some of their preferred products anymore.

The follow up question was meant to address the stocking situation and how supermarkets could provide a better variety of products without compromising on the traditional ones. The participants consider Copenhagen as a very multinational and multicultural city, and therefore this should also be reflected in the supermarkets. In the same time, they consider that, because Copenhagen is such a touristic city, the supermarkets should reflect more of the Danish culture and the Danish foods.

The final question ended this focus group by asking whether the participants feel that their needs are met in the supermarkets and what they consider could be improved. They all agreed that their basic needs are met up to a certain degree and that special ethnic shops help them live a comfortable life without missing very much. One participant argued that the shops should be at least considerate of other ethnicities that Asian and Mexican (reflected by product availability) because, from her experience, Danes are very open towards trying foreign foods.

The themes and sub-themes revealed by the focus group are displayed in the following table:

Theme	Sub-theme	Argument
The product	choices	All participants complained about the range of products available and the limited choice of vegetables. However, they are understanding that some specific products could only be found in ethnic shops and don't expect to find them otherwise.
	International versus national	Some participants were impressed by the international range of products found in the supermarkets, while others claim that the national Danish foods are not emphasized enough, especially in a touristic city like Copenhagen
	price	The price aspect was revealed in connection to product and service quality. All participants agreed that they would pay more for buying from supermarkets such as Irma, where the products are nicely displayed and they shop is clean.
	stock rotation	Some of the participants complained about stock rotation, especially in small supermarkets and how they couldn't find anymore some of the products they liked.
	ecology	All participants are aware of ecology, but they are concerned with what it actually means in terms of product sourcing and travelling distances.
	quality	Everyone agreed that the quality of products found in the supermarkets is inferior when compared to developed countries and superior to countries such as India and Venezuela
The supermarket	convenience	Some of the participants were pleased by the convenience given by having so many supermarkets in Copenhagen, while others would prefer less shops and a higher quality of service.
	cleanliness	Low cost supermarkets such as Netto and Fakta are seen as dirty, unorganized and hard to navigate, while Irma is considered the ideal standard of cleanliness and order
	advertising	None of the participants reads advertising brochures or other materials due to them being exclusively in Danish. They also agreed that promotional products should be more visible in the shops
	communication	The language is a strong barrier, especially for newcomers, and all participants agreed that they would benefit from both having more information in English and from a better communication in the shops.

# Analysis

## 7. Analysis

This chapter will look further into the buying behavior of non-Danish customers and answer the fourth research sub-question: “What characterizes the buying experience of the international customers?”. The first part of the analysis is based on the three interviews and the three Customer Journey Maps. The data gathered and afterwards analyzed through the theoretical framework on buying behavior serves as a foundation for the questions asked during the focus group. Subsequently, the second part of the analysis starts by analyzing the findings of the focus group and the relevant aspects and results will be presented using the framework provided by the Business Model Canvas.

### Analysis part 1: Individualized experiences

#### Linda

Linda is 24 years old and has been living in Copenhagen for the last 4.5 years. She is originally from Latvia and has moved to Denmark as a 19-year-old to study. Linda has graduated with a bachelor in Global Nutrition and Health from Professional College Metropol and is now working full-time as the head of the nutrition and research department of a food start-up in central Copenhagen. Her decision to move to Denmark was rather spontaneous as she moved in less than a month after being accepted by the education institution. Therefore, she did little research about the country, the society and the culture.

After graduating, Linda’s decision to stay in Denmark was determined by the fact that she got an exciting job in a field that is relevant for her and that she is very happy with her workplace. During the interview, she also mentioned that the job marked played an important role in her trying to stay and find a job here. Lastly, Linda mentioned her boyfriend as a factor in remaining in Denmark, but not the most important one at the time of her graduation.

Linda usually buys her groceries from Rema 1000 because it is the shop closest to her house, but she also visits Netto and Føtex. She used to purchase frequently from Fakta, but since she moved to a new place she doesn’t do it anymore. When it comes to other supermarkets, Linda doesn’t go out of her way to visit them, unless for very specific reasons. As she mentions during the interview: “...but the only exception is I love the oatmeal Oatly and it's sold only in COOP shops, and then I have to go, even though I never shop in that chain of supermarkets; so if I go there I get the Oatly and I just leave, that's it.” (Appendix 4).

Besides that, Linda never reads the promotional newspapers (*reklamer*) because they don't influence her buying decisions and the only time she is considering the discounted products is when she has to choose between that and other similar products that she both likes.

When it comes to buying schedule, Linda doesn't have a specific day or time when she goes shopping, but she tends to buy more during the weekends when she is off work. Because she is also attending Danish language lessons 2 afternoons a week, on top of work she prioritizes her spare time for other activities than cooking.

But being a vegetarian, when Linda cooks, she enjoys combining different kinds of vegetables with pasta and a dressing such as pesto or spicy sauce. She usually cooks for herself and sometimes for her boyfriend as well and very seldom she engages in social cooking session with friends.

By looking at *Linda's Customer Journey Map* (Appendix 8), we observe that the frontstage section is much fuller of information compared to the backstage. Because she doesn't have direct contact with any other people, in the backstage the same actors and are consistent throughout all the boxes and very limited in presence.

One particular aspect of the Customer Journey Map observed in Picture 7 is the *Emotion indicator*, which follows Linda's emotions through the supermarket. The emotions recorded are based on either her reactions in the shop as recorded on the video or from her explanations given during the interview. As seen, she experiences different kind of emotions, from happy, to curious, confused, unhappy, contemplative and excited.



Picture 8. Linda's Emotion indicator

The Customer Journey starts by showing the activities happening during the *pre-experience phase*. Here, Linda is being contacted by the researcher and agrees to participate at an established date and time. In the pre-experience phase she also prepares for the meeting by dressing and riding the bike to the chosen Rema 1000 shop. She then meets with the researcher on Saturday the 10th of March at 15:30. The objects involved in the pre-experience are: her

phone, agenda, clothing, bicycle and bag. The other actor involved besides Linda is the researcher.

The *experience phase* is the most complex one and takes the longest time in this Customer Journey. Therefore, for a better presentation and simplification, the experience was divided into six different phases corresponding to sections in the supermarket:

- *Entering the shop*- When entering the shop, Linda picks a basket and looks towards the left side (freezers with meat on promotion) without heading that way. She then establishes direct contact with me and lets me know that she'll take her time in the fruit and vegetable section, although she won't be purchasing very much today.
- *Fruits and vegetables*- She goes back and forth between the fruit display and seems unhappy with the options. She then picks a lemon and grapes but complains about the diversity and goes further to the "ready-made /packaged" foods where she picks up a hummus pack asking whether I have tried and if it is any good.
- *Grains and legumes*- Here she examines the selection, picks up the tofu and asks me if I like that specific brand. When I tell her that I don't eat tofu because of the controversy around soy products and hormonal disruptions, she states her opposing opinion and promises to send me an article about the subject that she wrote as part of her job. Afterwards, Linda picks up the red lentil pasta and suggests that I try it as well because it is very good.
- *Dairy and eggs*- Passing the meat section Linda explains how she became a vegetarian almost a year ago and then stops in front of the cheese. She picks up a bag of grated cheese and mentions that she would pick organic if she had that option. Afterwards, she picks up the organic eggs and checks if they are broken.
- *Other products*- Here Linda picks up the organic coarse oats and looks for "something else". She then tells me that she is craving Nutella and starts looking at the "healthier alternatives". Unhappy with the options, she picks a jar of real Nutella and goes further.
- *Cashier*- While heading for the exit, Linda stops to look through her basket to make sure she bought everything necessary for the following week. When asked about bread, she says that she doesn't consume bread very often, and therefore prefers to buy nice bread from the bakery once in a while. Afterwards she buys her products by making direct contact with the cashier and then exits the supermarket.

The *post-experience phase* finalizes this customer journey and takes place after Linda exits the supermarket. The activities taking place in this phase include us saying our goodbyes, agreeing

to send each other pictures of a lentil pasta dish and that we would meet again for coffee sometime soon. She then unlocks her bike and goes back home with the shopping bag.

The second part of the Customer Journey focuses on the actors and objects that are important for the experience but not in direct contact with Linda. Because her experience was continuous (without breaks) and short-timed, the actors and objects are also consistent throughout all phases of the experience.

Therefore, the main actors and objects in the *backstage section* are:

In the *pre-experience phase*: the researcher plays an important role being the actor most involved in Linda's trip to Rema 1000 that day. Due to the researcher's connection with Aalborg University, the university also plays a minor role, in planning and executing this research project. The objects involved in this phase are connected to the research done before the interview. Therefore, computers, study materials and other study-related objects play an important role, but not preeminent in this phase. This is due to them being replaceable by other similar objects such as a smartphones or textbooks.

In the *experience phase*: Linda's shopping experience is heavily influenced by the supermarket-Rema 1000 and every employee involved in the good functioning of the shop. The company behind Rema 1000, all the employees working with procurement, sales, advertising, logistics and so on, the producers and suppliers of the products found in the shop, together with everyone else involved in the supply chain are backstage actors. Closer to Linda, but still in the backstage there are Rema 1000's employees from that specific shop who, through their work, have made possible for her to access the desired products. The other consumers shopping there at the same time as Linda are also backstage actors because even though they are close to her there is no direct contact between them. When it comes to objects, in the backstage phase of the experience there are situated all the machinery facilitating the production, process, transportation, etc. of the products to be sold. All these actors and objects are presented all throughout the experience, without having direct contact with Linda or her shopping experience.

In the *post-experience phase*: Linda is not influenced by any other actors and objects, as she leaves the shop with her products and seizes contact with the experience.

All 3 Customer Journeys take place in the same setting (the supermarket), in a limited timeframe (from entering to exiting the shop) and are representative for a specific experience (the shopping trip). In none of the Customer Journeys did the participants have direct contact with additional actors nor objects. As seen from the other two Customer Journey Maps (Appendix 9 and Appendix 10) in the backstage section the same actors and objects are

consistent all throughout the three experiences. This is due to the infrastructure of the supermarkets being similar and the fact that during those specific experiences none of the participants came in contact with other customers or personnel. Therefore, the following two Customer Journeys will focus only on the frontstage aspects of the experiences, since the backstage is established to be common for all three.

## **Andrei**

Andrei is 26 years old and originally from Romania. He moved to Denmark almost 7 years ago to study International Marketing and Management in Roskilde and now works full-time with techno-logistics in UPS. Andrei had no plans of staying here after graduating, but after having to extend his studies due to personal reasons he ended up getting a job. He claims that he has no long-term plans and takes it day by day, and that is also how he ended up living here for 7 years.

Andrei had a rather chaotic lifestyle because he works in the afternoon from 2 PM to 10 PM but sometimes he ends up being at work until 1 AM even. In the morning he tries to go to the gym for strength training and the weekends are spent going out with friends.

Andrei prefers to buy his groceries from Netto because it is convenient. He says: *“Well, Netto is just like everywhere to be honest and it's convenient and they're open until late, and I usually... I work late as well so they're open till 12 a.m. some of them so it's easier for me to get the essentials from there.”* (Appendix 5).

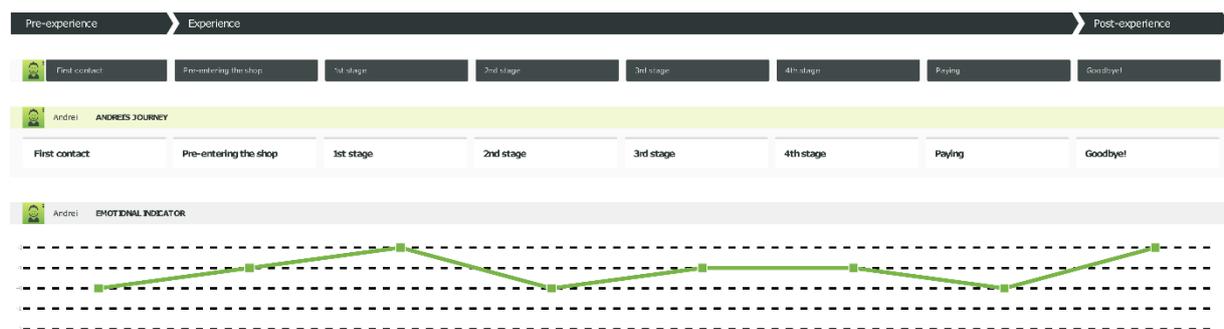
He also shops from Føtex because they have a vast selection of products, for example the rotisserie chicken he purchased that day and other types of ready-made dishes. A similar reason Andrei has for shopping in Lidl, which he prefers because of the ready-made bakery/bake off products he buys on the go.

Similar to Linda, Andrei is not aware of marketing strategies or advertising and because he doesn't meal plan, he impulse purchases for not longer than 2 days at a time and always foods that are fast to cook and eat.

Andrei also eats lunch provided by his workplace, which he considers as “eating out”, together with going to buffees in the weekends or for brunch with friends. During the week, he sometimes grabs a pizza either because it is less time-consuming, or the food served at his workplace doesn't seem appealing.

Because his schedule is so chaotic at times, he claims he isn't in the state of mind to plan his meals and it has consequences over his workouts and muscle gain. When he was more disciplined with meal planning, Andrei would eat around 5000 kcal per day and even though he still eats large quantities of food, the results are not the same due to poor nutrition.

Going further to Andrei's Customer Journey Map, as in Linda's case, the *frontstage section* is fuller of information than the backstage section. This is, again, because the CJM examines only one time-limited and very precise experience and the same background actors and objects are consistent all throughout. Andrei's CJM also includes the Emotion indicator which follows his emotions through the experience (Picture 8).



Picture 9. Andrei's Emotion Indicator

The CJM starts with the *pre-experience* phase, where Andrei was contacted and asked to take part to the research. He agreed to participate and meet me on Sunday, the 11th of March at 13:00 in front of Amagercentret. The shopping trip took place in the Føtex supermarket from Amager Center and lasted approximately 15 minutes. In the *pre-experience* phase he prepares for the meeting by taking a shower, getting dressed and biking from his home to the pre-established location. The objects involved in the pre-experience phase are his phone, his backpack, clothing and the bicycle. The only actor involved in this phase besides Andrei is the researcher.

The *experience* is the longest and is constituted of the following sub-experiences:

- **Before entering the shop-** Since entering the Amager Center and all the way to entering the Føtex situated in the shopping center, Andrei has passed a Yousee shop. He stopped in front of the Yousee and considered entering because he had a problem with his phone that he didn't have time to fix before. He then decided not to enter, and headed to the Føtex's entrance instead, which was just across, and picked a shopping basket.
- **Entering the supermarket-** Upon entering the supermarket, Andrei passed through the clothing department and jokingly threw 2 packs of underwear in his basket looking at

me. He then put them back smiling and said that he won't be buying very much because he goes shopping very often.

- ***The food area-*** Here, Andrei picked up a packet of bacon without thinking too much, which showed that he was familiar with that specific product. He then goes straight to the "cooked meats", looks at the options and then picks up a rotisserie chicken. Afterwards he looks also at fresh uncooked chicken breasts and tells me that he is considering buying that instead and save some costs. He then says that he probably won't have time to cook all the chicken and decides on the rotisserie chicken: "It's just easier"
- ***Moving towards to dried goods-*** Next, Andrei passes by the fruit and vegetable section without stopping and goes straight to the dried goods. He picks up a box of instant mashed potatoes with bacon and looks at me to see my reaction. I tell him that he shouldn't feel conscious of what I might be thinking and purchase whatever he wants. He then goes on explaining how fast and easy it is to just add boiling water over the instant mix and have mashed potatoes in 5 minutes or less. He adds the product to his basket and turns around to the pasta. Afterwards, Andrei picks up a type of pasta and tells me that the same pasta his parents are using back home in Romania and he prefers it although it is on the expensive side. He puts the pasta in his basket as well.
- ***Back to vegetables-*** After seeing that he moves further away from the vegetable section, I ask him whether he considers buying any today or if he has already some at home. He then looked into his basket and decided to go back to that section and purchase some. There, he grabbed a package of cherry tomatoes and moved further to the beverages.
- ***The beverage section-*** Here Andrei examines very fast the options and picks up a pear juice. He also looks at an energy beverage but puts it down.
- ***Paying and leaving-*** After he placed the pear juice in his basket, I ask Andrei if he wants to purchase anything more. He looked into his basket and answers negatively, so we decide to head to the cashier.

The ***post-experience*** phase ends this CJM and takes place after Andrei exits the supermarkets. The activities consist in us saying our goodbyes and agreeing to meet again for coffee, after which Andrei unlocks his bike and leaves with the groceries.

As mentioned before, the backstage section of Andrei's CJM is identical to Linda's and therefore it won't be repeated.

## Shuhan

Shuhan is 22 years old and he is originally from China. Before moving to Copenhagen 7 months ago, Shuhan has studied and lived in the United States for the previous 2 years. His reason for coming in Denmark was an internship with a big architecture firm, where he afterwards got a full-time student position and decided to extend his stay.

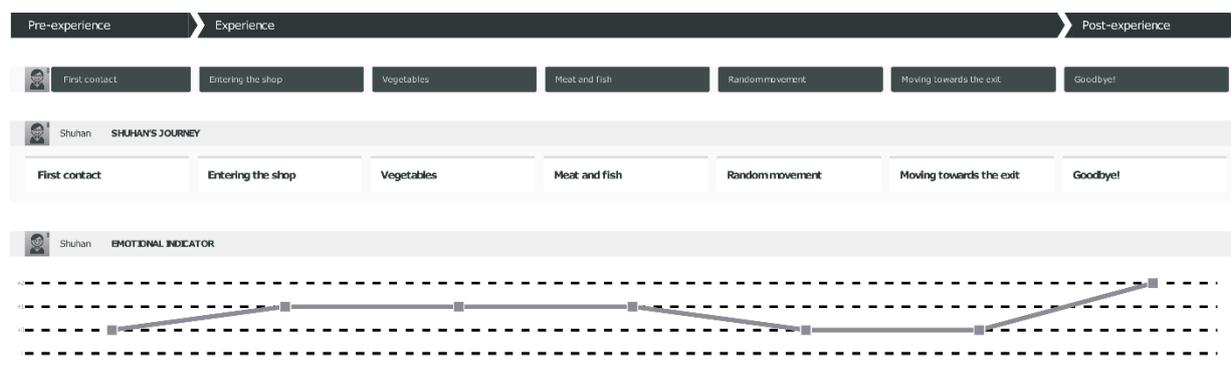
Shuhan's workplace offers both breakfast and lunch and he always eats these meals at work. Besides the two meals, he often brings leftover food from work to have for dinner, some weeks as often as every day and never less than 3 days. This means that he only buys snacks to eat at home and food to cook during the weekends.

But when he buys food, Shuhan goes to Netto and Fakta as they are the closest supermarket to his house and there he can also find other household items he might need. More, he is not interested in what offers the supermarkets send out because they are in Danish and he doesn't know the language. At least once every two weeks he goes shopping at the Chinese supermarket near Copenhagen Central station to buy speciality items.

When it comes to food choices, Shuhan claims he eats 50% vegetables and 50% meat and cooks for two days at a time, but sometimes he also cooks a lot and has leftover food for the following week.

Since working full time, Shuhan eats out more often, either foods that he cannot prepare at home, such as kebab, or when he is already out with friends and is too tired or lazy to cook.

As in the other two instances, the Emotion indicator- Picture 9 illustrates Shuhan's emotional response to the different phases of the experience as they emerge from the CJM and the interview.



Picture 10. Shuhan's Emotion Indicator

Shuhan's Customer Journey Map starts as the other two with the *pre-experience* phase where he was contacted by the researcher and agreed to participate. The shopping trip took place on Friday, the 16th of March at 17:30 at Netto on Tagensvej, Central Copenhagen. Because he came straight after work, the objects involved in the pre-existence are his phone and his bicycle. The only other actor involved besides Shuhan in this phase is the researcher.

As with the other two previous CJM's, the *experience* phase is the longest and formed by the following sub-experiences:

- **Entering the shop-** Upon entering the supermarket, Shuhan picks up a basket and goes straight towards the fruit and vegetable section where he has a quick look at the options. Then he headed straight to the plums wanting to buy some. Because he couldn't see the plastic bags, I showed him where they were. After getting a bag he filled with around 15-20 plums and moves further towards the vegetables. He then grabs 2 cucumbers, a package of two ecological zucchinis and one of avocados. After considerations, he decides not to purchase the zucchinis, but an aubergine instead.
- **Meat and fish-** After picking up his vegetables, Shuhan passes the bread and the alcohol department without stopping, heading straight to the meat fridges. Here he has a quick look at the options and picks up a big piece of smoked bacon. He then looks at me and asks if I have ever tried this kind of bacon, how it tastes and if it is like "*normal bacon*". I tell him that I haven't, but I assume it is used for dishes where bigger pieces of bacon must be used. I then ask what he wants to use it for and he answers that he doesn't know. Afterwards he goes on looking at what other options are available and tells me that he doesn't like the small pieces of bacon because "*they aren't juicy*" and "*probably this is more cheap*".
- **Random movement-** This sub-experience contains Shuhan's walk through the supermarket without a clear path because he doesn't end up buying anything. After buying meat, he goes towards the frozen fish section and picks up wild salmon. He looks at it but decided not to buy and then moves further to a type of salmon in pastry frozen dish and asks me how it should be cooked and how much it costs. I show him towards the price scanner and tell him that it is a dish you make in the oven. He comes back from the scanner saying that it costs 50 kr., which was too much and puts it back in the freezer.
- **Moving towards the exit-** After placing the fish back, he heads straight to the eggs and picks up a packet. He then goes through the shelves all the way to the cashier without stopping for another products.

The *post-experience* section in Shuhan's CJM takes place after we exit the supermarket when I thank him for his participation and we say our goodbyes.

Like in Andrei's case, Shuhan's CJM's backstage section is identical to Linda's and therefore won't be repeated.

Looking back at the three Customer Journey Maps, it is clear that the participants have different interests and ways of navigating the supermarkets. Therefore, the following section will summarize the three customer journeys separately:

## **Subconclusion**

Linda likes to take her time in the supermarket, like she said so herself: *"I like to take my time in the vegetable section"* She plans beforehand, compares products and chooses based on her preferences: vegetarian, ecological and preferably local products. Furthermore, she keeps a stock of products at home as she didn't have to buy a lot on that specific day *"I won't buy too many things because I don't need everything"*. Because Linda keeps a stock at home, she also cares about how products look in shelves mentioning that she has dry goods displayed in jars. Because the Nutella jars had a promotional label, she took time to compare them and picked a specific design she liked.

Linda's path through the supermarket is linear, she goes through every section once and even though she takes her time in deciding what to buy, she doesn't go back and forth between the shelves. Furthermore, she seems familiar to the setup of the supermarket, although it is not the one she usually buys from. Linda's interest in health and nutrition is reflected by her shopping.

Andrei's customer journey is rather short and the products he ended up purchasing reflect his lack of meal planning: already-made or easy to prepare foods in small quantities. He only bought enough to last him for that day, without considering what he will eat the rest of the week. As he didn't plan beforehand, a lot of time in the shop was spent considering what to buy and evaluating alternatives, as for example the already cooked chicken versus the chicken breast. Because easier to cook foods were chosen (cooked chicken vs. chicken breasts, instant mash potatoes vs. potatoes) and because he repeatedly mentioned going shopping late at night, convenience is more important for Andrei than price or other considerations.

Andrei's journey through the supermarket was concentrated around the areas with foods he prefers and buys most often: meat, dry goods and vegetables. In the same time, the journey was not linear because Andrei moved back and forth between sections, including the event when he went back to the vegetable section.

Shuhan's customer journey map is also short and nonlinear as a consequence of him not having a plan of what to buy. He was clearly not familiar with where the plastic bags were or how to use the price scanner even though he visited that supermarket before. Furthermore, he takes a long time in deciding what to purchase and on different occasions ends up putting back products from his basket. He also goes back and forth between the sections and avoids entire isles all together.

One important aspect of Shuhan's CJM is his lack of language knowledge which affects how he recognizes products in the supermarket, as he also mentions: "... when you don't understand a word or the language, you sort of... at least for Danish supermarkets I did the same, when I enter in there I sort of back-out my language use, I just focus on the image". Because Shuhan doesn't eat breakfast and lunch at home, his shopping basket had no products associated with these meals. Even more, the products he purchased, as he said so himself, cannot constitute a dish and are meant to complement the food he brings from work.



Picture 11. Mexican isle in Bilka Fields

The three interviews and CJM's have had an "individual approach", them providing information behind the decision-making mechanisms of the participants. By asking them how they perceive certain products, why they bought them and how they will use them, the interviews revealed personal perceptions and aspects of food culture derived from individual motifs and beliefs.

In order to gain a holistic view over the buying behavior of the international consumers in Copenhagen, it is important to assess their relation to the food retail sector. Therefore, the focus group was directed towards the environmental conditioners of buying behavior.

## Analysis part 2: Decision making

In order to evaluate the buying behavior of the international consumers in Copenhagen it is important to address their decision making with the use of the Engel-Blackwell-Miniard Model, which was illustrated in Figure 5. This particular consumer decision model has at its core the seven step *Decision Process* (Figure 15), which is fundamental for understanding how choices are made and where the retail system can intervene and influence them.

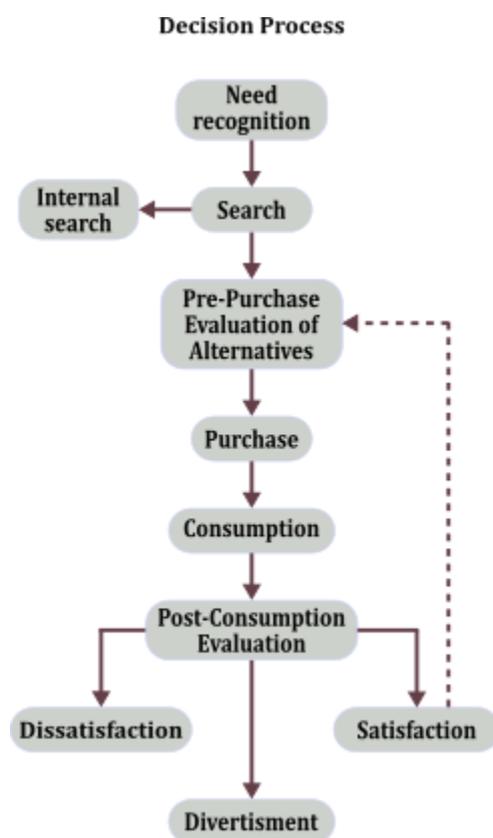


Figure 15. Decision Process

The first step in the Consumer Decision Model is “*need recognition*” or the step where one individual becomes aware of his need to visit a supermarket. This need can either be dictated by *environmental influences*, in situations where friends, family or other acquaintances demand a need to be acknowledged, as for example having visitors over for dinner or having to cook for your family. Or it can be dictated by *individual differences* and can be a basic physical need, such as hunger or craving for a specific food, or influenced by a person’s lifestyle, values, or personality. In Shuhan’s case, curiosity is a strong motivator for him trying different foods: “*Because I saw you one time eating avocado, so I was like, ok, probably I should eat some avocado and I bought it*” (Appendix 6). Curiosity and desire to try new things are also strong motivators for Linda, together with her interest in food and nutrition based on her lifestyle and occupation:

“*...but let's say from all the times I cook home I use tofu maybe every third or fourth time and it's actually something I started kind of recently, I think when I turned vegetarian. Before that I would not not eat it but I would never buy it.*” (Appendix 4).

On the other hand, Andrei recognizes the need to eat more vegetables for health reasons, which then influenced his decision to buy tomatoes: “*....since I came to Denmark I kind of been a bit not*

*so careful with my healthy eating, like eating vegetables” (Appendix 5). His interest in performing well during strength training is situated behind how he defines his need of food: “... power training, so yeah, you definitely have to eat a lot if you want to have strength or build-up power and I know that's pretty bad but that's kind of my training. I need to eat a lot of calories so usually I do tend to, in the day, I do tend to eat 4 to 5000 calories because I train every day almost...” (Appendix 5).*

After a need is recognized, the second step in the process is to **search for information**, which can be done either through *internal* or *external search*. **External search** is preponderantly used for important and complex purchases: where a larger amount of money is involved, when more knowledge on the product is needed or when the product desired is something new for the buyer. External sources are various and based on their connection to the buyer: *personal sources* (family, friends, acquaintances), *marketing sources* (advertising, personnel, materials found in the shop), *independent sources* (consumer groups or other groups the consumer can ask for more information) or *experimental sources* (the buyer trying the product in order to gain knowledge). Experimenting unknown drinks is how Andrei discovered his passion for soft drinks, which soon became a habit: “... i.t's just something I've discovered along my life... that I love drinks with fruity taste like mango taste, I love mango juices, I love pear juices, kiwi and pineapple wow it's just amazing so I like those kind of drinks.” (Appendix 5).

Shuhan also experiments with foods he hasn't purchased before, which he considers important when living abroad: “*This is the first time ever in my life when I buy a big chunk of bacon because I found it and it's something I've never bought before, and I want to try it*” (Appendix 6) while Linda experiments with combinations of foods she was already familiar with “*I think it's just something I discovered one time I had rye bread at home, and I had Nutella so I toasted it and I got the best combination and it's a bit like more healthy I guess because of the fiber.*” (Appendix 4)

**Internal search** relies on the consumer's own experiences and memories of the certain product, which has as starting point the external search. The internal search redirects this analysis towards the Information process.

The **Information process** is one of the three main parts building the Consumer Decision Model and represents the process of building memories. Starting from the external search, **marketing dominated stimuli**, such as advertising or promotion, associated with **environmental** and **individual influences** contribute to the information process. During the research process, the participants declared to be unaffected by the *marketing stimuli* due to not knowing the language or not having interest in it. For example, neither Andrei nor Shuhan read the advertising whatsoever, while Linda is only aware of advertising displayed in the shop. The focus group also revealed that language is the main barrier in understanding the marketing stimuli, Jarrell

saying: “because it’s in Danish. So I have to guess and look at the numbers so...I haven’t become an expert or confident in the circulars (reklamer) yet” (Appendix 7). Besides language, the advertising rotation is also hard to understand, as Anne mentions: “...also what they are doing: I know Fotex they change their sales starting from Friday. I think Netto starts from Saturday and Rema starts from Monday. Irma has two blocks within one week where they advertise different and there are weekend sales as well [...] maybe it says in the brochure but i can’t read so it doesn’t make sense to me and that really confuses me as well with all different days and i think...” (Appendix 7).

In the time they have been living in Denmark, the participants of the focus group have also been exposed to other stimuli (information) from the supermarkets as they now gained an opinion of what kind products are specific to the country. As Jarrel mentions, pork is a type of food promoted extensively: “I realized it’s a lot about the pork. It’s the first time I’ve ever seen in the metro station, I’ve never seen advertising with a living pig, on the poster, the back was facing me I was like “Why am I looking at a pig’s bottom?” (Appendix 7) and Risha agrees, adding also cheese as being important: “I’ve never seen this much variety of meats in India. [...] I guess lot of cheeses is used in Denmark, I don’t know if it’s Danish of its general, because there are a lot more kinds of cheeses” (Appendix 7)..

Storing an information in the memory is according to Blackwell, Miniard et. al. (2001) a five-step process consisting of the following stages:

**Exposure**- when the buyer first gets exposed to stimuli

**Attention**- after being exposed, the buyer becomes aware of the specific stimuli

**Comprehension**- the buyer understands what the stimuli are and how the influence his decision

**Acceptance**- when the buyer embraces the stimuli without resisting it anymore

**Retention**- once the information is accepted, it is retained in the long-term memory

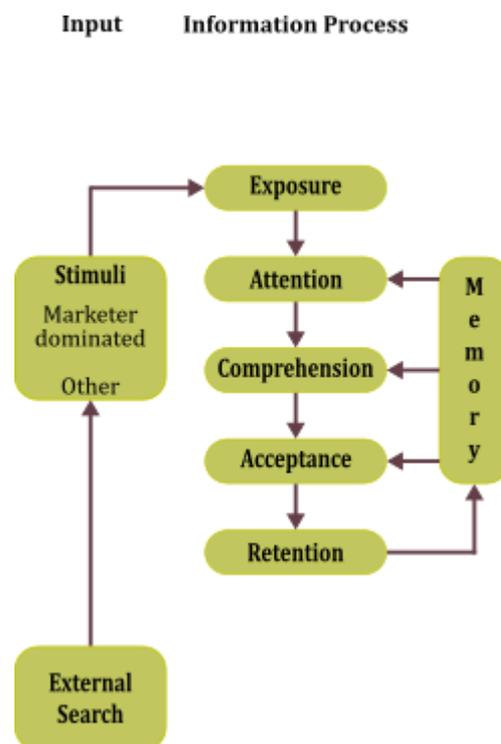


Figure 16. Information process

Once the information is memorized, it functions as the basis for *internal search of information* and used in solving simpler situations where the individual relies almost exclusively on past experiences. For simpler and more important decisions, both internal and external searches are involved. One example is Linda's attitude towards red lentil pasta, where after trying it once she liked it very much. The pasta became a staple in her kitchen and now she doesn't rely on external information search anymore when buying it: *"when I actually got it the first time I remember I was like "uhm..it looks interesting but I was not sure if it will taste nice" because it's red lentil pasta so that's kind of weird [...] Yeah I was really impressed of how nice it was, [...]and it tastes amazing, I love it!"* (Appendix 4).

The following step in the decision process is *evaluating the alternatives pre-purchase*. This step is fulfilled by having under consideration both environmental and individual variables as in the previous steps. Although *"inhibitors"* or barriers are not included in the model, according to Bray J. (2008) it is important to consider them as well as their role in the decision process.

During the research process of this project, it became clear that evaluating the alternatives refers to two different concepts: evaluating between products and evaluating between shops.

Because Linda tends to buy from the same shop situated closest to her home, for her evaluating the alternatives means comparing products within the same shop. Therefore she refers to evaluating alternatives based on price: *"Well..when I am in the shop of course, but that really doesn't influence my decision, unless I like...let's say that there are 2 products, for example pasta, and there are 2 products that both of them are nice, and I like them then of course if i see one of them is discounted I will take that"*, (Appendix 4) based on the nutrition the product provides: *"I knew I wanted exactly Nutella, I was actually thinking that [...] I should try not to eat necessarily Nutella but I was thinking maybe it would be nice to try a more natural one"* or based on its origin: *"To support the local economy, also the fact that they grew here when they were in season and I also trust Danish food that they wouldn't use too many chemicals."* (Appendix 4),

For Andrei, evaluating the alternatives is done based on convenience, him choosing between easy to make instant meals with different tastes: *"Sometimes they have different cups, you know, with carbonara or different sort of carbs so, same Knorr brand with different pots, like Bolognese, that's not good; but this one is like easy I also know that it's mashed potatoes, I don't know if it's mashed potatoes but at least it tastes like mashed potatoes, it's an easy decision."* (Appendix 5).

During the focus group, evaluating between the supermarkets was a main theme revealing differences in terms of size, products available and the service offered:

Netto has been identified as a small supermarket, widely spread across the city, with average prices and a very unorganized display of products, as Nelson mentions: *“I think small supermarkets like Netto or Fakta are very convenient, they are everywhere, but they are not organized you don't know where to find what are you looking for, these are like a mess”* (Appendix 7). His opinion is also shared by Risha: *“it's the look and feel when you enter at Netto, the simple ways in which they stock their stuff, or the containers it's very different than the one in Irma”* (Appendix 7) and by Barbara: *“But then in Netto if I walk a little ahead then all the buckets are stuffed out, everything is in baskets, must be that there is nothing wrong with the quality but the presentations is not as neat.”* (Appendix 7).

An alternative to Netto is Irma, which has been described as clean and neat, with good quality products and services, as Risha says: *“Irma has probably smaller shops somewhere. So were I stay that's my close place to go and it's nice and clean and tidy at any time of the day when you go, so hygiene is never a question”* (Appendix 7).

In terms of evaluating between products in terms of product availability, the focus group revealed contradictory information, as both Ann and Jarrel complained of the limited offer: Jarrel: *“I feel spoiled. Because I am from NYC and we have variety and so, I feel this is the close market.”* In the same time, Nelson and Barbara, being used with the Italian market consider they have plenty of choices here: Nelson: *“Well, in my opinion, thinking in stuff like that Italy is more standard “italic”, Italian quality standards, more restricted to Italian products... here in Denmark is more open and you have more variety of products and foods”*; Barbara: *“if we compare it to Italy, these have much more international brand like Oreo, in Italy you can find only one type of Oreo, only the classic one. Here you have like I don't know maybe ten, for me it was like “Oh my God! I don't know what to get!”* (Appendix 7).

**Purchase**, the following step refers to the buying activity itself either from the supermarket or other chosen alternatives. When referring to purchase, a recurring theme during the interviews is the time of day when they go shopping. Therefore, Andrei buys for two or three days at a time during the evening: *“I'm the kind of guy that buys his stuff, you know like I don't plan for like a week or two, because as I said I have days when I may be home for like 2 days or 3 days a week[...] but usually I buy my products in the evening after work or after my workouts or something like that...”*(Appendix 5), while Linda, being more organized in what she cooks prefers to buy over the weekend: *“I don't think there is a trend but maybe a bit more in the weekends, cause that's when I have more free time to just you know, go to shop and just shop a bit more around, because during weekdays I don't have so much time...”*(Appendix 4)

**Consumption** is the next step and it symbolizes the moment in which the product is being literally consumed. Both *individual* and **environmental influences** play an important role over

consumption. Sometimes, like in Linda’s case with the chili spice, consumption occurred separately from the decision process when she tried the food item from her roommate: *“No, this is the first time I bought it, I tried it from my flat mate but then I knew that if I’ll see it I’ll get it”* (Appendix 4).

The **post-consumption evaluation** provides a way of assessing how well the product fulfilled its role and to what degree the buyer will purchase it again. If the buyer is *dissatisfied*, he will store this information in his memory, which will function as *inhibitor* for future decisions, like in Andrei’s case with not liking the vegetables: *...“here is like I’m eating a bit of plastic or something, sometimes, I don’t know maybe I’m not buying from the right places, maybe I should go to a market, where there are actually farmers and sell them”* (Appendix 5).

On the other hand, if the consumer is *satisfied*, the information will be stored in the memory and used in future pre-purchase evaluations, like when Andrei recognized a product he liked and bought it instead of others: *“Like I said, I didn’t really look for this one I just tried it and I discovered that I love it and I’m just going to buy it again and again so it wasn’t really difficult, you know they have like loads and loads, so I just chose this one because I remembered it even though I haven’t seen it for a while”* (Appendix 5).

The last step of the Consumer Decision Model is **divestment**, and it represents the moment when the buyer disposes of his purchase. Divestment can take place soon after the purchase, for example with food items, as opposed to larger investments such as clothing, electronics, cars, etc.

The third major section of the Consumer Decision Model (Figure 16) describes the **variables** influencing the decision process. As mentioned before, there are two types of variables: individual differences referring to demographics, values, personality and lifestyle and external influences such as marital situation, culture, social class or financial situation.

The thematic analysis done on both the individual interviews and the focus group revealed multiple themes and subthemes which can be associated to either the individual differences or the external influences of buying behavior.

**Variables influencing decision process**

**Environmental Influences**  
 Culture  
 Social Class  
 Personal influence  
 Family  
 Situation

**Individual Difference**  
 Consumer resources  
 Motivation and involvement  
 Knowledge  
 Attitudes  
 Personality, values and lifestyle

Figure 17. Variables influencing buying behavior

The **individual differences** examine the way in which people think, behave and feel differently based on: age, gender, intelligence, personality, values, lifestyle, education, social class, motivation, involvement, attitudes and resources available. The themes found corresponding to individual variables are presented next:

The first main theme revealed during the interviews is that of **personal preferences** based on sub-themes such as familiarity to foods, personal curiosity, interest in foods and health and presumptions of food culture. First of all, both during the interviews and the focus group, the theme of **familiar foods** was used by the participants. Linda associates familiar foods to her mother's cooking and she continues to cook some of the dishes like they do at home: "*I learnt it from my family, my mum used to make omelet for breakfast for us..*" (Appendix 4). This is also Andrei's case, who buys foods that reminds him of home, for example the rotisserie chicken: "*My dad, he was a fan of buying this rotisserie chicken, and also I think I picked it up from him [...]*" or the mashed potatoes: "*To be honest I just, I do like mashed potatoes because my mum used to make them [...] so yes, they remind me of my mother's mashed potatoes..*" (Appendix 5). During the focus group, the theme of familiar foods took the form of specific products that are hard to find in the supermarkets and that Jarrel has to purchase from ethnic shops: "*but the hardest thing is making traditional foods, I had to go further like to Nørrebro to the immigrant shops so we can get our peppers and spices and sometimes they are not as expected, it's time consuming sometimes and it would be nice to just go to the supermarkets and get some of what we need*" (Appendix 7).

Another theme related to personality and lifestyle is the **interest in health**, the participants being either interested in the nutritional aspect of foods, such as Linda, who prefers the coarse oatmeal: "*so it's the taste, the texture but also for health aspects*" (Appendix 4) or Andrei, who chooses to buy pasta as his source of carbohydrates: "*...like I said I need the carbs for my workouts, I need energy, I need the source of energy so I think they do the purpose.*" (Appendix 5)

The next sub-theme situated under personal preferences and influenced by personality, values and lifestyle is the **curiosity** to try new foods. The focus group revealed that the participants are willing to try new foods as long as enough information is provided about them in the shop. For example, Risha has bought "kammerjunkere" numerous times before the sales assistant noticed her and recommended that she eats them together with "koldskål" because that is the traditional way. Therefore, she considers that her curiosity of the Danish culture would make her buy even more traditional foods, as long as she is provided with the information "*...so the lady at the counter, since I bought them very often because it's close to my place, said "Why don't you buy also the vanilla flavor buttermilk? This is the combination you have with this" so I said why not? so I picked it up and I tried it and liked it*" (Appendix 7). Curiosity and willingness to try

new things are one of Linda's main drivers, as a lot of the products she buys she never tried before, for example the red lentil pasta that became a staple in her cooking: *"Yeah, when I actually got it the first time I remember I was like uhm...it looks interesting but I was not sure if it will taste nice, because it's red lentil pasta [...] I thought ok I will get to try it and it tastes AMAZING, I love it!"* (Appendix 4). For Shuhan, curiosity takes a whole new direction, as he now lives away from a lot of his familiar foods, and therefore he is exposed to new food items, for example avocado: *"I think when I grew up there was no avocado, at all, and it got a little bit popular recently because of people thinking it's healthy... actually I think this is my second time buying avocado"* (Appendix 6).

Deferent values and attitudes also influence the way participants view **ecology**, and while some have a clear preference for ecological foods, as Linda does: *"My only requirement for eggs is that they are organic because I am very much aware of how the eggs that come from non-organic sources, the chickens are treated very poorly [...] So definitely organic and I don't know, if maybe there's a discount, I would go for the most free-range and organic"* (Appendix 4). On the other hand, Andrei doesn't care for ecology at all: *"No, I am not at all into that ecological bacon thing, you know... like come on [...] I don't know, I have no idea and I don't care anyway...too much information"* (Appendix 5) while Shuhan doesn't believe in mass production of ecological goods: *"...because I know how to grow vegetables, we used to grow vegetables, my parents [...] and I don't think they can do mass production on this kind of things."* (Appendix 6). The focus group revealed how the Danish supermarkets offers a lot of ecological or organic choices, as Anne mentioned: *"I think the system focuses a lot on organic products and foods this days especially in grocery stores, a lot of focus is on organic and local [...]"*. Risha takes the discussion further by reminding everyone that the interest shouldn't be only on ecology, but also on the carbon footprint of these ecological imported goods: *"... the whole concept is to essentially also reduce the carbon footprint, the amount of plastic they use to wrap up the ekologisk stuff and the distances from there they struggling to come into the Danish supermarkets, the amount of fuel they are probably using to just get it to the store it this, nothing ekologisk about it. Except that they don't use fertilizers."* (Appendix 7)

Finally, the individual differences based on the **education** and **job situation** also influence the way participants relate to certain concepts. For example, Linda is aware of how her education and professional background influence her buying behavior: *"I guess that's also related to my profession right? and my education, so it makes sense that I pay attention to it; but I think more and more people recognize the fact that the organic is the better option"* (Appendix 4) while

Shuhan pays extra attention to packaging: *“I know it's recycled paper because I work in the same field, so I'm quite familiar with this kind of product, like paper, printing ”* (Appendix 6).

The **environmental influences** are variables working outside of the individual and influence his decision-making process, such as cultural and sub-cultural influences, social class and social groups, as well as family and friends. After determining the main themes uncovered through data collection, the main environmental influences being **social groups** and **culture**:

First, the **social groups** we belong to influence our decision making whether we acknowledge it or not. Family is the first social group one takes part to, and the values shared by parents influence their children later in life. All three interview participants have a strong parental influence on the dishes they prefer. Linda, as mentioned earlier cooks dishes like her mother used to do, while Andrei prefers to buy meals reminiscent of his father's favorite ones.

Later in life, the group of friends grows more influential, determining whether one occasionally buys and cooks for a group or whether they eat outside of the house. All participants, both to the interviews and the focus group declared that, although eating out in Copenhagen is expensive, they prefer that when in the company of friends.

The **personal preconceptions** and **cultural aspects** of food are acknowledged during both the interviews and the focus group. The focus group revealed how Italian products are associated with quality and good tastes, as Jarrel says: *“because I think in terms of expectations quality or brand, as a New Yorker there is this concept that Italian made means quality”*; an opinion which Linda shares: *“I like that it's Italian [...] Well, you know that Italians are well known for their parmesan and stuff...”* (Appendix 7).

Andrei uses his cultural background in evaluating and comparing products, making his decisions based on products he is familiar with or remind him of home: *“I always have it home, it's not like missing because you know, like I said it's sometimes easy [...] so I think they do the purpose, remind me a bit of home, the restaurant, my parents, church and I like pasta obviously, so yes”* (Appendix 5). He uses the word “home” or expressions like “at home” or “back home” 24 times during the interview, more than any other participant, which shows how much his own culture influences the way he perceives food. Out of all participants, Andrei's opinions and views resonate the most with my own, and I attribute that partially to our common cultural background. Listening to his arguments, I found myself remembering my own childhood and how for years after moving to Denmark I was still comparing the taste, color and appearance of the tomatoes found here with the ones I used to buy at home. And I sometimes still compare tastes and colors and shapes, but I have also learned to view the options available for what they are and to do the best with what I have (or find in the shops). I believe my education in nutrition

and health has contributed a lot to this change in how I view food and how much more open I am towards trying foreign foods and international dishes. This aspect I also share with Linda, as we have a common professional background. As Linda mentioned numerous times during her interview, a lot of the dishes she cooks are of another cultural provenience that hers and she doesn't see her family cooking them: *"No no no, the opposite, I think my mum would never cook with tofu"*. She is also aware of how much her eating habits have changed during the years: *"... let me think about it, because you know, 5 years is a long time, you kind of get used to local products so I think I found my ways around it and change my habits a little"* (Appendix 4).

On the other hand, there is Shuhan, who's food culture is very different than what he encountered in Denmark. Back in China he is used to buying meat products from the meat market, where the animals are bought alive and then slaughtered on demand: *"There's like food markets where there are a lot of vendors so they don't really buy that (meat) in the supermarket...at least my parents and grandparents, they don't think it's fresh in the supermarket, and you can buy alive things from the Chinese supermarket, not like here everything is dead, everything is processed from meat factory"* (Appendix 6). By interviewing Shuhan, I realized how much our views on food differ and how my own culture influences the way I think about food. As part of the interview, I asked him of the way he plans to eat the cucumber he previously purchased, and Shuhan nonchalantly said that he will cook it with eggs:

*"Shuhan: Cucumber in general... is like... I can fry egg with cucumber"*

*Corina: You fry egg and cucumber?*

*Shuhan: Yea, but not like deep fry, fried in a pan, I guess it's a Chinese thing, but it tastes really nice.*

*Corina: That I've never heard about, I am sorry*

*Shuhan: Haha, you're facing a different culture!"* (Appendix 6).

My reaction was powerful and based one of the few "cooking lessons" my mother taught me before I was even old enough to start cooking. I remember these rules clearly because I still follow them today. She said to me:

1. Not all vegetables boil at the same speed, so you start with root vegetables first and move further to other vegetables and add the herbs at least so they don't overcook!
2. You never cook: salat, radishes and cucumber!

Therefore, it is important to acknowledge that people have different ways of buying, preparing and eating food and the way we chose to do so is influenced by both internal and external factors. This section on buying behaviour also showed how one's behaviour changes in time and how every new experience with foods dictates how we relate to it afterwards.

### Analysis part 3: Experiencing the supermarket

During the focus group, the discussion accommodated numerous aspects of the shopping experiences in Danish supermarkets. While the interviews had a more personal direction, the participants opening up on the mechanism and reasoning behind buying specific products, the focus group revealed how they perceive the supermarkets, what expectations they had and what they would change if possible. Therefore, the following section will transpose all these findings through the framework offered by the Experience Economy Theory.

According to Pine and Gilmore (1998), the retailers should be aware of *five key design principles* when creating memorable experience. To determine whether these principles are met in the supermarket, the participants have been asked questions such as: “What do you like about the supermarkets? ”, “What don’t you like about the supermarket?”, “What made you chose this specific shop?”

As Pine and Gilmore (1998) indicate, for experiences to be memorable, they should have a well-defined *theme* to raise expectancy among customers. Although going to the supermarket might not seem as a meaningful experience at first, the way in which we experience a shopping trip determines both the outcome of that trip and of the future ones.

A visit to the supermarket has a theme by itself, but some supermarkets go one step further in providing themed experiences, the example given during the focus group being Lidl. The German retailer Lidl has periodic campaigns where they promote food items specific to a country or a culture (for example, Asian week, Greek week, Iberic week, Mexican week, etc.) as Anne also mentions: “*Sometimes Lidl has foreign foods and they focus on a specific...like Greek and... that’s what I’ve seen a couple of weeks ago, and like Italian*” (Appendix 7). Besides Anne, none of the other participants were aware of Lidl’s marketing campaign. Seasonality also gives retailers an excuse for creating themed campaigns, such as Christmas, Easter, Halloween, the summer holiday (barbecue season) etc. and promoting specific foods and drinks associated to that event.

Although not specifically thematic, every supermarket has a different strategy as mentioned in the Background section. As these strategies and values have a strong influence over the products available and on the way they are sold, they can be identified as themes. According to the participants of the focus group there is a clear distinction between discount and high-end supermarkets in Copenhagen. Without having any Danish knowledge, Risha realized that Netto is a discount shop by the way products were displayed: “*But then in Netto if I walk a little ahead*

*then all the buckets are stuffed out, everything is in baskets, must be that there is nothing wrong with the quality but the presentations is not as neat".* The difference perceived is so strong, the Barbara claims the products in Netto are of a lower quality than in Føtex: *"In my opinion a Netto cannot compete with a Føtex because they have too different products"* (Appendix 7). At the other end the participants have situated Irma as the most inviting supermarket chain.

Secondly, experiences should **harmonize impressions with positive cues**. As mentioned previously, Irma is seen as the supermarket chain providing the best in-shop experiences. Nelson describes Irma with positive adjectives: *"... Irma where it is cleaner and where you can buy all the things that you need"* while Risha was positively impressed by the quality of some biscuits she bought there *"Irma had this neat box with them stocked, so there wasn't a minor crack in any of them so you were eating the effect thing. General presentation and the quality is so different and so bad than Irma."* (Appendix 7).

On the opposite note, experiences should have as **few negative cues** as possible. Unfortunately, Netto has been most associated with negative qualities. Besides being considered some of the most dirty and unorganized supermarkets, they are also considered as being small as Nelson says: *"I think small supermarkets like Netto or Fakta are very convenient, they are everywhere, but they are not organized you don't know where to find what are you looking for, these are like a mess."* While Nelson sees the multitude of Nettos in the city center as convenient, Risha considers there are too many and too closed together: *"And now that I know the area, like you said there is this one straight to Østerbro, the main road and there at least, there are 6 Netto and there are 3 Matas within 300 meters"* (Appendix 7).

Memorable experiences should also **mix in memorabilia**, or physical reminders of the experience. The most common memorabilia after a shopping trip are the goods purchased, most often food items. By reviewing how the participants remember memorabilia, various aspects arose:

**Product choices-** Besides Nelson and Barbara, who are familiar with food scarcity from their home country of Venezuela, all the other participants complained about the limited food choices found in the supermarkets. While Jarrel, original from New York, complained about not finding specific foods he considers "international", Risha mentioned the limited variety of vegetables: *"... vegetables should have a better variety because there is a very restrictive variety of numbers of vegetables [...] because that's a daily consuming item and the supermarkets are keeping it so they should have a little more than just cauliflower and broccoli"* (Appendix 7).

**Stock rotation-** the focus group revealed that the participants are not familiar with stock rotation. Jarrel was surprised to not find the same product he liked on a second supermarket

visit: *“And so that’s frustrating because we don’t know where to get certain things, a barbecue sauce that we want in Føtex, disappears and that makes no sense because if you sell it you should restock.”* (Appendix 7)

**International versus national-** two arguments are presented here: first, the argument of international foods: Barbara and Nelson consider that the Danish supermarkets are very open towards international foods, while the other participants are not happy with the product variety and consider supermarkets should stock more than the usual Mexican and East-Asian products, as Risha mentions: *“make sure that you also have Asian variety and we don’t have to stock up all supermarkets with Asian products but make you have at least one of the main products in the supermarkets.”* (Appendix 7); secondly, there is the argument of national foods: the participants discussed how Danish foods are not represented and promoted in the supermarkets. They consider that for such an international city as Copenhagen, visited by thousands of tourists every year, the foods representative of the Danish culture should be better displayed. Anne mentions her experience as a tourist in other cities where she likes to visit local supermarkets as a way of exploring the culture, but she couldn’t have the same experience in Copenhagen: *“I would love to go in a different country I would love to go to the grocery store to see what kind of food they sell. I would love to do it, I thought I would love it in Denmark as well so I went here, I went to different grocery stores and i said “well, ok, I am not very pleased”*(Appendix 7). Jarrel takes the discussion further, but saying how inferior his shopping experience in Copenhagen is compared to other countries he has visited: *“I was surprised that Island felt more like home in terms of global market since, like you look at the snow up here but we go to supermarket, way more variety it’s like “why is my shop experience on a road trip better in Reykjavik then in Denmark? and I don’t associate Denmark with being a third world country with what I feel like it’s a third world experience”*(Appendix 7)

Lastly, experiences should engage all 5 senses, which means that **sensory stimulation** is important in creating memories. Pine and Gilmore (1998) argue that the more senses an experience engages, the more effective and memorable it becomes. Because this topic was not covered during the focus group, my own observations will be presented next.

When discussing shopping experiences in a supermarket, the sensory stimulation is dependent on the supermarket chain and how large it is. Small supermarkets, such as Netto or Aldi are known for being discount, therefore very restricted in what services they offer. On the other hand, medium sized supermarkets such as Kvickly, Lidl and Føtex have almost always a bakery/ bread selling point attached to them. These bakeries, although with limited functionality, are used for baking bread or other pastry products, which after are being sold in-store. The smell of fresh bread stimulates the olfactory sense, which is known to influence hunger levels and

consequently the buying behavior (David McNamee D. 2014). The tactic of using olfactory cues in public spaces is widely used under the term of *Scent marketing* and can be found anywhere from coffee shops, to cosmetic and clothing outlets, etc. Some larger supermarkets have promotions, where consumers are invited to taste different food or drinking products in the shop. This approach encourages customers to buy that product if they like it, and more than once I have found myself doing so. Lastly, the hearing sense can be stimulated by the use of music or radio in stores, another tactic heavily used in fashion retail.

The last research question “*What characterizes the buying experience of the international customers?*” is answered by summarizing this Analysis section.

### **Subconclusion**

A buying decision is a 3 parts process, dependent on a *decision process* meant to show the mechanism behind choice making, an *information process* showing how information is processed and stored in the memory and the *internal and environmental variables* influencing the decision.

The Consumer Decision Model is a 7-step mechanism through which customers *recognize a need* they have for a specific food product, either initiated from the individual or from his environment. Afterwards, he *searches for information*, either *internally* from his memory and past experiences, of *externally* from family, friends, other consumers or other sources. He then *evaluates the alternatives pre-purchase* having in mind both inhibitors and facilitators and if the right conditions are met the *purchase* occurs. Then follows the *consumption* of the food items purchased, followed by *post-consumption evaluation*. Whether the consumer is *satisfied* or *unsatisfied*, the last step of the model is *divestment*.

The Consumer decision model is interconnected with the *information process*, a 5-step progress through which information is stored in the memory and used as reference in further decision making. The five steps contained in the information process are: *exposure* to the new stimuli, *attention* to it, *comprehension* or understanding of its meaning, *acceptance* and then *retention*. Once the information is stored, it functions as the basis for the *internal search of information*.

The third section influencing the buying behavior of the international consumers are their individual differences and environmental influences.

*Internal variables* or *individual influences* such as personality traits, age, gender, education, lifestyle, values and motifs influence how people behave and take decisions. These all factors contribute to the individual having both personal preferences and resources available to spend.

Having familiar foods or on the contrary, curiosity and willingness to try new foods determines whether the customer ends up buying foods close to his cultural background or not.

The *environmental influences*, for example the familial situation, social groups or the culture we belong to also have an impact on our buying behaviors. During both the focus group and the interviews, various aspects of buying behavior have been revealed.

By asking the participants how they perceive certain products, why they bought them and how they will use them, the interviews revealed personal perceptions and aspects of food culture derived from individual motifs and beliefs.

All in all, this section showed how buying behavior varies according to the individual's food preferences and cultural background and how we chose food products based on what they symbolize to us. Furthermore, our lifestyle and interests inflict changes in both food preferences but also in how we perceive them. From an external perspective, the analysis showed how important a clean and easy to navigate shop is in deciding from the abundance of supermarkets in the Copenhagen Area.

Although the shopping events in Danish supermarkets fulfill all conditions to be considered experiences, they are not necessarily positive ones. Plenty of negative aspects have been revealed during the focus group and the interviews, which makes sense considering that consumers have individual needs. Unfortunately, not everyone's needs can be met in this setting and a common ground is necessary. Therefore, the following section covers some aspects that can be used by the supermarkets in improving the experiences of their international consumers. These suggestions are framed in the Business Model Canvas template and the areas of the canvas covered are the ones consistent with the findings from the interviews and focus group.

## **Recommendations**

As mentioned before, The Business Model Canvas can be used as a tool for companies or businesses, in this case the Danish supermarkets, to identify areas of opportunity. They can develop these areas in order to improve the buying experience of their international consumers. By providing this set of guidelines, the last part of the Problem statement will be answered: *"how can the Danish food retail sector, exemplified by supermarkets in the Big Copenhagen Area enhance the buying experience of their international customers?"* The following section offers an overview of the Building Blocks that could prove useful to the supermarkets and in which way they could change their strategy to accommodate a more multi-national approach. Only the relevant blocks for this project will be presented.

<p><b>Customer Segments</b></p> <p>Supermarkets target a multi-sided market by having multiple customer segments. For example, a supermarket can target both customers interested in cost saving and the ones with resources, both interested in ecology and organic consumption or not by offering multiple alternatives. Although some supermarkets are high-end, they still have periodic discounts and promotions, which brings cost-oriented clientele. For the aim of this project, the customer segment is identified as internationals/ residents with another ethnic background than Danish.</p>	<p><b>Channels</b></p> <p>The international customers can be reached through the same way as the Danish ones, through direct and indirect advertising. The language constitutes the only impediment for internationals in being reached by the mass-advertising</p>
<p><b>Key Activities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make themselves seen among the international community and perceived as international-friendly</li> <li>• Make their employees aware of the language barrier and teach them how to act and react when faced with this situation</li> <li>• Have bilingual signs and other informative materials</li> </ul>	<p><b>Value Proposition</b></p> <p>The value proposed during this project is defined as a combination of customization and accessibility. Customization refers to tailoring products and services to the needs of the consumers, which translates into providing the international population with the products they need and a better service in English. Accessibility on the other hand refers to making the products and services available to the target group. This also has implications over the language aspect, as internationals could benefit from having information on products, promotions or the display in English.</p>
<p><b>Key Partnerships</b></p> <p>The supermarkets (ore one specific supermarket chain) could partner with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the Integration Ministry or other authorities within this field and create awareness towards the services and products they offer by promoting themselves in the materials already send out to newcomers in the country.</li> <li>• Language schools could be valuable partners as they are one of the first channels of contact with the immigrants</li> <li>• Social media outlets where internationals find their information (Facebook pages, blogs, newspapers in English)</li> </ul>	

Figure 18. Business Canvas Model- with recommendations

# Discussion

## 8. Discussion

This Master Thesis was born from my desire to determine whether food culture is important for expats living in Copenhagen and how one's food culture influences his buying behavior in the context of the Danish supermarkets. This particular topic is of interest for me as an expat, but also as an Integrated Food Studies student because I strongly believe that food is an important aspect of our lives. Apart from its nutritional value, the food we eat has multiple and important roles, and it is more than often the way through which we show our love to each other.

Therefore, when food is missing, or we are not satisfied, for whatever reason, with the foods we have available it can have a deep impact over our lives. And I believe these challenges should be addressed and solutions should be found to satisfy the needs of each and every one of us.

Because the topic of food and food culture is so vast, it couldn't have been covered within this project. So, I decided to narrow it down to a group whose struggles I know very well and I asked myself: *"How important is food culture in the buying behavior of international consumers and how can the Danish food retail sector, exemplified by supermarkets in the Big Copenhagen Area enhance the buying experience of their international customers?"* And in order to answer this question, I have also researched four additional questions:

### *What characterizes food culture?*

To answer the first question, I have reviewed literature on food culture, which revealed that both the internal attributes of the individual and the external forces influencing him have important roles in how food culture is defined. In the same time, information on food culture is gathered both directly and indirectly and it includes multiple cultural dimensions. More so, food culture is dependent on situations such as everyday activities or festive events, the meaning it has in the situation, what habits, techniques and behaviors the individual has and how he perceives the foods in terms of communication, images, smell, taste, etc. Furthermore, food culture is determined by cultural aspects and traditions, geography, eating patterns and how it can be used or chosen to be used.

### *What characterizes buying behaviour?*

The second question was answered from two perspectives. Firstly, literature on buying behavior has been reviewed having as focus 3 main areas: the ethnic consumer, how buying behavior can be influenced and the connection between ethnicity and buying behavior. The

research of the ethnic consumer revealed a chronology of studies on the marketing done on ethnic groups and how for a long time ethnic groups have been seen as separate from the mass population. The literature on influencing buying behavior revealed methods and techniques used by the retailers and focused on nudging, one of the most current methods used. Literature has also revealed that the buying behavior of ethnic consumers is influenced, between others, by the availability of ethnic choices and by how strong his ethnic identity is.

Secondly, theories on buying behavior have also been reviewed, and the Consumer Decision Model was chosen as a framework for the analysis process of this report.

### ***What characterizes the Danish food retail sector?***

This question was answered in the Background section through a review of the Danish food retail sector, exemplified by the supermarkets. Their values and strategies have been presented as well. Furthermore, the data collected revealed aspects of the food retail as perceived by the participating international consumers.

### ***What characterizes the buying experience of the international customers?***

The last research question has been answered during the Analysis section. The data collected through interviews, Customer Journey maps and a focus group has been subject to a thematic analysis. The themes revealed, together with the data have been used in analysing both the buying behavior of the selected participants but also aspects of their experiences in the supermarkets. Although the shopping events can be identified as experiences, further work must be done by the supermarkets to improve them.

Based on the data collected, a series of recommendations have been made, and framed under the structure offered by the Business Model Canvas. In order to improve the buying experience of the international consumers, the Danish supermarkets are advised to improve their communication strategy, provide more knowledge to their consumers and adopt a “multinational-friendly” mindset.

This section will further reflect on the choice of theories and methods and future applications of this research:

## Methodological considerations

For the purpose of this project, qualitative data has been gathered through various methods and combined to answer the four research questions. For example, data from the focus group has been combined with the interviews through the thematic analysis and then analyzed to reveal aspects of the buying behavior. The same interviews and focus group have also been used to identify themes corresponding to experiences and therefore analyzed from an Experience Economy perspective.

The foundation of the research was in autoethnography, or my own experiences and knowledge on the topic. I have chosen to use this method and embrace my background as foreigner instead of detaching myself from it. By doing otherwise, I could have encountered bias in analyzing the data because it was impossible to detach myself from it completely. Due to my choice of research design, I was considerate towards certain aspects of autoethnographic writing.

Autoethnographic sensibility is defined by Butz D. and Besio K. (2009) as a form of sensitivity towards the autoethnographic data provided by the participants in relation to my own. Therefore, it is important to mention that during the data collection process and the analysis my own experiences have overlapped with the ones of the participants. My autoethnographic sensibility is therefore transcribed through: my participation in the focus group, where I was moderator, but I also engaged in discussions; the customer journeys where I asked questions when and because I thought fit; and during the analysis where I have exposed the connections I have with the participants and how I relate to them on a personal level.

Carolyn Ellis (2004) emphasizes the importance of ethics when working with autoethnographies. Ethical issues in the context of this project can occur due to my connections to some of the participants, which I have tried at my uttermost to keep separate from the research process. Therefore, when we met for the supermarket trips and the interviews, I have agreed with each of the participants to have a separate coffee date where we can discuss personal issues to avoid this happening during the research.

The issue of reliability, validity and generalizability in autoethnographic studies are derived from the researcher's credibility and his ability to transpose the reader through his writing (Bochner A. 2002). In terms of reliability, I have physical proof of the data collected from videos, pictures, and audio recordings. Validity on the other hand cannot be assessed at this point because I haven't shared my research with my group of interest, but I hope they will find it

reliable once I do. Lastly, generalizability can be assessed by the readers of this paper once they find familiar cultural aspects they can relate to.

As part of the ethnographic process, I have used observations, interviews, pictures and video recordings to gain information on the buying behavior of the participants to this study.

The 3 Customer Journey Maps were organized and conducted by the researcher using video recording. Frames from the recordings have been used to illustrate touchpoint in the visual representations of the maps and therefore some of them were blurry. To make the customer journey as closed to their normal shopping experiences as possible, we have agreed not to talk to each other. This was especially difficult in Shuhan's case because he encountered some difficulties in the supermarket and I felt obliged to help him.

The friendship I have with the participants has also been hard to control during the customer journeys. For example, Linda understood completely that we shouldn't communicate while Andrei kept on turning to me, talking and even joking on two different occasions. But our relationship has also helped the participants to feel more comfortable while being recorded.

It is also important to mention that while Andrei and Linda's journeys took place in the weekend at 13:00 and 15:50 respectively, Shuhan's was in a weekday at 17:00. Because the days and times were different, I cannot address how their experiences would have changed if there were other conditions.

The participants were also told to choose the products they would usually buy and as a result, they all ended up purchasing them and taking them home. The same products have been integrated in the interviews, which took place right after the shopping trip.

The Customer Journey Maps have been designed using the trial version of a software called Smaply. This decision has not affected in any way the desired outcome.

The three interviews have followed a semi-structured interview guide, which gave me freedom to ask the questions I considered relevant while still having a structure and not omitting important information. The follow-up questions have been influenced by the participant's answers and by the products he/she purchased. Because the topic of food culture is vast, as shown by the section on food culture, I have chosen to focus on each and one product separately. This has helped me unfold aspects of food culture that are relevant for each participant in particular.

The focus group was organized using volunteer participants found through Facebook. Because in the last moment one of the participants canceled, I was constrained to find another

participant through my personal network. Therefore, Anne, also a master student in Integrated Food Studies and my classmate has rounded up the focus group.

Anne's expertise within the food studies has been proven beneficial for the focus group, as she opened up important discussions. It is important to mention that the other participants were familiar with the discussions she initiated and once started, they were easily involved. Also, her experience with organizing focus groups has helped her be aware of the advantages she has in terms of knowledge and familiarity with the subject of the focus group and therefore she was considerate in not taking over the discussion.

As I was both moderator and observer during the focus group, it was hard to take notes while participating to the discussion and taking care to ask the follow-up questions. Therefore, I have chosen to both audiorecord and video record the focus group, which has helped me greatly afterwards in transcribing.

Although the focus group provided the research with in-depth data on the buying behavior of the participants, having more than one focus group would have been beneficial.

While the interviews provided a personal view on buying behavior, the focus group had a more social perspective, which was equally relevant for this research. Therefore, the findings from both methods helped build a holistic image of the buying behavior of the international community.

### **Theoretical considerations**

Theories on buying behavior have been used to analyze and present the data collected during this project. A cognitive approach was desired because of its importance in assessing both the internal and the external determinants of behavior. The chosen theory was the Consumer Decision Model, also known as the Engel-Blackwell-Miniard Model because it provides a complete framework through which behaviors can be analyzed. This model was chosen in favor of another cognitive theory- the Theory of Buyer Behavior, which has as focus the act of buying.

The Consumer Decision Model is built on three pillars: the decision process, the information process and the variables influencing decision, which I considered relevant for the purpose of this project. Because the target group is formed of international consumers, the variables influencing their behavior are at least as important as the decision process itself, a feature that the Theory of Buyer Behavior was missing.

Furthermore, because the environmental influences and the stimuli identified as the Danish supermarkets have such an important role over the buying behavior, it was also important to address how they can influence it in a positive way.

Therefore, The Experience Economy Theory has been chosen to determine whether a shopping event can be considered an experience. Also, because the data collected showed how the experiences weren't always positive, the theory provided a framework of how they can be improved.

It is important to mention that although the two theories are comprehensive, they fail to include important aspects, such as the development in technology. The topic of technological advancement in relation to buying behavior and online retail has been covered by the Experience economy in retail section, which also revealed that the Environment is the most important realm according to a study made by Retail Economics in 2017. This was consistent with the findings of the focus group, where the participants expressed both their satisfaction and dissatisfaction with the supermarkets in the Copenhagen Area.

In order to improve the buying experiences, I have chosen to recommend a series of actions presented under the framework of the Business Model Canvas. Because of the limitations of this project in terms of size, duration and areas on interest, I have only focused on the blocks of the BMC that are relevant.

### **Future perspectives**

Although this study provided a series of suggestions under the form of the Business Model Canvas, it is nowhere near implementation. Further research and analysis should be done if this approach is desired. Furthermore, the supermarkets should be also involved in the process as they possess the framework for implementation.

Although I strongly believe in the subject of cultural differences in terms of food choices among the international population and the Danes, I don't know how this interest is shared by the institutions that possess the power to make a change. Therefore, a more in-depth analysis would be more convincing for the supermarkets/authorities.

In order to obtain more "convincing" data from the business perspective, multiple focus groups should be organized, together with other types of quantitative research, such as questionnaires.

If the suggestions were to be implemented, I would emphasize the need for a communication strategy towards the international group. As technology is so advanced and because they expressed their disinterest towards the physical advertising, I believe that the online offers should be posted bilingual. This would show initiative from the business side without interfering with the framework already set in place in Danish. Because after all, this initiative is about accommodating the internationals and not about excluding the Danes.

# Conclusion

## 9. Conclusion

Unless science finds other methods to nourish the human body, we are dependent on food. Without doubt food has an important role in our lives and almost everything we do is connected in a way or another with the food we eat. Whether we grow our own vegetables, we bring cake over to a party or we return with sweet souvenirs from a holiday, we make choices when it comes to the foods we buy. And because food is a crucial aspect of life, all matters of food should be addressed, and solutions must be found so that no one experiences food shortage of any kind.

The topic of food becomes even more important when the foods we are used to are suddenly unavailable due to various reasons. And this can be the case for people moving to a foreign country or culture. With the continuous growth of the international community in Copenhagen, it is important to ask ourselves how they feel about their food choices and how we can help.

Therefore, this project aimed to address the topic of food culture among the participating internationals and how it influences their choices and buying behavior. In order to assess this, it was important to gain an overview on the food retail sector, and because the supermarkets are the largest retailers, it was crucial to consider who they are and their strategies. This revealed that there are both high-end and discount supermarkets in Copenhagen and their strategies are somewhat similar: a lot of focus is put on ecology, sustainability, food waste and good service.

Furthermore, the research couldn't have been complete without assessing what literature was written on this topic and because not enough studies were made in Denmark, an international approach was taken. The literature revealed that although sometimes the ethnic consumer has different needs, the advertising today is inclusive and not differentiating between ethnicities. Even in the multicultural world of today, ethnic groups still separate themselves from the majority, creating ethnic communities where specific products and services are being provided.

By assessing the mechanism of buying behavior of the international consumers in Copenhagen, it was revealed that they are under the influence of both personal and external variables. In the same time, the way they process information is also detrimental for buying behavior.

The determinants of food culture from the literature have been consistent with what the participants identified as reasons and motifs for purchasing and consuming certain foods. Therefore, personality traits such as curiosity, familiarity to foods, lifestyle, level of education, interest in food trends and health influence the buying behavior. But in the same time, these traits can be overthrown by how we perceive a retail space, the products they have available and the level of service they offer. Therefore, it is safe to say that the experiences we have in a supermarket are as important as our personal food culture.

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# Appendix

## 11. Appendix

### Appendix 1: Interview guide

1. Please tell me your name and a few things about you
2. For how long have you been living in Denmark?
3. How did you decide to move to Denmark?
4. And what made you decide to stay here?
5. Where do you usually buy your groceries and why?
6. Are you aware of any marketing efforts the supermarkets make? Advertising?
7. What is your working schedule and when do you usually buy your groceries?
8. Where do you usually buy from and why?
9. What about eating out? Do you cook with friends? (social aspect of cooking)

Then Asking questions related to the products purchased:

10. Why did you decide to buy this....?
11. Do you buy it often?
12. How do you prepare it/ use it?
13. Is it something you used to do at home as well?
14. What attracted you to this product in particular?
15. What does it remind you of?
16. Was it easy to find in the supermarket?
  
17. What would you say you miss from "home"?
18. What about your experience with food in Denmark? What do you like and what would you like to change?
19. What would you change about the Danish supermarkets if you could?

## Appendix 2: Focus group guide

1. I would like to start by asking your names and for how long you've been living here and what you do in Copenhagen?
2. What is your perception about the Danish food system all together? Do you know where foods come from, how much is produced here, what is your knowledge about the food system? And how do you guys feel about the Danish food system?
3. How happy are you in the Danish supermarkets; especially the supermarkets in Copenhagen area?
4. What matters for you when purchasing products from the Danish supermarkets?
5. How would you describe your way of shopping and cooking in Denmark as opposed to your home country?
6. Are you aware of the differences between the supermarkets/ supermarket chains?
7. Are you aware of the discounts? And that “reklamer” or “avis” they send out every week where they have like discounts for the following week?
8. What about the product variety? How is it different and how would you change it?
9. So, can you agree that your needs (are met) or not in the Danish supermarkets?
10. What would you like suggest or recommend?
11. Lastly, is there anything else you would like to add to this discussion?

### Appendix 3: Consent form

Purpose of the research: To understand the buying behavior of international professionals in Denmark

What you will do in this research: If you decide to volunteer, you will be asked to participate in one interview including a supermarket visit. First, you will be followed during one of your weekly shopping trips. Afterwards you will be asked several questions. Some of them will be about food habits. Others will be about shopping habits. With your permission, I will video record the supermarket trip, so I don't have to make so many notes. The following interview will be tape recorded.

Thank you for reading the information sheet about the interview sub-study. If you are happy to participate then please complete and sign the form below:

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason and without there being any negative consequences. In addition, should I not wish to answer any particular question or questions, I am free to decline.

I understand that my responses will not be kept confidential and they are meant to be used in the final report. I understand that my name will be linked with the research materials.

I agree for this interview to be tape-recorded. I understand that the audio recording made of this interview will be used only for analysis and that extracts from the interview will be public.

I agree for this supermarket visit to be video-recorded. I understand that captures of the video recording will be used only for analysis and that they will be public.

I understand that no other use will be made of the recording without my written permission, and that no one outside the research team will be allowed access to the original recording.

I agree to take part in this interview.

_____	_____	_____
Name of participant	Date	Signature
_____	_____	_____
Investigator	Date	Signature

## Appendix 4: Linda's interview transcription

C: Thank you first of all for joining, as I've told you already this is what I am going to use for my Masters thesis, I cannot tell you right now what the outcome of the Master thesis is, but you'll find out.

C: I am interested first to know some more about your background, like what age you are, if you are willing to say that, what do you do, generally speaking, for how long you have been in Denmark, things like that.

L: I am 24, I work at a food-tech start-up and I am head of nutrition and research at the company I work for and I've been living here for 4 and a half years.

C: And where do you come from?

L: I am from Latvia.

C: You're from Latvia, ok. Uhhh why did you come to Denmark?

L: for my studies, it was very spontaneous; I moved here like within a month so I didn't do a lot of research about what is Denmark and like I applied for the studies and I was like "aarh if I get in I get in, if I don't I don't" and I got in, but with a delay so within like 3 weeks I was in a new country where I've never been before, so that's my story.

C: Ok, so I know now how you got here, but what made you stay after finishing your studies?

L: Uhhh..that's simply the fact that I got a job in a field that is relevant to me, also a job that is exciting and I am very happy to work there..uhhh..also probably the fact that my boyfriend is here, even though, we have been together for a bit more than a year, so I have finished my studies roughly a year ago, so it was not necessarily for him because at that stage we were still dating and it was fresh; but it was mostly because of the job market actually and at the point when I decided that at least I'll be trying to stay, I didn't have the job yet, so it was more my decision to actually actively try to stay.

C: Ok, that makes sense. Then I would like to ask you some questions about your grocery shopping, your food shopping. Where do you usually buy your food from?

L: Usually, most often is Rema, because I have one just across the street. Sometimes I go to Netto or Fakta, actually Fakta not so much anymore, cause on my way home there's not really one I could go to, I would rather go to Netto or Føtex.

C: And you say you go to those shops in particular because they are close to your place?

L: Definitely the fact that it's comfortable to get to them; I don't think I would go to a shop just because I like the shop explicitly, because it takes time...but the only exception is I love the oatmeal Oatly and there's sold only in COOP shops, and then I have to go, even though I never shop in that chain of supermarkets; so if I go there I get the Oatly and I just leave, that's it.

C: Ok, why don't you shop more from there?

L: I think they are a bit overpriced. I can buy the same things for less, so I feel a bit cheated when I am inside there.

C: Ok, ok. Are you aware of the marketing from the shops you buy from and what they do to attract customers? Are you aware of the offers they have or stuff like that?

L: No..I never check the offers...

C: You never check the offers?

L: Well..when I am in the shop of course, but that really doesn't influence my decision, unless I like...let's say that there are 2 products, for example pasta, and there are 2 products that both of them are nice, and I like them then of course if i see one of them is discounted I will take that.

C: So you don't check like the magazines or their Facebook pages or anything?

L: No, not really.

C: When do you usually buy your groceries? Is it a specific day in the week, is it a specific time or every Friday for example?

L: No, no, mostly though...uhm...I don't think there is a trend but maybe a bit more in the weekends, cause that's when I have more free time to just you know, go to shop and just shop a bit more around, because during week days I don't have so much time and then during the week if I go to a shop I get exactly what I need and I am out of the shop.

C: Do you eat out a lot?

L: uhmm, I don't know..I get at least 1 or 2 nights a week but then also on weekends sometimes also breakfast or brunch.

C: Did you use to eat a lot out before?

L: Noo, no. That has changed actually, and mostly because I work full-time and by the time I get home I don't know sometimes I am super tired and I also go to Danish 2 times a week, so I don't physically have the time to do it and maybe I prioritize something else than to spend a lot of time cooking. I can do an easy dinner but it's also that social aspect that me and my boyfriend just wanting to go somewhere or if I am staying at his place we don't usually cook at his place because he lives in an apartment where the landlord lives and it's a bit weird so we don't cook there.

C: You don't cook there, haha, ok.

C: What do you cook when you cook? In those few days when you cook?

L: I usually...I'm a vegetarian so that makes it very easy. I remember when I was not it was way more complicated to figure out what to cook and what to eat but since I am vegetarian is just very easy to combine different kinds of vegetables, very often I just put them in the oven, so I roast them, and then I later mix them with pasta, I then put some pesto or spicy sauce or whatever so I just mix vegetables and some kind of grain, maybe I do tofu with I don't know like, noodles so I base the dish on vegetables and then I figure out what else I want to add.

C: And when you cook, you cook just for yourself or you cook for you and your boyfriend?

L: Both...If I'm alone, I cook just for myself, if we're together then I cook for both.

C: Ok..now let's have a look at what you bought today; maybe we should start with the eggs. How did you decide to buy the eggs?

L: Uhhmm, my only requirement for eggs is that they are organic because I am very much aware of how the eggs that come from non-organic sources, the chickens are treated very poorly; if, if I would be even more free in my resources I would even buy eggs from like Føtex or bigger chains where they offer eggs from like small farms where they chickens have even more, like better conditions. So definitely organic and I don't know, if maybe there's a discount I would go for the most free-range and organic.

C: Do you buy eggs a lot? Like if it's something that you usually buy?

L: Noo, I would say I have them one of the breakfast on weekends and then maybe once or twice a week as well.

C: How do you usually use them? How do you eat the eggs?

L: In an omelette. So vegetables and also with some cheese.

C: Have you always used the eggs like this or?

L: Yes, I actually did

C: So what attracts you to this product, is there something else other than the fact that it's ecological?

L: Uhm..another thing...I don't know if there's so much of it here in Denmark but I know in Latvia I hate when they put the eggs in the plastic packages, It really annoys me, so if I would see it in a plastic package I would never get it.

C: Even though they were ecological?

L: If there would be another option, I would go with the more expensive because I think it's very stupid to use plastic for somethings like eggs. Also the package of the eggs I chose it's kind of attractive as well.

C: Why do you say it's attractive?

L: It's a nice color..

C: The green color?

L: Yea...it's kind of like harmonious. Of course, as a consumer I see the labels upfront ...also the fact that they are Danish so they are local eggs.

C: How do you find them in the supermarket? Do you usually go looking for the eggs or you know where the eggs are?

L: Yea..like supermarkets usually have the same layout, right? It starts with vegetables and closing with grains and at some point you find the refrigerators...I think it's usually kind of the same.

C: Ok, so you got used to it.

L: Yea, so I go and search directly where I know the eggs are and then I pick organic.

C: The way that you used the eggs, is it something that you grew up with or is something that you got to know along the way, or..?

L: Uhmm. yea I think I learnt it from my family, my mum used to make omelet for breakfast for us, so I guess it's an easy thing as well for breakfast.

C: Let's go now to the second product that I have here, let's see the Nutella.

L: Yea, that was my craving.

C: How did you decide to buy it?

L: Because I wanted, I had in my mind I want it, I knew I wanted exactly Nutella, I might go like I was actually thinking that that's why I picked the other one I could go for more I was thinking

maybe I should try not to eat necessarily Nutella but I was thinking maybe it would be nice to try a more natural one

C: What do you mean a more natural one?

L: Less the one where they use like real chocolate and nuts and yeah there's a lot of sugar in Nutella which should be a bit less; it should have more nuts, but in the same time Nutella is Nutella...like I know I will like it so I would get it anyways.

C: How often do you buy Nutella?

L: Oh no really, not that much maybe in my life I have bought it like 3 times so this is the third time; but I've had it if I'm seeing it somewhere like a friend of mine is using it or in a cafe I seen Nutella then I would go for it, but it's not the same. It's just because I had the craving for it so I went for it, but it's not something I'm buying very often.

C: Ok, how do you use it? Or how do you plan on using it?

L: Uhm...on toasted rye bread, it's my favourite.

C: Now, again that question, what attracts you to this product?

L: Well... the fact that I know that it tastes good, also the packing looks good with a nice flower especially for a product like don't tell her which I will keep in my shelf for a long time, I know it's maybe a bit weird but yeah I'm a very visual person so I like things to look nice especially something I'll see often, so I really shop for a pretty product, if I know it's going to be on myself for a long time I wouldn't go for something that looks ugly then I will hide it in my cupboard and I rarely use it or use it fast so that I'm out of it

C: But did you find it easily in the supermarket?

L: Uhhh... maybe not really who was not super obvious it will be there but I kind of walked past it and then saw it.

C: What does Nutella remind you of?

L: Uhhh... chocolate

C: Chocolate...did you use to have Nutella?

L: Uhhh...sometimes, yea, yea

C: The way you use it, is it something specific to your country or to your culture or to your family?

L: No, no no, neitheræ I think it's just something I discovered one time I had rye bread at home, and I had Nutella so I toasted it and I got the best combination and it's a bit like less healthy I guess because of the fiber.

C: So we are finished. Is there something else you would like to say about Nutella?

L: I wish it would be in smaller packages, I know they have like a smaller one than this, if I could choose then I would go for a smaller one; that's because if it's something like a treat then I'm like "oh I shouldn't have so much of it" so I would never go for the biggest packaging, I would go for the smallest possible

C: Let's take the tofu next, so you chose tofu why did you choose that?

L: Uhm... organic is one, I would not go for tofu that is not organic.

C: But like tofu how often do you buy it or how did you decide to buy the tofu?

L: Ok so as I said it's very infrequent when I'm cooking home but let's say from all the times I took home I use tofu maybe every third or fourth time and it's actually something I started like kind of recently I think when I turn vegetarian, before that I would not not eat it but I would never buy it. But then yeah I don't know I learn how to cook it and I love it now.

C: so you said that's not something you used to do before?

L: No, no, no, that's very new for me.

C: Is there something else that attracted you to this product besides the fact that it's ecological?

L: it is not too big so it's not a huge packaging, so like the size of it; I don't know maybe like the transparency of the packaging so I can see it, I don't even know if you can buy tofu that is in a packaging that you cannot see-through but..

C: How did you find it in the supermarket?

L: In my Rema, where I usually shop it's in a really weird place, because it's not put in the fridge it's on the outside and I just found it randomly in one of these boxes wear there is random things and here as well it was in a weird place so I didn't know I don't know I just noticed it and I wanted to buy it, I was willing to get it

C: What does tofu remind you of?

L: Asian kitchen.

C: Is it something specific to your country?

L: No no no, the opposite, I think my mum would never cook with tofu

C: Should we go to the next product, the pasta. how did you decide to buy this pasta?

L: Because I know I like it a lot

C: Ok, so you tried it before...

L: Yeah, when I actually got it the first time I remember I was like "uhm..it looks interesting but I was not sure if it will taste nice" because it's red lentil pasta so that's kind of weird, but I said the thing that sold me was the fact that it has a lot of protein. Yeah I was really impressed of how nice it was, it has 20 gr of protein per 100g of lentils, so it's quite a lot, because sometimes I just put the vegetables in the oven and if I don't want to eat beans or something then I kind of want to put some protein source as well and I thought ok I will get to try it and it tastes AMAZING, I love it

C: And you just boil it?

L: Yeah I boil it and then I mix it with some pasta sauce and vegetables, it's so good!

C: Do you always buy this one or are you aware of other brands that offer the same?

L: I'm not aware of other brand I'm sure there are some but this is also like the price is really attractive; I don't remember what exactly, but I know for a fact that it's not expensive

C: Are you used to using this kind of pasta from back home?

L: No, no this is also like this is total, it's a thing that is kind of recent

C: Do you want to tell me something more about the pasta?

L: Well as always it's a bonus it's organic but if it wouldn't be organic I would still go for it. I tried to go for organic always if possible but mostly 4 things that are from animals or high fat percentage then I would go for sure if possible for organic.

C: So you're very aware of it...

L: Yeah that's something I guess that's also related to my profession right? and my education so, so it makes sense that I pay attention to it; but I think more and more people recognize the fact that the organic is the better option

C: Then let's go further to the shawarma chili, why did you buy that one?

L: Because I know that my flat mate she's had it and I tried it from her, and it's so nice, it reminds me of kebab / falafel places

C: Is it similar to that thing?

L: It's exactly the same, like when they have it in

C: Is it so spicy?

L: Yaaa, and I really like spicy things too

C: So you buy a lot?

L: No this is the first time I bought it, I tried it from my flat mate but then I knew that if I'll see it I'll get it

C: How do you plan on using it?

L: With vegetables, maybe like mix it in hummus if it's normal hummus; maybe in some like chili or pasta dishes, I don't know, it could be anything.

C: How did you find it in the supermarket?

L: Uhm...it was where the hummus was

C: Was it hard to find or easy to find or you just happened to see it?

L: It just happened that I saw it. It wasn't like I was going for it, but I saw it and I wanted to get it so, yea, so basically it reminds me of falafel sauce

C: I assume that's not something that you're used to home?

L: No, no, we have no falafel places, so that's something I learned here in Denmark.

C: So not even in your family...you don't use it either.

L: No, no

C: should we go to the next one?

L: yea

C: the kokos milk

L: Yea, and then I got it mostly because of the packaging size, I like that it's a small one. I really dislike, not dislike but it's a bit annoying for me when you get the big jar and never use it up, I always end up spoiling some of it unless I cook for like more than me and my boyfriend or for more times...I can't predict

C: How do you plan on using it?

L: Maybe in like curry, so vegetables with some lentils, chickpeas and then this and tomato, yea that's how I usually use it

C: How often do you buy it?

L: Uhhh..the curry is also one of my staples. if I cook I probably go for that.

C: And I assume again that that's not something you got from home?

L: No, actually, no..because my family is not vegetarian, so my mum is the type that is more traditionally-oriented, not that she would never cook it, but I don't know, they don't usually cook curries..maybe chillies but it would be with meat.

C: So you said you want to use it in a curry?

L: Also maybe in like Thai noodles

C: Is it something you used before?

L: No

C: What attracted you to this product? is it something else besides the size?

L: No.

C: Do you always buy this one?

L: If I'm in Rema yes, I know Fotex has a small one like a similar one, so I would also buy it there

C: Now let's go to the next one. It's a mix of cheeses

L: I didn't know it was a mix, I was not aware

C: What did you plan on buying?

L: parmesan or something similar

C: How did you decide to buy it?

L: Yes it's something I keep in my fridge so I ran out of it

C: How often do you buy it?

L: I don't know once every few weeks

C: Ok, as soon as it runs out.

L: Yes

C: How do you use it

L: In omelets, in pasta dishes, I guess that's it

C: What attracts you to this product?

L: I like that it's Italian.

C: Why do you like it cause it's Italian?

L: well you know that Italians are well known for their parmesan and stuff, but I can see it's not permanent so it was kind of marketing for them to infiltrate but I'm not very unhappy with it because I still feel like it's fine; I like the color of the packaging as well

C: Do you know the brand or?

L: No. The only thing I would love I would if it's organic, because cheeses something that I definitely prefer to be organic, but it's not so since I use a little bit of it each time I don't care; but I would love to support the idea of getting it organic

C: The way that you use it is it something specific to your country or family?

L: Oh yeah my mum used it in omelet like I do, in pasta as well, I think I'm using it exactly how my mum would use it or my family

C: Is there anything else you want to say about it?

L: I like that it's zippable, that you can zip it and it keeps fresh

C: How did you find it in the supermarket?

L: It was in the cheese section

C: The next one is red bell pepper. Why did you choose this one?

L: Well, organic and I like bell peppers, so I wanted to have eat with hummus, but I didn't find the hummus I want so I will just have it with something else I guess this time.

C: Do you have it often?

L: Yes, yes, I can actually eat it with omelet, I put some pepper on the pan and then.

C: What attracts you to this product?

L: That it is organic, what is not attracting me is the plastic, I hate it, I think it's so stupid I think it's just super silly especially because the whole point of, of course there's the health aspect of organic but it's also the environment and this is just super ridiculous.

C: I can see it from Spain how do you feel about that?

L: I mean there are no bell peppers growing in Denmark right now.

C: Would you buy it if they were?

L: If it would be season then yeah, but not if it's a lot more expensive, if it's like 30%-40% more expensive than I would go for it, otherwise I feel like ... maybe if I earn more

C: How did you find it in the supermarket?

L: It was obvious, it was in the vegetable section

C: Does it remind you of something?

L: In general? No, not really.

C: Is it something you liked from home?

L: Yeah we would have it home like a staple food, like a staple vegetable

C: and now let's take the last one, the oats, how did you decide to buy it?

L: organic and what is it called rough cut?

C: Do you prefer the rough cut?

L: Yes, definitely, I would not get the fine-cut one

C: Why not?

L: I don't like the texture, I don't like the fact that they are, how do you call that, that it takes less time for your stomach to digest them, so it's the taste, the texture but also for health aspects, although it's not super important

C: How often do you buy it?

L: Uhm.. whenever I run out of it.

C: How do you cook it or how do you consume it?

L: Boil it in a porridge and then I love it with the oat milk it's so good and then some fruits and maybe some seeds

C: Is it something you used to consume before?

L: Yes

C: So is it something you grew up with?

L: Yes definitely, yea

C: Aand since moving to Denmark you didn't find something to replace it with or you didn't even look for

L: I didn't even look because for me breakfast is; I love breakfast and I love breakfast foods that I have been growing up with so I feel happy with it

C: Why do you think there's difference between breakfast and like dinner foods, why you were willing to change the dinner?

L: Definitely time plays a role, so even though I don't eat home for breakfast, I eat it at the office, but if I would I'm just going back or imagine what it would be if I would be home so definitely

time plays a role because I don't want to cook an experiment with breakfast so I choose something that I knew all my life

C: Is there something else you would like to say about the oats?

L: Again, they are Danish, because I saw in the shop there were brands also organic also rough cut non Danish and I will not buy that, I try to go as local as possible

C: Why?

L: To support the local economy, also the fact that they grew here when they were in season and I also trust Danish food that they wouldn't use too many chemicals.

C: What would you like to have from home that you don't have here in the supermarkets?

L: let me think about it, because you know 5 years is a long time to kind of get used to local products so I think I found my ways around it and change my habits a little

C: Then tell me what you missed

L: I missed the regular products that I usually had like for example, we have a cottage cheese but it's different than here, is kind of the same idea of the dairy product but it tastes a bit different and the texture is different so I missed that; I remember there was one shop here in Copenhagen or you could buy products from Latvia, and I remember I was going there once in a while to get it

C: What shop is it?

L: It's a Bulgarian-Polish shop.

L: And I really miss some of the snacks like yea some sweets and also savory snacks, what else, at first I really miss the bread because the bread is different home and different things really, and also some like sauces and condiments, something that gives the taste of home

C: do you still miss them?

L: Yea, actually sometimes I when I get home sometimes I get spices from home

C: And it's something specific from that region something that you don't find here or

L: yeah it's like a mix of different herbs and spices, it's just what I grew up with my mum used to use them so it's the feeling of going back to my childhood, also sauces and I can't bring them home so, I still crave them, and there are special hearty resources, and it's something quite different so I really really enjoy using them when I'm going home

C: What about the services in the supermarket do you have any positive or negative experiences here?

L: I think it's very annoying when there is a long queue, I really appreciate that Føtex takes has the self-checkout, I think that's the way to go

C: do you guys have this at home?

L: yeah we started having it like a year ago. I think that's great. and you can also check what you're getting. remember when I first moved here I had some experiences when I was kind of cheated or maybe I didn't understand well enough what it says on the price tag or whatever, I remember a couple of times I was going home and I was so angry because I overpaid for something I didn't intend to buy for that money

C: Ok, why was that?

L: Probably a mixture of me not understanding Danish and also a few times I noticed that the cashier put in the wrong thing but I didn't know that those things are going so fast so I really like when it's the self service.

C: Now if you could summarise all together your experience of shopping in the Danish supermarkets as a foreigner what are the main aspects that or the main feelings that come up to you, how do you feel about it?

L: One thing that's something that Denmark could improve is the variety of foods I think it's sometimes so boring because you don't get exposed to more than 2,3 brand and whenever I go to travel somewhere or even go home you go to shops and it's like, it's a much more fun experience because you can try new things you seen your products like all new and cool and you're like "oh I want to try this", so I feel like Denmark it's really conservative when it comes to food and new products I think there's definitely space for new things to come in and I think people would be happy to try them because for some reason you just always see the same old boring things like, no fusions, no mixtures, no trying to bring something new. The good thing, what I love is so so many organic things and options that super nice, I appreciate that a lot. yes I would like if the shops would be a bit bigger especially in Copenhagen the shops are so small and they always seem messy and I don't know it doesn't seem super organized it's more like what I said about some of the things that I just found them accidentally it's not very organized like I will find this here from shop to shop is different, they change around where they put things. so you still get some kind of guiding, if there is a refrigerator probably you will find the dairy and but there could be like moved around the shop a lot, also these mystery boxes where you can find anything from shoe cream to tofu in there, there is a big chance you'd find them mixed together.

C: Is there something else you'd like to add?

L: One thing that I would encourage in the supermarket is space for new things and for organic fruits and vegetables don't use plastic because that's something that I don't see a lot in Latvia for example when I go you can still find, you can still see the difference between organic and non-organic but it's not wrapped in such a big thick plastic, especially for Denmark for people buy organic thanks so it's not like they have to preserve it so much

C: Thank you very much

L: Sure :)

## Appendix 4: Andrei's interview transcription

C: Hi, thank you for joining me here today. If you could start by telling me your name and your age and what you do for a living.

A: My name is Andrei, I'm a 26 year old and I currently work with technologists in UPS.

C: For how long have you been living in Denmark?

A: For about 7 years now

C: 7 years, ok; and why did you come here?

A: For my education, for my bachelors

C: What did you study?

A: International marketing and management

C: And why did you decide to stay?

A: Wel, it was just you know, I took it year by year, it was not like I'm gonna stay here forever, but after finishing my education which I kind of got extended for about a year and a half due to some personal choices I just decided to stay one more year and one more and now they're seven years so, I didn't really decide on this it just happened, here we are.

C: If I can start with another set of questions about your shopping habits.

A: Yes

C: Where do you usually buy your groceries?

A: Well, it really depends on the area you know where I am, usually I'm pretty active so I'm out a lot or I'm at some friends for a few days maybe or visiting someone and usually I would say the most common shops I go to is Netto and Fotex, also the 3rd would be maybe Aldi, they have more variety in their products so I think they're pretty good as well so these are the main three shops.

C: Why those shops in particular?

A: Well, Netto is just like everywhere to be honest and it's convenient and they're open until late, and I usually I work late as well so they're open till 12 a.m. some of them so it's easier for me to get the essentials from there and Fotex is because they have a bigger variety of things as well, you know, if I want something more maybe quality like or something bigger or something like for example rotisserie chicken they're just but they have those kind of products as well, ready-made products. And Aldi, or Lidl oh no I said Lidl, I always confuse them, LIDL, it's also going to have an interesting variety of things there that I enjoy going there and having a look and also have the bakery products sometimes there so when I need something realyl quick I just go there.

C: Are you aware of the marketing efforts these shops make?

A: Nooo

C: No, so you don't know what they do about promoting their products in the shops are outside the shops?

A: No, I don't really notice there are advertisements or anything like that so no it's just about, where I see them, my experience in the shops

C: Ok, when do you usually buy your groceries?

A: I'm the kind of guy that buys his stuff you know like I don't plan for like a week or two, because as I said I have days when I may be home for like 2 days or 3 days a week and then I'm out somewhere else even though I work is going to visit someone stay at night at my friends or you know just weekends out somewhere else, but usually I buy my products in the evening after work or after my workouts or something like that you know?

C: How do you work? What's your working schedule then?

A: Again, my life is not really like you know perfectly planned out so my schedule right now is really chaotic sometimes because last year I was working basically normal hours kind of normal hours from 10 to 18.30 but now I switch to another position where I'm supposed to be there from maybe 2 or 3 to about you know as long as it takes and I have days when I'm there until like 11 some days I was there until 12 but on average it is like it's at 10 in the evening.

C: And what do you usually buy in the days when you buy things?

A: Well, when I just go and get something really quick like some chicken breast and then I just grill it and make it with a quick and then I have some pasta at home just boil it takes 5 minutes to boil it and then I get some tomatoes just to have some veggies in there and nothing really creative you know, nothing crazy, and if I want to make some sauce for the pasta maybe if I have

some time I got some tomatoes if you canned tomatoes as well, olive oil, few bacon pieces and all that so.

C: Do you eat out a lot?

A: If eating out means eating at your work if eating out means eating at your work, is that eating out at the canteen and if yes then I would say yeah

C: You eat at work?

A: Yea and then also outside the working the weekend I do tend to go out I like the buffets, or like a brunch so I do tend to go out in the weekend or maybe in the week as well if I'm too tired then I could grab a pizza from the local pizzeria so I do eat a few you know junk food you know like a burger or something like that.

C: You said you go to the gym and your schedule is chaotic? How often do you go to the gym or how much do train?

A: Uhhh, again it depends on the period, what's happening in my life right now like last year everything was more stable so I could follow a strict program and I could see the results and I was eating a bit more balanced if I could say so, but the last 3, 4 months it's quite a mess I just eat whenever I can you know, I don't really follow, I know it's bad for my workouts, it kind of suffers I can feel it, it's not the same anymore and I don't see the progress like I used to maybe because of my poor diet at the moment, you know, not so balanced, I just tried to fit it in sometimes.

C: What kind of training do you do? Is it like strength training?

A: Yea it's mostly strength, power training so yeah you definitely have to eat a lot if you want to have you know strength or build-up power and I know that's pretty bad but that's kind of my training I need to eat a lot of calories so usually I do tend to, in the day, I do tend to eat 4 to 5000 calories because I train everyday almost but my workout intensity has been going down for the last couple of months due to my work and due to my lifestyle in a way.

C: What about the social aspect of cooking? Do you cook together with friends or do you cook for friends?

A: Not really. I have maybe one friend that I do that with and sometimes it's just for fun, we do like we have some days where we just like let's juice, we buy some ginger and then some apples and we go all like this juice makes me so healthy and we do that for maybe like two three days and then we quit and then next month again so it's really rare when I cook with my friend like last time I was cooking with my friend we were making some chicken with some bullion, some

chicken breast with some cherry tomatoes and pretty much that was it and some carbs, some small bread pieces, you know, some crunchy bread, that's pretty much it.

C: So it doesn't happen very often?

A: No, not at all, I barely have time for myself to cook but cook with someone else and make fun of it noo

C: Now let's have a look at what you picked up in the shop today. Let's start with the juice, the pear juice. How did you decide to buy it?

A: Uhm..I really like, I'm not a fan of the sugary drinks like Coca-Cola or Fanta, but I do like this kind of stuff drinks you know just fruity pear juice and I really like my water with a bit of taste you know like some kind of fruit.

C: So you use it with water?

A: No not really you know this is not a syrup sometimes I buy syrup as well like softvand with pineapple taste or whatever, I like the fruit taste like kiwi or pineapple or apple or whatever

C: Is it's something that you were brought up with in your family?

A: No, no not really no it's just something I've discovered along my life that I love drinks with fruity taste like mango taste, I love mango juices, I love pear juices, kiwi and pineapple wow it's just amazing so I like those kind of drinks is nothing being influenced by my family or, I just love those drinks.

C: So it's a personal preference?

A: Yea, it's just a personal preference

C: How often do you buy it?

A: Well, I kind of find different type of juice every time I'm going to the shop I like to try them like if I see something I didn't try before I want to buy it and I'll try it and then I kind of have an idea which one I like most and which one tastes the best.

C: So every time you go to the shop you also pass the soda?

A: Yea, even though I'm not going to buy anything I'm just going to look a bit around, sometimes I buy this can the juices as well, I just want to have something like that I like lemon they have this fizzy sometimes I buy these fizzy ones the lemon taste one is really nice, something I like with a meal, to have a fruity drink or something like that.

C: What attracted you to this product in particular? What was it?

A: Well, I do drink a lot so this one was kind of the biggest as well, it's 1.5L and it's pear I did taste it a few months ago and I like to switch them around and I like to drink it cold with my food, it really helps the food go down you know.

C: Ok, so you drink it with a meal?

A: Yea, and sometimes I wake up in the night and I just want to even though I'm thirsty and I could have just some cold water, I just choose this one you know for the taste.

C: How did you find it in the supermarket was it easy for you to find it?

A: Like I said I didn't really look for this one I just tried it and I discovered that I love it and I'm just going to buy it again and again so it wasn't really difficult, you know they have like loads and loads, so I just chose this one because I remembered it even though I haven't seen it for a while but now it's back in the shop because sometimes they have these periods.

C: You mean like summer/seasonal?

A: I'm not sure how they do it but I remember I do know for a fact that I haven't seen it in a while so I was like "oh I do know this one and I haven't seen it in a bit so I'll just buy it"

C: What does it remind you of? Does it remind you of something?

A: No not really, just like I said I like fruity drink like pineapple, kiwi, watermelon juice I think that's amazing, lemon you know, but I don't like grape juice for example; I'm not crazy about apple juice or orange juice either.

C: Let's go to the next product you bought, this bacon and onion, potato snack pot from Knorr. How did you decide to buy it?

A: To be honest I just, I do like mashed potatoes because my mum used to make them so she made them in a different way obviously, I don't know how she did it but it was just an amazing taste, I don't know she put maybe some garlic and a little bit of milk I have no idea what the hell she was doing; my mum has her own recipe and it's just something from my family I guess, I like mashed potatoes and I saw this and I was like look I'm not going to go home and try and boil potatoes and try to do a mash, I was like ok I am just going to buy this, and pour some hot water, mix it up, 5 minutes is nice and good and put it on my plate with my chicken and it's done you know. Because how to get home very late you know I don't have time to... and if I say yeah let me make food for a week, 2 kilos of mashed potatoes and then reheat it and then reheat it and like come on you know, it might not be the healthiest choice but it's convenient it doesn't job I like the taste I'm not crazy about it but I like the taste, it got some bacon bits in it and I like bacon so yeah remind me of my mum's mashed potatoes, it's carbs, I feel full after it, it does its purpose you know.

C: How often do you buy it?

A: Sometimes they have different cups you know with carbonara or different sort of carbs so, same Knorr brand with different pots, like Bolognese, that's not good; but this one is like easy I also know that it's mashed potatoes, I don't know if it's mashed potatoes but at least it tastes like mashed potatoes, it's an easy decision.

C: And you told me how you use it.

A: With my food, yea

C: Is it something you used to before coming here? Did you use to have this kind of mashed potatoes at home?

A: Obviously as I said it was not the same there's my mother was making them entails from Romania I have no idea.

C: But she didn't buy them like this?

A: No, no, she would hang herself and not buy them like that you know.

C: But also there are periods where they have them, and periods where they don't have them so when I see them I usually buy like 5 or 8 of them you know, so yea.

C: I don't know if they have a different type of mashed potato in this shop but why did you choose this one?

C: I don't know if they have a different type of mashed potatoes in this shop but why did you choose this one?

A: No, they don't have a different one, I looked around, they have like 3-4 different kind of products, they have bacon-onion mashed potatoes, they have bolognese pasta, they got some other rice things, I tried that and that was not tasty and some other different pasta, pasta with carbonara. But the ones I prefer are pasta with carbonara and the bacon-onion mashed potatoes.

C: How did you find it in the supermarket? Was it easy to find?

A: Uhm...not really, I wouldn't say it was really easy, it was just like in a section where everything was just kind of thrown in there, they have this in the corner, all together, mixed up and I was like oh, cause I said I was just shopping late at night and I was just so tired but I knew I had to eat so then I bought this chicken and then I also want it something with it, you know I don't want to eat just bread, I don't want to also boil pasta and start making sauces at this hour, so then I saw "oh, they got this pot and you fill it up, ok this is convenient" I thought, but yea it was not really easy to find so once I found it I thought I need more of this.

C: Let's go further with the next product. We have this bacon, how did you decide to buy it?

A: Well, I do love bacon, you know, I know maybe it's not healthy or whatever, but I feel that it makes, it gives me the power I need when I work out, before I work out, I just buy different brands when I see them, it depends, for me of course quality is important, I don't just, I bought some bad bacon before and I just it's too much fat or you know, the quality is not there.

C: Ok, so how do you see the quality in bacon?

A: I just bought this type before, it's alright, I think it's a decent bacon, I just looked at the size of it and I was like ok, I could one pack of these, sometimes they have smaller packs and eat 2 or 3 packs on one go so I am like ok, this is not really practical for me so I decided to buy this one.. 'cause in the morning, when I do cook in the morning, I do eggs with bacon, so I love bacon.

C: How often do you buy it? Is it something you always have?

A: On a weekly basis almost, yea, I have it in my fridge, I think it's always there, I always have, emergency case.

C: So bacon is a staple in your kitchen?

A: I wouldn't really say, I don't want to say that I wouldn't go without it, I am just saying that I like it and I think it does me good until I see how much fat is in it, but yea I'll suffer for it later.

C: How do you use it? You said eggs and bacon? Do you also use it in different ways?

A: Yea, sometimes when I make a pasta sauce, I just put some bacon on a pan, and cook them and then chop them up in smaller bits and throw them in the tomato sauce you know, add some garlic, crush it in and then a bit of olive oil and fresh tomatoes as well, chopped up; I also sometimes, when I feel like I am hungry I make chicken with bacon on top of the chicken.

C: I can imagine bacon goes with everything

A: Yea, sometimes I can put also like honey, you should try that. Put a bit of honey on the bacon, I think it stays, I don't know, some fresh bread and some bacon there with a bit of honey, uh, it's just amazing.

C: Is it something specific to your country or to your family to eat bacon?

A: Hmm...not necessarily, my dad doesn't really, he's not a fan of bacon, he likes meat products; my mum is also not a big fan of it, but we do have like a culture of having a lot of meat in the fridge you know, all sorts of, including pig obviously, my dad always gives me also bacon obviously, but it's different in Romania than the bacon that is here, of course I eat bacon when I am there and he cooks for me and yea it is, something also I got from my parents.

C: Was it hard to find in the supermarket?

A: No, definitely not, because I think in Denmark is also part of the culture thing, they are really big consumers of bacon in Denmark, they love their bacon, so no, not at all and I obviously know where to go and I don't think I've ever see them running out of bacon, like sorry we don't have bacon today, so I think it's like Danes with their butter and bacon, it's always there you know.

C: Do you always buy this one?

A: No, no, it depends, sometimes they have some offers, like I said you can buy maybe like 3-packs for 30kr, so then I am like why not, just throw it in there.

C: Do you also look at price and quality? You just said that yes

A: Yes, yes

C: Is it something else that you look at at bacon?

A: Quantity

C: You don't look for ecological?

A: No, I am not at all into that ecological bacon thing you know like come on, just give me a break, ecological pigs are happy and on the field and...the farmer was singing for them and petting them and playing sports, I don't know I have no idea, and I don't care anyway...too much information

C: Now the rotisserie chicken, the already cooked chicken. How did you decide to buy that one?

A: Uhm, like I said, it's all about the shop I go to and today we went to Fotex and they're the only shop that I know of that has this rotisserie section where they have flaeskesteg, meatballs or fish fillets or rotisserie chickens and every time I am there the smell just hits me you know, so actually you saw me I was kind of debating should I buy the 50kr 1 kg of chicken breast or almost the same price one full rotisserie chicken and I was just weak today and lazy and it's Sunday so I just decided to buy the rotisserie chicken because I want to be lazy today.

C: Do you also buy different products from their already cooked section?

A: No, not really I think, if they don't have chicken there I just don't buy anything else like I'm not a fan of the meatball things or or the flaeskesteg, I mean flaeskesteg is good now and then, I love it it's tasty now and then, but every time I eat it after, the next day I am just like weah, I am dying, it's too heavy I think for me but yeah if I was in another shop with you now I think I would have just bought normal chicken like a 500g pack so it's just a decision on the moment as soon as I know I'm going to eat it, I know it's going to taste good, I bought it before I was not disappointed by it, it tastes great, I know it's barbecue it as well, marinated and all that it smells great, it's fresh and hot, it's juicy, it's good protein.

C: How often do you buy it then?

A: Well it depends on when I'm going to Fotex and it's not really often because when I finish work no Fotex is open and I'm not going to buy rotisserie chicken at 8 in the morning you know.

C: Is that because you're only doing the shopping when you're off work?

A: And also I wouldn't buy maybe rotisserie chicken when it's all dried up and not fresh anymore because they do have those in the section` the ones that they don't sell that just put them in the other section but it's not the same so it's something like if I bought it I want to eat it in the next 5 to 6 hours

C: Alright so you need to run home and eat a chicken?

A: No, I don't need to run home but you know what I mean

C: How do you use it? How do you eat it?

A: To be honest with you I'm just like Barbarian, I just open it up and I'll start eating with my hands I just focus on it you know, the chicken and I need as much as I can from it sometimes I finish it all full chicken in one meal sometimes I finish like 80% of it so I keep the rest for a bit later who are put the rest of the meat in some other dish, put it on the pan fry a bit, warm it up put some eggs in there, mix it up, it becomes like kind of an omelette with chicken bits in there put a bit of salt and then there you go

C: Is it something you used to have before you move to Denmark?

A: Rotisserie chicken? Yes, my dad, he was a fan of buying this like rotisserie chicken he was just like mesmerized and also I think I picked it up from him because every time we went in Romania they have all these big shops and you know, you always have the stands where they have rotisserie chicken rotisserie this rotisserie that, and it's a different smell the smell of it my dad was just a fan of it, he was like give me 2 chickens like that and this and this, so when he came home it was like screw all the good food we have the rotisserie stuff so... not always but every now and then if he saw something he like you would just, "I want a rotisserie chicken and he bought two" and also garlic dips because we like garlic a lot so chicken, fresh chicken barbecued and with garlic sauce it's just like mmmm.

C: So you can say that this is something you picked up from your parents from your country and you brought here with you to Denmark?

A: Well, to some degree yes, but I also love chicken, I like it, sometimes it can be too much when it's just dry and no taste but I can make a sauce out of it and just put it in there, like I said I work

out so you know the quality of the meat is very important for me sometimes, I don't just buy any kind of chicken sometimes you know.

C: What do you mean by that?

A: Sometimes they have this, you know I'm very careful with the chicken I buy, like if it expires in two days or one day then I'm reluctant you know, I have this feeling that it might have something and I don't want to risk it with the chicken, I want to be very careful and also how much fat is in it how much water retention, I just want as much of the meat as I can you know, so yea. So...yea, I think my dad influenced me on the rotisserie part of things but also because it's practical like I said I don't buy every day I buy it once every two weeks when I have the time to go to Fotex and if it's there then I do pick it up I do take it because I know I'm going to eat it. But most of the days I told you, I get up kind of early, go to the gym, I don't have time ok let me go to Fotex and I'll buy rotisserie chicken, then go to work with a rotisserie chicken in my bag you know I'm not gonna, I'm not that crazy and you know and then when I go back home then it's closed, they don't have any more chickens.

C: Ok.. should we go to the next product?

A: Yes

C: These cherry tomatoes that you bought today, how did you decide to buy them?

A: Uhhh...I think I just knew for a long time that... since I came to Denmark I kind of been a bit not so careful with my healthy eating like vegetables

C: What do you mean by that?

A: I haven't been taking enough vegetables in my diet I think

C: Why do you think that?

A: Just because I don't, I don't know, back home my parents used to own a restaurant, and I always used to get like maybe the best of the vegetables and the most fresh ones and I was used to that but here I was looking in the shops when about the vegetables here, and it just didn't taste as fresh and as good and I just thought like oh, this is not the same you know, I just noticed right away so even though they are ecologic, more expensive I just thought that they didn't compare to what was home, maybe it's just in my head maybe it's better here, but I don't know even to this day when I taste the tomatoes here, they are not the same like back home there is no flavor, I'm not saying they're bad, I'm just saying that it's like I'm eating sometimes apples and that shouldn't be the sound of eating a tomato; so that's definitely something because as I said I like Bolognese sauce sometimes you know I don't like the Bolognese canned pasta, but I do like the Bolognese sauce that my mum makes and she uses some tomatoes my dad always

bought tomatoes, fresh tomatoes from the market, from the peasant, the farmers actually, haha, and my grandma used to have the same like when you go to the market do not buy the big round colorful ones and the best ones because those are not the best just buy the smaller ones there was a little bit more weird, those are the ones that are being brought up healthy and from the ground with time and those are the ones that are most healthiest, so I think it kind of stuck in my head you know and also some tomatoes if you put some salt on them, my dad used to do that, I do that as well, do tastes really good and I did find a brand here that this brand and actually the cherry tomatoes they do have some sort of flavor to them and I was like a bit impressed like uuu they actually taste a bit like something so I was like yeah I'm going to stick to this brand and I know they're are in this bucket thing you know the small one and it's 20 kroner, it's not expensive it's quick and I can always eat them like nothing and it compensates a bit healthy price-wise and taste-wise, brings back home a bit so yeah

C: So, can you say that the tomatoes are something you use in your country and it's something that reminds you of your country or your family?

A: Yea, to some degree, yea I do agree that it does remind me a bit of my home, like I said my dad always bought tomatoes and cut them up and with salt and they smelled, I can still remember the feeling and the smell I don't know, it's just in my head like when I smell it I'm like oh that's fresh tomatoes, like with a cucumber as well actually.

C: Do you buy cucumbers here?

A: No, not really, it's rare, it's only in Romania, here is like I'm eating a bit of plastic or something sometimes, I don't know maybe I'm not buying from the right places, maybe I should go to a market, where there're actually Farmers and sell them, but again when the hell do I have the time to go to the market to buy the fresh tomatoes...and in the season and all that, yea it's a bit difficult I think so I'm like neah, leave the cucumbers alone, only if I make a salad then I'll be more a bit like ok, let's see which one

C: I can see you haven't bought other fruits and vegetables today is it because you don't eat them or because you already have them or because of what?

A: Uhhh... I do buy something I think the top vegetables I buy are avocado, is that a vegetable? I like avocado it tastes good, I like it, I like it on toast it's great, I like it in my salad, but I do buy some spinach now and then, I buy mushrooms I use them, I put them in my omelet

C: So it just happened that you didn't buy them today?

A: Yea just today, I definitely don't buy them maybe enough, as often as I should but depends again a lot, I do eat them.

C: We have the pasta left now, how did you decide to buy this pasta?

A: Barilla pasta? Uhhh...actually it's funny, my parents like I said own an Italian restaurant so some of the suppliers for my parents were actually Italians coming every month maybe and bringing different products and pasta and prosciutto and different meats and different stuff and they used to come by my parents place and they used to discuss OK how much you want for this, like olive oil, negotiate a bit, because it was cheap obviously and we needed good stuff, and they decided and I remember they were buying this Barilla pasta you know, sometimes, and I remember that also when I was going to church, when I was in Romania the priest, I'm not sure how, he had I think in his deposit or something downstairs storage he had like loads of Barilla pasta and I was like what the hell I think it was something because the priest also gives out to families if they need it, so they had from Italy connections with the church in Italy, with the Catholic Church; and of course he was so good he was giving me like here you go Andrei, here's some pasta, I was like ok priest thank you, you know. So, it reminds me a bit of the church, and the restaurant, of course an Italian restaurant so obviously there was quite a bit of pasta in my time you know so I remember this brand, there were also others but this one is one of the brands I remember, and I think it's good and I like it, it reminds me a bit of home and pasta is important.

C: Ok, how often do you buy it?

A: I always have it home, it's not like missing because you know, like I said it's sometimes easy, it is easy to make, just boiling water, 5 minutes, it's boiled, done, take it out, make a quick sauce and like I said I need the carbs for my workouts, I need energy, I need the source of energy so I think they do the purpose, remind me a bit of home, the restaurant, my parents, church and I like pasta obviously so yea

C: And you told me over and over again how you use it, like the bacon and all that

A: There's always something you can do with pasta.

C: Ok, and now I know what attracted you to this product in particular, how hard was it to find it in supermarket?

A: Well, obviously I kind of knew where the section for pasta was, so I was just looking around, see which one, kind of like, there are quite a few brands that I've never heard of, I was looking a bit like..are they the fuldkorn ones or ecological ones I'm like neah, so I was like uhm ok I know this one, and it reminds me of something so ok, I get this one; there were like 2 brands that I knew, I forgot what the other one was but this one stood up, I know this one!

C: Because you know the brand and you're familiar with it?

A: And plus it's not that big effort and I was like, yea it is a bit more expensive but sometimes, it depends on how often I eat it, I don't eat pasta every day so it does last me for a while, yea it's double the price, but what does double mean, it's like 20kroner?

C: Yea, it was like 19kroner

A: 19 and normal pasta is like 8 kroner a kilo maybe, this is not a kilo, it depends how you see it but of course

C: So price is not that important?

A: If I ate it every day maybe I would be a bit more careful, like I need maybe to buy a cheaper brand cause why not, and it's more pasta...but I eat it often but not every day so it does last me for a while.

C: Now that we finished with the products I have a couple of more questions for you. You said that you eat from work, what do you usually eat from work, what meals or what food do you usually have there?

A: Yea, actually, well, the owner of the canteen he's something Middle Eastern from Jordan I think, so obviously he's not really making Danish food, he does few interesting kind of dishes sometimes, some sort of pasta with different spices and different vegetables and stuff I've never tasted and I'm like...sometimes I decide ok I'm not going to eat there today or sometimes I'm like oh, I know they have some chicken or some rice or they have more simple, ok, I know this, and sometimes they have great stuff some sort of like pickled stuff you know and I was like oh, ok because we have that back home as well so I know that, they have some kind of beef in whatever sauce they have it with some sort of side dish and it's interesting and it tastes really good and I feel good but sometimes they have these like really spicy sort of fish or something like that and I'm like aarh, I don't know about that, so I am not eating that, spicy food or extremely spicy sort of pasta thing, I am like neeaah, no thank you.

C: Do the others eat it?

A: No, not really, I mean I don't eat if I don't like it, I am not going to eat it.

C: Do you only have 1 main meal at work?

A: Yes

C: Ok, so you don't have like a buffet..

A: No, you kind of have to be lucky on the day to get something decent you know, I am not saying it's not good, maybe for them is great, but just for my taste, I'm just aarh, I don't know

C: And what do you do when you have something like that that you don't like?

A: If I'm really hungry... but sometimes I do have in my bag some kind of peanuts with cashews or like I said the mashed potatoe thing, I just take a break, make some hot water, and eat it quick but I don't always take it, some peanuts some nuts in a bag I have some juice as well with me maybe a Snickers bar, but I know it's not really good for me so... but in the same time I might get something that it's not even as good I will order a takeout from the guys from the office and sometimes they get pizza or pizza sandwich or a burger and then I kind of fall into temptation, I get also like a pizza or a burger; I kind of have to do something, I need the calories, I can't just work, on an empty stomach sometimes so I have to give in to the temptation.

C: That makes sense, ok, going back to the supermarkets, what do you miss from the Romanian supermarkets?

A: Well, it's a lot of things maybe, but I cannot really put them together, for instance the dessert, like the desserts in Denmark from my point of view, are not that tasty, if anything, they don't put an effort I think. Maybe they just like them like that, simple and flavorless, I don't know, maybe for them they're great, but for me they are the most simple not tasty thing ever you know, so definitely they don't have eclairs, even the one that I didn't like in Romania which was a "Savarina", I didn't like that but now I miss it, cause even that was good, they have all sorts of desserts back home you know, cremeschnitte, even the Turkish baklava that they make like I went to a Turkish shop here and they got baklava, but my mum used to make it with honey and nuts and you know, and when and I bought it in a "proper" shop I was like uh, this is not what I expected, it's definitely not the one my mum used to make back home, so I'm like yea..shiit. So I miss the desserts my mum used to make them home or that you could find in the shops as well and sometimes yea the products like the meat products like the pork, the sausages with garlic, I know we make, even the garlic is different back home, like a different taste the flavor is intense, you can smell it the moment open, it can smell it's like buff, it smells so good and it just like hits me, like this is great, and I garlic in my pizza or my bread or like stuff like that. So it's definitely, of course, I miss a few things you're not but it's not like I'm crazy, it's not so bad, I'm not in the Middle East let's say where I can't find what I want. There are few Romanian shops, and they kind of compensate for that you know.

C: What do you buy from the Romanian shops?

A: I don't go there too often, actually I think I've been there, funny enough you ask me that because the second time I went there was yesterday, and just by accident I passed by and I saw the Romanian flag and I was like what's this, and then I see flags everywhere, so oh a Romanian shop, so I just bought some like Romanian pretzels and pufuleti, so some snacks that kind of remind of home and even Romanian beer, even though I am not a beer guy, and I don't know when I'll be back, I'm just going to buy it you know cause the beer is different, I am not a big

beer drinker but I know there's a difference you know, and I was like, I was with some friends, I thought I was going to buy some so they can try it, I was with some Spanish friends, they always give me some of their wine or Sangria and I said I'm gonna give you some Romanian beer.

C: Did they like it?

A: Yea, yea, they definitely said oh it's different and it's tasty, they loved it, they finished it really quick I was like waw, you really liked it, I should have bought some more but...yea I buy some beers, some snacks, obviously they don't have all the things, the proper meat and all that but the things that remind me of home and my childhood, they kind of have those, so I am happy...that's why I buy it from there.

C: The last set of questions is about the service in the supermarket, do you have any positive or negative experience?

A: Well...I am not really sure what to say about that, service, they just do their job, I think they're alright, it's not really much to say about it, I didn't have questions really, if I have questions then they answer them, they're ok. I think they're just doing their jobs you know.

C: One last thing, is there something else you would like to add about your experience with food in Denmark and how your food habits changed?

A: My experience with food, I will never understand this thing with Danes and their hot dogs like the huge hot dog and tiny bread, I'm like...how does that work... when I'm thinking about a hot dog I'm thinking about having a good piece of bread as well I can't have the hot dog sticking out you know and they always take pride in their hotdogs and also big taste waiting nothing it's like plastic, what are you talking about, they have these stands everywhere and I don't know...there are too many kebab shops around...far too many and I think there should be a bigger variety of takeouts, of food, like yea, they are cheap but they are not healthy, I'd rather have more maybe Thai small places you know, like take something quick like Chinese or even Italian small places where you can get something real quick, not just shaormas and kebabs and fake Italian pizzas, it happened to me a couple of times, Italian flags everywhere and then I see kebab in the pizza menu, come on man, that's not Italian at all.

C: Thank you very much then.

## Appendix 6: Shuhan's interview transcription

C: Hi and thank you for joining me today, let's start. I would like to start by asking you your name if you could tell me that, and your age.

S: My name is Shuhan, I am from China, and I've been living in China for 18,19,20 years, and I've been living in the States for 2 years and my age is 22.

C: And how long have you been living in Denmark?

S: 6 months, 7 months, yea

C: Why did you come to Denmark?

S: I came here for an internship, so far work, right now I'm working in a designing firm

C: So you came for an internship and you continued working for them.

S: Yes

C: Where do you usually buy your groceries? Like every day food items?

S: Wherever it's close to my apartment so basically Netto, Fakta

C: And why do you shop in these shops in particular? You said because they are close to

S: I think so I will choose to go to a place where I could buy not just food but everything else so I can buy everything in one place.

C: What do you mean by everything?

S: Do you know...tissues, napkins, all the laundry stuff, showering stuff...

C: Ok, are you aware of what the specific supermarkets you buy from stand for? Like what their marketing strategy is and how do they differentiate themselves from other supermarkets?

S: Uhm...I think you mean between different chains of supermarkets...I really don't know actually...I mean here because it's Denmark but I know what happened in the States, do you think I can refer to that part?

C: Yes of course

S: I think that for Denmark I can sense that there's a homogeneity between Fakta and Netto but that's very personal, just what I think...out in the States you know Whole Foods and Eataly and whatever...I think they have Eataly here but like these and some others and also 7/11 and also Food Market, there's a brand called Food Market, so they have a very different range because people who go there and buy things, the stuff are different you know...for people with a lower income they all go to a cheap supermarket, for people who have money and for people who live in Manhattan, they always go to Whole Food or Eataly so I haven't noticed this kind of situation here in Denmark, I feel like probably there should have this kind of differentiation because you can tell the environment and decoration in the price. I think Netto is probably the cheapest one, I don't know I'm not sure, I think it's cheap for me I was by a little bit of stuff every time, is it cheap to me and I always go and also because it's close to where I live.

C: But are you aware of the marketing effort that they do? Are you aware about advertising like in the newspaper they have every week and offers and discounts?

S: Ok, first of all I don't read newspapers in Denmark because I don't know Danish

C: But it's like a small offer newspaper

S: Yea, I understand because they have that; I don't read that, but while I was in the States, even though I understand the language I don't read that, probably because very busy at school in the States so I don't have that energy and time to do that, but I feel like if I understand that I probably would read it, and based on how much time I have on my own I probably would be able to read that for some purpose C: Ok, when do you usually buy your groceries?

S: That really depends. Sometimes, actually most of the times when I get off work and weekends, basically that's the time, that doesn't mean that I have a regular time to go every week, so it really depends.

C: What do you usually buy then?

S: Uhhh, my own diet is more like half-veggie, half-meat so I always buy the fresh veggie I want to eat now or for the next 2 days but I will always get some meat and that's quite a lot so I can use it for like 2 weeks, and sometimes I'll get crazy and insane and I'll buy a lot of stuff and cook a pot of stuff and say that I will eat this for the next week that kind of also happens a lot

C: Do you eat out?

S: Yes, a lot actually..

C: When and why?

S: Uhhh... there are several kind of situations. First of all is like when me and my friends are out, or when I feel like I want to eat kebab so I order takeout, that depends on whether do I want to cook or not so most of that time I just don't want to go; and sometimes I just go outside wandering around and I would eat out as well because I won't come back and cook.

C: Ok, what about breakfast and lunch?

S: I eat my breakfast at work because there is like a fruit and leftover bread and butter so you can always find a cheap breakfast that will not cost you any money...by cheap I mean is not the fancy kind

C: I understand. And lunch?

S: Lunch...at work everyday

C: What do you cook when you usually cook?

S: Basically half veggie half meat, I always..I mean I'm trying to be convenient so I always just cook some meat and then fry the veggie with that or...I think that's the only pattern that I have right now or I will cook some Chinese food and then I would go to the Chinese market and buy a bunch of stuff and come back and cook and eat for a week.

C: Ok, you said you go to the Chinese supermarket, is it very different than what you find in a regular Danish supermarket?

S: Yes, of course because I think if you go to something like, if you're comparing it to Danish supermarket and some Italian supermarket like Eataly, they could be a little bit similar but Chinese it's like...it's so different because the culinary culture is very very different; so I need to go there because there are lot of specific things.

C: Now let's have a look at what you bought today, let's start with the bacon, how did you decide to buy the bacon?

S: Because, like I said I need some more flavour meat to go with my veggie so yea I think yea, I just bought a big chunk and like we said in the supermarket is cheaper than the other one.

C: How often do you buy bacon like this?

S: This is the first time ever in my life when I buy a big chunk of bacon because I found it and it's something I've never bought before, and I want to try it.

C: So did you buy it because you never bought it before or because you know exactly what you're going to use it for?

S: Yea, I know exactly what I am going to use it for because I used the same one but it's the first time I buy a big chunk of bacon because I always...I mean they sell bacon in China as well, I guess

people just think that is something foreign for sure...and it's always the same one, but I've never bought a big chunk

C: That's one more step closer to becoming Danish, buying a big chunk of bacon.

S: But I don't think they have that in the American supermarket, like a big chunk...I haven't seen it before

C: Is this bacon something you used before, but you just said that it's your first time, but you bought bacon before, how did you use it before?

S: It's the same...just fried it, just to get some oil out of bacon and also use the oil to fry veggies and also I made eggs once and then I used bacon, that's the only time I used bacon differently.

C: What does bacon remind you of? Does it remind you of something?

S: Yes, western culture, haha; I mean I really liked bacon when I was a kid so that's like very foreign stuff, it's not like it's very Chinese, and it was quite expensive when I was a child and I had to beg my parents to buy it because they don't know how to cook.

C: So bacon is something foreign?

S: Yea, it's definitely something foreign in China.

C: And you came in contact with it when you were a child? But it was like a novelty item?

S: Yes

C: And now coming back to the Western world, you buy much more bacon?

S: Not much more..

C: Much more than you used to get when you were at home..

S: I mean...yea, but when I was...I mean there's different times in life; when I was really like a child because well at that time everything from foreign is quite expensive, so I didn't buy that a lot. I think that when I grew a little bit older I bought...when I was a little bit older and still in China I think I bought the bacon with the same frequency that I bought outside of China

C: Ok, but you didn't buy as often as you used the normal types of meat you have back in China, the ones you grew up with in your family?

S: What? I am sorry

C: Was bacon a staple in your family?

S: No, definitely not

C: That's what I meant

S: But I don't think pork is staple in my family, because my family is more into chicken, but pork is also...so if I use bacon, I probably would use it as pork, like chop it up and fry the oil out of that and it goes with veggie because it's more flavor and nicer

C: Ok, let's go further to this avocado that you bought. Why did you buy it?

S: Because I saw you one time eating avocado, so I was like, ok probably I should eat some avocado and I bought it; because I am not a super fan of avocado, but sometimes just you know...I have bread and probably I should use some vegetarian oil source which probably could be healthier for my body and I saw you were eating it and I was like ok you remind me that I should buy avocados.

C: Do you buy it often?

S: No, certainly not

C: How do you use it?

S: So I eat it with bread, that's it.

C: Is it something that you used to buy back home in China?

S: No, definitely not; because I think when I grew up there was no avocado, at all...and it got a little bit popular recently because of someone thinking it's healthy, but when it got popular I left China, so I've never...actually I think this is my second time buying avocado

C: Ok, does it remind you of something?

S: Salad...or Mexican, or Western-Japanese fusion

C: I mean...well I assume that they eat a lot more avocado, don't they, in Japan?

S: No, I don't think so

C: Isn't avocado something you have to have in sushi?

S: No, actually that's why I said "western infusion" because they definitely don't have avocado in Japanese sushi, the reason why they use avocado in sushi is because of the California roll, that's American style

C: Ok, let's go to the next product, we have this cucumber, why did you choose this cucumber?

S: Cucumber in general is like I can fry egg with cucumber

C: You fry egg and cucumber?

S: Yea, but not like deep fry, fried in a pan, I guess it's a Chinese thing, but it tastes really nice.

C: That I've never heard about, I am sorry

S: Haha, you're facing a different culture

C: Yea I can see that...so you bought it to fry it with eggs?

S: No frying, you just scramble some eggs and then put cucumber in it, then it's done; cook for a while and that's it, put some salt in. Yea because in China, we don't actually use raw cucumber a lot, we eat it, but not a lot so we actually eat like cooked cucumber.

C: Sorry that's a bit strange to me cause I've never had cooked cucumber in my life.

S: I mean also in Japan, do you know tempura, they also fry, you can get deep fried cucumber

C: I thought they fry other vegetables

S: They fry cucumber, sweet potato, avocados...I mean avocado is a very American thing, and also broccoli and cauliflower, and onion.

C: Ok, is the way you eat cucumber something you used to do before coming to Denmark?

S: Mhmm, yea

C: What attracted you to this product, why did you decide to buy this cucumber?

S: Isn't that the only cucumber they had in the supermarket?

C: No...I have to tell you, it's because it's the ecological one

S: Aarrh...but to be honest I think ecological or not I think it's really not my concern... like always. I don't know why, because I am not saying I don't believe in ecological stuff or not but I think if ...because I know how to grow vegetables, we used to grow vegetables; my parents, I don't know, they probably have time, free time, so they grew vegetables in the garden or in the balcony, so we know that it's an ecological one if you don't want to use any fertilizer or whatever, you have to do it yourself, you know, the human work is going to be heavy, and I don't think they can do mass production on this kind of thing so I always don't...100% to me believe that; I am not saying that I am avoiding buying that and I don't differentiate, I just buy ...

C: Because I could see in the shop that they had 3 different types of cucumbers

S: Really? I only saw this one

C: So they had this one, the organic one, then they had the one from Spain, without an ecological mark and now they have these spring cucumbers that are produced in Denmark, that have the Danish flag

S: Ok, I didn't know

C: So you're not familiar with the eco-brand?

S: You mean the Ø-go? I thought that's a brand?

C: That's Netto's brand of organic products

S: Oh you mean this one with the flag and the leaf...I really don't know but yea, good to know, but I won't differentiate it.

C: How did you find it in the supermarket? Was it hard to find, was it easy to find?

S: I think all those chains supermarkets they have like, they have a very psychologically way of arranging the supermarket so there's separate sections

C: What does cucumber remind you of? Does it remind you of something in particular?

S: I don't know...something weird, dirty...I mean there's a lot of jokes about cucumber haha, that's what I can think of, I am sorry

C: And do you eat the cucumber in any other way besides frying it with eggs?

S: I mean if I am hungry and there's nothing to eat like I finished all of my food then I will probably just eat the cucumber.

C: How did you use to have cucumbers back home?

S: Prepared? just chopped up

C: Now the eggplant, how did you decide to buy it?

S: I didn't plan it, I saw it and bought it

C: How often do you buy it?

S: Not really often, because I think I am not really fond of eggplant. If it's cooked well I really like it, I think probably I have some bad memories about it when I was a child. You know when it didn't cook through, it tastes really bad, like something like dishwasher and bitter and yea...

C: And you remember eating it like that when you were a child?

S: Yea, that's why.

C: Why do you think it was like that?

S: I think it's because people don't cook it properly, like didn't cook it through, there's still some raw inside

C: How do you plan on using it? On preparing it?

S: I'm just going to fry it with bacon

C: Eggplant and bacon, ok. Is it something specific to your country?

S: No, not at all; it's just, there is something special to my country that they kind of have a lot of great dishes with eggplant, but I am just doing this 'cause I can do it fast so bacon is something with flavor and will pan-fry the eggplant and put some chinese sauce in it.

C: Ok. Let's go to the next product, eggs. How did you decide to buy the eggs?

S: 'cause they were cheap

C: They were cheap?

S: Are the cheapest ones?

C: I don't think these are the cheapest ones.

S: Ok, I think there is a very very important reason why I buy eggs, it's based on what the box looks like

C: Yea...what does this box look like?

S: I think I'm very fond of, I don't know where this kind of feeling comes from but I am very fond of recycled paper in brown-ish pack so that's why I choose, I never choose that kind of one with plastic bag because it looks not very ecological but I don't care about it; I always feel like brown, recycled paper wrapping always feels better and modern

C: So is it because you know that this is recycled paper or you think?

S: Yea, I know it's recycled paper because I work in the same sort of field so I'm quite familiar with this kind of product, like paper, printing

C: Ok, because I don't think it says here that it's recycled paper

S: No, it's definitely recycled because the way they make this is for... and they have to recycle the paper and wet them and make them into some sort of batter and then dry them and turn them into recycled paper.

C: So you bought these eggs because of the packaging?

S: Yes.

C: Ok.

S: I mean, if the avocado is wrapped by wrong bag paper and there's another bag of avocados like in a brown bag, I am definitely buying the brown bag with them.

C: That's very interesting.

S: Haven't you seen those ecological-friendly or healthier salad shops?

C: Like the waste free?

S: Yea, yea they always do that, it's sort of...I mean in the designing perspective, design wise they always do that because actually people will feel better about the branding and wrapping so that's why they use that and that's why I instinctively and professionally know I should buy that

C: So you didn't care about the fact that they are 10 eggs or the fact that it's ecological and it says here Danish, and it has a Danish flag.

S: I don't care about all of those. First of all, as I said I don't understand Danish...

C: Yea but it says here Dansk, that's like the first word

S: But you know when you feel like you know that you don't understand a word or the language you sort of, when you are entering the, at least for Danish supermarkets I did the same, when I enter in there I sort of back-out my language use, I just focus on the image I see like that's eggs, then I will buy eggs, but I won't buy eggs because it says that...so if there's something like you know like all those cans, I'm never buying any canned food in Denmark because I don't know what's happening in there and I don't buy any sauce unless I have to buy a sauce because I don't know what kind of sauce they are.

C: Ok. How often do you buy eggs?

S: That really depends, sometimes I eat a lot because I use eggs sort of as a substitute to meat, I am not craving for meat like always and egg is easy to cook so if I cook like a lot then I will buy them a lot but sometimes just like I will have more meat and probably I will buy less eggs, every 2 weeks a box of 10 eggs

C: How do you use them?

S: Normally scrambled eggs and probably sometimes sunny side, but not very often because I don't cook breakfast home anymore.

C: And you associate that with breakfast?

S: Yees, sunny side is my breakfast. But I don't have breakfast at home anymore so I don't cook that anymore...like a lot. I used to have it quite some times, and while I lived in the States I had to cook for myself before going to school and I had a lot of eggs, I could have like a dozen of eggs for 3 or 4 days.

C: Ok, how did you used to cook eggs back in China?

S: I think it's the same, scrambled eggs with cucumber or yea, or also I mean at home we used to do that a lot, the egg-soup, with vegetables or with beef we would do an egg-soup

C: Do you plan on making an egg-soup here?

S: No, because I don't like drink soup, so I don't make soup at all

C: So you were forced to have it at home, sort of

S: Sort of to say like at home there's a lot of people, like 3 or 4 and then you would make some pan-fried food and something stew and then soup and some vegetables

C: Was it hard to find the eggs in the supermarket?

S: I mean, at first it is, to me, at first, because I totally don't know why they keep eggs in the same place as they keep milk and yoghurt, that's weird to me and I don't know what the door is for you know that there are always doors in front of the milk shelf and yoghurt shelf and I don't understand why because they don't have that in the States

C: To keep the cold air inside...so they don't waste energy

S: Aaarh, really, I thought they're...I think that's why because in the States they don't have that at all, they just have the shelves, different kind of shelves

C: But I think it also depends on the supermarket, cause some supermarkets don't have the doors but they have a different type of refrigerating system where the cold goes inside while at Netto I think they have to.

C: Do eggs remind you of something?

S: Not really, eggs remind me of scrambled eggs

C: Ok, now we have the plums. How did you decide to buy the plums?

S: I mean first of all I like plums, but sometimes plums really depend on their freshness and whether it's good or not; I think this batch is really good, that's why I bought a lot; it's the second time I buy this a lot, the last time I bought it was yesterday and they were good

C: How often do you buy plums then?

S: That really depends, because if they are fresh plums I'll keep buying them til they taste bad you know; until the batch of plums that they have in the supermarket doesn't taste good anymore, that's when I'll stop. So that's a very seasonal way of purchasing

C: I don't know if these plums have anything seasonal in them

S: Yea, but probably they are growing in the greenhouse but you know....but they don't always have this in Netto

C: I think I've always seen them

S: Ok...so probably I missed it for several times, or maybe until I get bored of this. I'll probably keep buying every day or every second day until I get bored of it

C: How do you consume them?

S: Just eat it like I am doing right now

C: As a snack or dessert?

S: Snack, more like a snack

C: Is it something you used to do before coming to Denmark?

S: Yea, like always, since I grew up,

C: Did you use to have plums back in China?

S: Yea, a lot

C: The same type of plums?

S: Not the same type, I don't think because they're definitely not the same type and I think they are probably the same species, but probably there's a species variation

C: Now I have a couple of questions about the Danish supermarket. What do you miss from the Chinese supermarkets?

S: Everything!

C: And you think it's a big difference?

S: Yea, it's a big difference, see if I need, I mean normally for convenience and daily basis, I can't go to the chinese supermarket in Copenhagen every time I want something

C: Why not?

S: Because it's far away and I'm lazy...not really far away, it's behind Central Station but I mean like...

C: Ok, what do you think is the same in Denmark as the Chinese supermarkets?

S: I think everything is different, literally everything is different, like probably some of the fruit are the same, but they are sold differently, like in China they sell them by weight but here they sell them by pieces; I think fruit is probably the most similar, common between the Chinese, American and Danish market. Except for that I think comparing Chinese and American and Danish, Chinese eggs sell differently, meat sellss differently, people won't buy meat in the supermarket while they are in China. They would buy meat in the food market, so yea that's different. There's like food markets where there are a lot of vendors so they don't really buy that in the supermarket...at least my parents and grandparents they don't think it's fresh in the supermarket, and you can buy live things from the Chinese supermarket, not like here everything is dead, everything is processed from meat factory, so everything is processed in the supermarket

C: Why do you mean by live things?

S: I mean definitely like the pigs are dead, but you can buy alive chicken

C: Did you use to buy alive chicken? Like your parents used to?

S: Yea, a lot actually, not a lot but, you buy a live chicken, you have to kill it yourself, so they would buy a lot of chicken outside, and the people would kill them for them and in China I mean, in the supermarket here they sell different parts of the chicken, like they sell a bunch of chicken wings but they don't do that in China, I mean normally people won't buy that because they don't think it's fresh, but that it's frozen stuff you know, so they normally buy a whole chicken that comes from the head to the toe...and it also depends on what you're going to eat because we eat chicken head as well, and we love chicken feet, so you know we don't throw them away and only buy the chicken that come without head and feet

C: I understand what you mean but I don't think I've ever seen chicken feet in Denmark

S: Really? I've seen it in the Chinese supermarket

C: Yea? But not like in the normal supermarket

C: Ok, what about the service in the Danish supermarket, do you have any experience, the way you are served or

S: I think, I mean most of them were self-service, I mean I do ask for service probably to kind of say that I am looking for something but I don't understand Danish

C: And how did they respond?

S: They respond well...I mean there's also a problem because all those supermarkets, they don't always have people there, they probably only have 1 staff as a cashier and probably they cannot go away so...I think that's why probably then I have to ask someone else and if there's something else that I want

C: What about the food culture so to say? What do you understand by food culture and how do you see food culture differently here than where you come from?

S: Food culture? I think the way people eat here and in America are quite similar and I mean in traditional Chinese we eat like sharing, we're like sharing a plate so you have to use chopsticks to pick it up, so, and the way we cook, we tend to cut everything to pieces, we slice everything basically, not like in the States where you have potato in a bowl and you have chunks of chicken breast which is in a whole piece, we don't do that; so I think that's different and because of that in the supermarkets people say things differently; like in the Danish one they probably say something, they won't sell something that, I'm guessing I'm not sure, because I don't think they

sell a lot of things like rice, I don't think they sell rice a lot, they don't have a rice section with different kinds of rice. They have like a pasta section, they have like sausages, they have a sausage section, but I mean in China they don't have a sausage section, they don't have a cheese section, they don't have a milk section, probably there only one or two or three kind of milk in big boxes and some small ones but they have like rice section, they have a sauce section and they soy sauce section they have like tons of soy sauce and different brands, I guess that's very different.

C: That's different because I assume you eat a lot of those products

S: Yea, I use I start every time when I cook

C: Ok, thank you very much for your answers

## Appendix 7: Focus group transcription

C: Thank you very much for coming here today, My name is Corina and you probably know by now, I've been living in Denmark for the last almost ten years and this focus group today will help me (hopefully) graduate with a Master in Integrated food studies. I asked you all to come here today because I want to hear your opinion about some things connected to Danish supermarkets and hopefully I will make a good project that they will want to consider and change something because I know we are not the only ones being a little bit confused when we enter Danish supermarkets. I would like to start by asking your names and for how long you've been living here and what you do. Who wants to start?

B: I am Barbara. I am from Venezuela as my husband is. And we were living before in Italy; and moved to Denmark, in October, few months ago, not the best period to move, but yes.

C: I agree

N: I am Nelson and also from Venezuela and I am a PhD here at DTU... so yeah...we moved here in October

C: Ok..

A: Hello. My name is Ann. I moved here in August two years ago for to start my studies, the same studies Corina is doing and I am 24 years old and I am from Netherlands.

R: Hi I am Richa and I am from India. I am 42 years old and I came here in February this year with my husband. He is working and I am his accompanying spouse, so yeah I've been here for less than three months.

J: I am Jerrel, I am from New York City, 34 years old and I have too come as an accompanying spouse. My wife works for Leo Pharma in New Jersey and was extended an opportunity to take an international assignment and I have just recently proposed her last year and we are trying to make plans to get married by the next year or towards the end of the year and then when this came up we had a hurry up and get married in the summer essentially. Then we decided we should go together and not do the long distance thing... and so I have a lot of time right now to grocery shop and cook and learn the Danish culture.

C: Ok. Thank you.

C: (short introduction to the food and drinks available, where the toilet was and so on)

C: So, my first question is: How do you guys feel about the Danish food system? What is your perception about the Danish food system all together? Do you know where foods come from, how much is produced here, what is your knowledge about the food system?

B: I think that a lot of the products are imported, and I know pork is produced here ... and I think most of the things are imported.

C: Ok

N: I think the pork is pretty famous, right? and I find a lot of pork products in supermarkets, cheap compared to in Italy and beef and also, I have the idea that they import a lot of international products compared to other countries. I feel a bit like in the U.S. a lot of variety of products

B: and also big sizes

N: and also big sizes products. Well in my opinion, thinking in stuff like that Italy is more standard "italic", Italian quality standards, more restricted to Italian products... here in Denmark is more open and you have more variety of products and foods

C: Ok

R: I've never seen this much variety of meats in India. Beef we don't get it as easily in India, it's banned in fact and very few shops has pork, but there are other meats that you get. Compared to Denmark, the variety is a lot lesser. I guess lot of cheeses is used in Denmark, I don't know if it's Danish of its general, because there are a lot more kinds of cheeses

A: I think the system focuses a lot on organic products and foods this days especially in grocery stores, a lot of focus is on organic and local [...], focus on organic and local stuff

N: I agree on the organic, but also a lot of products with the standard "okologisk " and I don't initially think that, but also in my opinion it's pretty international but yes, the products are organic

B: They really care about fair trade too and I work in a coffee shop and they sell coffee to the clients and when you say you are fair trade and when they see "Fairtrade certified" they are very surprised and very into it but yes ok it's pure fair trade and good because the farmers get paid and so on

R: But you know, some are already very partially when you say "okologisk" or organic, the whole concept is to essentially also reduce the carbon food print, the amount of plastic they use to wrap up the okologisk stuff and the distances from there they struggling come into the Danish supermarkets, the amount of fuel they are probably using to just get it to the store it this, nothing okologisk about it. Except that they don't use fertilizers.

A: I remember a case where shrimp was the issue, that i am like trying a bit to remember, it was here in Denmark where they produce a lot, but they sent it to Morocco if i remember correctly to have it peeled and then they sent it back to Denmark and then they said like organic peeled shrimp

C: yeah and it's local and all that

A: it travels such a long distance. It's a shame

R: I think, I don't know if I am biased about the subject but a number of immigrants requires money because the immigrant population is less expenses but also a lot come here from third world countries that are already used to that kind of work and hence, but despite that there's all kinds of outsourcing of the most of the country really... That happens that different levels of different products it you get on...for instance the packing is in Sweden at the, so a lot of packing happens there and then it's sent out here so I don't know if the milk is from local cows and then sent there for packing and then drop out to shops.

C: that's very interesting

J: I feel spoiled. Because I am from NYC and we have variety and so, I feel this is the close market.

N: where do you go to buy from supermarkets?

J: here?

N: yeah

J: Fotex, Irma, Fakta, I mean Rema

N: Fotex is one of the most expensive ones, In Fotex I feel like...

J: the most variety, yeah, and even there i feel restricted and I like I said, it's an adjustment and hearing you all I had to reprogram my mind and my expectations. I come from the world of politics and communication from the US and when I do know the world and so, I think a lot of

stuff is propaganda and they come like marketing strategy rather than being concerned about the process or even sometimes about the quality

N: i think the organic stuff also it maybe not so organic. Of course, it's also marketing strategy because it is adding value, of course they still say that

J: an so... some of my, I realized it's a lot about the pork. It's the first time I've ever seen in the metro station, I've never seen advertising with a living pig, on the poster, the back was facing me i was like "Why am I looking at a pig's bottom?", it's just different in terms of values but I realized it's also difference in not only options but taste, like in NYC we have NY things: It's NY hot dogs and NY pizza and so I've been searching for certain flavors like hot dogs...

C: No..

A: for me I experienced myself as well, the great variety and maybe it's different than Italy then but the moment I came here and went to do some groceries I was like, ok, "This is everything what they have?" [...] but also the prices were higher in groceries stores, it's kind of different than at home and then rice for example, we have maybe 5 different types, like rice or long grain, short grain doesn't matter and it's kind of like the whole 0.5 kg or 1 kg.. And here in Denmark it's kind of not the same

A: yeah

J: yeah

R: it's all you get

B: and meat for instance as well and fish so for me it's kind of limited as well so yeah

C: And then you already started answering my second question: how happy are you in the Danish supermarkets; especially the supermarkets in Copenhagen area?

N: well I think depends also in the choice. I think small supermarkets like Netto or Fakta are very convenient, they are everywhere, but they are not organized you don't know where to find what are you looking for, these are like a mess. But the big ones are more ok

B: if we compare it to Italy, these have much more international brand like Oreo, in Italy you can find only one type of Oreo, only the classic one. Here you have like I don't know maybe ten, for me it was like "Oh my God! I don't know what to get!"

J: this is so funny

B: also Ben and Jerry. There is no way that you find Ben and Jerry's in the land of the gelato.

R: no way

N: They don't even like Starbucks. They opened the first one this year. Coffee has to be in the Italian way. Maybe there more closed about their culture, here in Denmark eventually not

A: they are very into proteins

N: and they like Italian food

B: you know like all the pieces are sized more, like we are used to in Venezuela. Here we have like proper sizes

C: ok

J: it's interesting that she said that because i think in terms of expectations or quality, brand as a NY there is this concept that Italian made means quality and so i wonder in terms of quality when talk about coffee would the quality of the coffee, my experience in Denmark has been: higher prices than the quality, and that's been challenging because you already have to go through the culture shot of the sticker price change and then the question is: what am i getting and if it's been like ok , along the customer service.

A: The whole point in Holland is that your income it's lower as well but now when I came here as a student, being supported by my state, I had to work my way around with my income and that was pretty difficult in the beginning, I love food and I love cooking and I love to experiment and everything, so for me it's rather easy still but imagine here coming here as student not into cooking, i think it's kind of a though thing to do to a lot of people here and I was living along with 2 Norwegian girls, their income is higher so for them everything was pretty cheap[... ], but the quality it's different and it's a part to have everything and marketing putting into market sales "oh no Danish quality " but the moment when I hear quality, ok that's nice, that's the standard, it doesn't bring the value, it doesn't get me to say "oh yeah, Danish quality ". and about the quality of the groceries stores and living in the city center it's one straight away of to my apartment, and I cross Fisketorvet and there I have a big Fotex which is a nice store, it's organized, you know where to find everything and one thing I think it's strange that the structure of the groceries stores is completely different than in Holland. We start with vegetables and freshness and here they start with something completely different and if I go to the Netto in the city center, it a 24/7 and the first thing you see its big fridge with freezers and beers. I am not very fan of that shop

C: ok.

R: from quality point of view this is better than the quality of the food we get in India. Of course the largest cities in India they have shops with high quality but these are few and far. Largely in Denmark but even within Denmark now that I've been, Irma is probably expensive, and as far as vegetable concern I think the vegetables variety is so much less in Danish supermarkets, restricted. If you import, import a large variety, not just cauliflower an ... For Asians is a very restricted variety. We have a least 20 kinds of vegetables available on the streets from the farmers which are always ekologisk in real way. Since I've gone I had then to find my way to one of these Afghan stores, that's where I buy my vegetables, anything else I would get it in one of

these supermarkets. I don't know, if someone could tell them they should just try to import a better idea of vegetables. I am sure people would like it.

A: sometimes Lidl has foreign foods and they focus on a specific...like Greek and... that's what I've seen a couple of weeks ago, and like Italian

J: I add to that. I should say i am from NYC but my family is from the Caribbean. The Caribbean is full of blended culture. Latin America has strong Indian influence, Asian as well, African and global and so i mean the reason why i married my wife is that she's Caribbean as well and I expected good food, spices and turns out I am the cook now but the hardest thing is making a traditional foods, I had to go further like to Norrebro to the immigrant shops so we can get our peppers and spices and sometimes they are not expected, it's time consuming sometimes and it would be nice to just go to the supermarkets and get some of what we need

R: That's what I mean...like there's one corner where they get stuff like Asian, we don't feel included; they are not open enough to probably fit us in their stores.

J: what I wanted to add is I get the immigrant thing is always the other, but the consistency of product supply it doesn't make sense to me. To have something of the shelf and we buy something that we like and then disappears and it's not on the shelves and no one knows when it's coming back.

A: and the craziest is the long way you go to Netto of whatever grocery store in one place of the city there are completely different the products they are offering, then when you go to another place it's the same chain but completely different

C: i think there is a difference between the discount supermarkets where they bring based on what is cheaper in the market, what they can get cheaper and hopefully they will end up selling than supermarkets like Irma which has a completely different focus group.

J: i didn't know that

C: the following question was: I can see that a lot of you mentioned that there is difference in the supermarkets like there are high end supermarkets and discount supermarkets, how did you come across that? Was it by your own experience? Or did someone tell you?

R: it's the look and feel when you enter at Netto the simple ways in which they stock their stuff, ore the containers it's very different than the one in Irma

A: also the lights

R: It's the feel, the intangible really

N: It's much smaller and organized. Compared to Fotex or an Irma where it is more clean and where you can buy all the things that you need

R: so Netto has more outlets but it's a little messy. Irma has probably smaller shops somewhere. So were I stay that's my close place to go and it's nice and clean and tidy at any time of the day when you go,so it's just hygiene is never a question. But then in Netto if I walk a little ahead then all the red buckets are stuffed out, everything is in baskets, must be that there is nothing wrong with the quality but the presentations is not as neat.

A: I remember when I moved here I went to Fakta and Netto, and those were my go to supermarkets because I actually didn't know another place to go and later i found Irma but that was like tourist shops, you can't get groceries there, and there's Super Brugsen sort of in the central station and that doesn't have everything. so i went to buy in Fakta and Netto and later on I found there are other stores and i came across Aldi, the German brands but they are not the nicest stores either and I know Lidl and I came across and then I figured out the big Fotex and close to my home but also a Super Brugsen.

C: ok

A: but as student when you have to work around or work with an income it's a Netto you go to, a place to go where it's cheaper

J: For us, what were most important were the products that we like and so gone through not only price shock but variety shock; the absence of product likes drier sheets. We were looking for drier sheets for so long and finally someone said Denmark: doesn't sell drier sheets so, but for me what was difficult was from a branding point of view if you go into the same store they should carry the same products. If you go to the same store you should expect the same. to go into the same brand store and not have the consistency to buy the same product, like a butter, it's annoying because I don't know why can I trust your brand I can trust that you have so, so every time that i go out it's an adventure, you may not have a great time when you look for specific thing

C: what exactly if I may ask?

J: sometimes is the herbs, spices, sometimes it's a cereal that we like granola with strawberry it's not at any other store and sometimes you need a couple more days to restock, it's not the restocking thing it's discontinuous. And so that's frustrating because we don't know where to get certain things, a barbecue sauce that we want in Fotex, disappears and that makes no sense because if you sell it you should restock. Simple things like that.

N: going back here there is thing we found by experience, we went to a supermarket and we went to another and no one had it, and it's funny, it was like an adventure experience like didn't know what to find but i think connected to the first questions we are quite happy here because also from our home country we are having a huge food crisis and you cannot find actually all you are looking for and you have to make lines in the supermarkets for products for hours. In developed countries compared to US you don't find what you need sometimes but I don't know how it's in India for example. But in Venezuela it's like that compared to other big developed countries as US it's not as constant.

J: when i started bouncing back before into supermarkets. Went to a bunch of supermarkets so we gathered all the things we liked and forget where we gathered it from

R: yes there are so many of this distinct shops

J: but the other thing is the concept of quality level, price level that's not consistent either so do i have cheaper tomatoes in one place vs. another product it's cheaper here, so trying to do price comparison and to know which you go to and sometimes it's difficult, for things like bottle of water it's like, so many things are different. the other thing i wanted to mention was i don't know where is this when it comes to the meat is the organization of the supermarkets, if i am looking for chicken legs in US there is a whole section: this is all the chicken, this is all the beef all the brands, but walking somewhere into Fotex has a better layout, more international brands, there is chicken legs up here, there is chicken legs up here, why are the chicken legs not in the same area so I can compare all the chicken legs. And because I don't know the language, it's hard to understand what the difference is, you know.

R: that's a very good point for every expat. Absolutely everything is in Danish. If i am looking for plain water and I don't want carbonated water, I don't know the difference unless i learn Danish.

N: There only other two languages it is translated to is Swedish and Norwegian

R: I went into a Matas looking for facial bleach, and she sold me removal cream, you know the...I explained to her cream to lighten the color of the hair and she is so ok.... And what she sold me was hair removal for the face. I don't know if she spoke much English

A: but that's like when you go to the store, doesn't matter if it's a grocery or just a clothing store the way how they treat you as a customer like, in Holland they say the customer is the king, it doesn't matter what you are buying people like to talk to each other even though they don't know if they are having the product in back of the store they go there just to help you with the product. [...] Maybe it's nice for you as customer to know you're appreciated and they do their job as well.

R: there is no customer service in fact it is... imagine. I see that little racial discrimination here now you don't afford that because Denmark as a country has massive shortage of high skill

manpower. The fact that many Indians here, or Asians or Chinese or Japanese is because you don't have for jobs and companies, I mean Denmark has the money but it doesn't have the talent so now they call people from other countries to work here. If anything, the younger lot should know that they can't fill in the gaps so the ones that are coming treat them right because if they decide not to come, your economy it's going to crash soon enough.

C: i don't think they are aware of that at all, to be honest.

R: Because I feel that people working in Matas or these shops are mostly students and they work to get extra pocket money or summer jobs and so on, but they need to be sensitized about this because probably if i feel this is too much i will probably go home and Xif I am asked, I will say no. If you want to go, you would probably go to Germany, Germany is a lot more open to expats, to be more inclusive, because you leave your comfort zone, and you leave your family and leave a lot of comforts.

N: I agrees as customer should be treated well that's what i appreciate from US the good life and good customer service and probably having the Italian experience I think the customer service here in Denmark is not that bad. probably going to the south is even worse and here if everyone speaks English so you can always communicate in English, even if it's not the best customer service in the world at least they help you out. In Italy sometimes you have to speak Italian.

B: or sometimes they speak Italian with different dialect for example Napoli, Napoli is like that

N: but in Italy in general I think they don't treat you as that customer is king concept. Copenhageners are like that, very horizontal threating like equals. If you start being too much, bothering me I'm going to say I don't understand.

R: back in India customer service is like what she said, because you have just so many people and you think you are the only customer, get out and get another [...] because the customer come and sais "If I don't like the feeling here I go to the next shop". here you can count the number of supermarkets on your fingers back in India there are just so many shops, even the supermarkets within that then the competition is so so tough. You need to make XXX

N: but i don't think there it's a problem also in the food supermarkets. I think they also see that in the restaurants

B: yeah the customer service in general

N: the customer service in general. I think it's Danish culture

A: because in the restaurants they don't even ask you...

N: and you have to go to the cashier and ask

J: for me... i am spending more money here that i want to spend in this outing...

N: Danes don't save money also because the salaries are high so you are earning a lot

J: I think in terms of the customer service experience we are treated nice like to interact with some who knows the inventory or knows their products or know what they sell. I don't know how the scenario might have been in the situation where my wife went to Imerco looking for a pot. kitchen supply stores is not like we look in Fotex, and like you have the pot and get to the language piece but then you go to the place when they only sells kitchen supplies so you should know what the pot is. "Ok, where are the pots?" "we don't have it" "ok. do you speak English?" "yes" "do you know what a pot is?" "yes" "where is the pots? "Over there

N: I have the completely opposite experience: always when I ask for a product to some guy or girl in the supermarket they walk with me and show me. Fotex and Netto and when I went and asked many times: do you know where this is? And they walked with me and they take me to the right isle. so i thing it's kind of good service. For me it hasn't been a coincidence and i always ask and they show.

J: I recognize there is a minimum of labor that goes into understanding, translating and directing and I think the challenge for me from a business perspective is, I was taught in business: we don't lose the customer. You let that customer go, and so with that assumption. My experience in Denmark is : it's ok if the customer goes. and for me that challenges me because if it's my business and I have inventory I am expecting you to move the inventory as the reason why I am in business and so, it's like you have two jobs not one job make sure the product is sold and make sure you put the product back on the shelves so we can sell more. So when there is a gap in between that I don't know it is...it just doesn't hang up: don't you want to sell this? It is different experience

C: I can tell you my opinion but after the focus group

C: But now that we are talking about I think that's my personal opinion because there are not many companies that own the supermarkets. There isn't really competition between a Netto and a Fotex because they belong to the same, so you either go to the one or the other they still get the customer.

B: in my opinion a Netto cannot compete with a Fotex because they have too different products, like Fakta can compete in that case

C: and then you have Netto everywhere

A: that's really nice as well because if you want to go it's so easy to say "well I know a Netto just around the corner". It's very convenient

N: [...]

J: it makes sense especially when the one I am buying from is by CBS and next door to Fotex.

A: the concentration of groceries stores... it doesn't make any sense because the quality is different in groceries stores next to each other and then sometimes it's no shops at all the you

find stores next to each other and then you find Netto, no different stores and Netto again. Why again?

R: so where I stay in Osterbro is the same

A: i think somewhere around Norreport there are some, a lot of Rema 1000, and Irma and Netto and on the other side Netto as well and Netto again

C: like every bus station has a Netto

A: and doesn't make sense

R: I think Netto is big in Copenhagen and I wonder if Netto is for buying everything. My husband he said, he's been here for long and you can always find one there

B: I saw one of them on the map in Tringlen, but when I left home it showed me it was straight to the left from Trianglen so I asked this guy what the best option is; and he said: One here, one straight, one right. And now that I know the area, like you said there is this one straight to Osterbro, the main road and there at least, there are 6 Netto and there are 3 Matas within 300 meters. One which is only moisturizes and cosmetics and one which has a lot of other makeup stuff and why would you distinguish it like that?

N: because I see sometimes there is difference in status XXX 24/7 and sometimes some of them are open and some of them are closed, are they like different kind of shops or how do they operate? Are they competing with each other in some way?

C: i don't know but...that's a good question

N. but I can see that they are different, some of them are open 24/7, some are closed on holidays? Are they different managements? What do you know? Are they competing with each other in some way also?

R: maybe they are little dealerships, franchise

N: also makes sense that on higher level to have one and another in the same block, I always wonder are they competing, or its different management?

A: or they do it because otherwise it doesn't make sense, some stores can be open and then it doesn't make sense because probably have them all open, fill it with employees because it costs money, and then they say "ok, we are going to open only one store in city center which is open when its only one line of employees and everything" it's the lower costs that can be

R: i think the same store had different owner

J: This changes that branding and consistency...

C: i think the issue with the opening hours is that because they have so many shops they prioritize area wise so in the area they pick one specific shop but now that's also my opinion and as far as i know Netto shops they don't compete with each other while for example in Lidl you can see also on their website who is responsible with that shop. With Netto you don't really, there is no employee of the month, butik chef, there is nothing, random people, and you might see the same people there for years or you might not see the next day, so because thinking about it, Netto, Irma and Fotex they all belong to the same

R: I think they just have different target audience

C: and Irma they used to have shops also outside of Copenhagen, now they closed everything and they only focus in the Copenhagen area but in the same time you can find their products,

like the Irma brand with the little girl, in the other shops because there are products that they want to sell like the blue coffee for example

R: the quality is really much better than the other shops, i think they have kammerjunker, small little biscuits

C: now in the summer, kammerjunker with strawberries

R: so I was buying that from Irma and I actually essentially bought just those cookies because back in India there is something very similar, so the lady at the counter since I bought them very often because it's close to my place she said "Why don't you buy also the vanilla flavor buttermilk? This is the combination you have with this" so I said why not? so i picked it up and I tried and the next day I was out somewhere and I walked in to Super Brugsen, the quality of those kammerjunker..., they were broken and cracked and Irma had this neat box with them stocked, so there wasn't a minor crack in any of them so you were eating the effect thing. General presentation and the quality is so different and so bad than Irma.

C: but then what's about the price?

R: there was difference of 2 korona.

C: are you willing to pay that extra price for?

R: I would pay

C: what about the others?

A: I would too. But it's definitely different. When I came by I saw some meat for 25 koronas and then Irma's product pricing and then suddenly it's 50 koronas for the same sort of meat on

especially minced meat, ok something i use in a dish... the stake which is the main ingredient, so it's different the moment I look for a cheaper kind of meat or when the steak price is different

R: one of the strange differences between the Indian supermarkets and here is that your products do not have the price tag on it. In India this is something standard, but not in Denmark. The price comes from the manufacturer and every shop will sell at the same price. Here there are no standard prices. The same thing after 2 days if the quality is ...if it's something perishable the price is lesser than initially. Super Brugsen has a section with yellow stickers and price is different up if you bought it 2 day ago, that would not happen in India. Everything is that price and the shops which sales it they have a separate cart for stocking and that comes from the manufacturer that the end customer didn't know, but the end customer will pay the same price no matter where he goes and that it's all of

A: and what if it's close to expiring would they change it?

R: no. they don't. You just have to be smart enough to see when it expires

N: So the supermarkets don't have the freedom to change price?

R: but that's only for perishable. There are a lot of things that are not perishable. Like meat and stuff makes sense to have cheaper when it's close to expire but some like shampoos and...

B: yeah but if you buy a shampoo in Irma its different then if you buy a shampoo in Netto, the whole experience of the supermarket

R: if i am somebody who is manufacturing a shampoo and I see there is a feel for it in Irma and the have the shelf space which are certain number in Irma and I wonder if Irma wants to carry my product and I have to give separately price to Irma, or else Irma can approach me and say a want a stock and then negotiate the prices which I will stock it but the end price of my shampoo bottle when I give it to Irma or Netto is the same. What is different is what I negotiate.

C: i didn't know that

R: this is why is very surprising that you come and pick the brand is the same but the same is brand in a different shop is different price. That's not standard. To the end customer became like "I am paying to bring the right quality to the shop?" Irma it's clean and smart and nice but why am I paying for that. Somebody who is not interested in price can buy the same thing from a cheaper place

B: don't go to Irma better go to Netto

B: actually in Italy we used to eat a lot outside like 2-3 times per week. So we came here...and from the first days we realized the huge gap that is between going to a restaurant and buying things in the supermarket. So we decided like ok we are not eating outside anymore but we are not also going to buy take-out not that often.

N: well, we go to a pizzeria and it is very nice

B: but the week before we were going to a pizza place and we paid 400 kr.s for two pizzas and two drinks; super expensive. In the end we went to Fotex, we invited some friends for a party, made barbecue, the same for 400 kr. and we got food for the rest of the week

R: I am glad everybody has a similar view and it is not just us because [...]

B: The problem with like eating outside is not just about prices. I am going to Fotex or Fakta or Netto. These are my go-to supermarkets and sometimes going to Rema but you know I feel like ok, if I go to a restaurant to eat the same thing I pay 5 times more so, yeah...

C: makes sense

C: now going back to the question. Are you aware of the discounts? And that reklamer or avis they send out every week where they have like discounts for the following week?

C: you know there are like smaller newspaper they give

J: yeah. I hate that system. In the states you walk in the supermarket, that supermarket would have a circular. And says what is on sales this week you look at it you chose what you want, you can even leave it there for the next person. When i open up my mailbox and there is a whole bunch of different ones it's overbearing... I don't look at it and the truth is when there is a supermarket next to you the concept of going to a similar supermarket somewhere else into a different neighborhood doesn't make sense, i am like "oh If I go to the supermarket they should have that product at a similar price, in my mind " but I looked sometimes, some things, sometimes what bothers me in when they say it's a sale but it's not a big sale. The amount of time it takes to go there, the extra zones it takes to go there doesn't make sense. And I can't read it

R: because it's in Danish

J: because it's in Danish. So i have to guess and look at the numbers so...I haven't become an expert or confident in the circulars yet

A: ...also what they are doing I know Fotex they change their sales starting from Friday. I think Netto starts from Saturday and Rema starts from Monday. Irma has two blocks within one week where they advertise different and there are weekend sales as well so the moment when you see the advertisement I don't always find my time to save 10 koronas, going there and then you have to pay 25 koronas for one thing that's on sale only Thursday and Friday.... maybe it says in the brochure but i can read so it doesn't make sense to me and that really confuses me as well with all different days and i think... well I ll remember, that wine it's on sale at Fotex on Monday but when got here it's not on sale anymore because it's Friday and they started advertising the new sales on Friday.

R: I think it would be better if they made it also in English because there is a massive audience that doesn't understand

B: I think they want to force you to learn Danish

R: yeah

B: but everybody speaks English so soon in they should start changing that and stuff like that

R: i think if Google would start charging people for translating we will be bankrupt

B: don't give them ideas

C: i think they also rely on the fact that it's easy to understand from what it is. It says two pieces for 15 koronas

R: but that's why I don't understand...just give it all in English so everybody will understand and Danes they understand English and speak english.in fact one of the initially experiences that i had with that customer service they have was that wanted to go and buy myself a bike so i ended up at Norrebro and Norrebro had this shop with really nice bikes, i wanted to start with a second hand and when i see these bikes they looked really nice so i walked in and the guy said also 6000 korona and I said "ah..ok" and then there was just something that i could figure out ...so this is day 3, all right? so i did not know that much about it. i know 6000 korona it's 60000 Indian rupees and in that much you can buy 6 bikes with it in India so really nice ones so my husband said "we are not paying 6000 koronas on it, find something which is alright" and then there was something like a bank thing, financial... and then i asked the guy "what is this about?" so he comes and he says "so we have a deal with so and si bank and if you want take this in installments" so then i said "oh sure it's nice could you tell me more?" so he didn't tell me more because he clearly had a problem with English himself so he comes with this pamphlet and he gives it to me, which is obviously in Danish so I looked at it and i said "ok so how does this work? How much I am supposed to pay?" "So what you do, you speak to this number bank and they tell you" "do you have something in English? Do you have this in English?" "And then he told me "this in Denmark " and i lost it, i said "yeah but you speak English"

B: yeah

R: so he said "yeah but i don't know I am sorry, you call this number and they tell you " so obviously i walked out if the shop and my husband he said "you don't pick up a fight here in Denmark" i said "how did they tell me this is Denmark it's not like I don't know i am in Denmark but you speak English, tell me in English, are you explaining to me or give me something that i understand you don't just tell me that is a number, go figure it out yourself"

C: was the guy Danish?

R: yeah he was Danish

N: I think in Italy everything is written in Italian. so I think in Denmark we are now more intentional environment and we expect more things in English because Danish is only spoken in Denmark , we expect everything in English sometimes and i understand that are some things in Danish you don't understand, but you translate and translate. I don't expect the government to tell everything in English also

R: But is that not normal because you want to do business with countries where English is the language of, it is the only international language

J: it depend who you ask about

R: but English it's the only international language now, it's in fact the first international language of the world, everywhere that you go, and the only common language that you could possibly reach out would be English. Not any of the original languages because particularly European countries speak English. So when i was in Germany, Germany didn't have so many issues of course there is a lot of Germans there but there is also English so all signs and signs in the supermarkets or subways everything in pamphlets would have German and English, so you are not lost for directions, you know what you are buying like "danskvand" water

C: now i have question about the products variety; a lot of you answered it, this question but would you like to add something more? What about product variety? How is it different and what would you change?

R: it thinks vegetables should have a better variety because there is a very restrictive variety of numbers of vegetables

C: yeah

R: because that's a daily consuming item and the supermarkets are keeping it so they should have a little more than just cauliflower and broccoli

C: but they do have like seven types of potatoes

A: everything with pork, everything with potatoes, that's fine

C: this is Denmark

A: and also bread

N: they have a lot of variety of bread actually

A: oh, yeah!

N: the bread?

A: yeah i am used to the bakeries within a grocery store. I am pretty used to that concept so the moment that when I go to the grocery store and I see this sliced bread i say "no thanks, not this time " but for me as a variety thing i kind of miss, more un-traditional, everything that i find here in Denmark but [...]and then they have like the white beans and black and maybe chickpeas not even in letils I think those four are only the ones they are selling in Denmark and i miss different types of beans and Asian stuff, i walk into Asian stuff or products dishes but i can't really find the different products i need because they have just those things are kind of i am working with every day, [...] and like a meat section with cold meats to put into sandwiches

J: like a deli section?

A: yeah. And that's also something that I miss up here, no deli section with chesses or cold cuts whatever, everything it's like pretty fixed.

C: yeah

A: I understand

J: I was going to say. it is frustrating when simple thing like, i like orange juice, not from concentrate and it's almost impossible like, except for Inocent, i have no option and so it is kind of like blown my mind that it's not more of market, in, I don't know why, I guess I am also maybe incorrectly that probably from a business perspective you want to offer variety because this perspective you know, but I can be wrong, I guess I kind of miss wrong but just like the this is what you get

A: for me it's really like i am selecting from the supermarket you can see that there are two different perspective so ok, not all customers are often or like a crazy big branch, is it that, is it necessary to offer 20 different types of pasta, 5 different brands so like hundred different pasta bags where to choose from, so it's that necessary? but the moment when I am moved here that was kind of my opinion because now I think it's not necessary, come guys we can cut it down and say maybe there will be like 20 different types to choose from and then i started living in Denmark and I really told myself ok, I was completely wrong because especially because I

experience it in a different way. i have grew up with lots of products to choose from and now i have less products to choose and so i was like "ok, there i go" but yeah it was just the moment when it was completely, it's less, then i am [...]

C: considering that you have so many supermarkets and the spaces are rather small, Netto are small and Fakta are small, how would then think they can have more variety? What would you like suggest or recommend?

R: they could probably reorganize the way they generally stock stuff. There is a lot of space that's available where the small items are, relook at the way they are stacking or stocking their stuff

C: ok

R: if the really want to make space for adding. And that's possible. It's not that there is no space for that

B: it's really logistically thing

N: I think they made a good point of it. They are very small, they cannot offer us much variety so I think we just got used to it but when we want something like specific, i don't know if i am going to find in Netto or Fakta, but when we want variety... ok, we give in, so there is this scale in depending on what do you want to go buy

J: I think for me was some shock coming from things that are popular, let's say for me NYC in thinking the food is international global market and so something that is popular would it be so hard to find a specific product like for example this , i am still searching for, i haven't found it yet, i put a post on Facebook and i got a couple of addresses so the next week i am going to try get but , this are certain flavor of sausage in the State,s Kielbasa, that it's very common in a lot of different dishes. And not all are made the same; there is something distinct and well the polish or the polska whatever. Here i have not found it yet and that's why I would say you know I wrote the meat products post. Because in my mind, this does well in a lot of markets this does

well not only in international neighborhoods but in more fluent neighborhoods this does well you know in restaurants and some other places and we are closer to Poland so in my mind they would have this polish sausage Kielbasa. I can't find it, yet.

C: yet

B: but i think i saw your post, i don't know where to find it

J: but that i wonder is it the politics? you know, and so i feel like in a space of a sausage I see a whole bunch of different varieties, they say it's the same, so the variety it's like "ok, give me a different taste " so i am not just choosing from a brand, but again a variation of a product

C: I understand what you are saying

J: or, also the market they have... also, the global trend, like imagine you know you have this civil population maybe, is a good idea but from the business perspective you know and i guess it goes back so what does this Copenhagen want to do and i am speaking for Denmark as well or the international region of this Copenhagen wants to do. How do want to evolve with... you know, the current situation?

C: that makes a lot of sense

A: and you always have to be able to get used to the culture because I don't know, when I moved to Denmark I didn't know enough much of the difference because In the Netherlands at least, I knew that I have to adapt to the culture and everything but so on one hand they say "well it's just two years, it's fine, but for you, you don't stay here for two years " and long when i miss cheese and I am not very fond about the chesses. That is one thing that my father might have brought me once or everyone here I need need something, i kind of miss that so it was for me rather wasy and again i got ok well on one hand i do need to adapt to the culture which means chaotic grocery stores or crazy variety chaos on what they are offering but on the other hand I thought "ok, i have two years, I want to have the variety to choose" so I kind of am like between those two thoughts i am not sure which one suits me better. Both of them are like what my

thoughts are for now so it's really difficult to choose from them like "oh well just go with it" or say "maybe they shouldn't change because i am here now so"

R: if you would have an option of, let's just say food is something just so close to a person, that if it's possible for me to get the kind of food that i like here without having the struggle to go to one particular shop and one part of the city and get it, for me to integrate would be a lot easier and probably also confidence so i am not someone who it's just looking at just spending my two years and going back to my own country because that some may come for life so the supermarkets have a massive role to play in the economy at large because if they make these things comfortable for the crowd that's coming here up and as a country your politicians have decided to allow a certain number of expats here over highly skills should come here and stay be comfortable, get the kind of food that they like and contribute better to this place, besides to stay back here because they are high skills so they, continue to live here, or do you want to make it that you come here and that you become like us and eat the food that we eat and if you don't like it we give a visa for two years go back.

C: yeah

R: so it's a choice that the economy also and other people that are responsible have to make. Because for an Indian for instance to eat pork and beef is no right. We will not. So thankfully i find chicken here and i find fish or so...

J: fish is so expensive. And we are close to the water

C: i think everyone agrees, that's the common disappointment.

A: i totally agree. The moment when you know that are a lot of different nationalities, especially in Copenhagen which is such an international city, try to make it an international city as well. Also in the grocery stores, make sure that you also have Asian variety and we don't have to stock up all supermarkets with Asian products but make you have at least one of the main products in the supermarkets.

R: at least in the bigger ones, like Fotex and Bilka are massive, I am sure that they can have also

J: massive and very limited

C: Ok. That makes a lot of sense. That's very good, like very good opinions

J: and a think i want to say, this global conversation that we are having I feel like... And I don't want to be rude, this when you talk about taste and quality this I think there is a low standard of what is considered good and ok. And this big imitation or inspired by market, so like i was watching TV and they showed an Italian pizza and they stuck a Danish flag in it. They took the Italian, box it up and they are selling frozen pizza and they say it's just as good as Italian. Like...why would they even have to have that? Just sell you product and don't link it to something else that I would consider good quality, authentic, experience. and so I think either with dining out and going to like a taking an ethnic dish it's like you spend all this money with inspired by stuff bout it doesn't reach the taste, i feel like in this world of travel easy access, global market, and when talking about food and taste and competitions all throughout don't say that something it's excellent or like something just let it be or actually celebrate, have the folks coming and doing their best, i think the NY food experience is that they celebrate how international and how much variety they have within the people to make it you got to be the best and want anybody that represent your ethnicity, you don't want a... let's say Italian restaurant like you don't want that, like this is good this is our representation and so I fell like even in some of their products it's like similar to or just like American X Y Z, just la Spanish... and It's like what the equivalent at home would be a budget brand, And I don't say like the brand budget

C: Ok...

A: Also the arranging system in the grocery stores, at home we have shelf and the top layers are the high end brands and the bottom shelves are like... or like there is a whole strategy behind, even grocery stores are encouraging and increase the sales, what they sell but I can't find it here in Denmark at all everything is kind of placed everywhere some, best brand, like original brand. And i am just not use to the system yet.

J: it takes a whole market science to shelf it

C: and you don't see that in Denmark

A: not at all

R: it depends, groceries are very united, but only in Irma, it's not like in every supermarket. Fotex I agree, it's the same, Netto, Fakta even Rema it's not that friendly so,

A: but Irma, we were just talking about how can fit all different products in a rather small store, maybe making shelves that are a bit higher and so, but that's the thing they do in Rema, they just kind of create big shelves along the wall and they reach to the ceiling and very tall to reach. Even for me it was like hard to reach

C: thank you! So can you guys agree that your needs (are met) or not in the Danish supermarkets? Like your

C: no

N: my basic needs are met, of course not all of needs, some products, a couple we have some particular in Venezuela that we only buy in this Asian markets and i think it's natural because we are not so many here. Basically we are lucky to find them several markets because a Kquickly closed in that area but other than that and some fruits, i think in supermarkets i find what i need.

A: i think like the basic needs are met. It was just something more I miss... If they could produce some research to what kind of population is living

R: or just start stocking what the normal shops are stocking

C: Fotex shops do that. But they are still limited; they don't go for certain spice or certain...flours They don't go that that extreme

R: I've seen sometimes a lot of locals in the Norrebro shops, in the afghan market. It's not like only Asians go there. There was that lady girl, young girl who was buying tikka masala, that along with coriander and other spices, green chillies, not the big ones the small green chillies

A: spicy ones

R: she was cooking chicken gravy...I was very surprised

J: i think our needs... I mean we are adaptable. The good thing is that we started out near Torvehallerne in might have been 2, 3 months before I actually walked in it because when i came out, straight was Norrebro, a lot of stuff but and then we moved to Frederiksberg, where close it's Norrebro again. but i think the, maybe the experience, communication experience, the shopping experience because in service.. all contribute to my level of happiness or satisfaction in the shop experience is not any different from being home in the states, you don't get everything everywhere but I think there can be better order and also again in terms of customer service I don't how many how many expectations should i have especially they are coming from the back to be able to help me with the expectation that is in the inventory like, we like lamb so we get ground lamb and it's in Fotex sometimes if not in Fotex

C: it is in Fotex

J: i was going to a butcher shop

A: in Norrebro there are many

J: yeah that my good to go. but the thing is if they are caring a product they should have it there, as i said the turkey bacon was in another side fridge and there was covered by other products and it was mixed with other products so you have little search for that product instead of having a section for this and next to product they have nothing to do with it. And so there is no logic to say why it is placed there and i think that's a service that would add quality even if they don't add variety

N: they can increase they sales if they properly stock and be consistent in how they organize

A: and also the products that are on sale you never see in the store itself. sometimes you see, especially with the electronic stuff but a lot of times it's just the moment they are on sale, they never really promote it and it's something that it's missed to see, it's something that i would encourage to price something new "oh there it's on sale a new product" and you think "oh instead of my to go product maybe I would try something new " so that's also some thing

J: we just went through, like the last couple of months and realized that we spent a lot of money on food and i think maybe it's the American mindset, I feel like if you are putting so much of your earnings into this space or place, you what satisfaction out of you, you don't want to feel like you're just getting by . Another thing it's like our family both American and Caribbean so we I feel like our own experience is versatile to know what it's to be from a third world country. my wife is Asian so like you now, we understand that not everything it's not like NYC but i think as

we travel, we do a lot we go to different cities logistics is always one thing that stops so this takes out to say you know the difference between a third world country and a first world country is the administrative order, logistics. even to Iceland I was surprised that Island felt more like home in terms of global market since like you look at the snow up here but we go to supermarket, way more variety it's like "why is my shop experience on a road trip better in Reykjavik then in Denmark, and I don't associate Denmark with being a third world country with what I feel it's like a third world experience" and so i just doesn't add up and so I'll say "why would you want to shake thins about Denmark="

C: is there anything else you would like to add to the discussion?

A: i would love to go in a different country I would love to go to the grocery store to see what kind of food they sell. I would love to do it, I thought I would love it in Denmark as well so I went here, i went to different grocery stores and i said "well, ok, I am not very pleased of " normally i would be happy about it, just walking and seeing different products "oh this is a product i never had before" and i haven't seen any product and though this is something new

R: if you look in any Indian restaurant even in Copenhagen you will probably find this Bhriani. Bhriani it's something that it's very connected to something in India so they should have a Bhriani and eventually it's rice and chicken and spices nothing more. But i was looking for something authentically Danish or authentically Copenhagen but i haven't found what it's really original about this place in terms of food

N: yeah i have the same though.

A:[...] I think Danish people are proud of their products even if they are not Danish, you see the Danish flag everywhere

R: i mean in India, every city and every state has it's own food identity so you go to this place to eat this or you go to this place you have to eat this. I was looking for something similar in Copenhagen i haven't found it

J: a lot of potatoes. it's Danish culture to be inclusive and appreciative of global diversity and then when you step into the circles it's a little too less welcoming and I feel like my food experience it's similar and I wonder if this up fear of opening doors if you lose everything if you open up the shelf, you know, other options. But i think that a global city like Copenhagen, and I think of Copenhagen as a global city, would benefit from accommodating those who are already here for long term as well and also the new comers so i think this is an economic advantage as well.

C: Thank you very much. That's very good. And I got a lot of useful information that I can use.  
Thank you for taking you time.

Linda

JOURNEY MAP

International customers in Danish supermarkets

PROJECT

21 May 2018

EXPORT DATE

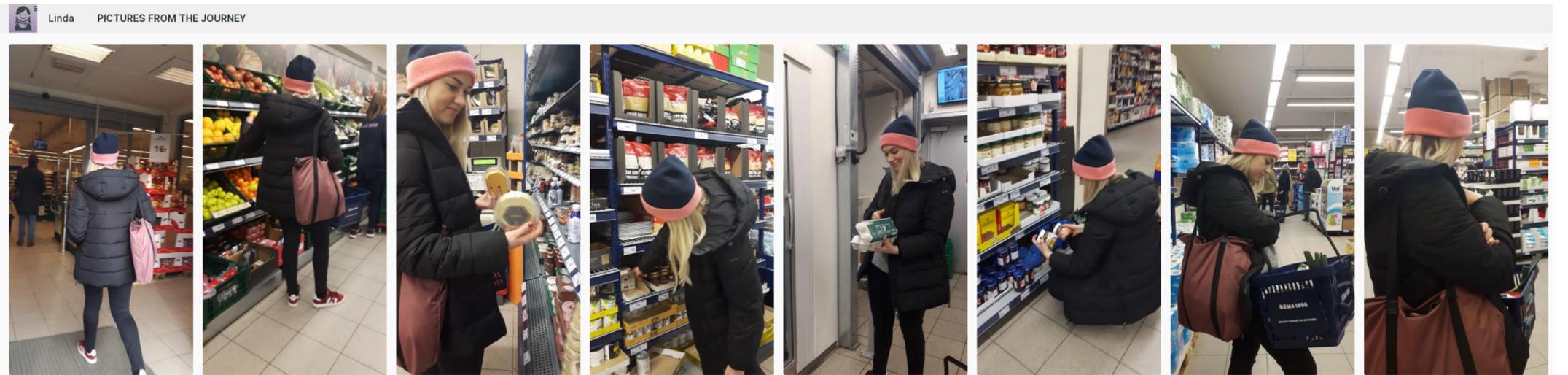
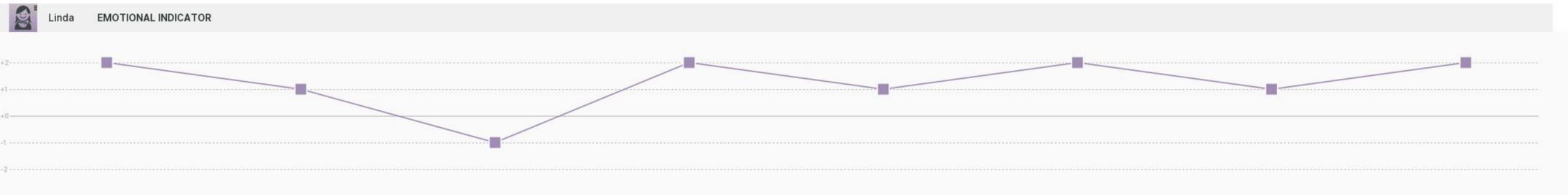
CREATED WITH SMAPLY TRIAL VERSION



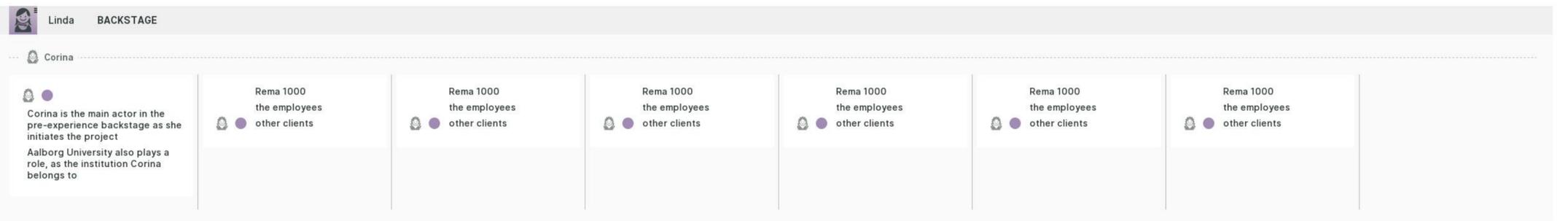
Pre-experience

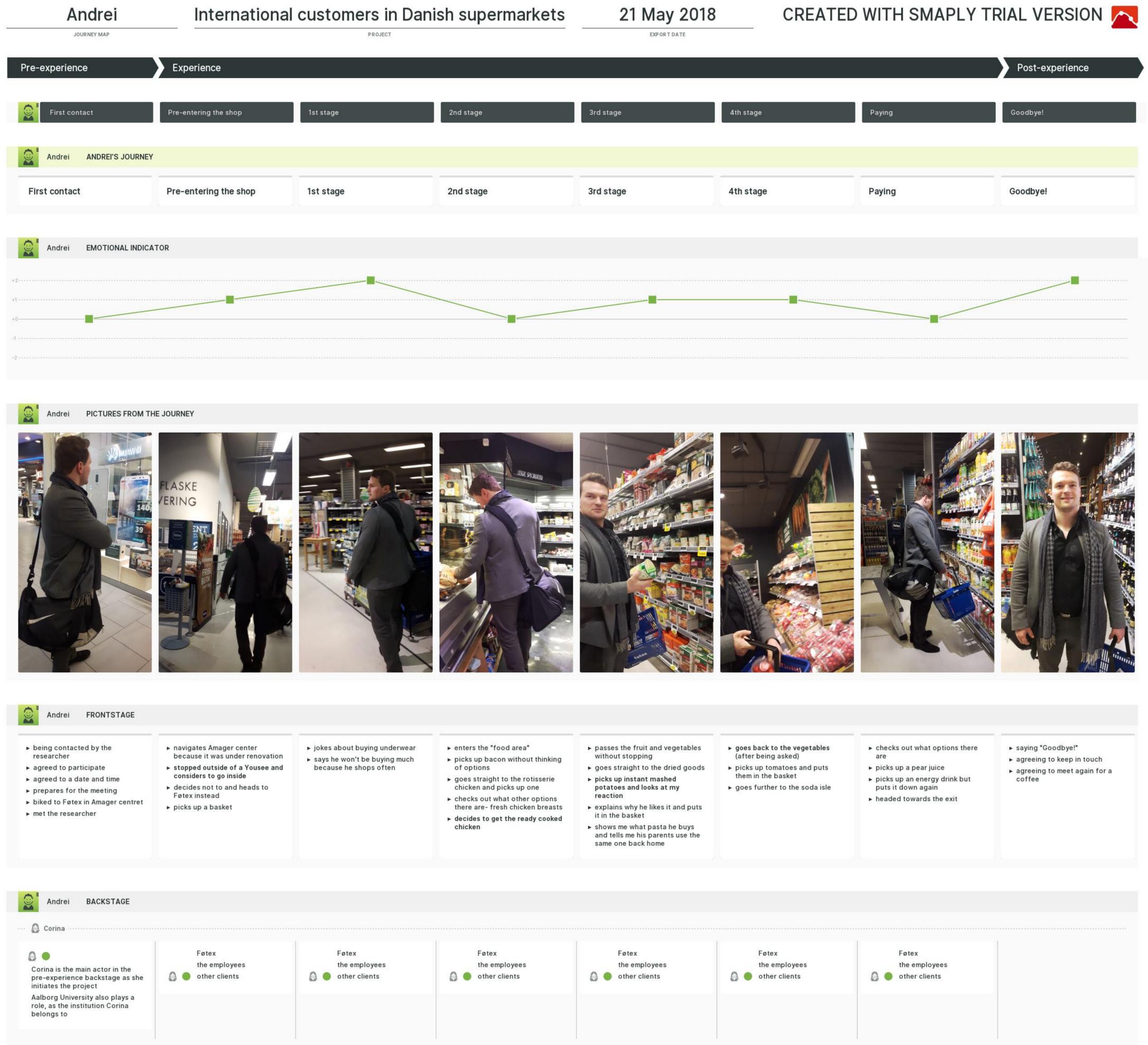
Experience

Post-experience



- Linda FRONTSTAGE
- ▶ being contacted by the researcher
  - ▶ agreed to participate
  - ▶ agreed to a date and time
  - ▶ prepares for the meeting
  - ▶ biked to Rema1000
  - ▶ met the researcher
  - ▶ picked-up a basket
  - ▶ said she takes her time in the fruit and vegetable section
  - ▶ looks at the meat section but doesn't go there
  - ▶ said she won't be buying much as she doesn't need "everything"
  - ▶ picks up one lemon
  - ▶ goes back and forth looking at the options
  - ▶ leans down for cabbage
  - ▶ asks is I am familiar with a specific type of hummus
  - ▶ goes back and looks at grapes
  - ▶ complains about the variety
  - ▶ examines the section
  - ▶ recommends me a type of lentil pasta and then picks up the pasta
  - ▶ picks up tofu and asks if I consume it
  - ▶ recommends me to eat tofu because it is healthy
  - ▶ says she will send a blog post about soy that she wrote
  - ▶ explains how she became vegetarian
  - ▶ picks up grated cheese
  - ▶ checks the options
  - ▶ says she would buy organic if that was available
  - ▶ picks up eggs
  - ▶ checks them and places in the basket
  - ▶ picks up oats
  - ▶ looks for "something"
  - ▶ picks up Nutella and says she has cravings for it
  - ▶ looks for a healthier alternative
  - ▶ ends up buying the Nutella
  - ▶ looks around to see what else is available
  - ▶ looks to her basket
  - ▶ she goes quickly through what she will cook next week
  - ▶ when asked about bread, she says she usually buys if from the bakery
  - ▶ goes to the cashier
  - ▶ saying "Goodbye!"
  - ▶ agreeing to keep in touch
  - ▶ agreeing to send each other pictures of the cooked lentil pasta





# Shuhan

JOURNEY MAP

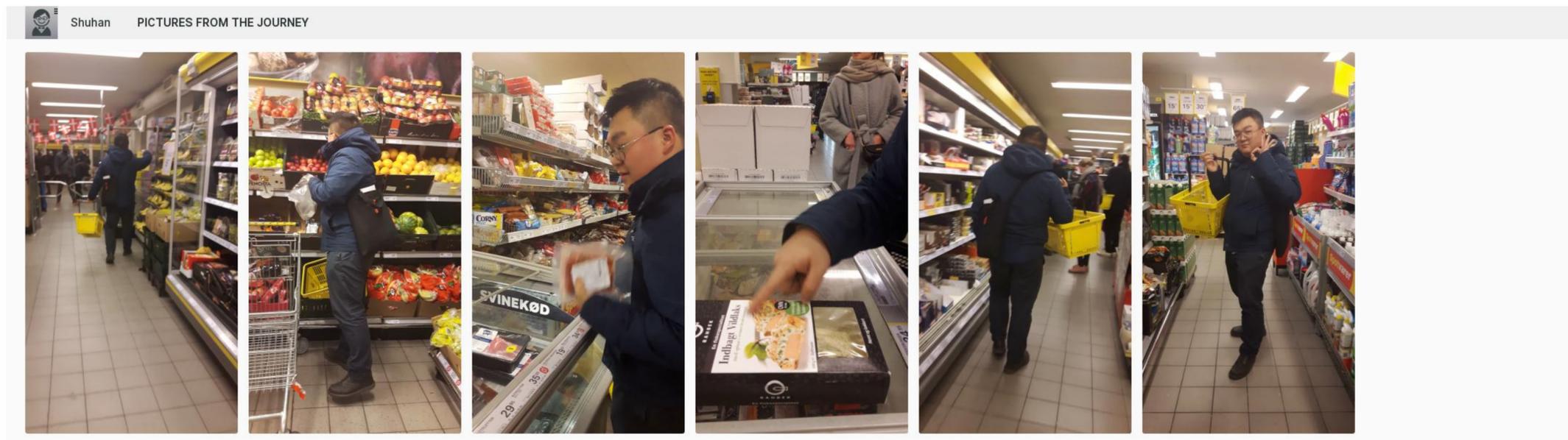
# International customers in Danish supermarkets

PROJECT

21 May 2018

EXPORT DATE

CREATED WITH SMAPLY TRIAL VERSION



- Shuhan FRONTSTAGE
- ▶ being contacted by the researcher
  - ▶ agreed to participate
  - ▶ agreed to a date and time
  - ▶ prepares for the meeting
  - ▶ biked to Netto in Nørrebro
  - ▶ met the researcher
  - ▶ picks a basket and heads straight to fruits and vegetables
  - ▶ couldn't find the plastic bags, so I showed him towards them
  - ▶ picks up plums and moves further
  - ▶ picks up zucchinis, cucumber and avocado
  - ▶ picks up an aubergine and leaves the zucchini
  - ▶ picks up a piece of bacon and asks me if I ever tasked it
  - ▶ puts the bacon in his basket and tells me why he doesn't like the other bacon available (smaller size)
  - ▶ moves towards the freezers and picks up a type of fish
  - ▶ asks me how much it is and I show him towards the price scanner
  - ▶ after checking the price (50 kr.) he says it is too expensive and puts it back
  - ▶ goes further between the isles without a clear direction
  - ▶ heads towards the eggs and picks up a package
  - ▶ places them in the basket and heads towards the cashier
  - ▶ pays and leaves the supermarket
  - ▶ saying "Goodbye!"
  - ▶ agreeing to keep in touch
  - ▶ agreeing to meet again

